

Åke Lindgren, IIAP¹, Stockholm

NordANs seminars on "Alcohol and other drugs in traffic", a summary

NordAN has since 2007 arranged seminars on Driving under influence of alcohol and other drugs (DUI). Different participants from the Nordic and the Baltic states have presented papers. We have got overviews of the development of DUI and activities and campaigns to reduce the problems. The following presentation gives some facts which I have noted as the chairman for these seminars in Reykjavik 2007, Tallin 2008 and Helsinki 2009. In Helsinki there were also presentations concerning other drugs than alcohol and its importance for safety driving

Documentation of presentations

In Nordan website www.nordan.org most of the following presentations are published and can be downloaded

The range of the DUI-problem and measures to reduce harms

At least 17.000 traffic accidents with 10.000 deaths a year in the European road traffic are alcohol related (one third of all fatalities).

During the last years there are EU-projects on DUI, which are commented on in Eurocare's homepage (www.eurocare.org) The numbers above are noted on this homepage. Eurocare is an important NGO which takes initiatives to evidence based studies. NordAN and several of its member organisations are members in Eurocare

Drs Peter Anderson and Ben Baumberg have written a report for EU, *Alcohol in Europe*. They valuate cost effective policy measures for reducing the harms related to DUI. The symbols in the following table mean:

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+	means:	"Evidence for limited effectiveness"
++		"Evidence for moderate effectiveness"
+++		"Evidence of high degree of effectiveness"
0		"Evidence indicate a lack of effectiveness"

¹ Executive director, International Institute on Alcohol policies, ake.lindgren@mhf.se

<u>Recommendations</u>	<u>Effectiveness</u>	<u>Breadth of research support</u>	<u>Cost efficiency</u>
<u>1.Regulating the availability and marketing of alcohol</u>			
1.1 Increased tax rates for all alcohol Beverages	+++	+++	+++
1.2 Regulating alcohol outlets	+++	+++	+++
1.3 Restrict or ban marketing	+	+	+++
<u>2. Drink Driving countermeasures</u>			
2.1 Maximum blood alcohol concentration limit of 0,5 g/L	+++	+++	+++
2.2 A lower limit 0,0 g/L for younger drivers	+++	++	+++
2.3 Unrestricted powers to breathtests	+++	++	+
2.4 Common penalties depending on BAL level	++	+	+
2.5 Driver education	+	+	+
2.6 Europa wide campagne	+	+	+
2.7 Designated campaign	0	+	++
2.8 Training for servers of alcohol	+	++	++
2.9 Community based educational and mobilization programmes	++	++	+

Correlation between total alcohol consumption, DUI accidents and fatalities

The quality of public statistics for a country concerning DUI differs between countries. It is probable that the level and change of total alcohol consumption also describes the level and change of DUI. It has been calculated on statistics from Sweden a factor of 0,6 between consumption and DUI, meaning that e.g. a consumption increase of 10 % means a DUI increase of 6 %.

Comparisons of the alcohol consumption in the Nordic countries (www.stakes.fi) show how all countries have an increase of alcohol consumption almost year by year since 1970. The highest consumption is registered in Greenland, Denmark and Finland with about 10-12 100% litre alcohol in 2008. The lowest consumption has the Faroe Islands, Iceland, Sweden and Norway with about half of this level.

ETSV-report in Tylösand 2009 re comparisons on DUI in the Nordic countries

An interesting report was presented by Lars-Olov Sjöström from MHFs Tylösand conference 2009. It was a report from *European Transport safety Council (ETSC)* with comparisons and recommendations directed to the Nordic countries.

In short some facts from the ETSC presentation:

- Nordic countries are among the most safety in the world, but the gap with the rest of Europe is decreasing
- in 2008 occurred accidents with 1.400 deaths in Europe and 16.000 seriously injured
- Deaths per million people were in 2008 in Denmark 68, Finland 67, Iceland 63, Norway 52, Sweden 48. Road deaths reduction during the past decade was in Iceland 43 %, in Sweden 22 %, Denmark 22 %, Norway 20 % and in Finland 19 %
- The highest seat belt use is noted in Sweden with 96 % in front seats and 86 % in rear seats. In Norway the use is 93/85 %, Finland 90/82 %, Denmark 90/79 %, The Nordic average was 93/81 % compared with the average for EU 87/65 % in front and rear seats respectively.
- Alcohol related deaths among all road deaths are in Norway 22%, Sweden 24 %, Iceland 24 %, Finland 26 % and Denmark 28 %
- Sweden and Denmark have the most safe motorways in Europe

ETSC recommends:

All Nordic countries: seek to maintain the top position, promote further alcolocks, improve safety belt wearing on rear seats and reduce serious injuries

Sweden: continue to show a high level of leadership in traffic safety and pay attention to the increasing numbers of DUI

Norway: implement measures for improving child safety

Denmark: all major risk factors should be addressed, especially speeds

Finland and Iceland: take actions concerning elderly people at risk

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Notes from presentations in Helsinki from Nordic and Baltic countries

Finland, Leena Sipinen: *Safe and straight traffic for young people. Actions done by Finnish Health association NGO*

- safe moped courses for pupils age 15; increasing accident figures
- courses for students and conscripts
- from peer to peer: European night without accident
- global youth network for road safety: 25.000 lives to save

Finland, country report Finland:

- persons killed in accidents since 1970: 120 or more a year as highest
- 28 % of fatalities DUI-influenced
- Improved safety among children, passengers and bicycle drivers

- alcohol law in 2008 after 3 years testing, in use from August 2011 to be required for all chartered taxis and buses transporting children
- still discussion if promille limit 0,5 should be lowered. Police think they have 'nt resources enough and equipment for handling growing number of DUI

Finland: Kaisa Hara Liikenneturva: *Drink driving campaigns in Finland*

- advertizing and communication have been linked with reforms in legislation, enforcement and other traffic safety procedures.
- behind the campaigns are a broad and united front of authorities and various communities
- yearly campaigns with repeated basic issues: the risk of getting caught, many consequences of drink driving, management and responsibility
- in 1970's starts regular integrated campaigns, tightened legislation and alcoholmeters
- in 1980's negative attitudes towards DUI, self control, situational sobriety: *"if you take-don't drive, if you drive-don't drink"*
- in 1990's social responsibility: strong attitudes against DUI, prevention of drunken persons from getting behind the wheel, responsibility of the host, use of public transports
- in 2000's support of selfcontrol of drinking, self possession, personal safety net: *"There are mornings when it is wise to leave the car home"*
- in 2004-2006: *if you drive – take a driver"*, *"you will thank your friend in the morning!"*
- in 2007 started a *Nation wide information campaign"* to arouse and maintain discussion on DUI, to increase the social responsibility of young people, the cultural change demands. The same campaign is planned for several years
- the poster messages are : *"This weekend many drunken young people will hurt"* and *"when friends refuse, hand over the car keys"*
- Closing words: *"The campaigning against drinking driving can be effective, if it is long-term recurring, performed in connection with other traffic safety procedures, authorities and organisations co-operate, political decisions makers support it, it addresses issues which are current from the viewpoint of the citizens and the main task of campaigning is to arise and support awareness"*

Finland: National Institute for health and welfare, Kekki: *"The Road to Sobriety – Alcohol and Drug consultations. Drink-driving prevention project 1 June 2009- 31 May 2010"*

- background *The 2007 Government package of measures concerning traffic safety*
- immediate intervention of arrested drink drivers within 24 hours of the incident
- the Swedish SMADT project (Co-operation against alcohol and drugs in traffic) is the model: co-operation with the police and the social and health services
- five pilot areas
- a key method is the AUDIT questionnaire to be completed together with the client
- The goal is to motivate clients, to offer an opportunity to reflect on what has happened and contribute towards a change in behaviour.

Norway: Terje Törring, MA: *Driving under influence of drugs – other than alcohol*

- in Norway every day 12.000 drivers intoxicated: 60 % alcohol, 40 % other drugs
- 1 out of 100 drivers represent high risk in traffic due to their use of alcohol, drugs and medicine
- every year 8-9.000 reported for DUI due to use of alcohol or othe drugs
- a large number of unrecorded cases
- no problems to detect intoxication of alcohol but problems to detect other drugs
- the police participate in DRUID-projects with new tools “*narkometer*”
- in spring 2009 were 3836 drivers of heavy vehicles checked in roadside screenings: only 1 had BAC level higher than 0.02 %
- the Norwegian Institute of Public Health says that alcohol is still the most common intoxicants among drivers, but more there are more cocain users in 2008 (200) than in 2007 (150); mainly in Oslo and surroundings
- In 2008 were of 10.000 drivers suspected for DUI of alcohol or drugs. In 90 % of the blood tests were found one or more substances like drugs, medicine or other intoxicants (cannabis, tranquillizing medicine and amphetamine). 3.500 blood-tests were analysed for alcohol only, 4.500 tests for alcohol and other drugs. 7.000 had been drinking. 500 out of 5.000 were women. In average 3 different substances were found
- Positive link between sleeping medicine and the chance of being assessed as impaired in a clinical examination
- The author conclude that there are: few DUI-drivers in Norway, but those drivers represent a high risk. New tools like alcolock are necessary to be found and used

Iceland: Country report

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of accidents</u>	<u>%DUI</u>
1999	1190	4.9
2000	1002	5.5
2001	863	5.2
2002	1027	4.1
2003	897	4.5
2004	810	6.5
2005	687	5.1
2006	915	4.3
2007	1147	5.0
2008	1085	6.7

There are lower numbers some years but possibly an increasing trend during the last two years according to the official statistics. About 5 % of accidents are DUI-cases. Most drunk drivers are found in the age 25-40.

Estonia: Diana Rand, National Institute for Health Development: *Drinking and Driving Facts about Estoni*

- per capita consumption in 2008 was 11,9 litres pure alcohol (top of Nordan countries). It is doubled level since 1990
- 44 % of men and 14 % of women drink alcohol every week in 2008
- 41 % DUI fatal accidents
- 19 % drunk drivers of all accidents in 2008, 25 % in 1997
- public campaigns (advertisements, radio, TV) with temas as “Sober groupmanager”, “Drive sober”,

Latvia: “Drinking and driving”, data from Traffic safety Directorate

- decreasing trend of DUI- accidents
- 116 DUI-fatalities in 2000, 58 in 2008
- 1237 injuries in 2000, 565 in 2008
- DUI-injuries about 20 % of all injuries in 1995-2000, in 2008 9,5 %
- Law rules: loosing of driving license if DUI; 6.610 drivers loosed licence in 2008

Sweden: Sjöström: “Swedish news in the field of drinking and driving 2009”

- Commission of Inquiry investigates the possibilities of making the use of Alcolocks statotuary in buses and heavy vehicles.
- The Swedish Coast Guard customs official has been given authority to make DUI-controls (from July 1 2008)
- The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention reports that the number of women seized for drunk driving has doubled during the latest ten years

Sweden: Sjöström: “Driving under influence of drugs – other than alcohol”

- a new Swedish report about prevalence, crime-fighting and preventive methods
- 1 July, 1999 the Swedish Road Traffic Offence Act introduced a zero limit for narcotic substances
- during the second half of 1999 there were a fourfold increase in the number of drives suspected of DUID (driving under influence of drug)
- Increased DUID numbers year by year: In 2001 about 1900, in 2008 about 5.500
- 68 % of DUID-drivers in 2001-2004 recidivists
- initiated rehabilitation processes (the Skellefteå model/SMADIT) in which different authorities are involved for rehabilitation of offenders
- In 2001-2008 were 85 % of DUID-crimes cleared up
