

Forestry Statistics 2020

Sources: Trade

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Introduction

Statistics on imports and exports are based on the published overseas trade statistics for intra-EU trade and extra-EU trade produced by HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) and available at www.uktradeinfo.com.

Data on apparent consumption is derived as UK production plus imports less exports.

Data Sources and Methodology

The data obtained from HMRC cover quantities (weights and volumes) and values of wood and wood products imported to and exported from the UK. Data are compiled for the following products:

- roundwood - woodfuel, industrial roundwood;
- wood charcoal;
- wood pellets;
- wood chips, particles and residues;
- sawnwood;
- wood-based panels - veneer sheets, plywood, particleboard, fibreboard;
- pulp - wood pulp, other pulp;
- recovered paper;
- recovered wood;
- paper & paperboard - graphic papers (including newsprint), sanitary & household papers, packaging materials, other paper & paperboard.

For roundwood, sawnwood and wood-based panels, a softwood/hardwood breakdown is available.

The HMRC data are also available by country of origin (for imports) and destination country (for exports).

For consistency with timber deliveries data, softwood roundwood and wood chip exports figures are replaced by those compiled from companies believed to export roundwood and/or chips. For Northern Ireland, figures are provided by the Forest Service.

Where the HMRC reporting units for quantity differ from those shown in this publication, figures are adjusted using standard FAO/ECE conversion factors, which are listed in the Timber section of the Sources chapter.

The figures may also be adjusted where an apparent inconsistency in the UK trade figures cannot be resolved before the international return is required.

Historically, HMRC wood trade figures have often necessitated adjustments, following liaison with practitioners in the trade (including the Expert Group on Timber and Trade Statistics, Wood Panel Industries Federation (www.wpif.org.uk) and Confederation of Paper Industries (www.paper.org.uk)). This is partly because detailed intra-EU wood trade data is obtained through a survey of businesses that trade above a particular value threshold. Businesses that trade below this threshold are only required to report the total value of their imports and exports. Therefore the trade data reported in this publication for individual products is based on a potentially biased survey. More information on HMRC statistics can be found at www.uktradeinfo.com/Statistics/Pages/Statistics.aspx.

The "Methodology note: UK wood imports and exports" sets out the data analysis methods used to produce annual estimates of UK wood imports and exports and is available at www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/statistics/about-our-statistics/methodology-and-outputs/.

Quality

Detailed information on the quality of the trade statistics presented in this publication is provided in the "Quality Report: UK Wood Production and Trade", available at www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/statistics/about-our-statistics/code-of-practice/quality-of-official-statistics/.

Further quality information on our Official Statistics is available at: www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/statistics/about-our-statistics/code-of-practice/quality-of-official-statistics/.

Revisions

Statistics on imports and exports are subject to revision after publication if revisions are made to the overseas trade statistics produced by HMRC. Figures may also be refined to take account of expert advice from the Expert Group on Timber & Trade Statistics and trade associations on the trade in specific products.

Figures for 2019 are final; provisional figures were previously released in "UK Wood Production and Trade: 2019 provisional figures". Since the release of 2019 provisional figures, the following revisions have been made:

- Import quantities – an upward revision to pulp in 2018 (1%).
- Export quantities – revisions to woodbased panels in 2019 (down 2%) and to pulp in 2018 (down 3%) and 2019 (up 1%).
- Import values – revisions to woodbased panels in 2019 (up 2%) and to sawnwood in 2019 (down less than 0.5%).

- Export values – a downwards revision to sawnwood in 2019 (2%) and an upwards revision to woodbased panels in 2019 (1%).

Other revisions to 2018 and 2019 data resulted in changes of no more than 0.5% magnitude.

Information on revisions made since "Forestry Statistics 2019" are provided in "UK Wood Production and Trade: 2019 provisional figures".

Information on significant revisions to published statistics is provided in the "Quality Report: UK Wood Production and Trade" at www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/statistics/about-our-statistics/code-of-practice/quality-of-official-statistics/.

Our revisions policy sets out how revisions and errors to these statistics are dealt with, and can be found at:

www.forestresearch.gov.uk/documents/4355/FCrevisions.pdf.

Further information

Most of these statistics are used to compile data that are sent to international organisations in the Joint Forest Sector Questionnaires, in some cases giving more detail than in this release. These returns are published as Official Statistics on the Forest Research website; provisional figures in May and final figures in September/ October. The statistics are used by Eurostat Forestry Statistics, UNECE Timber Bulletins, and UN/FAO Forest Product Statistics and are published on the FAOSTAT database (www.fao.org/faostat/en/#home).

A summary of the international statistics available from the FAOSTAT website are presented in the chapter on International Forestry. For more information, please refer to the International Forestry section of the Sources chapter.

The definitions used in this publication are consistent with the international definitions, as given in the Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire definitions, available at www.fao.org/forestry/statistics/80572/en/.

The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry also collects, on an annual basis, estimates for the current year and projections for the following year of wood production, imports and exports. Results are available on the UNECE website (www.unece.org/forests/fpm/timbercommittee.html). Copies of UK returns for the UNECE Timber Forecast Questionnaire are available at www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/statistics/statistics-by-topic/international-returns/unece-timber-forecast-questionnaire/.

Figures for UK imports and exports of sawn softwood have previously been used alongside data from other sources to assess consumption of sawn softwood in the main end-user markets in the UK. Reports are available at www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/statistics/statistics-by-topic/timber-statistics/timber-utilisation-statistics/.

Release schedule

Provisional trade figures for 2020 will be released on 16 May 2021 in "UK Wood Production and Trade: 2020 provisional figures".

Final trade figures for 2020 will be released on 30 September 2021 in "Forestry Statistics 2021" and "Forestry Facts & Figures 2021".