**External Merchandise Trade Statistics – 2nd Quarter 2024**

# **Introduction**

This issue of Economic and Social Indicators presents external merchandise trade statistics for the first and second quarters of 2024 and the years 2022 and 2023. 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).

Figures for 2024 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 2024 was valued at Rs 106,291 million, i.e. 14.6% higher than the value of Rs 92,766 million of the previous quarter and 8.7 % higher than the value of Rs 97,791 million of the corresponding quarter of 2023.

For the second quarter of 2024, total exports (inclusive of ship’s stores & bunkers[[1]](#footnote-1)) were valued at Rs 29,579 million against total imports of Rs 76,712 million. In the first quarter of 2024, total exports (inclusive of ship’s stores and bunkers) amounted to Rs 23,359 million against total imports of Rs 69,407 million while for the second quarter of 2023, total exports (inclusive of ship’s stores & bunkers) amounted to Rs 25,149 million against total imports of Rs 72,642 million. Compared to the previous quarter, total exports and total imports in the second quarter of 2024 were higher by 26.6% and by 10.5% respectively. While compared to the corresponding quarter of 2023, total exports and total imports were higher by 17.6% and 5.6% respectively.

The resulting trade deficit for the second quarter of 2024 worked out to Rs 47,133 million, 2.4% higher than the deficit of Rs 46,048 million of the previous quarter and 0.8% lower than the deficit of Rs 47,493 million of the corresponding quarter of 2023.



Compared to the first semester of 2023, total exports (inclusive of ship’s stores & bunkers) rose from Rs 50,660 million to Rs 52,938 million in the first semester of 2024, showing an increase of around 4.5% (Fig 1). Total imports went up from Rs 138,252 million in first semester of 2023 to Rs 146,119 million in the first semester of 2024, representing an increase of 5.7%. Consequently, the trade deficit for first semester of 2024 worked out to around Rs 93,181 million, 6.4% higher than the deficit of Rs 87,592 million in the first semester of 2023.

1. **Total Exports**

**3.1 Total exports (Tables 1 & 3) – 2nd Quarter & 1st Semester 2024**

Total exports proceed for the second quarter of 2024, including domestic exports[[2]](#footnote-2),re-exports[[3]](#footnote-3) and ship’s stores and bunkers amounted to Rs 29,579 million, showing an increase of 26.6% compared to the previous quarter. This is mainly explained by increases in exports of “Machinery and transport equipment” (+79.4%), “Ships’ stores & bunkers” (+59.5%), “Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material” (+42.0%), “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” (+17.5%), “Food and live animals” (+5.8%) and “Chemicals and related products, n.e.s” (+2.7%).

Compared to the corresponding quarter of 2023, total exports for the second quarter of 2024 increased by 17.6%. This is mainly explained by increases in the exports of “Ships’ stores & bunkers” (+91.4%), “Food and live animals” (+9.0%) and “Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material” (+0.1%), partly offset by decreases in the exports of “Machinery and transport equipment” (-12.9%), “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” (-6.2%) and “Chemicals and related products, n.e.s.” (-1.4%).

Total exports for the first semester of 2024, amounting to Rs 52,938 million increased by 4.5%, from Rs 50,660 million in the corresponding semester of 2023. This is mainly explained by increases in the exports of “Ships’ stores & bunkers” (+57.1%), “Chemicals and related products” (+5.4%) and “Food and live animals” (+2.2%), partly offset by decreases in the exports of “Machinery and transport equipment” (-44.8%), “Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material” (-13.7%) and “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” (-10.3%).

Domestic exports, amounting to Rs 15,551 million, accounted for 52.6% of total exports in the second quarter of 2024. Compared to a value of Rs 13,626 million recorded in the first quarter of 2024, domestic exports increased by 14.1%. This is mainly explained by increases in domestic exports of “Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material” (+29.8%), “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” (+17.0%), “Food and live animals” (+8.7%) and “Chemicals and related products, n.e.s.” (+0.7%), partly offset by a decrease in the exports of “Crude materials, inedible, except fuels” (-0.3%).

Compared to the corresponding quarter of 2023, domestic exports for the second quarter of 2024 were higher by 6.2%, mainly explained by increases in exports of “Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material” (+28.3%) and “Food and live animals” (+12.1%), partly offset by decreases in the exports of “Crude materials, inedible, except fuels” (-20.2%), “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” (-7.3%) and “Chemicals and related products, n.e.s.” (-1.6%).

Domestic exports for the first semester of 2024, valued at Rs 29,177 milliom were lower by 2.3%, from Rs 29,874 million in the corresponding semester of 2023. This decline was mainly due to decreases in the exports of “Crude materials, inedible, except fuels” (-20.9%), “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” (-12.5%) and “Chemicals and related products, n.e.s.” (-0.2%), partly offset by increases in the exports of “Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material” (+17.4%) and “Food and live animals” (+1.2%) (*Table 4*).

For the second quarter of 2024, re-exports stood at Rs 5,260 million, i.e. higher by 24.2% compared to the previous quarter, mainly due to increases in re-exports of “Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material” (+123.2%), “Machinery and transport equipment” (+79.1%), “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” (+19.0%) and “Chemicals and related products, n.e.s.”(+3.5%), partly offset by a decrease in the exports of “Food and live animals” (-12.8%) (*Table 5*).

Compared to the corresponding quarter of 2023, re-exports for second quarter of 2024 for merchandise goods declined by 11.3%, mainly explained by decreases in re-exports “Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material” (-45.9%), “Machinery and transport equipment” (-17.9%), “Food and live animals” (-11.1%), “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” (-2.5%) and “Chemicals and related products, n.e.s.” (-1.4%).

Re-exports amounting to Rs 9,495 million in the first semester of 2024 decreased by 18.9% from Rs 11,706 million in the first semester of 2023. This decline was mainly due to decreases in the re-exports of “Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material” (-61.7%), “Machinery and transport equipment” (-47.4%) and “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” (-2.4%), partly offset by increases in the re-exports of “Food and live animals” (+9.4%) and “Chemicals and related products, n.e.s.” (+7.6%).

**3.2 Exports of Export Oriented Enterprises (EOE) – 2nd Quarter & 1st Semester 2024**

For the second quarter of 2024, exports of EOE amounted to Rs 11,435 million, compared to Rs 9,469 million in the previous quarter (+20.8%) and to Rs 11,986 million in the corresponding quarter of 2023 (-4.6%) (*Table 1*).

Compared to the first semester of 2023, exports of EOE decreased by 12.6%, from   
Rs 23,923 million to Rs 20,904 million in the first semester of 2024.

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 2024.

**3.3 Exports by country of destination (Table 7) – 2nd Quarter & 1st Semester 2024**

Analysis of exports figures by country of destination for the second quarter of 2024 showed that the European countries were our main buyers, purchasing some 40.8% of our exports for a value of Rs 8,498 million. Among countries, the major destinations for our exports were South Africa (11.4%), Madagascar (10.3%), U.S.A. (9.4%), France (9.0%), United Kingdom (9.0%), Spain (6.0%), Reunion (4.4%) and Netherlands (3.9%).

Compared to the corresponding quarter of 2023, changes in exports to main markets were Madagascar (+55.0%), Netherlands (+32.8%), South Africa (+13.7%), Reunion (+9.9%), U.S.A. (+5.0%), United Kingdom (+2.3%), Spain (-15.6%) and France (-13.9%).



From Figure 2, compared to the corresponding semester of 2023, changes in exports to main markets in the first semester of 2024 were Spain (-11.0%), France (-10.2%), United Kingdom (-8.6%), Netherlands (-5.5%), South Africa (-2.6%), Madagascar (+52.0%) and U.S.A. (+4.8%).

**4. Total Imports**

**4.1 Total imports (Table 10) – 2nd Quarter & 1st Semester 2024**

Total imports for the second quarter of 2024 amounted to Rs 76,712 million, showing an increase of 10.5%, compared to the previous quarter. This is mainly due to increases in imports of “Beverages and tobacco” (+71.6%), “Chemicals and related products” (+21.1%), “Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material” (+15.6%), “Mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials” (+9.4%), “Food and live animals” (+7.1%), “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” (+5.0%) and “Machinery and transport equipment” (+2.9%).

Compared to the corresponding quarter of 2023, total imports for the second quarter of 2024 increased by 5.6%. This is mainly due to increases in the imports of “Mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials” (+40.4%) and “Chemicals and related products” (+12.6%), partly offset by decreases in the imports of “Beverages and tobacco” (-39.3%), “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” (-6.5%), “Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material” (-2.7%), “Food and live animals” (-2.1%) and “Machinery and transport equipment” (-0.7%).

Total imports, amounting to Rs 146,119 million in the first semester of 2024 increased by 5.7% from Rs 138,252 million in the first semester of 2023. This rise was mainly explained by increases in the imports of “Mineral fuels, lubricants, & related products” (+25.7%), “Machinery & transport equipment” (+7.6%), “Chemicals and related products” (+7.2%), “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” (+0.7%) and “Food and live animals” (+0.6%), partly offset by decreases in the imports of “Beverages and tobacco” (-36.5%) and “Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material” (-5.4%).

**4.2 Imports by SITC section (Table 10) – 2nd Quarter 2024**

Around 24.8% of imports in the second quarter of 2024 consisted of “Mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials” (Rs 19,054 million), 22.6% of “Machinery and transport equipment” (Rs 17,363 million), 17.4% of “Food and live animals” (Rs 13,362 million), 12.3% of “Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material” (Rs 9,463 million), 8.8% of “Chemicals and related products” (Rs 6,714 million) and 8.2% of “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” (Rs 6,269 million).

Compared to the corresponding quarter of 2023, total imports for the second quarter 2024 increased by 5.6%. Main changes by section are as follows:

* “Mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials” increased by 40.4%, mainly due to an increase in the imports of “Refined petroleum products” (+48.9%).
* “Chemicals and related products” increased by 12.6%, mainly due to increases in the imports of “Plastics in primary forms” (+17.9%) and “Medicinal & pharmaceutical products” (+0.9%).
* “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” decreased by 6.5%, mainly due to decreases in the imports of “Footwear” (-13.6%), “Articles n.e.s, of plastic” (-1.8%) and “Professional, scientific & controlling instruments & apparatus, n.e.s” (-0.7%), partly offset by an increase in the imports of “Articles of apparel and clothing” (+1.6%).
* “Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material” decreased by 2.7%, mainly due to decreases in the imports of “Pearls, precious & semi-precious stones (-61.9%), partly offset by increases in the imports of “Other textile fabrics” (+32.5%), “Textile yarn” (+11.3%), “Iron and Steel (+4.2%) and “Manufactures of metal, n.e.s” (+2.9%).
* “Food and live animals” decreased by 2.1%, mainly due to a decrease in the imports “Fish and fish preparations” (-14.6%), partly offset by increases in the imports of “Vegetables and fruits” (+40.3%), “Meat and meat preparations” (+35.1%) and “Dairy products and bird’s eggs” (+6.0%).
* “Machinery and transport equipment” decreased by 0.7%, mainly due to decreases in the imports of “Electrical machinery, apparatus & appliances, n.e.s., & electrical parts of household type” (-13.7%), “Telecommunications & sound recording & reproducing apparatus & equipment” (-0.4%), partly offset by increases in the imports of “General industrial machinery & equipment, n.e.s., & machine parts, n.e.s” (+6.7%) and “Road vehicles” (+1.8%),.
  1. **Imports by country of origin – 2nd Quarter & 1st Semester 2024**

During the second quarter of 2024, our imports originated from five main countries, namely: China (14.6%), U.A.E. (13.7%), India (11.4%), South Africa (8.4%) and France (6.3%)   
(*Table 13*). Among continents Asia was our main supplier with a share of Rs 41,107 million, representing 53.6% of total imports.

Compared to the corresponding quarter of 2023, total imports from India, South Africa, France and U.A.E. rose by 52.1%, 25.4%, 17.8% and 15.4% respectively, while imports from China declined by 0.4%.



From Figure 3, compared to the corresponding semester of 2023, total imports for the first semester of 2024 from India, South Africa, China and France have witnessed increases of 68.1%, 25.2%, 13.2% and 3.7% respectively, while imports from U.A.E. declined by 14.1%.

**5. Trade with Member States of Regional Organizations – 2nd Quarter 2024**

During the second quarter of 2024, total exports to African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) States stood at Rs 6,006 million against imports of Rs 9,774 million (*Table 14*). The trade deficit with ACP countries worked out to Rs 3,768 million. The main buyers were South Africa and Madagascar with shares of 39.4% and 35.9% and our main supplier was South Africa with a share of 66.2%.

Exports for the second quarter of 2024 to COMESA member states attained Rs 3,200 million while imports from these countries amounted to around Rs 2,719 million, resulting in a trade surplus of Rs 481 million. Madagascar was the main buyer with a share of 67.3%, followed by Kenya (19.4%). Our main suppliers were Seychelles (27.9%), Kenya (25.0%) and Egypt (24.9%) (*Table 15*).

Trade with SADC countries showed a deficit of Rs 2,979 million, resulting from imports of Rs 8,019 million against exports worth Rs 5,040 million for the second quarter of 2024. The main suppliers were South Africa (80.6%) and Seychelles (9.5%) and our main buyers were South Africa (47.0%) and Madagascar (42.7%) (*Table 16*).

**6. Trade in Freeport Zone – 2nd Quarter 2024**

During the second quarter of 2024, total imports of the Freeport Zone stood at   
Rs 2,685 million, higher by 4.5% compared to the corresponding quarter of 2023 and lower by 0.4% compared to the previous quarter – (*Table 12*). Compared to corresponding semester of 2023, freeport imports rose by 7.6% and for this period, the main items imported were “Chemicals and related products, n.e.s” (26.1%), “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” (23.2%) and “Food and live animals” (21.4%).

Re-exports for the second quarter of 2024 were valued at Rs 3,395 million, representing a decrease of 7.4% compared to the corresponding period of 2023 (*Table 6*), but higher by 4.7% compared to the previous quarter. Compared to the corresponding semester of 2023, a decrease of 5.8% was recorded in the first semester of 2024, the main items re-exported were “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” (34.9%), “Food and live animals” (27.6%) and “Chemicals and related products” (16.1%).

**7. Forecast 2024**

Based on trends and information from various sources, the forecast for year 2024 for both total exports and total imports have been maintained at the previous forecast figures.

Total exports for 2024 will be around Rs 105 billion, slightly higher than Rs 104 billion in year 2023, and total imports for 2024, including one-off items such as machinery for metro terminals, will be around Rs 300 billion, 5.6% higher than the total imports of around Rs 284 billion in 2023.

The trade deficit for 2024 is forecasted at around Rs 195 billion, 8.3% higher as compared to around Rs 180 billion in 2023.

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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)