

## TRADING PARTNERS

The pattern of OECD merchandise trade – where imports come from and where exports go to – has undergone significant shifts over the last decade. These shifts have occurred in response to changes in the distribution of global income and to globalisation – in particular, the outsourcing of manufacturing from OECD countries to the rest of the world.

### Definition

The data shown here refer to total OECD imports and exports and show merchandise trade both within the OECD area and with countries in the rest of the world. The definitions of merchandise imports and exports are explained under “Trade in goods”.

NAFTA is the North American Free Trade Area and consists of Canada, Mexico and the United States. OECD Asia and Oceania includes Australia and New Zealand as well as Japan and Korea. Non-OECD America covers the Caribbean, South America and Central America, except Mexico. Non-OECD Asia covers Central Asia, China, the Indian sub continent and South East. Middle East covers the Gulf Arabian Countries, Iran, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, the occupied Palestinian territory and the Syrian Arab Republic.

### Overview

Since 1988, there has been a steady decline in the share of OECD imports and exports among OECD countries. In 1988, imports from OECD countries accounted for 80% of total OECD imports. By 2008 this share had fallen to 65%. For exports, the fall in intra-OECD trade was less marked – down from 81% in 1988 to 74% in 2008.

OECD imports from Non-OECD Asia have risen from 7% to 18% of the total over the period, while exports to these countries have increased from 7.5% to 11%. A large change occurred in trade between OECD and China. In 1988 China supplied a little over 1% of total OECD imports but by 2008 this share had risen to 10%. China's importance as a destination for OECD countries has increased less sharply, rising from 1% in 1988 to 4% in 2008.

### Comparability

OECD countries follow common definitions and procedures in compiling their merchandise trade statistics. These statistics are therefore comparable and of good quality. The removal of customs frontiers following the creation of a common market in Europe required EU countries to adopt a system of recording trade flows through sample surveys of exporters and importers. This led to some fall in the reliability of merchandise trade statistics for trade between the EU countries. Statistics on trade between EU countries and non-EU countries, however, were not affected.

### Sources

- OECD (2009), *International Trade by Commodity Statistics*, OECD, Paris.

### Further information

#### Analytical publications

- OECD, IOM and the World Bank (eds.) (2004), *Trade and Migration: Building Bridges for Global Labour Mobility*, OECD, Paris.
- OECD (2004), *Agriculture, Trade and the Environment: The Dairy Sector*, OECD, Paris.
- OECD (2004), *Trade and Competitiveness in Argentina, Brazil and Chile Not as Easy as A-B-C*, OECD, Paris.
- OECD (2005), *OECD Trade Policy Studies – Environmental Requirements and Market Access*, OECD, Paris.
- OECD (2005), *Trade and Structural Adjustment: Embracing Globalisation*, OECD, Paris.
- OECD (2006), *The Development Dimension – Aid for Trade: Making it Effective*, OECD, Paris.

#### Statistical publications

- OECD (2009), *Monthly Statistics of International Trade*, OECD, Paris.
- OECD (2009), *Statistics on International Trade in Services*, OECD, Paris.

#### Methodological publications

- UN, EC, IMF, OECD, UNCTAD and the WTO (2002), *Manual on Statistics of International Trade in Services*, United Nations, New York.

#### Online databases

- ITCS *International Trade by Commodity Statistics*.
- *Monthly International Trade*.

#### Web sites

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



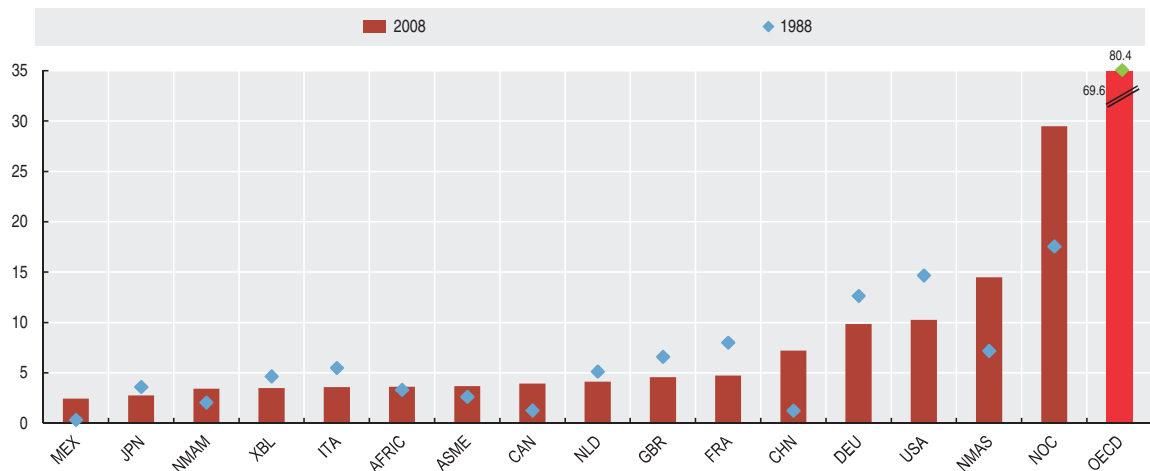
Partner countries and regions of OECD merchandise trade

	Imports As a percentage of total OECD merchandise imports				Exports As a percentage of total OECD merchandise exports				Merchandise trade As a percentage of total OECD merchandise trade			
	1990	2000	2005	2008	1990	2000	2005	2008	1990	2000	2005	2008
<b>OECD total</b>	<b>77.8</b>	<b>73.0</b>	<b>67.2</b>	<b>65.5</b>	<b>80.5</b>	<b>79.0</b>	<b>75.4</b>	<b>74.1</b>	<b>79.1</b>	<b>75.8</b>	<b>71.3</b>	<b>69.6</b>
Major seven	52.1	47.5	40.2	37.3	51.8	51.0	46.1	43.0	52.0	49.2	43.0	40.0
NAFTA	16.7	21.7	16.0	14.9	18.4	26.1	21.5	18.5	17.5	23.8	18.6	16.6
Canada	4.5	5.6	4.6	4.2	4.1	4.8	4.0	3.6	4.3	5.3	4.3	3.9
Mexico	1.5	3.3	2.7	2.6	1.5	3.0	2.3	2.2	1.5	3.2	2.5	2.4
United States	10.7	12.8	8.7	8.0	12.8	18.3	15.1	12.7	11.7	15.4	11.7	10.3
OECD Asia Oceania	10.0	9.4	7.5	6.1	7.3	6.5	5.4	5.1	8.7	8.0	6.6	5.6
Japan	7.1	6.3	4.6	3.3	4.1	3.4	2.5	2.2	5.6	4.9	3.7	2.8
Korea	1.7	2.0	1.8	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.9	1.8	1.7
OECD Europe	51.3	42.0	43.5	44.5	55.0	46.4	48.5	50.5	53.1	44.0	46.1	47.3
Austria	1.3	1.0	1.2	1.3	1.6	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.4	1.2	1.3	1.4
Belgium-Luxembourg	3.9	2.6	2.6	3.2	4.5	3.2	3.2	3.8	4.2	2.8	3.4	3.5
France	6.9	5.1	4.9	4.2	8.1	6.0	6.2	5.3	7.4	5.5	5.5	4.7
Germany	12.4	9.2	10.2	10.2	10.6	8.8	9.0	9.4	11.6	9.0	9.7	9.8
Italy	5.2	3.7	3.1	3.5	5.1	3.7	3.5	3.7	5.2	3.7	3.3	3.6
Netherlands	4.5	3.5	3.8	4.1	4.8	3.9	3.7	4.2	4.6	3.7	3.8	4.1
Spain	1.8	1.9	2.1	2.2	2.7	2.8	3.4	3.2	2.2	2.4	2.7	2.7
Sweden	1.9	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.8	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.9	1.5	1.5	1.5
Switzerland	2.1	1.4	1.1	1.5	2.6	1.7	1.4	1.9	2.4	1.6	1.4	1.7
United Kingdom	5.3	4.9	4.0	3.6	7.0	6.1	5.7	5.6	6.1	5.4	4.8	4.6
<b>Non-OECD</b>	<b>20.7</b>	<b>26.0</b>	<b>31.3</b>	<b>33.6</b>	<b>17.6</b>	<b>20.1</b>	<b>22.7</b>	<b>25.0</b>	<b>19.2</b>	<b>23.1</b>	<b>27.3</b>	<b>29.5</b>
Africa	3.4	2.4	3.5	4.2	2.8	1.9	2.6	3.0	3.1	2.2	3.1	3.6
South Africa	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.5
America	3.3	3.0	3.4	3.5	2.3	3.0	2.6	3.3	2.8	3.0	3.0	3.4
South America	2.7	2.2	2.7	2.9	1.4	1.9	1.6	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.6
Brazil	1.0	0.8	1.0	1.0	0.5	0.8	0.7	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.8	1.0
Chile	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3
Asia	8.7	14.6	17.2	17.6	7.8	10.9	11.7	11.0	8.3	12.8	14.6	14.5
China	1.8	5.5	9.3	10.1	0.9	2.2	4.0	4.0	1.3	3.9	6.8	7.2
India	0.5	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.5	0.8	1.0	0.5	0.5	0.8	0.9
Chinese Taipei	1.9	2.1	1.3	..	1.5	2.0	1.5	..	1.7	2.0	1.4	..
Europe	1.8	2.4	3.7	4.6	2.1	1.9	3.4	4.9	1.9	2.2	3.6	4.8
Estonia	..	0.1	0.1	0.1	..	0.1	0.1	0.1	..	0.1	0.1	0.1
Russian Federation	0.1	1.4	2.1	2.7	0.1	0.6	1.2	2.0	0.1	1.0	1.7	2.4
Slovenia	..	0.1	0.2	0.2	..	0.2	0.2	0.3	..	0.2	0.2	0.2
Middle East	3.5	3.5	3.9	4.2	2.6	2.2	2.8	3.1	3.0	2.9	3.4	3.7
Israel	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.4

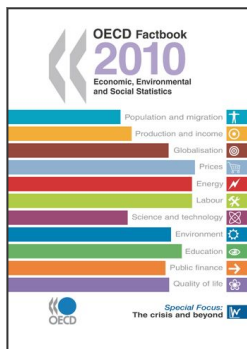
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Partner countries and regions of OECD merchandise trade

As a percentage of total OECD merchandise trade



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**From:**  
**OECD Factbook 2010**  
Economic, Environmental and Social Statistics

**Access the complete publication at:**  
<https://doi.org/10.1787/factbook-2010-en>

**Please cite this chapter as:**

OECD (2010), "Trading Partners", in *OECD Factbook 2010: Economic, Environmental and Social Statistics*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1787/factbook-2010-26-en>

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