Drivers of certain road vehicles for the carriage of goods or passengers: initial qualification and periodic training. Codification

2021/0018(COD) - 22/11/2022 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 631 votes to 1, with 3 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the initial qualification and periodic training of drivers of certain road vehicles for the carriage of goods or passengers (codification).

The European Parliament adopted its position at first reading. In the opinion of the Consultative Working Party of the Legal Services of the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission, the proposal in question contains a straightforward codification of the existing texts, without any change in their substance.

This proposal for a Directive on the minimum level of training of drivers of road transport vehicles is intended to ensure, through their qualifications, that drivers are qualified both for taking up and pursuing the activity of driving. More specifically, it imposes the obligation to hold an initial qualification and to undergo periodic training is intended to improve road safety and the safety of the driver, including during operations carried out by the driver while the vehicle is stopped.

Scope of application

This codified Directive will apply to the activity of driving carried out by nationals of a Member State, and nationals of third countries who are employed or used by an undertaking established in a Member State engaged in road transport within the Union.

This Directive should not apply where all the following conditions are met:

- the drivers of vehicles operate in rural areas to supply their own business;

- the drivers do not offer transport services;

- the Member States consider that the transport is occasional and does not have an impact on road safety.

This Directive should not apply to drivers of vehicles used, or hired without a driver, by agricultural, horticultural, forestry, farming or fishery undertakings for carrying goods as part of their own entrepreneurial activity, except if driving is part of the driver's principal activity or the driving exceeds a distance set in national law from the base of the undertaking which owns, hires or leases the vehicle.

Qualification and training

To establish that the driver complies with his or her obligations, Member States should issue the driver with a certificate of professional competence (CPC) certifying his or her initial qualification or periodic training.

Member States should be able to choose between several options so as to facilitate the implementation of the provisions relating to the **initial qualification**.

To ensure consistency between the different forms of training required under Union law, Member States should have the possibility of combining different types of relevant training: for example, it should be possible for them to combine training on the transport of dangerous goods, on disability awareness or on animal transport, with the training provided for in this Directive.

In order to maintain their qualification of driver, existing drivers should be obliged to undergo periodic retraining in the skills essential for their profession.

Periodic training should all consist of training to enable holders of a CPC to update knowledge which is essential for their work, with specific emphasis on road safety, health and safety at work, and the reduction of the environmental impact of driving.

Only training centres which have been approved by the competent authorities of the Member States should be able to organise the training courses laid down for the initial qualification and the periodic training.

Union code

Based on the CPC certifying an initial qualification and the CPC certifying periodic training, Member States' competent authorities should mark the harmonised Union code, ‘95’, provided for in Annex I to Directive 2006/126/EC, alongside the corresponding categories of driving licence: (a) on the driving licence, or (b) on the driver qualification card drawn up in accordance with the standard model depicted in Annex II to this Directive.

If the competent authorities of the Member State where the CPC was obtained cannot mark the harmonised Union code on the driving licence, they should issue the driver with a driver qualification card.

The driver qualification card issued by a Member State should be mutually recognised. When the driver qualification card is issued, the competent authorities shall check the validity of the driving licence for the category of vehicle concerned.

Enforcement network

For enforcement purposes, Member States should exchange information on CPCs issued or withdrawn. For that purpose Member States should, in cooperation with the Commission, develop an electronic network or work on an extension of an existing network, taking into account the assessment by the Commission of the most cost-effective option.