

Drink Driving Monitor

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

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18

Editorial

The 1st of January marks the beginning of the six-month Irish Presidency of the EU. ETSC welcomes that the Irish Presidency of the EU has identified road safety as a priority, particularly as this fits in the domestic context of updating the Irish Road Safety Strategy. The former Strategy, covering the 2007-2012 period, had set a target of reducing road deaths to no more than 252 deaths per annum by the end of 2012. Not only was this target achieved ahead of schedule in 2009, it was significantly surpassed, with provisional figures of 161 people killed on Irish roads in 2012. This is also because tackling drink driving and road safety in general have been featuring high on the political agenda in Ireland. The introduction of mandatory alcohol checkpoints on Irish roads, manned by the Irish Police, are just one of the positive developments seen since 2006. Furthermore, in July 2011, after two years of internal discussions, Ireland adopted a lower BAC limit of 0.5 g/l for all drivers and 0.2 g/l for novice and professional drivers. Moreover, the Irish legislative developments were complemented by hard-hitting road safety campaigning, efforts that contributed to a significant change in the attitude of Irish drivers who condemn drink driving as reprehensible and absolutely dangerous. Finally, provisional figures published by the Irish Road Safety Authority (RSA) at the beginning of January show a sensible reduction, for the fifth consecutive year, in the number of road deaths also in 2012: approximately -13% compared to 2011. ETSC strongly believes that the European Union can learn much from the Irish experience and measures to tackle drink driving.

The 18th Drink Driving Monitor brings news from across the EU on steps to further improve drink driving legislation and enforcement. Results from the SARTRE Project presented in Brussels last November and the launch of the TISPOL's winter alcohol and drugs campaign are presented together with last figures from Irish Police on drink driving road collisions and roadside alcohol checks since the introduction of a lower BAC limit. An interview with Arne Winerdal, CEO of the Swedish Abstaining Motorists' Association, an organisation that recently became a member of ETSC, is also included as well as ETSC's alcohol interlock barometer.

ETSC wishes you all the best for a Safe and Happy 2013!

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EU News

SARTRE Final Conference in Brussels

Last November the SARTRE final conference was organised in Brussels to disseminate the results of the 4th edition of the project. The three-year survey on social attitudes to road traffic risk was conducted in 19 countries including 17 countries of the European Union. Various topics related to road safety were included in the study such as alcohol, drugs, phone use while driving, speeding, use of advanced driver assistance systems or environment. Concerning drink driving the report showed that, over all countries interviewed, on average 69% of car drivers report not having driven after drinking even a small amount of alcohol. Italy and Cyprus top the lists of those with the highest percentage of drivers driving after drinking even a small amount of alcohol. There are also 85% of car drivers over all countries who report not having driven over the legal limit in the past month. However, 15% do admit to driving over the limit in the past month. Compared with female drivers, males are 2.6 times more likely to admit to driving within the past month with a BAC level over the legal limit. 28% of the drivers who reported driving over the legal limit in the previous month are between the ages of 25 and 34. Among car drivers, 94% of them believe that drinking and driving substantially increases the risk of collisions, 77% believe that one will be stopped and fined by the police and 20% of drivers believe most of their friends will drink and drive. Concerning BAC limits, 59% of people interviewed think that the alcohol limit should be less than present while 46% think drivers should not drink any alcohol at all before driving. When it comes to enforcement, 58% of the car drivers said they had not been checked for alcohol when in the past 3 years. 23% said they were checked only once, and the remaining 18% more than once. The highest numbers of alcohol road side checks are found in Finland and Estonia with more than 60% of drivers checked at least once. Finally, on alcohol interlocks, 53% of the drivers are very much in favour and another 23% are fairly in favour of having the device installed in the car. The majority of the respondents support much more severe penalties for drink driving offences (84%)

No new EU Alcohol Strategy in 2013

On the 22nd of November, the European Commission announced that there will be no new Alcohol Strategy at the beginning of 2013 but that the current one, set up in 2006, would continue. A number of countries voiced the need for a new EU Alcohol Strategy. The EC General Directorate for Health and Consumers noted the call for a new alcohol strategy but said that the European Commission intends to finalise the current EU alcohol strategy before launching another. The current EU Alcohol Strategy was designed to cover the period from 2006 to 2012. In one of its latest press releases, Eurocare, the European alcohol policy alliance, shared European government's opinion that the European Commission should step up on its work to address alcohol-related harm. *"Due to the size of the problem and universal impact, tackling alcohol related harm is too big for governments to solve alone. We need coordinated comprehensive response at the European level"* said Mariann Skar, Eurocare Secretary General.

TISPOL Alcohol winter checks

Between the 10th and the 14th of December motorists across Europe were tested for alcohol and drugs as police officers conducted an EU-wide enforcement operation. The European Traffic Police Network (TISPOL) renewed its plea for drivers to be sober on European roads. *"The danger of driving while impaired by alcohol, or drugs, or a combination of the two, is clearly documented – and backs up why it is against the law in every European country,"* says TISPOL President Koen Ricour. *"Any amount of alcohol affects your ability to drive, and you don't have to be committing an offence to be taking a risk. Those who choose to ignore all the warnings and drive after drinking or using drugs are taking an unacceptable risk and are putting others' people lives in danger. That's why officers are stepping up their enforcement during one week from the 10th to the 14th December. Our advice is clear, simple and unequivocal. If you have had a drink, do not drive. If you need to drive, then do not drink."* During a similar week-long operation in December 2011, 1,025,482 drivers were checked in 27 European countries and officers reported 13,588 alcohol offences and 1,300 drug offences.

Country News

Ireland

The Irish Police has just published the results of a research carried out over a one year period, from the 28th of October 2011 to the 27th of October 2012, just after the introduction of the lower BAC limit. The maximum legally allowed BAC was reduced from 0.8g/l to 0.5g/l, with a lower limit of 0.2g/l for novice and professional drivers. The review showed that:

- In total there were 9,771 drink driving collisions detected during this 12-month period. Of those, a total of 1,260 fixed charge notices were issued for drink driving.
- 299 (24%) were for novice and professional drivers in the BAC range 0.21 to 0.8g/l
- 620 (49%) were for all other drivers in the BAC range 0.51 to 0.8g/l
- 341 (27%) were for all other drivers in the BAC range 0.81 to 1.0g/l

Looking at all 9,771 incidents the following was identified:

- Although there has been a decline in the number of arrests in all but one age group category (females aged 58-67), a significant number of drink driving cases involved a male driver, between 23-32 driving late at night/ early morning particularly at weekends, with a BAC higher than 1.0g/l.
- Offenders aged 38-47 tended to have the highest proportion of >1.5g/l, with nearly half of all drivers detected in this age group having a BAC level above this level.
- A new feature of the lower limits is the increase in the number of people detected driving the "morning after", particularly on a Sunday around 11am. The BAC levels of these people tend to be in the lower ranges.

Belgium

In 2011, 16.5% of the drivers involved in a road crash in the Wallonia region were found to have a BAC above the legal limit, compared with 11% in the Flanders region. In 2011, no less than one in ten drivers involved in a crash resulted drunk. These figures were published by the Belgian Road Safety Institute (IBSR/BIVV) last month. "The greater the risk to be controlled, the less drivers will try to take the wheel after drinking," said Benoit Godard, spoke person from IBSR/BIVV. Therefore, to increase drink driving enforcement on Belgian roads, Belgian Police announced 250,000 alcohol

checks on the roads during the Christmas holidays. These are 50,000 more compared to last year campaign. "Checks will take place everywhere and during the whole day: morning, evening or night. The aim is to make the driver feel that they can have high chances of being caught if they are driving under the influence and therefore avoid this reckless behaviour" says the Belgian Federal Police.

UK

The Department for Transport announced a consultation on changes to procedures for drink and drug driving in the UK. This includes the abolition of the statutory option (the right to replace their breath alcohol specimens with either a specimen of blood or specimens of urine in cases where the lower of the two breath readings provided does not exceed 0.5g/l); changes as to when preliminary breath tests are needed; changes to the testing procedures in hospital; changes to who can assess whether someone is under the influence of alcohol and drugs. The changes were originally proposed in the North Review published in June 2010. The consultation document also includes a proposal to review the New Drivers Act, recognising that this may not be operating in the way originally anticipated, given the number of young and novice drivers who do not regain a licence having lost it under the provisions of the Act. The Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety (PACTS) welcomed the review as it covers an issue that road safety professionals have highlighted as a concern for a number of years. The consultation document can be found here: <http://www.pacts.org.uk/docs/pdf-bank/drink-driving-consultation.pdf>

According to a report published by ABI (the Association of British Insurers), radical measures, such as a minimum one year learning period, restrictions on night time driving and lowering the alcohol limit for driving, are needed to reduce the high crash risk young drivers face. In the UK only one in eight driving licence holders are aged 25 or under, yet one in three who die on the roads is aged below 25. An 18 year-old driver is more than three times as likely to be involved in a crash than a 48 year-old driver. Young drivers are far more likely to be involved in crashes involving 3-5 high value bodily injury claims, reflecting the increased risk they face of having a serious crash

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while carrying passengers. Among other measures the ABI is calling for restrictions on young drivers driving between 11pm at night and 4am during the first six months of driving. During the graduated phase there would be a lower blood alcohol driving limit. This would, in effect, be a zero limit as it would only allow for the consumption of alcohol linked to products such as mouthwash.

London Christmas campaign

The Metropolitan Police Service's (MPS) anti drink and drug driving enforcement campaign is now working at all times of day and night to make London's roads safer. This year's campaign has broken through the stereotype that drink driving is a night time issue. Building on last year's national figures, which revealed that more people failed breath tests between 06:00 and 11:00 than between 23:00 and 01:00, enforcement officers will be out on patrol at all times of the day: 1,230 people have already been arrested in London in 2012 on suspicion of drink driving and this year's 'all hour' enforcement is expected to bring more arrests than the 2011 and 2010 campaigns. It's not just car users who will be on the radar of anti-drink and drug enforcement officers. Motorbikes, scooters, lorries and vans can all be stopped and breathalysed. Police officers on all 32 London boroughs will also be ready to carry out these potentially life-saving breath tests.

"Drink and drug driving continues to be a significant problem causing harm within our communities. The tragedy is many well-meaning people who are very conscious of drinking and driving are hopping behind the wheel in the morning when they are over the limit and therefore unsafe to drive. Drinking the night before will impair their driving, make them unfit to drive and over the limit. This could cost them their job through - a loss of licence or a prison sentence - as well as endangering their own life and that of other road users" said the chief of the MPS, Nick Hancock.

Switzerland

The Swiss government has adopted last June the Via Sicura programme, a road safety national plan which would include around 36 measures to be implemented to improve road safety on national roads. One of the measures proposed takes in the

use of the alcohol interlock as a rehabilitation tool, initially aimed at high level and recidivist drink driving offenders. In case the driver's license is withdrawn for at least two years following a drink driving offence, the driver is allowed to drive only with an alcohol interlock installed in the vehicle and for a period of at least 5 years (after therapy and a good prognosis; without that they do not get back the license). The proposed measure is likely to come into force in Switzerland by the beginning of 2015.

Italy

During the month of December, for the seventh consecutive year, the ANIA Foundation campaign called "Guido con Prudenza" (I drive safely) was carried out with the aim of making roads safer, particularly during the weekend nights, preventing road deaths involving young people and convincing youngsters who spend their evenings in discos to have a "designated driver". The seventh edition of the campaign took place outside discos, to get in touch directly with young people and raise their awareness on the importance of driving sober. The designated drivers, the "Bob", would receive a gadget to be identified and, at the end of the night, if they kept their word, would receive a reward from the ANIA staff. In addition to the communication campaign, alcohol checks conducted by the Italian Police are to be intensified. The campaign covered every weekend of December until the 5th of January 2013.

France

On the 1st of December the Association Prévention Routière launched its new anti drink driving campaign. The objective of the campaign is to remind drivers the risks of alcohol behind the wheel especially during the Christmas holidays. Alcohol remains the leading cause of deaths on the roads in France where 1,150 people were killed in a road crash caused by alcohol in 2011. The Association affirms that 'almost 40% of young people between 18 and 24 were victims of a crash where the driver was found to be over the legal BAC limit'. The anti drink driving campaign used radio, internet and television as the media to spread its message to young people on the importance of not drinking and driving.

Country News

Denmark

“Every road death due to alcohol is one too many. Therefore, we recommend drivers to be responsible during Christmas celebrations and decide to be picked up by a taxi or designate a sober driver drive them back home” says Michelle Laviolette, project manager at the Danish Road Safety Council. Alcohol remains one of the biggest killers in traffic. One in 6 people die in an alcohol related road crash where the driver of a car, a van or a motorcycle was drunk. This figure rises if also cyclists, moped drivers and pedestrians are taken into account. Thus, 1 in 4 road deaths occur because of a drunk driver. Throughout the whole month of December, the Danish Road Safety Council in cooperation with the local Police carried out the drink driving campaign called ‘Who’s driving home?’

Drink Driving Monitor Interview

Arne Winerdal
CEO of the Swedish
Abstaining Motorists’
Association



1. Can you briefly introduce yourself and describe your organisation and its main activities?

MHF is a Swedish NGO founded back in 1926. We have been fighting for a sober traffic in Sweden all these years and we have been rather successful. MHF pushed the Members of Parliament to vote for a law already in 1989 for a maximum allowance of alcohol in traffic to be set at 0.2g/l. I have been the CEO of MHF since spring 2012. Before that I had been Editor-in-Chief of our monthly magazine Motorföroren for the past five years. Today alcohol interlocks and alcohol gates belong to our main

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advocacy activities in order to introduce them in Sweden as well as in the rest of EU.

2. Sweden is among the best performing European countries in terms of road safety. Concerning drink driving, has there been similar progress as for all other road deaths?

Yes, in general you can say so. About 25-30 % of the road deaths annually (in total approximately 250 per year) are related to alcohol and other drugs behind the wheel. That means around 70 deaths because of drink driving. Each one of them reveals an immeasurable tragedy among families and friends. We have adopted a Vision Zero-goal: none should be killed because of drink driving!

3. What is the current situation in Sweden related to drink driving?

In an EU-perspective we are doing very well in this area. We do more than two million alcohol checks along the roads each year. Compared with i.e. Italy, with over 60 million inhabitants, we do a higher number of checks even if we are just 9.5 million inhabitants. That means of course less drink driving. But drugs behind the wheel are a growing problem because the police forces do not have tools to detect drugs immediately along the roads. Our aim is to develop such tools so drug users can be stopped if they drive under the influence of drugs.

4. What is the Government’s attitude in tackling this important road safety issue?

When we talk to them they have a very positive attitude to do more against drink driving. But when it comes to action they are not willing to promote laws where Sweden differs from other EU members. Six years ago there was a majority in Parliament to accept a law for compulsory alcohol interlocks in all new cars. But the Conservative Party has so far stopped all these efforts.

5. How is MHF working to tackle drink driving?

We use all kinds of means to promote this important issue to the Swedish public. One of our best ways to highlight this issue is the big traffic safety seminar in Tylösand each year, where all important leaders in the traffic safety-area are

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present: people from Government and Parliament, traffic authorities, scientists, media people, NGOs. We have run this seminar every year since 1957.

We are also using social media to reach our goals. We have a Facebook group (www.facebook.com/nykter) with 209,000 members. Recently we asked for support for our vision "None should be killed because of drink driving". In a few days we got 87,000 likes and half a million viewers!

6. Are you conducting scientific work on alcohol interlocks?

Yes, we invest a lot of money to develop safe and easy-to-use alcohol interlocks. We run an accredited lab where we make official tests of alcohol interlocks from producers all around the world. We would like to invite members of ETSC to visit our lab to learn more in this very important area.

7. Are you also running communication campaigns to raise awareness on the risks related to alcohol and driving?

Yes, once a year we arrange "The Day of Sober Driving" nationwide in Sweden. In 300 places - squares, shopping malls, petrol stations - our local people try to stress out how important it is to be sober when driving.

8. How can the Swedish experience help improving road safety in all other EU countries?

We are very happy to become a full member of the ETSC, which is the most important organisation in this very field in the European Union. Sweden is at the forefront of traffic safety so we might have some good examples to hand in.

9. What more do you think could be done at an EU level to tackle drink driving?

I think the most important issue is to plant awareness in people's minds: it is not good to drive the car after a party or a visit to a local bar. The car becomes a murder weapon in the hands of a drink driver and must be stopped. If we can raise awareness in this attitude it is possible to plant good ideas on how to do it in practice. When the new alcohol interlocks will have automatic detection without blowing in I am sure that these devices will be installed in every new car all over Europe.

10. What are MHF future steps within the fight against drink driving?

To use all new (and old!) media tools; to launch awareness and create positive attitudes in connection with driving. The car is a great means to interact with other people even in far distances. But if you drink and drive you can kill both yourself and others.

Alcohol Interlock Barometer December 2012

ETSC's alcohol interlock legislation barometer gives an update on the "weather" for new legislation on introducing the use of alcohol interlocks 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 interlocks in commercial transport
Austria	✓					✓		✓
Finland				✓	✓ for school buses and daycare transport	✓	✓	✓
Sweden				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Netherlands	✓			✓	✓	✓		
France				✓	✓	✓	✓ for school buses	
Belgium				✓	✓	✓		✓
Denmark				✓		✓	✓	
Germany	✓					✓		
United Kingdom								✓
Switzerland		✓				✓		



European Transport Safety Council

Members

Accident Research Unit, Medical University Hannover (D)
Association Prévention Routière (F)
Austrian Road Safety Board (KFV) (A)
Automobile and Travel Club Germany (ARCD) (D)
Belgian Road Safety Institute (IBSR/BIVV) (B)
Catalan Traffic Service - Servei Català de Trànsit (ES)
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Centro Studi Città Amica (CeSCAm),
University of Brescia (I)
Chalmers University of Technology (S)
Confederación Nacional de Autoescuelas (CNAE) (ES)
Confederation of Organisations in Road Transport
Enforcement (CORTE) (Int)
Czech Transport Research Centre (CDV) (CZ)
Danish Road Safety Council (DK)
Dutch Safety Board (NL)
European Federation of Road Traffic Victims (FEVR) (Int)
Fédération Internationale de Motocyclisme (FIM) (Int)
Finnish Motor Insurers' Centre, Traffic Safety
Committee of Insurance Companies VALT (FIN)
Finnish Traffic Safety Agency (Trafi) (FIN)
Flemish Foundation for Traffic Knowledge (VSV) (BE)
Folksam Research (S)
Fondazione ANIA (I)
German Road Safety Council
(Deutscher Verkehrssicherheitsrat) (DVR) (D)
Global Road Safety Partnership (Int)
Hellenic Institute of Transport (HIT) (GR)
Institute for Transport Studies, University of Leeds (UK)
INTRAS - Institute of Traffic and Road Safety,
University of Valencia (ES)
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Lithuanian National Association Helping Traffic Victims
(NPNA) (LT)
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Norwegian Abstaining Motorists' Association (NO)
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