Passenger Rail Usage
2018-19 Q2 Statistical Release

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 Q2 (July to September 2018)

Sources:

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

Contents

Rail passenger journeys in Great Britain in 2018-19 Q2 increased to 434 million (1.9% rise compared to 2017-18 Q2), driven by a 3.1% increase in the London and South East sector. The number of journeys for the 12 months to the end of September 2018 was 1.73 billion.

Passenger journeys by ticket type (millions) and market share (%) for franchised operators, 2013-14 Q2 to 2018-19 Q2
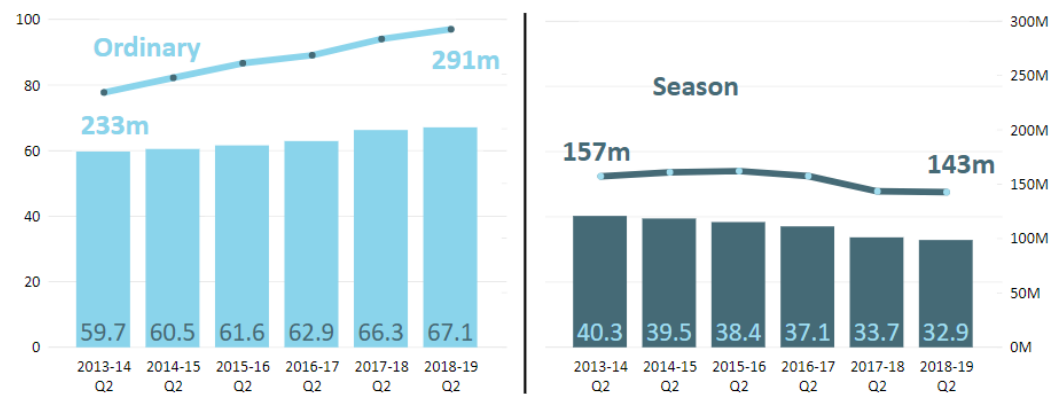
The number of **journeys** made using ordinary tickets (291 million) such as advance, anytime and off-peak, increased by 9 million compared to 2017-18 Q2. In contrast, season ticket journeys fell to their lowest level since 2010-11 Q2 reaching 143 million, which suggests passengers continue to move away from longer-term tickets.

Passenger kilometres increased by 1.4% compared to 2017-18 Q2 with only the London and South East sector reporting growth (3.8%).

Passenger revenue grew by 5.4% in 2018-19 Q2. The 3.4% increase in revenue per journey further suggests that people are switching away from season tickets, which offer the lowest price per journey.

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 now 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 Q2

- The number of journeys increased by 8 million compared to the same quarter in 2017-18, driven by an increase of 3.1% in journeys in the London and South East sector. This was partially offset by a drop in the Long Distance (0.8%) and Regional sectors (0.7%).
- Passenger journeys on season tickets in 2018-19 Q2 dropped for the ninth quarter in succession, but at a slower rate (0.5%) than in recent quarters.

Figure 1.01: Passenger journeys (millions) by operator, 2018-19 Q2 and percentage change compared to 2017-18 Q2
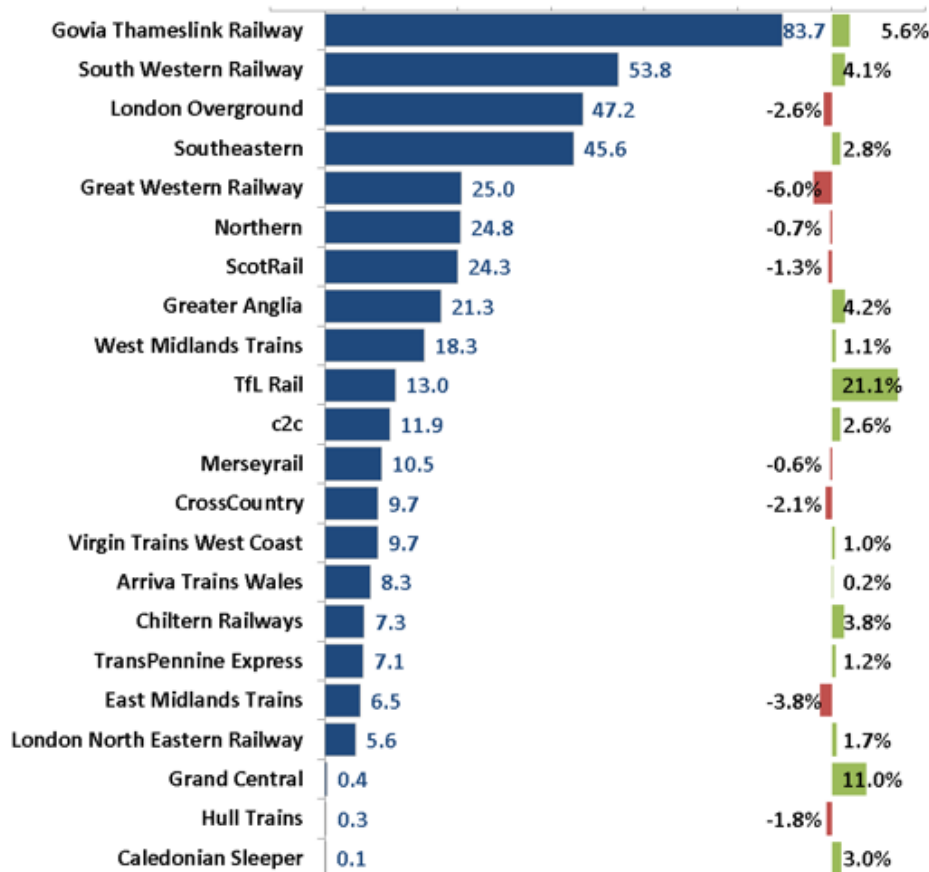
Of the four largest passenger operators, all of whom operate within the London and South East sector and account for over 50% of all journeys, three recorded an increase and only London Overground saw a decrease in journeys compared to 2017-18 Q2.

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. In addition, the May 2018 timetable disruptions and other causes such as signalling and track closures[1] affected the number of GWR journeys, which decreased by 1.6 million compared to 2017-18 Q2.

Northern services[2] continued to be affected by the timetable change in May 2018, which caused disruption on the network. Passenger journeys decreased by 0.2 million compared to the same quarter last year. Also within the Regional sector, ScotRail suffered from damage and disruptions caused by Storm Ali[3] in September 2018.

Non-franchised operators achieved their highest Q2 growth rate since 2015-16. The 0.4 million journeys for Grand Central represented their highest quarterly volume since the time series began in 2011-12.

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[1] https://www.theguardian.com/business/2018/sep/07/train-pain-how-great-western-railway-has-shunted-a-rail-review-woes-have-called-the-entire-rail-system-into-question

[2] https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-45069160

[3] https://www.glasgowlive.co.uk/news/glasgow-news/glasgow-trains-remain-affected-storm-15176039

Figure 1.02: Change in passenger journeys by ticket type (millions), 2018-19 Q2 compared to 2017-18 Q2 and market share (%) in 2018-19 Q2
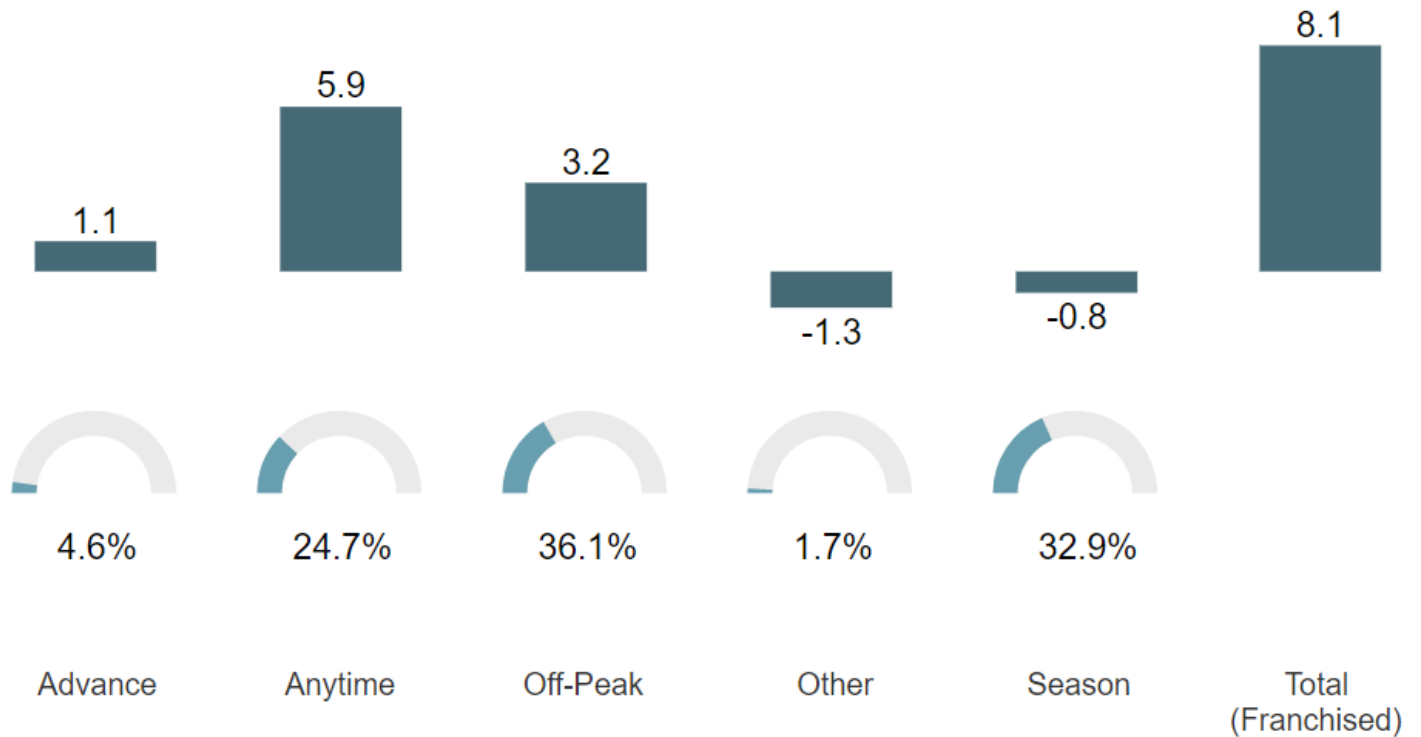
Passenger journeys using ordinary tickets, driven by a 5.9% growth in anytime tickets, increased by 3.2% compared to 2017-18 Q2. In contrast, the number of journeys made on season tickets fell at a slower rate of 0.5% to 143 million in 2018-19 Q2. Market share of season ticket journeys was 33% in 2018-19 Q2, down from 45% in the same quarter a decade ago.

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 now available from 1994-95 onwards in Table 12.3

Quarterly data **by ticket type** is now 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 now 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 Q2

- Total passenger kilometres increased to 17.1 billion in 2018-19 Q2. This was a 1.4% increase compared to the same quarter last year.
- Similar to passenger journeys, London and South East sector was the only sector where passenger kilometres increased (3.8%), with a record high of 7.9 billion in 2018-19 Q2.

Figure 2.01: Passenger kilometres by sector, percentage change compared to the same quarter the previous year, 2015-16 Q1 to 2018-19 Q2
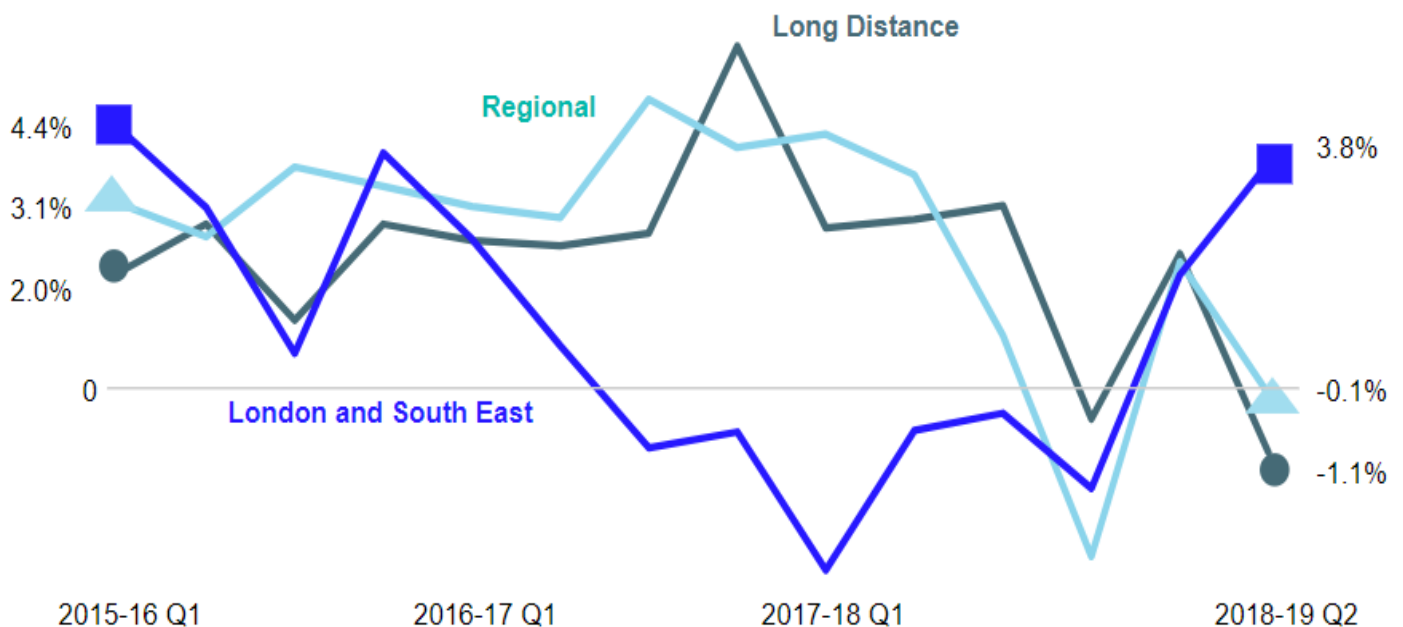
The main contributor to growth in the London and South East sector was Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR), which increased by 5.2% and was its strongest rate of growth in Q2 since 2012-13.

There was a 1.1% fall in passenger kilometres in the Long Distance sector in 2018-19 Q2, the lowest Q2 rate seen since 2002-03. Significant closures of London Euston station[4] affected Virgin Trains West Coast which decreased by 1.5%. In addition, CrossCountry and East Midlands Trains have been affected by disruptions caused by improvement works to track and signalling[5].

Figure 2.02: Passenger kilometres (billion kms) by operator, 2018-19 Q2 and percentage change compared to 2017-18 Q2
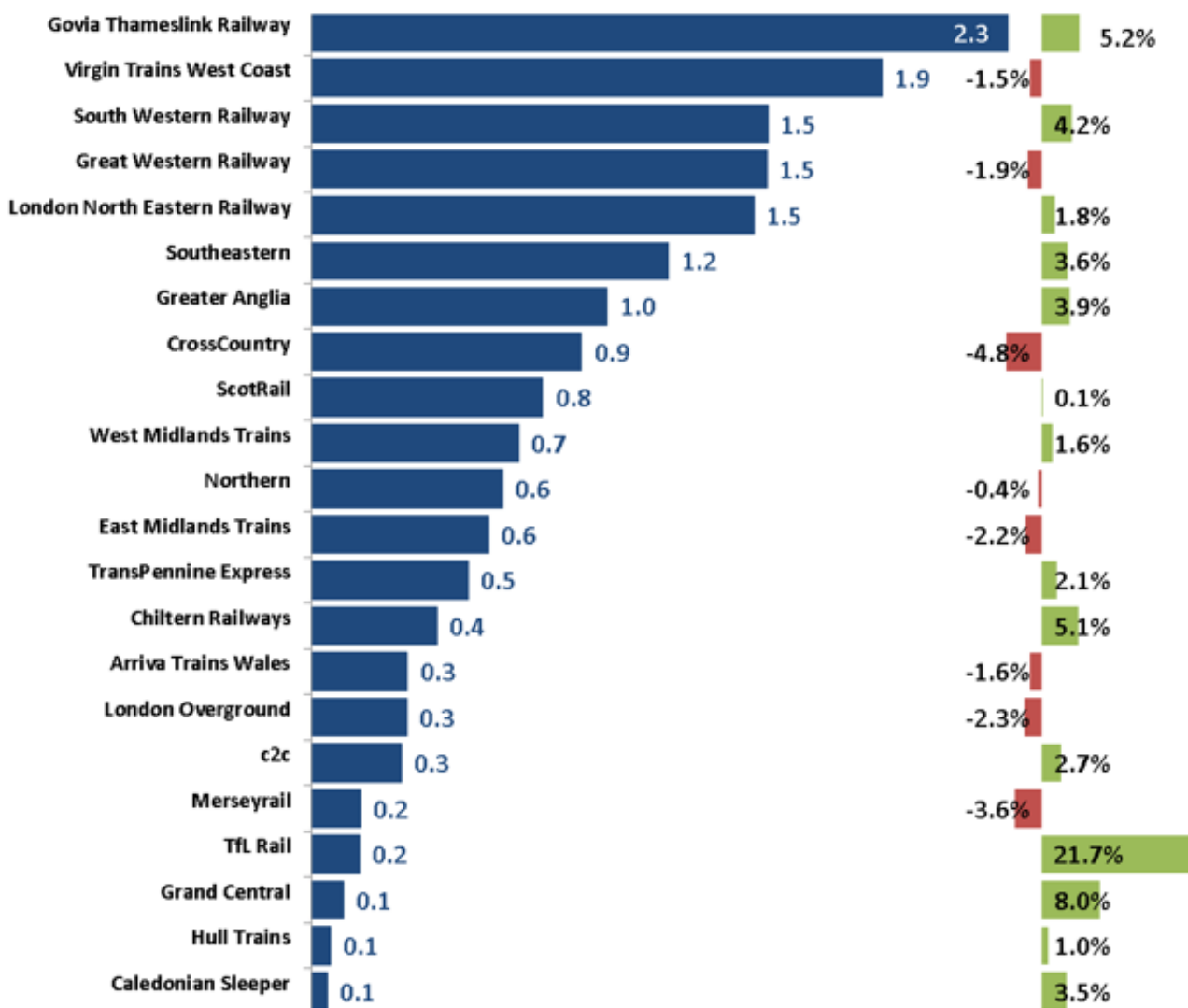
After decreasing for eight successive quarters, passenger kilometres from season tickets showed a rise of 1.5% compared to the same quarter last year.

Ordinary tickets, which accounted for more than three quarters of all passenger kilometres, increased to 13.2 billion in 2018-19 Q2, albeit at a slower rate than in recent quarters (1.3%).

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[4] https://www.independent.co.uk/travel/news-and-advice/london-euston-closure-virgin-trains-network-rail-birmingham-manchester-glasgow-a8514056.html

[5] https://www.itv.com/news/central/2018-07-23/derby-disruption-how-your-trains-will-be-affected/

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 Q2

- Total passenger revenue increased by 5.4% (£131 million) to £2,541 million compared to 2017-18 Q2.

- Nationally, revenue per passenger kilometre was up 4.0% to 14.85p, the highest Q2 rate of increase recorded since 2013-14.

Figure 3.01: Passenger revenue by sector, percentage change compared to the same quarter the previous year, 2015-16 Q2 to 2018-19 Q2
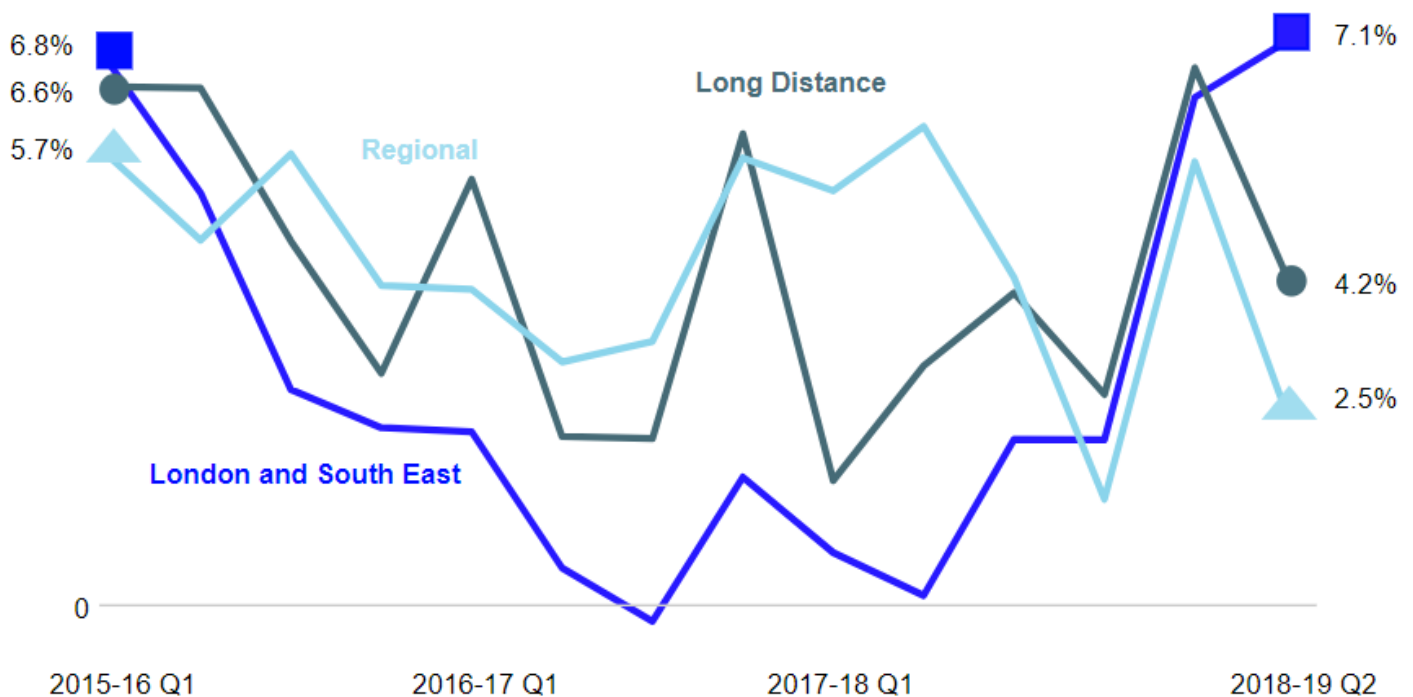
Passenger revenue in the London and South East sector, which accounts for nearly half of the total revenue, rose by 7.1% compared to 2018-19 Q2 and represented the strongest revenue growth in the sector since 2014-15 Q4.

Revenue from non-franchised operators increased by 14.5%; although these operators account for less than 1% of all passenger revenue.

Season ticket revenue increased by 5.4% compared to the same quarter last year despite a fall in the number of journeys made on season tickets. This might suggest that people are moving to shorter length season tickets.

Revenue from ordinary tickets, which accounted for almost 80% of total revenue, also increased by 5.4%, with advance and anytime tickets both demonstrating strong growth.

Revenue per passenger kilometre for franchised operators in 2018-19 Q2 was 14.88p, an increase of 4.0% on 2017-18 Q2. Revenue per journey for franchised operators in 2018-19 Q2 reached £5.81, an increase of 3.4% 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 Q2

■ Nationally, the volume of passenger train kilometres in 2018-19 Q2 was 135 million, up 1.8 million compared to 2017-18 Q2.

Figure 4.01: Change in passenger train kilometres (selected operators), 2018-19 Q2 compared to 2017-18 Q2 (million tkms)

Passenger train kilometres for franchised operators increased by 1.5% compared to 2017-18 Q2. The two largest operators based on their share of train kilometres - GTR and Northern - increased by 3.1% and 6.3% respectively this quarter compared to 2017-18 Q2.

Passenger train kilometres on TfL Rail increased by 0.3 million compared to the same quarter last year. This was due to TfL Rail taking over some GWR services out of London Paddington in preparation for Crossrail.

ScotRail[6] was affected by hot weather conditions in August 2018 and were also affected by signalling problems, which contributed to the decrease of 0.2 million passenger train kilometres in 2018-19 Q2.

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.

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.