

For immediate release

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Over 60 percent of drivers feel under-prepared for the road even after passing their driving test

New research by Liberty Insurance shows almost half of unconfident drivers have experienced anxiety while behind the wheel

- **Half of all drivers under 30 do not feel confident in certain driving scenarios**
- **19 percent of unconfident drivers have felt panic behind the wheel, and 18 percent have felt fear**
- **7 in 10 drivers think Irish roads are more dangerous than they were 10 years ago – this sentiment is higher in Connacht/Ulster**

New research by Liberty Insurance shows that 61 percent of drivers feel under-prepared for the road even after passing their practical test.

Conversely, only 2 in 5 drivers, or 38 percent, felt very prepared to drive on the road after completing their test.

Half of all drivers under 30 do not feel confident when driving in certain places or performing particular manoeuvres, like reverse parallel parking and using major roundabouts with multiple exits. Only 2 in 5 of all drivers claim to be 'very confident' in these areas.

In addition to a lack of confidence in their own ability, 7 in 10 drivers think that Irish roads are more hazardous than they were a decade ago. This opinion is higher among females (81 percent), older drivers aged 55-64 (76 percent) and residents of Connacht/Ulster (79 percent).

Among Irish drivers that lack confidence on the road, feelings of nervousness have been experienced by 60 percent when behind the wheel, while almost half (49 percent) have experienced anxiety. 19 percent report feelings of panic and 18 percent a sense of fear.

Overall, women drivers are less confident than their male counterparts; under 30 drivers are the least confident of all age groups; and the country's least confident drivers are from Connacht/Ulster.

Commenting, Deirdre Ashe, Director of Personal Lines at Liberty Insurance, said: "The results of this survey show that as a country, we currently lack confidence in our driving abilities and feel increasingly unsafe on our roads.

"In many ways, this isn't entirely surprising. Our roads are busier than ever before, with more distractions for drivers, like smartphones. Adding to the danger is the huge number of uninsured private vehicles on Irish roads, estimated by the Motor Insurance Bureau of Ireland (MIBI) to be over 151,000.

"In light of these findings, we all as drivers have a duty in taking greater personal responsibility for our actions on the road. By extension, road safety education is now

more important than ever. For example, if drivers are particularly nervous entering roundabouts or parallel parking, they should be looking to address and improve on this, like taking advanced driving lessons with IAM Road Smart Ireland. Further tips and advice are available on the Liberty Insurance Safety Centre as part of our 'Ready for the Real Road' initiative.

'Finally, since its foundation, the Road Safety Authority (RSA) has led the way in raising standards on road safety and testing, and as a result we have seen significant improvements on our roads. In continuing down this path, there may be merit in incorporating some of these findings into the RSA's driving test curriculum and using it as an opportunity to develop new features within the driving test that will challenge learner drivers on the various issues cited in our research.

"In short, our findings demonstrate the importance of the ongoing collaboration between government and industry in the promotion of safer driving, particularly among younger drivers and in regional areas with less developed infrastructure."

ENDS

Link to Ready for the Real Road Ad Campaign - <https://youtu.be/IaWN1nx8YGQ>

Visit www.libertyinsurance.ie/real-road

Notes to editor

About Liberty Insurance

Liberty Insurance provides car and home insurance to the Irish consumer market along with commercial insurance to the business sector. The company operates from offices in Cavan and Dublin. Liberty Insurance is part of the Liberty Mutual Insurance Group.

About Liberty Mutual Insurance

In business since 1912, and headquartered in Boston, Mass., today Liberty Mutual is a diversified insurer with operations in 29 countries and economies around the world. We are the fifth largest property and casualty insurer in the U.S. based on 2015 direct written premium data as reported by the National Association of Insurance Commissioners. We also rank 73rd on the Fortune 100 list of largest corporations in the U.S. based on 2015 revenue. As of December 31, 2015, Liberty Mutual had \$37.6 billion in annual consolidated revenue.

Liberty employs more than 50,000 people in over 800 offices throughout the world. We offer a wide range of insurance products and services, including personal automobile, homeowners, accident & health, commercial automobile, general liability, property, surety, workers compensation, group disability, group life, specialty lines, reinsurance, individual life and annuity products.

'Liberty Insurance Road Safety' research carried out by RedC Research & Marketing among 500 car insurance owners aged 17+ in the Republic of Ireland.

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