

Drink Driving in Switzerland

„Safe and Sober Talk“, 4.10.2011, Zürich

Uwe Ewert, Dr. phil. MPH, Research Associate
u.ewert@bfu.ch – www.bfu.ch

Judicial situation

Until 2004:

- Maximum BAC of 0.08%
- No random breath testing allowed, only with reasonable suspicion (like erratic driving behavior)
- Breath test not evidentiary

Since 2005:

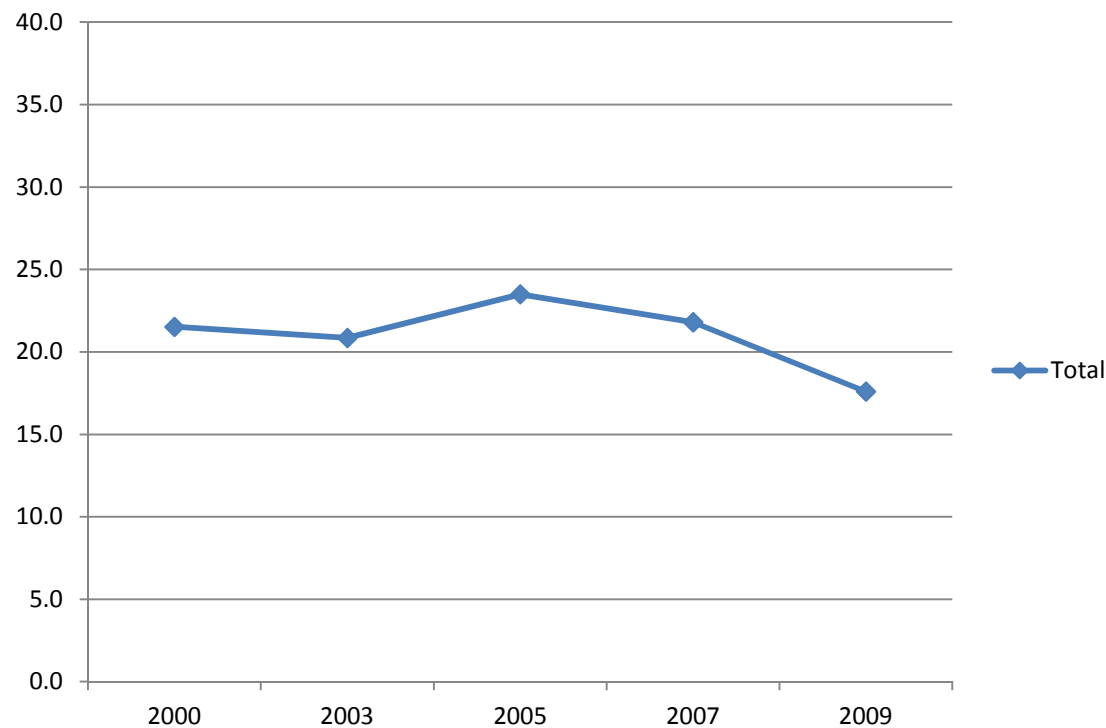
- Maximum BAC of 0.05%
- Random breath testing allowed, even without reasonable suspicion
- Cascade-like increase in penalty in case of repeat offences
- Breath test evidentiary from 0.05 to 0.08% (if the driver agrees), above 0.08% - blood test mandatory

How frequent is drunk driving in Switzerland?

- We don't know
- Only one roadside survey conducted (1987), only agglomeration Bern : 4.4% in Friday and Saturday nights (only persons that agreed to be tested)
- Until 2004: No breath tests allowed unless there was reasonable suspicion
- Since 2005 basically possible but not yet conducted

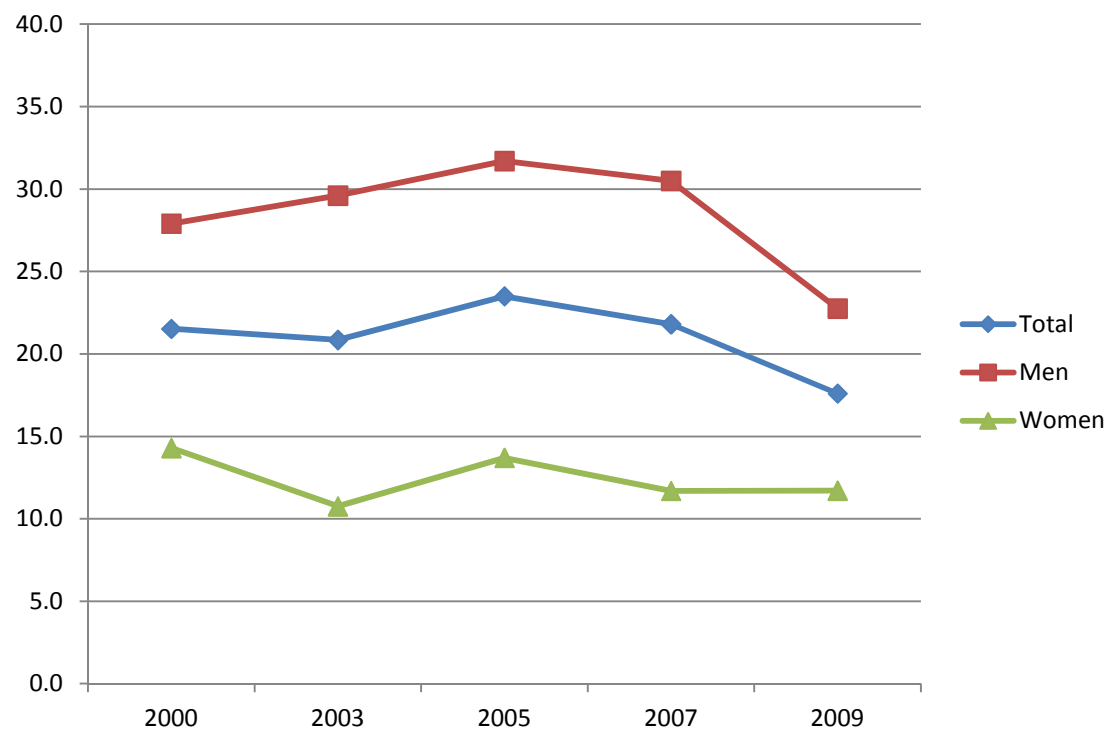
How frequent is drunk driving in Switzerland?

- Survey data from the Federal Office of Statistics: At least one trip with alcohol beyond the legal limit within the last year



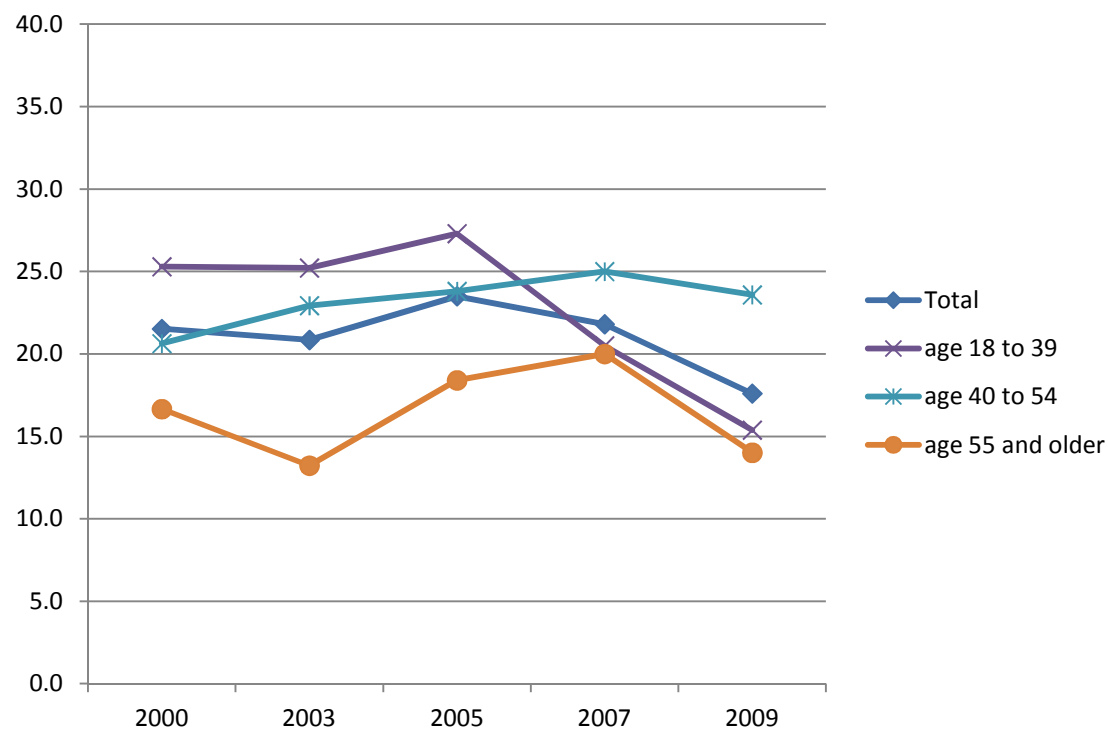
How frequent is drunk driving in Switzerland?

- Survey data from the Federal Office of Statistics: At least one trip with alcohol beyond the legal limit within the last year



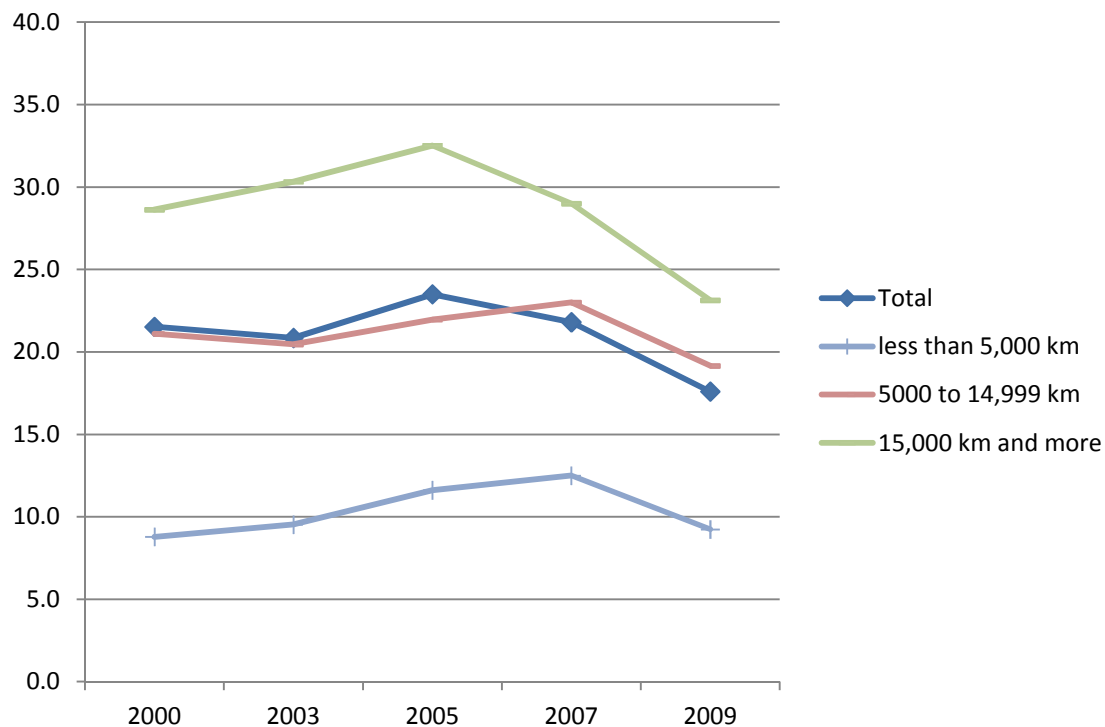
How frequent is drunk driving in Switzerland?

- Survey data from the Federal Office of Statistics: At least one trip with alcohol beyond the legal limit within the last year



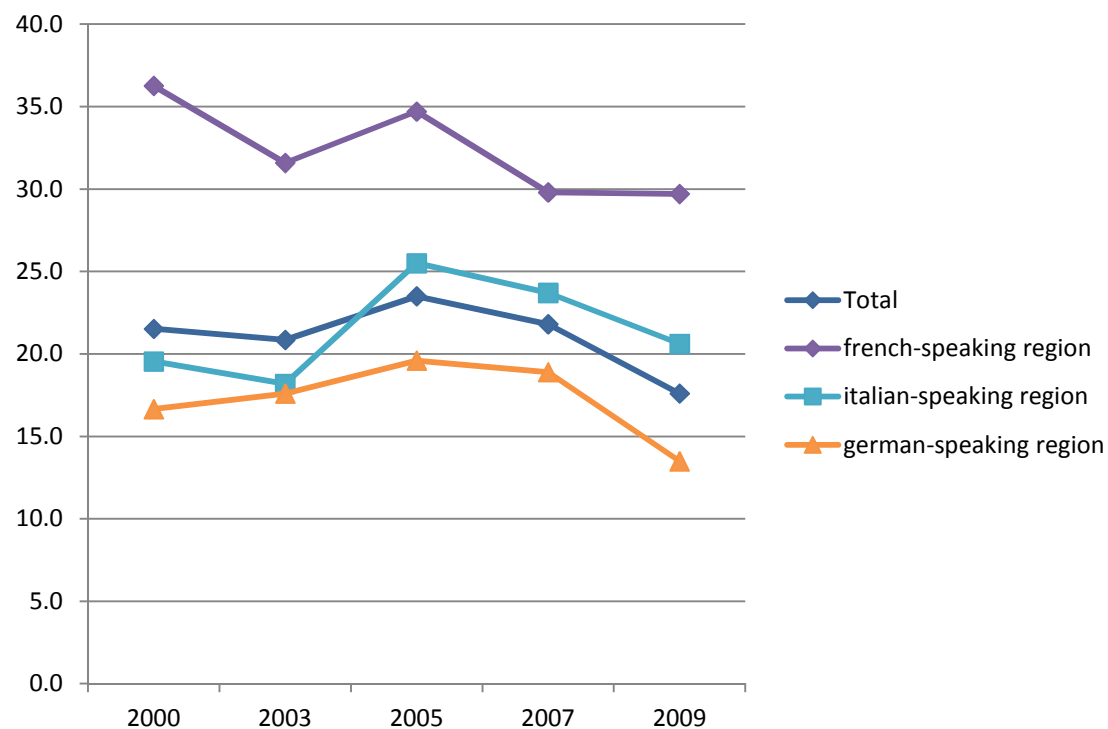
How frequent is drunk driving in Switzerland?

- Survey data from the Federal Office of Statistics: At least one trip with alcohol beyond the legal limit within the last year



How frequent is drunk driving in Switzerland?

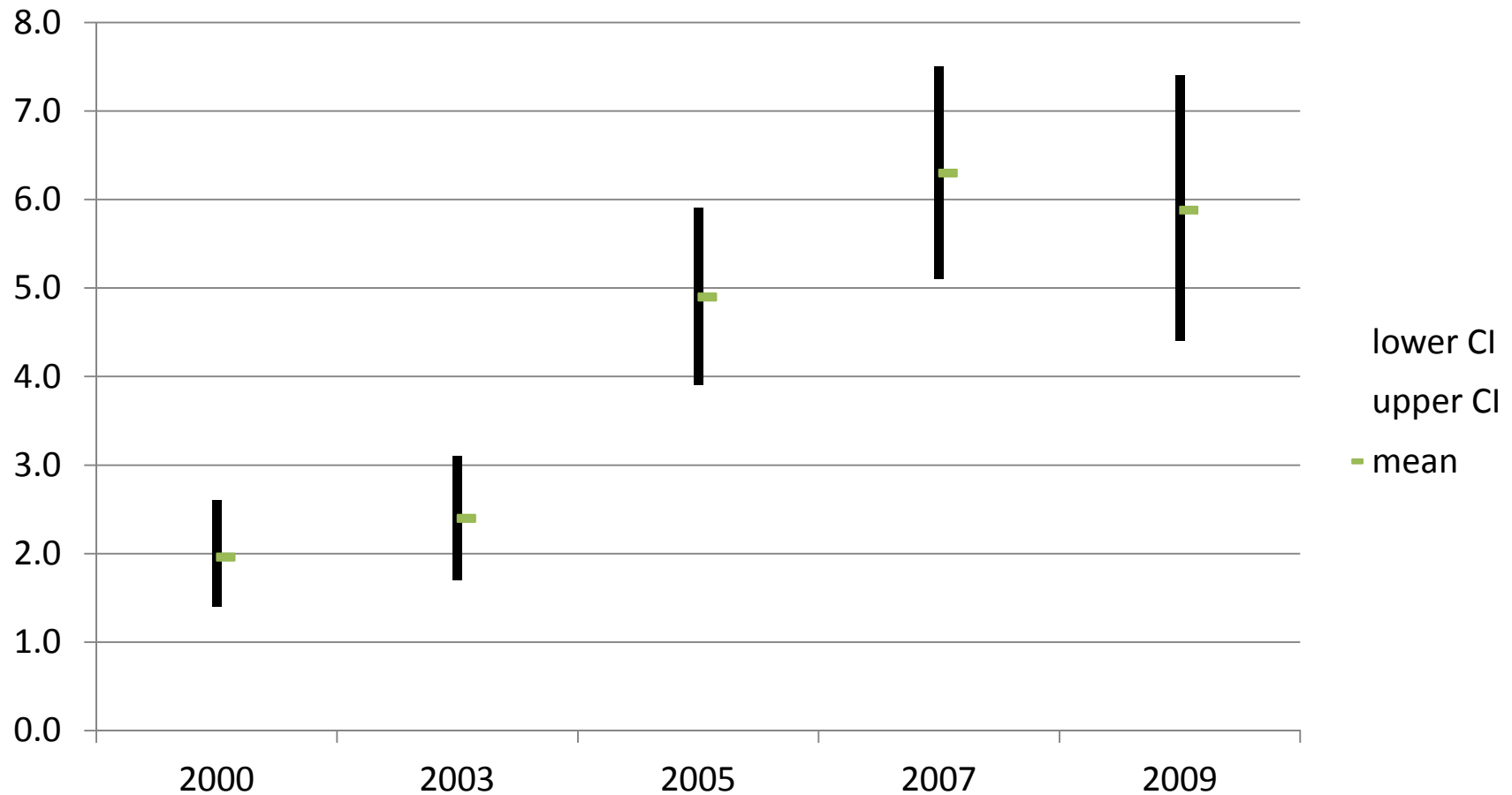
- Survey data from the Federal Office of Statistics: At least one trip with alcohol beyond the legal limit within the last year



How frequent is drunk driving in Switzerland?

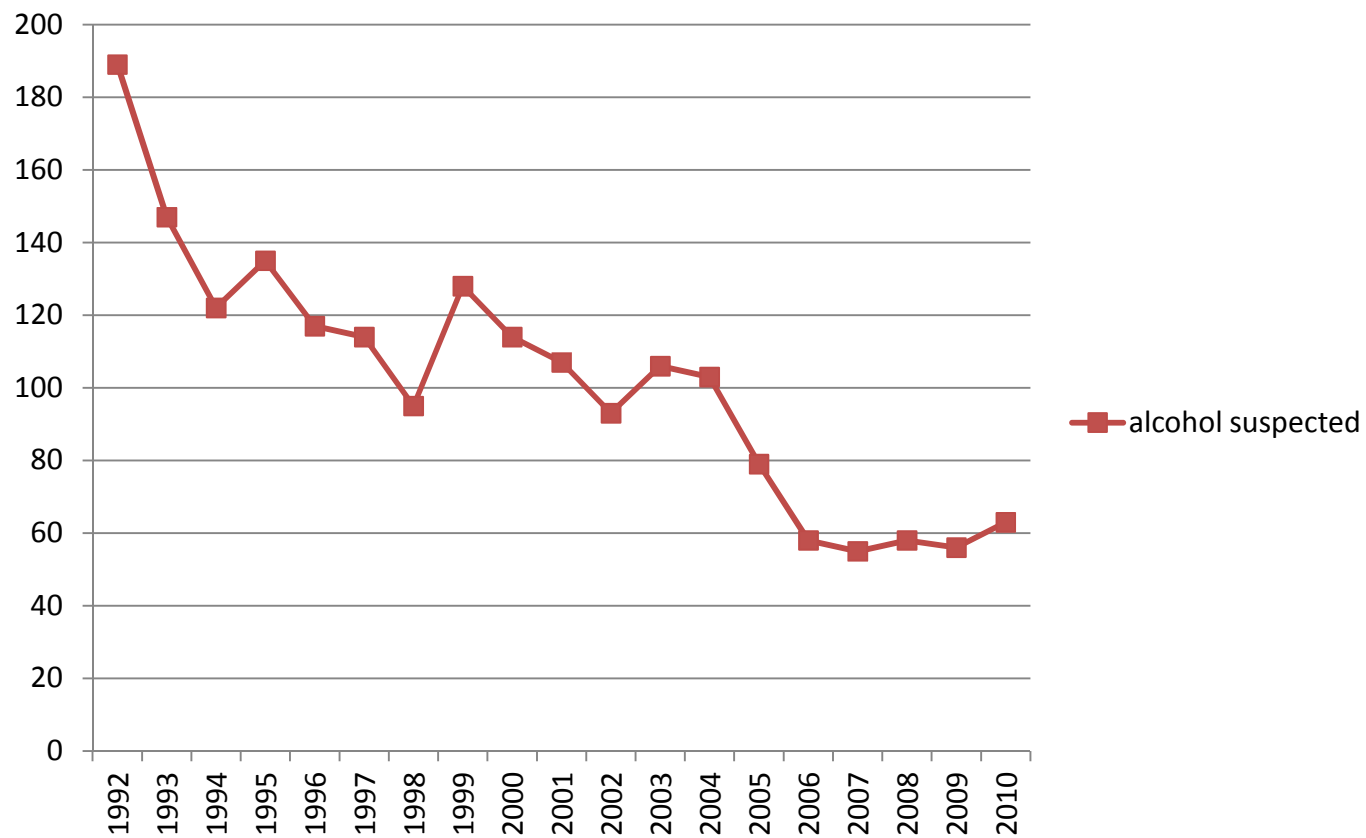
- Men drive drunk more frequently than women
- Until 2005: the younger, the more drunk driving
- After 2005: Decrease for younger and older drivers, no change in the middle age category (effect of GDL introduction?)
- The higher the yearly kilometrage, the more drunk driving (about proportional to change in kilometrage)
- Large differences in drunk driving in the different language regions (lowest german-speaking, highest french-speaking)
- 25% decrease in self-reported drunk driving beyond the limit since the introduction of 0.05 % BAC

How frequently does the police control for alcohol?



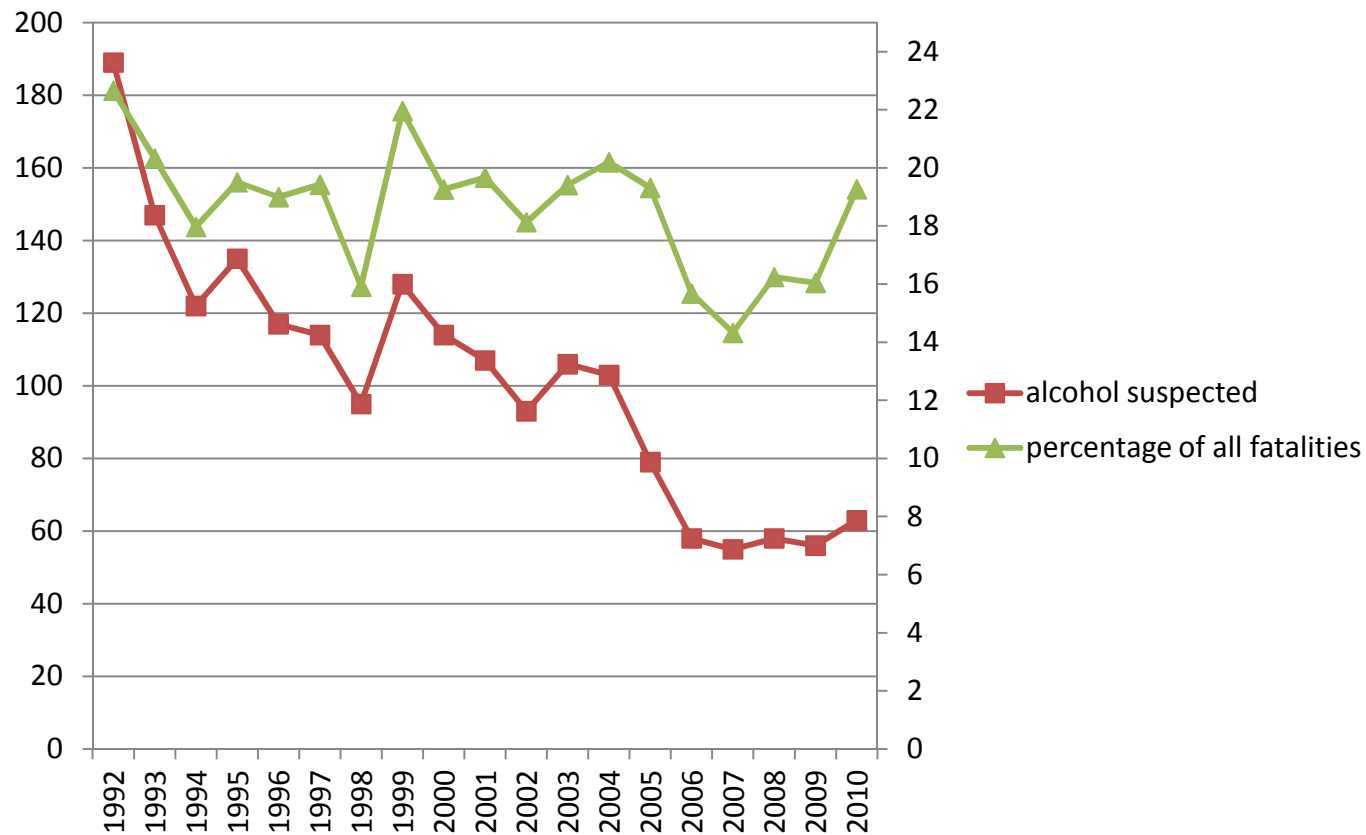
How did the accidents due to DUI develop?

- Fatalities, alcohol suspected



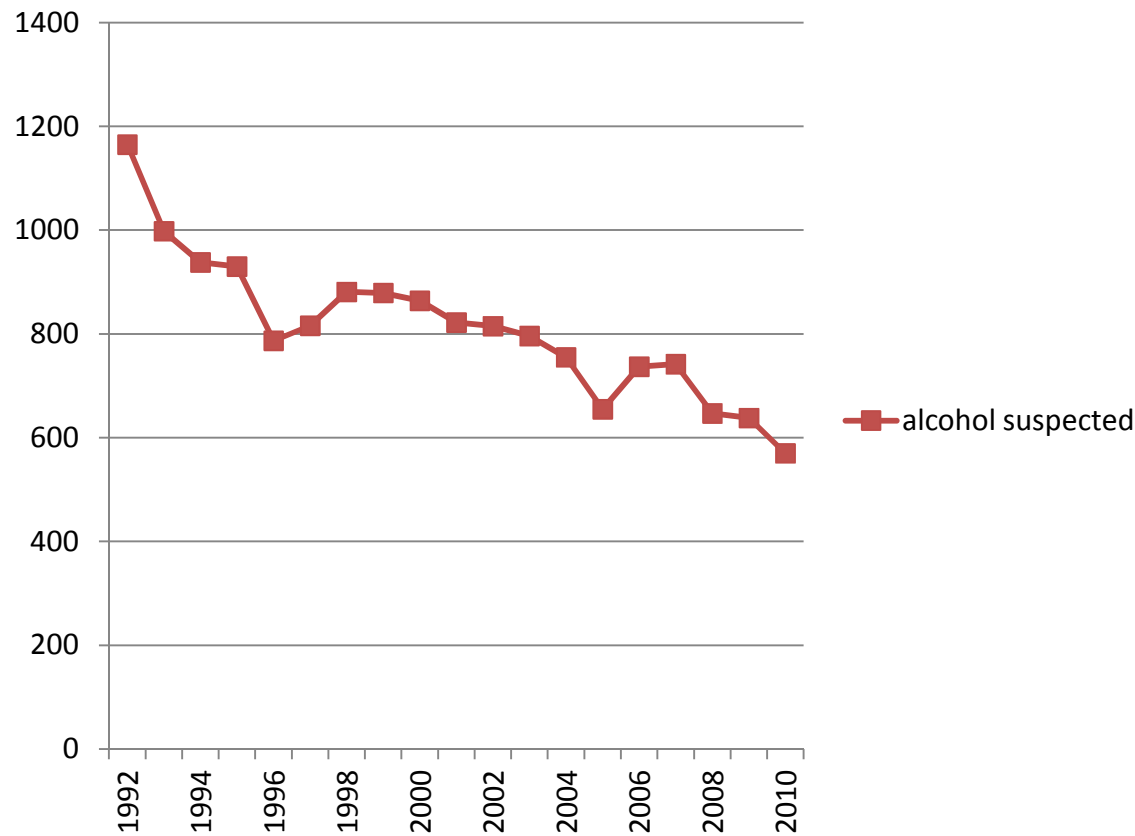
How did the accidents due to DUI develop?

- Fatalities, alcohol suspected



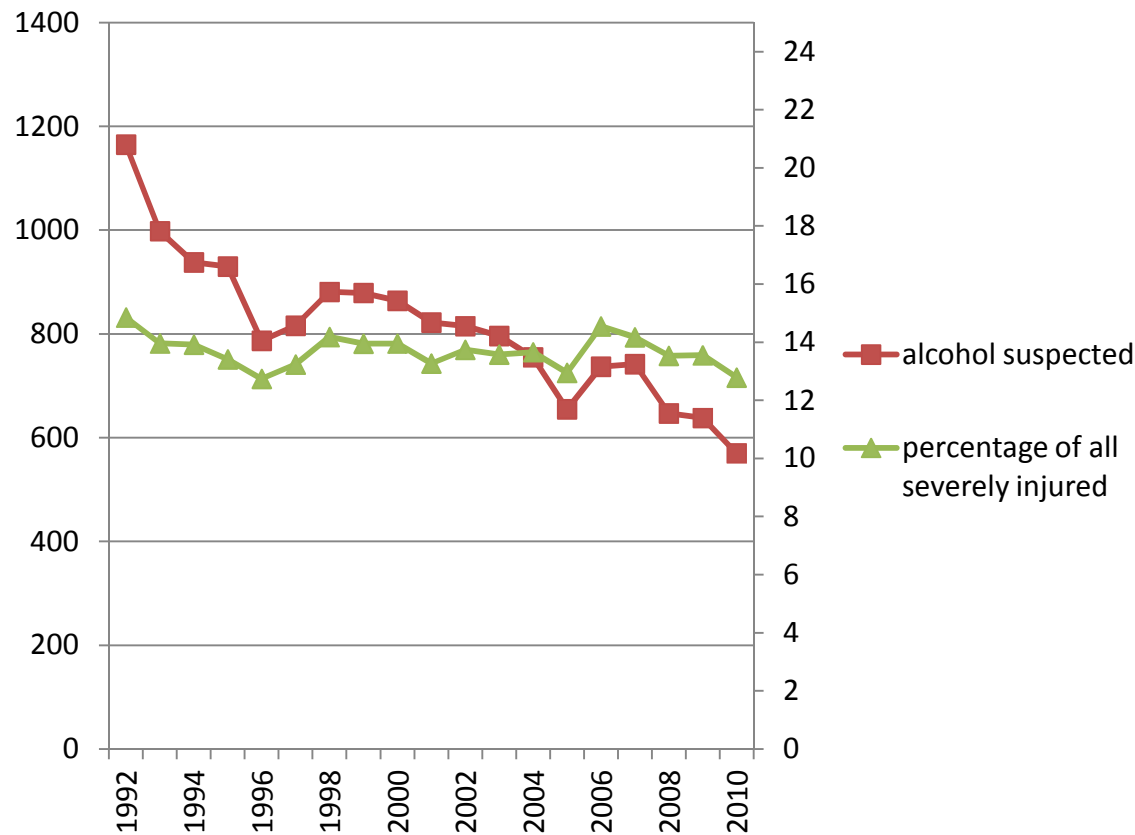
How did the accidents due to DUI develop?

- Severely injured, alcohol suspected



How did the accidents due to DUI develop?

- Severely injured, alcohol suspected



How did the accidents due to DUI develop?

- Fatalities in DUI crashes have decreased for a long time, seem to have reached stagnation with no more improvement since 2006
- Since the total number of road fatalities is decreasing, the proportion of alcohol-related fatalities is increasing: from 16% in 2006 to 19% in 2010
- The number of severely injured in DUI crashes is decreasing
- The percentage of all severely injured remains stable (with some fluctuations)

Conclusion

Drunk driving is still an important problem on Swiss roads

Planned interventions:

- Zero BAC for drivers in GDL system
- Licence withdrawal already beginning at 0.05 % BAC
- Extension of evidentiary breath test beyond 0.08% BAC
- More police enforcement with campaigns
- More forgiving roads
- Extension of rehabilitation course system
- Via Sicura: Alcolock for repeat offenders