



ETF Briefing on the Revision of Driving License Directive 2006/126/EC

In March 2023, the European Commission published a proposal for the revision of the Directive on driving licenses. Such initiatives have great potential for professionalizing the road transport industry, raising standards, and improving road safety. However, the ETF has voiced concerns and raised potential issues with some of the proposals and the approach of the Commission.

As the European Parliament is currently working on the file and negotiating possible compromises, as the ETF, we would like to reassert our red lines and priorities.

Minimum age

The Commission reviews the existing recommendations on minimum age for professional drivers and proposes to lower the recommended minimum age for truck driving, with accompanied driving as a condition. At the Parliament, there have been suggestions to lower minimum age for bus and coach drivers, as well as truck drivers. Some industry representatives campaign for reduction of minimum age as a solution to the driver shortage and the aging workforce.

The shortages of professional coach and truck drivers can only be resolved by improving working conditions and wages. Solving the professional driver shortage requires efforts to address the gender divide, and steps to address the demands and expectations of young drivers. With the average age of truck and bus drivers reaching approximately 50, it is clear that the solution is not to lower minimum age, but to focus on why younger drivers do not want to work in the sector.

The reduction of minimum age creates massive risks to road safety. The ETF is strongly against any reduction in minimum age for truck or bus drivers.

B+ category and vans (LGVs)

The Commission proposal did not include a differentiation between professional and private use of B category driving licenses which cover Light Goods Vehicles (LGVs).

In the Parliament, the TRAN Committee's rapporteur proposed to split the category; B license for vehicles weighing up to 1.8 tonnes and B+ for vehicles between 1.8 and 3.5 tonnes. This is a good step towards ensuring that professional usage of the B license category necessitates additional requirements to raise the standards in the sector and improve road safety.

In Europe, the logistics industry, which is marked by growing LGV usage, employs millions of people. In our Manifesto for Logistics Workers, we already called for improved and better standards in the logistics and delivery sector. We emphasized that policymakers must ensure access to proper training, qualifications, rigorous health and safety standards, and decent working conditions.

Within this context, the ETF reiterates that current requirements for bus and truck drivers, including professional driver training (Certificates of Professional Competence - CPCs) must

encompass van drivers. Van drivers must be required to undertake regular professional training under the CPC directive.

The ETF supports the B+ category and underlines the urgent need to extend the existing training and requirements for professional drivers to vans (LGVs).