



LESIONES ACCIDENTALES



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MUERTES POR ACCIDENTE DE TRÁNSITO

Traffic Accidents

The profile of male victims in traffic accidents considered as non-intentional injury occurrences includes youngsters and adults from 15 to 44 years, and some specific cases of men over 60, among - car, motorcycle or bicycle - drivers and pedestrians. The scenery is basically urban, where major focal points are provincial capital cities and, particularly, the metropolitan areas. Another secondary setting for occurrence is the inland road network connecting other localities with lower population density. The specificities of urban centers relate to volume and population density, the diversification of social and economic roles, and continuous alteration of patterns dealing with the perception of the relationship of time-space for mobility and traveling. Role diversification has an impact on space, such as the differentiation of places to perform any such roles. There are great differences among workplaces and homes, industrial zones, trade centers and malls, entertainment or amusement places. Traffic ways and lanes are the connection between and to and from these diverging points. None of them – or very few – can offer the opportunity to establish sound or stable relationships. The time factor has a very strong influence in traveling patterns for both drivers and pedestrians and they are prone to accidents if they are willing or forced to take risks while moving from one place to another. Both – with the exception of old people - have something in common: they belong in the 18-44 age group and constitute the productive base of social conglomerates; therefore, they have greater mobility in the spaces and sceneries they usually move around, as imposed by role diversification.

If this process takes places within an inadequate or unplanned urban structure, traffic-accident risks are further enhanced by lack of signals, deficiently kept roads, disrespect for traffic rules, this added to the absence of footbridges, poor mass transportation systems, obsolete road-network design, and the degradation of public spaces by car parking and the invasion of "informal economy" stalls. If we consider that the road network at metropolitan areas is bound to stretch in different directions, thus altering the current traveling patterns with the concurrent jams and obstructions, traffic-accident risks while moving to and from far distant residential, work and other places will be greater.

In municipal and rural areas with lower population density, the perceptions of time and space are different. Traveling through the national road system involves a shift and not a habit in daily life, since actors usually move for recreation, leisure and specific trade purposes included in the economic chain, such as the transportation and/or sale of cattle, goods or products. The reasons for traffic accidents in this areas are not unconnected with urban driver's mobilization, which usually includes traveling on both regional and national roads.

