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The impact of cognitive functioning on driving performance of older persons in comparison to younger age groups: a systematic review.

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14 Abstract

Older drivers are at a severely higher risk for motor vehicle crash involvement. Due to the global aging 15 16 of the population, this increased crash risk has a significant impact on society, as well as on an older individual's quality of life. For this reason, there is a need for understanding how normal age-related 17 18 changes in cognition and underlying brain dynamics impact driving performance to identify the 19 functional and neurophysiological biomarkers that could be used to design strategies to preserve or 20 improve safe driving behavior in older persons. This review provides an overview of the literature on 21 age-related changes in cognitive functioning and brain dynamics that impact driving simulator 22 performance of healthy persons. A systematic literature search spanning the last ten years was 23 conducted, resulting in 22 eligible studies. Results indicated that various aspects of cognition, most importantly executive function, complex attention, and dual tasking, were associated with driving 24 25 performance, irrespective of age. However, there was a distinct age-related decline in cognitive and 26 driving performance. Older persons had a more variable, less consistent driving simulator 27 performance, such as more variable speed adaptation or less consistent lane keeping behavior. Only 28 a limited number of studies evaluated the underlying brain dynamics in driving performance. 29 Therefore, future studies should focus on implementing neuroimaging techniques to further unravel 30 the neural correlates of driving performance.

31 **Keywords**: driving performance, healthy aging, cognition, dual tasking, neuroimaging, driving 32 simulator

33

34 1 Introduction

35 With the continued aging of the population, the proportion of older persons in the possession of a 36 driver's license is expected to increase further in the coming years (Eby et al., 2008). Yet, older drivers 37 have a higher risk of involvement in a fatal or injury-inflicting motor vehicle accident, especially when 38 they only drive a limited number of kilometers per year (Hakamies-Blomqvist, 2004; Langford et al., 39 2006). Additionally, research has indicated that older drivers are more likely to be involved in crashes 40 in which they are deemed to be responsible for the crash (Baldock et al., 2002; Ichikawa et al., 2015; Kubitzki & Janitzek, 2009; Lombardi et al., 2017). Nevertheless, driving remains an important part of 41 42 the life of older persons, as this warrants mobility and functional independence. As such, driving 43 cessation at a higher age could be a risk factor for depression, or for an accelerated admission into a 44 retirement facility (Chihuri et al., 2016; Siren & Haustein, 2015; Windsor et al., 2007). For this reason, it is of utmost importance to older persons that they can drive safely for as long as possible. Therefore, 45 46 this systematic review aims to synthesize the literature regarding the impact of normal age-related 47 changes in cognition and brain dynamics on driving performance in order to provide additional 48 insights that could help create strategies to preserve and improve older persons' driving 49 performance.

50 Due to normal aging processes visual, motor, and cognitive abilities essential for driving can deteriorate (Harada et al., 2013; Salthouse, 2019). Adequate cognitive function is needed for 51 52 appropriate decision-making while driving. It facilitates the selection and interpretation of relevant 53 information to generate a correct driving response. An age-related decline in cognitive function, such 54 as a deterioration of executive function, attention, dual tasking ability, visuo-spatial abilities, 55 processing speed, or memory can all negatively affect an everyday activity such as driving (Anstey & Wood, 2011; Cuenen et al., 2015; Cuenen et al., 2016; Salthouse, 2019; Wagner et al., 2011). Knowing 56 57 how driving performance is affected by this cognitive deterioration is necessary for determining a 58 preventive and interventional approach for increasing driving safety at an older age.

59 The cognitive domain of executive function is related to the capabilities that enable one to 60 successfully engage in independent, appropriate, purposeful, and self-serving behavior. This includes 61 the executive functions such as planning, working memory, inhibition, mental flexibility, and 62 problem-solving (Chan et al., 2008; Lezak et al., 2012). Subsequently, the domain of attention has 63 different aspects: (i) selective or focused attention, i.e. the ability to focus on specific information 64 while ignoring distracting stimuli; (ii) sustained attention, i.e. the ability to maintain concentration 65 over a period of time; and (iii), divided attention, i.e. the ability to focus on more than one task or 66 stimulus simultaneously. Adequate executive and attention skills are also a prerequisite for dual- and 67 multitasking performance, i.e. the ability to coordinate several simultaneous or serial tasks to achieve an overall goal (MacPherson, 2018). Furthermore, multitasking is also considered an essential skill for 68 69 driving, as driving consists of operating the vehicle, paying attention to traffic and surroundings, 70 possibly listening to the radio or talking to a passenger, and all of this while the driver also has to plan, 71 execute and adapt his or her behavior in response to sudden changes in the driving environment

(Ross et al., 2019; Schlag, 2008). Visuo-spatial abilities refer to the higher-level skill of stimulus
identification and localization (Strauss et al., 2006). Processing speed can be considered the time it
takes to do a cognitive task, and is often assessed using reaction time tasks (Salthouse, 1996). Finally,
memory refers to the processes of encoding, storing and retrieving information (Strauss et al., 2006).

76 All of these cognitive functions can deteriorate due to normal aging processes. Especially executive 77 function and complex attention, which involve both selective and divided attention, seem to be very 78 susceptible to aging effects (Harada et al., 2013; Lezak et al., 2012). Furthermore, these age-related 79 changes in cognition can be attributed to alterations in brain structure and connectivity, i.e. reduction 80 in grey matter volume and disruption of white matter tract integrity (Fjell et al., 2017; Sigurdsson et al., 2012; Ward, 2006). The greatest impact can be seen in frontal and medial temporal brain regions, 81 82 which are both important for cognitive function and motor control (Ward, 2006). These normal age-83 related neural processes could also play a role in the deterioration of healthy older persons' driving 84 performance.

85 Up to now, a large body of literature is available on how normal age-related changes in cognition 86 affect driving performance. However, due to methodological variability, it remains unclear to which 87 extent the different aspects of cognition, and underlying brain dynamics, affect driving performance 88 in an older population. Research has indicated that current protocols for age-related medical or 89 cognitive screening, and the potential subsequent obligation to stop driving, does not necessarily 90 imply safer mobility for older persons (Siren & Haustein, 2015). Previous research demonstrated that 91 in countries implementing driving license renewal screenings, motor vehicle accident rates of older 92 drivers did not decrease after implementation of these screening procedures (Siren & Haustein, 93 2015). Furthermore, it was found that after implementing screening procedures, older persons were 94 more likely to be involved in fatal accidents as a pedestrian or cyclist (Hakamies-Blomqvist et al., 1996; 95 Siren & Meng, 2012). The lack of decreased driving related crash rates can be explained by the fact 96 that currently used medical or cognitive screening protocols might not be suitable for evaluating 97 driving performance of older persons. Since driving is a complex skill that requires several abilities, 98 such as adequate visual, motor, and cognitive abilities, a single specific test is not sufficient to predict 99 the driving performance of an older person (Karthaus & Falkenstein, 2016; Urlings et al., 2018). As 100 the effectiveness of the currently available screening tools is unclear to date, it is necessary to 101 consider the potential of intervention strategies, and to not underestimate an older adult's capacity 102 to learn (Maes et al., 2017; Santos Monteiro et al., 2017). Therefore, it might be beneficial to focus 103 on defining intervention and prevention strategies based on the impact of normal age-related 104 changes in cognition on driving performance. Focusing on the predictive value of cognitive tests only in the context of driving license renewal procedures for older drivers, might be less significant. 105

The aim of this review is to present the existing literature that investigated the impact of age-related changes in cognitive function on driving performance by comparing the link between different aspects of cognition and driving performance in healthy older persons and younger age groups. Only studies evaluating driving simulator performance were included, as this makes the driving results 110 more uniform and comparable across the included literature. Studies of the last ten years were 111 considered in order to exclude studies that might have used outdated driving simulation technology, 112 not comparable to the modern driving simulators currently used. The use of a driving simulator allows 113 for a standardized, systematically controlled, and safe evaluation of a variety of driving-related 114 measures, dual tasking capabilities while driving, and the simultaneous use of neuroimaging 115 techniques (Aksan et al., 2016; Classen et al., 2014; Eramudugolla et al., 2016; Lee et al., 2003). 116 Additionally, there has been positive evidence concerning the validity of driving simulators in 117 predicting on-road driving performance in an older population (Aksan et al., 2016; Lee et al., 2003). 118 We will evaluate to what extent specific changes in cognitive function influence simulated driving 119 performance and how underlying brain physiology could potentially explain the deterioration in 120 driving performance of healthy older persons. We envisage that this overview could assist in 121 identifying the physiological and functional biomarkers that could place older persons at risk for 122 motor vehicle crash involvement and can be used to design remedial measures to preserve or 123 improve safe driving behavior.

124 **2** Methods

125 2.1 Search methods

126 This systematic review is conducted and reported according to the Preferred Reporting Items for 127 Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) Statement (Moher et al., 2009). Three electronic 128 databases (PubMed, Web of Science and Scopus) were searched to identify studies of the last 10 129 years that examined the link between simulated driving performance and cognitive functioning in 130 healthy older persons. The following terms were included in the search strategy: 'a(e)ging', 'brain imaging', 'EEG', 'cognition', 'cognitive functioning', 'driving performance', 'driving', 'fitness to drive', 131 132 and 'driving simulator'. Additional specific terms were added for cognitive functioning: 'executive function', 'attention', 'perception', 'inhibition', 'reaction time', 'working memory', 'workload', and 133 'response planning'. The complete list of search terms is shown in Table 1. The full electronic search 134 strategy for the Web of Science database is provided in the supplementary information. The last 135 search was undertaken on July 8th, 2019. Reference lists of included studies were screened for 136 137 potentially relevant studies. Duplicate studies were removed. First, two researchers (SD and KvD) 138 independently screened studies on title and abstract to exclude studies that did not meet the 139 inclusion criteria. The full texts were then retrieved and assessed for eligibility (see below in 2.2). 140 Disagreements between the two researchers were resolved by discussion and consensus.

Population	Cognition	Driving
A(e)ging	Brain imaging	Driving performance
Old	EEG	Driving
Elderly	ERP	Fitness to drive
Older	Cognition	Driving simulator
	Cognitive function	
	Cognitive ability (executive	
	function, attention,	
	perception, inhibition, reaction	
	time, working memory,	
	workload, response planning)	

141 Table 1: Search terms

142 2.1 Eligibility criteria

143 To be included in this systematic review, a study had to meet the following inclusion criteria: (i) the 144 included older and young populations were reported as healthy, based on self-report measures or 145 other diagnostic tools, (ii) driving performance was assessed in a driving simulator, (iii) use of 146 neuropsychological or behavioral tests to assess cognition or use of neuroimaging techniques (EEG, 147 fMRI), (iv) studies were published in an English-language journal in the last 10 years (2009-2019). 148 Studies were excluded if (i) automated driving or Advanced Driving Assistance Systems (ADAS) were 149 used, (ii) the relationship between cognitive measures and driving measures was not evaluated, (iii) 150 the study related to a case study or literature review.

151 **2.2 Data extraction**

Data were extracted and documented in a standardized data extraction form (see supplementary material). Information about study design, participants (number of subjects, age, gender, driving experience and frequency), cognitive assessment (neuroimaging, additional cognitive assessment or dual task performance testing), driving simulator outcome (driving scenario and outcome parameters), and results (driving results, cognition results, and the relationship between driving and cognition results) were documented. The pooled average and standard deviation were calculated for the demographics of all included studies.

159 2.3 Quality assessment

160 Study quality was assessed by a 15-item scale based upon the 'Strengthening the Reporting of 161 Observational Studies in Epidemiology' (STROBE) checklist (von Elm et al., 2007). The scale was 162 completed after consensus by the co-authors. The 15 items were divided into 3 categories: 163 introduction, methods and results, and discussion. The complete scale can be found in Table 2. For 164 each item, a maximum score of 2 could be awarded, with 2: a positive rating, 1: a mediocre rating, 165 and 0: a negative rating. A mediocre rating indicated that the study only partly met the criteria of the scoring item. Scoring ranged from 0 to 30, with 30 indicating the highest possible quality. Cut-off 166 values were set at a score of less than 22 points for poor, between 22 and 26 for medium, and 26 and 167 168 higher for high methodological quality.

Introduction

- 1. Is the scientific context clearly explained?
- 2. Are the objectives clearly stated?

Methods

- Are the setting and relevant dates (periods of recruitment, exposure, follow-up and data collection) clearly explained?
- 4. Are inclusion and exclusion criteria and selection of participants clearly explained?
- 5. Is the sample size considered adequate?
- 6. Are the study outcomes clearly described?
- 7. Is the method used in the assessment clearly described?
- 8. Is the method for assessment valid?
- 9. Are the efforts to limit potential sources of bias reported?
- 10. Are the statistical methods clearly described?
- 11. Are the statistical methods appropriate?

Results and discussion

- 12. Is drop-out during the study clearly described?
- 13. Are the characteristics of the subjects described?
- 14. Is there selective reporting of results?
- 15. Are study limitations discussed?
- 169 Table 2: Methodological quality assessment

170 **3 Results**

171 A detailed overview of all study results and data extraction can be found in the supplementary 172 material (see supplementary table 4-6). Only the most prominent results are discussed in this section.

173 3.1 Study Selection



174

175 Figure 1: Flowchart: PRISMA flowchart for the study selection process.

The electronic database search yielded 1177 results. Four additional studies were identified by screening reference lists of included studies. After removal of duplicates, 801 studies remained that were screened based on title and abstract. A total of 57 studies were considered to meet inclusion criteria, and full-text versions were read to assess eligibility. Thirty-five studies were excluded (see Figure 1 for reasons of exclusion). The remaining 22 eligible studies were further subdivided into 3 categories: additional cognitive assessment, dual task performance, and neuroimaging (a study could 182 be allocated to more than one category). Quality was assessed for these 22 studies. All studies

implemented a cross-sectional design. Six studies were considered to be of high quality, another 12

184 studies were of medium quality, and 4 studies were considered to be of poor quality. The score of

185 each study for all of the 15 items of the quality assessment is presented in Table 3.

	Introduction Methods				Results and Discussion												
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	Score	Quality
Alonso et al., 2016	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	-	1	2	2	25	Medium
Andrews & Westerman, 2012	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	1	0	1	1	2	2	2	24	Medium
Belanger et al., 2010	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	0	2	2	2	2	26	High
Belanger et al., 2015	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	0	2	2	2	1	25	Medium
Bunce et al., 2012	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	27	High
Cantin et al., 2009	2	2	2	2	0	2	2	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	1	24	Medium
Chen et al 2013		-	2	1	0	2	2	2	-	-	-	-	2	2	-	18	Poor
Fudave et al. 2018	2	2	-	2	2	2	2	2	-	2	2	2	2	2	2	27	High
Fofanova & Vollrath, 2011	2	1	2	2	0	2	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	2	1	23	Medium
Getzmann et al., 2018	2	1	1	1	0	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	0	22	Medium
Karthaus et al., 2018a	2	2	1	2	0	2	2	2	1	2	2	-	2	2	0	22	Medium
Karthaus et al., 2018b	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	-	2	2	2	27	High
Ledger et al., 2019	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	29	High
Liu et al., 2011	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	-	1	1	1	22	Medium
Michaels et al., 2017	2	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	2	-	0	2	1	20	Poor
Park et al., 2011	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	-	2	1	1	17	Poor
Perlman, 2019	2	1	2	2	0	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	1	2	2	25	Medium
Pitts & Sarter, 2018	2	2	2	2	0	2	2	1	1	2	2	-	0	2	2	22	Medium
Rodrick et al., 2013	2	1	2	0	0	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	16	Poor
Son et al., 2011	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	1	2	0	22	Medium
Stinchcombe et al., 2011	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	1	2	2	26	High
Wechsler et al., 2018	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	1	2	0	25	Medium
2 = positive rating; 1 = mediocre rating; 0 = negative rating; - = no information (=0 score)																	

186 Table 3: Quality assessment

187 **3.2 Driving simulator performance**

Concerning the driving performance across the different age groups, older persons generally drove
slower and at a less consistent speed than young and middle-aged adult persons (Alonso et al., 2016;
Andrews & Westerman, 2012; Cantin et al., 2009; Eudave et al., 2018; Liu & Ou, 2011; Michaels et al.,
2017; Park et al., 2011; Son et al., 2011; Wechsler et al., 2018). Older drivers also experienced more

- 192 crashes than younger drivers during simulated driving (Belanger et al., 2015; Belanger et al., 2010;
- 193 Michaels et al., 2017; Park et al., 2011). Finally, older drivers demonstrated poorer lane keeping
- 194 behavior, with larger variability in lane position or deviation from the road, compared to younger
- drivers (Bunce et al., 2012; Chen et al., 2013; Eudave et al., 2018; Fofanova & Vollrath, 2011; Karthaus
- 196 et al., 2018b; Ledger et al., 2019; Liu & Ou, 2011; Rodrick et al., 2013; Son et al., 2011; Wechsler et
- al., 2018). More information on the used driving simulator protocols and driving variables can be
- 198 found in the supplementary tables 4-6.

3.3 Impact of cognitive function on driving performance

200 Cognitive function was assessed using various neuropsychological tests in 11 studies (Alonso et al., 201 2016; Andrews & Westerman, 2012; Belanger et al., 2015; Belanger et al., 2010; Bunce et al., 2012; 202 Chen et al., 2013; Eudave et al., 2018; Ledger et al., 2019; Michaels et al., 2017; Park et al., 2011; 203 Stinchcombe et al., 2011). According to the classification of Lezak et al. (2012) and Strauss et al. 204 (2006), the neuropsychological tests were classified into 6 cognitive domains (Lezak et al., 2012; 205 Strauss et al., 2006). The cognitive domains were general cognition, executive function, attention, 206 processing speed, visuospatial perception, and memory. Table 4 illustrates the classification of each 207 test into its cognitive domain.

General cognitive functioning	Attention				
 Cognitive-Perceptual Assessment for Driving Mini-Mental State Examination National Adult Reading Test 	Selective: - Trail Making Test – A - Useful Field of View Test 3 Divided: - Useful Field of View Test 2				
Executive function	Sustained:				
- Diagramming Relationships Test	- Digit Symbol Coding Test				
Digit Span	Processing speed				
 Dual task. Timed Op and Go Test + Cognitive task Flanker Task 	 (2- and 4-) Choice Reaction Time Simple Reaction Time 				
- Go/No Go task	Visuospatial perception				
 Rey Complex Figure Test - Organization Simple Visual Search Stroop Arrow Test 	 3-D Multiple Object-Tracking task Block Design Test Paper Folding Test Rey Complex Figure Test – Copy 				
- Stroop Colour Word Test - Task Switching	Memory				
 Trail Making Test - B Verbal Fluency Test Wisconsin Card Sorting Test 	 Immediate & delayed word recognition Rey Auditory Verbal Learning Test Rey Complex Figure Test – Immediate Recall 				
- Zoo Map test	- Wechsler Memory Scale				

- 208 Table 4: Classification of neuropsychological assessment
- 209 General cognition, executive function, and attention were evaluated most across the included studies
- 210 (see Table 5 & 6). Overall, older persons performed worse than younger persons on various cognitive
- tests: (i) general cognition (Chen et al., 2013; Park et al., 2011), (ii) executive function (Alonso et al.,

- 212 2016; Andrews & Westerman, 2012; Bunce et al., 2012; Chen et al., 2013; Eudave et al., 2018; Ledger
- et al., 2019; Stinchcombe et al., 2011), (iii) attention (Andrews & Westerman, 2012; Eudave et al.,
- 214 2018; Ledger et al., 2019; Stinchcombe et al., 2011), (iv) processing speed (Andrews & Westerman,
- 215 2012; Bunce et al., 2012; Stinchcombe et al., 2011), (v) visuospatial perception (Andrews &
- 216 Westerman, 2012), and (vi) memory (Bunce et al., 2012; Eudave et al., 2018; Ledger et al., 2019).

	Studies	Performance	Association with driving
General	Alonso et al. (2016)	NS	Braking RT (Y & O)
cognition	Andrews & Westerman (2012)	NS	Lane keeping (O)
	Belanger et al. (2010)	NR	NR
	Bunce et al. (2012)	0 > Y	Lane keeping & car-following (Y & O)
	Chen et al. (2013)	Y > 0	NR
	Ledger et al. (2019)	NS	Overall driving & Less speeding (Y)
	Michaels et al. (2017)	NR	NR
	Park et al. (2011)	Y > 0	Crash, safer driving (Y & O)
	Stinchcombe et al. (2011)	NR	NR
Executive	Alonso et al. (2016)	Y > 0	Braking RT (Y & O)
function	Andrews & Westerman (2012)	Y > 0	Car following (anticipation) (Y & O)
	Belanger et al. (2015)	NR	Crash (O)
	Bunce et al. (2012)	Y > 0	Lane keeping & car-following (Y & O)
	Chen et al. (2013)	Y > 0	Left turning (Y & O)
	Eudave et al (2018)	Y > 0	Higher speed (Y)
	Ledger et al. (2019)	Y > 0	Lane keeping (Y & O)
	Park et al. (2011)	NR	Crash, safer driving (Y & O)
	Stinchcombe et al. (2011)	Y > 0	Driving errors (Y & O)
Attention	Andrews & Westerman (2012)	Y > 0	Anticipation car-following (O), lane
			keeping (Y), car-following (Y & O)
	Belanger et al. (2010)	NR	Crash (Y & O)
	Belanger et al. (2015)	NR	Crash (Y & O)
	Eudave et al (2018)	Y > 0	Higher speed (Y)
	Ledger et al. (2019)	Y > 0	NS
	Park et al. (2011)	NR	Crash, safer driving (Y & O)
	Stinchcombe et al. (2011)	Y > 0	Overall driving (O)
Processing	Andrews & Westerman (2012)	Y > 0	Lane keeping & speed consistency (Y & O)
speed	Belanger et al. (2010)	NR	NR
	Belanger et al. (2015)	NR	Crash (O)
	Bunce et al. (2012)	Y > 0	Lane keeping & car-following (Y & O)
	Stinchcombe et al. (2011)	Y > 0	Overall driving (Y)
Visuospatial	Andrews & Westerman (2012)	Y > 0	Lane keeping (Y & O)
perception	Eudave et al (2018)	NS	Higher speed (Y)
	Ledger et al. (2019)	NS	Overall driving (Y & O), less speeding (O)
	Michaels et al. (2017)	NR	Crash, speed, lane keeping (Y & O)
Memory	Bunce et al. (2012)	Y > 0	Lane keeping & car-following (Y & O)
	Eudave et al (2018)	Y > 0	Higher speed (Y)
	Ledger et al. (2019)	Y > 0	Overall driving (Y)

217 Table 5: Overview of association between cognitive function and driving

218 All associations presented in this table indicate that better performance on a neuropsychological test was related

219 to better driving behavior; Y: Younger persons, O: Older persons, NS: Not Significant, NR: Not Reported, in bold:

220 associations specific for older drivers

221 **3.3.1 General cognition**

222 For both younger and older adults, better general cognitive function was related to better driving 223 simulator performance, more specifically: a decreased braking reaction time (Alonso et al., 2016), increased lane keeping control (Bunce et al., 2012), less headway variability, i.e. the variability in 224 225 distance or time from the car ahead when following a lead car (Bunce et al., 2012), lower crash rate, 226 and safer steering, vehicle positioning and lane changing behavior (Park et al., 2011). Andrews and 227 Westerman (2012) found that only for older adults, high ability on the National Adult Reading Test 228 (NART) was associated with less variable lane keeping control (Andrews & Westerman, 2012). Ledger 229 et al. (2019), on the other hand, found that, only for the young participants, better performance on 230 the Mini-Mental State Examination (MMSE) was associated with less speeding behavior and a better 231 overall driving score (Ledger et al., 2019).

232 **3.3.2 Executive function**

233 All of the included studies assessing executive function found significant associations with driving 234 performance tests (Alonso et al., 2016; Andrews & Westerman, 2012; Belanger et al., 2015; Bunce et al., 2012; Chen et al., 2013; Eudave et al., 2018; Ledger et al., 2019; Park et al., 2011; Stinchcombe et 235 236 al., 2011). Better performance on tests of executive function was associated with better driving 237 performance in both young and older persons. Test performance had a positive impact on braking 238 reaction time (Alonso et al., 2016), anticipation while driving (Andrews & Westerman, 2012), lane 239 keeping control (Bunce et al., 2012; Ledger et al., 2019), headway variability during car-following 240 (Bunce et al., 2012), gap size acceptance when turning left (Chen et al., 2013), crash rate (Park et al., 241 2011), speed control (Park et al., 2011), steering (Park et al., 2011), lane changes (Park et al., 2011), 242 and driving errors (Stinchcombe et al., 2011). One study found that better executive function was 243 associated with faster driving, but only in younger adults (Eudave et al., 2018). Another study found 244 that older persons who experienced a crash during simulated driving had poorer executive function, 245 and that crash rate decreased with better executive function (Belanger et al., 2015).

246 **3.3.3 Attention**

247 Better performance on selective attention tests of young and older persons was related to better 248 driving performance: better car-following behavior with shorter headway adaption (Andrews & 249 Westerman, 2012), lower crash rate (Belanger et al., 2015; Belanger et al., 2010; Park et al., 2011), 250 safer lane changing and vehicle positioning (Park et al., 2011), and finally, a better overall driving 251 score (Stinchcombe et al., 2011). Only for older adults, higher ability on selective attention was 252 associated with better anticipation during a car-following task, while higher ability on selective 253 attention in younger adults, was associated with lane keeping ability (Andrews & Westerman, 2012). 254 For both young and older adults, better divided attention was associated with lower crash rate 255 (Belanger et al., 2015; Belanger et al., 2010; Park et al., 2011), safer speed control (Park et al., 2011),

- steering (Park et al., 2011), lane changing (Park et al., 2011) and vehicle positioning (Park et al., 2011).
 In the study of Stinchcombe et al. (2011), there was an association between divided attention and a
- 258 better overall driving score in only older adults (Stinchcombe et al., 2011). Better performance on
- sustained attention was associated with safer speed control, and lane changing (Park et al., 2011) for
- 260 both young and older adults. Driving at a higher speed was associated with better sustained attention
- in a younger age group but not in an older population (Eudave et al., 2018).

262 **3.3.4 Processing speed**

For younger and older persons, faster processing speed was associated with better lane keeping (Andrews & Westerman, 2012; Bunce et al., 2012), driving at a more consistent speed (Andrews & Westerman, 2012), and better car-following behavior (Bunce et al., 2012). Stinchcombe et al. (2011) found that there was an association with better overall driving performance only for younger and middle-aged drivers (Stinchcombe et al., 2011). Older persons who crashed while driving had significantly slower reaction times than older persons who did not crash (Belanger et al., 2015).

269 **3.3.5 Visuospatial perception**

Better results on visuospatial perception tests were related to better lane keeping (Andrews &
Westerman, 2012; Michaels et al., 2017), safer overall driving performance (Ledger et al., 2019), less
crashes, and driving at a higher mean speed (Michaels et al., 2017) in both older and younger persons.
However, Eudave et al. (2018) found that only for younger adult drivers, better visuospatial abilities
were associated with driving at a higher mean speed, still under the imposed speed limit, than older
adults (Eudave et al., 2018). Additionally, Ledger et al. (2019) found that only for older persons, better
perception was related to less excessive speeding during simulated driving (Ledger et al., 2019).

277 **3.3.6 Memory**

Bunce et al. (2012) found that better memory function was related to better car-following behavior
and better lane keeping behavior for older and younger persons (Bunce et al., 2012). Eudave et al.
(2018) reported that driving at a higher speed was associated with better performance on memory
tests, but only in younger persons (Eudave et al., 2018). Ledger et al. (2019) also found an association
with visuospatial memory only in young persons, but for an overall driving score (Ledger et al., 2019).

		Mean age	Cognitive		Association Driving &	Association Driving &
	n	(yrs)	Tests	Association Driving & Cognition: O & Y	Cognition: O	Cognition: Y
	0	0				
	n=102	70.4 (5.8)				
Alonso et al.,	Y	Y	MMSE			
2016	n=62	39.8 (7.2)	DT	MMSE, DT $\uparrow \Rightarrow$ braking RT \downarrow	/	/
			NART			
			TMT A			
	0	0	DRT	CRT, TMT A, PFT $\uparrow \Rightarrow$ Car-following \uparrow	TMT A $\uparrow \Rightarrow$ Anticipation	
Andrews &	n=22	66.77 (5.07)	TSW	NART, PFT, CRT, TMT A $\uparrow \Rightarrow$ Lane keeping \uparrow	car-following ↑	
Westerman,	Y	Y	CRT	CRT $\uparrow \Rightarrow$ Speed variability \downarrow	NART, CRT $\uparrow \Rightarrow$ Lane	PFT, CRT, TMT A $\uparrow \Rightarrow$ Lane
2012	n=22	33.32 (4.37)	PFT	TSW, TMT A $\uparrow \Rightarrow$ Anticipation car-following \uparrow	keeping 个	keeping 个
	0	0	MMSE			
	n=20	73.4 (5.17)	UFOV			
Belanger et	Y	Y	SRT			
al., 2010	n=20	29.5 (4.32)	CRT	UFOV: no crash > crash	UFOV 2&3: no crash > crash	1
	0	0	UFOV		CRT, TMT B, UFOV 2&3: no	
	n=35	72.1 (4.34)	тмт		crash > crash	
Belanger et	Y	Y	SRT		UFOV 2&3, TMT B $\uparrow \Rightarrow$	
al., 2015	n=35	28.9 (3.96)	CRT	1	Crash \downarrow	1
			NART			
			SVS			
			Flanker			
	0	0	SCWT			
	n=21	71.24 (6.83)	SAT			
Bunce et al.,	Y	Y	CRT	CRT, SVS, SCWT, SAT, WR $\uparrow \Rightarrow$ Car-following \uparrow		
2012	n=24	21.29 (1.71)	WR	CRT, Flanker, SAT, WR $\uparrow \Rightarrow$ Lane keeping \uparrow	1	1
	0	0				
	n=13	77.62 (4.86)	MMSE			
Chen et al.,	Y	Y	WCST			
2013	n=16	46.13 (5.41)	TMT B	WCST $\uparrow \Rightarrow$ Left turn \uparrow	1	1
			DSCT			
			ТМТ			
			ZMT			
			SCWT			
	0	0	DS			
	n=20	67.4 (5.2)	RAVLT			TMT B, ZMT, SCWT, DS,
Eudave et al.,	Y	Y	WMS			DSCT, BDT, WMS $\uparrow \Rightarrow$
2018	n=22	30.3 (4.3)	BDT	1	1	Speed 个

			MMSE			
	0	0	TMT		RCFTC $\uparrow \Rightarrow$ Speeding \downarrow	$MMSE \uparrow \Rightarrow Speeding \downarrow$
	n=43	66.77 (5.07)	RCFTO		RCFTO $\uparrow \Rightarrow$ Lane keeping \uparrow	RCFTO $\uparrow \Rightarrow$ Lane keeping \uparrow
Ledger et al.,	Y	Y	RCFTR		RCFTC & TMT B $\uparrow \Rightarrow$ Driving	RFCTR, RCFTC & MMSE $\uparrow \Rightarrow$
2019	n=51	33.32 (4.37)	RCFTC	1	score ↑	Driving score ↑
	0	0				
	n=51	77.2 (5.01)				
	M-A	M-A				
	n=35	36 (8.68)				
Michaels et	Y	Y	MMSE			
al., 2017	n=29	20.15 (1.19)	3D-MOT	3D-MOT $\uparrow \Rightarrow$ Crash \downarrow , Lane keeping \uparrow , Speed \uparrow	1	1
				CPAD fail \Rightarrow Crash, Steering, Vehicle position, Lane		
				change 个		
			CPAD:	Attention, SCWT, DS, TMT A&B $\uparrow \Rightarrow$ Crash \downarrow		
	0	0	Attention	Attention, DS $\uparrow \Rightarrow$ Speed control \uparrow		
	n=55	69.91 (3.63)	TMT	Attention, SCWT, DS $\uparrow \Rightarrow$ Steering \uparrow		
Park et al.,	Y	Y	SCWT	Attention, TMT A $\uparrow \Rightarrow$ Vehicle position \uparrow		
2011	n=48	34.25 (3.62)	DS	Attention, SCWT, DS, TMT A&B $\uparrow \Rightarrow$ Lane change \uparrow	1	1
	0	0				
	n=23	69.9	MMSE			
	M-A	M-A	UFOV			
	n=30	29.6	TMT			
Stinchcombe	Y	Y	SRT	TMT A&B, SRT, CRT, UFOV $\uparrow \Rightarrow$ Driving demerit	UFOV 2 $\uparrow \Rightarrow$ Driving	
et al., 2011	n=56	18.5	CRT	points ↓, Simulator errors ↓	demerit points \downarrow	NS

283 Table 6: Overview of cognitive functioning and driving performance

284 Only statistically significant results (p<0.05) are presented in the table. O: Older, Y: Younger, M-A: Middle-Aged, NS: Not Significant, NR: Not Reported;

285 Cognitive tests: MMSE: Mini-Mental State Examination, DT: Dual Task Test, NART: National Adult Reading Test, TMT: Trail Making Test, DRT: Diagramming

286 Relationships Test, TSW: Task Switching, CRT: Choice Reaction Time, WR: Word Recognition, PFT: Paper Folding Test, UFOV: Useful Field of View test, SRT:

287 Single Reaction Time, SVS: Simple Visual Search, ZMT: Zoo Map Test, SCWT: Stroop Color Word Test, SAT: Stroop Arrow Test, DS: Digit Span, WCST: Wisconsin

288 Card Sorting Test, RT: Reaction Time, DSCT: Digit Symbol Coding Test, RAVLT: Rey Auditory Verbal Learning Test, WMS: Wechsler Memory Scale, BDT: Block

289 Design Test, RCFTO: Rey Complex Figure Test - Organization, RCFTR: Rey Complex Figure Test – Immediate Recall, RCFTC: Rey Complex Figure Test - Copy, 3D-

290 MOT: 3-dimensional Multiple Object-Tracking task, CPAD: Cognitive-Perceptual Assessment for Driving

291 3.4 Dual task performance and driving

292 Dual tasking during simulated driving was evaluated in 11 studies (see Table 7) (Belanger et al., 2010; 293 Cantin et al., 2009; Fofanova & Vollrath, 2011; Karthaus et al., 2018a; Liu & Ou, 2011; Perlman et al., 294 2019; Pitts & Sarter, 2018; Rodrick et al., 2013; Son et al., 2011; Stinchcombe et al., 2011; Wechsler 295 et al., 2018). The dual task consisted of driving in the simulator and concurrently performing a 296 secondary task, such as a reaction time task or a functional task like using a navigation system. Dual 297 tasking had a detrimental effect on secondary task performance for both younger and older persons. 298 with slower reaction times and poorer accuracy. However, this effect was more pronounced for older 299 than for younger persons (Cantin et al., 2009; Karthaus et al., 2018a; Perlman et al., 2019; Pitts & 300 Sarter, 2018; Rodrick et al., 2013; Son et al., 2011; Stinchcombe et al., 2011; Wechsler et al., 2018).

301 Regarding the driving task, dual tasking also had a detrimental effect on various driving parameters 302 for both young and older adults. For instance, lane keeping control and steering behavior were poorer 303 while dual tasking (Fofanova & Vollrath, 2011; Liu & Ou, 2011; Perlman et al., 2019; Son et al., 2011). 304 Furthermore, young and older persons drove at a slower and more inconsistent speed when 305 performing a secondary task (Liu & Ou, 2011; Son et al., 2011; Wechsler et al., 2018). The detrimental 306 effect of dual tasking was more prominent in older subjects in almost all of the studies reporting this 307 detrimental effect: poorer lane keeping and steering (Fofanova & Vollrath, 2011; Perlman et al., 2019; 308 Pitts & Sarter, 2018; Son et al., 2011; Wechsler et al., 2018), and driving at a more inconsistent speed 309 (Son et al., 2011). Finally, Belanger et al. (2010) found that older and younger subjects who crashed 310 while driving, had slower reaction times and poorer accuracy on the secondary task when performing the two tasks simultaneously, than those who did not crash, with the older drivers experiencing 311 312 significantly more crashes (Belanger et al., 2010).

	Mean age		Secondary		
	n	(yrs)	Task	Dual Task performance: Secondary Task	Dual Task performance: Driving Task
	0	0			
	n=20	73.4 (5.17)			
Belanger et	Y	Y	Divided	RT: crash > no crash (O & Y)	
al., 2010	n=20	29.5 (4.32)	Attention Task	Accuracy: no crash > crash (O & Y)	NR
	~	•		RT : complex driving DT > simple driving DT >	
	0 n=10	U		ST, for complex driving: RT 个 (O > Y)	
Cantin at al	v	08.4 (5.0) v		Accuracy: ST > simple driving DT > complex	
2009	n-10	1 24 0 (3 5)	RT Tack	driving DT (O & Y). (Y > O)	NR
2003	0	24.0 (3.3)	INT TOSK		
Fofanova &	0 n-10	68 / (/ 2)		RT: DT > ST (O & Y)	Lane keeping: ST > DT (O & Y)
Vollrath	v	08.4 (4.2) V	D2 Test of	Accuracy: ST > DT (O & Y)	Lane keeping variability: DT > ST (O)
2011	n=10	386(40)	Attention	Number of items: ST > DT, Y > O (ST & DT)	RT Lane Change: DT > ST (O & Y)
2011	0	0	Brake RT task +		
	n=20	59.6 (3.2)	distracting		Braking RT: Y: ST > auditory & visual DT; O: visual DT > ST >
Karthaus et	Y	Y	stimuli (visual		auditory DT
al., 2018b	n=20	22.9 (1.8)	or auditory)	NR	Braking accuracy: visual DT: Y > O
	0	0	Divided		
	n=24	69.21 (3.05)	Attention Task		Lane keeping: $ST > simple \& complex DT (O \& Y)$
Liu & Ou,	Y	Y	+ Handsfree	RT: simple & complex DT > ST (O & Y)	Speed variability: ST & complex DT > simple DT (O & Y)
2011	n=24	23.10 (1.54)	phone calling	Accuracy: ST > simple DT > complex DT (O & Y)	Speed mean: ST & simple DT > complex DT (O & Y)
	0	0	Detection	DT. share 9 second which DT. (T (O.) M)	
	n=18	62.0 (4.1)	Response Task	RT: phone & smartwatch DT > ST (O > Y)	Lane keeping variability: phone DT > smartwatch DT & ST (O
Perlman et	Y	Y	+ phone or	Accuracy: ST > smartwatch DT > phone DT (Y >	& Y)
al., 2019	n=18	25.3 (2.5)	smartwatch	0)	Steering: phone DT > smartwatch DT > ST (O > Y)
	0	0			
	W:	W:			
	n=12	68.16 (3.76)			
	R:	R:			
_	n=12	68.33 (2.20)	_		
Pitts & Sarter,	Y	Y	Stimulus		
2018	n=12	22.67 (2.71)	Detection task	Accuracy in DI: Y > 0	Lane keeping change after stimuli: U > Y
	0				
	n=8		Secondary		
	M-A		task: Tracking,		
Deduial: -+ -!	n=8		visual Search,	Tracking in $DT: Y > O$	Lane keeping: Memory DT & ST > Tracking DT > Visual
Rodrick et al.,	Y	ND	Mewigation	Visual search in $DT: V > O$	search DT > Navigation DT $(0.8, Y)$
2013	n=8	INK	inavigation		scarch DI / Navigation DI (O & I)

Son et al., 2011	O n=29 Y n=32	O 64.55 (2.81) Y 25.28 (2.02)	n-Back task	Accuracy: ST > DT (O > Y)	Speed mean: ST > DT (Y & O) Speed variability: DT > ST (O only) Lane keeping variability: ST > DT (O > Y) Steering reversal rate: DT > ST (O & Y)
Stinchcombe et al., 2011	O n=23 M-A n=30 Y n=56	O 69.9 M-A 29.6 Y 18.5	Divided Attention Task	RT difference scores from baseline: Straight roads: O > Y Intersections: O > Y (right & no turn, NOT for left turn) Lane change: O > Y	NR
Wechsler et al., 2018	O n=61 Y n=63	O 69.97 (2.69) Y 23.17 (2.83)	Secondary task: Typing, Reasoning, Memory	RT: DT > ST (O) Accuracy: ST > DT (O)	Speed mean: ST > DT (O & Y) Speed variability: DT > ST (O & Y) Lane keeping mean: DT more lateral position > ST (O > Y) Lane keeping variability: DT > ST (O > Y)

313 Table 7: Overview of dual tasking and driving performance

314 Only statistically significant results (p<0.05) are presented in the table. This table indicates the dual task cost on secondary task and driving performance, and

315 to which age group this corresponds. For example, for the study of Cantin et al. (2009) indicates that the reaction time for the secondary task performance is

316 higher when dual tasking, and this effect is bigger in older persons. O: Older, Y: Younger, M-A: Middle-Aged, W: Working, R: Retired, RT: Reaction Time, DT:

317 Dual task, ST: Single Task, NS: Not Significant, NR: Not Reported, in **bold**: specific for older drivers

318 **3.5** Neural correlates of driving

319 Four studies assessed the brain dynamics related to driving performance of older compared to 320 younger persons (see Table 8) (Eudave et al., 2018; Getzmann et al., 2018; Karthaus et al., 2018a, 321 2018b). The study of Eudave et al. (2018) examined the neural correlates of a visuospatial perception 322 task using functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI) and its association to driving simulator 323 performance. Younger persons performed significantly better than older persons, whereby 324 deterioration in performance of older persons was associated with a widespread hyperactivity in 325 basal ganglia, and frontoparietal and cerebellar regions, and a decreased functional connectivity 326 between default-mode network zones. During the simulated drive, younger persons drove at a higher 327 speed than older persons, which was associated with greater activation and connectivity of the 328 default-mode network during the perception task, and with better executive function as evaluated 329 by neuropsychological tests (Eudave et al., 2018).

330 One research group published 3 studies using electroencephalography (EEG) to study the underlying neurophysiological processes related to simulated driving performance of older and younger persons 331 332 (Getzmann et al., 2018; Karthaus et al., 2018a, 2018b). Getzmann et al. (2018) reported that even 333 though older and younger persons did not differ in lane keeping control, differences in EEG measures 334 were found. It was found that Alpha power¹ increased with less demanding driving situations only in 335 the younger group, while only in the older group an increase in Theta power¹ was related to lower 336 steering variability (Getzmann et al., 2018). Another study that evaluated lane keeping performance 337 did find differences in driving performance between a younger and older age group (Karthaus et al., 338 2018b). The older persons could be divided into 2 groups according to the driving performance: a 339 group with high lane keeping variability and a group with low variability. The lane keeping 340 performance of the low variability group did not differ from performance of the younger comparison 341 group. Differences in EEG measures were again found between the young and older persons, and 342 between the two older persons groups. Theta power was stronger for younger than for the older 343 persons of the low variability group, although lane keeping performance was similar between both 344 groups. Regarding the two older persons groups, Theta and Alpha power was stronger in the group 345 with high lane variability than in the group with low variability (Karthaus et al., 2018b).

Finally, the neural correlates of dual tasking while driving were analyzed, using a braking reaction time task. It was found that older persons' braking performance was less accurate and slower when additional distracting visual stimuli were presented simultaneously with the brake light. This was associated with a smaller ERP amplitude and later onset latency (posterior P3b ERP) for the

¹ With EEG, neural oscillations are measured. These oscillations can be characterized by their frequency and are divided into different frequency bands, such as Alpha and Theta. An increase of power in the Alpha frequency band has been previously associated with attentional disengagement (Klimesch, 2012), while Theta power has been associated with processes of cognitive control (Cavanagh & Frank, 2014).

- 350 combination of the braking light stimulus and the visual stimulus in older persons (Karthaus et al.,
- 351 2018a).

		Mean age		Driving & neuroimaging		
	n	(yrs)	Neuroimaging	results: O & Y	Driving & neuroimaging results: O	Driving & neuroimaging results: Y
					Activity:	
					↑ frontoparietal, basal ganglia &	
			fMRI:		cerebellar	
			Brain activity &		Connectivity:	
	0	0	Functional		Λ between frontal, parietal and basal	Connectivity:
	n=20	67.4 (5.2)	connectivity		regions	个 between DMN areas
Eudave et	Y	Y	analysis during		Association with driving:	Association with driving:
al., 2018	n=22	30.3 (4.3)	HSD Task	/	NS	Driving speed & proper DMN dynamics
				Theta:		
			EEG:	Y > 0		
	0	0	Relative Theta	\downarrow with \uparrow Time on Task	Theta:	
Getzmann	n=16	63.3	& Alpha power	个 with 个 Task Load	\uparrow \Rightarrow Steering variability \downarrow	
et al.,	Y	Y	(anterior &	Alpha:	Alpha:	Alpha:
2018	n=16	24.1	posterior)	个 with 个 Time on Task	个 with 个 Task Load	$ m \uparrow$ over time with $ m \downarrow$ Task load
					P3b:	
				P3b:	Amplitude: ST > DT	
	0	0	ERP:	Amplitude: Y > O	Amplitude $\downarrow \Rightarrow$ Braking RT \uparrow & accuracy	
Karthaus	n=20	59.6 (3.2)	P2 (fronto-	Latency: DT > ST (O > Y)	\downarrow	
et al.,	Y	Y	central) & P3b	P2:	P2:	
2018a	n=20	22.9 (1.8)	(posterior)	Amplitude: Y > O	Latency: DT > ST	1
	0	0:			Alpha, Theta & Beta:	
	High:	High: 65.4	EEG:		\downarrow with \uparrow complex driving	
	n=14	(2.2)	Theta, Alpha	Alpha:	O-High vs O-Low:	
	Low:	Low: 63.9	and Beta	O-High > O-Low	O-High: Lane keeping variability \uparrow \Rightarrow	
Karthaus	n=14	(3.9)	power (fronto-	Theta:	Theta, Alpha 个	
et al.,	Y	Y	central &	Y > O-Low	O-Low: Lane keeping variability $\downarrow \Rightarrow$ Theta,	
2018b	n=14	25.1 (2.7)	posterior)	O-High > O-Low	Alpha 🗸	1

352 Table 8: Overview of neuroimaging and driving performance

353 Only statistically significant results (p<0.05) are presented in the table. O: Older, Y: Younger, RT: Reaction Time, HSD: High Speed Discrimination task, DMN:

354 Default Mode Network, ST: Single Task, DT: Dual Task, ERP: Event-Related Potential, NS: Not Significant, NR: Not Reported

355 4 Discussion

This systematic review aimed to provide a detailed overview of the literature concerning the impact of age-related changes in cognitive function on driving performance to help identify the physiological and functional biomarkers that can be used to design remedial measures to preserve or improve safe driving behavior. Yet, the studies included in this review demonstrate a large variety in driving outcome measures, and also in cognitive outcome measures. This heterogeneity required the division of cognitive and driving measures into domains and subgroups to be able to draw conclusions.

362 Overall, all domains of cognitive function were found to be associated with the driving outcomes to 363 some extent, irrespective of age. This signifies that higher cognitive ability is associated with better 364 driving performance. This review found some evidence that poorer cognitive function of both 365 younger and older adults, across all of the included cognitive domains, related to more inconsistent 366 driving behavior (Andrews & Westerman, 2012; Bunce et al., 2012; Michaels et al., 2017; Park et al., 367 2011). Nevertheless, older persons most often performed worse on both cognitive and driving 368 outcomes in comparison to the younger adult persons. This was also found for dual task performance 369 in the driving simulator: the consistency in driving performance was negatively affected by an 370 additional task in both younger and older persons (Fofanova & Vollrath, 2011; Perlman et al., 2019; 371 Pitts & Sarter, 2018; Rodrick et al., 2013; Son et al., 2011; Wechsler et al., 2018), yet this effect was 372 generally larger for older persons, due to the higher dual task cost while driving (Fofanova & Vollrath, 373 2011; Pitts & Sarter, 2018; Son et al., 2011; Wechsler et al., 2018).

Below, we will discuss the following in more detail. First, we will give an overview of the general driving behavior of older adults as compared to younger adults. Then, we will discuss the impact of cognition and dual tasking on driving performance based on neuropsychological tests, followed by the neurophysiological findings that are related to driving performance. Finally, we will address the implications and limitations of this systematic review.

379 4.1 Age-related changes in driving performance

380 As compared to younger adult drivers, older persons drove at a slower speed in a similar driving 381 context. This is in accordance with other literature that has found that older persons may adapt their 382 driving speed as compensation to reduce task demands, especially in more complex driving situations 383 and/or dual task driving protocols (Charlton et al., 2013; Cuenen et al., 2015; Doroudgar et al., 2017; 384 Ebnali et al., 2016). This tendency to reduce driving speed could indicate a more defensive driving 385 strategy in order to anticipate and cope with more challenging driving events. The older drivers also 386 demonstrated a more inconsistent driving pattern than the younger comparison groups. Older 387 persons had higher variability in speed, were less consistently in car-following situations and in lane 388 keeping behavior. Inconsistency in driving performance, and more specifically lateral control, could 389 indicate driving impairment due to a higher task demand (Cuenen et al., 2015). This more inconsistent driving pattern could be the result of age-related changes in cognitive function (Young & Bunce,2011).

392

4.2 Impact of cognition and dual tasking performance on driving performance

393 General cognitive function was evaluated the most across all of the included studies, together with 394 executive function. With respect to general cognitive functioning, no conclusive evidence was found 395 for an age-related deterioration, with only 2 out of 9 studies reporting that younger persons 396 performed better than older persons (Chen et al., 2013; Park et al., 2011). This might seem surprising, 397 since an abundance of research has demonstrated a negative influence of aging on general cognitive 398 functions (Salthouse, 2012). However, a distinction between two types of cognition can be made, i.e. 399 crystallized and fluid ability (Harada et al., 2013). Crystallized abilities refer to skills or knowledge that 400 are acquired across the lifespan, and thus increase with higher age. Fluid cognition reflects abilities 401 such as novel problem-solving and reasoning, which tend to deteriorate starting at about age 30 402 (Salthouse, 2012). In this review, both fluid and crystallized cognition were taken into account for 403 assessing general cognition, which might explain why general cognition in older adults was preserved.

404 Only 2 studies found age-dependent associations with driving performance measures, with more 405 consistent lane keeping being associated with better cognitive function in older adults (Andrews & 406 Westerman, 2012), and overall driving performance with better cognitive function in the younger 407 adults (Ledger et al., 2019). This association in only younger persons seems counterintuitive; 408 however, this could be due to the use of the MMSE, a tool used to screen for cognitive impairment 409 and dementia. All of the participants had normal scores, and since the MMSE is not meant to 410 discriminate between high performing individuals, the results might not be suitable to interpret 411 (Creavin et al., 2016; Tombaugh & McIntyre, 1992). Although Mathias and Lucas (2009) found that 412 the MMSE was predictive for simulator driving in older adults, other research has demonstrated that 413 the association between MMSE and on-road driving performance is rather poor (Wagner et al., 2011).

414 Executive function and attention were frequently measured cognitive domains across the included 415 studies as well. These two aspects of cognition also seem to be highly associated with driving 416 performance, by associations with measures such as crash rate and lane keeping consistency. 417 Furthermore, almost all of these studies reported that older persons performed significantly worse 418 than younger persons on executive function, and found evidence that selective attention is subject 419 to age-related decline. Therefore, adequate executive function and complex attention abilities seem 420 to be essential for driving performance, irrespective of age. However, as we see that these cognitive 421 functions deteriorate with increasing age, corroborated by the findings in other research on age-422 related deterioration in executive function and complex attention (Harada et al., 2013; Kirova et al., 423 2015; Salthouse, 2010), older persons' driving skills will presumably suffer more than that of younger 424 persons. Indeed, previous literature with older drivers has reported that neuropsychological tests of 425 executive function and attention are also associated with other driving outcome measures than 426 simulated driving, such as on-road driving and crash risk. It has been found that executive function 427 impairment may reduce driving safety based on crash records, on-road or simulated driving (Anstey 428 & Wood, 2011; Anstey et al., 2005; Asimakopulos et al., 2012; Mathias & Lucas, 2009). More 429 specifically, the Useful Field of View (UFOV) test of attention, has been demonstrated to be sensitive 430 for detecting blind-spot errors and to be predictive of driving performance measured by on-road 431 tests, simulator tests and documented driving problems (Anstey & Wood, 2011; Anstey et al., 2005; 432 Mathias & Lucas, 2009). Additionally, Cuenen et al. (2015) found that higher attention abilities in 433 older drivers was associated with lower crash occurrence, and had a moderating effect on lane 434 keeping while performing a dual task (Cuenen et al., 2015).

435 Tests of the remaining 3 cognitive domains, i.e. processing speed, visuospatial perception, and 436 memory were least included across studies. The included studies indicated that memory and 437 processing speed were found to deteriorate with age, which has also been demonstrated in other 438 aging research studies (Harada et al., 2013; Salthouse, 2010). Nevertheless, no clear deterioration in 439 visuospatial perception was found, with only one study reporting better scores in younger adult 440 persons (Andrews & Westerman, 2012), even though this has been found to deteriorate in cognitive 441 aging research (Harada et al., 2013). For these 3 cognitive domains, there was an association with 442 overall driving and with specific driving measures such as speed consistency, lane keeping, and car-443 following behavior in both younger and older adults, for which better cognitive performance was 444 related to better driving performance (Andrews & Westerman, 2012; Bunce et al., 2012; Ledger et 445 al., 2019; Michaels et al., 2017). In the older population, better visuospatial perception was associated with less speeding behavior (Ledger et al., 2019), and an inter-individual variability was found, with 446 447 older drivers who crashed having a significantly slower processing speed than those who did not crash 448 (Belanger et al., 2015). These results are in line with the review of Anstey et al. (2005), which also 449 found associations between memory, processing speed and visuospatial perception and on-road 450 driving assessment (Anstey et al., 2005).

451 Finally, studies indicated that both young and older drivers tend to slow down and drive less 452 consistently when distracted during the performance of a dual task. However, the impact of 453 distractions on driving performance was larger in the older population (Fofanova & Vollrath, 2011; 454 Perlman et al., 2019; Pitts & Sarter, 2018; Son et al., 2011; Wechsler et al., 2018). The performance 455 on the secondary task also deteriorated in comparison to baseline performance in the older 456 population while driving, more than compared to younger adults (Cantin et al., 2009; Karthaus et al., 457 2018a; Perlman et al., 2019; Pitts & Sarter, 2018; Rodrick et al., 2013; Son et al., 2011; Stinchcombe 458 et al., 2011; Wechsler et al., 2018). An on-road driving study also found that older drivers had a less 459 consistent driving speed when performing a demanding dual task (Ebnali et al., 2016). This difficulty 460 to perform tasks simultaneously due to aging has also been demonstrated in other studies 461 incorporating a motor task with a secondary task (Forte et al., 2019; Smith et al., 2017). Older persons 462 could have less attentional resources available to be able to combine multiple tasks, or struggle with 463 differentiating between relevant and irrelevant stimuli, and thereby overstraining those attentional 464 resources (Hahn et al., 2010; McAlister & Schmitter-Edgecombe, 2013; Verhaeghen et al., 2003).

Additionally, literature has reported that the cognitive domains of executive function and complex attention are essential aspects of dual- and multitasking performance (MacPherson, 2018; Yogev-Seligmann et al., 2008). This might help explain the deterioration in older driver performance since the studies included in this review indicate an age-related decline in executive function and complex attention, and these domains were found to be associated with driving performance.

470 **4.3** Neural correlates of driving in an older population

471 The above-mentioned changes in cognitive function of older persons can be due to age-related 472 changes in the availability of neural resources, due to brain atrophy or changes in functional 473 connectivity (Cabeza et al., 2018; Fjell et al., 2017; Reuter-Lorenz & Cappell, 2008; Spreng et al., 2010). 474 Neurocognitive aging research has found that older adults exhibit a stronger and more extended brain 475 activation in comparison to younger persons in a variety of cognitive tasks (Reuter-Lorenz & Cappell, 476 2008). Other research has found that during complex motor tasks, older persons show additional 477 activation in regions related to cognitive monitoring, such as the prefrontal cortex, even when the 478 behavioral performance is comparable in older and younger persons (Heuninckx et al., 2005). Hence, 479 a shift from automatic processing to more cognitively controlled information processing is commonly 480 observed (Heuninckx et al., 2005). This observed overactivation could serve as a compensatory 481 mechanism for neurodegenerative processes and increased task demands in order to preserve the 482 behavioral performance in older persons, acknowledged as the compensation hypothesis (Cabeza et 483 al., 2018; Heuninckx et al., 2008; Reuter-Lorenz & Cappell, 2008).

484 The literature evaluating the underlying brain dynamics related to simulated driving in an aging 485 population is rather sparse. Some of the neuroimaging studies found results that were in line with 486 the compensation hypothesis. For instance, in less difficult driving situations, Alpha power increased 487 only in the younger group, while no differences in driving performance between young and old were 488 demonstrated (Getzmann et al., 2018). Since increased Alpha power has been demonstrated to 489 indicate attentional disengagement or boredom (Borghini et al., 2014; Herrmann & Knight, 2001; 490 Klimesch, 2012; Wascher et al., 2016), this lack of an increase in older drivers could signify that they 491 required a higher attentional demand to maintain their performance on the driving task. Secondly, 492 increased Theta power was associated with less steering variability only in older drivers (Getzmann 493 et al., 2018). Since frontal Theta power has been associated with mental processes such as cognitive 494 control and mental effort (Cavanagh & Frank, 2014), this could indicate that increased mental effort 495 resulted in a more adequate steering behavior. As this association was only found for the older 496 persons, this could also be an indication of the compensation hypothesis (Cabeza et al., 2018; 497 Heuninckx et al., 2008; Reuter-Lorenz & Cappell, 2008), with older drivers experiencing higher task 498 demands and requiring more cognitive control to keep the car in the center of the driving lane, at a 499 similar level as the younger persons.

However, this brain overactivation may also be due to an age-related reduction in the concentration
 of the inhibitory neurotransmitter gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA) (Cassady et al., 2019; Koen et

502 al., 2020). This loss could lead to a non-functional spread of brain activity with no improvement or 503 even a deterioration in behavioral performance, known as the dedifferentiation hypothesis 504 (Heuninckx et al., 2008; Koen et al., 2020; Sala-Llonch et al., 2015). Some of the included studies point 505 towards this dedifferentiation hypothesis, with differences in driving performance between young 506 and old, or even between high and low performing older persons (Karthaus et al., 2018b). Alpha and 507 Theta power was increased in the older persons who had a less consistent lane keeping performance 508 as compared to the better performing older group, which could be an indication of dedifferentiation. 509 This also indicates that the worse performing group required more mental effort, yet they were less 510 attentive during the lane keeping task. This group, therefore, employed a more reactive driving 511 strategy, in which they responded to the environmental information, while the better performing 512 group employed a more alert and proactive driving strategy, in which they anticipated to the available 513 information and actively used this to plan their driving behavior (Karthaus et al., 2018b). Additionally, 514 the ERP study found that an increase in braking reaction time was associated with smaller P3b 515 amplitude in the older adults (Karthaus et al., 2018a). Since the P3b is associated with cognitive 516 control of attentional and stimulus evaluation processes (Polich, 2007), this could indicate that older 517 adults have less neural resources at their disposal to manage the processing of a secondary stimulus 518 (Gajewski & Falkenstein, 2014; Karthaus et al., 2018a). Finally, older persons performed worse than 519 younger persons on a driving related visuospatial speed discrimination task, which was associated 520 with widespread brain hyperactivity in the older persons, again supporting the dedifferentiation 521 hypothesis (Eudave et al., 2018). Furthermore, driving at a higher mean speed was associated with 522 efficient default-mode network activity and connectivity only in younger persons, while this 523 association seemed to be lost in older persons. This network probably loses its efficiency in older 524 persons due to reduced deactivation and weakened connectivity (Eudave et al., 2018; Reuter-Lorenz 525 & Cappell, 2008). Therefore, this could indicate that the compensatory behavior of slower driving in 526 older persons, to cope with the increased mental effort during challenging driving situations, might 527 stem from age-related changes in the underlying brain dynamics (Eudave et al., 2018).

528 4.4 Towards preventive measures and rehabilitating techniques

529 In conclusion, cognitive performance tends to deteriorate with higher age, which might explain 530 poorer driving performance in older adults, and thus possibly leading to a higher risk of accident 531 involvement. Currently, available screening protocols seem to be insufficient to accurately predict 532 driving performance due to the complexity of this skill. Moreover, mandatory driving cessation could 533 lead to the use of higher risk mobility options (e.g. as pedestrians or cyclists), or impact the quality of 534 life (Siren & Haustein, 2015). Therefore, we recommend complementing driving screening in the 535 context of license renewal procedures, with the implementation of preventive or remedial measures 536 and training strategies in order to preserve or improve safe driving in older persons.

537 This systematic review found that older persons drove less consistently than the younger adult 538 drivers, and that they compensate for age-related cognitive decline by driving slower, in order to cope 539 with larger task demands during driving. Therefore, at risk older drivers could benefit from strategies

aimed at reducing driving task demands. For instance, guidelines regarding the driven vehicle could 540 541 be formulated, such as recommending vehicles with automatic gear transmission or other 542 technologies. Recent technological advances in the development of In-Vehicle Information Systems 543 (IVIS), Advanced Driving Assistance Systems (ADAS), or, on an even higher level, the development of 544 autonomous driving vehicles may increase driving safety in an older population (Classen et al., 2019; 545 Knoefel et al., 2019). Driving problems such as poorer lane keeping or speed control that arise due to 546 age-related changes in cognitive function, could be remedied by smart driver alerts or further 547 automation of corrective steering, speeding or braking input. However, IVIS might not always be 548 beneficial to older drivers. External alerts could be considered as a secondary task, and might initiate 549 driving problems. Therefore, these alerts should be tailored to the older individual (Classen et al., 550 2019). Considering autonomous driving, various technical, legal or ethical challenges need to be taken 551 into account. Additionally, it is required that older drivers specifically trust and learn to use these 552 technologies, as they might be skeptical to hand over driving control (Knoefel et al., 2019).

553 Secondly, education programs could focus on informing older persons of these increased task 554 demands, and how to reduce them by taking self-regulatory actions (Molnar & Eby, 2008). Older 555 drivers could self-regulate their driving behavior by for instance avoiding distracting stimuli, such as 556 handsfree calling or interacting with radio or GPS systems.

557 Finally, we recommend implementing individually tailored training protocols in order to increase safe 558 driving behavior and reduce task demands. These could focus on increasing dual tasking abilities or 559 on task specific training, using a driving simulator. Previous research has indicated that this approach 560 using driving simulator training has the potential to enhance road driving performance in older 561 persons (Casutt et al., 2014). Adding adjuvant non-invasive brain stimulation protocols could further 562 support increasing cognitive resources in order to cope with larger task demands during driving. This 563 could increase safe driving behavior in an older population, since research has found positive effects 564 on both cognitive and motor functions in older adults (Perceval et al., 2016; Summers et al., 2016). A 565 stimulation technique such as transcranial Direct Current Stimulation (tDCS) is portable, hence it is feasible to use in a daily life setting such as driving. Previous studies using tDCS while driving in a 566 567 young population found promising results for improving car-following and lane keeping behavior, 568 which might be relevant for older persons as well (Beeli et al., 2008; Sakai et al., 2014). Moreover, 569 implementing these neuromodulation techniques could aid in exploring the causal role between a 570 targeted brain region and their association with driving performance in an older population (Gomes-571 Osman et al., 2018; Woods et al., 2016). This can give more insight into the aging processes that play 572 a role in driving ability, and help us identify the brain regions which need to be targeted with brain 573 stimulation in order to improve driving performance in older persons.

574 4.5 Limitations

575 There are some limitations to this systematic review that may reduce the significance of our findings. 576 First of all, due to the heterogeneity of the literature using different outcome measures and different

577 protocols for evaluating cognition and driving performance, it was difficult to compare across studies 578 and to draw clear and definite conclusions. This also made a meta-analysis impossible. Due to this 579 heterogeneous literature, cognition was classified into domains. Although this classification was 580 based on reliable literature, this remains a relatively arbitrary division (Lezak et al., 2012; Strauss et 581 al., 2006). It is well known that some of the reported cognitive domains overlap with other domains, 582 and therefore, a neuropsychological test could be considered part of more than one domain. For 583 example, for the cognitive domain of divided attention, adequate switching and inhibition capacity is needed, which is also a component of executive function (Strauss et al., 2006). Likewise, there was 584 585 methodological variability in the driving evaluation that required a division into subsets. Even though 586 all included studies employed a simulated drive as driving outcome, there were variations in driving 587 protocol and driving related measures (for an overview: see Supplementary Table 4-6). For example, 588 some studies employed a more monotonous car-following or lane keeping task in which they were 589 not required to operate the gas pedal for controlling driving speed (Getzmann et al., 2018; Karthaus 590 et al., 2018a, 2018b), while other studies used a more realistic driving scenario requiring the 591 participant to react adequately to challenging driving events such as intersections. These differences 592 across studies complicate generalization over the different driving simulator tasks. In addition, the 593 included studies integrated different motor and cognitive secondary tasks into the simulated drive, 594 which might influence driving performance differently. However, when focusing on its impact on 595 driving, each type of dual task can give us insight if driving ability, i.e. the extent of automatization, is 596 affected.

597 Secondly, there were variations in the age range for the younger comparison groups. In 4 studies a 598 young adult inexperienced population (younger than 25 years of age) was added as a comparison 599 group, with two of them adding a more experienced younger person comparison group between the 600 ages of 25 and 55 as well (Bunce et al., 2012; Ledger et al., 2019; Michaels et al., 2017; Stinchcombe 601 et al., 2011). This younger and more inexperienced group is more likely to be involved in motor vehicle 602 crashes than middle-aged adults (Keating & Halpern-Felsher, 2008). Not only a lack of driving 603 experience might explain this higher crash incidence, but also underdeveloped executive function or 604 cognitive control (Ross et al., 2015; Ross et al., 2016; Walshe et al., 2017). In adolescents, executive 605 function is still developing parallel with the maturation of the frontal lobe, which is associated with 606 increased risk-taking (Huizinga et al., 2006; Romer et al., 2011). The inclusion of these adolescent 607 comparison groups might have given a distorted representation of the age-related changes in 608 cognition that impact driving performance.

Additionally, the methodological quality of some of the included studies was rather poor, which makes it difficult to infer strong conclusions. Some of the included studies did not analyze or report the differences in cognition between the age groups, or did not even evaluate the association between cognition and driving for each of the age groups separately. Also, a minority of the included studies did not report if the participants were screened for mild cognitive impairment (Sanford, 2017), resulting in a poor quality rating (Chen et al., 2013; Park et al., 2011; Rodrick et al., 2013). However, none of the conclusions in this systematic review are based on only the studies that were of poorquality.

Moreover, only some studies incorporated multivariate analyses to control for multicollinearity
between the cognitive variables (Eudave et al., 2018; Ledger et al., 2019). This hinders the isolation
of exclusive associations between a variable of a certain cognitive domain and driving performance.
The statistical methods used in several of the included studies did not allow such differentiation
(Belanger et al., 2015; Belanger et al., 2010; Chen et al., 2013). Furthermore, not all studies corrected
for multiple comparisons when using test batteries (Andrews & Westerman, 2012; Bunce et al., 2012;
Park et al., 2011), which might overestimate the observed associations to a certain degree.

624 Furthermore, only limited evidence was available for evaluating the physiological brain dynamics 625 related to driving performance in young and older populations. One of these studies did not evaluate 626 brain activity while actually driving in a simulator (Eudave et al., 2018). Finally, the choice was made 627 to only include studies that evaluated driving performance in a simulator. Even though the use of a 628 driving simulator has several advantages, such as the possibility to evaluate driving ability in a 629 standardized and safe environment and allow the assessment of a variety of driving related measures, 630 it remains a question if simulator-based driving reflects actual real world on-road driving (Helland et 631 al., 2016). Nevertheless, there is positive evidence available on the validity of a driver simulator 632 assessment for evaluating older drivers' performance (Aksan et al., 2016; Lee et al., 2003).

633 5 Conclusions and future directions

634 This systematic review found evidence that several domains of cognitive functioning, irrespective of 635 age, are associated with driving simulator performance. Especially the cognitive domains of executive 636 function, complex attention, and therefore also dual tasking ability, are important for adequate 637 driving performance in both younger and older adults. However, with increasing age, cognitive 638 performance tends to deteriorate, which might explain poorer driving performance in older adults. 639 The older persons drove less consistently than the younger adult drivers, as demonstrated by a larger 640 variability in speed, headway, i.e. the distance or time from the lead car during car-following 641 situations, and lane keeping performance. Evidence was also found that older drivers will compensate 642 for age-related cognitive decline by driving slower, in order to cope with larger task demands during 643 driving. Therefore, at risk older persons could benefit from strategies focusing on reducing task 644 demands, such as training of dual tasking abilities in a driving context, or for instance recommending 645 vehicles with automatic gear transmission.

At this moment, it is still unclear if older drivers with a similar cognitive performance as younger adult drivers also have a similar driving performance. There is an indication that this might be the case, with one EEG study finding differences in the neural correlates between high and low performing older adults, and the high performing older drivers having similar driving results as the younger 650 persons. Still, more research should focus on understanding the inter-individual variability between

older drivers in order to develop tailor-made intervention strategies.

Only a limited amount of studies evaluated the neural correlates of driving in an aging population. It 652 653 is probable that the differences in the underlying brain dynamics between young and older drivers account for a deterioration in older driver performance, which is supported by the findings of the EEG 654 655 studies that older drivers experience a higher cognitive load. Nevertheless, future research should try to implement neuroimaging techniques to further explore the neural correlates of driving 656 657 performance. Furthermore, it might be useful to implement neuromodulation techniques to explore 658 the causal association between neurophysiological processes and their association with driving. This 659 could offer a unique perspective in the field of driving research, as portable neuromodulation systems 660 could be used as a preventive measure for motor vehicle crashes. Finally, due to the complexity of 661 driving performance and diversity in driving evaluation, future driving simulator research and clinical screening application could benefit from a general construct of outcome measures to objectify driving 662 663 performance.

664 6 Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financialrelationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

667 7 Author Contributions

- 668 **SD**: Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing original draft, Visualization, **VR**: Supervision, Writing
- 669 Review & Editing, SV: Writing Review & Editing, KB: Writing Review & Editing, TB: Supervision,
- 670 Writing Review & Editing, **KvD:** Validation, Supervision, Writing Review & Editing, **RM:** Supervision,
- 671 Writing Review & Editing

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