



# Department for Transport

## Road goods vehicles travelling to mainland Europe: July to September 2015 (quarter 3)

### About this release

This statistical release summarises results from the survey of road goods vehicles travelling to mainland Europe from Great Britain. It includes all the main ferry routes between Great Britain, mainland Europe and the Channel Tunnel.

Ferry routes between Great Britain and Northern Ireland or the Republic of Ireland are not included.

These statistics are used within the UK, the Department for Transport, regional bodies, academics and transport consultants to obtain a better understanding of the complexities of freight transport and of trends, in order to advise on policy options. The haulage industry itself has a particular interest in data on the activity of overseas registered vehicles within the UK.

These statistics are updated on a quarterly basis.

**Next Update: February 2016**

### In this publication

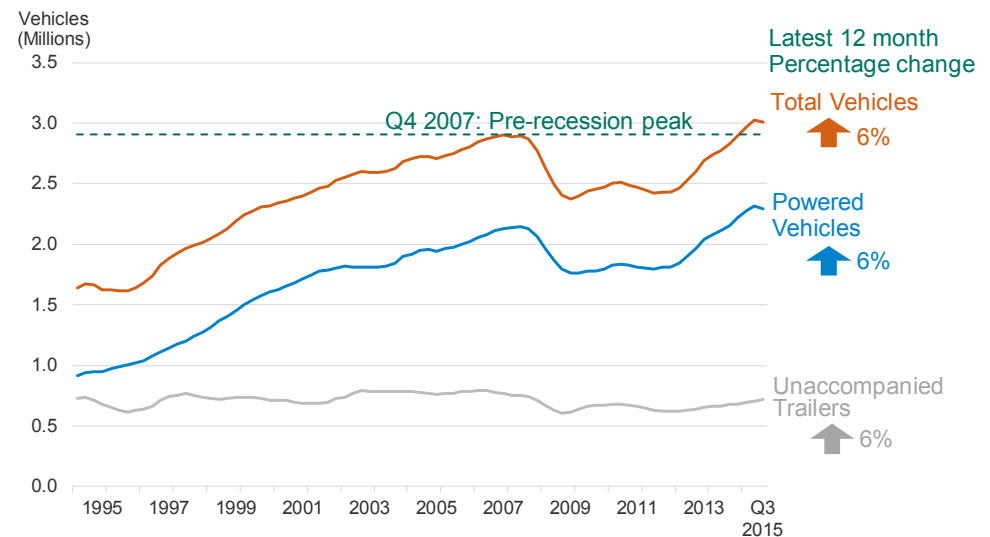
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**There was a 6 per cent increase in the number of road goods vehicles travelling from Great Britain to mainland Europe in the 12 month period ending September 2015**

### Rolling 12 month period (October 2014 - September 2015)

- Road goods vehicles increased by 173 thousand to **3 million**, taking the total to 4 per cent higher than in 2007 – the pre-recession peak.
- Of the total road goods vehicles, 2.3 million were **powered vehicles** and 718 thousand were **unaccompanied trailers**. In the last 12 months, both powered vehicles and unaccompanied trailers increased by 6 per cent.

### Road goods vehicles travelling from Great Britain (GB) to mainland Europe, rolling 12 month period totals to September 2015



### Quarter 3 total (July - September 2015)

In quarter 3 (July – September) 2015, 718 thousand goods vehicles travelled from Great Britain to mainland Europe; 525 thousand **powered vehicles** and 193 thousand **unaccompanied trailers**.

## Road goods vehicles travelling to mainland Europe

### Rolling 12 month period (October 2014 - September 2015)

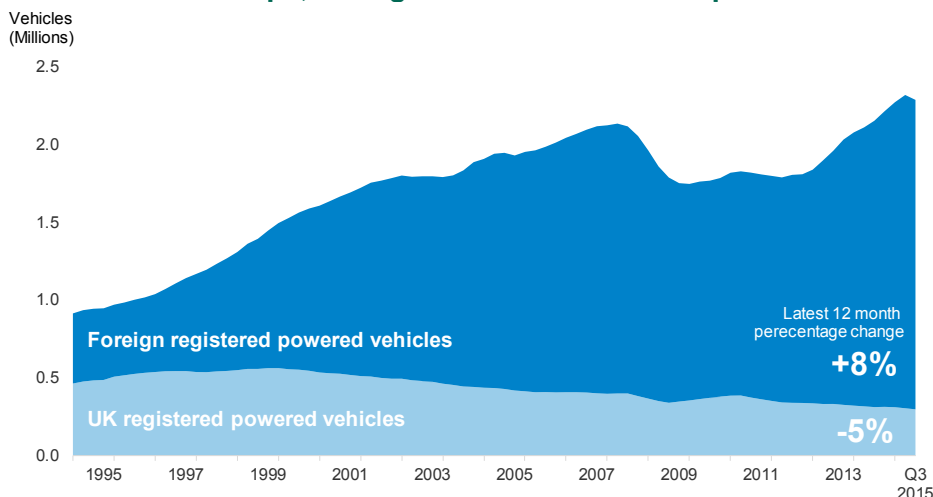
There were just over 3 million goods vehicles travelling from Great Britain to mainland Europe during the last 12 months (2.3 million **powered vehicles** and 718 thousand **unaccompanied trailers**), 6 per cent higher than the previous 12 months total. The increase was largely driven by the number of operators using the Dover to Calais route, part of the Dover Strait Port Group. Compared with the last 12 months, an additional 111 thousand goods vehicles travelled via the Dover Straits Port Group during this period.

Since the 12 month period ending June 2012, the number of road goods vehicles has been consistently increasing and the latest 12 month period saw figures exceed the the pre-recession peak during 2007 (2.9 million).

Longer term, the number of goods vehicles travelling from Great Britain to mainland Europe has increased by 81 per cent in the last 20 years.

In the twelve month period ending September 2015, powered vehicles rose by 6 per cent to 2.3 million, this was largely due to an increase in the number of **foreign registered** powered vehicles which rose by 8 per cent to just under 2 million, continuing the gradual upward trend seen since 2009. **UK registered** powered vehicles were down 5 per cent to 297 thousand. This is 14 per cent lower than in 2009.

### UK registered and foreign registered powered vehicles travelling from GB to mainland Europe, rolling 12 month totals to September 2015



### Quarter 3 total (July - September 2015)

During quarter 3 2015, 718 thousand goods vehicles travelled from Great Britain to mainland Europe (525 thousand **powered vehicles** and 193 thousand **unaccompanied trailers**). This was 3 per cent lower compared to quarter 3 2014. However, this was the second highest quarter 3 total since the series began over 30 years ago.

### What are powered vehicles and unaccompanied trailers?



#### Powered vehicles

comprise rigid vehicles, lorries with semi-trailers (articulated units) and lorries with drawbar trailers (some vehicles under 3.5 tonnes gross weight are also included).



#### Unaccompanied trailers

comprise trailers and semi-trailers not accompanied on the ferry by a powered unit.

Over the last 20 years large increases in the number of foreign registered vehicles travelling to Europe have seen the UK's percentage share drop to 13 per cent of the total from a peak of 52 per cent in 1996.

## Country of vehicle registration

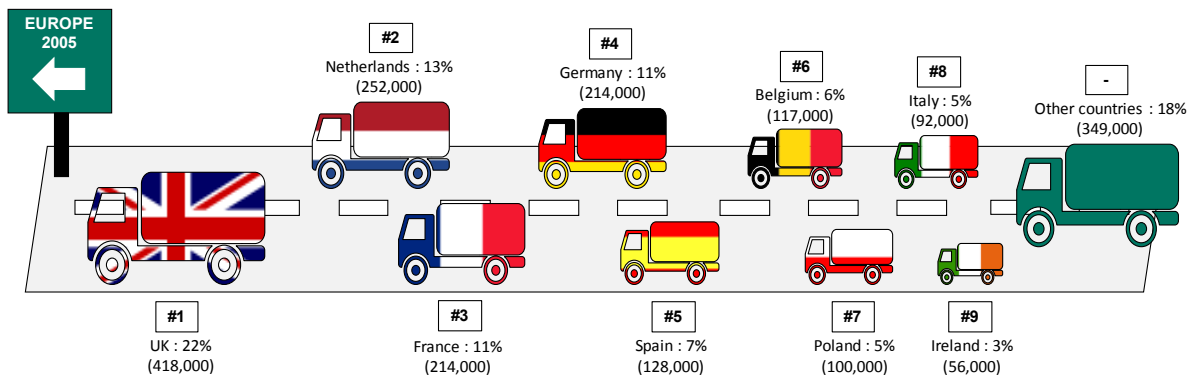
### Rolling 12 month period (October 2014 - September 2015)

Over the last twenty years there has been over a four fold increase in the number of **foreign registered** powered vehicles travelling from Great Britain to mainland Europe (from 461 thousand in 1995 to 2.0 million in the latest 12 month period).

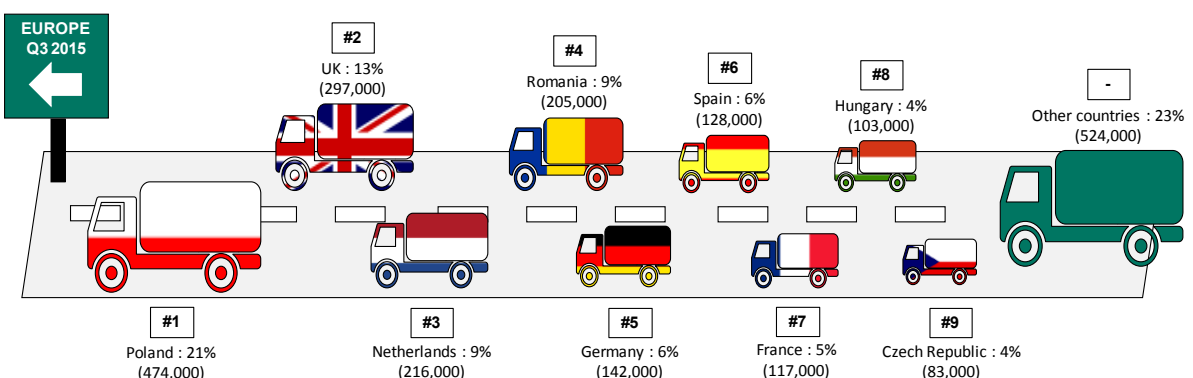
Vehicles registered to countries such as the **UK, Netherlands, Germany and France** have seen their share of powered goods vehicles fall as a number of countries have increased their share since joining the EU. When **Poland** joined the EU in 2004, they accounted for 3 per cent of the total number of powered vehicles. By the 12 month period ending September 2015 this had risen to 21 per cent, a larger share than any other country. **Hungary and Czech Republic** joined the EU in 2004 and have seen their shares of total powered vehicles rise from 1 per cent to 4 per cent each. **Romania**, which joined the EU in 2007, accounted for 9 per cent compared to less than 1 per cent in 2004. **Bulgaria** also joined the EU in 2007, which accounted for 3 per cent in quarter 3 2015.

### Powered vehicles travelling from GB to mainland Europe, percentage share by country of registration, 2005 compared to the 12 month period ending September 2015

2005 Total: 1.9 Million



October 2014 - September 2015 Total: 2.3 Million



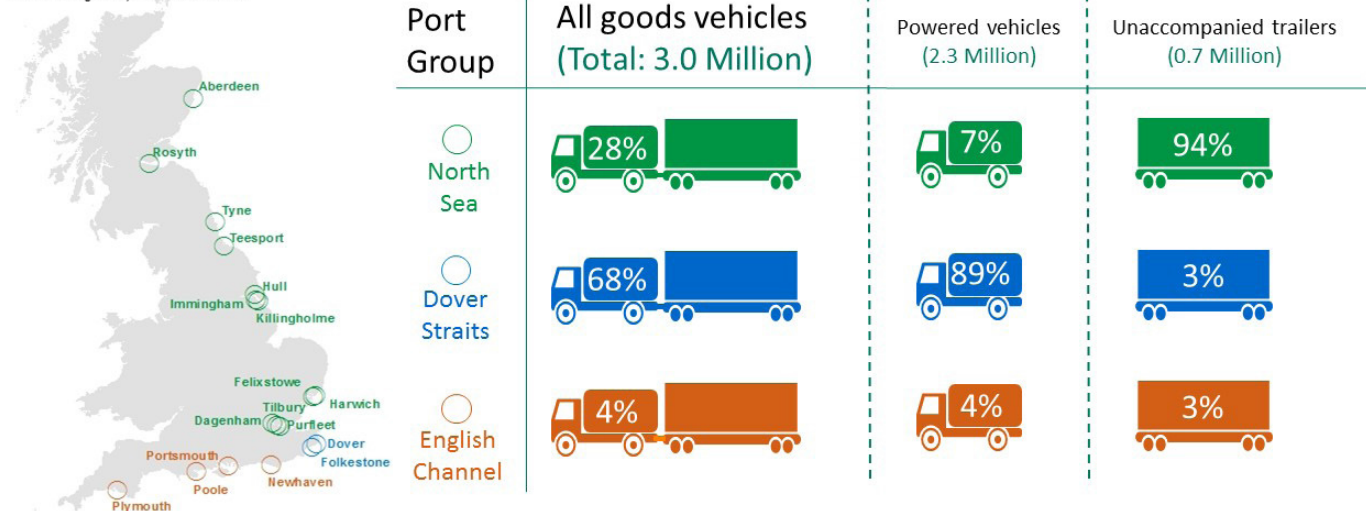
### Quarter 3 total (July - September 2015)

During quarter 3 2015, 71 thousand powered vehicles travelling from GB to mainland Europe were **UK registered** (13 per cent of the total). This was a 30 per cent decrease compared to ten years previously (102 thousand). **Foreign Registered** vehicles saw a total of 454 thousand powered vehicles in quarter 3 2015, accounting for 86 per cent of total powered vehicles, however this is a slight decrease of 5 per cent since quarter 3 2014.

## Port group

### Goods vehicles travelling to mainland Europe by port group, rolling 12 month period totals to September 2015

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#### Rolling 12 month period total (October 2014 - September 2015)

- The proportions of goods vehicles travelling from each Great Britain port group to mainland Europe have remained broadly unchanged over the past decade.
- Of the 3.0 million goods vehicles, 843 thousand goods vehicles used the **North Sea Port Group** (28 per cent), 2,053 thousand used the **Dover Strait Port Group** (68 per cent) and 110 thousand used the **English Channel Port Group** (4 per cent).
- The majority of the powered vehicles travelled from the **Dover Strait Port Group**, with 2,032 thousand powered vehicles (89 per cent).
- There were 9 out of 10 unaccompanied trailers which travelled from the **North Sea Port Group**, with 674 thousand (94 per cent).

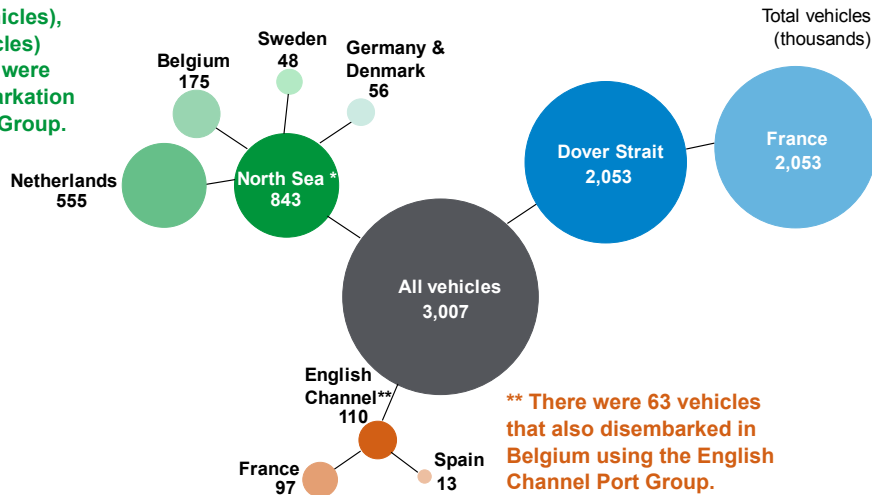
#### Quarter 3 total (July - September 2015)

- In quarter 3 2015, 458 thousand goods vehicles travelled from the **Dover Strait Port Group**, of which 453 thousand (99 per cent) were powered vehicles.
- There were 230 thousand goods vehicles that travelled from the **North Sea Port Group**, of which 181 thousand (79 per cent) were unaccompanied trailers.
- There were 30 thousand goods vehicles that travelled from the **English Channel Port Group**, the majority of which (24 thousand or 81 per cent) were powered vehicles.

## Country of disembarkation

### Goods vehicles travelling to mainland Europe by port group and country of disembarkation, rolling 12 month period totals to September 2015

\* Norway (6 thousand vehicles), Finland (4 thousand vehicles) and Estonia (32 vehicles) were also countries of disembarkation using the North Sea Port Group.



### Rolling 12 month period total (October 2014 - September 2015)

- Of the total goods vehicles, 71 per cent disembarked in **France**. Sixty-eight per cent of those goods vehicles which disembarked in **France** travelled from the **Dover Strait Port Group**, and 3 per cent from the **English Channel Port Group**. **France** is the only country of disembarkation for the **Channel Tunnel**. Ninety-two per cent of total powered vehicles disembarked in **France** (2.1 million).
- Of the total goods vehicles which travelled from the **North Sea Port Group**, 66 per cent disembarked in the **Netherlands**. Fifty-six per cent of unaccompanied trailers disembarked in the **Netherlands** (405 thousand).
- Of the small number of goods vehicles using the **English Channel Port Group**, 88 per cent disembarked in **France** and 12 per cent in **Spain**.

### Quarter 3 total (July - September 2015)

- In quarter 3 2015, 474 thousand powered vehicles disembarked in **France** (90 per cent of the total). This was an 8 per cent decrease compared to quarter 3 2014 (514 thousand powered vehicles) and the first quarter 3 decrease since quarter 3 2011.
- There is currently insufficient information to assess whether this decrease is a new trend or a fluctuation associated with disruptions at Calais and the closure of MyFerryLink (an English Channel ferry operator) during this period.
- In contrast, the number of powered vehicles disembarking in the **Netherlands** increased by 15 per cent compared to the same period a year earlier. This represents an increase from 37 thousand in the third quarter of 2014, to 42 thousand. The volume of powered vehicles disembarking in other countries (most notably **Belgium**, **Spain** and **Denmark**) also increased by some 31 per cent to 9 thousand. These increases may represent powered vehicles rerouting from Dover Strait Port Group sailings to other ports.

## Background notes

- The web tables for RoRo statistics can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/road-freight-domestic-and-international-statistics>

- Full guidance on the methods used in the publication of these releases, the quality of the data, and the revisions published in 2007 can be found in the Technical Note at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/road-freight-domestic-and-international-statistics-guidance>

- National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the National Statistics Code of Practice. They undergo formal statutory assessments to ensure they meet customer needs:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html>

- Details of ministers and officials who receive pre-release access to these statistics up to 24 hours before release can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/roll-on-roll-off-international-freight-statistics-pre-release-access-list>

## Strengths and Weaknesses of the data

- The results in this bulletin are compiled from quarterly returns provided by the roll-on / roll-off ferry operators, giving the number of powered vehicles and unaccompanied trailers carried on each route from GB to mainland Europe, and from monthly information supplied by Eurotunnel.
- Disaggregation by country of registration of powered vehicles is supplied by most of the ferry operators and by Eurotunnel. Some operators identify this from the registration number pattern whilst others extract the nationality from the manifest or waybill. A few operators use the country of booking as a proxy for the country of registration of the powered vehicle.
- Revised estimates for 2004 to 2007 were published in May 2008 following a data quality review. This resulted in a break in the series between 2003 and 2004. For full details see the Technical Note.
- As a result of the review the survey was put on a statutory basis and since early 2008 returns have been supplied by all operators resulting in more complete reporting of country of registration. The quality of the data is therefore thought to have been substantially improved and the data are considered fit for purpose.
- Additional information for Croatia who joined the EU in 2013, will be included in the next statistical release, for table RoRo0201. This table shows the number of powered goods vehicles by country of registration.