

February 2019

Northern Ireland Annual Coal Inquiry

Geographical Area: Northern Ireland
Theme: Economy
Frequency: Annual

Key Points

- In 2018, 1.661 million tonnes of coal and other solid fuels were shipped into Northern Ireland through the four main ports, which was 12% more than the 1.483 million tonnes imported in 2017.
- Approximately two thirds (66%) were imported for domestic or industrial use in 2018, and one third (34%) was for the generation of electricity. Imports for domestic or industrial use were at their highest level since 1997, while those for electricity generation were lower on only two previous occasions in the 31-year series (in 1988 and 2009).
- Although almost 60% above the lowest recorded in the series (1.055 million tonnes in 2009), the amount of coal and solid fuels imported in 2018 was still 40% below the 1995 high point (2.798 million tonnes).
- Following a 10-year period when tonnages for each were broadly similar, for the last two years the amount of coal and solid fuels imported annually for domestic or industrial use has been significantly higher than that imported for the generation of electricity. By contrast, between 1995 and 2006, coal imports for electricity generation were well above those for domestic or industrial use.

Notes

The Annual Coal Inquiry collects information on all coal and other solid fuels shipped into Northern Ireland each year, and the purpose for which it was imported: for domestic or industrial use, or for the generation of electricity. It covers all types of solid fuels including coal, anthracite, lignite, coke and manufactured smokeless fuels. Figures are inclusive of all sources of coal shipped (bulk cargo and containerised) to Northern Ireland, including cross channel and foreign imports.

The information is obtained by surveying all coal importing ports in Northern Ireland annually (in January to collect data for the previous year). This is a voluntary census and the response rate for 2018 was 100 per cent.

The latest publication presents statistics for the years 1988 to 2018. Splits for 'Domestic Use' and 'Industrial Use' are available up until 2014.

For further information contact:

Steven Roberts
Economic & Labour Market Statistics Branch
Colby House
Stranmillis Court
Belfast
BT9 5RR

Tel: (028) 9052 9897

Email: steven.roberts@nisra.gov.uk

Web: [NI Annual Coal Inquiry](#)

Twitter: [@ELMSNISRA](#)