

Distr.: General
14 September 2018

English only

Economic Commission for Europe

Inland Transport Committee

Global Forum for Road Traffic Safety

Seventy-seventh session

Geneva, 18-21 September 2018

Item 3 (b) of the provisional agenda

Convention on Road Traffic (1968):

Driving permits

Submitted by Australian Automobile Association (AAA)

This is a complete survey of AAA Australia, FIA's Affiliate in Australia, which has carried out a qualitative study on how international driving permits are currently used by motorists.

IDP SURVEY – MARCH 2018

In March 2018 the AAA surveyed three months of online IDP applicants to get a better understanding of how and where IDPs were being used.

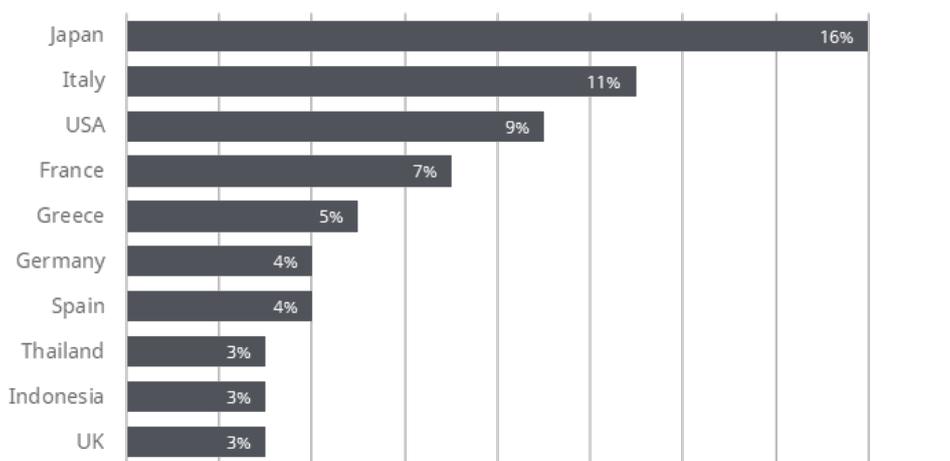
On completion of the survey, respondents were invited to share travel stories featuring their IDP, to be used for a social media promotional campaign. A selection of the stories is included below the high-level survey results.

Responses

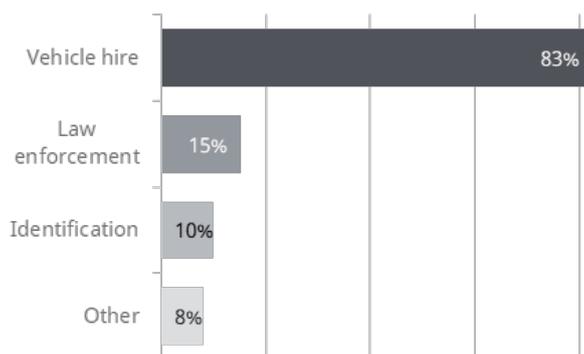
2,909



Where did you use your IDP?



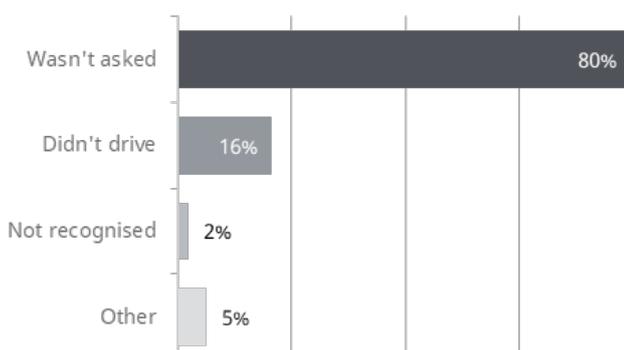
How did you use your IDP?



Selected responses to "Other"

- "While on holiday in Japan, it was required when driving a go-kart on public roads."
- "Employer motorpool division requires it before issuing a company vehicle"
- "As a safeguard to ensure I was covered by the insurance policy"
- "As part of applying for a local drivers licence"
- "As peace of mind"

Why didn't you use your IDP?



Selected responses to "Other"

- "I didn't get it on time"
- "Didn't end up going overseas"

Belinda Malone (Greece)

I used my IDP in a remote area of western Greece whilst doing a 6 week stint of volunteering. It was fun being able to drive somewhere a bit different and it was really useful to our whole team for me to be able to use my license in Greece - we had a long term hire car there for getting to and from the project as well as some fun island visits on weekends.



Casey Talli (Japan)

I applied for an International Driving Permit before I went to Japan in September 2017. I used it to go-kart through the streets of Roppongi. Mario Karting through the streets of Japan was an experience like no other and I couldn't have done it without my international driving permit



Nancy Khuu (Japan)

One of my dreams for visiting Japan was to see Mount Fuji. The first time we went was with family, so flexibility on the trip was low. Unfortunately on this first trip, I was not able to sight the mountain. The second time we visited Japan, I came back with a vengeance to see the mountain, so we decided to actually stay in the Mount Fuji area so that we were pretty much guaranteed to see it. Initially when planning this trip, I hadn't considered renting a car as I understood Japan's public transport system was top notch. However, when I tried to work out the logistics of our Mt. Fuji stay, I figured that the best way to mind our luggage around check-out times was to rent a vehicle. Not only would this allow us to go wherever we wanted easily, but it also meant we didn't have to find locker hire for our luggage. Having a car in the Fuji area was the best decision we made. With a rental vehicle, we were able to get from place to place with ease (there were not as many train lines in this area as Tokyo City itself). Having a car allowed us to drive from lake to lake and see Mt. Fuji from various different angles. I went crazy fulfilling my Japanese dream of seeing the mountain; my eyes were definitely satiated. We had also spoken to another couple who did a similar trip. Despite spending the same number of days in Fuji, they weren't able to see as much as we did as they had to rely solely on public transport. At the end of our Japan trip, my partner and I both agreed that our favourite leg was Fuji area. This was definitely because we had the freedom and flexibility of having our own rental car, all thanks to applying for an International Driver's Permit



Amanda Virtu (Japan)

My husband and I had booked our annual trip to Japan in 2017 and we couldn't wait to try the one thing we'd heard so much about - Our very own Super Mario Kart adventure on the streets of Tokyo in our own GoKart. When we visited the MariKar website to book our time slot or a bright and shiny night in Tokyo, we were advised on there that we had to have an IDP. So, in that moment, we jumped on AAA and submitted our request for an IDP because there was no way we were going to miss out on this awesome experience.

Fast forward 4 weeks and there we were, **showing our IDP to the team at MariKar in Japan and getting suited up** (in Yoshi and Bowser costumes of course) to hit the road on our Mario Kart adventure.

The IDP allowed us to enjoy 3 hours of exhilarating, heart racing FUN! We drove on the roads of Tokyo (with all the other cars who were so used to seeing GoKarts on the roads it was normal to them) and over the famous Rainbow Bridge allowing us to see the colourful city of lights whilst having the best time on the Go Karts ever!!!

We also made our way down to the famous Shibuya Crossing (where 1 million people cross there daily) and were totally the centre of attention as tourists (and non tourists) waved at us with such excitement to see us driving around in Mario Kart costumes and see what a great culture it brings to the life of Japan. We will never forget this experience and can't wait to go back to experience it all again in the daylight!



Kim Loveridge (Japan)

I am currently **using my international drivers permit in Japan where I am on a working holiday visa, working at a lodge in the mountains of Japan** for the winter snow season. One of my jobs here is to drive our guests from our lodge to various locations around town so they can go skiing at the resorts or have dinner out at one of the restaurants in our gorgeous traditional village of Nozawa Onsen. It snows here alot, with the side of roads piling up with snow up to 3 metres high! What a good challenge it has been taking care driving on twisting narrow roads and avoiding icy sections. It is an adventure to say the least, and learning hoe to snowboard here had been amazing too! Here are some attached of the beautiful village I get to drive around in, and of myself snowboarding!



Robyn Lean (Italy)

We were travelling through Tuscany in Italy, and suddenly our GPS had us going down a road that was not meant for through traffic - a nice cobblestone path. We were warned by the locals - via sign language - that our photo may have been taken Anyway 5 minutes later in the rolling hills of Tuscany we were pulled over by police. Unsure of whether it was a coincidence. **Anyway thankfully we had our international licence - had actually left our Australian one in the villa. The International Licence was the only one they were interested in - well we never received a ticket - our small amount of money paid for the licence suddenly became a very good investment!!**



Bryony Sanaghan (Japan)

I recently used my international driving permit when travel lining in Japan. I went "mario-karting" with a group of friends around Tokyo. Had so much fun you wouldn't believe zooming around the streets with the cars and trucks, through the tunnels and over the bridges!



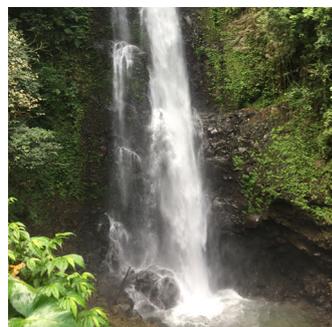
Daniel Rogerson (Bali)

In July 2017 I spent one week travelling through the more remote regions of the island of Bali. Before leaving I prearranged hire of a 125cc scooter, and my IDP.

I also mapped out a route I could follow for the week taking in all the places that I wanted to see. I decided to take all of my own riding gear including helmet, summer riding pants and jacket, I was the most over dressed rider there but my safety was always going to come first.

Over the week I visited 10 different waterfalls, stayed in village towns, ate food without any idea as to what it actually was, sat down for coffee with a local land owner and basically explored the real Bali.

The trip was amazing and very humbling, I stayed as far away from Kuta as I could as I wanted to meet the real people and to experience the real culture of this stunning country. This trip was a highlight of my travels.



Phil Brown (South Korea)

I used my IDP in Jeju Island, South Korea, where it is required for foreigners to rent a car. I spent 5 days on the island - a popular destination for domestic Korean travellers but little known to foreign tourists - and drove around seeing the great variety of sights that the island has to offer. I drove my tiny little rental car around the entire island with stops at various beaches, hiking on the snow-covered Hallasan (Korean's highest mountain), sunrise on the rim of an extinct volcano, beaches, and a wide-array of Jeju's "quirky" attractions and museums - including a teddy bear museum, stone park, glass castle, tea plantation, various art museums, and several sex-themed museums and parks (which are somehow all the rage in conservative Korea).



Driving in Jeju was relatively easy - there was little traffic outside the main city. The rental car came with a GPS but addresses had to be input in Korean (which is virtually impossible if you don't speak the language), but I luckily was able to use the maps.me app on my phone which has a built-in GPS function too. I didn't get too lost, had no incidents, and only had to refuel once which was great for the wallet. I definitely look forward to exploring more and seeing where my IDP will be useful next!

Kurt Warn (Canada)

Last year we ducked over to Whistler, Canada to visit some friends. They had got a hold of a van by the time we got there and were happy for us to commandeer it for a wee while.

We were stoked on the offer and took the opportunity to head east and drive up through the Canadian Rockies. We started off heading across B.C then Alberta to Banff, making tracks North to Jasper and returning to Whistler. It was the trip of a lifetime!



Zuru Sikharulidze (Germany)

Thanks to the IDP we were lucky enough to hire a car in Germany and drive on the Autobahn to experience the magnificent German countryside and small towns. Thank you so much!



Adrian Roach (Japan)

The absolute most fun you can have with an International License is in Tokyo Japan, racing Mario Karts through the busy streets of Tokyo. It wouldn't be a proper Mario Kart experience if you weren't in full costume and there's many different Super Mario character costumes to choose from. Riders race powerful custom built go karts as fast or as slow as you want, weaving in and out of everyday city traffic on tours of this fascinating city lasting between one and three hours during the day or night. You will not stop smiling the whole time and pedestrians get as much joy as you do, watching you zoom past waving and high-fiving as you fly by. The experience is absolutely amazing and there's only one rule, you need to have an International Drivers License to participate.



Alex MacLeod (Sri Lanka)

I was volunteering in a Sri Lankan vet clinic for a couple months, and had taken my surfboard over there to hopefully spend some time in the water. I read up on the local road rules before I left and realised I needed an international licence to buy or hire my own tuktuk. So I arranged this before I left, then hired a tuktuk for the couple months so I could travel around the island on days off and go surfing.



Walter Ketterer (Sri Lanka)

I took my family to Sri Lanka for a period of five weeks. I had travelled extensively in this country on previous occasions although the experience would be new for my family. My wife and I have seven children so transport was always going to be an issue. I had always used the public transport system and frequently used the rail system which is an excellent example of colonial British rail architecture. It was always my first choice and still is. **I arranged for an International Driving Permit through the AAA as I was sure I would need it as a backup at some stage during our trip.**



We had accommodation in the north of Colombo in a town called Negombo. Negombo is an old Portuguese fishing village which has, over the years, become almost a city in the region due to its growing population and busy way of life. We were travelling to the southern suburb of Moratuwa through the capital Colombo on several occasions to prepare for community Bible seminars that we were involved in promoting. Initially the train was great, the kids loved it and it brought back fond memories for me. One afternoon we were pushed into peak hour which is a dramatic hustle and bustle in Colombo. We made it to the city by bus and managed to get through the mayhem to the central fort railway station. Only standing room on the train to Negombo but the tight situation as we left Colombo soon became a nightmare with more and more people crushing in through the entry. We were spread throughout the coach and struggling to give the kids enough space to breathe. It was all too much and we managed to alight at Kelaniya station in tact but only just. The next train was equally packed and it was night. We waited for one more train but to no avail. Eventually we made it back to our accommodation via two buses and more walking at 9.30pm and needless to say, straight to bed.



The next day, another enjoyable rail trip to Moratuwa where our host Tony suggested we take the organisation's van, an eight seater Toyota which had seen many better days however it looked like a limousine to us. Reluctantly, I took the keys at about 3pm. **I checked my IDP and it was safe with my passport and insurance letter from my organisation, all was well.**



We started our first ever drive in Colombo. Now we were in the thick of it again, but this time, going with the flow along the busy and famous Galle Rd, through the heart of Colombo and heading for the newly built expressway. We were crawling, again at peak hour, but somehow it seemed fun, leaning over to chat to the tuk tuk drivers and asking them for directions when we weren't sure. In the sea of confusion I missed the expressway connection and we were heading on the traditional slow route back to Negombo. My daughter alongside with google maps monitoring our progress along the way. Well this was high tech stuff compared to my methods 30 years ago travelling through these parts. We made it back without incident and I felt satisfied after my first drive in Sri Lanka.

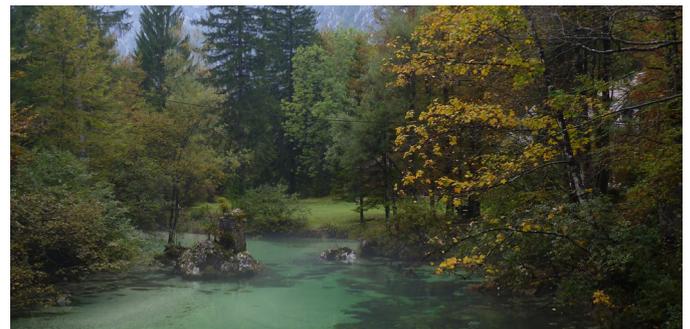
We had more friends arriving in country and we were able to take the van to manage the airport collections. Another two young ladies had arrived from Perth. I managed to leave the airport late at night and a wrong turn had me travelling in the opposite direction. Katunayake Airport is also a military airport and we were soon pulled over by a policeman who gestured for my license and didn't say too much. He examined my IDP document, looked intently at my face, examined my document and again scanned my face. Finally, he waved me on and I thanked him as respectfully as I could. Well at least now I knew I was legal.

Filling the van with fuel was good fun as we were serviced by the local guys who were keen to get us back on the road with oil in the engine (it leaked a bit) and a full tank after the cover was prised open with a screw driver almost. On another congested occasion through Negombo I managed to touch a tuk tuk ever so lightly while cueing at a railway crossing at night. I could not see the scratch and was dumbfounded with his performance as he inspected what he considered was damage and we all waited for him to accept it was time to move on. These incidents are to be avoided at all costs. Our last notable experience with our driving in Colombo was another wrong turn coming back from the airport. This time we were heading on the expressway south to Colombo instead of north to Negombo and we had a late night drive through Jaela before getting back on the expressway home. All in all we had a very enjoyable and interesting experience driving through Colombo, **of course made possible with our International Drivers Permit.** I would recommend the permit for overseas travel even as a back up, it was great.

Jayden Hunter (Slovenia/Italy/Austria)

I travelled to Europe in September/October 2017, first stop Slovenia. After just over 40 hours straight in transit I landed in Ljubljana shortly after 9pm and **picked up my hire car (an Opel Corsa) at the airport with my IDP**, feeling rather exhausted! I then had to drive 90min to Portoroz on the coast, and of course it was raining, dark, a manual car and I was driving on the opposite side of the road in a haze of fatigue wanting nothing but bed!

I made it safely and spent the next 10 days driving around Slovenia, an amazingly beautiful densely forested country, with picturesque mountains and rivers. The car ran perfectly and once I got used to the narrower roads I felt safe and comfortable driving through the country, although next time I'd probably pay extra for an automatic vehicle. For the most part the roads were in very good condition, they only deteriorated once I get into the mountains between Bovec and Bled. In fact, the road was washed away just past the Vrsic Pass so I had to detour back to Bovec before driving the long way around to Bled through Italy and Austria. Funny thing is it only added on about 90mins to the whole trip! Slovenia is a very small country, easy to get around and I would certainly drive there again.

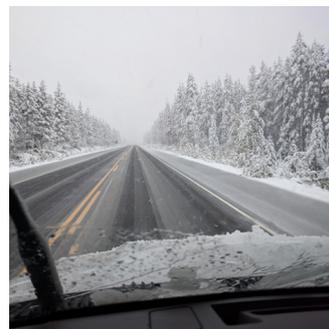


Richard Perry (Canada)

I took my family of four to Canada, starting in Calgary. **We found out from friends that an IDP was required, and presented it when hiring a car in Calgary.**

We had no issues with hiring the car, and used the hire car to gain familiarity with driving "on the wrong side of the road", and dealing with 4-way intersections before after a few days we began the main event: touring the Rockies in a great big RV, borrowed from generous friends (photo attached). The RV was great in every sense and we saw a lot in supreme comfort (but we wouldn't want one in Australia - too thirsty and too difficult to get into places off the beaten track).

Later, we continued driving when we visited Winnipeg, Manitoba for a family wedding. Having the freedom to drive was supremely convenient, especially as **public transport in Winnipeg isn't fantastic.**



Barry Carter (US)

Recently, when touring across the U.S, **I used my IDP to test drive the latest Dodge Challenger Hellcat.** I fell in love with this particular car while cruising around the States. It's the fastest American muscle car ever built, and I was able to take one for a test drive thanks to the supportive sales assistant at the Dodge dealership. At first they were reluctant to allow me behind the wheel because my NSW drivers license was foreign to them. **But after producing my IDP, they agreed,** and I was able to complete a once in lifetime opportunity.

Rob Hiller (Europe)

My wife and I **always travel with an IDP when planning to drive overseas as it is never easy to predict when one will be needed or not. It is easier to remove any risks hence we always purchase one each.**

On two reasonably recent trips we have “leased” through Renault Eurodrive rather than renting as, for us, it is a better and cheaper experience when the time with the car is significant. One particular trip saw us in a Renault and, as part of the cars registration process when driven/purchased by a non-EU resident (temporary registration), the car was fitted with a red French number plate which stands out from the traditional black and white on the road.



This can, at times, mean that the car also stands out to the local authorities. On one such occasion we were driving near The Palace of Versailles through a busy roundabout that had local authorities monitoring traffic flows. Not surprisingly we were pulled over for no other reason than to check our ID and other credentials (the red number plates appeared to be the beacon).

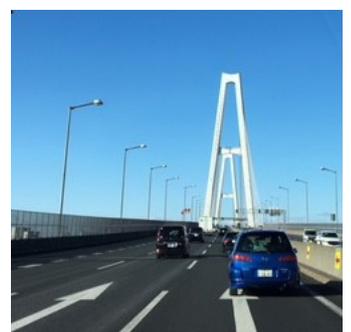
On production of my Australian Driver’s License (NSW) there was general confusion amongst some of the officials checking our ID. Within seconds I understood the issue and produced my IDP and registration documents which showed everything they required in their language. Suffice to say we were sent on our way with a nod and a smile... the **IDP saved some interesting, and potentially time consuming, communications that afternoon.**

Another simple example of where an IDP can come in handy is that it can often happily **be used as “security”** when renting equipment eg we rented a Segway in Rome for an hour or so recently and passed over our IDP to the rental company which was sufficient for them to entrust their valuable machines to us.

Reiko Reynolds (Japan)

We went to Japan during the last school holiday. **We drove everywhere using the international driver’s licence.** The highlights of our holiday were road trips to Nagashima Spaland in Mie prefecture (amusement park) and Hakuba in Nagano for skiing. We had a great time in Japan because we had freedom of going anywhere we wanted anytime we wanted without bothering to use public transport.

Roads and highways in Japan are pretty well maintained and surprisingly there’s no much traffic! We even learned to spot the speed camera warning signs. It’s quite cheap to hire a car especially if you hire for a week or more. We truly **recommend everyone to hire a car** and drive around Japan to discover places that are hard to get to by public transport.



Jorden Garnaut (Java)

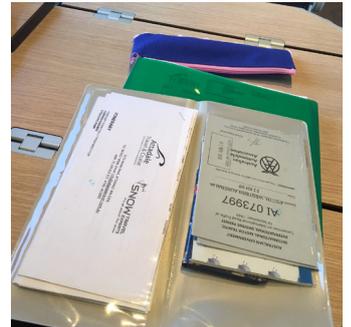
Having the IDP allowed me the opportunity to own and drive a motorcycle around Java without any worries of consequences. I am currently spending a year abroad in Indonesia and having an IDP has meant skipping a lengthy process of obtaining an Indonesian driving permit.



Annie Horner (Italy)

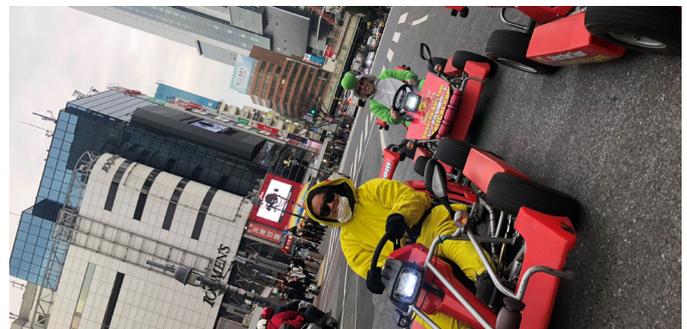
My name is annie and we just got back from our European honeymoon. It's certainly going to be an amazing holiday to remember. **And our international driving license is the one document that helped us get back home to Australia.** We had just hired our car in Rome and we got a flat tyre.

While my husband was changing it we were robbed by 2 men. Our **international license got us access to the consulate** and it was a lifesaver. We made many jokes in Italy about this being our only document. More like our lifeline. I'm sure we will look back at this and laugh one day!



Rachel Tony (Japan)

I used my IDP to try the MariKart in Japan. This is an experience not for the faint hearted. We drove through the streets of Tokyo at speeds of almost 70km/h on the go kart. It was truly a unique experience to see Japan from a low height alongside the daily traffic of this bustling city. Sights included Rainbow bridge, Tokyo tower. The worlds busiest pedestrian intersection at Shibuya and streets of Shinagawa. The Japanese people are so respectful and drive cautiously. It is an experience that I would recommend for those into cars and all things Japan.



Jess Gordon (Japan)

Driving Go-Karts through the streets of Japan dressed as characters from Japanese culture is unforgettable! Getting a IDP was beyond easy. This experience was one of my highlights from my trip to Japan. It's a must do for any geek at heart, so **don't forget to get your IDP organised before you go!**



Peter Keeda (Italy)

After a few days in Palermo, Sicily, I went to pick up my rental car for which we had booked and paid a deposit. Many times previously, in many different cities in Europe, we had used our Australian driver's license - it must 30-40 years ago that some one asked to see my IDP. Well, in Palermo they refused to rent us a car and refused to return our deposit ... For the next week or so we manged getting around Sicily by public transport and an occasional taxi.

We arrived in Syracuse where we related our sad tale to our hotel manager. He picked up the phone to a friend of his who manages a (well-known) car-rental agency in Syracuse and **she agreed to rent us a car without IDL. She warned us that there is a remote possibility that the police might stop us, in which case we would have to pay a fine.** We drove around Sicily for another week and returned the car to Palermo airport without being stopped by the police. We did, however, get stuck in a very narrow, steep alley which was closed at the bottom and had to reverse uphill for about 100 metres without scraping the sides ... I have since heard that everyone has a similar story!



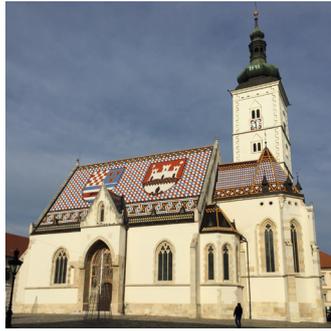
Pip Barbary (Norway)

When I went to Norway and Europe last year, I registered for my IDP not knowing whether I would need it or not on the trip. I ended up being so glad I had as we rented a car for 2 days to drive around some beautiful (and treacherous) parts of Northern Norway which is really remote. Turned out there was a snow storm on top of the fact that in January in Norway there are zero daylight hours and we literally saw none of the mountains and lakes we were planning to. We did however spend a magical NYE in a secluded part of a fishing village taking photos of the Aurora Borealis which we couldn't have done without a car. Here is a photo of the state of the car on the morning we hired it!



Sanjay Farshid (Croatia)

I used my IDP to make the most of my time travelling through Croatia with my girlfriend. We did a road trip through five towns in five days – Zagreb, Slunj, Zadar, Split, and Dubrovnik.



Tyson Kedgley (Japan)

We went Mario Karting through Tokyo, which was SO much fun we had to do it again in Osaka. So glad we found about it before we went otherwise we wouldn't have been able to get the IDP outside Australia.



Simon Hughes (Germany)

"It has always been a lifelong dream of mine to drive a 911 Porsche. Let alone drive a 911 Porsche on the Autobahn in Germany. Luckily late last year my partners grandparents were celebrating their 60th wedding anniversary, which gave us a big reason to head to Europe (I'm 38 years old and have never been)

Upon reading the Porsche drive website's guidelines I was to have an international driving permit. With over a month to go I ordered online and put the address as my partner's mother's house in Germany. After travelling in Europe for a couple of weeks the permit had still not arrived. I was a little worried at this stage so I took precautionary action and ordered another driving permit to be sent to my parents house and then to send to me via international courier.



I was not going to miss this experience of a lifetime!! So the permit arrived at my parents house on the Friday evening and I was due to drive the Porsche the coming Sunday. My mother headed to the post office on Tuesday and they claimed that it would take 2-4 days to get there. Friday came along and my original permit arrived (it took just over 4 weeks) yay! My dream was slowly becoming a reality.

We woke early on Sunday morning to make the drive to Stuttgart. The weather was terrible and raining so we weren't going to be able to drive with the roof down ;) The car was an absolute dream to drive, a 2017 Porsche 911 Targa. The sports mode really kicked off more power when driving. The max speed we ended up cruising at was only around 217-20kmh. The spray off the cars in front of us was making it hard to see. I kept checking the speedo and feeling like I was going to fast due to the limited speed restrictions here in Australia. For the most part people drove far more efficiently on the hwy and only a few people held up the left hand lane. It was a little weird getting used to driving on the wrong side of the road and also the wrong side of the car. All up it was an amazing 3 hour drive in the Porsche and a life long dream unlocked.

Can't wait to go back there..... The international express item arrived on the Monday (the day we left)