



Department
for Transport

Road Freight Statistics, United Kingdom: July 2016 - June 2017

Methodology change

The Department for Transport has undertaken a review of part of the methodology used to produce the estimates of the domestic aspect of the 'Road Freight Statistics' series. This review has now concluded and a change to part of the methodology has been implemented. The findings in this release are not directly comparable with previous publications in this series. More information on the effect of these revisions to the headline statistics can be found on [page 3](#).

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 June 2017, looking at the activity of GB-registered HGVs operating **in the UK**, there were...



Goods
Lifted

1.47
billion tonnes

↑ 4%

Compared to the year ending
June 2016



Goods
Moved

151
billion tonne
kilometres

↑ 6%



Vehicle
Distance

18.9
billion vehicle
kilometres

↑ 2%

- In the twelve months ending June 2017, the amount of **goods lifted**, **goods moved** and the **distance travelled** by GB-registered HGVs, in the UK, increased by 4%, 6% and 2% respectively.

[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.

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FURTHER INFORMATION: Media: 020 7944 3066 Public: 020 7944 8361

International road freight: main results

In the year ending June 2017, looking at the activity of UK-registered HGVs transporting freight internationally, there were...

Compared to the year ending
June 2016



8.1 million tonnes
to/from the UK
of which...

- 3.7 million tonnes were exported
- 4.4 million tonnes were imported

↑ 5%

↓ 3%

↑ 12%



5.4 billion tonne kilometres
to/from the UK
of which...

- 2.6 billion tonne kilometres were exported
- 2.8 billion tonne kilometres were imported

↑ 6%

↑ 2%

↑ 10%

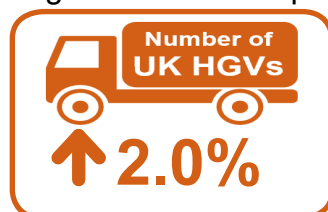
- ▶ **Goods lifted** to/from the UK, by UK-registered HGVs, increased by 5% to 8.1 million tonnes compared with the previous year ending June 2016. This is 29% lower than the same period 10 years earlier.
- ▶ **Goods moved** to/from the UK, by UK-registered HGVs, increased by 6% to 5.4 billion tonne kilometres compared with the previous year ending June 2016. This is 40% lower than the same period 10 years earlier.
- ▶ The total amount of **goods lifted** and **goods moved** internationally, by UK-registered HGVs, have generally been falling since 2000.

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

In context - The year ending June 2017 compared to the year ending June 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](#)

Methodology change

The Department for Transport has undertaken a review of part of the methodology used to produce the estimates of the domestic aspect of the 'Road Freight Statistics' series. The publication initially scheduled for 11 January 2018 was postponed pending the findings from this review.

This review has now concluded and a change to part of the methodology has been implemented which has led to estimates of the amount of goods lifted and goods moved to be revised from 2011 Quarter 2 onwards. The statistics have been revised from this point in line with when a historical change in processing methods was introduced to the series at that time.

The review found that in certain cases, the methodology was over-estimating the amount of goods moved and goods lifted on journeys involving five or more stops per day, as collected from the Continuing Survey of Road Goods Transport-Great Britain (CSRGT-GB) and Continuing Survey of Road Goods Transport-Northern Ireland (CSRGT-NI), back to 2011 Quarter 2. This latest change to part of the methodology corrects for this and as a result has led to a downward revision in the estimated amount of goods moved and lifted by UK-registered HGVs back to 2011 Quarter 2. Figures for 2016 were particularly affected by this revision owing to the larger number of journeys reported that had five or more stops per day, compared to previous years. This led to the change in direction of the figures in 2016 as seen below. As stated before, in previous publications, comparisons between these periods should continue to be treated with caution.

These revisions only apply to estimates produced from the CSRGT-GB and CSRGT-NI surveys. Domestic road freight activity by GB and NI-registered HGVs working within the UK have been the most impacted by the methodology review. Overall, international road freight activity estimates remain largely unaffected, with the exception of NI-registered HGV activity which comes from CSRGT-NI. All statistics related to international road freight activity from the International Road Haulage Survey (IRHS) remain unaffected.

What is the effect of these changes?

The methodology change has led to the estimates of goods lifted and goods moved by GB-registered HGVs and NI-registered HGVs to be revised from 2011 Quarter 2 onwards. The effect of these changes on domestic and international road freight activity can be seen below:

Domestic:

Total goods lifted by GB-registered heavy goods vehicles (million tonnes):

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016
Original Figures	1,475	1,490	1,647	1,887
Revised Figures	1,316	1,322	1,445	1,434

Total goods moved by GB-registered heavy goods vehicles (billion tonne kilometres):

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016
Original Figures	139	136	152	170
Revised Figures	131	128	143	148

International:

Changes to international road freight activity, impacted only by the CSRGT-NI, are minimal and therefore cannot be seen in the headline figures.

All of the tables last updated in the Road Freight [annual release](#) which are affected by the change in goods moved and goods lifted have been revised. These tables can be found at the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/rfs01-goods-lifted-and-distance-hauled>.

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 (ONS) 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 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 Driver Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) and Driver Vehicle Standards Agency (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: DVLA](#); and [Quality assurance of administrative data sources: DVSA](#).

Background notes

Accompanying data tables give further detail on the key results presented in this statistical release, as well as statistics on other road freight topics, which are available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/road-freight-domestic-and-international-statistics>. For this release, all annual tables which are affected by the change in methodology have been updated. In addition to these, Table [RFS0145](#), which provides a summary of goods lifted and goods moved domestically and internationally by UK-registered HGVs, is being published for the first time with the release of this publication. Hereafter, Table [RFS0145](#) will be updated annually.

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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