



Taxi driver licensing in select EU countries/cities

Research Paper for T.x.x.H

Abstract

This research paper provides information on the licensing of taxi drivers in a selected group of European cities.

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1. Introduction

This paper lists as far as possible the licencing requirements for taxi drivers in seven European Union countries or cities.

In many countries the regulation of taxis is at a local level rather than at a national level as in Ireland. Thus even within countries there could be different regulatory regimes and different requirements to meet to become a taxi driver.

It should be noted that in many cities the number of licences are fixed and thus the regulation of entry tends to be focused on the purchase/renting of a taxi plate from an existing owner or working for a taxi company rather than the minimum requirements set by the local authority.

Based on the countries below similar regimes exist in many countries. The following criteria feature in almost all cities/countries covered.

- An age criteria (usually 21);
- The holding of an existing driving licence from a EEA country (sometimes for a specific period);
- A test which has practical and theoretical elements;
- Proof of residence or work permit;
- A medical exam of some sort;
- A criminal record check.

The information reported below was usually on local authority or national government websites in their own language. Thus they have had to be translated using a suitable translation programme (Google Translate). While this programme is generally reasonable effective it is not infallible and while judgment was used in presenting the information it should be noted that it cannot be completely relied upon.

2. UK - London

The below is based on <https://www.gov.uk/driving-licences-private-hire-taxis-london> and <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/motoring/news/9421234/Taxi-drivers-and-the-importance-of-The-Knowledge.html>.

To apply for a taxi license in London you must be:

- At least 21 years old;

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- A UK or European Union (EU) citizen, or have the right to stay and work in the UK;
 - The holder of a full Great Britain (GB), Northern Ireland (NI) or European Economic Area (EEA) driving licence;
 - Have a [Criminal Records Bureau \(CRB\) check](#);
 - Pass 'the knowledge' test;
 - Pass the Driving standards Agency (DSA) [taxi driving assessment](#);
 - Have a medical examination with your GP.

All applicants who hold a driving licence issued by another Member State of the European Union or one of the other countries in the EEA are required to obtain a GB counterpart document prior to the issue of a licence.

Passing "the knowledge" depends on what type of taxi driver the person wants to be.

There are two types:

- All-London drivers, also known as the Green Badge drivers, must learn 320 routes, 25,000 streets and 20,000 landmarks or places of interest within a six-mile radius of Charing Cross. It usually takes two to four years to pass and, once qualified, cabbies can work anywhere in the Greater London area.
- Suburban drivers, or Yellow Badge drivers, can choose from London's nine suburban sectors and must learn 30 to 51 runs in detail plus the streets, landmarks and places of interest. It's usually quicker to pass than for All-London drivers – about two years – but cabbies can only work in the sector they're licensed for.

3. Rest of UK

The below is based on <https://www.gov.uk/dsa-taxi-driving-test> and <http://www.glasgow.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=4357>.

The requirements for the rest of the UK are similar though may vary from council to council.

For example in Glasgow the driver must meet these minimum requirements:

- Be at least 21 years of age;
- Be able to work legally in the UK;
- Be fit to drive;
- Have held for a period of one year prior to the date of the application either a UK Driving Licence issued by DVLA Swansea or an equivalent European Union Driving Licence;
- have passed the Topographical Test of Knowledge.

Many councils also request that the driver has passed the Driving Standards Agency (DSA) taxi assessment to drive a taxi or private hire vehicle (PHV) which is a separate driving test for taxi/private hire drivers which focuses on customer service, as well as driving ability specifically needed for taxi drivers (i.e. turning a car to face the opposite direction, pulling over in traffic to collect a fare etc.). There is a separate or top up DSA assessment for those wishing to drive a wheelchair accessible taxi.

Thus in the UK the main barriers to getting a taxi drivers licence is passing a local knowledge test and/or the standard Driving Standards Agency taxi assessment if required. The individual must also be eligible to work in the UK and have an EEA driver's licence.

4. France

Taxi driver is a regulated profession in France. According to the French public service website <http://vosdroits.service-public.fr/professionnels-entreprises/F21907.xhtml> (translated by Google Translate) the following is needed to succeed in applying for a taxi driver licence:

- A full category B driving license,
- Be declared fit by a doctor approved by the prefecture,
- Hold a PSC1 (a basic first aid training certificate) for less than 2 years,
- Meet the criminal record standard i.e. not have been sentenced by a French court or foreign for a felony or misdemeanour for theft, fraud, embezzlement, deliberate attack on the integrity of the person, sexual assault or breach legislation on narcotics that led to at least a 6 months prison term.

In addition, certain driving offences (such as driving while intoxicated or after drug use, speeding, unintentional injuries to others while driving, driving without a licence etc.) prevent an applicant getting a licence.

Non-European Union candidates need to show that they have a residence permit to exercise a professional activity in France.

They also need a Certificate of Professional Competence for taxi drivers, which is given after an exam is passed in each region in France. The exam includes several tests on various subjects: general regulations, road safety, French, management, local regulations, and a driving test.

5. Brussels

The below is based on

http://www.mobielbrussel.irisnet.be/static/attachments/partners/na/5/Info%20%E2%80%9C%20Destination%20des%20chauffeurs%202012_.pdf (translated by Google Translate).

To become a taxi driver in Brussels an individual must complete a course or training that leads to a certificate which allows them to practice as a taxi driver in Brussels.

They must also pass behavioural tests designed for vehicle drivers who are in contact with the public.

To apply for the course/training they must have:

- A certificate of good conduct and morals dating less than 3 months,
- An identity card (indicating the domicile or residence in Belgium).
- Completed the behavioural tests.

The behavioural tests include tests on basic calculations and statements of problems; writing; reasoning; and concentration. There is also a personality test and individual interviews.

They also need a Belgian national driving licence or one from a European country to drive a category B vehicle (i.e. car) and an identity card (indicating the domicile or residence in Belgium). Non-EU nationals must submit a work permit or show that they are married to a Belgian. Non-Belgians have to have a certificate from their embassy or any other document that establishes their good conduct and morals prior to their arrival in Belgium, (or prove that they have refugee status,¹ or that they have lived in Belgium for five years).

After passing the behavioural tests there are two ways to get the certificate of practice:

- (a) Complete the local authority approved course (30 hours) and then pass a theoretical and practical exam; or
- (b) Vocational training with a taxi firm and pass the theoretical exam.

¹ Presumably a person with refugee status may not be able to ask their embassy to give them a certificate of good conduct.

The local authority course is a 30 hour course covers the topography of Brussels, legislation relating to taxis, practical aspects (taximeter roadmap, accident report, etc.), social legislation, common phrases in Dutch and English², regulations regarding access to specific sites, information relating to the transport of persons with reduced mobility and information on security.

Individual taxi businesses can also offer vocational training to individuals wanting to get the certificate to practice as a taxi driver in Brussels. This is at least an eight week course with on the job training. There is a theoretical part and a practical part to the training. The trainee must pass exams on the theoretical part within three weeks of beginning their training (taxi regulations, social legislation, reading maps etc.). After the eight week training they must then work for four months for the taxi company with weekly progress reports signed by their tutor and they are then issued with a full certificate to allow them to be a licenced taxi driver.

6. Germany – Frankfurt

The below is based on

http://www.frankfurt.de/sixcms/detail.php?id=703665&ffmpar%5B_id_inhalt%5D=58098 (translated by Google Translate).

In Frankfurt the prerequisites for issuing a taxi licence include:

- Principal residence in Frankfurt;
- Minimum age 21 years;
- Having a drivers licence for 2 years within the last 5 years. It may be a German, EU or EEA country driving licence or a proven equivalent from a driver's own country i.e. the person must apply for a Euro-licence (Euro-Führerscheins) which proves equivalency;
- The driver must pass a local knowledge test for taxi and hire car drivers conducted by the Frankfurt Chamber of Commerce;
- Non-EU nationals must provide a valid residence permit;
- In addition there is a general medical evaluation including a performance assessment and medical opinion about vision.

² The assumption is that the individual's French is adequate as shown by passing the behavioural tests.

7. Sweden

The below is based on

<http://www.transportstyrelsen.se/sv/Vag/Yrkestrafik/Taxi/Taxiforlegitimation/Ansokan-om-taxiforlegitimation-/?usg=ALkJrhlL71cMQwk8-BYD-HIO9sy2zf4UYA> (translated by Google Translate).

Transport Sweden issue driver licences, including taxi driver licences.

Taxi drivers must be:

- Over 21 years;
- have a driving license For at least two years with permissions to drive vehicles B or D;
- Meet medical requirements necessary for the safety of passengers and other road users;
- Deemed appropriate to serve as a taxi driver in terms of professionalism and law-abiding nature;
- Have completed the three tests for a taxi license.

The tests for taxi drivers include:

- A knowledge test on map reading, basic vehicle maintenance and efficient operation, safety, customer service, disability awareness, and taxi and traffic laws.
- A professional taxi driver test which tests vehicle control, passenger safety, driving ability and driving judgement.
- The medical test.

8. Madrid

The below is based on

<https://sede.madrid.es/portal/site/tramites/menuitem.d3089948cb18b1bb68d8a521ecd08a0c/?vgnextoid=953a705e440fc310VgnVCM2000000c205a0aRCRD&vgnnextchannel=23a99c5ffb020310VgnVCM100000171f5a0aRCRD&vgnnextfmt=default> (translated by Google Translate).

To become a taxi driver in Madrid a person must:

- Pass an aptitude test
- Hold a driving license class B or higher and BTP authorization (this is an additional authorization on the driving license that allows the driving of

ambulances, police cars, fire engines, cars for civil protection and rescue, taxis and school buses);

- Have no criminal record;
- Not be suffering from contagious disease, or physical or psychological conditions that may hinder the normal exercise of the profession of taxi driver;
- Have completed secondary education. Qualifications obtained abroad must be proved to be equivalent and relevant to the applicant.

The aptitude test is a multiple choice test on computer and covers a number of areas including taxi regulation and fares, a physiological test, environmental awareness, direct routes to destinations, and areas of local interest.