

Statistical bulletin

UK trade in services by partner country experimental data: July to September 2018

Trade in services data, including breakdown of exports and imports by country and geographical region, EU and non-EU.

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Table of contents

1. [Main points](#)
2. [Things you need to know about this release](#)
3. [The value of UK exports of services decreased in Quarter 3 2018 from Quarter 2 2018, while imports of services increased](#)
4. [Exports of services in Quarter 3 2018 were lower than those reported in Quarter 2 2018 for most geographical regions](#)
5. [The US remains the UK's biggest trading partner for services exports](#)
6. [Exports of other business services remains the UK's largest export service type](#)
7. [Imports of services in Quarter 3 2018 were higher than those reported in Quarter 2 2018](#)
8. [The three highest-value trading partners for services imports accounted for over one-third of total services imports](#)
9. [Imports of travel services in Quarter 3 2018 accounted for 40.7% of total UK imports](#)
10. [Explore the new trade in services data with our interactive tools](#)
11. [Quality and methodology](#)

1 . Main points

- This release covers all the UK economy's trade in services, presenting UK trade in services by 67 countries and 31 service types, with non-seasonally adjusted quarterly data.
- UK exports of services decreased from £72.0 billion in Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2018 to £71.6 billion in Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2018.
- UK imports of services increased from £43.4 billion in Quarter 2 2018 to £50.0 billion in Quarter 3 2018.
- Imports of services were higher in Quarter 3 2018 compared with the same quarter a year ago, while exports of services saw a small drop.
- The European Union (EU) remained the UK's largest trading partner for both exports and imports of services in Quarter 3 2018, while the US was the largest trading partner when considering individual countries.
- Imports of travel services has seen a 41.7% increase in Quarter 3 2018 compared with Quarter 2 2018, with Spain being the UK's largest trading partner of travel services; note that these data are not seasonally adjusted.

2 . Things you need to know about this release

The UK trade in services data have been produced as part of planned improvements to our trade statistics described in Section 3.3 of the [trade development plan](#). In response to user needs, one of our main priorities is to publish detailed trade figures across more dimensions than we do currently; for example, across industries, geographic trade partners and service types. A large focus for the trade development plan is also making improvements to the quality of the trade figures.

This is the second of our more detailed quarterly services releases containing 31 service types by 67 countries. While we currently publish service type by partner country annually in [Pink Book](#), we have increased the level of detail available and produced quarterly data for Quarter 1 (Jan to Mar) 2016 to Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2018.

We have made significant quality improvements to the UK trade in services by partner country experimental dataset partly through fuller use of the improved quarterly country breakdown derived from the increased and optimised quarterly International Trade in Services Survey (ITIS). In order to deliver at the pace required, the data are closely aligned to the balance of payments but are not fully consistent. Improvements that have been made for Quarter 1 2018 to Quarter 3 2018 will be included within the next Balance of payments release in March. The improvements in the 2016 data will be incorporated into Pink Book 2019, the first opportunity to revise this time period within the wider accounts.

Estimates derived from the International Passenger Survey (IPS) are used to help measure exports and imports of travel services. The IPS has recently transferred data collection from paper forms to tablet computers. Analysis of IPS data has detected no discontinuities as a result of the change in data collection mode, therefore we have replaced forecasts used in recent periods with IPS data within headline trade estimates. Please see our [Travel and tourism release](#) for more information about IPS.

Data in this release have been revised back to Quarter 1 (Jan to Mar) 2016 when compared with figures published in our [previous Trade in services bulletin](#) on 24 October 2018.

Data are provided in as much detail as possible without disclosing the details of any individual companies, however, this means some figures have been suppressed to protect confidentiality.

You are advised to be cautious when interpreting changes between quarters given that the series are not seasonally adjusted and few data points are presented.

3 . The value of UK exports of services decreased in Quarter 3 2018 from Quarter 2 2018, while imports of services increased

The value of UK exports of services decreased from £72.0 billion in Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2018, to £71.6 billion in Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2018, a decrease of 0.6%, as shown in Table 1.

The value of UK imports of services increased by 15.3% over the same period, from £43.4 billion in Quarter 2 2018 to £50.0 billion in Quarter 3 2018.

Imports of services were higher in Quarter 3 2018 compared with the same quarter a year ago while exports of services saw a small drop. Exports decreased by 0.6%, from £72.0 billion in Quarter 3 2017 to £71.6 billion in Quarter 3 2018. The value of imports increased by 5.1% from £47.6 billion in Quarter 3 2017 to £50.0 billion in Quarter 3 2018.

Table 1: Total UK trade in services exports and imports, Quarter 1 (Jan to Mar) 2016 to Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2018, £ million non-seasonally adjusted

	Q1 2016	Q2 2016	Q3 2016	Q4 2016	Q1 2017	Q2 2017	Q3 2017	Q4 2017	Q1 2018	Q2 2018	Q3 2018
UK exports	57,710	64,135	66,455	69,588	64,217	70,185	71,996	72,402	65,200	72,012	71,585
UK imports	33,576	38,164	46,017	38,366	37,715	41,584	47,589	38,810	38,969	43,384	50,038

Source: Office for National Statistics

Notes

1. Quarter 1 is January to March, Quarter 2 is April to June, Quarter 3 is July to September and Quarter 4 is October to December. [Back to table](#)

4 . Exports of services in Quarter 3 2018 were lower than those reported in Quarter 2 2018 for most geographical regions

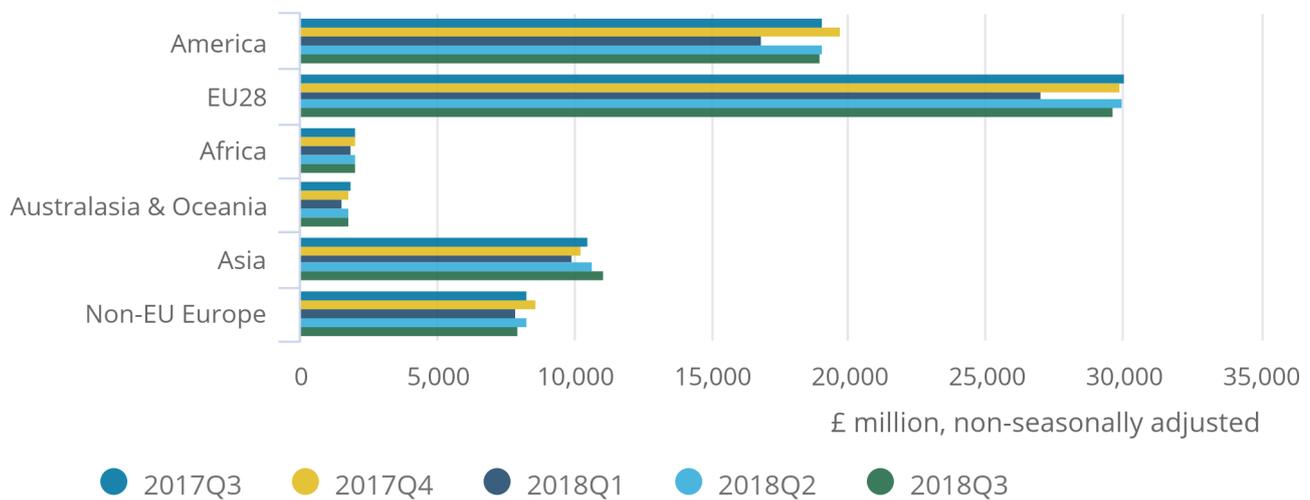
The value of services exports for Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2018 decreased to all geographical regions except Asia, and Australasia and Oceania (Figure 1). The largest decrease between Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2018 and Quarter 3 2018 was for exports to the EU, which dropped by £0.4 billion; from £30.0 billion to £29.6 billion. This was driven primarily by decreases in exports of other business services not included elsewhere to the Netherlands and Ireland.

Other business services not included elsewhere includes distribution services (water, steam, gas, petroleum) and of electricity where provided separately from transmission, air conditioning supply, placement of personnel, security and investigative services, translation and interpretation, photographic services, building cleaning, real estate services to businesses, and the remaining business services that cannot be classified to any of the business services within the other business services category.

Exports to Asia saw an increase of £0.4 billion in Quarter 3 2018 compared with Quarter 2 2018, driven by personal travel services to all Asian countries. Non-EU Europe, America and Africa all saw decreases in exports of less than £0.3 billion.

Figure 1: UK exports of services by geographical region, Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2017 to Quarter 3 2018

Figure 1: UK exports of services by geographical region, Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2017 to Quarter 3 2018



Source: Office for National Statistics - UK trade in services

Notes:

1. Quarter 1 is January to March, Quarter 2 is April to June, Quarter 3 is July to September and Quarter 4 is October to December.

It is important to note that these estimates for UK services exports are not seasonally adjusted. Therefore, some variation from quarter to quarter will be explained by the time of the year, where trade in some services could be more common than at other times of the year.

Compared with the same quarter a year ago, exports to the EU saw the largest decrease of the geographical regions, dropping from £30.0 billion in Quarter 3 2017 to £29.6 billion in Quarter 3 2018. This was driven primarily by a decrease in exports of intellectual property to Belgium.

Exports to Asia increased by £0.5 billion in Quarter 3 2018 compared with Quarter 3 2017. Services exports of architectural, engineering, scientific and other technical services to Residual Gulf Arabian countries accounted for £0.2 billion of this increase.

5 . The US remains the UK’s biggest trading partner for services exports

The value of services exports to the UK’s top 10 export destinations all saw differences of less than £0.3 billion between Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2018 compared with Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2018.

The US remains the UK’s largest services export partner, accounting for £15.9 billion, or 22.3% of all UK exports of services in Quarter 3 2018, as shown in Table 2. The value of exports to Germany was the second-highest at £4.8 billion, with exports to France the third-highest destination at £4.4 billion. Exports to Germany and France were equivalent to 6.7% and 6.1% of total UK services exports, respectively. Taken together, UK exports to the top three countries accounted for 35.1% of all UK services exports.

Table 2: Largest export partner countries, Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2017 to Quarter 3 2018

Country	£ million					Cumulative percentages of total services exports	
	Q3 2017	Q4 2017	Q1 2018	Q2 2018	Q3 2018	Q3 2017	Q3 2018
United States	16,060	16,572	14,206	15,935	15,948	22.3	22.3
Germany	4,997	4,790	4,409	4,720	4,784	29.2	29.0
France	4,388	4,309	4,132	4,530	4,389	35.3	35.1
Netherlands	4,372	4,398	4,129	4,493	4,229	41.4	41.0
Ireland	4,206	4,956	3,712	4,384	4,156	47.3	46.8
Switzerland	3,129	3,147	3,050	2,826	2,730	51.6	50.6
Italy	2,436	2,166	1,945	2,312	2,439	55.0	54.0
Spain	1,840	1,736	1,666	1,817	1,935	57.5	56.7
Japan	1,759	1,704	1,768	1,828	1,793	60.0	59.2
Australia	1,547	1,390	1,246	1,415	1,459	62.1	61.3
Rest of the World	27,262	27,234	24,937	27,752	27,723	100.0	100.0

Source: Office for National Statistics

Notes

1. Quarter 1 is January to March, Quarter 2 is April to June, Quarter 3 is July to September and Quarter 4 is October to December. [Back to table](#)
2. United States including Puerto Rico. [Back to table](#)

6 . Exports of other business services remains the UK's largest export service type

Other business services, which includes research and development, professional and management consulting services, and technical, trade-related and other business services not included elsewhere, was the largest export service type accounting for 28.3% in Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2018 of total services exports (Table 3). Exports of other business services saw a 3.0% decrease in Quarter 3 2018 compared with Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2018.

Financial services exports, the second-largest export type, has also dropped between Quarter 2 2018 and Quarter 3 2018, from £16.0 billion to £14.5 billion.

Of the top five service types, exports of travel saw the largest increase of 15.8% in Quarter 3 2018 compared with Quarter 2 2018.

Table 3: Largest service type exports, Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2017 to Quarter 3 2018

Service type	£ million					Cumulative percentages of total services exports	
	Q3 2017	Q4 2017	Q1 2018	Q2 2018	Q3 2018	Q3 2017	Q3 2018
Other Business Services	19,677	22,335	18,978	20,875	20,250	27.3	28.3
Financial	14,262	15,182	15,229	15,988	14,492	47.1	48.5
Travel	11,744	9,106	7,020	9,879	11,442	63.5	64.5
Transportation	8,046	7,315	6,967	7,507	8,197	74.6	76.0
Insurance and Pension	4,321	4,567	4,724	5,464	5,218	80.6	83.3
Other service types	13,946	13,897	12,282	12,299	11,986	100.0	100.0

Source: Office for National Statistics

Notes

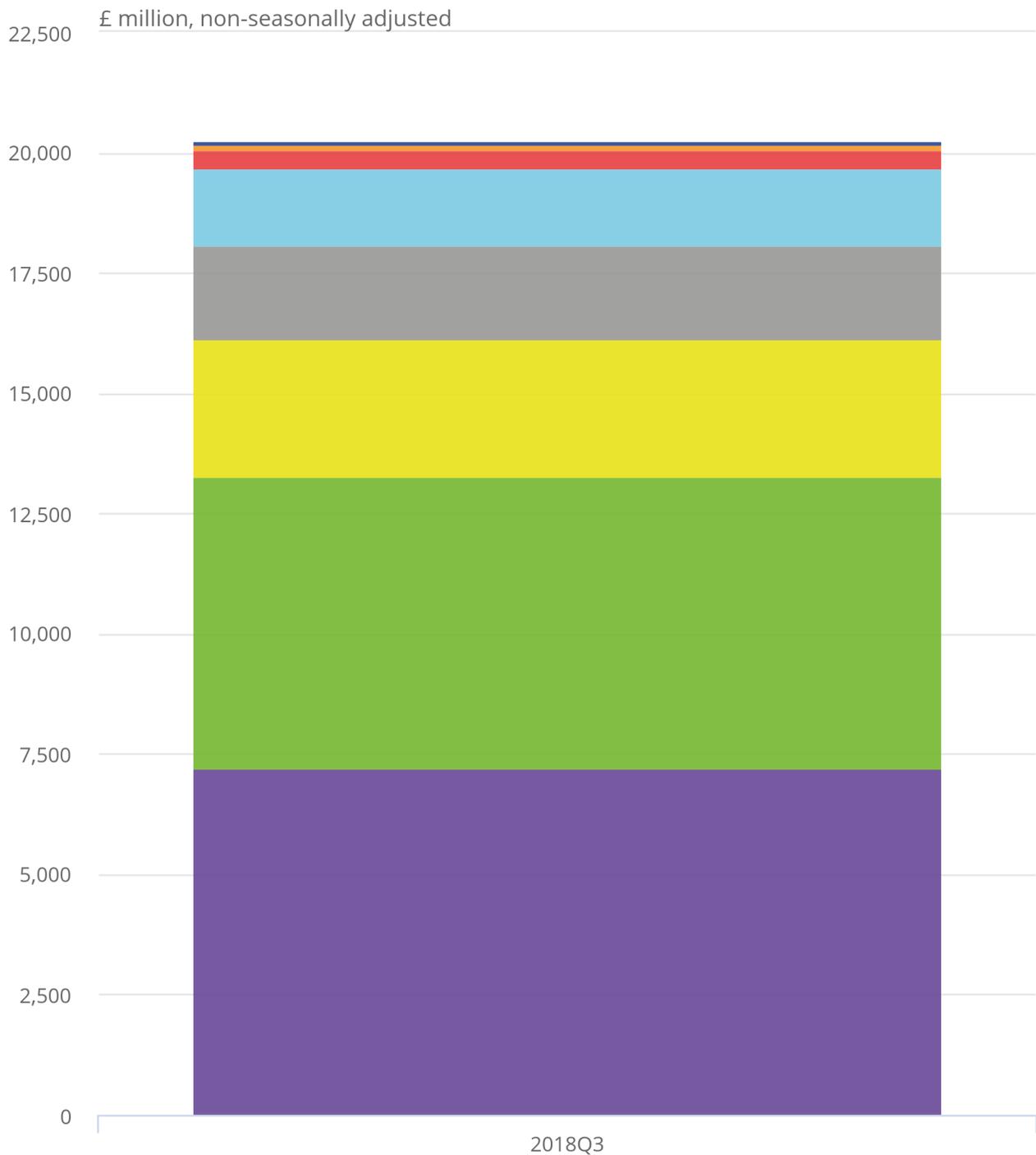
1. Quarter 1 is January to March, Quarter 2 is April to June, Quarter 3 is July to September and Quarter 4 is October to December. [Back to table](#)

Figure 2 shows the value for each component of other business services in Quarter 3 2018. Other business services not included elsewhere accounted for 35.5% of total exports of other business services, followed by legal, accounting, management consulting and public relations, which made up 30.1%.

Legal, accounting, management consulting and public relations is a sub-component of professional and management consulting services.

Figure 2: Total UK exports of other business services, Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2018

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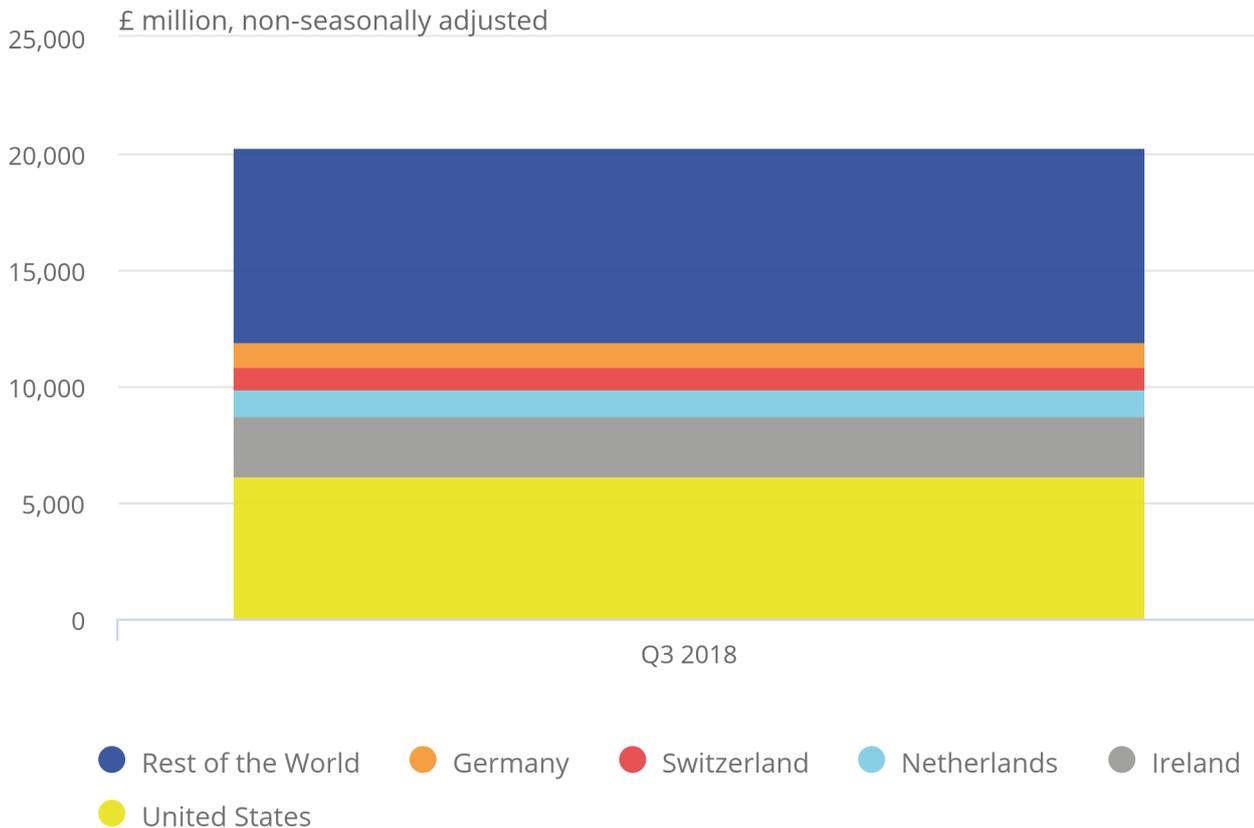
- Waste treatment and de-pollution, agricultural and mining services
- Operating leasing services
- Advertising, market research and public opinion polling
- Research and development services
- Trade-related services

In Quarter 3 2018, the US was the largest export partner for other business services, accounting for 30.3%. The £6.1 billion export of other business services to the US was driven primarily by £2.5 billion of legal, accounting, management consulting and public relations.

Ireland was the second-largest export partner for other business services, followed by the Netherlands, Switzerland and Germany, as shown in Figure 3. The top five export partners accounted for 58.9% of total exports of other business services.

Figure 3: UK exports of other business services by partner country, Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2018

Figure 3: UK exports of other business services by partner country, Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2018



7 . Imports of services in Quarter 3 2018 were higher than those reported in Quarter 2 2018

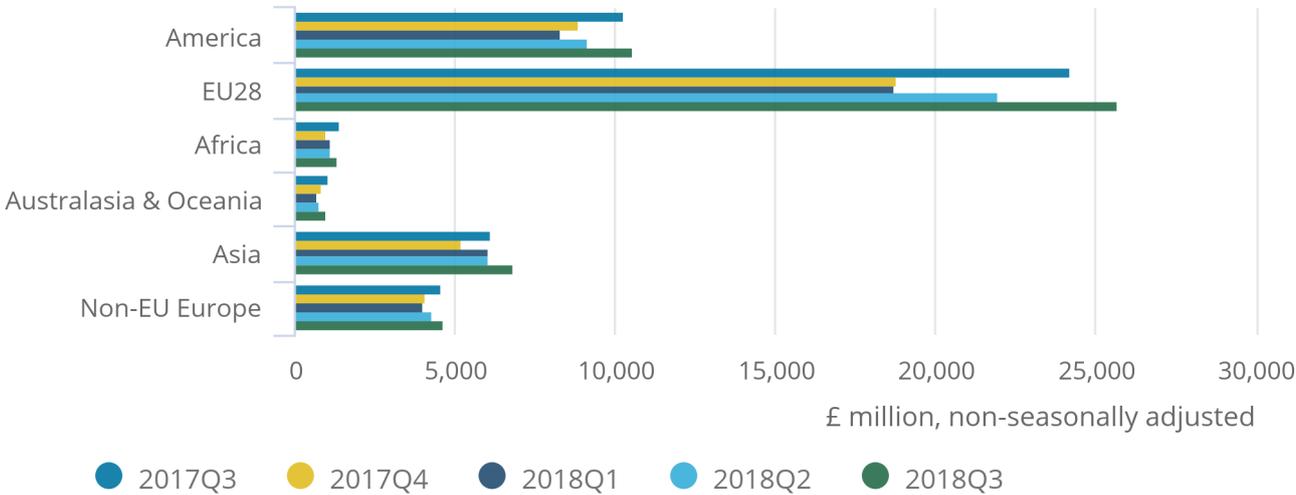
Imports of services increased in Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2018 compared with Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2018 for all geographical regions. Of all the geographical regions presented in Figure 4, imports from the EU increased the most over the quarter from £22.0 billion to £25.7 billion, a rise of £3.7 billion. This increase was driven by imports of personal travel services from Spain of £1.2 billion. It is important to note that these estimates for UK services imports are not seasonally adjusted. Therefore, some variation from quarter to quarter will be explained by the time of the year, where trade in some services could be more common than at other times of the year.

Imports of travel covers goods and services provided to UK residents during visits abroad of less than one year, excluding students and medical patients who remain residents of their country of origin even if the length of stay in another economy is more than a year.

Services imports from the Americas saw the second-largest increase in Quarter 3 2018; from £9.2 billion to £10.6 billion. The increase of £1.4 billion was due mainly to imports of travel services from the US.

Figure 4: UK imports of services by geographical region, Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2017 to Quarter 3 2018

Figure 4: UK imports of services by geographical region, Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2017 to Quarter 3 2018



Source: Office for National Statistics - UK trade in services

Compared with the same quarter a year ago, imports from the EU saw the largest increase of £1.5 billion, rising from £24.2 billion in Quarter 3 2017 to £25.7 billion in Quarter 3 2018. Services imports from Spain and France saw the largest increase, both of £0.4 billion.

Imports from Asia saw the second-largest increase of £0.7 billion in Quarter 3 2018 compared with Quarter 3 2017. Services imports from Hong Kong increased by £0.3 billion, going from £0.4 billion in Quarter 3 2017 to £0.7 billion in Quarter 3 2018.

8 . The three highest-value trading partners for services imports accounted for over one-third of total services imports

The value of imports to the UK from the UK's top 10 import destinations increased in Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2018 compared with Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2018. The only exceptions were imports from Germany, India and Jersey, which decreased by very small amounts.

The US remains the UK's largest import partner, accounting for £8.2 billion, or 16.5% of imports of services. The value of imports from Spain was the second-highest, with imports from France the third-highest. Imports from Spain and France were equivalent to 10.5% and 8.2% of total UK services imports respectively, as shown in Table 4. The top three countries accounted for 35.1% of all UK services imports.

Table 4: Largest import partner countries, Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2017 to Quarter 3 2018

Country	£ million					Cumulative percentages of total services imports	
	Q3 2017	Q4 2017	Q1 2018	Q2 2018	Q3 2018	Q3 2017	Q3 2018
United States	7,927	6,959	6,702	7,313	8,242	16.7	16.5
Spain	4,811	3,177	3,198	3,875	5,240	26.8	26.9
France	3,678	3,030	2,989	3,556	4,083	34.5	35.1
Ireland	2,302	1,794	1,622	2,367	2,421	39.3	39.9
Germany	2,787	2,433	2,138	2,374	2,344	45.2	44.6
Netherlands	1,751	1,535	1,500	1,760	1,784	48.9	48.2
Italy	1,625	1,181	1,225	1,353	1,734	52.3	51.7
Japan	1,165	1,158	1,181	1,142	1,235	54.7	54.1
India	1,003	883	1,149	1,174	1,123	56.8	56.4
Jersey	861	748	1,135	1,139	1,093	58.6	58.6
Rest of the World	19,679	15,912	16,130	17,331	20,739	100.0	100.0

Source: Office for National Statistics

Notes

1. Quarter 1 is January to March, Quarter 2 is April to June, Quarter 3 is July to September and Quarter 4 is October to December. [Back to table](#)
2. United States including Puerto Rico. [Back to table](#)

When compared with the same quarter a year ago, Germany saw a decrease in services imports to the UK of 15.9% in Quarter 3 2018. This was driven primarily by falls in imports of direct insurance of £0.2 billion.

Of the top 10 countries, Spain and France saw the largest value increase compared with the same quarter a year ago, both rising by £0.4 billion.

9 . Imports of travel services in Quarter 3 2018 accounted for 40.7% of total UK imports

Travel was the largest service type import accounting for 40.7% of total imports in Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2018 (Table 5). Imports of travel services has seen a 41.7% increase in Quarter 3 2018 compared with Quarter 2 (July to Sept) 2018.

Users should note that these data show the seasonal trends throughout the year, with the majority of imports of travel seen in Quarter 2 and Quarter 3. Travel covers goods and services provided to UK residents during visits abroad of less than one year, excluding students and medical patients who remain residents of their country of origin, even if the length of stay in another economy is more than a year. Transport to and from the UK is excluded from travel and shown as passenger services under transportation.

Table 5: Largest service type imports, Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2017 to Quarter 3 2018

Service type	£ million					Cumulative percentages of total services imports	
	Q3 2017	Q4 2017	Q1 2018	Q2 2018	Q3 2018	Q3 2017	Q3 2018
Travel	19,018	10,903	10,866	14,368	20,360	40.0	40.7
Other Business Services	9,614	9,475	9,135	10,133	9,903	60.2	60.5
Transportation	6,079	5,162	5,731	5,738	6,786	72.9	74.0
Financial	3,921	4,038	4,194	4,299	4,307	81.2	82.6
Telecommunications, computer and information services	2,947	3,007	3,405	3,172	3,069	87.4	88.8
Other service types	6,010	6,225	5,638	5,674	5,613	100.0	100.0

Source: Office for National Statistics

Notes

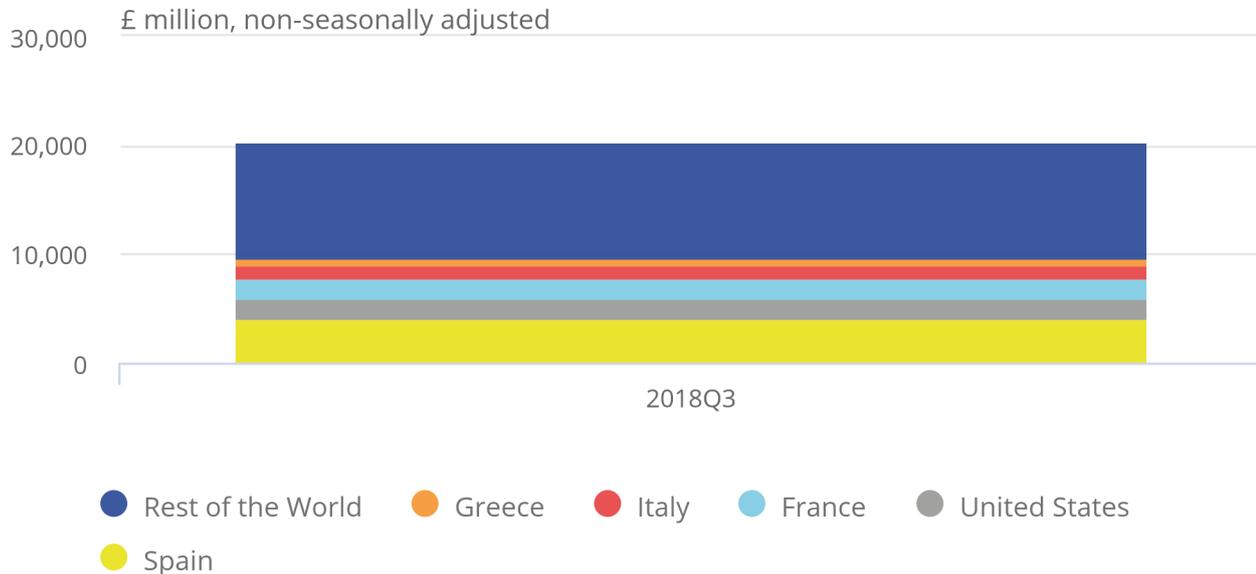
1. Quarter 1 is January to March, Quarter 2 is April to June, Quarter 3 is July to September and Quarter 4 is October to December. [Back to table](#)

In Quarter 3 2018, Spain was the largest import partner for travel services, accounting for 19.8% of total travel services imported. The £4.0 billion imports of travel to Spain was predominantly from £3.8 billion of personal travel.

The US was the second-largest import partner of travel services, followed by France, Italy and Greece. The top five import partners accounted for 47.8% of total imports of travel services (Figure 5).

Figure 5: UK imports of travel by partner country, Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2018

Figure 5: UK imports of travel by partner country, Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2018



Source: Office for National Statistics - UK trade in services

10 . Explore the new trade in services data with our interactive tools

We have produced some interactive tools to help explore the data.

Data are provided in as much detail as possible without disclosing the details of any individual companies, however, this means that some figures have been suppressed to protect confidentiality. The interactive will show no data available if the data are zero, suppressed or unavailable at this level of detail.

Select a country by hovering over it or using the drop-down menu.

Figure 6: UK trade in services with the rest of the world, exports and imports, 2017

What about trade in a particular service type?

Use our interactive tools to understand UK trade of a particular service type.

Select a service type from the drop-down menu, or click through the levels to explore the data.

Figure 7: UK services exports, 2017

Figure 8: UK services imports, 2017

What questions do you have about the new data? Do you find these tools helpful? Please email trade@ons.gov.uk with your comments.

11 . Quality and methodology

Trade in services covers export and import activity across 12 categories:

- manufacturing
- maintenance and repair services
- transportation
- travel
- construction
- insurance and pension
- financial
- intellectual property
- telecommunications services
- other business services
- personal, cultural and recreational
- government

Trade in services statistics are derived from a variety of sources, though the International Trade in Services (ITIS) Survey and the International Passenger Survey (IPS) form the bulk of these data.

Detailed methodological notes are published in the [UK Balance of Payments, The Pink Book 2018](#).

The [UK trade methodology web pages](#) have been developed to provide detailed information about the methods used to produce UK trade statistics.

The [UK trade Quality and Methodology Information report](#) contains important information on:

- the strengths and limitations of the data and how it compares with related data
- uses and users of the data
- how the output was created
- the quality of the output including the accuracy of the data