

# Featured Chart 1.7 Relaxation of Motor Vehicle Import Restrictions and Import Trends

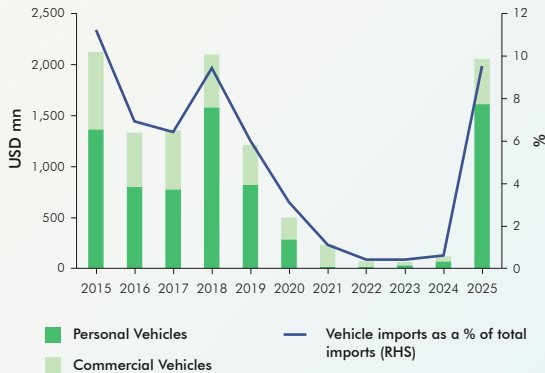


The motor vehicle import restrictions were relaxed in a phased manner, with all remaining restrictions on personal vehicles removed by January 2025. With the relaxation of motor vehicle import restrictions, the Government introduced several tariff and non-tariff measures to mitigate a potential surge in demand following the prolonged period of restrictions.

Despite these measures, vehicle imports increased markedly in 2025, reflecting a strong pent-up

demand accumulated during the years of import restrictions and improvements in economic activity. A notable acceleration in imports was observed from April 2025 onwards. Consequently, expenditure on vehicle imports, including both personal and commercial vehicles, rose significantly to USD 2.04 bn in 2025, marking the third-highest annual total after USD 2.12 bn in 2015 and USD 2.09 bn in 2018.

### Annual Vehicle Imports



Sources: Sri Lanka Customs  
Central Bank of Sri Lanka

### Monthly Vehicle Imports



Sources: Sri Lanka Customs  
Central Bank of Sri Lanka