

Nearly half of Brits say they'd be a better driver than driverless cars

- **New research from Volkswagen Financial Services UK (VWFS) can reveal that 46% of British motorists think they'd be a better driver than driverless cars powered by Artificial Intelligence**
- **Almost a quarter of Brits (24%) think the first fully driverless car will be available to consumers in five to ten years, whilst 8% think they'll never hit the mass market**
- **However, just one in five (21%) are likely to buy a driverless car if and when they become available**
- **Most people who are interested in driverless cars say they expect to spend their time listening to music (44%) whilst behind the wheel, but 22% of people would still be focusing on the road**

Technology is revolutionising many aspects of modern life but Brits are reluctant to relinquish driving duties, with almost half of us saying we'd prefer to drive ourselves rather than rely on self-driving technology.

A study by Volkswagen Financial Services UK (VWFS) has revealed that 46% of British motorists think they'd be a better driver than driverless cars powered by Artificial Intelligence.

Regionally, it's Scottish people who are Britain's most confident drivers with 54% of Scots answering that they'd trust their own driving skills over driverless vehicles.

People living in northern England are the second most likely group to back their motoring prowess over driverless cars (48%), followed by people in the South East (47%) and respondents in the Midlands (46%). However, just four in ten people (40%) in Wales and the South West feel they'd be better drivers than driverless cars.

Generationally, 18-24 year olds believe in their driving abilities most (52%) whereas just 39% of over 75s think they'd be a better driver than a driverless car.

The Department for Transport announced earlier this year that self-driving vehicles could be allowed on UK roads by the end of 2021, with automated lane-keeping systems (ALKS) the first type of hands-free driving legalised.

The government says the market in the UK could be worth as much as £42 billion by 2035, capturing around 6% of the £650 billion global market, and creating approximately 38,000 new jobs.

The research from Volkswagen Financial Services UK also found that almost a quarter of Brits (24%) think the first fully driverless car will be available to consumers in five to ten years, whilst 8% think they'll never hit the mass market.

Just 4% of respondents felt that a fully driverless car will be available to consumers within the next 12 months.

And many consumers are not completely convinced by the idea of a driverless car, with only one in five people (21%) saying they're likely to buy a driverless car if and when they become available.

However, men are significantly more likely than women to answer that they would be likely to purchase a driverless car (29% versus 13%).

As expected, younger people also indicate a greater likelihood to purchase a driverless car. Respondents aged between 25 and 34 years old are ten times as likely to buy a driverless car than people aged 55 to 64 years old (50% versus 5%).

Most people who are interested in driverless cars say they would expect to spend their time listening to music (44%) whilst behind the wheel, but 22% of people would still be focusing on the road.

Other popular activities envisaged by this group included watching TV or a film (25%), reading (25%), sleeping (20%) and checking emails (17%).

The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) has said automated driving systems could prevent 47,000 serious accidents and save 3,900 lives over the next decade through their ability to reduce the single largest cause of road accidents – human error.

Mike Todd, CEO at Volkswagen Financial Services UK said: *“I think our study offers a fascinating insight into the collective psyche of British motorists as it confirms that we’re a proud nation of drivers and that we’re very confident in our own driving abilities. It speaks volumes that so many of us would rather be in control behind the wheel as opposed to being chauffeured by highly sophisticated technology. Of course, the road to full autonomy will not be without its challenges – which goes some way to explaining the slight apprehension towards driverless vehicles uncovered in our research – but if self-driving technology continues to develop at its current pace, fully driverless cars could be here much sooner than we think.”*

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Note to editors

The data for this study was collected between 6th August 2021 and 8th August 2021 and comprises responses from 2,012 British respondents.

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