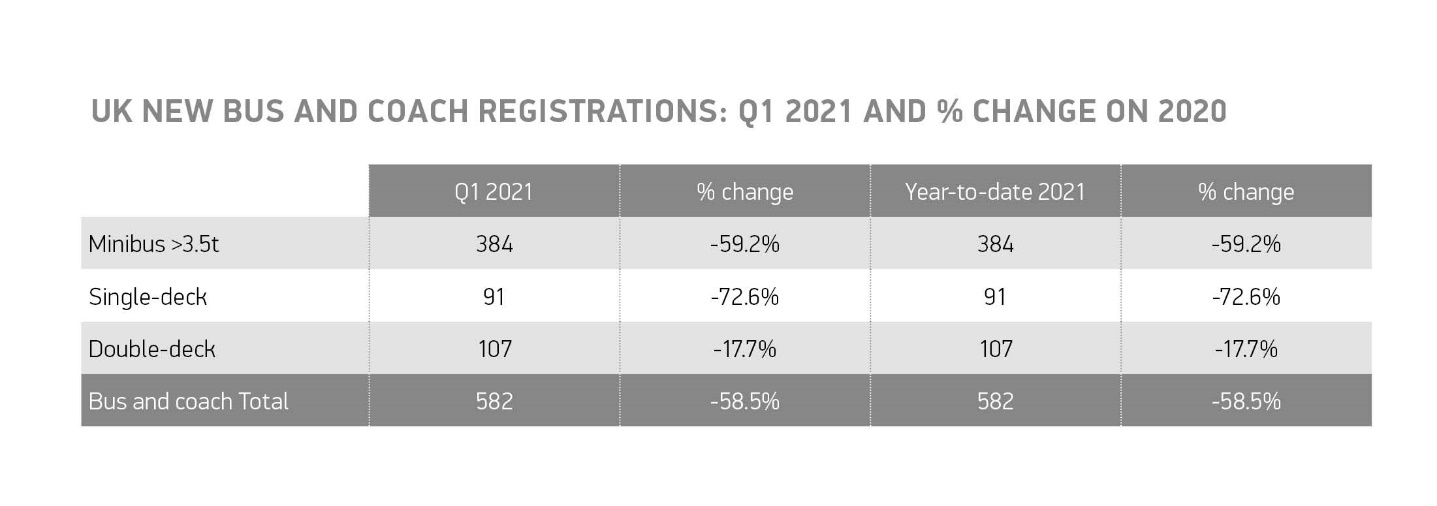
**BUS AND COACH REGISTRATIONS**

18 May 2021(data for Q1 2021)

**UK bus and coach market plunges further, with just 582 vehicles registered in first quarter**

* Bus and coach registrations down -58.5% in the first three months of the year to only 582 vehicles.
* While all segments see double-digit decline, single-deck bus registrations continue to be worst affected, down -72.6% to just 91 units.
* Sector needs to see funding implemented to boost orders to address both long term ridership decline and pandemic-wrought impact on public transport over past year.

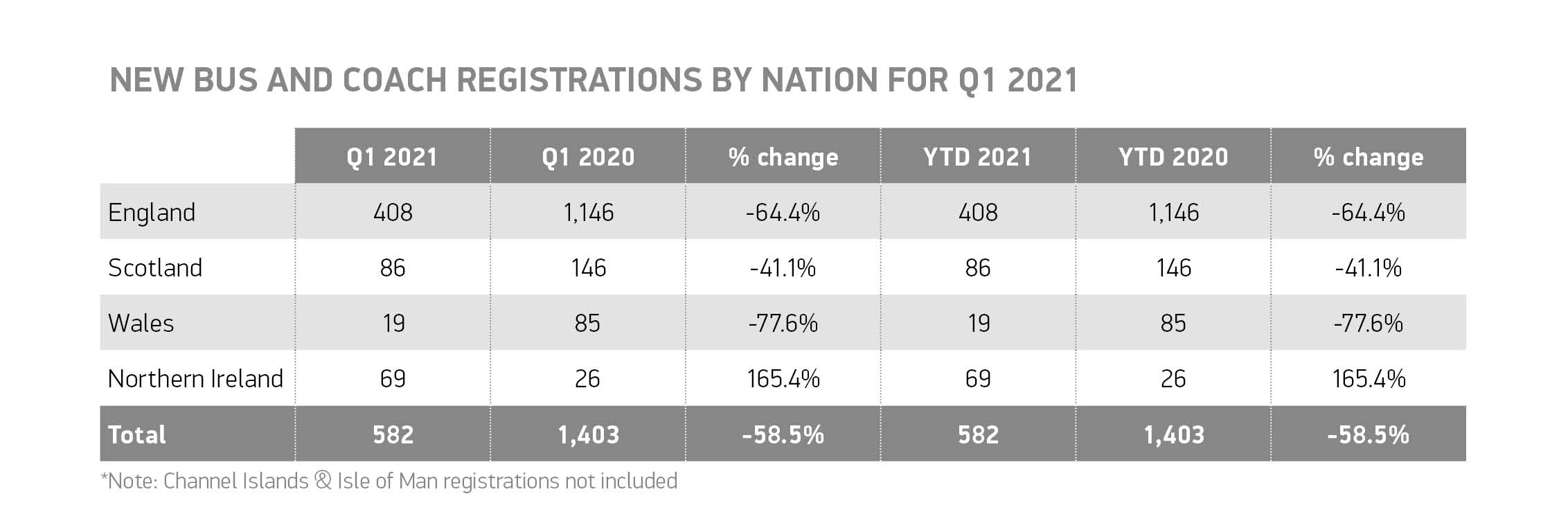


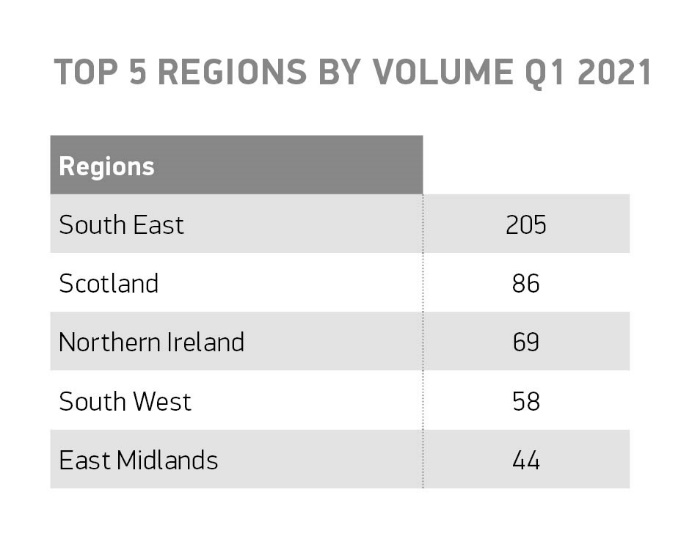
**Tuesday 18 May, 2021** The UK new bus and coach market declined further, down -58.5% in the first quarter of 2021, according to figures released today by the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT). In what has been the weakest start to the year on record1, only 582 buses and coaches joined UK roads in the first three months of 2021, as the sector faced significantly reduced demand during nationwide lockdowns combined with a longer term challenge of declining ridership.

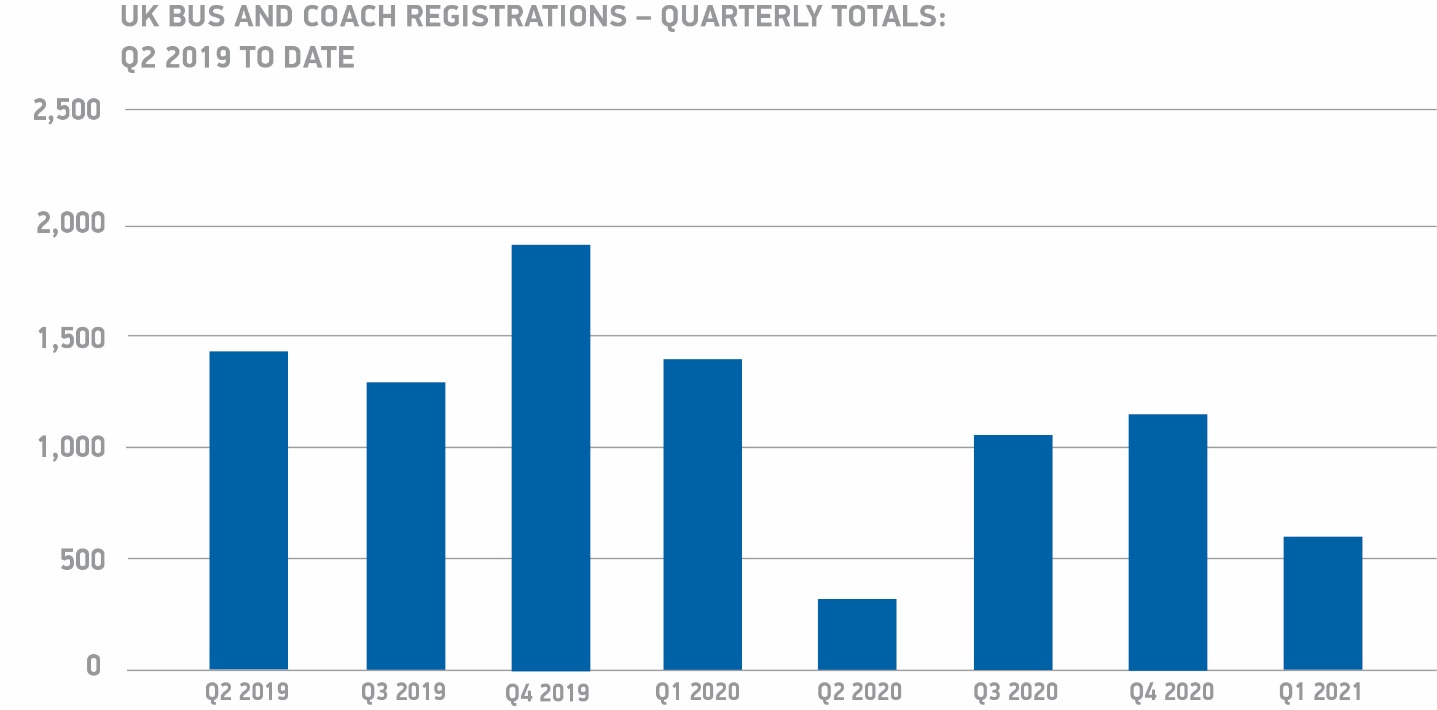
The entire sector saw double-digit declines, with single-deck buses and coaches most affected by prolonged closures, down -72.6% to just 91 vehicles registered. Meanwhile, the largest segment, minibuses weighing more than 3.5 tonnes, saw a decline of -59.2% to just 384 vehicles, and double-deck bus and coach registrations dropped -17.7% to 107 vehicles.

Bus ridership was most impacted by the coronavirus closures of 2020, with traffic down -32.0% in the year.2 This decline, compounded by a longer term decrease in bus passenger numbers, puts into perspective how much the sector has yet to overcome if it is to begin a recovery. The government’s *Bus Back Better* plan needs to address these issues to protect this vital sector, especially given the potential change in future travel patterns with working from home on the rise, and transport mode preferences changing as the nation emerges from lockdown.

**Mike Hawes, SMMT Chief Executive,**said, “It is devastating but unsurprising that the bus and coach sector has continued to suffer well into 2021, with no sign of recovery yet. Battling with long term declines in passenger numbers and the nationwide lockdown measures brought about by the pandemic, has resulted in plummeting registrations. The sector urgently needs a boost in operator confidence to restore order books before we can even to begin to talk about recovery. Given that the UK needs to replace at least 4,000 vehicles a year as they retire from service, we are dangerously at risk of a bus shortage at a time when public transport will be needed most as businesses return to work.”







**Notes to Editors**

1. Records going back to 1996 – 1,267

2. DfT: [Road Traffic Estimates in Great Britain, 2020](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/981967/road-traffic-estimates-in-great-britain-2020.pdf)

**Hi-res charts available here:** [**https://www.dropbox.com/sh/qcy7jvuijahxuk0/AAC7z9EiRxWZTi2LV2c9nETIa?dl=0**](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/qcy7jvuijahxuk0/AAC7z9EiRxWZTi2LV2c9nETIa?dl=0)

SMMT bus and coach registrations for Q2 2021 will be published in August.

**About SMMT and the UK automotive industry**

The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) is one of the largest and most influential trade associations in the UK. It supports the interests of the UK automotive industry at home and abroad, promoting a united position to government, stakeholders and the media.

The automotive industry is a vital part of the UK economy accounting for £78.9 billion turnover and £15.3 billion value added. With some 180,000 people employed directly in manufacturing and 864,000 across the wider automotive industry, it accounts for 13% of total UK export of goods and invests more than £3 billion each year in automotive R&D. More than 30 manufacturers build some 70 models of vehicle in the UK supported by 2,500 component providers and some of the world's most skilled engineers.

More detail on UK automotive available in SMMT's Motor Industry Facts 2020 publication at smmt.co.uk/facts20

**Broadcasters: SMMT has an ISDN studio and access to expert spokespeople, case studies and regional representatives.**

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