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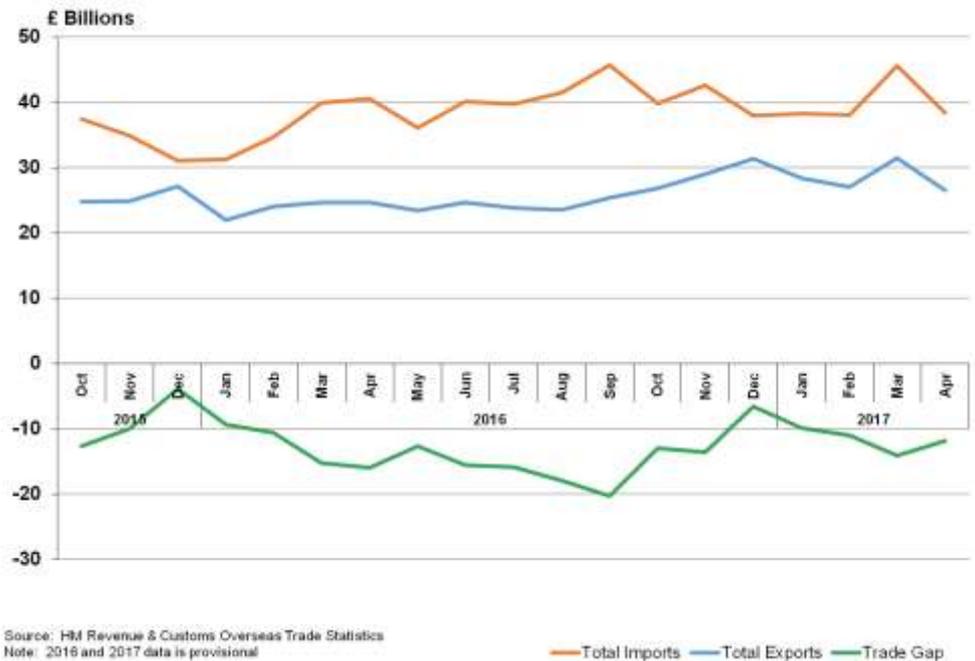


UK Overseas Trade Statistics April 2017

Summary

- Total trade exports for April 2017 were £26.5 billion. This was a decrease of £4.9 billion (16 per cent) compared with last month, and an increase of £1.9 billion (7.8 per cent) compared with April 2016.
- Total trade imports for April 2017 were £38.3 billion. This was a decrease of £7.2 billion (16 per cent) compared with last month, and a decrease of £2.2 billion (5.5 per cent) compared with April 2016.
- The UK was a net importer this month, with imports exceeding exports by £11.8 billion.

Figure 1: Total UK monthly trade



Trade Trends

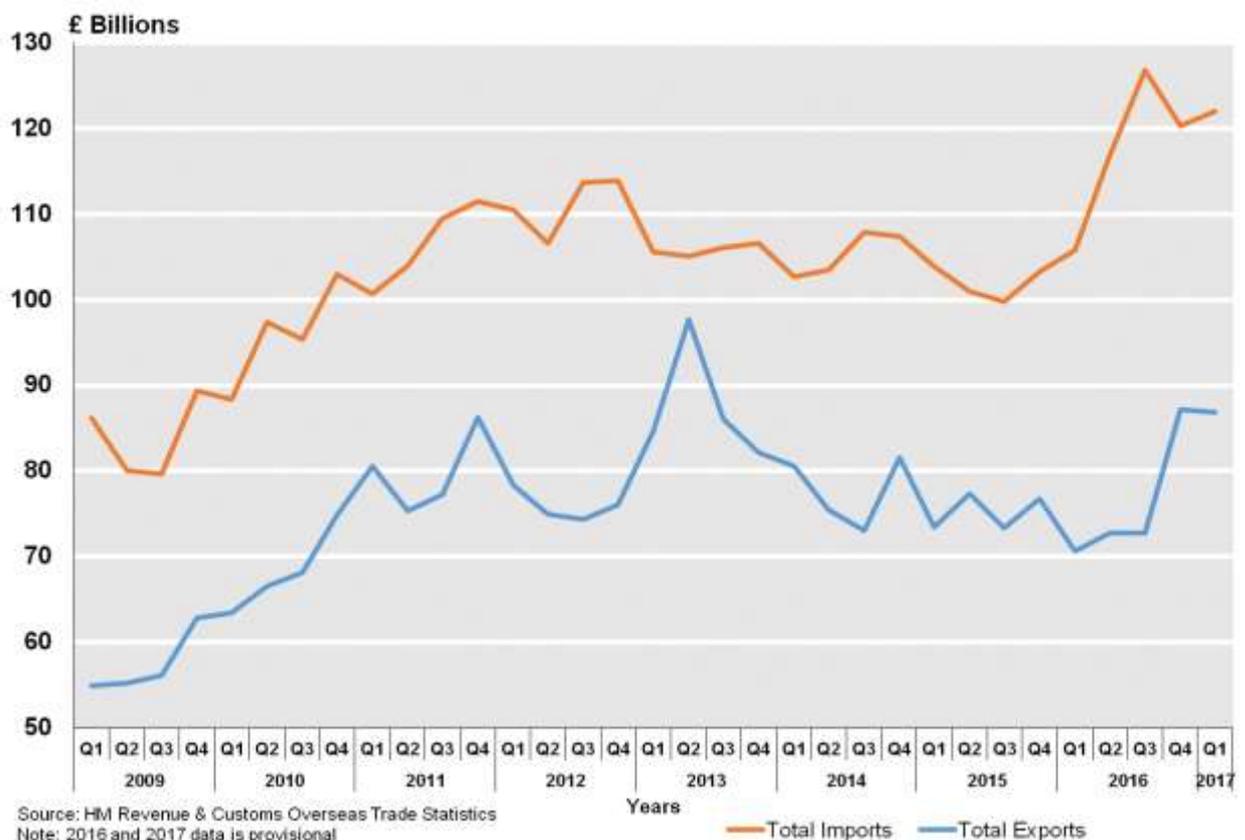
- Following the global economic crisis, UK trade dropped in 2009. Both imports and exports then steadily increased until 2012. From the start of 2013, imports remained relatively flat until a very sharp increase in Q3 of 2016, while exports peaked in Q2 of 2013, with a further peak in Q4 of 2016.
- The total **export** trade for Q1 of 2017 was £86.9 billion, which was an increase of 23 per cent compared with £70.7 billion for Q1 of 2016.
- The total **import** trade for Q1 of 2017 was £122 billion, which was an increase of 15 per cent compared with £106 billion for Q1 of 2016.
- There was a trade deficit of £35.1 billion for Q1 of 2017. This was a slight decrease of 0.1 per cent compared with Q1 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 23%
for Q1 2017 on
Q1 2016

Imports up 15%
for Q1 2017 on
Q1 2016

Trade deficit down
0.1% for Q1 2017
on Q1 2016

Figure 2: Quarterly UK trade, 2009 – 2017



Non-EU & EU Trade

- **Non-EU Exports** for April 2017 were £14.1 billion. This was a decrease of £2.0 billion (12 per cent) on last month, but an increase of £1.5 billion (12 per cent) compared with April 2016.
- **Non-EU Imports** for April 2017 were £19.0 billion. This was a decrease of £2.5 billion (11 per cent) compared with last month, and a decrease of £2.6 billion (12 per cent) compared with April 2016.
- In **Non-EU trade** the UK was a net importer this month, with imports exceeding exports by £4.8 billion.
- **EU Exports** for April 2017 were £12.4 billion. This was a decrease of £2.9 billion (19 per cent) compared with last month, but an increase of £0.4 billion (3.4 per cent) compared with April 2016.
- **EU Imports** for April 2017 were £19.4 billion. This was a decrease of £4.8 billion (20 per cent) compared with last month, but an increase of £0.4 billion (2.1 per cent) compared with April 2016.
- In **EU trade** the UK was a net importer this month, with imports exceeding exports by £6.9 billion.
- The proportion of total exports to the EU was 47 per cent in April 2017. Over the past 18 months, this has ranged from 38 per cent to 51 per cent. The proportion of total imports from the EU was 51 per cent in April 2017. Over the same period, this has ranged between 46 per cent and 56 per cent.

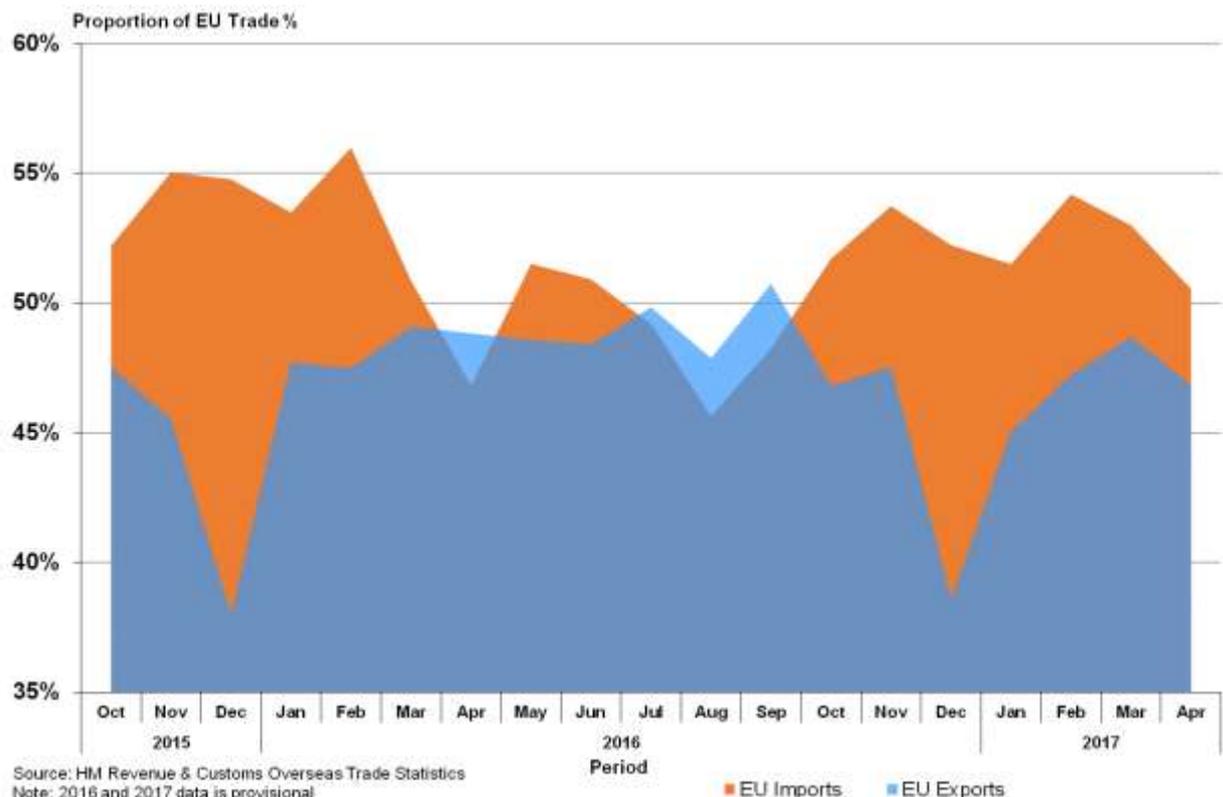
Non-EU exports
up 12% on
April 2016

Non-EU imports
down 12% on
April 2016

EU exports
down 19% on
last month

EU imports down
20% on
last month

Figure 3: Proportion of Total UK Trade with the EU, April 2017



Exports

Country Analysis

Table 1: UK exports to top 10 partner countries, April 2017

Partner Country	April 2017 Total (£ millions)	Change from March 2017 (%)	Change from April 2016 (%)	Rank March 2017	Rank April 2016
USA	4,046	-12.1	-5.2	1	1
Germany	2,791	-24.6	2.8	2	2
France	1,955	-17.4	9.4	3	3
China	1,677	12.5	65.3	6	6
Irish Republic	1,495	-4.8	11.6	5	5
Netherlands	1,490	-20.4	-4.0	4	4
Belgium	1,156	-7.9	15.8	7	7
Italy	786	-18.8	-3.9	10	8
Spain	734	-25.5	-5.7	9	9
UAE	611	-16.9	25.0	11	12
Others	9,805	-17.4	10.6	-	-
Total Non-EU	14,116	-12.4	12.1	-	-
Total EU	12,430	-18.7	3.4	-	-
Total Exports	26,546	-15.5	7.8	-	-

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade Statistics

Note: 2016 and 2017 data is provisional

- The order of the top ten export partner countries (ranked by value) has slightly changed compared with last month, with China rising to fourth, and Italy to eighth. China also rose when compared with April 2016, while Switzerland dropped to 11th.
- Nine of the top ten countries have experienced decreases in value compared with last month, while six countries showed an increase compared with April 2016.
- The USA was the largest export partner country, although it showed the third largest decrease compared with last month, down £558 million (12 per cent). It saw the largest decrease compared with April 2016, down £220 million (5.2 per cent).

Top export country, USA, down 12% on last month

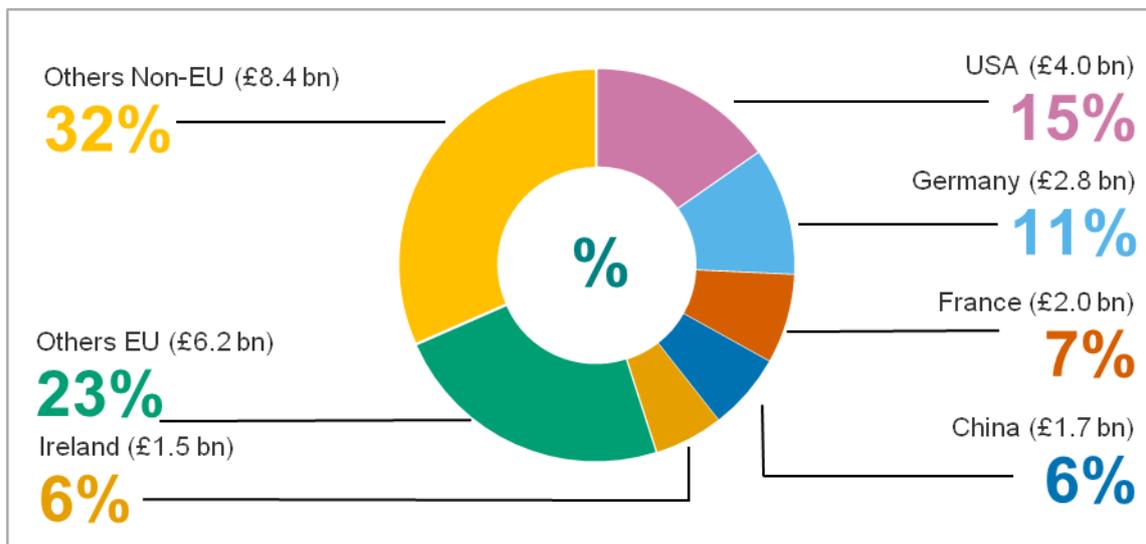
- Germany experienced the largest value decrease compared with last month, down £911 million (25 per cent). However, it increased compared with April 2016, up £76 million (2.8 per cent).
- Switzerland (in 11th place) experienced the second largest value decrease compared with last month, down £643 million (53 per cent). However, it increased compared with April 2016, up £34 million (6.2 per cent).
- China experienced the largest increase compared with last month, up £186 million (12 per cent). It also saw the largest increase compared to April 2016, up £662 million (65 per cent).
- France experienced decreases compared with last month, down £413 million (17 per cent). However, it had the second biggest increase compared to April 2016, up £168 million (9.4 per cent).
- The second largest value decrease compared with April 2016 was outside the top ten, as Saudi Arabia (18th) fell by £107 million (22 per cent).

Exports to Germany down 25% on last month

Exports to Switzerland down 53% on last month

Exports to China up 65% on April 2016

Figure 4: UK exports to top 5 countries, April 2017



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade Statistics
 Note: 2016 and 2017 data is provisional

- The USA accounted for 15 per cent of the total value of exports from the UK, compared with 17 per cent in April 2016.
- Germany had the second largest proportion of total exports, accounting for 11 per cent, unchanged compared with April 2016.
- The top five export partners accounted for 45 per cent of total exports this month, compared with 47 per cent in April 2016.

The USA accounted for 15% of total UK exports

Commodity Analysis

Table 2: UK exports by top 5 commodities, April 2017

Commodity Description	April 2017 Total (£ millions)	Change from March 2017 (%)	Change from April 2016 (%)	Rank March 2017	Rank April 2016
Mechanical appliances	4,385	-9.2	15.4	1	1
Motor vehicles	3,166	-22.0	-3.6	2	2
Mineral fuels	2,200	-8.1	42.2	4	5
Pharmaceutical products	2,041	-18.0	0.4	3	3
Electronic equipment	1,814	-8.9	14.0	5	4
Others	12,941	-17.3	4.6	-	-
Total Exports	26,546	-15.5	7.8	-	-

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade Statistics
Note: 2016 and 2017 data is provisional

- The ordering of the top five export commodities (ranked by value) has changed compared with last month and April 2016.
- The top commodity, Mechanical appliances, fell compared with last month, down £446 million (9.2 per cent), but had the second biggest rise compared with April 2016, up £585 million (15 per cent).
- Motor vehicles experienced the largest value decrease compared with last month, down £892 million (22 per cent). It had the second largest decrease compared with April 2016, down £118 million (3.6 per cent).
- Aircraft saw the second largest value decrease on last month, down £756 million (42 per cent). It experienced the largest value decrease compared with April 2016, down £393 million (27 per cent).
- Precious metals saw the third largest decrease compared with last month, down £660 million (35 per cent). However, it had the third highest increase compared with April 2016, up £347 million (40 per cent).
- Art and antiques (12th place) experienced the largest increase compared with last month, up £139 million (37 per cent).
- Mineral fuels experienced a decrease of £194 million (8.1 per cent) on last month, but showed the biggest increase compared with April 2016, up £653 million (42 per cent).
- The top five export commodities accounted for 50 per cent of total UK trade exports this month compared with 49 per cent in March 2016.

Exports of Mechanical appliances up 15% on April 2016

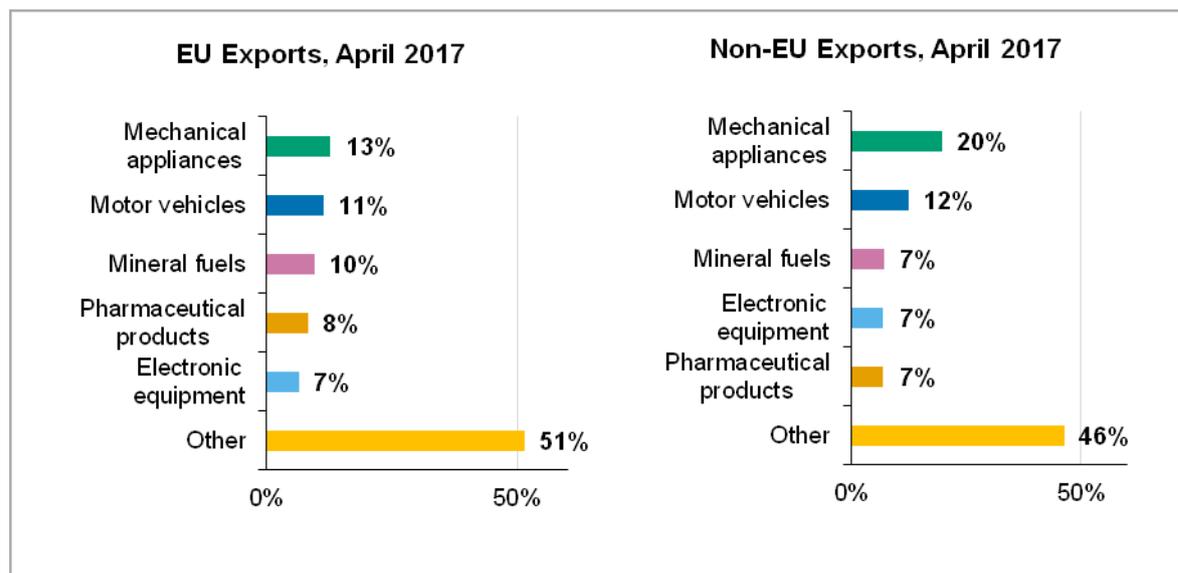
Exports of Motor vehicles down 22% on last month

Exports of Precious metals down 35% on last month

Exports of Mineral fuels up 42% on April 2016

Combined Commodity and Country Analysis

Figure 5: UK exports to EU & Non-EU by top 5 commodities, April 2017



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade Statistics
 Note: 2016 and 2017 data is provisional

- This month, the top five export commodities are the same for both EU and non-EU countries, but in a slightly different order.
- The decrease in exports of Motor vehicles compared with last month was led by the USA, Belgium and Germany, down £215 million (25 per cent); £122 million (39 per cent) and £111 million (27 per cent) respectively.
- The fall in exports of Aircraft compared with last month was led by decreases to Saudi Arabia, down £160 million (93 per cent), and France, down £130 million (31 per cent). The decrease on April 2016 was dominated by a fall to the USA of £297 million (67 per cent).
- The decrease in exports of Mechanical appliances compared with last month was led by the USA, down by £170 million (20 per cent). Conversely, a rise in exports of the commodity compared with April 2016 was largely due to France, up £266 million (nearly trebling in value).
- The fall in exports of Precious metals compared with last month was led by a decrease to Switzerland, down £688 million (81 per cent). In contrast, the increase on April 2016 was led by exports to Turkey, up £139 million, from less than £1 million.
- The increase in exports to China on both periods was largely due to Mineral fuels, up £184 million (45 per cent) on last month, and £505 million (almost sevenfold) on April 2016.

Exports of
 Motor vehicles to
 USA down 25%
 on last month

Exports of
 Mechanical
 appliances to
 USA down 20%
 on last month

Exports of
 Precious metals to
 Switzerland down
 81% on last month

Exports of
 Mineral fuels to
 China up 45% on
 last month

Imports

Country Analysis

Table 3: UK imports from top 10 countries, April 2017

Partner Country	April 2017 Total (£ millions)	Change from March 2017 (%)	Change from April 2016 (%)	Rank March 2017	Rank April 2016
Germany	5,158	-20.9	-1.3	1	1
USA	3,512	-16.0	6.8	2	2
China	3,067	-2.2	10.3	4	4
Netherlands	2,842	-21.4	3.8	3	5
France	2,080	-13.4	7.1	6	6
Belgium	1,849	-28.8	0.1	5	7
Irish Republic	1,470	37.6	49.2	13	12
Italy	1,353	-19.2	3.8	9	8
Norway	1,254	-32.9	33.5	7	14
Spain	1,139	-38.5	-10.3	8	9
Others	14,607	-12.2	-19.8	-	-
Total Non-EU	18,955	-11.5	-12.1	-	-
Total EU	19,376	-19.8	2.1	-	-
Total Imports	38,331	-15.9	-5.5	-	-

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade Statistics

Note: 2016 and 2017 data is provisional

- The ordering of the top ten import partners (ranked by value) has changed compared with last month. China has risen above the Netherlands; France has risen above Belgium; and the Irish Republic has risen from 13th to seventh in the rankings. There were several country ranking changes compared with April 2016, most prominently Switzerland falling from third to 18th.
- Nine of the top ten import partners decreased in value compared with last month, while two decreased when compared with April 2016.
- Germany remained the top import partner country, despite having the biggest decrease in value compared with last month, down £1,366 million (21 per cent). It also fell slightly compared with April 2016, down £68 million (1.3 per cent).

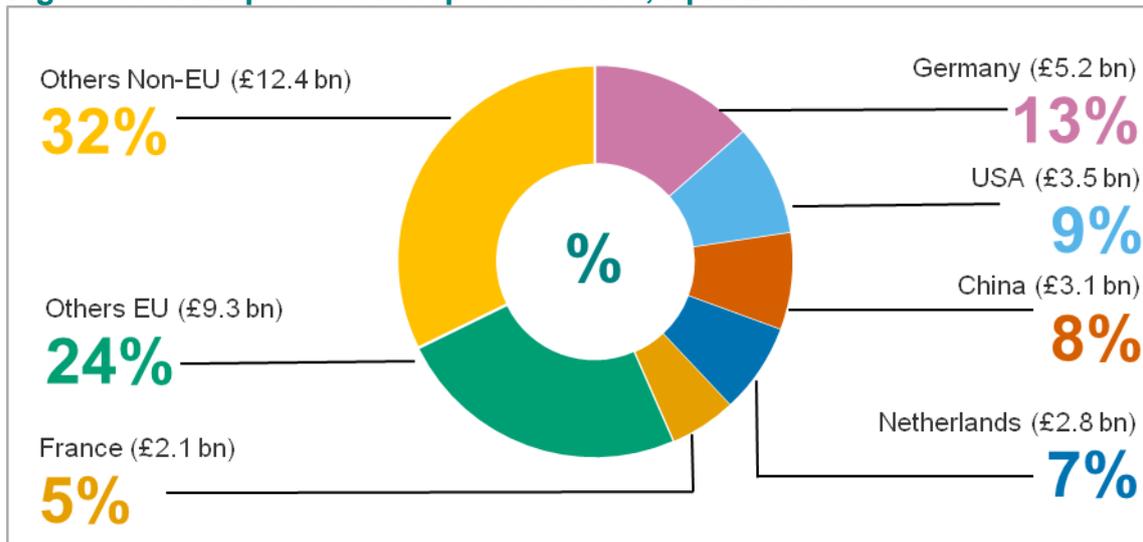
Top import country Germany down 21% on last month

- The Irish Republic saw the largest value increase compared with both periods, up £402 million (38 per cent) on last month, and up £485 million (49 per cent) compared with April 2016.
- Imports from the Netherlands saw the second largest decrease compared with last month, down £773 million (21 per cent). It increased compared with April 2016, up £105 million (3.8 per cent).
- Belgium experienced the third largest value decrease on last month, down £749 million (29 per cent).
- Norway also fell compared with last month, down £616 million (33 per cent). However, it showed the second largest increase on April 2016, up £315 million (34 per cent).
- Switzerland experienced the largest value decrease compared with April 2016, down £2,492 million (82 per cent). It dropped from third to 18th place.
- Australia saw the second largest decrease compared with April 2016, down £675 million (67 per cent). It dropped from 11th to 22nd.

Imports from Ireland up 38% on last month

Imports from Switzerland down 82% on April 2016

Figure 6: UK imports from top 5 countries, April 2017



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade Statistics
Note: 2016 and 2017 data is provisional

- Germany accounted for 13 per cent of the total value of imports to the UK, a slight increase on April 2016.
- The USA accounted for 9.2 per cent of total imports, also increasing compared with 8.1 per cent in April 2016.
- The top five partner countries accounted for 43 per cent of total UK import value this month, compared with 42 per cent for April 2016.

Germany accounted for 13% of total UK imports

Commodity Analysis

Table 4: UK imports by top 5 commodities, April 2017

Commodity Description	April 2017 Total (£ millions)	Change from March 2017 (%)	Change from April 2016 (%)	Rank March 2017	Rank April 2016
Mechanical appliances	4,484	-23.2	-9.2	2	2
Motor vehicles	4,364	-29.9	-6.9	1	3
Electronic equipment	3,576	-7.5	6.5	3	4
Precious metals	3,071	-2.8	-49.6	5	1
Mineral fuels	2,865	-21.2	32.9	4	5
Others	19,971	-12.6	3.4	-	-
Total Imports	38,331	-15.9	-5.5	-	-

Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade Statistics
 Note: 2016 and 2017 data is provisional

- The ordering of the top five commodity groups has changed slightly compared with last month. Mechanical appliances rose to first from second place. Precious metals dropped from first to fourth place when compared with April 2016.
- Mechanical appliances was the top import commodity by value, accounting for a 12 per cent share of the total imports. However, it showed the second largest decrease compared with both last month, down £1,353 million (23 per cent), and with April 2016, down £452 million (9.2 per cent).
- Motor vehicles showed the largest decrease in imports compared with last month, down £1,858 million (30 per cent). It showed the third highest decrease on April 2016, down £321 million (6.9 per cent).
- Mineral fuels decreased by £770 million (21 per cent), the third largest decrease compared with last month. In contrast, it showed the highest increase compared with April 2016, up £709 million (33 per cent).
- Precious metals imports decreased by £89 million (2.8 per cent) compared with last month. It also had the largest decrease compared with April 2016, down £3,019 million (50 per cent), falling from first to fourth place.
- Imports of Aircraft (in seventh place) experienced the largest increase compared with last month, up £94 million (7.6 per cent).
- The top five import commodities accounted for 48 per cent of total UK trade imports for this month, down from 52 per cent in April 2016.

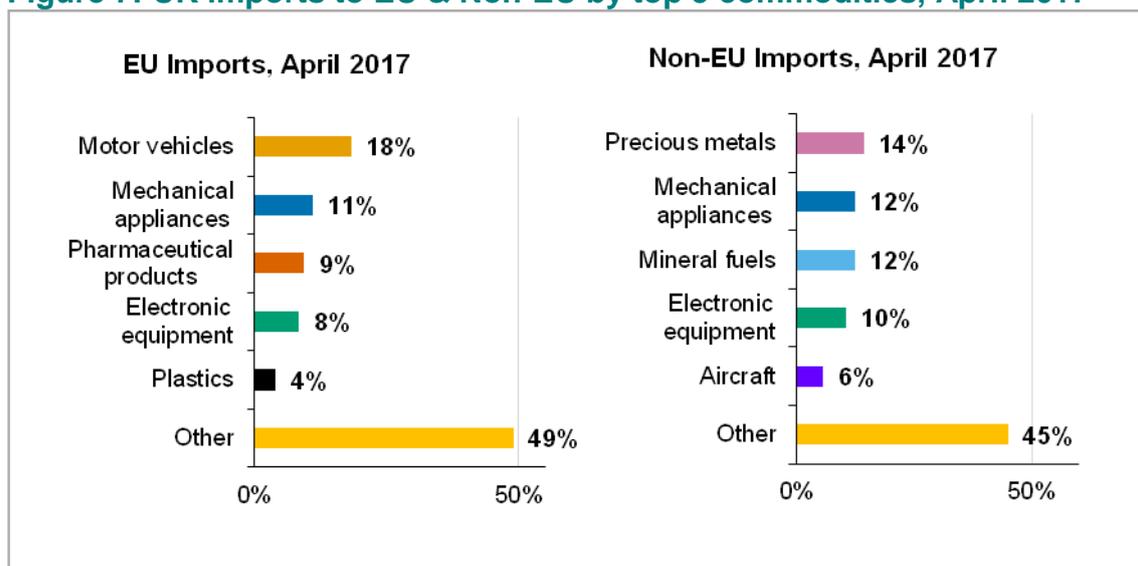
Mechanical appliances down 23% on last month

Imports of Mineral fuels up 33% on April 2016

Precious metals imports down 50% on April 2016

Combined Commodity and Country Analysis

Figure 7: UK imports to EU & Non-EU by top 5 commodities, April 2017



Source: HM Revenue & Customs Overseas Trade Statistics Note: 2016 and 2017 data is provisional

- Mechanical appliances and Electronic equipment were in the top five import commodities from both EU and non-EU countries.
- The fall in imports of Motor vehicles compared with last month was led by decreases from Germany, down £628 million (28 per cent); Spain, down £329 million (54 per cent); and Belgium, down £298 million (36 per cent). Spain also led the decrease on April 2016, falling by £137 million (33 per cent).
- The decrease in imports of Mechanical appliances compared with last month was led by USA and Germany, down £291 million (29 per cent) and £188 million (22 per cent) respectively. These countries, together with China, also led the decrease on April 2016. The USA fell £80 million (10 per cent); China £76 million (14 per cent), and Germany £70 million (9.4 per cent).
- The decrease in imports of Mineral fuels compared with last month was led by imports from Norway, down £474 million (33 per cent). Converseley, Norway also led the increase on April 2016, up £231 million (31 per cent).
- The decrease in Precious metals compared with April 2016 was dominated by imports from Switzerland, down £2,367 million (98 per cent).
- The increase in imports from the Irish Republic compared with both periods was led by Pharmaceuticals, up £359 million on last month, and £363 million on April 2016, a fourfold increase in both cases.

Imports of Motor vehicles from Germany down 28% on last month

Imports of Precious metals from Switzerland down 98% on April 2016

Imports of Pharmaceuticals from Ireland up fourfold on last month and April 16

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 9 June 2017 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 April 2017. At the same time revisions for all previously published non-EU and EU data for 2016 and 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 April 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 April 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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