



Department of the
Environment
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Northern Ireland Road Safety Monitor Bulletin 2005

Introduction

The Northern Ireland Road Safety Monitor 2005 is the latest in a series of research on attitudes, behaviour and awareness of road safety issues in Northern Ireland. The survey has been carried out since 1995, but in 2002 was revised to reflect changing driving habits and to allow new topics to be explored. Whilst some of the original questions remain, many have been removed and there has been a substantial introduction of new material.

This bulletin highlights the key points arising out of the 2005 survey. The Northern Ireland Road Safety Monitor is a sample survey, the results of which are subject to both sampling and non-sampling errors.

Key Points

Speeding

- Just over one in five motorists (21%) stated that they never exceed the speed limit, however just over one quarter of drivers (26%) admitted that they had exceeded the speed limit on all road types.
- Females are more likely to speed than males in built up areas (32% of females compared to 27% of males). However, males are almost twice as likely to speed on all road types (33% compared to 17%).
- More than one in five respondents (22%) admitted that they regularly exceeded the speed limit on motorways by 11 mph or more.
- Almost three quarters of respondents (73%) felt that it is fair that the police should issue speeding tickets with penalty points for drivers who exceed the speed limit by up to 10 mph, 24% of which felt it is fair for drivers who exceed the speed limit by 5mph.



- In 2005, 55% of respondents thought it was likely that they would be stopped by the police for speeding, 61% thought it likely that they would be caught by a mobile camera, and 52% thought it likely that they would be caught on a fixed camera.
- Those aged over 65 are almost twice as likely as 16 – 24 year olds and 25 – 34 year olds to agree that it is always dangerous to exceed the speed limit by less than 5mph on both dual carriageways and motorways.
- In view of increasing deaths among motorcyclists, 87% of respondents felt that compulsory training for all new motorcyclists should be introduced to help reduce fatalities.
- Nearly half of all respondents agreed with the statements “all motorcyclists ride too fast” (45%) and “many motorcyclists are selfish and think that they own the road” (46%).

Drinking and Driving

- In 2005, 30% of motorists who drink stated that they would be unlikely to drive after one drink. This decreased to 17% after two drinks and 7% after three or more drinks. The figures for 2004 were 31%, 12% and 7% respectively.
- The majority of respondents (83%) stated that they would be unlikely to drive the next morning if they thought that they were still over the legal limit. However, 58% stated they would be likely to drive the morning after an evening drinking, with 27% stating that they were unlikely to consider the amount of alcohol they had drunk the previous evening.
- More than two thirds of respondents (69%) stated that they would be unlikely to travel in a car in which the driver has had a single drink. This increased to 73% after two drinks and 92% after the driver has had three or more drinks.
- 86% of respondents agreed that the police should be able to stop people at random and breathalyse them, however just over two fifths of respondents (42%) felt it was unlikely that they would be stopped by the police for drinking and driving.
- Nearly half (45%) of respondents felt that motorists should not be allowed to drive if they had consumed any alcohol. One half of respondents (50%) think that the penalties for drinking and driving are not very severe.
- Over two fifths of respondents (42%) underestimated the number of units contained in a pint of beer, while 46% underestimated the number of units

contained in a bottle of beer and 45% underestimated the number of units contained in a glass of wine. Almost two fifths underestimated a pint of cider (39%) and a can of beer (36%) and almost one quarter underestimated the number of units contained in a measure of spirits (23%).

- With regard to the drinking and driving campaign 'Shame', 93% of respondents were able to correctly identify the campaign after seeing still pictures from the TV advertisement. 95% of respondents were aware of the campaign, and 76% admitted that it had influenced their behaviour in relation to drink driving.

Pedestrian Safety

- 80% of pedestrians would always or almost always use a pedestrian crossing if they are at or near one when crossing the road.
- A high number of respondents (71%) were aware of what 'amber light flashing' meant when you are driving and approaching a pedestrian crossing. However just over one in five respondents (22%) were aware of what 'Green man flashing' meant when at a pedestrian crossing.
- One quarter of respondents think it is dangerous to walk along / across a public road after one or two alcoholic drinks.
- The majority of those surveyed (80%) recognized still pictures from the TV advertisements relating to pedestrian safety called 'Texting' and 'Home'. 89% stated that they were aware the campaign and 85% stated that it had influenced their behaviour.
- 91% of respondents agreed that it is the responsibility of both drivers and pedestrians to ensure pedestrian safety on the road.

Fatigue

- Almost half (48%) of motorists stated that there have been occasions when they have felt drowsy when driving (57% male and 37% female).
- Almost three quarters (74%) stated that this happened on roads outside a built up area (compared with 71% in 2004), and just over one half (52%) stated this happened on motorways (compared with 47% in 2004).
- The most common time when motorists felt tired while driving was 4pm (12% male and 13% female).

Additional Information

Electronic and hard copies of this bulletin and the full Northern Ireland Road Safety Monitor Report (2005) are fully downloadable from the CSRB website and are also available from:

Central Statistics and Research Branch,
Room 4.02,
Clarence Court,
10 - 18 Adelaide Street,
Belfast, BT2 8GB

Telephone: (028) 9054 0808 / (028) 9054 0390
Fax: (028) 9054 0782
E-mail: csrb@doeni.gov.uk
Web: <http://csrb.doeni.gov.uk>