



Department for Transport

UK Port Freight Statistics: January to March 2017 (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 2017 will be published in September 2018, 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

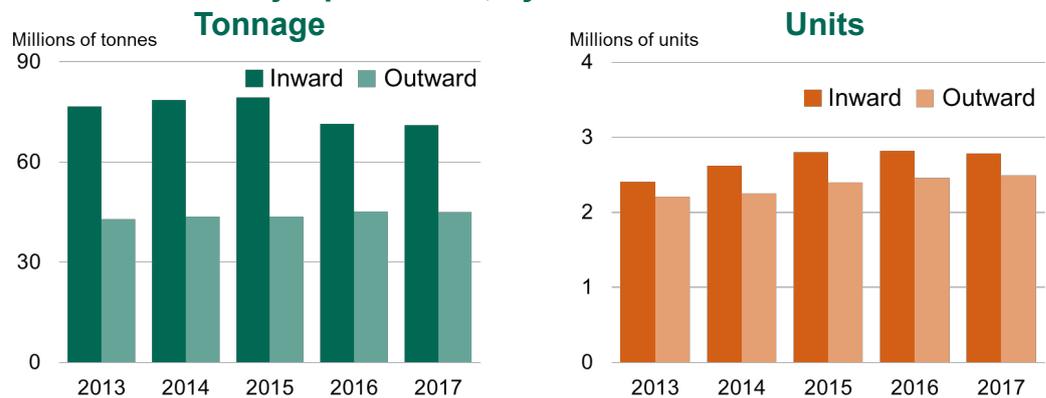
Ports handling over one million tonnes of freight per year and a small number of other key ports. Together these ports accounted for 98% of total UK port traffic in 2015.

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.

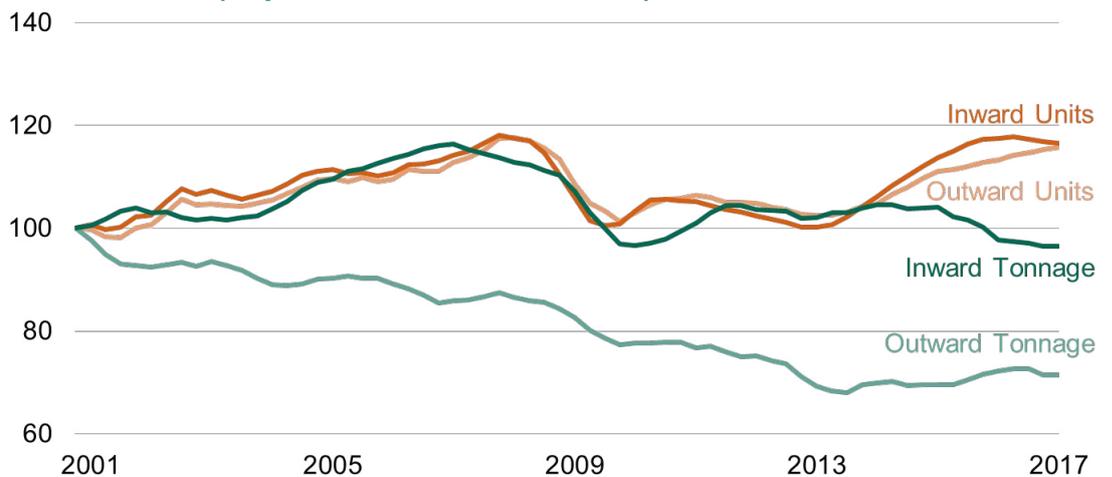
UK major ports handled 115.9 million tonnes of freight in the first quarter of 2017, 1% less than the same quarter in the previous year. The volume of unitised traffic remained similar to the first quarter last year at 5.3 million units.

Quarter 1 UK major port traffic, by direction: 2013 to 2017



In quarter 1 inward tonnage remained similar to the year before at 71.0 million tonnes and outward tonnage decreased by 1% to 44.9 million tonnes over the same period. Inward unitised traffic decreased by 1% to 2.8 million units while outward increased by 2% to 2.5 million.

Major port traffic indices, tonnage and units: rolling 4 quarter totals to March 2017 (4 quarters to Q4 2000 = 100)



The total tonnage handled in the four quarters to the first quarter of 2017 decreased by 1% to 472.7 million tonnes, compared to the previous four quarters. The volume of unitised traffic increased by 1% to 23.8 million units.

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 2016 and 2017 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, highlight anomalies.
- ▶ A small amount of data for the the first quarter of 2017 was not available at the time of publication and so was estimated based on recent activity. The volume comprises a small proportion, less than 1%, of the aggregate totals.

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 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 September 2017. It will contain provisional quarterly figures for the second quarter of 2017. Annual statistics on freight handled by UK sea ports are released in September. The final 2015 figures can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/port-freight-statistics-2015-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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