

Promoting Mobility with a Modernised Driving Licence Directive

Proposal

The Commission should work on a revision of the 3rd Driving Licence Directive to ensure a modernised driving licence system that is fit for the increasing digitalization, the development in vehicle technology and the modern world where EU citizens move and reside across the world.

The Directive should allow for the digital reality by supporting digital solutions and processes for the driving licence holders. The Commission should assess the impact and potential in harmonising a digital version of the driving licence that can be used across the EU.

The development in vehicle technology and safety supports a revision of the driving licence categories. The classification of vehicles should reflect the existing technology and thereby allow a greater freedom for the driving licence holder, for instance by permitting a higher weight limit for category B-vehicles. In the objective of ensuring consistency and coherency in the legislation, the classification of vehicles in the Driving Licence Directive should to a greater extent correspond with the technical type approval regulation.

Furthermore, the requirement of normal residence hinders the mobility of the EU citizens since it is not possible for a Member State to issue a new EU driving licence to a driving licence holder living outside the EU, including the overseas territories of the Member States. The requirement of normal residence should be more flexible in regard to people living abroad who have already obtained an EU driving licence.

Challenge

The Driving Licence Directive requires a physical driving licence. A digital version of the driving licence will only be valid in the issuing Member State. Consequently, it is not possible for the Member States to create digital solutions for the driving licence holders that they can use across borders.

According to the Driving Licence Directive, a Member State may only issue and renew driving licences for applicants who have their normal residence in the Member State. Consequently, if EU citizens living in a third country lose their EU driving licence, the Member States cannot issue a duplicate driving licence.

The Driving Licence categories classify which vehicles can be driven by holders of each licence category. The classification of the vehicles does not fully reflect the new vehicle technology.

Background

The Driving Licence Directive is essential for the free movement of persons because it allows the citizens to use their driving licences when they reside and move within the EU. Furthermore, the rules on driving licences contribute to improve road safety. However, to ensure that the Driving Licence Directive is fit for the digital reality and new vehicle technology, a revision of the 3rd Driving Licence Directive is needed.