

Directive 2006/126/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 December 2006 on driving licences (Recast) (Text with EEA relevance)

*Article 4*

**Categories, definitions and minimum ages**

1 The driving licence provided for in Article 1 shall authorise the driving of power-driven vehicles in the categories defined hereafter. It may be issued from the minimum age indicated for each category. A ‘power-driven vehicle’ means any self-propelled vehicle running on a road under its own power, other than a rail-borne vehicle.

2 mopeds:

Category AM:

- Two-wheel vehicles or three-wheel vehicles with a maximum design speed of not more than 45 km/h, as defined in Article 1(2)(a) of Directive 2002/24/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 March 2002 relating to the type-approval of two or three-wheel motor vehicles<sup>(1)</sup> (excluding those with a maximum design speed under or equal to 25 km/h), and light quadricycles as defined in Article 1(3)(a) of Directive 2002/24/EC,
- the minimum age for category AM is fixed at 16 years;

3 motorcycles with or without a sidecar and motor tricycles:

- ‘motorcycle’ means two-wheel vehicles with or without a sidecar, as defined in Article 1(2)(b) of Directive 2002/24/EC,
- ‘motor tricycle’ means vehicles with three symmetrically arranged wheels, as defined in Article 1(2)(c) of Directive 2002/24/EC;

(a) Category A1:

- motorcycles with a cylinder capacity not exceeding 125 cubic centimetres, of a power not exceeding 11 kW and with a power/weight ratio not exceeding 0,1 kW/kg,
- motor tricycles with a power not exceeding 15 kW,
- the minimum age for category A1 is fixed at 16 years;

(b) Category A2:

- motorcycles of a power not exceeding 35 kW and with a power/weight ratio not exceeding 0,2 kW/kg and not derived from a vehicle of more than double its power,
- the minimum age for category A2 is fixed at 18 years;

(c) Category A:

(i) motorcycles

- The minimum age for category A is fixed at 20 years. However, access to the driving of motorcycles of this category shall be subject to a minimum of two years' experience on motorcycles under an A2 licence. This requirement as to previous experience may be waived if the candidate is at least 24 years old.

(ii) motor tricycles with a power exceeding 15 kW

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- The minimum age for motor tricycles exceeding 15 kW is fixed at 21 years.

4 motor vehicles:

- ‘motor vehicle’ means any power-driven vehicle, which is normally used for carrying persons or goods by road or for drawing, on the road, vehicles used for the carriage of persons or goods. This term shall include trolleybuses, i.e. vehicles connected to an electric conductor and not rail-borne. It shall not include agricultural or forestry tractors,

- ‘Agricultural or forestry tractor’ means any power-driven vehicle running on wheels or tracks, having at least two axles, the principal function of which lies in its tractive power, which is specially designed to pull, push, carry or operate certain tools, machines or trailers used in connection with agricultural or forestry operations, and the use of which for carrying persons or goods by road or drawing, on the road, vehicles used for the carriage of persons or goods is only a secondary function;

(a) Category B1:

- quadricycles, as defined in Article 1(3)(b) of Directive 2002/24/EC,
- the minimum age for category B1 is fixed at 16 years,
- category B1 is optional; in Member States which do not introduce this category of driving licence, a driving licence for category B shall be required to drive such vehicles;

(b) Category B:

motor vehicles with a maximum authorised mass not exceeding 3 500 kg and designed and constructed for the carriage of no more than eight passengers in addition to the driver; motor vehicles in this category may be combined with a trailer having a maximum authorised mass which does not exceed 750 kg.

Without prejudice to the provisions of type-approval rules for the vehicles concerned, motor vehicles in this category may be combined with a trailer with a maximum authorised mass exceeding 750 kg, provided that the maximum authorised mass of this combination does not exceed 4 250 kg. In case such a combination exceeds 3 500 kg, Member States shall, in accordance with the provisions of Annex V, require that this combination shall only be driven after:

- a training has been completed, or
- a test of skills and behaviour has been passed.

Member States may also require both such a training and the passing of a test of skills and behaviour.

Member States shall indicate the entitlement to drive such a combination on the driving licence by means of the relevant Community code.

The minimum age for category B is fixed at 18 years;

(c) Category BE:

- without prejudice to the provisions of type-approval rules for the vehicles concerned, combination of vehicles consisting of a tractor vehicle in category B and a trailer or semi-trailer where the maximum authorised mass of the trailer or semi-trailer does not exceed 3 500 kg,
- the minimum age for category BE is fixed at 18 years;

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- (d) Category C1:  
motor vehicles other than those in categories D1 or D, the maximum authorised mass of which exceeds 3 500 kg, but does not exceed 7 500 kg, and which are designed and constructed for the carriage of no more than eight passengers in addition to the driver; motor vehicles in this category may be combined with a trailer having a maximum authorised mass not exceeding 750 kg;
- (e) Category C1E:  
— without prejudice to the provisions of type-approval rules for the vehicles concerned, combinations of vehicles where the tractor vehicle is in category C1 and its trailer or semi-trailer has a maximum authorised mass of over 750 kg provided that the authorised mass of the combination does not exceed 12 000 kg,  
— without prejudice to the provisions of type-approval rules for the vehicles concerned, combinations of vehicles where the tractor vehicle is in category B and its trailer or semi-trailer has an authorised mass of over 3 500 kg, provided that the authorised mass of the combination does not exceed 12 000 kg,  
— [<sup>F1</sup>the minimum age for categories C1 and C1E is fixed at 18 years;]
- (f) Category C:  
motor vehicles other than those in categories D1 or D, whose maximum authorised mass is over 3 500 kg and which are designed and constructed for the carriage of no more than eight passengers in addition to the driver; motor vehicles in this category may be combined with a trailer having a maximum authorised mass which does not exceed 750 kg;
- (g) Category CE:  
— without prejudice to the provisions of type-approval rules for the vehicles concerned, combinations of vehicles where the tractor vehicle is in category C and its trailer or semi-trailer has a maximum authorised mass of over 750 kg,  
— [<sup>F1</sup>the minimum age for categories C and CE is fixed at 21 years;]
- (h) Category D1:  
motor vehicles designed and constructed for the carriage of no more than 16 passengers in addition to the driver and with a maximum length not exceeding 8 m; motor vehicles in this category may be combined with a trailer having a maximum authorised mass not exceeding 750 kg;
- (i) Category D1E:  
— without prejudice to the provisions of type-approval rules for the vehicles concerned, combinations of vehicles where the tractor vehicle is in category D1 and its trailer has a maximum authorised mass of over 750 kg,  
— [<sup>F1</sup>the minimum age for categories D1 and D1E is fixed at 21 years;]
- (j) Category D:  
motor vehicles designed and constructed for the carriage of more than eight passengers in addition to the driver; motor vehicles which may be driven with a category D licence may be combined with a trailer having a maximum authorised mass which does not exceed 750 kg;

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- (k) Category DE:
- without prejudice to the provisions of type-approval rules for the vehicles concerned, combinations of vehicles where the tractor vehicle is in category D and its trailer has a maximum authorised mass of over 750 kg,
  - [F1the minimum age for categories D and DE is fixed at 24 years;]

5 With the agreement of the Commission, Member States may exclude from the application of this Article certain specific types of power-driven vehicle such as special vehicles for disabled persons.

Member States may exclude from the application of this Directive vehicles used by, or under the control of, the armed forces and civil defence.

- 6 Member States may raise or lower the minimum age for issuing a driving licence:
- a for category AM down to 14 years or up to 18 years;
  - b for category B1 up to 18 years;
  - c for category A1 up to 17 or 18 years,
    - if there is a two years difference between the minimum age for category A1 and the minimum age for category A2, and
    - there is a requirement of a minimum of two years experience on motorcycles of category A2 before access to the driving of motorcycles for category A can be granted, as referred to in Article 4(3)(c)(i);
  - d for categories B and BE down to 17 years.

Member States may lower the minimum age for category C to 18 years and for category D to 21 years with regard to:

- a vehicles used by the fire service and vehicles used for maintaining public order;
- b vehicles undergoing road tests for repair or maintenance purposes.

Driving licences issued to persons at a lower age than set out in paragraphs 2 to 4 in accordance with this paragraph shall only be valid on the territory of the issuing Member State until the licence holder has reached the minimum age limit set out in paragraphs 2 to 4.

Member States may recognise the validity on their territory of driving licences issued to drivers under the minimum ages set out in paragraphs 2 to 4.

[F27 By way of derogation from the minimum ages laid down in points (g), (i) and (k) of paragraph 4 of this Article, the minimum age for issuing a driving licence in categories C and CE; D1 and D1E; and D and DE respectively shall be the minimum age prescribed for the driving of such vehicles for holders of a CPC laid down in Article 5(2), the first paragraph of Article 5(3)(a)(i), the first paragraph of Article 5(3)(a)(ii) or point (b) of Article 5(3) of Directive 2003/59/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council<sup>(2)</sup> as applicable.

Where, in accordance with the second paragraph of Article 5(3)(a)(i) or the second paragraph of Article 5(3)(a)(ii) of Directive 2003/59/EC, a Member State authorises driving within its territory from a lower age, the validity of the driving licence shall be limited to the territory of the issuing Member State until such time as the licence holder has reached the relevant minimum age referred to in the first subparagraph of this paragraph and holds a CPC.]

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### Textual Amendments

- F1** Substituted by 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).
- F2** Inserted by 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).

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- (1) [OJ L 124, 9.5.2002, p. 1](#). Directive as last amended by Commission Directive 2005/30/EC ([OJ L 106, 27.4.2005, p. 17](#)).
- (2) [<sup>F2</sup>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, amending Council Regulation (EEC) No 3820/85 and Council Directive 91/439/EEC and repealing Council Directive 76/914/EEC ([OJ L 226, 10.9.2003, p. 4](#)).]

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#### **Textual Amendments**

- F2** Inserted by [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 \(Text with EEA relevance\)](#).