

# Northern Ireland Ports Traffic 2014



Geographical Area: Northern Ireland  
Theme: Business  
Frequency: Annual

## Key points

- The total tonnage through Northern Ireland (NI) ports in 2014 was 25.1 million tonnes, compared to 25.3 million tonnes the previous year. Total freight traffic through United Kingdom (UK) ports in 2014 was 503.2 million tonnes, compared to 503.3 million tonnes the previous year.
- The total tonnage decreased to 15.7 million tonnes of inward traffic and increased to 9.3 million tonnes of outward traffic in Northern Ireland. For the UK as a whole, the inward traffic figure for 2014 decreased to 325.5 million tonnes and outward traffic increased to 177.7 million tonnes.
- The majority of total NI traffic came through the Belfast Port (67.0%), while Warrenpoint accounts for the second highest level of total traffic (11.4%), followed by 9.5% coming through the port of Larne. The most popular UK port was Grimsby & Immingham, which handled 11.8% of total UK port traffic in 2014.
- A total of 474,508 non-freight vehicles passed through Northern Ireland ports in 2014. This compared with a figure of 476,904 in 2013 – a decrease of 0.5%. Some 5,736,469 non-freight vehicles passed through the UK in 2014 – an increase of 2.4% on 2013.

## **Context**

The Department for Transport (DfT) collects and publishes statistics about passenger and freight traffic through the ports of the UK. The statistics in these releases are collected to provide information on trends and patterns in the handling of freight traffic at UK sea ports.

The importance of shipping and trade to the economy of the UK, an island nation, has resulted in the establishment of a large number of ports around the coast, which are very diverse in terms of size and type of cargo handled. Around 95 per cent by volume of the UK's international trade is transported by sea, and at least until recently, the UK port sector handled a greater weight of goods than any other in Europe.

Statistics on UK port traffic (2014) are available on the DfT Statistics website:

### [UK Port Freight Statistics 2014](#)

Following publication of the detailed final annual release by DfT, statisticians within the Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency analyse the data which relate to Northern Ireland ports and release this information as the 'Northern Ireland Ports Traffic' publication in November each year.

The Northern Ireland Ports Traffic publication provides statistics on passenger and freight traffic through Northern Ireland ports. Full details including information on quality and methodology can be found in the Ports Traffic section of the NISRA-ELMS website:

### [NI Ports Traffic - further information](#)

**This Ports Traffic report contains the following chapters:**

- 1. Goods through principal ports**
- 2. Non-freight vehicles**
- 3. Further information**
- 4. Index of tables**

### **National Statistics**

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods, and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

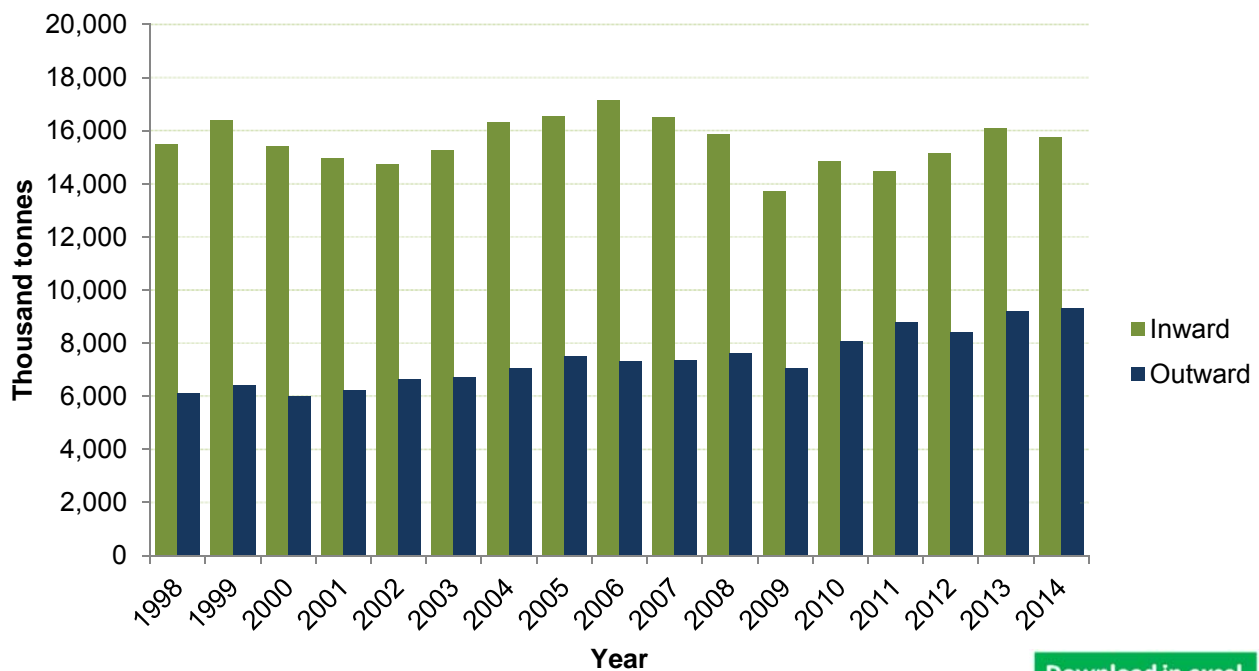
# 1

## Goods through principal ports

### Key points

- The total tonnage through Northern Ireland ports in 2014 was 25.1 million tonnes
- This represented a decrease of 1.0% on the figure of 25.3 million tonnes for 2013
- In 2014, the majority of total NI traffic came through the Belfast Port (67.0%)

Figure 1: Total inward and outward traffic for Northern Ireland, 1998-2014



[Download in excel](#)

The total tonnage through Northern Ireland ports in 2014 was 25.1 million tonnes, which:

- comprised 15.7 million tonnes of inward traffic and 9.3 million tonnes of outward traffic.
- represented a decrease of 1.0% on the figure of 25.3 million tonnes in 2013, which comprised 16.1 million tonnes of inward traffic and 9.2 million tonnes of outward traffic.
- was the first recorded decrease over the year since 2009, when it decreased by 11.5%.

Of all NI ports in 2014:

- the majority of total traffic came through the Belfast Port (67.0%), with the remainder coming through Warrenpoint (11.4%), Larne (9.5%), Londonderry (7.2%) and other minor ports (4.8%).
- the majority of inward traffic came through the Belfast Port (65.4%), with 10.7% through Londonderry, 9.5% through Warrenpoint, 8.1% through Larne and the remainder through other minor ports (6.2%).

- 69.6% of outward traffic came through the Belfast Port, with 14.7% through Warrenpoint, 11.8% through Larne and the remainder through Londonderry (1.1%) and other minor ports (2.4%).

In 2014, total freight traffic through UK ports was 503.2 million tonnes, which

- was broadly similar to the figure in 2013 (503.3 million tonnes).
- was some 13.9% below the peak in the series in 2005 (584.5 million tonnes).
- comprised 325.5 million tonnes of inward traffic, a decrease of 0.1% since 2013.
- comprised 177.7 million tonnes of outward traffic, an increase of 0.2% since 2013.

Of all UK ports in 2014:

- Grimsby and Immingham was the UK's leading port, handling 59.4 million tonnes (11.8% of UK traffic), followed by London with 44.5 million tonnes (8.8%), Tees and Hartlepool with 39.5 million tonnes (7.9%) and Southampton with 36.7 million tonnes (7.3%).
- Peterhead (41.8%) and Great Yarmouth (35.2%) experienced the largest percentage increase in total traffic of all major UK ports, although the total tonnage for 2014 (1.4 and 1.1 million tonnes respectively) was relatively small compared to the leading ports.

## 2

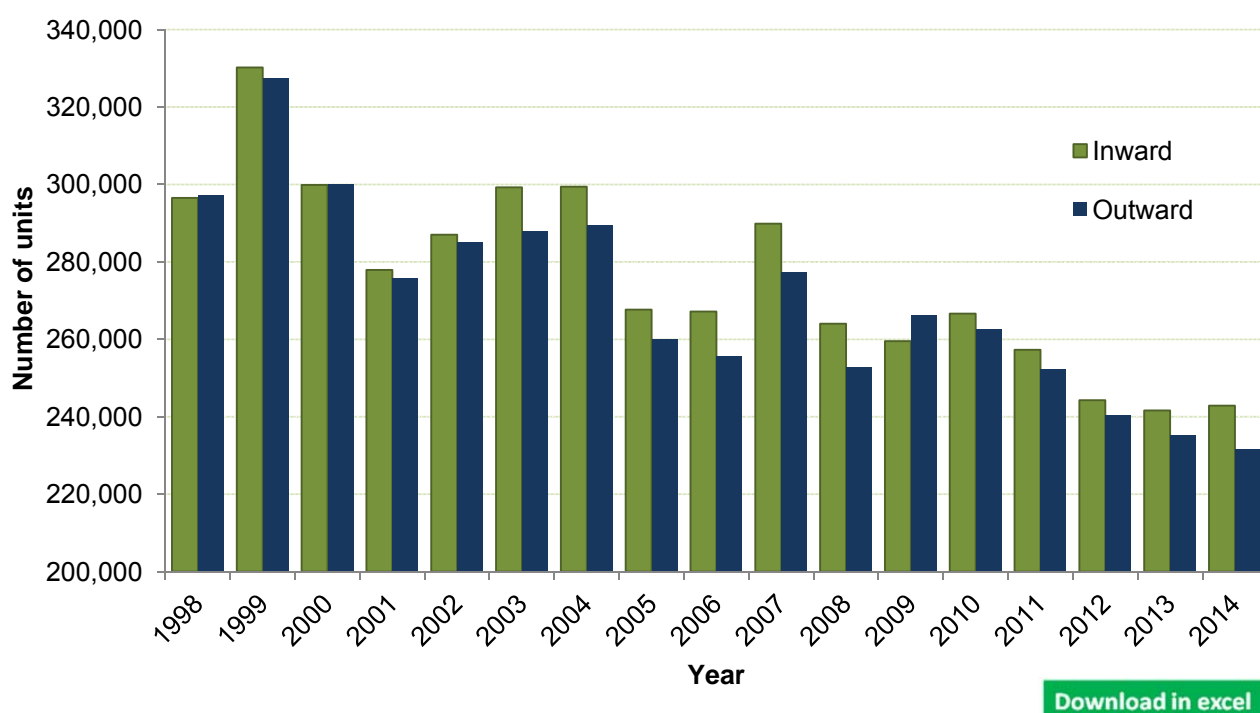
# Non-freight vehicles

Non-freight vehicles include passenger cars, motorcycles and accompanying trailers / caravans and passenger buses.

### Key points

- Nearly half a million non-freight vehicles passed through NI ports
- Belfast accounted for nearly two thirds of the traffic
- Dover still the most popular UK port

Figure 2: Unit load carrier non-freight vehicles - Northern Ireland, 1998-2014



A total of 474,508 non-freight vehicles passed through Northern Ireland ports in 2014, of which:

- 242,862 vehicles were inward traffic and 231,646 left NI.
- the majority passed through the Belfast Port (63.2%), while the remainder passed through Larne Port (36.8%)

A total of 5,736,469 non-freight vehicles passed through UK ports in 2014, which:

- represented an increase of 2.4% on 2013 figures.
- comprised 2,835,388 inward traffic and 2,901,081 outward traffic vehicles.
- mostly passed through Dover, which accounted for 2,509,211 vehicles or 43.7% of the total UK non-freight vehicle traffic, making it the most popular UK port for non-freight vehicles.

# 3

## Further information

Port freight traffic statistics are based on a combination of data reported to the DfT by port authorities and shipping lines or their agents. Prior to 2000, reporting was by port authorities only.

In January 2000, an EC Maritime Statistics Directive (Council Directive 95/64/EC on statistical returns in respect of the carriage of goods and passengers by sea, recast as Directive 2009/42/EC) was implemented in the UK. This required a complete overhaul of data collection methods. The information in this report has been shown as far as possible on the same or similar basis as previously published, but it should be noted that the different collection system for freight traffic has resulted in some discontinuities in the data series between 2000-2014 and previous years.

Under the Directive, information is required quarterly on foreign and domestic tonnages and freight units, for major ports (i.e. those that have over one million tonnes of freight per annum), by route, flag and cargo type. Much less information is required for smaller ports. Most of the detailed freight information is collected from shipping lines, operators and shipping agents, because the detailed route and ship flag information required by the Directive is only generally available from them. The ports supply more limited information quarterly and annually, which is used to provide control totals and also to publish more timely provisional results.

A technical note, published by the Department for Transport, provides further information on the current and previous data collection systems, and explains the methods and quality standards implemented in the DfT Port Freight Statistics publication, and the Northern Ireland Ports Traffic publication. It is available at:

[A guide to DfT maritime statistics](#)

### Contact information

If you require further information about the figures contained in this publication or the accompanying tables, please contact:

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The next Northern Ireland Ports Traffic bulletin, including estimates for 2015, will be published in November 2016.

The following tables containing Northern Ireland Ports Traffic data for 1998-2014 can be found on the website:

**Table 1** - Tonnage of goods through the principal ports in Northern Ireland

**Table 2** - Unit load carrier cross channel traffic

**Table 3** - Unit load carrier foreign traffic

**Table 4** - Unit load carrier total traffic

**Table 5** - Other traffic (cross channel, foreign and total)

**Table 6** - Unit load carrier traffic non-freight vehicles

### Notes and definitions:

Tables 1-5 give tonnage of goods through the ports and exclude weights of containers and weights of materials shipped for dumping at sea.

### Inward traffic

Inward traffic refers to all goods taken into Northern Ireland from Great Britain and elsewhere through the Northern Ireland ports. Northern Ireland is not necessarily the ultimate destination for these goods.

### Outward traffic

Outward traffic covers all goods taken out through Northern Ireland ports, destined for Great Britain or for foreign countries. The origin of the goods is not necessarily in Northern Ireland.