



## Welsh goods exports, 2020

31 March 2021  
SB 14/2021

### Key points

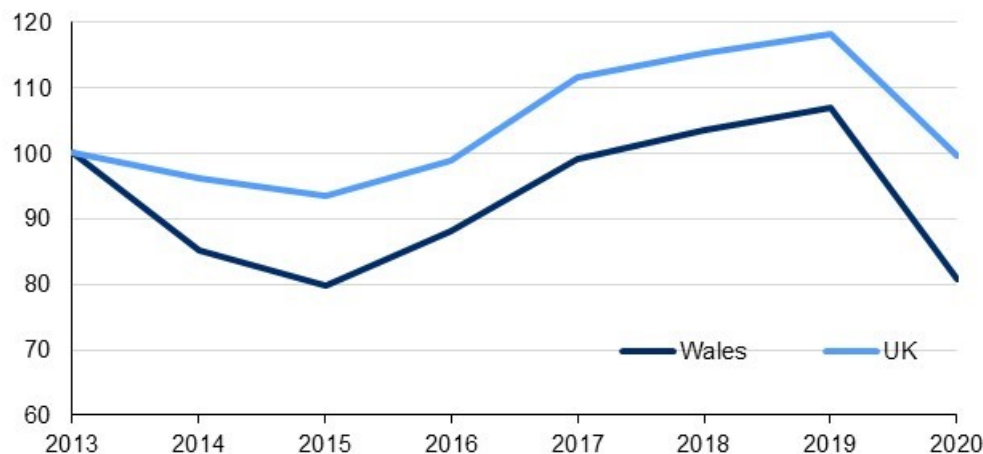
- The value of Welsh goods exports was £13.4 billion in 2020, a decrease of £4.3 billion (down 24.4%) from the previous year. Across the UK as a whole, goods exports decreased by 15.6%. The decreases are the largest since comparable records began. Trade in recent months has been more volatile than usual as a result of the (COVID-19) pandemic and events leading to EU exit.
- Exports to EU countries decreased by £3.0 billion (down 27.5%) and to non-EU countries by £1.4 billion (down 19.7%). Exports to the EU accounted for 58.1% of Welsh exports, compared with 48.1% of UK exports.
- Other Transport Equipment (transport equipment other than road vehicles) was the largest export category, making up 19.2% of total exports; although this was a decrease of £1.6 billion (down 38.7%).

**Table 1: Value of Welsh and UK goods exports by destination**

	Destination	Amounts (£ billions)		Percentage Change
		2019	2020	
<b>Wales:</b>	EU	10.8	7.8	-27.5%
	Non-EU	7.0	5.6	-19.7%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>17.8</b>	<b>13.4</b>	<b>-24.4%</b>
<b>UK:</b>	EU	168.5	141.1	-16.3%
	Non-EU	179.3	152.5	-15.0%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>347.8</b>	<b>293.6</b>	<b>-15.6%</b>

Source: WG analysis of Regional Trade in Goods Statistics, HMRC

**Chart 1: Index of goods exports by year, Wales & UK (2013 = 100)**



Source: WG analysis of Regional Trade in Goods Statistics, HMRC

### About this bulletin

The provisional data in this bulletin summarises HMRC estimates of goods exports from Wales in 2020, providing comparisons with the UK. The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and events leading to EU exit are likely to have affected Welsh goods exports in 2020.

The figures are modelled estimates. Exports are allocated to UK countries and regions based on the proportion of employees in that area.

Figures relate to goods exported to destinations outside the UK. They do not include service exports.

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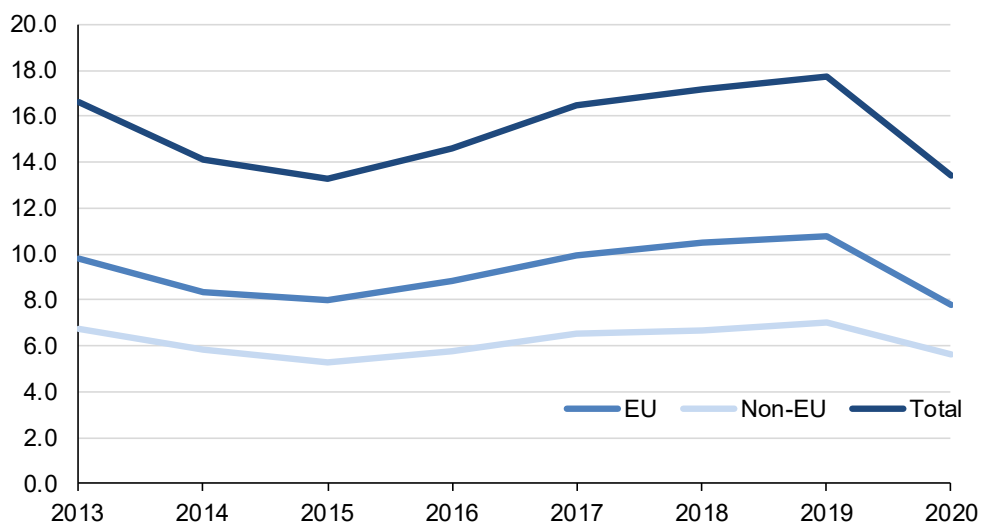
## We want your feedback

Welsh Government statisticians intend to review its analysis and publication of HMRC trade data including the contents of this annual goods exports bulletin (see Key quality information for more detail). If you would like to be involved in a review, or provide any feedback on any aspect of these statistics, please email [stats.trade@gov.wales](mailto:stats.trade@gov.wales)

### 1. Welsh goods exports by destination

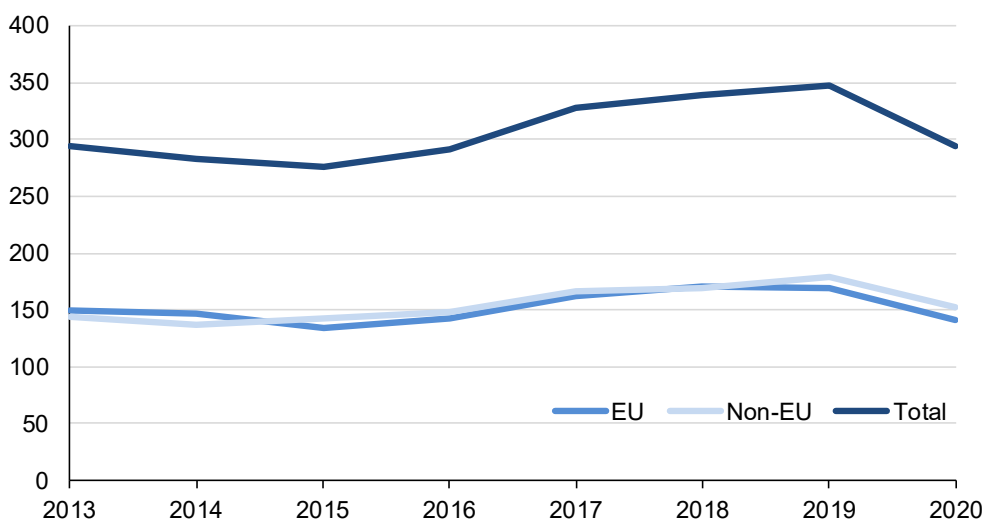
The value of goods exports from Wales decreased by £4.3 billion (down 24.4%) to £13.4 billion in 2020. Exports to EU countries were down £3.0 billion (down 27.5%) and exports to non-EU countries down by £1.4 billion (down 19.7%). The value of exports from the UK also decreased over this period, down 15.6%, with exports to EU countries down by 16.3% and exports to non-EU countries down by 15.0%. (Chart 1.1).

**Chart 1.1: Goods exports by year and destination, Wales (£bn)**



Source: WG analysis of Regional Trade in Goods Statistics, HMRC

**Chart 1.2: Goods exports by year and destination, UK (£bn)**



Source: WG analysis of Regional Trade in Goods Statistics, HMRC

In 2020, Germany was the largest export market for Welsh products, accounting for £2.2 billion (16.0%) of exports, although the value of exports to Germany decreased by £0.7 billion from the previous year. France was the second largest export market, accounting for £1.8 billion (13.7%) then the USA, with £1.8 billion (13.4%).

Compared with the previous year, exports to all the top five countries have decreased. Exports to France showed the largest absolute decrease of £983 million (down 34.9%), followed by USA (including Puerto Rico), decreasing £945 million (down 34.5%).

Outside the top five destinations, exports to United Arab Emirates had the largest fall, decreasing £172 million (down 37.2%). While total goods exports decreased, some countries did show increases. Exports to China showed the largest country increase of £63 million (up 15.4%). (Table 1.1)

**Table 1.1: Top 10 destinations for Welsh goods exports (£m)**

Country	2019	2020	Change	
			Level	Percentage
Germany	2,881	2,152	-728	-25.3%
France	2,819	1,836	-983	-34.9%
USA (including Puerto Rico)	2,744	1,798	-945	-34.5%
Ireland	1,696	1,183	-513	-30.3%
Netherlands	981	724	-257	-26.2%
China	407	470	63	15.4%
Belgium	547	447	-100	-18.3%
Spain	471	346	-125	-26.6%
Turkey	338	325	-13	-3.9%
United Arab Emirates	463	291	-172	-37.2%

Source: WG analysis of Regional Trade in Goods Statistics, HMRC

## 2. Welsh goods exports by product categories

Other Transport Equipment (transport equipment other than road vehicles) was the category with the highest export value in 2020, followed by Power Generating Machinery and Equipment. Export values for seven of the 2020 top ten products decreased compared to the previous year. The overall decrease in exports from Wales was mainly due to decreases in Other Transport Equipment (down £1,629 million, 38.7%), Petroleum, Petroleum Products & Related Materials (down £1,032 million, 43.4%). And Power Generating Machinery and Equipment (down £701 million, 31.5%). The Medical & Pharmaceutical products product group saw the largest absolute increase, up £52 million (6.9%). (Table 2.1).

**Table 2.1: Top 10 products for Welsh goods exports (£m)**

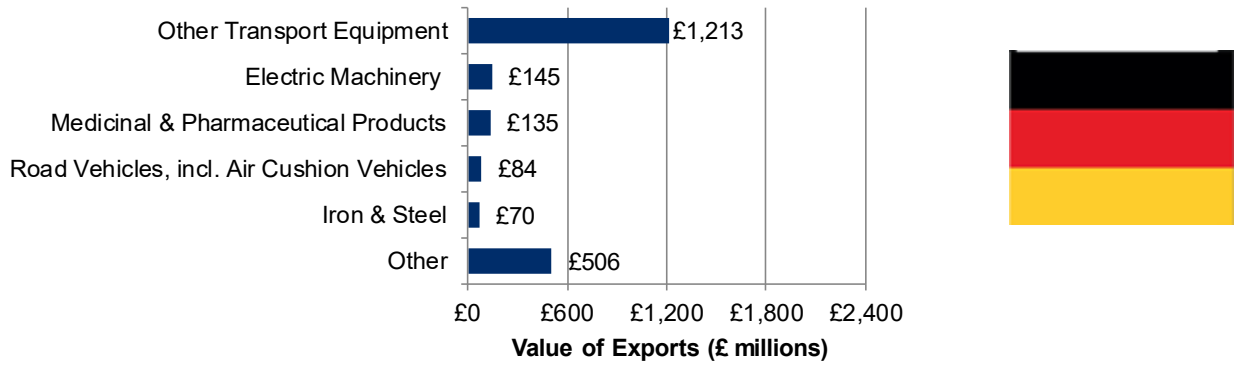
Product category	2019	2020	Change	
			Level	Percentage
Other Transport Equipment	4,207	2,579	-1,629	-38.7%
Power Generating Machinery & Equipment	2,229	1,527	-701	-31.5%
Petroleum, Petroleum Products & Related Materials	2,378	1,346	-1,032	-43.4%
Iron & Steel	957	859	-98	-10.3%
Medicinal & Pharmaceutical Products	760	812	52	6.9%
Electric Machinery, Apparatus & Appliances & Electric Parts Thereof N.E.S	807	738	-68	-8.4%
Road Vehicles, incl. Air Cushion Vehicles	586	464	-122	-20.8%
Chemical Materials & Products N.E.S	428	455	27	6.3%
Professional, Scientific & Controlling Ins & Apparatus N.E.S.	493	415	-78	-15.9%
Machinery Specialized For Particular Industries	369	379	10	2.7%

*WG analysis of Regional Trade in Goods Statistics, HMRC*

### 3. Welsh goods exports by destination and product<sup>1</sup>, 2020

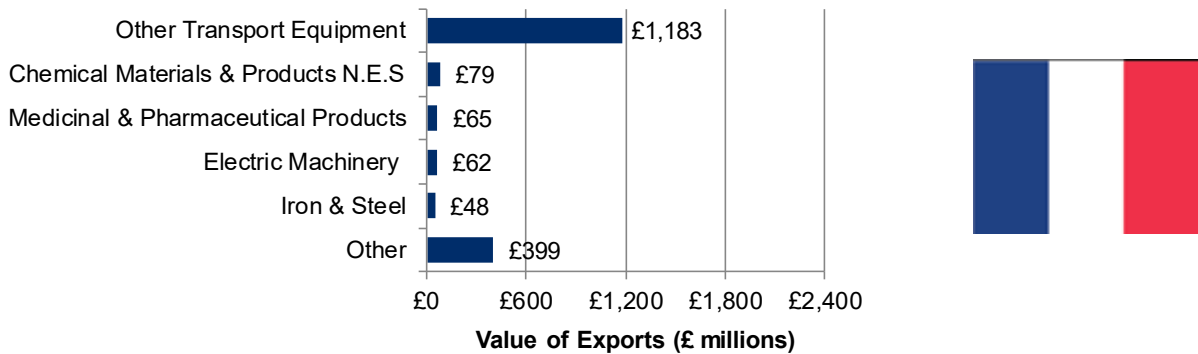
The three largest export countries for Wales were Germany, France and USA (including Puerto Rico). The largest export product to Germany and France was Other Transport Equipment and the largest product to the USA was Petroleum, Petroleum Products & Related Materials. (Charts 3.1 - 3.3)

**Chart 3.1: Welsh goods exports to Germany by product, 2020**



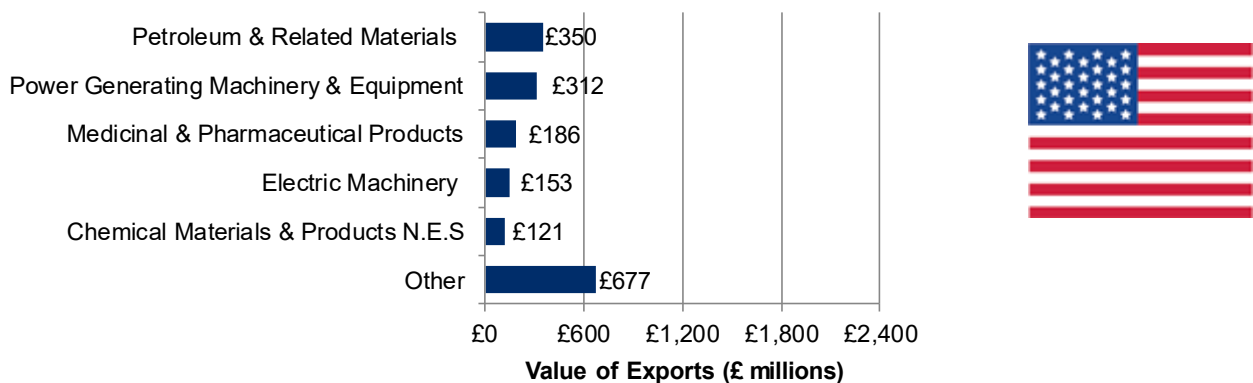
Source: WG analysis of 2020 Regional Trade in Goods Statistics, HMRC

**Chart 3.2: Welsh goods exports to France by product, 2020**



Source: WG analysis of 2020 Regional Trade in Goods Statistics, HMRC

**Chart 3.3: Welsh goods exports to the USA (including Puerto Rico) by product, 2020**

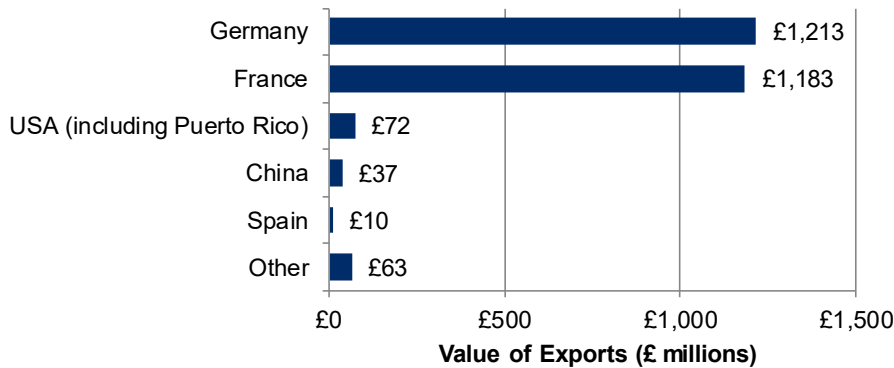


Source: WG analysis of 2020 Regional Trade in Goods Statistics, HMRC

<sup>1</sup> Category names have been shortened on charts. Petroleum & Related Materials is Petroleum, Petroleum Products and Related Materials; Electric Machinery is Electric Machinery, Apparatus and Appliances and Electric Parts Thereof NES; Professional & Scientific Apparatus is Professional, Scientific and Controlling Ins and Apparatus NES.

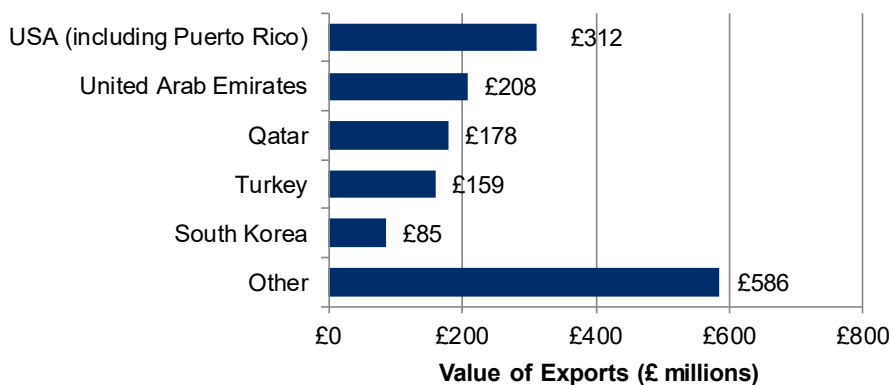
The three largest export products for Wales were Other Transport Equipment (transport equipment other than road vehicles), Power Generating Machinery & Equipment and Petroleum Products & Related Materials. France and Germany combined received 93% of Welsh exports of Other Transport Equipment (47% and 46% respectively). USA received 20% of Welsh exports in Power Generating Machinery & Equipment. Ireland received 42% of Welsh exports of Petroleum Products & Related Materials. (Charts 3.4 - 3.6)

**Chart 3.4: Destinations for Welsh exports in other transport equipment, 2020**



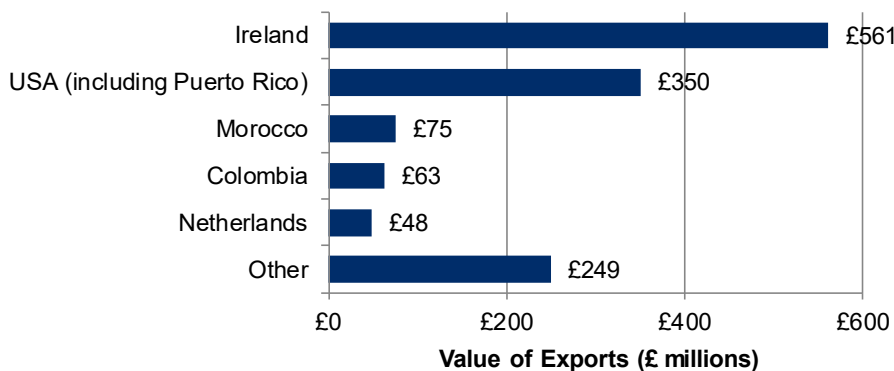
Source: WG analysis of 2020 Regional Trade in Goods Statistics, HMRC

**Chart 3.5: Destinations for Welsh exports in power generating machinery & equipment, 2020**



Source: WG analysis of 2020 Regional Trade in Goods Statistics, HMRC

**Chart 3.6: Destinations for Welsh exports in petroleum, petroleum products & related materials, 2020**



Source: WG analysis of 2020 Regional Trade in Goods Statistics, HMRC

## Key quality information

### We want your feedback

Welsh Government statisticians intend to review its analysis and publication of HMRC trade data including which will affect the contents of this annual goods exports bulletin.

This Wales export release is produced from [HMRC Regional Trade Statistics](#). Welsh Government have historically produced statistical bulletins which summarise HMRC quarterly and annual regional export statistics for Wales, the data is also made available on [StatsWales](#). In reviewing the statistics we publish we aim to streamline the trade data available and will engage with users to make sure we continue to meet their needs.

If you would like to be like to be involved in a review, or provide any feedback on any aspect of these statistics, please email [stats.trade@gov.wales](mailto:stats.trade@gov.wales)

### Relevance

The provisional data in this bulletin summarises [HMRC Regional Trade in Goods Statistics](#) (RTS) of goods exports from Wales in 2020, providing comparisons with the UK. The COVID-19 pandemic and events leading to EU exit are likely to have affected Welsh goods exports in 2020.

This bulletin contains analysis data for 2019 and 2020. These statistics are used by the Welsh Government to monitor the performance in goods exports for Wales, as well as providing comparisons to the UK and other regions. This bulletin is also used by other public sector organisations, businesses, academia and private individuals.

### Accuracy

The data in this bulletin are the Regional Trade in Goods Statistics (RTS) published by HMRC. These statistics refer to goods that have crossed the UK frontier. This means that exports from Wales to other parts of the UK are not included and there is no element included for components produced in Wales when the final product is completed in and then exported from another part of the UK. HMRC does not receive information in respect of goods that move wholly within the UK. Further, these figures do not contain any information on the export of services such as banking or tourism.

### Timeliness and punctuality

Regional Trade in Goods Statistics are published quarterly by HMRC in March, June, September and December. Headline exports statistics are published by the Welsh Government at the same time.

### Accessibility and clarity

Exports data are published on [StatsWales](#). The Headline Statistics and Statistical Bulletin are available on the [Welsh Government website](#). The latest HMRC quarterly Regional Trade in Goods Statistics (RTS) release is available from the [HM Revenue & Customs website](#).

## Comparability and coherence

1. Comparable measures for other UK countries are published on StatsWales.
2. Data shown for the European Union (EU) are based on the 28 member states which comprised the EU (that is the 28 states less the UK, as only exports to destinations outside the UK are covered). This includes Croatia which joined the EU on 1 July 2013.
3. The quarterly totals of the value for RTS do not equate to the totals already published as the UK-wide Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics. Certain goods, such as North Sea crude oil, ships and aircraft stores, and those not in free circulation, that are shipped to EU countries using traditional Customs declarations, are not allocated to a UK region. Exports relating to overseas companies, registered for VAT in the UK, but with no place of business in the UK, have been excluded. Channel Islands and Isle of Man trade is also excluded. In addition, some exports to countries outside the EU cannot be allocated to a region because the VAT registration numbers have not been properly declared. These exclusions mean that it is not possible to reconcile total figures for regional trade against figures for UK trade.
4. Data are collated using the [Standard International Trade Classification \(SITC\)](#) system.

## Methodology

From 1 May 2016, there was a methodological change to the way the Non-EU trade-in-goods statistics are compiled. Following a change in legislation, the Non-EU trade-in-goods statistics have changed from the 'General Trade' system of compilation to the 'Special Trade' system. For further information on the differences between General and Special Trade, please see the [HMRC Methodology Paper for Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics](#). Special Trade data is only available for 2013 Q1 onwards. All data in this bulletin is Special Trade.

HMRC has revised the methodology used to calculate Regional Trade in Goods Statistics. Business trade is now allocated to a region based on the proportion of employees in that region rather than where the location of the Head Office of the business is. Under the old methodology Welsh EU exports accounted for 39.2% reported for the four quarters ending in June 2016. The new methodology stands at 60.9% for the four quarters ending in June 2016. Data are available under the new methodology from 2013 Q1. It is inappropriate to compare current data with data prior to 2013 and it has been excluded from this bulletin. Further information on the quality, revisions and methodology of the data can be found on the [HMRC website](#).

## Revisions

Data for previous quarters have been revised in accordance with the HMRC revision policy where data on exports for the current calendar year may be validated and revised at any time, while data on exports for the previous calendar may be validated and revised until just after the second quarter figures for the current calendar year are published.

Any figures which are currently provisional are marked with '(p)' and are subject to revision. Revisions to the data arise as a result of including trade amendments and late submissions received by HM Revenue and Customs. Figures are provisional for up to 18 months.

For data from our own outputs, we follow Welsh Government [revisions policy](#).



## National Statistics status

The [United Kingdom Statistics Authority](#) has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#).

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the UK Statistics Authority's regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

It is Welsh Government's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected of National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

These statistics last underwent a [full assessment against the Code of Practice](#) in 2013. Since the latest review by the Office for Statistics Regulation, we have continued to comply with the Code of Practice for Statistics, and have made the following improvements:

- Removed large tables of data from the release and ensured that the data is available in online interactive tables
- Improved visuals and commentary to make it easier for the readers to draw out key messages

## Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFG)

The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act puts in place seven well-being goals for Wales. These are for a more equal, prosperous, resilient, healthier and globally responsible Wales, with cohesive communities and a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. Under section (10)(1) of the Act, the Welsh Ministers must (a) publish indicators ("national indicators") that must be applied for the purpose of measuring progress towards the achievement of the Well-being goals, and (b) lay a copy of the national indicators before Senedd Cymru. The 46 national indicators were laid in March 2016.

Information on the indicators, along with narratives for each of the well-being goals and associated technical information is available in the [Well-being of Wales report](#).

Further information on the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#).

The statistics included in this release could also provide supporting narrative to the national indicators and be used by public services boards in relation to their local well-being assessments and local well-being plans.

## Further details

The document is available at: <https://gov.wales/welsh-exports>

## Next update

To be confirmed

## Open Government Licence

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