

**MERIT Project Information Day
Driving Instructor Standards in
the European Union**

19 May 2005, Vienna

MERIT

Minimum European Requirements
for driving Instructor Training

MEETING REPORT

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1. List of participants

Information Day delegates			
First name	Surname	Organisation name	Country
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Ernestine	Mohaupt	Instructor Training School	Austria
Willy	Koblieck	Instructor Training School	Austria
Karl	Pevec	Driving Point Training Centre	Austria
Franz	Kern	Fahrwelt Kern Burgkirchen	Austria
Peter	Smirz	IVV	Austria
Franz	Fabian	Test & Training	Austria
Adolf	Weichsler	Fahrschule Meidling	Austria
Norbert	Hausherr	Austrian Driving Schools' Association	Austria
Christoph	Doppler	Instructor Training School	Austria
Manfred	Kuhn	Viennese Chamber of Commerce	Austria
Michael	Grubmann	Austrian Chamber of Commerce	Austria
Oliver	Köck	Working Group for Instructor Training	Austria
Herbert	Stipek	Instructor Training School	Austria
Willy	Mohaupt	Instructor Training School	Austria
Gaetan	Detroz	GDS	Belgium
Georges	Van Aerschot	Fédération des Auto-Ecoles	Belgium
Sanja	Brnadic Zoranic	Hrvatski Autoklub - HAK	Croatia
Nenad	Zuber	Croatian Automobile Club	Croatia
Robert	Kotal	Traffic Academy of Bohemia	Czech Republic
Pavel	Nahodil	Ministry of Transport	Czech Republic
Eveliis	Nagel	Estonian Motor Vehicle Registration Centre	Estonia
Sakari	Hopia	Finnish Driving Schools' Association	Finland
Pekka	Ahlgren	Finnish Driving Instructor Institute	Finland
Mika	Hotti	AKE	Finland
Gerard	Acourt	ECF - IVV Europe	France
Kay	Schulte	DVR	Germany
Heinrich	Haas	Rheinland Driving Schools' Association	Germany
Peter	Tschöpe	DFA	Germany
Reinhard	Meyer	TUV South Germany	Germany
Andreas	Schmidt	DEKRA	Germany
Peter	Harvey	MSA	Great Britain
Robin	Cummins	CIECA Expert Advisory Group	Great Britain
John	Milne	ADI National Joint Council	Great Britain
Trevor	Wedge	DSA Policy Unit	Great Britain
John	Lepine	GoSkills	Great Britain
Bob	Jarvis	Driving Instructors' Registrar	Great Britain
Peter	Laub	IVV	Great Britain
Bill	Lavender	BSM	Great Britain
Des	Cummins	Irish Driving Instructor Register (DIR)	Ireland
Cathy	Bacon	Irish Driving Instructors' Association	Ireland
Mario	Fornaris	Unione Nazionale Autoscuole StudiConsulenza Automobilistica	Italy

Information Day delegates			
First name	Surname	Organisation name	Country
Brian	Morrison	Driver & Vehicle Testing Agency	Northern Ireland
Justyna	Wacowska	Motor Transport Institute	Poland
Maria	Dabrowska – Loranc	Motor Transport Institute	Poland
Piotr	Wcislo	Regional Road Traffic Center Katowice	Poland
Romuald	Szopa	Regional Road Traffic Center Katowice	Poland
Adam	Czarnowski	DIA: Polish Professional Driving Tuition Centre	Poland
Luisa	Rosário	General Transport Directorate	Portugal
Susana	Paulino	General Transport Directorate	Portugal
Jacinto	Perez	Confederación Nacional de Autoescuelas	Spain
Hans	Mattsson	Swedish National Road Administration	Sweden
Peter	Kinnbo	Sveriges Trafikskolors Riksförbund	Sweden
Lars	Gunnarson	Sveriges Trafikskolors Riksförbund	Sweden

Gregor	Bartl	MERIT Director
Nils-Petter	Gregersen	MERIT
Gerhard	von Bressendorf	MERIT
Jan	Vissers	MERIT
Kjell	Torsmyr	MERIT
Deirdre	Walsh	MERIT
Nick	Sanders	MERIT

2. Agenda

10.00-10.15	Objectives of the MERIT project (Gregor Bartl)
10.15-11.15	Literature study (Nils-Petter Gregersen)
11.15-12.00	Current instructor standards (Nick Sanders)
12.00-13.30	<i>LUNCH</i>
13.30-14.30	Long-term vision paper 1 (Nils-Petter Gregersen) Long-term vision paper 2 (Gregor Bartl)
14.30-15.30	Minimum requirements paper (Nick Sanders)
15.30-16.00	Closing words and discussion (Gregor Bartl)

3. Aim of information day

The aim of the end-of-project information day was to present the work of the EU MERIT Project and to discuss the latest version of the minimum requirements paper for driving instructor standards. See the MERIT website at www.gutefahrt.at/merit for further details.

4. Presentations

The following presentations were made:

- i. Objectives of the MERIT Project: Gregor Bartl
- ii. The context of novice driver accidents and the relevance of the GDE matrix / Literature study: Nils-Petter Gregersen
- iii. Current instructor standards: Nick Sanders
- iv. The GDE matrix and driving instructor training : Nils-Petter Gregersen
- v. Teaching methods and didactics for driving instructors : Gregor Bartl

Please see the attached files for the powerpoint presentations.

5. Main discussion points

- **What MERIT is not saying**

- The driving instructor has to teach all he has learned

MERIT is proposing requirements concerning new knowledge and skills for instructors. These are considered useful tools for instructors, to be applied where needed. The important

thing is to know when to apply it and how. (MERIT is trying to move away from the current situation in many countries where driving instructors tend to provide too much information to learner drivers, and do not enough focus on analysis).

- Driving instructors have to become psychologists

The MERIT recommendations contain references to the psychological aspects of driving. Clearly, driving is not just a mechanical process; it involves complex thought processes, and is influenced by convictions, norms and values, and lifestyle factors. It is important for driving instructors to be aware of these influences and to be able to address them in training. It does not, however, mean that instructors have to be psychologists to do so effectively.

The status of existing instructors changes

If the MERIT recommendations lead to an EU Directive, existing instructors would continue to be able to work as instructors, under so-called ‘grandfather rights’. They would, however, be obliged to respect new requirements concerning ongoing training and quality control during the exercise of their profession.

- **Coaching and other teaching / learning methods**

Gregor Bartl’s speech (long-term vision paper 2) referred to the need for coaching skills amongst driving instructors. Coaching is one of many techniques that the driving instructor should be able to use. The choice of which technique to use should depend on:

- The subject matter being taught
- The learning environment (immediate circumstances)
- The individual (learner driver) in question (preference and response to various techniques / learning style)
- The strengths and weaknesses of the instructor with regard to the teaching technique in question.

The important thing is that the driving instructor should possess a wide range of teaching skills and should be able to know which one to use according to the above parameters. Coaching may take a little longer than instruction, but it is designed to achieve longer-term results (coaching empowers the trainee with a sense of decision-making and personal responsibility for his/her actions, and increases the motivation of the trainee to act rather than to ignore).

- **The respective roles of professional and lay instructors according to the GDE matrix**

If driver training is to involve a mixture of accompanied driving and professional instruction, which levels of the GDE matrix should be the focus in each training context? Driving instructors must be involved in all levels of the GDE matrix, especially the higher levels. Lay instructors are largely helpful for developing the experience of the learner driver in traffic (level 2) and to a certain extent level 3 (experience with the context of the trip). As one participant pointed out, the specific levels of the GDE matrix should not always be considered so separately. The levels interact with each other at any given moment so it is important for the instructor to realise this.

- **The role of e-learning and simulators in driver training**

A number of EU studies have looked into the potential for e-learning and driving simulators in driver training and testing. This does not mean that the European Commission is keen at this stage for these methods to be integrated into law. There was a general feeling that driving simulators have not yet reached a sufficient level of reality and complexity to accurately reflect the driving task. While e-learning is a valid learning method, it is only appropriate for some types of learning, such as knowledge accumulation. The training of social driving competencies can, it was claimed, only be effectively addressed in face-to-face training.

- **Volume or duration requirements for the MERIT basic training recommendations**

The current MERIT minimum requirements for instructor training and testing set objectives, but no volume or duration of training has been recommended. The representative of the Spanish National Driving School Association (CNAE) suggested that driving instructors should be expected to reach professional level 3 of Council Decision 85/368 CEE 16 July 1985 (Comparability of vocational training qualifications between the Member States of the European Community).¹

- **Mutual recognition of driving instructor certificates within the EU**

Whilst mutual recognition of instructors is an admirable and necessary goal within the EU, it was claimed by a number of participants that instructors from other EU member states could not simply be accepted immediately, even if an EU Directive came into effect. Different traffic regulations and driving test requirements and formalities exist in different countries and these differences should, it was claimed, be taken into account. Furthermore, if significant differences in instructor requirements persist from one country to another, it would be unacceptable to allow instructors with lower standards to create a two-tier system in the host country.

The MERIT team will discuss the issue of mutual recognition with the European Commission, but considering its lack of legal expertise, the team will consider removing section 6 (mutual recognition) from the minimum requirements paper.

- **Medical requirements for driving instructors**

Why should driving instructor applicants undergo a Group 2 medical test, but then only have to follow ongoing medical requirements for the category of licence in question after that? This, it was claimed, showed a lack of consistency. If high medical requirements are needed for the profession, they should be maintained throughout the instructors' career. This is especially relevant in the knowledge that medical impairments increase with age. Secondly,

¹ “LEVEL 3: Training providing access to this level: compulsory education and/or vocational training and additional technical training or technical educational training or other secondary-level training

This form of training involves a greater fund of theoretical knowledge than level 2. Activity involves chiefly technical work which can be performed independently and/or entail executive and coordination duties. “

the British delegation pointed out that disabled instructors are often used to teach disabled learner drivers. If the Group 2 medical requirements would be imposed, they would be unlikely to pass. Thirdly, it was argued that category A or B driving instructors should not be considered as Group 2 drivers (namely professional drivers) as far as medical requirements are concerned. According to this claim, Group 2 medical requirements are high more due to the size of vehicle involved (e.g. categories C and D) and therefore the increased safety risk, than due to exposure (kilometers driven as a professional driver).

- **Training content requirements for driving instructors**

Section 5 (content requirements) of the minimum requirements paper mentions, under level 4 issues: “disabilities, special needs, vehicle adjustment”. This is not to suggest that all driving instructor applicants should become experts in teaching the disabled. It is simply stating the importance of being aware of the needs and circumstances of disabled learner drivers.

- **Teaching real learner drivers prior to full qualification**

The current minimum requirements paper states that “Experience with teaching real learner drivers is required prior to the trainee instructor gaining full qualification.” As a result of experience in Great Britain, where such a system is being abused, it was decided to add that the trainee instructor should be under “constant in-car supervision”.

- **Different qualification grades or levels for driving instructors?**

What about having recommendations based on a series of qualifications for instructors, thereby promoting ongoing professional development? Professional development is important amongst instructors, but this is largely a matter for individual member states. The current MERIT minimum requirements create a basic level of competence which the MERIT team believes should apply to all future instructors. Clearly, there is opportunity for these standards to be increased, in various directions, for those instructors who wish to progress (beyond ongoing training requirements).

- **Ongoing training requirements**

A directive should ensure that it is only possible for driving instructors to follow ongoing training in the country in which he/she is operating. This is to prevent ‘training tourism’.

No timeframe has been given to the requirement in section 4 a) para.2 (“Persons who have ceased pursuit of the profession, and have missed ongoing training requirements during the period of absence, shall undergo a course of sufficient periodic training before resuming the profession”). Great Britain suggests a period of 12 months.

- **The GDE matrix and a forthcoming directive on driving instructors**

It was suggested that the GDE matrix should not be specifically referred to in a directive on driving instructors. The MERIT team agrees with this and the European Commission has already supported this approach.

6. Next steps

Following feedback at the information day (above), the MERIT team will consider changes to the existing minimum requirements paper in the following sections:

- The medical requirements for driving instructors and driving instructor applicants (content and periodicity)
- The requirement to teach real learner drivers prior to full qualification (include obligation of supervision)
- Para. 6 on mutual recognition of driving instructor certificates within the EU (consider scrapping)
- Refresher training for instructors returning to the profession (determine timeframe)
- Driving ability: add “the ability to control the vehicle if the learner driver is unable to do so”.

The MERIT final report will be formally submitted to the European Commission by the end of June.

Attached presentations:

- Objectives of the MERIT Project: Gregor Bartl
- The context of novice driver accidents and the relevance of the GDE matrix / Literature study: Nils-Petter Gregersen
- Current instructor standards: Nick Sanders
- The GDE matrix and driving instructor training : Nils-Petter Gregersen
- Teaching methods and didactics for driving instructors : Gregor Bartl

Further information (in English, French and German) on the MERIT Project can be obtained at www.gutefahrt.at/merit .

Annex: Minimum requirements for driving instructors: MERIT recommendations (pre-Information Day, May 2005)

MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR DRIVING INSTRUCTORS²

1. GENERAL COMPETENCIES REQUIRED BY A DRIVING INSTRUCTOR

The driving instructor must be able to plan, implement and evaluate driver training effectively and meaningfully using the knowledge, skills and understanding related to the topics listed in 1 a) to e).

- a) Comprehensive knowledge of the Goals for Driver Education, in the form of the GDE matrix
- b) Familiarity with a wide range of communication, teaching and motivational skills, with a particular emphasis on targeting self-evaluation skills amongst learner drivers (right column of GDE matrix)
- c) Ability to assess the skills of the learner driver and to identify and address shortcomings
- d) Ability to drive in a consistently high social, defensive and environmentally-friendly manner
- e) Knowledge of the official training curriculum and/or driving test requirements for applicants for a driving licence

Detailed content requirements for training and testing are listed in article 5.

2. CONDITIONS FOR ENTRY TO THE PROFESSION

Applicant driving instructors are required to:

- a) have sufficient schooling to meet the demands of training and working in the profession
- b) possess the driving licence of the category he/she intends to teach in
- c) have a minimum of 3 years driving experience with the relevant category of vehicle
- d) complete a screening process, in order to gain access to training and the test to become an instructor
- e) undergo a medical test according to requirements for Group 2 drivers
- f) undergo a background check with regard to prior criminal offences and/or traffic offences, to ensure that the applicant is a fit and proper person.

² MERIT is focusing on driving instructor requirements for category B. Special training and testing for other licence categories should be considered.

3. INITIAL QUALIFICATION

a) Training

Applicants shall be required to undergo obligatory initial professional training prior to the test. Such training shall be carried out in accredited driving instructor training centres which are subject to oversight by a recognised and appointed body. The programme shall at least include training on the teaching methods and skills required to teach all levels of the Goals for Driver Education matrix.

Experience with teaching real learner drivers is required prior to the trainee instructor gaining full qualification.

Detailed content requirements for training and testing are listed in article 5.

Persons responsible for training applicant instructors must possess sufficient knowledge and skills to train in the specific area in question.

b) Testing

Applicants shall undergo testing, according to the competencies laid down in article 1 and the specific goals specified in article 5, to assess his/her basic knowledge and skills with regard to:

- Theoretical knowledge
- Teaching ability
- Driving ability

The order of the above tests shall be determined by each Member State.

Testing of driving ability and/or teaching ability can be integrated into the training process.

Persons responsible for testing applicant instructors must possess sufficient knowledge and skills to test in the specific area in question.

4. QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ONGOING TRAINING

a) Ongoing training

Driving instructors are required to attend a minimum of 5 days of ongoing training every 5 years.

Persons who have ceased pursuit of the profession, and have missed ongoing training requirements during the period of absence, shall undergo a course of sufficient periodic training before resuming the profession.

b) Observation / Quality Checks (with feedback)

Driving instructors shall undergo a minimum of 1 observation, by an appropriately qualified and accredited observer, every 5 years. This observation shall, in particular, assess the instructor's interaction with the learner driver(s) and provide feedback to the instructor on positive performance and areas in need of improvement. The observation shall take place during a practical on-road driving lesson and/or in a theory lesson, if relevant to the member state in question.

Instructors found to be seriously under-performing during such observations shall be required to obtain specific training to correct the observed shortcomings.

c) Periodic medical testing

Ongoing medical tests shall be the equivalent of the medical checks for drivers of the licence category being taught.

5. CONTENT REQUIREMENTS FOR TRAINING AND TESTING

a) Comprehensive knowledge of the Goals for Driver Education, in the form of the GDE matrix

The driving instructor candidate shall be fully familiar with the hierarchical approach to safe behaviour, according to the GDE matrix (Goals for Driver Education), and shall be able to provide understanding to the learner driver about how abilities and preconditions on a higher level influence the demands, decisions and behaviour on a lower level. In order to emphasise the comparative importance of the higher levels of the matrix, training for instructors should begin with level 4 and work downwards to level 1.

- Level 4 content requirements: knowledge and skills

Individual aspects related to safe driving

- age and gender
- personality
- general values and attitudes
- intelligence, education and learning style
- disabilities, special needs, vehicle adjustment
- diseases and impairments (including alcohol and drug use)
- Feeling of invulnerability (zero-risk theory)

Social aspects related to safe driving

- group norms and peer pressure
- cross-cultural issues
- youth socialisation process
- lifestyle
- socio-economic position

Road Safety-related Statistics

- road safety/accident statistics, national and international for different sub groups of population and road users-related to GDE level 4-aspects

- Level 3 content requirements: knowledge and skills

Transport and road safety system

- costs of traffic accidents, estimates of human costs, society cost, health cost etc.
- effects of traffic on health, mobility, economy, environment

Decision making and behaviour in trip-related choices

- health status and driving choices
- alcohol and drugs, tiredness and emotional state
- distractions (e.g. mobile phones) and inattentiveness
- single vehicle accidents amongst novice drivers
- peer pressure in the car, passengers, reason and motives for driving, influence on accidents and driving style
- available travel modes, public transport
- journey planning;
 - traffic density, rush hours,
 - time of day, darkness, dusk and dawn
 - seasonal and weather differences, snow and ice, fog, rain
 - time management

- Level 2 content requirements: knowledge and skills

Traffic rules

- existing traffic rules and their applications
- increased internationalisation and travelling between countries
- road users who are not obeying traffic rules, and driver's ability to cope with them
- legal aspects of breaking the rules, police surveillance, methods and principles, penalties

Traffic psychology

- mental workload, visual attention
- routine in traffic and automatised driving behaviour
- overconfidence and calibration of subjective driving abilities in traffic
- risk compensation theory

Driver behaviour

- behaviour in different traffic situations (junctions, motorways, overtaking etc.)
- speed adjustment, general and in different road environments and situations
- cooperation with other road users and clearness about own intentions
- hazard perception
- dangerous situations, (animals, vulnerable road users, icy spots etc.)

Road Safety-related Statistics

- road safety/accident statistics, national and international for different accident types in different traffic situations-related to GDE level 2

- Level 1 content requirements: knowledge and skills

Vehicle functioning

- functioning of the vehicle and its different subsystems related to safety (airbag, seat belts, brakes, anti skid systems, tyres, chassis, child restraints, neck support etc, and benefits of using safety systems) and environment (e.g. fuel consumption)

- legislation concerning vehicles and their subsystems
- basic maintenance of vehicle and vehicle subsystems, particularly in relation to road safety and the environment
- principles of EuroNCAP (including pedestrian-friendly ratings), principles for crashworthiness of vehicles
- crash types, crash violence and injuries

Traffic psychology

- mental workload, visual attention
- routine and automatised of basic vehicle control skills
- overconfidence and calibration of subjective car control skills

Vehicle control and-related behaviour

- skills in vehicle control (starting, braking, steering, shifting gear)
- vehicle control on low friction
- vehicle control in high speed
- influence of the laws of nature on vehicle dynamics and movement
- sitting posture
- safety check of the vehicle
- environmentally-friendly driving style

b) Communication, teaching and motivational skills

The instructor shall have knowledge and skills relating to the following educational skills:

- Lesson planning, goal-setting and lesson evaluation
- Professional communication skills (establishing the appropriate relationship for learning)
- Basic teaching methods (demonstration, informing, setting tasks, checking)
- Advanced teaching methods (active learning methods such as coaching, moderating group activities, questioning & developing and giving feedback, etc)
- Selection of specific teaching method according to specific educational goal and driver's needs
- Learning styles
- Motivational techniques

c) Assessment skills (driving skills, personal characteristics)

The instructor shall be able to:

- assess driving skills of learner driver, identify shortcomings and address them
- assess the effects of the personal characteristics of the learner driver on safe driving
- encourage self-assessment on the part of the learner driver with regard to his/her driving motives and ability

d) Driving ability

The instructor shall possess a high and consistent driving standard, with particular emphasis on:

- a social and defensive driving style
- environmentally-friendly driving techniques

e) Knowledge of curriculum and/or test requirements

The instructor shall have a full understanding and familiarity with:

- the goals of the national training curriculum for learner drivers (if appropriate)
- the requirements of the driving test for driving licence candidates

6. RECOGNITION OF CERTIFICATES BASED ON ABOVE MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

In order to facilitate the free movement of professionals within the European Union, official test certificates issued to driving instructors, based on an EU directive on minimum requirements, shall be recognised by all other member states, in accordance with Articles 1 b) and 6 c) of Directive 92/51 on recognition of professional education and training.