

# Russia Blames Sanctions, Closed Borders for Rise in Traffic Accidents

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**Moskva News Agency**

Russian police ascribed an increase in road accidents to Western sanctions that have shifted traffic flows toward ill-equipped infrastructure in the country's east, the Kommersant business daily [reported](#) Thursday.

The Russian Interior Ministry's road safety research center said in its 2022 report that some highway sections in eastern Russia saw upticks in accidents of as much as 80%. Western highways saw fewer traffic accidents, it added.

With Western destinations cut off as part of economic penalties for Russia's invasion of Ukraine, traffic redistribution placed a heavy toll on roads to Turkey, Kazakhstan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and China.

"The infrastructure was not ready for such changes and as a result, the main traffic arteries were overloaded and vehicle miles traveled increased," the report stated.

The surge came despite Russia's car fleet increasing by only 0.5% compared with annual growth of up to 1.9% in previous years.

The Interior Ministry's research center warned that aging cars, a 70% increase in used vehicle imports and bootleg auto part shortages would further deteriorate road safety in Russia.

Russia last year allocated 13 trillion rubles (\$160 billion) toward road construction through 2027.

Russia's automotive industry has been the sector hardest-hit by Western sanctions imposed over the invasion of Ukraine.

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