



Department for Transport

Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Statistics: England 2015

About this release

This statistical release presents information on taxis and private hire vehicles (PHV) in England as at 31 March 2015.

Figures are updated every two years through surveying each licensing authority (a unitary or lower tier authority) in England and Wales.

This release refers to England only but data for Wales can be found online [here](#).

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The total number of licensed taxi and private hire vehicles and driver licences in England reached record levels in 2015.

Total licensed vehicle numbers increased by 9.3% to 242,200 since 2013, the highest number since comparable records were first collected in 2005.

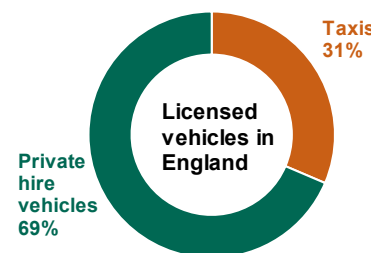
In 2015, 69% of all licensed vehicles in England were private hire vehicles.

Licensed vehicles in London accounted for 35% of all licensed vehicles.

There were 297,600 driver licences in 2015, 12,400 more than in 2013.

242,200
licensed vehicles

↑9.3% since 2013



35%
London

65%
England outside London

297,600
driver licences

↑4.3% since 2013

Summary table

Table 1 summarises the 2015 taxi and private hire vehicles (PHV) licensing statistics. Figures for licensed vehicles, PHV operators and drivers are shown for London, England outside London and England. These statistics are collected every two years with the last survey being carried out in 2013.

Table 1: Summary of 2015 taxi and private hire vehicle licensing figures compared with 2013

	London	England outside London	England
	March 2015 figure in thousands and change compared to March 2013		
Total licensed vehicles	85.3 ↑ 18.4%	156.9 ↑ 4.9%	242.2 ↑ 9.3%
Taxis	22.5 ↑ 1.5%	53.6 ↑ 5.3%	76.1 ↑ 4.2%
wheelchair accessible taxis	22.5 ↑ 1.5%	21.9 ↑ 0.5%	44.4 ↑ 1.0%
Private Hire Vehicles (PHVs)	62.8 ↑ 25.9%	103.4 ↑ 4.7%	166.1 ↑ 11.8%
Licensed PHV operators	3.0 ↓ -4.8%	11.8 ↓ -3.3%	14.8 ↓ -3.6%
Total licensed drivers	103.9 ↑ 12.3%	193.7 ↑ 0.5%	297.6 ↑ 4.3%
Taxi-only licences	25.2 ↓ -1.3%	36.5 ↓ -0.6%	61.7 ↓ -0.9%
PHV-only licences	78.7 ↑ 17.5%	85.4 ↓ -2.0%	164.1 ↑ 6.5%
Dual licences	0.0 ↔ 0.0%	71.8 ↑ 4.3%	71.8 ↑ 4.3%

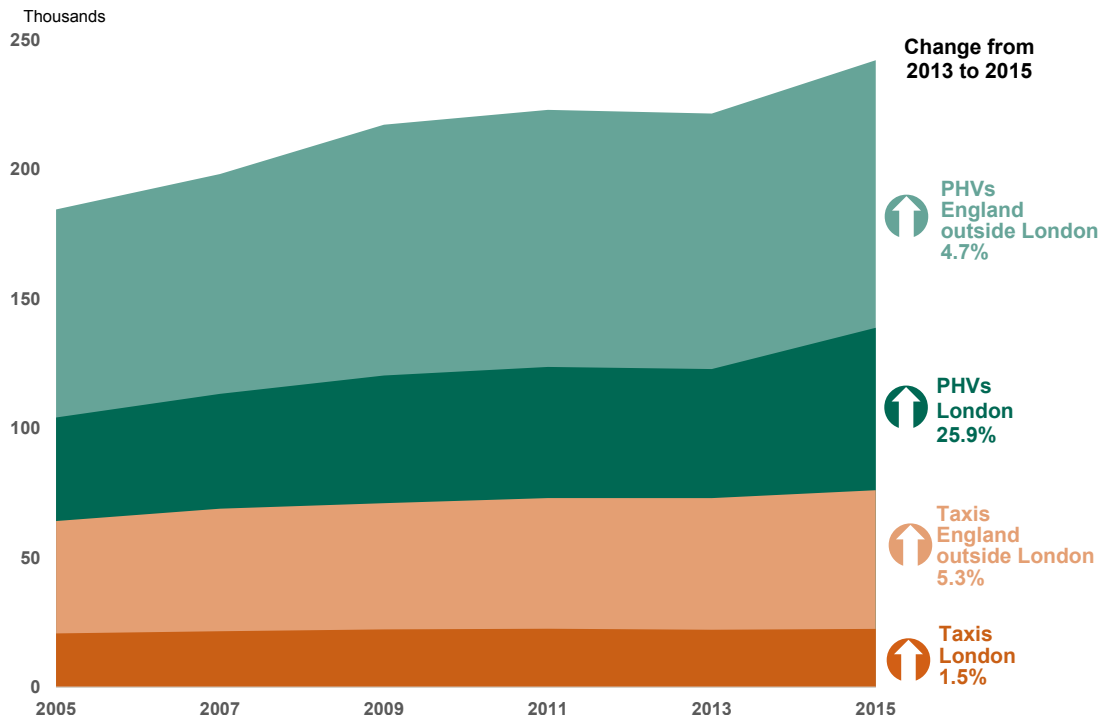
Taxis (or 'hackney carriages') are available for immediate hire, can be hailed in the street ('ply for hire') and accept pre-bookings. Taxis have two types of licences: a vehicle licence (issued to the owner of the taxi) and a driving licence.

Private Hire Vehicles (PHV; 'minicabs') must be pre-booked and cannot use taxi ranks. It is illegal for PHV to ply for hire. For PHV there are three types of licences: a vehicle licence, a driving licence and an operator licence.

Licensed vehicles

There were 242,200 licensed taxis and PHVs in England in 2015. Just under a third (76,100) of these vehicles were taxis (see chart 1). The number of licensed vehicles increased by 9.3% from 2013, a similar rate of increase seen between 2007 and 2009 (before the economic downturn). Overall there has been a 31.2% increase in licensed vehicles since 2005.

Chart 1: Licensed vehicles by type and area: England, biennial since 2005
(table [TAXI0101](#))



Further Statistics

on the number of licensed taxis and PHVs in Scotland (which operates under a different licensing regime) are collected by the Scottish Government and published in Scottish Transport Statistics [here](#).

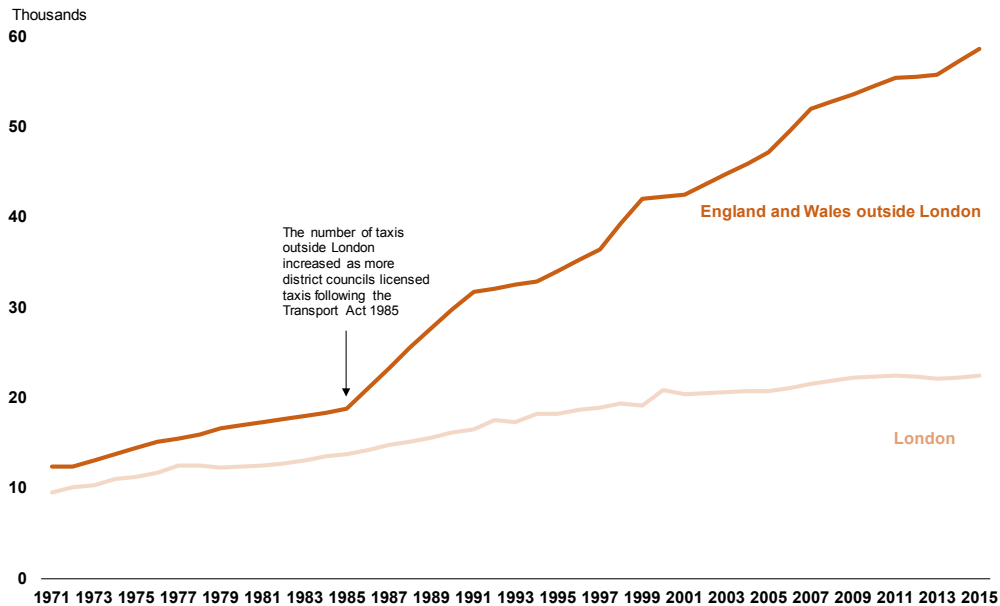
Detailed statistics

on licensed vehicles can be found in table [TAXI0101](#).

Economic conditions and local licensing policies influence the number of licensed vehicles with considerable variation between areas. Since 2013, around two thirds of licensing authorities recorded an increase in vehicle numbers.

There were 76,100 licensed taxis in 2015, a 4.2% increase from 2013 and a continuation of the long term increase in the number of taxis in England (chart 2). A 1.5% increase occurred in London and a 5.3% increase in England outside London.

Chart 2: Licensed taxi vehicle numbers in London and England and Wales outside London from 1971 (table [TAXI0101](#))



There was a 11.8% increase in licensed PHVs in England between 2013 and 2015 to 166,100 vehicles, with a 25.9% increase in London and a 4.7% increase in England outside London.

Licensing authorities

are the lower tier or unitary local authorities in England outside London (and Wales for online tables) and Transport for London (TfL).

Chart 2

refers to England and Wales data to show the long-term trend in the number of licensed taxis. The rest of this release refers to England only data.

Detailed statistics

on licensed vehicles can be found in table [TAXI0101](#).

Detailed statistics

on wheelchair accessible licensed taxis since 2005 for each region can be found in table [TAXI0103](#) and for each local authority can be found in table [TAXI0104](#)

Wheelchair accessible taxis

In England 58% of all taxis were wheelchair accessible in 2015, a small decline (2 percentage points) from 2013. However, the proportion of wheelchair accessible vehicles has remained similar across the last decade.

All 22,500 London taxis were wheelchair accessible as required by Transport for London's 'Conditions for Fitness' taxi licensing policy. In England outside London, metropolitan areas had 84% wheelchair accessible taxis with a substantial decline in the proportion of accessible taxis in other urban (36%) and rural areas (13%) as shown in chart 3. Some 175 authorities (61%) required wheelchair accessible vehicles in all or part of their taxi fleet.

Chart 3: Proportion of taxis that were wheelchair accessible in 2015 by urban/rural classification (table [TAXI0104](#))



Urban/rural classification

Other urban and rural categories were defined using the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs urban/rural classification, which can be [here](#).

Metropolitan areas

represent the Passenger Transport Executives.

Detailed statistics

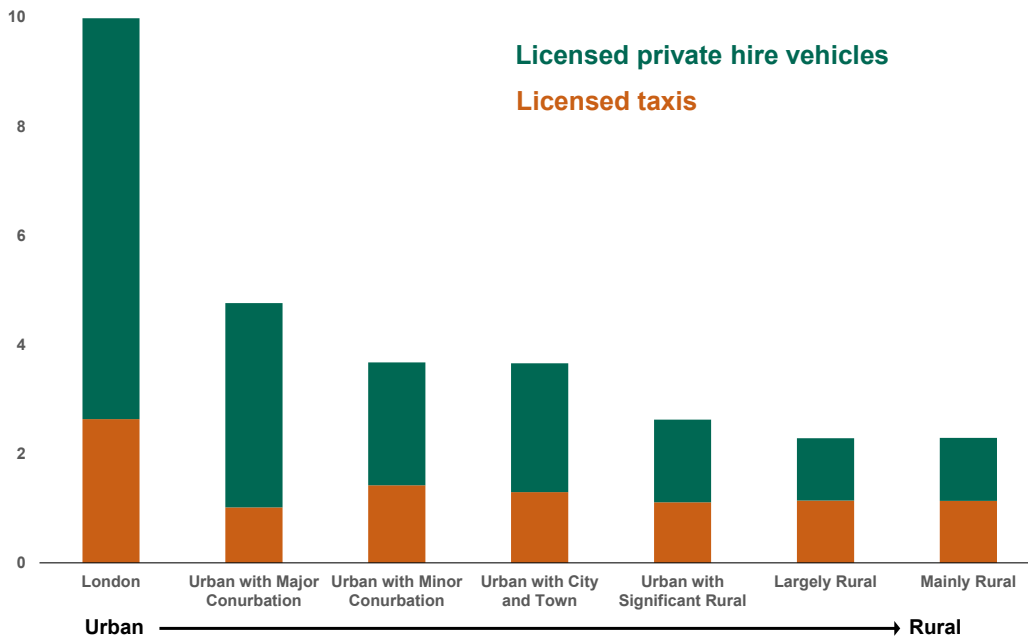
on the number of licensed taxi and private hire vehicles per 1,000 people for each local authority can be found in table [TAXI0105](#).

Licensed taxi and PHV vehicles per 1,000 people

In 2015, on average, there were 4.5 licensed taxi and private hire vehicles per 1,000 people in England. The number of licensed vehicles per 1,000 people decreases as areas became more rural (see chart 4).

Chart 4: Number of licensed taxis and private hire vehicles per 1,000 people by urban/rural classification, England 2015 (table [TAXI0105](#))

Number of vehicles per thousand people



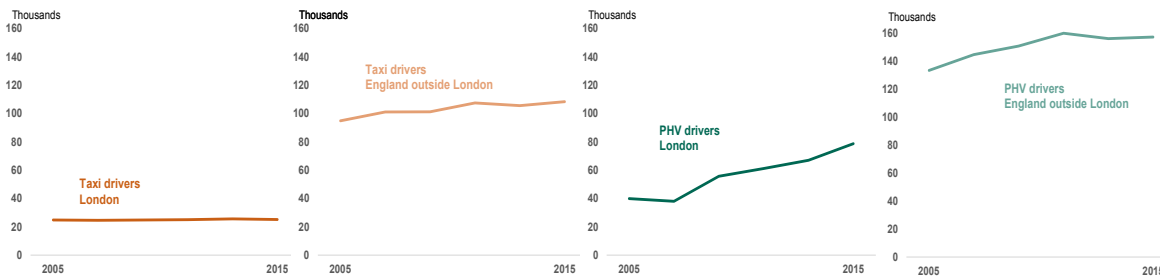
In London there were 10.0 licensed vehicles per 1,000 people, more than double the national average, with 7.3 licensed PHVs and 2.6 licensed taxis per 1,000 people.

Driver licences

Overall there were 297,600 taxi-only, PHV-only and dual driver licences in England, over 12,400 (4.3%) more than in 2013.

Of the total, 55% had PHV-only licences, 21% taxi-only licences and 24% had dual taxi/PHV licences, all similar proportions to 2013.

Chart 5: Number of driver licences by vehicle type, London and England outside London, 2005 to 2015 (table [TAXI0104](#))



London accounted for the majority of the increase in the number of driver licences, with a 12.3% increase of 11,400 driver licences to 103,900 since 2013. PHV-only driver licences increased by 17.5%. The number of taxi-only driver licences decreased by 1.3% from 2013.

In England outside London, the total number of driver licences increased by 0.5%. Table 2 and map 2 (on page 7) show that this relatively small national increase masked quite large regional and local authority changes. There was a marked decline in total driver licences in Yorkshire and the Humber and a marked increase in the West Midlands, for example.

Table 2: Change in total driver licences (taxi-only, PHV-only and dual) by region between 2013 and 2015, England

Licensing region	Total driver licences		Taxi licence		PHV licence		Dual licence	
	Thousands	% change compared with 2013	Thousands	% change compared with 2013	Thousands	% change compared with 2013	Thousands	% change compared with 2013
North East	13.4	2.3%	13.4	2.6%	13.4	8.9%	13.4	-6.8%
North West	40.9	0.6%	40.9	6.5%	40.9	-5.2%	40.9	14.6%
Yorkshire and the Humber	24.8	-4.3%	24.8	-18.2%	24.8	-8.5%	24.8	6.1%
East Midlands	16.7	0.2%	16.7	27.5%	16.7	-1.8%	16.7	-2.3%
West Midlands	25.2	4.7%	25.2	-1.0%	25.2	-0.8%	25.2	16.0%
East of England	22.5	2.1%	22.5	-7.9%	22.5	0.4%	22.5	5.8%
London	103.9	12.3%	103.9	-1.3%	103.9	17.5%	103.9	0.0%
South East	34.0	0.3%	34.0	-10.9%	34.0	1.4%	34.0	5.7%
South West	16.2	-1.1%	16.2	5.5%	16.2	2.3%	16.2	-6.8%
England	297.6	4.3%	297.6	-0.9%	297.6	6.5%	297.6	4.3%

Detailed statistics

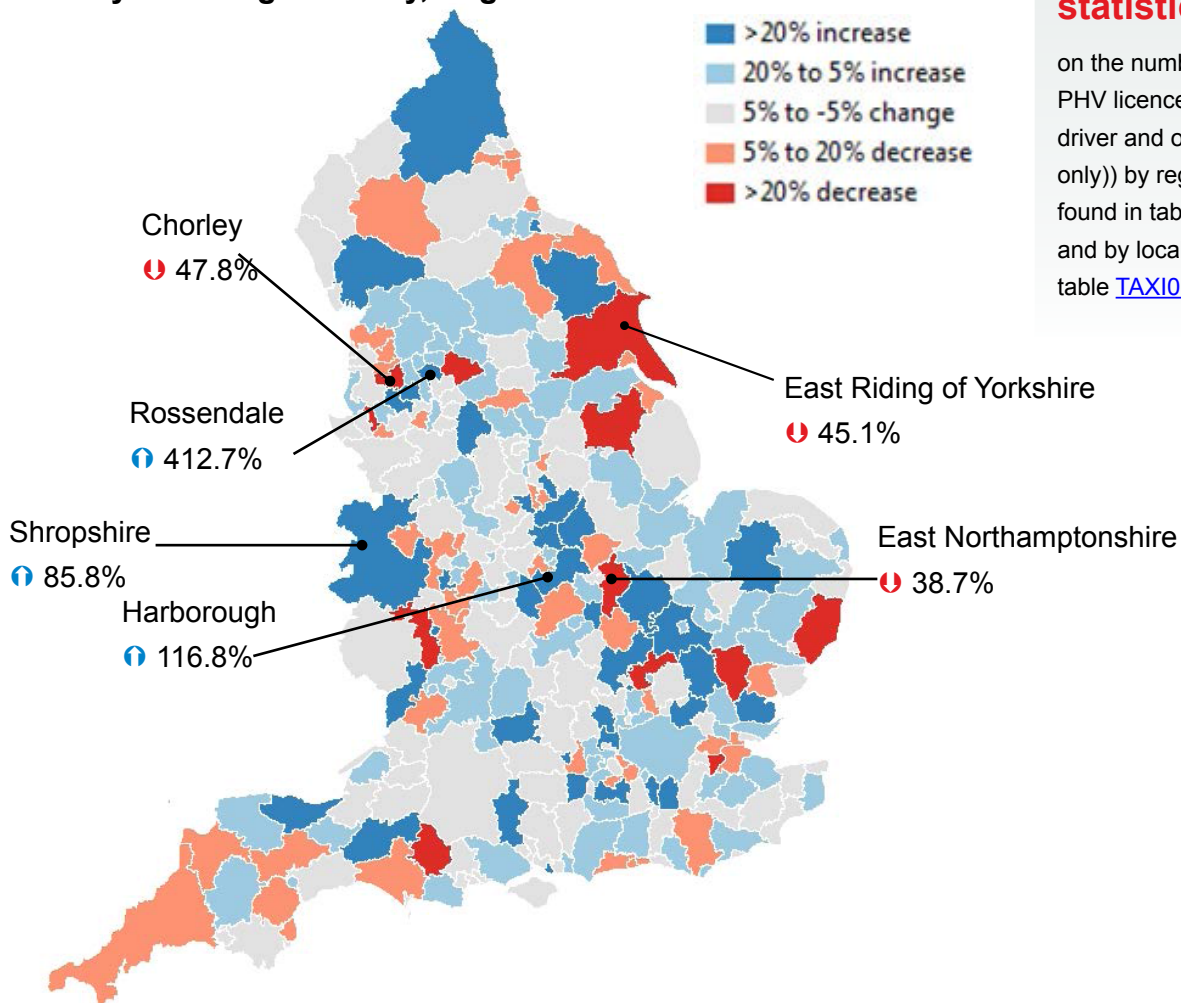
on licensed drivers can be found in table [TAXI0101](#) and for each region in table [TAXI0103](#).

Detailed statistics

on the number of drivers licences (total, taxi, PHV and dual licences) since 2005 for each region can be found in table [TAXI0103](#) and for each local authority can be found in table [TAXI0104](#).

Regional and local trends

Map 1: Change in total licensed vehicles (taxis and PHV) between 2013 and 2015 by licensing authority, England



Detailed statistics

on the number of taxi and PHV licences (vehicle, driver and operator (PHV-only)) by region can be found in table [TAXI0103](#), and by local authority in table [TAXI0104](#).

The number of total licensed vehicles increased in 193 out of 293 licensing authorities in England (see map 1 and table 3 for regional changes). These areas accounted for 81% of all licensed vehicles. Taxi vehicles increased in 144 areas accounting for 66% of all vehicles. Private hire vehicles increased in 177 authorities, which accounted for 81% of all PHV.

Table 3: Change in total licensed vehicles (taxi and PHV) by region between 2013 and 2015, England

Licensing region	Total licensed vehicles		Taxis		PHVs	
	Thousands	% change compared with 2013	% change compared with 2013	% change compared with 2013	% change compared with 2013	% change compared with 2013
North East	10.6	6.8%	4.5%	8.7%		
North West	32.7	6.2%	17.0%	2.2%		
Yorkshire and the Humber	20.0	1.5%	-3.6%	2.8%		
East Midlands	14.0	8.9%	17.1%	4.1%		
West Midlands	19.4	4.7%	1.4%	6.3%		
East of England	18.5	5.3%	1.8%	7.7%		
London	85.3	18.4%	1.5%	25.9%		
South East	28.2	5.2%	2.8%	6.6%		
South West	13.5	1.1%	-0.6%	2.7%		
England	242.2	9.3%	4.2%	11.8%		

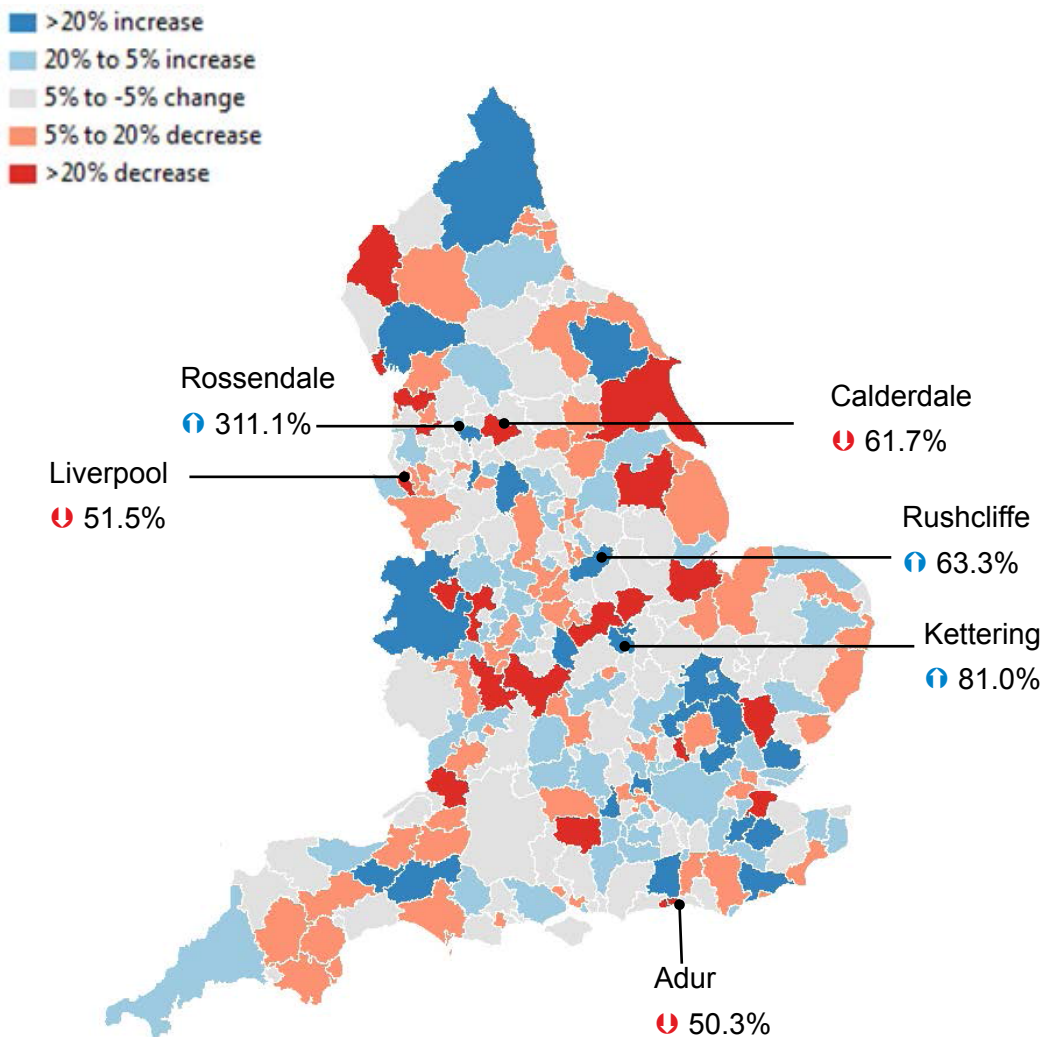
The total number of licensed drivers increased in 153 out of 293 licensing authorities in England, covering 72% of all licensed drivers (see map 2). The number of taxi-only driver licences increased in 46 out of 154 areas accounting for 75% of all taxi driver licences. The number of PHV licensed drivers increased in 95 out of 196 areas which accounted for 77% of all PHV drivers. The number of dual driver licences increased in 110 out of 221 areas accounting for 57% all dual licence drivers.

Rossendale Borough Council had the greatest increase in both total licensed vehicles and driver licences in England. This is likely due to the fact that although taxis can only be driven by drivers licensed by Rossendale Council, once a vehicle becomes a licensed taxi, the law allows it to accept pre-bookings in any district in England and Wales.

Detailed statistics

on the number of taxi and PHV licenses (vehicle, driver and operator (PHV-only)) on a regional scale can be found in table [TAXI0103](#) and on a local authority can be found in table [TAXI0104](#).

Map 2: Change in total licensed drivers (taxi, PHV and dual) between 2013 and 2015 by licensing authority, England

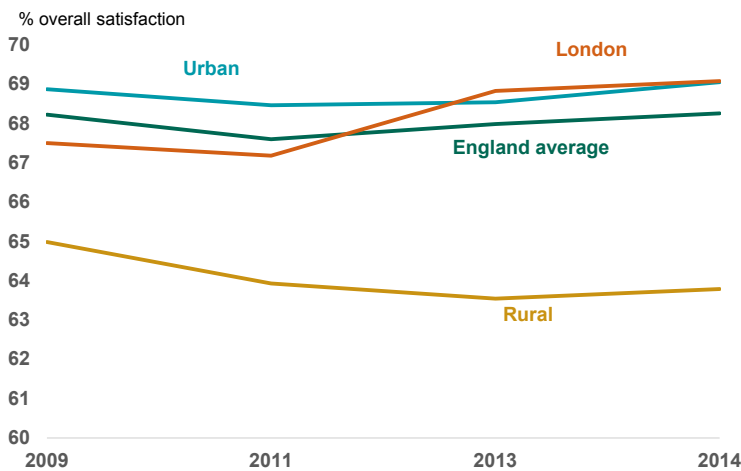


Passenger satisfaction with taxis and PHV

The Department for Transport collects data on the number of licensed vehicles, drivers and private hire operators. The National Highways and Transport Public Satisfaction Survey collects public perspectives on, and satisfaction with, highway and transportation services on behalf of several local authorities to inform performance management and local transport plans.

On average, in the areas surveyed in England in 2015, the overall public satisfaction with taxi and PHV was 68%, remaining similar to previous years (see chart 6).

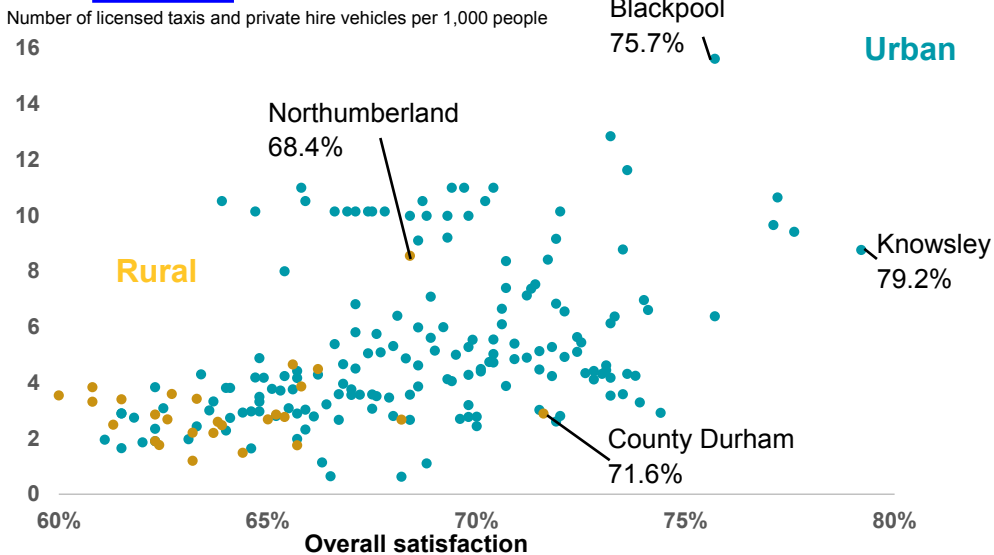
Chart 6: Overall taxi passenger satisfaction in rural and urban areas and London, England 2009 to 2014



Rural areas tended to have the lowest overall satisfaction and in 2014 the average satisfaction was 5 percentage points below the England average. In London, overall satisfaction with taxis and PHVs increased from 67% to 69% between 2009 and 2014.

Chart 7: Overall taxi passenger satisfaction compared with total number of licensed vehicles per 1,000 people, England 2009 to 2014

(table [TAXI0105](#))



The National Highways and Transport Public Satisfaction Survey

is in its 8th year and has surveyed 115 local authorities. For more information see: <http://nhtsurvey.econtrack.co.uk/>

Detailed statistics

The National Highways and Transport Survey results can be found [here](#).

The National Highways and Transport Public Satisfaction Survey is carried out in July-August of each year. Due to the timing of this release, the 2015 data was unavailable so 2014 data has been used instead.

Further Statistics

Total number of licensed vehicles per 1,000 people was used as a proportion representative based on population size in each authority and the data can be found in table [TAXI0105](#).

Reliability satisfaction (72%) and availability satisfaction (75%) were at similar levels in 2014 and much higher than the England average for satisfaction with cost (48%).

Overall taxi passenger satisfaction tended to increase as the number of total licensed vehicles per 1,000 people increased (see chart 7). Therefore, the more taxis and PHV vehicles per person the more satisfied people are with availability, reliability and overall quality of the service. There was no relationship between public satisfaction with cost and the number of total licensed vehicles available.

Licensed PHV operators

The number of licensed PHV operators decreased by 3.6% to 14,800 in 2015, and a 10.3% decline from the peak in PHV operators at 16,500 in 2009. PHV operators declined by 4.8% to 3,000 operators in London and by 3.3% to 11,800 operators in England outside London.

Driver licensing policies

Driver licence renewal:

- 132 of 291 authorities (45%) required taxi drivers to be licensed every year and 79 authorities (27%) licensed every three years
- 45% of authorities required PHV drivers to be licensed every year (131 out of 292) and 79 authorities (27%) every three years

Disability training requirement:

- 34% of authorities (99) required disability awareness training for taxi drivers
- 29% of authorities (86) had a requirement for PHV drivers

Further Statistics

on taxi use in England are collected by the National Travel Survey and are available in tables [NTS0601](#), [NTS0702](#) and [NTS0303](#)

Private hire vehicle operators

accept bookings and are the company with whom the customer makes a contract for carriage.

Further Statistics

on driver, vehicle and operator licensing policy in each local authority can be found in table [TAXI0106](#)

Background information

Users and uses of these statistics

These statistics are used within DfT to inform the development and monitoring of policy relating to taxis (for example regarding wheelchair accessible vehicles and quantity controls on taxis) and for occasional ministerial briefing or to answer public enquires. Outside DfT, the statistics are of interest to various industry bodies and provide information for licensing authorities to compare themselves with other areas.

Strengths and weaknesses of the data

These statistics are collected through a survey of the 315 licensing authorities in England and Wales (lower tier and unitary local authorities, and TfL for London). A copy of the survey questionnaire can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/taxi-survey-questionnaire>

In 2015, full or partial responses were received from 314 areas (99%), covering nearly 100 per cent of licensed vehicles. Where a figure was not provided, this was imputed by carrying forward a figure from the authority's latest response to previous surveys. This means that the national estimates involve very little imputation. Data returns are validated by comparing with previous figures and querying cases that are outside set validation thresholds. This can result in revisions to previous years' figures, though these are typically minor.

These statistics cover licensed private hire vehicle operators in England and Wales. This includes PHV operators, such as Uber, and enlisted drivers who use such app-based technology. However, we are not able to disaggregate which drivers are using these apps in the figures presented.

In a few cases, authorities report that figures are estimated, or relate to time points other than 31 March. Although these factors are unlikely to impact on the national and regional level figures to any great degree, changes in the data systems used by licensing authorities to store and extract the information can result in fluctuations in the quality of data over time. This is unlikely to be systematic and it is difficult to assess the impact with any precision, however sensitivity analysis suggests changes of +/- 1% in the national figures should be interpreted with caution.

National Statistics

National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the National Statistics Code of Practice. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure they meet customer needs: www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html

For details of ministers and officials who receive pre-release access to these statistics up to 24 hours before release: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/taxis-statistics-pre-release-access-list>

Next Release

The next taxi and private hire vehicle statistics release is due to be published 2017.