

# ProfDRV



PROFESSIONAL DRIVING –  
MORE THAN JUST DRIVING!

Qualification requirements  
and vocational training for  
professional drivers



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### IMPRINT:

Publisher:  
DEKRA Akademie GmbH  
Handwerkstraße 15  
70565 Stuttgart (DE)

Concept:  
ETMservices and project ProfDRV

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Archive, project partners, Fotolia

Graphic design:  
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Publishing house:  
ETMservices  
Handwerkstraße 15  
D-70565 Stuttgart  
www.etmservices.de  
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[facebook.com/ProfDRV](https://facebook.com/ProfDRV)  
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**Dr. Peter Littig,**  
**Director Education**  
**Policy and Strategy**

**Dear readers,**

well-educated professional drivers are the key to increased safety on European roads. At the same time, they are responsible for the success of today's transport industry. Directive 2003/59 EC aims in this same direction. The main target of the ProfDRV project was to research professional drivers qualification in terms of the directive and also considering existing formal systems of education.

One of the results of the project is how directive 2003/59 EG fails to achieve a common minimal level of qualification among professional drivers all over Europe. Instead, this approach leads to a wide variety of levels, which could not differ more. The project therefore wants the directive's outcomes to become more comparable. Thus, the member states should implement the directive using the learning outcome oriented approach of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), which is currently implemented all over Europe. The project partners suggest formulating the directive on an outcome-basis; that means, to define in Annex One of directive 2003/59 EC what a driver actually needs to be able to do upon completion of training, instead of further concentrating on input-factors like content or the duration of the trainings themselves.

At the same time, the project results warn about significant deficits in the quality of the training, especially in regard to an actual gain in knowledge, skills and competences of the (future) drivers. This is rooted in a lacking awareness of the human factors involved while implementing the directive- quantity instead of quality. The project partners conclude that it is essential to implement directive 2003/59 EC within the national systems of education, but also to raise the quality of the training. Thus, professional drivers' education and training can increase safety on European roads while helping cope with the lack of drivers. That is why the project partners suggest an intensive dialogue take place between the transport and education sectors. The ProfDRV project was the beginning of this dialogue.

Yours sincerely,  
Dr. Peter Littig, DEKRA Akademie GmbH (DE)



*One common directive on professional driver qualification in Europe but very different results*

## PROFESSIONAL DRIVER QUALIFICATION IN EUROPE – STATUS QUO

Professional drivers need to have a common minimal level of qualification all over Europe, according to directive 2003/59 EC. The European directive defines basic conditions for the member states of the EU, such as length of the training or its contents. Further, the member states are in charge of how to implement these requirements for professional drivers within their own national structures. This leads to many commonalities, but also to even more differences. The biggest commonalities are the topics directly regulated by the directive, such as the content

of the training or its duration, also in regard to continuing periodic training. Apart from that, the approaches differ greatly. Initial training works very differently. Among the states analysed in the ProfDRV project, Italy, Spain and Great Britain go for training and test. Austria, Hungary and the Netherlands chose only to test the drivers. In Germany, both approaches are possible. In regard to periodic training, there are huge differences. These choices partly root back to educational tradition. Only in Hungary is a test mandatory. While the Netherlands and Great Britain are quite flexible concerning

the topics (Great Britain offers 2,500 courses, the Netherlands about 200), the other countries impose stricter regulations. Certain areas need to be addressed within certain time frames. There are also differences in choosing possible topics. Great Britain and the Netherlands, for example, accept ADR as a course in periodic training. All other countries refuse to accept this already otherwise regulated training course.

## DIFFERENT APPROACHES

Apart from the different approaches, there are also stark differences concerning the requirements for training facilities and trainers, quality management and a final examination. Although all approaches are in accordance with the directive, the different specifications lead to significant differences in its application and the actual results. This leads to a lack of comparability between the ways of qualifying professional drivers in Europe.

Similarly different are the forms of training organisation and the didactic approaches. The groups in Germany are relatively large – between 20 and 40 participants. The average group in Austria consists of between five and 15 participants. Methods also differ strongly and are based on learner-based approaches, working with active, practical methods in training, but also using classroom-lessons with a strong emphasis on theory. The same applies for the testing. Actual driving is only a part of periodic training in the Netherlands, Sweden and Spain. Further differences between each of the examined countries can be found in the use of simulators and computer-based

learning. All these observations from only seven countries suggest that there cannot be a common minimal level for professional drivers qualification in Europe, although every one of them is based on the same directive. Sometimes during interviews with drivers and employers, one even gets the impression that there is no difference between now and before the directive. Some might thus want to harmonise and further regulate drivers' qualification in Europe to come to such minimal levels. But with all these differences in national educational systems, one might doubt that this would lead to a satisfying result. ■

### ■ INFO: DIRECTIVE 2003/59/EC

Until the implementation of directive 2003/59 EC, most of the European professional drivers only needed a drivers licence to qualify for the profession. According to the directive, the drivers now also need to attend defined trainings, also after initial training. The intent is to increase safety on European roads. At the same time, the driver-profession in goods transport should increase in appeal and thus correct the lack of qualified drivers. The directive aims at making a common qualification all over Europe possible.



## THE PROFDRV PROFILE FOR PROFESSIONAL DRIVERS (FREIGHT TRANSPORT)

The question about what a competent professional driver needs to know and be able to do was one of the main focuses in ProfDRV project. That is why the team researched several qualifications profiles for professional drivers from all over the world and interviewed drivers, employers and trainers from the project countries. The result of this effort is the ProfDRV profile. It describes, what a competent and well-educated professional driver needs to know, understand and be able to perform, according to the categories of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) – knowledge, skills and competences.

### EXAMPLE: DEPARTURE CHECKS

- **Knowledge** - “The professional driver knows the parts of the vehicle, which he needs to check before departure.” “Knowledge” means the result of processing information by learning them. These are facts, principles, theories and

practices within a working or learning field. In the context of the EQF, knowledge is described as theoretical and factual.

- **Skills** - “The professional driver can perform a full departure check with different vehicles and vehicle combinations, analyse the results and perform necessary corrections.”

„Skills“ means the ability, to use knowledge to perform tasks and solve problems. In the context of EQF, skills are described as cognitive (logical, intuitive and creative thinking) and practical (manual abilities and using methods, materials and tools).

- **Competences** - “The professional driver performs regular departure checks autonomously and self-responsibly to ensure the safety of the vehicle.”

“Competences” means the proven ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and methodical abilities in work or study situations and in professional and personal development. In the context of the EQF, competences are described in terms of responsibility and autonomy.

But how does an approach based on learning outcomes support the notion of “well-educated” drivers? Which differences does it make, compared to current approaches

and what could this mean for education in Europe?

The difference: Until now, directive 2003/59 EC only regulates the learning inputs for the professional drivers qualification. It says nothing about the skills, a professional driver needs to fulfil his profession in a competent way and

therefore meet the requirements of the labour market. A learning outcome based profile defines these skills by means of the categories "knowledge", "skills" and "competences". So, if the goal is for all professional drivers in Europe to have the competences to perform regular departure checks autonomously and self-re-

### A practical example:

Directive 2003/59/EC	ProfDRV core profile		
	Knowledge	Skills	Competences
2.1 Objective: to know the social environment of road transport and the rules governing it: maximum working periods specific to the transport industry; principles, application and consequences of Regulations (EEC) No 3820/85 and (EEC) No 3821/85 [...]	4.2 Planning of and compliance with driving time and rest periods based on relevant legal regulations and on the specifications of the transport order		
	The professional driver knows: • legal regulations for driving times and rest periods • ...	The professional driver can: • Apply legal regulations for driving times and rest periods in praxis • Organise time • ...	... He/She considers the legal regulations for driving times and rest periods self-dependently and autonomously, ...  He/ She applies the relevant legal regulations during the tour consequently and shows a professional behaviour as well as integrity.

### INFO: EQR

The European Qualifications Framework is a common European reference framework which links countries' qualifications systems together. It acts as a translation device to make qualifications more readable and understandable across different countries and systems in Europe. It has two principal aims: to promote workers' mobility between countries (among others in order to overcome skill shortage within Europe) and to facilitate citizens' lifelong learning. But the way in which people are trained or learn within different national education and training systems or different institutional contexts are so diverse that they are not comparable. A situation that we are also facing with regard to the driver CPCs' implementation approaches in Europe. Those approaches are (based on the input oriented European directive, duration of learning and content to be trained)

hardly comparable from country to country. The EQF proposes a shift to learning outcomes to overcome this difficulty and to make comparison between qualifications possible based on the learning outcomes they stand for. In the EQF a learning outcome is defined as a statement of what a learner knows, understands and is able to do on completion of a learning process. The EQF therefore emphasises the results of learning rather than focusing on inputs such as the length of study.

ProfDRV developed a learning outcomes-based profile for professional drivers and EQF compatible educational standards. Both intend to make professional driver qualification in Europe indeed comparable. Additional information on the EQF and its mode of action is available at [www.eqf-support.eu](http://www.eqf-support.eu).

sponsibly in order to ensure the safety of their vehicle", one can reach a common minimal level of qualification in Europe, but defining these learning outcomes is just the first step. They also need to be realised in training, in order to be successful. This has some consequences.

Training has to be strongly orientated toward knowledge, skills and competences as defined in the profile, as well as in the tests. It has also to ensure that all kinds of learning outcomes are addressed. Yet providing for and testing of "skills" and "competences" is a weak point in many training environments. Current training practice concentrates strongly on providing theoretical knowledge, such as fuel-efficient driving. However, it only rarely supports drivers in actually accumulating necessary skills and competences; that means using theoretical knowledge in real working practice. This is perhaps the biggest challenge in establishing such an approach. Actually working on skills and competences requires certain training approaches, well-educated trainers to start and lead learning processes, and also the necessary equipment, needed for such a kind of training. A similar situation applies for testing. Current multiple-choice-tests mainly assess knowledge, but neither skills, nor competences. Practical tests and discussions about how to implement scenarios into testing professional drivers are the first promising steps on the way to equally testing knowledge, skills and competences.

The European Qualifications Framework (EQF) is a common European framework of reference; which can be used to connect the different systems of education in the various European countries. It works as a translator to make qualifications in each country more comparable and more

transparent. EQF has two goals: mobility of learners and workers across borders (which simultaneously assists in leveling demand due to the lack of qualified personnel around Europe) and to make lifelong learning easier for all EU citizens. But the way, initial and periodic training works in the different national systems of education varies so strongly that it is simply not readily comparable. These approaches are based on the input-oriented directive 2003/59 EC (learning duration, content). The EQF, however, suggests comparing these qualifications by means of learning outcomes. Within the EQF, a learning outcome is defined as what the learner knows, understands and is able to perform, once the learning process is completed. The EQF therefore places emphasis on the results of the training and learning process, instead of concentrating simply on inputs.

ProfDRV has developed a profile for professional drivers based on learning outcomes, as well as EQF-compatible standards of education, and which should lead to a more comparable professional drivers qualification in Europe. More information is available on [www.eqf-support.eu](http://www.eqf-support.eu).



*Learning outcomes – an opportunity to make qualifications comparable across borders*

### Subject-specific tasks/ Core work processes

- (1) Driving and manoeuvring the vehicle
- (2) Performing pre-departure tasks
- (3) Loading and unloading
- (4) Planning driving times and routes
- (5) Maintenance of vehicle and vehicle combinations
- (6) Work documentation and paper work

### Cross-cutting tasks

- (I) Cooperation with customers
- (II) Cooperation with supervisors, colleagues, controlling bodies and general public
- (III) Occupational health and safety and healthy lifestyle
- (IV) Continuous vocational education and training



*Policy makers, authorities, training providers, industry and many more are equally asked to contribute to the assurance of a high quality.*

## THE PROFDRV QUALITY STANDARDS

Quality is one of the most important factors to ensure sustainability in professional initial and periodic training. In regard to the professional drivers qualification, this means, among other things, that both the initial and periodic training need to meet the requirements of the labour market and should help increase roadsafety. At the same time, the ProfDRV results show that a lack of quality concerning the implementation of a driver CPC is one of the biggest issues to deal with, and it is also a severe impediment for a decent professional drivers qualification. Already today, this endangers a sustainable implementation of directive 2003/59 EC.

### COMMON STANDARDS

This is why the ProfDRV consortium suggests quality standards for the implementation of professional drivers qualification which extend the formal demands of directive 2003/59 EC and especially take into account the approaches of the EQF as a common European approach for professional education.

### STANDARDS ACCORDING TO REQUIREMENT

The result is a catalogue of quality standards for different topics, such as "implementation of directive 2003/59 EC

into the national systems of education" or the "adaption of the training to changing needs of competences". For each of these topics, the quality standards propose a set of "key questions" and a matching "aspired situation", "adequate measurements" and "involved groups". In this way, these standards are not only indicators and criteria for quality in professional drivers qualification, but also at the same time a tool to ensure a development of quality by each of the different stakeholders, involved in

professional drivers qualification. These are mainly:

- *Political decision-makers and competent bodies of national education systems involved in implementation of directive 2003/59 EC*
- *Suppliers of professional education and training, trainers and developers/publishers of learning materials*
- *Committees responsible for the validation of learning outcomes*

Of course, a crucial question is how measurements to ensure quality can be implemented, or have already been implemented. The differences from state to state are significant. Especially countries like the Netherlands, which have already implemented the directive in their national structures, have implemented these measurements to a high degree. Countries like Germany can point to available structures of public education, like educational structures for professional trainers and also pilot-results over the last few years. Other member states still have a long way to go in order to realise these quality standards with their strong focus on professional initial and periodic training. ■

## CORE ISSUES ADDRESSED BY THE STANDARDS

- How should directive 2003/59/EC be embedded into national VET systems?
- Which entry requirements should future profession professional driver show before entering into the profession?
- Which training/ learning methods are adequate within initial qualification and periodic training of professional drivers?
- What are the requirements on trainers conducting training for professional drivers?
- What are the requirements on assessment & validation within initial qualification and periodic training?
- How is the recognition of non-/informal learning integrated?
- How should professional driver qualification be adaptable and adapted to changing skills needs?
- How can quality within periodic and initial training for professional drivers be assured?



## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A COMMON EUROPEAN MINIMUM QUALIFICATION STANDARD

- Embedding of the driver CPC into the different formal national vocational education and training (VET) systems and National Qualifications Framework in order to improve the quality of training through the application of existing VET structures and facilities and in order to facilitate lifelong learning of workers through bridges to other VET tracks in the formal VET system
- Updating directive 2003/59/EC with a reference to the European Qualifications Framework in order to enable a common minimum level of vocational education to be reached with the initial qualification and to pave the way for comparability of qualifications by broadly applying the EQF approach on professional driver qualification in Europe
- Application of the EQFs learning outcomes approach on the implementation of directive 2003/59/EC in order to ensure a comparable minimum qualification standard for professional drivers across Europe
- Application of the ProfDRV quality standards in order to ensure a common level of quality within professional drivers' vocational education and training as basis for meeting the qualification requirements of the labour market and for contributing to the safety on European roads

# ProfDRV

2003/59/EC



EUROPEAN  
QUALIFICATIONS  
FRAMEWORK



STANDARDS



CORE PROFILE

Further information is available  
on the project website  
[www.project-profdrv.eu](http://www.project-profdrv.eu)  
e-mail: [eu-project.akademie@dekra.com](mailto:eu-project.akademie@dekra.com)



Lifelong  
Learning  
Programme

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