Drink Driving in Finland

SMART policies for tackling drink driving

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• Facts & number of drink driving cases
• Sober Road -project
• Alcohol Interlocks
• Campaigns
Finland: facts

Area 338 432 m² (10 % lakes)

~ 5,5 million inhabitants
~ 3,7 million driving licences
~ 5,0 million motor vehicles

BAC-limit 0,5 ‰

Random checks by the police:
~ 2 million/year

In 2015 about 13 000 drink drivers caught by the police

Road traffic accidents:
~ 20 % of deaths and
~ 10 % of injuries related to DUI
Drink driving cases per year (caught by the police)
Sober Road -project to support young drivers

• The project offers support to young drivers caught drink driving, along the principles of a low threshold, voluntariness and prompt intervention.

• The police and the social & health services work together in this project to prevent serial drink driving.

• The main tool is a discussion about the use of intoxicants, held by social & health services (considering also possible social and mental health problems behind drink driving).

• First-offenders are more likely to take the support offered, whereas serial offenders and problem users of intoxicants are less likely to. However, the project reaches young people at risk of exclusion.

• One key result is that intervention and bringing up the subject of use of intoxicants are sensible, viable tools in customer contacts in social work.

• The social worker at the police department turned out to be an invaluably important liaison between the police and social & health services.
Alcohol Interlocks for DUI Offenders since 2005

- Voluntary; all drink-driving offenders are able to apply for a driving licence with a requirement to use an alcohol interlock → possible to keep on driving sober
- Alcohol interlock kept for 1–3 years (court decides the length for each driver; on average it’s between 1–2 years)
- Driving licence with national code 111 (from 1 January 2017 harmonized European code 69)
- Log-data read-out every 60 days, the police follows up the data
- Health care sector involved with one discussion with each driver
- The driver pays all the costs (on average less than 5 € per day)

- At least one third of the drivers leave the alcohol interlock voluntarily in the vehicle after the mandatory period (voluntary use settings applied, e.g. no running re-tests, no log-data read-out)!
- Evaluation study: Trafi Publications 6/2013 (in English): “Effectiveness and impact of alcohol interlock-controlled driving rights”
Alcohol Interlocks as a preventive measure

Since 2011 alcohol interlocks mandatory in chartered school and day care transports (more than 10 000 taxies and busses equipped with interlocks)

Since 2013 “health-related” alcohol interlock

- Doctors have an obligation to inform the police if a driving licence holder does not meet the minimum health requirements for the driving licence.
- **Doctors** are able to propose an alcohol interlock if the person would not otherwise receive/keep the driving licence due to unmet health requirements (in terms of alcohol use).
- National code 113 is recorded on the driving licence to show the obligation to use an alcohol interlock in all vehicles that the person is driving.
- The person may get rid of this code if he/she is able to convince the doctor that he/she does not have any problematic issues with alcohol use any longer.
CAMPAIGNS
Situational control
1980’s:

“If you take – do not drive
If you drive – do not drink”
CAMPAIGNS:
Self control
2000’s:

“There are mornings when it is wise to leave the car home”
CAMPAIGNS (2012):
Youngsters came up with this idea themselves (Slogan competition)
"It is OK to be stupid – but it’s NOT OK to be drunk driver"
Thank you!

Questions?
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