

**Question for written answer E-006071/2020
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Marian-Jean Marinescu (PPE)

Subject: Harmonisation of the minimum driving age at 18, initial qualification and periodic training of drivers in all Member States

The EU is facing a professional drivers crisis, and especially a lack of young drivers. Statistics show that only 5 % of professional drivers are under 30 years old. Statistics also show that there is no link between accidents and the age of drivers and that road safety depends on the level of professional training.

There are different minimum age rules for category C and C+E licences in the EU.

Directive 2003/59/EC on the initial qualification and periodic training of drivers of certain road vehicles for the carriage of goods or passengers provides that 18 is the minimum age at which a driver can drive a vehicle in licence categories C and C+E.

Harmonising the minimum driving age at 18 in all Member States would reduce the shortage of drivers and lead to fair competition between transport companies.

What does the Commission intend to do in order to ensure the harmonisation of this rule in all the Member States?

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Answer given by Ms Vălean
on behalf of the European Commission
(9.2.2021)

The minimum age to drive a vehicle in licence categories C and C+E is harmonised by Directive 2003/59¹ and Directive 2006/126².

Both of the above-mentioned directives were jointly amended by Directive 2018/645³, in particular concerning the provisions on minimum age. The aim of the amendment related to minimum age was to clarify the application of the minimum age requirements for drivers having followed professional drivers training.

According to Article 5.2 of Directive 2003/59, the minimum age to drive vehicles in licence categories C and C+E is established at 18 years, provided the driver holds a certificate of professional competence awarded on the basis of an initial qualification obtained in accordance with the provisions of Article 6.1, i.e. including 280 hours of training or a comprehensive practical and theoretical test.

For drivers who follow an accelerated initial qualification in accordance with Article 6.2, which includes only 120 hours of training, the minimum age for vehicles in categories C and C+E is established at 21 years.

The deadline for the transposition of the amended provisions was 23 May 2020. Due to delays in the transposition, it is possible that the new age requirements are not yet applied by some Member States. The Commission will proceed to check the correct transposition of the new provisions in coming months.

¹ Directive 2003/59/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 July 2003 on the initial qualification and periodic training of drivers of certain road vehicles for the carriage of goods or passengers, OJ L 226, 10.9.2003, p. 4–17.

² Directive 2006/126/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 December 2006 on driving licences (Recast) (Text with EEA relevance) OJ L 403, 30.12.2006, p. 18–60.

³ Directive (EU) 2018/645 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 April 2018 amending Directive 2003/59/EC on the initial qualification and periodic training of drivers of certain road vehicles for the carriage of goods or passengers and Directive 2006/126/EC on driving licences (Text with EEA relevance.) OJ L 112, 2.5.2018, p. 29–41.