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More than 10% of Brits admit to driving on wrong side of the road in Europe

Accidentally driving on the wrong side of the road is such a big fear for Brits heading to the continent by car that a quarter (26%) of those surveyed by [RAC European Breakdown](#)* list it as their greatest worry.

While the majority of those who take car trips to Europe do not experience anything untoward or unusual happening, two in five (42%) do. But for more than one in 10 (13%) the frightening experience of driving on the wrong side of the road becomes a reality.

Further European driving troubles include being confused by road signage which a fifth (22%) of those surveyed admitted to, and suffering the embarrassment of causing a queue at the toll booth while they fumble around trying to find the right money or working out how to use the machine which 7% have had to endure.

Six per cent reported they have had an unfortunate encounter with a local policeman, having been stopped for a motoring offence whereas a smaller percentage (5%) said they have been caught driving too fast by a speed camera. Around 4% were found to have been involved in an accident – the same percentage as those who said they had driven the wrong way around a roundabout – and 3% revealed they had been the victim of a road rage incident at the hands of an irate local driver.

The RAC European Breakdown research also revealed a high level of confusion around the phone number to dial in the EU for emergency assistance, with only 30% knowing the number to call was 112 – in 2015 the figure was 38%. Of the remainder 50% admitted simply to not knowing the number and a combination of others who thought it was the UK non-

emergency health number 111 (11%), the US emergency number 911 (5%) or the police non-emergency line 101 (3%).

RAC European Breakdown spokesman Simon Williams said: “On the face of it there may appear much to be concerned about with about driving in Europe, but in reality many of these worries are easily overcome through some simple preparation and research. Driving on the wrong side of the road is perhaps the most obvious concern which is probably far more likely to happen on a quiet, deserted country road than it is on a busy town or city road.

“Interestingly, the RAC European Breakdown survey found that more than a third (37%) of those questioned hadn’t even driven in Europe with 18% of those admitting to feeling worried by the thought.

“Accidents can and do happen on roads abroad but they are probably far less frequent than many would imagine. Should you be unfortunate enough to be involved in an accident or even witness one, it’s vital to know the right number to call to get help so it was very worrying to see that more people were unaware of the 112 emergency number this year than they were last year when 38% knew the correct answer.”

The study also found that breaking down in Europe is the biggest concern of all (39%), followed by not knowing local parking rules (30%), and the feeling of being pressured by local motorists who are more familiar with the roads (24%).

Asked how they would deal with a breakdown in France should they experience one, the vast majority of respondents (79%) said they would call their European breakdown cover provider, but a brave 13% said they would attempt to sort the problem out themselves.

Notes to Editors

* RAC Opinion Panel research with 1,164 respondents. Of those surveyed, 45% had driven in Europe and 19% had been driven by someone else.

About the RAC

With more than eight million members, the RAC is one of the UK's most progressive motoring organisations, providing services for both private and business motorists. Whether it's roadside assistance, insurance, buying a used car, vehicle inspections and checks, legal services or up-to-the-minute traffic and travel information – the RAC offers a solution for all motoring needs. The RAC is committed to making motoring easier, safer, more affordable and more enjoyable for drivers and road users.

The RAC is the motorist's champion and campaigns to support the interests of its members and UK motorists at a national level, including advancing levels of road safety, supporting the needs of young drivers and voicing concerns about the increasing cost of motoring. The RAC's annual [Report on Motoring](#) – first published in 1989 – provides a clear insight into the concerns and issues facing today's motorists.

For the very latest news on UK fuel prices, check [RAC Fuel Watch](#) or follow [#racfuelwatch on Twitter](#). This is a comprehensive guide to the latest UK unleaded petrol and diesel prices – both at the wholesale level and at the pump. RAC Fuel Watch analyses how prices changed through the previous month and compares the most recent prices with those from three, six and 12 months before.

Key facts:

- RAC patrols fix four out of five vehicles at the roadside and on average within 30 minutes
- RAC vans carry more than 500 parts and tools to get members' vehicles going again
- 92% of members would recommend RAC Rescue to their friends and family

Contacts



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