



KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

- ❑ Driving is on the left.
- ❑ Drivers are required to carry a valid national driving license, car registration documents and proof of insurance.
- ❑ A new Highway Code was enacted in 2022 giving priority to pedestrians and cyclists. Pedestrians and cyclists should be alert to drivers who may be unaware of these changes.
- ❑ Visiting pedestrians should use caution and look both ways when crossing streets; traffic approaches from the opposite direction than in the US.
- ❑ Legal blood alcohol limit is below 0.08 g/dl for all drivers. Despite legal limits, crashes involving drink driving have increased. An average of one in ten drivers fails breath alcohol tests.
- ❑ Two-thirds of alcohol-related crashes occur on rural roads.
- ❑ There are 2.8 road deaths per 100,000 people in the UK and Northern Ireland, compared to 2.8 in Sweden and 4.6 in France.

ROAD CULTURE

- **Distracted** driving is common. Over 64% of drivers used a mobile device in some capacity while driving during 2021; male drivers are more likely to use a phone or other electronic device while operating a motor vehicle.
- **Male** drivers account for about 91% of drink driving; more than half of related crashes occur on weekends, evenings and in early morning hours.
- **Many motorists** speed, tailgate and accelerate when approaching yellow traffic lights, rushing through as the light changes to red.
- **Drivers may** be aggressive and reckless.
- **Road rage**, gesturing rudely or swearing at other drivers, is common.
- **Failure** to use indicators to alert other road users of the intention to turn is widespread.
- **Drivers** may eat or drink while behind the wheel.

ROAD CONDITIONS

- **There are** 25,790 km (16,025 miles) of public roads.
- **Urban roads**, streets and motorways are regarded as in good condition, and are well maintained.
- **Rural roads** may be less well maintained, and may have uneven surfaces or potholes.
- **During severe weather**, surfaces of rural roads may become hazardous. Soft shoulders may deteriorate during heavy rains.
- **Most roads** are very narrow. Traffic congestion is common, particularly in and around urban areas.
- **Roads are** prefixed with “M” for motorway; “A” for primary roads; “B” non-primary roads; and “C” for minor roads.
- **Signs** in Northern Ireland use miles and miles per hour; drivers crossing into the Republic of Ireland should note that distances are in kilometers.
- **When crossing** the border into the Republic of Ireland, speed limits and traffic laws change.
- **There are** currently no toll roads.
- **Many people travel by** motorcycles. Motorcyclists may behave recklessly and weave through traffic.



Source: CIA Factbook

- **Pedestrian infrastructure** is better developed in cities and towns than in rural areas.
- **Drivers** and cyclists may not stop at pedestrian crossings, even when electronic signals give pedestrians right-of-way.
- **Public demonstrations** are common and carry a high risk of violence. Avoid all demonstrations; even peaceful gatherings may become confrontational.
- **Demonstrations** are particularly common in and around city centers and heavily touristed areas.
- **Transportation strikes** are common. Public transport and road travel may be disrupted.
- **The following roads** may present particular challenges to motorists:
 - » **The Sydenham By-pass/Dee Street, Andersontown Road/Finaghy Road North; York Street/Westlink; and Falls Road/Donagall Road** junctions in Belfast are regarded as dangerous. Causes of the majority of serious and fatal crashes are careless driving, inattention of motorists navigating these intersections, and drivers tailgating or following



Road Conditions, continued

too close to other motorists. Male drivers are responsible for more than 65% of all crashes, and 73% of crashes involving serious injuries and fatalities. Many crashes on these roads involve pedestrians.

- » **The Caw Roundabout/Clooney Road** junction in Derry/Londonderry has a high rate of crashes and is regarded as the most dangerous roundabout in Northern Ireland. In approximately 20% of serious or fatal crashes, the driver was not wearing a seat belt; in 17%, rear passengers were not secured with seat belts. Additional factors include the use of alcohol and drugs, tailgating and driver distraction. A new housing development is underway and is anticipated to increase traffic at this junction. New traffic lights are being installed to help control traffic.
- » **The Antrim Coast Road** from Black Arch near Larne to Red Arch near Cushendall is a 40-km (24.8-mile) coastal road that is part of the A2 Road. The scenic route has a paved surface, and is popular with visiting drivers. The road is bordered on one side by the ocean, and on the other by cliffs and steep hills. Most of the road is a single lane in each direction. The road is narrow, and drivers should be alert to high numbers of pedestrians and bicyclists. There are no cycle lanes and few walking paths.

REGIONAL AND SEASONAL CONDITIONS

- The Orange Order summer marching season takes place throughout the country from April to August; these parades cause disruption to road travel and public transportation and carry the potential for violence. Risks increase in the weeks leading up to July 12, the commemoration of Orangeman’s Day. Follow instructions of local authorities.
- The country is subject to rain, storms, floods, fog and strong winds. Unpredictable weather year-round is common.
- Flooding, including flash floods, may result from heavy rainfall, increased river flow or sea surges. Strong winds may accompany storms.
- Heavy fog may be present, particularly in coastal areas. Fog may impair driver vision.
- Be familiar with emergency procedures. The Red Cross provides a website and free, downloadable emergency app: <http://www.redcross.org/get-help/prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies>

TRANSPORTATION





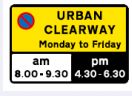




- **Transportation** includes cars, taxis, buses, motorcycles, rideshare services, trains and boats.
- **The public** transportation network is extensive and connects most areas of the country.
- **Translink** is the main bus and rail operator, and is the brand name of the integrated public transportation network including Metro, Foyle Metro, Ulsterbus, Goldmine and NI Railways.
- **A journey planner** is available on the Translink website at <https://www.translink.co.uk/>
- **Ulsterbus Smartcards** and rail tickets can also be purchased on line at the Translink website.
- **Taxis** are generally regarded as safe.
- **Use only** licensed Black Cabs or pre-ordered car services and minicabs. Avoid unlicensed taxi drivers; incidents of violence and robbery have occurred involving persons pretending to be taxi drivers.
- **Translink buses** are the main form of public transport.
- **There are three** types of buses: pink metro buses, purple articulated Glider buses, and blue Ulsterbuses.

Maximum Speed Limits

Type of road	Maximum speed
Urban areas	30 kph (50 mph)
Dual carriageways/ rural roads	70 kph (112 mph)
Rural/single carriageway roads	60 kph (96 mph)
Motorways	70 kph (112 mph)

Always adjust speed according to signage, hazards and weather conditions.

Signs are generally pictorial and may not follow European Union conventions.

								
Traffic signal not in use	No vehicles; only bicycles (unmounted)	Destination exit directions at roundabout	Traffic on right has priority over joining traffic	Brief stop only to pick up or drop off passengers	National speed limit applies	Contra-flow bus lane	Two-way traffic crosses one-way road	Dual carriageway ends

Transportation, continued

- **Glider buses** operate cross-city services in Belfast.
- **Motorcycles** are a popular form of transport, particularly in urban areas.
- **Fatal** and serious crashes involving motorcycles rose in 2022. Many crashes have been attributed to drivers failing to see motorcycle riders within the driver's "blind spot."
- **Trains** include suburban commuter rail and long-distance routes.
- **NI Railways** (the Northern Ireland rail network) offers routes including the Bangor, Larne, Derry and Portadown lines.
- **Enterprise Train** routes connect Belfast and Dublin, and is jointly operated by Translink and Irish Rail.
- **Rideshare services** are available in some urban areas. Use only rideshare services that have a dispatch app providing vehicle description, license plate number and driver's name. Verify all information before entering vehicle.
- **Boat services** are available in many areas, including some ferry routes from Belfast.
- **Children** are not restricted from being motorcycle passengers. For safety, children should not be passengers on motorcycles.
- **There are** dedicated bus lanes in many areas. Only public buses and emergency service vehicles may use these lanes.
- **A double white** center line on roadways means that passing other vehicles is prohibited.
- **At box junctions** (an intersection or junction painted with yellow crisscrossed lines), traffic may not enter the "box" area until lanes are clear and entering will not block traffic flow.
- **There are** many roundabouts, including large multi-layered circles on major roads and highways.
- **Drivers** entering a roundabout must yield to traffic entering from the right. Roundabouts must be traveled in a clockwise direction.
- **Drivers should** be alert to pedestrians and observe pedestrian right-of-way at zebra crossings, intersections and street crossings.
- **Motorists must** slow down near cyclists and pass only when safe. When possible, drivers should give cyclists a space of 1.5 meters (4.9 feet).

TRAFFIC REGULATIONS

- **Drivers must** be a minimum of 17 years of age to drive, and 21 to rent a car. Individual rental agencies may have other restrictions.
- **Seat belt use** is mandatory for driver and all passengers.
- **Children** under 135 cm (53 inches) or who have not yet reached their 12th birthday (whichever comes first) must be seated in a child safety seat appropriate to their height and weight.
- **Children may** be seated in front seats provided they are in a rear-facing child safety restraint, and the passenger-side airbag has been deactivated.
- **Children** 12 and older, or younger children at least 135 cm (53 inches) in height may use a seat belt.
- **Helmet use** is compulsory for motorcyclists and moped riders. Helmets must meet UK standards.
- **Cyclists** must use bike lanes where present, and must signal clearly to other road users before exiting the bike lane.
- **Bike** lanes may be painted green in some city locations.
- **Many intersections** with traffic signals have advanced stop lines positioning cyclists ahead of other traffic. Motorists must not enter this area, and are required to allow cyclists to set off first when light becomes green.
- **Drivers** may not sound their horn when encountering an animal in a road or street.
- **Turning** on a red light is prohibited. Drivers must wait for a full green light or a directional green light before proceeding.
- **Use of** headlights during daytime hours is not required, but is recommended.

Belfast (Capital)

- » Transportation includes cars, motorcycles, bicycles, taxis, buses, rideshare services, trains and boats.
- » Largest city and main transportation hub. Most major roads converge here.
- » Traffic can be dense. Driving during twice-daily rush hours should be avoided.
- » There are many motorcycles.
- » Many people travel by foot or bicycle.
- » Drivers should be alert to distracted pedestrians using electronic devices, and to pedestrians and cyclists under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Belfast, continued

- » Belfast Bikes is a public bike sharing system run by Nextbike. To use Belfast Bikes, it is necessary to register online and purchase a membership.
- » The city center is compact. Downloadable maps are available at the Visit Belfast site: <https://visitbelfast.com/plan/brochures-and-downloads/>
- » Black Taxis are official, licensed taxis. Most operate as shared taxis running on fixed routes that pick up and drop off passengers at city bus stops.
- » Black Taxis may also be found at city taxi ranks including City Hall and Botanic Inn, or ordered by phone.
- » Black Taxis with yellow license plates may be flagged on the street. All other taxis must be booked in advance.
- » Private taxis (not Black Taxis) are operated by multiple companies.
- » Public transportation is overseen by Translink, which operates throughout Northern Ireland.
- » Railways connects Belfast to various cities and towns in Northern Ireland.
- » Main train stations are Great Victoria Street Station and Lanyon Station (previously called Belfast Central Station).
- » Translink buses are the main form of public transport. There are three types of buses: Pink metro buses, purple articulated Glider buses, and blue Ulsterbuses.
- » Pink metro buses include single and double-decker vehicles.
- » Glider Belfast bus rapid transit system operates a fleet of articulated buses between East and West Belfast.
- » There are two Glider routes: G1 (west to east) and G2 (city center to Titanic Quarter). Buses operate from about 5 am to 11 pm. Hours may vary on weekends and public holidays.
- » Dedicated bus lanes for Glider routes are from 7 am to 7 pm Monday to Saturday.
- » Blue Ulsterbuses operate from Europa Bus Station.
- » Rideshare services are available. Use only rideshare services that have a dispatch app providing vehicle description, license plate number and driver's name. Verify all information before entering vehicle.
- » Multiple companies operate boats and ferries, including ferry service between Belfast and Douglas, Isle of Man.
- » The ferry terminal is located at the base of Dargan Road, 4.8 km (3 miles) northeast of the city center.
- » Metro Bus provides service between the ferry port and city center.
- » Belfast International Airport is 28.9 km (18 miles) from city center.
- » Translink buses offer service between the airport and city center, and to further destinations including cities in the Republic of Ireland. Bus routes are available to Dublin, George Best and Derry airports.
- » Direct shuttle service from the airport to Derry/Londonderry is available. Departures are every 30 minutes during peak travel times.
- » Official taxis are operated by the International Airport Taxi Company. Ranks are located outside the exit doors.
- » Most major car rental agencies are represented at the airport.

Derry/Londonderry

- » Second largest city.
- » Transportation includes cars, motorcycles, rideshare services, bicycles, taxis, buses, trains and boats.
- » Signage can be confusing. The official city name is a matter of political dispute. Both "Derry" and "Londonderry" are often used separately to refer to the same location, including on some maps and navigation systems.
- » Road signs showing "Londonderry" are often vandalized and may be obscured by spray paint.
- » There are many motorcycles; drivers face increased risk on narrow, winding roads shared with larger vehicles.
- » Some city streets are steep and may be difficult for pedestrians to navigate.
- » Drivers should be alert to distracted pedestrians using electronic devices, and to pedestrians and cyclists under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- » Cycling paths are available in some areas, including paths to the border towns of Lifford and Strabane. A bike path known as the Greenway links the transport hub to Foyle Street Bus Station and to city center via the Peace Bridge.

Derry/Londonderry, continued

- » Cyclists may be required to share busy narrow roadways with motorized traffic.
- » Rideshare services are available in some areas. Use only rideshare services that have a dispatch app providing vehicle description, license plate number and driver's name. Verify all information before entering vehicle.
- » Black Taxis are official, licensed taxis. Most operate as shared taxis running on fixed routes that pick up and drop off passengers at city bus stops.
- » Private taxis (not Black Taxis) are operated by multiple companies.
- » The main city transportation center is the North West Transport Hub.
- » Public transportation buses and trains are operated by Translink.
- » Buses are the most prevalent form of public transport. Multiple routes connect to suburban and long distance locations, including Dublin and Cork in the Republic of Ireland.
- » At some times of the year (including busy holiday seasons), Translink operates late night buses called Nightmovers to and from central shopping and entertainment districts.
- » Waterside railway station is the main train station. Shuttle buses link the rail station to the central bus station.
- » Trains are operated by Northern Ireland Railways, a subsidiary of Translink.
- » There is regular daily service between the city and Belfast.

ACCOMMODATIONS AND INCLUSIONS FOR MOBILITY CHALLENGED

- Navigating cities may be difficult due to narrow and uneven sidewalks.
- Most UK National Rail System stations are not readily accessible for persons with mobility or other physical challenges. Many stations are not equipped with elevators. There are often stairways and long corridors for changing trains or exiting to the street. Many buses are equipped with lowering platforms for limited-mobility or sight- or hearing-challenged travelers.
- Many taxis have swivel-entry seats, or are fitted with retractable ramps.
- Parking permits (called "blue badges") are issued by local government bodies throughout the country; some may not offer permits to temporary visitors. Visit the UK government website for contact information: <https://www.gov.uk/transport-disabled>
- Accessible Belfast and Access Able provide detailed information on accessible features at: <https://visitbelfast.com/plan/accessible-belfast/> and <https://www.accessable.co.uk/organisations/belfast-city-council#venues>

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

- **Pre-program** emergency numbers into your phone before departure.
 - » Police, ambulance and fire: 999
- **Good** quality medical care is widely available.
- **Outside** of major urban areas, medical professionals and first responders to emergency calls may take longer to reach the injured and to provide life-saving care.
- **Tourists** and short-term visitors will be charged 150% of the cost of any medical treatment provided by the National Health System (NHS).
- **Orange** emergency call boxes are located at half-mile intervals along motorways. Boxes are labeled "SOS;" blue-and-white poles indicate the direction of the closest call box.
- **Use of** call boxes is recommended rather than calling for emergency help via a mobile phone. Motorway center staff are more easily able to pinpoint the area where the caller is located when a call box is used.
- **If involved in a crash:**
 - » Call police.
 - » Move away from vehicle; do not leave the scene until police arrive.
 - » Take photographs of crash scene if possible.
 - » Collect contact and insurance information from other driver(s), and gather contact information from any witnesses.



ABOUT THE ASSOCIATION FOR SAFE INTERNATIONAL ROAD TRAVEL (ASIRT)

ASIRT is a non-profit humanitarian organization established in memory of Aron Sobel, age 25, who was killed along with 22 other passengers in a Pamukkale Bus Company crash on the roads of Turkey.

Disclaimer: ASIRT provides this information as a service to travelers. This Road Safety Review is intended to provide general guidelines for travelers to countries around the world. Any electronic links provided in this Report are for illustrative purposes and ASIRT is not responsible for the content provided within these electronic links and/or videos.

Copyright: Purchasers of this Road Safety Review are entitled to use it for purposes of research, education, information on health, safety and general road and traffic conditions or other non-commercial uses. Neither the whole nor any part of this ASIRT Road Safety Review may be copied in any form or provided to any other party without the prior written consent of the copyright owner. Flag images are © Central Intelligence Agency World Factbook.

To order more copies or to order Road Safety Reviews for other countries please contact:

Association for Safe International Road Travel, 11769 Gainsborough Road, Potomac, MD 20854 USA,

Phone: 1-240-249-0100; Email: asirt@asirt.org; Website: www.asirt.org; Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ASIRT.org/>