

Disability and Transport 2023

Contents

Contents	2
Key Findings	4
Introduction	5
The Scottish Household Survey and its disability questions	5
Scottish Household Survey definition of disability	5
Your Bus Journey Survey and Rail User Survey Definition of Disability	7
Disabled people	8
Personal Travel	8
How much are disabled people travelling?	8
Method of travel	9
Method of travel to work	10
Travel to school	10
Why are people travelling?	11
Distance travelled	11
Time of travel	12
Travel cost and affordability	13
Outcome Indicators for Accessible Travel Framework	14
Overview of the Accessible Travel Framework	14
More disabled people make successful door-to-door journeys, more often	15
Use of local bus services in the past month	15
Use of local train services in the past month	15
Whether experienced difficulties when changing from buses to other public transport modes	16
Whether experienced difficulties when changing from trains to other public transport modes	
Factors discouraging public transport use	17
Everyone involved in delivering transport information, services and infrastructum will help to enable disabled people to travel	
Rating of bus driver – helpfulness and attitude of the driver	18
Rating of bus driver – time given to get to the seat	18
Satisfaction with helpfulness and attitude of train staff	19
Views on the ease of finding out about routes and times (bus and train indicacombined)	

Number of accessible buses	20
Number of wheelchair accessible taxis	20
Views on information provided at the bus stop	21
Views on information provided during the train journey	22
Satisfaction with public transport	22
Disabled people feel comfortable and safe using public transport	23
Rating of availability of seating or space to stand on the bus	23
Rating of comfort of seats on the bus	24
Percentage of buses with CCTV	25
Whether feel safe and secure on trains during the day	25
Whether feel safe and secure on trains during the evening	25
Whether feel safe and secure on buses during the day	25
Whether feel safe and secure on buses during the evening	25
Rating of personal safety while at bus stop	25
Rating of personal security while on the bus	26
Satisfaction with personal security during train journey	27
Supporting Information	28
Scottish Household Survey, years used and comparisons over time	28
Your Bus Journey and Rail User Survey	28
Official Statistics	29
Tell us what you think	29
Enquiries	29
Join the mailing list	29

Key Findings

Disabled people are making fewer trips per day than they did before the COVID-19 pandemic.

In 2023, the average number of trips per day for disabled people was 1.39, a fall from 2019 when the average was 1.58.

On average, disabled people made journeys of shorter distance than non-disabled people.

In 2022-23, the average (median) journey distance was 3.3 km for disabled people compared to 4.4 km for non-disabled people.

Disabled people's satisfaction with public transport has fallen since 2019.

Disabled people's satisfaction with public transport fell to 60% in 2023. The figure in 2019 was 69%. While it has also fallen for non-disabled people, satisfaction in 2023 was lower for disabled people than for non-disabled people.

Disabled people were less likely to feel safe and secure on buses and trains in the evening than non-disabled people.

The percentage of disabled people who felt safe and secure on the train during the evening was lower than for non-disabled people (66% to 83%).

This was also the case on buses in the evening with 54% of disabled people feeling safe and secure compared to 76% of non-disabled people.

Introduction

This publication presents statistics on transport and travel for disabled people in Scotland. It includes data for the Accessible Travel Framework's outcome indicators.

The main source of data for this publication is the Scottish Household Survey. Additionally, some of the outcome indicators use data from the Your Bus Journey and Rail User surveys carried out by Transport Focus, as well as further sources.

The Scottish Household Survey and its disability questions

The Scottish Household Survey (SHS) is an annual survey of the general population. It collects information on a range of topics using a random sample of people in private residences in Scotland. It is a voluntary and interviewer-led survey. The survey covers a number of topics relating to transport and travel, including a 'travel diary', which involves respondents recounting the details of all of the journeys they made the day before their survey interview.

As the survey only samples private residences, people in accommodation such as hospitals and care homes are not included. The groups not covered by the survey are estimated to form 0.5% of Scotland's population, although disabled people may be over-represented in this group.

Further information on the SHS is provided in the supporting information section.

Scottish Household Survey definition of disability

As part of the survey, a randomly selected adult is chosen from each participating household. This 'random adult' is then asked a range of questions, including the questions on transport and travel which are analysed within this publication.

The survey uses two questions to determine whether the random adult is disabled:

Question RG5A

Do you have a physical or mental health condition or illness lasting or expected to last 12 months or more?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Refusal

Question RG5B

Does your condition or illness reduce your ability to carry-out day-to-day activities?

- Yes, a lot
- Yes, a little
- Not at all

If a person answers 'Yes' to the first question and 'Yes, a lot' or 'Yes, a little' to the second, then they are considered disabled. This is in line with the Equality Act 2010 definition and the approach taken by most large-scale surveys in Scotland and the UK.

Since 2022, the following question has been asked of the randomly chosen adult in order to gather more information on the nature of their condition or illness:

Question RG5C

Does your condition(s) or illness(es) affect you in any of the following areas?

- Vision (for example blindness or partial sight)
- Hearing (for example deafness or partial hearing)
- Mobility (for example walking short distances or climbing stairs)
- Dexterity (for example lifting and carrying objects, using a keyboard)
- Learning or understanding or concentrating
- Memory
- Mental health
- Stamina or breathing or fatigue
- Socially or behaviourally (for example associated with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) which includes Asperger's, or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD))
- Other
- Refused

This represents a change from the equivalent question included in the survey prior to 2022, which used different categories of conditions. The categories used previously can be found in the Disability and Transport 2021 publication.

In addition, prior to 2022 the question was not asked of the random adult, but was instead asked of the 'highest income householder'. The 'highest income householder' is the individual in the household with the highest income, or their partner (this may or may not be the same person as the random adult). As part of the survey, they are asked a number of general questions about the household. Prior to 2022, this included describing any health conditions that household members had.

These changes mean that it is not possible to combine the 5 most recent years of data, as had been done in previous editions of this publication. Instead, the data in the main tables are now based on the years of data available since these changes were made (2022 and 2023).

There is no question asking for detail about health conditions for children. We only have data on whether or not they have a health condition. We do not know whether their day-to-day activities are limited or not.

Your Bus Journey Survey and Rail User Survey Definition of Disability

In their analysis of the two surveys, Transport Focus apply a different definition of disability than is used in the analysis of the Scottish Household Survey.

The definition used in the Transport Focus analysis is essentially whether respondents had a long term physical or mental health condition. It does not apply the second element used in the Scottish Household Survey definition, which requires that the long term health condition reduces the individual's ability to carry-out day-to-day activities.

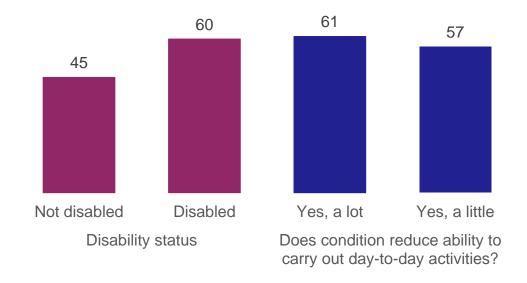
As a broad indicator of the difference between the two definitions of disability, in the Scottish Household Survey 82% of people with a long-term condition had their ability to carry out activities reduced.

Disabled people

In Scotland's Census 2022, 1.3 million people stated they had a long-term health problem or disability that limited their day-to-day activities. This is almost a quarter (24%) of Scotland's people.

Disability is more common among older people. In 2022-23, the average (median) age of people whose condition reduced their ability to carry out day-to-day tasks a lot was 61. The average for those whose activities were reduced a little was 57. [Table 1, Figure 1: Median age, by whether adult is disabled and whether their condition limits their ability to carry out day-to-day tasks, 2022 - 2023 (combined)]

Figure 1: Median age, by whether adult is disabled and whether their condition limits their ability to carry out day-to-day tasks, 2022 - 2023 (combined)



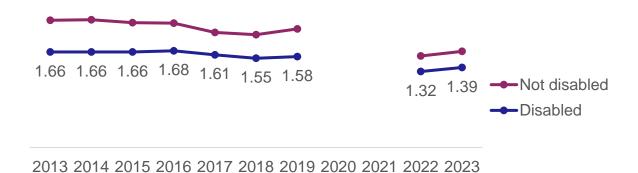
Almost a third (30%) of disabled people were in work. The percentage in work of those whose disability limited their activities a lot was 18%. 40% of disabled people were retired. [Table 2]

Personal Travel

How much are disabled people travelling?

The average number of trips per disabled adult the day before their survey interview was 1.39 in 2023. There was a drop in the number of trips for both disabled and non-disabled people after the COVID-19 pandemic. The drop was smaller for disabled people than for non-disabled people. [Time series table 3, Figure 2]

Figure 2: Average number of journeys per day per adult 2013 to 2023



In 2022-23, the average number of daily journeys for those whose disability limited their activities a lot was 1.18 compared to 1.57 for those disability limited their activities a little.

Method of travel

Driving a car or van was the most common mode of transport for disabled people in 2022-23 (44% of journeys). Walking was the next most common mode of transport making up more than a quarter (27%) of the journeys made by disabled people. [Table 5, Figure 3]

Disabled people were less likely to make their journey driving a car or van than non-disabled people (44% to 56%). They were more likely to be a car or van passenger (16% to 10%) or walk (27% to 23%) than non-disabled people. [Table 5, Figure 3]

Those whose disability limited their day-to-day activities a lot were more likely to be a passenger in a car than those whose activities were limited a little (19% to 12%) . [Table 5]

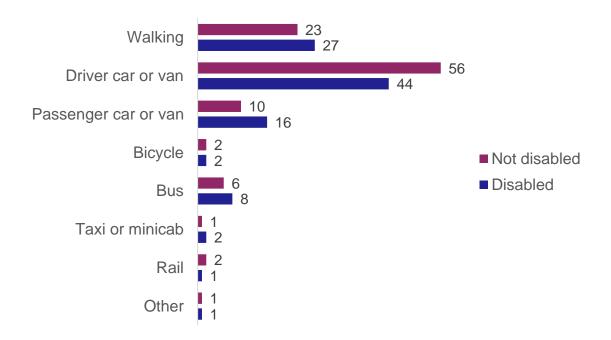


Figure 3: Main mode of travel (percentages), 2022-2023 (combined)

Disabled people were less likely to possess a driving licence drive than those who were not disabled. (56% compared to 78%). [Table 20]

Disabled people were less likely to have a car available to their household than non-disabled people (56% compared to 80%). [Table 21]

A quarter of disabled people (25%) had taken a flight for leisure in the last 12 months. This was much lower than for non-disabled people (47%). [Table 31]

Method of travel to work

Over half of disabled people (51%) usually drove to work in 2023. Disabled people were more likely to take the bus to work than non-disabled people (15% to 9%). [Table 6]

Among those disabled people who didn't use public transport to travel to work, the top reasons were 'No direct route (28%)', 'Work unusual hours (23%)' and 'Lack of service' (21%). 17% said public transport was too unreliable. [Table 7]

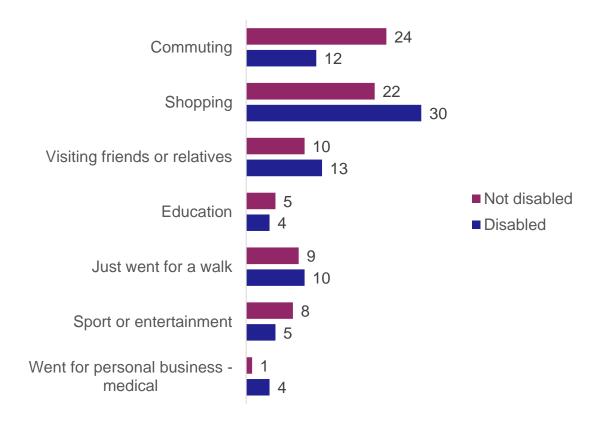
Travel to school

School children with a long-term health condition were less likely to walk than those without a condition (40% compared to 53%). Those with a long term condition were far more likely to use a taxi than those without. (13% compared to 1%) [Table 8].

Why are people travelling?

A smaller percentage of the journeys of disabled people were to or from work (12%, compared to 24% for those who are not disabled) and a higher percentage of the journeys of disabled people were to the shops (30% compared to 22%). [Table 9, Figure 4]

Figure 4: Purpose of journey (selected categories), by whether adult has a disability (percentages), 2022-2023 (combined)

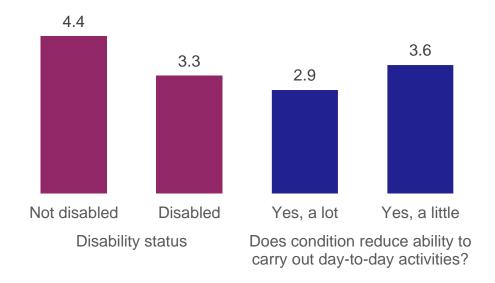


Distance travelled

Disabled adults had a shorter average (median) journey (3.3 km), than those who were not disabled (4.4 km). [Table 13, Figure 5]

Those disabled people whose ability to carry out day-to-day activities was limited a lot had a shorter median journey (2.9 km) than those whose ability to carry out activities was limited a little (3.6 km). [Table 13, Figure 5]

Figure 5: Average (median) journey length (km), by whether adult is disabled and whether their condition limits the ability to carry out day-to-day tasks, 2022-2023 (combined)



When only people aged under 60 who were not employed are considered, there is less difference between disabled and non-disabled people (2.6 km compared to 2.8 km), Those whose condition affected day-to-day activities a lot travelled least far (2.3km). [Table 14]

Median distance to work was lower for disabled than non-disabled people (5.5 km vs 7.9 km). [Table 15]

Time of travel

On weekdays disabled people's journeys are more likely to be in the middle of the day when services are less busy than at peak times. For those whose disability limits activities a lot, there is an even higher proportion of travel between 9:30 and 4:30. [Table 16, Figure 6]

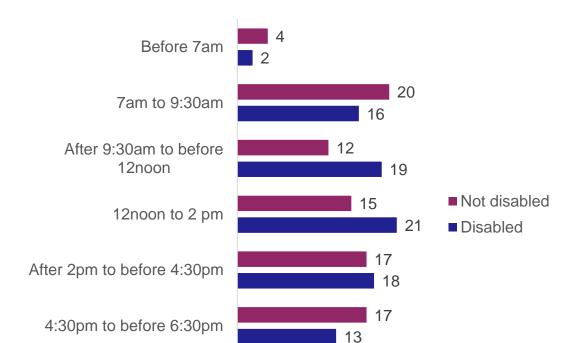


Figure 6: Percentage of journeys made on weekdays by start time of journey, by whether adult is disabled, 2022 to 2023 (combined)

Travel cost and affordability

6:30pm onwards

Over half of disabled people (55%) spent nothing on car fuel. Of those who did spend on fuel, the average (mean) amount spent in the last month was £118. This was lower than for non-disabled people (£141). [Table 33]

15

Most disabled people (88%) spent nothing on public transport. The average (mean) weekly cost of public transport for disabled people was £6.30. [Table 34]

More than half of disabled people (59%) found it easy to afford their transport costs, but this was lower than for non-disabled people (70%). [Table 35]

Outcome Indicators for Accessible Travel Framework

Overview of the Accessible Travel Framework

The Accessible Travel Framework was developed to work alongside (1) the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, ratified by the United Kingdom in 2009, and (2) the National Transport Strategy (NTS), specifically the pillar focusing on reducing inequality.

These two documents underscore the standard of rights and treatment of disabled people and provide a strategy to remove barriers to accessing and using (public transport) services, as well as improve the overall travel experiences. Thus, the disabled people should be able to (1) make successful door-to-door journeys; (2) easily access help and support, when necessary; (3) obtain and use accessible information to plan their journey; (4) travel comfortably and safely; (5) complete their journeys successfully and be involved in future design and improvement of services, infrastructure, and broader transport policies. These aims are collated into three main outcomes for transport accessibility:

- More disabled people make successful door-to-door journeys, more often
- Disabled people feel comfortable and safe using public transport
- Everyone involved in delivering transport information, services and infrastructure will help to enable disabled people to travel

The fourth outcome, Disabled people are involved in the design, development and improvement of transport policies, services and infrastructure, is still developing and there is currently no measurement for this activity. As part of the wider engagement process with disabled people, one of the aims is to develop measures for this indicator and start collecting information.

The data presented in this section relate to the indicators specified in the Accessible Travel Framework for which measurement is available.

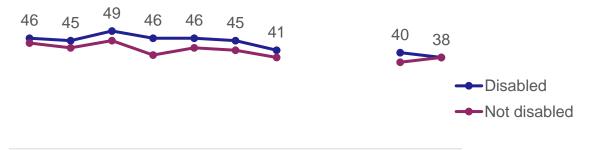
More disabled people make successful door-to-door journeys, more often

Use of local bus services in the past month

The percentage of disabled people who said they had used the bus in the past month in 2023 (38%) was lower than it had been in 2018 (45%). Use of the bus has fallen slightly in recent years for non-disabled people as well. [Time series table 5, Figure 7]

In 2022-23, people whose disability limited their day-to-day activities a little were more likely to have used the bus than those whose day-to-day activities were limited a lot (43% to 36%). [Table 24]

Figure 7: Percentage of adults who used the bus in the last month, 2013 to 2023



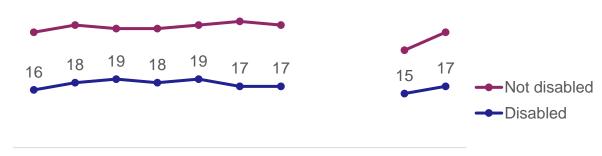
2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021 2022 2023

Use of local train services in the past month

The train was less likely to have been used in the past month by disabled people (17%) than non-disabled people (32%). In 2023, the percentage of disabled people using the train was the same as it had been in 2019, prior to the pandemic. [Time series table 6, Figure 8]

In 2022-23, those whose disability limited everyday activities a lot were less likely to use the train (11%) than those whose activities were affected a little (21%).

Figure 8: Percentage of adults who used the train in the last month, by whether adult is disabled, 2013 to 2023

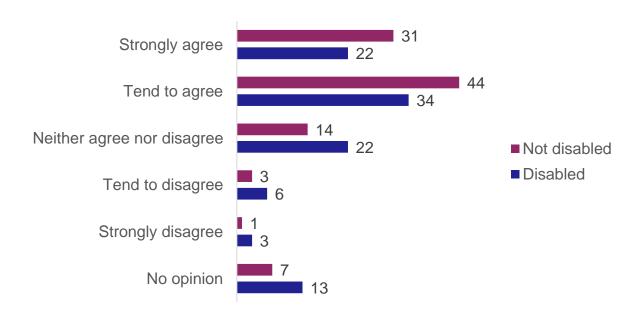


2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021 2022 2023

Whether experienced difficulties when changing from buses to other public transport modes

Over half (56%) of disabled people agreed that it was easy to change from buses to other forms of transport, but the figure was higher for non-disabled people (74%). 9% of disabled people disagreed. [Table 25, Figure 9]

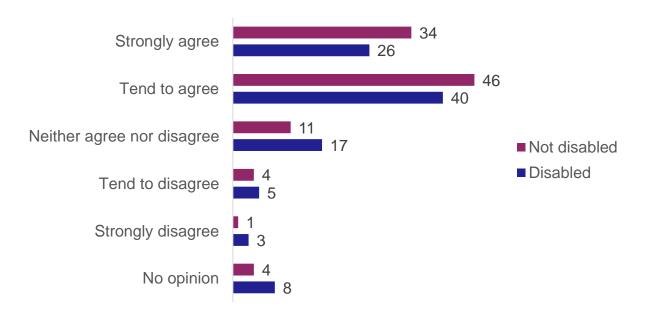
Figure 9: Easy to change from buses to other forms of transport by whether adult is disabled, 2023



Whether experienced difficulties when changing from trains to other public transport modes

Two-thirds (66%) of disabled people agreed that it was easy to change from trains to other forms of transport, but the figure was higher for non-disabled people (80%). 8% of disabled people disagreed. [Table 28, Figure 10]

Figure 10: Easy to change from trains to other forms of transport by whether adult is disabled, 2023



Factors discouraging public transport use

The top reason disabled people were discouraged from using the bus more often was 'Health reasons' (27%). This is much higher than for non-disabled people (2%). The next four reasons were 'Use my own car' (20%), 'No need' (19%), 'Lack of service' (7%) and 'Public transport is unreliable' (6%). 12% said nothing discouraged them. [Table 26]

The top reasons disabled people were discouraged from using the train more often were 'No need' (25%), 'Cost' (14%), 'No nearby station' (10%), 'Use my own car' (5%) and 'Trains unreliable' (4%). 39% said nothing discouraged them. [Table 29]

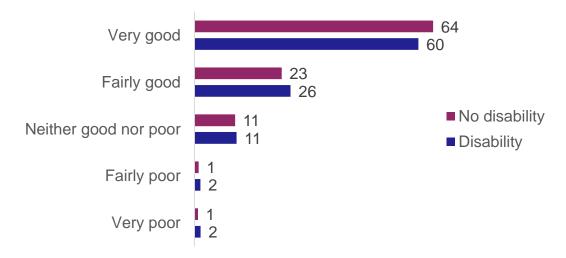
Data for the 'Satisfaction with distance of bus stop from beginning of journey' indicator are not collected in the new 'Your Bus Journey' survey from Transport Focus.

Everyone involved in delivering transport information, services and infrastructure will help to enable disabled people to travel

Rating of bus driver – helpfulness and attitude of the driver

In 2023, 86% of disabled people rated the helpfulness and attitude of the driver as good or fairly good, with 3% giving a rating of poor or fairly poor. The ratings given by non-disabled people were similar. [Table 41, Figure 11]

Figure 11: Rating of bus driver helpfulness and attitude (percentages), 2023



Rating of bus driver – time given to get to the seat

The majority of disabled people (86%) rated the time the driver gave them to get to their seat as good or very good, with 4% giving a fairly poor or very poor rating. [Table 42, Figure 12]

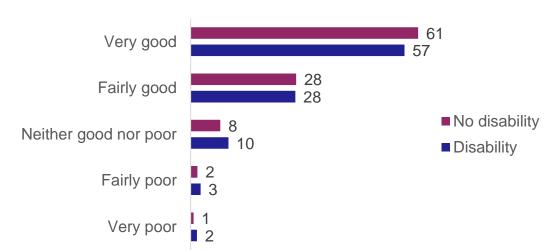
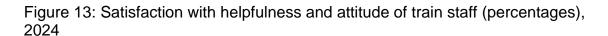
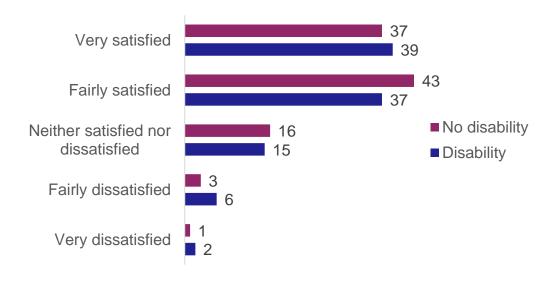


Figure 12: Rating of bus driver time given to get to the seat (percentages), 2023

Satisfaction with helpfulness and attitude of train staff

In 2024, three-quarters (76%) of disabled people were satisfied with the helpfulness and attitude of train staff and 8% were dissatisfied. [Table 49, Figure 13]

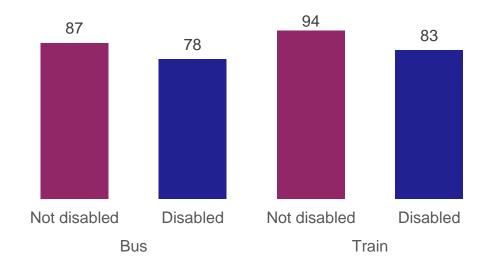




Views on the ease of finding out about routes and times (bus and train indicator combined)

While the majority of disabled people agreed that finding out about routes and times was easy (78% for bus and 83% for train), they were less likely to agree than non-disabled people. [Tables 25 and 28, Figure 14]

Figure 14: Percentage who agreed that finding out about bus and train routes and times was easy, by whether adult is disabled, 2022-2023 (combined)



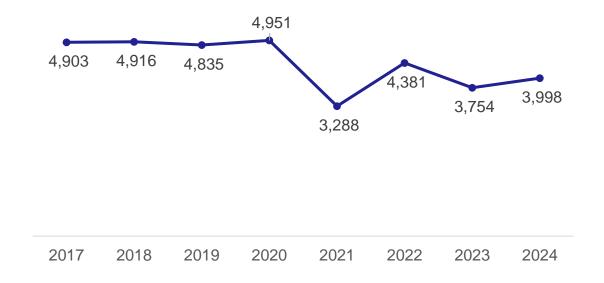
Number of accessible buses

Since 2019-20, 100% of buses in Scotland have been accessible or low floor buses, but the number of buses dropped from 4.4 thousand in 2019-20 to 3.5 thousand in 2023-24. [Table 38]

Number of wheelchair accessible taxis

Almost half (46%) of taxis in Scotland are wheelchair accessible. The number of wheelchair accessible taxis fell sharply in 2021, but has risen since to almost 4,000 in 2024. [Table 37, Figure 15]

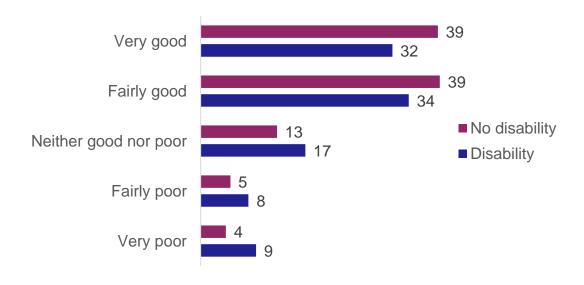




Views on information provided at the bus stop

Two-thirds (66%) of disabled people rated the information provided at the bus stop as very or fairly good. 17% rated it fairly or very poor which was higher than for non-disabled people (9%). [Table 48, Figure 16]

Figure 16: Rating of information provided at the bus stop (percentages), 2023



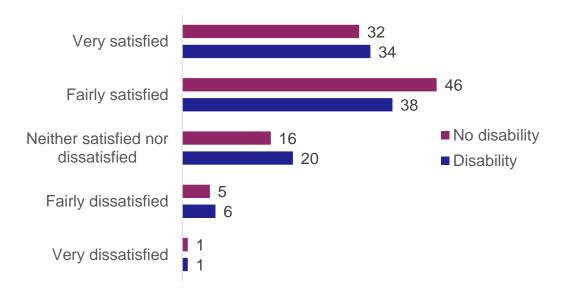
Data for the 'Views on information provided inside the bus' indicator are not collected in the new 'Your Bus Journey' survey from Transport Focus.

Data for the 'Views on information provided about train times/platforms'indicator are not collected in the new Rail User survey from Transport Focus.

Views on information provided during the train journey

The majority (72%) of disabled passengers were very or fairly satisfied with the information provided to passengers during their train journey, while 7% were very or fairly dissatisfied. [Table 52, Figure 17]

Figure 17: Satisfaction with provision of information during train journey (percentages), 2024



Satisfaction with public transport

Disabled people's satisfaction with public transport has fallen in recent years to 60% in 2023. While it has also fallen for non-disabled people, satisfaction in 2023 was lower for disabled people than for non-disabled people. [Time series table 7, Figure 18]

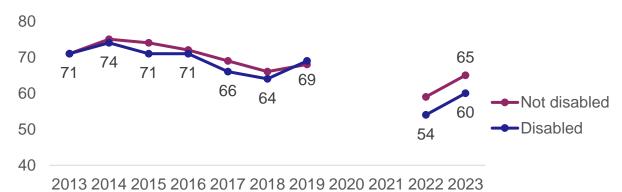


Figure 18: Percentage satisfied with public transport, 2013 to 2023

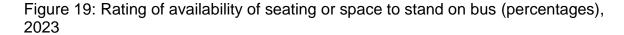
Disabled people feel comfortable and safe using public transport

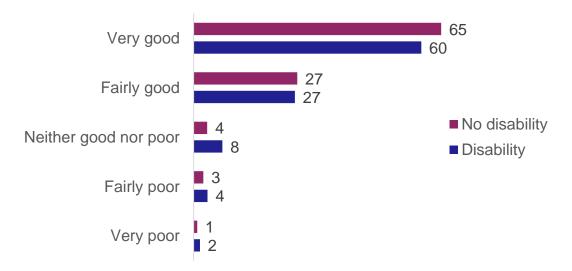
Data for the following indicators are no longer collected since the Rail Passenger Survey was replaced by the Rail User Survey:

- Views on toilet facilities on the train
- Views on toilet facilities at the station
- Availability of staff on the train
- Availability of staff at the station

Rating of availability of seating or space to stand on the bus

Most disabled people (87%) rated the availability of seating or space to stand as very or fairly good. [Table 45, Figure 19]

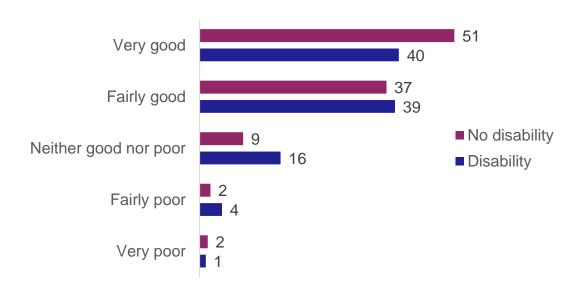




Rating of comfort of seats on the bus

The percentage of disabled people rating the comfort of the seats as very good was lower than for non-disabled people (40% to 51%). 6% of disabled people rated the comfort as very or fairly poor. [Table 46, Figure 20]

Figure 20: Rating of the comfort of the seats on bus (percentages), 2023



Data for the 'satisfaction on bus with amount of personal space' are not collected in the 'Your Bus Journey' survey.

Percentage of buses with CCTV

The percentage of buses with CCTV has risen over the years from 82% in 2016-17 to 94% in 2023-2024. [Table 53]

Whether feel safe and secure on trains during the day

In 2022-23, a high percentage (93%) of disabled people felt safe and secure on trains during the day. The percentage for non-disabled people was 97%. [Table 28]

Whether feel safe and secure on trains during the evening

The percentage of disabled people who felt safe and secure during the evening was much lower than during the day (66% to 93%). The percentage was also lower than for non-disabled people in the evening (66% to 83%). [Table 28]

Whether feel safe and secure on buses during the day

In 2022-23, a high percentage (91%) of disabled people felt safe and secure on buses during the day. The percentage for non-disabled people was 96%. [Table 25]

Whether feel safe and secure on buses during the evening

Again, the percentage of disabled people who felt safe on buses during the evening was much lower than during the day (54% to 91%). Disabled people were less likely to feel safe in the evening than non-disabled people (54% to 76%). [Table 25]

Rating of personal safety while at bus stop

Almost three-quarters (73%) of disabled people rated their safety at the bus stop as very or fairly good, while 7% rated it as poor or fairly poor. [Table 39, Figure 21]

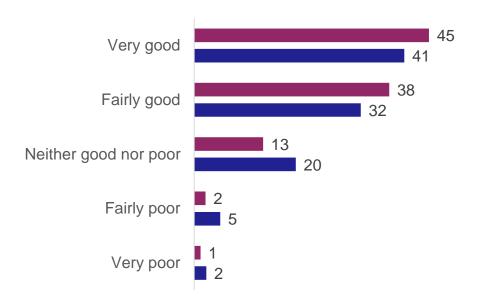
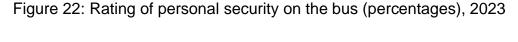
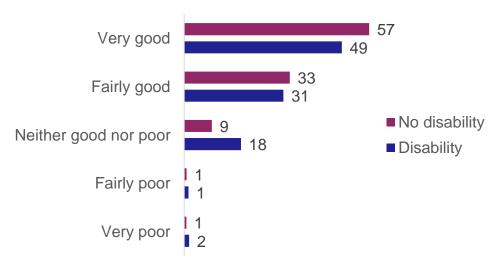


Figure 21: Rating of personal safety at the bus stop (percentages), 2023

Rating of personal security while on the bus

The percentage of disabled people who rated their security on the bus as very or fairly good was 80%. The figure for non-disabled people was 90%. [Table 40, Figure 22]



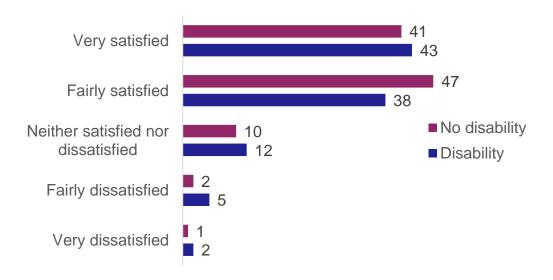


Data for the indicators 'Views on personal safety while using the train station' and 'Views on personal safety while on the train' are not collected in the Rail User Survey. Data on 'Satisfaction with personal security during train journey' have been included instead.

Satisfaction with personal security during train journey

Most disabled people (82%) were very or fairly satisfied with their personal security during the train journey, but 6% were dissatisfied. The figure for dissatisfaction for non-disabled people was 2%. [Table 51, Figure 23]

Figure 23: Satisfaction with personal security during train journey (percentages), 2024



Supporting Information

Scottish Household Survey, years used and comparisons over time

In previous editions of the report, figures were averaged over five years. The change in approach to identifying areas affected by health conditions was described in the section on the definition of disability. This has caused a change to averaging Scottish Household Survey results over the two years 2022 and 2023 in the main tables, where possible. This has been done to give a larger sample size for areas affected than for one year. A set of time series tables has been provided for a selection of statistics.

If comparing with the results in the 2021 report, which were averaged over the years 2017 to 2021, it's important to bear in mind that the survey methodology was changed in the years 2020 and 2021 due to the COVID pandemic. Most notably, the survey was moved to telephone interviewing rather than face to face.

The full Scottish Household Survey questionnaire can be found on the Scottish Government website.

Figures for individual years are available by disability (but not any further subdivisions) in <u>Transport and Travel in Scotland</u>.

Your Bus Journey and Rail User Survey

Other than the Scottish Household Survey, the two main sources for the Accessible Travel framework outcome indicators are the Your Bus Journey survey and the Rail User Survey, both carried out by Transport Focus. These surveys replaced the Bus Passenger survey (in 2023) and National Rail Passenger survey (in 2021).

The analysis used in this publication is taken from the <u>Transport Focus Data Hub</u>.

Official Statistics

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The data collected for the SHS is made available via the UK Data Service and may be made available on request, subject to consideration of legal and ethical factors. Please contact shs@gov.scot for further information.

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