All Island Strategic Rail Review

Consultation Paper

November 2021

Contents

Ministerial Foreword

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We firmly believe in the untapped potential of rail to contribute toward social and economic development across the island of Ireland, providing faster and more frequent connectivity, connecting communities, as well as helping us meet our ambitious climate action objectives.

If we are to tap that potential, then we believe there is a need to comprehensively and objectively examine how rail could deliver benefits across the island of Ireland and that is why we are undertaking this Review.

The Review expands on the commitment under the New Decade, New Approach agreement to examine the feasibility of a high/higher speed rail link between Belfast, Dublin and Cork and will look at ways to improve our current rail infrastructure, including the feasibility of high/higher speeds and electrification, better connections to the North-West, and role of rail in the efficient movement of goods.

The results will give our Departments an evidence-informed approach to delivering low carbon rail services and building a more resilient network to support sustainable growth across the island of Ireland.

The aim of this Review, and the evidence base that will underpin it, is to show the trade-offs in outcomes against objectives for alternative network options, outlining a potential investment framework for the coming decades. This Review will show the difference in network option outcomes that have clear blue water between them, ensuring stakeholders understand the impact of competing objectives to aid our decision-making.

We understand how valuable consultation is to the development of a Review of this magnitude, which is why engagement is an essential part of the process throughout.

In this Consultation Paper, we invite everyone to share their views.

While several questions are posed, we would urge participants to raise other issues which they believe may assist in developing the Review. The responses to this paper will help inform the development of an improved rail network on the island.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Eamon Ryan T.D.
Minister for Transport

Nichola Mallon MLA
Minister for Infrastructure

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Inside the process

In April 2021, the Minister for Transport, Eamon Ryan T.D., and the Minister for Infrastructure, Nichola Mallon MLA, announced the launch of an all-island Strategic Rail Review (the 'Review').

This Review will consider how the rail network on the island of Ireland can improve to promote sustainable connectivity into, and between, the major cities, enhance regional accessibility and support balanced regional development.

The Review will look at how the railways are used, how they could be used in future and how the network can evolve to serve the people on the island of Ireland and achieve policy goals.

In addition, the Review will consider the feasibility of high (above 200km/h[1]) / higher (up to 200km/h) speeds on the network and whether there is potential to increase use of the network for freight.

The Review's focus is not on commuter rail services within the major cities, but it will consider the interactions between proposed improvements to inter-urban rail and existing, or proposed, commuter rail services.

Today's rail network across the island of Ireland covers around 2,300 kilometers. This review will look at the network's current conditions and connectivity and identify ways that it can support wider policy objectives.

A Steering Group has been established to support this Review, chaired by the Department of Transport and composed of Department of Transport and Department for Infrastructure representatives, the Rail Operators and other key stakeholders.

The Review aims to use a data-driven, evidence-based approach to transparently show trade-offs between different objectives and identify viable options for the future of rail across the island of Ireland. The Review will be delivered over three phases:

- **Phase 1:** Review of the current context and role of rail through policy review, data analysis, environmental considerations, development of rail case studies, and consultation to gauge stakeholder and public priorities

- **Phase 2:** Identification of different service and connectivity concepts to address issues and opportunities for rail, applying the insights from Phase 1 to inform the selection of potential options

- **Phase 3:** Final appraisal of the developed concepts

A key element of the Review will be gaining insights from all stakeholders, which will add significant value to the Review. The purpose of this Consultation Paper is to provide information about how we are going about this Review, its purpose, and give everyone an opportunity to provide information that will inform the consideration of options.

To facilitate this, we ask the public to share their view on the future of rail, framed by the proposed high-level goals and objectives set out in this paper. Alongside this, we will invite key rail stakeholders on the island of Ireland, to share informed insights that could aid the Review.

Further information on how you can contribute to the Review is outlined at the end of this Consultation Paper.

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[1] https://www.uic.org/com/enews/nr/596-high-speed/article/the-definition-of-high-speed-rail?page=thickbox_enews

The policy opportunity

Rail is recognised on this island as an important asset to enable a better quality of life and more sustainable travel

The Government of Ireland and the Northern Ireland Executive both have ambitions to improve the transport system, recognising the important role that it plays in quality of life, economic activity, and the environment.

These key policy opportunities are relevant when planning for the future of the rail network.

Policy Opportunities

Decarbonisation

Several policies and strategies aim to address decarbonisation in the transport sector, including through developing alternative fuelled transport and reducing travel by car. Rail is seen as a key enabler with a move towards electric or hybrid trains, as well as through shifting passenger travel from private motor vehicles to rail, as this will reduce the carbon emissions associated with the use of diesel and petrol.

Opportunity for rail to contribute towards:
Climate action, clean energy, air quality.

Network Connectivity

Policies and plans identify the importance of investment in north-south connectivity, as well as enhancing links between major cities; including consideration of the potential for high/higher speed rail.

Opportunity for rail to contribute towards:
Supporting transport needs, compact growth, quality of life.

Regional Accessibility

Regional accessibility is a key element of many policies at the national and regional level, including a focus on improved connectivity to and from the North-West. Improving regional access means better economic and social connections for people who do not live in the seven major cities, increasing access to opportunity, and supporting balanced regional development.

Opportunity for rail to contribute towards:
Regional and rural development, inter-regional connectivity, quality of life.

Sustainable Mobility

Policies at every level of Government support sustainable mobility aims, with a focus on providing alternative travel options to reduce private motor vehicle use, integration of public transport services - with each other and with active travel networks, and managing travel demand, including through integrating transport and land use planning through strategies like compact growth.

Opportunity for rail to contribute towards:
Quality of life, low-carbon society, compact growth, integration, alternative travel options, managing travel demand.

Strong Economies

Better connecting major cities, ports and airports can facilitate new economic opportunities. At a regional level, the three regional assemblies in Ireland acknowledge the economic potential of rail corridors; for efficient freight movements, connecting workforces, and supporting tourism. In Northern Ireland rail is critical to supporting the growth of the economy and potential new industrial opportunities.

Opportunity for rail to contribute towards:
Economic growth, efficient movement of people and freight, balance regional and urban growth, connecting people to jobs, international connectivity, economic competitiveness.

Economic and Financial Feasibility

With significant plans for investment in transport infrastructure, delivering greater value for money is key. Ireland's Public Spending Code requires that for a project to proceed it must be the 'best means to a particular policy goal,' while Northern Ireland's Guide to Expenditure Appraisal and Evaluation aims to assess what is best for the people of Northern Ireland and to deliver maximum benefit.

Opportunity for rail to contribute towards: Efficiency, meeting demand, optimising benefit, accountability.

Goals and Objectives

To guide the development of the Review, six goals, with supporting objectives, have been drafted and are to be confirmed by completion of the first phase of the review.

These address relevant policy objectives in both jurisdictions and will be used to help understand which options best support those policy objectives. Potential options will be reviewed against these goals.

Goal	Objectives
Goal 1: Contribute to Decarbonisation	To reduce the carbon emissions associated with rail's construction, operation, and maintenance.
	To reduce the carbon emissions from motor vehicle travel.
Goal 2: Improve All Island Connectivity Between Major Cities	To provide an attractive public transport choice for travel between the seven major cities of Belfast, Cork, Derry/ Londonderry, Dublin, Galway, Limerick and Waterford
Goal 3: Enhance Regional And Rural Accessibility	To give people in rural and regional areas better access to economic opportunities, health, education, and civic services.
	To improve inter-regional accessibility.
Goal 4: Encourage Sustainable Mobility	To help manage demand through compact growth and better integration of public transport with land use.
	To enhance the integration of rail with other transport modes.
	To reduce reliance on private passenger vehicles.
Goal 5: Foster Economic Activity	To contribute to balanced economic growth between urban and regional areas.
	To support the efficient movement of goods to and from economic centres and international gateways.
	To support the efficient movement of people between economic centres, and to and from economic centres and international gateways.
Goal 6: Achieve Economic And Financial Feasibility	To plan investment in rail that is financially feasible.
	To access potential funding.
	To ensure the benefit cost ratio of investment in the railway network is considered alongside meeting objectives.

Ongoing projects for the rail system

Improvements to the rail network and services are already in planning, some of these are shown in the below table.

| Title	Purpose	Location	Status
Additional Rail Fleet	41 InterCity Railcars are under construction and scheduled for service entry by 2023.	Greater Dublin Area (largely)	In construction
Belfast Transport Hub	The new Belfast Transport hub will be the main, transport gateway to Belfast, creating a sense of arrival in a modern, progressive city, with rail, bus and coach connections to all parts of Northern Ireland and beyond, scheduled for completion by 2025.	Belfast	Enabling Works
Cork Commuter Rail Programme	A series of projects to develop and expand rail infrastructure and services in the Cork Metropolitan Area. Phase 1 of the Programme has been included in Ireland's National Recovery & Resilience Plan for delivery by 2026.	Cork Metropolitan Area	Strategic Assessment
DART+	A series of projects to develop and expand the DART network in the Greater Dublin Area, with approval of the Preliminary Business Case expected by end 2021.	Greater Dublin Area	Preliminary Business Case
Dublin-Cork Line Speed Improvements	A programme of works over the coming years to improve line speeds on the Dublin – Cork line.	Multiple	In construction
Enterprise Rolling Stock Replacement	Replacement of the Enterprise fleet to provide 9 new inter-city train set for hourly service frequency on the Belfast-Dublin corridor by 2027. Rolling stock to be future proofed for electrification.	Belfast - Dublin	Pre-Planning
Lisburn Area Renewals	Renewal of existing Track and Signalling within the Lisburn Station Limits and enhanced capacity by 2024.	Lisburn	Pre-Construction
National Train Control Centre	The existing Iarnród Éireann central train control centre is due for replacement due to capacity constraints with the IT systems nearing life expiration, with the replacement system expected to be fully operational by 2026.	Dublin, with network wide benefits	In construction
New Trains 3 Programme	Provision of 21 additional carriages to integrate with existing class 4000 during 2022.	NIR Network Wide	Construction
Park and Ride Programme	Provision of additional Park and Ride spaces throughout the network at existing stations over the period 2023 to 2025.	Ballymena, Bellarena, Moira, Mossley West, Trooperslane	Planning
Station Development Programme	Enhance facilities at existing Rail Stations on the network over the period 2023 to 2025.	Yorkgate, Lurgan, Ballymena, Posnett St.	Planning

The rail network and how we use it

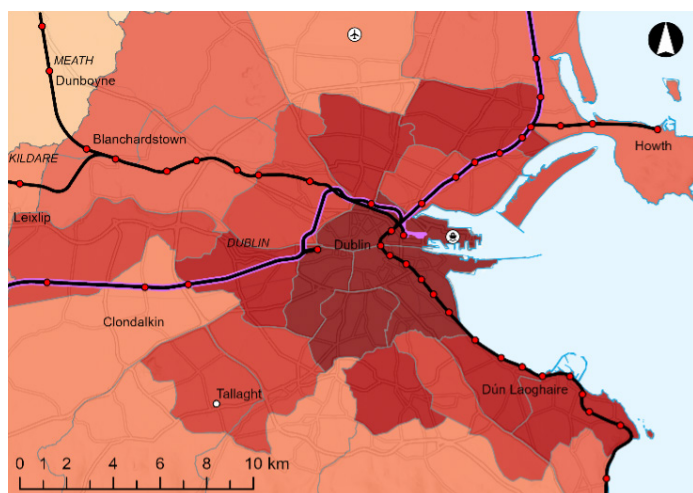## Rail network coverage and population density:

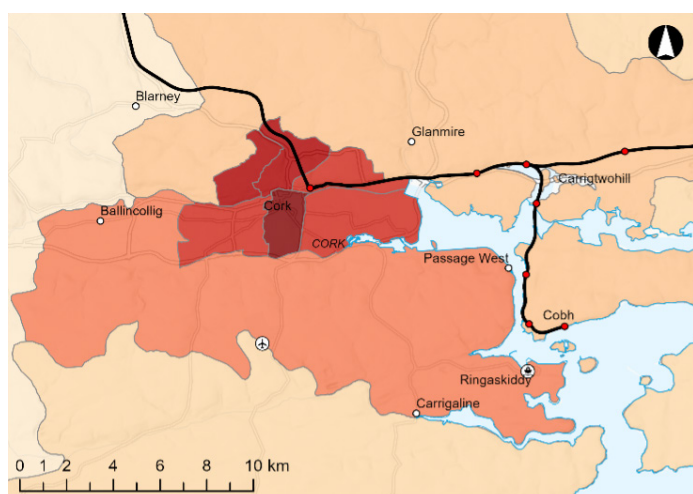**Figure 1.** *Rail network coverage and population density*

The densely populated eastern side of the island of Ireland has the most rail network coverage
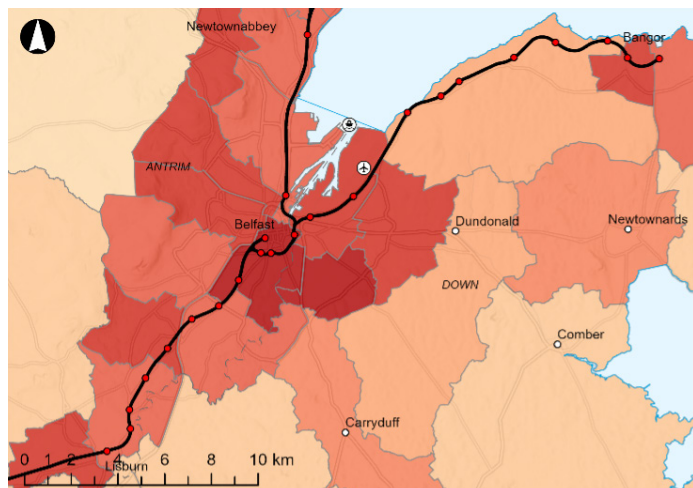
Figure 2. *Rail network coverage and population density - Belfast*

Figure 3. *Rail network coverage and population density - Dublin*

Figure 4. *Rail network coverage and population density - Cork*

The population density of the island of Ireland is highest along the east coast, particularly around the two largest cities of Dublin and Belfast, and the corridor between them.

Relatively high population densities are found in Leinster and eastern Ulster, as well as in the vicinity of the other major cities of Cork, Derry/Londonderry, Galway, Limerick, and Waterford. The areas of lowest population density are found along the western seaboard outside the main cities and regional centres.

There are approximately twenty rail lines for passenger travel on the island of Ireland. These mainly support intercity train services and, between them, stop at 199 stations across the network.

The island of Ireland's rail network is centred on Dublin and, to a lesser extent, Belfast. The network is most extensive in the south and the east of the island. At its peak in the early twentieth century, almost every town in Ireland was served by rail. While the network contracted in the mid-twentieth century some routes have reopened in recent decades, including lines from Cork to Midleton, Ennis to Athenry, and Whiteabbey to Antrim.

Enhancements to the existing track and stations have also occurred in recent years, such as four-tracking between Inchicore and Hazelhatch and the introduction of hourly services between Derry/Londonderry and Belfast.

Most rail corridors radiate from the two cities or branch off the main routes to them. The route from Waterford to Athenry via Limerick is the only key cross-country link that does not connect directly to Dublin or Belfast.

Five counties in Ulster on either side of the border (Donegal, Tyrone, Fermanagh, Monaghan, and Cavan) have no connection to the rail network. The network's focus on Dublin and Belfast necessitates lengthy and circuitous routes for rail travel within and across many of the regions.

Each of the seven major cities serves as a terminus for rail services. Dublin, Belfast, and Cork each have a suburban rail network, while the other major cities only have one station each. The rail networks for the three cities with suburban services are shown in more detail on the left.

There are three rail freight services on the network, including the recently opened Ballina to Waterford Port. These services connect Ballina, Westport, and Navan to the ports of Waterford (Belview) and Dublin. The freight lines from Mayo share track with passenger services along the corridor from Mayo to Dublin, along with the corridor from Kildare to

Waterford for services to Belview. Freight services to Navan share track with passenger services between Dublin and Drogheda before continuing to Navan on a line which is no longer served by passenger trains. There are no rail freight operations in Northern Ireland.

As an island, ports and airports are the main international gateways. Four of the island's ports are connected to the rail network (Larne and Rosslare for passengers and Belview and Dublin for freight).

No airport on the island currently has a rail connection, but all three airports in Northern Ireland are located adjacent to a rail line. The Lisburn – Antrim line next to Belfast International Airport is disused, there is no station at City of Derry Airport, and for Belfast City Airport the closest station is over a one kilometre (0.6 miles) walk away on the other side of a dual carriageway. Kerry Airport is likewise located around one kilometre from the nearest station.

The proposed MetroLink in Dublin will provide a metro connection to Dublin Airport. While this will not be a direct connection to the national rail network, it will allow for interchange with the mainline rail network at Glasnevin.
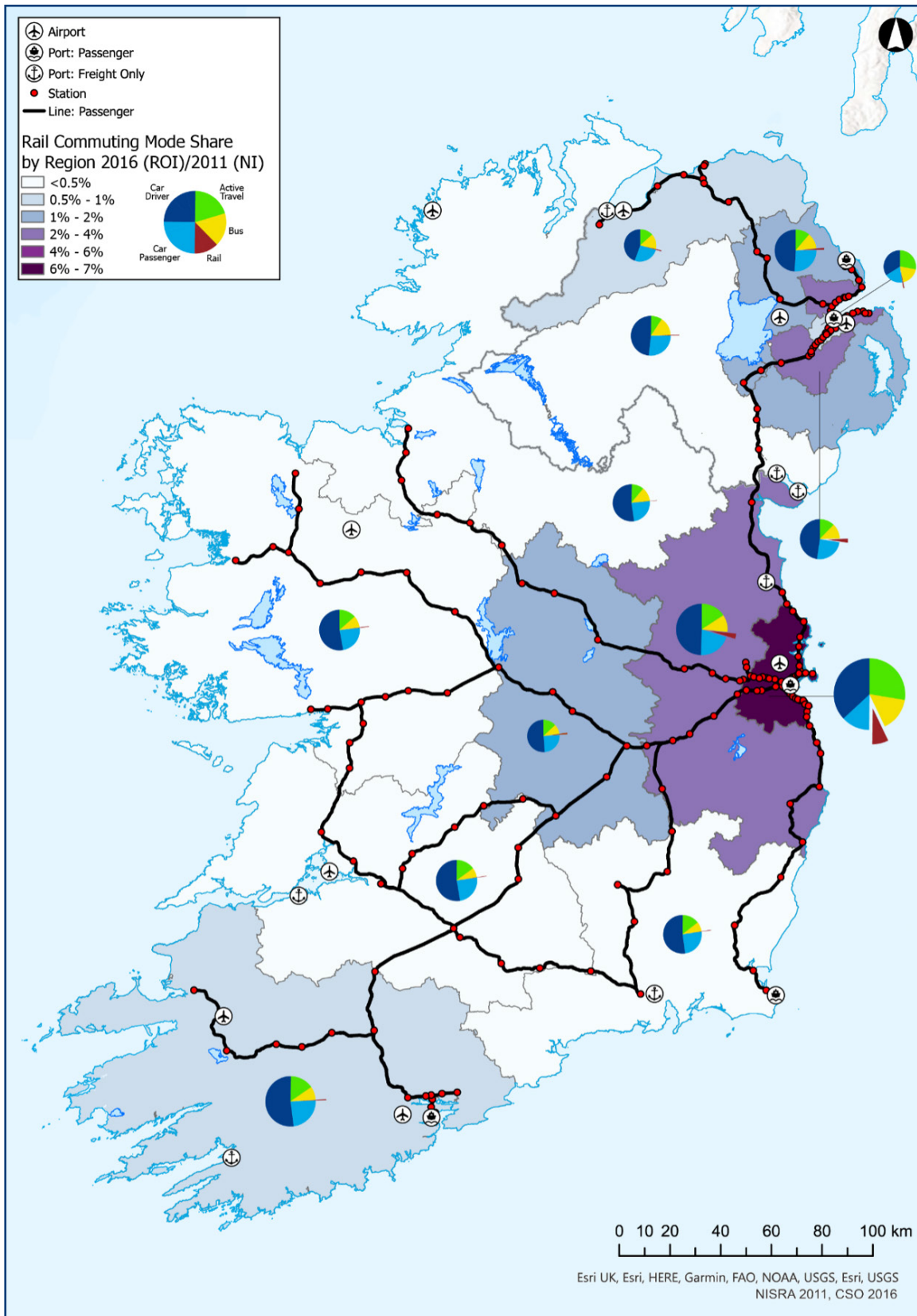
Rail's passenger mode share: Travel to work

Figure 5. *Passenger travel mode share to work*

A small percentage of people travel by rail for commuting, particularly outside Dublin and Belfast

The proportion of people travelling to work, school, or university by rail varies across Ireland, In Dublin, where rail has its largest share of commuting trips, overall share of travel by rail is 7%. The regions around Belfast and Dublin are the only others where rail's commuting mode share exceeds 2%.

In much of the west, northwest, and southeast, rail has a negligible mode share. This reflects the limited coverage and number of services on much of the rail network, as well as the impact of car-centric low density development patterns in recent decades. Those in more rural regions who travel by train are more likely to do so for occasional long-distance business and leisure trips, rather than regular commuting.

A survey of the Belfast-Dublin Enterprise customers in 2019 found that just over half of people were regular customers, with 31% of people travelling at least once a week on the service, and 24% travelling at least once a month.

The car, including drivers and passengers, is the dominant mode for commuting in all regions, accounting for half of commutes even in Dublin and exceeding three-quarters of all commuting trips in several regions.

Buses have a higher mode share than rail but do not exceed the 10%-20% range in any region. The active modes of walking and cycling have their highest share in Belfast and Dublin, accounting for more than a quarter of commuting trips in each.

The pie charts on these maps show the proportion of trips to work for residents in each region taken by each mode of transport: walking/cycling, bus, rail, car passenger, and car driver. The size of each pie charts is proportionate to the number of people commuting in each region.

Journey purpose of rail trips

Visiting friends and family and other leisure activities account for almost half of all rail journeys across the Iarnród Éireann Intercity network. A survey of 3,700 InterCity passengers in 2020 found that only 12% of passengers were travelling for commuting to work, while 14% were travelling to third level education institutions, as shown in Figure 6.
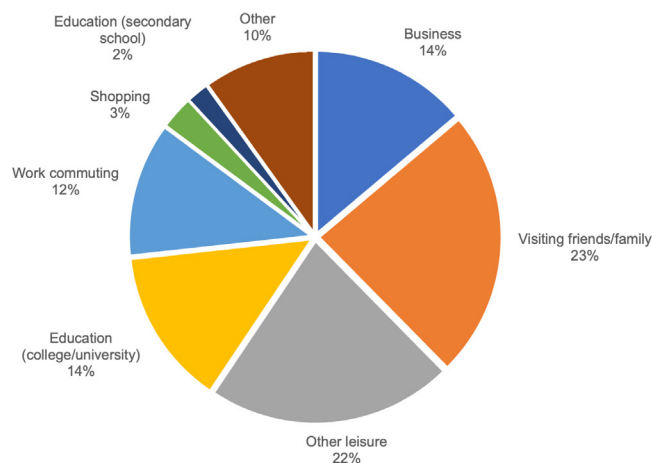
Figure 6. *Journey purpose for InterCity rail journeys, Iarnród Éireann 2020*

Passenger trends: Passengers at rail stations

Figure 7. *Passenger numbers per rail station*

Figure 8. *Passenger numbers per rail station - Belfast*

Figure 9. *Passenger numbers per rail station - Dublin*

Figure 10. *Passenger numbers per rail station - Cork*

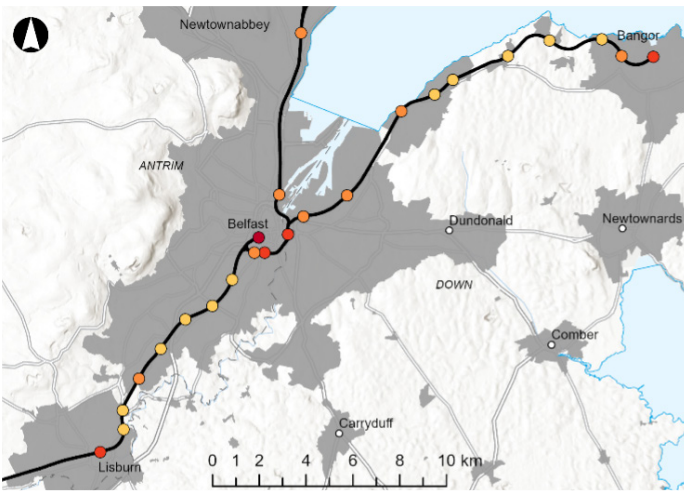## Large stations that support several rail lines have the most passengers

According to annual statistics from Translink and annual figures extrapolated from the NTA National Rail Census, Connolly Station in Dublin is the busiest station on the island with around 10.4 million passenger boardings and alightings per annum on average between 2017 and 2019. This corresponds to approximately 200,000 passengers per week.

Pearse, Heuston, and Tara Street in Dublin, along with Great Victoria Street in Belfast, also have high passenger numbers with around 8.5 million, 6.3 million, 5.5 million and 5.2 million passengers per year, respectively.
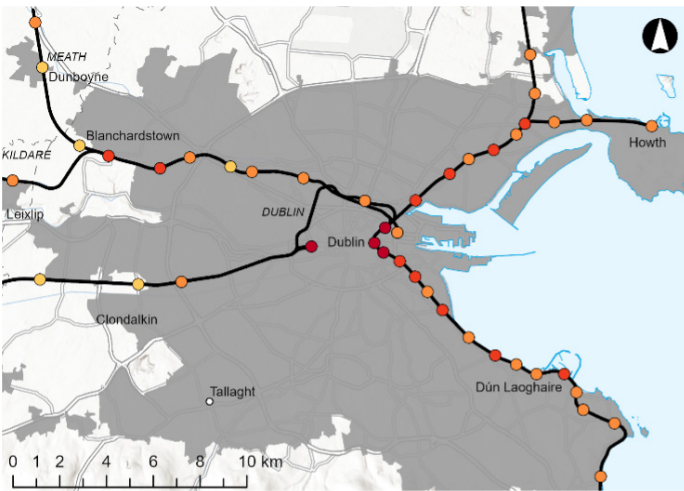
Of the other major cities, Cork Kent station has the highest annual passenger numbers with around 2.3 million, followed by Galway Ceannt station with around 1.0 million, Limerick Colbert station with around 750,000, Derry/Londonderry with around 500,000, and Waterford Plunkett station with around 275,000.

Outside of the seven major cities, the stations with the highest annual passenger numbers are Bangor with 1.6 million, Balbriggan with 1.3 million, Limerick Junction with 1.1 million (although these are almost all transferring passengers), and Sallins and Naas Station with around 1.0 million.
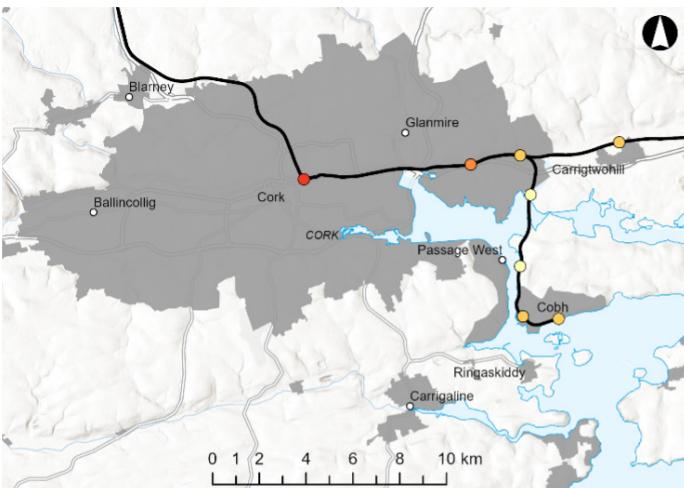
Of the three cities with urban rail networks, the network in Dublin (including stations to Drogheda, Maynooth, M3 Parkway, Newbridge, and Greystones) has 79.2 million passenger boardings and alightings per year. The network in Belfast (including stations to Whitehead, Mossley West, Lisburn, and Bangor) has 18.9 million, and the network in Cork (including stations to Mallow, Midleton, and Cobh) has 4.4 million.

Rail and bus travel trends

Around twice as many regional bus journeys are taken on the island of Ireland, compared to rail journeys

In 2019, 127 million regional bus journeys (excluding city services) were taken across the island of Ireland, compared with 65 million rail journeys.

The number of annual rail and regional bus passenger journeys follows a similar trend to economic performance in both Ireland and Northern Ireland. The demand for rail and regional bus services started to decline after the economic recession in 2008. Regional bus travel remained largely steady between 2010 and 2017, but recently grew 9% between 2017 and 2019. Across the island of Ireland, rail has experienced a growth in passenger numbers of 37% since 2011. Within each jurisdiction the growth in rail passenger journeys has been approximately 34% in Ireland and 45% in Northern Ireland.
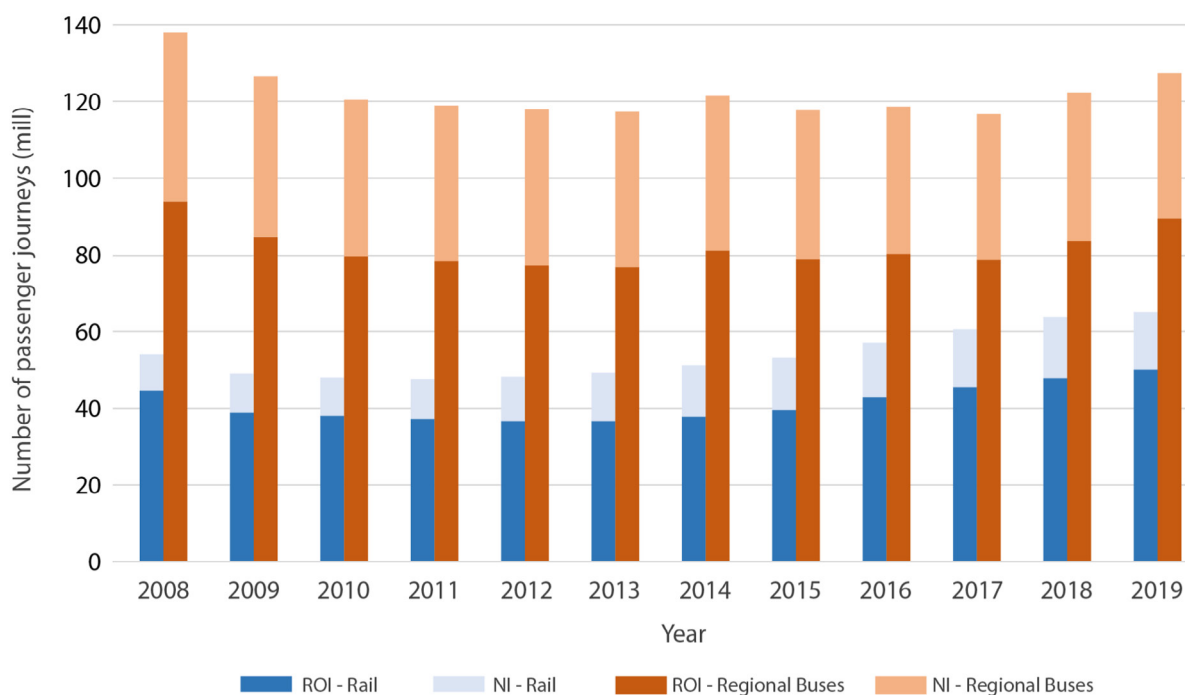
Figure 11. *Annual rail and regional bus passenger journeys (mill.), [Source: CSO, Department for Infrastructure, NISRA]*

Car travel trends

The distance travelled by car has also increased slightly over the past 10 years

Analysis over the same period shows that the average distance travelled by car increased slightly across the island of Ireland, from 8,900km (5,500 miles) in 2008, to 9,200km (5,700 miles) in 2019. This fluctuated over the period, with Ireland experiencing a drop to 8,600km (5,400 miles) in 2012 followed by strong growth over the period 2013-2017, peaking at 10,000km (6,300 miles) in 2017. This then declined again to 9,400km (5,800 miles) by 2019.

The initial decline and growth to 2017 is explained by the impact of the economic recession and subsequent recovery, while the more recent decline is likely influenced by increased congestion in urban areas encouraging a change in travel patterns. The growth in public transport journeys indicates that a shift from driving to public transport is occurring.

Northern Ireland's average car distance travelled per person dropped to 7,300km (4,600 miles) in 2015, before climbing between 2017 and 2019 to 8,600km (5,300 miles). This growth was in line with several new road projects that opened in previous years including the A2 Shore Road, the A31 Magherafelt bypass, and the A8 Larne dual carriageway.
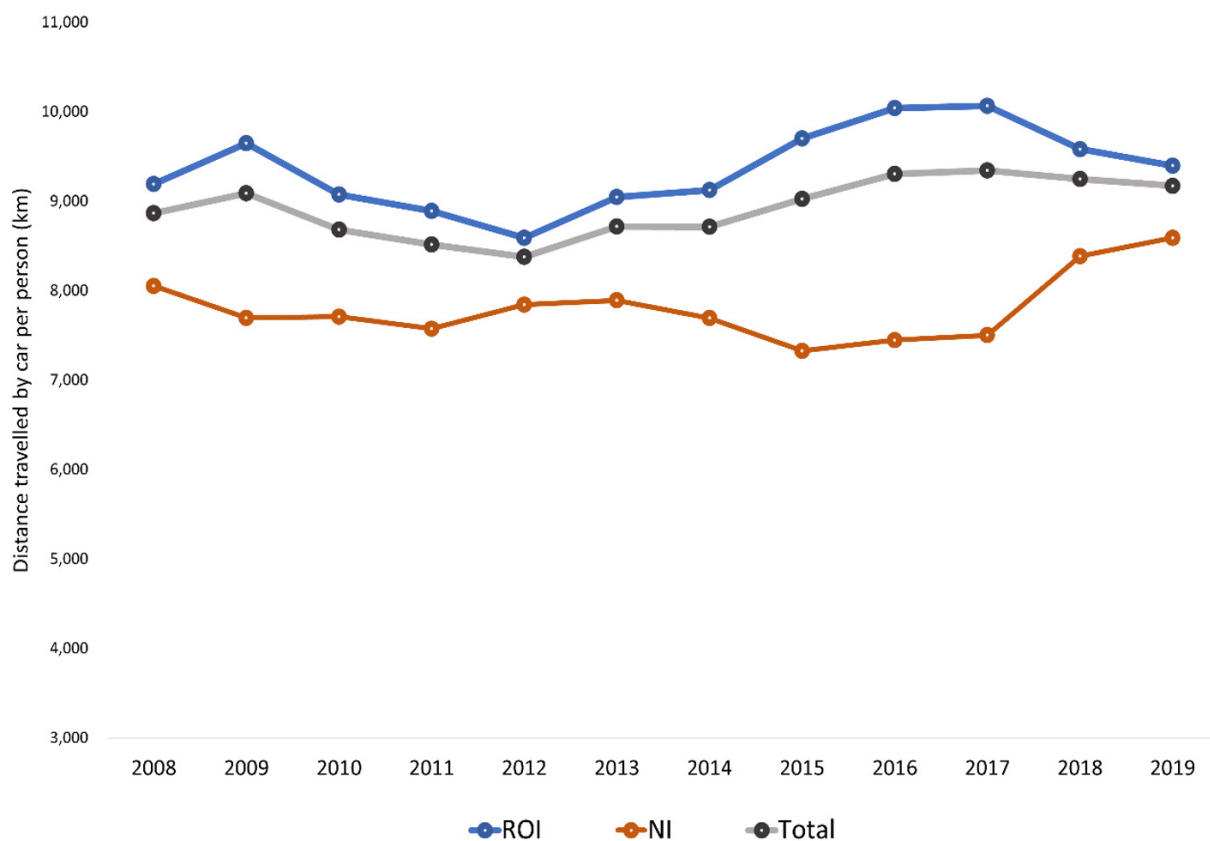
Figure 12. *Average annual distance travelled by car per person (km)*
[Source: CSO, Department for Infrastructure, NISRA]

Service frequency for each station
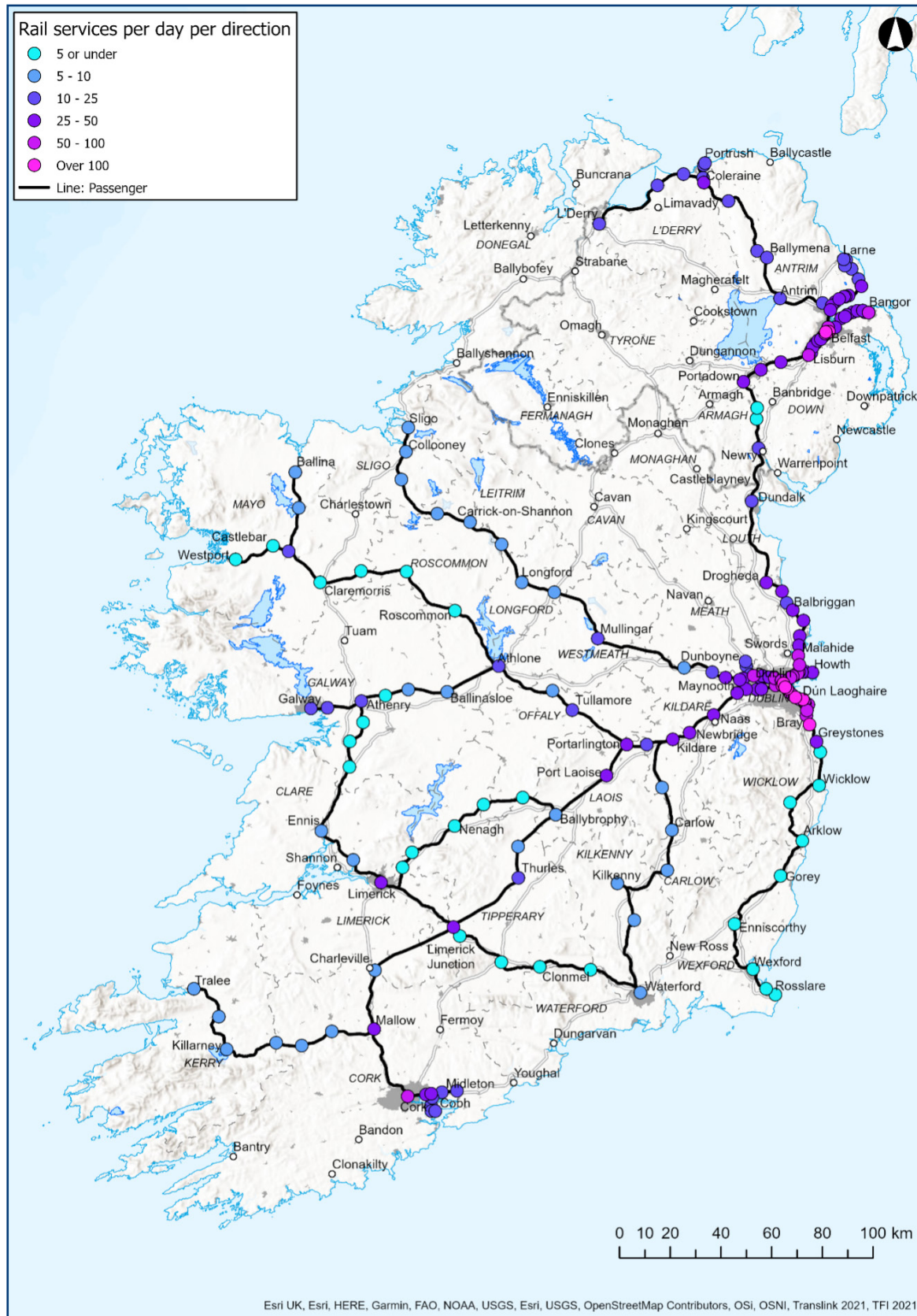
Figure 13. *Service frequency per rail station*

Figure 14. *Service frequency per rail station - Belfast*

Figure 15. *Service frequency per rail station - Dublin*

Figure 16. *Service frequency per rail station - Cork*

## Some regional train stations have as few as two services per day in each direction

The number of rail services at each station varies significantly across the network. The station with the highest number of services is Dublin Connolly which has trains every three to four minutes in each direction across all lines at peak times. Services at Connolly include the DART, Intercity services to Belfast, Sligo, and Rosslare, and Commuter services along each of the four lines radiating from Dublin. The other Dublin city centre stations of Tara Street, Pearse, and Grand Canal Dock are the next busiest stations; likewise served by DART, Commuter, and some Intercity services.

The most frequently served stations outside of Dublin are Lanyon Place and Great Victoria Street in Belfast along with Cork Kent station. At the other end of the range, stations such as Cloughjordan, Roscrea, Carrick-on-Suir, Tipperary and Clonmel only have two services scheduled in each direction per day.

The lines with the highest frequencies are generally those in the vicinity of Dublin, Belfast, and Cork, while the lowest frequencies are found on the Limerick Junction – Waterford, Limerick – Nenagh – Ballybrophy, Ennis – Athenry, Athlone – Westport, and Greystones – Rosslare routes.

The number of services provided on some rail lines is constrained due to the need for some services to share the same track. The Belfast-Dublin enterprise service shares the same track as the DART service to Malahide, limiting the number of intercity services that can be provided. The route from Dublin to Rosslare south of Greystones has notably lower frequencies than other routes to Dublin, reflecting the capacity constraints of its single-track line south of Bray and shared track with DART services in Dublin.

There is a strong correlation between service frequencies and passenger numbers at stations. While this generally reflects the distribution of population density, examples such as the Rosslare line, which serves a relatively densely populated corridor and is close to Dublin, suggest that low levels of service might dampen demand for rail. In locations with low frequencies, rail is generally a viable option only for occasional long-distance travel and plays little role in regular travel patterns. With the increase in hybrid working patterns, higher levels of occasional longer-distance commutes to urban centres presents an opportunity for rail.
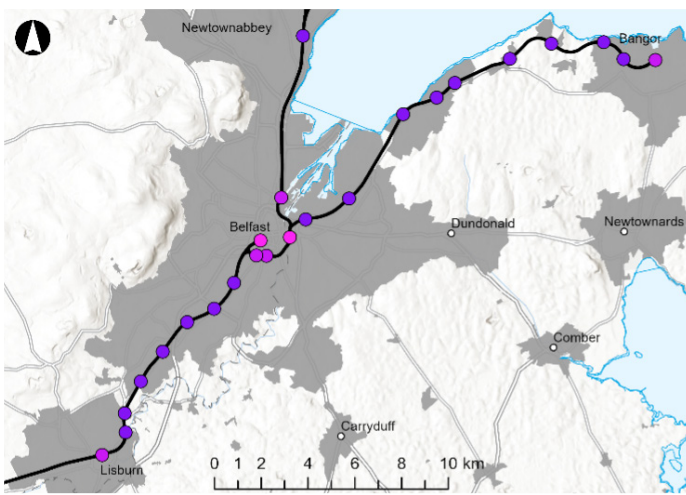
Figure 17. *Platform accessibility*
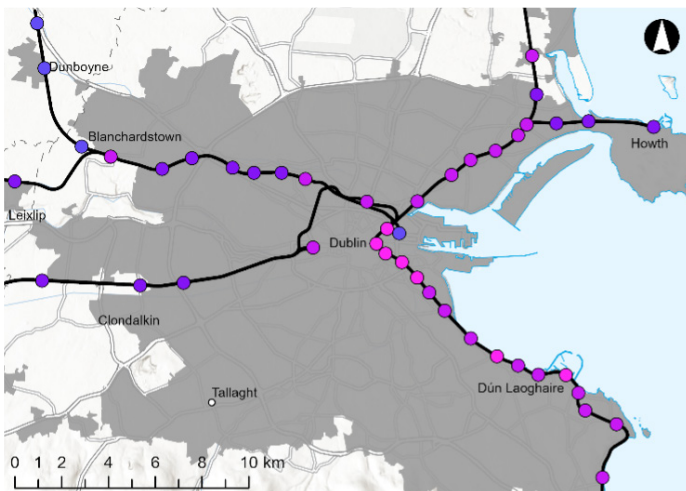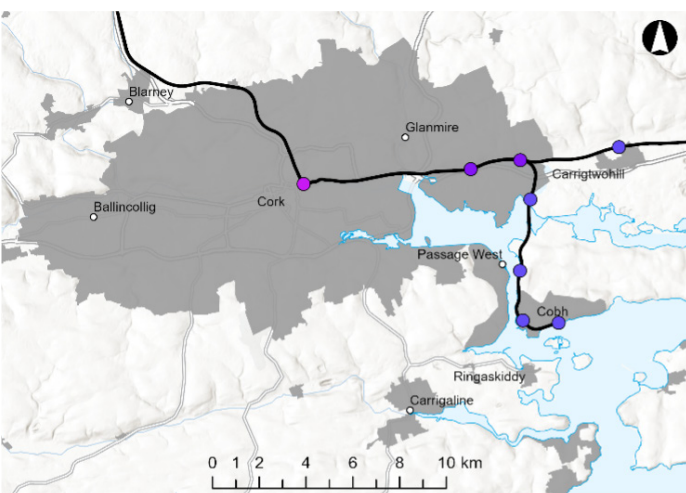
Accessibility

The rail network has a key role in opening opportunities to travel for those with mobility impairments. One key measurement of accessibility is whether passengers in wheelchairs can independently access all platforms at their origin and destination stations. Historically footbridges provided access to other platforms at many stations which presented challenges for those in wheelchairs, although in recent years lifts and ramps have been added to stations across the network. Maintenance of lifts has been an issue in recent years, with lifts at some locations being out of order for up to several weeks consecutively.

Across the island's rail network, 139 stations provide full wheelchair access to all platforms, 43 require passengers to contact the operator prior to travel, while 17 currently have at least one platform that is not accessible.
A significant proportion of the stations without full independent access for wheelchair users are located in the Dublin, Belfast, and Cork suburban networks, with the majority of stations in Dublin requiring arrangements to be made prior to travel.
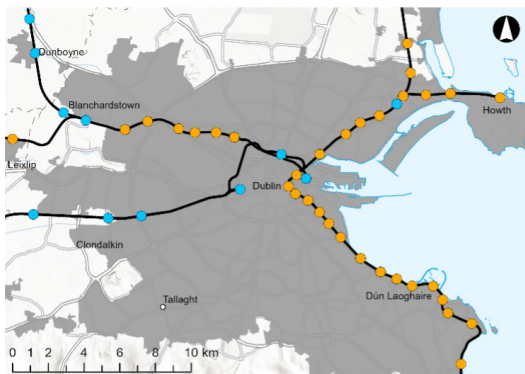

Figure 18. *Platform accessibility - Dublin*

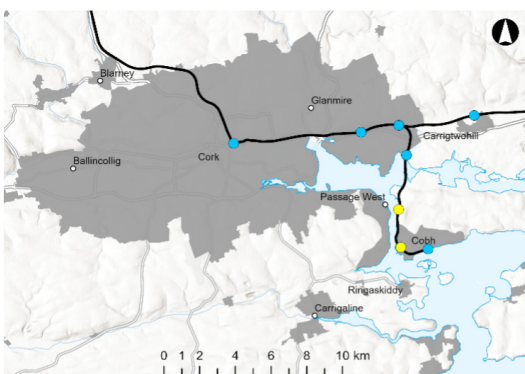**Figure 19.** *Platform accessibility - Belfast*

Figure 20. *Platform accessibility - Cork*

Travel times by different modes

The same journey can take different lengths of time, depending on the transport mode

Data sourced from Google Maps shows that travel between some towns and cities can take more than twice as long by rail, compared with travel by bus or car. This has been exacerbated by the major expansion of the motorway network in recent decades compared with more limited investment in the rail network.

The rail system on the island of Ireland is generally based around discrete services to the major urban centres. On these routes rail is generally competitive with other modes as it is unaffected by congestion in urban areas.

However, interchange between services can sometimes involve significant waiting times. As a result, for some journeys requiring interchange rail is less competitive than other modes in terms of journey times. This is particularly noticeable for locations that are within the same region, but connected by different radial rail routes to Dublin, although trips between major cities are also impacted.

An example of the former is Wexford to Waterford, which takes six hours by rail but under one hour by car. An example of the latter is the Cork to Belfast route which takes almost seven hours by train, and six hours by bus, but only four and a half hours by car. Rail is competitive with driving between Cork and Limerick despite the need for interchange as the two cities are not linked by motorway.

For towns such as Letterkenny and Omagh, which are not currently served by the rail network, using the rail network requires either driving or taking a bus to the nearest town or city with a train station. The lack of integration between rail and bus timetables can contribute to uncompetitive public transport journey times.

Table 1. *Journey travel times between cities and towns, 09:00 weekday departure*

Origin - Destination	Journey Times		
	Drive Time	**Rail Time**	**Bus Time**
Athlone - Galway	1hrs 01min	1hrs 01min	1hrs 18min
Dublin - Belfast	1hrs 56min	2hrs 15min	2hrs 42min
Coleraine - Bangor	1hrs 23min	2hrs 39min*	3hrs 08min*
Port Laoise - Dublin	1hrs 19min	0hrs 55min	2hrs 05min
Cork - Belfast	4hrs 18min	6hrs 44min*	5hrs 50min*
Cork - Limerick	1hrs 33min	1hrs 41min*	1hrs 45min
Wexford - Waterford	0hrs 50min	06hrs 01min*	0hrs 50min
Tralee - Cork	1hrs 46min	2hrs 40min*	2hrs 15min
Newry - Belfast	0hrs 47min	1hrs 49min*	1hrs 40min
Coleraine - Derry/Londonderry	0hrs 46min	0hrs 51min	1hrs 14min
Clonmel - Limerick	1hrs 25min	1hrs 47min*	1hrs 28min

Indicates that interchange is required for journey

Get involved

Thank you for taking the time to engage with this Consultation Paper.

We invite interested members of the public to share their thoughts via an online public consultation form.

The public consultation will launch on Monday 29 November 2021 and will remain open for submissions until Friday 21 January 2022.

Interested parties can find all the relevant information at the consultation website: www.strategicrailreview.com and will be invited to share insights on several areas framed by the information in this paper.

In addition to a public consultation, we will be engaging directly with specific stakeholders in a targeted consultation, identified as those having a significant interest in the future of rail on the island of Ireland. This consultation will take place in the duration that the public consultation is open.

The output of these consultations will feed directly into the Review and support the development of high-level scenarios for the future of the rail network.