

EU-27 consistent world leader in trade of food and drink

Brazil and Argentina become two leading sources of food and drink imports to EU-27

The European Union is by far the major world player in both imports and exports of food and drink. The sum of exports and imports in 2007 (the most recent year for which a comparison is possible) was EUR 138 billion, compared with EUR 115 billion for the second largest player, the United States.

Food and drink made up 5.2% of both imports and exports for the EU-27 in 2008. The value of EU-27 food and drink exports rose by 10.2% between 2007 and 2008, compared to a rise in imports of 6.1% over the same period.

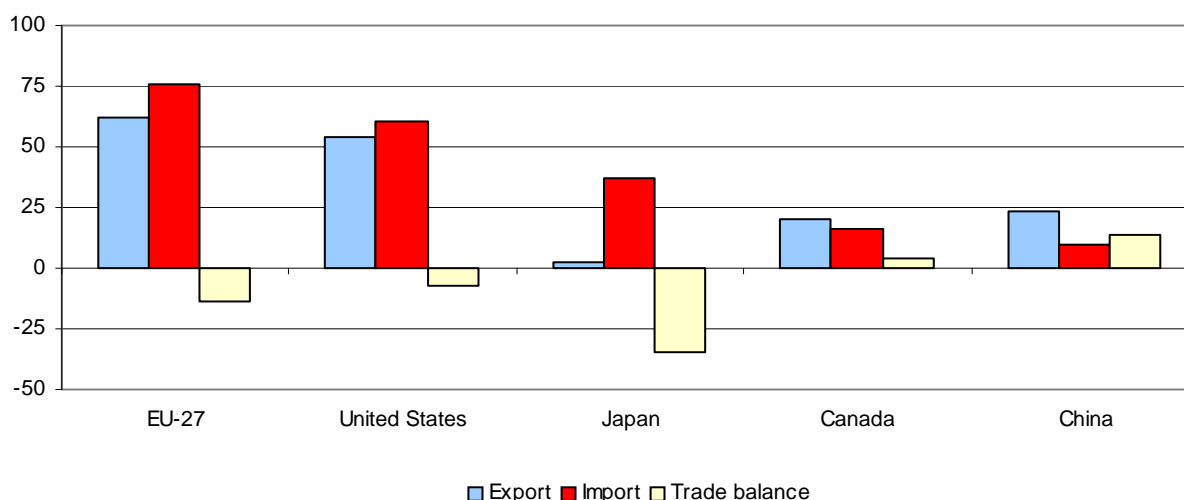
The United States was the most important trading partner for EU-27 exports in 2008. Together, the United States and Russia accounted for just over a quarter of EU-27 exports. For EU-27 imports, however, Brazil and Argentina were the main trading partners, accounting together for just over a fifth of EU-27 imports in 2008.

France remained the largest contributor to EU-27 food and drink exports, with around one fifth of the total extra EU-27 trade. However, the greatest growth in exports between 2000 and 2008 was registered by Estonia, Romania, Lithuania and especially by Latvia, with a growth of almost 35% per year on average.

A major growth area for EU-27 exports of food and drink between 2000 and 2008 was beverages, which grew by over EUR 5 billion, leading to a trade surplus for this product group of EUR 12.4 billion in 2008.

'Vegetables and fruit' and 'fish and crustaceans' were by far the largest two product groups for EU-27 imports of food in 2008. However, the largest growth rate in imports between 2000 and 2008 was recorded for cereals and cereal preparations.

Graph 1: EU and other major players in worldwide trade in food and drink, 2007 - value in billion euro



Source: Eurostat ([ext_lt_intertrd](#))

Value of both imports and exports of food and drink increased strongly between 2004 and 2008

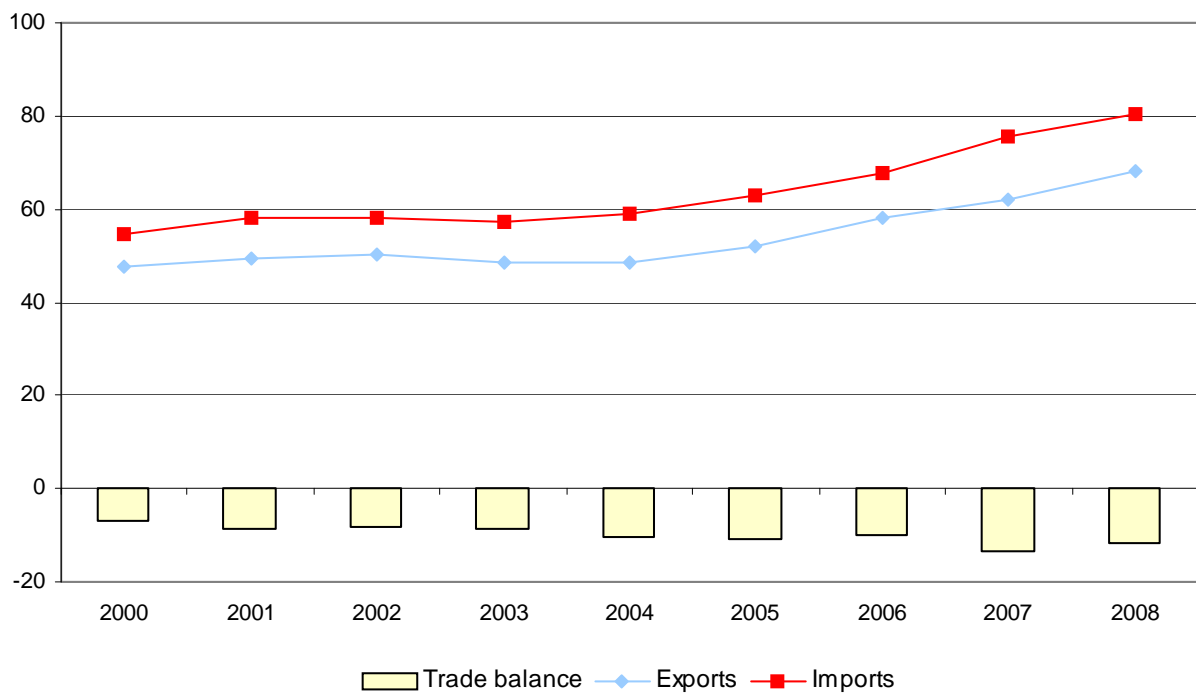
The value of EU-27 imports and exports of food and drink remained largely stable between 2000 and 2004, before both rising by around 40% between 2004 and 2008.

A deficit was recorded in every year; the overall EU-27 trade deficit in food and drink products increased by 67% between 2000 and 2008. In particular the deficits in fish and crustaceans and in vegetables and fruit recorded large increases over the period.

However, large increases in exports of beverages and cereals were also recorded. As a result the overall deficit in food and drink remained below 10% of the sum of imports and exports across the period.

The second largest world player, the United States, also showed a deficit on trade in food and drink in 2007 (the most recent year for which a comparison is possible), while Japan recorded the largest deficit of any country (EUR 35 bn) on a much lower overall total.

Graph 2: Evolution of extra EU-27 trade of food and drink, 2000-2008 - value in billion euro



Source: Eurostat ([tet00005](#))

Strong rise in beverages exports outstripped by rise in vegetables and fruit imports

EU-27 exports of vegetables and fruit showed a strong average annual growth rate over 2000-2008, but this was greatly outweighed by the growth in import figures, which led to an increase of the deficit for this product group over the period. Similarly, the value of exports of fish and crustaceans rose on average by over 5% per year between 2000 and 2008, but the higher

increase in import figures led to a deficit each year between 2006 and 2008.

With the exception of sugars and honey, exports of all the main food and drink product groups to countries outside EU-27 increased between 2000 and 2008. Vegetables and fruit recorded the largest average annual increase over the whole period, though the exports of cereals and cereal preparations rose by 48.6% in a single year

between 2007 and 2008. This sharp rise was driven by a strong increase in the value of exports of wheat and wheat/rye mixtures that year. Beverages remained the largest single export group throughout the period shown. However, the second and third largest product groups, cereals and cereal preparations and vegetables and fruit, both experienced higher average annual growth rates, and their share of total food and drink exports rose between 2000 and 2008.

The value of EU-27 imports of most product groups of food and drink rose between 2000 and

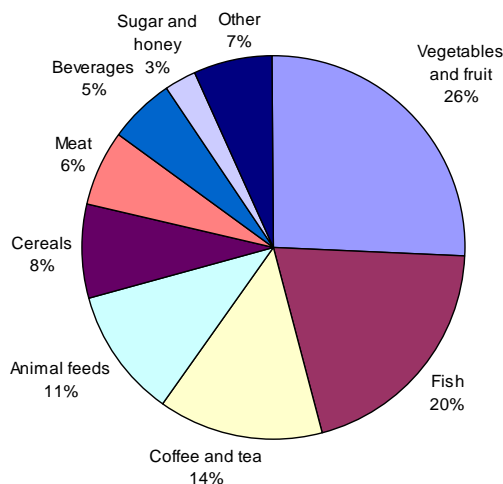
2008. The two largest groups, vegetables and fruit and fish and crustaceans, made up a quarter and a fifth respectively of total imports of food and drink throughout the period. As with exports, the value of imports of cereals and cereal preparations rose sharply between 2007 and 2008, though the increase was less remarkable than the equivalent rise in exports. Three smaller food and drink product groups, live animals, dairy products and eggs, and tobacco, experienced a fall in imports between 2000 and 2008. Imports of tobacco saw the largest absolute decrease (about EUR 1 billion).

Table 1: Extra EU-27 trade of food and drink, by main categories - value in million euro

SITC division	2000	2006	2007	2008	Average annual increase 2000-2008 (%)	Share in total food and drinks 2008 (%)	Share in total EU trade 2008 (%)
EXPORTS	47 720	57 959	62 015	68 319	4.6%	100.0%	5.2%
00 Live animals	1 054	1 042	1 096	1 103	0.6%	1.6%	0.1%
01 Meat and meat preparations	4 469	4 108	4 233	5 383	2.4%	7.9%	0.4%
02 Dairy products and eggs	5 525	5 159	6 368	6 745	2.5%	9.9%	0.5%
03 Fish and crustaceans	1 838	2 414	2 579	2 757	5.2%	4.0%	0.2%
04 Cereals and cereal preparations	6 066	5 824	6 716	9 978	6.4%	14.6%	0.8%
05 Vegetables and fruit	4 444	6 503	7 381	7 942	7.5%	11.6%	0.6%
06 Sugars and honey	2 387	2 905	1 571	1 474	-5.8%	2.2%	0.1%
07 Coffee, tea, cocoa and spices	2 506	3 655	4 041	4 271	6.9%	6.3%	0.3%
08 Feeding stuff for animals	1 386	1 913	2 146	2 436	7.3%	3.6%	0.2%
09 Miscellaneous edible products	4 040	5 910	6 425	6 780	6.7%	9.9%	0.5%
11 Beverages	11 685	16 203	17 116	16 750	4.6%	24.5%	1.3%
12 Tobacco	2 286	2 319	2 337	2 688	2.0%	3.9%	0.2%
IMPORTS	54 823	67 922	75 576	80 203	4.9%	100.0%	5.2%
00 Live animals	602	579	457	344	-6.8%	0.4%	0.0%
01 Meat and meat preparations	3 099	4 698	5 027	5 194	6.7%	6.5%	0.3%
02 Dairy products and eggs	924	729	758	745	-2.7%	0.9%	0.0%
03 Fish and crustaceans	11 716	15 822	16 124	16 082	4.0%	20.1%	1.0%
04 Cereals and cereal preparations	2 199	2 597	5 218	6 345	14.2%	7.9%	0.4%
05 Vegetables and fruit	13 813	18 604	20 495	20 703	5.2%	25.8%	1.3%
06 Sugars and honey	1 652	2 246	2 181	2 361	4.6%	2.9%	0.2%
07 Coffee, tea, cocoa and spices	7 956	8 739	9 741	11 110	4.3%	13.9%	0.7%
08 Feeding stuff for animals	5 569	6 000	7 011	8 732	5.8%	10.9%	0.6%
09 Miscellaneous edible products	1 525	1 732	1 938	2 305	5.3%	2.9%	0.1%
11 Beverages	2 845	4 137	4 552	4 397	5.6%	5.5%	0.3%
12 Tobacco	2 863	2 020	2 068	1 875	-5.2%	2.3%	0.1%
TRADE BALANCE	-7 103	-9 963	-13 561	-11 884			
00 Live animals	452	463	640	759			
01 Meat and meat preparations	1 370	-590	-793	189			
02 Dairy products and eggs	4 600	4 430	5 609	6 000			
03 Fish and crustaceans	-9 878	-13 407	-13 545	-13 325			
04 Cereals and cereal preparations	3 868	3 227	1 498	3 632			
05 Vegetables and fruit	-9 369	-12 101	-13 114	-12 761			
06 Sugars and honey	735	660	-610	-887			
07 Coffee, tea, cocoa and spices	-5 450	-5 084	-5 700	-6 839			
08 Feeding stuff for animals	-4 184	-4 087	-4 865	-6 296			
09 Miscellaneous edible products	2 515	4 177	4 486	4 475			
11 Beverages	8 841	12 066	12 564	12 353			
12 Tobacco	-577	299	268	813			

Source: Eurostat ([DS_018995](#))

Graph 3: Extra EU-27 imports of food and drink, by category, 2008 - % of total value



Source: Eurostat ([DS_018995](#))

While vegetables and fruit made up an eighth of EU-27 exports in 2008, they made up over a quarter of imports. Well over half these imports consisted of fresh or dried fruit and nuts, with fresh and frozen vegetables making up around one sixth. Turkey was the main origin for fruit and nuts and their products throughout the period, followed by the United States, Brazil and South Africa. Turkey, the United States and South Africa chiefly exported fresh fruit and nuts to EU-27, whereas Brazil's largest category was fruit and vegetable juices. South Africa recorded the highest growth rate in this category of trade, with an increase of over 50% between 2000 and 2008.

The next largest imported product group in 2008 was fish and crustaceans. Half of this value was made up of fresh and frozen fish, while crustaceans made up one quarter. Imports from Norway, largely of fresh and dried fish, made up just over one sixth of the total fish and crustacean imports to EU-27. China recorded almost a tripling in value of fish exports to EU-27 between 2000 and 2008 and replaced Iceland as the second largest source of these imports in 2006.

Imports of coffee and tea were dominated by coffee, the value of which was almost ten times that of tea imports. Brazil was by far the most important source of unroasted coffee in 2008, followed by Vietnam and Colombia. Vietnam's exports of unroasted coffee to EU-27 more than doubled between 2000 and 2008, the fastest growth rate recorded among the major partners in this trade. By a large margin the major source of roasted coffee imports to EU-27 in 2008 was Switzerland. Switzerland was also the largest source of these imports over the period 2000

to 2008, but the growth it recorded in the last three years was remarkable, a rise from EUR 119 million in 2006 to EUR 414 million in 2008.

These three product groups alone made up 60% of food and drink imports to EU-27.

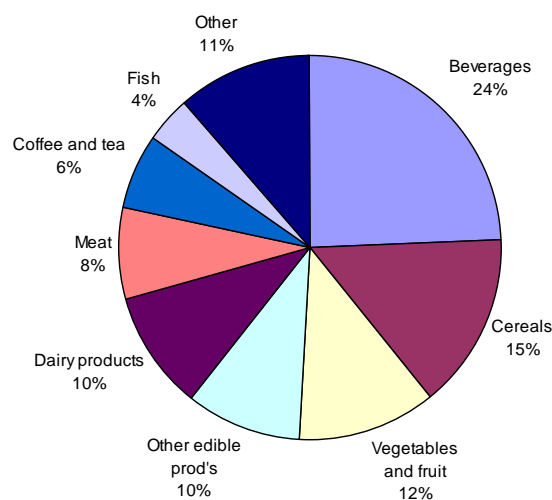
Beverages were the largest single product group in EU-27 exports, the largest part due to the export of alcoholic beverages. In 2008, still wine accounted for one third of EU-27 export of alcoholic beverages, while whiskies accounted for almost one fifth. France was by far the largest exporter of alcoholic beverages, exporting almost EUR 2 billion of still wine, EUR 1.2 billion of grape-based spirits and EUR 775 million of sparkling wine. The United Kingdom was the second largest contributor, exporting EUR 2.3 billion of whiskies, almost 90% of the EU-27 total for this product in 2008.

Cereals and cereal preparations were the second largest category of EU-27 food and drink exports in 2008, and well over half of these exports came from France, Germany and Italy combined. France alone exported 29% of the EU-27 total for this category, mostly unmilled wheat.

Netherlands, Italy and Spain together accounted for just over half of vegetables and fruit exports in 2008. Vegetables accounted for 55% of the EU-27 total of these exports.

While a relatively small contributor to overall exports, dairy products are noteworthy as being the product group with the highest relative surplus.

Graph 4: Extra EU-27 exports of food and drink, by category, 2008 - % of total value



Source: Eurostat ([DS_018995](#))

United States falls to third place as source of EU-27 food and drink imports

Table 2: Extra EU-27 trade of food and drink, top 20 trading partners - value in million euro

	EXPORTS							IMPORTS						
	2000	2006	2007	2008	Average annual growth rate 2000-2008	Share in EU-27 food and drinks exports 2008	Share in total EU-27 exports with that country 2008	2000	2006	2007	2008	Average annual growth rate 2000-2008	Share in EU-27 food and drinks imports 2008	Share in total EU-27 imports with that country 2008
EU-27	47 720	57 959	62 015	68 319	4.6%	100.0%	5.2%	54 823	67 922	75 576	80 203	4.9%	100.0%	5.2%
United States	9 229	11 353	11 189	9 980	1.0%	14.6%	4.0%	6 143	5 491	5 871	5 975	-0.3%	7.5%	3.2%
Brazil	480	448	522	607	3.0%	0.9%	2.3%	5 627	7 197	9 107	9 211	6.4%	11.5%	25.9%
Russia	2 823	5 918	6 757	7 561	13.1%	11.1%	7.2%	727	800	894	854	2.0%	1.1%	0.5%
Switzerland	3 102	4 137	4 378	5 025	6.2%	7.4%	5.1%	1 262	2 049	2 403	2 717	10.1%	3.4%	3.4%
Argentina	186	62	76	85	-9.4%	0.1%	1.4%	3 682	4 927	5 934	7 227	8.8%	9.0%	68.6%
Norway	1 184	1 914	2 208	2 413	9.3%	3.5%	5.5%	2 570	3 016	3 061	3 005	2.0%	3.7%	3.3%
China	439	884	1 190	1 327	14.8%	1.9%	1.7%	1 525	2 809	3 361	3 558	11.2%	4.4%	1.4%
Turkey	546	785	990	1 174	10.0%	1.7%	2.2%	1 946	3 019	3 048	3 138	6.1%	3.9%	6.8%
Japan	4 033	3 643	3 733	3 907	-0.4%	5.7%	9.2%	118	116	111	119	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%
Canada	1 399	1 850	1 895	1 946	4.2%	2.8%	7.5%	1 289	1 325	1 420	1 448	1.5%	1.8%	6.1%
Morocco	573	510	846	1 156	9.2%	1.7%	8.0%	1 136	1 591	1 940	1 891	6.6%	2.4%	22.6%
Thailand	420	383	447	443	0.7%	0.6%	5.2%	1 639	1 711	2 055	2 394	4.8%	3.0%	13.9%
South Africa	303	555	649	696	10.9%	1.0%	3.4%	1 372	1 799	2 005	2 060	5.2%	2.6%	9.3%
Ukraine	431	839	1 051	1 485	16.7%	2.2%	5.9%	160	386	377	1 043	26.4%	1.3%	7.3%
Australia	771	1 115	1 217	1 332	7.1%	1.9%	5.3%	1 080	1 355	1 377	1 176	1.1%	1.5%	10.5%
Chile	92	86	111	112	2.5%	0.2%	2.2%	1 051	2 042	2 197	2 362	10.7%	2.9%	20.9%
Algeria	1 154	1 238	1 446	2 196	8.4%	3.2%	14.3%	29	47	47	47	6.2%	0.1%	0.2%
Vietnam	111	175	233	305	13.4%	0.4%	9.1%	605	1 334	1 701	1 902	15.4%	2.4%	22.2%
New Zealand	102	147	164	182	7.4%	0.3%	6.2%	1 545	1 947	1 933	1 956	3.0%	2.4%	64.9%
Cote d'Ivoire	216	251	282	341	5.9%	0.5%	23.0%	1 465	1 392	1 529	1 729	2.1%	2.2%	54.8%

Source: Eurostat ([tet00041](#), [DS_018995](#))

Over the period 2000 to 2008, the United States was the main recipient for EU-27 food and drink exports. Although the value of this trade remained relatively stable throughout the period, its proportion of total EU-27 exports fell from 2000 to 2008. In every year from 2001 onwards, well over half the value of food and drink exports to the United States was made up of alcoholic beverages, driving the large EU-27 surplus in food and drink with the United States across the period.

In contrast, Russia's share of EU-27 exports of food and drink rose between 2000 and 2008, driven in part by an eight-fold increase in the value of exports of alcoholic beverages, and a four-fold increase in exports of fruit and vegetables. Japan, which was the second largest destination for EU-27 food and drink exports in 2000, was replaced in this position by Switzerland in 2003 and then by Russia in 2004.

EU-27 food and drink exports to Ukraine also grew very strongly, more than tripling between 2000 and 2008. This rise was in large part driven by a remarkable 30-fold increase in the value of EU-27 exports of meat (other than beef).

On the import side, the United States stands out as being the only major trading partner whose exports of food and drink to EU-27 fell in value between 2000 and 2008. Although the United States was EU-27's main source of these imports in 2000, Brazil took this place in every year thereafter. The rise between 2000 and 2008 in EU-27 food and drink imports from Brazil was mainly due to an increase in feeding stuff for animals (the single

largest category) as well as increases in imports of maize, meat and coffee.

In 2007 and 2008, Argentina also overtook the United States as a source of EU-27 imports of food and drink. As with Brazil, by far the largest category was feeding stuff for animals. This category alone accounted for the major part of the growth between 2000 and 2008 in Argentinean exports of food and drink to EU-27. Food and drink products accounted for about two thirds of Argentina's total exports to EU-27 in 2008, feeding stuff for animals alone accounted for over a third of that total.

There was also very strong growth in EU-27 imports of food from Chile, the other South American country appearing in EU-27's top 20 trading partners for food and drink. In this case, though, the main part of the total increase between 2000 and 2008 was due to fruit and nuts, in particular grapes and apples, which together accounted for half of Chile's fruit and nuts exports to EU-27 in 2008.

The large value of food and drink imports to EU-27 from these three South American countries is reflected in the deficit of almost EUR 18 billion recorded in EU-27's food and drink trade with them in 2008.

China's exports of food and drink to EU-27 have also grown strongly over the period 2000-2008. In this instance, the largest component of the rise in imports was fruit and vegetables, followed by fish and crustaceans.

Table 3: Extra EU-27 trade of food and drink, by Member State - value in million euro

	Exports						Imports						Trade balance			
	2000	2006	2007	2008	Average annual growth rate 2000-2008 (%)	Share in food and drinks trade 2008 (%)	2000	2006	2007	2008	Average annual growth rate 2000-2008 (%)	Share in food and drinks trade 2008 (%)	2000	2006	2007	2008
EU-27	47 720	57 959	62 015	68 319	4.6%	100.0%	54 823	67 922	75 576	80 203	4.9%	100.0%	-7 103	-9 963	-13 561	-11 884
Belgium	2 037	2 938	3 284	3 718	7.8%	5.4%	3 545	4 741	5 265	6 109	7.0%	7.6%	-1 508	-1 803	-1 981	-2 391
Bulgaria	279	374	370	627	10.6%	0.9%	170	375	285	376	10.4%	0.5%	109	0	85	251
Czech Republic	258	289	281	299	1.9%	0.4%	453	279	311	335	-3.7%	0.4%	-195	10	-30	-35
Denmark	3 206	3 208	3 369	3 524	1.2%	5.2%	2 451	2 598	2 691	2 775	1.6%	3.5%	755	609	677	749
Germany	5 198	6 716	7 308	8 738	6.7%	12.8%	8 290	9 746	10 855	11 538	4.2%	14.4%	-3 092	-3 030	-3 547	-2 800
Estonia	57	183	270	244	20.0%	0.4%	73	73	78	84	1.6%	0.1%	-17	109	191	161
Ireland	1 890	1 841	1 844	1 461	-3.2%	2.1%	541	616	701	464	-1.9%	0.6%	1 349	1 225	1 143	997
Greece	777	814	860	905	1.9%	1.3%	537	971	1 152	1 156	10.1%	1.4%	241	-157	-292	-252
Spain	3 138	3 668	4 252	4 554	4.8%	6.7%	5 433	7 275	8 910	8 914	6.4%	11.1%	-2 296	-3 608	-4 658	-4 360
France	9 891	10 907	11 480	12 947	3.4%	19.0%	5 480	6 106	6 766	7 428	3.9%	9.3%	4 411	4 801	4 714	5 519
Italy	4 223	5 694	6 166	6 815	6.2%	10.0%	4 430	5 899	6 553	7 102	6.1%	8.9%	-207	-205	-387	-287
Cyprus	31	60	69	83	13.2%	0.1%	159	132	169	250	5.9%	0.3%	-128	-72	-100	-167
Latvia	41	208	268	446	34.6%	0.7%	69	119	138	169	11.8%	0.2%	-28	89	129	276
Lithuania	176	536	685	1 047	25.0%	1.5%	190	264	271	329	7.1%	0.4%	-14	272	414	718
Luxembourg	13	10	13	12	-0.2%	0.0%	61	61	59	49	-2.6%	0.1%	-48	-52	-46	-37
Hungary	663	802	752	914	4.1%	1.3%	385	208	251	278	-4.0%	0.3%	278	593	501	636
Malta	58	111	137	103	7.5%	0.2%	70	41	59	67	-0.5%	0.1%	-12	71	78	36
Netherlands	6 132	7 700	8 503	8 906	4.8%	13.0%	7 206	9 376	10 653	12 020	6.6%	15.0%	-1 074	-1 676	-2 150	-3 114
Austria	538	1 754	1 715	1 685	15.3%	2.5%	476	987	1 162	1 212	12.4%	1.5%	62	767	553	472
Poland	944	1 735	1 842	2 053	10.2%	3.0%	1 122	1 304	1 547	1 551	4.1%	1.9%	-178	431	295	503
Portugal	375	670	767	879	11.2%	1.3%	1 236	1 098	1 367	1 521	2.6%	1.9%	-861	-428	-599	-642
Romania	108	206	208	638	24.8%	0.9%	426	984	759	711	6.6%	0.9%	-318	-778	-551	-74
Slovenia	260	241	276	352	3.9%	0.5%	184	362	498	516	13.8%	0.6%	76	-122	-222	-164
Slovakia	53	108	71	85	6.0%	0.1%	118	127	84	82	-4.4%	0.1%	-65	-19	-13	3
Finland	358	456	521	535	5.1%	0.8%	410	443	492	508	2.7%	0.6%	-52	14	29	26
Sweden	840	1 199	1 225	1 368	6.3%	2.0%	1 446	2 333	2 541	2 676	8.0%	3.3%	-606	-1 134	-1 315	-1 308
United Kingdom	6 177	5 532	5 480	5 381	-1.7%	7.9%	9 861	11 403	11 961	11 981	2.5%	14.9%	-3 684	-5 871	-6 481	-6 600

Source: Eurostat ([tet00048](#))

The four largest EU-27 exporters of food and drink in 2008 were France, the Netherlands¹, Germany and Italy; together they accounted for more than half of these exports. In 2000, the United Kingdom was the second largest exporter, after France, but unlike most EU-27 Member States, it saw a decrease in the value of its food and drink exports outside EU-27 over this period. This decrease was largely accounted for by a fall in exports of manufactured tobacco products.

Alcoholic beverages were the largest single product exported from France, Italy and the Netherlands in 2008, accounting for 35%, 28% and 15% of these countries' food and drink exports respectively. France was also a major exporter of wheat, its exports in this category in 2008 made up almost half the EU-27 total. Alcoholic beverages and wheat together accounted for half of France's food and drink extra EU-27 exports in 2008, driving the country's trade surplus of EUR 5.5 billion for this category.

Despite France's leading position, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands all saw stronger annual growth over the period 2000 to 2008. Germany in particular saw a growth rate of 6.7%, almost double that of France. The largest component in the increase in Germany's food and drink exports was manufactured tobacco products, the largest single category for this country.

However, the strongest growth rates in extra EU-27 exports of food and drink over this period were

seen in the Member States who joined in 2004 and 2007. Food and drink exports grew particularly in Latvia (+35% per year on average between 2000 and 2008), followed by Lithuania, Romania and Estonia. In both Estonia and Latvia this growth was primarily due to an increase in exports of alcoholic beverages, whereas Romania's growth was driven by a rise in exports of wheat and Lithuania's by a rise in exports of fruit and nuts.

As far as imports are concerned, the Netherlands¹, United Kingdom and Germany have been the three largest importers of food and drink in EU-27 in every year between 2000 and 2008, each accounting for between 14% and 15% of the total in the final year. These three countries all have an extra EU-27 deficit on trade in food and drink, but due to the United Kingdom's lower exports, its deficit is by far the largest. The largest component of the rise in the United Kingdom's food and drink deficit was imports of fruit and nuts. Spain, which saw imports grow much more strongly than exports over the period, recorded the second largest deficit in 2008.

While France recorded by far the highest surplus on trade in food and drink between 2000 and 2008, the second highest every year was in Ireland. Ireland recorded falls in both exports and imports of food and drink over the period, leading to the surplus decreasing. The largest contributor to the fall in Ireland's imports was a drop of EUR 80 million in live animals, while the fall in exports was caused by a decrease in exports of beef and alcoholic beverages.

¹ Figures for Dutch trade are biased by the so-called "Rotterdam effect"(see the Methodological notes for more details)

METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

Data source:

Eurostat's free dissemination database.

Non EU-data (Graph 1): United Nations COMTRADE database.

Data were extracted on 12.06.2009.

A code (such as 'tet00005') has been inserted as part of the source. This code allows the reader to easily access the most recent data on the Eurostat website – within the PDF version of this publication, the data codes under each table and graph are presented as Internet hyperlinks. The data on the website is frequently updated and may also be more detailed or have a different measurement unit.

Reporting countries

EU-27: Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

Concepts and definitions

EU data are compiled according to community guidelines and may therefore differ from national data published by Member States.

For further information, please refer to the following documents:

External trade statistics - Metadata in SDDS format:

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_SDDS/EN/ext_base.htm

Statistics on the trading of goods - User guide:

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-BM-06-001/EN/KS-BM-06-001-EN.PDF

The food and drink sector:

Under the 4th revision of the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC), the food and drink product group is made up of Section SITC 0 food and live animals (Divisions 00 Live animals; 01 Meat; 02 Dairy products; 03 Fish; 04 Cereals; 05 Vegetables and fruit; 06 Sugar and honey; 07 Coffee, tea, cocoa and spices; 08 Animal feeds; 09 Miscellaneous edible products) and Section 1 beverages and tobacco (Divisions 11 Beverages; 12 Tobacco).

The "Rotterdam effect"

Dutch extra-EU imports, and therefore the trade deficit, are over-estimated because of the so-called 'Rotterdam effect'. Goods destined for the rest of the EU arrive in Dutch ports and, according to Community rules, are declared as imports by the Netherlands (the country where these goods are released for free circulation). This in turn reduces the extra-EU imports to those Member States to which the goods are re-exported, as these shipments are recorded, for Community statistics, as arrivals from the Netherlands, rather than imports from an extra-EU partner. To a lesser extent, Belgian extra-EU import figures are similarly over-estimated.

Extra-European Union trade

Statistics on the European Union's trade with non-member countries are currently based on [Council Regulation \(EC\) No. 1172/95](#) (consolidated version) of 22 May 1995, the implementing [Commission Regulation \(EC\) No 1917/2000](#) of 07 September 2000 and three amending [Commission Regulations \(EC\) No 1669/2001](#) on the threshold; [\(EC\) 179/2005](#) on the transmission delay; and [\(EC\) 1949/2005](#) to exclude repair).

The collection of data is based mainly on the Single Administrative Document (SAD), which is filled in by customs and transferred to the statistical authority.

COMEXT database

COMEXT is the Eurostat reference database for external trade. It provides access not only to both recent and historical data from the EU Member States but also to statistics of a significant number of third countries. External trade aggregated and detailed statistics disseminated from Eurostat website are compiled from COMEXT data according to a monthly process. Because COMEXT is updated on a daily basis, data published on the website may differ from data stored in COMEXT in case of recent revisions.

Further information

Data: [Eurostat Website: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat)

Data on "External Trade Statistics":

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/external_trade/data/database

More information about "External Trade Statistics":

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/external_trade/introduction

Journalists can contact the media support service:

Bech Building, Office A4/125, L - 2920 Luxembourg

Tel. (352) 4301 33408 Fax (352) 4301 35349

E-mail: eurostat-mediasupport@ec.europa.eu

European Statistical Data Support:

Eurostat set up with the members of the 'European statistical system' a network of support centres, which will exist in nearly all Member States as well as in some EFTA countries.

Their mission is to provide help and guidance to Internet users of European statistical data.

Contact details for this support network can be found on our Internet site:

<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/>

A list of worldwide sales outlets is available at the:

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