

**Standard Report
on
Methods and Quality
for
VEHICLE LICENSING**

This documentation applies to the reporting period:
2009

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1. Overview

The vehicle licensing release provides detailed monthly and annual information on the number of vehicles licensed for the first time in the Republic of Ireland. Data is collected at the time of first licensing by the Department of Transport via their network of Motor Tax Offices and this administrative data is then used by CSO to produce the monthly and annual releases. The survey population is all vehicles licensed for the first time in a particular time period. Data is collected and presented on the variables type of vehicle, fuel, make, emission band, size class, new/second-hand status and county of licensing for each vehicle licensed.

2. General information

2.1 Statistical Category

Statistical compilation based on administrative data.

2.2 Area of Activity

Transport Statistics

Services Division

2.3 Organisational Unit Responsible, Persons to Contact

Services Division

Transport Section

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2.4 Objectives and purpose; history

The release titled 'Vehicles Licensed for the First Time' commenced in January 1993. It replaced the series previously published as 'Particulars of Vehicles Registered and Licensed for the First Time'.

In January 1993, separate systems for vehicle registration and licensing were introduced. The Office of the Revenue Commissioners became responsible for the compilation of vehicle registrations while the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government retained responsibility for vehicle licensing. In January, 2008, responsibility for vehicle licensing was transferred to the Department of Transport.

2.5 Periodicity

Monthly and Annual

2.6 Client

General National Requirement

2.7 Users

- Motor Industry - to monitor the activity in the sector
- Researchers
- General Public
- Government Department and Agencies – to monitor the economic and environmental impact of the motor trade

2.8 Legal basis

None

3. Statistical concepts, methods

3.1 Subject of the statistics

To provide detailed monthly and annual information on the number and types of vehicles licensed for the first time in the Republic of Ireland.

3.2 Units of observation/collection units/units of presentation

Data is collected and also presented on the number of vehicles licensed for the first time by the variables vehicle type, fuel, make, size class, emission rating, county of licensing and new/second-hand status

3.3 Data sources

Administrative Data is received monthly from the Vehicle Registration Unit (VRU) of the Department of Transport via a secure link from the Department of Transport's website.

3.4 Reporting unit/respondents

Not Applicable - Survey involves use of Administrative data.

3.5 Type of survey/Process

Compilation based on Administrative Data

3.6 Characteristics of the sample

3.6.1 Population and Sampling Frame

Full Census. A file recording all the registered vehicles for a particular month which are licensed for the first time is received from Department of Transport.

3.6.2 Sampling Design

Full Census.

3.7 Survey technique/data transfer

Data file is placed in a secure site on the Department of Transport website from which it is downloaded by CSO staff each month.

3.8 Questionnaire (incl. Explanations)

Not Applicable

3.9 Participation in the survey

Not relevant

3.10 Characteristics of the survey/Process and its Results

The data file that is received monthly from Department on Transport contains the following variables for each vehicle:

- Licensing Authority

- Month of First Registration
- Registration Number
- Simi Code
- Make Code
- Model
- Tax Code (Type of vehicle class)
- Fuel Type
- New/Secondhand Indicator
- Description
- Unladen Weight (For goods vehicles)
- Engine Capacity (For private cars and Motorcycles)
- Body Type

A simple aggregation is then carried out on the data and the following classification variables are reported on in the publication:

- Number of private cars licensed by Make, Licensing Authority, Fuel, Engine Capacity, New/Second-hand Indicator, Emission Band
- Number of goods vehicles licensed by Make, Licensing Authority, Fuel, Unladen Weight, New/Second-hand Indicator
- Number of motor cycles licensed by Make, Licensing Authority, Fuel, Engine Capacity, New/Second-hand Indicator,
- Number of other vehicle classes licensed by Make, Licensing Authority, Fuel, Engine Capacity, New/Second-hand Indicator
- Number of new vehicles by type and fuel
- Number of new and second-hand vehicles by type of vehicle

3.11 Classifications used

The Vehicle Licensing release uses a number of in-house and general EU classifications. An example of an in-house classification Tran.Fuel_Code which is a fuel type classification that lists 8 types of fuel that vehicles are powered by. An example of a general EU Classification would be NUTS (Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics) which is a geographical classification, level 4 of which identifies Irish counties.

3.12 Regional breakdown of results

Results are classified by Licensing Authority from which data can be extracted to a NUTS level 4. Each county has at least one licensing authority. For counties with large cities, two or more licensing authorities may exist (eg Limerick City and Limerick County are two separate licensing authorities).

4. Production of the statistics, Data processing, Quality Assurance

4.1 Data capture

Data is received monthly from the VRU of the Department of Transport via a secure link to Department of Transport website. This data is read, validated and edited by a SAS¹ application. The clean data is then stored in a SAS dataset.

4.2 Coding

Coding is based on classifications used as detailed in 3.11. The data has already been coded as part of the data collection process by the Motor Tax Office's.

4.3 Data Editing

Data editing is carried out automatically by the SAS system used to read the data. Edit and validation checks are done on the data file received from VRU to ensure that all codes used are valid and that there is consistency between the

¹ Originally *Statistical Analysis System*, SAS is an integrated system of software products provided by [SAS Institute](https://www.sas.com).

various vehicle details given for each vehicle. Duplicate checks are also performed as corrections can be made if a vehicle details were recorded incorrectly during licensing which results in the correct details of a vehicle appearing in the next available monthly file. Any queries that arise are forwarded to VRU for clarification.

4.4 Imputation (for non-response or incomplete data sets)

Not Applicable as no non response.

4.5 Grossing and Weighting

Not applicable

4.6 Computation of Outputs, Estimation Methods Used

Outputs are compiled by simple aggregation using the SAS system.

4.7 Other Quality Assurance Techniques Used

None

5. Quality

5.1 Relevance

The vehicle licensing data is of major relevance for the motor industry as an indicator of how the sector is performing. It is also of particular use and relevance to Government Department and Agencies in how they implement and monitor policies and recommendations relating to the motor sector of the economy.

5.2 Accuracy and Reliability

5.2.1 Sampling effects, representativity

Not applicable as census of all vehicles licensed.

5.2.2 Non Sampling effects

5.2.2.1 Quality of the data sources used

Department of Transport provide the most up to date data available. If an error is discovered with the details recorded for any vehicles the correct details are forwarded to the CSO for updating.

5.2.2.2 Register Coverage

Not applicable as census of all vehicles licensed.

5.2.2.3 Non-response (unit and item)

Not applicable as census of all vehicles licensed.

5.2.2.4 Measurement errors

The licensing data for each vehicle is cross checked by both the VRU and the individual Motor Tax Offices. As a vehicle can only be licensed once on the VRU system the likelihood of any significant measurement errors are small.

5.2.2.5 Processing errors

Edit checks are done on the data file received from VRU to ensure that all codes used are valid and that there is consistency between the various vehicle details given for each vehicle. No processing errors are possible as each variable is cross checked against the classifications used for the variables to ensure it is valid. Any variable that is highlighted as a result of the edit checks carried out on the data is forwarded to VRU for clarification and updated where necessary. As the data file received from the VRU is uploaded directly into the SAS system, there is a very low possibility of error at the data capture stage.

5.2.2.6 Model-related effects

Not Applicable

5.3 Timeliness and punctuality

5.3.1 Provisional results

Only final results are produced.

5.3.2 Final results

Final data for each month are published T+3 weeks after the end of the survey period in the *Vehicle Licensed for the First Time* release.

5.4 Coherence

Monthly data is compared to the previous month and to the corresponding month in previous year to ensure consistency.

The licensing process where applicable follows the registration process. Registration and licensing figures may differ in a given month for a number of reasons some of which are outlined below;

- Vehicles which under the previous system would have been licensed in the latter part of a particular month may not be licensed until a later month because of the time lapse between registration and first licensing.
- Registered vehicles which are not used in a public place (e.g. tractors for use exclusively on the land may not need to be licensed.

5.5. Comparability

The published licensing data is compared with data from other countries to identify if similar trends exist. It is also compared with registration and industry data for comparability. A detailed time series of vehicle licensing data is available on the CSO's databank with a time series available back to 1965.

5.6 Accesibility and Clarity

5.6.1 Assistance to Users, Special Analyses

Detailed tables are provided to Motor Industry as requested. A detailed time series of vehicle licensing data is available on the CSO's databank with a time series available back to 1965. In addition paper copies of vehicle licensing releases are available from 1954 to date.

5.6.2 Revisions

The data are not revised.

5.6.3 Publications

5.6.3.1 Releases, Regular Publications

Vehicles Licensed for the First time, Monthly (Electronic release only since March 2009)

Vehicles Licensed for the First Time, Annual (may be discontinued in 2009)

5.6.3.2 Statistical Reports

Transport 2006 (Transport Omnibus)

Transport 2007 (Transport Omnibus)

Ireland - North and South, A statistical profile

Statistical Yearbook of Ireland

5.6.3.3 Internet

http://www.cso.ie/releasespublications/documents/transport/VEHLICM2009M08/vehlicm_Aug2009.htm- Most recent monthly release

<http://www.cso.ie/releasespublications/documents/transport/current/vehlica.pdf> - Most recent annual release

<http://tinyurl.com/vehiclelicensedmonthly> - link to Vehicle Licensing content on CSO Databank

5.6.4 Confidentiality

All data are treated as strictly confidential in accordance with Part V of the Statistics Act, 1993.

Detailed tables relating to the first licensing of Agricultural Tractors are not published until the data is 1 year old for confidentiality reasons in accordance with Commission Decision 92/157/EEC as upheld on 29 May, 1998..

6 Additional documentation and publications

Vehicle licensing data is also published in the Department of Transport's Annual Report and the annual Department of Transport publication " Irish Bulletin of Vehicle and Driver Statistics". In addition the entry for this statistic under StatCentral (the portal to Ireland's official statistics) is at: <http://www.statcentral.ie/viewStat.asp?id=34>