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Preliminary figures show that Malta registered a trade deficit of €117.0 million in December 2018, compared to a deficit of €119.9 million in the corresponding month of 2017.

International Trade: December 2018

Cut-off date:
5 February 2019

Provisional data for international trade show that the trade deficit in December stood at €117.0 million, down by €2.9 million when compared to the corresponding month of 2017. Both imports and exports decreased by €113.6 million and €110.6 million respectively (Table 1a). The decrease in the value of imports was primarily due to machinery and transport equipment (€63.9 million) and mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials (€46.4 million). On the exports side mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials (€121.4 million) and machinery and transport equipment (€42.6 million) accounted to the main decrease in the value of exports, partly outweighed by an increase of €45.0 million in food (Table 2).

January-December 2018

During 2018, the trade deficit widened by €403.4 million when compared to 2017, reaching €2,858.5 million. Both imports and exports show decreases of €5.4 million and €408.7 million respectively (Table 1a). Lower imports were mainly due to machinery and transport equipment, which decreased by €280.5 million. This was partly outweighed by increases of €126.6 million in mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials, €67.2 million in chemicals, €41.7 million in semi-manufactured goods and €32.1 million in miscellaneous manufactured articles. On the exports side, the main decrease was registered in mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials (€427.2 million) (Table 2).

Malta's trade imports from the European Union reached €4,025.7 million, or 65.8 per cent of total imports. There was an increase of €642.0 million in imports from euro area countries when compared to the same period of 2017. Main increases and decreases in imports were registered from Italy (€161.8 million) and Canada (€171.9 million) respectively. On the exports side, the main increase was directed to the Netherlands (€50.1 million), whereas Egypt (€84.6 million) registered the highest decrease (Table 3) ■

Chart 1. International Trade

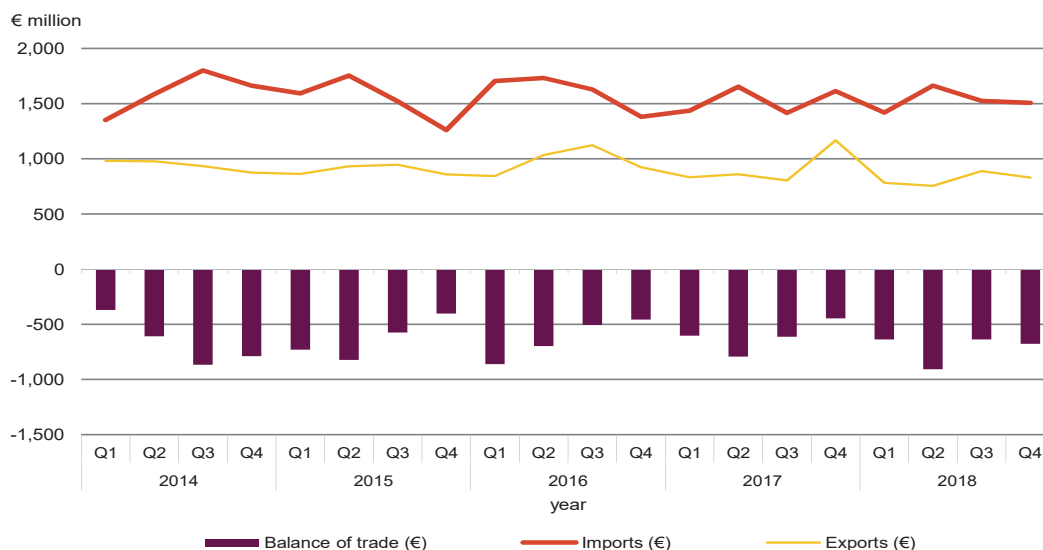


Table 1a. Trade by period and broad economic category

€ million

Broad economic category	2015 ^P	2016 ^P	2017 ^P	2018 ^P	December	
					2017 ^P	2018 ^P
Imports	6,130.4	6,447.5	6,119.9	6,114.5	511.1	397.5
Industrial Supplies	1,481.9	1,334.9	1,322.3	1,441.9	99.7	95.1
Primary	80.6	112.7	126.3	125.1	9.9	6.1
Semi-Finished	1,193.3	1,028.7	1,010.6	1,117.3	76.7	79.8
Finished	208.1	193.5	185.4	199.4	13.1	9.2
Capital Goods and Others	1,742.8	2,282.2	1,680.2	1,362.9	121.2	62.5
Consumer Goods	1,224.4	1,240.6	1,345.7	1,420.7	103.6	100.6
Food and Beverages	486.3	499.2	530.4	535.7	39.4	33.1
Durable Goods	453.4	432.3	468.8	476.8	39.0	35.6
Others	284.7	309.2	346.5	408.1	25.2	31.9
Fuels and Lubricants	1,681.3	1,589.8	1,771.7	1,889.1	186.6	139.4
Exports	3,599.8	3,925.7	3,664.8	3,256.1	391.2	280.6
Balance of Trade	-2,530.6	-2,521.8	-2,455.1	-2,858.5	-119.9	-117.0

^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	2017 Q3 ^P	2017 Q4 ^P	2018 Q1 ^P	2018 Q2 ^P	2018 Q3 ^P	2018 Q4 ^P
Imports	1,416.7	1,613.8	1,419.2	1,662.8	1,525.3	1,507.3
Industrial Supplies	337.8	339.9	321.3	377.7	365.3	377.5
Primary	20.3	53.9	6.8	42.0	28.3	48.1
Semi-Finished	277.6	238.2	244.4	286.5	294.1	292.3
Finished	40.0	47.8	70.1	49.2	43.0	37.2
Capital Goods and Others	237.4	495.7	273.8	490.2	327.5	271.3
Consumer Goods	342.5	352.9	342.0	353.5	364.4	360.8
Food and Beverages	143.9	139.2	122.5	137.6	146.3	129.3
Durable Goods	112.1	120.0	115.4	120.7	115.9	124.9
Others	86.5	93.7	104.1	95.3	102.2	106.5
Fuels and Lubricants	498.9	425.2	482.1	441.4	468.0	497.6
Exports	804.5	1,167.4	782.5	755.1	888.5	830.0
Balance of Trade	-612.2	-446.4	-636.6	-907.8	-636.8	-677.2

^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	2015 ^P	2016 ^P	2017 ^P	2018 ^P	December	
					2017 ^P	2018 ^P
Total Exports	3,599.8	3,925.7	3,664.8	3,256.1	391.2	280.6
Exports of Fuels and Lubricants	1,366.3	1,130.1	1,379.1	941.5	153.4	28.7
Exports net of Fuels and Lubricants	2,233.4	2,795.5	2,285.7	2,314.5	237.8	251.9

^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	2015 ^P	2016 ^P	2017 ^P	2018 ^P	December	
					2017 ^P	2018 ^P
Imports	6,130.4	6,447.5	6,119.9	6,114.5	511.1	397.5
Food	523.1	571.5	624.6	618.3	46.5	34.7
Beverages and Tobacco	89.7	98.0	95.9	108.9	6.8	8.8
Crude Materials	27.5	26.4	26.2	27.0	1.9	1.9
Mineral Fuels, Lubricants and related materials	1,682.9	1,597.0	1,775.0	1,901.6	188.4	142.0
Animal and Vegetable Oils and Fats	9.2	9.4	9.3	9.4	0.6	0.5
Chemicals	508.2	465.7	517.7	584.9	33.6	43.4
Semi-Manufactured Goods	414.3	375.9	361.2	402.9	30.6	25.6
Machinery and Transport Equipment	2,395.7	2,852.7	2,236.0	1,955.5	167.0	103.1
Miscellaneous Manufactured Articles	465.6	439.0	468.7	500.8	35.1	37.2
Miscellaneous Transactions and Commodities	14.1	11.7	5.3	5.1	0.6	0.4
Exports	3,599.8	3,925.7	3,664.8	3,256.1	391.2	280.6
Food	245.6	255.2	281.4	242.7	48.2	93.2
Beverages and Tobacco	42.3	41.1	38.6	43.5	2.2	4.6
Crude Materials	15.9	12.6	13.4	13.2	0.8	1.1
Mineral Fuels, Lubricants and related materials	1,391.5	1,162.6	1,428.3	1,001.1	155.8	34.4
Animal and Vegetable Oils and Fats	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	-	0.0
Chemicals	405.9	965.0	383.1	383.9	34.7	32.4
Semi-Manufactured Goods	122.1	120.9	150.7	152.8	15.4	6.4
Machinery and Transport Equipment	965.4	961.7	987.8	937.0	111.2	68.6
Miscellaneous Manufactured Articles	410.3	405.8	380.7	479.5	22.8	39.0
Miscellaneous Transactions and Commodities	0.6	0.7	0.8	2.5	0.1	0.9
Balance of Trade	-2,530.6	-2,521.8	-2,455.1	-2,858.5	-119.9	-117.0
Food	-277.5	-316.3	-343.1	-375.6	1.6	58.4
Beverages and Tobacco	-47.4	-56.9	-57.3	-65.4	-4.6	-4.2
Crude Materials	-11.5	-13.8	-12.9	-13.8	-1.0	-0.8
Mineral Fuels, Lubricants and related materials	-291.5	-434.4	-346.7	-900.5	-32.6	-107.6
Animal and Vegetable Oils and Fats	-9.2	-9.4	-9.3	-9.4	-0.6	-0.5
Chemicals	-102.2	499.3	-134.6	-201.0	1.2	-10.9
Semi-Manufactured Goods	-292.2	-255.0	-210.6	-250.2	-15.1	-19.2
Machinery and Transport Equipment	-1,430.3	-1,891.0	-1,248.2	-1,018.5	-55.8	-34.5
Miscellaneous Manufactured Articles	-55.3	-33.2	-88.0	-21.4	-12.3	1.9
Miscellaneous Transactions and Commodities	-13.5	-10.9	-4.5	-2.6	-0.5	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					
	2017 ^P			2018 ^P			2017 ^P			2018 ^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	396.2	123.7	-272.5	271.9	99.7	-172.2	3,870.3	1,496.9	-2,373.5	4,427.1	1,575.2	-2,852.0
<i>of which:</i>												
European Union	314.8	120.2	-194.5	234.0	90.2	-143.8	3,298.9	1,424.9	-1,874.0	4,025.7	1,479.2	-2,546.5
<i>of which:</i>												
United Kingdom	30.8	4.4	-26.5	34.0	5.5	-28.5	403.0	78.5	-324.5	499.3	61.1	-438.2
Euro Area	264.5	101.2	-163.3	177.0	67.4	-109.6	2,673.2	1,176.1	-1,497.1	3,315.2	1,195.2	-2,119.9
<i>of which:</i>												
Italy	111.3	45.5	-65.9	78.7	9.2	-69.5	1,233.1	399.9	-833.2	1,394.9	321.3	-1,073.6
Germany	28.4	28.9	0.4	29.9	26.0	-4.0	423.5	402.6	-20.9	439.2	420.7	-18.5
Spain	42.7	2.7	-40.0	19.6	5.5	-14.1	238.5	53.2	-185.3	307.7	51.7	-256.0
France	19.0	18.8	-0.2	18.5	20.7	2.3	229.9	238.0	8.1	293.8	268.8	-25.0
Greece	37.9	0.4	-37.6	9.4	0.2	-9.2	138.6	6.6	-132.1	238.5	8.0	-230.5
Netherlands	13.3	1.5	-11.8	8.9	2.2	-6.8	198.1	23.7	-174.4	284.7	73.8	-210.9
EFTA Countries	39.2	1.7	-37.5	2.0	1.3	-0.7	78.0	33.1	-44.9	49.3	22.2	-27.1
<i>of which:</i>												
Switzerland	2.9	1.6	-1.2	1.9	1.2	-0.7	35.1	27.0	-8.1	35.9	17.1	-18.8
Other European Countries	42.2	1.8	-40.5	35.9	8.2	-27.7	493.4	38.8	-454.6	352.1	73.8	-278.3
<i>of which:</i>												
Turkey	12.9	1.5	-11.4	24.1	1.1	-23.0	192.3	20.8	-171.5	190.3	30.0	-160.3
Asia	38.6	76.0	37.4	68.3	119.6	51.3	947.5	640.7	-306.9	920.4	594.1	-326.3
<i>of which:</i>												
China	11.0	2.5	-8.5	19.5	1.7	-17.8	200.3	37.7	-162.7	221.0	32.2	-188.8
India	9.3	3.1	-6.2	11.8	1.1	-10.8	130.3	12.8	-117.5	142.4	11.4	-131.0
Kazakhstan	0.0	-	0.0	9.9	-	-9.9	1.0	0.1	-0.9	17.0	0.0	-17.0
Israel	0.2	0.2	0.0	4.5	0.2	-4.3	124.1	2.7	-121.4	119.4	2.0	-117.4
Japan	3.0	29.5	26.6	3.2	75.6	72.4	62.9	141.6	78.6	66.8	150.1	83.3
North and Central America	36.8	29.8	-7.0	20.0	12.2	-7.9	506.3	184.2	-322.1	267.2	173.3	-93.9
<i>of which:</i>												
United States of America	32.6	25.2	-7.4	19.1	9.1	-10.0	254.9	144.1	-110.8	192.0	141.2	-50.9
Canada	4.1	3.6	-0.6	0.7	1.4	0.7	244.8	26.3	-218.5	72.9	19.3	-53.6
Africa	11.3	95.3	84.0	12.6	43.1	30.5	284.7	586.2	301.5	258.9	449.9	191.0
<i>of which:</i>												
Egypt	1.6	8.4	6.7	8.7	16.3	7.6	138.4	160.1	21.7	99.5	75.5	-24.0
Australia and Oceania	0.6	0.2	-0.4	0.6	0.4	-0.2	34.9	7.7	-27.1	14.1	5.6	-8.5
South America	1.7	1.2	-0.5	2.5	3.9	1.4	38.3	8.4	-29.9	54.8	46.7	-8.1
Ships and Aircraft Stores	0.3	64.7	64.4	0.0	1.4	1.3	5.0	737.3	732.3	0.3	407.4	407.1
Caribbean and Bahamas Islands	25.6	0.2	-25.4	21.6	0.3	-21.3	432.8	3.3	-429.5	171.6	3.9	-167.7
Grand Total	511.1	391.2	-119.9	397.5	280.6	-117.0	6,119.9	3,664.8	-2,455.1	6,114.5	3,256.1	-2,858.5

^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	
		2017 ^P	2018 ^P	2017 ^P	2018 ^P
Main imports					
02	Meat and edible offal	4,759	4,256	59,249	61,548
03	Fish and crustaceans, etc.	10,067	2,680	142,907	148,760
04	Dairy produce; birds' eggs	4,124	3,411	50,999	53,141
10	Cereals	1,473	3,180	23,496	19,762
16	Preparations of meat/fish	3,768	2,847	51,943	51,731
19	Preparations of cereals	5,065	4,062	64,832	64,385
21	Miscellaneous edible preparations	2,978	2,760	40,945	40,825
22	Beverages, spirits and vinegar	4,514	5,218	66,473	76,978
23	Food residues and waste	2,711	2,156	33,979	31,596
24	Tobacco and manufactured tobacco substitutes	2,324	3,619	30,024	32,862
25	Salt/sulphur/earths/plastering materials and cement	2,398	2,096	25,915	30,647
27	Mineral fuels, oils and products	188,408	142,006	1,775,364	1,902,963
29	Organic chemicals	2,158	6,130	89,437	84,999
30	Pharmaceutical products	13,197	17,854	185,433	242,789
32	Tanning/dyeing extracts and paints	2,088	3,411	35,774	46,237
33	Essential oils and toilet preparations	3,156	3,191	36,473	39,734
39	Plastics and articles of plastics	10,866	10,986	162,610	165,260
48	Paper and paperboard articles	4,548	6,371	67,486	95,493
61	Knitted clothing	3,707	5,599	56,207	64,500
62	Woven clothing	4,115	3,228	53,518	51,084
64	Footwear, gaiters etc. and parts	3,429	3,167	54,261	49,478
71	Pearls, precious stones/metals and imitation jewellery	2,186	2,667	20,227	23,005
73	Articles of iron or steel	5,430	3,528	71,971	69,233
84	Machinery and mechanical appliances	72,418	26,772	441,770	422,276
85	Electrical machinery etc.	40,416	41,611	487,639	516,825
87	Vehicles (excluding trains) and parts thereof	15,819	11,254	183,431	171,291
88	Aircraft/spacecraft and parts thereof	9,540	20,325	398,195	463,502
89	Ships, boats and floating structures	28,771	4,087	727,989	382,716
90	Optical/photographic/cinematographic instruments	5,422	4,992	68,404	89,149
94	Furniture; bedding, etc.	5,554	4,556	64,086	67,014
Main exports					
03	Fish and crustaceans, etc.	35,643	76,650	171,818	149,869
19	Preparations of cereals	3,366	3,265	20,693	20,680
21	Miscellaneous edible preparations	8,954	12,690	65,433	65,449
24	Tobacco and manufactured tobacco substitutes	834	2,710	12,693	14,842
27	Mineral fuels, oils and products	155,576	34,206	1,426,522	999,272
29	Organic chemicals	6,755	4,839	40,777	37,799
30	Pharmaceutical products	23,873	21,861	288,460	289,734
33	Essential oils and toilet preparations	1,343	1,508	13,734	14,856
39	Plastics and articles of plastics	4,533	4,955	68,682	69,620
40	Rubber and articles of rubber	2,902	2,447	57,837	61,170
49	Printed books, newspapers	4,700	9,064	66,579	124,418
60	Knitted/crocheted fabrics	2,106	1,723	26,090	25,669
71	Pearls, precious stones/metals and imitation jewellery	1,640	2,040	7,419	9,053
84	Machinery and mechanical appliances	38,912	7,659	158,699	147,295
85	Electrical machinery etc.	56,293	51,906	697,765	674,710
88	Aircraft/spacecraft and parts thereof	13,356	8,348	114,264	103,020
90	Optical/photographic/cinematographic instruments	4,879	12,209	78,600	95,434
95	Toys, games and sports requisites	5,389	7,476	124,667	140,043
99	Special classifications	2,070	2,119	31,883	31,033

^P Provisional

Notes:

1. Table 4 is based on the World Customs Organisations Harmonised System (HS) codes. Figures for chapter 27 include 'Industrial supplies, primary' and 'Industrial supplies, processed'.

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 based 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 based on data reported as at the cut-off date printed on the front page of this release. These are provisional figures based on information provided by traders and customs 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 the "Statistical Concepts" link below.
7. Individual countries' data not appearing in this release are available from the National Statistics Office (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, Czechia, 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. 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?>
10. References to this news release are to be cited appropriately.
11. A detailed news release calendar is available on https://nso.gov.mt/en/News_Releases/Release_Calendar/Pages/News-Release-Calendar.aspx