

Council Directive 96/53/EC of 25 July 1996 laying down for certain road vehicles circulating within the Community the maximum authorized dimensions in national and international traffic and the maximum authorized weights in international traffic

Article 2

For the purposes of this Directive:

- ‘motor vehicle’ shall mean any power-driven vehicle which travels on the road by its own means,
- ‘trailer’ shall mean any vehicle intended to be coupled to a motor vehicle excluding semi-trailers, and constructed and equipped for the carriage of goods,
- ‘semi-trailer’ shall mean any vehicle intended to be coupled to a motor vehicle in such a way that part of it rests on the motor vehicle with a substantial part of its weight and of the weight of its load being borne by the motor vehicle, and constructed and equipped for the carriage of goods,
- ‘vehicle combination’ shall mean either:
 - a road train consisting of a motor vehicle coupled to a trailer; or
 - an articulated vehicle consisting of a motor vehicle coupled to a semi-trailer,
- ‘conditioned vehicle’ shall mean any vehicle whose fixed or movable superstructures are specially equipped for the carriage of goods at controlled temperatures and whose side walls, inclusive of insulation, are each at least 45 mm thick,
- ‘bus’ shall mean a vehicle with more than nine seats including the driver's seat, constructed and equipped to carry passengers and their luggage. It may have one or two decks and may also draw a luggage trailer,
- ‘articulated bus’ shall mean a bus consisting of two rigid sections connected to each other by an articulated section. On this type of vehicle the passenger compartments in each of the two rigid sections shall be intercommunicating. The articulated section shall permit the free movement of travellers between the rigid sections. Connection and disconnection of the two sections shall be possible only in a workshop,
- ‘maximum authorized dimensions’ shall mean the maximum dimensions for use of a vehicle, as laid down in Annex I to this Directive,
- ‘maximum authorized weight’ shall mean the maximum weight for use of a laden vehicle in international traffic,
- ‘maximum authorized axle weight’ shall mean the maximum weight for use in international traffic of a laden axle or group of axles,
- ‘indivisible load’ shall mean a load that cannot, for the purpose of carriage by road, be divided into two or more loads without undue expense or risk of damage and which owing to its dimensions or mass cannot be carried by a motor vehicle, trailer, road train or articulated vehicle complying with this Directive in all respects,
- ‘tonne’ shall mean the weight executed by the mass of a tonne and shall correspond to 9,8 kilonewtons (kN),
- ^[F1]‘alternative fuels’ shall mean fuels or power sources which serve, at least partly, as a substitute for fossil oil sources in the energy supply to transport and which have the potential to contribute to its decarbonisation and enhance the environmental performance of the transport sector, consisting of:
 - (a) electricity consumed in all types of electric vehicles;
 - (b) hydrogen;

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- (c) natural gas, including biomethane, in gaseous form (Compressed Natural Gas — CNG) and liquefied form (Liquefied Natural Gas — LNG);
 - (d) Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG);
 - (e) mechanical energy from on-board storage/on-board sources, including waste heat,
- ‘alternatively fuelled vehicle’ shall mean a motor vehicle powered wholly or in part by an alternative fuel and which has been approved under the framework of Directive 2007/46/EC,
 - ‘^{F2}zero-emission vehicle’ shall mean a zero-emission heavy-duty vehicle as defined in point (11) of Article 3 of Regulation (EU) 2019/1242 of the European Parliament and of the Council⁽¹⁾,
 - ‘intermodal transport operation’ shall mean:
 - (a) the combined transport operations defined in Article 1 of Council Directive 92/106/EEC⁽²⁾ engaged in the transport of one or more containers or swap bodies, up to a total maximum length of 45 feet; or
 - (b) transport operations engaged in the transport of one or more containers or swap bodies, up to a total maximum length of 45 feet, using waterborne transport, provided that the length of the initial or the final road leg does not exceed 150 km in the territory of the Union. The distance of 150 km referred to above may be exceeded in order to reach the nearest suitable transport terminal for the envisaged service in the case of:
 - (i) vehicles complying with point 2.2.2(a) or (b) of Annex I; or
 - (ii) vehicles complying with point 2.2.2(c) or (d) of Annex I, in cases where such distances are permitted in the relevant Member State.

For intermodal transport operations, the nearest suitable transport terminal providing a service may be located in a Member State other than the Member State in which the shipment was loaded or unloaded,

- ‘shipper’ shall mean a legal entity or a natural or legal person who is named on the bill of lading or on an equivalent transport document, such as a ‘through’ bill of lading, as the shipper and/or in whose name or on whose behalf a contract of carriage has been concluded with the transport company.]

All maximum authorized dimensions specified in Annex I shall be measured in accordance with Annex I to ^{F3}Directive 2007/46/EC], with no positive tolerances.

Textual Amendments

- F1** Inserted by [Directive \(EU\) 2015/719 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2015 amending Council Directive 96/53/EC laying down for certain road vehicles circulating within the Community the maximum authorised dimensions in national and international traffic and the maximum authorised weights in international traffic \(Text with EEA relevance\).](#)
- F2** Inserted by [Regulation \(EU\) 2019/1242 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2019 setting CO2 emission performance standards for new heavy-duty vehicles and amending Regulations \(EC\) No 595/2009 and \(EU\) 2018/956 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Council Directive 96/53/EC \(Text with EEA relevance\).](#)
- F3** Substituted by [Directive \(EU\) 2015/719 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2015 amending Council Directive 96/53/EC laying down for certain road vehicles circulating within](#)

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- (1) [^{F1}]^{F2}Regulation (EU) 2019/1242 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2019 setting CO₂ emission performance standards for new heavy-duty vehicles and amending Regulations (EC) No 595/2009 and (EU) 2018/956 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Council Directive 96/53/EC (OJ L 198, 25.7.2019, p. 202).]]
- (2) [^{F1}Council Directive 92/106/EEC of 7 December 1992 on the establishment of common rules for certain types of combined transport of goods between Member States (OJ L 368, 17.12.1992, p. 38).]

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