#### External Merchandise Trade Statistics

**4th Quarter and Year 2024**

# **Introduction**

This issue of Economic and Social Indicators presents external merchandise trade statistics for the years 2023 and 2024. 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 at the Customs Department.

Thus, while figures for 2023 are published in this indicator, those 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 fourth quarter of 2024 was valued at Rs 113,402 million, i.e. 1.8% higher than the value of Rs 111,362 million of the previous quarter and 14.3% higher than the value of Rs 99,250 million of the corresponding quarter of 2023.

For the fourth quarter of 2024, total exports (including ship’s stores & bunkers) were valued at Rs 26,869 million against imports of Rs 86,533 million. This resulted in a trade deficit of   
Rs 59,664 million, 16.0% higher than the deficit of Rs 51,442 million of the previous quarter and 25.4% higher than the deficit of Rs 47,594 million of the corresponding quarter of 2023.

Total export proceeds for the year 2024 stood at Rs 110,313 million, representing an increase of 6.2% over the 2023 figure of Rs 103,895 million. Total imports for the year 2024 amounted to Rs 314,054 million, representing an increase of 10.6%, compared to Rs 283,871 million in 2023. The trade deficit for year 2024 worked out to Rs 203,741 million, around 13.2% higher than the deficit of Rs 179,976 million for the year 2023.



1. **Exports**

**3.1 Total exports (Tables 1 and 3) - 4th Quarter 2024**

Total exports for the fourth quarter of 2024, including domestic exports[[1]](#footnote-1),re-exports[[2]](#footnote-2) and ship’s stores and bunkers, amounted to Rs 26,869 million, showing a decrease of 10.3% compared to the previous quarter. This is explained by decreases in the exports of “Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material” (-19.5%), “Ship’s stores and bunkers” (-17.0%), “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” (-9.5%), “Chemicals and related products, n.e.s” (-8.6%), “Machinery and transport equipment” (-4.0%) and “Food and live animals” (-3.6%).

Compared to the corresponding quarter of 2023, total exports for the fourth quarter of 2024 increased by 4.0%. This is mainly explained by increases in the exports of “Ship’s stores and bunkers” (+11.1%), “Food and live animals” (+11.0%) and “Chemicals and related products, n.e.s” (+8.1%), partly offset by decreases in the exports of “Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material” (-14.4%), “Machinery and transport equipment” (-10.7%) and “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” (-3.2%).

**3.2 Domestic Exports**

Domestic exports for the fourth quarter of 2024 amounting to Rs 15,175 million accounted for 56.5% of total exports. Compared to a value of Rs 16,159 million recorded in the third quarter of 2024, domestic exports decreased by 6.1%. When compared to the corresponding quarter of 2023, an increase of 3.5% was observed (*Table 4*).

**3.3 Re-exports**

In the fourth quarter of 2024, re-exports stood at Rs 5,102 million i.e. lower by 12.9% compared to previous quarter, and by 2.4% compared to the corresponding quarter of 2023. *(Table 5)*

* 1. **Exports by SITC sections (Tables 1 and 3) - Year 2024**

Total export proceeds for the year 2024 stood at Rs 110,313 million, representing an increase of 6.2% over the 2023 figure of Rs 103,895 million. Around 32.1% of total exports consisted of “Food and live animals” (Rs 35,413 million), 26.6% of “Ship’s stores and bunkers” (Rs 29,350 million), 21.6% of “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” (Rs 23,795 million) and 8.8% of “Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material” (Rs 9,716 million).

Compared to the year of 2023, the main changes by section were as follows:

* “Ship’s stores and bunkers” increased by 45.7%.
* “Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material” decreased by 13.8% mainly due to “Pearls, precious & semi-precious stones” (-63.9%), partly offset by an increase in the exports of “Textile yarns, fabrics, made-up articles” (+23.6%).
* “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” registered a decrease of 7.9%, mainly due to “Articles of apparel & clothing accessories” (-11.7%).
* “Food and live animals” increased by 4.4%, mainly due to “Live Primates” (+19.2%) and “Fish & fish preparations” (+4.3%), partly offset by a decrease in the exports of “Cane sugar” (-0.5%).
  1. **Exports of Export Oriented Enterprises (EOE)**

For the year 2024, exports of EOE amounted to Rs 43,975 million, compared to   
Rs 47,247 million in 2023, representing a decrease of 6.9%.

*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 28 March 2025.*

* 1. **Exports by country of destination (Table 7) –Year 2024**

Analysis of exports figures by country of destination for the year 2024 shows that the European countries were our main buyers, purchasing around 42.4% of our exports excluding Ship’s stores and Bunkers, for a value of Rs 34,351 million. Among countries, the major destinations for our exports were South Africa (11.6%), Madagascar (10.3%), U.S.A. (10.1%), France (9.3%), United Kingdom (9.1%) and Spain (7.0%).



Compared to the year 2023, exports to France, United Kingdom and Spain decreased by 5.1%, 4.6% and 0.5% respectively. On the other hand, exports to Madagascar, South Africa and U.S.A. increased by 35.4%, 3.7% and 3.3%, respectively.

**4. Total Imports (Table 10) - 4th Quarter 2024**

Total imports for the fourth quarter of 2024 amounted to Rs 86,533 million, showing an increase of 6.3%, compared to the previous quarter. This is due to increases in the imports of “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” (+15.2%), “Mineral fuels, lubricants, & related products” (+11.3%), “Machinery & transport equipment” (+5.1%), “Food and live animals” (+4.2%), “Chemicals and related products, n.e.s” (+2.7%) and “Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material” (+1.7%).

Compared to the corresponding quarter of 2023, total imports for the fourth quarter of 2024 increased by 17.9%. This is due to increases in the imports of “Machinery & transport equipment” (+21.0%), “Chemicals and related products” (+21.0%), “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” (+19.2%), “Mineral fuels, lubricants, & related products” (+19.1%), “Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material” (+17.9%) and “Food and live animals” (+10.0%).

**4.1 Imports by SITC section (Table 10) – Year 2024**

Total imports for 2024 amounted to Rs 314,054 million, representing an increase of 10.6% compared to Rs 283,871 million in 2023. Around 23.9% of imports in the year 2024 consisted of “Machinery & transport equipment” (Rs 75,082 million), 22.0% of “Mineral fuels, lubricants, & related products” (Rs 69,010 million), 18.3% of “Food and live animals” (Rs 57,584 million), 12.7% of “Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material” (Rs 39,941 million), 9.3% of “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” (Rs 29,138 million) and 8.8% of “Chemicals and related products, n.e.s” (Rs 27,667 million).

Compared to the year 2023, main changes by section were as follows:

* “Mineral fuels, lubricants, & related products” increased by 18.8%, mainly due to imports of “Gas, natural and manufactured” (+23.1%) and “Refined petroleum products” (+20.3%).
* “Chemicals and related products, n.e.s.” increased by 13.6%, explained by imports of “Plastics in primary forms” (+19.1%), “Plastics in non-primary forms” (+13.5%) and “Medicinal & pharmaceutical products” (+1.3%).
* “Machinery & transport equipment” increased by 12.2%, mainly due to imports of “Road vehicles” (+22.6%), “General industrial machinery & equipment, n.e.s., & machine parts, n.e.s.” (+14.2%), “Telecommunications & sound recording & reproducing apparatus & equipment” (+7.3%), “Electrical machinery, apparatus & appliances, n.e.s., & electrical parts of household type” (+5.2%).
* “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” increased by 11.0%, mainly due to imports of “Articles n.e.s, of plastic” (+15.3%), “Articles of apparel and clothing” (+12.9%), “Professional, scientific & controlling instruments & apparatus, n.e.s” (+5.1%) and “Footwear” (+5.1%).
* “Food and live animals” increased by 6.0%, due to imports of “Vegetables and fruits” (+30.5%), “Meat and meat preparations” (+28.9%), “Cereal preparations” (+22.6%), “Rice” (+18.9%) and “Dairy products and bird’s eggs” (+11.8%), partly offset by a decrease in “Fish and fish preparations” (-5.4%).
* “Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material” increased by 5.4%, mainly due to imports of “Textile yarn” (+21.3%), “Manufactures of metal, n.e.s.” (+18.0%), “Iron and steel” (+16.0%), “Other textile fabrics” (+14.7%), “Cement” (+12.5%) and “Paper, paperboard & articles thereof” (+10.6%).
  1. **Imports by country of origin – Year 2024**

For the year 2024, our imports originated from five main countries, namely: China (17.5%), United Arab Emirates (12.5%), India (11.0%), South Africa (7.4%) and France (5.9%). Among continents, Asia was our main supplier with a share of Rs 177,699 million, representing 56.6% of total imports. *(Table 13)*

Compared to 2023, total imports from U.A.E., China, India, South Africa and France rose by 24.2%, 22.1%, 18.5%, 12.5% and 8.0% respectively.



**5. Trade with Member States of Regional Organizations – Year 2024**

Exports to African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) States stood at Rs 23,311 million against imports of Rs 36,507 million. The trade deficit with ACP countries worked out to   
Rs 13,196 million. South Africa is the main supplier and buyer, with a share of 63.3% and 40.1% respectively. *(Table 14)*

Exports to COMESA member states attained Rs 12,494 million while imports amounted to around Rs 9,925 million, resulting in a trade surplus of Rs 2,569 million. Madagascar (66.6%) was the main buyer, followed by Kenya (20.0%) and Seychelles (8.1%). Our main suppliers were Seychelles (30.3%), Egypt (25.5%), Kenya (20.6%) and Madagascar (15.1%). *(Table 15)*

Trade with SADC countries showed a deficit of Rs 11,571 million, resulting from imports of Rs 31,127 million against exports worth Rs 19,556 million. The main buyers were South Africa (47.8%) and Madagascar (42.6%) and the main suppliers were South Africa (74.2%) and Seychelles (9.7%). *(Table 16)*

**6. Trade in Freeport Zone – Year 2024**

For the year 2024, total imports of the Freeport Zone stood at Rs 11,791 million, higher by 9.0% compared to 2023 – (*Table 12*).

The main imports of the Freeport zone were “Chemicals and related products, n.e.s.”, “Food and live animals” and “Miscellaneous manufactured articles” with a share of 28.8%, 23.4% and 20.4% respectively.

Freeport re-exports were valued at Rs 14,657 million, representing an increase of 1.4% compared to 2023 – (*Table 6*). The main re-exports were “Food and live animals”, “Miscellaneous manufactured articles”, and “Chemicals and related products, n.e.s.”, with a share of 32.9%, 30.8% and 14.4% respectively.

**7. Forecast for the year 2025**

Based on trends and information from various sources, the forecast of total exports for 2025 will be at the same level as 2024, that is, Rs 110 billion. Total imports for 2025, excluding one-off items, will be around Rs 320 billion, 1.9% higher than the total imports of around Rs 314 billion in 2024.

The trade deficit for 2025 is forecasted at around Rs 210 billion, 2.9% higher as compared to around Rs 204 billion in 2024.

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**Notes**

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**(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 2022)**. 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. Domestic exports are defined as goods of national origin. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. 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-2)