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# 2025 Guide to the Bus Operator's Transport Returns

## Statistics for the services operated in 2024

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# 1. Legal requirement

Under section 73 (Information, data and statistics) of the Dublin Transport Authority Act 2008, as amended (“DTA Act 2008”), the National Transport Authority (the “Authority”) is required to collect, compile and gather, for the purpose of exercising its functions and on a regular basis, publish information regarding public transport.

**All public transport operators holding regular category licences from this Authority to provide public bus passenger services wholly or partially within the State are required to provide the data.**

The specific legal provisions state:

“73. (1) The Authority shall—

- (a) collect, compile, analyse and prepare information, data or statistics, including that or those gathered by ticketing systems operated by public transport operators, for the purpose of exercising its functions, and
- (b) on a regular basis, publish information, data or statistics on—
  - (i) numbers of persons using differing modes of transport,
  - (ii) satisfaction levels with public passenger transport services,
  - (iii) travel times to work, and
  - (iv) such other matters as the Authority considers appropriate in respect of its functions.

(2) The Minister may give a direction to the Authority to collect, compile, prepare and publish such information, data or statistics that he or she may specify in writing to the Authority regarding the performance of the Authority in exercising its functions.

(3) The Minister shall consult the Authority, and may consult any other person he or she considers appropriate, before giving a direction under subsection (2).

(4) The Authority may require a person who holds information, data or statistics relating to the functions of the Authority, to give to the Authority such information, data or statistics in such form (including electronic form) and at such reasonable times or intervals, as the Authority specifies.

(5) Save as otherwise provided by law, the Authority shall ensure commercially sensitive information obtained under this section is not disclosed.”

Bus services covered by this legislative provision include any service with an origin, intermediate point (including travelling through), or a destination point within the State (Ireland).

## 2. Usage of information

As per the DTA Act 2008, the Authority has gathered information, data, and statistics on the licenced bus services in the state for the purposes of exercising its functions since 2013.

The Authority also publishes a number of statistical bulletins charting public transport use in the State, including trends in patronage and the characteristics of the fleet in use.

**Completion of the enclosed document is a legal requirement and all parts of sections A & B on the following pages must be completed. Please see Section 73 subsection (1) and (4) of the DTA Act 2008, Section 13 of the Public Transport Regulation Act 2009, and your licence conditions.**

The statistical bulletins for previous years are available to view and download from our website here:

<https://www.nationaltransport.ie/publications/>

In publishing data, the Authority will be fully aware of its obligations regarding confidential information and will ensure, for all licensed operators, that patronage and revenues are presented in a consolidated and confidential fashion, see section 73 (5) of the legislation above. Should you require further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact us through the details provided at section 3.9 page 8 of this document.

We thank you for your full cooperation and compliance with returning completed forms each year.

Publishing of composite public transport data is a normal practice throughout Europe. For example, you may view the bus statistics for Great Britain including consolidated operator revenue at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/bus-statistics>

## 3. Guide to completing the returns spreadsheet

**Completion is a legal requirement.**

**All parts must be completed and submitted by 31 March 2025.**

**The information required in the attached spreadsheet is for the year 2024 only.**

### 3.1 Changes to the return form

The Bus Operator Returns for 2025 are to be returned digitally, via a tailored Excel spreadsheet to your services and vehicles. This makes completion by you simpler. It also enables the Authority to pre-fill much of the information on a per Operator basis, speed data entry, and analyse the information returned quicker.

Your Excel spreadsheet has five tabs that you must complete:

- Declarations;
- Form A General Questions;
- Form B Licence Questions;
- Emissions Questions; and
- Accessibility Questions.

If you need assistance to complete the form, please email [bus.data@nationaltransport.ie](mailto:bus.data@nationaltransport.ie). We are happy to help.

### 3.2 Completing Declarations

Please read the Licence Holder Declaration carefully. This must be signed, dated, and the position of the person completing the return is to be entered.

### 3.3 Completing Form A General Questions

These questions **apply across all your Regular Services**. The Authority does **not** require information on any other service types, for example tour or concert services that you may operate. Your Operator Name and Trading Name are pre-filled.

### Q. Annual Total Ticket Revenue For All Licensed Services

Your answer to 'Annual total passenger revenue' must include:

- All fares revenue such as single, return, 10-journey, weekly, monthly, annual, and TaxSaver tickets for adults, students, children and fare-paying pensioners, et cetera;
- Leap card revenue;
- Young Adult and Student Card Fares Scheme (YASC) revenue;
- Any online or other type of pre-paid tickets; and
- Other payments such as a grant from a business or corporate park for running your service(s).

Your answer to 'Annual total passenger revenue' must exclude:

- Free Travel Scheme payments;
- Private hire revenues; and
- NTA Grant payments.

### Q. TaxSaver tickets: Offered?

The TaxSaver Commuter Ticket Scheme allows employees to avail of public transport commuter tickets if they are travelling to/ from work by public transport. The scheme involves employers providing employees with public transport commuter tickets while saving on employer PRSI payments. Employees participating in the scheme benefit from reduced tax and PRSI payments. The scheme is generally known as the TaxSaver Scheme but other names might be used by individual public transport operators.

This question wants to know whether you offer annual, monthly or any other period **TaxSaver tickets** to your customers? Please select 'Annual', 'Monthly' or 'Other' from the drop-down list. If you select 'Other' and type the details of the ticket in the box provided.

## 3.4 Completing Form B Licence Questions

All questions must be completed on a **licence by licence** basis. This includes if the service did not operate or has only been operated for part of 2024. Operator Name, Licence Number, and Route Number are pre-filled.

### Q. On Free Travel Scheme (Y/N)

Please select 'Yes' or 'No' from the drop-down list.

### Q. On YASC Scheme (Y/N)

Please select 'Yes' or 'No' from the drop-down list.

### Q. Date Joined YASC Format DD/MM/YY

Please completed the date the licence joined the YASC Scheme.

### Q. Has the Service Commenced (Y/N)

Please select 'Yes' or 'No' from the drop-down list.

### Q. Has the Service Ceased Operation (Y/N)

Please select 'Yes' or 'No' from the drop-down list.

### Q. Date Ceased (if Applicable) Format DD/MM/YY

If applicable, please complete the date the service ceased.

### Q. Total Annual Passenger Journeys

For this question one passenger boarding a vehicle counts as one passenger journey. Return trips count as two passenger journeys. Weekly tickets are counted as 10 passenger journeys, Monthly tickets are counted as 40 passenger journeys, and Annual tickets are counted as 480 passenger journeys, unless you have more accurate calculations. If you have other tickets that are not easily converted into a precise number of passenger journeys per year then please give us the best approximate answer.

### Q. Free Travel Passengers as a percent (%) of all Passenger Journeys

Please provide your best estimate.

### Q. 2024 Kilometres Operated

The number of kilometres we are looking for is the total you actually operated in 2024 on the basis of your timetable and accounting for any auxiliary buses operated. For example, if your timetable involved 10 daily

departures operating every day with vehicles driving a 10kms round trip, this would be 100kms per day (10 services by 10kms round trips per service), for a total of 36,500 kilometres operated per year (being 100kms per day by the number of days operated, in this case 365).

If auxiliary buses had to operate, these should be **added** to the total. For example, if service operated in 2024 needed an auxiliary bus, the total auxiliary services would be an additional 36,500km, which would be a total of 73,000 kilometres operated to provide the service in 2024.

Websites such as Google Maps can assist with calculating various distances.

### **Q. 2024 Maximum PVR (Peak Vehicle Requirement)**

The figure requested is the maximum number of vehicles that are required to provide the licensed service on the busiest deployment day.

## **3.5 Completing Emissions Questions**

This section needs to be completed for vehicles that have been used to provide Regular services only. Vehicle Registration Number, Make, Model Version, Transmission, and Engine Type are all pre-filled where available. The Number of Seats per bus on record is also pre-filled and verification is required. If additional vehicles that are not listed are used, please fill in the details below the other vehicle details.

### **Q. Are the Make/Model/Engine Type Correct**

Please select 'Yes' or 'No' from the drop-down list.

### **Q. Correct Number of Seats**

This only needs to be completed if the pre-filled number of seats is incorrect. If the number is correct, please leave blank. If the number is incorrect, please fill in the correct number of seats.

### **Q. Vehicle with AVL/GPS on Board (Y/N)**

Please select 'Yes' or 'No' from the drop-down list.

### **Q. How often was this bus used on the below route?**

Your route numbers are pre-filled in the column heading. Under the correct route number heading, please fill in the percentage (%) of time the vehicle was used to provide the route. If a vehicle was not used to provide the route, the cell can be left blank.

For example, if you have two vehicles used 100% of the time to provide a route, 100 should be entered for each. If you also have another vehicle that is used half of the time to provide the route, then 50 should be entered.

## 3.6 Completing Accessibility Questions

The Vehicle Registration Number is pre-filled.

### Q. Number of wheelchair spaces per bus?

Please fill in the number of wheelchair spaces available on the vehicle, enter 0 if there are none.

### Q. If there are wheelchair spaces how are they accessed

Please select from the drop-down list of '*Low-floor vehicle suitable for wheelchair access*', '*Vehicles with lift suitable for wheelchair access*', '*Both low-floor and has a wheelchair lift*', or '*Not wheelchair accessible*'.

### Q. Mechanical access ramp

**Definition:** the entry and exit access ramp is mechanical and does not require manual deployment of the ramp by the driver.

Please select 'Yes' or 'No' from the drop-down list.

### Q. Equipped with centre door ramps

**Definition:** Centre doors also have a ramp.

Please select 'Yes' or 'No' from the drop-down list.

### Q. Exterior backlit route displays

**Definition:** A lit route display on the front of the vehicle

Please select 'Yes' or 'No' from the drop-down list.

### Q. Interior stop displays

**Definition:** A lit 'next stop' display inside the bus.

Please select 'Yes' or 'No' from the drop-down list.

### Q. Interior automated audible stop announcements

**Definition:** An automated 'next stop' announcement inside the vehicle.

Please select 'Yes' or 'No' from the drop-down list.

### Q. Yellow coloured bars (handrails) that highlight the bars (handrails) grasped by people

**Definition:** Bars/ handrails on the vehicle are colour contrasted with the other surrounding surfaces.

Please select 'Yes' or 'No' from the drop-down list.

### Q. Priority seating

**Definition:** A seat or seats indicating that persons with a disability or reduced mobility have priority for the use of that seat.

Please select 'Yes' or 'No' from the drop-down list.

### Q. Seat covers in a colour that contrast with the floor colour

**Definition:** Seat covers on the vehicle which are colour contrasted with the other surrounding surfaces.

Please select 'Yes' or 'No' from the drop-down list.

## Q. Induction Loop System

**Definition:** An audio technology which helps people with a hearing impairment, who use a hearing aid or cochlear implant, hear the driver or the next stop audio announcements.

Please select 'Yes' or 'No' from the drop-down list.



### 3.7 Contact Us

If you have any queries, please contact us by email at: [bus.data@nationaltransport.ie](mailto:bus.data@nationaltransport.ie)

### 3.8 Return date

We are asking for your Annual Bus Operator Returns earlier than previous years. This is to help you to have your Returns completed earlier in the year to avoid overlapping with applications for renewals, amendments and/or event or venue licences, as 2025 will be a busy year for applications.

**The final date for your completed returns to be submitted by 23:59, 31 March 2025. Non-submission by this date is a breach of the licence conditions and may be considered as part of any application to renew the licence. Data from late submissions may be used but non-compliance with the licence condition will be recorded.**

### 3.9 Return address

You may return the information (sections A and B):

By email to: [bus.data@nationaltransport.ie](mailto:bus.data@nationaltransport.ie)

or

By post to: Bus Data – Public Transport Regulation  
Ciarán O’Gorman  
National Transport Authority  
Haymarket House  
Smithfield  
Dublin 7  
D07 CF298

### 3.10 Acknowledgment

We appreciate your continued assistance in completing this form and should you require any further details, please do not hesitate to contact us.