

Transport and Distribution

This industry is known as the 'logistics' industry – it manages the flow of goods and other resources, including mail and people, from one place to another.

If you like organising and planning, and want to work in a job that is necessary to the daily needs of customers and keeping business moving, then transport and distribution may be the right career for you.

The transport and storage industry is vital to the UK economy, running 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and 365 days in the year.

What areas can I work in?

You can work in one of five areas.

- **Distribution** handles goods in storage before they are sent out, while they are being moved and after they arrive.
- **Air transport** includes jobs in the air but also on the ground.
- **Train companies** run passenger and goods services all over the UK and through the Channel Tunnel to Europe.
- **Road transport** carries passengers and goods.
- **Sea transport** includes ferries, cruise liners and Merchant Navy vessels.

To see the routes to getting into each of these sectors, take a look at our [Career Pathway](#).

What kind of companies can I work for?

There are a wide variety of companies to choose from including:

- airline companies and airports
- warehousing and distribution centres
- the Merchant Navy
- passenger cruise and ferry companies
- train, bus and taxi firms
- freight forwarding and logistics companies.

What's the job market like?

The transportation and storage industry employs 1,718,000 people, of which 114,000 are in Scotland, accounting for 4.2% of the Scottish workforce. These numbers have slightly fallen from last year, at a difference of 0.3%.

In Scotland, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, data shows from 2020 that over the last five years there had been an increase in air (19.9%), rail (4.0%) and ferry (7.7%) passenger numbers, indicating that these areas of the passenger transport industry were healthy. (For reference, Scotland's population increased by 2% over the same

period.) Meanwhile, the number of bus passengers decreased over this same period.

In 2020, there were an estimated 22,970 UK seafarers, compared to 22,440 from the previous year. UK nationals accounted for 19% of the 86,140 seafarers active at sea working for companies within the membership of the UK Chamber of Shipping. There was a slight increase in the numbers of certified officers, while the numbers of cadet officers and uncertified officers all fell.

Facts and figures

- Only 4% of UK certified officers active at sea are female.
- The aviation sector employs around 230,000 workers directly.
- The UK rail industry employs around 240,000 people.
- 2020 saw a massive reduction in terminal and transit passengers with Edinburgh remaining as Scotland's busiest airport with (3,474,879) in 2020, followed by Glasgow (1,946,474) and Aberdeen (944,077).
- Around 95% of British imports and exports in goods are moved by sea.

Want to find out more?

The People1st-run website, [Careers that Move](#), provides information and case studies on working in the transport and travel industries.

Sources

- Aviation Sector Guide (April 2021), [Career Transition Partnership](#)
- Port Freight Statistics, Department of Transport, [UK Government website](#) (August 2020)
- Workforce jobs by industry section, Nomis Labour Market Profile (December 2020) [Nomis](#)
- Scottish Transport Statistics No.39 2020 Edition, [Transport Scotland](#)
- Seafarers in the UK Shipping Industry 2020, Department for Transport (February 2021)
- Terminal and Transit Passengers 2020, Civil Aviation Authority Airport Data, [UK Civil Aviation Authority](#)
- Williams Rail Review (2019), UK Government website