

## **German regulation regarding professional carriage driving for tourism**

*In many places animal rights associations campaign against horse drawn carriages in tourism and call for a general ban. Instead of banning, some federal countries in Germany now passed regulations aiming to insure security and animal welfare. Comprehensive prescriptions are set regarding the driver and the groom, the horses, the harness and the shoeing, the working conditions and the horse-drawn vehicles. Some key points of the new regulation:*

- Drivers must be min. 18 years old and have an official document proving their qualification as carriage drivers. A trained groom is recommended.
- The minimum age of the horses used for regular work is 5 years. 3 and 4 years old horses may be used for a limited time together with an experienced animal. All horses must be trained for carriage driving and be in good shape. The harness must fit the horse, be adapted to the work and in perfect condition. Shoeing has to be adapted to working conditions and guarantee safe driving.
- The total working time in a day must not exceed 9 hours, working time including harnessing, transport to and from the working place. At least two non-interrupted pauses of 30 minutes each for feeding and drinking are mandatory, the first pause being at the latest 4 hours after hitching the horses. After work, the animals have to be given the opportunity to move freely in a paddock or pasture. After six days of work they must rest for 24 hours.
- If the temperature exceeds 30° in the shadow after 10 a.m., 30 minutes pauses are compulsory every two hours. The rest places must provide shadow and the possibility to tie up the horses, if possible on sandy ground or grass. During the rest time horses must have free access to hay (or similar) and water. The animals must be protected against horseflies and bad weather conditions.
- Horse drawn vehicles must be controlled by an authorized person/institution at least once in a year. Each vehicle must have a plaque showing: an identification number, the maximum number of passengers, the maximum load capacity, the weight of the carriage, the name and telephone number of the company.

*This regulation applies in the German federal countries of Niedersachsen, Berlin, Hamburg, Schleswig-Holstein and Thüringen since 2018. The title is: "Gewerbsmäßige Unterhaltung eines Fahrbetriebes mit Zugtieren"*

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