



## Case Study for designated driver

### “EURO BOB” CAMPAIGN

**Reference:** “EURO BOB” European designated driver campaign against drinking and driving 2001-2002. Final Report, December 2002.

**Available online on:**

<http://www.regione.pmn.it/trasporti/prss/biblioteca/dwd/progetti/uomo/eurobob1.pdf>

#### **Background**

The “Bob” designated driver campaign was originally launched in Belgium in 1996 and aimed at raising awareness about the dangers of drunk driving. In subsequent years several subsequent campaigns evolved from the first one, aimed at discouraging drink driving in the Belgian population.

Given the good results of the “Bob” campaign in Belgium, the European Commission adopted a document to extend the “Bob concept” to other EU member states, also providing financial support.

#### **Setting**

The 2001-2002 campaign was implemented in Belgium, The Netherlands, Greece and France. In each country the campaign was implemented during a period of a few months (about 1-5, depending on the country).

#### **Aim**

To reduce the number of road casualties related to drinking and driving, using a combination of awareness-raising by mass-media, police controls and local campaigns in bars and pubs.

#### **General design**

Distinctive of the campaigns is the figure of the designated driver “Bob”, the person that does not drink when he has to drive, and who is responsible for driving the rest of the party home safely.

The idea is to have a strong common basic concept for all European partners involved, defined in a concise list of specification. The partners have a considerable degree of freedom to adapt the concept to local taste and sensibilities.

The project envisions the involvement and collaboration of official road safety organizations and of the drink industry in the conduction of the campaign.

#### **Target population**

Although some actions were targeted to the general population, specific actions were aimed at younger age groups, e.g., 15-24 in France and 18-39 in Greece.

### **Implementation**

In the framework of the general design of the Bob campaign, implementations have differed in the various countries.

To raise awareness, various means have been used, including TV and radio spots, Internet websites, advertisements in newspapers and on street panels, distribution of promotional material (posters, brochures and gadgets). In France, a specific campaign was conducted in discotheques. In Belgium and the Netherlands a "Bob van" was also used, i.e. a bus where people could have their alcohol levels tested free of charge, and use a driving simulator giving faithful imitation of the effects of alcohol on driving performance. In Greece an one-hour driving education course and a 30 minute educational video tape were developed.

### **Evaluation**

The evaluation was based on interviewing samples of the target population in order to evaluate: 1) the visibility of the campaign, i.e. how well people recalled the campaign in the different media used, 2) awareness of the risk of drunk driving 3) behaviors, and changes in behaviors i.e. if people designated another person as designated driver, or if they had themselves acted as designated driver in some occasions.

Results of breath tests operated by the police in various time periods (during the campaign and in other periods) were also reported. Only in Belgium, however, comparative data were presented for the period of the Bob campaign and for other periods.

### **Results**

In general in all countries the initiatives to promote the Bob designated driver campaign were well remembered and considered favorably by the target group. There were, however, substantial differences between countries in the results, in particular concerning awareness of the dangers of drunk driving, willingness to act as designated driver.

In Belgium, where the Bob campaign had been active for many years, the campaign conducted in 2001/2002 specifically convinced passengers, while a high percentage of drivers were already aware and convinced by previous campaigns. The number of drunk drivers detected by the police was lower during the period of the campaign, than during the rest of the year, highlighting the importance of a constant reminder of the risks of drunk driving. However, police controls decreased in Belgium as compared to the previous years, and simultaneously the number of positive tests increased. This shows how police enforcement is a fundamental component of any campaign aimed at reducing drunk driving, which cannot rely on awareness rising alone.

In France, the campaign had the greatest impact on the age group 15-24 years, which was specifically identified as the target group. Although appreciation for the campaign was wide, young people in general clearly preferred to designate another person as driver, rather than to be themselves the designated driver. The authors note that this was in contrast with one of the main messages of the campaign, which aimed at presenting Bob – the designated driver – as a positive figure.

In Greece, the target group was people aged 18-39. The campaign messages was well remembered and considered convincing by the

target group. However, an underestimation of the dangers of drunk driving also emerged (over 50% thought that driving after having drunk 2 or more drinks is not dangerous) and 6 out of 10 persons aged 18-39 years reported to having driven after drinking 2 or more drinks.

In the Netherlands the campaign was well known, and 4 out of 10 people declared to have improved their attitude in consequence of the campaign. In general, the campaign strengthened and improved the level of awareness that was already high at baseline.

### **Resources**

The whole budget for the four countries was about 1,200,000 euros. Of this, about 16% was listed as staff assigned to the operation, 33% to subcontracting, and 45% was listed as "other allowable direct costs". The resources needed included the production of the TV and radio spots, videotape, posters, brochures, gadgets etc., the availability and customization of the Bob vans and the costs for renting advertising space on the various media. Voluntary work of interested parties was also exploited in some instances.

### **Continuation**

The period 2001-2002 was the first stage of the European Bob campaign, which has been continued in subsequent years also. This first period of implementation has yielded country specific indications on how to shape the continuation, according to the local conditions in the various countries.

### **Implications for further implementations**

The remembrance and acceptance of the campaign was very good in all countries, showing that the basic concept at the core of the Bob designated driver campaign is a useful tool for promoting avoidance of drunk driving.

An important point that has emerged from the first EURO Bob campaign is that it is necessary to tailor the action to the specific needs and sensibilities of the target population. This underlines the need to undertake a specific evaluation of the attitudes, beliefs and reactions of the target population in any further implementation of the campaign in other countries.

Another important point that has been highlighted by the results in Belgium is that awareness raising must be accompanied by a determined action of enforcement of the laws about driving under the effect of alcohol impairment, if the aim of decreasing drunk driving and, ultimately, alcohol related road traffic injuries has to be achieved.

See also:

<http://www.certh.gr/dat/009B7E90/file.pdf?632962351927891250>

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