Twelve Million Brits Could Drive On The Wrong Side Of The Road This Summer

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- Over 20 million of us will drive in Europe, but 71% can't identify key road regulations -

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As the nation gears up for the great Summer getaway, a new study from TomTom has revealed that almost 12 million of the 20 million Brits planning on driving in Europe this Summer* could find themselves driving on the wrong side of the road.

A new Europe-wide study of over 10,000 drivers, including 2,000 from the UK, looks at summer driving habits. It highlights that whilst 44% of British drivers are planning to drive in Europe this summer, 71% didn't know the driving laws of popular holiday destinations when tested. Although 85% said they do research road regulations before driving abroad, a simple road rule knowledge test, commissioned by TomTom, showed UK drivers are stumped by everyday international driving laws. For example:

- In **Scandinavia** it is illegal to drive without headlights, even in daylight
- **Cyprus** has a zero tolerance policy on all drinking at the wheel, including non-alcoholic drinks like water and eating any food
- In some **Spanish** cities, cars must be parked on different sides of the road according to the day of the week
- In **Portugal** it is illegal to carry bicycles on the back of a car
- In **Denmark** you must do a routine check for sleeping children under your car every time you drive

And it isn't just specific regulations that are causing confusion on European roads for British drivers, with many admitting they have struggled in the past when faced with foreign driving cultures. The most common issues faced when driving abroad include:

- Not knowing where and when you can park (27%)
- Driving on the 'wrong' side of the road (26%)
- Knowing which lane is best to travel in (22%)
- The correct speed limit to travel at (19%)
- Not understanding the road signs (18%)

Indeed, almost two thirds of UK drivers (61%) said they would prefer someone else to drive because they don't feel confident driving abroad (47%) and find it too stressful (44%).

European Data

It isn't just British drivers who feel like they are driving round in circles when it comes to international road laws – our European counterparts are also struggling. German drivers are perhaps the most likely to exceed the speed limit with more than a quarter (29%) admitting to have done so whilst driving abroad in the past and 27% admit to having been pulled over by the police. Nearly one in three Italians also admit to being pulled over by law enforcement when abroad, which maybe links to the fact that more than one in ten (15%) have had a near miss.

Corinne Vigreux, co-founder and managing director, TomTom Consumer, said: "There are a huge number of varying and complex road rules that exist across the globe. And, as our research reveals, it's understandable that drivers aren't always completely aware of the rules in every country they visit. We try to take the headache out of driving abroad with our range of navigation devices and services** – whether that's making sure you're aware of the speed limit, that you're in the right lane, or even by guiding you to the nearest car park in an unfamiliar city."

-ENDS-

For further information, please contact Sally Fearfield at Starfish Communications onfearfield@starfishcommunications.com

For regional stats, please see the Notes to Editors below.

Notes to Editors

Greg Morrison of TomTom is available for interview.

Research data

The European research was conducted by Censuswide with fieldwork conducted in June 2015. Data was secured via an online survey and the sample consisted of 2,000 adults over the age of 18 with driving licenses, in each of: the UK, Germany, France, Spain, Italy and The Netherlands.

*44% of UK citizens surveyed said they plan to drive in the same continent this summer. With the UK driving population currently at 45.5 million we can safely assume 20,020,000 (just over 20 million) Brits will be driving in Europe this summer.

**TomTom GO Mobile is now available globally for free on 64 Google Play stores. People can now experience TomTom's premium navigation and real-time traffic information, driving up to 75km/50miles every month free of charge. Drivers can upgrade to unlimited driving with a simple in app purchase. Note that data charges may apply for traffic information.

TomTom

TomTom offers a range of products to help with summer driving including standalone satnavs, and smartphone apps. Drivers can find out more about TomTom's standalone satnavs here http://www.tomtom.com/en_gb/

TomTom GO Mobile for Android is available globally, for free on Google Play™ stores and can be used over the world, even without a network connection, to avoid roaming costs.

REGIONAL UK DATA

East

65.10% would prefer someone else to drive (3rd highest in UK regions)

Most find France the hardest place to drive (24.7%)

North East

35.6% would prefer someone else to drive because they don't know the road laws of other countries (highest of UK regions)

Most find France the hardest place to drive (15%)

Yorkshire

Which of the following rules have you found the hardest to keep to when abroad? Knowing where/when you can park (27.7%) is answer most commonly given, followed by 'driving on the wrong side of the road' (26.80%),

Most find France the hardest place to drive (13.3%)

North West

16.0% would not think to research road laws before going abroad (3rd highest of UK regions)

21.7% own a Sat Nav but don't know if it would work abroad (2nd highest of UK regions)

71.5% of people's holiday destination decision is influenced by having to drive abroad (2nd highest of UK regions)

Most find France the hardest place to drive (13.4%)

Wales

15.9% have driven in wrong lane whilst abroad (2nd highest of UK regions)

55.90% would prefer someone else to drive because of stress (highest of UK regions)

55.9% would prefer someone else to drive because of lacking confidence (highest of UK regions)

Most find France the hardest place to drive (18.4%)

Midlands

24.9% own a Sat Nav but don't know if it would work abroad (highest of UK regions)

Most find France the hardest place to drive (12.6%)

South East

54.5% would prefer someone else to drive due to lack of confidence (2nd highest of UK regions)

Most find France the hardest place to drive (16.2%)

South West

Given the choice, 67.9% would prefer someone else to drive abroad (highest of UK regions)

Most find France the hardest place to drive (21.9%)

Scotland

Only 44.6% would not be concerned by road signs in a foreign language (the lowest of UK regions)

Most find Spain the hardest place to drive (15%)

Northern Ireland

Only 38.8% would not be concerned by road signs in a foreign language (the lowest of UK regions)

Given the choice, 71.4% would prefer someone else to drive abroad (highest of UK regions)

20% have driven in wrong lane whilst abroad (highest of UK regions)

25.7% would prefer someone else to drive because THEY don't know the road signs (highest of UK regions)

75.5% of people's holiday destination decision is influenced by having to drive abroad (highest of UK regions)

Most find USA & Germany the hardest place to drive (both 14.3%)

CITY DATA

Nottingham

28.8% own a Sat Nav but don't know if it would work abroad (highest of UK cities)

Most find France the hardest place to drive (14.8%)

Newcastle

36.7% would prefer someone else to drive because they don't know the road laws of other countries (2rd highest of UK cities)

21.3% own a Sat Nav but don't know if it would work abroad (3rd highest of UK cities)

Most find France the hardest place to drive (16.7%)

Edinburgh

Which of the following rules have you found the hardest to keep to when abroad? Driving on the wrong

side of the road' (34.5%) is answer most commonly given, followed by 'knowing which lane is best to travel in' (31.0%)

Most find France the hardest place to drive (16.4%)

London

28.6% would prefer someone else to drive because THEY don't know the road signs (highest of UK cities)

Most find France the hardest place to drive (19.1%)

Sheffield

16.7% have driven in wrong lane whilst abroad (3rd highest of UK cities)

53.5% would prefer someone else to drive because of stress (3rd highest of UK cities)

76.4% of people's holiday destination decision is influenced by having to drive abroad (highest of UK cities)

Most find France the hardest place to drive (18.9%)

Southampton

59.6% would prefer someone else to drive because they lack confidence (2nd highest of UK cities)

Glasgow

Only 38,7% would not be concerned by road signs in a foreign language (the 2nd lowest in the UK)

36.1% would prefer someone else to drive because they don't know the road laws of other countries (3rd highest of UK cities)

Most find USA the hardest place to drive (13.6%)

Norwich

17% have driven in wrong lane whilst abroad (2nd highest of UK cities)

54% would prefer someone else to drive because they lack confidence (3rd highest of UK cities)

21.3% own a Sat Nav but don't know if it would work abroad (3rd highest of UK cities)

Most find France the hardest place to drive (17.1%)

Cardiff

Which of the following rules have you found the hardest to keep to when abroad? Driving on the wrong side of the road' (25.7%) is answer most commonly given, followed by 'knowing which lane is best to travel in' and 'knowing the correct speed limit to travel' (both at 22.9%)

Most find France & USA the hardest places to drive (equal at 17.6%)

Brighton

60% would prefer someone else to drive because they lack confidence (highest of UK cities)

Most find Spain the hardest place to drive (18.8%)

Leeds

Which of the following rules have you found the hardest to keep to when abroad? Knowing where/when you can park (29.1%) is answer most commonly given, followed by knowing which lane is best to travel in' (24.4%)

Most find Spain the hardest place to drive (12.2%)

Birmingham

Only 42.4% would not be concerned by road signs in a foreign language (the 3rd lowest of UK cities)

21.9% own a Sat Nav but don't know if it would work abroad (2nd highest of UK cities)

Most find France the hardest place to drive (15.6%)

Liverpool

56.60% would prefer someone else to drive because of stress (highest of UK cities)

39.6% would prefer someone else to drive because they don't know the road laws of other countries (highest of UK cities)

Most find Spain the hardest place to drive (20.9%)

Manchester

Which of the following rules have you found the hardest to keep to when abroad? Knowing where/when you can park (33.9%) is answer most commonly given, followed by 'driving on the wrong side of the road' (26.3%)

Most find France the hardest place to drive (12.2%)

Bristol

17.3% would not think to research road laws before going abroad (3rd highest of UK cities)

Given the choice, 71.2% would prefer someone else to drive abroad (2nd highest of UK cities)

Most find France the hardest place to drive (22.8%)

Belfast

18% would not think to research road laws before going abroad (2nd highest of UK cities)

Only 38% would not be concerned by road signs in a foreign language (the lowest of UK cities)

Given the choice, 70% would prefer someone else to drive abroad (3rd highest of UK cities)

19.4% have driven in the wrong lane whilst abroad (highest % of UK cities)

Most find USA & Germany the hardest place to drive (equal at 13.6%)

Plymouth

19% would not think to research road laws before going abroad (highest of UK cities)

Given the choice, 71.4% would prefer someone else to drive abroad (highest of UK cities)

74.6% of people's holiday destination decision is influenced by having to drive abroad (2nd highest of UK cities)

Most find France the hardest place to drive (28.1%)

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