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(Actions syndicale code de la route conclusions (EN))

## Free circulation of machinery Initiative: Highway Code

Analysis and comments on questionnaires sent to CEETTAR  
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### Introduction

Based on the analysis of responses to the questionnaires returned by the different national federations, the authors of this document (1) would like to make the following remarks:

1. Firstly, they wish to congratulate the persons that were responsible for completing the questionnaire. They showed detailed knowledge of the subject of the analysis and provided pertinent responses to the questions.
2. Some responses even went beyond the framework defined by the authors of the questionnaire (2) and added responses that were difficult to include in the pre-defined schema.
3. In general, it would be true to say that the different countries did not provide similar responses for any of the aspects analysed, which also indicated that the true harmonisation desired by the European authorities in relation to the free circulation of machinery has not yet taken place.
4. In conclusion, the representative nature of the different responses received is very pleasing, with the 11 most representative countries contributing information about their national systems to the discussion.

### Evaluation of the responses received, according to individual sections and countries

The questionnaire on the free circulation of machinery has been completed by the following Member States: France, Belgium, Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden, Germany, Denmark, United Kingdom, Poland, Slovakia and Italy.

The participation of five countries representing Western Europe, two countries from the Mediterranean region, two Scandinavian countries and two additional Eastern European Member States serves to ensure that the questionnaire is truly representative at European level.

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## **1. Problems encountered concerning the circulation of agricultural and forestry machinery**

### 1.1. Width of machinery

In six countries (France, Belgium, Portugal, Sweden (2.60 m), Denmark and Italy) the normal width is 2.55 m, compared to 3m in Germany/Poland and 3.5 m in the Netherlands. In some countries (Portugal, Sweden, Germany, Denmark, Slovakia and Italy), special authorisation is required if the width exceeds 3 m.

### 1.2. Length of machinery

France and Belgium specify the length of machinery with trailers: 12 - 18 m. Specific requirements also apply if any tools being carried exceed the front or rear elevation of the tractor.

### 1.3. Vehicle signalling systems

The countries that allow the circulation of longer vehicles, or machinery that exceeds one metre or more (front) or 2 m or more (rear), require that these vehicles be equipped with adequate signalling systems. In some countries (France, Belgium, Denmark), legislation requires the installation of one or more emergency beacons.

In other countries, such as Portugal, the signalling system consists of a red fluorescent triangle; in Sweden, vehicles are equipped with a red rear light and a white front light. In Poland, some vehicles are driven without the appropriate lighting, while in Slovakia oversize vehicles can only be driven if accompanied by signalling vehicle.

### 1.4. Vehicle speeds

The vast majority of countries impose a maximum speed of 40 km/h. In most countries, special vehicles or propelled vehicles without brakes can only be driven at speeds of 25 - 30 km/h. In the Netherlands, the maximum speed is 25 km/h.

### 1.5. Vehicle weights

The permitted weight for vehicles varies fairly widely between countries. For example, in France, the maximum weight is 3.5 T; in Belgium and Denmark, the maximum weight is 10 T per axle with a 6 T load. In the United Kingdom, there is a weight limit of 24 T (which is frequently exceeded); in Sweden the maximum weight is 18 T; in Germany, it is not permitted to exceed 40 T and 11.5 T per axle.

The maximum weight in the Netherlands is 50 T and 60 T in Portugal (10 T per axle, 20 T per 2 axles, 24 T per 3 axles, if the distance between the propelled vehicle and trailer does not exceed 1.80 m between the axles).

## **2. Problems encountered when crossing borders with machinery**

Practically all the countries surveyed stated that no problems occur when crossing borders with machinery. The Netherlands stated that Dutch drivers are able to obtain a driving license in Belgium and Germany. On the other hand, Germany complains that it is not permitted to purchase fuel abroad because the diesel is dyed red.

## **3. Principle of mutual recognition of standards for the registration and certification of vehicles**

Only France and Poland fail to apply the principle of mutual recognition of standards. All the other countries apply this principle, except for the four countries that failed to respond to this question (Portugal, Sweden, Denmark and the United Kingdom).

## **4. What are the requirements of the national legislation concerning driving licenses?**

Two countries stated that no license is currently required in order to drive agricultural vehicles. In the Netherlands, there is a minimum age of 16 for drivers of vehicles and in Portugal drivers will not require a license until September 2008, provided the vehicle weighs less than 40 T, is less than 2.55 m wide, with a maximum length of 12 m and a maximum height of 4 m. Similarly, in Belgium, persons born before 1 October 1982 do not require a license.

The situations are far from similar in the various countries. In addition to the above-mentioned cases, licenses for driving agricultural vehicles vary from country to country. In France, for example, a B-category license is required for vehicles weighing less than 3.5 T.

This is also the case in Sweden, Denmark, Poland and Italy. But in order to drive vehicles weighing more than 3.5 T, an E-category license is required in France, while a G, C or E-category license is needed in Belgium. Sweden requires a C-category license, while Poland and Slovakia stipulate that a T-category license must be held.

In Germany, drivers aged between 16 -18 need a T-category license for vehicles with a maximum speed of 40 km/h.

In Germany, drivers aged between 18- 21 are permitted to drive their vehicles up to the maximum speed of 60 km/h. From the age of 21, drivers require a C or CE-category license in order to drive lorries and other vehicles.

In the United Kingdom, the various licences refer to the legislation DG 4020547, the content of which has not been specified.

#### 4.1. Do any special dispensations exist for vehicles driven on private land?

Most countries, such as Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Poland, Slovakia and Italy, stated that no special dispensations apply for vehicles driven on private land or for drivers aged 16.

In France and Sweden, work conducted in the forestry sector, by ARCs or involving joint ownership of farm machinery enables the requirement for a driving license to be waived, if the work is conducted within the same business. Similarly, a young person aged 16 benefits from the same advantages when working on a privately owned site.

In Denmark and the United Kingdom, the same dispensations exist, except for young people aged 16 who require a tractor driver's license in Denmark.

### **5. What are the problems affecting manufacturers?**

A number of Member States have requested that similar vehicles exist in the various countries. Poland considers that various problems make difficult the task of adapting to European standards. Germany states that there is scarcely any harmonisation in terms of registration. Belgium highlights a number of problems with imported machinery.

## **6. Do you have a presentation chart outlining requirements for vehicle approval and road traffic regulations?**

Only France, Belgium and Germany have this type of reference framework. All the other countries gave a negative response to this question, indicating that they are awaiting the European directives.

## **7. What type of registration system exists for agricultural and forestry machines? Is it compulsory? How does it work in practice?**

In France and the Netherlands, neither forestry machines nor building machines are subject to a registration system. The Dutch are waiting for the relevant European directive. In Belgium, the system is compulsory for tractors and self-propelled machines, but not for mounted or trailed machines. In Portugal, drivers of large vehicles declare that they are able to drive smaller machines. In Sweden, tractors are registered in the same way as in Germany if the vehicles travel at more than 6 km/h. In the last two countries, there is no registration system for propelled or self-propelled vehicles. In Poland, registration is required if the vehicles are driven on public roads.

The other four countries did not state their opinion on this matter.

## **Final conclusions**

If the questions raised by the project authors and the responses provided by the different delegations are considered as a whole, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- 1 Even if, upon first impression, the responses provided do not indicate a high level of harmonisation that could form the basis of an appropriate European directive, closer analysis highlights a number of points of convergence between the responses provided by the various countries.
- 2 For example, some common elements can be seen in the information provided on the width, length, height, weight and permitted speed for vehicles, as well as the different signalling systems for cartage, so that some real harmonisation could be achieved in this field with a few minor adjustments.
- 3 The lack of responses to the questions concerning problems encountered when crossing borders appears to reinforce the analysis put forward in point 2.

- 4 The mutual recognition of standards appears to meet with very broad approval, with the exception of France, which, as a major producer of agricultural machinery, has little interest in recognising standards for the registration and certification of vehicles produced by its direct competitors.
- 5 In relation to driving licenses, this important section of the questionnaire also shows a certain harmonisation across the different countries, except in the Netherlands and Portugal, where no driving license is required.
- 6 Similarly, the question concerning special dispensations that apply when driving away from the public highways, the vast majority of countries indicated that these dispensations and those for young people aged 16 do not apply.
- 7 The majority of responses concerning standards for manufacturers indicate that the harmonisation of similar vehicles is required between the various countries.
- 8 Only three countries provided a reference framework for the approval of vehicles and free circulation. All the other countries are waiting for a European directive to provide a way forward in this area.
- 9 Finally, this desire also became apparent when the authors of the project asked whether vehicle registration should be compulsory.

## **Conclusion**

In light of the above information and evaluations, it would be appropriate for the Management Committee of CEETTAR to examine the different European directives, in order to be in a position to contribute, if necessary via the European Parliament, any improvements considered vital.

Brussels, 31.3.2008

Eddy Klöcker  
Director

	France	Belgium	Netherlands	Portugal	Sweden	Germany	Denmark	United Kingdom	Poland	Slovakia	Italy
<b>1. Problems encountered</b>		No exemptions for machines without brakes									
<b>1.1. Width of vehicles</b>	2.55 m	2.55 m	3.5 m max.	2.5 m without registration 3 m with registration Over 3 m: Special license	2.10 m max. A vehicle that pulls an agricultural machine may exceed 2.60 m	3 m Special authorisation if wider	2.55 m - 3.30 m or more between farm and fields	---	Up to 3 m	Authorisation for oversized vehicles with accompanying vehicle	2.55 m Authorisation if 3.20 m
<b>1.2. Length of vehicles</b>	12 – 18 m	12 – 18 m									
<b>1.3. Vehicle signalling systems</b>	Min.: 1 emergency beacon Max.: 4 emergency beacons			Red fluorescent triangle	If more than 3 m wide, a red rear light and a white front light		Emergency beacon if 1 m to front, 15 cm at side and 2 m to rear		Sometimes without lights		Yes
<b>1.4. Speed</b>	Tractor: 40 km/h Spec. vehicles: 25-30 km/h	40 km/h vehicles + old: 25-30 km/h	25 km/h	Max. 20 km/h	Max. 40 km/h Propelled vehicles: max. 30 km/h	40 km/h	30 km/h	In general: 20 km/h If with brakes: 40 km/h			40 km/h
<b>1.5. Weight</b>	Max. 3.5 T	10 T par axe, max. 6 T load	Max. 50 T	Max. 60 T	Towed weight: 18T Without brakes: towed weight = vehicle weight		Weight per axle: 10 T Max. 44 T 2 axles: 10 T 3 axles: 24 T If 1.80m entre axes	Limit: 24 T Frequent illegal excessive weight			Limit: 6 T per axle 2 axles: 14 T 3 axles: 20 T
<b>1.6. Other problems</b>				Few vehicles properly registered							

	France	Belgium	Netherlands	Portugal	Sweden	Germany	Denmark	United Kingdom	Poland	Slovakia	Italy
<b>2. Problems at borders:</b>											
<b>2.1. Approval of vehicles</b>	---	---	No	---	---	No	---	---	---	---	---
<b>2.2. Certification</b>	---	---	No	No	---	No	---	---	---	---	---
<b>2.3. Other problems</b>	---	---	Dutch drivers may obtain a B-category license in Belgium and Germany	---	---	Not possible to purchase fuel abroad: dyed diesel fuel	---	---	---	---	---

	France	Belgium	Netherlands	Portugal	Sweden	Germany	Denmark	United Kingdom	Poland	Slovakia	Italy
<b>3. Mutual recognitions of standards</b>	No	Yes	Yes	---	---	Yes	---	---	No	Yes	Yes

	France	Belgium	Netherlands	Portugal	Sweden	Germany	Denmark	United Kingdom	Poland	Slovakia	Italy
<b>4. What about licenses at national level?</b>											
<b>4.1. Name the different license categories</b>	If > 3.5 T: E If < 3.5 T: B	License G, C and E No license required for pers. born before 1 Oct. 82	No license. Min. age: 16	Until Sept. 2008: no license if less than 40 T, less than 2.55 wide, - 12 m long, less than 4 m high	License B: cars, small lorries License C: + 3.5 T License A, C; D or E for driving vehicles	License T (16-18 years of age) up to 40 T, 40 km/h License T: over 18 years of age, 40, 60 km/h License C, CE from 21 years of age	Car driving license sufficient for tractor and loads up to 44 T	Reference: DG 40 20 547	License B: car – 3.5 T License C: truck License T: agricultural vehicles	License T for tractors	License B
<b>4.2. Special dispensations on own land?</b>	Yes	No	No	---	No license on own land	No	Yes, no registration, tax-free diesel	Yes, if away from roads	No	No	No
<b>4.3. Drivers under 16</b>	Yes	No, ARCs are not permitted to employ students	No	---	No license if only on own land	No	If 16 years old, license required for tractors	No	No	No	No



	France	Belgium	Netherlands	Portugal	Sweden	Germany	Denmark	United Kingdom	Poland	Slovakia	Italy
<b>5. Standards for manufacturers?</b>											
<b>5.1. Yes or no?</b>	Similar vehicles required across the Member States	Yes, for imported machines	Similar vehicles required across the Member States	---	---	Diff. registration in Europe	---	---	Difficulties adapting to European standards	---	---

	France	Belgium	Netherlands	Portugal	Sweden	Germany	Denmark	United Kingdom	Poland	Slovakia	Italy
<b>6. Do you have a reference framework for the approval of vehicles and regulations covering free circulation?</b>	Yes	Yes	No, we are awaiting the European directives	No, we are awaiting the European directives	In preparation	Yes	No, in preparation in Danish	No, in preparation	No, in preparation	No, in preparation	No, in preparation

	France	Belgium	Netherlands	Portugal	Sweden	Germany	Denmark	United Kingdom	Poland	Slovakia	Italy
<b>7. Is vehicle registration compulsory?</b>	No registration for self-propelled forestry, machines, non-registered building machines	Yes, compulsory for tractors and self-propelled machines. Not for mounted or trailed machines	No registration system. Waiting for the European directive	Drivers of large vehicles declare themselves able to driver smaller vehicles	Yes, for tractors. Not for towed vehicles	In theory, registration for vehicles over 6 km/h. Except: self-propelled vehicles	---	---	Registration, if driven on public highways		