



Department for Transport

UK Port Freight Statistics: January to March 2018 (Quarter 1)

About this release

This statistical release summarises the latest provisional quarterly statistics on freight handled by **major** UK sea ports. Detailed final annual statistics for 2018 will be published in summer 2019, when the quarterly series will also be finalised.

This statistical release compares results to the same quarter a year earlier to avoid the misinterpretation of seasonal effects.

Definitions:

Major ports

Ports handling over one million tonnes of freight per year and a small number of other key ports. Together, these ports accounted for 98% of total UK port traffic in 2016.

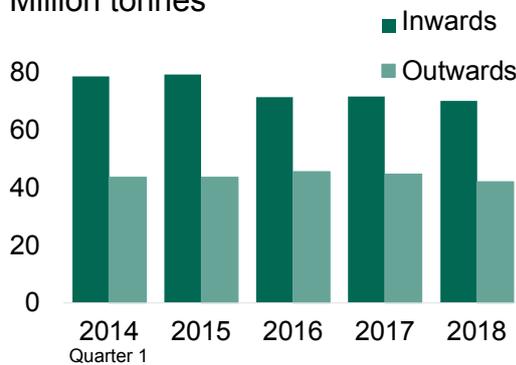
Unitised traffic

This includes containers and all roll-on/roll-off units (trade, passenger and import/export vehicles). These figures include both loaded and empty units.

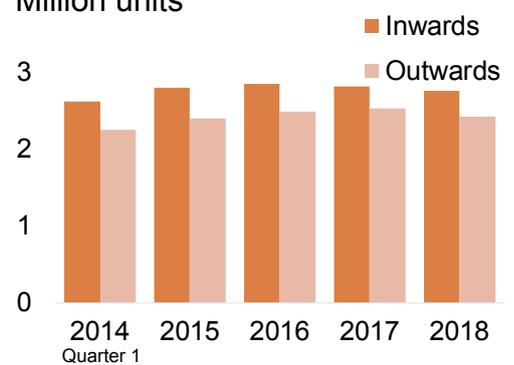
UK major ports handled 112.0 million tonnes of freight in the first quarter of 2018, a 4% decrease from the same quarter last year. The number of units handled decreased 3% to 5.2 million units.

Quarter 1 UK major port traffic, by direction: 2014 to 2018

Million tonnes

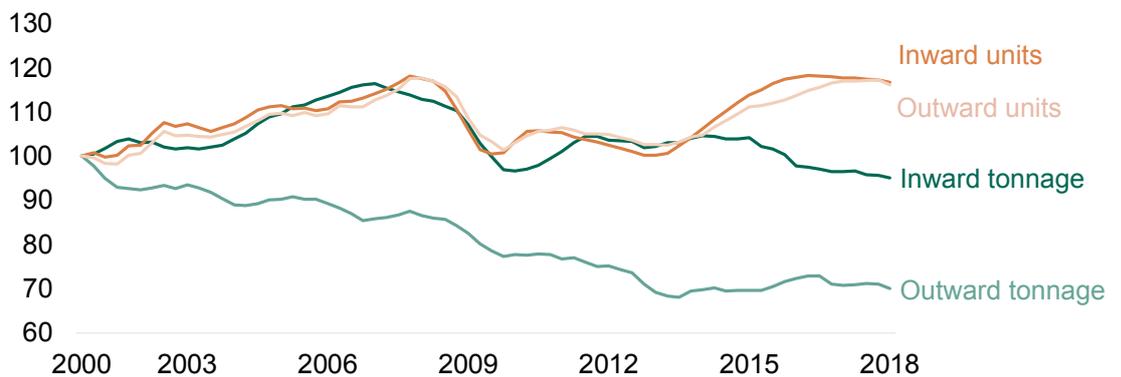


Million units



Inward tonnage to UK major ports fell by 2% to 70.0 million tonnes and outward tonnage fell by 6% to 42.0 million tonnes, compared with quarter 1 of 2017. Inward units fell by 2% to 2.8 million units and outward units fell by 4% to 2.4 million units, compared with quarter 1 of 2017.

Major port traffic indices: rolling 4 quarter totals to March 2018 (4 quarters to Q4 2000 = 100)



In the four quarters to March 2018, UK major ports handled 465.7 million tonnes of freight, 1% lower than the four quarters to March 2017. Total unitised traffic fell by 1% to 23.9 million units, compared to the equivalent 2017 period.

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Strengths and weaknesses of the data

- ▶ These port freight statistics relate to traffic to and from major ports in the United Kingdom and, unless otherwise stated, do not cover ports in the Isle of Man or the Channel Islands.
- ▶ These statistics are based on data provided by major ports. Data is available for total weight of goods and number of units inwards and outwards for each port. More in depth commentary will be provided with the release of the final port statistics which will include details on cargo categories.
- ▶ The data provided for 2017 and 2018 is provisional and may be subject to revision if subsequent checks against data provided by agents, or data provided by ports at the year end, arouse suspicion or highlight anomalies.
- ▶ The data provided for 2018 for Clyde and Immingham was estimated for this quarterly release. These figures are provisional and will be updated in subsequent releases, and finalised in summer 2018.

Background notes

- ▶ The web tables and charts give further detail of the key results presented in this statistical release. They are available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/port05-traffic-indices-and-quarterly-breakdowns>
- ▶ Full guidance on the methods used to compile these statistics can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/maritime-and-shipping-statistics-guidance>
- ▶ National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Statistics. Port Freight Statistics were assessed by the UK Statistics Authority against the Code of Practice and were confirmed as National Statistics in February 2013.
- ▶ Details of Ministers and officials who receive pre-release access to these statistics up to 24 hours before release can be found on the ports series page here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pre-release-access-lists-for-maritime-and-shipping-series>
- ▶ The next update in this series will be published in September 2018. It will contain provisional quarterly figures for the second quarter of 2018. Annual statistics on freight handled by UK sea ports in 2017 will be released in August 2018. The final 2016 figures can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/port-freight-statistics-2016-final-figures>.
- ▶ These statistics are also sent to Eurostat on a quarterly basis and used in a table alongside data from other EU member countries. For further information and data tables see link below: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/transport/data/database>



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