

Your EU driving licence in the Netherlands

Introduction

If you take up residence in the Netherlands, you may continue using your foreign driving licence for a certain period of time. The period depends on the country where you obtained your driving licence. After this 'transition period' ends, you will need a Dutch driving licence. Driving licences issued by a EU memberstate can be exchanged for Dutch driving licences. This is subject to the condition that you live in the Netherlands (and are registered in the Municipality of Someren) and that the EU driving licence is valid at the time of application.

The rules are as follows:

If you have a driving licence that was issued in the EU, you may continue using such driving licence up to 10 years after the issue date. However, if your EU driving licence is more than 9 years old, you may continue using it for at least one year (calculated from the date of registration in the Municipality of Someren). The EU driving licence must still be valid.

First example:

Your driving licence was issued on 25 October 1999. You may continue using the driving licence until 25 October 2009 (= 10 years after the issue date*1), unless the period of validity of your driving licence expires before that date (see the end of validity date*2). If the validity of the driving licence expires before 25 October 2009, then you need to exchange the driving licence before it expires.

Second example:

Your driving licence was issued on 10 March 1998 and you took up residence in Someren on 10 October 2007. This means you may use your EU driving licence in the Netherlands until 10 October 2008. After all, the driving licence is more than 9 years old. Based on the issue date, you would be able to use the driving licence here until 10 March 2008. However, from the date that a person has taken up residence in the Netherlands, the driving licence may be used for another year, which in this case means until 10 October 2008 (provided of course that the term of validity (end of validity date*2) of the EU driving licence has not expired yet).

Do you have a category CD(E) driving licence?

Persons with category CD(E) (truck/bus/+trailer for a truck or bus) need to purchase a so-called 'medical report form' from the municipality before they can exchange their driving licence. This form needs to be completed. It requires a medical inspection by an occupational health and safety physician ('arbo-arts'). You can find an occupational health and safety physician by searching the telephone directory/Yellow Pages under 'arbodiensten' in your neighbourhood or on www.arbo.startpagina.nl. Subsequently, this completed 'medical report form' must be sent to the Central Office for Motor Vehicle Driver Testing (CBR) in Eindhoven. If everything is in order, you will be notified in writing and you can go to the town hall to apply for an exchange. You can do so during the opening hours of the Civil Affairs department.

Professional Competence driving licence

A new code on the driving licence

The introduction of the new European Directive for professional competence means a new structure of basic qualification and mandatory refresher training for professional drivers. As from 10 September 2008, instead of the paper driver's diploma, new bus drivers receive a professional competence code on their driving licence. The same applies to truck drivers as from 10 September 2009. As from September 2008, the structure of the examinations on professional competence and the C and D driving licence also changes. The code will be placed after the relevant category on the driving licence and looks as follows: 95 (= the code for professional competence), followed by the expiry date, e.g. 10-09-2015. The professional competence code is valid for five years. Renewal is only

possible if professional drivers attend 35 hours of certified refresher training during a five-year period. Drivers may not carry out professional transport without a valid code. All persons with a D driving licence, issued before 10 September 2008, and a C driving licence, issued before 10 September 2009, are exempted from obtaining the professional competence basic qualification. From those dates, they do not need to have a valid professional competence code on their driving licence yet. If they work as professional drivers, they do need to attend refresher training.

During the first period of mandatory refresher training, they have seven instead of five years to comply with the requirements. This means that on 10 September 2015 at the latest (for current bus drivers) or 10 September 2016 (for current truck drivers) they need to have a valid professional competence code on their driving licence. From that date onwards, every professional driver needs to have such a valid code. You can find more information about the professional competence directive on: www.rijbewijs.nl/nl/english.asp and www.richtlijnvakbekwaamheid.nl (Dutch only).

How long does it take to exchange a driving licence?

Exchanging a EU driving licence for a Dutch driving licence takes 3 weeks on average. You must hand in the EU driving licence when you apply for the exchange. You will receive a certified copy of your EU driving licence to demonstrate during these 3 weeks that you are in the process of exchanging your driving licence, which means you can continue driving in the Netherlands.

*1: the issue date of your driving licence is the date stated after 4a.

*2: the end of validity date when your driving licence expires is the date stated after 4b. For most people, this is a dash [-], which means an indefinite period.

International driving licences

International driving licences are merely legalised translations of national driving licences. These can therefore not be exchanged for a Dutch driving licence. Please contact *Rijksdienst voor het Wegverkeer (RDW)* in Veendam, at telephone number 0900 0739 (from the Netherlands) for more information about driving licences.

Information

For more information, please contact the Civil Affairs department of the Municipality of Someren.

Address details

Municipality of Someren
Postbus 290
5710 AG Someren
Telephone 0493-494888
Website: www.someren.nl

Opening hours of the Civil Affairs Department

Monday through Friday between 09.00 a.m. and 12.00 noon
Monday afternoon between 5.00 p.m. and 8.00 p.m.

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