



Department  
for Transport

## Road Freight Statistics, United Kingdom: October 2016 - September 2017

### About this release

This statistical release summarises statistics on domestic and international activity of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs).

#### Domestic road freight:

Data are derived from the Continuing Survey of Road Goods Transport Great Britain (CSRG-GB) which measures the activity of **GB-registered** HGVs operating in the UK.

#### International road

**freight:** Data are derived from the International Road Haulage Survey (IRHS) and the Continuing Survey of Road Goods Transport Northern Ireland (CSRG-NI) which measure the activity of **UK-registered** HGVs operating both domestically and internationally.

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### Domestic road freight: main results

In the year ending September 2017, looking at the activity of GB-registered HGVs operating **in the UK**, there were...

Compared to the year ending  
September 2016



1.45  
billion tonnes

↑ 3%



150  
billion tonne  
kilometres

↑ 3%



18.7  
billion vehicle  
kilometres

↓ 1%

- In the twelve months ending September 2017, the amount of **goods lifted** and **goods moved** by GB-registered HGVs, in the UK, both increased by 3%, whilst **vehicle kilometres** decreased by 1%.
- In comparison to 2016, **goods moved** and **goods lifted** are increasing, which is similar to the overall trend shown over the last 5 years, with exception to severe weather conditions in 2013 and 2014.

[See Table [RFS0101](#) for detailed statistics]

### Definitions



**Goods lifted:** the weight of goods carried, measured in tonnes.



**Goods moved:** the weight of goods carried, multiplied by the distance hauled, measured in tonne kilometres.

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## International road freight: main results

In the year ending September 2017, looking at the activity of UK-registered HGVs transporting freight **internationally**, there were...

Compared to the year ending  
September 2016



**8.0** million tonnes lifted  
to/from the UK  
of which...

- 3.7 million tonnes were exported
- 4.3 million tonnes were imported

↑ 2%

↓ 3%

↑ 7%



**5.4** billion tonne kilometres moved  
to/from the UK  
of which...

- 2.6 billion tonne kilometres were exported
- 2.8 billion tonne kilometres were imported

↑ 5%

↑ 2%

↑ 8%

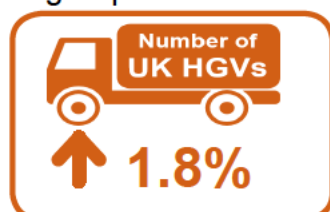
- ▶ **Goods lifted** to/from the UK, by UK-registered HGVs, increased by 2% to 8.0 million tonnes compared with the previous year ending September 2016. However, This is 29% lower than the same period 10 years earlier.
- ▶ **Goods moved** to/from the UK, by UK-registered HGVs, increased by 5% to 5.4 billion tonne kilometres compared with the previous year ending September 2016. This is 37% lower than the same period 10 years earlier.
- ▶ The total amount of **goods lifted** and **goods moved** internationally, by UK-registered HGVs, have generally been falling since 2000, but has seen an increase during the latest 12 months compared to the previous 12 months. This can be explained due to particularly low levels of international road freight activity in the previous year and is unlikely to be the start of a new trend.

[See Tables [RFS0201](#) and [RFS0144](#) for detailed statistics]

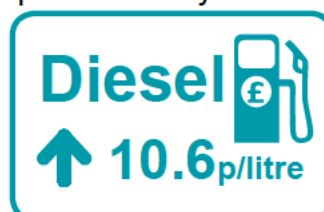
**In context** - The year ending September 2017 compared to the year ending September 2016:



Source: [Office for National Statistics](#)



Source: [Department for Transport, Vehicle Licensing Statistics](#)



Source: [Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy](#)



Source: [Office for National Statistics](#)

## Users and uses of statistics

Road freight statistics are a key source of management information on the use of the country's infrastructure. Its main use occurs across various types of public and private bodies. This includes the statistical office of the European Union (Eurostat); local and central government, such as the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and Highways England; local town and transport planning bodies; commercial organisations, such as haulage operators and transport consultants; and academics.

Users are mainly interested in information such as the origins and destinations of journeys, length of haul, empty running and the pattern of freight on UK roads. The statistics also support policies on freight, road safety and reducing congestion, and pollution.

## Strengths and weaknesses of data

The figures in this release are derived from the Continuing Survey of Road Goods Transport Great Britain/ Northern Ireland (CSRGT GB/NI) and the International Road Haulage Survey (IRHS), which are continuous surveys which collect a range of information on freight movements from a stratified sample of HGVs. Foreign-registered vehicles and vehicles with a gross vehicle weight of 3.5 tonnes or less (Light Goods Vehicles) are excluded from the survey. Guidance on the methods used to compile these statistics and further information can be found in the [Road Freight Statistics notes and definitions](#). Sample figures are weighted to be representative of the HGV population, but these are subject to sampling errors. Annual sample sizes and sampling error estimates can be found within Table [RFS0143](#).

The figures presented here rely on the use of administrative data from Driver Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) and Driver Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA). DfT have assessed the impact of this on the quality of these statistics, reports on which can be found at the following links: [Quality assurance of administrative data sources: DVLA](#); and [Quality assurance of administrative data sources: DVSA](#).

## Background notes

Accompanying data tables give further detail on the key results presented in this statistical release, as well as statistics on other road freight topics, which are available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/road-freight-domestic-and-international-statistics>. For this quarterly release, only three tables are updated as they provide road freight statistics for each quarter, whereas all other road freight tables only provide annual statistics. These are Tables [RFS0101](#), [RFS0144](#) and [RFS0201](#).

In the previous statistical publication in this series, for 2017 Quarter 2, the Department for Transport undertook a review of part of the methodology used to produce the estimates of the domestic aspect of the 'Road Freight Statistics' series. This resulted in changes to the published figures dating back to 2011 Quarter 2. See page 3 on the statistical release [here](#) for further details.

Further information about the statistics and methodology in this report can be found in the [Road Freight Statistics notes and definitions](#).

Details of ministers and officials who receive pre-release access to these statistics up to 24 hours before release can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/road-freight-statistics-pre-release-access-list>.



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