



## 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 September 2021.

Supporting tables, visuals and data can be found at [www.uktradeinfo.com](http://www.uktradeinfo.com)

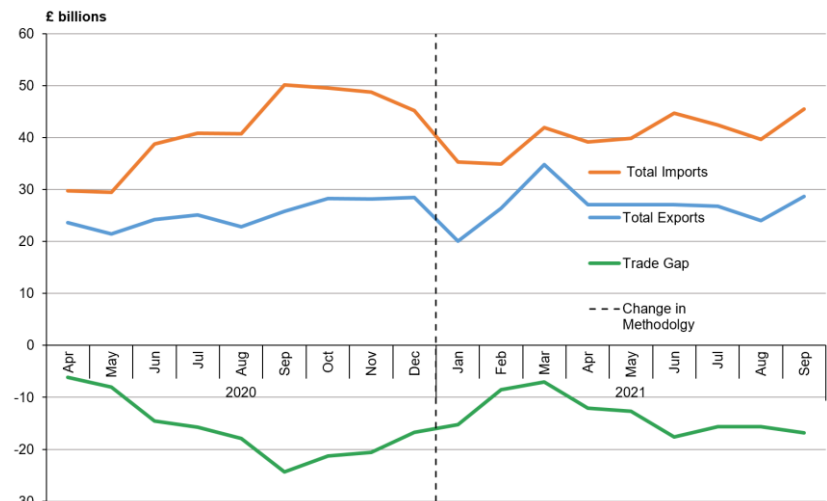
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## Trade in Goods, September 2021

- Total **exports** of goods for September 2021 were £28.7 billion. This was up £4.6 billion (19%) compared with last month, and up £2.9 billion (11%) compared with September 2020.
- Total **imports** of goods for September 2021 were £45.5 billion. This was up £5.8 billion (15%) compared with last month, but down £4.6 billion (9.2%) compared with September 2020.
- The UK was a net importer this month, with **imports** exceeding **exports** by £16.8 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 and Statistics  
Note: 2021 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. 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.

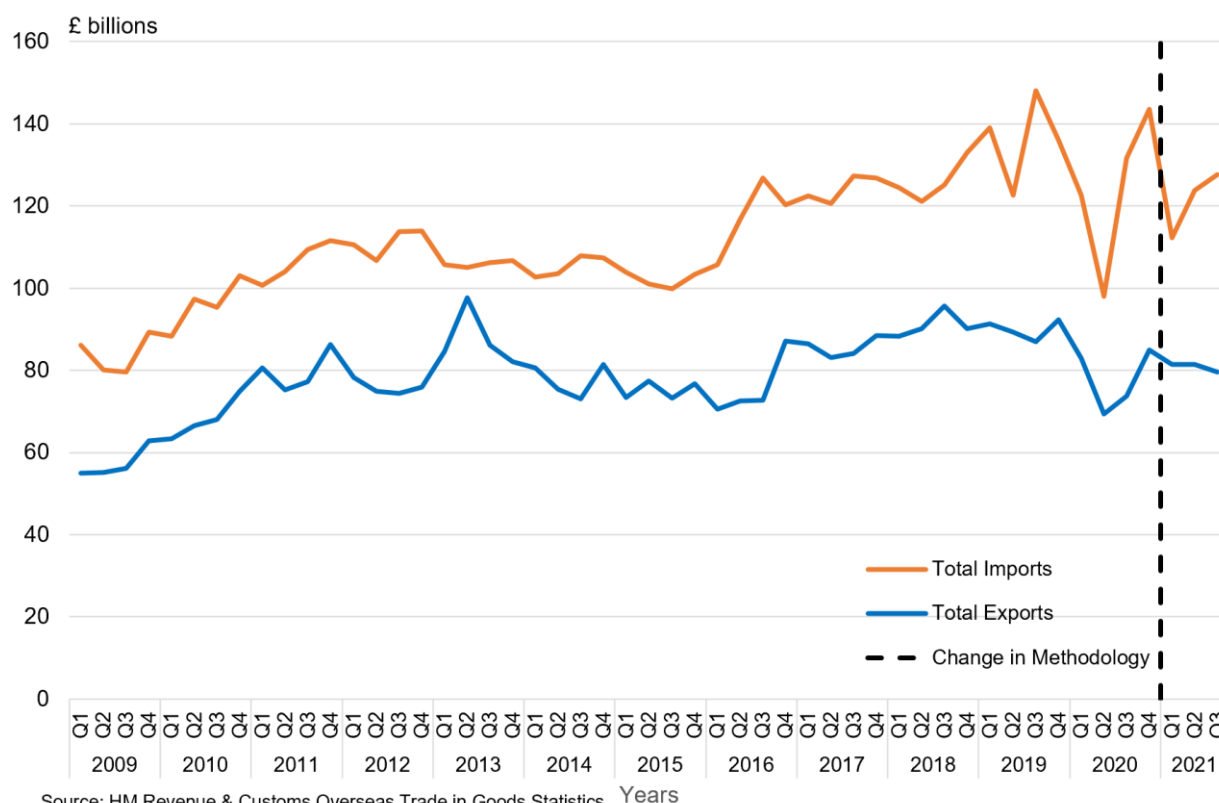
- The total **export** trade for Q3 of 2021 was £79.5 billion, which was an increase of 7.9% compared with £73.7 billion for Q3 of 2020.
- The total **import** trade for Q3 of 2021 was £128 billion, which was a decrease of 3.1% compared with £132 billion for Q3 of 2020.
- There was a trade deficit of £48.1 billion for Q3 of 2021. This was a narrowing of 17% compared with £58.0 billion for Q3 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.

↑ Exports up 7.9% on Q3 2020

↓ Imports down 3.1% on Q3 2020

↓ Trade deficit narrowed by 17% on Q3 2020

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



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

# Non-EU & EU Trade in Goods

## Non-EU Trade in Goods:

- **Non-EU exports** for September 2021 were £15.2 billion. This was an increase of £2.9 billion (23%) on last month, and an increase of £2.2 billion (17%) compared with September 2020.
- **Non-EU imports** for September 2021 were £24.9 billion. This was an increase of £2.3 billion (10%) on last month, but a decrease of £3.5 billion (12%) compared with September 2020.
- For **non-EU trade** the UK was a net importer this month, with imports exceeding exports by £9.7 billion.

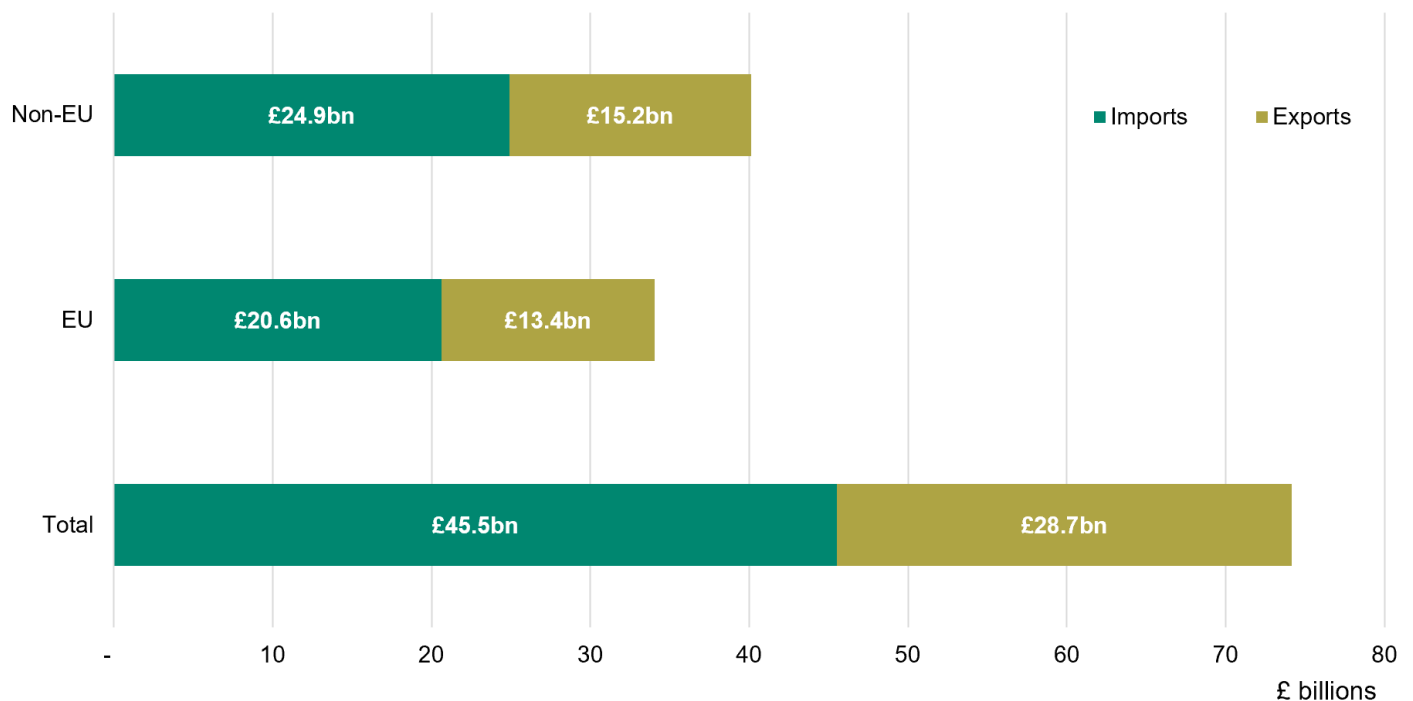
↑ **Non-EU exports up 23% on last month**

## EU Trade in Goods:

- **EU exports** for September 2021 were £13.4 billion. This was an increase of £1.7 billion (15%) on last month, and an increase of £0.6 billion (5.0%) compared with September 2020.
- **EU imports** for September 2021 were £20.6 billion. This was an increase of £3.5 billion (20%) on last month, but a decrease of £1.2 billion (5.3%) compared with September 2020.
- For **EU trade** the UK was a net importer this month, with imports exceeding exports by £7.2 billion.

↑ **EU imports up 20% on last month**

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



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2021 data is provisional

# Exports: Country Analysis

- The USA remained the largest export partner country.
- Switzerland experienced the largest value increases on last month and on September 2020, up £2,454 million and £2,472 million respectively (up to more than 6 times the value in both cases).
- The Netherlands experienced the 3rd largest value increase on last month, and the 2nd largest value increase on September 2020, up £292 million (14%) and £753 million (46%) respectively.
- Norway (ranked 23rd) experienced the largest value decrease on September 2020, down £634 million (75%).
- Italy experienced the 2nd largest value increase on last month, up £365 million (67%).
- Germany experienced the 2nd largest value decrease on September 2020, down £341 million (13%).
- The UAE (ranked 15th) experienced the largest value decrease on last month, down £227 million (35%).

↑ **Exports to Switzerland up to more than 6 times the value on last month**

↑ **Exports to the Netherlands up 46% on September 2020**

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

Partner Country	September 2021		August 2021		September 2020	
	Total (£ millions)	Total (£ millions)	Change on August 2021 (%)	Total (£ millions)	Change on September 2020 (%)	
USA	3,289	3,240	1.5	3,186	3.2	
Switzerland	2,937	483	507.5	465	532.2	
Netherlands	2,388	2,095	14.0	1,635	46.0	
Germany	2,286	2,207	3.6	2,627	-13.0	
Ireland	1,828	1,591	14.9	1,932	-5.3	
France	1,554	1,393	11.6	1,723	-9.8	
Belgium	1,253	1,116	12.3	947	32.2	
China	1,180	1,304	-9.5	1,253	-5.8	
Italy	909	544	67.0	812	12.0	
Spain	859	608	41.4	723	18.9	
Others	10,179	9,477	7.4	10,476	-2.8	
<b>Total EU</b>	<b>13,440</b>	<b>11,699</b>	<b>14.9</b>	<b>12,801</b>	<b>5.0</b>	
<b>Total Non-EU</b>	<b>15,222</b>	<b>12,358</b>	<b>23.2</b>	<b>12,976</b>	<b>17.3</b>	
<b>Total Exports</b>	<b>28,662</b>	<b>24,057</b>	<b>19.1</b>	<b>25,778</b>	<b>11.2</b>	

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2021 data is provisional

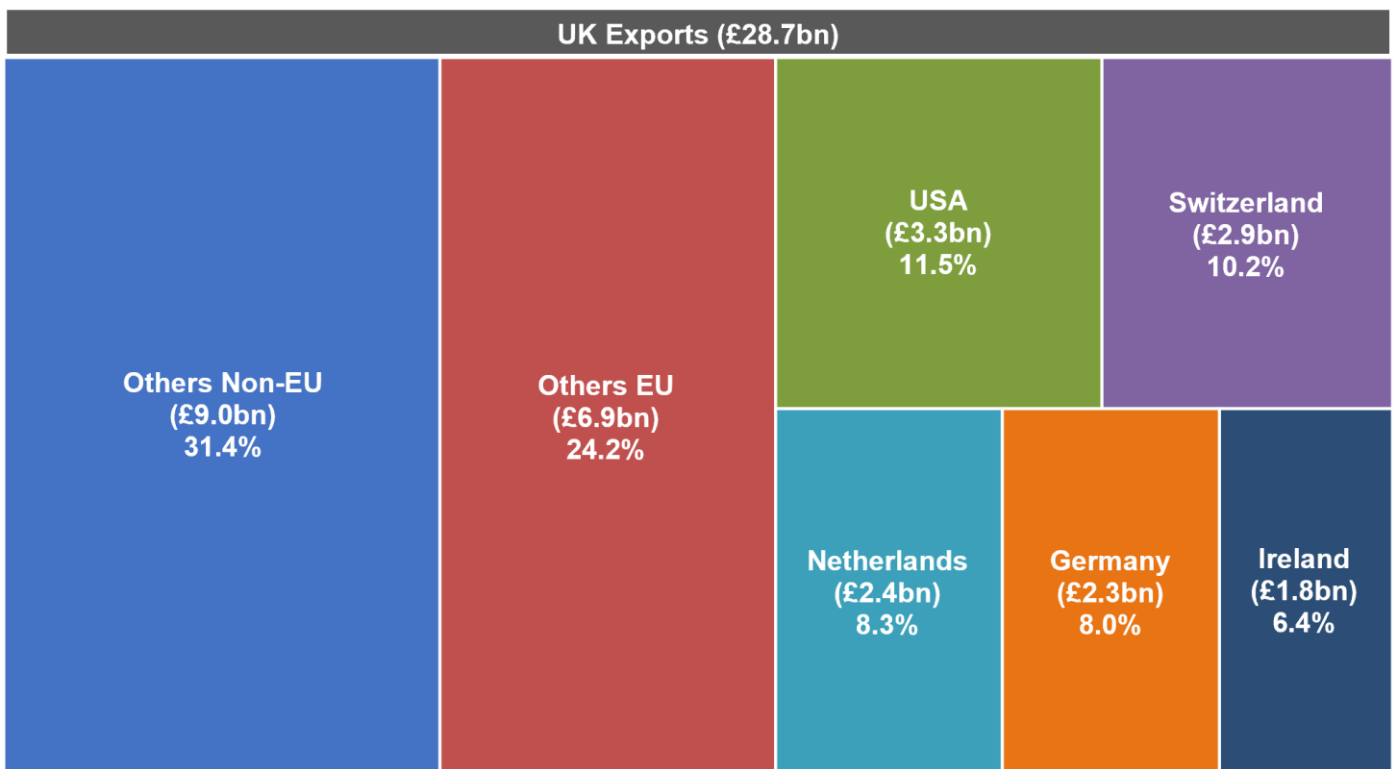
# Exports: Country Analysis

- The top 5 export partners accounted for 44% of the total value of goods exported in September 2021. This was an increase from 43% in September 2020.
- The USA accounted for 11% of the total value of goods exported from the UK. This was a decrease from a 12% share in September 2020.
- Switzerland had the 2nd largest proportion, accounting for 10%. This was an increase from a 1.8% share in September 2020.
- The top 10 export partner countries (ranked by value) changed compared with last month. Most notably, Switzerland rose to 2nd place from 12th and Italy rose to 9th place from 11th, while Germany fell to 4th place from 2nd.
- The top 10 export partner countries (ranked by value) changed compared with September 2020. Most notably, Switzerland rose to 2nd place from 16th and the Netherlands rose to 3rd place from 5th.

↓ **The USA had an 11% share of total exports in September 2021**

↑ **Switzerland had a 10% share of total exports in September 2021**

**Figure 4: Share of UK exports of goods to the top 5 countries, September 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 September 2021, the USA remained the largest export partner country.
- Among the top 10, Switzerland experienced the largest percentage increase on the 3 months to September 2020, doubling in value.
- Among the top 10, the Netherlands experienced the 2nd largest percentage increases on the 3 months to June 2021 and on the 3 months to September 2020, up 11% and 42% respectively.
- Among the top 10, Germany experienced the largest percentage decrease on the 3 months to June 2021, and the largest percentage decrease on the 3 months to September 2020, down 15% and 9.1% respectively.
- Among the top 10, Spain experienced the largest percentage increase on the 3 months to June 2021, up 12%.
- 6 of the top 10 export partners experienced a decrease on the 3 months to June 2021. The exceptions were the Netherlands, Switzerland, Belgium, and Spain.
- 8 of the top 10 export partners experienced an increase on the 3 months to September 2020. The exceptions were Germany and Ireland.

↑ **Exports to Switzerland doubled in value on the 3 months to September 2020**

↓ **Exports to Germany down 15% on the 3 months to June 2021**

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

Partner Country	3 months to Sep 2021		3 months to Jun 2021		3 months to Sep 2020	
	Total (£ millions)	Total (£ millions)	Change on June 2021 (%)	Total (£ millions)	Change on September 2020 (%)	
USA	10,318	11,016	-6.3	9,999	3.2	
Germany	6,909	8,163	-15.4	7,605	-9.1	
Netherlands	6,570	5,920	11.0	4,619	42.2	
Ireland	5,124	5,313	-3.6	5,224	-1.9	
France	4,693	5,007	-6.3	4,673	0.4	
Switzerland	4,172	3,818	9.3	2,049	103.6	
China	3,698	3,774	-2.0	3,653	1.2	
Belgium	3,636	3,476	4.6	2,638	37.8	
Italy	2,224	2,476	-10.2	2,211	0.6	
Spain	2,218	1,979	12.1	2,009	10.4	
Others	29,981	30,465	-1.6	29,055	3.2	
<b>Total Exports</b>	<b>79,542</b>	<b>81,407</b>	<b>-2.3</b>	<b>73,735</b>	<b>7.9</b>	

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2021 data is provisional

## Exports: Commodity Analysis

- Mechanical appliances remained the largest export commodity. It experienced the 2nd largest value increase on last month and the 3rd largest value increase on September 2020, up £1,061 million (31%) and £682 million (18%) respectively.
- Precious metals experienced the largest value increases on last month and on September 2020, up £1,709 million (76%) and £2,044 million (doubling in value) respectively.
- Mineral fuels experienced the 2nd largest value increase on September 2020, up £850 million (57%).
- Motor vehicles experienced the 3rd largest value increase on last month, up £780 million (50%). In contrast, it experienced the 2nd largest value decrease on September 2020, down £500 million (18%).
- Ships, boats and floating structures (ranked 43rd) experienced the largest value decrease on September 2020, down £546 million (89%).
- Pharmaceutical products experienced the largest value decrease on last month, down £155 million (9.4%).

↑ Exports of Precious metals up 76% on last month

↑ Exports of Mineral fuels up 57% on September 2020

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

Commodity Description	September 2021	August 2021		September 2020	
	Total (£ millions)	Total (£ millions)	Change on August 2021 (%)	Total (£ millions)	Change on September 2020 (%)
Mechanical appliances	4,490	3,429	30.9	3,807	17.9
Precious metals	3,954	2,245	76.1	1,909	107.1
Motor vehicles	2,337	1,557	50.1	2,837	-17.6
Mineral fuels	2,331	2,131	9.3	1,481	57.4
Electronic equipment	1,707	1,542	10.7	1,712	-0.3
Pharmaceutical products	1,485	1,640	-9.4	1,434	3.5
Other products	1,399	1,209	15.7	716	95.5
Measuring devices and gauges	1,266	1,189	6.5	1,174	7.8
Aircraft	770	582	32.2	905	-14.9
Plastics and plastic products	767	748	2.6	727	5.6
Others	8,158	7,786	4.8	9,076	-10.1
<b>Total Exports</b>	<b>28,662</b>	<b>24,057</b>	<b>19.1</b>	<b>25,778</b>	<b>11.2</b>

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2021 data is provisional

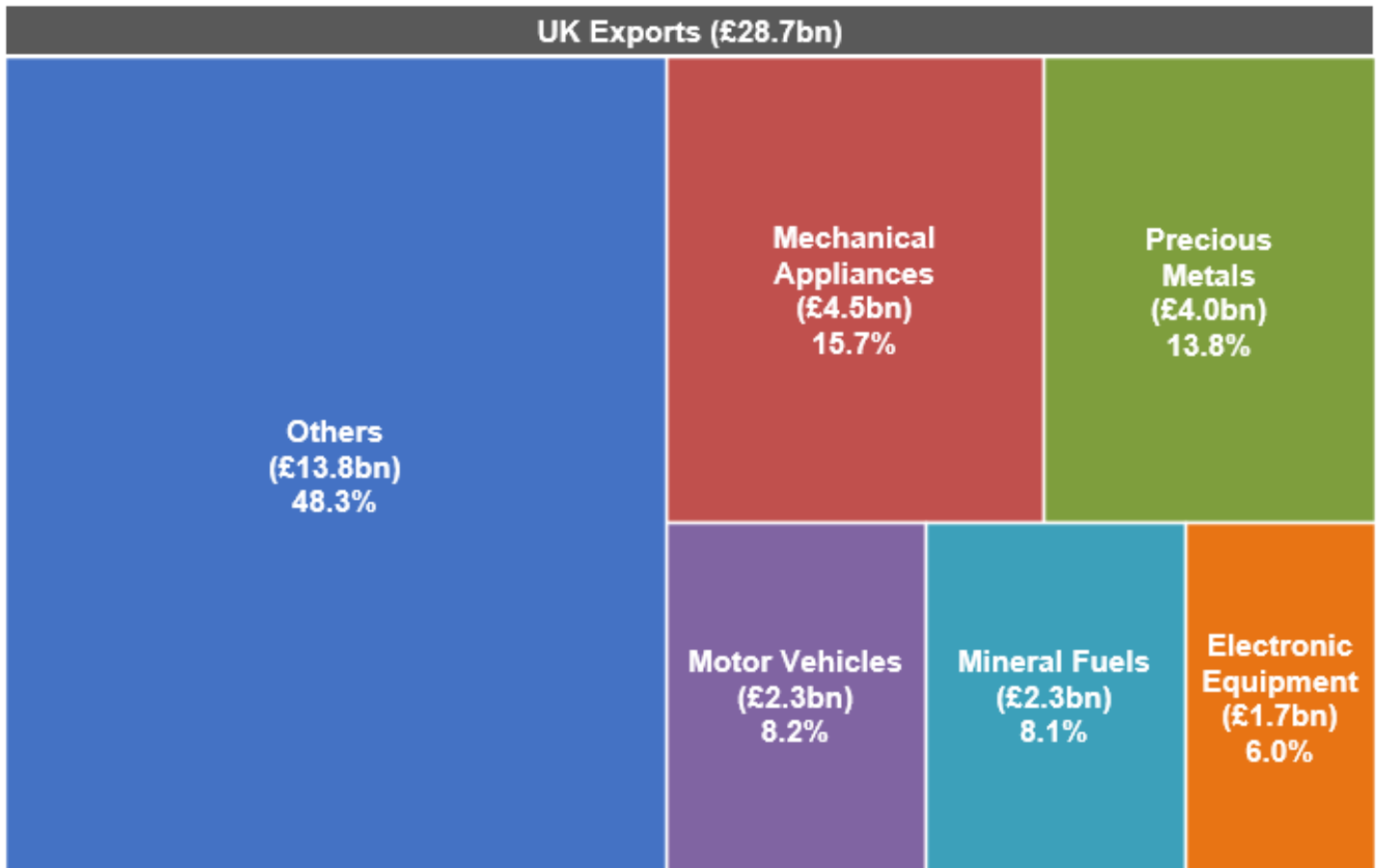
# Exports: Commodity Analysis

- The top 5 export commodities (ranked by value) accounted for 52% of the total value of goods exported in September 2021. This was an increase from a 46% share in September 2020.
- Mechanical appliances accounted for 16% of the total value of goods exported from the UK. This was an increase from a 15% share in September 2020.
- Precious metals had the 2nd largest proportion, accounting for 14% of total exports. This was an increase from a 7.4% share in September 2020.
- The top 10 export commodities (ranked by value) changed compared with last month. Most notably, Motor vehicles rose to 3rd place from 5th and Aircraft rose to 9th place from 11th, while Pharmaceutical products fell to 6th place from 4th.
- The top 10 export commodities (ranked by value) changed order compared with September 2020. Most notably, Precious metals rose to 2nd place from 3rd.

↑ **Mechanical appliances accounted for 16% of total exports in September 2021**

↑ **Precious metals accounted for 14% of total exports in September 2021**

**Figure 5: Share of UK exports by the top 5 commodities, September 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 September 2021, Mechanical appliances remained as the largest export commodity.
- Among the top 10, Mineral fuels experienced the largest percentage increases on the 3 months to June 2021 and on the 3 months to September 2020, up 36% and 41% respectively.
- Among the top 10, Precious metals experienced the 2nd largest percentage increase on the 3 months to September 2020, up 27%.
- Among the top 10, Aircraft experienced the largest percentage decrease on the 3 months to June 2021, down 15%.
- Among the top 10, Motor vehicles experienced the 2nd largest percentage decrease on the 3 months to June 2021 and the largest percentage decrease on the 3 months to September 2020, down 13% and 12% respectively.
- 6 of the top 10 export commodities experienced a decrease on the 3 months to June 2021. The exceptions were Mechanical appliances, Mineral fuels, Electronic equipment, and Pharmaceutical products.
- 7 of the top 10 export commodities experienced an increase on the 3 months to September 2020. The exceptions were Motor vehicles, Electronic equipment, and Aircraft.

↑ **Mineral fuels exports up 41% on the 3 months to September 2020**

↓ **Aircraft exports down 15% on the 3 months to June 2021**

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

Commodity Description	3 months to Sep 2021	3 months to Jun 2021		3 months to Sep 2020	Change on September 2020 (%)
	Total (£ millions)	Total (£ millions)	Change on June 2021 (%)	Total (£ millions)	
Mechanical appliances	12,525	12,301	1.8	11,174	12.1
Precious metals	8,062	9,307	-13.4	6,337	27.2
Mineral fuels	6,624	4,873	35.9	4,697	41.0
Motor vehicles	6,218	7,186	-13.5	7,054	-11.9
Electronic equipment	4,888	4,858	0.6	4,913	-0.5
Pharmaceutical products	4,744	4,633	2.4	4,474	6.0
Other products	4,037	4,341	-7.0	2,407	67.7
Measuring devices and gauges	3,723	3,813	-2.4	3,411	9.1
Plastics and plastic products	2,346	2,526	-7.2	2,049	14.5
Aircraft	2,217	2,602	-14.8	2,253	-1.6
Others	24,161	24,968	-3.2	24,967	-3.2
<b>Total Exports</b>	<b>79,542</b>	<b>81,407</b>	<b>-2.3</b>	<b>73,735</b>	<b>7.9</b>

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2021 data is provisional

# Exports: Combined Commodity & Country Analysis

## Country to commodity:

- The increases in exports to Switzerland on last month and on September 2020 was dominated by Precious metals, up £2,329 million (to more than 10 times the value) and £2,400 million (from £180 million) respectively.
- The increase in exports to Italy on last month was led by Art and antiques, up £54 million (from £3.9 million).
- The decrease in exports to Germany on September 2020 was led by Pharmaceutical products, down £139 million (66%).
- The decrease in exports to the UAE on last month was dominated by Precious metals, down £243 million (64%).

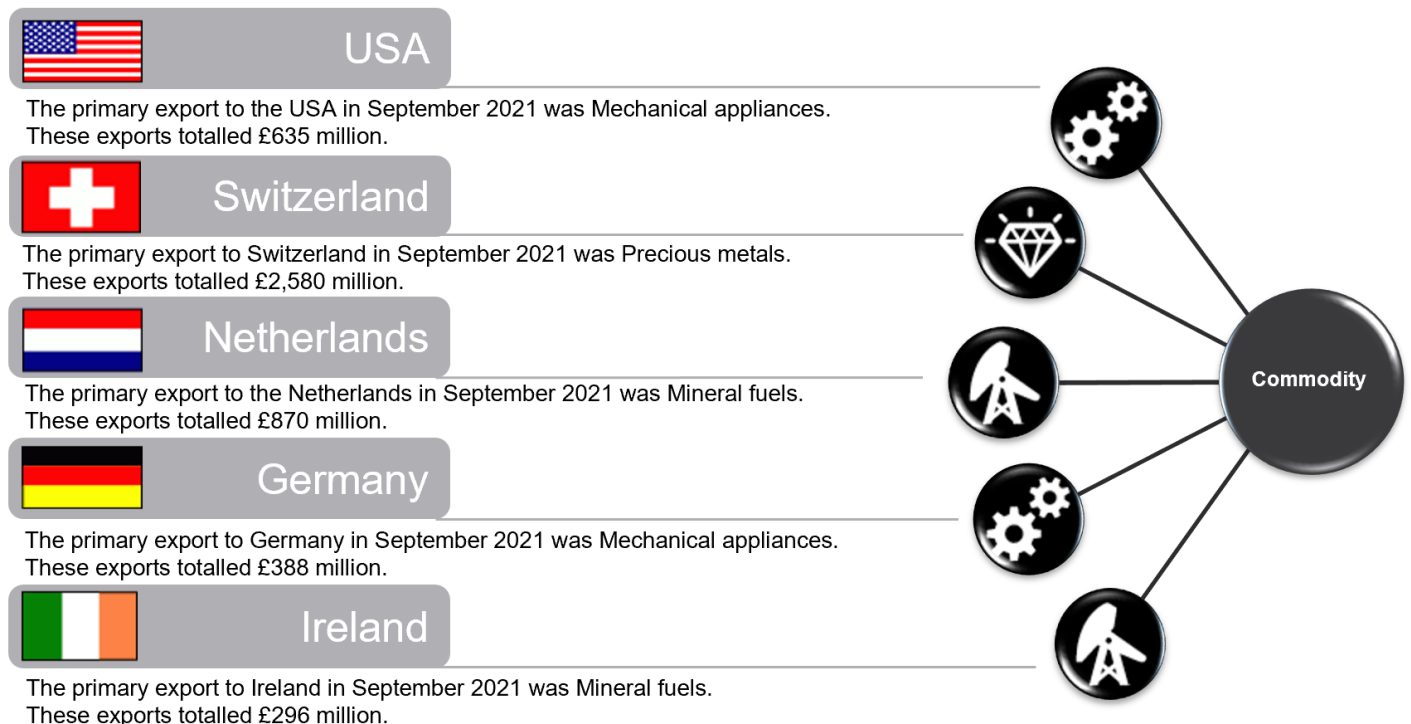
## Commodity to country

- The increase in exports of Mechanical appliances on last month was led by France and the Netherlands, up £133 million (83%) and £126 million (57%) respectively. The increase on September 2020 was driven by the Netherlands, up £206 million (to 2.5 times the value).
- The increase in exports of Mineral fuels on September 2020 was led by the Netherlands and Ireland, up £329 million (61%) and £172 million (to more than double the value) respectively.
- The increase in exports of Motor vehicles on last month was led by China, up £263 million (to 3 times the value). The decrease on September 2020 was led by the USA, down £176 million (35%).
- The decrease in exports of Ships, boats and floating structures on September 2020 was dominated by Norway, down £568 million (to £0.4 million).

↑ Exports of Precious metals to Switzerland up to 10 times the value of last month

↑ Exports of Mineral fuels to the Netherlands up 61% on September 2020

**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 largest value increase on last month, up £1,065 million (21%).
- Hong Kong (ranked 19th) experienced the largest value decrease on September 2020, down £2,257 million (79%).
- Switzerland (ranked 15th) experienced the 2nd largest value decrease on September 2020, down £2,087 million (73%).
- Norway experienced the 2nd largest value increase on last month and the largest value increase on September 2020, up £794 million (44%) and £1,762 million (to 3 times the value) respectively.
- Russia experienced the 3rd largest value decrease on September 2020, down £1,728 million (56%).
- Germany experienced the 3rd largest value increase on last month, up £679 million (17%). Conversely, it experienced the 4th largest value decrease on September 2020, down £1,023 million (18%).

↓ Imports from Hong Kong down 79% on September 2020

↑ Imports from China up 21% on last month

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

Partner Country	September 2021		August 2021		September 2020	
	Total (£ millions)	Total (£ millions)	Change on August 2021 (%)	Total (£ millions)	Change on September 2020 (%)	
China	6,177	5,111	20.8	5,881	5.0	
Germany	4,756	4,077	16.6	5,779	-17.7	
USA	3,749	3,538	5.9	3,875	-3.3	
Netherlands	2,968	2,471	20.1	3,035	-2.2	
Norway	2,618	1,824	43.6	856	206.0	
Belgium	2,092	1,881	11.2	2,242	-6.7	
France	2,082	1,822	14.3	2,217	-6.1	
Italy	1,573	1,336	17.7	1,629	-3.5	
Russia	1,351	1,561	-13.5	3,079	-56.1	
Spain	1,315	1,054	24.7	1,258	4.5	
Others	16,829	15,043	11.9	20,295	-17.1	
<b>Total EU</b>	<b>20,615</b>	<b>17,115</b>	<b>20.4</b>	<b>21,773</b>	<b>-5.3</b>	
<b>Total Non-EU</b>	<b>24,893</b>	<b>22,603</b>	<b>10.1</b>	<b>28,373</b>	<b>-12.3</b>	
<b>Total Imports</b>	<b>45,508</b>	<b>39,718</b>	<b>14.6</b>	<b>50,146</b>	<b>-9.2</b>	

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2021 data is provisional

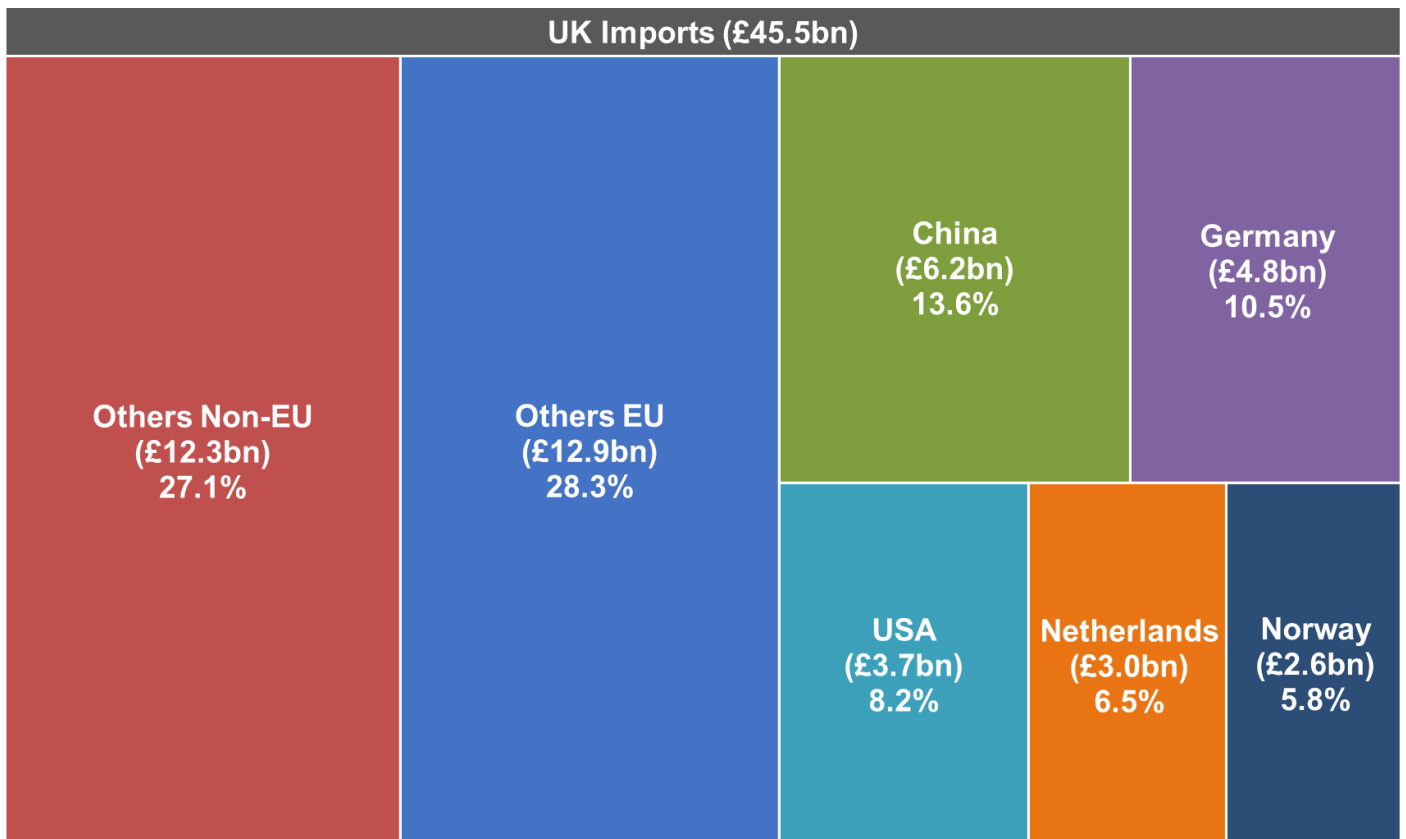
# Imports: Country Analysis

- The top 5 import partners accounted for 45% of the total value of goods imported in September 2021. This was an increase from a 43% share in September 2020.
- China accounted for 14% of the total value of goods imported to the UK. This was an increase from a 12% share in September 2020.
- Germany had the 2nd largest proportion, accounting for 10%. This was a decrease from a 12% share in September 2020.
- The top 10 import partner countries (ranked by value) changed order compared with last month. Most notably, Norway rose to 5th place from 6th while Belgium fell to 6th place from 5th.
- The top 10 import partner countries (ranked by value) changed compared with September 2020. Most notably, Norway rose to 5th place from 15th while Switzerland fell to 15th place from 7th and Hong Kong fell to 19th place from 6th.

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

↑ **China accounted for 14% of total imports in September 2021**

**Figure 7: Share of UK imports of goods from the top 5 countries, September 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 September 2021, China remained the largest import partner country. Among the top 10, it experienced the 2nd largest percentage increase on the 3 months to June 2021, up 13%.
- Among the top 10, Norway experienced the largest percentage increases on the 3 months to June 2021 and on the 3 months to September 2020, up 57% and up to almost 3 times the value respectively.
- Among the top 10, Russia experienced the largest percentage decrease on the 3 months to September 2020, down 25%.
- Among the top 10, the Netherlands experienced the 3rd largest percentage increase on the 3 months to June 2021, up 12%.
- Among the top 10, Germany experienced the 2nd largest percentage decrease on the 3 months to September 2020, down 11%.
- 7 of the top 10 countries experienced an increase on the 3 months to June 2021. The exceptions were Germany, the USA, and Italy.
- 6 of the top 10 countries experienced an increase on the 3 months to September 2020. The exceptions were Germany, the Netherlands, Russia, and Italy.

↑ Imports from Norway up 57% on the 3 months to June 2021

↓ Imports from Russia down 25% on the 3 months to September 2020

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

Partner Country	3 months to Jun 2021		3 months to Sep 2020	
	Total (£ millions)	Change on June 2021 (%)	Total (£ millions)	Change on September 2020 (%)
China	16,085	12.7	15,022	7.1
Germany	13,514	-1.0	15,169	-10.9
USA	10,793	-5.1	10,038	7.5
Netherlands	8,033	12.1	8,540	-5.9
Norway	6,483	56.9	2,348	176.2
Belgium	5,953	8.3	5,603	6.2
France	5,716	8.5	5,603	2.0
Russia	4,559	3.0	6,053	-24.7
Italy	4,459	-2.8	4,516	-1.2
Spain	3,629	1.5	3,304	9.8
Others	48,419	-2.8	55,553	-12.8
<b>Total Imports</b>	<b>127,643</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>131,749</b>	<b>-3.1</b>

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2021 data is provisional

# Imports: Commodity Analysis

- Mechanical appliances replaced Precious metals as the largest import commodity. It experienced the 4th largest value increase on last month and the 2nd largest value increase on September 2020, up £896 million (21%) and £624 million (14%) respectively.
- Precious metals experienced the largest value decreases on last month and on September 2020, down £1,080 million (19%) and £7,507 million (63%) respectively.
- Mineral fuels experienced the largest value increases on last month and on September 2020, up £1,520 million (44%) and £2,983 million (up to 2.5 times the value) respectively.
- Electronic equipment experienced the 2nd largest value increase on last month and the 3rd largest value increase on September 2020, up £1,122 million (34%) and £457 million (12%).
- Motor vehicles experienced the 3rd largest value increase on last month, up £1,036 million (33%).
- Other textile goods (ranked 39th) experienced the 2nd largest value decrease on September 2020, down £724 million (79%).

↓ Imports of Precious metals down 63% on September 2020

↑ Imports of Mineral fuels up 44% on last month

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

Commodity Description	September 2021		August 2021		September 2020	
	Total (£ millions)	Total (£ millions)	Change on August 2021 (%)	Total (£ millions)	Change on September 2020 (%)	
Mechanical appliances	5,206	4,310	20.8	4,582	13.6	
Mineral fuels	5,011	3,490	43.6	2,027	147.2	
Precious metals	4,474	5,555	-19.4	11,981	-62.7	
Electronic equipment	4,374	3,252	34.5	3,916	11.7	
Motor vehicles	4,207	3,171	32.7	4,713	-10.7	
Pharmaceutical products	1,947	1,662	17.1	1,608	21.1	
Plastics and plastic products	1,428	1,320	8.2	1,503	-5.0	
Measuring devices and gauges	1,198	1,109	8.1	1,397	-14.2	
Furniture and light fittings	931	875	6.5	813	14.5	
Knitwear	896	739	21.3	976	-8.2	
Others	15,836	14,235	11.2	16,629	-4.8	
<b>Total Imports</b>	<b>45,508</b>	<b>39,718</b>	<b>14.6</b>	<b>50,146</b>	<b>-9.2</b>	

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2021 data is provisional

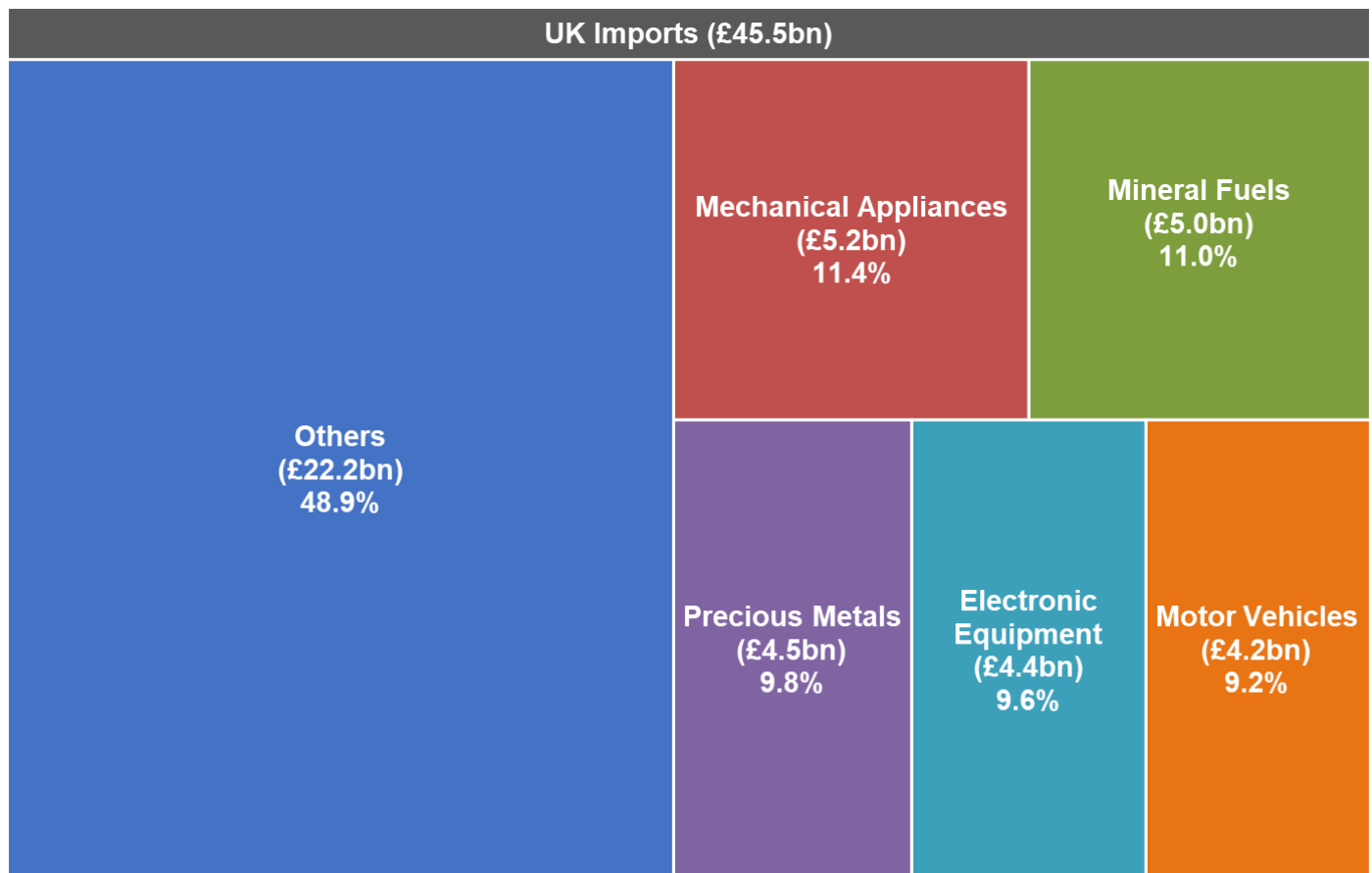
# Imports: Commodity Analysis

- The top 5 import commodities (ranked by value) accounted for 51% of the total value of goods imported in September 2021. This was a decrease from a 54% share in September 2020.
- Mechanical appliances accounted for 11% of the total value of goods imported to the UK. This was an increase from a 9.1% share in September 2020.
- Mineral fuels had the 2nd largest proportion, accounting for an 11% share. This was an increase from a 4.0% share in September 2020.
- The top 10 commodities (ranked by value) changed order compared with last month. Most notably, Precious metals fell to 3rd place from 1st.
- The top 10 commodities (ranked by value) changed compared with August 2020. Most notably, Mineral fuels rose to 2nd place from 5th, while Motor vehicles fell to 5th place from 2nd and Clothes (not knitted) fell to 15th place from 9th.

↓ **The top 5 import commodities accounted for 51% of total imports in September 2021**

↑ **Mechanical appliances accounted for 11% of total imports in September 2021**

**Figure 8: Share of UK imports for the top 5 commodities, September 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 September 2021, Precious metals remained the largest import commodity. Among the top 10, it experienced the largest percentage decreases on the 3 months to June 2021 and on the 3 months to September 2020, down 21% and 48% respectively.
- Among the top 10, Mineral fuels experienced the largest percentage increases on the 3 months to June 2021 and on the 3 months to September 2020, up 40% and up to almost 2.5 times the value respectively.
- Among the top 10, Furniture and light fittings experienced the 2nd largest percentage increase on the 3 months to September 2020, up 24%.
- Among the top 10, Knitwear experienced the 2nd largest percentage increase on the 3 months to June 2021, up 23%.
- 7 of the top 10 commodities experienced an increase on the 3 months to June 2021. The exceptions were Precious metals, Mechanical appliances, and Motor vehicles.
- 6 of the top 10 commodities experienced an increase on the 3 months to September 2020. The exceptions were Precious metals, Motor vehicles, Measuring devices and gauges, and Knitwear.

↑ Imports of Mineral fuels up 40% on the 3 months to June 2021

↓ Imports of Precious metals down 48% on the 3 months to September 2020

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

Commodity Description	3 months to Sep 2021		3 months to Jun 2021		3 months to Sep 2020	
	Total (£ millions)	Total (£ millions)	Change on June 2021 (%)	Total (£ millions)	Change on September 2020 (%)	
Precious metals	15,106	19,043	-20.7	29,325	-48.5	
Mechanical appliances	14,312	14,698	-2.6	12,962	10.4	
Mineral fuels	12,528	8,960	39.8	5,260	138.2	
Electronic equipment	11,237	10,477	7.3	10,797	4.1	
Motor vehicles	11,110	11,656	-4.7	11,645	-4.6	
Pharmaceutical products	5,287	4,427	19.4	4,510	17.2	
Plastics and plastic products	4,134	3,834	7.8	3,956	4.5	
Measuring devices and gauges	3,427	3,391	1.1	3,656	-6.3	
Furniture and light fittings	2,733	2,571	6.3	2,200	24.2	
Knitwear	2,350	1,907	23.2	2,527	-7.0	
Others	45,419	42,815	6.1	44,911	1.1	
<b>Total Imports</b>	<b>127,643</b>	<b>123,779</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>131,749</b>	<b>-3.1</b>	

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 increase in imports from China on last month was driven by Electronic equipment, up £410 million (49%). The increase on September 2020 was led by Electronic equipment and Motor vehicles, up £294 million (31%) and £267 million (to 4 times the value) respectively.
- The increases in imports from Norway on last month and on September 2020 were dominated by Mineral fuels, up £758 million (47%) and £1,684 million (to 3.5 times the value) respectively.
- The increase in imports from Germany on last month was driven by Pharmaceutical products and Electronic equipment, up £146 million (78%) and £132 million (38%) respectively. The decrease on September 2020 was driven by Motor vehicles and Precious metals, down £397 million (27%) and £369 million (76%) respectively.

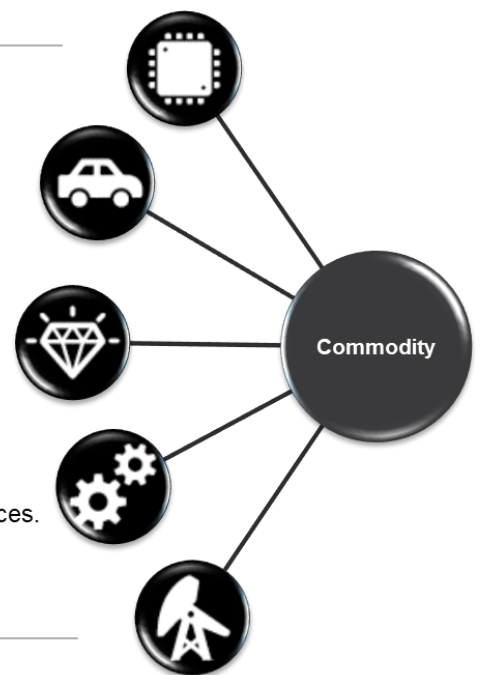
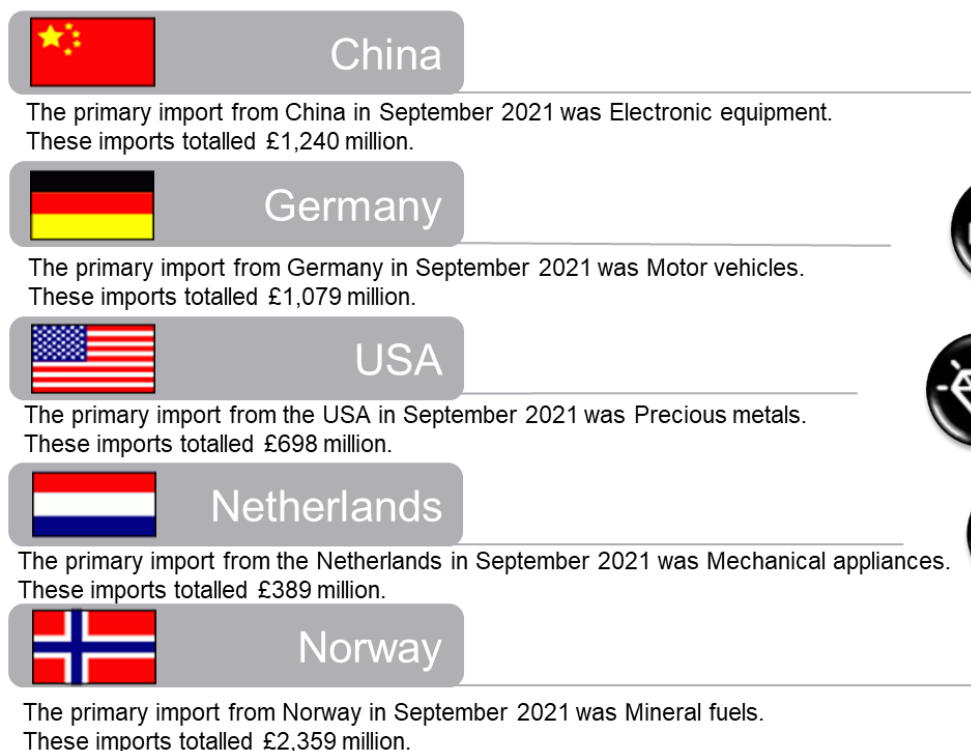
↑ Imports of Electronic equipment from China up 49% on last month

↓ Imports of Precious metals from Hong Kong down 99% on September 2020

## Commodity to country:

- The decrease in imports of Precious metals on last month was driven by Switzerland, the USA, and Russia, down £323 million (78%), £312 million (34%), and £269 million (22%) respectively. The decrease on September 2020 was driven by Switzerland, Hong Kong, and Russia, down £2,433 million (96%), £2,081 million (99%), and £1,807 million (65%) respectively.
- The increase in imports of Mechanical appliances on last month was driven by China and the Netherlands, up £123 million (13%) and £122 million (46%) respectively. The increase on September 2020 was driven by China, up £218 million (26%).
- The decrease in imports of Other textile goods on September 2020 was dominated by China, down £678 million (89%).
- The increase in imports of Motor vehicles on last month was dominated by Spain, up £182 million (doubling in value).

**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 September 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 11 November 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](http://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 September 2021. At the same time revisions for all previously published non-EU and EU data for 2021 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
October 2021	10 December 2021
November 2021	14 January 2022
December 2021	11 February 2022

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.