

ATTITUDES ABOUT ELECTRONIC DEVICE USE AMONG SELF-REPORTED DISTRACTED DRIVERS IN SEVEN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, 2010

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R Naumann, A Dellinger. *National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, USA*

Background Distracted driving is a growing concern internationally. However, attitudes about distracted driving are poorly understood.

Aims/Objectives/Purpose To examine attitudes about electronic device use and driving in Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, and the UK.

Methods Respondents to an online survey of adults aged 18–64 (N=9002) were asked about their distracted driving behaviours (eg, how often they talk on a mobile phone and text while driving) and their attitudes (eg, how strongly they felt about being able to reach others by mobile phone or text at any time).

Results/Outcomes Compared to those who never talk on their mobile phone while driving, those who 'regularly or fairly often' talk on their mobile phone while driving (distracted drivers) more often agreed that they liked the idea of people being able to reach them at any time (65% vs 49%), liked the idea of being able to reach other people at any time (73% vs 57%), and found it very hard to 'unplug' or turn off their phone while driving (53% vs 30%) ($p < 0.001$ for all comparisons). After controlling for age, sex, income, and country, distracted drivers were two to three times more likely to agree that they liked the idea of people being able to reach them at any time, liked the idea of being able to reach other people at any time, and found it very hard to 'unplug' while driving.

Significance/Contribution to the Field Understanding the attitudes of distracted drivers can help target communications messages and other interventions in these countries.