

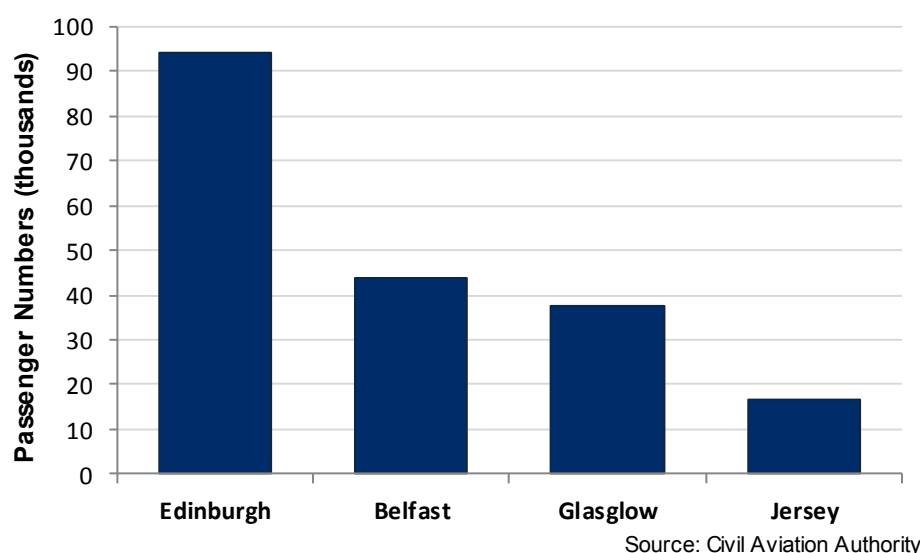
## Air transport in Wales during 2016

27 July 2017  
SB 40/2017

### Key points

- The total number of passengers using Cardiff International Airport increased by 16.1 per cent between 2015 in 2016, to 1.3 million ([Table 1](#)).
- During 2016 there were 77 international routes that operated out of Cardiff International Airport. This was an increase of 4 routes when compared to 2015.
- There were 26,256 aircraft movements at Cardiff International Airport in 2016. This was a 4.7 per cent increase on the 2015 figures (Table 2).
- There were 16,563 commercial aircraft movements at Cardiff International Airport (Table 2).
- There were 9,693 non-commercial aircraft movements (Table 2).

**Chart 1: Most popular UK destinations from Cardiff Airport, 2016**



### About this bulletin

This Statistical Bulletin shows information about Cardiff International Airport as this is the only major domestic and international airport in Wales. It includes results from the latest Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) passenger survey carried out in 2015. All the information shown was originally compiled by the CAA, further information of this source is in the notes section. Any references to tables 2 and 3 (apart from the Air Passenger Survey), refer to the table numbers in the accompanying Excel file.

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## Introduction

Air transport is an important driver for economic development. It connects Wales to the global economy which facilitates inward investment and trade. It provides a gateway for business and leisure passengers, which is an enabler for tourism and helps support industry.

During 2016, 268.5 million passengers travelled through UK airports with Heathrow the busiest with 75.7 million passengers, followed by Gatwick (43.1 million passengers), Manchester (25.6 million passengers) and Stansted (24.3 million passengers). Cardiff was the 19th busiest airport in the UK with 1.3 million passengers, which accounted for 0.5 per cent of the UK total.

## Cardiff Airport

Cardiff Airport saw an increase of 16.1 per cent in passenger numbers in 2016 when compared to 2015. The Airport saw an increase in the number of routes in 2016 with Flybe and Thomson Airways being the largest carriers. The majority of passengers fly to international destinations.

## Domestic routes

236,614 passengers travelled to other UK airports in 2016. The largest proportion of these passengers travelled between the main domestic routes of Edinburgh (94,288 passengers), Belfast (43,847 passengers), Glasgow (37,714 passengers), Jersey (16,630 passengers) and Newcastle (13,664 passengers) (Table 3 and [Chart 1](#)).

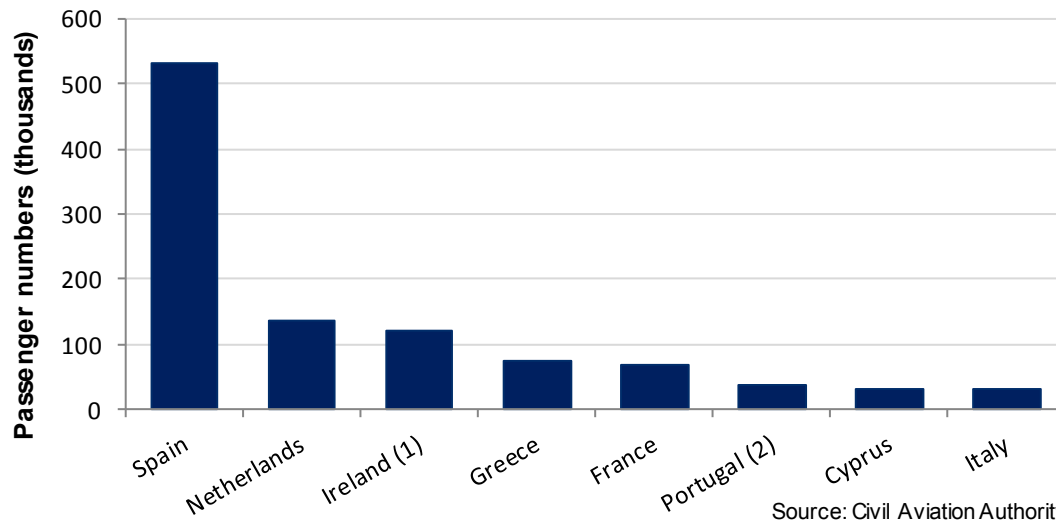
In 2016, the largest increases in passenger numbers at Cardiff Airport were on routes to/from Gatwick and Glasgow, when compared to 2015. The largest decrease in passenger numbers at Cardiff Airport were on routes to/from Stanstead when compared to 2015. Flybe introduced a new route to London City in 2016 and had 12,425 passengers. This route was introduced initially to cover the six weeks that the Severn rail tunnel was closed, however due to the routes popularity; it extended its operation through to the end of its summer schedule. Flybe are hoping that the demand for this route will continue to grow to enable it to become a firmly established route on the Cardiff schedule.

Overall there were 61,375 more passengers that used the Airport to travel to other UK airports in 2016 compared to 2015.

## International routes

During 2016, over 1,114,001 passengers used Cardiff airport to travel to overseas destinations ([Chart 2](#)).

**Chart 2: Most popular overseas destinations from Cardiff Airport by country in 2016**



**Notes:**

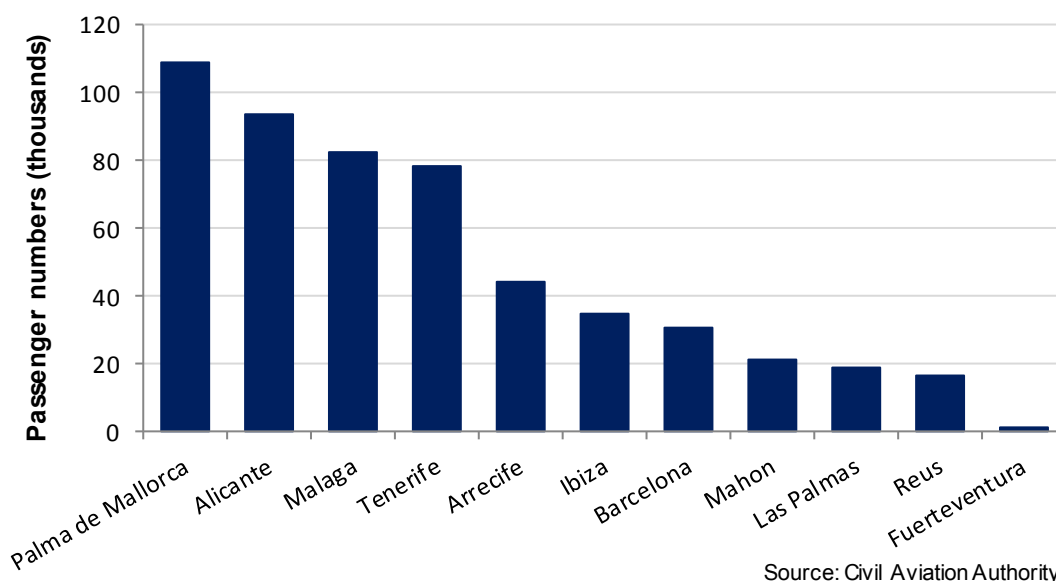
(1) Refers to the Republic of Ireland only

(2) Excludes Maderia

## Spain

Spain is the most popular destination with over 530 thousand passengers (531,726); of which 143,552 visited the Canary Islands ([Chart 3](#)). Spain represents 48 per cent of all International travel through Cardiff Airport. The key destinations to the Spanish mainland were Palma de Mallorca (109,021), Alicante (93,424) and Malaga (82,596). In the Canary Islands, Tenerife was the most popular destination with 78,587 visitors followed by Arrecife (44,412). Fuerteventura had the lowest passenger numbers of Spanish areas, with 1,483 visitors ([Chart 3](#)).

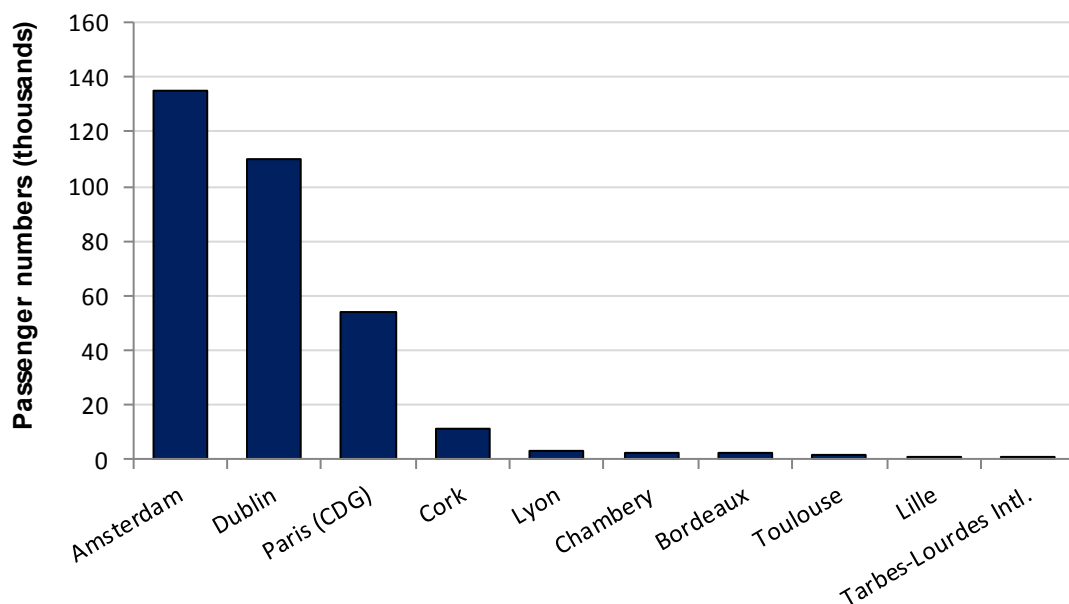
**Chart 3: Main Spanish destinations from Cardiff Airport in 2016**



## Netherlands, Republic of Ireland and France

Key international routes are to Amsterdam in the Netherlands (135,032 passengers), Dublin in the Republic of Ireland (110,320 passengers) and Paris Charles de Gaulle Airport in France (54,104 passengers). The Netherlands represents 12 per cent (135,032 passengers), Republic of Ireland represents 11 per cent (122,225 passengers) and France represents 6 per cent (67,325 passengers) of all International travel through Cardiff Airport ([Chart 4](#)). Paris, Amsterdam and Dublin are key hub airports that offer the Welsh travelling public the opportunity for onward connections to a wider range of destinations.

**Chart 4: Main Dutch, Irish (Republic of) and French destinations from Cardiff Airport in 2016**



Source: Civil Aviation Authority

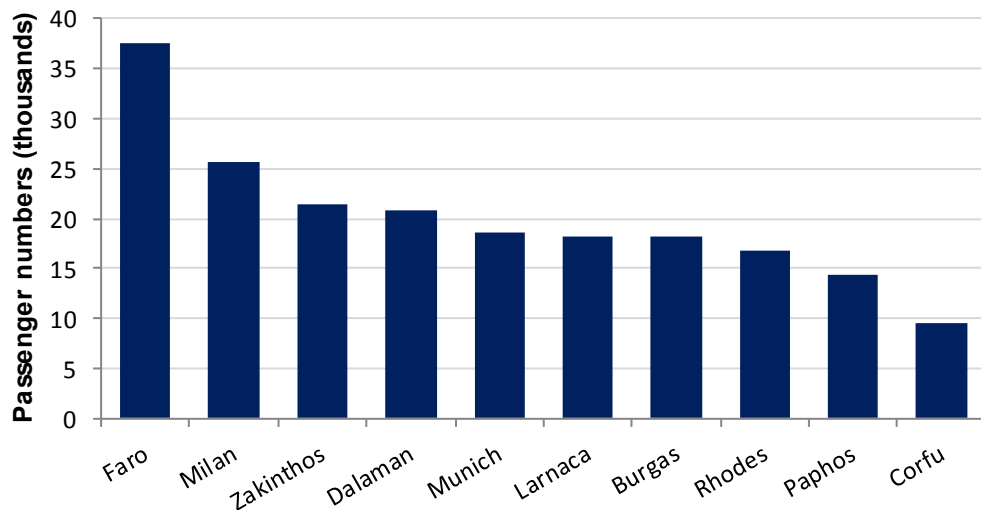
**Notes:**

1. Netherlands = Amsterdam
2. Ireland = Republic of Ireland - Dublin and Cork
3. France = Paris (Charles De Gaulle), Lyon, Chambéry, Bordeaux, Toulouse, Lille and Tarbes-Lourdes International

## Other destinations

Faro was the most popular of the other destinations with 37,614 passengers). 72,950 passengers visited Greek destinations like Corfu (9,577 passengers), Kos (8,551 passengers), Rhodes (16,731 passengers), Kefallinia (7,474 passengers), Heraklion (9,259 passengers) and Zakynthos (21,358 passengers). Other popular destinations include Milan (25,603 passengers), the coastal plain of Dalaman in Turkey (20,869 passengers) and Munich (18,674 passengers). A further 32,547 passengers visited Larnaka and Paphos in Cyprus ([Chart 5](#)).

**Chart 5: Other popular destinations from Cardiff Airport in 2016**



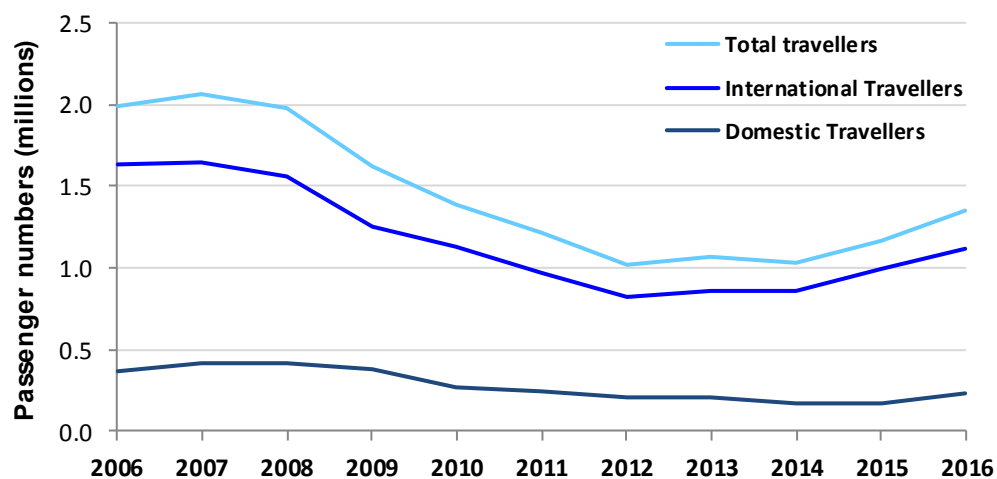
Source: Civil Aviation Authority

## Longer term trends

Domestic and international passenger numbers have been declining over the longer term. Numbers peaked to 2,060,184 in 2007 but sharply declined by over a half to 1,021,540 in 2012 ([Chart 6](#)). The onset of the recession saw a number of carriers who operated from the Airport either cease trading or reduced route capacity.

Passenger numbers overall have increased in 2015 and 2016, but these numbers are still below the peak of 2007. 2016 saw an increase of 16 per cent in passenger numbers when compared to 2015.

**Chart 6: Passenger numbers at Cardiff Airport from 2006 to 2016**



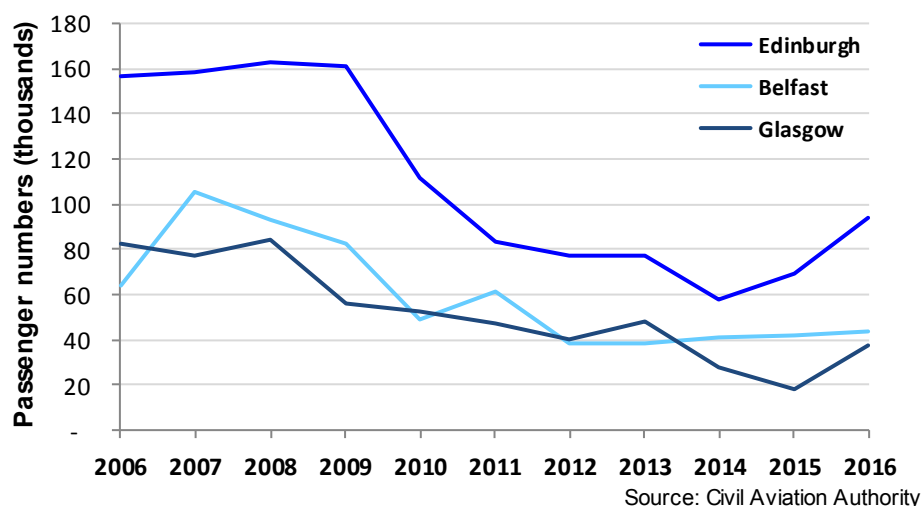
Source: Civil Aviation Authority

Both domestic and international routes have seen a marked decline since 2008. On the key domestic routes, Edinburgh has declined from 162,556 in 2008 to 94,288 in 2016; for Glasgow numbers have fallen from 83,986 in 2008 to 37,714 in 2016; and for Belfast<sup>1</sup>, numbers have dropped from 105,960 in 2007 to a low of 38,389 in 2013 ([Table 2](#) and [Chart 7](#)).

When compared to 2015, 2016 saw increases in passenger numbers on the Edinburgh, Belfast and Glasgow route. The largest increase was on the Glasgow route (108 per cent) and the smallest increase was on the Belfast route (4 per cent). The Edinburgh route had an increase of 36 per cent.

<sup>1</sup> Belfast totals include both Belfast International and Belfast City (George Best) Airports

**Chart 7: Most popular domestic destinations within the UK 2006-2016**

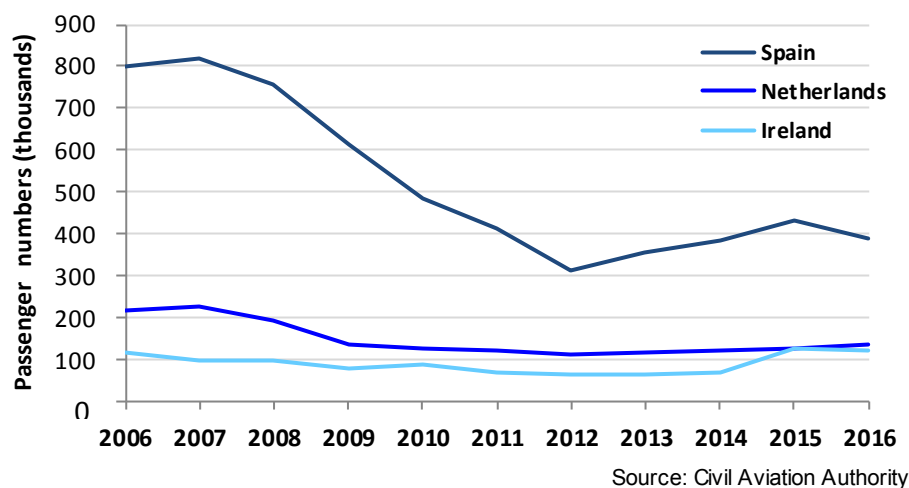


**Notes:**

1. Belfast includes Belfast City Airport (George Best) and Belfast International Airport

International passenger numbers have also declined in recent years, with numbers falling from their peak of 1,647,655 in 2007 to 818,163 in 2012. Since 2012, passenger numbers have been steadily increasing to 1,114,001 in 2016. Passenger numbers to the Netherlands have declined from a peak of 225,570 in 2007 to 111,960 in 2012. Since 2012, passenger numbers have been increasing and the 135,032 passengers in 2016 represents a 5 per cent increase on the 2015 numbers ([Chart 8](#)). Passenger numbers to Ireland declined from 119,655 in 2006 to a low of 63,799 in 2012. The numbers have since recovered since 2012 due to the introduction of the Flybe routes to Dublin and Cork. In 2016, there were 122,225 passengers on this route which represents a 5 per cent decrease when compared to the 2015 numbers ([Chart 8](#)). Spanish destinations have seen the largest falls from over 816,784 in 2007 to a low of 313,632 in 2012. The 2016 passenger numbers of 388,174 represents a 10 per cent decrease on the 2015 Spanish passenger numbers ([Chart 8](#)).

**Chart 8: Main international destinations by country 2006-2016**

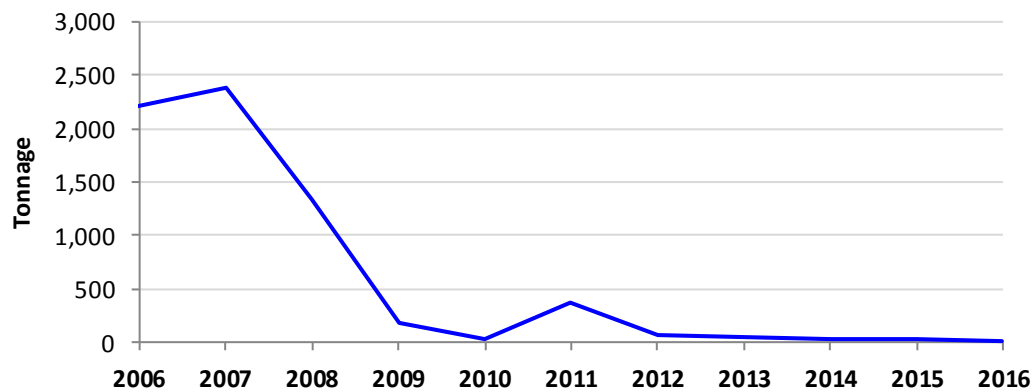


## Air freight

In 2016, freight volume at Cardiff Airport was 4.58 tonnes, the majority of this (3.1 tonnes) was set down whilst the remaining 1.48 tonnes of freight was picked up. Air freight has declined dramatically over the last 10 years ([Chart 9](#)). Up until 2008 over a one thousand tonnes of freight was still being transported through the Airport. However, since 2012 the annual volume of freight has been below 70 tonnes, fluctuating in range from 66.14 tonnes in 2012 to a low of 4.58 tonnes in 2016.

The users of air freight are those with high value goods that need to be transported in small quantities or perishable goods, such as food and medicine that have a short lifespan. The main industries for example that use next day deliveries are electronics, telecoms, vehicles and auto parts, biotech and health.

**Chart 9: Freight at Cardiff Airport from 2006 to 2016**



Source: Civil Aviation Authority



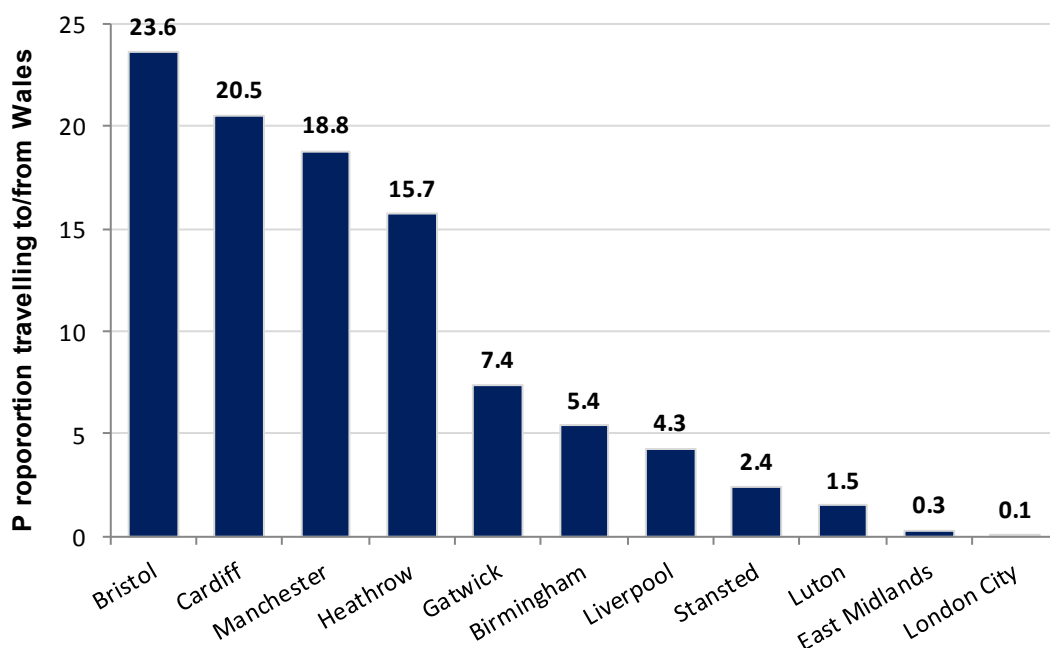
## Air passenger survey

The CAA's 2015 departing passenger survey can show information about (1) the way people use Cardiff Airport and (2) about all people travelling through British airports where the origin or final destination of their journey lies in Wales. A list of topics covered in the survey is set out in the notes section at the end of the bulletin.

### Which airports are used by people in Wales?

The table below uses the CAA's 2015 departing passenger survey to look at travel by everyone where the origin or destination of their journey is in Wales. This survey showed that the proportion of Welsh passengers in 2015 using Cardiff Airport was similar to the 2012 survey figures (21 per cent). Bristol is now the most used airport by people travelling to and from Wales with 23.6 per cent of all passenger numbers. In 2015, the least used airports by people travelling to and from Wales was the East Midlands (0.3 per cent) and London City (0.1 per cent). It should be noted that this survey was completed prior to the introduction of the London City route in 2016, so these numbers are expected to increase in the 2016 passenger survey ([Chart 10](#)).

**Chart 10: Proportion of air passengers with journeys starting and ending in Wales using each of the major airports, 2015**



Source: Civil Aviation Survey Passenger Survey Report

The 2015 survey showed that 4.3 million scheduled passengers indicated that Wales was either their point of origin or destination. For charter passengers the equivalent number was 964,000 ([Table 1](#)). The airports covered in this survey included Birmingham, East Midlands, Gatwick, Heathrow, Gatwick, Heathrow, Liverpool, Luton, Manchester, Stansted and London City, which along with Cardiff and Bristol are the other main airports used by Welsh passengers when opting to fly.

**Table 1: Air travel by people whose journeys origin or final destination lies in Wales, 2015***Numbers (thousands of people) and proportion of total (percentages)*

Airport	People travelling to/from Wales		Total terminal passengers		People travelling to/ from Wales on:			
	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Scheduled		Charter	
					Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages
Birmingham	280	5.4%	9,520	2.9%	216	77%	64	23%
Bristol	1,234	23.6%	6,343	19.5%	1,054	85%	180	15%
Cardiff	1,075	20.5%	1,122	95.8%	607	56%	468	44%
East Midlands	15	0.3%	4,428	0.3%	12	86%	2	14%
Gatwick	389	7.4%	36,973	1.1%	326	84%	63	16%
Heathrow	822	15.7%	47,919	1.7%	815	99%	7	1%
Liverpool	226	4.3%	4,203	5.4%	226	100%	0	0%
Luton	78	1.5%	12,001	0.6%	77	99%	1	1%
Manchester	983	18.8%	21,991	4.5%	806	82%	177	18%
Stansted	128	2.4%	21,421	0.6%	126	98%	2	2%
London City	3	0.1%	4,173	0.1%	3	100%	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,233</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>170,094</b>	<b>3.1%</b>	<b>4,268</b>	<b>82%</b>	<b>964</b>	<b>18%</b>

Source: Welsh Government analysis of the CAA Passenger Survey Report

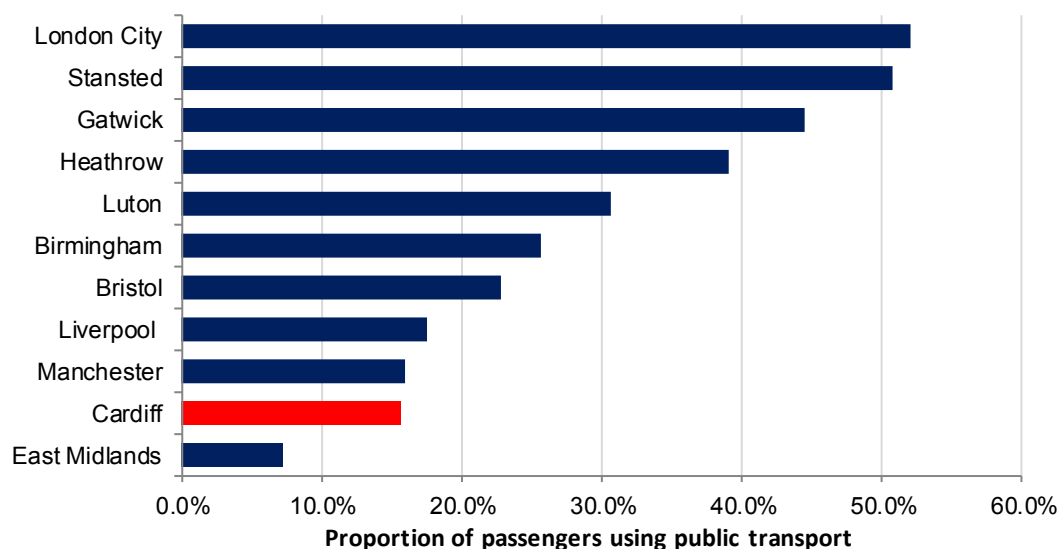
**Notes:**

Total is sum of airports shown. The small number of people travelling to and from Wales and using other airports has not been included

## What proportion of journeys to the airport use public transport?

The CAA's Passenger Survey also shows the mode of transport used by air passengers to travel to and from the airport. [Chart 11](#) shows that during 2015, 15.6 per cent of passengers travelling through Cardiff airport used public transport; which is lower than the majority of most other competitor airports. East Midlands at 7.2 per cent was the only airport lower than Cardiff. More people travel by public transport to Bristol airport (22.8 per cent), than travel to Cardiff airport. This is the underlying context for proposals to improve public transport access to Cardiff airport. The airport with the highest proportion travelling to and from the airport by public transport was London City at 52.1 per cent. This was closely followed by Stansted at 50.7 per cent. Gatwick (44.4 per cent), Heathrow (39.0 per cent) and Luton (30.6 per cent) were the next highest proportion of terminal passengers travelling to and from the airport by public transport. The London Airports having the highest proportion of passengers using public transport is not surprising as the London public transport system has a higher frequency of services to London airports, when compared to the services offered at other Airports outside London.

**Chart 11: Proportion of terminal passengers using public transport to get to or from the airport, 2015**



Source: Welsh Government analysis of the CAA Passenger Survey Report

## Notes

### 1 Context - Related publications

The Department for Transport produce a series bringing together documents relating to [UK Aviation Statistics](#)

Transport Scotland produce a compendium publication titled "[Scottish Transport Statistics](#)" which includes a chapter on Air Transport:

The Department for Regional Development in Northern Ireland produce a publication titled "[Northern Ireland Transport Statistics – 2015-16](#)", Chapter 7 includes information on Air Transport:

### 2 Data source

The information on air transport through Cardiff Airport in this Bulletin and associated Excel tables reproduces the statistics compiled by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). Their work is gratefully acknowledged. The CAA data are outside the scope of National Statistics. The information can be found from the following [link](#), including the CAA's own notes about the figures.

### 3.1 Definitions

The statistics in this bulletin relate to Cardiff International Airport as this is the only major domestic and international airport in Wales.

Up to 2000, all statistics include Air Taxi operations (defined for statistical purposes as charter flights utilising aircraft of less than 15 tonnes MTWA). From 2001, air taxis are included in the total of air transport movements but traffic carried, both passenger and freight, on air taxi services is excluded.

### 3.2 Glossary

*Air transport movements:* Landings or take offs of aircraft engaged in the transport of passengers or cargo on commercial terms. All scheduled service movements, whether loaded, empty, or positioning, and charter movements transporting passengers or cargo and air taxi movements are included. For the purpose of these statistics, where flights are operated on a sub-charter basis the operator is identified according to the flight number, an internal flight is counted as a single air transport movement.

*Domestic service:* Services flown entirely within the United Kingdom, Isle of Man or Channel Islands.

*Freight:* The weight of property carried on an aircraft including for example the weight of vehicles, excess baggage and diplomatic bags, but excluding mail and passengers' and crews' permitted baggage. Freight in transit through the airport on the same aircraft is excluded.

*International Service:* Services flown between the United Kingdom, including the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands and places outside.

*Non-scheduled or Charter Services:* All air transport movements other than scheduled services.

*Passengers:* All revenue and non-revenue passengers on air transport movement flights

*Scheduled services:* Those performed according to the published timetable including supplementary timetables, available for use by the members of the public.

*Terminal passenger:* A passenger joining or leaving an aircraft at the reporting airport. A passenger travelling between two reporting airports is counted twice, once at each airport. A passenger who changes from one aircraft to the other, carrying the same flight number is treated as a terminal passenger.

*Transit passenger:* A passenger who arrives and departs from a reporting airport on the same aircraft. Each transit passenger is counted only once.

#### 4. CAA departing passenger survey – topics covered in survey questions

About the person	The airport and airline	About the Journey
Male/female....Age (in bands)	Scheduled or charter airline	Trip origin (if not home location)
Nationality	When was ticket booked	How did they get to (and from) airport (i.e. private or public transport - 30 categories used)
Which country living in for last 12 months	Type of ticket	
Ethnicity	Cost of flight	How many different modes of transport used during journey to airport, and what they were
Disability (& satisfaction with assistance at airport)	How did you check in?	
Home location (for UK and Ireland) - postcode	How many items checked-in?	How long (time) was journey to airport
Business passengers: Business of firm/ organisation Occupation and job title Income (personal - in bands)		Purpose of trip
		Destination airport
		Main destination (Country, town/city)
		Leisure passengers: Do you own property at...
Leisure passengers: How many people in household (& under 16) Occupation of chief earner Income (household - in bands)	How many people came to see you off?	If a return ticket: How long have you or will you stay away?
	How many people in your travel group?	
		How many times flown (anywhere) in last 12 months
		How many times flown on this route in last 12 months

Plus more detailed questions for transit passengers and for passengers with journeys involving more than one airline trip to complete their journey

## **5 Key quality information**

This section provides a summary of information on this output against five dimensions of quality: Relevance, Accuracy, Timeliness and Punctuality, Accessibility and Clarity, and Comparability.

### **5.1 Relevance**

The statistics are used both within and outside the Welsh Government to monitor air transport trends and as a baseline for further analysis.

### **5.2 Accuracy**

This is described by the CAA at the link given under 'data source' above.

### **5.3 Timeliness and punctuality**

The information in the bulletin, covering air transport through Cardiff Airport, is based on the most recent annual UK Airport Statistics from the CAA.

### **5.4 Accessibility and clarity**

This Statistical Bulletin is pre-announced and then published on the [Statistics for Wales](#) website and is accompanied by Excel versions of the tables shown. Historically, this information was released in Chapter 11 of 'Welsh Transport Statistics'.

### **5.5 Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFG)**

The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act puts in place seven well-being goals for Wales. These are for a more equal, prosperous, resilient, healthier and globally responsible Wales, with cohesive communities and a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. Under section (10)(1) of the Act, the Welsh Ministers must (a) publish indicators ("national indicators") that must be applied for the purpose of measuring progress towards the achievement of the Well-being goals, and (b) lay a copy of the national indicators before the National Assembly. The 46 national indicators were laid in March 2016 and this release does not include any of the national indicators.

Information on indicators and associated technical information - [How do you measure a nation's progress? - National Indicators](#)

Further information on the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#).

## Further details

The document is available at: <http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/air-travel/?lang=en>

## Next update

July 2018

## We want your feedback

We welcome any feedback on any aspect of these statistics which can be provided by email to [stats.transport@gov.wales](mailto:stats.transport@gov.wales).

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