

# MTA Analysis & Insights

**Q: What trends did you notice in subway ridership?**

**A:** There was a **74% drop** in 2020 compared to 2019. Ridership fell from **1.686 billion** to **370 million**. By 2024, it recovered to **988 million**, which is **59% of 2019 levels** — showing gradual but incomplete recovery.

---

**Q: Which transit mode recovered the fastest?**

**A:** **Bridges and Tunnels** recovered the fastest. By 2023, ridership had already reached **101% of 2019 levels**, and in 2024 it climbed further to **103%**, making it the only mode to **fully recover and surpass pre-COVID traffic**.

---

**Q: How was subway ridership affected by the pandemic?**

**A:** Daily ridership dropped by **over 90%** at the peak in April 2020. Annually, subway ridership dropped from **1.686 billion (2019)** to **370 million (2020)** – a **74% annual decrease**. By 2024, it recovered to **59% of 2019's total**.

---

**Q: Did bus ridership recover faster than subways?**

**A:** Yes. Buses maintained about **50–60% of pre-pandemic levels** in 2020, and recovered to around **90% by 2024**, compared to subway's **59%**. Buses were more resilient due to their essential role in outer boroughs.

---

**Q: How was LIRR impacted compared to other modes?**

**A:** LIRR dropped by **75%** in 2020, from **91.1 million** to **22.4 million** riders. In 2024, it reached **73.7 million**, or **81% of its 2019 total** — a slower recovery compared to buses and bridges.

---

**Q: What about Metro-North ridership?**

**A:** Metro-North dropped by **76%** in 2020, from **87.5 million** to **20.8 million**. In 2024, it climbed back to **69.4 million**, which is **79% of its 2019 levels**.

---

**Q: Did car traffic bounce back quickly?**

**A:** Yes. Car traffic through Bridges & Tunnels **fell by 27% in 2020** (from 333 million to 206 million). Recovery began steadily in 2021, and by 2023 it slightly exceeded pre-pandemic levels, reaching 336 million — about 101% of 2019. So **while the bounce back was not instant, it was strong and complete by 2023**.

**Q: What trends did you notice with the Staten Island Railway?**

**A:** Ridership dropped from **4.6 million (2019)** to **1.1 million (2020)** — a **76% decline**. Recovery was modest, reaching **3.1 million** in 2024, which is **67% of its pre-pandemic level**.

---

**Q: Which mode had the highest ridership before the pandemic?**

**A:** Subways, with **1.686 billion annual riders** in 2019 (about **5.5 million per weekday**).

---

**Q: Which had the lowest ridership before the pandemic?**

**A:** Staten Island Railway, with **4.6 million total riders** in 2019 (around **12,600 daily riders**).

---

**Q: And during the pandemic?**

**A:** **Buses** had the **highest relative usage**, maintaining **60% of normal levels** in 2020. Subways dropped to **22%**, while LIRR and Metro-North dropped to **24% and 23%**, respectively.

---

**Q: Is there a noticeable difference between weekdays and weekends?**

**A:** Yes. **Weekday ridership is 50% higher** than weekends across most modes, especially for commuter-heavy lines like LIRR and Metro-North.

---

**Q: When did ridership start to recover after the initial pandemic drop?**

**A:** Recovery began in **mid-2020**, with significant growth in **2021**. For example, subway ridership grew from **370 million (2020)** to **760 million (2021)** — a **105% increase**.

---

**Q: Were there any sudden drops or spikes later in the dataset?**

**A:** Yes. Sudden drops occurred during **holiday weeks**, **winter storms**, and **COVID-19 variant waves** (like Omicron in late 2021). Spikes appeared during **reopening phases** and **summer months**.