

Call for comments

The Commission is calling for comments on the suggestions outlined above. In particular we would be grateful for your replies to the following questions:

1. Do you think that driver training systems should be harmonised in the EU? If so, what advantages would it have for traffic safety, and what problems do you expect?

A: Only harmonisation based on best practice would have the potential to be accepted by member states. Harmonisation must take into account that member states with highly developed driver training systems should not be forced to return to earlier states of their development and accept pertaining rules. The Commission must be aware of the fact that, due to specific geographical and climate based conditions, a number of member states will see a need for specific national adaptations of driver training, such as driving in winter time, on icy roads, driving in darkness (cf. the Scandinavian countries).

2. Should traffic education at school be mandatory?

A: Individual mobility has become one of the major skills required in modern societies. It is therefore absolutely mandatory to teach all aspects of this skill – beginning in pre-school/kindergarten and differentiating educational topics according to age; mobility education should therefore continue until graduation.

3. Should driving instructors undergo continuing professional development?

A: Continuing professional development should be mandatory for all professions in the area of safety including driving instructors. Knowledge on how to teach behavioural aspects of driving must be an integral part of driving instructors' professional development.

4. Should coaching be emphasised more as a teaching method for driving instructors?

A: Teaching and coaching should not exclude each other; coaching on the background of insufficient knowledge is less efficient. Both, teaching and coaching must be adaptive as to age and behaviour specific needs.

5. Should post-test practical experience models be encouraged?

A: Post-test practical experience models should only be encouraged for specific risk-groups within the population of novice drivers. Risky driving in this phase of a driver's career is best recognized by demerit point systems and best addressed via individual re-education.

6. Should accompanied driving systems be encouraged? Should they be harmonised at EU level?

A: Practical experience of novice drivers is best gathered through accompanied driving

7. Should accompanied driving systems with 'lay instructors' be encouraged? Should there be training requirements for lay instructors?

A: This should be based on the experience systems have made with accompanied driving. Lay instructors must meet a set of criteria ascertaining minimum competence.

8. Do you agree that the minimum age of solo driving (with a category B licence) should be 18?

A: In general, the answer is: yes. As, however, there is sufficient experience in Germany that driving at a lower age, e.g. 16, does not create a higher risk if the novice driver is medically and psychologically assessed prior to driver training and after licensing is restricted to driving time and distance according to individual needs, the minimum age for single applicants may be set to 16.

9. Should more use be made of computer-based training systems? If so, in which areas?

A: Computer-based training systems will not replace training on the road. Effectiveness of computer-based training has been shown for specific risks, e.g. neglect of risk pertaining details in the visual field/field of vision.

10. Should more use be made of e-learning? If so, in which areas?

A: This is in line with question 9.

Comments should be sent by fax or e-mail, not later than 22.06.2009 to:

European Commission

DG TREN

Road safety unit

Reference: 'Driver training and traffic safety education'

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