



# Sea Passenger Statistics: Final 2013

**Both international and domestic sea passenger numbers increased in 2013 to 22.4 million and 43.3 million respectively.**

## International Sea Passengers

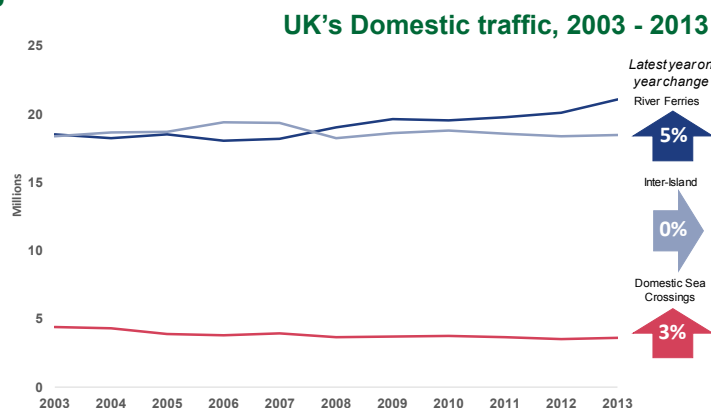
- **International sea passenger** numbers increased by 5 per cent on the previous year, following 10 years of general decline. Numbers increased across all international journey types.

	Thousand passengers		
	2012	2013	Percentage change
Short Sea	19,680	20,490	↑ 4%
Cruise Journeys	1,737	1,906	↑ 10%
Long Sea	32	34	↑ 7%

- **Cruises** have been growing in popularity over the last 30 years, with a total of 1.9 million in 2013. This was **15 times the amount in 1983**.

## Domestic Sea Passengers

- In 2013 there were **43.3 million passengers** travelling on domestic routes, a 3 per cent increase compared to 2012.



- Passenger numbers on **domestic sea crossings** rose by 3 per cent to **3.6 million**. Despite this, passenger figures have been **steadily declining over the last decade**, with figures for 2013 being 18 per cent lower when compared to 2003.

## About this release

This statistical release presents final statistics on the number of sea passengers on both international and domestic routes, to and from the UK in 2013.

### International passengers

are broken down into those on short sea (ferry) routes and passengers travelling for pleasure on cruises and long sea journeys.

### Domestic passengers

include those on domestic sea crossings, river ferries and inter-island journeys.

These statistics includes all vehicle drivers, their passengers and foot passengers on ferries.

## In this publication

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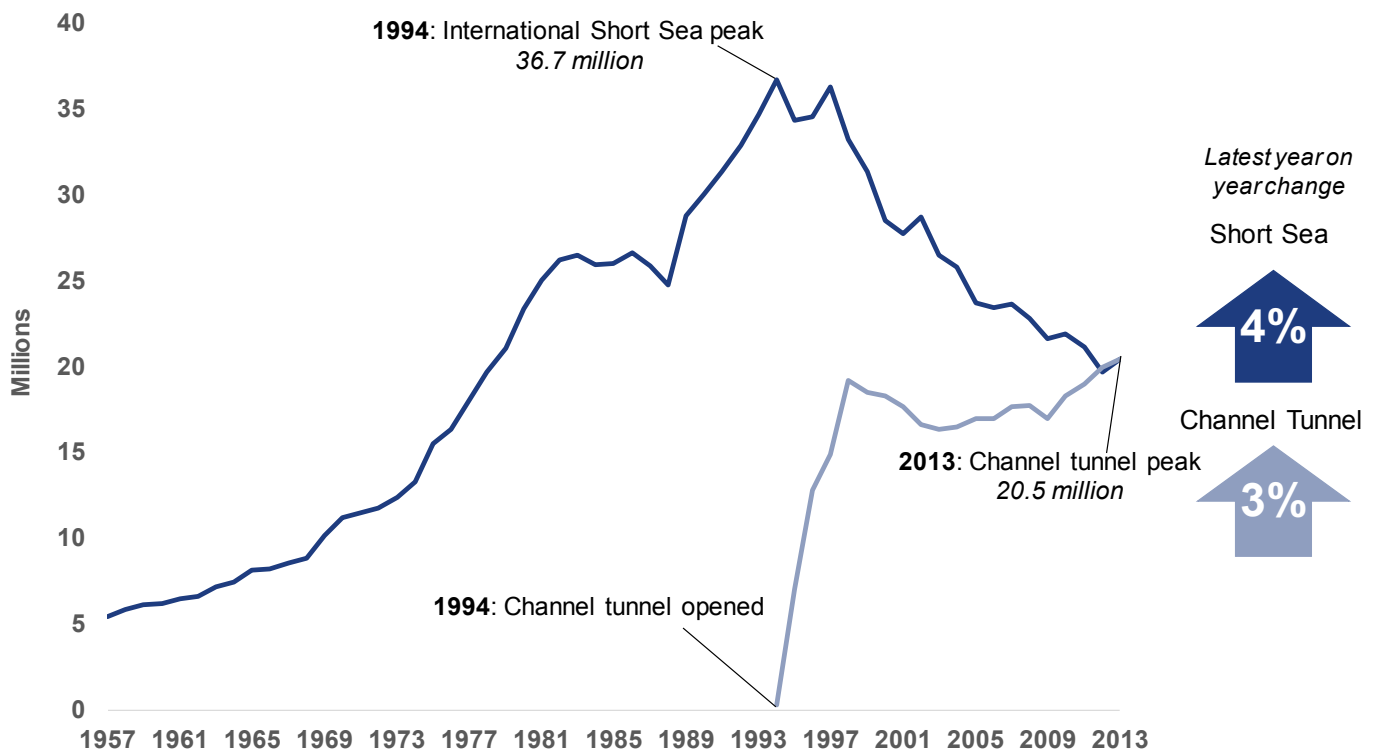
### Summary

- **International passenger figures** have been declining since the mid 90's. In 2013 there were **22.4 million** international sea passengers travelling, a 5 per cent increase compared to 2012. Despite this, passenger numbers are still **39 per cent below the peak of 37 million (1994)**.
- **Passenger numbers increased** for all three of the international route categories: **short sea, long sea and cruise journeys**.

### International Short Sea Journeys

- In 2013 the number of **international short sea passengers** travelling internationally **increased to 20.5 million**, a 4 per cent rise from 2012. This was the first year on year increase since 2010.
- International short sea passenger numbers grew steadily, from **3.9 million movements in 1950** (the start of the series) up **until 1994 when journeys peaked at 36.7 million**. Since 1997 international short sea numbers **have steadily declined**, with only a few exceptions. The increase in 2010 was in part linked to the eruption of the Icelandic volcano Eyjafjallajökull, which disrupted air travel and resulted in passengers using other modes of transport.
- In 2013 the number of passengers travelling via the **Channel Tunnel rose** by 3 per cent to 20.5 million, **29 thousand fewer** than those travelling internationally by short sea ferry.
- Since opening in 1994, the trends in the number of passengers travelling via the Channel Tunnel and by sea have been steadily converging. Channel Tunnel passengers exceeded those on international short sea journeys for the first time in 2012.

## International short sea passengers and Channel Tunnel passengers, 1957-2013



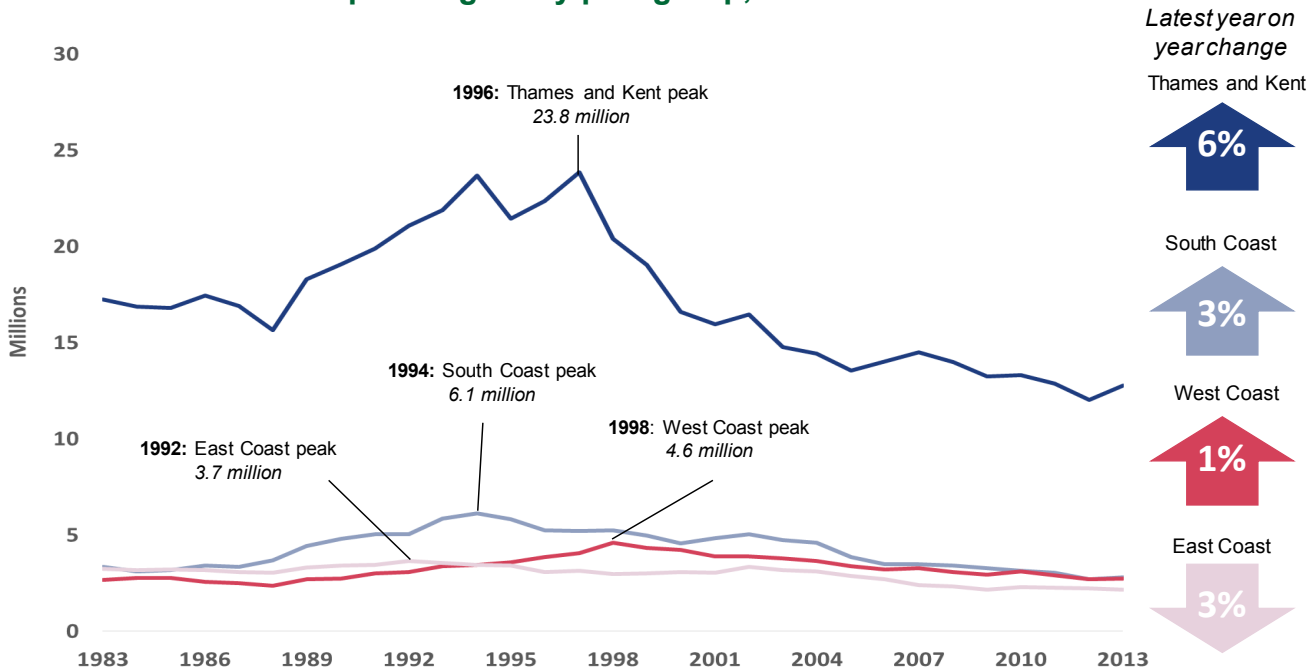
Detailed statistics on Channel Tunnel and International Short Sea Passengers can be found in web table [SPAS0301](#)

## International Short Sea Journeys by Port Group

- In 2013 international short sea passenger **movements increased** for all port groups **except the East Coast**. The number of passengers travelling through the **East Coast fell for the third consecutive year** to 2.2 million passengers, a 3 per cent annual decline.
- Thames and Kent** remained the **busiest port group** in 2013, accounting for 62 per cent of all international short sea passenger movements. Passenger numbers in Thames and Kent increased by **6 per cent to 12.8 million**, ending the decline seen since 2011. This was mainly caused by the **7 per cent increase seen at Dover**, which handled 12.7 million passengers.
- Although overall passenger numbers in Thames and Kent increased in 2013, the amount of passengers travelling from **Ramsgate fell to 18 thousand, a fifth of the amount in 2012**. This was due to the ferry provider from Ramsgate going into administration in April 2013. In 2013 Ramsgate contributed 0.1 per cent to the Thames and Kent total while in 2012 it accounted for 0.7 per cent.

- The number of international short sea passengers travelling through the **West Coast** ports **remained stable** in 2013 at 2.7 million. Passengers travelling from the **South Coast** increased by 3 per cent to 2.8 million, **following 10 years of decline**.

### International short sea passengers by port group, 1983 - 2013

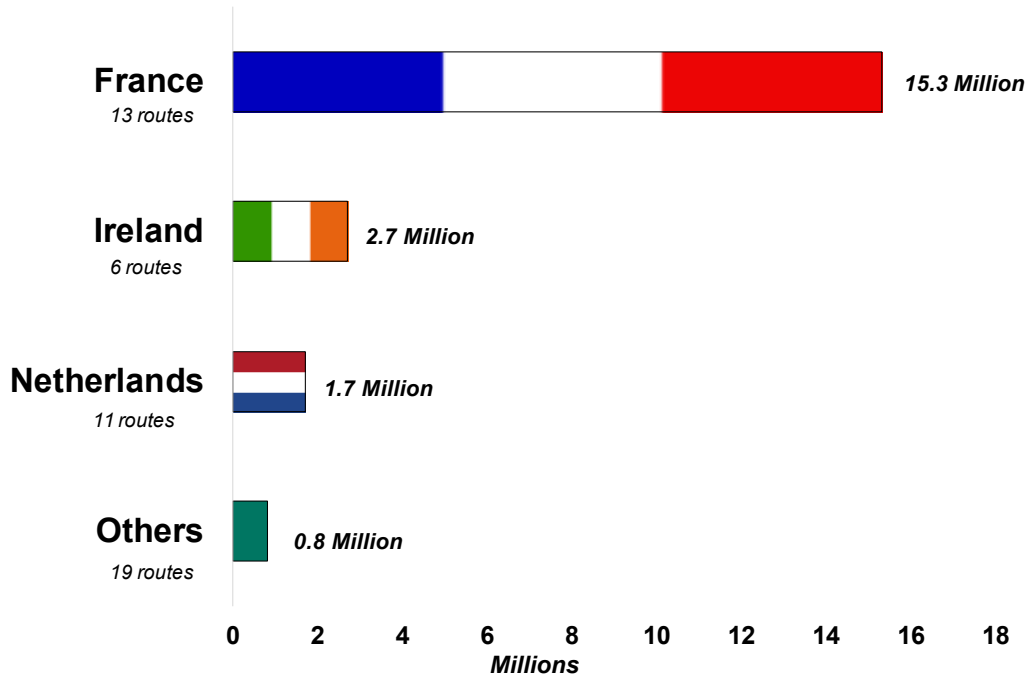


Detailed statistics on International Short Sea Passengers by port group can be found in web table [SPAS0101](#).

### International Short Sea Journeys by Route

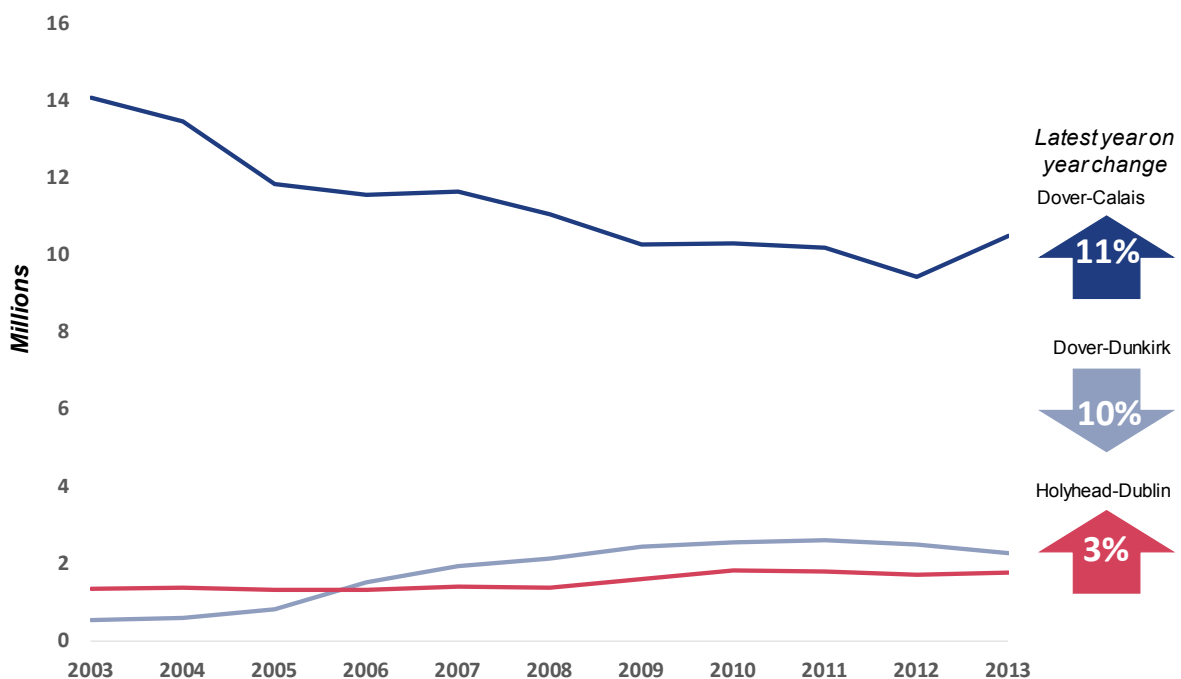
- France remained the most popular destination** for international short sea routes, a trend which has been seen since the series began (1950). In 2013, 75 per cent (15.3 million) of international short sea journeys occurred between the UK and France. This partly reflects the **high number of routes** between the **UK and France** (13 routes).
- However, the country with the second highest number of routes (11 routes) - **the Netherlands** - only accounted for **8 per cent** of all international short sea passengers (1.7 million).

## UK Short sea international sea passengers by country destination, 2013



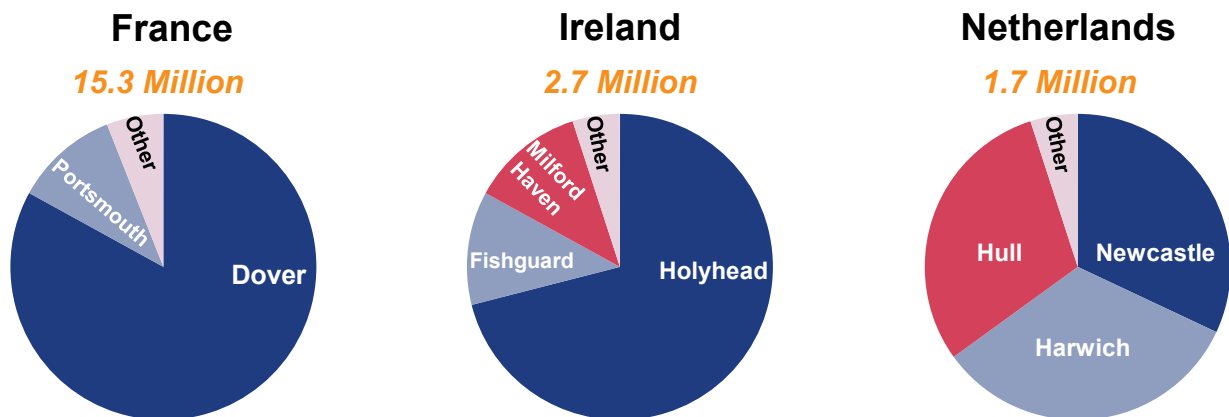
- Despite the **year on year** increase in passenger traffic to and from France in 2013, numbers have been **steadily falling over the last decade** and in 2013 there were 20 per cent fewer journeys made than in 2003. This is mirrored in the **23 per cent decline** of all **international short sea passengers** over the last decade.
- **Dover to Calais** remained the most popular route in 2013, carrying 10.5 million passengers. This was an **11 per cent increase** compared with 2012. Despite this increase the number of passengers remains 26 per cent lower than in 2003.

## UK's top 3 busiest international ferry routes, 2003 - 2013



- The **Irish Republic** remained the **second most popular destination** for international short sea passengers in 2013. The number of passengers travelling to the Irish Republic remained **stable at 2.7 million** in 2013, 13 per cent of all passenger traffic.

### Proportion of short sea passengers by port of origin and destination, 2013

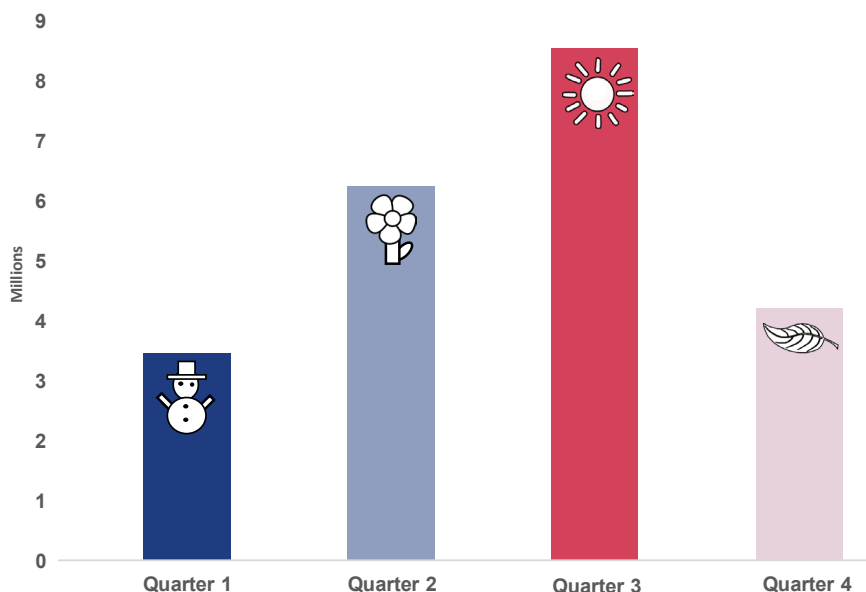


Detailed statistics on International Short Sea Passengers by route can be found in web table [SPAS0102](#) and [SPAS0103](#).

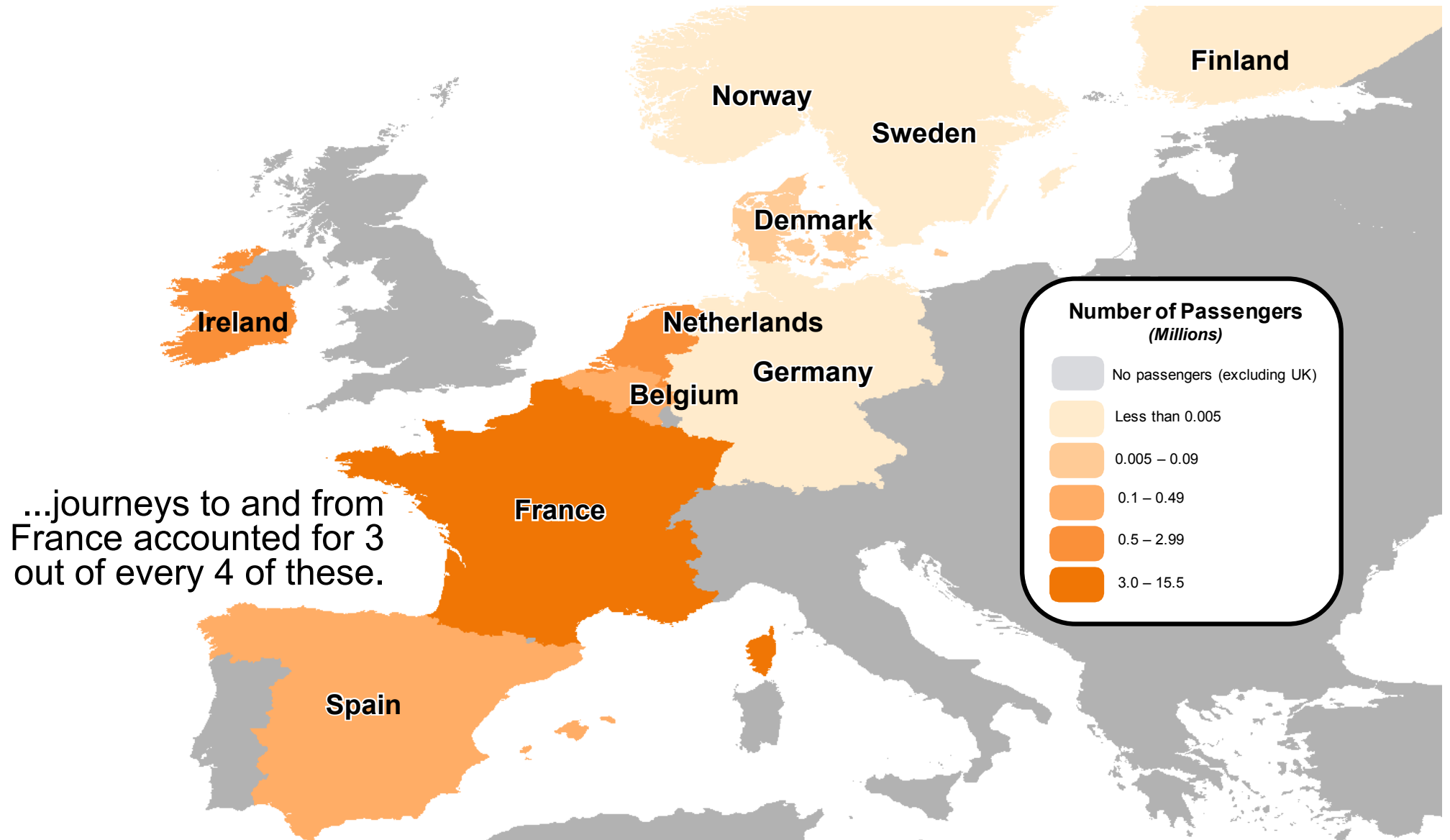
### Seasonal trends in International Short Sea Journeys

- One out of every three** (8.5 million) international short sea journeys took place in the summer, quarter three (July – September), making this the **busiest quarter** for international ferry journeys, in 2013. This was more than double the 3.5 million journeys in **quarter one** (January – March) 2013, the **least busiest quarter**. This seasonal trend has been seen over a number of years.
- Quarter two** (April – June) was the second busiest quarter, with a total of **6.2 million** international short sea passengers, followed by quarter four (October – December) with **4.2 million** passenger movements.

### Total international sea passenger by quarter, 2013



In 2013, there were 20.5 million **international short sea passenger journeys** to and from the UK...



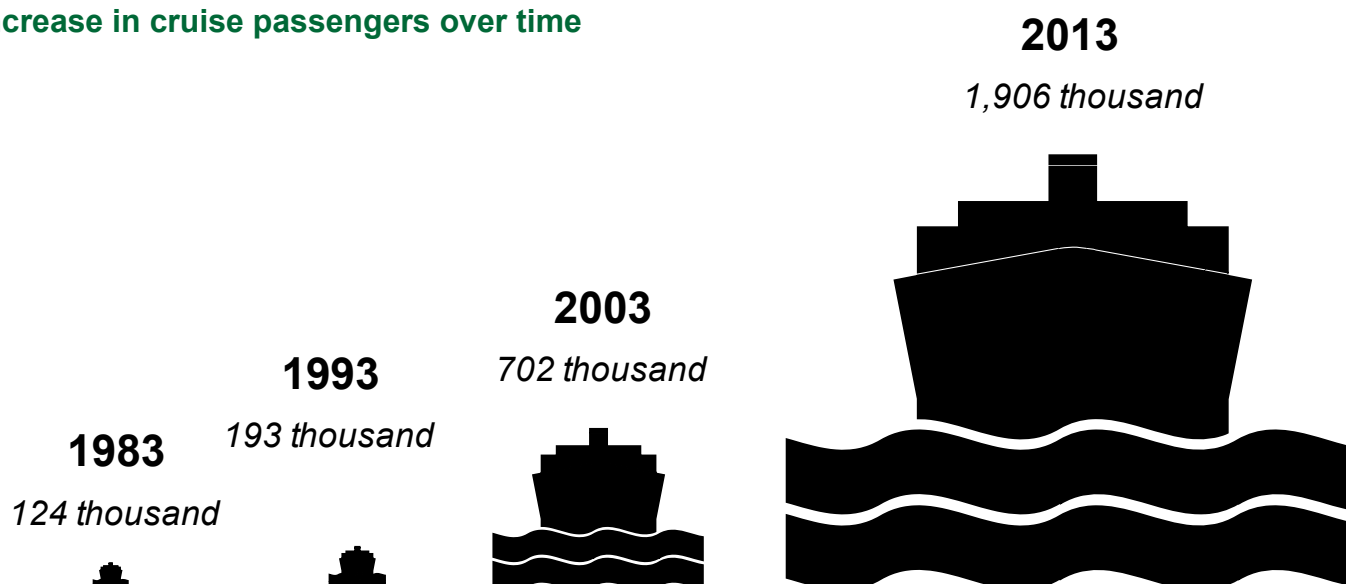
## Long Sea Journeys and Cruise Passengers

- In 2013, **1.9 million people started or ended a cruise trip at a UK port**, an increase of 10 per cent on 2012. This increase was primarily due to more data becoming available, following a data quality exercise to identify cruise operators not previously included in these statistics.
- **Excluding the new operator data**, the number of people starting or ending a **cruise trip at a UK port increased by 7 per cent** on 2012.
- Cruises have been growing in popularity since the early 1980s and in **2013 there were over 15 times more cruise passengers than 30 years previously**.

### Definitions

Cruise passenger figures include all passengers on international cruise journeys who start and finish their cruise journey at a UK port.

## Increase in cruise passengers over time



- The number of passengers on **long sea journeys** has been **declining since 2008**. In 2013 the number of **passengers rose to 34 thousand**, a 7 per cent increase compared with 2012 and still 53 per cent lower than the previous peak of 72 thousand in 2008.

### Definitions

Long sea voyage passengers are those travelling on one-way scheduled voyages to and from ports outside Europe/ Mediterranean. In general, the long sea passengers were travelling on the Southampton to New York route.

Detailed statistics on Long sea and Cruise Passengers can be found in web table [SPAS0101](#).

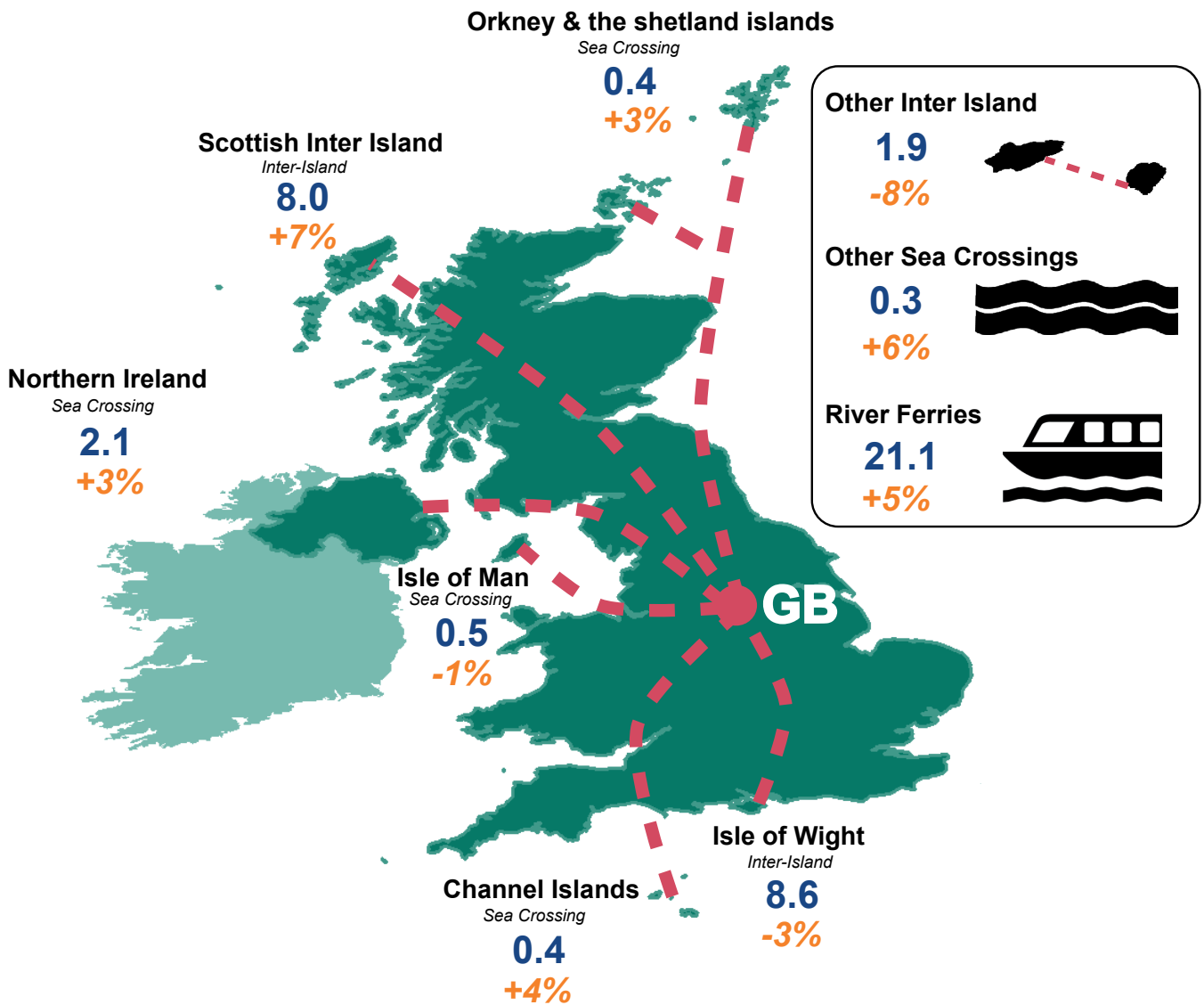


## Summary

- In 2013 there were **43.3 million passengers** travelling on domestic routes, a 3 per cent increase compared to 2012. This increase is primarily due to a **rise in passenger numbers on river ferries**, resulting from improved reporting methods.
- The number of passengers on domestic routes have steadily increased by 5 per cent in the last decade (since 2003), with a slight dip in 2008.

## UK Domestic Sea Passenger Total: 43.3 million

Million passengers/ Percentage change compared to 2012

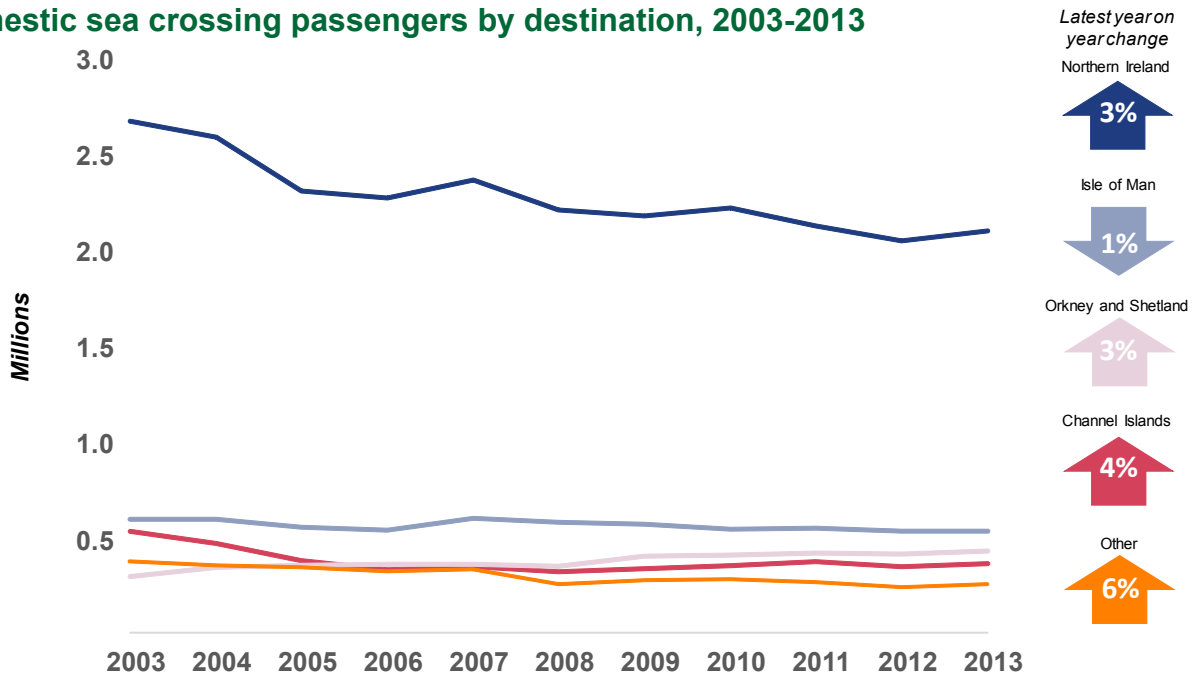


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## Domestic Sea Crossing by Route

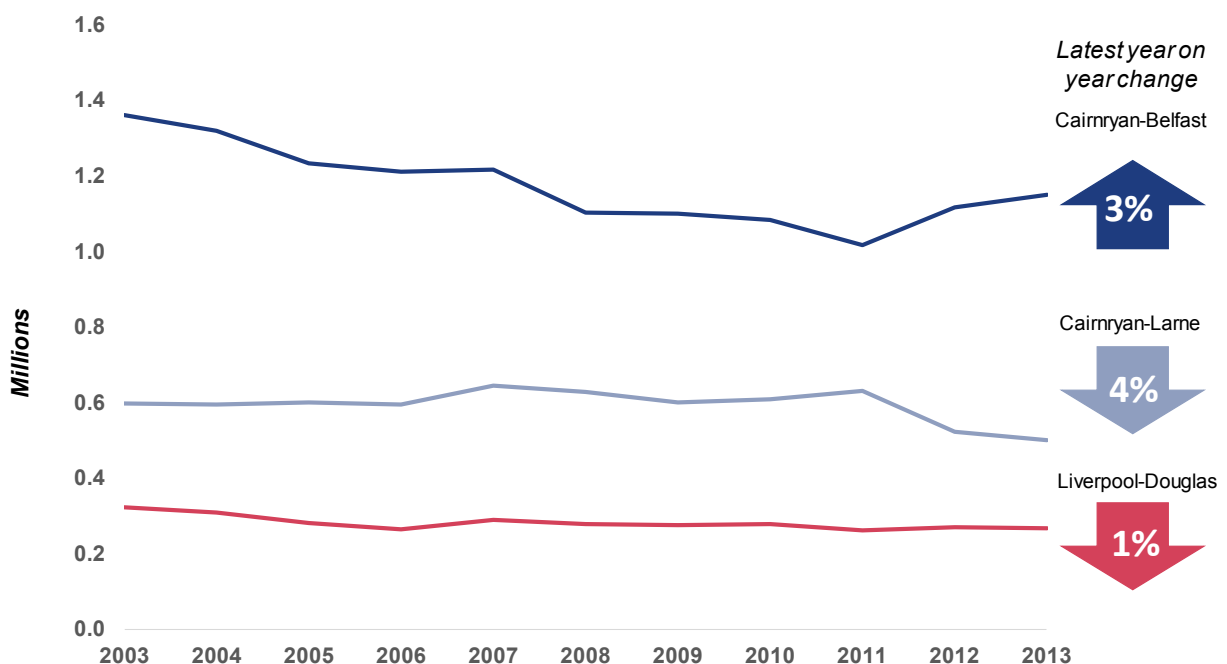
- The number of passengers on **domestic sea crossings** increased by 3 per cent to **3.6 million**, following two years of decline.
- Passenger traffic on **domestic sea crossings** has **steadily declined over the last decade**, with figures for 2013 being 18 per cent lower when compared to 2003.

### Domestic sea crossing passengers by destination, 2003-2013



- In 2013 there were **2.1 million journeys** between the **UK and Northern Ireland**, the most popular domestic sea crossing. **Cairnryan to Belfast** was the most **popular route** between the UK and Northern Ireland, carrying 1.2 million passengers in 2013, a 3 per cent increase compared to 2012. The **route opened in 2011** and has taken passengers who previously travelled between **Stranraer and Belfast**.

### UK's top 3 busiest domestic sea crossing routes, 2003 - 2013



- The number of domestic sea passengers travelling to **Northern Ireland, Channel islands and Orkney & the Shetlands increased in 2013**, while passengers travelling to **the Isle of Man declined** by 1 per cent to **5.2 million**. Passenger numbers on this route have been falling since 2007, with a slight rise in 2011.
- In **February 2012** the port of **Weymouth closed** due to safety concerns over the structure of the port. Weymouth **reopened in July 2013** and in the last five months of 2013, 95 thousand passengers travelled from Weymouth to Jersey/Guernsey. During this closure passengers travelled from Poole.

## Seasonal trends in Domestic Sea Crossing Journeys

- **Quarter three** (July-September) was the **most popular period** for domestic sea crossings, accounting for 39 per cent of all journeys made in 2013. Comparatively the first quarter was the least popular only accounting for 15 per cent of all domestic sea crossings. This follows the same pattern seen year to year.

## Passengers on inter-island Domestic Routes

- **Inter-island passenger numbers remained steady** in 2013 with **18.5 million** passengers following two years of decline.
- Passenger numbers on **Scottish routes rose** by 7 per cent with 8.1 million passengers travelling between Scottish islands and land. This increase was largely due to data which was previously unavailable for selected routes becoming available.
- There were offsetting **decreases seen on the hampshire to Isle of Wight** route with 8.6 million passengers travelling in 2013, a 3 per cent decrease, compared to 2012.

## Passengers on River Ferries

- River ferry passenger numbers have been steadily increasing since 2006. In 2013 the number of passengers rose by 5 per cent, compared with 2012, with **21.1 million people travelling on river ferries**.
- This increase is primarily due to a **rise** in passenger numbers on **river ferries**, resulting from **improved reporting methods**.

### Definitions

#### Inter-Island:

Covers routes between the mainland and UK islands, such as Isle of Skye and the Isle of Wight. It also covers internal ferry routes on lochs such as Strangford to Portaferry in Northern Ireland.

#### River Ferries:

Figures for river ferries are collected annually from the operators. Routes are generally included in this statistical release when the passenger km figure is greater than 500 passenger kms.

Detailed statistics on Domestic Sea Passengers can be found in web table [SPAS0201](#) and [SPAS0202](#).

## Strengths and weaknesses of the data

- ▶ The data for international ferry passenger routes, domestic sea crossings and inter-island routes are collected regularly from the operators or, in the case of the crossings to Orkney and Shetland and Scottish inter-island routes, supplied by the Scottish Government. These data sets are checked in detail and considered to be very robust.
- ▶ Passenger numbers on river ferries are collected from the operators and cover major routes, which are reviewed periodically. Data are considered to be fit for purpose.
- ▶ The cruise and long sea data are also supplied by the operators and are regularly reviewed. The data are considered to be fit for purpose.

## Background notes

- ▶ The web tables for sea passenger statistics can be found at:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/maritime-and-shipping-statistics#data-tables-associated-with-this-series>
- ▶ Full guidance on the methods used in the publication of these releases, and the quality of the data, can be found in the Technical Note at  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/maritime-and-shipping-statistics-guidance>
- ▶ National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the National Statistics Code of Practice. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure they meet customer needs.
- ▶ 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/pre-release-access-lists-for-maritime-and-shipping-series>
- ▶ Provisional summary totals for international sea passenger traffic are released monthly via the DfT website at  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/spas01-uk-international-sea-passengers#table-spas0107>