

## **The Spanish National Markets and Competition Commission (CNMC) proposes changes in driver training activities to reduce costs and improve training**

- Accompanied driving with a lay instructor, already possible in other countries, could improve learning.
- Simplifying the requirements for driving schools and teachers would increase the offer of these services.
- Promoting transparency in exams and pass rates would benefit future drivers.

**Madrid, 25 February 2025.**– The CNMC has conducted an in-depth analysis of driver training services in Spain and proposes measures to make it more accessible, efficient and flexible ([E/CNMC/001/22](https://www.cnmc.es/E/CNMC/001/22)).

Specifically, the CNMC has examined the training offered by driving schools for the different driving licences, for the recovery of points and for special licences for professional driving of trucks and buses (the Certificate of Professional Competence, CPC) and for the carriage of dangerous goods (ADR licence).

These services are essential to ensure road safety, as well as to facilitate the personal and professional mobility of citizens, and for the transport sector. Most of the candidates trying to obtain a driving licence are young people, who generally have below-average incomes. In addition, having a driver's license is very important in less populated and less connected areas.

### **Barriers to competition that hinder the activity**

This sector is made up of small companies, focused on the municipal level, and highly regulated to guarantee road safety. In Spain, only authorized driving schools can teach driving, while in many similar countries it is possible to practice with a lay instructor.

Driving schools must obtain a specific authorization for each type of training they want to provide, in addition to having premises or vehicles. The qualification of professional instructors and school managers is also regulated.

Moreover, the traffic authorities have implemented a system for allocating the available examination capacity between driving schools, since the demand exceeds the possibilities for the administration. Although this distribution system has improved in recent years, there is still room to make it more balanced and transparent, and to give greater choice to students.

Lack of transparency and access to key information can be detrimental to students. Future drivers cannot easily consult important information, such as the pass rates of each driving school, or carry out procedures directly with the DGT.

Finally, driving schools also have difficulties in accessing exam centres and municipal grounds where they can practice, as well as problems adapting to the authorities' new software tool to process examination files.

### **CNMC recommendations**

To improve the sector for the benefit of citizens, the CNMC proposes:

- **Making learning to drive more flexible.** Allow accompanied driving with lay instructors, like in other countries, and facilitate more training alternatives, including digital and online methods.
- **Reducing barriers to the activity of driving schools.** The obligation to own a vehicle and physical premises should be reconsidered, and duplications in the different administrative procedures should be reviewed. It should also be easier for the same centre to provide different types of training.
- **Facilitating access to the profession.** The requirements to be a teacher or manager could be simplified and training for professionals in the sector could be improved.
- **Improving exam management.** There is room to increase the transparency of the system, promote a level playing field and give more decision-making power to students. Consideration should be given to the possibility to allocate exams directly to students rather than to driving schools.
- **Promoting transparency and competitive fairness.** Traffic authorities can publish information on pass rates and allow students to manage their procedures directly with the traffic authorities. Adequate access to practice and examination grounds should be guaranteed, and direct use of the software tool to manage the examination files should be facilitated.

The CNMC is the independent regulatory body of the markets that guarantees and promotes the existence of effective competition for the benefit of consumers and users. This study is carried out within the framework of its functions of promoting competition.

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