

Provisional figures for registered trade in Malta recorded a trade deficit of €101.5 million during December 2020, compared to a deficit of €37.7 million in the corresponding month of 2019.

International Trade in Goods: December 2020

Cut-off date:
1 February 2021

Data in this news release presents all international trade in goods registered up to the indicated cut-off date (refer to methodological notes). A trade deficit of €101.5 million was recorded during December 2020, compared to a deficit of €37.7 million in the corresponding month of 2019. Both imports and exports registered decreases of €101.8 million and €165.6 million respectively when compared to the same month of 2019 (Table 1). The major decrease in the value of imports was recorded for mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials (€66.0 million). On the exports side, the main decreases were registered in mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials (€65.8 million) and food (€51.7 million) (Table 2).

January-December 2020

During 2020, the trade deficit narrowed by €1,462.3 million when compared to 2019, reaching €2,159.8 million. Both imports and exports decreased by €2,138.4 million and €676.1 million respectively (Table 1). Lower imports were mainly recorded in machinery and transport equipment (€1,258.8 million) and mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials (€656.5 million). On the exports side, mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials (€457.2 million) and machinery and transport equipment (€108.5 million) accounted for the main decreases (Table 2).

Imports from the European Union reached €2,815.4 million, or 53.3 per cent of total imports. There was a decrease of €526.7 million in imports from euro area countries when compared to the same period in 2019. The main increase and decrease in imports were registered from Algeria (€103.4 million) and the United Kingdom (€966.6 million) respectively. With respect to exports, the main increase was directed to China (€4.6 million), whereas Italy registered the highest decrease (€119.6 million) (Table 3) ■

Chart 1. International Trade in Goods - quarterly

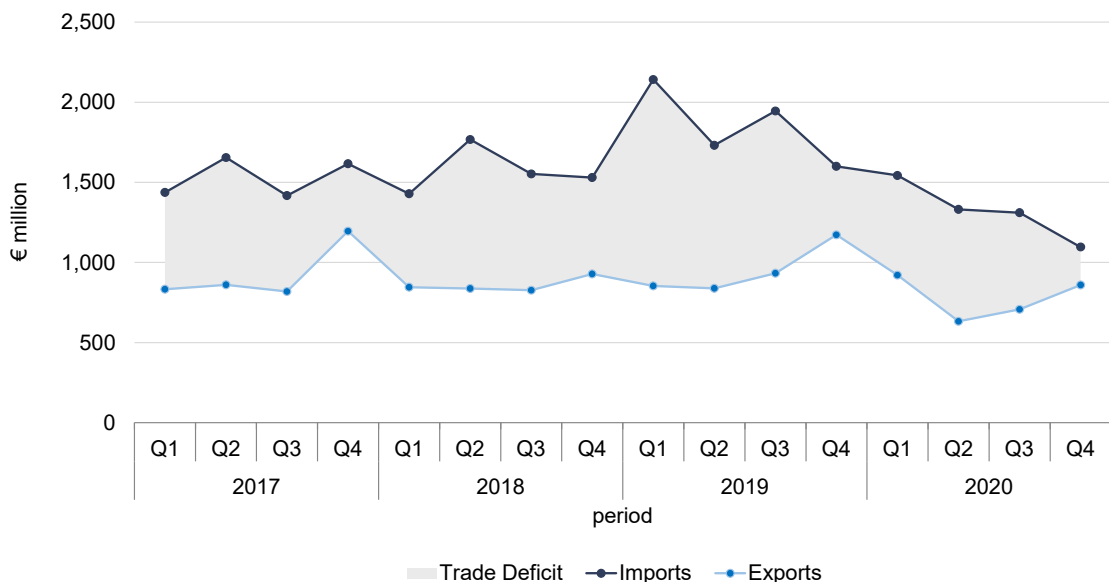


Table 1. Trade in goods by period and broad economic category

€ million

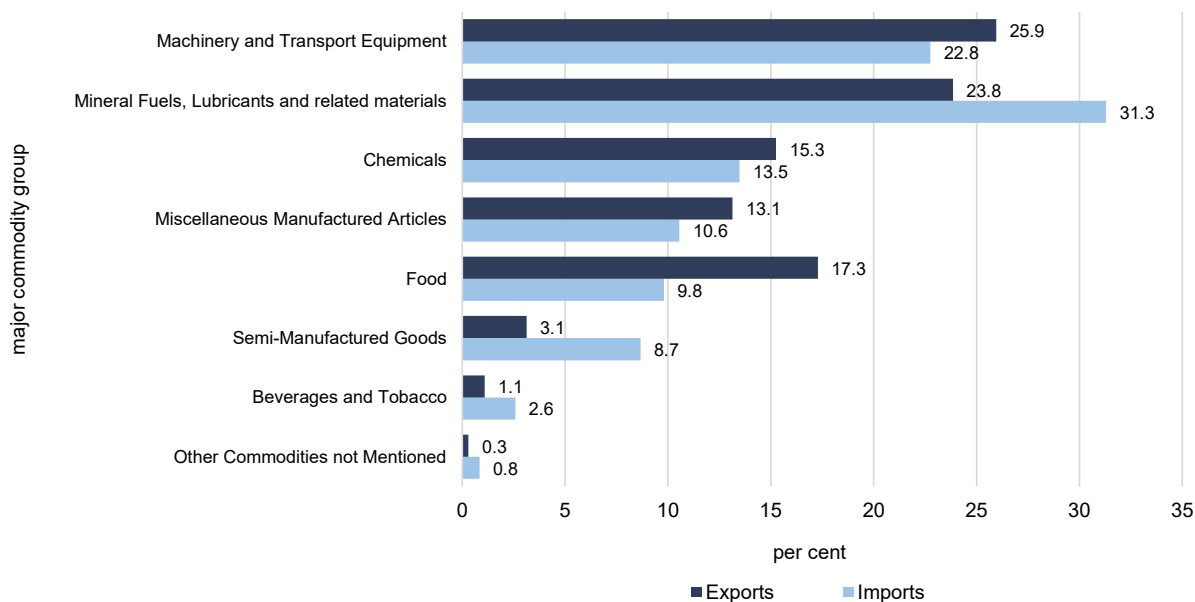
Broad economic category	2017 ^P	2018 ^P	2019 ^P	2020 ^P	December	
					2019 ^P	2020 ^P
Imports	6,126.8	6,281.4	7,420.1	5,281.7	456.1	354.3
Industrial Supplies	1,324.1	1,472.1	1,659.1	1,368.9	112.2	86.6
Primary	126.3	125.7	116.5	83.0	3.1	3.0
Semi-Finished	1,012.3	1,140.9	1,338.0	1,188.3	98.1	78.2
Finished	185.5	205.4	204.5	97.6	11.1	5.4
Capital Goods and Others	1,680.4	1,402.9	2,375.8	1,292.0	46.1	44.2
Consumer Goods	1,350.5	1,471.9	1,554.0	1,418.8	120.9	112.6
Food and Beverages	530.9	546.7	560.3	483.6	41.8	36.2
Durable Goods	469.5	497.3	549.8	481.9	43.1	39.4
Others	350.1	428.0	443.9	453.3	35.9	37.0
Fuels and Lubricants	1,771.7	1,934.5	1,831.2	1,201.9	176.9	110.9
Exports	3,708.0	3,440.9	3,798.0	3,121.9	418.4	252.8
<i>of which:</i>						
Exports of Fuels and Lubricants	1,419.9	986.6	1,128.6	701.1	126.1	60.3
Balance of Trade	-2,418.9	-2,840.6	-3,622.1	-2,159.8	-37.7	-101.5

^P Provisional

Notes:

1. Table 1 is based on the United Nations Statistical Division BEC codes (Broad Economic Categories). Figures for 'Fuels and Lubricants' refer to BEC 0031 and BEC 0032; respectively 'Fuels and lubricants, primary' and 'Fuels and lubricants, processed'.
2. Totals may not add up due to rounding.
3. A disaggregation by quarter is available on the excel version of this news release:
https://nso.gov.mt/en/News_Releases/View_by_Unit/Unit_A4/International_Trade/Pages/International-Trade-in-Goods.aspx

Chart 2. Percentage distribution of registered trade in December 2020 by major commodity group



Notes:

1. The commodity breakdown is in accordance with the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC) Rev. 3.
2. "Other Commodities not Mentioned" includes the commodity groups "Miscellaneous Transactions and Commodities", "Animal and Vegetable Oils and Fats" and "Crude Materials".
3. Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Table 2. Balance of trade in goods by period and major commodity group

€ million

Major commodity group	2017 ^P	2018 ^P	2019	2020 ^P	December	
					2019 ^P	2020 ^P
Imports	6,126.8	6,281.4	7,420.1	5,281.7	456.1	354.3
Food	625.1	629.3	611.6	522.3	40.0	34.8
Beverages and Tobacco	95.9	109.8	128.4	104.4	10.3	9.2
Crude Materials	26.2	27.4	36.4	30.1	2.0	2.0
Mineral Fuels, Lubricants and related materials	1,775.0	1,947.0	1,865.1	1,208.6	176.9	110.9
Animal and Vegetable Oils and Fats	9.3	9.7	9.8	9.0	0.7	0.7
Chemicals	521.5	603.1	688.1	671.2	48.0	47.8
Semi-Manufactured Goods	362.0	413.9	441.6	440.6	38.2	30.7
Machinery and Transport Equipment	2,236.2	2,006.4	3,056.2	1,797.4	91.6	80.6
Miscellaneous Manufactured Articles	470.2	529.6	578.4	494.1	48.0	37.4
Miscellaneous Transactions and Commodities	5.3	5.2	4.6	4.0	0.3	0.4
Exports	3,708.0	3,440.9	3,798.0	3,121.9	418.4	252.8
Food	283.4	345.3	287.4	237.4	95.4	43.7
Beverages and Tobacco	38.6	44.6	46.9	41.4	4.3	2.8
Crude Materials	13.4	13.3	10.0	10.5	0.4	0.5
Mineral Fuels, Lubricants and related materials	1,469.1	1,048.6	1,158.3	701.1	126.1	60.3
Animal and Vegetable Oils and Fats	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Chemicals	383.1	387.0	523.6	503.9	51.6	38.6
Semi-Manufactured Goods	150.8	153.8	137.8	100.5	5.9	7.9
Machinery and Transport Equipment	988.0	957.1	1,025.5	917.0	85.6	65.6
Miscellaneous Manufactured Articles	380.7	488.8	605.8	608.1	48.9	33.2
Miscellaneous Transactions and Commodities	0.8	2.5	2.6	1.9	0.1	0.3
Balance of Trade	-2,418.9	-2,840.6	-3,622.1	-2,159.8	-37.7	-101.5
Food	-341.6	-284.0	-324.2	-284.9	55.4	8.9
Beverages and Tobacco	-57.4	-65.2	-81.4	-62.9	-6.0	-6.4
Crude Materials	-12.9	-14.1	-26.4	-19.7	-1.6	-1.5
Mineral Fuels, Lubricants and related materials	-305.9	-898.5	-706.8	-507.5	-50.8	-50.6
Animal and Vegetable Oils and Fats	-9.3	-9.6	-9.7	-9.0	-0.7	-0.7
Chemicals	-138.4	-216.1	-164.5	-167.3	3.6	-9.2
Semi-Manufactured Goods	-211.3	-260.0	-303.7	-340.0	-32.3	-22.8
Machinery and Transport Equipment	-1,248.2	-1,049.3	-2,030.6	-880.4	-6.0	-15.0
Miscellaneous Manufactured Articles	-89.5	-40.8	27.3	114.0	0.9	-4.2
Miscellaneous Transactions and Commodities	-4.5	-2.7	-1.9	-2.0	-0.2	-0.1

^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 in goods by period and by region/country

€ million

Region/Country	December						January-December					
	2019 ^P			2020 ^P			2019 ^P			2020 ^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	339.8	105.8	-234.1	245.6	94.8	-150.8	5,598.2	1,693.6	-3,904.6	3,551.6	1,339.6	-2,212.0
<i>of which:</i>												
European Union	274.3	96.9	-177.4	198.0	86.5	-111.5	3,559.8	1,568.7	-1,991.1	2,815.4	1,226.7	-1,588.7
<i>of which:</i>												
euro area	254.1	83.2	-170.8	187.1	74.4	-112.7	3,170.3	1,298.5	-1,871.8	2,643.6	1,016.8	-1,626.8
<i>of which:</i>												
Italy	104.8	12.0	-92.8	83.7	21.8	-61.9	1,255.1	286.9	-968.3	1,016.9	167.3	-849.6
France	39.7	12.6	-27.0	27.4	16.9	-10.5	461.1	269.9	-191.2	329.4	233.6	-95.7
Germany	31.0	46.2	15.2	24.7	24.0	-0.6	508.7	495.3	-13.4	329.8	424.2	94.4
Spain	14.7	2.6	-12.2	18.1	2.9	-15.2	260.4	87.3	-173.1	251.5	34.5	-217.1
Greece	7.0	3.6	-3.4	12.6	0.5	-12.2	203.0	22.8	-180.2	99.1	12.2	-86.9
Netherlands	10.1	2.1	-8.0	9.3	3.8	-5.5	203.9	66.3	-137.6	172.0	52.4	-119.6
EFTA Countries	5.1	1.5	-3.6	4.1	2.3	-1.9	58.7	27.4	-31.3	41.3	19.4	-21.9
<i>of which:</i>												
Switzerland	5.0	1.3	-3.7	3.7	2.0	-1.7	41.2	23.6	-17.6	31.8	15.3	-16.5
Other European Countries	60.5	7.3	-53.1	43.5	6.1	-37.4	1,979.7	97.4	-1,882.3	694.9	93.5	-601.4
<i>of which:</i>												
United Kingdom*	29.0	2.6	-26.3	29.7	2.6	-27.1	1,363.6	56.2	-1,307.5	397.0	45.8	-351.3
Turkey	12.0	0.9	-11.0	10.4	2.2	-8.2	308.0	29.3	-278.7	182.9	24.1	-158.8
Asia	68.9	157.3	88.3	57.5	76.3	18.8	1,016.5	765.5	-251.0	974.6	719.1	-255.5
<i>of which:</i>												
China	19.7	3.3	-16.4	18.3	5.9	-12.4	270.2	37.0	-233.3	371.9	41.6	-330.3
India	11.0	5.6	-5.4	14.4	3.1	-11.3	157.1	21.3	-135.7	180.5	24.3	-156.2
Japan	4.7	56.6	51.8	4.0	21.1	17.0	56.5	161.1	104.7	50.2	128.5	78.3
South Korea	2.9	17.8	15.0	3.7	2.4	-1.4	41.1	77.4	36.4	49.9	33.1	-16.8
Taiwan	3.0	0.4	-2.6	3.2	0.3	-2.8	26.7	8.6	-18.1	24.1	3.9	-20.2
North and Central America	31.0	17.8	-13.2	5.8	13.7	8.0	261.0	186.2	-74.8	264.9	141.9	-123.0
<i>of which:</i>												
United States of America	30.2	15.7	-14.5	4.4	9.8	5.5	168.3	159.1	-9.3	116.3	115.3	-1.0
Canada	0.7	1.1	0.4	1.3	2.2	0.9	87.0	15.9	-71.2	146.8	16.8	-129.9
Africa	14.3	57.4	43.1	20.3	24.0	3.7	165.2	436.3	271.1	238.6	389.2	150.6
<i>of which:</i>												
Algeria	-	0.8	-0.8	7.7	0.7	-7.0	13.3	32.8	19.5	116.7	11.8	-104.9
Australia and Oceania	0.5	1.1	0.5	0.4	0.2	-0.2	113.8	6.7	-107.2	14.8	4.3	-10.5
South America	1.4	3.2	1.8	1.8	4.0	2.2	24.8	27.2	2.4	22.1	16.5	-5.6
Caribbean and Bahamas Islands	0.0	0.2	0.2	22.9	0.1	-22.7	240.3	6.2	-234.2	214.9	5.5	-209.4
Ships and Aircraft Stores	0.1	75.7	75.6	0.0	39.6	39.6	0.2	676.5	676.3	0.2	505.8	505.6
Grand Total	456.1	418.4	-37.7	354.3	252.8	-101.5	7,420.1	3,798.0	-3,622.1	5,281.7	3,121.9	-2,159.8

^P Provisional

* For the exclusion/inclusion of the United Kingdom in the European Union computation, refer to methodological note 7 (ii).

Notes:

1. Ranking is based according to top countries of import for the period under review.
2. Arrivals/Dispatches relate to registered transactions with EU Member States.
3. Imports/Exports relate to registered transactions with Non-EU Member States (see methodological notes for country groupings).
4. Totals may not add up due to rounding.
5. A full list of countries is available on the excel version of this news release:

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

Table 4. Trade in goods by period and principal traded commodities

€ 000

Chapter number	Commodity description	December		January-December	
		2019 ^P	2020 ^P	2019 ^P	2020 ^P
Main imports					
02	Meat and edible offal	5,702	4,820	63,222	53,352
04	Dairy produce; birds' eggs	4,378	3,349	53,846	49,401
16	Preparations of meat/fish	3,491	3,649	53,172	48,508
19	Preparations of cereals	5,452	4,265	70,399	60,777
20	Preparations of vegetables, fruit and nuts	2,538	2,029	32,429	26,918
21	Miscellaneous edible preparations	2,683	2,786	42,417	37,846
22	Beverages, spirits and vinegar	4,785	5,217	81,667	61,443
23	Food residues and waste	2,369	3,173	32,618	34,756
24	Tobacco and manufactured tobacco substitutes	5,570	3,995	47,617	43,652
25	Salt/sulphur/earths/plastering materials and cement	3,272	2,890	39,998	41,549
27	Mineral fuels, oils and products	176,904	110,869	1,868,902	1,208,656
29	Organic chemicals	8,363	4,233	169,973	118,602
30	Pharmaceutical products	18,522	25,708	242,837	287,821
32	Tanning/dyeing extracts and paints	4,825	2,792	53,366	52,775
33	Essential oils and toilet preparations	3,114	2,417	47,671	38,990
38	Miscellaneous chemical products	2,346	2,279	26,748	31,290
39	Plastics and articles of plastics	12,609	13,219	175,035	170,273
48	Paper and paperboard articles	12,401	7,897	109,961	116,850
61	Knitted clothing	8,514	5,583	81,642	66,996
62	Woven clothing	4,736	3,082	56,851	55,632
64	Footwear, gaiters etc.and parts	4,334	3,246	59,900	38,900
69	Ceramic products	2,782	2,328	30,495	29,576
73	Articles of iron or steel	4,464	3,890	68,030	58,683
84	Machinery and mechanical appliances	26,494	23,013	391,751	304,502
85	Electrical machinery etc.	47,296	41,450	586,411	520,082
87	Vehicles (excluding trains) and parts thereof	11,505	12,456	202,619	155,947
88	Aircraft/spacecraft and parts thereof	6,548	3,661	459,722	561,291
90	Optical/photographic/cinematographic instruments	6,798	5,180	81,981	79,411
94	Furniture; bedding, etc.	6,188	5,379	77,942	69,671
95	Toys, games and sports requisites	2,070	2,210	28,039	22,302
Main exports					
03	Fish and crustaceans, etc.	71,599	21,977	188,343	144,664
19	Preparations of cereals	6,495	5,293	22,483	21,997
21	Miscellaneous edible preparations	16,936	16,062	71,865	66,419
24	Tobacco and manufactured tobacco substitutes	2,452	2,254	18,521	30,084
27	Mineral fuels, oils and products	126,004	60,264	1,157,338	700,307
29	Organic chemicals	31,085	5,396	154,952	75,154
30	Pharmaceutical products	13,613	26,036	287,524	360,165
33	Essential oils and toilet preparations	1,754	1,567	20,851	15,750
38	Miscellaneous chemical products	1,176	1,344	12,028	6,661
39	Plastics and articles of plastics	5,926	6,518	87,901	81,401
40	Rubber and articles of rubber	2,252	3,804	56,577	51,233
49	Printed books, newspapers	19,067	12,772	199,040	259,078
60	Knitted/crocheted fabrics	1,507	2,225	23,399	23,985
84	Machinery and mechanical appliances	8,545	7,436	187,404	117,657
85	Electrical machinery etc.	47,959	52,555	651,969	630,315
88	Aircraft/spacecraft and parts thereof	28,585	5,313	177,201	162,250
90	Optical/photographic/cinematographic instruments	6,869	4,966	80,895	97,049
91	Clocks and watches/parts	572	1,140	6,749	6,592
95	Toys, games and sports requisites	10,594	8,488	155,546	144,565

^P Provisional

Notes:

- 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'.
- A full list of chapters is available on the excel version of this news release:
https://nso.gov.mt/en/News_Releases/View_by_Unit/Unit_A4/International_Trade/Pages/International-Trade-in-Goods.aspx
- Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Methodological Notes

1. Figures presented in this news release are based on register data available 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 declarations 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. No estimations are included in these figures to compensate for late or non-response by traders or late documentation of customs declarations.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. 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 signifies a trade surplus.
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 in the "Statistical Concepts" link below.
7.
 - 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 and Sweden. As of February 1, 2020, the United Kingdom is no longer part of the European Union.

For reference periods February 2020 onwards, monthly news releases having a country breakdown will carry EU data excluding the United Kingdom. Users are advised to use data with caution when making comparisons since this will result in discrepancies, unless United Kingdom information is removed from previous figures.
 - iii. EFTA (European Free Trade Association) countries comprise Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.
8. More detailed and disaggregated data not appearing in this release is available in the excel version of this release or upon request from the NSO.
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: <https://metadata.nso.gov.mt/concepts.aspx>

Metadata: <https://metadata.nso.gov.mt/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