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## UK roads pale in comparison to European counterparts, according to drivers

Most drivers that have travelled abroad in Europe prefer the state of roads across the Channel compared to the UK's pothole-ridden ones, according to new research from [RAC Europe](#).

Six-in-10 (62%) motorists say local roads in Europe are in better condition with fewer potholes than equivalent roads in the UK, with only a fifth (17%) thinking UK roads are in better shape than those on the continent.

Concerningly, more than half (57%) of drivers also think there are fewer, less severe potholes on Europe's motorways than on the UK's high-speed equivalents, both of which carry millions of drivers a day. Just one-in-five (19%) said the UK fares better while 14% said there was little or no difference.

Of the five aspects of driving the RAC asked drivers to compare between the UK and Europe, the UK scored highest on just one – the ease of understanding road signs, with a third (30%) saying they find signage more straightforward at home. However, a much greater proportion (55%) believe there is little difference and one-in-10 (10%) say they find European road signs easier to read.

In contrast, 37% of drivers thought painted road markings – such as junctions and give way lines – were easier to see on foreign roads while 32% saw little difference, compared to a fifth (21%) of drivers who think painted markings are more visible in the UK. Meanwhile, a third (34%) feel roadside litter is much less of an issue abroad than it is this side of the Channel, with just 11% saying they think UK roads are cleaner than those in Europe.

RAC Europe spokesman Rod Dennis said: “There's much talk about just how dire the state of the UK's local roads are, but to hear drivers think they are significantly worse than elsewhere in Europe is shocking. This begs the question: if other countries can manage to have decent quality highways to drive on, why can't we? It's even more concerning from a safety perspective to learn just how many drivers think the UK's motorways are plagued with potholes compared to the smooth surfaces of their European counterparts, as it's these high-speed routes that carry most traffic.

“Aside from having fewer potholes, European roads also come up trumps for their lack of litter and better visibility of road markings. So, it's not just better weather drivers are benefitting from when they're abroad – the condition of the roads makes them safer to drive on too.”

The RAC also asked drivers about the vital car maintenance checks they carry out before driving in European countries. A quarter (25%) admitted they don't check their car's coolant levels before setting off, which helps regulate vehicle temperatures – something that's even more important when the weather is hot. A further quarter (25%) said they sometimes monitor coolant levels ahead of a trip while more than half (56%) check before most journeys.

A similar proportion – two-in-10 (20%) – said they don't complete a vitally important oil check before a long trip, and a quarter (24%) only do some of the time. Fortunately, 56% of those surveyed said they check their vehicle's oil most or all the time.

When asked about their tyres, motorists were more cautious. Nearly seven-in-10 (69%) mostly or always check if their tyres are inflated to the right pressures before a drive abroad, while more than a third (67%) check their tyres have a good tread and are not damaged. Only 9% said they don't know or never check if their tyres are inflated while very worryingly, 11% don't know or never check the condition of their tyres.

Rod continued: "The positive news is that even in countries where the roads appear to be better, most drivers are being diligent with essential vehicle checks and making sure their tyres are in good shape. However, it's also very important to have a look at your vehicle's oil and coolant levels as both can lead to catastrophic breakdowns, something no one ever wants, especially when on holiday in Europe.

"With a fifth of drivers telling us they never check if they've got the right level of breakdown cover for their trip, we encourage anyone driving to Europe this summer to ensure they've got the [correct policy](#) to cover them if something unexpected happens to their vehicle.

"And, if you're hiring a car abroad, it's also well worth taking out [car hire excess insurance](#) as rental firms charge thousands if it gets damaged or stolen."

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## About the RAC

The RAC, an iconic UK brand, provides complete peace of mind to nearly 14

million UK private and business drivers, whatever their motoring needs. As well as its premium nationwide breakdown assistance service – with an expert branded patrol workforce attending more than two million breakdowns every year – it offers a wide range of market-leading products across insurance, legal services, vehicle inspections and service, maintenance and repair. Included in this is the first-of-its-kind nationwide Mobile Mechanics service which brings the garage to homes and workplaces.

At the forefront of new solutions for business fleets and consumers, the RAC's breakdown service is electric-ready with mobile EV charging technology and can be called on using [myRAC](#) – the all-in-one route planner, fuel finder and breakdown reporting app.

Visit the [RAC website](#).

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