

Enlargement countries - international trade in goods statistics

Statistics Explained

*Data extracted in May 2023.
Planned article update: June 2024.*

" 82 % of all goods exported from the Western Balkans and Türkiye in 2022 originated from Türkiye. "

" With the exception of Türkiye and Serbia, in 2022 the other five economies of the Western Balkans and Türkiye each recorded a deficit in their trade of goods of over 20 % of GDP. "

" In 2022, 78 % - more than three-quarters - of all exports leaving North Macedonia were destined for the EU. The shares of exports going to the EU were also close to three-quarters in Bosnia and Herzegovina (73 %) and Albania (74 %). "

This article is part of an [online publication](#) and provides information on a range of international trade statistics for the Western Balkans and Türkiye and compares this with the corresponding data for the [European Union \(EU\)](#) . Within this region, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Albania, Serbia and Türkiye are candidate countries, while Kosovo has the status of potential candidate. **Data for Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, granted candidate status or European perspective by the European Council in June 2022, are not included in this article** . Statistics Explained articles on the European Neighbourhood Policy-East countries are available [here](#) . The article gives an overview over international trade developments for goods in the Western Balkans and Türkiye, covering [imports](#) and [exports](#) as well as the [trade balance](#) . It also presents an analysis of international trade by selected product groups (based on the [Standard international trade classification \(SITC\)](#)) and of trade with the EU. * *This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.*

International merchandise trade statistics track the value and quantity of goods traded between countries. They are the official source of information on merchandise imports, exports and the trade balance, i.e. the difference between imports and exports of goods.

Exports and imports as a percentage of GDP are common measures of a country's openness to world trade. The sum of exports and imports, known as total trade, or the average of the two is sometimes used for this analysis. Trade flow analysis as a percentage of GDP is useful for comparisons between countries, since it abstracts from the size of the economies. Smaller countries tend to have higher levels of trade openness than larger ones, since there are fewer opportunities for buying and selling domestically produced goods. The relationship between trade openness and income, measured as GDP per capita, is more complicated, although low income countries generally have low trade openness.

Countries with economies that are growing fast or are undergoing or recovering from economic difficulties may wish to run [trade deficits](#) , in which the value of imports is greater than that of exports. Countries that specialise in providing services to the rest of the world, such as tourism or business services, may also run consistent trade deficits, since services are not included in the statistics of exports and imports of goods. The [balance of payments](#) includes data on both trade in goods and in services.

From at least 1970 until the global financial crisis in 2008, global trade increased as a proportion of GDP. Trade globalisation has levelled off since then.

Figures 1, 2 and 3 show merchandise exports, imports and trade balance of the Western Balkans and Türkiye, as well as the EU, as a percentage of their respective GDP over the period 2011-2022. This ratio illustrates the relative importance of trade flows to the size of the respective economies.

Exports and imports as a percentage of GDP have increased in most of the of the Western Balkans and Türkiye over the period 2011-2022, indicating that these economies have mostly become more open to trade. Each of these economies has experienced its own trends in its shares of exports and imports in GDP over this period. Annual fluctuations in the data have mostly been smaller than the trends. At the beginning of this period, the recovery from the 2008 global financial crisis did not have a clear impact on exports and imports as a percentage of GDP, since international trade generally moved in parallel with the overall economy. By contrast, the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic are visible in the data on exports and imports as a share of GDP for many of the Western Balkans and Türkiye economies.

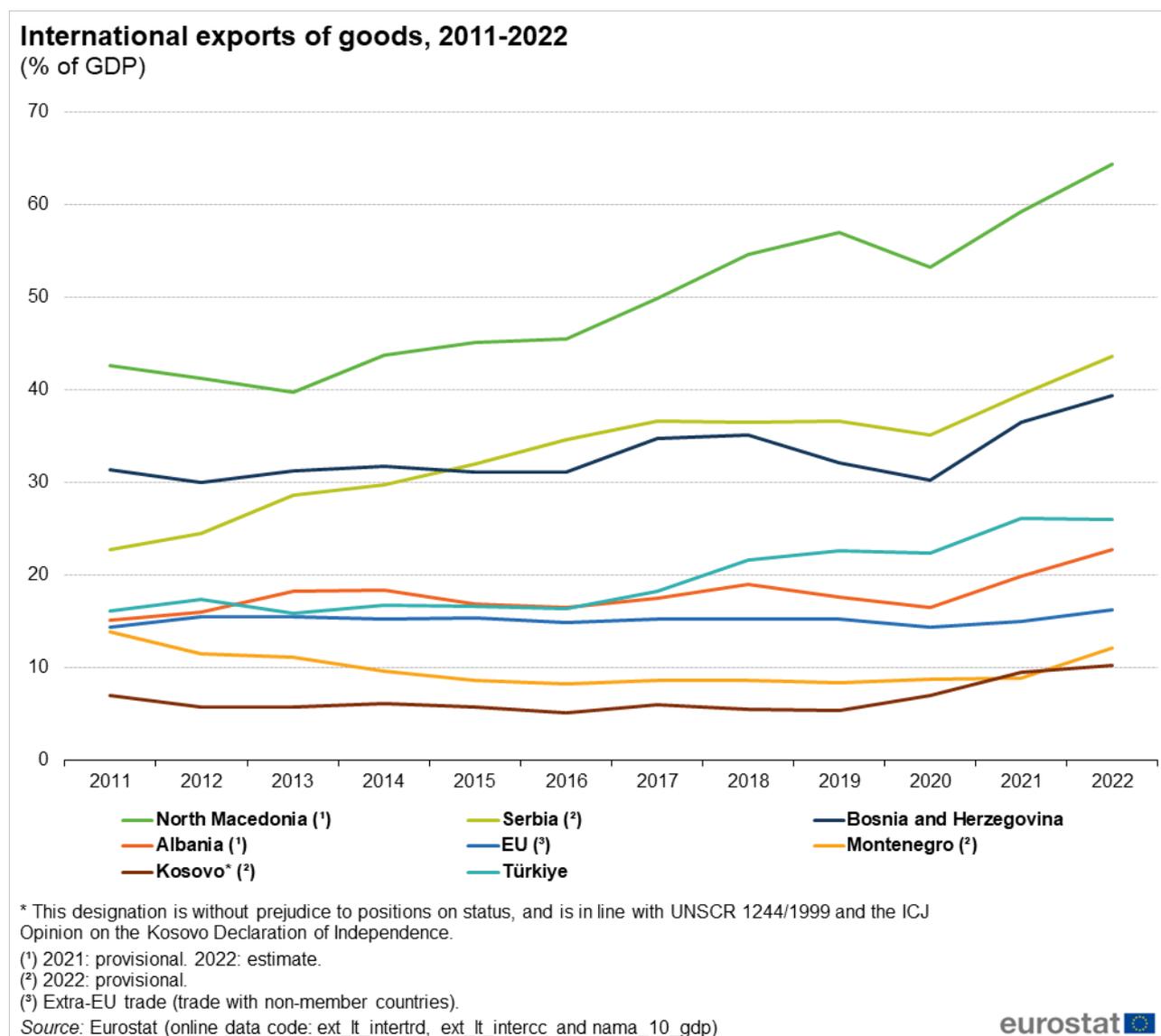
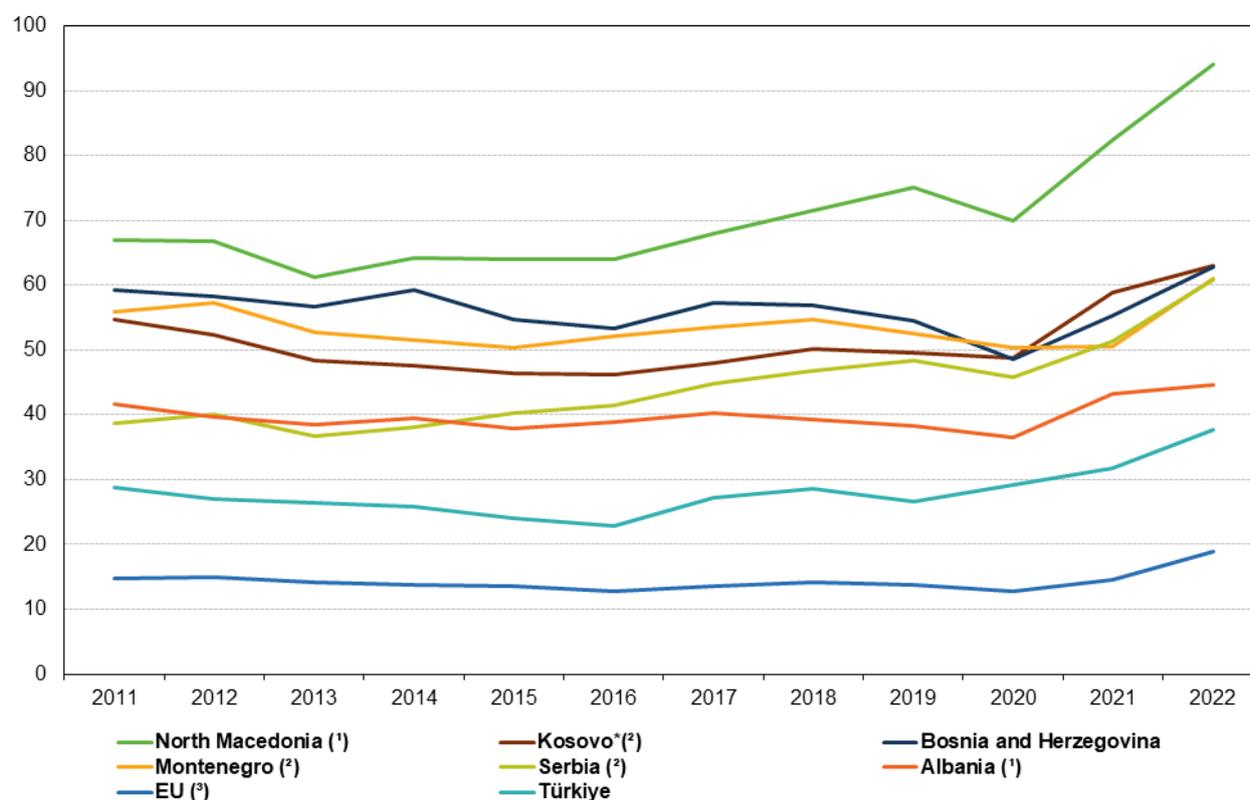


Figure 1: International exports of goods, 2011-2022 (% of GDP) Source: Eurostat (ext_lt_intertrd), (ext_lt_intercc) and (nama_10_gdp)

International imports of goods, 2011-2022

(% of GDP)



* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

(¹) 2021: provisional. 2022: estimate.

(²) 2022: provisional.

(³) Extra-EU trade (trade with non-member countries).

Source: Eurostat (online data code: ext_lt_intertrd, ext_lt_intercc and nama_10_gdp)

eurostat

Figure 2: International imports of goods, 2011-2022 (% of GDP) Source: Eurostat (ext_lt_intertrd), (ext_lt_intercc) and (nama_10_gdp)

North Macedonia's exports corresponded to 64.3 % of GDP and its imports to 94.0 % of GDP in 2022. These were the highest ratios of both exports and imports to GDP among the Western Balkans and Türkiye in that year. Exports as a share of GDP increased by 21.7 percentage points (pp) from 2011 to 2022, marginally the largest change among the group. Over the same period, imports as a share of GDP rose by 27.0 pp, the largest increase. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic can be seen by looking at changes from 2019, the last year before the pandemic, to 2020, the year of its greatest impact. In North Macedonia, there were falls of -3.8 pp in exports and of -5.1 % in imports relative to GDP in that year. Among the group of economies under consideration, this was the greatest impact on exports and second greatest on imports. Comparing the data in 2019 with that of 2022, the first year of return to economic normalcy after Covid-19, exports rose by 7.3 pp and imports by 18.9 pp as percentages of GDP. The increase in exports was among the largest in the Western Balkans and Türkiye and the change in imports was the largest. 2021 data are provisional and 2022 data are estimates.

Serbia's exports were 43.7 % of GDP in 2022, the second highest proportion of GDP among the Western Balkans and Türkiye. Its imports were 60.9 % of GDP. From 2011 to 2022 the export to GDP ratio increased by 20.9 pp, the second highest in the studied group of economies. Serbia's imports as a proportion of GDP increased over this period by 22.2 pp, again the second highest. The Covid-19 pandemic had an observable effect on exports as a share of GDP, which showed a decline of -1.5 pp from 2019 to 2020. Imports fell more strongly relative to GDP, with a decline of -2.4 pp. Comparing 2022 with 2019, skipping over the Covid-19 period, exports as a percentage of GDP rose by 7.0 pp, while imports rose by 12.6 pp. Only in Serbia and North Macedonia was the share of imports in GDP higher in 2019 than it had been in 2011. 2022 data is provisional.

Bosnia and Herzegovina's exports of goods as percentage of GDP were equivalent to 39.4 % of GDP in 2022, having risen by 8.1 pp from 2011. Imports were 62.8 % of GDP in 2022, having increased by 3.6 pp from 2011. The

fall in exports as a percentage of GDP from 2019 to 2020, the first year of Covid-19, was -1.8 pp, while the fall in imports was -5.9 pp, the largest among the Western Balkans and Türkiye. From 2019 to 2022, thus comparing before and after the Covid-19 period, exports as a share of GDP increased by 7.3 pp and imports by 8.3 pp.

Since Türkiye is by far the largest economy in the group, it is not surprising that its share of imports in GDP, at 37.6 % in 2022, is smaller than in the Western Balkans economies. Its share of exports in GDP, at 26.0 % in 2022 was, however, close to the average among these economies. The export share in GDP increased by 9.8 pp from 2011 to 2022, while that of imports increased by 8.8 pp. From 2019 to 2020, the first year of the Covid-19 pandemic, the export share declined by a minimal -0.2 pp, while the imports share of GDP actually rose by 2.4 pp, the only increase for this year within the group.

Exports from Albania accounted for 22.8 % of its GDP in 2022, an increase of 7.7 pp over 2011. Imports in 2022 were 44.6 % of GDP, up by 2.9 pp from 2011. From 2019 to 2020, the first year of the Covid-19 pandemic, the export share declined by -1.2 pp, while the import share of GDP fell by -1.8 pp. Comparing 2022 with 2019, prior to Covid-19, the export share in GDP rose by 5.2 pp, while that of imports increased by 6.3 pp. 2021 data are provisional and 2022 data are estimates.

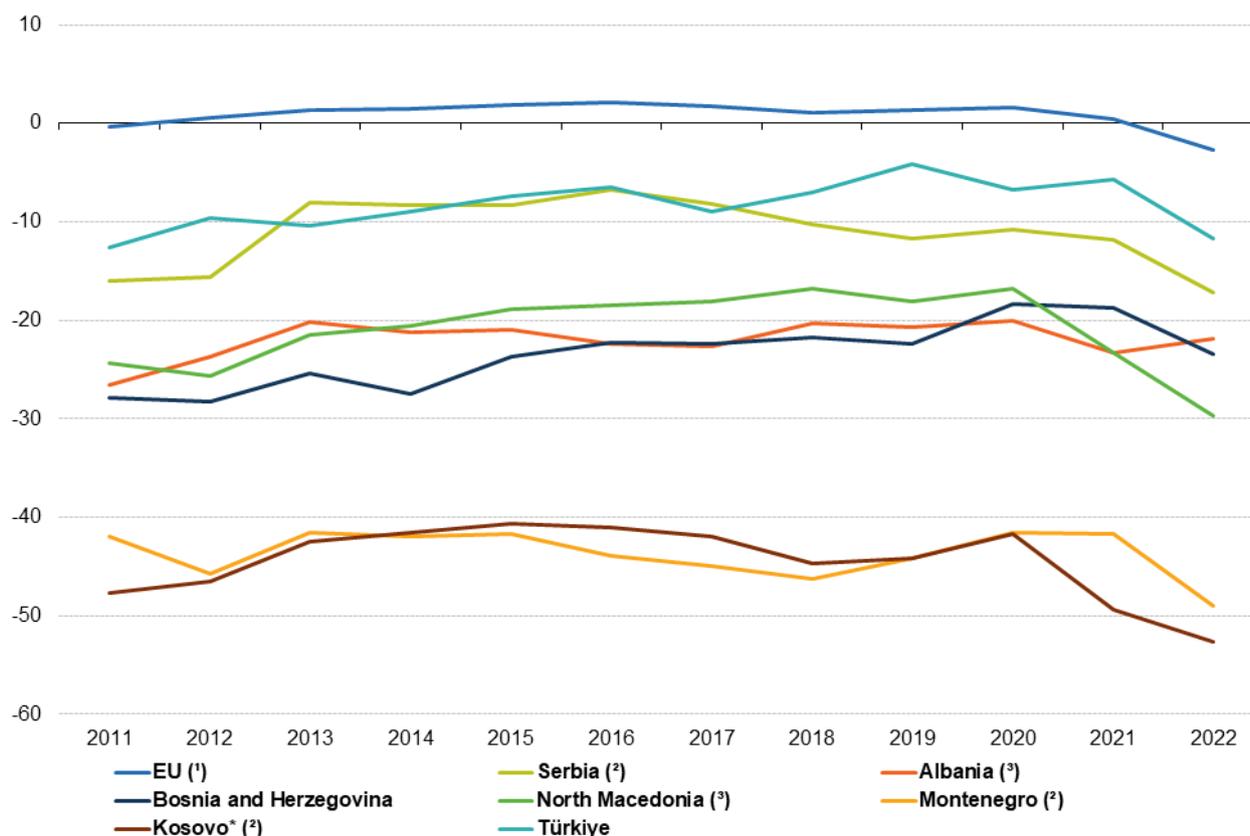
The share of exports in GDP in Montenegro was 12.1 % in 2022, the second smallest among the Western Balkans and Türkiye. This was the only case where exports declined as a percentage of GDP over 2011-2022, by -1.8 pp. Imports as a share of GDP were 61.1 % of GDP in 2022, in line with many other economies in the group. The import share of GDP increased by 5.2 pp over 2011-2022. From 2019 to the first year of Covid-19, 2020, the export share of GDP actually increased by a marginal 0.3 pp, while the import share declined by -2.2 pp. From 2019 to 2022, comparing before and after the main effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, the export share in GDP rose by 3.7 pp and that of imports by 8.5 pp. Only in Montenegro and Kosovo was the share of exports in GDP lower in 2019 than it had been in 2011. 2022 data are provisional.

In Kosovo in 2022, exports were 10.3 % of GDP, the smallest share among the Western Balkans and Türkiye. Its imports in 2022 corresponded to 63.0 % of GDP, the second highest share in the group. Exports as percentage of GDP increased over 2011-2022 by 3.3 pp, while the share of imports increased by 8.3 pp. Looking at the change from 2019 to 2020, the initial impact year of Covid-19, the share of exports in GDP actually rose by 1.6 pp, the largest increase within these economies, while the share of imports declined by -0.9, a lesser impact than all others except Türkiye. Comparing 2022 with 2019 to abstract from the impact of Covid-19, Kosovo's share of exports in GDP rose by 4.8 pp, while the share of imports in GDP rose by 13.4 pp, the second largest gain among the group.

In the EU, exports to the rest of the world were 16.3 % of GDP in 2022, an increase of 1.9 pp from 2011. Imports from the rest of the world as a percentage of GDP were 19.0 % in 2022, an increase of 4.3 pp from 2011. The decline in exports as a share of GDP from 2019 to 2020 in the face of the impact of Covid-19 was limited to -0.9 pp, while that of imports was -1.1 pp. The export share in GDP in 2022 was 1.1 pp higher than in 2019, prior to Covid-19. The share of imports in GDP in 2022 was 5.1 pp higher than in 2019. The share of the EU's imports from the rest of the world in its GDP was thus lower in 2019 than in 2011.

Balance of international trade in goods, 2011-2022

(% of GDP)



* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

(*) Extra-EU-27 trade (trade with non-member countries).

(*) 2022: provisional.

(*) 2021: provisional. 2022: estimate.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: ext_lt_intertrd, ext_lt_intercc and nama_10_gdp)

eurostat

Figure 3: Balance of international trade in goods, 2011-2022 (% of GDP) Source: Eurostat (ext_lt_intertrd), (ext_lt_intercc) and (nama_10_gdp)

During the period 2011-2022, all of the Western Balkans and Türkiye registered a trade deficit for goods, resulting from higher imports than exports, in every year. The ratio of the trade deficit to GDP diminished in magnitude over the period 2011-2019 in all the economies in the group, except for Montenegro. In all the economies except Türkiye, the deficits became smaller in 2020 as compared with 2019, as imports shrunk more than exports. The deficits started to increase relative to GDP in 2021, again everywhere except for Türkiye, although the changes were small in Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The deficits continued to increase in 2022, except for Albania.

Kosovo had the deepest trade deficit the Western Balkans and Türkiye in both 2011 and 2022, when it was equivalent to -52.7 % of its GDP. The second deepest trade deficit was in Montenegro in both 2011 and 2022, when it was -49.0 % of GDP. North Macedonia's trade deficit was -29.7 % of GDP in 2022; Bosnia and Herzegovina's was -23.4 %; and Albania's was -21.8 %. All three economies had run average trade deficits in the range of -20 % to -25 % of GDP over the period 2011-2019. Although Serbia's trade deficit was -17.2 % of GDP in 2022, it had run much smaller deficits from 2013 to 2021. Türkiye's trade deficit diminished in magnitude over the period to -11.7 % in 2022, the smallest relative to its economy in this group of economies, although it represented an increase in its trade deficit from -5.6 % of GDP in 2021.

The EU ran a small trade surplus with the rest of the world in most years from 2011 to 2019, averaging 1.2 % of GDP. The surplus became marginal in 2021, at 0.4 % of GDP, and turned into a deficit of -2.7 % of GDP in 2022.

Value of exports and imports

Table 1 presents data on goods exports and imports valued in million euro over the period 2011-2022.

International trade in goods, 2011-2022

(€ million)

	Exports											
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
EU (*)	1 624 461	1 770 880	1 780 148	1 796 802	1 876 328	1 866 813	1 994 234	2 059 767	2 131 985	1 932 727	2 181 004	2 572 720
Bosnia and Herzegovina	4 204	4 018	4 285	4 440	4 595	4 815	5 653	6 085	5 876	5 379	7 298	9 190
Montenegro	454	367	376	333	317	326	372	400	416	366	437	700
North Macedonia	3 215	3 124	3 235	3 747	4 088	4 390	5 007	5 873	6 424	5 781	6 922	8 300
Albania	1 400	1 531	1 761	1 827	1 728	1 771	2 026	2 431	2 426	2 190	3 012	4 090
Serbia	8 058	8 251	10 413	10 562	11 447	12 742	14 365	15 650	16 859	16 464	21 053	26 353
Türkiye	96 973	118 644	114 563	118 654	129 555	128 792	139 229	142 290	153 201	140 035	180 299	223 799
Kosovo*	319	276	294	325	325	310	378	368	384	475	756	920
	Imports											
EU (*)	1 666 127	1 702 498	1 630 802	1 625 427	1 648 068	1 602 470	1 772 077	1 912 117	1 940 879	1 717 439	2 125 964	3 002 095
Bosnia and Herzegovina	7 938	7 799	7 756	8 283	8 105	8 263	9 298	9 855	9 969	8 634	11 042	14 642
Montenegro	1 823	1 821	1 773	1 784	1 842	2 062	2 304	2 554	2 601	2 105	2 504	3 540
North Macedonia	5 053	5 071	4 983	5 505	5 801	6 177	6 825	7 676	8 463	7 599	9 638	12 126
Albania	3 867	3 797	3 699	3 941	3 882	4 169	4 648	5 026	5 269	4 860	6 545	8 002
Serbia	13 706	13 522	13 345	13 512	14 425	15 225	17 559	20 074	22 216	21 482	27 332	36 736
Türkiye	173 099	184 087	189 784	182 338	186 536	179 468	207 000	188 337	181 038	182 328	219 224	324 440
Kosovo*	2 492	2 508	2 449	2 538	2 635	2 790	3 047	3 347	3 497	3 297	4 684	5 639
	Balance											
EU (*)	-41 666	68 382	149 347	171 376	228 260	264 343	222 157	147 650	191 106	215 288	55 040	-429 375
Bosnia and Herzegovina	-3 735	-3 781	-3 472	-3 843	-3 510	-3 448	-3 646	-3 770	-4 093	-3 254	-3 744	-5 452
Montenegro	-1 369	-1 454	-1 398	-1 451	-1 524	-1 736	-1 932	-2 154	-2 185	-1 739	-2 067	-2 840
North Macedonia	-1 838	-1 947	-1 748	-1 758	-1 714	-1 786	-1 818	-1 804	-2 040	-1 818	-2 716	-3 826
Albania	-2 467	-2 267	-1 938	-2 114	-2 154	-2 399	-2 622	-2 596	-2 843	-2 670	-3 533	-3 912
Serbia	-5 648	-5 271	-2 933	-2 950	-2 978	-2 483	-3 194	-4 424	-5 356	-5 019	-6 279	-10 383
Türkiye	-76 126	-65 443	-75 222	-63 684	-56 981	-50 676	-67 771	-46 047	-27 836	-42 293	-38 925	-100 642
Kosovo*	-2 173	-2 232	-2 155	-2 214	-2 309	-2 480	-2 669	-2 980	-3 114	-2 822	-3 929	-4 719

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

(*) Extra-EU trade (trade with non-member countries).

Source: Eurostat (online data codes: ext_it_intertrd and ext_it_intercc)

eurostat 

Table 1: International trade in goods, 2011-2022 (€ million) Source: Eurostat (ext_it_intertrd) and (ext_it_intercc)

Trade data are presented here in current euro terms, so that they are affected by inflation. Prices in euro terms rose more in 2022 than in previous years of the period.

Trends in exports and imports valued in euro can be analysed as two periods: from 2011 to 2019, prior to the Covid-19 pandemic; and from 2019 to 2022, the period of the pandemic impact and its recovery. In 2020, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic disrupted trade, with both exports and imports falling for most of the Western Balkan and Türkiye economies. The subsequent trade rebound in 2021 and 2022 was very strong. Consequently, in almost all of the Western Balkans and Türkiye, as well as in the EU, the growth in the value of both exports and imports was greater, and often much greater, in the period 2019-2022 than during the period 2011-2019. The exception was in North Macedonia, where growth in exports during the period 2011-2019 was a minimal 0.1 % a year faster than in the subsequent period.

Over the whole period 2011-2022, Serbia's exports increased at an annual average 11.4 %, the fastest among the Western Balkans and Türkiye. Export growth during 2011-2019 had been 9.7 % a year on average, again the highest in the group. The impact of Covid-19 in 2020 led to exports falling by -2.3 % from 2019, the smallest decline within these economies. The recovery in 2021 led to 27.9 % export growth, Serbia's fastest over the whole period, followed by 25.2 % in 2022. Average annual export growth over 2019-2022 was 16.1 %. Serbia's annual average import growth over the whole 2011 – 2022 period was 9.4 %, the fastest among the Western Balkans and Türkiye, while the sub-period 2011-2019 saw average growth of 6.2 %, the second fastest. The 2020 decline in imports was -3.3 %, the second least impact among the Western Balkans and Türkiye. The subsequent recovery in 2021 saw 27.2 % growth, followed by 34.4 % in 2022, Serbia's fastest of the whole period. Over the 2019-2022 sub-period, growth was 18.3 % a year, the second fastest among the Western Balkans and Türkiye.

Albania had marginally the second fastest export growth among the Western Balkans and Türkiye over both the whole 2011-2022 period, at an annual average rate of 10.2 %, as well as during the sub-period 2011-2019, when the average rate was 7.1 %. The 2020 decline in exports from 2019 was -9.7 %, in line with most of the economies in the group. The 2021 recovery saw 37.6 % growth, Albania's fastest of the period, followed by further growth of 35.8 % in 2022. Exports increased by an average 19.0 % over the sub-period 2019-2022. Concerning imports,

growth over the whole 2011-2022 period was an average of 6.8 %, and an average of 3.9 % during the 2011-2019 sub-period, both in line with the experiences of the other economies. The 2020 decline in imports was -7.8 %, followed by a 2021 rebound of 34.7 %, Albania's greatest of the whole period, then one of 22.3 % in 2022. Import growth over 2019-2022 was 14.9 % a year, again in line with the general trend.

Kosovo's export growth over 2011-2022 was an annual average of 10.1 %, just behind Albania. However, its export growth during the sub-period 2011-2019 was only 2.3 % a year, the second slowest among the Western Balkans and Türkiye. In particular, exports declined by -13.5 % in 2012. In 2020, the year of the greatest impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, Kosovo's exports *increased* by 23.8 %. Subsequent export growth in 2021 was 59.1 %, Kosovo's fastest of the period, and 21.8 % in 2022. Export growth over 2019-2022 was 33.9 % a year, the fastest among these economies. Imports increased by an annual average of 7.7 % over the whole period 2011-2022, and by 4.3 % during 2011-2019, both in line with the group's other economies. The 2020 decline in imports was -5.7 %, the third smallest impact among the Western Balkans and Türkiye. The 2021 rebound saw imports growth of 42.1 %, Kosovo's fastest of the period, then further growth of 20.4 % in 2022. The average growth of imports over 2019-2022 was 17.3 %, in line with the general trend.

In North Macedonia, exports increased by an annual average of 9.0 % over the whole period 2011-2022, in line with the experience of other Western Balkan and Türkiye economies. Its exports increased also by 9.0 % during the sub-period 2011-2019; this was the second fastest experience among the group. The 2020 fall in exports was -10.0 %, the second steepest of the Western Balkan and Türkiye. The subsequent rebound in 2021 was 19.7 %, close to the smallest, followed by further export growth of 19.9 % in 2022. This was simultaneously both the smallest growth that year among the Western Balkan and Türkiye economies while at the same time being the largest export growth in North Macedonia over the whole period 2011-2022. Average export growth over 2019-2022 was 8.9 %, by far the slowest within these economies. Turning to imports, annual average growth over the whole period was 8.3 %, the second largest among the Western Balkans and Türkiye. Over the sub-period 2011-2019, imports increased by an average 6.7 % a year, the most rapid among the group. The 2020 decline in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic was -10.2 %, approximately in line with the experience of the rest of these economies. This was followed by imports growth in 2021 of 26.8 % and 25.8 % in 2022. Annual average imports growth over 2019-2022 was 12.7 %, the second slowest of the Western Balkans and Türkiye.

In Türkiye, the value of exports increased by an annual average 7.9 % over the whole 2011-2022 period and by 5.9 % over the sub-period 2011-2019. Both figures were in line with the experience elsewhere in the region. Exports fell by -8.6 % in 2020 and then rebounded by 28.8 % in 2021, Türkiye's greatest export growth during the period, and increased again by 24.1 % in 2022. Annual average export growth over 2019-2022 was 13.5 %. Türkiye's imports increased by an annual average of 5.9 % over 2011-2022, the second smallest among the group of economies. Over the sub-period 2011-2019, imports growth was 0.6 % a year, considerably the smallest of them. Imports notably fell by -9.0 % in 2018. Imports actually increased by 0.7 % in 2020, the year of the main Covid-19 impact, the only increase in imports among the studied economies in that year. In 2021, Türkiye's imports increased by 20.2 %, then again by 48.0 % in 2022, the fastest for Türkiye during the period and the largest that year among these economies. Türkiye's imports increased by an annual average of 21.5 % during 2019-2022, the fastest within Western Balkans and Türkiye.

Bosnia and Herzegovina had export growth of 7.4 % a year over the whole period 2011-2022. While this was the second slowest among the Western Balkans and Türkiye, it was not considerably out of line with the experience of the other economies. Export growth during 2011-2019 was 4.3 % a year, similar to other economies in the region. The fall in exports in 2020 was -8.5 %. Subsequent export growth was 35.7 % in 2021, Bosnia and Herzegovina's fastest of the whole period, and 25.9 % in 2022. Over 2019-2022, average export growth was 16.1 %, in line with experience elsewhere. Concerning imports, the annual average growth over the 2011-2022 period was 5.7 %. While this was the slowest among the Western Balkans and Türkiye, this outcome was not radically out of line with experience elsewhere in the group. Imports increased by an average of 2.9 % over the sub-period 2011-2019. In 2020, imports fell by -13.4 %, the second largest fall in the region. Subsequent imports growth was 27.9 % in 2021 and 32.6 % in 2022, Bosnia and Herzegovina's largest for the whole period. Imports growth for 2019-2022 was an average of 13.7 %, in line with experience elsewhere.

Montenegro had annual average export growth of 4.0 % over the period 2011-2022, considerably the lowest among the Western Balkans and Türkiye. During the shorter period 2011-2019, exports declined by an annual average -1.1 %, again the lowest among them. The 2020 fall in exports from the previous year was -12.0 %, once again the lowest outcome in the region. The subsequent export growth in 2021 was 19.6 %. In 2022, exports increased by a very large 60.2 %, the fastest export growth both among the group of economies in that year and over the period 2011-2022 for Montenegro. In consequence, export growth over 2019-2022 averaged 19.0 %, in line with the rest of the region. Montenegro's imports increased by an annual average of 6.2 % over 2011-2022 and by an average 4.5

% during 2011-2019, both in line with the economies of the Western Balkans and Türkiye. The 2020 fall in imports was -19.1 %, the largest in the region. The recovery in 2021 saw imports growth of 19.0 %, then 41.3 % in 2022, the fastest increase in imports for Montenegro during the whole period. Import growth over 2019-2022 averaged 10.8 %, the slowest among the region's economies.

EU exports to the rest of the world increased by an annual average of 4.3 % over the period 2011-2022. During 2011-2019, exports increased by an average of 3.5 %. In 2020, the year of the main Covid-19 impact, exports fell by -9.3 %. In 2021, exports then rebounded by 12.8 % and increased further by 18.0 % in 2022, the EU's fastest export growth of the period. Over 2019-2022, the EU's exports increased by an average of 6.5 %. For imports, the EU had an annual average increase of 5.5 % over the period 2011-2022 and one of 1.9 % during the shorter period 2011-2019. In 2020, imports fell by -11.5 %, followed by increases of 23.8 % in 2021 and 41.3 % in 2022. In consequence, EU imports from the rest of the world increased by an annual average of 15.6 % over 2019-2022.

Exports of goods from Türkiye accounted for 81.9 % of the total value of exports from the seven economies in the Western Balkan and Türkiye group in 2022, down from 84.6 % in 2011. Serbia had the second highest level of exports at 9.6 % of the total in 2022, having been at 7.0 % in 2011. The third highest share was recorded by Bosnia and Herzegovina at 3.4 % in 2022 and 3.7 % in 2011. It was followed by North Macedonia, with a 3.0 % share in 2022 and 2.8 % in 2011. Albania was responsible for 1.5 % of the total exports in 2022 and 1.2 % in 2011. Kosovo and Montenegro both represented 0.3 % of the region's exports in 2022. In 2011, Montenegro had a share of 0.4 % and Kosovo, 0.3 %.

Türkiye's share of imports in the total of the seven Western Balkans and Türkiye economies was 80.1 % in 2022, compared with 83.2 % in 2011. Serbia accounted for 9.1 % of imports in 2022 and 6.6 % in 2011. Bosnia and Herzegovina's share was 3.6 % in 2022 and 3.8 % in 2011. North Macedonia received 3.0 % of the region's imports in 2022 and 2.4 % in 2011. Albania's share was 2.0 % in 2022 and 1.9 % in 2011; Kosovo's was 1.4 % in 2022 and 1.2 % in 2011. Montenegro represented 0.9 % of total imports in 2022, the same share as in 2011.

Altogether, the value of exports from the seven Western Balkans and Türkiye economies in 2022 was totalled € 273 billion, equivalent to 10.6 % of the EU's exports to the rest of the world that year. The total value of imports to the seven Western Balkans and Türkiye economies in 2022 was € 405 billion, equivalent to 13.5 % of total EU imports from the rest of the world.

Trade between the Western Balkans and Türkiye and the EU

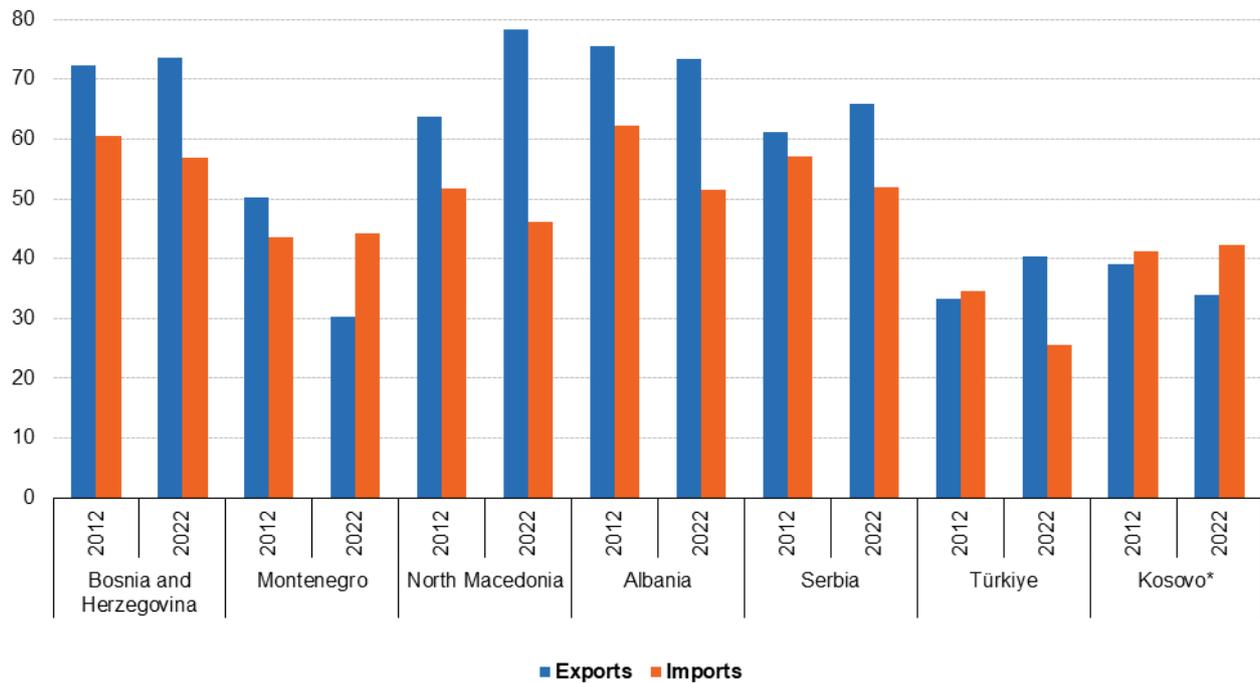
Due to its close geographic proximity and size, it is not surprising to find that the EU is a main trading partner of the Western Balkans and Türkiye. Figure 4 shows the relative importance of the EU as a trading partner to the Western Balkans and Türkiye in 2012 and 2022, respectively.

The EU accounted for 78.3 % of all the goods exported from North Macedonia in 2022; the EU's share of North Macedonia's exports increased by 14.6 pp since 2012. North Macedonia had the largest share of exports destined for the EU among the Western Balkan and Türkiye economies in 2022. 46.2 % of North Macedonia's imports originated from the EU in 2022; this share had diminished by -5.5 pp since 2012.

Goods destined for the EU accounted for 73.6 % of all merchandise exports by Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2022; since 2012 this share increased by 1.3 pp. In 2022, 56.9 % of all imported goods that arrived in Bosnia and Herzegovina originated from the EU, a decline of -3.7 pp from the share in 2012. Nevertheless, the EU's share of Bosnia and Herzegovina's 2022 imports was the largest in the Western Balkans and Türkiye. Albania recorded a share of 73.4 % of its total exports going to the EU in 2022, slightly down by -2.1 pp from 2012. A share of 51.6 % of Albania's imports were sourced from the EU in 2022, a fall of -10.6 pp from 2012. Goods exported from Serbia to the EU in 2022 made up 66.0 % of its exports; the figure was 4.8 pp larger than in 2012. The share of Serbia's imports coming from the EU was 51.9 % in 2022, down by -5.2 pp from 2012. Goods exported to the EU accounted for 40.4 % of all the exports from Türkiye in 2022, an increase of 7.2 pp over 2012. Türkiye had the smallest share of imports originating from the EU in 2022 among the Western Balkans and Türkiye economies, at 25.5 % of its total. The share had declined by -9.2 pp from 2012. A 33.9 % share of Kosovo's exports were destined to the EU in 2022, following a fall of -5.1 pp since 2012. Kosovo took 42.4 % of its imports from the EU in 2022, up by 1.0 pp from 2012. In 2022, 30.3 % of exports from Montenegro had an EU destination, substantially down by -20.0 pp from 2012. This was the smallest EU share in the exports of any of the Western Balkan and Türkiye economies in 2022. Montenegro's imports from the EU were 44.3 % of its total in 2022, a marginal increase of 0.8 pp from 2012.

International trade in goods with the EU, 2012 and 2022

(% share of total exports/imports)



* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: ext_lt_intercc)

eurostat

Figure 4: International trade in goods with the EU, 2012 and 2022 (% share of total exports/imports) Source: Eurostat (ext_lt_intercc)

Intra-regional trade

Table 2 presents the merchandise trade between the seven Western Balkans and Türkiye economies, based on 2022 exports, with a total value of € 13.3 billion.

Intra-regional trade — exports, 2022

(€ million)

Reporting country	Partner Countries						
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Montenegro	North Macedonia	Albania	Serbia	Turkey	Kosovo*
Bosnia and Herzegovina	-	295	93	23	1 208	159	64
Montenegro	91	-	7	20	149	16	25
North Macedonia	99	37	-	102	386	211	379
Albania	28	64	163	-	113	54	317
Serbia	1 805	944	851	172	-	407	-
Türkiye	692	150	621	902	1 650	-	610
Kosovo*	11	38	119	102	63	23	-

(-) not available.

(-) not applicable.

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: DS-056697)

eurostat 

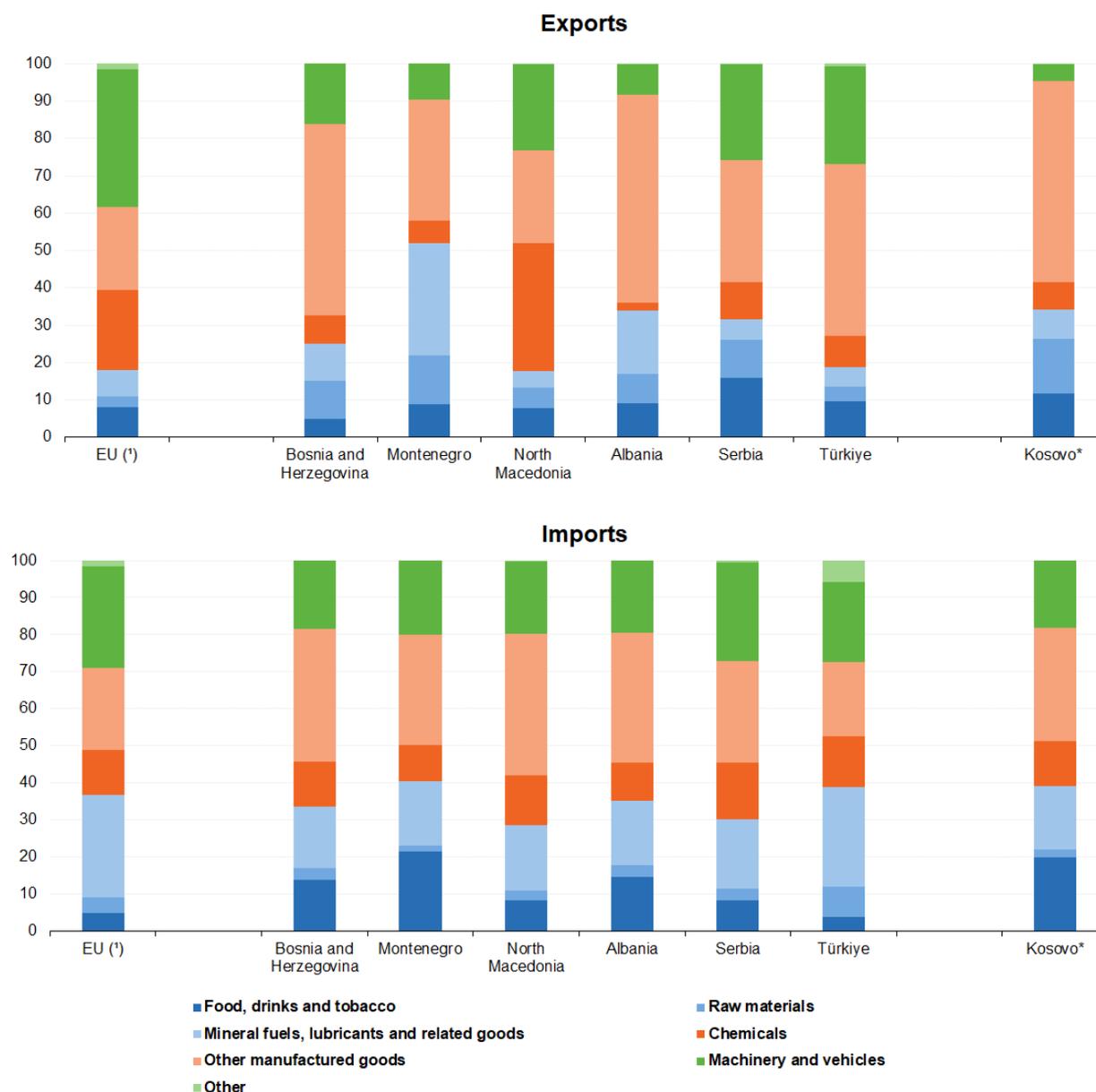
Table 2: Intra-regional trade, 2022 (€ million) Source: Eurostat (DS-056697)

Türkiye was the largest regional exporter of goods to the other economies of the Western Balkans and Türkiye. Its total 2022 exports to these economies were valued at € 4.6 billion. Its largest trade partners were Serbia, to which it exported goods worth € 1.7 billion; Albania, to which it exported € 900 million; and Bosnia and Herzegovina, € 690 million. Türkiye was the smallest destination for exports of the Western Balkan economies in 2022: it received € 870 million of their exports. Serbia was the second largest exporter of goods to the other Western Balkans and Türkiye in 2022, with its regional exports valued at € 4.2 billion. Its largest regional export partners were Bosnia and Herzegovina, which received € 1.8 billion of its exports; Montenegro, € 940 million; and North Macedonia, € 850 million. Serbia was the largest recipient in 2022 of the exports of the other Western Balkan and Türkiye economies, at € 3.6 billion. Bosnia and Herzegovina had total exports of € 1.8 billion to the region in 2022. Its main export partners among the Western Balkans and Türkiye were Serbia, at € 1.2 billion; Montenegro, at € 300 million; and Türkiye, at € 160 million. In 2022, Bosnia and Herzegovina received € 2.7 billion worth of exports from the other Western Balkans and Türkiye economies, the second largest partner in the region. North Macedonia exported merchandise totalling € 1.2 billion to other Western Balkan and Türkiye economies in 2022. Its main export partners in the region were Serbia, at € 390 million; and Kosovo, at € 380 million. North Macedonia was the trade partner for € 1.9 billion worth of regional exports of the Western Balkans and Türkiye in 2022. Albania's total exports to other Western Balkans and Türkiye economies were valued at € 740 million in 2022. Its main export partners were Kosovo, at € 320 million; and North Macedonia, at € 160 million. Albania was the trade partner for the exports of the other Western Balkans and Türkiye economies to the value of € 1.3 billion in 2022, the second smallest among the group. Kosovo's total regional exports amounted to € 360 million in 2022, the second lowest among the Western Balkans and Türkiye, mainly exporting to North Macedonia, at € 120 million; and to Albania, € 100 million. Kosovo was the trade partner for € 1.4 billion of exports of the other Western Balkans and Türkiye economies in 2022. Montenegro's regional exports of goods were the lowest among these economies, at € 310 million in 2022. Its main export partner was Serbia, at € 150 million. Montenegro was the trade partner for € 1.5 billion worth of exports of the other Western Balkans and Türkiye economies in 2022.

Structure of trade analysed by broad groups of goods

Figure 5 shows for each of the Western Balkans and Türkiye in 2022 a breakdown of their trade with the rest of the world, based on values in euro and analysed by Standard International Trade Classification (SITC Rev.4) broad product categories. The broad product category 'Other manufactured goods,' which covers SITC Sections 6 'Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material' and 8 'Miscellaneous manufactured articles', accounted for the greatest share of both exports and imports of most of the Western Balkan and Türkiye economies in 2022. The only exceptions were 'Mineral fuels, lubricants and related goods', SITC section 3, which provided the largest group of imports for Türkiye, while 'Chemicals', SITC section 5, provided North Macedonia's main export group.

International trade in goods by broad groups of goods, 2022
(% share of total exports/imports)



* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

(*) Extra-EU trade (trade with non-member countries).

Source: Eurostat (online data codes: ext_lt_intertrd and ext_lt_intercc)

eurostat

Figure 5: International trade in goods by broad product categories, 2022 (% share of total exports/imports)
Source: Eurostat (ext_lt_intertrd) and (ext_lt_intercc)

Bosnia and Herzegovina's exports in 2022 were accounted for by a share of 51.2 % of 'Other manufactured goods' (SITC Sections 6 and 8); 16.2 % of 'Machinery and vehicles' (SITC section 7); and 10.1 % of 'Raw materials' (SITC sections 2 and 4). Imports were made up of 35.8 % 'Other manufactured goods'; 18.4 % 'Machinery and vehicles'; 16.6 % 'Mineral fuels, lubricants and related goods' (SITC section 3); 13.9 % 'Food, drinks and tobacco' (SITC sections 0 and 1); and 12.2 % 'Chemicals' (SITC section 5).

In Montenegro in 2022, 'Other manufactured goods' (SITC Sections 6 and 8 combined) accounted for 32.6 % of exports; 'Mineral fuels, lubricants and related goods', 30.0 %; and 'Raw materials' (SITC sections 2 and 4 combined), 13.3 %. Imports mainly consisted of 'Other manufactured goods' at 29.7 % of the total; 'Food, drinks and tobacco', 21.3 %; 'Machinery and vehicles', 20.0 %; and 'Mineral fuels, lubricants and related goods', 17.6 %.

North Macedonia's exports in 2022 consisted of 'Chemicals', at 34.2 % of the total; 'Other manufactured goods', 25.1 %; and 'Machinery and vehicles', 23.0 %. The structure of imports was mainly composed of 'Other manufactured goods', 38.3 % of the total; 'Machinery and vehicles', 19.5 %; 'Mineral fuels, lubricants and related goods', 17.7 %; and 'Chemicals', 13.5 %.

Albania's exports in 2022 were largely accounted for by 55.6 % of 'Other manufactured goods'; and 17.0 % of 'Mineral fuels, lubricants and related goods'. Imports were made up of 35.1 % of 'Other manufactured goods'; 19.5 % of 'Machinery and vehicles'; 17.4 % of 'Mineral fuels, lubricants and related goods'; 14.6 % of 'Food, drinks and tobacco'; and 10.4 % of 'Chemicals'.

Serbia's exports in 2022 contained 32.5 % of 'Other manufactured goods'; 25.8 % of 'Machinery and vehicles'; 15.8 % of 'Food, drinks and tobacco'; 10.2 % of 'Raw materials'; and 10.0 % of 'Chemicals'. Its imports were made up of 27.4 % of 'Other manufactured goods'; 26.8 % of 'Machinery and vehicles'; 18.5 % of 'Mineral fuels, lubricants and related goods'; and 15.3 % of 'Chemicals'.

Türkiye's exports in 2022 were mainly composed of 'Other manufactured goods' (46.0 %); and of 'Machinery and vehicles' (26.3 %). Imports consisted of 27.0 % 'Mineral fuels, lubricants and related goods'; 21.7 % 'Machinery and vehicles'; 20.0 % 'Other manufactured goods'; and 13.7 % 'Chemicals'.

In Kosovo, 53.7 % of exports in 2022 were of 'Other manufactured goods'; 14.4 % 'Raw materials'; and 11.8 % 'Food, drinks and tobacco'. 'Other manufactured goods' made up 30.6 % of imports; 'Food, drinks and tobacco', 19.8 %; 'Machinery and vehicles', 18.2 %; 'Mineral fuels, lubricants and related goods', 17.1 %; and 'Chemicals', 12.0 %.

EU's exports to the rest of the world in 2022 consisted of 37.0 % 'Machinery and vehicles'; 22.2 % 'Other manufactured goods'; and 21.5 % 'Chemicals'. Imports included 27.7 % of 'Mineral fuels, lubricants and related goods'; 27.5 % 'Machinery and vehicles'; 22.1 % 'Other manufactured goods'; and 12.1 % 'Chemicals'.

Source data for tables and graphs

- [Western Balkans and Türkiye — international trade in goods: tables and figures](#)

Data sources

International trade statistics track the value and quantity of goods traded between countries for imports, exports and the trade balance. All statistics presented in this article as monetary values are based on current price series. Traditionally, customs records were the main source of statistical data on international trade. Following the launch of the Single Market on 1 January 1993, customs formalities between EU Member States were removed, and so a new data collection system, [Intrastat](#), was set up for [intra-EU](#) trade. In the Intrastat system, intra-EU trade data are collected directly from trade operators, which send a monthly declaration to the relevant national statistical authorities. The data presented in this article for the EU and the Western Balkans and Türkiye come from the [Comext](#) database, [Eurostat's](#) international trade database. Trade data are reported to Eurostat by all EU countries and a significant number of non-EU economies, including the Western Balkans and Türkiye. EU legislation serves as a basis for compiling the intra- and extra-EU trade statistics published by Eurostat. However, European statistics, which cover the EU as a whole, and the statistics published by the individual countries, are not always directly comparable. The countries may apply a different concept at national level, but they must provide Eurostat with harmonised data according to the Community concept. The most common differences between the Community concept and the national concepts are as follows:

- use of the general trade system at national level while the Community statistics are compiled according to the special trade system;
- exclusion from national statistics of 'quasi-transit', which means of

- goods imported from a non-EU country, cleared through customs and immediately dispatched to another Member State (the Member State of final destination); or
- goods imported from another Member State (the Member State of actual export), cleared through customs and immediately dispatched to a non-EU country.

Trade values are expressed in millions or **billions** (1 000 millions) of euros (€). 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. It is called a **FOB** value (free on board) for exports and a **CIF** value (cost, insurance, freight) for imports.

Eurostat collects statistical information on international trade developments with respect to the Western Balkans and Türkiye. These data are used by the European Commission to prepare annual strategy documents detailing EU policy developments concerning the Western Balkans and Türkiye as well as reports on political and economic developments in these economies.

The Western Balkans and Türkiye are expected to increase the volume and quality of their data progressively, and to transmit these data to Eurostat and the wider ESS in the context of the EU accession process. The final objective of the EU in relation to official statistics is to obtain harmonised, high-quality data that conforms to both European and international standards. More details on the statistical aspects of the accession process can be found in the article [Enlargement policy and statistical cooperation](#).

The Western Balkans and Türkiye are not at the same level of development and are progressing towards an efficient and modern statistical system at different speeds. In a number of areas, the Western Balkans and Türkiye are in a position to provide harmonised data in accordance with the *EUacquis* with respect to methodology, classifications and procedures for data collection and the principles of official statistics as laid down in the [European statistics Code of Practice](#). In these cases, administrations concerned in the Western Balkans and Türkiye report their data to Eurostat following the same procedures and under the same quality criteria as the EU Member States and the EFTA countries. Data from the Western Balkans and Türkiye that meet these quality requirements are published along with data for EU Member States and EFTA countries.

In addition, the Western Balkans and Türkiye provide data for a wide range of indicators for which they do not yet fully adhere to the quality requirements specified in the *EUacquis* and the methodology, classifications and procedures for data collection specified in the relevant Regulations, Directives and other legal documents. These data are collected on an annual basis through a questionnaire sent by [Eurostat](#) to the Western Balkans and Türkiye. A network of contacts has been established for updating these questionnaires, generally within the national statistical offices, but potentially including representatives of other data-producing organisations (for example, central banks or government ministries). This annual exercise also provides an opportunity to provide methodological recommendations to the Western Balkans and Türkiye.

Tables in this article use the following notation:

Value <i>italics</i>	data value is forecasted, provisional or estimated and is therefore likely to change;
:	not available, confidential or unreliable value.

Context

The EU has a common international trade policy, often referred to as the common commercial policy. In other words, the EU acts as a single entity on trade issues, including issues related to the [World Trade Organisation \(WTO\)](#). In these cases, the [European Commission](#) negotiates trade agreements and represents Europe's interests on behalf of the EU Member States.

The Western Balkans plus Moldova are parties to the [Central European Free Trade Agreement \(CEFTA\)](#). CEFTA seeks to promote trade within the region by eliminating tariffs to regional trade and identifying and reducing non-tariff barriers to trade. In 2018, a protocol on trade facilitation entered into force and CEFTA parties launched negotiations on a new protocol on dispute settlement.

EU-Türkiye trade relations are based on an [Association Agreement](#) from 1963 and a [Customs Union agreement](#) , which entered into force on 31 December 1995.

The economic impact of globalisation has had a considerable effect on international trade, as well as financial flows. The EU seeks to promote the development of free-trade as an instrument for stimulating economic growth and enhancing competitiveness. International trade statistics are of prime importance for both public sector (decision makers nationally, within the EU and internationally) and private users (in particular, businesses who wish to analyse export market opportunities), as they provide valuable information on developments regarding the exchange of goods between specific geographical areas.

While basic principles and institutional frameworks for producing statistics are already in place, the Western Balkans and Türkiye are expected to increase progressively the volume and quality of their data and to transmit these data to Eurostat in the context of the EU enlargement process. EU standards in the field of statistics require the existence of a statistical infrastructure based on principles such as professional independence, impartiality, relevance, confidentiality of individual data and easy access to official statistics; they cover methodology, classifications and standards for production.

Eurostat has the responsibility to ensure that statistical production of the Western Balkans and Türkiye complies with the EU acquis in the field of statistics. To do so, Eurostat supports the national statistical offices and other producers of official statistics through a range of initiatives, such as pilot surveys, training courses, traineeships, study visits, workshops and seminars, and participation in meetings within the [European Statistical System \(ESS\)](#) . The ultimate goal is the provision of harmonised, high-quality data that conforms to European and international standards.

Additional information on statistical cooperation with the Western Balkans and Türkiye is provided [here](#) .

Other articles

- [All articles on non-EU countries](#)
- [All articles on international statistical cooperation](#)
- [Enlargement countries — statistical overview](#) — online publication
- [All articles on international trade in goods](#)

Publications

- **Statistical books/pocketbooks**

[Key figures on enlargement countries](#) — 2019 edition

[Key figures on enlargement countries](#) — 2017 edition

[Key figures on the enlargement countries](#) — 2014 edition

- **Factsheets**

[Basic figures on the candidate countries and potential candidates — Factsheets](#) — 2023 edition

[Basic figures on Western Balkans and Türkiye — Factsheets](#) — 2022 edition

[Basic figures on enlargement countries — Factsheets](#) — 2021 edition

- **Leaflets**

[Basic figures on enlargement countries](#) — 2019 edition

[Basic figures on enlargement countries](#) — 2018 edition

[Basic figures on enlargement countries](#) — 2016 edition

[International trade for the enlargement countries](#) — 2018 edition

Database

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

[International trade in goods - aggregated data \(ext_go_agg\)](#)

[International trade long-term indicators \(ext_go_lti\)](#)

[International trade short-term indicators \(ext_go_sti\)](#)

[International trade detailed data \(detail\)](#)

[Full access to detailed statistics on international trade in goods \(Comext\) \(comext\)](#)

Dedicated section

- [Enlargement countries](#)
- [International trade in goods \(ITGS\)](#)

Methodology

- [International trade in goods statistics — European Union \(ESMS metadata file — ext_go_agg_esms\)](#)
- [Quality report on European statistics on international trade in goods — 2017-2020 data — 2021 edition](#)
- [User guide on European statistics on international trade in goods — 2020 edition](#)
- [European business statistics compilers' manual for international trade in goods statistics – aggregated data — 2022 edition](#)
- [European business statistics compilers' manual for international trade in goods statistics — 2021 edition](#)
- [National requirements for the Intrastat system — 2021 edition](#)

External links

- [European Commission — Trade](#)
- [European Commission — European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations](#)

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