Traffic Psychology in Germany

A close look at the German Traffic Safety System

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Topics

1. Numbers and Statistics
2. Psychology within the German Traffic Law System
3. The Medical-Psychological Assessment as a Road Safety Measure
4. Research and legislation needs
Traffic Fatalities in the EU 2001 vs. 2010 (per Mio. Inhabitants)

[Source: CARE - EU road accidents database / European Commission – DGMOVE]
Accidents under the Influence of Alcohol: 1995-2010

[Source: Statistisches Bundesamt]
Accidents under the Influence of other Psychoactive Substances: 1995-2010

[Source: Statistisches Bundesamt]
Efficiency of Traffic Safety Measures
Withdrawal of Driver’s Licenses in Germany: 2000-2009

[Source: Kraftfahrt-Bundesamt]
Psychological Measures within the German Traffic Law System

1. Assessment
   a. Bus and taxi drivers
   b. Drivers under the influence of alcohol or drugs (MPA)
   c. Drivers with multiple traffic offences (MPA)
   d. Handicapped drivers

2. Training and rehabilitation programs
   a. Novice drivers with a severe traffic offence
   b. Drivers with multiple traffic offences within the demerit point system
   c. Drivers under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs
Reasons for MPA in Germany 2010

- **Alcohol**: 29,114
- **Drugs**: 15,605
- **First alcohol offence**: 19,832
- **Repeated alcohol offence**: 12,343
- **Alcohol offence and other offences**: 7,758
- **Other reasons**: 16,944

Total: 101,596 Medical-Psychological Assessments

[Source: BASt]
Medical-Psychological Assessment of Traffic Offenders

Driver

Applies for regranting of license

Chooses MPA-Center and undergoes MPA

Authority

Doubts driver’s aptitude and requires MPA

Examines MPA-expertise and decides on regranting the license

MPA

Assesses the driver and sends him the written expertise
Medical-Psychological Assessment

MPA

Medical Examination
1. Medical history
2. Physical examination
3. Laboratory analyses

Psychological performance test
1. Reaction capacity
2. Visual perception
3. Concentration

Psychological Interview
1. Warming-up phase
2. Collection of biographical data
3. Report on the traffic offences
4. Evaluation of offence-relevant behavior- and attitude-changes

Evaluation of the findings by the medical doctor and by the psychologist
Possible Outcomes of the MPA

**Negative Outcome:**
- The driver’s license *cannot* be regranted
- Recommendations are given according to the MPA-results
- The MPA must be repeated

**Partially Negative Outcome:**
- Participation in a *driver improvement* course
- Then the driver’s license *can* be regranted

**Positive Outcome:**
- The driver’s license *can* be regranted

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Research Results

- **MPA-Evaluation:**
  - 93.5% of the first alcohol-offence drivers remain without a relapse
  - 91.7% of the multiple alcohol-offence drivers remain without a relapse
  - 94.6% of the drug-offence drivers remain without a relapse

- **Rehab-Evaluation:**
  - 91.6% of the participants in SPEED (for drug-drivers) remain without a relapse
  - 92.7% of the participants in LEER (for alcohol-drivers) remain without a relapse
Traffic psychology within EU legislation

Research and legislation needs

- Definition of research based criteria for evaluation studies on the effectiveness of psychological measures
- Definition of psychological and technical standards for a common EU-regulation of alcolock-systems
- Evaluation studies on the effectiveness of alcolock-systems combined with rehabilitation programs
- Introduction of minimum psychological standards for drivers with high responsibility (i.e. dangerous cargo and buss-drivers)
- Introduction of a harmonized point system as one prerequisite for implementing psychological measures
ALCOHOL

14. Alcohol consumption constitutes a major danger to road safety. In view of the scale of the problem, the medical and psychological professions must be very vigilant.

Group 1:

14.1. Driving licences shall not be issued to, or renewed for, applicants or drivers who are dependent on alcohol or unable to refrain from drinking and driving. After a proven period of abstinence and subject to authorised medical and psychological opinion and regular medical check-ups, driving licences may be issued to, or renewed for, applicant or drivers who have in the past been dependent on alcohol.

Group 2:

14.2. The competent medical and psychological authority shall give due consideration to the additional risks and dangers involved in the driving of vehicles covered by the definition of this group.
Many thanks for your attention!!

Visit us in Erfurt!!

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