

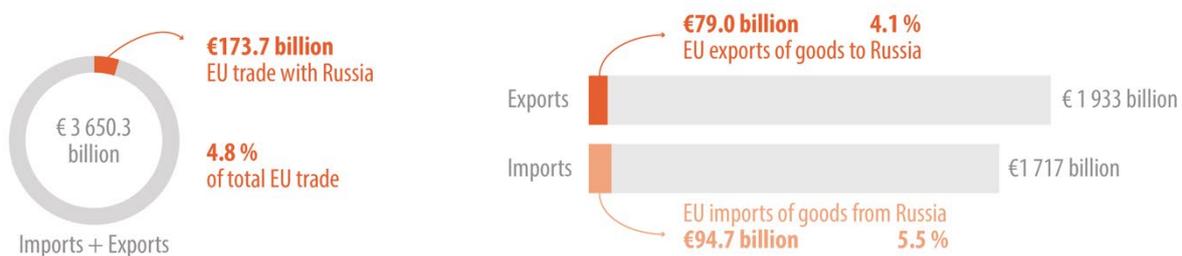
# EU-Russia trade in agri-food products

Up until Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the EU and Russia were important trade partners trading in a wide variety of goods, including agri-food products. Russia was the fifth largest importer of EU goods in 2020, despite the disruption of trade relations caused by the first Ukraine crisis in 2014. Furthermore, Russia is a major global exporter of several commodities, including sunflower oil, wheat and barley.

## Background

The Russian Federation is one of the EU's main [trading partners](#), with the total volume of trade estimated at €173.7 billion in 2020 (Figure 1). Russia was the fifth importer of EU goods in 2020, while the EU is the [first supplier](#) to the Russian market, providing machinery and transport equipment, chemicals, manufactured goods, and agricultural products and raw materials, for a total value of €79 billion. Russia's exports to the EU were led by fuel and mining products, agricultural products and raw materials, chemicals, and iron and steel, totalling almost €95 billion.

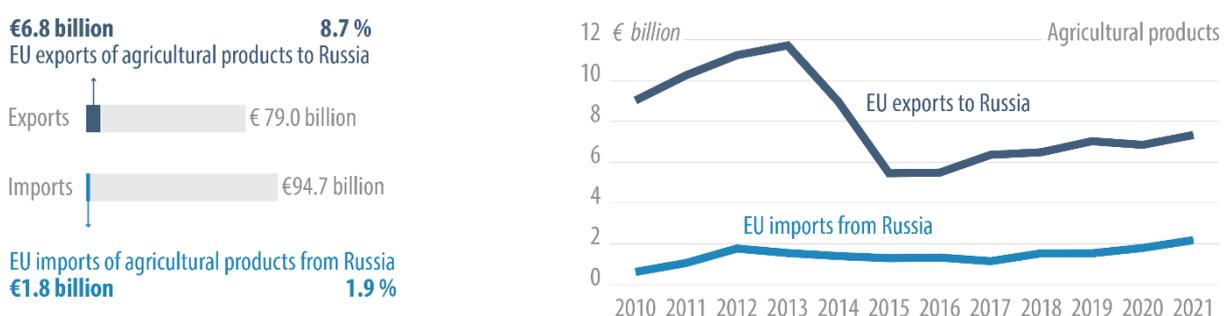
Figure 1 – EU trade in goods with the world and Russia (2020)



Data source: [Eurostat Comext](#) and author's calculations.

The 1997 bilateral [partnership and cooperation agreement](#) (PCA) is the general framework for EU-Russia trade relations. Negotiations for a new EU-Russia agreement, initiated in 2008, were suspended in 2014 owing to the first Ukraine crisis. In 2012, Russia [joined](#) the World Trade Organization (WTO), and EU-Russia trade relations have since been defined by the multilateral WTO rules. Since Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea in March 2014, the EU has progressively imposed [restrictive measures](#) towards Russia; these led in the same year, as retaliation, to a [Russian ban](#) on selected agricultural products from the EU and some third countries, namely Australia, Canada, Norway and the [United States](#). Although overall [EU trade with Russia](#) has continued, and even increased, from 2017 onwards, trade flows in agri-food products have decreased, as shown in Figure 2. On 24 February 2022, Russia launched an unprovoked attack on Ukraine, followed by a full-scale invasion. EU countries have since adopted unprecedentedly tough [sanctions](#).

Figure 2 – EU trade with Russia: Agricultural products (2020)

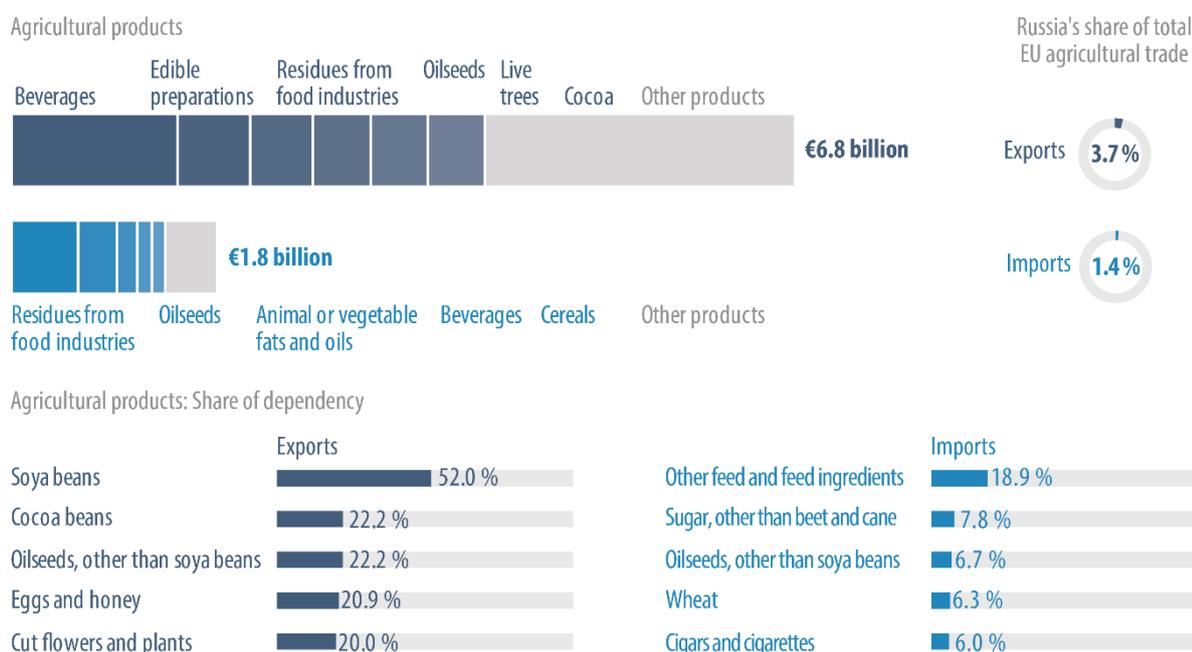


Data source: [Eurostat Comext](#) and author's calculations. The term 'agricultural products' refers to the WTO definition and includes Chapters 1-24 (excluding fish and fish products, Chapter 3) of the [Harmonised System](#), and a number of headings in Chapters 33, 35, 38, 41, 43 and 51-53. It does not contain tariff codes CN 3302.10.40 and CN 3302.10.90.

## Agri-food trade figures

Trade with the Russian Federation represents 3.7 % of overall EU exports in agri-food products, and 1.4 % of overall agri-food imports. The main products imported from Russia, in terms of overall value, are residues and waste from the food industries, including oilcakes and feed components (32.3 %), oilseeds (19.1 %), animal or vegetable fats and oils (9.9 %), beverages (7.0 %), cereals (6.5 %), and other products (25.2 %). Concerning exports from the EU to Russia, the main categories are beverages (21.2 %), edible preparations (9.3 %), residues and waste from the food industries (8.0 %), oilseeds (7.4 %), live trees and other plants (7.3 %), cocoa (7.3 %), and other products (39.5 %).

Figure 3 – EU trade with Russia: Agricultural trade by product (2020)



Data source: [Eurostat Comext](#) and author's calculations.

In terms of categories of products for which a significant part of **EU agri-food trade** is linked to Russia (see Figure 3, share of dependency), figures show that almost 19 % of 'other feed and feed ingredients' imported to the EU come from Russia, as well as almost 8 % of sugar (other than beet and cane), and slightly more than 6 % of imported wheat. As for EU exports, more than half of total EU exports of soya beans are exported to Russia, as are more than 20 % of total EU exports of cocoa beans, oilseeds, eggs and honey, and cut flowers and plants. With regard to **agri-food global exports**, Russia is a major producer and exporter of sunflower oil (28.6 % of global exports), wheat (18 %), barley (15.4 %), and corn (2.3 %).

The impact of the Russia-Ukraine war in agri-food markets is still being evaluated; judging from both countries' share in main agri-food commodities and fertilisers, it is expected to be [considerable](#).

