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## DVLA data shows rise in young provisional licence holders but drop in 17 to 24-year-old qualified drivers

[www.safedrivingforlife.info/learners/i-want-drive/starting-drive](http://www.safedrivingforlife.info/learners/i-want-drive/starting-drive) **The number of young people with provisional driving licences has increased by 8% in the last four years at the same time as a 6% fall in those becoming fully fledged young drivers has been recorded.**

According to RAC Black Box Car Insurance analysis of DVLA data\* 164,282 (2,081,800 v 2,246,082) more young people aged 17-24 had provisional licences in 2016 than in 2014, but 187,137 fewer (2,886,868 v 2,708,731) were actually listed as having their full licences.

Among teenage drivers (17 to 19-year-olds), the number of provisional licences was up 10% over the same period while the volume of fully qualified drivers was down 8%.

In addition, driving test data\*\* shows there has been a 13% decline in the number of tests taken, as well as passed, in the same period (1,436,481 v 1,252,871). Going from 2007 however, the drop increases to 29% (1,762,363 tests taken). The pass rate of 47% has not changed in the last four years, but it has improved on 2007 when it was 44%.

[RAC Black Box Car Insurance](#) spokesman Simon Williams said: “Learning to drive is a key step towards personal freedom and the figures very clearly demonstrate there is a desire for young people to embark on that journey with an 8% rise in people receiving their provisional licences.

“Surprisingly, figures show both an overall drop in the number of people of

all ages taking the test and a fall in the number of young people who are fully qualified drivers. This implies that an increasing number are not going on to take and pass their driving tests, and are therefore remaining as provisional licence holders.

“The cost of lessons and the number required to reach the necessary skill level to take the test has presumably played a part in this. With driving lessons now costing around £25 an hour and learners requiring an average of 45 hours of instruction to pass<sup>\*\*\*</sup>, learning to drive can be a very expensive rite of passage costing well over £1,000.

“And then once new drivers qualify to drive on their own they somehow have to foot their car insurance bills of usually around £1,000 or higher. But while this is clearly not very appealing it would seem unlikely that it is putting young drivers off taking their tests.”

Looking at all age groups there was a 3% increase in the total number of full driving licence holders from 2012 to 2016 while there was an 8% rise in those with provisional licences.

Interestingly, the data also shows there has been a 6% decline in the number of full licence holders in their 40s, which equates to 471,395 fewer people. In contrast, there was no change in those with provisional licences in the same age category, with 1.3m having one in both 2012 and 2016.

The figures also reveal there has been a 22% increase in provisional licence holders in their 50s and a similar rise among those in their 70s (21%). Among full licence holders in the same age groups, there are 10% more qualified drivers in their 50s (681,236) and 15% more in their 70s (434,730) than four years ago.

In addition, the comparison revealed Great Britain now has 152,474 more full licence holders in their 80s – a 15% increase – and 18,688 in their 90s – a 26% increase – compared to 2012.

Provisional			Full				
Age range	2012	2016	Change	Age range	2012	2016	Change

17-19	903,429	991,320	10%		17-19	619,037	570,471	-8%
17-24	2,081,800	2,246,082	8%		17-24	2,886,868	2,708,731	-6%
20-29	2,076,696	2,222,042	7%		20-29	5,026,468	4,991,525	-1%
30-39	1,422,830	1,511,223	6%		30-39	6,428,346	6,450,361	0%
40-49	1,311,226	1,305,588	0%		40-49	8,278,600	7,807,205	-6%
50-59	862,220	1,053,052	22%		50-59	7,142,572	7,823,808	10%
60-69	538,348	618,622	15%		60-69	6,169,235	6,406,163	4%
70-79	9,408	11,396	21%		70-79	2,842,452	3,277,182	15%
80-89	1,202	1,385	15%		80-89	988,424	1,140,898	15%
90-99	52	64	23%		90-99	71,097	89,785	26%
100+	-	-	n/a		100+	162	236	46%
<b>All</b>	<b>7,173,545</b>	<b>7,769,398</b>	<b>8%</b>		<b>All</b>	<b>37,567,461</b>	<b>38,558,731</b>	<b>3%</b>

Simon Williams added: “RAC Black Box Car Insurance is naturally proving very popular among young people under the age of 25 because it offers cheaper premiums as a result of them earning a real-time safe driving track record. What has been surprising though, is the policy’s appeal to older drivers who are also suffering from increasing premiums, whether that’s as a result of a recent claim or the fact that the cost of insurance is on the increase generally.”

[RAC Black Box Car Insurance](#) works via a matchbox-sized device which tracks speed, braking and acceleration along with where and when the policyholder drives in order to calculate how safe they are through a Driver Score. Unlike some telematics policies, there are no curfew or mileage limits so the policyholder is free to drive when, where and how far they like.

The policyholder can keep track of their driving performance by going to the RAC Black Box Insurance portal to look at their easy-to-understand Driver Score. There are also hints and tips for improving the score through safer and more economical driving. The Driver Score is first calculated after the

policyholder's car has been driven 200 miles and is then updated every seven days after the installation date.

The RAC telematics black box is fitted free of charge in approximately an hour at a time and location convenient to the policyholder. The telematics box also includes the RAC's patented accident detection technology, which correctly detected 92% of accidents in Transport Research Laboratory tests, even at speeds as low as 5mph, in contrast to most other boxes on the market which identify around 50%.

For further information about RAC Black Box Car Insurance visit [www.rac.co.uk/blackbox](http://www.rac.co.uk/blackbox) or call 0330 1591 042.

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### **Notes to Editors**

\* Source: GB Driving Licence Data – <https://data.gov.uk/dataset/driving-licence-data>) – 24 November 2012 and 31 March 2016.

\*\* Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency - [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/602596/dvsa0201.ods](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/602596/dvsa0201.ods)

\*\*\* Average number of hours of instruction to pass the driving test [Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency](#)

### **About the RAC**

First formed in 1897 the RAC has been looking after the needs of its members and championing the interests of motorists for 120 years.

Today it has more than eight million members and is one of the UK's most progressive motoring organisations, providing services for both private and business motorists. Whether it's roadside assistance, insurance, buying a used car, vehicle inspections and checks, legal services or up-to-the-minute traffic and travel information – the RAC offers a solution for all motoring needs. The RAC is committed to making motoring easier, safer, more affordable and more enjoyable for drivers and road users.

The RAC is the motorist's champion and campaigns to support the interests of its members and UK motorists at a national level. This includes voicing concerns about the increasing cost of motoring, particularly the price of fuel and the high level of tax levied on it, advancing levels of road safety, and supporting the needs of all drivers, from young to old.

The RAC's annual [Report on Motoring](#) – first published in 1989 – provides a clear insight into the concerns and issues facing today's motorists.

For the very latest news on UK fuel prices, check [RAC Fuel Watch](#) or follow [#racfuelwatch on Twitter](#). RAC Fuel Watch is a comprehensive guide to the latest UK unleaded petrol and diesel prices – both at the wholesale level and at the pump. RAC Fuel Watch analyses how prices changed through the previous month and compares the most recent prices with those from three, six and 12 months before.

Key facts:

- RAC patrols fix four out of five vehicles at the roadside and on average within 30 minutes
- RAC vans carry more than 500 parts and tools to get members' vehicles going again
- 92% of members would recommend RAC Rescue to their friends and family

## Contacts



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