



# Passenger Rail Usage

## 2018-19 Q3 Statistical Release

Publication date: 14 March 2019

Next publication date: 13 June 2019

### Background

This release contains information on passenger rail usage. This covers:

- Passenger journeys
- Passenger kilometres
- Passenger revenue
- Passenger train kilometres

Coverage: Great Britain

Latest Quarter: 2018-19 Q3  
(October to December 2018)

### Sources:

- LENNON ticketing and revenue database
- Train Operating Companies
- Network Rail

### Contents

Passenger journeys – p2

Passenger kilometres – p5

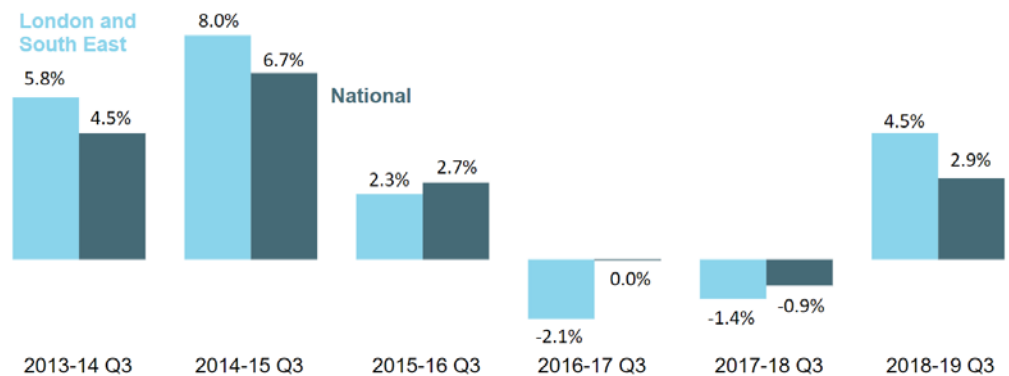
Passenger revenue – p7

Passenger train kilometres – p9

Annexes – p11

**Rail passenger journeys in Great Britain** in 2018-19 Q3 increased by 2.9% compared to 2017-18 Q3, reaching a record high of 451 million. The number of journeys for the 12 months to the end of December 2018 was 1.74 billion.

### Change on previous year's Q3 passenger journeys: London and South East sector and National, 2013-14 to 2018-19



The increase in total passenger journeys nationally was driven by a 4.5% rise in the London and South East sector, which recorded its highest number of journeys with 309 million in 2018-19 Q3 (an increase of 13 million compared to 2017-18 Q3).

**Passenger kilometres** increased by 2.0% compared to 2017-18 Q3. All three rail sectors increased, with London and South East showing the highest growth (3.6%).

**Passenger revenue** rose by 5.9% to £2.6 billion in 2018-19 Q3, driven by the London and South East sector, which grew by 7.1%.

The volume of **passenger train kilometres** in 2018-19 Q3 was 130 million, up by 0.9 million compared to 2017-18 Q3.

Responsible Statistician: Aruna Ramyeed

Public Enquiries: Email: [Rail.Stats@orr.gov.uk](mailto:Rail.Stats@orr.gov.uk) Media Enquiries: Tel: 020 7282 2094

Website: <http://orr.gov.uk/statistics/published-stats/statistical-releases>

# 1. Passenger journeys

**Passenger journeys** are calculated based on travel from an origin station to a destination station. A train journey may include one or more changes of train, and one journey is generated for each train used.

Quarterly and annual data **by sector** are available from 1994-95 onwards in [Table 12.6](#)

Quarterly data **by ticket type** are available from 1994-95 Q1 and annual data are available from 1986-87 onwards in [Table 12.7](#).

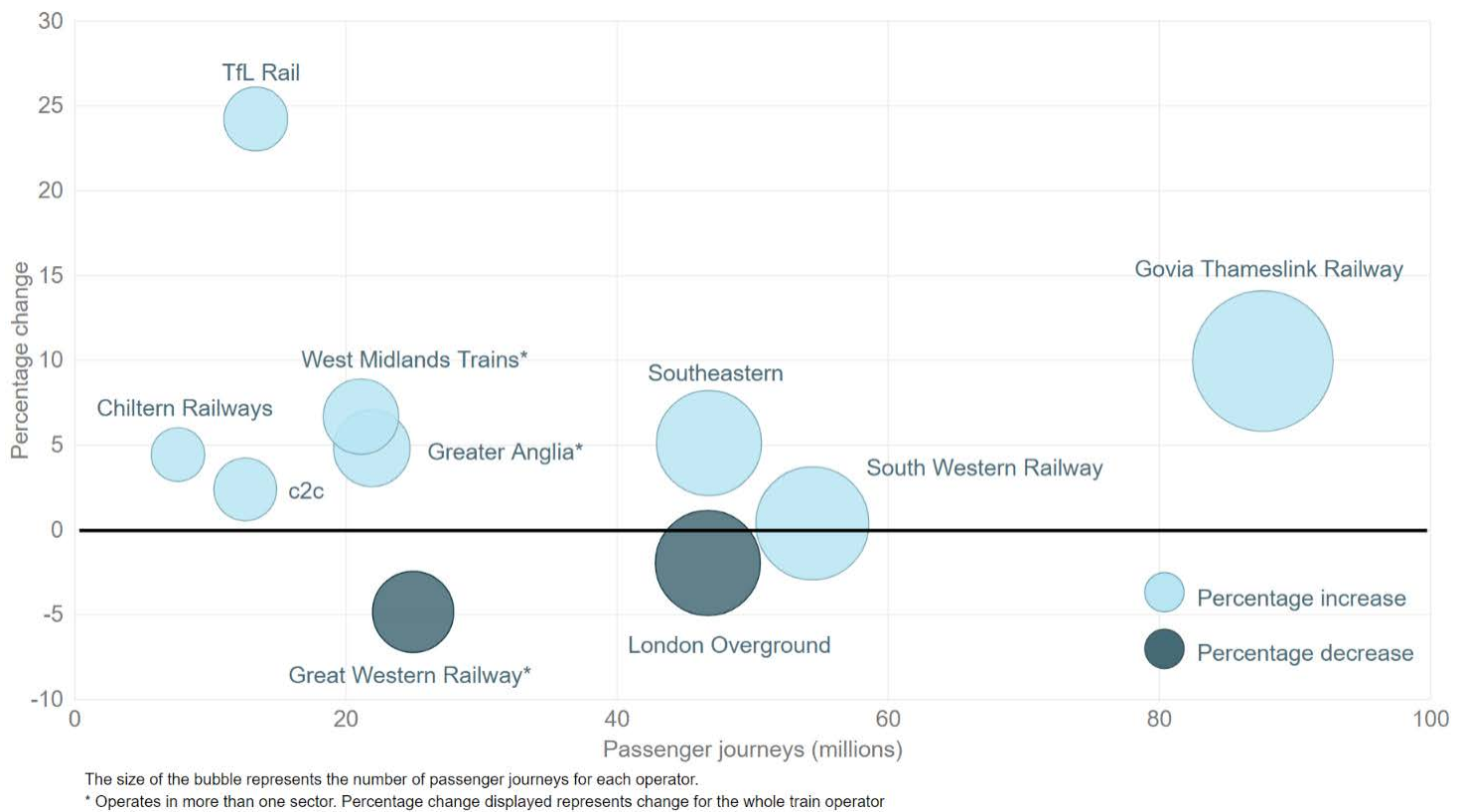
Quarterly and annual data **by TOC** are available from 2011-12 onwards in [Table 12.12](#).

A time series of aggregate annual data from 1950 are also available in [Table 12.5](#).

## 2018-19 Q3

- The number of journeys increased by 13 million compared to the same quarter in 2017-18, driven by an increase of 4.5% in journeys in the London and South East sector.
- Passenger journeys using season tickets in 2018-19 Q3 increased slightly (0.3%) to 161 million, after falling for the past nine quarters in succession.

**Figure 1.01: Passenger journeys (millions) 2018-19 Q3 and percentage change compared to 2017-18 Q3, London and South East sector**



Of the four largest passenger operators, all of whom operate within the London and South East sector and account for over 50% of all journeys, three recorded an increase in passenger journeys and only London Overground saw a decrease in journeys (-1.9%) compared to 2017-18 Q3.

Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR) which has the largest number of passengers journeys (19%) of all operators (including non-franchised) increased by 7.9 million compared to the same quarter last year. It reached a record high of 87.6 million passengers in 2018-19 Q3. GTR's punctuality<sup>1</sup> improved in 2018-19 Q3 and was the highest Q3 rate since 2012-13.

Passenger journeys on Southeastern reached 46.8 million, the highest it has been since 2016-17 Q4. They increased by 2.3 million compared to 2017-18 Q3, which can be attributed to a recovery from the fall in journeys due to Christmas closures as part of the Thameslink programme<sup>2</sup> between December 2017 and January 2018. In addition, there were new services introduced on the Southeastern line<sup>3</sup> from May 2018 onwards.

On 20 May 2018, TfL Rail took over some local Great Western Railway (GWR) services out of London Paddington, which significantly increased the number of trains ran by TfL Rail and consequently explains the drop in journeys for GWR.

The number of passenger journeys in the Long Distance sector continued to grow, albeit at a slower rate (1.0%) compared to previous Q3 growth rates. The Regional sector was the only sector which saw a decrease (-1.0%) compared to 2017-18 Q3.

Northern was affected by a round of strikes in December 2018 and ran a reduced service on Saturdays in the run up to Christmas<sup>4</sup>. The number of passenger journeys fell by 1.5 million compared to 2017-18 Q3.

The number of passenger journeys using non-franchised operators decreased compared to 2017-18 Q3. This was due to Hull Trains whose Q3 journeys decreased compared to the same quarter last year for the first time since the time series began in 2011-12. Hull Trains encountered some issues

---

<sup>1</sup> [https://orr.gov.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0018/40491/passenger-freight-performance-2018-19-q3.pdf](https://orr.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0018/40491/passenger-freight-performance-2018-19-q3.pdf)

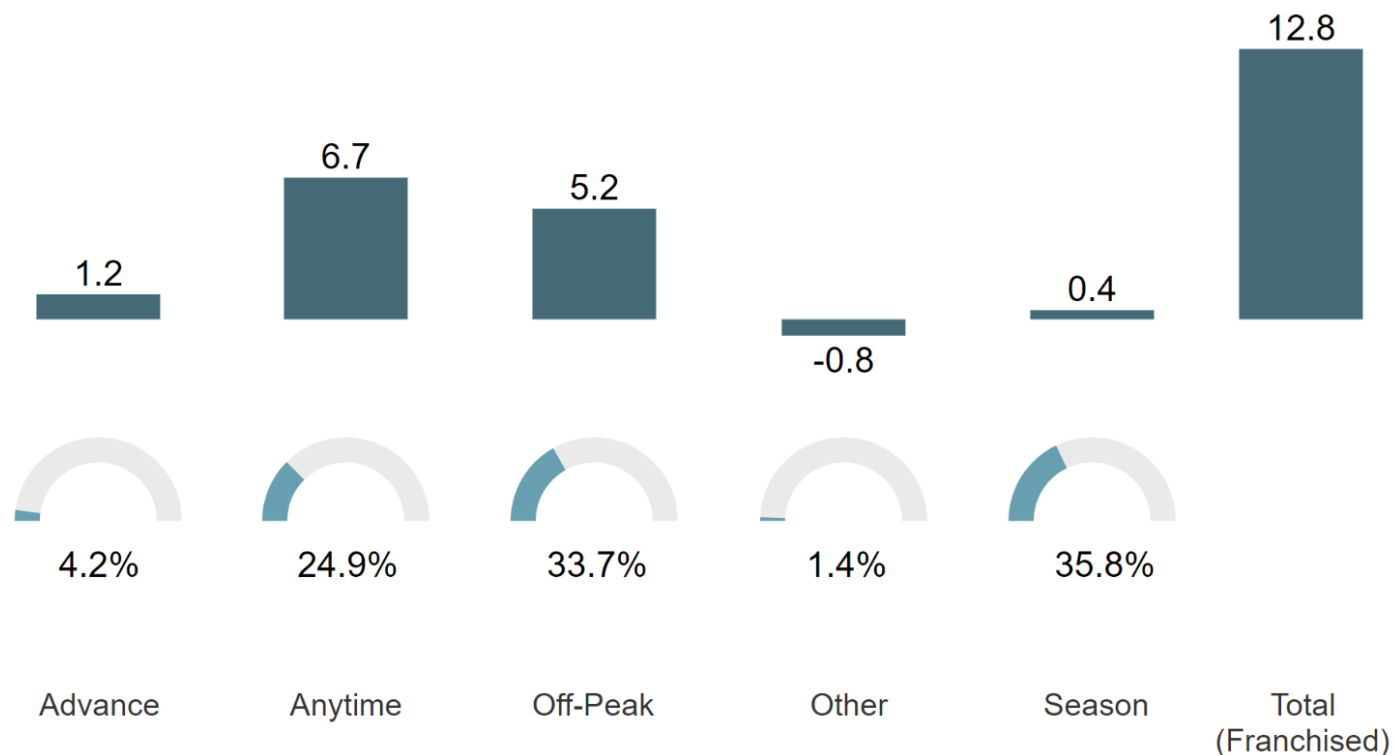
<sup>2</sup> <https://www.thameslinkprogramme.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Thameslink-Programme-Christmas-closures-suggested-text-internal-V2.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.southeasternrailway.co.uk/travel-information/live-travel-information/may-timetable>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-46371611>

with their trains<sup>5</sup> and planned to run 199 (17%) fewer trains in Q3 of 2018-19 compared with the same quarter last year<sup>6</sup>.

**Figure 1.02: Change in franchised passenger journeys by ticket type (millions), 2018-19 Q3 compared to 2017-18 Q3 and market share (%) in 2018-19 Q3**



Passenger journeys using ordinary tickets increased by 4.5% compared to 2017-18 Q3. This was driven by a 6.4% growth in anytime tickets, which has a larger market share than advance tickets. The number of journeys made on season tickets increased slightly (by 0.4 million) to 161 million in 2018-19 Q3, after falling for the past nine quarters in succession. Market share of season ticket journeys was 36% in 2018-19 Q3, down from almost 50% in the same quarter a decade ago.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-humber-45849235>

<sup>6</sup> [https://orr.gov.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0018/40491/passenger-freight-performance-2018-19-q3.pdf](https://orr.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0018/40491/passenger-freight-performance-2018-19-q3.pdf)

## 2. Passenger kilometres

**Passenger kilometres** are calculated by multiplying the number of passenger journeys on a particular flow by the number of track kilometres between the two required stations.

Quarterly and annual data **by sector** is available from 1994-95 onwards in [Table 12.3](#)

Quarterly data **by ticket type** is available from 1994-95 Q1 and annual data is available from 1986-87 onwards in [Table 12.4](#)

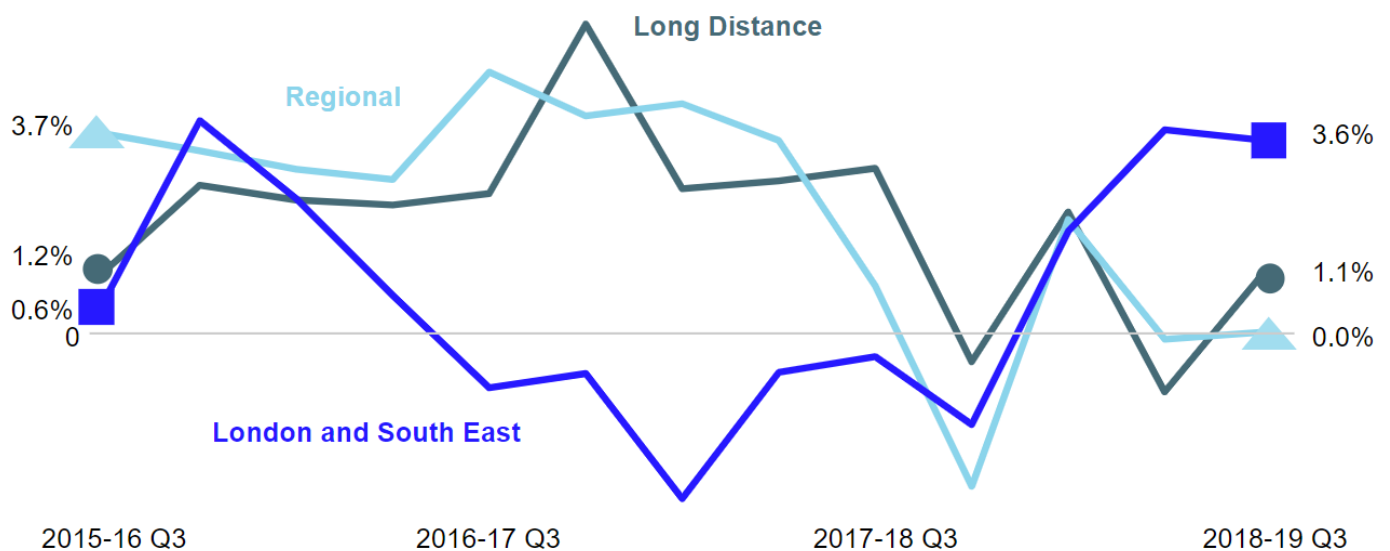
Quarterly and annual data **by TOC** is available from 2011-12 onwards in [Table 12.11](#)

A time series of aggregate annual data from 1947 is also available in [Table 12.2](#)

### 2018-19 Q3

- Total passenger kilometres increased to 17.1 billion in 2018-19 Q3. This was a 2.0% increase compared to the same quarter the previous year.
- Passenger kilometres in all three sectors increased, with the highest growth (3.6%) in London and South East to a record high of 7.9 billion in 2018-19 Q3.

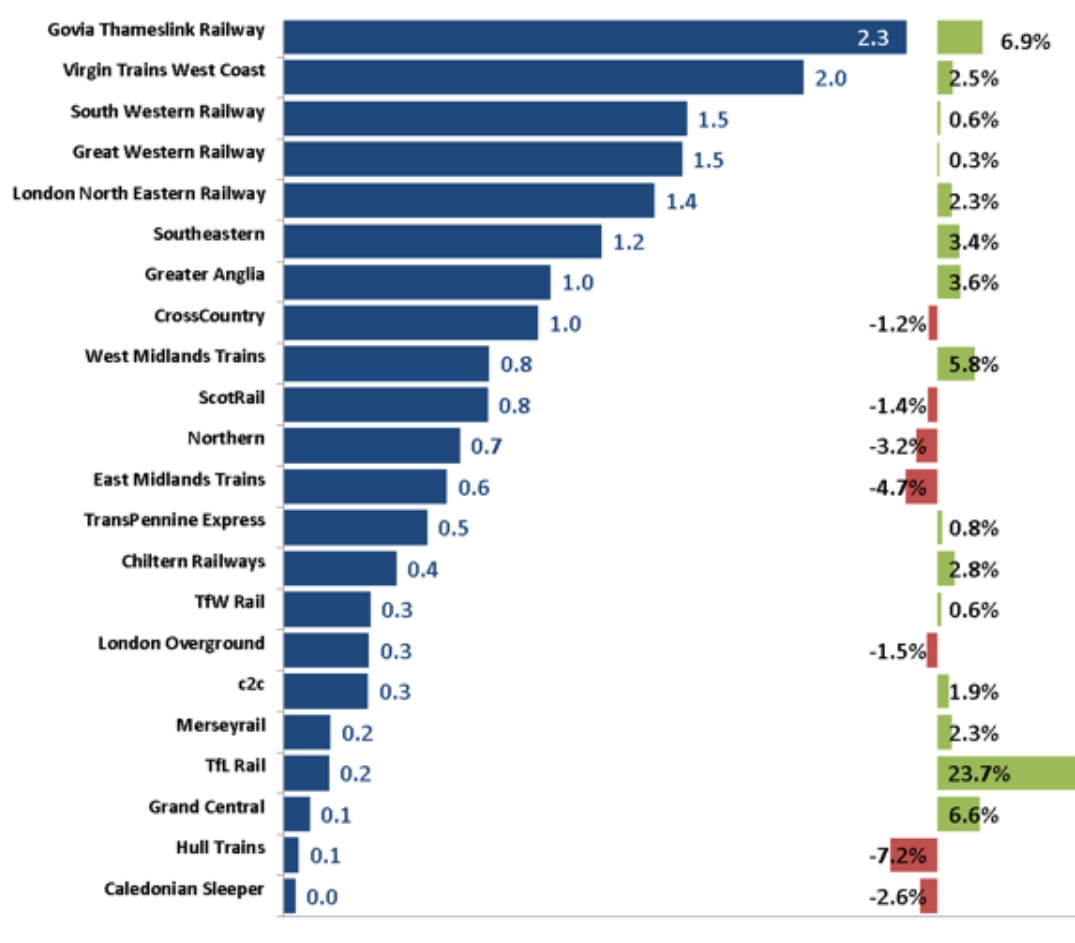
**Figure 2.01: Passenger kilometres by sector, percentage change compared to the same quarter the previous year, 2015-16 Q3 to 2018-19 Q3**



The main contributor to growth in the London and South East sector was Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR), which increased by 6.9%. This was the highest rate of growth in passenger kilometres since 2013-14 Q4.

Strike action contributed to passenger kilometres falling by 21.6 million on Northern<sup>7</sup>. Passenger kilometres on East Midlands Trains decreased by 30.4 million compared to 2017-18 Q3.

**Figure 2.02: Passenger kilometres (billion kms) by operator, 2018-19 Q3 and percentage change compared to 2017-18 Q3**



Note: In May 2018, TfL Rail took over some local Great Western Railway services out of London Paddington, which significantly increased the passenger kilometres recorded by TfL Rail.

Ordinary tickets, which accounted for three quarters of all passenger kilometres, increased to 12.8 billion in 2018-19 Q3. Passenger kilometres using season tickets increased slightly (0.3%) compared to the same quarter last year.

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.rmt.org.uk/news/rmt-confirms-raft-of-new-strike-dates-on-northern-rail/>

### 3. Passenger revenue

**Passenger revenue** statistics include all ticket revenue and miscellaneous charges associated with passenger travel on national railways. They do not include government support or grants.

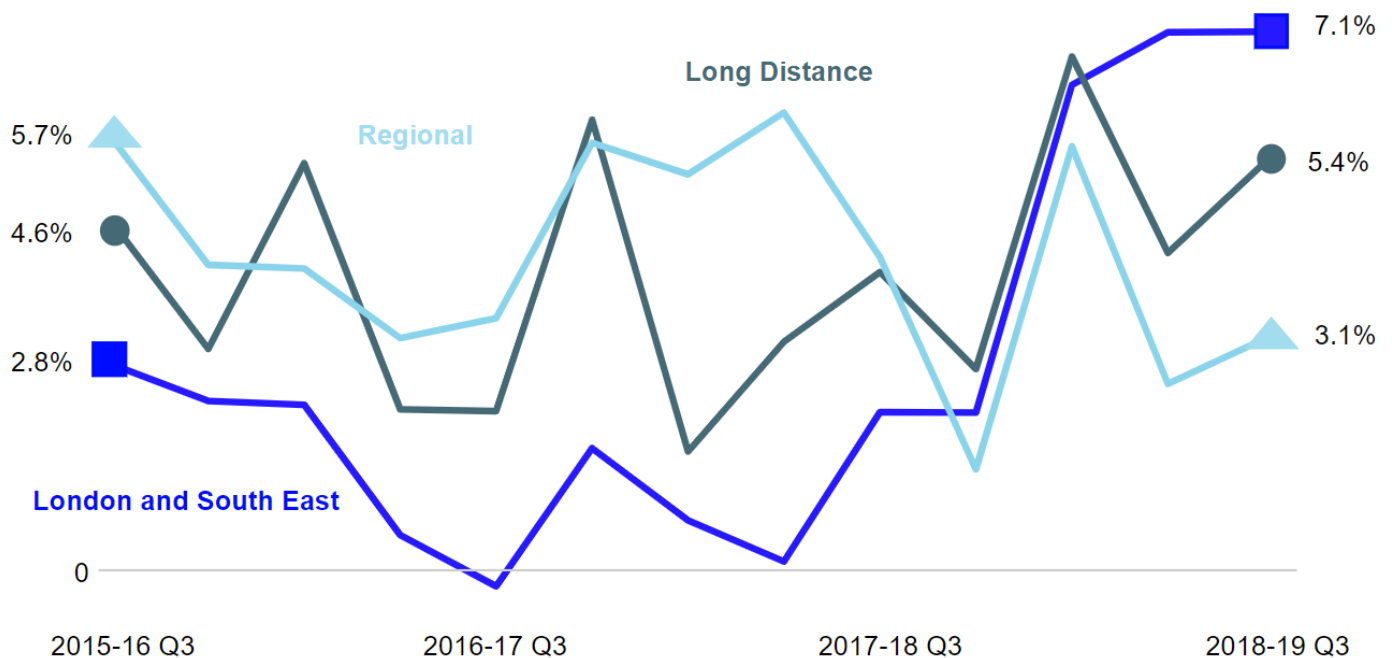
Quarterly data **by sector** is available from 1995-96 Q1 and annual data is available from 1994-95 onwards in [Table 12.8](#)

Quarterly data **by ticket type** is available from 1996-97 Q1 and annual data is available from 1986-87 onwards in [Table 12.9](#)

#### 2018-19 Q3

- Total passenger revenue increased by 5.9% (£147 million) to £2,621 million compared to 2017-18 Q3.
- Nationally, revenue per passenger kilometre was up 3.8% to 15.31p, the highest Q3 rate of increase recorded since 2012-13.

**Figure 3.01: Passenger revenue by sector, percentage change compared to the same quarter the previous year, 2015-16 Q3 to 2018-19 Q3**



Passenger revenue in the London and South East sector, which accounts for half of the total revenue in Great Britain, rose by 7.1% compared to 2018-19 Q3 and represented the strongest revenue growth in the sector since 2014-15 Q4.

Revenue from non-franchised operators increased by 12.4%; although these operators account for less than 1% of all passenger revenue.

Season ticket revenue increased by 2.7% compared to the same quarter last year. Revenue from ordinary tickets, which accounted for almost 80% of total revenue, increased by 6.8%, with advance, anytime and off-peak tickets all demonstrating strong growth.

Revenue per passenger kilometre for franchised operators in 2018-19 Q3 was 15.31p, an increase of 3.8% on 2017-18 Q3. Revenue per journey for franchised operators in 2018-19 Q3 reached £5.78, an increase of 2.9% compared to the same quarter last year.



## 4. Passenger train kilometres

**Passenger train kilometres** refers to the number of train kilometres (million) travelled by revenue earning passenger trains, sourced from Network Rail's Track Access Billing System (TABS).

Train kilometres for Heathrow Express have been excluded from the total figures for the non-franchised operators as it is not charged through TABS.

Data for **Passenger train kilometres** is available from 2010-11 onwards in [Table 12.13](#).

### 2018-19 Q3

- Nationally, the volume of passenger train kilometres in 2018-19 Q3 was 130 million, up 0.9 million compared to 2017-18 Q3.

**Figure 4.01: Change in passenger train kilometres (selected operators), 2018-19 Q3 compared to 2017-18 Q3 (million tkms)**



Passenger train kilometres for franchised operators increased by 0.9% compared to 2017-18 Q3. The largest operator, based on its market share, Govia Thameslink Railway increased by 3.9% compared to 2017-18 Q3. Transpennine Express recorded the highest growth (17.1%), which can be attributed to it taking over the Manchester to Leeds stopping service from Northern<sup>8</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.leeds-live.co.uk/news/leeds-news/trains-leeds-manchester-huddersfield-york-14669754>

South Western Railway was affected by industrial action in November and December<sup>9</sup> 2018 and suffered the largest decrease (6.1%) in passenger train kilometres compared to the same quarter last year.

---

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-46685824>

# Annex 1 – List of pre-created reports available on the ORR Data Portal

All data tables can be accessed on the data portal free of charge. The ORR data portal provides on screen data reports, as well as the facility to download data in Excel format and print the report. We can provide data in csv format on request.

## Passenger journeys

- Passenger journeys – [Table 12.5](#) (franchised only)
- Passenger journeys by sector – [Table 12.6](#)
- Passenger journeys by ticket type – [Table 12.7](#)
- Passenger journeys by train operating company – [Table 12.12](#)

## Passenger kilometres

- Passenger kilometres – [Table 12.2](#) (franchised only)
- Passenger kilometres by sector – [Table 12.3](#)
- Passenger kilometres by ticket type – [Table 12.4](#)
- Passenger kilometres by train operating company – [Table 12.11](#)

## Passenger revenue

- Passenger revenue by sector – [Table 12.8](#)
- Passenger revenue by ticket type – [Table 12.9](#)
- Revenue per passenger kilometre and per passenger journey – [Table 12.10](#) (franchised only)

## Passenger train kilometres

- Passenger train kilometres by operator – [Table 12.13](#)

We no longer publish the Timetabled train kilometres by train operating company table on our data portal. For historical data, please contact us at [rail.stats@orr.gov.uk](mailto:rail.stats@orr.gov.uk).

**Revisions:** There have been no revisions to the previously published tables associated with this statistical release. Further details can be found at: [Revisions Log](#).

**Methodology:** For more information on data collection and the methodology used to calculate the statistics in this release please see the accompanying [Quality Report](#).

**Regional passenger journeys** showing rail journeys to/from and within each region or country are published in [Regional Rail Usage](#) statistical release and data portal [tables](#). These journeys are based on the origin and destination named on a ticket and do not take into account any changes of train. It therefore produces slightly lower estimates than the total journeys published in this Passenger Rail Usage statistical release.

The **Department for Transport** (DfT) also publishes a range of rail statistics which can be found at [DfT Rail Statistics](#). This includes [Rail passenger numbers and crowding statistics](#) which provides information on the number of passengers travelling by rail into and out of major city centres in England and Wales. The statistics represent passengers on National Rail services on a 'typical' weekday.

# Annex 2 – Statistical Releases

## Statistical Releases

This publication is part of the ORR's [National Statistics](#) accredited statistical releases which consist of annual and quarterly themed releases:

### Annual:

- Rail Finance;
- Rail Fares Index;
- Rail Safety Statistics;
- Rail Infrastructure, Assets and Environmental;
- Regional Rail Usage;
- *Estimates of Station Usage (not National Statistics)*

### Quarterly:

- Passenger and Freight Rail Performance;
- Freight Rail Usage;
- Passenger Rail Usage;
- Passenger Rail Service Complaints.

A full list of publication dates for the next twelve months can be found in the [release schedule](#) on the ORR website.

## National Statistics

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the Authority's regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

It is ORR's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected of National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

For more details please contact the Statistics Head of Profession Lyndsey Melbourne on 020 7282 3978 or contact [rail.stats@orr.gov.uk](mailto:rail.stats@orr.gov.uk).



© Crown copyright 2019

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit [nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3](http://nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3) or write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This publication is available at [orr.gov.uk](http://orr.gov.uk)

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at [orr.gov.uk](http://orr.gov.uk)