



Department for Transport

# Vehicle Licensing Statistics: Quarter 3 (Jul - Sept) 2017

## About this release

This release presents the latest quarterly statistics on licensed motor vehicles. It is part of the [Vehicle Statistics](#) series. Detailed [data tables](#) are available from the web site.

For a more detailed commentary on vehicle registration statistics, see the [annual release](#).

It is based on administrative data held by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA).

Except where otherwise stated, the statistics in this release all refer to Great Britain. However, the underlying data set was expanded to cover UK data during 2014.

For further details please refer to the Background Information section below and the separate [Technical Notes](#).

## In this publication

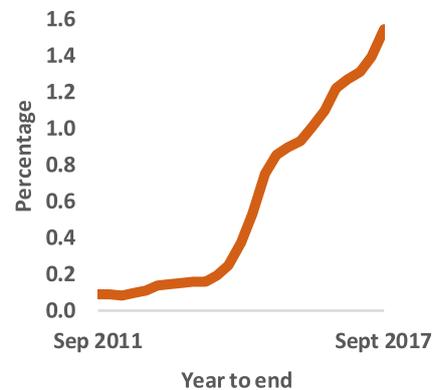
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**Next Release:**  
**March 2018**



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).

Model	Thousands
Volkswagen Golf	21
Nissan Qashqai	19
Ford Focus	17
Ford Fiesta	16
Volkswagen Polo	13

## 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%.

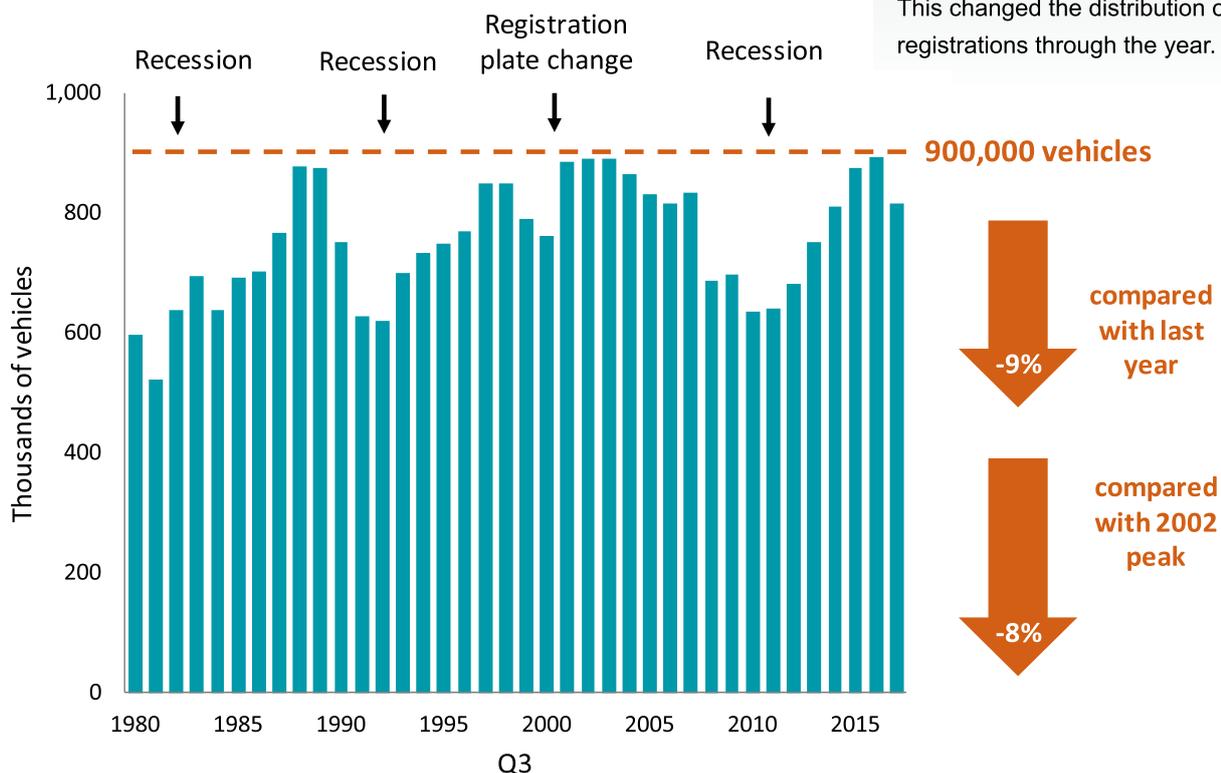


From July to September 2017, 816,000 vehicles were registered for the first time in Great Britain. This was the first time the number of new registrations in the third quarter of the year has fallen from the same period of the previous year since 2011.

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 CO<sub>2</sub> 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](#)

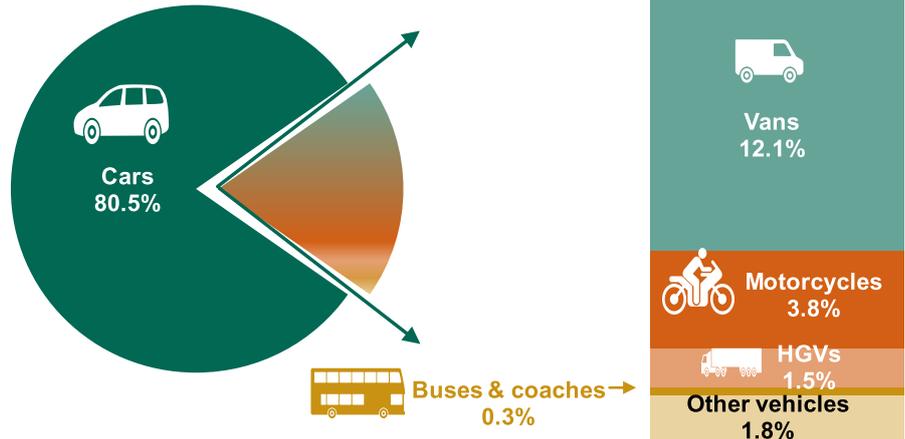
Cars: [VEH0253 and 0256](#)

### Change of registration plates

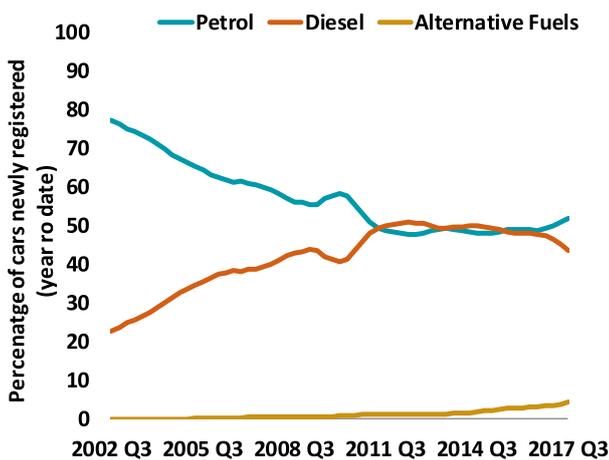
Up to 1998, new registration plates were issued once a year in August, causing a peak in registrations in that month. In 1999, this was changed to twice a year, in March and September. This changed the distribution of new registrations through the year.

**Figure 2: Vehicles registered for the first time, GB: July to September 2017; by vehicle type**

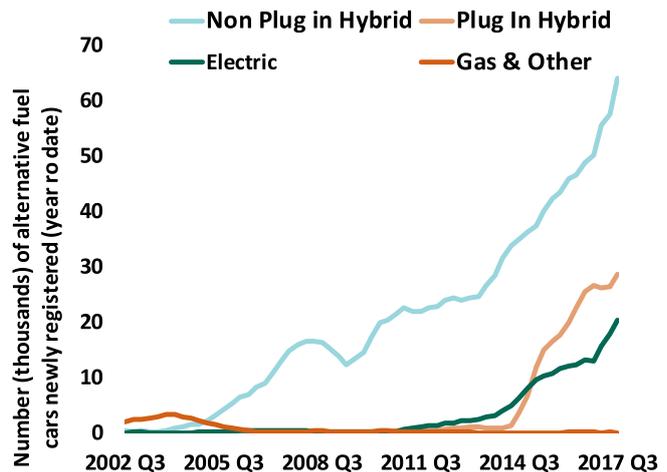
Of the new registrations between July and September 2017, 80.5% were cars, 12.1% were vans and 7.4% were motorcycles, HGVs, Buses & coaches and other vehicles.



**Figure 3: Percentage of cars registered for the first time, GB: Year to date; 2002 Q3 to 2017 Q3**



**Figure 4: Number of alternative fuel cars registered for the first time, GB: Year to date; 2002 Q3 to 2017 Q3**



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.



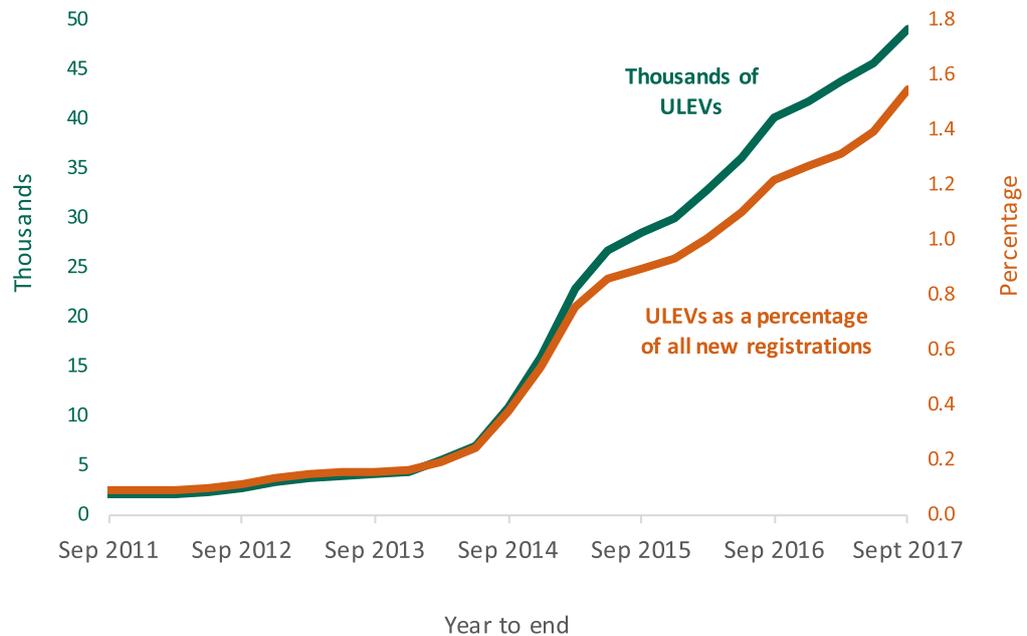
In the year to September 2017, 49,108 new **ultra low emission vehicles (ULEVs)** were registered for the first time in the United Kingdom, an increase of 22% on one year before and 72% on two years previously.

## What are Ultra Low Emission Vehicles?

Ultra low emission vehicles are those with emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> below 75 g/km, or fully electrically powered.

**Figure 5: New Ultra Low Emission Vehicle registrations, UK: 2011 Q3 - 2017 Q3**

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 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](#)

CO<sub>2</sub> 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%.

## Tables

Detailed vehicle stock statistical tables updated this quarter are:

All vehicle types: [VEH0101, 0104, 0110, 0120 to 0123, 0128 to 0131](#)

Motorcycles: [VEH0301](#)

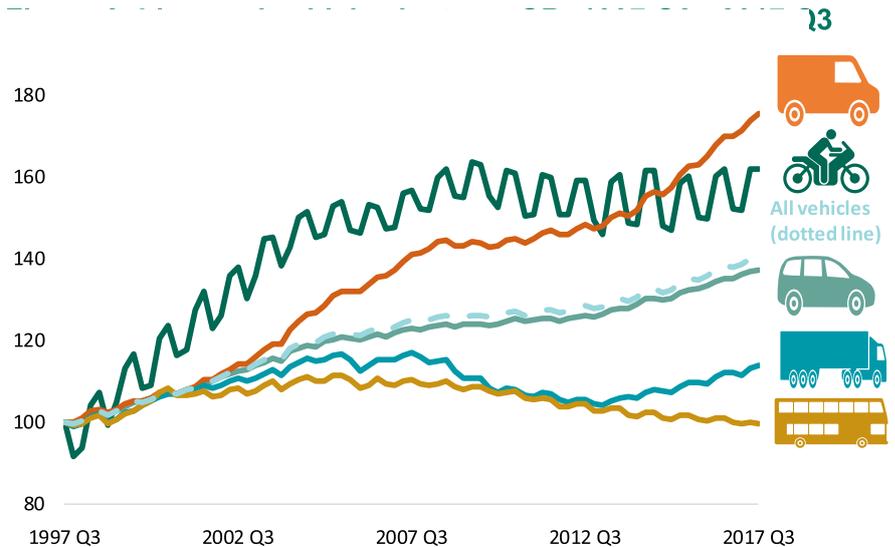
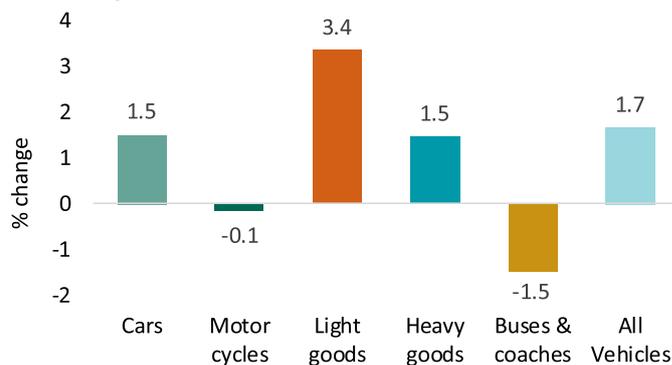
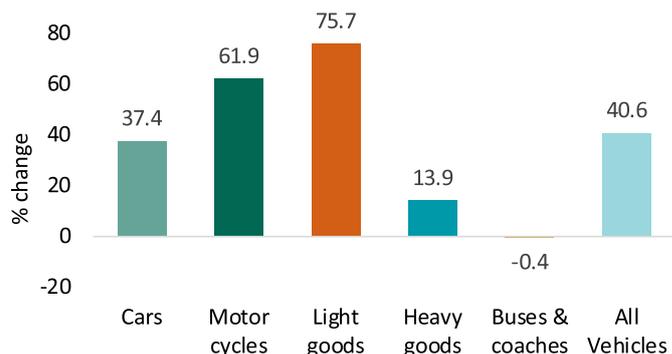


Figure 7: Change in licensed vehicles in GB, up to Sept 2017:

### Over last year



### Over last 20 years





**Makes**

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

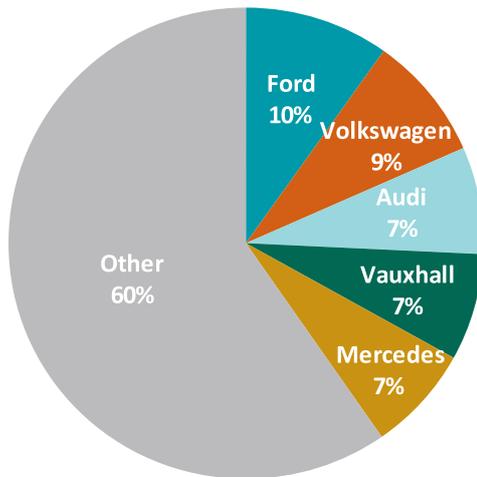
The top five makes (Ford, Vauxhall, Volkswagen, BMW and Audi) accounted for 44% of all licensed cars at the end of September 2017 in Great Britain. Ford accounted for 14% of all cars and Vauxhall for 11%.

**Tables**

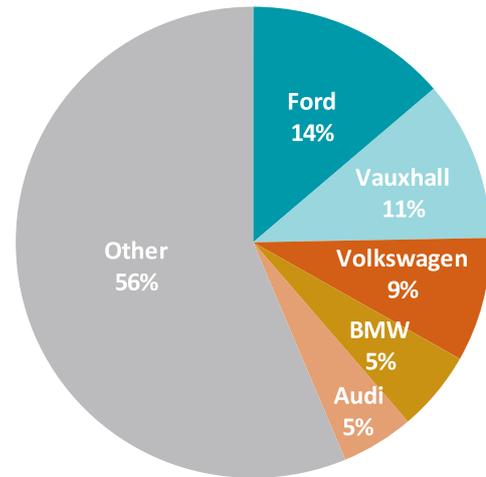
Detailed make and model data tables:

[VEH0120, 0121, 0128, 0129, 0160, 0161](#)

**Figure 8: Top 5 makes of cars, GB  
New cars, July to September 2017**



**All licensed cars, September 2017**



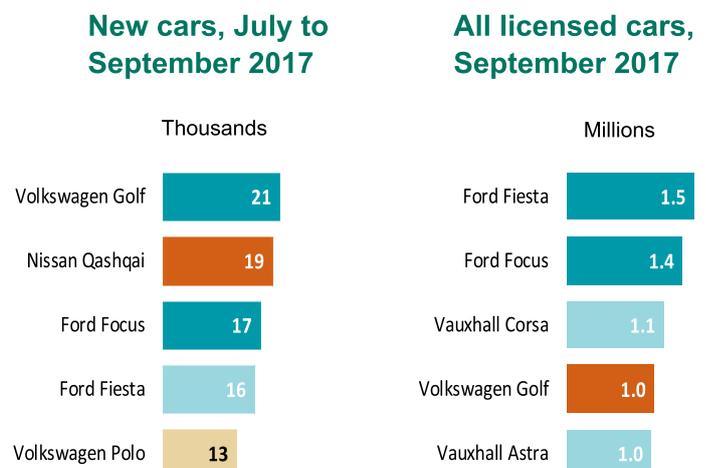
**Models**

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.

**Figure 9: Top 5 models of cars, GB**



### 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](mailto:vehicles.stats@dft.gsi.gov.uk).

## Release of DfT Statistics publications

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