



2022

The Vehicle and Driver Chain in Europe



Participating countries

Austria (EU)
Belgium (EU)
Croatia (EU)
Cyprus (EU)
Estonia (EU)
Finland (EU)
France (EU)
Germany (EU)
Gibraltar
Greece (EU)
Hungary (EU)
Iceland
Ireland (EU)
Jersey
Latvia (EU)
Lithuania (EU)
Luxembourg (EU)
Malta (EU)
The Netherlands (EU)
Norway
Poland (EU)
Portugal (EU)
Slovakia (EU)
Slovenia (EU)
Spain (EU)
Sweden (EU)
Switzerland
United Kingdom

Introduction

This is the tenth edition of the ‘Vehicle and Driver Chain in Europe’. The report is published every four years by the Association of European Vehicle and Driver Registration Authorities (EReg). The main goal of ‘The Vehicle and Driver Chain in Europe’ is to share knowledge and to facilitate cooperation between the registration authorities and their partners by sharing insight in the developments and processes related to the vehicle and driver chain in the European countries. This report is a reading document as well as a reference base for any party interested in the work of the vehicle- and driver registration authorities in the European countries. The report has been compiled with the input from various participating countries across Europe, which updated their country profile on the Vehicle Chain website for this edition.

The Vehicle and Driver Chain in Europe offers insight into the way in which (national) vehicle registration authorities are organised and the way in which they perform their tasks.

In almost all countries the registration task has been assigned to a national central authority or organisation. These authorities/organisations may also be responsible for other tasks, such as type approvals or periodic technical inspections (PTI) or for the role of National Contact Point (NCP) in the cross-border exchange of transport related information, meaning they are both registration authority and/or type approval authority and/or PTI authority and/or NCP. In this report, we mean with the term ‘registration authority’ the authority/organization that is responsible for the registration task, possibly next to other responsibilities. It does not mean that we regard activities linked with these other responsibilities as a part of their registration task.

In this report you will find an overview of the Vehicle and Driving Licence authorities in 28 European countries¹, where the similarities and differences in their activities will be presented. Since the previous edition of 2019, 5 more countries have contributed. On the Vehicle Chain website, www.vehicle-chain.eu, you will be able to retrieve the country profiles of all the countries which agreed to participate. The country profiles offer an accurate overview of the registration authorities and their activities in the Vehicle and Driving Licence Chain.

As you will find out through reading this publication, the registration authorities have distinctive working methods, they are responsible for many different tasks and work within their own specific contexts. Despite these national differences, however, both the international regulatory framework (UNECE) and the EU legislation lead to increased harmonisation in the vehicle (registration) and driver domain, from technical vehicle standards to vehicle registration documents and from driving licences to cross-border traffic enforcement. A European Union with an internal market, free movement of goods and persons, and open borders in which vehicles can easily be taken from one country to another, requires an international approach. Therefore, international cooperation, in the form of EReg, remains utterly important.

More and more vehicle authorities are developing e-government services, such as electronic registers and services to apply for a driving licence online. Other current and future developments the European vehicle authorities have to face include zero- and low-emission zones, Light Electric Vehicles (LEVs), autonomous vehicles, and the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI). This broad range of developments affects the way in which the vehicle authorities perform their tasks.

¹ The contribution from Austria, Gibraltar and Slovakia dates from 2019

About EReg

EReg – the Association of European Vehicle and Driver Registration Authorities – is a European Association dealing with subjects regarding the registration and documentation of vehicles and drivers. EReg supports the registration authorities by contributing to a better implementation of registration policies and enabling the improvement of the tasks and services performed by its members. This way, EReg contributes to improving the mobility and safety of vehicles and drivers in Europe. In short, EReg’s motto is “better policy, executed better.”

The main objectives of EReg are:

- to bring together the European Registration Authorities
- to share knowledge, experience and good practices
- to identify, follow and influence European developments and regulations
- to take initiatives aimed at improving the performance of tasks by the Members as European partners
- to establish exchange and cooperation arrangements with relevant third parties
- to promote effective and efficient data exchange.

EReg cooperates with her members on current developments and opportunities in the field of registration and licences. This is done through Topic Groups, of which the first were established in 2006. EReg has established 21 Topic Groups and published fourteen final reports presenting background information, conclusions, recommendations and/or guidelines. Examples of the topics which are discussed in these Topic Groups are international data exchange, transfer and re-registration of vehicles within the Single Market, CoC data exchange, non-physical (including mobile) driving licences, and the GDPR in international data exchange. The reports written by the members in the Topic Groups were sent to Ministries, to the European Commission and to other relevant stakeholders at the national and European level. More information about EReg can be found on the website:

www.ereg-association.eu

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1

The Vehicle and Driver Chain

The vehicle chain consists of a series of events and activities that take place during the lifespan of a vehicle, from the set-up of legislation and the production of the vehicle to its registration, its use and finally its controlled destruction.

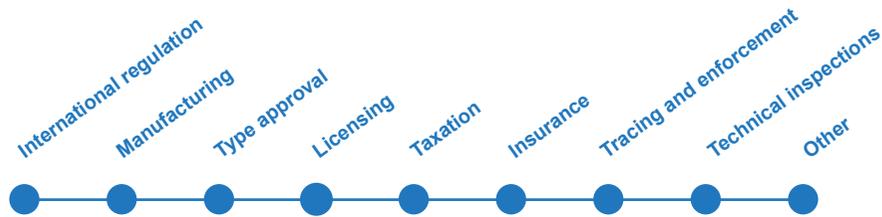


Figure 1: The Vehicle Chain

The vehicle chain starts with the development of (international (UNECE) and European (EU)) legislation formulating requirements for the admission of vehicles to the public road. Vehicles are manufactured based on these requirements. To be able to bring a vehicle to the market in the European countries (EU, EFTA and UK, Gibraltar and Jersey), an approval is required. The 'type approval' refers to the licensing of vehicle manufacturers by the European type approval authorities allowing them to produce a certain vehicle type or model. Individual vehicles of such a type or model normally do not have to be inspected anymore before admittance. Individual approvals relate to one specific vehicle and are based on an inspection.

The licensing of individual vehicles is an important part of the chain. It entails the entire range of mainly administrative activities which are required to make sure that the rights and duties of a vehicle owner are adhered to. The administrative activities include:

- Registration of the vehicle data and the person or company that is liable for the vehicle
- The issue of a vehicle registration document
- The issue of a licence plate (number plate)

During the licensing process, the vehicle and its owner/holder are registered in the national vehicle registration. Once registered, the vehicle owner is obliged to pay taxes, take care of an insurance and make sure that the vehicle undergoes (periodic) technical inspections. These activities are statutory obligations relating to vehicles that serve to maintain or support the licensing process. They also result in feedback from both the authorities involved and the vehicle owner and consequently contribute to the quality of the vehicle register and the licensing process.

While the vehicle is used, the owner oftentimes has to deal with events such as going through environmental zones, paying of parking fees and paying for tolls, etc. Tracing and enforcement includes traffic enforcement, police investigations and tracing and enforcement activities in connection with the vehicle-related obligations mentioned above. The vehicle will undergo technical inspections and may be 'recalled' to be repaired by the manufacturer or its dealer(s) because of a dangerous defect. Some vehicles are involved in an accident and are seriously damaged.

Over time, a vehicle normally will get a series of different owners, while some vehicles get exported and imported and re-registered in another country. In the end, the vehicle will be destructed by an Authorized Treatment Facility (ATF), a scrap yard that will dismantle the vehicle and recycle as much parts and materials as possible. These are End-of-Life (ELV) vehicles.

The Driver Chain

Most vehicle registration authorities also fulfil a role with regard to driver registration. The driver chain illustrates the activities with regard to the driving licence.



Figure 2: The Driver Chain

Just like the Vehicle Chain, the Driver Chain starts with the first step in the chain development of (international and EU) regulations and legislation. These regulations and legislation offer the legislative framework for different aspects of the driver licence chain such as the authorisation of the driving of power-driven vehicles in different categories, the required minimum age, the model of the driving licence in Europe, (international) mutual recognition and the issuing, validity and renewal of driving licences.

This chain starts with the development of international and EU legislation. The paragraph on ‘training and examination’ contains the procedures that have to be followed to obtain a driving licence. The ‘documents’ part refers to the driving licence documents, their application and issuing procedures. Next, the paragraph on ‘registration’ relates to the (central) registration of drivers. Then, the ‘offences’ part gives an overview of the (national) registration of offences and penalty point schemes. Finally, the validity of the driving licence will end due to expiration, health issues or a sanction, meaning that the licence may be withdrawn from its holder.

Reading guide

Returning to the purposes of this publication specifically, here you can find a comparative analysis of the information which is published on the country profiles (see www.vehicle-chain.eu). The second chapter discusses the European registration authorities included in general terms, while the following chapters offer more insight into their activities in the vehicle and driver chain. Information on the country profiles on www.vehicle-chain.eu is updated and offers a more detailed overview of the activities of the participating registration authorities. Last, this publication ends with a chapter on the current and future developments in and around EReg.

2

The Vehicle and Driver Registration Authorities

2.1 The Registration Authorities

This edition of the Vehicle and Driver Chain analyses the registration authorities of 28 European countries. 22 countries and regions are a part of the European Union (EU) and two countries (Norway and Iceland) are part of the European Economic Area (EEA). Since the Brexit, the United Kingdom and Gibraltar have stepped out of the EU and EEA. Switzerland is also not an EU member state, nor an EEA member. Table 1 shows an overview of the participating countries, their national vehicle (and driver) registration authorities, their website and the number of staff members. Personal contact information of each authority is available on the country profiles on the Vehicle Chain website: www.vehicle-chain.eu.

The registration authorities differ significantly in terms of staff numbers and the legal status. A distinction can be made between four legal types of vehicle and driver registration authorities, indicated by the following colours:

- 1 central governmental organisations;
- 2 agencies or authorities;
- 3 state owned enterprises;
- 4 private organisations .

As one can see in Table 1, most vehicle and driver registration authorities are (semi-governmental) agencies/authorities or governmental organisations. Austria is the only European country surveyed where the vehicle and driver registration responsibilities are carried out by a private organisation. In Austria, a cooperation of insurance companies maintains one of the two central registrations for vehicles. In Latvia, Lithuania and Luxembourg, the vehicle and driver registration tasks are performed by state-owned enterprises. Many of the registration authorities fall under the responsibility of, or are accountable to, the Ministry of Transport or Ministry of Infrastructure in their respective country. In Lithuania, Slovakia, and Spain the authorities are accountable to the Ministry of Interior. Exceptions are Estonia (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications).

Table 1 | Overview of the European Vehicle Registration Authorities

Country		Organisation	Staff	Website
Austria (EU)	A	Verband der Versicherungsunternehmen Österreichs (VVO)	n.a.	www.vvo.at
Belgium (EU)	B	Federal Public Service Mobility and Transport – Vehicle Registration Directorate (DIV)	105	www.mobilit.belgium.be
Croatia (EU)	HR	Ministry of Interior	30000	www.mup.gov.hr
Cyprus (EU)	CY	Road Transports Department (RTD)	190	www.mcw.gov.cy/rtd
Estonia (EU)	EST	Estonian Transport Administration	840	www.transpordiamet.ee
Finland (EU)	FIN	Finnish Transport and Communications Agency (Traficom)	950	www.traficom.fi
France (EU)	F	Ministry of Interior - Road Safety Delegation	200	www.securite-routiere.gouv.fr
Germany (EU)	D	Kraftfahrt-Bundesamt (KBA)	1115	www.kba.de
Gibraltar	GBZ	Driver and Vehicle Licensing Department (DVLD)	43	www.gibraltar.gov.gi
Greece (EU)	GR	Ministry of Infrastructure & Transport / General Secretariat of Transport	180	www.yme.gov.gr
Hungary (EU)	H	Ministry of Interior – Deputy State Secretariat of Registers	n.a.	www.nyilvantarto.hu
Iceland	IS	The Icelandic Transport Authority (ICETRA)	150	www.icetra.is
Ireland	IRL	Office of the Revenue Commissioners, Vehicle Registration Tax Policy & Legislation	8	www.revenue.ie
Jersey (EU)	GBJ	Driver & Vehicle Standards (DVS)	24	www.gov.je
Latvia (EU)	LV	Road Traffic Safety Directorate (CSDD)	571	www.csdd.lv
Lithuania (EU)	LT	State Enterprise REGITRA	546	www.regitra.eu
Luxembourg (EU)	L	Société Nationale de Circulation Automobile (SNCA)	120	www.snca.lu
Malta (EU)	M	Driver and Vehicle Licensing Unit, Land Transport Directorate	800	www.transport.gov.mt
The Netherlands (EU)	NL	RDW, The Netherlands Vehicle Authority	1697	www.rdw.nl
Norway	N	Norwegian Public Roads Administration (NPRA), Directorate of Public Roads	1400	www.vegvesen.no
Poland (EU)	PL	Ministry of Infrastructure	37	www.mi.gov.pl
Portugal (EU)	P	Instituto da Mobilidade e dos Transportes, I.P.	750	www.imt-ip.pt
Slovakia (EU)	SK	Odbor Dokladov a evidencií Prezídia PZ	25	www.minv.sk
Slovenia (EU)	SL	Slovenian Traffic Safety Agency	6	www.avp-rs.si
Spain (EU)	E	Dirección General de Tráfico (DGT)	3300	www.dgt.es
Sweden (EU)	S	Swedish Transport Agency	2000	www.transportstyrelsen.se
Switzerland	CH	Federal Roads Office (FEDRO)	504	www.astra.admin.ch
United Kingdom (EU)	UK	Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA)	5390	www.gov.uk/browse/driving

2.2 Tasks

There is a great variation in the involvement of the participating registration authorities in tasks within both the vehicle chain and the driver chain. Out of all the European registration authorities surveyed, all of them are performing vehicle registration tasks and/or licensing activities. Roughly half of the registration authorities are responsible for type approval (15/28), tracing and enforcement (14/28), and technical inspections (PTI and RSI) (14/28). Only some are additionally involved in the regulatory process (7/28), and taxation (9/28) part of the vehicle chain. Finally, interestingly, only in ten of the countries surveyed are the registration authorities responsible for registering a vehicle's insurance.

What is worth noting is that Transport Malta is the only registration authority which is involved in all of the steps of the vehicle chain, apart from Type approval. What seems more common is that usually, the authorities tend to fulfil only 3-5 tasks within the vehicle chain and the other tasks are taken up by other authorities/parts of the Ministry.

Most registration authorities, except for those in Austria and Croatia also play an important role in the driving chain. The registration authorities in Finland, Gibraltar, Greece, Latvia, Malta, Norway and Slovenia are the only registration authorities which perform tasks in all parts of the driver chain. They all provide training and examination, they issue driving licence documents, and they register driving licence offenses. The Netherlands, Sweden and Belgium only issue driving licences.

2.3 Missions

Since the registration authorities differ by legal status and tasks, their mission statements vary accordingly. However, a few objectives tend to stand out:

- To provide (high-quality) information and services to citizens and businesses **(customer-orientation)**
- To be an efficient organisation, offering social value **(efficiency)**
- To be a professional and reliable partner for both authorities and private parties in the market **(professionalism)**
- Contribute to road/traffic safety and environmental protection/sustainability **(safety and sustainability)**
- Provide good accessibility at a reasonable price **(accessibility and price effectiveness)**
- Boost digitalisation/participate in the modernisation of public administration **(digitalisation)**

The points listed above could be summarized as the collective missions of the registration authorities surveyed. The highlighted words are the values taken out of the mission statements. Most of the authorities have listed the provision of high-quality and up-to-date information and services as (one of the top) priorities of the organisation. This is not surprising, since the majority of the organisations are executive agencies or governmental organisations (hence the provision of information and services is naturally expected of them). The following two values – efficiency and professionalism – illustrate how the delivery of information and services should ideally be carried out. Further, many registration authorities also prioritise (road and traffic) safety and sustainability. This, together with the last three values (accessibility, price effectiveness, and digitalisation), contributes to the mission of being a professional and reliable partner.

2.4 Key cooperation partners

The registration authorities surveyed all deal with external stakeholders. Which kinds of stakeholders a registration authority cooperates with, depends on the registration authority itself, its specific tasks in the vehicle and driver chain and the division of other tasks between authorities and organisations at a national and local level. In general, the registration authorities collect, maintain, process and provide data. Due to the growing digital possibilities in the area of the electronic data exchange between the registers that are under the competences of the registration authorities, this arena is becoming even more complex. The more connections are made and the more data is exchanged, the more complex the registration authority's network becomes.

The registration authorities cooperate with both governmental and public/private organisations. The legislative framework is mostly set by the EU and the responsible national ministries. For most legislative tasks in the vehicle and driver domain, it is the Ministries of Transport, Infrastructure, the Interior, Justice, Economic Affairs and Finance in the respective countries, which are involved. In the execution of their tasks the registration authorities cooperate with the police, insurance companies, tax authorities, debt collectors and mortgage offices, public and private periodic test inspection (PTI) stations and other relevant agencies and authorities in the field. Key partners can also be found in the car business. For instance vehicle manufacturers, importers and distributors, car dealers, demolition firms and scrap yards.

(Re-/de-)registration and licensing of vehicles, including the transfer of ownership of a vehicle to another person or company, is a task of the registration authority that is commonly decentralised and done by different stakeholders:

- Importers (MT, IS, UK)
- Car dealers and garages (MT, NL, SE, FI, IS, UK, GI, BE, EE, JE, NO)
- Insurance agencies (MT, DE, SE, LT, FI, HU, IS, SI, GI, BE, JE, NO)
- Vehicle roadworthiness test stations/technical inspection companies (MT, SE, LT, FI, HU, IS, SI, EE, GR, PL)
- Authorised demolition firms (MT, NL, EE)
- Vehicle licensing offices (DE)
- Manufacturers (UK, JE).

In many countries, municipalities perform licensing tasks at a decentralised level. In the Netherlands, RDW partners with 1700 registration counters which arrange the transfers and suspensions of vehicles. Considering the driver chain, RDW partners with municipal offices which issue the driving licences. In Switzerland, the cantonal (small territorial) transport offices are important cooperation partners to FEDRO – they play a role in both the vehicle and driver chain. In Germany, KBA cooperates with about 650 driving licence issuing authorities and 860 tachograph card issuing authorities. By the end of 2022, KBA predicts that it will cooperate with about 5500 training centers and Chambers of Industry and Commerce.

2.5 Organisation of International and European activities

Transport and mobility do not stop at the border of the territory of a national government. International cooperation is becoming more and more important. At an international level, the United Nations Economic Committee for Europe (UNECE) has several relevant Working Parties such as WP.1 on road safety, WP.15 on the transport of dangerous goods, and WP.29 that deals with harmonisation of vehicle regulations. The last mentioned Working Party directly influences the tasks of (some of) the registration authorities in the Vehicle and Driver Chain.

The ongoing European process to create an internal market with free movement of goods and persons and the (digital) exchange of products and services supports further harmonisation between the EU Member States. EU legislation in the areas of traffic safety and

the environment is affecting the manufacturing, inspection and registration of vehicles. At a European level, EU legislation touches upon the tasks of the European registration authorities in most of the events in both the vehicle and driver chain.

Important new developments are for instance the 'revision of the Road Worthiness Package' in which, amongst others, a revision of the vehicle registration documents legislation (Revision Directive 1999/37/EC / Directive 2014/46/EC) is foreseen. Next to that, the EU has put forward legislation in the area of data and digitalization such as the Single Digital Gateway (Regulation (EU) 2018/172), the new proposal for the revision on the eIDAS Regulation (Proposal for a Regulation on a European Digital Identity, COM(2021) 281) and the proposal for an EU Data Act (COM/2022/68). Lastly, the EU is also working on the revision of the third Directive on driving licences (Directive 2006/126/EC).

As most of the European registration authorities fulfil solely executive tasks, representatives of the Ministries often negotiate policy and legislation at the EU level. Some registration authorities act and represent their vision under guidance of their Ministry (for instance Traficom in Finland) or are mandated to take part in the consultations (for instance SNCA in Luxembourg and RDW in the Netherlands).

2.6 EReg and EUCARIS

Except for Austria, Croatia, Cyprus, and Slovenia, all the European registration authorities in this publication are members of EReg, the Association of European Vehicle and Driver Registration Authorities that was established in 2006 and deals with subjects concerning registration and documentation of vehicles and drivers.

As seen in Table 2, all of the European registration authorities in this publication use EUCARIS. EUCARIS stands for the European Car and Driving Licence Information System and started in 1994 as a cooperation between national registration authorities to fight international vehicle crime and driving licence tourism by the exchange of vehicle and driving licence information between its members, to enable checks on any obstacles for re-registration of vehicles or the exchange of driving licences.

This cooperation was formalised in the multilateral EUCARIS Treaty, regulating the activities of its member states concerning the set-up and operation of a system to exchange information. This legislation allows vehicle information to be requested, after export, by the

member state of re-registration of the vehicle. Objectives for the exchange of information originally were to:

- Fight vehicle-related crime, by checking whether the vehicle, its number plates or vehicle documents are signalled in one of the EUCARIS countries as being stolen;
- Ensure that vehicles are registered and licenced for use on the public road in an efficient way, by transferring the vehicle data that are available in the country of origin to the country of re-registration;
- Improve the quality of the national vehicle registrations in the countries by minimizing the need for manual data entry, to guarantee the availability of accurate vehicle data for national and international procedures.

Since the amendment of the EUCARIS Treaty the EUCARIS system may be used for all international information exchange within the transport and mobility sector. New applications running on the existing EUCARIS technology can be developed, as long as they fulfil the goals set out in the appropriate legal frameworks, whether bilateral, multilateral, European directives/ Regulations or Council Decisions. The system may not only be used by the so-called Parties to the EUCARIS Treaty – countries that have signed and ratified the Treaty – but also by the other EU and EFTA countries. These countries are regarded as Third Parties to the Treaty.

Today, EUCARIS is a cooperation between 32 European countries and Gibraltar, Isle of Man, Jersey and Guernsey.

Table 2 | European Cooperation and International Data Exchange

	Austria	Belgium	Croatia	Cyprus	Estonia	Finland	France	Germany	Gibraltar	Greece	Hungary	Iceland	Ireland	Jersey	Latvia	Lithuania	Luxembourg	Malta	The Netherlands	Norway	Poland	Portugal	Slovakia	Slovenia	Spain	Sweden	Switzerland	United Kingdom
Member States EU	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●		●		●	●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●		
EReg Member		●			●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●
EUCARIS	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●*	●	●	●*	●	●*	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
- Vehicle information		🚗	🚗	🚗	🚗	🚗	🚗	🚗	🚗	🚗	🚗	🚗	🚗	🚗	🚗	🚗	🚗	🚗	🚗	🚗		🚗		🚗		🚗	🚗	
- Driving Licence information		📄	📄	📄	📄	📄	📄	📄	📄	📄	📄	📄	📄	📄	📄	📄	📄	📄	📄	📄	📄		📄	📄			📄	
- Police information (Prüm)	🚗📄	🚗📄	🚗📄	🚗📄	🚗📄	🚗📄	🚗📄	🚗📄		🚗📄	🚗📄		🚗📄		🚗📄	🚗📄	🚗📄	🚗📄	🚗📄		🚗📄	🚗📄	🚗📄	🚗📄	🚗📄	🚗📄	🚗📄	
- Owner/Holder information for traffic fines	🚗	🚗	🚗	🚗	🚗	🚗	🚗	🚗	🚗	🚗	🚗		🚗		🚗	🚗	🚗	🚗	🚗		🚗	🚗	🚗	🚗	🚗	🚗	🚗	
NorType					●							●								●					●			

🚗 Vehicle information 📄 Driving licence information * Reading access to EUCARIS

Next to exchanging data on imported and exported vehicles, the EUCARIS system is, among others, also in use for the following.

- **Exchange of information** based on the third Directive 2006/126/EC on driving licenses
- The Prüm Decisions (EU Council Decision 2008/615/JHA on the stepping up of **cross-border cooperation, particularly in combating terrorism and cross-border crime** and Council Decision 2008/616/JHA on the implementation of Decision 2008/615/JHA)
- Directive 2015/413/EU facilitating the **cross-border exchange of information on road-safety-related traffic offences**
- Council Regulation (EU) 2018/1541 amending Regulations (EU) No 904/2010 and (EU) 2017/2454 as regards measures to **strengthen administrative cooperation in the field of value added tax (VAT)**
- The **exchange of data on vehicle owners/holders**, to support the **enforcement of toll payments**, based on the EETS Directive.

EUCARIS offers its members the possibility to agree to additional bilateral agreements (mostly on cross-border enforcement of traffic violations). Currently EUCARIS is working on a Gateway to give access to its network to authorities outside the EU, via internet. This will open new possibilities for Australia and the USA, but also for low-income countries, e.g. African countries. More information about EUCARIS and what it could offer can be found at www.eucaris.net.

Where EReg focuses on the development of strategy, execution of European policies, exchange of best practices, and improvements in the areas that are of importance to the future developments and daily work of the European Vehicle and Driver Registration Authorities, EUCARIS is an information exchange system, and a Treaty based executive body that connects the registers of the Vehicle and Driver Registration Authorities in Europe. EUCARIS is developed by governmental authorities and when it comes to secure international data exchange in the transport and mobility domain, the registration authorities in EReg prefer to use EUCARIS as the exchange mechanism for the execution of their tasks. By being connected using the same system via the already existing national points of access (often the national registration authorities), the member states can save time and money, since no individual system development and maintenance is necessary.

2.7 International Associations

Depending on their specific tasks in the vehicle and driver chain, most European registration authorities are (associated) members of other international associations. These include for example CITA, the international association of public and private organisations actively practicing compulsory inspection of in-service motor vehicles and their trailers. CIECA, the international commission for driver testing authorities has the responsibility for authorising and supervising inspection organisations. Last, CORTE, the Confederation of Organisations in Road Transport Enforcement, is another association which the European registration authorities are a member of.

EReg maintains relations with the above-mentioned associations but also others, such as the European Association of Motorcycle Manufacturers (ACEM), the European Automobile Manufacturers' Association (ACEA), the Council of Bureaux and the Conference of Directors of Roads (CEDR).

EReg established formal relations with a couple of associations:

1. **AAMVA**, the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators: In August 2017, EReg has renewed its alliance agreement with the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA). This alliance agreement is to reinforce both organisation's common goals, namely that of ensuring safety on the road, sustainable mobility, and compliance with the policy framework. EReg and AAMVA exchange best practices, participate in each other's events, exchange information and consult each other on, among others, the following topics: mobile Driving Licences (mDL), autonomous vehicles, and vehicle identification.
2. **Austrroads**, the collective of the Australian and New Zealand transport agencies: In October of the same year (2017), EReg has signed an alliance agreement with Austrroads, the peak organisation of Australasian road transport and traffic agencies. This partnership is to benefit both parties in achieving their goals and objectives through the exchange of knowledge and best practices on topics such as autonomous vehicles, the Vehicle and Driver Chain, and vehicle identification.

3. **CIECA:** In October 2020, EReg has made yet another new partnership official: the association has signed an alliance contract with CIECA, the International Commission for Driver Testing. Once again, since both organisations share a lot of goals/objectives, they collaborate through participating on each other's conferences, exchange of knowledge, and through consultation on themes such as ADAS systems, vehicle identity registration and the vehicle driving licence framework, mDL, and the 3rd Driving Licence Directive.
4. **CITA:** Most recently in October 2021, a new partnership was officially established. EReg has signed the partnership agreement with CITA, the International Motor Vehicle Inspection Committee. Main aims of this alliance are to contribute to the objectives of keeping the international roads safe and to aid the progress in sustainable mobility. Topics which will be discussed among the two organisations are roadworthiness, vehicle data management, and international (vehicle) data exchange.

3 The Vehicle Chain

The different events that make up the chain of events in the lifecycle of a vehicle were introduced in Chapter 1. Table 3 displays the key tasks for authorities in the Vehicle Chain (Type approval, Licensing, Taxation, Insurance registration, Tracing and enforcement, Technical inspection and other activities (such as registering parking tickets) which the surveyed registration authorities are responsible for. This table will be a reference point for all the paragraphs within the Vehicle Chain chapter.

Table 3 | Tasks in the Vehicle Chain performed by the Vehicle Authorities

	Austria	Belgium	Croatia	Cyprus	Estonia	Finland	France	Germany	Gibraltar	Greece	Hungary	Iceland	Ireland	Jersey	Latvia	Lithuania	Luxembourg	Malta	The Netherlands	Norway	Poland	Portugal	Slovakia	Slovenia	Spain	Sweden	Switzerland	United Kingdom
Type approval				●	●	●		●		●		●		●	●				●	●	●	●		●		●	●	
Licensing	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Taxation			●	●		●	●						●		●		●									●		●
Insurance (registration)	●			●				●			●			●		●	●	●					●			●		
Tracing and enforcement		●	●	●			●			●	●			●			●	●	●	●				●	●			●
Technical inspection			●	●	●	●			●	●				●	●		●	●	●	●		●		●				
Other			●				●	●	●						●		●	●	●									

3.1 Type approval and market surveillance

Type approval is a process used to certify that a new vehicle type or model meets all EU regulatory, technical, safety and environmental requirements, before the manufacturer is authorised to launch the model on the EU market. Only one type approval is needed for the complete EU, since the EU countries² mutually recognise each other's certification. The manufacturer has a choice to select one of the EU type approval authorities to make an application for a type-approval. The manufacturer makes a series of pre-production cars available, which are equal to the final product. These prototypes are then tested on compliance with the EU safety rules (tests include e.g. the lights, braking performance, safety systems and crash tests). In addition, the prototypes need to comply with noise and emission limits as well as with the requirements regarding individual parts and components, such as seats or airbags. If all requirements are met, the relevant national type approval authority issues an EU whole vehicle type approval (WVTA) to the manufacturer authorising the placing on the market of the vehicle type in the EU.

Role of the vehicle authorities in type approval

As one can tell from table 3, about half of the vehicle authorities surveyed are involved in the type approval certification. For an overview of the authorities which are registered EU type approval authorities, visit the website of DG Enterprise and Industry³. Type approval authorities have the competence to approve types of vehicles, systems and components. They are also in charge of the authorisation process, issuing/withdrawing/refusing approval of certificates and designating the technical services. (EU) type approvals are subject to a legislative framework at both UNECE- and a European Union level. European type approval authorities meet at type approval authority meetings (TAAM) and together with the European Commission at the Forum.

In some countries the vehicle authority does not have a competence in type approval. For example, in France the type approvals are done by private organisations which are in

contact with the Ministry. In contrast, in Germany, the KBA is the type approval authority as well as the registration authority; i.e. KBA both grants the type approvals and registers vehicles that it registers them. In Jersey, the vehicles entering the country are expected to have an EU/UK Type approval. If a given vehicle does not have either of these type approvals, the authority carries out a Certificate of Approval inspection.

Legislative framework

The legal basis for technical harmonisation in the EU is the Whole Vehicle Type-Approval concept (WVTA). In 2018, a new EU type approval framework for motor vehicles was adopted. Regulation (EU) 2018/858⁴ became mandatory for all new vehicle types as of 1 September 2020. The Regulation sets out the regulatory, safety and environmental requirements that motor vehicles have to comply with before being allowed on the EU market. As part of this a large number of UNECE Regulations are mandatory. Together with Regulations 167/2013⁵ and 168/2013⁶, the new Regulation (EU) No 2018/858 encompasses the main part of the European legislative framework for type approvals and market surveillance.

The Certificate of Conformity (CoC)

When manufacturers have obtained an EU Whole Vehicle Type approval for a vehicle type in one EU Member State, there is no further need for tests or checks in another Member State. The EU Type approval system obliges manufacturers to produce their vehicles, systems, components etc. in conformity with its type approval. A vehicle manufacturer certifies this by issuing a Certificate of Conformity (CoC) for each vehicle. A CoC is a so-called car's 'birth certificate', in which the manufacturer certifies that the vehicle corresponds to the approved type. The CoC also contains specific data from the individual vehicle, which can be used for other tasks, for example taxes. With this document, the given vehicle can be registered anywhere in the EU (European Commission, 2022)⁷.

² The type approval certificate is also recognized by some countries outside the EU for example Iceland, Switzerland and Turkey.

³ https://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/automotive/technical-harmonisation/eu_en, see list of approval authorities for motor vehicles, their trailers, systems and components.

⁴ Regulation on the approval and market surveillance of motor vehicles and their trailers, and of systems, components and separate technical units intended for such vehicles, amending Regulations (EC) No 715/2007 and (EC) No 595/2009 and repealing Directive 2007/46/EC, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32018R0858>

⁵ Regulation (EU) No 167/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 February 2013 on the approval and market surveillance of agricultural and forestry vehicles Text with EEA relevance

⁶ Regulation (EU) No 168/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 January 2013 on the approval and market surveillance of two- or three-wheel vehicles and quadricycles Text with EEA relevance

⁷ FAQ - Type approval of vehicles (europa.eu)

According to Article 37 of Regulation (EU) 2018/858, from July 2026 onwards, CoCs shall be made available to the type approval authority that has granted the whole-vehicle type-approval as structured data in an electronic format (eCoC). EReg/TAAM Topic Group XII on CoC data exchange has developed an Initial Vehicle Information (IVI) message which enables the exchange of eCoCs between the type approval authorities via EUCARIS. The exchange is already used between several countries.

ETAES and DETA

All European Type Approval Authorities distribute type approval information through the European Type Approval Exchange System (ETAES).⁸ ETAES is a database, built and run by KBA, supporting the digital exchange of European type approval documents, which is only accessible to type approval authorities.

In addition, the World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations (UNECE WP.29) established a 'Database for the Exchange of Type approval documentation' (DETA). Since mid-2019 this system is used for exchanging UNECE type approval documentation between the (56[3]) contracting parties to the 1958 Agreement⁹.

NorType

In 2000, the type approval authorities from Iceland, Finland, Norway and Sweden set up a joint information system called 'NorType' for all information regarding European Whole Type-Approvals. The registration centre is based at the Icelandic Transport Authority (ICE-TRA) in Iceland. NorType is a central register but also a source from which the Nordic countries can download necessary information for their own type-approval and registration activities without having to carry out any further conversion processes.

Market surveillance

Considering the topic of market surveillance, EU countries established and appointed market surveillance authorities and notified the European Commission about them. The market

surveillance authorities are responsible for ensuring that vehicles, systems, components and separate technical units made available on the market comply with EU harmonisation legislation requirements. The market surveillance authorities also make sure that vehicles (made available on the market) and their elements do not endanger health, safety, the environment or any other aspect of public interest protection¹⁰.

3.2 Licensing

A vehicle licence (also called a vehicle registration certificate) is issued by a registration authority for a particular motor vehicle. A licence is required for a vehicle to be legally permitted for use on a public road. In some countries a licence is valid for one year and an annual licence fee is payable before a new one may be issued.

Licensing process

With regard to the licensing process, a distinction can be made between a vehicle-based licensing system and a person-based licensing system. The difference between the two systems is whether a registration is linked to a (individual) person or linked to a vehicle. In some countries the number contains information on the region where the holder of the vehicle resides.

Almost all European countries use a vehicle-based licensing system. Some of these countries, such as Hungary and Lithuania, offer the possibility to retain the number plates and use them on another vehicle.

The vehicle-based licensing system is based on a unique number per vehicle for the entire period that the vehicle is registered in the country in question. In some countries, the vehicle registration numbers are issued in sequence, which enables an estimation of the date of issue of the number, which can be an indication for the approximate age of the vehicle.

Other countries issue their licence numbers based on a certain syntax: a strict grouping of one, two, or three letters followed by a maximum of six numbers, often divided by a hyphen or space or sticker. Sometimes those letters and numbers are mixed, such as in the Netherlands or in Poland (A-BC-1A2B3C).

⁸ Use of ETAES is mandatory for European authorities for the exchange of EU type approvals.

⁹ Agreement concerning the Adoption of Harmonized Technical United Nations Regulations for Wheeled Vehicles, Equipment and Parts which can be Fitted and/or be Used on Wheeled Vehicles and the Conditions for Reciprocal Recognition of Approvals Granted on the Basis of these United Nations Regulations, (E/ECE/TRANS/505/Rev.2, amended on 16 October 1995). <https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/trans/main/wp29/wp29regs/2017/E-ECE-TRANS-505-Rev.3e.pdf>

¹⁰ Technical harmonisation in the EU (europa.eu)

In some of the vehicle-based licensing system countries (in Germany, Ireland, Poland, and the United Kingdom), the vehicle-based licensing system is combined with a region-based system. In Germany, 421 licensing offices across the federal states are authorised to issue licence numbers. If the registration plates obey a region-based system, corresponding visible regional emblems or letter combinations are visible on the number plates. When an owner/holder of a vehicle moves to another geographic region, the existing number plates are withdrawn and another licensing office allocates the number plates which correspond to the new region.

Belgium is the only country with a completely person-based registration system. Citizens can keep their registration plates for life and take them from vehicle to vehicle. Austria and Switzerland combine a person-based with a region-based system. Lithuania and Malta use a combination of vehicle-based and a person-based licensing system, and Croatia and Slovakia are the only countries using a combination of all three licensing systems. In Lithuania, if a person owns multiple registered vehicles, they transfer the number plates of one of their own vehicles to another vehicle registered in their name.

Vehicle registration documents

As mentioned before, a vehicle licence (also called a vehicle registration certificate) is issued by a registration authority for a particular motor vehicle. A licence is required for a vehicle to be legally permitted for use on a public road.

Council Directive 1999/37/EC on the registration documents for vehicles harmonises the registration certificates for vehicles in the European Union and sets out minimum rules on the re-registration of vehicles. Registration certificates may consist of a single part or of two parts; the requirements vary depending on the national rules in each EU country. In the majority of the countries (17/28), the vehicle registration document consists of one part (see Table 4). In eleven countries (Austria, Belgium, Finland, Germany, Greece, Jersey, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Slovakia, and Sweden), the vehicle registration document consists of two parts.

The Directive was amended by Directive 2014/46/EU to add the possibility to suspend the authorisation of the use of a vehicle for a certain period of time, without having to go through a

Table 4 | Vehicle Registration Document

	Austria	Belgium	Croatia	Cyprus	Estonia	Finland	France	Germany	Gibraltar	Greece	Hungary	Iceland	Ireland	Jersey	Latvia	Lithuania	Luxembourg	Malta	The Netherlands	Norway	Poland	Portugal	Slovakia	Slovenia	Spain	Sweden	Switzerland	United Kingdom	
Number of parts of the document	2	2	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	
Must be in the vehicle (when using it)	 *	 *			 **	 **		 *							 **	 ¹	 *			 *									
Contains historic information																													
Smart Card Vehicle Registration Document																													

* only part one ** only when traveling abroad

¹ The obligation shall not apply from 01-07-2018 in the territory of the country where the vehicle is used by the owner of the vehicle.

new process of registration after a suspension is lifted and to make it possible to retain a record of a registration after a vehicle registration has been cancelled. Furthermore, it was considered important to reduce administrative burdens and to ease the exchange of information between EU countries, thus it is required to record information relating to vehicles electronically.

Motor vehicle registration problems were considered a frequent barrier within the internal market, for both businesses and citizens. The European Commission “identified vehicle registration problems as one of the main obstacles faced by citizens when exercising their rights under EU law in their daily lives, [...] and announced the simplification of the formalities and conditions for the registration of vehicles registered in another Member State”. In 2012, the European Commission published a proposal for a Regulation on simplifying the transfer of motor vehicles registered in another Member State within the Single Market (2012/0082/COD). After a few years of negotiations, the European Commission decided to withdraw the proposal in 2018 (2018/C 233/05). Therefore, the (EC) 1999/37 is still the legal base for reducing the problems encountered when registering vehicles registered in another country. Currently the European Commission is working on the revision of the Road Worthiness Package, which also include revision of (EC) 1999/37.

According to Article 4 of the (EC) 1999/37, “a registration certificate issued by a Member State ‘shall be recognised’ by the other Member States for the re-registration of the vehicle in another Member State”. Moreover, Article 9 states that “Member States may exchange information as to check, before registration of a vehicle, the latter’s legal status. Such checking may in particular involve the use of an electronic network”. In connection to this, in 2017, the EUCARIS General Assembly decided that all EUCARIS Users are allowed to exchange, preceding re-registration of the vehicle, the dataset as defined in the EUCARIS Treaty based on either the EUCARIS Treaty, or Council Directive 1999/37/EC. For this exchange the EUCARIS AVI (Actual Vehicle Information) message is used. Following re-registration, a notification of re-registration may be exchanged using EUCARIS.

In November 2018, Regulation (EU) 2018/1724 establishing a Single Digital Gateway (SDG) to provide access to information, procedures, assistance and problem-solving services was adopted. This Regulation will facilitate online access to information, administrative procedures and assistance services that citizens and businesses need to become active in another EU country. One of the administrative procedures which organisations will have made available

online is the registration of a vehicle. Registration authorities will have to ensure that cross-border users can access this procedure online and that the exchange of the required data necessary for this procedure is enabled by the authorities in the vehicle’s country of origin and the country where the vehicle is to be registered.

In most countries, the vehicle registration document(s) contain(s) up-to-date information on both the vehicle and the owner/holder. Each time changes are made, a new vehicle registration document is issued and therefore no historic information is available in the document. There are four exceptions: Germany, Gibraltar, Greece, and Malta. In Germany, for instance, a vehicle is accompanied by the same registration certificate throughout its life. The certificate has two parts and lists details of both the holder and of the vehicle.

A vehicle licence may be a paper document to be kept in the vehicle at all times. This may also be in the form of an adhesive sticker to be affixed or displayed on the windshield of the vehicle or on the registration plate. Increasingly, the paper document is being replaced by an electronic record (a smart card). Three countries use smart card vehicle registration documents containing a chip: Austria, Slovakia, and the Netherlands. The smart card vehicle registration document in Austria was introduced on an optional basis. This means that the paper registration document (Part I and II) remains in use if a smart card is not desired or not possible (for instance due to short term export registrations or test-run registrations). Only Part I of the vehicle registration document is available as a smart card document. Part II is still a paper document. Part I includes technical data of the vehicle and is not considered a proof of ownership. On the other hand, Part II contains owner/holder data, and so is a proof of ownership. In the Netherlands, in 2014, the paper vehicle registration certificate was replaced by a vehicle registration card. This smart vehicle registration card contains two parts: the vehicle registration and the owner registration. Since 2018, the smart card replaces the paper document completely.

More information about the development and specifics of these smart cards can be found in the final report of EReg Topic Group V on Smart Card Vehicle Registration Certificates. Requirements for the smart card specifications have not yet been harmonised at an EU level.

Number plates

As mentioned before, a broad majority of the countries participating in this publication operates a vehicle-related licence system. This system is based on an unique number per vehicle for its entire lifespan. Based on Council Regulation (EC) 2411/98, all vehicle registration plates in EU countries have a distinctive sign of a Member State composed of 1-3 letters on the extreme left of the registration plate, combined with a blue strip including the European flag symbol.

In the majority of the European countries, the owner/holder of a vehicle may choose to buy personalised number plates.

Table 5 displays an overview of the syntax of the licence number the European countries use on their number plates, which of the three licensing systems they obey, and how much a personalised plate costs. Most passenger vehicle number plates in the EU are white or yellow. Most countries have white plates with black lettering. Some exceptions are Belgium, with red letters, and Iceland, with blue letters (in Latvia and Lithuania, commercial (temporary) vehicles have red-lettered number plates and in Latvia, electric cars have blue-lettered number plates. Luxembourg and the Netherlands have yellow plates with black letters for passenger cars. Gibraltar combines a yellow plate with black letters at the front and a white plate with black letters on the rear. Most European countries differentiate between 'ordinary' number plates, old-timers, taxis, CD (Corps Diplomatique) plates, temporary plates, and number plates for dealers or garages to be used for test drives.

In the majority of the European countries, the owner/holder of a vehicle may choose to buy personalised number plates. Personal plates are free of charge in Spain and Switzerland, while in the majority of the cases, one may purchase those plates for a fee, varying from 1 Euro in Iceland and 10 Euros in Germany, to up to 1500 Euros in Lithuania and 3660 Euros in Latvia. In Jersey and in the United Kingdom, DVS and DVLA put personalised numbers up for public auction where plates may be sold for thousands of British pounds.

Table 5 | Number Plates

Country	Number plate(s)	Vehicle based	Individual based	Region based	Costs personalised plate
Austria	AA- provincial emblem- 12345		●	●	€ 200
Belgium	1-ABC-123		●		€ 1.030
Croatia	AA(city)-123[4]-A[B]	●	●	●	€ 268
Cyprus	ABC-123	●			n.a.
Estonia	123AAA	●			€ 1.350
Finland	AA-123 or AAA-123	●			€ 850
France	AA-123-AA	●			n.a.
Germany	A[BC](district)-A[B]1[234]	●		●	€ 10
Gibraltar	G-9999-A	●			n.a.
Greece	3-letter combination derived from the 14 letters common in Greek and Latin alphabet + number (1-9999)			●	n.a.
Hungary	AAA-123	●			HUF 435.000
Iceland	AAA-123	●			55330 ISK
Ireland	99(year)-AB(district)-123456	●		●	€ 1000
Jersey	J001-J009 / JSY1-JSY999	●			n.a.
Latvia	AA-1234	●			€ 3.660
Lithuania	AAA 123	●	●		€ 1.448
Luxembourg	AA-1234 or 12345 or 1234	●	●		€ 50
Malta	AAA 123	●	●		€ 200
Netherlands	six positions: letters and digits	●			n.a.
Norway	AA 12345 / AA 1234	●			NOK 9000
Poland	A-AA-1A2A3A (max 6)	●		●	PLN 250
Portugal	AA-12-AA	●			n.a.
Slovakia	AA(district)123AA	●	●	●	€ 16
Slovenia	AA-12345	●			€ 103
Spain	1234-AAA	●			n.a.
Sweden	ABC123/ABC12A	●			SEK 6200
Switzerland	AA(canton) - 123456 (max 6)		●	●	n.a.
United Kingdom	AA(area)-12-AAA	●		●	€ 400

Registers

The purpose of vehicle registers is to store vehicle data and to make this data available for national and international stakeholders, e.g. for taxation and enforcement purposes. In almost all business processes of these stakeholders the most important data is that which identifies the owner/holder of the vehicle, as the liable person or company for the legal obligations related to the vehicle.

Table 6 gives an overview of the population, number of registered vehicles, density of vehicles, number of first registrations and de-registrations, and the number of the registered vehicle changes in the European countries surveyed. All figures can be compared with the figures of 2019, as a relative growth or decrease. For more information on the procedures and documents required in the different registration phases, visit the Vehicle Chain website at www.vehicle-chain.eu. The country reports also offer more insight into the possibility to suspend vehicles with consequences with regard to tax, insurance, technical inspection, traffic fines, etc. This procedure is available in a majority of the participating countries, but under different conditions. In most of the countries, the owner/holder of the vehicle is no longer required to meet tax and insurance obligations during the period of suspension. The vehicle may not be used on public roads during this period.

First registration

The first registration of a new vehicle that has not been used yet on the public road, is based in most countries on the CoC, with technical data describing the specific vehicle, such as the colour, mass, fuel consumption, emissions etc. In this CoC, the manufacturer declares that the vehicle corresponds to the approved type. Every vehicle with a CoC may be brought to the market and may be registered in all EU Member States.

According to Article 37 of Regulation (EU) 2018/858, from July 2026 onwards, CoCs shall be made available to the type approval authority that has granted the whole-vehicle type-approval, as structured data in an electronic format (eCoC). EReg/TAAM Topic Group XII on CoC data exchange has developed the IVI message – IVI stands for Individual Vehicle Information – which enables the exchange of eCoCs between the EU type approval authorities and registration authorities via EUCARIS.

Re-registration

Re-registration of a vehicle is needed when a vehicle is exported to another country.

The registration in the country of destination is normally based on the data on the vehicle licence issued by the country of origin, preferably made available in electronic form. If the vehicle has a valid roadworthiness certificate and no damage, a technical inspection is normally not needed. Electronic data exchange to support re-registration is based on Council Directive 1999/37/EC.¹¹

¹¹ According to Article 4, “a registration certificate issued by a Member State ‘shall be recognised’ by the other Member States for the re-registration of the vehicle in another Member State”. Moreover, Article 9 states that “Member States may exchange information as to check, before registration of a vehicle, the latter’s legal status. Such checking may in particular involve the use of an electronic network”.

Table 6 | Registered Vehicles per Country

Country	Population	Registered vehicles	Density of vehicles	Number of first registrations per year	Total number of changes per year	Number of changes of ownership per year	Number of technical changes to the vehicle per year	Number of deregistrations per year	Number of changes to the vehicle per year (export)	Number of changes to the vehicle per year (end-of-life)
Austria	8.000.000	6.200.000	775	3.000	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Belgium	11.560.000	6.200.000	620	670.000	930	n.a.	6.700	400.000	n.a.	n.a.
Croatia	4.047.000	2.283.818	587	118.000	n.a.	350.000	160.000	180.000	n.a.	n.a.
Cyprus	1.207.000	961.202	n.a.	35.699	n.a.	111.680	n.a.	22.125	472	n.a.
Estonia	1.331.000	946.000	710	39.843	270.000	195.000	4.600	30.000	17.000	13.000
Finland	5.531.000	6.989.000	1250	176.000	2.229.000	1.346.000	n.a.	1.402.000	130	109.000
France	67.390.000	39.930.944	n.a.	3.450.098	26.000.000	7.702.854	101.715	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Germany	83.240.000	59.020.091	710	3.611.650	35.739.814	n.a.	n.a.	9.139.437	n.a.	n.a.
Gibraltar	34.000	36.000	1059	3.000	3.600	3.600	n.a.	1.000	n.a.	n.a.
Greece	10.720.000	8.712.304	527	8.712.304	n.a.	415.868	20.701	55.140	1.243	46.643
Hungary	9.750.000	5.500.000	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Iceland	366.425	401.000	1095	21.485	92.500	152.785	6.000	10.972	800	n.a.
Ireland	5.010.000	2.900.000	568	234.337	n.a.	1.100.000	7.998	n.a.	n.a.	87.471
Jersey	107.800	127.000	n.a.	4.500	33.000	27.000	250	6.700	2.500	3.200
Latvia	1.902.000	1.019.099	n.a.	80.000	404.000	212.000	n.a.	30.000	9.000	25.000
Lithuania	2.795.000	2.070.000	605	235.000	236.000	395.000	16.300	268.000	54.000	23.000
Luxembourg	632.275	591.729	935	56.682	80.000	80.000	6.000	125.000	62.000	500
Malta	525.285	340.000	n.a.	n.a.	9.470	58.000	2.442	n.a.	317	n.a.
Netherlands	17.440.000	14.617.296	800	900.000	n.a.	3.481.663	n.a.	660.000	385.000	241.000
Norway	5.379.000	5.400.000	1000	300.000	n.a.	750.000	n.a.	250.000	n.a.	n.a.
Poland	37.950.000	28.800.000	628	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Portugal	10.310.000	8.349.381	807	314.770	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	107.752	1.189	84.381
Slovakia	5.500.000	3.077.648	600	126.700	n.a.	327.514	n.a.	62.000	n.a.	n.a.
Slovenia	2.100.000	1.737.194	824	126.040	471.346	471.346	46.912	402.030	n.a.	n.a.
Spain	47.350.000	34.700.000	733	1.400.000	n.a.	3.900.000	5.400.000	1.000.000	180.000	700.000
Sweden	10.350.000	12.000.000	n.a.	500.000	49.000	3.500.000	49.000	300.000	100.000	200.000
Switzerland	8.637.000	5.980.512	n.a.	415.000	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
United Kingdom	67.220.000	44.500.000	570	2.290.000	12.000.000	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	194.000	1.000.000

Table 6 | Suspensions

Austria: In the event of suspension, one must hand in the number plates and part 1 of the Zulassungsbescheinigung at one of the insurance offices. The obligation to insure and tax the vehicle is then suspended. No fee is charged for suspension.

Belgium: There is no option to suspend registration. In practice the number plate is handed in, which ends the registration.

Croatia: 61 in 2021

Cyprus: A temporary suspension of vehicle registration is not possible, unless a vehicle is deregistered. Immobilization: The application for immobilization of a vehicle is received by the District Offices of RTD, the Citizen Service Centers and the KEPO of the Department of Postal Services. The owner can immobilize their vehicle for a certain period or indefinitely. In case the applicant mentions a period that they intend to immobilize the vehicle, then the immobilization is valid for the specific time period, otherwise it is valid for an unlimited period of time.

Estonia: Registration suspension option is available in Estonia. During this period the vehicle must not be used on public roads.

Finland: The term "decommissioning" or "decommissioning from traffic" refers to temporary decommissioning of a vehicle from traffic and entering this information in the Vehicular and Driver Data Register. A decommissioning must be entered into the register by the end of the day during which the vehicle is decommissioned. No vehicle tax is charged for the duration of decommissioning. The licence plates of the vehicle need not be returned in connection with decommissioning. All vehicles can be decommissioned.

Germany: In Germany it is possible to get a seasonal license plate. With a seasonal license plate, a vehicle may only be on the road within a certain period of time specified by the owner. The holder has to fulfil the vehicle obligations only for the specific period. Besides this only German authorities have the possibility to suspend the vehicle. This process takes place if the vehicle does not fulfil roadworthiness, the lack of insurance or unpaid taxes. If the vehicle is deregistered it's not allowed to use the car on public roads.

Gibraltar: There are regulations that allow the department to suspend the use of the vehicle on public roads. A vehicle is suspended by the department if it does not, for example, have a road worthiness certificate. If he alters the vehicle and does not report the alterations to the Department. If he is stopped on a roadside check and the vehicle is not found fit to be on the road by a vehicle examiner.

Hungary: There are different reasons for suspending a vehicle: e.g. driving with no insurance, damages in accident, seizure, neglected tax payment, etc. The holder/owner is obliged to handle in the number plates and the Registration Certificate. The termination of the suspension costs HUF 10900 and the holder/owner has to prove that the suspension-ground has been eliminated.

Jersey: n.a.

Latvia: There is an option to suspend the tax and insurance obligations. Suspension costs about € 3 and is unlimited in time. Number plates are collected by CSDD and suspended vehicle is not allowed on public roads.

Lithuania: A vehicle can be suspended by REGITRA due to unfulfilled technical requirements or terminated insurance. There is also a possibility for suspension by a holder of a vehicle for a period up to 3 years. A suspended vehicle is not allowed to drive on public roads. The licence plates are not required to be returned to Regitra for the period of suspension.

Luxembourg: By returning part I of the vehicle registration document to SNCA, the vehicle owner can set a vehicle on stand-by, thereby indicating that he does not intend to use this vehicle on public roads for a certain period of time. Principally, a temporary suspension of a road vehicle's registration can be applied for an indefinite period. No charges are involved for temporarily suspending the registration of a road vehicle.

Malta: n.a.

Netherlands: In principle, the Dutch licensing system is based on holdership. That is to say, the owner has to fulfill the vehicle obligations regardless of whether he or she uses the vehicle. The owner can apply for a suspension of the vehicle obligations for up to one year. However, during this period the vehicle must not be used on the public road. The suspension of the vehicle obligations is arranged at a registration counter or an RDW office. It is also possible to register the suspension online. The vehicle is recorded as 'suspended' in the vehicle register. The owner gets a confirmation of the suspension in paper at the registration counter or by email when the suspension has been made online. The average cost of such a transaction is € 73,10. The Tax Department of the Ministry of Finance checks compliance with the regulations concerning the non-use of suspended vehicles.

Norway: A vehicle may be suspended from use in traffic when certain obligations are not fulfilled. This could be missing or not approved roadworthiness tests, the lack of insurance or unpaid taxes. In these cases the number plates should be delivered to a Driver and Vehicle Licensing Office. De-registration is a form of suspension because it gives a postponement of the obligations concerning holdership of the vehicle, for example tax and insurance, because the vehicle is temporary out of use. During suspension vehicles are not allowed to be in traffic.

Poland: Temporary withdrawal of vehicles from road traffic, at the request of the vehicle owner or entity entrusted with the vehicle pursuant to Article 73 (5), shall be imposed by the mayor having jurisdiction over the place of its last registration, on the basis of a decision on temporary withdrawal of the vehicle from road traffic. Temporary withdrawal applies to the following types of registered vehicles: trucks and trailers with a total permitted weight exceeding 3.5 tons; tractors; special vehicles; busses. A vehicle may be temporarily withdrawn from road traffic for a period of 2 to 24 months. It may be extended, although the total period of withdrawal from traffic cannot exceed 48 months from the date of its first withdrawal.

Portugal: Vehicle registration may be temporarily suspended. The procedure for temporary suspension of vehicle registration applies when:

- At the owner's request due to not being used on public roads, valid for a period of 5 years;
- For heavy vehicles that carry out public road transport of goods, valid for a period of 1 year.

Slovakia: 36 053 per year; Vehicle suspension is being decided on the base of holder requirement the District Office - traffic Department decides on a temporary suspension of the vehicle from the traffic system. The number plates have to be surrendered at the Traffic Police Inspectorate until the end of suspension.

Slovenia: Statutory duties relating to a vehicle can be suspended within 30 days of the expiry of the vehicle document (as indicated by the stamp) or anytime on the request of the owner. In this case the owner has to hand over the vehicle document and number plates to the vehicle registration organisation.

Spain: Vehicles can be temporarily suspended of vehicle register. The procedure for temporary suspension of vehicle registration applies when: The owner applies for it; The owner proves that the vehicle has been stolen; The vehicle has been handed over for its subsequent transfer.

Sweden: There is an option to suspend the tax and insurance obligations. Suspension is free of charges and unlimited in time. Excess tax is repaid. A suspended vehicle is not allowed to drive on public roads, with some exceptions (e.g. driving to and from a test centre). The suspension can be ended directly by the owner's application using a number of self-services.

Switzerland: There is no formal temporary suspension procedure. For a temporary suspension one simply leaves the number plates at the transport office (desk or often in a special "mailbox" that is accessible 24 h). The number plates will remain reserved for one year, free of charge. After the deadline, you may renew the reservation for another year (for a fee). Whenever you want to re-register your vehicle, the (old) number plates are returned after giving proof of valid insurance.

United Kingdom: A temporary suspension of vehicle registration is not possible. However, if a vehicle is taken off the road, a Statutory Off-Road Notification (SORN) must be made by the vehicle keeper. A SORN indicates that the vehicle is no longer being used or kept on the road and is not liable for VED.

Types of registered vehicles

With regard to the vehicles that are registered, as one could see in Table 7, most countries register the same types of vehicles. All countries register cars, lorries, buses and motorcycles. All countries except for Hungary and Portugal register mopeds. Jersey is the only country surveyed which does not register trailers (over 750 kg). A new development is registering Light Electric Vehicles (LEVs). LEVs have become particularly popular lately. Examples are e-steps, Segway, e-bikes and e-cargo bikes. So far, only five of the 28 surveyed countries register LEVs: Croatia, Cyprus, Germany, the Netherlands, and the UK. Although there are two relevant regulations which govern LEVs (2013/168/EU and 2019/631/EU), a harmonized European framework on the registration of this vehicle category is still missing. Furthermore, although all participating countries register owner/holder information, there are still several differences between the various registers with regard to the type of information which is registered. Information on the holder (of the vehicle registration document) is mandatory according to the 1999/37/EC. In most countries it is not known whether the holder is also the owner of the vehicle. Separate owner information is stored only by some countries. Lastly, all countries, except for the UK, register inspection data. In the United Kingdom, type inspections prior to admission, type approvals and regular roadworthiness testing are the responsibility of the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) and private inspection centres.

Considering the background regulations which are relevant, in 2019, the Topic Group XXI on Harmonization of vehicle registration procedures and data quality, had been installed. The intended goals for TG XXI were to determine a common data set which should always be registered and delivered in the international data exchange, e.g. in AVI (Actual Vehicle Information), and to describe the registration purposes of technical vehicle data in the different countries. Overall, 273 data items relate to M1. In some countries, technical data relevant for admittance of the vehicle are stored in another register than the data relating to the vehicle registration document. Nevertheless, the 20 mandatory data items that have to be registered based on the latest update of Directive 1999/37/EC are indeed registered by most of the countries. It was agreed to make a proposal to store and exchange at least the mandatory items from Directive 1999/37/EC (via AVI), supplemented with items which are registered by more than 50% of the countries. Topic Group XXI calls this list the minimum data set for M1. It contains 72 data elements¹².

¹² Final Report Topic Group XXI – Registration of Vehicle data for M1

¹³ <https://www.ereg-association.eu/media/1122/final-report-ereg-topic-group-xiii-vehicle-mileage-registration.pdf>

The European Commission proposed several legislative initiatives on data, open data and access to this data. An example is the revised Directive (EU) 2019/1024 on open data and the re-use of public sector information which entered into effect as of July 2019. All public sector content which can be accessed under national access to documents rules is in principle freely available for re-use. A particular focus will be placed on high-value datasets such as statistics or geospatial data. Other proposals include the Proposal for a Regulation on harmonised rules on fair access to and use of data (EU Data Act, COM(2022) 68 final) and the European Data Strategy (COM/2020/66 final).

Mileage

In 2014, EReg Topic Group XIII published a report on Vehicle Mileage Registration¹³. The main recommendations to the European Commission and the EReg members in the report were that the European Commission and EReg members should take all necessary measures to ensure the accuracy of the odometer reading between the date the vehicle is newly registered or imported and the date of export or final de-registration of the vehicle. They should work out a legal framework to combat mileage fraud. EReg members should participate actively in the creation of a central database with mileage recordings in their countries and in exchanging the mileage history between countries when a vehicle is exported. Additionally, the European Commission and EReg members should mandate that the full mileage history of the vehicle becomes a part of the dataset countries will have to make available to facilitate re-registration of a vehicle in another Member State. As one could see in table 7, vehicle mileage is so far registered in every country participating in this publication, apart from Austria, Gibraltar, Ireland, Norway, Switzerland, and the UK.

Directive 2014/45/EU states that odometer fraud should be regarded as a punishable offence, since manipulation of an odometer may lead to an incorrect evaluation of the roadworthiness of a vehicle. Most countries register mileage during the roadworthiness tests but there is no obligation to register the information in a national database and to exchange this information cross-border (except for the mileage reading on the PTI certificate). To create a legal base for this exchange, mileage data and the history of odometer recordings have been included as optional data in the Annex to the EUCARIS Treaty.

Table 7 | Vehicle Register

Data registered	Austria	Belgium	Croatia	Cyprus	Estonia	Finland	France	Germany	Gibraltar	Greece	Hungary	Iceland	Ireland	Jersey	Latvia	Lithuania	Luxembourg	Malta	The Netherlands	Norway	Poland	Portugal	Slovakia	Slovenia	Spain	Sweden	Switzerland	United Kingdom
Cars, lorries, busses and motorcycles	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Mopeds	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	○	●
Trailers > 750 kg	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○			●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Agricultural tractors	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	○	○	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Special categories	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●			●	●	●			●	●		●	●			
Owner/ Holder	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	●
Inspection	●	●	○	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	○	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Tax	●		○	●		●	●			○	○	○	●		●	○	○	●	○	●		○	○	●	○	●	●	●
Insurance	●	○	●	○	○	●	○	●		○	●	○		○	●	○	●	●	●	●		○	●	●	○	●	●	○
Stolen Vehicles	●	○	●	○	○	●	○	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	○	●
Vehicle Mileage		○	●	●	●	●	○	●		●	●	●		●	●	○	●	●	●		○	●	○	●	●	●		
Traffic Violations			●					○	●	○	○		○	○	●	○	○	●			○	○	○	○	●	○		
Mortgages			●	●		●	●			●	○	○		○	●	○	○					○	●	○	●			
Parking Tickets			●							○	○		○	○	○		○	●	●			○				●		
Light Electric Vehicles (LEVs)			●	●				●											●								●	

● Registered at Registration Authority ○ Registered separately

In 2018, the European Parliament adopted a resolution¹⁴ that contains, amongst others, recommendations on odometer fraud which should be regarded as an offence and be punished accordingly. The resolution explicitly mentions that “existing odometer reading databases on Member States’ level should be interconnected, compatible and interoperable on EU-level and allow for international data exchange while existing infrastructure like EUCARIS should be used for a cost-effective and timely implementation”. The European Commission was asked by the European Parliament to perform a pilot project (ODOCAR) to exchange odometer data with the aim to reduce odometer fraud. EUCARIS takes part in this pilot.

Actuality registers

In many cases there is a (direct) link between the central population register, the chamber of commerce register, and the vehicle register, to keep owner/holder information streamlined and up-to-date. In Luxembourg, all information on vehicles and their owners/holders is downloaded into a duplicate register on a daily basis in order to make all vehicle-related information an integral part of the central national register of persons. On the other hand Spain, Germany, the Netherlands, and Switzerland have no central population register (although in Spain, the vehicle register is connected to the central register of deceased persons). They do have central vehicle registers, however, in which vehicle information is centrally registered. In Germany, the local licensing offices communicate any changes to the central vehicle registers at KBA. While owner/holder and vehicle data is mostly registered at the registration authority of every country, Poland and Slovenia are exceptions to this rule. In Poland, it is the Ministry of Digital Affairs and in Slovenia, the Ministry of Infrastructure registers this type of information.

Data provision

The provision of vehicle data is arranged differently in each country. In many cases, the information on the owner/holder of the vehicle is provided free of charge to governmental authorities and to anyone acting on behalf of the governmental authorities. This information is not available to the general public (although in Finland and Sweden, the vehicle register is publicly available and in the Netherlands and Norway, limited information is available to the public). Also, the registration authorities tend to work very closely with the police, especially on the topic of stolen vehicles. In half of the cases (14/28), information on stolen vehicles is registered by the registration authorities and is shared with the police, while in the case of the other half of the

28 authorities, it is the police which registers the stolen vehicles. When it comes to insurance, insurance companies with a legitimate interest may gain access to data on the owner/holder and the vehicle, if for instance an accident has occurred. In the Netherlands, in some cases companies can request specific information from the vehicle register at a certain cost.

In Ireland, Belgium, and the United Kingdom, businesses could request information from the vehicle register and receive non-personal statistical data, while vehicle manufacturers and distributors are provided with the holder’s name and address to facilitate a recall. The public in Ireland may request this information at a cost of 6 EUR (in Jersey, the public may request the information for 12 EUR).

EReg Topic Group I on International data exchange has developed a general approach for international data exchange, reflecting the general vision of EReg on automated international information exchange. Next to that, EReg Topic Group XX on GDPR in International data exchange has developed optional guidelines on the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 in international data exchange¹⁵ which sets out how registration authorities deal with data protection in international data exchange.

3.3 Taxation

Registration authorities probably play a role in the taxation processes concerning vehicles in all countries, since most taxes are based on certain vehicle characteristics, such as the age of the vehicle, its weight and engine capacity, the CO2 emission rating etc. The registration authorities provide the vehicle data needed to determine how much tax has to be paid. Next to that, a minority (9/28) of the European Registration Authorities is involved with collection of taxes (see Table 3). There where the registration authorities are not responsible for taxation, it is the Customs Administration/Tax Department, Ministry of Finance (Poland and Slovenia), federal states (Germany), or the cantons (Switzerland), which are tasked to decide on the tax amounts and collect all the vehicle taxes. A couple of common types of taxes could be distinguished:

- Taxes related to the purchase of a vehicle, for example value added taxes or transfer taxes.
- Taxes related to owning or holding a vehicle, for example periodical taxes or road taxes.
- Taxes related to the use of a vehicle, for example tolls.

¹⁴ http://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-8-2018-0235_EN.pdf

¹⁵ <https://www.ereg-association.eu/media/2206/final-report-tg-xx-ereg-guidelines-on-privacy-and-data-protection-in-international-data.pdf>

In Finland, Sweden, and Austria, the vehicle registration and tax systems are strongly linked. In Iceland, ICETRA keeps track of tax payments; when an owner or holder of a vehicle pays no taxes, it is not possible to have a periodic technical inspection (PTI). In Austria and Finland, the annual tax payments are used to update the register details. In the United Kingdom, DVLA sends automatic renewal reminders to vehicle owners and holders. Once the Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) is paid, the owner/holder receives a new tax disc, which must be displayed on the windscreen of the vehicle.

One of the developments in the area of taxation is the exchange of vehicle data for the assessment and control of taxes. The European Tax Authorities are interested in gaining automated access to vehicle data for the assessment and control of Value Added Tax (VAT) and to support the fight against VAT fraud. DG TAXUD and the Member States have worked on Council Regulation (EU) 2018/1541 amending Council Regulations (EU) No 904/2010 and (EU) 2017/2454 as regards measures to strengthen administrative cooperation in the field of VAT. The cross-border exchange of information is now carried out by means of the EUCARIS system.

3.4 Insurance

The involvement of registration authorities in vehicle insurances knows three aspects:

- Check the presence of an insurance before registration
- Hold a central Insurance Register
- Provide vehicle information to the insurance companies, e.g. to determine the tariffs

In almost all the countries of the participating European Registration Authorities, (a proof of) insurance is a precondition to register or use a vehicle. In Latvia, one does not need an insurance to register a vehicle. However, an insurance is required to perform a PTI and use the vehicle on the public roads. In Poland, the insurance document is checked when a vehicle is registered, but a lack of this document does not result in the refusal of the vehicle's registration. In the Netherlands too, a proof of insurance is not needed upon registration. In Jersey, proof of insurance is required at the first registration, but not during transfers of ownership or deregistration.

10 out of the 28 European registration authorities (see Table 3) perform a role in the registration of insurance information. In Germany, the insurance companies upload and store

the insurance proof in a central database operated by the German association of insurance companies. KBA records the insurance details in the 'Zentrales Fahrzeugregister' (ZFZR), the central vehicle register, and communicates this to the relevant insurance company. The insurance companies ensure a vehicle is insured at all times and notify the KBA once this obligation is violated, so that the use of the vehicle can be prohibited. In Hungary, the Ministry of Interior keeps a central register with all insurance data. Hungarian insurance companies are obliged to forward (changes in) insurance information to the Ministry within three days. In the Netherlands, insurance companies are under the obligation to report all insurance policies and cancellations to RDW, which maintains a central insurance register. RDW checks that the vehicle is insured by cross-referencing the registers.

In some countries where the registration authorities are not responsible for a central insurance registration, the insurance is registered by private insurance companies (i.e. in Estonia, Latvia, and Slovenia) or by associations of insurance companies. These structures are comparable to the Austrian structure, as the Austrian Insurance Association (VVO) registers the insurance details that are supplied as part of the registration process. In Belgium, the Insurance Supervision Division of the FPS Economic Affairs compiles a central insurance register. In Luxembourg, insurance companies and SNCA are connected to a central database, where the insurance companies are obliged to register the insurance data. This situation is comparable to that of Sweden where the system of the insurance companies is linked to the register of the registration authority.

In some of the countries in which the European registration authorities are not involved in the insurance registration, there is no central insurance register at all.

Concerning the provision of vehicle data we may assume that in most countries the insurance companies have the possibility to retrieve some vehicle data from the RAs. In Switzerland, however, another organisation, the transport office, reports vehicle registration to the insurance companies.

In 2013, the final report of EReg Topic Group XI on tackling uninsured driving was published¹⁶. Tackling uninsured driving requires intensive and close cooperation between insurance authorities and vehicle registration authorities. The differences between the national registration systems for Motor Third Party Liability (MTPL) insurances and vehicle registrations, and the lack of harmonisation, make detecting uninsured vehicles/drivers complicated. At the same

¹⁶ <https://www.ereg-association.eu/media/1120/final-report-ereg-topic-group-xi-tackling-uninsured-driving.pdf>

time, Directive 2009/103/EC relating to insurance against civil liability in respect to the use of motor vehicles, and the enforcement of the obligation to insure against such liability, limits the possible actions which can be taken to detect and penalise uninsured vehicles/drivers.

Nowadays, vehicle and insurance information is available at an international level, thanks to the Prüm legal base for exchanging insurance information (Council Decisions 2008/615/JHA and 2008/616/JHA). The EUCARIS system is used by the EU countries to exchange vehicle insurance data with each other. Up to November 2021, this insurance information could not be used for traffic enforcement.

On 24 November 2021, Directive (EU) 2021/2118 was published, amending Directive 2009/103/EC. Based on the new Directive the cross-border exchange of insurance information is possible, supporting also systematic checks of the vehicle insurance of vehicles originating in another Member State. The new Directive however unfortunately does not describe how this cross-border exchange should be carried out in practice. It is now unsure if and how the current exchange of insurance data based on the Prüm legal base could be of any help.

3.5 Tracing and Enforcement

Thirteen out of twenty-eight surveyed vehicle authorities are involved in the 'Tracing and Enforcement' part of the Vehicle Chain (see Table 3). Their roles vary from the provision of data to an, often automated, administrative check and active enforcement by specific employees taking care of tracing and enforcement.

However, in most of the countries contributing to this publication, this task is mainly a responsibility of the (national) law enforcement authorities (the police or the customs). In Belgium, DIV actively searches for registration numbers on which no vehicle has been registered for over four months and whose registration plates have not been handed in. In Croatia, the registration authority is in close contact with the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Interior. While the Ministry of Finance provides the registration authority with data on the vehicle owner's unpaid taxes and fines, the Ministry of Interior uses the vehicle register to trace the vehicle owners and to issue extra fines or warnings.

The Ministry of Interior in Hungary has been appointed to fulfil the tasks of the Hungarian national Schengen Information System (SIS) Authority. The Ministry of Interior has a prominent role in the process of entering the Hungarian records and signals into SIS and performs tasks

in the field of information exchange. In Norway, the NPRA traffic inspection service plays an active role in inspecting the registration system for owners that fail to fulfil their duties with regard to insurance, tax and inspection. If the vehicle owner fails to fulfil their duties with regard to the three responsibilities, the NPRA, the customs, or the police confiscate the number plates. The RTD in Cyprus and DGT in Spain largely carry out this task themselves, and employ traffic police agents who take care of tracing and enforcement.

In the United Kingdom, a dedicated team of DVLA's staff is responsible for the collection of Vehicle Excise Duty (VED). In order to enforce this obligation, DVLA organises special joint campaigns with the national police, wheel-clamping actions via private contractors, partnership agreements with local municipal authorities, and they also use Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) to read, scan, and check number plates against a file of unlicensed vehicles. In Jersey, DVS works very closely with the States of Jersey Police, Jersey Customs and Honorary officers, inspecting post-collision incidents as well as carrying out regular roadside checks.

RDW in the Netherlands regularly compares vehicle and holder details in the vehicle register with insurance and inspection details. If applicable, RDW sends the owner/holder a settlement offer that specifies a certain fine. If there is no response, the matter is passed onto the Dutch Ministry of Justice. The Dutch Ministry of Finance is responsible for enforcing tax liabilities. The other European Registration Authorities which are not actively involved in tracing and enforcement, but which take care of the national vehicle registers, are in close contact with other governmental services, such as the police (which is actively involved in this task). Consequently, the registration authorities provide the governmental authorities vehicle owner/holder information, which is of vital importance to the tracing and enforcement activities. During the regular processes in the licensing and technical inspection link, for instance, the Estonian Transport Administration indirectly contributes to tracing and enforcement by performing vehicle identification inspections, by checking IDs and vehicle documents, and by checking tax and insurance obligations.

ICETRA in Iceland compiles a list of vehicles that have not been presented for a technical inspection or for which no taxes have been paid to the police on a monthly basis. In Ireland, the police enforces compliance with licensing- and insurance obligations through visual checks

for stickers displayed on the vehicle windscreen. This is done through ANPR technology. The Irish licensing agencies are further not actively involved in tracing and enforcement, other than through the issue of reminder notices to those who still have to pay their periodical taxes.

In 2016, EReg published its final report of Topic Group XVI on Preventing and Combatting Vehicle Crime and Fraud with Damaged Cars.¹⁷ The report shows that there are broad differences in the procedures in use regarding damaged vehicles. Problems recognised were that registration documents of these vehicles are often not withdrawn, in most cases information about damage is not available, and finally, vehicles are not always physically checked before re-registration. This results in the issuance of registration certificates for road-unworthy vehicles. The main recommendations stemming from this report included to register information about heavy damage and exchange this through EUCARIS. Meanwhile, this has been implemented. Furthermore, some other recommendations were to use damage information as a trigger for an extra verification of the vehicle's document; to adopt an end-of-life status if the vehicle was previously registered with that status by another country, and to prevent the rehabilitation of a vehicle's status once its registration has been cancelled or de-registered due to destruction.

There is an EU Platform for tackling Vehicle Crime established to gather damage information from the police and insurance companies. EReg participates in this Platform. Other participants are FIA, Insurance Europe, EGARA, The Council of Bureaux, ACEA, CECRA, CARPOL and LeasEurope.

3.6 Technical inspections (PTI and RSI)

There are different types of technical inspections: inspections needed to allow a vehicle access to the public road (after import, after an accident with serious damage or after some modifications of the vehicle) and inspections of vehicles that already are admitted to the road: roadside inspections (RSI) and periodical technical inspections (PTI). With regard to PTI, EU legislation ensures that all vehicles and their trailers are inspected at regular intervals.

In 2014, an agreement was reached over 'The Roadworthiness Package', which contains three directives on PTI (2014/45/EU), on registration documents of vehicles (2014/46/EU), and on RSI (2014/47/EU). EU legislation provides a basis for checking that vehicles throughout the EU are in a roadworthy condition and meet the safety standards laid down in the three Directives. Later, in 2021, an implementation report on the road safety aspects of the Roadworthiness Package was published. Some key recommendations in this report are to harmonise and tighten the test regime and introduce the obligation of additional checks after reaching a specified mileage; to make use of full electronic records; to use the Vehicle Information Platform, a central system suggested by the EC in Directive 2014/45/EU to exchange data electronically between Member States; and to make the exchange of odometer readings, information about accidents, and the frequency of malfunctions obligatory.¹⁸ The Roadworthiness Package is currently being revised by the European Commission.

Roadside inspections

With regard to roadside inspections, which are unannounced and obligatory, a number of technical roadside inspections of commercial vehicles have to be carried out by every Member State, regardless of whether the vehicles are registered inside the EU or not. These checks cover brakes, emissions and an assessment of the condition of the vehicles. Authorities should carry out their inspections based on the risk profile (good/bad behaviour) of the vehicle owner or the transport undertaking using the vehicle. Recent roadside technical inspection reports or proof that the vehicle has undergone mandatory roadworthiness tests may be requested. In 2017, the European Commission has decided to set up an RSI messaging system which enables the EU Member States after an inspection to notify serious infringements and dangerous defects to the country of registration of the vehicle.¹⁹

¹⁷ <https://www.ereg-association.eu/media/1509/final-report-ereg-topic-group-xvi.pdf>

¹⁸ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52021IP0122&qid=1646658628710>

¹⁹ http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2017/2205/oj

Periodical technical inspections

The frequency of PTIs varies per member state. The PTI Directive (2014/45/EU) states that passenger cars are subject to PTIs at the latest four years after the vehicle's first registration, and thereafter at least every two years (4-2-2-2- etc.). Considering that this is a minimum requirement, it is interesting to see that some of the countries (9/28) have formulated a stricter regime for these inspections. Jersey has the strictest regime with a first check after the first year of registration and thereafter, the PTI is to be conducted every year (1-1-1-1). Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Switzerland, and the UK require the same frequency of checks for buses, lorries, and trailers. Further, Croatia and Latvia also have one of the strictest regimes, since a PTI is required after the first two years of registration, and then every subsequent year – 2-1-1-1 (or every other year – 2-2-2-2). On the other hand, Malta has the most lenient regime (5-2-2-2). Table 8 shows the current frequency of PTIs per country and the parties the inspections are conducted by.

With regard to the organisations which conduct the roadworthiness tests, almost all countries (22/28) let the inspections be performed by private inspection centres which are supervised by a governmental organisation (in most cases this is the licensing authority itself). There are a few countries: Greece, Hungary, Latvia, and Spain where both private and public inspection centres conduct the inspections. In four countries (Austria, the Netherlands, and Norway), it is the commercial garages which are tasked with PTI.

Gibraltar, Jersey, Latvia, and Luxembourg are the only countries letting the central licensing authority conduct the inspections. Finally, Switzerland is the only country relying solely on the public inspection centres to carry out the PTI.

If the PTI process is carried out by private certified PTI stations, the PTI authority (which could be also the registration authority) is responsible for the certification of these companies and supervision. In Estonia, the vehicle authority signs contracts with specific private certified PTI stations which are supervised. In Finland, technical inspection activities are open to free competition. Traficom is responsible for granting permissions to operate the motor vehicle inspection businesses, and it is also responsible for supervising the training and functioning of the businesses.

Vehicle inspections might be combined with other activities. In Latvia, during the inspection, tax is paid and the insurance is checked for validity.

Table 8 | Periodical Technical Inspections (PTI)

Country	Frequency	Conducted by
Austria	3-2-1-1-	A
Belgium	4-1-1-1-	B
Croatia	2-1-1-1-	B
Cyprus	4-2-2-2-2-2	B
Estonia	4-2-2-2-1	B
Finland	4-2-2-2-1-	B
France	4-2-2-	B
Germany	3-2-2-2-	B
Gibraltar	4-2-2-2-	C
Greece	4-2-2-2-	B & D
Hungary	4-2-2-2-	B & D
Iceland	4-2-2-1-	B
Ireland	4-2-2-2-1-1	B
Jersey	1-1-1-1-	C
Latvia	M1 category: 2-2-1-1- or motorcycles: 2-2-2-2-	B & C & D
Lithuania	M1 category: 3-2-2-2	B
Luxembourg	4-2-1-1-1-1	B
Malta	5-2-2-2-	B
The Netherlands	petrol/electric 4-2-2-1-1 diesel/other 3-1-1-1	A
Norway	4-2-2-2-2	A & B
Poland	3-2-1-1-	B
Portugal	4-2-2-1-	B
Slovakia	4-4-4-	B
Slovenia	4-2-2-1-	B
Spain	4-2-2-2-1-	B & D
Sweden	3 years - 2 years - 14 months - 14 months - 14 months	B
Switzerland	4-3-2-2-	D
United Kingdom	3-1-1-1-	B

A | Commercial garages: commercial garages that are also allowed to carry out repairs

B | Private inspection centres: privately owned vehicle inspection centres

C | Central Licencing Authority: the central licencing authority in the country

D | Public inspection centres: governmental owned vehicle inspection centres

Some countries require visible proof of inspection inside or on the vehicle, the number plate(s) or on the windshield. This proof could take the form of a sticker or a stamp. Most countries register PTI information at the registration authority.

3.7 Other

This paragraph contains information about other events related to the use of a vehicle and the tasks vehicle authorities have in these events.

Environmental zones

When driving a vehicle on a public road, one often stumbles upon various urban access regulations. These regulations are put in place to reduce air pollution, congestion, or they are to influence how people experience the city. Examples of such restrictions involve environmental zones/low-emission zones, urban road tolls, and key Access Regulation Schemes (schemes where a permit is required to drive into an area or where access is restricted to only certain times of the day, or where only certain vehicle types are allowed).

Environmental (low-emission) zones are areas where the most polluting vehicles (usually older or heavy-duty vehicles) are restricted from entering, are obliged to pay an extra fee to enter, or need to have a special permission (e.g. after fitting a diesel particulate filter) to enter. In some zones (zero-emission zones), only zero-emission vehicles are allowed to enter, i.e. electric or hydrogen fuel vehicles. So far, environmental zones are to be found in Germany, the Netherlands, France, Belgium, UK, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Hungary, and Italy. Most of these zones affect buses, coaches, heavy-duty goods vehicles, but may also affect vans, minibuses, cars and motorcycles. To comply, the vehicle should not emit more than the Euro emission standard set by the European Commission. The higher the Euro standard, the tighter the restrictions to enter a particular zone.

Directive 2008/50/EC on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe establishes air quality objectives which are to improve human health and environmental quality. This is a key Directive, which has contributed to the kick-start of the environmental zones across Europe. According to this Directive, EU Member States should make sure that air pollution does not exceed the maximum level and that specific zones comply with the air quality limit values. All environmental zones are subject to air quality assessment and management.

Urban road tolls

The introduction of urban road tolls is another development to improve the issues a city has to deal with. Once a car enters a toll road, its driver has to pay a fee. Toll roads are supposed to reduce traffic congestions, air pollution, and noise disturbance. In some cases, tolls are there to improve the accessibility of the city. Directive 2019/520/EU on the interoperability of electronic road toll systems and facilitating cross-border exchange of information on the failure to pay road fees in the Union aims to make the European electronic road toll rules more effective by improving the interoperability of the systems used within the EU. The European Electronic Toll Service (EETS) enables road users to subscribe to a single contract to pay electronic tolls across the EU and it is complementary to national road toll schemes. Directive 2019/520/EU came into force in October 2021.

Modifications

Vehicles may be modified during their life-span. EReg Topic Group XXI worked on a report on these modifications and distinguished a series of modification types, from a simple change of the colour to complex changes of the construction, coachwork or engine of the vehicle or updates of the vehicle software with possible impact for the fuel consumption or exhaust emissions of the vehicle.

Recalls

During their life vehicles could be 'recalled'. A recall is issued to the relevant vehicle keepers, when a manufacturer, in cooperation with the responsible type approval authority, determines that a certain vehicle type or one of its components, parts or its equipment, reveals a serious defect that creates a severe risk resulting in the fact that the vehicle fails to meet the minimum safety requirements. The vehicle keepers of the defective vehicle type are asked to return the car to the dealer, to repair or replace the defective parts. According to the Regulation (EU) 2019/1020 on market surveillance and compliance of products, if the manufacturer fails to take the corrective action required or if the safety risk persists, the market surveillance authorities are to ensure that the defective vehicles are recalled, that vehicles which have not been repaired are not allowed on the public road anymore.

End-of-Life vehicles

At the very end of the Vehicle Chain, vehicles will get the End-of-life (ELV) status.

Directive 2000/53/EC on end-of-life vehicles (ELV Directive) aims to prevent waste production from vehicles and their parts, reducing the final disposal of waste and its overall environmental impact. In short, the ELV Directive follows a circular economy approach by encouraging eco-design, making sure that hazardous substances in the vehicles are prohibited, and establishing high reuse/recycling/recovery targets, aiming to reuse the valuable materials from the ELVs. The Directive will be reviewed by Q4 2022. In 2021, the European Commission published the Commission Staff Working Document – Evaluation of the ELV Directive . The document states a couple of conclusions on the implementation of the ELV Directive and what could be improved in the revised version. Important elements is the number of ELVs officially treated in the EU which is well below the number of vehicles leaving the stock of registered vehicles. The numbers reported and treated in Authorised Treatment Facilities (ATFs) are around 6 million, leaving about 35% of the total vehicles which exited the stock as “unknown whereabouts” each year (this problem is also to be seen in the Vehicle Chain country reports and in Table 6, where only 13/28 countries surveyed have registered the ELVs). The major cause for all these missing vehicle is lacking EU legislation on vehicle registration and de-registration. There is currently no obligation to register a vehicle as being destructed by an ATF; in some countries vehicles are simply de-registered. There is also no obligation to indicate to what country exported vehicles have been transferred; if they remain within the EU, normally a chain of vehicle registrations can be made based on the VIN; however, vehicles exported outside the EU (e.g. to Africa) get out of sight.

4

The Driver Chain

Besides responsibilities in the Vehicle Chain, many of the registration authorities also fulfil tasks with regard to driving licences. Just like the Vehicle Chain, the Driver Chain starts with the first step in the chain development of (international and EU) regulations and legislation. These regulations and legislation offer the legislative framework for different aspects of the Driver Chain such as the authorisation of the driving of power-driven vehicles in different categories, the required minimum age, the model of the driving licence in Europe, (international) mutual recognition and the issuing, validity and renewal of driving licences. The revision of the third Directive on driving licences is scheduled for the fourth quarter of 2022.

The following sections focus on training and driving licence examination Category B, the documents and procedure of applying for driving licences the (central) registration of licence data, and finally, the Chain finishes with the registration of offences and penalties, taking the regulations and legislation regarding the withdrawal of a driving licence into account.

In many countries, the organisation which handles vehicle registration also performs important tasks in the Driver Chain. In Finland, Gibraltar, Greece, Malta, Norway, and Slovenia, all the events identified in the Driver Chain are performed by or under the supervision of one organisation. In Austria, Croatia, and France, the vehicle registration authority plays no part in the Driver Chain. In Austria, these tasks are carried out by local authorities and private companies. Driving licences are issued by the Bezirksverwaltungsbehörden and are centrally registered by the Bundesrechenzentrum. The authorities and police can obtain information from this central register. In Croatia, it is the Croatian Automobile Club which performs the training and examination tasks, and it is the Croatian Police which issues driving licence documents. Table 9 shows an overview of the different tasks in the Driver Chain performed by the registration authorities included in this publication.



Figure 2: The Driver Chain

4.1 Training and driving licence examination Category B

In all European countries, the (minimum) requirements for driving tests and examiners who conduct practical driving tests are based on the third Directive (2006/126/EC) on driving licences. The minimum age for driving mopeds (AM), motorcycles with or without a sidecar and motor tricycles (Category A, A1 and A2) and motor vehicles (B, B1, BE, C1, C1E, CE, D1, D1E, D and DE) can be found in the Directive. For commonly used motor vehicles, the minimum age one can acquire a driving licence Category B is fixed at eighteen years. In the European countries, citizens may start taking driving lessons between sixteen and eighteen years old. See Table 10 for an overview of the minimum age required for learning, obtaining a driving licence, etc.

With regard to training and examination; in order to successfully obtain a driving licence, in all countries both a theoretical and a practical exam are required. Additionally, in all countries both sight and hearing capacities are tested as part of the medical examination, resulting in a medical certificate (certifying the medical fitness of the candidate). In some countries, such as in Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania and Switzerland, an additional first aid training certificate is required to be able to apply for a driving licence. In Jersey, the driving test consists of a

hazard-perception element (next to the theoretical and practical element).

In general, drivers are trained at (private) driving schools, which are supervised by the responsible government organisation or mandated agency. Traficom in Finland has responsibilities in all parts of the Driver Chain. Traficom examines drivers through a service provider. Before taking the driving examination, the candidate must apply for a driving licence permit issued by Traficom (including a photograph and a medical certificate). In Estonia and Lithuania, drivers are trained by accredited driving schools and the Estonian Transport Administration and REGITRA take care of the examination, registration and issuance of the driving licence document.

In Belgium and Germany, supervision of the quality of training and examinations is the responsibility of the regions/federal states. Some countries maintain a minimum training period and other countries have a set number of lessons with a professional driving instructor. In most countries novice drivers have to pass a theoretical exam before they can apply for a provisional driving licence or, sometimes even, start their practical training of driving.

Table 9 | Tasks in the driver chain performed by licensing authorities

	Austria	Belgium	Croatia	Cyprus	Estonia	Finland	France	Germany	Gibraltar	Greece	Hungary	Iceland	Ireland	Jersey	Latvia	Lithuania	Luxembourg	Malta	The Netherlands	Norway	Poland	Portugal	Slovakia	Slovenia	Spain	Sweden	Switzerland	United Kingdom
Training																												
Examination																												
Documents																												
Registration of Driving Licences																												
Registration of Offences																												

* only disqualifications

Table 10 | Training and examination Driving Licence Category B

	Austria	Belgium	Croatia	Cyprus	Estonia	Finland	France	Germany	Gibraltar	Greece	Hungary	Iceland	Ireland	Jersey	Latvia	Lithuania	Luxembourg	Malta	The Netherlands	Norway	Poland	Portugal	Slovakia	Slovenia	Spain	Sweden	Switzerland	United Kingdom
Minimum age learning	17,5	17	15.5	17.5	15.5	16		16	17	16	n.a.	n.a.	17	17	16	17	17	18	16.5	16	18	17.5	16	17.5	17.5	16	n.a.	16
Minimum age of obtaining a driving licence	17	18	16	18	18	18		17	18	17	17	17	17	17	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	17	18	18	18	18	18	16
Supervised driving																												
Provisional driving licence																												
Initial validity driving licence (in years)	2	10		15	2	15		15	15	15	10	3	2	10	10	3	2	3	10	15	15	15	n.a.	n.a.	10	2	3	n.a.

In a majority of the countries (18/28), a system of supervised driving (or accompanied driving) allows prospective drivers to learn to drive under supervision of an adult driver. In order to indicate that a novice driver is behind the wheel, some countries require an L-plate attached to the vehicle (Ireland, Jersey, Norway, Spain and the United Kingdom). In Ireland, the candidate must first undergo a practical test before earning a learner permit (allowing them to drive a vehicle in the company of someone who holds a full driving licence). After at least six months, the candidate may take a driving test. Once passing this examination, the candidate will receive a certificate of competency which is to be exchanged for a full driving licence. Moreover in Luxembourg, once passing the theoretical exam, the candidate is allowed to drive under supervision (accompanied driving) starting from the age of seventeen. The practical exam may only be taken once the candidate reaches at least eighteen years of age (this also applies in Norway). Then, once the first driving licence is issued, it has a limited validity of two years (three years in Switzerland). After these two years which are considered a training period, the holder must follow a one-day practical training course (or two-days in Switzerland), before receiving a licence for the validity of ten years.

Furthermore, some countries (15/28) issue a provisional driving licence, which is valid for a limited period of time. The drivers first receive a driving licence 'on probation', which can be exchanged for a full driving licence after a certain time or the provisional driving licence automatically acquires the status of a full driving licence after a set period of time (for instance after two years in Austria and, once the holder becomes eighteen years old, in Germany). A theoretical and practical exam is still required to obtain a full driving licence.

In Iceland the holder of the provisional driver licence has to take a special driving test (a self-evaluation of the driving performance) with a driving instructor. To acquire a full driving licence, another requirement is that no traffic regulations were broken by the holder in the twelve months prior to this test. In the United Kingdom, after a novice driver has successfully passed both the theoretical and practical element, a test pass certificate is issued. This temporary certificate must be exchanged for a full driving licence within two years. However, if a novice driver receives six or more penalty points within those two years, their licence is revoked and they will have to re-sit both the theoretical and practical tests.

4.2 Documents (incl. digital / mobile driving licences)

The third Directive on driving licences (2006/126/EC) offers the legal framework for the Community model driving licence document in Europe. Since 2013, one single European driving licence in the form of a polycarbonate card²⁰ replaced the 110 different models which used to exist in the EU Member States. The specifications of the Community model driving licence can be found in Annex I of the Directive.

In a majority of the countries surveyed, driving licences are issued by the central licensing authority (see Table 11). In Austria, Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, Poland, and Switzerland, the federal/cantonal governments or the municipalities play a role in the issuing process. In Jersey, twelve parochial authorities are responsible for administering and issuing the driving licences. In Greece, Iceland, and Slovakia, driving licences are issued by the police.

The third Directive on driving licences provides Member States with the option of placing a storage medium (microchip) on the driving licence to enable the Member States to further improve the level of anti-fraud protection. An EReg Topic Group presented its final report on smart card driving licences in 2009, in which recommendations were made about the standard to be used for the microchip on the driving licence. In 2014, the Netherlands added a chip on the smartcard driving licence document. A few other countries: Belgium, Iceland, Ireland, and Luxembourg, are also interested in this electronic chip.

In about a third of the countries (10/28), a driving licence is also considered to be an official ID document. These countries include Estonia, Cyprus, France, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, the Netherlands, Poland, Slovenia, and Sweden.

The driving licences issued by the EU Member States also have a set administrative validity for the different categories. Category B driving licences, for instance, have an administrative validity of ten years, but a Member State may choose to issue such licences with an administrative validity of up to fifteen years. A broad majority of the EU Member States have set the administrative validity to ten years (e.g. Ireland, Jersey, Latvia, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Spain, and Sweden), and most EEA countries have set the administrative validity to

fifteen years. Switzerland is the only country where driving licences are still valid indefinitely. There are a few EU countries which have set the validity to fifteen years. In Germany, for instance, the validity of a driving licence used to be indefinite. Because of the third Directive on driving licences, the administrative validity of new driving licences has been changed to fifteen years. In Luxembourg, once a driver reaches 60 years of age, his or her driving licence has to be renewed, this has to be repeated at 70 and 75 years and once the driver reaches 80 years of age. After that a driving licence is to be renewed every two years. In the UK, the process is similar, yet a little less strict: once a driver reaches the age of 70, the driver licence is to be renewed every three years.

Due to the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, the European Commission introduced some temporary measures to make sure that the drivers could keep on using their driver's licence, if it expired during the pandemic. According to the Regulation (EU) 2020/698, the validity of driving licences, which would otherwise expire between 1 February 2020 and 31 August 2020, were automatically extended by seven months. Since the Covid-19 pandemic was still not over by 31 August 2020, according to the Regulation (EU) 2021/267, any driving licences which were to expire between 1 September 2020 and 30 June 2021 were to be automatically extended by ten months.

According to the Commission Staff Working Document – Executive Summary of the Evaluation of the Directive 2006/126/EC, an important critique of the third Directive on driving licences is that the Directive does not account for digital solutions and the digitisation of driving licences. As part of these technological developments, several European countries (such as Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Poland, Portugal (planned in 2022) and Spain) have introduced mobile Driver's Licences (mDLs). This has led to discussions and plans with respect to how mobile driving licences are viewed in the context of EU legislation and the mutual recognition of such licences. The third Directive on driving licences leaves no room for the development of non-physical driving licence models. In other words, it imposes several restrictions which cause problems for registration authorities interested in introducing a digital or mobile driving licence model.

²⁰ The physical characteristics shall be in accordance with ISO 7810 and ISO 7816-1.

Table 11 | Driving Licence

Country	Kind of document	Issued by	Chip on the driving licence	Interested in chip on the driving licence	Issued First Time Normal Driving Licences per year	Maximum age for driving	Driving License is an official ID document	Renewal
Austria	Card	Bezirksverwaltungsbehörde	No	No	n.a.	No		No
Belgium	Card	Municipalities	No	Yes	n.a.	No	No	n.a.
Estonia	Card	Estonian Transport Administration	No	No	13000	No	Yes	10 years
Croatia	Card	Road and Transport Department	No	No	n.a.	No	No	15 years
Cyprus	Card	Estonian Transport Administration	No	No	10076	No	Yes	
Finland	Card	Traficom	No	No	67000	No	No	from the age of 70
France	Card	n.a.	No	No	n.a.	No	Yes	n.a.
Germany	Card	Federal States, Driving license offices	No	No	n.a.	No	No	15 years
Gibraltar	Card	DVLD	No	No	n.a.	No		15 years
Greece	Card	Regional Units' Directorates of Transport and Communication	No	No	n.a.	No	Yes	Every 3 years from the age of 65, every 2 years from the age of 80
Hungary	Card	Registration Authorities	No	No	n.a.	No	Yes	10 years (5 years after the age of 50, 3 years after the age of 60, and 2 years after the age of 70)
Iceland	Card	Police	No	Yes	4000	Yes	Yes	n.a.
Ireland	Card	National Driving License Service	No	Yes	n.a.	No	No	10 years
Jersey	Card	Parochial Authorities	No	No	6300	No	No	10 years
Latvia	Card	CSDD	No	No	90000	No	n.a.	10 years
Lithuania	Card	REGITRA	No	No	27072	No	No	10 years
Luxembourg	Card	SNCA	No	Yes	10000	No	No	From the age of 60, a medical certificate is needed before issuing a driving license
Malta	Card	Driver and Vehicle Licensing Unit	No	No	5527	No	No	10 years, 5 years after the age of 70
The Netherlands	Card	Municipal offices	Yes		n.a.	Yes	Yes	10 years (5 years after the age of 75)
Norway	Card	NPRA	No	No	72033	No	No	15 years. After the age of 80, a medical certificate is needed before issuing a new driving license (valid for 1-3 years)
Poland	Card	Mayor	No	No	n.a.	No	Yes	n.a.
Portugal	Card	IMT	No	No	109536	No	No	n.a.
Slovakia	Card	Police Traffic Directorates	No	No	n.a.	No		
Slovenia	Card	Slovenian Traffic Safety Agency	No	No	n.a.	Yes: the age of 80	Yes	10 years
Spain	Card	DGT	No	No	n.a.	No	n.a.	10 years
Sweden	Card	Swedish Transport Agency	No	No	n.a.	No	Yes	10 years
Switzerland	Card	Cantonal transport offices	No	No	240000	No	n.a.	n.a.
United Kingdom	Card	DVLA	No	No	n.a.	No	No	n.a.

In 2018, EReg published a final report of one of its Topic Groups which focused on the requirements in EU and international legislation to introduce non-physical driving licences which are mutually recognised²¹.

In a study executed on behalf of the European Commission, it was recommended that “the EU should take note of the work of the ISO working group 10 ‘Motor vehicle driver licence and related documents’ on a standard to allow cross-border and cross-jurisdictional recognition of mobile driving licences”²². A Commission staff working document on the evaluation of the Directive on driving licences published at the beginning of 2022 mentions that “digital solutions such as digital driving licences are insufficiently explored at present.” However, there is a general interest in the EU countries to introduce digital/ mobile driving licences.²³ Some countries are waiting for common (EU) standards. In 2021, ISO/IEC standard 18013-5, the mobile driving licence (mDL) application was finalised. This first step in global standardisation is an important step for the introduction of digital/ mobile driving licences.

EReg Topic Group XIX on non-physical driving licences has continued its work and monitors digital/ mobile driving licence developments in the European countries and offers EReg members the opportunity to share (technical) knowledge and experience. Another important development is the revision of the eIDAS Regulation 2021/0136 (OCD) regarding establishing a framework for a European Digital Identity. mDL is mentioned as use case in the context of this revision.

Some EReg Members; Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, have decided to abandon the obligation to carry a driving licence altogether on their national territories, as their citizens have just one national ID, which suffices instead. While this standard may eventually become a reality at EU-level, especially considering the digital age in which we live in, this development has still not been adopted by the other EReg members.

4.3 Registration of driving licence offences

All countries in this Vehicle and Driver Chain report have a central driving licence register.

²¹ <https://www.ereg-association.eu/media/2024/finl-report-tg-xix-on-non-physical-driving-licences.pdf>

²² European Commission (2017) Implementation of third Directive 2006/126/EC on driving licences – Final Report

²³ European Commission (2022) Commission staff working document evaluation of the Directive 3 2006/126/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 December 2006 on driving licences (SWD(2022)17 final

Some of these driving licence registers are not the responsibility of the registration authorities included in this report. In Iceland, for instance, the police carries out all registration activities regarding driving licences and in Jersey, the parochial authorities maintain the central driving licence register. In Switzerland each canton has its own driver register. All data from the cantons is collected in a central driver register, which is managed by the Federal Roads Office. Via an EU network for the exchange of driving licence information (RESPER), the central registers of the national authorities in the EU countries are connected (or through national databases or EUCARIS), facilitating contacts between the competent authorities with regard to processes such as first issuance, renewal and replacement of driving licences all over Europe.

As one can see in Table 12, almost all countries surveyed (19/28) register photos and/or signatures of the driving licence holder in the central driving licence register. In In Jersey and Poland, photos and signatures are registered in separate databases. In Sweden, only photos are registered in a central database, whereas in Gibraltar, solely signatures are registered. Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg, Slovenia, and Spain are the only countries surveyed which do not register drivers’ photos, nor signatures.

Almost all (24/28) licensing authorities also register driving licence offences. Often, the national police is involved in this task, e.g. as the registration office (Iceland), as a user or even as the only user (Norway) of the information on offences. In Iceland, for example, the police keeps a record of all committed offences. This data is used to decide whether or not to issue a permanent driving licence to a novice driver, after the expiration of the probation period. As in many countries, the Icelandic penalty point system takes the nature and gravity of the violation into account to determine the amount of penalty points, the amount of a fine or even the revocation of the driving licence.

In a majority of the countries, offences are registered in the central driver register. In others, offences are registered in a separate register. In Belgium, offences are registered by the Federal Public Service for Justice, while in Germany, offences are registered in the Register of Driver Fitness (FAER). Cyprus lets the police take care of registering offences. France, Spain, and Sweden are the only countries where offences are not registered.

Considering the penalty points system, the majority of the countries included in this publication (18/28) are working with penalty point systems and a few; Estonia, Gibraltar, and Jersey, are planning to introduce the penalty points system soon. This leaves Belgium, Finland, France, Lithuania, Slovakia, Sweden, and Switzerland being the only countries where the registration authorities do not have a penalty point system in place and are not planning to introduce it. On the other hand, despite not having a penalty points system, Belgium, Finland, Lithuania, and Sweden make use of alcohol locks. Hence, one could conclude that 22/28 countries surveyed have some kind of an enforcement system (be it that of the penalty points system or the alcohol locks) in place. Croatia, Poland, and Portugal are the only countries where both enforcement systems are in force.

There are many differences between the different kinds of penalty point systems. In Germany, entries made in the Register of Driver Fitness are deleted, once the amounted penalty points expire (this could take between 2.5 years (e.g. for using a mobile phone while driving) to ten years (if a criminal offence is committed and the driving licence was withdrawn)). In Hungary, once the driver reaches eighteen penalty points, the driving licence is withdrawn and this lasts for six months. However, once the punished driver completes extra training, they are to get their driving licence back after the period of six months. In Iceland, a driver loses his/her driving licence for three months (six months in Ireland) once he/she receives twelve penalty points or more (within the first three years of owning a driver's licence) and a novice driver must not receive a single penalty point in the first year of driving (in Ireland, a novice driver must not receive more than seven points in the first two years of driving).

Table 12 | Driving Licence Register and Penalty Point System

	Austria	Belgium	Croatia	Cyprus	Estonia	Finland	France	Germany	Gibraltar	Greece	Hungary	Iceland	Ireland	Jersey	Latvia	Lithuania	Luxembourg	Malta	The Netherlands	Norway	Poland	Portugal	Slovakia	Slovenia	Spain	Sweden	Switzerland	United Kingdom	
Central driving licence register	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Photos			●	●	●	●				●	●		○	●	●		●	●	●	○	●	●				●	●	●	
Signatures			●	●	●	●		●		●	●		○	●	●		●	●	●	○	●	●				●	●	●	
Offences / penalty points / disqualifications	●	○	●	○	●	●		○	●	●	●	●	○	●	○	○	●	○	●	○	○	●	○			●			
Penalty Points System in place	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	
Plans introduction of Penalty Points System		No			Yes	No	No		Yes				Yes		No								No			No	No	No	
Alcohol locks		Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No		No	No	No	No	n.a.	Yes	No	n.a.	No	No	Yes	Yes		No	n.a.	Yes	n.a.			

● Registered at Registration Authority ○ Registered separately

Latvia also has a penalty point system, where a novice driver may accumulate up to ten points and an experienced driver up to sixteen points, following liability for disqualification for for one year. The penalty points are valid for 2-5 years. Luxembourg has one of the strictest penalty point systems, where no more than twelve points may be accumulated, where it takes 3 years before the points expire, and where it also takes three years before the driving licence may be restored after disqualification. In Slovenia driving licences are revoked once drivers earn eighteen penalty points. The rules are even stricter for novice drivers. In that case, driving licences are revoked if drivers receive seven points. In Spain, every driver gets twelve till fifteen points for good behaviour. Novice drivers (in their first three years of driving) and drivers who have lost all points but have managed to qualify for a new driving licence get eight points. When a driver loses all points, the driving licence is revoked.

5

Future and current developments

The mobility domain is changing quickly. New technologies, new services and changing legislation will have an impact on the work field and role of vehicle and driver registration authorities. Developments in the field of autonomous driving, artificial intelligence, but also regarding environment and new modes of transport such as micro mobility are going fast. The COVID pandemic has accelerated the digitalisation and new ways of working were introduced. This all leads to new questions and discussions on how to deal with this.

The trends and developments as described in the previous edition of the Vehicle and Driver Chain (2019) are still relevant. Trends such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), digitalisation and robotics etc. are becoming increasingly important and influence the tasks of the registration authorities. These trends make it possible to carry out tasks better and more efficient, but at the same time should be balanced by installing the right safeguards such as transparency, privacy and cyber security. The impact of the pandemic has accelerated the development and deployment of electronic services (e-services), enabling more efficient service delivery and offering better services online. Nevertheless, the focus should still be on a citizen-oriented approach, together with making sure that citizens are digitally skilled enough to be able to use these e-services.

Another important trend that needs attention is the environment. The ambitions (lowering emissions) that are set by the European Union are high and need work from everybody. The acceleration of electric vehicles and the introduction of other modes of transport such as electric scooters and steps are an important focus area for the coming years. In a similar vein, many cities and regions all over Europe are introducing low-emission and zero-emission zones, congestion charging and urban traffic restrictions. These developments might lead to adaptations in the registers of the vehicle and driver registration authorities.

EReg will continue to monitor the trends and developments and translate them to the impact on the work and role of the registration authorities. These will be integrated in the following areas of work.

5.1 Environment and sustainability

The topics of environment, sustainability and electric vehicles are both very important and relevant to follow now and in the future. The European Commission set out an ambitious programme with the EU Green Deal focusing on providing efficient, safe and environmentally-friendly transport. By 2030, the net greenhouse gas emissions should be reduced by at least 55% compared to 1990 levels. To achieve this ambitious goal, the European Commission has come up with the European Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy and Action Plan. All transportation modes need to become increasingly sustainable, green alternatives becoming available to all Europeans.

For EReg it is becoming an increasingly important topic since it affects the registration tasks. For instance, the registration of electric vehicles and the subsequent changes that might have on the national registers. Or the impact on the vehicle registers in enforcing of low emission zones. From the viewpoint of registration authorities this is a matter of vehicle data related to vehicle properties, rights related to those properties, (geo-)location and enforcement. Whatever solution will come up it will have a link with the vehicle registrations.

5.2 Data and digitalisation

It should be of no surprise that Covid-19 and the rapid digitalisation connected with it, has had its impact on the registration authorities. Digitalisation, data and e-services are important developments and much is happening. Legislation is proposed regarding the creation of a European digital identity, Artificial Intelligence (AI), Cybersecurity and Data. All of these developments mentioned are actions of the EU priority 'A Europe fit for the digital age.' The European data strategy and the subsequent EU Data Act, which was compiled to reach EU's 'digital' priority, pleads for a single market for data. The vision of such a single market revolves in data which can flow within and outside of the EU, for the benefit of all European citizens. However, this could only occur provided that European regulations (e.g. GDPR) are fully respected and that the rules for access and use of data are clear, fair and practical. At all times, the user should stay in full control of their data.

Registration authorities have worked on offering a lot of services online, some of which include the issuance of a driving licence or appointments for inspections online, via webservices or through apps on mobile devices. Even though digitalisation of such services is a current development, the differences across European countries, when it comes to connectivity, digital skills, and cybersecurity, make this development a future one. With the introduction of the Single Digital Gateway and the Once-Only-Principle, cross-border access is on the agenda of many registration authorities. By the end of 2023, the European Commission is planning to offer access to 21 online services in all EU countries, including services touching upon EReg – i.e. registering a car – being fully digitalised. In order to achieve this, a system to transfer documents required for these procedures between national authorities will need to be established (so that a document, such as a car registration obtained in one EU country, can be shared with the national authorities of another EU country).

When it comes to service delivery, citizens and businesses increasingly expect the registration authorities to improve the customer journey and offer a more customer-centric experience. The registration authorities surveyed recognize this need and respond in terms of abandoning paper and transferring to electronic documents (Croatia, Finland, Hungary, Ireland, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, and the UK), this way developing e-government services, such as applying for a driving licence online. Other online services which the registration authorities offer (or are planning to offer) include electronic registers, online motor tax service, which enables the vehicle owner to pay their periodical tax online, an online facility which enables traders to notify vehicle ownership changes online, and an online facility where technical inspections could be arranged and number plates can be ordered. In France, a new website HistoVec was developed, providing the customer with administrative, technical, and historical information on second-hand vehicles. Other registration authorities are very interested in the development of a digital (mobile) driver's licence, which could replace the physical driver's licence for good. In addition, more European countries are exploring the possibility of abandoning the obligation to carry a driving licence on their national territory, with the belief that in the future, a single digital ID will suffice.

5.3 International data exchange

Movement does not stop at borders. Citizens and businesses travel everywhere with their vehicles. To enable them to freely move around Europe, but also to continue the processes of national registration authorities, we need to exchange data with each other. International data exchange is engaged in most of the future developments. For example, for the enforcement of environmental zones, it is needed that authorities have access to emission data and in a later stage the owner/holder data of a vehicle.

More and more information is becoming available in a digital way and exchanged internationally. Not only the registration authorities are involved, but other parties in other sectors as well, making thereby the role of the National Contact Point, which is responsible for passing through data, more important. Another trend that currently arises in the field of international data exchange are discussions on the exact role and responsibilities of national registration authorities in this exchange. The General Data Protection Regulation has forced us to look from a new perspective to the exchange of (personal) data. Another development is the expected increase in the use of information systems such as EUCARIS for structured data exchanges rather than exchanging via e-mail.

EReg supports the developments and focuses in its topic group on international data exchange on topics such as the exchange of freight data (eFTI), mileage, insurance data and data related to the Certificate of Professional Competence and risk profiles of transport undertakings. The exchange of owner/holder data for the enforcement of environmental zones are also of interest here, among others in combination with the revision of the Directive on cross-border exchange of information on road safety related traffic offences (CBE Directive, (EU) 2015/413)).

All these developments and changes reflect the importance of the topic for EReg members. Even though the vehicle and driver registration authorities have different tasks and responsibilities in their national ecosystem, the above-mentioned topics will impact their work in the coming years. In the future, EReg will accommodate the exchange of best practices and experiences on these topics.

Colophon

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