

EU-27 trade in chemical products in 2007

The EU remained the major player in the trade in chemical products in 2007 with a large trade surplus.

In 2007, the EU was the main player in the trade in chemical products, essentially due to its significant exports. This resulted in a large positive trade balance (EUR 77 billion).

Its main trading partner was the US (29% of the exchanges) and the most traded product category was medicinal and pharmaceutical products, which made up more than one third of the total trade in chemicals.

Within the EU, Germany was the main player in the trade in chemical products for both exports and imports.

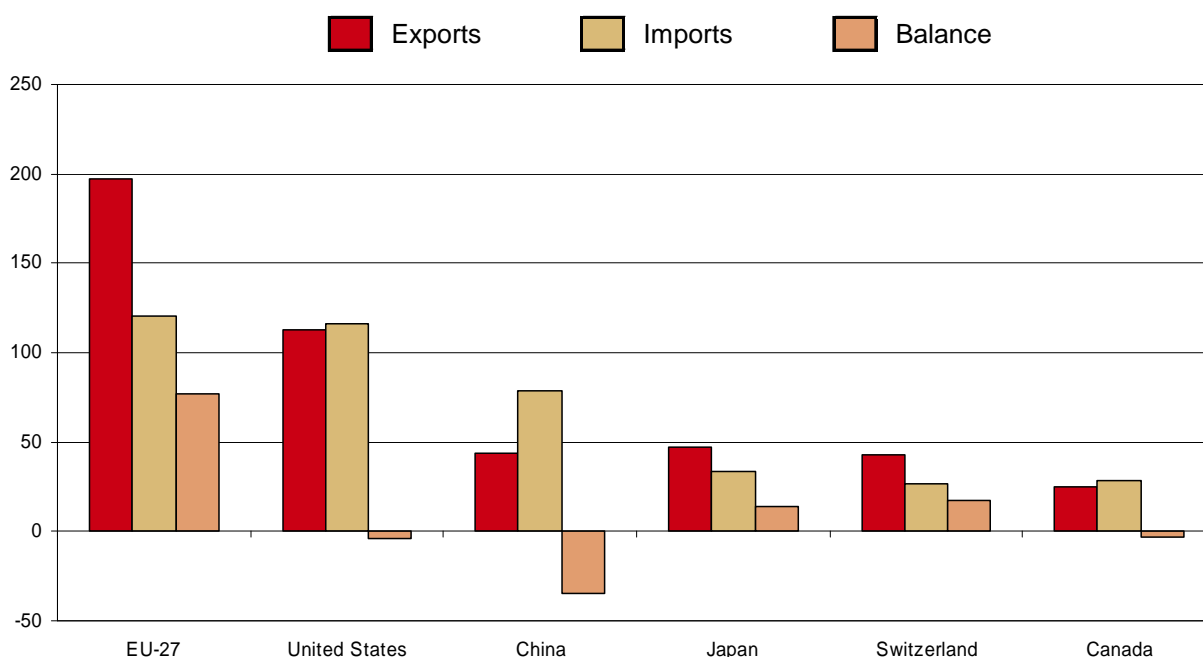
The EU: largest exporter worldwide by a large margin, largest importer by a narrow margin

Based on 2007 data, the EU was the main player in chemical products' trade (see Figure 1). This can mainly be attributed to the high value of its exports (EUR 198 billion), far ahead of the other major players in the world.

The EU was also the main importer of chemical products, but this time only by a small margin; at EUR 120 billion, the EU's imports were only slightly higher than the US (EUR 116 billion).

The high differential resulted in a large positive trade balance (EUR 77 billion). The two other major players, the US and China, both registered a trade deficit; that for the US being comparatively small (EUR 3 billion against EUR 34 billion for China).

Figure 1: EU and other major players in the international trade of chemicals in 2007 (EUR billion)



Source: Eurostat (COMEXT and Comtrade)

Table 1: EU-27 trade in chemicals: Top 20 trading partners (EUR million)

	EXPORTS								IMPORTS								TRADE BALANCE
	2000	2005	2006	2007	Average annual increase 2000-2007	Share in total EU chemicals exports 2007		Share in total EU exports 2007	2000	2005	2006	2007	Average annual increase 2000-2007	Share in total EU chemicals imports 2007		Share in total EU imports 2007	
						% cumul.	% cumul.							% cumul.	% cumul.		
EXTRA EU-27	118 911	164 852	184 569	197 552	8%	100%	100%	16%	70 496	96 443	109 026	120 204	8%	100%	100%	8%	77 348
USA	35 279	48 597	54 951	55 724	7%	28%	28%	21%	26 609	31 231	34 639	35 679	4%	30%	30%	20%	20 045
Switzerland	11 058	16 406	18 240	19 918	9%	10%	38%	21%	14 195	21 332	24 199	25 146	9%	21%	51%	33%	-5 228
Russia	3 280	8 222	10 930	12 372	21%	6%	45%	14%	2 519	3 702	4 026	4 489	9%	4%	54%	3%	7 883
Japan	8 251	8 960	9 165	8 777	1%	4%	49%	20%	5 504	6 034	6 156	6 516	2%	5%	60%	8%	2 261
China	2 421	5 180	6 098	7 343	17%	4%	53%	10%	2 805	5 178	6 269	7 522	15%	6%	66%	3%	-180
Turkey	4 922	7 861	8 704	9 136	9%	5%	57%	17%	505	907	1 190	1 353	15%	1%	67%	3%	7 783
Singapore	1 680	2 474	2 606	2 522	6%	1%	59%	12%	1 558	5 857	6 140	7 462	25%	6%	73%	41%	-4 940
Canada	2 669	4 307	4 967	5 165	10%	3%	61%	20%	775	1 610	2 242	3 397	24%	3%	76%	15%	1 768
Norway	2 561	3 322	3 495	3 770	6%	2%	63%	9%	2 305	2 583	3 030	3 282	5%	3%	79%	4%	488
Brazil	2 904	3 226	3 666	4 309	6%	2%	65%	20%	661	1 049	1 324	1 739	15%	1%	80%	5%	2 570
South Korea	2 475	3 250	3 796	4 225	8%	2%	67%	17%	1 160	1 158	1 282	1 562	4%	1%	82%	4%	2 663
India	1 276	1 923	2 196	2 482	10%	1%	69%	8%	1 141	1 990	2 377	2 972	15%	2%	84%	11%	-490
Australia	2 749	4 169	4 100	4 325	7%	2%	71%	19%	575	656	671	713	3%	1%	85%	6%	3 612
Saudi Arabia	1 769	2 092	2 300	2 433	5%	1%	72%	12%	858	2 008	2 512	2 576	17%	2%	87%	14%	-143
Israel	1 796	2 034	2 213	2 180	3%	1%	73%	15%	1 617	1 915	1 870	2 269	5%	2%	89%	20%	-89
Ukraine	779	2 042	2 630	3 216	22%	2%	75%	14%	457	654	844	886	10%	1%	89%	7%	2 330
Mexico	1 805	2 785	3 128	3 379	9%	2%	77%	16%	605	645	649	709	2%	1%	90%	6%	2 670
South Africa	1 737	2 258	2 464	2 678	6%	1%	78%	13%	416	556	554	618	6%	1%	91%	3%	2 060
Taiwan	2 102	2 102	2 150	2 312	1%	1%	79%	17%	463	570	714	872	9%	1%	91%	3%	1 440
Hong Kong	2 147	2 437	2 693	2 736	4%	1%	80%	13%	56	89	119	106	10%	0%	91%	1%	2 630

Source: Eurostat (COMEXT)

The US: the main partner of the EU in both imports and exports

The US was by far the most important trading partner of the EU for chemicals, both in terms of exports and imports. At EUR 55.7 billion, exports to the US accounted for 28% of the total EU exports of chemical products (see Table 1). This amount corresponded to nearly half of the total imports of chemical products of the US (EUR 116 billion, see Figure 1). Switzerland and Russia, the second and third main importers of EU chemicals respectively,

accounted for far less impressive shares (10% and 6% of the total EU exports of chemical products, respectively).

But the US was also the main country of origin for the EU imports of chemical products, at EUR 35.7 billion, corresponding to 30% of total EU imports. Switzerland followed with a share of 21%, China and Singapore ranked third and fourth respectively, both with 6%.

Table 2: Extra-EU trade in chemicals, by product (EUR million)

	EXPORTS							IMPORTS							TRADE BALANCE			
	2000	2005	2006	2007	Average annual increase 2000-2007	Share in total EU chemicals exports 2007		2000	2005	2006	2007	Average annual increase 2000-2007	Share in total EU chemicals imports 2007		2000	2005	2006	2007
5 Total Chemicals	118 911	164 852	184 569	197 552	8%	100%		70 496	96 443	109 026	120 204	8%	100%		48 416	68 409	75 542	77 348
54 Medicinal & pharmaceutical prod.	33 675	58 620	67 029	73 336	12%	37%		18 415	30 891	35 177	35 885	10%	30%		15 259	27 729	31 852	37 451
51 Organic chemicals	31 608	35 139	38 206	37 889	3%	19%		19 535	27 291	30 112	34 440	8%	29%		12 073	7 848	8 095	3 449
57 Plastic in primary forms	10 685	16 345	18 254	19 302	9%	10%		6 562	8 563	9 860	11 121	8%	9%		4 124	7 782	8 394	8 181
59 Chemical materials and products	13 593	16 529	18 068	19 097	5%	10%		7 920	8 436	9 278	10 136	4%	8%		5 674	8 093	8 790	8 960
55 Essential oils, resins and perfume	10 432	15 730	16 982	18 170	8%	9%		3 611	4 463	4 972	5 342	6%	4%		6 821	11 267	12 010	12 829
52 Inorganic chemicals	5 294	5 455	6 973	8 790	8%	4%		5 692	7 622	9 462	11 753	11%	10%		-398	-2 167	-2 489	-2 964
58 Plastic in non-primary forms	5 657	7 626	8 854	9 819	8%	5%		3 652	4 002	4 622	5 205	5%	4%		2 005	3 624	4 232	4 614
53 Dyeing, tanning & colouring mat.	7 051	7 775	8 582	9 089	4%	5%		3 407	3 266	3 516	3 716	1%	3%		3 644	4 509	5 065	5 373
56 Fertilizers (other than group 272)	916	1 633	1 621	2 061	12%	1%		1 702	1 909	2 028	2 607	6%	2%		-786	-276	-407	-545

Source: Eurostat (COMEXT)

Medicinal and pharmaceutical products accounted for one third of the total trade in chemical products and half of its surplus

Focusing on the trade of individual chemical product categories, 'medicinal and pharmaceutical products' were by far the most important in EU exports with a value of EUR 73.3 billion in 2007, corresponding to 37% of the total exports of chemicals. 'Organic chemicals' came second with a

share of 19%. Starting from a low level in absolute terms and accounting for only 1% of all exports, the export of 'Fertilizers' has nevertheless developed particularly fast (+12% on average between 2000 and 2007), at the same rate as the far more important 'Medicinal and pharmaceutical products'.

The most exported product categories were also the most imported ones: 'Medicinal and pharmaceutical products' (EUR 35.9 billion, 30% of total imports) and 'Organic chemicals' (EUR 34.4 billion, 29% of total imports) but the trade balance shows a substantial surplus in both cases.

Conversely, 'Inorganic chemicals' shows a growing trade deficit. The same applies for 'Fertilizers', where the large growth in exports has not fully compensated for the slower increase in imports.

Four Member States responsible for around 60% of total EU trade

Table 3 gives the detailed Extra-EU exports and imports of chemical products for the individual EU Member States along with the trade balances. In 2007, Germany was the main exporter of chemical products (EUR 45.8 billion). This amount represented 23% of the EU total. Three Member States followed, all with fairly similar shares: Belgium (13%), France (12%) and the UK (12%). The same countries also played the major roles in terms of imports. Germany remained the main actor with 18% of the total EU imports. As for exports, the same trio followed (again with similar

shares) but in a different order: the UK (14%), France (12%) and Belgium (12%). The Netherlands displayed a share of 13%, but this figure might be overestimated, due to the port of Rotterdam acting as a main EU entry point.

Looking at the trade balance, Germany displayed the highest surplus with EUR 24.4 billion. Ireland ranked second with a surplus of EUR 15 billion, explained by its low imports compared to its significant exports. Nine Member States registered trade deficits, but none of them was substantial.

Table 3: Extra-EU trade in chemicals, by Member State (EUR million)

	EXPORTS						IMPORTS						TRADE BALANCE			
	2000	2005	2006	2007	Average annual increase 2000-2007	Share in total EU chemicals exports 2007	2000	2005	2006	2007	Average annual increase 2000-2007	Share in total EU chemicals imports 2007	2000	2005	2006	2007
EU-27	118 911	164 852	184 569	197 552	8%	100%	70 496	96 443	109 026	120 204	8%	100%	48 416	68 409	75 542	77 348
Belgium	10 204	21 866	23 935	26 131	14%	13%	7 482	11 553	12 670	14 377	10%	12%	2 723	10 312	11 265	11 754
Bulgaria	328	460	426	610	9%	0%	146	314	364	358	14%	0%	182	146	62	252
Czech Rep.	405	837	878	1 017	14%	1%	558	653	691	772	5%	1%	-153	184	187	245
Denmark	2 341	3 838	3 522	3 772	7%	2%	726	981	1 091	1 231	8%	1%	1 615	2 857	2 431	2 541
Germany	29 970	36 132	42 715	45 771	6%	23%	13 159	15 942	19 330	21 404	7%	18%	16 811	20 190	23 384	24 367
Estonia	31	106	157	167	27%	0%	80	91	118	95	2%	0%	-49	15	40	72
Ireland	12 147	14 875	15 675	17 172	5%	9%	1 938	2 289	2 406	2 203	2%	2%	10 209	12 587	13 269	14 969
Greece	374	566	615	615	7%	0%	662	1 019	1 120	1 380	11%	1%	-289	-452	-505	-765
Spain	3 829	6 882	7 410	7 795	11%	4%	3 578	5 782	6 329	7 082	10%	6%	250	1 100	1 081	712
France	16 622	21 493	23 502	24 603	6%	12%	9 566	12 859	13 155	14 534	6%	12%	7 056	8 634	10 347	10 069
Italy	9 330	11 935	12 445	12 858	5%	7%	7 335	9 411	10 217	11 255	6%	9%	1 995	2 523	2 228	1 603
Cyprus	42	69	79	87	11%	0%	81	89	92	108	4%	0%	-39	-20	-13	-21
Latvia	53	108	156	178	19%	0%	107	133	176	222	11%	0%	-54	-25	-19	-44
Lithuania	60	278	324	438	33%	0%	161	270	282	323	10%	0%	-101	9	42	115
Luxembourg	75	64	66	63	-2%	0%	82	157	201	222	15%	0%	-7	-92	-134	-158
Hungary	667	1 225	1 630	1 640	14%	1%	595	674	767	880	6%	1%	72	551	863	760
Malta	15	39	37	62	22%	0%	43	52	68	101	13%	0%	-28	-14	-32	-38
Netherlands	7 188	11 489	12 845	15 207	11%	8%	8 068	11 598	14 032	15 823	10%	13%	-880	-109	-1 187	-616
Austria	2 229	3 303	3 850	4 234	10%	2%	1 288	2 103	2 474	2 488	10%	2%	940	1 200	1 376	1 747
Poland	643	1 713	1 998	2 405	21%	1%	1 233	1 363	1 657	2 019	7%	2%	-590	349	341	386
Portugal	336	391	401	490	6%	0%	452	580	667	750	7%	1%	-116	-188	-267	-260
Romania	347	775	824	779	12%	0%	296	751	967	981	19%	1%	52	24	-143	-202
Slovenia	492	988	1 233	1 408	16%	1%	286	340	369	469	7%	0%	206	648	863	939
Slovakia	103	231	272	273	15%	0%	235	256	334	399	8%	0%	-132	-25	-62	-125
Finland	1 106	1 242	1 533	1 470	4%	1%	757	889	1 022	1 073	5%	1%	349	353	511	397
Sweden	3 412	5 076	5 883	5 248	6%	3%	1 780	2 021	2 275	2 487	5%	2%	1 632	3 055	3 608	2 761
United Kingd.	16 562	18 871	22 158	23 056	5%	12%	9 801	14 273	16 153	17 167	8%	14%	6 761	4 598	6 005	5 889

Source: Eurostat (COMEXT)

► METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

Statistical source (data extracted on: 20/08/2008)

► EU-data: Eurostat (Comext)

► Non-EU data : United Nations (Comtrade)

The EU-27 includes: Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

Definition of the chemical sector: Products of the chemical sector are defined according to the 'Fourth revision of the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC)'. They include 9 divisions (51-59), corresponding to those listed in the first column of Table 2.

Concepts and definitions

EU data are compiled according to Community guidelines and may therefore differ from the national data published by the Member States. For further information, please refer to the following documents:

- [Statistics on the trading of goods – User guide](#)
- [Metadata available for the theme "External trade"](#)

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Data: [Eurostat Website: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat)

Select your theme on the left side of the homepage and then 'Data' from the menu.

Data: [Eurostat Web site/External trade](#)

External Trade



External trade aggregated data



External trade long-term indicators



Extra-EU trade of chemicals and related products (SITC 5) by main partner countries

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