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Vehicle Licensing Statistics, Great Britain: Quarter 2 2012

This publication presents information on motor vehicles in Great Britain that were licensed on the 30th June 2012 (the end of quarter 2), or were registered for the first time during quarter 2 (April to June 2012).

The statistics are derived from data held by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA), which administers vehicle registration and licensing records in Great Britain.

The key findings from the Vehicle Licensing Statistics: Quarter 2 2012 include:

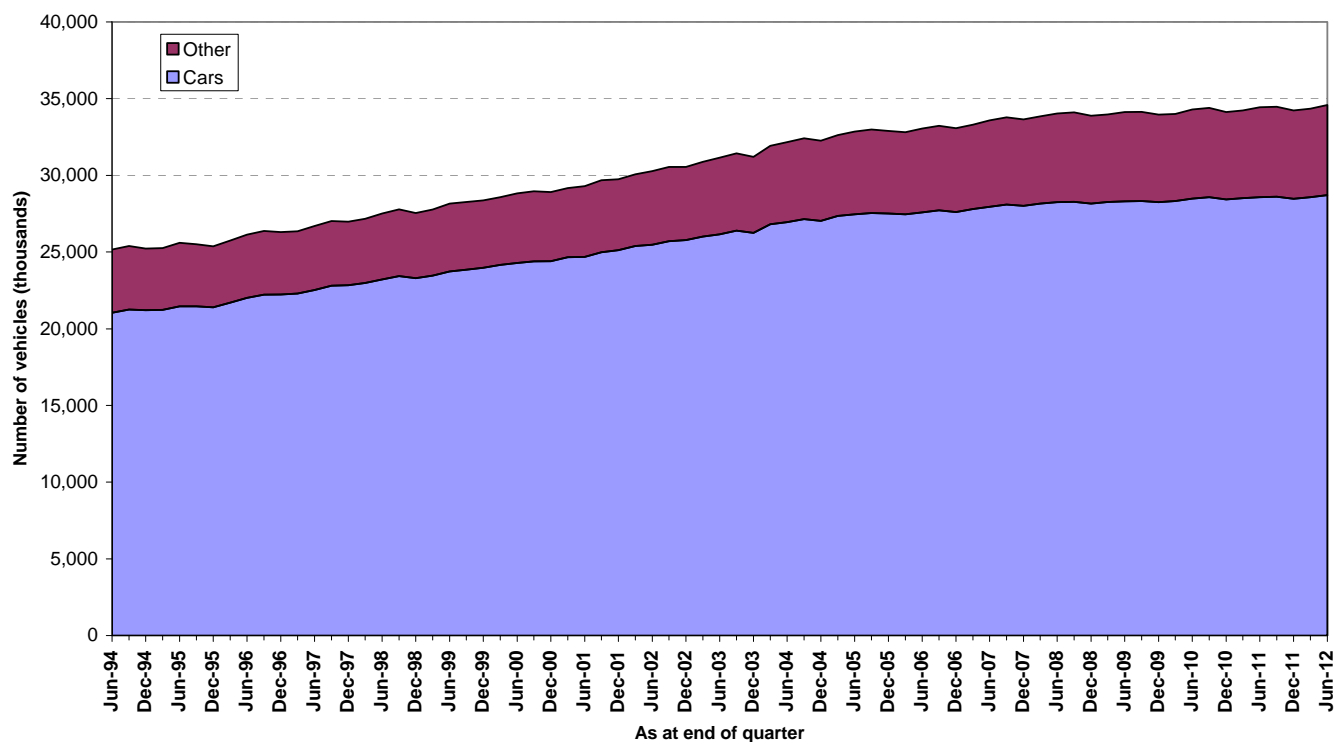
- There were 34.6 million vehicles licensed for use on the roads in Great Britain on the 30th June 2012. Of these vehicles, 28.7 million were cars. The all vehicle figure represents a 0.5 per cent increase on the quarter 2 2011 figure.
- The prevailing economic situation has a noticeable influence on trends in the number of licensed vehicles, especially commercial vehicles. The numbers of licensed Heavy Goods Vehicles and Buses & Coaches have been on a generally downward trend since the economic downturn began in 2008/09, and the rate of increase in other types of vehicles has slowed.
- A total of 604.9 thousand vehicles were registered for the first time in Great Britain during quarter 2 2012. This represents a 3.8 per cent increase in the number of first registrations from quarter 2 2011. There have now been four consecutive quarters with year-on-year increases, of which the latest is the largest. In general, however, first registration numbers have been on a downward trend since 2002.
- During quarter 2 2012 a total of 961 new ultra-low emission vehicles were registered for the first time (in the UK). Of these, 728 were cars or quadricycles, up from 366 in quarter 2 2011.
- Average CO₂ emissions from new cars fell from 134.7 g/km in quarter 1 2012 to 133.2 g/km in quarter 2 2012.

1. Licensed vehicle stock

- There were 34.6 million vehicles licensed for use on the roads in Great Britain on the 30th June 2012. Of these vehicles, 28.7 million were cars.
- The total number of vehicles in quarter 2 2012 was 0.7 per cent higher than at the end of both quarter 1 2012 and 0.5 per cent higher than at the end of quarter 2 2011. There is seasonality in quarterly licensed vehicle figures, with more vehicles being licensed and used during the summer months than in the winter months. This quarter continues the year-on-year increases that have happened every quarter since quarterly data were introduced in 1994.
- The number of licensed cars was 0.5 per cent higher at the end of quarter 2 2012 than it was at the end of the same quarter in 2011. As with total vehicles, the number of licensed cars has risen year-on-year since the start of the series in 1994. Similarly, aside from during 2009, the number of licensed light vans has increased every year; with the number at the end of quarter 2 2012 up 0.7 per cent on a year previously.
- Although the number of cars and light vans continue to increase, the current growth rates are historically quite low. (And as these types account for nearly 93 per cent of all licensed vehicles, the same can be said about the total number of licensed vehicles.) Since mid-2008 the year-on-year increase in the number of licensed cars has averaged 0.4 per cent per quarter. Between 1994 and mid-2008 the year-on-year increase averaged 2.2 per cent.

Licensed vehicles: Great Britain, 1994 to 2012 Q2

(Vehicles web table veh0101)



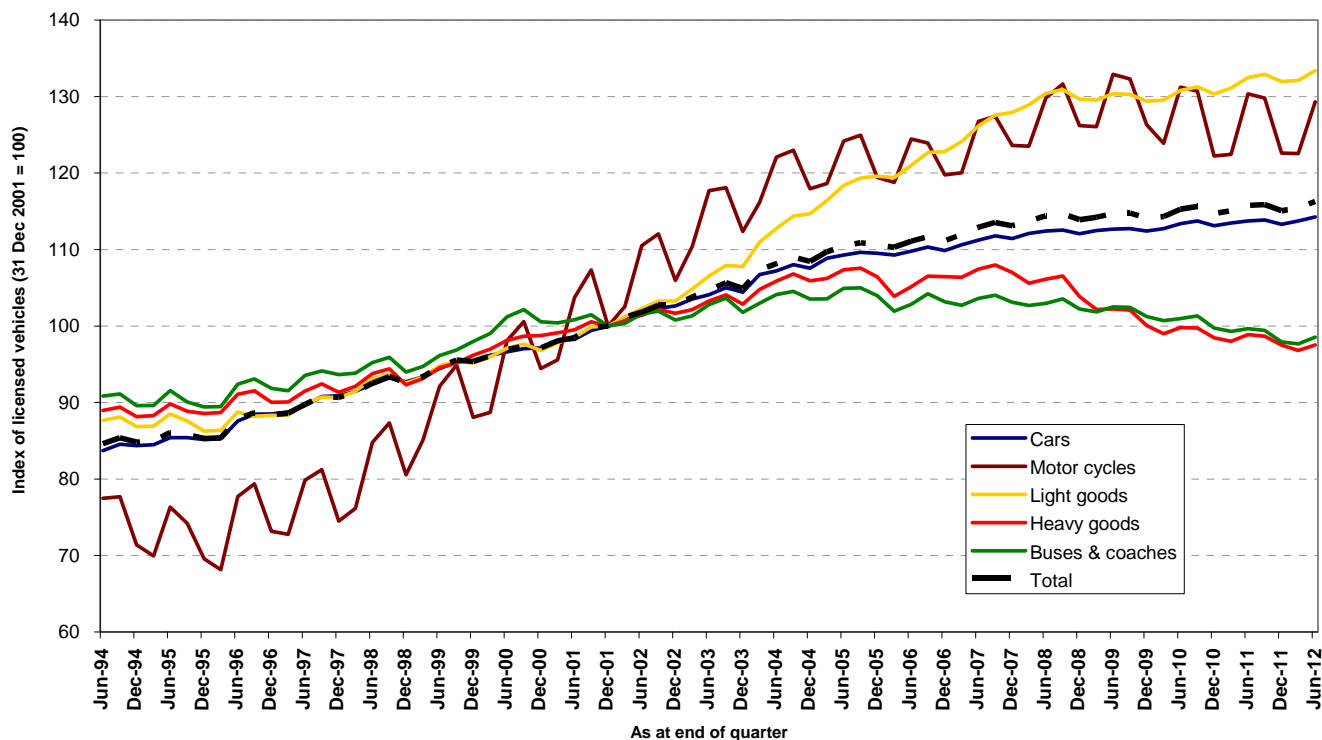
- The numbers of licensed heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) and buses / coaches decreased by 1.4 per cent and 1.1 per cent respectively over the year to end quarter 2 2012. The figures for both

of these vehicle types have been in decline since the economic downturn started in 2008. However, it should be noted that, aside from some small fluctuations in 2007, the downward trend for buses / coaches started as early as 2006.

- The prevailing economic situation has a noticeable influence on trends in the number of licensed vehicles, especially commercial vehicles. The numbers of licensed Heavy Goods Vehicles and Buses & Coaches have been on a generally downward trend since the economic downturn began in 2008/09, and the rate of increase in other types of vehicles has slowed.

Licensed vehicles by body type (indexed): Great Britain, 1994 to 2012 Q2

(Vehicles web table veh0101)



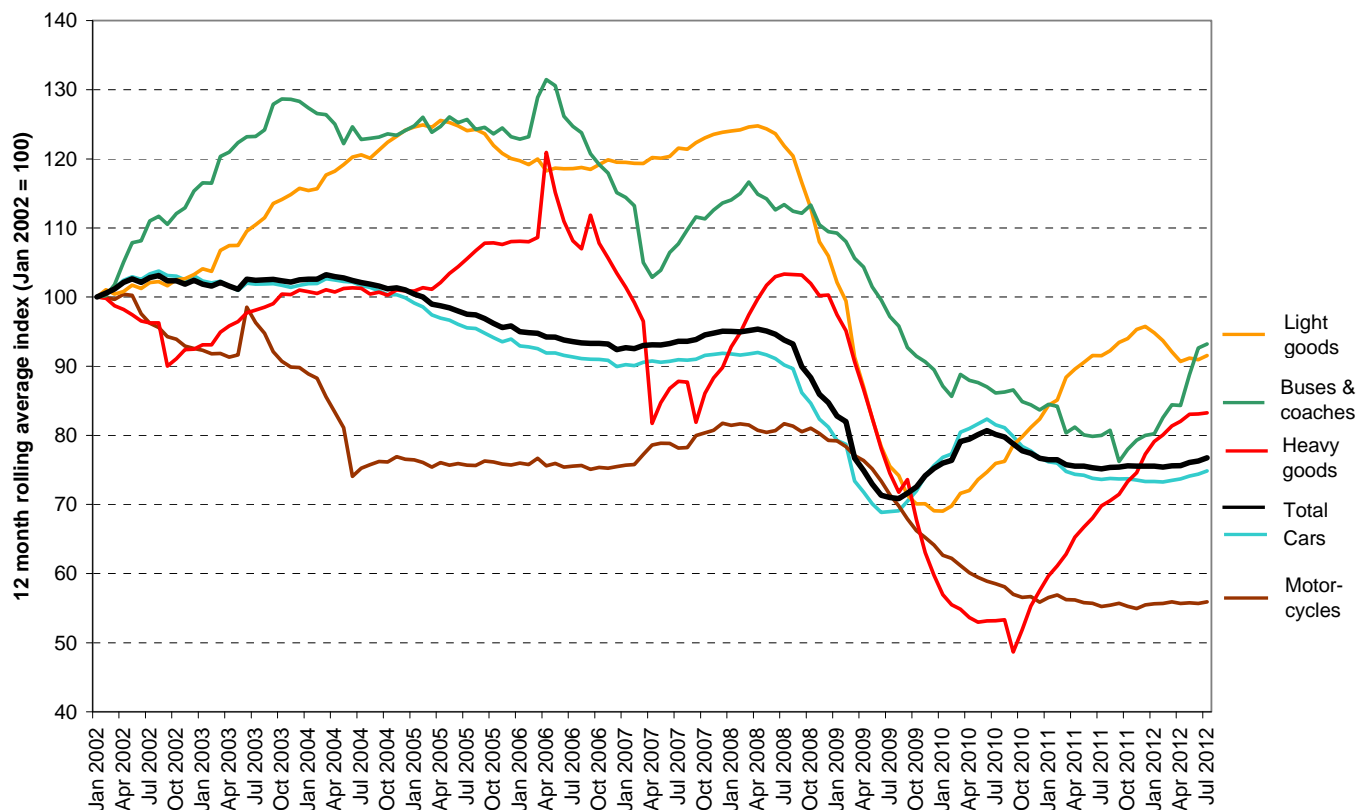
2. Vehicles registered for the first time

- A total of 604.9 thousand vehicles were registered for the first time in Great Britain during quarter 2 2012. This represents a 3.8 per cent increase in the number of first registrations from quarter 2 2011. The last four quarters have now shown year-on-year increases in the number of first registrations. Before this, apart from the period from mid 2009 to mid 2010, which was affected by the Vehicle Scrappage Scheme⁶, the last quarter showing year-on-year growth was quarter 1 2008.
- During quarter 2 2012 484 thousand cars were registered for the first time. This was a 5.0 per cent increase on the same period in 2011 and, aside from the mid 2009 to mid 2010 period affected by the Vehicle Scrappage Scheme, the last time a year-on-year increase of this size was recorded was at the end of 2007.
- The number of vehicles registered for the first time is usually higher in quarters 1 and 3 than it is

in quarters 2 and 4. This is influenced by the release of new number plates in March and September.

Vehicles registered for the first time in Great Britain: Jan 2002 to Jul 2012 (12 month rolling average, indexed to January 2002)

(Vehicles web table veh0150)



- Aside from the effects of the two recent recessions, first registrations have generally been on a downward trend since the early 2000s. The first registration figures both cars and total vehicles are over 20 per cent lower for quarter 2 2012 than they were for quarter 2 2001.
- The decrease in numbers of motorcycles being registered for the first time is even more marked. Fifty five thousand motorcycles were registered for the first time in quarter 2 2001. By quarter 2 2012 this had fallen by 44 per cent to 30.8 thousand. The underlying trend has been downward since 2007.
- The average CO₂ emissions from new cars continues to fall. The average emissions of cars registered between April and June 2012 was 133.2 g/km, down from 134.7 g/km for cars registered between January and March 2012 and 138.8 g/km for cars registered between April and June 2012. Since April 2002, the first quarter for which reliable CO₂ emission values are recorded, the average emissions from new cars have fallen by 42 g/km, a decrease of around 24 per cent. Much of this fall has been driven by tighter environmental regulations, emissions targets imposed on manufacturers, and demands by consumers for cars with higher fuel efficiencies / lower vehicle excise duty rates.

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- During quarter 2 2012 a total of 961 new ultra-low emission vehicles⁷ was registered for the first time. These figures are for the UK as a whole. This was an increase of 53 per cent from 628 in the same quarter of the previous year. The number of ultra-low emission cars and quadricycles among these increased from 366 to 728 over the same period. The Plug-In Car Grant, which started in January 2011, is likely to have made a major contribution to this increase⁸. Of the first registrations in quarter 2 2012, 473 were Grant-eligible cars. An increase in supply of electric cars to the UK market will have also played a part.
 - The most popular car registered for the first time during the first 6 months of 2 2012 was the Ford Fiesta, with almost 58 thousand new registrations. The Vauxhall Corsa was the second most popular with 46 thousand registrations, followed by the Ford Focus (43 thousand), Volkswagen Golf (35 thousand) and Vauxhall Astra (30 thousand).
 - The Volkswagen Up has been the most popular car model that has appeared on the market so far during 2012, with over 5,000 registered from January to June.

3. Background notes

1. The Vehicle Licensing Statistics web page at <http://www.dft.gov.uk/statistics/series/vehicle-licensing/> provides further detail of the key findings presented in this statistical release and statistics on other vehicle topics. The tables are available at http://www.dft.gov.uk/statistics?orderby=title&post_type=table&series=vehicle-licensing-parent-series.
2. The following tables have been updated as part of this release:

veh0101	licensed stock 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
veh0150	first registrations by body type
veh0160	first registrations by make and model
veh0161	first registrations by generic model name
veh0170	new ultra-low emission vehicle registrations (UK data)
veh0206	number of licensed cars by CO2 emission band (revision to back series only)
veh0301	number of licensed motor cycles
3. Please note that some tables have recently had the order of columns reversed. Instead of having data for the latest quarter in the left column they have been moved to the right hand column. This is to help with data production.
4. 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.
5. 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](#).
6. Further information about what the Vehicle Scrappage Scheme was is available at http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/www.direct.gov.uk/en/motoring/buyingandsellingavehicle/adviceonbuyingandsellingavehicle/dg_177693. The scheme ran between May 2009 and April 2010.
7. The Department for Transport uses the term 'ultra-low emission vehicles' to refer to vehicles with significantly lower levels of tailpipe emissions than conventional vehicles. All vehicles with fully electric powertrains and cars with tailpipe emissions below 75 g/km of CO2 are included.
8. Further information on the Plug-In Car Grant is available at http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Environmentandgreenerliving/Greenertravel/Greenercarsanddriving/DG_191976.