



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 2021.

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

In this publication

- Trade trends p.2
- Non-EU and EU trade p.3
- March 2021 Exports p.4

Country analysis

Country analysis – 3 months

Commodity analysis

Commodity analysis – 3 months

Combined analysis

- March 2021 Imports p.11

Country analysis

Country analysis – 3 months

Commodity analysis

Commodity analysis – 3 months

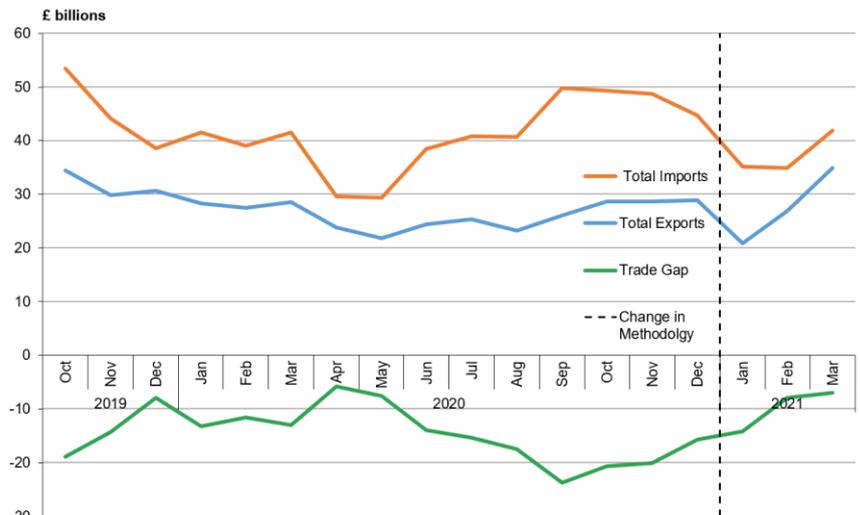
Combined analysis

- Methodology notes p.18

Trade in Goods, March 2021

- Total **exports** of goods for March 2021 were £34.9 billion. This was up £8.0 billion (30%) compared with last month, and up £6.4 billion (22%) compared with March 2020.
- Total **imports** of goods for March 2021 were £41.9 billion. This was up £7.0 billion (20%) compared with last month, and up £0.4 billion (0.9%) compared with March 2020.
- The UK was a net importer this month, with **imports** exceeding **exports** by £7.0 billion, narrowing by £1.0 billion on last month.

Figure 1: Total UK monthly Trade in Goods



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods and Statistics
Note: 2020 and 2021 data is provisional

From January 2021, the UK to EU export dataset incorporates both GB to EU customs export declaration data and NI Intrastat export (dispatch) data. This creates a break in the timeseries, users should take care when making comparisons with months and years prior to 2021.



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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. It has experienced large quarterly fluctuations since Q1 of 2019 and Q2 of 2020 saw the lowest quarterly imports value since Q3 of 2010. Exports peaked in Q2 of 2013, with a steady rise from Q2 of 2017 to Q3 of 2018. Q2 of 2020 also saw the lowest quarterly exports value since Q3 of 2010.

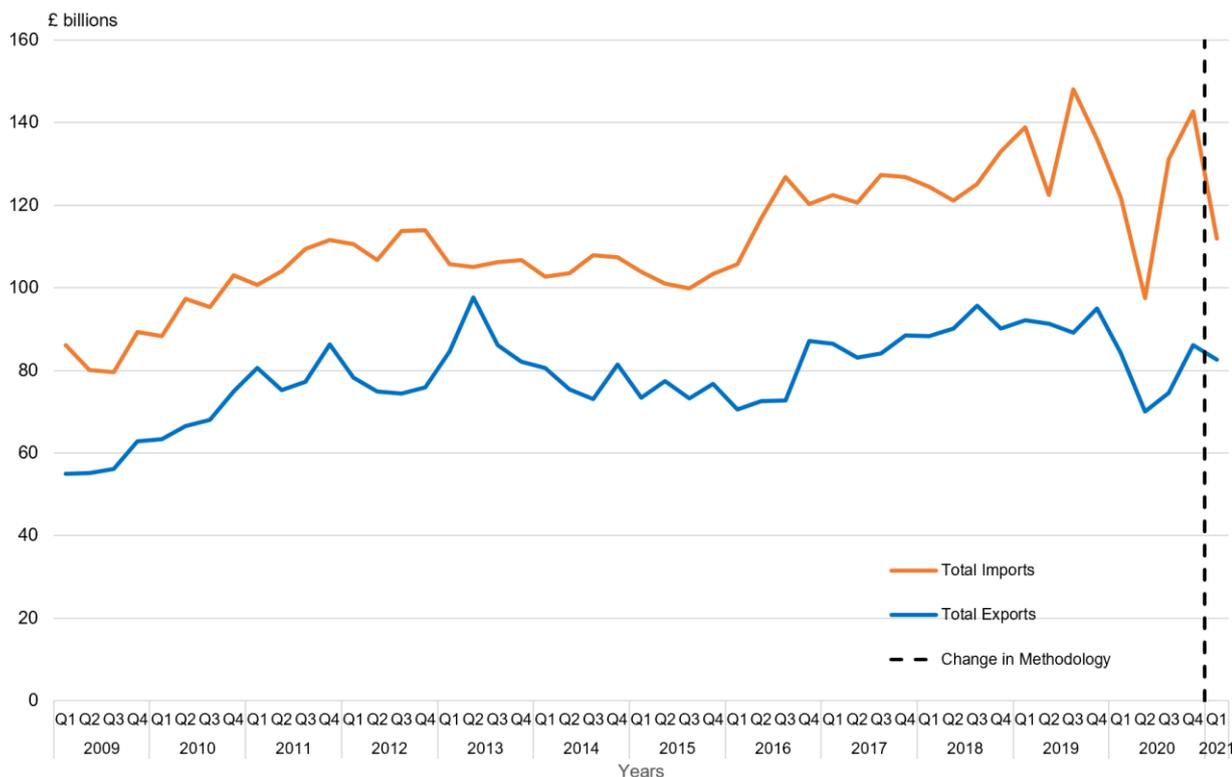
- The total **export** trade for Q1 of 2021 was £82.7 billion, which was a decrease of 1.9% compared with £84.2 billion for Q1 of 2020.
- The total **import** trade for Q1 of 2021 was £112 billion, which was a decrease of 8.3% compared with £122 billion for Q1 of 2020.
- There was a trade deficit of £29.2 billion for Q1 of 2021. This was a narrowing of 23% compared with £37.8 billion for Q1 of 2020.
- For many years Germany has been our largest trading import partner by value, recently surpassed by China, while the USA has been the dominant trading export partner, with occasional peaks for Switzerland.
- 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.
- Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, trade in goods in 2020 and 2021 experienced significant decreases, affecting our largest trade partners and commodity groups at differing magnitudes, although some months have shown some recovery.

↓ **Exports down 1.9% on Q1 2020**

↓ **Imports down 8.3% on Q1 2020**

↓ **Trade deficit narrowed by 23% on Q1 2020**

Figure 2: Quarterly UK Trade in Goods, 2009 – 2021



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics
 Note: 2020 and 2021 data is provisional

Non-EU & EU Trade in Goods

Non-EU Trade in Goods:

- **Non-EU exports** for March 2021 were £20.4 billion. This was an increase of £5.4 billion (36%) on last month, and an increase of £4.6 billion (30%) compared with March 2020.
- **Non-EU imports** for March 2021 were £21.6 billion. This was an increase of £3.1 billion (17%) on last month, and an increase of £1.2 billion (6.0%) compared with March 2020.
- For **non-EU trade** the UK was a net importer this month, with imports exceeding exports by £1.3 billion.

↑ **Non-EU exports up 36% on last month**

EU Trade in Goods:

- **EU exports** for March 2021 were £14.6 billion. This was an increase of £2.6 billion (22%) on last month, and an increase of £1.7 billion (14%) compared with March 2020.
- **EU imports** for March 2021 were £20.2 billion. This was an increase of £3.9 billion (24%) on last month, but a decrease of £0.8 billion (4.0%) compared with March 2020.
- For **EU trade** the UK was a net importer this month, with imports exceeding exports by £5.7 billion.

↑ **EU imports up 24% on last month**

Figure 3: Total UK Trade in Goods, with EU and Non-EU, March 2021



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2021 data is provisional

Exports: Country Analysis

- Switzerland replaced the USA as the largest export partner country. It experienced the largest value increase on last month and on March 2020, up £2,589 million (83%) and £4,029 million (3.5 times the value) respectively.
- The USA experienced the 2nd largest value increase on last month, up £863 million (25%).
- Germany experienced the 3rd largest value increase on last month, up £698 million (30%).
- China experienced the 4th largest value increase on last month, and the 3rd largest increase on March 2020, up £607 million (60%) and £462 million (40%) respectively.
- Belgium experienced the 2nd largest value increase on March 2020, up £531 million (53%).
- Hong Kong (in 11th place) experienced the largest value decrease on March 2020, down £597 million (51%).

↑ **Exports to Switzerland up 3.5 times the value on March 2020**

↑ **Exports to the USA up 25% on last month**

Table 1: UK exports of goods to the top 10 countries, March 2021

Partner Country	March 2021	February 2021		March 2020	
	Total (£ millions)	Total (£ millions)	Change from February 2021 (%)	Total (£ millions)	Change from March 2020 (%)
Switzerland	5,689	3,101	83.5	1,660	242.7
USA	4,276	3,413	25.3	4,146	3.1
Germany	3,029	2,331	29.9	2,825	7.2
Netherlands	1,936	1,906	1.5	1,758	10.1
Republic of Ireland	1,861	1,290	44.3	1,690	10.1
France	1,823	1,472	23.8	1,643	10.9
China	1,624	1,017	59.7	1,162	39.8
Belgium	1,525	1,379	10.6	994	53.4
Italy	865	772	12.1	744	16.3
Spain	719	582	23.5	723	-0.4
Others	11,561	9,608	20.3	11,180	3.4
Total EU	14,554	11,922	22.1	12,813	13.6
Total Non-EU	20,353	14,949	36.2	15,711	29.5
Total Exports	34,908	26,870	29.9	28,525	22.4

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2020 and 2021 data is provisional

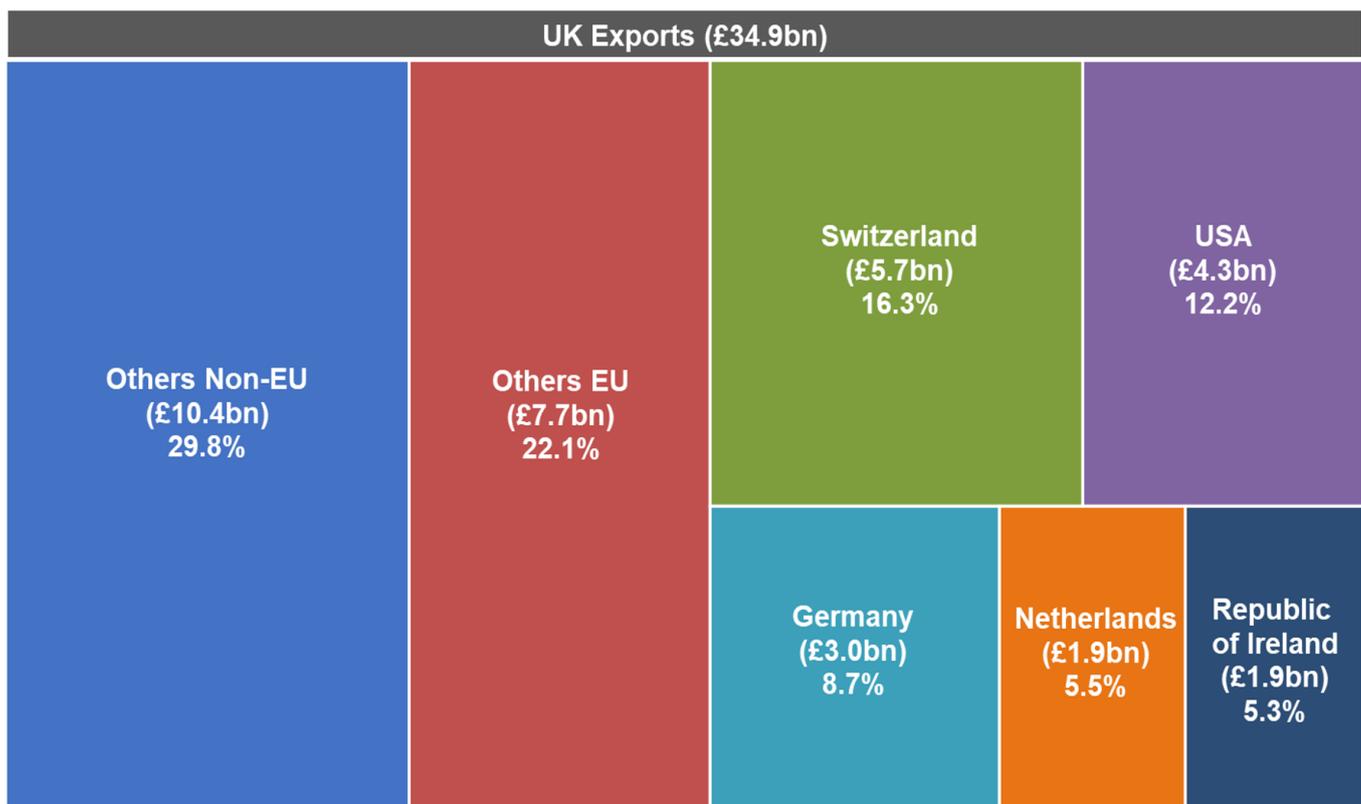
Exports: Country Analysis

- The top 5 export partners accounted for 48% of total exports in goods in March 2021. This was an increase from 42% in March 2020.
- Switzerland accounted for 16% of the total value of exports from the UK. This was an increase from a 5.8% share in March 2020.
- The USA had the 2nd largest proportion, accounting for 12%. This was a decrease from a 15% share in March 2020.
- All of the top 10 export partner countries increased in value on last month. Only Spain decreased in value on March 2020.
- The top 10 export partner countries (ranked by value) changed order compared with last month. Most notably, the Republic of Ireland rose to 5th place from 7th, while Belgium fell to 8th place from 6th.
- The top 10 export partner countries (ranked by value) changed compared with March 2020. Most notably, Switzerland rose to 1st place from 5th, and Hong Kong fell to 11th place from 7th.

↑ **Switzerland had a 16% share of total exports in March 2021**

↓ **The USA had a 12% share of total exports in March 2021**

Figure 4: Share of UK exports of goods to the top 5 countries, March 2021



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics
 Note: 2021 data is provisional

Exports: Country Analysis – 3 Months

- In the 3 months to March 2021, the USA remained the largest export partner country.
- Among the top 10, Switzerland experienced the largest percentage increase on the 3 months to December 2020, and on the 3 months to March 2020, up 3 times the value and 3.5 times the value respectively.
- Among the top 10, the Republic of Ireland experienced the largest percentage decrease on the 3 months to December 2020, down 46%.
- Among the top 10, Spain experienced the 2nd largest percentage decrease on the 3 months to December 2020 and the largest percentage decrease on the 3 months to March 2020, down 25% on both periods.
- Among the top 10, Germany experienced the 3rd largest percentage decrease on the 3 months to December 2020, and the 2nd largest percentage decrease on the 3 months to March 2020, down 24% and 23% respectively.
- 8 of the top 10 exports partners experienced decreases on the 3 months to December 2020. Switzerland and Belgium were the exceptions.
- 7 of the top 10 export partners experienced decreases on the 3 months to March 2020. The exceptions were Switzerland, China and Belgium.

↑ **Exports to Switzerland up 3.5 times the value on the 3 months to March 2020**

↓ **Exports to the Republic of Ireland down 46% on the 3 months to December 2020**

Table 2: UK exports of goods to the top 10 countries, 3 months to March 2021

Partner Country	3 months to Mar 2021		3 months to Dec 2020		3 months to Mar 2020	
	Total (£ millions)	Total (£ millions)	Change on December 2020 (%)	Total (£ millions)	Change on March 2020 (%)	
USA	10,972	12,163	-9.8	12,818	-14.4	
Switzerland	10,160	3,326	205.5	2,955	243.8	
Germany	6,976	9,159	-23.8	9,111	-23.4	
Netherlands	5,053	5,504	-8.2	5,795	-12.8	
France	4,188	5,041	-16.9	5,466	-23.4	
Republic of Ireland	4,040	7,467	-45.9	4,938	-18.2	
China	3,909	4,101	-4.7	3,681	6.2	
Belgium	3,543	3,040	16.6	3,021	17.3	
Italy	1,981	2,479	-20.1	2,333	-15.1	
Spain	1,763	2,344	-24.8	2,359	-25.3	
Others	30,079	31,563	-4.7	31,756	-5.3	
Total Exports	82,664	86,187	-4.1	84,234	-1.9	

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2020 and 2021 data is provisional

Exports: Commodity Analysis

- Precious metals remained the largest export commodity. It experienced the largest value increases on last month and on March 2020, up £3,063 million (67%) and £4,000 million (more than double the value) respectively.
- Mechanical appliances experienced the 2nd largest value increase on last month, up £979 million (27%).
- Motor vehicles experienced the 3rd largest value increases on last month and on March 2020, up £651 million (22%) and £559 million (18%) respectively.
- Organic chemicals experienced the 4th largest value increase on last month, up £624 million (2.5 times the value).
- Art and antiques experienced the largest value decreases on last month and on March 2020, down £150 million (36%) and £112 million (29%) respectively.

↑ Exports of Precious metals up more than double on March 2020

↑ Exports of Mechanical appliances up 27% on last month

Table 3: UK exports of goods for the top 10 commodities, March 2021

Commodity Description	March 2021	February 2021		March 2020	
	Total (£ millions)	Total (£ millions)	Change from February 2021 (%)	Total (£ millions)	Change from March 2020 (%)
Precious metals	7,624	4,562	67.1	3,624	110.4
Mechanical appliances	4,547	3,568	27.5	4,353	4.5
Motor vehicles	3,598	2,947	22.1	3,039	18.4
Electronic equipment	1,783	1,462	22.0	1,714	4.0
Pharmaceutical products	1,750	1,503	16.5	1,780	-1.7
Mineral fuels	1,724	1,482	16.4	1,666	3.5
Other products	1,468	1,306	12.4	678	116.4
Measuring devices and gauges	1,461	1,116	30.9	1,247	17.1
Aircraft	1,051	981	7.1	870	20.7
Organic chemicals	1,025	400	155.8	888	15.4
Others	8,876	7,544	17.7	8,664	2.4
Total Exports	34,908	26,870	29.9	28,525	22.4

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

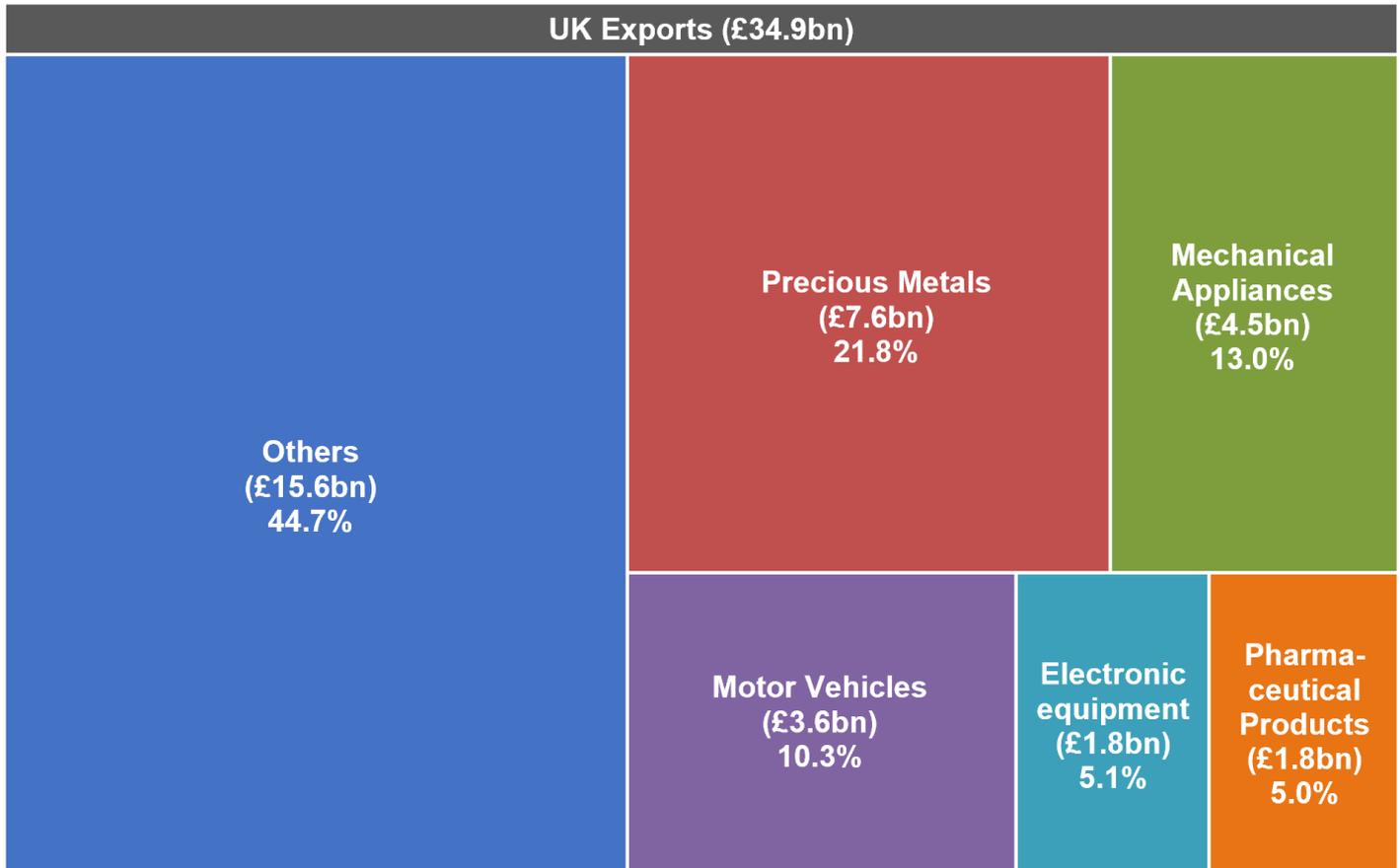
Note: 2020 and 2021 data is provisional

Exports: Commodity Analysis

- The top 5 export commodities (ranked by value) accounted for 55% of exports in March 2021, this was an increase from a 51% share in March 2020.
- Precious metals accounted for 22% of total exports. This was an increase from a 13% share in March 2020.
- Mechanical appliances had the 2nd largest proportion, accounting for 13% of total exports. This was a decrease from a 15% share in March 2020.
- The top 10 export commodities (ranked by value) changed compared with last month. Most notably, Electronic equipment rose to 4th place from 6th, and Organic chemicals rose to 10th place from 15th.
- The top 10 export commodities (ranked by value) changed compared with March 2020. Most notably, Precious metals rose to 1st place from 2nd.

- ↑ **Precious metals accounted for 22% of total exports in March 2021**
- ↓ **Mechanical appliances accounted for 13% of total exports in March 2021**

Figure 5: Share of UK exports by the top 5 commodities, March 2021



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics
 Note: 2021 data is provisional

Exports: Commodity Analysis – 3 Months

- In the 3 months to March 2021, Precious metals replaced Mechanical appliances as the largest export commodity. It experienced the largest percentage increase on the 3 months to December 2020, and the 2nd largest percentage increase on the 3 months to March 2020, up 99% and 79% respectively.
- Among the top 10, Mineral fuels experienced the largest percentage decrease on the 3 months to March 2020, down 29%.
- Among the top 10, Electronic equipment experienced the largest percentage decrease on the 3 months to December 2020, down 19%.
- Among the top 10, Pharmaceutical products experienced the 2nd largest percentage decrease on the 3 months to December 2020, down 18%.
- 7 of the top 10 commodities experienced decreases on the 3 months to December 2020. Precious metals, Other products and Aircraft were the exceptions.
- 8 of the top 10 commodities experienced decreases on the 3 months to March 2020. Precious metals and Other products were the exceptions.

↑ **Precious metals exports up 99% on the 3 months to December 2020**

↓ **Mineral fuels exports down 29% on the 3 months to March 2020**

Table 4: UK exports of goods for the top 10 commodities, 3 months to March 2021

Commodity Description	3 months to Mar 2021	3 months to Dec 2020		3 months to Mar 2020	
	Total (£ millions)	Total (£ millions)	Change on December 2020 (%)	Total (£ millions)	Change on March 2020 (%)
Precious metals	14,770	7,427	98.9	8,246	79.1
Mechanical appliances	11,093	12,364	-10.3	13,573	-18.3
Motor vehicles	8,573	9,616	-10.8	8,867	-3.3
Mineral fuels	4,702	5,469	-14.0	6,642	-29.2
Electronic equipment	4,474	5,519	-18.9	4,997	-10.5
Pharmaceutical products	4,269	5,204	-18.0	4,626	-7.7
Other products	4,092	2,683	52.5	2,134	91.7
Measuring devices and gauges	3,494	3,777	-7.5	3,608	-3.2
Aircraft	2,740	2,553	7.3	3,406	-19.6
Plastics and plastic products	2,120	2,205	-3.9	2,237	-5.2
Others	22,337	29,371	-24.0	25,898	-13.8
Total Exports	82,664	86,187	-4.1	84,234	-1.9

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics
Note: 2020 and 2021 data is provisional

Exports: Combined Commodity & Country Analysis

Country to commodity:

- The increase in exports to Switzerland on last month and on March 2020 was dominated by Precious metals, up £2,515 million (89%) and £4,070 million (more than 4 times the value) respectively.
- The decrease in exports to Hong Kong on March 2020 was dominated by Precious metals, down £524 million (75%).
- The increase in exports to China on last month was led by Mineral fuels, up £295 million (from £3.0 million). The increase on March 2020 was led by Motor vehicles and Mineral fuels, up £196 million and £173 million respectively (more than double the value for both products).
- The increase in exports to the USA on last month was led by Organic chemicals, up £342 million (more than 4.5 times the value).

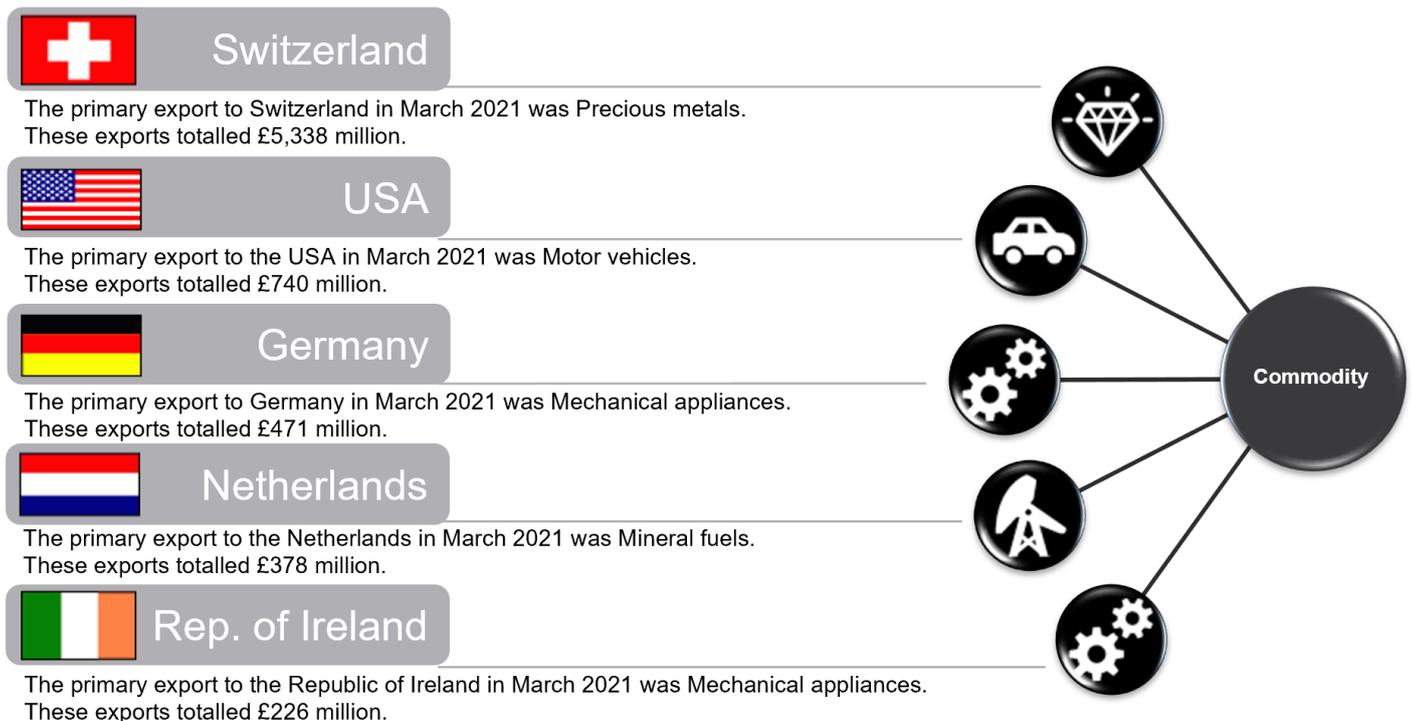
↑ Exports of Precious metals to Switzerland up 4 times the value on March 2020

↑ Exports of Mineral fuels to China up £295m from £3.0m last month

Commodity to country

- The increase in exports of Mechanical appliances on last month was led by the USA and Germany, up £161 million (29%) and £138 million (41%) respectively.
- The increase in exports of Motor vehicles on last month was led by the USA, up £115 million (18%).
- The decrease in exports of Art and antiques on last month was led by the USA, down £101 million (48%). The decrease on March 2020 was led by the USA and Switzerland, down £83 million (43%) and £69 million (65%) respectively.

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



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics
 Note: 2021 data is provisional

Imports: Country Analysis

- China remained the largest import partner country. It experienced the 2nd largest value increase on last month and the largest value increase on March 2020, up £455 million (9.1%) and £3,142 million (more than double the value) respectively.
- Germany experienced the largest value increase on last month, up £1,195 million (28%).
- The USA experienced the 3rd largest value increase on last month, up £420 million (13%). Conversely, it experienced the largest value decrease on March 2020, down £1,074 million (23%).
- The Netherlands experienced the 2nd largest value decrease on March 2020, down £843 million (24%).
- Australia experienced the 3rd largest value decrease on March 2020, down £789 million (80%).
- Norway experienced the 2nd largest value increase on March 2020, up £406 million (44%).

↑ Imports from China up more than double the value on March 2020

↑ Imports from Germany up 28% on last month

Table 5: UK imports of goods from the top 10 countries, March 2021

Partner Country	March 2021		February 2021		March 2020	
	Total (£ millions)	Total (£ millions)	Change on February 2021 (%)	Total (£ millions)	Change on March 2020 (%)	
China	5,442	4,987	9.1	2,300	136.6	
Germany	5,416	4,221	28.3	5,425	-0.2	
USA	3,580	3,159	13.3	4,654	-23.1	
Netherlands	2,614	2,279	14.7	3,457	-24.4	
Belgium	1,913	1,560	22.6	2,274	-15.9	
France	1,893	1,549	22.2	2,106	-10.1	
Italy	1,658	1,309	26.7	1,430	15.9	
Spain	1,373	1,138	20.7	1,356	1.3	
Norway	1,334	1,253	6.5	928	43.7	
Russia	1,283	924	38.8	922	39.2	
Others	15,379	12,470	23.3	16,647	-25.1	
Total EU	20,243	16,324	24.0	21,079	-4.0	
Total Non-EU	21,642	18,526	16.8	20,419	6.0	
Total Imports	41,885	34,849	20.2	41,499	0.9	

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2020 and 2021 data is provisional

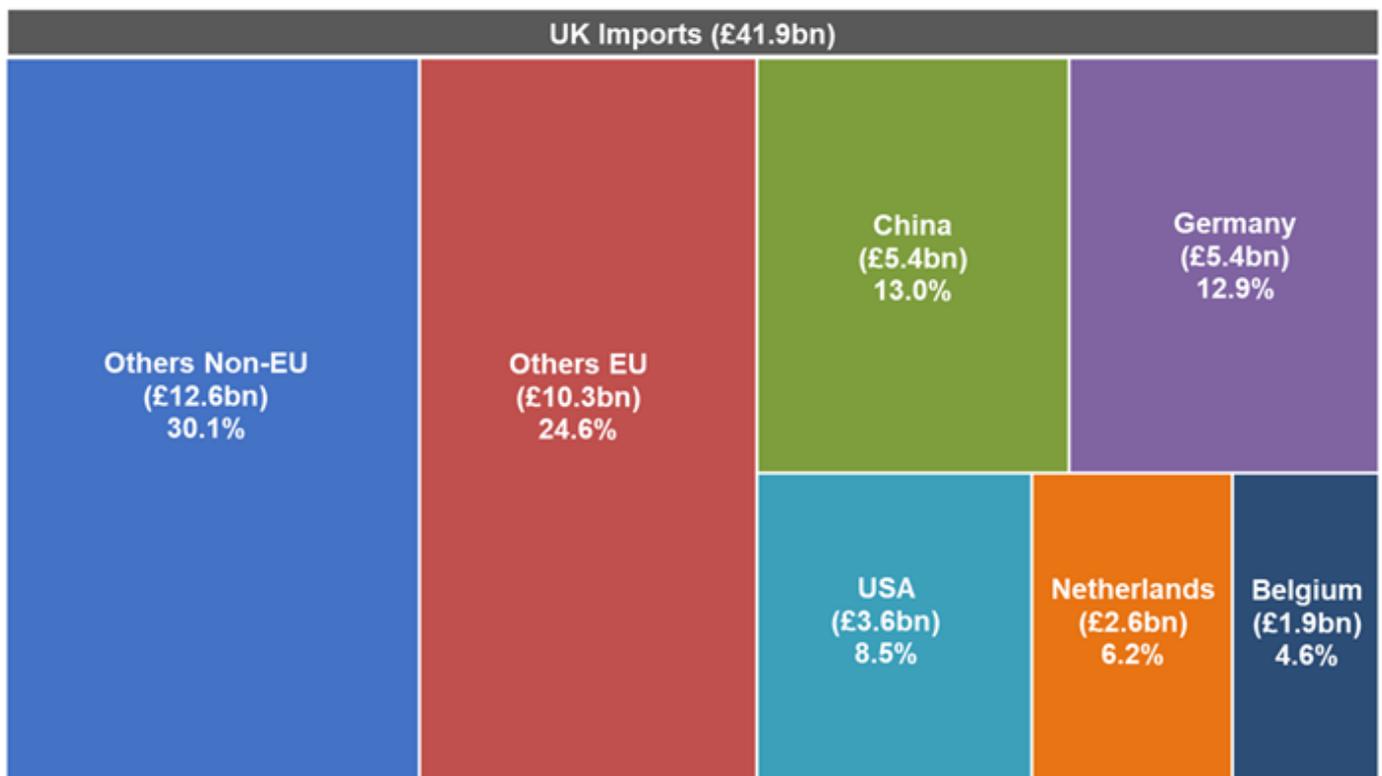
Imports: Country Analysis

- The top 5 import partners accounted for 45% of the total value of goods imported in March 2021. This was an increase from 44% in March 2020.
- China accounted for 13% of the total value of goods imported to the UK. This was an increase from 5.5% in March 2020.
- Germany had the 2nd largest proportion, accounting for 13%. This was a decrease of less than a percentage point on March 2020.
- The top 10 import partner countries (ranked by value) changed compared with last month, although the top 7 remained the same. Most notably, Canada fell to 12th place from 10th.
- The top 10 import partner countries (ranked by value) changed compared with March 2020. Most notably, China rose to 1st place from 4th and Australia fell to 33rd place from 10th.

↑ **The top 5 partners accounted for 45% of total imports in March 2021**

↑ **China accounted for 13% of total imports in March 2021**

Figure 7: Share of UK imports of goods from the top 5 countries, March 2021



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics
 Note: 2021 data is provisional

Imports: Country Analysis – 3 Months

- In the 3 months to March 2021, China remained the largest import partner country. Among the top 10, it experienced the largest percentage increase on the 3 months to March 2020, up 62%.
- Among the top 10, Russia experienced the largest percentage decrease on the 3 months to December 2020, down 44%.
- Among the top 10, the USA experienced the largest percentage decrease on the 3 months to March 2020, down 26%.
- Among the top 10, Norway experienced the only percentage increase on the 3 months to December 2020 and the 2nd largest percentage increase on the 3 months to March 2020, up 14% and 25% respectively.
- Among the top 10, Belgium experienced the 2nd largest percentage decrease on the 3 months to December 2020, down 31%.
- 7 of the top 10 countries experienced a decrease on the 3 months to March 2020. The exceptions were China, Norway, and Russia.

↑ Imports from China up 62% on the 3 months to March 2020

↓ Imports from Russia down 44% on the 3 months to December 2020

Table 6: UK imports of goods from the top 10 countries, 3 months to March 2021

Partner Country	3 months to Mar 2021		3 months to Dec 2020		3 months to Mar 2020	
	Total (£ millions)	Total (£ millions)	Change on December 2020 (%)	Total (£ millions)	Change on March 2020 (%)	
China	15,210	18,086	-15.9	9,365	62.4	
Germany	13,135	16,943	-22.5	15,229	-13.7	
USA	9,832	11,535	-14.8	13,265	-25.9	
Netherlands	7,170	10,246	-30.0	9,347	-23.3	
Belgium	4,793	6,925	-30.8	5,906	-18.8	
France	4,771	6,791	-29.7	6,081	-21.5	
Norway	4,144	3,632	14.1	3,323	24.7	
Italy	3,974	5,308	-25.1	4,466	-11.0	
Spain	3,558	4,357	-18.3	3,911	-9.0	
Russia	3,241	5,814	-44.3	2,849	13.8	
Others	42,025	53,048	-20.8	48,269	-12.9	
Total Imports	111,853	142,684	-21.6	122,010	-8.3	

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2021 and 2020 data is provisional

Imports: Commodity Analysis

- Mechanical appliances remained the largest import commodity, experiencing the 2nd largest value increase on last month, up £962 million (21%).
- Precious metals experienced the 3rd largest value increase on last month, up £766 million (21%). Conversely, it experienced the largest value decrease on March 2020, down £1,400 million (24%).
- Motor vehicles experienced the largest value increase on last month, up £1,260 million (37%).
- Miscellaneous chemical products experienced the largest value decrease on last month, down £63 million (6.3%). In contrast, it experienced the largest value increase on March 2020, up £478 million (double the value).
- Electronic equipment experienced the 4th largest value increase on last month and the 2nd largest value increase on March 2020, up £452 million (14%) and £421 million (13%) respectively.
- Mineral fuels experienced the 2nd largest value decrease on March 2020, down £337 million (11%).

↓ Imports of Precious metals down 24% on March 2020

↑ Imports of Motor vehicles up 37% on last month

Table 7: UK imports of goods for the top 10 commodities, March 2021

Commodity Description	March 2021	February 2021		March 2020	
	Total (£ millions)	Total (£ millions)	Change on February 2021 (%)	Total (£ millions)	Change on March 2020 (%)
Mechanical appliances	5,493	4,532	21.2	5,237	4.9
Motor vehicles	4,696	3,436	36.7	4,834	-2.9
Precious metals	4,361	3,595	21.3	5,761	-24.3
Electronic equipment	3,750	3,298	13.7	3,330	12.6
Mineral fuels	2,608	2,341	11.4	2,945	-11.4
Pharmaceutical products	1,636	1,509	8.4	1,761	-7.1
Measuring devices and gauges	1,351	1,001	35.0	1,280	5.6
Plastics and plastic products	1,285	1,126	14.1	1,096	17.2
Miscellaneous chemical products	932	995	-6.3	455	105.1
Furniture and light fittings	872	751	16.2	590	47.8
Others	14,899	12,265	21.5	14,211	4.8
Total Imports	41,885	34,849	20.2	41,499	0.9

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2020 and 2021 data is provisional

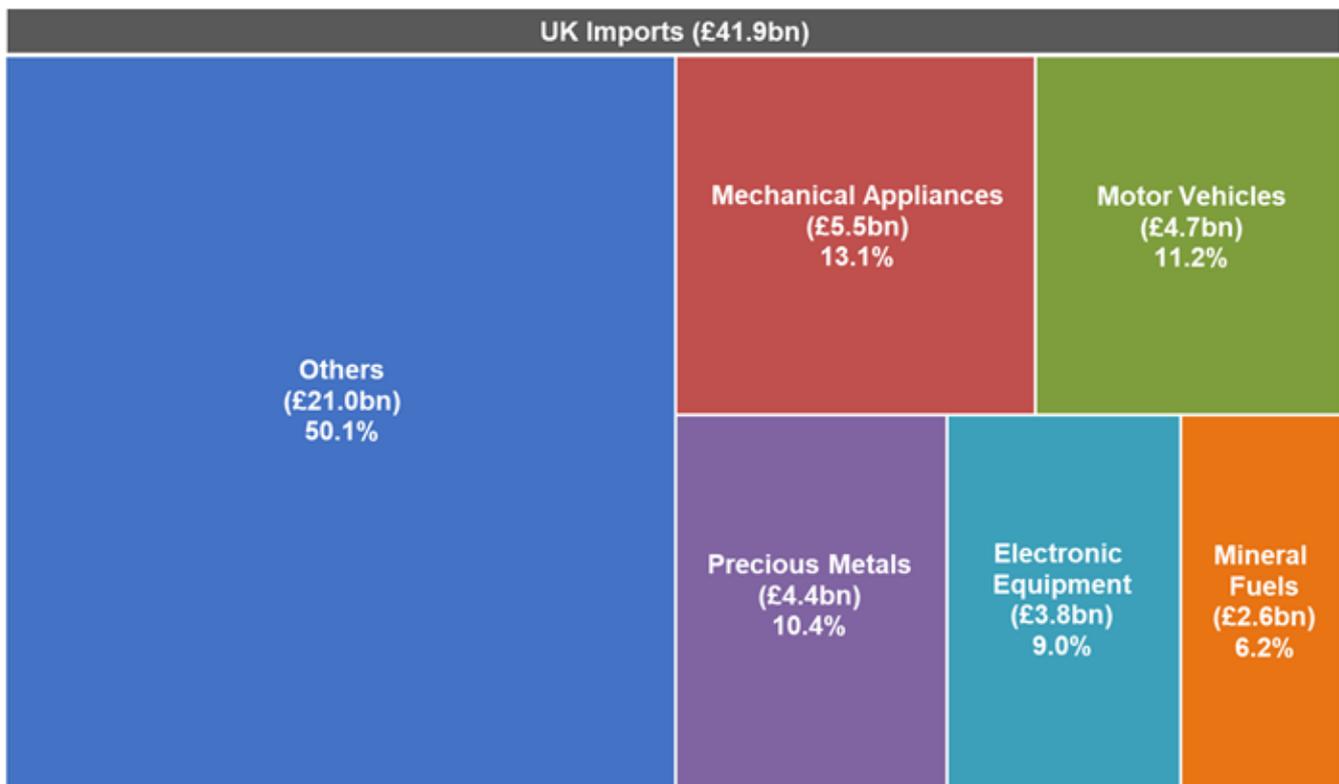
Imports: Commodity Analysis

- The top 5 import commodities (ranked by value) accounted for 50% of the total value of goods imported in March 2021. This was a decrease from a 53% share in March 2020.
- Mechanical appliances accounted for 13% of the total value of goods imported to the UK. This was an increase of less than a percentage point on March 2020.
- Motor vehicles had the 2nd largest proportion, accounting for an 11% share. This was a decrease from a 12% share in March 2020.
- The top 10 commodities (ranked by value) changed order compared with last month. Most notably, Motor vehicles rose to 2nd place from 3rd and Precious metals fell to 3rd place from 2nd.
- The top 10 commodities (ranked by value) changed compared with March 2020. Most notably, Miscellaneous chemical products rose to 9th place from 17th and Furniture and light fittings rose to 10th place from 13th.

↓ **The top 5 import commodities accounted for 50% of total imports in March 2021**

↑ **Mechanical appliances accounted for 13% of total imports in March 2021**

Figure 8: Share of UK imports for the top 5 commodities, March 2021



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics
 Note: 2021 data is provisional

Imports: Commodity Analysis – 3 Months

- In the 3 months to March 2021, Mechanical appliances replaced Precious metals as the largest import commodity.
- Among the top 10, Precious metals experienced the largest percentage decrease on the 3 months to December 2020, down 42%.
- Among the top 10, Miscellaneous chemical products experienced the largest percentage increases on the 3 months to December 2020 and on the 3 months to March 2020, up 32% and more than double respectively.
- Among the top 10, Pharmaceutical products experienced the 2nd largest decrease on the 3 months to March 2020, down 30%.
- 8 of the top 10 commodities experienced decreases on the 3 months to December 2020. The exceptions were Mineral fuels and Miscellaneous chemical products.
- 6 of the top 10 commodities experienced decreases on the 3 months to March 2020. The exceptions were Electronic equipment, Plastics and plastic products, Miscellaneous chemical products, and Furniture and light fittings.

↓ Imports of Precious metals down 42% on the 3 months to December 2020

↑ Imports of Miscellaneous chemical products up more than double on the 3 months to March 2020

Table 8: UK imports of goods for the top 10 commodities, 3 months to March 2021

Commodity Description	3 months to Mar 2021		3 months to Dec 2020		3 months to Mar 2020	
	Total (£ millions)	Total (£ millions)	Change on December 2020 (%)	Total (£ millions)	Change on March 2020 (%)	
Mechanical appliances	14,222	15,070	-5.6	15,355	-7.4	
Precious metals	13,002	22,553	-42.3	15,361	-15.4	
Motor vehicles	10,910	14,698	-25.8	13,751	-20.7	
Electronic equipment	10,595	13,784	-23.1	10,239	3.5	
Mineral fuels	8,105	6,982	16.1	9,800	-17.3	
Pharmaceutical products	4,173	5,930	-29.6	4,904	-14.9	
Plastics and plastic products	3,535	4,022	-12.1	3,301	7.1	
Measuring devices and gauges	3,319	4,397	-24.5	3,562	-6.8	
Miscellaneous chemical products	2,710	2,060	31.5	1,247	117.3	
Furniture and light fittings	2,350	2,372	-0.9	2,108	11.5	
Others	38,935	50,816	-23.4	42,383	-8.1	
Total Imports	111,853	142,684	-21.6	122,010	-8.3	

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2020 and 2021 data is provisional

Imports: Combined Commodity & Country Analysis

Country to commodity:

- The increases in imports from China on last month and on March 2020 were driven by Mechanical appliances, up £203 million (19%) and £703 million (more than double the value) respectively.
- The increase in imports from the USA on last month was led by Precious metals, up £95 million (13%). The decrease on March 2020 was driven by Mechanical appliances and Mineral fuels, down £373 million (40%) and £286 million (48%) respectively.
- The decrease in imports from the Netherlands on March 2020 was driven by Pharmaceutical products, down £489 million (78%)
- The increase in imports from Norway on March 2020 was dominated by Mineral fuels, up £333 million (48%).

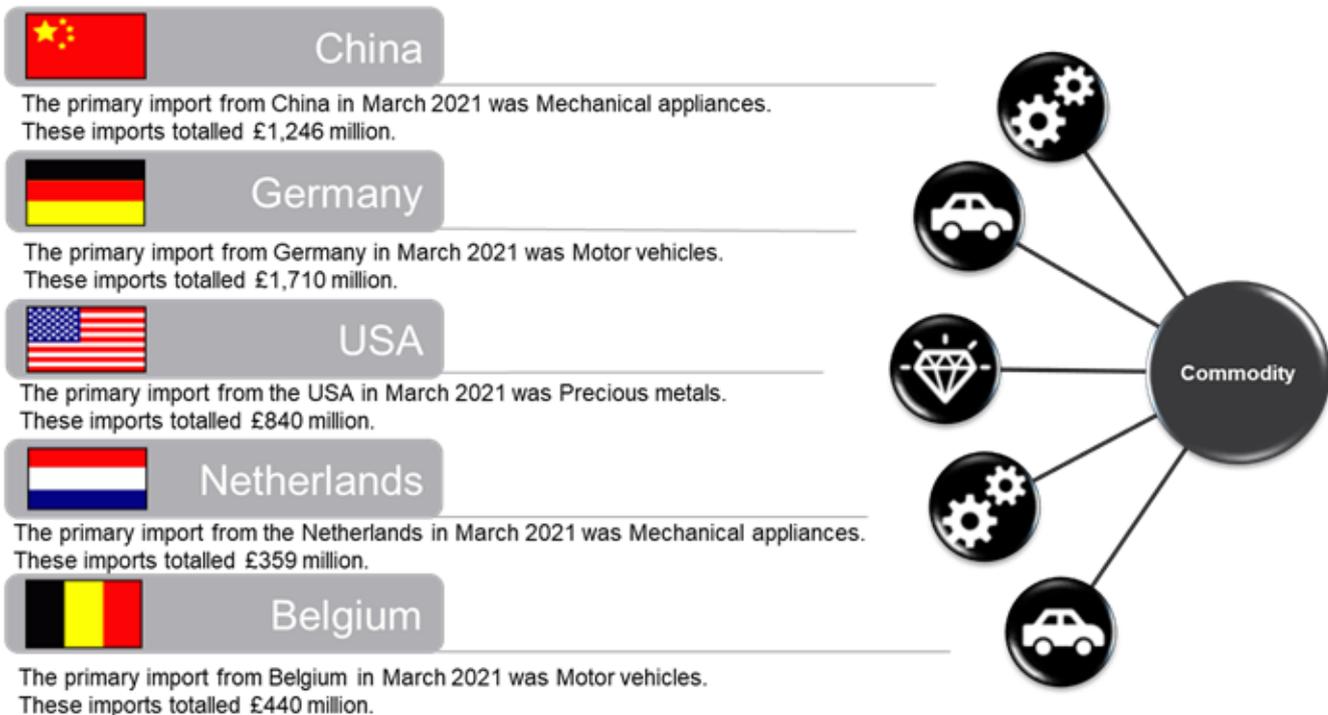
Commodity to country:

- The increase in imports of Precious metals on last month was driven by Russia, South Africa, and Switzerland, up £288 million (51%), £188 million (more than double the value), and £125 million (almost double the value) respectively. The decrease on March 2020 was driven by Australia, down £779 million (95%).
- The increase in imports of Motor vehicles on last month was driven by Germany, up £507 million (42%).
- The decrease in imports of Miscellaneous chemical products on last month was dominated by China, down £130 million (21%). The increase on March 2020 was also dominated by China, up £488 million (from £8.7 million).
- The increase in imports of Electronic equipment on March 2020 was dominated by China, up £362 million (77%).

↓ Imports of Pharmaceutical products from the Netherlands down 78% on March 2020

↑ Imports of Precious metals from Russia up 51% on last month

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



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics
Note: 2021 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](#).

Data sources

UK to EU exports

Up to 31 December 2020, UK to EU export statistics were collected via the Intrastat statistical survey, which required traders to declare the value and volume of commodities exported to EU Member States within the relevant month of physical goods movement.

For goods moving from 1 January 2021, GB to EU export statistics are compiled direct from customs export declarations made according to the requirements of the Taxation (Cross Border Trade) Act. The customs declaration requirements are more complex than the single monthly aggregated Intrastat return, and can result in differences between dates of declaration and actual movement of the goods out of the country.

The TIGS compilation methodology relies upon the acceptance date of the customs export declaration for its inclusion within the relevant month of account, rather than the declared physical movement date used from the Intrastat survey.

Intrastat survey returns continue to be collected for goods exported from Northern Ireland to the EU, under the terms of the [Northern Ireland Protocol](#).

Both the GB to EU customs export declaration data and NI Intrastat export (dispatch) data are incorporated into the overall UK to EU export dataset.

As a result of the changes and differences outlined above, there is a break in the timeseries for published UK to EU export statistics from January 2021. These will not be directly comparable to UK to EU export statistics published for previous months and years.

UK imports from EU

UK imports from EU statistics is not impacted by any change in 2021. The Intrastat survey continues to operate for all UK (GB and NI) imports (arrivals) from the EU, to mitigate the effects of staging customs controls, and to comply with the Northern Ireland Protocol.

Figures derived from Intrastat 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 in the OTS methodology paper [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 2021 Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics are presented by customs declarations and collected by the CHIEF (Customs Handling of Import and Export Freight) system. Declarations collected via the Customs Declarations Service (CDS) are included: for imports from August 2020 month of account; and for exports from December 2020 month of account onwards.

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

Methodology

The Overseas Trade Statistics Methodology paper (March 2021) is available [here](#). It 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.

From 31 December 2020, the free movement of people and goods and services between the UK and the EU ended. This changed the way HMRC collects trade in goods statistics. The overall UK to EU export dataset will incorporate both GB to EU customs export declaration data and NI Intrastat export (dispatch) data. As a result, there will be a break in the timeseries for published UK to EU export statistics from January 2021. Users should take care when comparing previous months and years.

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.

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 website provides an overview of [BoP](#), where you can find their 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.

National Statistics Publication

HM Revenue & Customs released these latest statistics on Overseas Trade with countries on 12 May 2021 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 February 2021. At the same time revisions for all previously published non-EU and EU data for 2020 are also being released in line with the [HM Revenue & Customs Policy on Revisions](#).

The next three publications are due for release on the following days:

Month of account	First release date
April 2021	11 June 2021
May 2021	9 July 2021
June 2021	12 August 2021

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.

Now that the UK has left the EU, it is important that our statistics continue to be of high quality and are internationally comparable. All releases continue to be produced in accordance with the UK Statistics Authority's Code of Practice for Statistics as well as internationally agreed statistical guidance and standards.