



HM Revenue  
& Customs

Coverage:  
United Kingdom

Theme:  
Business and Energy

Released:  
8 September 2017

Next Release:  
10 October 2017

Frequency of release:  
Monthly

Media contact:  
HMRC Press Office  
03000 585018

Statistical contacts:

Maxim Mastrangelo  
03000 594250  
[uktradeinfo@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:uktradeinfo@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk)

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

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

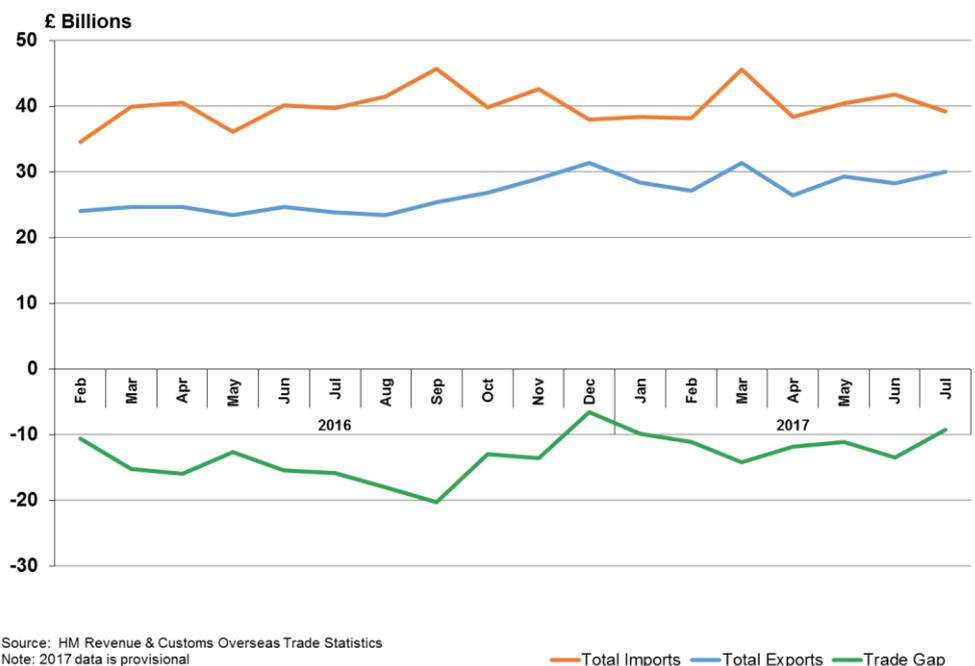


# UK Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics July 2017

## Summary

- Total trade exports for July 2017 were £30.0 billion. This was an increase of £1.7 billion (6.0 per cent) compared with last month, and an increase of £6.1 billion (26 per cent) compared with July 2016.
- Total trade imports for July 2017 were £39.2 billion. This was a decrease of £2.5 billion (6.1 per cent) compared with last month, and a decrease of £0.4 billion (1.1 per cent) compared with July 2016.
- The UK was a net importer this month, with imports exceeding exports by £9.2 billion.

Figure 1: Total UK monthly trade



## Trade Trends

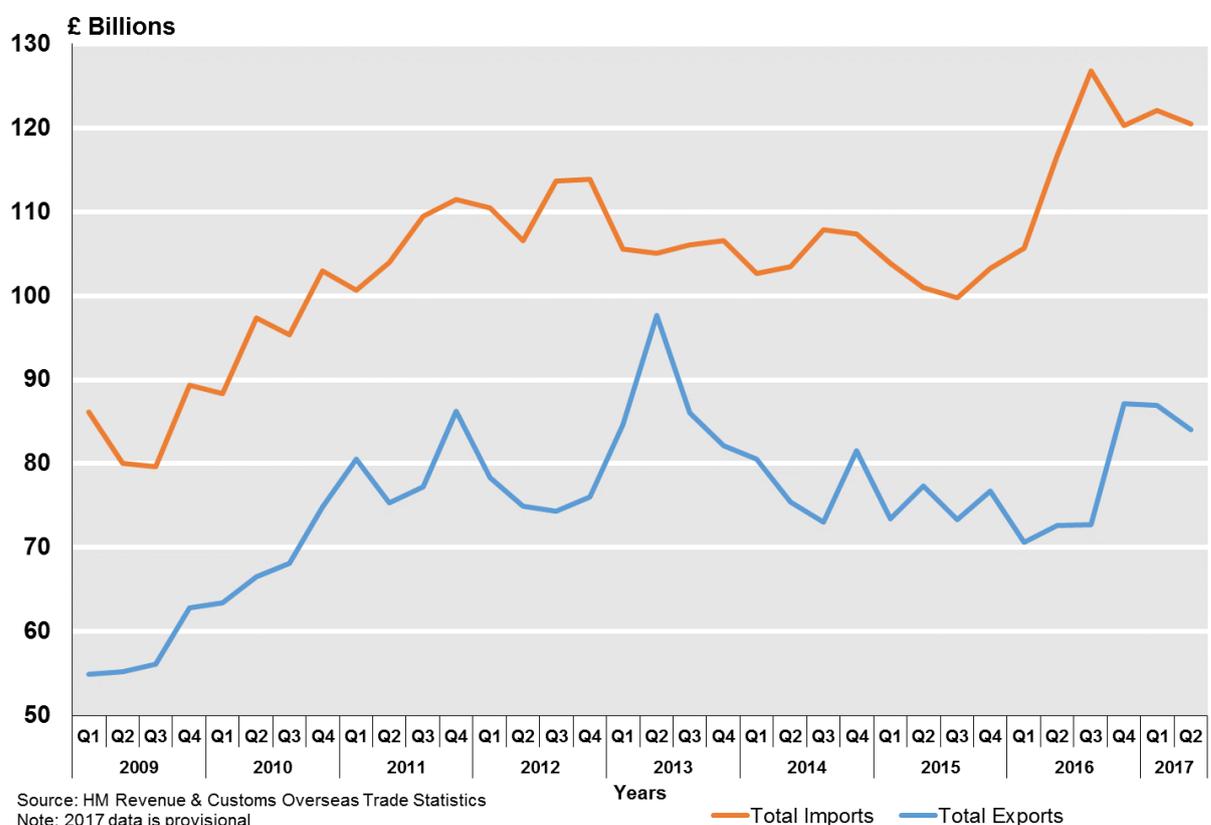
- Following the global economic crisis, UK trade dropped in 2009. Both imports and exports then steadily increased until 2012. From the start of 2013, imports remained relatively flat until a very sharp increase in Q3 of 2016, while exports peaked in Q2 of 2013, with a further peak in Q4 of 2016.
- The total **export** trade for Q2 of 2017 was £84.1 billion, which was an increase of 16 per cent compared with £72.7 billion for Q2 of 2016.
- The total **import** trade for Q2 of 2017 was £121 billion, which was an increase of 3.3 per cent compared with £117 billion for Q2 of 2016.
- There was a trade deficit of £36.4 billion for Q2 of 2017. This was a decrease of 17 per cent compared with Q2 of 2016. These values were strongly influenced by trade in non-monetary gold.
- For many years Germany has been our largest trading **import** partner by value. The USA has been the dominant trading partner for **exports** for many years.
- Mechanical appliances and Motor vehicles have generally been the largest **import** commodities by value. For **exports**, Mechanical appliances has also predominantly been the largest valued commodity, with occasional peaks for Precious metals.

Exports up 16%  
for Q2 2017 on  
Q2 2016

Imports up 3.3%  
for Q2 2017 on  
Q2 2016

Trade deficit down  
17% for Q2 2017  
on Q2 2016

Figure 2: Quarterly UK trade, 2009 – 2017



## Non-EU & EU Trade

- **Non-EU Exports** for July 2017 were £16.7 billion. This was an increase of £2.9 billion (21 per cent) on last month, and an increase of £4.7 billion (39 per cent) compared with July 2016.
- **Non-EU Imports** for July 2017 were £18.3 billion. This was a decrease of £1.0 billion (5.4 per cent) on last month, and a decrease of £1.8 billion (9.1 per cent) compared with July 2016.
- In **Non-EU trade** the UK was a net importer this month, with imports exceeding exports by £1.7 billion.
- **EU Exports** for July 2017 were £13.3 billion. This was a decrease of £1.2 billion (8.0 per cent) compared with last month, but an increase of £1.4 billion (12 per cent) compared with July 2016.
- **EU Imports** for July 2017 were £20.9 billion. This was a decrease of £1.5 billion (6.7 per cent) compared with last month, but an increase of £1.4 billion (7.1 per cent) compared with July 2016.
- In **EU trade** the UK was a net importer this month, with imports exceeding exports by £7.6 billion.
- The proportion of total exports to the EU was 44 per cent in July 2017. Over the past 18 months, this has ranged from 39 per cent to 51 per cent. The proportion of total imports from the EU was 53 per cent in July 2017. Over the same period, this has ranged between 46 per cent and 56 per cent.

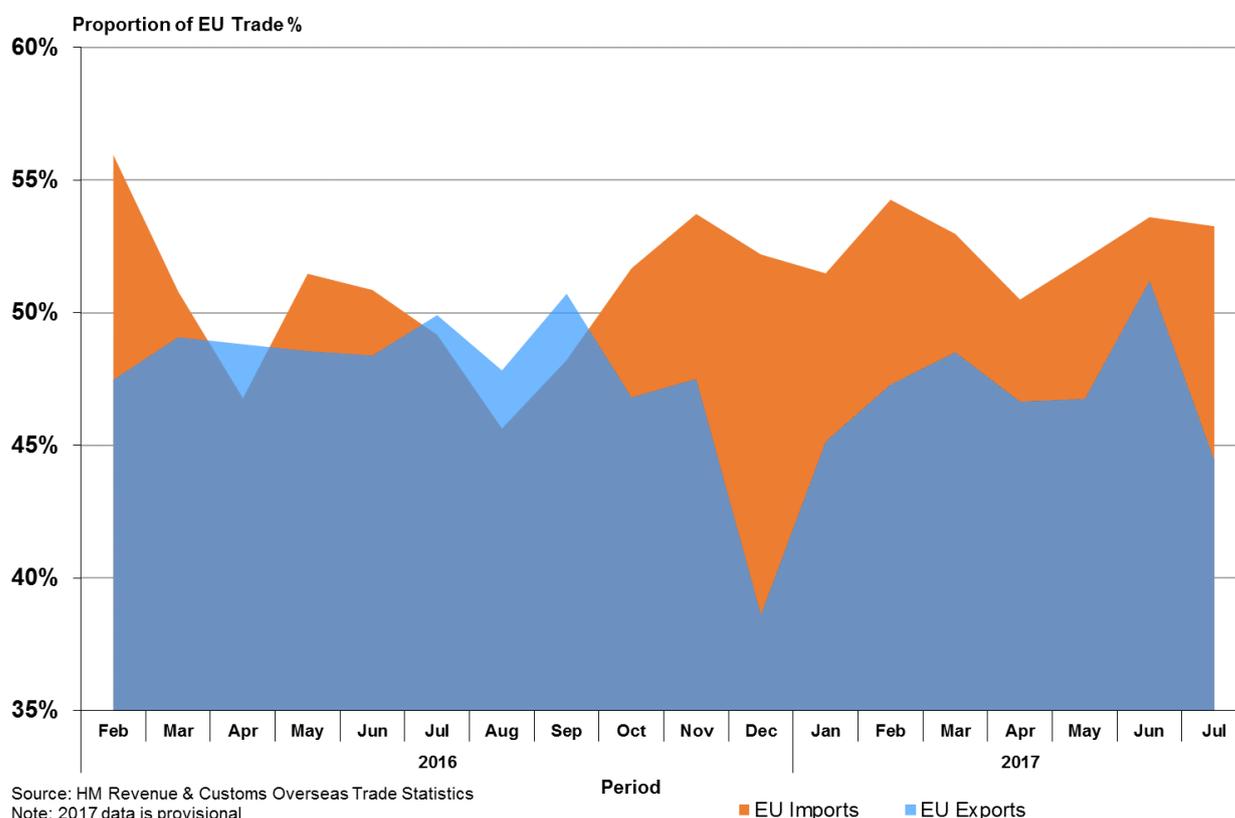
Non-EU exports  
up 39% on  
July 2016

Non-EU imports  
down 9.1% on  
July 2016

EU exports  
up 12% on  
July 2016

EU imports down  
6.7% on  
last month

**Figure 3: Proportion of Total UK Trade with the EU, July 2017**



# Exports

## Country Analysis

**Table 1: UK exports to top 10 partner countries, July 2017**

Partner Country	July 2017 Total (£ millions)	Change from June 2017 (%)	Change from July 2016 (%)	Rank June 2017	Rank July 2016
USA	3,527	-1.1	3.9	1	1
Switzerland	2,923	245.2	470.4	10	12
Germany	2,898	-8.2	11.4	2	2
France	2,041	-14.0	31.8	3	4
Netherlands	1,703	-9.5	-11.7	4	3
Irish Republic	1,542	-9.0	14.2	5	5
China	1,385	9.9	30.8	6	7
Belgium	1,289	15.4	21.3	7	6
Turkey	915	13.6	147.7	11	14
United Arab Emirates	858	52.2	55.9	12	11
Others	10,928	-1.0	15.0	-	-
<b>Total Non-EU</b>	<b>16,672</b>	<b>20.7</b>	<b>39.4</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total EU</b>	<b>13,337</b>	<b>-8.0</b>	<b>11.9</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total Exports</b>	<b>30,009</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>25.7</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade Statistics

Note: 2017 data is provisional

- The order of the top ten export partner countries (ranked by value) has changed when compared with both last month, and July 2016. Switzerland saw the most notable change, rising to 2<sup>nd</sup> from 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> place, respectively.
- Five of the top ten countries have experienced increases in value compared with last month. Compared with July 2016, all of the top ten countries experienced increases, with the exception of the Netherlands.
- The USA remained the largest export partner country, despite having a decrease of £41 million (1.1 per cent) on last month. However, the USA experienced an increase of £131 million (3.9 per cent) when compared with July 2016.
- Switzerland experienced the largest value increase compared with last month, up £2,076 million (more

Top export country, USA, down 1.1% on last month

than triple). Switzerland also experienced the largest value increase when compared with July 2016, up £2,411 million (more than five times).

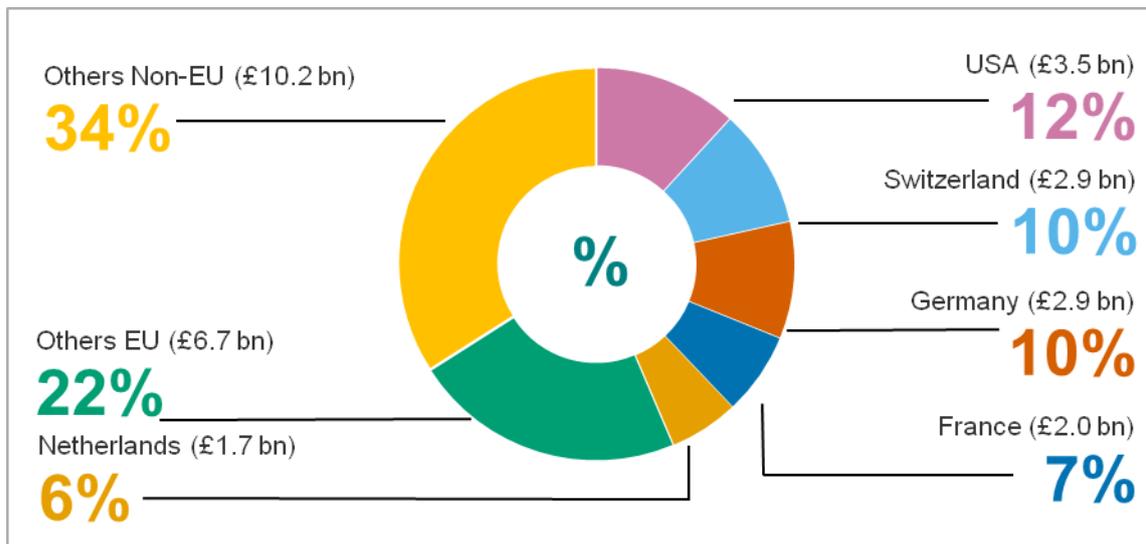
- The United Arab Emirates experienced the second largest value increase, up £294 million (52 per cent) when compared with last month. It also showed the fifth largest increase when compared with July 2016, up £308 million (56 per cent).
- Belgium experienced the third largest increase on last month, up £172 million (15 per cent), and up £227 million (21 per cent) compared with July 2016.
- Turkey increased by £109 million (14 per cent) compared with last month. It showed the second largest increase on July 2016, up £546 million (more than double).
- France experienced the largest decrease compared with last month, down £333 million (14 per cent). However, it saw the third largest increase compared with July 2016, up £492 million (32 per cent).
- Norway (25<sup>th</sup> place) experienced the largest decrease when compared with July 2016, down £421 million (64 per cent).
- The Netherlands had the second largest decrease when compared with July 2016, down £225 million (12 per cent).

Exports to Switzerland more than triple on last month

Exports to Turkey more than double on July 2016

Exports to France down 14% on last month

**Figure 4: UK exports to top 5 countries, July 2017**



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade Statistics  
Note: 2017 data is provisional

- The USA accounted for 12 per cent of the total value of exports from the UK, compared with 14 per cent in July 2016.
- Switzerland had the second largest proportion of total exports, accounting for 10 per cent, compared with 2.1 per cent in July 2016.
- The top five export partners accounted for 44 per cent of total exports this month, compared with 45 per cent in July 2016.

The USA accounted for 12% of total UK exports

## Commodity Analysis

**Table 2: UK exports by top 5 commodities, July 2017**

Commodity Description	July 2017 Total (£ millions)	Change from June 2017 (%)	Change from July 2016 (%)	Rank June 2017	Rank July 2016
Mechanical appliances	4,320	-3.5	19.2	1	1
Precious metals	4,294	235.7	441.4	7	8
Motor vehicles	3,557	5.9	12.2	2	2
Mineral fuels	2,228	10.9	17.0	4	3
Pharmaceutical products	1,849	-25.7	-2.7	3	4
Others	13,762	-6.3	10.2	-	-
<b>Total Exports</b>	<b>30,009</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>25.7</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade Statistics

Note: 2017 data is provisional

- The top five export commodities (ranked by value) have changed compared with last month and July 2016, although the top export commodity remains unchanged.
- The top commodity, Mechanical appliances, saw a decrease compared with last month, down £157 million (3.5 per cent). However, it saw an increase when compared with July 2016, up £696 million (19 per cent), the second largest increase.
- Precious metals, in second place, experienced the largest value increase compared with last month, up £3,015 million (more than triple). It also saw the largest increase when compared with July 2016, up £3,501 million (more than 5 times the value).
- Mineral fuels saw the second largest increase when compared with last month, up £219 million (11 per cent).
- Pharmaceutical products saw the largest decrease in exports compared with last month, down £641 million (26 per cent).
- Aircraft (8<sup>th</sup> place) experienced the second largest decrease compared with last month, down £568 million (34 per cent).
- Ships, boats, and floating structures (34<sup>th</sup> place) showed the largest decrease compared with July 2016, down £456 million (79 per cent).
- The top five export commodities accounted for 54 per cent of total UK trade exports this month compared with 51 per cent in July 2016.

Exports of Mechanical appliances up 19% on July 2016

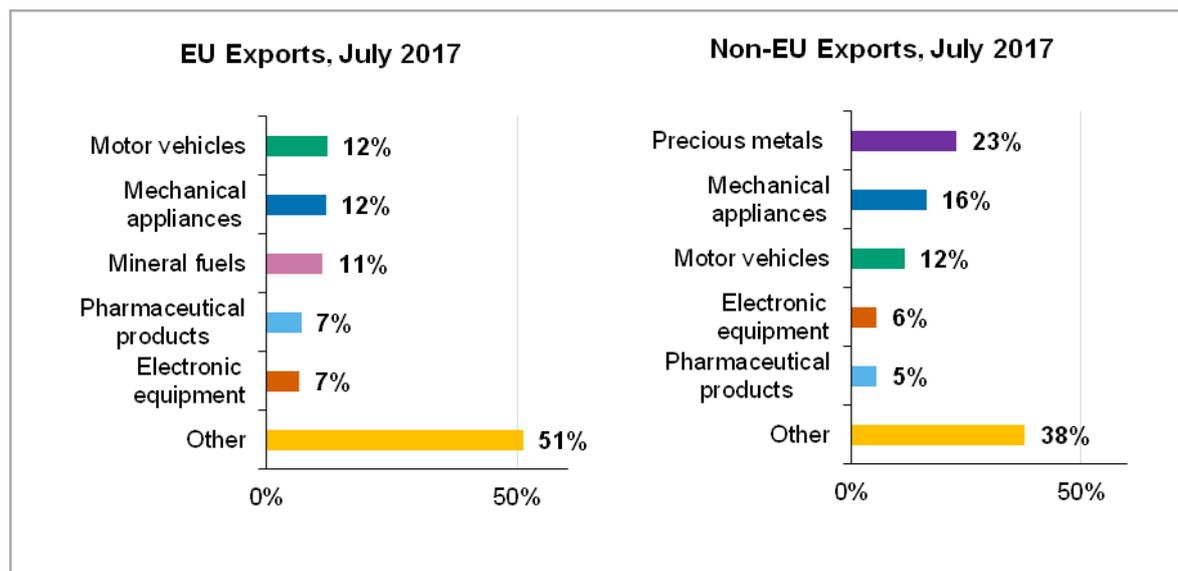
Exports of Precious metals more than triple on last month

Exports of Pharmaceutical products down 26% on last month

Exports of Ships, boats, and floating structures down 79% on July 2016

## Combined Commodity and Country Analysis

Figure 5: UK exports to EU & Non-EU by top 5 commodities, July 2017



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade Statistics  
 Note: 2017 data is provisional

- Motor vehicles, Mechanical appliances, Electronic equipment, and Pharmaceutical products were in the top five export commodities for both EU and non-EU countries.
- The increase in exports of Precious metals on both last month, and July 2016, was led by; Switzerland, up £2,292 million (from £297 million) and £2,502 million (from £87 million); Turkey, up £138 million (36 per cent) and £522 million (from £1.0 million); and the United Arab Emirates, up £307 million (from £31 million) and £319 million (from £20 million), respectively.
- The rise in exports of Mineral fuels on last month was led by Belgium and China, up £180 million (86 per cent) and £158 million (more than double), respectively. However, this was offset by a fall in exports to Germany on last month, down £101 million (39 per cent).
- The decrease in exports of Pharmaceutical products compared with last month was led by the USA, down £207 million (35 per cent); and the Irish Republic, down £129 million (71 per cent). The USA and the Netherlands led the decrease compared with July 2016, down £161 million (30 per cent) and £48 million (26 per cent) respectively.
- Norway and the Irish Republic experienced near complete reductions in exports of Ships, boats and floating structures compared with July 2016, down £436 million and £47 million, respectively.
- The fall in exports of Mechanical appliances on last month was led by France, down £244 million (41 per cent). Conversely, France led the increase on July 2016, up £216 million (more than double).

Exports of Precious metals to Switzerland, up £2,292 million on last month

Exports of Mineral fuels to Belgium up 86% on last month

Exports of Pharmaceutical products to the USA down 35% on last month

# Imports

## Country Analysis

**Table 3: UK imports from top 10 countries, July 2017**

Partner Country	July 2017 Total (£ millions)	Change from June 2017 (%)	Change from July 2016 (%)	Rank June 2017	Rank July 2016
Germany	5,631	-5.9	9.0	1	1
China	3,401	3.6	13.8	4	3
USA	3,109	-14.1	-7.1	2	2
Netherlands	2,940	-11.9	2.1	3	4
France	2,240	-13.9	13.4	5	7
Belgium	1,814	-14.5	-8.5	6	6
Italy	1,714	2.0	18.6	7	8
Spain	1,358	0.2	-6.0	8	9
Norway	1,323	-0.2	52.0	9	12
Irish Republic	1,104	0.3	6.5	11	11
Others	14,612	-4.9	-11.7	-	-
<b>Total non-EU</b>	<b>18,344</b>	<b>-5.4</b>	<b>-9.1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total EU</b>	<b>20,903</b>	<b>-6.7</b>	<b>7.1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total Imports</b>	<b>39,246</b>	<b>-6.1</b>	<b>-1.1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade Statistics  
 Note: 2017 data is provisional

- The order of the top ten import partners (ranked by value) has changed compared with last month, with the Irish Republic replacing Canada in the top 10. There were several country ranking changes compared with July 2016, most notably, Switzerland fell to 16<sup>th</sup> place from fifth.
- Six of the top ten import partners decreased in value compared with last month, while three decreased when compared with July 2016.
- Germany remained the top import partner country, despite showing the fourth largest decrease in value compared with last month, down £355 million (5.9 per cent). However it had the largest increase compared with July 2016, up £464 million (9.0 per cent).
- The USA showed the largest value decrease on last month, down £510 million (14 per cent). It was also down £239 million (7.1 per cent) on July 2016.

Top import country Germany down 5.9% on last month

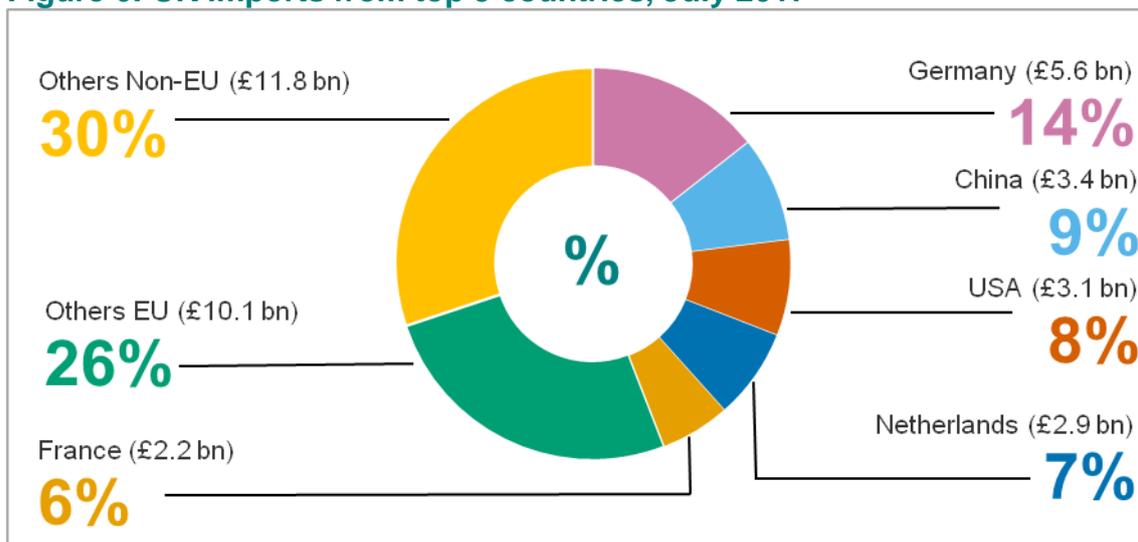
- Imports from the Netherlands saw the second largest decrease compared with last month, down £396 million (12 per cent). In contrast, it rose slightly on July 2016, up £61 million (2.1 per cent).
- France saw the third largest decrease on last month, down £361 million (14 per cent). Conversely, it showed an increase compared with July 2016, up £265 million (13 per cent), rising from seventh to fifth place.
- Japan (11<sup>th</sup> place) experienced the largest value increase compared with last month, up £266 million (35 per cent). It also increased on July 2016, up £217 million (27 per cent).
- Norway saw the second largest increase compared with July 2016, up £452 million (52 per cent).
- Imports from China increased by £119 million (3.6 per cent) compared with last month. It also increased on July 2016, up £413 million (14 per cent), the third largest increase.
- Switzerland decreased by £253 million (31 per cent) on last month. It saw the largest decrease compared with July 2016, down £2,110 million (79 per cent).

Imports from Netherlands down 12% on last month

Imports from Japan up 35% on last month

Imports from Switzerland down 79% on July 2016

**Figure 6: UK imports from top 5 countries, July 2017**



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade Statistics  
Note: 2017 data is provisional

- Germany accounted for 14 per cent of the total value of imports to the UK, compared with 13 per cent in July 2016.
- China accounted for 8.7 per cent of total imports, an increase compared with 7.5 per cent in July 2016.
- The top five partner countries accounted for 44 per cent of total UK import value this month, compared with 43 per cent for July 2016.

Germany accounted for 14% of total UK imports

## Commodity Analysis

**Table 4: UK imports by top 5 commodities, July 2017**

Commodity Description	July 2017 Total (£ millions)	Change from June 2017 (%)	Change from July 2016 (%)	Rank June 2017	Rank July 2016
Mechanical appliances	5,343	3.9	20.3	1	2
Motor vehicles	4,743	-7.4	7.2	2	3
Electronic equipment	3,545	-4.2	12.2	3	4
Mineral fuels	2,871	3.6	20.3	5	5
Precious metals	2,092	-37.4	-63.4	4	1
Others	20,651	-4.8	5.5	-	-
<b>Total Imports</b>	<b>39,246</b>	<b>-6.1</b>	<b>-1.1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade Statistics

Note: 2017 data is provisional

- The ordering of the top five commodity groups has changed compared with last month, with Mineral fuels rising to fourth, replacing Precious metals. Compared with July 2016, Precious metals dropped from first to fifth place.
- Mechanical appliances was the top import commodity by value, accounting for a 14 per cent share of the total imports. It showed the largest increase compared with both last month, up £202 million (3.9 per cent), and July 2016, up £902 million (20 per cent).
- Mineral fuels imports showed the second largest increase on last month, up £100 million (3.6 per cent). It also saw the second largest increase compared with July 2016, up £485 million (20 per cent).
- Precious metals imports saw the largest decrease on both periods. It fell £1,251 million (37 per cent) on last month, and £3,619 million (63 per cent) on July 2016.
- Motor vehicles showed the second largest decrease on last month, down £377 million (7.4 per cent). Conversely, it saw an increase compared with July 2016, up £320 million (7.2 per cent).
- Imports of Aircraft (in ninth place) experienced the third largest decrease compared with last month, down £287 million (22 per cent). It showed the second largest decrease on July 2016, down £598 million (37 per cent).
- The top five import commodities accounted for 47 per cent of total UK trade imports for this month, down from 51 per cent in July 2016.

Imports of Mechanical appliances up 20% on July 2016

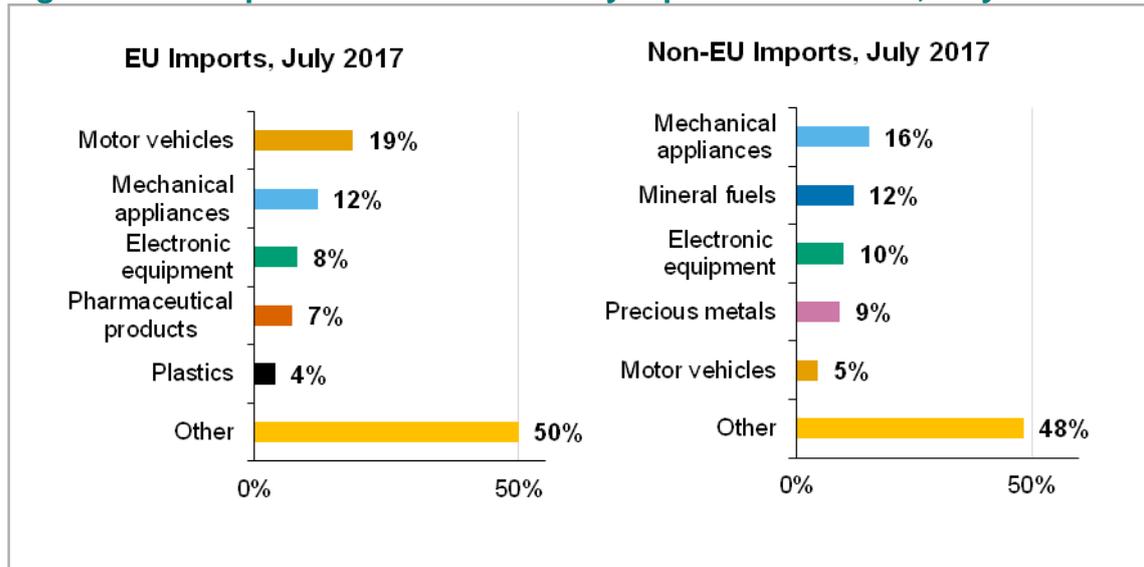
Mineral fuels imports up 3.6% on last month

Precious metals imports down 63% on July 2016

Imports of Aircraft down 22% on last month

## Combined Commodity and Country Analysis

Figure 7: UK imports to EU & Non-EU by top 5 commodities, July 2017



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade  
 Statistics Note: 2017 data is provisional

- Mechanical appliances, Motor vehicles and Electronic equipment were in the top five import commodities from both EU and non-EU countries.
- The rise in imports of Mechanical appliances compared with last month was led by increases from the USA, up £62 million (7.2 per cent), and Japan, up £62 million (31 per cent). These same countries, together with Germany, also led the increase on July 2016. USA up £282 million (44 per cent); Germany up £149 million (22 per cent) and Japan up £100 million (62 per cent).
- The increase in Mineral fuels compared with last month was led by Nigeria, up £182 million (trebling in value). The increase on July 2016 was led by Norway, up £344 million (49 per cent), and Nigeria, up £126 million (95 per cent).
- The decrease in imports of Precious metals on last month was seen across a number of import partners, led by Hong Kong, down £360 million (82 per cent) and the USA, down £269 million (62 per cent). The much larger decrease on July 2016, was dominated by a fall of £2,010 million (98 per cent) from Switzerland, with Hong Kong also down £525 million (87 per cent).
- The decrease in imports of Aircraft compared with both periods was led by imports from the USA, down £248 million (53 per cent) on last month, and down £895 million (80 per cent) on July 2016.
- The fall in imports from the Netherlands on last month was led by decreases in Pharmaceuticals, down £123 million (29 per cent).
- The increase in imports from China on both periods was led by Electronic equipment, up £90 million (15 per cent) on last month, and up £142 million (26 per cent) on July 2016.

Imports of Mechanical appliances from the USA up 44% on July 2016

Imports of Precious metals from Switzerland down 98% on July 2016

Imports of Aircraft from the USA down 53% on last month

Imports of Electronic equipment from China up 15% on last month

## Annex I – Metadata

You can access the data behind this bulletin through our [uktradeinfo web site](#).

- Detailed Trade Statistics data at 8-digit commodity code level is available in our [interactive database](#).
- Aggregate OTS data is available in [pre-prepared Excel tables](#).
- Non-Monetary Gold (NMG) can form a substantial part of the non-EU Overseas Trade Statistics (OTS). For further information, see [Inclusion of Non-Monetary Gold in OTS](#). Data relating to monthly non-EU and EU import and export totals for January 2008 onwards with a breakdown of non-monetary gold and other trade is available in an [OTS time series spreadsheet](#).
- You can find details of how users interested in import and export markets for specific goods make use of the detailed OTS data in '[The User Story](#)'.

## Annex II – Methodological Notes

1. HM Revenue & Customs released these latest statistics on Overseas Trade with countries on 8 September 2017 under arrangements set out in the [Code of Practice for Official Statistics](#). The first release is published on HMRC's trade data website [www.uktradeinfo.com](http://www.uktradeinfo.com).
2. This release includes the first provisional estimates of trade-in-goods between the UK and both countries of the EU and those outside the EU for July 2017. At the same time revisions for all previously published non-EU and EU data for 2017 are also being released in line with the [HM Revenue & Customs Policy on Revisions](#).
3. The **EU figures** provided in this publication of the July 2017 Overseas Trade Statistics are collected from the Intrastat survey. They will include:
  - a. Estimates for businesses who have yet to submit detailed data on the trade they had with other EU Member States this month.
  - b. Estimates for businesses who do not have to submit detailed data on the trade they have with other EU Member States
  - c. An adjustment for trade associated with Missing Trader Intra Community fraud. More details of this can be found [here](#).

Estimates are included in all high level totals including commodity (HS2) and country totals.

4. The **Non-EU figures** provided in this publication of the July 2017 Overseas Trade Statistics are presented by customs declarations and collected by the CHIEF (Customs Handling of Import and Export Freight) system.
5. Detailed trade information is presented according to the [Harmonised System \(HS\)](#) nomenclature.
6. The aggregate estimates here will differ slightly from those that are published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) as part of the Balance of Payments (BoP), as the two sets of data are compiled to different sets of rules. The ONS web site provides an overview of BoP at the [Guide to UK Trade](#) as well as the detailed monthly [UK Trade Releases](#). The BoP publication shows a high level picture of UK trade-in-goods, whereas the OTS publication shows a detailed picture of the UK's trade-in-goods by commodity and partner country. [uktradeinfo.com](#) provides more detail about the [differences between BoP and OTS publications](#).

7. The aggregate estimates here will differ from the Eurostat publication [Euro area external trade](#). The OTS was published up until the May 2016 month of account as 'general trade' based upon goods recorded as they enter or leave the UK. This will include goods imported into and exported from a freezone or customs warehouse, regardless of their future use. The Eurostat EU external trade data are published as 'special trade' where goods are recorded as trade only when they enter free circulation or are declared to specific Customs regimes such as Inward Processing (IP) or Processing under Customs Control (PCC). Imports from a free zone or customs warehouse are similarly recorded in 'special trade'.
8. HMRC publishes [additional information](#) to help support users of non-EU data. Information to help support users of the EU Overseas Trade Statistics can be found [here](#). This includes links to our policies on revision and suppression of data, descriptions of the methodology used to compile the OTS and information on the quality of the data published.
9. From the May 2016 month of account, there was a methodological change to the way our trade-in-goods statistics are compiled. Following a change in legislation, trade-in-goods statistics switched from the 'general trade' system of compilation to the 'special trade' system. More information can be found [here](#).
10. The OTS has been reviewed as part of an assessment made of Overseas Trade Statistics by the [UK Statistics Authority](#). The report of that assessment can be found at <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment/assessment-reports/assessment-report-93---uk-trade-in-goods.pdf>.
11. The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:
  - meet identified user needs;
  - are well explained and readily accessible;
  - are produced according to sound methods; and
  - are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

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

Statistical contact:

Maxim Mastrangelo 03000 594250

E-mail [uktradeinfo@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:uktradeinfo@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk)

Next release: 10 October 2017 9:30am

© **Crown copyright 2017.**

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