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## Comparative Study of Road Traffic Rules in Qatar Compared to Western Countries

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### Abstract

This paper presents the overall results of the comparative study of road traffic rules and corresponding enforcement actions in Qatar compared to western countries specifically the State of Florida in the United States and the United Kingdom. The primary purpose of the study is to provide comparisons with major western countries, and therefore possible guidance in the development and implementation of driving policies in Qatar. Therefore, the main focus of the data collection was on countries that would be considered well established as far as traffic rules and traffic safety. The data collection process covers the detail of the rules and respective enforcement for different topics of interest. The selection of the topics was based on considering that the set of topics had to be sufficiently broad to serve the main purpose of this study. Topics that are either far away from Qatar competencies or that do not have the potential to present interesting best practices are not included. Topics are aggregated by themes in order to enable a systematic approach in the data collection, analysis, and structured presentation of the results. Driving requirements, professional transport, road characteristics, safety equipment, traffic rules, and vehicle characteristics are the six themes used in the aggregation of the topics of interest.

The analysis of each topic covers detailed aspects on the rule, control and enforcement framework, and control and enforcement practice. The results of reviewing the traffic laws of the three studied countries indicated that a high percentage of laws and enforcement rules are similar in concept. It was found that the United Kingdom's traffic law is more strict when it comes to minimum age of driving and Qatar's traffic law is more restrict when it comes to running red-light violations. It was also found that Qatar does not currently have traffic laws that address seat belts use for children under 14 years of age, manslaughter and vehicular homicide, or blood alcohol content specifications for driving under influence.

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## 1. Introduction

Many accidents, injuries, and fatalities are caused by a driver that broke traffic laws. In order to improve the trend towards stronger reductions in fatalities, a strong involvement and cooperation between the authorities of different countries is necessary. Major steps towards this goal can be achieved through the gathering of information on the implementation and enforcement of traffic laws, the transfer of information and best practices, and initiating and supporting measures to avoid accidents with an emphasis on human factors. Therefore, there was a need to carry out a comparative assessment of road traffic rules and corresponding enforcement actions in different countries. It is expected that the information on the traffic rules in force in each country as well as their comparative assessment will show the necessity of changing some of the traffic rules where this should result in improved road safety. The results will also be made available to decision makers as well as to road users.

The main objective of this study is to provide information and to make a comparative analysis on road traffic rules and corresponding enforcement in different countries that would not be considered most directly comparable to Qatar, economically and demographically. These countries include the State of Florida from the United States, the United Kingdom from the European Union. This study will mainly contribute to efforts to improve road safety by providing information on different enforcement strategies to the decision makers. This will enable the detection of best practices in specific issues; supplying useful information to the general public, and increasing the knowledge of the rules to be followed within his/her own country and when travelling, by road, to other countries. From the analysis of the information collected, a set of policy conclusions and recommendations will be produced.

## 2. Traffic Laws Included

Due to broad range of traffic laws available in each country, it was necessary to clearly define the scope of this work, which mainly focus on the driver perspective, including road traffic rules applied to general vehicle traffic and specific rules applied to goods traffic. Therefore, choices were made before starting the data collection and analysis of the rules to focus on several of the most important laws. These laws include:

- Driving Age
- Seat Belt Laws
- Driving Under Influence
- Running Red-Light
- Using Mobile Phones While Driving
- Driving in a Dangerous Way
- Manslaughter and Vehicular Homicide
- Failure to Stop After an Accident
- Speeding

Most of these topics are sufficiently broad to serve the main purpose of the paper, which is a wide inventory of traffic safety laws. On the other hand topics that do not have the potential to present interesting best practice were not included. For each topic covered in the study, there is a common set of elements for which information has been collected and analyzed.

- Rule
- Fine
- Imprisonment
- Points

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