

Academic Weekly Digest

School of Hospitality & Tourism Management



Ridesharing seems sustainable, but where and with whom?

Autonomous and Automated Vehicles (AVs) are linked with new mobility services and sustainable transport. Ridesharing i.e. sharing vehicles and journeys are crucial to realise these benefits. User-focused studies are scarce though, so WISE-ACT, a network of 200 experts in 42 countries chaired by Dr Nikolas Thomopoulos, has distributed a survey in more than 20 countries. This article provides evidence about AV ridesharing preferences from 7 countries, including the UK.

A gender-based analysis of AV user acceptance: Who are women more likely to share an AV ride with?

Dr Nikolas Thomopoulos

Although Kolarova et al. (2019) have confirmed that Shared AV use is a less attractive option compared to Private AV, it is widely acknowledged that AVs will only deliver the anticipated benefits if used as part of a Shared AV fleet. The literature has also reported that women are more likely to own and use AVs in the future (Panagiotopoulos and Dimitrakopoulos, 2018). Thus it is essential to understand who are travellers willing to share their AV ride with, particularly female ones. WISE-ACT experts designed and distributed this survey targeting selected socio-economic groups, including both younger and older adults. The data collection process was designed and co-ordinated by Dr Nikolas Thomopoulos to ensure sufficient diversity and gender balance among the sample. This was a key study objective since the literature has reported that personal security is a significant factor for female respondents who often feel less comfortable travelling in the same vehicle with strangers. Findings based on 1,772 respondents indicate that the Value of Time is lower for AVs because travellers anticipate that they would be able to complete other activities while in an AV instead of driving a conventional car (Cohen and Hopkins, 2019).



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Female travelers prefer not to share their AV journeys with a single male or with two male co-travelers, particularly in northern Europe

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Yet, the Value of Time differs between Shared AVs compared to Private AVs, which is reasonable given the reduced convenience when travelling with unknown co-passengers. Interestingly, female respondents are willing to share their AV journey with other female travellers as co-passengers but not with a single male or two male co-passengers. These results were particularly evident in northern Europe e.g. Finland, Iceland, UK. This analysis provides valuable evidence in support of developing security protocols and targeted campaigns promoting a gender-balanced approach for AVs and particularly Shared AVs.

Further Reading:

Polydoropoulou, A., Tsouros, I., Thomopoulos, N., Pronello, C., Elvarsson, A., Sigþórsson, H., Dadashzadeh, N., Stojmenova, K., Sodnik, J., Neophytou, S., Esztergár-Kiss, D., Hamadneh, J., Parkhurst, G., Etzioni, S., Shifan, Y., di Ciommo, F. (2021). Who is willing to share their AV? Insights about gender differences among seven countries, *Sustainability*.

Link: bit.ly/3HWdN5l