



Fact Sheet European Driving Time Directive.

In order to enhance the safety on the public roads, restrictions have been placed by law on the duration and hours that drivers are allowed to drive freight vehicles within Europe. Adherence to the laws and regulations is safeguarded by a so called tachograph. A tachograph is a device which records exactly when the vehicle moves and at what speed. Modern tachographs are digital, older versions used a paper disk to record this in a graph. The digital version was made mandatory to reduce the chances of drivers abusing the system to operate outside the legal restrictions. The device further enables authorities to check adherence historically. The tachograph is not bound by the vehicle but by the driver since the vehicle itself can be operated 24/7 but it is the alertness and the amount of rest of the driver which the law is aiming at.

The law makes a distinction between driving time, the time the driver is driving the vehicle, and working time, the time a driver is not actually driving but still at work, lashing and securing, picking up or dropping a container at a terminal etc. The directive makes no distinction between empty or laden vehicles nor does it accept for example weather situations or unexpected delays as exceptions.

The modern tachographs make it virtually impossible to exceed the allowed driving hours. This, in combination with substantial fines and consequences of not adhering to the law results in the vast majority of European drivers adhering to mentioned allowed driving times. The directive is applicable in all countries of the European Union as well as in Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Iceland.

Below a summary of the legal restriction placed on truck drivers in Europe.

Driving Times Restrictions

Maximum driving time without a rest period:	4,5 hours
Maximum daily allowed driving time:	9 hours, 10 hours twice a week
Maximum weekly allowed driving time:	56 hours
Maximum allowed driving time 2 consecutive weeks:	90 hours

Mandatory resting periods

Minimum rest daily:	11 hours consecutive
Allowed split daily rest	9 hours plus 3 hours
Minimum mandatory rest allowed three times a week	9 hours consecutive
Minimum rest two drivers 1 vehicle	9 hours every 30 hours
Minimum weekly rest period uninterrupted	45 hours
<i>Reduced weekly rest to 24 hours uninterrupted is allowed once every 2 weeks, the remaining 21 hours need to be compensated before the end of the third week.</i>	

Mandatory Breaks

Break after every 4,5 driving hours	45 minutes
<i>Above break may be split in first 15 minutes followed by 30 minutes whereby the 15 minutes has to be taken within the 4,5 hours.</i>	
Rest period after working time between 6 and 9 hours	30 minutes
Rest period after working time of 9 hours	45 minutes
<i>Working time rest periods may be broken but need to be at least 30 minutes each in these cases.</i>	