



## Rail transport, 2022-2023

3 April 2024  
SB 13/2024

### Main points



In 2022-23, there were 23.5 million rail passenger journeys which either started or ended in Wales. This was a 32.6% increase compared to 2021-22, which was impacted by travel restrictions as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, but a 21.5% decrease compared to 2019-20.

### Rail passenger journeys within Wales increased by 30.8% to 14.8 million in 2022-23.

- Cardiff was the most common destination for within-Wales journeys (5.9 million passenger journeys), accounting for 40.0% of all journeys.

### In 2023 there were 12 railway fatalities, all were suicides.

- Suicides have accounted for the majority of rail fatalities since 2012 ([Figure 4](#)).

### In 2022-23, offences on Welsh railways were similar when compared to the previous year and decreased by 1.7% compared to 2019-20.

- There were 1,430 notifiable offences reported on Welsh railways in 2022-23, similar to the previous year ([Figure 5](#)).

### About this bulletin

This annual statistical bulletin reports information on rail passenger journeys, punctuality, accidents, fatalities and crime on the rail network. The tables of underlying data are available on the [StatsWales website](#).

### In this bulletin

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## **Impact of COVID-19 on rail transport**

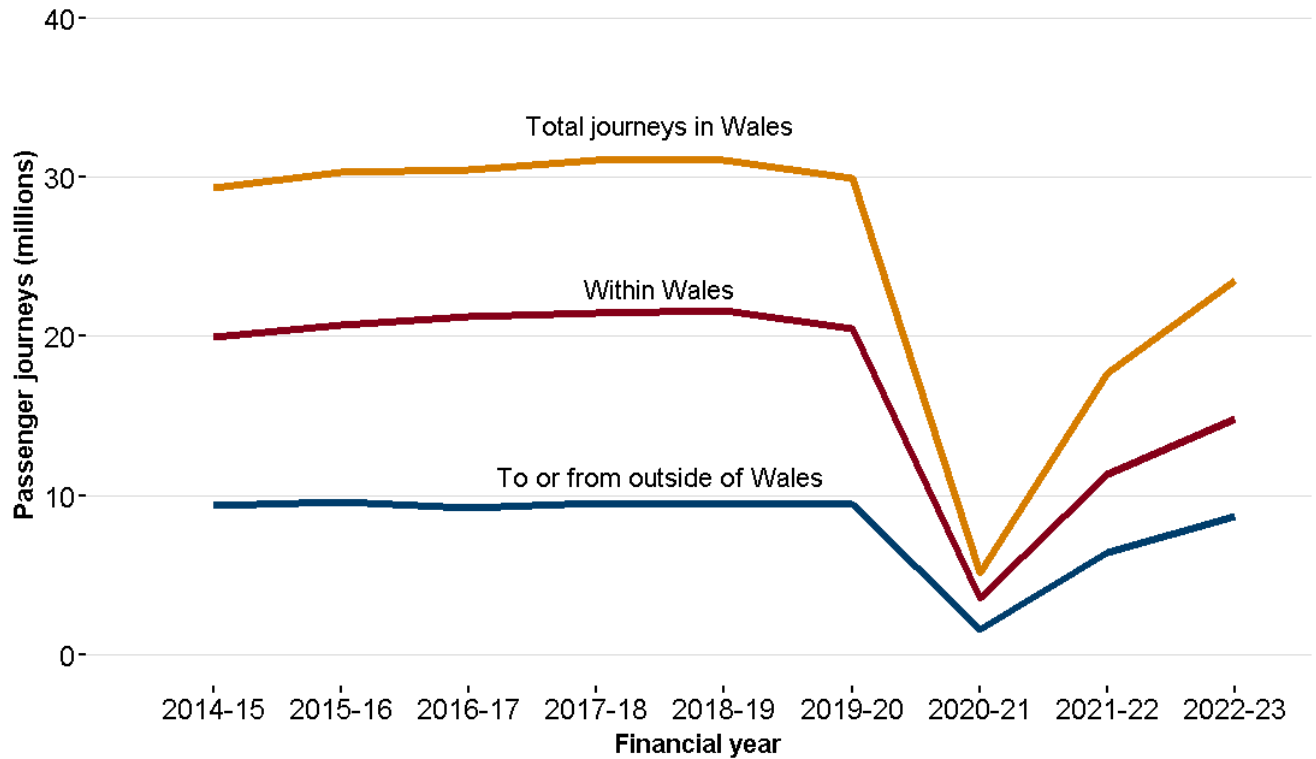
Rail transport services in 2020-21 (1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021) were significantly impacted by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, and these effects continued, though to a lesser extent, into 2021-22. Comparisons made with 2021-22 are likely to reflect the reduced use of public transport at the time. Where possible, we have compared to 2019-20 which was broadly unaffected by the pandemic.

### **Rail passenger journeys, Wales**

In 2022-23, there were 23.5 million rail passenger journeys recorded which either started or ended in Wales, representing a 32.6% increase compared to 2021-22, but a 21.5% decrease on 2019-20 levels. 63.1% of these journeys were within Wales and 36.9% were between Wales and other regions outside Wales ([Figure 1](#)). Despite the increases in passenger journeys the numbers remain below the pre-pandemic levels.

The number of rail passenger journeys increased annually between 1995-96 and 2018-19, reaching a high of 31.1 million in 2018-19. In 2020-21 travel restrictions imposed due to the COVID-19 pandemic contributed to an 82.8% decrease in rail passenger journey in Wales.

**Figure 1: Rail passenger journeys by direction 2014- 15 to 2022-23**

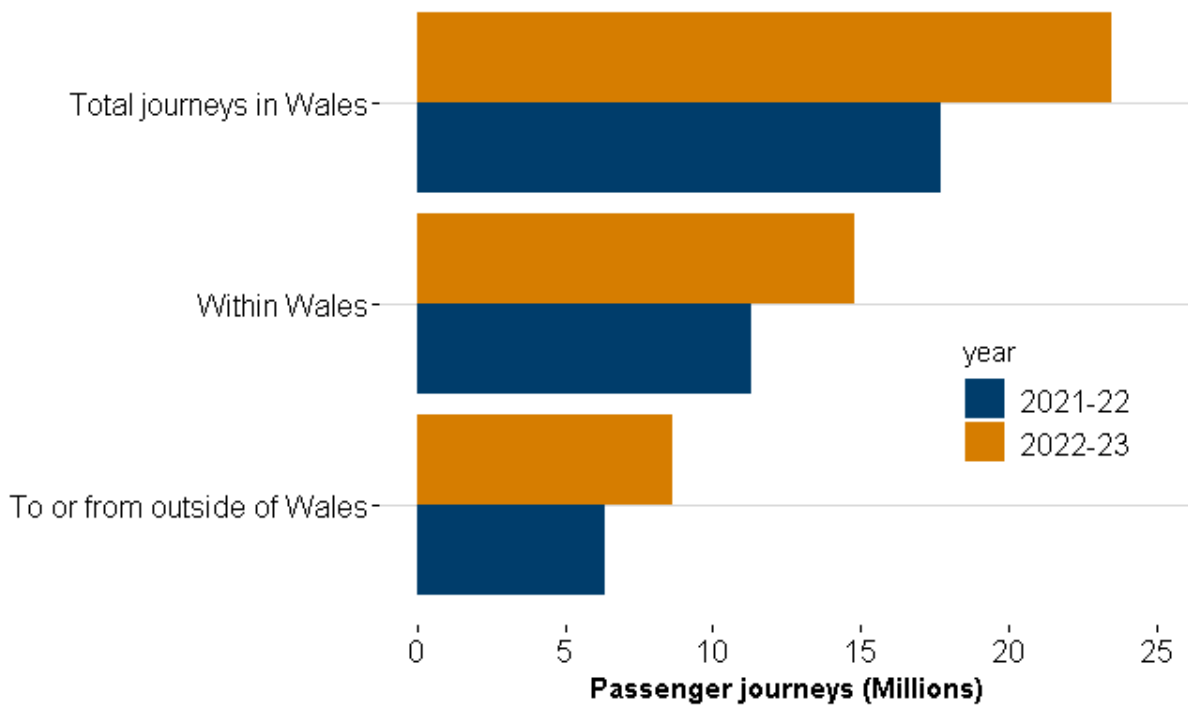


Description of Figure 1: Line chart showing number of rail passenger journeys from 2014-15 to 2022-23 by direction of travel.

Source: Welsh Government analysis of ORR estimates of rail passenger journeys data

In 2022-23 rail journeys within Wales increased by 30.8% and journeys ‘to or from outside of Wales’ increased by 35.8% compared to 2021-22 ([Figure 2](#)). Total journeys in Wales includes all journeys that are within Wales and all journeys across GB regions that either begin/end in Wales.

**Figure 2: Rail passenger journeys, Wales 2021-22 and 2022-23**



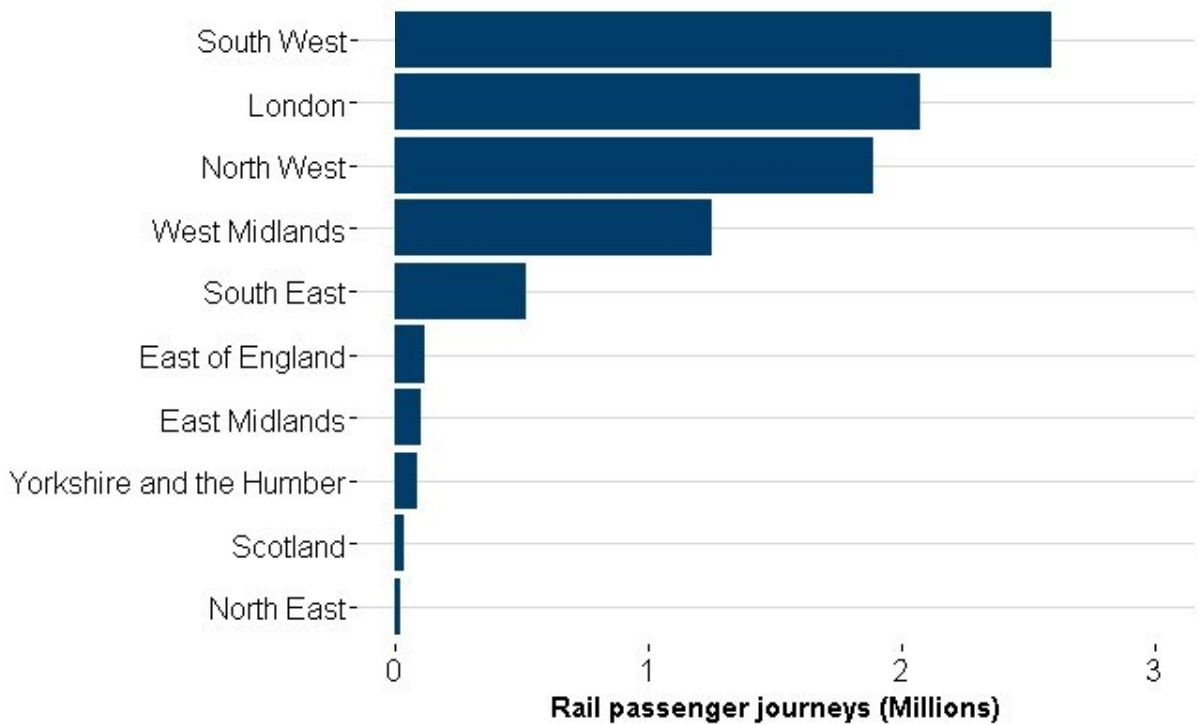
Description of Figure 2: Bar chart showing number of rail passenger journeys for latest year 2022-23 compared to previous year by direction of travel.

Source: Welsh Government analysis of ORR estimates of rail passenger journeys data

Journeys 'to and from outside of Wales' are dominated by those between Wales and the South West of England (2.6 million), Wales and the North West (1.9 million) and Wales and London (2.1 million). The journeys between Wales and these three regions represent 75.5% of all outside journeys 'to and from outside of Wales' in 2022-23 ([Figure 3](#)).

Total rail passenger journeys in Wales accounted for less than 2% of all journeys in Great Britain in 2022-23.

**Figure 3: Rail passenger journeys ‘to or from outside of Wales’ 2022-23**



Description of Figure 3: Bar chart showing number of rail passenger journeys by region in the latest year 2022-23 from or to Wales.

Source: Welsh Government analysis of ORR estimates of rail passenger journeys data

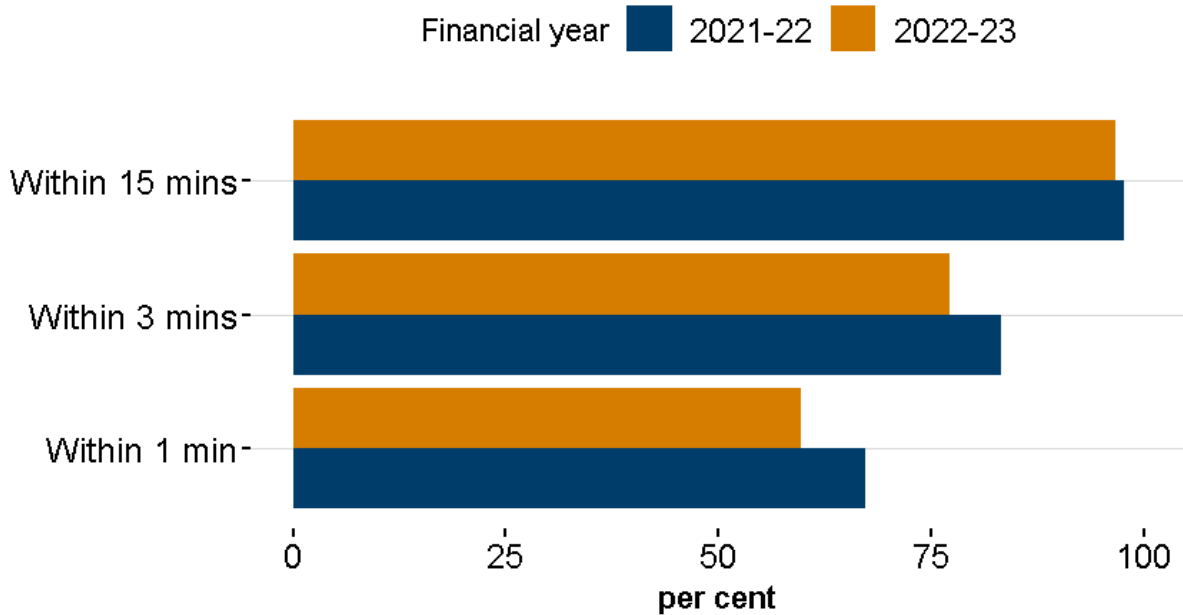
## Punctuality



Punctuality measures train reliability to passengers in its operations against their planned timetable. A higher percentage of trains arriving within 1 or 3 minutes indicates good punctuality while a lower percentage of cancellations indicates better reliability on all train journeys.

On average over the four quarters in 2022-23, 77.2% of Transport for Wales trains arrived within 3 minutes of scheduled arrival time and 59.7% of them within 1 minute of the scheduled time. During the same year, Transport for Wales had a cancellation score of 4.5% (the cancellation score takes into account both fully and partially cancelled trains).

**Figure 4: Train arrival from scheduled times for TfW services, 2021-22 to 2022-23**



Description of Figure 4: Bar chart showing train punctuality in Wales in latest year compared to previous year.

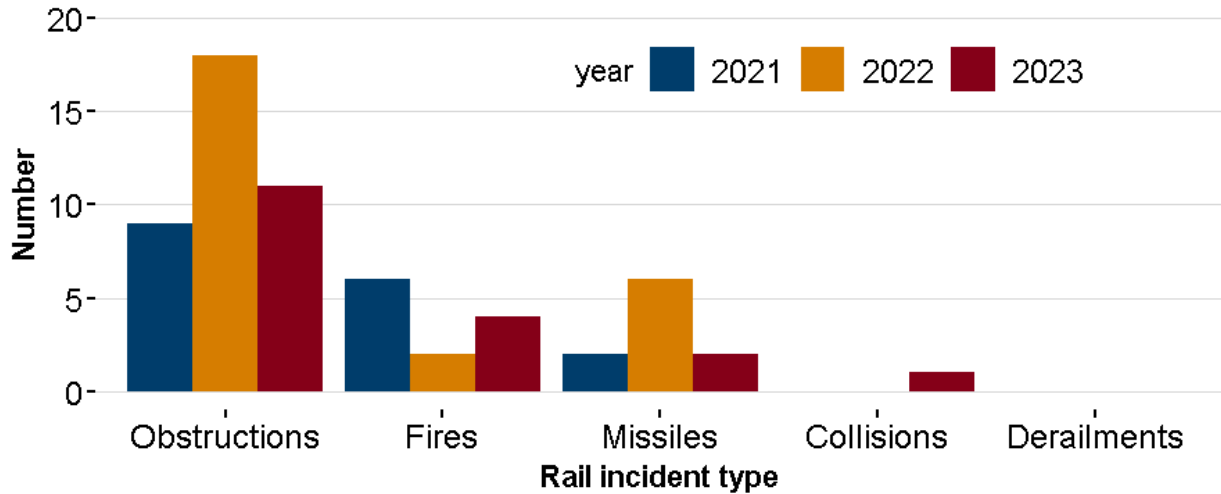
Source: Welsh Government analysis of ORR estimates of rail passenger journeys data

## Rail incidents

Information about safety on the mainline rail network comes from the Rail Safety and Standards Board (RSSB). There was a decrease of 30.8% in the number of incidents recorded in 2023 compared with 2022. Rail incident numbers are relatively volatile and there is no discernible long-term trend that can be ascertained. There were 18 recorded incidents in 2023 comprising of 11 obstructions, 4 fires, 2 missile and 1 collision.



**Figure 5: Train incidents, Wales, 2021 to 2023**

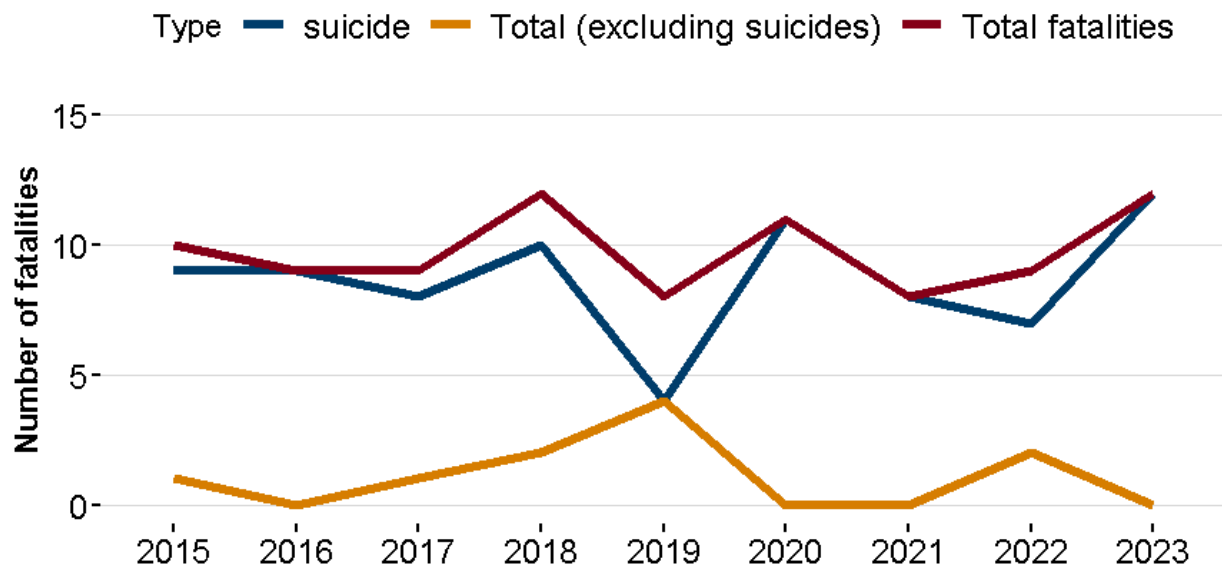


Description of Figure 5: Bar chart showing number of reported train incidents from 2021 to 2023 by incident type.

Source: Welsh Government analysis of ORR estimates of rail incidents data

Railway fatalities are where death occurs within one year of an incident on the rail network. In 2023 there were 12 railway fatalities, all of which were suicides ([Figure 6](#)). Suicides have accounted for the majority of rail fatalities since 2012.

**Figure 6: Railway fatalities, Wales 2015 to 2023**



Description of Figure 6: Line chart showing number of reported rail fatalities from 2015 to 2023.

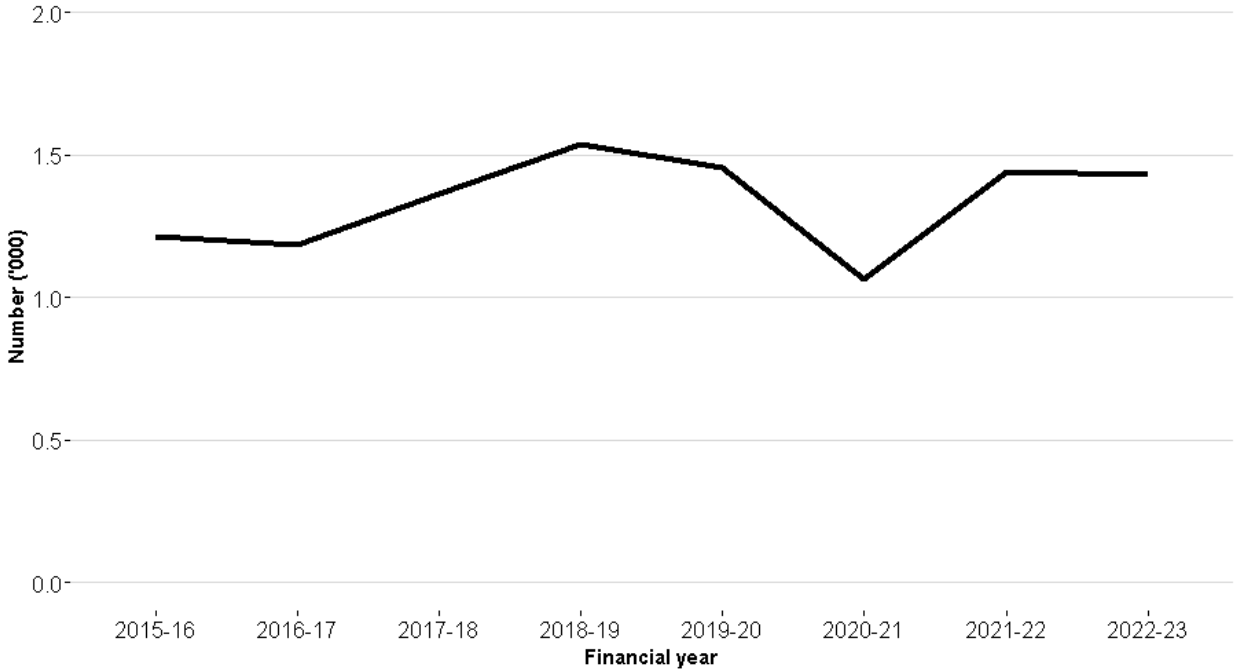
Source: Welsh Government analysis of ORR estimates of rail incident data

## Rail crime

Information about crime on the rail network comes from the British Transport Police’s computerised crime reporting system, CRIME. In 2022-23, there were a total of 1,430 recorded notifiable offences in Wales, a small (1.7%) decrease compared to 2019-20 numbers. (Figure 7). Since 2013-14, the number of offences in Wales had been relatively stable before increasing in 2017-18. In 2020-21 the number of offences in Wales decreased by 26.9%, which is likely a reflection of reduced rail passenger journeys as a result of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The largest categories of recorded offences were Violence against the person (342), Public order crime (277) and Criminal damage/malicious mischief (251), which accounted for 60.8% of all offences.



**Figure 7: Rail network notifiable crime/offences in Wales, 2015-16 to 2022-23**

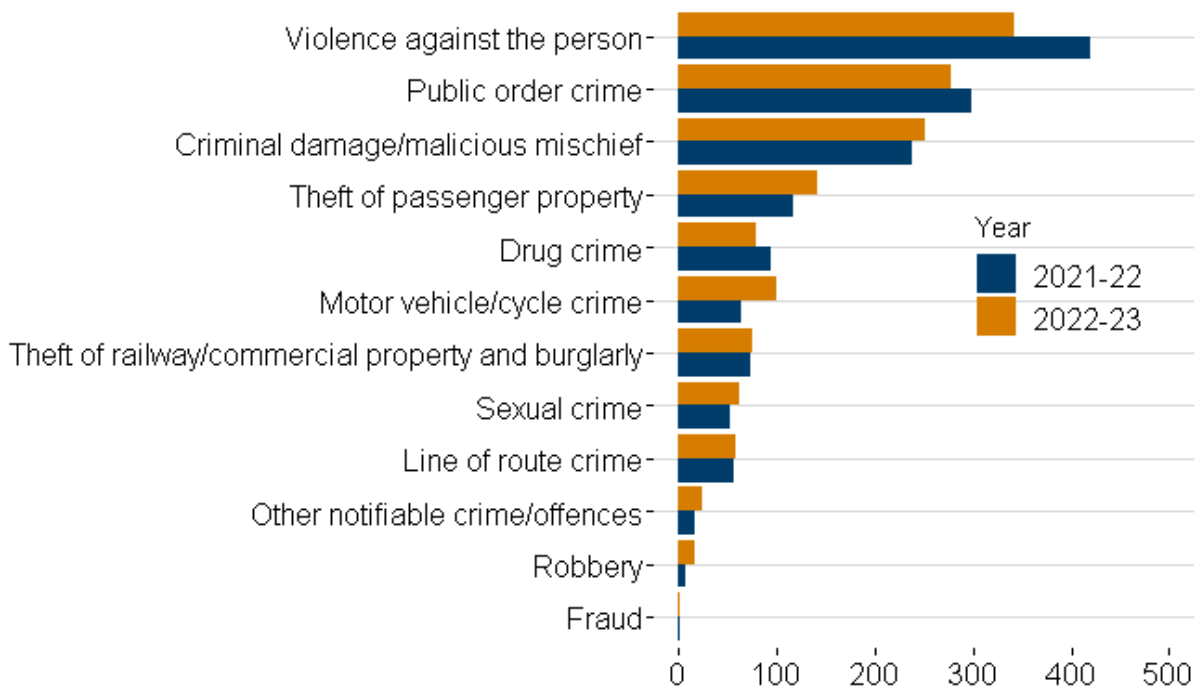


Description of Figure 7: Line chart showing levels of reported rail crimes in Wales from 2015-16 to 2022-23.

Source: Welsh Government analysis of British Transport Police Statistics

Compared to the previous year, criminal damage/malicious mischief in 2022-23 increased by 5.5%, Violence against the person decreased by 18.6% and sexual crimes increased by 17.0% ([Figure 8](#)).

**Figure 8: Rail notifiable crime/offences in Wales, 2021-22 to 2022-23**



Description of Figure 8: Bar chart showing levels of reported rail crimes in Wales compared to previous year.

Source: Welsh Government analysis of British Transport Police Statistics

As well as the notifiable offences described, some less serious, non-notifiable offences also occur but they are no longer recorded by British Transport Police in a way that supports reliable statistical reporting.

## **Quality information**

### **1 Context**

#### **1.1 Related publications**

The Department for Transport produces a series presenting [statistical information on the national rail system in Great Britain](#).

Transport Scotland produces an annual publication entitled [Scottish Transport Statistics](#) which includes a chapter on Rail Services.

### **2 Quality information**

#### **2.1 Relevance**

These statistics are used within and outside the Welsh Government to monitor trends in rail transport and as a baseline for further analysis. A similar release focusing on rail station entries and exits in Wales is also produced every year and can be accessed here [Rail Station Usage Statistical Bulletin](#).

#### **2.2 Accuracy**

The information in this bulletin is based on a range of surveys and administrative data.

#### **2.3 Coverage**

In Wales, as in England and Scotland, passenger train services are operated by a number of companies, referred to as Train Operating Companies (TOCs), normally on the basis of regional franchises awarded by the Department for Transport. There are 4 TOCs operating services to/from/within Wales during 2022-23

- Transport for Wales (TfW) (Arriva Trains Wales operated the Wales and Borders franchise until October 2018);
- Great Western Railway (which operates services between South Wales and London );

- Cross-country Trains (which operates a service from Cardiff to Nottingham via Newport and Chepstow); and
- Avanti West Coast (previously Virgin Trains, which operates services from Holyhead to London Euston). Station usage estimates are based on ticket sales regardless of which TOC is providing the journey.

## **Train reliability**

Cancellations measures the amount of trains that are cancelled as a percentage of trains planned as confirmed by the operator and Network Rail at 22:00 on the previous evening.

A train is classed as a part cancellation if:

- It ran at least half but not all of its planned journeys length, or
- It completed its whole journey length but failed to stop at one or more of its planned stations.

Cancellations and significant lateness (CaSL) the percentage of passenger trains cancelled or arriving at their final destination more than 30 minutes later than planned.

[Passenger performance quality report](#)

The Office for Rail and Road (ORR) calculate a cancellation score which counts full cancellations as one, and part cancellations as half. This industry measure is an indicator of disruption against the timetable operating on the day.

## **Rail passenger numbers**

These are compiled by the Office of Rail Regulation (ORR). ORR data are available via the [National Rail Trends \(NRT\) Data Portal](#), an online interface for ORR's database of rail statistics:

## **Rail safety**

Data are taken from the Rail Safety and Standards Board's (RSSB) Safety Management Information System (SMIS). Its scope is generally limited to incidents that occur at

stations, on trains, or elsewhere on Network Rail managed infrastructure, such as the track and trackside. However, workforce fatalities that occur away from these locations, but occur during working time, are also included. For [more information about the SMIS see the RSSB website](#).

Rail crime Information comes from the British Transport Police's (BTP) computerised crime reporting system, CRIME. The Home Office introduced a National Crime Reporting Standard (NCRS) that all police forces across England and Wales were required to adopt. BTP adopted this standard on 1 April 2002. The basic principles of NCRS are that if on the balance of probability a crime has been committed, it is recorded as a crime. The standard has made crime recording more victim focused. Crime statistics are not always accurate indicators of risk. Police activity to target particular offences, changes in reporting patterns and other factors can affect reported crime Figures. For [more information see the BTP's Statistical Bulletin](#).

## **Train incidence**

### **Incident definition**

- **Collisions:** Collisions between trains, with road vehicles, with a buffer stop or with members of the public
- **Derailments:** Train derailment by self or in collisions with another train
- **Obstructions:** Train striking animal, level crossing gate/ Striking level crossing barrier or other objects
- **Fires:** Mainly incidents of train fires
- **Missiles:** Events when a train is struck by missiles/stone(s) and/or other objects being thrown at a train.

## **Passenger satisfaction**

The passenger satisfaction survey carried out by Transport focus has been discontinued as of 2020 so is no longer included within this release. Historic information

on passenger satisfaction is published on StatsWales and [previous versions of this statistical bulletin](#).

## **2.4 Timeliness and punctuality**

The statistics in this bulletin relate to passenger journeys and crime up to the 2022-23 financial year, accidents and fatalities up to 2023.

## **2.5 Accessibility and clarity**

This statistical bulletin is pre-announced and then published on the Statistics & Research website and all the data in this bulletin as well as other years is available on the [StatsWales website](#).

## **2.6 Comparability and coherence**

These Rail Transport statistics are comparable with trends in other nations within Great Britain. See section 1.1 for additional information.

## **3 National Statistics status**

The [United Kingdom Statistics Authority](#) has 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 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 Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the UK Statistics 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.

The statistics underwent a full assessment against the Code of Practice in 2011.

It is Welsh Government'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.

Since the assessment in 2011 we have continued to comply with the Code of Practice for Statistics, and have made the following improvements:

- Added to and refined information about dimensions of quality and described links to policy.
- Improved our understanding of the various data sources, their strengths and limitations.
- Made the statistics more accessible by making much of the underlying data available via our online data portal [StatsWales](#).
- Improved presentation within the statistical bulletin by drawing out key features visually, and improved visuals by de-cluttering and standardising Figures and tables.

#### **4 Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFG)**

The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales. The Act puts in place seven wellbeing goals for Wales. These are for a more equal, prosperous, resilient, healthier and globally responsible Wales, with cohesive communities and a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. Under section (10)(1) of the Act, the Welsh Ministers must (a) publish indicators (“national indicators”) that must be applied for the purpose of measuring progress towards the achievement of the wellbeing goals, and (b) lay a copy of the national indicators before Senedd Cymru. Under section 10(8) of the Well-being of Future Generations Act, where the Welsh Ministers revise the national indicators, they must as soon as reasonably practicable (a) publish the indicators as revised and (b) lay a copy of them before the Senedd. These national indicators were laid before the Senedd in 2021. The indicators laid on 14 December 2021 replace the set laid on 16 March 2016.

Information on the indicators, along with narratives for each of the well-being goals and associated technical information is available in the [Well-being of Wales report](#).

Further information on the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#).

The statistics included in this release could also provide supporting narrative to the national indicators and be used by public services boards in relation to their local well-being assessments and local well-being plans.

## **5 Further details**

The document is available at <https://gov.wales/rail-transport>

## **6 Next update**

March 2025 (Provisional)

## **7 We want your feedback**

We welcome any feedback on any aspect of these statistics which can be provided by email to: [stats.transport@gov.wales](mailto:stats.transport@gov.wales)

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