7 SMART WAYS OF TACKLING DRINK-DRIVING IN THE EU
For more information

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DRINK-DRIVING AND ROAD SAFETY IN THE EU

The numbers of deaths attributed to drink-driving cannot currently be compared between countries, as there are large differences in the way in which countries define and record a ‘road death attributed to drink-driving’.

It is estimated that 1.5 - 2% of all kilometres travelled in the EU are driven with an illegal Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC)\(^1\)

2% of all kilometres travelled in the EU are driven with an illegal Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC)\(^1\)

ETSC estimates that at least 5120 DEATHS would have been prevented in 2016 if all drivers had been SOBER\(^2\)

\(^1\) European Commission (2015), Alcohol, Directorate General for Transport, https://goo.gl/q1jCS8

\(^2\) As indicated by the estimate that the risk of a fatal collision when driving with a blood alcohol concentration of 0.5g/l is 5 times that when sober. Allsop R (2015) Saving lives by lowering the legal drink-drive limit. https://goo.gl/JrQhTr
25% of all road deaths in the EU are alcohol-related.

-47% reduction in road deaths attributed to alcohol between 2006 and 2016 in the EU25. Other road deaths went down by 40% over the same period.

RECOMMENDATIONS

TO MEMBER STATES
Introduce obligatory testing for alcohol of all active road users in all collisions resulting in road deaths or serious injuries.
Adopt the SafetyNet recommended definition of a drink-driving death or serious injury: “any death or serious injury occurring as a result of a road accident in which any active participant was found with a blood alcohol level above the legal limit”.

TO EU INSTITUTIONS
Adopt the SafetyNet recommended definition of a drink-driving death or serious injury and update the CaDas guidelines accordingly.
Encourage Member States to test for alcohol all active road users involved in a collision resulting in road deaths or serious injuries.

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5 Ibid
6 CaDas, the Common Accident Data Set, consists of a minimum set of standardised data elements, to help comparable road accident data to be available in Europe. The CADaS can be implemented on a voluntary basis by any country that wishes to update their national road accident collection system. https://goo.gl/Roaa9M
1

LOWER BLOOD ALCOHOL CONCENTRATION (BAC) LIMITS

DID YOU KNOW?

The European Commission recommends BAC LIMITS are set at a maximum

**0.5G/L**

with a lower limit of

**0.2G/L** FOR NOVICE AND PROFESSIONAL DRIVERS.

Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia have gone beyond the EC recommendation by introducing **ZERO** TOLERANCE FOR ALL ROAD USERS.
7 SMART Ways of Tackling Drink-Driving in the EU

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*Scotland 0,5 for all groups
7 SMART Ways of Tackling Drink-Driving in the EU

“Fighting drink-driving is a clear priority for our traffic police. Opinion polls show that 99% of drivers think drink- and drug-driving is dangerous or rather dangerous. The longstanding support from our citizens and politicians for drink-driving prevention and enforcement activities helped to achieve such a high number of drink-driving checks. We aim to sustain current enforcement levels and improve the effectiveness of enforcement activities by identifying where and when the tests should be done to get the best safety effects...”

Erik Ernits,
Road Administration, Estonia

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BHCTHLEVELS OF DRINK-DRIVING ENFORCEMENT

Currently, Estonia has the highest level of drink-driving enforcement in the EU.

A **0.2G/L BAC LIMIT FOR ALL DRIVERS** was introduced in 2000 and drink-driving compliance is regularly checked by the police.

Drink-driving deaths decreased from 61 in 2006 to 7 in 2016, an 89% decrease.

Roadside breath tests increased from 105 per 1000 inhabitants in 2010 to 677 per 1000 in 2015.

SMART Ways of Tackling Drink-Driving in the EU

"Drink-drivers face tough sanctions: fines between 500 and 1500 EUR, the suspension of their driving license from 1 to 4 years and 8 penalty points valid for 5 years. To get one’s driving license back, offenders have to pass a theoretical and driving test at the end of the disqualification period as well as a medical check which includes a drug test and a psychological test. Campaigns combined with roadside drink-driving police checks take place every year in June and around Christmas and New Year."

A LOWER BAC LIMIT AND TOUGH SANCTIONS FOR DRINK-DRIVING OFFENDERS BROUGHT POSITIVE RESULTS

2004: Reduction of the limit for novice drivers

2016: Reduction of the limit for bus and tram drivers.

FROM 0.5G/L  TO 0.2G/L

Drink-driving deaths decreased from 84 in 2006 to 17 in 2016, an 80% decrease

LATVIA

Aldis Lama,
Road Traffic Safety Directorate, Latvia

2 SANCTIONS

DIFFERENT TYPES OF SANCTION

FIXED FINES
Most EU Member States have fixed fines for driving under the influence (DUI) offences that are not income-related.

Benefit of fines: higher benefit-to-cost ratio than jail sentences and the money earned can be used to support further measures against drink-driving.\(^9\)

INCOME-BASED FINES
Denmark, Finland and Sweden apply income-based fines.

SUSPENSION OR WITHDRAWAL OF THE DRIVING LICENSE
Suspension or withdrawal of the driving license can be an effective deterrent, but the effectiveness of this sanction depends on the ability of the police to enforce the measure. Research shows that the optimum duration for license withdrawal is between two and 12 months. Effects can be enhanced when driving license sanctions are combined with treatment or rehabilitation measures.\(^10\)

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BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLES

A STRATEGY FOR MAKING DRINK-DRIVING SOCIALLY INACCEPTABLE

- Motivate family, friends and colleagues to intervene and prevent drink-driving
- Publicise risk of being caught by police
- Publicise sanctions and consequences
- Promote non-alcoholic alternatives

DENMARK

The sanctions for drink-driving have been increased several times since 2005.

Drivers with a BAC above 0,5g/l must pay for and follow a mandatory 12-hour course about alcohol and road safety before being able to regain their driving license.

Drink-drivers with a BAC above 1,2 and repeat offenders get long term withdrawal of the driving license (min. three years), and serve community service or go to prison.

Police can confiscate the vehicle driven if the BAC is above 1,2 two times within three years.

Revised legislation on alcohol interlocks was introduced in the sanction system in 2017. It is still too soon to say anything about the effect.
3

ENFORCEMENT

LACK OF ENFORCEMENT IS OFTEN DUE TO:
• a lack of political will;
• limited financial and human resources;
• competing priorities at national level.

IT IS NECESSARY TO ENSURE THAT LAWS ARE ENFORCED AND APPROPRIATE PENALTIES ADMINISTERED.\(^\text{11}\)

Between 2010 and 2015, roadside checks increased by 39% each year in Poland, 24% in Estonia and 12% in Portugal.

But the figures are difficult to interpret since the data on roadside checks are not comparable between countries on aspects such as randomness, location and type of checks.\(^\text{12}\)

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\(^{13}\) Ibid
Fig. 1 - Annual change (%) in the number of alcohol roadside breath checks over the period 2010-2015.\textsuperscript{13}

*Data from urban roads and from the Basque Country are not included. Data for Catalonia cover checks on all roads. **Alcohol roadside breath tests by national police and Carabinieri only, the number of tests done by local police operating in cities is not included. †Number of checks and population data for England and Wales only over the period 2011-2014. EL, FR – 2010-2014 data, PT – 2010-2013 data, RO – 2013-2015, EE – 2012-2013.

\textsuperscript{13} ETSC (2018), Progress in Reducing drink-driving in Europe, http://etsc.eu/2Assf
Table 1 - Total number of roadside alcohol breath tests and proportion of those tested found above the legal limit.14 *Drink driving tests by national police and Carabinieri only. Checks done by the local police operating in cities are not available. **Drink driving tests for England and Wales only, the figure for the number found to be above the legal limit includes those who refused to take the breath test.

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14 ETSC, 2016, PIN Flash 31 How traffic law enforcement can contribute to safer roads, https://goo.gl/cpKsj2
BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLES

SWEDEN

AUTOMATIC SOBRIETY CHECKPOINTS: THE ALCO GATES

A collaboration between the Swedish Abstaining Motorists’ Association (MHF), the Swedish Transport Administration, the national police, customs, the coast guard, the Ports of Stockholm and ferry companies.

The automatic sobriety check is considered equivalent to a police breath test, and the folded traffic barriers are approved as equivalent to a police stop sign.

The control activities are carried out in full compliance with the law, and with a high level of accuracy.

In total, the control station and the traffic management centre communicate in 12 different languages.

A trial period was conducted in 2014, followed by an evaluation and final report submitted to the Swedish Transport Administration.

In September 2017, the Swedish government instructed the Swedish Transport Administration to introduce facilities for automatic sobriety checkpoints in all major ports. The implementation of similar controls is now being considered for other major transport terminals as well as in airports (for pilots and cabin crew).
4

ALCOHOL INTERLOCKS

DID YOU KNOW?

10% of all drink-driving offenders are involved in 2/3 of all alcohol-involved crashes.

Alcohol interlocks are:
- An effective measure for hard-core drink-driving offenders
- An effective prevention tool

LEGISLATION NEEDED

To maximise the effect on road safety, alcohol interlock programmes for drink drivers offenders should be compulsory and placed under administrative law.
7 Smart ways of tackling drink-driving in the EU

ALCOHOL INTERLOCKS IN THE EU

- VOLUNTARY USE
- LAW IN PREPARATION
- LAW ADOPTED

The alcohol interlock programme in The Netherlands is currently suspended.
EU VEHICLE SAFETY PROPOSALS TO REQUIRE STANDARDISED ALCOHOL INTERLOCK INTERFACE

All new vehicles sold in the EU will feature a standardised interface to enable the fitment of aftermarket alcohol interlock devices, according to new EU vehicle safety standards proposed in May 2018. The move is welcome and long overdue but ETSC is also calling for alcohol interlocks to be required as standard on vans, lorries and buses.

The European Commission has recommended since 2001 that professional drivers and novice drivers be subject to lower BAC limits.

ETSC WELCOMES

- Guidance to Member States on the use of alcohol interlocks is foreseen.
- Under the part on voluntary commitments the EC calls upon public authorities to require the fitment of alcohol interlocks in public procurement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

TO MEMBER STATES
Develop use of alcohol interlocks as part of the rehabilitation programmes for first time high-level offenders and recidivists. Mandate the use of alcohol interlocks for repeat offenders and professional drivers.

TO EU INSTITUTIONS
Ensure that retrofitting of vehicles with alcohol interlocks continues to be possible in the future. Legislate for a consistently high level of reliability of alcohol interlock devices. As a first step towards wider use of alcohol interlocks, legislate their use by professional drivers.

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BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLES

FRANCE

ENHANCED PREVENTION FOR SAFER TRANSPORT. BUSES AND COACHES IN FRANCE ARE ALREADY REQUIRED TO BE FITTED WITH ALCOHOL INTERLOCKS BY LAW.

January 2010: Coaches assigned to public transport for children have been equipped with alcohol interlocks.

1 September 2015: Mandatory alcohol interlocks in all coaches. The equipment must be checked every year in an approved centre. The devices record the data and store it for 45 days.

BELGIUM

ALCOHOL INTERLOCKS NOW MANDATORY IN BELGIUM FOR HIGH-LEVEL AND REPEAT OFFENDERS.

Since July 1, 2018, repeat offenders convicted with an alcohol level of at least 1.2 ‰ and drivers convicted with an alcohol level of at least 1.8 ‰ are required to install an alcohol interlock in their car.16

16 https://www.vias.be/fr/newsroom/lethylotest-antidemarrage-diminue-dau-moins-75-le-risque-de-recidive/
REHABILITATION PROGRAMMES

DID YOU KNOW?

Studies have repeatedly shown that alcohol interlock programme combined with rehabilitation programmes cut reoffending rates both during and after the driver has been required to install the device in their vehicle.

Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Sweden and Poland provide driver rehabilitation programmes including alcohol interlocks for drink-driving offenders. These programmes are combined with counselling and close monitoring in most cases.¹⁷


BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLES

AUSTRIA

THE ALTERNATIVE PROBATION SYSTEM

In September 2017, Austria launched a voluntary rehabilitation programme for drink-driving offenders using alcohol interlocks, following successful trials run in 2012 and 2013.

Convicted drink-drivers can opt-in to the scheme to enable them to get back behind the wheel when they have completed half of their driving ban period (subject to a minimum of four months). The programme is the first to require participants to meet regularly with a mentor.

Finland has had a nationwide rehabilitation programme for drink-drivers, coupled with the use of alcohol interlocks fitted in offenders’ vehicles since 2008. A 2013 evaluation found the effects on participants to be positive and that the programme has prevented 12,000 instances of driving under the influence of alcohol.

The Finnish alcohol interlock programme is a voluntary programme for all DUI offenders regardless of the blood alcohol concentration at their arrest. Offenders can choose to participate in the programme instead of getting a driving licence ban.18

The business case for addressing alcohol impaired driving in the workplace is strong. The vast majority of citizens with alcohol problems are employed full time. Employers can reap productivity gains and savings from reductions in alcohol-related vehicle crashes.\textsuperscript{19}

Given the typical characteristics of drink-drivers, it can be argued that drivers of commercial vehicles tend to have a profile corresponding to a \textit{typical drink-driver}. Many of them are relatively young, male, single, or divorced, with low self-esteem and coming from a low socio-economic grouping.

They drive as part of their professional job and risk much more than private car drivers if stopped while drink-driving. Apart from the immediate results of the crash they may also face a driving ban which could mean a loss of job especially if driving is the main part of their work.

Employers of commercial drivers have an important role to play in increasing the awareness of drivers about the risks of drink-driving.\textsuperscript{20}

\textsuperscript{19} Network of Employers for Traffic Safety NETS, http://trafficsafety.org/
\textsuperscript{20} Preventing Road Accidents and Injuries for the Safety of Employees (2010), ETSC, https://etsc.eu/Fitness_to_drive
BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLES

DENMARK

CARLSBERG SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAMME

The company has set an internal target to equip all vehicles with alcohol interlocks globally (sales cars, company cars as well as new trucks). This is now a mandatory requirement in Carlsberg procurement policy.

Status of the programme: fully implemented across Western Europe and rolling out in other regions.21

IRELAND

MATTHEWS COACH HIRE

Matthews Coach Hire is a passenger transport company founded in 1995 in the north east of Ireland that has voluntarily installed alcohol interlocks across its fleet. Every Matthews coach and support vehicle carries one of the devices.

The alcohol interlocks were introduced in 2008 and are now used in 43 coaches by 85 staff, carrying thousands of passengers each week.

RECOMMENDATIONS

TO MEMBER STATES

• Mandate the use of alcohol interlocks for professional drivers
• Adopt a 0.2 BAC limit for commercial drivers
• Run drink-driving campaigns linked to workplace health promotion based on scientific research and linked to enforcement

EMPLOYERS

• Install alcohol interlocks in commercial vehicles
• Inform and educate employees about the risk of drink-driving and adopt a zero tolerance approach to alcohol in the workplace and whilst driving for work.
• Develop clear internal policies and procedures on drink-driving.
• Supervisors, line managers and drivers should be trained on the effects of alcohol on driving

21 https://carlsberg-group-sustainability-report-2017
7 SMART Ways of Tackling Drink-Driving in the EU

EDUCATION & CAMPAIGNS

DID YOU KNOW?

The effect of publicity campaigns can be increased when a study is conducted on how to address the target group, and when the public campaign is supported by other measures such as enforcement and education.

Publicity campaigns using mass media are intended to change attitudes and behaviour. This can be done either by raising awareness of the dangers of drink-driving, by raising the likelihood of being detected and punished for drink-driving, by informing drivers about the social norm, or by promoting strategies to avoid drink-driving.

However, road safety campaigns are able to influence behaviour best when used in conjunction with legislation and law enforcement.\textsuperscript{22}

\textsuperscript{22} International Association of Traffic and Safety Sciences (2010), Improving the effectiveness of road safety campaigns: Current and new practices, Tamara Hoekstra, Fred Wegman, https://ac.els-cdn.com/Improving the effectiveness of road safety campaigns: Current and new practices.
BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLES

BELGIUM

THE BOB CAMPAIGN: EMOTIONAL / POSITIVE / SOLUTION-ORIENTED

The ‘BOB’ campaign is an annual campaign established in Belgium in 1995. One of the main principles is combining the prevention message with visible enforcement, with a section about awareness and another about police patrols and checks. The basic assumption is that an increased ‘chance of arrest’ results in a fall in the number of people driving under the influence of alcohol. The campaign was developed by the Belgian Road Safety Institute (now VIAS) in conjunction with the Belgian Brewers.

In its original meaning ‘BOB’ stood for ‘the person who doesn’t drink if he/she is driving’. He or she represents the designated driver who stays sober so that he/she can take the other passengers travelling in the vehicle home safely.23

Impact survey: around 35% of the respondents say they have been a BOB and around 2/3 of the people know someone who has acted as a BOB.

BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLES

SLOVENIA

HEROES DRIVE IN PYJAMAS

Winners of the Excellence in Road Safety Awards 2018

The ‘Heroes drive in pyjamas’ campaign addresses young people, often exposed to the risk of driving while under the influence of alcohol or other psychoactive substances. By making heroes of parents who drive their children to/from parties, the campaign is making good use of the phenomenon of peer pressure, which is a very powerful influencer of behaviour amongst youngsters.24

At the same time, the campaign implements a holistic preventive approach to drink-driving with the help of the traffic police, the private sector and municipalities. The project was recognised for addressing successfully an important societal problem: drink-driving amongst young people.

24 http://www.erscharter.eu/about-the-charter/awards-ceremony_en
7 SMART Ways of Tackling Drink-Driving in the EU