The impact of Uber in the UK.

How urban mobility has been transformed.

A report by Uber & Public First
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In 2009, Uber was founded by Garrett Camp and Travis Kalanick. By utilising the GPS and connectivity built into a smartphone, the new app enabled several innovations:

• Instead of having to travel out to scattered taxi ranks, calling a booking office, or relying on pure luck, passengers could have the vehicle come to them at the touch of a button.
• By making it easier for drivers to find passengers, the service enabled drivers to spend less time waiting around, reducing costs and increasing their earnings.
• The use of built-in GPS and route planning to estimate fares, enables more flexible and transparent pricing, and makes it easier for drivers to navigate to new destinations without prior awareness of the route.
• Passengers and drivers could now give feedback to each other, giving both more incentive to ensure a pleasant drive and helping to improve safety.

When combined, these innovations ensured that Uber was not just a cheaper way of finding a ride, but it unlocked a completely new way of getting around – complementing public transport, while offering an alternative to traditional private cars.

In our personal lives, being able to travel more easily helps us meet friends and family more often, and enjoy a wider variety of entertainment. At work, better transport helps us reach a wider range of jobs, suppliers, clients, and customers. Thanks to these so-called agglomeration effects, economists have estimated that for every doubling of a city’s size, its productivity increases by around 5% - one of the key reasons governments have historically invested so much in transport.1 Better transport makes our cities work better.

Since launching in the UK in 2012, Uber is now available in over 40 towns and cities across the country, with over 60,000 drivers using the platform and an estimated 5 million riders regularly using it. Beyond increasing its coverage in the UK, the company has also expanded to explore more ways to increase mobility: from e-bikes to car rentals to real-time public transport data integration.

Calculating the value of Uber

There are multiple channels through which Uber creates economic value:

• **Saving time for businesses.** Just like a new runway, road or high speed rail, Uber saves significant time for businesses - both directly boosting economic productivity, and supporting wider agglomeration effects.

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• **Supporting tens of thousands of jobs.** Thousands of drivers earn or supplement their income through Uber’s platform - and their spending in turn supports a wider supply chain of jobs.

• **Encouraging higher demand for the hospitality and entertainment industry.** By making it easier and safer to travel late at night, Uber encourages more spending in the night time economy in pubs, restaurants, theatres, cinemas and clubs.

But in addition to this, many of the important types of value that Uber creates don’t get measured in traditional GVA statistics:

• **Freeing up leisure time for riders.** Much of the time saved by Uber is in riders’ personal lives - but that does not mean it doesn’t matter. In Public First’s polling, riders say that the arrival of services like Uber made a bigger difference to their travelling experience than new roads, bus or train services. For the top 30% of riders, Uber is saving the equivalent of an extra 6 hours a year.

• **Giving more flexible work to drivers who use the Uber app.** A traditional 9-5 job, working as part of a large company, does not suit everyone. Overwhelmingly, drivers who use the Uber app told us they valued the freedom to set their own hours, letting them balance work with other responsibilities, jobs or interests.

• **Increasing the safety of cities.** Uber helps plug the inevitable gaps in public transport, making it safer to get home - with clear evidence that the presence of the service improves safety.

**Uber’s impact in the UK**

**Economy**

By making urban transport more convenient and flexible, the app helps save time, drives new demand for the entertainment and hospitality sectors, and provides good work for thousands of drivers partnering with Uber.

• **In total, Public First estimates that in 2019 Uber created £3.2 billion in economic value for the UK.**

• **Every million trips in a city creates £12.5 million for the local economy.**

• **By making it easier for people to travel late at night, Uber is supporting £164 million in the night time economy.**

• **Time saved through using Uber to get to work is worth an estimated £41 million.**

**Riders**

While many commentators assume that the primary reason for using Uber is lower cost, riders instead overwhelmingly pointed to convenience as the reason they chose it.

• **People from every background are using Uber to help out in their ordinary lives and work.** A third of riders (32%) say they have used Uber for work-related travel in the last year. 49% have used Uber while away from home or abroad, and 19% to travel to or from a doctor or hospital.

• **90% of riders point to convenience as an important reason why they use Uber.** The total consumer surplus created by Uber, the amount you would have to pay someone for them to voluntarily give a good or service up, is equal to over £13 billion, or 0.6% of GDP.

• **In total, Uber saves riders an estimated 2 billion minutes a year - that’s around 80% of the predicted benefit of High Speed 2.** On average, riders say Uber saves around a quarter of the time that the next best alternative would have taken.

• **85% of those who have used Uber since the arrival of Covid-19 say they were satisfied with their experience and 83% said they felt safe.** Around half of riders (48%) say they have used Uber since lockdown began.
Drivers

Drivers overwhelmingly chose to partner with Uber because of the flexibility it offers, and the ability to control their own hours. 78% of drivers say they would recommend the Uber app to a friend looking for similar flexible work opportunities.

- In total, drivers earn an estimated additional £231 million in income from Uber or – according to Public First’s polling – an average of 17% more than their next best alternative.
- 40% of drivers said that they had left their past job because they wanted to have more flexibility or preferred the opportunities Uber offered. 79% of those with caring responsibilities said that working via the platform provides them with significantly more flexibility than their past or other jobs.
- 89% of drivers said that flexibility was the most important reason they choose to drive using the Uber app. A majority of drivers surveyed would rather retain the right to set their own hours, even if the alternative was 20% higher pay. 87% of drivers are parents.
- Every day there are 80,000 conversations where a driver and passenger learn something from each other. 75% of drivers said that most days they have interesting conversations with passengers, and 66% said that most days they learn something.
- Over half of drivers partnering with Uber come from a minority background. 30% of drivers are over 45 years old and 15% over 50.

Communities

Uber helps increase safety in cities, and fill in the gaps which public transport and taxi services do not reach or are not as convenient - enabling many people not to have to own a car at all.

- 1 in 12 Uber trips connect with public transport. A majority of riders (57%) say that public transport is not always very convenient for them.
- 65% of female riders said they feel that Uber is often the safest way for them to travel home.
- 54% of riders agreed that if ride sharing services didn't exist, that it would be somewhat or very difficult to find a taxi near them. 66% of riders agree that it is now easier to get home late at night.
- 59% of riders without cars say that the availability of ride hailing services was important to their choice. 69% of riders agree that having the option of trips using Uber reduces their need to drive.
How We Measured Uber’s Impact

In order to better understand and quantify the impact they were making for passengers, drivers and communities across the UK, Uber commissioned independent consultancy Public First. Public First is a member of the British Polling Council and a Company Partner of the Market Research Society.

Public First used a mixture of methods to explore Uber’s impact:

• An in-depth **nationally-representative poll** to explore UK travel habits, as well as dedicated local polls in seven cities where Uber is operating: London, Birmingham, Manchester, Nottingham, Bristol, Glasgow, and Edinburgh.

• A **follow-up survey** of riders to explore if and how their travel habits had changed in response to Covid-19.

• A new **anonymous survey of over 500 drivers**, asking them about their experience and the reasons they chose the platform.

• Building off the data from Public First’s poll, data provided by Uber and official statistics such as the ONS’ National Travel Survey, they created new **quantitative models** of the economic impact, time saved, consumer surplus and driver value created by Uber.

• They performed a new **literature review** of the extensive independent academic research, looking at Uber’s impact on drivers who partner with them, passengers and cities.

How Uber Works

Uber is a technology platform that connects drivers and riders.

For riders, the Uber app provides information about their driver, including first name, vehicle type, and licence plate number. It makes it easy to see where your driver is, to track progress on your journey and to share your location with friends and family.

For drivers, Uber provides a platform that makes it easy for them to earn additional income, whenever it fits into their schedule. As self-employed contractors, drivers are free to choose their own hours, and to work for other companies or through different platforms.

Immediately after any trip ends, fares are automatically calculated and charged to the rider’s registered payment method. Drivers can collect their fares at any time, daily or on a weekly basis.

At the same time, drivers and riders are asked to rate each other from 1 to 5 Stars.
Services like Uber are one of the most significant transport innovations in the last twenty years. While many commentators assume that the primary reason for using Uber is lower cost, riders instead overwhelmingly pointed to convenience as the reason they chose it.

**Uber is an important innovation**

The average person in England spends 377 hours a year travelling, making 986 trips and covering over 6,000 miles. That is more time than we spend doing anything else other than sleep, work and watching television.

By making it easier and more convenient to travel, Uber makes it easier for individuals to meet up with friends and families, obtain new business or travel further for a job. The Department for Transport estimates that every hour of working time saved is worth around £20 and every hour of leisure time around £5. There is currently over £120 billion of investment in traffic infrastructure in the Government’s National Infrastructure and Construction Pipeline, aimed at boosting capacity, saving time and making travel more convenient.

While our politics often focuses on large transport infrastructure projects such as High Speed 2 or Crossrail, other kinds of innovation can be just as important.

The Uber platform is a gateway to a new mode of transport, that has created real benefits for its users - sharing many of the benefits of your own car, public transport or traditional taxis, but not fully replaceable by any of them.

When Public First asked riders, they chose Uber as the most significant transport innovation they have experienced in the last decade - more impactful to them than new roads.

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5. Webtag
The Impact of Uber - Riders

The arrival of ride-sharing services (eg Uber, Kapten, Ola etc.)

New roads being opened

New train service being offered

New bus services being offered

The growing popularity of electric cars

The growing popularity of electric bikes

The arrival of car sharing services (eg Zipcar, Tiro etc)

Thinking back on the last ten years, which changes have had the biggest positive impact on your own travelling experience?

Who uses Uber?

As of 2020, Uber is available in 40 towns and cities across the United Kingdom, covering approximately 60% of the UK population.

In Public First’s nationally representative poll:

28% of the whole population said that they had used the Uber app in the last year.

• 28% of the whole population said that they had used the Uber app in the last year.
• There was no statistically significant difference between genders in how likely someone was to use the Uber app.
• For young people, Uber was more prevalent - with around half of those under 35 saying they had used the app in the last year.

Around half of riders (49%) said that they used it at least once a month, and 81% multiple times a year.

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8 Public First estimate based on travel-to-work areas
Helping with ordinary life

Uber is increasingly becoming an important support for ordinary life.

But it is not just entertainment. Uber is being used to help with work, everyday chores and childcare.

And Uber is an important option for when you really need to get somewhere fast or on time.

Uber Access and Assist

Access to convenient, safe and affordable transportation, everywhere for everyone - that’s the big idea at the heart of Uber, and it’s the key principle behind Uber Access and Assist.

Access provides forward-facing fully wheelchair accessible services for users in non-foldable wheelchairs.

Assist offers additional assistance in a standard UberX vehicle, perfect for older people who need support, riders travelling with assistance animals, users with visual or hearing (or other) impairments, or riders with foldable wheelchairs.

Both services are priced exactly the same as Uber’s affordable UberX option, and are provided by drivers who have completed a 3-hour disability equality training course delivered by Transport for All and Inclusion London.
What is your most memorable experience using Uber?9

“The driver offered me an umbrella on a very rainy day.”
Woman, 28, Ammanford

“I had an Uber driver who had karaoke in his car. It was really fun. You could do whatever song you wanted, which was really funny.”
Woman, 21, Cardiff

“I once was travelling home from work and I was so tired I fell asleep. The driver just left me to it. I felt safe, and woke up about 5 minutes before we got home. We had a small laugh about how I must have had a hard day.”
Woman, 30, Pontefract

“The driver offered to help me carry a very large bag all the way into a train station. He parked the Uber and paid for the parking himself because I was feeling unwell.”
Man, 37, London

“The tube service I was in was suspended, and I needed to get home fast at night as I had an early start at work the next day. Uber was my life saver that day.”
Woman, 46, London

“My driver (with permission) stopped in order to ensure that a young woman out late at night was safe.”
Man, 34, Bristol

“Having a high end vehicle such as a Mercedes to drive me through London – I felt like a princess!”
Woman, 46, Cardiff

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9. Quotes have been edited for spelling and grammar, but are otherwise unchanged.
Uber’s other services

**UberEats** is helping to make ordering food to your door easy. Launched in 2016 in the UK, the service connects millions of users to their favourite restaurants, cafes, convenience stores and supermarkets, allowing them to browse menus, order and pay via the app. A courier will deliver it to your door, with the delivery charge included in the price. This has opened up delivery to thousands of outlets who would otherwise not have the option, generating an extra £323 million in revenue for the food industry in London alone.10

**Uber for Business** aims to provide a more comprehensive travel and mobility service for companies. The service allows businesses to book trips for staff and clients as well as order food for employees wherever they are. This can all be managed via a single company dashboard to track activity, bookings and billing.

In partnership with Lime, Uber is making hiring an electric bike accessible for more and more people. Via the Uber app, riders in London can search for e-bikes in their area to hire, offering an affordable, healthy and eco-friendly city travel option.

Many Londoners are looking for new ways to travel around the city, particularly when they start commuting back to work. Uber launched **Uber Boat** by Thames Clippers in London as a means for people to arrange travel on the river and road, all through the Uber app. Uber users can purchase tickets in advance through the Uber app and then use QR technology to board the boats. The increased space and being able to travel in fresh air are part of the reason why over 40% percent of river commuters are planning to increase their use of service in the future, according to new research carried out by Thames Clipper.

Why do riders choose Uber?

In the past, many commentators have assumed that the primary reason for using Uber is lower cost. It is true that Uber is often a lower cost option - but this is not always the case.

When Public First asked riders how much their next best alternative to Uber would have cost on their last trip:

- 42% said it would have cost more.
- 16% said it would have cost around the same.
- 34% said it would have cost less.

If cost doesn’t explain why people turn to Uber, why do they use it?

As part of their survey, Public First asked riders to write in their own words why they use the service - and one answer came back overwhelmingly more than others: **convenience**.

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10. Delivering growth, p5
In your own words, why do you use Uber?

On average, riders say using Uber saves around a quarter of the time that the next best alternative would have taken. In total, Public First estimates that using Uber saves its riders over 2 billion minutes a year. That’s around 80% of the predicted benefit of High Speed 2.

Why do you use Uber?  

“It’s quick, convenient, and generally safe. I can use it late at night when the trains and buses have stopped.”
Woman, 22, Glasgow

“It’s very convenient to use, as taxis are not always available.”
Man, 67, Aberfeldy

“It’s very convenient for me, especially when I’m somewhere I wouldn’t be able to get a bus from.”
Woman, 18, Gillingham

“It is convenient. You can see how far away your driver is, and you are told the make and model and number of the car and the estimated cost.”
Woman, 68, Swansea

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11. Quotes have been edited for spelling and grammar, but are otherwise unchanged.
How much is Uber worth to riders?

How much is the increased convenience, safety and reliability provided by Uber worth to riders?

One of the most important measures of economic welfare is the consumer surplus - the amount you would have to pay someone for them to voluntarily give a good or service up. If a good has a zero consumer surplus, that implies we can take or leave it - whereas goods with a high consumer surplus are playing an important role in our lives.

As part of their poll, Public First asked riders how much they would have to be compensated to lose access to the Uber app for the next month.

In total, they estimate that Uber is producing a £13.4 billion in consumer surplus for UK riders. That’s the equivalent of 0.6% of GDP.

What we know about Uber and consumer benefit

Most previous studies have focused on Uber’s consumer surplus in the US, with substantial evidence that it has been significantly welfare enhancing:

- **Cohen, Hahn, Hall, Levitt and Metcalf (2016)** uses the natural variation introduced by Uber’s surge pricing model to estimate a demand curve for Uber - and how much value it creates for consumers. They estimated that in 2015 Uber created $6.8 billion for US consumers.\(^{12}\)

- **Makridis and Paik (2018)** uses the different dates Uber arrived in urban areas in the US to estimate its overall effect on a city. They estimate that Uber arriving in an area creates a welfare gain of $795 million, increasing median house prices per square foot by 2.9%.\(^{13}\)

- **EDR Group (2018)** uses a similar survey-based stated preference methodology to this study to estimate that, in total, Uber benefits riders by $176 billion across the US.\(^{14}\)

- **Wallsten (2015)** finds that the growth of Uber in the US is associated with reduced complaints per trip for traditional taxis, suggesting that increased competition is leading to increased service to consumers.\(^{15}\)

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14. EDR Group, Uber’s Economic Impacts in the United States, 2018, https://drive.google.com/file/d/1P6hMBPc8TjIiYNPyFjGv8NQ59q4c6Ag9/view
Drivers overwhelmingly choose to partner with Uber because of the flexibility it provides.

The importance of flexible work

Over the last twenty years, the number of self-employed workers in the UK has increased by around a half.\(^{16}\) BEIS statistics estimate that in 2017 around three million adults work in the on-demand economy.\(^ {27}\)

Some of those self-employed workers are private hire drivers. Using Uber means drivers can start or stop working at the push of a button, while retaining the ability to access work through other platforms.

Drivers earn fares when driving a rider to their destination. They have no obligation to take a trip offered to them through the app and they can ignore or reject trips they don’t want to take at their convenience.

This flexibility is one of the primary benefits drivers cite as why they choose platform work. Drivers are often earning income across multiple operators and apps in the private hire industry as well as other sectors – such as deliveries.

Drivers incur a range of costs as they work. This includes the cost of owning or financing their car, running costs (e.g. insurance, fuel, maintenance) and any taxes or road charges. Building up an accurate picture of the costs each driver faces is very challenging and likely very imprecise, so is attributing them accurately to their time using Uber.

Therefore in this report we’ve taken the best available data, collected by Berger et al (2018)\(^ {18}\) and applied that at an aggregate level.

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18. Uber Happy? Work and Well-being in the “Gig Economy”
How a driver chooses to use the app has an impact on driver earnings. Like most independent professions, adapting to demand (moments when passengers request the most rides) helps increase revenue. For example, driving in the city centre on Friday night is likely to be busier and more lucrative than the suburbs on a weekday afternoon.

In total, after netting off the costs of running their vehicle, Public First estimates that UK drivers earn an additional £231 million in income from Uber compared to their next best alternative.

In order to test the importance of flexibility, Public First asked drivers partnering with Uber whether they would prefer a hypothetical situation in which they received higher earnings, but had to work fixed hours. 57% of drivers would rather retain the right to choose their own hours than receive a 20% earnings increase. In total, they estimate that this increased flexibility is worth an estimated £550 million to drivers.

Flexibility matters for many reasons. 39% of drivers say that they earn income from other sources, as well as via the Uber app - 19% have a traditional full-time job too - and it is only a minority of drivers who use the platform as their sole source of income.

When Public First asked why drivers had started using Uber, 40% of drivers said that they had left their past job because they wanted to have more flexibility or preferred the opportunities the Uber platform offered. Another 11% made the jump for increased earnings, while 19% said that they are still doing their original job alongside working via the Uber app.

Flexibility can be particularly important for those with other caring responsibilities for children, elderly relatives or others who need support:

- 87% of those with caring responsibilities said that the flexibility provided by Uber made it easier to balance family and work responsibilities.
- 79% of those with caring responsibilities said that working via the Uber platform provides them with significantly more flexibility than their past or other jobs.

In total, after netting off the costs of running their vehicle, Public First estimates that UK drivers earn an additional £231 million in income from Uber compared to their next best alternative.\(^\text{19}\)

Drivers are highly satisfied with their experience using Uber

In Public First’s survey:

- 62% of drivers said they were satisfied with their experience using the Uber app, compared to just 8% who said they were unsatisfied.
- 58% said that they expected to continue to use it for the foreseeable future.
- 88% of drivers said they would recommend the Uber app to a friend looking for similar work.

When they asked drivers what they appreciated about the Uber platform, the most popular answers were flexibility (92%), pay (90%), and security (89%).

Interacting with passengers was also a significant upside:

- 74% of drivers said that most days they have at least one interesting conversation with a passenger.
- 66% of drivers said that most days they learn something from a passenger.

That implies everyday over 100,000 conversations are happening between drivers and their passengers.

Supporting Drivers

Uber is working to raise the standard of independent work with a number of measures in the UK:

- In 2019, more than 9,000 UK drivers partnering with Uber benefited from free AXA insurance coverage, including payments for over 3,000 new mothers and fathers and more than 50,000 days of compensation for drivers recovering from illness or injury.
- UberPro - Uber’s partner rewards scheme - in the UK includes free tuition for Open University courses for drivers or a family member, with over 400 new students beginning their studies in 2019. Every trip completed earns drivers points towards their Uber Pro status - Blue, Gold, Platinum or Diamond. Each status unlocks a variety of rewards, such as AA breakdown assistance, car maintenance, fuel savings with Shell Go+, partner protection with AXA, discounted Gympass membership, and more.
What do you like most about driving with Uber?24

“The flexibility and the opportunity to earn more money every time you go out to work.”
Woman, 38, London

“I’m my own boss. I can pick my own hours and work where and when I want to.”
Man, 30, London

“I am my own boss. You have the flexibility to do your own hours and choose your day off.”
Man, 46, Bradford

“Safety, good pay and flexibility.”
Woman, 23, Rugby

“Flexibility, and working for myself. The job is paid for before the passenger gets into the vehicle and money paid straight into the bank weekly.”
Man, 32, Liverpool

“I like the flexibility and knowing that my passengers are safe due to the information they are given.”
Man, 60, Cambridge

“Earnings, flexible hours, security, the opportunity to meet new people.”
Man, 34, Weston-super-Mare

“Flexible working hours. Going everywhere in the country. Meeting new people. The challenge to keep my car safe and clean, and driving smooth and safe.”
Man, 39, Watford

Drivers come from diverse backgrounds

Every driver who wants to work via the Uber app goes through rigorous safety checks:

• They need a private hire licence from the licensing council for the local area, which includes an enhanced background check (DBS).
• They must hold a valid driving licence and the appropriate insurance for their vehicle.
• Their car must be from 2006 or newer (from 2008 in London), licensed as a private hire vehicle by their licensing council, and meet NCAP safety standards.

Uber has made it easier for more people to earn additional income by driving, full or part-time. In their survey, Public First found that drivers are coming from a wide range of diverse backgrounds:

52% of drivers come from a minority background
30% of drivers are over 45 years old and 15% over 50
51% of drivers only had a basic secondary education - but 26% had a university degree

20. Quotes have been edited for spelling and grammar, but are otherwise unchanged.
When they asked drivers partnering with Uber what they had done for work before they started to use the app, the most common answer was another type of driving or delivery work – but other former jobs ranged from working as a chef to being a full-time parent.

What we know about Uber and driver welfare

Many other studies have noted the importance of flexibility to drivers who use the Uber app, and that the platform tends to disproportionately attract individuals who value autonomy and flexibility:

Berger, Frey, Levin, Danda (2018) uses administrative data from Uber and a new driver survey to explore the platform’s impacts on earnings and well-being for drivers in London. They find that around half of drivers saw higher earnings after partnering with Uber and that on average drivers enjoyed higher life satisfaction than those doing other types of work, likely as a result of greater flexibility and autonomy. 21

Hall and Krueger (2016) uses administrative data from Uber and a new driver survey to explore the platform’s impacts on earnings and well-being for drivers who use the Uber app. They find that in America, drivers are attracted to the platform because of the flexibility it offers, with significantly more variation in hours driven than among traditional taxi drivers.22

EDR Group (2018) uses a similar survey-based stated preference methodology to this report to estimate that increased flexibility and other non-income benefits are worth $4.3 billion to drivers partnering with Uber in the US.23

23. EDR Group, Uber’s Economic Impacts in the United States, 2018, https://drive.google.com/file/d/1P6iHmbPc8T91y8lNvFGyv8NGQg4c4kAg9/view
The impact of Uber: Communities

Uber helps increase safety in cities, and fill in the gaps which public transport does not reach or is not as convenient - allowing many people to manage without a car altogether. In this section we look at how Uber is connecting cities, making them safer and more sustainable.

**Keeping communities safe**

**How do you get home late at night?**

Before Uber, it could be difficult, if not impossible, to find a taxi or minicab at the end of the night - and taking public transport required a long walk in the dark to your front door, or being alone on a carriage or bus. In addition, taxis were often harder to obtain in economically or socially deprived areas. 54% of riders agreed that if services like Uber didn’t exist, that it would be somewhat or very difficult to find a taxi near them.

88% of female riders say that safety is an important factor in their choice to use Uber.

After convenience, safety was the next most important reason riders told us they valued Uber. 65% of female riders said that using Uber is often the safest way for them to travel home.

- 88% of female riders say that safety is an important factor in their choice to use Uber
- 66% of riders agree that it is now easier to get home late at night
- 52% of young riders say they sometimes feel unsafe on public transport
Keeping riders and drivers safe

The Uber app has multiple features that help keep both riders and drivers safe:

• Before you take a ride, the Uber app will provide you with a driver profile, allowing you to check that you have the right vehicle, see how many trips your driver has completed, and the feedback they’ve received from other riders.

• Every Uber trip can be monitored by GPS for the whole journey, with riders able to share their trip with a trusted contact. At the same time, if your trip has an unexpectedly long pause or it looks like the vehicle may have been in a crash, riders will be directed to Uber’s in-app safety resources and emergency line.

• Star ratings help provide two way feedback between riders and drivers. Star ratings appear to be having a real impact.

• Every call or message made using the Uber app from a rider to a driver is anonymised, ensuring that personal phone numbers are not revealed.

• Uber has 24/7 customer support standing by, and makes it easy to call emergency services right from the app.

• In the UK, Uber has introduced a new facial verification process called Real time ID check to ensure that only the driver registered to an account can use it. Drivers are asked to take a real-time photo of themselves to verify their identity as they go online. This new technology helps to tackle the industry wide problem of account sharing, by preventing it before it can happen.

Partnering with the experts

• In the UK, Uber has partnered with leading gender-based violence organisations like UK Says No More on awareness, education and prevention of sexual assault and domestic violence.

• Important steps like creating a taxonomy to categorise incidents of sexual misconduct and sexual assault, as well as publishing the industry’s first-ever safety report in the US, have been key for driving accountability and improving safety across the whole industry.

Why do you use Uber?

“They usually arrive quickly to pick me up, and feel safe as your journey is tracked and the drivers are vetted.”
Woman, 24, Manchester

“When I don’t know a town or city it is the easiest because I already have an account. It is the most safe for me.”
Man, 26, Southampton

“Uber is safer than waiting for a bus at night or getting in a taxi because you and your friends can track the journey from your phones.”
Woman, 19, Bristol

“So I can drink when I’m out and get home safely.”
Woman, 26, Nottingham

24. Quotes have been edited for spelling and grammar, but are otherwise unchanged.
Supporting communities through Covid-19

While the majority of their research took place before the arrival of Covid-19, Public First also undertook a smaller second wave of research to explore the recent travelling experience of riders since the arrival of Covid-19.

Around half of riders (48%) say they have travelled in an Uber since lockdown began, with 85% of those who have travelled saying they were satisfied with their experience and 83% saying they felt safe. In general, 48% of riders in the UK say they have a favourable opinion of how Uber has handled the Covid-19 pandemic, compared to 9% who have an unfavourable opinion.

Drivers and Covid-19

Uber takes the health and wellbeing of drivers who use the Uber app very seriously, and this has been a top priority during the coronavirus pandemic. In addition to the support available to all drivers through our AXA partner insurance scheme, Uber have offered £100 a week, for up to 2 weeks, to active drivers diagnosed with COVID-19 or who were asked to self-isolate by a public health authority.

Making sure that drivers and riders can travel safely is paramount, which is why Uber have distributed free face masks and cleaning equipment as well as reimbursing drivers for up to £25 they spend on PPE. This has seen more than 1.6 million free face masks and 54,000 units of cleaning spray and hand sanitiser distributed. A new partnership with Unilever will also give drivers free access to hygiene kits, including hand sanitiser, cleaning supplies and face coverings.

UberMedics

Since the start of the coronavirus pandemic, we have all had a shared responsibility to keep our communities safe and healthy.

Uber launched UberMedics service in April, giving 25% off for NHS workers. Three quarters of drivers using Uber provided a journey to a frontline worker in that period, helping 64,000 NHS workers to get to and from work during lockdown.

Complementing public transport

For much of the twentieth century, the average amount we drove grew alongside wider economic growth - but thirty years ago, this started to change. Young people now drive much less than they used to. Between the early 1990s and 2010s, the proportion of 17-20 years old with a driving licence fell from 48% to 29%, while the proportion of trips fell by around a third.

One reason for this is that new technology and increased availability of public transport have made it easier to get by without a car. In Public First's polling, 60% of riders without a car said the availability of services like Uber was important to their decision not to own a vehicle.

This is part of a wider trend. Ride-hailing gives individuals more options and flexibility, making it easier to travel around a city. Nobody relies entirely on ride-hailing services to travel around an area - instead they form an important complement for public transport, covering those journeys for which other modes of transport would be less safe, inconvenient or take too long.

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26. Public First research
Increasing mobility in cities

Mobility matters. Making it easier for people to move around a city makes it easier for workers to find new work, friends to try new hobbies and cities to grow larger, and it stimulates the economy. Every million trips via Uber in a city, creates £12.5 million for the local economy.

Take the night-time economy. In 2019, the UK’s night-time economy employed over 1.3 million people, with many of these roles important starter jobs.\textsuperscript{27} In Public First’s polling, 66% of riders agreed that it is now easier to get home late at night, compared to before Uber existed.\textsuperscript{28} Because of this, Public First estimates that Uber is supporting over £164 million of activity in the night-time economy a year.\textsuperscript{29}

Just as important as stimulating the economy is making cities better places to live. New technologies such as Uber, carpooling and electric bikes are making it easier to get around, and reducing the burden of congestion.

Making Uber more Sustainable

Uber has recently committed to being a zero emissions platform in all of the cities in which it operates by 2040.

For the UK this ambition will be realised even sooner:

\begin{itemize}
  \item Bringing Uber Green to London by 2021 - a service where riders can request a zero emission vehicle
  \item Funding more than £5m of new electric vehicle charging infrastructure in London by 2023
  \item Going fully electric in London by 2025 through our Clean Air Plan and everywhere in the UK by 2030
\end{itemize}

The Clean Air Plan

To support the transition to electric vehicles, Uber launched the Clean Air Plan in London in January 2019. The scheme applies a Clean Air Fee of 15p per mile is included on every trip taken through the app in London. For drivers looking to upgrade, every penny will go towards supporting their move into an electric vehicle.

Since then more than £100 million has been raised to support drivers. The ambition is to raise in excess of £200 million in total meaning that, on average, drivers will save £4,500 off the cost of switching to an EV.

So far in the UK, over 1.7 million Uber trips have taken place in fully electric vehicles, representing 8 million zero emission miles.

Working with partners

This work also involves Uber forging a number of new partnerships. Uber have teamed up with Nissan UK, based in Sunderland, to more Drivers with access to over 2,000 Nissan LEAFs.

And a new industry partnership with BP will provide electric vehicle drivers with new dedicated charging points at BP charging hubs in London. Eligible Drivers will also benefit from discounts when using BP Chargemasters public charging network and when installing smart Homecharge charging points at home.

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\textsuperscript{27} https://ntia.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Forward-into-the-Night-Report.pdf
\textsuperscript{28} Public First opinion poll
\textsuperscript{29} Public First opinion poll
Cities

Glasgow
- Population: 1,256,435
- First arrived: 2015
- Economic Impact: £50 million
- Total Consumer Surplus: £230 million
- Time Saved: 800,000 hours per year

Edinburgh
- Population: 685,057
- First arrived: 2015
- Economic Impact: £50 million
- Total Consumer Surplus: £79 million
- Time Saved: 600,000 hours per year

Manchester
- Population: 2,740,172
- First arrived: 2014
- Economic Impact: £190 million
- Total Consumer Surplus: £761 million
- Time Saved: 21 million hours per year

Birmingham
- Population: 1,793,686
- First arrived: 2015
- Economic Impact: £180 million
- Total Consumer Surplus: £805 million
- Time Saved: 1.6 million hours per year

Bristol
- Population: 870,577
- First arrived: 2015
- Economic Impact: £80 million
- Total Consumer Surplus: £159 million
- Time Saved: 1.1 million hours per year

London
- Population: 8,961,989
- First arrived: 2012
- Economic Impact: £1.9 billion
- Total Consumer Surplus: £11 billion
- Time Saved: 17 million hours per year
Methodology: Riders

Consumer Surplus

Following the methodology of Brynjolfsson, Collis and Eggers (2019), Public First asked riders a single discrete binary choice question in the form:

“Now imagine you had to choose between the following options. Would you prefer to keep access to Uber or go without access to Uber for one month and get paid £X?”

The price offered was randomised between £1.25, £2.50, £5, £10, £20, £50, £100, £200, and £500. Public First computed both a linear and logarithmic regression of the results of this poll to derive a demand curve and the total consumer surplus per user, taking the average as the headline measure. This was scaled by regional population from ONS Travel to Work areas and regional usage, derived from their nationally representative poll. For London, population data was taken from Eurostat’s working age metropolitan population, and the headline consumer surplus data also takes into account the capital’s relative share of trips.

Time Saved

As part of their polling, Public First asked riders for the duration of their two most recent trips, and how long the next best alternative would have taken. They use the difference to estimate time saved per trip, multiplying by self-reported data on average trip frequency to estimate total time saved per year. They calculate the monetary value of this using the Department for Transport’s WebTag value of working and non working time.

In order to estimate the total amount of Uber trips in the UK in 2019, Public First averaged the results of two models:

- The first model uses polling data to estimate the average amount paid by trip. After netting of Uber’s percentage (25%), this model then divides Uber provided data on the total driver payouts in the UK by the estimated average driver fee per trip to produce an estimate of the total number of trips.
- The second model uses Uber provided data on the number of active drivers and total payouts per region, combined with Berger et al (2016)’s estimate of median driver pay, to estimate average driver income per hour. This is then combined with polling data on average trip duration to produce an estimate of the total number of trips.
Net Increase in Income

Net increase in income is calculated by: \( \text{(Gross Driver Income - Driver Cost)} \times \text{Increase in Income (\%)} \)

Gross Driver Income is calculated from proprietary data provided by Uber on total driver payouts and the number of drivers partnering with Uber by region.

For Driver Costs, Public First apply the ratio between driver net earnings before and after costs calculated in Berger et al (2018) for London.

Increase in Income (\%) is taken from Public First’s driver survey, and the average response to:

“If Uber did not exist, how much do you think you would be likely to earn per week in your next best alternative?”

Value of Flexibility

As part of the driver survey, Public First asked the following single discrete binary choice question:

“Imagine you had to choose between one of the following two options:

• Receiving X\% higher pay on average, but having to work fixed hours each week
• Receiving the same average pay as now, and retaining the right to choose your own hours

Which would you choose?”

X was randomised between 1\%, 2\%, 5\%, 10\%, and 20\%.

They computed a linear regression to derive a demand curve and multiplied by average regional pay to calculate total surplus per driver.
Impact of Driver Spending on Vehicles

Public First follows standard input-output methodology using the latest ONS detailed Input-Output tables (2015 detailed, 2019) to calculate Type 1 and Type 2 output multipliers for the relevant SIC codes for spending on vehicles.

This impact is regionalised using a Flegg Location Quotient (FLQ), and then scaled up by the number of drivers per city.

Impact of Additional Driver Income

Public First calculate net average income per driver by deducting average annual vehicle running costs. They then multiply this by 0.75 as an estimate of disposable income, and apply the relevant Type 2 GVA multipliers, regionalising with a retail-based Simple Location Quotient.

Impact on Night Time Economy

The night-time economy estimate is based on the geometric average of two models, estimating gross output for a given number of additional night time trips. Public First have defined night-time trips as any trips made between the time 10pm-5am.

The first model adapts Volterra Partners (2014), which estimated the impact of the Night Tube on the night time economy. The model multiplies additional night time users by key ratios in the report: the ratio of jobs to transport users, the ratio of output to jobs, and the proportion of new economic activity that is additional. This model assumes that the ratio of output to jobs is constant regardless of the distribution of additional night time users across a given week.

The second model uses self-reported data from Public First polling on the purpose and time of day of their most recent two trips. They calculate the average spend per trip by purpose using ONS Household Spend data, and assumed that individuals would only spend money in the night time economy for the following purposes:

• Going or returning from shopping.
• Seeing or returning for a film, show or performance.
• Visiting or returning from a restaurant or bar.

In addition, they asked riders how likely they would have been to make the trip if Uber and other ride hailing services did not exist. For those individuals who answered “Very likely” all trips are assumed to be additional, while for those who answered “Somewhat likely” half of trips are assumed to be additional.

Total spend is categorised by SIC Code and multiplied by the relevant ONS output multiplier, and then summed across trip purpose to give the total impact.

Public First regionalise this impact by multiplying the total UK impact by the share of total number of UK Uber trips that happened regionally.
Business Productivity

This estimate follows a similar methodology to Public First’s consumer estimate of time saved, using the proportion of recent trips which were used for “Commuting to or from work”, to get an estimate of the share of trips which are used for work purposes.

Time saved is valued at the average of WebTag’s values for leisure and working time.

Total Economic Impact

Total economic impact is calculated as the sum of:

- Driver payouts.
- Indirect and induced impact of driver spending on vehicles.
- Induced impact of additional driver income.

This measure is a gross estimate, looking at the total amount of economic activity supported by Uber in the UK. It does not attempt to measure what would happen in a hypothetical where Uber no longer existed.