Passenger Rail Usage 2019-20 Q1

Publication date: 3 October 2019

Next publication date: 12 December 2020

Background

This statistical release contains information on **rail usage** for Great Britain. The measures covered are:

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

The latest quarterly data in this release refers to April, May and June 2019 (Q1).

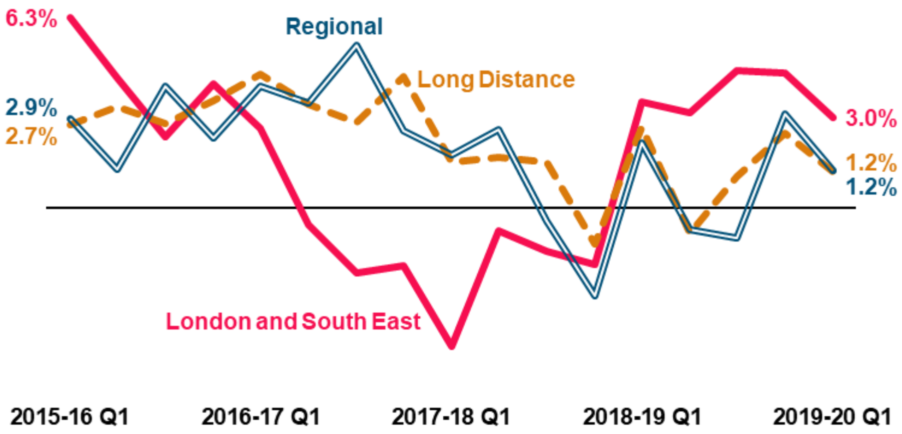
Data sources:

- LENNON ticketing and revenue database
- Train Operating Companies (TOCs)
- Network Rail

Rail passenger journeys in Great Britain in 2019-20 Q1 increased to 439 million (2.4% rise compared to 2018-19 Q1). The number of journeys for the 12 months to the end of June 2019 was 1.77 billion.

The increase in total passenger journeys nationally was driven by a 3.0% rise in the London and South East sector to 303 million in 2019-20 Q1.

Percentage change in franchised passenger journeys by sector compared with the same quarter the previous year, 2015-16 Q1 to 2019-20 Q1



Passenger kilometres increased by 3.9% compared to 2018-19 Q1. There were increases in all three franchised rail sectors, with the highest growth (4.3%) in the London and South East sector.

Passenger revenue rose by 4.9% to £2.7 billion in 2019-20 Q1.

The volume of **passenger train kilometres** in 2019-20 Q1 was 139 million, up 5.6% compared to 2018-19 Q1.

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1. Passenger journeys

Passenger journeys are estimated based on travel from an origin station to a destination station. For the purpose of these statistics, where travel includes one or more changes of train, each train used is counted as one journey.

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 is also available in Table 12.5.

2019-20 Q1

- Nationally, the number of passenger journeys increased by 10.4 million (2.4%) compared to 2018-19 Q1, driven by a 3.0% increase of journeys in the London and South East sector.
- Franchised passenger journeys using season tickets dropped 5.0% to the lowest Q1 total since 2010-11. In contrast, franchised passenger journeys using ordinary tickets increased by 6.4% compared to 2018-19 Q1.

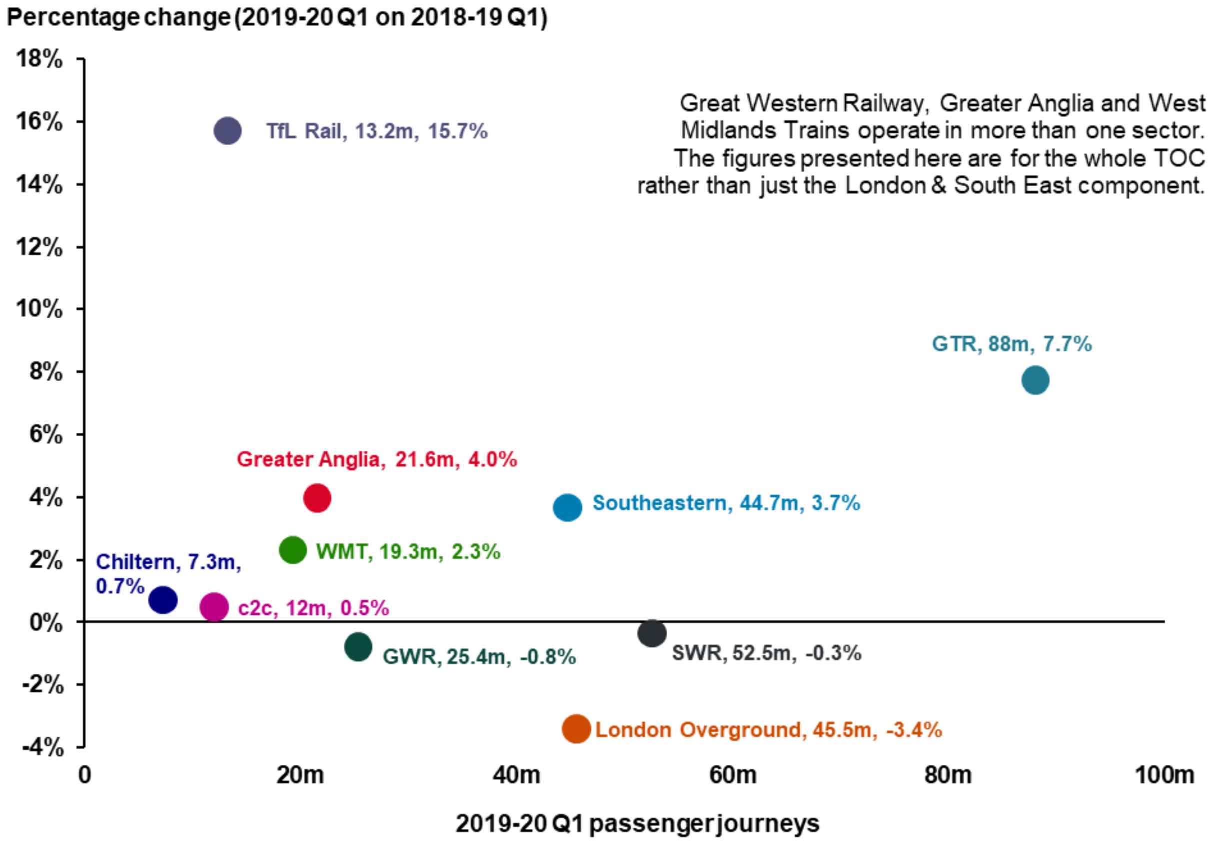
Passenger journeys by sector and Train Operating Company (TOC)

The rate of growth in passenger journeys in 2019-20 Q1 (compared to 2018-19 Q1) is lower than the previous Q1 growth rate. This is likely to be partly due to the timing of Easter (when passenger numbers are typically lower). Last year, in 2018, the Easter weekend was split across 2017-18 Q4 and 2018-19 Q1, whereas this year, in 2019, it was in late April (i.e. entirely within 2019-20 Q1).

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, Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR) and Southeastern recorded an increase in passenger journeys, while London Overground and South Western Railway (SWR) both saw a decline in journeys compared to 2018-19 Q1.

GTR, which had the largest number of passenger journeys (20%) of all operators in 2019-20 Q1, increased by 6.3 million compared to the same quarter last year. This was the highest Q1 growth (7.7%) since the time series started in 2011-12. GTR's punctuality improved in 2019-20 Q1 and it achieved the highest On Time percentage for any quarter since the punctuality time series began in 2013-14.

Figure 1.1: Passenger journeys (millions) 2019-20 Q1 and percentage change compared to 2018-19 Q1, by train operator, London and South East sector



Passenger journeys on Southeastern reached 44.7 million in 2019-20 Q1, an increase of 3.7% compared to 2018-19 Q1. New services were introduced on the Southeastern line from May 2018 onwards.

London Overground recorded a fall of 1.6 million journeys, which may be due to the closure at Euston Station over the Easter and May bank holiday for the railways upgrade work.

SWR passenger numbers fell slightly (0.3%) compared to 2018-19 Q1. There was a five-day strike in June 2019 during which SWR ran a reduced service across the network.

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 and Regional sectors both continued to grow, increasing by 1.2% each, compared to 2018-19 Q1.

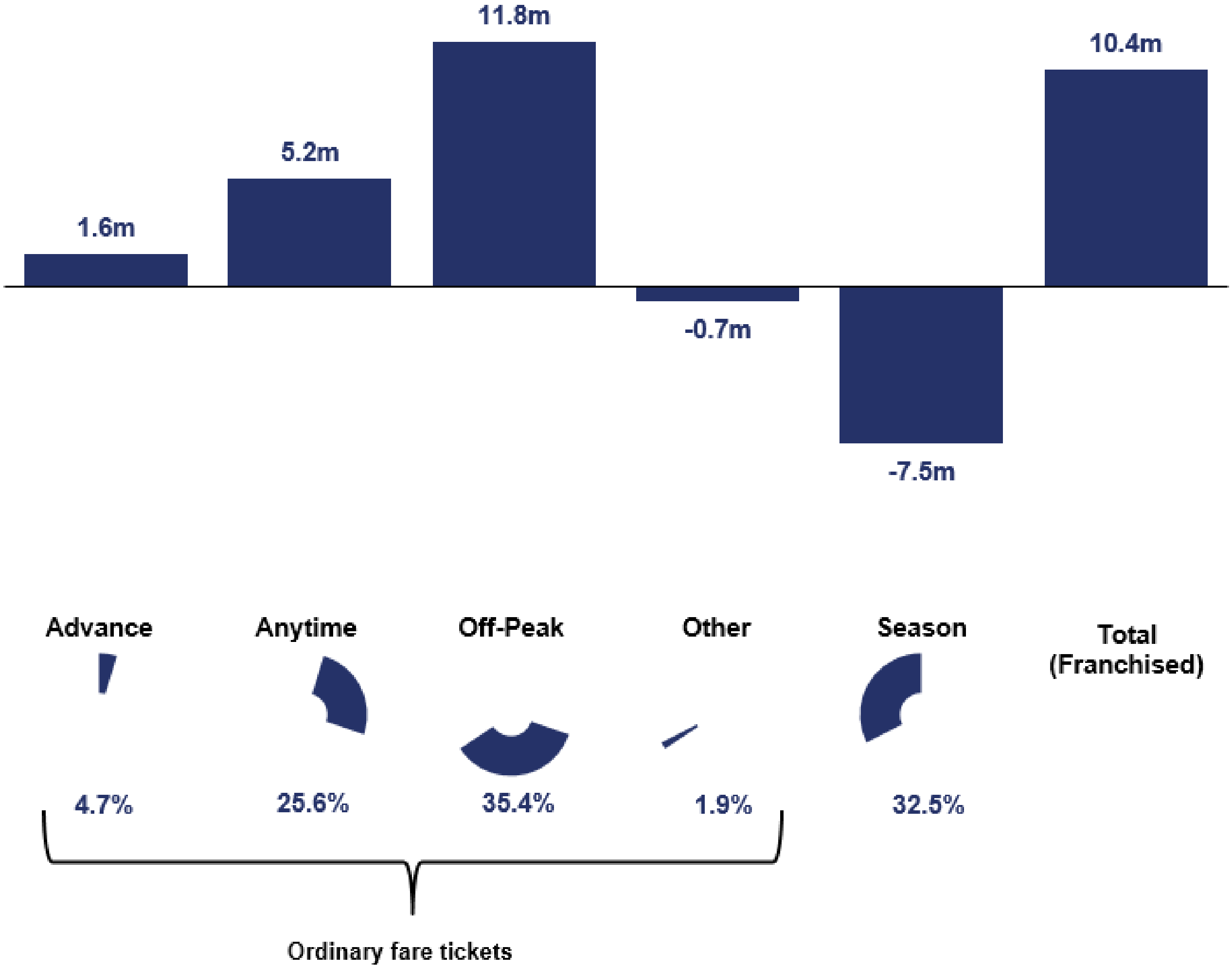
Passenger journeys on Northern increased by 1.3 million (5.0%) compared to same quarter last year. The strong growth is likely due to Northern's recovery from the timetable change in May 2018 and the closure of the Liverpool Lime Street during 2018-19 Q1 due to upgrade works.

Non-franchised operators (Hull Trains and Grand Central only) recorded their largest Q1 decrease since 2011-12 (down 1.7% compared to 2018-19 Q1). This was due to Grand Central whose journeys decreased compared to the same quarter last year.

Passenger journeys by ticket type

Passenger journeys using ordinary tickets, mainly driven by an 8.2% growth in off-peak tickets, increased by 6.4% in 2019-20 Q1 compared to 2018-19 Q1. In contrast, the number of journeys made on season tickets decreased by 7.5 million (down 5.0%) compared to 2018-19 Q1.

Figure 1.2: Change in franchised passenger journeys by ticket type (millions), 2019-20 Q1 compared to 2018-19 Q1 and market share (%) in 2019-20 Q1



2. Passenger kilometres

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

Quarterly and annual data **by sector** are available from 1994-95 onwards in Table 12.3.

Quarterly data **by ticket type** are available from 1994-95 Q1 and annual data are available from 1986-87 onwards in Table 12.4.

Quarterly and annual data **by TOC** are available from 2011-12 onwards in Table 12.11.

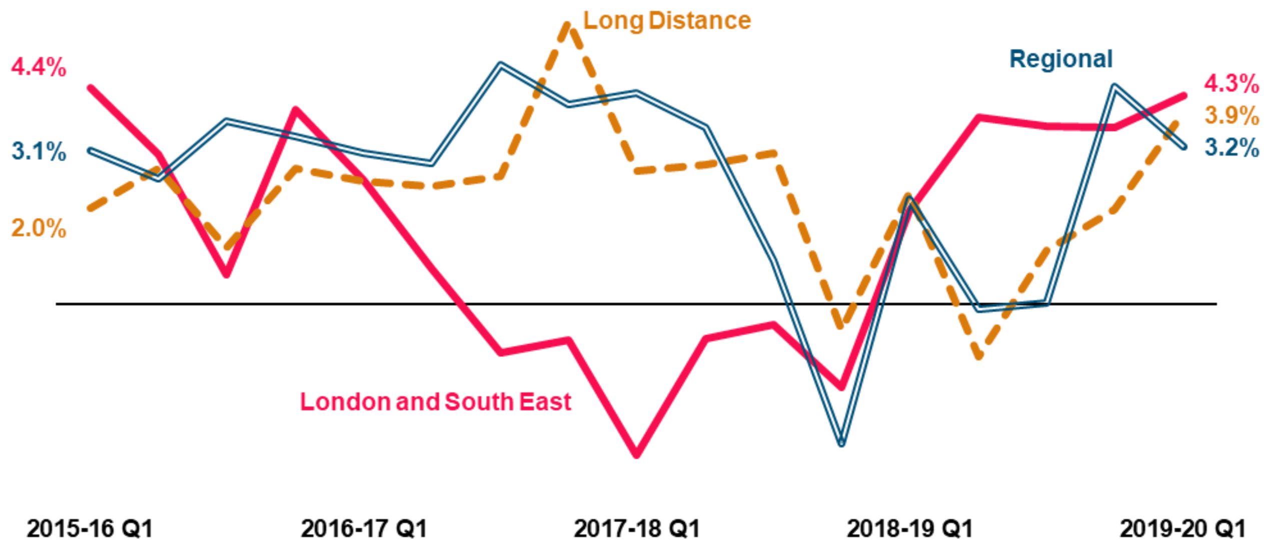
A time series of aggregate annual data from 1947 is also available in Table 12.2.

2019-20 Q1

- Total passenger kilometres increased to 17.3 billion in 2019-20 Q1. This was the largest Q1 increase (3.9%) since 2013-14.
- Passenger kilometres in all three franchised sectors increased, with the highest growth (4.3%) in the London and South East sector.

Passenger kilometres by sector and Train Operating Company (TOC)

Figure 2.1: Percentage change in franchised passenger kilometres by sector compared with the same quarter the previous year, 2015-16 Q1 to 2019-20 Q1

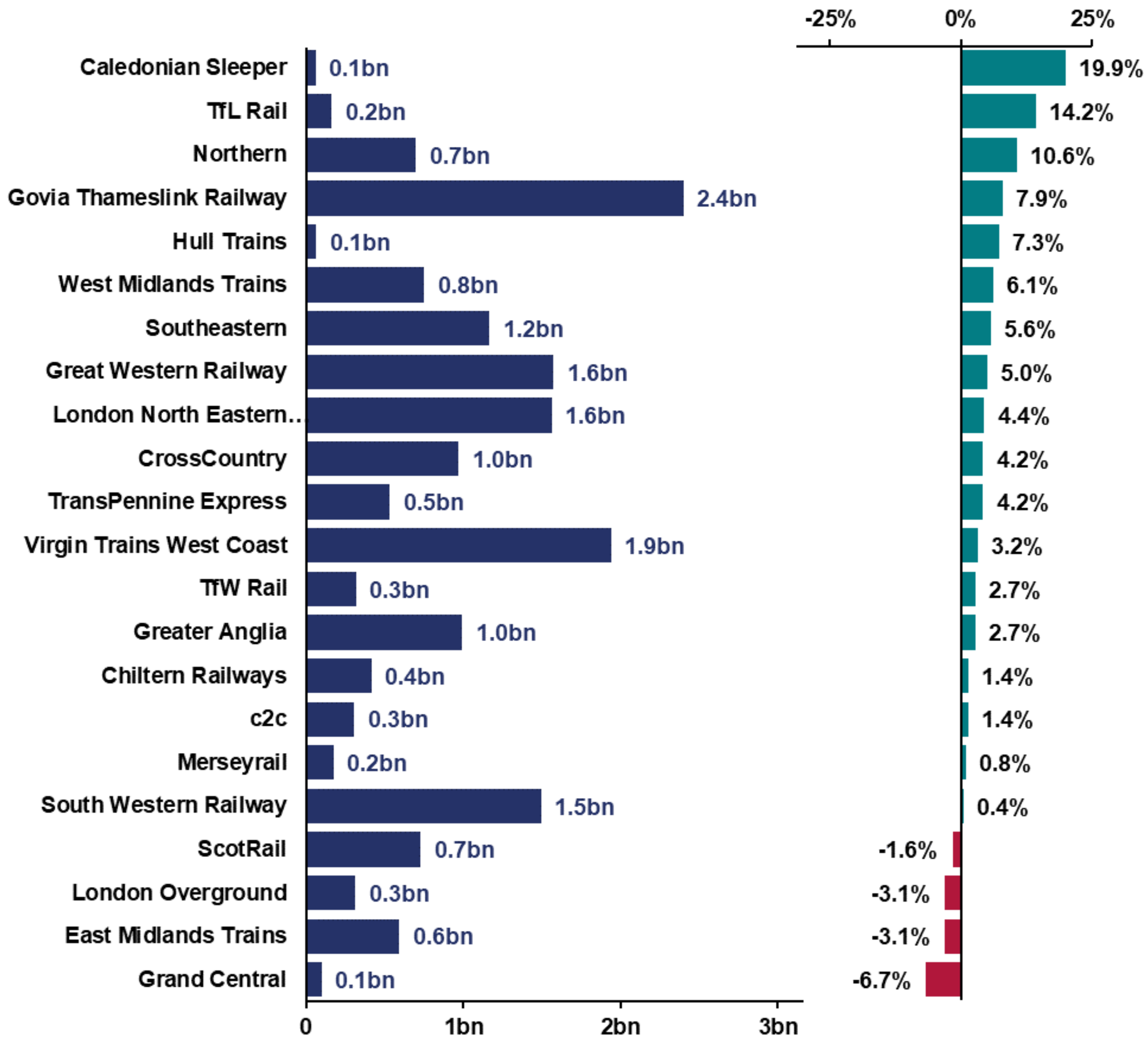


The main contributor to growth in passenger kilometres in the London and South East sector was GTR. It increased by 7.9% (176 million) and was the strongest rate of growth for any quarter since the time series started in 2011-12.

As mentioned earlier, the new services which started operating on the Southeastern line from May 2018 contributed to passenger kilometres increasing by 5.6% (62 million) in 2019-20 Q1 compared to the same quarter last year.

There was a 3.9% increase in passenger kilometres in the Long Distance sector in 2019-20 Q1, the highest Q1 rise seen since 2010-11. London North Eastern Railway (LNER) reached a record high of 1.6 billion passenger kilometres in 2019-20 Q1, with an increase of 4.4% compared to the same quarter last year. Virgin Trains West Coast (VTWC) recorded an increase of 59.4 million passenger kilometres (up by 3.2%).

Figure 2.2: Passenger kilometres by TOC, 2019-20 Q1, and percentage change compared with 2018-19 Q1



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.

Northern recorded an increase of 10.6% in its passenger kilometres, the highest quarterly growth for any quarter since 2016-17 Q3. As mentioned earlier for the passenger journeys, this is likely due to its recovery from the timetable**Error! Bookmark not defined.** change in May 2018 and the closure of the Liverpool Lime Street**Error! Bookmark not defined.**.

The extension of some of Hull Trains services[1] contributed to its passenger kilometres increasing by 4.5 million (7.3%) compared to 2018-19 Q1. However this increase was offset by the reduction in passenger kilometres of 7.2 million (down 6.7%) for Grand Central, which resulted in an overall decrease of 2.7 million (down 1.6%) for the non-franchised operators when compared to the same quarter last year.

Passenger kilometres by ticket type

Ordinary tickets, which accounted for around three quarters of all passenger kilometres, increased by 5.9% to 13.4 billion in 2019-20 Q1. This was mainly driven by a 7.7% increase in off-peak tickets compared to the same quarter last year. As with passenger journeys, passenger kilometres using season tickets decreased (by 2.4%) compared to the same quarter last year.

[1] https://www.hulltrains.co.uk/news/2019/additional-services-to-beverley-announced-for-hull-trains-after-approval-granted

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** are available from 1995-96 Q1 and annual data are available from 1994-95 onwards in Table 12.8.

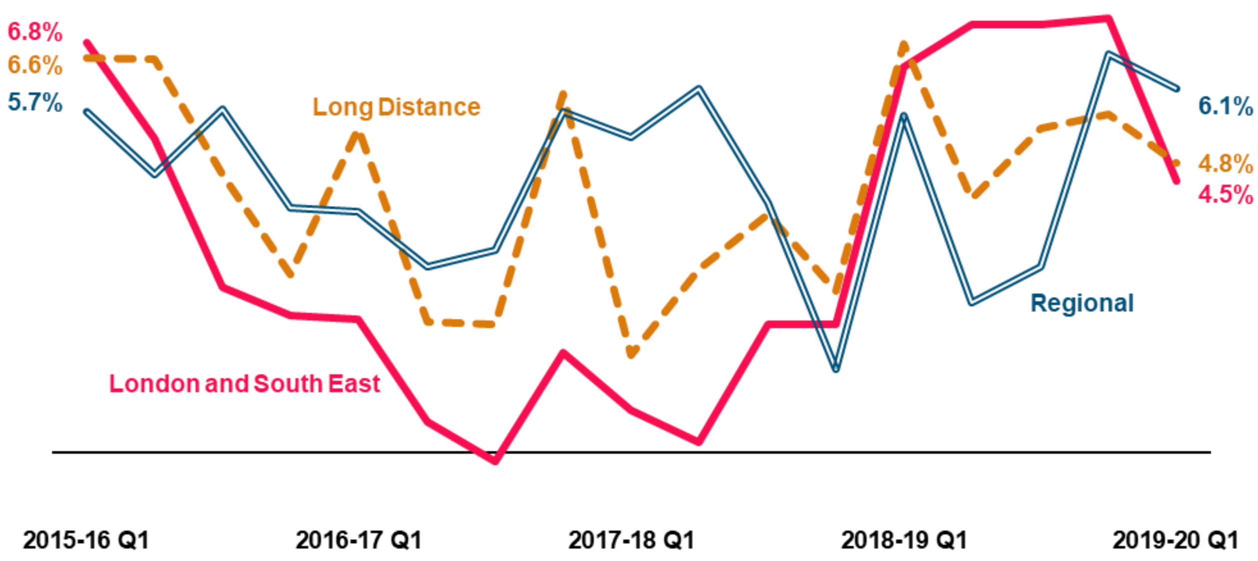
Quarterly data **by ticket type** (including inflation adjusted figures) are available from 1996-97 Q1 and annual data are available from 1986-87 onwards in Table 12.9.

2019-20 Q1

- Total passenger revenue increased by 4.9% (£125 million) to £2,675 million compared to 2018-19 Q1.
- Nationally, revenue per franchised passenger journey was up 2.4% to a record high of £6.05.

Passenger revenue by sector

Figure 3.1: Percentage change in franchised passenger revenue by sector compared with the same quarter the previous year, 2015-16 Q1 to 2019-20 Q1



Passenger revenue in the London and South East sector, which accounts for around half of the total revenue in Great Britain, increased by 4.5% to £1,312 million in 2019-20 Q1. The regional sector increased by 6.1% compared to the same quarter last year, which represented the strongest Q1 revenue growth in the sector since 2013-14.

Revenue for non-franchised operators (Hull Trains and Grand Central only) increased by 6.3% to £21.4 million, although these operators account for less than 1% of all passenger revenue.

Passenger revenue by ticket type

Revenue from season tickets decreased by 1.5% in 2019-20 Q1. This follows increases in four consecutive quarters, compared to the same quarter the previous year. Ordinary tickets revenue, which accounted for around 80% of total revenue, increased by 6.5%. Advance and off-peak tickets revenue had the strongest growth in 2019-20 Q1 of 10.1% and 7.8% respectively. Revenue for off-peak tickets increased by £64 million compared to 2018-19 Q1, which represented the largest Q1 increase for those tickets since the time series began in 2010-11.

Revenue per passenger kilometre and revenue per passenger journey

Revenue per passenger kilometre for franchised operators in 2019-20 Q1 was 15.46p, an increase of 0.9% compared to the previous year. Revenue per journey for franchised operators reached £6.05, an increase of 2.4% on 2018-19 Q1.

4. Passenger train kilometres by TOC

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). Only kilometres run on Network Rail infrastructure are included in the data. For further information, please see page 5 of the Quality Report.

Data for **Passenger train kilometres** are available from 2010-11 onwards in Table 12.13.

2019-20 Q1

- Nationally, the volume of passenger train kilometres in 2019-20 Q1 was 139 million, up 7.4 million compared to 2018-19 Q1.

Northern, which has the second highest operator market share, recorded its highest passenger kilometres since the time series began in 2010-11 with 14.3 million kilometres in 2019-20 Q1. This is likely due to its recovery from the timetable change in May 2018 and the closure of the Liverpool Lime Street.

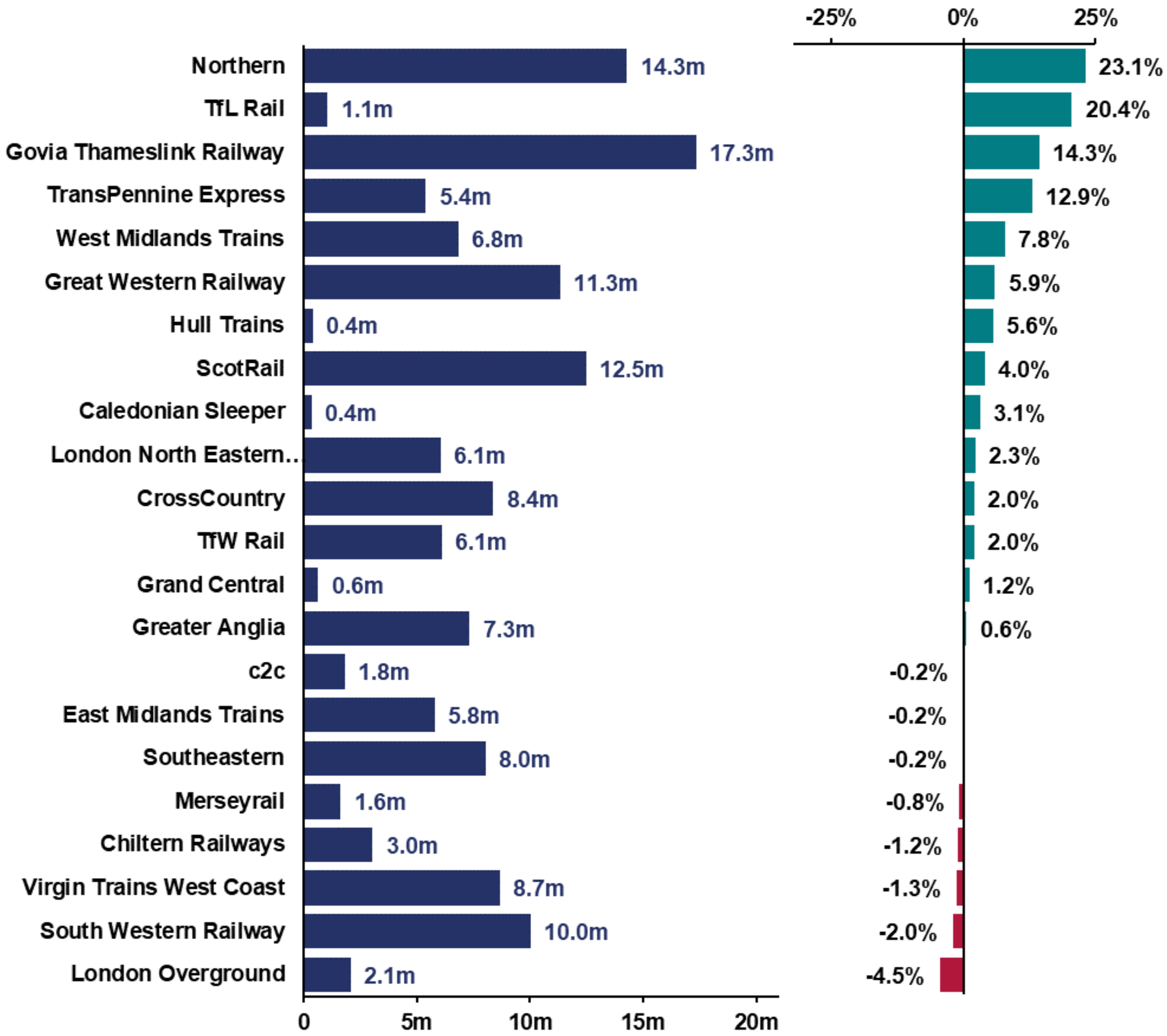
The volume of passenger train kilometres for the largest operator based on market share, GTR, increased by 14.3% in 2019-20 Q1 compared to the same quarter last year.

Passenger train kilometres on TfL Rail increased to 1.1 million in 2019-20 Q1, up 20.2% compared to 2018-19 Q1. This was due to TfL Rail taking over some GWR services out of London Paddington in preparation for Crossrail.

TransPennine Express (TPE) also recorded high growth (12.9%), which can be partly attributed to it taking over the Manchester to Leeds stopping service from Northern.

West Midlands Trains showed a 7.8% increase in its passenger train kilometres compared to 2018-19 Q1. There were some new services from May 2019.

Figure 4.1: Passenger train kilometres by TOC, 2019-20 Q1, and percentage change compared with 2018-19 Q1



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.

Annex 1 – List of data tables available on the ORR data portal

All data tables can be accessed on the ORR data portal free of charge and can be downloaded in Excel format. We can also provide data in csv or ods format on request.

All tables associated with this release can be found under Data Tables on the passenger rail usage page.

Passenger journeys

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

Passenger kilometres

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

Passenger revenue

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

Passenger train kilometres

- Passenger train kilometres by operator - quarterly – 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 dataset. Further details on historic revisions to the data set can be found on the 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.

Annex 2

Statistical Releases

This publication is part of ORR's National Statistics accredited releases, which consist of:

Annual

- Rail Finance
- Rail Fares Index
- Rail Safety Statistics
- Rail Infrastructure and Assets
- Rail Emissions
- Regional Rail Usage

Quarterly

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

In addition to the above, ORR publishes the following Official Statistics on the ORR data portal:

Annual

- Estimates of Station Usage
- Train Operating Company Key Statistics
- Rail Statistics Compendium
- Occupational Health

Quarterly

- Signals passed at danger (SPADS)
- Delay Compensation Claims
- Disabled Person's Railcard (DPRC)
- Passenger assistance

A full list of publication dates for the next twelve months can be found in the release schedule on the data portal.

The Department for Transport (DfT) also publishes a range of rail statistics which can be found at DfT Rail Statistics. For example, Rail passenger numbers and overcrowding on weekdays in major cities.

Transport Focus publish the National Rail Passenger Survey (NRPS).

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 - Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR). The OSR 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 OSR promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

Our statistical releases were assessed in 2012 and hold National Statistics status. Since our assessment we have improved the content, presentation and quality of our statistical releases. Also, in July 2019 we launched our new data portal. Therefore in late 2019 we worked with the OSR to conduct a compliance check to ensure we are still meeting the standards of the Code. On 4 November 2019, OSR published a letter confirming that ORR's statistics should continue to be designated as National Statistics. OSR found many positive aspects in the way that we produce and present our statistics and welcomed the range of improvements made since the statistics were last assessed in 2012. OSR identified some areas that we could consider that may enhance the value of the statistics further and we will be working on these.

For more information on how we adhere to the Code please see the UKSA Code of Practice page on the ORR data portal.

For more details, please contact the Statistics Head of Profession Lyndsey Melbourne at rail.stats@orr.gov.uk.

This publication is available on the ORR data portal

Any media enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at orr.gov.uk/contact-us.