

World Maritime Day

# Half of EU trade in goods is carried by sea

## Rotterdam, Antwerp and Hamburg busiest cargo ports

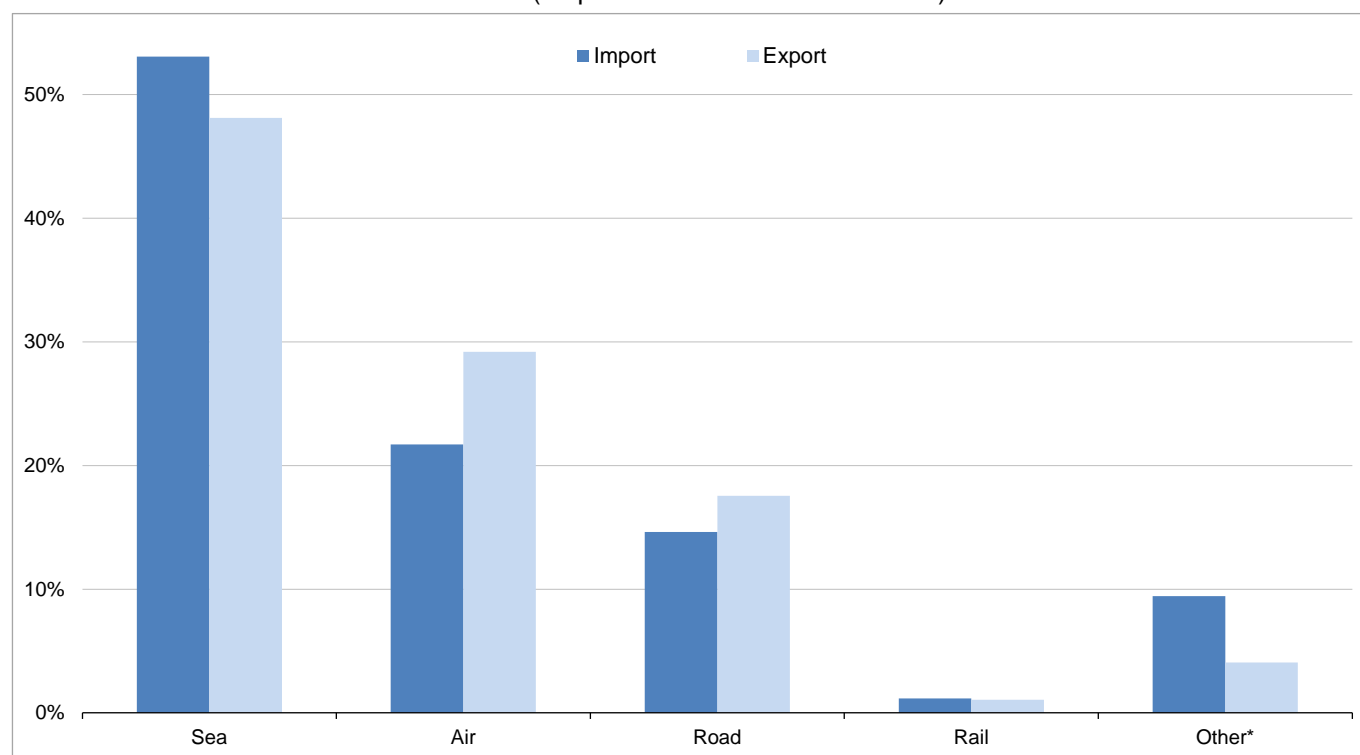
Maritime transport plays an essential role in the international trade in goods of the **European Union (EU)**. In 2015, the value of **EU** trade in goods with third countries (non-EU countries) carried by sea was estimated at close to €1,777 bn, accounting for about 51% of EU trade in goods. In detail, 53% of EU imports entered the EU by sea, while shipping represented 48% of EU exports to third countries.

The use of maritime transport for **EU** trade in goods has slightly increased over the last ten years: in 2006, less than half (47%) of the EU trade in goods with third countries was conducted by sea.

Rotterdam, Antwerp and Hamburg, all located on the North Sea coast, were the top 3 **EU** cargo ports in 2014, accounting together for almost a fifth (19.2%) of the gross weight of goods handled in EU ports.

On the occasion of World Maritime Day, celebrated on 29 September under the theme "Shipping: indispensable to the world", **Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union**, is publishing a selection of data on international trade in goods by sea as well as on maritime freight transport. More information on those topics is available in the Eurostat database.

**EU international trade in goods by mode of transport, 2015**  
(respective shares based on value)



\* category 'Other' covers: Fixed Mechanism (including pipelines), Self propulsion, Inland waterways, Post and Unknown.

## Portugal, Cyprus and Greece on top for international trade in goods by sea

Shipping was the main mode of transport in a majority of Member States in 2015. The highest shares of trade in goods with non-EU countries carried by sea were recorded in **Portugal** (81% of trade value), **Cyprus** (80%), **Greece** (77%), **Spain** (74%), **Malta** (67%), **Italy** (61%) and **Finland** (60%). Shares of over 50% were also reported by the **Netherlands**, **Romania**, **Bulgaria**, **Denmark** and **Germany**.

At the opposite end of the scale, maritime transport was less significant in the extra-EU trade in goods of the **Czech Republic** (12%) and **Luxembourg** (19%), followed by **Ireland** and **Latvia** (both 27%), **Austria** (31%) and **Croatia** (35%).

### EU Member States trade in goods with non-EU countries carried by sea, 2015 (% of trade based on value)

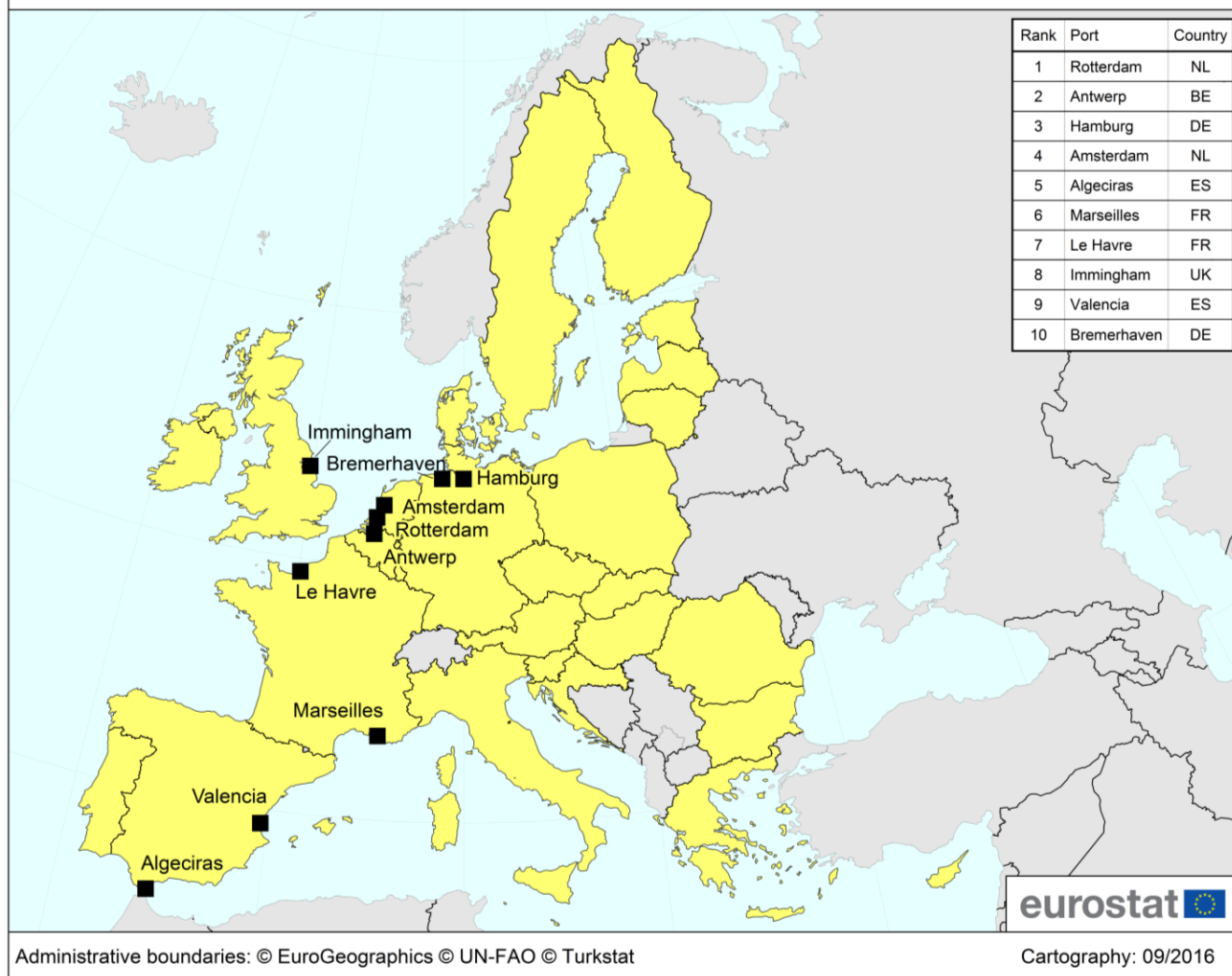
	Imports	Exports	Total trade
<b>EU*</b>	<b>53.0</b>	<b>48.1</b>	<b>50.5</b>
<b>Belgium</b>	49.4	44.7	47.3
<b>Bulgaria</b>	51.1	50.9	51.0
<b>Czech Republic</b>	0.4	27.0	12.4
<b>Denmark</b>	56.5	46.4	50.6
<b>Germany</b>	46.2	53.3	50.5
<b>Estonia</b>	39.8	44.2	42.2
<b>Ireland</b>	34.6	23.9	27.2
<b>Greece</b>	77.9	75.8	77.1
<b>Spain</b>	74.9	72.8	74.0
<b>France</b>	52.3	41.6	46.6
<b>Croatia</b>	45.0	24.7	35.0
<b>Italy</b>	66.6	55.9	60.7
<b>Cyprus</b>	87.0	68.8	80.1
<b>Latvia</b>	25.1	29.1	27.3
<b>Lithuania</b>	58.3	27.7	42.4
<b>Luxembourg</b>	9.9	38.9	18.6
<b>Hungary</b>	:	:	:
<b>Malta</b>	78.0	52.0	67.3
<b>Netherlands</b>	62.7	49.0	58.1
<b>Austria</b>	23.0	37.0	30.8
<b>Poland</b>	51.9	37.6	45.9
<b>Portugal</b>	83.0	79.0	81.0
<b>Romania</b>	54.3	59.4	56.9
<b>Slovenia</b>	64.5	26.4	46.9
<b>Slovakia</b>	38.0	44.9	40.8
<b>Finland</b>	65.1	56.9	60.2
<b>Sweden</b>	56.0	42.8	48.3
<b>United Kingdom</b>	49.4	41.1	45.5

\* Calculated without data for Hungary.

: Data not available

The source dataset can be found [here](#).

### Top ten EU cargo ports, 2014



### Rotterdam busiest port for handling goods

The total gross weight of goods handled in EU ports was estimated at close to 4 billion tonnes in 2014. The ten largest EU cargo ports accounted for nearly one-third of the total tonnage of goods handled in EU ports. With nearly 422 million tonnes of goods handled, or 11% of the EU total, **Rotterdam** in the Netherlands was the busiest cargo port in 2014, followed by **Antwerp** in Belgium (180 mn tonnes, 5%), **Hamburg** in Germany (126 mn tonnes, 3%), **Amsterdam** in the Netherlands (97 mn tonnes, 3%), **Algeciras** in Spain (76 mn tonnes, 2%) and **Marseilles** in France (74 mn tonnes, 2%).

### Top ten EU cargo ports, 2014

Rank	Cargo ports		Weight of goods handled in maritime ports	
			Millions of tonnes	Share in total gross weight of goods handled
1	Netherlands	<b>Rotterdam</b>	421.6	11.1%
2	Belgium	<b>Antwerp</b>	180.4	4.8%
3	Germany	<b>Hamburg</b>	126.0	3.3%
4	Netherlands	<b>Amsterdam</b>	97.1	2.6%
5	Spain	<b>Algeciras</b>	75.7	2.0%
6	France	<b>Marseilles</b>	74.4	2.0%
7	France	<b>Le Havre</b>	61.4	1.6%
8	United Kingdom	<b>Immingham</b>	59.4	1.6%
9	Spain	<b>Valencia</b>	55.0	1.5%
10	Germany	<b>Bremerhaven</b>	53.6	1.4%

The source dataset can be found [here](#).

## Geographical information

The **European Union** (EU) includes Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

## Methods and definitions

**International trade in goods statistics** presented in this News Release are provisional figures based on information provided by Member States. They are subject to frequent revision for up to two years after the year in question. Furthermore, national concepts may differ from the harmonised methodology used by Eurostat, leading to differences between figures in this release and those published nationally.

The modes of transport considered in the methodology for the statistics on the trading of goods are the following: Air, Fixed installation (including pipelines), Inland waterways, Post, Rail, Road, Sea, Self propulsion, Unknown.

It should be noted that this analysis refers only to extra-EU trade, meaning trade of goods with non-EU countries.

For extra-EU trade, the mode of transport corresponds to the active means of transport by which, on export, the goods are presumed to have left the statistical territory of the European Union and, on import, the goods are presumed to have entered the statistical territory of the European Union.

For **maritime ports freight statistics**, data are presented at the level of "statistical ports". A statistical port consists of one or more ports, normally controlled by a single port authority, able to record ship and cargo movements.

The gross weight of each consignment is the weight of the actual goods together with the immediate packaging in which they are being transported from origin to destination, but excluding the tare weight of containers or Ro-Ro units (e.g. containers, swap bodies and pallets containing goods as well as road goods vehicles, wagons or barges carried on the vessel).

## For more information

Eurostat [website section](#) on international trade in goods

Eurostat [database section](#) on international trade in goods

Eurostat [Statistics Explained article](#) on international trade in goods statistics

Eurostat [website section](#) on transport

Eurostat [database section](#) on transport

Eurostat [Statistics Explained article](#) on maritime ports freight and passenger statistics

The [UN website](#) dedicated to the World Maritime Day

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