

Directive 2003/59/EC on the initial qualification and periodic training of drivers of certain road vehicles for the carriage of goods or passengers

Information about the respondent	
Your name -open reply-(optional)	Stephen
Your surname -open reply-(optional)	Morris
Your organisation -open reply-(optional)	Bus Users UK
Your email address -open reply-(compulsory)	stephen.morris@bususers.org
Please provide some information about your organisation -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Other interest representation
Please specify your main country of operations or residence -single choice reply-(compulsory)	UK - United Kingdom
Are you answering as an individual or on behalf of an organisation or an institution? -single choice reply-(compulsory)	I am answering on behalf of an organisation or institutions (business organisation, NGO, public authority, etc.)
<p>Please note that as part of the European Transparency Initiative, organisations are invited to use the register of interest representatives to provide the European Commission and the public at large with information about their objectives, funding and structures (http://europa.eu/transparency-register/index_en.htm).</p> <p>Please indicate if your organisation is registered in the Transparency Register of the European Commission. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	No
Received contributions may be published on the Commission's website, with the identity of the contributor. Do you agree with your contribution being published under your name? -single choice reply-(compulsory)	My contribution may be published under the name indicated.
The general relevance and effectiveness of the Directive	
The importance of education and training of drivers	
<i>The European Commission's action in the area of transport of goods and passengers by road is based on the strong belief that action in this area is an important element to increase safety on European roads and that the qualification and training of drivers have an important role to play. In 2009 alone, more than 4,200 people died in road traffic accidents involving so-called</i>	Yes

Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs), meaning vehicles of over 3.5 tons maximum permissible gross vehicle weight. In the overall number of accidents the share of trucks is modest. However, while less than 2.5 % of the total road accidents lead to fatalities, over 6 % of the accidents involving heavy good vehicles lead to fatalities. A study on the causes of accidents involving trucks has shown that around 85 % of the accidents are linked to human error of one of the road participants. Other causes of accidents such as weather and infrastructure conditions could as well be mitigated through specific training of drivers.

1. Do you think that qualification and education of drivers engaged in the transport of goods or passengers by road have an important contribution to make to road safety? -single choice reply-(optional)

Comments -open reply-(optional)

It reassures passengers to know that drivers of the vehicles that transport them have to be qualified and meet certain standards. This removes a barrier to travel for some users and public transport is intrinsically safer than private transport. Giving drivers improved qualification increases their overall professionalism. Period training creates the opportunity to remind drivers of hazardous situations and strategies for avoiding them/dealing with them. It reduces complacency that many years of professional driving without training can induce. It also ensures that employers of bus and coach drivers provide good training for their employees and maintain their abilities throughout their career.

The current Directive provides some minimum training requirements but does not provide specific rules on the mutual recognition for the profession of drivers. The horizontal Directive 2005/36/EC on the recognition of professional qualifications applies therefore by default to the profession of drivers, but only partially fills the void. As far the drivers' profession is concerned, Directive 2005/36/EC does not provide for automatic recognition rules based on harmonised minimum training requirements.

No, a higher level of recognition should be pursued

2. Do you think that the level of mutual recognition of the profession currently stipulated in the Directive is sufficient or should a higher level of recognition be pursued? -single choice reply-(optional)

Comments -open reply-(optional)

There needs to be some care with this, especially in a UK situation where most bus services (outside London) are provided as a commercial venture, and any increase in driver costs will translate directly into higher fares for users. Too onerous a standard too onerous could lead to people leaving the profession, reducing the pool of people able to operate services. But the status of drivers is too low to reflect accurately the responsibility of the job, can deter potential good entries to the profession and can lead to resentment amongst drivers that can reflect in poor customer service.

The profession of driver frequently suffers from the image as a low qualification profession, with professionals operating in this sector being considered

No

as easily replaceable workforce. The establishment of an increased harmonisation of requirements of higher training and qualification standards to become a professional driver is meant to increase the consideration and the value of the profession and thereby also its attractiveness for young people entering the labour market.

3. Do you think that the setting up of an increased harmonisation of requirements would increase the consideration of the profession of driver? -single choice reply-(optional)

Comments -open reply-(optional)

We are not convinced that increased harmonisation in itself would improve the status of any role, or change the public perception of that role, though it might allow for better flow of EU citizens into jobs all across the EU.

The creation of a single market, with equal possibilities of access for all citizens of the EU and with no discrimination based on nationality or on the differences of requirements in the various Member States is a key objective of the European Union. The harmonisation of qualification and training requirement for drivers, intends to ensure fair and equal conditions for undertakings and drivers across the EU. However, there is substantial room for further harmonisation by establishing for example a common framework for the training and the testing, by further harmonising the content of the training, and setting common requirements for training centres and instructors. The harmonisation of all of these aspects could further contribute to levelling the playing field at higher quality levels than today for undertakings and drivers throughout the EU, while at the same time also increasing road safety and improving the preparation of drivers.

Yes

4. Do you think that the establishment of a common framework for the training and the testing, further harmonisation of the content of the training, and the setting of common requirements for training centres and instructors could further contribute to the objectives of the Directive? -single choice reply-(optional)

Comments -open reply-(optional)

The purpose of the Directive is to raise the standard of new drivers and to maintain and enhance the professionalism of existing truck and bus drivers throughout the EU through a continuous update of their capacities. Therefore it makes sense that the establishment of a common framework/training etc would contribute to the purpose of the Directive and new drivers in country A wouldn't have to start over or requalify if they wanted to move to work in country B.

The impact of the Directive

The Directive was adopted to guarantee initial qualification and periodic training of drivers of certain road vehicles to increase safety on European roads. The European Commission wishes to hear the stakeholders' opinion as to if and to what extent the Directive has actually met this objective and contributed to road safety (e.g. by improving the knowledge of road traffic regulations, changing driving attitudes, improving compliance with working time periods or increasing the awareness of risks).

Yes, but only insufficiently

5. Do you think that the Directive has contributed to increasing safety on European roads? Please explain your answer in the comments section. -single choice reply- (optional)

Comments -open reply-(optional)

Certainly the periodic training has no compulsory modules to improve awareness of safety aspects, though for drivers taking the appropriate modules there is the opportunity for example to remind drivers of the requirements of drivers' hours, which are incredibly complex (especially in members states like the UK that have separate 'domestic hours' for local bus drivers and EU hours' regulations for longer-distance work) so drivers need reminding of the requirements. The more rigorous training regime for new entrants is undoubtedly beneficial and is likely to weed out drivers who take a more cavalier approach.

The initial qualification and the periodic training stipulated in the Directive are intended to ensure that professional drivers have the necessary qualifications to drive their vehicles, thereby contributing to the development of the professionalism of the sector.

Yes, but only marginally

6. Do you think that the Directive has contributed to the development of the level of professional competence of drivers? -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Comments -open reply-(optional)

There needs to be a more rigorous system of assessing drivers' understanding of the periodic training given. It is possible to attend the training and not engage with it; simply attending training sessions is no guarantee of understanding or taking on board the training. However the test regime for new entrants has raised the bar for entering the profession.

The common qualification and training requirements set in the Directive are also intended to facilitate the free movement of workers in the sector within the EU by creating a comparable level of qualification, which addresses concerns that professionals from another Member State might not have the same level of competences.

Yes, significantly

7. Do you think that the Directive has facilitated the mobility of drivers in the transport sector? -single choice reply-(optional)

Comments -open reply-(optional)

The mobility of people within the sector has clearly been improved by the harmonisation of qualifications, and in the UK in particular there has been a substantial influx of drivers from former Eastern European states. Differing road traffic regulations throughout Europe (not

least in the UK, Ireland and Malta where the rule of the road is opposite that in most European states) remain a barrier, as does the requirement to speak the local language adequately in the case of bus and coach drivers is also a barrier.

The setting of common qualification and training requirements in the Directive has the objective to ensure that equal conditions for competition apply and that there is a level playing field for drivers and undertakings in all Member States.

Yes, significantly

8. Do you think that the Directive has contributed to the creation of a level playing field for drivers and undertakings? -single choice reply-(optional)

Comments -open reply-(optional)

Driving skills are not the only requirement; there are still be differences in local conditions and language issues for anyone trying to find work in a country other than their own. But having a common standard has levelled the playing field.

Scope of the Directive and Exemptions

The Directive contains a definition of its scope as well as a list of vehicles and uses to which it does not apply. Both must be taken into account in order to establish the applicability of the Directive to any given case. Notwithstanding the differences in the objective, an alignment with the definition of the scope and the exemptions contained in Regulation (EC) No 561/2006 on the harmonisation of certain social legislation relating to road transport regulating inter alia the working and rest periods of drivers could provide more clarity. Alternatively, a separate system of exemptions not related to other EU legislative measures could be elaborated.

A separate system of exemptions should be elaborated.

9. Do you think that the alignment of the scope and the exemptions of Directive 2003/59/EC with the ones stipulated in Regulation 561/2006/EC would best increase clarity on the scope of the Directive? Alternatively, do you think that a separate system of exemptions would be the most adequate option? -single choice reply-(optional)

Comments -open reply-(optional)

It is essential that all drivers of vehicles carrying the general public on the road comply with all requirements of the directive. However on the very periphery of that core business (eg fitters road-testing vehicles, people driving heritage vehicles to events etc) there needs to be the opportunity for member states to be able to apply exemptions in line with local culture.

As part of the review process consideration could be given to broadening the scope of application of the Directive to all holders of C or D driving licences or to include also certain professional drivers holding other types of driving licences. The inclusion of other professional drivers could mean for instance the inclusion of taxi drivers or drivers of vans of up to 3.5

To all professional drivers, including drivers of certain vehicles requiring other licences.

tonnes.

When considering this issue, two factors must be taken into consideration: on the one hand, the importance of a wide application of the Directive for the purpose of increasing road safety, and, on the other hand, the importance of not imposing a disproportionate administrative, economic or social burden on the administrations, undertakings and individuals concerned.

10. Who do you think the regime of qualification and training of the CPC should apply to? -single choice reply-

(optional)

Which other vehicles? -single choice reply-(optional)

Others (e.g. auto rickshaws)

Comments -open reply-(optional)

Ideally we would have ticked all three of the above but the site does not seem to allow that option. But professional drivers of all vehicles carrying passengers, including taxis etc, should have a similar professional qualification. An improvement in professional standards across the light van sector would contribute to road safety, though extending this to very occasional drivers for non-commercial purposes would be unnecessarily onerous.

Access to professional driving

A system of gradual access to professional driving requiring the various categories of C and D driving licences could be an option to regulate the access of young drivers in such a way that access to more challenging categories of heavy vehicles would be granted only after sufficient experience has been gained in less challenging categories. Such a system is already in place for motorcycles requiring category A driving licences, stipulating the access to heavy motorcycles either gradually by progressing through lower categories or through direct access at a higher age. The application of a similar type of model based on a choice between progressive and direct access to professional driving with C and D licences could be considered.

No

11. Do you think the CPC training should be structured in such a way to offer an option between gradual access to professional driving at an earlier age on the basis of training and experience and direct access at a higher age? -single choice reply-(optional)

Comments -open reply-(optional)

Age is not a good measure and people applying for training or licences should be judged on their own performances. Nobody, of any age, should be able to drive a large truck or bus unsupervised without adequate instruction.

Expanding also on question 4, a reorganisation of the

A new system based on modules and credits should be

training based on a system of modules structured on the basis of what the driver knows, understands and is able to do at the end of each of these modules (so-called "learning outcomes") could make the functioning of this system easier. The modules could rely on a common methodology and a common way of testing. The quality of the content of the modules might usefully be assured by applying the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education & Training (EQAVET) . For each completed module drivers could receive validation and recognition in the form of credits. The credits system could assure additional flexibility in the acquisition of knowledge by drivers and also allow drivers to easily transfer the credits already acquired from one Member State to another were they to move during the training. Alternatively, the current system leaving Member States and in some case single training centres the freedom to organise the training as they wish, could be maintained.

introduced

12. Do you think that a new structure of the training based on modules should be introduced or do you favour the current free system? -single choice reply-(optional)

Comments -open reply-(optional)

Modules need to be introduced and credits need to be earned, not gained simply by virtue of attendance.

Mutual recognition and certification of training

There are two main options considered to overcome this problem. The first one would be on the basis of a mutual recognition of the CPC to stipulate that drivers can go back to their home country and have the code 95 marked on the basis of a CPC obtained abroad. Alternatively, all Member States, also those which currently mark the code 95 in the driving licences could be required to issue a separate driver qualification card to holders of foreign driving licences, who obtained a CPC in their country.

By a requirement for the host Member State where the CPC was obtained to issue a separate driver qualification card to the driver.

13. How do you think the training should be certified as regards drivers obtaining the CPC in another Member State? -single choice reply-(optional)

Comments -open reply-(optional)

The issue of the card in the country in which it is acquired as it's harder to forge

At the moment no common format for the CPC exists. If the CPC were to become a mutually recognised document, the absence of a common format for the document could lead to difficulties. National authorities

Yes

could have difficulties in determining the validity of a CPC issued by another Member State and the risk of fraud could increase. A harmonised format for the CPC as a document would address these risks.

14. Do you think that the establishment of a harmonised format of the CPC as a document becomes necessary, if the CPC becomes a mutually recognised document?

-single choice reply-(optional)

Comments -open reply-(optional)

Structure and content of the training

Specificity of the CPC

15. Do you think that training for the CPC should be explicitly separated from other forms of training in order to preserve the specificity of the CPC training and its objectives? -single choice reply-(optional)

Yes

Comments -open reply-(optional)

Other modules could be added on, but the same basic qualification should be retained.

16. Do you think the CPC test should be explicitly separated from the driving licence test? -single choice reply-(optional)

Yes

Comments -open reply-(optional)

Initial qualification and training

The possibility of choosing between two options for the initial qualification, allows Member States to select the option they deem most suitable for their country. At the same time the absence of a mandatory training under the second option leads to the concern that the higher level of preparation which the CPC should certify might not really be obtained.

Yes

17. Do you think that all drivers should have to undergo a minimum initial training before obtaining the CPC?

-single choice reply-(optional)

Comments -open reply-(optional)

A minimum initial training should be required before obtaining CPC

The subjects to be covered during the initial and the periodic training are organised around three main themes: 'Advanced training in rational driving based on safety regulations', 'Application of regulations', and 'Health, road and environmental safety, service,

Yes, somewhat

logistics'. Annex I lists the single subjects to be covered in these three areas. They are meant to provide drivers with the necessary competences to improve road safety and at the same time make a useful contribution to their professionalisation.

18. Are the subjects listed in Annex I for the initial and periodic training relevant for the objectives of the Directive? If there are subjects you consider irrelevant, please indicate them. -single choice reply-(optional)

Comments -open reply-(optional)

19. Are there other subjects which in your view are relevant to the training but are currently not listed in the Annex?

If yes, please list them and explain why. -single choice reply-(optional)

Yes

Please list the missing subjects and explain why they should be listed -open reply-(optional)

Disability awareness, to ensure drivers have a thorough understanding of their duties and of correct and safe practices Customer service training: to ensure public transport remains an attractive and user-friendly option

Comments -open reply-(optional)

Section 2 of Annex 1 stipulates that during the initial training a driver must drive for at least 20 hours individually. Of these 20 hours a driver may drive up to 8 hours maximum on a top-of-the-range simulator, but there is no obligation to do so. The use of simulators during the periodic training is currently not regulated at all in the Directive.

20. Do you think that the use of top-of-the-range simulators during the training is useful and should therefore be mandatory? -single choice reply-(optional)

No

Comments -open reply-(optional)

Simulators may be helpful but are not a substitute for real-life driving. They may not always available and requiring their use would increase costs and would be out of reach to smaller training operators.

In the Directive there is no provision regulating the use of e-learning instruments during the training. The on-going technological progress in the decade since the Directive was approved has led to an ever increasing use of e-learning. The European Commission is interested in stakeholders' view on e-learning to understand if it can make an important contribution to the training of drivers and replace parts of the in-house training or if it does not meet the requirements to guarantee high quality levels of training.

Yes

21. Do you think that e-learning could make a useful contribution to the training and can therefore partially replace in-house training? -single choice reply-(optional)

Comments -open reply-(optional)

E-learning could be helpful and useful, but understanding must be tested if used.

Compulsory periodic training

This raises the issue of guaranteeing sufficient uniformity in the periodic training across all Member States and the necessity to assure that all relevant aspects are covered and that the CPC cannot be obtained on the basis of subjects that have little to do with the CPC training. This could be achieved through a uniform European training syllabus for the periodic training, which would also regulate the inclusion of practical training in the periodic training.

Yes

22. Do you think there should be a uniform European syllabus for the periodic training? -single choice reply-(optional)

Comments -open reply-(optional)

Yes, a uniform core European syllabus would be useful to maintain a level playing field, though needs to be some scope for locally-applicable training.

In the same way the Directive does not specify the content of the periodic training clearly, it does not specify if the driver has to undergo a test after the completion of the 35-hours of periodic training either. In most Member States course attendance only suffices for the issuing of the CPC and no test is foreseen to verify if the driver has really acquired the necessary knowledge of the subjects covered during the periodic training.

Yes

23. Do you think that there should be a test after the periodic training? -single choice reply-(optional)

Comments -open reply-(optional)

Training can be meaningless unless recipients can tangibly demonstrate their understanding of it.

The organisation of the periodic training in the Member States varies not only in content but also in the way the 35 hours of periodic training are distributed over the 5-years period. The Directive only stipulates that the single training periods must be at least 7 hours. Some countries have not regulated the distribution at all, leaving the freedom to distribute it over the whole 5-years period, some have determined that 7 hours of training have to be completed each year, while others have stipulated that the 35 hours of periodic training

Distribute it over the whole 5-years period

have to be completed within a limited fixed period of time (e.g. in one block or within 10 months).

24. Do you think that the most efficient way of organising the periodic training is to concentrate it in a limited fixed period at the end of the 5 years period or to distribute it over the whole 5-year period? -single choice reply-(optional)

Comments -open reply-(optional)

Five years between training sessions is too long. Learning gets forgotten, complacency comes in and conditions change over that period. The CPC concept seems to have been designed around one day per year which is a sensible approach and should be applied.

Further to question 11 no mechanism for the recognition of periodic training partially undergone in another Member State is currently foreseen (e.g. a driver undergoes 10 hours of periodic training in Member State A and then moves to Member State B and would like to have these 10 hours of periodic training counted towards the 35 hours of periodic training he has to undergo every five years). The recognition of this partial periodic training undergone in another Member State is not mandatory. It is important to understand if stakeholders see a need for the creation of such a mechanism of mutual recognition.

Yes

25. Do you think that a mechanism for the mutual recognition of parts of periodic training undergone in another Member State should be created? -single choice reply-(optional)

Comments -open reply-(optional)

If harmonised, it makes sense for all member states to recognise training in another state, unless clear evidence can be gathered that a particular training provider is not meeting the standards needed.

Approval of training centres and instructors

The training centres providing the initial and periodic training must be approved by the Member States' competent authorities. Annex I section 5 of the Directive lists the documents which must support the application and the conditions under which the competent authority must give approval. Approval can be given only in response to a written application. At the same time it is left to the competent authorities of the Member States to determine what "a suitable qualification and training programme is", and what characteristics the premises where the courses are given, the teaching materials and the vehicle fleet used need to have in order to be considered adequate. The European Commission is interested in hearing from stakeholders if they consider a more detailed regulation of approved training centres

Yes

(e.g. by means of common quality standards) as necessary to guarantee the same high levels of quality of the training in the whole of the EU.

26. Do you think that the Directive should regulate more in detail the requirements training centres have to meet in order to become an approved training centre? -single choice reply-(optional)

Comments -open reply-(optional)

If a consistent standard is to be maintained then yes, this is essential.

The requirements to be met by the instructors are not specified in the Directive either. The Directive only requires training centres to communicate to the competent national authorities the instructors' qualification and field of activity, but leaving it to the national authorities to determine on the basis of which criteria the instructors' qualifications can be deemed satisfactory.

Yes

27. Do you think that the Directive should regulate the requirements instructors have to meet in order to become approved instructors? -single choice reply-(optional)

Comments -open reply-(optional)

As 26. Regulations should be clear as to what constitutes an appropriate instructor.

Other comments

28. Are there any other aspects of the Directive you would like to comment on? -open reply-(optional)

Training needs to be relevant to the sector in which the driver will be operating. It is for instance unlikely that drivers on local service buses will be in a position where they may carry an illegal immigrant across a state border, while a long-distance coach driver may not need to know the same items of customer service as a local service bus driver.