



Department for Transport

Road Freight Statistics, United Kingdom: April 2016 - March 2017

About this release

This statistical release summarises statistics on domestic and international activity of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs).

Domestic road freight: Data are derived from the Continuing Survey of Road Goods Transport Great Britain (CSRGT-GB) which measures the activity of **GB-registered** HGVs operating in the UK.

International road freight: Data are derived from the International Road Haulage Survey (IRHS) and the Continuing Survey of Road Goods Transport Northern Ireland (CSRGT-NI) which measure the activity of **UK-registered** HGVs operating both domestically and internationally.

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Domestic road freight: main results

In the year ending March 2017 for GB-registered HGVs operating in the UK, there were...

Compared to the year ending March 2016

1.97 billion tonnes



↑ 17%

174 billion tonne kilometres



↑ 13%

19.0 billion kilometres



↑ 3%

- ▶ **Goods lifted** and **goods moved** by GB-registered heavy goods vehicles in the UK **reached record levels** for the 12 months ending March 2017.
- ▶ In comparison to the pre-recession peak in the year ending March 2008, both **goods lifted** and **goods moved** increased by 7% and 11% respectively, whilst vehicle kilometres decreased by 12%.

[See Table [RFS0101](#) for detailed statistics]

Definitions

- Goods lifted:** the weight of goods carried, measured in tonnes.
- Goods moved:** the weight of goods carried, multiplied by the distance hauled, measured in tonne kilometres.

International road freight: main results

In the year ending March 2017 for UK-registered HGVs transporting freight internationally, there were...

Compared to the year ending
March 2016

3.7
million tonnes
exported from the UK

↓ 9%

4.1
million tonnes
imported to the UK

↓ 1%



2.5
billion tonne kilometres
moved from the
UK (exported)

↓ 7%

2.6
billion tonne kilometres
moved to the UK
(imported)

↓ 6%



- ▶ **Goods lifted** to or from the UK by UK-registered HGVs decreased by 5% to 7.8 million tonnes (3.7 million tonnes exported and 4.1 million tonnes imported) compared with the previous year ending March 2016. This is 31% lower than the same period 10 years earlier.
- ▶ **Goods moved** to or from the UK by UK-registered HGVs decreased by 7% to 5.2 billion tonne kilometres compared with the previous year ending March 2016. This is 41% lower than the same period 10 years earlier.
- ▶ The UK has consistently imported more than it exported (by weight), for every rolling year since data has been available (start of January 2005).

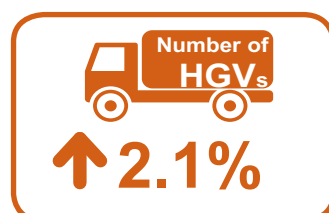
[See Table [RFS0201](#) and [RFS0144](#) for detailed statistics]

[More information on road freight can be found in the [annual release](#)]

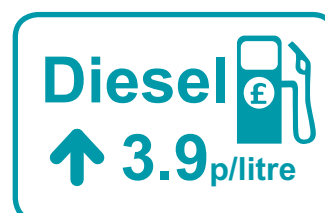
In context - the year ending March 2017 compared to the year ending March 2016:



Source: [Office for National Statistics](#)



Source: [Department for Transport, Vehicle Licensing Statistics](#)



Source: [Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy](#)



Source: [Office for National Statistics](#)

Revisions to international freight data

International road freight data are derived from the Continuing Survey of Road Goods Transport Northern Ireland (CSRGT-NI) and the International Road Haulage Survey (IRHS). In order to get a complete picture of international road haulage activities of UK-registered HGVs, data collected from the surveys are grossed up. For the IRHS, the process of grossing is achieved by scaling the number of trips by vehicles making international journeys in the survey, to the total number of trips reported in the Department for Transport's (DfT) 'Road goods vehicles travelling to mainland Europe' publication. This records the number of heavy goods vehicles travelling from Great Britain to mainland Europe on roll-on roll-off ferries and the Channel Tunnel. More information on this can be found in the [Road Freight Statistics notes and definitions](#).

A number of revisions have been made to data in the 'Road goods vehicles travelling to mainland Europe' statistical series, following the identification of issues in the data provided by a ferry operator. Details regarding these revisions can be found in 'Road goods vehicles travelling to mainland Europe: April to June 2017 statistical release', available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/road-goods-vehicles-travelling-to-mainland-europe-april-to-june-2017>.

As a consequence of these revisions, the grossing factors used to produce international road freight data have been altered back to 2012 and the international road freight statistics in this series have been revised. The effect of these revisions on the headline statistics are shown below:

Total goods lifted to and from the UK, by UK-registered HGVs, in tonnes:

Year		2013	2014	2015	2016
Original Figures	Total	9,665,000	8,938,000	8,244,000	7,762,000
	To UK:	5,299,000	4,627,000	4,318,000	4,035,000
	From UK:	4,366,000	4,311,000	3,926,000	3,726,000
Revised Figures	Total	9,848,000	9,171,000	8,309,000	7,774,000
	To UK:	5,408,000	4,759,000	4,355,000	4,042,000
	From UK:	4,439,000	4,412,000	3,954,000	3,733,000

Total goods moved to and from the UK, by UK-registered HGVs, in tonne kilometres (thousands):

Year		2013	2014	2015	2016
Original Figures	Total	6,440,000	5,864,000	5,491,000	5,077,000
	To UK:	3,420,000	2,917,000	2,806,000	2,558,000
	From UK:	3,021,000	2,947,000	2,685,000	2,519,000
Revised Figures	Total	6,586,000	6,036,000	5,553,000	5,087,000
	To UK:	3,497,000	3,007,000	2,836,000	2,563,000
	From UK:	3,089,000	3,029,000	2,717,000	2,524,000

All accompanying data tables which have been affected by this issue are listed here: Tables [RFS0144](#), [RFS0201](#), [RFS0202](#), [RFS0203](#), [RFS0204](#), [RFS0205](#), [RFS0206](#) and [RFS0207](#). Domestic road freight figures are unaffected by these revisions.

Users and uses of statistics

Road freight statistics are a key source of management information on the use of the country's infrastructure. Its main use occurs across various types of public and private bodies. This includes the statistical office of the European Union (Eurostat); local and central government, such as the Office for National Statistics and Highways England; local town and transport planning bodies; commercial organisations, such as haulage operators and transport consultants; and academics.

Users are mainly interested in information such as the origins and destinations of journeys, length of haul, empty running and the pattern of freight from abroad on UK roads. The statistics also support policies on freight, road safety and reducing congestion, and pollution.

Strengths and weaknesses of data

The figures in this release are derived from the Continuing Survey of Road Goods Transport Great Britain/ Northern Ireland (CSRGT GB/NI) and the International Road Haulage survey (IRHS) which are continuous surveys which collect a range of information on freight movements from a stratified sample of HGVs. Foreign-registered vehicles and vehicles with a gross vehicle weight of 3.5 tonnes or less (Light Goods Vehicles) are excluded from the survey. Guidance on the methods used to compile these statistics and further information can be found in the [Road Freight Statistics notes and definitions](#). Sample figures are weighted to be representative of the HGV population, but these are subject to sampling errors. Annual sample sizes and sampling error estimates can be found within Table [RFS0143](#).

The figures presented here rely on the use of administrative data from DVLA and DVSA. DfT have assessed the impact of this on the quality of these statistics, reports on which can be found at the following links: [Quality assurance of administrative data sources: Driver Vehicle Licensing Agency](#); and [Quality assurance of administrative data sources: Driver Vehicle Standards Agency](#).

Background notes

Accompanying data tables give further detail on the key results presented in this statistical release and statistics on other road freight topics, which are available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/road-freight-domestic-and-international-statistics>. For this quarterly release, only three tables are updated as they provide road freight statistics for each quarter, whereas all other road freight tables only provide annual statistics. These are Tables [RFS0101](#), [RFS0144](#) and [RFS0201](#).

Further information about the statistics and methodology in this report can be found in the [Road Freight Statistics notes and definitions](#).

Details of ministers and officials who receive pre-release access to these statistics up to 24 hours before release can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/road-freight-statistics-pre-release-access-list>.



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