Sierra Leone

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

Date of release: 19 September 2025; Date of next planned release: 31 October 2025

Total trade in goods and services (exports plus imports) between the UK and Sierra Leone[1] was **£97 million** in the four quarters to the end of Q1 2025, an increase of 9.0% or £8 million in current prices from the four quarters to the end of Q1 2024. Of this £97 million:

- Total UK **exports** to Sierra Leone amounted to £81 million in the four quarters to the end of Q1 2025 (an increase of 24.6% or £16 million in current prices, compared to the four quarters to the end of Q1 2024);
- Total UK **imports** from Sierra Leone amounted to £16 million in the four quarters to the end of Q1 2025 (a decrease of 33.3% or £8 million in current prices, compared to the four quarters to the end of Q1 2024).

Sierra Leone was the UK's 151st largest trading partner in the four quarters to the end of Q1 2025 accounting for less than 0.1% of total UK trade.[2]

At the end of 2023, the **stock of FDI from the UK in Sierra Leone** was £68 million. A comparison with the previous year is not available due to data disclosure.

At the end of 2023, the **stock of FDI from Sierra Leone in the UK** was £2 million, 66.7% or £4 million lower than the end of 2022. At the end of 2023, Sierra Leone accounted for less than 0.1% of the total UK inward FDI stock.[3]

[1] 'the four quarters to the end of Q1 2025' refers to the 12 months to the end of March 2025
[2] Trade data sourced from the latest ONS publication of UK total trade: all countries seasonally adjusted data.
[3] Investment data sourced from the ONS ad-hoc data release if not provided in the latest ONS main FDI release.

Contents

About these statistics 3

Summary trade and investment statistics for Sierra Leone 4

Trade with Sierra Leone, 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 Sierra Leone (ONS) 16

Economic statistics (as reported by Sierra Leone) 17

Background Notes 19

About these statistics

This factsheet presents the latest statistics on trade and investment between the UK and Sierra Leone. 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 in goods 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.

International statistics for goods traded with the world are published in the UN Comtrade database and services by ITC Trademap.

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.

Contact Details

statistics@businessandtrade.gov.uk

Summary trade and investment statistics for Sierra Leone

UK trade with Sierra Leone, in current prices (based on the latest four quarters)[4]

Trade	Value in the four quarters to the end of Q1 2025	Change from the four quarters to the end of Q1 2024
Total trade	£97 million	an increase of 9.0% or £8 million
Ranking out of all the UK's trading partners	151st	
Total UK exports	£81 million	an increase of 24.6% or £16 million
Ranking out of all the UK's export partners	139th	
UK exports of goods (percentage of total UK goods exports)	£41 million (50.6%)	an increase of 17.1% or £6 million
UK exports of services (percentage of total UK services exports)	£40 million (49.4%)	an increase of 33.3% or £10 million
Total UK imports	£16 million	a decrease of 33.3% or £8 million
Ranking out of all the UK's import partners	170th	
UK imports of goods (percentage of total UK goods imports)	£1 million (6.2%)	a decrease of 80.0% or £4 million
UK imports of services (percentage of total UK services imports)	£15 million (93.8%)	a decrease of 21.1% or £4 million

'the four quarters to the end of Q1 2025' refers to the 12 months to the end of March 2025

UK trade with Sierra Leone, in current prices (based on the latest calendar year)[5]

Trade	Value in 2024	Change from 2023
Total trade	£99 million	an increase of 22.2% or £18 million
Ranking out of all the UK's trading partners	148th	
Total UK exports	£79 million	an increase of 29.5% or £18 million
Ranking out of all the UK's export partners	139th	
UK exports of goods (percentage of total UK goods exports)	£39 million (49.4%)	an increase of 14.7% or £5 million
UK exports of services (percentage of total UK services exports)	£40 million (50.6%)	an increase of 48.1% or £13 million
Total UK imports	£20 million	a change of less than £1 million
Ranking out of all the UK's import partners	166th	
UK imports of goods (percentage of total UK goods imports)	£4 million (20.0%)	a decrease of 20.0% or £1 million
UK imports of services (percentage of total UK services imports)	£16 million (80.0%)	an increase of 6.7% or £1 million

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

UK market share in Sierra Leone[6]

UK market share for total trade	Value in 2024	Change from 2023
Total UK market share	4.6%	an increase of 1.2 percentage points
UK market share for goods only	2.7%	an increase of 0.5 percentage points
UK market share for services only	13.2%	an increase of 3.6 percentage points

UK Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) with Sierra Leone[7]

UK FDI stock	Value at the end of 2023	Change from the end of 2022
Total UK outward FDI stock	£68 million	Not available due to data disclosure
Total UK inward FDI stock	£2 million	a decrease of 66.7% or £4 million

Economic statistics and projections using gross domestic product (GDP) for Sierra Leone[8]

Economic statistics	2023	2024	2025	2026
Economic growth, using GDP in real terms, compared to the previous year	5.7%	3.7%	*4.7%*	*4.9%*
GDP per capita in $USD (in thousands)	0.7	0.9	*0.9*	*0.9*
GDP in current prices (billion $USD)	6.4	7.7	*8.4*	*8.7*
Global GDP Ranking	158	153	*150*	*150*

Figures for 2025 and 2026 are forecast projections.

[6] UK 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.

[7] FDI data sourced from the Office for National Statistics ad-hoc data release for FDI with all partners.

[8] Economic 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 Sierra Leone, in current prices (ONS)[9] [10] [11]

Trade definitions

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

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 Sierra Leone was £97 million in the four quarters to the end of Q1 2025, an increase of 9.0% or £8 million in current prices from the four quarters to the end of Q1 2024.

In the four quarters to the end of Q1 2025, **total UK exports** to Sierra Leone amounted to £81 million (an increase of 24.6% or £16 million in current prices, compared to the four quarters to the end of Q1 2024).

Of all UK exports to Sierra Leone in the four quarters to the end of Q1 2025, £41 million (50.6%) were **goods** and £40 million (49.4%) were **services**. In the four quarters to the end of Q1 2025, UK **exports of goods** to Sierra Leone increased by 17.1% or £6 million in current prices, compared to the four quarters to the end of Q1 2024 while UK **exports of services** to Sierra Leone increased by 33.3% or £10 million in current prices, compared to the four quarters to the end of Q1 2024.

In the four quarters to the end of Q1 2025, **total UK imports** from Sierra Leone were £16 million (a decrease of 33.3% or £8 million in current prices, compared to the four quarters to the end of Q1 2024).

Of all UK imports from Sierra Leone in the four quarters to the end of Q1 2025, £1 million (6.3%) were **goods** and £15 million (93.8%) were **services**. In the same period, UK **imports of goods** from Sierra Leone decreased by 80.0% or £4 million in current prices, compared to the four quarters to the end of Q1 2024 while UK **imports of services** from Sierra Leone decreased by 21.1% or £4 million in current prices, compared to the four quarters to the end of Q1 2024.

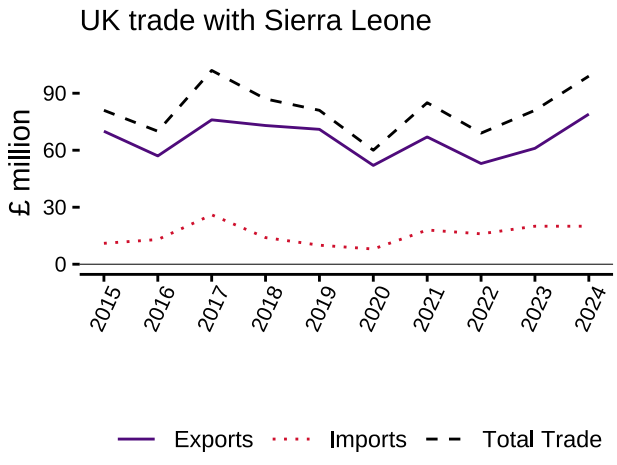
This means the UK reported a **total trade surplus** of £65 million with Sierra Leone, compared to a trade surplus of £41 million in the four quarters to the end of Q1 2024. In the four quarters to the end of Q1 2025, the UK had a **trade in goods surplus** of £40 million with Sierra Leone, compared to a trade in goods surplus of £30 million in the four quarters to the end of Q1 2024. Meanwhile, in the four quarters to the end of Q1 2025 the UK reported a **trade in services surplus** of £25 million with Sierra Leone, compared to a trade in services surplus of £11 million in the four quarters to the end of Q1 2024.

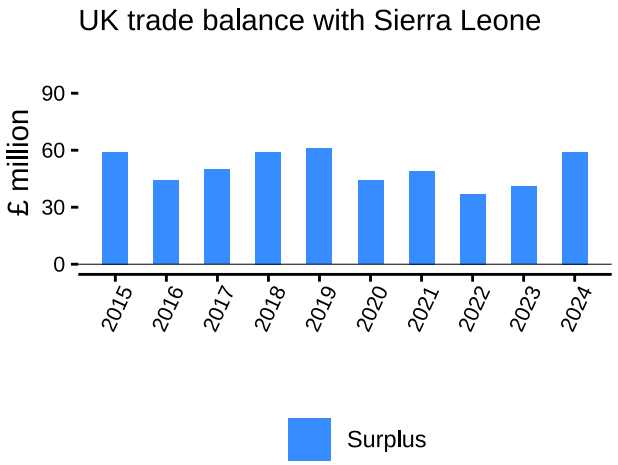
[9] Office for National Statistics (ONS) data source for total trade: UK total trade data (seasonally adjusted).

[10] This 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 Sierra Leone (reported by the UK) may not match the value of Sierra Leone imports from the UK (reported by Sierra Leone).

[11] Data 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 Sierra Leone for each year between 2015 and 2024:





Source: ONS, UK trade in goods and services, Q1 2025

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

Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Value of total trade	81	70	102	87	81	60	85	69	81	99
Value of exports	70	57	76	73	71	52	67	53	61	79
Value of imports	11	13	26	14	10	8	18	16	20	20
Trade balance	+59	+44	+50	+59	+61	+44	+49	+37	+41	+59

In the four quarters to the end of Q1 2025, Sierra Leone was the UK's:[12]

- **151st largest trading partner** (accounting for less than 0.1% of total UK trade).
  - 141st largest **goods** trading partner (less than 0.1% of UK goods trade).
  - Joint 149th largest **services** trading partner (less than 0.1% of UK services trade).
- **139th largest export market** (accounting for less than 0.1% of total UK exports).
  - 122nd largest **goods** export market (less than 0.1% of UK goods exports).
  - 144th largest **services** export market (less than 0.1% of UK services exports).
- **170th largest import market** (accounting for less than 0.1% of total UK imports).
  - Joint 159th largest **goods** import market (less than 0.1% of UK goods imports).
  - Joint 153rd largest **services** import market (less than 0.1% of UK services imports).

More timely data, for trade in goods only[13] is published by the ONS.

[12] Rankings are based on the ONS dataset which contains data for all individual partners: UK total trade data (seasonally adjusted).
[13] ONS data source for trade in the latest 12 months up to July 2025: UK Trade data (seasonally adjusted).

Trade in goods by commodity, in current prices (ONS)[14] [15]

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 Sierra Leone** in the four quarters to the end of Q1 2025 were as follows:

Commodity	Exports in the four quarters to the end of Q1 2025	Percentage of total goods exports	Change from the four quarters to the end of Q1 2024
84 - Clothing	£6.9 million	-	-
72I - Specialised machinery (intermediate)	£6.1 million	-	an increase of 38.7%
89OC - Other manufactures (consumer)	£3.4 million	-	an increase of 29.0%
54 - Medicinal & pharmaceutical products	£2.0 million	-	-
33R - Refined oil	£1.4 million	-	an increase of 73.5%

'the four quarters to the end of Q1 2025' refers to the 12 months to the end of March 2025

The **top 5 goods imported to the UK from Sierra Leone** in the four quarters to the end of Q1 2025 were as follows:

Commodity	Imports in the four quarters to the end of Q1 2025	Percentage of total goods imports	Change from the four quarters to the end of Q1 2024
05 - Vegetables & fruit	£610 thousand	-	an increase of 24.5%
72K - Specialised machinery (capital)	£520 thousand	-	-
64 - Paper & paperboard	£390 thousand	-	Nil trade in previous period
77I - Miscellaneous electrical goods (intermediate)	£300 thousand	-	a decrease of 16.7%
82I - Furniture (intermediate)	£260 thousand	-	an increase of 4.0%

'the four quarters to the end of Q1 2025' refers to the 12 months to the end of March 2025

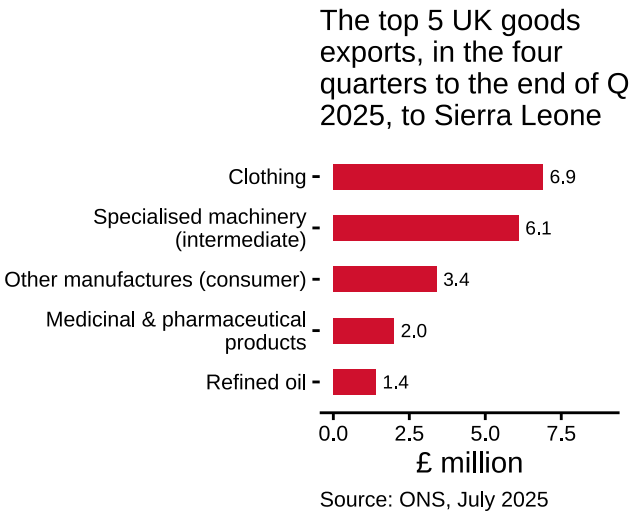
Note: *The percentage of the total UK imports and exports from Sierra Leone accounted for by the above commodities are not provided here. This is due to the value of total UK imports and exports of goods being rounded to the nearest £million, with commodity trade values being given to a greater level of accuracy. In some cases, this means the percentages above might sum to more than 100%.*

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.*

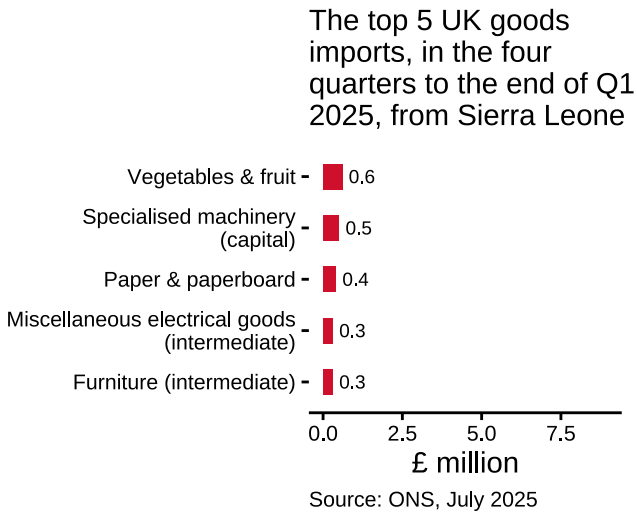
[14] Data on trade in goods by commodity are sourced from data by the ONS: UK trade release (non-seasonally adjusted). These statistics for exports and imports present the latest data from the ONS publication which are given on a monthly basis.

[15] The commodities are categorised by the ONS based on SITC codes using a mixture of level 2 and level 3 codes.

The chart below shows the top 5 goods exported from the UK to Sierra Leone and the top 5 goods imported to the UK from Sierra Leone, by value, in the four quarters to the end of Q1 2025. All data shown in the chart are provided in the text above.



Source: ONS, July 2025



Source: ONS, July 2025

Trade in services by service type, in current prices (ONS)[16]

Note: Service type data for the trade in services between the UK and Sierra Leone in the four quarters to the end of Q1 2025 are not available from UK sources.

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

Trade in goods by UK countries and English regions, in current prices (HMRC)[17]

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.

Note: Data for UK regions are not available from this source for Sierra Leone in 2024.

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

Trade in services by mode of supply, in current prices (ONS)[18]

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 Sierra Leone by mode of supply in 2022:

- Data on services exports to Sierra Leone by mode of supply are not available from this source.

UK services imports from Sierra Leone by mode of supply in 2022:

- Data on services imports from Sierra Leone by mode of supply are not available from this source.

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

UK Market Share (ONS and UNCTAD)[19] [20]

Market Share definitions

- **UK market share** – Imports from the UK as a percentage of all the goods and services imported by Sierra Leone. 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 for 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 [21].

The UK's market share for Sierra Leone in 2024 was as follows:

- **The total UK market share in Sierra Leone was 4.6% in 2024 for goods and services**. This is an increase of 1.2 percentage points from 2023.
- The UK market share in Sierra Leone was 2.7% in 2024 for **goods only**. This is an increase of 0.5 percentage points from 2023.
- The UK market share in Sierra Leone was 13.2% in 2024 for **services only**. This is an increase of 3.6 percentage points from 2023.

The table below presents the UK's market share for Sierra Leone between 2015 and 2024. Values presented in italics are based on UNCTAD estimates of imports.

Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Total goods and services	4.8%	5.4%	6.1%	6.7%	5.6%	4.9%	4.8%	3.2%	3.4%	*4.6%*
Goods only	3.7%	4.5%	3.6%	4.3%	4.0%	3.1%	2.9%	2.6%	2.2%	*2.7%*
Services only	6.4%	7.5%	13.8%	13.2%	10.1%	17.9%	16.5%	6.4%	9.6%	*13.2%*

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

[20] UNCTAD 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.

[21] Annual average spot exchange rates for $USD to £GBP are sourced from the Bank of England

Number of VAT-registered businesses trading goods (HMRC)[22] [23] [24]

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 goods with Sierra Leone in 2024:

- Data on the number of VAT-registered businesses exporting to Sierra Leone are not available from this source.
- Data on the number of VAT-registered businesses importing from Sierra Leone are not available from this source.

[22] HMRC data source for Regional Trade Statistics business counts data: UK trade in goods statistics.

[23] Data for UK businesses engaged in trade of services with Sierra Leone 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.

[24] HMRC 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)[25] [26]

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.

Note: Data for Sierra Leone on forward and backward linkages for exports in 2020 are not available from this data source.

Employment supported by exports:[27]

- Data for Sierra Leone on employment supported by exports of 2020 are not available.
- Exporting activity in the UK supported 6.7 million jobs in 2020 (20.6% of total UK employment). Data on the number of UK jobs supported by export activity to Sierra Leone in 2020 are not available.

[25] The 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.

[26] The data shown in this factsheet is from 2020.

[27] These 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 Sierra Leone (ONS)[28] [29] [30]

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 Sierra Leone), while **UK inward FDI stock** provides the total value of FDI by non-UK investors in the UK (investment of a Sierra Leone 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:

- At the end of 2023, the **stock of FDI from the UK in Sierra Leone** was £68 million. A comparison with the previous year is not available due to data disclosure.

UK inward FDI stock:

- At the end of 2023, the **stock of FDI from Sierra Leone in the UK** was £2 million, 66.7% or £4 million lower than the end of 2022. At the end of 2023, Sierra Leone accounted for less than 0.1% of the total UK inward FDI stock.

[28] Data for both inward and outward FDI between the UK and Sierra Leone are not available in the main ONS release (Foreign Direct Investment involving UK companies). Therefore, an ONS FDI ad-hoc data release is used to provide the latest FDI data for Sierra Leone where it is unavailable in the main ONS release.

[29] 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.

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

Economic statistics (as reported by Sierra Leone)

Trade and investment data for Sierra Leone (UNCTAD)[31] [32] [33]

The following data are reported by Sierra Leone 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	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Nominal exports	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.9	1.2	1.4	*1.4*
Nominal imports	1.6	1.5	1.6	1.4	1.9	2.1	2.3	*2.2*
Nominal trade balance	-0.8	-0.8	-0.9	-0.8	-1.0	-0.9	-0.9	*-0.8*
Inward FDI stock	1.5	1.7	2.1	2.2	2.4	2.7	3.0	3.2
Outward FDI stock	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

[31] United 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.

[32] Estimates are given in italics. Historic data pre-2017 can be found on the UNCTAD website.

[33] All 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 Sierra Leone (IMF)[34] [35]

The following table presents economic statistics for Sierra Leone. Figures from 2025 onwards are forecast projections.

Year	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Change in exports (%)	28.6	9.1	6.7	*13.2*	*6.5*	*4.2*	*3.0*	*2.6*	*2.5*
Change in imports (%)	-5.4	15.3	-3.6	*7.4*	*2.8*	*2.1*	*3.6*	*1.6*	*0.3*
Current account balance (% of GDP)	-6.4	-9.5	-5.5	*-4.8*	*-4.4*	*-4.1*	*-4.1*	*-4.2*	*-3.7*
Global GDP ranking (current prices)	155	158	153	*150*	*150*	*149*	*149*	*149*	*150*
GDP in current prices (billion $USD)	7.1	6.4	7.7	*8.4*	*8.7*	*9.1*	*9.6*	*10.1*	*10.6*
Change in real GDP (%)	5.3	5.7	3.7	*4.7*	*4.9*	*4.7*	*4.6*	*4.6*	*4.6*
GDP per capita (1,000 $USD)	0.8	0.7	0.9	*0.9*	*0.9*	*1.0*	*1.0*	*1.0*	*1.0*
GDP PPP (Int'l $billion)	26.0	28.5	30.3	*32.5*	*34.8*	*37.1*	*39.7*	*42.2*	*45.0*
Inflation, year average (CPI %)	27.2	47.7	28.4	*12.9*	*10.4*	*9.2*	*9.0*	*9.0*	*9.0*
Unemployment rate (% of total labour force)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Population (million)	8.6	8.8	9.0	*9.2*	*9.3*	*9.5*	*9.7*	*9.9*	*10.1*
Total investment (% of GDP)	14.9	19.7	20.5	*20.2*	*20.1*	*20.4*	*20.9*	*21.8*	*22.5*
Gross national savings (% of GDP)	12.7	10.2	15.1	*15.5*	*15.6*	*16.3*	*16.7*	*17.5*	*18.8*
General government net lending/borrowing (% of GDP)	-5.9	-5.0	-4.6	*-4.2*	*-2.0*	*-1.3*	*-1.0*	*-2.1*	*-2.3*
General government gross debt (% of GDP)	54.0	49.9	43.0	*44.3*	*44.6*	*42.4*	*39.8*	*38.6*	*37.8*

[34] International 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, April 2025.

[35] Projections and estimates are given in italics. More information for each metric and each partner, as well as historic data pre-2022, can be found on the IMF website.

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.

Our statistical practice is regulated by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR). OSR sets the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the Code of Practice for Statistics that all producers of official statistics should adhere to. You are welcome to contact us directly with any comments about how we meet these standards. Alternatively, you can contact OSR by emailing regulation@statistics.gov.uk or via the OSR website.

The publication of these factsheets as Official Statistics was agreed by the Chief Statistician at the Department for Business and Trade, who monitors these factsheets to ensure they continue to adhere to the Code of Practice for Statistics. These factsheets have not been formally assessed by the Office for Statistics Regulation and are therefore not designated as Accredited Official Statistics.

As a requisite of publishing as Official Statistics, a quality and methodology report has been produced which outlines the quality of these factsheets, as well as providing more information on the methodology of the data sources presented here. This report contains hyperlinks to information on the strengths and weaknesses for each data source. Statistics contained in the factsheets from UK data providers all come from Official Statistics publications, with some sources also being from National Statistics publications.

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.

© Crown copyright 2025

This publication is licensed under the terms of the except where otherwise stated.

Where the Department for Business and Trade have identified any third party copyright information, users will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This publication is available on the GOV.UK website.

Any media enquiries regarding this publication should be directed to the Department for Business and Trade website or by phoning 0207 215 2000.