



**TRANSPORT  
SCOTLAND**  
CÒMHDHAIL ALBA

# Scottish Transport Statistics 2022

## Summary Transport Statistics

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## 1. Introduction

This chapter highlights some of the main findings from Scottish Transport Statistics, the accompanying summary tables provide longer term trends than those included in the individual chapters and include comparisons between Scotland and Great Britain. This publication covers data up until 2021-22.

## 2. The content of this chapter

This chapter covers the following topics:

3. Overview of travel in Scotland
4. Motor vehicles, traffic and road casualties
5. Public transport: bus, rail, air and ferry
6. Personal travel (e.g. driving, walking and cycling; travel to work and school)
7. Cross-border transport
8. Environment and emissions

## 3. Overview of travel in Scotland

Transport and travel habits in Scotland were profoundly affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, with restrictions on travel and daily activity in place for large parts of 2020. Comparisons with 2020 should therefore be treated with caution.

Public transport journeys rose by 95%, with 295 million public transport journeys made by either bus, rail, air, or ferry in 2021-22. This was up from the 151 million public transport journeys recorded in 2020-21.

Bus remained by far the most commonly used form of public transport in 2021-22, with 79% of public transport journeys made by bus, 16% by rail, 2% by air and 3% by ferry.

The number of bus journeys increased by 87% in 2021-22. This followed on from a generally declining trend which had seen bus passenger numbers drop by 21% in the ten years leading up to 2019-20.

Rail journeys, which had been steadily increasing in the years immediately prior to the pandemic, showed an increase of 225% over the year.

Air passengers, which had increased by 28% in the ten years prior to the pandemic, then fell by 0.6% between 2020 and 2021. Ferry passengers showed an increase of 56% over the year.

Road traffic also rose in 2021-22,. Overall road traffic increased by 15%, with car traffic also increasing by 15%. This followed a steadily increasing trend with road traffic increasing by 10% in the 10 years up to 2019.

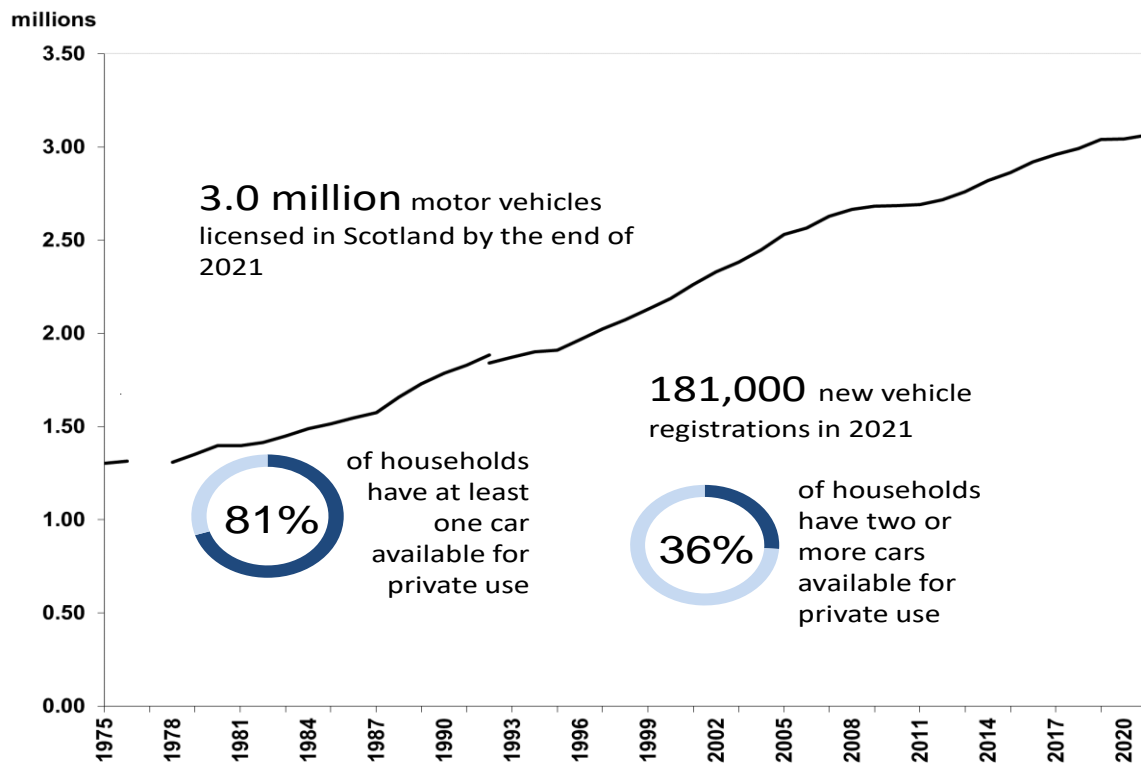
During the pandemic cycling was one of the few transport types to demonstrate an increase in traffic. However, estimates now show that on-road cycling decreased by 27% over the past year.

	<b>2016-17</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2021-22</b>	<b>Change over 1 year</b>	<b>Change over 5 years</b>
Car Traffic (m/veh km)	35,484	27,032	31,063	14.9%	-12.5%
Pedal Cycle Traffic (on-road) (m/veh km)	288	597	435	-27.1%	51%
ScotRail Passengers	94.2	14.4	46.7	225%	-50.5%
Bus Passengers (millions)	392	125	234	87.2%	-40.3%
Air Passengers (millions)	26.9	7.039	7.0	-0.6%	-74.0%
Ferry Passengers	10.1	4.9	7.7	55.3%	-23.8%
	<i>Source: STS 2022, Table S1 except Traffic estimates from table 5.3.</i>				

## 4. Motor vehicles, traffic and road casualties

### 4.1 Motor vehicles

Figure 1: Motor vehicles licensed in Scotland



There were 3.0 million motor vehicles licensed in Scotland in 2021. This is the highest level recorded, having increased slightly from 2020.

The total number of vehicles registered in Scotland has been increasing steadily over the longer term. The current total is 14% higher than in 2011 and has more than tripled since 1964.

The number of *new* vehicle registrations increased by 13% in 2021. During the UK lockdown (which applied from 23 March 2020), vehicle dealerships and showrooms were required to close, removing the main method by which new vehicles are sold in Scotland. This was lifted in Scotland on the 29<sup>th</sup> June. However local restrictions may have applied at later points in the year.

Whilst the significant decrease in 2020 will be linked to the pandemic, the number of new registrations had also decreased in the previous three years. This suggests that

in recent years people have been buying fewer new vehicles, but retaining existing vehicles for longer.

There were fewer vehicles per person in Scotland than in Great Britain as a whole (56 compared to 60 per hundred population), as has consistently been the case in recent years.

## 4.2 The road network

There were 57,077 kilometres of public road in Scotland in 2021. Seven per cent of this was trunk road, which is managed centrally by Transport Scotland; the remaining roads are the responsibility of Local Authorities.

In Scotland, there was 10.4 kilometres of road per 1,000 people, compared to 6.1 km per 1,000 people in GB as a whole.

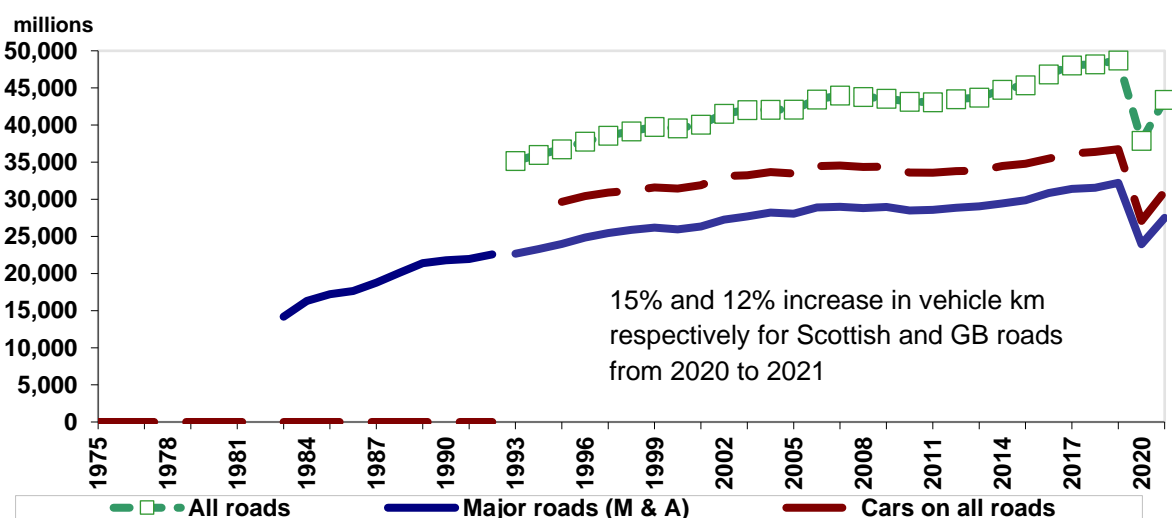
## 4.3 Road traffic

In 2021, 43.4 billion vehicle kilometres were travelled, an increase of 15% compared to the previous year, and 1% more than in 2011.

Prior to the pandemic, the volume of traffic on major roads (Motorways and A roads) had more than doubled since 1983, from an estimated 14,185 million vehicle kilometres to around 32,000 million vehicle kilometres in 2019.

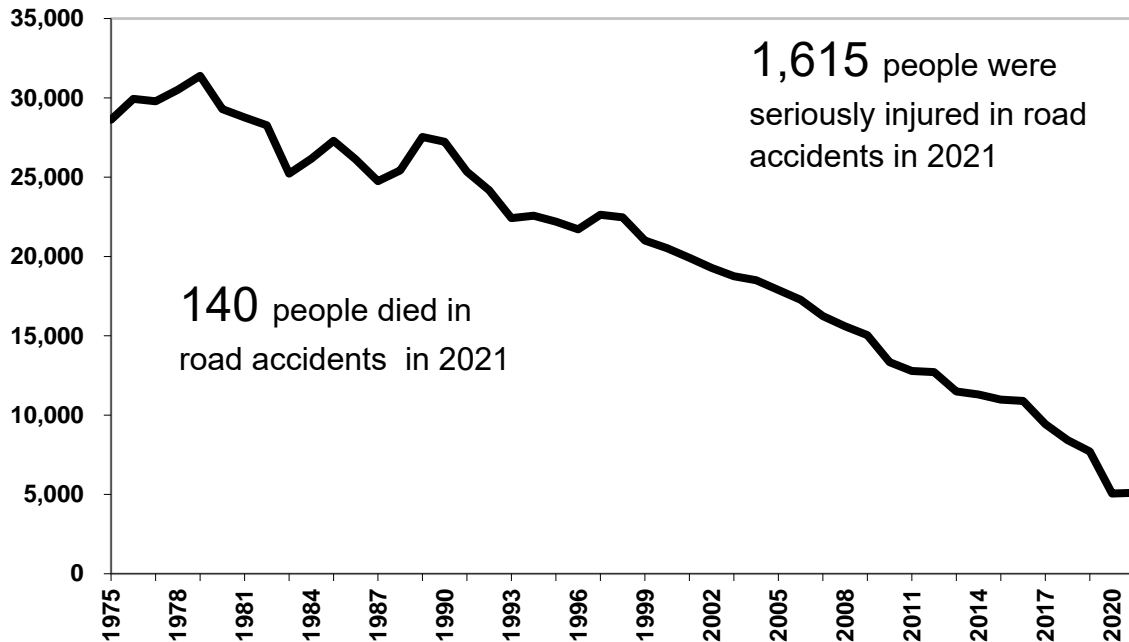
Car and van users reported that 12% of journeys were delayed due to traffic congestion in 2021.

Figure 2: Traffic in Scotland (vehicle km)



## 4.4 Road casualties

Figure 3: Reported road casualties of all severities – including fatal, seriously injured and slightly injured







The total number of casualties on Scottish roads rose 1% between 2020 and 2021 and is at the second lowest level since records began over 50 years ago.

These latest figures will have been influenced by the reduction in traffic seen over the course of the pandemic. However, prior to the pandemic recorded casualties were declining. The total number of road casualties decreased by 62% over the last decade. Casualties of all severities have fallen over this period.

In Scotland in 2021, for every thousand people in the population, 0.32 were killed or seriously injured in road accidents, compared to 0.42 for Great Britain.

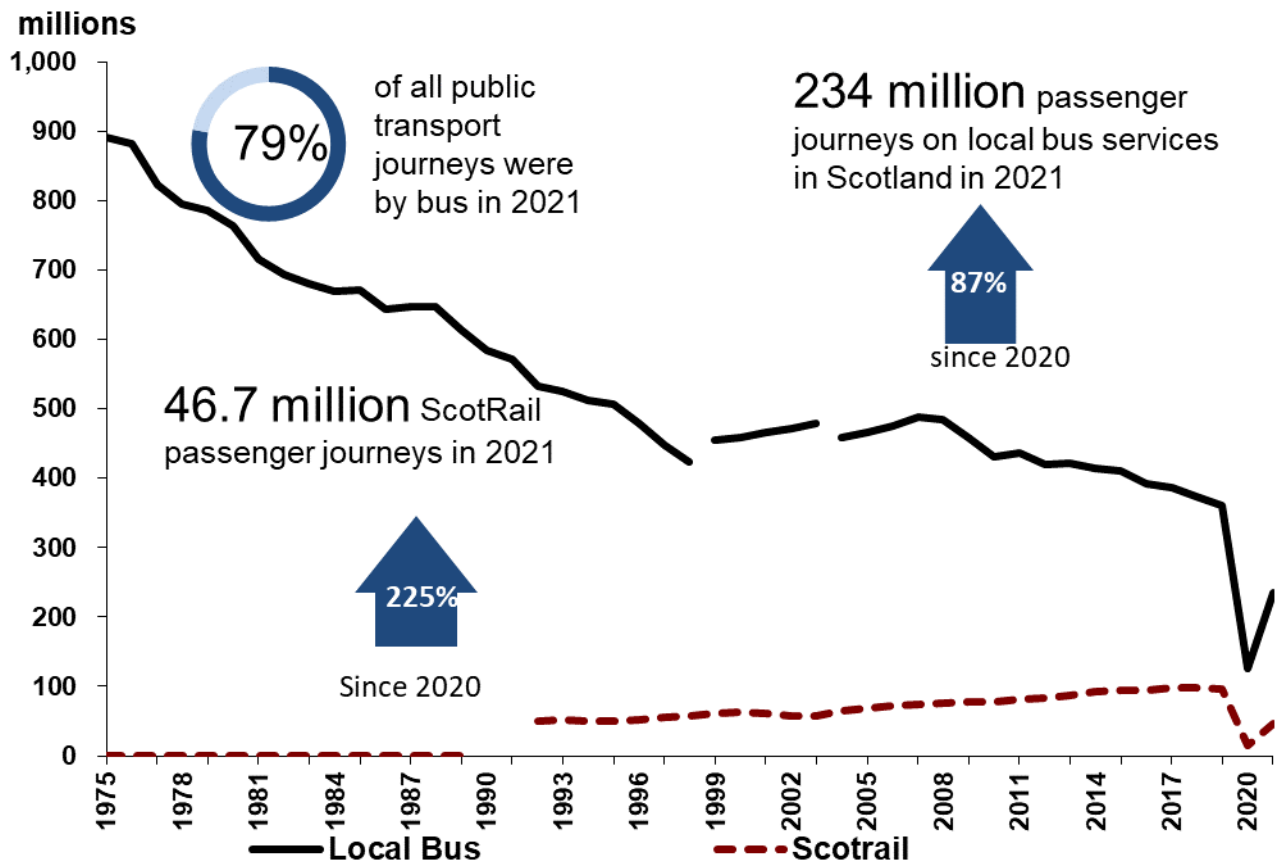
Figure 4: Road accident casualties by mode of transport

	Share of all road casualties	Yearly change in number of casualties
	57%	+5%
	15%	-5%
	9%	+9%
	10%	-16%

## 5. Public transport: bus, rail, air and ferry

### 5.1 Local bus and rail services

Figure 5: Bus and rail passenger numbers in Scotland



#### Bus

Bus travel in Scotland was profoundly affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, with restrictions on travel and daily activity in place for large parts of 2020. Comparisons with 2020 should therefore be treated with caution.

In 2021, there were 234 million bus passenger journeys, an increase of 87% on the previous year. Two fifths of all bus journeys in 2021 were made under the National Concessionary Travel scheme, a very similar proportion to 2020.

Prior to the pandemic, bus passenger journeys had been falling over the longer term. The figures almost halved between 1960 and 1975 and roughly halved again by 2019.



The distance covered by local bus services (expressed in terms of ‘vehicle kilometres’) can be seen as a measure of bus service provision. Although this rose in 2021 by 13%, this was a much smaller rise than the increase in passenger numbers (87%).

## Rail

Rail travel in Scotland was profoundly affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, with restrictions on travel and daily activity in place for large parts of 2020. Comparisons with 2020 should therefore be treated with caution.

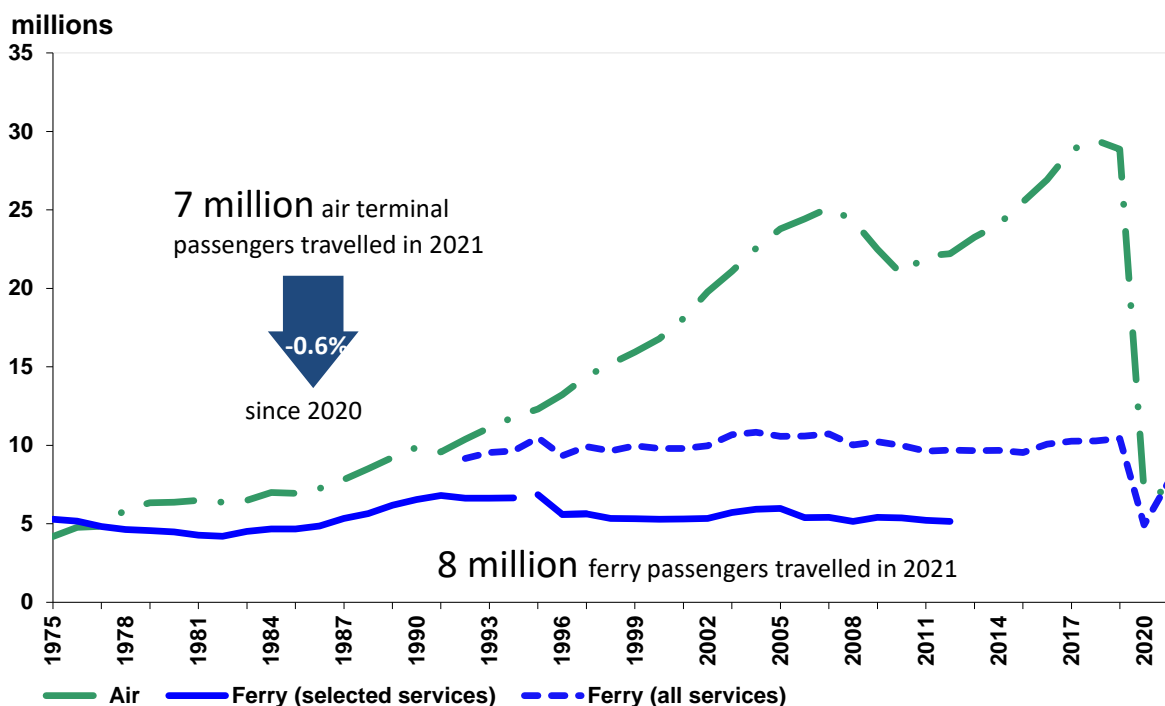
There were 46.7 million ScotRail passenger journeys in 2021-22, an increase of 225% from 2020-21.

Prior to the pandemic, rail patronage had been rising steadily and was 25% higher in 2019-20 compared to 2009-10.

Similar to bus services, the distance covered by scheduled trains in Scotland did rise by 8% in 2021-22. However this was not to the same scale as the increase in passenger numbers (225%).

## 5.2 Air and ferry passengers

Figure 6: Air and ferry passenger numbers in Scotland



Note: in the above figure, 'selected services' refers to those services for which data is available back to 1975 – Caledonian MacBrayne, P&O Scottish Ferries, Northlink Orkney and Shetland Ferries and Orkney Ferries.

## Air

There were 7 million air terminal passenger numbers in 2021, down 0.5% compared to the previous year, and 68% lower than 2011. Prior to the pandemic, air passenger numbers had been increasing over time, with a 28% increase in the ten years up to 2019.

In 2021, 9% of all terminal passenger traffic was from within Scotland, 51% was to or from other parts of the UK, 33% was between Scotland and mainland Europe.

## Ferry

In 2021, 7.7 million passengers travelled by ferry (including traffic within Scotland and to and from Northern Ireland), a 55% increase on the previous year.












Across all ferry routes, 3 million vehicles were carried in 2021 (including traffic between Scotland and Northern Ireland and within Scotland), a 46% increase on the previous year.

## 6. Personal travel (e.g. driving, walking and cycling; travel to work and school)

In 2021, 78% of people aged 17 or over had a full driving licence. The proportion of men aged 17+ holding a licence was higher than women (80% compared to 75%).

34% of people drove every day in 2021, with around 80% of households having access to at least one car.

Figure 7: Main modes of travel to work and school 2021

Main mode of travel to work:			Main mode of travel to school:		
Car (driver) 	68.0%		Walk 	54.4%	
Walk 	12.1%		Car/Van 	22.0%	
Bus 	6.8%		Bus 	19.4%	
Car(passenger) 	2.9%		Other	1.3%	
Rail 	4.1%		Cycle 	1.9%	
Cycle 	4.3%		Rail 	1.0%	
Other	1.9%				

Forty per cent of employed people reported that they currently worked from home. Of those that travelled to work in 2021, 27% of journeys to work were by public or active travel.

Seventy per cent of people were either very or fairly satisfied with public transport in 2021.

## 7. Cross-border transport

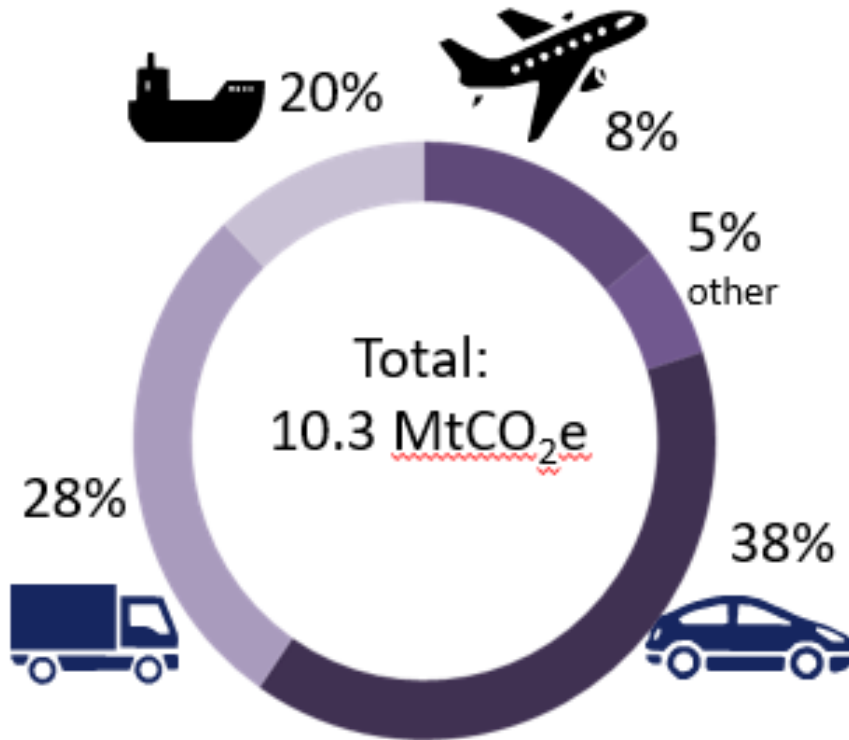
As with transport more generally, cross-border transport was significantly affected by the Coronavirus pandemic. In 2021, there were 5 million air and ferry passenger journeys to other parts of the UK, an increase of 25% since 2020. The majority of these journeys were made by air (3.6 million).

The most recently available figures for cross-border rail journeys are for 2020 and cover the pandemic period. These show 1.4 million passenger journeys were made to other parts of the UK in 2020.

In 2021, 2.4 million passenger journeys were made to and from other countries by air, a decrease of 76% since 2011.

## 8. Environment and emissions

Figure 8: Share of greenhouse gas emissions by mode in 2020



The most recently available figures for transport emissions relate to 2020.

Transport accounted for 25.9% of Scotland's total greenhouse gas emissions in 2020.

Scotland's transport emissions in 2020 were 25.9% lower than in 2019, and 30.6% lower than in 1990.

Over the longer term, newly registered cars have become more efficient in terms of carbon dioxide emissions, with average CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in Scotland for new car registrations falling by 10% over the last ten years. However, although average CO<sub>2</sub> emissions for newly registered cars have increased by 2% in each year between 2017 and 2020 they did fall by 3% between 2020 and 2021

Figure 9: Change in emissions by key transport mode between 2019 and 2020



At the end of 2021, ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEVs) accounted for 1.4% of vehicles licensed in Scotland.



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