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## Original Research

# Evaluation of the five-year Bloomberg Philanthropies Global Road Safety Program in the Russian Federation<sup>☆</sup>



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## ABSTRACT

Road traffic injuries are a leading cause of morbidity and mortality in the world. In Russia, a road safety program was implemented in Lipetskaya and Ivanovskaya oblasts (regions) as part of a 10-country effort funded by Bloomberg Philanthropies. The program was focused on increasing seat belt and child restraint use and reducing speeding. The primary goals of this monitoring and evaluation study are to assess trends in seat belt use, child restraint use, and speed compliance in the two oblasts over the 5 years and to explore the overall impact of the program on road traffic injury and death rates. Primary data via roadside observations and interviews, and secondary data from official government sources were collected and analyzed for this study.

Our results indicate significant improvements in seat belt wearing and child seat use rates and in prevalence of speeding in both intervention oblasts. The observations were consistent with the results from the roadside interviews. In Lipetskaya, restraint use by all occupants increased from 52.4% (baseline, October 2010) to 77.4% (final round, October 2014) and child

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Roadside observation  
Roadside interview

restraint use increased from 20.9% to 54.1% during the same period. In Ivanovskaya, restraint use by all occupants increased from 48% (baseline, April 2012) to 88.7% (final round, October 2014) and child restraint use increased from 20.6% to 89.4% during the same period. In Lipetskaya, the overall prevalence of speeding (vehicles driving above speed limit) declined from 47.0% (baseline, July 2011) to 30.4% (final round, October 2014) and a similar pattern was observed in Ivanovskaya where the prevalence of speeding decreased from 54.6% (baseline, March 2012) to 46.6% (final round, October 2014). Through 2010–2014, the road traffic crash and injury rates per 100,000 population decreased in Lipetskaya oblast (191.5 and 246.9 in 2010 and 170.4 and 208.6 in 2014, respectively) and slightly increased in Ivanovskaya oblast (184.4 and 236.0 in 2010 and 186.7 and 243.4 in 2014, respectively).

These road safety improvements are associated with the program that enabled a combined focus on policy reform, legislation, enforcement, advocacy, education, and data collection and use. However, the existence of other road safety efforts, lack of data from comparable regions, and unavailability of risk factor-specific data make it difficult to attribute these changes to the program.

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## Introduction

Globally, 1.2 million deaths and 20–50 million injuries are caused by road traffic crashes each year.<sup>1</sup> Though the European Region has the lowest road traffic fatality rate in the world, there is a significant disparity between the countries in the region. In 2010, the Russian Federation had a road traffic injury (RTI) rate of 199.1 per 100,000 population and a road traffic death rate of 18.6 per 100,000 population—the third highest road traffic mortality in the region and among the world's 10 countries with the highest number of road traffic deaths.<sup>1,2</sup> According to the 2013 Global Burden of Disease study, 2.29% of total disability adjusted life years were attributable to RTIs making it the 9th leading cause of disability adjusted life years in Russia.<sup>3</sup> The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia estimated that 2.5% of the gross domestic product (approximately \$26 billion) was lost due to RTIs in 2005.<sup>4</sup>

Recognizing this high burden, the Russian government implemented the first Federal Target Road Safety Program from 2006 to 2012 with a goal to reduce RTIs by 33% compared with 2004 rates. This multisectoral program involved multiple ministries focusing on modernization of road infrastructure, increases in penalties for traffic violations, strengthening

drinking driving and other road safety laws, law enforcement, traffic safety promotion in media and schools, social marketing campaigns, and improvement of medical care to victims of RTIs.<sup>5,6</sup> A second phase of the Federal Target Road Safety Program 2013–2020 was approved in fall 2013.<sup>7</sup>

The Bloomberg Philanthropies Global Road Safety Program was implemented over 5 years from 2010 to 2014 to improve road safety in 10 countries, including Russia. The goal of the program in Russia was to support the government in implementing its national program to prevent RTIs in two administrative districts of the Central Federal Okrug (Area) of Russia: Lipetskaya and Ivanovskaya oblasts (regions) by increasing seat belt and child restraint use and reducing speeding with the potential for dissemination of the project lessons in the Russian Federation in the medium term.<sup>8</sup>

Supported by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Ministry of Health, the project involved federal, regional, and international partners including the World Health Organization (WHO) which was responsible for legislation review, social marketing campaigns, and support to media; Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP) supported road traffic police capacity building and the Johns Hopkins International Injury Research Unit (JH-IIRU) was responsible for monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of

**Table 1 – Main activities of the Bloomberg Philanthropies Global Road Safety Program in the Russian Federation.**

Legislation	Enforcement	Social marketing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of the Russian road safety legislation on speeding and seatbelt use in 2010</li> <li>Review and update of the Russian road safety legislation on all five risk factors 2013</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide international expert support to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess current enforcement practices</li> <li>Elaborate a strategy to facilitate higher efficiency of enforcement</li> </ul> </li> <li>Assist in implementation of effective strategies for road safety in the intervention regions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social marketing campaigns on speeding, seatbelt, and child restraint use               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TV advertisements</li> <li>Outdoor advertisements</li> <li>Advertisements on public transport</li> <li>Radio advertisements</li> <li>Printed materials</li> <li>Internet advertisements</li> <li>A series of mass PR events</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Source: World Health Organization. Practical steps in enhancing road safety: lessons from the Road safety in 10 countries project in the Russian Federation, 2015.

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