



Road

- Access to the profession
- Haulage
- Passenger transport
- Road charging
- Social provisions

▶ Driving time & rest periods

- Guidance notes
- Form of attestation of activities

- ▶ Enforcement
- ▶ Working time
- ▶ Tachograph

- Weights and dimensions
- Parking areas
- Non EU-countries
- Links

- Public consultations
- Grants
- Events
- Studies
- What's new

Information

- Press room
 - ▶ Press releases RAPID
 - ▶ Audiovisual Service
- Newsletter
- Calls for tender
- Infringements
- Evaluations
- Statistics

Road



Search

OK

Driving time and rest periods

Regulation (EC) 561/2006 provides a common set of EU rules for maximum daily and fortnightly driving times, as well as daily and weekly minimum rest periods for all drivers of road haulage and passenger transport vehicles, subject to specified exceptions and national derogations. The scope of operations regulated is tremendously diverse, it includes: passenger transport and road haulage operations, both international and national, long and short distance, drivers for own account and for hire and reward, employees and self-employed.

The aim of this set of rules is to avoid distortion of competition, improve road safety and ensure drivers' good working conditions within the European Union.

These rules establish that:

- Daily driving period shall not exceed 9 hours, with an exemption of twice a week when it can be extended to 10 hours.
- Total weekly driving time may not exceed 56 hours and the total fortnightly driving time may not exceed 90 hours.
- Daily rest period shall be at least 11 hours, with an exception of going down to 9 hours maximum three times a week. Daily rest can be split into 3 hours rest followed by 9 hour rest to make a total of 12 hours daily rest
- Weekly rest is 45 continuous hours, which can be reduced every second week to 24 hours. Compensation arrangements apply for reduced weekly rest period. Weekly rest is to be taken after six days of working, except for coach drivers engaged in a single occasional service of international transport of passengers who may postpone their weekly rest period after 12 days in order to facilitate coach holidays.
- Breaks of at least 45 minutes (separable into 15 minutes followed by 30 minutes) should be taken after 4 ½ hours at the latest.

The compliance with these provisions is subject to continuous monitoring and controls, which are carried out on national and international level via checking tachograph records at the road side and at the premises of undertakings.

Reporting from the Commission

Article 13 of Directive 2002/15/EC and Article 17 of Regulation (EC) 561/2006 require that the Commission produces a report every two years on the implementation of



Siim KALLAS
Vice-President
Commissioner
for Transport



Matthias RUETE
Director-General
for Mobility
and Transport

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Organisation chart



Agencies

- EMSA
- EASA
- ERA
- EACI
- TEN-TEA



this Regulation by Member States and developments in the fields in question. The report is based on information and data submitted by Member States to the Commission. The latest report can be consulted [here](#)  [375 KB] .

National exceptions from drivers' hours rules

Article 13 (1) of Regulation (EC) No 561/2006 sets out a list of possible national derogations from application of provisions on driving times, breaks and rest periods (Articles 5 to 9 of the Regulation). It is within the competency of each Member States to decide whether any of the listed possible national derogations will be granted or not.

[This table](#)  [20 KB] presents an overview of national derogations granted by several Member States (updated: April 2010)

Article 14 (2) of the Regulation stipulates that Member States may grant in urgent cases exceptions from the application of Articles 6 to 9 up to maximum 30 days to transport operations carried out in exceptional circumstances. This table gives an overview of the exemptions notified to the Commission in accordance with Articles 14 (2).

[Temporary relaxation of drivers](#)  [23 KB]

The Court of Justice of the European Union judgements concerning social rules in road transport

Certain Court judgments under earlier legislation which has been repealed remain relevant as interpretative guidance on key provisions carried over into the current legislation. However, the relevance of Court rulings for the application and interpretation of Regulation 561/2006 should be assessed on a case by case basis.

[Overview of Court rulings related to the social rules in road transport](#)  [186 KB]

Related documents

► Legislation

[Regulation \(EC\) No 561/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2006 on the harmonisation of certain social legislation relating to road transport and amending Council Regulations \(EEC\) No 3821/85 and \(EC\) No 2135/98 and repealing Council Regulation \(EEC\) No 3820/85](#)

► Other references

[Biennial report on the implementation of the social legislation related to road transport](#)  [375 KB] [471 KB]

[Overview of national derogations granted by several Member States](#)  [20 KB] (updated: April 2010) [20 KB]