



## VET schemes for professional drivers in Europe (summary)

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Before the introduction of directive 2003/59/EC professional driver qualification schemes played a subordinate role in most of the European countries in terms of availability and impact. The overall situation has been characterised by very limited availability and access to training and the percentage of drivers attending training ranged far below the overall percentage in Europe. Today, there are in all project countries I/CVET opportunities for professional drivers available. However, they strongly differ with regard to their practical relevance, labour market orientation, overall character and education level.

While the schemes put in place in order to implement directive 2003/59/EC have to be attended by any commercial truck driver and are therefore implemented comprehensively, the mostly non-compulsory public "VET-schemes" are often rather rarely used and receive low acceptance from the industry. The countries with a long tradition in compulsory IVET for professional drivers such as the Netherlands seem to be an exception here. However, public IVET schemes are rated very differently by stakeholders. Some such as the German apprenticeship are evaluated as clearly meeting the industries needs in terms of well qualified drivers, others suggest the conclusion that there is labour market orientation missing. Also with regard to the referring European Qualifications Framework (EQF) level, different countries and programmes come to different results: The IVET schemes for professional drivers in Germany and Spain are referred to level 4 of the EQF, in the UK they range between 3 and 4 and in the Netherlands on level 2 of the EQF only. The driver CPC as introduced by directive 2003/59/EC is not referenced to the EQF at all in the investigated countries so far.

But also the driver CPC as provided by directive 2003/59/EC is not recognised as sufficient to prepare drivers for their jobs by the interviewed stakeholders in several countries surveyed in the framework of the ProfDRV project. With regard to periodic training the survey results indicate the conclusion that especially such approaches that enable companies (and drivers) to choose from a variety of topics are the ones most appreciated. This already illustrates that - although all goes back to one common European directive - the EU member states are free to decide about the way how they implement directive 2003/59/EC within their national systems. This leads to major differences:

The different EU member states make for instance equal use of the different *options for initial qualification*. From the countries investigated within ProfDRV Italy, Spain and the UK went for training and test, Austria, Hungary and the Netherlands for the test only option and Germany allows both. Within periodic training only Hungary went for a final test. Major differences can be noted with regard to the *handling of periodic training*. While for instance the Netherlands and UK allow a high degree of flexibility in the choice of topics, all other investigated countries strongly regulate the topics to be covered by defining a fixed set of topics partially to be implemented within given timeframes. Differences also exist with regard to the eligibility of other mandatory training as part of periodic training. The UK and the Netherlands for instance consider ADR-training as eligible while this is not the case in all other investigated countries.

Besides these different approaches with regard to topics and time division within periodic training, differences appear when it comes to *requirements on training providers and trainers*, *on the assurance of training quality* and on the way how *assessment* is implemented. Although all implementation approaches are in line with the provisions of the directive, the different specifications lead to major differences in the implementation and the actual results of training and therefore to missing comparability of professional driver training and its results in Europe.

Also the overall *organisation of training and the didactical approaches* applied differ strongly. Training groups in Germany for instance accommodate 20 to 40 participants, while the average group size in Austria, Italy or the UK ranges between 5 and 15. Also the methodical approaches applied within training strongly differ and incorporate learner-centred approaches that work with active training methods and a big share of practice-related training, but also training approaches that focus on lecturing and have a strong emphasis on theory. The same applies for assessment. But also provisions/ regulations have a strong influence on the implementation of training. Practical driving is for instance only obligatory within periodic training in some countries and also provisions/ regulations with regard to simulators and computer based learning strongly differ.

The whole research paper can be downloaded at [www.project-profdrv.eu](http://www.project-profdrv.eu).