

International trade in goods in 2017

A third of EU trade is with the United States and China

At Member State level, trade within the EU largely prevails

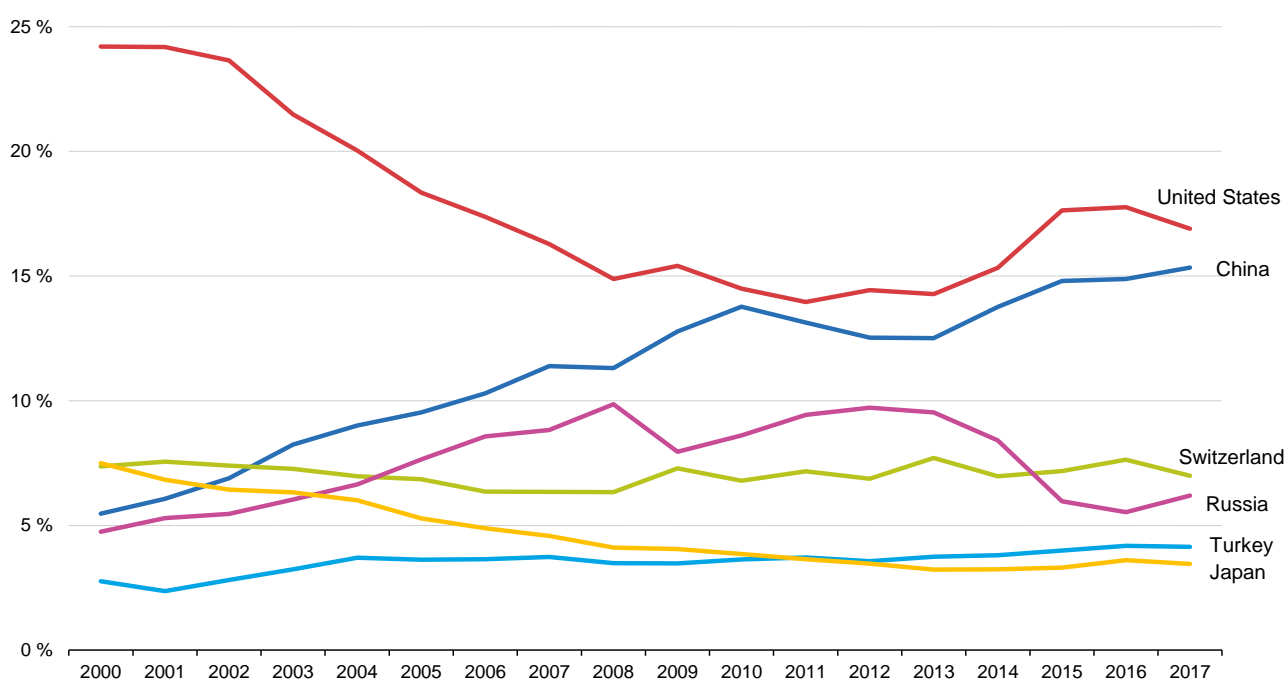
In 2017, the **United States** (€631 billion, or 16.9% of total EU trade in goods) and **China** (€573 bn, or 15.3%) continued to be the two main goods trading partners of the **European Union** (EU), well ahead of **Switzerland** (€261 bn, or 7.0%), **Russia** (€231 bn, or 6.2%), **Turkey** (€154 bn, or 4.1%) and **Japan** (€129 bn, or 3.5%).

However, the trends observed over time differ for these top trading partners of the EU. After recording a significant and almost continuous fall until 2011, the share of the **United States** in **EU** total trade in goods had increased to nearly 18% in 2015 and 2016, before decreasing again slightly in 2017. The share of **China** has almost tripled since 2000, rising from 5.5% to 15.3% in 2017. The share of **Russia** in total **EU** trade had been decreasing since 2012 from nearly 10% to around 6% in 2016, and slightly picked up in 2017. The share of trade with **Japan** has fallen by more than a half since 2000 – from 7.5% in 2000 to 3.5% in 2017. As for **Switzerland** and **Turkey**, their respective shares in trade remained relatively unchanged over the entire period.

In 2017, machinery and transport equipment, other manufactured goods and chemicals represented the main categories of product traded by the **EU**.

These data are issued by **Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union**. A selection of [infographics](#) on international trade in goods is also available on the Eurostat website.

EU top trading partners, 2000-2017
(Share in total extra-EU trade in goods, based on trade value)



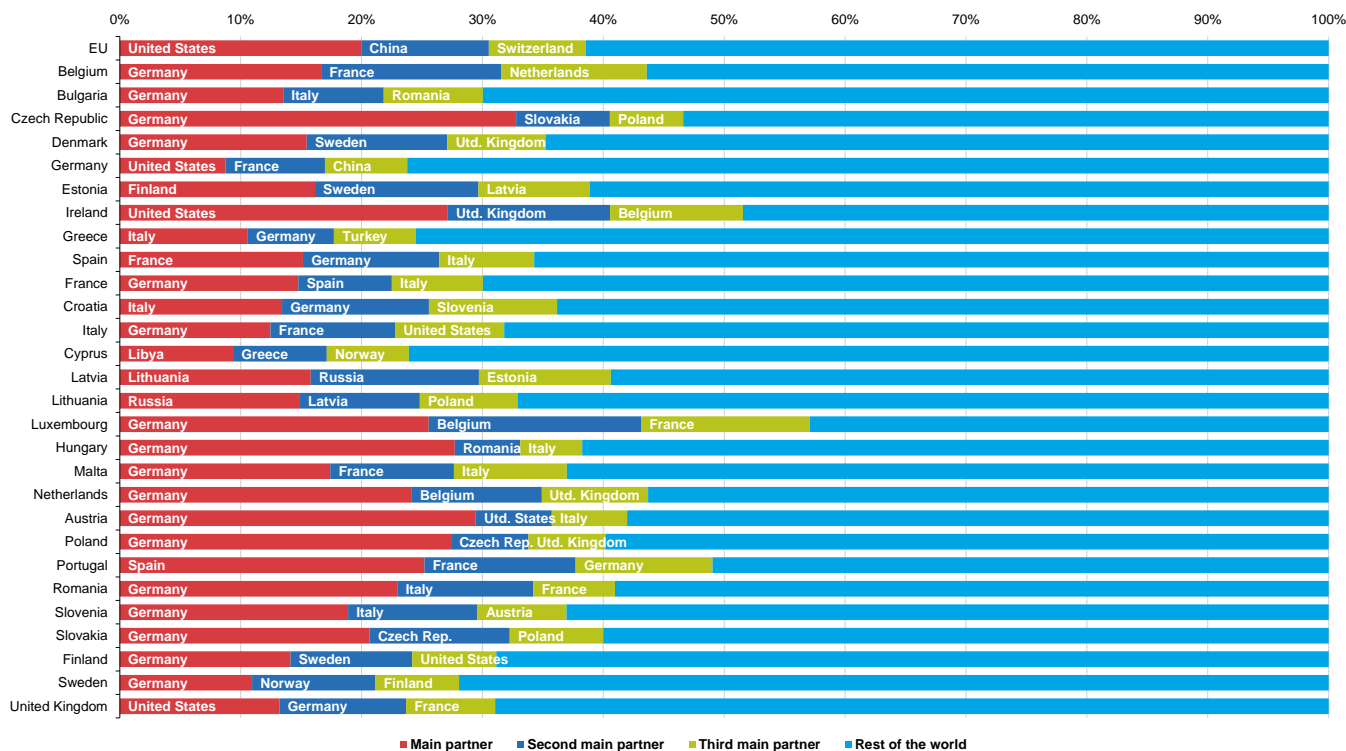
Germany, main export destination for a majority of Member States

In almost all EU Member States, the main partner for exports of goods in 2017 was another member of the European Union, except for **Germany, Ireland, and the United Kingdom** (the United States was the main destination of exports) as well as **Cyprus** (Libya) and **Lithuania** (Russia).

In some Member States, over a quarter of exports went to one single partner. This partner was **Germany** for the **Czech Republic** (33% of exports of goods), **Austria** (29%), **Hungary** (28%), **Poland** (27%) and **Luxembourg** (26%). 27% of exports of **Ireland** went to the **United States** and 25% of exports of **Portugal** went to Spain. Overall, **Germany** was the main destination of goods exports for 17 Member States and among the top three in 22 Member States.

For extra-EU trade, that is trade with non-EU countries, the 3 main destinations of EU exports in 2017 were the **United States** (20% of all extra-EU exports), **China** (11%) and **Switzerland** (8%).

Exports of goods of the EU Member States: top 3 partners, 2017
(based on trade value)



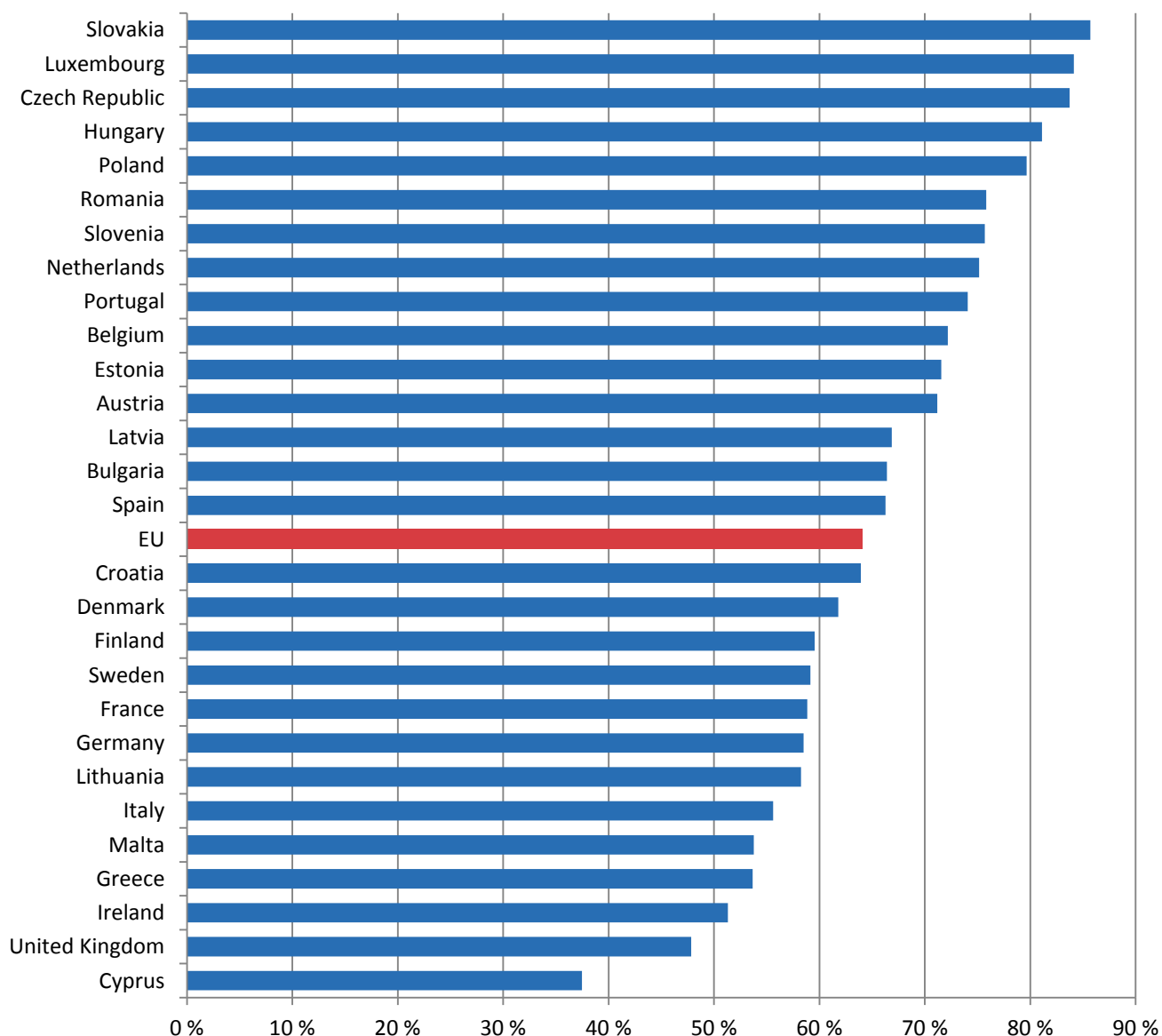
EU exports refer to extra-EU exports only, while exports of Member States refer to total exports (both intra- and extra-EU). The source dataset can be found [here](#).

Intra-EU exports prevail in all Member States apart from Cyprus and the United Kingdom

In 2017, the 28 EU Member States exported a total of €5 226 bn of goods, of which €3 347 bn (or 64%) were destined for another Member State of the EU (intra-EU trade).

With about three-quarters or more of goods exported to other EU Member States, **Slovakia** (86% intra-EU in total exports), **Luxembourg** and the **Czech Republic** (both 84%), **Hungary** (81%), **Poland** (80%), **Romania** and **Slovenia** (both 76%) and the **Netherlands** (75%) recorded in 2017 the highest shares of intra-EU exports. At the opposite end of the scale, **Cyprus** (37%) and the **United Kingdom** (48%) were the only Member States that exported more goods to non-EU countries than within the EU in 2017.

Share of intra-EU exports, 2017
(based on trade value)



The source dataset can be found [here](#).

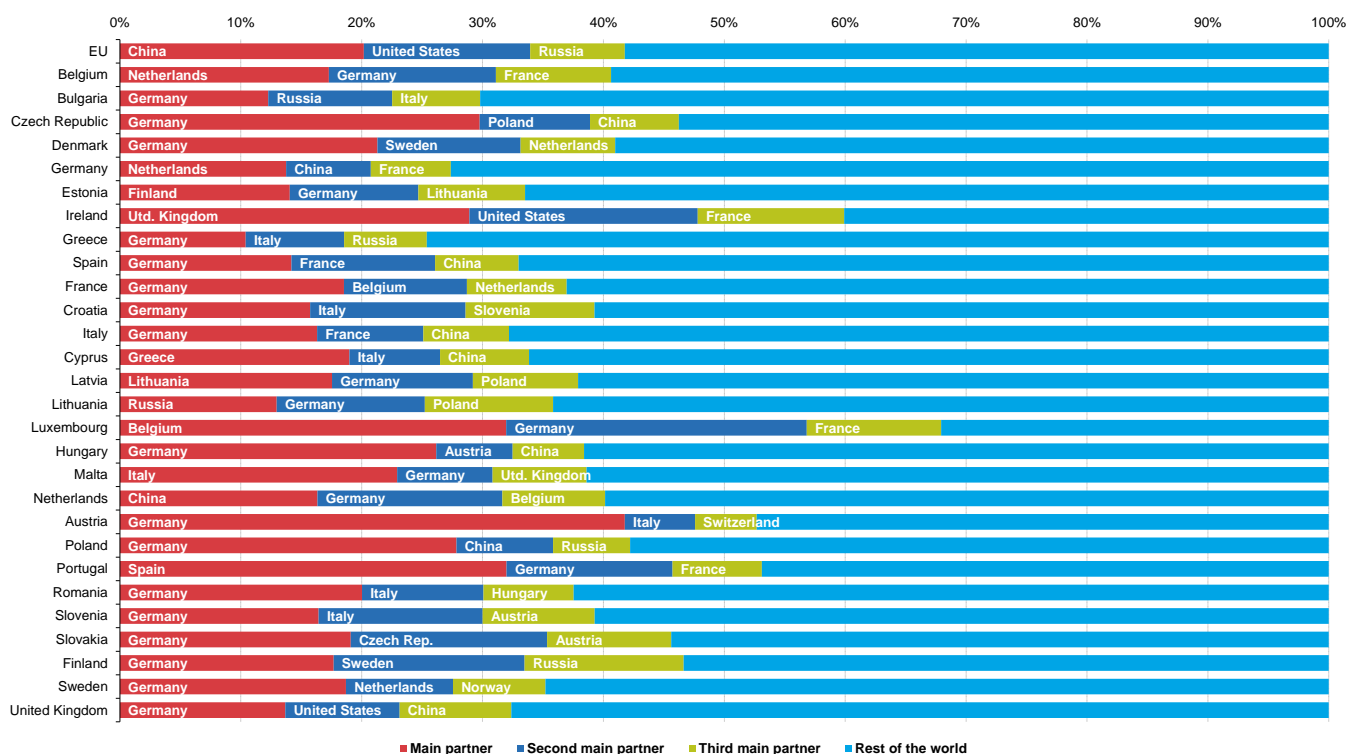
Germany, also main source of imports for more than half of EU Member States

As for exports, the main partner for imports of goods in 2017 was another member of the European Union in all Member States except **Lithuania**, for which Russia was the main country of origin of goods imported, and the **Netherlands** (China).

In seven Member States, more than 25% of imports of goods came from a single partner country in 2017: **Austria** (42% of imports of goods originated from Germany), **Luxembourg** (32% from Belgium), **Portugal** (32% from Spain), the **Czech Republic** (30% from Germany), **Ireland** (29% from the United Kingdom), **Poland** (28% from Germany) and **Hungary** (26% from Germany). Overall, **Germany** was among the top three countries of origin of goods imported in all EU Member States except **Ireland** and **Cyprus**.

For extra-EU trade, the main country of origin of goods imported into the EU in 2017 remained **China** (20% of all extra-EU imports), followed by the **United States** (14%) and **Russia** (8%).

Imports of goods into the EU Member States: top 3 partners, 2017
(based on trade value)



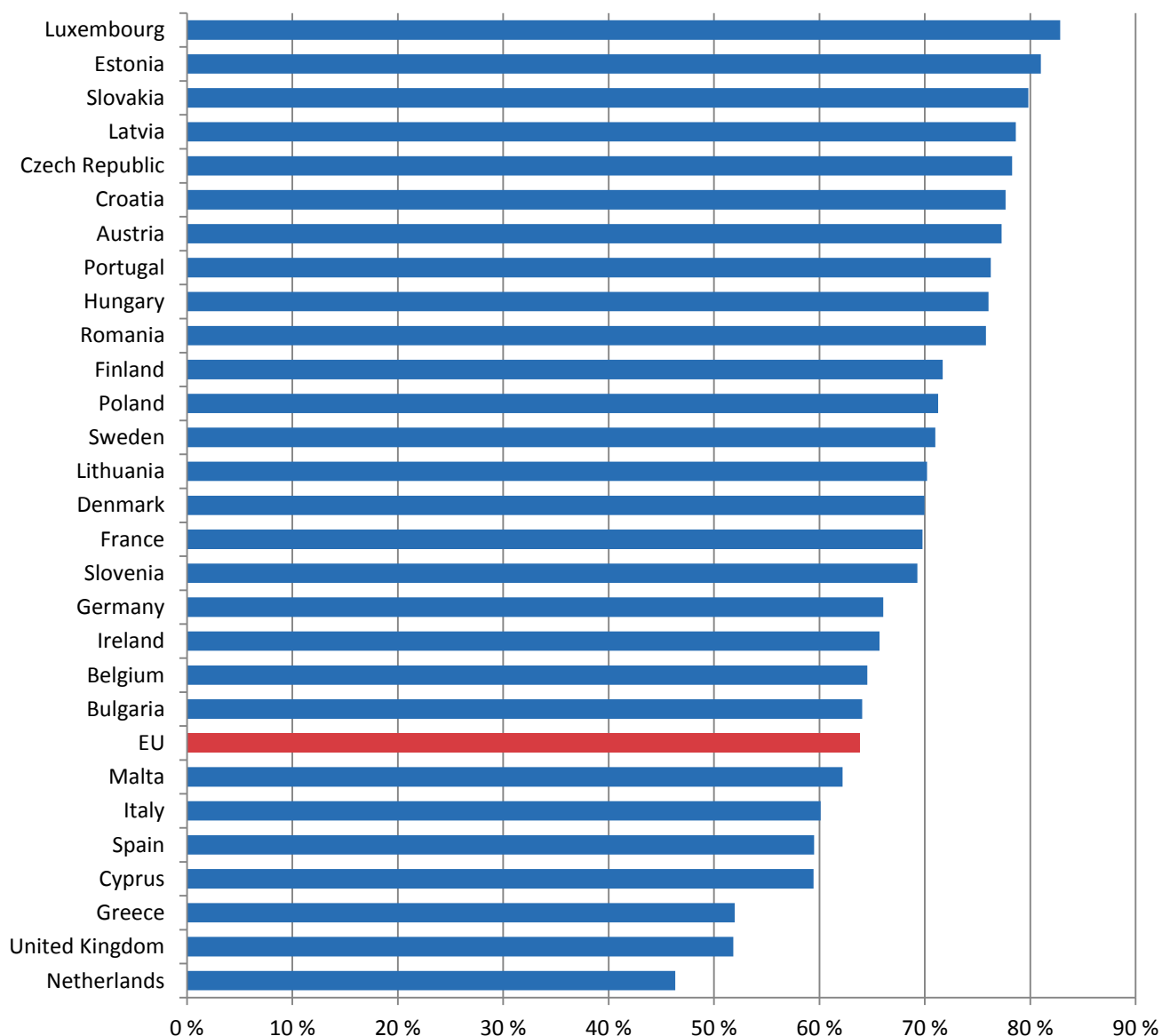
EU imports refer to extra-EU imports only, while imports of Member States refer to total imports (both intra- and extra-EU). The source dataset can be found [here](#).

Intra-EU imports prevail in almost all Member States

In 2017, the 28 EU Member States imported a total of €5 131 bn of goods, of which €3 276 bn (or 64%) came from another EU Member State (intra-EU trade).

Over three-quarters of total imports of goods originated from another EU Member State in **Luxembourg** (83%), **Estonia** (81%), **Slovakia** (80%), **Latvia** (79%), the **Czech Republic** and **Croatia** (both 78%), **Austria** (77%), **Portugal**, **Hungary** and **Romania** (all 76%). In contrast, the **Netherlands** (46%) was the only Member State where less than half of the imports came from within the EU. This is largely due to the so-called 'Rotterdam effect' (see country note).

Share of intra-EU imports, 2017
(based on trade value)



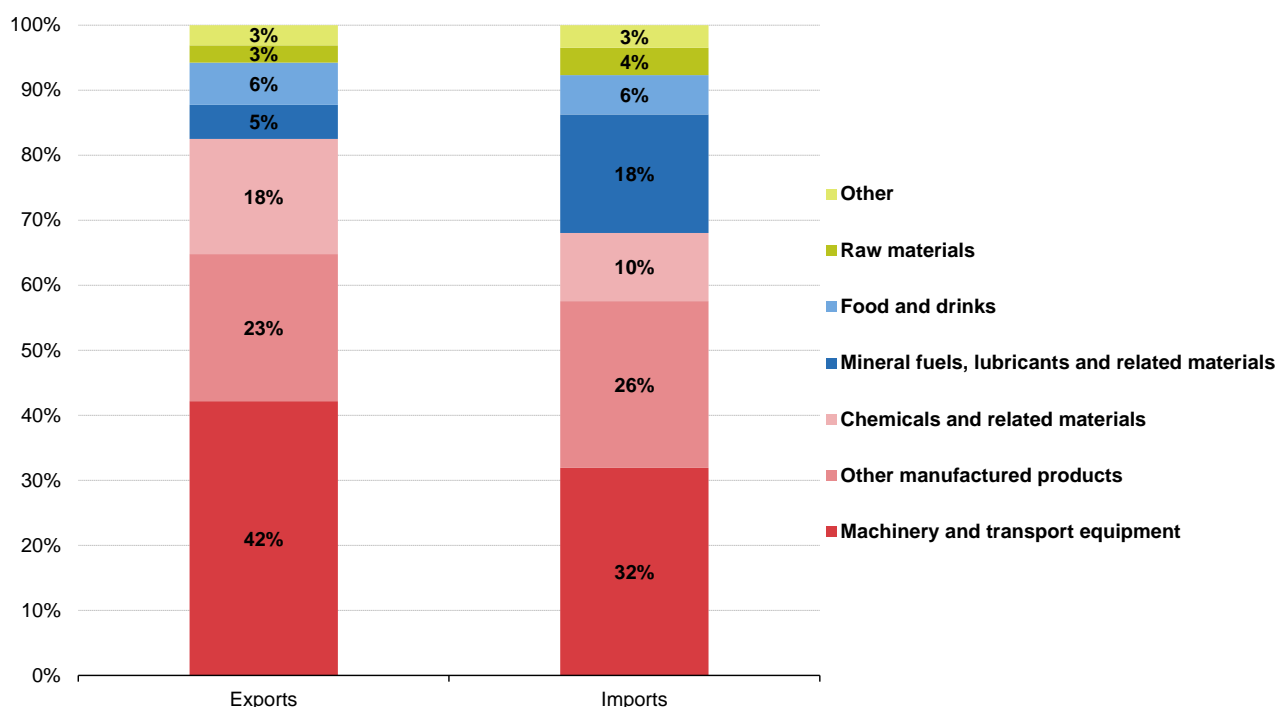
The source dataset can be found [here](#).

Machinery & transport equipment dominated both EU exports and imports

In 2017, machinery and transport equipment continued to play a major role in EU trade in goods with the rest of the world, accounting for 42% of total extra-EU exports and 32% of imports. Other manufactured goods (23% of extra-EU exports and 26% of extra-EU imports) as well as chemicals (18% of extra-EU exports and 10% of extra-EU imports) also played a significant role in EU trade in goods in 2017. Mineral fuels made up a minor share of extra-EU exports (5%), but accounted for 18% of all imports.

Extra EU-trade by product group, 2017

(share of each product group in total extra-EU exports and imports, based on trade value)



The source dataset can be found [here](#).

Geographical information

The **European Union** (EU) includes Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

Methods and definitions

This News Release is based on data available on 19 March 2018. These are provisional figures based on information provided by Member States. They are subject to frequent revision for up to two years after the year in question. Furthermore, national concepts may differ from the harmonised methodology used by Eurostat, leading to differences between figures in this release and those published nationally.

Products are classified according to the [Standard international trade classification \(SITC\)](#), Revision 4. Other manufactured goods includes articles made of leather, rubber and wood, paper, textiles, metals, building fixtures and fittings, furniture, clothes, shoes and accessories, scientific instruments, clocks, watches and cameras.

As data for all EU Member States are available according to a harmonised methodology, in theory the intra-EU balance should be 0. However, bilateral comparisons have revealed persistent discrepancies in the mutual Member States' intra-EU trade, called **asymmetries**. For example, this means that, for a given period and a specific product X, exports from France to Austria do not equal imports of Austria from France. There are different reasons for these asymmetries, including methodological issues (such as CIF/FOB valuation, deliveries to vessels and aircraft, system of threshold for providing statistical information) but also mismatch in data reporting.

Country note:

Dutch trade flows are over-estimated because of the so-called '**Rotterdam effect**' (or **quasi-transit trade**): that is goods bound for other EU countries arrive in Dutch ports and, according to EU rules, are recorded as extra-EU imports by the Netherlands (the country where goods are released for free circulation). This in turn increases the intra-EU flows from the Netherlands to those Member States to which the goods are re-exported. To a lesser extent, Belgian figures are similarly overestimated.

For more information

Eurostat [website section](#) dedicated to trade in goods statistics.

Eurostat [database](#) on international trade in goods.

Eurostat [Statistics Explained article](#) on international trade in goods statistics.

Eurostat [infographic](#) on EU international trade in goods in 2017.

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