



HM Revenue
& Customs

Coverage:
United Kingdom

Theme:
Business and Energy

Released:
9 November 2018

Next Release:
11 December 2018

Frequency of release:
Monthly

Media contact:
HMRC Press Office
03000 585018

Statistical contact:

Daniel Wilkes
03000 594250
uktradeinfo@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk

Trade Statistics & Customs Analysis
HM Revenue & Customs
21 Victoria Avenue
Southend-on-Sea
SS99 1AA

Website:
<http://www.uktradeinfo.com>

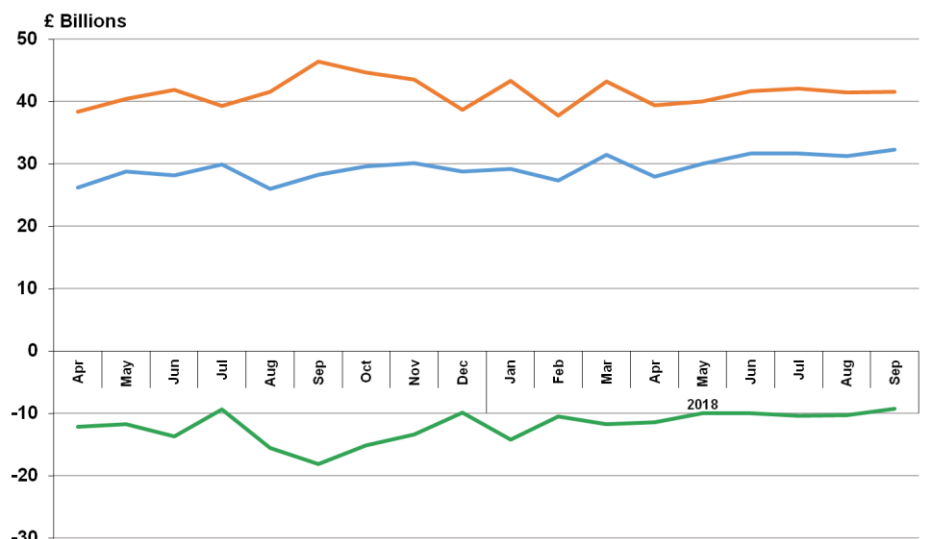


UK Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics September 2018

Summary

- Total trade in goods **exports** for September 2018 were £32.3 billion. This was an increase of £1.0 billion (3.3 per cent) compared with last month, and an increase of £4.0 billion (14 per cent) compared with September 2017.
- Total trade in goods **imports** for September 2018 were £41.6 billion. This was a slight increase of £0.1 billion (0.2 per cent) compared with last month, but a decrease of £4.9 billion (10 per cent) compared with September 2017.
- The UK was a net importer this month, with imports exceeding exports by £9.3 billion.

Figure 1: Total UK monthly Trade in Goods



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

— Total Imports — Total Exports — Trade Gap

Trade Trends

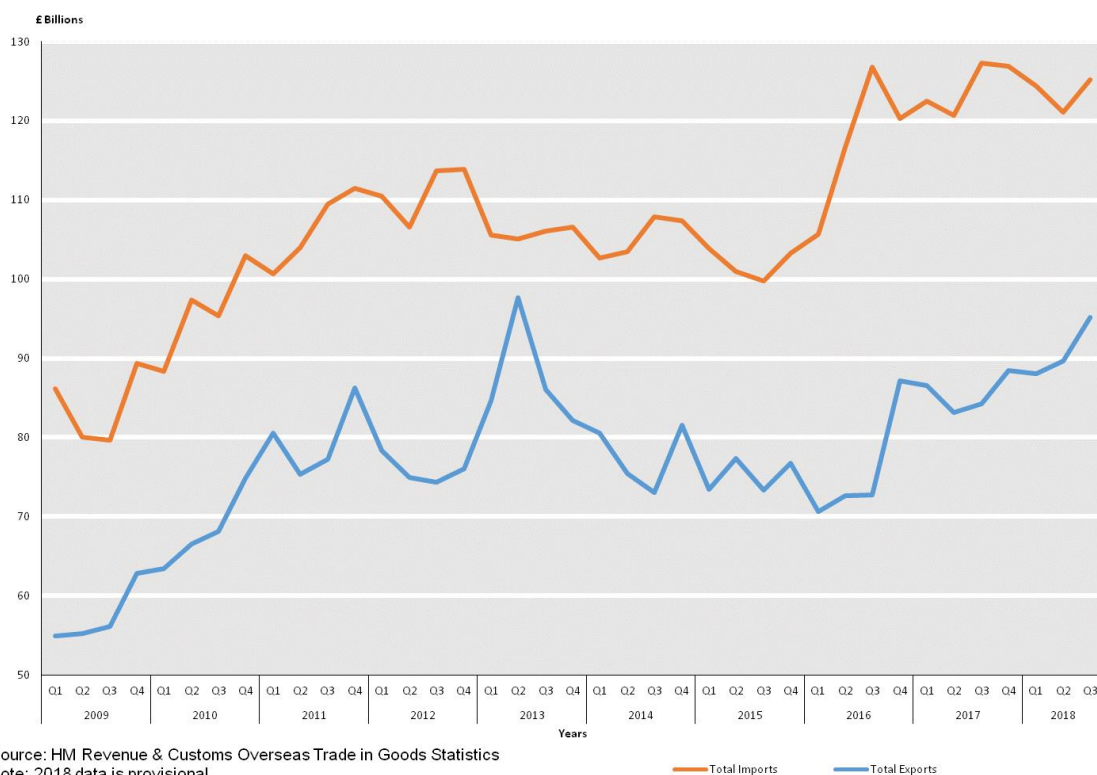
- Following the global economic crisis, UK trade in goods dropped in 2009. Both imports and exports then steadily increased until 2012. From the start of 2013, imports remained relatively flat until a very sharp increase in Q3 of 2016, while exports peaked in Q2 of 2013, with a steady rise since Q4 of 2016.
- The total **export** trade for Q3 of 2018 was £95.2 billion, which was an increase of 13 per cent compared with £84.2 billion for Q3 of 2017.
- The total **import** trade for Q3 of 2018 was £125.2 billion, which was a decrease of 1.7 per cent compared with £127.3 billion for Q3 of 2017.
- There was a trade deficit of £30.0 billion for Q3 of 2018. This was a narrowing of 30 per cent compared with Q3 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 13%
for Q3 2018 on
Q3 2017

Imports down
1.7% for Q3 2018
on Q3 2017

Trade deficit
narrowed by 30%
for Q3 2018 on Q3
2017

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



Non-EU & EU Trade

- **Non-EU Exports** for September 2018 were £18.0 billion. This was an increase of £0.3 billion (1.8 per cent) on last month, and an increase of £4.2 billion (31 per cent) compared with September 2017.
- **Non-EU Imports** for September 2018 were £19.6 billion. This was a decrease of £1.3 billion (6.4 per cent) on last month, and a decrease of £4.2 billion (18 per cent) compared with September 2017.
- For **Non-EU trade** the UK was a net importer this month, with imports exceeding exports by £1.6 billion.
- **EU Exports** for September 2018 were £14.3 billion. This was an increase of £0.7 billion (5.2 per cent) on last month, and a decrease of £0.2 billion (1.6 per cent) compared with September 2017.
- **EU Imports** for September 2018 were £22.0 billion. This was an increase of £1.4 billion (6.9 per cent) on last month, and a decrease of £0.7 billion (2.9 per cent) compared with September 2017.
- For **EU trade** the UK was a net importer this month, with imports exceeding exports by £7.7 billion.
- The proportion of total exports to the EU was 44 per cent in September 2018. Over the past 18 months, this has ranged from 44 per cent to 51 per cent. The proportion of total imports from the EU was 53 per cent in September 2018. Over the past 18 months, this has ranged from 49 per cent to 56 per cent.

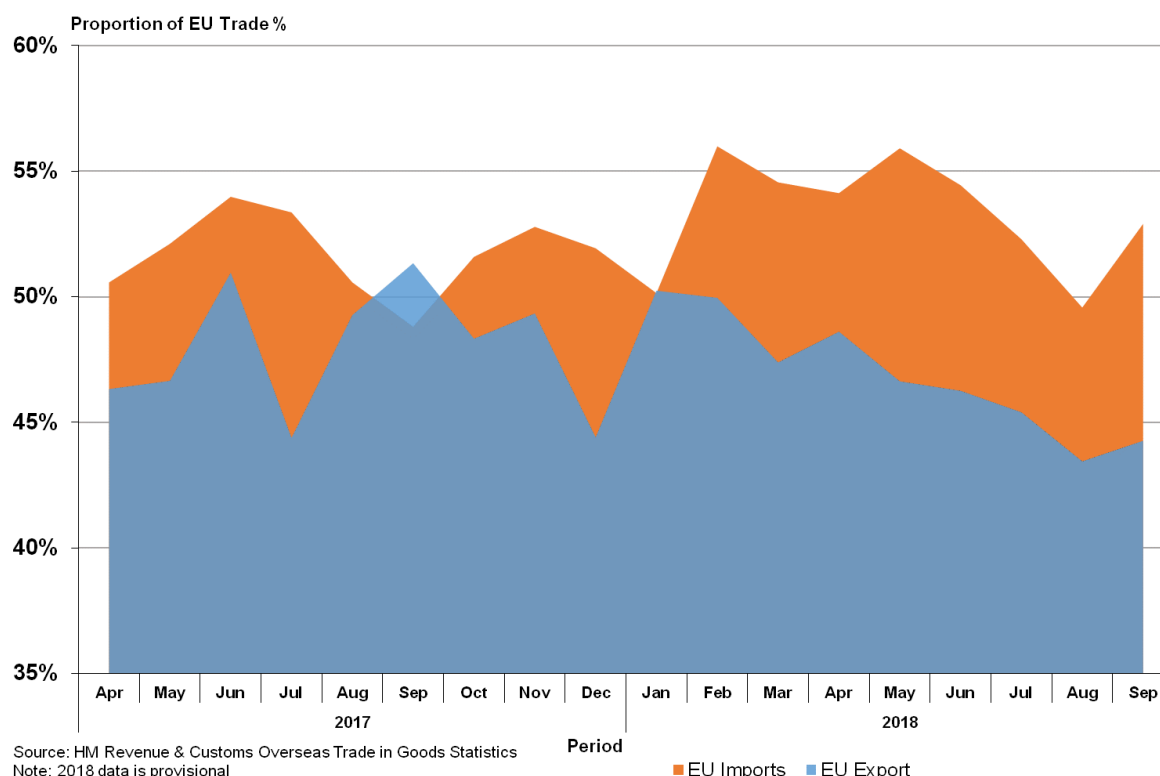
Non-EU exports
up 31% on
September 2017

Non-EU imports
down 6.4% on
last month

EU exports
up 5.2% on
last month

EU imports
down 2.9% on
September 2017

Figure 3: Proportion of total UK Trade in Goods with the EU, September 2018



Exports

Country Analysis

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

Partner Country	September 2018 Total (£ millions)	Change from August 2018 (%)	Change from September 2017 (%)	Rank August 2018	Rank September 2017
USA	4,096	7.3	17.1	1	1
Germany	3,014	8.7	-4.6	3	2
Switzerland	2,964	-4.0	373.7	2	11
China	2,143	-2.3	71.7	4	7
Netherlands	1,977	5.6	4.7	6	4
France	1,950	-1.6	-10.4	5	3
Irish Republic	1,829	3.0	6.3	7	5
Belgium	1,313	-3.2	3.0	8	6
Italy	903	31.4	1.0	11	8
Spain	861	5.4	-2.7	10	9
Others	11,234	3.1	2.8	-	-
Total Non-EU	17,993	1.8	30.6	-	-
Total EU	14,292	5.2	-1.6	-	-
Total Exports	32,285	3.3	14.1	-	-

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2018 data is provisional

- The top ten export partner countries (ranked by value) changed compared with last month and with September 2017. Most notably, Switzerland rose to third place from eleventh place compared with September 2017, though it dropped from second to third compared with last month.
- Six of the top ten countries experienced increases in value compared with last month, and seven of the top ten countries experienced increases in value compared with September 2017.
- The USA remained the largest export partner country, experiencing the largest increase on last month of £279 million (7.3 per cent). It also experienced the third largest value increase on September 2017, up £599 million (17 per cent).

Top export partner USA up 7.3% on last month

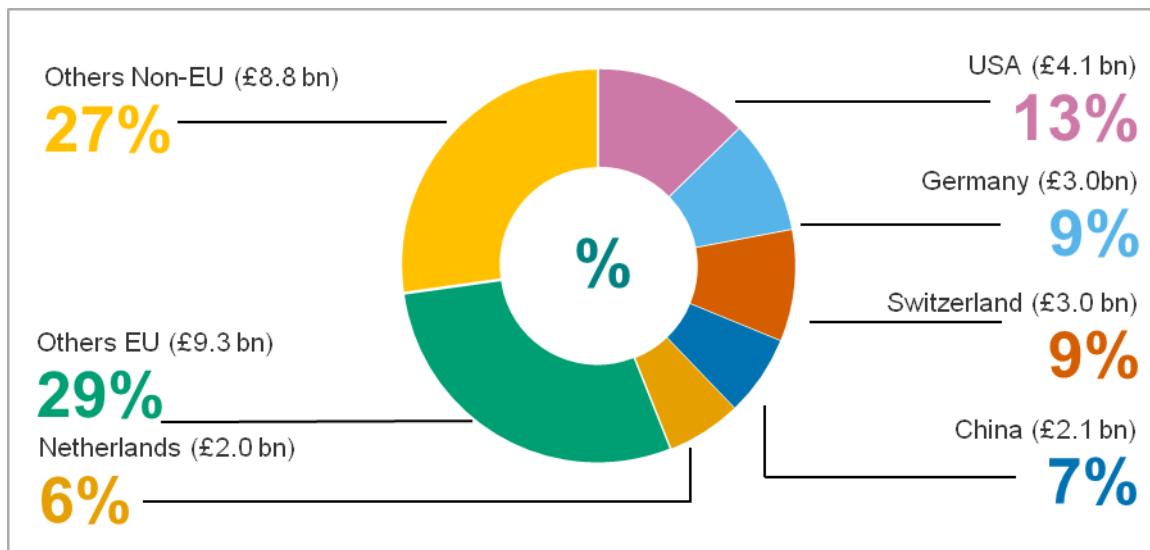
- Germany experienced the second largest value increase on last month, up £240 million (8.7 per cent). However, it had the second largest fall against September 2017, down £147 million (4.6 per cent).
- Italy experienced the third largest value increase compared with last month, up £216 million (31 per cent).
- Switzerland experienced the largest value increase compared with September 2017, up £2,338 million (over four times in value). However, it had the second largest value decrease against last month, down £122 million (4.0 per cent).
- China showed the second largest increase on September 2017, up £895 million (72 per cent).
- The UAE (ranked 12th) experienced the largest value decrease compared with last month, down £215 million (26 per cent).
- France experienced the largest value decrease compared with September 2017, down £227 million (10 per cent).
- Hong Kong (ranked 11th) experienced the third largest decrease compared with September 2017, down £134 million (17 per cent).

Exports to Germany up 8.7% on last month

Exports to Switzerland up over four times on September 2017

Exports to the UAE down 26% on last month

Figure 4: UK exports of goods to the top 5 countries, September 2018



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

- The USA accounted for 13 per cent of the total value of goods exports from the UK. This was an increase from 12 per cent in September 2017.
- Germany had the second largest proportion, accounting for 9.3 per cent, a decrease from 11 per cent in September 2017.
- The top five export partners accounted for 44 per cent of total exports in goods this month, this was unchanged from September 2017.

The USA accounted for 13% of total UK exports

Commodity Analysis

Table 2: UK exports of goods by top 5 commodities, September 2018

Commodity Description	September 2018 Total (£ millions)	Change from August 2018 (%)	Change from September 2017 (%)	Rank August 2018	Rank September 2017
Mechanical appliances	4,739	8.8	9.8	2	1
Precious metals	4,390	-10.7	269.5	1	7
Motor vehicles	3,738	44.8	7.5	4	2
Mineral fuels	2,937	-17.2	20.8	3	3
Electronic equipment	1,945	6.7	1.8	5	5
Others	14,535	3.6	-3.0	-	-
Total Exports	32,285	3.3	14.1	-	-

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2018 data is provisional

- The top five export commodities (ranked by value) has changed when compared with both last month and last year. Most notably, Precious metals rose to second from seventh place when compared with September 2017. In contrast, it dropped from first to second compared with last month.
- Mechanical appliances returned to first place, experiencing the second largest increase in value on last month, up £385 million (8.8 per cent). It experienced the third largest increase on September 2017, up £424 million (9.8 per cent).
- Motor vehicles experienced the largest value increase compared with last month, up £1,157 million (45 per cent). It also experienced the fourth largest increase on September 2017, up £262 million (7.5 per cent).
- Mineral fuels experienced the largest decrease against last month, down £611 million (17 per cent). In contrast, it had the second largest value increase on September 2017, up £506 million (21 per cent).
- Precious metals experienced the second largest decrease against last month, down £523 million (11 per cent). In contrast it had the largest value increase compared with September 2017, up £3,202 million (more than three times larger).
- Pharmaceuticals (ranked 6th) experienced the third largest value decrease on last month, and the largest decrease on September 2017, down £194 million (11 per cent) and £387 million (19 per cent) respectively.
- The top five export commodities accounted for 55 per cent of total UK trade in goods exports this month, this increased from 50 per cent on September 2017.

Exports of Mechanical appliances up 8.8% on last month

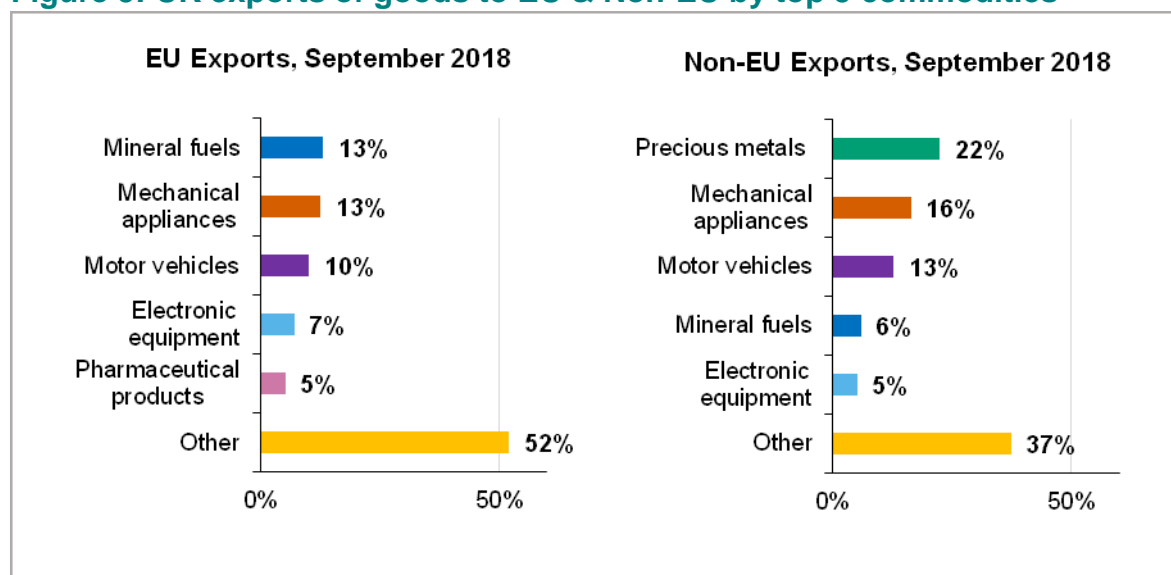
Exports of Motor vehicles up 45% on last month

Exports of Mineral fuels up 21% on September 2017

Exports of Precious metals up more than 3 times on September 2017

Combined Commodity and Country Analysis

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



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

- Mineral fuels, Mechanical appliances, Motor vehicles and Electronic equipment were in the top five export commodities for both EU and non-EU countries.
- The increase in exports of Motor vehicles on both periods was led by the USA and China. Exports to the USA rose by £299 million (60 per cent) on last month and £241 million (43 per cent) on September 2017, while exports to China rose by £146 million (56 per cent) on last month and £133 million (49 per cent) on September 2017.
- The decrease in exports of Precious metals on last month was led by the UAE and Switzerland, down £294 million (94 per cent) and £161 million (5.8 per cent) respectively. In contrast, the increase on September 2017 was led by Switzerland and China, up £2,552 million (from £72 million) and up £570 million (from 45 million) respectively.
- The increase in exports of Mechanical appliances on both periods was spread over a number of countries, led by the USA, up £83 million (12 per cent) on last month, and up £112 million (17 per cent) on September 2017.
- The decrease in exports of Mineral fuels on last month was led by exports to France and China, down £330 million (82 per cent) and £192 million (31 per cent) respectively. In contrast, China led the increase on September 2017, up £156 million (59 per cent).
- The decrease in exports to Germany on September 2017 was led by Pharmaceutical products, down £170 million (48 per cent).
- The increase in exports to Italy on last month was led by Motor vehicles, up £64 million (66 per cent).
- The decrease in exports to Hong Kong on September 2017 was led by Precious metals, down £111 million (34 per cent).

Exports of Motor vehicles to the USA up 60% on last month

Exports of Precious metals to Switzerland up more than 30 times on September 2017

Exports of Mineral fuels to France down 82% on last month

Exports of Pharmaceutical products to Germany down 48% on September 2017

Imports

Country Analysis

Table 3: UK imports of goods from top 10 countries, September 2018

Partner Country	September 2018 Total (£ millions)	Change from August 2018 (%)	Change from September 2017 (%)	Rank August 2018	Rank September 2017
Germany	5,403	5.2	-12.2	1	1
China	4,042	5.1	-0.2	3	2
Netherlands	3,404	-5.9	-0.1	4	4
USA	3,259	-21.8	-7.6	2	3
France	2,349	13.9	1.2	6	6
Belgium	2,231	7.4	2.6	5	7
Italy	1,574	13.3	-2.2	8	8
Norway	1,413	-24.7	-7.4	7	9
Irish Republic	1,246	7.2	-0.7	9	10
Spain	1,194	16.6	-1.2	10	12
Others	15,474	2.1	-19.4	-	-
Total non-EU	19,587	-6.4	-17.6	-	-
Total EU	22,002	6.9	-2.9	-	-
Total Imports	41,589	0.2	-10.4	-	-

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

- Compared with last month and September 2017, the order of the top ten import partners (ranked by value) has changed. Most notably, the USA fell from second to fourth place compared with last month, and from third place compared with September 2017.
- Seven of the top ten import partners increased in value compared with last month, but only two of the top ten import partners increased in value compared with September 2017.
- Germany remained the top import partner country. It showed the second largest increase in value on last month, up £269 million (5.2 per cent). However, it had the second largest decrease on September 2017, down £748 million (12 per cent).

Top import partner Germany up 5.2% on last month

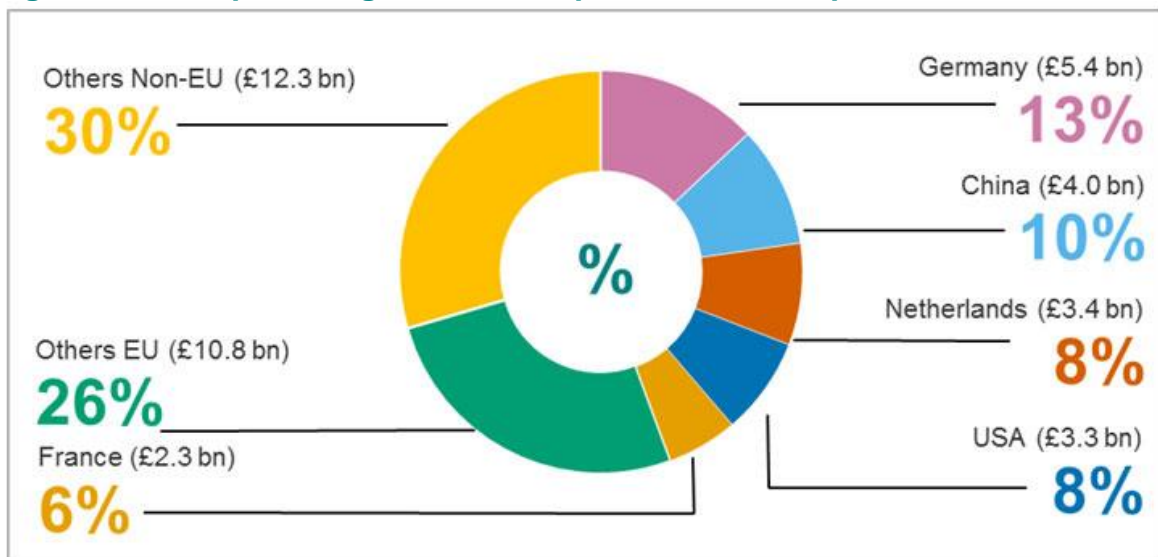
- France showed the largest value increase compared with last month, up £286 million (14 per cent).
- China experienced the third largest value increase on last month, up £196 million (5.1 per cent).
- The USA experienced the largest value decrease compared with last month, down £908 million (22 per cent).
- Norway experienced the second largest value decrease on last month, down £463 million (25 per cent).
- Imports from Nigeria (24th place) showed the largest value increase on September 2017, up £202 million (more than double).
- Imports from Switzerland (22nd place) experienced the largest value decrease compared with September 2017, down £2,500 million (85 per cent).
- Canada (13th place) experienced the third largest value decrease compared with September 2017, down £416 million (34 per cent).

Imports from France up 14% on last month

Imports from Nigeria more than double on September 2017

Imports from Switzerland down 85% on September 2017

Figure 6: UK imports of goods from top 5 countries, September 2018



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

- Germany accounted for 13 per cent of the total value of imports to the UK, a slight decrease of less than one percentage point on September 2017.
- China had the second largest proportion of the total value of trade, accounting for 10 per cent, an increase from 8.7 per cent in September 2017.
- The top five partner countries accounted for 44 per cent of total UK import value this month, an increase from 43 per cent in September 2017.

Germany accounted for 13% of total UK imports

Commodity Analysis

Table 4: UK imports of goods by top 5 commodities, September 2018

Commodity Description	September 2018 Total (£ millions)	Change from August 2018 (%)	Change from September 2017 (%)	Rank August 2018	Rank September 2017
Mechanical appliances	5,358	1.0	0.4	1	2
Motor vehicles	4,732	36.9	-6.7	4	3
Electronic equipment	4,426	16.0	6.6	3	4
Mineral fuels	4,125	-9.2	25.4	2	5
Precious metals	2,375	9.6	-63.7	5	1
Others	20,572	-7.4	-6.7	-	-
Total Imports	41,589	0.2	-10.4	-	-

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

- The ordering of the top five commodity groups for September 2018 has changed compared with last month, and September 2017. Motor vehicles rose to second place from fourth when compared with last month, and from third when compared with September 2017.
- Mechanical appliances was the top import commodity by value, accounting for a 13 per cent share of the total imports this month. It saw a slight increase on last month and September 2017, up £51 million and £23 million respectively.
- Imports of Motor vehicles showed the largest value increase on last month, up £1,275 million (37 per cent). However it saw the fourth largest value decrease on September 2017, down £340 million (6.7 per cent).
- Electronic equipment showed the second largest increase on last month, up £611 million (16 per cent). It also showed the second largest increase on September 2017, up £275 million (6.6 per cent).
- Imports of Mineral fuels experienced the largest value increase on September 2017, up £836 million (25 per cent). In contrast, it experienced the second largest decrease on last month, down £419 million (9.2 per cent)
- Aircraft (19th place) experienced the largest value decrease on last month, down £748 million (61 per cent). It showed the third largest decrease on September 2017, down £421 million (47 per cent).
- Pharmaceutical products showed the third largest decrease on last month, down £415 million (19 per cent). It had the second largest decrease on September 2017, down £540 million (24 per cent).

Imports of Motor vehicles up 37% on last month

Imports of Electronic equipment up 16% on last month

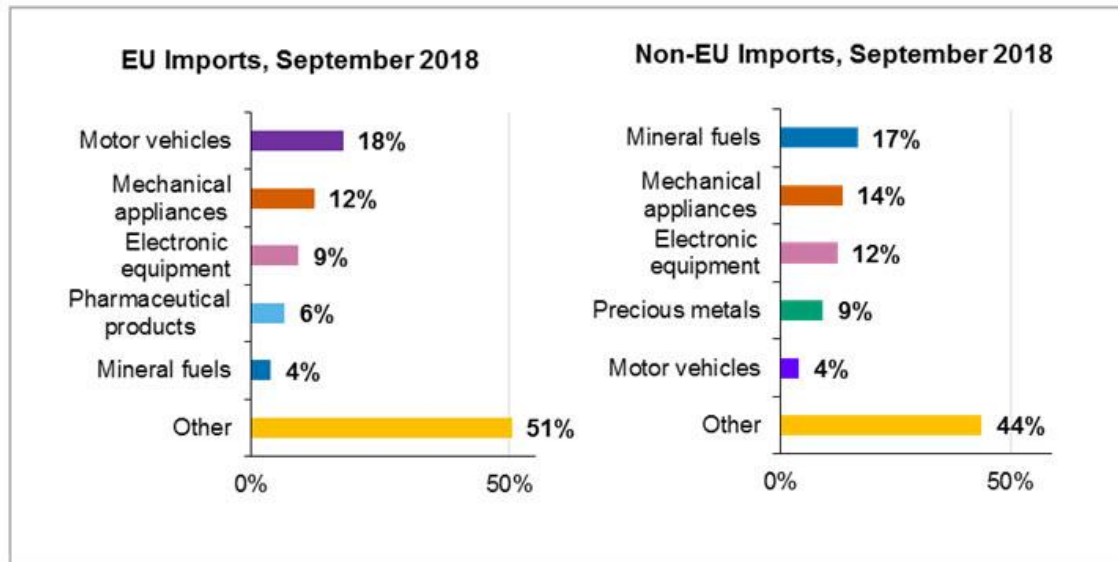
Imports of Aircraft down 61% on August 2018

Imports of Pharmaceutical products down 19% on last month

- The top five import commodities accounted for 51 per cent of total UK trade in goods imports this month. This was a decrease from 53 per cent in September 2017.

Combined Commodity and Country Analysis

Figure 7: UK imports of goods from the EU & Non-EU by top 5 commodities



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

- Motor vehicles, Mechanical appliances, Electronic equipment and Mineral fuels were all in the top five import commodities for both EU and non-EU countries.
- The increase in imports of Motor vehicles last month was led by Germany, up £421 million (38 per cent).
- The increase in imports of Mineral fuels on September 2017 was led by South Africa and Nigeria, up £210 million (more than nine times) and £200 million (more than double) respectively.
- The rise in imports from France last month was led by Motor vehicles, up £137 million (92 per cent).
- The decrease in Aircraft on last month was led by the USA and Germany, down £588 million (82 per cent) and £229 million (86 per cent) respectively.
- The decrease in imports of Pharmaceutical products on last month was led by the Netherlands, down £370 million (50 per cent). The decrease on September 2017 was led by Switzerland and the Netherlands, down £199 million (71 per cent) and £170 million (32 per cent) respectively.
- The decrease in imports from Switzerland on September 2017 was led by Precious metals, down £2,303 million (97 per cent).

Imports of motor vehicles from Germany up 38% on last month

Imports of Mineral fuels from Nigeria more than double on September 2017

Imports of Pharmaceutical products from the Netherlands down 50% on last month

Annex I – Metadata

You can access the 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](#).
- 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](#).
- You can 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](#)'.

Annex II – Methodological Notes

1. HM Revenue & Customs released these latest statistics on Overseas Trade with countries on 9 November 2018 under arrangements set out in the [Code of Practice for Official Statistics](#). The first release is published on HMRC's trade data website [www.uktradeinfo.com](#).
2. This release includes the first provisional estimates of trade-in-goods between the UK and both countries of the EU and those outside the EU for September 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](#).
3. The **EU figures** provided in this publication of the September 2018 Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics are collected from the Intrastat survey. They will include:
 - a. Estimates for businesses who have yet to submit detailed data on the trade they had with other EU Member States this month.
 - b. Estimates for businesses who do not have to submit detailed data on the trade they have with other EU Member States.
 - c. 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.

4. The **Non-EU figures** provided in this publication of the September 2018 Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics are presented by customs declarations and collected by the CHIEF (Customs Handling of Import and Export Freight) system.
5. Detailed trade information is presented according to the [Harmonised System \(HS\)](#) nomenclature.
6. 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 two 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](#).

7. 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'.
8. HMRC publishes [additional information](#) to help support users of non-EU data. Information to help support users of the EU Overseas Trade Statistics can be found [here](#). This includes links to our policies on revision and suppression of data, descriptions of the methodology used to compile the OTS and information on the quality of the data published.
9. 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](#).
10. 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/assessment-reports/assessment-report-93---uk-trade-in-goods.pdf>.
11. 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.

Statistical contact:

Daniel Wilkes 03000 594250

E-mail uktradeinfo@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk

Next release: 11 December 2018 9:30am

© **Crown copyright 2018.**

If using specific facts contained in this release please check the information is still current.