

Rail Factsheet

November 2017



Department
for Transport

About this factsheet

This factsheet provides an overview of key statistics on rail in Great Britain. The national rail statistics are for surface rail only, and do not include underground, light rail and tram systems.

Key Statistics

How people travel P1
Rail accounts for 2% of trips

Rail usage P2
Rail journeys have doubled in the last 20 years

Rail Passengers P3
Over half of rail journeys are for commuting

Satisfaction P4
83% were satisfied with their last journey

Rail performance, infrastructure and freight P5
87.7% of trains were 'on time' in 2016-17

Rail Safety P6
No passengers or workers have died as a result of a mainline train accident since 2008.

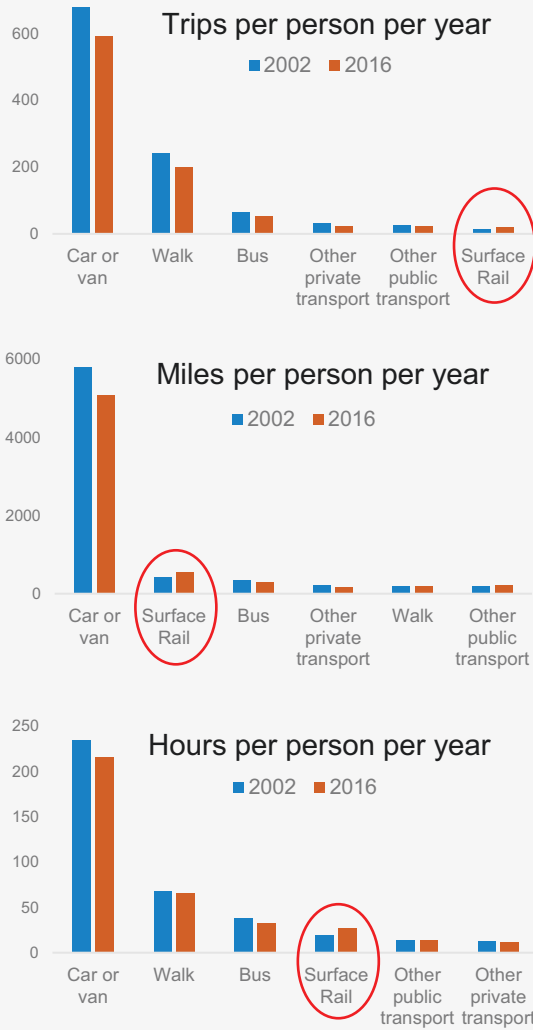
Of all travel, in England in 2016 rail accounted for¹:

2% of trips

8% of distance

7% of time

How people travel






In England, people are making fewer trips, travelling shorter distances and spending less time travelling overall compared with 14 years ago.

Most trips are by car or van, either as a driver or a passenger. In 2016, people made on average almost 2 trips, travelled 14 miles and spent 35 minutes each day using cars or vans.

Whether measuring trips, distance or time, car and van travel accounts for more travel than all other modes of travel combined.

By contrast, rail accounts for only one in fifty trips, but has increasingly become a preferred mode of travel¹.

Between 2002 and 2016, rail usage has grown whilst other modes declined¹:

	Trips	Distance	Time
 Rail	⬆️ 56%	⬆️ 23%	⬆️ 43%
 Car or van	⬆️ 13%	⬆️ 13%	⬆️ 8%
 Bus	⬆️ 19%	⬆️ 14%	⬆️ 14%

➤ The information on this page comes from the National Travel Survey 2016, which covers people living in England. As such, UK-wide comparisons shouldn't be made with other information in this factsheet.

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FURTHER INFORMATION: Public: 020 7944 2419; Media: 020 7944 4459

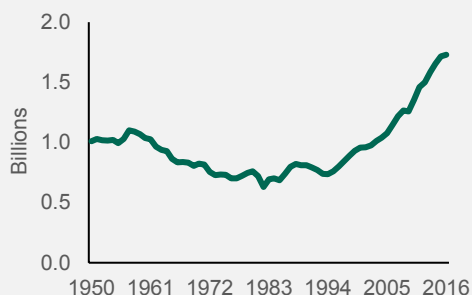
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Rail travel in Great Britain



Rail usage

Rail passenger journeys in GB²

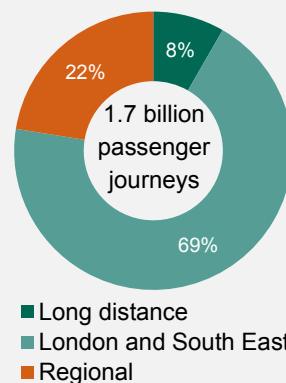


Rail passenger journeys in Great Britain have more than doubled in the last 20 years.

In London & the South East, where most rail journeys are made, rail usage has increased 16% in the last five years.

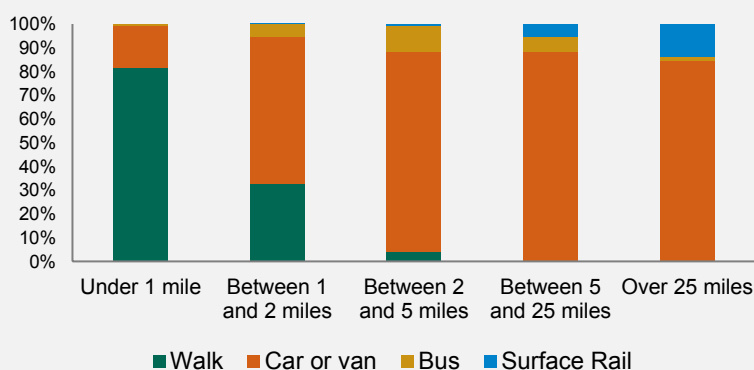
There are some signs that growth has been slowing and recent figures have shown a small decline in national rail usage².

Share of journeys by sector²



Figures do not add to 100 due to rounding.

Average distance travelled by mode: England, 2016¹



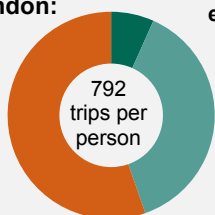
Car or van remains the dominant mode of travel except for the very shortest journeys.

Buses made up only 4% of all distance travelled, and tended to be used as a public transport option for trips between 1 and 5 miles¹.

Rail tends to be used for longer trips; the average rail journey was 29 miles whereas the average car journey was about 9 miles¹.

Mode share of all trips¹

London:



Rail

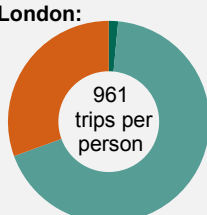


Private



Other

England excluding London:



64% of rail journeys started or ended in London⁴

London residents were four times more likely to use rail than those living elsewhere in England. Other regions tended to be more reliant on car usage, whereas London has the lowest level of car usage of all regions¹.

Central London had 13 times more passenger arrivals in the morning peak than the next highest city (Birmingham).

5.7% of morning peak arrivals in London exceeded train capacities, more than any other major city³.

Morning Peak arrivals: autumn 2016³



The UK rail network is one of the most heavily used in terms of train kilometres in the European Union¹⁵.

In 2015, trains in the UK travelled:

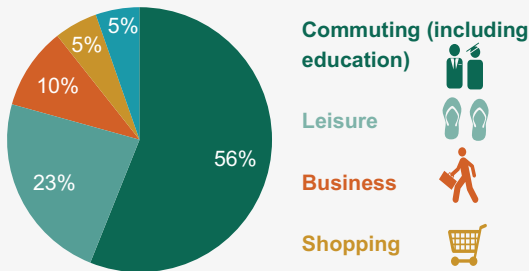
570m km

Rail passengers



Journey purpose

Over half of all rail journeys in England in 2016 were for commuting¹



Given that most rail travel occurs during peak times, it follows that rail is most commonly used for commuting, including trips for education.

Rail is used disproportionately more for commuting and business journeys and less for education, shopping and leisure than other modes of travel¹.

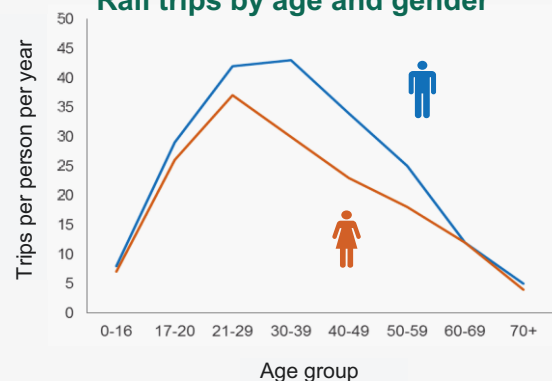
Figures do not add to 100 due to rounding. Other

Rail users

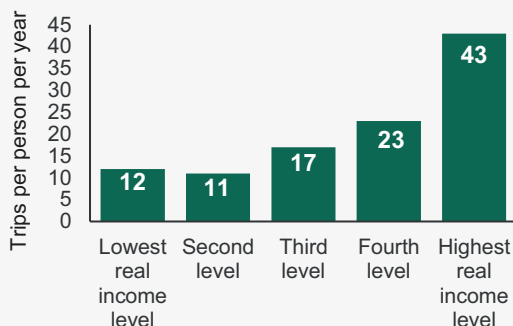
Males made more trips overall than females in England in 2016. The gap between the sexes is most stark for those aged between 21 and 59.

Working-age people tended to make more rail trips than those under 20 and over 60; males aged between 30 and 39 made the highest number of trips¹.

Rail trips by age and gender



Rail trips by income level



Rail travel becomes increasingly common as income level increases, and those with the highest income level in England almost four times as many rail trips per year than those with the lowest income level on average in 2016.

Average trip numbers are almost double between those in the highest income quintile and those in the second highest¹.

Disabled people make fewer trips, spend fewer hours travelling and travel a smaller number of miles on average per year across all modes than non-disabled people⁵



7.7%

In 2016-17, there were over 207,000 Disabled Person's Railcards in circulation, an increase of 7.7% from the previous year⁶



92% of people were satisfied with the assistance received via booked Passenger Assist⁸



4.4%

In 2016-17, there were 1.2 million booked Passenger Assists, an increase of 4.4% from the previous year⁷

Four in five had never heard of "turn up and go" assistance services⁹



Satisfaction

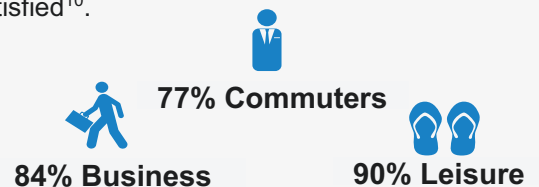


83% of passengers were satisfied overall with their last journey in spring 2017¹⁰



Overall, most rail passengers are satisfied with their last journey, and satisfaction levels have remained fairly stable in recent years¹⁰.

In spring 2017, commuters were the least satisfied¹⁰.



In 2017, the top three passenger priorities for improvement to the railways were:



Price of train tickets offers better value for money



Passengers able to get a seat on the train



More trains arrive on time than happens now¹¹

The three most important drivers in determining passenger **satisfaction** in spring 2017 were:



Punctuality/reliability of trains



Cleanliness of the inside of the train



Journey time¹⁰

Although overall satisfaction is at a relatively high level, there are some areas that can make passengers less happy, such as delays.

Most frequent causes for passenger complaints in 2016-17:

Punctuality/reliability (26%)

Ticket buying facilities (other) (7%)

Facilities on board (7%)

Ticket buying facilities (7%)

Ticket refund policy (7%)¹²

The three most important factors in determining passenger **dissatisfaction** in spring 2017 were:



How well train company dealt with delays



Punctuality/reliability of trains



Journey time¹⁰

Rail Safety



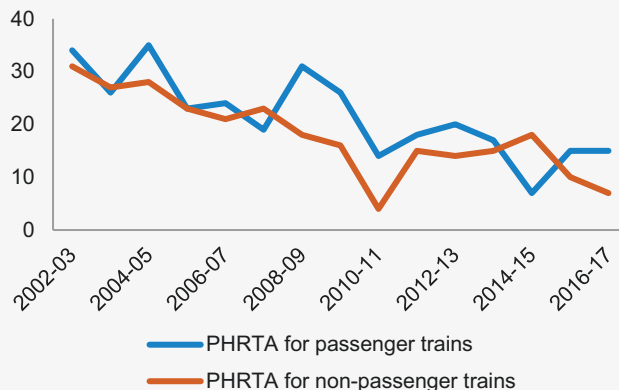
Key facts

- The UK rail network is one of the safest in Europe.
- Rail is also the safest conventional mode of transport in Great Britain.
- No railway passengers or workers have died as a result of a mainline train accident for ten consecutive years¹³.



Potentially High Risk Train Accidents

Potentially high risk train accidents (PHRTA) have fallen consistently for many years, and in 2016-17 were at a record low since 2002-03¹³.



UK Rail and Europe

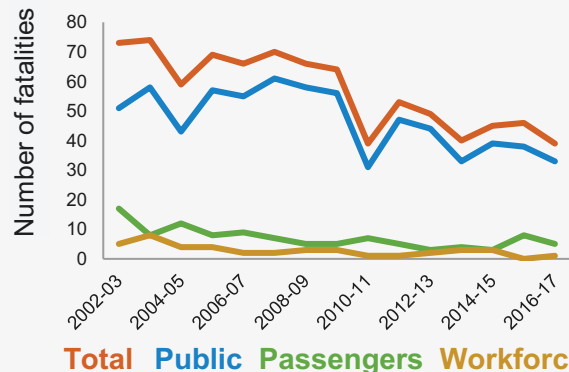
The UK has one of the best rail safety records in Europe in terms of fatalities per passenger journey and per passenger kilometre¹⁵.



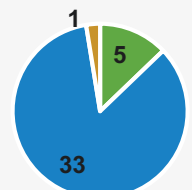
Since 2007, overall non-suicide fatalities on the railways have fallen. In 2016-17 the majority of fatalities on the railways were due to trespassing or occurred at level crossings.

However, each year there are still a small number of passenger fatalities. These tend to occur most frequently at the platform edge¹³.

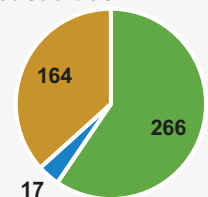
Railway fatalities



Total fatalities: 39



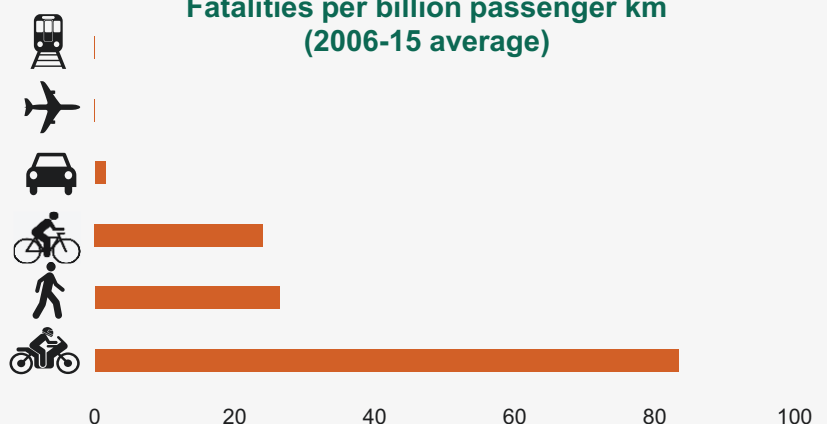
Major casualties: 447



Rail vs other modes

Rail is the safest conventional mode of transport in the UK, and is over 2 times safer than air, nearly 300 times safer than car, around 4,500 times safer than walking or cycling and over 15,000 times safer than motorcycle transport per kilometre travelled¹⁴.

Fatalities per billion passenger km (2006-15 average)

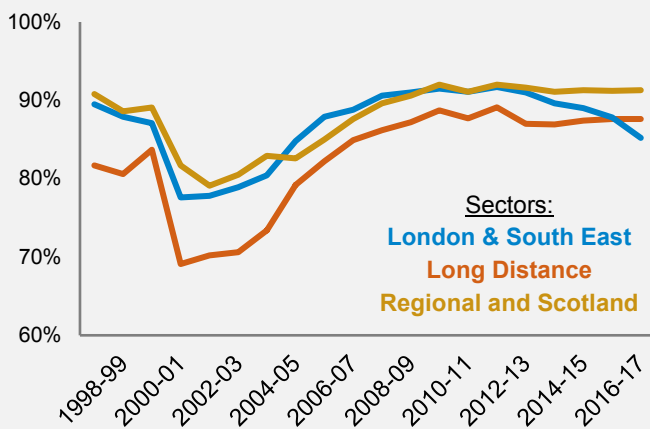


Rail Performance, Infrastructure and Freight



Performance

Percentage of trains 'on time' by rail sector



The Public Performance Measure (PPM) is the industry's main measure of train punctuality. It measures the percentage of trains 'on time' (i.e. within 5 minutes of the scheduled destination time, or for Long Distance services within 10 minutes).

Performance fell sharply following the Hatfield accident in October 2000, and gradually recovered over the following decade.

In 2016-17, 87.7% of trains were 'on time' in Great Britain. This is the lowest annual score for eleven years, as poor performance in the London and South East sector has driven down national PPM¹⁶.

Infrastructure

In 2016-17 in Great Britain¹⁷:



2,560
stations



15,811 km
of route



34% of
electrified route



The average age of
rolling stock was
21 years



29% less carbon
emissions per
passenger KM than
in 2005-06

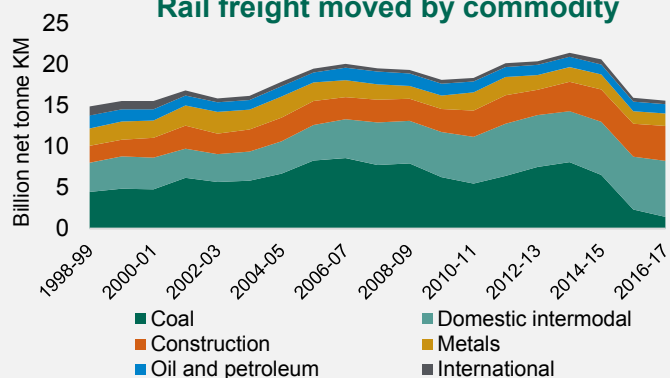
Rail Freight

Rail freight makes up 9% of freight moved domestically, with the majority carried on roads.

Rail freight moved has fallen sharply. This was driven by a drop of 82% in coal freight over 3 years, as a gradual move towards renewable sources of energy has caused the closure of some coal power stations.

Commodities such as 'domestic intermodal' and construction have increased over many years¹⁸.

Rail freight moved by commodity



Sources

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4. Office of Rail and Road: Regional rail usage
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6. Office of Rail and Road Disabled Persons' Railcard (DPRC) in circulation and issued Publication
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8. Office of Rail and Road (2017) [Research into passenger experience of Passenger Assists](#)
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