

Bus Statistics: Concessionary travel in England, 2013/14



Department for Transport

There were 9.7 million older and disabled concessionary travel passes in England in 2013/14 and just over a billion concessionary passenger journeys on buses in the same period. Both of these figures were broadly unchanged from 2012/13.

These figures for England mask differences between different types of areas.

- ▶ In London concessionary passes increased by 1.5% in 2013/14 compared to 2012/13, whilst outside London there was a drop of 0.7%.

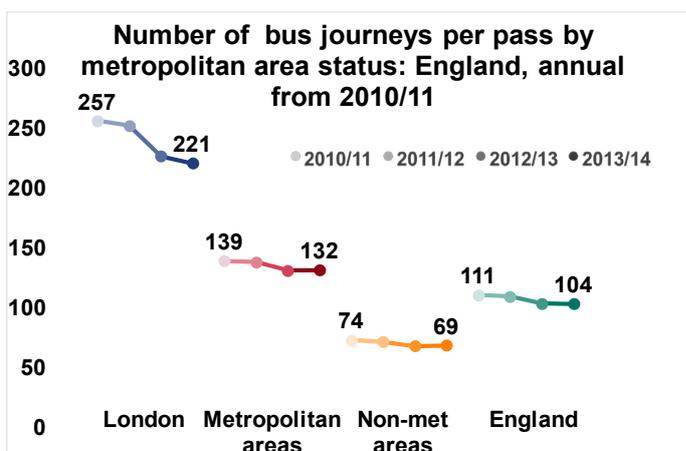


Elderly passes have decreased 0.6% in England which might reflect the increasing age of eligibility.



Disabled passes have increased 2.0% driven by a 9.3% increase in London.

- ▶ Outside London passenger journeys per pass were the same as in 2012/13 following two years of decline whilst in London figures continued to decline, as passes increased and concessionary journeys decreased.



About this release

This release covers concessionary bus travel in England. It provides the most up to date statistics on the number of older and disabled concessionary passes, the number of concessionary bus journeys, and the reimbursement for concessionary fares to Travel Concession Authorities (TCAs).

These statistics are derived from a DfT survey of TCAs undertaken in July and August 2014, covering 90 areas: the 89 TCAs outside London, and London Councils.

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Summary figures

Figures for England are broken down into London, metropolitan areas (which are the six former metropolitan counties of Greater Manchester, Merseyside, South Yorkshire, Tyne and Wear, West Midlands and West Yorkshire) and non-metropolitan areas (the rest, covering shire counties and unitary authorities).

	Total older and disabled concessionary passes	Older and disabled concessionary journeys	Reimbursement for concessionary bus journeys (2013/14 prices)
	2013/14 (millions)	2013/14 (millions)	2013/14 (millions)
	Compared to 2012/13	Compared to 2012/13	Compared to 2012/13
England	9.73 ↓ 0.4%	1,011 ↓ 0.5%	£933 ↑ 1.2%
London	1.33 ↑ 1.5%	293 ↓ 1.0%	£231 ↑ 0.8%
Outside London	8.41 ↓ 0.7%	718 ↓ 0.3%	£702 ↑ 1.3%
Metropolitan areas	2.17 ↓ 1.5%	286 ↓ 1.2%	£255 ↑ 1.0%
Non-metropolitan areas	6.24 ↓ 0.4%	431 ↑ 0.3%	£447 ↑ 1.4%

Detailed statistical tables

are available online as part of the bus statistical series:

- Concessionary passholders in table [BUS0820](#)
- Concessionary journeys in table [BUS0821](#)
- Reimbursement to bus operators in table [BUS0830](#)

Concessionary passes

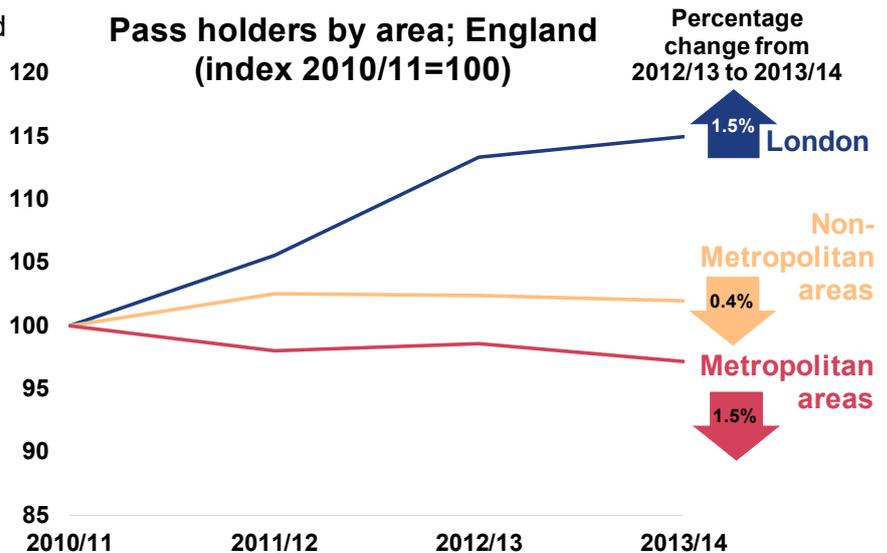
Older and disabled people holding a statutory English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) pass are allowed to travel for free on local bus services anywhere in England, between 0930 and 2300 during weekdays and anytime at weekends and bank holidays. The scheme is administered at a local level by Travel Concession Authorities (TCAs). Some TCAs offer discretionary concessions in addition to the statutory ENCTS scheme, such as free or reduced travel before 0930 or on other transport modes.

In London, the statutory concession for London residents covers the whole London Local Transport Network, including the London underground and trams.

There were 9.7 million older and disabled concessionary passes¹ in 2013/14, around 39 thousand less than in 2012/13. This was driven by decreases in passes outside London and these decreases were larger in metropolitan areas than in non-metropolitan areas.

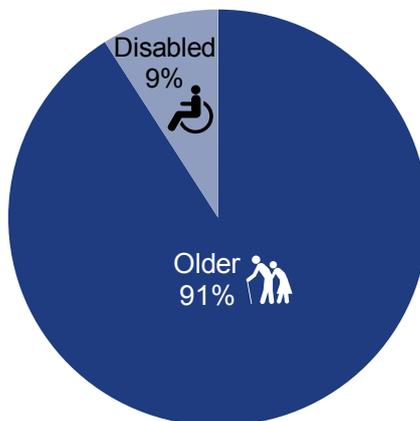
Although England has shown a broadly flat trend, in London passes continued to increase, rising 15% since 2010/11. During this time there was a 41%

increase in disabled passes, compared to a 17% increase on average across England.



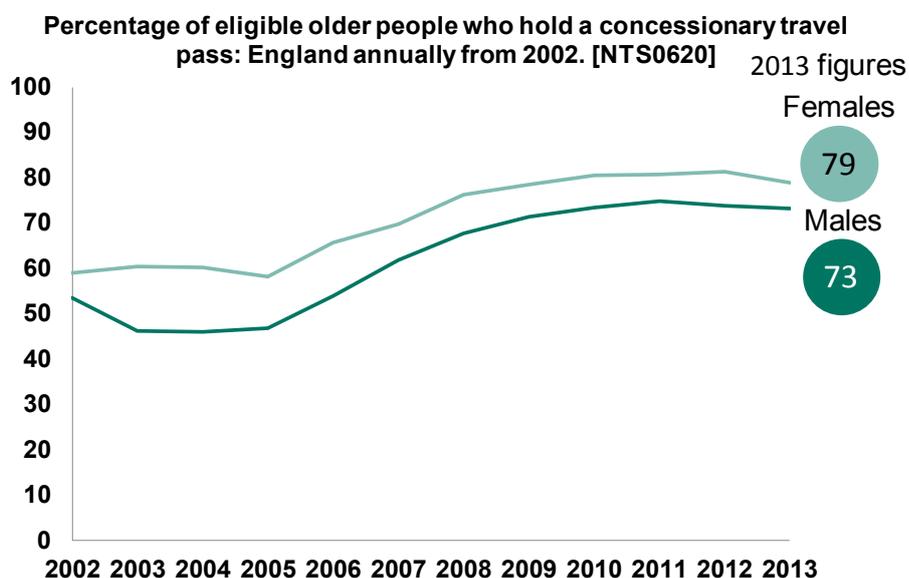
¹ Note that pass numbers are as reported by TCAs and are known to include a small number of inactive passes, issued to people who are now deceased or no longer resident in the area, but which remain on TCA databases.

Of the total passes, 8.8 million (91%) were for older people. The proportion of the total that belong to older people has remained constant since 2010/11 in England, however the proportion varies slightly more across area type. In London older people account for 87% of passes, going up to 93% in non-metropolitan areas outside London.



There were about 79 passes per hundred eligible older people in 2013/14. This figure has increased by one pass per hundred eligible older people every year since 2010/11. There has been a decrease in the eligible population of about 1% each year, due to the increasing eligible age for an older concessionary pass, whilst the number of older passes has remained roughly level.

These figures are broadly consistent with the National Travel Survey (NTS), which has a longer time series. The NTS estimated that in 2013 76% of eligible pensioners in England held a concessionary pass. This proportion was higher for females (79%) than males (73%).



These proportions have risen from 61% and 50% respectively in 2005, the year before the introduction of free local bus travel, but with the rising eligibility age the percentage of eligible pensioners with a pass has decreased slightly between 2012 and 2013 from 78% to 76%.

²The eligible populations have been estimated to be people aged 61.25 and over in 2012/13 and 61.75 and over in 2013/14. See notes and definitions for further details.

Detailed statistical tables

are available online as part of the bus statistical series:

- Concessionary passes in table [BUS0820](#)
- Concessionary passes by Travel Concessoin Authority (TCA) in table [BUS0822](#)

Eligible population

Since April 2010, the eligibility age has been tied to the State Pension age for women. The pensionable age for women is rising, to reach 65 by 2018 and 66 for both men and women by 2020. See tables for ages used to estimate the eligible population.

The National Travel Survey

The NTS is a household survey and is the primary source of data on personal travel patterns in Great Britain.

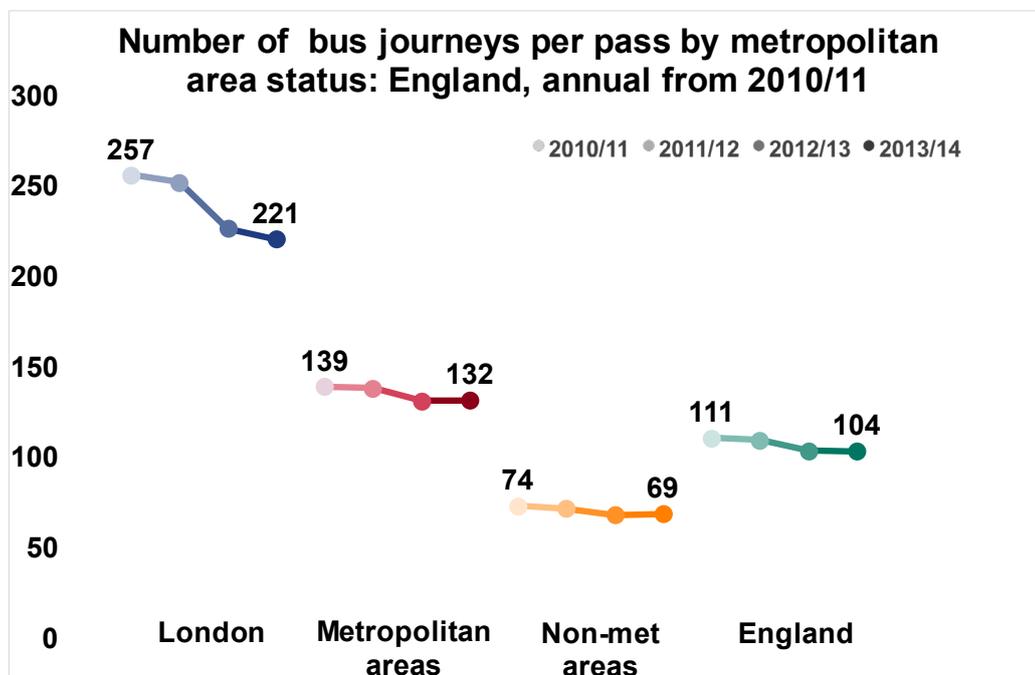
- concessionary travel schemes take up by area in table [NTS0619](#)
- Concessionary travel schemes take up by gender in table [NTS0620](#)
- Frequency of bus use by people aged 60 years or over in table [NTS0621](#)

Passenger Journeys

There were 1.0 billion concessionary passenger journeys in England in 2013/14, the same as in the previous year. However, this masks area differences; London and metropolitan areas decreased slightly (1.0% and 1.2% respectively) whilst journeys were broadly unchanged in non-metropolitan areas.

London passes accounted for around 14% of all passes in England but 29% of journeys were in London. A similar proportion of journeys were in metropolitan areas and the remaining 42% were in non-metropolitan areas.

Across England there were, on average, 104 concessionary journeys per pass³ in 2013/14. The number of journeys per pass is highest in London with an average of 221 journeys made in 2013/14 and lowest in non-metropolitan areas with an average of 69 journeys made per pass. Following two years of decline, journeys per pass outside London stayed the same from 2012/13 to 2013/14. However, London continued to decline, falling 14% since 2010/11, as passes increased and passenger journeys remained broadly flat.



Detailed statistical tables

- Concessionary journeys and concessionary journeys per pass by metropolitan area status in table [BUS0821](#)
- Total bus passenger journeys (including fare paying passengers and concessions) in table series [BUS01](#)

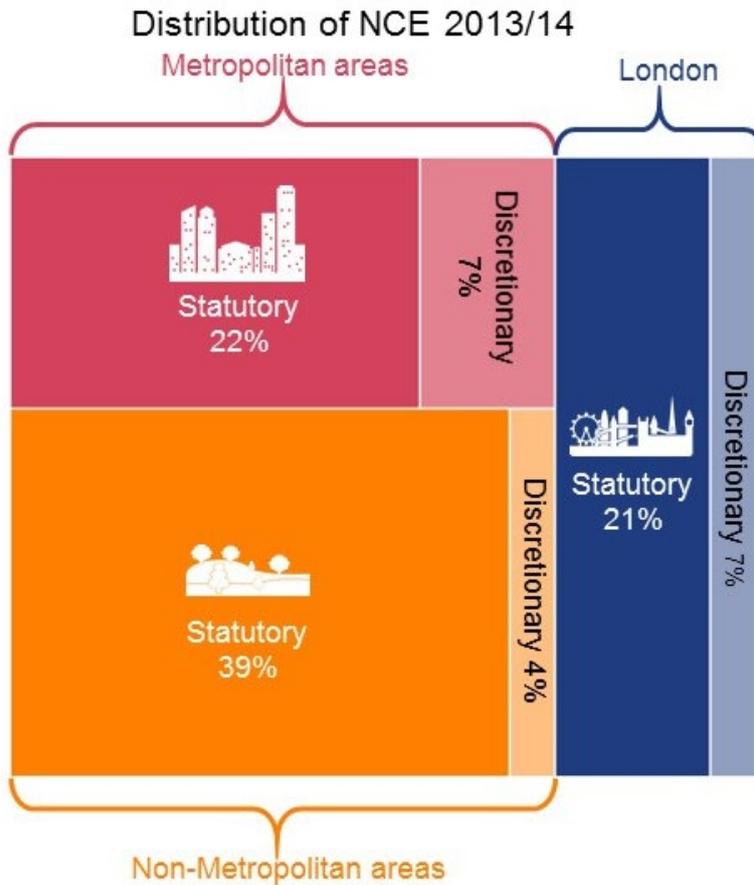
Expenditure on concessionary travel

In 2013/14 82% of English TCA net expenditure on concessionary travel was on the statutory ENCTS scheme, the remaining 18% was spent on discretionary concessions such as youth concessions and non-bus public transport.

Metropolitan areas spent 25% of concessionary travel net expenditure on discretionary concessions, a higher proportion than the 8% spent in non-metropolitan areas. This reflects the prevalence of different types of transport in metropolitan areas such as trams, which may be offered as non-statutory discretionary concessions.

³ These averages are derived by dividing total journeys by total passes. In practice, concessionary journeys are unlikely to be evenly distributed across all passes and passholders resident in one area type may make passenger journeys in another area – e.g. journeys by non-London passes form part of London's total journeys, but the figures available do not disaggregate these.

English TCA's spent around £1 billion on concessionary travel in 2013/14, nearly 40% of this was spend on the statutory ENCTS scheme in non-metropolitan areas.



Data on total concessionary travel expenditure by TCAs is collected annually by the Department for Communities and Local Government as part of the Revenue Outturn (RO2) data collection. The latest data for 2013/14 are due to be published in November 2014. **This release will be updated to report the latest trends when this data set is available.**

Detailed statistical tables:

- Expenditure on ENCTS as a proportion of total expenditure on concessionary travel in table [BUS0810](#)
- The most recent Net Current Expenditure figures are available in table [BUS0811](#)

Bus accessibility

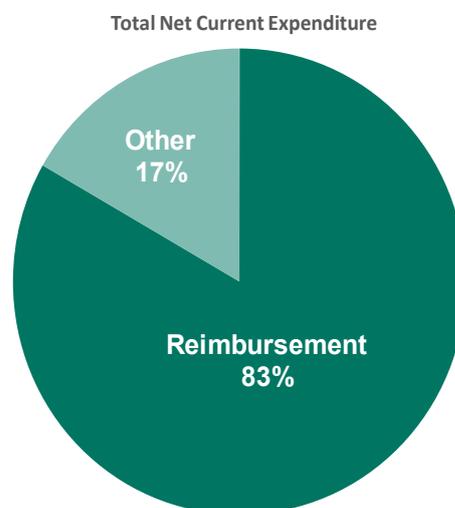
- The number of disability accessible and low floor buses can be found in table [BUS0603](#)

Detailed statistical tables:

- Reimbursement to bus operators in table [BUS0830a](#) (not adjusted for inflation)
- Reimbursement to bus operators in table [BUS0830b](#) (adjusted for inflation)
- Reimbursement methods in table [BUS0831](#)
- Table BUS0830b adjusts for inflation using the HM treasury GDP deflator as at 27 June 2014 which can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/gdp-deflators-at-market-prices-and-money-gdp-june-2014-quarterly-national-accounts>

Concessionary journey reimbursement

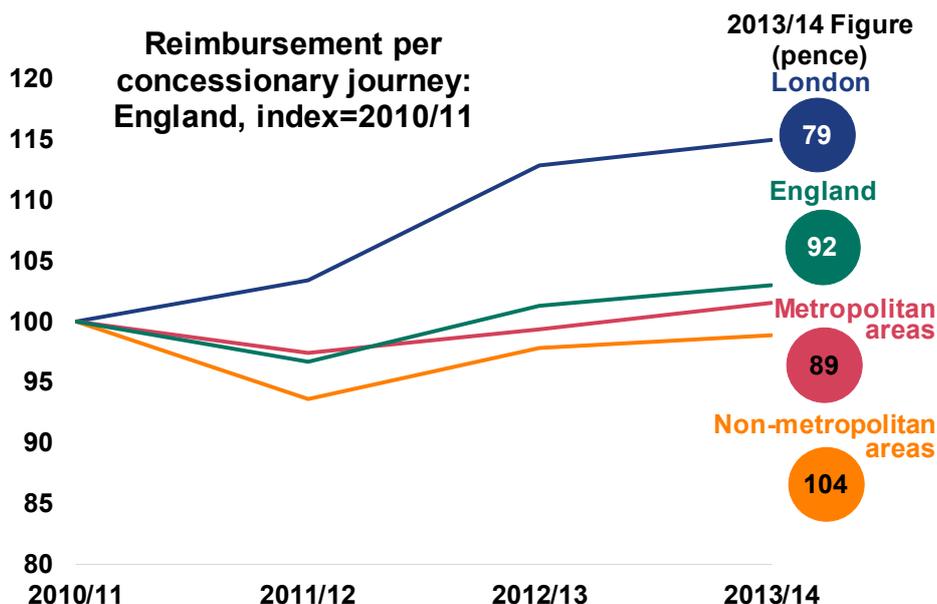
The expenditure figures in the previous section cover all expenditure on concessionary travel, including administration, pass production costs and concessions on other forms of transport. The data in the following section relates specifically to the cost of reimbursing bus operators for carrying older and disabled concessionary passengers, including both statutory and discretionary journeys. In England



£933million was paid to bus operators in reimbursement in 2013/14, a 1.2% rise in real terms since 2012/13. The rise was greatest in non-metropolitan areas and smallest in London.

Average reimbursement per journey was 92p on average across England in 2013/14. This varied across areas, ranging from 79p per journey in London to 104p in non-metropolitan areas. Reimbursement per journey rose 2p per journey in 2013/14 prices in both London and metropolitan areas and rose by 1p per journey in non-metropolitan areas. Reimbursement has risen 14% in London in real terms since 2010/11 while in other areas the trend has remained broadly flat.

The Department for Transport publishes guidance on concessionary travel reimbursement for TCAs. At least 70 TCAs (of the 87 who responded to the questions) were using this guidance, either as a starting point for negotiating with bus operators, or for calculating the reimbursement due in 2014/15. This was an increase on the 66 who were using the guidance in 2012/13 and the same as the 70 who were using it in 2013/14.



At least 57 TCAs had an arrangement that pays a fixed cost for reimbursement of concessionary journeys with at least one of the bus operators in their area.

Discretionary travel concessions

Since 2010/11 almost all of the 89 TCAs outside London have offered some sort of discretionary travel concession over and above the statutory minimum ENCTS.

The most commonly offered discretionary concessions are extensions to the statutory time period (63 TCAs in 2014/15), free or reduced travel for companions to disabled people (57 TCAs) and concessions on on-demand or community transport (55 TCAs), including taxi tokens, travel vouchers, Dial-a-Ride and other community transport schemes.

The number of authorities offering some types of concession has decreased since 2013/14, in particular the availability of discretions for on demand transport and community transport services have decreased from 61 to 55 TCAs, however most types of discretionary concessions were offered by the same number of TCAs as 2013/14.

Detailed statistical tables:

- Information on what is included as part of the ENCTS is available in the background information on page 7

- Discretionary travel enhancements in table [BUS0841](#)

Travel concessions for young people

Concessions for young people fall into two categories – those offered by TCAs and those offered by bus operators on a commercial basis. One or both of these types of concessions may be available to young people in a TCA.

In 26 of the 89 TCAs outside London, a youth concession is offered by the TCA. A youth concession is offered by at least one commercial bus operator in 77 TCAs outside London.

Background information

A statutory bus concession for older and disabled people has been in place since 2001. This initially provided for a minimum half-fare concession for older and disabled people travelling on buses within their local authority of residence, extended to a full fare (i.e. free) concession in 2006. In 2008, the concession was extended further to cover free local bus travel between 0930 and 2300 to older and disabled people anywhere in England. This statutory concession is referred to as the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS).

Concessionary travel schemes are administered locally by Travel Concession Authorities (TCAs). Prior to 2011, TCAs were lower tier local authorities (e.g. district councils), but this moved to upper tier in April 2011 (e.g. county councils). TCAs are required by law to reimburse bus operators for concessionary journeys made under the ENCTS. TCAs may also offer their residents discretionary enhancements over and above the statutory scheme, including free or reduced travel outside the statutory time period or on other transport modes.

In London, the statutory concession for London residents also covers off-peak travel on the whole London Local Transport Network, including tram and underground travel. The scheme is administered by London Councils, on behalf of the 32 London Boroughs and the City of London.

More details, including a full history of the concessionary travel policy, can be found in the Notes and Definitions document that accompanies this release.

Detailed statistical tables:

- Concessions for young people in table [BUS0842](#)

Users and uses of these statistics

Within the Department for Transport, these statistics are used to understand the impact of changes to the concessionary travel scheme and reimbursement guidance, for ministerial briefing and to answer public enquiries. Outside the Department, users include TCAs and others with an interest in concessionary travel, such as campaign groups, bus operators and specialist transport press.

Feedback

We welcome any feedback on these statistics, to ensure future releases best meet user needs. Feedback can be provided by email to bus.statistics@dft.gsi.gov.uk.

Next update

The next Concessionary Travel Statistics are due to be published in autumn 2015.

Strengths and weaknesses of the data

These statistics are derived from the annual DfT survey of Travel Concession Authorities (TCAs) covering 90 areas: the 89 TCAs outside London plus London Councils. However, in each of these years, not all respondents answered all questions in full. The response rate achieved is comparable with that achieved in other DfT surveys of local authorities.

Year	Response Rate
2010/11	76 (84%)
2011/12	80 (89%)
2012/13	88 (99%)
2013/14	90 (100%)

(The response rate is the number of authorities who provided a response to at least one question.)

The data was imputed for item non-response using data from adjacent years and information from TCA websites (for discretionary and youth concessions).

The accompanying Notes and Definitions document, including details of the imputation methods used to derive the national-level totals, is here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/buses-statistics-guidance>

Furthermore, in light of information received in the most recent survey, some revisions have been made to the figures for previous years. For example, where a TCA has not previously responded but did respond in 2014, we have used the 2014 survey as a basis for imputing figures for the previous years. In addition, a small number of TCAs reported that the figures supplied last year for passes, journeys and expenditure were inaccurate and these have also been revised.

Further information and statistics on concessionary travel

These figures have not been assessed by the UK Statistics Authority, and so are not National Statistics. However, they have been produced in compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Details of Ministers and officials who receive pre-release access to these statistics up to 24 hours before release can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport/series/bus-statistics>

The Department for Transport's National Travel Survey collects some information about concessionary travel, including the demographic characteristics of pass holders. These statistics can be found here in tables NTS0620 and NTS0619: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/nts06-age-gender-and-modal-breakdown>

The Department for Transport's Survey of Public Service Vehicle Operators (PSV Survey) also collects figures for concessionary bus journeys. These data, which includes youth concessionary journeys as well as older and disabled journeys can be found in the bus statistics series along with data relating to a range of other aspects of bus travel, including overall patronage and operator finance and can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/bus-statistics>