



European Sleep Research Society
Sleep Research and Sleep Medicine in Europe



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ESRS WAKE-UP BUS PROJECT FINDS POOR SLEEP AT NIGHT LEADS TO ROAD TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS MORE THAN DRIVING FOR A LONG TIME

Results of European Sleep Study Presented at EU Parliament

Brussels, Belgium (ESRS) 15.10.2013 – The European Sleep Research Society (ESRS) together with members of the Assembly of National Sleep Societies (ANSS) present the data gathered in 19 European countries as part of the Wake-Up Bus Project to estimate the prevalence of falling asleep at the wheel. The awareness campaign culminates with a presentation of results at the European Parliament on 15. October, organized with the support of Member of the European Parliament (MEP) Paulo Rangel.

The Wake-Up Bus sleep study gathered 12,434 online responses from July to September 2013. The prevalence of high level of daytime sleepiness (Epworth Sleepiness Scale) varied between below 20% (Turkey, Croatia, and Italy) and above 50% (Austria and Portugal). In the whole sample 20.5% of the respondents fell asleep at the wheel in the previous two years. This prevalence varied between 6.1% in Croatia and 34.7% in Netherlands. The main determinants of falling asleep at the wheel were male gender, driving exposure, daytime sleepiness and obstructive sleep apnea risk.

Among the respondents who fell asleep at the wheel 7% had a road traffic accident as a result. Of the 167 sleep related accidents 13.2% involved at least one person receiving hospital care and 3.6% resulted in at least 1 fatality. The most frequently reported reasons for falling asleep at the wheel were poor sleep on the previous night (42.5%) and poor sleeping habits in general (34.1%). To a lesser extent, feeling unwell (18.6%) and having been driving for a long time (16.2%) were also reported reasons for falling asleep at the wheel.

Despite the differences in the frequency of falling asleep at the wheel between countries common modifiable determinants for this problem were found across Europe.

About the European Sleep Research Society (ESRS): The ESRS is an international scientific non-profit organization and promotes all aspects of sleep research and sleep medicine. These include the publication of the Journal of Sleep Research (JSR), the organization of scientific meetings, and the promotion of training and education, the dissemination of information, and the establishment of fellowships and awards.

About the Wake-Up Bus Project: The Wake-Up Bus project is collaboration between the ESRS and ANSS member societies to raise awareness of the role of sleepiness as one of the main causes of road accidents. The project is jointly organized by: Dr. Marta Gonçalves, President, Portuguese Sleep Association, Dr. Ludger Grote, ANSS Chairperson, Dr. Roberto Amici, Chairperson, ESRS EU Committee, and Dr. Philippe Peigneux, President, ESRS.

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