

REPORT ON THE STAKEHOLDER CONFERENCE

on Directive 2003/59/EC on the initial qualification and periodic training of drivers of certain road vehicles for the carriage of goods or passengers

Panteia / TML

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1 Introduction

On 6 March 2014, the European Commission organized a Stakeholder Conference as part of the review of Directive 2003/59/EC on the initial qualification and periodic training of drivers of certain road vehicles for the carriage of goods or passengers.

The main objectives of the conference, which was open to all interested stakeholders, were to report on the findings of the public consultation and to validate its results, to present the results of the ex-post evaluation of the Directive and to discuss policy measures for the review of the Directive. 107 participants registered for the Conference, representing 104 organisations from 20 Member States or operating EU wide.

Background of the Conference

Between July and October 2013, the European Commission held a public consultation on the Directive to assess its effectiveness, and to allow the identification of measures that may be needed in order to improve the Directive's mechanisms. The public consultation elicited in 395 responses.¹ The stakeholder conference was a follow-up to this public consultation. All answers to the public consultation have been taken into account and analysed. The stakeholder conference was intended to validate this analysis and integrate it, especially on the options for the way forward.

Structure of the Conference

The Conference had four thematic sessions and an introductory session.

In the introductory session, the findings of the public consultation and the preliminary results of the ex-post evaluation of the current Directive were presented.

The four thematic sessions addressed the following aspects:

- (1) Relevance and scope of the Directive.
- (2) Minimum age.
- (3) Structure of the training.
- (4) Quality assurance and mutual recognition of the training.

In each of these sessions, a speaker introduced the session's topic, the problems identified and the possible policy measures. Subsequently, the stakeholders participating in the Conference were given the opportunity to express their views and comment on the various options. Section 2 of this report will outline the main findings of the Conference based on the thematic sessions, while the detailed minutes of the Conferences are attached under Annex I, together with the conference agenda (Annex II), and the discussion paper that formed the basis of the thematic sessions (Annex III).

¹ European Commission, 'Public Consultations: Directive 2003/59/EC on the initial qualification and periodic training of drivers of certain road vehicles for the carriage of goods or passengers' (2013), available at: http://ec.europa.eu/transport/media/consultations/2013-professional-drivers-training_en.htm.

2 Main Findings of the Conference

2.1 Introductory session

In its welcoming note, the Commission reflected briefly on the objectives of the stakeholder conference, outlining also the current status of the review process of the Directive.

Mr. Klaas Westerkamp, from Panteia, briefly summarized the findings on the public consultation and the initial findings of the *ex-post* evaluation..

The public consultation results showed that stakeholders consider training of drivers to be important for road safety, where the Directive also plays a contributory role. The Directive contributed to a lesser degree to the mobility of drivers and level playing field since close to half of the stakeholders believed the Directive played no contributory role at all in this context. Almost half of the respondents considered that the CPC training should apply to all professional drivers, including certain other types of vehicles. While results show a division among stakeholders on the certification of a CPC training obtained abroad, 82% of the respondents agreed that the topics under Annex I to the Directive are relevant, although to a varying degree. Although a uniform EU syllabus is favoured by 60% of the respondents, there is a division among the respondents on the necessity of a test after the periodic training. 72% of respondents further believe that there is a need to introduce the mutual recognition of partial periodic training, together with more detailed requirements for training centres and instructors.

The preliminary results of the *ex-post* evaluation revealed that the Directive remains relevant since heavy goods vehicles and buses are involved in accidents. The effectiveness analysis revealed that the Directive's mechanism resulted in problems, among others, in the mutual recognition of trainings, free movement of drivers, level playing field, and road safety. The Directive is further not coherent with other EU legislations, such as the minimum age requirements stipulated under the Driving Licence Directive (Directive 126/2006/EC). Furthermore, there seems to be a lack of harmonised approach among Member States with respect to utilities such as e-learning and simulators. The efficiency analysis showed that, in terms of monetary assessment, the potential benefits of the Directive outweigh the incurred costs

2.2 Session 1: Relevance and scope of the Directive

The session was introduced by Prof. Fred Wegman, Professor of Traffic Safety at Delft University of Technology (the Netherlands). Prof. Wegman's presentation discussed the causes of crashes, the objectives of the Directive, risks to road safety, specifically basic risk factors and risk increasing factors, while drawing also the distinction between two approaches to improve safety: a person approach (better enforcement inducing humans to change their behaviour) and a system approach (better understanding of the human errors leading to accidents).

After a discussion among the stakeholders, the following main conclusions were drawn by the Commission:

- No stakeholder contested the relevance of the Directive but there was a clear signal that before expanding the scope, the Commission has to ensure that the Directive is properly implemented, which also gives added value to the industry and the drivers themselves. The Commission took notice of the concerns expressed regarding vans.
- From the discussion it became evident that the number of exemptions should not be increased from what is currently foreseen in the Directive. The alignment with Regulation 561/2006 is not seen as important but coherence between the two regimes is welcome.
- The Commission took notice of the concerns expressed regarding the impact of the application of certain exemptions on the level playing field on a national level

A detailed record of the minutes of this session is provided in Annex I.

2.3 Session 2: Minimum age

The second session focused on minimum ages of professional drivers. The introductory remarks were given by Dr. Willem Vlakveld from the SWOV Institute for Road Safety Research. Dr. Vlakveld presented factors and causes that negatively impact the young drivers' safety skills such as poor hazard detection, inattention, and peer influence and increase their likelihood of being involved in accidents.

After a discussion among the stakeholders, the following main conclusions were drawn by the Commission:

- There is a difference between the opinion of the academia and that of the industry on the right level of minimum ages to enter the profession.
- Nonetheless, both the academia and the industry believe that there are ways to mitigate the additional risks posed by youngsters through mechanisms such as having the right training or other measures such as mentorship.
- As regards the age limits, there is a broad consensus among the stakeholders that the ages as laid down currently in the Directive are adequate.
- The Commission took note of the calls for further specific research on the issue.

A detailed record of the minutes of this session is provided in Annex I.

2.4 Session 3: Structure of the training

The third session was dedicated to the structure of the training. The session was introduced by Ms Claudia Ball, representative of the DEKRA Akademie GmbH. Ms Ball outlined the need to put emphasis on the harmonisation of learning outcomes in the training of professional drivers. This is an approach that is particularly suitable where standardization is otherwise not possible, since it allows the harmonisation of the outcomes (ensuring consistent quality) instead of the harmonisation of teaching methods.

After a discussion among the stakeholders, the following main conclusions were drawn by the Commission:

- There is a need to improve the training system.
- There is a consensus that the training system has to be made more adaptable to the actual needs of the drivers and companies. There is also a need to make it more flexible over time with more direct involvement of the stakeholders and the industry.
- The training should be meaningful for the drivers.
- There might be a need to replace a rigid periodic training system with a life-long learning approach.

A detailed record of the minutes of this session is provided in Annex I.

2.5 Session 4: Quality assurance and mutual recognition of the training

The last session was introduced by Mr. Poul Christensen from the European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF), who addressed the issues relating to quality assurance and mutual recognition of the training.

After a discussion among the stakeholders, the following main conclusions were drawn by the Commission:

- As regards the mutual recognition, it is not clear whether there is a problem, and if so, how big it is.
- There is support for a system that improves mutual recognition but there are concerns regarding the costs.
- There is a consensus that quality assurance is important and we should find ways to increase the reliability and trustworthiness of the training centres.

A detailed record of the minutes of this session is provided in Annex I.

3 Concluding Remarks

At the end of the Conference, the Commission made the following concluding remarks:

- There is broad agreement among the stakeholders that the Directive is relevant and necessary, but it has to be improved especially as regards

implementation. That should be given priority over extending its scope to other vehicles.

- There are reservations regarding the extension of the scope, although a couple of stakeholders called for an extension to vans and small trucks.
- There was little, if any, support for the alignment of the scope of the Directive with other related legislation, especially Regulation 561/2006.
- Stakeholders support leaving minimum age requirements as they currently are in the Directive. However, the current ambiguity with the Driving Licence Directive needs to be corrected.
- Almost all stakeholders agree that introducing a modular training structure would be a good way to go forward.
- There is a need to improve the adaptability and flexibility of the training system. The training should be meaningful and useful for the drivers.
- It remains uncertain whether mutual recognition represents a problem, and if so, to what extent. Nobody would oppose cost-effective measures that would improve the mutual recognition.
- In the same way, nobody would oppose cost-effective measures to provide better quality assurance.
- The stakeholders expressed an interest to be involved and consulted in the subsequent steps of the review process, to the extent allowed by procedural rules.

4 Annex I: Minutes of the Stakeholder Conference

Stakeholder Conference on the Review of Directive 2003/59/EC

Date: Brussels, 6 March 2014

Time: 10.00 hrs to 17.00 hrs

Venue: Albert Borschette Conference Centre (36, rue Froissart, 1040 Brussels)

Nr. of registered participants: 107

1. Welcoming address by DG MOVE C4 and report on the preliminary findings of the *ex-post* evaluation and public consultation

- Mr. Szalocs Schmidt, Head of Road Safety Unit of DG MOVE, opened the conference and welcomed the stakeholders. After a brief introduction, he gave the floor to Mr. Klaas Westerkamp of Panteia B.V. who is the Project Manager of the evaluation and impact assessment study on Directive 2003/59/EC.
- Mr. Westerkamp briefly presented the results of the public consultation and the *ex-post* evaluation of Directive 2003/59/EC.
- With respect the result of the public consultation, the results showed that stakeholders consider training of drivers to be important for road safety, where the Directive also plays a contributory role. The Directive contributed to a lesser degree to the mobility of drivers and level playing field since close to half (48% and 49%) of the stakeholders believed the Directive played no contributory role at all in this context. Almost half of the respondents (47%) considered that the CPC training should apply to all professional drivers, including certain other types of vehicles. While results show a division among stakeholders on the certification of a CPC training obtained abroad, 82% of the respondents agreed that the topics under Annex I to the Directive are relevant, although to a varying degree. Although a uniform EU syllabus is favoured by 60% of the respondents, there is a division among the respondents on the necessity of a test after the periodic training (49% being in favour, 48% being against it). 72% of respondents further believe that there is a need to introduce the mutual recognition of partial periodic training, together with more detailed requirements for training centres (58% in favour) and instructors (62% in favour).
- Mr. Westerkamp further outlined that the preliminary results of the *ex-post* evaluation revealed that the Directive remains relevant. The effectiveness analysis revealed that the Directive's mechanism resulted in problems, among others, in the mutual recognition of trainings, free movement of drivers, level playing field, and road safety. The Directive is further not coherent with other EU legislations, such as the minimum age requirements stipulated under the Driving Licence Directive (Directive 126/2006/EC). Furthermore, there seems to be lack of a harmonised approach among Member States with respect to utilities such as e-learning and simulators. The

efficiency analysis showed that, in terms of monetary assessment, the benefits of the Directive outweigh the incurred costs..

- After the presentation, the following questions/remarks were made:
 - Freight Transport Association (UK): the stakeholder raised the question concerning the weighting given to responses considering that organizations may represent a group of stakeholder while other respondents may only answered on their individual capacity.
 - In response, Mr. Westerkamp explained that opinions from individuals were analysed in a different manner than the responses from associations.
 - Confederation of Danish Industries: the stakeholder noted that only four answers were received from Denmark and it seems like the way the findings were used makes them almost useless.
 - The Commission responded that there is no mechanism to force any party to respond. The consultation was open to anybody but responding to it is on a voluntary basis. Moreover, four responses from professional institutions are not few in terms of response numbers, considered that such institutions may represent a large number of members.
 - United Union (UK): supports the idea of the CPC but the way it is implemented at the moment causes problems. It is not properly implemented and there is something, which is not functioning very well. The drivers support it but they would like it to be more relevant.
 - The Commission responded that this matter already relates to the substantive discussion of the conference, and will be discussed in the fourth agenda point.
 - Mr. Westerkamp made two further remarks. He noted that in the responses to the public consultation, it was visible that associations ensured that their members will provide harmonized answers to the questions. Secondly, he also noted the degree of division among the stakeholders with respect to some questions, where half of the responses favour one option, while the other half favours a different option.

2. Session 1: Relevance and scope of the Directive

The presentation by Prof. Fred Wegman is attached to this report, and therefore not included in the minutes.

- Irish Road Haulage Association (Ireland): The stakeholder supports the expansion of the scope of the Directive, but only after getting the training mechanism right. While the Directive did bring useful elements, the way in which it is implemented is not adequate. Directive had a negative impact on driver training because of the national implementation. It is not enough to say that improving the situation is not possible due to political reasons. The EU has the responsibility to deliver a quality outcome. The stakeholder also emphasized that the seven hour module is too long and not working.
- Portuguese National Association of Passenger Transport (Portugal): As a general observation, it has to be mentioned that every time the EU discusses this Directive, it pays too much attention on the training part, and not

enough to qualification. This Directive is important because of the significant change in the sector, because it stated that it is no longer enough to hold a professional driving licence to perform this job. The main focus must be on qualification and not training. Of course training is important but qualification is the most crucial first step. At stake is the qualification system, which came and changed the system. The focus should not be only on crashes when talking about effectiveness. The Directive can be analysed in light of road accidents, but there are other objectives in the Directive related to fuel consumption, environmental issues, the comfort of passengers, etc. The main issue is not training. As regards the scope, it should stay as it is. In Portugal taxi drivers already have their own CPC. In terms of the alignment with Regulation 561/2006, the two instruments should stay separate. There is no need to merge the Regulation with the Directive.

- Austrian Economic Chamber (Austria): Professional drivers who are civil servants are not within the scope of the Directive, while if they are employed by a company, they do fall within it. This is a question of competition and this has to be addressed. On the other hand, extension to car drivers should not happen at the moment because it is a completely different field. There are already qualifications for taxi drivers, and the situation of danger is completely different for these types of drivers.
- European Transport Safety Council: In terms of the extension of the scope, ETSC made reference to a report of the ETSC drawn up in the context of a project on preventing accidents and providing for the safety of employees. The report also looked at drivers' training but emphasising risk assessments. ETSC supports the expansion of the Directive to van drivers, but this should be made through an integrated approach to risk assessment. The stakeholder would like to see a reference made to, Directive 89/391/EEC, which could be applied to all drivers. A question was addressed to Mr Wegman. When he discussed the extension of scope he mentioned 'yes, unless other effective assurances are in place'. The question to him was if he could elaborate more on those 'effective assurances' and what does he mean by that.
- Professor Wegman was referring to national schemes when talking about effective assurances. For example, in the Netherlands there is a taxi scheme and introducing changes to that sector would only disturb the quality improvements by including it into a European Directive.
- Confederation of Passenger Transport (UK): With respect to the extension of the scope of the directive, when the Directive was first conceived back in 2002-2003, thousands of drivers in the UK were working in the non-profit sector, driving mini-buses. However, since 2009, they are being paid, they became professional, and they are now winning proposal to carry out broader tasks, such as carrying older people at the expense of professional bus drivers on a ground of cost because they do not have to have the CPC. The scope of the Directive should be extended to all drivers of category D and D1, no matter the type of work they are doing. As regards Regulation 561/2006, it has to be taken into account that Regulations 561/2006 does not cover everybody driving professionally who is currently covered by the scope of the Directive. An alignment would therefore mean taking thousands of drivers out of the scope of the Directive, which is a step backwards.

- Moving: the stakeholder supports the extension of the scope of the Directive, especially the inclusion of vans because the cross-border traffic of vans is increasing. The impact on job security could be very important. Furthermore, the drivers are not having the training that they should have. With respect to the alignment, the stakeholder is also in favour of aligning Regulation 561/2006 and the Directive, to support clarity.
- Freight Transport Association (UK): The stakeholder referred back to the presentation of Prof. Wegman, more specifically to the point that Directives leave the implementation to Member States, that doing so is a political decision and might not create a level playing field. The stakeholder expressed concerns, arguing that the drafting of the Directive should not be a political process. Furthermore, the key point is that the Commission did not invent driver training, and there were trainings in place before the CPC. And when it came, did brought nothing but burden, cost, and inflexibility. In this aspect, the stakeholder raised concerns about the relevance of the Directive, if such decisions are made by politicians. The best place to make a decision on the relevant training is the industry itself.
- Prof. Wegman responded with an example of a Directive on road infrastructure. The issue there was what kind of tools can be suggested to Member States to make their road infrastructure safer. Four such tools were identified, and the question was whether it would be good to be very specific on the nature and character of these tools, and Member States, politicians or policy makers then can decide based on the detailed explanations. Furthermore, certain freedom was given to Member States on how to develop these tools, and if such a freedom is given, they will develop different tools. While the Commission sees no problems in this regards, as long as the results of the work are in line with the objectives pursued. Therefore, if you give such freedom to Member States, then you end up with different level playing field. That is a reality, and we have to live with that. If it comes to content of training, it is best to leave it to professionals and experts.
- The Commission explained that opting for a Directive does not automatically destroy the level playing field. A Directive allows for a minimum harmonization which should be equal enough to allow for a level playing field while still providing with the necessary flexibility needed on the level of Member States and even individual companies. What we need to find out here is whether we need a more solid minimum to provide for this level playing field. This topic will further be discussed in the third session.
- United Union (UK): The safety question concerns the involvement of more people. The more people are involved, the better it is. As regards training, the system should fit the people, otherwise it will not work. With regards to the CPC training, there was already a model in place namely ADR, which started a long time ago. The ADR training is an example of good practice. It started as a sham but developed into a very useful piece of legislation. When drivers are asked about the effects of the ADR training, they state that it made the industry safer. Furthermore, drivers are not academics, and we should emphasize with them otherwise, the training will go nowhere.
- The Commission concluded the session by stating the following:

- No stakeholder contested the relevance of the Directive but there was a clear signal that before expanding the scope, the Commission has to ensure that the Directive is properly implemented, which also gives added value to the industry and the drivers themselves. The Commission took notice of the concerns expressed regarding vans.
- From the discussion it became that the number of exemptions should not be increased from what is currently foreseen in the Directive. The alignment with Regulation 561/2006 is not seen as important but coherence between the two regimes is welcome.
- The Commission took notice of the concerns expressed regarding the impact the application of certain exemptions on the level playing field on a national level.

3. Session 2: Minimum age

The presentation by Dr. Willem Vlakveld is attached to this report, and therefore not included in the minutes.

- Confederation of Passenger Transport (UK): 18 years old drivers have been employed by this stakeholder since the 1970s. Experience shows that, provided the selection criteria are right and the quality of training is right, no evidence was found to suggest an increased risk of accidents for young drivers than any other driver. It all depends on the circumstances and the measures taken to manage the risk (such as follow-up supervision). Because of the aging work force, there is a need of steady supply of new drivers, coming into the industry straight from school, and who may stay within the same company for the years to come. Raising the minimum age, will take good driver candidates away from the industry, and may only cause problems.
- Portuguese National Association of Passenger Transport (Portugal): The first point made addresses the conflicting legislation regarding the minimum age. If this Directive is what provides the qualification for someone who wants to be in this profession, this instrument must prevail over the others (such as the Driving Licence Directive), and should be accepted across Europe. Otherwise, it would make no sense to have a qualification system under the CPC Directive that is subject to different conditions under different Directives. With respect to the presentation of Dr. Vlakveld, drivers should not be considered adolescents. Furthermore, performance could be explained with two main factors – individual and system/situational factors. Young drivers may behave differently depending on outside factors (for instance, driving behaviour may be different when driving alone or when an older drivers is accompanying the youngster). Experience is much more important than age. The younger a person starts being trained the more experience he/she will gain. The Portuguese National Association of Passenger Transport is of the opinion that the suitable age for bus passengers is 23, and for truck drivers 21.
- The Commission asked the stakeholder whether he would prefer a gradual access system.

- Portuguese National Association of Passenger Transport (Portugal): Gradual access system is not favoured. That is because the current minimum age scheme under the Directive is already very good.
- Confederation of Passenger Transport (UK): The stakeholder sees no problem in setting 18 as the minimum age. If one starts at the age of 18, this will affect his/her behaviour on the road. The younger one starts, the more opportunities he/she will have to develop experience.
- European Transport Safety Council: The ETSC has concerns about reducing the minimum age requirements. The stakeholder pointed to the Road Safety Performance Index (PIN), which in 2012 gathered data looking at young people compared to people of other ages. The statistics were shocking: road mortality rate is 69% higher for young people than the corresponding risk for the rest of the population. For young males, this is 168% higher. This should be considered carefully.
- Irish Road Haulage Association (Ireland): Many of the people who enter the industry are early school leavers. They do not want to stay at school but they want to enter a profession. However, society to understand what happens with youngsters of 15-16 years of age who leave school. By 20, these youngsters could already be involved in serious crimes. We should pay attention not to raise more barriers for such young people, who may want to join the industry at such age, but it is not possible do to minimum age limitations. The cost of entry are rising and again this increases the barrier to early school leavers. The industry could represent an alternative to drugs and crime. This aspect must be taken into account.
- International Road Transport Union: With respect to accident rates, we need to have a specific study on that specific age category. The studies that have been done so far are not specific enough in terms of drivers involved. Furthermore, driving in a professional environment is much different than driving in personal capacity. That should be analyzed as well.
IRU also pointed out that there seems to a consensus that the problems of the Directive need to be fixed. We know that the industry needs drivers. We have a systematic shortage of drivers, which has been alleviated with the crisis to some extent, but the industry is contributing to growth. And Europe needs growth, and if one puts even more penalties and barriers on an industry that is contributing significantly to the GDP of the European economy, it is the whole society that will be penalized. The road safety element is absolutely key. IRU also warns about the risk of jumping to conclusions without a deeper analysis which needs to be done first. There is already a methodology available, and the system is there, freely accessible, that we can re-use in order to do a specific analysis on the category of young drivers.
- The Commission asked the last two speakers whether the age limits currently under the Directive are correct, should they be lowered, should they be raised?
- Irish Road Haulage Association (Ireland): The stakeholder answered in the negative, but specified that he could not give a precise answer at the moment.

- International Road Transport Union: The age limits should not be raised. This may cause a danger to create a gap between leaving school and entering the profession, which already exists. If you create an even bigger gap, who will join the industry? The current age limits in the CPC already allow for gradual access. Further harmonization with the Driving Licence Directive should be investigated as well. We need to ensure that these two systems are coherent.
- Food Storage and Distribution Federation (UK): The stakeholder remarked that if the findings of the presentation of Dr. Vlakveld are correct, then there should be a higher rate of accidents in the military, where drivers are allowed to driver at the age of 18. However, quite to the contrary, the military is one of the greatest sources of professional, highly efficient and effective man power. We have seen less and less of them, and this is worrying since we must find other sources for future professional drivers. We should start at the age of 18, and ensure that the training and operation management are proper.
- Transportgruppen (Sweden): The stakeholder fully agrees with the IRU when it comes to the relevant research, availability, as well as the recruitment aspect. The final aspect should be highlighted once more: the Directive should be used to promote more staff entering the industry. However, this point has not been elaborated in the past. Although is a small point on the agenda on the review of this Directive, it is a vital aspect of this legislation, and should be discussed much more than in the past. Transportgruppen urged to keep this aspect in mind while reviewing the Directive.
- The Commission underlines that it does care about the supply of drivers to the market. The difficulty is to achieve a balance also with the other objectives.
- Portugese National Association of Passenger Transport (Portugal): The conclusions made during the presentation are not valid for professional drivers. There is an interest in researching this aspect in Europe. The stakeholder recommends that the Commission does so urgently. That is because we need to know whether age is a factor in accidents involving professional drivers. The second point to be made relates to the trend in terms of the minimum age. The trend now seems to be to increase age, which makes no sense at all. Considering that the individual element (i.e., the driver) this seems all right, in terms of the system, are other elements not improving, for instance, roads getting better, trucks and busses are becoming easier to drive? The profession of driver should be doable for everyone with a minimum age of 23.
- Freight Transport Association (UK): FTA suggests also looking at the impact on the insurance industry. They have an influence over the issue of minimum ages. Very often, it is financially prohibitive to start driving commercial vehicles at a young age, and operators will not be allowed to bring them in because they will either not be insured or it will be far too expensive. Some operators have come to agreements with insurance companies and adopted additional mitigating measures (e.g., mentoring).

- International Association of Public Transport: Although the topics discussed are interesting, they are not the core of the problem. The core problem is: how is the Directive implemented in the different Member States? It is on this point that you can have large differences and problems concerning the functioning of the Directive. What was discussed so far is important but not the core of the problem. Survey on how the Directive was implemented in each MS has to be done before having a discussion on the revision.
- European Transport Workers' Federation: ETF supports having further research on the precise effects of young age on driving skills. Although the presentations shown earlier are very interesting, the question is whether their conclusions apply fully to professional, trained young drivers? ETF supports to acquire more knowledge on this aspect. Until then, the age limits in the Directive should not be changed. For those concerned about the inflow of new drivers, ETF pointed out that in the Directive there is a gate for young people at the age of 18 if they follow the extended education. This is a good way to enter the industry, as well as through a vocational education scheme. There is a good experience with this in Denmark, where employers hire apprentices, and lead them through three years of introduction to the sector, and have them as good colleagues for a lifetime.
- Prof. Wegman: Lower age will increase the level of risk. The question is whether it is possible to bring in additional restrictions or training in order to reduce that risk. That is the challenge ahead of us. Do we have evidence that if we lower the age, and if we add something to it, a risk level that we can live with can be achieved? Additional research is needed when considering changing the age limits.
- Dutch Ministry of Transport (NL): Is the professional context in which the drivers work also an important factor in this discussion?
- Dr. Vlakveld responded in the affirmative. Improving the safety culture in general will also improve the safety of young drivers. Therefore, the safety culture of a company is very important.
- German Association of Freight Forwarders and Logistics: The age is not a significant barrier to entry to the market but the remuneration, the social status and working conditions of the drivers represent more important problems. Lowering of the age will not do anything to help with the driver shortage. Lowering the minimum age does not seem to be a good idea. The minimum ages should to be kept as they are.
- The Commission concluded the session by stating the following:
 - There is a difference between the opinion of the academia and that of the industry on the right level of minimum ages to enter the profession.
 - Nonetheless, both the academia and the industry believe that there are ways to mitigate the additional risks posed by youngsters through mechanisms such as having the right training or other measures such as mentorship.
 - As regards the age limits, there is a broad consensus among the stakeholders that the ages as laid down currently in the Directive are adequate.
 - The Commission took note of the calls for further specific research on the issue.

4. Session 3: Structure of the training

The presentation by Ms Claudia Ball is attached to this report, and therefore not included in the minutes.

- European Transport Workers' Federation: Experience in Denmark shows that the learning outcomes approach is sympathetic but extremely difficult to achieve in practice. To develop a new way of organizing the training according to learning outcomes, will require an enormous effort, and it might take a decade, at least. We should also be mindful of the problems that may result from mutual recognition perspective. It might cause problems for an EU-28 to recognize each others activities on the basis of learning outcomes models. To reach this level of mutual trust, it would require an extended testing system, which might not be preferable.
- Austrian Economic Chamber (Austria): A very beneficial solution would be to simply combine the initial qualification with the education and testing for the driving license. For those drivers who already hold a driving licence right now, and have not done the initial qualification, the requirement to prove an initial qualification before being allowed to work as professional driver might constitute a hurdle to start this profession. Therefore, it should be possible to start the profession, and then take the initial qualification during the first year. The driver is already allowed to driver the truck, and will gain experience. The first year will be like a trainee year. As regards periodic training, the stakeholder received complaints from its members who are not happy that the same content must be repeated every five years. If driver have acquired substantial experience and have taken various periodic trainings, the amount of hours they should take should decrease regularly.
- International Road Transport Union: There are good programmes delivered under the Directive, but the problem is the lack of harmonization we see the possibility of having very low quality training where the purpose is to get drivers on the road, and not to have well qualified drivers. Before going into the technicalities of the Directive, we must assess what are the objectives of the Directive. One objective is road safety, but it is not the only one. We should also speak about reduction of fuel consumption, for instance. Consultation should take place on a regular basis, involving all the social partners. Repeating the same content in trainings does not help the drivers, and may even result in a wrong perception of the Directive. Harmonization is important, but it is not possible to adopt a "one size fits all" approach for periodic trainings without taking into account the peculiarities of the job. We have different specialities that we need to take into account. By encapsulating that, we can make the training much more interesting. We have also technological developments that need to be taken on board. There are the flexibilities that we need so that the Directive becomes something more dynamic in the future and not static as it is today.
- The Commission asked the stakeholder about the method that he would recommend to reach that degree of flexibility and adaptability.

- International Road Transport Union: A method has to be discussed. However, when speaking about priorities, there is no country in the EU where eco-driving is mandatory. It is one of the biggest EU policies to reduce CO₂ emissions. In reality, however, in terms of driver qualification, eco-driving is not mandatory, and in some countries not even possible because there is no training on that. This represents a problem. What can be done is to reach a better harmonization. This will also help with the enforcement, compliance with other rules (such as driving rest time), and level playing field. We should take into account also the priorities of the industry and social partners, to encapsulate their needs into the training modules. Such modules could be used to promote flexibility. The training structure could then split into 2days-3days or vice versa where the driver could have more flexibility to adapt to the needs of the profession. Thus, on the side, there will be harmonization, while giving the flexibility to the driver to go into the specificities needed for his individual case.
- Belgian Federation of Fuel Distributors (Belgium): The structure of the training is less important, it is more important that the topics relevant for the industry are covered. One of the objectives of the Directive is safety. In the fuel distribution sector, it happens that drivers follow courses which are not relevant for them. For instance, tanker truck drivers following courses on cargo securing. They can follow five times the same course while it is not allowed that voluntary ADR refreshing courses are taken into account for the calculation of the 35 hours obligatory training. The ADR is modified every two year and the drivers have to follow every five years a refreshing course so that means that they are missing two additions of the ADR. The stakeholder does not ask that the initial ADR training should be taken into account for the calculation of the 35 hours but that at least two times seven hours of periodic training can be dedicated to ADR. ADR is a training course that really responds to the needs of the industry, and it is also important for the security.
- Food Storage and Distribution Federation (UK): This stakeholder is looking at abolishing the CPC and integrating it into a more in-depth vocational training scheme. The stakeholder also expressed agreement with the concept of learning outcomes presented by Ms Ball. The qualification has to be relevant to the individual as well as the business, and it should create a formal qualification. This should give a sense of pride to the individual who will get a certificate and will become a true professional. The stakeholder further support the modular structure for the training, but it should also be contextualized taking into account the different aspects required by the industry. It all comes down to applying a standard, and then having an assessment process for the truck drivers. Such systems improve not only the perception relating to the status of the driver, but also the efficiency of the process and the success of the enterprise as a whole.
- Freight Transport Association (UK): On the issue of the ADR, training was already happening before the CPC came into existence. The stakeholder would like to recommend the process used by the UK authorities, where a course can be presented for approval to the authorities by proving how it matches the objectives of the Directive.

With respect to mandatory modules, the FTA opposes anything to be made mandatory because so often 'one-size-fits-all' becomes 'one-size-fits-nobody-well'. We have discussed about the relevance of engaging drivers, and one way to disengage them is to impose compulsory trainings that they do not need for the job they are doing.

With respect to repeating modules, the stakeholder understands the concerns raised about repeating the same modules. Nonetheless, the FTA points out that some courses may be very complex (such as the relevant EU regulations), and it might be relevant to take those courses multiple times in the five year cycle.

One of the objectives of the Directive is to enhance the professionalism of the industry. While there may be various interpretations of what professionalism means, the stakeholder believes that professionalism should mean that one takes responsibility for one's own development.

- Portuguese National Association of Passenger Transport (Portugal): The Directive fails to provide the industry with sufficient information as to what proper qualification means. In Portugal, it would be difficult to conceive that you could drive a bus without first having a CPC. If that is allowed, the Directive might be killed. There are no problems with the structure of the training in Portugal. No companies are contacting the authorities for changing the contents of the modules or re-organizing the trainings, etc. There is a complaint, however, about the quality of training providers. No one complains about the subjects and the content of Annex I to the Directive. In terms of modules, in Portugal, in order to become a training provider, there is a need to obtain a certificate based on modules that will be taught. Most of the subjects included in Annex I can easily be turned into learning outcomes. In terms of non-formal learning, the stakeholder considers that it should be a requirement for all drivers to undergo the training. To stay in this job, 35 hours each five years is a requirement and, as such, it is important to keep it. If we believe that the profession is noble enough to be subjected to this kind of demands, then we must keep them.
- Confederation of Passenger Transport (UK): The Directive left the bus and coach industry with the ability to decide exactly the courses needed to make drivers perform better. The industry is now facing the first mandatory training courses relating to passenger rights, as a result of the Regulation that recently became applicable on this matter. Other courses will increasingly fill up the 35 hour training. We should be careful not to fill in this 35-hour period with mandatory courses that might not be able to deliver what is right for the industry.
- Commission: A letter was received from the Norwegian authorities regarding the problems relating to winter driving. If such training is made mandatory in one Member State, this may cause problems for drivers who are registered in a MS where such a course is not given but wish to operate in the MS where such training is mandatory.
- Road Administration Office in Norway: Norway considers the introduction of training on winter conditions due to the challenging driving conditions and the long winter periods. The Directive needs modification as to include winter driving. Common modules about driving in difficult weather conditions should be included in the initial and periodic training courses, with some degree of

flexibility in order to avoid problems with mutual recognition. Driving in the winter is challenging in the Nordic countries, especially in Norway. Inadequately equipped vehicles and inexperienced drivers represent a serious risk to safety and impairment to traffic flow. Common modules therefore should focus on addressing these aspects, teaching drivers on driving under difficult weather conditions. There are several countries in Europe having the same problem during winter time, but not from October to end of March. A module on driving under difficult weather conditions should be of common interest to these countries. The stakeholder kindly asked the Commission to consider such suggestion.

- International Association of Public Transport: UITP expresses support for the views of the IRU. Emphasis should be accorded to the evolving nature of some of the subjects in Annex I, while the objectives can remain the same. Furthermore, it is important to discuss these subjects with other expert partners before changing anything in the Directive. Expert partners can work together and find out what works in the Directive, and how is it working in each Member State. Furthermore, the time needed to prepare for the introduction of a training, such as the one required for the CPC, is four-five years. Before the Directive was enacted, only the Netherlands and France had similar types of trainings. In both countries four years were needed to create the systems. A similar time period may be required also for countries where the training was introduced by the Directive. Also, more time might be needed in countries that cannot invest a large amount of money into the setting up of the training scheme. The stakeholder further insists that a survey has to be made on how the Directive works in each Member State, what the problems and good practices are. We do not currently have a clear picture of the reality.
- Irish Road Haulage Association (Ireland): In Ireland, the training is perceived as a driver requirement and not as an employer requirement. If the employer would be allowed some corporate input to the training modules, this could become an employer requirement, and perhaps provide some funding for the training. In addition, the seven hours structure is non-sense. One way of achieving commonality would be to allow certain points to be done over the internet. The use of internet is a very useful tool to teach drivers who are constantly on the move. There could also be a rewarding system for learning on the internet. The stakeholder also does not agree that repeating the content of the training is not helpful. Also, there should be an executive summary of each module that the drivers can carry with them because they seem to forget some elements of the training. This equivalent of an executive summary would repeat the same messages in every module reminding drivers of a number of basic requirements such as Drivers Daily Walk Around Checks, the purpose of the DDWAC's should be explained in every module along with some other basic messages.
- The Commission concluded the session by stating the following:
 - There is a need to improve the training system.
 - There is a consensus that the training system has to be made more adaptable to the actual needs of the drivers and companies. There is also a need to make it more flexible over time with more direct involvement of the stakeholders and the industry;

- The training should be meaningful for the drivers.
- There might be a need to replace a rigid periodic training system with a life-long learning approach.

5. Session 4: Quality assurance and mutual recognition of the training

The presentation by Mr. Poul Christensen is attached to this report, and therefore not included in the minutes.

- Freight Transport Association (UK): The stakeholder mentioned that in the UK, where Driver Qualification Cards are used, the validation of trainings in case of driving licences bearing a code 95 represents a situation where a licence exchange can be forced. In this respect, the stakeholder believes that a solution does indeed exist to the problem of mutual recognition. In terms of the recognitions of partially completed trainings, a failure to recognize such trainings would breach the requirement of free movement of workers.
- The Commission responded to these points. A Member State cannot force the exchange of a driving licence of a non-resident. If he/she is a resident that has taken the training in another Member State, the holder can request the exchange but the Member State cannot force it in order to give code 95. The underlying problem is that the CPC itself is not recognized, it's only the driving licence or the driver qualification card that are recognized. The same goes for the recognition of partial training. As the Directive stands now, there is no obligation to recognize partial trainings. The point is, whether this is a problem, and, if so, how to best solve it.
- Portuguese National Association of Passenger Transport (Portugal): When discussing mutual recognition, we can divide it into two different aspects. The first aspect relates to the document and the papers. In Portugal, the administrative act of obtaining a CPC is useless but it costs €30. Next to this CPC, the driver is also required to ask for a Driver Qualification Card (DQC), which allows him to be a professional driver. The Portuguese state also decided not to give the DQC, unless the driver goes through the first CPC training. This created a unique situation in Europe, in which those who were older, and where entitled to the CPC due to acquired rights could leave the profession next year without ever having to hold a CPC. Thus, if such a driver were to drive abroad and asked for his qualification, he would have nothing to show (except his old driving license). In this aspect, there is a clear need to change certain unclear aspects. Furthermore, Portugal never issued a code 95 in any driving license. The stakeholder reiterated that the only mutually recognized tool should be the Driver Qualification Card (DQC). The second aspect relates to the training. The stakeholder noted that he never came across a request to recognize partial periodic training. Furthermore, in order to set up a path for recognizing such trainings, it might take several years to harmonize the systems of different Member States. Moreover, the stakeholder believes that the qualification mechanism of the Directive was set up in a manner to allow for an initial qualification followed by a periodic training each five years. Drivers should not be allowed to have seven hours trainings each year. The stakeholder believes that this was not the intention of the legislator.
- The Commission asked Mr. Westerkamp on the available data relating to the demand for cross-border recognition trainings.

- Mr. Westerkamp responded that based on the results of the surveys, it may be assumed that it is not such a big problem. However, only few Member States made data available on this aspect.
- Irish Road Haulage Association (Ireland): the stakeholder faces problems with modules completed in the UK. Although on a UK licence modules taken in the R. of Ireland were recognised by the UK government, the Irish authorities would not recognise on the Irish licence modules taken in the UK, despite the fact that they are very good modules. Accordingly, there is a problem in this area, and it is not just hear-say.
- The Commission asked whether it could be possible that it is just so hopeless that people give up trying. Could it be that the administrative difficulties hide a problem that may not manifest itself because people just do not try it?
- Irish Road Haulage Association (Ireland): The stakeholder believes that this problem is called bureaucracy.
- European Cyclists' Association: the stakeholder went back to the topic of road safety. The stakeholder pointed out that although road safety should be a priority in the Directive, when looking at the Annex, there is nothing there. Specifically, there is no element on the safety of interaction with other road users. Considering also the earlier comments on winter driving, there may be a need to develop some sort of urban qualification.
- European Transport Safety Council: In terms of which priorities should be included, the Annex I, Section 3.4 does include a list of issues that are relevant to road safety (effects of alcohol, drugs, fatigue, and stress). However, the training here should reflect also the key road risk factors (such as speed, non-use of seat belts). ETSC would further support the training looking at the interaction with vulnerable road users. There are some existing good practices from some countries on this aspect, which should be included.
- Transport for London (UK): it is important to teach drivers to watch out especially for cyclists. Cycling fatality is a key issue within London. Transport for London developed a course which is CPC accredited to address this problem. The course involves taking drivers cycling tour in the city in order to show them how vulnerable these road users can be. Cyclists are also being put in a truck to show how big the blind spots may be.
- Freight Transport Association (UK): The stakeholder came back to some of the points raised earlier where the Directive's limitations were discussed. Considering winter driving, the Directive creates the objective of making drivers aware of the risks of the road, and it may be possible to approve a specific winter course based on this objective. This is also demonstrated by the existence of courses protecting vulnerable road users. So the Directive clearly does not exclude such aspects from happening.
- The Commission raises the aspect of mutual recognition.
- French Road Transport Association (France): Although it might take years, we should keep the objective of having a mutual recognition throughout Europe.

It is also important to have a strict control on the correct implementation and harmonization of the Directive in each Member State.

- Confederation of Passenger Transport (UK): With an exchange of driving license, any training carried out in the UK will then be uploaded onto the UK system. We further need to ensure that we have a system that enables mutual recognition quickly, without spending weeks and months trying to sort out bureaucratic burdens. While the establishment of an EU wide centralized system would be useful, it still may be years away. Therefore, there should be some simple and quick form of mutual recognition.
- The Commission responded that it is certainly looking at the feasibility of a database solution.
- Austrian Economic Chamber (Austria): the mutual recognition of partial trainings is very important for this stakeholder, especially since Austria sees an increased number of drivers from neighbouring countries (e.g., Hungary, Slovakia). Accordingly, it is important to be able to split the training between two countries, and have an adequate system of recognition. Since transport is such an international activity, where drivers cross borders regularly, it is not feasible to maintain these borders when it comes to driver training. Furthermore, a problem arises where training completed in Austria cannot be marked with a code 95 on a Hungarian driving licence. Such a problem could probably be solved by an attachment to the driving licence.
- International Road Transport Union: Reports have shown that some countries are more affected by this problem than others. Mutual recognition is especially important for countries that are located in the middle of the transport flow.
- The Commission raises the issue of the quality of training centres. The Commission asks the stakeholder whether they are happy with the quality of the training. Mr. Christensen mentioned that a stricter structure for the control of the quality, and there may be a very standardized way to do that through quality assurance. Quality assurance requires standards which will be used to certify training centres. Such accreditations will be carried out by national bodies that are coordinated by an EU cooperative structure which is called European accreditation. The system exists, but it is not being used in our sector. Would do stakeholders think about bringing this into the sector?
- European Transport Safety Council: The stakeholder supports an EU quality label for driver courses.
- European Transport Workers' Federation: While the CEN provides well developed standards, but this may only work where critical clients put emphasis on standards being respected and audits being successful. We do not have critical clients here to make this work, and the CEN may not have the adequate powers to bring about compliance without the help of domestic authorities. As such, the stakeholder concluded that this is not a possible option for the time being.
- European Committee for Standardization (CEN): CEN clarifies that CEN does not do audit. What CEN does is the creation of voluntary standards with the

participation of all relevant stakeholders that can be used (or not) as a basis for certification. They can also be useful for public authorities and a common basis for enforcement. The CEN has already created similar standards dealing with qualification in some service area, which can be used as a common benchmark in a specific sector.

- The Commission noted that while it may be difficult to achieve such standards, once these do exist they represent a powerful tool to all those involved, especially those who have to manage processes.
- Training centre in Belgium [the stakeholder did not mention the name of the training centre]: the stakeholder asked for quality control in training centres. That is because there are no standard requirements for training centres. Furthermore, the price of a training often matters more than the quality of the training. Therefore, it would be good to have some standards to compare training centres.
- Portuguese National Association of Passenger Transport (Portugal): Problems relating to the quality of the training are related mainly to the periodic training. There are complaints about how training providers address periodic trainings. In Portugal, this problem is not necessarily due to the lack of quality controls but the lack of enforcement. Accordingly, the stakeholder does not feel the need for an EU standard, but he feels the need for better national efforts in this aspect. Further EU standards would not be opposed, provided they do not bring additional costs to the sector.
- DEKRA Akademie: If we talk about quality, we should first define what is exactly meant by "quality" since it is often misunderstood. Some people may perceive sitting for seven hours in a training course as 'quality', but we should better look at how efficient the training actually is. This should be considered in this context.
- Panteia: Mr. Westerkamp called on stakeholders to share any quantitative data that they may help in determining the magnitude of the problem relating to mutual recognition. Stakeholders are welcome to share any additional data that may point out other problems relating to the Directive. These data can be shared through the following email address: k.westerkamp@panteia.nl.
- Irish Road Haulage Association (Ireland): the stakeholder gave an example on how the CPC gained such ill reputation. Before the CPC, the stakeholder could use freely the training facilities of an automotive manufacturer, but after the CPC was introduced, this was no longer possible because the approval would result in costs. The stakeholder argues that such bureaucratic hurdles result in less competitive conditions.
- The Commission concluded the session by stating the following:
 - As regards the mutual recognition, it is not clear whether there is a problem, and if so, how big it is.
 - There is support for a system that improves mutual recognition but there are concerns regarding the costs.
 - There is a consensus that quality assurance is important and we should find ways to increase the reliability and trustworthiness of the training centres.

6. Concluding remarks by DG MOVE C4

At the end of the Conference, the Commission made the following concluding remarks:

- There is broad agreement among the stakeholders that the Directive is relevant and necessary, but it has to be improved especially as regards implementation. That should be given priority over extending its scope to other vehicles.
- There are reservations regarding the extension of the scope, although a couple of stakeholders called for an extension to vans and small trucks.
- There was little, if any, support for the alignment of the scope of the Directive with other related legislation, especially Regulation 561/2006.
- Stakeholders support leaving minimum age requirements as they currently are in the Directive. However, the current ambiguity with the Driving Licence Directive needs to be corrected.
- Almost all stakeholders agree that introducing a modular training structure would be a good way to go forward.
- There is a need to improve the adaptability and flexibility of the training system. The training should be meaningful and useful for the drivers.
- It remains uncertain whether mutual recognition represents a problem, and if so, to what extent. Nobody would oppose cost-effective measures that would improve the mutual recognition.
- In the same way, nobody would oppose cost-effective measures to provide better quality assurance.
- The stakeholders expressed an interest to be involved and consulted in the subsequent steps of the review process, to the extent allowed by procedural rules.

5 Annex II: Agenda of the Conference

Stakeholder Conference on the Review of Directive 2003/59/EC Brussels, 6 March 2014

AGENDA

10:00 – 10:30	Welcoming Address <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>DG MOVE C4</i> Report on Findings <i>ex-post</i> Evaluation and Public Consultation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Mr. Klaas Westerkamp</i>, Project manager Evaluation and Impact Assessment study Directive 2003/59/EC
10:30 – 11:30	Session I: Relevance and Scope of the Directive <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction by <i>Prof. Fred Wegman</i>, Professor of Traffic Safety, Delft University of Technology• Discussion
11:30 – 11:45	Coffee Break
11:45 – 12:45	Session II: Minimum Age <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction by <i>Dr. Willem Vlakveld</i>, SWOV Institute for Road Safety Research• Discussion
12:45 – 14:00	Lunch Break
14:00 – 15:15	Session III: Structure of the Training <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction by <i>Mrs. Claudia Ball</i>, DEKRA Akademie GmbH• Discussion
15:15 – 15:30	Coffee Break
15:30 – 16:45	Session IV: Quality Assurance and Mutual Recognition of the Training <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction by <i>Mr. Poul Christensen</i>, European Transport Workers' Federation• Discussion
16:45 – 17:00	Conclusions <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>DG MOVE C4</i>

6 Annex III: Discussion Paper

Discussion Paper

*Stakeholder Conference
Review of Directive 2003/59/EC
Brussels, 6 March 2014*

1. Introduction

On 6 March 2014 the European Commission will hold a Stakeholder Conference as part of the review of Directive 2003/59/EC on the initial qualification and periodic training of drivers of certain road vehicles for the carriage of goods or passengers. The main objectives of the conference, which is open to all interested stakeholders, are to report on the findings of the public consultation and to validate its results, to present the results of the ex-post evaluation of the Directive and to discuss policy measures for the review of the Directive. This paper serves as an input for the discussions at the Conference.

Background

Directive 2003/59/EC sets initial qualification and periodic training requirements for certain drivers engaged in the transport of goods or passengers. The Directive requires drivers to prove their initial qualification either through an option based on training and a theoretical test or a theoretical and practical test, without any mandatory training beforehand. Periodic training of 35 hours each 5 years is compulsory to refresh and update the qualification of the drivers. The qualification is attested by a Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC). Knowledge requirements are defined in the annexes of the Directive in terms of topics to be covered during the training.

Between July and October 2013 the European Commission held a public consultation on the Directive to assess its effectiveness, and to allow identifying measures that may be needed in order to improve the Directive's mechanisms. The public consultation elicited in 395 responses.² The stakeholder conference is a follow-up to this public consultation. All answers to the public consultation have been taken into account and analysed. The stakeholder conference is intended to validate this analysis and integrate it, especially on the options for the way forward.

Structure of the Stakeholder Conference

The Conference will have four thematic sessions and an introductory session.

In the introductory session the findings of the public consultation and the results of the ex-post evaluation of the current Directive will be presented.

The four thematic sessions will address the following aspects:

² European Commission, 'Public Consultations: Directive 2003/59/EC on the initial qualification and periodic training of drivers of certain road vehicles for the carriage of goods or passengers' (2013), available at: http://ec.europa.eu/transport/media/consultations/2013-professional-drivers-training_en.htm

- (1) Relevance and scope of the Directive;
- (2) Minimum age;
- (3) Structure of the training;
- (4) Quality assurance and mutual recognition of the training.

In each of these sessions a speaker will introduce the session's topic, the problems identified and the possible policy measures. Subsequently, the stakeholders participating in the Conference will be given the opportunity to express their views and comment on the various options. The speakers have been selected on the basis of their expertise. Their role is to introduce the issue, functioning as a facilitator for the discussion. The objective is to listen to the position of all stakeholders. The opinions the speakers express do not represent the official position of the European Commission.

2. Thematic Sessions of the Conference

2.1. Session I: Relevance and scope of the Directive

As first aspect, it is appropriate to hear stakeholders' views on the overall relevance of the Directive. Relevance refers to the importance of regulating the initial qualification and periodic training of drivers at European level to increase road safety, to ensure a level playing field and to guarantee the free movement of workers in the transport sector.

The Directive applies to drivers holding a C or a D driving licence engaged in the transport of goods or passengers. A series of exemptions are stipulated envisaging essentially to exempt non-professional drivers from the requirements of the Directive.

As part of the review process the question arises if there is value in broadening the scope of the Directive to all holders of C or D driving licences or to include also certain professional drivers holding other types of driving licences. The inclusion of other professional drivers could mean for instance the inclusion of taxi drivers or drivers of vans of up to 3.5 tonnes. The definition of the scope of the Directive needs to balance the concerns for road safety and EU value added with the necessity not to impose an unnecessary burden on certain drivers especially in light of the principle of subsidiarity.³

Moreover, the question also arises whether it would be useful to align the scope and the exemptions with Regulation 561/2006/EC on the harmonisation of certain social legislation relating to road transport, while taking into account the different objectives of the two legislative documents.

Questions as input for the discussion:

1. Do you consider a Directive at European level on the qualification and training of drivers as relevant?

2. Do you consider that the scope of the Directive needs to be extended bearing in mind both safety concerns and the burden that this may impose on drivers as well as the principle of subsidiarity?

³ http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/institutional_affairs/treaties/lisbon_treaty/ai0017_en.htm

3. Do you think that aligning the scope of application and the exemptions of Directive 2003/59/EC with those of Regulation 561/2006 would bring more clarity? If yes, how far shall the alignment go? What are possible drawbacks?

2.2. Session II: Minimum age

The main issue here is to determine at what age young people shall be allowed to drive professionally taking into account both the demands of the industry facing a shortage of young drivers and the concerns regarding road safety.

Three possible approaches can initially be identified:

1) Setting the same minimum age requirements for professional and for non-professional drivers and to use the minimum age requirements indicated in Directive 2006/126/EC on driving licences.

2) As professional drivers have to undergo additional testing, which goes beyond the normal driving licence testing to obtain the initial CPC, it might be considered that they can drive at an earlier age than drivers, who have not undergone the CPC qualification.

3) A system of gradual access to professional driving requiring the various categories of C and D driving licences could be an option. It would regulate the access of young drivers in such a way that access to more challenging categories of heavy vehicles would be granted only after sufficient experience has been gained in lower categories.

Questions as input for the discussion:

1. Would young people driving trucks or buses represent an increased road safety risk or can this be overcome through additional training and qualification requirements?

2. Are the high minimum age requirements in the driving licence directive functioning as deterrent for young people to join the profession?

3. If lower minimum age requirements for professional drivers are adopted are those minimum age requirements currently set in Directive 2003/59/EC adequate or should they be changed?

4. Would a gradual access system help addressing the shortage of drivers or would it complicate matters as there is a demand for drivers of heavy vehicles in particular?

2.3. Session III: Structure of the training

This session is closely linked with the fourth session on quality assurance and mutual recognition. The main focus of this session is how the training shall be organised to be meaningful and best contribute to the objectives of the Directive. In the current Directive the main focus is on indicating the subjects to be covered and on setting the minimum hours of training.

It is important that the revised Directive indicates a structure of the training that is both sufficiently flexible to be adaptable to the needs of Member States and also of undertakings and single drivers, while at the same time sufficiently uniform and reliable to create a sufficient level of trust between Member States to allow for mutual recognition, which will be discussed in section IV. Uniformity is also important to ensure a level playing field for drivers and undertakings.

The training could be organised in modules structured around specific topics (e.g. a module dedicated to driving on dangerous terrain). A common modular structure might help the mutual recognition of training courses and their transferability between Member States. A certain amount of common modules could be introduced to guarantee uniformity, while drivers and undertakings could be left the freedom to choose the additional modules.

It could also be explored if it might be useful to link the modules to a credit system like the European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET)⁴ or if this would represent an unnecessary complication. The revised Directive could shift the focus from the hours of training required to what a driver needs to learn during the training, so-called learning outcomes.

Questions as input for the discussion:

- 1. Do you think that there is a need to re-organise the current CPC- training structure?*
- 2. Shall the Directive indicate the number of hours of training or shall the focus be on learning outcomes?*
- 3. Would a modular structure be useful or could it instead be excessively complicated and burdensome?*
- 4. Would the introduction of a credit system be helpful or would it represent burdensome structure without much practical value?*
- 5. Would it be useful to differentiate between mandatory and optional training courses?*

⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/vocational-policy/ecvet_en.htm

2.4. Session IV: Quality assurance and mutual recognition of the training

Mutual recognition is fundamental to ensure free movement of workers and also the viability of the Directive. There are several aspects which are related to mutual recognition. The first one is trust in the existence of a homogenous level of quality of the training in the EU.

Quality assurance could take different forms. What a driver needs to learn through the training could be set in the form of common standards. These standards could either be elaborated in detail in the revised Directive or its elaboration could be mandated to an external entity such as the European Committee for Standardisation (CEN).⁵ These standards could either regulate the structure or be "goal-based standards" regulating the objectives. In the same way quality standards could be conceived not only for the training itself but also for the training centres.

An alternative option could be to rely on a voluntary system such as the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET).⁶

A second element is related more to the practical implementation of mutual recognition: what means and what information are needed to make mutual recognition work in practice. Mutual recognition has so far been guaranteed by the marking of code 95 either on the driving licence or on a separate driver qualification card. The CPC itself is today not a mutually recognised document. Problems have emerged with the marking of the code 95 on foreign driving licences.

Different practical solutions could be adopted. On the basis of a mutual recognition of the CPC it could be stipulated that drivers can go back to their home country and have the code 95 marked on the basis of a CPC obtained abroad. Alternatively, all Member States, also those which currently mark the code 95 in the driving licences could be required to issue a separate driver qualification card to holders of foreign driving licences, who obtained a CPC in their country. A third option could be exploring the feasibility of issuing digitally a CPC instead of the paper version.

No mechanism for the recognition of periodic training partially undergone in another Member State is currently foreseen (e.g. a driver undergoes 14 hours of periodic training in Member State A and then moves to Member State B and would like to have these 10 hours of periodic training counted towards the 35 hours of periodic training he has to undergo every five years). It is important to understand if there is a need for developing such mechanism. Related to this there is also the question whether and to what extent there is a need to work on mechanisms to allow for a better exchange of information between Member States. This could be done via a system of exchange of information between national databases not only for partial periodic training if there is a need for it. Such a system called RESPER is currently already in place for the exchange of information between Member States on driving licences.

⁵ <https://www.cen.eu/pages/default.aspx>

⁶ http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/vocational-policy/eqavet_en.htm

Questions as input for the discussion:

- 1. Do you think that setting standards for training is the right way to ensure quality or would it be too complicated and burdensome to do so? If yes, who should set the standards and what should these standards be set for, the structure or the objectives?*
- 2. Can the voluntary European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET) be the most appropriate tool or would an enforceable method be needed?*
- 3. How should the fulfilment of the training and qualification requirements be marked? On the driving licence or on a separate driver qualification card? In particular for drivers working abroad who shall be responsible for marking: the host Member State where the training is done or the home Member State having issued the driving licence?*
- 4. Is a paperless CPC feasible or are there too many problems linked to it?*
- 5. Are mechanisms for the exchange of information between national databases of the Member States needed?*