

Quarterly Road Traffic Estimates: Great Britain Quarter 4 (October - December) 2014



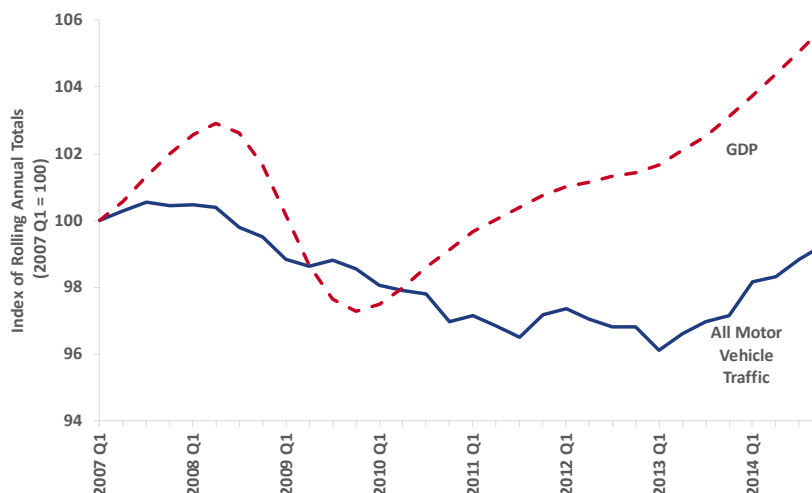
Department
for Transport

Main findings: Traffic across all vehicle types and road classes has increased in 2014, according to provisional estimates.

Provisional annual figures suggest that **all motor vehicle traffic** in Great Britain **increased by 2.1 per cent** in 2014, compared to 2013. Provisional figures indicate that 310.2 billion vehicle miles were travelled across all roads in Great Britain in 2014.

Initial estimates show that GDP in the UK increased over 2014, with all four major components of the economy (services, construction, manufacturing and production) recording growth compared to 2013. It is likely that such increases in economic activity are contributing to the continued upward trend in traffic volumes, as illustrated by the chart below.

Index of rolling annual totals - All Motor Vehicle Traffic in Great Britain and UK GDP, quarterly from 2007 [[TRA2501e](#)]



Compared to 2013, provisional annual estimates indicate that:

- **Car traffic increased** by 1.5 per cent.
- **Light Goods Vehicle (LGV) traffic continued to rise** at a higher rate than any other vehicle type, increasing 5.8 per cent to a new peak.
- **All road classes experienced higher volumes of traffic.**
- **Motorway traffic increased to a new record high**, reaching 64.8 billion vehicle miles over the four quarters of 2014, up 2.4 per cent from 2013.

About this release

This quarterly release presents provisional annual estimates for road traffic in Great Britain for 2014 using rolling annual totals. These estimates are provisional until they have been constrained by the final annual estimates each year. Final annual estimates for 2014 are due to be published in May 2015.

These estimates are based on traffic data collected continuously from a national network of around 200 Automatic Traffic Counters. Final annual figures also incorporate manual traffic count data.

Information

Further charts and tables can be accessed online via our [road traffic statistical series](#).

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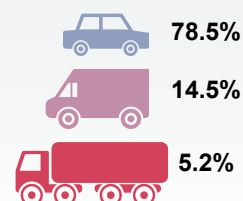
Summary figures of provisional annual estimates, 2014

The summary table below shows the annual patterns in vehicle traffic compared to 2013, and across a range of previous years, using rolling annual totals. More information on our quarterly estimates, along with our [TRA25](#) quarterly tables, can be found online [here](#).

	Vehicle Miles (Provisional) 2014	Annual percentage change over time			
		Last Year 2013	Five Years Ago 2009	Ten Years Ago 2004	Twenty Years Ago 1994
All Motor Vehicle Traffic	310.2 billion	📈 2.1%	📈 0.7%	📈 1.1%	📈 18.4%
Cars and Taxis	243.7 billion	📈 1.5%	📉 0.5%	📉 0.5%	📈 13.6%
Light Goods Vehicles	45.1 billion	📈 5.8%	📈 10.7%	📈 20.5%	📈 67.3%
Heavy Goods Vehicles	16.0 billion	📈 2.2%	📉 1.8%	📉 11.9%	📈 4.1%
Motorways	64.8 billion	📈 2.4%	📈 4.9%	📈 8.0%	📈 47.5%
Rural 'A' Roads	89.4 billion	📈 2.3%	📈 1.3%	📈 1.8%	📈 23.4%
Urban 'A' Roads	49.7 billion	📈 2.4%	📉 0.7%	📉 3.5%	📈 1.8%
Rural Minor Roads	42.1 billion	📈 2.1%	📉 0.8%	📈 4.4%	📈 17.6%
Urban Minor Roads	64.3 billion	📈 1.5%	📉 2.1%	📉 4.5%	📈 5.4%

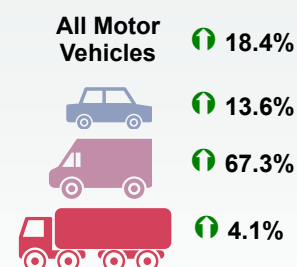
Proportion

Car traffic continues to account for the highest proportion of vehicle miles travelled in Great Britain;



Longer term trends

Provisional annual figures suggest that 2014 traffic volumes have increased at varying rates since 1994:

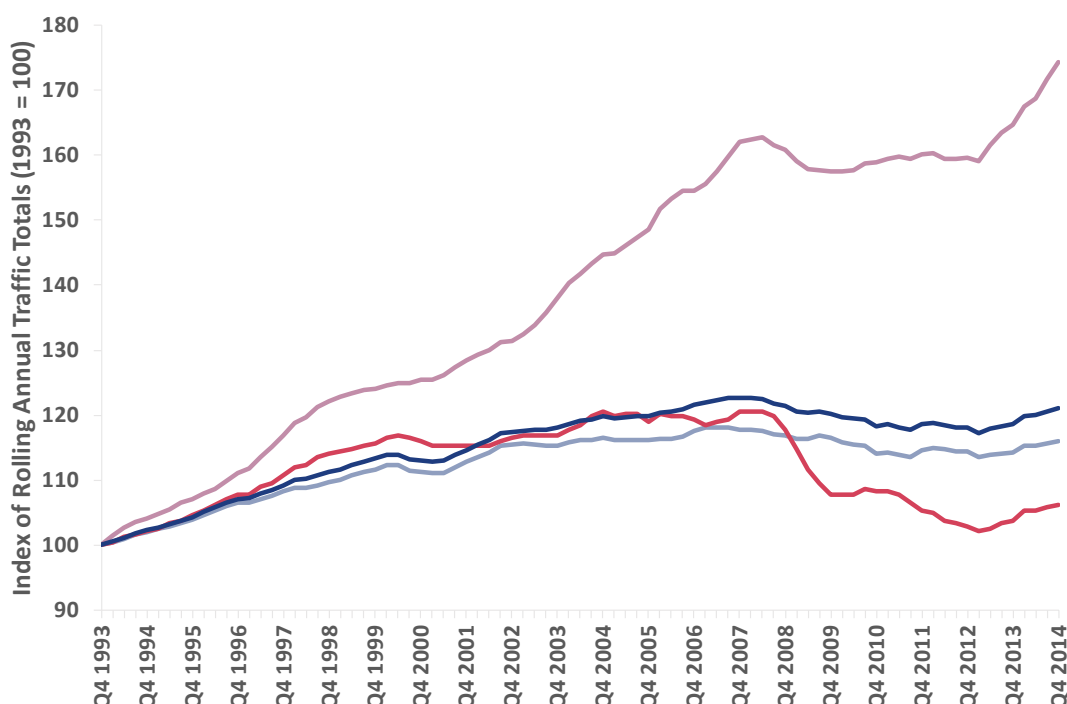


Provisional annual road traffic by vehicle type

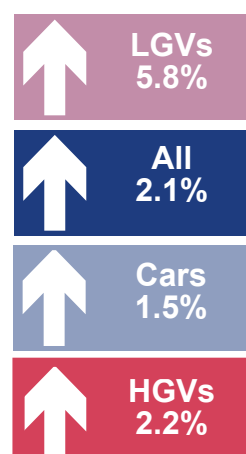
Latest figures: Car, LGV and Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) traffic increases.

- Provisional annual figures indicate that all motor vehicle traffic increased by 2.1 per cent in 2014 compared to 2013.

Rolling annual index of road traffic in Great Britain by vehicle type, (1993 = 100) [\[TRA2501e\]](#)



% Change from 2013...



- Car and taxi traffic increased by 1.5 per cent, to 243.7 billion vehicle miles, from 2013 to 2014.
- Provisional annual estimates indicate that LGV traffic totalled 45.1 billion vehicle miles in 2014, 5.8 per cent higher than in 2013. This contributes to a 67.3 per cent increase since 1994.
- HGV traffic increased 2.2 per cent in 2014 compared to 2013, totalling 16.0 billion vehicle miles.

Longer term trends

Over the 20 years since 1994, provisional estimates suggest that traffic volumes have increased across motorways and both 'A' roads and minor roads;

Motorways  **47.5%**



Rural 'A'  **23.4%**

Minor rural  **17.6%**



Urban 'A'  **1.8%**

Minor urban  **5.4%**

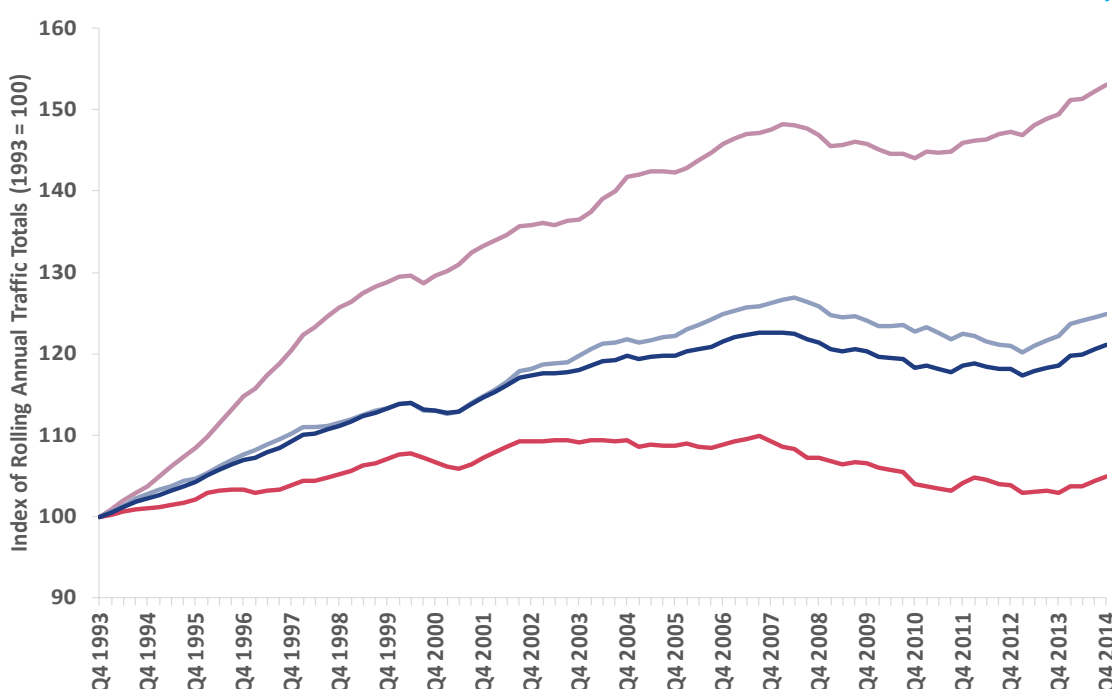


Provisional annual road traffic by road type

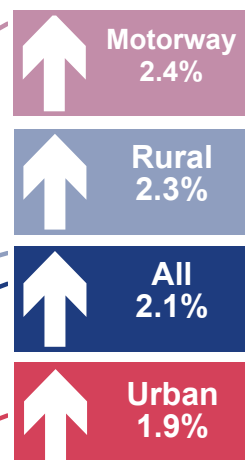
Latest figures: Traffic increases on motorways and all other road classes.

- Traffic on motorways in Great Britain increased from 63.3 billion vehicle miles in 2013 to 64.8 billion vehicle miles in 2014, representing growth of 2.4 per cent.
- Provisional annual estimates suggest that motorway traffic has increased by more than 47 per cent since 1994.
- 2014 estimates for 'A' road traffic show an increase when compared to 2013. Traffic on rural 'A' roads was 89.4 billion vehicle miles, up 2.3 per cent, with traffic on urban 'A' roads rising to 49.7 billion vehicle miles, a 2.4 per cent increase on 2013.
- Traffic volumes also rose by 2.1 per cent on minor rural roads, increasing to 42.1 billion vehicle miles, and by 1.5 per cent on minor urban roads, increasing to 64.3 billion vehicle miles, when comparing the same twelve month period in 2013 and 2014.

Rolling annual index of road traffic in Great Britain by road type, (1993 = 100) [\[TRA2502e\]](#)



% Change from 2013...



Background information

Changes from previous quarterly traffic publications

In this publication document, rolling annual totals have been used to present the latest road traffic statistics, as at end December 2014. All charts within the release use this presentation of traffic data, and tables with the rolling annual data are available within the accompanying set of tables. If you have any comments on this, or feedback on any aspects of the Department's road traffic statistics, please contact the team via email: roadtraff.stats@dft.gsi.gov.uk

Users and uses of these statistics

Road traffic data are a key source of management information on the country's infrastructure. Main uses of road traffic statistics are summarised online in our report [Meeting customers' needs: Users and uses of road traffic statistics and data](#).

Sources, strengths and weaknesses of the data

Quarterly estimates are based on data from automatic traffic counters and give an indication of changes in traffic levels for different types of vehicle and on different types of road in Great Britain as a whole. **Annual estimates** make use of data from around eight thousand manual traffic counts in addition to the data from the automatic traffic counters and can estimate traffic levels in local areas and on specific road links which cannot be produced from the quarterly data.

Automatic traffic counters classify vehicle types based on characteristics such as axle-spacing and vehicle length. This creates the possibility for misclassification of vehicles with atypical characteristics, meaning that **provisional estimates** for different vehicle types are less robust than the final estimates which also utilise the more accurate manual counts data. The classification algorithms are continually developed to ensure that vehicle classification is as accurate as possible.

Further statistical guidance can be found online here: www.gov.uk/government/publications/road-traffic-speeds-and-congestion-statistics-guidance

As part of the quarterly methodology, historic figures are subject to revision. However, these revisions will typically be minor and will not affect the overall patterns shown in the data.

Provisional quarterly and annual traffic estimates for all motor vehicles have historically been accurate (typically within 1.5 per cent) when compared with the final estimates.

Next release

The next Quarterly Road Traffic estimates, for Quarter 1 (January to March) 2015, are due to be published in May 2015. Final annual traffic estimates for 2014 are due to be published in May 2015.

Feedback

We welcome further feedback on any aspects of the Department's road traffic statistics including content, timing, and format via email to roadtraff.stats@dft.gsi.gov.uk

National Statistics

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 here: www.gov.uk/government/publications/pre-release-access-lists-for-road-traffic-speeds-and-congestion-series

All motor vehicle traffic	Billion vehicle miles/percentage														
	2011					2012					2013				
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Ann.	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Ann.	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Ann.
Provisional estimates at time of publication	76.7	75.8	76.2	77.3	305.8	76.5	74.6	75.0	76.7	302.6	75.4	76.9	77.1	77.6	306.4
Final estimates	76.3	75.4	75.7	76.4	303.8	76.5	74.6	75.3	76.2	302.6	75.0	76.0	76.2	76.5	303.7
Difference (%)	0.6	0.4	0.6	1.2	0.7	0.0	-0.1	-0.4	0.6	0.0	0.5	1.1	1.1	1.4	0.9