



About this release

This release includes the 1st provisional estimates of trade-in-goods between the UK and both countries of the EU and those outside the EU for December 2018.

Supporting tables, visuals and data can be found at uktradeinfo.

In this publication

• **Trade trends p.2**

• **2018 Exports p.3**

Country analysis

Commodity analysis

• **2018 Imports p.6**

Country analysis

Commodity analysis

• **December 2018 trade p.9**

• **December 2018 Exports p.10**

Country analysis

Commodity analysis

Combined analysis

• **December 2018 Imports p.17**

Country analysis

Commodity analysis

Combined analysis

• **Methodology notes p.24**



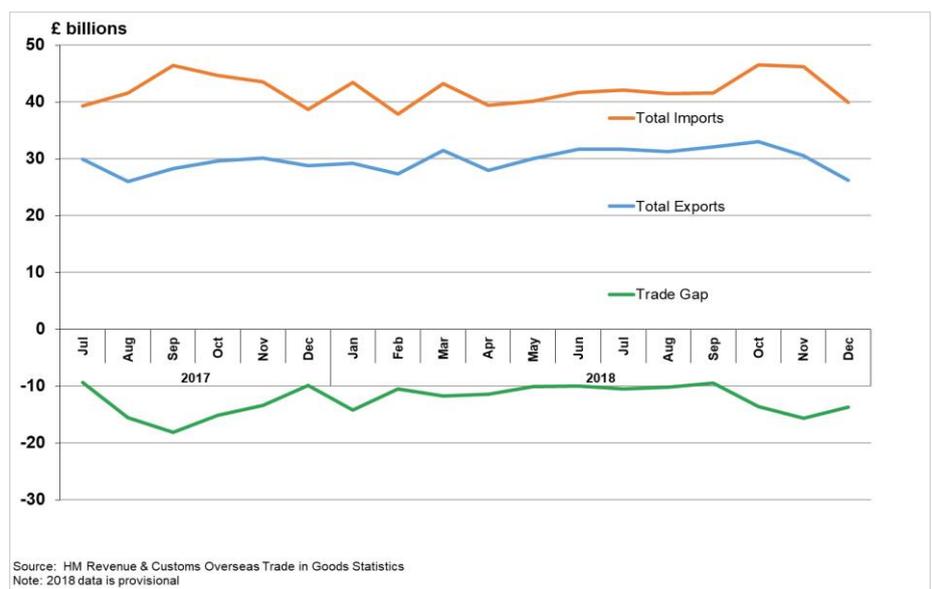
Summary of Trade in Goods - 2018

- Total **exports** of goods in 2018 were £362 billion. This was an increase of £20.1 billion (5.9%) compared with 2017.
- Total **imports** of goods in 2018 were £503 billion. This was an increase of £6.1 billion (1.2%) compared with 2017.
- The UK was a net importer in 2018, with imports exceeding exports by £141 billion. This was a narrowing of the trade in goods gap from £155 billion in 2017.

Trade in Goods, December 2018

- Total **exports** of goods for December 2018 were £26.2 billion. This was a decrease of £4.3 billion (14%) compared with last month, and a decrease of £2.6 billion (9.1%) compared with December 2017.
- Total **imports** of goods for December 2018 were £39.9 billion. This was a decrease of £6.3 billion (14%) compared with last month, and an increase of £1.2 billion (3.1%) compared with December 2017.
- The UK was a net importer this month, with imports exceeding exports by £13.7 billion.

Figure 1: Total UK monthly Trade in Goods



Coverage: United Kingdom
 Theme: Business and Energy
 Released: 12th February 2019
 Next release: 12th March 2019

Website: <https://www.uktradeinfo.com>
 Email: uktradeinfo@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk
 Statistical contact: Daniel Wilkes 03000 594250
 Media contact: HMRC Press Office 03000 585018

Trade in Goods Trends

Following the global economic crisis, UK trade in goods dropped in 2009. Both imports and exports then steadily increased until 2012. From the start of 2013, imports remained relatively flat until a very sharp increase in Q3 of 2016, while exports peaked in Q2 of 2013, with a steady rise since Q4 of 2016.

- The total **export** trade for Q4 of 2018 was £89.7 billion, which was an increase of 1.4% compared with £88.5 billion for Q4 of 2017.
- The total **import** trade for Q4 of 2018 was £132.6 billion, which was an increase of 4.6% compared with £126.9 billion for Q4 of 2017.
- There was a trade deficit of £42.9 billion for Q4 of 2018. This was a widening of 12% compared with Q4 of 2017.
- For many years Germany has been our largest trading **import** partner by value. The USA has been the dominant trading partner for **exports** for many years.
- Mechanical appliances and Motor vehicles have generally been the largest **import** commodities by value. For **exports**, Mechanical appliances has also predominantly been the largest valued commodity, with occasional peaks for Precious metals.

↑ **Exports up 1.4% for Q4 2018 on Q4 2017**

↑ **Imports up 4.6% for Q4 2018 on Q4 2017**

- **Trade deficit widened by 12% for Q4 2018 on Q4 2017**

Figure 2: Quarterly UK Trade in Goods, 2009 – 2018



2018 Exports: Country Analysis

- China experienced the largest annual increase on 2017, up £4,159 million (25%) on 2017. This was largely due to an increase of Precious metals, up £3,929 million (more than 7 times the value).
- Germany experienced the largest annual decrease on 2017, down £998 million (2.8%). This was led by a decrease of Pharmaceutical products, down £967 million (24%).
- Switzerland experienced the 2nd largest annual increase on 2017, up £3,775 million (25%). This was largely due to increases of Precious metals, up £4,122 million (39%).
- The Netherlands experienced the 3rd largest annual increase on 2017, up £3,581 million (17%). This was led by increases of Mineral fuels, up £2,719 million (35%).

↑ Exports to China
up 25% on 2017

↑ Exports to
Switzerland up
25% on 2017

Table 1: UK Exports of goods to top 10 partner countries, 2018

Partner Country	2018 Total (£ millions)	2017 Total (£ millions)	Change from 2017 (%)
USA	48,682	45,738	6.4
Germany	35,245	36,243	-2.8
Netherlands	24,994	21,413	16.7
France	24,084	23,631	1.9
Irish Republic	21,290	19,564	8.8
China	20,752	16,593	25.1
Switzerland	19,150	15,374	24.6
Belgium	14,350	13,798	4.0
Italy	10,549	10,264	2.8
Spain	10,518	10,474	0.4
Others	132,832	129,297	2.7
Total Non-EU	192,238	179,133	7.3
Total EU	170,210	163,257	4.3
Total Exports	362,448	342,391	5.9

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

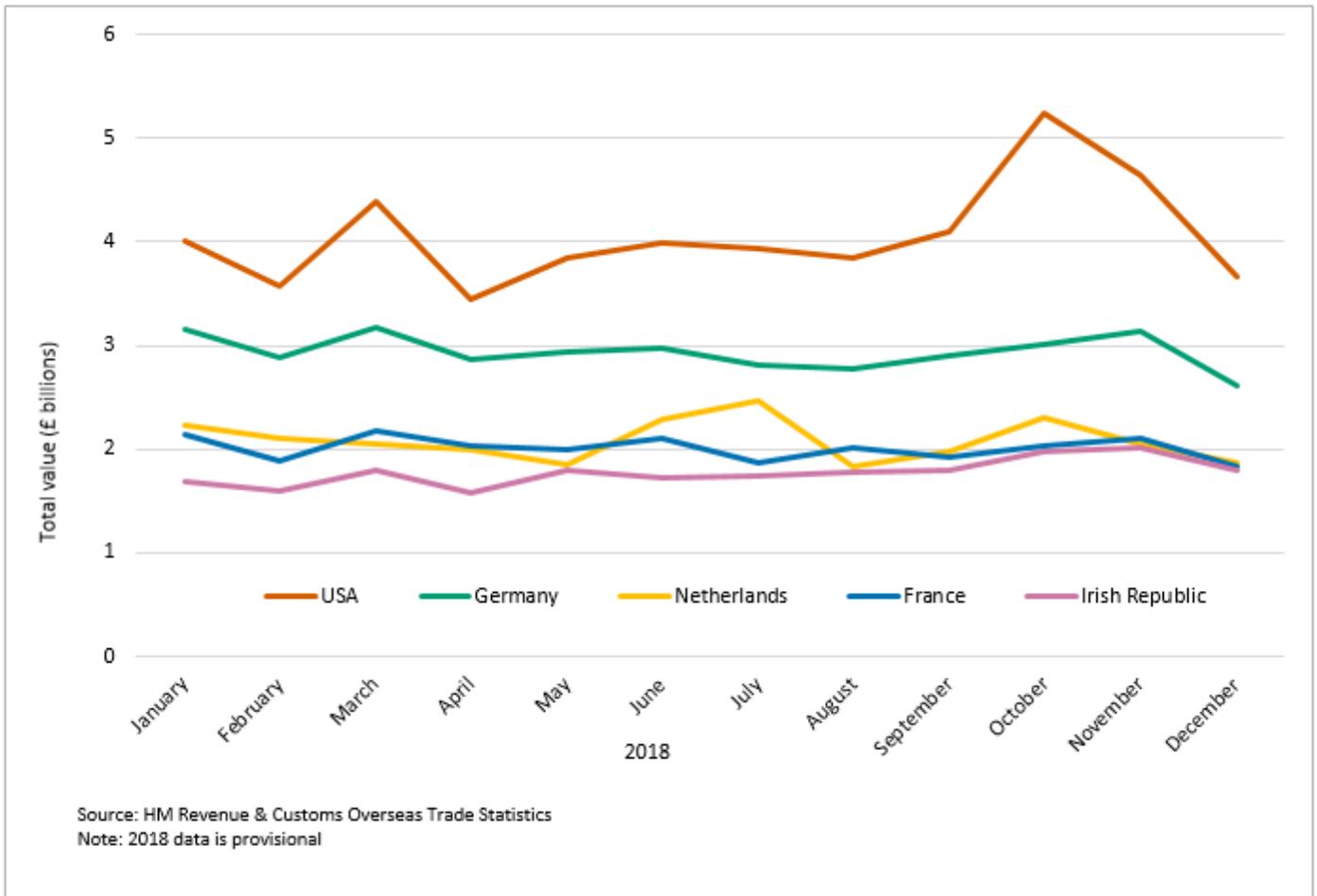
Note: 2018 data is provisional

2018 Exports: Country Analysis

- The USA remained the largest export partner country throughout 2018, experiencing an increase on 2017, up £2,944 million (6.4%). This was led by an increase in Organic chemicals, up £1,132 million (62%).
- The top 5 partner countries accounted for 43% of total exports of goods in 2018, this was unchanged compared with 2017.

↑ Exports to the USA up 6.4% on 2017

Figure 3: UK exports of goods to the top 5 countries, 2018



2018 Exports: Commodity Analysis

- The top 10 export commodities accounted for 71% of total exports of goods in 2018, increasing from 70% in 2017.
- Mechanical appliances accounted for 15% of total UK exports in 2018 (unchanged from 2017). It experienced the 3rd largest annual increase, up £3,533 million (7.0%) on 2017. This was largely due to increases to the USA, up £986 million (13%).
- Precious metals experienced the largest value increase compared with 2017, up £10,703 million (43%). This was largely due to increases to Switzerland, up £4,122 million (39%) and China, up £3,929 million (7 times the value).
- Mineral fuels experienced the 2nd largest increase compared with 2017, up £5,708 million (21%). This was led by increases to the Netherlands, up £2,719 million (35%).
- Pharmaceutical products saw the largest decrease on 2017, down £2,868 million (11%). This was largely due to decreases to the USA, down £1,216 million (20%).
- Aircraft saw the 2nd largest decrease compared with 2017, down £1,586 million (10%). This decrease was led by Oman, down £727 million (61%).

↑ **Exports of Precious metals up 43% on 2017**

↑ **Mineral fuels exports up 21% on 2017**

↓ **Pharmaceutical product exports down 11% on 2017**

Table 2: UK exports of goods by top 10 commodities, 2018

Partner Country	2018 Total (£ millions)	2017 Total (£ millions)	Change from 2017 (%)
Mechanical appliances	54,325	50,792	7.0
Motor vehicles	41,316	41,727	-1.0
Precious metals	35,606	24,904	43.0
Mineral fuels	33,131	27,423	20.8
Pharmaceutical products	22,528	25,396	-11.3
Electronic equipment	22,022	22,115	-0.4
Aircraft	14,703	16,289	-9.7
Measuring devices and gauges	14,420	13,988	3.1
Plastics and plastic products	9,623	9,244	4.1
Organic chemicals	9,253	8,211	12.7
Others	105,521	102,301	3.1
Total Exports	362,448	342,391	5.9

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2018 data is provisional

2018 Imports: Country Analysis

- The USA experienced the largest annual increase on 2017, up £3,099 million (7.5%) on 2017. This was largely due to increases in Mineral fuels, up £2,149 million (88%).
- Switzerland experienced the largest annual decrease on 2017, down £4,226 million (38%). This was led by a decrease of Precious metals, down £3,066 million (74%).
- Denmark experienced the 2nd largest annual increase on 2017, up £1,707 million (34%). This was largely due to increases in Articles of iron or steel, up £1,887 million (a near 10 times increase).
- The Netherlands experienced the 3rd largest annual increase on 2017, up £1,681 million (4.2%). This was largely due to increases in Mineral fuels, up £839 million (26%).

↑ Imports from
USA up 7.5% on
2017

↓ Imports from
Switzerland
down 38% on
2017

Table 3: UK Imports of goods from top 10 partner countries, 2018

Partner Country	2018 Total (£ millions)	2017 Total (£ millions)	Change from 2017 (%)
Germany	68,545	68,756	-0.3
USA	44,447	41,348	7.5
China	42,560	41,641	2.2
Netherlands	41,505	39,824	4.2
France	27,638	26,931	2.6
Belgium	26,130	24,863	5.1
Norway	19,858	19,201	3.4
Italy	19,450	18,753	3.7
Spain	15,849	15,630	1.4
Irish Republic	14,115	14,544	-3.0
Others	183,296	185,846	-1.4
Total Non-EU	237,040	238,539	-0.6
Total EU	266,354	258,799	2.9
Total Imports	503,394	497,337	1.2

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

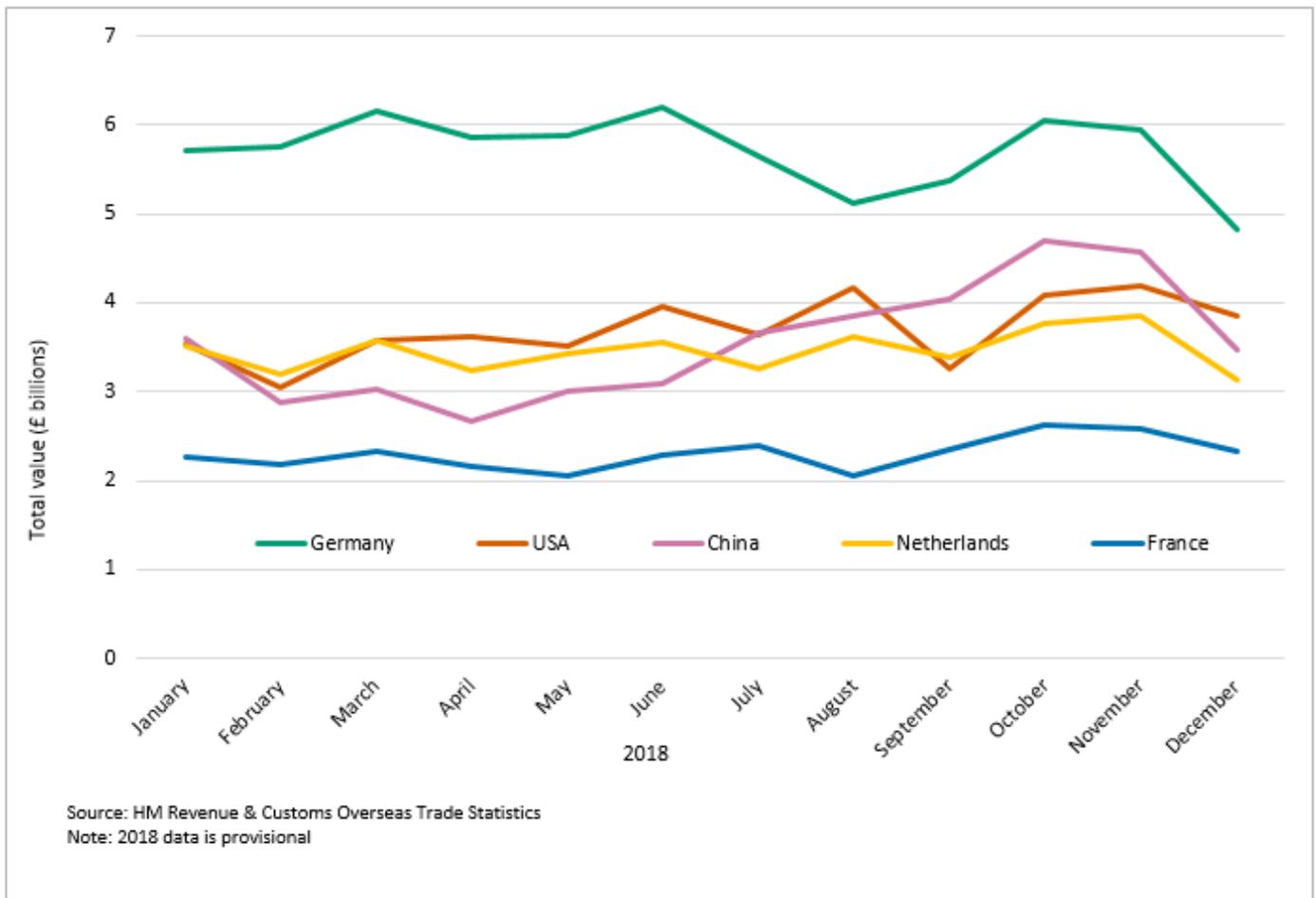
Note: 2018 data is provisional

2018 Imports: Country Analysis

- Germany remained the largest import partner country throughout 2018. It experienced a minimal decrease on 2017, down £211 million (0.3%). This was led by a decrease in Pharmaceutical products, down £797 million (19%).
- The top 5 partner countries accounted for 45% total imports of goods in 2018, up from 44% in 2017.

↑ **Top 5 import partners accounted for 45% of total imports in 2018**

Figure 4: UK Imports of goods from top 5 partner countries, 2018



2018 Imports: Commodity Analysis

- The top 10 import commodities accounted for 64% of total imports of goods in 2018, increasing from 63% in 2017.
- Mechanical appliances accounted for 13% of the total value of goods imports to the UK in 2018 (up from 12% in 2017). It experienced the 2nd largest annual increase, up £2,428 million (3.9%) on 2017. This was largely due to increases from China, up £1,046 million (16%).
- Mineral fuels experienced the largest value increase compared with 2017, up £10,048 million (25%). This was largely due to increases from the USA, up £2,149 million (88%) and Russia, up £1,987 million (63%).
- Precious metals saw the largest decrease on 2017, down £7,949 million (21%). This was largely due to decreases from Switzerland and Hong Kong, down £3,066 million (74%) and £2,291 (88%) respectively.
- Aircraft saw the 2nd largest decrease compared with 2017, down £3,053 million (26%). This was largely due to decreases from the USA, down £1,424 million (35%).

↑ **Exports of Mineral fuels up 25% on 2017**

↓ **Exports of Precious metals down 21% on 2017**

Table 4: UK imports of goods by top 10 commodities, 2018

Partner Country	2018 Total (£ millions)	2017 Total (£ millions)	Change from 2017 (%)
Mechanical appliances	64,519	62,091	3.9
Motor vehicles	56,969	57,025	-0.1
Mineral fuels	50,140	40,092	25.1
Electronic equipment	47,922	46,621	2.8
Precious metals	30,090	38,039	-20.9
Pharmaceutical products	22,709	25,703	-11.6
Plastics and plastic products	14,635	14,330	2.1
Measuring devices and gauges	14,082	13,804	2.0
Knitwear	9,787	9,715	0.7
Articles of iron or steel	9,090	6,970	30.4
Others	183,450	182,948	0.3
Total Imports	503,394	497,337	1.2

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2018 data is provisional

December 2018: Non-EU & EU Trade in Goods

Non-EU Trade in Goods:

- **Exports** for December 2018 were £13.5 billion. This was a decrease of £2.2 billion (14%) on last month, and a decrease of £2.6 billion (16.1%) compared with December 2017.
- **Imports** for December 2018 were £19.2 billion. This was a decrease of £3.1 billion (14%) on last month, and an increase of £0.6 billion (3.1%) compared with December 2017.
- The UK was a net importer this month, with imports exceeding exports by £5.7 billion.

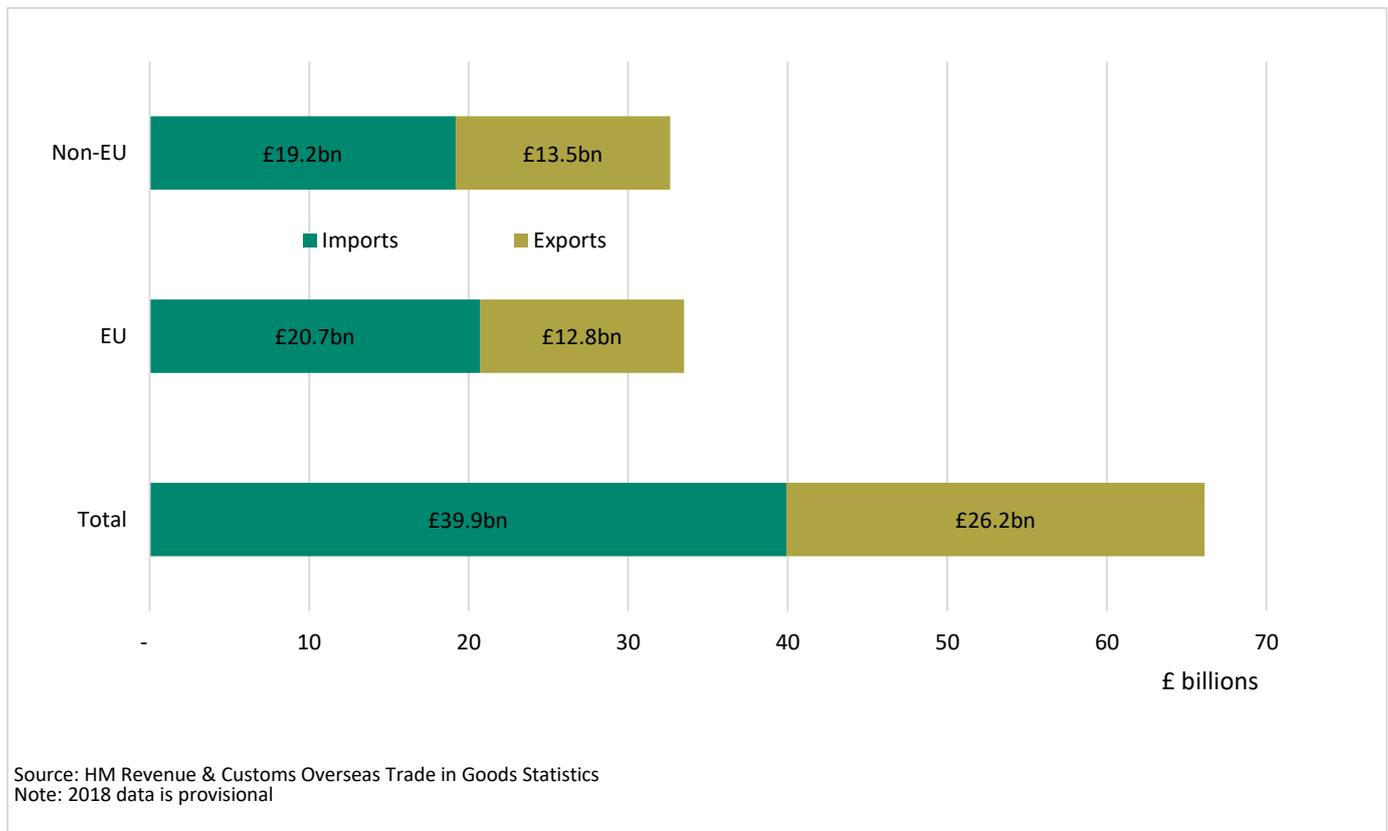
EU Trade in Goods:

- **Exports** for December 2018 were £12.8 billion. This was a decrease of £2.1 billion (14%) on last month, and a small decrease of 0.4% compared with December 2017.
- **Imports** for December 2018 were £20.7 billion. This was a decrease of £3.2 billion (13%) on last month, and an increase of £0.6 billion (3.2%) compared with December 2017.
- The UK was a net importer this month, with imports exceeding exports by £8.0 billion.

↓ **Non-EU imports down 14% on last month**

↓ **EU exports down 14% on last month**

Figure 5: Total UK Trade in Goods, with Non-EU and EU, December 2018



December 2018 Exports: Country Analysis

- The USA remained the largest export partner country, despite experiencing the largest decrease on last month, down £973 million (21%). It experienced a small decrease on December 2017, down £32 million.
- India (ranked 12th) experienced the largest value increase on last month, up £156 million (45%). It also experienced the largest value increase on December 2017, up £70 million (16%).
- Belgium experienced the 2nd largest value increase on December 2017, up £69 million (7.9%).
- Germany experienced the 2nd largest value decrease on last month, down £525 million (17%).
- Switzerland experienced the largest value decrease on December 2017, down £1,362 million (66%).

↑ Exports to India
up 45% on last
month

↓ Exports to
Switzerland
down 66% on
December 2017

Table 5: UK Exports of goods to top 10 partner countries, December 2018

Partner Country	Total (£ millions)	November 2018		December 2017	
		Total (£ millions)	Change on November 2018 (%)	Total (£ millions)	Change on December 2017 (%)
USA	3,672	4,645	-20.9	3,705	-0.9
Germany	2,616	3,141	-16.7	2,638	-0.8
Netherlands	1,873	2,047	-8.5	2,006	-6.6
France	1,834	2,103	-12.8	1,821	0.7
Irish Republic	1,789	2,011	-11.1	1,763	1.5
China	1,248	1,520	-17.9	1,335	-6.5
Belgium	940	1,120	-16.0	871	7.9
Italy	820	926	-11.5	759	8.1
Spain	756	972	-22.3	811	-6.9
Switzerland	716	680	5.2	2,078	-65.6
Others	9,947	11,385	-12.6	11,043	-9.9
Total Non-EU	13,453	15,676	-14.2	16,027	-16.1
Total EU	12,757	14,876	-14.2	12,802	-0.4
Total Exports	26,210	30,552	-14.2	28,829	-9.1

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics
Note: 2018 data is provisional

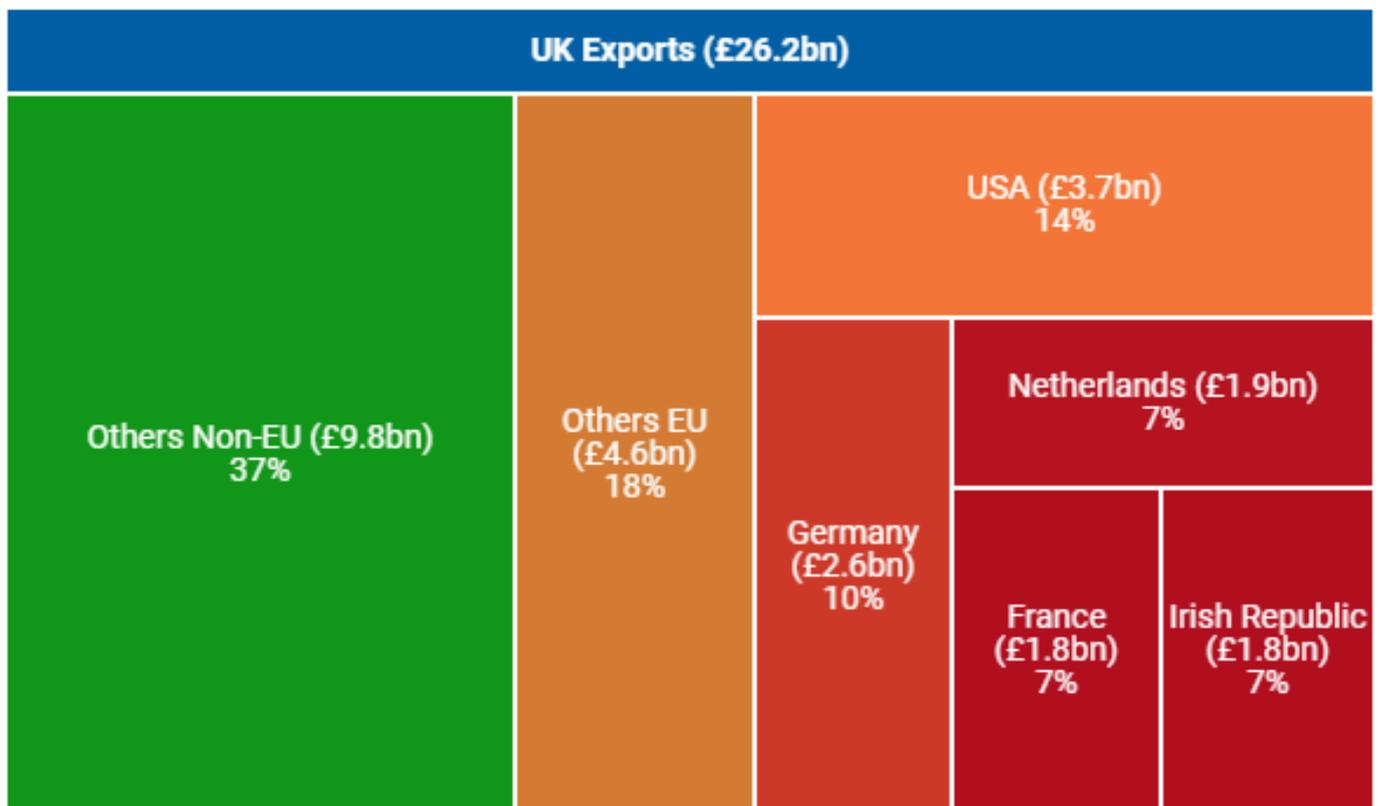
December 2018 Exports: Country Analysis

- The top 5 export partners accounted for 45% of total exports in goods this month, this was an increase from 42% on December 2017.
- The USA accounted for 14% of the total value of goods exports from the UK. This was an increase from 13% on December 2017.
- Germany had the 2nd largest proportion, accounting for 10%, an increase from 9% on December 2017.
- The top 10 export partner countries (ranked by value) changed compared with last month. Most notably, Switzerland rose 2 places to 10th, and Hong Kong fell 1 place to 11th.
- Other than Hong Kong and Switzerland, all other countries remained in the top 10 on last month.
- The top 10 export partner countries (ranked by value) changed compared with December 2017. Most notably, Switzerland fell 7 places to 10th.

↑ **USA had a 14% share of total exports for December 2018**

↑ **Switzerland rose to 10th largest export partner for December 2018**

Figure 6: UK exports of goods to the top 5 countries, December 2018



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2018 data is provisional

December 2018 Exports: Country Analysis

- The USA remained the largest export partner country. It experienced the largest percentage increase on 3 months to September 2018 and 3 months to December 2018, up 12% and 14% respectively.
- Italy experienced the 2nd largest percentage increase on 3 months to September 2018, up 8.2%.
- The Netherlands experienced the 2nd largest percentage increase on 3 months to December 2017, up 6.9%.
- Switzerland experienced the largest percentage decrease on 3 months to September 2018, down nearly 3 times in value.
- Spain experienced the only percentage decrease within the top ten partner countries on 3 months to December 2017, down 0.1%.

↑ **Exports to USA up 14% on 3 months to December 2017**

↓ **Switzerland down nearly 3 times on 3 months to September 2018**

Table 6: UK Exports of goods to top 10 partner countries, 3 months to December 2018

Partner Country	Total (£ millions)	3 months to Sep 2018		3 months to Dec 2017	
		Total (£ millions)	Change from September 2018 (%)	Total (£ millions)	Change from December 2017 (%)
USA	13,550	11,872	12.4%	11,597	14.4%
Germany	8,925	8,745	2.0%	8,852	0.8%
Netherlands	6,301	6,379	-1.2%	5,865	6.9%
France	6,075	5,977	1.6%	6,061	0.2%
Irish Republic	5,884	5,496	6.6%	5,480	6.9%
China	4,505	5,988	-32.9%	4,394	2.5%
Belgium	3,312	4,228	-27.6%	3,181	4.0%
Switzerland	3,102	8,453	-172.5%	3,103	0.0%
Italy	2,742	2,517	8.2%	2,584	5.8%
Spain	2,701	2,567	5.0%	2,705	-0.1%
Others	33,362	33,953	-1.8%	34,671	-3.9%
Total Exports	90,460	96,173	-6.3%	88,491	2.2%

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2018 data is provisional

December 2018 Exports: Commodity Analysis

- Mechanical appliances remained in 1st place, despite experiencing the 4th largest decrease in value on last month, down £447 million (9.0%). In contrast it experienced the largest increase on December 2017, up £216 million (5.0%).
- Ships, boats and floating structures (ranked 35th) experienced the largest value increase on last month, up £68 million (more than double).
- Mineral fuels experienced the 2nd largest value increase on December 2017, up £88 million (4.0%).
- Motor vehicles experienced the largest decrease on last month, down £715 million (20%).
- Precious metals experienced the largest decrease on December 2017, down £2,278 million (67%). It experienced the 2nd largest decrease on last month, down £561 million (33%).

↓ Exports of Mechanical appliances down 9% on last month

↓ Exports of Precious metals down 67% on last month

Table 7: UK exports of goods by top 5 commodities, December 2018

Partner Country	Total (£ millions)	November 2018		December 2017	
		Total (£ millions)	Change on November 2018 (%)	Total (£ millions)	Change on December 2017 (%)
Mechanical appliances	4,535	4,982	-9.0	4,320	5.0
Motor vehicles	2,954	3,669	-19.5	3,225	-8.4
Mineral fuels	2,282	2,694	-15.3	2,194	4.0
Electronic equipment	1,889	2,029	-6.9	1,862	1.4
Pharmaceutical products	1,445	1,903	-24.0	1,874	-22.9
Measuring devices and gauges	1,247	1,293	-3.6	1,209	3.2
Aircraft	1,137	1,275	-10.8	1,081	5.2
Precious metals	1,113	1,674	-33.5	3,391	-67.2
Other products	675	771	-12.4	794	-14.9
Organic chemicals	671	806	-16.8	726	-7.6
Others	8,260	9,454	-12.6	8,152	1.3
Total Exports	26,210	30,552	-14.2	28,829	-9.1

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2018 data is provisional

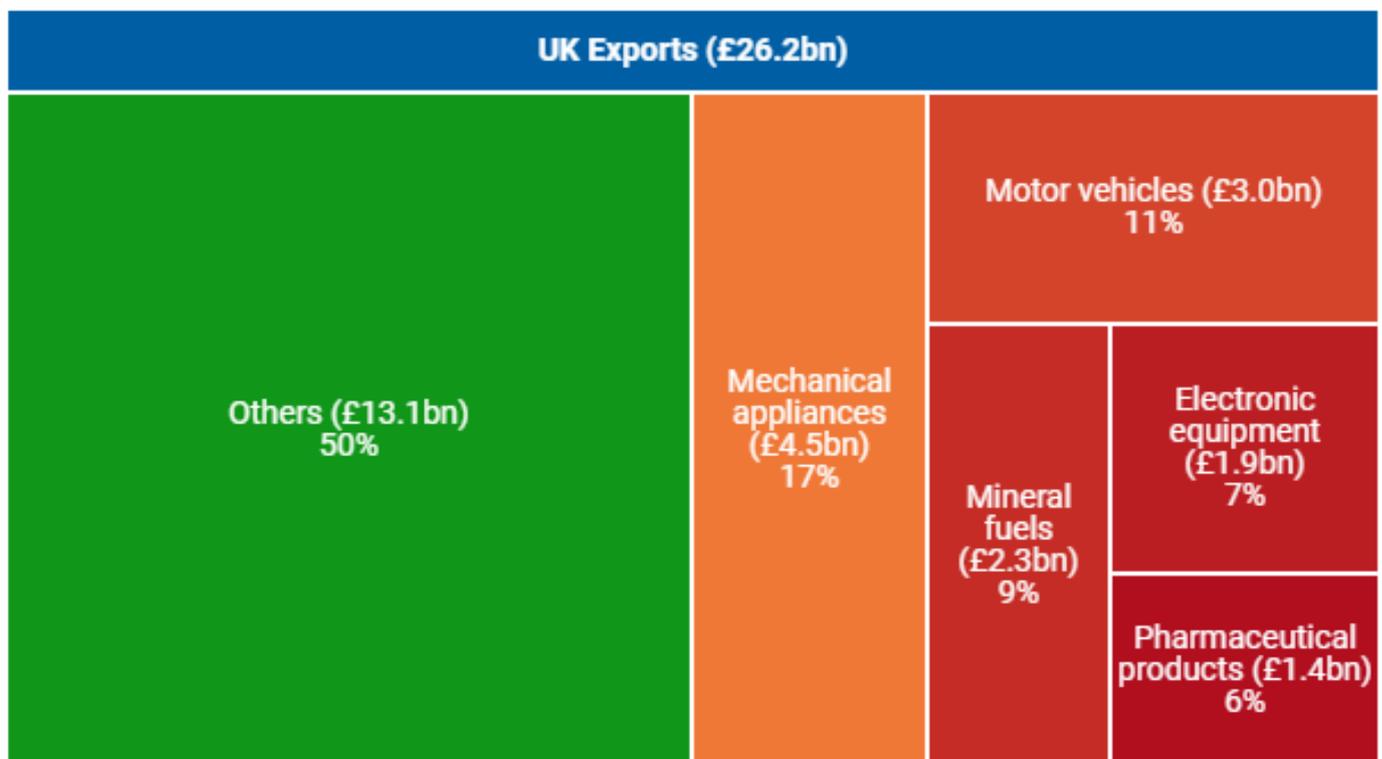
December 2018 Exports: Commodity Analysis

- The top 5 export commodities (ranked by value) accounted for 50% this month, this was a decrease from 52% on December 2017
- Mechanical appliances accounted for 17% of the total value of goods exports from the UK, this was an increase from 15% on December 2017.
- Motor vehicles had the 2nd largest proportion, accounting for 11%, a decrease from 12% on December 2018.
- The top 10 export commodities (ranked by value) changed compared with last month. Most notably, Precious metals fell 2 places to 8th.
- Apart from Beverages, all other commodities remained in the top 10 from last month. Other products rose from 12th to 9th on last month.
- The top 10 export commodities (ranked by value) changed compared with December 2017. Most notably, Precious metals fell 6 places to 8th, and electronic equipment rose 2 places to 4th.

↑ **Mechanical appliances had a 17% share of total exports**

↓ **Precious metals fell to 8th largest export on December 2017**

Figure 7: UK exports by top 5 commodities, December 2018



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2018 data is provisional

December 2018 Exports: Commodity Analysis

- Mechanical appliances remained the largest export commodity. It experienced increases on 3 months to September 2018, and 3 months to December 2017, up 6.1% and 8.8% respectively.
- Organic chemicals experienced the largest percentage increase on 3 months to September 2018 and 3 months to December 2017, up 16% and 23% respectively.
- Aircraft experienced the 2nd largest percentage increase on 3 months to September 2018, up 7.3%.
- Precious metals experienced the largest percentage decrease on 3 months to September 2018, down more than double
- Aircraft experienced the largest percentage decrease on 3 months to December 2017, down 18%.

↑ **Organic chemicals up 23% on 3 months to December 2017**

↓ **Precious metals down more than double in value on 3 months to September 2018**

Table 8: UK exports of goods by top 10 commodities, 3 months to December 2018

Commodity description	Total (£ millions)	3 months to Sep 2018		3 months to Dec 2017	
		Total (£ millions)	Change from September 2018 (%)	Total (£ millions)	Change from December 2017 (%)
Mechanical appliances	14,630	13,732	6.1%	13,338	8.8%
Motor vehicles	10,377	9,736	6.2%	11,214	-8.1%
Mineral fuels	8,174	10,190	-24.7%	6,804	16.8%
Electronic equipment	5,966	5,702	4.4%	5,830	2.3%
Pharmaceutical products	5,557	5,313	4.4%	6,177	-11.2%
Precious metals	5,539	13,327	-140.6%	5,875	-6.1%
Measuring devices and gauges	3,914	3,660	6.5%	3,680	6.0%
Aircraft	3,589	3,326	7.3%	4,221	-17.6%
Organic chemicals	2,478	2,073	16.3%	1,915	22.7%
Plastics and plastic products	2,315	2,445	-5.6%	2,284	1.3%
Others	27,922	26,670	4.5%	27,154	2.8%
Total Exports	90,460	96,173	-6.3%	88,491	2.2%

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2018 data is provisional

December 2018 Exports: Combined Commodity & Country Analysis

Country to commodity:

- The decrease in exports to the USA on last month was led by Pharmaceutical products, down £275 million (47%).
- The increase in exports to India on last month was led by Mechanical appliances, up £60 million (more than double in value). The increase on December 2017 was led by Mineral fuels, up £52 million (from £2.2 million).
- The increase in exports to Belgium on last month was led by Mineral fuels, up £28 million (24%).
- The decrease in exports to Germany on last month was led by Motor vehicles and Mechanical appliances, down £97 million (29%) and £88 million (20%) respectively.

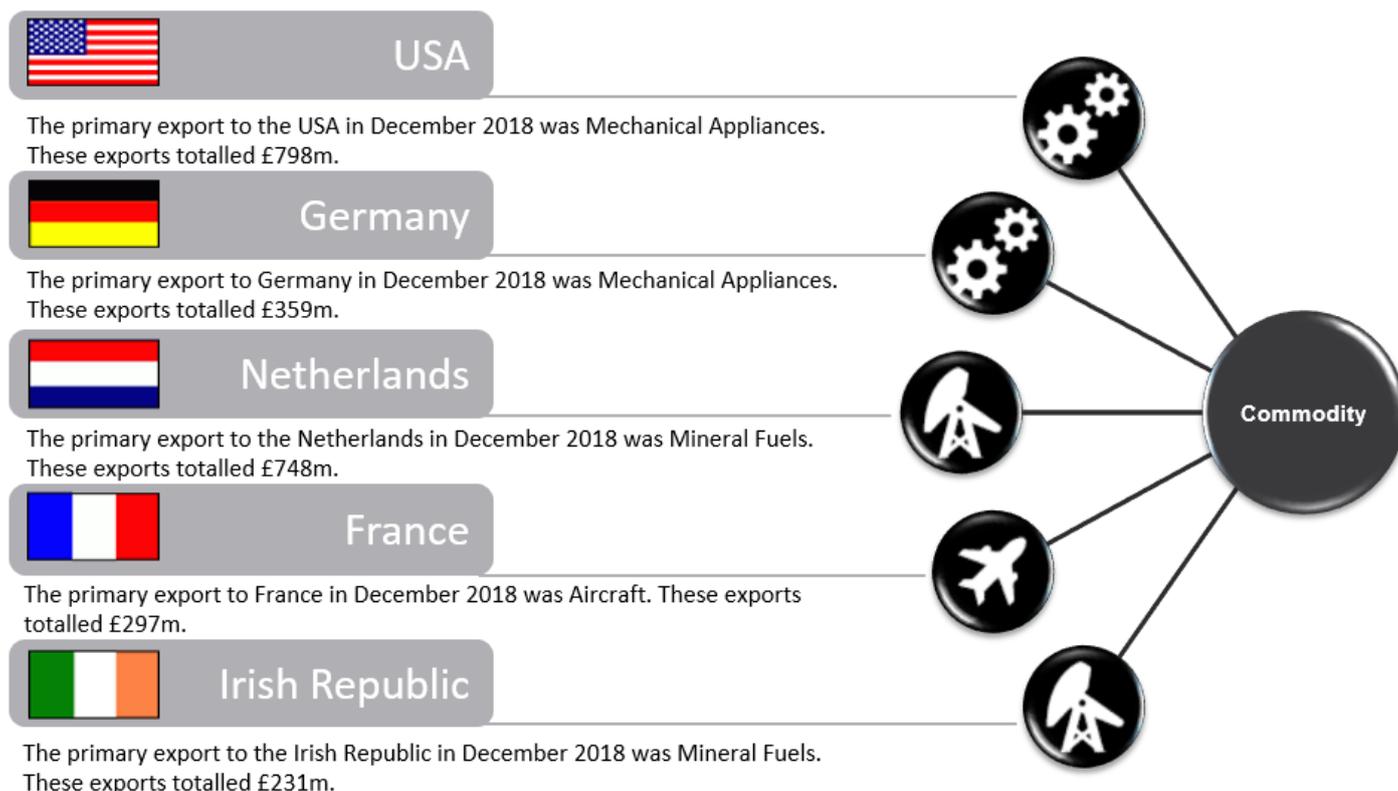
Commodity to country:

- The decrease in exports of Mechanical appliances on last month was led by USA, down £165 million (17%). Conversely, the increase on December 2017 was also led by Mechanical appliances, up £160 million (25%).
- The increase in exports of Ships, boats and floating structures on last month was led by India, with a total of £37 million.
- The decrease in exports of Motor vehicles on last month was led by the China and Belgium down £109 million (36%) and £105 million (43%). Respectively.
- The decrease in exports of Precious metals on December 2017 was dominated by Switzerland, down £1,336 million (79%).

↑ Exports of Pharmaceutical products to USA down 47% on December 2017

↓ Exports of Motor vehicles to China down 36% on last month

Figure 8: UK exports of goods to top 5 EU & Non-EU countries top commodities



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics
 Note: 2018 data is provisional

December 2018 Imports: Country Analysis

- Germany remained the top import partner country, despite experiencing the largest decrease on last month, down £1,115 million (19%).
- Spain experienced the largest value increase on last month, up £211 million (16%). It experienced the 2nd largest increase on December 2017, up £434 million (40%).
- USA experienced the largest value increase on December 2017, up £435 million (13%).
- China experienced the 2nd largest value decrease on last month, down £1,097 million (24%).
- The Netherlands experienced the largest value decrease on December 2017, down £349 million (10%). It experienced the 3rd largest decrease on last month, down £724 million (19%).

↑ Imports from Spain up 40% on December 2017

↓ Imports from China down 24% on last month

Table 9: UK Imports of goods to top 10 partner countries, December 2018

Partner Country	Total (£ millions)	November 2017		December 2017	
		Total (£ millions)	Change from November 2018 (%)	Total (£ millions)	Change on November 2018 (%)
Germany	4,823	5,938	-18.8	4,901	-1.6
USA	3,850	4,182	-7.9	3,415	12.7
China	3,467	4,564	-24.0	3,276	5.8
The Netherlands	3,132	3,856	-18.8	3,481	-10.0
France	2,332	2,582	-9.7	2,061	13.2
Belgium	1,999	2,321	-13.9	2,067	-3.3
Italy	1,585	1,785	-11.2	1,493	6.1
Spain	1,507	1,295	16.3	1,073	40.5
Norway	1,499	1,609	-6.8	1,845	-18.8
Irish Republic	1,143	1,272	-10.2	1,274	-10.3
Others	14,573	16,819	-13.3	13,819	5.5
Total non-EU	19,176	22,308	-14.0	18,605	3.1
Total EU	20,734	23,914	-13.3	20,099	3.2
Total Imports	39,910	46,222	-13.7	38,704	3.1

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2018 data is provisional

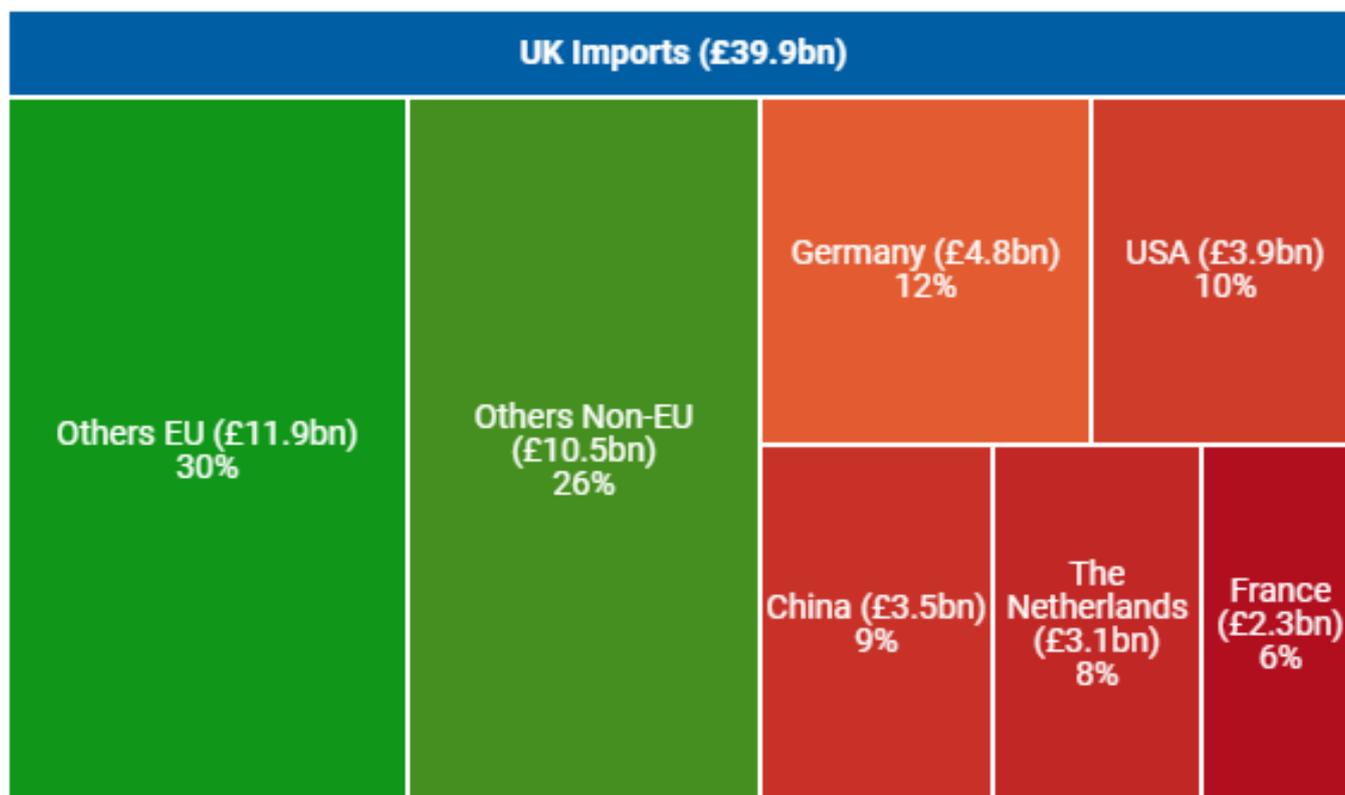
December 2018 Imports: Country Analysis

- The top 5 import partners accounted for 44% of total imports of goods this month, this remained unchanged on December 2017.
- Germany accounted for 12% of the total value of goods imports from the UK. This was a decrease from 13% on December 2017.
- USA had the 2nd largest proportion, accounting for 10%, an increase from 9% in December 2017.
- The top 10 import partner countries (ranked by value) changed compared with last month. USA rose 1 place to 2nd and China fell 1 place to 3rd.
- The top 10 import partner countries (ranked by value) changed compared with December 2017. Most notably, Spain rose 2 places to 8th.

➤ **Top 5 import partners accounted for 44% of total imports**

↑ **Spain rose to 8th largest Import partner for December 2018**

Figure 9: UK imports of goods to the top 5 countries, December 2018



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2018 data is provisional

December 2018 Imports: Country Analysis

- Germany remained the largest export partner country. It experienced a percentage increase on 3 months to September 2018 and on 3 months to December 2017, up 3.6% and 1.0% respectively.
- Spain experienced the largest percentage increase on 3 months to September 2018, up 12%.
- USA experienced the largest percentage increase on 3 months to December 2017, up 14%.
- All top 10 countries experienced a percentage increase on 3 months to September 2018.
- Irish Republic experienced the only percentage decrease within the top 10 partner countries on 3 months to December 2017, down 5.9%.

↑ Imports from USA up 14% on 3 months to December 2017

↓ Imports from Irish Republic down 5.9% on 3 months to December 2017

Table 10: UK Imports of goods to top 10 partner countries, 3 months to December 2018

Partner Country	Total (£ millions)	3 months to Sep 2018		3 months to Dec 2017	
		Total (£ millions)	Change from September 2018 (%)	Total (£ millions)	Change from December 2017 (%)
Germany	17,039	16,431	3.6%	16,865	1.0%
USA	12,110	11,066	8.6%	10,420	14.0%
China	12,735	11,555	9.3%	11,149	12.5%
Netherlands	10,867	10,439	3.9%	10,793	0.7%
France	7,624	6,945	8.9%	6,880	9.8%
Belgium	6,659	6,464	2.9%	6,346	4.7%
Italy	5,345	4,773	10.7%	4,910	8.1%
Spain	4,148	3,645	12.1%	3,685	11.2%
Norway	4,945	4,817	2.6%	4,884	1.2%
Irish Republic	3,692	3,692	0.0%	3,909	-5.9%
Others	48,258	46,449	3.7%	47,019	2.6%
Total Exports	133,422	126,276	5.4%	126,859	4.9%

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2018 data is provisional

December 2018 Imports: Commodity Analysis

- Mechanical appliances remained in 1st place, despite experiencing the 2nd largest decrease on last month, down £940 million (16%).
- Ships, boats and floating structures experienced the largest value increase on last month, up £438 million (from £13 million).
- Motor vehicles experienced the largest value increase on December 2017, up £597 million (17%). In contrast, it experienced the 3rd largest value decrease on last month, down £701 million (15%).
- Electronic equipment experienced the largest value decrease on last month, down £962 million (19%).
- Mineral fuels experienced the largest value decrease on December 2017, down £274 million (6.4 %).

↑ **Exports of Motor vehicles up 17% on December 2017**

↓ **Exports of Electronic equipment down 19% on last month**

Table 11: UK imports of goods by top 10 commodities, December 2018

Partner Country	Total (£ millions)	November 2018		December 2017	
		Total (£ millions)	Change on December 2018 (%)	Total (£ millions)	Change on December 2018 (%)
Mechanical appliances	5,053	5,993	-15.7	4,853	4.1
Motor vehicles	4,118	4,819	-14.6	3,521	17.0
Electronic equipment	4,081	5,043	-19.1	3,981	2.5
Mineral fuels	4,014	4,687	-14.4	4,287	-6.4
Precious metals	2,816	2,826	-0.4	2,987	-5.7
Pharmaceutical products	1,604	2,146	-25.3	1,833	-12.5
Measuring devices and gauges	1,123	1,275	-12.0	1,070	5.0
Plastics	1,040	1,301	-20.0	1,003	3.7
Knitwear	801	989	-19.0	767	4.4
Articles of iron or steel	720	785	-8.3	500	44.0
Others	14,540	16,356	-11.1	13,902	4.6
Total Exports	39,910	46,222	-13.7	38,704	3.1

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2018 data is provisional

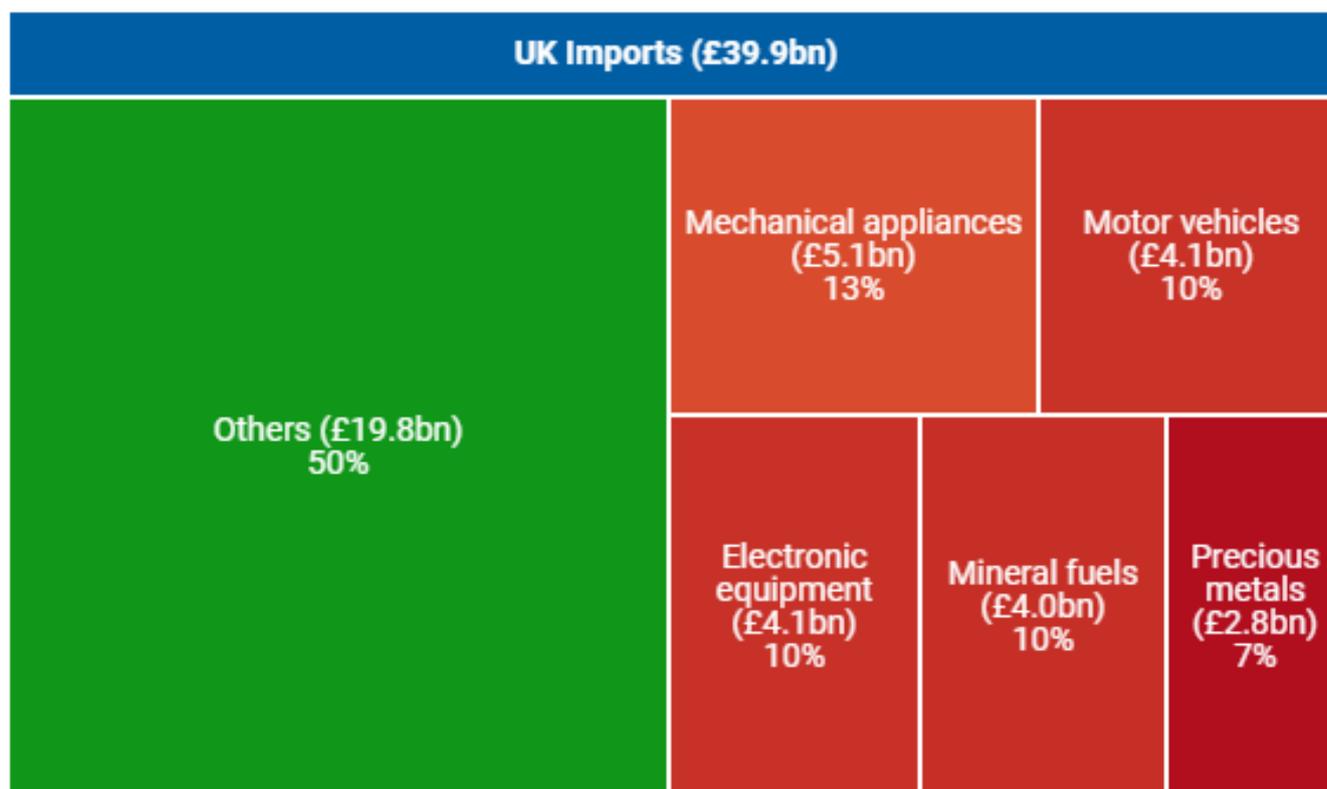
December 2018 Imports: Commodity Analysis

- The top 5 import commodities accounted for 50% of total UK trade in goods imports this month. This was a decrease from 51% on December 2017.
- Mechanical appliances accounted for 13% of the total value of goods imports from the UK, this remained unchanged on December 2017.
- Motor vehicles had the 2nd largest proportion, accounting for 10%, this was a decrease from 11% on December 2017.
- The top 10 import commodities (ranked by value) changed compared with last month. Most notably, Motor vehicles rose to 2nd place and Electronic equipment fell to 3rd place.
- All commodities remained in the top 10 from last month.
- The top 10 import commodities (ranked by value) changed compared with December 2017. Most notably, Articles of iron and steel rose 6 places to 10th.

↓ **Top 5 import commodities accounted for 50% of total trade last month**

↑ **Imports of Articles of iron and steel up 6 places on December 2018**

Figure 10: UK imports by top 5 commodities, December 2018



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2018 data is provisional

December 2018 Imports: Commodity Analysis

- Mechanical appliances remained the largest export partner country. It experienced a percentage increase on 3 months to September 2018 and on 3 months to December 2017, up 5.7% and 7.9% respectively.
- Electronic equipment experienced the largest percentage increase on 3 months to September 2018, up 13%.
- Articles of iron or steel experienced the largest percentage increase on 3 months to December 2017, up 29%.
- Plastics and plastic products experienced the largest percentage decrease on 3 months to September 2018, down 1.9%.
- Precious metals experienced the largest percentage decrease on 3 months to December 2017, down 12%.

↑ **Electronic equipment up 13% on 3 months to September 2018**

↑ **Precious metals down 12% on 3 months to December 2017**

Table 12: UK imports of goods by top 10 commodities, 3 months to December 2018

Commodity description	Total (£ millions)	3 months to Sep 2018		3 months to Dec 2017	
		Total (£ millions)	Change from September 2018 (%)	Total (£ millions)	Change from December 2017 (%)
Mechanical appliances	17,484	16,480	5.7%	16,097	7.9%
Motor vehicles	14,214	12,789	10.0%	12,795	10.0%
Electronic equipment	14,026	12,144	13.4%	13,095	6.6%
Mineral fuels	13,055	12,840	1.6%	11,411	12.6%
Precious metals	8,022	6,979	13.0%	8,949	-11.6%
Pharmaceutical products	5,697	5,706	-0.2%	6,162	-8.2%
Measuring devices and gauges	3,659	3,523	3.7%	3,463	5.3%
Plastics and plastic products	3,692	3,761	-1.9%	3,502	5.1%
Knitwear	2,883	2,680	7.0%	2,684	6.9%
Articles of iron or steel	2,346	2,133	9.1%	1,674	28.7%
Others	48,345	47,239	2.3%	47,028	2.7%
Total Exports	133,422	126,276	5.4%	126,859	4.9%

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2018 data is provisional

December 2018 Imports: Combined Commodity & Country Analysis

Country to commodity:

- The increase in imports from Spain on last month was dominated by Ships, boats and floating structures, up £440 million, this was partially offset by a decrease in Motor Vehicles, down £76 million (21%).
- The increase in imports from USA on December 2017 was led by Precious metals, up £227 million (52 %).
- The decrease in imports from China on last month was led by Electronic equipment, down £292 million (24 %).
- The decrease in imports from the Netherlands on December 2017 was led by Pharmaceutical products, down £303 million (62%).

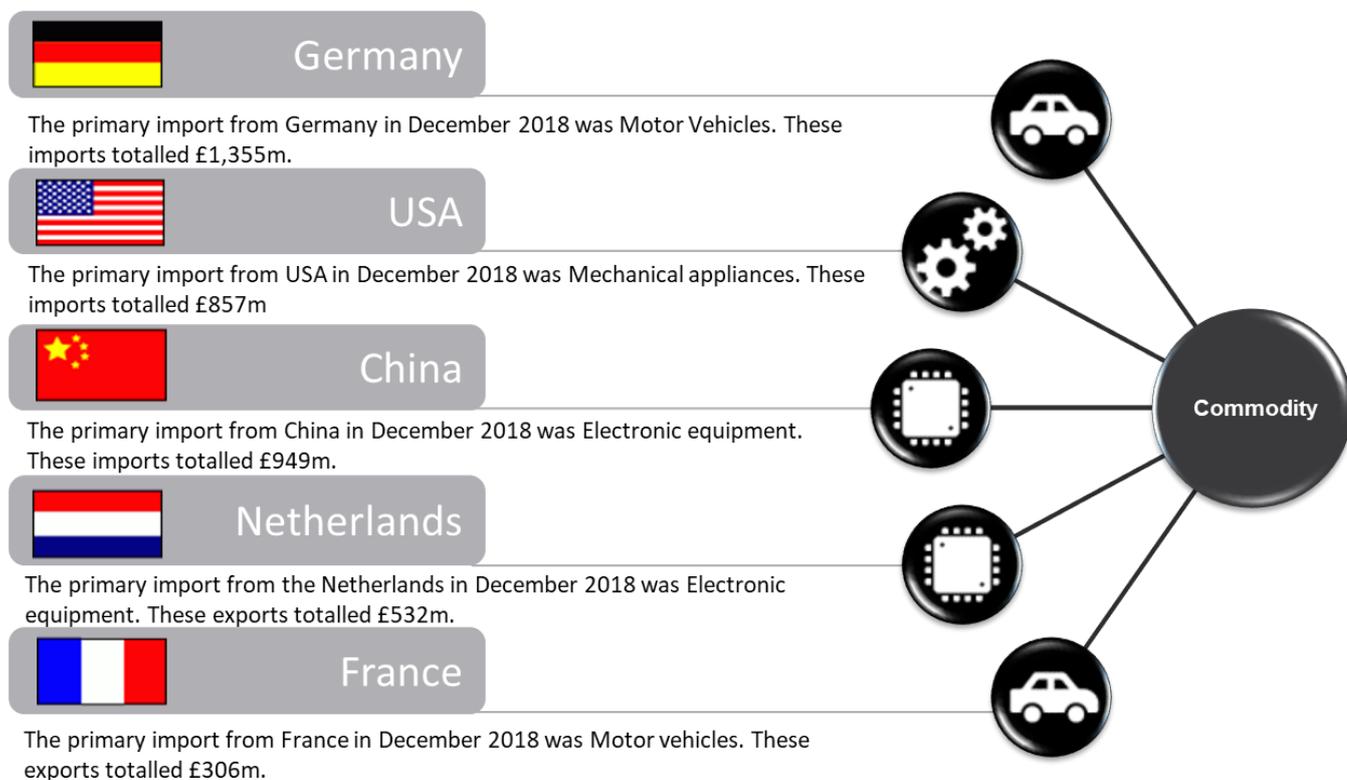
Commodity to country:

- The decrease in imports of Mechanical appliances on last month was led by China, down £230 million (26%).
- The increase in imports of Motor vehicles on December 2017 was led by Belgium, up £120 million (27%).
- The decrease in imports of Electronic equipment on last month was led by China, down £292 million (24%) and the Netherlands, down £114 million (18%).
- The decrease in imports of Mineral fuels on December 2017 was led by Norway, down £396 million (23%).

↑ Imports of Precious metals from USA up 52% on December 2017

↑ Imports of Motor vehicles from Belgium up 27% on last month

Figure 11: UK imports of goods from top 5 EU & Non-EU countries top commodities



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2018 data is provisional

Methodology Notes

Metadata

All data behind this bulletin through our [uktradeinfo web site](#):

- Detailed Trade Statistics data at 8-digit commodity code level is available in our [interactive database](#).
- Aggregate OTS data is available in [pre-prepared Excel tables](#).

Find details of how users interested in import and export markets for specific goods make use of the detailed OTS data in '[The User Story](#)'.

Data sources

The **EU figures** provided in this publication of the December 2018 Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics are collected from the Intrastat survey. They will include:

- Estimates for businesses who have yet to submit detailed data on the trade they had with other EU Member States this month.
- Estimates for businesses who do not have to submit detailed data on the trade they have with other EU Member States.
- An adjustment for trade associated with Missing Trader Intra Community fraud. More details of this can be found [here](#).

Estimates are included in all high level totals including commodity (HS2) and country totals.

The **Non-EU figures** provided in this publication of the December 2018 Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics are presented by customs declarations and collected by the CHIEF (Customs Handling of Import and Export Freight) system.

Detailed trade information is presented according to the [Harmonised System \(HS\)](#) nomenclature.

Methodology

This methodology paper covers all aspects of the Overseas Trade Statistics methodology – data sources, classifications and definitions, quality assurance, publications and governance. It is a useful companion to the trade data, providing the definitions and methodologies on which the data are based. The Overseas Trade Statistics Methodology paper (July 2017) is available [here](#).

From the May 2016 month of account, there was a methodological change to the way our trade-in-goods statistics are compiled. Following a change in legislation, trade-in-goods statistics switched from the 'general trade' system of compilation to the 'special trade' system. More information can be found [here](#).

Non-Monetary Gold (NMG) can form a substantial part of the non-EU Overseas Trade Statistics (OTS). For further information, see [Inclusion of Non-Monetary Gold in OTS](#). Data relating to monthly non-EU and EU import and export totals for January 2008 onwards with a breakdown of non-monetary gold and other trade is available in an [OTS time series spreadsheet](#).

Methodology update

A recent review of the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC) and the corresponding Combined Nomenclature (CN) classification, has identified improvements to how the trade in goods data within 'SITC 98' Military Arms and Ammunitions chapter is treated.

To bring the trade in goods we publish in line with the current SITC Rev 4 classification system, trade in certain military goods will in future be published under 'SITC 89' Arms and Ammunitions. This will take effect from January 2019 published data, and there will be no changes to past data. Please see the detailed description of [SITC Rev.4](#) for more information. The products included under SITC 89 can be found on page 169.

Relationship with other statistical publications

The aggregate estimates here will differ slightly from those that are published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) as part of the Balance of Payments (BoP), as the 2 sets of data are compiled to different sets of rules. The ONS web site provides an overview of BoP at the [Guide to UK Trade](#) as well as the detailed monthly [UK Trade Releases](#). The BoP publication shows a high level picture of UK trade-in-goods, whereas the OTS publication shows a detailed picture of the UK's trade-in-goods by commodity and partner country. [uktradeinfo.com](#) provides more detail about the [differences between BoP and OTS publications](#).

The aggregate estimates here will differ from the Eurostat publication [Euro area external trade](#). The OTS was published up until the May 2016 month of account as 'general trade' based upon goods recorded as they enter or leave the UK. This will include goods imported into and exported from a freezone or customs warehouse, regardless of their future use. The Eurostat EU external trade data are published as 'special trade' where goods are recorded as trade only when they enter free circulation or are declared to specific Customs regimes such as Inward Processing (IP) or Processing under Customs Control (PCC). Imports from a free zone or customs warehouse are similarly recorded in 'special trade'.

National Statistics Publication

HM Revenue & Customs released these latest statistics on Overseas Trade with countries on 10 October 2018 under arrangements set out in the [Code of Practice for Official Statistics](#). The 1st release is published on HMRC's trade data website [www.uktradeinfo.com](#).

This release includes the 1st provisional estimates of trade-in-goods between the UK and both countries of the EU and those outside the EU for December 2018. At the same time revisions for all previously published non-EU and EU data for 2018 are also being released in line with the [HM Revenue & Customs Policy on Revisions](#).

The OTS has been reviewed as part of an assessment made of Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics by the [UK Statistics Authority](#). The report of that assessment can be found at <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment-reports/assessment-report-93---uk-trade-in-goods.pdf>.

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods; and
- Are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.