

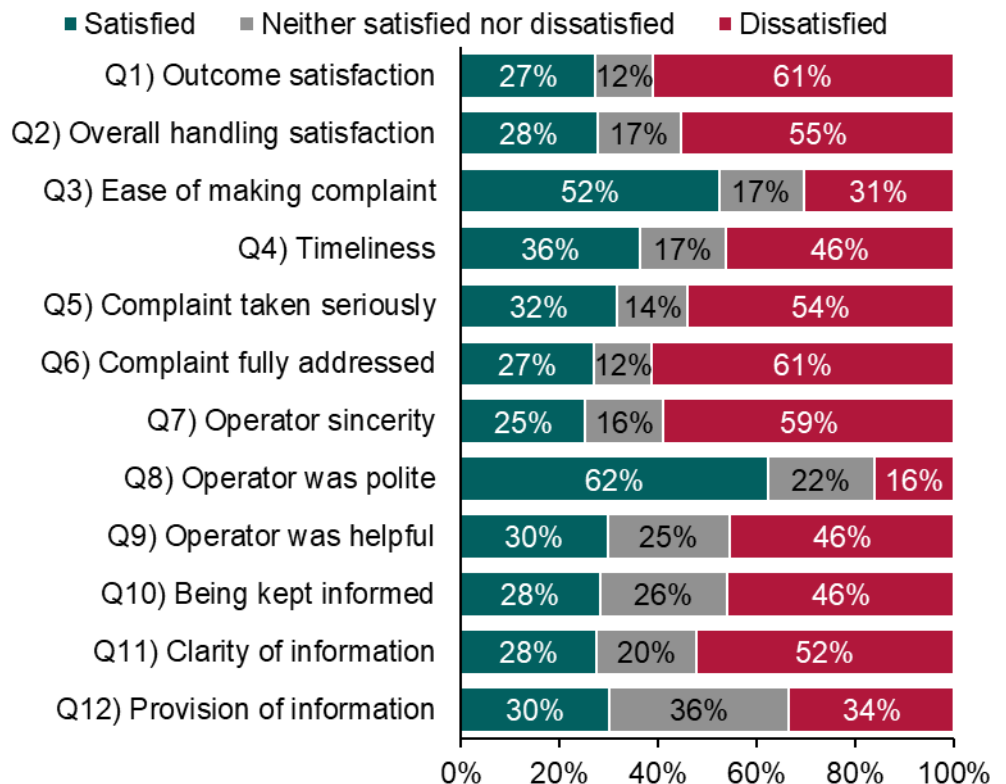
# Passenger satisfaction with complaints handling

## April 2023 to March 2024

8 August 2024

Overall, 28% of respondents were satisfied with how the train operator **handled their complaint** in the latest year (1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024). This was up 0.5 percentage points (pp) compared with the previous year (not a statistically significant change). Satisfaction with the **complaint outcome** was 27%, which was down 0.7pp compared with the previous year (not a statistically significant change).

**Figure 1 Passenger satisfaction with the outcome and handling of their complaint, all surveyed operators combined, Great Britain, April 2023 to March 2024 (Table 4170)**



See the annex for precise wording of questions asked.

All data tables and a quality and methodology report associated with this release are published on the [passenger satisfaction with complaints handling](#) page of the data portal.

### Background:

This factsheet shows survey results on passenger satisfaction with operators' complaints handling processes.

It includes satisfaction with the **outcome and handing** of complaints. It also covers how passengers **felt about the operator** following the complaint.

**Source:** ORR survey of passengers' satisfaction with complaints handling. Conducted by M.E.L Research (32,660 responses in the latest year)

**Latest year:** 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024

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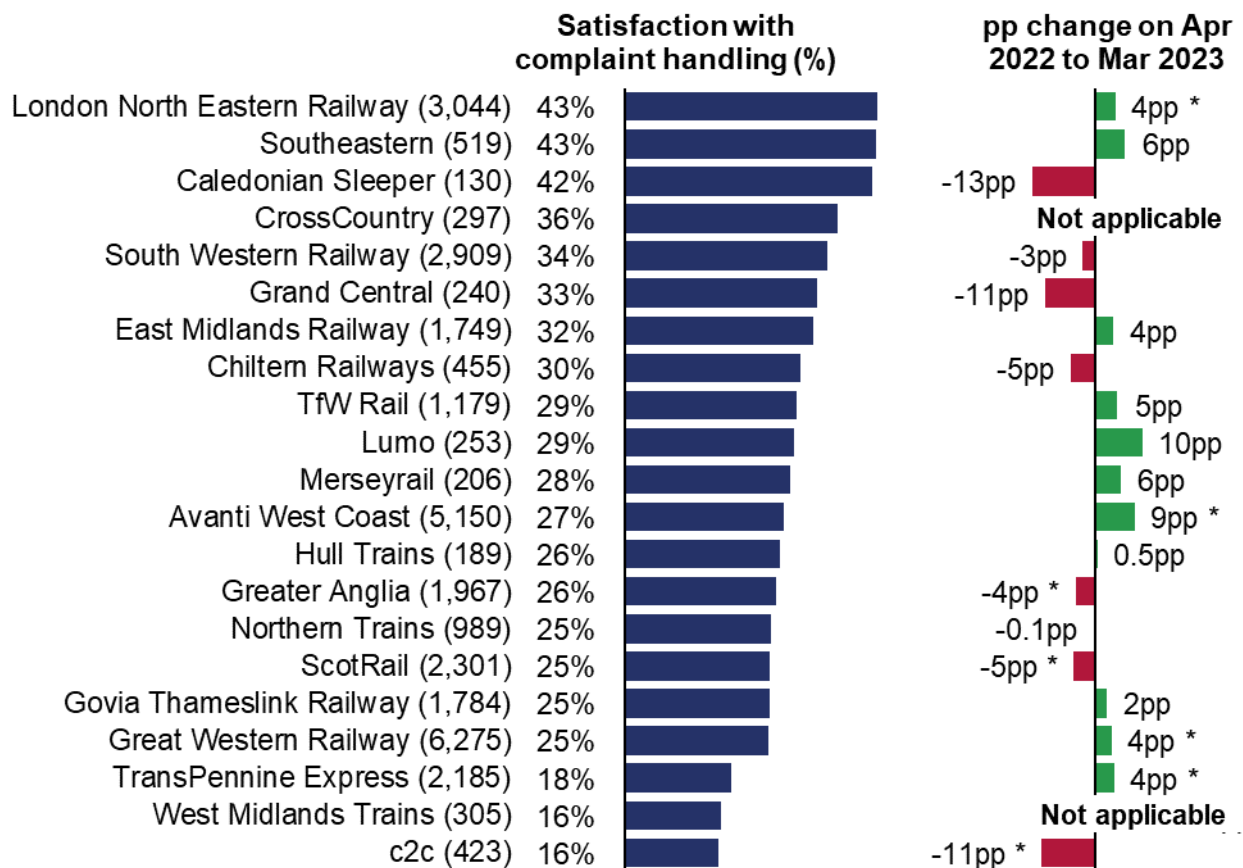
# 1. Passenger satisfaction with complaints handling by operator

In the latest year, London North Eastern Railway and Southeastern (both 43%) had the highest levels of satisfaction with overall complaint handling. West Midlands Trains (16%) and c2c (16%) had the lowest levels of satisfaction.

Avanti West Coast saw the largest statistically significant increase in satisfaction with overall complaint handling compared with the previous year (up 9pp). c2c saw the largest statistically significant decrease in satisfaction (down 11pp).

**Figure 1.1 London North Eastern Railway and Southeastern had the highest level of satisfaction with overall complaint handling**

Passenger satisfaction with overall complaint handling, by operator, Great Britain, April 2023 to March 2024 and change compared with previous year (Table 4174)



**Notes:**

- Survey responses for each operator are shown in brackets. Changes with an asterisk are statistically significant at the 95% level of confidence (see annex for more information).
- Where operators had 100 or fewer responses in the previous year (CrossCountry and West Midlands Trains), the comparison is shown as 'Not applicable'.
- London Overground and Elizabeth line have not participated in the survey since March 2021. No responses for Heathrow Express were received in time for publication in the latest year.

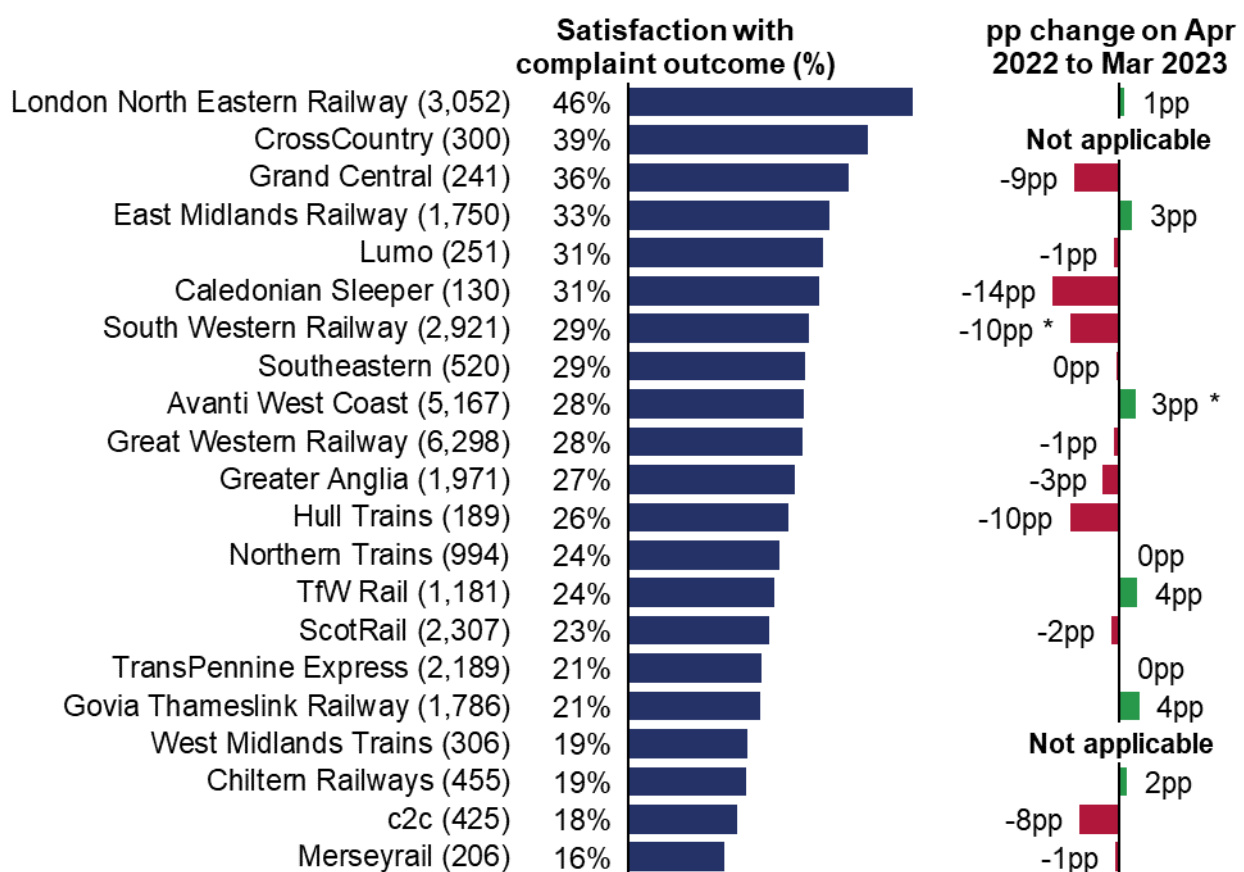
## 2. Passenger satisfaction with complaint outcome by operator

In the latest year, London North Eastern Railway (46%) had the highest level of satisfaction with complaint outcome. Merseyrail (16%) had the lowest satisfaction with complaint outcome.

Avanti West Coast (up 3pp) and South Western Railway (down 10pp) were the only operators to record statistically significant changes compared with the previous year.

**Figure 2.1 London North Eastern Railway had the highest level of satisfaction with complaint outcome**

Passenger satisfaction with complaint outcome, by operator, Great Britain, April 2023 to March 2024 and change compared with previous year (Table 4174)



Notes:

- Survey responses for each operator are shown in brackets. Changes with an asterisk are statistically significant at the 95% level of confidence (see annex for more information).
- Where operators had 100 or fewer responses in the previous year (CrossCountry and West Midlands Trains), the comparison is shown as 'Not applicable'.
- London Overground and Elizabeth line have not participated in the survey since March 2021. No responses for Heathrow Express were received in time for publication in the latest year.

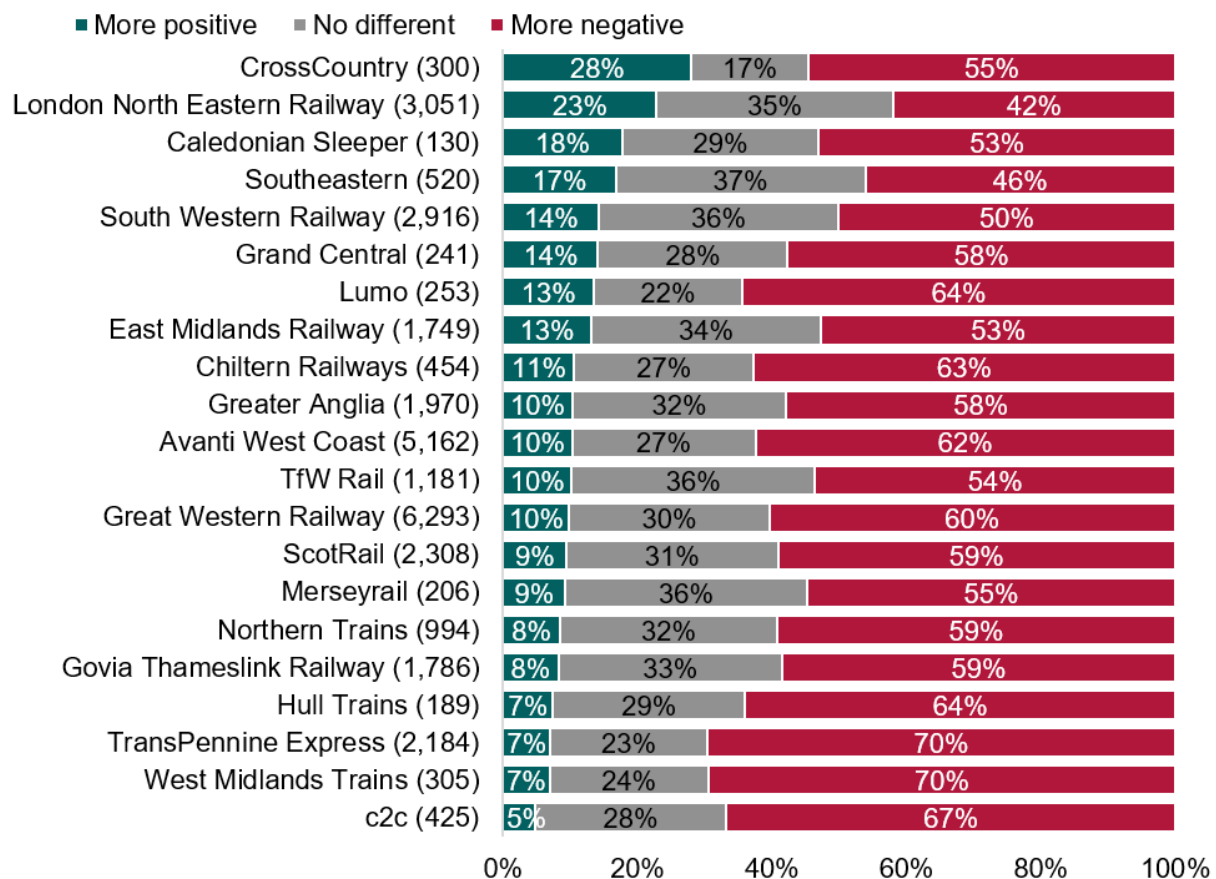
### 3. Passenger sentiment about operators

Data on passenger sentiment about operators will no longer be collected after April 2023 to March 2024. In the latest year, 11% of complainants to all surveyed operators combined reported that the way their complaint had been handled had made them feel more positive about the operator. Around a third (30%) reported that they felt no different, while 58% reported that they felt more negative about the operator.

CrossCountry (28%) had the highest percentage of complainants reporting that they felt more positive about them while c2c (5%) had the lowest. TransPennine Express and West Midlands Trains (70%) also had the highest percentage of complainants reporting that they felt more negative about them while London North Eastern Railway (42%) had the lowest.

**Figure 3.1 CrossCountry had the highest percentage of complainants reporting that they felt more positive about the operator**

How complainants felt about their operator given the way the operator had handled their complaint, Great Britain, April 2023 to March 2024 (Table 4174)



Notes:

- Survey responses for each operator are shown in brackets.
- London Overground and Elizabeth line have not participated in the survey since March 2021. No responses for Heathrow Express were received in time for publication in the latest year.

# Annex

## Quality and Methodology

After a passenger makes a complaint to a train operator, they are invited to participate in an ORR commissioned survey about their experience of how the complaint was handled. M.E.L Research has conducted the survey since April 2022. Between April 2016 and March 2022, it was carried out by Critical Research.

The complainant is asked to rank their satisfaction with the outcome and various aspects of the handling of the complaint on a five point scale and, in some instances, to provide a qualitative response via an open text box. For the data presented in the accompanying data tables and the analysis presented in this factsheet, the response 'satisfied' refers to both satisfied and very satisfied, and 'dissatisfied' refers to both very dissatisfied and dissatisfied. Any 'don't know' responses have been excluded from the data.

The table below lists the outcome satisfaction question, the 11 handling satisfaction questions, and the corresponding labels used in Figure 1 of this release. Complainants are also asked how they feel about the operator given the way they handled the complaint. For this question, the options are 'more positive', 'more negative', and 'no different'.

**Table A.1 Survey questions 1 to 12 and Figure 1 labels**

Number	Question	Label in Figure 1
1	Ignoring for the moment the operator's handling of the issue, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the outcome of your particular complaint?	Outcome satisfaction
2	Putting to one side the outcome of your complaint, we would like you to think about the process you went through. So overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the way your complaint was handled?	Overall handling satisfaction
3	The ease with which you were able to make the complaint	Ease of making complaint
4	The time taken to deal with your complaint	Timeliness
5	Your complaint was taken seriously	Complaint taken seriously
6	Your complaint was fully addressed by the operator	Complaint fully addressed
7	The operator seemed keen to reach an agreeable outcome	Operator sincerity
8	The operator was polite	Operator was polite
9	The operator was helpful or knowledgeable	Operator was helpful
10	Being kept informed appropriately about the progress of your complaint	Being kept informed
11	The clarity of information provided by the operator about your complaint	Clarity of information
12	The operator provided you with any information that they promised to send	Provision of information



## Revisions

There have been no revisions to previously published data. Details on previous revisions can be found in the [Revisions log](#).

## Results for all surveyed operators and the margin of error

The data for all surveyed operators combined (Table 4170) are weighted by train operator complaint volumes and rail reporting period. This improves the representativeness of the combined results. The train operator data in Table 4174 are unweighted.

The following table shows the margin of error (95% confidence level) for the April 2023 to March 2024 results for all surveyed operators combined. The margin of error for each operator is available in the [quality and methodology report](#). As passenger satisfaction with complaints handling data are based on a survey, the margin of error provides a range within which the true result is expected to lie for the given confidence level.

**Table A.2 Margin of error, April 2023 to March 2024 survey**

Question	Satisfied (%)	Margin of error (pp)
Q1) Outcome satisfaction	27.3%	+/- 0.5pp
Q2) Overall handling satisfaction	27.6%	+/- 0.5pp

### Statistical significance for year-on-year changes

A year-on-year change is statistically significant where the result ranges for the two years do not overlap. Where the ranges do overlap, the change may be the result of sampling errors rather than improvement or deterioration in complaint handling.

## Comparability of the time series

The mix of operators participating in the survey has varied over time. The [quality and methodology report](#) provides details of the operators present for each year of the survey. This should be considered when comparing results from different years. The table below details the total number of survey responses in each year of the survey. Not all complainants surveyed provided a response to all questions.

**Table A.3 Number of survey responses each financial year**

Financial year	Number of responses
1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017	29,606
1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018	41,789
1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019	3,896
1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020	54,573
1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021	17,476
1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022	45,147
1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023	31,394
1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024	32,660

In the latest year, 9.5% of those who complained to participating operators took part in the survey (32,660 responses out of 345,326 complaints to the surveyed operators).

## Inclusion of operators by railway reporting period

The survey was conducted by M.E.L Research for the first time in the year April 2022 to March 2023. It was unable to survey complainants at some operators until a number of railway periods into the year (see the table below for details). In the case of Heathrow Express, no data are available for the whole year. London Overground and Elizabeth line have not participated in the survey since 31 March 2021.

The [quality and methodology report](#) includes details of the operators included by railway reporting period in previous year.

**Table A.4 Inclusion of operators in the survey, April 2023 to March 2024**

Operator	Periods in the survey
Avanti West Coast	Period 1 to Period 13
c2c	Period 1 to Period 13
Caledonian Sleeper	Period 1 to Period 13
Chiltern Railways	Period 1 to Period 13
CrossCountry	Period 1 to Period 13
East Midlands Railway	Period 1 to Period 7 and Period 9 to Period 13
Elizabeth line	Did not participate in the survey
Govia Thameslink Railway	Period 1 to Period 13
Grand Central	Period 1 to Period 13
Great Western Railway	Period 1 to Period 13
Greater Anglia	Period 1 to Period 13
Heathrow Express	No responses received in time for publication
Hull Trains	Period 1 to Period 13
London North Eastern Railway	Period 1 to Period 13
London Overground	Did not participate in the survey
Lumo	Period 1 to Period 13
Merseyrail	Period 1 to Period 6 and Period 9 to Period 13
Northern Trains	Period 1 to Period 8 and Period 10 to Period 13
ScotRail	Period 1 to Period 13
South Western Railway	Period 1 to Period 13
Southeastern	Period 1 to Period 6 and Period 8 to Period 12
TfW Rail	Period 1 to Period 13
TransPennine Express	Period 1 to Period 13
West Midlands Trains	Period 1 to Period 13

## Operators with a low sample size

Operators with 100 or fewer responses are not shown in Figures 1.1, 2.1 and 3.1. London Overground and Elizabeth line have not participated in the survey since March 2021. No responses for Heathrow Express were received in time for publication in the latest year.

## Other related data

### **Passenger rail service complaints:**

ORR publishes statistics about [Passenger complaints](#). These statistics show complaint volumes, the type of complaints and response times to those complaints.

### **Rail Ombudsman:**

The [Rail Ombudsman](#) provides a service to which unresolved customer complaints about train operators can be escalated. The Rail Ombudsman publish quarterly statistics on the number and type of cases it is dealing with.

### **Transport Focus – National Rail Passenger Survey (NRPS):**

The [NRPS](#) provides a network-wide picture of passengers' satisfaction with rail travel. Before the pandemic, passenger opinions of train services were collected twice a year from a representative sample of journeys. The [latest wave of the survey](#) was published on 2 July 2020. Due to the pandemic and a significant drop in the numbers of people using public transport, NRPS was paused. The Great British Railways Transition Team are developing a new rail customer experience survey. This is planned to go live in the first half of 2025.

### **Key drivers of passenger satisfaction with complaints handling:**

In August 2021 ORR published [independent statistical analysis of the key drivers of passenger satisfaction with complaint handling](#). The report provided useful feedback to the rail industry and has informed the [Complaints Code of Practice](#).





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