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High EV Charging VAT and Lack of Home Charging Access Undermining UK's Electric Transition

55% of motorists put off switching to EVs due to 20% VAT on public charging

New research* from Europcar Mobility Group UK reveals that ongoing fuel price pressures and the cost-of-living crisis have not accelerated momentum behind electric vehicle (EV) adoption. More than half (57%) of motorists say rising fuel costs have not made them more likely to consider switching to an EV, while 34% believe higher petrol prices will do little to drive the UK's transition to electric mobility.

Crucially, the findings highlight that structural barriers, particularly limited access to home charging and the high VAT rate on public charging, are actively holding drivers back. Four in ten (40%) motorists say they are unable to charge at home, while 33% cite a lack of local charging infrastructure. At the same time, 55% of drivers say the current 20% VAT applied to public EV charging has actively deterred them from making the switch.

Alongside these challenges, over half (55%) of respondents continue to cite the upfront purchase cost of EVs as a key barrier, while 43% highlight concerns around battery range — underlining the complexity of factors influencing consumer decisions.

“While rising fuel prices might be expected to accelerate the shift to electric, our research shows that cost remains a decisive barrier and not just at the point of purchase,” comments Sarah Clarke, Senior Consumer Marketing Manager at Europcar. “The disparity in VAT between home and public charging is creating an unintended disincentive for drivers who rely on the public network. Combined with the reality that many drivers cannot charge at home, this is a significant barrier to mass adoption. Addressing these imbalances will be critical to building consumer confidence and driving meaningful change.”

In response to the current fuel crisis, rather than transitioning to electric, many drivers are adapting in more immediate, cost-conscious ways. Nearly half (46%) report driving less overall, while 24% are combining trips to improve fuel efficiency, and 19% are choosing to walk more frequently.

The Europcar research raises important questions about whether current policy is fully aligned with consumer behaviour, particularly as the UK continues to pursue ambitious net-zero and transport electrification targets. Without targeted incentives and greater cost parity between home and public charging, there is a growing risk that progress towards widespread EV uptake could stall at a critical point in the UK's transition to electric mobility.

Europcar UK is helping motorists bridge the gap to electric by offering flexible EV rental, giving drivers the opportunity to experience real-world usage before making longer-term decisions. By removing the need for upfront investment, rental provides a low-risk route to understanding how electric vehicles fit into everyday driving.

**Vypr survey of 1,000 motorists conducted in April 2026*



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Contacts

Press Relations

Wendy Harrison/Cecile Stearn/Clare Watson:
europcarmobilitygroupUK_PR@harrisonsadler.com
020 8977 9132

Notes to Editors

About Europcar Mobility Group

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"We help to change the way you move" is what we stand for and brings us together. More than ever, we're committed to delivering simple, seamless, innovative solutions that make mobility easy, enjoyable and increasingly eco-friendly.

To do this, we offer to individuals and businesses a wide range of car and van rental services, be it for a few hours, a few days, a week, a month or more, on-demand or on subscription, relying on a fleet of more than 280.000 vehicles, equipped with the latest engines including an increasing share of electric vehicles.

Our brands address differentiated needs, use cases and expectations: Europcar® - a global leader of car rental and light commercial vehicle rental, Goldcar® - a frontrunner at providing low-cost car rental services in Europe, Fox-Rent-A-Car®, one of the main players in the car rental market in the US, with a "value for money" positioning, and Euromobil®, a German car rental player. The Group also operates the "myEuropcar" platform for vehicle subscription.

Customers' satisfaction is at the heart of the Group's ambition and that of our more than 9,000 employees, everywhere we deliver our mobility solutions, thanks to a strong network in over 130 countries (including 15 wholly owned subsidiaries completed by franchisees and alliance partners).

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