

Freight Forwarder

Freight forwarders arrange the movement of goods across the world for importers and exporters. They use computer systems to decide on which combination of air, rail, road and sea transport provides the most suitable and cost-effective method.

The Work

You could be:

- negotiating rates and booking spaces for goods on trains, ships and planes
- planning the most suitable mode of transport and route, taking into account deadlines and type of goods
- arranging the packing and storage of goods before transportation
- confirming shipping arrangements and details with carriers and clients
- dealing with customs to clear goods to be transported
- working out import and export duties
- arranging payment for freight services and other charges
- preparing quotes, invoices and all necessary licences and paperwork
- working out the details of transport and insurance costs
- perhaps specialising in one type of business, such as importing perishable goods like fruit.

Pay

The figures below are only a guide. Actual pay rates may vary, depending on:

- where you work
- the size of the company or organisation you work for
- the demand for the job.

Starting pay for is around £18,000 to £25,000 a year, rising to around £28,000 to £30,000 a year. With experience, this can rise to around £45,000 a year at a senior level.

There may also be benefits such as bonuses or a company car.

Conditions

- You would work for a local, national or international logistics firm, a major retail company, a manufacturing firm or a warehousing and distribution company.
- You would be based at a computer in an office most of the time.
- The offices are usually based in industrial areas or close to airports, sea ports, rail terminals or major road networks.
- You would generally work normal business hours.
- You may have to work outside normal hours or do shift work when required.
- You may have to leave the office on occasions to visit customers and contractors, which may sometimes involve overseas travel.

- The work involves negotiating with people and meeting tight deadlines so you will be under pressure at times.

Getting In

- There is no single entry route to this work.
- You could join a relevant firm in an administrative post and then train to be a freight forwarder.
- There may be the opportunity available to complete a Modern Apprenticeship in Freight Logistics.
- Many trainees enter with an HNC (SCQF Level 7), HND (SCQF Level 8) or degree (SCQF Level 9). Courses that include business or international business can be relevant, but there are also specialist courses available in subjects such as international trade, logistics, transport and distribution.
- Entry requirements for HNCs and HNDs are 1-3 Highers plus subjects at National 5. Degree courses require 4-5 Highers plus subjects at National 5 including English.
- City of Glasgow College offers an HND in Managing Supply Chain Operations. Entry requirements are 2 Highers including English or an English based subject.
- It can be helpful to have knowledge of at least one foreign language.

What Does It Take

You need to be:

- good at planning and problem solving
- able to estimate and handle complex information
- able to prioritise workloads and meet deadlines
- logical with good organisation skills
- able to work accurately and pay attention to detail
- able to work well under pressure.

You need to have:

- perseverance
- good time management skills
- good negotiation and decision making skills
- excellent communication skills
- good numerical and IT skills
- good industry knowledge.

Training

- You would normally train on the job with part time study for relevant qualifications.
- A variety of qualifications is offered by the British International Freight Association (BIFA), The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (UK) (CILT (UK)) and The Institute of Export.
- Study may be by part time attendance at college, evening classes or distance learning.
- You may be able to work towards an SVQ (SCQF Levels 5 and 6).

Getting On

- With experience and training, you may be able to gain promotion into supervisory or managerial posts.
- It is also possible to specialise in dealing with particular products or with specific countries or regions.
- In some cases, you may get the opportunity to work in an overseas location.
- Another option is to move into other sales or marketing roles or into more general management.

Contacts

British International Freight Association (BIFA)

Tel: 020 8844 2266

Website: www.bifa.org

Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (UK)

Website: www.ciltuk.org.uk

X: @ciltuk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/cilt.uk

Institute of Export

Tel: 01733 404400

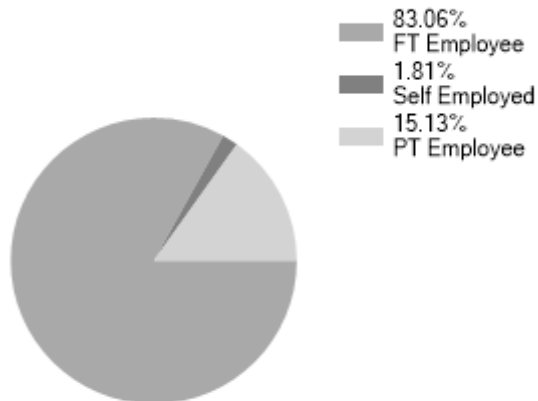
Website: www.export.org.uk

X: @IOExport

Facebook: www.facebook.com/instituteofexport

Statistics

Employment Status UK %

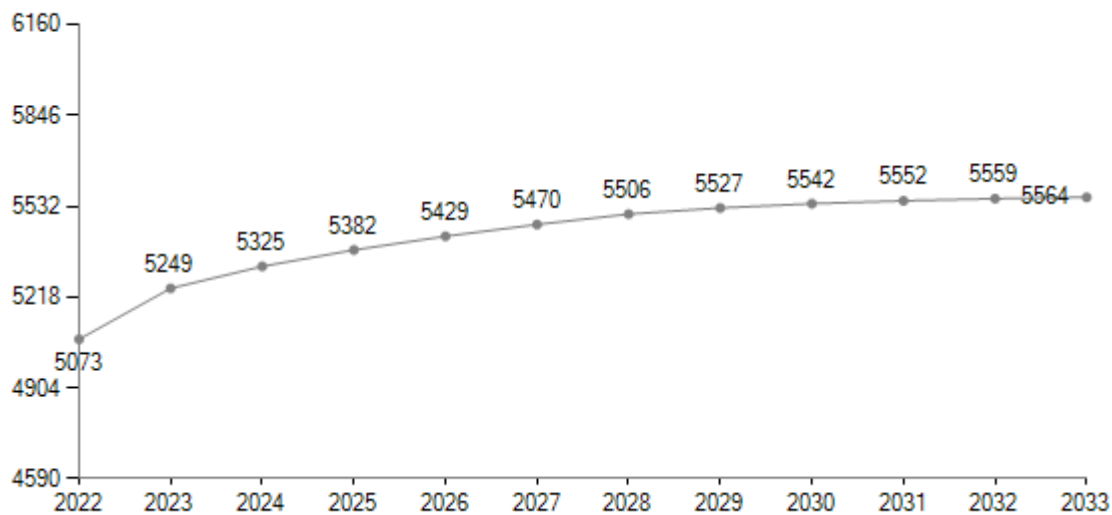


Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

LMI data powered by [LMI for All](#)

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [Lightcast](#)