



Department for Transport

Vehicle Licensing Statistics: 2020 Quarter 3 (Jul - Sep)

About this release

This release presents the latest [statistics on licensed motor vehicles](#). Detailed [data tables](#) are available online and more detailed commentary can be found in the [annual release](#).

These statistics are based on administrative data held by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA).

Except where otherwise stated, the statistics refer to Great Britain. UK data is available from July 2014.

In this publication

Summary	1
Impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19)	2
Vehicles registered for the first time	4
New car registrations by fuel type	5
Ultra low emission vehicles (ULEVs)	6
Average CO ₂ emissions for cars	7
Total licensed vehicles	9
Car makes and models	10
Background notes	11

ULEVs: Vehicles that are reported to emit less than 75g of carbon dioxide (CO₂) from the tailpipe for every kilometre travelled.

Alternative fuel: Vehicles powered by something other than petrol or diesel.

Next published:
April 2021



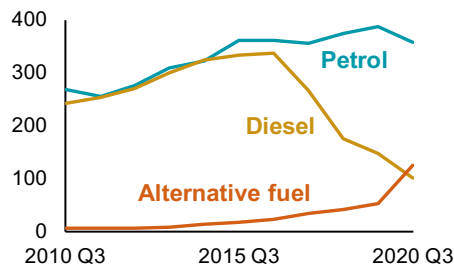
755 thousand vehicles were registered for the first time in Great Britain during 2020 Q3, 2% more than during 2019 Q3. [\[VEH0150\]](#)

Thousands of vehicles registered for the first time - GB - Q3 only



The recent trends in this statistical series have been heavily affected by the measures implemented from March 2020 onwards to limit the impact of **the coronavirus (COVID-19)** pandemic. Additional information is provided on [page 2](#).

Thousands of cars registered for the first time - GB - Q3 only

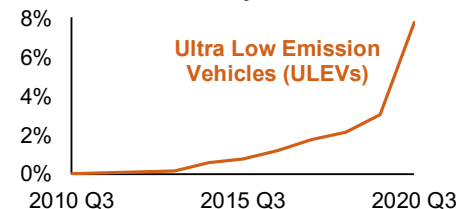


The number of **diesel** cars registered for the first time in Great Britain during 2020 Q3 declined by 31% compared to 2019 Q3, with **petrol** cars declining by 8%. In contrast, there was a 137% increase in the number of **alternative fuel** cars registered over the same time period. [\[VEH0253\]](#)



During 2020 Q3, 59,057 **ultra low emission vehicles (ULEVs)** were registered for the first time in Great Britain, an increase of 162% on 2019 Q3. ULEVs made up 7.8% of all new registrations in 2020 Q3. [\[VEH0150\]](#)

Proportion of vehicles registered for the first time - GB - Q3 only



At the end of September 2020, there were 38.8 million **licensed vehicles** in Great Britain, a decrease of 0.1% compared to the end of September 2019. This is the third year on year quarterly decline in a row. [\[VEH0101\]](#)



Impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19)



The statistics for this quarter cover part of the period after the government's announcement of measures to limit the impact and transmission of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

During the UK lockdown (applied from 23 March 2020), vehicle dealerships and showrooms were required to close, removing the main method by which new vehicles are sold in the UK, which had a heavy impact on new registrations during 2020 Q2. These restrictions were subsequently lifted at various times for the devolved countries of the UK - England (1 June), Northern Ireland (8 June), Wales (22 June), and Scotland (29 June).

During 2020 Q3, there were no national restrictions affecting vehicle registrations themselves, although locally applied measures might have led to reduced access to dealerships. In response to the first national lockdown, several manufacturers implemented new methods for purchasing vehicles (i.e. "click and collect").

The UK economy rebounded from recession in 2020 Q3 following two successive declines in 2020 Q1 and Q2, but the economy did not recover to pre-pandemic levels. New vehicle registrations are heavily affected by the economy.

Impact on new UK registrations including more recent trends



In order to provide more timely data during the coronavirus pandemic, the Department has included some additional data covering October 2020 in [table VEH0150](#).

Monthly new registrations in the UK (see **Table 1**) were considerably lower in 2020 during April (down 94%) and May (down 85%) compared with the same months in 2019. In June 2020, the number of new registrations was much higher than the previous month, but was still 33% lower than in June 2019. July 2020 saw the first monthly year on year increase since December 2019, up by 12%. Between August and October 2020, the market was broadly stable compared with the same months in 2019.

Despite the fall in new registrations, ULEVs saw large year on year increases in 2020 from June onwards, ranging from +90% to +250% each month compared to 2019. This is shown in **Table 2**.

Table 1: New vehicle registrations, United Kingdom, January to October, 2018 to 2020 [VEH0150]

Date	2018	2019	2020	Annual percentage change: 2020 (%)
Quarter 1: January to March	875,768	877,240	613,720	-30
<i>January to March 21st</i>	589,020	595,800	561,936	-6
Quarter 2: April to June	757,992	745,443	246,567	-67
Quarter 3: July to September	763,023	754,887	771,648	+2
January	199,813	202,012	190,887	-6
February	108,493	111,025	108,310	-2
March	567,462	564,203	314,523	-44
<i>1st to 21st</i>	280,714	282,763	262,739	-7
<i>22nd to 31st</i>	286,748	281,440	51,784	-82
April	213,277	211,560	12,342	-94
May	245,922	240,046	37,079	-85
June	298,793	293,837	197,146	-33
July	211,685	206,371	230,235	+12
August	129,384	134,489	128,671	-4
September	421,954	414,027	412,742	0
October	204,597	191,443	190,360	-1

Year on year comparisons

Comparing new registrations on a daily basis by year can be difficult for a number of reasons. For example, 2020 has a leap day in February, and the period of Easter varies between years.

Table 1 compares complete weeks between years to avoid the strong effect of the day of the week on new registrations.

Figure 1 illustrates the fall in the number of new registrations in 2020 by week number. The dates included in each week number have been slightly adjusted from the usual calendar to ensure that the peaks in registrations align properly (e.g. including the leap day in 2020 in week 9) and to overcome the strong seasonality of the day of the week.

Figure 1: Cumulative difference in new vehicles registrations in 2020 compared with the average of 2018 and 2019 by week number (adjusted), United Kingdom, January to October

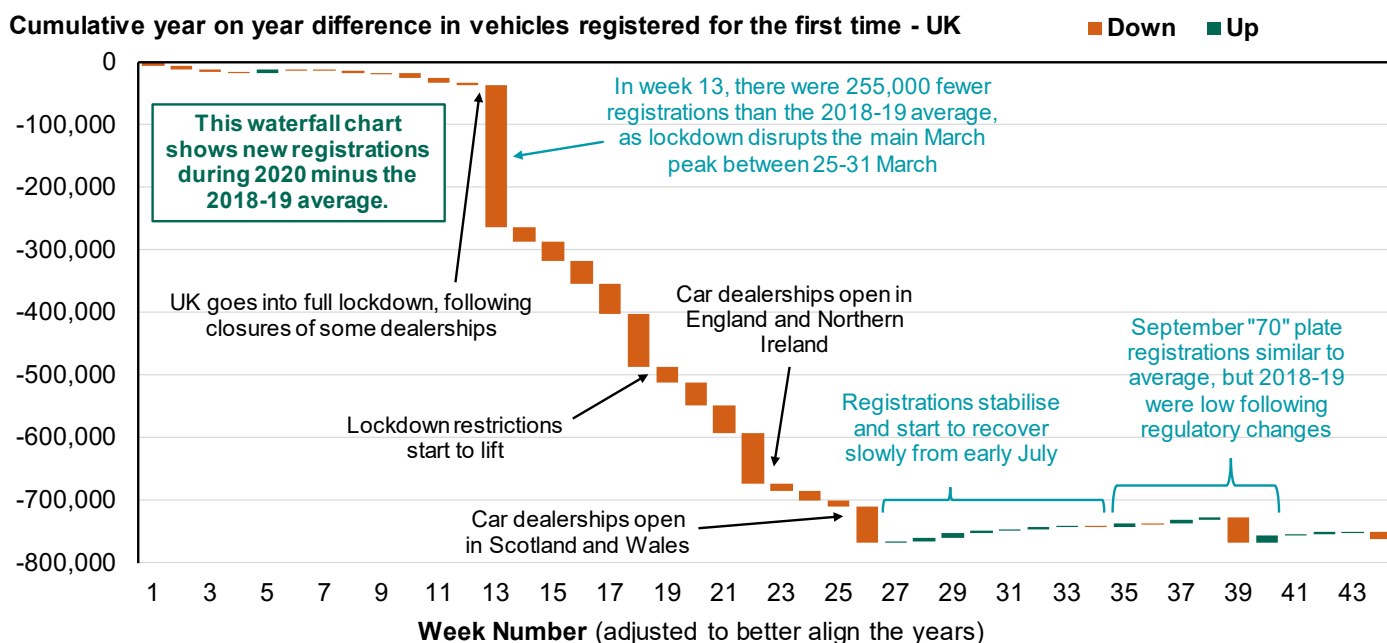


Table 2: New vehicle registrations by body type and ULEV breakdown, United Kingdom, January to October, 2019 and 2020 ^[VEH0150]

								Thousand / Percentage			
Month	Cars	Light goods vehicles (LGVs)	Heavy goods vehicles (HGVs)	Motorcycles	Buses & coaches	Other vehicles	Total: All	Car ULEVs	Other body type ULEVs	Total: ULEVs	Proportion of all new vehicles that were ULEVs
Feb-19	84.5	14.8	2.7	5.5	0.4	3.1	111.0	2.1	0.2	2.3	2.1
Mar-19	462.4	68.8	6.9	17.9	0.8	7.5	564.2	8.9	0.9	9.8	1.7
Apr-19	163.8	25.7	5.0	11.0	0.5	5.5	211.6	3.5	0.6	4.1	1.9
May-19	185.9	30.8	5.0	12.1	0.6	5.7	240.0	4.4	0.6	5.0	2.1
Jun-19	226.4	40.4	7.7	13.0	0.6	5.8	293.8	5.1	0.7	5.7	2.0
Jul-19	159.5	26.7	3.1	11.2	0.4	5.6	206.4	3.8	0.8	4.5	2.2
Aug-19	95.4	23.9	2.7	8.0	0.3	4.2	134.5	4.1	0.5	4.6	3.4
Sep-19	346.6	42.4	4.6	13.9	1.0	5.5	414.0	13.0	0.7	13.7	3.3
Oct-19	146.6	26.3	5.1	8.1	0.7	4.6	191.4	6.2	0.8	7.0	3.7
Jan-20	152.1	24.2	3.4	7.1	0.4	3.6	190.9	8.8	0.8	9.7	5.1
Feb-20	82.1	14.6	2.3	5.7	0.4	3.2	108.3	4.5	0.7	5.2	4.8
Mar-20	257.4	31.8	4.8	13.8	1.0	5.9	314.5	18.4	0.9	19.3	6.1
Apr-20	4.2	3.1	1.0	1.7	0.1	2.2	12.3	1.4	0.2	1.7	13.5
May-20	20.6	7.6	1.2	5.5	0.1	2.0	37.1	3.2	0.3	3.4	9.3
Jun-20	146.7	31.0	2.3	13.7	0.2	3.3	197.1	13.3	0.7	14.0	7.1
Jul-20	177.3	29.6	3.3	15.1	0.3	4.6	230.2	15.0	0.9	15.9	6.9
Aug-20	90.3	20.8	2.5	10.6	0.4	4.0	128.7	8.2	0.5	8.7	6.8
Sep-20	331.8	54.2	4.6	15.8	0.9	5.5	412.7	33.7	1.5	35.2	8.5
Oct-20	142.6	28.6	4.3	9.9	0.6	4.4	190.4	16.7	1.2	17.9	9.4
Jan-20	-7	5	-20	1	8	-1	-6	142	163	144	
Feb-20	-3	-2	-14	4	0	5	-2	112	231	122	
Mar-20	-44	-54	-31	-23	28	-21	-44	106	11	98	
Apr-20	-97	-88	-80	-84	-87	-59	-94	-59	-61	-59	
May-20	-89	-75	-75	-55	-90	-64	-85	-28	-53	-31	
Jun-20	-35	-23	-70	5	-65	-42	-33	163	5	145	
Jul-20	11	11	6	35	-8	-17	12	296	18	250	
Aug-20	-5	-13	-5	32	20	-5	-4	101	-1	90	
Sep-20	-4	28	0	14	-16	-1	0	160	101	157	
Oct-20	-3	9	-15	22	-20	-5	-1	168	62	156	

Vehicles registered for the first time

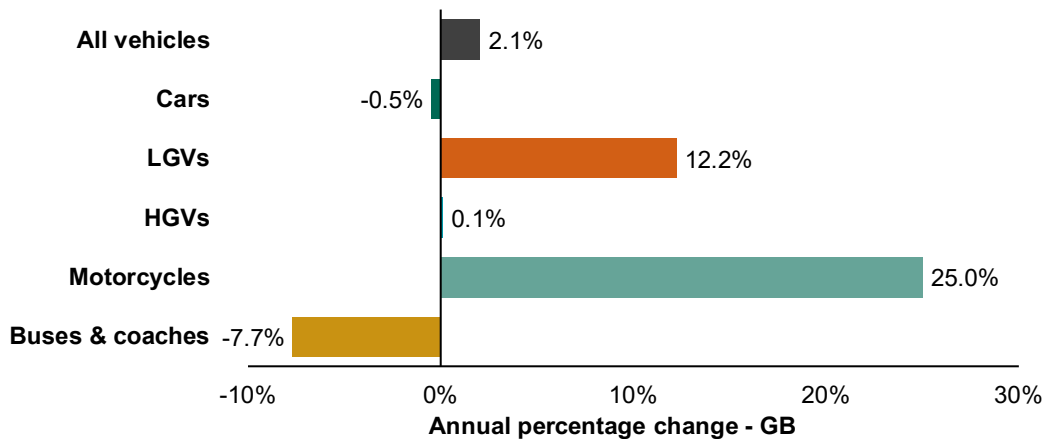
During 2020 Q3, 755 thousand vehicles were registered for the first time in Great Britain. [\[VEH0150\]](#)

New vehicle registrations increased by 2.1% compared to 2019 Q3, following very large year on year reductions in 2020 Q1 and Q2. Over half (54%) of new registrations in 2020 Q3 occurred in September, coinciding with the release of “70” registration plates.

There were large increases in the number of registrations of light goods vehicles (LGVs) (+12.2%) and motorcycles (+25.0%), but a small decline in the number of car registrations (-0.5%). New registrations of buses & coaches continue to decline (-7.7%) after a number of successive years of decline.

Figure 2: Annual percentage change in vehicles registered for the first time compared to 2019 Q3 by body type, Great Britain, 2020 Q3

[\[VEH0150\]](#)



Although the number of new registrations in Great Britain can vary considerably each year, the [total vehicle stock](#) varies much more slowly as there are many more vehicles that remain licensed over the year.

Table 3: Vehicles registered for the first time by body type, with previous year and total stock comparison, Great Britain, 2020 Q3

[\[VEH0101\]](#) [\[VEH0150\]](#)

	2019 Q3		2020 Q3		Total stock at the end of September 2020
	New registrations	Proportion of all new registrations	New registrations	Proportion of all new registrations	
Cars	589	79.6	586	77.6	31,869
Light goods vehicles (LGVs)	92	12.4	103	13.6	4,215
Heavy goods vehicles (HGVs)	10	1.4	10	1.3	484
Motorcycles	33	4.4	41	5.4	1,358
Buses & coaches	2	0.2	2	0.2	140
Other	15	2.0	14	1.8	770

Thousand / Percentage

During 2020 Q3 **755 thousand** vehicles registered for the first time in Great Britain



Monthly seasonality

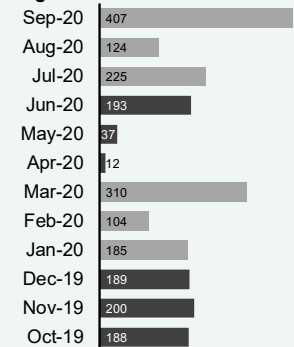
Up to 1998, new registration plates were issued once a year in August, causing a peak in new registrations in the third quarter.

Since 1999, new plates have been issued twice a year, in March and September. This changed the distribution of new registrations through the year, with peaks in the first and third quarters.

INSET: Vehicles registered for the first time by month, Great Britain, year ending September 2020

[\[VEH0150\]](#)

Thousands of vehicles registered for the first time



Updated tables

Detailed new registrations data tables updated this quarter:

All vehicle types: [VEH0150, 0160, 0161 & 0170 to 0172](#)

Cars: [VEH0253 & 0256](#)

New car registrations by fuel type

Alternative fuel cars overtake diesel cars for second time in quarterly new registrations. [\[VEH0253\]](#)



In 2020 Q3, there was continued decline in new diesel car registrations, falling by 31% compared to 2019 Q3. Over the same period, new petrol car registrations fell 8%.

Diesel car registrations have been falling in recent years since peaking in 2016. Over the four year period from 2016 Q3 to 2020 Q3, new diesel car registrations fell 70%.

By contrast, new registrations of alternative fuel cars have more than doubled (+137%) in 2020 Q3 compared to 2019 Q3. More new alternative fuel cars (126 thousand) were registered this quarter than new diesel cars (103 thousand). This occurred for the first time in modern times in 2020 Q2.

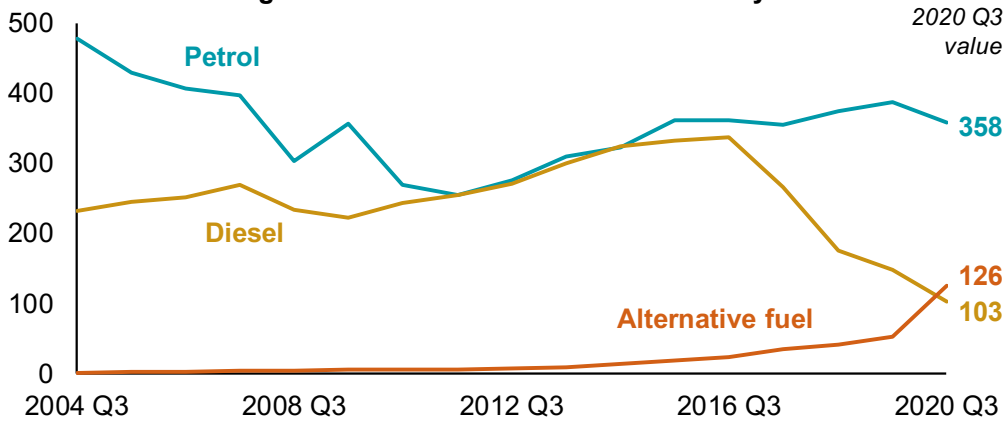
New car registrations

Annual change in 2020 Q3 - GB

Diesel **Petrol** **Alt. fuel**
-31% **-8%** **+137%**

Figure 3: Cars registered for the first time by fuel type, Great Britain, 2004 Q3 to 2020 Q3 [\[VEH0253\]](#)

Thousands of cars registered for the first time - GB - Q3 only



Alternative fuel new car registrations more than double for all three main fuel types. [\[VEH0253\]](#)

In 2020 Q3, across all new alternative fuel car registrations in Great Britain, there were 67 thousand hybrid electric (HEVs), 36 thousand battery electric (BEVs), 22 thousand plug-in hybrid electric (PHEVs), and fewer than 500 using other alternative fuel types.

All three of the main alternative fuel cars saw new registrations more than double in 2020 Q3 when compared to 2019 Q3; with HEVs increasing by 108%, BEVs increasing by 179%, and PHEVs increasing by 184%.

		Does the vehicle use petrol or diesel?	
		Yes	No
Does the vehicle use electric power?	Yes, and is a plug-in	Plug-in hybrid electric (PHEV) ¹	Battery electric (BEV)
	Yes, but is not a plug-in	Hybrid electric (HEV)	Fuel cell electric (FCEV)
	No	Petrol / Diesel	Other*

1. A range-extended electric vehicle is a special case of PHEV, where the conventional fuel does not power the wheels directly, usually only charging the battery for additional range.

* This table excludes rare combinations based on biofuels and other emerging technologies.

Key events around the decline in new diesel cars

April 2017: changes are introduced for newly registered car [tax bands and rates](#).

July 2017: [UK Plan for Tackling Roadside Nitrogen Dioxide Concentrations](#) is announced, ending the sale of all new conventional petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2040.

November 2017: Transport for London announces the "world's first [Ultra-Low Emission Zone](#)" - although new diesel cars would not be charged under the current plan.

Electric Vehicle Charging Device Statistics

The Department for Transport publishes [statistics](#) on the number of publicly available electric vehicle charging devices in the UK.

Ultra low emission vehicles (ULEVs)

This section relates to the United Kingdom rather than Great Britain.

New ULEVs in the UK continue to increase in 2020 Q3, with battery electric vehicles up 171% year on year. [\[VEH0171\]](#)



In 2020 Q3, 59,738 ULEVs were registered for the first time in the United Kingdom, an increase of 162% on 2019 Q3 and 265% on 2018 Q3. ULEVs accounted for 7.7% of all new vehicle registrations, up from 3.0% in 2019 Q3. [\[VEH0150\]](#)

For the year ending September 2020, the most common generic model of ULEV registered for the first time in the UK was the Tesla Model 3 with 20,504 vehicles, followed by the BMW 3 Series with 9,330 vehicles and the Nissan Leaf with 7,302 vehicles. [\[VEH0171\]](#)

Figure 4: ULEVs registered for the first time by fuel type, United Kingdom, 2012 Q3 to 2020 Q3 [\[VEH0171\]](#)

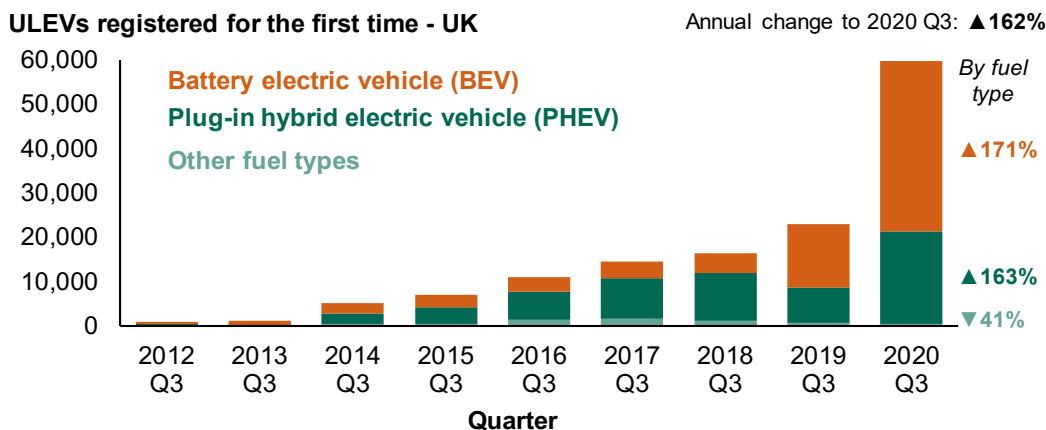
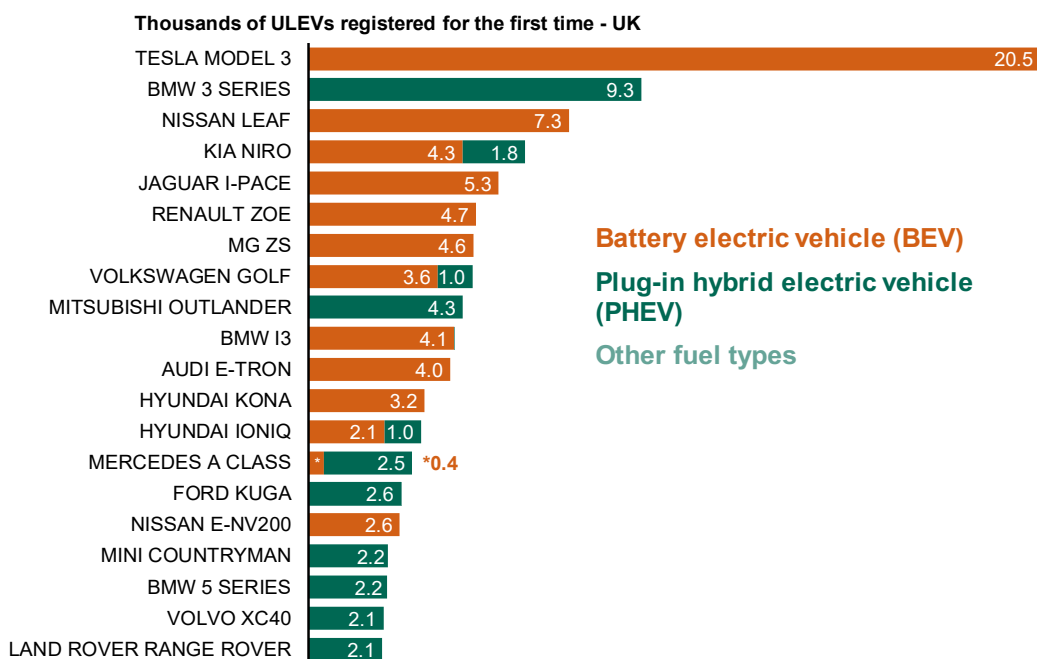


Figure 5: Top 20 generic models for ULEVs registered for the first time by fuel type, United Kingdom, October 2019 to September 2020 [\[VEH0171\]](#)



ULEV definition

In these statistics, a ULEV is defined as a vehicle with **reported** tailpipe CO₂ emissions of less than 75g/km.

From April 2020, the CO₂ emission figures for cars registered for the first time exclusively use WLTP, which generally (but not always) reports higher emission levels than e-NEDC for the same car. Consequently, a small number of model variants are now above the 75g/km threshold and are no longer recorded as ULEVs in these statistics, whilst a smaller number are now under the threshold so are now considered to be ULEVs.

More information about CO₂ emission figures can be found in [this section](#).

Key events surrounding the uptake of new ULEV registrations

2011/2012: [plug-in car and van grants](#) are introduced, reducing the cost of qualifying models - expanded to cover more body types in 2016.

July 2018: [Road to Zero Strategy](#) confirms the government's ambition to see at least half of new cars to be ultra low emission by 2030.

October 2018 / March 2020: Over time, the scope for the plug-in grants has been altered to [focus on BEVs](#), and to [reduce the maximum value of the car grant whilst excluding more expensive models](#).

Average CO₂ emissions for cars

Since 2019 Q3, average CO₂ emissions for cars registered for the first time have started to reduce again after a complex period of regulation and market changes. [\[VEH0156\]](#)



The transition from using NEDC to WLTP (see side bar) as the official measurement procedure used to determine car CO₂ emissions has complicated the interpretation of recent trends. The changes made have caused a number of discontinuities to the time series for **reported** emissions from September 2018 onwards. These changes are summarised in **Table 4**.

As the CO₂ emissions figure varies for any individual car, depending on the source, [table VEH0156](#) has recently been added to this publication to illustrate these differences and **Figure 6** summarises the complex behaviour observed over the past few years.

Table 4: The use of different testing systems for average reported CO₂ emissions of new cars, United Kingdom

Name	Period	Testing system used	Reported figure at point of first registration
NEDC / Pre-WLTP	Up to August 2018	NEDC	NEDC
Transition period	September 2018 to December 2018	NEDC and WLTP	NEDC and e-NEDC
WLTP	January 2019 to March 2020	WLTP	e-NEDC
WLTP	April 2020 onwards	WLTP	WLTP

Methods used to measure CO₂ emissions

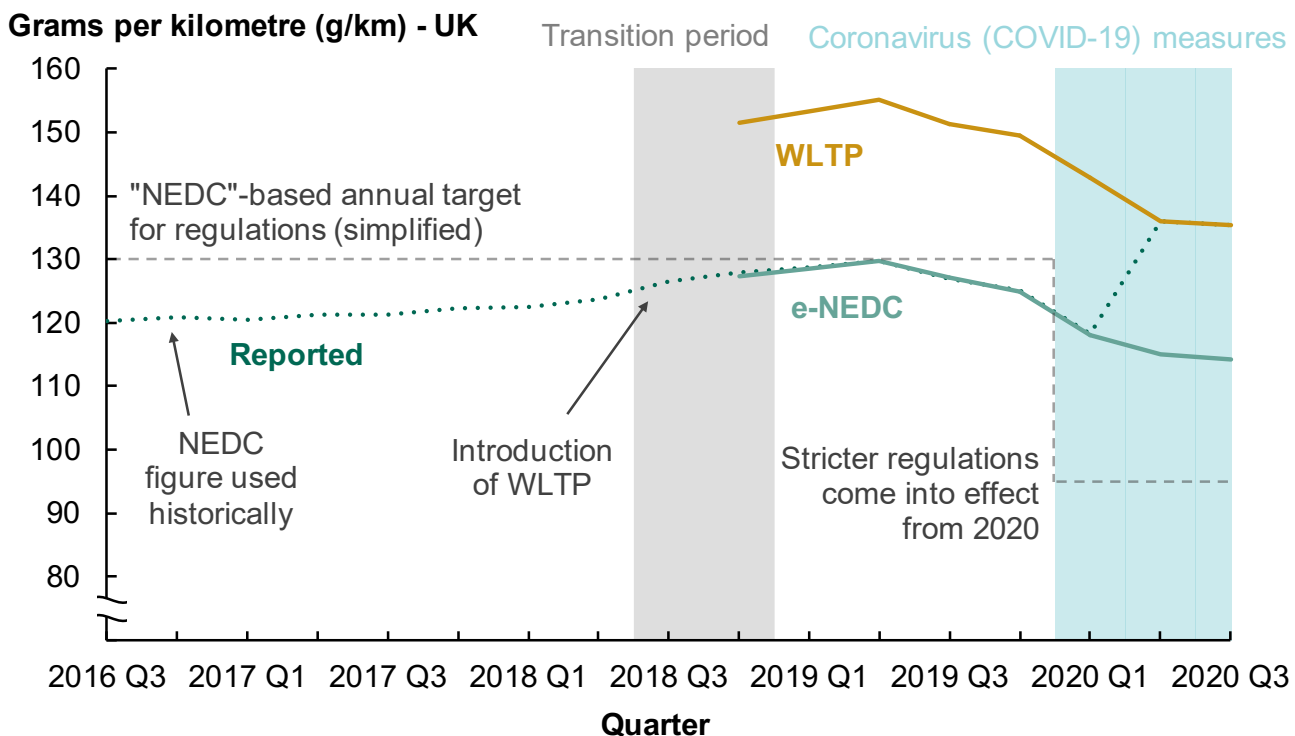
New European Driving Cycle (NEDC): Original laboratory test based on theoretical behaviour.

Worldwide Harmonised Light Vehicle Test Procedure (WLTP): More advanced lab test to replace NEDC, based on real driving data.

e-NEDC figure:

This figure has been calculated using the results of a WLTP test via the [COM2PAS tool](#) developed by the European Commission, for tax and emissions monitoring purposes (can be referred to as NEDC correlated). This is not directly comparable with an NEDC figure as their underlying methodologies are different.

Figure 6: Average CO₂ emissions for cars registered for the first time by emissions data source, quarterly, United Kingdom, 2016 Q3 to 2020 Q3 [\[VEH0156\]](#)



In 2020 Q3, there was a notable shift towards registering BEVs (i.e. zero emission vehicles), with UK new car registrations averaging 114.2 g/km under e-NEDC, down 10.1% compared with 2019 Q3, and an average of 135.4 g/km under WLTP, down 10.5%.

Interpretation of Figure 6

Reported figure: Average CO₂ emissions were increasing steadily from mid-2016 up to the transition period and were only measured using a NEDC figure. From September 2018 onwards, cars tested under NEDC could only be registered with agreement from the European Commission, so called *end-of-series derogations*. This avoided manufacturers being left with new cars that were illegal to sell - although this was used sparingly. The reported figure became the WLTP figure for cars registered from April 2020.

e-NEDC figure: Once WLTP testing was introduced, cars registered for the first time quickly transitioned to being registered with an e-NEDC figure. Whilst initially higher than the NEDC trend would suggest, the e-NEDC figure started to decline from around September 2019 onwards. This figure will be used to [assess manufacturers against emissions regulations](#) until the end of 2020.

WLTP figure: The WLTP figure trend mirrors that of the e-NEDC figure, with an uplift of approximately 20%. From 2021, this will be the only figure available for new cars.

Comparing e-NEDC and WLTP

The process of deriving of the e-NEDC figure from the WLTP test is complex and involves a lot of vehicle parameters.

As a result, the trends for the e-NEDC and WLTP figures are similar but vary slightly depending on the mix of cars registered.

Historical CO₂ emissions data

This release focuses on the recent trends for CO₂ emissions. Long term trends are discussed in the [annual release](#).

There was a discontinuity in the VED band distribution from 2020 Q2 onwards.

The distribution was partially impacted by the measures implemented due to the coronavirus, but also due to the adoption of WLTP as the reported CO₂ figure for cars from April 2020 onwards.

The adoption of WLTP contributed to declines in new cars with 76-130 g/km, with corresponding increases for those with 131+ g/km. This is partially due to the WLTP figure being ~20% higher than the previously used e-NEDC figure for these cars.

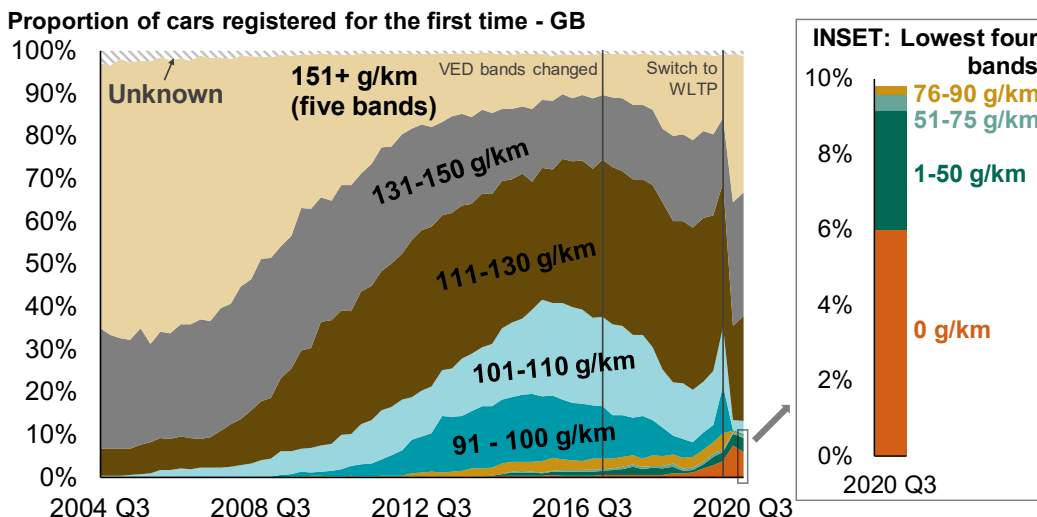
Updated tables

Detailed CO₂ emissions data tables updated this quarter:

All figures: [VEH0156](#)

Reported figures for cars by VED band: [VEH0256](#)

Figure 7: Cars registered for the first time by current VED band (based on reported CO₂ emissions), quarterly, with insert for lowest four bands, Great Britain, 2004 Q3 to 2020 Q3 [VEH0256]



VED bands

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

Since March 2001, car VED has charged in bands on the basis of their CO₂ emissions (NEDC).

From April 2017, the CO₂ emission bands for VED were revised.

From April 2020, the emissions used to allocate a VED band was changed to use WLTP figures. The bands themselves were not altered.

Total licensed vehicles

The decline in licensed vehicles at the end of September 2020 was affected by increased levels of SORNs issued. [\[VEH0101\]](#)

At the end of September 2020, there were 38.8 million licensed vehicles in Great Britain, a 0.1% decrease compared to the end of September 2019.

This is the third year on year quarterly decline in licensed vehicles in a row. Prior to this year, this had only occurred once (in 1991) since the end of the Second World War.

Cars make up the majority of licensed vehicles. The number of licensed vehicles by body type in Great Britain at the end of September 2020 are presented in **Table 5**.

At the end of September 2020, there were year on year increases in the number of licensed LGVs (+1.9%) and motorcycles (+1.2%), reflecting the high number of new registrations. Declines in the number of licensed cars (-0.3%), HGVs (-3.9%), and buses & coaches (-9.1%) all coincided with higher-than-usual increases in SORN stock, possibly due to keepers choosing to SORN their vehicle to save on VED as they are not using their vehicles during the coronavirus restrictions. [\[VEH0101\]](#) [\[VEH0110\]](#)

For example, the decrease in licensed buses & coaches was 9.1%, a fall of 14 thousand vehicles. However, as shown in **Table 5**, the number of buses & coaches with a SORN increased by 13 thousand vehicles over the same period.

Table 5: Annual difference in licensed vehicles and vehicles with a SORN by body type, including total stock for reference, Great Britain, end of September 2020 [\[VEH0101\]](#) [\[VEH0110\]](#)

	Difference between end of Sep-20 compared to end of Sep-19		Total licensed stock at the end of Sep-20
	Licensed vehicles	Vehicles with a SORN	
Cars	-107	+265	31,869
Light goods vehicles (LGVs)	+78	+59	4,215
Heavy goods vehicles (HGVs)	-20	+30	484
Motorcycles	+16	+52	1,358
Buses & coaches	-14	+13	140
Other	+2	+17	770
All vehicles	-45	+436	38,836

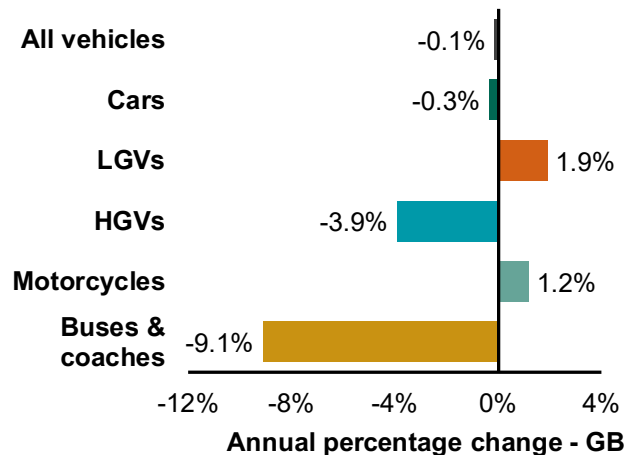
At the end of Sep 2020

38.8 million

vehicles licensed for use on roads in Great Britain



Figure 8: Annual percentage change in licensed vehicles by body type, Great Britain, end of September 2020 [\[VEH0101\]](#)



How are these different from new registrations?

Figures on total licensed vehicles have slower variations compared to vehicles registered for the first time as there are many more vehicles that remain licensed over the year.

What vehicles are included?

These figures only include vehicles that are licensed for use on UK roads, which typically requires [paying Vehicle Excise Duty](#) (VED).

Vehicles that are not licensed should typically be given a **Statutory Off Road Notification (SORN)**. The keeper can then re-license their vehicle at any time.

[Detailed tables relating to vehicles with a SORN are available.](#)

Updated tables

Detailed licensed vehicle data tables updated this quarter:

All vehicles types: [VEH0101](#), [0104](#), [0110](#), [0120 to 0123 & 0128 to 0134](#)

Motorcycles: [VEH0301](#)

Car makes and models

Vauxhall Corsa remains the most common generic model for a second consecutive quarter in 2020 Q3. [\[VEH0160\]](#)



During 2020 Q3, the top five makes were Ford (9.7%), Volkswagen (8.7%), Audi (6.7%), Mercedes-Benz (6.6%), and BMW (6.4%). The equivalent top five for 2019 Q3 were Ford (10.1%), Mercedes-Benz (8.0%), Volkswagen (7.7%), Vauxhall (7.2%), and BMW (7.0%).

There were 19 makes with over 10 thousand cars registered for the first time each in 2020 Q3, accounting for 86.8% of all new car registrations.

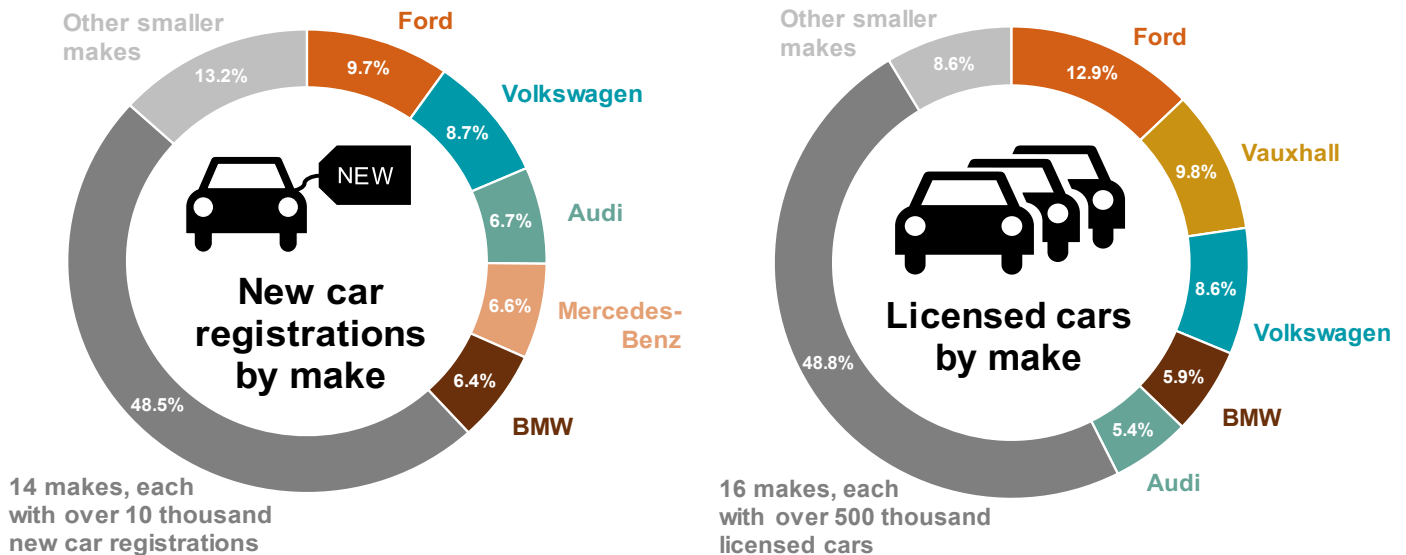
For total licensed stock at the end of September 2020, the top five makes were different to new registrations, namely Ford (12.9%), Vauxhall (9.8%), Volkswagen (8.6%), BMW (5.9%), and Audi (5.4%). There were 21 makes with over 500 thousand licensed cars each, accounting for 91.4% of all licensed cars. [\[VEH0120\]](#)

Updated tables

Detailed make and model data tables updated this quarter:

[VEH0120 to 0123, 0128, 0129, 0160 & 0161](#)

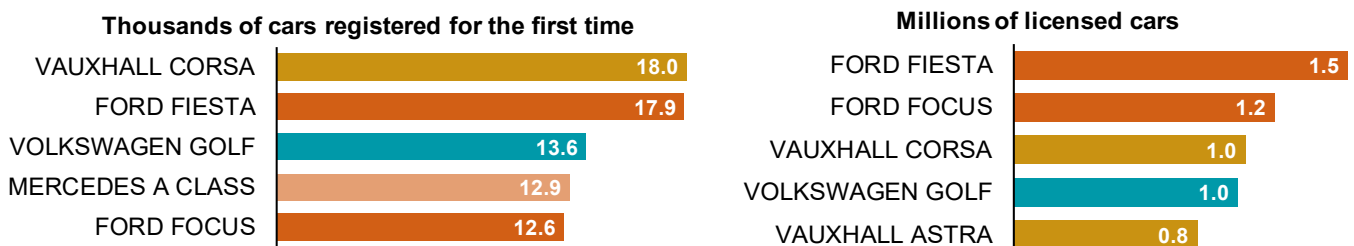
Figure 9: Top five makes for cars registered for the first time during 2020 Q3 and for those licensed at the end of September 2020, Great Britain [\[VEH0120\]](#) [\[VEH0160\]](#)



Vauxhall Corsa was the most common new car registration in 2020 Q3, with 18,014 registered for the first time, slightly more than Ford Fiesta, which had 17,921 registered. Following these models was the Volkswagen Golf with 13,605 registrations. [\[VEH0161\]](#)

At the end of September 2020, the most common licensed car was Ford Fiesta, with 1.5 million cars licenced, followed by Ford Focus with 1.2 million, and Vauxhall Corsa with 1.0 million. [\[VEH0128\]](#)

Figure 10: Top five generic models for cars registered for the first time during 2020 Q3 and for those licensed at the end of September 2020, Great Britain [\[VEH0128\]](#) [\[VEH0161\]](#)



Background notes

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 about the data used in this release, please see the detailed [notes and definitions](#). There is also a [Statement of Administrative Sources](#) for the DVLA vehicles database.

A separate note on users and uses of these statistics is available from the vehicles statistics information [web page](#).

Strengths and weaknesses of the data

The DVLA database can be regarded as being virtually complete in terms of the number of vehicles registered for the first time, licensed vehicles and vehicles with a SORN (Statutory Off Road Notification). However, there may be some errors in some of the specific details of individual vehicles.

The Department for Transport estimates that under 2% of the vehicle 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;
- ▶ Foreign registered vehicles may also use UK roads without being registered with DVLA;
- ▶ Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) evasion.

Most of these factors will only have a marginal effect for most uses of the data.

Geography

In July 2014, vehicle and registration services for Northern Ireland were centralised at DVLA, where these services for Great Britain were already administered. This created a single vehicle register for the United Kingdom, in place of separate registers for Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

As a result of these changes, the coverage of the vehicle licensing statistics tables was expanded to cover UK as well as GB where practical. Because of the greater availability of GB time series data, this statistical release will continue to focus mainly on GB rather than UK results for now.

For further information, please see the detailed [notes and definitions](#).

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.gov.uk.

National Statistics

These statistics were [designated as National Statistics in April 2012](#). There are a few exceptions listed on the [collection page](#).

National Statistics are produced to the high professional standards set out in the [Code of Practice for 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](#).

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

The coronavirus pandemic has had an impact on every aspect of life in the United Kingdom, which has affected almost all statistical trends across the transport sector. New vehicle registration and licensed vehicle statistics are likely to be affected in future months and quarters by the economic and social impacts of the coronavirus.

Recent trends

There are more recent data than published here available from SMMT on the majority of vehicle sales. SMMT data are published monthly for cars and vans shortly after the month-end, in advance of the publication of DfT's detailed official statistics. This can be useful to look at the most recent trends in vehicle registrations.

Although there are slight differences in coverage of the SMMT data, the volumes and trends published by SMMT are generally consistent with DfT published data.

More information about the data published by SMMT can be found on [their website](#).

Next release

Vehicle Licensing Statistics are published quarterly. The next release is due in April 2021, which will cover the period up to the end of December 2020. The quarterly releases (typically published in June, September, and December) have a reduced number of tables and commentary compared to the annual publication (April).

Any updates to these plans, including the exact publication date when known, will be advertised via the [DfT statistical publications schedule](#).

To hear more about DfT statistics publications as they are released, please follow us on Twitter via our @DfTstats account: <https://www.twitter.com/DfTstats>. TWITTER, TWEET, RETWEET and the Twitter logo are trademarks of Twitter, Inc. or its affiliates.