



Department for Transport

Road goods vehicles travelling to mainland Europe: January to March 2015 (quarter 1)

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 used within the UK, the Department for Transport, regional bodies, academics and transport consultants to obtain a better understanding of the complexities of freight transport and of trends, in order to advise on policy options. The haulage industry itself has a particular interest in data on the activity of overseas registered vehicles within the UK.

These statistics are updated on a quarterly basis.

Next Update: 20 August 2015

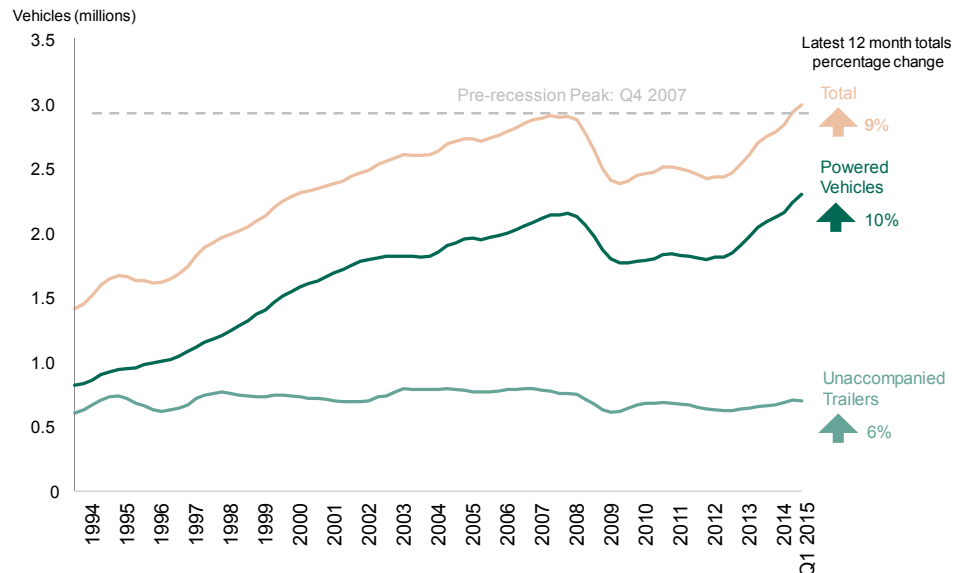
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There was a 9 per cent increase in the number of road goods vehicles travelling from Great Britain to mainland Europe in the 12 month period ending March 2015

- Road goods vehicles increased by 248 thousand to **3 million** over the 12 month period ending March 2015, taking the total to 3 per cent higher than in 2007 – the pre-recession peak.
- Of the total road goods vehicles, 2.3 million were **powered vehicles** and 695 thousand were **unaccompanied trailers**. In the last 12 months, powered vehicles increased by 10 per cent and unaccompanied trailers increased by 6 per cent.

Road goods vehicles travelling from GB to mainland Europe, rolling 12 month period totals to March 2015



- In quarter 1 (January – March) 2015, 767 thousand goods vehicles travelled from Great Britain to mainland Europe; 593 thousand **powered vehicles** and 174 thousand **unaccompanied trailers**).

Rolling 12 month period (April 2014 - March 2015)

There were 3 million goods vehicles travelling from Great Britain to mainland Europe during the last 12 months (2.3 million **powered vehicles** and 695 thousand **unaccompanied trailers**), 9 per cent higher than the previous 12 months total. The increase was largely driven by the number of operators using the Dover to Calais route, part of the Dover Straits port group. Compared with the last 12 months, an additional 197 thousand goods vehicles travelled via the Dover Straits port group in the latest 12 month period.

Since the 12 month period ending June 2012, the number of road goods vehicles has been consistently increasing and the latest 12 month period saw figures exceed the pre-recession peak during 2007 (2.9 million).

More long term, the number of goods vehicles travelling from Great Britain to mainland Europe has increased by 87 per cent in the last 20 years.

Quarter 1 total (January - March 2015)

During quarter 1 2015, 767 thousand goods vehicles travelled from Great Britain to mainland Europe (593 thousand **powered vehicles** and 174 thousand **unaccompanied trailers**). This was 11 per cent higher compared to quarter 1 2014. This was the highest quarter 1 total since the series began over 30 years ago.

What are powered vehicles and unaccompanied trailers?



Powered vehicles

comprise rigid vehicles, lorries with semi-trailers (articulated units) and lorries with drawbar trailers (some vehicles under 3.5 tonnes gross vehicles weight are also included).



Unaccompanied trailers

comprise trailers and semi-trailers not accompanied on the ferry by a powered unit.

Country of disembarkation and port group

Goods vehicles travelling to mainland Europe by port group, rolling 12 month period totals to March 2015

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Port Group	All goods vehicles (Total: 2.9 Million)	Powered vehicles (2.2 Million)	Unaccompanied trailers (0.7 Million)
North Sea	28%	7%	94%
Dover Straits	69%	89%	3%
English Channel	3%	4%	3%

Rolling 12 month period total (April 2014 - March 2015)

- The proportions by port group of goods vehicles travelling from GB to mainland Europe has remained similar over the past decade.
- Of the total powered vehicles, 93 per cent disembarked in **France** (2.1 million). This explains the high number using the **Dover Straits Port Group** (France is the only country of disembarkation for the Channel Tunnel).
- Of the total unaccompanied trailers, 56 per cent disembarked in the **Netherlands** (387 thousand) and 23 per cent in **Belgium** (161 thousand). Over half of the routes from the **North Sea Port Group** disembarked in the **Netherlands** or **Belgium**.
- Of the small number of goods vehicles using the **English Channel Port Group**, 90 per cent disembarked in **France** and 10 per cent in **Spain**.

Quarter 1 total (January - March 2015)

In quarter 1 2015, 551 thousand powered vehicles disembarked in **France** (93 per cent of the total, unchanged compared to quarter 1 2014), 36 thousand in **Netherlands** (6 per cent, unchanged compared to quarter 1 2014) and the remaining 6 thousand in other countries (most notably **Denmark**, **Germany** and **Belgium**).

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>

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.
- This bulletin includes details of the country of registration of powered vehicles. This information is provided by the roll-on/ roll –off ferry operators and Eurotunnel. Data to Quarter 1 2015 is not currently available due to a data processing issue with the provision of the usual dataset, experienced by our data suppliers. DfT are working with the suppliers to resolve this issue and data for Q1 2015 will be published as an update at the earliest opportunity.
- 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.