



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

STATISTICS, DOCUMENT

# Road freight: 2023

Data about imports and exports to and from Wales that were carried by road using UK registered heavy goods vehicles during 2023.

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# Introduction

Wales road freight statistics include information about imports, exports, goods lifted, and goods carried to and from Wales that are transported by road using UK registered heavy goods vehicles (HGVs). Data is provided by the Department for Transport (DfT).

## **DfT changed data collection methods for domestic road freight statistics**

from a paper-based to online survey midway through 2021. As a result, data pre-July 2021 and online data, from July 2021 onwards should not be compared. International road freight data have not been affected.

More information is available in [DfT's methodology note](#).

# Main points

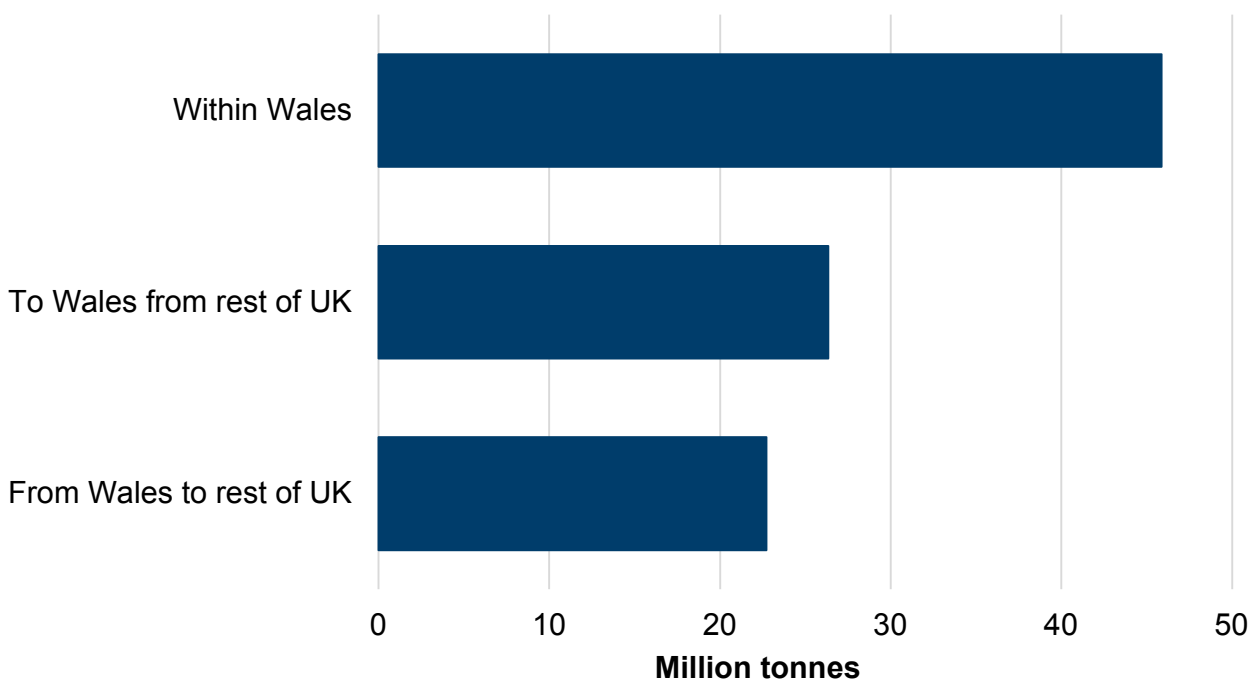
In 2023 a total of 95.0 million tonnes (Mt) of goods were lifted in Wales by UK registered HGVs, which is a 12% decrease from 107.7Mt in 2022. Of this total:

- 45.9Mt of goods were carried by road within Wales, which is a 15% decrease on last year; the largest goods category was 'metal ore and other mining and quarrying' that made up 24% of total goods carried within Wales
- 26.4Mt of goods entered Wales from the rest of the UK, which is an 8% increase on last year; the largest category of this was 'grouped goods' (a mixture of types of goods which are transported together) that made up 25% of inward goods
- 22.7Mt of goods were carried from Wales to the rest of the UK, which is a 22% decrease on last year; the largest category of this was 'grouped goods' that made up 25% of outwards goods
- 406,000 tonnes (0.41Mt) of goods were transported between Wales and the

## EU by road in 2023

The decrease in freight was partly driven by the timing of the 2023 domestic road freight haulage survey, explained in detail in [DfT's Domestic road freight statistics, United Kingdom: 2023 publication](#).

**Figure 1: Goods lifted by road within, to and from Wales by UK registered HGVs, 2023 [Note 1]**



Description of Figure 1: A bar chart showing the weight of goods lifted by road within, to and from Wales by UK registered HGVs in 2023.

[Note 1] Goods lifted is defined as the weight of goods carried, measured in tonnes. This is a measure of the total amount of goods transported within the UK by GB-registered HGVs.

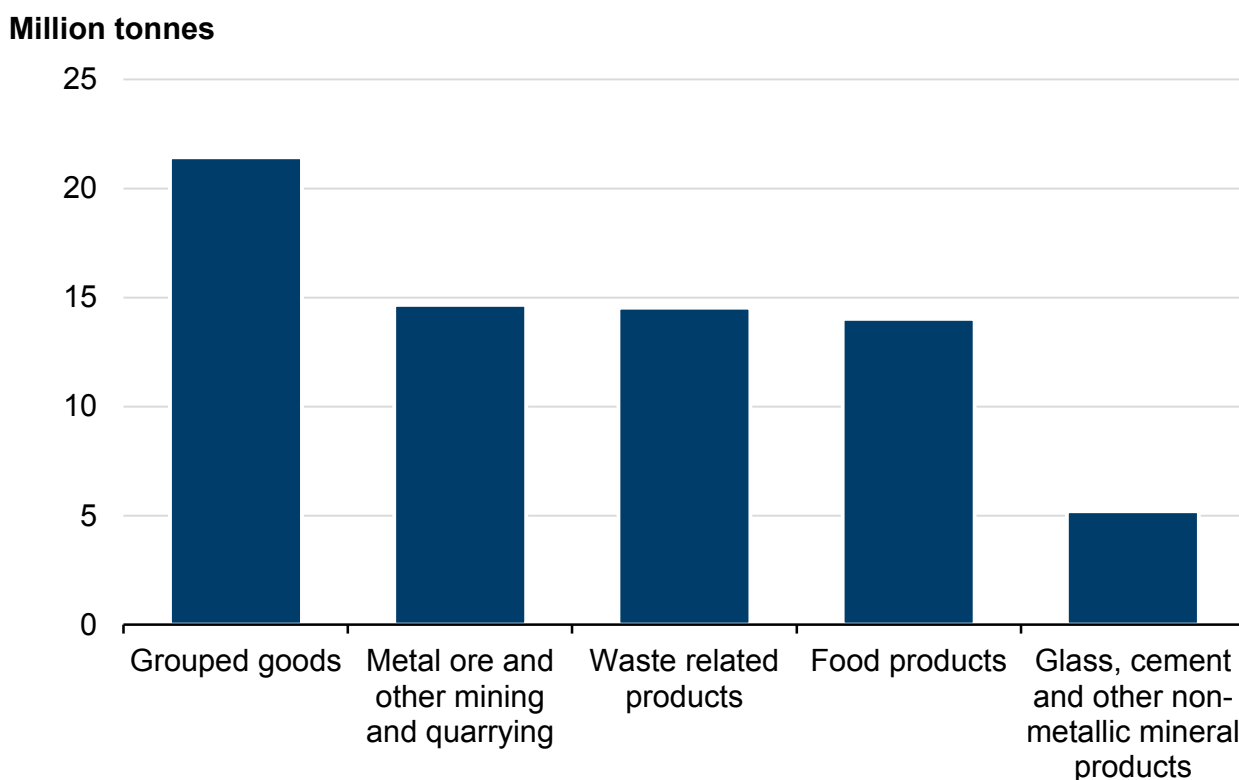
Source: DfT road freight data

## Commodity groups

Figure 2 shows the top 5 commodity groups that were carried by HGVs in Wales in 2023. Grouped goods registered the highest at 21.4Mt of weight followed by Metal ore (14.7Mt). Food products accounted for 15% of goods carried by HGVs in Wales over the same period.

More details on commodity groups can be accessed from [DfT publication Road Freight Statistics Notes and Definition \(pages 17 to 18\)](#).

**Figure 2: Commodities group carried (by weight) by UK registered HGVs in Wales, 2023 [Note 1]**



Description of Figure 2: A column chart showing the weight of goods carried by HGVs for the five greatest commodity groups in Wales in 2023.

[Note 1] Grouped goods: a mixture of types of goods which are transported together

Source: DfT road freight data

## UK destinations 2023

This section looks at domestic activity of GB-registered HGVs by the amount road freight lifted and moved within UK to and from Wales.

### Main points

- In 2023, 76% of goods lifted by road in Wales, went to destinations within Wales.
- Of goods transported (goods lifted) from Wales to other parts of the UK, 24% went to the South West of England, 23% to the West Midlands and 19% to the North West of England (Figure 3). These regions accounted for a total of 66% of goods transported from Wales to the rest of the UK.
- The same three regions accounted for 68% of goods transported into Wales from the rest of the UK. 27% came from the West Midlands, 25% from the South West of England and 17% from the North West of England.
- In 2023, of the 9.6 billion tonne kilometres of goods moved to and from Wales, 47% of the total goods moved left Wales for other UK countries and regions and 53% of goods moved entered Wales.

# Definitions

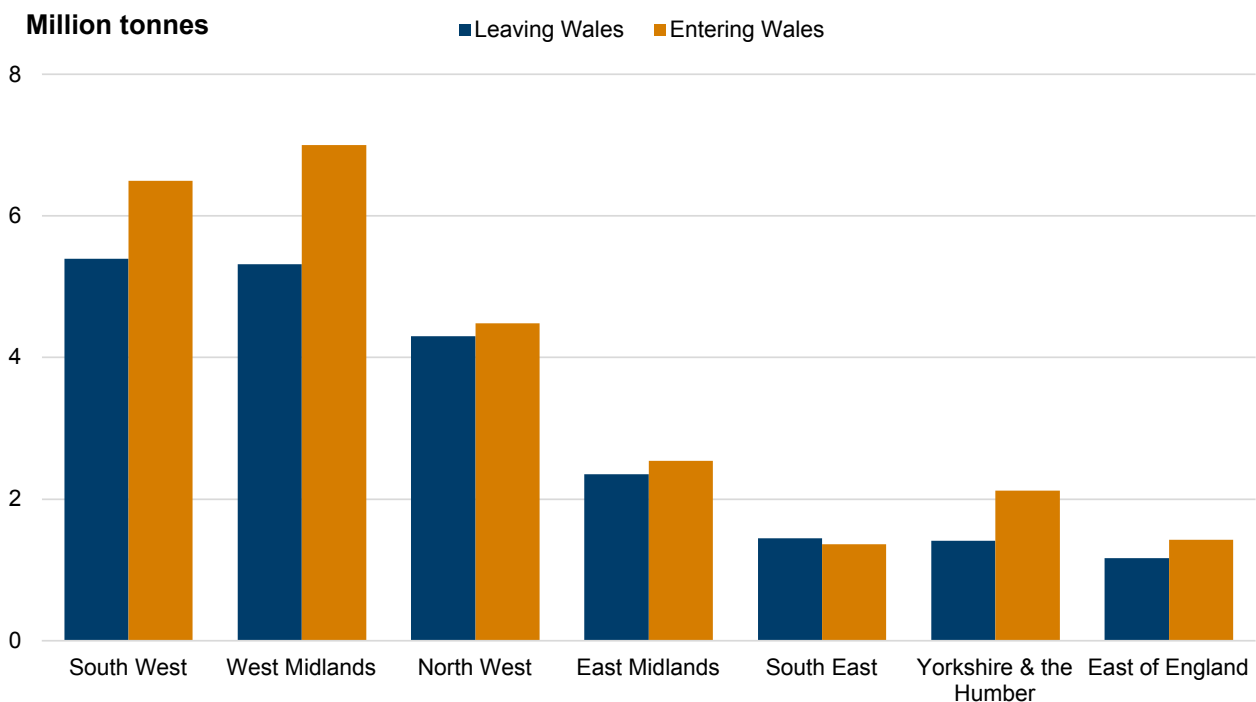
## Goods moved

The weight of goods carried multiplied by the distance hauled, measured in tonne kilometres. This is a measure of the overall activity within the UK by GB-registered HGVs, accounting for both the distance travelled by each vehicle and the weight of its load.

## Goods lifted

The weight of goods carried, measured in tonnes. This is a measure of the total amount of goods transported within the UK by GB-registered HGVs. [Notes and definitions for Road Freight \(DfT\)](#).

**Figure 3: Goods transported (goods lifted) carried by HGVs between Wales and UK regions, 2023 [Note 1] [Note 2]**



Description of Figure 3: A column chart showing direction of domestic road freight by UK region and Wales in 2023.

[Note 1] Goods lifted is defined as the weight of goods carried, measured in tonnes. This is a measure of the total amount of goods transported within the UK by GB-registered HGVs.

[Note 2] Northern Ireland and Scotland data are suppressed due to small sample sizes

Source: DfT road freight data

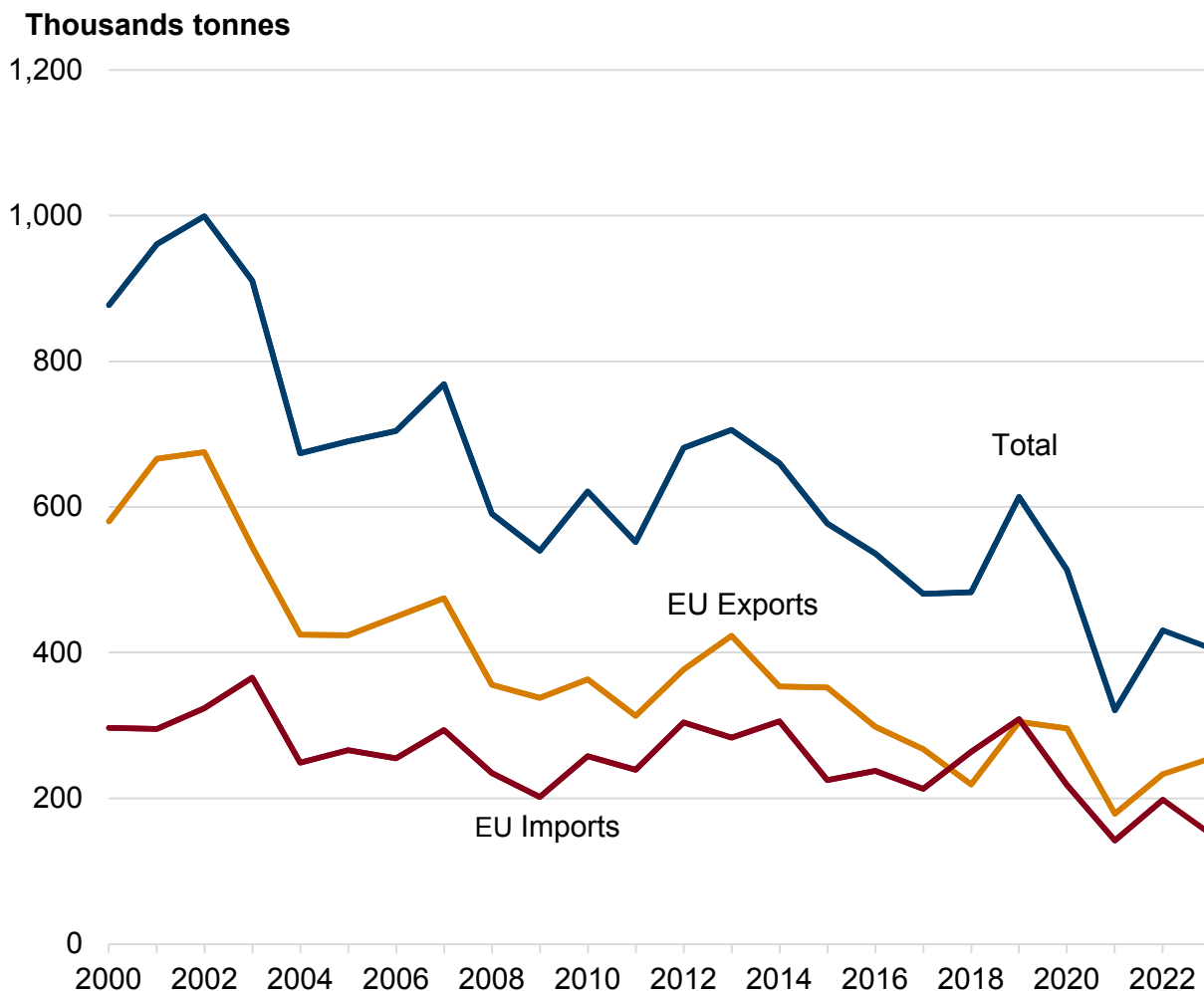


## European Union (EU) Destinations 2023

406,000 tonnes (0.41Mt) of goods were transported between Wales and the EU by road in 2023 (Figure 4).

For the EU as a whole, the combined total of imports and exports of goods carried by road decreased by 6% in 2023 compared to 2022. The total weight of goods transported by HGV between Wales and EU destinations declined between 2019 and 2023 and remains lower than 2019 levels. These statistics cover a period which was likely impacted by both the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, as well as the UK's exit from the EU.

**Figure 4: Road freight (by weight) carried by HGVs between Wales and EU, 2000 to 2023**



Description of Figure 4: A line chart showing the trend in road freight (by weight) carried by HGVs between Wales and the EU from 2000 to 2023.

Source: DfT Road Freight data

51% of Welsh tonnage carried by road from and to the EU was loaded/unloaded in Belgium, Luxembourg or Germany in 2023. The combined total of imports and

exports of goods carried by road to and from these countries increased by 15% in 2023, but remain 18% below 2019 levels.

## Contact details

Statistician: Oscar Carrel

Email: [stats.transport@gov.wales](mailto:stats.transport@gov.wales)

Media: 0300 025 8099

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