**External Merchandise Trade Statistics – 2nd Quarter 2021**

# **Introduction**

 This issue of Economic and Social Indicators presents external merchandise trade statistics for the first and second quarters of 2021 and the years 2020 and 2019. These statistics are compiled from declarations lodged at the Customs Department of the Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA), by importers and exporters. Some of these declarations are usually revised at a later period and corrections are made accordingly on the computerised database of the Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA).

Thus, while revised figures for 2020 are published in this indicator, those for 2021 are still provisional and subject to revision as and when the Customs Department of the MRA submits latest amendments to Statistics Mauritius.

Data on external merchandise trade are compiled as per the recommendations of the United Nations General Trade System. According to this system, all goods entering and leaving the national frontier, including trading activities of the Freeport zone should be accounted for.

1. **Total value of trade and trade balance**

Total external merchandise trade for the second quarter of 2021 was valued at Rs 67,244 million, i.e. 8.9% higher than the value of Rs 61,743 million of the previous quarter and 44.7% higher than the value of Rs 46,458 million of the corresponding quarter of 2020.

For the second quarter of 2021, total exports (inclusive of ship’s stores & bunkers[[1]](#footnote-1)) were valued at Rs 19,447 million against total imports of Rs 47,797 million. In the first quarter, total exports (inclusive of ship’s stores and bunkers) amounted to Rs 18,957 million against total imports of Rs 44,390 million while for the corresponding quarter of 2020, total exports (inclusive of ship’s stores & bunkers) amounted to Rs 12,252 million against total imports of Rs 43,963 million. Compared to the previous quarter, total exports and total imports in the second quarter of 2021 were higher by 12.1% and 7.7% respectively. While compared to the corresponding quarter of 2020, total exports and total imports were up by 58.7% and 39.7% respectively.

The resulting trade deficit for the second quarter of 2021 worked out to Rs 28,350 million, 4.9% higher than the deficit of Rs 27,037 million of the previous quarter and 29.1% higher than the deficit of Rs 21,954 million of the corresponding quarter of 2020.



Compared to the first semester of 2020, total exports (inclusive of ship’s stores & bunkers) rose from Rs 31,209 million to Rs 36,800 million, showing an increase of around 17.9% (Fig 1). A similar increasing trend was observed in total imports for the same period. Total imports, increased by 17.9% in first semester of 2021, compared to the corresponding period of 2020. Consequently, the trade deficit for first semester of 2021 works out to around
Rs 55,387 million, 17.9% higher than the deficit of Rs 46,960 in the first semester of 2020.

1. **Total Exports**

**3.1 Total exports (Tables 1 & 3) – 2nd Quarter & 1st Semester 2021**

Total exports proceed for the second quarter of 2021, including domestic exports[[2]](#footnote-2),re-exports[[3]](#footnote-3) and ship’s stores and bunkers amounted to Rs 19,447 million, showing an increase of 12.1%, compared to the previous quarter. This is mainly explained by increases in exports of “Chemicals and related products, n.e.s.” (+56.1%), “Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material” (+37.3%), “Crude materials, inedible, except fuels” (+33.2%), “Machinery and transport equipment” (+20.5%), “Ships’ stores & bunkers” (+14.2%), “Food and live animals” (+3.3%) and “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” (+2.6%).

Compared to the corresponding quarter of 2020, total exports for the second quarter of 2021 increased by 58.7%. This is mainly explained by increases in exports of “Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material” (+167.7%), “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” (+107.9%), “Machinery and transport equipment” (+102.4%), “Crude materials, inedible, except fuels” (+84.9%), “Food and live animals” (+26.3%), “Ships’ stores & bunkers” (+20.5%) and “Chemicals and related products” (+14.6%).

Compared to corresponding semester of 2020, total exports for the first semester of 2021, increased by 17.9% which is mainly explained by increases in “Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material” (+48.6%), “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” (+42.6%), “Machinery & Transport” (+40.9%), “Crude materials, inedible, except fuels” (+39.0%), ,“Food and live animals” (+5.5%) and “Chemicals and related products, n.e.s.” (+4.2%), partly offset by a decrease in exports of “Ships’ stores & bunkers” (-10.6%).

Domestic exports, amounting to Rs 12,607 million, accounted for 64.8% of total exports in the second quarter of 2021. Compared to a value of Rs 11,764 million recorded in the first quarter of 2021, domestic exports increased by 7.2%. This is mainly explained by increases in domestic exports of “Chemicals and related products, n.e.s.” (+44.7%), “Crude materials, inedible, except fuels” (+35.0%), “Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material (+21.7%), “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” (+4.3%) and “Food and live animals” (+2.5%).

Compared to the corresponding quarter of 2020, domestic exports were higher by 66.7%, mainly explained by increases in exports of “Crude materials, inedible, except fuels” (+150.0%), “Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material” (+119.3%), “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” (+103.4%), “Food and live animals” (+36.2%) and “Chemicals and related products, n.e.s.” (+1.8%).

Compared to the corresponding semester of 2020, domestic exports for the first semester of 2021 were higher by 24.9%. This rise was mainly due to increases in the domestic exports of “Crude materials, inedible, except fuels” (+61.4%), “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” (+35.2%), “Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material” (+18.8%), “Food and live animals” (+18.5%), partly offset by a decrease in exports of “Chemicals and related products, n.e.s.” (-3.0%) (*Table 4*).

For the second quarter of 2021, re-exports stood at Rs 4,088 million, i.e. higher by 28.6% compared to the previous quarter, mainly due to increases in re-exports of “Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material” (+81.7%), “Chemicals and related products” (+61.4%), “Crude materials, inedible, except fuels” (+32.1%), “Machinery and transport equipment” (+24.8%) and “Food and live animals” (+10.9%), partly offset by a decrease in “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” (-5.5%) (*Table 5*).

Compared to the corresponding quarter of 2020, re-exports of merchandise goods rose by 69.8% mainly explained by increases in re-exports “Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material” (+362.3%), “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” (+137.8%), “Crude materials, inedible, except fuels” (+38.1%), “Machinery and transport equipment” (+114.2%) and “Chemicals and related products, n.e.s.” (+21.4%), partly offset by a decrease in the re-exports of “Food and live animals” (-21.7%).

Compared to the corresponding semester of 2020, re-exports increased by 22.8% in the first semester of 2021. This increase was mainly due to a rise in re-exports of “Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material” (+240.0%), “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” (+101.0%), “Machinery and transport equipment” (+41.4%), “Crude materials, inedible, except fuels” (+17.6%) and “Chemicals and related products, n.e.s.” (+8.0%), partly offset by a decrease in re-exports of “Food and live animals” (-46.3%).

**3.3 Exports of Export Oriented Enterprises (EOE) – 2nd Quarter 2021**

For the second quarter of 2021, exports of EOE amounted to Rs 10,428 million, compared to Rs 9,435 million in the previous quarter (+10.5%) and to Rs 5,273 million in the corresponding quarter of 2020 (+97.8%) (*Table 1*).

Compared to the first semester of 2020, exports of EOE increased by 34.5%, from Rs 14,770 million to Rs 19,863 million in the first semester of 2021.

Further details on these transactions will be presented in the issue of the Economic and Social Indicator on Export Oriented Enterprises, to be released on 27 September 2021.

**3.4 Exports by country of destination (Table 7) – 2nd Quarter 2021**

Analysis of exports figures by country of destination for the second quarter of 2021 showed that the European countries were our main buyers, purchasing some 42.2% of our exports for a value of Rs 7,045 million. Among countries, the major destinations for our exports were South Africa (13.8%), United Kingdom (10.9%), U.S.A. (8.1%), France (8.1%), Madagascar (7.5%), Spain (6.1%) and Reunion (4.1%).

Compared to the corresponding quarter of 2020, changes in exports to main markets were: South Africa (+209.1%), Reunion (+131.3%), Spain (+108.4%), United Kingdom (+71.8%), Madagascar (+46.0%), France (+36.1%) and U.S.A (+29.8%).



From Figure 2, compared to the corresponding semester of 2020, changes in exports to main markets in the first semester 2021 were: Reunion (+121.7%), South Africa (+89.2%), United Kingdom (+36.6%), Spain (+20.8%), France (+19.6%), Madagascar (+17.5%), and U.S.A (-6.5%).

**4. Total Imports**

**4.1 Total imports (Table 10) – 2nd Quarter & 1st Semester 2021**

Total imports for the second quarter of 2021 amounted to Rs 47,797 million, showing an increase of 7.7%, compared to the previous quarter. This is mainly due to increases in imports of “Chemicals and related products” (+76.0%), “Beverages and tobacco” (+42.4%), “Animal & vegetable oils and fats” (+39.7%), “Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material” (+13.1%), “Crude materials, inedible, except fuels” (+4.9%) and “Food and live animals” (+2.1%), partly offset by decreases in the imports of “Machinery and transport equipment” (-7.7%), “Mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials” (-4.4%) and “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” (-4.0%).

Compared to the corresponding quarter of 2020, total imports for the second quarter of 2021 increased by 39.7%. This is mainly due to increases in imports of “Mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials” (+95.6%), “Chemicals and related products” (+95.2%), “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” (+73.3%), “Crude materials, inedible, except fuels” (+42.0%), “Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material” (+40.3%), “Machinery and transport equipment” (+26.8%), “Animal & vegetable oils and fats” (+12.5%) and “Beverages and tobacco” (+5.7%), partly offset by a decrease in the imports of “Food and live animals” (-1.3%).

Compared to the corresponding semester of 2020, total imports increased by 17.9% in the first semester of 2021. This rise was mainly explained by increases in the imports of “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” (+54.4%), “Chemicals and related products, n.e.s.” (+52.7%), “Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material” (+25.4%), “Crude materials, inedible, except fuels” (+16.3%), “Animal & vegetable oils and fats” (+10.1%), “Beverages and tobacco” (+7.9%), “Food and live animals” (+6.7%), “Mineral fuels, lubricants, & related products” (+6.6%) and “Machinery & transport equipment” (+6.5%).

**4.2 Imports by SITC section (Table 10) – 2nd Quarter 2021**

Around 19.1% of imports in the second quarter of 2021 consisted of “Food and live animals” (Rs 9,128 million), 18.7% of “Machinery and transport equipment” (Rs 8,936 million), 16.3% of “Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material” (Rs 7,802 million), 15.6% of “Mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials” (Rs 7,457 million) and 15.0% of “Chemicals and related products” (Rs 7,151 million) and 9.2% of “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” (Rs 4,410 million).

Compared to the corresponding quarter of 2020, total imports for the second quarter 2021 increased by 39.7%. Main changes by section are as follows:

* “Mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials” increased by 95.6%, mainly due to an increase in the imports of “Refined petroleum products” (+124.8%).
* “Chemicals and related products” increased by 95.2%, mainly due to increases in the imports of “Medicinal & pharmaceutical products” (+211.9%), “Plastics in primary forms” (+63.8%) and “Plastics in non-primary forms” (+1.9%).
* “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” increased by 73.3%, mainly due to increases in the imports of “Watches and clocks & optical goods” (+134.8%), “Articles of apparel and clothing” (+102.8%), “Footwear” (+102.3%), “Professional, scientific & controlling instruments & apparatus, n.e.s” (+56.8%) and “Articles n.e.s, of plastic” (+12.4%).
* Crude materials, inedible, except fuels increased by 42.0% mainly due to an increase in imports of “Textile fibres” (+37.6%).
* “Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material” increased by 40.3%, mainly due to increases in the imports of “Pearls, precious & semi-precious stones (+508.3%), Cement” (+284.4%), “Textile yarn” (+132.2%), “Iron and Steel (+38.2%) and “Manufactures of metal, n.e.s” (+28.1%).
* “Machinery and transport equipment” increased by 26.8%, mainly due to increases in the imports of “Road vehicles” (+55.9%), “Electrical machinery, apparatus & appliances, n.e.s., & electrical parts of household type” (+32.7%), “General industrial machinery & equipment, n.e.s., & machine parts, n.e.s” (+23.3%), “Office

machines & automatic data processing machines” (+22.3%), “Machinery specialized for particular industries” (+19.2%) and “Telecommunications & sound recording & reproducing apparatus & equipment” (+9.6%).

The above-mentioned increases were partly offset by a decrease in imports of “Food and live animals” (-1.3%).

* 1. **Imports by country of origin – 2nd Quarter & 1st Semester 2021**

During the second quarter of 2021, our imports originated from five main countries, namely: India (17.5%), China (13.5%), South Africa (9.6%), U.A.E (9.4%) and France (5.9%)
(*Table 13*). Among continents Asia was our main supplier with a share of Rs 25,680 million, representing 53.7% of total imports.

Compared to the corresponding period of 2020, total imports from India, U.A.E, South Africa, France and China rose by 161.5%, 82.1%, 59.5%, 13.4% and 4.0% respectively.



From Figure 3, compared to the corresponding semester of 2020, total imports for the first semester of 2021 from India, South Africa, France and China have witnessed increases of 85.0%, 31.6%, 19.3% and 18.4% respectively, as compared to total imports from U.A.E which decreased by 16.5%.

**5. Trade with Member States of Regional Organizations – 2nd Quarter 2021**

During the second quarter of 2021, total exports to African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) States stood at Rs 4,583 million against imports of Rs 6,421 million (*Table 14*). The trade deficit with ACP countries worked out to Rs 1,838 million. South Africa, was the main buyer and supplier with shares of 50.3% and 71.6%, respectively.

Exports to COMESA member states attained Rs 2,045 million while imports from these countries amounted to around Rs 2,026 million, resulting in a trade surplus of Rs 19 million.

Madagascar was the main buyer with a share of 61.1%, followed by Kenya (19.8%). Our main suppliers were Seychelles (31.3%), Kenya (26.2%) and Egypt (17.7%) (*Table 15*).

Trade with SADC countries showed a deficit of Rs 1,742 million, resulting from imports of Rs 5,683 million against exports worth Rs 3,941 million. The main suppliers were South Africa (80.9%) and Seychelles (11.2%) and our main buyers were South Africa (58.5%) and Madagascar (31.7%) (*Table 16*).

**6. Trade in Freeport Zone – 2nd Quarter 2021**

During the second quarter of 2021, total imports of the Freeport Zone stood at
Rs 5,323 million, higher by 329.3% compared to the corresponding quarter of 2020 and 115.9% compared to the previous quarter – (*Table 12*). Compared to corresponding semester of 2020, freeport imports rose by 163.5% and for this period, the main items imported were

“Chemicals & related products, n.e.s” (42.6%) and “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” (23.4%).

Re-exports for the second quarter of 2021were valued at Rs 2,356 million, representing an increase of 31.3% compared to the corresponding period of 2020 (*Table 6*). Compared to the corresponding semester of 2020, a decrease of 0.8% was recorded in the first semester of 2021, mainly explained by a decrease in the re-exports of “Food and live animals”
(-52.0%).

**7. Forecast 2021**

Based on trends and information from various sources, the forecast of total exports for 2021 will be around Rs 78,000 million, 11.1% higher than the total exports of around
Rs 70,200 million in 2020. Total imports for 2021, including one-off items such as machinery for metro terminals, cranes and tugs, will be around Rs 186,000 million, 12.3% higher than the total imports of around Rs 165,700 million in 2020.

The trade deficit for 2021 is forecasted at around Rs 108,000 million, 13.1% higher as compared to around Rs 95,500 million in 2020.

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**Notes**

**(1)** **Scope and coverage**

**External merchandise trade statistics** are compiled according to the General Trade System as recommended by the United Nations. Using the national boundary as the statistical frontier, the General Trade System is a record of all goods entering (imports) and leaving the country (exports).

**Imports** include goods brought in directly for domestic consumption plus goods imported into customs bonded warehouses.

**Exports** cover:

* Domestic exports defined as goods of national origin, that is goods produced in the exporting country.
* Re-exports which are exported in the same condition as imported or after undergoing minor operations which leave them essentially unchanged and include re-exports from customs bonded warehouses.
* Ship’s Stores and Bunkers (SSB)are included in total exports and are shown separately.

Trade by parcel post is also included in imports and exports.

**(2)** **Valuation**

**Imports** are valued on a C.I.F. (Cost, Insurance and Freight) basis, whilst exports on a F.O.B. (Free on Board) basis.

**Cost, Insurance and Freight** (C.I.F) value is the value of a country's imports of goods, including all charges for transporting and insuring the goods from the country of exports to the given country but excluding the cost of unloading from the ship, aircraft unless it is borne by the carrier.

**Free on Board** (F.O.B) value is the value of a country's exports of goods, including all costs of transporting the goods to the customs frontier, export duties.

**(3) Classification of commodities**

Commodities are coded according to the **Harmonised Commodity Description and Coding System Nomenclature (HS 2017)**. However, for the purposes of economic analysis and to facilitate international comparison of trade by commodity data, the commodities are also classified according to **the Standard International Trade Classification (Revision 4) (SITC Rev. 4)**. The HS and the SITC Rev. 4 are six- and five-digit codes respectively but have been extended to eight and seven digits to accommodate national requirements.

**(4)** **Symbols used**

 - Nil or negligible

 -. - Not applicable

 ... Not available

1. Ships stores and bunkers, which consist of jet fuel and victuals supplied to foreign vessels and aircraft, are included in total exports and are shown separately [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Domestic exports are defined as goods of national origin. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Re-exports are goods which are exported in the same condition as imported or after undergoing minor operations which leave them essentially unchanged.

 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)