

IOGT International submission

WHO Discussion Paper (Version Feb. 14, 2017)

Draft: Developing voluntary global performance targets for road safety risk factors and service delivery mechanisms

IOGT International commends WHO and member states for the efforts to develop voluntary global performance targets on key risk factors and service delivery mechanisms to reduce road traffic fatalities and injuries.

IOGT International welcomes the opportunity to contribute our expertise to the process of developing set of voluntary global performance targets for the prevention of road traffic injuries.

IOGT International is the premier global network of civil society organizations working to prevent and reduce alcohol-related harm through evidence-based policy measures and community-based interventions. IOGT International was founded in 1851 and has today 140 Member Organizations in 57 countries; IOGT International has special consultative status with the United Nation's Economic and Social Committee (ECOSOC).

Preventing alcohol-related road traffic injuries and fatalities

Alcohol is a major risk factor for traffic fatalities and injuries. In high-income countries about 20% of fatally injured drivers reportedly have a BAC level above the legal limits¹. Evidence from LMICs shows that between 33% and 69% of fatally injured drivers were under the influence of alcohol.

Blood alcohol concentration (BAC) is the key mechanism of alcohol-related traffic injuries and fatalities². Already at low levels of alcohol consumption, there is a high risk of fatal motor vehicle injury³.

¹ Babor, T., et.al.: Alcohol No Ordinary Commodity, 2010, p. 165

² Babor, T., et.al.: Alcohol No Ordinary Commodity, 2010, p. 165

³ Rehm, J., Taylor, B.,: The relationship between alcohol consumption and fatal motor vehicle injury: high risk at low alcohol levels, in: Alcohol Clin Exp Res. 2012 October ; 36(10): 1827–1834. doi:10.1111/j.1530-0277.2012.01785.x.

In addition, studies have also shown a correlation of per capita alcohol consumption and population based measures, such as increasing alcohol taxation and decreasing alcohol outlet density, to promote prevention and reduction of road traffic injuries and fatalities. Babor et.al. write in Alcohol No Ordinary Commodity (2010): “A substantial body of literature has examined the links between alcohol taxes, alcoholic beverage prices and road traffic accidents ...⁴”

Global target and indicator: driving under the influence of alcohol

In principle, IOGT International supports the inclusion of the target and indicator “Reduce drinking and driving” under the core area “safer road users”. This is in line with the evidence of alcohol being a major risk factor for road traffic injuries and fatalities.

Improved Objective

We would welcome the consideration of the following objective:

“All countries implement a legal limit for the BAC level of at least 0.05%.”

Improved Target

The target should be formulated like this:

“Reduce by at least ...% the number of drivers with a BAC level above the legal limit.”

In considering the Sustainable Development Goals, especially SDG3.5, as well as with regard to the WHO NCDs Global Action Plan, IOGT International wants to recommend a few additions to make the global performance target on driving under the influence of alcohol more robust.

The three most cost-effective and high-impact measures to prevent and reduce driving under the influence of alcohol are (see following image)⁵:

- Lowered BAC limits
- Random Breath testing
- Low BAC for young drivers (“zero tolerance”)

⁴ Babor, T., et.al.: Alcohol No Ordinary Commodity, 2010, p. 123

⁵ Babor, T., et.al.: Alcohol No Ordinary Commodity, 2010, p. 245

Strategy or intervention	Effectiveness	Breadth of research support	Crossnational testing
DRINK DRIVING COUNTERMEASURES			
Sobriety check points	++	+++	+++
Random breath testing	+++	++	++
Lowered BAC limits	+++	+++	+++
Low BAC for young drivers (zero tolerance)	+++	++	++
Designated drivers and ride services	0	+	+
Severity of punishment	0/+	++	++

Improved indicators

In consideration of the evidence, IOGT International proposes to include in the definition of the indicator "Legislation on drink- driving meets best practice" both "random breath testing, and a "zero tolerance principle" for novice drivers, along with a robust commitment to enforcement.

Bringing the target, objective and indicator in line with the criteria for selection of targets

Additional objective

In the NCDs global action plan, governments committed to a reduction of per capita harmful use of alcohol by 10%. Per capita alcohol use is also included as indicator for SDG 3.5 in the Sustainable Development Goals.

Addressing alcohol-related road traffic injuries and fatalities through decreasing total per capita alcohol use clearly is evidence-based, has high epidemiologic and public health relevance (strong causal links, other health co-benefits), would be an evidence driven target, is supported by the availability of effective and feasible public health interventions (the three best buys in alcohol policy) and its implementation is practical and achievable, including in low- and middle-income countries.

We would welcome the consideration of the following objective:

“At least 10% relative reduction in the harmful use of alcohol.”

Additional indicator

We would welcome and urge the addition of an indicator in line with the WHO Global Alcohol Strategy and the NCDs Global Action Plan.

“Implementation of alcohol pricing⁶ and alcohol availability measures; such as increasing alcohol taxation⁷ and decreasing alcohol outlet density⁸.”

⁶ Alexander C. Wagenaar, Melvin D. Livingston, and Stephanie S. Staras. Effects of a 2009 Illinois Alcohol Tax Increase on Fatal Motor Vehicle Crashes. American Journal of Public Health: September 2015, Vol. 105, No. 9, pp. 1880-1885. doi: 10.2105/AJPH.2014.302428

⁷ Effect of Maryland’s 2011 Alcohol Sales Tax Increase on Alcohol-Positive Driving Lavoie, Marie-Claude et al.

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8 Gruenewald, P.J., et.al.: Outlets, Drinking and Driving: A Multilevel Analysis of Availability, in: JOURNAL OF STUDIES ON ALCOHOL , 2002