



Bulgaria

This factsheet provides the latest statistics on trade and investment between the UK and Bulgaria.

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Total trade in goods and services (exports plus imports) between the UK and Bulgaria was **£2.9 billion** in the four quarters to the end of Q3 2024, a decrease of 6.4% or £200 million in current prices from the four quarters to the end of Q3 2023. Of this £2.9 billion:

- Total UK **exports** to Bulgaria amounted to £976 million in the four quarters to the end of Q3 2024 (a decrease of 0.2% or £2 million in current prices, compared to the four quarters to the end of Q3 2023);
- Total UK **imports** from Bulgaria amounted to £2.0 billion in the four quarters to the end of Q3 2024 (a decrease of 9.2% or £198 million in current prices, compared to the four quarters to the end of Q3 2023).

Bulgaria was the UK's 59th largest trading partner in the four quarters to the end of Q3 2024 accounting for 0.2% of total UK trade.¹

In 2023, the **outward stock of foreign direct investment (FDI)** from the UK in Bulgaria was £172 million, 25.5% or £59 million lower than in 2022. In 2023, Bulgaria accounted for less than 0.1% of the total UK outward FDI stock.

In 2023, the **inward stock of foreign direct investment (FDI)** in the UK from Bulgaria was £317 million, 11.7% or £42 million lower than in 2022. In 2023, Bulgaria accounted for less than 0.1% of the total UK inward FDI stock.²

¹Trade data sourced from the latest ONS publication of [UK total trade: all countries seasonally adjusted](#) data.

²Investment data sourced from ONS publication on [Foreign Direct Investment Involving UK Companies](#).

Contents

About these statistics	3
Summary trade and investment statistics for Bulgaria	4
Trade with Bulgaria, in current prices (ONS)	6
Trade in goods by commodity, in current prices (ONS)	8
Trade in services by service type, in current prices (ONS)	10
Trade in goods by UK countries and English regions, in current prices (HMRC)	11
Trade in services by mode of supply, in current prices (ONS)	12
UK Market Share (ONS and UNCTAD)	13
Number of VAT-registered businesses trading goods (HMRC)	14
Trade in Value Added (OECD)	15
Foreign Direct Investment with Bulgaria (ONS)	16
Economic statistics (as reported by Bulgaria)	18
Background Notes	22

About these statistics

This factsheet presents the latest statistics on trade and investment between the UK and Bulgaria. It summarises a wide range of publicly available data, from data providers such as the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC), as well as international data providers.

This factsheet is part of a wider range produced by the Department for Business and Trade which draws together many data sources into one single compendium document for each individual trade and investment partner. The full set of factsheets for different individual partners can be found on the [Trade and Investment Factsheets website](#) on GOV.UK.

Where data are available, these factsheets contain metrics on:

- [Headline trade statistics between the UK and each trading partner for the latest four quarters.](#)
- [Trade statistics by commodity and service type.](#)
- [Trade between the UK and each trading partner, broken down by UK country and English region.](#)
- [Trade in services between the UK and each trading partner, broken down by mode of supply.](#)
- [UK's market share as a total of all imports for each trading partner.](#)
- [Number of VAT-registered businesses trading goods.](#)
- [UK's Foreign Direct Investment \(FDI\) with each investment partner.](#)
- [Summary trade and investment data as reported by each trade and investment partner, as well as economic data and projections.](#)

All statistics are correct at the time of publication, with upcoming release dates available on the [Government update schedule for Official Statistics](#). The Department for Business and Trade strongly recommends users download the latest factsheet to ensure the most up-to-date statistics are used. Please do not use previous factsheets to analyse earlier time periods than those shown in the most recent factsheets, as the data will have been revised and previous factsheets will no longer be correct. For analysis of earlier time periods, please use the published source data.

For the most up to date snapshot of the UK's trade and investment position with all partners, please see the [UK trade in numbers](#) publication or the [trade and investment core statistics book](#). These statistics are based on the same data sources as this factsheet and therefore are comparable. A list of all [Official Statistics](#) publications from the Department for Business and Trade can be found online.

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Summary trade and investment statistics for Bulgaria

UK trade with Bulgaria, in current prices (based on the latest four quarters)³

Trade	Value in the four quarters to the end of Q3 2024	Change from the four quarters to the end of Q3 2023
Total trade	£2.9 billion	a decrease of 6.4% or £200 million
Ranking out of all the UK's trading partners	59th	
Total UK exports	£976 million	a decrease of 0.2% or £2 million
Ranking out of all the UK's export partners	68th	
UK exports in goods (percentage of total UK exports that were goods)	£432 million (44.3%)	an increase of 1.2% or £5 million
UK exports in services (percentage of total UK exports that were services)	£544 million (55.7%)	a decrease of 1.3% or £7 million
Total UK imports	£2.0 billion	a decrease of 9.2% or £198 million
Ranking out of all the UK's import partners	51st	
UK imports in goods (percentage of total UK imports that were goods)	£686 million (35.2%)	an increase of 2.1% or £14 million
UK imports in services (percentage of total UK imports that were services)	£1.3 billion (64.8%)	a decrease of 14.4% or £212 million

UK trade with Bulgaria, in current prices (based on the latest calendar year)⁴

Trade	Value in 2023	Change from 2022
Total trade	£3.1 billion	an increase of 5.7% or £167 million
Ranking out of all the UK's trading partners	58th	
Total UK exports	£906 million	a decrease of 4.9% or £47 million
Ranking out of all the UK's export partners	69th	
UK exports in goods (percentage of total UK exports that were goods)	£397 million (43.8%)	an increase of 2.1% or £8 million
UK exports in services (percentage of total UK exports that were services)	£509 million (56.2%)	a decrease of 9.8% or £55 million
Total UK imports	£2.2 billion	an increase of 10.9% or £214 million
Ranking out of all the UK's import partners	50th	
UK imports in goods (percentage of total UK imports that were goods)	£697 million (32.1%)	a decrease of 2.2% or £16 million
UK imports in services (percentage of total UK imports that were services)	£1.5 billion (67.9%)	an increase of 18.5% or £230 million

³Trade data sourced from Office for National Statistics data on [UK total trade \(seasonally adjusted data\)](#).

⁴Trade data sourced from Office for National Statistics data on [UK total trade \(seasonally adjusted data\)](#).

UK market share in Bulgaria⁵

UK market share for total trade	Value in 2023		Change from 2022
Total UK market share	1.9%		unchanged
UK market share for goods only	1.0%		an increase of 0.1 percentage points
UK market share for services only	7.9%		a decrease of 1.6 percentage points

UK Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) with Bulgaria⁶

UK FDI	Value in 2023		Change from 2022
Total UK outward FDI	£172 million		a decrease of 25.5% or £59 million
Total UK inward FDI	£317 million		a decrease of 11.7% or £42 million

Economic statistics and projections using gross domestic product (GDP) for Bulgaria⁷

Economic statistics	2021	2022	2023	2024
Economic growth, using GDP in real terms, compared to the previous year	2.8%	13.0%	8.6%	2.8%
GDP per capita in \$USD (in thousands)	5.2	4.2	4.4	4.3

Bulgaria was the 70th largest economy in 2023, in terms of gross domestic product (GDP).

⁵UK market share data calculated using the methodology outlined in the [market share section](#) in the factsheet, based on data from the Office for National Statistics and United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

⁶FDI data sourced from the Office for National Statistics publication [Foreign Direct Investment Involving UK Companies](#).

⁷Economic data sourced from the International Monetary Fund [World Economic Outlook](#) databases; Estimates and projections are given in italics; GDP rankings where provided are based on values in current prices (nominal terms) in \$USD, where some partner values are based on estimates which may influence the rankings when revised.

Trade with Bulgaria, in current prices (ONS)^{8 9 10}

Trade definitions

- **UK exports** - Goods and services that were produced or sourced in the UK, which were sold to Bulgaria.
- **UK imports** - Goods and services that were sold to the UK, which were produced or sourced by Bulgaria.
- **Total or 'bilateral' trade** - The value of total trade between the UK and Bulgaria (exports plus imports).
- **Trade balance** - The difference between exports and imports, calculated by UK exports minus UK imports.
- **Trade surplus** - This occurs when the value of UK exports to Bulgaria is greater than the value of UK imports from Bulgaria.
- **Trade deficit** - This occurs when the value of UK exports to Bulgaria is less than the value of UK imports from Bulgaria.

Headline trade statistics include trade in non-monetary gold (reported within the unspecified goods category), which can significantly affect trends for some partners. Please see the factsheet [quality and methodology report](#) for more information. These statistics are given on a balance of payments (change of ownership) basis.

Note: UK trade statistics experienced higher levels of volatility between 2019 and 2022, due to the pandemic, global recession, supply chain disruption, EU Exit, Russia's invasion of Ukraine, price inflation, conflict in the Middle East, and data collection changes. All figures are reported in current prices (not adjusted for inflation), unless otherwise stated. We recognise that some of the recent changes in UK trade values will be partly due to price changes.

Total trade in goods and services (exports plus imports) between the UK and Bulgaria was £2.9 billion in the four quarters to the end of Q3 2024, a decrease of 6.4% or £200 million in current prices from the four quarters to the end of Q3 2023.

In the four quarters to the end of Q3 2024, **total UK exports** to Bulgaria amounted to £976 million (a decrease of 0.2% or £2 million in current prices, compared to the four quarters to the end of Q3 2023).

Of all UK exports to Bulgaria in the four quarters to the end of Q3 2024, £432 million (44.3%) were **goods** and £544 million (55.7%) were **services**. In the four quarters to the end of Q3 2024, UK **exports of goods** to Bulgaria increased by 1.2% or £5 million in current prices, compared to the four quarters to the end of Q3 2023 while UK **exports of services** to Bulgaria decreased by 1.3% or £7 million in current prices, compared to the four quarters to the end of Q3 2023.

In the four quarters to the end of Q3 2024, **total UK imports** from Bulgaria were £2.0 billion (a decrease of 9.2% or £198 million in current prices, compared to the four quarters to the end of Q3 2023).

Of all UK imports from Bulgaria in the four quarters to the end of Q3 2024, £686 million (35.2%) were **goods** and £1.3 billion (64.8%) were **services**. In the same period, UK **imports of goods** from Bulgaria increased by 2.1% or £14 million in current prices, compared to the four quarters to the end of Q3 2023 while UK **imports of services** from Bulgaria decreased by 14.4% or £212 million in current prices, compared to the four quarters to the end of Q3 2023.

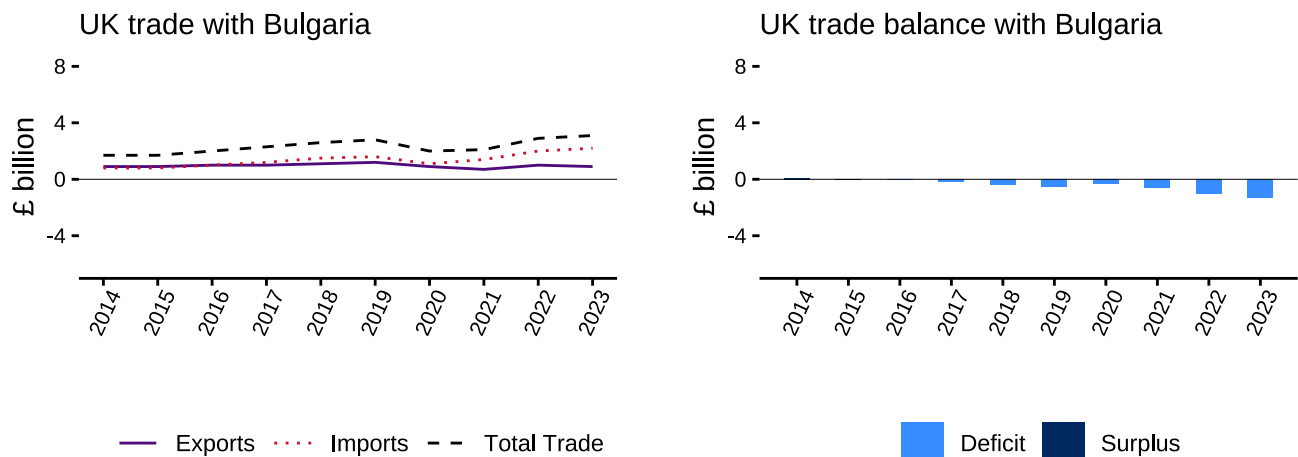
This means the UK reported a **total trade deficit** of £974 million with Bulgaria, compared to a trade deficit of £1.2 billion in the four quarters to the end of Q3 2023. In the four quarters to the end of Q3 2024, the UK had a **trade in goods deficit** of £254 million with Bulgaria, compared to a trade in goods deficit of £245 million in the four quarters to the end of Q3 2023. Meanwhile, in the four quarters to the end of Q3 2024 the UK reported a **trade in services deficit** of £720 million with Bulgaria, compared to a trade in services deficit of £925 million in the four quarters to the end of Q3 2023.

⁸Office of National Statistics (ONS) data source for total trade: [UK total trade data \(seasonally adjusted\)](#).

⁹This factsheet contains data as reported by the UK, users are advised to use UK-reported data where possible for consistency between partners. These data are subject to [asymmetries](#) e.g. the value of UK exports to Bulgaria (reported by the UK) may not match the value of Bulgaria imports from the UK (reported by Bulgaria).

¹⁰Data are in current prices, meaning no adjustment has been made to account for changes in inflation or exchange rate. The totals may not exactly match the sum of their parts due to rounding.'

The charts below present a time series for trade between the UK and Bulgaria for each year between 2014 and 2023:



Source: ONS, UK trade in goods and services, Q3 2024

The data that are presented in the charts above are given in the table below in £ billion:

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Value of total trade	1.7	1.7	2.0	2.3	2.6	2.8	2.0	2.1	2.9	3.1
Value of exports	0.9	0.9	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.2	0.9	0.7	1.0	0.9
Value of imports	0.8	0.8	1.0	1.2	1.5	1.6	1.1	1.4	2.0	2.2
Trade balance	+0.1	+0.0	+0.0	-0.2	-0.4	-0.5	-0.3	-0.6	-1.0	-1.3

In the four quarters to the end of Q3 2024, Bulgaria was the UK's:¹¹

- **59th largest trading partner** (accounting for 0.2% of total UK trade).
 - 59th largest **goods** trading partner (0.1% of UK goods trade).
 - 52nd largest **services** trading partner (0.2% of UK services trade).
- **68th largest export market** (accounting for 0.1% of total UK exports).
 - 64th largest **goods** export market (0.1% of UK goods exports).
 - 63rd largest **services** export market (0.1% of UK services exports).
- **51st largest import market** (accounting for 0.2% of total UK imports).
 - 57th largest **goods** import market (0.1% of UK goods imports).
 - 39th largest **services** import market (0.4% of UK services imports).

More timely data, for trade in goods only¹², show that UK exports of goods to Bulgaria increased by 10.1% the 12 months to December 2024 in current prices, compared to the same period the previous year. UK imports of goods from Bulgaria decreased by 4.2%, in current prices, over the same period.

¹¹Rankings are based on the ONS dataset which contains data for all individual partners: [UK total trade data \(seasonally adjusted\)](#).

¹²ONS data source for trade in the latest 12 months up to December 2024: [UK Trade data \(seasonally adjusted\)](#). More timely data for trade in goods reports the latest 12 month period, which includes data during 2021 and 2022. Due to a change in data collection methodology for Great Britain imports from the EU, data collected in 2022 are not fully comparable with data collected in 2021. More information on this methodology change can be found in an [article by the ONS](#).

Trade in goods by commodity, in current prices (ONS)^{13 14}

Please note, these data are presented on a non-seasonally adjusted basis and are not directly comparable to seasonally adjusted data, including the headline trade statistics presented before.

The **top 5 goods exported from the UK to Bulgaria** in the four quarters to the end of Q3 2024 were as follows:

Commodity	Exports in the four quarters to the end of Q3 2024	Percentage of total goods exports	Change from the four quarters to the end of Q3 2023
72K - Specialised machinery (capital)	£49.0 million	11.1%	a decrease of 5.1%
78M - Cars	£44.0 million	10.0%	an increase of 59.3%
1 - Beverages & tobacco	£42.8 million	9.7%	an increase of 4.3%
792 - Aircraft	£38.6 million	8.8%	-
74K - General industrial machinery (capital)	£28.7 million	6.5%	an increase of 33.2%

The **top 5 goods imported to the UK from Bulgaria** in the four quarters to the end of Q3 2024 were as follows:

Commodity	Imports in the four quarters to the end of Q3 2024	Percentage of total goods imports	Change from the four quarters to the end of Q3 2023
1 - Beverages & tobacco	£55.7 million	8.1%	an increase of 27.7%
54 - Medicinal & pharmaceutical products	£52.8 million	7.7%	an increase of 62.9%
22 - Oil-seeds & oleaginous fruits	£45.6 million	6.6%	an increase of 13.7%
84 - Clothing	£42.8 million	6.2%	a decrease of 1.6%
04 - Cereals	£35.4 million	5.2%	an increase of 24.6%

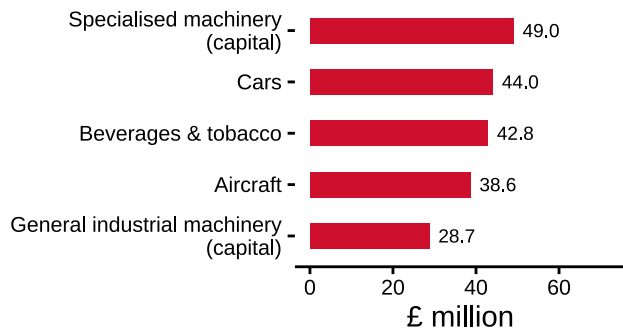
Note: Percentage changes between the current and previous period that exceed 100% have been omitted. This is to avoid presenting small value changes from a low base as fast growing.

¹³Data on trade in goods by commodity are sourced from data by the ONS: [UK trade release \(non-seasonally adjusted\)](#). These statistics for [exports](#) and [imports](#) present the latest data from the December 2024 ONS publication which are given on a monthly basis.

¹⁴The commodities are categorised based on [SITC](#) codes using a mixture of level 2 and level 3 codes.

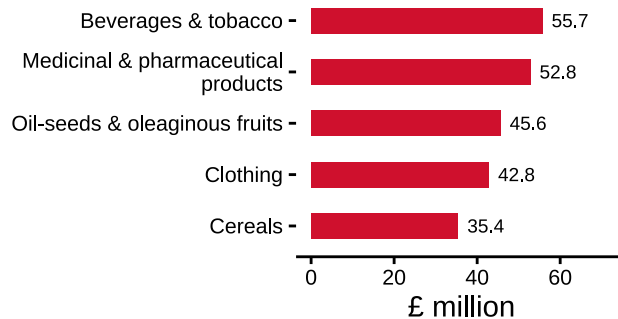
The chart below shows the top 5 products exported from the UK to Bulgaria and the top 5 products imported to the UK from Bulgaria, by value, in the four quarters to the end of Q3 2024. All data shown in the chart are provided in the text above.

The top 5 UK goods exports, in the four quarters to the end of Q3 2024, to Bulgaria



Source: ONS, December 2024

The top 5 UK goods imports, in the four quarters to the end of Q3 2024, from Bulgaria



Source: ONS, December 2024

Trade in services by service type, in current prices (ONS)^{15 16 17 18}

Please note, these data are presented on a non-seasonally adjusted basis and are not directly comparable to seasonally adjusted data, including the headline trade statistics presented before.

The **top 5 service types exported from the UK to Bulgaria** in the four quarters to the end of Q3 2024 were as follows:

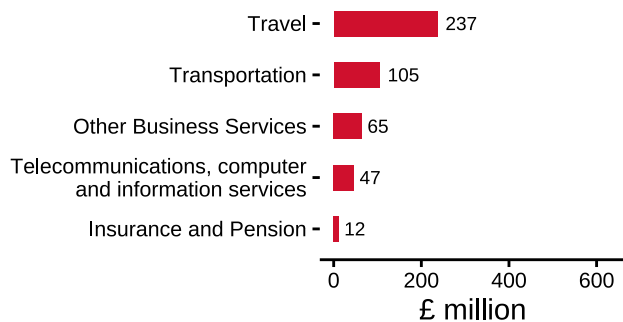
Service type	Exports in the four quarters to the end of Q3 2024	Percentage of total services exports	Change from the four quarters to the end of Q3 2023
Travel	£237 million	43.4%	a decrease of 4.8%
Transportation	£105 million	19.2%	a decrease of 2.8%
Other Business Services	£65 million	11.9%	an increase of 22.6%
Telecommunications, computer and information services	£47 million	8.6%	an increase of 6.8%
Insurance and Pension	£12 million	2.2%	Unavailable due to suppressed data

The **top 5 service types imported to the UK from Bulgaria** in the four quarters to the end of Q3 2024 were as follows:

Service type	Imports in the four quarters to the end of Q3 2024	Percentage of total services imports	Change from the four quarters to the end of Q3 2023
Travel	£488 million	39.1%	an increase of 10.4%
Other Business Services	£318 million	25.5%	a decrease of 10.7%
Transportation	£263 million	21.1%	a decrease of 17.6%
Telecommunications, computer and information services	£74 million	5.9%	Unavailable due to suppressed data
Financial	£42 million	3.4%	Unavailable due to suppressed data

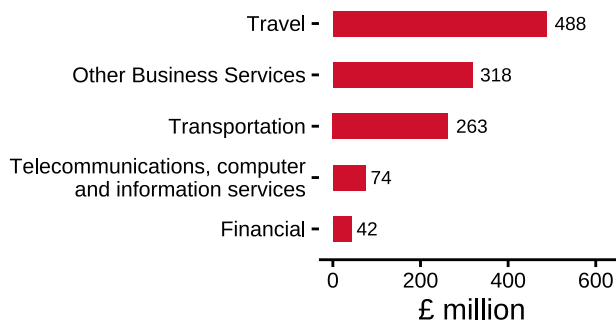
The chart below shows the top 5 service types exported from the UK to Bulgaria and the top 5 service types imported to the UK from Bulgaria, by value, in the four quarters to the end of Q3 2024. All data shown in the chart are provided in the text above.

The top 5 UK services exports, in the four quarters to the end of Q3 2024, to Bulgaria



Source: ONS, Q3 2024

The top 5 UK services imports, in the four quarters to the end of Q3 2024, from Bulgaria



Source: ONS, Q3 2024

¹⁵Trade in services by service type is sourced from data by the ONS: [UK trade in services by partner country \(non-seasonally adjusted\)](#).

¹⁶Data are classified on the [EBOPS 2010](#) basis. 'Other business services' include: Research and development, professional and management consulting services, technical services and trade related services. A full description of all service types can be found on the [UN Statistics Division website](#).

¹⁷Service type data may be unavailable for some quarters, due to the suppression of figures for the confidentiality of individual traders.

¹⁸Where data suppressions prevent a comparison between the current and previous four quarters, the above tables will state "Unavailable due to suppressed data" in the comparison column.

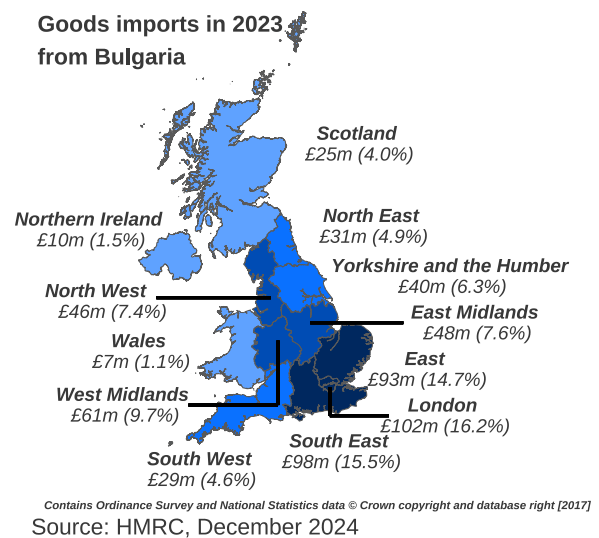
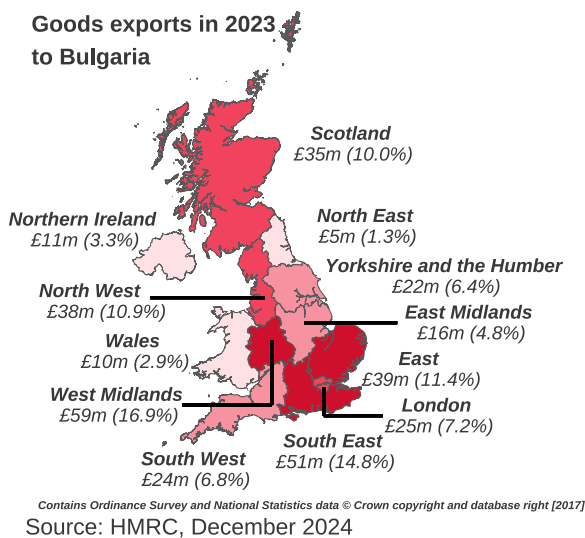
Trade in goods by UK countries and English regions, in current prices (HMRC)¹⁹

20

Regional trade definitions

- **UK regions** - The UK is categorised into 12 regions based on the International Territorial level 1 (ITL1). This level includes 9 regions in England, as well as Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.
- **Regional trade data** - The data are compiled by merging HM Revenues & Customs (HMRC) trade data with employment data from the Interdepartmental Business Register (IDBR) so a business' trade can be allocated to a UK region based on the proportion of its employees employed in that region. Where a trader is not matched with the IDBR, its trade is matched with ONS postcode data to obtain the UK region in which the Head Office of the VAT-registered business is based.

The maps below show the value of UK goods exports and imports between each UK region and Bulgaria in 2023. The maps are shaded with the 3 UK regions with the highest amount of trade as the darkest colour, and the 3 UK regions with the lowest amount of trade as the lightest colour.



The data that are presented in the maps above for 2023 in £ million are also given in the table below:

UK country or English region	North East	North West	Yorkshire and the Humber	East Midlands	West Midlands	East	London	South East	South West	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
	Value of goods exports to Bulgaria	5	38	22	16	59	39	25	51	24	10	35
Percentage of total goods exports to Bulgaria	1.3%	10.9%	6.4%	4.8%	16.9%	11.4%	7.2%	14.8%	6.8%	2.9%	10.0%	3.3%
Value of goods imports from Bulgaria	31	46	40	48	61	93	102	98	29	7	25	10
Percentage of total goods imports from Bulgaria	4.9%	7.4%	6.3%	7.6%	9.7%	14.7%	16.2%	15.5%	4.6%	1.1%	4.0%	1.5%

Note that these figures from HMRC are reported on a physical movement basis and are **not directly comparable** to trade data from ONS which are reported on a change of ownership basis. **Percentages will not total 100%** as data not allocated to a single UK country or English region are not presented.

¹⁹ HMRC data source for regional UK trade data: [HMRC Regional Trade Statistics](#) (data extracted from the spreadsheet download using the HMRC interactive tables).

²⁰ Totals presented here will differ from overall HMRC trade figures due to the exclusion of trade in non-monetary gold and non-response estimates and the exclusion of data not allocated to a UK country or region. Figures for 2023 are provisional and subject to change.

Trade in services by mode of supply, in current prices (ONS)^{21 22}

Trade in Services by Mode of Supply definitions

- **Modes of Supply** define the way services trade is conducted. The World Trade Organisation's [General Agreement on Services](#) categorises methods for trade in services into four different modes of supply, which depend upon on the territorial presence of the supplier and the consumer at the time of transaction.
- **Mode 1** - Remote trade (a supplier in one country sells a service to a customer in another, without the movement of people).
- **Mode 2** - Consumption abroad (the person receiving the service travels to the supplier's country).
- **Mode 3** - Commercial presence (e.g. a company subsidiary) - this mode is not counted as part of UK services trade on a balance of payments basis and is not reported in this release. This means that total figures are only the total of Modes 1, 2 and 4.
- **Mode 4** - Presence of natural persons (a supplier sends its personnel to the customer's country to provide service).

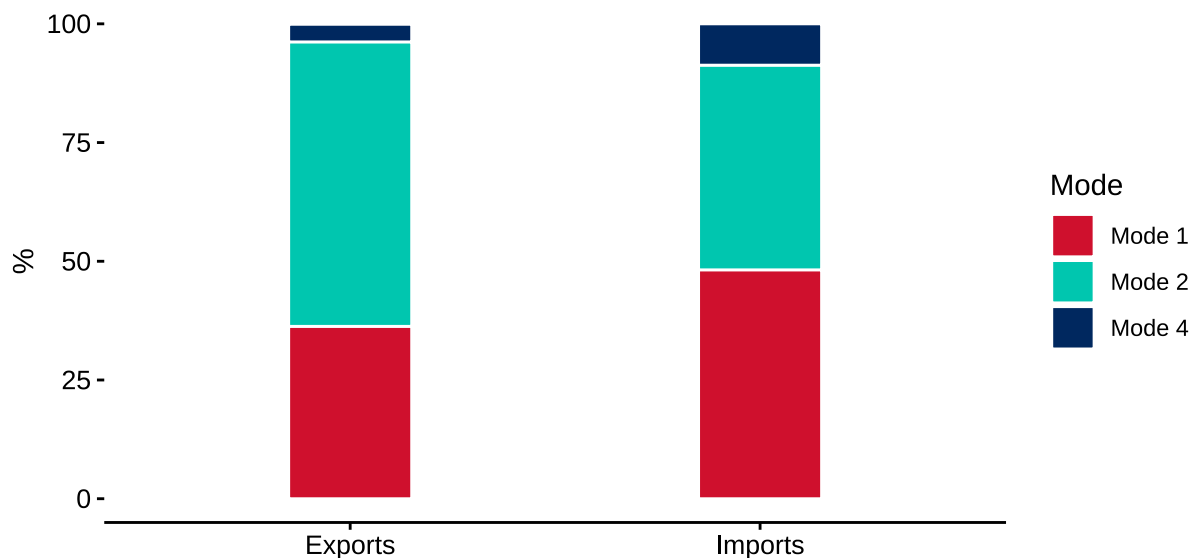
UK services exports to Bulgaria by mode of supply in 2022:

- £205 million of services exports to Bulgaria were delivered by Mode 1 (36.3%).
- £338 million of services exports were delivered by Mode 2 (59.9%).
- £21 million of services exports were delivered by Mode 4 (3.7%).

UK services imports from Bulgaria by mode of supply in 2022:

- £599 million of services imports from Bulgaria were delivered by Mode 1 (48.2%).
- £535 million of services imports were delivered by Mode 2 (43.1%).
- £108 million of services imports were delivered by Mode 4 (8.7%).

Proportion of total trade flows of services with Bulgaria by Modes 1, 2, & 4 in 2022 (%)



Source: ONS, 2022

²¹ONS data source for UK Trade in Services by Mode of Supply: [ONS Imports and exports of services by country, by modes of supply, UK](#)

²²Data included in this ONS release are experimental estimates.

UK Market Share (ONS and UNCTAD)^{23 24}

Market Share definitions

- **UK market share** – Imports from the UK as a percentage of all the goods and services imported by Bulgaria. Market share is provided for total imports from the UK, as well as for goods and services separately.
- **Market share methodology** – These UK market share statistics are derived by the Department for Business and Trade, using publicly available data from the Office of National Statistics (ONS) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). These new statistics allows users to estimate the importance of UK trade on imports to each trading partner. Market share is calculated as the value of imports from the UK using data from [ONS](#), divided by the value of total imports using data from [UNCTAD](#). Data from UNCTAD are converted from US dollars into pounds sterling by using the annual average spot exchange rate ²⁵.

The UK's market share for Bulgaria in 2023 was as follows:

- **The total UK market share in Bulgaria was 1.9% in 2023 for goods and services.** This is unchanged from 2022.
- The UK market share in Bulgaria was 1.0% in 2023 for **goods only**. This is an increase of 0.1 percentage points from 2022.
- The UK market share in Bulgaria was 7.9% in 2023 for **services only**. This is a decrease of 1.6 percentage points from 2022.

The table below presents the UK's market share for Bulgaria between 2014 and 2023. Values presented in italics are based on UNCTAD estimates of imports.

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total goods and services	3.9%	4.1%	4.2%	3.6%	3.5%	3.6%	2.9%	2.0%	1.9%	1.9%
Goods only	2.4%	1.9%	2.5%	1.9%	1.7%	1.4%	1.5%	0.9%	0.9%	1.0%
Services only	12.0%	16.7%	13.0%	12.5%	14.0%	16.6%	12.5%	10.5%	9.5%	7.9%

²³ONS data source for market share: [UK total trade data \(seasonally adjusted\)](#).

²⁴UNCTAD data source for market share: [Goods and Services \(BPM6\): Exports and imports of goods and services, annual](#). Some UNCTAD data may be based on estimates.

²⁵Annual average spot exchange rates for \$USD to £GBP are sourced from the [Bank of England](#)

Number of VAT-registered businesses trading goods (HMRC)^{26 27 28}

Business counts definition (Regional Trade in Goods Statistics)

- Business counts report UK VAT-registered business exporting and importing goods. Data is collected primarily from customs declarations (using the Intrastat survey and VAT returns for Northern Ireland businesses trading with the EU).
- Counts exclude businesses trading below the statistical value thresholds for customs declarations and exclude trade in non-monetary gold.

Businesses trading with Bulgaria in 2023:

- In 2023, around 4,000 UK VAT-registered businesses exported goods to Bulgaria.
- In 2023, around 2,800 UK VAT-registered businesses imported goods from Bulgaria.

Businesses trading with the world in 2023:

- In 2023, around 125,600 UK VAT-registered businesses exported goods to the world.
- In 2023, around 251,200 UK VAT-registered businesses imported goods from the world.

²⁶HMRC data source for Regional Trade Statistics business counts data: [UK trade in goods statistics](#).

²⁷Data for UK businesses engaged in trade of services with Bulgaria are not available. A single business may trade with multiple trading partners abroad, so care should be taken when adding figures for multiple trading partners.

²⁸HMRC does not receive partner country information for customs declarations with commodity line values that fall under the statistical value threshold of £873 (in value) and 1,000kg (in net mass). Therefore, these counts of exporting/importing businesses only capture those businesses with exports/imports (respectively) above the statistical value threshold. The number of businesses has been rounded to the nearest 100.

Trade in Value Added (OECD)^{29 30}

Trade in Value Added definitions

- **Trade in Value Added (TiVA)** - TiVA is a statistical approach to examine supply chains, which is not possible with conventional ('gross') trade statistics. This is because TiVA treats international trade flows as flows of value added rather than gross flows of final goods and services.
- **Domestic and foreign value added** - In TiVA, gross exports are decomposed into domestic and foreign value added. Domestic value added measures the value added generated by the domestic economy in the production of its exports (e.g. the value added by UK car manufacturers and their UK supply chains in car exports). Foreign value added measures the value added contribution that foreign suppliers make to these exports (e.g. the import of foreign car parts).
- **TiVA statistics** - Although TiVA offers advantages over traditional ways of measuring trade, these statistics are not fully developed. These results are estimates which should be considered complementary to conventional trade statistics and not be over-interpreted. In addition, the geographical detail is limited for developing countries. More information on TiVA can be found in a recent [research report](#) by the Department for Business and Trade and Cambridge Econometrics.
- **UK forward linkages for exports** - Measures the reliance of foreign exporters on UK value added (inputs).
- **UK backward linkages for exports** - Measures the reliance of UK exporters on foreign value added (inputs).
- **Employment supported by exports** - This provides an estimate of the number of employees in exporting industries, and their domestic supply chains that are supported by exporting activity.

UK forward linkages for exports:

- **In 2020, 0.6% of the total value added in gross exports from Bulgaria originated in the UK.**
- In 2020, 32.0% of the value added content in gross exports from Bulgaria reflected foreign imports from abroad. The largest sources of foreign value added for gross exports from Bulgaria were Russia (8.1%), Germany (2.4%), and Turkey (2.0%).

UK backward linkages for exports:

- **In 2020, less than 0.1% of the total value added in gross exports from the UK originated in Bulgaria.**
- In 2020, 14.3% of the value added content in gross exports from the UK reflected foreign imports from abroad. The largest sources of foreign value added for gross exports from the UK were United States (2.4%), Germany (1.5%), and China (1.2%).

Employment supported by exports:³¹

- Exporting activity in Bulgaria supported 1.5 million persons in 2020 (43.5% of total Bulgaria employment). Exports to the UK supported around 44,100 jobs in Bulgaria in 2020.
- Exporting activity in the UK supported 6.7 million persons in 2020 (20.6% of total UK employment). Exports to Bulgaria supported around 6,100 jobs in the UK in 2020.

²⁹The estimates in this factsheet are based on Trade in Value Added statistics published by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD): a) [Trade in Value Added database \(origin of value added in gross exports\), June 2024](#); and b) [Trade in employment \(TIM\) database, February 2024](#), indicators EXGR_DEM.

³⁰The data shown in this factsheet is from 2020.

³¹These estimates measure employees directly and indirectly supported by exports i.e. workers employed in exporting businesses and in other domestic businesses supplying inputs to the exporting businesses. The estimates should be interpreted as employment *supported* by exports, rather than employment *created* by exports, as the jobs may have previously existed to serve the domestic market. Employees may also be supported by exports from a multiple number of trading partners. As with the core TiVA data, these estimates are based on a number of assumptions and modelling, so should be interpreted with caution.

Foreign Direct Investment with Bulgaria (ONS)^{32 33 34}

Foreign direct investment definitions

- **Foreign direct investment (FDI)** - Investment made by a firm or individual in one economy ('direct investor') to acquire a 'lasting interest' in an enterprise operating in another economy. The lasting interest is deemed to exist if the direct investor acquires at least 10% of equity, or equivalently 10% of the voting rights, of the company.
- **FDI stock** - The accumulated value of all previous investments at the end of a reference period. Figures are net, that is the value of investment minus disinvestment. **UK outward FDI stock** provides the total value of FDI by UK investors in economies abroad (investment of a UK parent company in Bulgaria), while **UK inward FDI stock** provides the total value of FDI by non-UK investors in the UK (investment of a Bulgaria parent company in the UK).
- **Data disclosure** - It can happen that FDI is coming from only a few investors. In that case, figures are suppressed by the ONS to avoid disclosure of information relating to individual enterprises.

Note: The FDI data for 2020 have been affected by changes in sampling methodology. Improvements have been made to the population which has been sampled and the way that businesses are sampled from the population, capturing a wider range of businesses. This means data from 2020 and onward are more representative of UK FDI with overseas partners and are comparable.

More information about the methodology changes can be found on the [ONS website](#).

UK outward FDI stock:

- In 2023, the **stock of FDI from the UK in Bulgaria** was £172 million, 25.5% or £59 million lower than in 2022. In 2023, Bulgaria accounted for less than 0.1% of the total UK outward FDI stock.
- In 2023, the total UK FDI abroad was £1.9 trillion. In 2023, the **top destination for UK FDI** was United States, accounting for 26.7% of the total UK outward FDI stock, followed by Netherlands (14.8%) and Luxembourg (7.6%).

UK inward FDI stock:

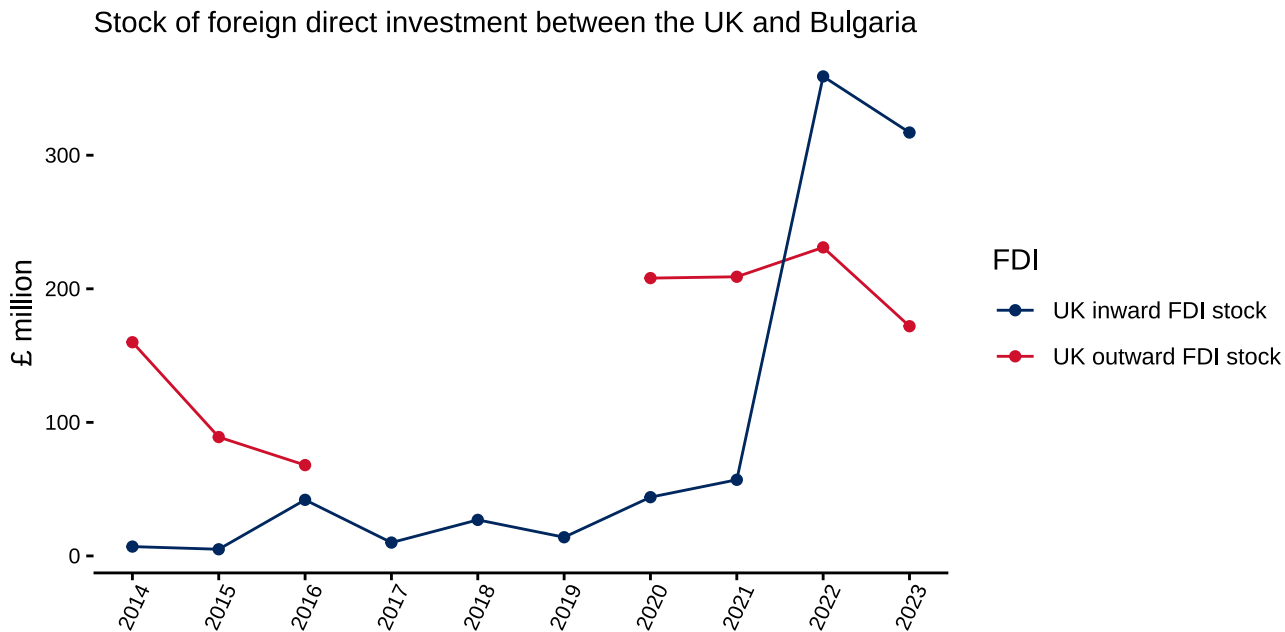
- In 2023, the **stock of FDI from Bulgaria in the UK** was £317 million, 11.7% or £42 million lower than in 2022. In 2023, Bulgaria accounted for less than 0.1% of the total UK inward FDI stock.
- In 2023, the total FDI in the UK in was £2.1 trillion. In 2023, the **top investor in the UK** was United States, accounting for 34.1% of the total UK inward FDI stock, followed by Luxembourg (9.1%) and Jersey (7.9%).

³² ONS data source for FDI statistics: [Foreign Direct Investment involving UK companies](#).

³³ Data are presented on a directional basis which means they are not directly comparable to the asset/liability report prepared by ONS as part of the Balance of Payments statistical release. Figures are on net basis (investments minus disinvestments) and are given in nominal terms. Negative FDI values occur when disinvestments are greater than investments. Data are on an immediate destination/source basis and not an ultimate destination/source, which is likely to overstate financial centres such as the Netherlands and Luxembourg.

³⁴ This factsheet contains data as reported by the UK and are subject to asymmetries e.g. UK outward FDI to Bulgaria (reported by the UK) may not match Bulgaria inward FDI from the UK (reported by Bulgaria). For consistency when comparing between partners, users are advised to use UK-reported data as far as possible.

The chart below shows FDI between the UK and Bulgaria between 2014 and 2023:



Source: ONS, 2023 FDI main release. Data are on a directional basis, data suppression can cause breaks in the trends.

The data that are presented in the charts above are given in the table below in £ million:

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
UK outward FDI stock	160.0	89.0	68.0	-	-	-	208.0	209.0	231.0	172.0
UK inward FDI stock	7.0	5.0	42.0	10.0	27.0	14.0	44.0	57.0	359.0	317.0

Economic statistics (as reported by Bulgaria)

Trade and investment data for Bulgaria (UNCTAD)^{35 36 37}

The following data are reported by Bulgaria and are for reference only. Whenever possible use data from UK sources for trade and investment. All data below are presented in \$USD in billions.

Year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Nominal exports	34.5	39.7	43.6	44.1	39.5	51.6	62.5	62.1
Nominal imports	31.8	37.2	41.9	41.8	38.1	50.1	62.3	58.8
Nominal trade balance	2.7	2.6	1.7	2.2	1.4	1.5	0.2	3.3
Inward FDI stock	42.9	50.9	50.4	51.7	59.7	57.9	57.5	61.9
Outward FDI stock	2.2	2.7	2.6	2.8	3.6	3.5	3.6	4.3

³⁵United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) data sources for trade: [Goods and Services \(BPM6\): Exports and imports of goods and services, annual](#); and for investment: [Foreign direct investment: Inward and outward flows and stock, annual](#).

³⁶Estimates are given in italics. Historic data pre-2016 can be found on the [UNCTAD website](#).

³⁷All trade data are on a Balance of Payments basis. The FDI data are on a directional and net (investment minus disinvestment) basis. These figures are given in current prices and are rounded to the nearest \$0.1 billion, with missing data represented by dashes.

Economic data and projections for Bulgaria (IMF)^{38 39}

The following table presents economic statistics for Bulgaria. Projections include assumptions of the effects of COVID-19 and may be subject to change in the future. Estimated data, as well as projections up to 2029, are presented in italics and are subject to revision.

Year	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Change in exports (%)	7.9	8.0	0.9	3.0	5.4	3.5	3.0	3.0	3.0
Change in imports (%)	9.1	13.3	-5.1	3.5	8.2	2.3	4.6	1.2	3.2
Current account balance (% of GDP)	-1.7	-1.4	-0.3	-1.0	-1.7	-1.0	-1.2	-0.2	-0.3
Change in real GDP (%)	7.7	3.9	1.8	2.3	2.5	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.6
GDP per capita (1,000 \$USD)	12.3	14.0	15.8	17.1	18.5	19.6	20.8	21.9	23.2
GDP PPP (Int'l \$billion)	202.3	225.2	237.6	248.9	259.8	272.0	284.3	297.5	310.8
Inflation, year average (CPI %)	2.8	13.0	8.6	2.8	2.6	1.9	2.0	2.0	2.0
Unemployment rate (% of total labour force)	5.2	4.2	4.4	4.3	4.2	4.1	4.0	4.0	4.0
Population (million)	6.8	6.4	6.4	6.4	6.3	6.2	6.2	6.1	6.1
Total investment (% of GDP)	21.1	23.4	18.9	16.6	17.6	16.4	17.2	15.9	15.8
Gross national savings (% of GDP)	19.4	22.0	18.6	15.7	16.0	15.4	16.0	15.7	15.5
General government net lending/borrowing (% of GDP)	-2.8	-0.8	-3.1	-2.9	-3.0	-3.1	-3.2	-3.2	-3.2
General government gross debt (% of GDP)	22.5	21.5	22.0	23.7	25.4	27.1	29.0	30.9	32.6

Bulgaria was the 70th largest economy in 2023, in terms of gross domestic product (GDP). The UK was the 6th largest economy in 2023.⁴⁰

³⁸International Monetary Fund (IMF) provide economic commentary in their [World Economic Outlook reports](#). The latest data presented here can be found in the [World Economic Database, October 2024](#).

³⁹Projections and estimates are given in italics. More information for each metric and each partner, as well as historic data pre-2021, can be found on the [IMF website](#).

⁴⁰GDP ranking based on values in current prices (nominal terms) in \$USD. Some GDP values for partners are based on estimates which may influence the rankings when revised.

Top goods traded with the world by Bulgaria, in current prices (UN Comtrade)^{41 42}

Data presented here show the top commodities traded with the world, not solely the UK, by Bulgaria. These data are based on a different commodity classification system to the ONS commodity data used earlier in this factsheet, and the two sections should therefore not be directly compared.

Top goods exported to the world by Bulgaria in 2023:

Rank	HS Commodity	\$USD billion	% of total goods exported
1	85 - Electrical machinery and equipment	5.4	11.2%
2	84 - Machinery and mechanical appliances	3.9	8.1%
3	27 - Mineral fuels or oils, products of their distillation	3.8	7.9%
4	74 - Copper and articles thereof	3.7	7.7%
5	10 - Cereals	2.3	4.8%
6	99 - Commodities not specified according to kind	2.2	4.6%
7	87 - Vehicles other than railway or tramway stock	1.7	3.4%
8	39 - Plastics and articles thereof	1.4	3.0%
9	30 - Pharmaceutical products	1.3	2.8%
10	26 - Ores, slag and ash	1.2	2.5%
	All goods exported	47.9	100.0%

Top goods imported from the world by Bulgaria in 2023:

Rank	HS Commodity	\$USD billion	% of total goods imported
1	85 - Electrical machinery and equipment	6.5	12.1%
2	27 - Mineral fuels or oils, products of their distillation	6.0	11.2%
3	84 - Machinery and mechanical appliances	5.3	9.9%
4	87 - Vehicles other than railway or tramway stock	4.1	7.7%
5	39 - Plastics and articles thereof	2.3	4.2%
6	26 - Ores, slag and ash	2.2	4.2%
7	30 - Pharmaceutical products	2.2	4.2%
8	72 - Iron and steel	1.8	3.4%
9	74 - Copper and articles thereof	1.3	2.4%
10	73 - Articles of iron or steel	1.1	2.0%
	All goods imported	53.5	100.0%

⁴¹United Nations (UN) Comtrade data are sourced from the online [UN Comtrade Database](#). The data reported above are for 2023, but as the data upload to UN Comtrade is continuous, more timely data may be available from the source.

⁴²Data are classified using the [Harmonized System](#) and are given on a physical movement basis, with UK data comparable to HMRC data sources rather than the headline trade figures presented here from ONS.

Top services traded with the world by Bulgaria, in current prices (ITC Trade Map)^{43 44 45}

Data presented here shows the top service types traded to the world, not solely the UK, by Bulgaria.

Top services exported to the world by Bulgaria in 2022:

Rank	EBOPS Service Type	\$USD billion	% of total services exported
1	Travel	3.4	27.3%
2	Telecommunications, computer, and information services	3.0	24.2%
3	Transport	2.5	19.9%
4	Other business services	2.1	16.9%
5	Insurance and pension services	0.5	4.3%
	All services exported	12.5	100.0%

Top services imported from the world by Bulgaria in 2022:

Rank	EBOPS Service Type	\$USD billion	% of total services imported
1	Transport	2.3	32.8%
2	Travel	1.6	22.5%
3	Other business services	1.3	18.6%
4	Telecommunications, computer, and information services	0.7	9.9%
5	Insurance and pension services	0.5	6.6%
	All services imported	6.9	100.0%

⁴³International Trade Centre (ITC) Trade Map data are sourced from the online [ITC Trade Map tool](#). The data above are for 2022, but as the data upload to ITC is continuous, more timely data may be available from the source.

⁴⁴Data are classified on the [EBOPS 2010](#) basis. 'Other business services' include: Research and development, professional and management consulting services, technical services and trade related services. A full description of all service types can be found on the [UN Statistics Division website](#).

⁴⁵Estimates are shown in italics, where for some partners only estimates are available - These data have been included for information and should be treated with caution.

Background Notes

This document is one of a wider set of factsheets between the UK and its individual trade and investment partners which can be found on the [Trade and Investment Factsheets website](#). All of these factsheets are published as [Official Statistics](#) as defined by the [UK Statistics Authority](#).

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Future updates of these factsheets can be found on the [Government update schedule for Official Statistics](#). These scheduled updates are in line with significant updates from UK data providers when they release new data. Unscheduled releases of the factsheets may also be necessary to accommodate data updates where little or no advanced notice are given, such as in the case of international data updates. Please see the data update schedule and revisions policy in the [quality and methodology report](#) for more information. Please note that there may be occasions where more recent data than is provided here can be found directly from the data providers.

The Department for Business and Trade welcome any feedback or comments on these factsheets, please send these to statistics@businessandtrade.gov.uk.



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