



Professional driving a heterogeneous field (summary)

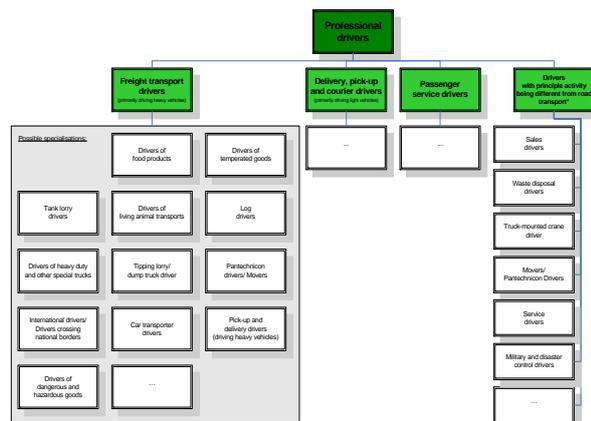
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The term “professional driver” describes a variety of different and specialised vocational fields starting from taxi drivers up to drivers of heavy duty trucks. Directive 2003/59/EC – being the major subject of the ProfDRV project - defines “professional drivers” based on the driving license categories. However, in order to investigate professional driving from a labour market and employability perspective, it is necessary to approach professional driving also from an industry and vocational education and training driven perspective in terms of driving as an occupation and a vocational field.

Different countries approaches to structure and organise professional driver training among others from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the Netherlands, Germany and France have been investigated. This investigation shows that a pure distinction by driving license classes is not sufficient in order to meet the labour markets different qualification requirements on different kind of professional drivers that are not necessarily linked to the kind of driving license they possess and to the actual driving abilities trained within driver's education classes. This becomes especially evident among the major types of drivers in the typology in figure 1. The driving license class and therefore the vehicle driven plays an inferior role and is overlapping in the elaborated types although partially predominance of one or the other can be observed. It is rather the kind of service accomplished and the embedding into the overall logistics chain besides the actual driving that rules the allocation to one type or the other.

In general it can be concluded that professional driving as a vocational field needs further distinction and elaboration in order to serve the labour markets different qualification requirements on different kinds/ types of professional drivers due to the heterogeneity of the overall vocational field. The typology in figure 1 proposes a possible way to distinguish between different kinds of drivers based on labour market qualification requirements and relies on different national examples that already made an effort to further distinguish professional driving into different labour market driven qualifications. Nevertheless, other ways to distinguish are imaginable. Already in the typology above, it was not possible to avoid overlaps within this and even with other vocational fields, but such a selective distinction can also not be expected when it comes to distinguishing different branches/ professions within one vocational field.



* allocation may vary from the one used within article 2g of directive 2003/59/EC

Figure 1: An attempt for a partial typology of professional drivers by kind of service accomplished

Same applies for possible specialisations identified for freight transport drivers that are also strongly overlapping with each other. The ones proposed are based on applied specialisations for road transport drivers in some of the investigated countries while countries such as Germany and the Netherlands do not propose specialisations at the researched stage. However, there are already compulsory training requirements in place for certain specialisations such as driving dangerous and hazardous goods from a European level. Other specialised training is required (or considered) based on national regulations such as driving of long combination vehicles (Ecombi) in the Netherlands. Further specialisations for freight transport drivers as proposed in figure 1 should therefore be strongly considered when discussing vocational education and training especially in a lifelong learning context for this type of drivers. This appears necessary in order to answer the needs of the labour market and to ensure employability of freight transport drivers within an ever changing world of transport with constantly increasing and changing qualification requirements.

The whole paper can be downloaded at www.project-profdrv.eu.