

**Question for written answer E-000158/2023
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Ignazio Corrao (Verts/ALE)

Subject: Directive 2018/645 on the driver qualification card and conversion of the qualification for non-EU nationals

Directive 2018/645 allows non-EU drivers to prove their professional qualification and training (CPC) by means of a certificate bearing code '95' that they have obtained in a Member State.

Drivers who are nationals of non-EU countries do not have this qualification, even if they have an equivalent qualification issued by a third country, simply because of a conversion issue.

This means that non-EU nationals who could be employed in companies as professional drivers cannot be recruited, thereby undermining their right of entry into the European Union.

The IRU (International Road Transport Union) estimates that there is a shortage of around 400 000 professional drivers in the road transport sector in the largest EU countries.

In view of the above:

1. What is the Commission's assessment of the situation?
2. Does it think that it would be possible for an applicant to start driving under a C or CE licence and subsequently obtain the CPC qualification?
3. Are there any ongoing talks with non-EU countries on recognition and conversion of the driver qualification card (CPC)?

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Answer given by Ms Vălean
on behalf of the European Commission
(27.3.2023)

All drivers working for EU undertakings have to obtain their certificate of professional competence (CPC) in the EU. Drivers who are nationals of third countries and who are employed or used by an undertaking established in a Member State obtain the CPC certifying initial qualification in the Member State where the undertaking is established or in the Member State which issued a work permit to them¹.

According to information available to the Commission, some 280 000 truck drivers from third countries were employed in the EU at the end of 2021². This number has increased more than fivefold between 2015 and 2021. There is therefore no evidence that the qualification and training requirements for professional drivers in the EU are in any way an obstacle to recruit non-EU drivers.

A conversion of CPCs issued by third countries into CPCs issued by EU Member States is not possible because, by their very nature, the former do not cover all topics required in the EU (e.g. knowledge of the social and regulatory environment in the EU). The objective is for all drivers, EU nationals and non-EU nationals, to have the same level of knowledge and skills.

The Commission plans to launch soon a study to have a better knowledge of third country training programmes to assist Member States in their assessment.

¹ Cf. Article 9 of Directive (EU) 2022/2561 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 December 2022 on the initial qualification and periodic training of drivers of certain road vehicles for the carriage of goods or passengers (codification) (OJ L 330, 23.12.2022, p. 46).

² Hauliers established in the EU are issued a driver attestation for each non-EU national who is not a long-term resident in the EU and who is employed or used by them. The number of driver attestations issued in the EU between 2012 and 2021 is available on the Commission website:

https://transport.ec.europa.eu/document/download/87bf9b74-2216-4605-bbd1-da915f5ca1a6_en?filename=driver-attestations-in-road-freight-transport_2022-10.pdf