



# EU Tachograph compliance for Last Mile LCV fleets

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## Executive summary

The European Automobile Manufacturers' Association (ACEA) estimates that more than **30 million light commercial vehicles** (LCVs) are in operation across the EU, representing over 80% of all freight vehicles in the region. When including the UK and the EFTA (Norway, Liechtenstein and Switzerland), this figure rises to approximately 37 million vehicles.

Of all freight transport in the EU, a **quarter is estimated to be international**. Drivers on these routes face challenging working conditions, including long and often irregular working hours and tight schedules that can contribute to fatigue and stress. Driver fatigue is a recognised risk factor that endangers all road users. According to the **European Transport Workers' Federation**, fatigue leads to poor steering control, decreased reaction time, poor speed tracking and loss of attention and hazard perception. **According to surveys**, more than half of long-distance drivers report that they have nearly fallen asleep at the wheel.

Recognising the scale of international LCV freight transportation within the EU, and the impact that these operations can have on road safety, the EU is extending the scope of Regulation (EU) 2020/1054 to include LCVs weighing over 2.5 tonnes involved in international transport or cabotage. Under rules introduced as part of the EU Mobility Package, from the **1st of July 2026**, these LCVs must be fitted with second-generation smart tachographs (G2V2 tachos), and drivers will be subject to the same EU drivers' hours rules that currently apply to heavy goods vehicle (HGV) drivers. The objective is to improve road safety, strengthen driver protection, and ensure fair competition across the European transport market.

This white paper provides a practical guide to the new regulatory landscape for LCV operators. It outlines the regulatory framework, highlights the financial risks of non-compliance, and explores how last mile operators can turn a compliance challenge into a commercial opportunity by using the new tachograph data alongside existing telematics systems to improve efficiency, reduce risk, and strengthen operational control.

# How EU tachograph regulation has evolved

The EU's approach to tachographs and drivers' hours has developed over more than four decades, with a consistent focus on improving road safety, protecting drivers, and maintaining fair competition. While originally designed for heavy goods vehicles, this framework is now extending into light commercial vehicle operations.

The foundation was [Council Regulation \(EEC\) No 3821/85](#), which mandated analogue tachographs for commercial heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) exceeding 3.5 tonnes. These devices recorded speed, distance, and driver activity on paper charts, creating the first enforceable system for monitoring compliance. Introduced alongside earlier drivers' hours rules, they established a baseline for enforcement, but were vulnerable to error.

A major improvement came with the introduction of digital tachographs, required in new vehicles from 2006. These enhanced data integrity and enforcement consistency across Member States, with the transition consolidated under [Regulation \(EU\) No 165/2014](#).

**In parallel, Regulation (EC) No 561/2006** harmonised rules on driving time, breaks, and rest periods. Its stated objectives were to improve working conditions for drivers, enhance road safety, and ensure fair competition within the European transport sector. These rules have since become the cornerstone of operational compliance for HGV fleets.

The next phase came with the Mobility Package I, notably [Regulation \(EU\) 2020/1054](#). This introduced smart tachographs with Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) tracking and remote enforcement capability, stricter rules on rest and return-to-base requirements, and enhanced cross-border enforcement.

Crucially for last mile operators, the regulatory scope is now expanding to address a long-standing gap. LCVs engaged in international transport have historically operated outside the full regulatory framework applied to HGVs, despite increasingly being used in cross-border delivery networks. This has created both enforcement challenges and competitive imbalance. **From 1 July 2026**, tachograph and drivers' hours rules will extend to vehicles with a maximum permissible mass of over 2.5 tonnes used in international or cabotage operations, requiring the installation of second-generation smart tachographs (G2V2).

This marks a structural shift. Cross-border van movements, which have often operated with limited formal oversight, will now sit within the same compliance framework as heavier vehicles. By extending tachograph rules to LCVs, the EU is allowing for more consistent enforcement, fairer competition, and full visibility of labour conditions across the entire cross-border logistics market.



# Vehicles and routes affected by the new legislation

With the new extended scope of the EU drivers' hours and tachograph legislation, the determining factor becomes a combination of the vehicle type and how that vehicle is used. This section provides a clear, practical framework to help you identify which vehicles and routes fall within scope, so you can assess your exposure with confidence and avoid unintended non-compliance.

## Will Your LCVs be affected?

Your LCVs ARE affected if:	Your LCVs are NOT affected if:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The vehicle's maximum permissible mass is greater than 2.5 tonnes	<input type="checkbox"/> The vehicle's maximum permissible mass is 2.5 tonnes or less
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> and the vehicle transports goods across EU borders, or into the EU, for hire or reward	<input type="checkbox"/> Or the vehicle exclusively operates domestically within a single country
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Or The vehicle performs cabotage operations (delivering goods domestically in another EU country)	<input type="checkbox"/> Or you're operating exclusively on a true own-account basis
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The vehicle is used for both domestic and international routes, since it will fall within scope whenever it is used for international transport or cabotage. These vehicles will have to be fitted with a G2V2 tachograph for compliance on the international routes.	

## Considerations for UK Fleets

While the EU regulations no longer bind the UK, any UK-registered vehicles that cross into the EU for commercial transport or cabotage must comply with the new EU tachograph requirements while operating there.

In practice, this means that a UK van delivering goods from Dover to Paris is in scope for the European portion of the journey, but a UK van delivering goods from Manchester to Birmingham is not in scope and is instead governed by UK domestic drivers' hours rules.

# Country-by-country breakdown

## EU member states

Country	Enforcement body	Possible fines from July 2026
Austria	Bundesministerium fur Klimaschutz + Polizei	Up to EUR 5,000 for serious infringements.
Belgium	DG Controle / Federal Public Service Mobility	Up to EUR 80,000 for serious infringements, and/or imprisonment of up to 6 months.
Bulgaria	IA Avtomobilna Administratsiya	Up to approx. EUR 1,500 per infringement.
Croatia	Ministarstvo mora, prometa i infrastrukture	Up to EUR 40,000 in company fines for serious infringements, plus driver and responsible person.
Czech Republic	Celni sprava + Policie CR	Up to CZK 350,000 for serious infringements for companies (approx. EUR 14,000), plus up to 4 years imprisonment for the driver and professional driving ban or forfeiture.
Denmark	Fardselsstyrelsen	Up to DKK 12,000 for serious infringements to the company (approx. EUR 1,600) and up to DKK 6,000 for the driver (approx EUR 800).
Estonia	Transpordiamet	Up to EUR 1,200 or detention of the driver for serious infringements, plus up to EUR 16,000 to a legal person.
Finland	Traficom	Day-fine system, dependent on the salary of the driver, 18 day-fines at a maximum of 25€.
France	DREAL – regional authorities + Gendarmerie	Up to EUR 30,000 for serious infringements, plus one year of imprisonment.
Germany	BAG – Bundesamt fur Guerverkehr	Up to EUR 30,000 for serious infringements.

Country	Enforcement body	Possible fines from July 2026
Greece	YPAA – Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport	Up to EUR 3,000 for serious infringements for the company, and up to EUR 1,000 for the driver.
Hungary	ITM – Innovacios es Technologiai Miniszterium	Up to HUF 400,000 for serious infringements (Approx. EUR 1,100).
Ireland	RSA – Road Safety Authority	Fines are unknown, but expected to be in line with the European average.
Italy	MIT – Ministero delle Infrastrutture + Polizia Stradale	Fines are unknown, but expected to be in line with the European average.
Latvia	CSDD – Celu satiksmes drošibas direkcija	Up to EUR 1,400 and up to 280 penalty points to the company for serious infringements, plus up to 570 EUR and up to 114 penalty points to the driver.
Lithuania	VI Transporto kompetenciju agentura	Up to EUR 2,000 for serious infringements.
Luxembourg	Administration des transports	Up to 25,000 for serious infringements and/or imprisonment of up to 5 years.
Netherlands	ILT – Inspectie Leefomgeving en Transport	Company fines of up to EUR 13,375 for serious infringements. Driver fines of up to EUR 1,500.
Poland	ITD – Inspekcja Transportu Drogowego	Up to PLN 12,000 for serious infringements (approx. EUR 2,800).
Portugal	IMT – Instituto da Mobilidade e dos Transportes	Up to EUR 79,560 for serious infringements.
Romania	ARR – Autoritatea Rutiera Romana	Fines are unknown, but expected to be in line with the European average.
Slovakia	Statna sprava pre cestnu dopravu	Up to EUR 16,596 for serious infringements against the company, plus up to 330 EUR for the driver.

Country	Enforcement body	Possible fines from July 2026
Slovenia	Agencija za varnost prometa	Up to EUR 12,000 to the transport company, 6,000 EUR to the transport manager, and 5,000 EUR to the driver for serious infringements.
Spain	Ministerio de Transportes / Movilidad Sostenible	Up to EUR 6,000 for serious infringements
Sweden	Transportstyrelsen	Administrative sanction fees of up to 20,000 SEK for serious infringements (approx 1,900 EUR), plus criminal penalties including detention for a natural person.

## Key non-EU countries

Country	Enforcement body	Possible fines from July 2026
United Kingdom	Non-EU post-Brexit	<p>The UK is not bound by EU Regulation 2020/1054. However, UK vehicles operating in the EU must comply with tacho rules whilst on EU territory.</p> <p>Irish operators travelling by ferry to Great Britain and then through Wales/England before taking the ferry/channel tunnel to continental Europe will need to comply with the EU tachograph regulations throughout the journey, including the leg undertaken in GB.</p>
Norway	EFTA and EEA Member – not EU	<p>As an EEA and EFTA member, Norway has adopted EU transport regulations, including the Mobility Package.</p> <p>LCVs weighing 2.5-3.5T completing international transport to the EU must comply with EU rules from 1 July 2026.</p>
Switzerland	Member of the EFTA, bilateral agreements with EU	<p>Switzerland has signed a bilateral mobility package with the EU.</p> <p>LCVs weighing 2.5-3.5T completing international transport to the EU are expected to have to comply with EU rules from 1 July 2026.</p>
Türkiye	EU candidate, not currently in scope	EU rules will apply on the EU side of the border, once vehicles enter an EU member state.

# Key compliance requirements

All LCVs with a maximum permissible mass of over 2.5 tonnes that are involved in international transport or cabotage must have G2V2 tachographs fitted by 1 July 2026. All drivers must be trained in the correct usage of the tachograph unit and their driver cards, as well as the application of the EU drivers' hours regulations. Operators are also required to implement robust processes for data capture, download, and ongoing compliance management.

These requirements sit within the framework of Regulation (EC) No 561/2006, which defines limits on driving time, breaks, and rest periods as follows:



## Daily driving limit

Drivers can drive for up to 9 hours per day. This can be extended to a maximum of 10 hours, no more than twice a week.



## Weekly driving limit

Drivers must not exceed 56 hours of driving in one week, or 90 hours within any two consecutive weeks. This means that if the maximum driving hours are reached in one week, driving time must be reduced to only 34 hours in the following week.



## Break times

A break of at least 45 minutes must be taken after 4.5 hours of driving. This may be taken as one continuous period or split into two parts of at least 15 minutes, followed by at least 30 minutes.



## Rest times

Rest times are those spent completely away from any work. As such, they exclude time spent not only driving, but also on break or conducting "other work", as identified on the driver's tachograph. EU rules define both daily and weekly rest requirements.



## Daily rest times

**Regular:** At least 11 hours of uninterrupted rest per day. This can be split into at least 3 hours, followed by at least 9 hours of uninterrupted rest.

**Reduced:** At least 9 hours under permitted conditions.



## Weekly rest times

**Regular:** At least 45 hours of uninterrupted rest per week.

**Reduced:** At least 24 hours, subject to compensatory rest requirements at a later stage.



## Data management

Driver card data must be downloaded at least every 28 days, and vehicle unit data at least every 90 days. Records must be retained for at least 12 months. During roadside inspections, drivers must be able to produce records covering the previous 56 days.

In practice, compliance depends not only on driver behaviour but also on the integrity of fleet-level systems used to capture, store, and audit tachograph data.



## Costs and timeline for compliance

Fleets should budget approximately €1,000-1,600 (£870-1,390 GBP) per vehicle for compliance, which consists of:

Component/Service	Estimated cost
G2V2 tachograph unit	€700-1,200
Installation and calibration	€200-400
Driver tachograph card (per driver)	Approximately €60
Company tachograph card	Approximately €100 (valid for 5 years)

A fleet of ten LCVs with fifteen drivers should expect upfront costs of between €11,000-17,000 (£9,600-14,800), plus ongoing expenses for training, data management, and card renewals.

## What to do now: a 2-month countdown

With the 1 July 2026 deadline only two months away, last mile fleets have a very small window to ensure they have a fully functioning tachograph operation for cross-border operations. Workshop capacity for G2V2 unit retrofits will be limited, and the application process for driver's cards can take weeks.

Drivers must receive sufficient training to be confident using their tachograph units, with a clear understanding of the drivers' hours and rest requirements to ensure they don't inadvertently risk non-compliance and potential fines.

An example timeline might look like:

### May 2026

Audit, installation and training

- Audit your fleet to identify in-scope routes and vehicles, and book in workshop time for installations
- Complete tachograph installations across your in-scope fleet
- Roll out driver training on tachograph operation and driving time rules
- Set up data download and archiving procedures
- Update scheduling processes to account for mandatory breaks

### June 2026

Testing, final checks

- Run pilot operations with new tachographs in place
- Test remote download and data retention systems
- Identify and resolve any issues before the deadline
- Verify data retention meets the 56-day inspection requirement
- Communicate any delivery window changes to customers

### 1 July 2026

Enforcement begins

- Ensure ongoing compliance monitoring is in place
- Provide refresher training as necessary



## Lessons from the HGV rollout

When the G2V2 tachographs became mandatory for new HGVs in 2019, the fleets that adapted most effectively shared a common approach.

They treated compliance as an operational discipline, not just a procurement exercise. Installing hardware is straightforward; the greater challenge lies in redesigning schedules, training drivers, and embedding compliance into day-to-day operations. For last mile operators, where routes are dynamic and time pressures are high, this shift is particularly important.

They invested in remote download capability to improve visibility of drivers' hours. Manually collecting tachograph data from vehicles is time-consuming, prone to errors, and dependent on drivers and vehicles returning to the depot regularly. By contrast, remote download enables near real-time oversight, allowing operators to identify and address potential infringements before they escalate, creating a stronger culture of compliance while reducing administrative burden.

Finally, leading fleets integrated tachograph data with wider fleet management insights, rather than treating it as a standalone compliance requirement. This integration allowed them to move beyond risk avoidance, using the data to improve route planning, resource allocation, and operational resilience.

For last mile LCV fleets entering scope in 2026, these lessons are directly transferable.

# The opportunity

While the new regulations may initially feel burdensome, they create a clear opportunity for operators who take a structured approach. With the enhanced G2V2 tachograph data, LCV fleet managers with cross-border or cabotage operations will gain access to verified, standardised data on driving time, rest periods, and border crossings – capabilities long established in HGV fleets. This data has value well beyond compliance:



## Driver welfare becomes measurable

Rather than relying on self-reported hours, operators will gain objective insight into driving patterns and workloads. Compliance with drivers' hours rules is designed to reduce fatigue-related risk, a recognised contributor to road collisions, improving safety for both drivers and other road users.



## Customer SLA accuracy improves

With greater visibility of legally available driving time, delivery promises can be made with greater confidence. For last mile operations, where tight delivery windows and dynamic routing are common, this enables more realistic scheduling aligned with drivers' legal limits.



## Insurance conversations evolve

Demonstrating consistent compliance and the ability to monitor driver activity supports a more evidence-based conversation with insurers. Some insurers already offer preferential terms for fleets with telematics and tachograph integration.



## Operational efficiency improves

Accurate insight into vehicle location and driver availability supports more effective dispatching. For cross-border last mile operations, this can reduce empty mileage, improve utilisation, and enhance overall network efficiency.

# How Geotab helps

Geotab's digital tachograph solution enables last mile fleets to meet the new European requirements while maintaining control over driver hours and operational planning. Driver card and vehicle unit data can be downloaded remotely on a scheduled basis, allowing compliance with drivers' hours rules to be monitored centrally. Near real-time alerts highlight potential infringements before they escalate into violations, supporting proactive compliance management.

Tachograph data is captured directly from the vehicle and presented within the MyGeotab platform, providing a unified view across both HGV and LCV fleets. This creates a single system for inspections, audits, and responding to enforcement requests. The data can also be integrated with fuel usage, safety, and video telematics insights in MyGeotab, enabling operators to reduce risk, improve safety outcomes, and enhance operational efficiency across increasingly complex last mile networks.

safety and compliance. From driver behavior insights to emissions tracking and proof of service documentation, Geotab helps municipalities safeguard their communities and their budgets.

## Conclusion

The window for compliance with the extended tachograph legislation is narrowing. Last mile fleet operators across EMEA with cross-border LCV activity should now be preparing to ensure that all in-scope vehicles are fitted with G2V2 tachographs by 1 July 2026, and that drivers and operational teams are trained in the application of EU drivers' hours rules.

For fleets operating across multiple countries, manual collection and management of tachograph data is unlikely to be sustainable at scale. As regulatory requirements extend into LCV operations, many operators are moving towards centralised, system-led approaches.

Geotab's digital tachograph solution supports this transition by providing a unified view of driver activity and compliance. By integrating tachograph data with wider fleet insights, operators can move beyond basic compliance and strengthen control over safety, efficiency, and operational performance.



To explore how this can be applied in your operation,  
[book a demo or contact our EMEA team today.](#)

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