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16. Abstract

This survey examined public opinion regarding self-driving-vehicle technology in three major English-speaking countries—the U.S., the U.K., and Australia. The survey yielded useable responses from 1,533 persons 18 years and older.

The main findings (applicable to each of the three countries) were as follows:

- The majority of respondents had previously heard of autonomous or self-driving vehicles, had a positive initial opinion of the technology, and had high expectations about the benefits of the technology.
- However, the majority of respondents expressed high levels of concern about riding in self-driving vehicles, security issues related to self-driving vehicles, and self-driving vehicle not performing as well as actual drivers.
- Respondents also expressed high levels of concern about vehicles without driver controls; self-driving vehicles moving while unoccupied; and self-driving commercial vehicles, busses, and taxis.
- The majority of respondents expressed a desire to have this technology in their vehicle. However, a majority was also unwilling to pay extra for the technology; those who were willing to pay offered similar amounts in each country.
- Females expressed higher levels of concern with self-driving vehicles than did males. Similarly, females were more cautious about their expectations concerning benefits from using self-driving vehicles.

In comparison to the respondents in the U.K. and Australia, respondents in the U.S. expressed greater concern about riding in self-driving vehicles, data privacy, interacting with non-self-driving vehicles, self-driving vehicles not driving as well as human drivers in general, and riding in a self-driving vehicle with no driver controls available.

The main implications of these results are that motorists and the general public in the three countries surveyed, while expressing high levels of concern about riding in vehicles equipped with this technology, feel positive about self-driving vehicles, have optimistic expectations of the benefits, and generally desire self-driving-vehicle technology when it becomes available (though a majority is not willing to pay extra for such technology at this time).

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