

Mercosur-EU - international trade in goods statistics

Statistics Explained

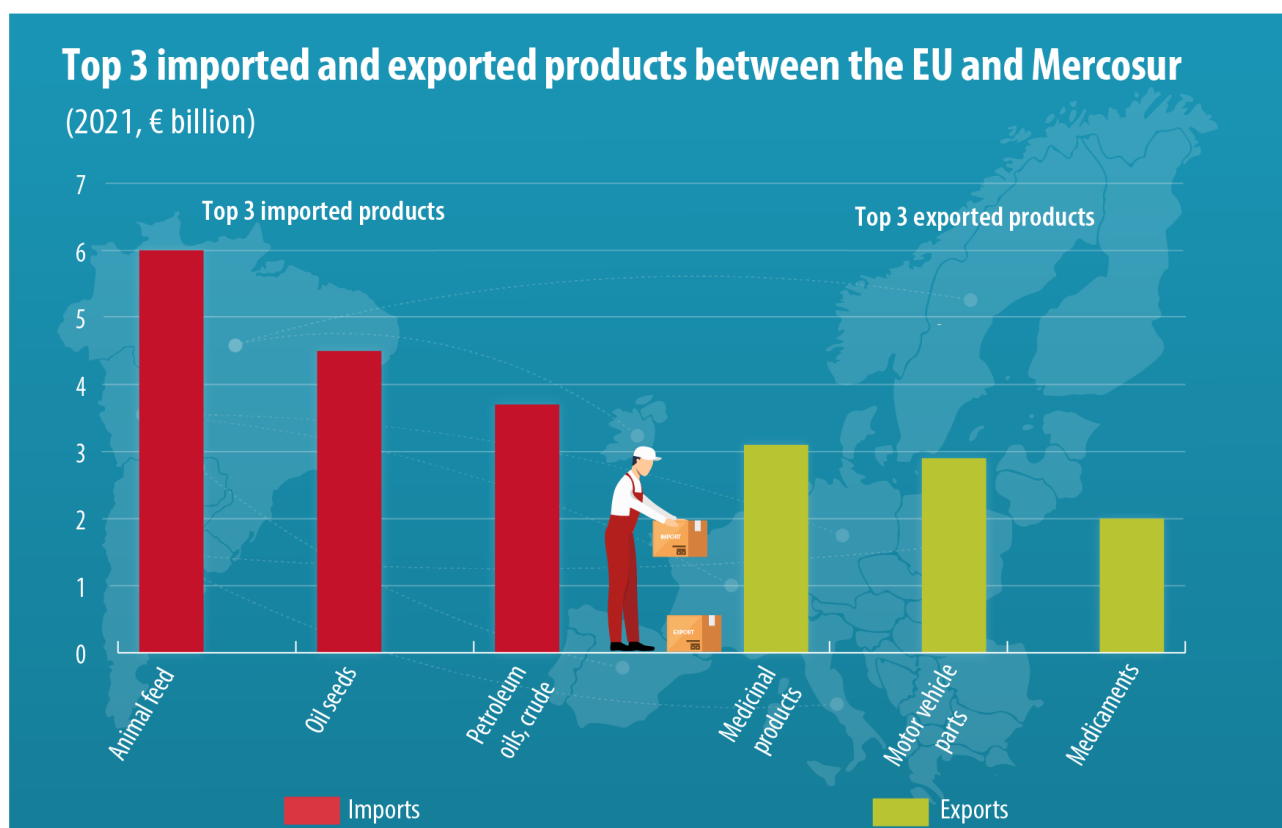
Data extracted in August 2022

Planned article update: August 2023

" In 2021, manufactured goods dominated EU exports to Mercosur, with 89 % of total exports while primary goods (78 % of total) dominated imports. "

" Brazil was the largest Mercosur partner for both EU exports and imports of goods in 2021. "

" Valued at € 13 billion, Germany was the largest EU exporter of goods to Mercosur countries in 2021, while the Netherlands was the largest EU importer of goods from Mercosur countries with a value of € 10 billion. "



The countries belonging to Mercosur are Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay.

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The countries belonging to [Mercosur](#) are Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay. Mercosur has always been regarded as a strategic partner for the European Union as by 1999, an inter-regional Framework Cooperation Agreement was already entered into force. The importance of Mercosur as a trade partner was subsequently

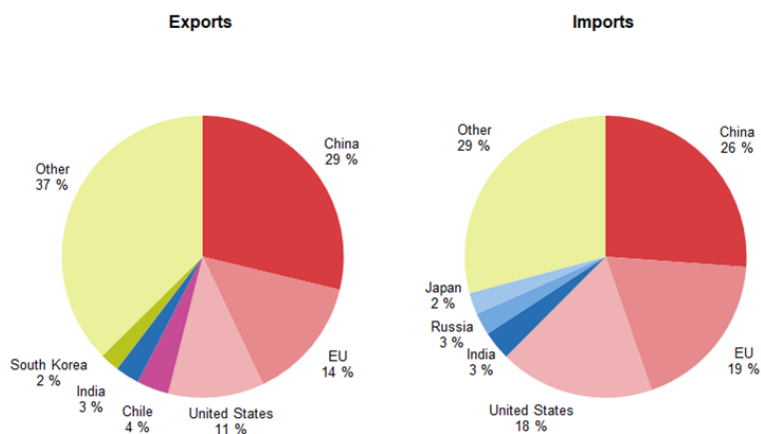
reaffirmed by the trade agreement signed in 2019 with the aim of removing existing barriers to trade in goods, including the abolition of tariffs. This article provides a picture of the international trade in goods between the [European Union \(EU\)](#) and Mercosur. It analyses the type of goods exchanged between them and the shares of each EU Member State in those exchanges.

This article is part of an [online publication](#) providing recent statistics on international trade in goods, covering information on the EU's main partners, main products traded, specific characteristics of trade as well as background information.

In 2021, EU was the second trading partner for Mercosur, after China and ahead of the United States

The largest trade in goods partners of Mercosur countries in 2021 are shown in Figure 1. In 2021, the EU (14 %) was the second largest export destination behind China (29 %) and ahead of the United States (11 %). The situation was similar for imports, where the EU accounted for 19 % of total Mercosur imports, placing it second behind China (26 %) but slightly ahead of the United States (18 %).

Mercosur trade in goods with main partners, 2021
(%)



Source: UNCTAD



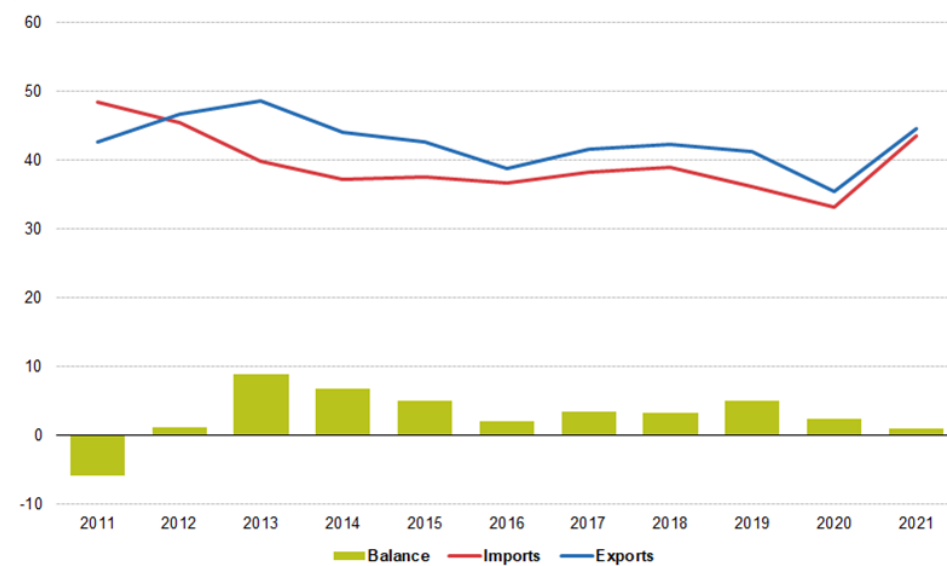
Figure 1: Mercosur trade in goods with main partners, 2021 (%) Source: UNCTAD

Strong recovery of trade with Mercosur countries in 2021

In 2021, EU trade with Mercosur fully recovered from the Covid-19 pandemic with an increase of 25.5 % in exports and 31.2 % in imports (compared with 2020), which led to a surplus of € 1 billion. In 2011, there was a trade deficit of € 6 billion, however, between 2012 and 2021, the higher level of exports compared with imports led to a surplus, which peaked in 2013, reaching € 9 billion. Imports in 2021 reached the highest level since 2013, although they had been higher before that. Exports in 2021 reached the highest level since 2014, although they too had been higher before that.

EU trade in goods with Mercosur countries, 2011 - 2021

(€ billion)



Source : Eurostat (Comext data code: DS-018995)

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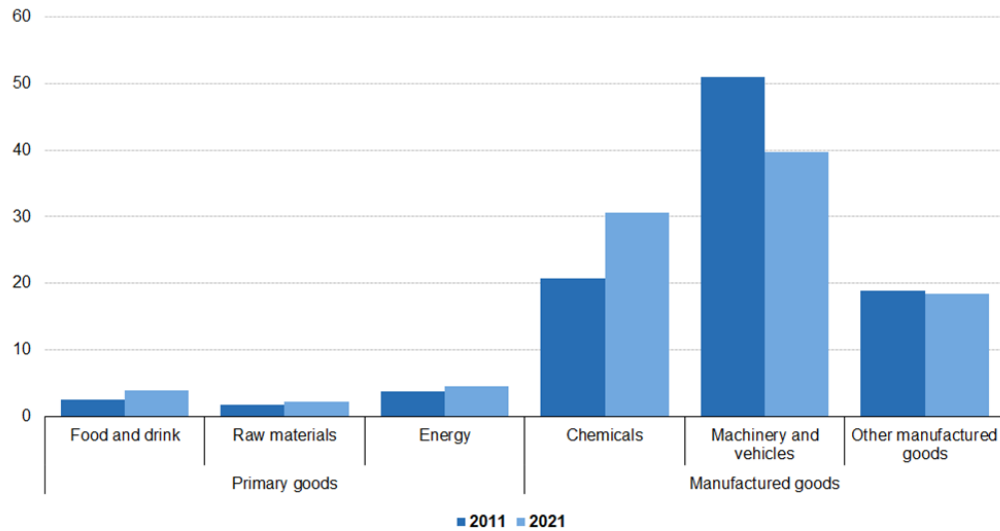
Figure 2: EU trade in goods with Mercosur countries, 2011-2021 (€ billion) Source: Eurostat - Comext DS-018995

Close to 90 % of the EU's exports to Mercosur were manufactured goods, both in 2011 and 2021

The following two graphs compare the share of the main products in 2011 with the share of main products in 2021. In 2021, the share of chemical goods in total exports was 31 %, an increase of 10 pp compared with 2011 (see Figure 3). 'Machinery and vehicles' remained the most traded product group despite its share decreasing from 51 % in 2011 to 40 % in 2021.

EU exports to Mercosur by product group, 2011 and 2021

(shares of total exports in value)



Source: Eurostat (Comext data code: DS-018995)

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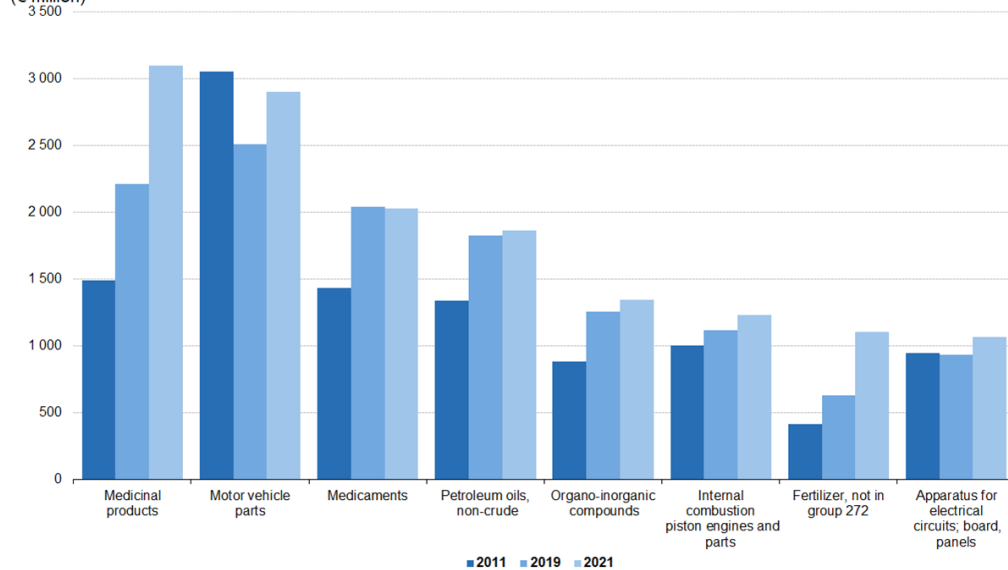
Figure 3: EU exports to Mercosur countries by product group, 2021 (shares of total exports in value) Source: Eurostat - Comext DS-018995

A deeper analysis of the main products exported to Mercosur in 2021 is shown in Figure 4. For comparison, the value of exports in 2011 and 2019 are shown as well. Exports of 'medicinal products' recorded a 48 % increase between 2011 and 2019. The exports of vaccines for the COVID-19 virus (+ € 0.7 billion) gave a further boost to the exports of 'medicinal products' which increased by 40 % between 2019 and 2021. 'Fertilisers' grew significantly (+165 % compared with 2011).

'Motor vehicles parts' was the only one of the main eight product groups with a slight decline between 2011 and 2021.

Most exported products to Mercosur, 2011, 2019 and 2021

(€ million)



SITC-3 codes shown are: 541, 784, 542, 334, 515, 713, 562 and 772.
Source: Eurostat (Comext data code: DS-018995)

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Figure 4: Most exported products to Mercosur countries, 2011, 2019 and 2021 (€ million) Source: Eurostat - Comext DS-018995

More than 75 % of the EU's imports from Mercosur were primary goods in 2021

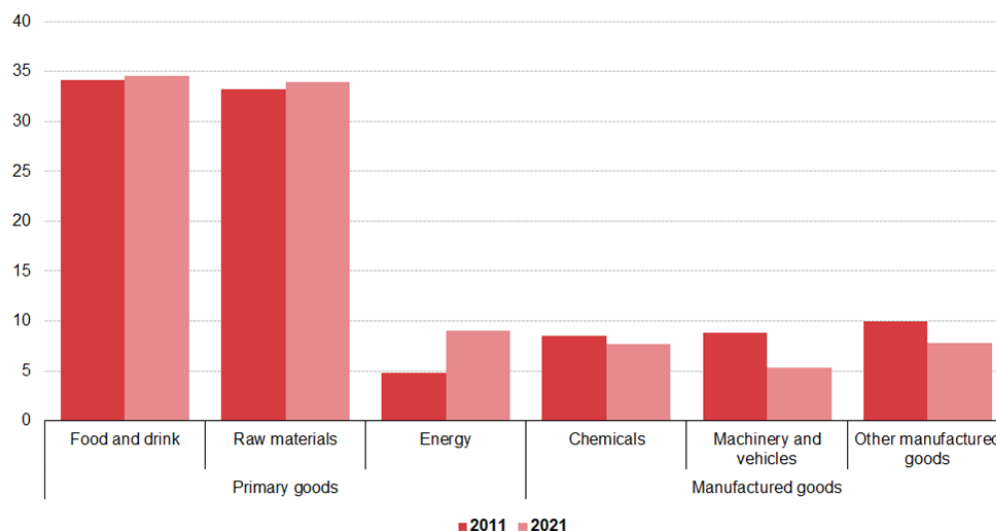
Primary goods were the largest group in imports of goods from Mercosur countries in 2021 (see Figure 4). 'Food and drinks' and 'raw materials' remained the main groups product groups imported, showing only small changes compared with 2011. With a considerable increase of the value of 'energy' imports from Mercosur in 2021, primary goods represented more 78 % of the EU's imports from Mercosur which was 5.3 pp higher than in 2011.

Conversely 'machinery and vehicles' and

'other manufactured goods' had a drop in their relative shares of 3.5 pp and 2.2 pp respectively, compared with 2011.

EU imports from Mercosur by product group, 2011 and 2021

(shares of total imports in value)



Source: Eurostat (Comext data code: DS-018995)

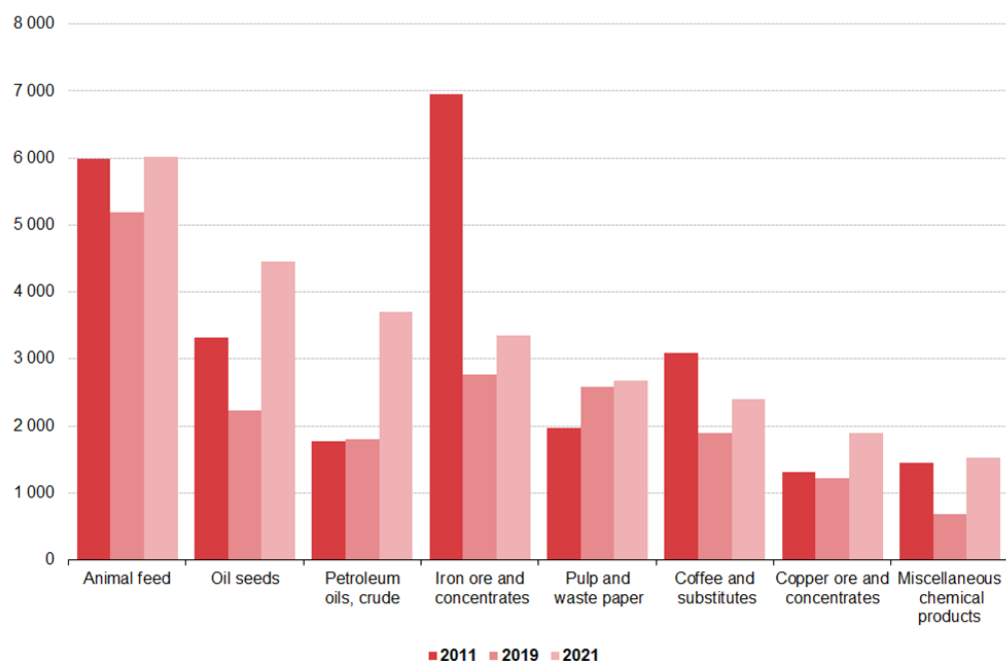
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Figure 5: EU imports from Mercosur countries by product group, 2021 (shares of total imports in value)

Source: Eurostat - Comext DS-018995

The most important products imported in 2021 were 'animal feed' and 'oil seeds'. Among the top 8 products, 'iron ore and concentrates' recorded the largest drop (-52 %) compared with 2011, while 'petroleum oils, crude' recorded the largest increase (+109 %), in large part due to the increase of energy prices.

Most imported products from Mercosur, 2011, 2019 and 2021 (€ million)



SITC-3 codes shown are: 081, 222, 333, 281, 251, 071, 283 and 598.
Source: Eurostat (Comext data code: DS-018995)

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Figure 6: Most imported products from Mercosur countries, 2011, 2019 and 2021 (€ million) Source: Eurostat - Comext DS-018995

Brazil largest Mercosur destination for EU exports of goods

Table 1 shows the exports, imports and trade balance for trade in goods between the EU and Mercosur countries. In 2021, measured in total EU trade (exports + imports), Brazil (€ 67 billion) was the largest partner, ahead of Argentina (€ 17 billion). Trade with Uruguay (3.4 %) recorded the largest average annual growth rate between 2011 and 2021 while trade with Paraguay recorded the strongest decrease due to the contraction in imports.

EU trade in goods with Mercosur countries, 2011 and 2021 (€ billion and %)

	Exports			Imports			Total trade (exports+imports)			Trade balance	
	2011	2021	Average annual growth rate (%)	2011	2021	Average annual growth rate (%)	2011	2021	Average annual growth rate (%)	2011	2021
Brazil	33.2	33.9	0.2	36.0	32.9	-0.9	69.2	66.8	-0.4	-2.9	0.9
Argentina	7.9	8.0	0.2	10.0	8.6	-1.5	17.9	16.7	-0.7	-2.1	-0.6
Uruguay	1.2	1.9	5.1	1.2	1.5	1.6	2.4	3.4	3.4	-0.1	0.5
Paraguay	0.4	0.7	5.8	1.2	0.5	-8.5	1.6	1.2	-2.7	-0.8	0.3

Source: Eurostat (Comext data code: DS-018995)

Countries are sorted on the value of total trade (exports + imports)

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Table 1: EU trade in goods with Mercosur countries, 2011 and 2021 (€ million and % average annual growth) Source: Eurostat - Comext DS-018995

Figure 7 shows the EU exports of goods to Mercosur trading partners. Brazil (€ 34 billion) and Argentina (€ 8 billion) were the largest export destinations in 2021 but exports to Uruguay (5.1 %) and Paraguay (5.8 %) recorded the highest annual growth rates between 2011 and 2021.

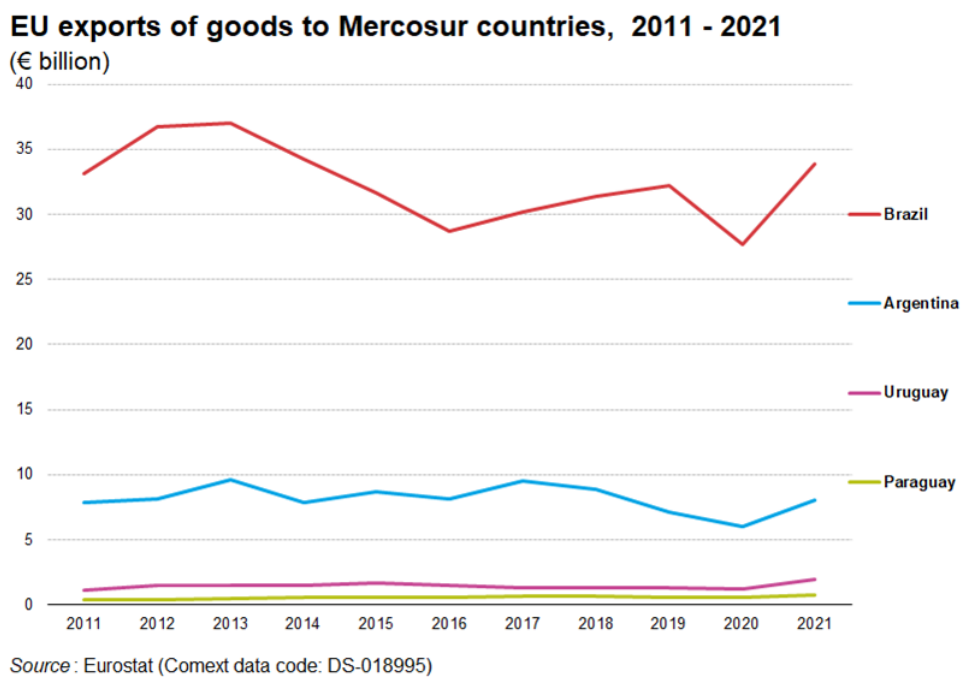


Figure 7: EU exports of goods to Mercosur countries, 2011-2021 (€ billion) Source: Eurostat - Comext DS-018995

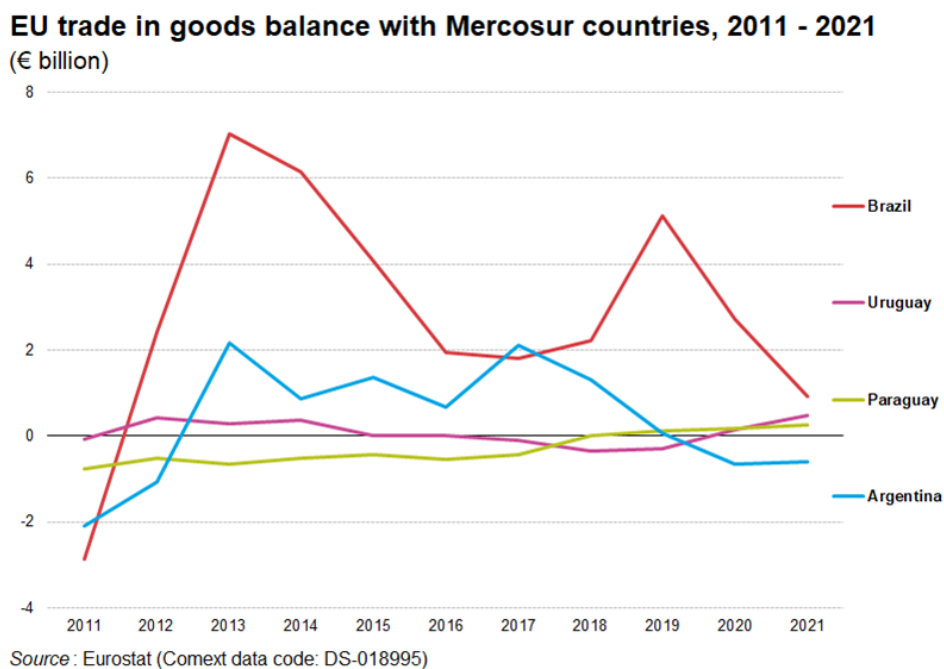
The EU's largest partner for imports of goods among Mercosur countries in 2021 was Brazil (€ 33 billion), despite falling slightly between 2011 and 2021 (see Figure 8). Imports from Argentina and Paraguay also fell in this period and only imports from Uruguay grew by an average of 1.6 % per year.



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Figure 8: EU imports of goods from Mercosur countries, 2011-2021 (€ billion) Source: Eurostat - Comext DS-018995

In 2011, the EU had a trade in goods deficit with all four Mercosur countries (see Figure 9). By 2021 this had turned into a surplus in the trade with Brazil, Uruguay and Paraguay. Argentina remained the only Mercosur partner with which the EU had a trade deficit, after having been in surplus between 2013 and 2019.



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Figure 9: EU trade in goods balance with Mercosur countries, 2011-2021 (€ billion) Source: Eurostat - Comext DS-018995

Germany, Italy and France largest trade in goods exporters to Mercosur countries

The largest EU exporter of goods to Mercosur countries in 2021 was Germany, followed by Italy and France (Table 2). German exports of goods to Mercosur countries had a value of € 13 billion, making up 2.1 % of their extra-EU exports. Portugal was the EU Member State with the highest share (4.6 %) of extra-EU exports destined for Mercosur countries.

Exports of goods to Mercosur countries, 2021

(€ million and %)

	EUR million	% of Mercosur in extra-EU exports
Germany	13 371	2.1
Italy	5 897	2.4
France	4 707	2.1
Belgium	4 579	2.9
Netherlands	4 391	2.0
Spain	3 859	3.2
Sweden	1 210	1.6
Denmark	1 012	2.0
Austria	957	1.8
Finland	898	3.0
Portugal	829	4.6
Poland	669	0.9
Ireland	498	0.5
Czechia	410	1.1
Hungary	409	1.6
Romania	173	0.9
Slovakia	157	0.9
Lithuania	125	0.9
Greece	96	0.5
Slovenia	79	0.5
Estonia	56	0.9
Latvia	49	0.8
Bulgaria	49	0.4
Luxembourg	48	1.8
Croatia	19	0.3
Malta	4	0.3
Cyprus	3	0.1

Source: Eurostat (Comext data code: DS-018995)

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Table 2: Exports of goods to Mercosur countries, 2021 (€ million and %) Source: Eurostat - Comext DS-018995

Among the EU Member States, the Netherlands with € 10 billion was the largest importer of goods from Mercosur countries (Table 3) but due to the 'Rotterdam effect' (see notes at the end of this article), this value is likely to be overestimated. Dutch imports from Mercosur countries had a value of € 13 billion, making up 2.7 % of their extra-EU imports. Portugal was the EU Member State with the highest share (12.7 %) of extra-EU imports originating from Mercosur countries.

Imports of goods from Mercosur countries, 2021

(€ million and %)

	EUR million	% of Mercosur in extra-EU imports
Netherlands	10 309	2.7
Spain	6 785	4.2
Germany	6 189	1.4
Italy	5 571	2.7
France	3 049	1.5
Portugal	2 763	12.7
Belgium	2 686	1.6
Poland	1 887	1.9
Sweden	666	1.3
Ireland	624	1.0
Denmark	456	1.4
Romania	454	1.7
Greece	440	1.4
Slovenia	394	1.8
Finland	349	1.6
Bulgaria	221	1.4
Austria	184	0.4
Czechia	112	0.2
Hungary	98	0.3
Lithuania	60	0.5
Cyprus	52	1.7
Slovakia	46	0.2
Estonia	26	0.5
Croatia	26	0.3
Latvia	18	0.3
Malta	10	0.5
Luxembourg	8	0.3

Source: Eurostat (Comext data code: DS-018995)

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Table 3: Imports of goods from Mercosur countries, 2021 (€ million and %) Source: Eurostat - Comext DS-018995

Source data for tables and graphs

- [EU trade in goods with Mercosur countries](#)

Data sources

EU data is taken from Eurostat's COMEXT database. COMEXT is the reference database for international trade in goods. 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 non-EU countries. International trade aggregated and detailed statistics disseminated via the Eurostat website are compiled from COMEXT data according to a monthly process.

Data are collected by the competent national authorities of the EU Member States and compiled according to a harmonised methodology established by EU regulations before transmission to Eurostat. For extra-EU trade, the statistical information is mainly provided by the traders on the basis of customs declarations.

EU data are compiled according to EU guidelines and may, therefore, differ from national data published by the Member States. Statistics on extra-EU trade are calculated as the sum of trade of each of the 27 EU Member States with countries outside the EU. In other words, the EU is considered as a single trading entity and trade flows are measured into and out of the area, but not within it.

Methodology According to the EU concepts and definitions, extra-EU trade statistics (trade between EU Member States and non-EU countries) do not record exchanges involving goods in transit, placed in a customs warehouse or given temporary admission (for trade fairs, temporary exhibitions, tests, etc.). The partner is the country of final destination of the goods for exports and the country of origin for imports.

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. Although to a lesser extent, trade figures of other EU Member States such as Belgium or Luxembourg may also be overestimated due to quasi-transit.

Product classification Information on commodities exported and imported is presented according to the [Standard international trade classification \(SITC\)](#) . A full description is available from Eurostat's classification server [RAMON](#) .

Unit of measure Trade values in this article are expressed in € millions or € [billions](#) (1 000 million). They correspond to the statistical value, i.e. to the amount which would be invoiced in case of sale or purchase at the national border of the reporting country. The statistical value is calculated differently for each flow:

- a [FOB](#) value (free on board) for exports and
- a [CIF](#) value (cost, insurance, freight) for imports.

Context

Trade is an important indicator of Europe's prosperity and place in the world. The block is deeply integrated into global markets both for the products it imports and exports. The EU trade policy is one of the main pillars of the EU's relations with the rest of the world.

Because the 27 EU Member States share a single market and a single external border, they also have a single trade policy. EU Member States speak and negotiate collectively, both in the [World Trade Organization](#) , where the rules of international trade are agreed and enforced, and with individual trading partners. This common policy enables them to speak with one voice in trade negotiations, maximising their impact in such negotiations. This is even more important in a globalised world in which economies tend to cluster together in regional groups.

The openness of the EU's trade regime has meant that the EU is one of the biggest players on the global trading scene and remains a good region to do business with. Thanks to the ease of modern transport and communications, it is now easier to produce, buy and sell goods around the world which gives European companies of every size the potential to trade outside Europe.

Other articles

- [International trade in goods](#)
- [Extra-EU trade in goods](#)

Main tables

- [International trade in goods](#) (t_ext_go), see:

International trade in goods - long-term indicators (t_ext_go_lti)

International trade in goods - short-term indicators (t_ext_go_sti)

Database

- [International trade in goods](#) (ext_go), see:

International trade in goods - aggregated data (ext_go_agg)

International trade in goods - long-term indicators (ext_go_lti)

International trade in goods - short-term indicators (ext_go_sti)

International trade in goods - detailed data (detail)

- [Full access to detailed statistics on international trade in goods \(Comext\)](#) , see:

EU trade since 1988 by SITC (DS-018995)

Dedicated section

- [International trade in goods](#)

Methodology

- [International trade in goods statistics - background](#)
- [International trade in goods](#) (ESMS metadata file — ext_go_esms)
- [User guide on European statistics on international trade in goods](#)

Data visualisations

- [Top 5 partners in trade in goods](#)

External links

- [European Commission](#)
- [Globalisation](#)
 - [Trade](#)