

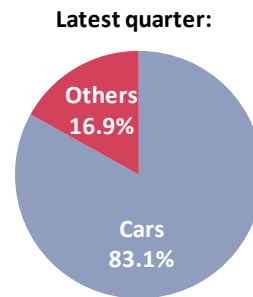
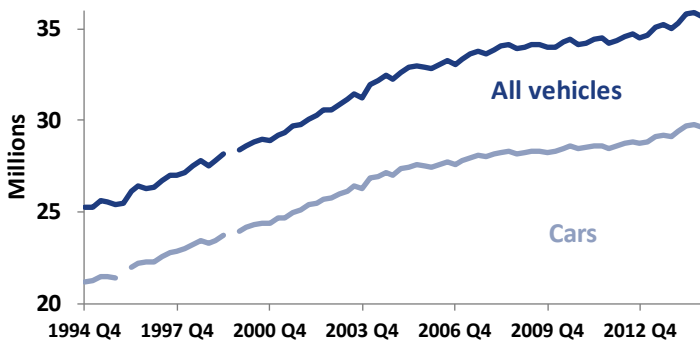


# Vehicle Licensing Statistics: Quarter 4 (Oct - Dec) 2014

At the end of December 2014 there were 35.6 million vehicles licensed for use on the road in Great Britain

This is a 1.7% increase on quarter 4 2013, the biggest quarter 4 year-on-year increase since quarter 4 2007. At the end of 2014 there were 598 thousand more vehicles licensed than at the end of 2013.

Licensed vehicles in GB: Q2 1994 - Q4 2014 [\[veh0101\]](#)



## About this release

This release presents the latest statistics on licensed motor vehicles. It is part of the [Vehicle Statistics](#) series. Detailed [data tables](#) are available from the web site.

It is based on administrative data held by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA).

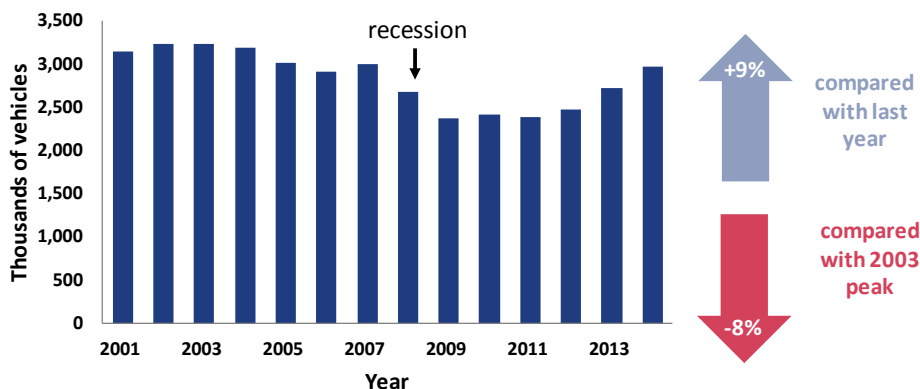
Except where otherwise stated, the statistics all refer to Great Britain. However, the series has been expanded to cover UK data.

For further details please refer to the Background Information section below and the separate [Technical Notes](#).

2.97 million vehicles were registered for the first time in Great Britain during 2014

This was 9% up on the previous year, but 8% lower than in the peak year of 2003.

Vehicles registered for the first time, GB: 2001-2014 [\[veh0150\]](#)



## In this publication

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## General Context

The number of licensed vehicles and number of vehicles registered for the first time are influenced by the general economic climate in Britain and further afield. New registrations have only recently returned to the level before the 2008-9 recession began, so the licensed vehicle stock, while continuing to grow, have been growing more slowly than before the recession.

New car registrations across the European Union as a whole increased by 5.6% in 2014 according to the European Automobile Manufacturers' Association. Of the only major EU markets, only Spain showed a higher growth than the UK. The UK was the second largest new car market in Europe in 2014, after Germany. The UK accounted for 20% of new cars registered in the EU in 2014, compared with 19% in 2013 and 17% in 2012.

## Licensed vehicle numbers

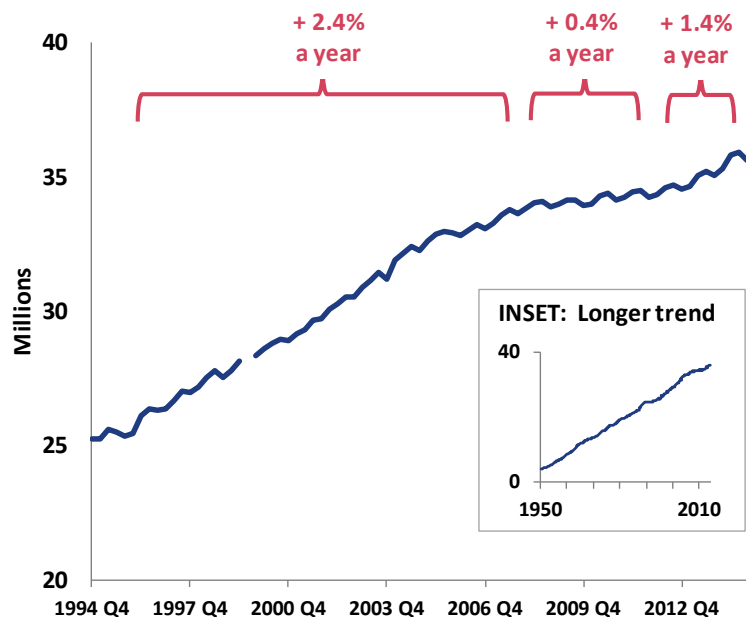
**At the end of 2014 there were 35.6 million vehicles licensed for use on the roads in Great Britain, of which 29.6 million were cars.**

The total number of licensed vehicles has increased in every year since the end of the Second World War except 1991.

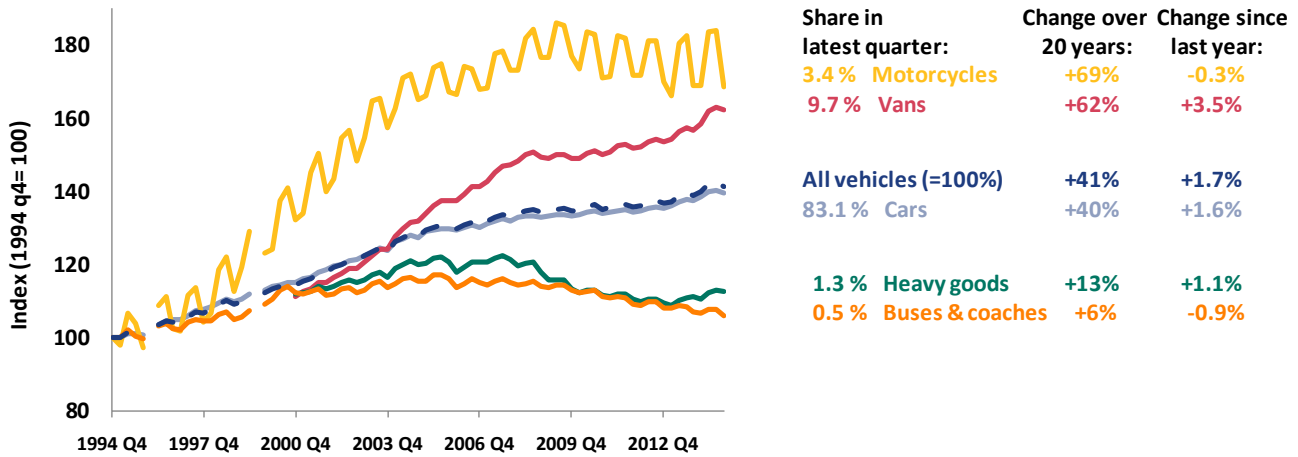
Between 1996 and 2007, the annual growth in licensed vehicles averaged 2.4% a year, although from the mid-2000s it had already begun to slow somewhat.

Following the recession of 2008-9 it slowed further, but did not stop, averaging 0.4% a year between 2008 and 2011. Since 2012, the average growth has been 1.4%.

Licensed vehicles in GB: Q4 1994-Q4 2014



## Licensed vehicles by type, GB: Q4 1994 - Q4 2014



The recent increases in vehicle numbers have been driven largely by cars and vans.

The numbers of **licensed cars** increased by 1.6% between quarter 4 2013 and quarter 4 2014, the fastest quarter 4 rate of growth since 2005.

**Van** numbers were up 3.5% over the same period, representing the third consecutive quarter with a year-on-year increase above 3%, a growth rate not achieved since 2008.

**Motorcycle** numbers fell by 0.3% over the last year, and are now 5% lower than at the end of 2009.

Since the end of 1994, the number of licensed cars in Great Britain has increased by 40%, while the number of vans has increased by 62% and the number of motorcycles by 69%.

The numbers of heavy goods vehicles (HGV) and buses and coaches have both fallen since 2007.

The number of **HGVs** in quarter 4 2014 was 1.1% up on the same quarter of the previous year, but remained 8% below the peak in 2007. However, there is some evidence of hauliers using fewer, larger HGVs (and more large vans), so this reduction in numbers does not necessarily indicate a fall in road freight carrying capacity.

The number of **buses and coaches** fell by 0.9% compared with quarter 4 2013, continuing an eight year decline. There are now 10% fewer buses and coaches than in 2005, when the number peaked.

### Tables

Detailed vehicle stock statistical tables updated this year are:-

All vehicles types: [VEH0101 to 0130](#)

Cars: [VEH0202 to 0221](#)

Motorcycles: [VEH0301, 0303, 0306 to 0311 and 0341](#)

Light Vans: [VEH0402 to 0411](#)

HGVs: [VEH0504 to 0525](#)

Buses & Coaches: [VEH0601 to 0611](#)

**2.97 million vehicles were registered for the first time in Great Britain in 2014.**

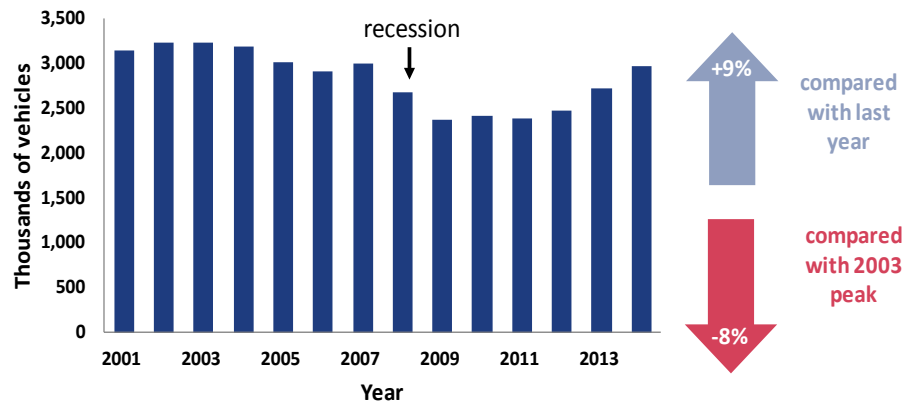
This was the highest annual total since 2007, but still 8% below the peak year of 2003 (when there were 3.23 million registrations).

The economic downturn from late 2008 affected the new registration figures from then onwards, but a downward trend was already apparent before that.

The new registration figure for October to December 2014 was the highest quarter 4 figure since 2003. It was just 1% below the highest quarter 4 total in 2002.

A 'Vehicle Scrappage Scheme' for cars and vans helped to boost first registrations between May 2009 and April 2010, and may also have had the side effect of slightly depressing registrations briefly either side of this period if prospective buyers changed their plans to take advantage of the scheme.

Vehicles registered for the first time, GB: 2001-2014



### Tables

Detailed new registrations statistical tables updated this year are:-

All vehicles types: [VEH0150 to 0170](#)

Cars: [VEH0252 to 0261](#)

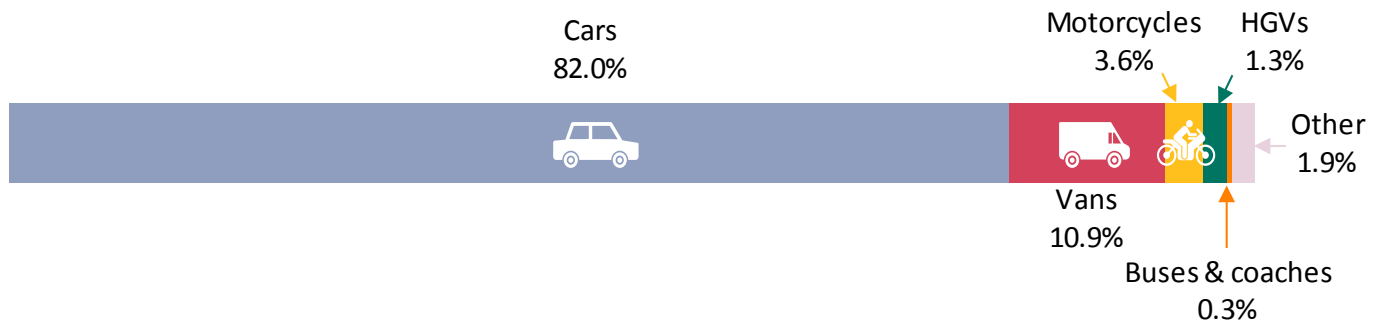
Motorcycles: [VEH0323 and 0324](#)

Light Vans: [VEH0452 to 0454](#)

HGVs: [VEH0554 and 0556](#)

Buses & Coaches: [VEH0651 and 0654](#)

### New registrations in Great Britain in 2014, by vehicle type



The charts to the right show indexed trends in new registrations for each major vehicle type, on the same scale. The impact of the recession in late 2008 and 2009 can be seen.

The number of **cars** registered for the first time in quarter 4 2014 was up 11% on quarter 4 2013, at 515 thousand. The last thirty two months have seen a sustained period of growth. The shorter surge in car registrations during 2010 reflects the effect of the vehicle scrappage scheme mentioned above.

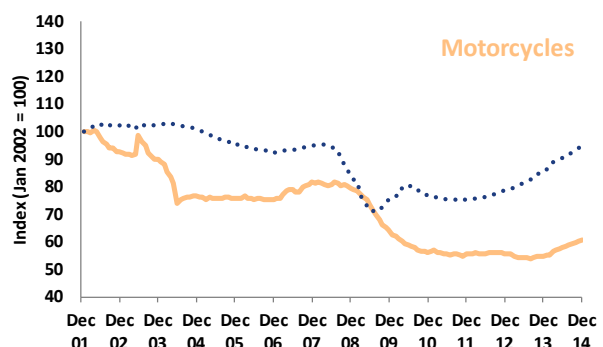
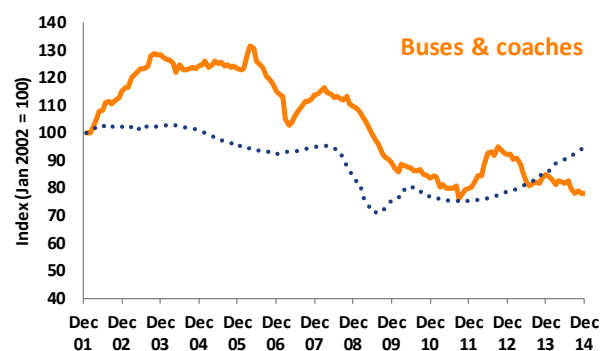
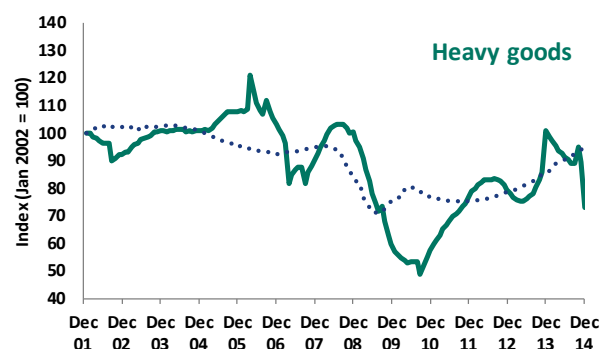
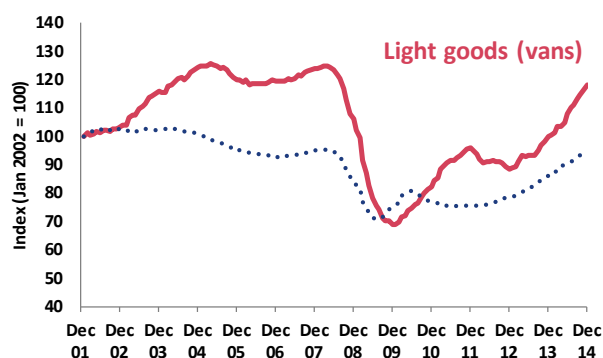
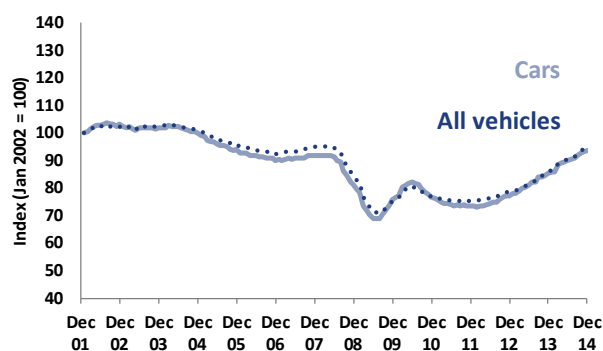
The number of **vans** registered for the first time in quarter 4 2014 was up 20% on quarter 4 2013, at 80 thousand. The last twenty four months have seen sustained year-on-year growth exceeding that of cars. The recession had a relatively bigger impact on both van and HGV registrations than those of other vehicles.

The number of **HGVs** registered for the first time in quarter 4 2014 was down 39% on quarter 4 2013, at 13 thousand. This reflects a rush to register new vehicles before new environmental standards (Euro 6) came in in January 2014. More generally HGV registrations have increased from a low point following the recession, but remain below pre-recession levels.

New **bus and coach** registrations increased relatively rapidly up to 2003. While they dropped off less sharply than those of vans or HGVs at the the onset of the recession, they have also not shown a sustained recovery since, and at 2 thousand in quarter 4 2014 were 0.8% up on quarter 4 2013.

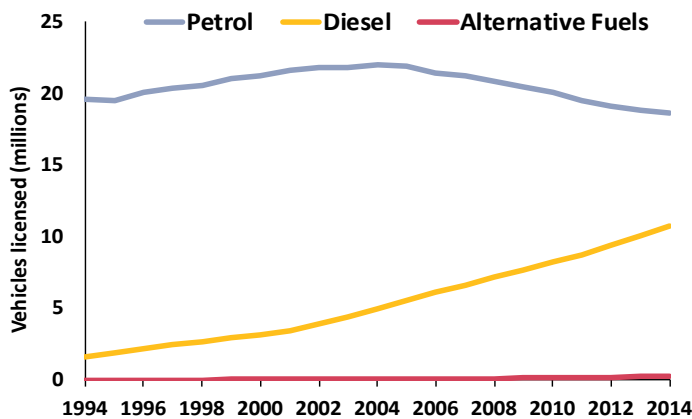
New registrations of **motorcycles** fell relatively rapidly in the first few years of the last decade, before levelling off. The onset of the recession saw a further decrease, followed by another period of relative stability. The total of 20 thousand new registrations in quarter 4 2014 was up 11% on quarter 4 2013.

**Vehicles registered for first time, by vehicle type:**  
**GB, 2001 - Dec 2014.**  
**12-month rolling averages (index Jan 2002=100)**



A range of factors have been driving changes in the fuel type, efficiency and emissions of the vehicle fleet. There are financial benefits to motorists who switch to cars with smaller engine sizes or lower emissions. Cars with lower carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions fall in cheaper Vehicle Excise Duty (car tax) bands. Cars with smaller engines and / or cars which use diesel rather than petrol tend to have better fuel efficiency, and are therefore cheaper to run. In addition, legally binding EU-wide CO<sub>2</sub> emission targets for manufacturers give them added incentives to bring lower emission vehicles to the market.

### Licensed cars by propulsion type, GB 1994 - 2014



The proportion of the licensed car fleet that is made up of diesel and alternative fuel vehicles has continued to grow.

By quarter 4 2014 there were 10.7 million **diesel** cars, accounting for 36.2% of the total, up from only 7.4% in 1994. There were only 248 thousand **alternative fuel** cars licensed by December 2014, but this was up 20% over the year.

In total, 6,121 new **ultra low emission vehicles** (ULEVs) were registered for the first time in the United Kingdom in quarter 4 2014, up 422% from 1,173 in the fourth quarter of 2013. Most of this increase has been due to vehicles eligible for plug-in car and van grants.

During 2014, there were 15,869 new ULEVs registered for the first time up 264% from 4,359 during 2013.

### Tables

Detailed propulsion statistical tables updated this year are:-

Cars: [VEH0203 and 0253](#)

Light Vans: [VEH0403 and 0453](#)

### What are alternative fuel vehicles?

Alternative fuel vehicles are those able to use a range of alternatives to purely petrol or diesel fuel, including gas, electricity, or a combination such as gas bi-fuel and hybrid electric.

### What are Ultra Low Emission Vehicles?

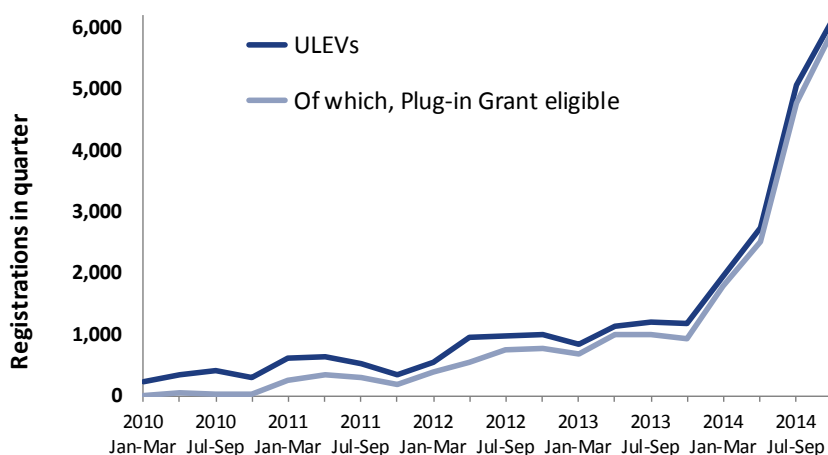
Ultra low emission vehicles are those with emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> below 75 g/km, or fully electrically powered.

### What are plug-in grants?

Plug-in car and van grants were introduced in January 2011 and February 2012 respectively.

These grants are designed to provide 25% of the cost of a car (up to £5,000) or 20% of the cost of a van (up to £8,000) for qualifying models - see [Plug-in car and van grants](#) for further details.

## New Ultra Low Emission & electric vehicles, UK 2010 - Q4 2014



### Tables

Detailed environment statistical tables updated this year are:-

ULEV: [VEH0130 and 0170](#)

CO<sub>2</sub> cars: [VEH0206 and 0256](#)

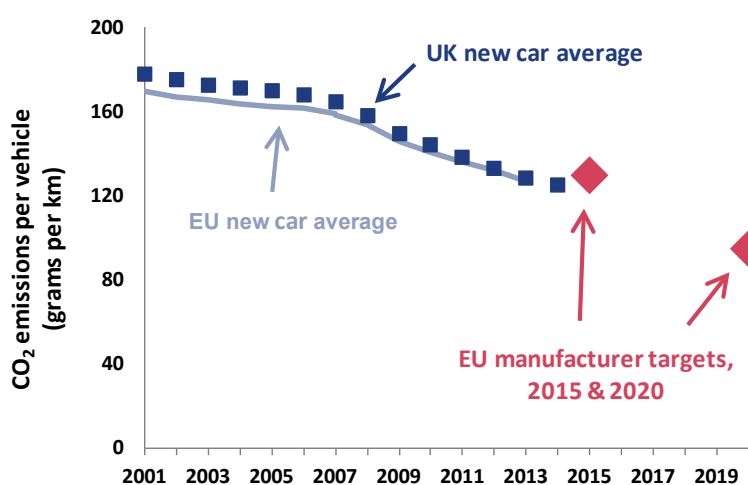
The number of newly registered ultra low emissions vehicles is one of the Department for Transport's [input and impact indicators](#).

The 2014 quarter 4 registrations included 5,715 cars and 227 vans of models that were eligible for these grants, 531% up on the same quarter of 2013. This growth is being influenced by new models coming into the market, and increasingly, competitive pricing. The models accounting for the most registrations in the latest quarter were the Mitsubishi Outlander with 2,626 and the Nissan Leaf with 1,080. The number of privately owned ULEVs newly registered in quarter 4 2014 was 2,206, up from 364 in the same quarter of 2013.

In quarter 4 2014, 37% of all licensed cars fell into one of the lowest five **Vehicle Excise Duty** bands (A to E, up to 140 g/km), compared with under 1% in 2001.

The average CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from cars newly registered in 2014 quarter 4 fell by 3.0% from 2013 quarter 4 to an average figure of 123 g/km. Since 2001 the average emissions of new cars has fallen by 31%.

## New car CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, UK 2001 - Q4 2014



### What are VED bands?

Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) is charged on vehicles registered in the UK.

For cars licensed after March 2001, VED is charged in bands on the basis of their CO<sub>2</sub> emissions - see [Vehicle Tax Rate Tables](#) for further details.

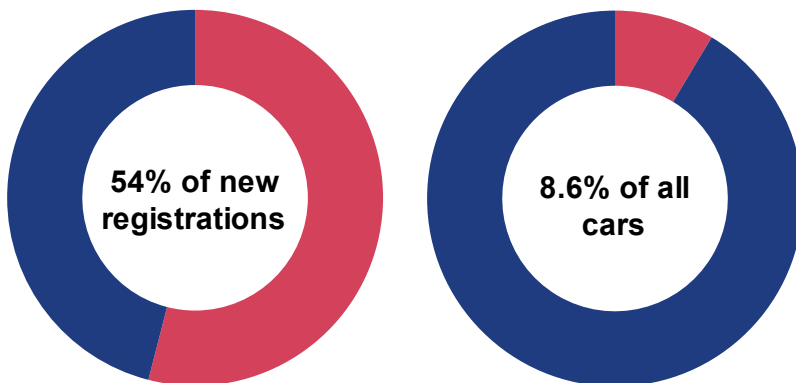
Average new CO<sub>2</sub> emissions is one of the Department for Transport's [input and impact indicators](#).



## Cars and their owners

The commercial fleet and company car market continues to be the primary driver of first registrations. In 2014, 54% of all car first registrations were made by companies. However, the proportion of company registered cars in the whole of the licensed car stock was much lower, at only 8.6%. This indicates that cars tend to move quite swiftly from the company market to the private market.

### In 2014, company registered cars accounted for:



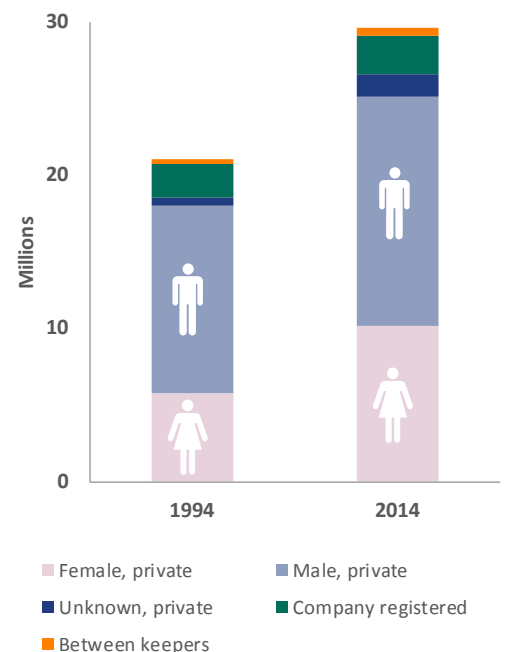
The percentage of company registered cars in the fleet is up slightly from a minimum of 8.1% in 2010, having previously declined from a peak of 10.5% in 1997.

The number of female registered keepers of cars has increased by 75% since 1994, compared with an increase of only 23% in male keepers. Women now account for about 40% of registered keepers of privately registered cars.

### Who is a registered keeper?

Every registered vehicle, unless it is in the process of changing hands, has a registered keeper, whose details are held by DVLA. Aggregated, anonymised information extracted from the keeper details can provide useful pointers to how the vehicle fleet is being used, although it must be borne in mind that the registered keeper of a vehicle is not always the person who uses it, and the vehicle is not always based at the keeper's contact address. This is particularly true for company or fleet vehicles.

### Cars by registered keeper, GB



It is estimated that there were roughly 8.0 million transfers of keepership of used vehicles during 2014. It is not possible to identify the precise reason for the transfer of keepership from the DVLA data, but a significant majority of these transfers will be second-hand vehicle sales. About 6.8 million of these transactions were for cars, with over 6.0 million cars changing hands at least once during the year, including almost 0.7 million which changed hands more than once.



## Makes and models of cars

At the end of December 2014 in Great Britain:

Ford accounted for 15% of all cars and Vauxhall for 12%.

The top five makes (Ford, Vauxhall, Volkswagen, Peugeot and Renault) accounted for 46% of all licensed cars in Great Britain.

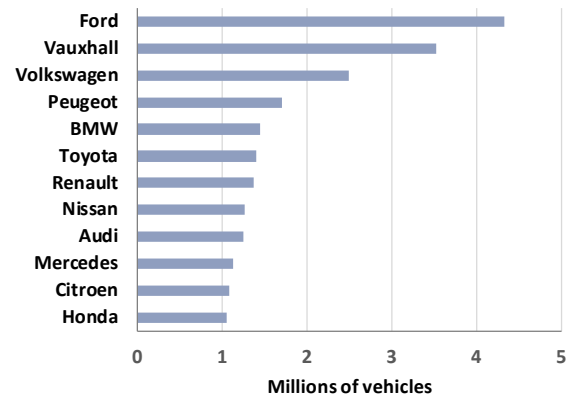
There were twelve **makes** with over 1 million cars each on the road, and together these accounted for 74% of all licensed cars.

The **most common car model** was the Ford Focus (1.5 million) followed by the Ford Fiesta (1.4 million), a situation unchanged from the year before.

The Ford Fiesta was the most common **new registration** in 2014 with 129 thousand registered for the first time. This was followed by the Ford Focus with 83 thousand, the Vauxhall Corsa with 81 thousand and Volkswagen Golf with 75 thousand.

Ford, Vauxhall, Volkswagen, Audi and BMW accounted for 45% of the new car registrations in 2014.

Licensed cars, top 12 makes, GB: Q4 2014

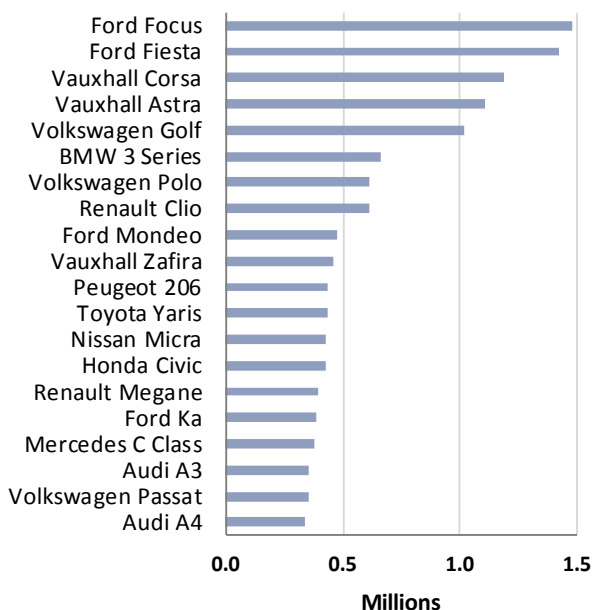


### Tables

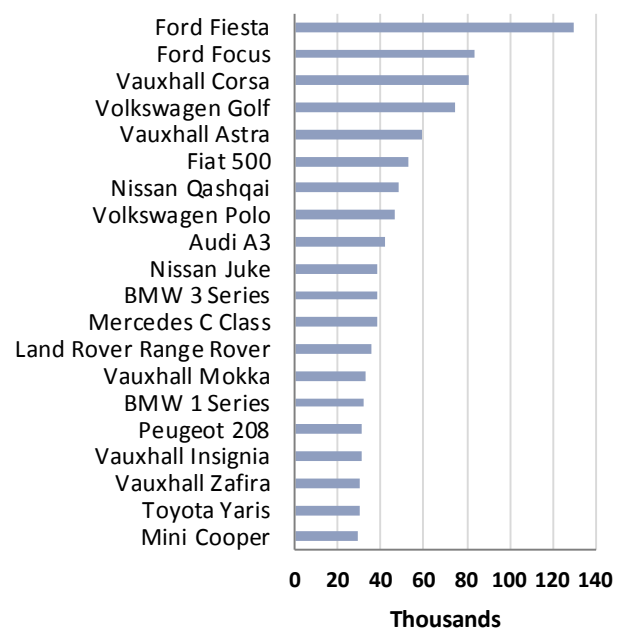
Detailed make and model statistical tables updated this year are:-

[VEH0120, 0121, 0124 to 0129, 0160, 0161](#)

Licensed cars, top 20 models, GB: Q4 2014



New registrations cars, top 20 models, GB: 2014

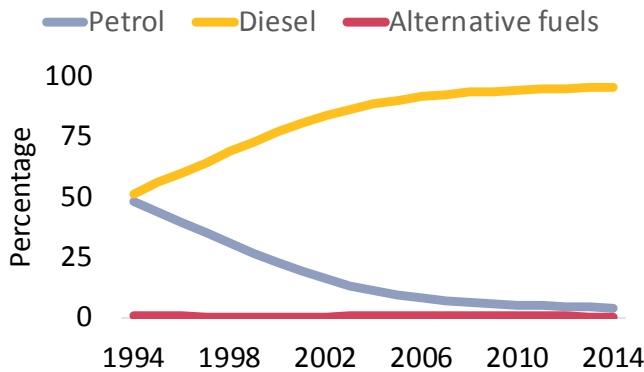


## Other vehicle types



In 1994, there were 2.1 million vans registered in Great Britain. They were almost equally split between petrol and diesel, with just over one million of each. By 2014 there were 3.5 million vans, of which the vast majority – 96% - were diesel powered.

### Licensed vans by propulsion type: GB, 1994 - 2014



### What are vans and HGVs?

In these statistics, goods vehicles with a gross vehicle weight up to 3.5 tonnes are referred to as 'vans' or light goods vehicles, and those with a gross vehicle weight over 3.5 tonnes as 'HGVs' or heavy goods vehicles.

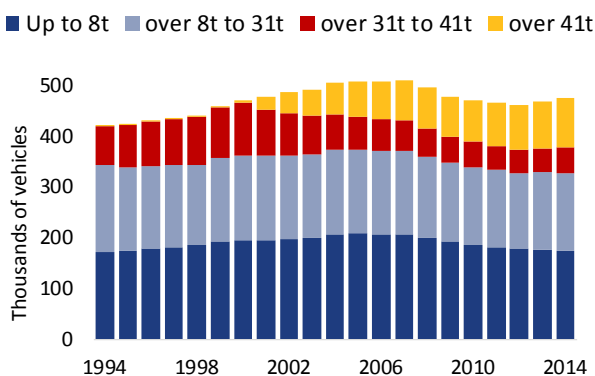
### What is gross vehicle weight?

Gross vehicle weight is the maximum permissible weight for a vehicle, including its load.



There were 474 thousand heavy goods vehicles registered in Great Britain in 2014. Their average gross vehicle weight in 2014 was 21.5 tonnes, compared with 17.5 tonnes in 1994. In 2014, 20% had a gross vehicle weight of over 41 tonnes – hardly any fell into this category prior to 2001 when the general weight limit for articulated vehicles was increased from 41 to 44 tonnes.

### Licensed HGVs by gross weight: GB, 1994 - 2014

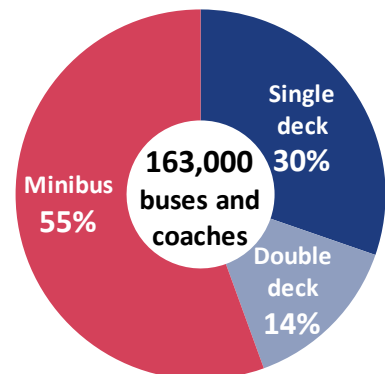


### What is a minibus?

In these statistics, a minibus is a vehicle with between 9 and 16 passenger seats. More would be classified as a bus or coach, while less would be classified as a car or taxi.



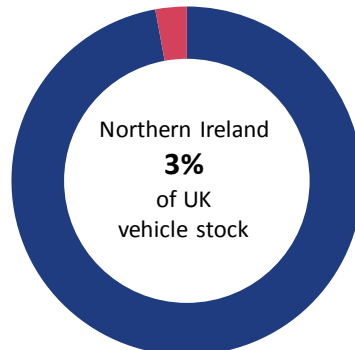
There were 163 thousand buses and coaches registered in Great Britain in 2014. Of these, 30% were single-deck buses or coaches, 14% double-deckers, and 55% minibuses.



## United Kingdom data

As a result of the changes described to the right, data for the United Kingdom (Great Britain + Northern Ireland) have been added to the data tables for this series during this year.

The total number of vehicles licensed at the end of December 2014 in the UK was 36.7 million, of which 1.1 million (3%) were registered to an address in Northern Ireland.



Within Great Britain, 30.4 million vehicles were registered in England, 2.8 million in Scotland and 1.8 million in Wales.

The number of registered vehicles per 1,000 residents was markedly lower in London (356 vehicles per 1,000 people) than in any other English region or country, reflecting its highly urbanised nature. There was less variation between the other regions, with the rate being highest in the southern English regions (of which the South West was highest at 683) and lowest among the northern English regions (of which the North East was lowest at 500).

## Addition of Northern Ireland data to this series

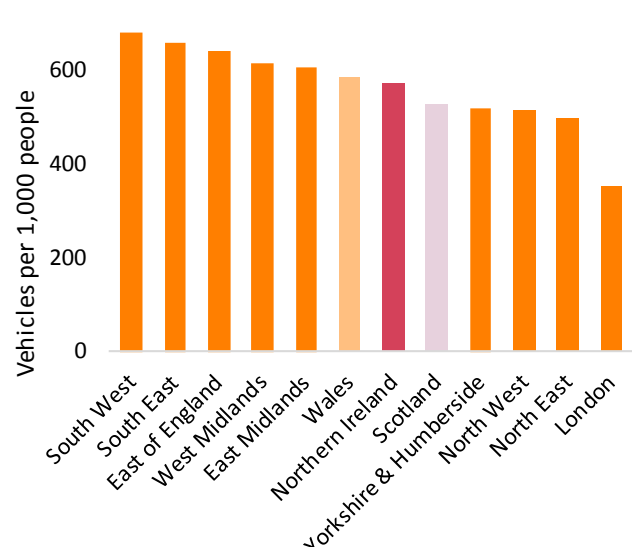
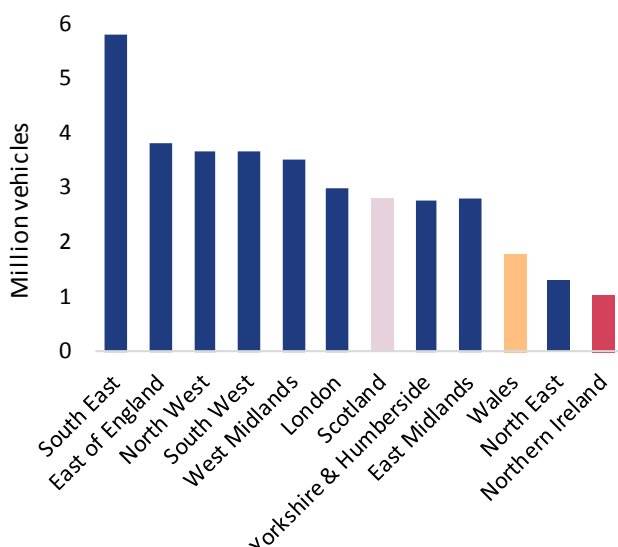
In July 2014 vehicle and registration services for Northern Ireland were centralised at DVLA, where these services for Great Britain were already administered. This created a single vehicle register for the United Kingdom, in place of separate registers for Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

As a result, the coverage of the vehicle licensing statistics tables is being expanded to cover UK rather than GB. Where practical, the published tables are being expanded to give figures for both UK and GB, at least for a transitional period. Because of the greater availability of GB time series data, this statistical release will continue to focus mainly on GB rather than UK results for the time being.

If you have any comments on these changes, please send them to [vehicles\\_stats@dft.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:vehicles_stats@dft.gsi.gov.uk).

Separately from this GB/UK statistical series, [DOE Northern Ireland](#) will continue to publish statistics for vehicles registered in Northern Ireland.

### Licensed vehicles by country or English region, UK: Q4 2014



### About these statistics

Almost all the statistics in the vehicle licensing statistics series are derived by Department for Transport statisticians from extracts of the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) vehicle database. The main purpose of the database is to administer vehicle registration and licensing records in the United Kingdom.

### What data tables go with this release?

For the full list of tables published this year, please see the Vehicles Tables [Index](#).

For further information, please see the detailed [Technical Notes](#). There is also a [Statement of Administrative Sources](#) for the DVLA vehicles database.

### Strengths and weaknesses of the data

The DVLA database can be regarded as being virtually complete in terms of the number of licensed vehicles and vehicles with a SORN (Statutory Off-Road Notification). However, there will be some errors in some of the specific details of individual vehicles, mostly less important details. The Department for Transport estimates that under 2% of the vehicles records have an inaccuracy in one of the variables used for the statistics published. Other factors to consider in interpreting these statistics include: changes in legislation, revisions to the series, seasonal variation which affects some vehicle types, vehicle excise duty evasion and other types of failure to inform DVLA of relevant facts about the status of a vehicle, and the fact that foreign registered vehicles may also use UK roads without being registered with DVLA. Most of these factors will only have a marginal effect for most uses of the data. For further information, please see the detailed [Technical Notes](#).

### Users and uses of these statistics

A separate note on this is available from the vehicles statistics guidance [web page](#).

### National Statistics

All of the statistics published in this series are National Statistics, apart from the exceptions listed on the [series page](#). Vehicles statistics were assessed by the UK Statistics Authority and confirmed as National Statistics in April 2012. National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference.

Details of ministers and officials who receive pre-release access to these statistics up to 24 hours before release can be found in the [Pre-release access list](#).

## Next Release

Vehicle Licensing statistical releases are published quarterly. The next is due on 11 June 2015. The Quarter 4 release for each calendar year is accompanied by a larger set of data tables. In addition a single table of monthly new vehicle registrations is released on the series page on the second Thursday of each month. Any updates to these plans will be advertised via the [DfT statistical publications schedule](#).

## Request for Feedback

We welcome any feedback on these statistics, to ensure future releases best meet user needs. Feedback can be provided by email to [vehicles.stats@dft.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:vehicles.stats@dft.gsi.gov.uk).