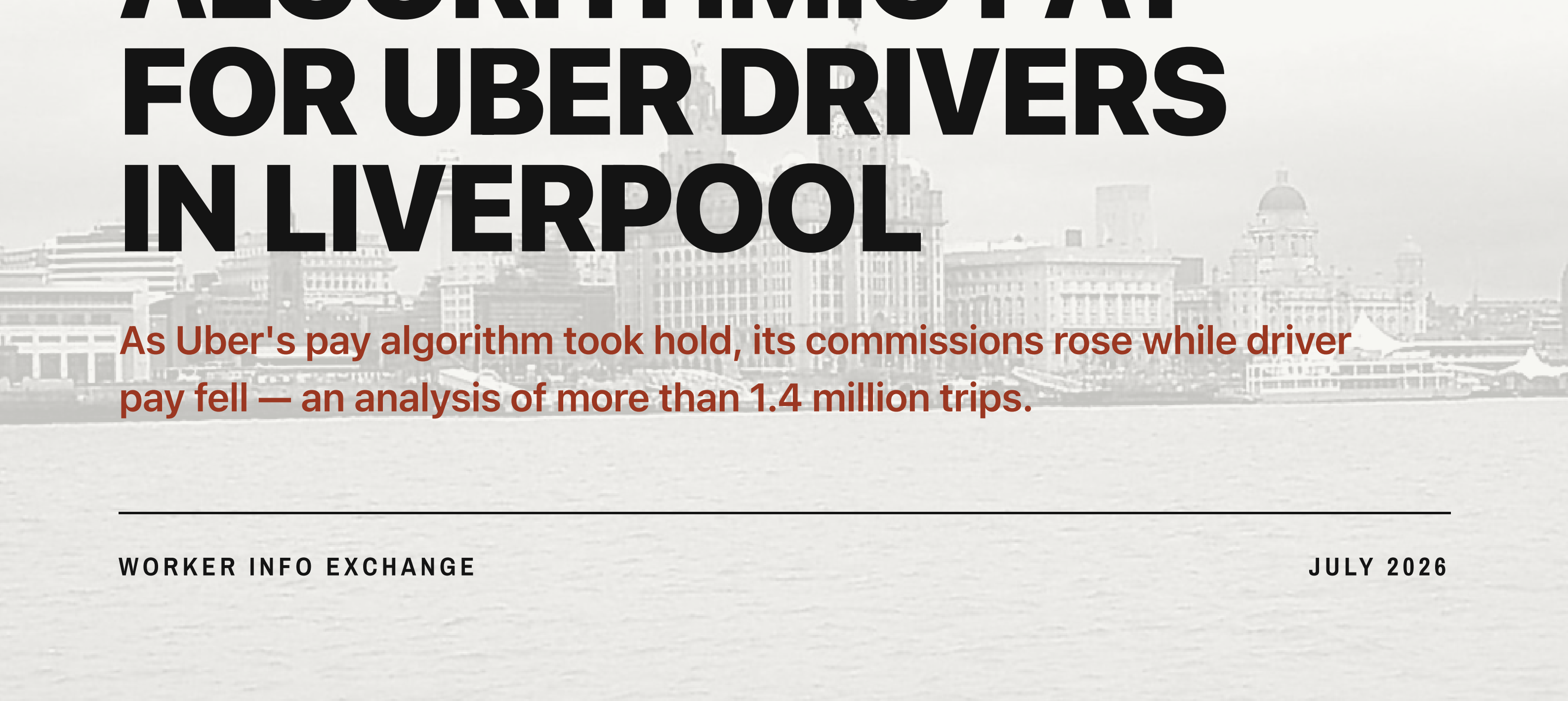
WORKER INFO EXCHANGE

RESEARCH BRIEFING · LIVERPOOL

ALGORITHMIC PAY FOR UBER DRIVERS IN LIVERPOOL



As Uber's pay algorithm took hold, its commissions rose while driver pay fell — an analysis of more than 1.4 million trips.

WORKER INFO EXCHANGE

JULY 2026

THE FINDINGS AT A GLANCE

78

UBER DRIVERS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE STUDY

1.4M+

INDIVIDUAL UBER TRIPS ANALYSED, 2022–2025

25.6% → 30.4%

AVERAGE COMMISSION UBER TOOK 2024 TO 2025

−7.7%

REAL-TERMS FALL IN DRIVER PAY PER HOUR ON TASK, 2024 TO 2025

In recent years Uber replaced its fixed time-and-distance pay model with pay set in real time by algorithm. Worker Info Exchange analysed data from 78 Liverpool drivers to study the impact of dynamic pay — commission records from 2022–2025 and pay from 2024–2025, across more than 1.4 million trips.

As the algorithm took hold, Uber's average take rate rose from 25.6% in 2024 to 30.4% in 2025, and the gap between individual trips widened.

Over the same period, drivers' inflation-adjusted pay per hour on task fell by 7.7%. This excludes unpaid stand-by time and operating costs, so it is not overall take-home income.

These findings raise concerns about the transparency, predictability and fairness of algorithmic pay, and are broadly consistent with research published by the University of Oxford with WIE.

BACKGROUND

WHY WE DID THIS STUDY

In 2020, Uber introduced what it calls Up-Front Pricing — where a journey is offered at a fixed fare and pay amount for the passenger and driver respectively, set by Uber's algorithm. This broke the link with the time-honoured method of transparently setting fares and pay according to published rates for the actual distance and duration of the trip.

In 2022, Uber introduced a new dispatch methodology called Trip Radar, where the same trip is offered to many drivers simultaneously, sometimes at different rates of pay. Drivers must quickly respond to the offer and the algorithm will then notify the successful candidate that they have been awarded the work. Today, a large proportion of a driver's work is assigned on a non-exclusive basis via Trip Radar. Such systems are only effective because of an over-supply of drivers in the market, which enables AI-driven algorithmic discrimination — a problem we examined in detail in our Dying for Data report.

In 2023, Uber went a step further by abandoning the fixed commission rate of 25% it charges drivers on every fare, to instead make the commission variable.

Since then, drivers report that pay has been reduced, work allocation on a non-exclusive basis has increased (Trip Radar), commissions have increased, and the entire settlement process has become more opaque and unpredictable.

These technology shifts are part of a global strategy which has driven spectacular financial results for Uber on Wall Street — with profits doubling and the share price tripling since 2023.

LEGAL CHALLENGE

Worker Info Exchange is bringing a collective legal action challenging the lawfulness of Uber's algorithmically set dynamic pay under the GDPR — its automated decision-making in Up-Front Pricing, the use of driver data to train that algorithm, and the transfer of driver data to the United States. Many Liverpool drivers have already joined. Visit **dynamicpay.org** for more information.

HOW THE STUDY WAS DONE

Worker Info Exchange is a UK-based non-profit helping workers reclaim control over the data collected from them at work. We help workers turn data into power — challenging unfair algorithmic systems and holding tech platforms to account.

78 Uber drivers granted WIE a mandate to access their personal data held by Uber. Under Article 80(1) of the UK GDPR and the relevant provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018, individuals may authorise a qualifying not-for-profit body to exercise specified data-protection rights on their behalf.

Uber B.V. (Netherlands) and Uber Technologies, Inc. are the joint controllers of Uber driver data in the EEA, UK and Switzerland. Uber cooperated with the requests and provided WIE with personal data relating to the 78 Liverpool drivers, which we used for this analysis.

The period covered was 2024–2025 for pay and 2022–2025 for commission payments. The analysis encompasses pay and dispatch-to-drop-off working time (excluding stand-by) across more than 1.4 million individual Uber trips.

THE COMMISSION UBER TAKES

Average commission is the amount Uber retains from the fare, excluding third-party charges such as tolls and parking. The chart shows the weekly mean take rate and the ±1 standard-deviation band across Liverpool drivers.

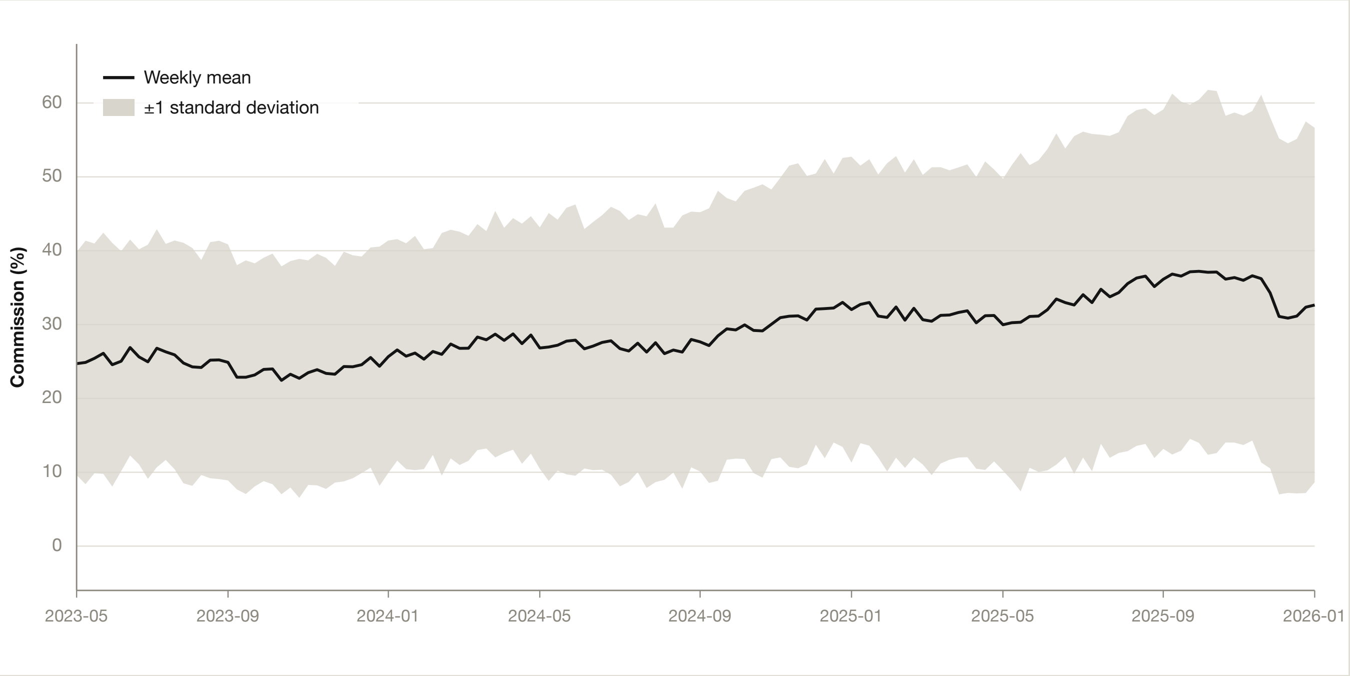


Figure 1. Weekly average commission rate with ±1 standard-deviation band, Liverpool, 2023–2026.

The commission Uber deducts from Liverpool drivers' fares climbed from an average of 25.6% in 2024 to 30.4% in 2025. But the widening standard-deviation band reveals a more worrying trend: individual trip commission rates have become increasingly variable over time.

Work and pay for Uber drivers in Liverpool has become increasingly unstable and unpredictable. These findings raise significant concerns about the risk of algorithmic wage discrimination — and it is unclear what steps, if any, Uber has taken to prevent it.

DRIVER PAY IS FALLING

Average pay per hour on-trip (P3) and en-route (P2) excluding stand-by time (P1) — comparing 2024 and 2025, adjusted for inflation. This is pay after Uber's commission but before operating costs.

P1 · Stand-by
Logged in and available, waiting for a trip.

P2 · En route
Dispatched and driving to collect the passenger.

P3 · On trip
Carrying the passenger to their destination.

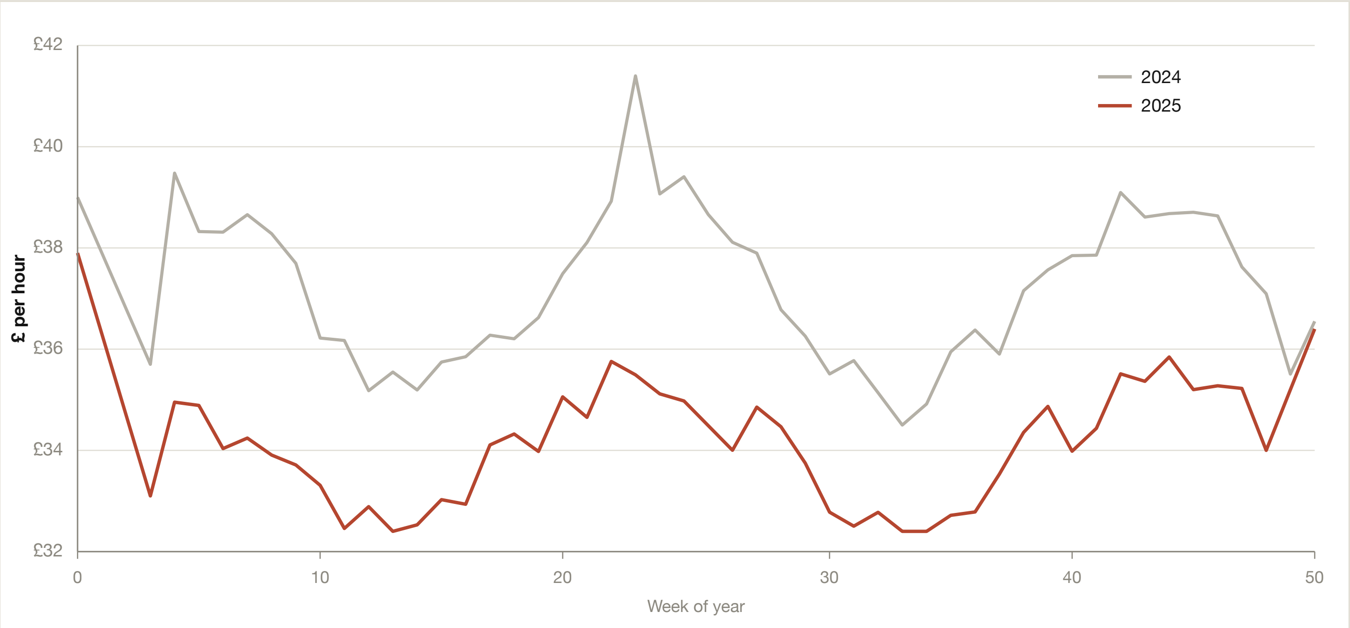


Figure 2. Weekly pay per hour for P2 and P3. Real pay fell 7.7% year on year.

Stand-by time (P1) can be a significant proportion of a driver's working time — typically 40% or more — but remains unpaid by Uber. Operating costs typically include vehicle finance or rent, fuel, maintenance, hire & reward insurance, licensing, cleaning and consumables.

Comparing 2025 with 2024, we see a **7.7% drop in real pay** after adjusting for inflation using the CPIH 12-month rate for January 2025, which was 3.9%.

HOW OFTEN UBER TAKES 25%+

Frequency of different commission rates Uber now takes over the former standard rate of 25% of the fare (shown in red). A substantial tail of trips sees it take 40% or more.

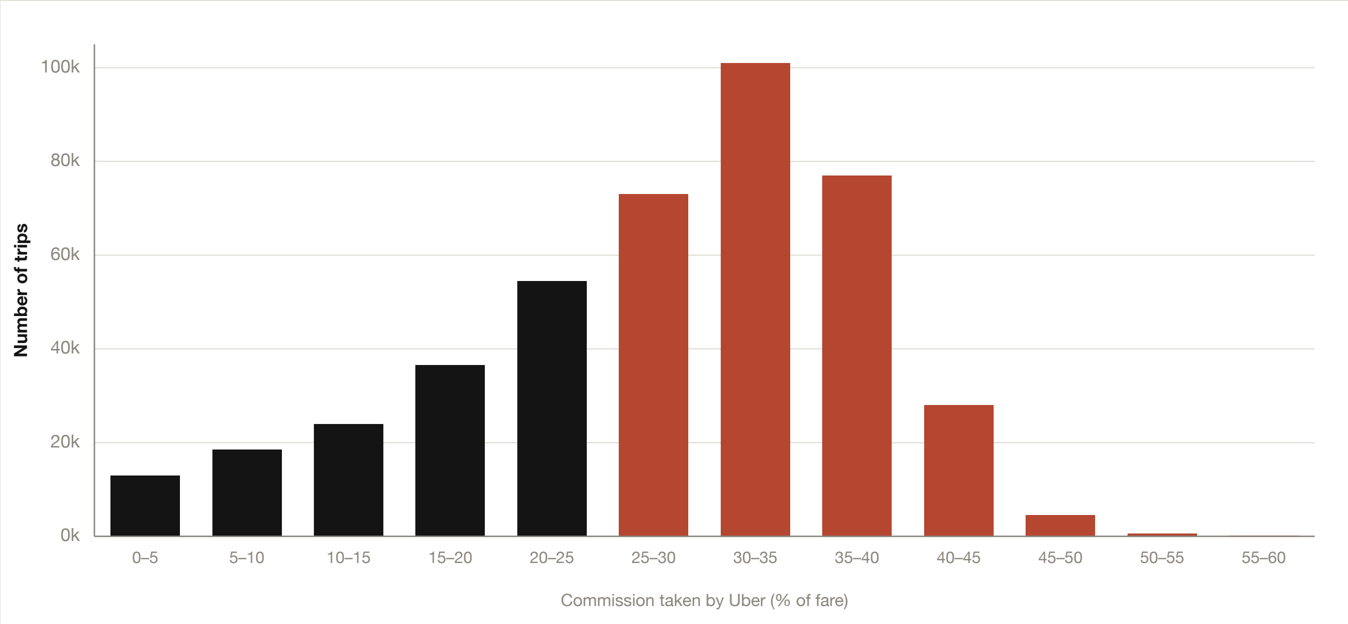
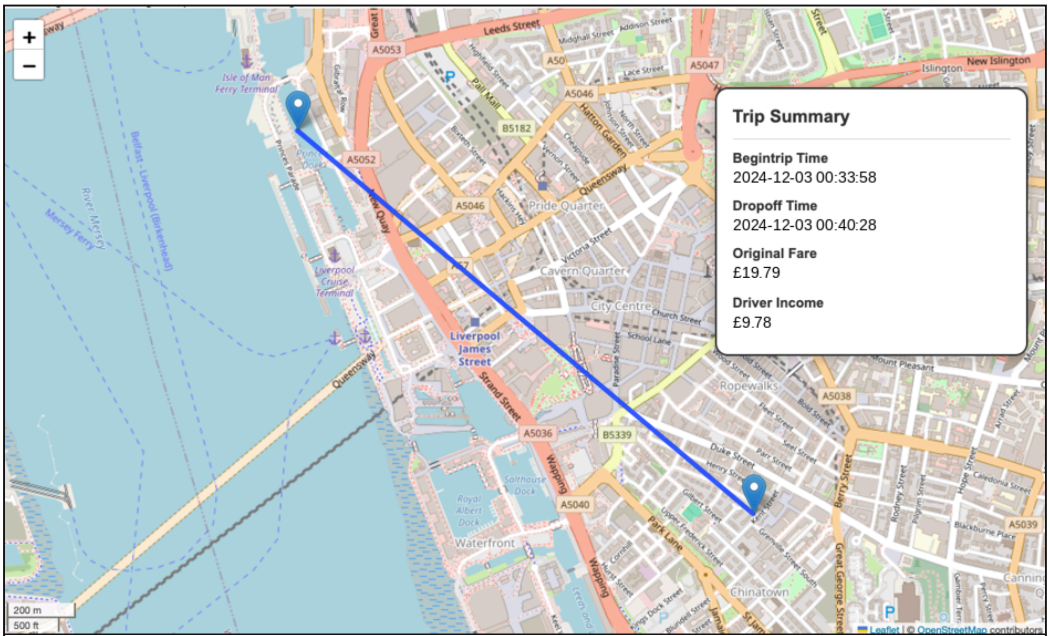


Figure 3. Number of trips by commission bucket, Liverpool, 2024–2025.

The distribution confirms that high take rates are not rare exceptions but a routine feature of Uber's dynamic pricing. Because pay is now set trip-by-trip by algorithm, two drivers completing near-identical journeys can be paid very differently — the essence of the fairness concern this data exposes.

COMPARE THE FARE

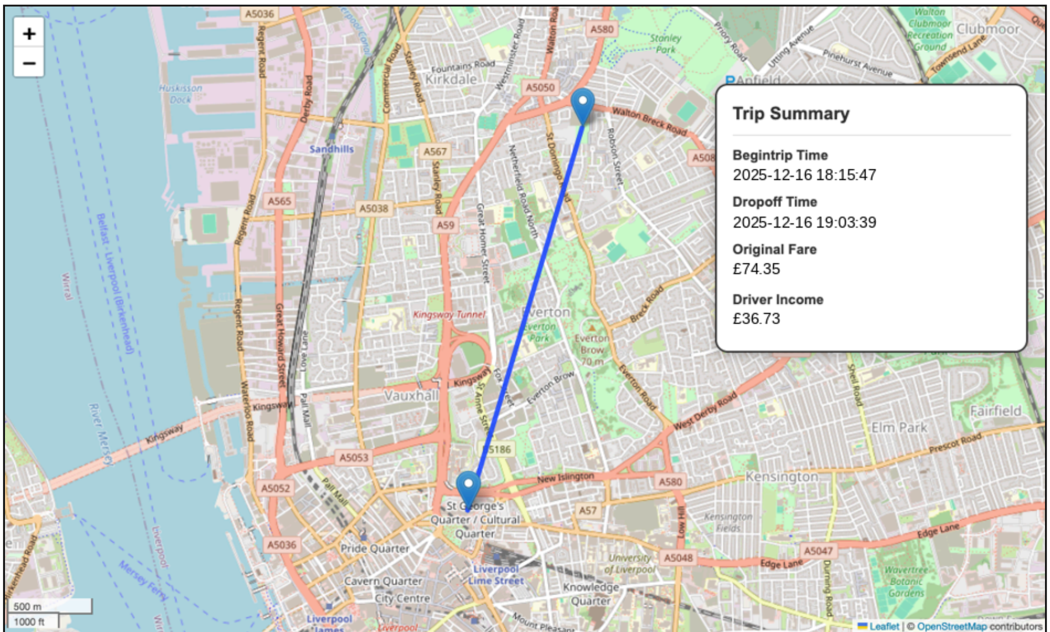
Passengers have begun sharing what they paid Uber against what the driver received — and are often shocked at the gap. Below are two trips from the dataset that illustrate the wide variance between the fare paid and the amount reaching the driver.



03 DEC 2024

Fare **£19.79** · Driver **£9.78**

51% UBER TOOK



16 DEC 2025

Fare **£74.35** · Driver **£36.73**

51% UBER TOOK

Note: Examples have been adjusted to preserve anonymity. Trips occurred within a few days of the dates shown, with fares within ±3%; times and locations have been adjusted slightly. Passenger and driver fares remain in proportion to preserve data integrity.

A DRIVER'S ACCOUNT

"

When we started, it was 25% commission they're taking. Whatever the rider is paying, you're getting 75%, 25% goes to them. But this time around, we have been blinded from both sides. The rider doesn't know how much you're getting, we don't know how much he is paying. We only know how much we're getting. The only person being happy here is Uber."

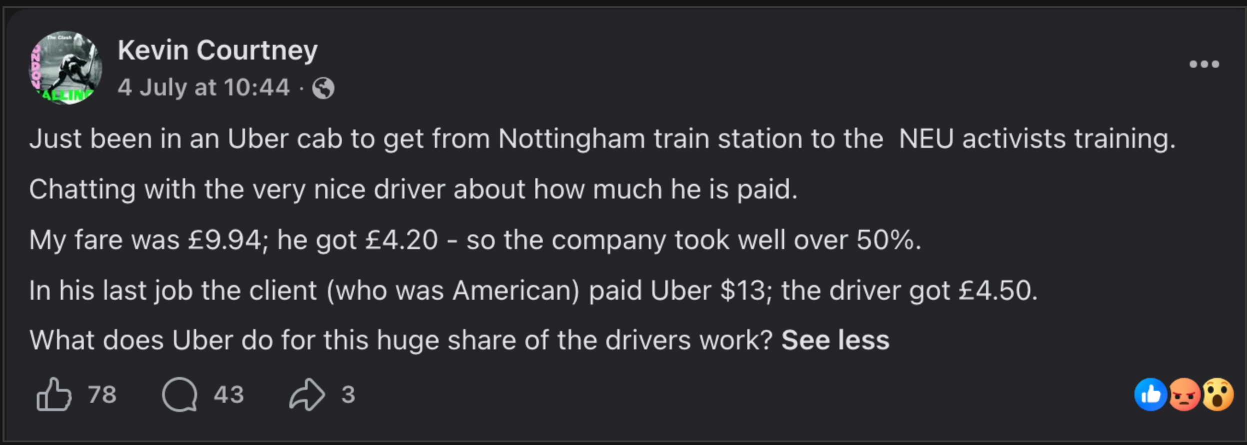
KOLA · UBER DRIVER

Kola describes the impact of Uber's dynamic pay on his work. Watch the video.

TAKE ACTION

MORE PEOPLE ARE NOTICING

Across social media, passengers and drivers are increasingly comparing what Uber charged with what the driver received — and speaking up. That is a good thing, and we want to see more of it.



Kevin Courtney
4 July at 10:44 ·

Just been in an Uber cab to get from Nottingham train station to the NEU activists training.

Chatting with the very nice driver about how much he is paid.

My fare was £9.94; he got £4.20 - so the company took well over 50%.

In his last job the client (who was American) paid Uber $13; the driver got £4.50.

What does Uber do for this huge share of the drivers work? **See less**

78 43 3

FOR PASSENGERS

Compare the fare with your driver, raise your concerns with Uber, and encourage your driver to join a union and the collective legal action.

FOR DRIVERS

Join a union, and join the collective legal action at dynamicpay.org.