



## Professional driving a heterogeneous field



Deliverable:	No 13	Version:	2.0
WP:	03	Last update:	09/08/11
Prepared by:	Claudia Ball, DEKRA Akademie GmbH (DE)		
With contributions from:	ProfDRV project partners		

### Short summary:

This paper intends to map the scope of the wide and heterogeneous term and occupation "professional driver" and proposes a typology of professional drivers appropriate for further discussion of this occupation within the ProfDRV project and in the context of vocational education and training. Different national education systems and approaches have been investigated in order to propose a common approach to distinguish between different groups of professional drivers in terms of required qualifications. Based on these results and further consultation with professionals a typology has been proposed based on the criterion of service accomplished by the groups of drivers. The freight transport drivers group has been further elaborated for the purpose of the ProfDRV project in terms of possible specialisations within road freight transport.

The term "professional driver" describes a variety of different and specialised vocational fields starting from taxi drivers up to drivers of heavy duty trucks. Directive 2003/59/EC – being the major subject of the ProfDRV project – defines "professional drivers" as those "drivers", engaged in road transport within the Community, on roads open to the public, using:

- vehicles for which a driving licence of category C1, C1+E, C or C+E, as defined in Directive 91/439/EEC, or a driving licence recognised as equivalent, is required,
- vehicles for which a driving licence of category D1, D1+E, D or D+E, as defined in Directive 91/439/EEC, or a driving licence recognised as equivalent, is required."

(European Parliament and the Council, 2003, 3)

In order to investigate professional driving from a labour market and employability perspective, it is nevertheless useful to approach professional driving also from a labour market and vocational education and training driven perspective in terms of driving as an occupation and a vocational field. This paper therefore makes an attempt to map driving professions and their specialisations in this regard.

### (1) Professional driver qualifications in different European and non-European countries

In order to map driving professions, different VET systems and approaches have been researched with regard to "professional driving" in order to build the basis for further considerations within the ProfDRV project. For this purpose the following countries have been considered: Australia, Canada, France, Germany, The Netherlands and New Zealand. Those countries were selected based on accessibility of the necessary information and the level of differentiation between different professional driver qualifications within the education system.

The Australian Transport & Logistics Industry Skills Council distinguishes among driving occupations among others between: chauffeur, courier driver, tour bus driver, armoured car escort, furniture removalist, general freight driver, livestock driver, tanker driver, delivery driver, dangerous goods driver, passenger coach driver and mobile crane operator (Transport & Logistics Industry Skills Council, 2009).

The Canadian Trucking Human Resources Council splits the professional drivers within trucking into "Local Pick-up and Delivery Driver", "Short-haul Driver", "Long-haul Driver" and "Owner-operator" (CTHRC) and defines a number of specialisations such as "Professional Bulk Liquid Driver", "Professional Mover/Van Foreman Driver" and "Professional Over-dimensional/ Supersized Driver" for which occupational profiles have been developed. These occupations are all based on the professional driver occupation, what is different is the context in which the work is done and some of the additional criteria required like dangerous goods training for the "Bulk Liquid Driver", human resources management for the "Mover/Van Foreman".<sup>1</sup>

The French qualification system considers courier and delivery drivers (regional, national) with specialisations for movers, perishable food products, tanker, refrigerated truck and living animals, road freight transport drivers (regional, national and international) with specialisations for movers, perishable food products, tanker, refrigerated truck, living animals and special transports, different kind of bus drivers and movers using small trucks (AFT-IFTIM, 2011).

The German vocational education and training system considers a specialised qualification for courier-, express- and post-deliveries, skilled transport employee (driver in local public transport incl. bus, tram, underground), service drivers and (professional) drivers (freight and bus). Furthermore there used to be a qualification for drivers transporting/ dealing with waste and recoverable resources that was allocated to driving professions but has been renewed and transferred into more specialised "green" qualifications with less focus on driving and transport. A newly launched profession regulates the profile of a skilled worker for furniture, kitchen and relocation services. (BIBB) Further certificates are issued for the transport of dangerous goods, exceptions and heavy duty/ oversize trucks, but these certificates are regulated by traffic law.

In the Netherlands the following qualifications are offered within road transport: freight transport driver, passenger transport driver with separate qualifications for public transport, taxi drivers and tour-bus driver (tour leader) (VTL).

The New Zealand Qualifications Authority offers certificates within passenger service (large passenger vehicle with strands in school bus; urban and local route; and long distance and small passenger vehicle with an optional strand in taxi driving); for courier driver with strands in urgent and non-urgent operations; commercial road transport with optional strands in dangerous goods, and forklifts; heavy haulage (with an optional strand in abnormal loads), transportation of livestock by Road, transportation of perishable products by road and transportation of waste and recoverable resources. Furthermore they partially refer to light trucks and introduce senior driver schemes (level of experience). (NZQA)

## (2) Major findings and an attempt for a partial typology

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All examples described above can of course only to a very limited extend be compared with each other due to different reasons such as the different national systems and the different points of reference they are referring to. Nevertheless they provide relevant evidence in order to draw conclusions regarding different types of professional drivers within the vocational field professional driving.

As the major and in all countries practiced differentiation passenger service and freight transport drivers (heavy vehicles) can be distinguished. But it also appears as sensible to open an additional type for delivery, pick-up and

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<sup>1</sup> In Canada, there is only one commercial license for all categories of tractor-trailer drivers. When they get into their specialties, they are often required to get an "endorsement" on their license which indicates that they have additional certification.

courier drivers who are offered specialised qualifications in nearly all selected countries. The Australian, French, German and New Zealand system furthermore open up an additional type of professional drivers that combines professional driving with another principle vocational field:

- the Australian qualifications refer to armoured car escorts, furniture removalists and crane operators,
- the French system singles out movers as a possible specialisation for road transport drivers and as a special scheme for light vehicle drivers,
- the German system offers a qualification for service drivers and furniture movers and used to have a specialised qualification for drivers dealing with waste and recoverable resources and
- in New Zealand system introduced a specialisation for the transportation of waste and recoverable resources.

Based on these findings it is proposed to open up an additional type of drivers with principle activity being different from road transport. This includes drivers such as service and sales drivers, waste disposal drivers, truck-mounted crane drivers, movers or cementation pump drivers.<sup>2</sup>

Since the ProfDRV project focuses on *freight transport drivers (primarily driving heavy vehicles)*, this type has been further elaborated (see figure 1) while the delivery, pick-up and courier, passenger service drivers and drivers with principle activity being different from road transport will not be further specified in the context of this paper. But a further step into developing different types of freight transport drivers seems not possible because criteria that might serve to distinguish between qualification requirements strongly interrelate with each other within the potential types. Instead, a number of specialisations are proposed in figure 1 that can be combined with and do not exclude each other. They primarily refer to the kind of goods transported and the kind of trailer used, both aspects of course being closely related to each other but nevertheless overlapping, but also to the geographical scope of the accomplished transports.

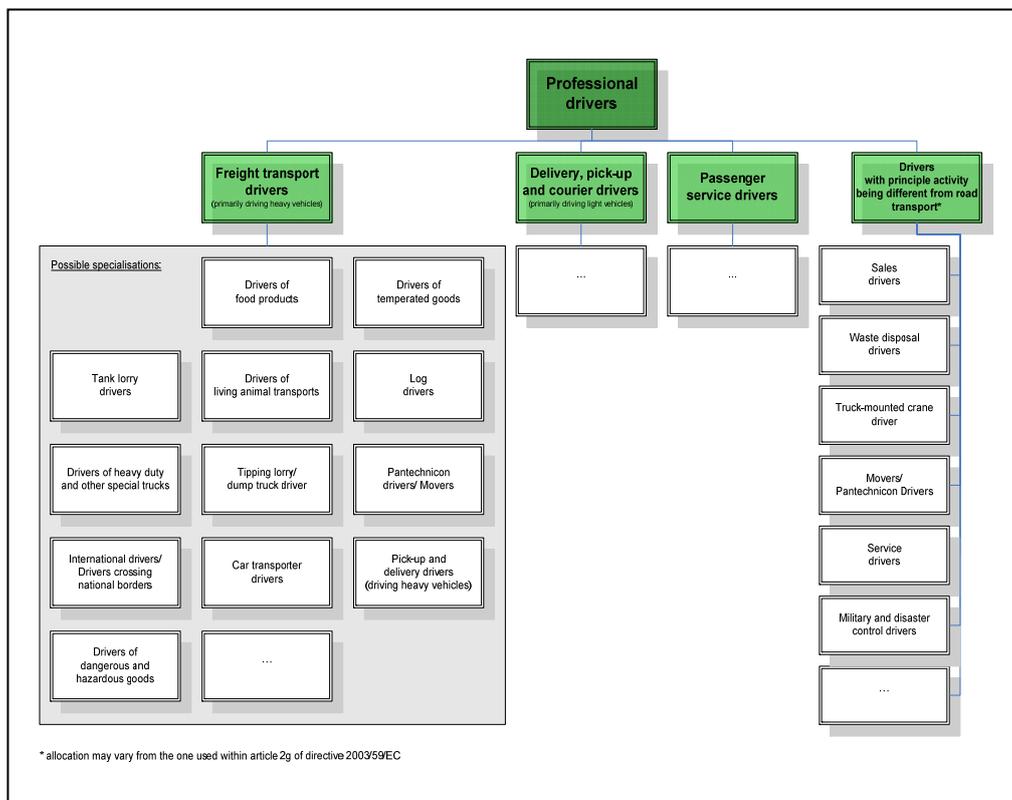


Figure 1: An attempt for a partial typology of professional drivers by kind of service accomplished

<sup>2</sup> This category should not be agitated with the exceptions from directive 2003/59/EC stated in article 2g because the point of reference is different.

These specialisations for freight transport drivers need to be further reflected and elaborated in terms of their applicability within vocational education and training, e.g. which should be combined/ grouped, which left aside and which further specified.

### (3) Conclusions for the ProfDRV project

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The ProfDRV consortium already decided to focus on road freight transport and therefore on freight transport drivers as defined in figure 1. Furthermore the projects reference to directive 2003/59/EC limits freight transport drivers to those drivers holding licenses C, C1, C+E and C1+E. This means non-passenger vehicles above 3,5t.

Due to the extended number of possible specialisations within this profile it needs to be considered to what extend these specialisations can and should be explored in the context of workpackage 3 "A core profile for professional drivers in Europe" by making it subject of a task analysis. Since the WP aims to focus on a core profile rather than on specialisations it is recommended to focus on the tasks that are the basis for all these specialised drivers but to leave the specialisations at an introductory level only for the time being. The "prototype driver" to be proposed for further investigation within ProfDRV could be characterised as follows:

*The ProfDRV prototype professional driver drives a truck/lorry above 3,5t usually a standard tautliner or an equivalent for smaller trucks. He/she transports non-dangerous/ hazardous general cargo up to a gross vehicle weight of 40t. The cargo is transported regionally or nationally only. Collection and delivery locations are primarily consolidation warehouses or large enterprise specific warehouses or plants. He/she is usually responsible for loading and unloading cargo and load security. He/she is usually at home on weekends and partially also at night on weekdays.<sup>3</sup>*

But key requirements of today's labour market are a high level of qualification incl. specialisations in order to carry out highly specialised transports on the one hand and flexibility in terms of employees work capability on the other. Vocational education and training for freight transport drivers must therefore not remain at such a core profile level. It has to consider that freight transport drivers need a high qualification level including specialised abilities in order to respond to increasing labour market requirements and in order to ensure their employability in the long run. Therefore the specialisations in figure 1 should be strongly considered in the broader context of the ProfDRV project beyond WP3 and when it comes to recommendations for the further development of directive 2003/59/EC.

### (4) Limitations and general conclusions

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The distinction of professional drivers by kind of vehicle driven seems an appropriate and the most efficient way of classifying drivers in terms of required abilities from a road safety perspective and closely related to the driving license classes. But the exercise above shows that additional aspects need to be considered when it comes to a vocational education and training perspective in order to meet the labour markets different qualification requirements on different kind of professional drivers that are not necessarily linked to the kind of driving license they possess and to the actual driving abilities trained within driver's education classes. This becomes especially evident among the major types of drivers in the typology in figure 1. The driving license class and therefore the vehicle driven plays an inferior role and is overlapping in the elaborated types although partially predominance of one or the other can be observed. It is rather the kind of service accomplished and the embedding into the overall logistics chain besides the actual driving that rules the allocation to one type or the other.

In general it can be concluded that professional driving as a vocational field needs further distinction and elaboration in order to serve the labour markets different qualification requirements on different kinds/ types of

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<sup>3</sup> non exhaustive list of characteristics

professional drivers due to the heterogeneity of the overall vocational field. The typology in figure 1 proposes a possible way to distinguish between different kinds of drivers based on labour market qualification requirements and relies on different national examples that already made an effort to further distinguish professional driving into different labour market driven qualifications. Nevertheless other ways to distinguish are imaginable. Already in the typology above, it was not possible to avoid overlaps within this and even with other vocational fields, but such a selective distinction can also not be expected when it comes to distinguishing different branches/ professions within one vocational field.

Same applies for the specialisations identified for freight transport drivers that are also strongly overlapping with each other. The ones proposed are based on applied specialisations for road transport drivers in some of the investigated countries while countries such as Germany and the Netherlands do not propose specialisations at the researched stage. Nevertheless there are already compulsory training requirements in place for certain specialisations such as driving dangerous and hazardous goods from a European level. Other specialised training is required (or considered) based on national regulations such as driving of long combination vehicles (Ecocombi) in the Netherlands. Further specialisations for freight transport drivers as proposed in figure 1 should therefore be strongly considered when discussing vocational education and training especially in a lifelong learning context for this type of drivers. This appears necessary in order to answer labour market needs and to ensure employability of freight transport drivers within an ever changing world of transport with constantly increasing and changing qualification requirements.

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For further information on the project please consult:

[www.project-profdrv.eu](http://www.project-profdrv.eu)

For further information on the paper please contact:

[Claudia.Ball@dekra.com](mailto:Claudia.Ball@dekra.com)