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EU Overseas Trade Statistics December 2013

Summary

- The UK's EU exports for December 2013 total £11.6 billion. This is a decrease of £1.0 billion (7.9 per cent) compared to November 2013. However, it is an increase of £0.5 billion (4.3 per cent) compared to December 2012.
- The UK's EU imports for December 2013 total £16.7 billion. This is a decrease of £2.5 billion (12.8 per cent) compared to November 2013. However, it is an increase of £1.2 billion (7.9 per cent) compared to December 2012.
- The UK remains a net importer (imports are greater than exports). The size of the difference between imports and exports is £5.2 billion. This is a decrease of £1.5 billion (22.0 per cent) compared to November 2013.
- The first estimate of total EU exports for 2013 is £150.8 billion compared with £149.8 billion in 2012. This is an increase of 0.7 per cent.
- The first estimate of total EU imports for 2013 is £216.8 billion compared with £207.0 billion in 2012. This is an increase of 4.7 per cent.



HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) are responsible for collecting the UK's international trade in goods data, which are published as two National Statistics series - the 'Overseas Trade Statistics (OTS)' and the 'Regional Trade Statistics (RTS)'. The OTS are published monthly, providing detailed data for over 9,000 commodities and 200 partner countries. The RTS are published quarterly showing trade at summary product and country level, split by UK regions.

The OTS and RTS data series are published in HMRC's trade data website www.uktradeinfo.com. Detailed data is available within an [interactive database](#) and ['The User Story'](#) explains how users utilise it to analyse import and export markets.

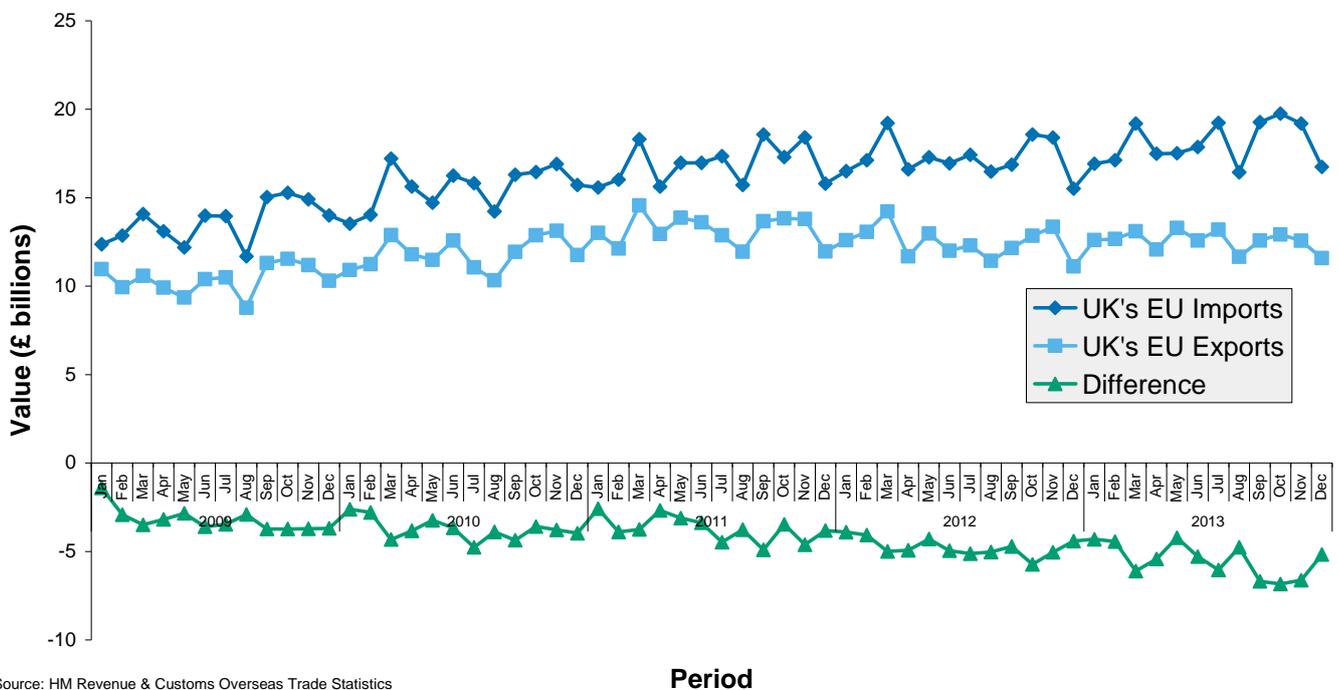
Key Points

For the month of December 2013:

The value of UK trade decreased for both EU imports and exports, with imports falling by £2.5 billion, and exports by £1.0 billion against November 2013 totals. Compared to December 2012, imports rose by £1.2 billion and exports by £0.5 billion.

There is a decrease of 22.0 per cent in the trade gap (i.e. the difference between UK imports from, and exports to the EU) when compared to November 2013. This difference is now £6.9 billion. This is the largest drop in the trade gap since January 2009.

Fig. 1: Total Monthly UK Trade with EU Member States



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade Statistics
 Note: 2013 data are provisional

Exports

- The UK's EU exports for December 2013 total £11.6 billion. This is a decrease of £1.0 billion (7.9 per cent) compared to November 2013. However, it is an increase of £0.5 billion (4.3 per cent) compared to December 2012.
- The top five commodities are unchanged from last month. HS2 27 (Mineral fuels, mineral oils and products of their distillation; bituminous substances; mineral waxes) remains the top commodity exported by value. In December it contributed £2.3 billion, 19.6 per cent of the total value of the UK's EU export trade. This chapter also experienced the largest value increase from the previous month of £267.1 million (13.4 per cent).
- The largest value decrease from the previous month was in the commodity with the third largest export value. HS2 87 (Vehicles other than railway or tramway rolling-stock, and parts and accessories thereof) was down £286.5 million (23.0 per cent).
- The top five EU export partner countries are the same as the previous month. Germany remains the UK's largest EU export partner country, accounting for 19.5 per cent of the total exports, despite experiencing the largest value decrease from the previous month of £345.7 million (13.3 per cent).
- The largest increase in exports to a partner country compared to November 2013, was a modest rise of £6.0 million (3.3 per cent) to Denmark.
- The first estimate of total exports for 2013 is £150.8 billion¹. This is an increase of £1.1 billion (0.7 per cent) compared with 2012. This is a slight recovery after the value of exports fell in 2012.
- The total 2013 year to date value of the UK's trade in goods exported to EU Member States, excluding December, is £139.3 billion. This has been upwardly revised by £147.1 million. This is an increase of 0.1 per cent.

Imports

- The UK's EU imports for December 2013 total £16.7 billion. This is a decrease of £2.5 billion (12.8 per cent) compared to November 2013. However, it represented an increase of £1.2 billion (7.9 per cent) compared to December 2012.
- The top five commodities are the same as last month. The largest contributing commodity group is HS2 87 (Motor vehicles). This contributed £2.6 billion, 15.2 per cent of the total value of UK's EU import trade. However, this chapter also experienced the largest value decrease from the previous month, down £457.4 million (15.2 per cent).
- The largest value increase from the previous month was in HS2 71 (Precious metals, stones, pearls and jewellery) up £99.9 million (52.7 per cent).
- The top five EU import partner countries are unchanged from November 2013. Germany remains the EU Member State from which the UK imports most goods by value, accounting for 24.6 per cent of total EU imports despite having the largest decrease compared to November 2013, down by £722.7 million (14.9 per cent). The largest increase was a rise of £84.1 million (15.6 per cent) in imports from Sweden.

¹ The final figure for total exports for 2013 will be published in August 2014 when data is finalised in line with our revisions policy.

- The first estimate of total imports for 2013 is £216.8 billion². This is an increase of £9.8 billion (4.7 per cent) compared with 2012. This continues the upward trend in the annual value of imports of goods from the EU since the period of recession in 2009.
- The total 2013 year to date value of the UK's trade in goods imported from EU Member States, excluding December, is £200.0 billion. This has been downwardly revised by £271.7 million. This is a decrease of 0.1 per cent.

² The final figure for total imports for 2013 will be published in August when data is finalised in line with our revisions policy.

Further Analysis: Exports

Table 1: Top 5 commodities in UK's EU exports in December 2013 compared to November 2013 and December 2012

HS 2	Description	December 2013 Total £ millions	% Change from November 2013	% Change from December 2012	% of Total December 2013 Exports	Rank November 2013	Rank December 2012
-	Total Exports	11,582.8	-7.9	4.3	100.0	n/a	n/a
27	Mineral fuels, mineral oils and products of their distillation; bituminous substances; mineral waxes	2,266.7	13.4	-14.2	19.6	1	1
84	Nuclear reactors, boilers, machinery and mechanical appliances; parts thereof	1,137.3	-11.8	3.9	9.8	2	2
87	Vehicles other than railway or tramway rolling-stock, and parts and accessories thereof	958.5	-23.0	-2.5	8.3	3	3
30	Pharmaceutical products	891.7	-2.8	30.5	7.7	4	5
85	Electrical machinery and equipment and parts thereof; sound recorders and reproducers, television image and sound recorders and reproducers, and parts and accessories of such articles	872.8	-3.3	11.7	7.5	5	4

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade Statistics
Note: 2013 data are provisional

Commodity Analysis: comparison with previous month

The decrease in export value of £1.0 billion (7.9 per cent) **compared to November 2013** is composed of decreases in 80 per cent of all HS2 chapters. Four of the top five chapters experienced falls in trade, the exception being the top chapter HS2 27 (Mineral fuels), which experienced the largest chapter increase. There were five decreases over £100 million and two increases above this level.

The largest decrease was for the third largest chapter, HS2 87 (Motor Vehicles), down £286.5 million (23.0 per cent). This decrease was spread across many of the other EU member states, the largest being a fall of £71.1 million (30.5 per cent) in exports to Germany. Of all the EU member states, only four saw increases in this chapter and these were all under £10 million.

The second largest decrease was for the second placed chapter, HS2 84 (Mechanical appliances). This fell by £152.4 million (11.8 per cent). This decrease was composed of falls to most EU Member States, the largest being to Germany, down £64.5 million (17.3 per cent).

The third largest decrease was £112.4 million (38.3 per cent) for HS2 72 (Iron and steel). Again, this decrease was composed of falls to most EU Member States, the largest being to Germany, down £29.4 million (52.6 per cent). Of all the EU member states, only three saw increases in this chapter and these were all under £3 million.

The fourth largest chapter decrease was for HS2 39 (Plastics and plastic products) down £107.3 million (24.0 per cent). This decrease was spread over all but two of the 27 member states, the largest being for Germany down £27.5 million (29.3 per cent).

The only other decrease over £100 million was for HS2 88 (Aircraft, spacecraft, and parts thereof) down £105.2 million (22.0 per cent). This was driven by a fall of £62.0 million (29.1 per cent) in exports to Germany.

There were no other decreases over £100 million. The next highest decrease was £63.3 million (23.6 per cent) for HS2 22 (Beverages, spirits and vinegar).

There were two increases over £100 million. The largest increase was for the top chapter HS2 27 (Mineral fuels), which rose by £267.1 million (13.4 per cent). This was driven by an increase in exports to Germany of £103.6 million (50.8 per cent).

The second largest increase was for HS2 71 (Precious stones, metals, pearls and jewellery) up £107.9 million (56.8 per cent). This was dominated by a rise in imports to France of £177.3 million, which is a seven-fold increase.

There were no other increases over £100 million. The next largest increase was for HS2 28 (Inorganic chemicals) up £61.9 million (79.6 per cent).

Commodity Analysis: Comparison against the same month in the previous year

Compared to December 2012, the overall export trade to EU Member States increased by £0.5 billion (4.3 per cent). This overall rise is composed of increases in 77 per cent of all HS2 chapters, but there was one very large decrease which was influential in reducing the scale of the overall increase. There was one decrease and one increase over £100 million. In the top five chapters, there were three increases and two decreases.

The largest increase was for HS2 30 (Pharmaceutical products), which rose by £208.6 million (30.5 per cent). This was driven by increases in exports to Germany of £80.5 million (53.5 per cent) and the Netherlands of £67.6 (61.6 per cent).

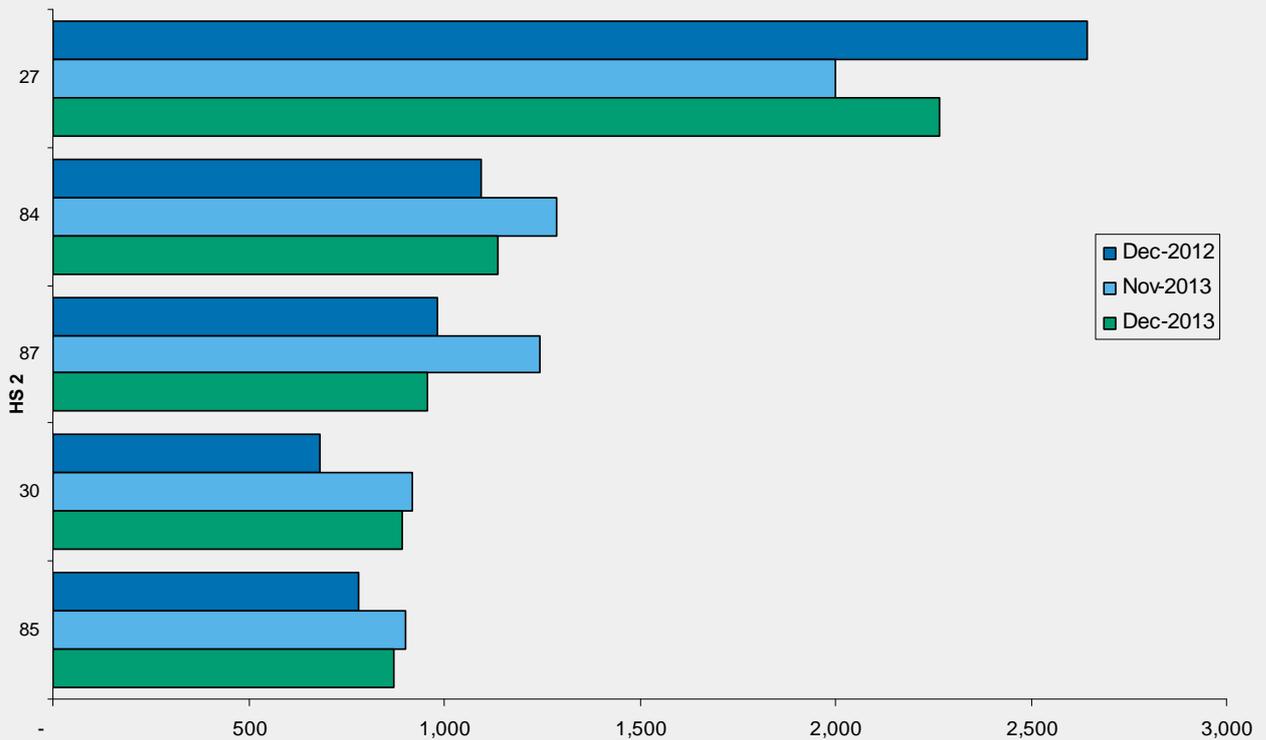
This was the only increase over £100 million but just below this level was a rise of £91.1 million (11.7 per cent) for HS2 85 (Electronic equipment), which was spread across several member states.

The largest decrease was in the top chapter HS2 27 (Mineral fuels), down £376.6 million (14.2 per cent). This reduction was driven by falls in exports to Germany down £184.1 million (37.5 per cent), France down £119.3 million (22.7 per cent) and Sweden down £102.7 million (69.0 per cent). These decreases were partially offset by an increase of £104.8 million (a six-fold increase) in exports to Spain. However, trade within this chapter is highly volatile.

The next largest decrease was just £24.2 million (2.5 per cent) for HS2 87 (Motor vehicles).

Figure 2 shows the top five commodities for the UK's EU exports in December 2013, compared to November 2013 and December 2012. It shows that in comparison with both November 2013 all chapters except HS2 27 decreased. In contrast, in comparison with December 2012 HS2 27 along with HS2 87 decreased whereas the remaining three chapters increased.

Fig 2: Top 5 commodities for UK's EU exports in December 2013 compared to November 2013 and December 2012



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade Statistics
Note: 2013 data are provisional

Value (£ millions)

Table 2 shows comparisons of the value of UK export trade with our top five EU export trading partners for December 2013, November 2013 and December 2012.

Table 2: Top 5 EU export partner Member States in December 2013 compared to November 2013 and December 2012

Country	Total December 2013 £ millions	% Change from November 2013	% Change from December 2012	% of total EU exports	Rank November 2013	Rank December 2012
Total Exports	11,582.8	-7.9	4.3	100.0	n/a	n/a
Germany	2,257.4	-13.3	2.7	19.5	1	1
France	1,969.5	0.3	1.9	17.0	2	2
Netherlands	1,820.0	-4.5	1.5	15.7	3	3
Irish Republic	1,556.9	-5.6	6.0	13.4	4	4
Belgium	801.9	-10.7	-10.6	6.9	5	5

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade Statistics
Note: 2013 data are provisional

Country Analysis: comparison with previous month

The top five EU export partner Member States remain unchanged **compared with November 2013**. Germany has been the UK's largest export partner in the EU for a number of years, currently accounting for 19.5 per cent of the total value of exports. This was led by exports of £308.4 million in HS2 84 (Mechanical appliances) and

£307.4 million in HS2 27 (Mineral fuels) with four other chapters having exports of over £100 million.

The decrease in value of total export trade compared to November 2013 reflects falls in 21 of the 27 Member States in the EU. There were two decreases but no increases over £100 million. Four of the top five partner countries experienced falls in export trade and the only increase, which was for France, was very marginal.

The largest decrease in the value of exports was for the UK's top export partner, as Germany fell by £345.7 million (13.3 per cent). This decrease was spread across a number of chapters, the largest being in HS2 87 (Motor vehicles) down £71.1 million (30.5 per cent), HS2 84 (Mechanical appliances) down £64.5 million (17.3 per cent) and HS2 88 (Aircraft) down £62.0 million (29.1 per cent). These falls, however, were to some extent offset by a substantial increase in HS2 27 (Mineral fuels) up £103.6 million (50.8 per cent).

The second largest decrease in the value of exports from the UK was to Italy down £106.8 million (13.8 per cent). This decrease was spread across the vast majority of chapters but the largest was for HS2 87 (Motor vehicles) down £31.8 million (23.8 per cent). Again, these decreases were offset by a large increase in HS2 27 (Mineral fuels) up £34.5 million (64.2 per cent).

There were no other decreases over £100 million. However, just below this level there was a decrease in the value of exports from the UK to Belgium, down £96.5 million (10.7 per cent). This decrease was spread across many chapters but the largest were in HS2 87 and HS2 71 down £39.1 million (19.4 per cent) and £33.9 million (60.0 per cent) respectively. Similarly, these falls were counterbalanced by an increase in HS2 27 (Mineral fuels) up £46.2 million (68.2 per cent).

This was closely followed by a fall in exports to the Irish Republic down £92.4 million (5.6 per cent). In complete contrast to the previous cases, this was driven by a fall in HS2 27 (Mineral fuels) of £70.7 million (20.1 per cent).

There were no increases over £100 million. The largest increase was a modest rise of £6.0 million (3.3 per cent) in exports to Denmark. This rise was dominated by an increase in HS2 27 (Mineral fuels) of £29.6 million (up from £3.9 million to £33.5 million). However, this was offset by smaller decreases spread across the majority of other chapters.

Country Analysis: comparison against the same month in the previous year

The increase in total export trade value **compared to December 2012** was composed of 19 increases and 7 decreases in the UK's 26 EU export partner Member States. This excludes Croatia as although it joined the EU on 1 July 2013, it was not a member in December 2012. There was one increase over £100 million but no decreases above this value. There were increases in trade with four of the top five export partner countries.

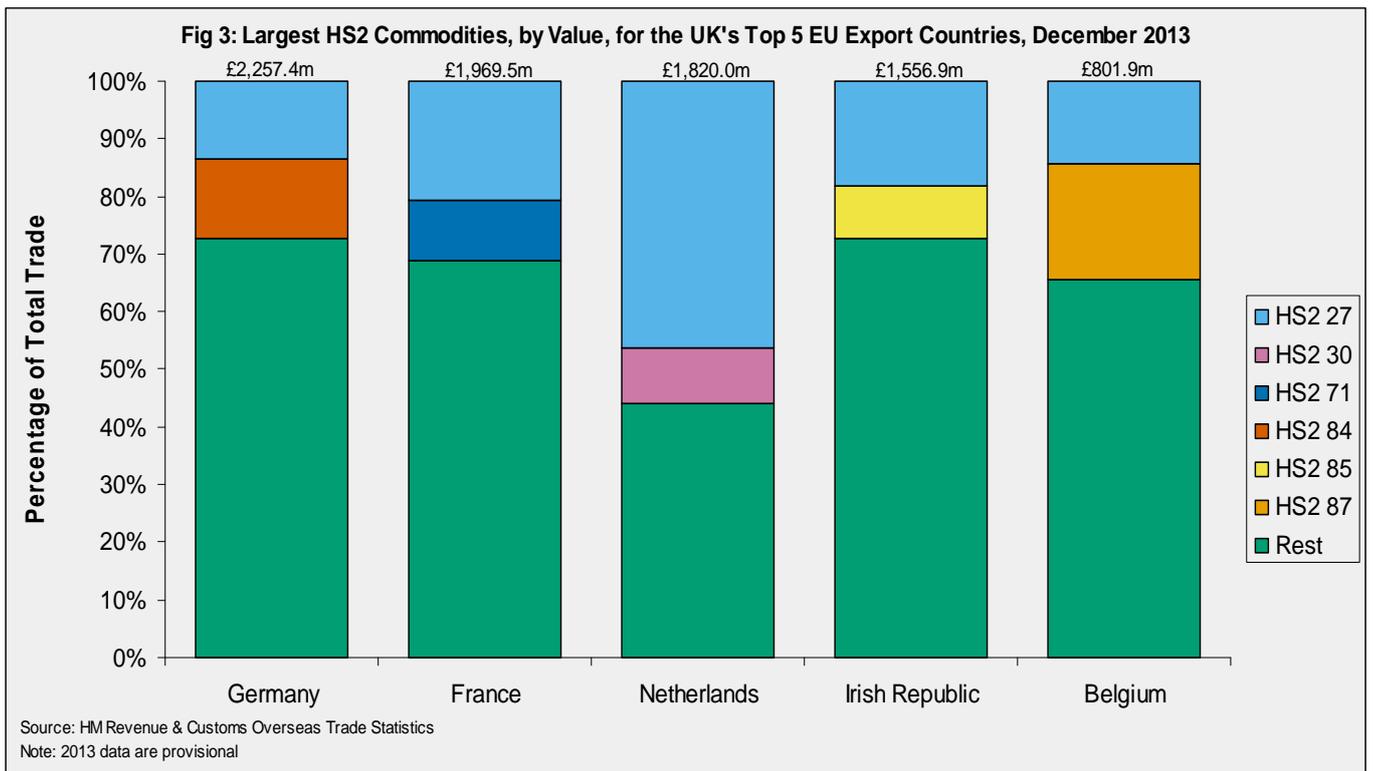
The largest increase was for Italy up by £128.4 million (23.7 per cent). This increase was driven by a rise of £82.0 million in HS2 27 (Mineral fuels) from £6.2 million to £88.2 million.

There were no other increases over £100 million. However, just below this level, Spain experienced a rise of £94.4 million (14.9 per cent). This increase was similarly greatly influenced by a substantial rise of £104.8 million in HS2 27 (Mineral fuels), from £19.3 million to £124.1 million.

There were no decreases over £100 million although the largest was just below this level. Belgium experienced a fall of £95.0 million (10.6 per cent), which was dominated by a decrease in HS2 71 (Precious stones, metals, pearls and jewellery) of £116.1 million (83.7 per cent).

Figure 3 shows the two largest commodities by value exported from the UK to each of the UK's top five EU export trading partners. All of the top five Member States have HS2 27 (Mineral fuels) as one of their two largest commodities exported from the UK by value. The trade with these three Member States accounts for 86.1 per cent of the total value of UK EU export trade under this chapter. Furthermore, HS2 27 accounts for 46.2 per cent of the total UK export trade to the Netherlands.

None of the other chapters feature in more than one of the top five Member States' two largest commodities.



Further Analysis: Imports

Table 3: Top 5 commodities in UK's EU imports in December 2013 compared to November 2013 and December 2012

HS 2	Description	December 2013 Total £ millions	% Change from November 2013	% Change from December 2012	% of Total December 2013 Imports	Rank November 2013	Rank December 2012
-	Total Imports	16,748.0	-12.8	7.9	100.0	n/a	n/a
87	Vehicles other than railway or tramway rolling-stock, and parts and accessories thereof	2,553.8	-15.2	20.9	15.2	1	1
84	Nuclear reactors, boilers, machinery and mechanical appliances; parts thereof	1,960.0	-11.8	7.0	11.7	2	2
85	Electrical machinery and equipment and parts thereof; sound recorders and reproducers, television image and sound recorders and reproducers, and parts and accessories of such articles	1,482.5	-23.1	-0.2	8.9	3	3
27	Mineral fuels, mineral oils and products of their distillation; bituminous substances; mineral waxes	1,165.2	-18.4	-17.7	7.0	4	4
30	Pharmaceutical products	1,146.1	-3.8	46.7	6.8	5	5

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade Statistics
Note: 2013 data are provisional

Commodity Analysis: comparison with previous month

The decrease of £2.5 billion in imports **compared to November 2013** is made up of decreases in 77 per cent of all HS2 chapters. There were five decreases over £100 million and no increases above this level. All of the top five commodities fell in import value.

The largest decrease was for the top import chapter, HS2 87 (Motor vehicles). This fell by £457.4 million (15.2 per cent). There is a history of falls during December for this chapter. The decrease this month is dominated by a fall of £291.2 million (19.6 per cent) from Germany.

The second largest decrease was for HS2 85 (Electrical equipment). This fell by £446.0 million (23.1 per cent). This is also a seasonal fall after a previous peak of imports for the Christmas market. The fall is spread over a majority of countries, with falls of over £50 million from the Netherlands, Germany and Poland.

The third largest decrease was for the fourth biggest chapter by value, HS2 27 (Mineral fuels), which fell by £263.4 million (18.4 per cent) to £1.2 billion. The decrease included falls in imports from the Netherlands, of £146.8 million (22.1 per cent), and France, of £100.5 million (53.6 per cent), partially offset by a rise of £125.5 million (more than double) from Sweden.

The fourth biggest decrease was for the second biggest import chapter, HS2 84 (Mechanical appliances), which fell by £261.5 million (11.8 per cent) to £2.0 billion. This decrease is led by a fall of £126.1 million (17.6 per cent) from Germany.

The fifth largest decrease was for HS2 39 (Plastics and plastic products), which fell by £144.4 million (19.9 per cent) to £581.4 million. The decrease was led by a fall in imports from Germany, of £48.8 million (23.0 per cent).

There were no other decreases over £100 million. The next largest was £98.1 million (21.2 per cent) for HS2 22 (Beverages, spirits and vinegar). This fall was spread over a number of import partner countries.

There were no increases over £100 million, but just below this level, the largest increase was for HS2 71 (Precious stones, metals, pearls and jewellery), which rose by £99.9 million (52.7 per cent) to £289.4 million. The increase was led by a three-fold rise in imports from France, of £78.7 million.

Commodity Analysis: comparison with the same month in the previous year

Compared with December 2012, there was an increase of £1.2 billion (7.9 per cent) in the value of imports from EU Member States. There were increases in 77 per cent of all chapters. There were three chapters with increases of over £100 million, and one decrease above this level. Three of the top five commodities increased in import value.

The chapter with the largest increase in comparison with December 2012 was the top import chapter, HS2 87 (Motor vehicles), which rose by £442.2 million (20.9 per cent). This increase was led by rises of £150.8 million (14.5 per cent) from Germany and £126.7 million (49.1 per cent) from Belgium.

The second largest increase was for the fifth biggest import commodity by value, HS2 30 (Pharmaceutical products), which rose by £364.9 million (46.7 per cent). This was led by a three-fold increase of £163.6 million in imports from the Irish Republic, and a rise of £139.7 million (70.1 per cent) from Germany.

The third biggest increase was for HS2 84 (Mechanical appliances), up by £128.9 million (7.0 per cent). This increase is spread over a majority of import partner countries, led by a rise of £31.2 million (5.6 per cent) from Germany.

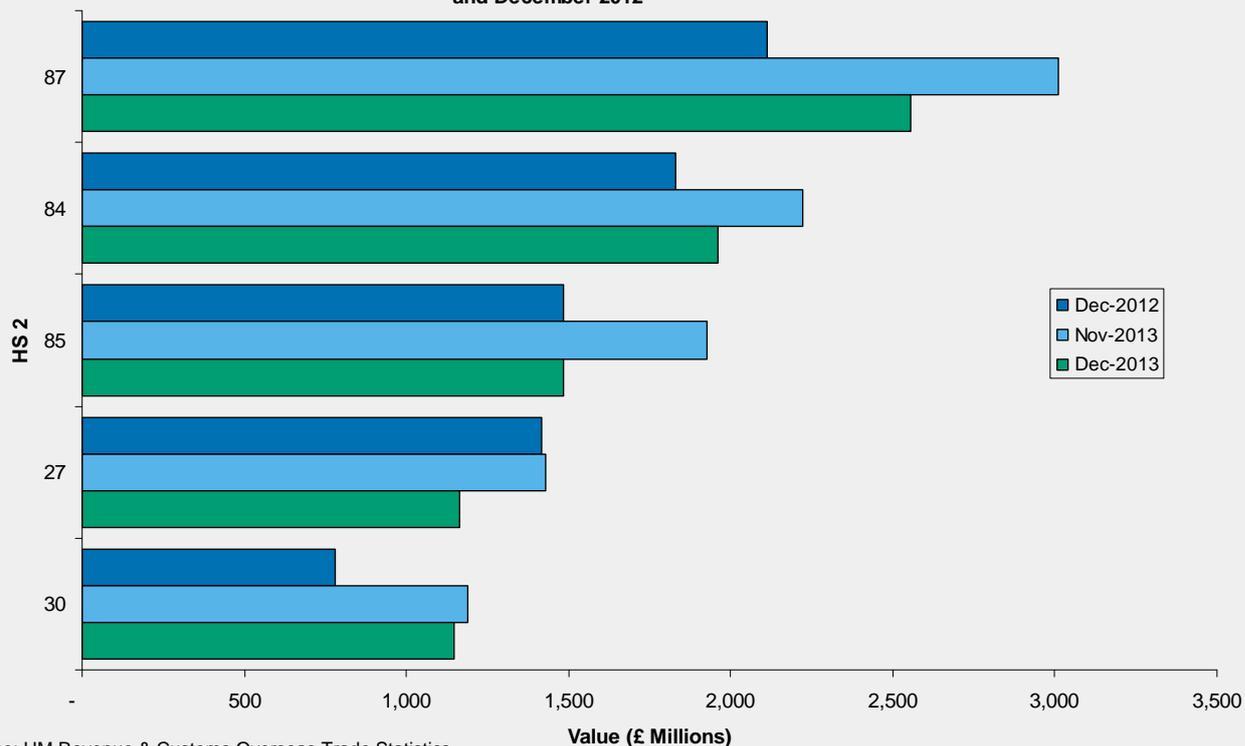
There were no other increases over £100 million. The next largest was a rise of £68.8 million (17.4 per cent) for HS2 29 (Organic chemicals).

The only decrease over £100 million was for HS2 27 (Mineral fuels), which fell by £250.7 million (17.7 per cent) to £1.2 billion. This was dominated by a fall of £237.0 million (94.2 per cent) in imports from Denmark.

There were no other decreases over £100 million. The next largest was £75.4 million (20.7 per cent) for HS2 71 (Precious metals, stones, pearls and jewellery).

Figure 4 shows the top five HS2 commodity groups for the UK's EU imports in December 2013, compared to November 2013 and December 2012. The graph demonstrates how all of the top five chapters fell compared to last month, while chapters 87, 84 and 30 rose compared to last year.

Fig 4: Top 5 Commodities for UK's EU imports in December 2013 compared to November 2013 and December 2012



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade Statistics
Note: 2013 data are provisional

Table 4 shows comparisons of the value of UK import trade with our top five EU import trading partners for December 2013, November 2013 and December 2012.

Table 4: Top 5 EU import partner Member States in December 2013 compared to November 2013 and December 2012

Country	December 2013 Total £ millions	% change from November 2013	% change from December 2012	% of total December 2013 Imports	Rank November 2013	Rank December 2012
Total Imports	16,748.0	-12.8	7.9	100.0	n/a	n/a
Germany	4,124.0	-14.9	11.8	24.6	1	1
Netherlands	2,626.9	-16.0	-1.5	15.7	2	2
France	1,880.4	-12.8	16.9	11.2	3	3
Belgium	1,523.8	-13.2	5.6	9.1	4	4
Italy	1,317.7	-4.7	22.0	7.9	5	5

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade Statistics
Note: 2013 data are provisional

The UK imports most goods from Germany, which account for 24.6 per cent of the total imports to the UK from the EU. This is led by imports of £1.2 billion in HS2 87 (Motor vehicles), accounting for 28.9 per cent of the total imports from Germany. The next largest chapter is HS2 84 (Mechanical appliances), with £0.6 billion, 14.3 per cent of the UK's imports from Germany.

Country Analysis: comparison with previous month

Compared with November 2013, the value of total import trade into the UK decreased for 22 of the EU Member States, and increased for five. Imports for seven Member States decreased by over £100 million, while there were no increases above this level. All of the top five Member States decreased in import value.

The largest decrease was a fall of £722.7 million (14.9 per cent) from Germany, to £4.1 billion, the lowest value for imports from Germany since December 2012. The decrease this month is led by falls of £291.2 million (19.6 per cent) in HS2 87 (Motor vehicles) and £126.1 million (17.6 per cent) in HS2 84 (Mechanical appliances).

The second largest decrease in import value was from the Netherlands, down £501.0 million (16.0 per cent) to £2.6 billion. This is the second fall since October's record high of £3.3 billion, and takes imports from the Netherlands to the lowest level since February 2013. This was led by falls of £146.8 million (22.1 per cent) in HS2 27 (Mineral fuels), and £109.0 million (44.8 per cent) in HS2 30 (Pharmaceutical products).

The third largest decrease was from France, down by £275.3 million (12.8 per cent). This was dominated by a fall of £100.5 million (53.6 per cent) in HS2 27 (Mineral fuels).

The fourth largest decrease was from Belgium, down by £232.2 million (13.2 per cent). This was led by falls of £60.7 million (29.3 per cent) in HS2 30 (Pharmaceutical products), and £59.1 million (33.5 per cent) in HS2 27 (Mineral fuels).

The fifth largest decrease was for imports from Denmark, down by £189.1 million (36.5 per cent) to £328.5 million. This is lowest import value since May 2010. The fall this month is led by a decrease of £83.6 million (85.1 per cent) in HS2 27 (Mineral fuels).

The sixth largest decrease was for imports from Spain, down by £143.9 million (13.3 per cent) to £939.7 million. This was led by a fall of £46.9 million (16.0 per cent) in HS2 87 (Motor vehicles).

The only other decrease over £100 million was from Poland, down by £123.5 million (17.1 per cent) to £598.8 million. This was led by a fall of £52.3 million (36.8 per cent) in HS2 85 (Electrical equipment).

There were no increases over £100 million. The largest increase was for imports from Sweden, up by £84.1 million (15.6 per cent) to £622.0 million. This was more than covered by an increase of £125.5 million (more than double) in HS2 27 (Mineral fuels).

Country Analysis: comparison with the same month in the previous year

There was an increase of £1.2 billion (7.9 per cent) in total import trade value **compared to December 2012**, which is composed of 19 increases and seven decreases from the other EU Member States (excluding Croatia). Four of the top five Member States increased in import value. There were four increases and one decrease over £100 million.

The largest increase was from the UK's biggest import partner. Imports from Germany rose by £436.0 million (11.8 per cent), led by increases of £150.8 million (14.5 per cent) in HS2 87 (Motor vehicles) and £139.7 million (70.1 per cent) in HS2 30 (Pharmaceutical products).

The second largest increase was for the third biggest import country, France, up £271.9 million (16.9 per cent). This was also led by a rise of £73.3 million (43.9 per cent) in HS2 87 (Motor vehicles).

The third largest increase was for imports from Italy, up £237.4 million (22.0 per cent). This was led by a thirteen-fold increase of £139.7 million in HS2 29 (Organic chemicals). Imports of this chapter from Italy are at a record high this month.

The fourth largest increase was for imports from Ireland, up £203.6 million (22.3 per cent). This was led by a twofold rise of £163.6 million in HS2 30 (Pharmaceutical products).

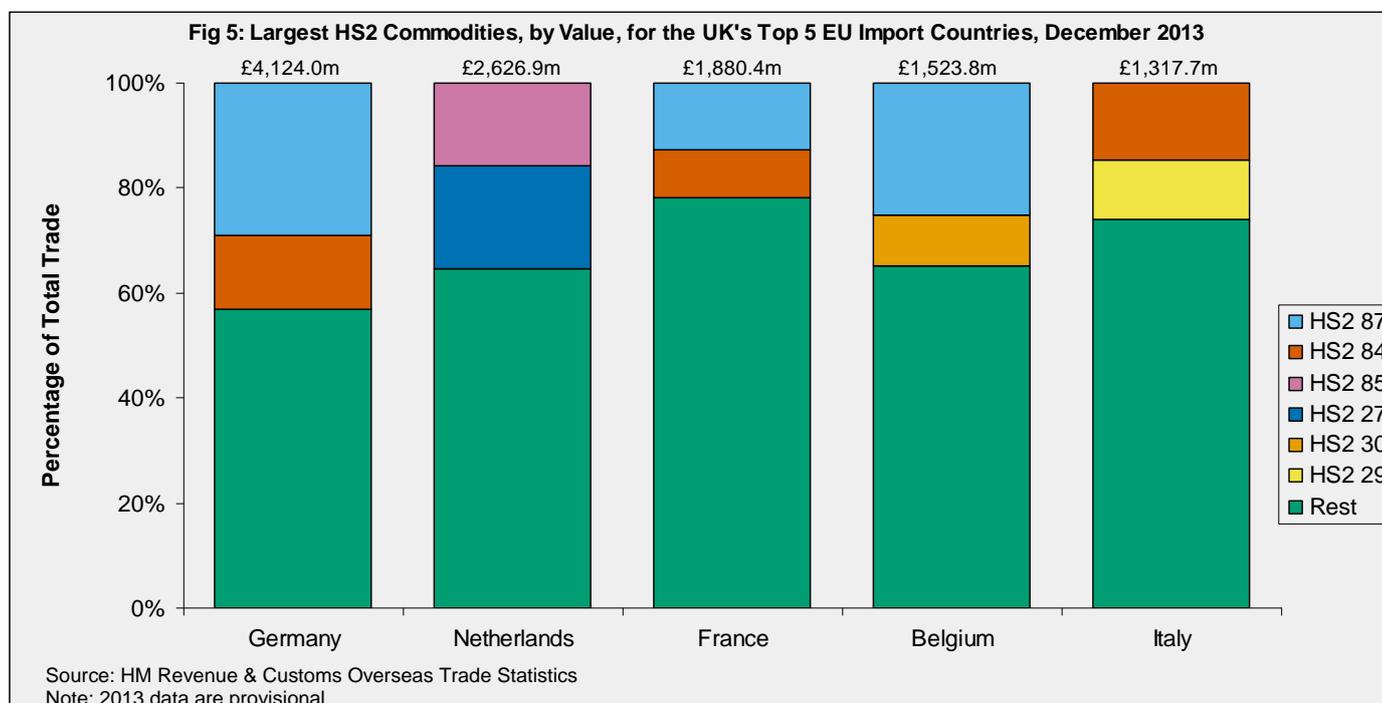
Just outside the £100 million level, the next largest increase was for Spain, rising by £97.2 million (11.5 per cent). This was led by HS2 87 (Motor vehicles), up £69.0 million (39.1 per cent).

The only decrease over £100 million was for Denmark, down £205.8 million (38.5 per cent). This was dominated by a fall of £237.0 million (94.2 per cent) in HS2 27 (Mineral fuels).

The next largest decrease was for the Netherlands, down £40.1 million (1.5 per cent).

Figure 5 shows the two largest commodities imported into the UK by value from each of the UK's top five import partner EU Member States. Three of the top five Member States (Germany, France and Belgium) have HS2 87 (Motor vehicles) in their top two largest commodities. The trade in HS2 87 from these Member States accounts for 71.2 per cent of the total import trade to the UK under this chapter. It also makes up 28.9 per cent of the UK's total imports from Germany.

Three Member States (Germany, France and Italy) have HS2 84 (Mechanical appliances) in their top two largest commodities imported by the UK, accounting for 48.5 per cent of the total UK import value in these commodities. Imports from the Netherlands within HS2 27 (Mineral fuels) account for 44.4 per cent of the UK's imports from the EU in this chapter.



Notes:

1. HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) released these latest statistics on Overseas Trade with Member States of the European Union (EU) on 11 February 2014 under arrangements set out in the [Code of Practice for Official Statistics](#). The first release is published in HMRC's trade data website www.uktradeinfo.com/.
2. This release includes the first provisional estimates of trade-in-goods between the UK and Member States of the EU for December 2013. At the same time revisions for all previously published EU data for 2013 are also being released in line with the [HM Revenue & Customs Policy on Revisions](#).
3. The figures provided in this publication of the December 2013 EU Overseas Trade Statistics will include
 - a. Estimates for businesses who have yet to submit detailed data on the trade they had with other EU Member States in December.
 - b. Estimates for businesses who do not have to submit detailed data on the trade they have with other EU Member States
 - c. An adjustment for trade associated with [Missing Trader Intra Community fraud](#).
4. Estimates are included in all high level totals including HS2 and country totals but not for aggregated totals below this level.
5. Detailed trade information is presented according to the [Harmonised System \(HS\)](#) nomenclature.
6. The aggregate estimates here will differ slightly from those that are published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) as part of the Balance of Payments (BoP), as the two sets of data are compiled to different sets of rules. The ONS web site provides an overview of BoP at the [Guide to UK Trade](#) as well as the detailed monthly [UK Trade Releases](#). The BoP publication shows a high level picture of UK trade-in-goods, whereas the OTS publication shows a detailed picture of the UK's trade-in-goods by commodity and partner country. uktradeinfo.com provides more detail about the [differences between BoP and OTS publications](#).
7. The aggregate estimates here will differ from the Eurostat publication [Euro area external trade](#). The OTS is published as 'general trade' based upon goods recorded as they enter or leave the UK. This will include goods imported into and exported from a freezone or customs warehouse, regardless of their future use. The Eurostat EU external trade data are published as 'special trade' where goods are recorded as trade only when they enter free circulation or are declared to specific Customs regimes such as Inward Processing (IP) or Processing under Customs Control (PCC). Imports from a free zone or customs warehouse are similarly recorded in 'special trade'.
8. HMRC publishes [additional information](#) to help support users of this data. This includes links to our policies on revision and suppression of data, descriptions of the methodology used to compile the OTS and information on the quality of the data published.
9. The OTS has been reviewed as part of an assessment made of Overseas Trade Statistics by the [UK Statistics Authority](#). The report of that assessment can be found at <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment/assessment-reports/assessment-report-93---uk-trade-in-goods.pdf>

10. 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.

11. Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

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The OTS and RTS data series are published in HMRC's trade data website www.uktradeinfo.com. Detailed data is available within an [interactive database](#) and ['The User Story'](#) explains how users utilise it to analyse import and export markets.

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