



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE RENEWAL,  
PROVINCE OF NOVA SCOTIA

## 2013 Nova Scotia Road Safety Survey TECHNICAL REPORT

August, 2013

**MQO**  
RESEARCH RECHERCHE

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# Introduction

- The Nova Scotia Road Safety Survey was initiated with the purpose of examining Nova Scotians' attitudes, perceptions and behaviours when it comes to elements of road safety. TIR has been conducting the Nova Scotia Road Safety Survey with drivers in Nova Scotia (aged 16 years or older) since 2009.
- **Objective:** The Nova Scotia Road Safety Survey was designed to measure the impact and success of Nova Scotia's road safety initiatives. Specific objectives of the study include:
  - Examine knowledge, attitudes and behaviours of Nova Scotia drivers (aged 16 or older) on road safety issues;
  - Measure changes in knowledge, attitudes and behaviours over time;
  - Assess and identify road safety issues that are important to Nova Scotians; and
  - Evaluate the impact of the road safety initiatives (current and over time).
- This report presents the findings of the fifth year (2013) of the study, with a comparison of key measures over time where applicable.
- **Methodology:**
  - Telephone survey methodology
  - Total of 1,403 surveys of 19.36 minutes in average length
  - Population defined as Nova Scotia residents aged 16 or older
  - Region: Nova Scotia, four sampling regions, as per TIR's districts (Eastern, Western, Central, Northern)
  - Surveys were equally distributed across the Department's four districts (approximately 350 per district)
  - Final survey data weighted to ensure representativeness of actual population distributions
  - Surveys were collected between June 6 and July 11, 2013
- This report presents highlights of the survey's findings.

# Highlights

## *In this Report...*

- ***Drivers continue to identify four top road safety issues as serious problems, with cell phone use while driving continuing to be identified as the most important issue.*** This is followed by driving while distracted, drinking and driving, and excessive speeding. These top issues are consistent with previous years.
- ***A number of Nova Scotia adults frequently engage in risky driving behaviours, with speeding continuing to be the most common.*** Between 5% and 10% drive well over the posted speed limit, drive when tired or fatigued, speed up through yellow lights or drive when distracted by something on a regular basis. All these risky driving behaviours are most prominent among young adults under the age of 35.
- ***Speeding up to 10 kilometers per hour over the posted speed limit is a very common practice among Nova Scotia drivers.*** The majority of drivers regularly speed up to 10 kilometers per hour above the speed limit and one-third regularly speeds between 11 and 15 kilometers per hour over the posted speed limit. The incidence of speeding is much higher among drivers aged 16 to 34.
- ***Although a number of behaviours are identified as important road safety concerns, drivers are not necessarily behaving to eliminate these issues.*** This is particularly true for drinking and driving. The majority of drivers consider this a very important issue, yet two in ten (20%) have driven within 2 hours of consuming alcohol in the month prior to the survey, and most feel very confident in their ability to operate the vehicle after consuming alcohol. Note that while most who drink and then drive report having consumed only one drink, the decrease in the number of drinks actually consumed (prior to driving) noted in 2012 has not sustained into 2013. More are now reporting having 2 or more drinks (25%) than they did last year (18%).
- ***The Nova Scotia Road Safety Survey points to a subtle but positive shift in behaviour and attitude among young males.*** Historically, this group was most commonly and most frequently engaged in risky driving behaviours. Although this continues to be true, there is evidence of a shift in behaviour among this group. Young males are significantly more likely to wear their seatbelt than previously reported, and significantly less likely than in previous years to have had to break or steer to avoid a crash.
- ***Young females, on the other hand, are increasingly engaged in distracting driving behaviours.*** There has been a 10 percentage point jump in the number of young females reporting driving when distracted by something relative to last year. Common distractions include interactions with others, sending text messages, and personal grooming.
- ***A number of infrequent driving and walking behaviours are identified which may have an impact on the safety of pedestrians, the most common being 'crossing the road where there is no marked crosswalk'.*** In fact, 1 in 5 pedestrians report being hit by, or having a 'close call' with a vehicle in the past year. The most common behaviour is crossing where there is no marked crosswalk. A good portion of pedestrians (2 in 5) engage in this behaviour on a regular basis. Along the same lines, there are ***mixed perceptions regarding who is at fault in the event of a car and pedestrian accident.*** Many believe the driver is always responsible, while others believe the responsibility is shared.

# Road Safety Issue Identification



# Road Safety Issue Identification

- As was done in previous years, Nova Scotia drivers were asked to rate a list of road safety issues on a '1' to '5' scale (1=not a problem at all, 5=an extremely serious problem).
- Of the twelve issues under consideration, **distracted drivers and driving while using cell phones top the list as the two most serious issues**, rated as very serious (rating of 4 or 5) by over seven in ten drivers.
- Two other key issues include excessive speeding, and drinking (rated as very serious by 64% of drivers).
- Relative to previous years, driving while using cell phones is considered a much more important issue than was the case in 2009. On the other hand, the perceived seriousness of drinking and driving, street racing and of children not being properly secured in a safety seat has declined significantly over the past five years.

*Cell phone usage as a road safety issue in Nova Scotia has declined in 2013, but is still considered more serious than distractions, speeding and drinking & driving.*

**Figure 1**  
**Seriousness of Road Safety Issues**

% who answered 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale – 1=Not a problem at All 5=Extremely Serious Problem

Issue	2009 Overall	2010 Overall	2011 Overall	2012 Overall	2013 Overall
Driving while using cell phones, either hand-held or hands-free	67%	73%	74%	76%	<b>73%</b>
Distracted drivers	68%	74%	72%	71%	<b>70%</b>
Excessive speeding	68%	67%	65%	66%	<b>64%</b>
Drinking drivers	69%	70%	71%	63%	<b>64%</b>
Drivers under the influence of illegal drugs	-	-	62%	58%	56%
Street racing	49%	46%	48%	44%	43%
Drivers who run red lights	47%	46%	47%	42%	45%
Drowsy drivers	44%	43%	44%	40%	40%
Children who are not properly secured in child safety seats	44%	44%	39%	39%	34%↓
Drivers taking prescription medication	-	-	38%	32%	34%
Older drivers	29%	28%	29%	28%	29%
Young drivers	22%	24%	24%	23%	22%

**Figure 1**  
Full results over years are shown in Figure 1, where the four top issues (measures shown in bold font) are examined in-depth.

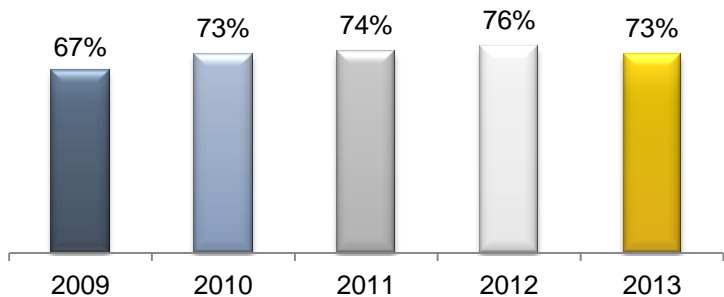
Reference, data tables 1a-l.

# Road Safety Issue Identification

**Figure 2**

**Drivers Using Cell Phones**

% who answered 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale – 1=Not a problem at All 5=Extremely Serious Problem



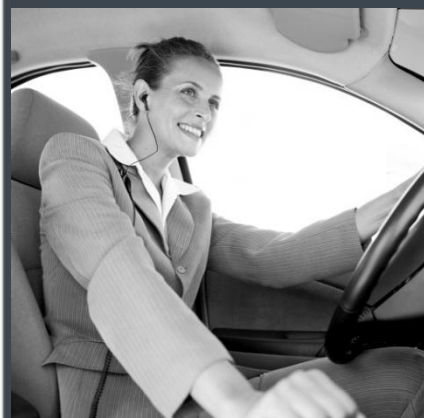
**Figure 3**

**Drivers Using Cell Phones: Seriousness of Issue**

Demographic Group	2012	2013
<b>Overall Adults</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>73%</b>
16-34 year old	71%	73%
35-44 year old	72%	68%
45-54 year old	82%	72%↓
55-64 year old	79%	80%
65-74 year old	77%	74%
75 years or older	80%	71%
Males	73%	68%↓
Females	79%	79%
Males 16-34	65%	68%
All others not 16-34	78%	74%↓

- Across a series of potential road safety issues, **driving while using a cell phone is the most frequently rated ‘serious problem’** among Nova Scotians.
- Approximately three-quarters (73%) of Nova Scotia drivers consider this a serious issue (score of 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale), consistent with the previous 3 years.
- Despite laws against driving while using hands free devices, **cell phone use while driving continues to grow as a serious issue among drivers.**
- Females (79%) and adults in the 55 to 64 age bracket (80%) are more likely to consider cell phone use as a serious problem than other drivers.

**USING CELL PHONES**



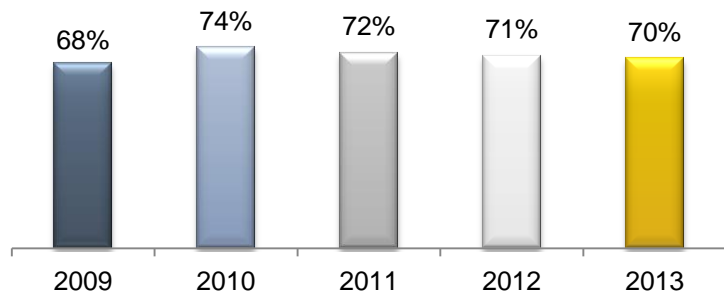
**Figure 2, 3** Seriousness of Drivers Using Cell Phones as an issue, determined by the % who answered 4 or 5 on a 5-pt scale – 1=Not a problem at All 5=Extremely Serious Problem. Figure 3 shows seriousness of issue across age and gender groups.

Reference, data table 1e.

# Road Safety Issue Identification

**Figure 4**  
**Distracted Drivers**

% who answered 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale – 1=Not a problem at All 5=Extremely Serious Problem

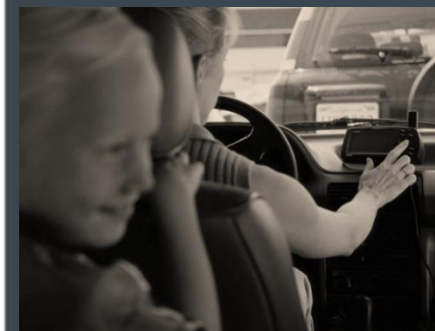


**Figure 5**  
**Distracted Drivers: Seriousness of Issue**

Demographic Group	2012	2013
<b>Overall Adults</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>70%</b>
16-34 year old	68%	75%
35-44 year old	74%	68%
45-54 year old	76%	68%↓
55-64 year old	75%	73%
65-74 year old	67%	58%↓
75 years or older	63%	72%
Males	68%	64%
Females	74%	75%

- **Distracted drivers also continue to be seen as a serious concern for Nova Scotians.** Seven in ten Nova Scotia drivers (70%) consider it serious (‘5’ or ‘4’ on a 5-point scale). Very few (9%) do not believe this to be an issue (1 or 2 on a 5-point scale).
- The likelihood of considering ‘distracted drivers’ is stronger among those aged 16-34, which is a change from what was noted in 2012 when those 35-64 were particularly more likely to consider this a serious problem. As in previous years, women are more likely than men (75% vs. 64% for men), to consider distracted drivers a serious problem in Nova Scotia.
- Across districts, results are consistent over previous years. **Central district drivers continue to consider distracted drivers as a slightly more serious issue,** whereas Eastern Drivers are least phased by this issue (72% vs. 65% respectively).

## DISTRACTED DRIVERS



**Figure 4, 5**  
Seriousness of Distracted Drivers as an issue. Determined by % who answered 4 or 5 on a 5-pt scale – 1=Not a problem at All 5=Extremely Serious Problem. Figure 5 shows full results across age and gender groups.

Reference, data table 1f.

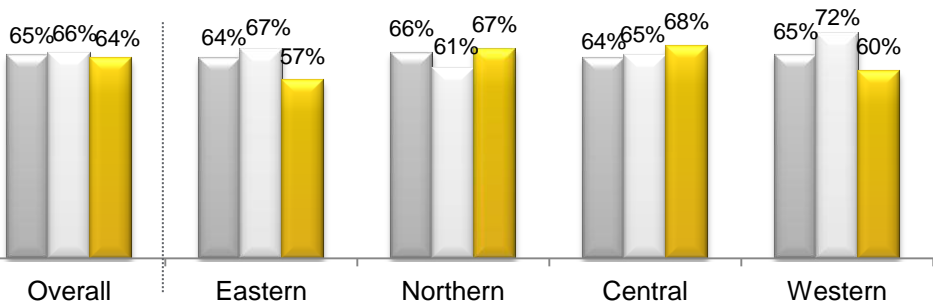


# Road Safety Issue Identification

**Figure 6**  
**Excessive Speeding**

% who answered 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale – 1=Not a problem at All 5=Extremely Serious Problem

■ 2011 ■ 2012 ■ 2013



- As had been the case since 2009, two-thirds of Nova Scotia drivers believe excessive speeding is a serious problem (score of 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale) in the province (64% in 2013). In fact, **approximately one-third of drivers (33%) rate excessive speeding as an extremely serious problem** (score of 5 on a 5-point scale).

## EXCESSIVE SPEEDING



**Figure 6, 7**

Figure 6 shows the perceived seriousness of excessive speeding as an issue. Determined by % who answered 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale – 1=Not a problem at All 5=Extremely Serious Problem. Figure 7 shows those who consider Excessive Speeding an 'extremely' serious issue (score of 5) across age and gender Groups

**Figure 7**  
**Excessive Speeding: Seriousness of Issue**

Demographic Group	2012	2013
<b>Overall Adults</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>33%↓</b>
16-34 year old	31%	34%
35-44 year old	31%	23%
45-54 year old	36%	29%
55-64 year old	43%	36%↓
65-74 year old	40%	40%
75 years or older	59%	57%
Males	30%	28%
Females	43%	39%

Note: ↓ Indicates a decrease from 2012

- The opinion that excessive speed is a serious problem is significantly more prominent among Northern (67%) and Central drivers (68%) relative to Eastern (57%) and Central (60%) drivers.
- Females are much more likely than males (39% vs. 28%) to consider excessive speeding an extremely serious problem.
- The likelihood of considering excessive speed as a road safety issue increases with age. Drivers aged 75 or older are much more likely to identify excessive speeding as an extremely serious issue (57%) than drivers in other age groups (ranging between 23% and 40%).

Reference, data table 1b

# Road Safety Issue Identification

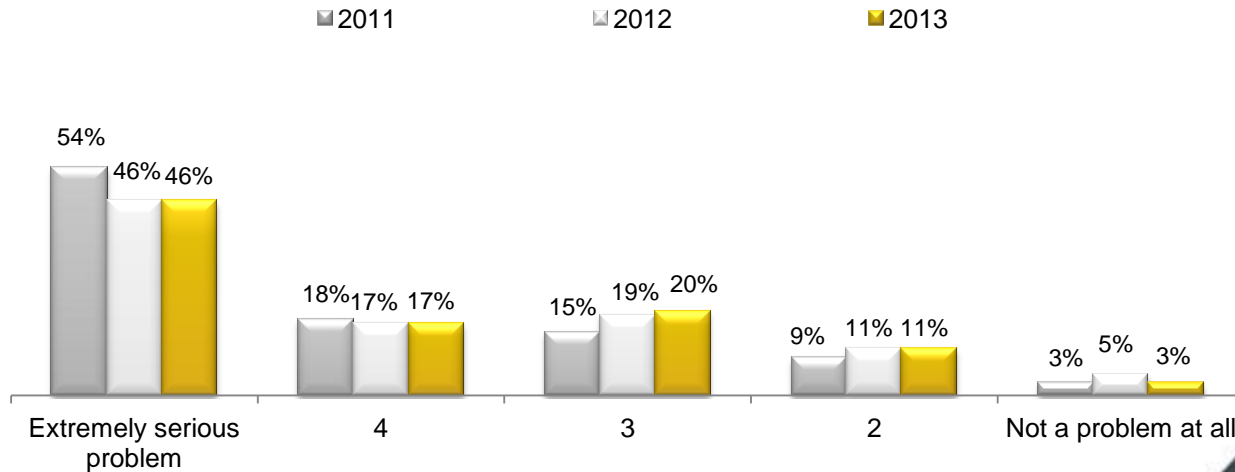
- Nearly two-thirds (64%) of Nova Scotia drivers in 2013 believe driving while intoxicated is a serious problem ('5' or '4' on a 5-point scale).
- The perceived seriousness of drinking and driving as a road safety issue is consistent with 2012 results. However, this issue has declined relative to previous years (69% in 2009, 70% in 2010 and 71% in 2011 thought the issue was serious).
- Females are more likely to consider drinking and driving as a serious problem (score of 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale) than males (70% vs. 57% for males). In 2013, results are rather consistent across regions.

## DRINKING DRIVERS



**Figure 8**  
**Drinking Drivers**

5-point scale – 1=Not a problem at All 5=Extremely Serious Problem



**Figure 8**  
Seriousness of Drinking Drivers as an Issue. Determined by the % who answered 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale with 1=Not a problem at all, 5=Extremely Serious Problem.

Reference, data table 1h

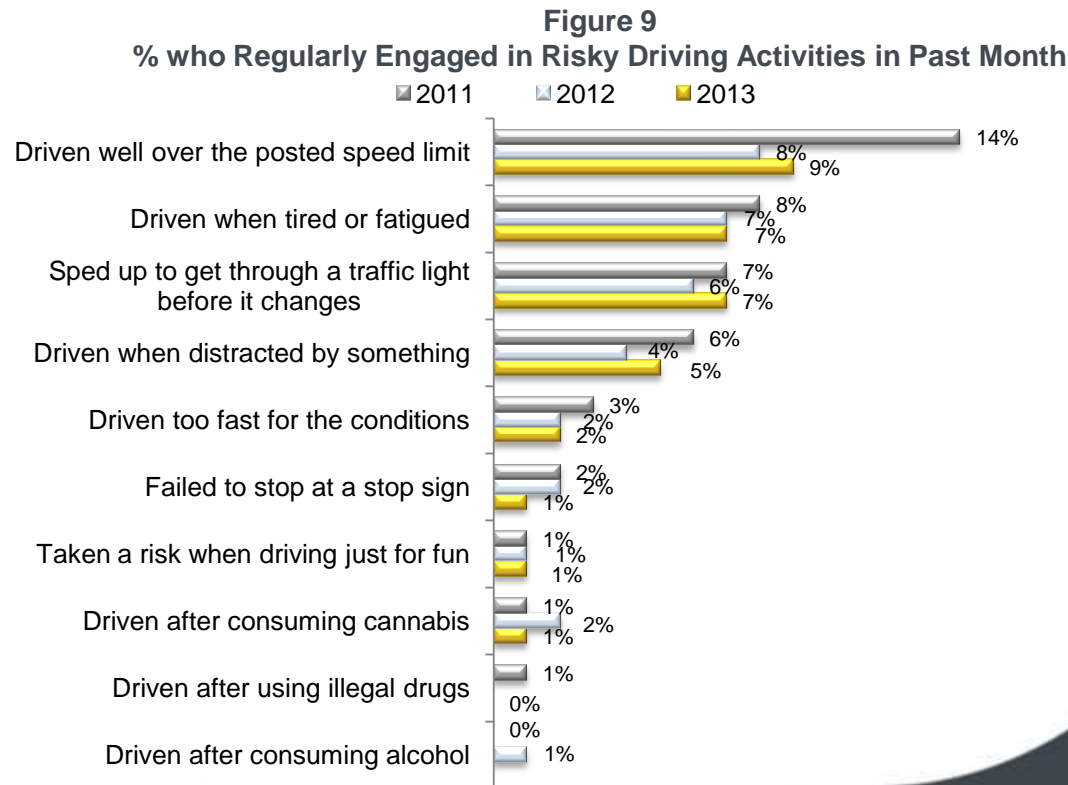
# Road Safety Behaviour



# Road Safety Behaviour

- Nova Scotia drivers were asked to identify how often they have undertaken certain activities during the month prior to the survey.
- This exercise identified **four common risky driving behaviours: driving well over the posted speed limit, driving when tired or fatigued, speeding up through traffic lights before they change, and driving when distracted.**
- In fact, **more than one-half of all drivers mentioned engaging in each of these risky activities at least once in the month prior** to the survey (55%, 61%, 55% and 66% for each activity respectively). Note, however, that the incidence of speeding frequently (score of 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale) has declined since 2011, from 14% in 2011 to 8% in 2012 and 9% in 2013.

*Young Nova Scotia drivers are significantly more likely to regularly engage in risky driving behaviours, with the top four including speeding, driving when tired, speeding through yellow lights and driving when distracted.*



**Figure 9**  
Full results over years are shown in Figure 9. The size of each bar represents the percentage of drivers answering 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale, with 1='never' and 5 'very often'.

Reference, data tables 2a-j.

# Road Safety Behaviour

- The table below shows the incidence of regularly engaging in risky driving behaviours (score of 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale) across age and gender categories.
- **Engaging in risky driving behaviour is more prominent among younger adults.** Females aged 16-34 are more likely to drive when distracted (12%), or to speed up through traffic lights (12%). In fact, young females aged 16-34 reported a significant increase in frequently driving when distracted. On the other hand, these females reported are less likely to report driving under the influence of cannabis or illegal drugs, or taking a risk when driving.
- Note, however, that many of these behaviours have been declining since 2009 for younger adults.

## BEHAVIOUR BY SUBGROUP



**Figure 10**  
Frequency of Road Safety Activities in past Month

Issue	2010			2011			2012			2013		
	Males 16-34	Fem. 16-34	Ages 35+	Males 16-34	Fem. 16-34	Ages 35+	Males 16-34	Fem. 16-34	Ages 35+	Males 16-34	Fem. 16-34	Ages 35+
Driven well over the posted speed limit	18%	15%	9%	18%	21%	12%	12%	8%	7%	11%	14%	8%
Sped up to get through a traffic light before change	13%	8%	5%	9%	12%	6%	10%	9%	5%	5%	12%	6%
Driven when tired or fatigued	14%	17%	4%	10%	14%	6%	6%	12%	6%	10%	13%	5%
Driven too fast for the conditions	6%	5%	1%	6%	5%	2%	2%	0%	2%	6%	3%	2%
Driven when distracted by something	1%	17%	3%	14%	9%	4%	5%	2%	4%	6%	12%↑	4%
Taken a risk when driving just for fun	0%	1%	1%	3%	0%	1%	1%	4%	0%	3%	0%↓	1%↑
Failed to stop at a stop sign	4%	3%	2%	1%	4%	2%	3%	0%	2%	1%	2%	1%↓
Driven after consuming alcohol	2%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	2%	0%	2%
Driven after consuming cannabis	-	-	-	0%	0%	1%	4%	9%	0%	4%	0%↓	0%
Driven after using illegal drugs	-	-	-	0%	0%	1%	0%	3%	0%	2%	0%↓	0%

Note: '↓' Indicates a decrease from 2012; '↑' Indicates an increase from 2012

'-' Indicates question was not asked in the referenced year

**Figure 10**

Figure 10 shows the incidence of regularly engaging in each risky driving behaviour in the month prior to the survey. This is determined by the % who answered 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale with 1=Never and 5=Very Often. The past four years of results are shown, across young gender groups, and older adults aged 35 or older.

Reference, data tables 2a-j.

# Attitudes Towards Road Safety



# Attitudes Towards Road Safety

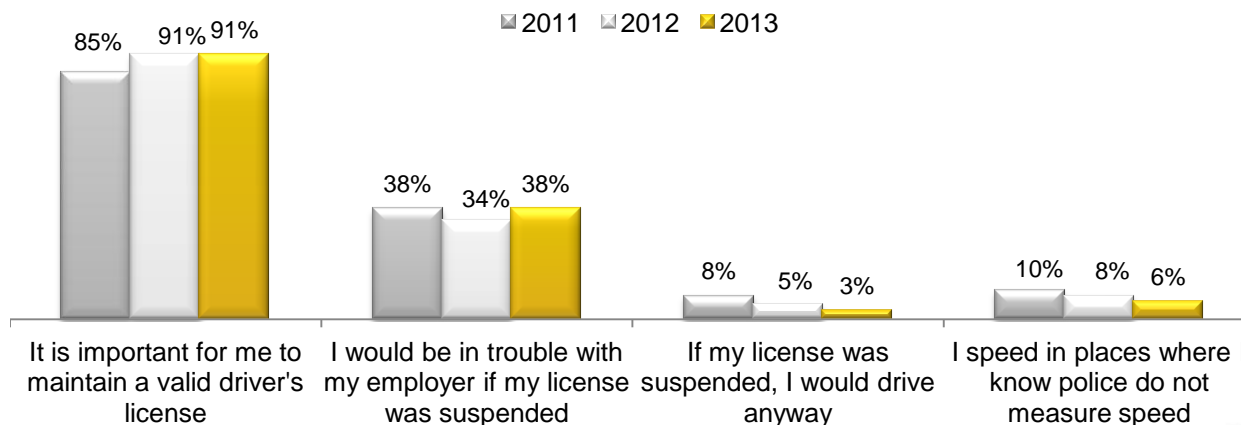
- Nova Scotia drivers were asked about their driving behaviours through a series of related behavioural statements. Statements addressed attitudes toward driver’s licenses, speeding, and drinking and driving.
- Consistent with 2012, the majority of NS drivers value the importance of a valid driver’s license.
- Key changes compared with last year (2012) and over time include:
  - A decreasing trend in the proportion reporting they would ‘drive anyway’ if their license was suspended;
  - A decreasing trend in the proportion of drivers who ‘speed’ in places where they believe they won’t get caught; and
  - An increase, back to the 2011 measure, in the percentage who believes having their license suspended would cause them issues with their employer.

*Most drivers consider a valid driver’s license important and disagree with drinking and driving, and a number of drivers find it a ‘big deal’ to get a speeding ticket.*

**Figure 11**

**% Who Agree with Attitudinal Statement**

% who answered 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale – 1=Strongly Disagree 5=Strongly Agree



**Figure 11**  
This figure highlights areas with significant changes in driver attitudes over the past years. The proportion of drivers agreeing with each driving-related statements is shown (% who agreed by answering 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale).

Reference, data tables 3a, c, b, g.

# Attitudes Towards Road Safety

## DRIVERS' LICENSES

- The vast majority of Nova Scotia drivers find it important to maintain a valid driver's license, with 91% rating the question as a 4 or a 5 on a 5-point agreement scale. Drivers over the age of 75 are least phased with the importance of holding a valid driver's license (88% find it important).
- The importance of holding a valid driver's license increases in direct relation with income, with 96% of those in the highest income category agreeing (score of 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale) it is important for them to hold a valid driver's license relative to 87% for those in the lowest.
- A sizeable minority (more than one-third) also agrees that their driver's license is a very important element of employment, with 38% admitting they would be in trouble with their employer if their license was suspended. This incidence is particularly high among young males aged 16-34 (50%). The driver's license is a well-respected and valued permit. Year over year, fewer mention they would still drive if their driver's license was suspended.



Figure 12

The proportion of drivers agreeing with three driver's license statements is shown in Figure 12. Key differences over the years are shown. The size of each bar represents the percentage of drivers who agreed by answering 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale.

Reference, data tables 3a, d, h.

**Figure 12**  
**% Who Agree with Driver's License Statements**  
 % who answered 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale – 1=Strongly Disagree 5=Strongly Agree

Issue	2012			2013		
	Males 16-34	Fem. 16-34	Ages 35+	Males 16-34	Fem. 16-34	Ages 35+
It is important for me to maintain a valid driver's license	91%	92%	92%	94%	90%	91%
I would be in trouble with my employer if my license was suspended	27%	44%	36%	50%	34%	36%
If my driver's license was suspended, I would drive anyway	4%	5%	4%	4%	1%	3%

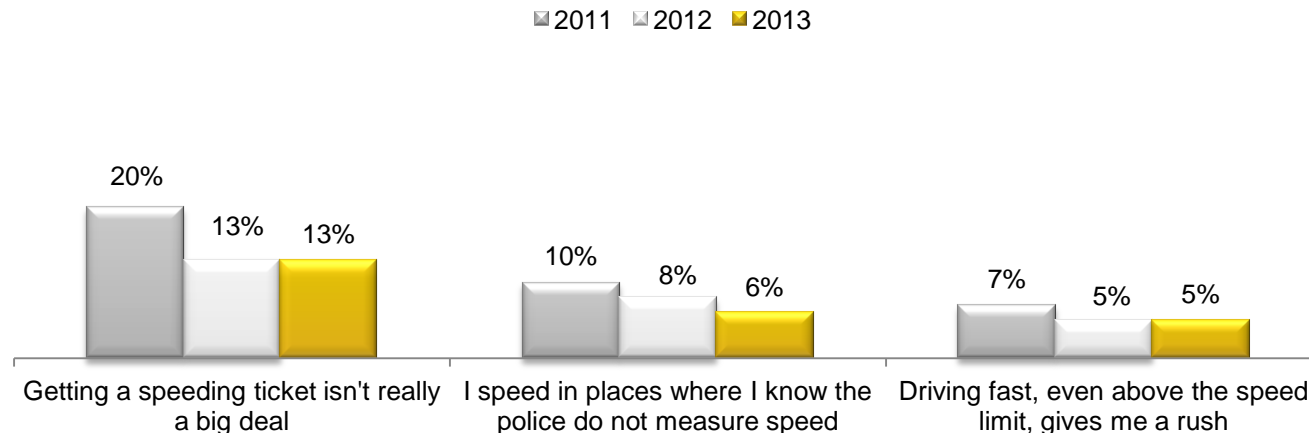


# Attitudes Towards Road Safety

- There has been a slight shift in attitudes towards speeding in 2012, which has sustained into 2013. **An increasing number of Nova Scotia drivers find it a 'big deal' to receive a speeding ticket** (13% agreed with a 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale that getting a speeding ticket isn't really a big deal, which is down from 20%-21% in previous years).
- Young adults are more likely to find getting a speeding ticket to be a big deal (8% agreed a speeding ticket isn't a big deal, vs. 15% for those 35 or older).
- The incidence of driving over the speed limit is consistently higher among young males, who are more likely to admit getting a rush from driving fast (9%) when compared with all other drivers (4%), or females 16 to 34 (1%).



**Figure 13**  
**% Who Agree with Speeding Statements**  
 % who answered 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale – 1=Strongly Disagree 5=Strongly Agree



**Figure 13**  
 The proportion of drivers agreeing with three speeding statements is shown in Figure 13. Key differences over the years are depicted. The size of each bar represents the percentage of drivers who agreed by answering 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale.

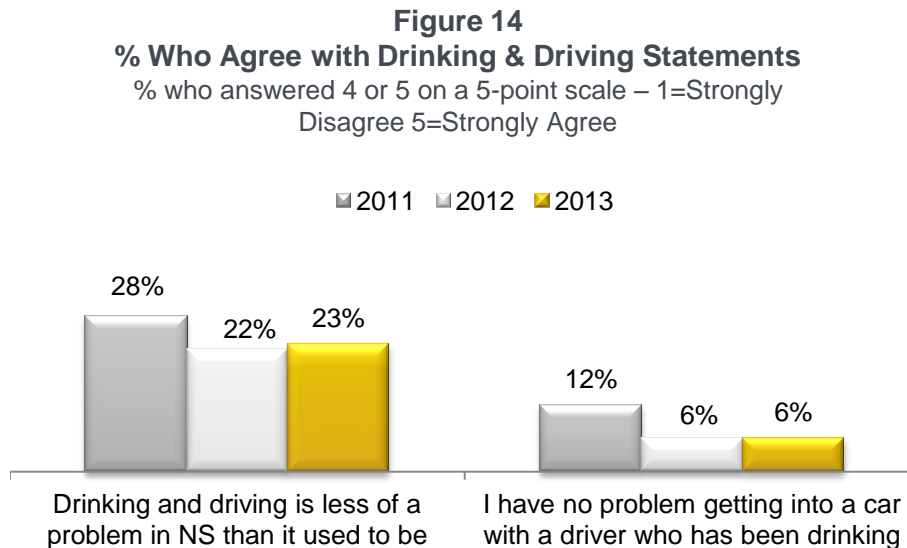
Reference, data tables 3c, e, f.

# Attitudes Towards Road Safety

## DRINKING & DRIVING



- Few Nova Scotia drivers believe drinking and driving is less of a problem today than it used to be.
- **The perceived seriousness of riding as a passenger with a driver who has been drinking increased significantly in 2012, and has sustained into 2013.** Very few agree they have no problem getting into a car with a driver who has been drinking (6%).
- Older adults aged 75 or older (12%) are slightly less convinced of the risk of riding in a vehicle with a driver who has been drinking than drivers in younger age groups.
- In 2013, male drivers aged 16 to 34 are reporting a change in attitude with regards to getting into a car with a driver who has been drinking. This group is significantly less likely to be 'ok' with this idea than was the case in 2012 (10% in 2012 vs. 3% in 2013).



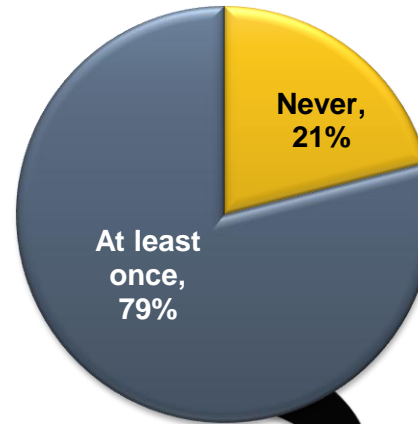
**Figure 14**  
The proportion of drivers agreeing with two drinking and driving statements is shown in Figure 14. Key differences over the years are depicted. The size of each bar represents the percentage of drivers who agreed by answering 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale.

Reference, data tables 3b, g.

# Attitudes Towards Road Safety

- **Most Nova Scotia drivers (79%) mention having encountered at least one police check point in the past year.**
- On average, drivers might encounter one checkpoint per season, or 3.9 check points per year. This, however, is significantly lower than reported in 2012.
- The frequency of encountering a police checkpoint is related with driving frequency: the more people drive, the higher the chance of coming across a police checkpoint.
- Across demographic subgroups, there has been as significant increase in the number of police checkpoint reported by Northern District drivers. The average number of checkpoints is higher among adults in the lowest income adequacy group, a flip from what was observed in 2012. Gender differences observed in 2012 have leveled-off.

Figure 15  
% Encountered Police Checkpoint



## POLICE CHECKPOINTS

**Figure 15, 16**  
Figure 15 shows the proportion of drivers who have encountered a police checkpoint in the past year. The table (Figure 16) shows details on the average # of checkpoints across regions, age groups, gender and driving frequency categories.

Reference, data table 3.2.

Figure 16

Average # of Times Encountered Police Checkpoint (Past Year)

Demographic Group	2012	2013
<b>Overall Adults</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>3.9</b>
16-34 year old	4.6	3.8
35 or older	4.2	3.9
Males	4.8	4.0↓
Females	3.8	3.8
Eastern District	3.9	3.2
Northern District	3.5	4.5↑
Central District	4.9	3.8
Western District	3.9	4.3
Lowest Income Adequacy	3.5	4.6
Middle Income Adequacy	4.4	3.9
Highest Income Adequacy	4.9	3.6↓

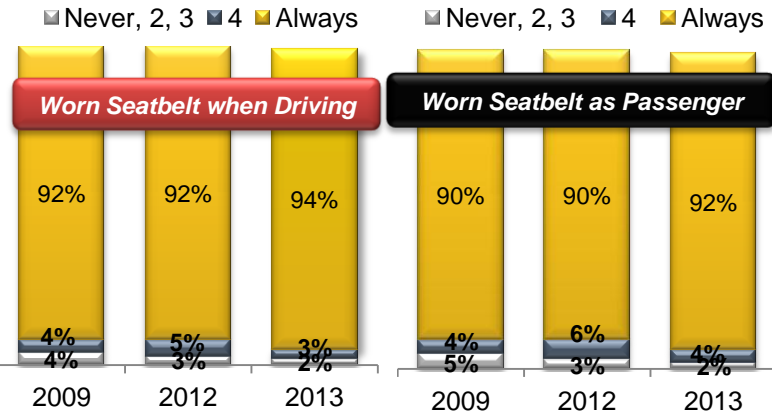
Note: '↓' Indicates a decrease from 2012 '↑' Indicates an increase from 2012

# Seatbelt Use



# Seatbelt Use

**Figure 17**  
**Frequency of Wearing a Seatbelt**  
 5-point scale – 1=Never 5=Always



- **Most Nova Scotia drivers, at least 9 in 10, always wear their seatbelt** when driving (94%) or riding as a passenger (92%).
- The incidence of wearing a seatbelt when riding as a *passenger* is slightly lower. Although the 2 percentage point difference is not statistically significant, it is a notable trend.
- Across demographic sub-groups, the incidence of wearing a seatbelt when riding in a vehicle varies considerably across age and gender. Young males aged 16 to 34, are significantly less likely to wear a seatbelt (90%) than drivers in other age groups. However, this is a notable increase relative to 2012, when only 78% of young males reported wearing a seatbelt when driving.

- Most common reasons for not wearing a seatbelt include ‘driving only a short distance’, or ‘forgetting’. Forgetting is a particularly common reason among younger adults 16-34, with 23% likely to mention this as opposed to 14% for older adults.

*For the most part, Nova Scotia drivers follow seatbelt rules and regulations.*

**Figure 17**  
 These figures show the frequency of wearing a seatbelt either as a passenger or as a driver.

Reference, data tables S1, S2, S3, S4

# Distracted Driving



# Distracted Driving

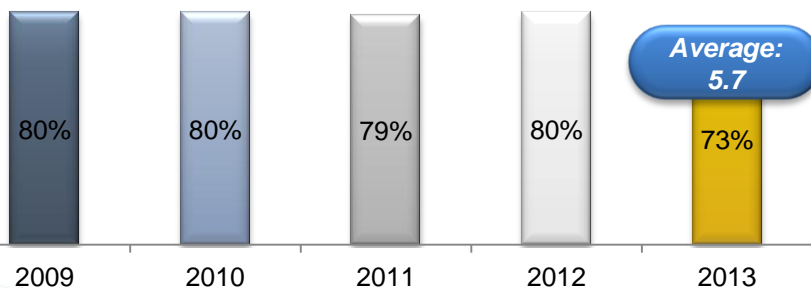
**Figure 18**  
**Distracted Driving Behaviours**

Issue	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Talked or interacted with passengers	60%	56%	59%	63%	61%
Adjusted the vehicle controls or climate controls	47%	49%	51%	48%	48%
Changed radio stations or CDs	47%	45%	47%	47%	43% ↓
Looked at something outside the vehicle	40%	47%	45%	46%	45%
Eaten or consumed a beverage	39%	34%	38%	37%	34%
Had your pet in the vehicle, unrestrained	13%	13%	13%	12%	13%
Made or received phone calls	13%	8%	11%	11%	10%
Used technical devices such as blackberries, navigation units	6%	6%	10%	6%	8% ↑
Sent text messages	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%
Done personal grooming	2%	2%	2%	2%	1% ↓

Note: ↓ Indicates a decrease from 2012  
↑ Indicates an increase from 2012

**Figure 19**  
**% Reporting at least 4 Distracting Driving Behaviours in Past Month**

■ 2009 ■ 2010 ■ 2011 ■ 2012 ■ 2013



▪ Distracted driving behaviours in 2013 are very consistent with previous years. **The four most common distracted driving activities include talking or interacting with others, adjusting vehicle controls, changing stations or CDs, or looking at something outside.** Most common is the large proportion (61%) that often (5 or 4 on a 5-point scale) talked or interacted with adult or child passengers while driving in the month prior to the survey.

▪ The incidence of distracting driving behaviours reported by young males has seen a general decline in 2013. Relative to young males, young females (aged 16-34) are more likely to engage in sending text messages, talking with passengers, personal grooming and having unrestrained pets in the vehicle.

▪ In 2012, as in previous years, the majority of (73%) had undertaken four or more of these ten activities in the month prior to the survey. Very few (1% in 2012) have never done any of the activities under consideration.

*The majority of Nova Scotia drivers engage in activities that could be distracting when driving.*

**Figure 18, 19**  
The incidence of Distracting Driving Behaviours, year over year. Shown is percentage of drivers who engaged in each behaviour by answering 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale (1=Never and 5=Very Often). Figure 19 provides the average number of distracting driving behaviours reported. Reference, data tables 7a-j.

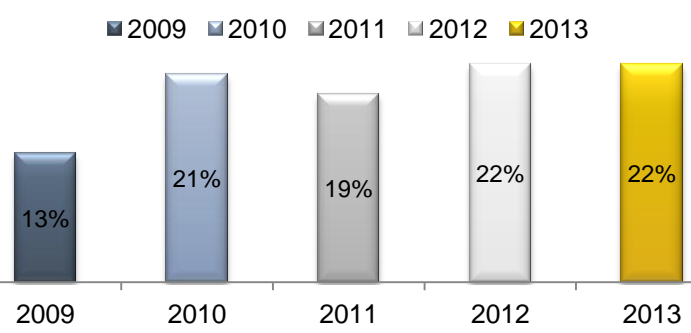
# Distracted Driving

## AVOIDING A CRASH

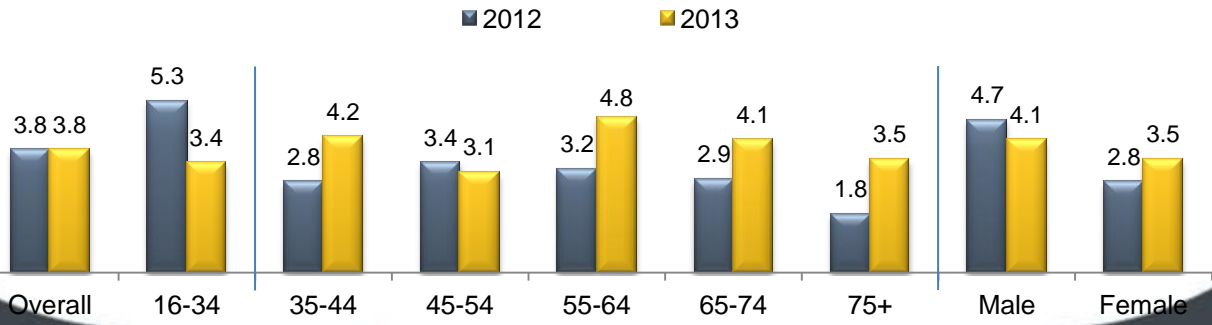


- During the 12-month period prior to responding to the survey, slightly more than one in five Nova Scotia drivers (22%) had to either apply the brakes or steer to avoid being in a crash because they were distracted by something inside or outside of their vehicle.
- This incidence has been consistent over the past few years, although considerably higher than the 2009 baseline measure (13%).
- Among those who had to take action in order to avoid a collision after being distracted, most had this happen more than once. Approximately one-third experienced two such incidents, and four in ten (40%) experienced three or more of these near-crashes.
- Adults aged 35 or older are less likely to report having to brake or steer to avoid a crash (21% vs. 26% for those 16-34). However, when they do, they do so more often. Adults 35 or older who reported having to brake or steer to avoid a crash mention doing so 3.9 times on average versus 3.4 times for young drivers 16 to 34. Overall, there has been a significant drop in the number of incidents where braking or steering was needed to avoid a crash among young males (16-34) from 8.2 times in 2012 to 2.6 in 2013.

**Figure 20**  
% who Had to Brake/Steer to Avoid a Crash



**Figure 21**  
Average # of Times: Had to Brake / Steer to Avoid a Crash in Past Year



**Figure 20, 21**  
Figure 20 shows the % who answered 'yes' when asked if they had to steer or brake to avoid a crash in past year. Figure 21 shows the average number of times this happened (among those who said yes) across age and gender groups. Reference, data tables B8a, 8b



# Speeding



# Speeding

Consistent with previous years, the majority (91%) reported they had driven at speeds up to 15 kilometres per hour over the posted speed limit at least once during the month prior to the survey (score of 2, 3, 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale). The incidence of speeding (up to 15 km/hr) is strongly correlated with age, with young adults more likely to report driving up to 15 km per hour above the posted speed limit (98% vs. 88% for those 35 and older).

As shown in Figure 22, a large majority of Nova Scotia drivers exceeded the posted speed limit by up to 10 kilometres per hour at least once in the month prior to the survey, and one-third exceeded it by 11 to 15 kilometres per hour. This has been consistent since 2010. (Tables 12, a-e)

**Figure 22**  
**Confidence in capability of Maintaining Control of Vehicle when Driving Well Over Speed Limit**

Km/Hr Over Posted Speed Limit	2009*	2010	2011	2012	2013
1-5 km/hr		89%	87%	89%	89%
6-10 km/hr	81%	68%	71%	70%	71%
11-15 km/hr		34%	35%	32%	32%
16-30 km/hr	24%	11%	10%	10%	8%
31+ km/hr	4%	3%	3%	3%	2%

\*Small increments of 1-5km/h, 6-10km/h and 11-15km/h not asked in 2009.

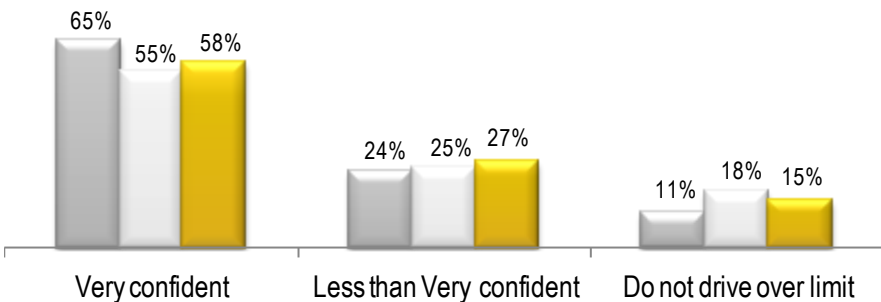
*Driving up to 15km/hr over the speed limit is very common among Nova Scotia drivers.*

**Figure 22**  
 Figure 22 shows the incidence of driving over the posted speed limit, across increments of 5km per hour, over time periods.  
 Reference, data tables Table 12, a-e

# Speeding

**Figure 23**  
Confidence in capability of Maintaining Control of Vehicle when Driving Well Over Speed Limit

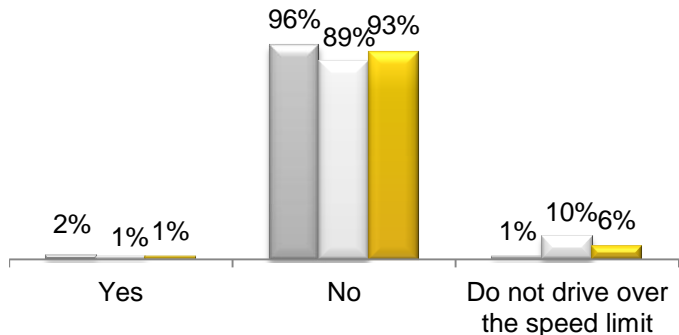
■ 2011 ■ 2012 ■ 2013



- Most drivers (58%) in 2013 are very confident ('5' on a 5-point scale) they can maintain control of their vehicle when driving well over the posted speed limit, and only a small number (8%) are not confident ('1' or '2' on a 5-point scale) in this regard. Males (62%) are more likely to report being 'very confident' than females (54%), particularly young males aged 16-34 (69% vs. 56% for everyone else).

**Figure 24**  
Incidence: Braking/Steering to Avoid Crash Because of Speeding

■ 2011 ■ 2012 ■ 2013



- The incidence of having to brake or steer to avoid a crash because of speeding is very low. In 2013, similar to previous years, only 1% of drivers reported that, in the year prior to the survey, they had to brake or steer to avoid being in a crash because they were driving above the posted speed limit.
- The incidence of having to brake or steer to avoid a crash because of speeding is more prominent among those who reported speeding by at least 16 kilometers per hour in excess of the posted speed limit (5%). Among those who did report having to brake or steer to avoid a crash, this happened 2.6 time on average in the past year.

## CONFIDENCE WHEN SPEEDING



**Figure 23, 24**

Figure 23 shows drivers' confidence levels on a scale of 1 to 5 (1=Not Confident at All, 5=Very Confident) in their capability of maintaining control of the vehicle when speeding. Figure 24 demonstrates the incidence of having to brake or steer to avoid a crash because of speeding (% yes).

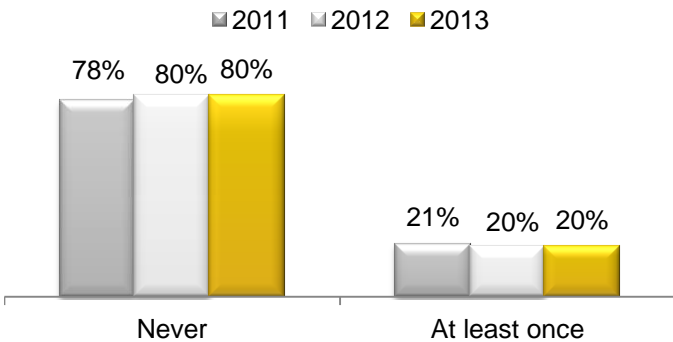
Reference, data tables Table 13, 14

# Impaired Driving



# Impaired Driving

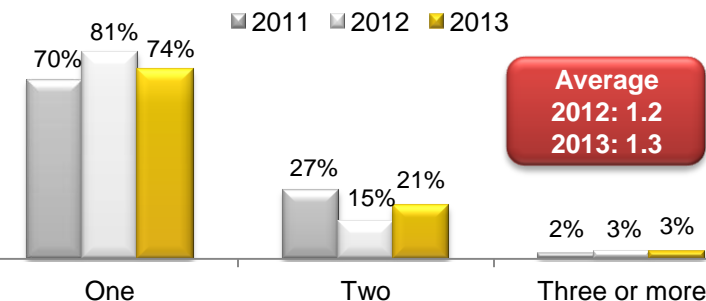
**Figure 25**  
# of Times Driven Within 2 Hours of Drinking



**Figure 26**  
# of Times Driven Within 2 Hours of Drinking

Occasions	2010 (%)		2011 (%)		2012 (%)		2013 (%)	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Never	64	83	69	86	72	87	72	87
At least Once	34	16	30	14	28	13	27	13

**Figure 27**  
# of Drinks Consumed Last Time



- As noted in previous years, the majority of Nova Scotia drivers (80%) reported having never driven after consuming alcohol during the month prior to responding to the survey. Nonetheless, **this leaves a notable twenty percent (20%) mentioning having driven within two hours of having at least one drink.**
- Overall, males are at least twice as likely to drink and drive as females (27% vs. 13%). The incidence of drinking and driving (within 2 hours of alcohol consumption) is also directly linked with socio-economic factor: this increases with income, education and income adequacy. Young adults 16-34 are less likely to report drinking after consuming alcohol.
- Among those who report drinking and driving, the majority (74%) usually have only one drink. Only a small percentage (3%) of those who drove within two hours of drinking report having consumed three or more drinks.
- Although the incidence of drinking and driving has remained consistent in 2013, the decline noted last year in the reported number of drinks consumed was temporary.** More Nova Scotia drivers are reporting having two drinks (21% vs. 15% in 2012). This is consistent with 2011.

*Approximately two in ten adults (20%) report driving within two hours of drinking alcohol in the previous month, an incidence most common among males.*

**Figures 25-27**  
The incidence of driving within 2 hours of drinking in the month prior to taking the survey. Figure 26 shows results for each year across gender groups. Figure 27 shows the # of drinks consumed the last time driven within 2 hours of drinking (among those who said they did, n=261)

Reference, data tables 16,17.

# Impaired Driving

## DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE

- Most drivers who drink and drive Over three-quarters (76%) who consumed alcohol and drove within two hours reported being very confident ('5' on a 5-point scale) that they were capable of maintaining control of their vehicle. None reported not feeling confident (0%).

Figure 28

Confidence in capability of Maintaining Control of Vehicle (last time drove within 2 hrs of drinking)

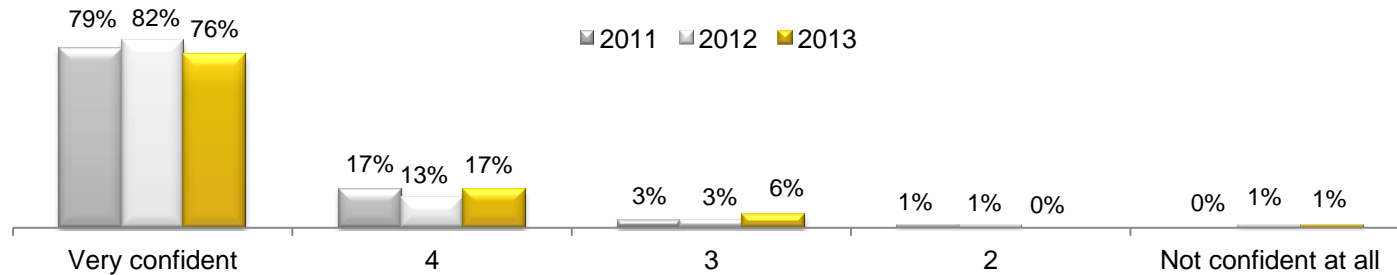


Figure 29

% Drove Within 2 Hours of Using Marijuana/Hash

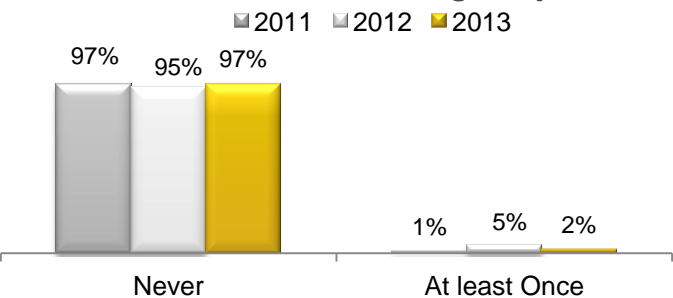
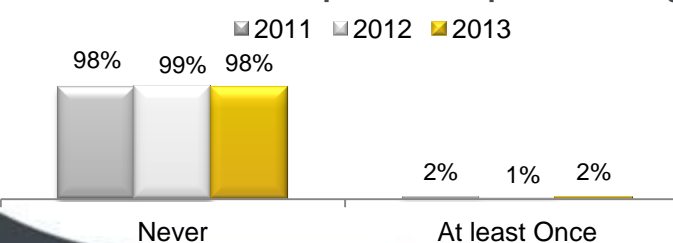


Figure 30

% Pulled over on Suspicion of Impaired Driving



- The incidence of driving under the influence of marijuana or hash is a rare incidence among overall drivers. Nonetheless, 2% of all Nova Scotia drivers report having driven a motor vehicle within two hours of consuming marijuana or hash in the past month. This incidence is concentrated among young drivers aged 25-34 (7% vs. 2% for all others).
- The incidence of being pulled over on suspicion of impaired driving is minimal among Nova Scotia drivers. Although 20% of drivers have driven a vehicle after consuming alcohol and 2% have driven after using marijuana or hash (within 2 hours of consumption), only 2% report being pulled over.



Figure 28-30

Shown: level of confidence in capability of maintaining control of a vehicle on a 5-point scale the last time drove within 2 hours of drinking (among those who said they drank then drove in past month, n=261).

Figures 33 & 34 show the incidence of driving under the influence of marijuana or hash in past month, and of having been pulled over on suspicion of impaired driving in past year.

Reference, data tables Table 18, 20, 23 30

# Attitudes Towards Pedestrian, Cyclist and Crosswalk Safety



# Attitudes Towards

Figure 31

## Agreement rating with the following pedestrian/cyclist/crosswalk safety statements

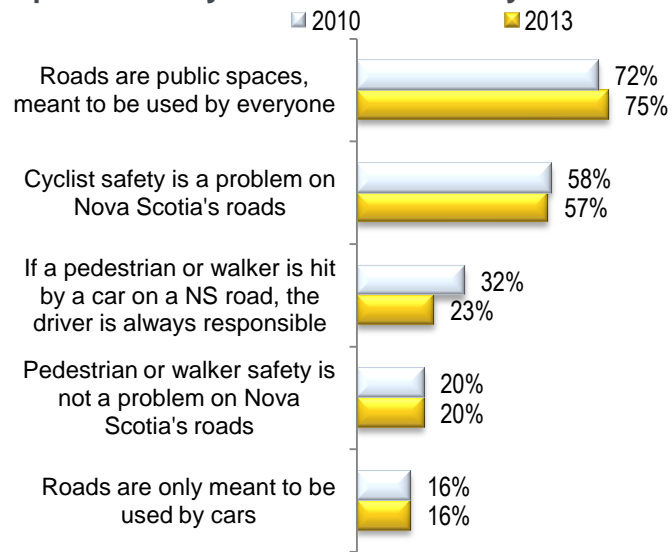
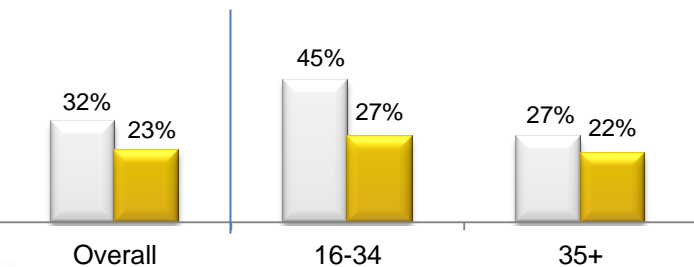


Figure 32

## Agreement Rating That If a Pedestrian is Hit by a Car on a Road in Nova Scotia, the Driver is Always Responsible

2010 2013



- Drivers were asked to rate a list of five statements about pedestrian, cyclist and crosswalk safety on a '1' to '5' scale, where '1' is strongly agree, and '5' is strongly disagree. From the five statements under consideration, drivers are most likely to agree that 'roads are public spaces, meant to be used by everyone' (75%). The reverse is true for the statement 'Roads are only meant to be used by cars', where 75% disagree (score of 1-2) with the statement.

- The perception that roads are meant to be shared is linked with age and education. Young adults are more likely to agree (24%) than those 35+ (13%) that 'roads are only meant to be used by cars', and so are drivers with less than high-school education (23% agree). Young females, in particular, are not convinced that roads are 'meant to be used by everyone' (only 68% agree vs. 75% overall).

- Opinions are mixed regarding who is at fault if a pedestrian is hit by a car in NS, and a significant change in attitude is noted over 2010. While approximately one-quarter agrees the 'driver is always responsible', almost one-half disagrees (48%) and a sizeable portion (3 in 10) is neutral or doesn't know. Across groups, young adults (16-34) are more likely to agree the driver is always responsible, whereas Central district drivers are less likely to agree (16%) than those in other districts.

*Most Nova Scotia drivers agree that roads are public spaces, meant to be used by everyone and that cyclist safety is a problem on Nova Scotia's roads.*

**Figures 31, 32** Agreement, scores of 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale, with 5 pedestrian, cyclist and crosswalk statements. Figure 32 shows the same agreement scores (score of 4 or 5) specific to 'who is responsible when a pedestrian is hit by a car' across age groups for 2010 and 2013.

Reference, data table 23.



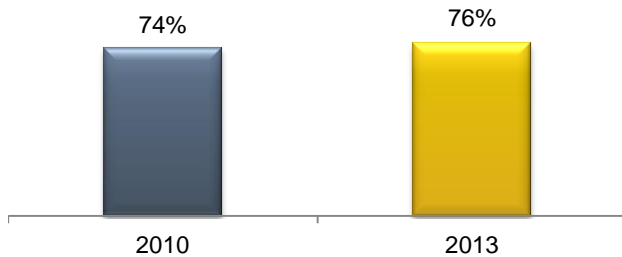
# Pedestrian Safety Measures



# Pedestrian Safety Measures

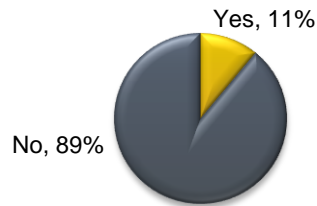
**Figure 33**

**Walked, Run or Jogged in Nova Scotia**



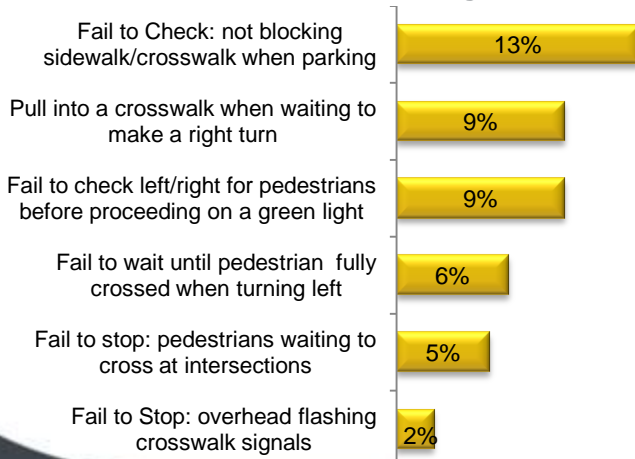
**Figure 34**

**Had a Collision or Close Call with a Pedestrian**



**Figure 35**

**How Often Done the Following When Driving**



- Over three-quarters of Nova Scotia residents (76%) have, over the past year, walked, run, or jogged in Nova Scotia. These results are consistent with those from 2010. Young adults aged 16-34 are more likely to have walked, run, or jogged on roads in Nova Scotia (89% vs. 72% for adults over the age of 35). The likelihood of Nova Scotia's roads being used to walk, run, or jog on also increases with income level.

- Among those who have driven a motor vehicle in the past year, approximately 9 in 10 drivers indicated that they have never had a collision or close call with a pedestrian or walker (89%). This is consistent across sub-groups and districts and relative to 2010.

- Drivers were asked to identify how often they had engaged in six very specific risky driving behaviours in relation to pedestrian safety. Few engage in risky driving behaviours, with 'failing to check to make sure I'm not blocking the sidewalk or crosswalk when parking' being the most prominent at 13%.

*Nova Scotia roads are frequently used by residents to walk, run or jog on or along.*

**Figures 33-35**  
The incidence of walking, running or jogging on NS roads. Figure 34 shows the % of drivers who reported 'yes' having had a collision or close call with a pedestrian in the past year. Figure 35 shows the percent who often (score of 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale from 1=never to 5=very often) engaged in the stated activity while driving. Reference, data tables 24, 28, 29.

# Pedestrian Safety Measures

Figure 36

Have **NOT** been Hit or Had a Close Call with a Vehicle in the Past year

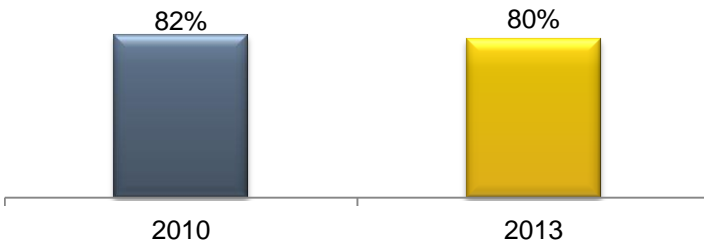
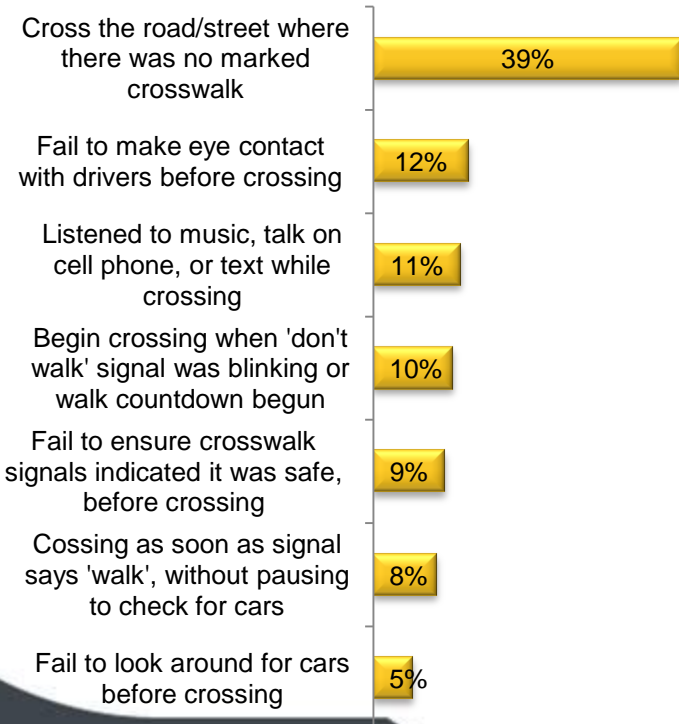


Figure 37

How Often You have Done the Following When Walking



- While most (8 in 10) pedestrians indicated they have not been hit or had a close call with a vehicle in the past year, this leaves a notable twenty percent (20%) mentioning they have.
- Young adults aged 16-34 are more likely to report having been hit or had a close call with a vehicle (29% vs. 16% for those aged 35 and older). Across districts, pedestrians in the Eastern district are less likely to report being hit or having a close call with a vehicle.
- Nova Scotia pedestrians regularly engage in various risky street crossing behaviours, with the top three including crossing the road where no crosswalk is marked, failing to make eye contact with drivers and listening to music or using a cell phone while crossing.
- Young pedestrians aged 16-34 are most likely to cross the road where there is 'no marked crosswalk', to 'listen to music, talk or text while crossing' and to 'cross when the don't walk or countdown has begun'. Older adults over the age of 75, on the other hand, more prominently cross the road without looking for cars (10% do so regularly).

## PEDESTRIAN BEHAVIOURS



Figure 36, 37

Figure 36 shows the % of pedestrians who answered 'NO' when asked if hit or 'close call' with a vehicle in the past year. Figure 37 shows the % who often (score of 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale from 1=never to 5=very often) engaged in the stated activity while walking.

Reference, data tables 30,