

Drink Driving Monitor

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ETSC's Newsletter on Drink Driving Policy Developments in the EU

Editorial

On February 28th a draft report on European Road Safety was presented by MEP Koch during the TRAN Committee. The "fitting of alcolocks to the vehicles of road users who are known to drink and drive" and their mandatory installation "to all commercial passenger and goods transport vehicles" were highly recommended together with harmonised legal blood alcohol limits throughout Europe. The rapporteur welcomed the Commission's Communication "Towards a European Road Safety Area: policy orientations on road safety 2011-2020" published in July 2010, but invited the Commission to further "develop its proposals into a fully-fledged action programme incorporating a detailed set of measures with clear timetables for their implementation". ETSC supports the European Parliament's own initiative report and considers it to be a timely response to the European Commissions' policy orientations and the Council Conclusions on Road Safety of December 2010. The draft report is expected to be voted by the European Parliament's Transport Committee in May, with the plenary vote scheduled for June.

The 13th Drink Driving Monitor brings news from across the EU on steps to further improve drink driving legislation and enforcement. Updates on Cross-Border Enforcement Directive and the decision of the UK to delay its opt-in are presented, together with the Draft Report on Road Safety proposed by MEP Koch and the latest on TISPOL alcohol and drug campaign. An interview with Desiree Schaap, Ministry of Transport in the Netherlands, on the Dutch Alcolock Programme and ETSC's alcolock legislation barometer are also featured.

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EU News

Cross-Border Enforcement Directive moves one step closer to adoption

The process leading to the adoption of the Cross-Border Enforcement Directive is moving ahead. Driving under the influence of alcohol is one of the four main traffic offences that will be covered by the new piece of legislation. On the 17th of March, following the political agreement reached on the 2nd of December, the Council of Ministers adopted the first reading position on cross border, together with the statement of the Council's reasons. The next step will be sending the position to the European Parliament for a second reading. ETSC was glad to hear that Member States' representatives took this important next step

towards improving the safety of citizens across the EU. The main objective of the Directive is to identify and prosecute EU drivers who commit offences in a Member State other than the one where their vehicle is registered.

On the 4th of March the UK decided to delay its opt-in procedure to the Cross Border Enforcement Directive. UK citizens will thus be exempt from this important new road safety law. According to ETSC, the UK decision is regrettable, but the government is within its legal rights to delay their opt-in.

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MEP Koch's Report on Road Safety calls for concrete measures for 2011-2020

MEP Koch recommended the "fitting of alcolocks to the vehicles of road users who are known to drink and drive" and their mandatory installation "to all commercial passenger and goods transport vehicles" and pleaded for harmonised legal blood alcohol limits during the 28th of March TRAN Committee meeting where he presented his draft report on European Road Safety. He welcomed the Commission's Communication "Towards a European Road Safety Area: policy orientations on road safety 2011-2020" published in July 2010, but invited the Commission to further "develop its proposals into a fully-fledged action programme incorporating a detailed set of measures with clear timetables for their implementation". The rapporteur stressed the importance of "a coherent, holistic and integrated approach" to improve road safety and the need of going beyond the period covered by the Commission's communication with the objective of preventing all road deaths ('Vision Zero').

The draft report is expected to be voted by the Committee in May, with the plenary vote scheduled for June.

TISPOL Policy Report: a toolkit to improve Road Safety

In December 2010 the TISPOL Alcohol and Drugs working group published a policy document focusing on best practices in reducing the problem of driving under the influence of alcohol and drugs. The main goal was to provide a toolkit for optimal legislation, preventative measures and technical equipment for police services and to make all drivers understand that drinking and driving and use of psychoactive substances will lead to detection and severe sanctions. TISPOL stressed the role of enforcement as one of the best ways to achieve road safety improvements in a relatively short period.

TISPOL believes that much of the considerable success in reducing drink-drive collisions and casualties in the majority of EU Member States resulted from a change in public attitudes. However, further measures and a new approach are now needed if more reductions are to be achieved. Taken as solitary measures, legislation, enforcement, education and awareness campaigns are unlikely to achieve significant results, but when used as a coherent policy package they

have the potential to generate further reductions in casualty figures. Among its recommendations, TISPOL supports stronger enforcement and education programmes targeted at high risk offenders, such as young drivers and recidivists. TISPOL also supports education programmes for young people, new learner and existing drivers, a harmonised blood alcohol limit across the EU. TISPOL recommends BAC limits should be lowered to at least 0.5, with a lower legal limit for young drivers.

The TISPOL Policy Paper can be found under the following link: <https://www.tispol.org/policy-papers/alcohol-drugs-driving/tispol-alcohol-drugs-driving-policy-document>

TISPOL December Drug and Alcohol operations

The month of December saw the implementation of the TISPOL's alcohol and drug operation which took place in 27 countries between 13 and 19 December. Police officers conducted 796,812 roadside breath tests for alcohol, 12,030 of which were positive. Spain recorded the highest number of checks during the TISPOL operation, with more than 170,000 roadside breath tests, followed by France whose police officers stopped nearly 105,600 drivers. Severe winter weather in a number of countries led to the cancellation of many planned alcohol and drug control operations. Regardless of this minor drawback, the results of the operation reconfirmed the success of TISPOL's work to improve road safety on the roads.

Alcohol labelling policies under the spotlight in the European Parliament

On the 17th of March politicians, public health experts, NGOs and alcohol industry representatives met in the European Parliament to discuss the risks related to alcohol consumption, the labelling policies to be put forward concerning alcoholic beverages, what types of messages would be most effective and what the EU could do on this specific issue. Alcohol is one of the leading risk factors of death and ill health in the EU, especially among young people: 25 per cent of deaths among young men aged 15-29 are caused by alcohol. Within the framework of the PROTECT project, co-funded by the European Commission, feedback from youngsters showed that due to road safety awareness campaigns carried out in each country they are aware of the consequences of alcohol

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abuse when getting behind the wheel. Despite that, a good number of them keep acting in an irresponsible way. The European Parliament is currently debating the Commission's proposal on the "Provision of Food Information to Consumers". Unlike soft drinks and juices, beer, wine and spirits have been exempted from the obligation to list ingredients and provide nutritional information. Warning labels can be a tool to further spread the messages to young people about alcohol-related risks: particularly the risk of being involved in road crashes, but also alcohol-related diseases for pregnant women and cancers. The aim of the event, organised by EUROCARE, was to learn more about the potential impact of alcohol labelling, its advantages and drawbacks as well as actions which could be put in place in Europe, both at institutional and industry levels.

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Brussels Police checks increased last January

Massive FIPA operations (Full Integrated Police Action) took place in Brussels in January: 1,300 vehicles stopped, 598 drivers checked and 35 licences withdrawn. Breath tests were carried out on a Saturday night showing that out of 598 people tested 93 were drunk while driving. "It is an impressive number in just one night!" said Frédéric Laurent, coordinator of the FIPA. "Moreover, 35 drivers had their licence withdrawn on that Saturday night." The roadside checks saw the presence of a number of prosecutors who took on the spot decisions to disqualify drivers in cases of high BAC rates. The numbers of such integrated (federal and local) Police operation were large: more than 200 officers were involved, stopping over 1,300 vehicles, testing 1,034 drivers, of whom 93 resulted positive. Road checks increased to more than 15% in January.

UK keeps the same legal BAC level

The United Kingdom will not lower the legal BAC limit from 0.8 to 0.5, despite the strong recommendation by Sir Peter North's report on the legal framework around drink and drug driving published in June 2010. In November 2010 the Transport Committee gave its full support to the report. The Government rejected the proposal and confirmed that the current level will remain

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the same (0.8 g/l) while other measures considered more effective will be implemented to tackle drink and drug driving. Transport Secretary Philip Hammond stated that enforcement would be the right solution to reduce road collisions related to drinking and driving and approved a package of measures that will include: revoke the right for people whose evidential breath test result is less than 40% over the limit to opt for a blood test (the 'statutory option'); introduce a more robust drink drive rehabilitation scheme; high-risk offenders will no longer be able to delay their medical examinations and police will have portable evidential testing kits. Road safety campaigner and the British Medical Association saw the Government decision as a "missed opportunity" to save more lives on the roads. The British Medical Association showed its disappointment by saying that "such a move would have helped prevent deaths and reduce the number of lives ruined by drink-driving."

AXA Switzerland encourages customers not to drink and drive

AXA Winterthur aims to persuade people spending their night out not to take the car and go back home safely if they are drunk or too tired to drive. The solution proposed is to call a taxi, and the insurance company announced it would reimburse up to three taxi fares for its customers who opt for the free installation of a Crash Recorder. The Crash Recorders would have to be installed by the 31st of July 2011. The Crash Recorder is a device which records data in case of a road crash, from the 20 seconds preceding to the 10 seconds following it. "Our aim is to convince our customers who drank two or more drinks not to get behind the wheel," says Marcel Siegrist, AXA Product Manager Customers.

The Swiss Council for Accident Prevention (bfu) estimates that one in six fatal accidents is caused by the influence of alcohol, while during weekends the proportion rises to one in four. A particularly high number of accidents caused by alcohol occur during the evenings, nights and weekends. In many of these cases fatigue is also combined with alcohol consumption as a contributing factor in road crashes.

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TISPOL Policy Report: a toolkit to improve Road Safety

A survey carried out by the Nordic Road Safety Council in 2010 showed the differences in drink driving behaviour among Nordic citizens. Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden were involved in the survey. The questionnaire was answered by 5,197 respondents. The questions also covered travel habits, awareness level on accidents, speed, seat belts, mobile phones, tiredness, children in traffic, bicycle helmets, reflexes and road safety education.

Concerning drinking and driving, in Denmark and Finland, 18 percent reported that they had been driving when they suspected their BAC was over the allowed limit during the last 12 months. The corresponding share in Norway and Sweden was 7 percent. The percentage among women was much lower than for men in all countries. The main goal of this survey was to use the gathered information to contribute to the selection of countermeasures in each country and to an improved safety in the whole area.

MHF: Stricter measures needed for Swedish Police Offenders

"If police officers are caught drunk while driving, they should not have the permission to drive the police car. An alcohol interlock device should be instead installed in their private car and they should follow a rehabilitation programme" said Tom Bjerver, CEO of MHF. He reported that the number of drink driving offences committed by police officers had increased in the last years and that, in almost all cases, they had kept their job. Policemen who are drunk while driving should be treated like other employees working in companies that have an alcohol and drug policy. A suitable solution would be then, according to MHF, to have an Alcohol Interlock installed. Moreover, the person found guilty of drink driving should not drive a car while in service and attend a rehabilitation programme to deal with abuse. Police officers are people too, but more than anyone else they have to keep their model role as a duty towards the population, as they are accountable for their safety.

Italian Health Ministry concerned about new drink driving phenomenon

A new trend coming from Northern countries is developing in Italy especially among youngsters, generating an alarming social problem. "Binge drinking" is the word defining a heavy consumption of alcohol, exceeding in more than twice the daily limit with the only intention of getting intoxicated. The topic has been examined in a report from the Italian Health Minister. More generally, the report showed that about 8.5 million citizens drink over the risk limit (around 15.8% over 11 years old of the entire population). Among them, in particular, about 475,000 young people (18.5% of boys and 15.5% of girls under 16), who should have a consumption equal to 0, and nearly 3 million adults (44.7% of males and 11.3% of females over 65), consuming excessive amounts of alcohol especially during their daily meals. The practice is getting more and more common among the 18-24 (21.6%) and the 25-44 (17.4%) age groups, yet what strikes more is the number of young females between 18 and 24 (7.9%) who are used to "binge drinking". The national average for binge drinking (12.4% for males and 3.1% for females) appears to be much lower compared to the one of youngsters.

Finnish latest report traces the profile of a typical drunk driver

The Finnish Linto Research Programme recently published a report based on long-term analysis of roadside testing in the Uusima province from 1990 to 2008. Its main findings showed that on Uusima roads on average, out of every 500 drivers one is a drunk driver and three have 'had a few'. Overall, the prevalence of drunk driving remained stable between 1990 and 2008. Drunk drivers are more likely to be found in roadside testing on Saturday morning. Professional drivers accounted for 9.4% of all drunk drivers. The study was also helpful to describe the typical profile of a drunk driver: most of the times it is a man aged between 40 and 49 who has a driving licence and drives his own car, usually alone, with a blood alcohol level of 0.1%. He drives between 20,000 and 50,000 km per year. He is a skilled employee or junior salaried employee in a permanent employment relationship and is married or cohabiting. Such a typical drunk driver is on the road on weekdays, either on his way to work (one in five cases) or coming home from work (just over 10%). The percentage of women among drunk drivers did not change during

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the period studied. The risk of drink driving for women was less than one fifth of that for men. Finally, these findings were used to draw up a list of recommendations, such as amending the law to lower the blood alcohol threshold levels, expand the use of alcolocks through national legislation, and include them as standard in-car equipment.

Germans support "Zero tolerance" to Alcohol on the roads

A public opinion survey was carried out by the German Road Safety Council (DVR) late last year amongst almost 2,000 road users in Germany. They were asked to express their opinion on banning alcohol on German roads. The results showed a strong level of awareness of the risks linked to drinking and driving: the majority of the population (59.4%) fully agreed to a total ban of alcohol on the roads while 28.6% was against such measure. Alcohol was still one of the main causes of road collisions in Germany in 2009, with more than 22,000 people injured and 440 killed.

Estonia records good reduction in road accidents in 2010

In 2010 in Estonia there were 146 accidents involving drivers in state of intoxication. The accidents led to 11 people killed and 222 injured. In 2009 there were 248 such accidents.

More generally, the number of road deaths in Estonia decreased to 78 last year, and is below 100 for the first time since 1947. There were a total of 1,339 accidents which resulted in fatal crashes or serious injuries in 2010. Tarmo Miilits, head of the Law Enforcement Police Department stated that "the 40% decrease of traffic accidents with drivers under intoxication indicates that the behavioural habits of people have changed. There are fewer violations of the Traffic Code but road users have also become more responsible while driving." He also added that "taking the driver's seat of a vehicle after using alcohol has been clearly condemned by the public. This change is due to constant communication and preventive action carried out by the Road Administration and the police but also [due] to the cooperation with the government aiming at improving road users' behaviour".

ETSC Events

Safe & Sober Exhibition in the European Parliament



Following the 6th of October 2010 seminar on the use of alcohol interlocks, the MHF and the ETSC discussed and promoted the role of alcohol interlocks in the new EU road safety strategy for 2011-2020 during a three-day exhibition from the 29th to the 31st of March in the European Parliament. More European countries are adopting legislation for the use of alcohol interlock devices in rehabilitation programmes, substituting this punishment for driving license withdrawal. Many EU countries voluntarily introduced alcohol interlock technology for vehicles used to transport goods or passengers. In its Road Safety Policy Orientations 2011-2020, the European Commission specifically mentioned "the possibility of making the use of alcohol interlock devices obligatory in certain cases" quoting for instance professional transport. ETSC hopes now that EU decision-makers will coordinate new actions at EU level, thus substantially improving both the effectiveness and efficiency of these new technologies. The event was organised within the framework of ETSC's "Safe and Sober" programme, run by ETSC in partnership with the VOLVO group. "Safe and Sober" is part of the ETSC's commitments under the Alcohol and Health Forum run by the European Commission. The opening reception and the exhibition provided informative and interactive materials on alcohol interlocks and their use. The event was kindly supported and co-hosted by MEP Anna Hedh. More information can be found here: http://www.etsc.eu/documents/invitation_safe&sober_FINAL.pdf

ETSC Events

TIRF will host Drink Driving Symposium in Brussels

On the 19th of May, the Traffic Injury Research Foundation (TIRF) will organise a Drink Driving Symposium in Brussels. The goals of this one-day conference are to increase understanding of the many facets of the drink driving problem as they relate to priorities and solutions, to identify evidence-based, effective programmes and policies for controlling the problem, and to promote broader awareness of the impaired driving system in which these tools and interventions are applied. The agenda includes presentations on international experiences and measures implemented within the area of drinking and driving. The presentations will be followed by a panel discussion on research and behaviour, possible solutions and policy recommendations.

TIRF is a road safety research institute and a world leader in research, programme and policy development, evaluation, and knowledge transfer focusing on the road user and behaviours that result in driver error and account for 80% of road crashes. Its mission to reduce deaths and injuries resulting from road crashes is achieved by designing, implementing, evaluating and promoting evidence-based strategies.

EU and Member States decision-makers, leading international researchers, road safety practitioners and representatives from non-governmental organizations and industry will take part in the event. More information on the programme can be found here: <http://www.drinkdrivingforum.eu/index.html>

Interview

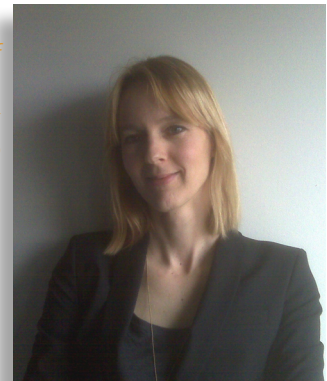
Can you describe the scale of drink driving problem on the Dutch roads (percentage of drink driving offenders, number of deaths related to drink driving etc.)?

Since the Dutch law doesn't allow post mortem blood alcohol tests after fatal accidents we can only estimate that around 25 per cent of all road deaths is alcohol-related. In 2009, 720 fatal crashes occurred therefore about 180 of them were alcohol-related. In the last years however we registered a positive trend in drivers' behaviour: more and more drivers drive sober and only nearly 3% of all drivers drive above the legal limit of 0.5 g/l. Nevertheless there is no downward tendency for drink-drivers above a BAC rate of 1.3 g/l. They are responsible for about 75% of all alcohol related collisions. This is the reason why our government wanted to take specific measures to tackle drink driving.

What kind of measures have you been taking to reduce alcohol related road crashes?

In terms of awareness raising actions, we promoted the BOB campaign to designate a sober driver who will not drink during the night out and will be able to drive friends home safely. Since 1996, we introduced different driver improvement programs (rehabilitation programs) for drunk drivers. These programs will be imposed by the

*Desiree Schaap,
Dutch Ministry of
Transport,
on the Alcolock
Programme*



Licensing Authority in addition to the sanctions given by a judge or prosecutor. The Licensing Authority can also impose a medical psychiatric assessment in case of drink driving above 1.8 g/l or recidivism. In 2006 we lowered the legal limit for novice drivers from 0.5 to 0.2 g/l. In addition to the above mentioned measures, in 2010 the parliament has adopted two new laws to tackle drink driving that will ideally come into force by mid 2011:

- Alcohol interlock program: a 2 year mandatory installation of an alcolock for first high level offenders and recidivists.
- Demerit Point system: drink driving recidivists who commit an offence with a BAC rate above 1.3 g/l will have the driving licence revoked. They will have to pass again the exam to get a new driving licence.

Interview

Can you please tell us how the Dutch Alcohol Interlock programme will work?

The Dutch Alcolock programme is a 2 year mandatory programme for the rehabilitation of drink driving offenders. The program can also be extended to drivers who are not able to separate drinking and driving. It will be extended repeatedly for a period of 6 months until the driver shows they have completely recovered. A mandatory support program with several group sessions is part of our alcohol interlock program. Moreover, participants will get regular feedback after every data download. The Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment is accountable for the legislation. The Licensing Authority (CBR) has the power to require the program and to train and monitor the participants. The Road Traffic Authority (RDW) is responsible for managing the alcohol interlock database, to approve and certify the interlocks devices, the installers and the suppliers. Companies certified by the RDW can supply and install alcohol interlocks. All type approved interlocks can be used. All interlock data will be registered in one central database. Alcohol interlocks used in the program have to meet the following requirements which can only be tested by accredited laboratories: the EN 50436-1 (European CENELEC standard).

What type of road offender the programme will focus on?

The target groups involved in the Alcolock Programme are first high-level offenders with a BAC rate between 1.3 and 1.8 g/l and recidivists and novice drivers with an illegal BAC going from 1.0 to 1.8 g/l.

Did you run a pilot programme before? If so, what were the results achieved?

Yes, we ran a trial with 80 volunteers. We tested the technical part of the interlock device: the first results confirmed that it could be installed in all vehicles. We also tested potential ways to elude the device and countermeasures to prevent it. The results obtained by the trial were useful to define our technical requirements. In addition to the

European Cenelec standard we defined some data security requirements to ensure the integrity and confidentiality of the data. The protection profile defines security requirements for the interlock and the data flow from the interlock to the database.

How much will the programme cost? Who will pay for it?

We cannot tell the exact cost of the Alcolock Programme as this has not been published yet. However, the expenses concerning the participation in the programme will be entirely covered by the driver.

What are your expectations in the short and long term regarding your programme?

In the short term we expect to save 5-6 lives on our roads and prevent 50-60 drivers from getting injured each year. On the long term we believe we could save 30 lives and 300 injured drivers each year.

In his draft report on road safety, MEP Koch is asking for Alcohol Interlock devices for rehabilitation programme. How would the Dutch experience help the EU to set up an alcolock programme?

Our technical standard would be useful and exploited in the implementation of Alcolock programmes at the EU level. Indeed, we expect they will become part of the Cenelec Standard in the near future. As The Netherlands is one of the first countries in taking the lead in this field we will have the chance to evaluate our programme 3 years after its implementation and share our knowledge for best practice exchange within the European Union. Finally, we fully agree on mandatory installation of alcolocks for road users who are known to drink and drive. It is important to support these drivers (through mandatory group sessions), give them regular feedback on the alcohol interlock data and extend the period of the alcohol interlock program if they cannot separate drinking from driving.

Alcolocks legislation barometer March 2011

ETSC's alcolock legislation barometer gives an update on the "weather" for new legislation on introducing the use of alcolocks either within the commercial or rehabilitation context.

Legislation Country	Pilot project ongoing	Legislation in preparation	Legislation in discussion in Parliament	Legislation adopted	Legislation in implementation	Rehabilitation	Commercial Transport	Voluntary use of alcolocks in commercial transport
Austria	✓					✓		✓
Finland				✓ for school buses	✓	✓	✓ for school buses	✓
Sweden				✓		✓		✓
Netherlands	✓			✓		✓		
France			✓ for use in rehabilitation programmes and first time offenders	✓ for school buses	✓	✓	✓ for school buses	
Belgium				✓	✓	✓		✓
Slovenia	✓							✓
Denmark				✓		✓		



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