July to September 2017 saw the number of new registrations of ultra low emission vehicles (ULEVs) exceed 14,000 vehicles in the United Kingdom for the first time. Over 39 million vehicles in total were registered during this period.

During these months, 14,600 new ULEVs were registered in the United Kingdom, an increase of 33% on the same period in 2016.

The most popular new car model in Great Britain in July to September 2017 was the Volkswagen Golf (21,000), followed by the Nissan Qashqai (19,000) and the Ford Focus (17,000).

At end of Sept 2017 The number of vehicles that were licensed and on the road in Great Britain was 38 million, up 1.7% on the same quarter in 2016.

During Jul to Sept 2017 54.1% of newly registered cars in Great Britain were petrol and 40.5% diesel. 2.3% were plug in cars and non plug in hybrids were 3.1%.
From July to September 2017, 816,000 vehicles were registered for the first time in Great Britain. This was the first time the number of new registrations in the third quarter of the year has fallen from the same period of the previous year since 2011.

It was 8.6% down on the same quarter of the previous year and 8.4% lower than the highest number recorded in 2002. This fall could be attributed in part to changes in VED introduced in April 2017.

This fall particularly affected lower emission cars. VED bands A to E (emissions up to 140 g/km) account for 83% of newly registered cars. The percentage of new registrations in Band A (1 to 100 g/km) fell by 2.8 percentage points compared to the same period in 2016. Band B (101 to 110 g/km) fell by 1.1 percentage points. Band C (111 to 120 g/km) fell by 0.8 percentage points. Band D (121 to 130 g/km) rose by 1.9 percentage points and Band E (131 to 140 g/km) rose by 1.7 percentage points.

Figure 1: Vehicles registered for the first time, GB: third quarter of the year, 1980-2017

**Changes in VED bands**

Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) is charged on vehicles registered in the UK.

For cars licensed after March 2001, VED is charged in bands on the basis of their CO₂ emissions. New tax rates apply for cars newly registered after April 2017 - see Vehicle Tax Rate Tables for further details.

**Tables**

Detailed new registrations statistical tables updated this quarter are:

All vehicles types: VEH0150, 0160 and 0170

Cars: VEH0253 and 0256

**Change of registration plates**

Up to 1998, new registration plates were issued once a year in August, causing a peak in registrations in that month. In 1999, this was changed to twice a year, in March and September. This changed the distribution of new registrations through the year.
Of the new registrations between July and September 2017, 80.5% were cars, 12.1% were vans and 7.4% were motorcycles, HGVs, Buses & coaches and other vehicles.

The proportion of newly registered cars by propulsion have changed significantly over the last fifteen years. In the year to 2002 Q3, newly registered cars were petrol (77.2%), diesel (22.7%) and alternative fuels (0.1%). In the year to 2017 Q3 the proportions were petrol (52%), diesel (43.6%) and alternative fuels (4.4%).

The number of new registrations of the different types of alternative fuel cars in the year to 2017 Q3 were non-plug in hybrids (64,000), plug in hybrids (29,000), battery electric cars (20,000). Gas and other alternative fuels cars reached a peak of around 3,000 new registrations a year in 2003 but are now less than 100 each year.

What are Alternative Fuels cars?

A hybrid vehicle uses two or more distinct types of power, such as internal combustion engine plus an electric motor. The battery of a plug-in hybrid vehicle or electric vehicle needs to be connected to a mains electricity supply to replenish the electric supply whereas a non-plug-in hybrid is charged while the fuel is being used to motor the engine. Gas & other includes vehicles propelled by gas and other vehicles that are neither petrol, diesel, electric or any type of hybrid.
In the year to September 2017, 49,108 new **ultra low emission vehicles** (ULEVs) were registered for the first time in the United Kingdom, an increase of 22% on one year before and 72% on two years previously.

During the year to end of September 2017, ULEVs represented 1.5% of all new registrations, compared with 1.2% over the previous year, and 0.9% over the year before that.

Most of the increase in ULEV registrations has been accounted for by vehicles eligible for plug-in car and van grants. New registrations in the year to September 2017 included 42,281 cars and 1,134 vans of models that were eligible for these grants, 17% up in total for cars and vans on the year to September 2016.

The growth in ULEVs is being influenced by new models coming into the market, and increasingly, competitive pricing. The models with the most registrations in the year to September 2017 were the Mitsubishi Outlander with 7,380, followed by the Nissan Leaf with 6,180 and the BMW 3 Series with 5,083.

### What are Ultra Low Emission Vehicles?

Ultra low emission vehicles are those with emissions of CO₂ below 75 g/km, or fully electrically powered.

### What are plug-in vehicles and grants?

A plug-in vehicle is one that can be recharged from an external source of electricity. It may be powered by a battery only, or by a combination of battery and a conventional internal combustion engine (a plug-in hybrid).

Plug-in car and van grants started in Jan 2011 and Feb 2012 respectively, with major changes in Mar 2016.

They provide a grant towards the cost of new qualifying models - see [Plug-in car and van grants](#) for further details.

The Government aspires that by 2040 every new car in the UK will be a ULEV and is facilitating this through a range of measures. See the report on the [uptake of ULEV vehicles](#) for further details.

### Tables

Detailed environmental statistical tables updated this quarter are:

- **ULEV**: [VEH0130, 0131 and 0170](#)
- **CO₂ cars**: [VEH0256](#)
At the end of September 2017 there were 38 million vehicles licensed for use on the roads in Great Britain, of which 31.3 million were cars.

In the year to September 2017 the stock of vehicles increased by 1.7%. This is the lowest year-on-year increase since 2015 Q4. Since 2015 Q4 the quarterly year-on-year have varied between 1.8% and 2.5%.

In September 2017, the numbers of licensed cars and vans were at their highest ever levels. The numbers of motorbikes, HGVs and buses & coaches, on the other hand, remained below their peak levels, which they reached between 2004 and 2009.

In the year to September 2017, the largest percentage increase was for vans at 3.4% followed by cars and HGVs both at 1.5%. Motorcycles decreased by 0.1% over the same period and buses & coaches fell by 1.5%.

Over the last twenty years, vehicle stock has increased by 40.6%. The largest increase was for vans at 75.7%, followed by motorcycles at 61.9%. Growth in HGVs was low at 13.9% and buses & coaches decreased by 0.4%.

Figure 7: Change in licensed vehicles in GB, up to Sept 2017:

Over last year

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<th></th>
<th>% change</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cars</td>
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<tr>
<td>Motorcycles</td>
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<tr>
<td>Light goods</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavy goods</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buses &amp; coaches</td>
<td>-1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Vehicles</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Over last 20 years

<table>
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<th></th>
<th>% change</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cars</td>
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<tr>
<td>Motorcycles</td>
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<tr>
<td>Light goods</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heavy goods</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buses &amp; coaches</td>
<td>-0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Vehicles</td>
<td>40.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Makes

Ford, Volkswagen, Audi, Vauxhall and Mercedes accounted for 40% of the new car registrations in July to September 2017.

The top five makes (Ford, Vauxhall, Volkswagen, BMW and Audi) accounted for 44% of all licensed cars at the end of September 2017 in Great Britain. Ford accounted for 14% of all cars and Vauxhall for 11%.

Models

The Volkswagen Golf was the most common new registration car model from July to September 2017 with 21,000 registered for the first time. This was followed by the Nissan Qashqai with 19,000.

New registrations of cars in 2017 Q3 are lower than in the same quarter in 2016. The Volkswagen Golf and Nissan Qashqai increased respectively by 16% and 18%. The Ford Fiesta decreased by 49% from the same quarter in 2016. The Vauxhall Corsa has fallen out of the top five models this quarter and has been replaced with the Volkswagen Polo.

The most common models licensed at the end of September 2017 were the Ford Fiesta with 1.5 million cars followed by the Ford Focus with 1.4 million.
About these statistics

Almost all the statistics in the vehicle licensing statistics series are derived by Department for Transport statisticians from extracts of the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) vehicle database. The main purpose of the database is to administer vehicle registration and licensing records in the United Kingdom.

For further information, please see the detailed Technical Notes. There is also a Statement of Administrative Sources for the DVLA vehicles database.

Strengths and weaknesses of the data

The DVLA database can be regarded as being virtually complete in terms of the number of licensed vehicles and vehicles with a SORN (Statutory Off-Road Notification). However, there will be errors in some of the specific details of individual vehicles, mostly less important details. The Department for Transport estimates that under 2% of the vehicles records have an inaccuracy in one of the variables used for the statistics published. Other factors to consider in interpreting these statistics include: changes in legislation, revisions to the series, seasonal variation which affects some vehicle types, vehicle excise duty evasion and other types of failure to inform DVLA of relevant facts about the status of a vehicle, and the fact that foreign registered vehicles may also use UK roads without being registered with DVLA. Most of these factors will only have a marginal effect for most uses of the data.

What is the full list of tables updated as part of this release?

- veh0101: number of licensed vehicles by body type
- veh0104: number of licensed vehicles by region
- veh0110: number of SORN vehicles by body type
- veh0120: number of licensed vehicles by make and model
- veh0121: number of SORN vehicles by make and model
- veh0122: number of licensed vehicles by postcode district
- veh0123: number of SORN vehicles by postcode district
- veh0128: number of licensed vehicles by generic model name
- veh0129: number of SORN vehicles by generic model name
- veh0130: number of licensed ultra-low emissions vehicles (UK data)
- veh0131: number of plug in cars and vans by upper and lower tier local authority.
- veh0150: first registrations by body type
- veh0160: first registrations by make and model
- veh0161: first registrations by generic model name
- veh0170: first registrations of ultra-low emission vehicle registrations (UK data)
- veh0253: first registration of cars by propulsion type
- veh0256: first registrations of cars by CO2 emission band
- veh0301: number of licensed motor cycles
Users and uses of these statistics

A separate note on vehicles statistics guidance is available.

National Statistics

All of the statistics published in this series are National Statistics, apart from the exceptions listed on the series page. Vehicles statistics were assessed by the UK Statistics Authority and confirmed as National Statistics in April 2012. National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference.

Details of ministers and officials who receive pre-release access to these statistics up to 24 hours before release can be found in the Pre-release access list.

Next Release

Vehicle Licensing statistical releases are published quarterly. The next is due on 8 March 2017. The Quarter 4 release for each calendar year (released in April) is accompanied by a larger set of data tables and more detailed commentary.

In addition a single table of monthly new vehicle registrations is released on the series page on the second Thursday of each month.

Any updates to these plans will be advertised via the DfT statistical publications schedule.

Request for Feedback

We welcome any feedback on these statistics, to ensure future releases best meet user needs. Feedback can be provided by email to vehicles.stats@dft.gsi.gov.uk.

Release of DfT Statistics publications

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