

Intra-EU - most traded goods

Statistics Explained

Data extracted in April 2022.

Planned update: April 2023.

" Between 2017 and 2021, the 5 most exported types of goods between EU countries were motor vehicles, trailers and semi-trailers, chemicals and chemical products, computer, electronic and optical products, machinery and equipment n.e.c. and food products. "

" Between 2017 and 2021, exports between EU countries increased by € 583 billion, despite falling by € 216 billion in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. "

This article focuses on the most significant goods by value (according to the CPA classification) in [intra-EU](#) exports and presents statistics for the EU from 2017 to 2021. Statistics on goods traded between the EU and the world — especially the size and evolution of exports — enable the EU and national authorities to evaluate the health and competitiveness of EU industries. The article discusses the contribution of individual Member States to total intra-EU exports for the five most exported product groups. Additionally, it shows the share these product groups have in each Member State's total intra-EU exports of goods. 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.

Evolution of intra-EU trade

The [CPA classification](#) consists of 40 products. Table 1 shows the 24 most exported products, while the remaining 16 are grouped as "other". Among the 24 products, 23 recorded an increase in exports in 2021. The exceptions was other transport equipment (CPA 30) which decreased by € 0.6 billion.

Intra-EU exports of main CPA groups, 2017 - 2021

€ billion

CPA code	CPA label	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Trend
TOTAL	TOTAL	2 845.1	3 014.2	3 071.6	2 855.4	3 427.8	
29	Motor vehicles, trailers and semi-trailers	369.1	386.9	398.7	342.3	371.7	
20	Chemicals and chemical products	263.6	287.4	284.7	267.5	346.2	
26	Computer, electronic and optical products	252.6	262.9	270.9	268.4	300.0	
28	Machinery and equipment n.e.c.	253.0	270.1	279.0	254.3	288.0	
10	Food products	205.4	206.8	213.3	212.4	237.9	
24	Basic metals	167.0	178.9	168.0	148.4	220.0	
21	Basic pharmaceutical products and pharmaceutical preparations	137.9	158.7	168.0	191.2	219.2	
27	Electrical equipment	149.7	161.9	168.0	167.6	200.3	
22	Rubber and plastics products	109.5	115.2	116.6	111.6	131.8	
25	Fabricated metal products, except machinery and equipment	99.3	105.4	105.5	98.2	117.8	
1	Products of agriculture, hunting and related services	80.3	79.6	83.0	85.9	94.3	
19	Coke and refined petroleum products	81.2	95.5	93.7	61.5	93.9	
14	Wearing apparel	74.1	78.3	83.4	75.7	89.5	
32	Other manufactured goods	69.0	70.9	74.9	72.5	84.7	
17	Paper and paper products	59.6	63.5	62.4	57.1	66.0	
30	Other transport equipment	69.3	67.3	73.1	56.4	55.8	
23	Other non-metallic mineral products	40.0	42.4	43.2	41.2	48.0	
15	Leather and related products	42.0	43.7	45.5	40.1	46.0	
31	Furniture	37.8	39.2	40.8	39.2	45.0	
13	Textiles	35.7	36.3	36.3	36.1	39.2	
16	Wood and of products of wood and cork, except furniture; articles of straw and plaiting materials	27.2	28.9	29.0	28.6	38.4	
38	Waste collection, treatment and disposal services; materials recovery services	25.1	26.7	25.5	24.7	37.3	
11	Beverages	22.6	24.2	25.2	24.4	28.0	
6	Crude petroleum and natural gas	17.6	21.9	20.1	11.4	27.6	
35	Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning	11.1	12.4	12.2	10.5	26.5	

Green is highest point, red is lowest point during 2017-2021

Source: Eurostat (online data code: Comext data code : DS-057009)

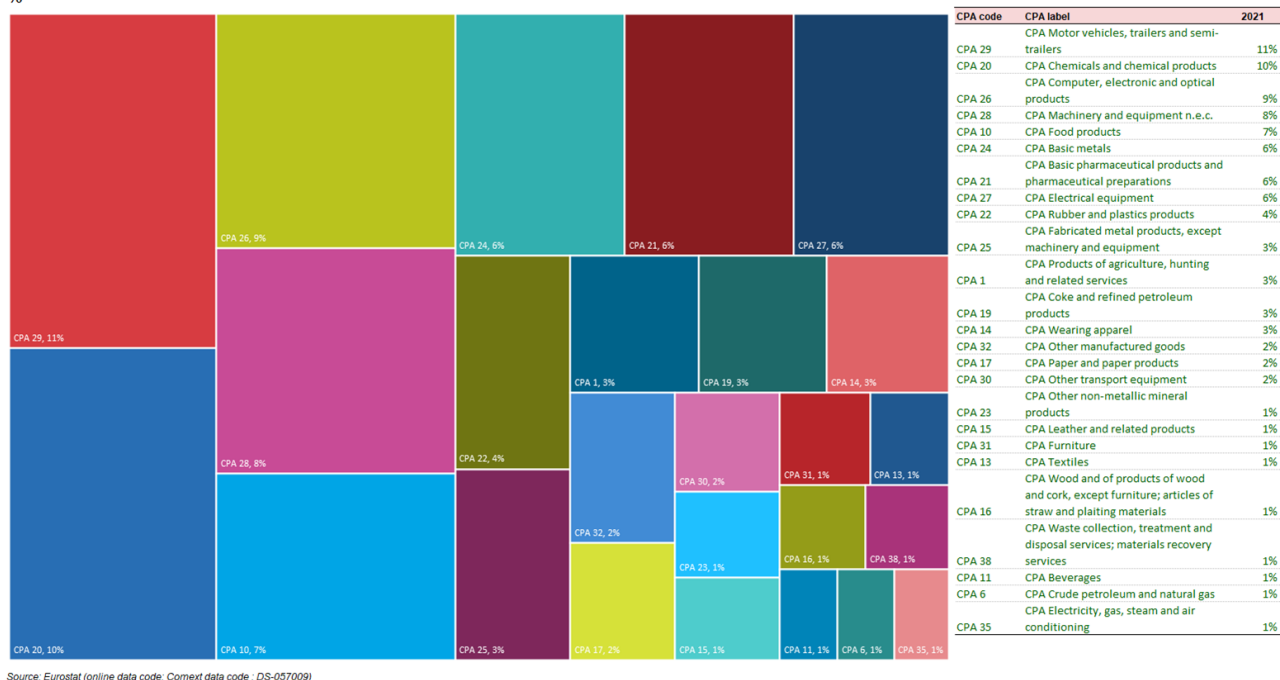
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Table 1: Intra-EU exports of main CPA groups, 2017 - 2021 (€ billion) Source: Eurostat (Comext database DS-057009)

The composition of total exports of goods in 2021 in the 24 CPA groups mentioned in Table 1, is presented in Figure 1. The top five product groups are Motor vehicles, trailers and semi-trailers (**cars**), Chemicals and chemical products (**chemicals**), Computer, electronic and optical products (**computers**), Machinery and equipment n.e.c. (**machines**) and Food products (**food**). The rest of this article will concentrate on these top five products. Together they account for 45 % of all exports. Cars (11 %) and chemicals are the only product with a share above 10 %.

Share of main CPA groups in intra-EU exports, 2021

%



Source: Eurostat (online data code: Comext data code: DS-057009)

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Figure 1: Shares for main CPA groups in intra-EU exports, 2021 (%) Source: Eurostat (Comext database DS-057009)

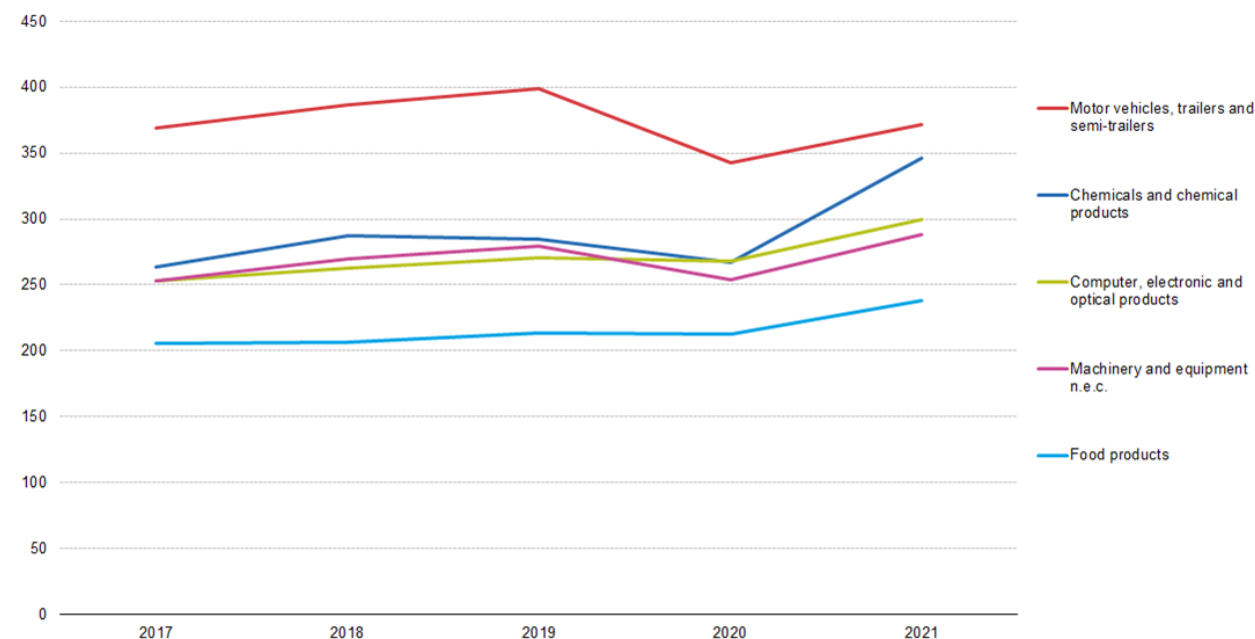
For readability, in the rest of the article we use the designation of these products given in bold between brackets in the paragraph above. However, readers should keep in mind that these do not correspond exactly to the definition of these product groups.

The 5 most significant products in intra-EU trade

The most exported product within the EU was cars. Its exports increased from € 369 billion in 2017 to € 372 billion in 2021 (see Figure 2) despite a decrease of € 56 billion in 2020. The intra-EU exports of the second to fifth most traded products all grew in this period, most notably for chemicals whose exports increased from € 264 billion in 2017 to € 346 billion in 2021

Top 5 CPA categories in intra-EU exports, 2017 - 2021

€ billion



Source: Eurostat (online data code: Comext data code : DS-057009)

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Figure 2: Shares for top 5 CPA categories in intra-EU exports, 2017 - 2021 (€ billion) Source: Eurostat (Comext database DS-057009)

Intra-EU trade of the most traded goods by Member State

The analysis in this section looks at intra-EU exports by individual EU Member State for the five most traded products identified above. Tables 2 to 6 show the shares of these products in total exports, showing how important these products were in each Member State. The detailed data underlying these figures can be found in the excel file attached to this article.

In 2021, Germany was the largest exporter of cars in the EU. Its exports of € 90 billion were 24.1 % of total EU exports to other Member States (Table 2). There were three Member States where the share of cars in their total exports within the EU was above 20 %. These were Slovakia (29.0 %), Slovenia (20.6 %) and Romania (20.2 %).

Intra-EU exports of motor vehicles, trailers and semi-trailers, 2021

€ million and %

	Total trade (€ million)	Motor vehicles, trailers and semi-trailers (€ million)	Share by Member State (%)	Share in total extra-EU imports (%)
EU	3 427 767	371 696	100.0	10.8
Germany	747 347	89 595	24.1	12.0
Spain	203 708	33 019	8.9	16.2
France	270 379	32 672	8.8	12.1
Belgium	305 984	32 504	8.7	10.6
Czechia	154 105	28 381	7.6	18.4
Poland	213 661	23 203	6.2	10.9
Italy	269 805	21 172	5.7	7.8
Slovakia	70 482	20 409	5.5	29.0
Hungary	93 913	17 882	4.8	19.0
Netherlands	491 175	15 102	4.1	3.1
Sweden	86 255	12 095	3.3	14.0
Austria	118 415	11 192	3.0	9.5
Romania	54 090	10 906	2.9	20.2
Slovenia	32 586	6 698	1.8	20.6
Portugal	45 409	6 260	1.7	13.8
Finland	38 960	3 333	0.9	8.6
Denmark	55 549	2 345	0.6	4.2
Lithuania	19 932	1 060	0.3	5.3
Luxembourg	11 355	1 059	0.3	9.3
Estonia	12 189	870	0.2	7.1
Bulgaria	23 152	643	0.2	2.8
Latvia	11 313	535	0.1	4.7
Croatia	13 215	520	0.1	3.9
Greece	21 445	126	0.0	0.6
Ireland	61 186	112	0.0	0.2
Malta	1 290	3	0.0	0.2
Cyprus	867	1	0.0	0.1

Source: Eurostat (online data code: Comext data code : DS-057009)

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Table 2: Intra EU exports of motor vehicles, trailers and semi-trailers, 2021 (€ million and %) Source: Eurostat (Comext database DS-057009)

In 2021, Germany was the largest exporter of chemicals in the EU. Its exports of € 73 billion were 21.1 % of total EU exports to other Member States (Table 3). There were six Member States where the share of chemicals in their total exports within the EU was above 10 %. These were Ireland (21.9 %), Belgium (18.9 %), France, Lithuania (both 13.3 %), the Netherlands (12.4 %) and Estonia (11.4 %).

Intra-EU exports of chemicals and chemical products, 2021

€ million and %

	Total trade (€ million)	Chemicals and chemical products (€ million)	Share by Member State (%)	Share in total extra-EU imports (%)
EU	3 427 767	346 212	100.0	10.1
Germany	747 347	72 956	21.1	9.8
Netherlands	491 175	61 108	17.7	12.4
Belgium	305 984	57 978	16.7	18.9
France	270 379	35 864	10.4	13.3
Spain	203 708	19 650	5.7	9.6
Italy	269 805	19 372	5.6	7.2
Poland	213 661	14 691	4.2	6.9
Ireland	61 186	13 427	3.9	21.9
Czechia	154 105	7 625	2.2	4.9
Austria	118 415	6 206	1.8	5.2
Hungary	93 913	6 164	1.8	6.6
Sweden	86 255	5 986	1.7	6.9
Denmark	55 549	3 580	1.0	6.4
Finland	38 960	2 897	0.8	7.4
Portugal	45 409	2 863	0.8	6.3
Slovakia	70 482	2 798	0.8	4.0
Lithuania	19 932	2 656	0.8	13.3
Slovenia	32 586	1 854	0.5	5.7
Romania	54 090	1 719	0.5	3.2
Bulgaria	23 152	1 671	0.5	7.2
Estonia	12 189	1 394	0.4	11.4
Greece	21 445	1 377	0.4	6.4
Luxembourg	11 355	803	0.2	7.1
Latvia	11 313	739	0.2	6.5
Croatia	13 215	737	0.2	5.6
Cyprus	867	57	0.0	6.6
Malta	1 290	40	0.0	3.1

Source: Eurostat (online data code: Comext data code : DS-057009)

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Table 3: Intra EU exports of chemicals and chemical products, 2021 (€ million and %) Source: Eurostat (Comext database DS-057009)

In 2021, the Netherlands was the largest exporter of computers in the EU. Its exports of € 95 billion were 31.7 % of total EU exports to other Member States (Table 4). There were four Member States where the share of computers in their total exports within the EU was above 10 %. These were the Netherlands (19.4 %), Czechia (16.6 %), Hungary (13.5 %) and Slovakia (13.3 %).

Intra-EU exports of computer, electronic and optical products, 2021

€ million and %

	Total trade (€ million)	Computer, electronic and optical products (€ million)	Share by Member State (%)	Share in total extra-EU imports (%)
EU	3 427 767	299 992	100.0	8.8
Belgium	305 984	8 894	3.0	2.9
Bulgaria	23 152	1 098	0.4	4.7
Czechia	154 105	25 615	8.5	16.6
Denmark	55 549	3 605	1.2	6.5
Germany	747 347	62 347	20.8	8.3
Estonia	12 189	758	0.3	6.2
Ireland	61 186	4 120	1.4	6.7
Greece	21 445	1 235	0.4	5.8
Spain	203 708	5 272	1.8	2.6
France	270 379	16 493	5.5	6.1
Croatia	13 215	402	0.1	3.0
Italy	269 805	8 102	2.7	3.0
Cyprus	867	46	0.0	5.3
Latvia	11 313	1 093	0.4	9.7
Lithuania	19 932	1 152	0.4	5.8
Luxembourg	11 355	324	0.1	2.9
Hungary	93 913	12 676	4.2	13.5
Malta	1 290	112	0.0	8.7
Netherlands	491 175	95 116	31.7	19.4
Austria	118 415	8 169	2.7	6.9
Poland	213 661	19 113	6.4	8.9
Portugal	45 409	2 710	0.9	6.0
Romania	54 090	3 596	1.2	6.6
Slovenia	32 586	1 090	0.4	3.3
Slovakia	70 482	9 395	3.1	13.3
Finland	38 960	1 356	0.5	3.5
Sweden	86 255	6 104	2.0	7.1

Source: Eurostat (online data code: Comext data code : DS-057009)

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Table 4: Intra EU exports of computer, electronic and optical products, 2021 (€ million and %) Source: Eurostat (Comext database DS-057009)

In 2021, Germany was the largest exporter of machines in the EU. Its exports of € 87 billion were 30.3 % of total EU exports to other Member States (Table 5). There were five Member States where the share of machines in their total exports within the EU was above 10 %. These were Italy (13.8 %), Germany (11.7 %), Austria (11.0 %), Denmark (10.4 %) and Czechia (10.3 %).

Intra-EU exports of machinery and equipment n.e.c., 2021

€ million and %

	Total trade (€ million)	Machinery and equipment n.e.c. (€ million)	Share by Member State (%)	Share in total extra-EU imports (%)
EU	3 427 767	287 971	100.0	8.4
Belgium	305 984	17 177	6.0	5.6
Bulgaria	23 152	1 738	0.6	7.5
Czechia	154 105	15 867	5.5	10.3
Denmark	55 549	5 769	2.0	10.4
Germany	747 347	87 212	30.3	11.7
Estonia	12 189	766	0.3	6.3
Ireland	61 186	1 297	0.5	2.1
Greece	21 445	470	0.2	2.2
Spain	203 708	8 598	3.0	4.2
France	270 379	20 512	7.1	7.6
Croatia	13 215	642	0.2	4.9
Italy	269 805	37 354	13.0	13.8
Cyprus	867	16	0.0	1.9
Latvia	11 313	319	0.1	2.8
Lithuania	19 932	704	0.2	3.5
Luxembourg	11 355	1 053	0.4	9.3
Hungary	93 913	6 851	2.4	7.3
Malta	1 290	40	0.0	3.1
Netherlands	491 175	27 200	9.4	5.5
Austria	118 415	13 033	4.5	11.0
Poland	213 661	14 004	4.9	6.6
Portugal	45 409	2 353	0.8	5.2
Romania	54 090	4 938	1.7	9.1
Slovenia	32 586	2 860	1.0	8.8
Slovakia	70 482	5 984	2.1	8.5
Finland	38 960	3 728	1.3	9.6
Sweden	86 255	7 484	2.6	8.7

Source: Eurostat (online data code: Comext data code : DS-057009)

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Table 5: Intra EU exports of other machinery and equipment, 2021 (€ million and %) Source: Eurostat (Comext database DS-057009)

In 2021, Germany was the largest exporter of food in the EU. Its exports of € 45 billion were 18.8 % of total EU exports to other EU Member States (Table 6). There were four Member States where the share of food in their total exports within the EU was above 10 %. These were Cyprus (16.7 %), Greece (14.1 %), Denmark (12.7 %) and Lithuania (11.0 %).

Intra-EU exports of food products, 2021

€ million and %

	Total trade (€ million)	Food products (€ million)	Share by Member State (%)	Share in total extra-EU imports (%)
EU	3 427 767	237 943	100.0	6.9
Germany	747 347	44 724	18.8	6.0
Netherlands	491 175	41 820	17.6	8.5
Belgium	305 984	22 397	9.4	7.3
France	270 379	21 171	8.9	7.8
Poland	213 661	19 398	8.2	9.1
Spain	203 708	19 164	8.1	9.4
Italy	269 805	18 567	7.8	6.9
Austria	118 415	7 250	3.0	6.1
Denmark	55 549	7 055	3.0	12.7
Hungary	93 913	4 926	2.1	5.2
Czechia	154 105	4 847	2.0	3.1
Ireland	61 186	3 881	1.6	6.3
Sweden	86 255	3 504	1.5	4.1
Greece	21 445	3 015	1.3	14.1
Portugal	45 409	2 979	1.3	6.6
Lithuania	19 932	2 200	0.9	11.0
Slovakia	70 482	1 972	0.8	2.8
Bulgaria	23 152	1 805	0.8	7.8
Romania	54 090	1 508	0.6	2.8
Slovenia	32 586	1 227	0.5	3.8
Latvia	11 313	1 038	0.4	9.2
Croatia	13 215	899	0.4	6.8
Luxembourg	11 355	889	0.4	7.8
Finland	38 960	790	0.3	2.0
Estonia	12 189	769	0.3	6.3
Cyprus	867	144	0.1	16.7
Malta	1 290	4	0.0	0.3

Source: Eurostat (online data code: Comext data code : DS-057009)

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Table 6: Intra EU exports of food products, 2021 (€ million and %) Source: Eurostat (Comext database DS-057009)

Source data for tables and graphs

- [Intra-EU trade of most exported goods \(Excel file\)](#)

Data sources

EU data comes from Eurostat's COMEXT database.

COMEXT is the Eurostat 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 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.

Information on intra-EU trade is collected by the EU Member States using the various media placed at the disposal of the information providers. These may be paper or electronic declarations provided for at national level. The declarations are addressed directly to the competent national administrations.

European statistics on international trade in goods are compiled according to the EU concepts and definitions and may, therefore, differ from national data published by Member States.

Product classification

Classification of products by activity ([CPA](#)) is a statistical classification of products and services obligatory for all EU Member States. CPA classifies products by activity in which they are produced. Products are transportable goods and services. The CPA is a product classification whose elements are related to activities as defined by NACE Rev. 2. Each product - whether it be a transportable or a non-transportable good or a service - is assigned to one single NACE Rev. 2 activity. The linkage to activities as defined by NACE Rev. 2 gives the CPA a structure parallel to that of NACE Rev. 2 at all levels distinguished by NACE Rev. 2.

Unit of measure

Trade values are expressed in billions (109) or millions (106) 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.

Comparability across countries

Intra-EU statistics of EU Member States are comparable across countries since:

- European statistics are drawn up on the basis of a broadly common methodology and common definitions;
- the problem of the FOB and CIF valuations generally plays a smaller role in view of the geographical context and the structure of intra-EU trade;
- given the rules for determining reference periods, time delays should not have such a large impact — at least on annual results;
- the trade partner for intra-EU imports is always the EU Member State of consignment, not the country of origin of the goods.

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

Context

The European internal market, also referred to as the Single Market, allows people and businesses to move and trade freely across the 27-nation group. The cornerstones of the single market are the free movement of people, goods, services and capital, known collectively as the 'four freedoms', which are included in the EU Treaty. Articles 34 to 36 of the Treaty of the functioning of the EU prohibit quantitative restrictions on imports, exports or goods in transit and all similar restrictive measures between EU Member States. All measures capable of hindering directly or indirectly such imports are considered to be quantitative restrictions. Additionally because the 27 EU Member States share a single market and a single external border, they also have a single trade policy. Both in the World Trade Organization (WTO), where the rules of international trade are agreed and enforced, and with individual trade partners, EU Member States speak and negotiate collectively.

Other articles

- [International trade in goods](#)
- [Intra-EU trade in goods - main features](#)

Main tables

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

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

[International trade in goods - detailed data \(detail\)](#)

Database

- [International trade in goods - detailed data](#)

[Traditional international trade database access \(ComExt\)](#)

Dedicated section

- [International trade in goods](#)

Methodology

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

Visualisations

- [Top 5 partners in trade in goods](#)
- [My Country in a bubble](#)

Legislation

- [Regulation \(EC\) No 471/2009](#) of 6 May 2009 on Community statistics relating to external trade with non-member countries
- [Summaries of EU Legislation: Extrastat: statistics relating to trade with non-EU countries](#)
- [Regulation \(EU\) No 92/2010](#) of 2 February 2010 implementing Regulation (EC) No 471/2009, as regards data exchange between customs authorities and national statistical authorities, compilation of statistics and quality assessment
- [Regulation \(EU\) No 113/2010](#) of 9 February 2010 implementing Regulation (EC) No 471/2009 , as regards trade coverage, definition of the data, compilation of statistics on trade by business characteristics and by invoicing currency, and specific goods or movements.

External links

- [European Commission — Trade](#)
- [European Commission — Globalisation](#)
- [European Commission — Single market for goods](#)