



Under the EU funded Road and Traffic Safety Education and Campaigning project being implemented in our country a field survey has been conducted.

A field survey has been conducted to determine how the road safety issues are seen through the eyes of the public in the context of the European Union funded Traffic Safety Education and Campaigning project aiming to contribute to the studies related to ensuring road safety by helping the community understand the factors that cause accidents and by increasing awareness on this issue.

The survey was conducted in October in five residential areas including Nicosia, Famagusta, Kyrenia, Morphou with participation of a total of 300 participants of which 138 were women and 162 were men. The results of the study highlighted the followings:

The first driving age is too low

The average age at which the survey respondents first drove a car is 15.72. Almost in all settlements, the means are very close; however the youngest age of driving a car stands out to be age 11.

We drive, but without knowing the traffic rules

Only 25.37 percent of survey participants' declared they learnt how to drive in driving schools. The remaining 74.63 per cent expressed that they had learnt from family members, friends, or on their own. Thus, many drivers who lack proper knowledge of traffic rules are driving around streets.

People do not know the meanings of traffic signs correctly

Survey participants were shown 4 different traffic signs and were asked the meaning of these. For Inbound Ring (Rotary Junction) sign only 46 percent of respondents, For Highway Cross Road Junction sign only 24 percent of respondents, For mandatory direction sign (Forward or To the Left only) 16 percent of participants, For parking is not allowed sign only 45 percent of the participants answered correctly. This seems to be a consequence of either drivers not attending a driving school or the training quality in driving schools is not adequate.

Young people are seen as the major risk group in traffic

The participants see the drivers in 18-24 age group as the biggest risk group in traffic. This group is followed by commercial drivers and pedestrians. In general, this order is similar every where in the world. The Accident Data System records maintained by the General Directorate of Police in our country interestingly indicates a remarkably high ratio of traffic accidents in which young drivers (18-24 age group) were involved.



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No mobiles phone usage during driving

Among the participants 86 per cent declared they do not use mobile phones while driving. However, violation of this rule is increasing all over the world. Such violation is more common among the male drivers. It seems this has not been a very major issue in our country.

Safety belts are not used as it should be

Though 51 per cent of the participants declared they use safety belts, however, those who said they never use consists 33 per cent. Participants who declared they use safety belts only in intercity roads were 16% of participants. Taking in to account the high number of traffic accidents and the ratio of injury and fatality, which is double of the rate in EU, usage of safety belts is not satisfactory and should be increased.

No drunk drivers

The most fortunate among the results of the survey is that people are aware of the risks of drunk driving and less and less people are driving when they had alcoholic drinks. 85 per cent of the participants declared they do not drive when they are under the influence of alcohol.

In the coming days "Road Safety Education and the Campaigning" project will be inviting all the community for the "I promise" campaign to promise to obey the traffic rules. By both the campaign materials and the training activities traffic and road safety issues will be drawn to public attention.



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