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**DRIVING A CAR WITHOUT TRAINING AT A DRIVING SCHOOL****Tarasenko O. V.***senior lecturer*

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**Abstract.** *The paper examines the theoretical training of future drivers without attending classes at a driving school, the introduction of self-training for passing the theoretical exam for obtaining a driver's license, and the dangers of road traffic.*

**Key words:** *studying at a driving school, self-training, taking a theoretical exam, the state of accidents on the roads, traffic safety.*

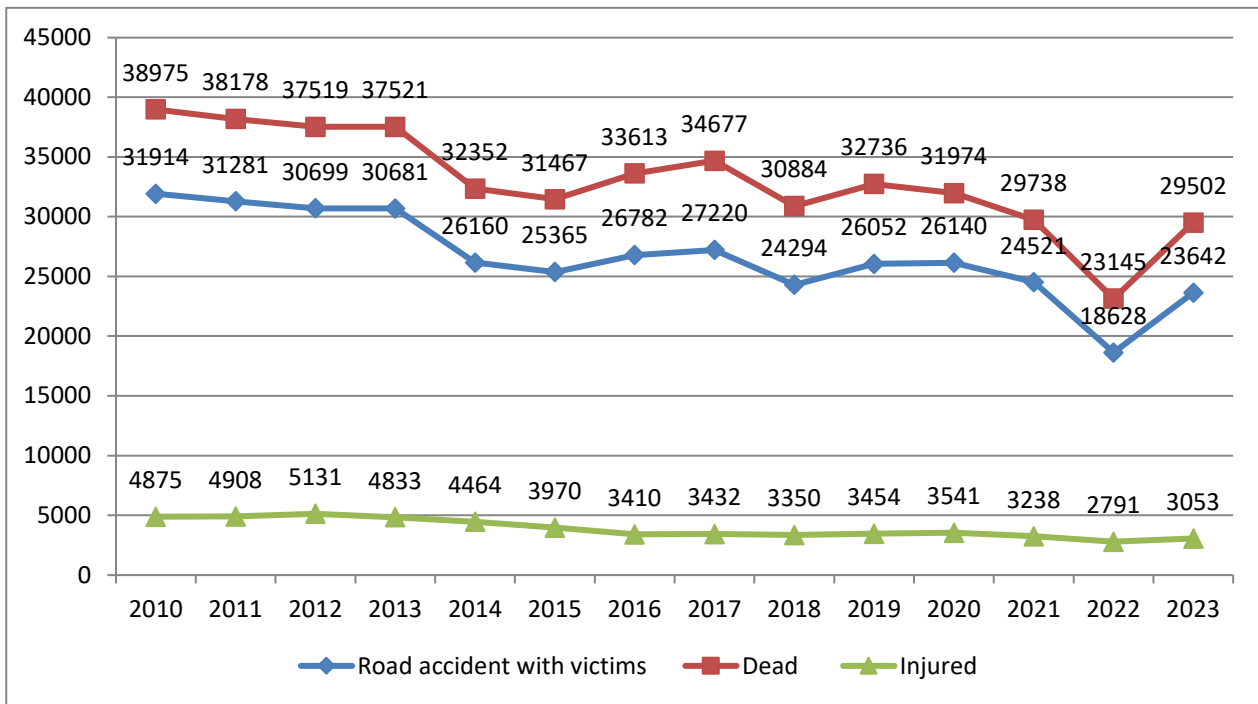
**Introduction.**

Road safety is a problem of national importance, as a significant number of citizens—participants in traffic—are killed or injured annually in road traffic accidents on the country's roads. Addressing issues related to improving road safety is a critical task, considering the substantial social and economic costs of the negative consequences of road traffic accidents for the community and the country's budget. It is the duty of the government to develop and implement effective measures aimed at reducing the level of accidents on the roads, to protect all categories of road users.

**Main text.** An analysis of the statistics of road traffic accidents on Ukrainian roads from 2010-2023 (Figure. 1) shows that the number of people injured as a result of transport events unfortunately does not decrease [1].

The current state of accident rates necessitates the development and vigorous implementation of measures aimed at improving traffic safety.

In this context, it is surprising that as of November 22, 2023, the Resolution No. 1218 of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, dated November 10, 2023, came into effect. This resolution allows prospective drivers to take the theoretical exam at the territorial service centers of the Ministry of Internal Affairs to obtain a driver's license without undergoing theoretical training at a driving school. It is assumed that it is sufficient to independently study the content of the Road Traffic Rules of Ukraine, practice the test questions for the exam, and then calmly register at the territorial service center of the Ministry of Internal Affairs to take the theoretical exam. "The theoretical exam is taken by a person who has undergone appropriate training in an accredited institution or independently mastered the content of the theoretical module of the standard training program, considering the categories of vehicles" – this is how the new resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine is formulated [2].



**Figure 1 – Analysis of Statistics on Transport Events with Victims**

A source: [1]

It seems that the deputies of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine do not remember the history of the process of preparing future drivers, because there was previously a permit for independent preparation of future drivers for theoretical exams on Road Traffic Rules. However, after analyzing the state of accidents on the country's roads, especially paying attention to the training undergone by the driver responsible for the traffic incident—whether they were trained in a driving school or prepared independently—the leadership of the then State Automobile Inspection of Ukraine proposed a ban on independent preparation for obtaining a driver's license.

It appears that the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine did not order expert opinions, nor did it conduct consultations with road safety experts before implementing such a decree. This conclusion can be drawn considering the actual state of accidents on the country's roads and a deep understanding of the psychology of future drivers, especially those mostly under the age of 25.

According to the analysis of traffic accident statistics in the USA, teenagers aged 16 to 19 make up 3.6% of licensed drivers, but account for 9.3% of drivers in all traffic accidents and 6.3% in fatal traffic accidents [3].

According to a 2002 WHO report, in the European region, the risk of death from a road traffic accident increases with age, peaking from 20 to 24 years. Three-quarters of road traffic death cases among those aged 0-24 years are males. Furthermore, analyzing the list of the top 10 causes of death among children and youth aged 5 to 24 years, the leading cause is "road traffic injuries" [4].

In the age group from 0 to 14 years, 48% of those killed in traffic accidents, depending on the type of movement, were pedestrians, 32% were in cars, 9% were on bicycles, and 6% were on motorcycles. Analyzing the age group from 15 to 24 years, the picture changes: 59% were in cars, 19% were on motorcycles, 17% were



pedestrians, and 2% were on bicycles [4].

The decision to allow independent preparation for the theoretical exam is also flawed because the Standard Training Program for the Preparation and Re-training of Vehicle Drivers [5] consists of a standard educational plan, a standard thematic program, and specifies the minimum number of instructional hours allocated for the preparation and retraining of vehicle drivers, taking into account the relevant categories of vehicles.

The standard educational plan for the driver training program for Category B vehicles includes a list of educational sections of theoretical and practical modules with the minimum number of instructional hours allocated for mastering the educational material (section of the educational program), for theoretical and practical training and retraining of vehicle drivers.

The theoretical module includes the following educational sections:

- “Fundamentals of Legislation in the Field of Road Safety” – 31 hours.;
- “Ethics (psychological foundations) of a Vehicle Driver” – 7 hours.;
- “Construction and Technical Maintenance of the Vehicle” – 8 hours.;
- “Fundamentals of Vehicle Operation and Requirements for Road Safety” – 10 hours.;
- “Providing Pre-medical Assistance” – 8 hours.

The practical module includes the following educational sections:

- “Practical Vehicle Operation” – 40 hours.;
- “Special Provisions Regarding Vehicle Categories”.

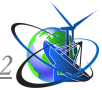
Moreover, it is necessary to consider that the average citizen wishing to obtain a driver's license thinks that for self-preparation, it is sufficient to know only the contents of the Road Traffic Rules, not taking into account other sections of the Standard Training Program for the Preparation and Retraining of Vehicle Drivers, especially sections like "Fundamentals of Vehicle Operation and Requirements for Road Safety" and "Providing Pre-medical Assistance." The developers of the Standard Program allocated a significant portion of the training, 18 hours, to these sections, considering the importance of their content and enrichment for making correct decisions during potential dangerous or urgent situations on the roads.

Obtaining such knowledge independently is very difficult; a person needs to be highly motivated to do so.

It should also be understood that there are particularly dangerous situations and maneuvers on the road, which need to be explained in detail to driving school students. For example, navigating a roundabout self-regulated intersection is a complex exercise for a novice driver. Without the explanations of an experienced professional, it is very challenging for a future driver to independently understand the sequence of actions during such an exercise.

One definition of the term "competence" is an integrated ability of a person, acquired through learning, which consists of knowledge, experience, values, and attitudes that can be holistically realized in practice.

Professional competence of a vehicle driver for providing passenger and/or freight transportation services is a dynamic combination of knowledge, skills, and abilities that demonstrates the capability to successfully perform transportation



services [6]. A private transport driver also carries passengers and must possess competence at a sufficiently high level. What competence can a future driver acquire if they learn in a self-study mode without the participation of an instructor who could share their personal experience and more in-depth knowledge?

A future driver independently cannot connect information from different sections of the Road Traffic Regulations. It is necessary to systematize the study of information for better understanding.

The structure of the material presentation also plays an important role. The sequence of studying educational sections and themes, and the instructional hours for theoretical and practical modules are determined by the accredited institution conducting the training and retraining of vehicle drivers. For example, while studying Section 8 of the Road Traffic Regulations "Regulation of Road Traffic," specifically paragraph 8.4 "Road Signs," students move on to study Section 33 of the Road Traffic Regulations "Road Signs." If a future driver learns the material in a self-study environment, they might leave the study of road signs until the end of mastering the content of the Road Traffic Regulations, which would be a significant mistake because without this knowledge, the knowledge of road markings (Section 34 of the Road Traffic Regulations), it will be difficult to understand the rules of maneuvering and passing intersections [7].

It must be considered that driving schools are conducted by experienced instructors, all with many years of personal driving experience. The transfer of this knowledge and personal life experience of a practicing driver with many years of driving experience is significant for forming the personal competencies of a future driver. The absence of such knowledge transfer significantly worsens the formation of a safe behavior model for the future driver. For example, to make a left turn at an intersection, the driver must perform the following actions:

- Give a warning signal with the turn indicator (paragraph 9.2);
- Take the appropriate position on the road intended for movement in this direction well in advance (paragraph 10.4);
- Look in the mirror or turn their head to ensure there is no obstacle on the left side of the vehicle (paragraph 10.1);
- If necessary, let oncoming vehicles pass (paragraph 10.4);
- Let pedestrians who are crossing the roadway at the intersection in the same direction pass (paragraph 16.2);
- Complete the maneuver so that when exiting the intersection, the vehicle does not end up in the lane of oncoming traffic (paragraph 10.5).

It is also necessary to consider factors such as the duration of education. If a person studies the material on their own in self-study mode, without specific deadlines as in a driving school, the duration of learning can extend significantly over time, in which case it all depends on the future driver's self-organization. Meanwhile, in driving school, a student learns the material according to a class schedule and better structures their time. Moreover, it has been proven that so-called "community" learning, i.e., studying in a group, enhances the material absorption by students. Communication in a group with other driving school students helps the future driver to overcome their own fears and exchange thoughts with other "beginners."



## Summary and conclusions.

The unchanging significant number of victims on the roads of Ukraine requires the implementation of measures aimed at increasing road safety for beginner drivers, such as: the first 120 hours of independent driving after obtaining a driver's license only in the company of an adult aged 30 years or older; strengthening control over driving school students attending theoretical classes. However, instead of this, Resolution No. 1218 worsens the level of preparedness for independent driving for those wishing to obtain a driver's license, without full training at a driving school, which will lead to a deterioration in the accident rate on Ukraine's roads in the future.

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