

MTA Daily Ridership Data Overview

General Description

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) is a public-benefit corporation responsible for public transportation in the state of New York serving 12 counties in southeastern New York, along with two counties in southwestern Connecticut under contract to the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CDOT). The MTA is the largest transportation network in North America.

Subway service within New York City is operated by MTA New York City Transit (NYCT).

Bus service within New York City is operated by MTA agencies New York City Transit (NYCT) and MTA Bus Company (MTABC).

The Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) is the busiest commuter railroad in North America, serving customers from Manhattan to the eastern tip of Suffolk County on Long Island.

Metro-North Railroad (MNR) is the second-busiest commuter railroad in North America, connecting Manhattan with the Bronx, the Hudson Valley, and Connecticut.

Access-A-Ride (AAR) Paratransit Service provides public transportation for eligible customers with disabilities that prevent them from using the public buses and subways for some or all of their trips, in compliance with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

MTA Bridges and Tunnels (B&T) operates seven bridges and two tunnels in New York City, and will administer the Central Business District Tolling Program (CBDTP).

MTA Staten Island Railway (SIR) is the only rapid transit line on Staten Island, providing local service 24/7 between St. George, where timed connections are available with the Staten Island Ferry to Manhattan, and Tottenville, running along the east side of the island. It is owned by the Staten Island Rapid Transit Operating Authority (SIRTOA) and is operated by MTA New York City Transit (NYCT).

This dataset provides systemwide ridership and traffic estimates for subways (including the Staten Island Railway), buses, Long Island Rail Road, Metro-North Railroad, Access-A-Ride, and Bridges and Tunnels, beginning 3/1/2020 (4/1/2020 for LIRR and Metro-North), and provides a percentage comparison against a comparable pre-pandemic date.

This dataset was published during the first phase of the MTA's commitment to increasing transparency. We continually examine all our published and publishable data with a view to both providing datasets that can be effectively utilized by our customers and the public at large, and to providing regular, automated updates to these datasets efficiently and sustainably. Consequently, this dataset may be restructured and/or combined with other similar datasets in the future.

Data Collection Methodology

Subway ridership figures are determined from MetroCard and OMNY swipes and taps. Figures from recent days may be revised as data reconciliation processes are carried out.

Bus ridership figures from 3/23/2020 through 9/30/2020 were estimated from models that use MetroCard and OMNY swipes and taps and Automatic Passenger Counter data that is available on a portion of our bus fleet. These figures are indicative of ridership but not a precise count. Ridership figures from 3/1/2020 to 3/22/2020 and from 10/1/2020 onward are a count of MetroCard and OMNY swipes and taps plus an estimate of cash fares paid. Figures from recent days may be revised as data is transmitted from buses and reconciliation processes are carried out.

LIRR and Metro-North ridership is estimated by a model using monthly, weekly, ten-trip, and daily ticket sales.

The Access-A-Ride ridership within this dataset is a measure of scheduled trips as an indicator of demand, rather than completed trips that is used in official Access-A-Ride ridership statistics. The process to reflect completed trips, including adjusting for on-demand trips, cancellations, no shows, and on-street issues, does not allow for day-after reporting.

Bridges and Tunnels data comprises of preliminary total traffic volume collected by the toll collection systems at the 7 MTA bridge and 2 tunnel crossings.

In February 2023, MTA upgraded the methodology used to calculate the pre-COVID ridership comparison percentages in the dataset. The methodology is now consistent across each agency, more accurate, and less subjective; it uses the 2019 monthly average ridership for non-holiday weekdays, Saturday, and Sunday / holidays and compares each day to the average day of the same type for the equivalent month in 2019. All pre-pandemic comparison numbers in the dataset were refreshed to align with the upgraded methodology.

Statistical and Analytic Issues

Due to the processes followed to allow next-day ridership and traffic figures to be published, the figures in this dataset may differ from official ridership totals published elsewhere by MTA.

Limitations of Data Use

There are no limitations on the data at this time.

Release Notes

Version 1.0.0 release note instituted, and AAR weekday baseline numbers corrected (09/12/2024)