



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MOBILITY AND TRANSPORT

Directorate C - Innovative & sustainable mobility  
**C.4 - Road safety**  
Head of Unit

4 December 2015  
MOVE C4/SzS/EsR

**08 DEC. 2015**

Gábor Dittel  
Acting Secretary General  
Federation of National Private Transporters (NiT Hungary)  
Újhegyi út 3/a-5  
1108 Budapest  
Hungary

**Subject: Your letter 14 September 2015 (Your ref 4159/2015/K)**

Dear Mr Dittel,

Thank you for the letter you addressed to Ms Bulc, European Commissioner in charge of transport concerning driver shortage and the minimum age for driving trucks and buses. I am responding herewith on her behalf.

Ensuring sufficient number of competent and well-trained drivers is indeed important for a well-functioning road transport sector. You stress that the age of 18 is crucial for the choice of profession and that you consider it therefore essential that young candidates for a professional driving licence are not requested to wait for at least three years to obtain a C-licence for professional purposes.

As regards the age of professional drivers, you correctly pointed out that Directive 2006/126/EC on driving licences in general lays down 21 as the minimum age for driving trucks (category C) and 24 for driving buses (category D). However Article 4(6) second paragraph provide the possibility for Member States to lower the minimum age for driving vehicles of category C to 18 and D to 21 with regard to vehicles used by the fire service, for maintaining public order and vehicles undergoing road tests for repair and maintenance purposes.

Beyond that, Directive 2003/59/EC on training of professional drivers prescribes in general the minimum age of 18 for category C and 21 for category D for drivers having initial qualification and periodic training in accordance with the Directive. While Article 4(4) of Directive 2006/126/EC indicates that the minimum age of that Directive is "without prejudice to the provisions for driving of such vehicles in Directive 2003/59/EC" the legal situation is not without ambiguity. An ex post evaluation of Directive 2003/59/EC has underlined this legal uncertainty as a problem, and which has led to a divergent application of the minimum age between the Member States as you also correctly remarked.

In the ongoing work of assessing the follow-up to this evaluation, one of the objectives is to provide legal clarity on this matter. The preparatory work done so far, especially underlining concerns on driver shortage, suggests that legal clarity should be sought through clearly indicating the lower minimum age.

I am pleased to inform you that taking this into account, the Commission, accordingly does not oppose if Hungary decides to apply the minimum age foreseen by Directive 2003/59/EC for drivers covered by that Directive.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Szabolcs Schmidt', with a stylized, flowing script.

Szabolcs Schmidt