



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 March 2020.

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

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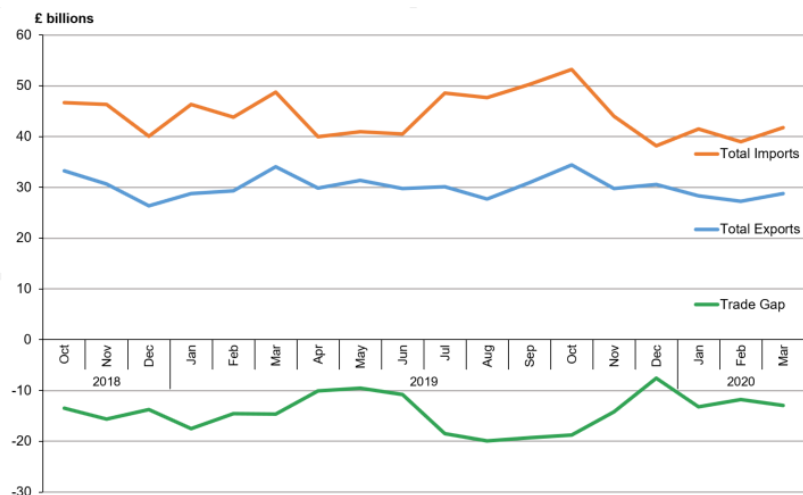
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Trade in Goods, March 2020

- Total **exports** of goods for March 2020 were £28.8 billion. This was an increase of £1.6 billion (5.8%) compared with last month, and a decrease of £5.3 billion (15%) compared with March 2019.
- Total **imports** of goods for March 2020 were £41.7 billion. This was an increase of £2.8 billion (7.1%) compared with last month, and a decrease of £7.0 billion (14%) compared with March 2019.
- The UK was a net importer this month, with **imports** exceeding **exports** by £12.9 billion, widening by £1.2 billion on last month.

Figure 1: Total UK monthly Trade in Goods



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics
Note: 2019 and 2020 data is provisional



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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, reaching its highest point in Q3 of 2019. Exports peaked in Q2 of 2013, with a steady rise from Q2 of 2017 to Q3 of 2018.

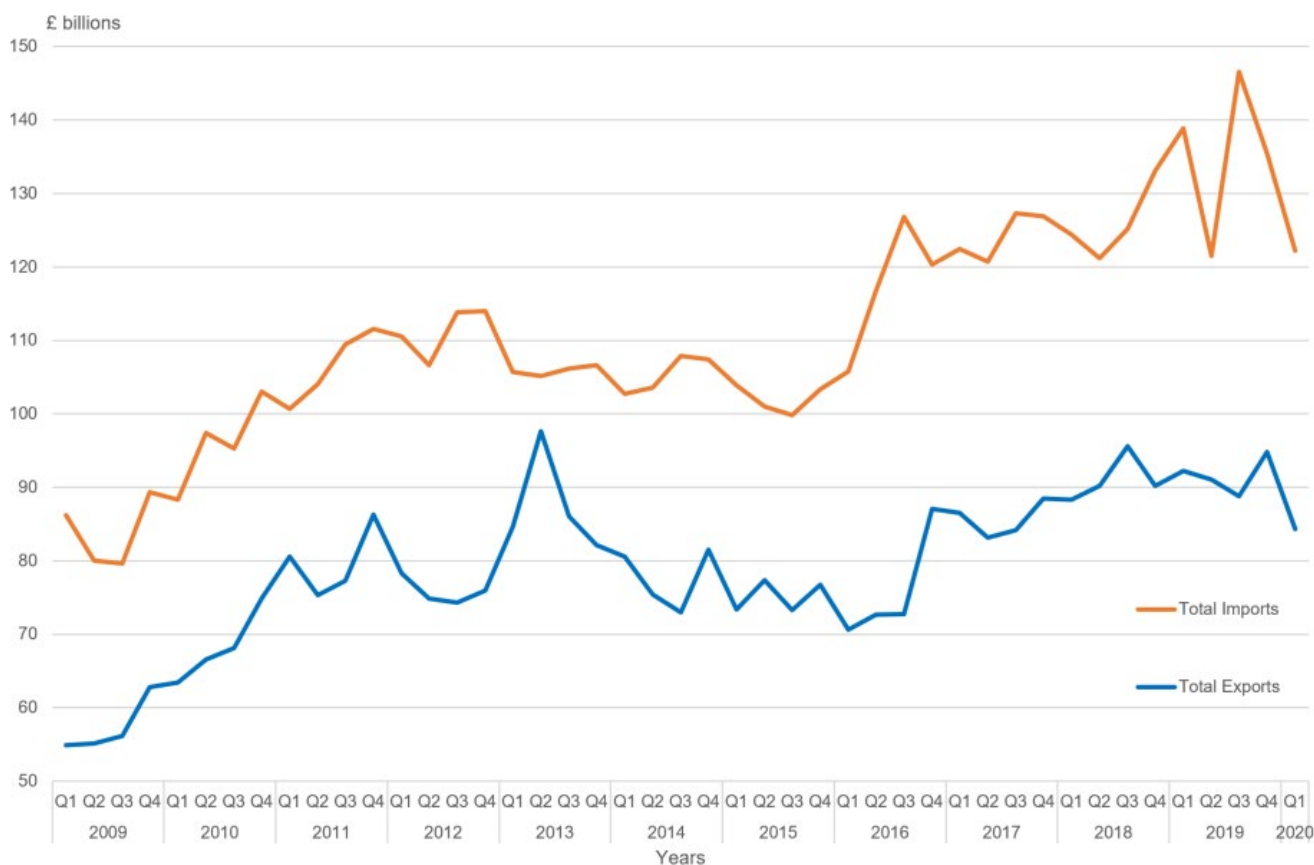
- The total **export** trade for Q1 of 2020 was £84.4 billion, which was a decrease of 8.5% compared with £92.2 billion for Q1 of 2019.
- The total **import** trade for Q1 of 2020 was £122 billion, which was a decrease of 12% compared with £139 billion for Q1 of 2019.
- There was a trade deficit of £37.9 billion for Q1 of 2020. This was a narrowing of 19% compared with £46.7 billion for Q1 2019.
- 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 down 8% on Q1 2019**

↓ **Imports down 12% on Q1 2019**

• **Trade deficit narrowed by 19% on Q1 2019**

Figure 2: Quarterly UK Trade in Goods, 2009 – 2019



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics
 Note: 2019 and 2020 data is provisional

Non-EU & EU Trade in Goods

Non-EU Trade in Goods:

- **Non-EU exports** for March 2020 were £15.7 billion. This was an increase of £2.0 billion (14%) on last month, and a decrease of £1.2 billion (6.9%) compared with March 2019.
- **Non-EU imports** for March 2020 were £20.4 billion. This was an increase of £0.9 billion (4.5%) on last month, and a decrease of £0.9 billion (4.1%) compared with March 2019.
- For **non-EU trade** the UK was a net importer this month, with imports exceeding exports by £4.8 billion.

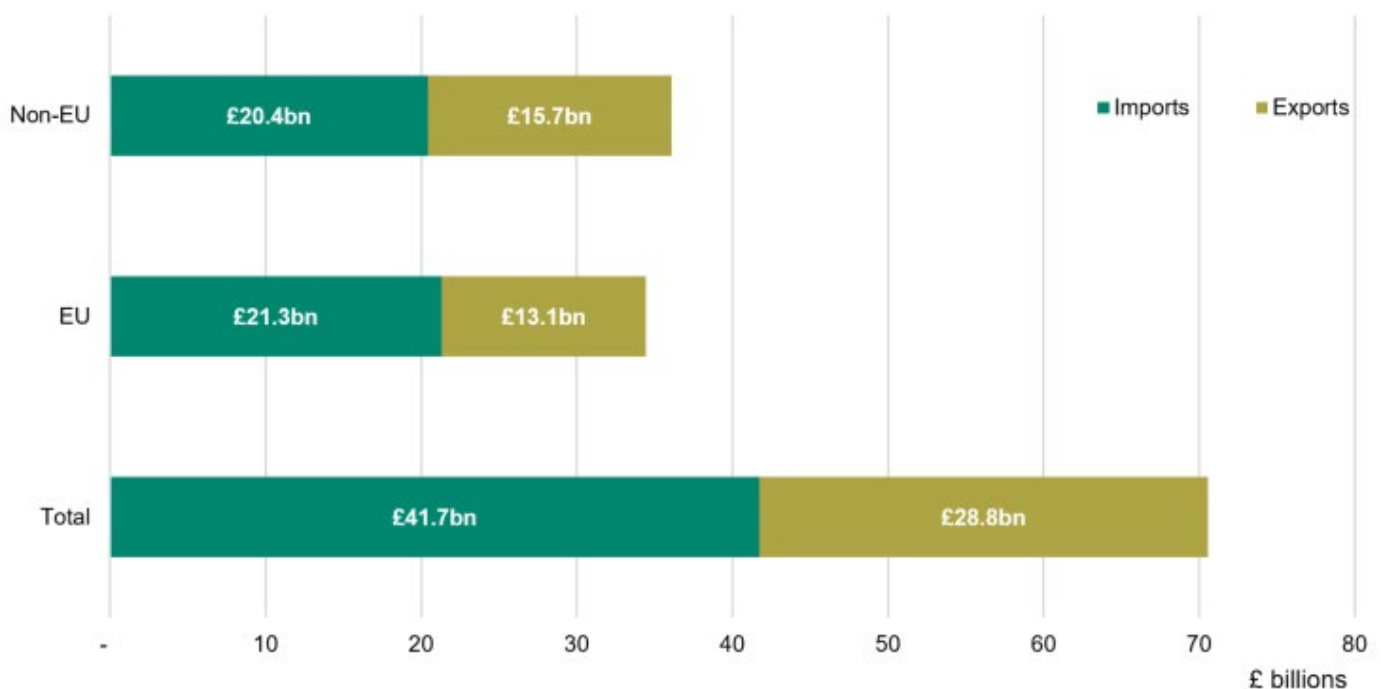
↑ **Non-EU exports up 14% on last month**

↓ **EU imports down 22% on March 2019**

EU Trade in Goods:

- **EU exports** for March 2020 were £13.1 billion. This was a decrease of £0.4 billion (2.8%) on last month, and a decrease of £4.1 billion (24%) compared with March 2019.
- **EU imports** for March 2020 were £21.3 billion. This was an increase of £1.9 billion (9.7%) on last month, and a decrease of £6.1 billion (22%) compared with March 2019.
- For **EU trade** the UK was a net importer this month, with imports exceeding exports by £8.2 billion.

Figure 3: Total UK Trade in Goods, with EU and Non-EU, March 2020



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2020 data is provisional

Exports: Country Analysis

- The USA remained the largest export partner country. It experienced the 3rd largest value increase on last month, up £401 million (11%), but the 3rd largest value decrease on March 2019, down £603 million (13%).
- Switzerland experienced the largest value increase on last month and on March 2019, up £1,012 million and £1,019 million respectively. Both increases were over 2.5 times in value.
- Hong Kong experienced the 2nd largest value increase on last month and on March 2019, up £633 million (more than doubling in value), and £216 million (23%) respectively.
- Belarus (ranked 101st) experienced the largest value decrease compared with last month, down £400 million (99%).
- The Netherlands experienced the 2nd largest value decrease on last month down £399 million (19%).
- France experienced the largest value decrease on March 2019, down £1,046 million (37%).

↑ **Exports to Switzerland up over 2.5 times on last month**

↓ **Exports to France down 37% on March 2019**

Table 1: UK exports of goods to the top 10 countries, March 2020

Partner Country	March 2020		February 2020		March 2019	
	Total (£ millions)	Total (£ millions)	Change on February 2020 (%)	Total (£ millions)	Change on March 2019 (%)	
USA	4,117	3,716	10.8	4,720	-12.8	
Germany	2,913	3,214	-9.4	3,432	-15.1	
Irish Republic	1,759	1,524	15.4	2,319	-24.2	
France	1,752	1,838	-4.7	2,798	-37.4	
Netherlands	1,696	2,095	-19.1	2,282	-25.7	
Switzerland	1,660	648	156.2	641	158.9	
China	1,170	988	18.4	2,126	-45.0	
Hong Kong	1,163	530	119.3	947	22.8	
Belgium	1,003	995	0.8	1,342	-25.3	
Italy	771	837	-7.9	975	-21.0	
Others	10,805	10,841	-0.3	12,487	-13.5	
Total EU	13,142	13,525	-2.8	17,241	-23.8	
Total Non-EU	15,668	13,701	14.4	16,828	-6.9	
Total Exports	28,809	27,226	5.8	34,070	-15.4	

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics
Note: 2019 and 2020 data is provisional

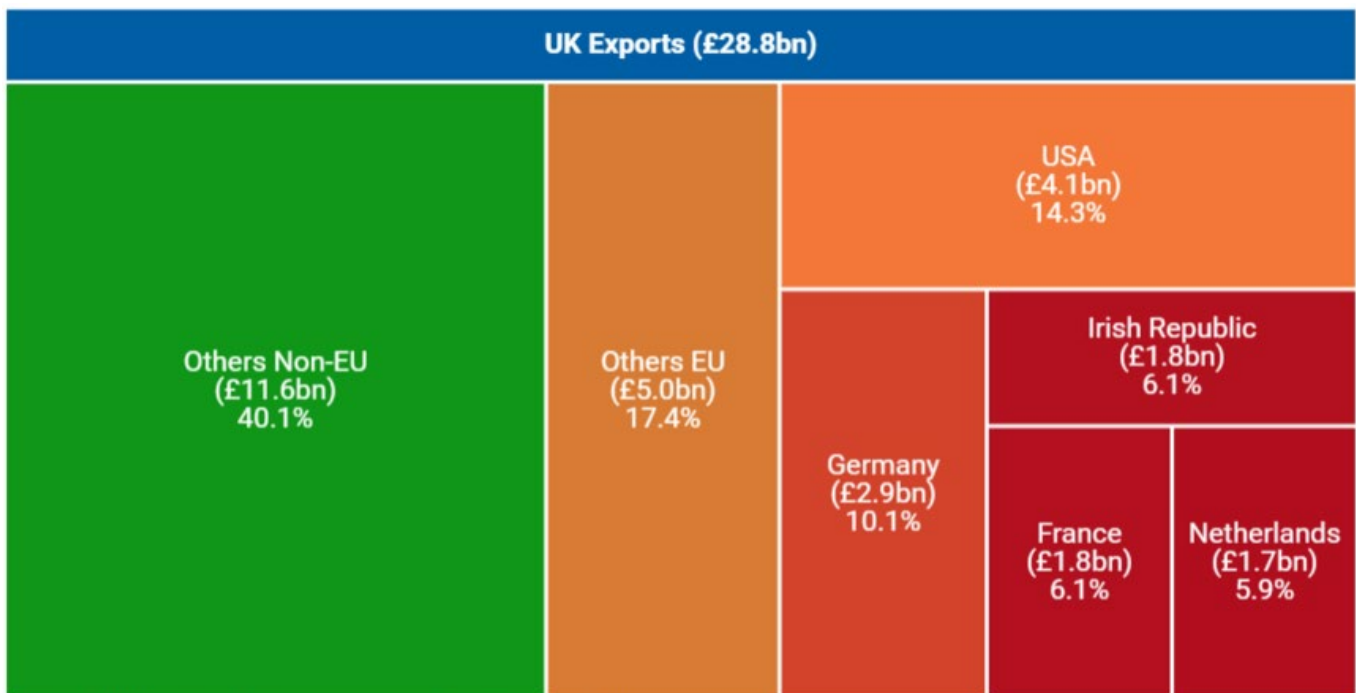
Exports: Country Analysis

- The top 5 export partners accounted for 42% of total exports in goods in March 2020. This was a decrease from a 46% share in March 2019.
- The USA accounted for 14% of the total value of exports from the UK, this was an increase of less than 1 percentage point on March 2019.
- Germany had the 2nd largest proportion, accounting for 10%. This was an increase of less than 1 percentage point on March 2019.
- The top 10 export partner countries (ranked by value) changed compared with last month. Most notably, the Irish Republic rose to 3rd place from 5th and Hong Kong rose to 8th place from 13th.
- The top 10 export partner countries (ranked by value) changed compared with March 2019. Most notably, Switzerland rose to 6th place from 12th.

↑ **The USA had a 14% share of total exports in March 2020**

↑ **Germany had a 10% share of total exports in March 2020**

Figure 4: Share of UK exports of goods to the top 5 countries, March 2020



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics
 Note: 2020 data is provisional

Exports: Country Analysis – 3 Months

- In the 3 months to March 2020, the USA remained the largest export partner country. Among the top 10, it experienced the 2nd largest percentage decrease on the 3 months to December 2019, down 24%, and decreased on the 3 months to March 2019, down 4.8%.
- Among the top 10, China experienced the largest percentage decreases on the 3 months to December 2019, and on the 3 months to March 2019, down 45% and 27% respectively.
- Among the top 10, Germany experienced the largest percentage increase on the 3 months to December 2019, up 2.9%.
- Among the top 10, Switzerland experienced the only percentage increase on the 3 months to March 2019, doubling in value.
- 8 of the top 10 partner countries experienced a decrease on the 3 months to December 2019. Germany and Belgium were the exceptions.

↓ **Exports to China down 45% on the 3 months to December 2019**

↑ **Exports to Switzerland doubled in value on the 3 months to March 2019**

Table 2: UK exports of goods to the top 10 countries, 3 months to March 2020

Partner Country	3 months to Mar 2020		3 months to Dec 2019		3 months to Mar 2019	
	Total (£ millions)	Total (£ millions)	Change on December 2019 (%)	Total (£ millions)	Change on March 2019 (%)	
USA	12,523	16,402	-23.6	13,153	-4.8	
Germany	9,265	9,007	2.9	10,091	-8.2	
Netherlands	5,775	5,955	-3.0	6,500	-11.2	
France	5,570	5,940	-6.2	7,190	-22.5	
Irish Republic	4,979	5,741	-13.3	5,739	-13.2	
China	3,689	6,762	-45.4	5,076	-27.3	
Belgium	3,027	2,991	1.2	3,727	-18.8	
Switzerland	2,955	3,761	-21.4	1,472	100.8	
Spain	2,415	2,689	-10.2	2,824	-14.5	
Italy	2,363	2,424	-2.5	2,729	-13.4	
Others	31,806	33,184	-4.2	33,699	-5.6	
Total Exports	84,367	94,856	-11.1	92,200	-8.5	

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2019 and 2020 data is provisional

Exports: Commodity Analysis

- Mechanical appliances remained the largest export commodity despite a decrease on last month, down £53.6 million (1.2%). It experienced the 2nd largest decrease on March 2019, down £939 million (18%).
- Precious metals experienced the largest value increase on last month and on March 2019, up £1,210 million (49%) and £778 million (27%) respectively.
- Pharmaceutical products experienced the 2nd largest value increase on last month, up £257 million (17%). However, it decreased on March 2019, down £542 million (23%).
- Mineral fuels experienced the largest value decrease on last month and on March 2019, down £833 million (36%) and £973 million (40%) respectively.
- Aircraft experienced the 2nd largest value decrease on last month, down £347 million (28%). It also decreased on March 2019, down £421 million (33%).
- Motor vehicles experienced the 3rd largest value decrease on March 2019, down £687 million (18%).

↑ **Exports of Precious metals up 49% on last month**

↓ **Exports of Mineral fuels down 40% on March 2019**

Table 3: UK exports of goods for the top 10 commodities, March 2020

Commodity Description	March 2020	February 2020		March 2019	
	Total (£ millions)	Total (£ millions)	Change on February 2020 (%)	Total (£ millions)	Change on March 2019 (%)
Mechanical appliances	4,357	4,411	-1.2	5,296	-17.7
Precious metals	3,655	2,446	49.5	2,878	27.0
Motor vehicles	3,058	2,943	3.9	3,745	-18.3
Pharmaceutical products	1,798	1,541	16.7	2,341	-23.2
Electronic equipment	1,769	1,664	6.3	2,128	-16.9
Mineral fuels	1,479	2,312	-36.0	2,452	-39.7
Measuring devices and gauges	1,289	1,196	7.7	1,490	-13.5
Organic chemicals	893	705	26.7	827	8.0
Plastics and plastic products	874	698	25.3	925	-5.5
Aircraft	871	1,218	-28.5	1,292	-32.6
Others	8,766	8,094	8.3	10,698	-18.1
Total Exports	28,809	27,226	5.8	34,070	-15.4

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2019 and 2020 data is provisional

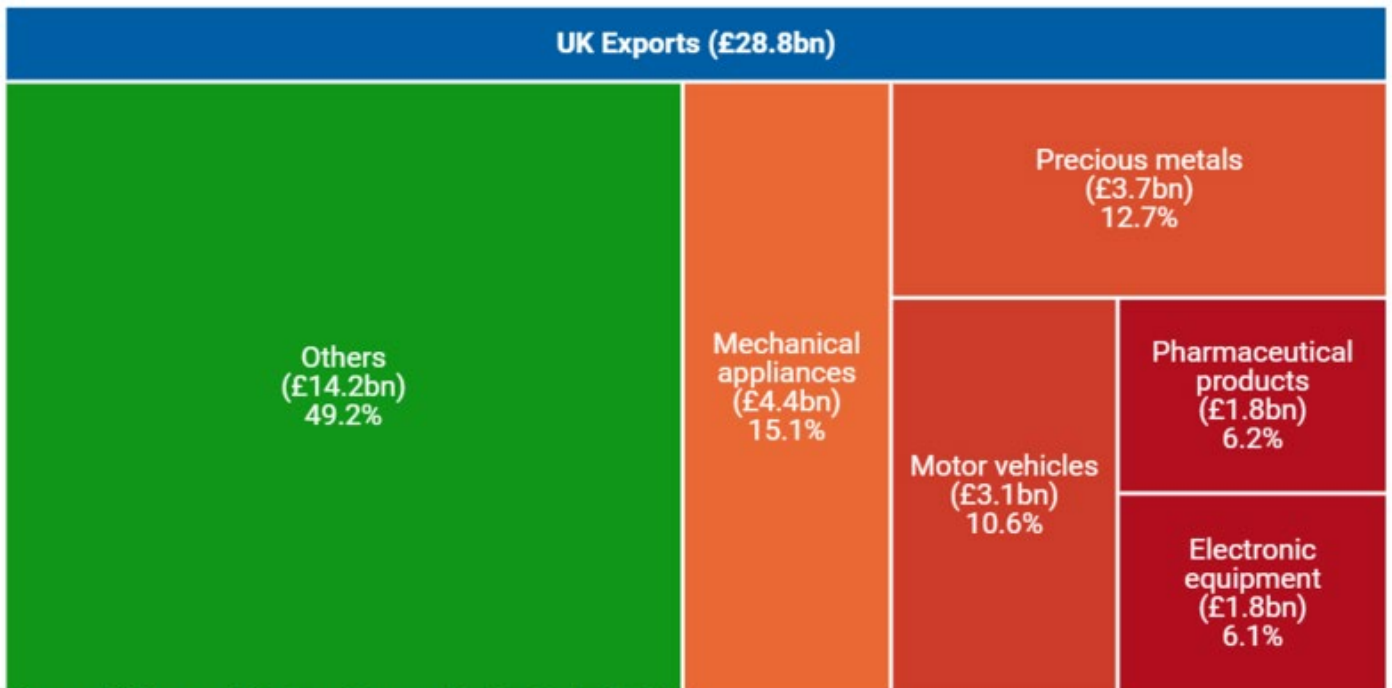
Exports: Commodity Analysis

- The top 5 export commodities (ranked by value) accounted for 51% of exports in March 2020, this was an increase from 49% in March 2019.
- Mechanical appliances accounted for 15% of the total value of exports from the UK. This was a decrease from 16% in March 2019.
- Precious metals rose to the 2nd largest proportion, accounting for 13% of total exports. This was an increase from an 8.4% share in March 2019.
- The top 10 export commodities (ranked by value) changed compared with last month. Most notably, Pharmaceutical products rose to 4th place from 6th, while Mineral fuels fell to 6th place from 4th.
- The top 10 export commodities (ranked by value) changed compared with March 2019. Most notably, Organic chemicals rose to 8th place from 11th.

↓ **Mechanical appliances accounted for 15% of total exports in March 2020**

↑ **Precious metals accounted for 13% of total exports in March 2020**

Figure 5: Share of UK exports by the top 5 commodities, March 2020



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics
 Note: 2020 data is provisional

Exports: Commodity Analysis – 3 Months

- In the 3 months to March 2020, Mechanical appliances remained the largest export commodity. This was despite experiencing decreases of 8.3% on the 3 months to December 2019, and 9.3% on the 3 months to March 2019.
- Among the top 10, Organic chemicals experienced the largest percentage increase on the 3 months to December 2019 and the 2nd largest on the 3 months to March 2019, up 14% and 10% respectively.
- Among the top 10, Motor vehicles experienced the largest percentage decrease on the 3 months to December 2019, down 17%.
- Among the top 10, Precious metals experienced the 2nd largest percentage decrease on the 3 months to December 2019, down 17%. Conversely, it showed the largest increase on the 3 months to March 2019, up 25%.
- 8 of the top 10 commodities experienced decreases on the 3 months to December 2019. Organic chemicals and Plastics and plastic products were the exceptions.
- 8 of the top 10 commodities experienced decreases on the 3 months to March 2019. Precious metals and Organic chemicals were the exceptions.

↓ **Motor vehicles exports down 17% on the 3 months to December 2019**

↑ **Precious metals exports up 25% on the 3 months to March 2019**

Table 4: UK exports of goods for the top 10 commodities, 3 months to March 2020

Commodity Description	3 months to Mar 2020		3 months to Dec 2019		3 months to Mar 2019	
	Total (£ millions)	Total (£ millions)	Change on December 2019 (%)	Total (£ millions)	Change on March 2019 (%)	
Mechanical appliances	13,315	14,526	-8.3	14,677	-9.3	
Motor vehicles	8,888	10,646	-16.5	10,271	-13.5	
Precious metals	8,282	9,919	-16.5	6,613	25.2	
Mineral fuels	6,607	7,440	-11.2	7,893	-16.3	
Electronic equipment	5,041	5,703	-11.6	5,848	-13.8	
Pharmaceutical products	4,652	5,380	-13.5	5,925	-21.5	
Measuring devices and gauges	3,643	4,048	-10.0	3,899	-6.6	
Aircraft	3,380	3,507	-3.6	3,779	-10.6	
Organic chemicals	2,919	2,568	13.6	2,649	10.2	
Plastics and plastic products	2,329	2,136	9.0	2,540	-8.3	
Others	25,311	28,981	-12.7	28,107	-9.9	
Total Exports	84,367	94,856	-11.1	92,200	-8.5	

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics
Note: 2019 and 2020 data is provisional

Exports: Combined Commodity & Country Analysis

Country to commodity:

- The increase in exports to the USA compared with last month was led by Organic chemicals and Pharmaceutical products, up £219 million (more than doubling in value) and £164 million (71%) respectively. The decrease on March 2019 was led by Mechanical appliances and Art and antiques, down £264 million (26%) and £201 million (51%) respectively.
- The decrease in exports to Belarus on last month was led by Precious metals, down £401 million (to nil trade).
- The decrease in exports to France on March 2019 was led by Precious metals and Aircraft, down £397 million (83%) and £158 million (39%) respectively.

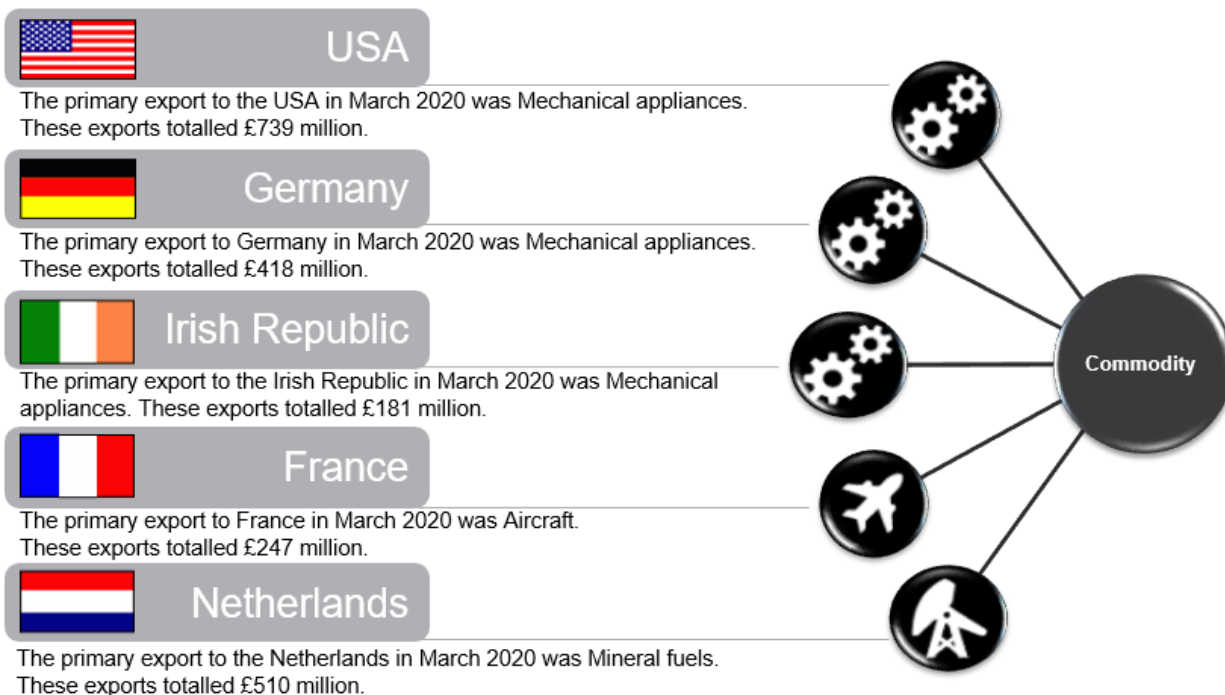
↑ Exports of Organic chemicals to the USA more than doubled on last month

Commodity to country

- The increase in exports of Precious metals on last month was led by Switzerland and Hong Kong, up £1,032 million (more than 5 times the value) and £597 million (nearly 7 times the value) respectively. The same countries also led the increase on March 2019, up £1,107 million (nearly 8 times the value) and £498 million (3.5 times the value) respectively.
- The decrease in exports of Mineral fuels compared with last month was led by the Netherlands and Germany, down £517 million (50%) and £213 million (59%) respectively. The decrease on March 2019 was led by China and the Netherlands, down £357 million (73%) and £341 million (40%) respectively.
- The decrease in exports of Motor vehicles on March 2019 was led by Belgium and Germany, down £154 million (46%) and £106 million (30%) respectively.

↑ Exports of Precious metals to Switzerland up nearly 8 times on March 2019

Figure 6: The UK's top commodity exports to the top 5 countries



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics
 Note: 2020 data is provisional

Imports: Country Analysis

- Germany remained the largest import partner country, experiencing the 4th largest increase on last month, up £430 million (8.7%). Conversely, it experienced the largest decrease on March 2019, down £1,426 million (21%).
- The Netherlands experienced the largest value increase on last month, up £726 million (26%). Conversely, it experienced the 4th largest decrease on March 2019, down £1,173 million (25%).
- China experienced the largest value decrease on last month and the 3rd largest decrease on March 2019, down £616 million (21%) and £1,235 million (35%) respectively.
- Australia experienced the 3rd largest value increase on last month, up £446 million (85%) and the largest value increase on March 2019, up £653 million (3 times the value).
- France experienced the 2nd largest value decrease on March 2019, down £1,318 million (39%).

↓ Imports from the Netherlands up 26% on last month

↓ Imports from China down 35% on March 2019

Table 5: UK imports of goods from the top 10 countries, March 2020

Partner Country	March 2020		February 2020		March 2019	
	Total (£ millions)	Total (£ millions)	Change on February 2020 (%)	Total (£ millions)	Change on March 2019 (%)	
Germany	5,391	4,961	8.7	6,817	-20.9	
USA	4,654	4,349	7.0	4,362	6.7	
Netherlands	3,533	2,806	25.9	4,706	-24.9	
China	2,300	2,917	-21.1	3,536	-34.9	
Belgium	2,294	1,813	26.5	2,625	-12.6	
France	2,089	2,144	-2.5	3,408	-38.7	
Italy	1,446	1,510	-4.2	1,912	-24.4	
Spain	1,378	1,363	1.1	1,664	-17.2	
Irish Republic	1,112	1,012	9.9	1,194	-6.8	
Australia	972	525	85.0	318	205.2	
Others	16,574	15,580	6.4	18,186	-8.9	
Total EU	21,314	19,422	9.7	27,425	-22.3	
Total Non-EU	20,428	19,557	4.5	21,302	-4.1	
Total Imports	41,742	38,979	7.1	48,727	-14.3	

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2019 and 2020 data is provisional

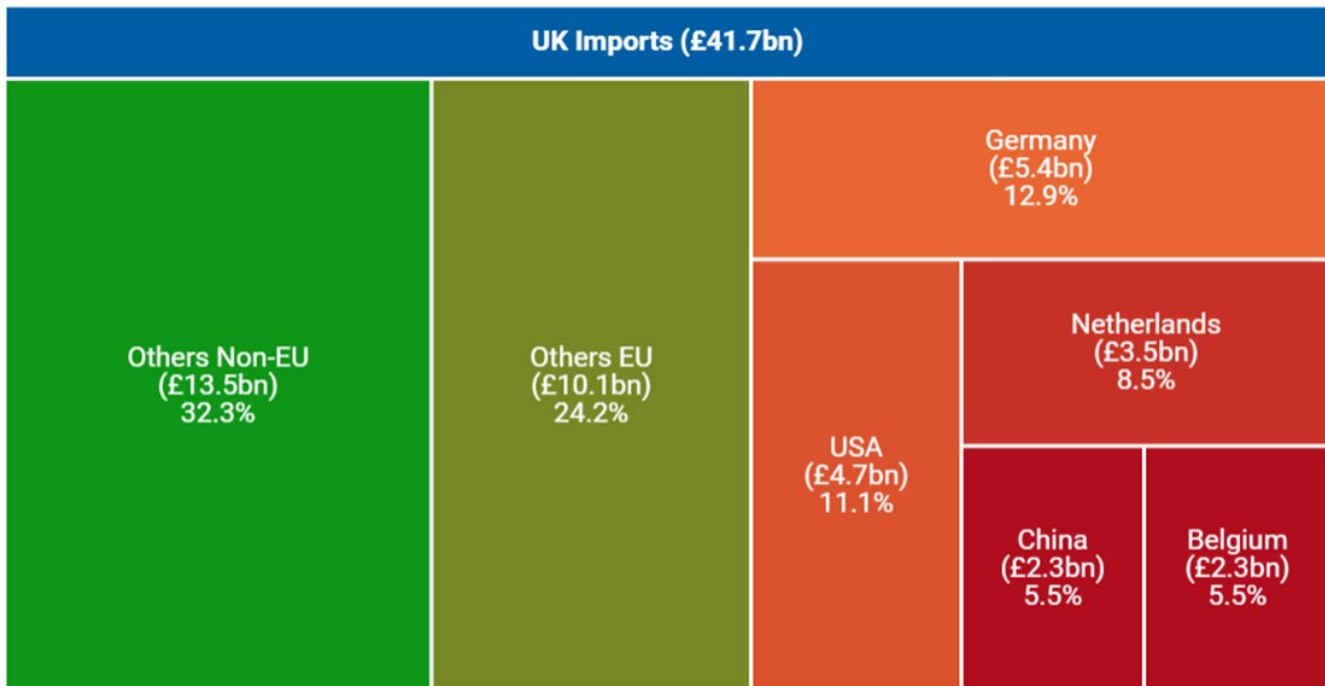
Imports: Country Analysis

- The top 5 import partners accounted for 44% of the total value of goods imported in March 2020, this was a decrease from a 47% share in March 2019.
- Germany accounted for 13% of the total value of goods imported to the UK. This was a decrease from a 14% share in March 2019.
- The USA had the 2nd largest proportion, accounting for 11%. This was an increase from a 9.0% share in March 2019.
- The top 10 import partner countries (ranked by value) have changed compared with last month. Most notably, China fell from 3rd to 4th.
- The top 10 import partner countries (ranked by value) have changed compared with March 2019. Most notably, Australia rose to 10th from 28th.

↓ **The top 5 partners accounted for 44% of total imports in March 2020**

↑ **Germany accounted for 13% of total imports in March 2020**

Figure 7: Share of UK imports of goods from the top 5 countries, March 2020



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics
 Note: 2020 data is provisional

Imports: Country Analysis – 3 Months

- In the 3 months to March 2020, Germany remained the largest import partner country. It experienced decreases on the 3 months to December 2019 and on the 3 months to March 2019, down 4.6% and 18% respectively.
- Among the top 10, the USA experienced the largest percentage increase on the 3 months to December 2019 and the only increase on the 3 months to March 2019, up 3.0% and 2.2% respectively.
- Among the top 10, China experienced the largest percentage decrease on the 3 months to December 2019, down 25%.
- Among the top 10, Norway experienced the 2nd largest percentage decrease on the 3 months to December 2019 and the 3 months to March 2019, down 16% and 27% respectively.
- Among the top 10, France experienced the 3rd largest percentage decrease on the 3 months to December 2019 and the largest percentage decrease on the 3 months to March 2019, down 15% and 30% respectively.
- 8 of the top 10 countries experienced a decrease on the 3 months to December 2019, the USA and Belgium were the exceptions.

↓ Imports from China down 25% on the 3 months to December 2019

↓ Imports from France down 30% on the 3 months to March 2019

Table 6: UK imports of goods from the top 10 countries, 3 months to March 2020

Partner Country	3 months to Mar 2020		3 months to Dec 2019		3 months to Mar 2019	
	Total (£ millions)	Total (£ millions)	Change on December 2019 (%)	Total (£ millions)	Change on March 2019 (%)	
Germany	15,168	15,904	-4.6	18,519	-18.1	
USA	13,265	12,875	3.0	12,985	2.2	
Netherlands	9,408	10,569	-11.0	12,225	-23.0	
China	9,365	12,420	-24.6	11,429	-18.1	
France	6,044	7,140	-15.3	8,612	-29.8	
Belgium	5,920	5,916	0.1	7,146	-17.2	
Italy	4,478	5,081	-11.9	5,156	-13.2	
Spain	3,935	4,022	-2.2	4,541	-13.3	
Norway	3,345	3,969	-15.7	4,591	-27.1	
Irish Republic	3,213	3,527	-8.9	3,479	-7.6	
Others	48,102	53,981	-10.9	50,227	-4.2	
Total Imports	122,243	135,405	-9.7	138,911	-12.0	

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2019 and 2020 data is provisional

Imports: Commodity Analysis

- Precious metals remained the largest import commodity, experiencing the largest increase on last month and March 2019, up £598 million (12%) and £1,403 million (34%) respectively.
- Mineral fuels experienced the largest value decrease on last month, down £219 million (6.9%).
- Motor vehicles experienced the largest value decrease on March 2019, down £1,488 million (23%).
- Mechanical appliances experienced the 2nd largest increase on last month, up £410 million (8.5%).
- Pharmaceutical products experienced the 3rd largest increase on last month, up £407 million (30%). Conversely, it experienced the 2nd largest decrease on March 2019, down £1,414 million (44%).
- Electronic equipment experienced the 3rd largest decrease on March 2019, down £1,124 million (25%).

↓ Imports of Precious metals up 34% on March 2019

↓ Imports of Pharmaceutical products down 44% on March 2019

Table 7: UK imports of goods for the top 10 commodities, March 2020

Commodity Description	March 2020	February 2020		March 2019	
	Total (£ millions)	Total (£ millions)	Change on February 2020 (%)	Total (£ millions)	Change on March 2019 (%)
Precious metals	5,557	4,959	12.1	4,154	33.8
Mechanical appliances	5,257	4,847	8.5	6,030	-12.8
Motor vehicles	4,847	4,722	2.6	6,335	-23.5
Electronic equipment	3,430	3,202	7.1	4,553	-24.7
Mineral fuels	2,945	3,164	-6.9	3,737	-21.2
Pharmaceutical products	1,781	1,374	29.6	3,195	-44.3
Measuring devices and gauges	1,330	1,082	22.9	1,492	-10.8
Plastics and plastic products	1,205	1,062	13.4	1,463	-17.6
Knitwear	701	663	5.8	728	-3.7
Clothes, not knitted	700	643	8.9	781	-10.4
Others	13,989	13,260	5.5	16,259	-14.0
Total Imports	41,742	38,979	7.1	48,727	-14.3

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2019 and 2020 data is provisional

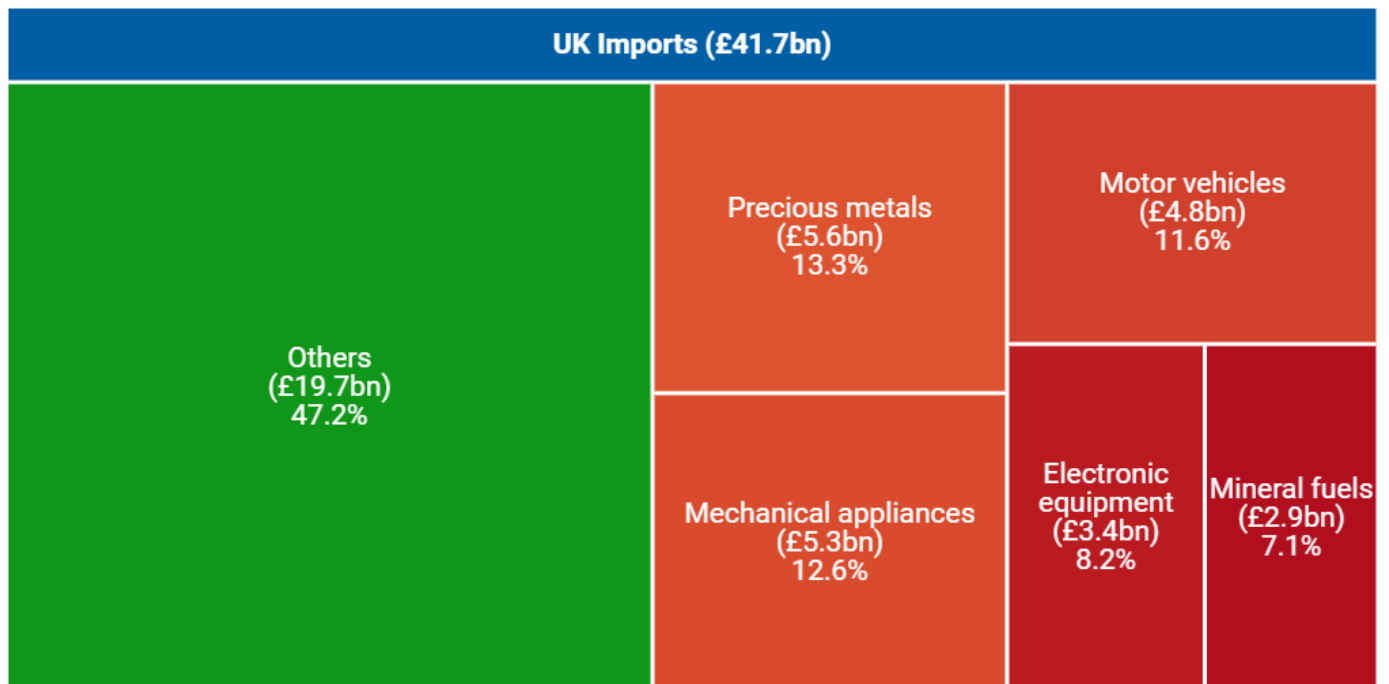
Imports: Commodity Analysis

- The top 5 import commodities (ranked by value) accounted for 53% of the total value of goods imported in March 2020, this was an increase from a 51% share in March 2019.
- Precious metals accounted for 13% of the total value of goods imported to the UK. This was an increase from an 8.5% share in March 2019.
- Mechanical appliances accounted for 13% of the total value of goods imported to the UK. This was an increase from a 12% share in March 2019.
- The top 10 import commodities (ranked by value) changed compared with last month, although the top 8 remained the same. Most notably, Knitwear rose to 9th place from 11th and Clothes, not knitted rose to 10th place from 12th.
- The top 10 import commodities (ranked by value) changed compared with March 2019. Most notably, Precious metals rose to 1st place from 4th.

↑ **The top 5 import commodities accounted for 53% of total imports in March 2020**

↑ **Precious metals accounted for 13% of total imports in March 2020**

Figure 8: Share of UK imports for the top 5 commodities, March 2020



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics
 Note: 2020 data is provisional

Imports: Commodity Analysis – 3 Months

- In the 3 months to March 2020, Mechanical appliances replaced Precious metals as the largest import commodity, despite experiencing decreases on the 3 months to December 2019 and on the 3 months to March 2019, down 5.5% and 11% respectively.
- Among the top 10, Motor vehicles experienced the only percentage increase on the 3 months to December 2019, up 2.3%. Conversely, it experienced the 2nd largest percentage decrease on the 3 months to March 2019, down 20%.
- Among the top 10, Precious metals experienced the 3rd largest percentage decrease on the 3 months to December 2019, down 19%. Conversely, it experienced the only percentage increase on the 3 months to March 2019, up 22%.
- Among the top 10, Knitwear experienced the largest percentage decrease on the 3 months to December 2019, down 23%.
- Among the top 10, Pharmaceutical products experienced the largest percentage decrease on the 3 months to March 2019, down 35%.

↓ **Precious metals down 19% on the 3 months to December 2019**

↓ **Pharmaceutical products down 35% on the 3 months to March 2019**

Table 8: UK imports of goods for the top 10 commodities, 3 months to March 2020

Commodity Description	3 months to Mar 2020	3 months to Dec 2019		3 months to Mar 2019	
	Total (£ millions)	Total (£ millions)	Change on December 2019 (%)	Total (£ millions)	Change on March 2019 (%)
Mechanical appliances	15,376	16,263	-5.5	17,234	-10.8
Precious metals	15,160	18,777	-19.3	12,454	21.7
Motor vehicles	13,717	13,408	2.3	17,199	-20.2
Electronic equipment	10,361	13,419	-22.8	12,502	-17.1
Mineral fuels	9,818	10,905	-10.0	11,955	-17.9
Pharmaceutical products	4,924	4,958	-0.7	7,579	-35.0
Measuring devices and gauges	3,601	3,695	-2.5	3,987	-9.7
Plastics and plastic products	3,403	3,439	-1.0	4,100	-17.0
Knitwear	2,215	2,891	-23.4	2,280	-2.9
Furniture and light fittings	2,121	2,232	-5.0	2,378	-10.8
Others	41,547	45,419	-8.5	47,243	-12.1
Total Imports	122,243	135,405	-9.7	138,911	-12.0

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2019 and 2020 data is provisional

Imports: Combined Commodity & Country Analysis

Country to commodity:

- The decrease in imports from Germany on March 2019 was led by Motor vehicles, down £439 million (21%).
- The decreases in imports from China on last month and on March 2019 were led by Electronic equipment, down £143 million (23%) and £490 million (51%) respectively.
- The decrease in imports from France on March 2019 was led by Precious metals, down £464 million (76%).

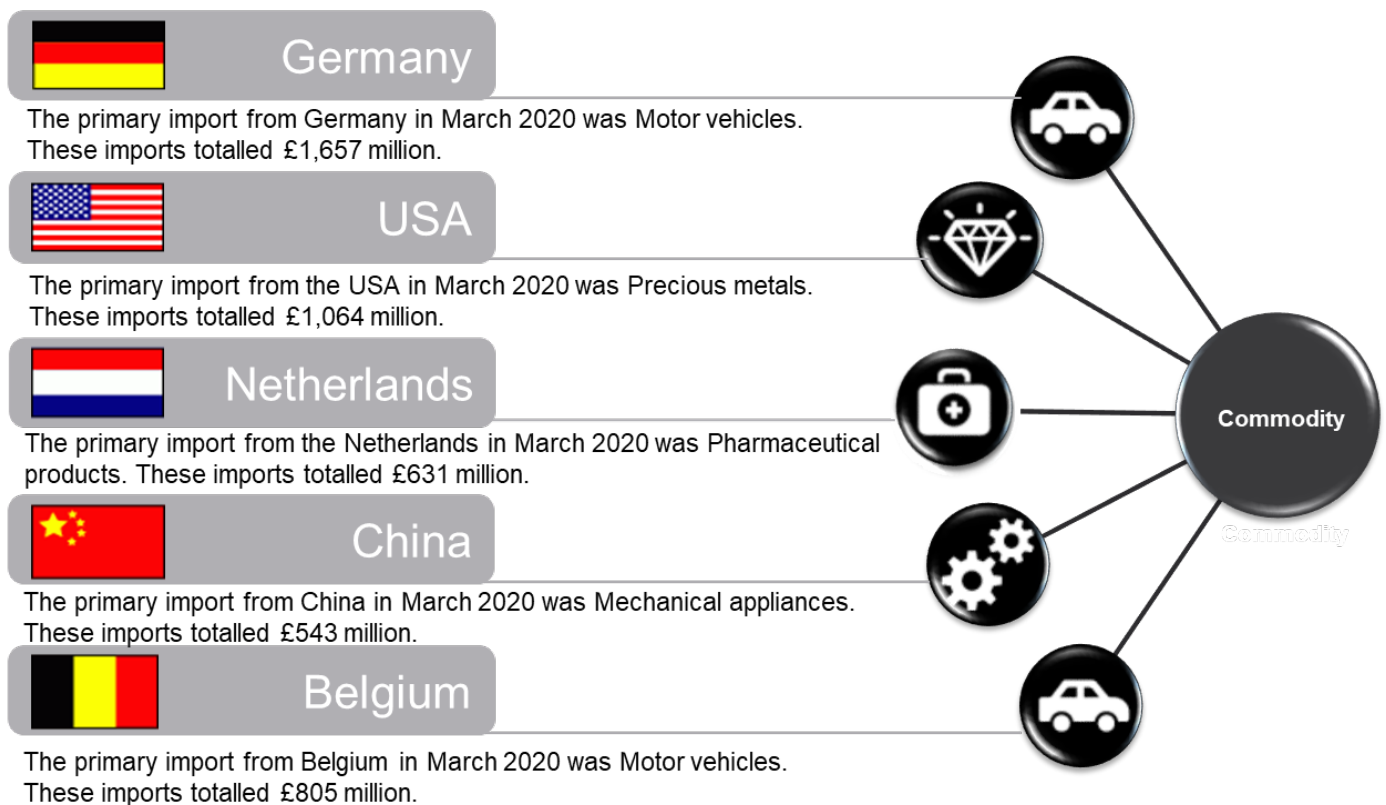
Commodity to country:

- The increase in imports of Precious metals on last month and on March 2019 was led by Australia, up £397 million (96%) and £672 million (almost 6 times the value).
- The decrease in imports of Mineral fuels on last month was led by Norway, down £309 million (30%).
- The increase in imports of Mechanical appliances on last month was led by the Netherlands, up £141 million (39%).
- The increase in imports of Pharmaceutical products on last month was led by the Netherlands, up £380 million (2.5 times the value). Its decrease on March 2019 was also led by the Netherlands, down £721 million (53%).

↓ Imports of Electronic equipment from China down 51% on March 2019

↓ Imports of Precious metals from Australia up 6 times the value on March 2019

Figure 9: The UK's top commodity imports from the top 5 countries



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics
 Note: 2020 data is provisional

Methodology Notes

Metadata

Data behind this bulletin is available 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 March 2020 Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics are collected from the Intrastat survey. They 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 March 2020 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 (October 2019) 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](#).

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 13 May 2020 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 March 2020. At the same time revisions for all previously published non-EU and EU data for 2019 are also being released in line with the [HM Revenue & Customs Policy on Revisions](#).

As the demand increases for statistics and data to measure the impact of the COVID19 pandemic, HMRC has had to change its release practices. In line with [guidance](#) from the Office for Statistics Regulation, the decision has been made to delay the March, April and May month of account releases.

We are continuing to work hard with UK businesses to get the information we need to produce high quality statistics to inform decision making. However, the disruption caused by the pandemic means we need a little extra time to quality assure some of our data before publication. Therefore, in line with ONS and its GDP releases, we are announcing short delays to our upcoming Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics publication dates to allow additional time for data processing and quality assurance that will ensure the highest possible level of accuracy.

The changes to the release dates are outlined below:

Month of account	Original date	New date
March 2020	12 May 2020	13 May 2020
April 2020	10 June 2020	12 June 2020
May 2020	10 July 2020	14 July 2020

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 [here](#).

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.

As the UK leaves the EU, it is important that our statistics continue to be of high quality and are internationally comparable. During the transition period, those UK statistics that align with EU practice and rules will continue to do so in the same way as before 31 January 2020. After the transition period, we will continue to produce statistics in line with the UK Statistics Authority's Code of Practice for Statistics and in accordance with internationally agreed statistical guidance and standards.