

International trade in goods in 2018

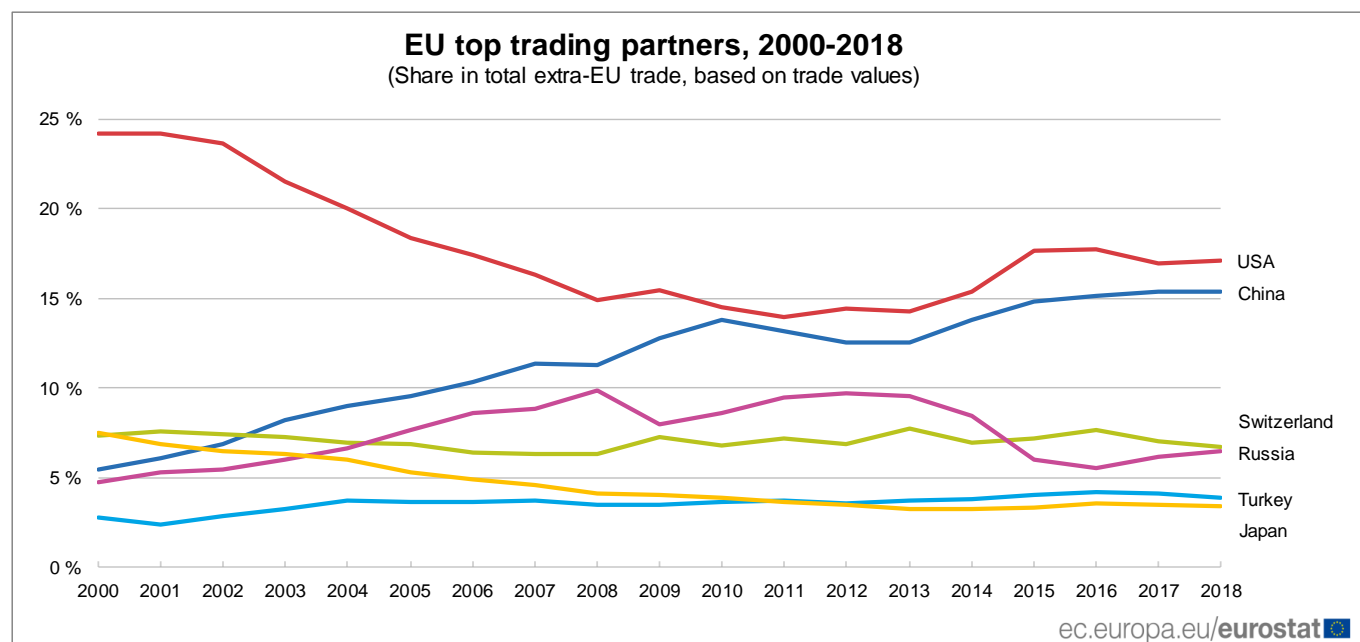
A third of EU trade is with the United States and China

At Member State level, trade within the EU largely prevails

In 2018, the **United States** (€674 billion, or 17.1% of total extra-EU trade in goods, i.e. the sum of exports and imports) and **China** (€605 bn, or 15.4%) continued to be the two main goods trading partners of the **European Union** (EU), well ahead of **Switzerland** (€265 bn, or 6.7%), **Russia** (€254 bn, or 6.4%), **Turkey** (€153 bn, or 3.9%) and **Japan** (€135 bn, or 3.4%).

However, the trends observed over time differ for these top trading partners of the **EU**. After recording a significant and almost continuous fall from nearly 25% in 2000 to 14% in 2011, the share of the **United States** in **EU** total trade in goods increased again to reach 17% in 2018. The share of **China** has almost tripled since 2000, rising from just over 5% to more than 15% in 2018. The share of **Russia** decreased from nearly 10% in 2012 to around 7% in 2018. The share of **Japan** has fallen by more than half since 2000 while the shares of **Switzerland** and **Turkey** remained relatively unchanged over the period.

These data are issued by **Eurostat**, the statistical office of the **European Union**. A selection of [infographics](#) on international trade in goods is also available on the Eurostat website.

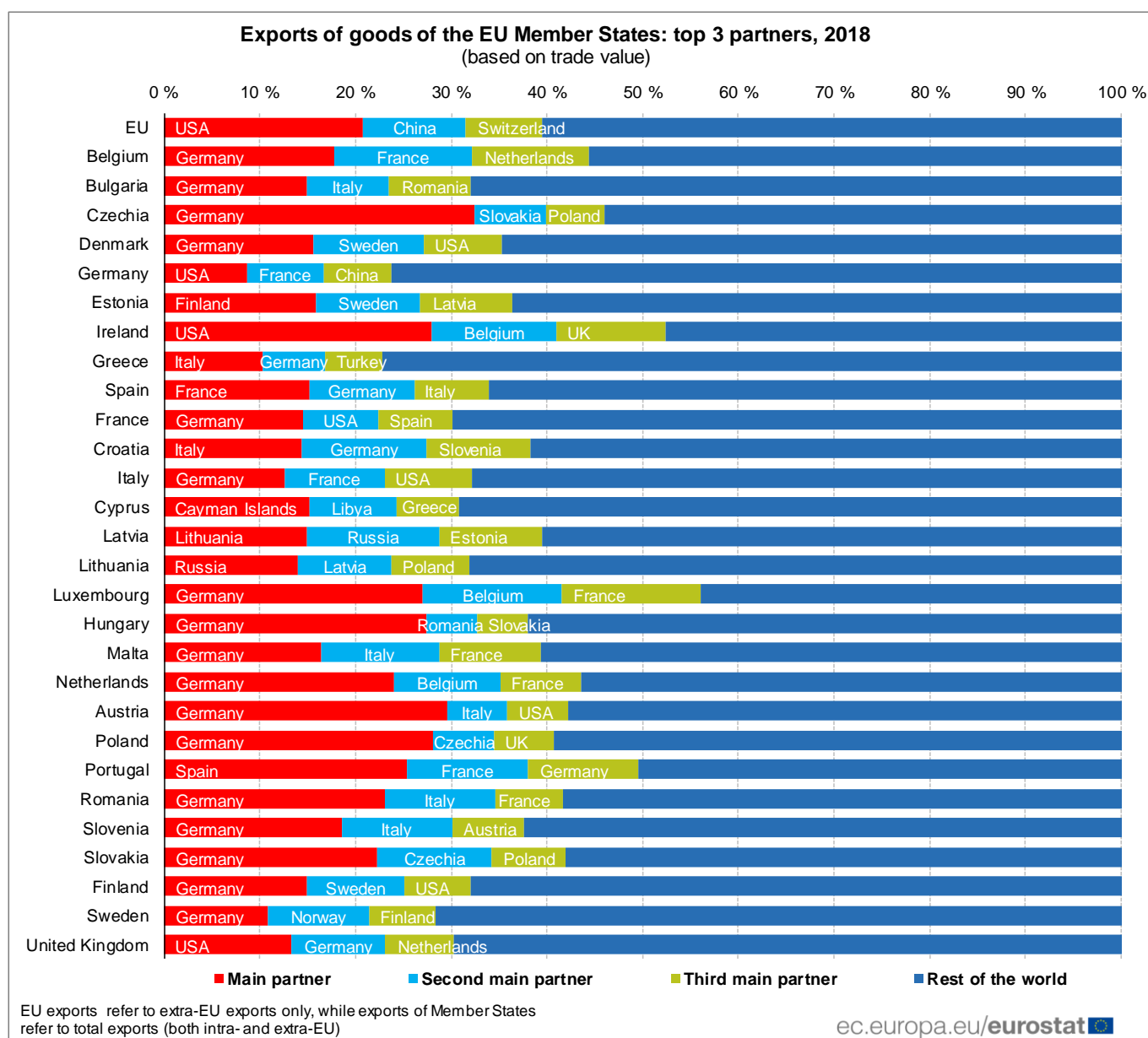


The source dataset can be found [here](#).

Germany, main export destination for a majority of Member States

In almost all EU Member States, the main partner for exports of goods in 2018 was another member of the European Union, except for **Germany, Ireland, and the United Kingdom** (the United States was the main destination of exports) as well as **Cyprus** (Cayman Islands) and **Lithuania** (Russia). Overall, **Germany** was the main destination of goods exports for 17 Member States.

In some Member States, over a quarter of exports went to one single partner. This partner was Germany for **Czechia** (32% of exports of goods), **Austria** (30%), **Poland** (28%), **Hungary** and **Luxembourg** (both 27%), the United States for **Ireland** (28%) and Spain for **Portugal** (25%). For extra-EU trade, that is trade with non-EU countries, the 3 main destinations of EU exports in 2018 were the **United States** (21% of all extra-EU exports), **China** (11%) and **Switzerland** (8%).

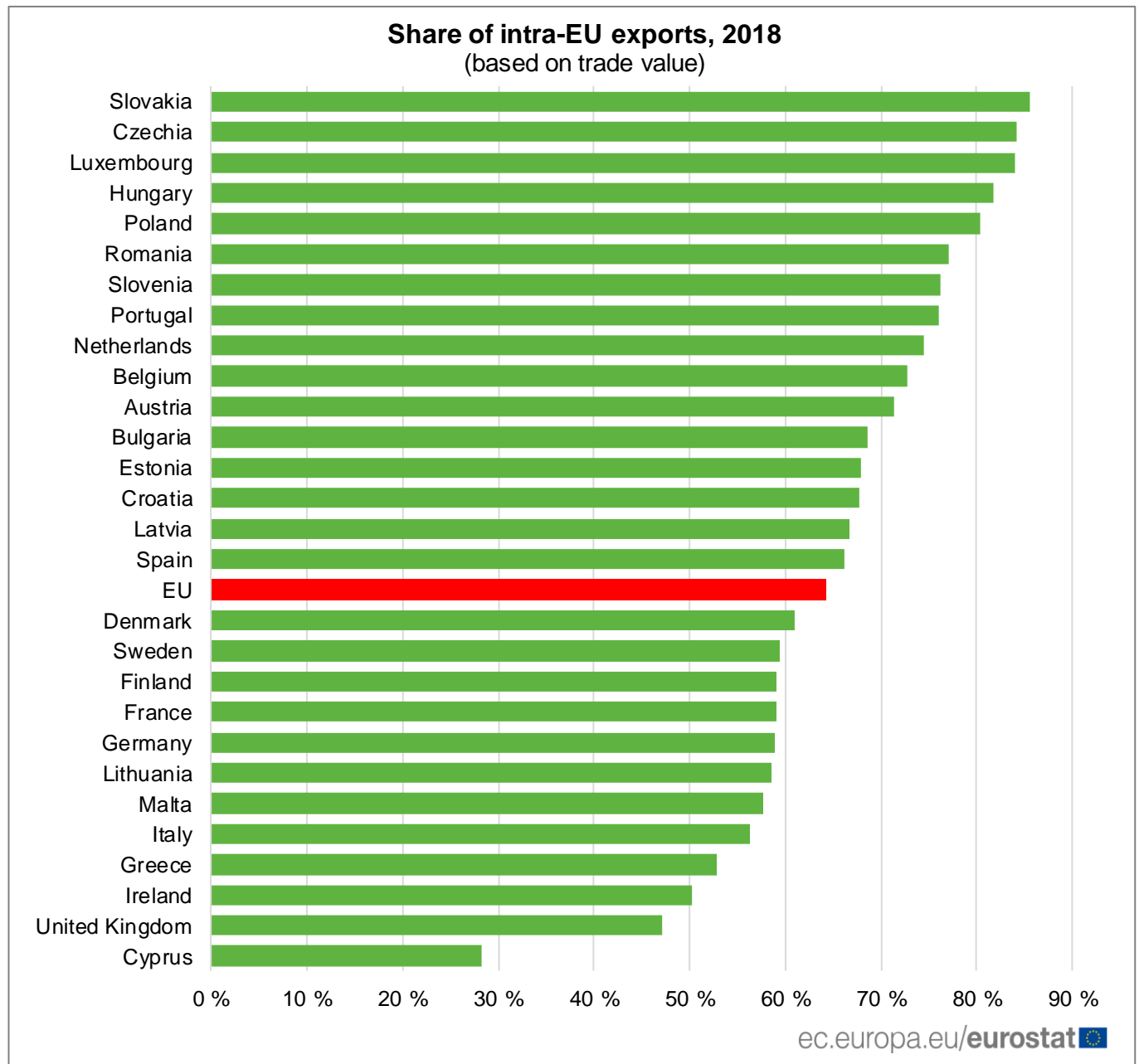


The source dataset can be found [here](#).

Intra-EU exports prevail in all Member States apart from Cyprus and the United Kingdom

In 2018, the 28 EU Member States exported a total of €5 474 bn of goods, of which €3 518 bn (or 64%) were destined for another Member State of the EU (intra-EU trade).

With more than three-quarters of goods exported to other EU Member States, **Slovakia** (86% intra-EU in total exports), **Czechia** and **Luxembourg** (both 84%), **Hungary** (82%), **Poland** (80%), **Romania** (77%), **Slovenia** and **Portugal** (both 76%) recorded the highest shares of intra-EU exports in 2018. At the opposite end of the scale, **Cyprus** (28%) and the **United Kingdom** (47%) were the only Member States that exported more goods to non-EU countries than within the EU in 2018.



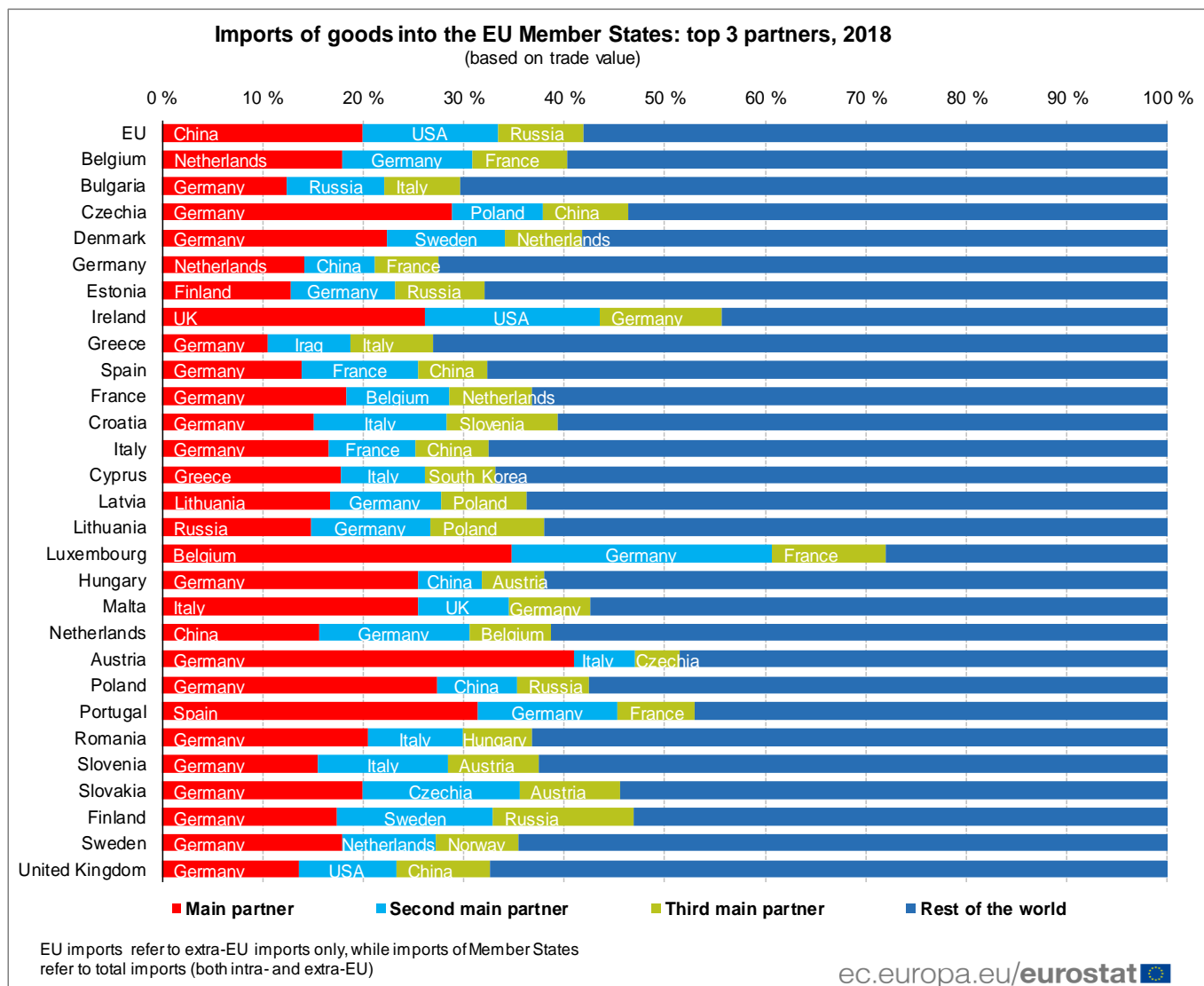
The source dataset can be found [here](#).

Germany, also main source of imports for majority of EU Member States

As for exports, the main partner for imports of goods in 2018 was another member of the European Union in all Member States except **Lithuania** (Russia was the main country of origin of goods imported) and the **Netherlands** (China). Overall, **Germany** was the main source of goods imports for 17 Member States.

In eight Member States, more than 25% of imports of goods came from a single partner country in 2018: **Austria** (41% of imports of goods originated from Germany), **Luxembourg** (35% from Belgium), **Portugal** (31% from Spain), **Czechia** (29% from Germany), **Poland** (27% from Germany), **Ireland** (26% from the United Kingdom), **Hungary** (25% from Germany) and **Malta** (25% from Italy).

For extra-EU trade, the main country of origin of goods imported into the EU in 2018 remained **China** (20% of all extra-EU imports), followed by the **United States** (13%) and **Russia** (8%).

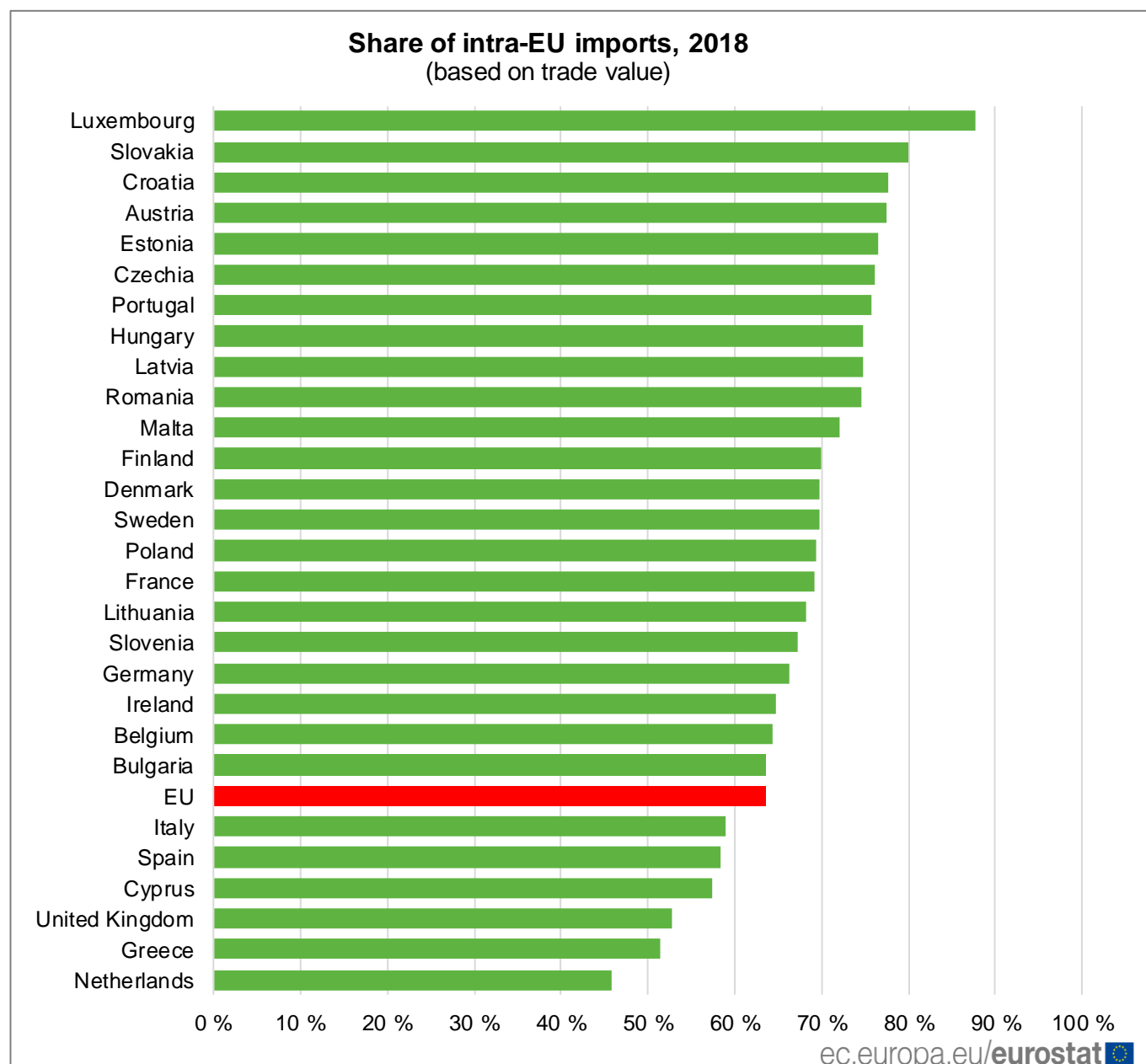


The source dataset can be found [here](#).

Intra-EU imports prevail in almost all Member States

In 2018, the 28 EU Member States imported a total of €5 426 bn of goods, of which €3 446 bn (or 64%) came from another EU Member State (intra-EU trade).

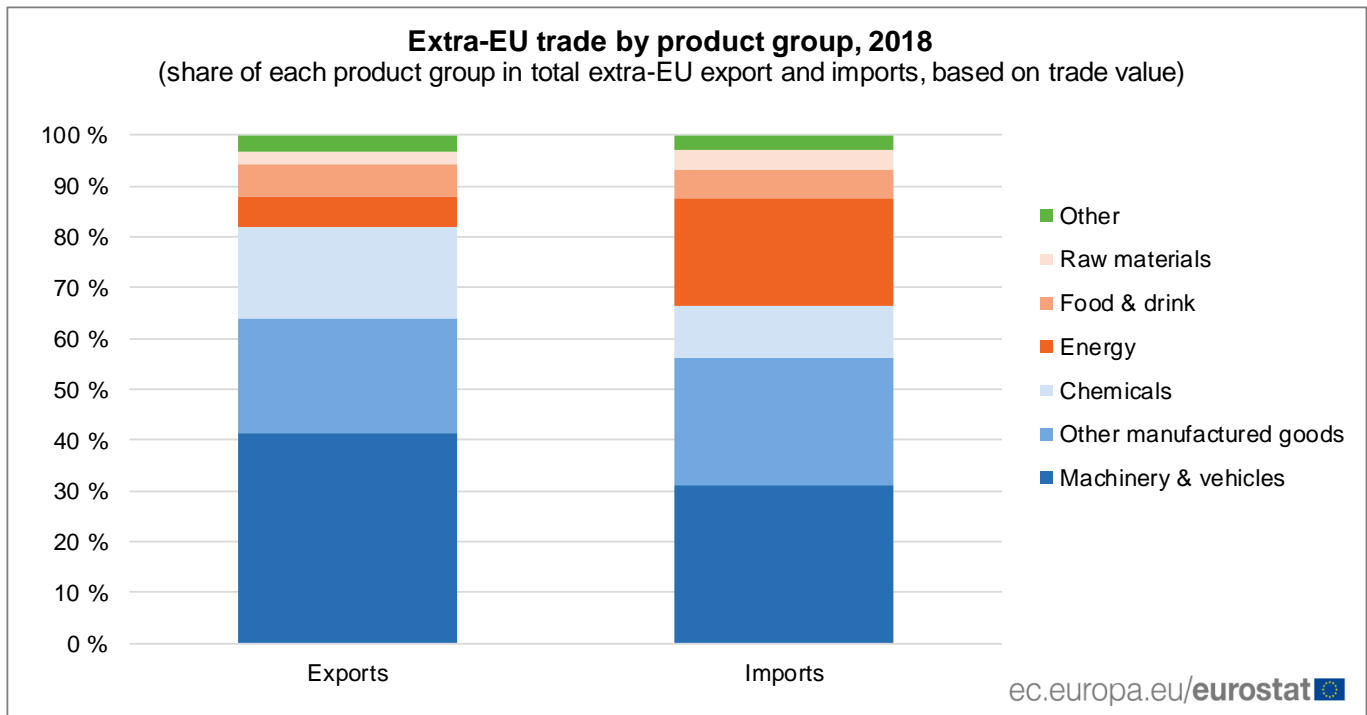
At least three-quarters of total imports of goods originated from another EU Member State in **Luxembourg** (88%), **Slovakia** (80%), **Croatia** and **Austria** (both 78%), **Estonia** (77%), **Czechia** and **Portugal** (both 76%), **Hungary**, **Latvia** and **Romania** (all 75%). In contrast, the **Netherlands** (46%) was the only Member State where less than half of the imports came from within the EU. This is largely due to the so-called 'Rotterdam effect' (see country note).



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

Machinery & transport equipment dominated both EU exports and imports

In 2018, machinery and transport equipment continued to play a major role in EU trade in goods with the rest of the world, accounting for 41% of total extra-EU exports and 31% of imports. Other manufactured goods (22% of extra-EU exports and 25% of extra-EU imports) as well as chemicals (18% of extra-EU exports and 10% of extra-EU imports) also played a significant role in EU trade in goods in 2018. Energy made up a minor share of extra-EU exports (6%), but accounted for 21% of all imports.



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

Geographical information

The **European Union (EU)** includes Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechia, 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

This News Release is based on data available on 19 March 2019. These 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.

Products are classified according to the Standard international trade classification (SITC), Revision 4. Other manufactured goods includes articles made of leather, rubber and wood, paper, textiles, metals, building fixtures and fittings, furniture, clothes, shoes and accessories, scientific instruments, clocks, watches and cameras.

As data for all EU Member States are available according to a harmonised methodology, in theory the intra-EU balance should be 0. However, bilateral comparisons have revealed persistent discrepancies in the mutual Member States' intra-EU trade, called **asymmetries**. For example, this means that, for a given period and a specific product X, exports from France to Austria do not equal imports of Austria from France. There are different reasons for these asymmetries, including methodological issues (such as CIF/FOB valuation, deliveries to vessels and aircraft, system of threshold for providing statistical information) but also mismatch in data reporting.

Country note:

Dutch trade flows are over-estimated because of the so-called '**Rotterdam effect**' (or **quasi-transit** trade): that is goods bound for other EU countries arrive in Dutch ports and, according to EU rules, are recorded as extra-EU imports by the Netherlands (the country where goods are released for free circulation). This in turn increases the intra-EU flows from the Netherlands to those Member States to which the goods are re-exported. To a lesser extent, Belgian figures are similarly overestimated.

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 in goods statistics.

Eurostat [infographic](#) on EU international trade in goods in 2018.

Issued by: **Eurostat Press Office**

Romina BRONDINO

Tel: +352-4301-33 444

eurostat-pressoffice@ec.europa.eu



[@EU_Eurostat](#)



[EurostatStatistics](#)



ec.europa.eu/eurostat

Production of data:

Anne BERTHOMIEU-CRISTALLO

Tel: +352-4301-33 616

Anton ROODHUIJZEN

Tel: +352-4301-35 792

estat-etfree@ec.europa.eu



Media requests: Eurostat media support / Tel: +352-4301-33 408 / eurostat-mediasupport@ec.europa.eu