



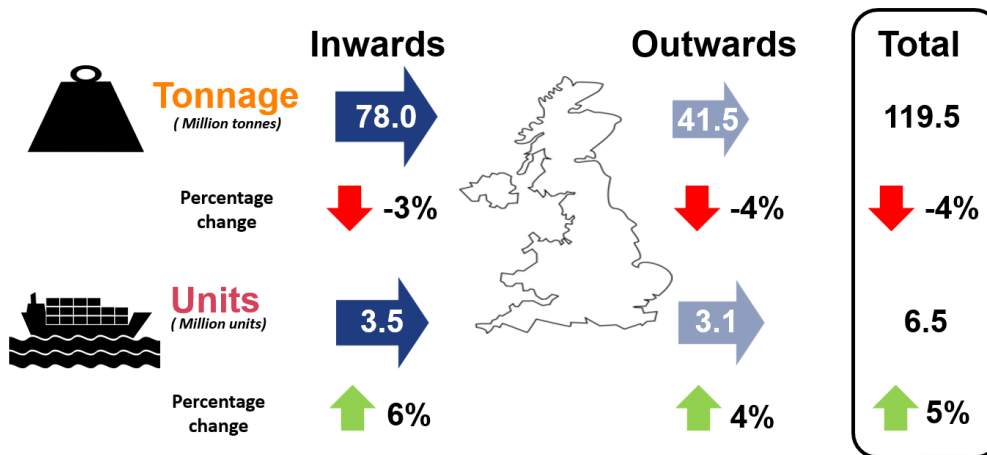
# UK Port Freight Statistics: July to September 2014 (Quarter 3)

## UK Major Ports

### Quarter 3 2014 main findings

#### Quarterly Trend

Comparing quarter 3 2014 (July - September) with quarter 3 2013:

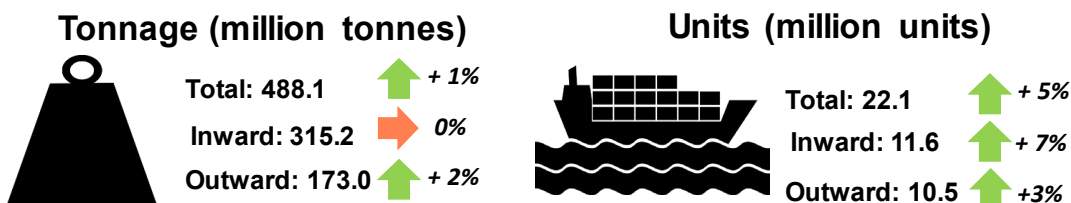


- **Freight** handled at UK major ports fell by 4 per cent to **119.5 million tonnes** in quarter 3 2014. Traffic had been generally declining from quarter 4 2011, with a brief period of growth for quarter 4 2013 and quarter 1 2014.

- Unitised traffic rose by 5 per cent to **6.5 million units**, continuing the growth seen since quarter 2 2013.

#### Rolling Annual Total

Comparing the 12 months ending September 2014 with the 12 months ending September 2013:



- Major port **freight** traffic increased by 1 per cent to **488.1 million tonnes**.

- UK major port unitised traffic **increased** for the fifth rolling 12 month period by 5 per cent to **22.1 million units**.

### About this release

This statistical release summarises the latest provisional quarterly statistics on freight handled by major UK sea ports.

Detailed final annual statistics will be published in August 2015, when the quarterly series will also be finalised.

This statistical release compares results for the latest quarter to the same quarter a year earlier to avoid seasonal impact.

### Definition:

#### Major ports-

Ports handling over one million tonnes of freight per year and a small number of other key ports.

Together these ports accounted for 98% of total UK port traffic in 2013.

## Major Port Freight Traffic (Tonnage)

### Quarterly Trend: Comparing quarter 3 2014 (July – September) to quarter 3 2013:

- **Freight** handled at UK major ports fell **by 4 per cent** to **119.5 million tonnes** in quarter 3 2014. Traffic had been generally declining from quarter 4 2011, with a brief period of growth for quarter 4 2013 and quarter 1 2014.
- Freight traffic **travelling in** to UK major ports **decreased by 3 per cent** to **78.0 million tonnes**, accounting for 65 per cent of all traffic. Previously inward traffic had been generally increasing since quarter 1 2013.
- Freight traffic **travelling out** of the UK major ports **fell by 4 per cent** to **41.5 million tonnes**, the lowest amount of outward freight recorded for quarter 3 since 2000. This follows three consecutive quarters of growth.

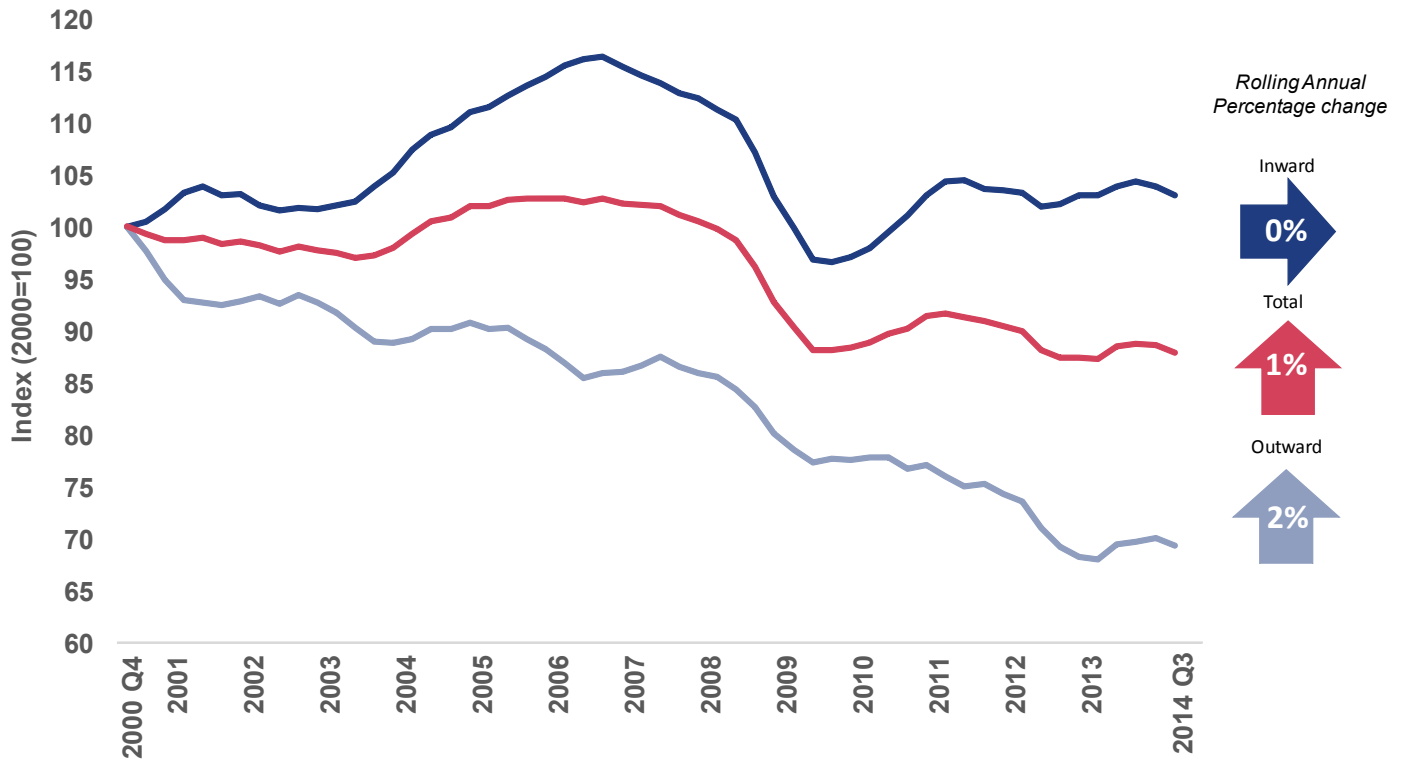
### Annual (Rolling) Trend: Comparing the 12 months ending September 2014 with the 12 months ending September 2013:

- Major port **freight** traffic **increased by 1 per cent** to **488.1 million tonnes**, continuing the growth seen in the 12 months ending June 2014 (quarter 2). Previously the rolling annual total had been steadily declining since quarter 2 2012.
- Freight **travelling in** to UK major ports **remained steady** when compared with the previous four quarters at **315.2 million tonnes**. This followed 3 quarters of growth seen in the inward rolling annual total.
- Freight **travelling out** of UK major ports **increased by 2 per cent** to **173.0 million tonnes**. The annual rolling outward total declined throughout 2011-2013.

Detailed statistics (tables) on Quarterly Tonnage Port Freight Statistics can be found in the web tables [PORT0501 & PORT0504-PORT0506](#)

Major port traffic had a large drop in 2009 during to the recession however in recent years port freight levels have stabilized (see chart below).

**Chart 1: Major port traffic indices, tonnage: rolling 12 month totals to September 2014 (2000=100)**



## Major Port Freight Traffic (Units)

### Quarterly Trend: Comparing quarter 3 2014 (July – September) to quarter 3 2013:

- Unitised traffic rose **by 5 per cent** to **6.5 million units**, for the sixth consecutive quarter, continuing the growth seen since quarter 2 2013.
- Unitised traffic **travelling in** to UK major ports **rose by 6 per cent** to **3.5 million units**. This was the sixth consecutive quarterly increase. Previously inward unitised traffic had been declining for over two years (quarter 4 2010 - quarter 1 2013).
- Unitised traffic **travelling out** of UK major ports **increased by 4 per cent** to **3.1 million units**. This was the highest quarter 3 total in the last 5 years. Outward unitised traffic has generally increased during 2014, a trend seen throughout 2013, following a year of decline in 2012.

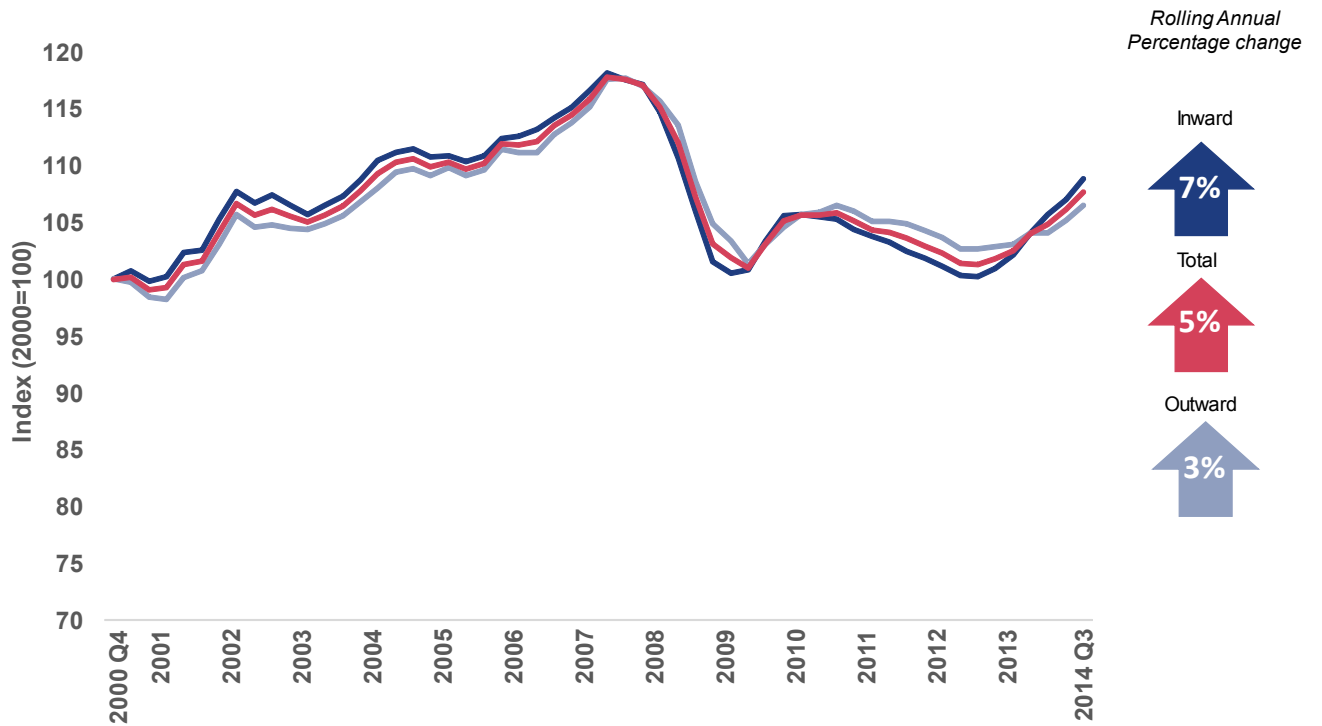
### Annual (Rolling) Trend: Comparing the 12 months ending September 2014 with the 12 months ending September 2013

- UK major port unitised traffic **increased** for the fifth rolling 12 month period in a row **by 5 per cent** to **22.1 million units**. This was the highest rolling annual total since quarter 1 2009. Previously the rolling annual total steadily declined from quarter 3 2011 to quarter 3 2013.
- Unitised traffic **travelling in** to UK major ports **increased by 7 per cent** to **11.6 million units**. This was the fifth year on year increase.
- Unitised traffic **travelling out** of UK major ports **increased by 3 per cent** compared with the previous 12 month period to **10.5 million units**. This was the fourth consecutive increase in the rolling annual total.

Detailed statistics (tables) on Quarterly Unitised Port Freight Statistics can be found in the web tables [PORT0502 & PORT0507-PORT0509](#)

Although unitised freight has seen some fluctuation since the recent post-recession low in 2009, unitised freight appears to be growing again (see chart below).

**Chart 2: Major Port traffic indices, units - rolling 12 month totals to September 2014 (2000=100)**



## Strengths and weaknesses of the data

- ▶ The port freight statistics relate to traffic to and from ports in the United Kingdom, unless otherwise stated, and do not cover ports in the Isle of Man or the Channel Islands.
- ▶ The provisional quarterly port data relate to all cargos loaded or unloaded by ship at major ports in the UK, including both international and domestic traffic.
- ▶ These statistics are based on data provided by major ports. Data are available for total weight of goods and number of units inwards and outwards for each responding port. These figures may be subject to revision if subsequent checks against data provided by agents, or data provided by ports at the year end, highlight anomalies. More in depth commentary will be provided with the release of the final port statistics.
- ▶ Typically a very small number of ports do not provide data in time for publication, in which case the national trend is estimated based on the trend for those ports which have provided data for the latest quarter. The provisional figures for freight traffic at each major UK port in quarter 3 2014 are based on 100 per cent of expected returns.

## Glossary

- ▶ **Major ports:** Ports handling over one million tonnes per year, and a small number of other key ports, together accounted for 98% of UK port traffic in 2013.
- ▶ **Tonnage:** The weight of goods transported, including crates and other packaging, but excluding the unloaded weight of shipping containers, road goods vehicles, trailers and other items of transport equipment where these are used.
- ▶ **Units:** Includes all roll-on/roll-off (ro-ro) units whether carrying freight or not (road goods vehicles, unaccompanied trailers, shipborne port-to-port trailers, passenger vehicles, trade vehicles, and other ro-ro units), as well as lift-on lift-off (lo-lo) containers. In most published port statistics, freight carrying roll-on/roll-off units are reported separately, however, this detail is not available at the time of the quarterly statistics publication, in which combined totals are given.

## Background notes

- ▶ The web tables and charts give further detail of the key results presented in this statistical release. They are available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/port05-traffic-indices-and-quarterly-breakdowns>
- ▶ Full guidance on the methods used to compile these statistics can be found on the ports series page here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/maritime-and-shipping-statistics-guidance>
- ▶ National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the National Statistics Code of Practice for Official Statistics. Port Freight Statistics were assessed by the UK Statistics Authority against the Code of Practice and were confirmed as National Statistics in February 2013.
- ▶ Details of Ministers and officials who receive pre-release access to these statistics up to 24 hours before release can be found on the ports series page here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pre-release-access-lists-for-maritime-and-shipping-series>
- ▶ The next update in this series will be published in March 2015. It will contain provisional quarterly figures for the fourth quarter of 2014.
- ▶ Annual statistics on freight handled by UK sea ports are released in August 2015. The final 2013 figures can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/port-freight-statistics-2013-final-figures>