

STREETS FOR LIFE: #LOVE 30

THE CASE FOR 30 KM/H STREETS FOR HEALTH,
ENVIRONMENT, AND EQUITY DURING UN ROAD
SAFETY WEEK AND BEYOND



Streets for Life
#Love30

unroadsafetyweek.org



THE GLOBAL GOALS
For Sustainable Development



BACKGROUND

Across the world, low speed, safe streets can transform public spaces to serve the long-term needs of everyone in their communities.

Building upon the 2020 Stockholm Declaration,¹ the Streets for Life campaign focuses on advocating for a maximum speed of 30km/h on urban streets where motorised traffic and vulnerable road users mix, unless there is clear evidence why this is not necessary.

ACTION

The Streets for Life campaign calls for 30km/h speed limits where people walk, live and play, through legislation, infrastructure design, enforcement, vehicle technology, and public awareness-raising.



Streets for Life unites campaigners for walkable, safer and climate-friendly streets, and vital child rights including safe environments for children to move around and play. The COVID-19 crisis adds an additional urgency, reflected in a growing number of interventions to promote walking and cycling at national and city levels.

Low speed streets offer the potential to tackle car dependency, to reduce road traffic injury, and reduce climate impacts. These are issues that particularly impact young people and marginalised communities at a global and local level.

Low speed streets are key to achieving Vision Zero, eliminating death and serious injury from road collisions. In 2020, the city of Helsinki recorded no deaths for the first time since records began in 1960,² while in Oslo, not only were there no pedestrian or cyclist deaths in the city but no children under 16 died in traffic crashes across the entire country of Norway.³ Low speed streets around schools, known as 'Hjertesone' or 'heart zones', which were collaborations between many different groups – including the police, cyclists groups, and the Directorate of Health – were an integral part of the solution.⁴



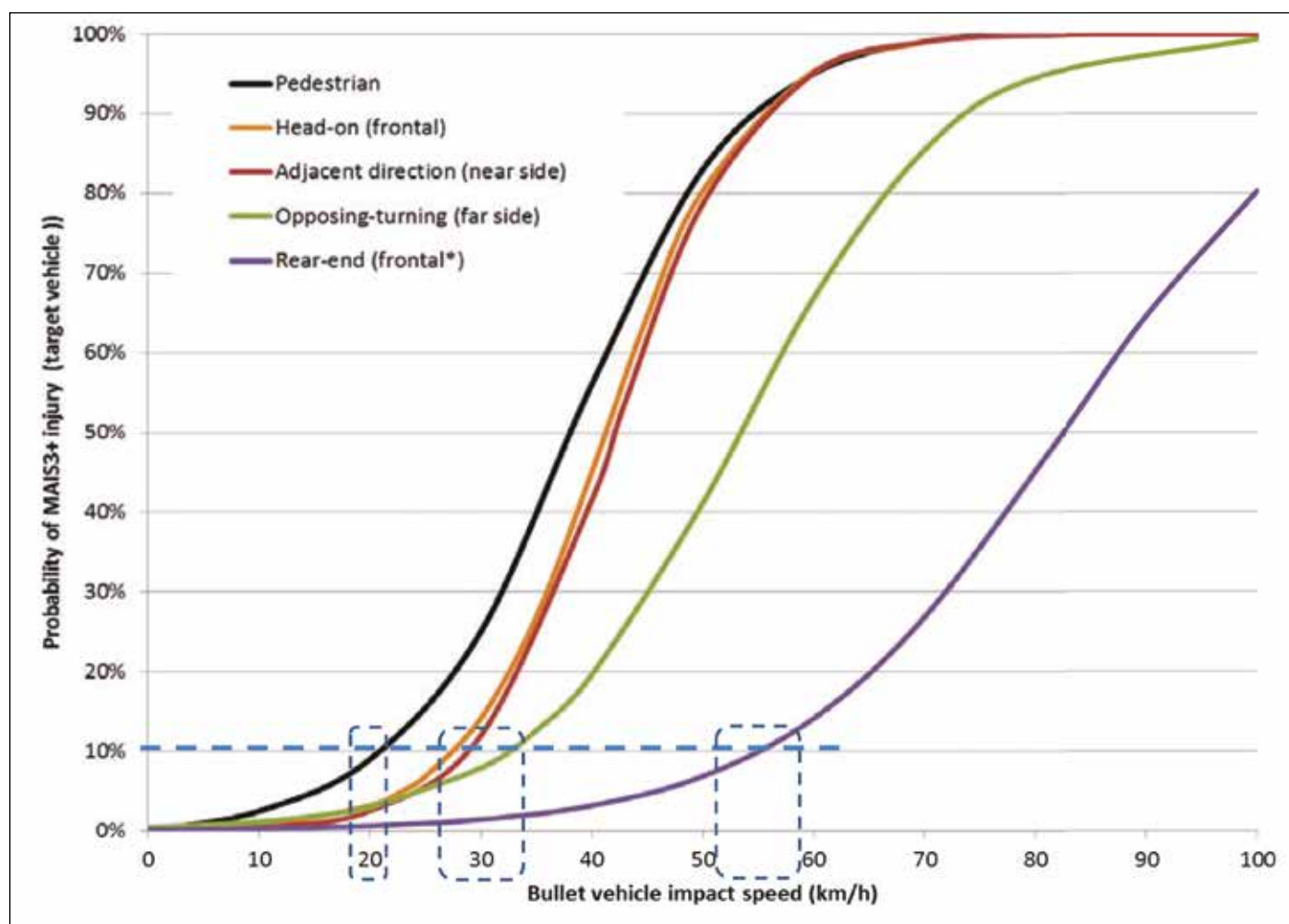
MAKING THE CASE FOR LOWER SPEEDS

ROAD TRAFFIC INJURY

Driving speed in urban areas is closely associated with crash rates and the likelihood of serious injury. Reducing speeds makes it easier for vehicles to stop in time, with total stopping distances almost halving at 20mph compared to 30mph.⁵ Speed also affects the forces involved in a crash (related to the square of a vehicle's velocity) and therefore risk of serious injury.⁶

Limiting vehicle speed to 30km/h on streets where people and traffic mix saves lives. For a pedestrian or cyclist the risk of death or serious injury in a road traffic collision with a vehicle rises exponentially above speeds of 30km/h. This is why campaigners 'love 30'. It can be the difference between life and death.

Probability of Severe Injury When Struck by a Motor Vehicle⁷





CHILDREN, ADOLESCENTS AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Road crashes are the leading cause of death for children, adolescents and young people between the ages of 5 and 29.

Children's bodies are more vulnerable to road injury, particularly their softer heads make them more susceptible to serious head injury than adults. Because of their small stature, it can be difficult for children to see surrounding traffic and for drivers and others to see them.⁸

Road traffic injuries are a leading cause of disability for children. Many still retain some functional disability for many months following a crash. In Bangalore, India 14% of children who sustained a traumatic brain injury required assistance with day-to-day activities six months after the road traffic crash.⁹

CLIMATE ACTION

Low speed streets encourage active (non-motorised) mobility, which is good for the climate.

In Edinburgh, Scotland, low speed streets around schools resulted in the proportion of primary school children walking increased from 58% to 74%, while cycling increased by 7 times from 3% to 22%.¹⁰

If all cities develop policies that support to support cycle infrastructure, including low speed street, it could contribute to a 11% cut in urban carbon emissions by 2050 – saving around 300 megatonnes of global CO₂ emissions.¹¹

EQUITY

The crash rate in the most deprived areas is often far higher than in more wealthy ones, often by a factor of 4 or 5 times.¹² These areas are often near busy and dangerous roads. Reducing vehicle speeds help reduce social exclusion, where communities are cut off from local facilities.

This can help increase social connectedness, and active travel, improving mental and physical health.¹³



NOISE

Noise is linked to sleep disorders and heart disease, as well as lower school performance in children. 30 km/h road speeds reduced acoustic energy levels by about half.¹⁴



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