

Ms Valérie Devaux
Member of the European Parliament
European Parliament
Rue Wierz 60
1047 - Bruxelles
Belgium



By email

BR1061015/VCO

Brussels, 21 November 2024

EU Driving Licence: Demystification of biases on driver's age

Dear Ms Devaux,

You are representing the European Parliament in negotiations with the Council on a vital file for the future of road transport: *the revision of the Driving Licence Directive*.

We would like to provide you with information on a topic of intense debate in the negotiations between the Council and European Parliament, namely the minimum age for young professional drivers.

For both goods and passenger transport road companies, the solutions regarding the driving age included in the Parliament's negotiating position are good solutions, pragmatic and well considered. In our view, the debate on the driving age does not have a realistic basis and is not supported by facts but by myths because young professional drivers are amongst the safest drivers on the road. The arguments are outlined below.

↓ Myth

↓ Fact

Young drivers have little experience and drive imprudently. They pose an increased safety risk on the roads. No decision should be taken that allows their presence behind the wheel.

- In addition to basic driving licence training, professional drivers must train for up to 280 hours to be able to drive commercial heavy-duty vehicles. This compares to about 30 hours for private car drivers.
- Professional drivers must undertake regular or annual periodic training and ongoing certification to maintain their Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC). Private car drivers do not.
- Professional drivers drive to earn their living, not for fun. They are fully motivated to drive prudently to maintain their livelihood.

17-year-old accompanied truck drivers pose an intolerable safety risk on our roads. Hence, the EU proposal to support them should be rejected.

- The word "accompanied" is crucial when looking at the proposed text in the driving licence revision. A 17-year-old driving a truck under the supervision of an experienced truck driver sitting next to him/her in the cabin is a form of extended on-the-job training and the safest form of professional driver training.
- The advantage for the driver is that this "training" is paid and provides insights into the profession, in a similar way to apprenticeship schemes.
- The advantage for the company – who pays two drivers for the same journey – is that it secures the retention of young professional drivers at the end of the training period.

18 years is too young an age for a truck driver; this should not be further encouraged.

- 18-year-old truck drivers with full training already carry out domestic operations across all EU Member States and carry out international operations in 24 out of the 27 EU Member States, as stipulated in the current Driving Licence Directive.
- Yet, the current driving licence rules still present 21 years old as the rule and 18 as an exception, which has cost (i.e. increased insurance premiums) and legal implications (i.e. three Member States still prohibit cross-border travel to another EU country).

21 years is too young an age for a bus driver; this should not be further encouraged.

- Fully trained 21-year-old bus drivers can already drive professionally on most EU roads.
- Moreover, nine EU Member States already allow 18-year-old drivers to drive scheduled bus routes of up to 50km in length.
- Yet, the current driving licence rules still present 24 years old as the rule and 21 as an exception, which has cost (i.e. increased insurance premiums) and legal implications (i.e. Member States setting even higher age limits).

Further arguments can be found in our leaflet enclosed to this letter and available [here](#).

We cannot emphasise enough the importance of your support to address accessibility and training professional drivers in the EU.

Thank you for your attention and dedication to this important cause.

Sincerely,



Raluca Marian

Director EU Advocacy / General Delegate of the Permanent Delegation to the EU