



UK Port Freight Statistics: April to June 2014 (Quarter 2)

UK Major Ports

Quarter 2 2014 main findings

Quarterly Trend

Comparing quarter 2 2014 (April - June) with quarter 2 2013:

Tonnage (million tonnes)



Units (million units)



- **Freight** handled at UK major ports **fell** by 1 per cent to **124.4 million tonnes**. Traffic had increased for the two previous quarters (quarter 4 2013 and quarter 1 2014) after generally declining from quarter 4 2011.
- **Freight** traffic **travelling in** to UK major ports decreased by 2 per cent to **80.5 million tonnes**. Inward traffic had been increasing in the previous two quarters.
- **Unitised** traffic **rose** by 5 per cent to **5.8 million units**, continuing the steady quarter on quarter growth seen since quarter 2 2013.

Rolling Annual Total

Comparing the 12 months ending June 2014 with the 12 months ending June 2013:

Tonnage (million tonnes)



Units (million units)



- Major port **freight** traffic increased by 1 per cent to **492.2 million tonnes**.
- UK major port **unitised** traffic increased by 4 per cent to **21.8 million units**, the fourth yearly increase in a row.

About this release

This statistical release summarises the latest provisional quarterly statistics on freight handled by **major UK sea ports**.

Detailed final annual statistics will be published in August 2015, when the quarterly series will also be finalised.

This statistical release uses quarter on quarter comparisons to avoid seasonal impact.

Definition:

Major ports-

Ports handling over one million tonnes per year, and a small number of other key ports.

Together these ports accounted for 98% of total UK port traffic in 2013.

Major Port Freight Traffic (Tonnage)

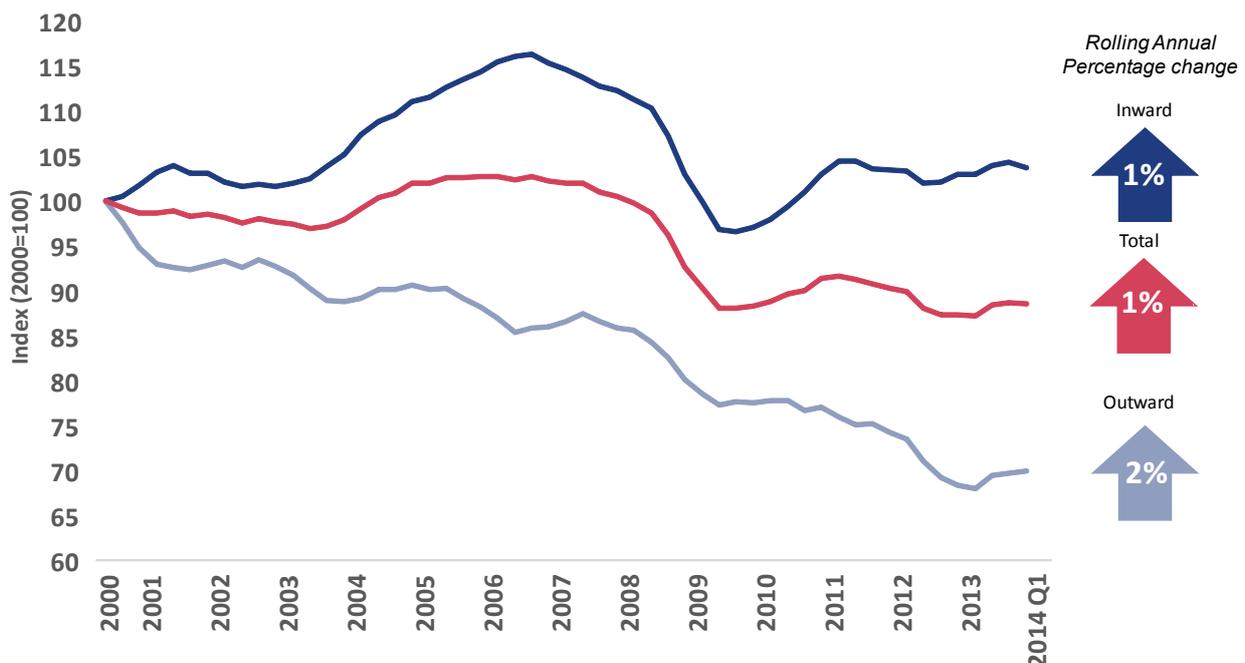
Quarterly Trend: Comparing quarter 2 2014 (April – June) to quarter 2 2013:

- Freight handled at UK major ports fell by 1 per cent to 124.4 million tonnes in quarter 2 2014. This follows two consecutive quarters of growth and a period of general decline seen since Q4 2011.
- Freight traffic travelling in to UK major ports decreased by 2 per cent to 80.5 million tonnes, accounting for 65 per cent of all traffic. Inward traffic had been increasing in the previous two quarters.
- Freight traffic travelling out of the UK major ports increased by 1 per cent to 44.0 million tonnes. This was the third consecutive quarterly increase following six quarters of decline.

Annual (Rolling) Trend: Comparing the 12 months ending June 2014 with the 12 months ending June 2013:

- Major port freight traffic increased by 1 per cent to 492.2 million tonnes, continuing the growth seen in the 12 months ending March 2014 (quarter 1).
- Freight travelling in to UK major ports to rose by 1 per cent when compared with the previous four quarters at 317.6 million tonnes. Freight travelling in to major ports remains largely unchanged from 2011.
- Freight travelling out of UK major ports increased by 2 per cent to 174.6 million tonnes. The annual rolling outward total declined throughout 2011-2013 until quarter 1 2014.

Chart 1: Major port traffic indices, tonnage: rolling 12 month totals to June 2014 (2000=100)



Detailed statistics (tables) on Quarterly Tonnage Port Freight Statistics can be found in the web tables [PORT0501](#) & [PORT0504-PORT0506](#)

Major Port Freight Traffic (Units)

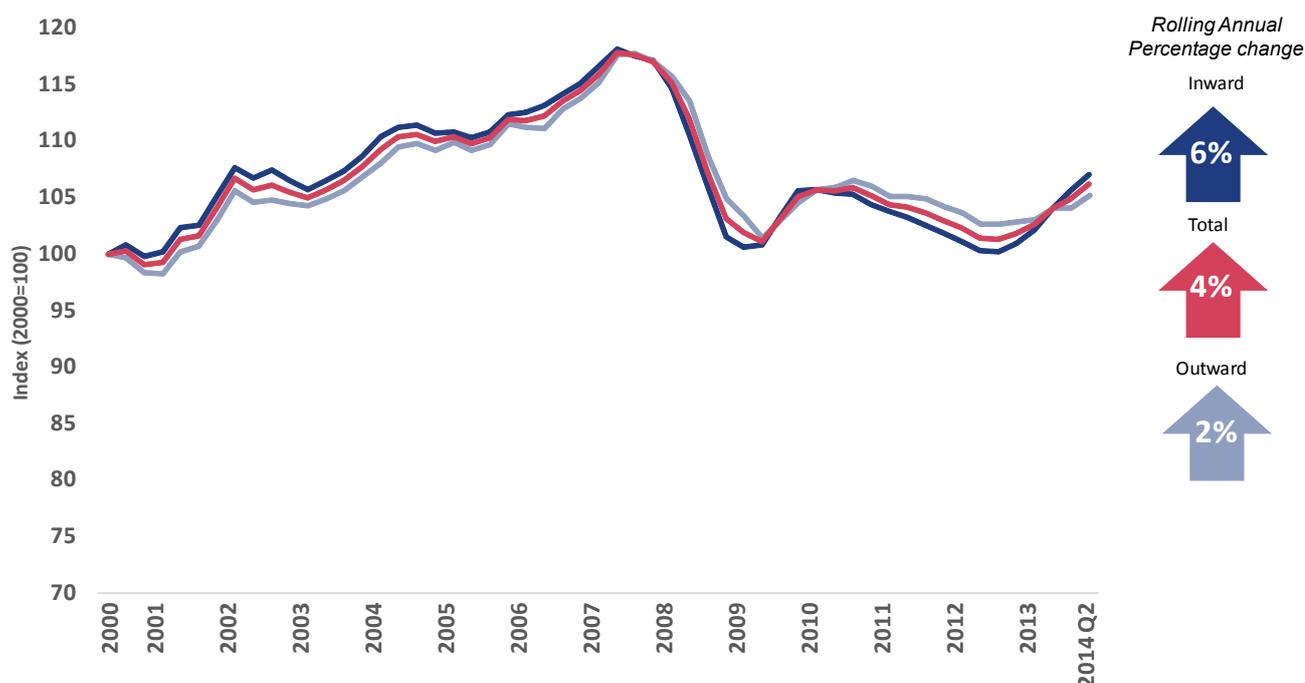
Quarterly Trend: Comparing quarter 2 2014 (April – June) to quarter 2 2013:

- Unitised traffic rose **by 5 per cent to 5.8 million units**, for the third consecutive quarter continuing the growth seen since quarter 2 2013.
- Unitised traffic **travelling in** to UK major ports **rose by 5 per cent to 3.0 million units**. This was the fifth consecutive quarterly increase.
- Unitised traffic **travelling out** of UK major ports **increased by 4 per cent to 2.8 million units**. This was the highest quarter 2 total in the last 5 years. Outward unitised traffic generally increased throughout 2013 following a year of decline in 2012.

Annual (Rolling) Trend: Comparing the 12 months ending June 2014 with the 12 months ending June 2013

- UK major port unitised traffic **increased** for the fourth rolling 12 month period in a row **by 4 per cent to 21.8 million units**. Previously the rolling annual total steadily declined from quarter 3 2011 to quarter 2 2013.
- Unitised traffic **travelling in** to UK major ports **increased by 6 per cent to 11.4 million units**. This was the fourth year on year increase following a previous series of consecutive decreases since quarter 2 2011.
- Unitised traffic **travelling out** of UK major ports **rose by 2 per cent** compared with the previous 12 month period to **10.4 million units**. This was the third consecutive increase in the rolling annual total since 2013.

Chart 2: Major Port traffic indices, units - rolling 12 month totals to June 2014 (2000=100)



Detailed statistics (tables) on Quarterly Unitised Port Freight Statistics can be found in the web tables [PORT0502 & PORT0507-PORT0509](#)

Strengths and weaknesses of the data

- ▶ The port freight statistics relate to traffic to and from ports in the United Kingdom, unless otherwise stated, and do not cover ports in the Isle of Man or the Channel Islands.
- ▶ The provisional quarterly port data relate to all cargos loaded or unloaded by ship at major ports in the UK, including both international and domestic traffic.
- ▶ These statistics are based on data provided by major ports. Data are available for total weight of goods and number of units inwards and outwards for each responding port. These figures may be subject to revision if subsequent checks against data provided by agents, or data provided by ports at the year end, highlight anomalies. More in depth commentary will be provided with the release of the final port statistics.
- ▶ Typically a very small number of ports do not provide data in time for publication, in which case the national trend is estimated based on the trend for those ports which have provided data for the latest quarter. The provisional figures for freight traffic at each major UK port in quarter 2 2014 are based on 98 per cent of expected returns as data was incomplete at the time of publishing.

Glossary

- ▶ **Major ports:** Ports handling over one million tonnes per year, and a small number of other key ports, together accounted for 98% of UK port traffic in 2013.
- ▶ **Tonnage:** The weight of goods transported, including crates and other packaging, but excluding the unloaded weight of shipping containers, road goods vehicles, trailers and other items of transport equipment where these are used.
- ▶ **Units:** Includes all roll-on/roll-off (ro-ro) units whether carrying freight or not (road goods vehicles, unaccompanied trailers, shipborne port-to-port trailers, passenger vehicles, trade vehicles, and other ro-ro units), as well as lift-on lift-off (lo-lo) containers. In most published port statistics, freight carrying roll-on/roll-off units are reported separately, however, this detail is not available at the time of the quarterly statistics publication, in which combined totals are given.

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 on the ports series page here: <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 for Official 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 December 2014. It will contain provisional quarterly figures for the third quarter of 2014.
- ▶ Annual statistics on freight handled by UK sea ports are released in August 2015. The final 2013 figures can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/port-freight-statistics-2013-final-figures>