



Road goods vehicles travelling to mainland Europe, October to December 2013 (Quarter 4)

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Key Findings

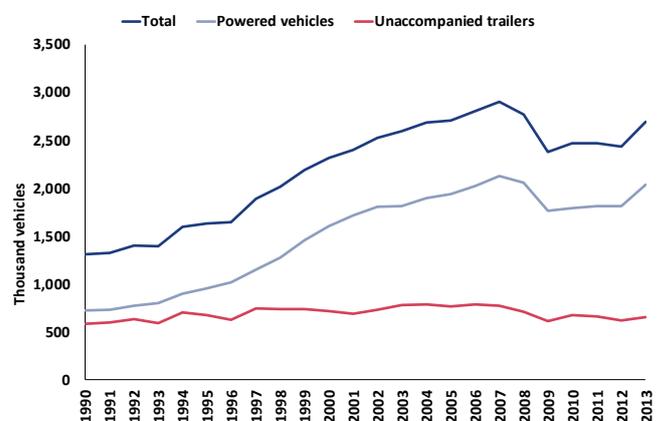
In 2013:

- There were 2.7 million **road goods vehicles** travelling from Great Britain to mainland Europe. This was 11 per cent **higher** than in 2012 and just 7 per cent lower than in 2007 - the pre-recession peak.
- Of these goods vehicles, 2 million were **powered vehicles** and 652 thousand were **unaccompanied trailers**. Powered vehicles increased by 13 per cent whilst unaccompanied trailers increased by 5 per cent, compared to 2012.

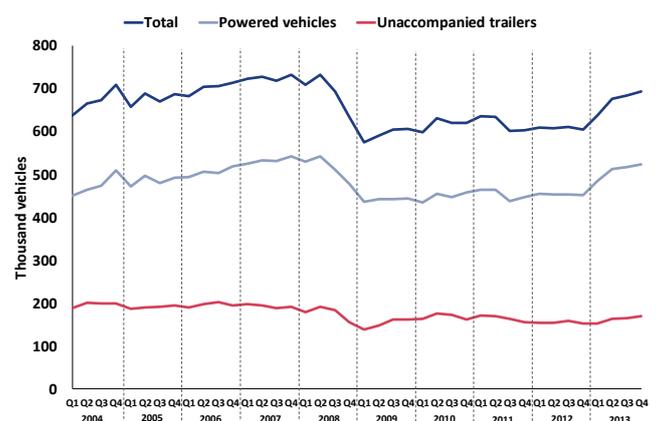
In Q4 2013:

- During quarter 4 2013, 693 thousand **goods vehicles** travelled from Great Britain to mainland Europe, 15 per cent higher than in Q4 2012 and the highest Q4 figure since 2007.
- Of these goods vehicles, 523 thousand were **powered vehicles** and 170 thousand were **unaccompanied trailers**.

Road goods vehicles travelling to mainland Europe, 1990-2013



Road goods vehicles travelling to mainland Europe, Q1 2004-Q4 2013



About this release

This Statistical Release summarises results from the survey of road goods vehicles travelling to mainland Europe from Great Britain. It includes all the main ferry routes between Great Britain and mainland Europe. Ferry routes between Great Britain and Northern Ireland or the Republic of Ireland are not included. These statistics are updated on a quarterly basis.

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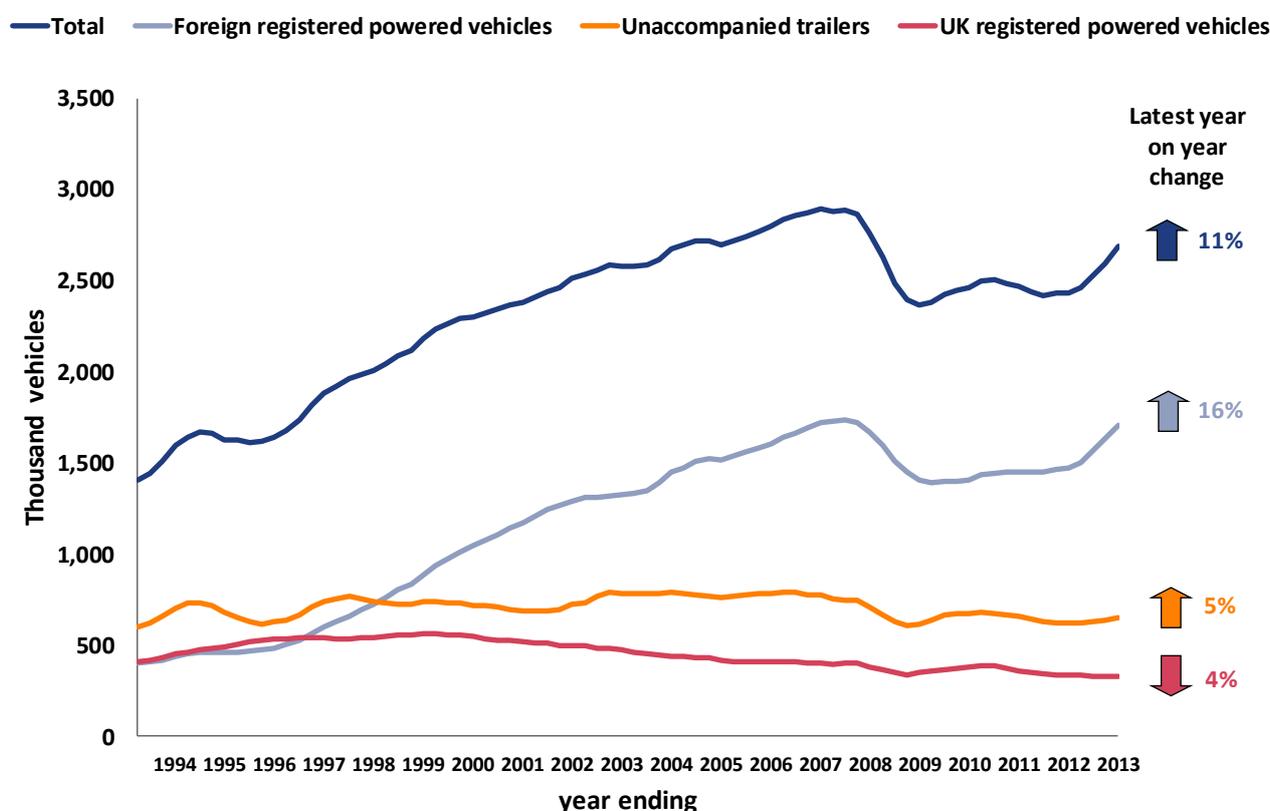
Annual (2013)

- There were 2.7 million **goods vehicles** travelling from Great Britain to mainland Europe in 2013, 11 per cent higher than in 2012 (2.4 million). This was largely driven by an increase in operators on the Dover to Calais route between 2012 and 2013 which led to an increase of 222 thousand goods vehicles travelling via the Dover Straits Port Group.
- The 2013 figure was the highest annual total since 2008 and just 7 per cent less than the pre-recession peak of 2.9 million in 2007 (*chart 1*). This growth has been sustained since Q3 2012. The number of goods vehicles travelling from Great Britain to mainland Europe has **increased by 93 per cent in the last 20 years**.
- Of these goods vehicles, 2 million were **powered vehicles** and 652 thousand were **unaccompanied trailers**.
- **Powered vehicles** were 13 per cent higher compared to 2012. **Foreign registered** powered vehicles were 16 per cent higher compared to 2012 following a gradual upward trend between 2009 and 2012. **UK registered** powered vehicles were down 4 per cent on 2012. This was the third consecutive year-on-year decrease in UK registered powered vehicles, continuing the downward trend since 1999 (*chart 1*).
- **Unaccompanied trailers** were 5 per cent higher compared to 2012, the first increase seen in three years (*chart 1*).

Quarterly (Quarter 4 2013)

- During quarter 4 2013, 693 thousand **goods vehicles** travelled from Great Britain to mainland Europe, of which 523 thousand were **powered vehicles** and 170 thousand were **unaccompanied trailers**.
- The total number of **goods vehicles** travelling from Great Britain to mainland Europe increased by 15 per cent on quarter 4 2012 and was the highest quarter 4 total since 2007. This was the sixth consecutive quarter-on-quarter increase in the number of goods vehicles travelling to mainland Europe. The number of **powered vehicles** increased by 16 per cent compared to quarter 4 2012 whilst the number of **unaccompanied trailers** increased by 11 per cent.

Chart 1: Road goods vehicles travelling from GB to mainland Europe, rolling 4 quarter totals to Q4 2013



Detailed statistics (tables) on 'Road goods vehicles travelling to mainland Europe' can be found in [RORO01](#).

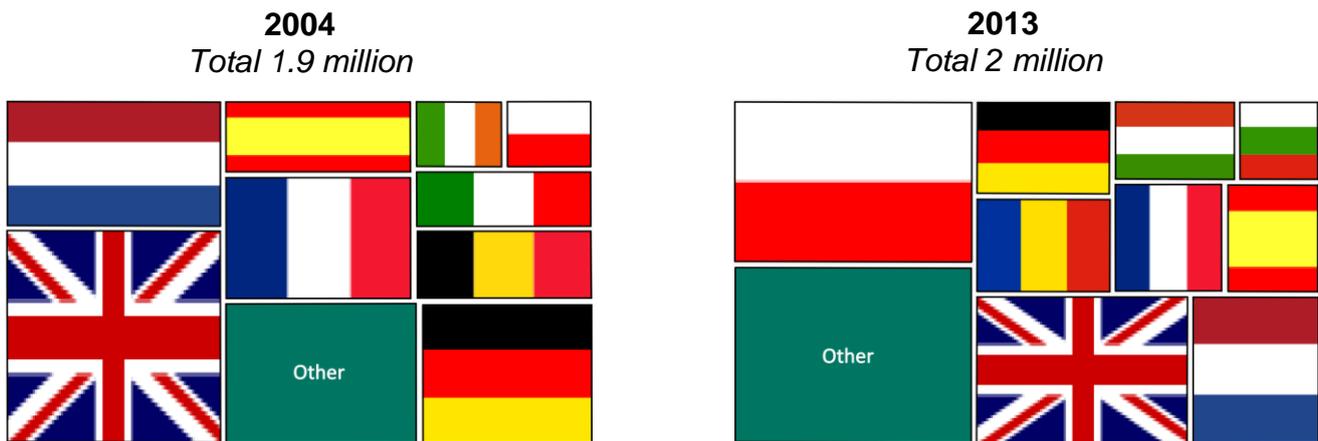
Country of vehicle registration

Annual (2013)

- Over the last twenty years there has been a general increase in the number of **foreign registered powered vehicles** travelling from Great Britain to mainland Europe. The number of foreign registered powered vehicles has increased from 392 thousand in 1993 to 1.71 million in 2013.
- In 2013, 326 thousand powered vehicles travelling to mainland Europe were **UK registered** (16% of all powered goods vehicles).
- Foreign countries** with a large number of powered goods vehicles include the Netherlands (197 thousand or 10%), Germany (134 thousand or 7%) and France (126 thousand or 6%) - *chart 2*.

- A number of **foreign countries** have increased their share of powered vehicles travelling to mainland Europe since joining the EU. Poland and Hungary both joined the EU in 2004 and accounted for 20 per cent and 5 per cent of total powered vehicles in 2013 (compared to 3% and 1% in 2004). Romania and Bulgaria both joined the EU in 2007 and accounted for 7 per cent and 3 per cent of total powered vehicles in 2013 (compared to 1% and 0.4% in 2004).

Chart 2: Powered goods vehicles travelling from GB to mainland Europe, percentage share by country of registration, 2004 versus 2013



Key: Flag size represents the proportion of total powered vehicles

Quarterly (Quarter 4 2013)

- In quarter 4 2013, 76 thousand **powered vehicles** travelling from Great Britain to mainland Europe were **UK registered** compared to 447 thousand **foreign registered** vehicles.
- In quarter 4 2013, **UK registered** vehicles accounted for 15 per cent of all powered vehicles travelling to mainland Europe, a decline compared to 18 per cent in quarter 4 2012.

Detailed statistics (tables and charts) on Powered goods vehicles travelling to mainland Europe by country of registration can be found in table [RORO02](#).

Country of disembarkation and port group

Annual (2013)

- In 2013, 68 per cent of all **goods vehicles** travelling to mainland Europe used the **Dover Straits Port Group**, which includes the Channel Tunnel. A total of 28 per cent used the **North Sea Port Group** and 4 per cent used the **English Channel port group**. These proportions have been similar over the last decade.
- The majority (89%) of **powered vehicles** travelling to mainland Europe used the Dover Straits Port Group. However, the majority (94%) of **unaccompanied trailers** travelling to mainland Europe went via the North Sea Port Group.
- 92 per cent of **powered vehicles** disembarked in **France**. This is to be expected given the high number using the Dover Straits Port Group. In 2013, all but one of the routes from Dover Strait ports disembarked in France. France is the only country of disembarkation for the Channel Tunnel.
- Just over a half of **unaccompanied trailers** disembarked in the **Netherlands** (55%), and around a quarter disembarked in Belgium. This is to be expected given the high number using the North Sea Port Group. In 2013, just over a half of the routes from North Sea ports disembarked in the Netherlands or Belgium. On average these routes carried a greater number of unaccompanied trailers than those between North Sea ports and other countries and accounted for 85 per cent of total unaccompanied trailers travelling via the North Sea Port Group.

RoRo ports by port group, 2013



Quarterly (Quarter 4 2013)

- In quarter 4 2013, 93 per cent of powered vehicles disembarked in France (91% in Q4 2012), 6 per cent in the Netherlands (7% in Q4 2012), 0.7 per cent in Belgium (2.1% in Q4 2012) and 0.1 per cent in Denmark and Germany (0.2% in Q4 2012).

Detailed statistics (tables and charts) on Goods vehicles travelling to mainland Europe by country of disembarkation and port group can be found in tables, [RORO03](#), [RORO04](#), [RORO05](#), [RORO06](#), and [RORO07](#). A list of active routes by quarter can be found in [RORO09](#).

Background notes

- The web tables for RoRo statistics can be found at:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/road-freight-domestic-and-international-statistics>
- Full guidance on the methods used in the publication of these releases, the quality of the data, and the revisions published in 2007 can be found in the Technical Note at:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/road-freight-domestic-and-international-statistics-guidance>
- National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the National Statistics Code of Practice. They undergo formal statutory assessments to ensure they meet customer needs:
<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html>
- Details of ministers and officials who receive pre-release access to these statistics up to 24 hours before release can be found at:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/roll-on-roll-off-international-freight-statistics-pre-release-access-list>
- These results will be updated for Q1 2014 in May 2014.

Strengths and weaknesses of the data

- The results in this bulletin are compiled from quarterly returns provided by the roll-on / roll-off ferry operators, giving the number of powered vehicles and unaccompanied trailers carried on each route from GB to mainland Europe, and from monthly information supplied by Eurotunnel.
- Disaggregation by country of registration of powered vehicles is supplied by most of the ferry operators and by Eurotunnel. Some operators identify this from the registration number pattern whilst others extract the nationality from the manifest or waybill. A few operators use the country of booking as a proxy for the country of registration of the powered vehicle.
- Revised estimates for 2004 to 2007 were published in May 2008 following a data quality review. This resulted in a break in the series between 2003 and 2004. For full details see the Technical Note.
- As a result of the review the survey was put on a statutory basis and since early 2008 returns have been supplied by all operators resulting in more complete reporting of country of registration. The quality of the data is therefore thought to have been substantially improved and the data are considered fit for purpose.