

## Air transport in Wales during 2015

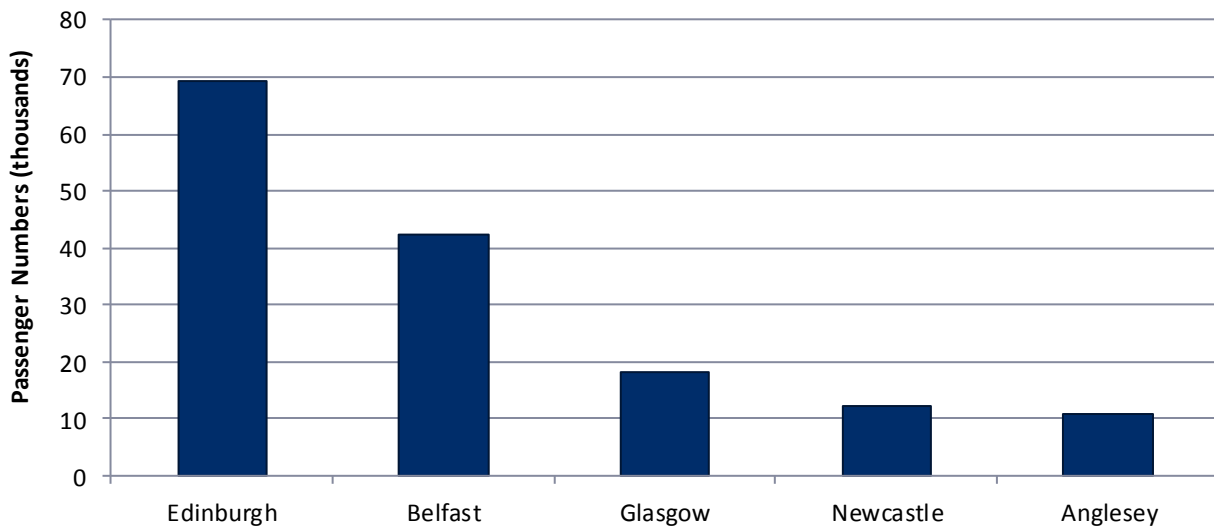
This Statistical Bulletin and the accompanying tables set out information about air transport in Wales. It shows information about Cardiff International Airport as this is the only major domestic and international airport in Wales. Analysis is also included from the latest Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) passenger survey carried out in 2014. All the information shown was all originally compiled by the CAA, further information of this source is in the notes section.

The references, given below to tables, refer to the table numbers in the accompanying Excel workbook.

### Key points:

- The total number of passengers using Cardiff International Airport increased by nearly 14 per cent between 2014 in 2015, to over 1.15 million (*Table 1*);
- During 2015 there were 24 domestic routes and 73 international routes that operated out of Cardiff Airport;
- There were just over 15,000 commercial aircraft movements at Cardiff International Airport (*Table 2*). There were just under 10,000 non-commercial aircraft movements making just over 25,000 in total.

**Chart 1: Most Popular UK Destinations from Cardiff Airport in 2015**



Source: Civil Aviation Authority

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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 2015, over 250 million passengers travelled through UK airports with Heathrow the busiest with nearly 75 million passengers, followed by Gatwick (40 million), Manchester (23 million) and Stansted (22 million). Cardiff was the 19th busiest airport in the UK with 1.15 million passengers, which accounted for 0.5 per cent of the UK total.

## Cardiff Airport

Cardiff Airport saw an increase of nearly 14 per cent in passenger numbers. The Airport saw an increase in the number of routes in 2015 with Flybe and Thomson Airways being the largest carriers. The majority of passengers fly to international destinations.

### Domestic Routes

Over 167,000 passengers travelled to other UK airports in 2015. The largest proportion of these passengers travelled between the main domestic routes of Edinburgh (69,000), Belfast (42,000) and Glasgow (18,000). (Table 3 and Chart 1)

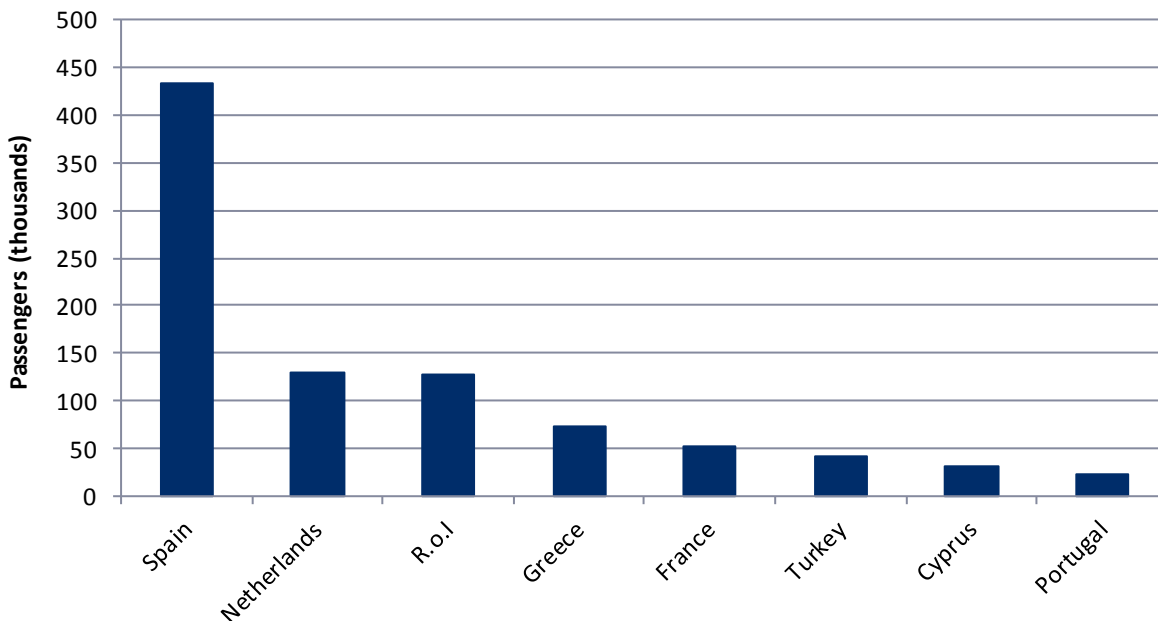
The Cardiff to Anglesey route saw an increase in passenger numbers to nearly 11,000. When the service began in 2007 there was strong passenger growth in the early years. However with the brief cessation of the service in 2010 and subsequent resumption passenger numbers have yet to reach the levels seen at the start with figures ranging from over 7,000 to under 9,000.

Overall there were over 3,000 fewer passengers that used the Airport to travel to other UK airports in 2015 compared to 2014.

### International Routes

During 2015, just under a million passengers (989,000) used the airport to travel to overseas destinations.

**Chart 2: Most Popular Overseas Destinations from Cardiff Airport by Country in 2015**

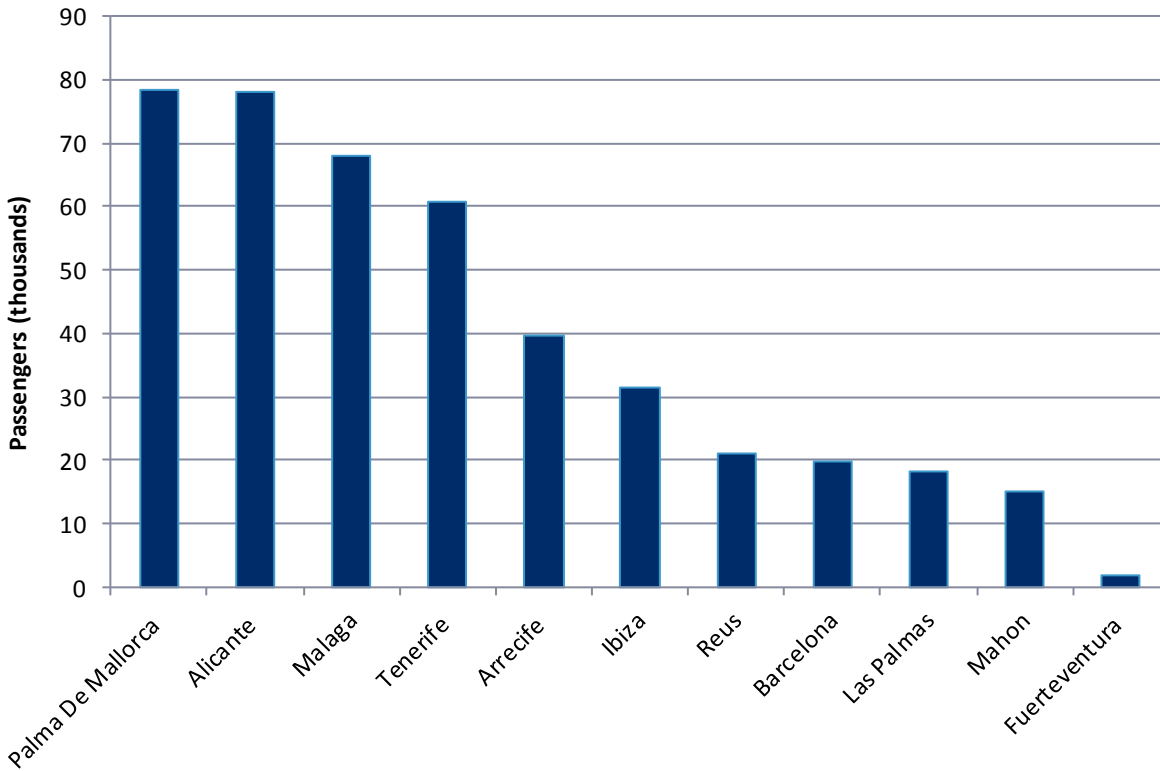


Source: Civil Aviation Authority

## Spain

Spain is the most popular destination with over 430 thousand passengers; of which 120 thousand visited the Canary Islands (*Chart 2*). The key destinations to the Spanish mainland were Alicante and Mallorca (both 78,000) and Malaga (68,000). In the Canary Islands, Tenerife was the most popular destination with 60,000 visitors followed by Arrecife(39,000). A further 79,000 passengers visited Palma de Majorca in the Balearic Islands.

**Chart 3: Main Spanish Destinations from Cardiff Airport in 2015**



Source: Civil Aviation Authority

## Netherlands, Republic of Ireland and France

Key international routes are to Amsterdam (129,000 passengers), Paris Charles de Gaulle Airport (30,000 passengers) and Dublin (120,000 passengers). Paris and Amsterdam are key hub airports and along with both Dublin and Munich offers the Welsh travelling public the opportunity for onward connections to a wider range of destinations. For example, at Dublin Airport the United States Customs and Border Protection facility allows all US bound passengers the opportunity to undertake immigration and customs inspection prior to departure. On arrival in America, passengers are then treated as domestic arrivals which allows for a faster processing through their arrival airport. These routes also offer the opportunity for inbound business and leisure passengers to visit Wales.

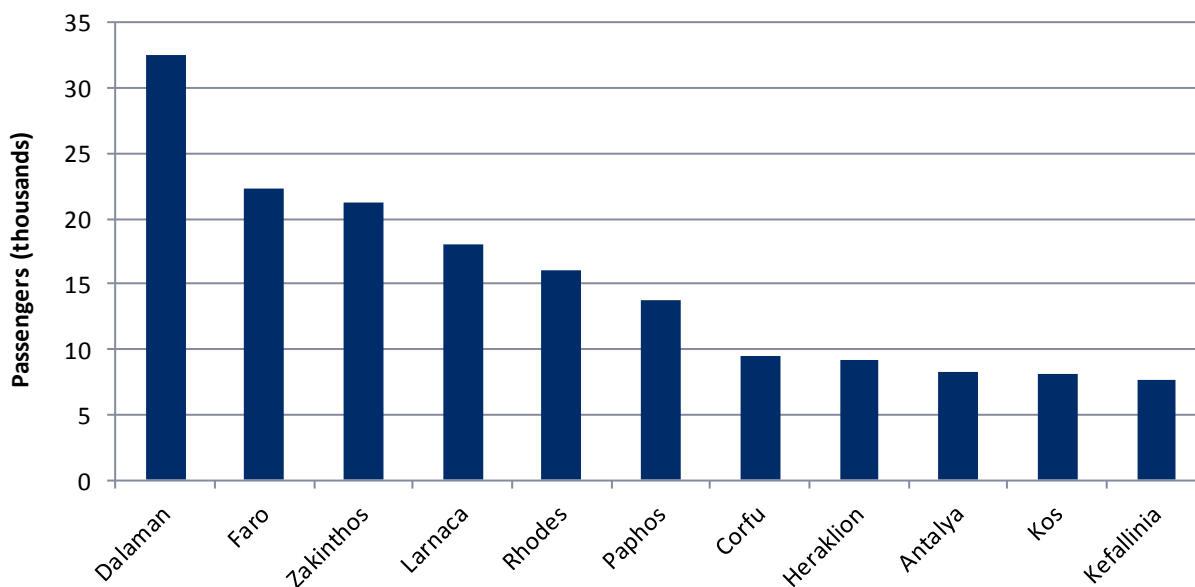
## Other Destinations

Greece is another popular destination with 72,000 passenger visiting Greek destinations like Corfu, Kos, Rhodes and Zakynthos. The Coastal Plain of Dalaman and the city of Antalya in Turkey were popular with over 40,000 passengers and a further 31 thousand visited Larnaka and Paphos in Cyprus. A further 22,000 visited Faro in Portugal. (*Chart 4*)

There were one off charter flights to Israel (283 passengers) and Bosnia-Herzegovina (158 passengers) with Welsh football fans following the national side during their successful EURO2016 qualifying campaign.

Destinations like Spain, Turkey, Cyprus, Greece and Portugal are popular holiday destinations with the majority of passengers flying on charter services.

**Chart 4: Other Popular Destinations from Cardiff Airport in 2015**

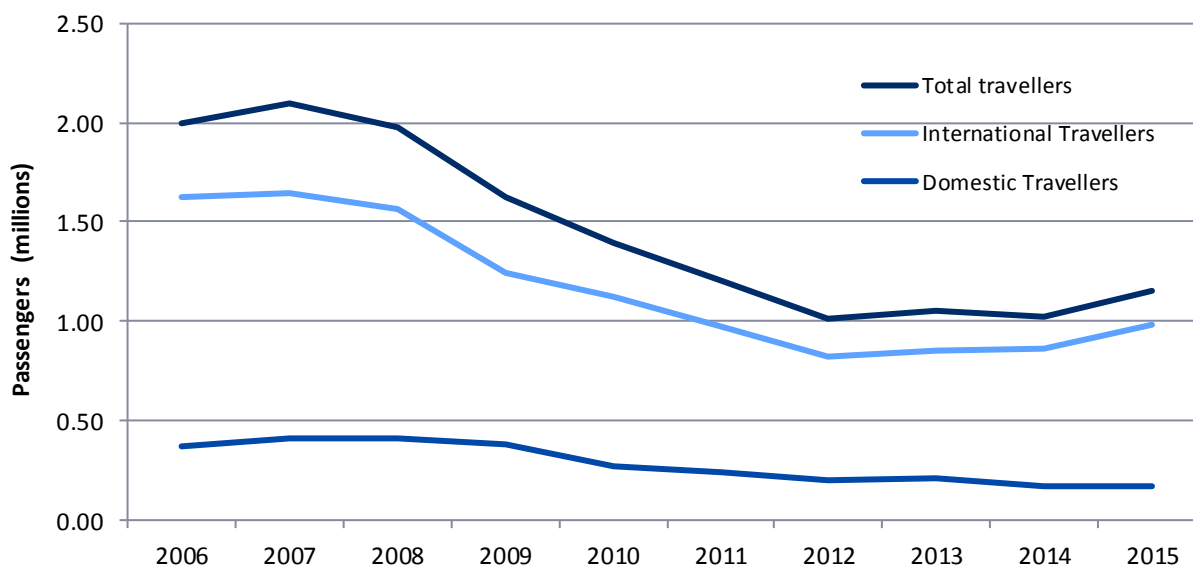


Source: Civil Aviation Authority

**Longer Term Trends**

Domestic and international passenger numbers have been declining over the longer term. Numbers peaked at just over 2 million in 2007 but sharply declining by over a half to just over one million in 2012 (Chart 5). The onset of the recession saw a number of carriers who operated from the Airport either cease trading or reduced route capacity.

**Chart 5: Passenger numbers at Cardiff Airport from 2006 to 2015**

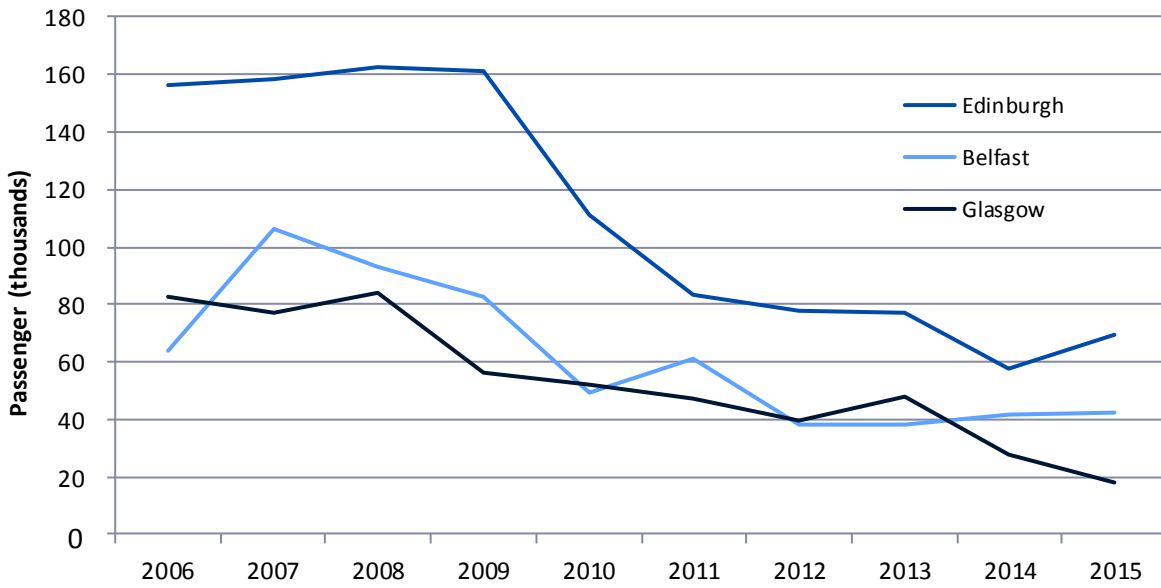


Source: Civil Aviation Authority

Both domestic and international routes have seen a marked decline. On the key domestic routes, Edinburgh has declined from 162,000 in 2008 to 69,000 in 2015; for Glasgow numbers have fallen from 84,000 in 2008 to 18,000 in 2015; and for Belfast<sup>1</sup>, numbers have dropped from 106,000 in 2007 to a low of 38,000 in 2012 and 2013 (Excel table 2 and Chart 5).

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

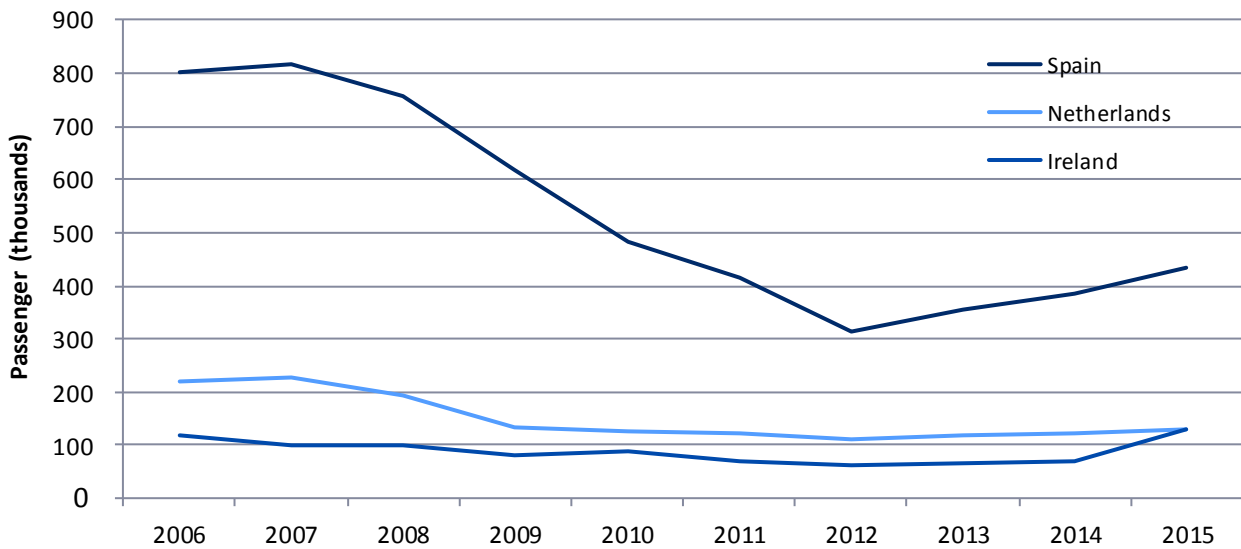
**Chart 6: Most popular domestic destinations within the UK 2006-2015**



Source: Civil Aviation Authority

International passenger numbers have also declined in recent years, with numbers falling from their peak of 1.6 million in 2007 to 818 thousand in 2012. Passenger numbers on the Amsterdam route have declined from a peak of 226,000 in 2007 to a 112,000 in 2012. Numbers to Ireland declined from 120,000 in 2006 to a low of 63,000 in 2012 but have now recovered. Spanish destinations have seen the largest falls from over 816,000 in 2007 to a low of 313,000 in 2012.

**Chart 7: Main International Destinations by Country 2006-2015**



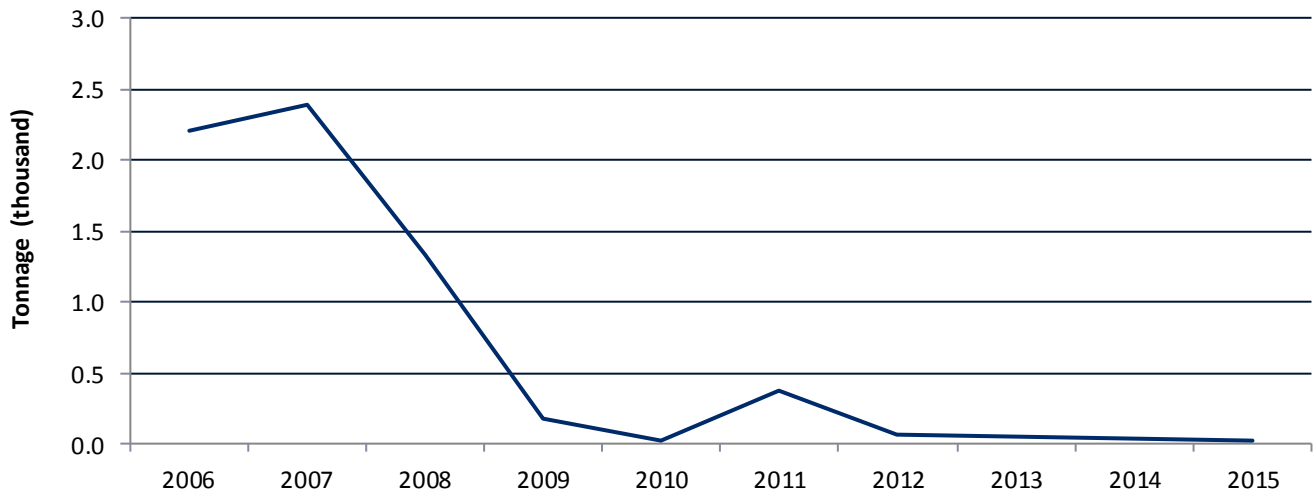
Source: Civil Aviation Authority

## Air Freight

Freight volume at Cardiff Airport was just under 26 tonnes, the majority of this (22 tonnes) was set down whilst the remaining 4 tonnes of freight was picked up. Air freight has declined dramatically over the last 10 years (*Chart 8*). 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 tonnes in 2012 to a low of 26 tonnes in 2015.

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 8: Freight at Cardiff Airport from 2006 to 2015**



Source: Civil Aviation Authority

## Air Passenger Survey

The latest CAA passenger survey published in 2014<sup>2</sup> showed that nearly 2.5 million scheduled airline passengers indicated that Wales was either their point of origin or destination. For charter passengers the equivalent number was 383,000. The airports covered in the survey included Heathrow, Gatwick, Birmingham, Liverpool and Manchester, which along with Cardiff and Bristol are the other main airports used by Welsh passengers when opting to fly.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.caa.co.uk/Data-and-analysis/UK-aviation-market/Consumer-research/Departing-passenger-survey/Survey-reports/>

## **List of Tables**

Table 1: Cardiff International Airport: air traffic summary

Table 2: Cardiff International Airport: Aircraft movements

Table 3: Domestic passengers to and from Cardiff International Airport

Table 4: International air passenger traffic, to and from Cardiff International Airport

## Notes

### 1 Context - Related Publications

The Department for Transport produce a series bringing together documents relating to UK Aviation statistics:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport/series/aviation-statistics>

Transport Scotland produce a compendium publication titled "Scottish Transport Statistics" which includes a chapter on Air Transport:

<http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/statistics/j357783-00.htm>

The Department for Regional Development in Northern Ireland produce a publication titled "Northern Ireland Transport Statistics – 2014-15", Chapter 7 includes information on Air Transport:

<https://www.drdsni.gov.uk/publications/northern-ireland-transport-statistics-2014-2015>

### 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:

<http://www.caa.co.uk/data-and-analysis/>

### 3 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.

### 4 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.

#### 4.1 Relevance

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

#### 4.2 Accuracy

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

#### 4.3 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.

#### 4.4 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'.

#### 4.5 Comparability

See section 3.1.





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