

# Trends in rail goods transport 1990-2001

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- Between 1990 and 2001 the change in the total freight transport varied between -41 % in Greece and +49 % in Portugal.
- The general development of national transport measured in tkm was a negative one for almost all countries in 2001 compared to 1990.
- Except Greece, Belgium and Luxembourg, other Member States (EU12) showed an increase of the international goods transport varying between 9 % in Italy and 95 % in Portugal.
- In absolute terms, Germany carried in 2001 the biggest volume of goods: 74 billion tkm.
- 80 % of the total transport of Netherlands, and 71 % of the total transport of Belgium and Greece were represented by the international transport, while for Portugal and Spain transport within the country accounted for 86 % and 83 % respectively.
- The breakdown by types of goods transported shows that in 2001, the group "machinery, manufactured articles, miscellaneous products" (NST/R chapter 9) had the highest share in both national and international transport, followed by "metal products" (NST/R chapter 5).
- The modal share of rail goods transport in inland goods transport declined from 19 % in 1990 to about 14 % in 2001.

## Statistics in focus

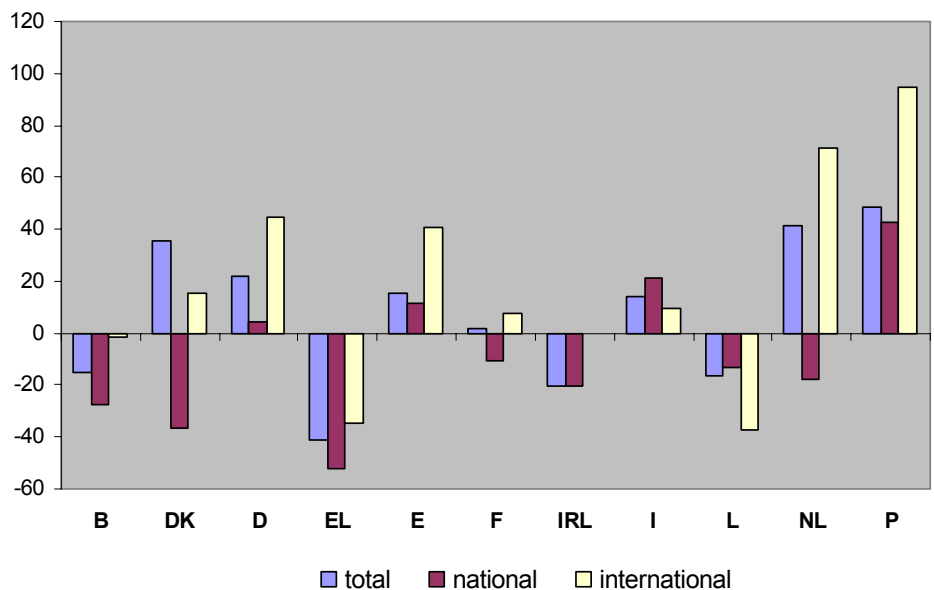
### TRANSPORT

THEME 7 – 9/2003

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Graph 1: The development of rail goods transport: 2001 compared to 1990 (%)



Note: Germany: 1991-2001; Ireland 1990-1998



## Total goods transport

Only ten Member States reported data under Directive 80/1177 for both 1990 and 2001 (Table 1). Of these, six reported increases over the whole period in the total volume of goods transported by rail, ranging from 1.5 % (France) to 48.6 % (Portugal). For Germany, taking the

period from 1991 (the first year when the new Länder were included in the reported data) to 2001, there was an overall decrease of 1.1 %.

Between 2000 and 2001, ten out of thirteen countries reported decreases in rail goods transport.

**Table 1 : Total transport of goods by railway - in million tkm**

	1990	1991	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	Ch 90-01 (%)	Ch 00-01 (%)
Belgium	8333	8126	7602	7243	7465	7600	7392	7674	7081	-15.0	-7.7
Denmark	1545	1509	1693	1459	1726	1812	1703	2025	2091	35.3	3.3
Germany <sup>1)</sup>	60886	75074	67818	67214	70546	71207	69127	76030	74260	-1.1 <sup>2)</sup>	-2.3
Greece	647	605	306	350	330	322	347	427	380	-41.3	-11.0
Spain	10131	9435	9753	9761	10841	11322	11487	11614	11717	15.7	0.9
France	49578	49264	46355	48270	52575	52612	52059	55282	50345	1.5	-8.9
Ireland	589	603	602	570	522	469	:	:	:	-20.4 <sup>3)</sup>	-10.2 <sup>6)</sup>
Italy	19343	19941	21689	21034	22902	22455	21549	22752	22121	14.4	-2.8
Luxembourg	702	704	:	:	:	:	:	632	585	-16.7	-7.4
Netherlands	3047	3023	3016	3164	3435	3793	3732	4522	4293	40.9	-5.1
Austria	:	:	13155	13311	14196	14713	15038	16600	16893	28.4 <sup>4)</sup>	1.8
Portugal	1439	1641	2019	1858	2247	2048	2179	2183	2138	48.6	-2.1
Finland	:	:	9293	8806	9856	9885	9753	10107	9857	6.1 <sup>4)</sup>	-2.5
Sweden <sup>5)</sup>	:	:	19391	18846	19181	19163	19090	20088	19547	0.8 <sup>4)</sup>	-2.7
United Kingdom	16271	15382	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:

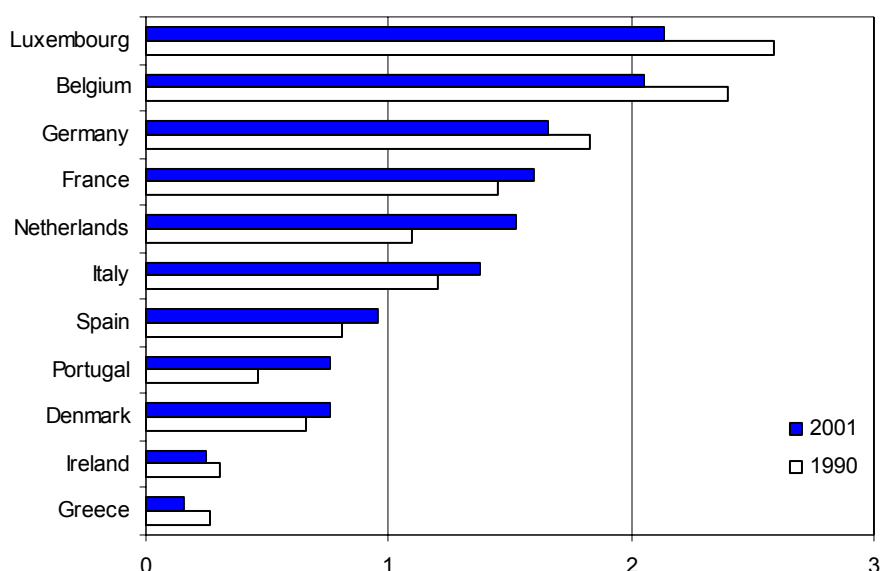
<sup>1)</sup> Data for 1990 exclude ex-GDR; <sup>2)</sup> 1991-2001; <sup>3)</sup> 1990-1998; <sup>4)</sup> 1995-2001

<sup>5)</sup> Data for Sweden have been received from Banverket; <sup>6)</sup> 1997-1998

In absolute terms, both in 1990 and 2001, Germany had the highest volume of rail goods transport, followed by France and Italy. These three countries together accounted for 67 % of the total rail freight transport of

the thirteen Member States which reported data for 2001. The notable decline reported by Greece (-41.3 %) is explained by the disruption of rail traffic by the conflicts in the West Balkan region.

**Graph 2: Network utilisation in 1990 and 2001 (Mio tkm per kilometre)**



. Note: Data for Germany refer to 1991 and 2001; data for Ireland refer to 1990 and 1998.

The network utilisation rate is calculated by dividing the volume of goods transport (in Mio tkm) by the length of the rail network (Graph 2). In 2001, network utilisation rates ranged from more than 2 Mio tkm/km

(Luxembourg, Belgium) to less than 0.2 Mio tkm/km (Greece, Ireland). Six out of eleven Member States reported increases in their network utilisation rates over this period.

## National transport

Of the ten Member States which reported data for 1990 and 2001, seven showed decreases, including Germany using 1991 as the base year (Table 2). The sharpest decrease was in Denmark (-36.3%), while the largest increase was in Portugal (+42.9%).

For the newest Member States Austria, Finland and Sweden, national rail freight has increased since 1995. All reporting countries except Spain and Sweden showed a fall in national rail freight transport from 2000 to 2001.

**Table 2 : National transport of goods by railway - in million tkm**

	1990	1991	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	Ch 90-01 (%)	Ch 00-01 (%)
Belgium	2629	2564	2231	2218	2036	2168	2040	2031	1904	-27.6	-6.3
Denmark	568	547	448	437	484	476	421	456	362	-36.3	-20.6
Germany <sup>1)</sup>	33092	45102	35710	35241	36961	35764	34627	35038	34556	-23.4 <sup>2)</sup>	-1.4
Greece	236	232	159	156	136	126	103	116	112	-52.5	-3.4
Spain	8750	8070	7992	7771	8572	9174	9543	9587	9775	11.7	2.0
France	33482	33194	28797	29647	32249	31380	31009	32815	29874	-10.8	-9.0
Ireland	589	603	602	570	522	469	:	:	:	-20.4 <sup>3)</sup>	-10.2 <sup>6)</sup>
Italy	9088	9058	10606	10415	11518	11435	11096	11789	11019	21.2	-6.5
Luxembourg	113	116	:	:	:	:	:	101	98	-13.3	-3.0
Netherlands	1020	999	721	778	814	763	622	945	839	-17.7	-11.2
Austria	:	:	3001	2913	3140	3098	3519	3892	3875	29.1 <sup>4)</sup>	-0.4
Portugal	1283	1470	1767	1608	1852	1638	1861	1872	1834	42.9	-2.0
Finland	:	:	5936	5699	6258	6313	6380	6802	6588	11.0 <sup>4)</sup>	-3.1
Sweden <sup>5)</sup>	:	:	11078	11570	11694	11902	12036	12420	12500	12.8 <sup>4)</sup>	0.6
United Kingdom	16078	15190	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:

<sup>1)</sup> Data for 1990 exclude ex-GDR; <sup>2)</sup> 1991-2001; <sup>3)</sup> 1990-1998; <sup>4)</sup> 1995-2001

<sup>5)</sup> Data for Sweden have been received from Banverket; <sup>6)</sup> 1997-1998

## International transport

Ten Member States reported data for 1990 and 2001, of which seven showed an increase over this period. The largest relative increases were in Portugal (+94.9 %) and the Netherlands (+71.3 %), although it should be mentioned that the increase of 9 032 tonnes in international rail transport in Germany from 1991 to

2001 (+39.3 %) was in absolute terms much greater than the total increase in all the other countries. However, of the seven countries reporting an increase in international rail freight over the whole period, all except Italy reported a decrease between 2000 and 2001.

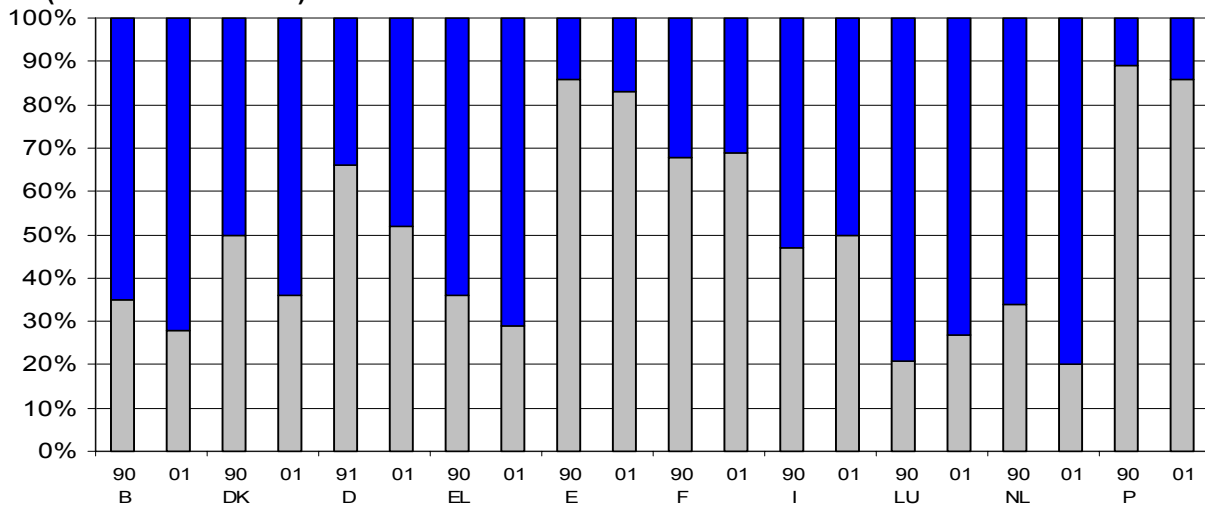
**Table 3 : International transport of goods by railway - in million tkm**

	1990	1991	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	Ch 90-01 (%)	Ch 00-01 (%)
Belgium	4954	4929	4648	4336	4785	4918	4978	5419	4895	-1.2	-9.7
Denmark	569	630	602	570	706	671	608	699	657	15.5	-6.0
Germany <sup>1)</sup>	22127	22984	25384	25118	26414	27755	27161	32875	32016	39.3 <sup>2)</sup>	-2.6
Greece	411	373	147	194	194	196	244	311	268	-34.8	-13.8
Spain	1381	1365	1761	1990	2269	2148	1944	2027	1942	40.6	-4.2
France	12983	12802	13804	14351	15741	13563	13740	15026	14007	7.9	-6.8
Ireland	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Italy	10141	10840	11065	10607	11370	11006	10435	10946	11091	9.4	1.3
Luxembourg	419	408	:	:	:	:	:	262	263	-37.2	0.4
Netherlands	2016	2017	2295	2386	2621	3030	3110	3577	3454	71.3	-3.4
Austria	:	:	6884	7159	7769	8025	8067	9096	9191	33.5 <sup>3)</sup>	1.0
Portugal	156	171	252	250	395	410	318	311	304	94.9	-2.3
Finland	:	:	3357	3107	3598	3572	3373	3305	3269	-2.6 <sup>3)</sup>	-1.1
Sweden <sup>4)</sup>	:	:	8313	7276	7487	7261	7054	7668	7047	-15.2 <sup>3)</sup>	-8.1
United Kingdom	193	192	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:

<sup>1)</sup> Data for 1990 exclude ex-GDR; <sup>2)</sup> 1991-2001; <sup>3)</sup> 1995-2001

<sup>4)</sup> Data for Sweden have been received from Banverket

**Graph 3: The share of national and international transport in total goods transport in 2001 compared to 1990 (on the basis of tkm) - in %**



Note: data for Germany refer to 1991 and 2001

□ National ■ International

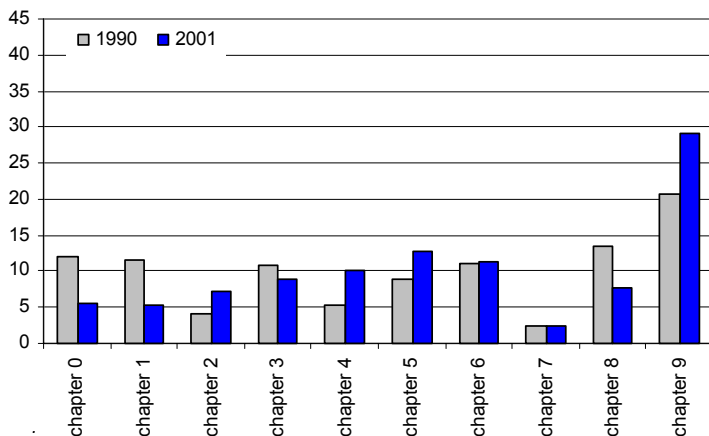
In small countries like Belgium, Greece, Denmark, Luxembourg and the Netherlands, international transport (expressed in tonne-kilometres) has a higher share in total rail transport (Graph 3). In 2001, this share accounted for 80 % in the Netherlands and 73 % in Luxembourg. National and international transport have almost equal importance in Germany: by 2001, both national and international transport accounted for about 50 %, while in 1991 the share of national

transport was 66 % and of international transport only 34 %. In Portugal and Spain, international transport is less important compared to national transport. The latter accounted in 2001 for 86 % in Portugal and 83 % in Spain. In both countries, there is an upward trend in the relative importance of international rail freight transport. In general, the trend in reporting countries over this period was an increase in the share of international transport in 2001 compared to 1990.

### Breakdown by groups of goods (NST/R chapters)

The evolution of rail freight transport is strongly related to the type of freight transported. Over the period 1990-2001 there were some important changes of the shares of different groups of goods for both national and international transport cumulated for the eight Member States (seven in the case of international transport) which reported data with a breakdown by type of goods.

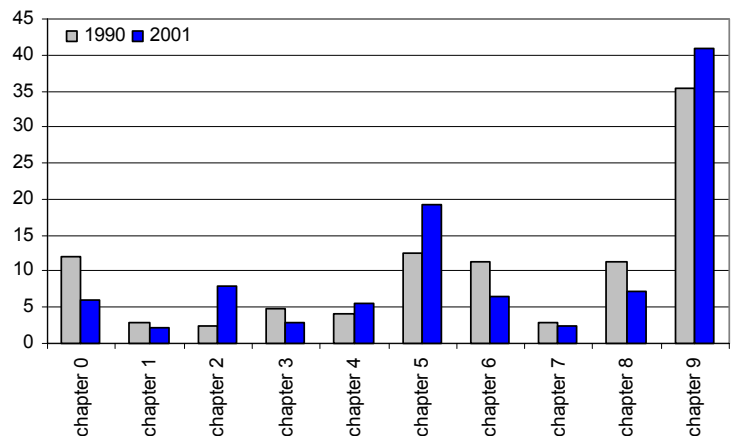
**Graph 4: Share of NST/R goods chapters in national transport in 1990 compared to 2001 - in % (data for eight Member States)**



Note: on the basis of tkm, for the following Member States: B, D, EL, E, F, I, IRL, PT

It should be noted that the share of NST/R group 24 "miscellaneous" in chapter 9 is very high, which may be due to the use of group 24 to report containerised goods which are not specifically identified. This explains the high shares chapter 9 has in 1990 and 2001 in both national and international transport

**Graph 5: Share of NST/R goods chapters in international transport in 1990 compared to 2001 - in % (data for seven Member States)**



Note: on the basis of tkm, for the following Member States: B, D, EL, E, F, I, PT.

NST/R chapters	
0	Agricultural products and live animals
1	Foodstuffs and animal fodder
2	Solid mineral fuels
3	Petroleum products
4	Ores and metal waste
5	Metal products
6	Crude and manufactured minerals, building materials
7	Fertilizers
8	Chemicals
9	Machinery, transport equipment, manufactured articles and miscellaneous articles

Leaving aside the special case of chapter 9, from Graph 4 it could be noticed that the transport of chemicals (chapter 8) had the highest share in national transport in 1990 (13 %), while in 2001 this was true for chapter 5 “metal products” (13 %). A remarkable decline (-6 percentage points) was shown between 1990 and 2001 in the share of agricultural products and live animals (chapter 0) in national transport, while the transport of ores and metal waste (chapter 4) grew in importance (the share of this chapter increased by 5 percent points compared to 1990). As far as international transport (Graph 5) is concerned, in both 1990 and 2001, the transport of metal products (chapter 5) had the highest relative importance: accounting for about 13 % and 19 %, respectively. It appears that the share for the transport of agricultural products and live animals (chapter 0) declined by more than 6 percentage points. On the other hand, there was an increase of about 6 percentage points in the share of

chapter 2, which includes coal and other solid mineral fuels. Comparing national and international transport, it could be noticed that the relative importance of chapter 1 (foodstuffs and animal fodder) in 1990 was 12 % in national transport and only 3 % in international transport. The corresponding shares for this NST/R chapter in 2001 were 5 % and 2 %, respectively. In 2001, the petroleum products (chapter 3) accounted for 9 %, in national transport, while in international transport for 3 % only. Despite of the fact that crude and manufactured minerals and building materials had the same share (11 %) in 1990 in both national and international transport, in 2001 this group of goods was less important for the international transport (7 %). In general, all chapters except chapter 6 (crude and manufactured minerals and building materials) show the same trend for both national and international transport.

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## Transit transport

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Rail transit transport means that goods pass through the reporting Member State without being loaded, unloaded or transhipped. In this publication, statistical data on transit transport are included in the figures for total goods transport. At EU level, the volume of transit transport in 2001 was more than 22 000 million tkm,

and presented the same trend as the international goods carried by rail. Due to the geographical position, transit transport is more important for certain Member States than for others. In Ireland, Portugal and United Kingdom there is no rail transit transport.

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## Modal share

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The development of rail freight transport should be seen in the context of broader trends in the transport market in the European Union. Freight transport by road, measured in tkm, grew on average 2.7 % per year from 1990 to 2001, from 993 to 1 329 billion tkm. The share of rail freight transport in the inland transport market was declining in favour of road transport. Railways carried 18.6 % of inland freight (road, rail, inland waterways and pipelines) in 1990, but this share has decreased to about 13.6 % in 2001, while the share of goods transport by road had

increased from 68 % in 1990 to 74 % in 2001.

The modal share by groups of goods (Table 4) shows that road transport is the main carrier of most categories of goods, while rail is dominant for the transport of heavy goods like coal and other solid mineral fuels (chapter 2) and ores (chapter 4). The share of rail is also important in the transport of metal products (chapter 5).

**Table 4: Modal share by groups of goods for EU-15 (% of tkm)**

(NST/R classification chapters in brackets)	Road	Rail	Other	Total
Agricultural products (0,1)	21.6	1.2	10.0	23.5
Coal, other solid mineral fuels (2)	0.7	1.0	19.0	3.0
Petroleum and petroleum products (3)	3.0	0.8	19.0	10.1
Ore and waste of ore and steel (4)	0.7	1.1	5.0	2.2
Metal products (5)	4.5	2.1	3.0	6.8
Cement, building materials (6)	11.9	1.2	34.0	15.5
Chemicals, fertilizers (7,8)	6.7	1.4	9.0	8.7
Machinery, manufactured articles (9)	25.3	4.8	2.0	30.2
All goods	74.4	13.6	12.0	100

*Note: data refer mainly to the year 2001. "Other" includes inland waterways and pipeline transport for which the tkms per NST/R chapter are estimates from DG TREN and Eurostat*

## ➤ ESSENTIAL INFORMATION – METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

This publication is based on the statistics supplied by Member States under Council Directive 80/1177/EEC. They cover rail freight transport on the main railway network in each Member State. Restructuring of railway administrations, which has included the separation of operating companies from infrastructure authorities, and in certain cases privatisation, has resulted in some Member States no longer supplying these data to Eurostat.

For most comparisons between 1990 and 2001 only the EU12 countries are included, but the data of Austria, Finland and Sweden appears in the tables from 1995 onwards.

Some data were taken from the Eurostat/UN-ECE<sup>1</sup>/ECMT<sup>2</sup> Common Questionnaire. Data for Sweden (2000 and 2001) have been taken "Bantrafik 2000-2001" (Banverket 2003).

### **National rail transport**

Rail transport where the goods are both loaded and unloaded within the same reporting Member State, irrespective of the route followed by the railway vehicle.

### **International rail transport**

Rail transport where the goods are either loaded or unloaded, but not both, in the reporting Member State, distinguishing between goods loaded and goods unloaded.

### **Rail transit**

Rail transport where the goods pass through the reporting Member State without being loaded, unloaded or transhipped.

### **Tonne-kilometre by rail**

Unit of measure of goods transport which represents the transport of one tonne of goods by rail over a distance of one kilometre.

### **Network utilisation rate**

Network utilisation rate is determined by dividing the total volume of goods transported (expressed in tkm) by the length of the railway network. The figures for the total volume of goods is the sum of national, international and transit transport

### **NST/R**

The NST/R classification (Standard Goods Nomenclature for Transport Statistics / Revised) consists of 176 headings. The goods are classified as far as possible on the basis of their nature, processing stage, methods of transport and quantities transported. The 176 headings are divided into 10 chapters and 52 main groups. Starting with Council Directive 78/546 on road transport statistics, a new aggregation into 24 groups was introduced for practical reasons. These 24 groups appear in all subsequent legal acts on transport statistics, although they have never been incorporated into the official NST/R. According to the Council Directive 80/1177/EEC, Member States are providing data to Eurostat by the 24 groups of goods. These data have been aggregated at NST/R chapter level.

Total goods transport (in tkm) was calculated as a sum of national, international and transit transport, where international transport is the sum of international loaded and unloaded in the reporting country.

For Germany, the changes in the freight volumes were calculated for the period 1991-2001, since the data for 1990 exclude ex-GDR.

For the Ireland the total transport is equal to the national transport as the traffic to/from Northern Ireland is recorded as national traffic.

The international transport by NST/R goods chapters refers to international transport unloaded in the reporting countries, in order to avoid double counting when making the total for the available Member States.

The data in the chapter on modal share were taken from Eurostat's road freight production database and from the NewCronos database (Theme 7, Domain Inland waterways transport). The breakdown of inland waterways transport to NST/R chapters comes from "EU Transport in figures" – Statistical pocketbook 2001, p.132, issued by the European Commission, Directorate General for Energy and Transport in co-operation with Eurostat. ([http://europa.eu.int/comm/energy\\_transport/etif/](http://europa.eu.int/comm/energy_transport/etif/))

1: United Nations – Economic Commission for Europe

2: European Conference of Ministers of Transport

# Further information:

## ➤ Databases

NewCronos, Theme 7, Domain: rail

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