

PROJECT

SARTRE 4

Social Attitudes to Road Traffic Risk in Europe

Funding: European

Duration: Sep 2010 - Nov 2012

Status: Complete with results



Objectives:

Two related factors form the theoretical and practical bases for the Social Attitudes to Road Traffic Risk in Europe (SARTRE) 4 projects:

- Road safety is dependent to a large extent on actual road users' behaviour, which in turn is influenced by their attitudes, beliefs and perceptions. Knowing opinions and beliefs may help with the understanding of traffic behaviour.
- Citizens' perceptions and opinions about transport, road safety, control measures in-use or contemplated by authorities, are very relevant to policy makers for understanding the needs of the public, the limitations of their policies and the potential support for new policies.

The objective of the project is to survey, with a uniform methodology, the attitudes, opinions, self-reported behaviour and experiences of European drivers, their riders, and non-drivers.

The project will provide a follow-up to the previous three SARTRE projects, and will include additional groups (non-drivers and motorized two-wheelers), and a more policy-focused questionnaire.

The focus will continue on a number of core safety issues: speeding, impaired-driving (drink-driving, drugs, possibly also fatigue or distraction) and seat-belt wearing.

New issues will be included, those that gained importance during the last years, e.g. 'eco-driving' and mobility, harmonisation, cross-border traffic control, the safety of motorised two-wheelers, risk to pedestrians in urban areas, security concerns and new traffic enforcement technologies.

The gathered data will provide the EC and member states a current picture of road users' attitudes and opinions, with the ability to compare between states and identify possible reasons for differences. On several core issues it will be possible to compare the findings to SARTRE 3 results, and evaluate the changes that had taken place in drivers' attitudes in the EU since the release of the White Paper on European Transport Policy just prior to the SARTRE 3 project.

Methodology:

The proposed operation will take place in four major stages:

- The first stage is definition, and includes a review of the background, the finalisation of methods and the development and creation of the questionnaire - the centrepiece of the second stage
- The second stage is data collection in each country participating in the project
- The third stage is the analysis of survey results and drawing conclusions
- The final stage is the release of results and recommendations

Two important steps must be mentioned: on the one hand surveys on the field should be carried out ideally in the September and October of the first year, and the other is holding a press conference to disseminate the main findings and recommendations to mark the end of the '2010 target' and contribute to future objectives of the Commission.

Partners:

Austria:KfV

Belgium:IBSR/BIVV

Cyprus:ETEK

Czech Republic:CDV

Estonia:TUT

Finland:VTT

France:Europe Recherche Transport - ERT; INRETS

Germany:BASt

Greece:NTUA

Hungary:KTI

Israel:4Sight

Ireland:RSA

Italy:SIPsivi

Netherlands:SWOV

Poland: ITS

Slovenia:AVP

Serbia:MUB-USP

Spain:DGT

Sweden:VTI

Organisation: ERT

Address: c/o INRETS - 25 avenue François Mitterrand - Case 24

Zipcode: 69675

City: Bron

Contact country: France

Telephone: +33(0)472142345

Key Results:

SARTRE 4 is a tool for all road traffic researchers, practitioners in road safety, engineers, stakeholders, policy makers, road users and anyone interested in transportation issues. This tool is based on a unique setting at the European level, with exceptional data containing knowledge of road traffic laws and road traffic risks, perceived risk of apprehension, attitudes regarding road safety issues, reported road traffic behaviours, transport habits and environmental concerns.

The results can provide the basis for benchmarking in the following areas:

- Introducing new legislation or modifying existing laws, which can be useful for harmonisation in Europe
- Introducing intelligent transport systems such as 'Alcolock', speed-limiting devices and fatigue-detection devices
- Providing information that can be used not only in training and education, but also when developing safety campaigns
- Promoting more environmentally-friendly mobility options

In contrast to former editions of SARTRE, SARTRE 4 focused on three target groups: car drivers, powered two wheelers, and other road users (pedestrians, cyclists, public transport users). Overall, 21 280 road users were interviewed in 19 countries. In each country, at least 600 car drivers, 200 users of which were powered two wheelers, and 200 other road users formed the sample. Each of these subgroups was representative of the local composition of the corresponding population and 96% have been questioned face-to-face.

In each country, the questions were translated and adapted to the linguistic context. The questions covered various topics related to road safety such as alcohol, drugs, or phone use while driving, speeding, the use of advanced driver assistance systems and environmental motivations for the choice of transport.

Along with numerous safety actions carried out in Europe between 2002 and 2010 (which corresponds to the time period when data was collected for SARTRE 3 and for SARTRE 4) the number of people killed in car crashes in 27 member states went down by 43% (CARE, 2012). However, 30 926 people died on roads in the European Union during 2010 (ETSC, 2011) which is unacceptable and further action is therefore needed to reduce the number of accidents.

The results from SARTRE 4 include questions measuring road users' motivations underlying their actions and can provide some valuable information about the main determinants behind speeding, driving under the influence of psycho-active substances (drugs, alcohol and medicines) and driving while tired. Moreover, road users do not benefit equally from road safety improvements.

For example, on average, motorcyclist fatalities have increased by 22% since 2002. Obviously it is urgent to address more efficiently the question of motorcyclists' safety on the road. That is why in SARTRE 4 motorcycling is a key area of inquiry for the first time.

With regard to other road users, namely pedestrians, cyclists and users of public transport, we are interested in identifying their motivations to encourage all road users towards the use of 'soft' transportation modes. We also have to ensure that an increase in soft modes does not increase the number and severity of accidents because pedestrians and cyclists are most vulnerable to the consequences of a road traffic accident.

The results from the SARTRE survey showed that car drivers who speed regarded doing so as fun and believed that it could get them to their destination more quickly. They also regarded speeding as normal and socially acceptable. However, this was very different from drinking and driving, which was perceived as substantially increasing the risk of an accident.

A large proportion of motorcyclists regard speeding as a cause of road accidents. Nevertheless, those who drove a sport style motorcycle were the most positive towards speeding and received the most speeding tickets. Drink riding would appear to be something most motorcyclists claimed that they would not do, or at least they regard this as very dangerous, although riders in southern countries were more likely to drink and drive. In general motorcyclists did not perceive the risk of being stopped by the police as very great. Pedestrians were in strong support of enforcement policies and various other safety measures. With regard to cyclists the level of cycling in their own country did not predict their perception of danger, but it did predict their satisfaction with their own safety.

From the comparison of road users, we found that multimodality was very common even for a single trip. However, 'other road users' were positive towards road safety and measures taken to improve the environment. The attitude of car drivers and users of powered two wheelers towards drinking and driving was similar, although it would probably be more dangerous for a motorcyclist to drink and ride than for a car driver.

A number of recommendations for each of the three target groups of the project are suggested as a result of the findings in the attached report.

STRIA Roadmaps: Smart mobility and services

Transport mode: Road transport

Transport sectors: Passenger transport
Societal/Economic issues,

Transport policies: Safety/Security