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HM Revenue and Customs

2016 UK VAT Registered Importer and Exporter Population – Trade in Goods

Summary

This article breaks down the UK's Value Added Tax (VAT) registered business population for 2016, clearly explaining the numbers of VAT registered businesses who have declared trade in goods with EU and Non-EU countries, and the combination therein.

Data sources

The unique business count for UK VAT registered businesses trading in goods with EU countries has been collected from VAT data and the Intrastat survey. All VAT registered businesses must submit VAT returns, which include values of EU trade. Businesses whose annual value of imports and exports of goods from/to EU countries exceed a given value threshold (EU imports: £1.5 million, EU exports: £250,000) are required to provide a more detailed Intrastat declaration each month.

The business count for UK VAT registered businesses trading in goods with Non-EU countries has been collected from customs declarations presented to HMRC using the Customs Handling of Import and Export Freight (CHIEF) system.

These counts do not include businesses trading below the VAT registration threshold.

Table 1: UK's VAT registered importer and exporter population for trade in goods in 2016

Trade Pattern	No. of Businesses
With EU Member States Only	138,000
With Non-EU Countries Only	73,000
With Both EU & Non-EU	72,000
Total EU	210,000
Total Non-EU	145,000
Total	283,000

Source: HMRC Overseas Trade Statistics

Notes:

- 1. Values rounded to nearest thousand*
- 2. Businesses only trading in non-monetary gold have been excluded to ensure consistency with HMRC's Regional Trade Statistics business counts*
- 3. Intrastat and CHIEF data has been compiled on a special trade basis, excluding trade that enters a customs warehouse but does not enter free circulation in the UK*