

The Texas Traffic Safety Culture Survey

Center for Transportation Safety

November 2010



Summary

For decades, traffic safety improvements have relied primarily upon engineering and enforcement solutions. A growing number of safety professionals and policy makers have concluded that if we are limited to those options in the future, further improvements will be incremental at best. Truly meaningful advancements in safety will depend largely on changing the way we think about driving – changing our traffic safety culture. To provide a baseline for future measurements toward such change, the Center for Transportation Safety at the Texas Transportation Institute conducted a survey to determine Texas drivers’ attitudes toward safety conditions and laws. A brief sample of findings shows that:

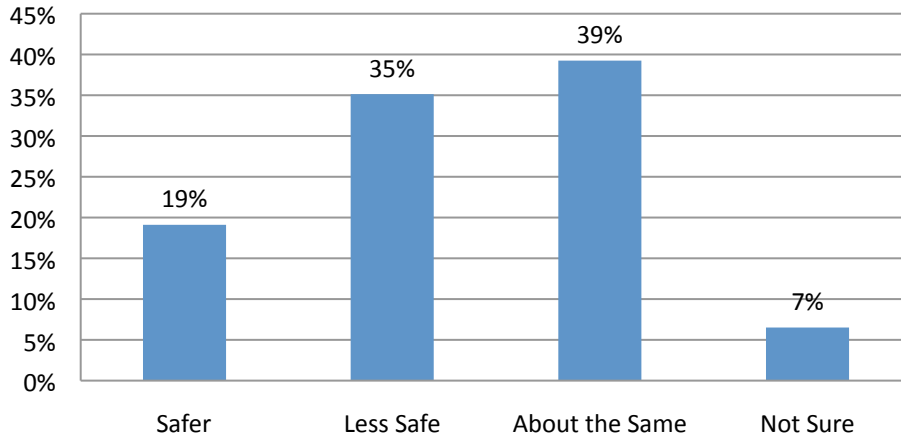
- Although roadway deaths have steadily declined in recent years, more than a third of Texas drivers think the roadways are less safe than they were five years ago. Only about one out of five feel safer.
- More than four out of five respondents believe that texting while driving (85 percent) and cell phone use (81 percent) have become bigger problems than they were five years ago.
- Well over half say aggressive driving is worse, and nearly half say the same thing about driver courtesy.
- Texans generally feel safer on the roads than drivers nationwide, as measured in the 2010 Traffic Safety Culture Index published by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety. In that survey, 52 percent of drivers nationwide said they feel less safe, while the number in Texas is 34 percent.
- Supporters of a law to ban cell phone use while driving outnumber opponents by a two-to-one margin.
- Supporters of red light cameras outnumber opponents by 48 percent to 36 percent.
- Supporters also outnumber opponents on measures to deter impaired driving, favoring sobriety checkpoints, and requiring the use of ignition interlock devices for drivers with DWI convictions.
- Survey participants were generally opposed to raising the state’s gasoline tax to pay for new roads or to make the roads safer.

The *Texas Traffic Safety Culture Survey* was conducted at ten driver license stations operated by the Texas Department of Public Safety in the following cities in September and October 2010.

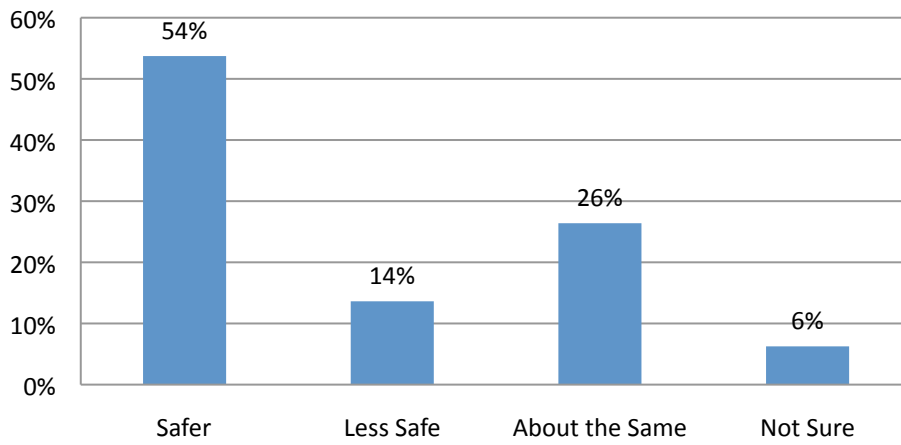
Austin	Amarillo	Beaumont
Bryan	Dallas	El Paso
Houston	Lubbock	McAllen
San Angelo		

Results from the sample of 1,167 licensed drivers represent a cross-section of the opinions of the adult driving population in Texas. CTS researchers plan to repeat the survey each year and publish its findings as part of the Center’s Legislative direction to “*foster public awareness of the importance of roadway safety to the economy of this state.*”

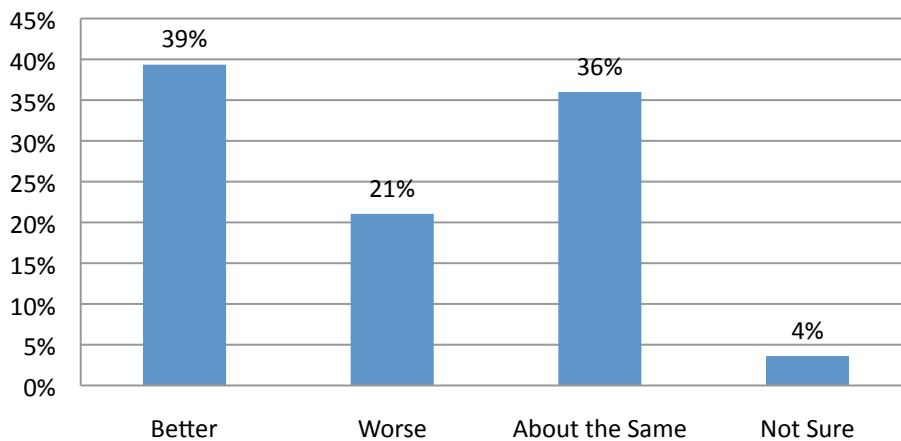
Overall, do you think driving feels safer, less safe, or about the same as it did 5 years ago?



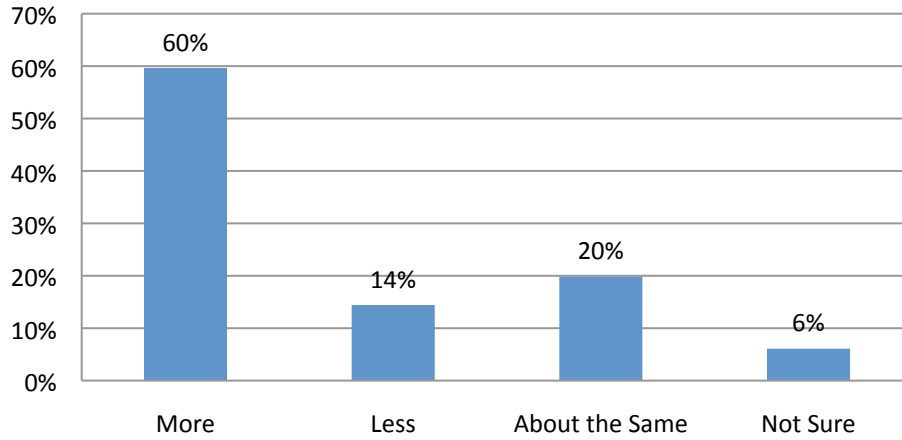
Overall, do you think vehicles sold in the U.S. are safer or less safe than they were 5 years ago?



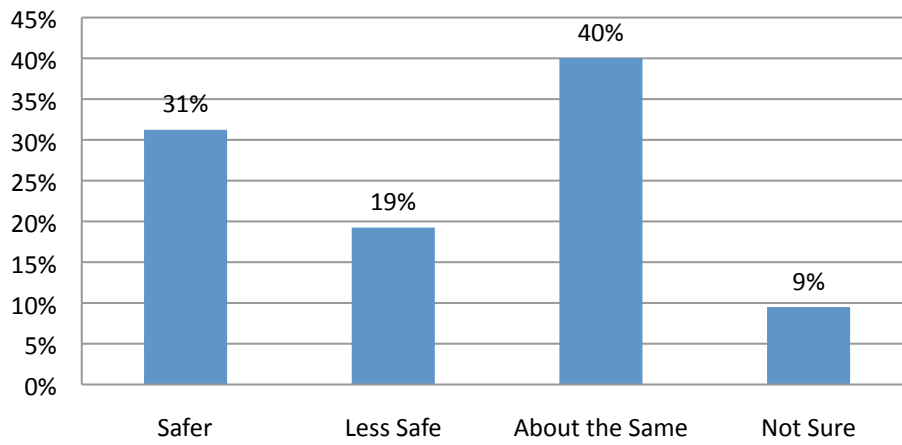
Overall, do you think the condition of roads you travel on most is better or worse than 5 years ago?



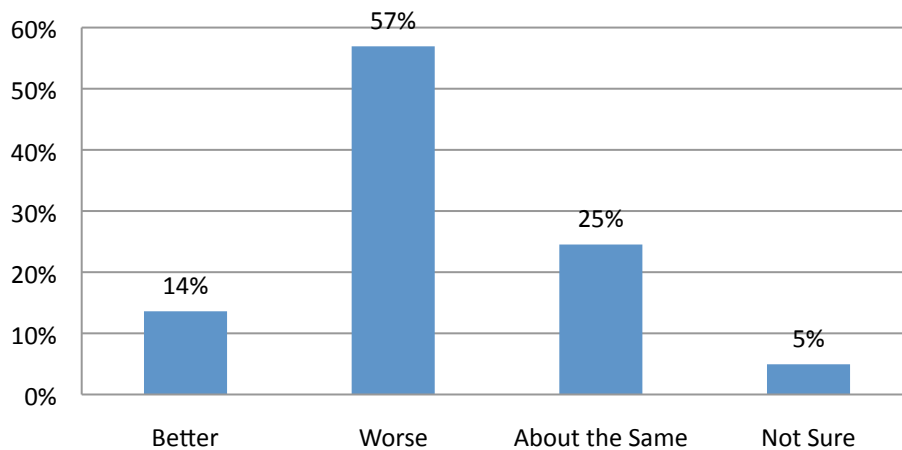
In your area, is there more or less road construction than 5 years ago?



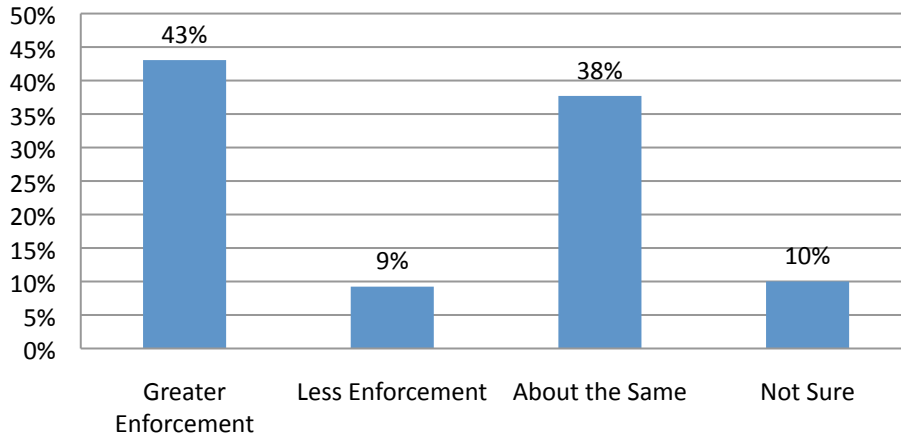
In general, are the areas under construction safer or less safe than 5 years ago?



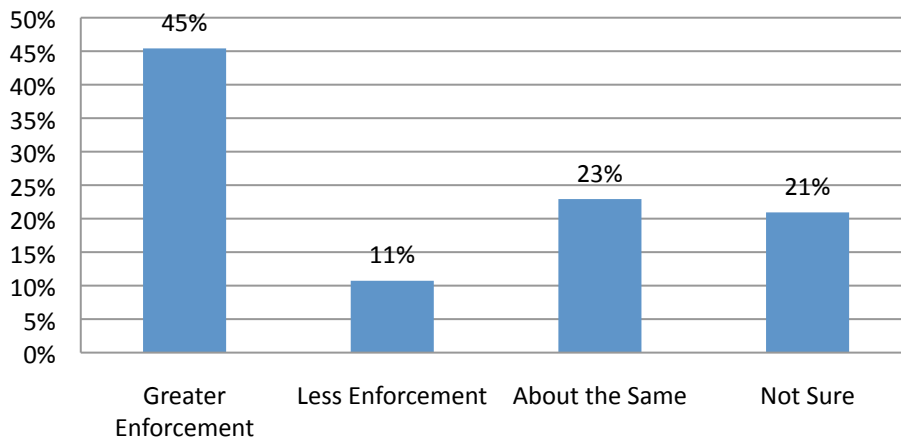
In your area, do you think traffic congestion has gotten better or worse than 5 years ago?



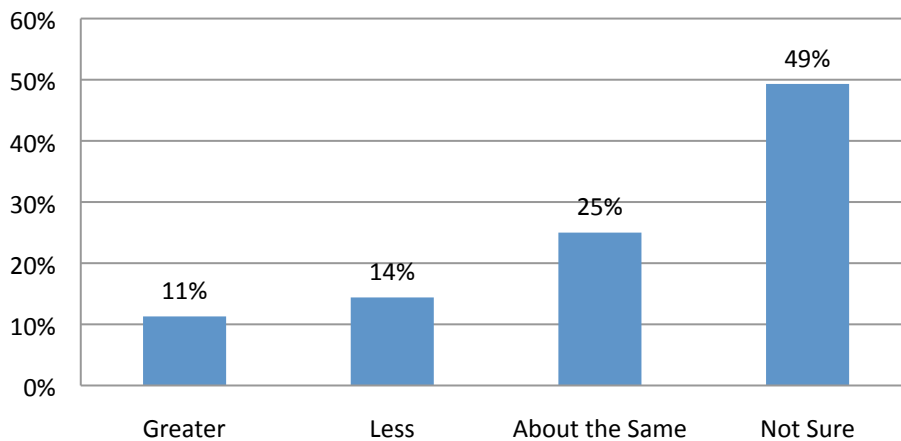
Overall, do you think enforcement of traffic violations in your area is greater or less than 5 years ago?

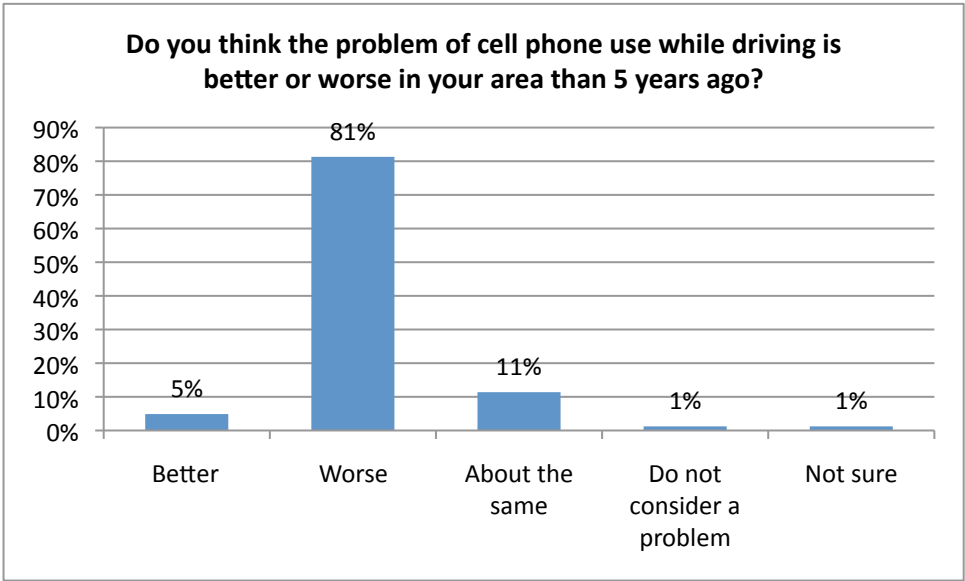
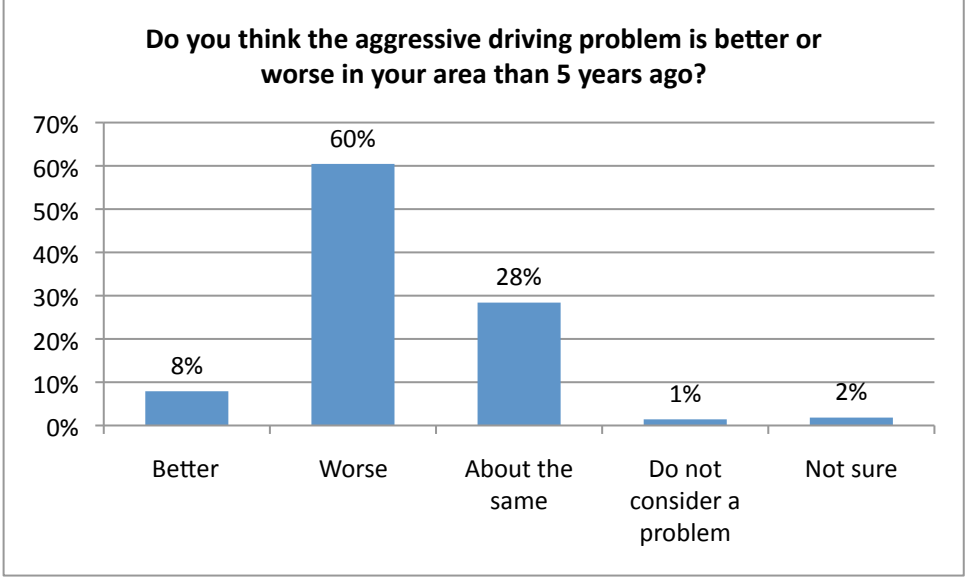
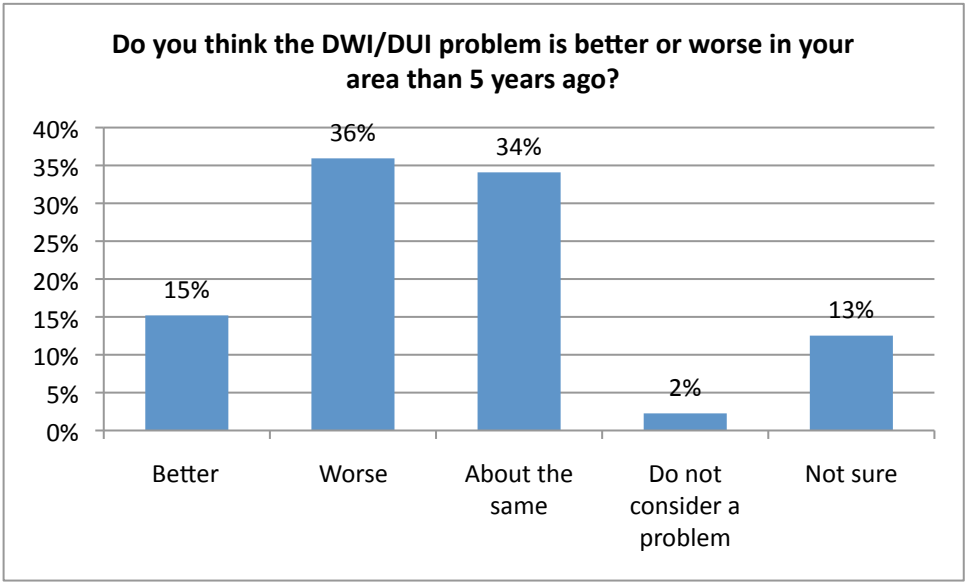


Overall, do you think enforcement by using cameras in your area is greater or less than 5 years ago?

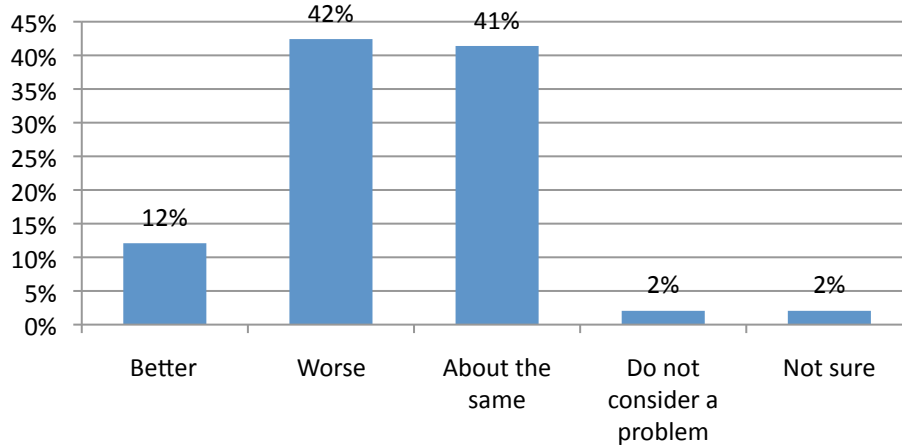


Do you think the percent of traffic tickets dismissed by a judge or court in your area is greater or less than 5 years ago?

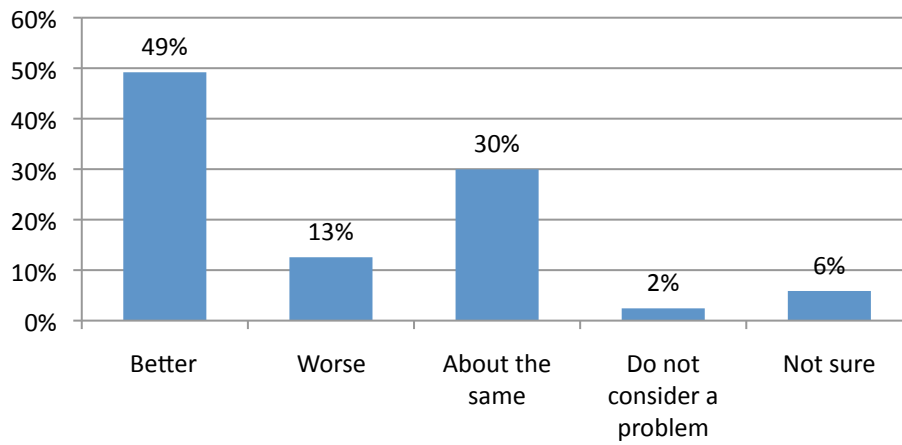




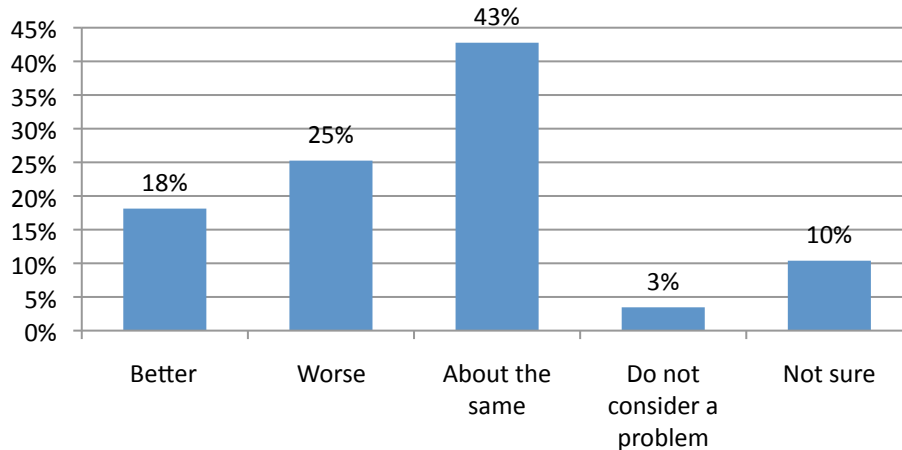
Do you think speeding is better or worse in your area than 5 years ago?



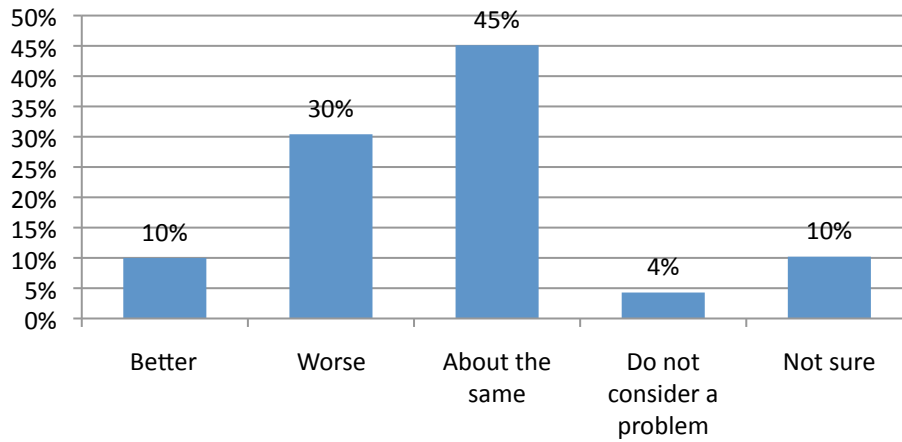
Do you think seat belt use is better or worse in your area than 5 years ago?



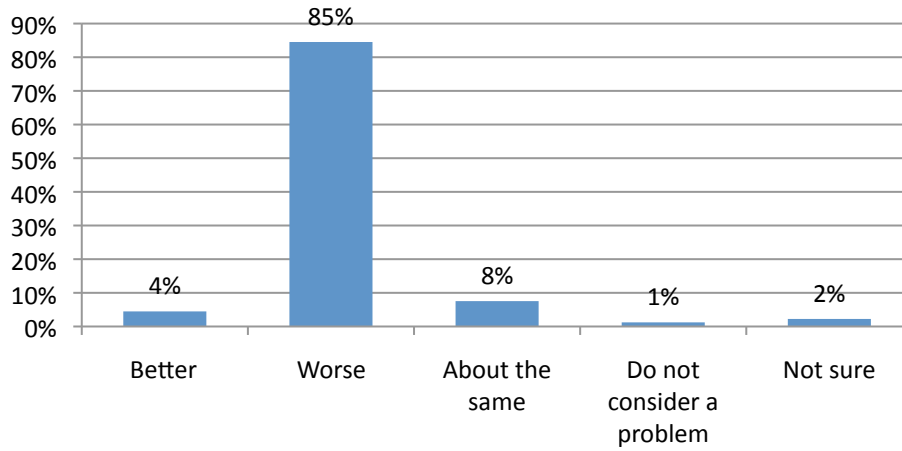
Do you think teen drivers are better or worse in your area than 5 years ago?



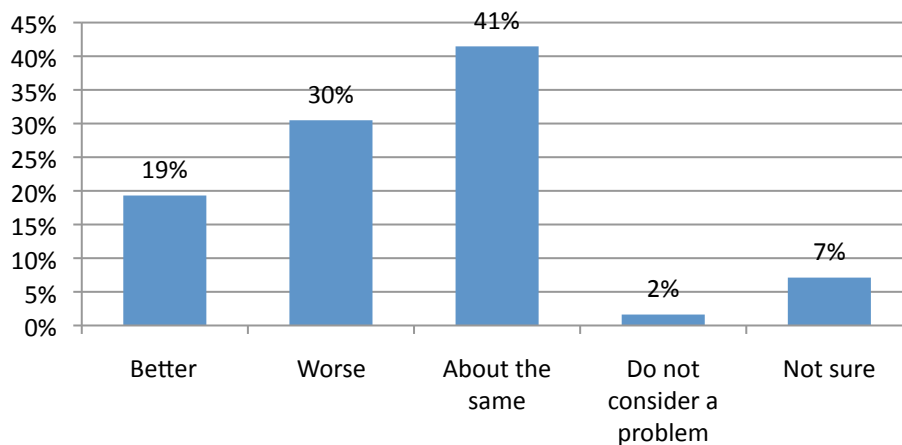
Do you think elderly drivers are better or worse in your area than 5 years ago?



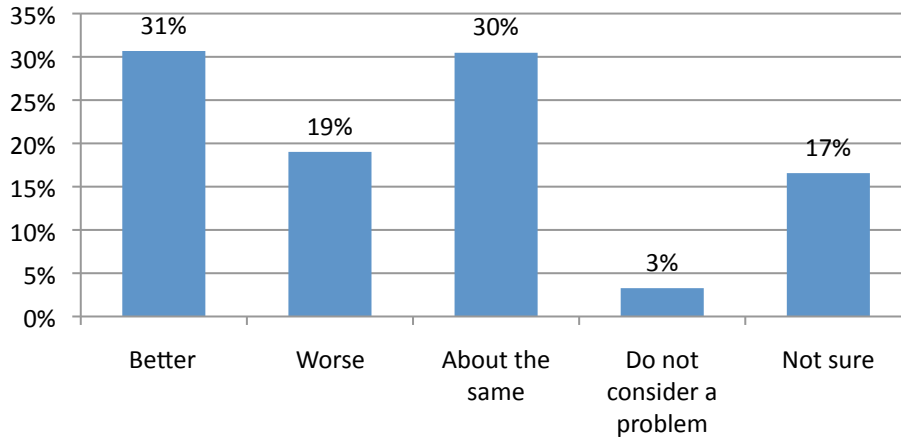
Do you think texting while driving is better or worse in your area than 5 years ago?



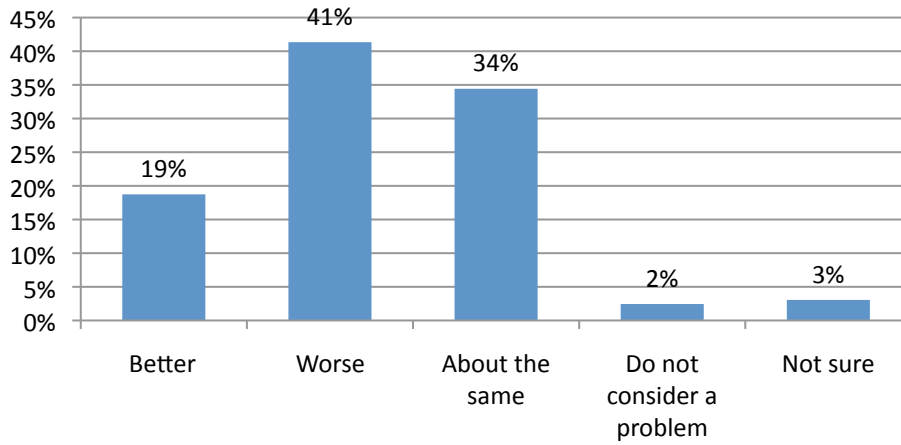
Do you think running red lights is better or worse in your area than 5 years ago?



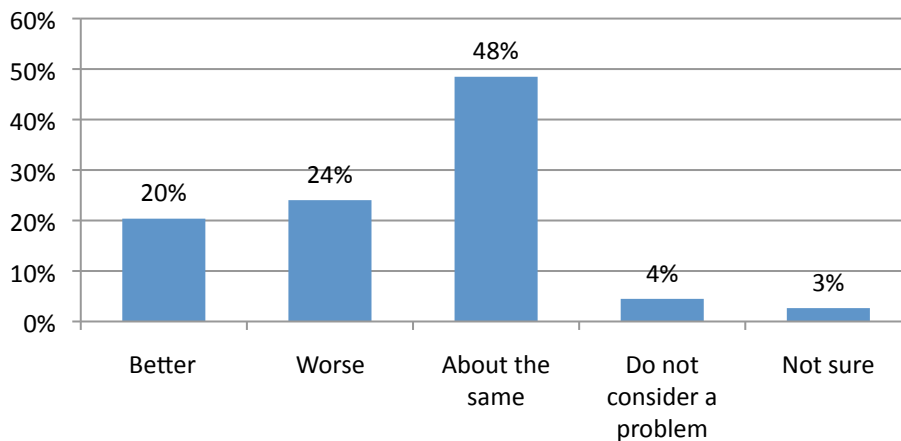
Do you think the problem of children not riding in car seats is better or worse in your area than 5 years ago?

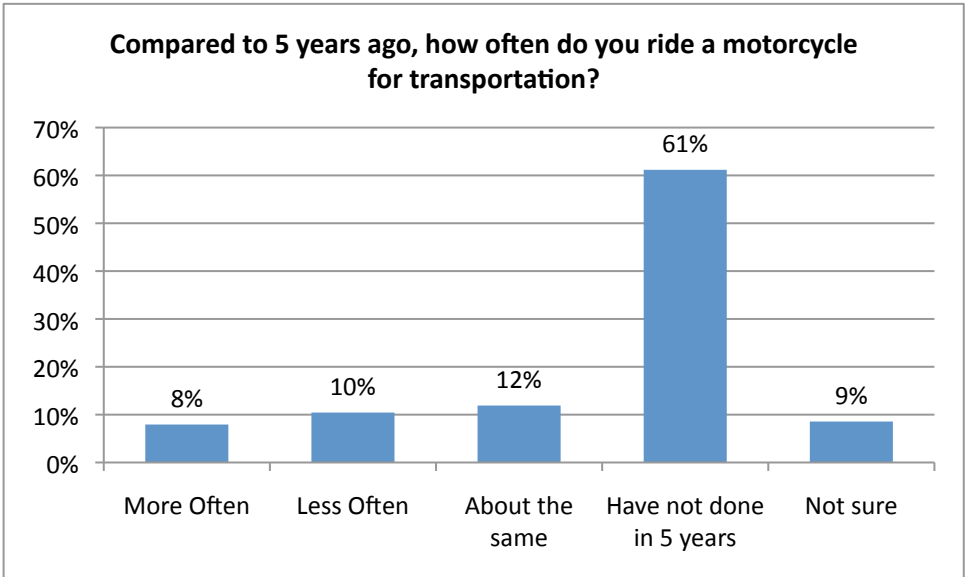
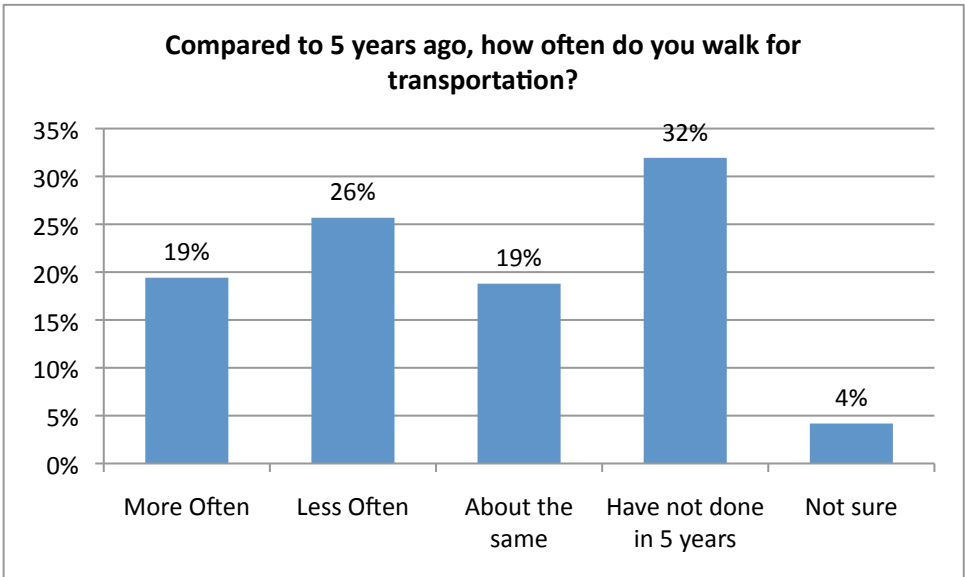
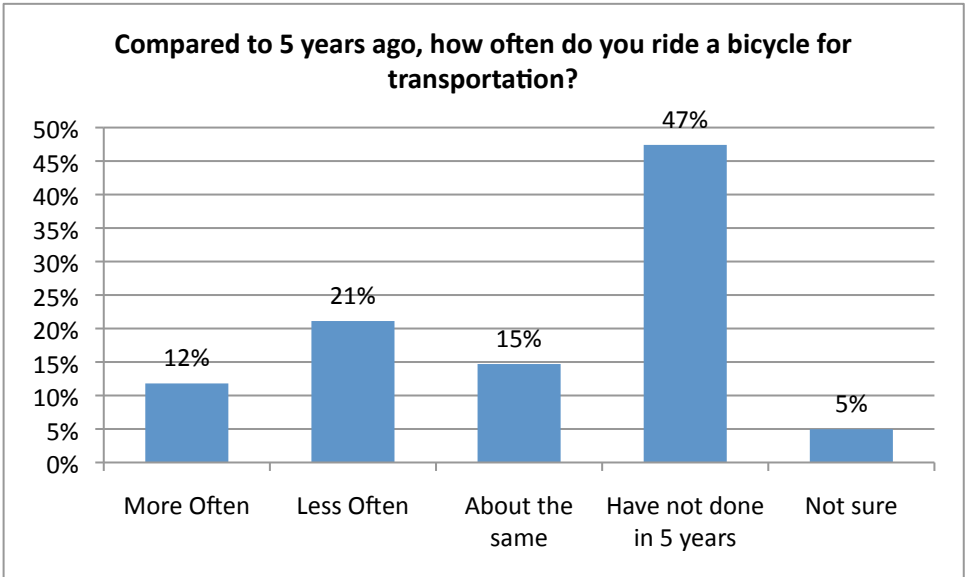


Do you think driver courtesy is better or worse in your area than 5 years ago?

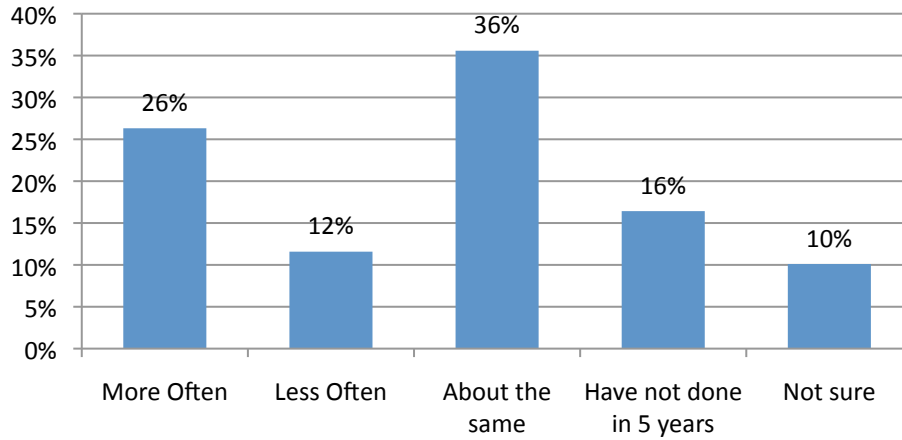


Do you think problems with giving the right-of-way are better or worse in your area than 5 years ago?

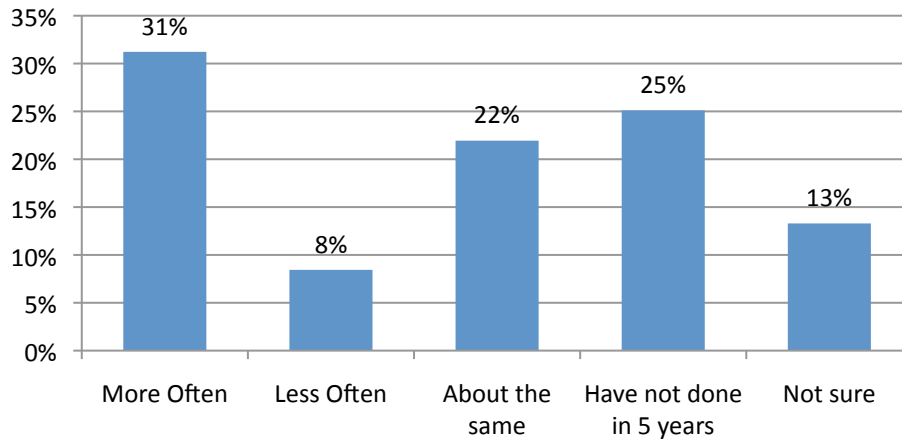




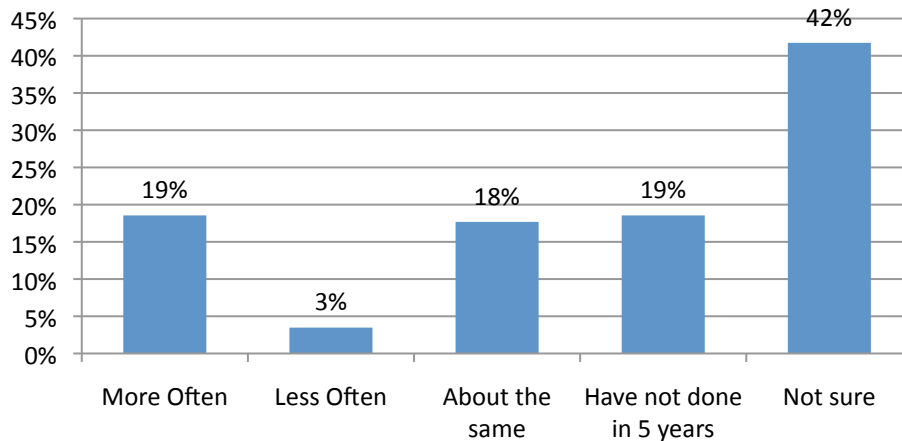
Compared to 5 years ago, how often do you drive slower to save on fuel?



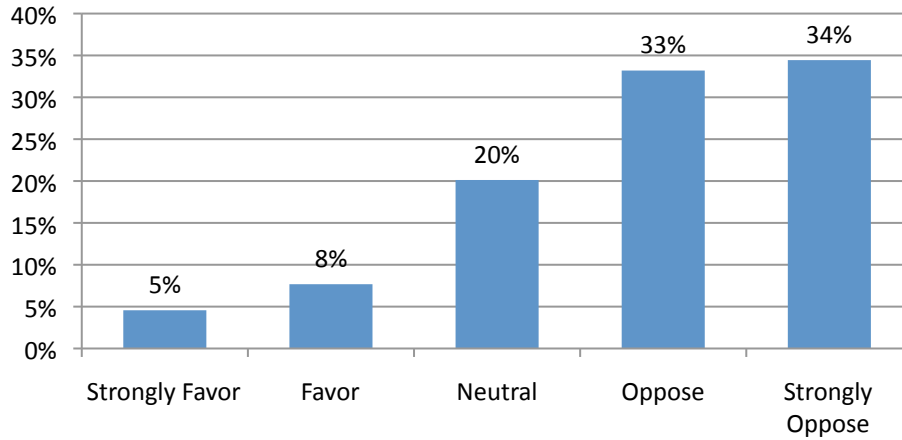
Compared to 5 years ago, how often do you shop on-line to save transportation costs?



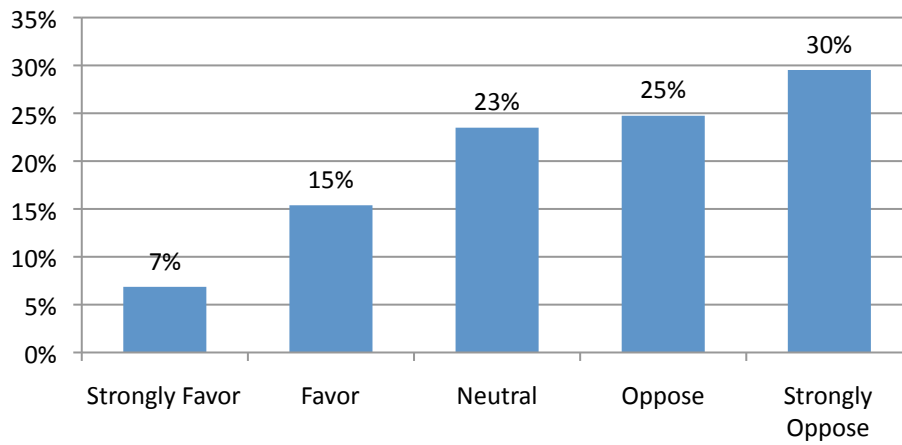
Compared to 5 years ago, how often do you do other fuel-saving measures?



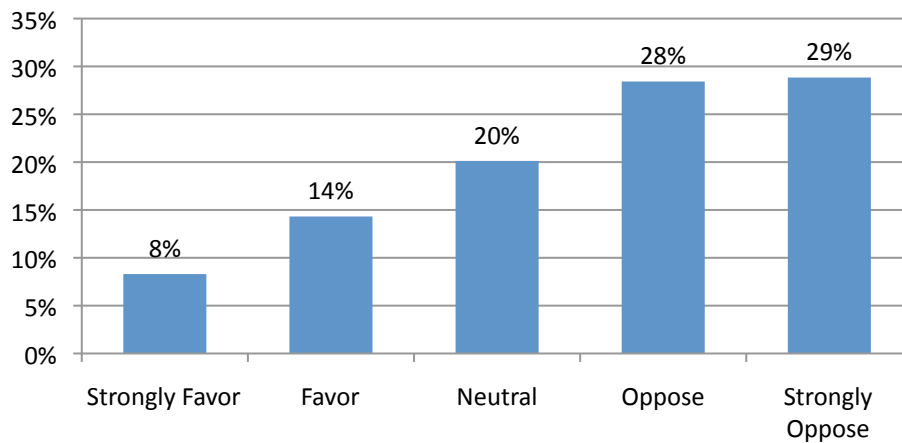
Are you in favor of or opposed to adding 10 cents per gallon tax on gasoline to pay for new road construction?



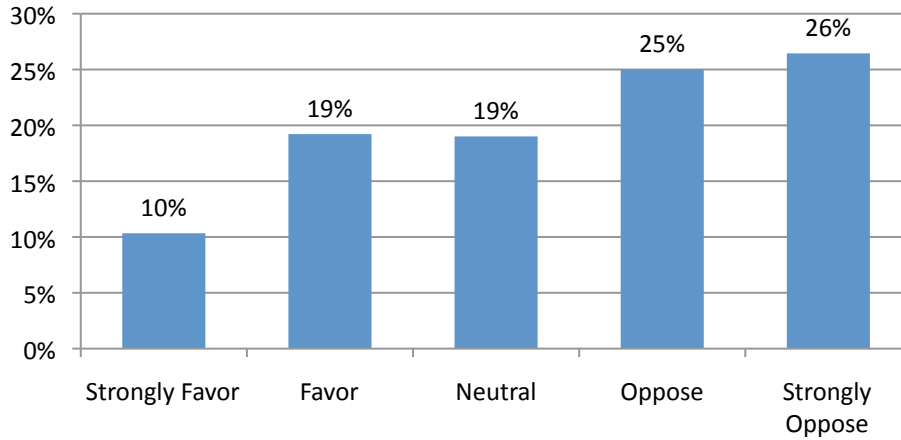
Are you in favor of or opposed to adding 10 cents per gallon tax on gasoline to pay for repairing dangerous roads?



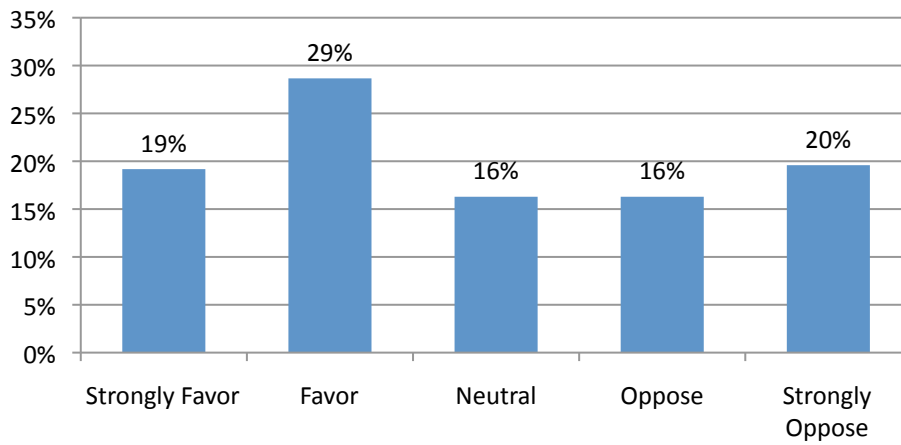
Are you in favor of or opposed to using cameras to ticket drivers on freeways?



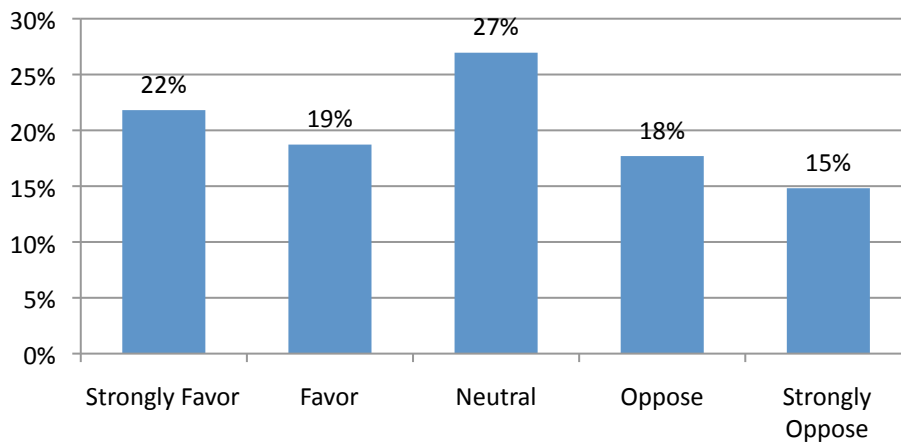
Are you in favor of or opposed to using cameras to ticket drivers on residential streets?



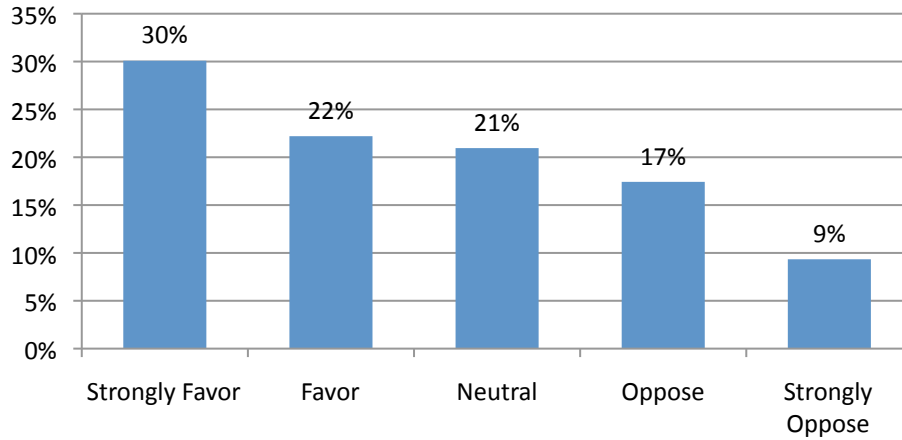
Are you in favor of or opposed to using cameras to ticket drivers who run red lights?



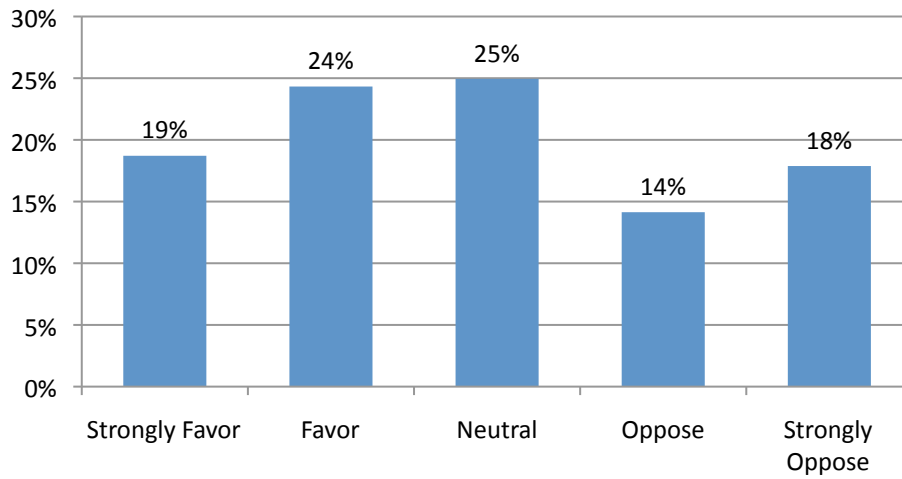
Are you in favor of or opposed to raising the minimum age for getting a driver license to 18?



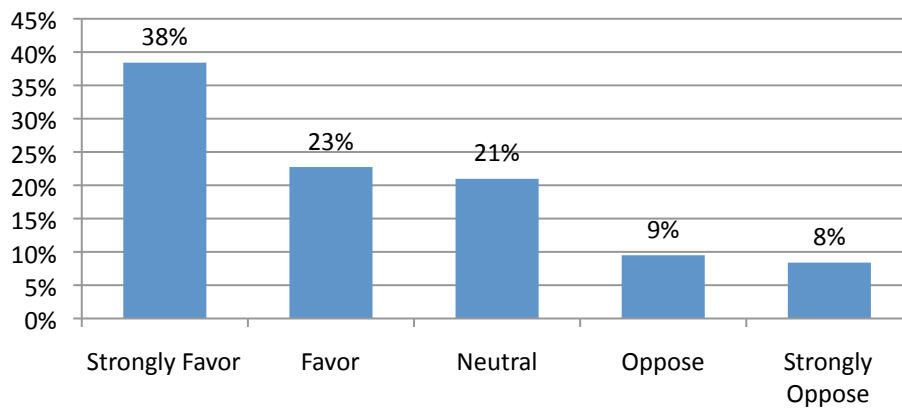
Are you in favor of or opposed to a law against any type of cell phone use while driving?



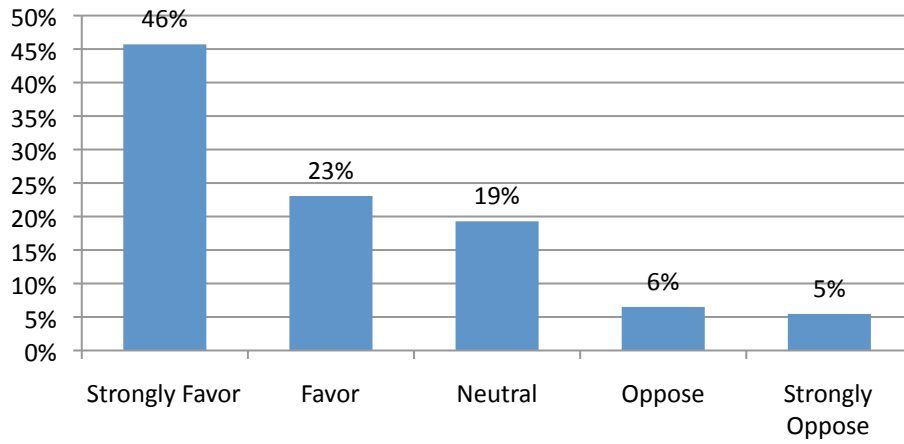
Are you in favor of or opposed to sobriety checkpoints?



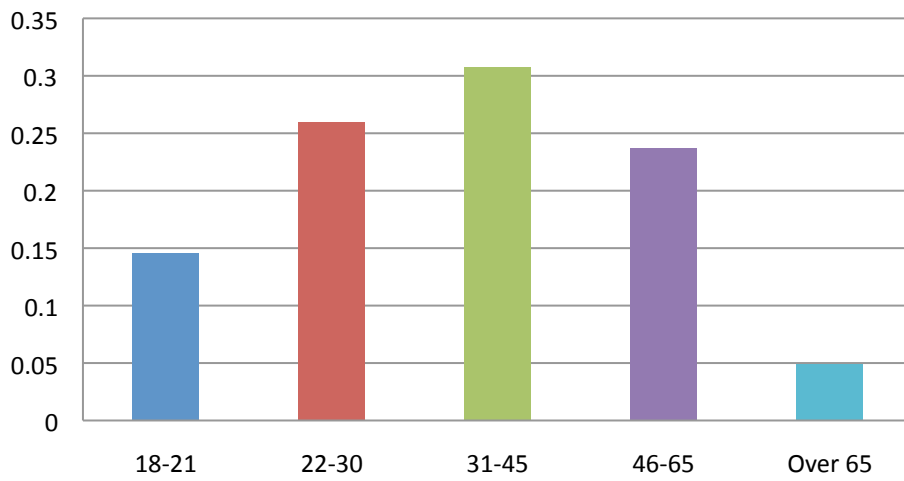
Are you in favor of or opposed to requiring all drivers convicted of DWI to use a device to keep their car from starting if they have been drinking ?



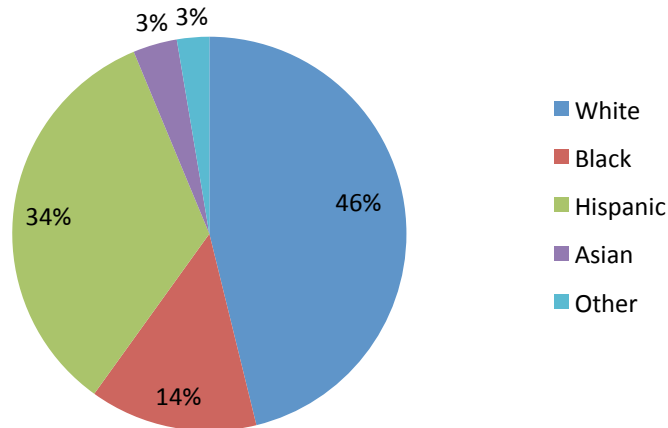
Are you in favor of or opposed to requiring all motorcyclists to wear helmets?



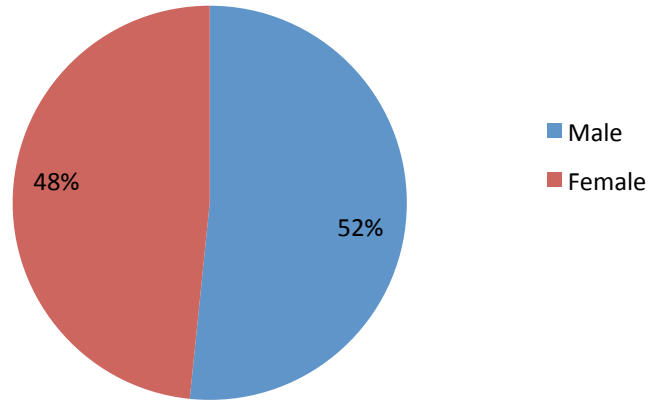
Age of Survey Respondents



Race/Ethnicity of Survey Respondents



Gender of Survey Respondents



What type of vehicle do you drive most often?

