Truck Driver Shortage: By the Numbers

There are far too few truck drivers to match the volume of freight currently being delivered across Europe. In the UK, the problem got worse when Brexit restricted entry by drivers from EU countries. The driver supply/demand imbalance will widen as current drivers retire and fewer people are drawn to a truck driving career. This trend puts further pressure on transport operators to create the most efficient fleets possible, leveraging technology to minimise fleet miles and the number of drivers required to cover those miles.

Here are 10 startling facts related to the current driver shortage.

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100,000

Road Haulage Association (RHA) estimate of the current shortage of qualified drivers in the UK. Across all of Europe, the shortfall extends to 400,000 truck drivers.

55

The average age of an HGV driver in the UK (RHA). 47% of UK lorry drivers are over 50, and only 1% are under 25.

10-20%

Average UK lorry driver wage increase over a six-month period in 2021. Inefficient fleets that carry more drivers than needed will become less profitable as driver salaries continue to rise.

63%

Percentage of
asked custom
cover increasi

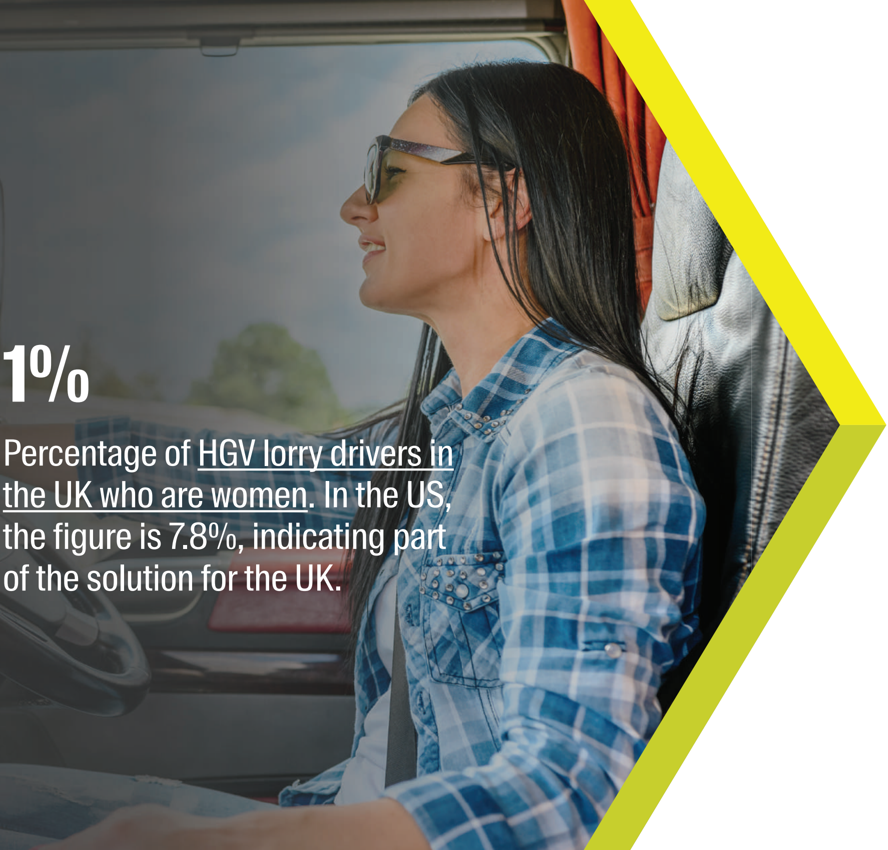
UK haulers who have
ers for rate increase to
ng driver costs (RHA).

127,000

Number of drivers likely to retire by the end of 2026—a third of the UK’s 380,000 drivers.

8+ weeks

Time it takes to fill HGV driver vacancies, as reported by 30% of UK trucking companies.



1%

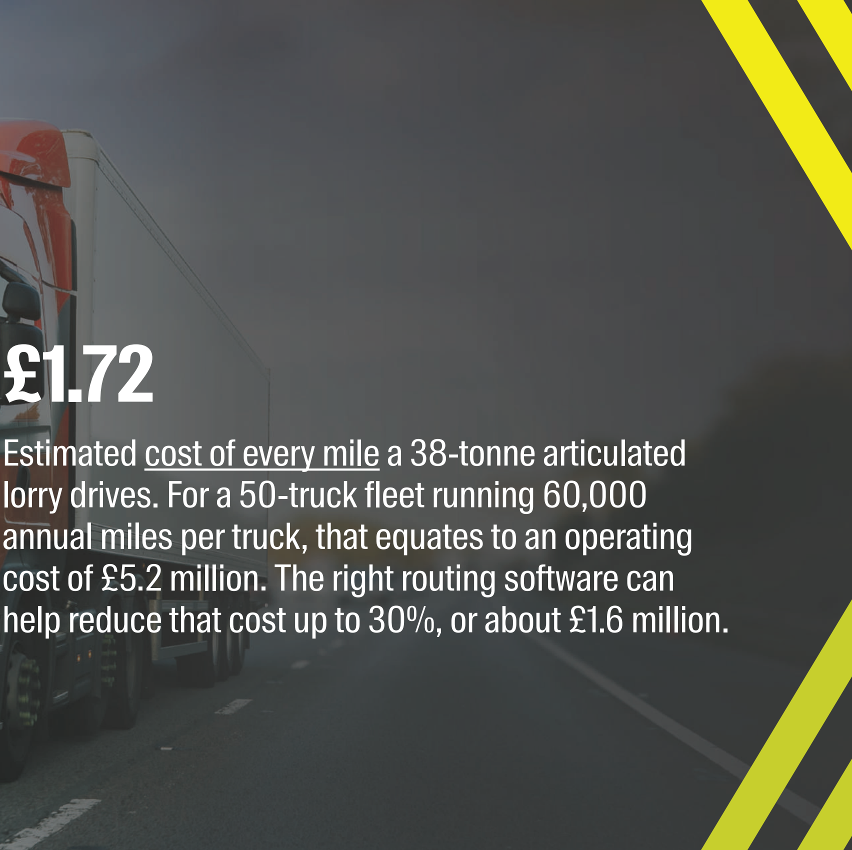
Percentage of HGV lorry drivers in the UK who are women. In the US, the figure is 7.8%, indicating part of the solution for the UK.

£5,000

Three-stage lorry driver sign-on/retention bonus offered by UK retailer Marks & Spencer. Department store chain John Lewis offers a “welcome payment” of £1,000, in addition to an annual pay rise of up to £5,000.

£30,000

The average salary for a UK truck driver. In Germany, pay is around €41,000 (£34,600).



£1.72

Estimated cost of every mile a 38-tonne articulated lorry drives. For a 50-truck fleet running 60,000 annual miles per truck, that equates to an operating cost of £5.2 million. The right routing software can help reduce that cost up to 30%, or about £1.6 million.

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