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Significant differences between regions in the stock of passenger cars and freight vehicles

There are significant disparities in the ownership of passenger cars within the regions of the different European countries.

The number of passenger cars per inhabitant provides an illustration of this phenomenon, with the highest regional rate registered in the European Union being more than eleven times the lowest one. At EU-27 level, the average rate is established at 0.54 passenger car per inhabitant in 2007.

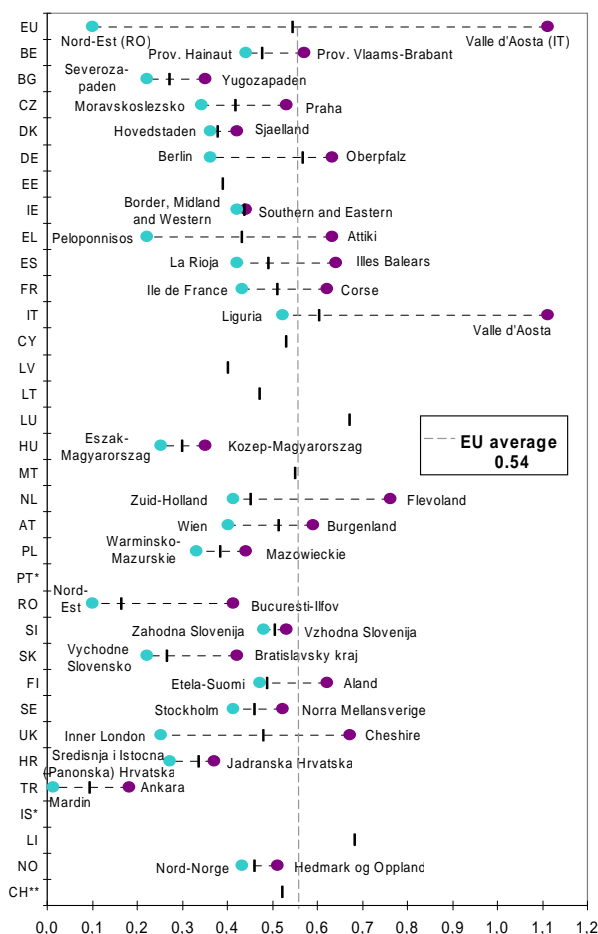
The ratio registered in the various regions is often linked to economical issues. The highest ratio within the European Union is observed in Vale d'Aosta (a region with specific low prices for gasoline).

Regions with high density of population present a different pattern depending on the countries considered. For the EU-15 countries, the lowest ratios are often observed in the capital region (notably Germany, France and the United Kingdom). The opposite trend applies for some new Member States (such as Czech Republic and Romania) and Turkey, for which the highest ratio is observed in the capital region.

The highest numbers of passenger cars per inhabitant are registered in West European regions, with a significant difference compared with the regions of the Centre and East of Europe.

The picture is however different when considering road freight vehicles, with less contrast between West and East European regions.

Graph 1: Regional disparities (at NUTS 2 level) in the number of passenger cars per inhabitant, 2007



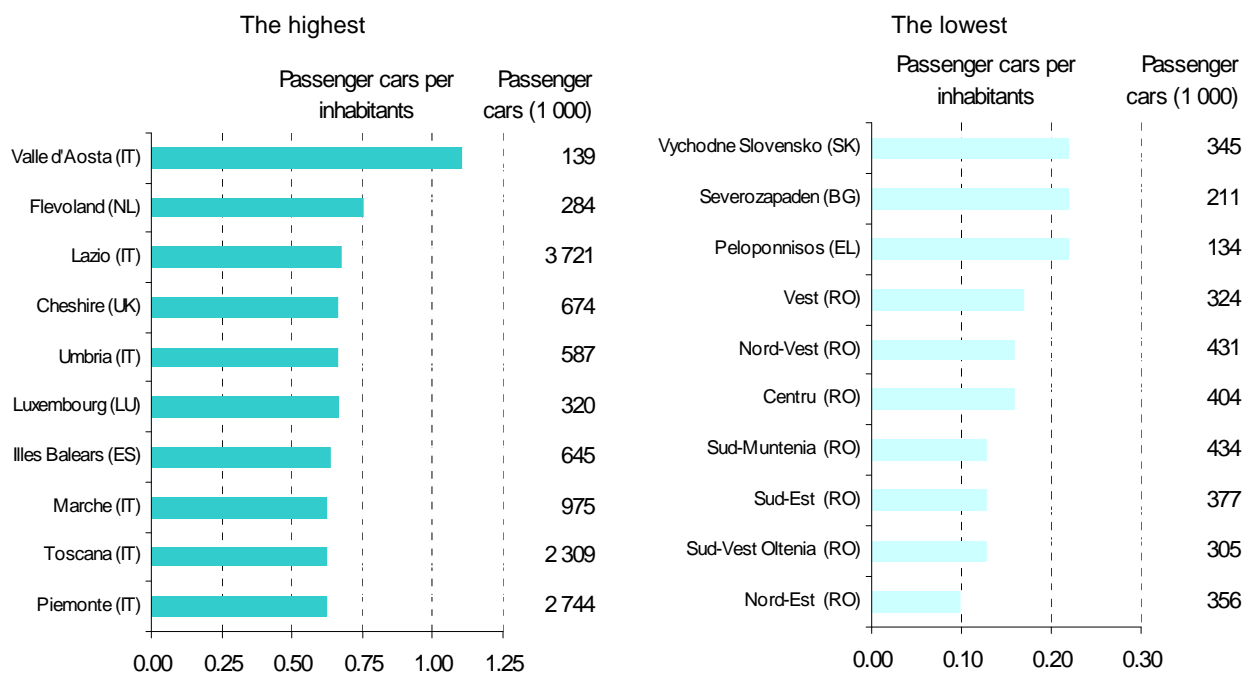
* PT and IS data not available ** CH data only available at national level

EE, CY, LV, LT, LU, MT, LI are composed of only one region at NUTS 2 level

Source: Eurostat ([tran_r_vehst](#) and [reg_d2jan](#))

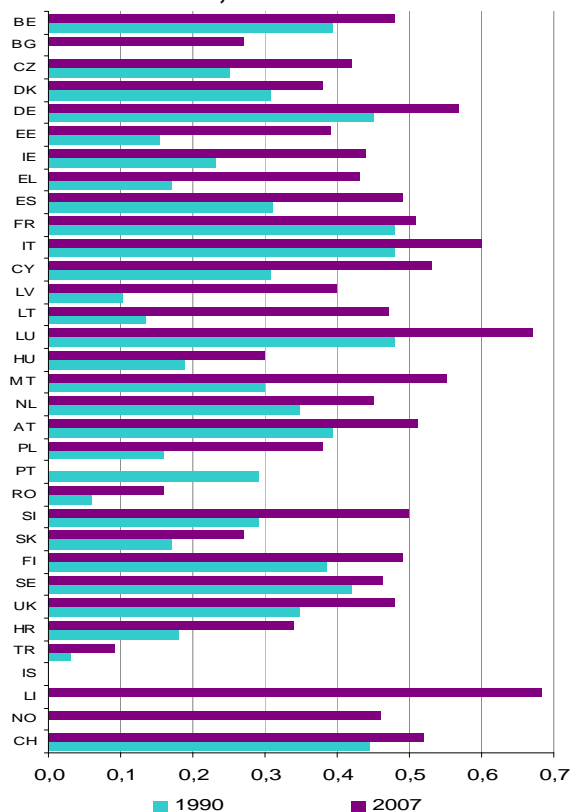
The highest number of passenger cars per inhabitant in regions of Northern Italy

Graph 2: EU-27 regions with the highest/lowest number of passenger cars per inhabitant, 2007



Source: Eurostat ([tran_r_vehst](#) and [reg_d2jan](#))

Graph 3: Number of passenger cars per inhabitant, 1990 and 2007



CZ: 1992 data instead of 1990 ; DK: passenger vans excluded – see methodological notes ; PL, RO: 1991 data instead of 1990 ; PT: 1991 data instead of 1990, data only for Portugal Continente (PT1), 2007 data not available ; HR, TR: 1990 data estimated ; CH: 2006 data instead of 2007.

Source: Eurostat ([tran_r_vehst](#) and [reg_d2jan](#))

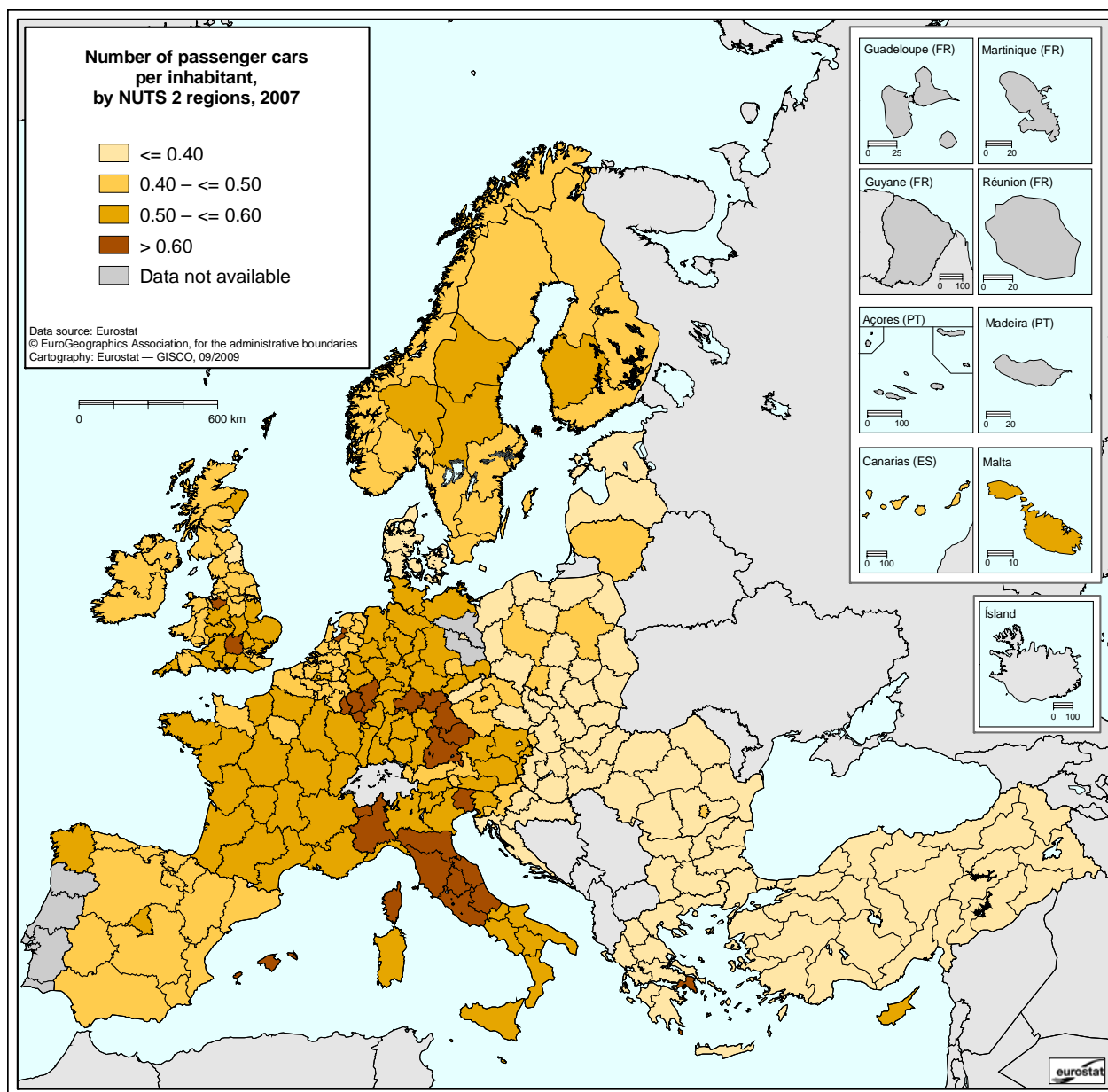
Graph 2 indicates that the Italian region Valle d'Aosta registers by far the highest number of passenger cars per inhabitant within the European Union while 6 out of the 10 regions with the highest rates are located in Italy.

On the other hand, seven out of the ten regions with the lowest number of passenger cars per inhabitant were located in Romania.

Graph 3 highlights however that, between 1990 and 2007, Romania registered the third highest average annual growth over the period among the EU-27 Member States (+5.9%), after Latvia (+8.3%) and Lithuania (+7.7%).

Turkey ranked between those countries with an average growth of 6.7%. In general, the newest Member States, Turkey and Croatia have been registering strongest growths over the 1990-2007 period compared to EU-15 countries.

Map 1: Number of passenger cars per inhabitant by NUTS 2 region, 2007



Source: Eurostat ([tran_r_vehst](#) and [reg_d2jan](#))

Map 1 highlights the significant disparities observed between countries of the EU-15 (except Greece) and countries which joined the EU in 2004 and 2007 when considering the number of passenger cars per inhabitant. In general, East European countries register the lowest numbers of passenger cars per inhabitant.

The underlying data show that in Romania and Slovakia, the capital region records more than 2.5 times and 1.5 times respectively the rate observed in the second-ranked region. As for Poland, the contrast observed on the map is mainly due to the size-classes defined, as the highest regional ratio is only 31% higher than the lowest one.

In comparison, West European countries register higher rates, but with various countries presenting marked regional disparities.

There is a clear north/south contrast in Italy, with the northern regions recording the highest number of passenger cars per inhabitant. In Greece, strong regional differences can be observed between the high rate registered in the capital region (0.78 passenger cars per inhabitant in the Attiki region) - and to a lesser degree on some islands - and the low rate observed for the other regions of the country.

Great regional differences can also be observed in the United Kingdom, with the highest regional rate 2.6 times the lowest.

Four of the top-5 EU-25 regions registering the greatest growth between 1997 and 2007 are located in Greece and three of them are exclusively composed of islands.

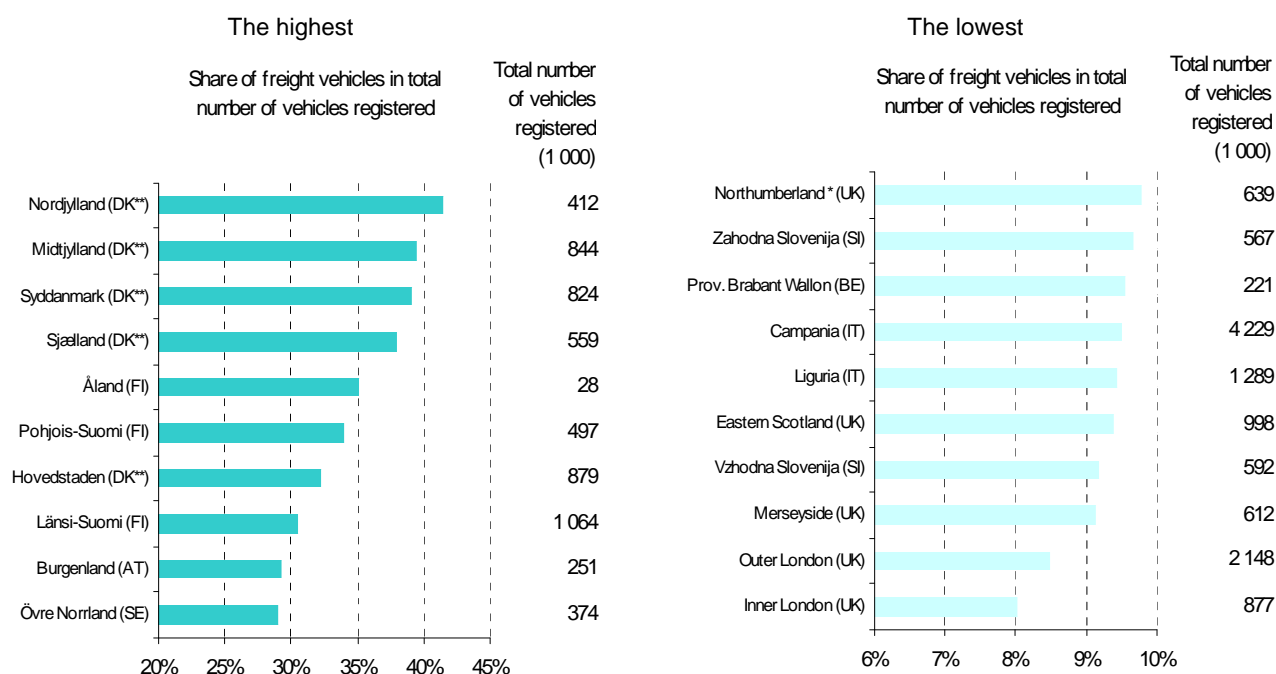
Generally speaking, Greece as a whole has registered an increase in the number of passenger cars, with 10 out of the top-15 EU regions with the

highest growths. Poland has 10 regions in the top-25.

The region Champagne-Ardenne in France is the only region to register a decline over the period, with around 10% fewer passenger cars per inhabitant in 2007 than in 1997. Considering the regions with the lowest growths, half of the top-eight regions are located in France and two regions of the top-four are in Germany.

The geographical position of the regions influences the stock of freight vehicles

Graph 4: Shares of freight vehicles in the total number of vehicles by NUTS 2 EU-27 regions, 2007



* Tyne and Wear. **DK: passenger vans included.

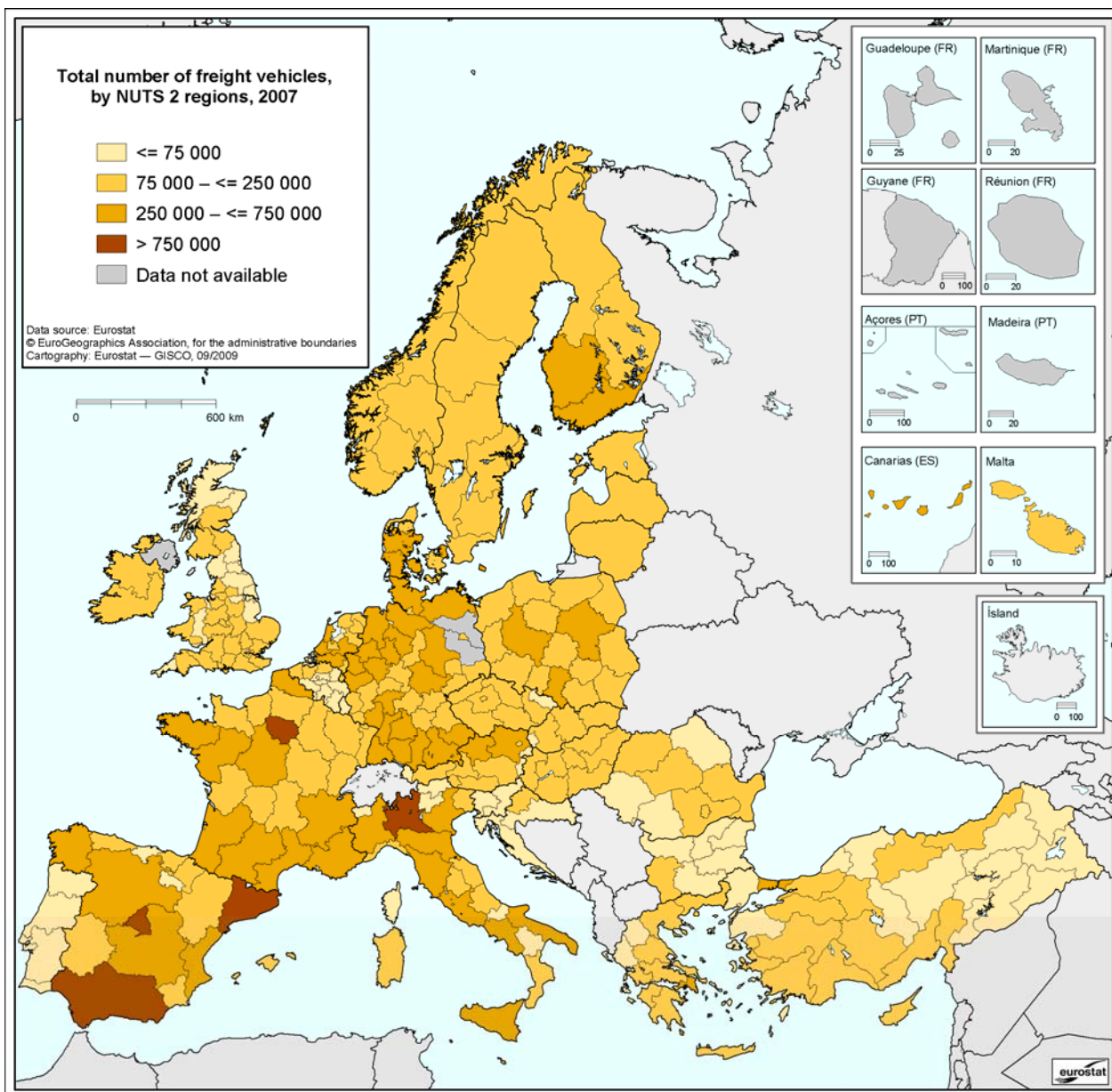
Source: Eurostat ([tran_r_vehst](#))

Five of the top-10 EU regions with the lowest shares of freight vehicles in all types of vehicles are located in the United Kingdom, and 16 of the top-25 regions.

The highest shares of freight vehicles are registered in Northern Europe regions: 9 of the top-10 regions with the highest shares of freight vehicles are located in Denmark, Finland and Sweden.

The average share of freight vehicles in all types of vehicles within the European Union was established at 20.3% in 2007. This was less than half the highest regional rate observed in Nordjylland region (41.5%), and 2.5 times the lowest rate observed in Inner London (8.0%). This particularly highlights the huge disparities existing in the regional structure of vehicles stocks.

Map 2: Total number of freight vehicles by NUTS 2 region, 2007



For Portugal, the source of the data is the National Statistical Institute (see methodological notes)

For Estonia, total number of freight vehicles excluding special purpose vehicles.

Source: Eurostat ([tran_r_vehst](#))

Among the five regions registering more than 750 thousand freight vehicles, two are located on the Mediterranean sea: Andalucía and Cataluña.

These two regions play a key role in freight transport in the West Mediterranean region, with direct ferry connections not only with the Spanish islands and Ceuta and Melilla, but especially

between Andalucía and Morocco and Algeria and between Cataluña and Italy.

The capital regions in France and Spain also register high stocks of freight vehicles, reflecting the importance of these economic and trade hubs within Europe.

The only other region registering more than 750 thousand freight vehicles is Lombardia. The geographical position of this region seems to play a key role in the regional need for freight vehicles: Lombardia, located at the heart of international freight corridors between Italy, France, Switzerland

and Austria, registers a very high volume of trans-Alpine freight transport.

This trans-alpine freight transport shows a steady increase which is likely to grow further over the next decades, particularly for road transport.

METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

Data sources

Eurostat collects regional statistics on the infrastructure of road, railways and inland waterways, as well as vehicle stocks and road accidents. The data are provided by the Member States, the Candidate Countries and some EFTA countries on a voluntary basis using the REGWEB online application. The data are collected at NUTS 2 level for these transport indicators.

Definitions

(Source: Glossary for transport statistics, 3rd edition)

- Passenger car: road motor vehicle, other than a motor cycle, intended for the carriage of passengers and designed to seat no more than nine persons (including the driver).

The term "passenger car" therefore covers microcars (need no permit to be driven), taxis and hired passenger cars, provided that they have fewer than ten seats. This category may also include pick-ups.

- Lorry: rigid road motor vehicle designed, exclusively or primarily, to carry goods.

This category includes vans which are rigid road motor vehicles designed exclusively or primarily to carry goods with a gross vehicle weight of not more than 3 500 kg. This category may also include pick-ups.

- Road tractor: road motor vehicle designed, exclusively or primarily, to haul other road vehicles which are not power-driven (mainly semi-trailers).

Agricultural tractors are excluded.

- Trailer: goods road vehicle designed to be hauled by a road motor vehicle.

This category excludes agricultural trailers and caravans.

- Semi-trailer: goods road vehicle with no front axle designed in such way that part of the vehicle and a substantial part of its loaded weight rests on the road tractor.

- Special purpose road vehicle: road vehicle designed for purposes other than the carriage of passengers or goods.

This category includes e.g. fire brigade vehicles, ambulances, mobile cranes, self-propelled rollers, bulldozers with metallic wheels or track, vehicles for recording film, radio and TV programmes, mobile library vehicles, towing vehicles for vehicles in need of repair, and other road vehicles not specified elsewhere.

Country Specific Notes

- DK Stocks of vans for passenger transport and vans for freight transport cannot be distinguished and are included altogether under freight vehicles.

EE Special purpose road vehicles only include self-propelled rollers.

PT Total (mainland) number of freight vehicles was provided by NSI of Portugal based on Road Freight Transport Survey (Norte – 37170; Centro – 31010; Lisboa – 48011; Alentejo – 5556; Algrave – 4504). The data are not available in Eurostat's dissemination tables because no data by type of freight vehicles are presented.

UK The number of passenger cars registered in the Cheshire region is overestimated due to the presence of headquarters of a leasing company.

Number of passenger cars per inhabitant

For a given year, this indicator is calculated on the basis of the stock of vehicles as of 31st December and the population figures as of 1st January of the following year.

Regional breakdown

The Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics (NUTS) was established by Eurostat more than 30 years ago in order to provide a single uniform breakdown of territorial units for the production of regional statistics for the European Union. From 1 May 2004, the regions in the 10 new Member States were added and from 1 January 2007 the regions of Bulgaria and Romania.

Data used are figures at different levels of NUTS 2006 as defined in the following legal acts:

- [Regulation \(EC\) No 1059/2003](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 May 2003 on the establishment of a common classification of territorial units for statistics (NUTS);
- [Regulation \(EC\) No 1888/2005](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 October 2005 amending Regulation (EC) No 1059/2003 on the establishment of a common classification of territorial units for statistics (NUTS) by reason of the accession of the Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia to the European Union;

- [Commission Regulation \(EC\) No 105/2007](#) of 1 February 2007 amending the annexes to Regulation (EC) No 1059/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of a common classification of territorial units for statistics (NUTS)

- [Regulation \(EC\) No 176/2008](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 February 2008 amending Regulation (EC) No 1059/2003 on the establishment of a common classification of territorial units for statistics (NUTS) by reason of the accession of Bulgaria and Romania to the European Union.

Certain smaller countries are not sub-divided in NUTS regions. This is the case for Estonia (EE), Cyprus (CY), Latvia (LV), Lithuania (LT), Luxembourg (LU), Malta (MT) and Liechtenstein (LI).

Country codes

Aggregates

EU: European Union, including the 27 Member States (EU-27)

EU-27 countries

Belgium (BE), Bulgaria (BG), the Czech Republic (CZ), Denmark (DK), Germany (DE), Estonia (EE), Greece (EL), Spain (ES), France (FR), Ireland (IE), Italy (IT), Cyprus (CY), Latvia (LV), Lithuania (LT), Luxembourg (LU), Hungary (HU), Malta (MT), the Netherlands (NL), Austria (AT), Poland (PL), Portugal (PT), Romania (RO), Slovenia (SI), Slovakia (SK), Finland (FI), Sweden (SE) and the United Kingdom (UK).

Candidate Countries

Croatia (HR), Turkey (TR)

EFTA countries

Liechtenstein (LI); Norway (NO), Switzerland (CH)

This publication was prepared with the assistance of Christiane Gengler (data) and Mathieu Erzar (commentary).

Further information

Eurostat Website: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat>

Data on "Transport statistics"

<http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/transport/data/database>

Select "regional transport statistics"

Data on "Demography – regional data"

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More information about "Transport statistics"

<http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/transport/introduction>

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