



**TRANSPORT
SCOTLAND**
CÒMHDHAIL ALBA

Scottish Transport Statistics 2021

Road Freight

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1. Introduction

1.1 This chapter provides information about road freight lifted by UK-registered heavy goods vehicles (HGVs: over 3.5 tonnes gross weight), such as the weight of goods lifted in Scotland by origin and destination, the lengths of haul, the destinations within the UK and Europe, and the types of commodity lifted.

1.2 A change in methodology by the Department for Transport (DfT) in 2003 Continuous Survey of Road Goods Transport has resulted in a discontinuity in the series. Therefore road freight transported *within* the UK from 2004 onwards is not comparable with earlier years. Revisions have also been made to figures for the years 2011 to 2016.

2. Main Points

Good Lifted and Distance

2.1 In 2020, an estimated 93.3 million tonnes of goods were lifted within Scotland by UK HGVs and transported to destinations within Scotland. About 11.9 million tonnes of goods from Scotland were delivered to destinations elsewhere in the UK, and around 15.6 million tonnes were brought into Scotland from elsewhere in the UK. In comparison, the volume of international road freight by UK HGVs travelling to and from Scotland is very small: less than 1 million tonnes in 2020. (*Table 3.1a and 3.1b*)

2.2 Most road freight journeys are 100 kilometres or less in length: 17% of tonnes lifted by road in Scotland in 2020 were carried a distance of no more than 25 kilometres, and 27% travelled over 50 km but no more than 100 km. The average journey distance, which is calculated by dividing the total tonne-kilometres by the total tonnes lifted, was 108 km. (*Table 3.2*)

Originating in Scotland

2.3 Goods moved on journeys originating in Scotland with a destination in Scotland accounted for around 7.5 billion tonne-kilometres in 2020. The overall total, including journeys with destinations elsewhere in the UK and abroad, was around 11.6 billion tonne-kms, a decrease of 18% on 2019. (*Table 3.3a*)

Entering Scotland

2.4 In 2020, 15.6 million tonnes of goods entered Scotland on UK HGVs from the rest of the UK. 97% of these came from England. Around 70 per cent of the goods entering came from the North West (33%), Yorkshire and Humber (23%) and North East (19%) regions of England. Fewer goods leave Scotland for other UK countries (12 million tonnes) than enter from them but the proportions going to and coming from different areas are similar (*Table 3.6*).

2.5 In 2020, 'food products including beverages and tobacco' was the largest single category of goods lifted in Scotland, which remained in Scotland, accounting for 18.8 million tonnes out of the total of 93.3 million tonnes. (*Table 3.4*)

Destination

2.6 In 2020, UK-registered HGVs carried an estimated 276 thousand tonnes of goods from Scotland to countries outwith the UK, and 158 thousand tonnes from foreign countries into Scotland. Of goods leaving Scotland for abroad, carried by UK road hauliers, 35% went to France and 11% to the Netherlands. (*Table 3.7*)

2.7 In 2020, around 4% of goods leaving the UK lifted by UK HGVs originated in Scotland. (*Table 3.5*)

2.8 Generally in the period from 2016 to 2020, goods transported by UK-registered HGVs within Scotland were on journeys that started and finished within the same region. The Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT) was the most active in terms of tonnage entering and leaving. There were 70 million tonnes on journeys within Scotland and 16 million of these were on journeys beginning in the SPT area (*Table 3.8*).



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