

9 February 2018 | 1100 hrs | 021/2018

Preliminary figures show that Malta registered a trade deficit of €118.0 million in December 2017, compared to €125.9 million in the corresponding month of 2016.

International Trade: December 2017

Cut-off date:
6 February 2018

Provisional data for international trade show that the trade deficit in December stood at €118.0 million, down by €7.9 million when compared to the corresponding month of 2016. Both imports and exports increased by €59.9 million and €67.9 million respectively (Table 1a). The increase in the value of imports was primarily due to machinery and transport equipment (€59.2 million), while mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials (€39.2 million) and machinery and transport equipment (€21.3 million) accounted to the main increase in the value of exports (Table 2).

January-December 2017

During 2017, the trade deficit widened by €236.4 million when compared to 2016, reaching €2,723.7 million. Both imports and exports show decreases of €483.4 million and €719.8 million respectively (Table 1a). Lower imports were mainly due to machinery and transport equipment, which decreased by €631.3 million. This was partly outweighed by increases of €71.2 million in mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials, €49.2 million in chemicals, and €42.7 million in food. On the exports side, the main decreases were registered in chemicals (€581.9 million) and mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials (€152.8 million) (Table 2).

Malta's trade imports from the European Union reached €3,174.4 million, or 53.5 per cent of total imports. There was a decrease of €58.1 million in imports from euro area countries when compared to the same period of 2016. Main increases and decreases in imports were registered from the Russian Federation (€96.2 million) and Canada (€342.4 million) respectively. On the export side, the main increase was directed to Italy (€44.7 million), whereas the United States of America (€612.3 million) registered the highest decrease (Table 3) ■

International Trade

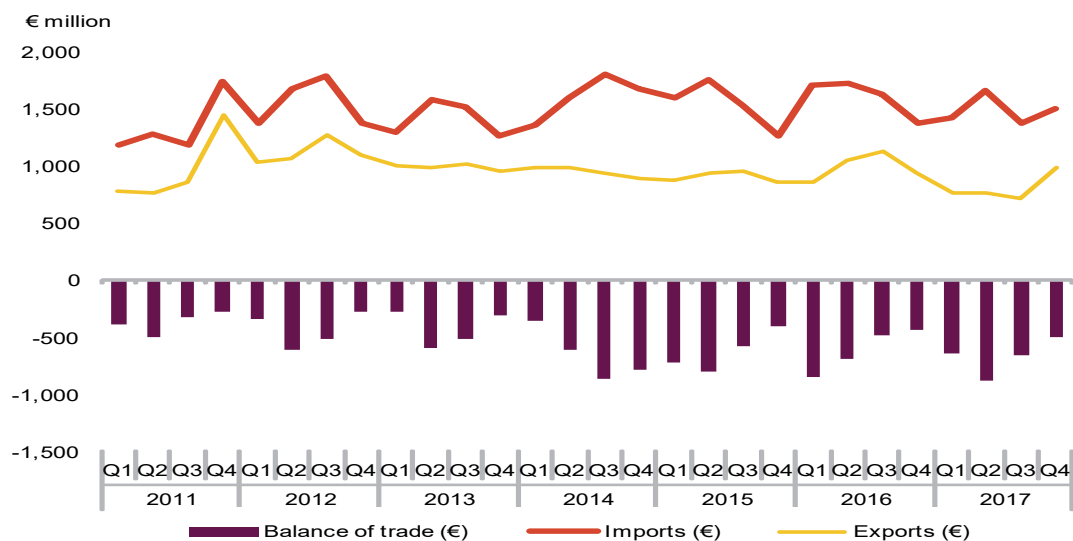


Table 1a. Trade by period and broad economic category

€ million

Broad economic category	2014 ^P	2015 ^P	2016 ^P	2017 ^P	December	
					2016 ^P	2017 ^P
Imports	6,402.5	6,114.7	6,414.5	5,931.1	393.7	453.6
Industrial Supplies	1,414.2	1,484.5	1,334.0	1,307.7	113.4	91.9
Primary	81.5	80.6	112.7	123.6	21.2	6.5
Semi-Finished	1,181.8	1,193.1	1,027.8	999.9	74.5	72.6
Finished	151.0	210.8	193.5	184.2	17.6	12.8
Capital Goods and Others	1,311.5	1,718.5	2,252.2	1,639.4	57.7	119.2
Consumer Goods	1,116.0	1,224.1	1,239.9	1,320.5	100.1	96.3
Food and Beverages	472.7	485.9	499.1	522.8	40.9	36.8
Durable Goods	374.1	453.9	431.9	455.9	35.7	35.5
Others	269.3	284.3	308.9	341.8	23.4	24.0
Fuels and Lubricants	2,560.7	1,687.7	1,588.3	1,663.5	122.5	146.3
Exports	3,771.2	3,605.6	3,927.2	3,207.4	267.7	335.6
Balance of Trade	-2,631.3	-2,509.1	-2,487.3	-2,723.7	-125.9	-118.0

^P Provisional

Note: Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Table 1b. Trade by broad economic category - last six quarters

€ million

Broad economic category	2016 Q3 ^P	2016 Q4 ^P	2017 Q1 ^P	2017 Q2 ^P	2017 Q3 ^P	2017 Q4 ^P
Imports	1,616.1	1,371.0	1,415.2	1,648.4	1,371.7	1,495.9
Industrial Supplies	328.3	337.1	296.6	347.2	336.3	327.5
Primary	27.8	32.1	16.3	36.6	20.3	50.4
Semi-Finished	260.4	246.6	230.9	262.7	276.3	229.9
Finished	40.2	58.4	49.4	47.9	39.8	47.2
Capital Goods and Others	422.3	324.2	333.8	604.1	239.7	461.8
Consumer Goods	308.4	335.0	312.8	335.5	336.6	335.7
Food and Beverages	127.2	138.9	121.1	125.3	142.8	133.6
Durable Goods	100.5	116.7	110.7	124.6	109.0	111.6
Others	80.7	79.4	81.0	85.6	84.8	90.5
Fuels and Lubricants	557.1	374.8	472.1	361.5	459.0	370.9
Exports	1,123.0	923.9	760.4	756.2	706.5	984.2
Balance of Trade	-493.1	-447.2	-654.8	-892.1	-665.1	-511.7

^P Provisional

Note: Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Table 1c. Exports net of fuels and lubricants by period

€ million

Broad economic category	2014 ^P	2015 ^P	2016 ^P	2017 ^P	December	
					2016 ^P	2017 ^P
Total Exports	3,771.2	3,605.6	3,927.2	3,207.4	267.7	335.6
Exports of Fuels and Lubricants	1,608.2	1,366.3	1,130.1	962.9	58.2	101.9
Exports net of Fuels and Lubricants	2,163.0	2,239.3	2,797.0	2,244.5	209.6	233.7

^P Provisional

Note: Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Table 2. Balance of trade by period and major commodity groups

€ million

Major commodity group	2014 ^P	2015 ^P	2016 ^P	2017 ^P	December	
					2016 ^P	2017 ^P
Imports	6,402.5	6,114.7	6,414.5	5,931.1	393.7	453.6
Food	506.9	522.7	571.5	614.2	58.5	41.2
Beverages and Tobacco	89.8	89.7	98.0	95.1	6.7	6.3
Crude Materials	24.4	27.5	26.3	26.6	2.1	1.6
Mineral Fuels, Lubricants and related materials	2,563.0	1,689.3	1,595.6	1,666.8	122.5	148.0
Animal and Vegetable Oils and Fats	8.7	9.2	9.4	9.2	0.7	0.6
Chemicals	509.1	507.6	465.5	514.7	33.3	33.0
Semi-Manufactured Goods	342.4	414.9	375.2	355.6	29.3	28.1
Machinery and Transport Equipment	1,923.2	2,374.2	2,822.5	2,191.2	104.3	163.5
Miscellaneous Manufactured Articles	423.0	465.4	438.8	452.6	34.9	30.7
Miscellaneous Transactions and Commodities	11.9	14.1	11.7	5.3	1.3	0.6
Exports	3,771.2	3,605.6	3,927.2	3,207.4	267.7	335.6
Food	197.8	245.6	254.9	245.4	44.1	48.1
Beverages and Tobacco	45.3	42.3	41.1	38.6	2.3	2.2
Crude Materials	16.1	15.9	12.6	13.3	0.6	0.8
Mineral Fuels, Lubricants and related materials	1,608.2	1,391.5	1,162.6	1,009.8	62.7	101.9
Animal and Vegetable Oils and Fats	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Chemicals	409.8	406.0	965.0	383.1	29.1	34.7
Semi-Manufactured Goods	116.0	122.9	121.2	151.3	9.0	15.9
Machinery and Transport Equipment	1,000.7	969.2	962.4	985.2	88.3	109.6
Miscellaneous Manufactured Articles	375.9	411.5	406.6	379.9	31.7	22.3
Miscellaneous Transactions and Commodities	1.3	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.0	0.1
Balance of Trade	-2,631.3	-2,509.1	-2,487.3	-2,723.7	-125.9	-118.0
Food	-309.1	-277.1	-316.6	-368.7	-14.4	7.0
Beverages and Tobacco	-44.5	-47.4	-56.9	-56.5	-4.4	-4.1
Crude Materials	-8.3	-11.5	-13.8	-13.3	-1.5	-0.7
Mineral Fuels, Lubricants and related materials	-954.8	-297.9	-433.0	-657.0	-59.9	-46.2
Animal and Vegetable Oils and Fats	-8.7	-9.2	-9.4	-9.1	-0.7	-0.6
Chemicals	-99.3	-101.6	499.5	-131.7	-4.2	1.7
Semi-Manufactured Goods	-226.4	-292.0	-254.0	-204.3	-20.3	-12.2
Machinery and Transport Equipment	-922.4	-1,405.0	-1,860.1	-1,206.0	-16.0	-53.9
Miscellaneous Manufactured Articles	-47.1	-53.9	-32.2	-72.7	-3.2	-8.4
Miscellaneous Transactions and Commodities	-10.6	-13.5	-10.9	-4.5	-1.3	-0.5

^P Provisional

Notes:

1. The commodity breakdown is in accordance with the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC) Rev. 3.
2. Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Table 3. Direction of trade by period

€ million

	December						January-December					
	2016 ^P			2017 ^P			2016 ^P			2017 ^P		
	Arrivals/ Imports	Dispatches/ Exports	Balance of Trade	Arrivals/ Imports	Dispatches/ Exports	Balance of Trade	Arrivals/ Imports	Dispatches/ Exports	Balance of Trade	Arrivals/ Imports	Dispatches/ Exports	Balance of Trade
Europe	298.7	87.8	-210.8	337.5	115.7	-221.7	3,635.6	1,300.6	-2,335.0	3,696.3	1,334.9	-2,361.4
<i>of which:</i>												
European Union	264.4	84.0	-180.4	266.7	112.2	-154.4	3,199.4	1,228.8	-1,970.5	3,174.4	1,262.9	-1,911.5
<i>of which:</i>												
United Kingdom	30.4	6.4	-24.0	28.5	3.9	-24.6	347.8	107.0	-240.8	395.1	77.8	-317.4
Euro Area	212.2	67.3	-144.9	221.7	93.8	-127.9	2,620.0	976.1	-1,644.0	2,561.9	1,015.5	-1,546.4
<i>of which:</i>												
Italy	116.1	8.5	-107.6	102.9	42.3	-60.6	1,234.6	212.2	-1,022.4	1,174.4	256.9	-917.4
Spain	13.0	3.1	-9.9	41.4	2.6	-38.8	187.0	34.8	-152.2	231.7	47.6	-184.0
Germany	29.2	33.3	4.0	26.1	27.1	1.0	374.7	399.3	24.7	418.0	398.0	-20.0
France	14.7	17.2	2.5	15.4	16.4	1.1	251.5	238.7	-12.8	225.6	231.3	5.7
Greece	12.3	0.9	-11.4	13.2	0.3	-12.8	119.5	8.3	-111.3	107.9	6.5	-101.4
Netherlands	10.9	1.3	-9.6	11.8	1.4	-10.4	230.8	34.7	-196.1	195.4	23.5	-171.9
EFTA Countries	4.5	2.1	-2.4	39.2	1.7	-37.5	84.6	32.4	-52.1	78.0	33.2	-44.8
<i>of which:</i>												
Norway	0.6	0.6	0.0	36.3	0.1	-36.2	5.4	3.4	-2.0	42.0	5.7	-36.3
Other European Countries	29.8	1.8	-28.0	31.6	1.8	-29.8	351.7	39.3	-312.3	443.9	38.8	-405.0
<i>of which:</i>												
Russian Federation	21.7	0.1	-21.7	20.2	0.0	-20.2	163.2	3.2	-160.1	259.4	0.8	-258.6
Asia	48.1	83.1	35.0	38.7	76.0	37.4	787.2	671.6	-115.6	932.9	594.4	-338.5
<i>of which:</i>												
China	14.4	3.7	-10.7	11.0	2.5	-8.5	202.4	43.7	-158.7	200.3	37.7	-162.7
India	8.7	2.6	-6.2	9.4	3.1	-6.3	112.6	15.4	-97.2	130.4	12.9	-117.5
Japan	4.3	33.0	28.7	3.0	29.5	26.6	53.1	144.7	91.6	62.9	106.5	43.5
Malaysia	1.6	0.1	-1.4	2.9	1.5	-1.4	21.4	5.3	-16.1	32.2	4.4	-27.8
Korea Republic	2.2	3.5	1.3	2.8	7.1	4.3	61.3	27.6	-33.8	41.8	43.8	2.0
North and Central America	6.9	19.8	12.9	38.0	14.2	-23.7	871.5	783.9	-87.6	504.2	169.4	-334.8
<i>of which:</i>												
United States of America	6.3	17.2	10.9	32.6	9.6	-23.0	285.7	740.9	455.3	259.6	128.6	-109.4
Canada	0.5	1.7	1.2	5.3	3.6	-1.7	580.4	27.8	-552.6	238.0	26.3	26.3
Africa	28.5	39.7	11.2	11.3	85.6	74.2	264.7	563.5	298.8	285.6	556.7	271.1
<i>of which:</i>												
Tunisia	10.3	2.4	-7.9	5.5	0.8	-4.7	53.9	48.0	-5.8	31.9	62.2	30.3
Australia and Oceania	0.6	0.6	0.0	0.6	0.2	-0.4	31.8	14.1	-17.7	35.4	7.8	-27.7
South America	3.7	4.7	1.0	1.7	1.2	-0.5	46.3	13.0	-33.3	38.3	8.4	-29.9
Ships and Aircraft Stores	0.2	31.8	31.6	0.3	42.4	42.1	9.1	574.6	565.5	5.7	532.6	526.9
Caribbean and Bahamas Islands	7.0	0.3	-6.7	25.6	0.2	-25.4	768.3	5.9	-762.5	432.8	3.3	-429.5
Grand Total	393.7	267.7	-125.9	453.6	335.6	-118.0	6,414.5	3,927.2	-2,487.3	5,931.1	3,207.4	-2,723.7

^P Provisional

Notes:

1. Arrivals/Dispatches relate to transactions with EU Member States.
2. Imports/Exports relate to transactions with Non-EU Member States (see methodological note 8 for country groupings).
3. Totals may not add up due to rounding.
4. A full list of countries is available on the excel version of this news release: http://nso.gov.mt/en/News_Releases/View_by_Unit/Unit_A4/International_Trade/Pages/International-Trade.aspx

Table 4. Trade by period and principal traded commodities

€ 000

Chapter number	Commodity description	December		January-December	
		2016 ^P	2017 ^P	2016 ^P	2017 ^P
Main imports					
02	Meat and edible offal	4,728	4,449	54,068	58,894
03	Fish and crustaceans, etc.	18,526	6,975	110,533	139,814
04	Dairy produce; birds' eggs	3,514	3,999	46,058	50,390
08	Edible fruit and nuts	3,173	2,462	39,915	39,341
16	Preparations of meat/fish	3,728	3,699	46,568	51,815
19	Preparations of cereals	5,508	4,840	63,611	64,061
21	Miscellaneous edible preparations	3,625	2,739	37,871	39,680
22	Beverages, spirits and vinegar	5,017	4,007	63,243	65,670
23	Food residues and waste	2,812	2,459	32,030	33,644
24	Tobacco and manufactured tobacco substitutes	1,717	2,324	35,630	30,024
25	Salt/sulphur/earths/plastering materials and cement	1,600	2,181	24,413	26,482
27	Mineral fuels, oils and products	122,515	148,050	1,597,197	1,667,147
30	Pharmaceutical products	11,213	13,155	142,181	185,323
33	Essential oils and toilet preparations	3,690	3,073	39,850	35,642
38	Miscellaneous chemical products	2,989	2,358	24,736	28,153
39	Plastics and articles of plastics	10,374	10,240	149,756	161,029
48	Paper and paperboard articles	5,700	4,437	70,970	67,072
61	Knitted clothing	4,221	2,505	51,904	52,870
62	Woven clothing	2,422	3,637	40,974	50,922
64	Footwear, gaiters etc.and parts	3,253	3,183	30,855	52,641
69	Ceramic products	2,679	2,137	27,613	23,175
72	Iron and steel	3,541	3,990	21,911	28,508
73	Articles of iron or steel	4,731	4,993	84,218	70,850
84	Machinery and mechanical appliances	22,662	71,108	297,831	437,613
85	Electrical machinery etc.	38,921	38,433	488,667	483,304
87	Vehicles (excluding trains) and parts thereof	13,946	15,699	167,566	182,813
88	Aircraft/spacecraft and parts thereof	11,554	9,540	825,577	389,911
89	Ships, boats and floating structures	17,541	28,771	1,033,086	700,765
90	Optical/photographic/cinematographic instruments	4,289	4,972	65,192	67,400
94	Furniture; bedding, etc.	5,488	4,844	64,605	61,730
Main exports					
03	Fish and crustaceans, etc.	35,054	35,608	158,653	136,373
19	Preparations of cereals	3,230	3,366	24,487	20,628
21	Miscellaneous edible preparations	5,682	8,955	60,100	65,434
27	Mineral fuels, oils and products	62,456	101,690	1,160,853	1,008,046
29	Organic chemicals	6,440	6,761	46,581	40,783
30	Pharmaceutical products	19,451	23,873	882,397	288,443
33	Essential oils and toilet preparations	1,022	1,310	13,675	13,702
39	Plastics and articles of plastics	4,121	4,539	54,373	68,709
40	Rubber and articles of rubber	2,585	2,946	54,073	57,886
49	Printed books, newspapers	10,587	4,185	94,440	66,064
60	Knitted/crocheted fabrics	2,244	2,106	22,863	26,090
71	Pearls, precious stones/metals and imitation jewellery	31	1,640	7,941	7,404
73	Articles of iron or steel	2,864	9,324	24,642	43,739
84	Machinery and mechanical appliances	9,683	38,056	122,839	157,318
85	Electrical machinery etc.	65,029	56,441	675,700	697,717
88	Aircraft/spacecraft and parts thereof	13,122	12,779	135,045	113,544
90	Optical/photographic/cinematographic instruments	4,436	4,672	83,425	78,307
95	Toys, games and sports requisites	9,170	5,389	130,181	124,745
99	Special classifications	1,825	2,068	28,024	31,877

^P Provisional

Notes:

1. The commodity breakdown is the Harmonised System (HS) Code at chapter level.

2. A full list of chapters is available on the excel version of this news release:

http://nso.gov.mt/en/News_Releases/View_by_Unit/Unit_A4/International_Trade/Pages/International-Trade.aspx

Methodological Notes

1. Data in this release are compiled on:
 - a. the Intrastat Supplementary Declaration that traders in merchandise goods must submit in respect of Arrivals (Imports) and Dispatches (Exports) of goods from and to the Member States of the European Union (EU), in compliance with Legal Notice 131 of 2004; and
 - b. the Customs Declarations for imports from and exports to countries that are not Member States of the EU.
2. The Intrastat Supplementary Declaration for the collection of data on trade in goods between the Member States of the EU replaced the Customs Declaration as from 1 May 2004. The requirements of the Supplementary Declaration, which at EU level were introduced as from 1 January 1993, are similar in all the Member States of the EU.
3. As from May 2004, with the introduction of the Intrastat Supplementary Declaration as the source document for trade statistics, it was no longer possible to disaggregate total exports into domestic exports and re-exports.
4. The 'Balance of Trade' is the difference between a country's exports and imports. A country has a trade deficit if it imports more than it exports; the opposite scenario is a trade surplus.
5. This news release is compiled on data available as on the cut-off date printed on the front page of this release. These are provisional figures compiled on information provided by traders on a monthly basis. Regular revisions to monthly and annual trade data may be carried out for up to two (2) years after the reference period.
6. National concepts differ from the harmonised methodology used by Eurostat, leading to differences between figures in this release and those published by Eurostat. Malta uses the General Trade system for dissemination purposes, in line with UN recommendations. On the other hand, monthly data sent to Eurostat for both Intra-EU and Extra-EU are compiled according to the Special Trade methodology. A more detailed explanation of these two concepts can be found at <http://nso.gov.mt/metadata/reports.aspx?id=7>.
7. Individual countries' data not appearing in this release are available from the NSO upon request and in the excel version.
8.
 - i. Up to 31 December 2014, the euro area included Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Latvia (from 2014), Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain. From 1 January 2015, the euro area also includes Lithuania. Trade data for Lithuania is included with the euro area data as from reference month January 2015.
 - ii. The European Union includes Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia (from July 2013), Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom.
 - iii. EFTA (European Free Trade Association) countries comprise Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.
9. Totals may not add up due to rounding.
10. More information relating to this news release may be accessed at:

Sources and Methods: https://nso.gov.mt/en/nso/Sources_and_Methods/Unit_A4/International_Trade/Pages/External-Trade-Statistics.aspx

Statistical Concepts: <http://nso.gov.mt/metadata/concepts.aspx>

Metadata: <http://nso.gov.mt/metadata/reports.aspx?id=7>

Classification: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/ramon/index.cfm?>
11. Any quotations from this news release are to be cited and/or referenced.
12. A detailed news release calendar is available on https://nso.gov.mt/en/News_Releases/Release_Calendar/Pages/News-Release-Calendar.aspx