



Driver & Vehicle  
Licensing  
Agency

## Public consultation

Exchange of car driving licences  
issued in Moldova



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## Public consultation

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Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA)  
Longview Road  
Morrison  
Swansea  
SA6 7JL



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## Introduction

This consultation seeks your views on allowing drivers who hold a licence to drive cars that was issued in Moldova to exchange it for an equivalent GB licence if the driver becomes resident in GB.

This change will apply in England, Scotland and Wales only. Driver licensing is devolved in Northern Ireland.

## Background

People resident in GB who have a valid driving licence issued in a country outside the European Economic Area can drive small vehicles included on that licence (including motorcycles, cars and vehicles weighing up to 3,500kg or with up to eight passenger seats) for up to 12 months. To continue driving after this time, they are required to sit and pass a GB driving test. However, if they are from a country designated for driving licence exchange purposes, drivers can exchange their licence for the GB equivalent without the requirement to pass a driving test.

Designation for driving licence exchange is dependent on the testing and licensing standards in the country or territory having been assessed by the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) as equivalent to those in GB. Once a country has been designated, specified licences may be exchanged for the GB equivalent subject to the licence holder meeting the normal driver licensing **requirements** including on **health**, and **minimum ages in GB**.

Other countries currently designated for driving licence exchange are:

- Andorra
- Australia
- Barbados
- British Virgin Islands
- Canada
- Cayman Islands
- Falkland Islands
- Faroe Islands
- Gibraltar
- Hong Kong
- Japan
- Monaco
- New Zealand
- North Macedonia
- Republic of Korea
- Singapore
- South Africa
- Switzerland
- Taiwan
- Ukraine
- United Arab Emirates (UAE)
- Zimbabwe

The exchange of a licence from a designated country or territory for a GB equivalent is subject to the following conditions:

- i. applicants must show that they did not obtain the licence by way of a previous exchange for one issued in a third country where the licensing and testing standards do not meet those applied in GB
- ii. only entitlement to drive vehicles with automatic transmission will be granted on the GB licence unless there is confirmation that the original test was taken in a manual vehicle
- iii. the licence being exchanged must be valid at the time of application for a GB driving licence
- iv. the licence must be exchanged within five years of the date the holder became resident in GB

If the licence holder has been resident in GB for longer than five years, they must pass a GB theory and practical driving test to be able to continue to drive.

## The proposal

Consideration is now being given to designating Moldova for driving licence exchange purposes. This would require an order, known as a designation order, to be made by statutory instrument under section 108 of the Road Traffic Act 1988.

Current driver licensing and testing standards in Moldova have been assessed by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) and the DVSA. The DVSA has confirmed that relevant Moldova driving tests for cars are equivalent to those in GB. As a result, the DVLA is proposing to allow car licences issued in Moldova to be exchanged for the GB equivalent without the need for a further driving test. This is provided the holders of such licences are resident in GB and can meet other licensing requirements. As holders of a car licence from Moldova will have passed a test of an equivalent standard to those in GB, we do not believe there will be a negative impact on road safety.

Moldova driver licensing processes, documents and the information displayed on them have been considered to identify any issues that might lead to GB licences being issued inappropriately and with unacceptable risks to road safety. No issues have been identified.

## Benefits of proposed change

If adopted, the proposal would allow individual licence holders to apply to exchange their Moldovan licence for the GB equivalent without the requirement to take theory and practical tests.

The main benefit will be to allow Moldovan driving licence holders who have already met equivalent driving standards to those required in GB to obtain a full GB car licence. These drivers will no longer have to apply for a provisional GB licence and incur the added time and expense involved in subsequently sitting another driving test.

Figures obtained from the DVLA's driver records from January 2018 to November 2024 show that 33,472 GB provisional car licences were issued to applicants with Moldova as their place of birth.

There are not expected to be any significant costs or savings for the DVLA. The costs for a licence exchange application would continue to be met through the relevant fee. The proposal may remove some demand for driving tests but this is not expected to be significant.

Designation would be on the understanding that Moldova implements reciprocal arrangements for GB licence holders and both GB and Moldova will be required to keep the exchange arrangements under review.

## Consultation question

The consultation seeks views on the following specific question relating to the proposed change.

### Question:

**Are you aware of any reason why the DVLA should not exchange car driving licences issued in Moldova for the equivalent GB licence?**

## How to respond

The consultation runs from 28 February 2025 to 28 March 2025. You can respond by emailing [internationalpolicy@dvla.gov.uk](mailto:internationalpolicy@dvla.gov.uk)

You can also post your response to:

International Policy Team  
Strategy, Policy & Communications  
Directorate – C3W  
Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency  
Swansea  
SA6 7JL

When responding, it would be helpful if you could state whether you are responding as an individual or representing the views of an organisation. If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please make it clear who the organisation represents and, where applicable, how the views of members were collected.

## What happens next

All responses will be considered as part of the consultation process. The summary of responses will be published within 3 months and before or alongside any further action, for example, before any designation order is made. It will be available online at GOV.UK. We will notify those who responded to the consultation when this happens.

## Privacy and Freedom of Information

We collect, use and store your personal data so that we can record and analyse your response to the consultation. We may share your personal

data if we have a lawful reason, for example, as part of a criminal investigation or to prevent fraud. [Read the DVLA privacy policy](#) to find out how we collect, use and store your data.

The DVLA is an executive agency of the Department for Transport (DfT). The data controller for the DVLA is DfT – a data controller determines the reasons and how personal data is processed. For more information, [see the Information Commissioner's Office \(ICO\) Data Protection Public Register](#). DfT's registration number is Z7122992.

## Freedom of Information requests

We may need to publish or share some or all of the comments received in response to this consultation in line with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) or the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

Under the FOIA, there is a statutory code of practice that we have to comply with. It covers how we deal with confidential information.

If there are reasons why you would not wish your comments to be published or disclosed, please let us know. Although your wishes in this respect may not override any statutory requirement to disclose, they will be taken into account so far as possible.

Some IT systems produce an automatic confidentiality disclaimer. We do not always recognise them.

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### Consultation principles

Due to the limited impact and scope of this proposal we are carrying out a shortened consultation. This consultation follows the government consultation principles. These principles give clear guidance to us on running consultations. For further information, [see our consultation principles guidance page](#).

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