

## SHARE OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN GDP

International trade is a principal channel of economic integration. International trade tends to be more important for countries that are small in terms of geographic size or population and surrounded by neighbouring countries with open trade regimes than for countries that are large, relatively self-sufficient, or geographically isolated and penalised by high transport costs. Other factors that help explain differences in the importance of international trade across countries are history, culture, trade policy, the structure of the economy (especially the weight of non-tradable services in GDP), re-exports and the presence of multinational firms (which leads to much intra-firm trade).

### Definition

The importance of international trade in different countries is measured here by the share of trade in goods and services in GDP. The rates shown correspond to the average of imports and exports of both goods and services at current prices as a percentage of GDP. Goods consist of merchandise imports and exports. Services cover transport, travel, communications, construction, IT, financial, other business, personal and government services, as well as royalties and license fees.

The data are taken from OECD national accounts statistics compiled according to the 1993 *System of National Accounts*.

### Comparability

The ratios shown in this table are compiled using common standards and definitions.

The trade-to-GDP ratio is often called the “trade openness ratio”. However, the term openness may be somewhat misleading as a low ratio for a country does not necessarily imply high tariff or non-tariff obstacles to foreign trade, but may be due to a range of other factors mentioned above.

The trade-to-GDP ratios shown here differ from those published by WTO, IMF and OECD trade indicators, which refer to the sum of imports and exports (rather than the average).

Data for Australia and New Zealand refer to fiscal years.

### Overview

In 2008, the trade-to-GDP ratio for OECD countries was 29%, while the rate for the EU27 was 41%. For the reasons noted above, there were large differences in these ratios across countries. The ratios exceeded 50% for small countries – Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Hungary, Ireland, Korea, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, the Slovak Republic, Sweden, and Switzerland – but were under 20% for the two largest OECD countries – Japan and the United States.

Between 1998 and 2008, trade-to-GDP ratios for the OECD as a whole increased by 8 percentage points. Substantial increases in trade-to-GDP ratios were recorded for Luxembourg, Hungary, the Czech Republic, and the Slovak Republic. Both Canada and Ireland saw falls in their trade-to-GDP ratios over this period, with the decline being especially large for Canada (-6%).

### Sources

- OECD (2010), *National Accounts of OECD Countries*, OECD, Paris.

### Further information

#### Statistical publications

- OECD (2009), *International Trade by Commodity Statistics*, OECD, Paris.
- OECD (2010), *Main Economic Indicators*, OECD, Paris.
- OECD (2009), *Monthly Statistics of International Trade*, OECD, Paris.
- OECD (2008), *Statistics on International Trade in Services*, OECD, Paris.
- OECD (2010), *National Accounts at a Glance 2009*, OECD, Paris.

#### Methodological publications

- Lindner, A., et al. (2001), “Trade in Goods and Services: Statistical Trends and Measurement Challenges”, OECD Statistics Brief, No 1, October, OECD, Paris, [www.oecd.org/std/statisticsbrief](http://www.oecd.org/std/statisticsbrief).
- UN, EC, IMF, OECD, UNCTAD and the WTO (2002), *Manual on Statistics of International Trade in Services*, United Nations, New York.

#### Web sites

- OECD International Trade Statistics, [www.oecd.org/std/its](http://www.oecd.org/std/its).



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## International trade in goods and services

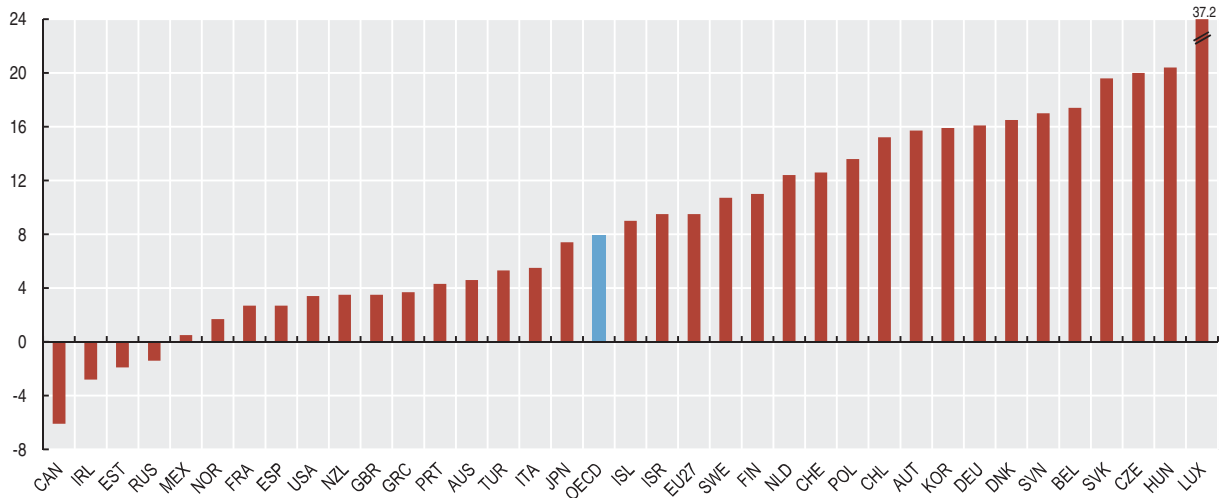
As a percentage of GDP

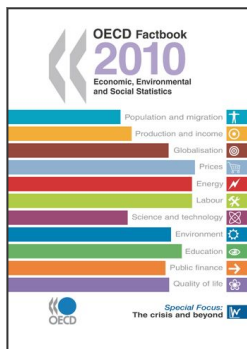
|                    | 1995 | 1996  | 1997  | 1998  | 1999  | 2000  | 2001  | 2002  | 2003  | 2004  | 2005  | 2006  | 2007  | 2008  |
|--------------------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Australia          | 19.4 | 19.3  | 20.3  | 19.9  | 20.9  | 22.5  | 21.1  | 20.4  | 18.8  | 19.9  | 21.0  | 21.2  | 21.6  | 24.5  |
| Austria            | 35.3 | 36.3  | 39.7  | 40.8  | 41.7  | 45.5  | 47.4  | 46.7  | 46.8  | 50.0  | 52.2  | 54.4  | 56.8  | 56.5  |
| Belgium            | 63.5 | 64.1  | 68.0  | 67.9  | 68.0  | 76.8  | 76.1  | 74.1  | 71.7  | 74.2  | 78.2  | 80.4  | 81.5  | 85.3  |
| Canada             | 35.7 | 36.4  | 38.5  | 40.4  | 41.4  | 42.7  | 40.7  | 39.4  | 36.2  | 36.3  | 35.9  | 34.9  | 33.9  | 34.3  |
| Czech Republic     | 52.9 | 51.8  | 54.7  | 54.8  | 56.0  | 64.9  | 66.6  | 61.3  | 62.9  | 70.1  | 70.6  | 74.7  | 77.6  | 74.8  |
| Denmark            | 35.5 | 35.4  | 36.9  | 37.2  | 38.2  | 43.5  | 43.9  | 44.3  | 42.2  | 42.9  | 46.5  | 50.5  | 51.2  | 53.7  |
| Finland            | 32.6 | 33.4  | 34.7  | 34.0  | 33.7  | 38.7  | 36.7  | 35.7  | 35.1  | 36.5  | 39.6  | 42.7  | 43.2  | 45.0  |
| France             | 22.2 | 22.4  | 24.3  | 25.0  | 25.1  | 28.1  | 27.5  | 26.3  | 25.1  | 25.7  | 26.5  | 27.4  | 27.4  | 27.7  |
| Germany            | 23.7 | 24.4  | 26.8  | 28.0  | 29.0  | 33.2  | 33.8  | 33.4  | 33.7  | 35.9  | 38.5  | 42.5  | 43.4  | 44.1  |
| Greece             | 21.8 | 22.1  | 24.0  | 24.6  | 27.4  | 31.6  | 30.6  | 27.8  | 26.1  | 27.2  | 27.0  | 27.9  | 28.3  | 28.3  |
| Hungary            | 44.8 | 47.9  | 53.9  | 61.3  | 64.7  | 74.9  | 71.6  | 63.8  | 63.1  | 64.5  | 66.9  | 77.5  | 79.7  | 81.7  |
| Iceland            | 33.7 | 36.0  | 36.0  | 36.9  | 35.9  | 37.2  | 39.3  | 36.7  | 35.8  | 36.9  | 37.8  | 41.1  | 40.2  | 45.9  |
| Ireland            | 70.4 | 71.5  | 73.1  | 81.1  | 82.4  | 91.6  | 92.4  | 85.5  | 75.8  | 76.5  | 75.9  | 74.9  | 75.8  | 78.3  |
| Italy              | 23.8 | 22.4  | 23.3  | 23.6  | 23.5  | 26.6  | 26.4  | 25.2  | 24.3  | 25.0  | 26.0  | 28.1  | 29.1  | 29.1  |
| Japan              | 8.5  | 9.6   | 10.3  | 10.0  | 9.5   | 10.3  | 10.2  | 10.7  | 11.2  | 12.3  | 13.6  | 15.5  | 16.8  | 17.4  |
| Korea              | 27.8 | 28.0  | 30.9  | 37.6  | 33.8  | 37.1  | 34.6  | 32.4  | 34.2  | 38.8  | 37.9  | 39.0  | 41.2  | 53.5  |
| Luxembourg         | 95.8 | 101.0 | 112.2 | 119.3 | 124.6 | 139.5 | 137.8 | 130.9 | 125.1 | 140.2 | 143.0 | 153.2 | 160.5 | 156.5 |
| Mexico             | 26.5 | 28.3  | 27.7  | 28.9  | 28.8  | 29.1  | 26.1  | 25.3  | 26.1  | 27.5  | 27.9  | 28.7  | 29.1  | 29.4  |
| Netherlands        | 56.5 | 57.0  | 60.5  | 60.2  | 60.9  | 67.3  | 64.4  | 60.9  | 59.9  | 62.7  | 65.4  | 69.0  | 70.5  | 72.6  |
| New Zealand        | 28.6 | 27.8  | 27.9  | 29.3  | 31.0  | 34.7  | 33.9  | 31.5  | 28.9  | 29.3  | 28.9  | 29.8  | 29.4  | 32.8  |
| Norway             | 34.9 | 36.3  | 37.3  | 36.7  | 35.7  | 38.0  | 37.3  | 34.4  | 33.8  | 35.3  | 36.4  | 37.4  | 37.8  | 38.4  |
| Poland             | 22.1 | 23.0  | 25.4  | 28.4  | 27.1  | 30.3  | 28.9  | 30.4  | 34.7  | 38.7  | 37.5  | 41.3  | 42.2  | 42.0  |
| Portugal           | 31.8 | 31.7  | 32.6  | 33.4  | 33.0  | 35.2  | 33.9  | 32.1  | 31.3  | 32.3  | 33.0  | 35.1  | 36.5  | 37.7  |
| Slovak Republic    | 56.7 | 58.7  | 61.2  | 64.6  | 63.4  | 71.7  | 76.8  | 74.8  | 76.8  | 75.9  | 78.6  | 86.4  | 87.2  | 84.2  |
| Spain              | 22.4 | 23.4  | 25.9  | 26.8  | 27.6  | 30.6  | 29.8  | 28.4  | 27.5  | 27.9  | 28.3  | 29.5  | 30.3  | 29.5  |
| Sweden             | 36.4 | 35.3  | 38.4  | 39.8  | 39.9  | 43.4  | 43.2  | 41.2  | 40.4  | 42.2  | 44.9  | 47.4  | 48.8  | 50.5  |
| Switzerland        | 33.4 | 34.1  | 37.5  | 38.2  | 39.3  | 43.6  | 43.5  | 41.1  | 40.8  | 42.9  | 45.6  | 48.4  | 51.1  | 50.8  |
| Turkey             | 17.5 | 19.5  | 21.8  | 20.8  | 19.4  | 21.6  | 25.4  | 24.4  | 23.5  | 24.9  | 23.6  | 25.1  | 24.9  | 26.1  |
| United Kingdom     | 28.3 | 29.3  | 28.3  | 26.9  | 26.9  | 28.6  | 28.3  | 27.4  | 26.6  | 26.6  | 28.1  | 30.1  | 28.2  | 30.4  |
| United States      | 11.6 | 11.8  | 12.1  | 11.8  | 12.0  | 13.0  | 11.9  | 11.5  | 11.7  | 12.6  | 13.2  | 13.9  | 14.4  | 15.2  |
| EU27 total         | 28.8 | 29.1  | 30.9  | 31.5  | 32.0  | 35.8  | 35.6  | 34.5  | 33.9  | 35.2  | 36.9  | 39.4  | 39.9  | 41.0  |
| OECD total         | 19.1 | 19.8  | 20.7  | 21.0  | 20.8  | 22.2  | 21.7  | 21.5  | 22.1  | 23.6  | 24.7  | 26.4  | 27.5  | 28.9  |
| Chile              | 28.1 | 28.1  | 28.1  | 27.9  | 28.4  | 30.6  | 32.5  | 32.8  | 34.5  | 36.2  | 37.1  | 38.2  | 40.3  | 43.1  |
| Estonia            | 71.9 | 67.4  | 77.2  | 79.6  | 72.9  | 86.4  | 81.1  | 74.6  | 72.9  | 76.6  | 81.0  | 86.0  | 78.4  | 77.7  |
| Israel             | 32.7 | 31.9  | 31.8  | 31.3  | 35.5  | 37.2  | 34.1  | 36.4  | 36.9  | 41.3  | 42.7  | 42.6  | 43.3  | 40.8  |
| Russian Federation | 27.6 | 24.0  | 23.6  | 27.9  | 34.7  | 34.0  | 30.6  | 29.8  | 29.5  | 28.3  | 28.3  | 27.4  | 26.0  | 26.5  |
| Slovenia           | 50.9 | 50.7  | 52.1  | 52.2  | 49.7  | 55.7  | 55.9  | 54.6  | 54.1  | 58.7  | 62.3  | 66.8  | 70.4  | 69.2  |

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## International trade to GDP ratios

Difference between 2008 and 1998 ratios in percentage points

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