

Drink Driving Monitor

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

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Editorial

Drunk drivers driving in a Member State other than the one their vehicle is registered in will be identified and prosecuted after the long-awaited approval of the Cross Border Enforcement Directive. On the 6th of July the European Parliament finally voted in favour of this piece of legislation that will allow the exchange of data between the country in which the offence is committed and the one in which the car is registered. Drink driving is listed as one of the main offences causing death and serious injury in the EU, together with speeding, failing to wear seatbelts and failing to stop at traffic lights. Furthermore, the list has been extended to cover two other important safety-related offences: drug driving and illegal mobile phone use whilst driving. ETSC has always backed this Directive that would result in higher levels of safety through enforcement and congratulated the European Parliament for the outcome of the vote. The UK and Ireland are still exempt from this decisive road safety legislation; therefore ETSC urges these two countries' governments to opt-in to the Directive as soon as possible. The legislative proposal now needs the final approval from the EU Council of Ministers before becoming law. There will then be a two-year period for Member States to transpose it before it comes into force (possibly by 2013).

The 14th Drink Driving Monitor brings news from across the EU on steps to further improve drink driving legislation and enforcement. Updates on the Cross Border Enforcement Directive and its long-awaited approval by the European Parliament on the 6th of July are presented together with the adoption of the Draft Report on Road Safety proposed by MEP Koch and the latest on TISPOL's alcohol and drug campaign. The new legislation on mandatory breath testing in Ireland and ETSC's alcolock legislation barometer are also included.

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EU News

Concrete actions to strengthen the EC "Policy Orientations"

On the 21st of June, the draft report presented in March by MEP Koch was adopted during the TRAN Committee vote. All 20 proposed compromises were approved. A 0‰ blood alcohol limit for newly qualified drivers in the first two years and for professional drivers at all times was one of the measures supported. The draft report was prepared in response to the Commission's "Policy Orientations on Road Safety 2011-2020" published in July 2010. The European Parliament welcomed the document yet regretted that, instead of a

new Action Programme, only some weaker policy orientations were put forward and called for more concrete actions and ambitious targets. Further measures included in the Koch report and adopted by the Committee were: a long term 'Vision Zero' strategy at EU level; the creation of the office of a European Coordinator for Road Safety; three complementary EU targets to be reached by 2020 in addition to renewing the target of halving the number of road deaths (-60% for children under 14; -50% for unprotected road users; -40% for

EU News

serious injuries); the preparation and adoption of national targets and road safety action plans to become mandatory; better protection for road users such as pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists; speed limits of 30km/h in residential areas.

Cross Border Enforcement: the so long-awaited green light

On the 6th of July the European Parliament approved the Cross Border Enforcement Directive that will allow the exchange of data between the country in which the offence is committed and the one in which the car is registered. Drink driving is listed as one of the main offences causing death and serious injury in the EU together with speeding, failing to wear seatbelts and failing to stop at traffic lights. Furthermore, the list has been extended to cover two other important safety-related offences: drug driving and illegal mobile phone use whilst driving. The Directive plugs an important gap in the enforcement of traffic laws across the EU. It also shows a good level of commitment to the target of halving road deaths for the 2011-2020 decade. The UK and Ireland are still exempt from this decisive road safety legislation. The legislative proposals now need final approval from the EU Council of Ministers before becoming law. There will then be a two year period for Member States to transpose it before it comes into force, possibly by 2013.

TISPOL on European roads for one-week summer operations

TISPOL annual summer operations started on the week from the 6th until the 12th of June. Police officers across more than 25 European countries, including the UK, started a one-week of road side checks to tackle drink and drug driving. The chairman of TISPOL's strategic alcohol and drugs working group Pasi Kempainen commented: "We know that driving while impaired by alcohol and/or drugs remains one of the 'big three' killers on Europe's roads, along with speeding and non-wearing of seatbelts. Although police officers are looking for drink drivers and drugged drivers throughout the year, this high-profile week-long operation is meant to raise awareness of the dangers that go with driving with alcohol or drugs (both medicinal and illicit) in your system. A similar operation in 2010 saw more than 420,000 drivers tested in 21 European countries. In total, 7,699 alcohol and 561 drug offences were detected.

Country News

Alcolocks for German offenders: time for debates

On the 20th of April the German government informed the press of a proposal regarding the implementation of an alcolock system to tackle drinking and driving. The Transport Minister Peter Ramsauer fully supports the installation of alcolocks in a car but only for those drivers who cannot separate drinking from driving and have serious addiction to alcohol. According to the proposal, drink-driving offenders would be allowed to keep their driving licences if they agreed to have the device fitted to their car. The proposal however would involve only drivers who decide to install an alcolock as a voluntary initiative. A mandatory programme is still far from being considered by the German government, which remains concerned about the ethical aspect, the financial costs of the device and its maintenance.

Ireland: a step forward to tackle drink driving

On the 1st of June mandatory alcohol testing for drivers involved in road traffic collisions came into force in Ireland. The new legislation was introduced by the Irish Minister for Transport Leo Varadkar in order to further contribute to tackling drink driving and saving more lives on Irish roads. The measure requires Gardai (the Irish Police) to conduct mandatory testing of drivers for alcohol at the scene of a crash where someone has been injured, or of a driver who has been injured and taken to the hospital.

The Road Safety Authority (RSA) has welcomed the new life saving legislation. "This measure is another very important step towards removing the scourge of drink driving from our roads. I'm confident that, combined with the planned reduction in the drink driving limits later this year, this measure will save many lives and prevent many serious injuries" said Noel Brett, RSA Chief Executive Officer. Mandatory alcohol testing will increase the chance of drivers getting caught by the police if they commit an offence. A total of 53 people have been killed and 116 people seriously injured in June Bank Holiday crashes between 2000 and 2010. A total of 77 people have died on the roads to date in 2011. This is a decrease of 11 in the number of killed in the same period last year. The new anti-driving measure follows the introduction of a lower BAC level from 0.8 to 0.5 g/l for all categories and 0.2 g/l for novice and professional drivers, adopted in July 2010.

Country News

One more fleet company opts for Alcolocks in the UK

A coach travel provider in the UK, National Express, introduced alcolocks on its coaches to prevent fatal collisions caused by drink driving. Every driver getting behind the wheel of the National Express coaches fitted with the new device will have to breathe into the system before they're allowed to start the engine. Any information collected by the breathalyser device will be transferred directly to the National Express head office so if any driver is found with traces of alcohol in their system, they will face disciplinary action immediately, and a worst case scenario will see the driver lose his or her job. So far, 480 coaches out of 600 have an alcolock installed. The move follows a National Express coach collision in 2008 in which 36 passengers were injured and the driver, who was found drunk, was jailed for 10 months. The alcolock system appears to be once again offering a quality assurance for fleet companies that install the device on a voluntary basis.

A new Belgian driving license by 2013

A new European driving licence card collecting all drink driving and speeding offences will be issued to Belgian drivers by 2013. The document will be valid for a period of 10 years after which it must be renewed. It will have the same format as a credit card and will be connected to a central database where all the information on past sanctions will be archived. Thanks to this new database it will be possible to check whether the driver applying for a driving licence already has a licence delivered by another EU Member State or whether his/her driving licence has been suspended or revoked. Moreover, Belgian Police checking a driver will immediately obtain all the offences already committed, if any. Recidivists for drink driving or other severe offence will then incur tougher sanctioning if they are caught by a police officer. The judges from the investigative Police asked for the implementation of such a system. The database is now in the implementation phase as declared by the State Secretary for Mobility Etienne Schouppe.

Higher risks for passengers in the drunk driver's vehicle

A new study published by the University of Turku and commissioned by the Traffic Safety Committee of Insurance Companies (VALT) in Finland showed that drink driving is more dangerous for those who travel in the drunk driver's car. The report examined all the fatal road crashes due to alcohol in the 1999-2008 decade. The results demonstrated that most of the road deaths caused by the influence of alcohol were concentrated in the vehicle of the drunk driver. Therefore, those most at risk are primarily the drink driver himself/herself, as well as the passengers. Estimated on the basis of fatal collisions, the drink driving situation has remained more or less unchanged in the past ten years. One in four fatal collisions is caused by a drink driver. In the majority of cases, those who are killed in alcohol-related collisions are the drink driver himself/herself or a passenger in the drink driver's car. Of all victims of alcohol-related road collisions, only 8% were killed elsewhere than in the drink driver's vehicle. In single-vehicle collisions, an average of 37 drivers and 13 passengers were killed annually. In head-on collisions caused by a drink driver, 84% were killed in the vehicle of the party causing the collision and 16% in the collision partner's vehicle. There were very few pedestrian or cyclist deaths in alcohol-related collisions, an average of 2 people per year. Last year, as many as 85% of the drink drivers who caused a fatal accident exceeded the limit of 1.2 g/l. The drivers' age is rising too: last year half of the drink drivers were over the age of 40. Typically, fatal collisions caused by drink drivers are concentrated in summer time: last year they accounted for as many as 82% of the collisions in the period from April to September.

Country News

New anti drink driving campaign launched in Poland

The national Polish social campaign "Did you drink? Do not drive!" was launched in April. The campaign aims at informing of the dangers related to the influence of alcohol while driving. Police statistics show that enhanced enforcement and preventive education activities work well and have brought a visible reduction in the number of collisions caused by drunk drivers. 2010 was a year of improvement for road safety in Poland. Poland reduced the number of people killed on its roads by 15% in 2010 compared with 2009. Yet 3,907 people died last year in road collisions, a far cry from the maximum of 2,800 set in the national road safety plan for 2013. This campaign is part of a government programme and is coordinated by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration. The message from this year's campaign will go out all over the country through the publication of leaflets which will be handed out to drivers during roadside controls. Spots produced on the purpose of this campaign will appear on national TV, in cinemas, in universities, in several hundred buses and on the streets in several cities. Billboards will appear in the Driver Training Centres, Testing Centres and in public transport vehicles. During some outdoor events roll-over simulators and simulators with the module of "drink driving" will be used. The video of the anti drink driving campaign can be found here. <https://www.tispol.org/video-library/tispoltv-video/polish-advertisement>

Summer time means more controls on the roads for the Danish Police

Summer is peak season for drink driving and, as a consequence, for roadside police checks too. In a one-week operation in June, Danish police charged 348 people for driving under the influence of alcohol while 32 traffic collisions caused by alcohol occurred during the same week. The figures come from the National Police's Traffic Centre also showing the different distribution in the number of drink driving offences in each district. Awareness raising campaigns also started from June to the beginning of July to warn people of dangers of drinking and driving during summer holidays. A car collision caused by alcohol not only has great consequences for those involved and their relatives, it also has costs for society. From 2006 to 2010 a total of 4,897 persons died or got injured in an alcohol-related crash, divided into

416 killed, 2,199 seriously injured and 2,282 slightly injured. The Danish Sikker Trafik association calculated that every time a citizen gets injured in a traffic collision social costs are incurred at around 2 million Danish crowns (almost 270,000 Euro). This amount includes expenditures for police and emergency service, treatment costs and damage costs.

Alcohol consumption in Belgium: highest level of the year is registered in summer

The number of alcohol checks will rise significantly during the summer holidays in Belgium. The Federal Police decided to intensify roadside breath testing both during the week and at weekends also taking into consideration the latest results of a poll carried out by IBSR/BIVV (Belgian Road Safety Institute). The poll shows that the summer months from June to August can be considered more dangerous in terms of alcohol consumption than any other month of the year. 31% of those interviewed admitted that they drink more alcohol during the summer than in any other season, especially those younger than 39 years. Moreover, on almost 44,000 alcohol tests made between May and the beginning of July, 6% of drivers were found under the influence of alcohol, compared to 3.6% on New Years' Eve. Complementary to police enforcement, IBSR/BIVV started its BOB summer campaign on the 6th of June lasting until the 29th of August with the aim of increasing the level of safety on the roads this summer.

ETSC Events

"Safe and Sober" Seminars

On the 4th of October, the 17th Safe & Sober Talk will take place in Zurich, in collaboration with the Swiss Council for Accident Prevention (bfu). A growing number of countries are adopting legislation for the use of alcohol interlock devices in rehabilitation programmes as a substitute punishment for driving license withdrawal. ETSC, through the "Safe and Sober" Campaign, is raising awareness amongst policy makers and the private sector as well as some key opinion leaders for a systemic approach to reduce alcohol misuse in road transport, especially through effective and innovative measures such as the implementation of alcohol interlocks. This event will be followed by another Safe & Sober talk in Stockholm, Sweden, on the 26th of October.

ETSC Events

The objective of this seminar, jointly organised by ETSC and the Abstaining Motorists' Association (MHF), is to analyse the Swedish experience within the European context, promoting current good practices both in commercial and rehabilitation programmes.

PIN conference



Ms. Catharina Elmsäter-Svärd, Swedish Minister for Infrastructure (left) and Mr. Eligijus Masiulis, Lithuanian Minister for Transport and Communications (right) during the PIN Conference

The 5th Annual PIN Conference was held on the 21st of June in Brussels. The latest country rankings were presented showing the outcome of progress towards the EU 2010 target. This year's PIN Awards went to Sweden and Lithuania recognising their particular efforts in reducing road deaths, by 50 and 58% respectively. A reduction of the legal BAC limit to 0.2g/l for novice and professional drivers and 0.4g/l for other drivers in Lithuania showed how stronger policies to tackle drink driving together with tougher police controls and better infrastructure can be effective in achieving outstanding reductions of road casualties at the national level.

Alcolocks legislation barometer July 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	✓	✓		✓
Sweden				✓		✓		✓
Netherlands	✓			✓		✓		
France		✓	✓ for use in rehabilitation programmes and first time high-level offenders	✓ for school buses	✓	✓		
Belgium				✓	✓	✓		✓
Slovenia	✓							✓
Denmark				✓		✓		
United Kingdom								✓



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