

The ESRA Approach towards a Joint Monitoring System on Road Users' Attitudes and Behaviour – Australian Results

Uta Meesmann¹, Katrien Torfs²

Belgium Road Safety Institute

Abstract

The ESRA project (E-Survey of Road user' Attitudes) is a joint initiative of research organizations and road safety institutes from 25 countries (four continents). The project aims at collecting comparable (inter)national data on road users' opinions, attitudes and behaviour with respect to road safety risks. The overall aim is to provide a solid contribution to a joint monitoring system on road safety attitudes and behaviour for policy measures. The next edition of this survey will be launched in 2018. The presentation will highlight the Australian results in comparison to the results of countries from Europe, North America and Asia.

Background

ESRA, an acronym for "E-Survey of Road users' Attitudes", is a joint initiative of research institutes, road safety organizations and authorities to establish comparable and reliable road safety performance indicators based on opinions and self-declared behaviour of road users. The ESRA network already includes 25 countries from four continents, in which the first ESRA survey was conducted in 2015/2016. The ESRA network is expected to grow substantially by 2018, when the second ESRA survey will be launched.

Method

The first ESRA survey was conducted online using representative samples (N=1,000) of the national adult populations. A common questionnaire was developed in 30 different country-language versions. The subjects covered in the survey are, amongst others: 'attitudes towards unsafe traffic behaviour', 'self-reported behaviour in traffic', and 'support for road safety policy measures'. The field work was carried out in two waves: (1) June 2015 (17 European countries), and (2) November 2016 (eight additional countries). In total, the first ESRA survey covers almost 27,000 respondents from 25 countries across four continents, including 21,397 respondents from 20 European countries and 1,002 respondents from Australia.

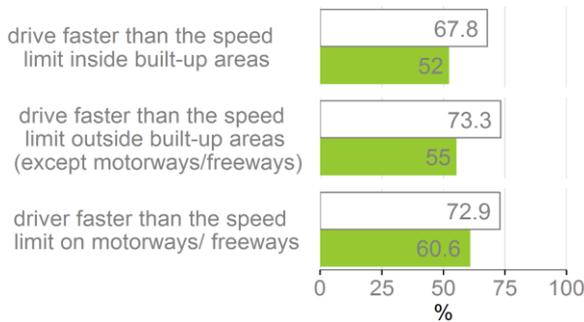
Results

The results of the first ESRA survey (2015/2016) show that in all participating countries driving too fast is the most frequently reported unsafe traffic behaviour, followed by mobile phone use while driving and driving under the influence of alcohol, medication and drugs. Comparing the Australian results (N=1,002) with the European means (N=21,397; 20 countries), differences with respect to self-reported behaviour and enforcement are striking (BRSI, 2016). Australians report e.g. less speeding offences for all road types, less talking on a hand-held mobile phone while driving, less cycling without a helmet, and more seat belt use in the back of the car. On the other hand, Australians report more often cycling on the road next to the cycle lane and cycle while listening to music through a headphone. The largest difference between Australia and the European countries was observed for reported alcohol checks. In Australia, 50% of the respondents report having been checked for alcohol in the last 12 months, in Europe this was only 19%. For drugs, the difference was smaller: Australian mean 14%, European mean 4%. Interestingly the perceived likelihood of getting checked by the police concerning all investigated traffic offences is higher in Australia than in Europe.

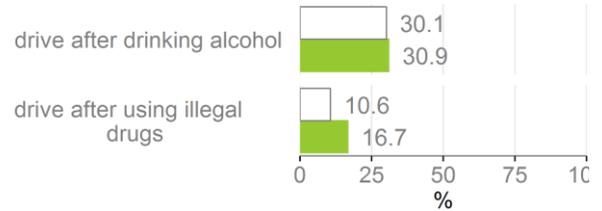
Self-reported behaviour

In the past 12 months, as a road user, how often did you...? (5-point scale, 1=never to 5=(almost) always) - % at least once (2-5)

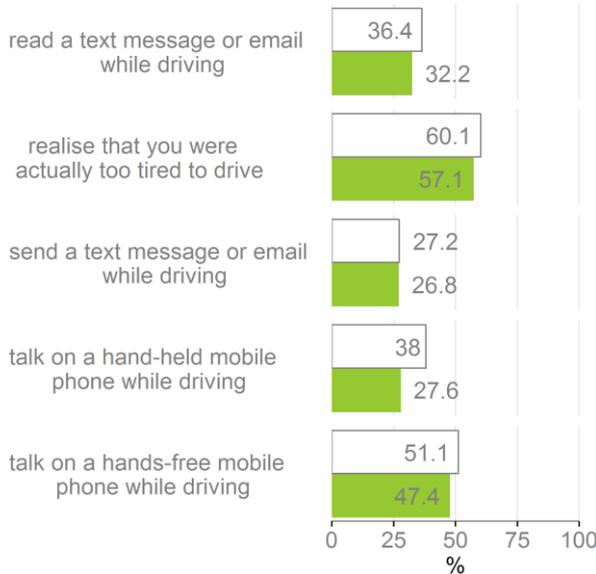
Speed



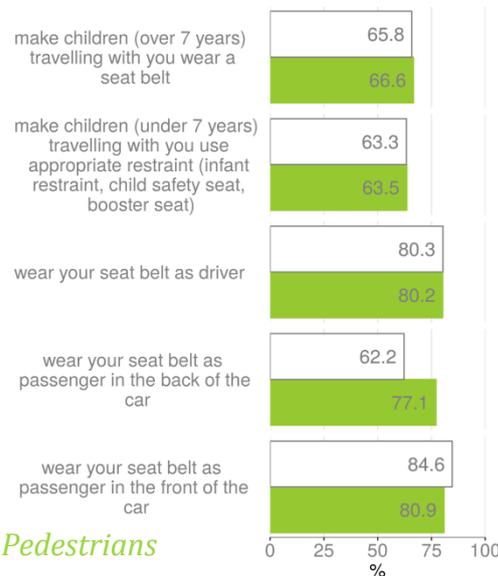
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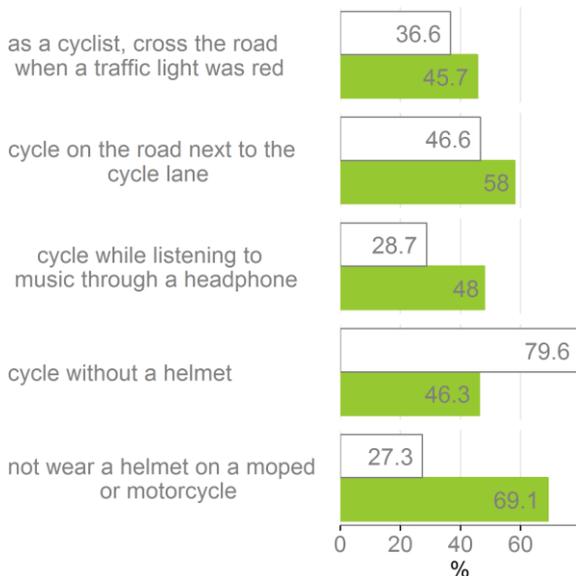
Distraction & Fatigue



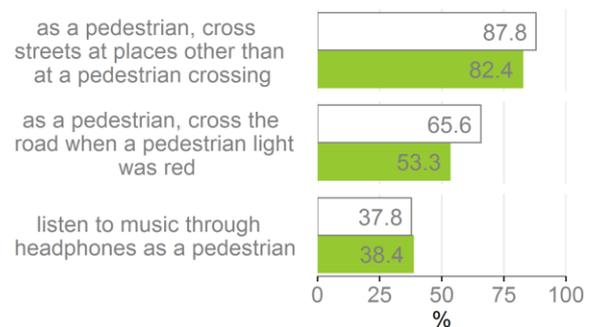
Seat belt and Child restraint system^{*/**} - % almost always (5)



Cyclists & Motorcyclists



Pedestrians



* The seat belt related items describe safe behaviour – in contrast with the other items
 ** Please note that this country fact sheet used the British terminology

Figure 1. Comparison of self-reported (un)safe traffic behaviour: Australian mean (green) and European mean (white; 20 countries)

Conclusions

The ESRA project has shown the feasibility and the added value of joint data collection by a network of road safety organizations. The intention is to extend the ESRA survey to an increasing number of countries and to repeat it every three years. The next edition (ESRA2) will be launched in 2018. More information can be found on: www.esranet.eu.

References

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- Torfs, K., Meesmann, U., Van den Berghe, W., Trotta, M. (2016). *ESRA 2015 – The results. Synthesis of the main findings from the ESRA survey in 17 countries*. ESRA project (European Survey of Road users' safety Attitudes). Brussels, Belgium: Belgian Road Safety Institute.
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