

European SME Week 2017

SMEs in the European Union generate half of the intra-EU trade in goods

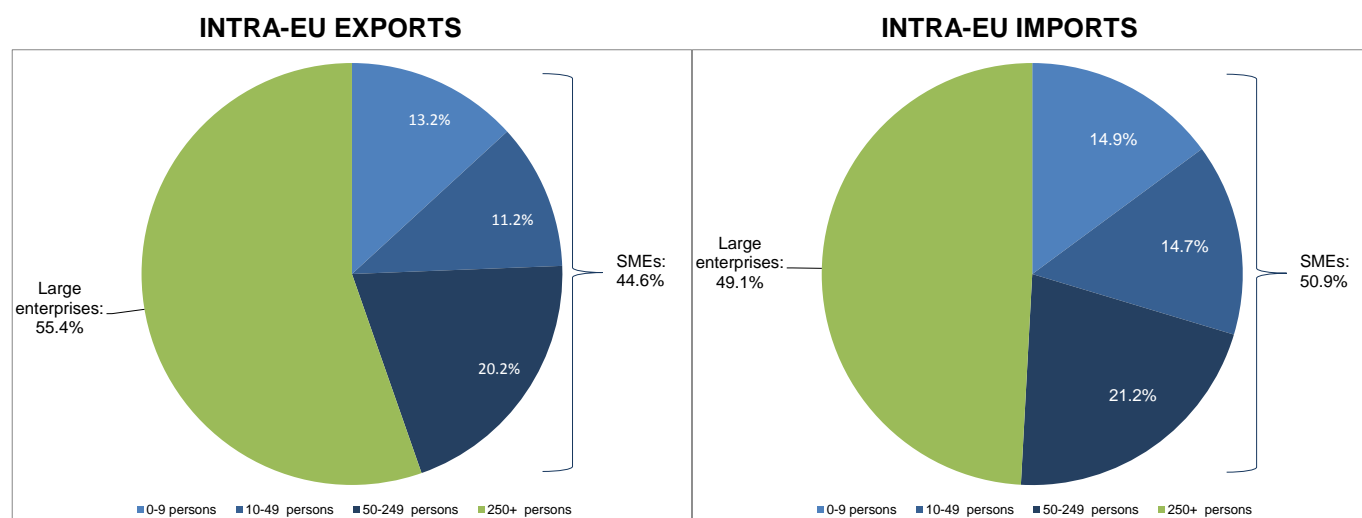
With a slightly higher share for imports

Small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs – up to 249 persons employed) are considered as a driver of the economy of the **European Union** (EU), creating jobs and contributing to economic growth.

They also substantially contribute to trade within the EU. 98% of companies trading goods within the **EU** are SMEs, including around 70% that are micro-enterprises (up to 9 persons employed). SMEs are responsible for half the value of the intra-EU trade in goods. In detail, they account for 51% of intra-EU imports and 45% of intra-EU exports.

On the occasion of the European SME week, which aims to promote entrepreneurship, **Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union**, publishes data on enterprises broken down by employment size classes, with a special focus on the importance of small and medium enterprises in intra-EU trade.

Intra-EU trade in goods by enterprise size class, 2015
(% based on value - 2015)



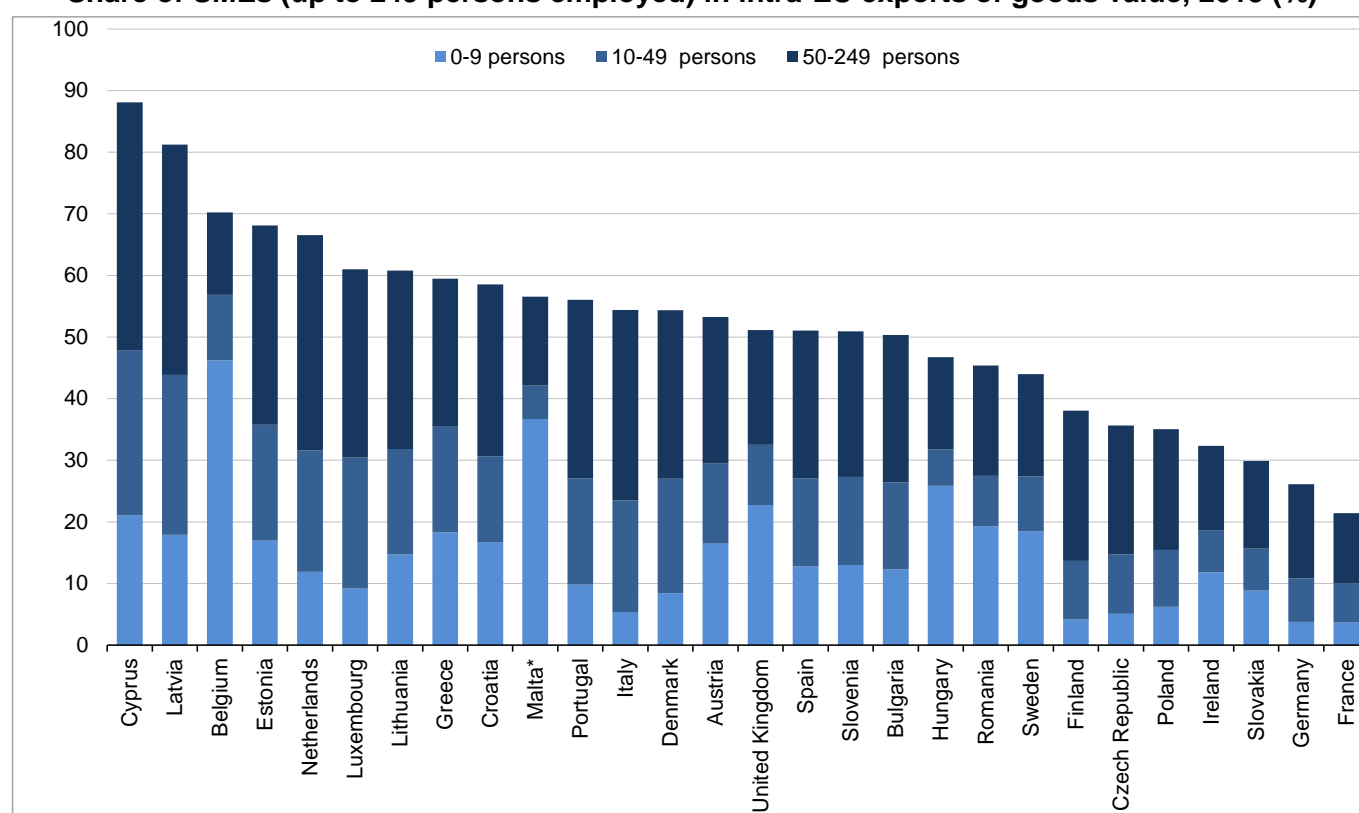
SMEs contribute the most to intra-EU exports in Cyprus and Latvia, the least in France

In five Member States, SMEs generate more than two-thirds of the total value of intra-EU exports of goods: **Cyprus** (88%) and **Latvia** (81%), followed by **Belgium** (70%), **Estonia** (68%) and the **Netherlands** (67%). At the opposite end of the spectrum, SMEs account for less than one third of intra-EU export value in **France** (21%), **Germany** (26%), **Slovakia** (30%) and **Ireland** (32%), followed by **Poland** (35%), the **Czech Republic** (36%) and **Finland** (38%).

From all SME size classes, micro-enterprises are the largest contributors to intra-EU exports in six Member States: **Belgium** (where micro-enterprises account for 46% of total intra-EU export value), **Malta** (37% in 2013), **Hungary** (26%), the **United Kingdom** (23%), **Romania** and **Sweden** (both 19%). In contrast, in ten Member States they generate less than 10% of total value: **France**, **Germany**, **Finland** (all around 4%), as well as the **Czech Republic**, **Italy** (both around 5%), **Poland** (6%), **Denmark** (8%), **Slovakia**, **Luxembourg** (both around 9%) and **Portugal** (10%).

In all Member States, more than 90% of enterprises exporting intra-EU are SMEs, ranging from 90% in the **Czech Republic** to over 99% in **Slovenia**.

Share of SMEs (up to 249 persons employed) in intra-EU exports of goods value, 2015 (%)



* Malta: 2013 data

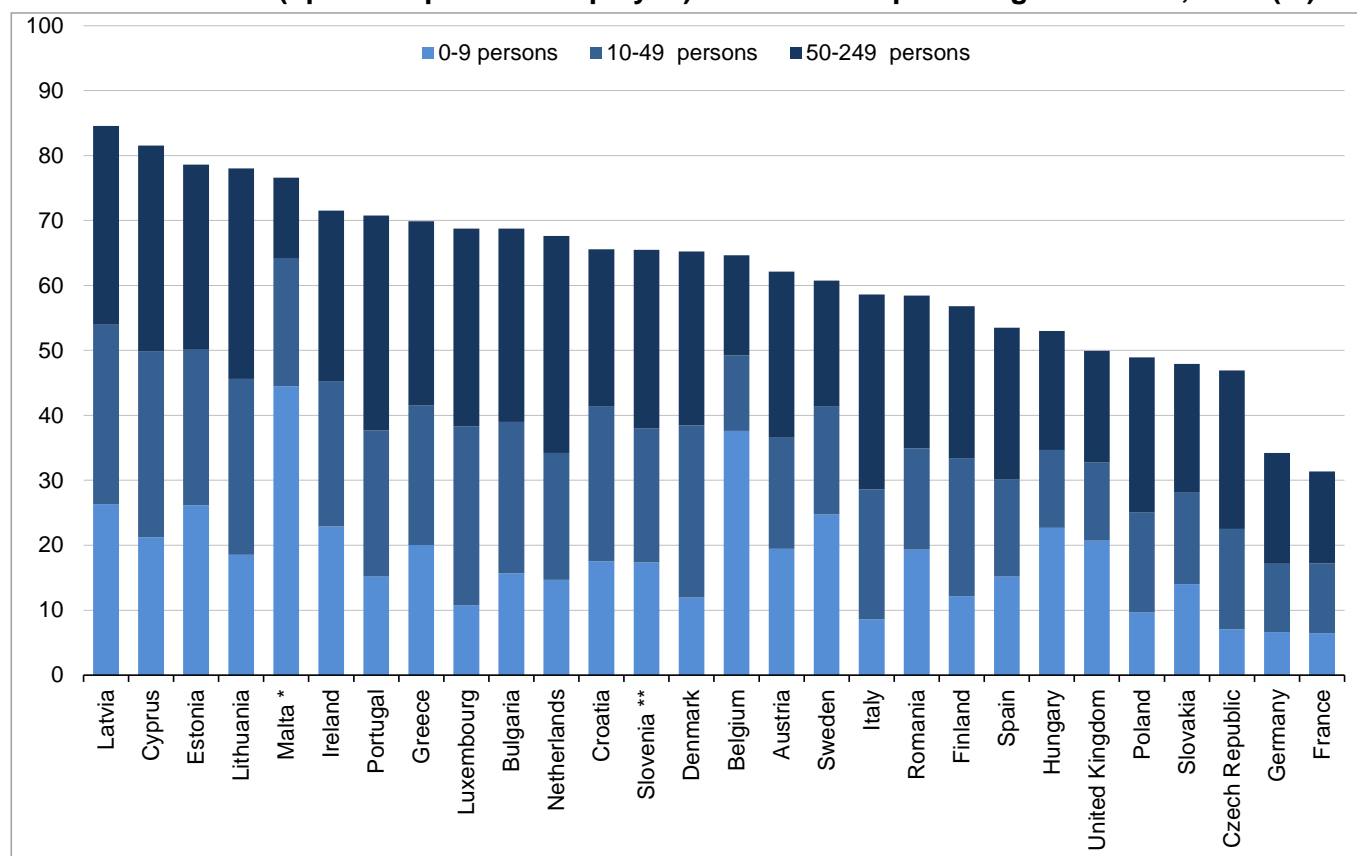
Highest share of intra-EU imports by SMEs in Latvia and Cyprus

In the vast majority of Member States, at least half the value of intra-EU imports of goods comes from SMEs. In particular, SMEs are responsible for more than three-quarters of total import value in **Latvia** (85%), **Cyprus** (82%), **Estonia** (79%), **Lithuania** (78%) and **Malta** (77% in 2013). Only in **France** (31%), **Germany** (34%), the **Czech Republic** (47%), **Slovakia** (48%) and **Poland** (49%), SMEs account for less than half of the imports.

From all SME size classes, micro-enterprises are the largest contributors to intra-EU imports in five Member States: **Malta** (where micro-enterprises accounted for 45% of total intra-EU imports value in 2013), **Belgium** (38%), **Sweden** (25%), **Hungary** (23%) and the **United Kingdom** (21%). In contrast, in five Member States they generate less than 10% of total value: in **France**, **Germany**, the **Czech Republic** (all around 7%), **Italy** (9%) and **Poland** (10%).

Just as for exports, more than 90% of enterprises importing intra-EU are SMEs in all Member States, ranging from 91% in the **Czech Republic** to almost 100% in **Belgium**.

Share of SMEs (up to 249 persons employed) in intra-EU imports of goods value, 2015 (%)



* Malta: 2013 data

** Slovenia: 2014 data

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

Data on trade in goods by enterprise characteristics presented in the news releases are for 2015. The shares are calculated from the total number of enterprises for which the size class is known.

Enterprises are classified in different categories according to the number of persons employed.

SMEs stand for small and medium-sized enterprises with fewer than 250 persons employed. SMEs are further subdivided into:

- micro-enterprises: fewer than 10 persons employed;
- small enterprises: 10 to 49 persons employed;
- medium sized enterprises: 50 to 249 persons employed.

Intra-EU trade refers to all transactions (imports and exports) occurring between the EU Member States.

For more information

Eurostat [website section](#) dedicated to trade in goods statistics.

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

Eurostat [Statistics Explained](#) article on international trade by enterprise characteristics.

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Intra-EU exports by size of enterprise, 2015

	Enterprises by size (number of persons employed):							
	Total SMEs		Of which:					
			0 - 9 persons		10 - 49 persons		50 - 249 persons	
	% of enterprises	% of value	% of enterprises	% of value	% of enterprises	% of value	% of enterprises	% of value
EU	97.8	44.6	65.0	13.2	24.8	11.2	8.0	20.2
Belgium	98.7	70.2	77.7	46.2	16.5	10.6	4.6	13.4
Bulgaria	97.9	50.3	60.6	12.3	26.4	14.1	10.8	23.9
Czech Republic	90.2	35.6	22.9	5.1	37.2	9.7	30.1	20.9
Denmark	98.2	54.4	64.1	8.4	26.3	18.6	7.8	27.4
Germany	96.7	26.1	56.3	3.8	29.3	7.1	11.1	15.3
Estonia	98.9	68.1	74.0	17.0	19.2	18.8	5.7	32.3
Ireland	98.0	32.3	70.6	11.8	20.8	6.8	6.7	13.8
Greece	97.8	59.5	60.5	18.3	28.5	17.3	8.8	23.9
Spain	98.5	51.1	69.7	12.8	22.8	14.3	6.0	24.0
France	95.1	21.4	52.7	3.7	30.1	6.3	12.4	11.4
Croatia	92.3	58.5	36.7	16.7	33.0	13.9	22.6	27.9
Italy	98.8	54.4	61.5	5.4	30.9	18.1	6.4	30.9
Cyprus	98.5	88.1	69.1	21.0	22.1	26.8	7.3	40.2
Latvia	98.8	81.2	65.6	17.9	25.9	26.0	7.3	37.4
Lithuania	98.1	60.8	57.4	14.7	31.0	17.1	9.7	28.9
Luxembourg	95.2	61.0	47.2	9.2	31.7	21.2	16.3	30.6
Hungary	98.2	46.7	69.6	25.9	22.0	5.9	6.6	15.0
Malta*	95.2	56.6	57.3	36.7	23.1	5.4	14.8	14.5
Netherlands	98.9	66.5	79.0	11.9	15.3	19.7	4.6	34.9
Austria	97.8	53.2	66.7	16.5	24.0	13.0	7.2	23.7
Poland	97.8	35.0	70.7	6.2	19.6	9.2	7.5	19.6
Portugal	98.9	56.0	65.4	9.8	26.7	17.3	6.8	28.9
Romania	95.2	45.4	46.3	19.3	32.6	8.2	16.2	17.9
Slovenia	99.1	50.9	81.5	13.0	13.5	14.3	4.1	23.6
Slovakia	98.4	29.9	70.4	8.8	21.1	6.8	6.8	14.2
Finland	96.9	38.1	64.6	4.1	23.7	9.5	8.6	24.4
Sweden	98.1	44.0	68.8	18.5	22.7	8.9	6.6	16.6
United Kingdom	97.8	51.1	65.0	22.7	25.0	9.8	7.7	18.6

* Malta: 2013 data are used due to some confidential data for 2014 and 2015
The source dataset is available [here](#).

Intra-EU imports by size of enterprise, 2015

	Enterprises by size (number of persons employed):							
	Total SMEs		<i>Of which:</i>					
			0 - 9 persons		10 - 49 persons		50 - 249 persons	
	% of enterprises	% of value	% of enterprises	% of value	% of enterprises	% of value	% of enterprises	% of value
EU	98.6	50.9	75.3	14.9	18.3	14.7	5.0	21.2
Belgium	99.5	64.6	90.0	37.6	7.9	11.6	1.6	15.4
Bulgaria	98.5	68.8	68.2	15.7	22.7	23.3	7.6	29.8
Czech Republic	91.2	46.9	32.6	7.0	35.3	15.5	23.3	24.4
Denmark	98.7	65.2	76.0	12.0	18.1	26.5	4.7	26.8
Germany	97.8	34.2	66.7	6.6	24.1	10.5	7.0	17.1
Estonia	98.9	78.6	79.0	26.1	15.2	24.0	4.8	28.5
Ireland	99.0	71.5	80.1	22.9	15.4	22.4	3.4	26.3
Greece	98.3	69.9	71.2	20.0	21.2	21.5	5.9	28.4
Spain	98.9	53.5	78.7	15.2	16.2	14.9	4.0	23.4
France	95.4	31.3	60.4	6.5	24.1	10.7	10.9	14.2
Croatia	94.4	65.6	44.0	17.5	34.0	23.8	16.3	24.2
Italy	99.1	58.6	73.0	8.6	21.7	20.0	4.5	30.0
Cyprus	99.3	81.5	82.6	21.2	13.9	28.7	2.8	31.7
Latvia	98.7	84.6	71.9	26.3	21.4	27.6	5.4	30.6
Lithuania	98.5	78.0	64.5	18.5	26.3	27.1	7.7	32.4
Luxembourg	95.6	68.8	44.5	10.7	38.2	27.5	12.9	30.5
Hungary	98.6	53.0	73.0	22.7	20.5	12.0	5.2	18.3
Malta*	98.9	76.6	74.6	44.5	19.1	19.7	5.1	12.4
Netherlands	99.2	67.6	85.2	14.7	10.9	19.5	3.0	33.4
Austria	99.1	62.1	79.4	19.5	16.4	17.1	3.2	25.6
Poland	98.2	48.9	74.6	9.7	17.6	15.4	5.9	23.9
Portugal	99.3	70.8	79.9	15.2	16.0	22.5	3.4	33.1
Romania	98.0	58.4	65.7	19.3	24.6	15.6	7.8	23.5
Slovenia**	99.2	65.5	84.2	17.3	12.0	20.7	3.1	27.4
Slovakia	99.0	47.9	80.3	14.0	14.9	14.1	3.8	19.8
Finland	97.7	56.8	75.7	12.2	16.9	21.2	5.1	23.4
Sweden	99.0	60.7	83.2	24.7	12.7	16.6	3.1	19.4
United Kingdom	97.7	49.9	66.2	20.7	24.1	12.1	7.3	17.2

* Malta: 2013 data are used due to some confidential data for 2014 and 2015

** Slovenia: 2014 data are used due to some confidential data for 2015

The source dataset is available [here](#).