

International trade in sporting goods

Statistics Explained

Data extracted in July 2025.
Planned article update: October 2026.

Highlights

In 2024, the United States was the leading destination for EU exports of sporting goods, with a value of € 1.6 billion. China was the major EU trade partner for the imports of sporting goods in 2024, accounting for more than 40% of the total sporting goods imports. Sports footwear accounted for the highest value among sporting goods imported from non-EU countries in 2024 (28% of the total sporting goods imports), while boats and water sport equipment generated the highest export value (30%).

This article analyses statistics on international trade in sporting goods for the [EU](#). Data are also presented for the [European Free Trade Association \(EFTA\) countries](#), [candidate countries](#) and the potential candidate country (Kosovo*). This analysis covers data from 2019 and 2024 showing:

- [export](#) and [import](#) values in absolute and relative terms (in € million and as a share of total trade);
- [extra-EU](#) and [intra-EU](#) trade;
- the type of goods traded;
- EU's main trading partners.

Statistics on international trade in sporting goods are based on data extracted from [COMEXT](#), Eurostat's database on international trade in goods.

**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.*

The value of extra-EU trade in sporting goods in 2024

In 2024, the EU's trade in sporting goods (the sum of extra-EU exports and imports) with the rest of the world was valued at € 18.1 billion (€ 7.3 billion of exports and € 10.8 billion of imports, see Table 1). Both imports and exports increased compared with 2019: a higher growth was recorded for exports rather than imports (+13.2% against +5.9%), corresponding to an increase of € 0.9 billion for exports against € 0.5 billion for imports. Looking at the overall figure, the extra-EU's trade deficit (imports exceeding exports) in sporting goods decreased by € 0.3 billion, from € 3.7 billion in 2019 to € 3.4 billion in 2024 (see Table 1). In the 5 years between 2019 and 2024, there were some relevant changes in the trade balance of sporting goods.

For exports

- the largest relative increase in sporting goods exports was in the 'golf equipment' category, in which the exports more than doubled with a 108.7% growth between 2019 and 2024, followed by 'racket sports equipment' (+76.6%) and 'boats and water sport equipment' (+52.4%)
- in absolute terms, the 'boats and water sport equipment' category had the highest growth, with an increase of € 0.8 billion between 2019 and 2024

- the only category recording a decrease in exports between 2019 and 2024 was 'sports footwear', which lost around € 0.6 billion (-37.6%) of its value

For imports

- as for exports, the 'golf equipment' category had the highest relative increase, almost doubling its imports with a +96.3% growth in the 5 years (around € 195 million), followed by 'racket sports equipment' (+58.2%)
- in absolute terms, the 'gymnastic, athletic and swimming equipment' category had the highest growth, with an increase of € 343 million between 2019 and 2024; in addition, also the 'boats and water sport equipment' registered a growth higher than € 300 million
- 4 categories recorded a decrease in imports between 2019 and 2024: 'sports footwear', which lost around € 0.5 billion (-14.9%) of its value, 'bicycle', with a decrease of € 155 million (-16.4%), 'skis and related equipment', with a decrease of € 9 million (-3.9%), and 'skates', with a decrease of € 7 million (-5.5%)

Extra-EU trade in sporting goods, EU, 2019 and 2024

	2019				2024				Annual average growth rate, 2019-2024	
	Exports	Imports	Trade balance	Cover ratio (exports/imports)	Exports	Imports	Trade balance	Cover ratio (exports/imports)	Exports (%)	Imports (%)
	(€ million)				(€ million)				(%)	
TOTAL	6 463.6	10 211.1	-3 747.5	0.63	7 319.7	10 750.5	-3 430.8	0.68	2.5	1.0
Balls	71.1	316.5	-245.4	0.22	88.3	476.3	-388.0	0.19	4.4	8.5
Bicycles	367.5	942.8	-575.3	0.39	479.0	788.0	-309.0	0.61	5.4	-3.5
Boats and water sport equipment	1 446.0	768.3	677.7	1.88	2 204.2	1 074.0	1 130.2	2.05	8.8	6.9
Fishing equipment	115.0	423.6	-308.6	0.27	134.2	455.4	-321.2	0.29	3.1	1.5
Golf equipment	24.1	202.6	-178.5	0.12	50.3	397.8	-347.5	0.13	15.9	14.4
Gymnastic, athletic and swimming equipment	1 333.8	2 439.5	-1 105.7	0.55	1 589.6	2 782.6	-1 193.0	0.57	3.6	2.7
Parachutes	48.4	67.1	-18.7	0.72	69.6	101.0	-31.4	0.69	7.6	8.5
Racket sports equipment	50.4	140.9	-90.5	0.36	89.0	222.9	-133.9	0.40	12.1	9.6
Skates	27.8	128.0	-100.2	0.22	35.0	120.9	-85.9	0.29	4.7	-1.1
Skis and related equipment	648.3	239.8	408.5	2.70	672.1	230.5	441.6	2.92	0.7	-0.8
Sporting shotguns	365.5	62.2	303.3	5.88	532.4	76.8	455.6	6.93	7.8	4.3
Sports footwear	1 602.1	3 472.1	-1 870.0	0.46	999.3	2 954.3	-1 955.0	0.34	-9.0	-3.2
Sportswear	363.7	1 007.6	-643.9	0.36	376.5	1 070.1	-693.6	0.35	0.7	1.2

Source: Eurostat (online data code: sprt_trd_prd)

eurostat 

Table 1: Extra-EU trade in sporting goods, EU, 2019 and 2024 Source: Eurostat (sprt_trd_prd)

International trade in sporting goods at national level – 13 EU countries with a positive trade balance

At [national level](#), in 2024, a [trade surplus](#) (concerning intra- and extra-EU trade) was recorded in 13 countries and a trade deficit (imports exceeding exports) in 14 countries (see Table 2). The largest trade surplus in absolute terms, with almost € 1.4 billion, belonged to Belgium, followed by Italy with € 0.7 billion. Belgium had the largest trade surplus also in 2019.

Luxembourg recorded the highest cover ratio (exports/imports), with exports 2.7 times higher than imports. In addition to Luxembourg, Belgium (1.7), Bulgaria, Lithuania and Portugal (1.6) were countries with cover ratios greater than 1.5. Spain (with almost € 0.9 billion) and Germany (with almost € 0.8 billion) recorded the largest deficits of trade in sporting goods, while Malta (0.02) Ireland (0.1) and Cyprus (0.2) had the lowest cover ratios.

In 2024, Germany was the EU's largest exporter of sporting goods in terms of value, with exports around € 4.3 billion (€ 0.4 billion more than in 2019), followed by the Netherlands with € 3.9 billion (€ 1.2 billion more than in 2019) and Belgium with € 3.5 billion (€ 0.1 billion less than in 2019). The largest importers were Germany (€ 5.1 billion, € 0.2 billion less than in 2019), France with € 4.0 billion (€ 0.5 billion more than in 2019) and the Netherlands with € 3.5 billion (€ 0.7 billion more than in 2019, the highest increase).

The high ranking on the list of EU sporting goods importers, of medium-size countries like the Netherlands and Belgium is due to the impact of quasi-transit of goods, the 'Rotterdam effect', affecting countries with large ports at the EU's external border (for more details, see the methodology/metadata section).

International trade in sporting goods, 2019 and 2024

	2019				2024				Annual average growth rate, 2019-2024	
	Exports	Imports (€ million)	Trade balance	Cover ratio (exports/ imports)	Exports	Imports (€ million)	Trade balance	Cover ratio (exports/ imports)	Exports	Imports
EU (*)	6 463.6	10 211.1	-3 747.5	0.6	7 319.7	10 750.5	-3 430.8	0.7	2.5	1.0
Belgium	3 596.2	2 316.5	1 279.7	1.6	3 501.0	2 103.4	1 397.6	1.7	-0.5	-1.9
Bulgaria	261.7	88.8	172.9	2.9	237.9	146.2	91.7	1.6	-1.9	10.5
Czechia	730.1	618.5	111.6	1.2	1 003.2	822.0	181.2	1.2	6.6	5.9
Denmark	247.0	537.9	- 290.9	0.5	364.9	652.1	- 287.2	0.6	8.1	3.9
Germany	3 837.1	5 282.4	-1 445.3	0.7	4 268.5	5 059.1	- 790.6	0.8	2.2	-0.9
Estonia	58.2	67.2	- 9.0	0.9	91.4	100.0	- 8.6	0.9	9.4	8.3
Ireland	17.8	269.5	- 251.7	0.1	38.3	464.4	- 426.1	0.1	16.6	11.5
Greece	101.2	350.6	- 249.4	0.3	154.6	432.4	- 277.8	0.4	8.8	4.3
Spain	952.5	1 995.3	-1 042.8	0.5	1 523.9	2 420.8	- 896.9	0.6	9.9	3.9
France	2 431.7	3 466.9	-1 035.2	0.7	3 286.2	4 011.1	- 724.9	0.8	6.2	3.0
Croatia	102.4	268.2	- 165.8	0.4	167.3	501.0	- 333.7	0.3	10.3	13.3
Italy	2 657.9	2 209.3	448.6	1.2	3 299.0	2 614.4	684.6	1.3	4.4	3.4
Cyprus	5.5	40.5	- 35.0	0.1	13.3	66.2	- 52.9	0.2	19.4	10.3
Latvia	45.7	77.1	- 31.4	0.6	58.5	87.0	- 28.5	0.7	5.0	2.4
Lithuania	134.1	93.3	40.8	1.4	160.5	101.0	59.5	1.6	3.7	1.6
Luxembourg	70.1	82.9	- 12.8	0.8	263.8	99.5	164.3	2.7	30.4	3.7
Hungary	198.6	221.2	- 22.6	0.9	294.7	225.5	69.2	1.3	8.2	0.4
Malta	1.8	45.7	- 43.9	0.0	3.6	168.8	- 165.2	0.0	14.8	29.8
Netherlands	2 707.6	2 814.8	- 107.2	1.0	3 885.9	3 539.9	346.0	1.1	7.5	4.7
Austria	1 030.2	1 286.0	- 255.8	0.8	1 156.6	1 534.6	- 378.0	0.8	2.3	3.6
Poland	1 483.6	1 051.6	432.0	1.4	1 970.3	1 347.3	623.0	1.5	5.8	5.1
Portugal	426.0	321.6	104.4	1.3	629.0	386.6	242.4	1.6	8.1	3.8
Romania	420.6	286.1	134.5	1.5	494.1	389.2	104.9	1.3	3.3	6.3
Slovenia	178.7	201.8	- 23.1	0.9	242.3	240.8	1.5	1.0	6.3	3.6
Slovakia	215.7	230.2	- 14.5	0.9	307.4	289.5	17.9	1.1	7.3	4.7
Finland	297.2	359.9	- 62.7	0.8	351.8	365.2	- 13.4	1.0	3.4	0.3
Sweden	409.8	892.4	- 482.6	0.5	531.3	931.3	- 400.0	0.6	5.3	0.9
Iceland	1.2	36.2	- 35.0	0.0	1.0	45.2	- 44.2	0.0	-2.6	4.5
Norway	31.2	632.9	- 601.7	0.0	48.6	493.0	- 444.4	0.1	9.3	-4.9
Switzerland	195.0	939.2	- 744.2	0.2	241.5	1 171.6	- 930.1	0.2	4.4	4.5
Bosnia and Herzegovina	51.7	34.2	17.5	1.5	49.6	46.0	3.6	1.1	-0.8	6.1
Montenegro	0.5	12.9	- 12.4	0.0	1.0	22.6	- 21.6	0.0	13.6	11.9
Moldova	1.1	19.9	- 18.8	0.1	.	.
North Macedonia	0.8	14.9	- 14.1	0.1	2.3	20.9	- 18.6	0.1	22.8	7.0
Georgia	0.3	24.1	- 23.8	0.0	0.9	39.6	- 38.7	0.0	22.6	10.5
Serbia	27.8	60.8	- 33.0	0.5	47.2	91.0	- 43.8	0.5	11.2	8.4
Türkiye	357.8	239.6	118.2	1.5	534.1	480.4	53.7	1.1	8.3	14.9
Ukraine	107.9	91.7	16.2	1.2	70.4	109.4	- 39.0	0.6	-8.2	3.6
Kosovo (*)	0.8	14.7	- 13.9	0.1	0.7	24.9	- 24.2	0.0	-2.2	11.1

(*) Excluding intra-EU trade.

(*) 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: sprt_trd_prd)

eurostat

Table 2: International trade in sporting goods, 2019 and 2024 Source: Eurostat (sprt_trd_prd)

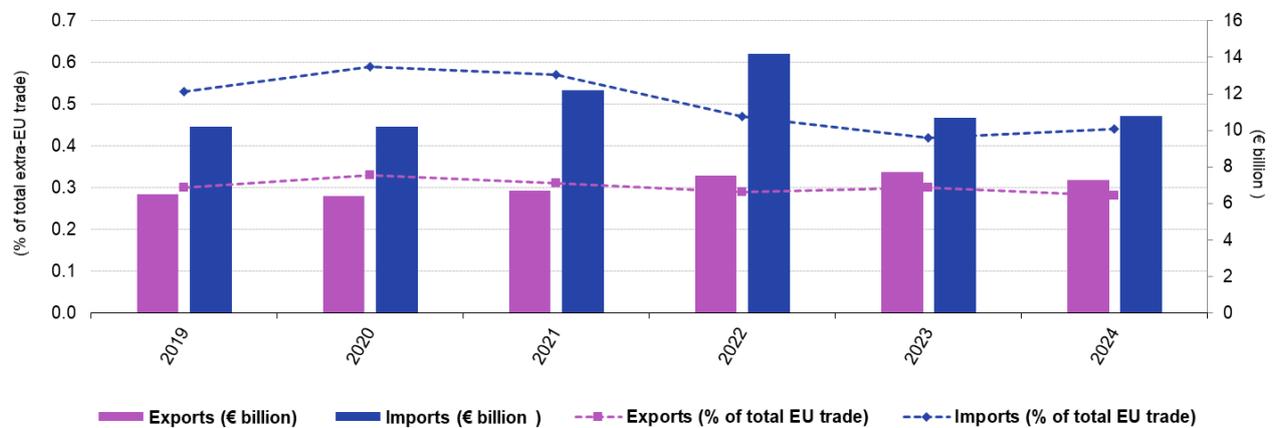
EU International trade in sporting goods between 2019 and 2024

Looking at the EU international trade in sporting goods within the past 5 years (see Figure 1), both imports and exports remained stable in 2020 compared to 2019 (only -€ 0.1 billion difference for exports), before registering a notable increase in 2021 and 2022, particularly for imports (increase of € 4 billion in 2022 compared with 2020). In 2023, compared with 2022, exports continued their growth by € 0.2 billion while imports declined by € 3.5 billion, going back almost to the 2020 value. From 2023 to 2024 however their trends were reversed, with exports dropping by € 0.4 billion and imports registering a slight recovery (€ 0.1 billion).

In relative terms, the imports of sporting goods as a share of total imports increased between 2019 and 2020, before slightly decreasing in 2021 and dropping consistently both in 2022 and 2023, where it accounted almost at 0.4% (the lowest value of this trend series). While the decrease in imports in 2023 also involved the total EU trade, it was more significant for the imports in sporting goods. Following the slight increase in absolute terms for imports, in 2024 also the share of total imports started to increase again.

The share of exports was more stable from 2019 to 2024, peaking in 2020 at 0.3% before starting a slight decrease in 2021 and in 2022, when it went under 0.3%. From 2022 to 2023 it went back to 0.3%, before dropping again below 0.3% in 2024.

Extra-EU trade in sporting goods, EU, 2019–2024 (% of total extra-EU trade and € billion)



Note: different scale on left and right axis.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: sprt_trd_prd)

eurostat

Figure 1: Extra-EU trade in sporting goods, EU, 2019–2024 (% of total extra-EU trade and € billion) Source: Eurostat (sprt_trd_prd)

Between 2019 and 2024, the [annual average growth rate \(AAGR\)](#) of the EU international trade in sporting goods (excluding intra-EU trade) was 2.5% for exports and 1.0% for imports. The annual average growth rate of the value for exports of sporting goods (also including intra-EU trade) was positive in 25 countries, with 3 registering average annual growth rates over 15%: Luxembourg (with +30.4%), Cyprus (+19.4%) and Ireland (+16.6%) (see Figure 2). On the other hand, in Bulgaria (-1.9%) and Belgium (-0.5%) the annual average growth rate was negative. As regards Luxembourg, Cyprus and Malta, their relatively low volumes of sporting trade could lead to significant fluctuations for rates of change from one year to another.

Annual average growth rate for the export of sporting goods, 2019-2024 (%)

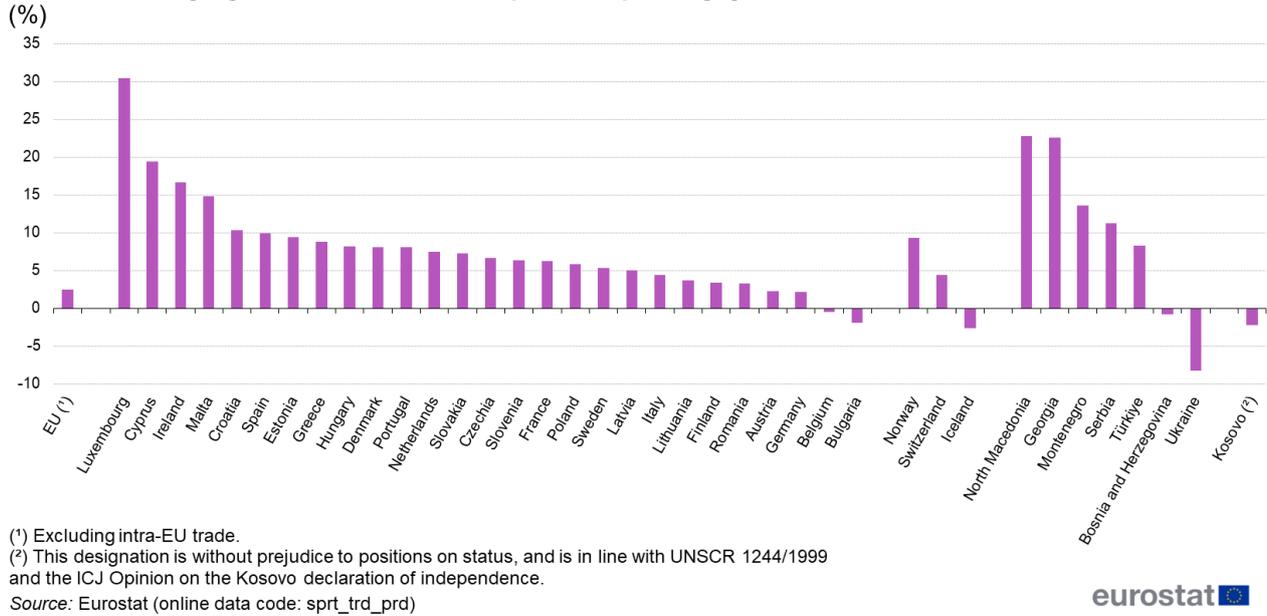


Figure 2: Annual average rate of change for the export of sporting goods, 2019-2024 (%) Source: Eurostat (sprt_trd_prd)

Regarding imports over the same period, 25 countries registered a positive value, with the highest increases in Malta (+29.8%) and Croatia (+13.3%), followed by Ireland, Bulgaria and Cyprus where the average annual growth rate of imports passed the 10% threshold. Belgium (-1.9%) and Germany (-0.9%) were the only countries with a negative annual average growth rate (see Figure 3).

Annual average growth rate for the import of sporting goods, 2019-2024 (%)

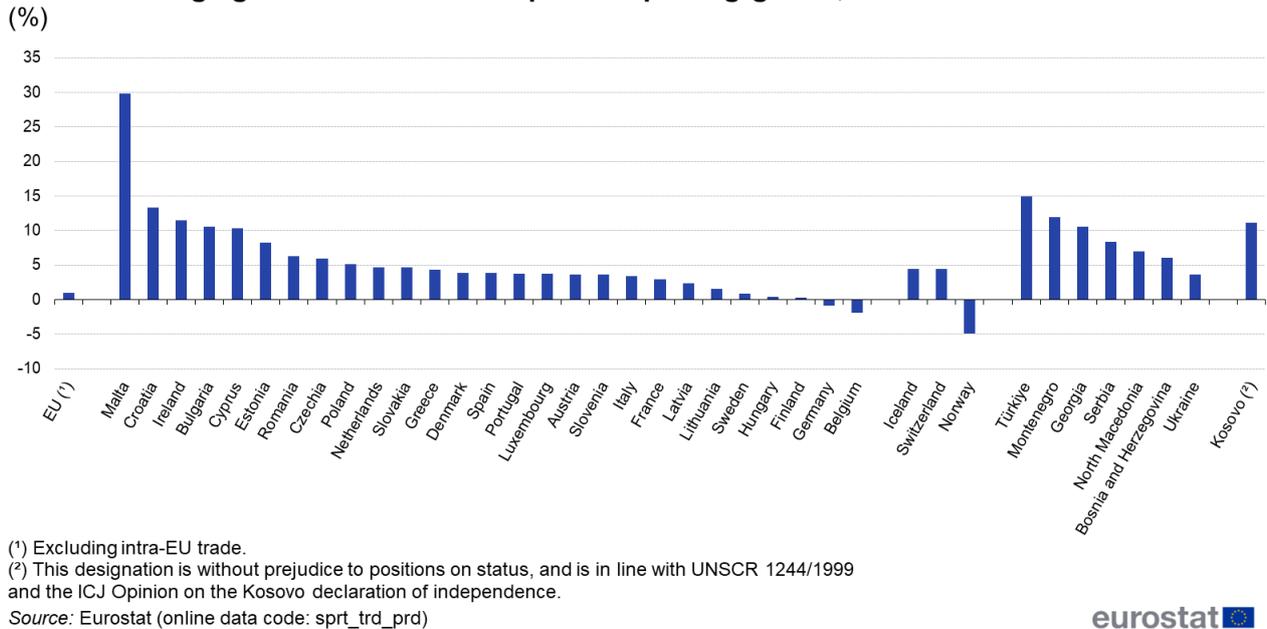


Figure 3: Annual average rate of change for the import of sporting goods, 2019-2024 (%) Source: Eurostat (sprt_trd_prd)

Intra-EU and extra-EU trade in sporting goods

In most countries, the value of intra-EU trade in sporting goods was greater than the value of extra-EU trade in sporting goods

The international trade of countries can be analysed from 2 perspectives: intra-EU trade (between the countries) and extra-EU trade (with non-EU countries). The relation between the 2 is an indication of the heterogeneity of a country's trade patterns and, to some extent, may reflect historical ties and geographical location.

Looking at exports in 2024, almost three-quarters of the EU's total trade in sporting goods was intra-EU (74.1%). At country level, intra-EU trade accounted for most exports in 25 of the countries: the figures ranged from 54.2% in Italy to 94.0% in Luxembourg (see Figure 4). Belgium (93.1% intra-EU trade) and Romania (92.6%) were the other countries where the share of extra-EU trade was below 10%. By contrast, only Ireland (26.9%, mainly due to its significant amount of trade in sporting goods to the United Kingdom) and Finland (45.5%) recorded less intra-EU than extra-EU exports.

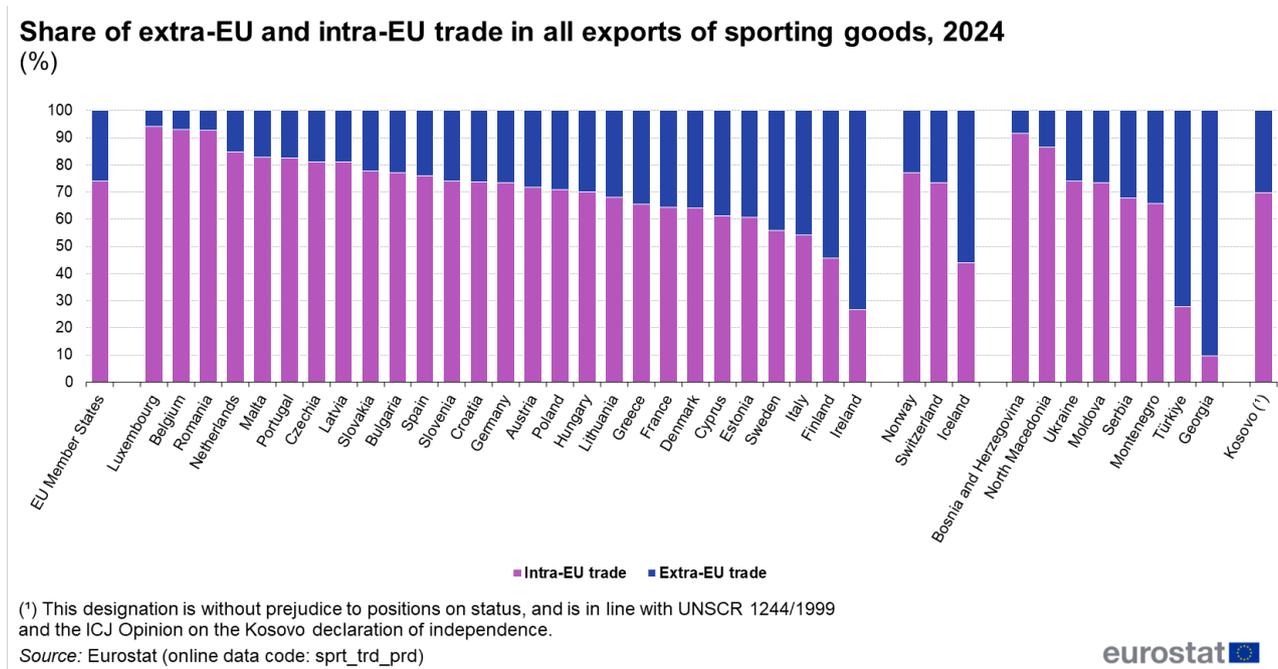
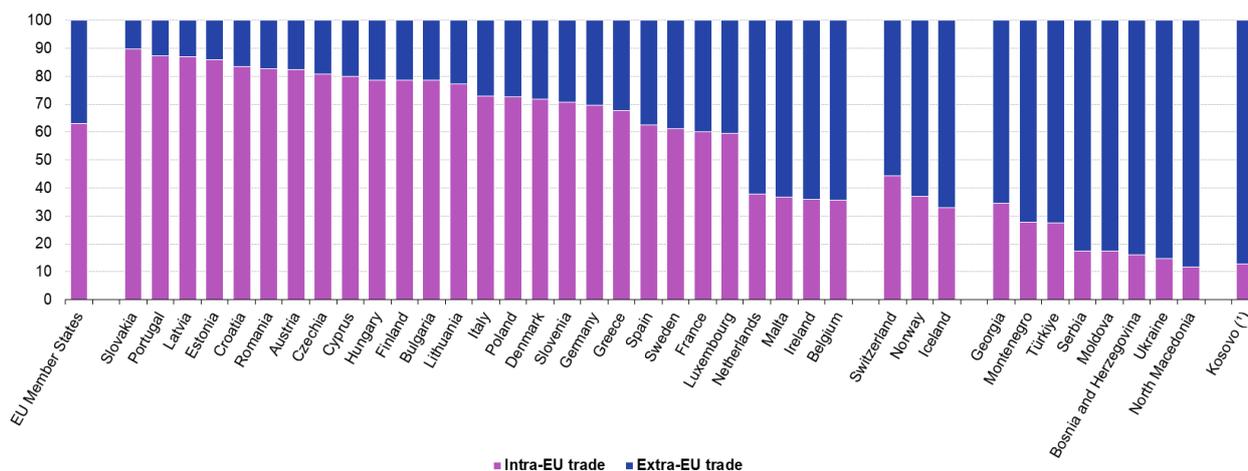


Figure 4: Share of extra-EU and intra-EU trade within all exports of sporting goods, 2024 (%) Source: Eurostat (sprt_trd_prd)

For the whole EU, intra-EU imports accounted for 63.1% of the international trade in sporting goods. Looking at individual countries, in 23 of the 27 countries, the value of intra-EU imports of sporting goods was greater than the value of extra-EU imports. Intra-EU import shares for these countries varied from 59.7% in Luxembourg to 89.7% in Slovakia. 4 countries imported more sporting goods from outside the EU than from inside (see Figure 5): the Netherlands, Malta, Ireland and Belgium.

Share of extra-EU and intra-EU trade in all imports of sporting goods, 2024

(%)



(*) 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: sprt_trd_prd)

eurostat

Figure 5: Share of extra-EU and intra-EU trade within all imports of sporting goods, 2024 (%) Source: Eurostat (sprt_trd_prd)

Trade in sporting goods by product

Boats and water sport equipment were the sporting goods most exported outside the EU

The list of sporting goods that are traded internationally contains the equipment necessary for doing sports (e.g. skis or balls), clothing (e.g. swimwear or footwear) and some articles that can be used for sport and leisure activities (e.g. boats and water sports equipment, bicycles or fishing equipment).

The 3 main groups of sporting goods, among those analysed here, are 'boats and water sport equipment', 'gymnastic, athletic and swimming equipment' and 'sports footwear'. In 2024, they generated two-thirds of the value of extra-EU exports, with 'boats and water sport equipment' accounting for 30.1% of the total value (see Table 3).

At national level, in 2024, taking into account both intra-EU exports and extra-EU exports

- 'boats and water sport equipment' had the largest share in exports of sporting goods in 7 countries, accounting for at least half of total exports of the sporting products value in Malta (87.1%) and Cyprus (50.0%)
- 'gymnastic, athletic and swimming equipment' was the main type of sporting good being exported in 8 countries, accounting for more than half of total exports of sporting products value in Slovakia (52.0%)
- products in the 'sports footwear' category accounted for the largest share of total sporting goods exports in Luxembourg (97.9%), followed by Belgium (75.5%), Germany (33.7%), the Netherlands (28.0%), Ireland (25.4%) and Italy (25.2%)
- 'skis and related equipment' were the principal sporting goods exported from Austria (52.3%) and Romania (37.0%)
- 'bicycles' were the most exported type of sporting good (in terms of trade value) from Portugal (58.2%), Lithuania (37.6%) and Bulgaria (30.4%)
- the 'sportswear' category amounted to the highest share of total sporting goods export value in Croatia (45.6%)
- in Estonia, products belonging to the 'fishing equipment' category accounted for 44.8% of the total value of national exports in sporting goods.

Exports of sporting goods by group of products, 2024

	Total sporting exports (€ million)	Boats and water sport equipment	Gymnastic, athletic and swimming equipment	Sports footwear	Skis and related equipment	Sporting shotguns	Bicycles	Sportswear	Fishing equipment	Other sporting goods
	(% share of total sporting exports)									
EU (*)	7 320	30.1	21.7	13.7	9.2	7.3	6.5	5.1	1.8	4.6
Belgium	3 501	1.4	8.8	75.5	0.2	1.2	6.2	2.3	2.6	1.8
Bulgaria	238	6.1	27.8	3.3	23.9	0.0	30.4	6.4	1.3	0.8
Czechia	1 003	2.8	34.2	15.4	18.0	3.7	16.5	4.1	1.2	4.1
Denmark	365	12.1	28.0	26.1	1.4	0.4	6.9	8.1	5.9	11.1
Germany	4 269	7.3	15.0	33.7	4.6	2.4	20.2	8.1	0.6	8.1
Estonia	91	10.1	16.8	8.5	6.5	0.1	4.7	2.7	44.8	5.8
Ireland	38	4.0	24.7	25.4	0.1	0.0	11.8	14.5	4.6	14.9
Greece	155	42.5	15.1	25.1	0.1	1.1	4.4	7.6	0.5	3.6
Spain	1 524	10.8	22.1	20.4	4.3	3.5	17.9	8.2	2.5	10.3
France	3 286	37.6	11.9	21.6	7.6	0.1	3.4	6.2	2.6	9.0
Croatia	167	27.1	3.2	16.1	0.8	2.2	1.5	45.6	2.0	1.5
Italy	3 299	14.0	19.9	25.2	10.1	10.4	9.0	8.3	0.8	2.3
Cyprus	13	50.0	0.6	3.9	0.0	21.4	0.0	7.5	16.6	0.0
Latvia	58	11.5	30.9	25.2	1.9	0.7	5.7	9.3	6.4	8.4
Lithuania	160	30.5	14.1	4.9	3.6	0.1	37.6	3.1	3.1	3.0
Luxembourg	264	0.0	1.0	97.9	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.4	0.1	0.5
Hungary	295	4.4	42.3	7.4	22.7	0.3	13.6	4.4	2.2	2.7
Malta	4	87.1	3.4	3.8	0.0	0.6	0.1	4.1	0.7	0.2
Netherlands	3 886	12.2	22.9	28.0	1.1	0.0	18.4	6.2	1.9	9.3
Austria	1 157	5.7	10.7	8.6	52.3	1.5	10.6	4.3	1.4	4.9
Poland	1 970	40.6	16.9	17.6	1.0	0.1	7.5	8.9	4.2	3.2
Portugal	629	13.2	4.8	5.7	0.0	6.1	58.2	7.8	0.8	3.4
Romania	494	2.7	5.1	26.6	37.0	1.6	22.9	1.9	0.9	1.3
Slovenia	242	26.0	21.1	20.1	20.0	0.0	4.2	4.3	0.8	3.5
Slovakia	307	2.4	52.0	22.4	1.9	0.7	7.4	4.4	7.2	1.6
Finland	352	47.3	21.9	3.6	1.8	20.1	0.9	0.9	2.9	0.6
Sweden	531	13.5	40.7	14.2	3.5	0.4	2.8	5.6	4.4	14.9
Iceland	1	1.5	37.7	29.9	4.2	2.1	3.8	5.6	14.1	1.1
Norway	49	24.6	18.1	18.8	21.7	0.1	6.5	5.5	0.7	4.0
Switzerland	242	4.1	20.8	27.5	18.1	1.3	2.7	23.2	0.2	2.1
Bosnia and Herzegovina	50	0.3	16.9	77.3	3.4	0.0	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.3
Montenegro	1	69.4	19.5	2.1	0.1	0.5	0.8	7.1	0.0	0.5
Moldova	1	50.7	46.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.5	0.0	0.2
North Macedonia	2	14.9	20.3	9.2	2.3	0.0	1.6	4.8	0.2	46.7
Georgia	1	83.0	8.4	2.3	0.0	0.0	0.1	3.7	0.0	2.5
Serbia	47	4.9	8.4	0.7	0.5	16.8	24.7	34.4	8.0	1.6
Türkiye	534	9.6	9.8	18.2	0.9	41.6	7.0	12.0	0.2	0.7
Ukraine	70	46.1	19.2	0.2	25.8	0.1	2.1	3.8	2.5	0.2
Kosovo (*)	1	0.0	22.7	7.4	0.1	0.0	54.6	6.8	0.0	8.4

(*) Excluding intra-EU trade.

(*) 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: sprt_trd_prd)

eurostat 

Table 3: Exports of sporting goods by group of products, 2024 Source: Eurostat (sprt_trd_prd)

Sports footwear and gymnastic, athletic and swimming equipment accounted for over half of the value of extra-EU imports of sporting goods

In 2024, the 2 main groups of sporting goods accounted for over half of the value of extra-EU imports (see Table 4). The 'sports footwear' category represented the highest share of imports with 27.5% of all imported sporting goods, followed by 'gymnastic, athletic and swimming equipment' (25.9%).

After analysing imports in individual countries (taking into account both intra-EU imports and extra-EU imports), the following results can be highlighted

- for 20 countries, imported 'sports footwear' goods generated the highest value, accounting for 65.7% of the total value of imports of sporting goods in Luxembourg
- 'gymnastic, athletic and swimming equipment' imports had the highest value of all imported sporting goods in Sweden (31.0%), Finland (28.6%), Hungary (28.3%), and Lithuania (24.5%)
- Malta (89.8%) and Croatia (48.0%) imported more 'boats and water sport equipment' in terms of value than any other type of sporting good.

Imports of sporting goods by group of products, 2024

	Total sporting imports (€ million)	Sports footwear	Gymnastic, athletic and swimming equipment	Boats and water sport equipment	Sportswear	Bicycles	Balls	Fishing equipment	Golf equipment	Other sporting goods
	(% share of total sporting imports)									
EU (*)	10 750	27.5	25.9	10.0	10.0	7.3	4.4	4.2	3.7	7.0
Belgium	2 103	53.3	16.2	1.9	3.9	15.9	1.8	3.2	0.3	3.5
Bulgaria	146	33.8	19.3	15.2	7.9	6.7	2.8	6.3	0.0	8.0
Czechia	822	30.8	21.7	3.3	7.0	16.8	2.2	3.0	1.3	13.9
Denmark	652	33.5	23.1	3.7	6.0	16.8	5.1	3.3	2.4	6.1
Germany	5 059	40.2	16.6	6.1	9.1	14.5	3.5	1.8	1.3	6.9
Estonia	100	22.9	17.8	10.2	5.9	15.3	1.6	9.4	0.8	16.1
Ireland	464	45.6	18.8	4.1	7.3	7.4	3.4	1.9	9.8	1.7
Greece	432	33.5	18.7	28.2	9.3	2.2	2.9	2.3	0.2	2.7
Spain	2 421	38.8	18.9	9.4	9.8	9.2	3.6	2.3	1.1	6.9
France	4 011	34.8	17.2	9.7	7.7	9.4	3.4	3.4	2.6	11.8
Croatia	501	15.4	7.3	48.0	17.1	4.9	1.8	2.7	0.0	2.8
Italy	2 614	44.1	14.5	9.5	9.8	5.3	2.6	1.5	0.3	12.4
Cyprus	66	26.3	22.4	13.1	9.1	5.1	2.2	6.6	1.0	14.2
Latvia	87	29.1	26.3	5.6	7.5	14.0	2.7	6.1	0.2	8.5
Lithuania	101	20.5	24.5	8.5	8.1	16.4	3.6	8.6	0.2	9.6
Luxembourg	100	65.7	11.7	0.7	3.7	13.3	1.0	0.5	1.2	2.2
Hungary	226	26.6	28.3	7.9	8.8	10.3	3.6	5.4	0.1	9.0
Malta	169	3.2	3.1	89.8	1.7	0.8	0.2	0.5	0.1	0.6
Netherlands	3 540	28.1	23.2	7.3	6.4	17.9	3.6	2.0	7.1	4.4
Austria	1 535	19.9	16.1	3.6	7.9	16.7	1.8	1.3	0.8	31.9
Poland	1 347	33.9	23.2	5.3	11.8	11.2	3.1	4.6	0.2	6.7
Portugal	387	30.7	26.9	6.7	9.6	10.1	3.8	4.3	1.6	6.3
Romania	389	35.3	25.1	4.7	7.6	7.2	3.4	7.8	0.1	8.8
Slovenia	241	28.4	19.9	17.8	5.7	13.5	3.0	2.0	0.5	9.2
Slovakia	289	32.7	21.8	4.8	8.1	12.1	2.6	8.9	1.0	8.0
Finland	365	18.1	28.6	4.7	3.9	19.9	1.9	5.3	4.0	13.6
Sweden	931	22.5	31.0	5.1	5.5	8.4	2.4	2.6	5.7	16.8
Iceland	45	21.3	25.3	5.5	11.4	6.4	2.4	8.2	9.8	9.7
Norway	493	29.5	19.1	11.2	4.7	10.0	1.4	3.6	4.5	16.0
Switzerland	1 172	20.8	22.4	5.9	11.6	18.0	1.9	0.9	2.2	16.3
Bosnia and Herzegovina	46	36.5	20.5	3.0	12.2	9.2	5.9	3.1	0.1	9.5
Montenegro	23	30.4	18.6	23.9	10.4	4.8	4.6	3.5	0.7	3.1
Moldova	20	27.5	32.0	3.6	9.9	10.5	7.4	5.8	0.0	3.3
North Macedonia	21	43.9	21.8	4.5	10.1	11.2	4.4	1.7	0.1	2.3
Georgia	40	27.4	38.2	5.9	6.9	6.8	6.0	2.6	0.2	6.0
Serbia	91	30.6	28.9	4.7	11.6	2.6	7.0	6.1	0.1	8.4
Türkiye	480	33.5	16.6	24.2	6.5	2.2	4.8	7.1	0.3	4.8
Ukraine	109	5.5	38.0	4.5	6.8	14.7	4.4	11.0	0.1	15.0
Kosovo (²)	25	50.4	22.4	0.4	9.2	3.6	5.0	0.7	0.0	8.3

(¹) Excluding intra-EU trade.

(²) 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: sprt_trd_prd)

eurostat 

Table 4: Imports of sporting goods by group of products, 2024 Source: Eurostat (sprt_trd_prd)

The EU's principal partners for trade in sporting goods

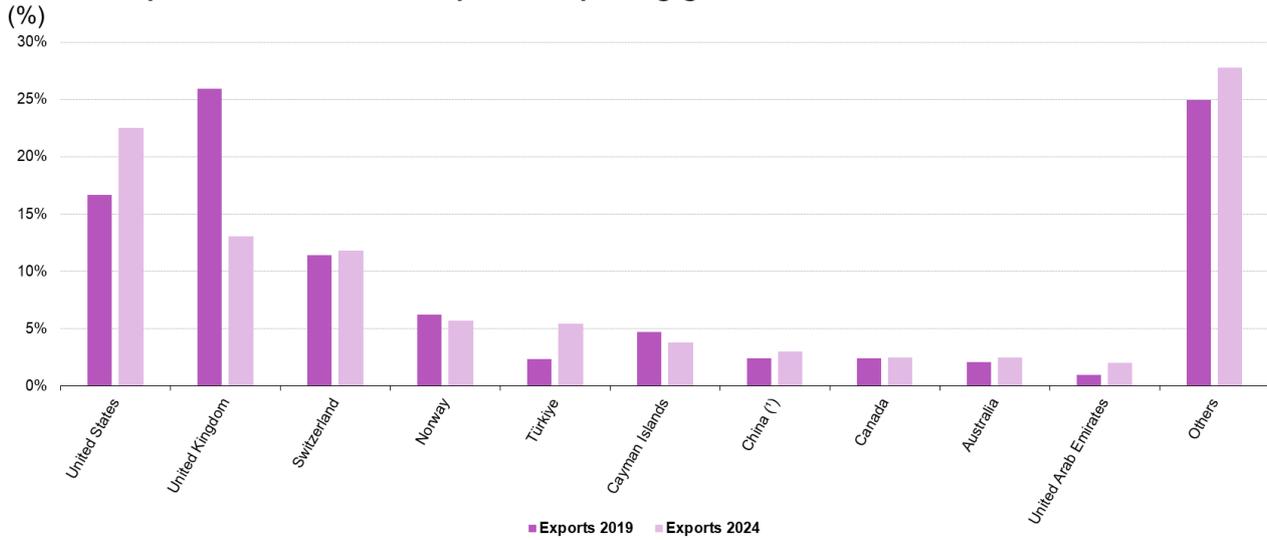
The United States overtook the United Kingdom as the leading destination for EU exports of sporting goods

When considering the aggregate trade of all countries, most of the value from sporting goods is generated within the European single market (see Figure 4 and Figure 5).

In 2024, in terms of value, the leading extra-EU destinations for sporting goods were the United States (22.5%), the United Kingdom (13.0%) and Switzerland (11.8%), accounting for almost half of the total value of exports of sporting goods. Exports to any of the other extra-EU trade partners accounted for less than 10% (see Figure 6).

Compared with 2019, in 2024, the United States' share of the total value of exports of sporting goods increased by 5.9 percentage points (pp), while for the United Kingdom it decreased by 12.9 pp (it should be noted that the United Kingdom was part of the EU in 2019). The majority of the other main partners were able to increase their share of exports of sporting goods from 2019 to 2024, notably Türkiye by 3.2 pp; the only exceptions were the Cayman Islands (down by 0.9 pp) and Norway (down by 0.5 pp).

2024 main partners for extra EU exports of sporting goods, EU, 2019 and 2024



(1) Excluding Hong Kong.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: sprt_trd_prt)

eurostat

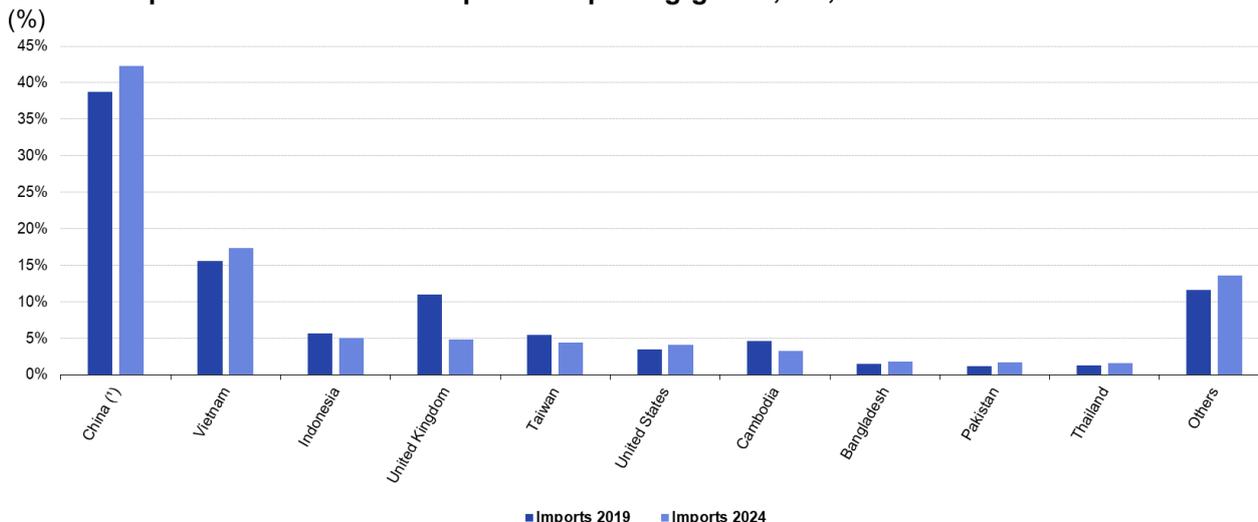
Figure 6: 2024 main partners for extra EU exports of sporting goods, EU, 2019 and 2024 (%) Source: Eurostat (sprt_trd_prt)

Almost half of EU imports of sporting goods came from China

Figure 7 shows the extra-EU's 10 main partners for imports of sporting goods. In 2024, 42.3% of the total value of EU imports of sporting goods was generated by imports from China, increasing by 3.5 pp since 2019. The second highest share belonged to Vietnam (17.4%), which increased by 1.8 pp from 2019, followed by Indonesia with 5.1% (down by 0.6 pp from 2019).

As for exports, the United Kingdom's share in the total value of EU imports of sporting goods significantly decreased, falling from 10.9% in 2019 (third highest partner of the EU) to 4.8% in 2024. In addition to the United Kingdom and Indonesia, Taiwan and Cambodia were the other main partners experiencing a decrease in their share of imports of sporting goods from 2019 to 2024.

2024 main partners for extra EU imports of sporting goods, EU, 2019 and 2024



(*) Excluding Hong Kong.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: sprt_trd_prt)

eurostat

Figure 7: 2024 main partners for extra EU imports of sporting goods, EU, 2019 and 2024 (%) Source: Eurostat (sprt_trd_prt)

Extra-EU sporting goods' trade flows by category of product

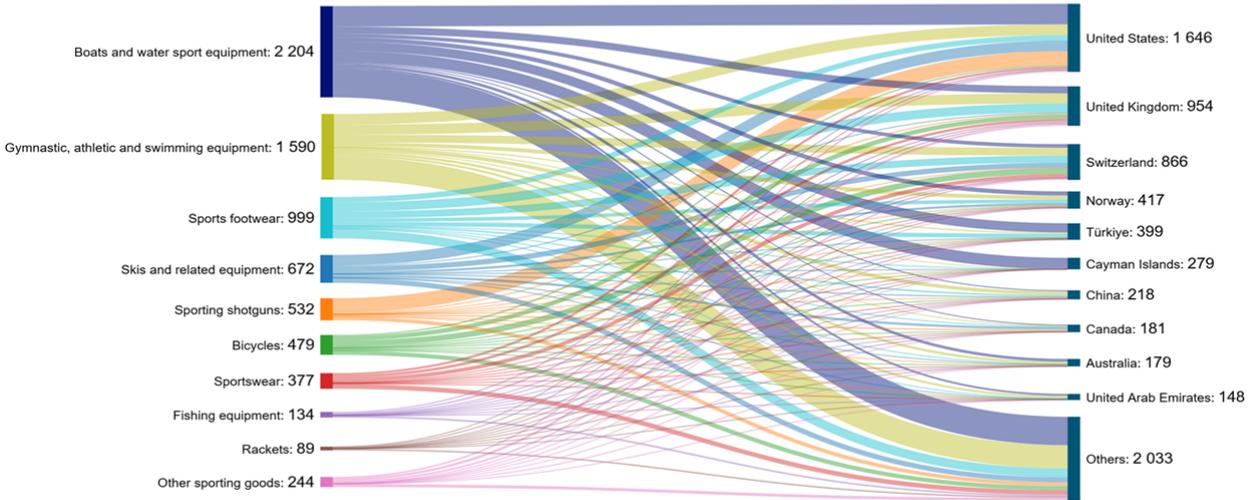
Exports to leading countries by category

In 2024, as shown in Figure 8, boats and water sport equipment were the most exported sporting products outside the EU. In terms of value, the United States was the first extra-EU country to which these products were directed, while other important trade partners for these products were the Cayman Islands, Türkiye and the United Kingdom. With a value of around € 2.2 billion euros, boats and water sport equipment accounted for almost one-third of the total extra-EU exports of sporting goods.

While the United States, the United Kingdom and Switzerland were the largest EU trade partners for all categories of products, exports of sporting goods in 2024 were directed towards a high number of countries. As shown in the chart, a value of € 2 billion from sporting goods was exported to countries that were not among the top 10 main EU partners (categorised as 'others'). This value was mostly from boats and water sport equipment, gymnastic, athletic and swimming equipment and sport footwear.

While most of the categories of sporting goods were distributed to several extra-EU countries, the case of sporting shotguns was characterised by a concentration of exports towards the United States and half of the exports of bicycles was directed towards Switzerland and the United Kingdom. In addition, the exports of sporting goods to the Cayman Islands consisted almost exclusively of boats and water sport equipment.

Value of extra-EU exports of sporting goods by main partners and by category, EU, 2024
(€ million)



Note 'other sporting goods' includes: tennis balls, skates, golf equipment, parachutes, and so on.
Source: Eurostat (online data code: sprt_trd_prt)



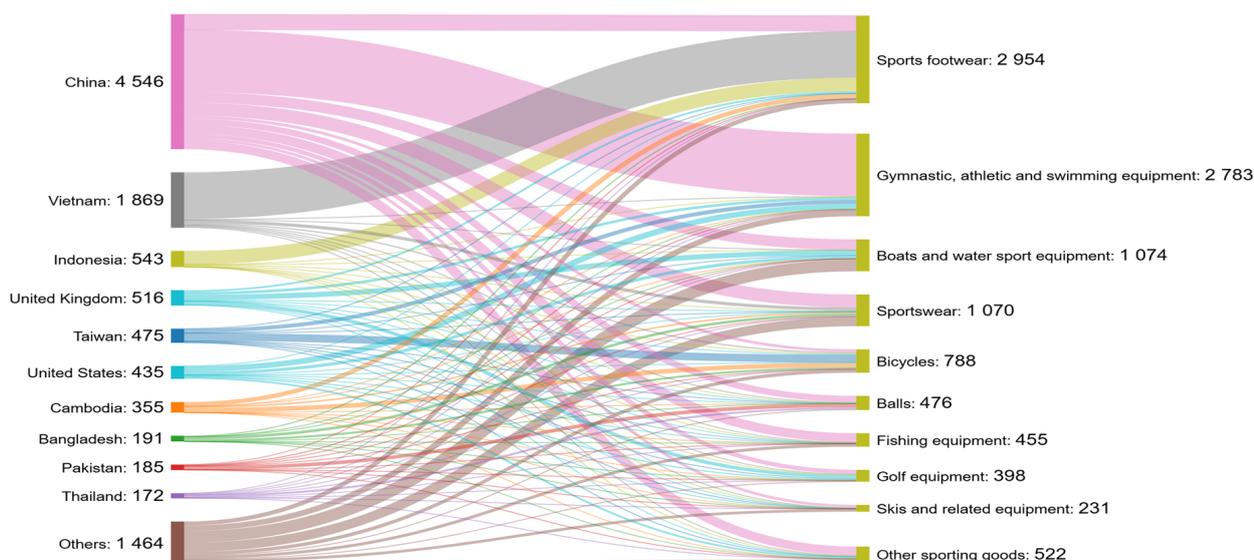
Figure 8: Value of extra-EU exports of sporting goods by main partners and by category, EU, 2024 (€ million)
Source: Eurostat (sprt_trd_prt)

Imports from leading countries by category

Figure 9 illustrates the categories of sporting products by country of import. In 2024, China was the major EU trade partner for the imports of sporting goods. The chart shows that almost half of the value of the products imported from China was from gymnastic, athletic and swimming equipment, while the rest was distributed among all the other categories.

In contrast to the composition of exports, imports from some extra-EU countries showed a more pronounced product-specific structure. Almost the entire value of the imports from Vietnam and Indonesia in 2024 was from sports footwear, while for Taiwan significant shares of imported sporting products consisted of bicycles and for Cambodia sports footwear and bicycles accounted for over 80% of imports of sporting products. In addition, almost two-thirds of the value of imports from Pakistan belonged to the balls category.

Value of extra-EU imports of sporting goods by main partners and by category, EU, 2024 (€ million)



Note 'other sporting goods' includes: skates, parachutes, tennis, badminton and similar rackets, sporting and hunting shotguns, and so on.
Source: Eurostat (online data code: sprt_trd_prt)

eurostat

Figure 9: Value of extra-EU imports of sporting goods by main partners and by category, EU, 2024 (€ million)
Source: Eurostat (sprt_trd_prt)

Source data for tables and graphs

- [Download Excel file](#)

Data sources

International trade statistics are stored in [COMEXT](#), Eurostat's database for international trade in goods. COMEXT contains statistics on goods traded between Member States (intra-EU trade) and goods traded by Member States with non-EU countries (extra-EU trade). The trade values for other political or geographical entities, such as the EFTA and candidate countries are also collected. The COMEXT database is built around 6 main dimensions

- reporter (country declaring commercial transactions)
- partner (trade partners of the declaring country — all countries of the world)
- flow (exports and imports)
- product (items by [HS](#), [CN](#) or [SITC](#), [BEC](#) and [CPA](#) depending on the dataset);
- time (annual and monthly data)
- type of indicator (the value or quantity of traded products)

Based on the number of dimensions available in the COMEXT database, the following indicators are compiled for imports and exports of sporting goods

- value of trade in thousands of euros (THS_EUR)
- percentage of country's total trade (PC_TOT)
- percentage of total EU trade (PC_EU27_2020)
- percentage of total sport trade — at country and EU level (PC)

The data are compiled for the following trade partners

- intra-EU
- extra-EU
- world (intra-EU and extra-EU)
- main extra-EU trading partners

Unit of measure

Trade values are expressed in millions of euros. They correspond to the statistical value, i.e. the amount which would be invoiced in the case of sale or purchase at the national border of the reporting country. It is called an **FOB** value (free on board) for exports and a **CIF** value (cost, insurance, freight) for imports.

Identification of sporting goods

The identification of the list of sporting goods is based on the [Vilnius Definition](#) of sport, the [Study on the Contribution of Sport to Economic Growth and Employment in the EU](#) and the [2009 UNESCO Framework for Culture statistics](#) (which considers sport as a domain related to culture). Internationally traded sports-related items are selected using the HS classification. They are then aggregated into meaningful groups according to sporting disciplines or specific sports equipment and accessories.

The groups of products (covered by HS 6-digit codes) are the following: i) skis and related equipment; ii) skates; iii) boats and water sport equipment; iv) golf equipment; v) racket sports (tennis and badminton) equipment; vi) balls; vii) gymnastic, athletic and swimming equipment; viii) fishing equipment; ix) bicycles; x) parachutes; xi) sportswear; xii) footwear; and xiii) sporting shotguns.

Regarding the 'boats and water sport equipment' category, the CN codes 8903 92, 8903 31, 8903 32 and 8903 33 (Motorboats, other than outboard motorboats for pleasure or sports) have been excluded due to anomalies in trade exchanges identified for these codes.

For a detailed list of aggregates of sport products, see Table 5 and the [metadata](#) on international trade in sporting goods.

Detailed list of sporting goods by aggregate

AGGREGATE		SPORTING GOODS	
GROUP	LABEL	HS CODE	DESCRIPTION
BALL	Tennis balls, inflatable balls, other balls (excl. golf balls, and table tennis balls)	9506.61	Tennis balls
		9506.62	Inflatable balls
		9506.69	Balls (excl. inflatable, tennis balls, golf balls, and table tennis balls)
CHUTE	Parachutes (including dirigible parachutes and paragliders) and rotochutes; parts thereof and accessories thereto	8804.00	Parachutes (including dirigible parachutes and paragliders) and rotochutes; parts thereof and accessories thereto
CYCLE	Bicycles and other cycles (including delivery tricycles), not motorised	8712.00	Bicycles and other cycles (including delivery tricycles), not motorised
GOLF	Golf clubs and other golf equipment	9506.31	Golf clubs, complete
		9506.32	Golf balls
		9506.39	Golf equipment (excl. balls and complete clubs)
GYMSWIM	Articles and equipment for general physical exercise, gymnastics or athletics, sport and outdoor games, swimming and paddling pools	9506.91 9506.99	Articles and equipment for general physical exercise, gymnastics or athletics Articles and equipment for sport and outdoor games, swimming and paddling pools
FISHING	Fishing rods, fish-hooks, fishing reels and other fishing equipment	9507.10	Fishing rods
		9507.20	Fish-hooks, whether or not snelled
		9507.30	Fishing reels
		9507.90	Line fishing tackle n.e.s.; fish landing nets, butterfly nets and similar nets; decoys and similar hunting or shooting requisites
		6402.19	Sports footwear with outer soles and uppers of rubber or plastics
FTWEAR	Sports footwear	6403.19	Sports footwear, cross-country ski footwear and snowboard boots with outer soles of rubber, plastics, leather or composition leather and uppers of leather (excl. ski-boots, cross-country ski footwear, snowboard boots and skating boots with ice or roller skates attached)
		6404.11	Sports footwear; tennis shoes, basketball shoes, gym shoes, training shoes and the like
		9506.40	Articles and equipment for table tennis
RACKET	Articles and equipment for table tennis; tennis, badminton and similar rackets	9506.51	Tennis rackets, whether or not strung
		9506.59	Badminton and similar rackets, whether or not strung
		9303.20	Sporting, hunting or target-shooting shotguns, with at least one smooth barrel (excl. muzzle-loading firearms and spring, air or gas guns)
SHOTGUN	Sporting, hunting or target-shooting shotguns	9303.30	Sporting, hunting and target-shooting shotguns with one or more rifled bores (other than spring, air or gas guns)
SKATE	Ice skates and roller skates, including skating boots with skates attached	9506.70	Ice skates and roller skates, including skating boots with skates attached
SKI	Snow-skis and other snow-ski equipment, ski-boots, cross-country ski footwear and snowboard boots	9506.11	Ski
		9506.12	Ski-fastenings (ski-bindings)
		9506.19	Ski equipment for winter sports
		6402.12	Ski-boots, cross-country ski footwear and snowboard boots with outer soles and uppers of rubber or plastics
		6403.12	Ski-boots, cross-country ski footwear and snowboard boots with outer soles of rubber, plastics, leather or composition leather and uppers of leather
		4203.21	Gloves, mittens and mitts specially designed for use in sports
SPWEAR	Swimwear, ski-suits, gloves designed for use in sports	6211.12	Women's or girls' swimwear (excl. knitted or crocheted)
		6211.20	Ski suits (excl. knitted or crocheted)
		6112.20	Ski-suits, knitted or crocheted
		6112.31	Men's or boys' swimwear of synthetic fibres, knitted or crocheted
		6112.39	Men's or boys' swimwear of textile materials, knitted or crocheted (excl. synthetic fibres)
		6112.41	Women's or girls' swimwear of synthetic fibres, knitted or crocheted
		6112.49	Women's or girls' swimwear of textile materials, knitted or crocheted (excl. synthetic fibres)
6211.11	Men's or boys' swimwear (excl. knitted or crocheted)		
WATER	Vessels for pleasure and sport, sailboats, sailboards, other water-sport boats and boards and water-sport equipment	9506.21	Sailboards
		9506.29	Water-skis, surf-boards, sailboards and other water-sport equipment
		8903.10	Inflatable vessels for pleasure or sports
		(2004-2021)	
		8903 11	Inflatable "incl. rigid hull inflatable" boats, for pleasure or sports, fitted or designed to be fitted with a motor, unladen "net" weight excluding the motor <= 100 kg
		(from 2022)	
		8903 12	Inflatable "incl. rigid hull inflatable" boats, for pleasure or sports, not designed for use with a motor, unladen "net" weight <= 100 kg
		(from 2022)	
		8903 19	Inflatable "incl. rigid hull inflatable" boats, for pleasure or sports, unladen "net" weight > 100 kg
		(from 2022)	
		8903.91	Sailboats, with or without auxiliary motor for pleasure or sports
		(2004-2021)	
		8903 21	Sailboats, with or without auxiliary motor, of a length <= 7,5 m (excl. inflatable)
		(from 2022)	
		8903 22	Sailboats, with or without auxiliary motor, of a length > 7,5 m but <= 24 m (excl. inflatable)
(from 2022)			
8903 23	Sailboats, with or without auxiliary motor, of a length > 24 m		
(from 2022)			
8903.99	Vessels for pleasure or sports; rowing boats		
(2004-2021)			
8903 93	Outboard motorboats, for pleasure or sports, and rowing boats and canoes, of a length <= 7,5 m (excl. inflatable)		
(from 2022)			
8903 99	Outboard motorboats, for pleasure or sports, and rowing boats and canoes, of a length > 7,5 m (excl. inflatable)		
(from 2022)			

Source: Eurostat (ESMS metadata file — sprt_trd)

eurostat

Table 5: Detailed list of sporting goods by aggregate Source: Eurostat (International trade in sporting goods (sprt_trd)) (ESMS metadata file — sprt_trd)

The impact of quasi-transit 'Rotterdam effect'

The trade flows of EU Member States may be overvalued because of the quasi-transit trade. However, the trade balance of the Member State concerned is not affected, as quasi-transit should increase by the same amount as the intra- and extra-EU trade flows (extra-EU imports followed by dispatches to the Member State of actual destination or arrivals from the Member State of actual export followed by extra-EU exports to the country of actual destination). Quasi-transit is known to affect mostly the Member States with large ports located at the EU's external border, particularly the Netherlands, which is why its impact on figures is known as the 'Rotterdam effect'. In the case of imports, the goods destined for other Member States arriving in Dutch ports are recorded, according to EU rules, as extra-EU imports by the Netherlands (the country where goods are released for free circulation) and as dispatches from the Netherlands to the Member States of actual destination, even though there is no link with the Dutch economy. Quasi-transit is known to influence more the imports, but exports are also affected. In exceptional cases, the customs clearance occurs not in the actual Member State of export but in the Member State of exit, i.e. the Member State from which the goods are taken out of the EU customs territory.

Context

The multiannual work programme ([EU work plan for Sport for 2024-2027](#)) agreed by the [EU Council](#), sets the priorities and principles for cooperation on sport between the European Commission and the Member States.

Several expert groups have been set up to achieve concrete results. Among them, the Expert Group on the Economic Dimension of Sport (XG ECO) and the Expert Group on Health-Enhancing Physical Activity (XG HEPA) play a key role in implementing evidence-based policies in the sports sector. XG ECO, for example, has developed an economic definition of sport (' [Vilnius definition](#) '), and made progress towards developing Sport [Satellite Accounts](#) in some EU countries. XG HEPA is working on implementing the [Council recommendations on physical activity](#) adopted in 2013. These include a monitoring framework with indicators both for the level of physical activity and for policies to promote physical activity in EU countries. Eurostat comparable data on international trade, employment in sport, participation in sporting activities, etc. make a valuable contribution to the monitoring and development of the EU's policies in this area.

View this article online at

http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/International_trade_in_sporting_goods

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- [Sport participation - practicing sport and physical activity](#)
- [Sport participation - attending live sporting events](#)
- [Consumer prices of recreational and sporting goods and services](#)
- [Government expenditure on recreational and sporting services](#)
- [Culture](#) (all Statistics Explained articles on culture)

Database

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

Intra and extra-EU trade in sporting goods by product (sprt_trd_prd)

Intra and extra-EU trade in sporting goods by product and partner (sprt_trd_prt)

Thematic section

- [Sport](#)

Publications

- [EU Sport Satellite Account: Research into estimating the economic value of sport in the EU – 2025 edition](#)
- [User guide on European statistics on international trade in goods — 2020 edition](#)
- [Sports statistics – infographics – 2025 version](#)
- [The economic dimension of sport](#)

Methodology

For a detailed list of aggregates of sport products, see the metadata on trade in sporting goods.

- [International trade in sporting goods \(sprt_trd\)](#)
- [International trade in goods \(ext_go_agg_esms\)](#)
- [Vilnius definition of sport](#)

Legislation

- [EU Work Plan for Sport for 2024–2027](#)
- [European legislation applicable to statistics relating to trade in goods](#)