



# SAFER CARS FOR LATIN AMERICA

## CAMPAIGN REPORT



Consumers International (CI) is the world federation of consumer groups that works with its Members to serve as the only independent and authoritative global voice for consumers. With over 240 Member organisations in 120 countries, we are building a powerful international movement to help protect and empower consumers everywhere.

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#nozerostarcars



STOP THE CRASH  
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This research was carried out by Security in Transport and Mining (SETRAM) on behalf of CI. SETRAM is a company that specialises in transport engineering, offering road safety and mining services. [www.setram.cl](http://www.setram.cl)

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# FOREWORD — AMANDA LONG, DIRECTOR GENERAL, CONSUMERS INTERNATIONAL

In April 2016, the United Nations passed a significant resolution calling on all Member States to implement UN Vehicle Safety Regulations in full, or adopt equivalent national standards. This critical endorsement shows the importance of achieving universal minimum standards for the protection of vehicle occupants and other road users. There is now a need to ensure these standards are achieved by 2020. Consumers International and its member organisations in Latin America are proud to work alongside the Global and Latin New Car Assessment Programmes to push for improved regulation of car safety standards that will save lives.

It is shocking that one car can be manufactured in Mexico (the leading car producer in the region) to the highest safety standards and sent to the US or Europe, while the same factory produces another vehicle omitting those safety features for sale to Latin American consumers. Manufacturers can produce much safer vehicles but robust regulations are needed. This double standard of safer cars for well-regulated countries and unsafe cars for others motivates us to work tirelessly to champion the rights of consumers and hold governments and manufacturers to account.

Supporting our endeavours to save lives through safer cars, we have conducted research in some of the largest and most rapidly developing markets for car sales in Latin America. We have identified the scale of unsafe cars on the road, and identified which manufacturers are producing these cars. Each unsafe car sold threatens the lives of individuals, and crashes impact on families and children.

The consumer perspective is always at the forefront of our minds, and all consumers have the right to expect new cars to meet international safety standards and for manufacturers to provide sufficient information for the consumer to make an informed choice.

I hope you will find this campaign report a useful resource and that your organisation, company or government can play a role in ensuring improved car safety across Latin America.

Together we can save lives through safer cars.



Amanda Long, Director General, Consumers International

*Consumers International (CI) is the world federation of consumer organisations working together to champion consumer rights. With more than 240 member organisations in 120 countries, we are building a powerful international movement to help protect and empower consumers everywhere.*

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This campaign briefing provides a consumer perspective on the issue of car safety in Latin America. It aims to amplify the messages of the New Car Assessment Programme for Latin America and the Caribbean (Latin NCAP), which has played a critical role in highlighting safety issues.

It also serves as a call to action to Latin American governments and manufacturers in the region to fulfil the UN minimum vehicle safety standards, or national equivalents. We hope to stimulate a coalition of actors to come together and take action ensuring any car sold to Latin American consumers fully complies with the UN Vehicle Safety Standards.

Research, conducted by Consumers International, and focused on Brazil, Mexico, Peru, Chile and Argentina:

- Highlights the double standards of manufacturers, including General Motors (GM)/Chevrolet,<sup>1</sup> Nissan, Volkswagen, Fiat, Hyundai, Ford and Suzuki who continue to sell zero and one star car models to Latin American consumers that could not be sold in the US or Europe.
- Cars that are unsafe, scoring only zero or one star in Latin NCAP crash tests, continue to dominate the top ten selling lists in Latin America. In 2015, models that have received one or zero star ratings accounted for:
  - ▶ 3 of the 10 top-selling cars in Chile,
  - ▶ 4 of the 10 top-selling cars in Argentina,
  - ▶ 5 of the 10 top-selling cars in Mexico and Brazil (the two largest markets in the region).
- GM/Chevrolet is identified as the leading manufacturer of zero star cars in Latin America. It is the only manufacturer with best selling zero and one star cars for the past four years (2012-2015) in Chile, Argentina, Brazil and Mexico, selling more than 700,000 vehicles.
- Our qualitative surveys indicates sparse and at times inaccurate information about car safety features is provided to consumers at showrooms of the top manufacturers in Mexico, Peru, Chile and Argentina. This includes behaviours such as: indicating the addition of two airbags to a structurally unsound model will provide adequate protection, or pointing out the size of the car boot or trunk will make a car more or less crashworthy.
- Highlights that some leading car dealerships in the study countries are not providing consumers with information about Latin NCAP and their car safety rating system, whilst others are using the ratings of Euro NCAP rather than Latin NCAP when consumers enquire about the safety features of particular models.
- Indicates that improved regulation in some Latin American countries is having an impact, ensuring safer cars are on the roads.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> General Motors is a global automotive company and Chevrolet is one of its brands. Chevrolet is the GM brand that operates in Latin America and we refer to car models within the GM umbrella as 'GM/Chevrolet' throughout this report.

<sup>2</sup> Both Argentina and Brazil have adopted national equivalents to the UN Vehicle Safety Regulations in some cases. However, these are not as rigorous as the UN regulations, according to Global NCAP. A report prepared by the Transport Research Laboratory for Global NCAP provides more detail: [https://issuu.com/globalncap/docs/trl\\_report](https://issuu.com/globalncap/docs/trl_report)



# INTRODUCTION - A GLOBAL MARKET IN UNSAFE CARS

Consumers International and our Members are supporting the global campaign calling for urgent improvements to vehicle safety internationally to help reduce the toll of 1.25 million people who die on the roads each year.<sup>3</sup> Ninety percent of these road traffic deaths occur in low and middle-income markets where car manufacturers continue to sell unsafe cars due to weak regulation of car safety standards.<sup>4</sup> These vehicles could not be sold in the US, Europe, Japan or Australia – high-income well-regulated countries where car manufacturers provide consumers with a higher standard of car safety features and information. This alarming double standard is costing lives.

On 15 April 2016, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a Resolution for ‘Improving global road safety’, which represents the UN’s strongest ever commitment to road safety.<sup>5</sup> The Resolution:

*“Invites Member States that have not already done so to consider adopting policies and measures to implement United Nations vehicle safety regulations or equivalent national standards to ensure that all new motor vehicles, meet applicable minimum regulations for occupant and other road users protection, with seat belts, air bags and active safety systems fitted as standard;”*

Latin American countries represent a rapidly growing yet poorly regulated market for car manufacturers, which poses a significant challenge for consumer rights. There is an urgent need to transform the UN’s unprecedented commitment into rapid improvements in government regulation and manufacturer action on safety to save lives.



Stop the Crash Conference,  
2015 Consumers International World Congress, Brasilia

<sup>3</sup> See World Health Organization “Global Status Report on Road Safety”:  
[http://www.who.int/violence\\_injury\\_prevention/road\\_safety\\_status/2015/en/](http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/road_safety_status/2015/en/)

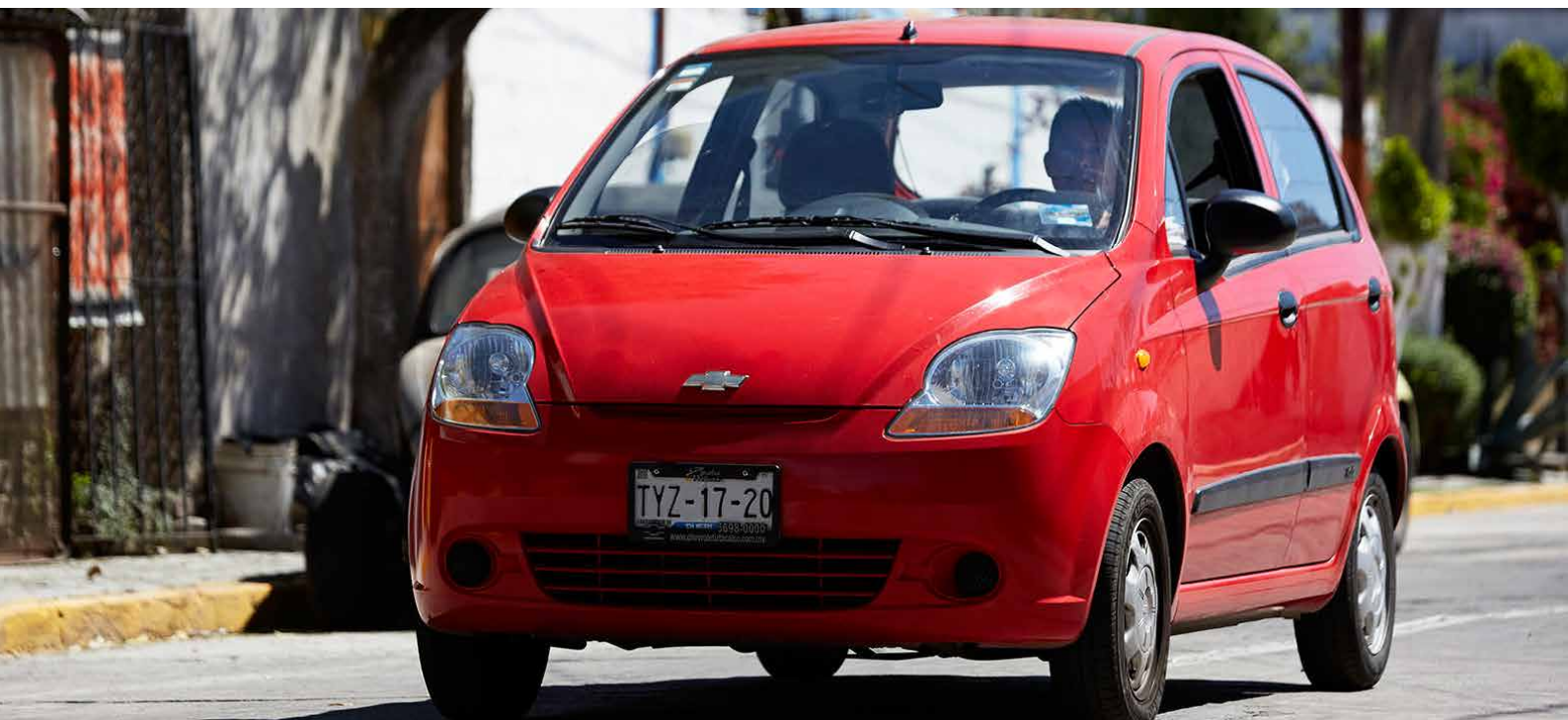
<sup>4</sup> See Global New Car Assessment Programme report, “Democratising Car Safety”: [https://issuu.com/globalncap/docs/road\\_map\\_2020](https://issuu.com/globalncap/docs/road_map_2020)

<sup>5</sup> See: <http://www.stopthecrash.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/UN-RS-Res-Final.pdf>

The majority of countries in Latin America are middle-income countries whose share in global car registrations and sales has increased by 165% since 2005.<sup>6</sup> Countries such as Brazil and Mexico have also established themselves as leading car producing countries, alongside China, India, Russia, Thailand and long-standing producers such as the EU, Japan, South Korea and the USA.

Unfortunately the increasing car sales in the Latin American region has not been accompanied by attention to safety standards associated with developed car markets such as the EU, USA or Japan. This has serious consequences for the safety of vehicle occupants and pedestrians in Latin America, as data compiled by the World Health Organization confirms. Road deaths for high-income countries stand at 8.7 per 100,000 individuals, as opposed to 20.1 for middle-income countries and 17 deaths per 100,000 individuals in Latin America. The WHO estimate that the rate for Latin America will increase to 24 deaths per 100,000 individuals unless urgent action is taken.<sup>7</sup>

The UN's Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety (2011-2020) supports the most important global standards available under the 1958 and 1998 agreements of the UN World Forum of Harmonisation of Vehicle Regulations (WP29).<sup>8</sup> The Global New Car Assessment Programme has made specific recommendations of minimum safety standards<sup>9</sup> to address key safety issues including crash worthiness, crash avoidance and pedestrian protection for all new vehicles.



<sup>6</sup> See Global New Car Assessment Programme report, "Democratising Car Safety": [https://issuu.com/globalncap/docs/road\\_map\\_2020](https://issuu.com/globalncap/docs/road_map_2020)

<sup>7</sup> See above.

<sup>8</sup> See: <http://www.unece.org/trans/main/wp29/introduction.html>

<sup>9</sup> See Global New Car Assessment Programme report, "Democratising Car Safety": [https://issuu.com/globalncap/docs/road\\_map\\_2020](https://issuu.com/globalncap/docs/road_map_2020)



# NEW CAR ASSESSMENT PROGRAMME FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (LATIN NCAP)

New Car Assessment Programmes (NCAP) carry out crash tests on new cars and allocate a rating that demonstrates safety performance. Five stars represents the highest score, a zero star car is considered one where the vehicle driver and occupants would stand little chance of survival in a crash at average speeds. NCAPs are dedicated to promoting the supply and demand for safer vehicles and Consumers International is working with NCAP to improve regulation of car safety, and build consumer awareness and demand for safer cars.

In Latin America, the New Car Assessment Programme for Latin America and the Caribbean (Latin NCAP) has tested more than 70 car models to help improve car safety. Unfortunately the results show that many of the vehicles sold in the region perform poorly in crash tests. In April 2016, Latin NCAP released its latest round of test results highlighting a further zero star safety rating for a GM/ Chevrolet model.<sup>10</sup>

The robust data generated by Latin NCAP about the safety performance of cars sold in the Latin American market serves as the basis for this campaign briefing. Our focus is on the most unsafe cars being sold to Latin American consumers, i.e. those that have been awarded a zero or one star rating by Latin NCAP. Our aim is to support consumer organisations and Latin NCAP's efforts and pressure manufacturers to voluntarily adopt the UN Vehicle Safety Regulations. Latin American consumers deserve cars that meet internationally recognised basic safety standards.



<sup>10</sup> See Latin NCAP press release: <http://www.latinncap.com/en/news/8570e8c53c8a97/latin-ncap-new-results-another-zero-star-chevrolet-and-the-ford-ranger-scores-three-stars-for-adult-occupants>

## Safety does not need to be an expensive option

Contrary to the claims of many leading manufacturers, it does not cost much to bring a car into line with basic UN safety regulations, making it more resilient in the event of a crash. In order for a typical small car to pass the UN Frontal Crash Test (Regulation 94) it would require the addition of one airbag and strengthened body work. Global NCAP has estimated that it would cost \$200 (USD) for two airbags (rather than one) and strengthened body work for each vehicle.

The additional expense of adding more advanced technologies, such as Electronic Stability Control (ESC)<sup>11</sup> has also decreased in recent years due to economies of scale. ESC is an inexpensive addition to a car that already has anti-lock brakes (ABS).

Cost of airbag + strengthened body work (UN Reg. 94)	\$200 (USD)
Cost of an airbag	\$50 (USD)
Cost of ESC (to a car with ABS)	\$50 (USD)
Cost of ABS + ESC	\$75 - \$100 (USD)

All data from Global NCAP.<sup>12</sup>



<sup>11</sup> Electronic Stability Control is a vital crash avoidance technology that stops cars from skidding and saves tens of thousands of lives. For more information, please visit the Stop the Crash website: <http://www.stopthecrash.org/esc/>

<sup>12</sup> See Global New Car Assessment Programme report, "Democratising Car Safety": [https://issuu.com/globalncap/docs/road\\_map\\_2020](https://issuu.com/globalncap/docs/road_map_2020)

**TABLE 1 – LATIN NCAP TESTED MODELS RATED ZERO OR ONE STAR<sup>13</sup>**

Manufacturer & Model	Country of origin	Test year	Stars
Chery IQ no Airbag	China	2015	0
Fiat New Palio no Airbag	Argentina	2014	0
Fiat Novo Uno Evo no Airbag	Brazil	2011	1
Fiat Palio Elx 1.4 no Airbag	Argentina/Brazil	2010	1
Ford Ka Fly Viral no Airbag	Brazil	2011	1
Geely CK 1 1.3 no Airbag	China	2010	0
GM/Chevrolet Agile no Airbag	Mexico	2013	0
GM/Chevrolet Aveo no Airbag	Mexico	2015	0
GM/Chevrolet Celta no Airbag	Brazil	2011	1
GM/Chevrolet Corsa Classic no Airbag	Argentina	2011	1
GM/Chevrolet Sail no Airbag	China	2016	0
GM/Chevrolet Spark no Airbag	South Korea	2014	0
Hyundai Grand I10 no Airbag	India	2015	0
JAC J3 Double Airbag	China	2012	1
Lifan 320 no Airbag	China	2014	0
Nissan Tiida Sedan no Airbag	Mexico	2015	0
Nissan Tsuru / Sentra B13 no Airbag	Mexico	2013	0
Peugeot 207 Compact 5P 1.4 no Airbag	Argentina/Brazil	2010	1
Renault Clio Mio no Airbag	Argentina	2013	0
Renault Sandero no Airbag	Argentina	2012	1
Suzuki Alto K10 no Airbag	India	2013	0
Volkswagen Gol Trend 1.6 no Airbag	Brazil	2010	1

## Our research

Consumers International commissioned a research study to build a regional picture of the extent of unsafe car sales in Latin America, which contribute to the significant car crash death toll. This research relates to car models tested by Latin NCAP achieving the lowest safety ratings, either a zero or one star rating in adult occupant safety tests – to date 22 models have been tested (see Table 1).

We identified whether these unsafe cars are still sold to consumers by examining current car model catalogues of the respective manufacturers. If the models were listed, the technical safety specifications of each vehicle were reviewed to ensure they matched those of the model tested by Latin NCAP. For example, if a model listed in the catalogue had a front seat double-airbag system, this would indicate that it was not directly comparable with the model tested by Latin NCAP. This is because all of the models rated with zero or one star by Latin NCAP lack airbags (except the JAC J3). We also looked at the best-selling car lists<sup>14</sup> to confirm the popularity of these models.

We focused on Peru, Chile, Argentina, Mexico and Brazil, as there are Consumers International Member organisations actively campaigning on car safety in these countries. Two of the largest regional markets, Mexico and Brazil are included in the study.

<sup>13</sup> See Latin NCAP's website for more detail and videos of the crash tested models: <http://www.latinncap.com/en/>

<sup>14</sup> Top ten selling car data covers Brazil, Mexico, Argentina and Chile. Unfortunately, data on Peru could not be obtained for this study

**TABLE 2 – STUDY COUNTRY PROFILES<sup>15</sup>**

Country	Argentina	Brazil	Chile	Mexico	Peru
Population (WHO, 2015)	41.4 million	200.4 million	17.6 million	122.3 million	30.4 million
Gross National Income per head (WHO, 2015)	US\$ 6,290	US\$ 11,690	US\$ 15,230	US\$ 9,940	US\$ 6,270
No. of cars on the road (OISEVI, 2015)	22.3 million	81.6 million	4.3 million	24.6 million	4.3 million
Annual growth rate of cars in circulation (OISEVI, 2015)	7.3%	5.5%	7.8%	6.2%	9.3%
Reported Road Traffic Fatalities (OISEVI, 2015)	5,209	43,075	1,630	15,856	4,043
Estimated road traffic fatalities (WHO, 2015)	5,619	46,935	2,179	15,062	4,234
Estimated deaths per 100,000 people (WHO, 2015)	13.6	23.4	12.4	12.3	13.9
Level of Car Safety Regulation (Global NCAP)	0 out of 7 UN Regulations adopted	0 out of 7 UN Regulations adopted	0 out of 7 UN Regulations adopted	0 out of 7 UN Regulations adopted	0 out of 7 UN Regulations adopted

**Points to note:**

- Brazil has the most road traffic deaths and the highest rate of deaths per 100,000 people. The Brazilian government has adopted national standards on vehicle safety in some cases, e.g. around mandatory use of airbags and carrying out their own version of frontal crash tests. However, these are not considered by Global NCAP to be as rigorous as UN standards.<sup>16</sup> Rates of death and injury are still high.
- Chile has the least road traffic deaths and the second lowest rate of deaths per 100,000 people. It also has the smallest population and lowest number of vehicles on the road in relation to this study.
- Mexico has the second highest number of road traffic deaths but the lowest rate of deaths per 100,000 people. It also has the second largest population and second highest number of vehicles on the road in relation to this study.

<sup>15</sup> The main data source for this table was the Ibero-American Road Safety Agency (OISEVI) and their annual report published in 2015: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BwLITAx-nEghbFN6YUFOaENuYjA/view?pref=2&pli=1> The 2016 report was available at the time of writing but did not contain information on Brazil so data from the 2015 report was used. WHO data is taken from the Road Safety Country Profiles, 2015: [http://www.who.int/violence\\_injury\\_prevention/road\\_safety\\_status/2015/country\\_profiles/country\\_profiles/en/](http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/road_safety_status/2015/country_profiles/country_profiles/en/)

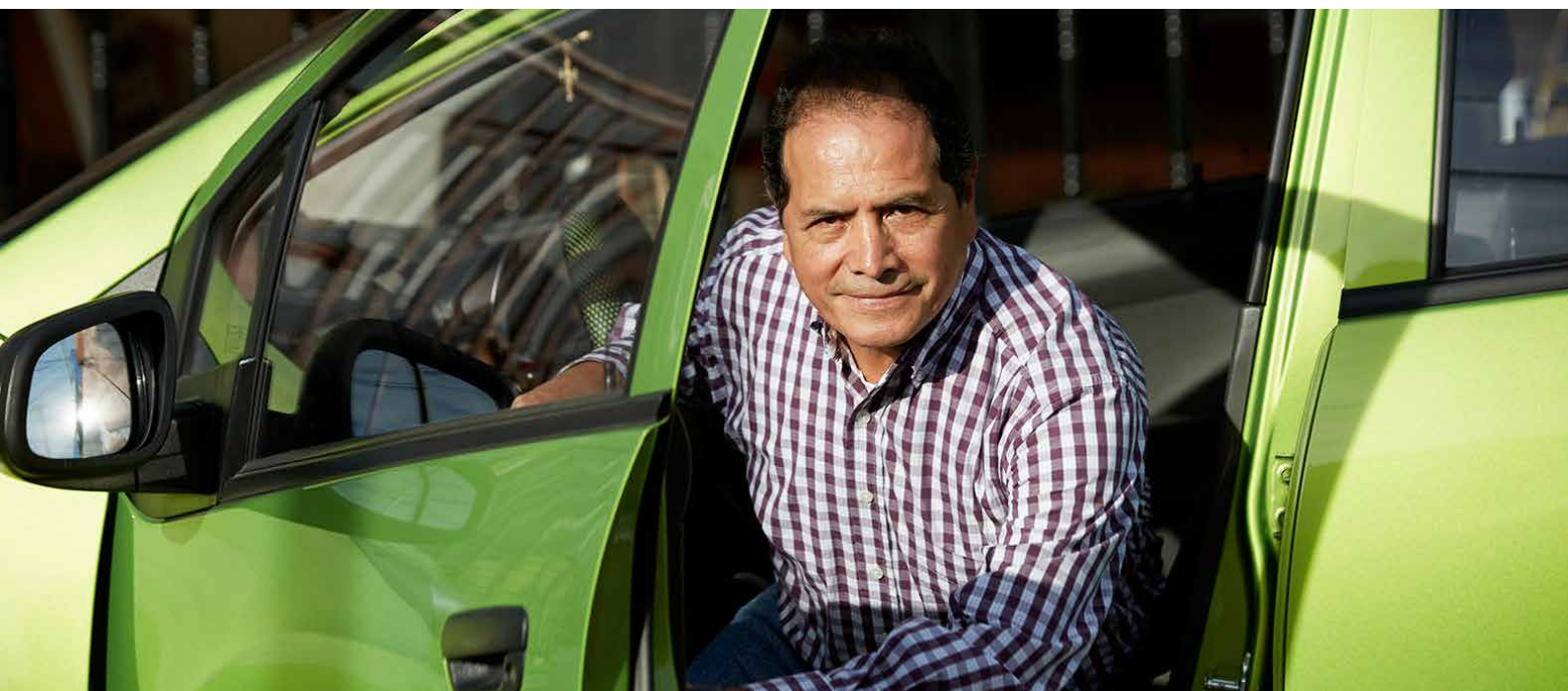
<sup>16</sup> A report prepared by the Transport Research Laboratory for Global NCAP provides more detail: [https://issuu.com/globalncap/docs/trl\\_report](https://issuu.com/globalncap/docs/trl_report)

- Peru has the second highest rate of deaths per 100,000 people despite having the second lowest number of cars on the road in relation to this study. It is also the most rapidly growing market.
- All of the countries in the study are middle-income countries, apart from Chile, which is a high-income country. The absence of car safety regulation in Chile, as a high-income market, particularly stands out.
- Brazil and Mexico have the largest populations in the study, the highest numbers of cars on the road, and the most road traffic fatalities. These countries are the biggest markets for car sales and the most significant car producing countries in Latin America. Therefore, the highest selling car models in these markets are the best sellers in the region.

## WHERE CAN CONSUMERS BUY A ZERO OR ONE STAR RATED CAR?

Manufacturers are selling zero and one star cars, without airbags, in Chile, Argentina, Peru and Mexico. This is in spite of the fact that Latin NCAP's internationally recognised testing regime confirms that occupants in these cars would stand little chance of surviving a crash at 64km per hour.

Notably, manufacturers are not selling these models without airbags in Brazil, where there are comparatively higher levels of car safety regulation than in the other countries in the study.



**TABLE 3 — CARS RATED WITH ZERO OR ONE STARS AVAILABLE TO SAME SPECIFICATION AS TESTED BY LATIN NCAP**

Model tested by Latin NCAP	Available to buy as a new 0/1 star model				
	Chile	Argentina	Peru	Mexico	Brazil
Chery IQ no Airbag	✓	✓	✓		
Fiat New Palio no Airbag		✓			
Fiat Novo Uno Evo no Airbag					
Fiat Palio Elx 1.4 no Airbag		✓			
Ford Ka Fly Viral no Airbag					
Geely CK 1 1.3 no Airbag	✓		✓		
GM/Chevrolet Agile no Airbag					
GM/Chevrolet Aveo no Airbag	✓		✓	✓	
GM/Chevrolet Celta no Airbag					
GM/Chevrolet Corsa Classic no Airbag	✓		✓		
GM/Chevrolet Sail no Airbag	✓		✓		
GM/Chevrolet Spark no Airbag	✓		✓	✓	
Hyundai Grand I-10 no Airbag			✓	✓	
JAC J3 double Airbag			✓		✓
Lifan 320 no Airbag	✓				
Nissan Tiida Sedan no Airbag	✓		✓		
Nissan Tsuru / Sentra B13 no Airbag				✓	
Peugeot 207 Compact 5P 1.4 no Airbag					
Renault Clio Mio no Airbag					
Renault Sandero no Airbag					
Suzuki Alto K10 no Airbag	✓		✓		
Volkswagen Gol Trend 1.6 no Airbag			✓	✓	



## Changes in safety features

Our research discovered that in many instances, manufacturers appeared to have made changes to the availability of safety options following the publication of test results. In a number of cases, models that were originally tested without airbags and given zero or one star ratings are now offered with airbags fitted as standard. However, the manufacturers have not submitted these modified vehicles for testing by Latin NCAP so it is unknown how they would perform in a crash test. This applies particularly to European brands such as Peugeot and Renault, which now offer driver and passenger airbags as standard in nearly all models.

The lack of clear information from manufacturers about improvements made to car models since being rated by Latin NCAP presents a significant challenge to consumers trying to determine the level of safety offered by these cars.

It is therefore not possible to ascertain with certainty that the latest versions of these models offer any increase in safety since they were tested by Latin NCAP, and these models could still pose significant dangers for consumers.

## Impact of car safety regulations

- More zero and one star car models are available in countries with lower levels of regulation, e.g. Chile and Peru (in contrast with Argentina and Brazil, which have national regulations not as rigorous as the UN standards) (see Table 3).
- 15 of 22 of cars rated with a zero or one star by Latin NCAP are still being sold as new models in Latin American countries. Chile (9) and Peru (10) have the highest number of these models present in their markets, and Brazil (1) has the least.
- The lower prevalence of cars rated with zero or one star in Argentina and Brazil (see Table 3) appears to have been affected by the introduction of mandatory regulations on the use of double airbags and ABS systems in 2014.
- In addition Chile has recently introduced mandatory standards around use of double airbags (for driver and front passenger) from 2015.

## The most popular car models 2012 – 2015

Although zero and one star cars tested by Latin NCAP are sold without airbags in some Latin American markets, particularly those with the lowest levels of regulation, it is important to ascertain how popular these models are with consumers.

In order to obtain an insight into how popular zero and one star models were to consumers we gathered some data about the best selling car models across the countries covered by this research. The following data highlights that models that have previously been given either zero or one star safety ratings continue to dominate the top ten rankings in Latin American markets. In 2015, models that have received one or zero star ratings accounted for:

- ▶ 3 of the 10 top-selling cars in Chile,
- ▶ 4 of the 10 top-selling cars in Argentina,
- ▶ 5 of the 10 top-selling cars in Mexico and Brazil (the two largest markets in the region.)

## Lack of transparency – Airbags or no airbags?

This study has looked at the top ten selling cars in each of the target markets for the years 2012 - 2015 and identified whether any of these were rated zero or one stars by Latin NCAP. Twenty of the 22 models tested by Latin NCAP, and rated with zero or one star did not have airbags.

When compiling data of this nature it is not possible to verify the exact specification of each model sold – for example, some may have been sold with airbags added - this means they are not directly comparable to the model tested by Latin NCAP.

Even with the addition of airbags, car models sold in these markets that were tested by Latin NCAP and rated with zero or one star, would be unlikely to meet UN Vehicle Safety Regulations and would not be sold in the US, Europe, Australia or Japan.

## ARGENTINA

Manufacturer	Most popular 0-1 star models 2012-2015	Units sold 2012-2015
GM/Chevrolet	Corsa Classic	133176
Volkswagen	Gol trend	127187
Renault	Clio	104777
Peugeot	207 compact	95283
Fiat	Palio	47713

### Looking at the top-ten most popular models from 2012-15:<sup>17</sup>

- GM/Chevrolet has sold the most zero and one star rated cars in Argentina
- 463,665 cars were sold in Argentina that had zero or one star ratings
- Both the VW Gol trend and GM/Chevrolet Classic have consistently been in the top three, selling 127,187 and 133,176 respectively during this period

## BRAZIL

Manufacturer	Most popular 0-1 star models 2012-2015	Units sold 2012-2015
Volkswagen	Gol	814,124
Fiat	Palio	669,269
Fiat	Uno	641,803
GM/Chevrolet	Celta	137,624

### Looking at the top-ten most popular models from 2012-15:

- Volkswagen has sold the most zero and one star rated cars in Brazil
- The one-star rated VW Gol was by far the biggest selling car with more than 800,000 units sold
- 2.3 million cars were sold in Brazil that received a zero or one star rating, though zero and one star car models appear to progressively feature lower in the best-selling car lists

<sup>17</sup> See Appendix 2 for the full data on top selling cars, 2012-2015



## CHILE

Manufacturer	Most popular 0-1 star models 2012-2015	Units sold 2012-2015
GM/Chevrolet	Sail	55475
GM/Chevrolet	Spark	22517
Nissan	Tiida	6464
Hyundai	I-10	13073
Suzuki	Alto	6659

### Looking at the top-ten most popular models from 2012-15:

- GM/Chevrolet has sold the most zero and one star rated cars in Chile
- 104,188 cars were sold in Chile that have received zero or one star ratings
- The zero-star rated GM/Chevrolet Sail was the number 1 selling car in Chile in 2012, 2013 and 2014

## MEXICO

Manufacturer	Most popular 0-1 star models 2012-2015	Units sold 2012-2015
GM/Chevrolet	Aveo	240,611
Nissan	Tsuru	158,262
Nissan	Tiida Sedan	100,252
GM/Chevrolet	Spark	117,293
Nissan	Sentra 2.0	80,890

### Looking at the top-ten most popular models from 2012-15:

- GM/Chevrolet has sold the most zero and one star rated cars in Mexico, closely followed by Nissan
- The zero-star rated GM/Chevrolet Aveo was consistently the number one seller with 240,611 cars sold
- A total of 697,398 zero and one star cars were sold in Mexico



## Manufacturer performance

Zero and one star rated models produced by a wide range of manufacturers feature as best-selling cars in Mexico, Chile, Brazil and Argentina. Although complete data for the period was not obtainable for Peru, statistics on car sales in the first three months of 2016 seen by Consumers International includes the same manufacturers within the top ten, with the exception of Ford.<sup>18</sup>

As previously mentioned, some car manufacturers may have improved the safety features of their models– such as the addition of double frontal airbags. Until these improved models are submitted to Latin NCAP for testing their crash worthiness cannot be accurately assessed.

### The data shows the top ten car sales 2012-2015:

- Fiat sold at least 1.3 million cars in Brazil and Argentina that were rated 1 star by Latin NCAP
- Volkswagen sold at least 941,311 cars in Brazil and Argentina that were rated 1 star by Latin NCAP
- GM/Chevrolet sold at least 725,787 cars in Argentina, Brazil, Mexico and Chile that were rated 0 star by Latin NCAP
- Nissan sold at least 339,494 cars that were rated 0 star by Latin NCAP in Mexico alone
- Ford sold at least 130,964 cars in Brazil and Argentina that were rated 1 star by Latin NCAP
- Hyundai sold at least 13,073 cars in Chile that were rated 0 star by Latin NCAP
- Suzuki sold at least 6,659 cars in Chile that were rated 0 star by Latin NCAP

The study indicates that manufacturers, such as General Motors and Nissan are producing cars which comply with existing weak national regulations rather than ensuring that all the cars they produce meet UN Vehicle Safety Standards.

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<sup>18</sup> Data obtained from the Automobile Association in Peru, April 2016

# CONSUMERS NEED BETTER QUALITY INFORMATION ABOUT SAFETY

## Mystery shopping results

Consumers International Member organisations across Peru, Chile, Argentina and Mexico conducted a pilot qualitative mystery shopping exercise in March 2016. The aim was to obtain an indication of the quality of safety information being provided to consumers across major car dealerships in these markets

The exercise involved a consumer organisation representative playing the role of a consumer interested in buying a new car and enquiring about the features of available models. Questions were asked to identify:

- The car models available in the economy price bracket
- The specific safety features of car models being marketed (if information not already provided)
- The performance of car models in crash tests
- The Latin NCAP rating of the model/s

## CAR DEALERSHIPS VISITED:

Country	Argentina	Chile	Mexico	Peru
Car dealerships visited	GM/Chevrolet	GM/Chevrolet	GM/Chevrolet	GM/Chevrolet
	Nissan	Nissan	Nissan	Nissan
	Volkswagen	Hyundai	Volkswagen	Toyota

## According to the information gathered via this survey:

- Only two of the 12 car dealerships visited provided information about the safety features of car models without prompting from the consumer
- Four of 12 car dealerships could not provide even a basic level of safety information when asked a specific question about vehicle safety e.g. about presence of airbags
- Only four of 12 car dealerships had knowledge of Latin NCAP and their crash test performance ratings

- Two of 12 car dealerships mentioned Euro NCAP ratings rather than Latin NCAP ratings when asked about vehicle safety. Global NCAP have highlighted that the same models are rarely sold in the European and Latin American markets so safety standards are therefore not directly comparable<sup>19</sup>
- There were two cases where a salesperson openly admitted that car models were not safe
- The exercise uncovered six examples of a car salesperson providing consumers with misleading or inaccurate information about the safety features of cars. That is half of all the consumer encounters as part of the qualitative survey with leading manufacturers. These included:
  - ▶ A salesperson claiming that the addition of two airbags would solve the poor safety performance of a car model with a zero star Latin NCAP rating
  - ▶ A salesperson comparing their models favourably to a zero star model of another manufacturer, even though both car companies in fact have zero star models
  - ▶ Three separate examples of salespersons assuring consumers that their models meet unspecified “certifications” or “requirements” in relation to safety when asked about Latin NCAP ratings
  - ▶ A salesperson indicating that a particular model was less safe due to the small size of its trunk/boot increasing the likelihood of impact in a rear-end collision

The findings of this limited survey suggest that the following barriers exist to Latin American consumers obtaining clear and accurate information about the safety features of cars at the point of sale:

- Car sales staff will generally not mention the safety features of a car model to a consumer, unless prompted. The emphasis tends to be on issues such as price, performance, aesthetics, comfort and technological accessories when marketing models to consumers.
- Safety issues are not viewed as a critical issue for consumers when deciding to purchase a car. Even when a car model had received a five star Latin NCAP rating this information was not mentioned in the sales pitch to consumers.
- A basic level of safety information, e.g. on presence of airbags, is known by car salespersons and is provided in most cases after prompting by the consumer.
- Salespersons may provide misleading or inaccurate information to consumers, such as by claiming unsafe car models have received some kind of official certification.
- Overall, there were low levels of awareness of Latin NCAP, their ratings, or what their system of classification actually meant. In two cases, sales persons mentioned car model performance in European New Car Assessment Programme testing, rather than Latin NCAP despite models not being directly comparable<sup>20</sup>

These findings indicate that car sales staff may generally not mention the safety features of a car model to consumers, unless prompted. The information that was provided in these 12 cases was often basic, sometimes inaccurate, and does not refer to Latin NCAP or their ratings.

<sup>19</sup> See Global NCAP letter to Renault regarding misleading advertising of safety standards of their car models: [http://www.globalncap.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Letter\\_CarlosGhosn\\_2-3-201611.pdf](http://www.globalncap.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Letter_CarlosGhosn_2-3-201611.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> See above

# CONSUMERS AND UNSAFE CARS IN MEXICO

We spoke to six Mexican consumers from different cities and socio-economic backgrounds about their cars. Two were taxi drivers, two had been involved in car crashes, but all were driving zero star cars and admitted to having little awareness about the double standard associated with the safety features in their cars.

During the interview they were shown the video of the Latin NCAP crash test on their particular model of car, and we spoke to them about their thoughts, the results, and the issue of government safety standards and regulations, information available around safety features, and whether they would be willing to pay more for safety features.

## CASE STUDIES

Gabriel Sánchez Calderón, Mexico City



*“Seeing the Tsuru crash at just over 60 kilometres per hour is alarming.”*

Gabriel, 29, is a young taxi driver from Mexico City. After watching the Latin NCAP crash test video he was shocked to see the car that he drives, a Nissan Tsuru, destroyed in a 60 km per hour crash.

The Tsuru is the cheapest car, Gabriel says with concern, as he owns Nissan Tsuru taxis. *“We know they do not have airbags”* he says, *“but seeing it crash at just over 60 kilometres per hour is alarming”*. His fleet of taxis consists of eight Nissan Tsurus, one GM/Chevrolet Aveo and a Nissan Tiida.

*“The government washes their hands”,* he says deeply disappointed: *“Maybe I didn’t research as much as was necessary; in the future I will spend more time determining which is the best car for me.”*

## Israel Torres Jiménez, State of Mexico



*“As taxi drivers we see small accidents, or even big ones, every day.”*

Israel is a taxi driver in the State of Mexico. He hires a Nissan Tsuru - the most common taxi in Mexico City. He recently had a minor crash on a rainy evening, which made him more aware of safety features in cars, having seen the damage done to his taxi.

He is now very wary when driving in wet conditions. His view is that *“the Tsuru is a disposable car”* and when shown the Latin NCAP video of the Tsuru crash test, he was quite distressed. He feels he is in a terrible position, as driving a taxi is the only job he feels he is qualified and able to do. He is very aware of his responsibility to his passengers, but this is the only car he can afford to drive.

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## Mildred Dimayuga Mosso, Cuernavaca, Morelos (Mexico)



*“It was not enough that I was careful when driving on the highway.”*

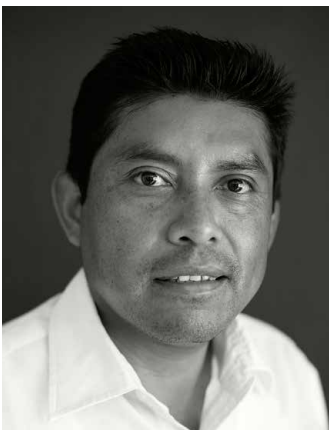
Office worker Mildred, 31, was driving her Tiida on the highway when she was involved in a crash.

*“I thought all cars had built-in safety mechanisms, but this is just not the case. It is not enough to be careful when driving,”* says Mildred, confessing that when she bought her car she ‘assumed’ it was very safe.

Mildred was hurt in that crash and had to wear a special collar and use taxis for several weeks. *“I advise people to be thorough about investigating a car before buying it.”*

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## Ascensión Garrido Campos, Puebla, (Mexico)



*“Companies worry about selling more cars, but they should start worrying more about providing safety to the people who buy the cars.”*

The Latin NCAP video is shocking observed Ascensión, a Mexican executive, as he watched with his two children.

The car crashing in the video is a Matiz, the same car that Ascensión drives. Ascensión had a crash while driving their Matiz with his wife, who broke her nose in the crash. The car is essential to their lives, but affordability is an issue.

Ascensión is relieved to find out that there is an organisation looking at the problem of car safety, because the companies say that cars today are made to withstand collisions. *“Companies worry about selling more cars, but they should start worrying more about providing safety to the people who buy the cars.”*

## Heriberto Mendoza Marroquin, Cholula, Puebla (Mexico)



*“There should be a system of equal safety for all vehicles.”*

Heriberto drives his GM/Chevrolet Spark to work every day. He recognises that his car has no alarms, no electric windows, nor airbags. However, it does have radio and air conditioning - which he considers essentials.

He has not been in any accidents, but he is surprised when watching the Latin NCAP safety video. *“Governments should implement safety regulations, because if not, we are left to the discretion of sales agents”*, he adds, *“There should be a system of equal safety for all vehicles.”*

Heriberto says he would advise people who are going to buy a new compact car, to be very thorough, looking in particular at the car’s stability and air bags - prioritising security over the cost.

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## Marcela Salazar Salgado, Mexico City



*“They should tell us the truth: which car is safe, and which one isn’t. Why would they do it in one country and not in another? ”*

Marcela lives with her dog, Gema, in Iztapalapa, a poorer neighbourhood of Mexico City. She works for the Mexican Institute of Social Security, and drives her GM/Chevrolet Aveo to work every day. She remembers how excited she was when she bought the car, and loves the space, freedom and performance.

When choosing which car to buy, price was a key factor. The dealer told her about all the features of the car, though not the safety features, and she did not ask, assuming *“that all cars are safe.”* When shown the Latin NCAP crash test video of the Aveo, she was shocked. This turned into anger and disbelief, and she questioned both the government for not regulating car safety and protecting consumers, but also manufacturers for seemingly treating her life with less value than in other countries. She is in the market for a new car, and now knows to ask about safety features.

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# WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE?

This campaign report highlights the alarming extent to which manufacturers are selling unsafe cars to consumers in Latin America. They can do this because of low levels of car safety regulation and consumer awareness, as well as through de-prioritising and withholding information about car safety. This is contributing to high levels of road traffic deaths.

**There is an urgent need for governments and manufacturers to adopt UN Vehicle Safety Regulations in full to stop car models with low safety ratings being sold to Latin American consumers.**

The car safety-testing regime of Latin NCAP identifies cars that Latin American consumers should avoid when buying a car due to their poor safety performance. In some cases manufacturers appear to have made changes to car models, however, a lack of transparency and independent verification makes it impossible to assess whether this has led to improved safety for consumers.

In the absence of national regulatory frameworks that fully comply with minimum UN Vehicle Safety Standards, consumers in these countries must rely on independent information to navigate the market and assess the relative safety offered by different products. At this point, the only truly independent source for unbiased and accurate information is Latin NCAP.

**It is crucial that manufacturers are more transparent about the safety features of car models and sub-models sold at their dealerships across Latin America to enable consumers to make more informed choices.**

In such a climate, how can consumers be expected to make informed choices to ensure their own safety? Our mystery shopping findings indicate that safety features are low on the list of points to mention when selling a car model to a consumer. Studies conducted in Mexico have shown that most consumers assume a new car will be safe upon purchase, without thinking to request any safety information.<sup>21</sup> The same may well be the case across the entire continent.

**Consumer organisations can play an important role working with consumers to improve knowledge and awareness of what makes a safe car, including through Latin NCAP rankings, and to pressure government and manufacturers to regulate the market more effectively.**

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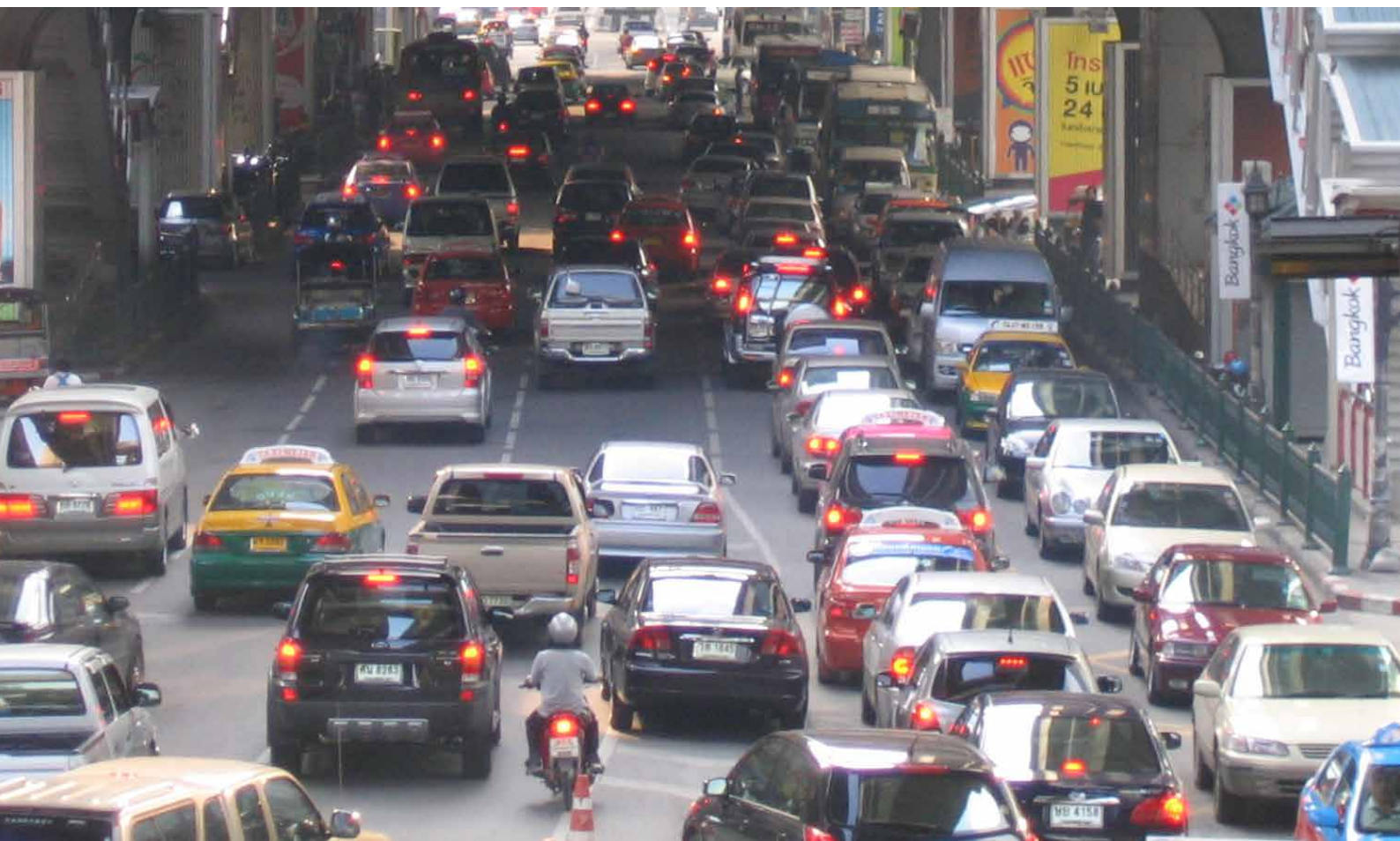
<sup>21</sup> CI Member El Poder del Consumidor (Consumer Power) conducted a national survey on car safety in 2015 which highlighted that the majority of car owners assumed their car had safety features, such as airbags and anti-locking brakes, when they did not. See <http://elpoderdelconsumidor.org/> for more detail.



# RECOMMENDATIONS

Consumers International supports the Global NCAP Road Map for Safer Cars 2020<sup>22</sup> and urges all governments to fulfil the Global NCAP two stage car safety regulation plan by the end of the UN Decade of Action in 2020:

Global NCAP Road Map for Safer Cars 2020	All New Car Models Produced or Imported	All Cars Produced or Imported
Stage 1: Adopt UN Regulations for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frontal Impact (Regulation No. 94)</li> <li>• Side Impact (Regulation No. 95)</li> <li>• Seat Belt &amp; Seat Belt Anchorages (Regulations No. 14 &amp; 16)</li> </ul>	2016	2018
Stage2: Adopt UN Regulations for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ESC (Regulations No. 13H or GTR. 8)</li> <li>• Pedestrian Protection (Regulations No. 127 or GTR. 9)</li> </ul>	2018	2020



<sup>22</sup> See Global New Car Assessment Programme report, "Democratising Car Safety": [https://issuu.com/globalncap/docs/road\\_map\\_2020](https://issuu.com/globalncap/docs/road_map_2020)

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## Governments

We call upon Latin American governments to:

- **Immediately** commit to signing up to front and side impact crash testing for all new car models by the end of 2016 (UNECE Regulations 94 and 95).
- Adopt in full the UN Regulations on Vehicle Safety in line with the Global NCAP Road Map for Safer Cars (above).
- Work in partnership with consumer organisations to conduct public awareness campaigns around the importance of vehicle safety.

## Manufacturers

Consumers International is calling upon all manufacturers to stop the double standard of selling unsafe cars to Latin American consumers. To do this they must:

- Stop selling zero star cars across Latin America.
- Voluntarily apply the standards within the UN Regulations on Vehicle Safety, in line with their responsibilities towards consumers in Latin America.
- Publish accurate data on car sales without airbags across Latin America to serve as a baseline for eradicating this practice and monitoring its implementation.
- Ensure greater transparency around car model specifications and safety features of new and used cars so that consumers have access to full and accurate information.
- Actively promote accurate information about safety features to consumers; this includes putting a stop to misleading car advertising.
- Ensure accurate and accessible information on car safety is provided to consumers as standard when enquiring about buying a vehicle and utilise the ratings of Latin NCAP as a recognised measure of vehicle safety where applicable.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

Consumer organisations can play an important role in:

- Supporting and disseminating the work of Latin NCAP about car safety ratings in Latin America.

Where resources are available, consumer organisations can also:

- Conduct consumer awareness and action campaigns to encourage people to consider the safety features of car models when they are looking to purchase a new vehicle
- Consider conducting their own mystery shopping research to identify the information available to consumers when looking to buy a new car and share the findings.



## APPENDIX 1 – TOP 10 RANKING OF CAR SALES PER COUNTRY, 2012-2015

### ARGENTINA

0-1 Star rated by Latin NCAP

Ranking	Manufacturer	Model	Total 2012
1	GM/Chevrolet	Corsa Classic	42,042
2	Volkswagen	Gol trend	32,991
3	Volkswagen	Gol power	29,634
4	Peugeot	207 compact	28,903
5	Volkswagen	SURAN	26,133
6	Renault	Clio	23,219
7	Renault	Sandero	22,472
8	Ford	Ka	22,387
9	Ford	Ecosport	21,092
10	GM/Chevrolet	Celta	19,091

Ranking	Manufacturer	Model	Total 2013
1	GM/Chevrolet	Corsa Classic	37,018
2	Volkswagen	Gol Trend	34,040
3	Renault	Clio	33,133
4	Ford	Ecosport	32,314
5	Peugeot	207 compact	29,236
6	Renault	Duster 2WD	25,246
7	Volkswagen	Gol power	23,858
8	Volkswagen	Suran	23,155
9	Renault	Sandero	22,882
10	Peugeot	308	19,783

Ranking	Manufacturer	Model	Total 2014
1	Volkswagen	Gol Trend	29,667
2	Renault	Clio Mio	27,007
3	GM/Chevrolet	Corsa Classic	25,375
4	Ford	Fiesta Kinetic	24,956
5	Ford	Ecosport	24,674
6	Fiat	Palio	23,023
7	Peugeot	208	20,707
8	Volkswagen	Suran	20,680
9	Toyota	ETIOS	20,135
10	Ford	Focus III	20,006

Ranking	Manufacturer	Model	Total 2015
1	Volkswagen	Gol Trend	30,489
2	GM/Chevrolet	Corsa Classic	28,741
3	Ford	Fiesta Kinetic	25,117
4	Fiat	Palio	24,690
5	Ford	Ecosport	23,498
6	Renault	Clio Mio	21,418
7	Ford	Focus III	21,263
8	Toyota	ETIOS	20,858
9	Volkswagen	Suran	18,061
10	Peugeot	208	16,437

# BRAZIL

0-1 Star rated by Latin NCAP

Ranking	Manufacturer	Model	Total 2012
1	Volkswagen	Gol	293,327
2	Fiat	Uno	255,812
3	Fiat	Palio	186,396
4	Volkswagen	Fox	146,902
5	GM/Chevrolet	Celta	137,624
6	Fiat	Strada	117,464
7	Ford	Fiesta	115,251
8	Fiat	Siena	103,056
9	GM/Chevrolet	Corsa Sedan	98,556
10	Renault	Sandero	98,453

Ranking	Manufacturer	Model	Total 2013
1	Volkswagen	Gol	255,057
2	Fiat	Uno	184,362
3	Fiat	Palio	177,014
4	Ford	Fiesta/new fiesta	137,547
5	Fiat	Siena	129,836
6	Fiat	Strada	122,913
7	Hyundai	HB20	122,382
8	GM/Chevrolet	Onix	122,340
9	Volkswagen	Fox	113,708
10	Renault	Sandero	102,520

Ranking	Manufacturer	Model	Total 2014
1	Fiat	Palio	184,337
2	Volkswagen	Gol	183,368
3	Fiat	Strada	153,141
4	GM/Chevrolet	Onix	150,838
5	Fiat	Uno	122,269
6	Hyundai	HB20	119,788
7	Ford	Fiesta	108,394
8	Fiat	Siena	106,974
9	Renault	Sandero	95,385
10	Volkswagen	Fox	89,024

Ranking	Manufacturer	Model	Total 2015
1	GM/Chevrolet	Onix	125,034
2	Fiat	Palio	121,522
3	Hyundai	HB20	109,850
4	Fiat	Strada	98,241
5	Ford	Ka	89,749
6	Volkswagen	Gol	82,372
7	Fiat	Uno	79,360
8	Renault	Sandero	11,838
9	Volkswagen	Fox	70,787
10	GM/Chevrolet	Prisma	69,905

# CHILE

0-1 Star rated by Latin NCAP

Ranking	Manufacturer	Model	Total 2012
1	GM/Chevrolet	Sail	14,760
2	Hyundai	Accent	9,769
3	Kia	Rio	9,113
4	GM/Chevrolet	Spark	8,294
5	Toyota	Yaris	6,763
6	Nissan	Tiida	6,464
7	GM/Chevrolet	Spark Gt	6,104
8	Kia	Morning	6,002
9	Renault Samsung	Sm3	5,461
10	Hyundai	I-10	5,220

Ranking	Manufacturer	Model	Total 2013
1	GM/Chevrolet	Sail	16,940
2	Kia	Rio	11,016
3	Hyundai	Accent	9,920
4	GM/Chevrolet	Spark	8,293
5	Kia	Morning	7,624
6	Toyota	Yaris	6,471
7	GM/Chevrolet	Spark Gt	6,027
8	Renault Samsung	Sm3	5,858
9	Mazda	All New Mazda3	4,812
10	Hyundai	I-10	4,792

Ranking	Manufacturer	Model	Total 2014
1	GM/Chevrolet	Sail	13,787
2	Kia	Rio	10,611
3	Hyundai	Accent	10,413
4	GM/Chevrolet	Spark Gt	7,149
5	Kia	Morning	6,570
6	Toyota	Yaris	6,191
7	GM/Chevrolet	Spark	5,930
8	Suzuki	Swift	5,803
9	Suzuki	Alto	3,633
10	Suzuki	Celerio	2,806



Ranking	Manufacturer	Model	Total 2014
1	Hyundai	Accent	9,988
2	Kia	Rio	9,302
3	GM/Chevrolet	Sail	8,908
4	Suzuki	Swift	6,641
5	Kia	Morning	6,368
6	Toyota	Yaris	4,738
7	Nissan	Versa Cl	3,310
8	GM/Chevrolet	Spark Gt	3,151
9	Hyundai	Grand I-10	3,061
10	Suzuki	Alto	3,026

# MEXICO

0-1 Star rated by Latin NCAP

Ranking	Manufacturer	Model	Total 2012
1	GM/Chevrolet	Aveo	66,099
2	Nissan	Versa	47,506
3	Volkswagen	Jetta Clásico	45,069
4	Nissan	Tsuru	34,569
5	Volkswagen	Nuevo Jetta	30,591
6	Nissan	Tiida Sedan	28,642
7	Nissan	March	25,306
8	Nissan	Chasis Largo	25,220
9	Honda	Cr-V	24,723
10	GM/Chevrolet	Spark	23,107

Ranking	Manufacturer	Model	Total 2013
1	GM/Chevrolet	Aveo	65,331
2	Volkswagen	Clásico	54,603
3	Nissan	Versa	49,004
4	Nissan	Tsuru	46,298
5	Volkswagen	Nuevo Jetta	36,455
6	GM/Chevrolet	Spark	29,505
7	Nissan	Sentra 2.0	28,538
8	Nissan	Tiida Sedan	25,863
9	Nissan	March	22,773
10	GM/Chevrolet	Sonic	20,247

Ranking	Manufacturer	Model	Total 2014
1	GM/Chevrolet	Aveo	57,650
2	Nissan	Versa	46,712
3	Nissan	Tsuru	41,113
4	Volkswagen	Vento	33,922
5	GM/Chevrolet	Spark	33,169
6	Volkswagen	Nuevo Jetta	31,640
7	Nissan	March	31,429
8	Volkswagen	Clásico	27,397
9	Nissan	Sentra 2.0	26,781
10	Nissan	Tiida Sedan	24,881

Ranking	Manufacturer	Model	Total 2015
1	GM/Chevrolet	Aveo	51,531
2	Nissan	Versa	43,524
3	Volkswagen	Vento	40,106
4	Nissan	Tsuru	36,282
5	Nissan	March	35,198
6	Volkswagen	Jetta	32,955
7	GM/Chevrolet	Spark	31,512
8	Nissan	Sentra	25,571
9	Nissan	Tiida Sedan	20,866
10	GM/Chevrolet	Matiz	20,545



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