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Highlights

The total EU road freight transport performance in 2023 decreased compared with 2022

The main goods categories transported in 2023 were the same as in 2022, both in terms of tonnes and tonne-kilometres

Transport decreased in all distance classes in 2023

In 2023, Germany, France, Spain, Poland and Italy together accounted for almost two thirds of the total tonnage transported in the EU

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Data extracted in July 2024.
Planned article update: July 2025.

Highlights

" In 2023, total EU road freight transport amounted to more than 13.2 billion tonnes and 1 857 billion tonne-kilometres. "

" 'Food products, beverages and tobacco' dominated EU freight transport by road in 2023, accounting for 308 billion tonne-kilometres. "

" The freight transported by road in a country's territory in terms of tonnes was the highest in Germany in 2023. "

" In 2023, Germany was the origin or destination of almost half of the top 20 country-to-country flows in intra-EU road freight transport. "

This article presents the main trends in road freight transport in the European Union (EU) up to and including 2023. National, international, cross-trade and cabotage transport are all analysed. Road freight transport by type of goods and distance class are also presented, as are goods moved on the national territory of countries and country-to-country flows. This article, together with the articles 'Road freight transport by vehicle characteristics' , 'Road freight transport by type of goods' , 'Road freight transport by journey characteristics' and 'Road freight transport statistics - cabotage' present a complete overview of road freight transport in Europe.

The total EU road freight transport performance in 2023 decreased compared with 2022

In terms of tonne-kilometres (tkm) , European road freight transport decreased by 0.1% from 2021 to 2022 (from 1 921 billion tkm to 1 919 billion tkm). In 2023, total European road freight transport performance continued to decrease, by 3.2% compared with 2022, falling to 1 857 billion tkm (see Table 1 and Figure 1 – all figures presented in tables and graphs can be seen in the 'Source data' file).

International transport, representing one quarter (25.1%) of total road freight transport in the EU in 2023, rose by 0.9% from 2021 to 2022, but then decreased by 4.4% in 2023 compared with 2020 2022 (see Table 1). National transport, which represented almost two thirds (61.3%) of the total, decreased by 0.1% in 2022 and by further decreased 3.3% in 2023. Cross-trade and cabotage transport, together representing 13.6% of the EU total in 2023, also decreased by 0.4% and 0.8%, respectively, compared with 2022. In 2022, both have recorded decreases from the previous year, by 0.2% and 9.0%, respectively.

In 2023, Poland (20.3% of EU total tkm) re-confirmed its position as one of the most important countries for road transport in Europe, ahead of Germany (15.4%) and Spain (14.2%). Almost two thirds (64.3%) of the Polish transport performance were either international transport, cross-trade or cabotage, while national transport accounted for just over one third (35.7%).

Compared with 2022, total road freight transport fell in 20 EU countries in 2023, with the most significant decreases recorded in Portugal (-16.4%), Slovakia (-16.2%) and Sweden (-11.5%). The remaining 6 EU countries recorded increases, the highest ones in Lithuania (+17.3%), Denmark (+8.2%) and Cyprus (+7.8%) (see Figure 1). In 2022, total road freight transport had fallen compared with 2021 in 12 EU countries, ranging from -13.3% in Estonia to -0.9% in France. In 12 other EU countries, total road freight transport had increased, ranging from +29.8% in Cyprus to +0.2% in Croatia. In Bulgaria and Portugal total road freight transport had remained stable during these 2 years.

Road freight transport by type of operation, 2021-2023
(million tonne-kilometres)

	2021					2022					2023				
	National	International	Cross-trade	Cabotage	Total	National	International	Cross-trade	Cabotage	Total	National	International	Cross-trade	Cabotage	Total
EU	1 177 894	483 049	204 593	54 973	1 920 510	1 176 987	487 302	204 227	50 051	1 918 566	1 137 889	466 048	203 402	49 646	1 856 985
Belgium	23 257	10 570	1 300	1 048	36 175	22 052	9 106	1 063	1 260	33 480	21 525	8 601	964	1 144	32 234
Bulgaria	9 029	11 403	13 296	1 402	35 130	8 817	13 489	11 636	1 192	35 134	9 902	12 409	9 995	819	33 125
Czechia	29 764	27 382	5 492	1 118	63 756	30 762	28 343	5 592	1 098	65 794	28 633	27 558	7 321	1 295	64 806
Denmark	12 863	2 258	123	99	15 342	12 755	2 159	119	129	15 162	13 921	2 278	105	103	16 406
Germany	272 000	31 280	2 747	1 245	307 272	268 557	30 883	2 998	1 510	303 948	253 596	28 376	3 000	1 436	286 408
Estonia	1 800	1 931	1 160	346	5 237	1 797	1 721	826	196	4 540	1 537	1 760	718	180	4 194
Ireland	10 238	1 479	431	346	12 493	10 182	1 455	389	337	12 364	10 448	1 319	475	349	12 591
Greece	16 482	4 283	239	50	21 053	16 182	4 822	129	47	21 182	14 815	5 129	67	1	20 011
Spain	182 466	80 114	4 440	3 156	270 176	178 005	81 610	4 454	2 655	266 724	178 213	77 965	4 627	2 577	263 382
France	162 574	11 382	272	626	174 853	160 535	11 908	309	601	173 353	157 313	11 143	311	473	169 240
Croatia	4 802	5 770	2 761	295	13 629	4 854	5 758	2 711	335	13 659	5 169	5 945	2 937	279	14 329
Italy	128 547	15 180	576	683	144 986	132 267	17 236	770	826	151 100	128 805	14 920	641	808	145 173
Cyprus	703	28	:	:	731	923	26	:	:	949	986	38	:	:	1 023
Latvia	4 064	6 110	3 914	1 016	15 103	3 989	6 330	3 487	775	14 581	4 058	5 211	3 289	646	13 203
Lithuania	3 862	11 382	36 135	6 377	57 755	3 182	10 256	34 661	5 674	53 773	4 178	10 878	41 238	6 807	63 101
Luxembourg	621	2 056	2 839	1 388	6 904	588	2 012	3 159	1 594	7 353	493	1 836	3 198	1 437	6 964
Hungary	14 778	15 413	6 032	878	37 101	13 926	16 014	6 517	987	37 444	14 050	14 427	4 110	767	33 353
Malta (¹)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Netherlands	36 271	27 536	3 723	2 028	69 559	35 433	25 018	3 276	1 738	65 466	33 126	24 583	3 083	1 779	62 571
Austria	18 011	6 905	1 625	742	27 282	17 565	6 976	1 604	685	26 830	16 567	6 884	1 392	578	25 422
Poland	134 730	145 824	74 384	24 882	379 820	140 032	145 588	77 718	21 751	385 089	134 808	143 326	78 049	21 690	377 873
Portugal	9 389	14 558	6 836	1 267	32 050	9 055	14 896	6 782	1 306	32 039	7 645	12 566	5 613	958	26 782
Romania	20 458	21 193	17 015	3 183	61 849	21 994	22 713	16 772	2 874	64 353	22 313	23 238	16 803	2 894	65 249
Slovenia	2 464	10 744	10 378	1 383	24 968	2 567	10 921	9 521	1 300	24 308	3 097	9 749	8 348	1 334	22 528
Slovakia	6 295	14 360	8 461	1 066	30 183	6 203	14 824	9 507	952	31 488	5 939	12 685	6 817	938	26 380
Finland	27 652	1 510	198	259	29 618	29 005	1 260	167	158	30 590	26 472	1 358	171	253	28 255
Sweden	44 776	2 400	217	91	47 485	45 759	1 977	60	68	47 865	40 280	1 869	133	102	42 383
Norway	20 415	2 115	5	17	22 553	22 325	2 071	19	13	24 428	22 606	1 720	37	45	24 408
Switzerland	10 849	1 551	129	167	12 698	10 868	1 667	251	202	12 988	10 308	1 245	119	217	11 888

(-) Not applicable
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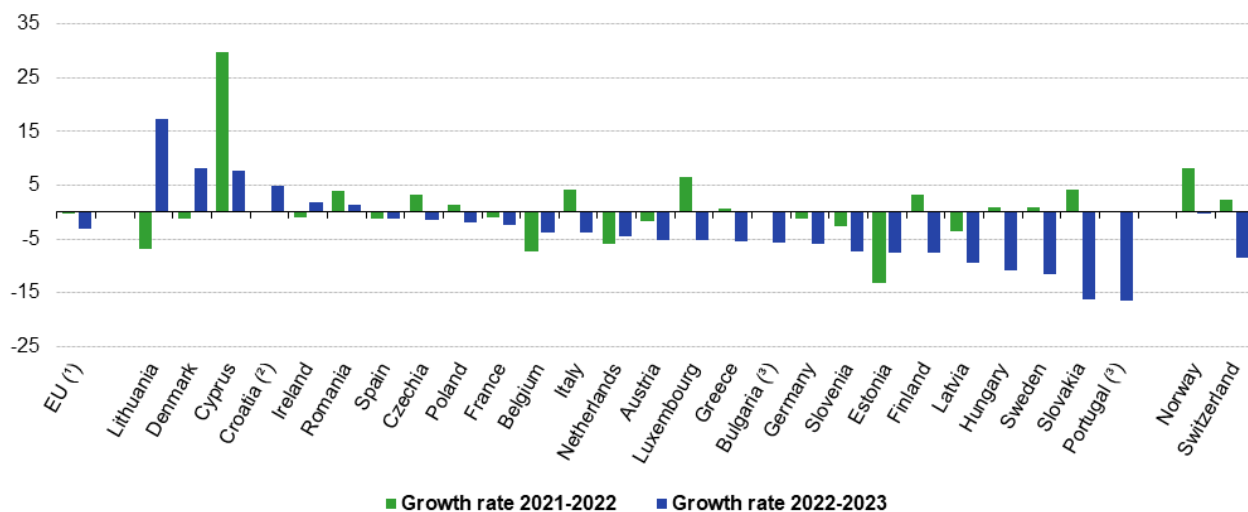(¹) Malta excluded (see chapter 'data sources')
Source: Eurostat (online data code: road_go_ta_tott)

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Table 1: Road freight transport by type of operation, 2021-2023 (million tonne-kilometres) Source: Eurostat (road_go_ta_tott)

Growth rates for total road freight transport, 2021-2022 and 2022-2023
(% based on tonne-kilometres)

Note: Malta excluded (see chapter 'data sources'); ranked by 2022-2023 growth rate.
(¹) Growth rate 2021-2022 = -0.1%.
(²) Growth rate 2021-2022 = 0.2%.
(³) Growth rate 2021-2022 = 0.0%.
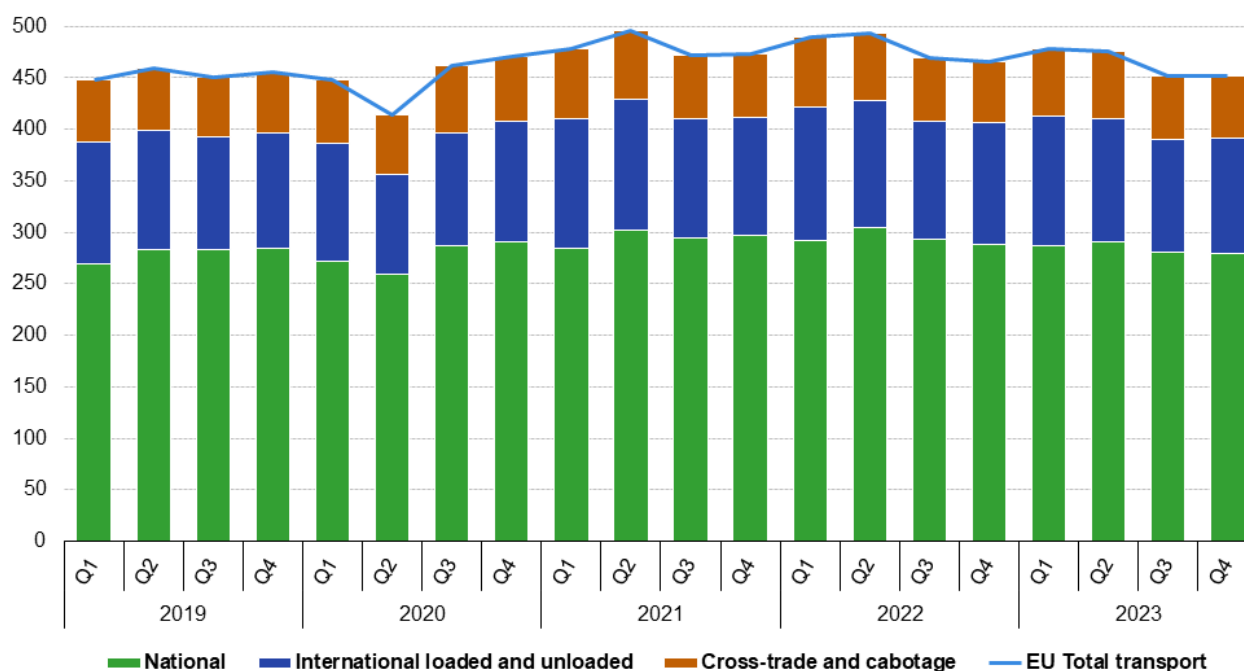*Source:* Eurostat (online data code: road_go_ta_tott)

Figure 1: Growth rates for total road freight transport, 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 (% based on tonne-kilometres) Source: Eurostat (road_go_ta_tott)

Road freight transport performance in the EU increased in 2021, following the recovery after the COVID-19 crisis. The second quarter of 2021 represented a peak, at 496.4 billion tkm (see Figure 2). In 2022, total EU road freight transport remained relatively stable, with a higher performance in the first quarter compared with the same quarter of the previous year (+2.5%) and small decreases in the following 3 quarters (-0.7%, -0.6% and -1.6%, respectively), bringing the overall total transport in 2022 close to the same level as in 2021. The road freight transport performance continued to decrease throughout 2023: -2.3% in the first quarter compared with the same quarter of the previous year, -3.6% in the second quarter, -3.8% in the third quarter and -3.1% in the last quarter. In the last 2 quarters of 2023, total EU road freight transport fell to levels not recorded since before the COVID-19 crisis.

Quarterly road freight transport by type of operation, EU, 2019-2023
(billion tonne-kilometres)

Note: Malta excluded (see chapter 'data sources')
Source: Eurostat (online data code: road_go_tq_tott)

Figure 2: Quarterly road freight transport by type of operation, EU, 2019-2023 (billion tonne-kilometres) Source: Eurostat (road_go_tq_tott)

The main goods categories transported in 2023 were the same as in 2022, both in terms of tonnes and tonne-kilometres

In terms of tonnage, European road freight transport decreased by 3.4% in 2023, compared with 2022 (from 13 620 million tonnes to 13 153 million tonnes – see Table 2). In 2023, as in previous years, 'metal ores and other mining and quarrying products' was the largest product group transported, accounting for 3 142 million tonnes. Other important product groups were 'other non-metallic mineral products' (1 561 million tonnes), 'food, beverages and tobacco' (1 551 million tonnes) and 'agricultural, forestry and fishery products' (1 267 million tonnes). The most notable increases between 2022 and 2023 were recorded for 'transport equipment' (up by 12.4%), 'furniture' (9.7%) and 'coal and lignite' (7.6%). At the other end of the scale, significant decreases were recorded for the product groups 'other non metallic mineral products' (-11.2%), 'other goods' (-6.6%) and 'metal ores and other mining and quarrying products' (-6.0%).

In terms of tonne-kilometres, 'food products, beverages and tobacco' continued to dominate road freight transport in 2023, accounting for 308 billion tkm, followed by 'grouped goods' (230 billion tkm) and 'agricultural products' (198 billion tkm). Notable increases between 2022 and 2023 were recorded for 'coal and lignite' (up by 105.5%), 'transport equipment' (8.6%) and 'furniture' (8.1%), while the highest decreases were recorded for 'other goods' (-15.9%), 'other non metallic mineral products' (-13.3%) and 'chemicals, chemical products, and man-made fibres' (-8.3%).

Road freight transport by group of goods (NST 2007), EU, 2022 and 2023
(thousand tonnes and million tonne-kilometres)

NST2007		Thousand tonnes			Million tonne-kilometres		
		2022	2023	Growth rate 2022-2023 (%)	2022	2023	Growth rate 2022-2023 (%)
TOT	Total transported goods	13 619 909	13 152 610	-3.4	1 912 127	1 850 422	-3.2
01	Products of agriculture, hunting, and forestry; fish and other fishing products	1 278 432	1 267 388	-0.9	202 939	197 847	-2.5
02	Coal and lignite; crude petroleum and natural gas	90 939	97 868	7.6	11 110	22 833	105.5
03	Metal ores and other mining and quarrying products; peat; uranium and thorium	3 341 623	3 142 205	-6.0	141 509	132 330	-6.5
04	Food products, beverages and tobacco	1 596 773	1 550 804	-2.9	316 827	308 429	-2.7
05	Textiles and textile products; leather and leather products	52 886	50 922	-3.7	15 617	14 742	-5.6
06	Wood and products of wood and cork (except furniture); articles of straw and plaiting materials; pulp, paper and paper products; printed matter and recorded media	501 375	494 392	-1.4	110 344	104 881	-5.0
07	Coke and refined petroleum products	406 883	403 329	-0.9	44 777	43 204	-3.5
08	Chemicals, chemical products, and man-made fibres; rubber and plastic products ; nuclear fuel	526 924	506 667	-3.8	122 381	112 195	-8.3
09	Other non metallic mineral products	1 758 562	1 561 315	-11.2	159 091	137 988	-13.3
10	Basic metals; fabricated metal products, except machinery and equipment	529 965	533 475	0.7	122 174	118 522	-3.0
11	Machinery and equipment n.e.c.; office machinery and computers; electrical machinery and apparatus n.e.c.; radio, television and communication equipment and apparatus; medical, precision and optical instruments; watches and clocks	254 266	254 121	-0.1	54 884	50 989	-7.1
12	Transport equipment	244 855	275 153	12.4	69 941	75 977	8.6
13	Furniture; other manufactured goods n.e.c.	116 512	127 809	9.7	39 435	42 623	8.1
14	Secondary raw materials; municipal wastes and other wastes	875 391	859 215	-1.8	68 534	66 978	-2.3
15	Mail, parcels	287 383	280 830	-2.3	65 671	61 336	-6.6
16	Equipment and material utilized in the transport of goods	286 274	288 947	0.9	42 733	42 545	-0.4
17	Goods moved in the course of household and office removals; baggage and articles accompanying travellers; motor vehicles being moved for repair; other non market goods n.e.c.	110 423	110 853	0.4	10 322	10 967	6.2
18	Grouped goods: a mixture of types of goods which are transported together	942 765	954 621	1.3	228 387	230 266	0.8
19	Unidentifiable goods: goods which for any reason cannot be identified and therefore cannot be assigned to groups 01-16	190 529	180 641	-5.2	30 176	29 272	-3.0
20	Other goods n.e.c.	227 149	212 055	-6.6	55 275	46 498	-15.9

Note: Malta excluded (see chapter 'data sources')
Source: Eurostat (online data code: road_go_ta_tg)

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Table 2: Road freight transport by group of goods (NST 2007), EU, 2022 and 2023 (thousand tonnes and million tonne-kilometres) Source: Eurostat (road_go_ta_tg)

Transport decreased in all distance classes in 2023

Most of the EU road freight traffic is carried out within 3 distance classes: from 150 to 299 km, from 300 to 499 km and from 500 to 999 km (see Table 3). In 2023, these 3 distance classes together totalled 1 110 billion tkm of the total EU road freight transport, a decrease of 3.2% compared with 2022. The highest road freight transport performance over these 3 distance classes was recorded in Poland (220 billion tkm) and Germany (179 billion tkm), while the lowest were recorded in Estonia (2 billion tkm), Luxembourg and Latvia (5 billion tkm each).

Road freight transport by distance class, 2022 and 2023
(million tonne-kilometres)

	From 150 to 299 km		From 300 to 499 km		From 500 to 999 km	
	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023
EU	358 830	350 579	337 244	324 325	450 011	435 076
Belgium	10 567	9 680	10 246	10 626	6 281	5 328
Bulgaria	3 656	3 966	4 139	5 181	7 426	5 930
Czechia	11 498	11 189	9 649	8 895	14 199	15 605
Denmark	4 486	4 915	3 730	4 285	998	1 019
Germany	77 069	73 909	63 052	59 019	50 294	46 103
Estonia	906	745	450	368	792	590
Ireland	4 116	4 046	1 355	1 459	753	695
Greece	3 805	3 437	3 204	3 061	4 097	3 478
Spain	34 615	34 445	45 859	45 069	75 064	75 220
France	40 683	41 657	41 870	40 382	42 258	41 369
Croatia	2 199	2 073	2 480	2 560	3 339	3 835
Italy	40 889	39 472	29 254	27 117	34 322	32 597
Cyprus	36	26	4	1	:	:
Latvia	1 890	2 025	1 557	1 524	2 384	1 908
Lithuania	2 975	3 660	5 050	6 366	16 616	18 925
Luxembourg	1 653	1 581	1 937	1 699	1 898	1 828
Hungary	7 110	6 813	5 431	4 890	11 272	9 635
Malta (¹)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Netherlands	18 987	18 255	6 923	6 602	8 054	8 177
Austria	6 252	6 097	3 539	3 721	4 136	3 889
Poland	51 825	50 698	63 343	60 310	109 984	109 284
Portugal	3 402	2 876	2 740	2 173	5 444	4 289
Romania	6 538	6 566	8 275	8 154	15 852	16 025
Slovenia	2 082	2 184	3 084	2 845	8 096	7 724
Slovakia	3 454	3 271	3 708	3 088	7 891	6 475
Finland	6 744	5 920	7 424	6 680	7 879	7 179
Sweden	11 393	11 075	8 941	8 253	10 681	7 968
Norway	4 538	5 304	4 327	4 196	4 641	5 254
Switzerland	2 770	2 531	684	543	617	495

(-) Not applicable

(:) Not available

(¹) Malta excluded (see chapter 'data sources')

Source: Eurostat (online data code: road_go_ta_dctg)
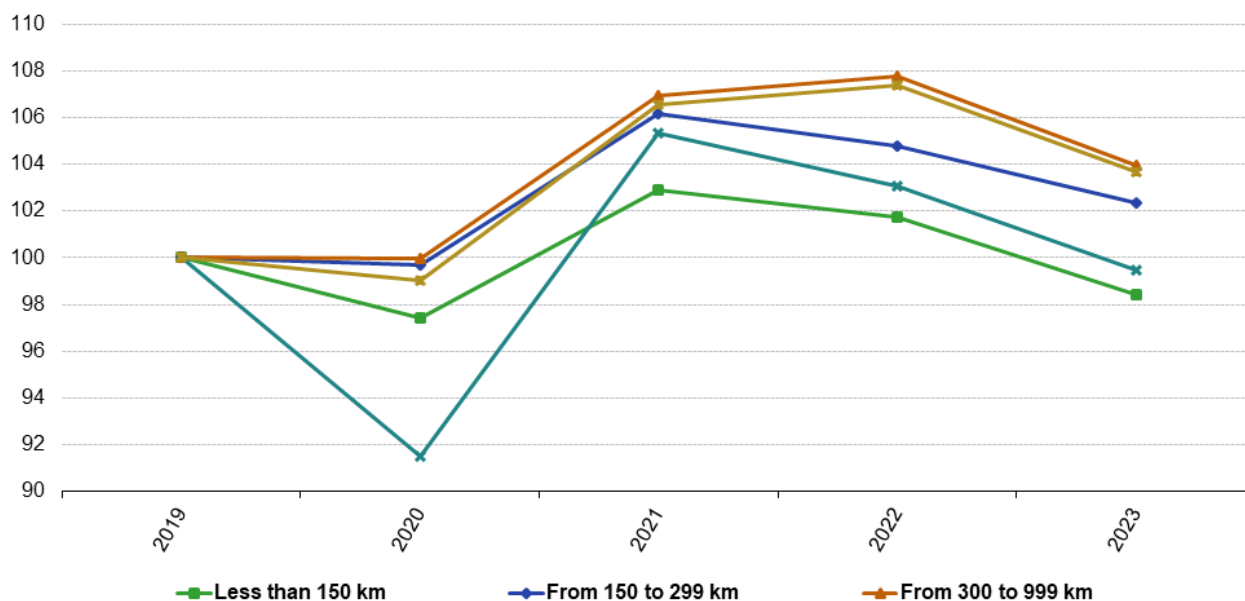
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Table 3: Road freight transport by distance class, 2022 and 2023 (million tonne-kilometres) Source: Eurostat (road_go_ta_dctg)

Figure 3 shows trends in road freight transport for different distance classes since 2019. Almost all distance classes recorded decreases in tonne-kilometres performed in 2020 compared with the previous year, ranging between -0.3 percentage points (pp) (for the distance class from 150 to 299 km) and -8.5 pp (for the distance class from 1 000 to 1 999 km). The only distance class which remained relatively unchanged was the one from 300 to 999 km. This development was heavily influenced by the COVID-19 crisis. The next year, following the post-COVID-19 recovery,

increases were recorded in all distance classes. The year 2021 was marked by strong increases in all distance classes, ranging from 13.9 pp (for the distance class from 1 000 to 1 999 km) to 5.5 pp (for the distance class of less than 150 km). Compared with 2021, in 2022 EU road freight transport decreased for the distance classes of less than 150 km; from 150 to 299 km; as well as for the class from 1 000 to 1 999 km (-1.1 pp, -1.4 pp and -2.3 pp, respectively). The remaining distance classes (from 300 to 999 km; and over 2 000 km) recorded increases of 0.8 pp each. Road freight transport by distance class continued to fall in 2023, with decreases in all classes: -3.8 pp from 300 to 999 km; -3.7 pp for over 2 000 km; -3.6 pp from 1 000 to 1 999 km; -3.3 pp for less than 150 km; and -2.4 pp from 150 to 299 km.

Figure 3: Road freight transport by distance class, EU, 2019-2023 (index based on tonne-kilometres; 2019=100) Source: Eurostat (road_go_ta_dctg)

Table 4 shows road freight transport by group of goods for 2022 and 2023, measured in tonnes, split between movements of less than 300 km and movements of 300 km or more. For transport of less than 300 km, 'transport equipment' and 'furniture' were the product groups that recorded the most significant increases (+13.4% and +10.4%, respectively). The highest decreases were recorded for 'Other non metallic mineral products' (-11%), 'metal ores and other mining and quarrying products' and 'unidentifiable goods' (-6.0% each). Overall, the tonnage transported for less than 300 km decreased by 3.4% from 2022 to 2023.

The tonnage transported for 300 km and more also decreased between 2022 and 2023. The most notable changes were the high increases for 'coal and lignite' and 'transport equipment' (up by 82.7% and 10.1%, respectively). The highest decreases were recorded for 'other goods' and 'other non metallic mineral products' (-18.8% and -14.1% respectively).

Road freight transport by distance class and group of goods (NST 2007), EU, 2022 and 2023
(thousand tonnes)

NST2007		Less than 300 km			300 km and more		
		2022	2023	Growth rate 2022-2023 (%)	2022	2023	Growth rate 2022-2023 (%)
TOT	Total transported goods	11 722 184	11 320 242	-3.4	1 897 726	1 832 376	-3.4
01	Products of agriculture, hunting, and forestry; fish and other fishing products	1 093 319	1 087 865	-0.5	185 114	179 523	-3.0
02	Coal and lignite; crude petroleum and natural gas	78 395	74 952	-4.4	12 545	22 916	82.7
03	Metal ores and other mining and quarrying products; peat; uranium and thorium	3 289 750	3 091 416	-6.0	51 873	50 790	-2.1
04	Food products, beverages and tobacco	1 256 889	1 223 007	-2.7	339 884	327 797	-3.6
05	Textiles and textile products; leather and leather products	36 132	35 050	-3.0	16 755	15 873	-5.3
06	Wood and products of wood and cork (except furniture); articles of straw and plaiting materials; pulp, paper and paper products; printed matter and recorded media	383 808	383 788	0.0	117 568	110 605	-5.9
07	Coke and refined petroleum products	376 113	371 425	-1.2	30 770	31 905	3.7
08	Chemicals, chemical products, and man-made fibres; rubber and plastic products ; nuclear fuel	391 416	382 225	-2.3	135 506	124 441	-8.2
09	Other non metallic mineral products	1 628 932	1 449 969	-11.0	129 631	111 346	-14.1
10	Basic metals; fabricated metal products, except machinery and equipment	394 575	402 016	1.9	135 389	131 459	-2.9
11	Machinery and equipment n.e.c.; office machinery and computers; electrical machinery and apparatus n.e.c.; radio, television and communication equipment and apparatus; medical, precision and optical instruments; watches and clocks	196 406	200 465	2.1	57 858	53 656	-7.3
12	Transport equipment	167 163	189 621	13.4	77 693	85 534	10.1
13	Furniture; other manufactured goods n.e.c.	70 992	78 399	10.4	45 520	49 411	8.5
14	Secondary raw materials; municipal wastes and other wastes	820 432	809 435	-1.3	54 958	49 780	-9.4
15	Mail, parcels	202 442	202 897	0.2	84 940	77 933	-8.2
16	Equipment and material utilized in the transport of goods	244 810	248 946	1.7	41 466	40 001	-3.5
17	Goods moved in the course of household and office removals; baggage and articles accompanying travellers; motor vehicles being moved for repair; other non market goods n.e.c.	102 281	102 081	-0.2	8 142	8 773	7.7
18	Grouped goods: a mixture of types of goods which are transported together	661 132	672 779	1.8	281 633	281 842	0.1
19	Unidentifiable goods: goods which for any reason cannot be identified and therefore cannot be assigned to groups 01-16	160 805	151 213	-6.0	29 724	29 429	-1.0
20	Other goods n.e.c.	166 392	162 693	-2.2	60 757	49 362	-18.8

Note: Malta excluded (see chapter 'data sources')
Source: Eurostat (online data code: road_go_ta_dctg)

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Table 4: Road freight transport by distance class and group of goods (NST 2007), EU, 2022 and 2023 (thousand tonnes) Source: Eurostat (road_go_ta_dctg)

In 2023, Germany, France, Spain, Poland and Italy together accounted for almost two thirds of the total tonnage transported in the EU

When looking at total transport in 2023, the tonnes of goods transported within Germany (national transport) or loaded/unloaded in Germany (international transport) represented almost one quarter of the total tonnage (22.8%) in the EU, with France and Spain also making up around one quarter together (12.4% and 11.7%, respectively). These countries, along with Poland and Italy accounted for close to two thirds (65.4%) of the total transport of goods by road in the European Union (see Figure 4).

Also, in terms of transport on the national territory, Germany, France, Spain, Poland and Italy recorded the high-

est tonnages among the EU countries in 2023.

Considering international transport (i.e., goods entering and leaving the country, including cross-trade), the pattern has not changed significantly over the last few years. International transport of goods loaded/unloaded in Germany remained the highest tonnage, ahead of France. The Netherlands and Belgium, with their large North Sea ports, also recorded relatively high tonnages of loaded/unloaded goods for international transport.
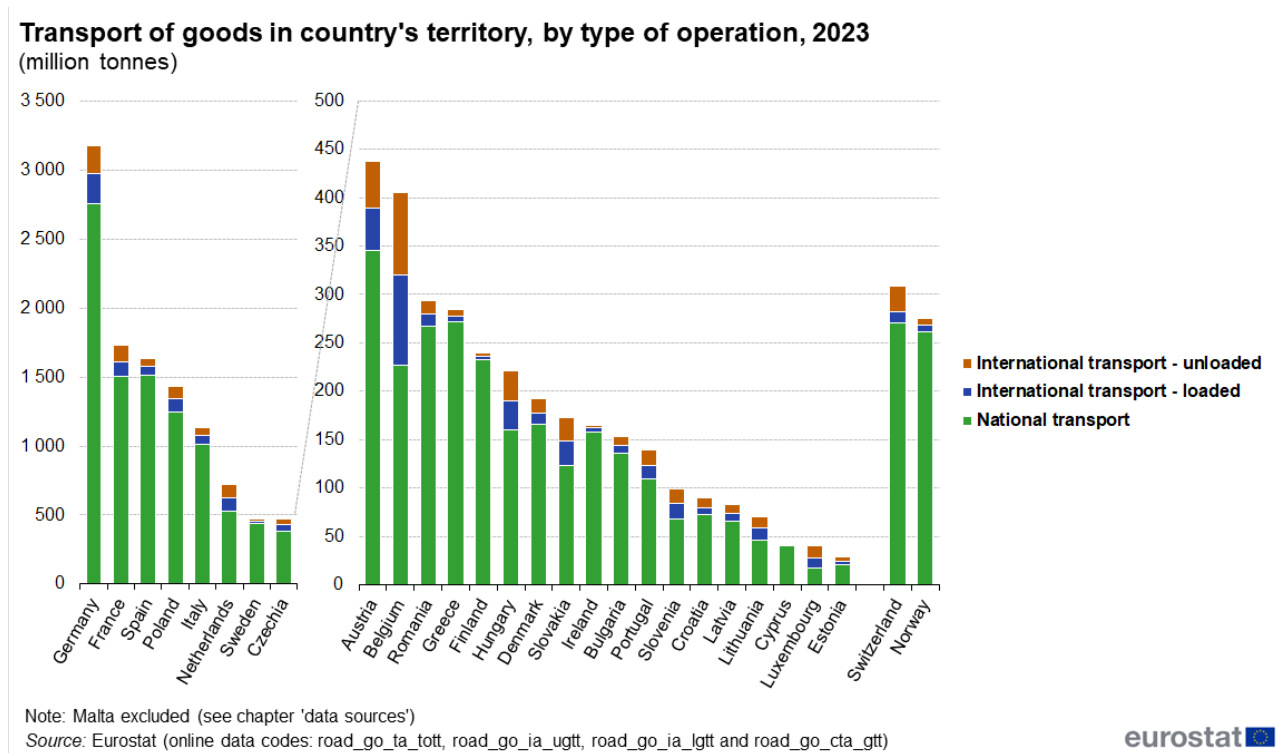
Transport of goods in country's territory, by type of operation, 2023
(million tonnes)

Note: Malta excluded (see chapter 'data sources')
Source: Eurostat (online data codes: road_go_ta_tott, road_go_ia_ugtt, road_go_ia_lgtt and road_go_cta_gtt)

Figure 4: Transport of goods in country's territory, by type of operation, 2023 (million tonnes) Source: Eurostat (road_go_ta_tott), (road_go_ia_ugtt), (road_go_ia_lgtt), (road_go_cta_gtt)

At the level of EU/extra-EU country-to-country freight transport flows (see Table 5), Switzerland, Norway and the United Kingdom were important trading partners. The main extra-EU flows have generally been between these countries and the EU country neighbouring them, except for the United Kingdom. In 2023, the 3 main such traffic flows were between Switzerland and Germany (16.5% of the total extra-EU road transport tonnage), followed by the flow between Norway and Sweden (9.1%) and the flow between Switzerland and France (7.2%).

Top 15 country-to-country flows in EU/extra-EU road freight transport, 2023
(million tonnes)

Rank	Pair of countries		Total tonnes (million)	% in total extra EU
1	Switzerland	Germany	16.1	16.5
2	Norway	Sweden	8.9	9.1
3	Switzerland	France	7.0	7.2
4	Switzerland	Italy	6.1	6.2
5	Ireland	United Kingdom	5.0	5.1
6	France	United Kingdom	4.7	4.8
7	Germany	United Kingdom	4.0	4.1
8	Poland	United Kingdom	3.3	3.4
9	Belarus	Poland	2.9	3.0
10	Spain	United Kingdom	2.7	2.7
11	Austria	Switzerland	2.6	2.6
12	Belgium	United Kingdom	2.6	2.6
13	Netherlands	United Kingdom	2.5	2.5
14	Bulgaria	Türkiye	1.9	1.9
15	Switzerland	Netherlands	1.5	1.5

Source: Eurostat (online data codes: road_go_ta_tott, road_go_ia_ugtt, road_go_ia_lgtt and road_go_cta_gtt)

Table 5: Top 15 country-to-country flows in EU/extra-EU road freight transport, 2023 Source: Eurostat (road_go_ta_tott), (road_go_ia_ugtt), (road_go_ia_lgtt), (road_go_cta_gtt)

Table 6 shows the tonnage transported in the top 20 country-to-country flows within the EU, as well as the nationality of the most important hauliers and their shares in the respective transport flows. Germany was either origin or destination in almost half of the top 20 country-to-country flows in 2023, illustrating the central role of Germany in intra-EU trade flows. However, German hauliers' share of the volumes transported was less than 50% in all country-to-country flows shown in Table 6, with as little as 3.5% in 2023 in the flow between Germany and Poland. German hauliers recorded their highest shares in the transport between Germany and Denmark (45.1%) and between Austria and Germany (28.9%).

The share of hauliers from other EU countries in the country-to-country transport flows varied substantially. In 2023, hauliers from other EU countries than the origin and destination countries carried 62.0% of the total volume transported between Germany and Italy, 58.7% between Germany and France, 58.6% between Belgium and Germany, 55.7% between Austria and Italy, and 52.4% between France and the Netherlands. At the other end of the scale, only 1.2% of the total tonnes between Czechia and Poland, 1.3% between Poland and Slovakia, 1.4% between Germany and Poland and 1.7% between Spain and Portugal were transported by hauliers from other countries.

Among hauliers from other EU countries than the origin and destination, Polish hauliers were by far the most important ones. Of the top 20 intra-EU country-to-country transport flows in 2023, Polish hauliers were the main transporters from and to other EU countries for 13 connections. Of the remaining 7 connections with 'other hauliers', Poland was the origin or destination country in 4 connections.

Top 20 country-to-country flows in intra-EU road freight transport, 2023
(million tonnes)

Rank	Pair of countries		Total tonnes (million)	Hauliers from country of origin (%)	Hauliers from destination country (%)	All other hauliers (%)	Main other haulier
1	Germany	Netherlands	83.3	23.8	49.8	26.4	Poland
2	Germany	Poland	69.2	3.5	95.1	1.4	Lithuania
3	Belgium	France	53.8	39.3	27.0	33.8	Poland
4	Belgium	Netherlands	53.2	17.7	68.9	13.4	Poland
5	Spain	France	50.0	78.3	8.2	13.5	Poland
6	Germany	France	41.5	27.6	13.8	58.7	Poland
7	Belgium	Germany	39.5	13.5	27.9	58.6	Poland
8	Austria	Germany	38.3	32.5	28.9	38.6	Poland
9	Czechia	Germany	29.3	62.1	17.4	20.5	Poland
10	Germany	Italy	25.3	13.2	24.8	62.0	Poland
11	Spain	Portugal	22.6	60.9	37.4	1.7	Romania
12	France	Italy	20.6	18.5	34.3	47.2	Lithuania
13	Czechia	Poland	20.2	7.8	91.0	1.2	Lithuania
14	France	Netherlands	18.3	7.4	40.2	52.4	Poland
15	Germany	Spain	13.5	4.0	58.7	37.3	Poland
16	Austria	Italy	12.3	27.0	17.3	55.7	Slovenia
17	Germany	Denmark	12.1	45.1	8.3	46.6	Poland
18	Poland	Slovakia	11.1	94.6	4.1	1.3	Romania
19	Czechia	Slovakia	10.9	40.9	54.6	4.5	Poland
20	Italy	Poland	9.6	0.8	97.0	2.2	Lithuania

Source: Eurostat (online data codes: road_go_ia_ugtt, road_go_ia_lgtt and road_go_cta_gtt)

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Table 6: Top 20 country-to-country flows in intra-EU road freight transport, 2023 Source: Eurostat (road_go_ia_ugtt), (road_go_ia_lgtt), (road_go_cta_gtt)

Source data for tables and graphs

* Road freight transport statistics

Context

Data presented in this publication were collected in the framework of Regulation (EU) No 70/2012 on statistical returns in respect of the carriage of goods by road (recast). These data are based on sample surveys carried out in the reporting countries, i.e., the EU Member States, Norway and Switzerland, and record the road goods transport undertaken by vehicles registered in these countries.

Reporting countries use their own national surveys for the collection of data based on returns from road hauliers. The results are microdata referring to vehicles and their linked journeys providing detailed information on goods transported. At the European level, common aggregation procedures have been used that might diverge from national practices. Differences might therefore occur between the figures in this publication and national values. For the distinction between national and international transport, journey information is used at the European level, which might cause differences in corresponding values from those countries that are using goods information for these statistics.

Data sources

Country specific notes

Croatia : While Croatia had no obligation prior to their accession in 2013, it started to report data for the reference year 2008.

Malta : Regulation (EU) No 70/2012 does not apply to Malta, so long as the number of Maltese-registered goods road transport vehicles licensed to engage in international transport does not exceed 400 vehicles.

Finland : National and international surveys have been harmonised and follow a common methodology from Q1 2011 onwards, leading to a break in time series in 2011.

Sweden : A break in series occurred in 2014 following a change in methodology. On the basis of a specific survey, Sweden corrected the European road freight survey results for trucks participating to the sample which were not in use over the surveyed period.

Liechtenstein : Liechtenstein reports only international road freight transport. Starting with the reference year 2014, Liechtenstein is exempted from the reporting of road freight data.

Methodological notes

EU totals calculated in this publication refer to road freight transport reported by the EU Member States, excluding Malta which is exempted from reporting road freight statistics.

Total transport

Total transport includes national transport, international transport of goods loaded in the reporting countries, international transport of goods unloaded in the reporting countries, cross-trade and cabotage transport.

National transport

Road transport between two places (a place of loading and a place of unloading) located in the same country, by a vehicle registered in that country.

International transport, loaded and unloaded

International transport as presented in this publication is based on goods loaded and unloaded in the reporting Member States. Each reporting country reports all activities of a road motor vehicle inside and outside its national territory. There is thus no risk of double counting at European level.

Breakdown by goods groups

Starting with the reference year 2008, Regulation (EC) No 1304/2007 establishes NST 2007 as the sole classification for goods carried in road freight transport. For detailed information on the NST 2007 classification, please refer to ' Metadata classification ', Eurostat's Metadata Server.

Transport by distance class

Eurostat disseminates road freight transport according to the following distance classes: less than 50 km; 50-149 km; 150-299 km; 300-499 km; 500-999 km; 1 000-1 999 km; 2 000-5 999 km; over 6 000 km.

More detailed data and metadata are available in the Eurostat dissemination database .

Goods entering a country

The volume of goods entering a country is the sum of international transport and cross-trade unloaded in the country by hauliers from all reporting countries.

Goods leaving a country

The volume of goods leaving a country is the sum of international transport and cross-trade loaded in the country by hauliers from all reporting countries.

Table 1 vs Table 2

The dissemination tables providing transport performance (in tkm) with a breakdown by group of goods are derived from basic goods transport operations (goods-related information) whereas dissemination tables without a breakdown by group of goods are derived from journey-related information. This may lead to small differences in the total tkm presented in different dissemination tables.

Figure 4

This figure presents volumes moved on the territory of each country if there is loading or unloading of the goods. Transit, where neither loading nor unloading takes place in the country traversed, is not included in this figure. The weight of goods in international transport is accounted for both in the country of loading and in the country of unloading. The weight of goods in national transport is accounted for only once.

Explore further

Other articles

- All articles on freight transport
- Road freight transport by journey characteristics
- Road freight transport by type of goods
- Road freight transport by vehicle characteristics
- Road freight transport statistics - cabotage

Database

- Transport , see:

Road transport (road)

Road freight transport measurement (road_go)

Dedicated section

- Transport

Publications

- Key figures on European transport — 2023 edition - Key figures
- Eurostat regional yearbook — 2023 edition - Flagship publications
- Key figures on Europe – 2023 edition - Key figures
- Energy, transport and environment statistics — 2020 edition - Statistical book

Main tables

- Transport , see:

Road transport (t_road)

Methodology

- Road freight transport measurement (ESMS metadata file)

- Glossary for transport statistics — 5th edition — 2019 - Manuals and guidelines

- Methodologies used in road freight transport surveys in Member States, EFTA and 3 candidate countries — 2023 edition - Manuals and guidelines

- Road freight transport methodology — Revised edition, August 2017 - Manuals and guidelines

Legislation

- Regulation (EU) No 70/2012 of 18 January 2012 on statistical returns in respect of the carriage of goods by road (recast)

- Regulation (EC) No 1304/2007 of 7 November 2007 amending Directive 95/64, Regulation (EC) No 1172/98, Regulations (EC) No 91/2003 and (EC) No 1365/2006 with respect to the establishment of NST 2007 as the unique classification for transported goods in certain transport modes