

A comparative study of driver licensing regulatory systems in Ghana and Sweden, from the Safe System Approach perspective.

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1. Introduction

The annual rate of road fatalities (died within 30 days of crash) in **Ghana was 8.31 per 100,000** population in 2020. The annual rate of road fatalities in **Sweden was 2.0 per 100,000** population (2021) which is about 76% lower than the Ghanaian rate.

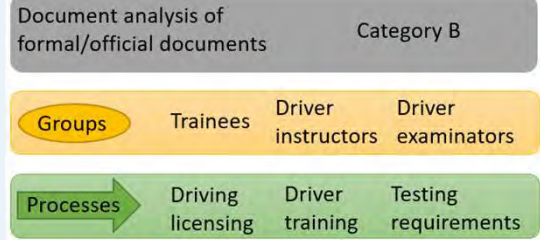
This difference is due to several factors such as traffic safety policy, transport system design, safety culture, driver training, etc. Previous research confirmed that most road crashes are caused by human factors, e.g., errors and violations.

The Safe System Approach is that road traffic safety is a shared responsibility among road designers, builders, managers, road users and vehicles.

Aim

The object of the study was to compare driver training in Ghana with Sweden. This was done in order to identify formal requirements that needs to be enhanced in the Ghanaian driving training and regulatory system, from a Safe System Approach

Methods



Results I

	Sweden	Ghana
Trainee requirements (those who learn how to drive)		
A trainee permit	Yes (5 years)	Yes (for 3 months)
Permanent resident in the country	Yes	Ghanaians and residents of the country
Minimum age for acquiring a driving licence	18	18
Minimum age for practicing to drive	16	18 (practice at any age no restrictions)
Eye test	Yes (at least 0.5)	Yes (visual acuity of at least 0.5 or 6/12) and Physical examination
Hearing test	No	No
Practicing with layman allowed?	Yes	No (unregulated)
Language	Theory test is translated into 14 different languages	Ability to read and write in English
Compulsory training		
Theoretical risk education on alcohol, drugs, speeding, fatigue	Yes (4 hrs)	No (but included in syllabus)
Practical risk education on slippery road	Yes (4 hrs)	No (but included in syllabus)
Compulsory number of theory lessons at a driving school	Nothing apart from theoretical and practical parts above	Compulsory 72-hour training with a DVLA accredited driving school
Cost of licensing		
Type of service	Regular	Regular, premium & prestige services
Cost of lessons	400-600 Swedish kr per hour (-40 - -60 US\$)	Driving schools' fees (-88 US\$ - 123 US\$)
Compulsory parts	2700 Swedish kr (-265 US\$)	Applicant must complete the theory test before the in-traffic driving test
Cost of theory test	Approx. 400 Swedish kr (-40 US\$)	Standard service: 38 US\$; Premium service: 61 US\$; Mobile service: 64 US\$; Tertiary drive: std= 38 US\$, premium=61 US\$ (cost comprise theory and in traffic test)
Cost of driving test	800 - 1040 Swedish kr (-79 - -102 US\$) (more if they need to hire a car)	Re-test (5 US\$)
Cost of re-examination	Same as above	
Curriculum		
National curriculum based on the GDE (Goals for Driver Education) which includes:	Yes	Yes
Vehicle control	Yes	Yes
Driving in traffic (traffic rules and cooperation)	Yes	Yes
Goals and context of driving (modal choice, route planning)	Yes	No (to be confirm)
Goals for life and skills for living (norms, risk perception)	Yes	No
Eco-driving	Yes	No
Theory test		
Number of questions	70 (traffic rules & road signs)	20
Duration	50 minutes, longer if it is verbal	30 minutes
Minimum number of correct answers	52 (~75%) of the 70 written questions	14 (70%) of the 20 written test questions
Procedure	Written but also oral with or without an interpreter.	Online (onsite)

Results II

	Sweden	Ghana
Driving test		
In real traffic	Yes	Yes (there is a road signs test after the in-traffic test)
Duration (minutes)	~25 min driving	20 min or less
Examiner chooses route	Yes	Yes (some centres have facilities for the doing the test within their premises)
Reversing manoeuvres	Yes (if traffic conditions allow)	The examiner decides - Compulsory
Parking manoeuvres	Yes (if traffic conditions allow)	The examiner decides - Compulsory
Lane changing manoeuvres	Yes (if traffic conditions allow)	The examiner decides - Compulsory
Merging manoeuvres	Yes (if traffic conditions allow)	The examiner decides
After licensing		
Probatory period	Yes	P-Plate (requirement for new drivers to display the P-Plate between 3 and 6 months after acquiring the license)
Duration of probatory period	2 years	3-6 months
Private driver trainer and requirements - Layman		
Regulated	Yes	Not regulated (unofficial) Regulated (private business)
Minimum age	24	25 (private business; certificate)
A valid driving licence	Yes (from Sweden or any other EES country)	Yes (private business: License C)
Completed introductory training course during the last 5 years	Yes (3 hrs)	Yes (private business)
Minimum year of driving experience required	5 years (after getting license B)	3 years (after getting License B)
Introductory course for those who will drive privately	Yes (same as the private trainer)	No (unofficial) and Yes (private business)
Duration of permit	5 Years (for both, trainee & instructor)	2 years renewable, same for driving schools' instructors
Driving schools instructors' requirements		
Higher education studies	Yes	Instructors are Technical officers with at least HND in automobile or mechanical engineering
Regulated profession	Yes	Yes
Study period	1.5 years	3 years
Minimum age	21 years	Major criteria is the qualification or degree
Driving experience	3 years	3 year (license class C)
training content		
Traffic safety work	Yes	Yes
Vehicle knowledge	Yes	Yes
Traffic psychology	Yes	Yes
Teaching methods	Yes	Yes
Degree project	No	No
Driving examiners requirements (those who approve a driving test)		
Higher education studies	Yes	Instructors should be a Technical office with at least HND in Automobile/ Mechanical Engineering
Regulated profession	Yes	Yes
Study period	1 year	3
Minimum age	23	No (major criteria is the qualification or degree)
teaching traffic safety awareness at schools		
Age of pupils	Varies from school to school	No (only in post secondary education)
Revocation of driving license		
Point system	No	No (law: careless or dangerous driving)
Withdrawal/ Cancellation of license (2 to 6, 12, 24 months)	Speeding > 30 km/h; alcohol >= 1,0 BAC; narcotics; hit-and-run; red light running, overtaking at crosswalks	Yes (difficult to implement. Only Poor eye-sight or eye defects); repeated drunk driving

Differences

- Trainee:**
- Younger age in Sweden to start training privately (layman: regulated)
 - Ghana: private layman unregulated (very common). Business layman regulated (not common).
- Compulsory training:**
- Sweden, 8 hrs (1: Alcohol, drugs, fatigue; 2: Speed, braking, slippery)
 - Ghana, 72 hours (theoretical general rules, some practice).
- Cost:**
- Ghana: Different time services: regular, premium, prestige, mobile
 - Compulsory courses more expensive in Sweden
- Curriculum:**
- Goals & Context of driving: Not clear in Ghana (TBC)
 - Norms & Risk perception: Not taught in Ghana
 - Eco-driving: Not taught in Ghana

Differences

- Theory test:**
- Number of questions 1/3 in Ghana (20) compared to Sweden (70)
 - Correct answers: Sweden= 52/70; Ghana= 14/20
- Driving test:**
- Sweden ~25 min; Ghana less than 20 min
 - Ghana some centres within their premises (not in real traffic) TBC
- After licensing:**
- Probatory period: Sweden 2 years; Ghana 3 to 6 months.
- Private training/instructor:**
- Ghana: private: not regulated, no introductory course. For business is regulated.
- Withdrawal:**
- Sweden: several reasons: speeding, alcohol, hit-and-run, red light.
 - Ghana: careless/dangerous driving, eye related problems.

Conclusions

Driver training	Ghana: not aligned with Safe System Approach	Ghana: less focus on teaching higher order skills	E.g., risk avoidance, modal choice, route planning
Experience	Sweden: regulated to practice from 16 y-o	Ghana: not regulated to practice from 16 y-o	Ghana: newly examined drivers with less experience
Compulsory risk education	Sweden: trainees are more aware of hazards	Ghana: trainees are less aware of hazards	E.g., speeding, braking distance, sharp curves
Recommendations Ghana	Regulation of private training (16 y-o)	GDE of trainees & instructors: Goals & context of training	Revise theory test (only 20 questions) Make sure driving test is in real traffic