Monitoring road safety attitudes in Europe

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ESRA

Together with:
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The future of road safety research

May 15
Monday
15
Road Safety Observatory
Fourth United Nations Global Road Safety Week

NTUA Zografou Campus, Athens
Railways Amphitheatre of the Department of Transportation Planning and Engineering
E-survey of Road Users’ Attitudes-ESRA

• A joint initiative of 25 countries aiming at collecting comparable national data on road users’ opinions, attitudes and behaviour with respect to road traffic risks.

• ESRA Core Group: BRSI (Belgium), KFV (Austria), NTUA (Greece), CTL (Italy), ITS (Poland), PRP (Portugal), BFU (Switzerland)

• The project was funded by the partners’ own resources.

• In total, the first ESRA survey (2015/2016) gathered data from more than **26,000** road users including **15,600** frequent car drivers.
The ESRA questionnaire

**Topics covered:**
- Attitudes towards unsafe traffic behaviour
- Behaviour of other road users
- Subjective safety and risk perception
- Involvement in road crashes
- Reported police checks and perceived likelihood of getting caught for traffic offences
- Self-declared (unsafe) behaviour in traffic
- Support for road safety policy measures
- Use of different modes of transportation
- Other items (e.g. socio-demographic information)

A **common questionnaire** in English (UK) was translated into 20 different country-language versions.
Deliverables and publications

Main project report

Thematic Reports:
- Speeding
- DUI alcohol & drugs
- Distraction & fatigue
- Seat belt & child restraint systems
- Subjective safety & risk perception
- Enforcement & support for road safety policy measures

25 Country Fact Sheets (8 under development)
Road users’ attitudes in Europe

- Attitudes towards drink-driving, drowsy driving, and seat belt use are quite similar between European countries. However, there are **large differences** in the attitudes towards **speeding** and **distracted driving**.

- In general, the declared **personal unacceptability** of risky behaviour is **stronger than** the perceived **social unacceptability** – e.g. people think that others are more likely to accept DUI of alcohol than they personally do.

- Even if people acknowledge that a certain **behaviour** is **risky** or **unacceptable**, they nevertheless may **show** that behaviour. For example, only 4% of Europeans think it is acceptable to type text messages or emails while driving, but 27% declare that they have sent a text message or email at least once during the past 12 months.
Attitudes towards speeding

- Respondents consider that behaviours related to speeding are more acceptable by "others", than by themselves indicating a **self-declared safer personal attitude** towards speeding.

- More than two-thirds of the respondents reported having driven faster than the speed limit at least once in the past 12 months.

- About half of the respondents agree that in their country **traffic rules should be stricter** (52%) and that traffic rules are not being checked sufficiently (54%).

- Over one third believe that **penalties** for speeding in their country are **too severe**.
Key recommendations at European level

• Define basic **road safety performance indicators** (RSPIs) and respective targets at European level in the fields of speeding, impaired driving, distraction and seat belt / helmet use.

• **Exchange best practice** across EU Countries and develop common principles and goals for the implementation of effective and efficient strategies on speed management, impaired driving, and mobile/smartphone use.

• Integrate such common principles and goals within future of **EU directives** and/or other **legislative mechanisms**.
Key recommendations on speeding

- Establish an effective and efficient speed management strategy based on integrated set of countermeasures.

- Select the most appropriate combination of measures against speeding based on an assessment of the local circumstances.

- Implement a road infrastructure that supports and encourages road users to drive at safe speeds.

- Develop and implement public education campaigns to provide information and influence road users to modify their behaviour.

- Develop an efficient speed enforcement system.

- Raise awareness on the impact of speeding on road safety and the need of speed enforcement.

- Ensure that there is sufficient political support and persistence during the implementation of a speed management strategy.
Repeating this European survey periodically (every three years) would bring important added value to understanding European road users attitudes’ changes.

The work within ESRA could become the solid foundation for a joint European (or even global) monitoring system on road safety attitudes and behaviour.

Measuring revealed behaviour (Performance Indicators) of road users and comparing it with the reported attitudes from ESRA would allow for a more clear picture of road safety behaviour of road users in Europe.
Monday 15 May at 14:00

Workshop in the framework of the Fourth United Nations Global Road Safety Week in 14 May 2017

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