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# UK Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics November 2017

## Summary

- Total trade in goods exports for November 2017 were £30.3 billion. This was an increase of £0.5 billion (1.6 per cent) compared with last month, and an increase of £1.3 billion (4.5 per cent) compared with November 2016.
- Total trade in goods imports for November 2017 were £43.2 billion. This was a decrease of £1.5 billion (3.3 per cent) compared with last month, but an increase of £0.6 billion (1.4 per cent) compared with November 2016.
- The UK was a net importer this month, with imports exceeding exports by £13.0 billion.

Figure 1: Total UK monthly Trade in Goods



## Trade Trends

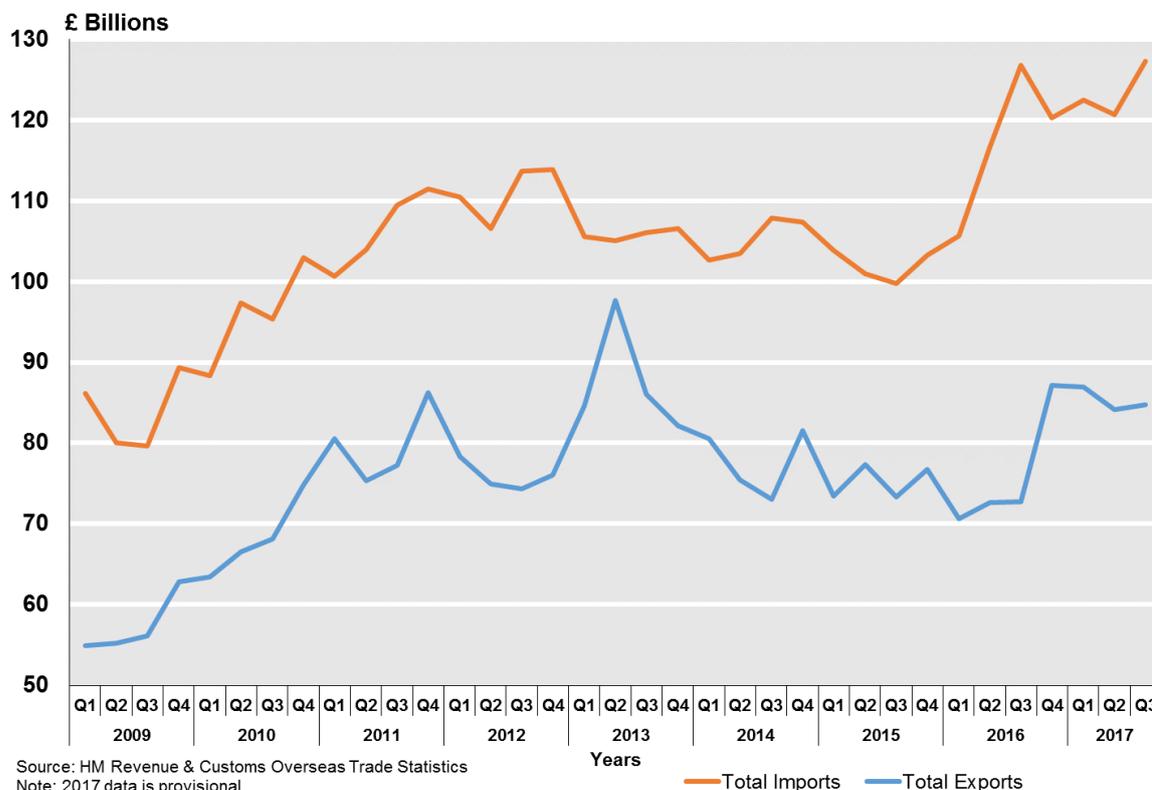
- Following the global economic crisis, UK trade in goods dropped in 2009. Both imports and exports then steadily increased until 2012. From the start of 2013, imports remained relatively flat until a very sharp increase in Q3 of 2016, while exports peaked in Q2 of 2013, with a further peak in Q4 of 2016.
- The total **export** trade for Q3 of 2017 was £84.7 billion, which was an increase of 16 per cent compared with £72.8 billion for Q3 of 2016.
- The total **import** trade for Q3 of 2017 was £127 billion, which was a slight increase of 0.4 per cent compared with Q3 of 2016.
- There was a trade deficit of £42.5 billion for Q3 of 2017. This was a narrowing of 21 per cent compared with Q3 of 2016. These values were strongly influenced by trade in non-monetary gold.
- 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 16%  
for Q3 2017 on  
Q3 2016

Imports up 0.4%  
for Q3 2017 on  
Q3 2016

Trade deficit  
narrowed by 21%  
for Q3 2017 on Q3  
2016

Figure 2: Quarterly UK Trade in Goods, 2009 – 2017



## Non-EU & EU Trade

- **Non-EU Exports** for November 2017 were £15.2 billion. This was a slight decrease of £0.1 billion (0.7 per cent) on last month, and a minimal decrease (0.2 per cent) compared with November 2016.
- **Non-EU Imports** for November 2017 were £20.5 billion. This was a decrease of £1.1 billion (5.1 per cent) on last month, but an increase of £0.8 billion (4.0 per cent) compared with November 2016.
- In **Non-EU trade** the UK was a net importer this month, with imports exceeding exports by £5.3 billion.
- **EU Exports** for November 2017 were £15.1 billion. This was an increase of £0.6 billion (3.9 per cent) on last month, and an increase of £1.3 billion (9.6 per cent) compared with November 2016.
- **EU Imports** for November 2017 were £22.7 billion. This was a decrease of £0.4 billion (1.6 per cent) on last month, and a slight decrease of £0.2 billion (0.8 per cent) compared with November 2016.
- In **EU trade** the UK was a net importer this month, with imports exceeding exports by £7.6 billion.
- The proportion of total exports to the EU was 50 per cent in November 2017. Over the past 18 months, this has ranged from 39 per cent to 52 per cent. The proportion of total imports from the EU was 53 per cent in November 2017. Over the same period, this has ranged between 46 per cent and 55 per cent.

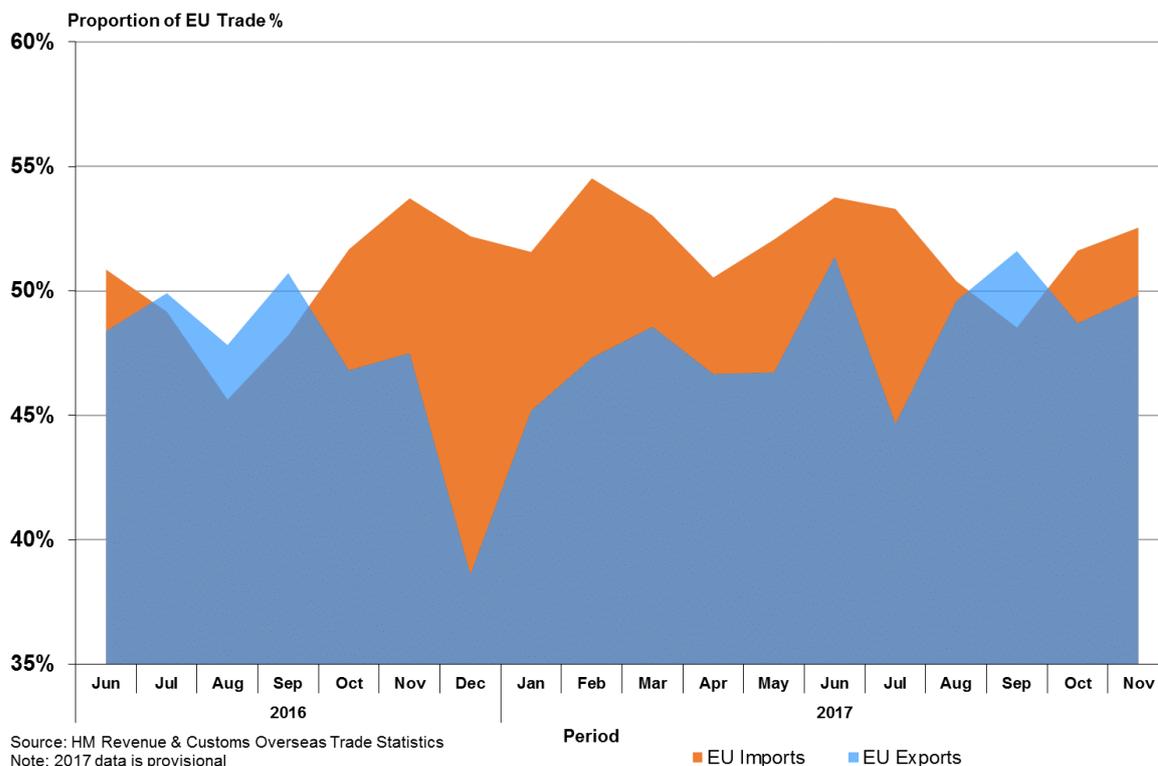
Non-EU exports  
down 0.7% on  
last month

Non-EU imports  
down 5.1% on  
last month

EU exports  
up 9.6% on  
November 2016

EU imports down  
0.8% on  
November 2016

**Figure 3: Proportion of total UK Trade in Goods with the EU, November 2017**



# Exports

## Country Analysis

**Table 1: UK Exports of goods to top 10 partner countries, November 2017**

Partner Country	November 2017 Total (£ millions)	Change from October 2017 (%)	Change from November 2016 (%)	Rank October 2017	Rank November 2016
USA	3,740	-9.3	-14.6	1	1
Germany	3,318	10.1	3.7	2	2
France	2,109	-11.3	11.4	3	3
Netherlands	2,049	12.2	20.8	4	6
Irish Republic	1,940	12.3	10.7	5	5
China	1,794	42.9	64.3	6	7
Belgium	1,184	2.9	11.6	7	8
Spain	956	-0.8	-1.3	8	9
Italy	950	3.7	5.4	9	10
Hong Kong	813	39.7	76.9	11	14
Others	11,422	-3.8	-1.3	-	-
<b>Total Non-EU</b>	<b>15,189</b>	<b>-0.7</b>	<b>-0.2</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total EU</b>	<b>15,085</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>9.6</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total Exports</b>	<b>30,274</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade Statistics

Note: 2017 data is provisional

- The order of the top ten export partner countries (ranked by value) has changed slightly compared with last month, with Hong Kong moving up into 10<sup>th</sup> place. Compared with November 2016 there were several changes, though the top 3 remained unchanged.
- Seven of the top ten countries experienced increases in value compared with last month, and eight of the top ten countries experienced increases in value compared with November 2016.
- The USA remained the largest export partner country, despite experiencing the largest value decrease on last month, down £383 million (9.3 per cent). Similarly, it saw the second largest decrease compared with November 2016, down £642 million (15 per cent).
- China experienced the largest value increases on both last month and November 2016, up £539 million (43 per cent) and £702 million (64 per cent) respectively.

Top export partner USA down 15% on November 2016

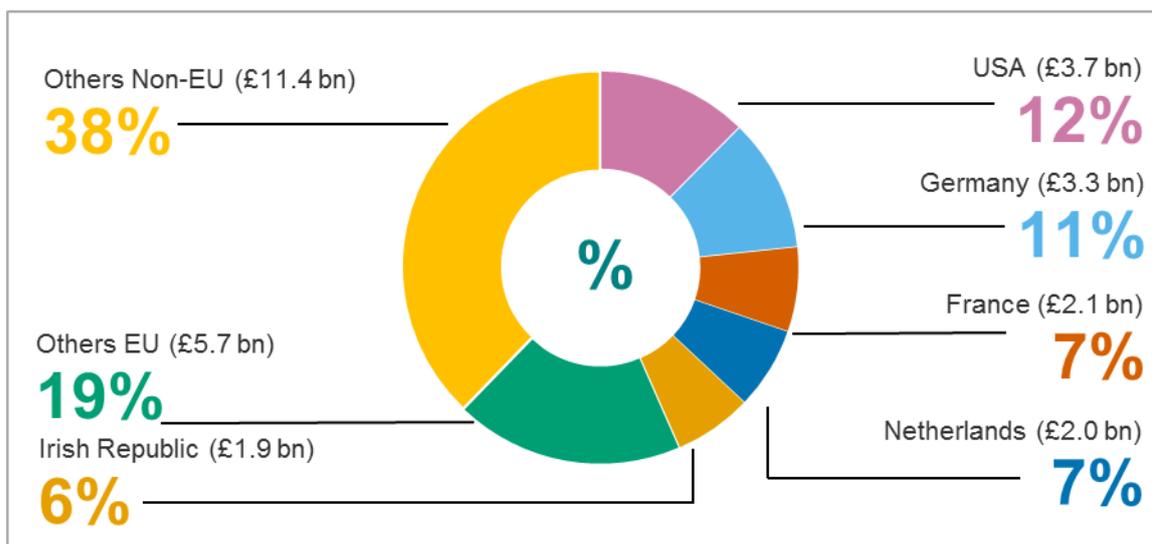
- Germany experienced the second largest value increase on last month, up £305 million (10 per cent). It also rose on November 2016, up £118 million (3.7 per cent).
- Switzerland (11<sup>th</sup> place) saw an increase compared with last month, up £119 million (26 per cent). In contrast, it experienced the largest decrease on November 2016, down £1,280 million (69 per cent).
- Hong Kong experienced the third largest increase on last month, up £231 million (40 per cent). It also experienced the second largest increase on November 2016, up £354 million (77 per cent).
- France experienced the second largest decrease compared with last month, down £269 million (11 per cent). In contrast, it experienced an increase on November 2016, up £216 million (11 per cent).
- Netherlands experienced increases on both last month and November 2016, up £223 million (12 per cent) and £353 million (21 per cent) respectively.
- Irish Republic saw increases on both last month and November 2016, up £212 million (12 per cent) and £188 million (11 per cent) respectively.

Exports to China up 64% on November 2016

Exports to Switzerland down 69% on November 2016

Exports to Hong Kong up 77% on November 2016

**Figure 4: UK exports of goods to the top 5 countries, November 2017**



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade Statistics  
Note: 2017 data is provisional

- The USA accounted for 12 per cent of the total value of goods exports from the UK, compared with 15 per cent in November 2016.
- Germany had the second largest proportion, accounting for 11 per cent, this is a slight decrease on November 2016.
- The top five export partners accounted for 43 per cent of total exports in goods this month, this is a decrease for 45 per cent on November 2016.

The USA accounted for 12% of total UK exports

## Commodity Analysis

**Table 2: UK exports of goods by top 5 commodities, November 2017**

Commodity Description	November 2017 Total (£ millions)	Change from October 2017 (%)	Change from November 2016 (%)	Rank October 2017	Rank November 2016
Mechanical appliances	4,539	-4.7	10.6	1	1
Motor vehicles	3,895	-4.4	0.4	2	2
Mineral fuels	2,346	3.3	23.3	3	6
Pharmaceutical products	2,206	3.2	-0.9	4	3
Electronic equipment	2,051	5.4	4.5	5	5
Others	15,238	4.2	2.2	-	-
<b>Total Exports</b>	<b>30,274</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade Statistics

Note: 2017 data is provisional

- The top five export commodities (ranked by value) was unchanged compared with last month. Compared with November 2016 there were several changes, most notably Mineral fuels rose into third place from sixth.
- Mechanical appliances remained the top export commodity, despite the largest decrease on last month, down £224 million (4.7 per cent). In contrast, it saw the second largest increase compared with November 2016, up £436 million (11 per cent).
- Precious metals experienced the largest value increase compared with last month, up £404 million (39 per cent). Conversely, it saw the largest decrease on November 2016, down £770 million (35 per cent).
- Mineral fuels exports increased compared with last month, up £75 million (3.3 per cent). Compared with November 2016 it saw the largest increase, up £443 million (23 per cent).
- Electronic equipment experienced the second largest increase compared with last month, up £104 million (5.4 per cent). It also increased compared with November 2016, up £89 million (4.5 per cent).
- Motor vehicles exports saw the second largest decrease compared with last month, down £179 million (4.4 per cent).
- Measuring devices and gauges (8<sup>th</sup> place) saw increases on both last month and November 2016, up £101 million (8.6 per cent) and £105 million (9.0 per cent).
- The top five export commodities accounted for 50 per cent of total UK trade in goods exports this month, unchanged compared with November 2016.

Exports of Mechanical appliances up 11% on November 2016

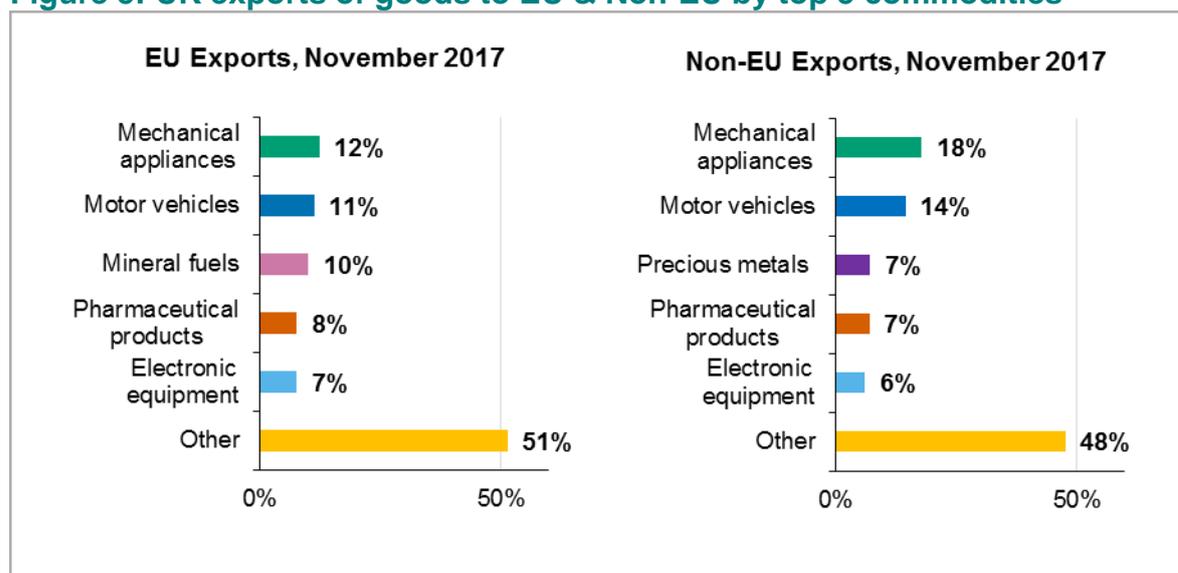
Exports of Precious metals down 35% on November 2016

Exports of Mineral fuels up 23% on November 2016

Exports of Motor vehicles down 4.4% on last month

## Combined Commodity and Country Analysis

Figure 5: UK exports of goods to EU & Non-EU by top 5 commodities



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade Statistics  
 Note: 2017 data is provisional

- Mechanical appliances, Motor vehicles, Pharmaceutical products and Electronic equipment were in the top five export commodities for both EU and non-EU countries.
- The change in exports of Mechanical appliances compared with both periods was led by France. It saw a decrease of £235 million (42 per cent) on last month, and a contrasting increase of £166 million (doubling in value) compared with November 2016.
- The rise in exports of Precious metals on last month was led by China and Switzerland, up £173 million (more than six times) and £90 million (near double) respectively. The fall on November 2016 was mainly due to Switzerland, down £1,352 million (88 per cent).
- The increase in exports of Mineral fuels compared with last month was led by China, Netherlands and the Irish Republic, up £255 million (10 times increase), £99 million (15 per cent) and £94 million (69 per cent), respectively. The same countries led the increase on November 2016, up £184 million (near treble), £282 million (60 per cent) and £119 million (more than double), respectively.
- The increase in exports of Electronic equipment on last month was led by the Irish Republic and Germany, up £46 million (35 per cent) and £36 million (18 per cent) respectively. The rise in the commodity on November 2016 was led by increases to Netherlands and the Irish Republic, up £27 million (31 per cent) and £22 million (14 per cent) respectively.
- The decrease in exports to the USA compared with last month was led by a fall in Pharmaceutical products, down £129 million (25 per cent). Whereas falls to the USA compared with November 2016 were due to Motor vehicles and Aircraft, down £269 million (28 per cent) and £249 million (62 per cent) respectively.

Exports of Mechanical appliances to France down 42% on last month

Exports of Precious metals to Switzerland down 88% on November 2016

Exports of Electronic equipment to the Irish Republic up 35% on last month

# Imports

## Country Analysis

**Table 3: UK imports of goods from top 10 countries, November 2017**

Partner Country	November 2017 Total (£ millions)	Change from October 2017 (%)	Change from November 2016 (%)	Rank October 2017	Rank November 2016
Germany	5,587	-7.2	-7.6	1	1
China	3,908	-1.4	3.1	2	2
Netherlands	3,797	6.4	16.9	4	4
USA	3,358	-7.9	-1.4	3	3
France	2,503	9.9	9.4	5	6
Belgium	2,218	3.3	-3.1	6	5
Norway	1,771	39.8	10.0	10	8
Italy	1,706	-0.6	4.8	7	7
Irish Republic	1,402	7.4	-11.1	9	9
Spain	1,203	-13.0	-17.5	8	10
Others	15,777	-9.4	3.3	-	-
<b>Total non-EU</b>	<b>20,516</b>	<b>-5.1</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total EU</b>	<b>22,715</b>	<b>-1.6</b>	<b>-0.8</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total Imports</b>	<b>43,231</b>	<b>-3.3</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade Statistics

Note: 2017 data is provisional

- The order of the top ten import partners (ranked by value) changed compared with last month and November 2016, though the top two remain unchanged. The most notable change on last month was Norway, rising from 10<sup>th</sup> to seventh place.
- Five of the top ten import partners increased in value compared with last month, and with November 2016.
- Germany remained the top import partner country, despite experiencing the second largest decrease on last month, down £433 million (7.2 per cent). It also experienced the largest decrease compared with November 2016, down £458 million (7.6 per cent).
- Singapore (32<sup>nd</sup> place) experienced the largest value decrease compared with last month, down £751 million (76 per cent). However, it saw an increase on November 2016, up £71 million (42 per cent).

Top import country Germany down 7.2% on last month

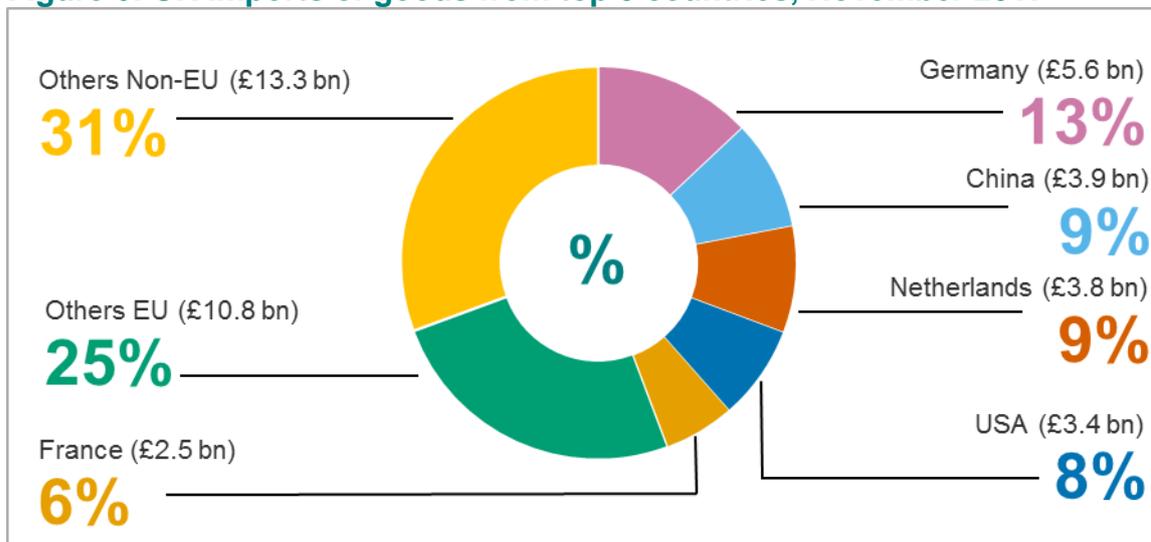
Imports from Singapore down 76% on last month

- Norway experienced the largest value increase compared with last month, up £504 million (40 per cent). It also experienced the fifth largest increase on November 2016, up £161 million (10 per cent).
- Imports from Switzerland saw the second largest increase compared with both last month and with November 2016, up £313 million (37 per cent) and £411 million (54 per cent) respectively
- Imports from the Netherlands saw the third largest increase compared with last month, up £229 million (6.4 per cent). It also experienced the largest value increase compared with November 2016, up £548 million (17 per cent).
- France experienced the fourth largest increase on last month, up £225 million (9.9 per cent). It also experienced the third largest increase on November 2016, up £215 million (9.4 per cent).
- South Korea experienced the second largest decrease on November 2016, down £260 million (44 per cent).
- Imports from the USA experienced the third largest decrease on last month, down £287 million (7.9 per cent).
- Spain saw the third largest decrease compared with November 2016, down £255 million (17 per cent).

Imports from Norway up 40% on last month

Imports from Switzerland up 54% on November 2016

**Figure 6: UK imports of goods from top 5 countries, November 2017**



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade Statistics  
Note: 2017 data is provisional

- Germany accounted for 13 per cent of the total value of imports to the UK, a decrease on the 14% in November 2016.
- China had the second largest proportion, accounting for 9.0 per cent of total imports, an increase compared with 8.9 per cent in November 2016.
- The top five partner countries accounted for 44 per cent of total UK import value this month, this is a slight increase on November 2016.

Germany accounted for 13% of total UK imports

## Commodity Analysis

**Table 4: UK imports of goods by top 5 commodities, November 2017**

Commodity Description	November 2017 Total (£ millions)	Change from October 2017 (%)	Change from November 2016 (%)	Rank October 2017	Rank November 2016
Mechanical appliances	5,848	7.7	11.3	1	1
Electronic equipment	4,696	7.2	6.0	3	3
Motor vehicles	4,163	-14.4	-12.9	2	2
Mineral fuels	3,897	19.0	17.4	5	4
Precious metals	2,432	-30.8	-15.4	4	5
Others	22,194	-4.5	1.1	-	-
<b>Total Imports</b>	<b>43,231</b>	<b>-3.3</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade Statistics  
Note: 2017 data is provisional

- The ordering of the top five commodity groups changed compared with last month and with November 2016, with Motor vehicles falling from second to third for both periods.
- Mechanical appliances was the top import commodity by value, accounting for a 14 per cent share of the total imports. It showed the second largest increase on last month, up £419 million (7.7 per cent). It also saw the largest increase on November 2016, up £592 million (11 per cent).
- Imports of Precious metals showed the largest decrease on last month, down £1,081 million (31 per cent). It also saw the second largest decrease on November 2016, down £443 million (15 per cent).
- Mineral fuels imports saw the largest increase on last month, up £622 million (19 per cent). It also experienced the second largest increase on November 2016, up £577 million (17 per cent).
- Imports of Motor vehicles experienced the third largest decrease on last month, down £703 million (14 per cent). It also saw the largest decrease compared with November 2016, down £614 million (13 per cent).
- Imports of Ships, boats and floating structures (80<sup>th</sup> place) saw the second largest decrease on last month, down £811 million (97 per cent). It also experienced the fourth largest decrease on November 2016, down £229 million (90 per cent).
- The top five import commodities accounted for 49 per cent of total UK trade in goods imports for this month, up from 48 per cent in November 2016.

Imports of Mechanical appliances up 11% on November 2016

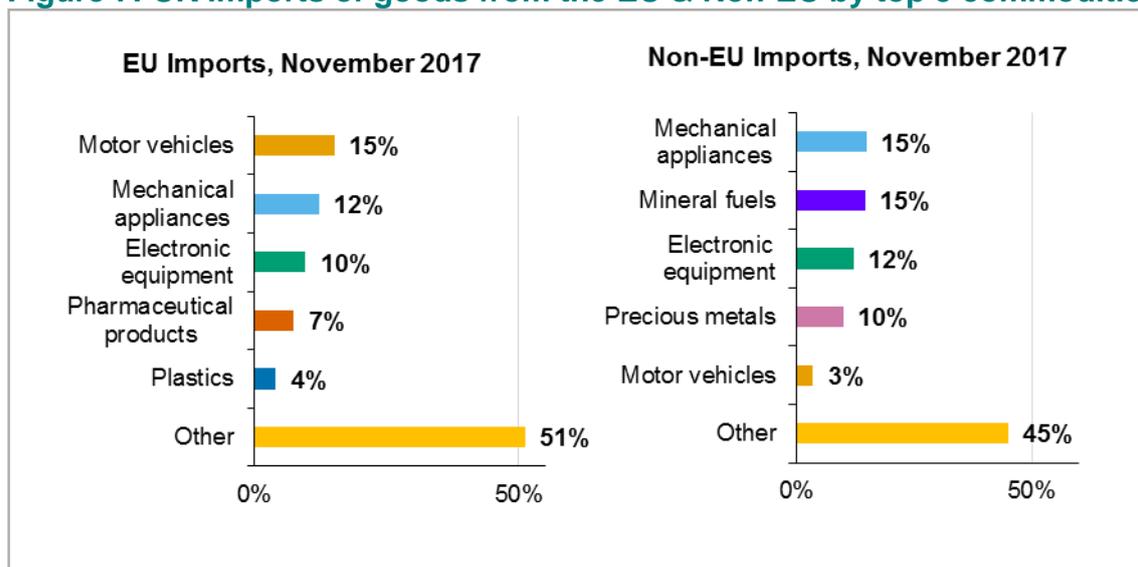
Precious metals imports down 31% on last month

Imports of Motor vehicles down 14% on last month

Imports of Ships, boats, and floating structures down 90% on November 2016

## Combined Commodity and Country Analysis

Figure 7: UK imports of goods from the EU & Non-EU by top 5 commodities



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade  
 Statistics Note: 2017 data is provisional

- Motor vehicles, Mechanical appliances and Electronic equipment were in the top five import commodities from both EU and non-EU countries.
- The rise in imports of Mechanical appliances compared with both periods was led by increases from the USA, up £207 million (25 per cent) on last month and £225 million (28 per cent) on November 2016, Germany, up £117 million (14 per cent) on last month and £135 million (17 per cent) on November 2016, and China, up £96 million (16 per cent) on last month and £79 million (12 per cent) on November 2016.
- The decrease in imports of Precious metals on last month was largely due to a fall from the USA, down £516 million (73 per cent), and Russia, down £256 million (90 per cent). However, the decrease in imports of this commodity compared with November 2016 was largely due to decreases from Hong Kong, down £346 million (92 per cent).
- The increase in imports of Mineral fuels on last month was led by Norway, up £461 million (42 per cent). The increase in imports of this commodity compared with November 2016 was led by an increase in imports from Algeria, up £194 million (more than eight times the value).
- The decrease in imports from Singapore on last month was dominated by a decrease in Ships, boats and floating structures, down £812 million (near complete reduction).
- The increase in imports from the Netherlands on November 2016 was due to an increase in Pharmaceutical products and Electronic equipment, up £199 million (66 per cent) and £198 million (48 per cent) respectively.

Imports of Mechanical appliances from the USA up 28% on November 2016

Imports of Mineral fuels from Norway up 42% on last month

Imports of Pharmaceutical products from the Netherlands up 66% on November 2016

## Annex I – Metadata

You can access the 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](#).
- 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](#).
- 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 User Story](#)'.

## Annex II – Methodological Notes

1. HM Revenue & Customs released these latest statistics on Overseas Trade with countries on 10 January 2018 under arrangements set out in the [Code of Practice for Official Statistics](#). The first release is published on HMRC's trade data website [www.uktradeinfo.com](#).
2. This release includes the first provisional estimates of trade-in-goods between the UK and both countries of the EU and those outside the EU for November 2017. At the same time revisions for all previously published non-EU and EU data for 2017 are also being released in line with the [HM Revenue & Customs Policy on Revisions](#).
3. The **EU figures** provided in this publication of the November 2017 Overseas Trade Statistics are collected from the Intrastat survey. They will include:
  - a. Estimates for businesses who have yet to submit detailed data on the trade they had with other EU Member States this month.
  - b. Estimates for businesses who do not have to submit detailed data on the trade they have with other EU Member States.
  - c. 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.

4. The **Non-EU figures** provided in this publication of the November 2017 Overseas Trade Statistics are presented by customs declarations and collected by the CHIEF (Customs Handling of Import and Export Freight) system.
5. Detailed trade information is presented according to the [Harmonised System \(HS\)](#) nomenclature.
6. 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. [uktradeinfo.com](#) provides more detail about the [differences between BoP and OTS publications](#).

7. 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'.
8. HMRC publishes [additional information](#) to help support users of non-EU data. Information to help support users of the 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 OTS and information on the quality of the data published.
9. 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](#).
10. The OTS has 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>.
11. 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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