



## Appraisal or Selection

### Comparative analysis of traffic risk perception of French and Dutch drivers



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When regarding accident statistics a large difference in traffic safety between France and The Netherlands can be observed. This research examines whether it is likely that a part of this difference can be explained by a difference in traffic risk perception. Based on the survey which was conducted within the scope of this research there is evidence that this is the case.

For the survey an online questionnaire is used. The questionnaire was sent to 2 000 residents of Enschede (The Netherlands) and Chartres (France); 95 of these filled it in. In the questionnaire respondents evaluated photographs of six intersections on risk perception. They also stated whether they are familiar with the intersections. Furthermore they filled in a questionnaire on socio-demographic characteristics and Driving Sensation Seeking. Half of the respondents received a questionnaire in which the photographs were manipulated so that the approach to the intersection had additional markings: peripheral transverse lining. The other half of the respondents functioned as a control group.

In this research traffic risk perception is split in two constructs: threat appraisal and action selection. Threat appraisal is measured with one construct; action selection is measured with two: attitude towards crossing an intersection with 60 km/h and preferred speed for crossing the intersection.

French drivers have a higher threat appraisal than Dutch drivers when they approach an intersection with peripheral transverse lining. No difference of this kind is found for the control groups. Although no significant differences between drivers in the intervention and control group are found it seems that French drivers in the intervention group have a higher threat appraisal than those in the control group. For Dutch drivers this seems to be the other way around. This concept is speculatively explained by introducing the concept of macro-familiarity.

In addition it is observed that French drivers under normal conditions have a more positive attitude towards crossing an intersection with 60 km/h . Also, they seem to prefer higher speeds when crossing an intersection. This might be explained by the high speed limits in France. At last it might be concluded that peripheral transverse lining is an effective method to decrease speeds in France.