



Press release

Statistics Netherlands

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Value increases lower in international trade

In the first quarter of 2001 the value of exported goods increased by 16%, and the value of imported goods by 12%. However, according to the latest figures by Statistics Netherlands this is slow compared to the 21% growth rate of the fourth quarter of the year 2000 in both imports and exports. Because the value increase of exports exceeds the value increase of imports the trade balance for goods in 2001 is on the rise.

The lower growth rate for the first quarter is partly caused by lower price increases in imports and exports. The volume increase in international goods trade was slightly higher in the first quarter of 2001 than in the fourth quarter of 2000.

Limited effect of foot en mouth disease in March

The value increases for March 2001 on March 2000 were 7% for imports and 11% for exports. March 2000 had one more working day than March 2001. The slowdown in the growth rate in March was further caused by the outbreak of foot and mouth disease at the end of March. The imports and exports of animals and of dairy products fell by almost 15% compared to March last year. The export of meat products fell by about 10% while imports went up by about 40%.

Trade balance more positive

The value increase of exported goods was higher than the rise in imports, resulting in a substantial increase on the positive side of the trade balance. In the first quarter of 2001 the trade surplus was 6 billion euro, against 3 billion a year ago. The trade surplus with EU countries in the first quarter was 18 billion euro. The trade with non-EU member states showed a negative balance of 12 billion euro.

Trade with EU countries

In the first quarter the Netherlands imported 31 billion euro worth from EU countries, up 8% on last year. Import from Germany increased most in terms of value. Imports from Belgium were down somewhat.

Exports to EU countries in the first quarter was up 16% on a year ago, totalling 49 billion euro. The increase came mainly from the trade with Germany and the UK.

Trade with non-EU countries

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Compared to a year ago the value of goods imported from countries outside the EU increased by 17% to 25 billion euro. Exports also increased by 17% in the first quarter. They were valued at 13 billion euro.

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Cumulative monthly trade balance (billion Euro's)

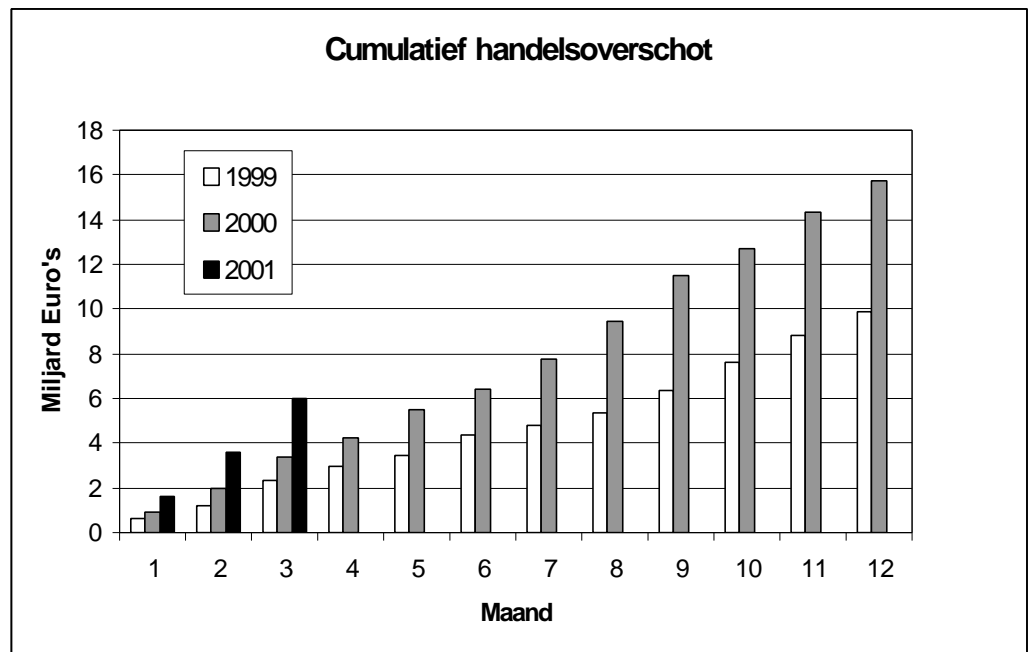


Table 1. Changes in imports and exports on a year ago

Jaar	Imports	Exports
	% change	
2000		
Q1	18	20
Q2	21	23
Q3	19	25
Q4	21	21
2001		
Q1	12	16

Source: Statistics Netherlands**Table 3. Imports and exports, totals 1996-2001 (in billion EURO's)**

	Imports	Exports	Trade balance
	bil. euro		
1996	139.9	153.8	13.8
1997	157.4	171.4	14.0
1998	168.4	180.7	12.3
1999	178.7	188.6	9.9
2000*	214.3	230.0	15.7
January	15.3	16.2	0.9
February	16.7	17.7	1.1
March	18.4	19.8	1.5
April	16.5	17.3	0.8
May	18.4	19.7	1.3
June	17.9	18.8	1.0
July	16.7	18.0	1.3
August	16.9	18.6	1.7
September	18.5	20.5	2.0
October	19.8	21.0	1.2
November	20.5	22.1	1.6
December	18.8	20.2	1.4
2001*			
January	18.8	20.4	1.6
February	17.9	19.9	2.0
March	19.7	22.1	2.4

* Preliminary figures

Source: Statistics Netherlands