

The Portuguese driving training system is a reference in European driving schools. The certification model for training that ANIECA presented a few years ago is very innovative. EFA meets the ANIECA President Fernando Santos.

Can you explain how it works the Portuguese driving licensing system?

We have implemented a system where theoretical and practical training tend to be given simultaneously, because these are interconnected competences.

The trainee must attend, at least, 28 theoretical hours and 32 practical hours and drive for 500 km.

The training always starts with a group session on concepts related to road safety (7 hours). The idea is to start training by trying to find the right motivation for adopting appropriate behavior.

As soon as the Road Safety module is completed, the student can begin to learn rules and signs. At the same time, he starts driving lessons.

When he reaches half of the mandatory minimum training (16 hours) and is already comfortable with the most basic driving tasks, he learns concepts of eco driving and risk perception (in the classroom).



The delegation of driving exams to private associations has also brought benefits to the Portuguese people?

When there was only a single entity responsible for testing (public), candidates had to wait 6 or 7 months for the test. When the Portuguese Government decided to extend exams to private entities, we started having exams in 6 or 7 days. 30 years after the opening of the first private examination center, candidates still have to wait several months.

On public centers, tests are booked without any considerations on candidates need. In private centers, candidates can choose the day and hour that fits his needs.

Everything regarding the exam (duration, maneuvers, methods, etc.) is the same. The main difference is in the management and administrative organization, which is much more efficient in private entities than in public ones. For a very small price difference, the candidate has an incomparably better and more efficient service experience.

EFA intends to introduce in Europe a training and examination system inspired by the effectiveness of the Portuguese model. Did you find any criticisms? Do you have any advice for other European associations?

The Portuguese model was developed with the aim of enhancing the role of the instructor and the driving school. We defend that the implementation of a road safety culture depends on professional support and guidance and an organized training strategy.

However, this implies the implementation of a wide and rigid set of rules. To ensure that all people respect the rules and that the model works, a strict sanctioning regime and intense supervision are necessary. It is important to develop training actions and awareness campaigns to prevent schools and instructors from being sanctioned.





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