

Non-EU Overseas Trade Statistics - May 2012

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Summary

- UK's non-EU exports have increased by £2.0 billion (17.9 per cent) compared to April 2012, to £13.2 billion. Compared to May 2011, exports have increased by £2.3 billion (21.0 per cent). This is the highest monthly increase since February 2011, and the second highest export value since the OTS was first published separately for non-EU countries in 1993.
- UK's non-EU imports of £16.5 billion remain almost unchanged compared to April 2012 decreasing by just over £30 million (0.2 per cent). Compared to May 2011, imports have increased by £0.4 billion (2.7 per cent).
- The UK remains a net importer (imports are greater than exports). The size of the difference between imports and exports has decreased by 38.2 per cent compared to April 2012, and has decreased from May 2011 by 36.0 per cent.



HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) are responsible for collecting the UK's international trade in goods data, which are published as two National Statistics series - the 'Overseas Trade Statistics (OTS)' and the 'Regional Trade Statistics (RTS)'. The OTS are published monthly, providing detailed data for over 9,000 commodities and 200 partner countries. The RTS are published quarterly showing trade at summary product and country level, split by UK regions.

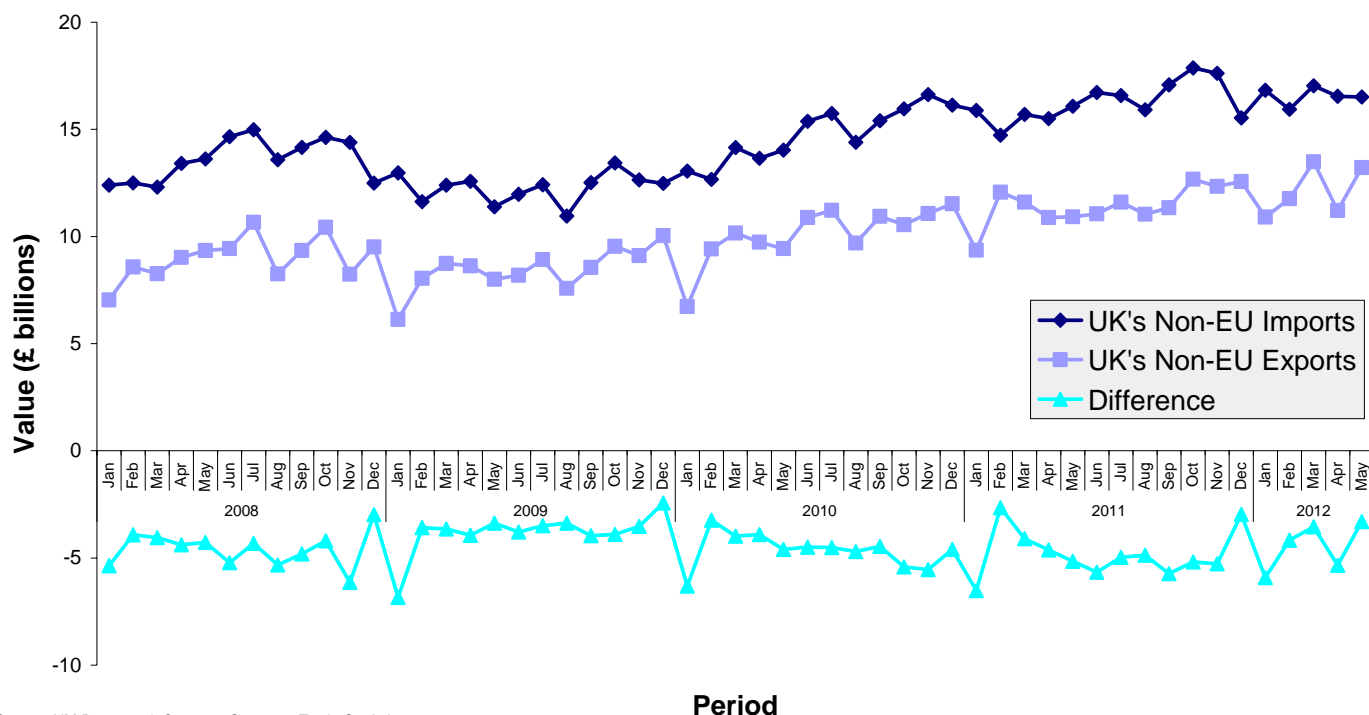
You can find details of how users interested in import and export markets for specific goods make use of the detailed OTS data in ['The Customer Story'](#). You can also access the detailed data in our interactive database [here](#).

Key Points

For the month of May 2012:

The value of exports increased in May 2012 compared with the previous month while the value of imports saw almost no change. Consequently the difference between non-EU imports and exports has decreased to the lowest value this year. The increase in the monthly export figures is the largest monthly increase in exports since February 2011 and follows the large decrease in the value of exports last month.

Fig. 1: Total Monthly UK Trade with Non-EU Countries



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade Statistics
 Note: 2011 and 2012 data are provisional

Exports

- UK's non-EU exports have increased by £2.0 billion (17.9 per cent) compared to April 2012, to £13.2 billion. Compared to May 2011, exports have increased by £2.3 billion (21.0 per cent). This is the highest monthly increase since February 2011, and the second highest export value since the OTS was first published separately for non-EU countries in 1993.
- The top five commodities have not changed from last month. There has been an increase in export value in nearly three quarters of commodity chapters since last month.
- The largest contributing commodity group remains HS2 84 (Nuclear reactors, boilers, machinery and mechanical appliances; parts thereof). It contributed £2.3 billion, 17.8 per cent of the total value of UK's non-EU export trade. The largest contribution to this chapter was £892.2 million from HS4 8411 (Turbo-jets, Turbo-propellers and other gas turbines).
- The largest value increase from the previous month was £573.4 million in HS2 87 (Vehicles other than railway or tramway rolling-stock, and parts and accessories thereof), an increase of 47.5 per cent. In comparison, the largest decrease from the previous month was just £89.9 million in HS2 97 (Works of art, collectors' pieces and antiques), a decrease of 22.8 per cent.
- The USA remains the UK's largest non-EU export partner country, accounting for 27.6 per cent of the total value of UK's non-EU export trade. Exports from the UK to the USA had the largest increase in value, compared to April 2012, up by £438.4 million, 13.7 per cent. The largest decrease in exports compared to April 2012 was to South Korea which decreased by £87.3 million, 17.8 per cent.
- The total 2012 year to date value of UK's goods exported to non-EU countries excluding May 2012 is £47.3 billion, which has been downwardly revised by £85.9 million. This is a decrease of 0.2 per cent.

Imports

- The value of the UK's non-EU imports was almost unchanged remaining at £16.5 billion, a small decrease of £31.2 million (0.2 per cent) compared to April 2012. Compared to May 2011 imports have increased by £0.4 billion (2.7 per cent).
- The top five commodities remain similar to the previous month with HS2 87 (Vehicles other than railway or tramway rolling-stock, and parts and accessories thereof) replacing HS2 30 (Pharmaceutical products) in May 2012.
- The largest contributing commodity group remains HS2 27 (Mineral fuels, mineral oils and products of their distillation; bituminous substances; mineral waxes), contributing £3.7 billion, 22.3 per cent of the total value of non-EU imports to the UK. The largest contribution to this chapter was £2.5 billion from HS4 2709 (Petroleum oils and oils obtained from bituminous minerals, crude).
- HS2 27 had largest value decrease from the previous month of £403.3 million, a fall of 9.9 per cent.
- The largest increase at HS2 level from the previous month was in HS2 71 (Natural or cultured pearls, precious or semi-precious stones, precious metals, metals clad with precious metal, and articles thereof; imitation jewellery; coin) with an increase of £131.5 million, 11.8 per cent.
- The USA remains the UK's largest non-EU import partner country, accounting for 15.9 per cent of the total value of UK's non-EU import trade. The largest increase in value of imports to the UK compared to April 2012 was from South Africa, a

rise of £226.7 million, 114 per cent. The largest decrease in imports compared to April 2012 was from Norway which decreased by £228.6 million, 10.7 per cent.

- The total 2012 year to date value of UK's trade-in-goods imported from non-EU countries excluding May 2012 is £66.3 billion, which is unchanged from last month.

Further Analysis: Exports

Table 1 shows a comparison of the top five commodities by value exported to countries outside the EU for May 2011, April 2012 and May 2012.

HS 2	Description	May 2012 Total £ millions	% Change from April 2012	% Change from May 2011	% of Total May 2012 Exports	Rank April 2012	Rank May 2011
-	Total Exports	13,213.1	17.9	21.0	100.0	n/a	n/a
84	Nuclear reactors, boilers, machinery and mechanical appliances; parts thereof	2,347.2	10.0	19.7	17.8	1	1
87	Vehicles other than railway or tramway rolling-stock, and parts and accessories thereof	1,781.9	47.5	62.2	13.5	2	2
27	Mineral fuels, mineral oils and products of their distillation; bituminous substances; mineral waxes	1,552.2	47.7	67.1	11.7	3	3
30	Pharmaceutical products	863.1	3.7	12.4	6.5	4	5
85	Electrical machinery and equipment and parts thereof; sound recorders and reproducers, television image and sound recorders and reproducers, and parts and accessories of such articles	835.2	12.0	17.7	6.3	5	6

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade Statistics

The overall increase in exports **compared to April 2012** reflects increases in under three quarters of HS2 chapters. The three largest changes in export value were in top five commodity types which accounted for nearly two thirds of the total net increase in export trade.

The largest increase was in HS2 87, up by £573.4 million, an increase of 47.5 per cent. This is the highest value in recent years, beating the previous highest of March 2012 by £210.8 million. This was driven by an increase of £512.8 million, 58.7 per cent in HS4 8703 (Motor cars and other motor vehicles principally designed for the transport

of persons, incl. station wagons and racing cars). The corresponding increase in quantity suggests the increase is due to a rise in the volume of export trade rather than unit cost price.

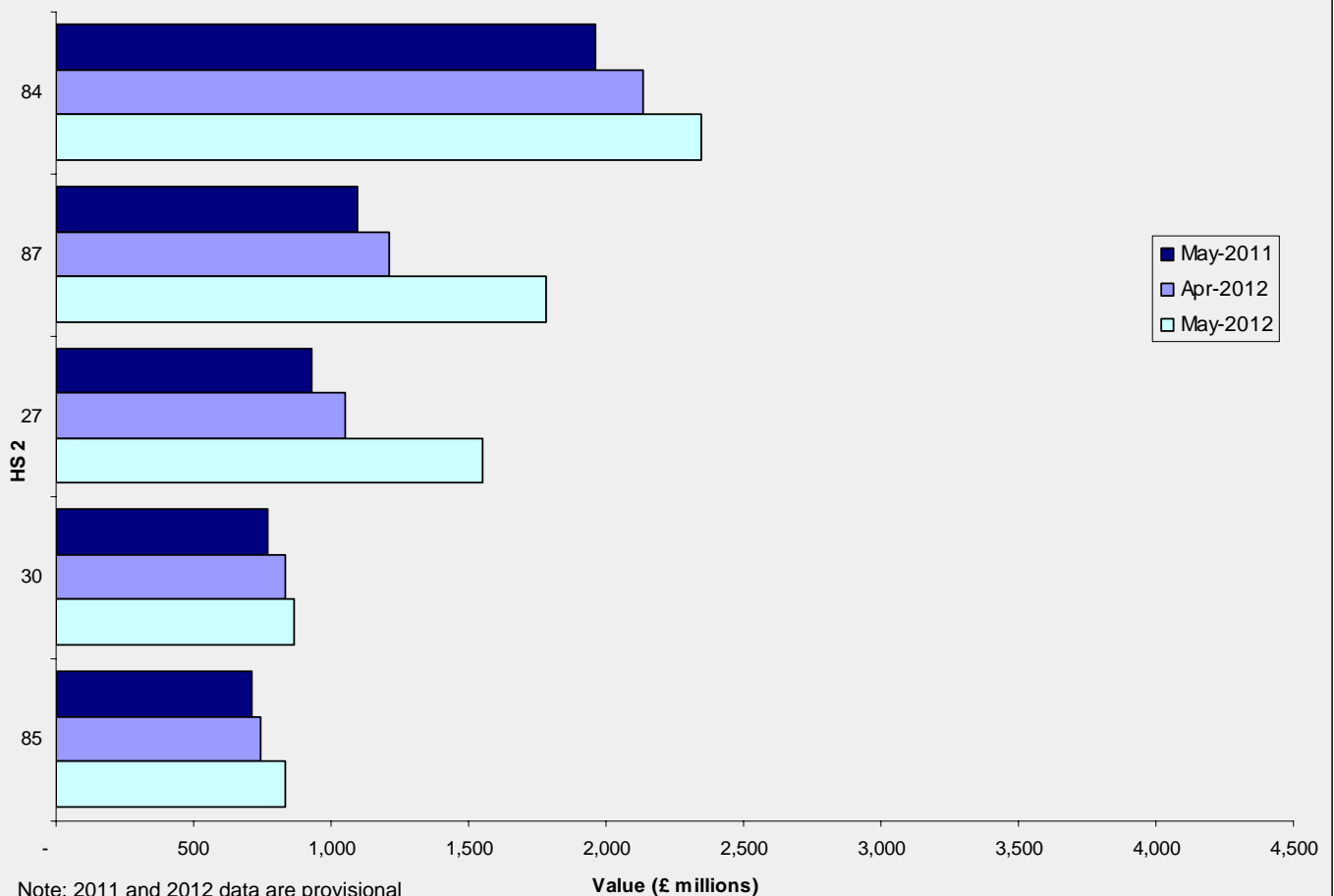
The second largest value increase from the previous month, of £501.2 million, was in HS2 27 (Mineral fuels, mineral oils and products of their distillation; bituminous substances; mineral waxes). This is a 47.7 per cent increase compared to April 2012, becoming the highest monthly export value in recent years, £260.2 million higher than the previous highest from June 2008. Within HS27 it was also HS4 2710 which saw the largest increase compared with April 2012 of £457.3 million, 82.5 per cent. This also had a corresponding increase in quantity suggests the increase is due to a rise in the volume of export trade rather than unit cost price.

In comparison the largest decrease since last month was only £89.9 million in HS2 97 (Works of art, collectors' pieces and antiques), a decrease of 22.8 per cent. This was driven by decreases of £69.0 million in paintings within HS4 9701, and £26.9 million in sculptures within HS4 9703.

There was no other chapter for which the value of exports decreased by more than £20 million.

The total export trade value has increased by £2.3 billion (21.0 per cent) **compared to May 2011**. Just under two thirds of HS2 chapters increased with the largest being an increase of £683.2 million in HS2 87, an increase of £623.1 million in HS2 27 and £386.4 million in HS2 84. These were to an extent offset by decreases in HS2 71 (down by £146.1 million) and HS2 29 (Organic chemicals), down by £143.2 million.

Fig 2: Top 5 commodities for UK's Non EU exports May 2012 compared to April 2012 and May 2011



Note: 2011 and 2012 data are provisional
Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade Statistics

Figure 2 above shows the top five commodities for UK's non-EU exports in May 2012, compared to April 2012 and May 2011. It shows that all the top five commodity types had increases when compared with both April 2012 and May 2011.

Table 2 below shows a comparison of the value of UK export trade with our top five non-EU export trading partners for May 2011, April 2012 and May 2012.

Country	May 2012 Total £ millions	% Change from April 2012	% Change from May 2011	% of total May 2012 Exports	Rank April 2012	Rank May 2011
Total Exports	13,213.1	17.9	21.0	100.0	n/a	n/a
USA	3,646.8	13.7	14.5	27.6	1	1
China	994.3	50.6	53.3	7.5	2	3
Russia	496.9	5.9	41.1	3.8	4	8
United Arab Emirates	450.5	11.0	40.4	3.4	6	9
Hong Kong	445.6	15.8	23.0	3.4	7	6
Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade Statistics						

For all three periods, the United States was the UK's largest non-EU exporting partner country.

The overall increase in exports compared to April reflects increases in the value of exports to over 70 per cent of our export partners. In addition the increases for countries were generally larger than the decreases. **Compared to April 2012**, the four largest increases by country accounted for over half the total net increase.

The largest increase in exports was to the USA, up by £438.4 million, 13.7 per cent. This increase is mostly due to increases of £279.8 million in HS2 27 (Mineral fuels, mineral oils and products of their distillation; bituminous substances; mineral waxes) and £119.8 million in HS2 87 (Vehicles other than railway or tramway rolling-stock, and parts and accessories thereof).

The increase in HS2 27 was driven by increases of £105.9 million (136.7 per cent) in HS4 2709 (Petroleum oils and oils obtained from bituminous minerals, crude) and £188.6 million (87.4 per cent) in HS4 2710 (Petroleum oils and oils obtained from bituminous minerals (excl. crude); preparations containing >= 70% by weight of petroleum oils or of oils obtained from bituminous minerals). Similar increases in value and mass indicate that the increase is due to a rise in quantities exported.

The increase in HS2 87 is driven by increases of £90.8 million (59.7 per cent) in HS4 8703 (Motor cars and other motor vehicles principally designed for the transport of persons, incl. station wagons and racing cars).

The second largest increase in exports was to China, up by £333.9 million (50.7 per cent) to £994.3 million. This is a new high for export value to China, 14 per cent higher than the previous record from November 2011.

This increase was driven by an increase of £290.8 million (178.3 per cent) in HS2 87, almost entirely due to a rise of £288.6 million in HS4 8703 (Motor cars and other motor vehicles principally designed for the transport of persons, incl. station wagons and racing cars), which is nearly 3 times the value of exports in April. This is also a new monthly record, almost 50 per cent higher than the previous record from November 2011.

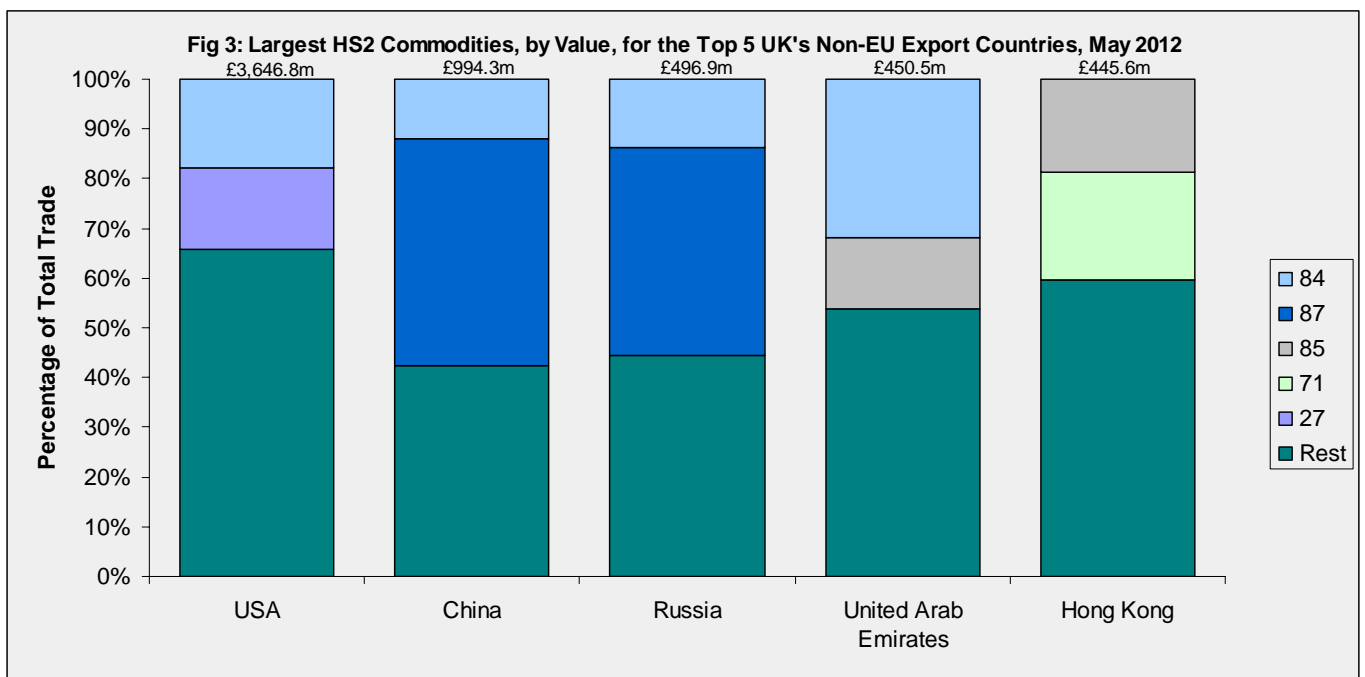
There were also relatively large increases for exports to Australia (up £131.6 million, 43.8 per cent), and Turkey (up £116.3 million, 53.2 per cent).

In contrast the largest decrease in exports was to South Korea, down by only £87.3 million (17.8 per cent). In April South Korea was our third biggest export partner, they are now eighth. Most of this decrease is in exports of oil in HS4 2709 (Petroleum oils and oils obtained from bituminous minerals, crude), which is down by £85.0 million, 27.9 per cent.

There were increases in the value of exports to two thirds of our export partner countries **compared to May 2011**. These were greater in magnitude than the decreases in exports from other countries driving up the value of exports overall. Exports from the UK increased by over £100 million to six countries while there were decreases in exports of this magnitude to only one.

The largest increases in total export trade value compared to May 2011 are to the USA (up by £462.1 million) and China (up by £345.8 million). USA's increase was driven by increases of £129.4 million in HS2 87 and £111.5 million in HS2 84, while China's increase was led by an increase of £309.8 million in HS2 87.

Figure 3 below shows the largest commodities by value exported from the UK to its top five non-EU export partner countries. Four of the top five countries have HS2 84 (Nuclear reactors, boilers, machinery and mechanical appliances; parts thereof) in their top two largest commodities exported from the UK. The trade with these countries accounts for 41.7 per cent of the total value of UK non-EU export trade under this heading. Furthermore, 38.5 per cent of all exports in HS2 27 from the UK go to the USA and 45.7 per cent of the UK's exports to China are in HS2 87.



Further Analysis: Imports

Table 3 shows a comparison of the top five commodities imported from countries outside the EU for May 2011, April 2012 and May 2012.

HS 2	Description	May 2012 Total £ millions	% Change from April 2012	% Change from May 2011	% of Total May 2012 Imports	Rank April 2012	Rank May 2011
-	Total Imports	16,514.8	-0.2	2.7	100.0	n/a	n/a
27	Mineral fuels, mineral oils and products of their distillation; bituminous substances; mineral waxes	3,679.2	-9.9	9.4	22.3	1	1
84	Nuclear reactors, boilers, machinery and mechanical appliances; parts thereof	1,991.6	2.3	12.5	12.1	2	2
85	Electrical machinery and equipment and parts thereof; sound recorders and reproducers, television image and sound recorders and reproducers, and parts and accessories of such articles	1,371.6	-4.2	-8.8	8.3	3	3
71	Natural or cultured pearls, precious or semi-precious stones, precious metals, metals clad with precious metal, and articles thereof; imitation jewellery; coin	1,250.9	11.8	21.2	7.6	4	4
87	Vehicles other than railway or tramway rolling-stock, and parts and accessories thereof	506.8	10.6	38.2	3.1	7	11

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade Statistics

The small decrease of £31.8 million in the value of imports **compared to April 2012** comprises increases in two thirds of HS2 commodities chapters, balanced by a smaller number of larger decreases.

In particular the decrease was dominated by the fall in imports in HS2 27, down by £403.3 million (9.9 per cent). The largest decreases within the HS2 27 chapter were for HS4 2711 (Petroleum gases and other gaseous hydrocarbons), down by £224.7 million (31.5 per cent), and HS4 2709 (Petroleum oils and oils obtained from bituminous minerals, crude) down by £212.0 million (7.8 per cent). The decrease in these two commodities more than covers the overall net decrease in this chapter.

The largest value increase from the previous month, of £131.5 million (11.8 per cent), was in HS2 71. This increase was led by a rise of £92.6 million (23.5 per cent) in HS4 7102 (Diamonds, whether or not worked, but not mounted or set). As there was a

similar percentage increase in quantity, this suggests that the increase was because more of the commodity type was imported rather than a change in price.

The increase in total import trade value **compared to May 2011**, noted above was driven by increases in over half of all chapters. The four chapters with the largest increases are all in the top five chapters: HS2 27 (up £316.2 million), HS2 84 (up £220.7 million), HS2 71 (up 218.4 million) and HS2 87 (up £140.2 million). There were also three chapters with decreases of over £100 million - HS2 85 (down £132.8 million), HS2 28 (down £131.3 million), and HS2 30 (down £121.6 million).

Within the top five chapters shown in Figure 4 below, four of the chapters show increases compared with May 2011 as explained above. Three of the five chapters show increases compared with April 2012, while there is a large decrease for HS 27.

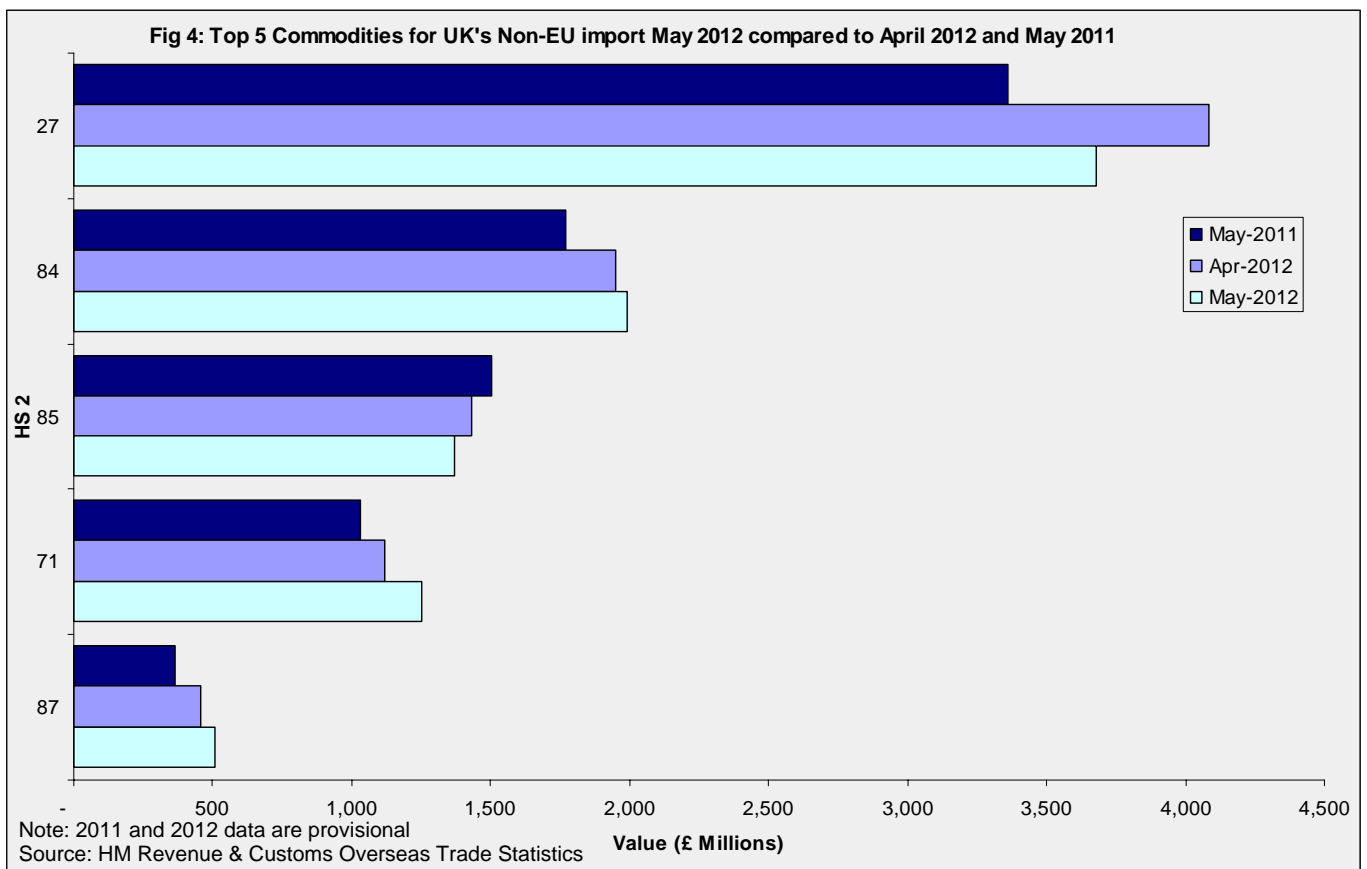


Table 4 below shows comparisons of the value of UK import trade from our top five non-EU import trading partners for May 2011, April 2012, and May 2012. Imports from three of the top five imports trading partners have fallen in May compared to the previous month, whereas all but one increased when compared to May 2011.

Country	May 2012 Total £ millions	% Change from April 2012	% Change from May 2011	% of Total May 2012 Imports	Rank April 2012	Rank May 2011
Total Imports	16,514.8	-0.2	2.7	100.0	n/a	n/a
USA	2,627.7	-2.2	2.8	15.9	1	1
China	2,489.3	9.4	8.4	15.1	2	2
Norway	1,916.2	-10.7	6.4	11.6	3	3
Japan	740.9	11.7	30.1	4.5	5	8
Russia	668.2	-5.7	-13.8	4.0	4	4

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade Statistics

These changes have moved Japan into fourth place, ahead of Russia. China has moved further ahead of Norway and is closing the gap with the USA. China, the USA and Norway have been our largest import partners for the UK for a number of years.

The small decrease in total imports **compared to April 2012** reflects approximately as many increases in the value of imports from countries as there are decreases, with the size of the decreases being slightly greater.

The largest increase in value of imports was from South Africa, up by £226.7 million, to £425.6 million, more than double the April 2012 value. This is the highest value of imports from South Africa since August 2010. This increase is driven by a rise of £208.8 million in HS2 71, over four times the April import value. Most of this increase is from imports of diamonds in HS4 7102 which rose by £197.8 million.

The second largest increase in imports was from China, which increased by £213.9 million, 9.4 per cent. The increase this month compared with April is spread across a whole range of HS2 chapters, with the highest rises in HS2 84 (Nuclear reactors, boilers, machinery and mechanical appliances; parts thereof) up £71.8 million, and HS2 95 (Toys, games and sports requisites; parts and accessories thereof) up £27.9 million. There were eight other chapters which rose by over £10 million. Only one chapter had a decrease of over £10 million, HS2 97 (Works of art, collectors' pieces and antiques) which fell by £51.3 million after a large increase last month.

There were also relatively large increases in imports from India, which experienced an increase of £112.7 million (27.2 per cent) and Nigeria, which rose by £100.4 million (34.8 per cent) compared to April 2012. Both increases were driven by rises in imports in HS2 27.

The largest decrease in value of imports was from Norway which fell by £228.6 million, a decrease of 10.7 per cent. This was led by a decrease of £238.3 million (64.3 per cent) in HS4 2711 (Petroleum gases and other gaseous hydrocarbons). As there was a similar percentage decrease in volume, this implies that the decrease was because less of the commodity type was imported rather than a change in price

The second largest decrease in the value of imports was from Angola, down 99.1 per cent, from last month's record high of £145.9 million to £1.3 million. This was almost entirely due to the trade in oil in HS2 2709, (Petroleum oils and oils obtained from bituminous minerals, crude), down from £144.8 million in April 2012 to no trade this month.

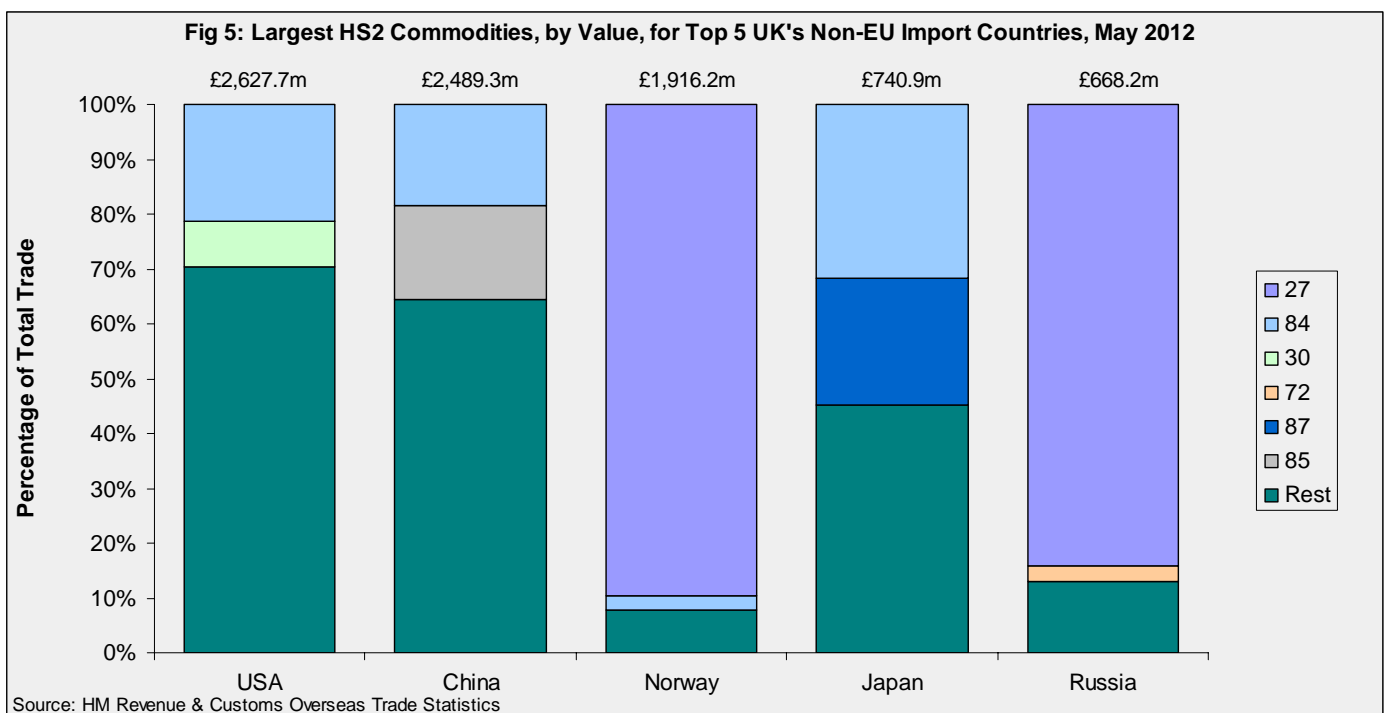
There were increases in the value of imports from just under half of our import partner countries **compared to May 2011**. These were greater in magnitude than the decreases in imports from other countries driving up the value of imports overall. Imports to the UK increased by over £100 million from eight countries while there were decreases in imports of this magnitude from only five.

The largest increases in total import trade value compared to May 2011 are from Nigeria (up by £293.9 million) and China (up by £192.2 million). Nigeria's increase was driven by an increase of £253.2 million in HS2 27, while China's increase was spread over a number of chapters, the largest increase being £86.3 million in HS2 84 (Nuclear reactors, boilers, machinery and mechanical appliances; parts thereof).

The largest decreases in value of imports were from Qatar, down by £173.7 million to £336.8 million; and Botswana, down by £159.4 million to £84.1 million. The decrease from Qatar was due to falls in imports of HS2 27, down by £170.9 million (34.2 per cent); while the decrease from Botswana was due to a fall of £159.4 million (65.5 per cent) in HS2 71.

Figure 5 shows the largest commodities by value imported from the top five non-EU import partner countries. Four of the top five non-EU import trading partners have HS2 84 (Nuclear reactors, boilers, machinery and mechanical appliances; parts thereof) in their top two largest commodities exported to the UK. The trade with these countries accounts for 65.4 per cent of the total value of UK non-EU import trade under this commodity heading.

The import trade in HS2 27 (Mineral fuels, mineral oils and products of their distillation; bituminous substances; mineral waxes) from the Norway, specifically the Norwegian Continental Shelf, accounts for 89.5 per cent of the total imports to the UK from Norway. Russia also has HS2 27 in its top two largest commodity types, with 84.2 per cent of Russian imports being in this category. Together, these two countries account for 61.9 per cent of the total non-EU import trade to the UK under this heading.



Notes:

1. HM Revenue & Customs released these latest statistics on Overseas Trade with countries outside the European Union (EU) on 10 July 2012 under arrangements set out in the [Code of Practice for Official Statistics](#).
2. This release includes the first provisional estimates of trade-in-goods between the UK and countries outside the EU for May 2012. At the same time revisions for all previously published non-EU data for 2011 and 2012 are also being released in line with the [Overseas Trade Statistics Policy on Revisions](#).
3. Detailed trade information is presented according to the [Harmonised System \(HS\)](#) nomenclature.
4. The aggregate estimates here will differ slightly from those that are published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) as part of the Balance of Payments (BoP), as the two sets of data are compiled to different sets of rules. The ONS web site provides an overview of BoP at the [Guide to UK Trade](#) as well as the detailed monthly [UK Trade Releases](#). The BoP publication shows a high level picture of UK trade-in-goods, whereas the OTS publication shows a detailed picture of the UK's trade-in-goods by commodity and partner country. More detail about the differences between the BoP and OTS publications can be found [here](#).
5. The aggregate estimates here will differ from the Eurostat publication [Euro area external trade](#). The OTS is published as 'general trade' based upon goods recorded as they enter or leave the UK. This will include goods imported into and exported from a freezone or customs warehouse, regardless of their future use. The Eurostat EU external trade data are published as 'special trade' where goods are recorded as trade only when they enter free circulation or are accepted into [Inwards Processing Relief](#) (IPR).
6. Information to help support users of the non-EU Overseas Trade Statistics can be found [here](#). This includes links to our policies on revision and suppression of data, descriptions of the methodology used to compile the Overseas Trade Statistics and information on the quality of the data published.
7. The OTS has recently been reviewed as part of an assessment made of Overseas Trade Statistics by the [UK Statistics Authority](#). The report of that assessment can be found at

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment/assessment-reports/assessment-report-93---uk-trade-in-goods.pdf>

8. The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods, and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

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To access the detailed 8-digit data in our interactive database please log in [here](#).

Please note: there may be a delay between the availability of the aggregated data tables downloadable here and the detailed data in our interactive database. This is because of the time required to upload such a large dataset. Subscribers to our email [Alert Service](#) will be sent an alert when the interactive database has been updated. The OTS Non-EU publication occurs one week prior to the publication of the OTS EU equivalent, to allow for additional processing of the Intrastat survey.

Next release: 9 August 2012 9:30am

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