

# Lifespan attitudes and self-serving evaluations about older drivers



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## Objective

→ Investigation of general population's attitudes about older drivers and road-safety measures aiming at them

## Introduction

- ❑ **Driving is a complex activity** (sensorial, physical, cognitive, and psychological) that may put older drivers in difficulty.  
→ Could easily trigger an **awareness of their age-related changes** (AARC).
- ❑ AARC: Experiences that make a person aware that his or her behavior/performance have **changed with aging** (Diehl & Wahl, 2010).
- ❑ Moreover, older drivers are surrounded both by **negative and positive stereotypes about their driving skills**, e.g., quickly overwhelmed, slow, more peaceful, etc. (Joanisse, Gagnon, & Voloaca, 2012).
- ❑ **Specific coercive measures** to increase road safety aiming at them, e.g., medical examination (OECD, 2011).

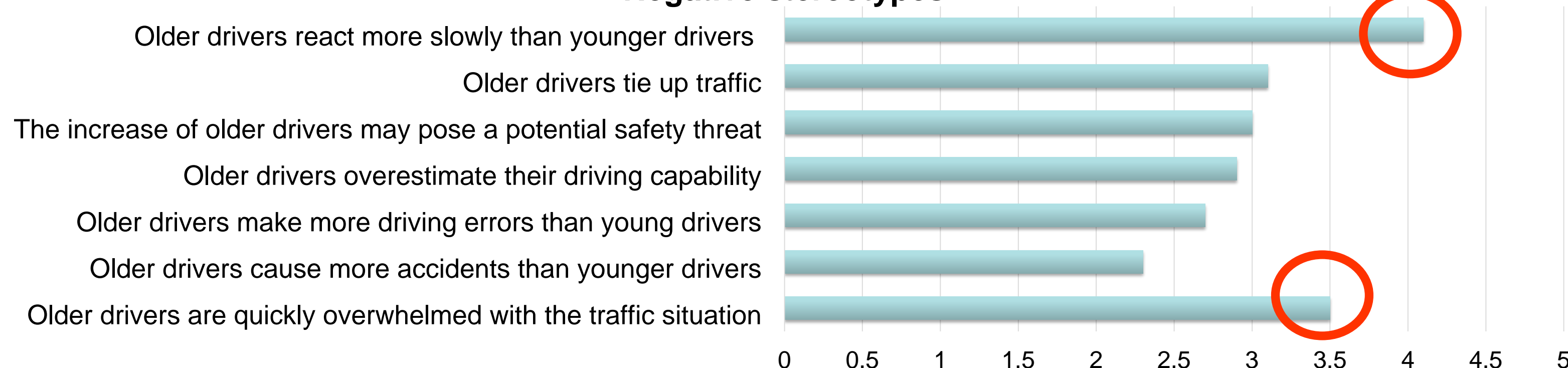
What are the general population's attitudes about older drivers?  
Which road-safety measures aim at them?

## Method

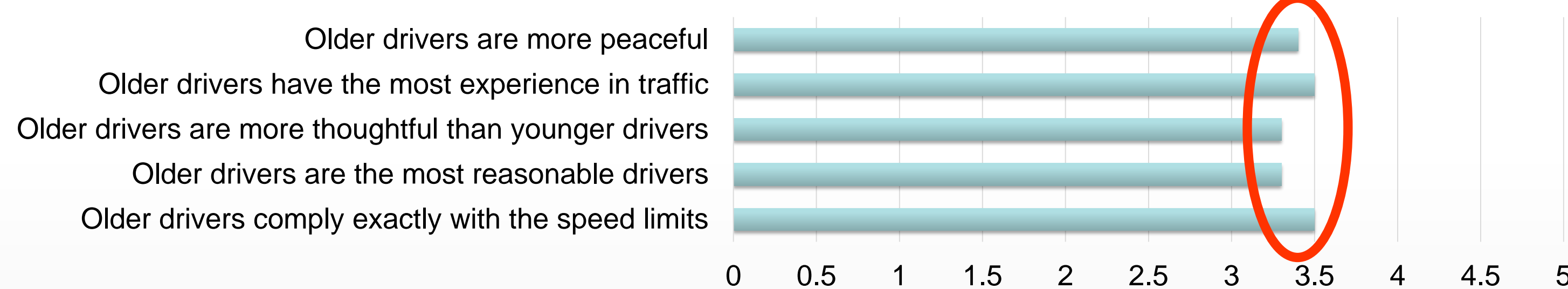
- ❑ **Participants:** 350 adults with a driving license aged between 19 and 88 (mean age = 49.4 years) and 52.6% were women.
- ❑ **Measures:**  
A 20-item self-report questionnaire with a 5-point Likert scale (1 = "don't agree at all" to 5 = "fully agree") about:
  - **Stereotypes about older drivers** (k = 12)  
Negative stereotypes (e.g., "older drivers cause more accidents than younger drivers")  
Positive stereotypes (e.g., "older drivers comply exactly with the speed limits").
  - **Coercive measures to increase road safety** (k = 8)  
E.g., "older drivers should pass a road safety training frequently".
- Other measures: Subjective age estimates
  - 1) "At what age do you estimate that a driver is old?"
  - 2) "At what age do you estimate that a person is old?"

## Results

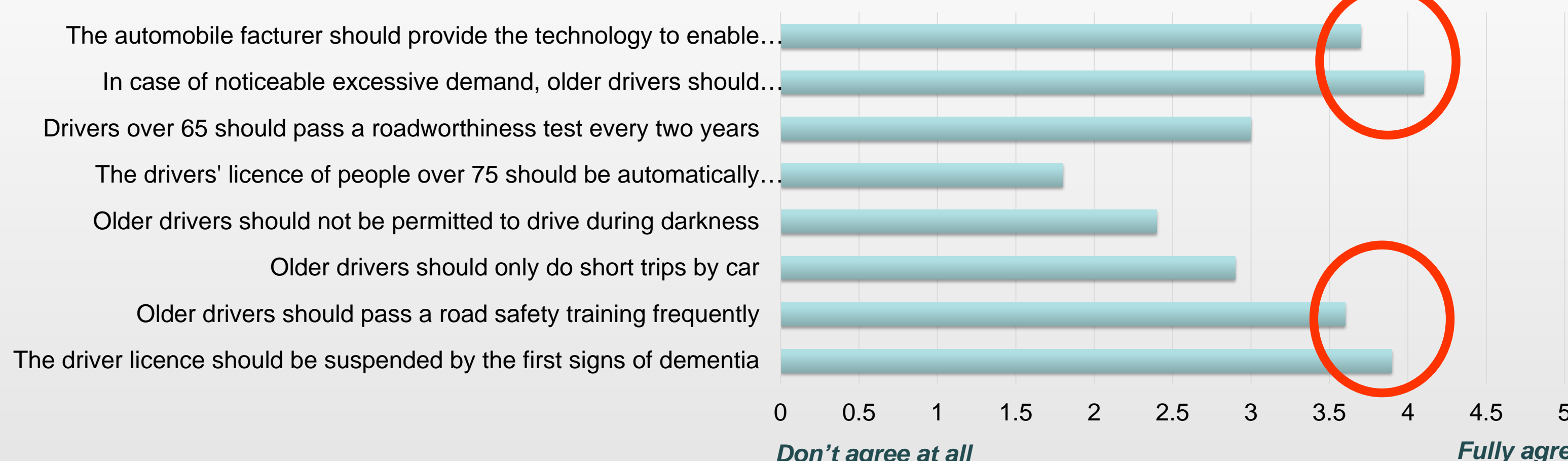
### Negative stereotypes



### Positive Stereotypes

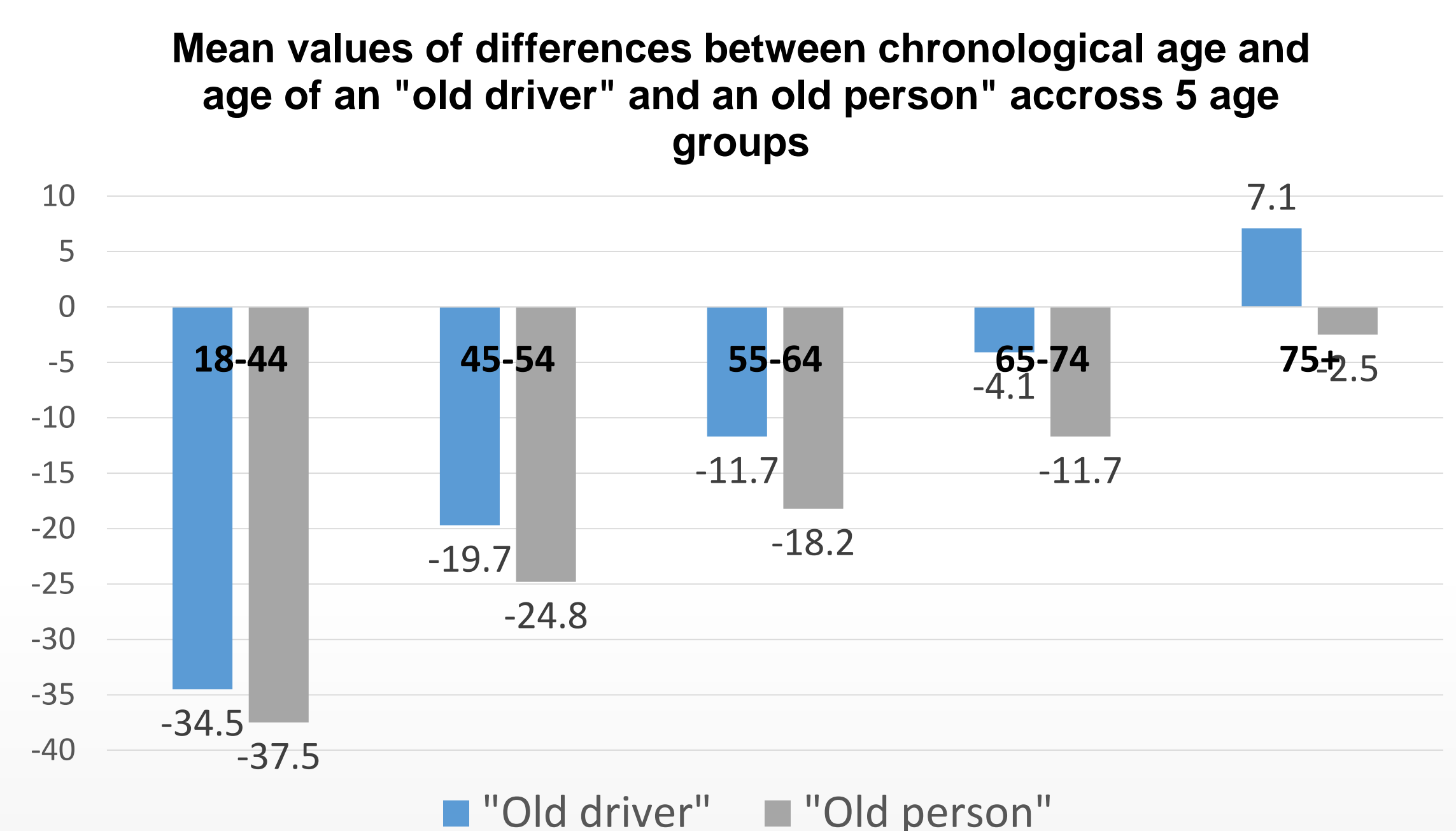


### Measures to increase road safety



### Subjective age estimates

The estimated age for an "old driver" was lower than for an "old person" (69.8 versus 75.8),  $t(348) = -12.31, p < .001$ .



### Prediction of stereotypes/agreement with measures

**Negative stereotypes:** predicted by agreement with measures to increase road safety ( $\beta = .43; p < .001$ ), positive stereotypes ( $\beta = -.16; p < .001$ ), chronological age ( $\beta = -.34; p < .001$ ), and difference "age - old person" ( $\beta = -.20; p = .01$ ),  
**Positive stereotypes:** predicted by agreement with negative stereotypes ( $\beta = -.27; p < .001$ ).  
**Agreement with measures:** predicted by agreement with negative stereotypes ( $\beta = .54; p < .001$ ), difference "age - old driver" ( $\beta = .28; p < .001$ ) and chronological age ( $\beta = -.22; p = .03$ ).

## Conclusion

- Results revealed an overall **rather positive view of older drivers** and a low agreement with coercive road-safety measures.
  - "Aging" is perceived as **more precocious for "old drivers"** than for "old persons" and this difference increases with age.
  - Agreement with negative stereotypes and road safety coercive measure decreases with age whereas agreement with positive stereotypes increases with age → presence of **self-serving evaluations in older drivers**.
- ⇒ Road safety measures should avoid focusing solely on chronological age to circumvent negative stereotyping with aging and **unjustified driving cessation**

