



Department for Transport

Road Freight Statistics, United Kingdom: April 2017 - March 2018

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 **internationally**.

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Domestic road freight: main results

Domestic road freight activity decreased in the twelve month period ending March 2018 for GB-registered HGVs operating **in the UK**. There were

Compared to the twelve months ending March 2017



1.37
billion tonnes of goods lifted

↓ 7%



149
billion tonne kilometres of goods moved

↓ 1%



18.7
billion vehicle kilometres travelled

↓ 2%

- ▶ **Goods lifted** in the UK by GB-registered HGVs in the twelve months ending March 2018 decreased by 7% to 1.37 billion tonnes compared with the previous twelve months. This is 26% lower than the same period ten years earlier.
- ▶ **Goods moved** in the UK by GB-registered HGVs in the twelve months ending March 2018 decreased by 1% to 149 billion tonne kilometres compared with the previous twelve months. This is 5% lower than the same period ten years earlier.
- ▶ The UK experienced adverse weather conditions during February and March 2018. However, analysis suggests there was no apparent link between weather and the decrease in domestic road freight activity.
- ▶ GB-registered HGV activity is a strong indicator of overall domestic road freight activity. Foreign HGV cabotage (road freight moved in the UK by a vehicle registered in another country) accounted for just 1% of total road freight activity within the UK for 2017.

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

Definitions



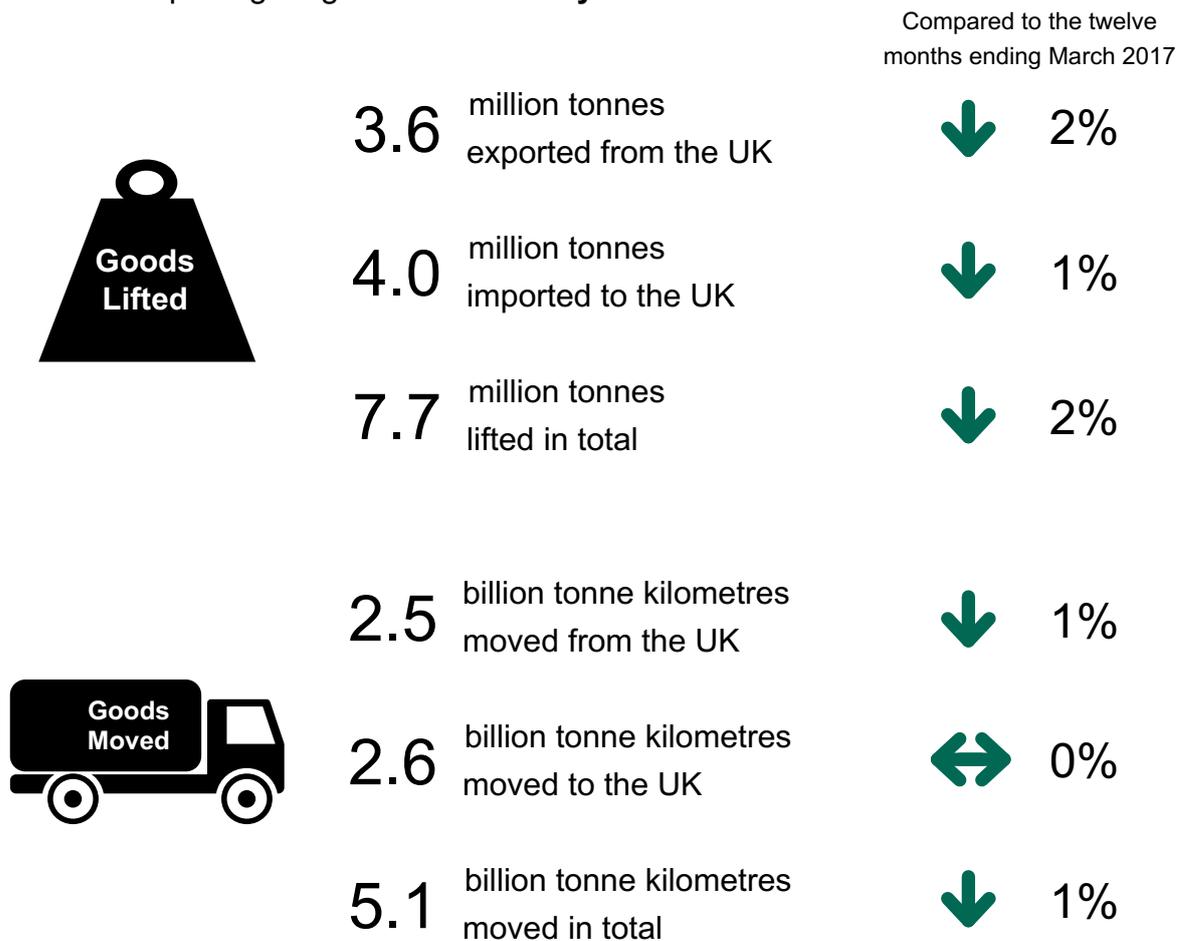
Goods lifted: the weight of goods carried, measured in tonnes.



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

International road freight: main results

International road freight activity decreased in the twelve month period ending March 2018 for UK-registered HGVs transporting freight **internationally**. There were



Figures are subject to rounding

- **Goods lifted** to/from the UK by UK-registered HGVs in the twelve months ending March 2018 decreased by 2% to 7.7 million tonnes compared with the previous twelve months. This is 32% lower than the same period ten years earlier.
- **Goods moved** to/from the UK by UK-registered HGVs in the twelve months ending March 2018 decreased by 1% to 5.1 billion tonne kilometres compared with the previous twelve months. This is 38% lower than the same period ten years earlier.

[See Tables [RFS0201](#) and [RFS0130](#) for detailed statistics]

In context - The year ending March 2018 compared to the year ending March 2017:



Source: [Office for National Statistics](#)



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



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



Source: [Office for National Statistics](#)

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. These statistics are published approximately six months after the end of each quarter to allow hauliers time to complete the survey and for the Department to quality assure and compile the data. 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 [RFS0129](#).

The figures presented here rely on the use of administrative data from the Driver Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) and the 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 providing statistics on other road freight topics, and can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/road-freight-domestic-and-international-statistics>. For this quarterly release, only three tables are updated, Tables [RFS0101](#), [RFS0130](#) and [RFS0201](#). The other published tables are updated on an annual basis alongside the annual statistical release.

A collection of other road freight statistics, such as road freight by commodity or region, are provided in our annual 2017 statistical release at the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/road-freight-statistics-2017>.

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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