

# EU Overseas Trade Statistics - July 2012

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**Media contact:**  
HMRC Press Office  
020 7147 0798/2328

**Out-of-hours:** 07860 359544

**Statistical contacts:**  
Andrew Watson  
Tel: 01702 367485  
[andy.watson@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:andy.watson@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk)

ECSM Trade Statistics  
HM Revenue & Customs  
21 Victoria Avenue  
Southend-on-Sea  
SS99 1AA

**Website:**  
<http://www.uktradeinfo.com>

## **Summary**

- For trade with EU Member States, the value of exports decreased whereas imports increased in July 2012 compared to June 2012 although both changes were marginal. Consequently the difference between imports and exports has increased compared with June.
- UK's EU exports have decreased by £0.3 billion (2.2 per cent) compared to June 2012, to £11.8 billion. Compared to July 2011, exports have decreased by £1.1 billion (8.2 per cent).
- UK's EU imports have increased by £0.2 billion (1.3 per cent) compared to June 2012, to £17.1 billion. Compared to July 2011, imports decreased by £0.2 billion (1.2 per cent).
- The UK remains a net importer (imports are greater than exports). The size of difference between imports and exports (£5.3 billion) has increased by 10.0 per cent compared to June 2012, but when compared to July 2011 the gap has increased by 18.9 per cent. This is the largest monthly difference in recent years.



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](#).

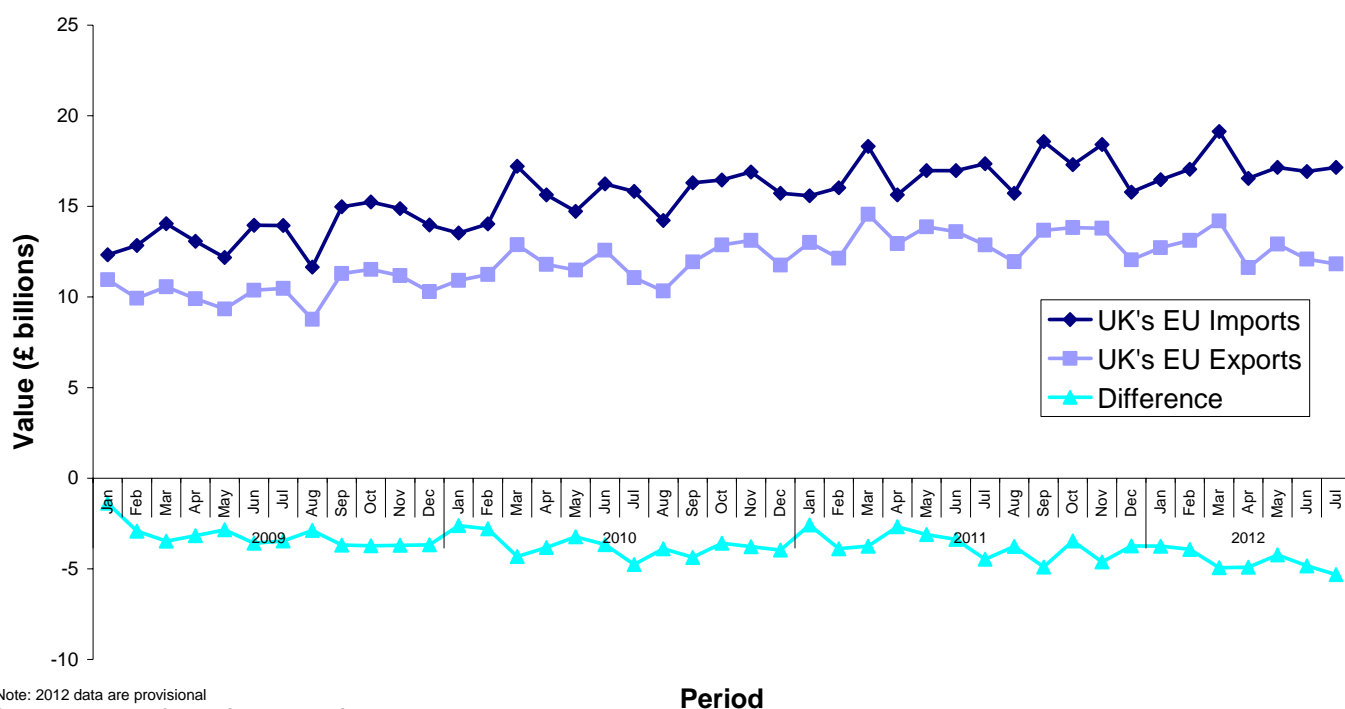
## Key Points

For the month of July 2012:

The value of UK trade increased for imports but decreased for exports in July 2012 compared to the previous month. Both of these changes, however, were very marginal.

As the value of exports fell and the value of imports rose, this resulted in an increase in the difference between UK imports from the EU and exports to the EU. This difference is now £5.3 billion, the largest monthly difference in recent years.

**Fig. 1: Total Monthly UK Trade with EU Member States**



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

## Exports

- The value of the UK's EU exports showed a small decrease of £0.3 billion (2.2 per cent) compared to June 2012, to £11.8 billion. Compared with June 2011, the value of exports decreased by £1.1 billion (8.2 per cent).
- The top five commodities are similar to the previous month. HS2 27 (Mineral fuels, mineral oils and products of their distillation; bituminous substances; mineral waxes) remains the top commodity exported by value. In July it contributed £2.3 billion, 19.8 per cent of the total value of the UK's EU export trade.
- The largest value decrease from the previous month, of £154.7 million, was in HS2 27, down by 6.2 per cent.
- The largest value increase from the previous month, of £105.4 million, was in HS2 30 (Pharmaceutical products), up by 12.5 per cent.
- The top five EU Member States to which the UK exports remain the same as the previous month. Germany remains the UK's largest EU export partner country, accounting for 20.6 per cent despite the value of exports showing the largest decrease compared to June 2012 of £411.8 million (14.4 per cent). The largest increase in the value of exports from the UK was to France which rose by £270.0 million (16.8 per cent).
- The total 2012 year to date value of UK's trade-in-goods exported to EU Member States excluding July 2012 was £76.7 billion, which has been upwardly revised by £0.4 billion. This is an increase of 0.5 per cent.

## Imports

- The value of the UK's EU imports has increased by £0.2 billion (1.3 per cent) compared to June 2012, to £17.1 billion. Compared to July 2011, imports have decreased by £0.2 billion (1.2 per cent).
- The top five commodities remain the same as the previous month. The largest contributing commodity group is HS2 87 (Vehicles other than railway or tramway rolling-stock, and parts and accessories thereof). This contributed £2.8 billion, 16.6 per cent, of the total value of UK's EU import trade.
- The largest value increase from the previous month was in HS2 87, the commodity group with the largest share of the trade, with an increase of £237.1 million, 9.1 per cent.
- The largest value decrease from the previous month was in HS2 29 (Organic chemicals) with a decrease of £182.4 million, 28.8 per cent.
- The top five EU Member States from which the UK imports remain the same as the previous month. Germany is still the EU Member State from which the UK imports most goods by value, accounting for 25.2 per cent. The Netherlands remains in second place. The largest increase in import trade compared to June 2012 was for France, up by £277.7 million (14.7 per cent). The largest decrease in import trade was a fall of £174.1 million from the Irish Republic, a decrease of 15.3 per cent.
- The total 2012 year to date value of UK's trade-in-goods imported from EU Member States excluding July 2012 was £103.3 billion, which has been upwardly revised by £0.07 billion. This is an increase of less than 0.1 per cent.

## Further Analysis: Exports

HS 2	Description	July 2012 Total £ millions	% Change from June 2012	% Change from July 2011	% of Total July 2012 Exports	Rank June 2012	Rank July 2011
-	Total Exports	11,825.7	-2.2	-8.2	100.0	n/a	n/a
27	Mineral fuels, mineral oils and products of their distillation; bituminous substances; mineral waxes	2,341.3	-6.2	-8.9	19.8	1	1
84	Nuclear reactors, boilers, machinery and mechanical appliances; parts thereof	1,190.3	-5.9	-8.8	10.1	2	2
87	Vehicles other than railway or tramway rolling-stock, and parts and accessories thereof	986.1	-4.7	-10.8	8.3	3	3
30	Pharmaceutical products	949.9	12.5	0.3	8.0	5	4
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	789.6	-7.5	-1.6	6.7	4	5

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade Statistics

The small decrease in export value **compared to July 2012** reflects decreases in just under 60 per cent of all HS2 chapters. Four out of five of the top chapters experienced decreases. The only chapter in the top five that saw a rise in exports was HS2 30 (Pharmaceutical products) of just £105.4 million. Indeed this was the largest rise for any HS2 chapter. The next largest increase was only £33.2 million in HS2 29 (Organic chemicals).

The largest HS2 decrease compared to July 2012 was £154.7 million in HS2 27 (Mineral fuels, mineral oils and products of their distillation; bituminous substances; mineral waxes). This is a fall of 6.2 per cent from June 2012's figure of £2.5 billion which has been revised upwards this month from the first provisional estimate of £2.0 billion published last month.

The other decreases in the top five commodity types were with HS2 84 down by £74.2 million, HS2 85 down by £63.9 million and HS2 87 down by £49.0 million.

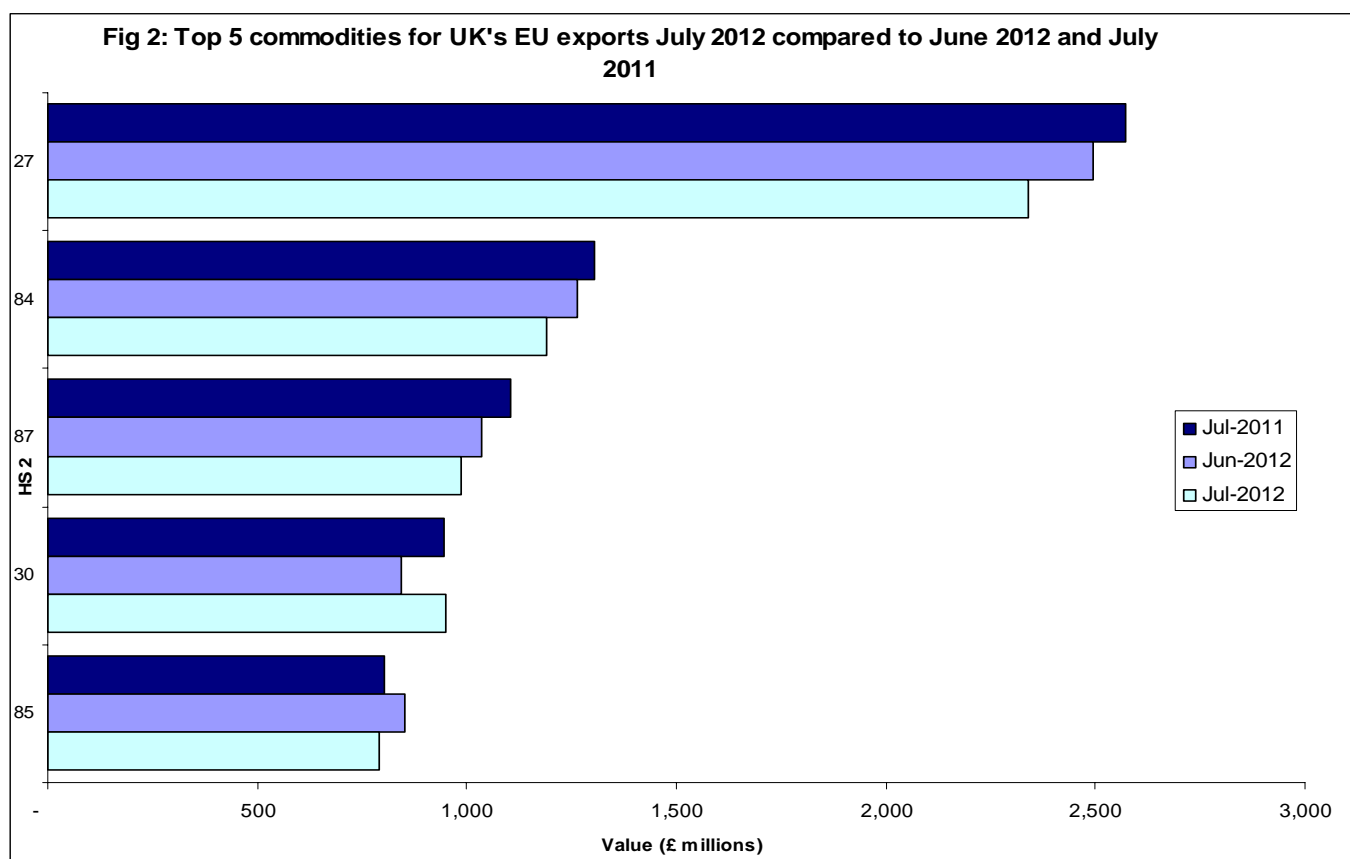
**Compared to June 2011**, the overall export trade to EU Member States decreased by £1.1 billion, 8.2 per cent. Around two thirds of all HS2 chapters saw a fall in the value of exports. Four of the top five HS2 chapters experienced decreases.

The five largest decreases were all in excess of £100 million. The top two decreases were in exports of HS2 27, down by £229.8 million (8.9 per cent) and HS2 71 (Natural or cultured pearls, precious or semi-precious stones, precious metals, metals clad with precious metal, and articles thereof; imitation jewellery; coin) down by £222.8 million (46.3 per cent).. The next largest decreases were HS2 29 (Organic chemicals) down by £147.4 million, HS2 87 down by £119.3 million) and HS2 84 down by £115.2 million.

In contrast, there were no increases above £100 million. HS2 88 (Aircraft, spacecraft, and parts thereof) experienced the largest increase up by £70.7 million (24.6 per cent). None of the other chapters which increased rose by more than £25 million.

Figure 2 shows the top five commodities for UK's EU exports in July 2012, compared to June 2012 and July 2011.

The graph shows decreases for four of the top five exported commodity types compared with both last month and last July.



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

<b>Country</b>	<b>Total July 2012 £ millions</b>	<b>% change from June 2012</b>	<b>% Change from July 2011</b>	<b>% of total July 2012 EU exports</b>	<b>Rank June 2012</b>	<b>Rank July 2011</b>
Total Exports	11,825.7	-2.2	-8.2	100.0	n/a	n/a
Germany	2,438.0	-14.5	-11.9	20.6	1	1
Netherlands	1,936.9	7.3	-1.5	16.4	2	2
France	1,874.5	16.8	7.6	15.9	3	3
Irish Republic	1,315.8	-2.1	-2.2	11.1	4	4
Belgium	1,201.5	0.0	-9.7	10.2	5	5

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade Statistics

The top five EU export partner Member States remain unchanged **compared with June 2012**.

Germany remains the top Member State for exports from the UK, accounting for over 20 per cent of the total exports from the UK to the EU since last month. The value of exports to Germany is generally largest in the top five exported commodity types to the whole EU. The largest export value to Germany this month was £343.3 million in HS2 84. The next largest chapter is HS2 27 with £288.8 million of exports from the UK.

The decrease in value of total export trade reflects decreases to 15 of the other 26 Member States in the EU.

The largest decrease in the value of exports from the UK was to Germany, down £411.8 million (14.4 per cent). The next largest decrease was the value of exports to Sweden, which fell by £139.3 million, down 31.0 per cent.

The fall in exports to Germany was dominated by a decrease of £434.2 million (60.1 per cent) in HS2 27. The fall for Sweden was also led by a decrease in HS2 27, down £62.6 million (71.4 per cent)

The largest increase in the value of exports from the UK was to France, up £270.0 million (16.8 per cent). The next largest increase was the value of exports to the Netherlands, which rose by £131.8 million, up 7.3 per cent.

The rise in exports to France was dominated by an increase of £268.1 million in HS2 27, nearly twice the value exported in June. This was offset to an extent by a decrease in exports in HS2 88 (Aircraft, spacecraft, and parts thereof) of £87.7 million. The rise for the Netherlands was also led by an increase in HS2 27, up £65.6 million (7.9 per cent) and by an increase in HS2 30 (Pharmaceutical products) up by £60.5 million (53.0 per cent).

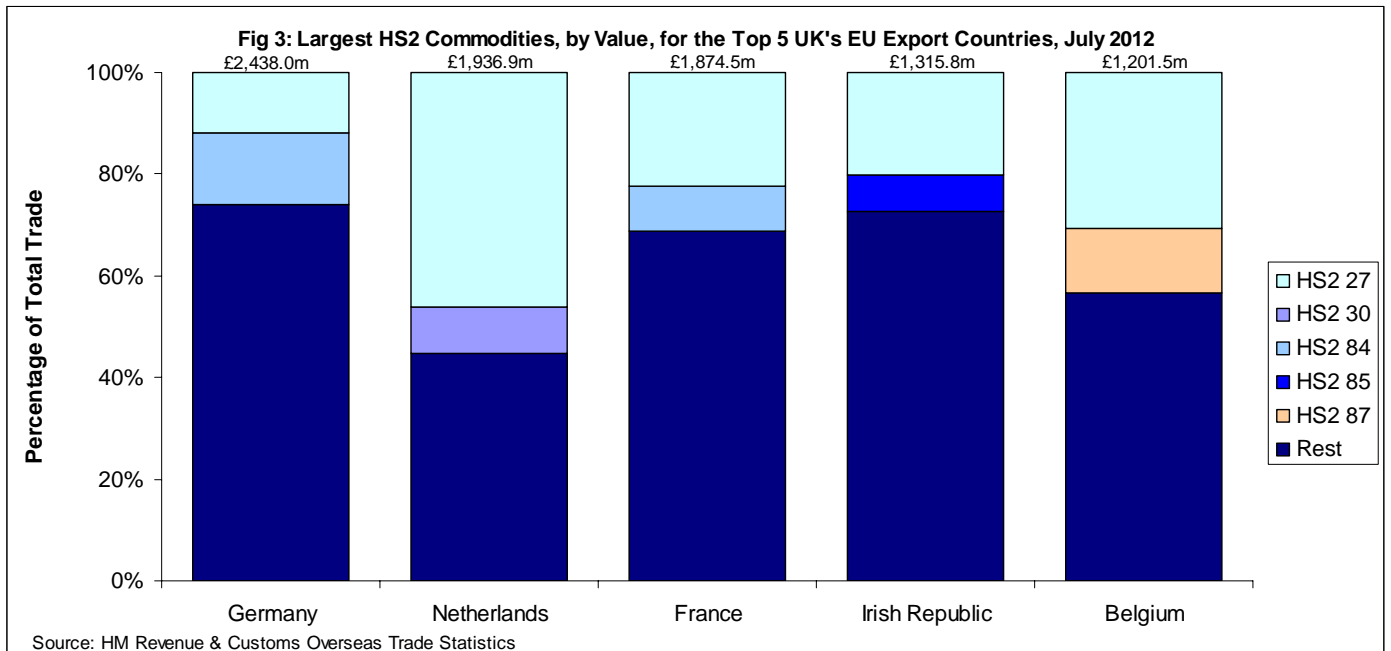
The decrease in total export trade value **compared to July 2011**, noted in table 2 was due to decreases for 21 of the UK's EU export partner Member States. The largest decrease was for Germany, down by £330.2 million (11.9 per cent), followed by Italy, down £269.7 million (29.3 per cent).

The decreases in exports to Germany was led by a fall of £155.2 million in HS2 29 (Organic chemicals) followed by decreases in HS2 84 and HS2 27, down by ££52.3 million and £46.1 million respectively. The decrease for Italy was led by decreases in HS2 27, down £95.2 million (94.4 per cent) and by a decrease in HS2 87 down by £55.2 million (38.9 per cent).

There were also relatively large decreases in exports to Belgium (down by £128.3 million, 9.7 per cent) and Sweden (down £114.0 million, 26.8 per cent).

The largest increase was £132.8 million (7.6 per cent) for exports to France. The next highest increase was less than £13 million.

Figure 3 shows the two largest commodities by value exported from the UK to each of the UK's top five EU export trading partners. All of the top five Member States have HS2 27 (Mineral fuels, mineral oils and products of their distillation; bituminous substances; mineral waxes) as the largest commodity by value exported to them from the UK. The trade with these four Member States accounts for 95.4 per cent of the total value of UK EU export trade under this heading.



## Further Analysis: Imports

HS 2	Description	July 2012 Total £ millions	% Change from June 2012	% Change from July 2011	% of Total July 2012 Imports	Rank June 2012	Rank July 2011
-	Total EU Imports	17,146.4	1.3	-1.2	100.0	n/a	n/a
87	Vehicles other than railway or tramway rolling-stock, and parts and accessories thereof	2,842.6	9.1	2.5	16.6	1	1
84	Nuclear reactors, boilers, machinery and mechanical appliances; parts thereof	2,086.8	2.7	1.5	12.2	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	1,452.0	3.6	2.6	8.5	3	3
27	Mineral fuels, mineral oils and products of their distillation; bituminous substances; mineral waxes	1,024.7	-7.2	-8.5	6.0	4	4
30	Pharmaceutical products	953.3	-4.7	-13.6	5.6	5	5

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade Statistics

The marginal increase **compared to June 2012** in imports is a reflection of the fact that there were increases in about 60 per cent of the HS2 chapters. There were only three changes of £100 million or more, two increases and one decrease. Only one of these was in the top five commodities.

The largest increase in value of imports was in the commodity type with the largest share of import trade, HS2 87 (Vehicles other than railway or tramway rolling-stock, and parts and accessories thereof). This was up by £237.1 million (9.1 percent) to £2.8 billion. This increase even exceeded the total net increase in import trade of £218.8 million. Therefore, if the change in this HS2 commodity were to be excluded from the total net change in import trade, this would lead to a total net decrease of



£18.3 million. The increase in this chapter was dominated by a rise of £265.7 million (16.6 per cent) in HS4 8703 (Motor cars and other motor vehicles principally designed for the transport of persons)

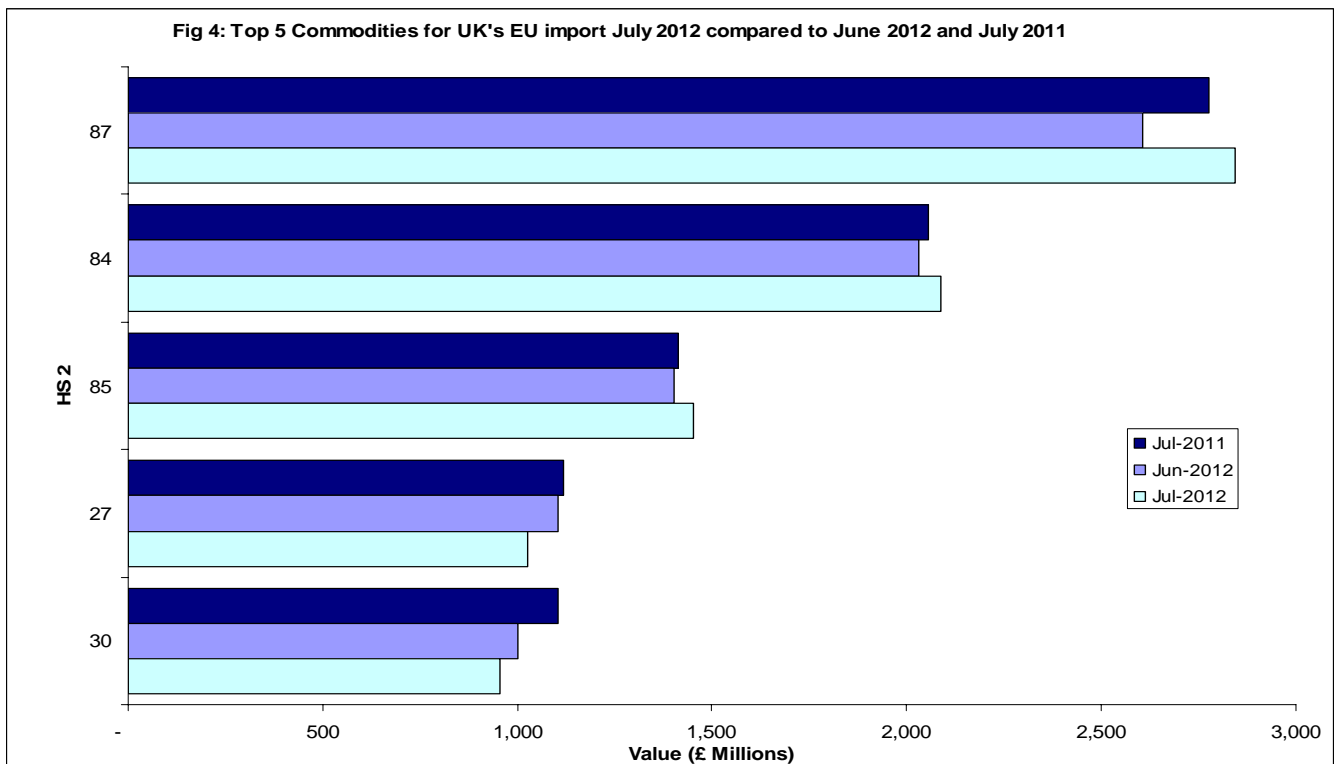
The next largest increase was for HS2 88 (Aircraft, spacecraft, and parts thereof), up £111.8 million to £275.8 million. There were no other increases in excess of £100 million. The increase in this chapter was driven by an increase in HS4 8802 (Parachutes, incl. dirigible parachutes and paragliders, and rotochutes; parts thereof and accessories thereto).of £103.1 million (134.4 per cent).

The largest decrease in value of imports was for HS2 29 (Organic chemicals), down by £182.4 million (28.8 per cent) to £451.7 million. There were no other decreases in excess of £100 million. The net decrease in this chapter was driven by a drop of £196.2 million (66.2 per cent) in HS4 2933 (Heterocyclic compounds with nitrogen hetero-atom[s] only)

**Compared with July 2011**, there was a decrease of 1.2 per cent in imports. Over 50 per cent of all chapters decreased in value, which explains the very marginal decrease in value. There were only two chapters with changes of over £100 million; one was an increase and the other a decrease.

The chapter with the largest increase in comparison with July 2011 was HS2 88 (Aircraft, spacecraft, and parts thereof) up £170.3 million (161.4 per cent). This was lead by an increase in HS4 8802 (Parachutes, incl. dirigible parachutes and paragliders, and rotochutes; parts thereof and accessories thereto) of £179.9 million with zero import trade recorded for July 2011. The largest decrease was for HS2 30 (Pharmaceutical products), which saw a fall of £150.3 million (13.6 per cent), which was dominated by a fall of £184.2 million (22.0 per cent) in HS4 3004(Medicaments consisting of mixed or unmixed products for therapeutic or prophylactic uses).

Figure 4 shows the top five HS2 commodity groups for UK's EU imports in July 2012, compared to June 2012 and July 2011.



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

Figure 4 shows that for the two chapters, HS2 84 and 85, there are only marginal differences over the three periods. For chapters HS 27 and 30, there were slight but steady decrease between the periods July 2011, June 2012 and July 2012. For HS2 87, however, there was a noticeable decrease between July 2011 and June 2012 followed by a sharp increase in July 2012 to restore trade to above the July 2011 figure.

Table 4 shows comparisons of the value of UK import trade with our top five EU import trading partners for July 2012, June 2012 and July 2011.

**Table 4: Top 5 EU import partner Member States in July 2012 compared to June 2012 and July 2011**

Country	July 2012 Total £ millions	% Change from June 2012	% Change from July 2011	% of Total July 2012 Imports	Rank June 2012	Rank July 2011
Total EU Imports	17,146.4	1.3	-1.2	100.0	n/a	n/a
Germany	4,329.0	1.0	4.6	25.2	1	1
Netherlands	2,449.3	-0.6	0.2	14.3	2	2
France	2,172.1	14.7	7.9	12.7	3	3
Belgium	1,414.8	0.1	-12.5	8.3	4	4
Italy	1,346.1	3.9	4.6	7.9	5	5

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade Statistics

Germany remains the top Member State for imports to the UK, accounting for over 25 per cent of the total imports to the UK from the EU since last month. This is led by imports of £1.3 billion in HS2 87. This is up by £97.4 million, 8.3 per cent. The next largest chapter is HS2 84 (Nuclear reactors, boilers, machinery and mechanical appliances; parts thereof), with £0.7 billion of imports to the UK.

The value of total import trade to the UK increased for only 12 of the other 26 Member States in the EU compared with June 2012 and decreased for 14. The sizes of the individual increases were generally larger than the sizes of the individual decreases, which explains the marginal net increase in total imports of 1.3 per cent.

The largest change in value of import trade **compared with June 2012** is the increase of £277.7 million (14.7 per cent) from France. This increase exceeded the total net increase in import trade of £218.8 million. There were no other Member States that had increases over £100 million. The next largest increases for the value of imports were from Poland, up by £78.4 million (14.0 per cent) followed by Spain up £76.1 million (8.9 per cent).

The increase from France is led by a rise of £142.9 million, almost a seven fold increase, in HS2 88 (Aircraft, spacecraft, and parts thereof) whereas the increase for Poland is spread across a number of HS2 chapters. The net increase for Spain is dominated by a rise of £108.9 million (51.8 per cent) in HS2 87.

The largest decrease was from the Irish Republic, down £174.1 million, 15.3 per cent to £963.9 million. Denmark had the second biggest decrease in import value, of £66.8 million (15.5 per cent). The decrease in imports from the Irish Republic is led by a fall of £157.9 million (56.4 per cent) in HS2 29 (Organic chemicals). The decrease from Denmark is lead by a drop in HS2 27 decreasing by £35.3 million (64.3 per cent).

The decrease in total import trade value **compared to July 2011**, noted in table 4, is composed of decreases and increases in an equal number (13) of the other 26

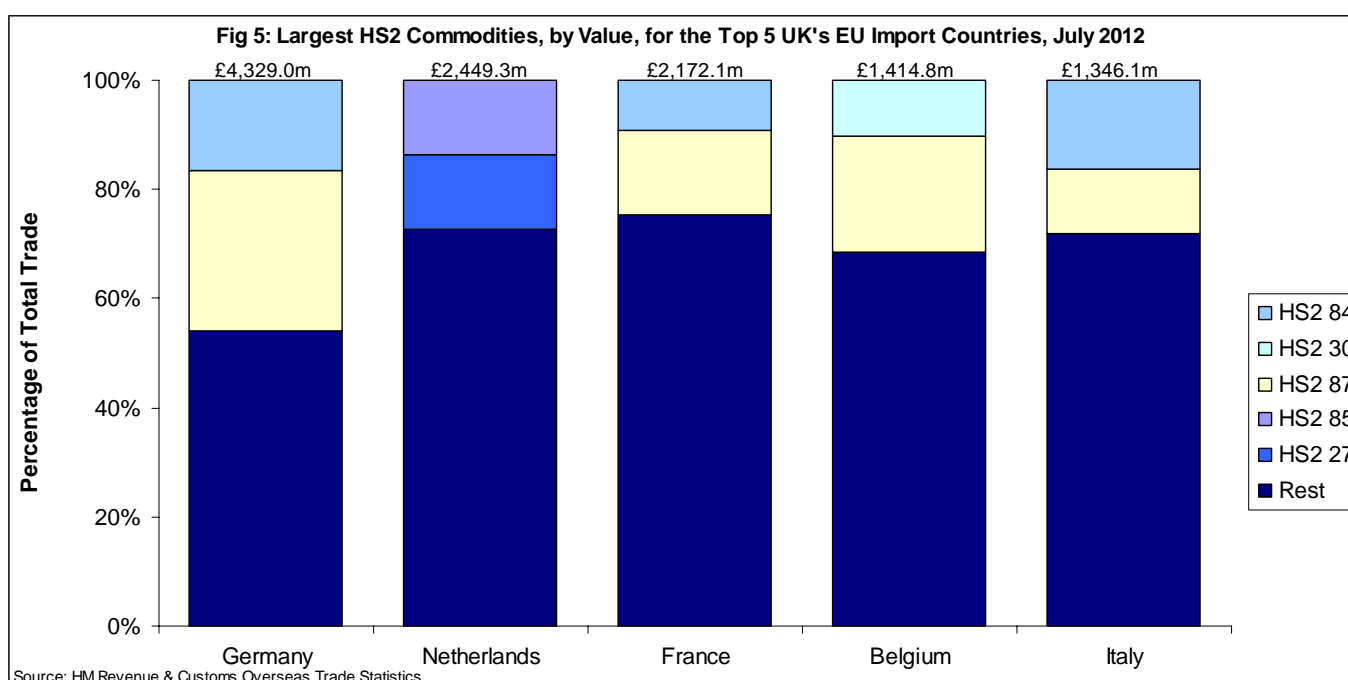
Member States in the EU. The reason for the overall net decrease in total trade is that the magnitude of the decreases is greater than that of the increases. The country with the largest decrease is Denmark, down by £243.8 million (40.0 per cent). This decrease exceeded the total net decrease in import trade of £203.8 million. The second largest decrease is £202.8 million (12.5 per cent) for Belgium and the third largest decrease was for the Irish Republic down £173.5 million (15.3 per cent). There were no other decreases in excess of £100 million. The country with the largest increase in value of imports into the UK is Germany, up £190.8 million (4.6 per cent). There were also large increases for France, up £158.2 million (7.9 per cent), and Sweden, up £114.6 million (18.8 per cent). There were no other increases in excess of £100 million.

The main decrease for Denmark was in HS2 27, down by £208.3 million (91.4 per cent). The decrease for Belgium was spread over a number of HS2 chapters but the decrease for the Irish Republic was led by a drop of £128.8 million (54.4 per cent) in HS2 30 (Pharmaceutical products).

The increase for Germany was driven by a rise in HS2 87 up £81.6 million (6.9 per cent). The increase for France was driven by a rise in HS2 88 (Aircraft, spacecraft, and parts thereof), up by £143.9 million, a seven fold increase offset to an extent by a decrease of £74.1 million in HS2 27. The increase for Sweden was driven by a rise in HS2 27 of £120.5 million (71.1 per cent).

Figure 5 shows the two largest imported commodities by value from each of the UK's top five import partner EU Member States. Four of the top five Member States have HS2 87 (Vehicles other than railway or tramway rolling-stock, and parts and accessories thereof) in their top two largest commodities exported to the UK. The trade in HS2 87 from these Member States accounts for 72.8 per cent of the UK's total EU import trade under this heading. It also makes up 29.4 per cent of the UK's imports from Germany.

Another three Member States have HS2 84 (Nuclear reactors, boilers, machinery and mechanical appliances; parts thereof). The trade in HS2 84 accounts for 54.3 per cent of the UK's EU total imports in these commodities.



Notes:

1. HM Revenue & Customs released these latest statistics on Overseas Trade with Member States of the European Union (EU) on 18 September 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 Member States of the EU for July 2012. At the same time revisions for all previously published EU data for 2012 are also being released in line with the [Overseas Trade Statistics Policy on Revisions](#).
3. The figures provided in this publication of the July 2012 EU Overseas Trade Statistics will include
  - a. Estimates for businesses who have yet to submit detailed data on the trade they had with other EU Member States in July.
  - 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 detail of this can be found [here](#).

Estimates are included in all high level totals including HS2 and country totals but not for aggregated totals below this level.

4. Detailed trade information is presented according to the [Harmonised System \(HS\)](#) nomenclature.
5. 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](#).
6. 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).
7. 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 Overseas Trade Statistics and information on the quality of the data published.
8. 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>
9. 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.

Statistical contact:

Andrew Watson 01702 367485

e-mail [uktradeinfo@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:uktradeinfo@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk)

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 this release 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: 16 October 2012 9:30am

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