



### About this release

This release includes the 1st provisional estimates of trade-in-goods between the UK and both countries of the EU and those outside the EU for May 2019.

Supporting tables, visuals and data can be found at [www.uktradeinfo.com](http://www.uktradeinfo.com)

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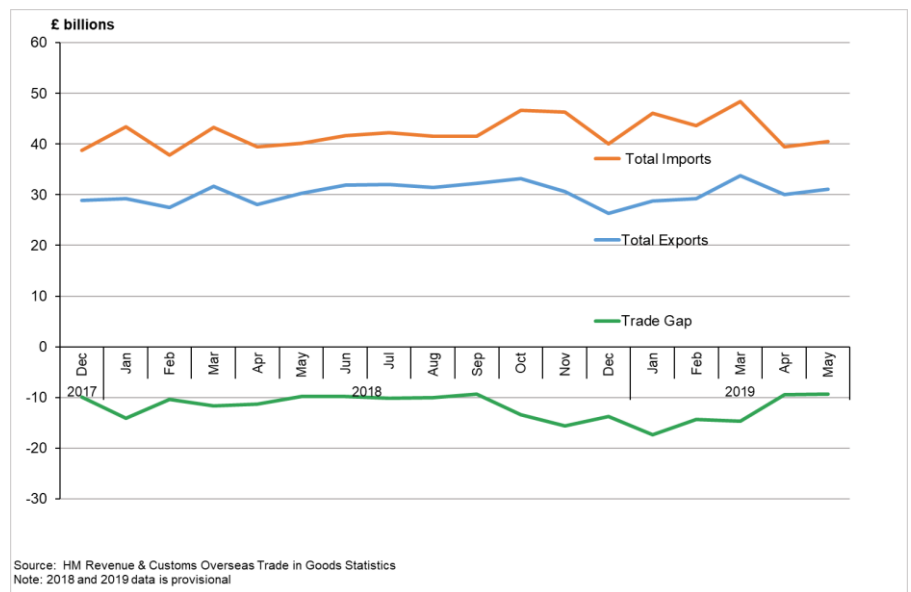
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### Trade in Goods, May 2019

- Total **exports** of goods for May 2019 were £31.1 billion. This was an increase of £1.1 billion (3.6%) compared with last month, and an increase of £0.8 billion (2.7%) compared with May 2018.
- Total **imports** of goods for May 2019 were £40.5 billion. This was an increase of £1.0 billion (2.5%) compared with last month, and an increase of £0.4 billion (0.9%) compared with May 2018.
- The UK was a net importer this month, with imports exceeding exports by £9.4 billion. This was a slight narrowing of £0.1bn on last month.

Figure 1: Total UK monthly Trade in Goods



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# Trade in Goods Trends

Following the global economic crisis, UK trade in goods dropped in 2009. Both imports and exports then steadily increased until 2012. From the start of 2013, imports remained relatively flat until a very sharp increase in Q3 of 2016, reaching its highest point in Q1 2019. Exports peaked in Q2 of 2013, with a steady rise since Q2 of 2017.

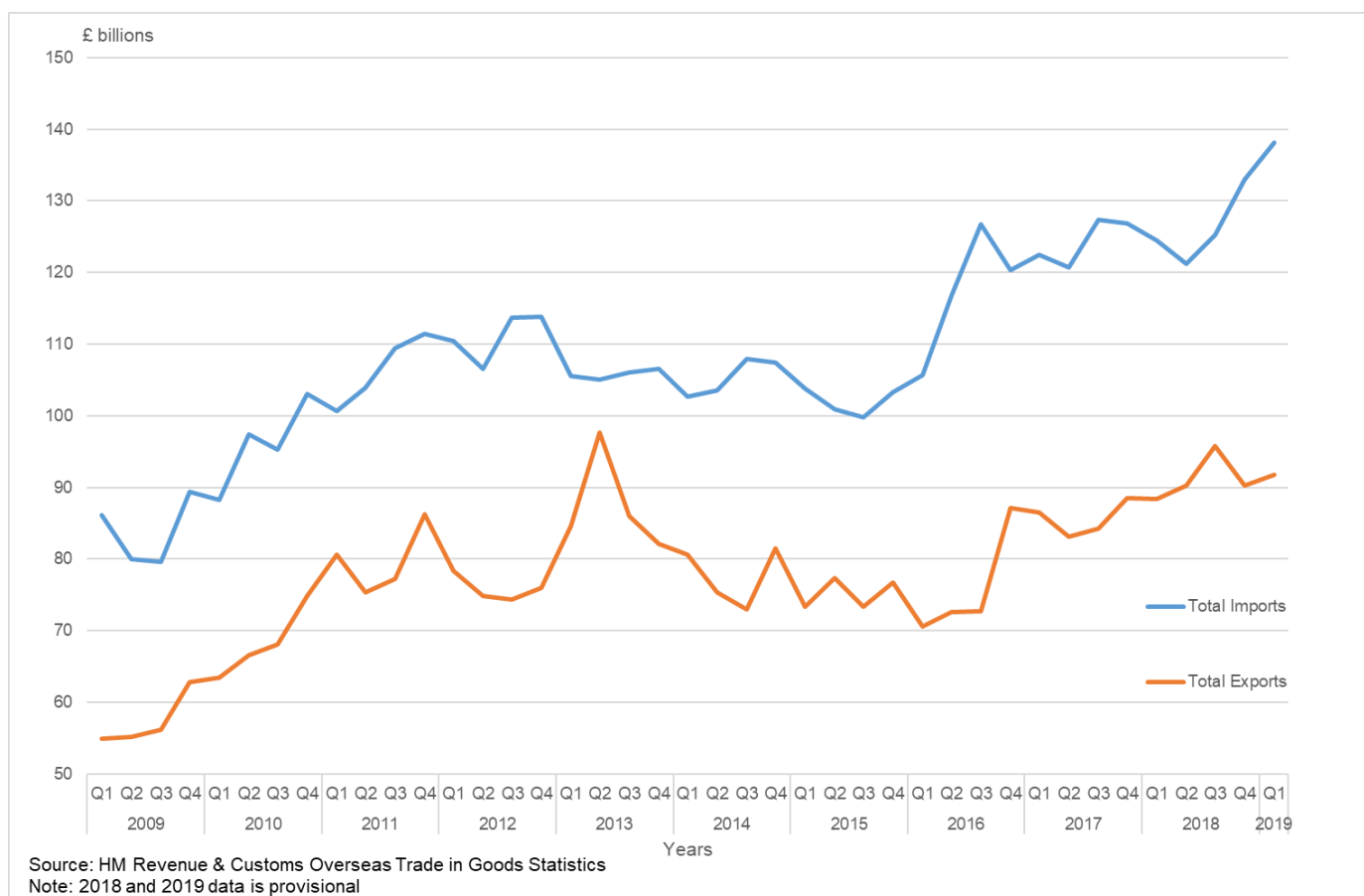
- The total **export** trade for Q1 of 2019 was £91.8 billion, which was an increase of 3.8% compared with £88.4 billion for Q1 of 2018.
- The total **import** trade for Q1 of 2019 was £138.1 billion, which was an increase of 11% compared with £124.5 billion for Q1 of 2018.
- There was a trade deficit of £46.3 billion for Q1 of 2019. This was a widening of 28% compared with Q1 of 2018.
- For many years Germany has been our largest trading **import** partner by value. The USA has been the dominant trading partner for **exports** for many years.
- Mechanical appliances and Motor vehicles have generally been the largest **import** commodities by value. For **exports**, Mechanical appliances has also predominantly been the largest valued commodity, with occasional peaks for Precious metals.

↑ **Exports up 4% on Q1 2018**

↑ **Imports up 11% on Q1 2018**

• **Trade deficit widened by 28% on Q1 2018**

**Figure 2: Quarterly UK Trade in Goods, 2009 – 2019**



# Non-EU & EU Trade in Goods

## Non-EU Trade in Goods:

- **Non-EU exports** for May 2019 were £17.0 billion. This was a decrease of £0.6 billion (3.2%) on last month, and an increase of £0.9 billion (5.5%) compared with May 2018.
- **Non-EU imports** for May 2019 were £20.0 billion. This was an increase of £0.2 billion (1.1%) on last month, and an increase of £2.3 billion (13%) compared with May 2018.
- For **non-EU trade** the UK was a net importer this month, with imports exceeding exports by £3.0 billion.

↑ **Non-EU imports up 13% on May 2018**

## EU Trade in Goods:

- **EU exports** for May 2019 were £14.1 billion. This was an increase of £1.7 billion (13%) on last month, and a decrease of £0.1 billion (0.4%) compared with May 2018.
- **EU imports** for May 2019 were £20.5 billion. This was an increase of £0.8 billion (3.8%) on last month, and a decrease of £2.0 billion (8.7%) compared with May 2018.
- For **EU trade** the UK was a net importer this month, with imports exceeding exports by £6.4 billion.

↑ **EU exports up 13% on last month**

**Figure 3: Total UK Trade in Goods, with EU and Non-EU, May 2019**



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2018 and 2019 data is provisional

# Exports: Country Analysis

- The USA remained the largest export partner country. It experienced a value decrease on last month, down £184 million (3.9%). Conversely, it saw the largest value increase on May 2018, up £633 million (16%).
- Germany experienced the largest value increase on last month, up £401 million (16%).
- China experienced the largest value decreases on last month and May 2018, down £275 million (13%), and £603 million (25%) respectively.
- Hong Kong experienced the 4th largest value increase on last month, up £296 million (47%) and the 2nd largest value increase on May 2018, up £321 million (53%).
- Turkey (19th place) experienced the 2nd largest value decrease on May 2018, down £494 million (56%).
- The Netherlands experienced the 2nd largest value increase on last month, up £304 million (18%).

↑ **Exports to USA up 16% on May 2018**

↓ **Exports to China down 13% on last month**

**Table 1: UK exports of goods to top 10 partner countries, May 2019**

Partner Country	Total (£ millions)	April 2019		May 2018	
		Total (£ millions)	Change from April 2019 (%)	Total (£ millions)	Change from May 2018 (%)
USA	4,506	4,690	-3.9	3,873	16.3
Germany	2,965	2,564	15.6	2,971	-0.2
Netherlands	1,953	1,649	18.4	1,940	0.6
France	1,900	1,809	5.1	1,992	-4.6
China	1,779	2,053	-13.4	2,381	-25.3
Irish Republic	1,746	1,634	6.9	1,797	-2.8
Switzerland	1,608	1,660	-3.1	1,330	20.9
Belgium	1,330	1,035	28.6	1,188	12.0
Hong Kong	924	629	47.0	604	53.1
Spain	878	779	12.7	901	-2.6
Others	11,490	11,488	0.0	11,285	1.8
<b>Total EU</b>	<b>14,115</b>	<b>12,462</b>	<b>13.3</b>	<b>14,176</b>	<b>-0.4</b>
<b>Total Non-EU</b>	<b>16,965</b>	<b>17,528</b>	<b>-3.2</b>	<b>16,087</b>	<b>5.5</b>
<b>Total Exports</b>	<b>31,080</b>	<b>29,990</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>30,263</b>	<b>2.7</b>

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2018 and 2019 data is provisional

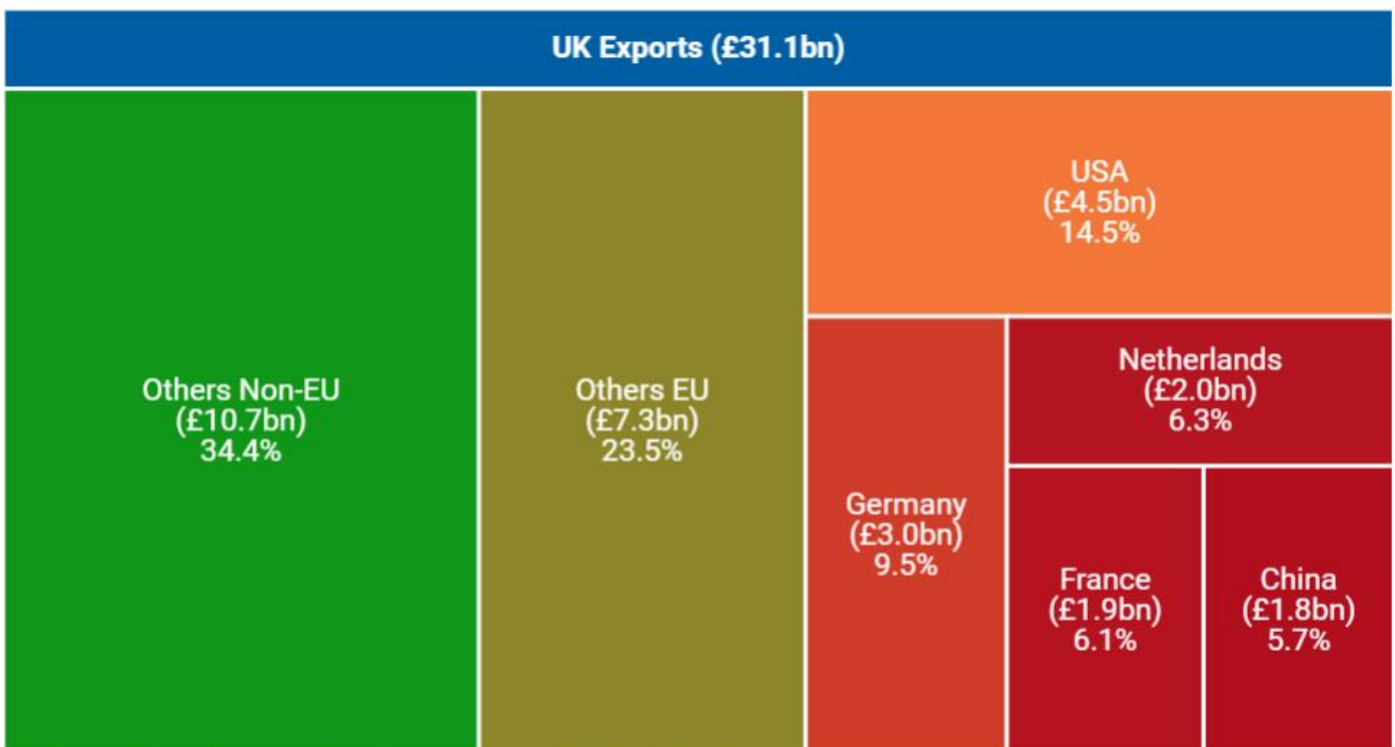
# Exports: Country Analysis

- The top 5 export partners accounted for 42% of total exports in goods in May 2019, this was a decrease from 43% in May 2018.
- The USA accounted for 14% of the total value of goods exports from the UK, this was an increase from 13% for May 2018.
- Germany had the 2nd largest proportion, accounting for 9.5%. This was a decrease from 9.8% for May 2018.
- The top 10 export partner countries (ranked by value) changed compared with last month. Most notably, the Netherlands rose to 3rd place from 6th.
- The top 10 export partner countries (ranked by value) changed compared with May 2018. Most notably, China fell to 5th place from 3rd.

↑ **USA had a 14% share of total exports in May 2019**

↑ **The Netherlands rose to 3rd largest export partner for May 2019**

**Figure 4: UK exports of goods to the top 5 countries, May 2019**



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics  
 Note: 2018 and 2019 data is provisional

## Exports: Country Analysis – 3 Months

- In the 3 months to May 2019 the USA remained the largest export partner country, experiencing a 14% increase on the 3 months to February 2019. Among the top 10, it saw the largest percentage increase compared with the 3 months to May 2018, up 18%.
- Among the top 10, Switzerland experienced the largest percentage increase on the 3 months to February 2019, a 2.5 times increase. It saw the 2nd largest percentage increase on the 3 months to May 2018, up 12%.
- Among the top 10, the Netherlands experienced the largest percentage decrease; on the 3 months to February 2019, down 5.4%; and on the 3 months to May 2018, down 3.1%.
- 8 of the top 10 partner countries experienced an increase on the 3 months to February 2019, Germany and the Netherlands were the exceptions.
- 6 of the top 10 partner countries increased on the 3 months to May 2018, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain and Italy being the exceptions.

↑ **Exports to USA up 18% on the 3 months to May 2018**

↑ **Exports to Switzerland up 2.5 times on the 3 months to February 2019**

**Table 2: UK exports of goods to the top 10 partner countries, 3 months to May 2019**

Partner Country	Total (£ millions)	3 months to Feb 2019		3 months to May 2018	
		Total (£ millions)	Change on February 2019 (%)	Total (£ millions)	Change on May 2018 (%)
USA	13,917	12,168	14.4	11,796	18.0
Germany	8,907	9,346	-4.7	9,030	-1.4
France	6,490	6,228	4.2	6,178	5.1
China	5,958	4,198	41.9	5,812	2.5
Netherlands	5,873	6,208	-5.4	6,063	-3.1
Irish Republic	5,384	5,150	4.6	5,181	3.9
Switzerland	3,910	1,547	152.8	3,503	11.6
Belgium	3,703	3,263	13.5	3,578	3.5
Spain	2,645	2,579	2.5	2,689	-1.7
Italy	2,633	2,536	3.8	2,708	-2.8
Others	35,368	31,173	13.5	33,454	5.7
<b>Total Exports</b>	<b>94,788</b>	<b>84,396</b>	<b>12.3</b>	<b>89,993</b>	<b>5.3</b>

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2018 and 2019 data is provisional

## Exports: Commodity Analysis

- Mechanical appliances remained the largest export commodity for May 2019, experiencing the largest value increase on last month and May 2018, up £739 million (17%), and £640 million (15%) respectively.
- Motor vehicles experienced the 2nd largest value increase on last month, up £476 million (18%). Conversely, it saw the 2nd largest decrease compared with May 2018, down £405 million (12%).
- Precious metals experienced the largest value decrease compared with last month, down £733 million (17%). In contrast, it saw the 2nd largest increase compared with May 2018, up £569 million (20%).
- Pharmaceutical products experienced the largest value decrease on May 2018, down £415 million (22%).
- Mineral fuels experienced the 3rd largest value increase compared with last month, up £330 million (12%).
- Organic chemicals (13th place) experienced the 2nd largest value decrease on last month, down £414 million (42%).

↑ Exports of Mechanical appliances up 17% on last month

↓ Exports of Precious metals down 17% on last month

**Table 3: UK exports of goods by top 10 commodities, May 2019**

Commodity Description	Total (£ millions)	April 2019		May 2018	
		Total (£ millions)	Change from April 2019 (%)	Total (£ millions)	Change from May 2018 (%)
Mechanical appliances	4,974	4,236	17.4	4,334	14.8
Precious metals	3,480	4,213	-17.4	2,911	19.5
Mineral fuels	3,049	2,719	12.1	2,916	4.6
Motor vehicles	3,048	2,572	18.5	3,453	-11.7
Electronic equipment	1,801	1,708	5.4	1,804	-0.1
Pharmaceutical products	1,506	1,594	-5.5	1,922	-21.6
Measuring devices and gauges	1,290	1,201	7.5	1,149	12.3
Aircraft	1,232	1,169	5.4	1,345	-8.4
Art and antiques	865	842	2.8	396	118.6
Plastics and plastic products	800	752	6.4	886	-9.7
Others	9,034	8,984	0.6	9,148	-1.3
<b>Total Exports</b>	<b>31,080</b>	<b>29,990</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>30,263</b>	<b>2.7</b>

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2018 and 2019 data is provisional

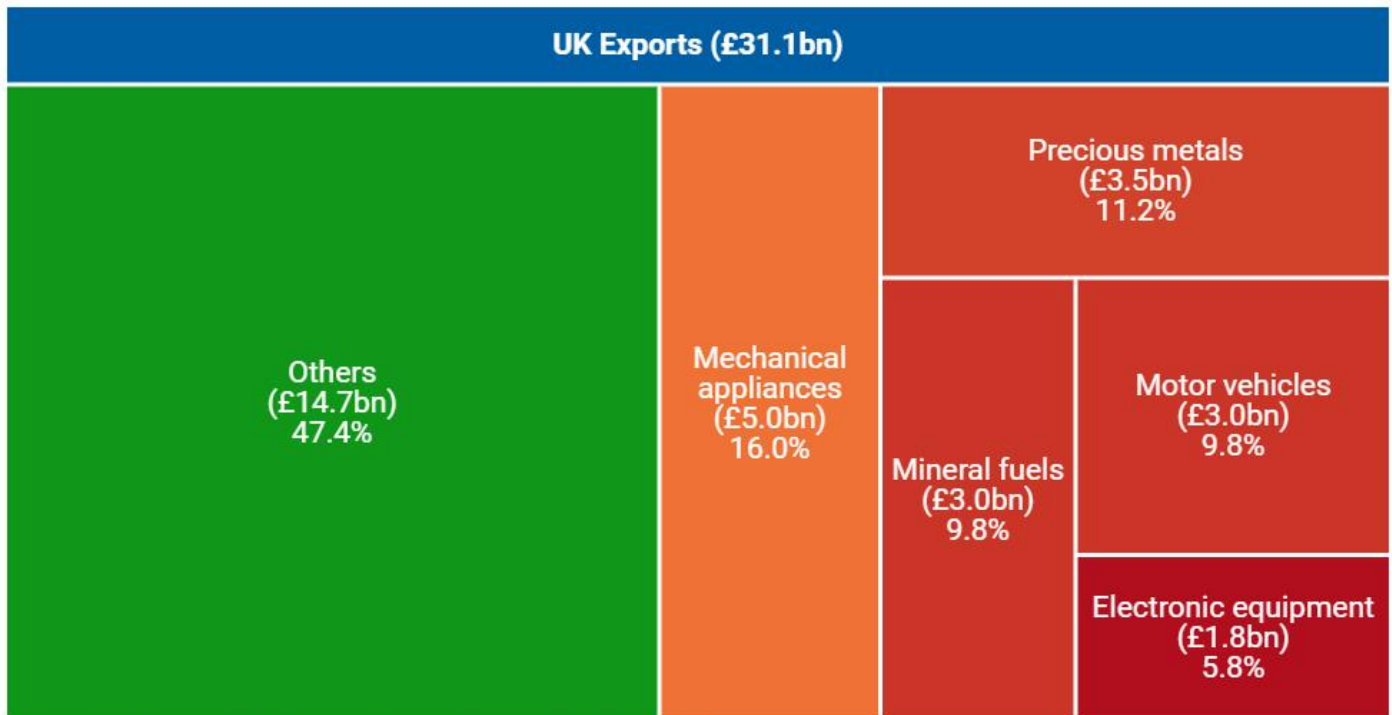
# Exports: Commodity Analysis

- The top 5 export commodities (ranked by value) accounted for 53% of exports this month, this was an increase from 51% in May 2018.
- Mechanical appliances accounted for 16% of the total value of exports from the UK, this was an increase from 14% in May 2018.
- Precious metals had the 2nd largest proportion, accounting for 11%, this was an increase from 9.6% in May 2018.
- The top 10 export commodities (ranked by value) changed compared with last month, though the top 8 were unchanged.
- The top 10 export commodities (ranked by value) changed compared with May 2018. Most notably, Precious metals rose to 2nd place, replacing Motor vehicles which fell to 4th.

↑ **Mechanical appliances had a 16% share of total exports in May 2019**

↑ **Precious metals was the 2nd largest commodity exported in May 2019**

**Figure 5: UK exports by top 5 commodities, May 2019**



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics  
 Note: 2018 and 2019 data is provisional



## Exports: Commodity Analysis – 3 Months

- In the 3 months to May 2019 Mechanical appliances remained the largest export commodity. It experienced an increase of 4.4% on the 3 months to February 2019, and 10% on the 3 months to May 2018.
- Among the top 10, Art and antiques experienced the largest percentage increase on the 3 months to February 2019, almost tripling in value; and on the 3 months to May 2018, up 64%.
- Among the top 10, Precious metals experienced the 2nd largest percentage increases compared with the 3 months to February 2019, more than doubling in value; and with the 3 months to May 2018, up 21%.
- Among the top 10, Motor vehicles experienced the largest percentage decreases compared with the 3 months to February 2019, down 1.3%; and with the 3 months to May 2018, down 12%.
- 9 of the top 10 commodities experienced increases on the 3 months to February 2019, with Motor vehicles being the exception.
- 6 of the top 10 commodities experienced increases on the 3 months to May 2018, with Motor vehicles, Pharmaceutical products, Aircraft and Plastics and plastic products being the exceptions.

↑ **Art and antiques exports almost triple on the 3 months to February 2019**

↓ **Motor vehicles exports down 12% on the 3 months to May 2018**

**Table 4: UK exports of goods by top 10 commodities for the 3 months to May 2019**

Commodity Description	Total (£ millions)	3 months to Feb 2019		3 months to May 2018	
		Total (£ millions)	Change on February 2019 (%)	Total (£ millions)	Change on May 2018 (%)
Mechanical appliances	14,502	13,890	4.4	13,170	10.1
Precious metals	10,475	4,849	116.0	8,629	21.4
Motor vehicles	9,363	9,482	-1.3	10,645	-12.0
Mineral fuels	8,321	8,026	3.7	7,835	6.2
Electronic equipment	5,633	5,576	1.0	5,330	5.7
Pharmaceutical products	5,124	4,990	2.7	5,673	-9.7
Measuring devices and gauges	3,982	3,640	9.4	3,498	13.8
Aircraft	3,692	3,623	1.9	3,764	-1.9
Art and antiques	2,681	911	194.2	1,639	63.5
Plastics and plastic products	2,469	2,266	9.0	2,522	-2.1
Others	28,547	27,142	5.2	27,288	4.6
<b>Total Exports</b>	<b>94,788</b>	<b>84,396</b>	<b>12.3</b>	<b>89,993</b>	<b>5.3</b>

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics  
 Note: 2018 and 2019 data is provisional

# Exports: Combined Commodity & Country Analysis

## Country to commodity:

- The decrease in exports to the USA compared with last month was led by a fall of Organic chemicals, down £464 million (83%). While the increase compared with May 2018 was led by Art and antiques, up £326 million (more than double).
- The increase in exports to Germany on last month was due to increases in several commodities, including: Mineral fuels, up £144 million (73%); Motor vehicles, up £110 million (52%); and Aircraft, £101 million (40%).
- The decreases in exports to China compared with last month and May 2018 were largely due to falls in Mineral fuels, down £323 million (55%), and £312 million (54%) respectively.
- The increases in exports to Hong Kong on last month and May 2018 were led by Precious metals, up £208 million (more than double) and £235 million (2.5 times the value) respectively.

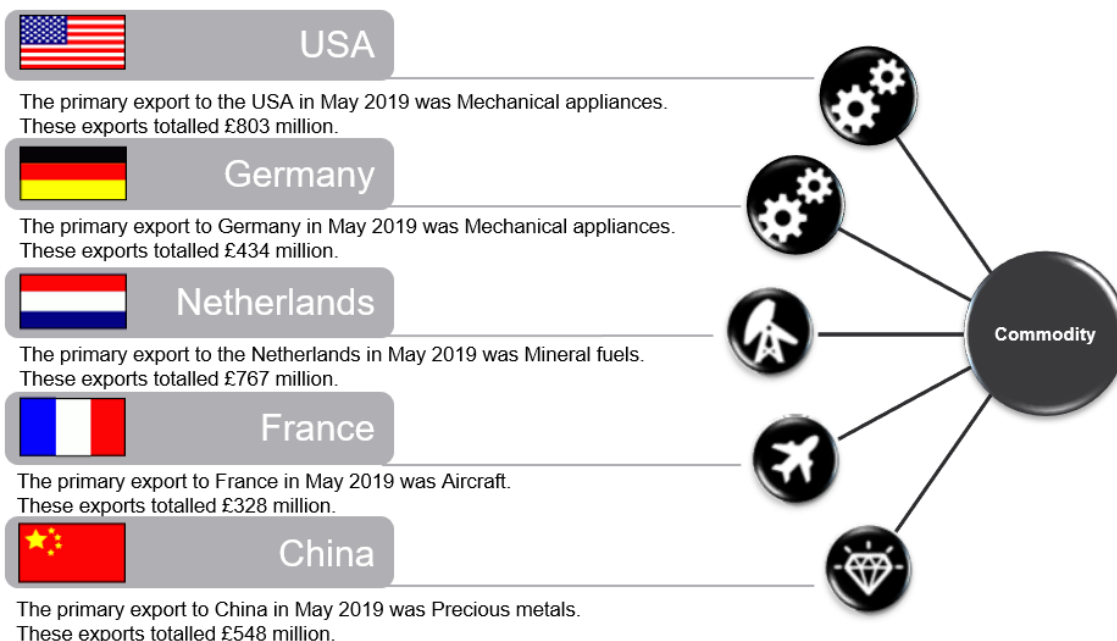
↓ Exports of Organic chemicals to the USA down 83% on last month

## Commodity to country:

- The increase in exports of Mechanical appliances on last month and May 2018 was led by Qatar, up £118 million (3 times the value) and £124 million (more than 3 times the value) respectively.
- The decrease in exports of Motor vehicles compared with May 2018 was due to China, down £141 million (38%).
- The decrease in exports of Pharmaceutical products compared with May 2018 was led by Germany, down £121 million (50%).
- The increase in exports of Mineral fuels compared with last month was due to increases to several countries, including: Belgium, up £188 million (94%); the Netherlands, up £184 million (32%); the USA, up £172 million (59%); and Germany, up £144 million (73%).

↑ Exports of Mechanical appliances to Qatar triple on last month

**Figure 6: The UK's top commodity exports to the top 5 EU & Non-EU countries**



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics  
 Note: 2018 and 2019 data is provisional

# Imports: Country Analysis

- Germany remained the top import partner country despite experiencing a decrease on last month, down £104 million (2.0%). It experienced the largest value decrease on May 2018, down £714 million (12%).
- China experienced the largest value increase on last month and May 2018, up £458 million (14%) and £670 million (22%) respectively.
- Canada (ranked 16th) experienced the largest value decrease on last month, down £520 million (44%).
- USA experienced the 2nd largest value increase on May 2018, up £421 million (12%).
- The Netherlands experienced the 2nd largest value decrease on May 2018, down £614 million (18%).

↓ Imports from Germany down 12% on May 2018

↓ Imports from Canada down 44% on last month

**Table 5: UK imports of goods from the top 10 partner countries, May 2019**

Partner Country	Total (£ millions)	April 2019		May 2018	
		Total (£ millions)	Change from April 2019 (%)	Total (£ millions)	Change from May 2018 (%)
Germany	5,163	5,267	-2.0	5,877	-12.1
USA	3,929	3,799	3.4	3,508	12.0
China	3,683	3,224	14.2	3,013	22.2
Netherlands	2,850	2,822	1.0	3,465	-17.7
France	2,105	2,106	-0.1	2,059	2.2
Belgium	1,808	1,841	-1.8	2,392	-24.4
Italy	1,658	1,510	9.8	1,625	2.0
Spain	1,359	1,197	13.5	1,452	-6.4
Norway	1,344	1,325	1.5	1,355	-0.8
Irish Republic	1,130	1,062	6.4	1,135	-0.4
Others	15,437	15,338	0.6	14,228	8.5
<b>Total EU</b>	<b>20,506</b>	<b>19,751</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>22,459</b>	<b>-8.7</b>
<b>Total Non-EU</b>	<b>19,961</b>	<b>19,741</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>17,651</b>	<b>13.1</b>
<b>Total Imports</b>	<b>40,467</b>	<b>39,492</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>40,110</b>	<b>0.9</b>

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics  
Note: 2018 and 2019 data are provisional

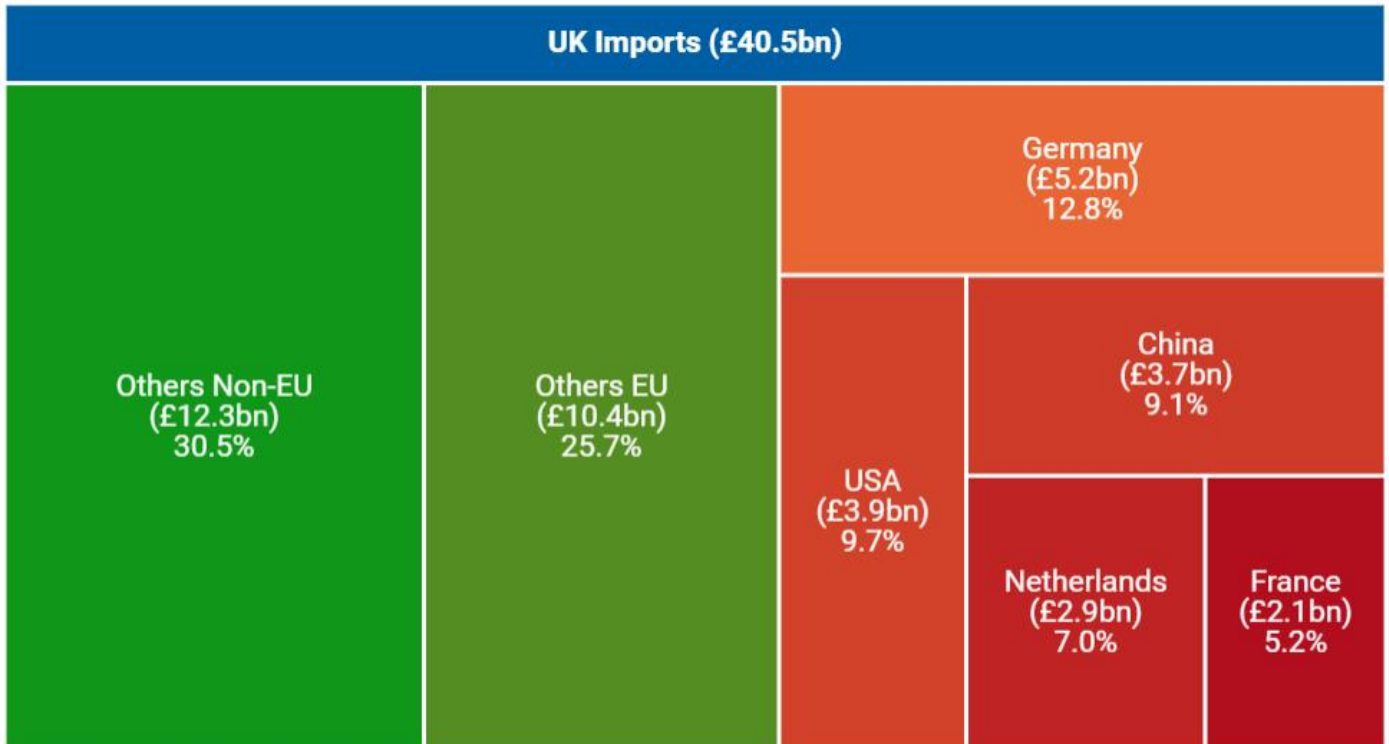
# Imports: Country Analysis

- The top 5 import partners accounted for 44% of total imports of goods in May 2019, this was a decrease from 46% on May 2018.
- Germany accounted for 13% of the total value of goods imports from the UK. This was a decrease from 15% on May 2018.
- The USA had the 2nd largest proportion, accounting for 9.7%. This was an increase from 8.7% on May 2018.
- The top 10 import partner countries (ranked by value) changed compared with last month, though the top 7 were unchanged.
- The top 10 import partner countries changed compared with May 2018. Most notably, China rose to 3rd place, replacing the Netherlands which fell to 4th.

↓ **Germany accounted for 13% of total imports in May 2019**

↑ **China rose to 3rd largest import partner in May 2019**

**Figure 7: UK imports of goods from the top 5 countries, May 2019**



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics  
 Note: 2018 and 2019 data is provisional

## Imports: Country Analysis – 3 Months

- In the 3 months to May 2019, Germany remained the largest import partner country, experiencing the 2nd largest percentage increase among the top 10 on the 3 months to February 2019, up 4.1%.
- Among the top 10, Italy experienced the largest percentage increase on the 3 months to February 2019, up 5.8%.
- Among the top 10, China experienced the largest percentage increase on the 3 months to May 2018, up 20%.
- Among the top 10, Norway experienced the largest percentage decrease; on the 3 months to February 2019, down 21%, and on the 3 months to May 2018, down 23%.
- 7 of the top 10 countries experienced a percentage decrease on the 3 months to February 2019, with Germany, France and Italy being the exceptions.
- 6 of the top 10 countries experienced a percentage increase on the 3 months to May 2018, with Germany, Belgium, Norway and the Irish Republic being the exceptions.

↑ Imports from China up 20% on the 3 months to May 2018

↓ Imports from Norway down 23% on the 3 months to May 2018

**Table 6: UK imports of goods from the top 10 partner countries, 3 months to May 2019**

Partner Country	Total (£ millions)	3 months to Feb 2019		3 months to May 2018	
		Total (£ millions)	Change on February 2019 (%)	Total (£ millions)	Change on May 2018 (%)
Germany	17,134	16,451	4.1	17,928	-4.4
USA	12,090	12,493	-3.2	10,703	13.0
China	10,443	11,361	-8.1	8,702	20.0
Netherlands	10,386	10,619	-2.2	10,334	0.5
France	7,571	7,400	2.3	6,578	15.1
Belgium	6,259	6,461	-3.1	6,888	-9.1
Italy	5,072	4,795	5.8	4,834	4.9
Spain	4,170	4,293	-2.9	4,151	0.4
Norway	3,988	5,016	-20.5	5,209	-23.4
Irish Republic	3,271	3,342	-2.1	3,315	-1.3
Others	47,927	47,580	0.7	44,167	8.5
<b>Total Imports</b>	<b>128,309</b>	<b>129,812</b>	<b>-1.2</b>	<b>122,809</b>	<b>4.5</b>

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2018 and 2019 data is provisional

## Imports: Commodity Analysis

- Mechanical appliances remained the largest import commodity. It experienced the 2nd largest value increase on May 2018, up £384 million (7.7%).
- Mineral fuels experienced the largest value increase on last month, up £689 million (20%).
- Precious metals experienced the largest value decrease on last month, down £1,251 million (35%). Conversely it experienced the largest value increase on May 2018, up £672 million (41%).
- Clothes, not knitted (ranked 11th) experienced the 3rd largest increase on May 2018, up £119 million (17%).
- Pharmaceutical products experienced the largest value decrease on May 2018, down £414 million (23%).

↑ Imports of Mineral fuels up 20% on last month

↑ Imports of Precious metals up 41% on May 2018

**Table 7: UK imports of goods by top 10 commodities, May 2019**

Commodity Description	Total (£ millions)	April 2019		May 2018	
		Total (£ millions)	Change from April 2019 (%)	Total (£ millions)	Change from May 2018 (%)
Mechanical appliances	5,373	5,313	1.1	4,989	7.7
Motor vehicles	4,765	4,475	6.5	4,992	-4.5
Mineral fuels	4,050	3,362	20.5	4,015	0.9
Electronic equipment	3,586	3,365	6.6	3,651	-1.8
Precious metals	2,314	3,565	-35.1	1,642	40.9
Pharmaceutical products	1,385	1,304	6.2	1,799	-23.0
Plastics	1,208	1,263	-4.4	1,240	-2.6
Measuring devices and gauges	1,205	1,193	1.0	1,153	4.5
Articles of iron or steel	972	779	24.7	928	4.7
Furniture and light fittings	839	722	16.2	745	12.7
Others	14,769	14,150	4.4	14,955	-1.2
<b>Total Imports</b>	<b>40,467</b>	<b>39,492</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>40,110</b>	<b>0.9</b>

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2018 and 2019 data is provisional

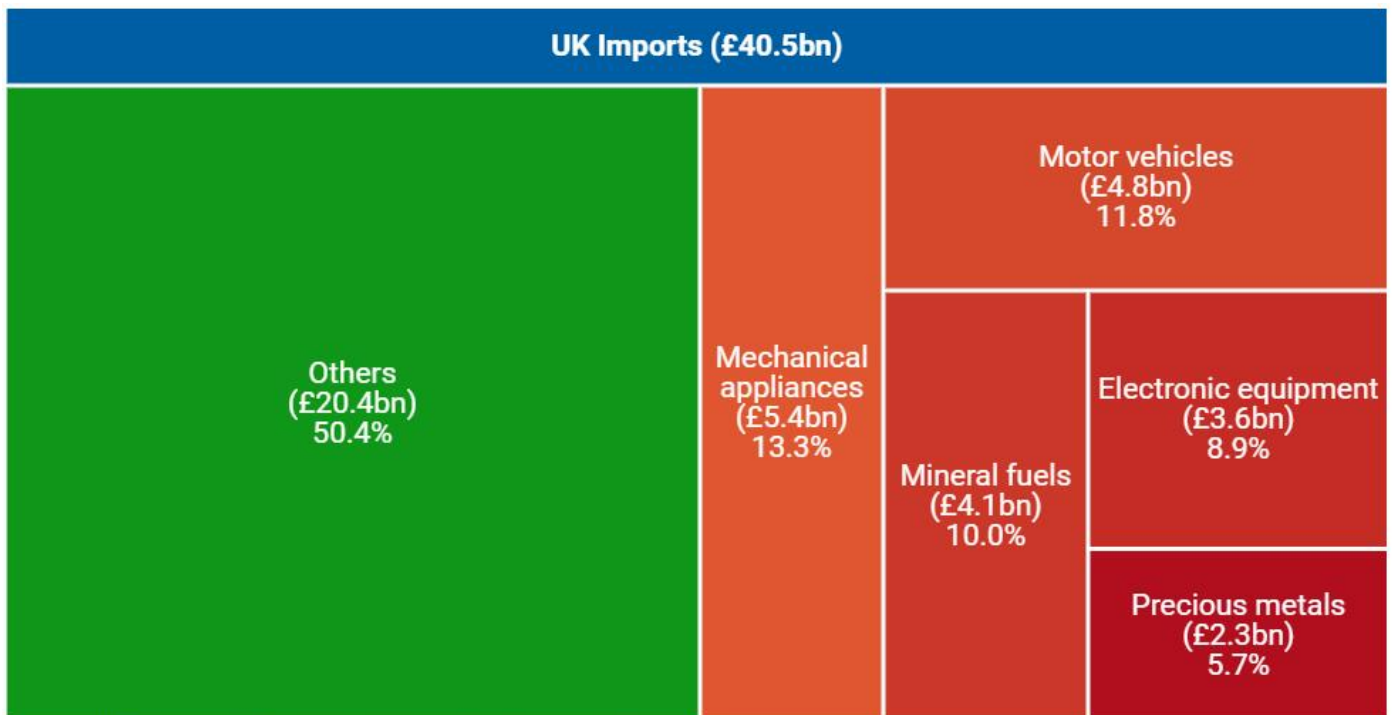
# Imports: Commodity Analysis

- The top 5 import commodities (ranked by value) accounted for 50% this month, this was an increase from 48% on May 2018.
- Mechanical appliances accounted for 13% of the total value of goods imports, this was an increase from 12% on May 2018.
- Motor vehicles had the 2nd largest proportion, accounting for 12%. This was an increase of less than 1 percentage point on May 2018.
- The top 10 import commodities (ranked by value) changed compared with last month. Most notably, Mineral fuels rose to 3rd place from 5th, replacing Precious metals which fell to 5th.
- The top 10 import commodities (ranked by value) changed compared with May 2018. Most notably, Mechanical appliances rose to 1st from 2nd place, replacing Motor vehicles as the UK's largest import commodity.

↑ **Mechanical appliances accounted for 13% of total imports in May 2019**

↓ **Precious metals fell to 5th largest import commodity for May 2019**

**Figure 8: UK imports by top 5 commodities, May 2019**



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics  
 Note: 2018 and 2019 data is provisional

## Imports: Commodity Analysis – 3 Months

- In the 3 months to May 2019, Mechanical appliances remained the largest import commodity, it experienced an increase on the 3 months to February 2019 and the 3 months to May 2018, up 2.9% and 8.1% respectively.
- Among the top 10, Articles of iron or steel experienced the largest percentage increase on the 3 months to February 2019, up 22%.
- Among the top 10, Precious metals experienced the largest percentage decrease on the 3 months to February 2019, down 10%. Conversely, it experienced the largest percentage increase on the 3 months to May 2018, up 47%.
- 6 of the top 10 commodities experienced an increase on the 3 months to February 2019, Electronic equipment, Mineral fuels, Precious metals and Pharmaceutical products being the exceptions.
- 7 of the top 10 commodities experienced an increase on the 3 months to May 2018, Motor vehicles, Mineral fuels and Articles of iron or steel being the exception.

↑ **Articles of iron or steel up 22% on the 3 months to February 2019**

↑ **Precious metals up 47% on the 3 months to May 2018**

**Table 8: UK imports of goods by top 10 commodities for the 3 months to May 2019**

Commodity Description	Total (£ millions)	3 months to Feb 2019		3 months to May 2018	
		Total (£ millions)	Change on February 2019 (%)	Total (£ millions)	Change on May 2018 (%)
Mechanical appliances	16,679	16,211	2.9	15,435	8.1
Motor vehicles	15,542	14,820	4.9	15,582	-0.3
Electronic equipment	11,484	11,971	-4.1	11,051	3.9
Mineral fuels	11,189	12,479	-10.3	12,583	-11.1
Precious metals	9,956	11,118	-10.5	6,796	46.5
Pharmaceutical products	5,848	5,936	-1.5	5,473	6.9
Plastics and plastic products	3,929	3,667	7.2	3,640	8.0
Measuring devices and gauges	3,859	3,607	7.0	3,490	10.6
Articles of iron or steel	2,494	2,043	22.1	2,529	-1.4
Clothes, not knitted	2,353	2,169	8.5	2,164	8.7
Others	44,976	45,791	-1.8	44,067	2.1
<b>Total Imports</b>	<b>128,309</b>	<b>129,812</b>	<b>-1.2</b>	<b>122,809</b>	<b>4.5</b>

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics

Note: 2018 and 2019 data is provisional



# Imports: Combined Commodity & Country Analysis

## Country to commodity:

- The decrease in imports from Germany on May 2018 was led by Motor vehicles, down £298 million (15%).
- The increase in imports from China on May 2018 was led by Mineral fuels, up £82 million (from £0.8 million). The increase on May 2018 was led by Mechanical appliances, up £168 million (31%).
- The decrease in imports from Canada on last month was dominated by Precious metals, down £483 million (54%).
- The increase in imports from the USA on May 2018 was led by Mechanical appliances, up £176 million (20%).

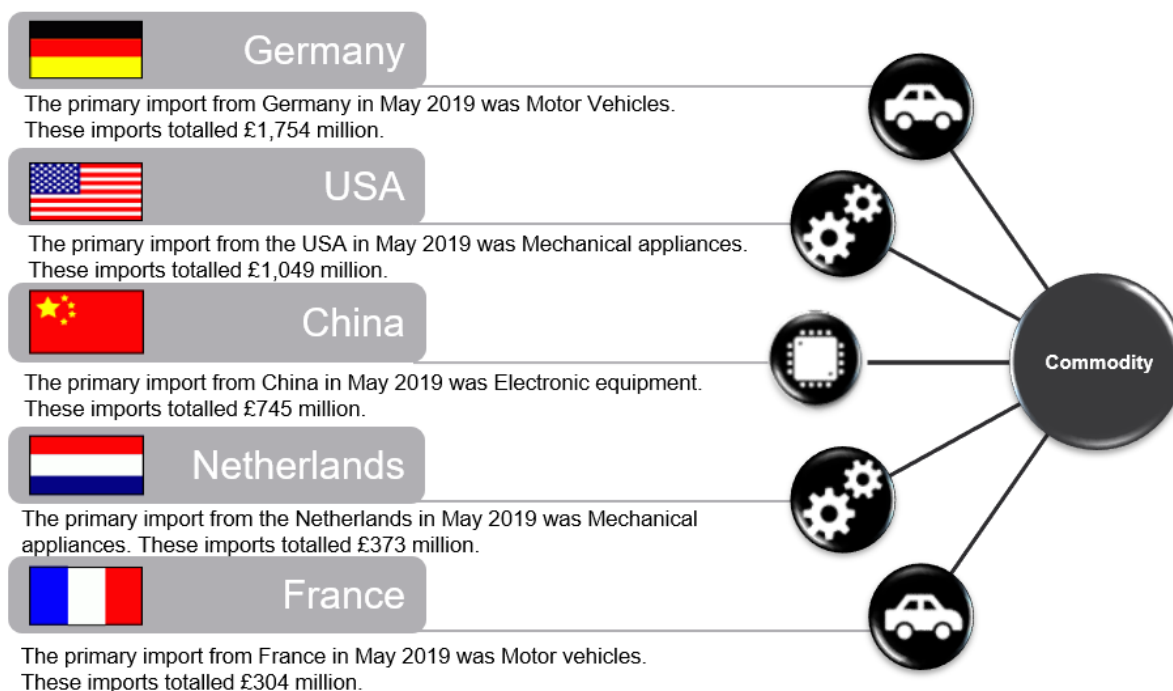
↓ Imports of Precious metals from Canada down 54% on last month

## Commodity to country:

- The increase in imports of Mechanical appliances on May 2018 was led by the USA and China, up £176 million (20%) and £168 million (31%) respectively.
- The increase in imports of Mineral fuels on last month was led by the USA and Qatar, up £273 million (more than double) and £240 million (more than 2.5 times) respectively.
- The decrease in imports of Precious metals on last month was led by Canada, down £483 million (54%) and Uzbekistan, down £314 million (to nil trade). The increase on May 2018 was led by Australia, up £363 million (from £13 million).
- The decrease in imports of Pharmaceutical products on May 2018 was led by the Netherlands, down £198 million (65%) and Belgium, down £127 million (40%).

↓ Imports of Pharmaceutical products from the Netherlands down 65% on May 2018

**Figure 9: The UK's top commodity imports from the top 5 EU & Non-EU countries**



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics  
 Note: 2018 and 2019 data is provisional

# Methodology Notes

## Metadata

All data behind this bulletin through our [uktradeinfo web site](#):

- Detailed Trade Statistics data at 8-digit commodity code level is available in our [interactive database](#).
- Aggregate OTS data is available in [pre-prepared Excel tables](#).

Find details of how users interested in import and export markets for specific goods make use of the detailed OTS data in [‘The User Story’](#).

## Data sources

The **EU figures** provided in this publication of the May 2019 Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics are collected from the Intrastat survey. They will include:

- Estimates for businesses who have yet to submit detailed data on the trade they had with other EU Member States this month.
- Estimates for businesses who do not have to submit detailed data on the trade they have with other EU Member States.
- An adjustment for trade associated with Missing Trader Intra Community fraud. More details of this can be found [here](#).

Estimates are included in all high-level totals including commodity (HS2) and country totals.

The **Non-EU figures** provided in this publication of the May 2019 Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics are presented by customs declarations and collected by the CHIEF (Customs Handling of Import and Export Freight) system.

Detailed trade information is presented according to the [Harmonised System \(HS\)](#) nomenclature.

## Methodology

This methodology paper covers all aspects of the Overseas Trade Statistics methodology – data sources, classifications and definitions, quality assurance, publications and governance. It is a useful companion to the trade data, providing the definitions and methodologies on which the data are based. The Overseas Trade Statistics Methodology paper (July 2017) is available [here](#).

From the May 2016 month of account, there was a methodological change to the way our trade-in-goods statistics are compiled. Following a change in legislation, trade-in-goods statistics switched from the ‘general trade’ system of compilation to the ‘special trade’ system. More information can be found [here](#).

Non-Monetary Gold (NMG) can form a substantial part of the non-EU Overseas Trade Statistics (OTS). For further information, see [Inclusion of Non-Monetary Gold in OTS](#). Data relating to monthly non-EU and EU import and export totals for January 2008 onwards with a breakdown of non-monetary gold and other trade is available in an [OTS time series spreadsheet](#).

## Relationship with other statistical publications

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 2 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. [uktradeinfo.com](#) provides more detail about the [differences between BoP and OTS publications](#).

The aggregate estimates here will differ from the Eurostat publication [Euro area external trade](#). The OTS was published up until the May 2016 month of account 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 declared to specific Customs regimes such as Inward Processing (IP) or Processing under Customs Control (PCC). Imports from a free zone or customs warehouse are similarly recorded in 'special trade'.

### National Statistics Publication

HM Revenue & Customs released these latest statistics on Overseas Trade with countries on 10 July 2019 under arrangements set out in the [Code of Practice for Official Statistics](#). The 1st release is published on HMRC's trade data website [www.uktradeinfo.com](http://www.uktradeinfo.com).

This release includes the 1st provisional estimates of trade-in-goods between the UK and both countries of the EU and those outside the EU for May 2019. At the same time revisions for all previously published non-EU and EU data for 2018 and 2019 are also being released in line with the [HM Revenue & Customs Policy on Revisions](#).

The next three publications are due for release on the following days:

Month of account	First release date
June 2019	9 August 2019
July 2019	9 September 2019
August 2019	10 October 2019

The OTS was reviewed as part of an assessment made of Overseas Trade in Goods 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>.

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.