



Europe is facing a chronic shortage of bus and coach drivers



Europe has 105,000 unfilled bus and coach driver positions – 10% of total positions, with significant variations geographically and by sector

Bus and coach services are fundamental to Europe's economy and social prosperity. The growing shortage of drivers is already disrupting mobility services.

Bus and coach collective passenger transport is critical to decarbonising Europe, emitting up to 80% less CO2 per passenger-kilometre than private cars.

Europe's bus and coach sector:
By the numbers

1.5 million
people employed

900,000
drivers

75,000
bus and coach
companies

920,000
buses and
coaches

EUR 128 billion
in annual revenue

0.5 billion
passenger-
kilometres per year

The shortage of drivers could more than double by 2050

Without action, Europe will have over 250,000 unfilled bus and coach driver positions in 2028.

The profession has an ageing population. Every year, far more people retire than join the profession.

Beyond 2028, it's forecasted to get even worse. In the five years up to 2033, over 1.2 million drivers are set to retire.



Solutions

There are both legislative and industry solutions to structurally address driver shortages at the national and EU level.

Across Europe, bus and coach companies are delivering a wide range of initiatives to improve driver recruitment and training. But the industry also needs EU-wide legislative solutions.

EU-wide solutions

3% of drivers are under 25 years old

Close the school-to-wheel gap:

- Remove distance limits for trained young drivers
- Subsidise training and licence costs
- Reduce insurance costs by setting the regular starting age at 21

5% of drivers are non-EU nationals

Facilitate access to third-country drivers to complement the EU talent pool

Download IRU's 2023 driver shortage report for the passenger transport sector in Europe



About IRU

IRU, the world road transport organisation, is the voice of 3.5 million mobility and logistics companies, including over 1 million in the EU.