

# News Release



Date: 9 February 2007  
No. : 22/2007  
Time of release: 11.00 hrs

Cut-off date for data presented:  
5 February 2007

**Theme:**  
**External Trade**

Compiled by:

International Trade Statistics Unit  
e-mail: [trade.nso@gov.mt](mailto:trade.nso@gov.mt)  
Tel: 25997169

The monthly calendar of NSO  
News Releases may be  
consulted on the Office's  
website at [www.nso.gov.mt](http://www.nso.gov.mt)

## International trade

### International trade: December 2006

*The visible trade gap narrowed by Lm11.0 million in December 2006 when compared to December 2005, but widened by Lm6.3 million in 2006 over the previous year.*

Provisional data for international trade shows that the visible trade gap in December 2006 stood at Lm33.2 million, down by Lm11.0 million from the same month of the previous year. In December 2006 imports declined while exports increased when compared to December 2005, as Table 1 shows. Less imports of mineral fuels and lubricants contributed to the shortfall in imports. Machinery and transport equipment accounted for most of the increase in exports during the month, although exports of mineral fuels and lubricants rose as well.

From the perspective of all twelve months of 2006, the visible trade gap widened by Lm6.3 million to stand at Lm500.2 million. This came about as the increase in imports during 2006, which amounted to Lm119.2 million, exceeded the Lm112.9 million rise in exports. Higher import values were registered especially for industrial supplies, but there were also increases in capital goods and consumer goods. The increase in exports during 2006 was generated primarily by machinery and transport equipment, food, chemicals as well as mineral fuels and lubricants, as shown in Table 2.

An analysis of the Total Trade Balance by commodity group, shown in Table 2, indicates that the deterioration in the balance for 2006 was due to miscellaneous manufactured articles, machinery and transport equipment, and semi-manufactured goods. Mineral fuels, food and chemicals brought an improvement in the trade balance.

The bulk of Malta's trade flows and consequent deficit continued to be directed to the European Union during 2006, as Table 3 shows ■

**National Statistics Office**  
**Library & Information Unit**  
Lascaris, Valletta CMR 02, Malta  
Tel: (+356) 25997219  
Fax: (+356) 25997205  
e-mail: [nso@gov.mt](mailto:nso@gov.mt)  
<http://www.nso.gov.mt>

Table 1. Trade by final use

Lm million

	2004 <sup>P</sup>	2005 <sup>P</sup>	December		January-December	
			2005 <sup>P</sup>	2006 <sup>P</sup>	2005 <sup>P</sup>	2006 <sup>P</sup>
<b>Imports</b>	<b>1,300.8</b>	<b>1,316.8</b>	<b>108.5</b>	<b>105.6</b>	<b>1,316.8</b>	<b>1,436.0</b>
<b>Industrial Supplies</b>	<b>623.6</b>	<b>593.5</b>	<b>45.7</b>	<b>53.5</b>	<b>593.5</b>	<b>699.9</b>
Primary	15.9	19.7	2.0	2.4	19.7	19.2
Semi-Finished	584.2	538.1	41.4	48.3	538.1	637.9
Finished	23.5	35.7	2.3	2.8	35.7	42.8
<b>Capital Goods and Others</b>	<b>235.9</b>	<b>227.8</b>	<b>15.9</b>	<b>14.0</b>	<b>227.8</b>	<b>239.7</b>
<b>Consumer Goods</b>	<b>339.5</b>	<b>355.0</b>	<b>26.5</b>	<b>27.9</b>	<b>355.0</b>	<b>365.5</b>
Food & Beverages	116.6	121.5	9.5	11.4	121.5	124.6
Durable Goods	135.9	150.7	10.8	10.5	150.7	154.7
Others	87.0	82.8	6.2	6.0	82.8	86.2
<b>Fuel and Lubricants</b>	<b>101.8</b>	<b>140.5</b>	<b>20.4</b>	<b>10.2</b>	<b>140.5</b>	<b>130.9</b>
<b>Exports</b>	<b>896.5</b>	<b>822.9</b>	<b>64.3</b>	<b>72.4</b>	<b>822.9</b>	<b>935.8</b>
<b>Visible Trade Gap</b>	<b>-404.3</b>	<b>-493.9</b>	<b>-44.2</b>	<b>-33.2</b>	<b>-493.9</b>	<b>-500.2</b>

Note: Totals may not add up due to rounding.

<sup>P</sup> Provisional

**Table 2. Balance of trade by major commodity groups**

Lm million

	2004 <sup>P</sup>	2005 <sup>P</sup>	December		January-December	
			2005 <sup>P</sup>	2006 <sup>P</sup>	2005 <sup>P</sup>	2006 <sup>P</sup>
<b>Imports</b>	<b>1,300.8</b>	<b>1,316.8</b>	<b>108.5</b>	<b>105.6</b>	<b>1,316.8</b>	<b>1,436.0</b>
Food	122.7	129.2	10.6	13.2	129.2	131.5
Beverages and Tobacco	22.5	17.4	1.4	0.9	17.4	16.3
Crude Materials	11.6	14.0	1.3	0.7	14.0	14.0
Mineral Fuels, Lubricants and related materials	102.2	140.8	20.4	10.2	140.8	131.2
Animal and Vegetable Oils and Fats	3.0	2.8	0.3	0.3	2.8	3.0
Chemicals	111.3	114.7	8.2	9.1	114.7	124.8
Semi-Manufactured Goods	146.9	145.6	11.8	11.8	145.6	145.2
Machinery and Transport Equipment	623.7	578.6	41.9	45.7	578.6	676.6
Miscellaneous Manufactured Articles	149.8	166.0	12.0	12.6	166.0	182.1
Miscellaneous Transactions and Commodities	7.1	7.7	0.6	1.1	7.7	11.3
<b>Exports</b>	<b>896.5</b>	<b>822.9</b>	<b>64.3</b>	<b>72.4</b>	<b>822.9</b>	<b>935.8</b>
Food	31.0	30.5	2.2	2.9	30.5	46.9
Beverages and Tobacco	14.2	9.0	0.4	0.3	9.0	8.3
Crude Materials	3.2	2.7	0.2	0.5	2.7	4.0
Mineral Fuels, Lubricants and related materials	29.2	9.2	0.5	3.6	9.2	13.0
Animal and Vegetable Oils and Fats	0.0	0.0	-	-	0.0	-
Chemicals	23.9	40.9	3.0	2.1	40.9	55.1
Semi-Manufactured Goods	50.6	54.0	3.0	3.4	54.0	49.2
Machinery and Transport Equipment	576.2	513.0	43.3	47.6	513.0	598.8
Miscellaneous Manufactured Articles	167.8	163.4	11.7	12.0	163.4	159.7
Miscellaneous Transactions and Commodities	0.4	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.7
<b>Total Balance</b>	<b>-404.3</b>	<b>-493.9</b>	<b>-44.2</b>	<b>-33.2</b>	<b>-493.9</b>	<b>-500.2</b>
Food	-91.7	-98.7	-8.4	-10.3	-98.7	-84.6
Beverages and Tobacco	-8.3	-8.4	-1.0	-0.6	-8.4	-8.0
Crude Materials	-8.4	-11.3	-1.1	-0.2	-11.3	-10.0
Mineral Fuels, Lubricants and related materials	-73.0	-131.6	-19.9	-6.6	-131.6	-118.2
Animal and Vegetable Oils and Fats	-3.0	-2.8	-0.3	-0.3	-2.8	-3.0
Chemicals	-87.4	-73.8	-5.2	-7.0	-73.8	-69.7
Semi-Manufactured Goods	-96.3	-91.6	-8.8	-8.4	-91.6	-96.0
Machinery and Transport Equipment	-47.5	-65.6	1.4	1.9	-65.6	-77.8
Miscellaneous Manufactured Articles	18.0	-2.6	-0.3	-0.6	-2.6	-22.4
Miscellaneous Transactions and Commodities	-6.7	-7.5	-0.6	-1.1	-7.5	-10.6

Notes: The commodity breakdown is in accordance with S.I.T.C. Rev. 3.

Totals may not add up due to rounding.

<sup>P</sup> Provisional

Table 3. Direction of trade

Lm million

Region and Country	December						January-December					
	2005 <sup>P</sup>			2006 <sup>P</sup>			2005 <sup>P</sup>			2006 <sup>P</sup>		
	Arrivals/ Imports	Dispatches/ Exports	Balance	Arrivals/ Imports	Dispatches/ Exports	Balance	Arrivals/ Imports	Dispatches/ Exports	Balance	Arrivals/ Imports	Dispatches/ Exports	Balance
<b>European Union</b>	<b>77.0</b>	<b>33.2</b>	<b>-43.8</b>	<b>74.4</b>	<b>29.1</b>	<b>-45.3</b>	<b>954.6</b>	<b>430.3</b>	<b>-524.3</b>	<b>981.6</b>	<b>471.2</b>	<b>-510.4</b>
of which:												
France	7.0	10.6	3.6	12.3	10.4	-1.9	121.2	121.8	0.6	133.4	140.6	7.2
Germany	6.8	6.8	0.0	8.3	6.9	-1.4	106.6	101.1	-5.5	110.3	119.4	9.1
Italy	38.4	3.0	-35.4	31.0	2.1	-28.9	408.2	43.0	-365.2	405.9	34.0	-371.9
United Kingdom	10.8	5.9	-4.9	9.5	4.7	-4.8	143.7	92.1	-51.6	145.8	88.4	-57.4
Euro Zone Area	62.9	24.1	-38.8	62.6	22.1	-40.5	779.1	305.1	-474.0	803.0	346.2	-456.8
<b>Non-European Union</b>	<b>31.5</b>	<b>31.1</b>	<b>-0.4</b>	<b>31.2</b>	<b>43.3</b>	<b>12.1</b>	<b>362.2</b>	<b>392.6</b>	<b>30.4</b>	<b>454.4</b>	<b>464.6</b>	<b>10.2</b>
<b>Other European Countries</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>-4.5</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>-3.7</b>	<b>44.1</b>	<b>8.8</b>	<b>-35.3</b>	<b>51.3</b>	<b>10.6</b>	<b>-40.7</b>
of which:												
Switzerland	1.5	0.2	-1.3	2.1	0.2	-1.9	19.5	3.5	-16.0	23.0	3.3	-19.7
Turkey	1.5	0.2	-1.3	0.7	0.1	-0.6	15.6	1.6	-14.0	16.2	1.8	-14.4
<b>Africa</b>	<b>6.9</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>-2.5</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>6.8</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>53.8</b>	<b>61.5</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>21.2</b>	<b>51.8</b>	<b>30.6</b>
of which:												
Egypt	4.6	0.0	-4.6	0.5	0.9	0.4	41.7	2.4	-39.3	9.0	3.5	-5.5
Libya	0.0	1.2	1.2	0.2	2.2	2.0	1.0	35.9	34.9	1.1	27.0	25.9
Tunisia	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.1	2.7	5.7	3.0	1.4	3.1	1.7
<b>North and Central America</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>8.3</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>10.0</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>73.7</b>	<b>120.9</b>	<b>47.2</b>	<b>82.9</b>	<b>124.3</b>	<b>41.4</b>
of which:												
United States	4.8	7.8	3.0	3.0	9.7	6.7	69.7	113.2	43.5	77.1	118.2	41.1
<b>West Indies</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>0.6</b>
<b>South America</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>-2.4</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>7.2</b>	<b>-0.2</b>	<b>10.3</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>-7.5</b>
<b>Asia</b>	<b>14.1</b>	<b>14.6</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>18.8</b>	<b>24.6</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>179.3</b>	<b>181.6</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>272.4</b>	<b>262.7</b>	<b>-9.7</b>
of which:												
China	2.3	1.0	-1.3	2.6	1.8	-0.8	25.0	7.6	-17.4	44.7	22.9	-21.8
Hong Kong	0.5	1.8	1.3	0.4	4.3	3.9	6.2	24.5	18.3	7.3	38.4	31.1
Japan	1.6	1.1	-0.5	1.2	4.0	2.8	24.5	17.8	-6.7	30.3	45.0	14.7
Korea Republic of	1.1	0.2	-0.9	0.9	0.3	-0.6	11.9	3.8	-8.1	13.4	5.3	-8.1
Malaysia	1.1	0.1	-1.0	2.2	0.3	-1.9	17.7	5.3	-12.4	28.5	6.7	-21.8
Singapore	3.3	8.2	4.9	7.7	10.4	2.7	51.2	96.9	45.7	91.7	120.2	28.5
<b>Australia and Oceania</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>-0.2</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>-0.1</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>-2.1</b>	<b>15.8</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>-13.9</b>
<b>Ships &amp; Aircraft Stores</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>9.6</b>	<b>9.6</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>9.4</b>	<b>9.4</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>108.5</b>	<b>64.3</b>	<b>-44.2</b>	<b>105.6</b>	<b>72.4</b>	<b>-33.2</b>	<b>1316.8</b>	<b>822.9</b>	<b>-493.9</b>	<b>1,436.0</b>	<b>935.8</b>	<b>-500.2</b>

<sup>P</sup> Provisional

Arrivals/Dispatches relate to transactions with EU Member States

Note: Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Imports/Exports relate to transactions with non-EU countries

Table 4. Trade by principal traded commodities

Lm'000

CHP NO	Commodity description	December		January-December	
		2005 <sup>P</sup>	2006 <sup>P</sup>	2005 <sup>P</sup>	2006 <sup>P</sup>
		Main Imports			
02	Meat	895	1,392	14,482	16,949
04	Dairy produce	1,121	1,235	13,019	13,029
08	Edible fruit and nuts	865	519	11,739	8,963
16	Preparations of meat, fish, etc	773	958	10,479	10,867
19	Cereal preparations, biscuits, etc	1,560	1,464	16,867	17,245
21	Miscellaneous edible preparations	865	1,003	11,449	11,508
22	Beverages and spirits	894	633	12,734	12,650
27	Mineral petroleum products	20,399	10,254	141,558	131,812
29	Organic chemicals	650	623	12,276	15,513
30	Pharmaceutical products	2,387	1,914	26,929	33,106
33	Toilet preparations	1,067	1,253	16,761	16,412
39	Plastics and articles thereof	3,615	3,853	52,628	53,931
44	Wood and articles of wood	1,047	929	10,072	9,613
48	Paper and articles thereof	2,437	2,075	28,278	31,342
49	Printed matter	623	1,728	11,165	10,974
52	Cotton	338	355	8,807	4,863
61	Knitted clothing	950	1,123	15,906	17,016
62	Woven clothing	1,214	923	21,202	18,880
64	Footwear	369	316	8,976	8,475
69	Ceramic products	863	825	10,349	10,492
71	Gold, silver and articles thereof	1,352	1,822	14,568	18,971
72	Iron and steel	1,356	2,483	14,663	16,099
73	Articles of iron and steel	2,083	1,714	18,794	19,960
84	Machinery and mechanical appliances	8,175	8,258	130,755	129,802
85	Electrical machinery and equipment	28,653	32,094	355,423	442,607
87	Motor vehicles	4,037	3,772	64,964	67,795
88	Aircraft and parts	996	1,659	15,503	19,494
89	Ships, boats and floating structures	355	78	10,336	18,996
90	Scientific instruments	1,787	1,831	33,913	45,429
94	Furniture	2,013	2,465	24,081	23,874
		Main Exports			
03	Fish	351	1,684	6,197	23,475
21	Miscellaneous edible preparations	766	1,068	19,074	18,357
27	Mineral petroleum products	522	3,559	8,937	12,766
29	Organic chemicals	140	294	6,703	7,021
30	Pharmaceutical products	2,266	1,203	24,095	39,743
33	Toilet preparations	241	258	6,270	3,051
39	Plastics and articles thereof	999	1,494	13,632	16,507
40	Rubber and articles thereof	1,182	1,201	20,724	19,910
49	Printed matter	3,449	4,268	34,352	34,251
60	Knitted fabrics	1,122	1,197	15,389	15,603
62	Woven clothing	2,744	997	35,613	21,564
71	Gold, silver and articles thereof	149	428	3,938	5,432
73	Articles of iron and steel	266	589	8,260	6,768
84	Machinery and mechanical appliances	3,505	2,899	53,511	40,224
85	Electrical machinery and equipment	37,044	43,512	428,754	527,580
87	Motor vehicles	1,511	741	21,584	23,351
90	Scientific instruments	2,004	2,212	31,695	37,897
95	Toys and games	1,037	1,807	28,542	30,130
99	Special classifications	644	375	7,116	6,578

<sup>P</sup> Provisional

## **Methodological notes**

1. The data in this release are based on:
  - a. the Customs Declarations for imports from and exports to countries that are not Members States of the European Union (EU) and, on
  - b. the Intrastat Supplementary Declaration that traders in merchandise goods must submit in respect of Arrivals (Imports) and the Dispatches (Exports) of goods from and to the 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 the 1 May 2004. The requirements of the Supplementary Declaration, which at EU level was introduced as from the 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 data in this release are provisional and therefore subject to revision. Regular revisions to monthly and annual trade data may be carried out for up to two (2) years after the reference period.