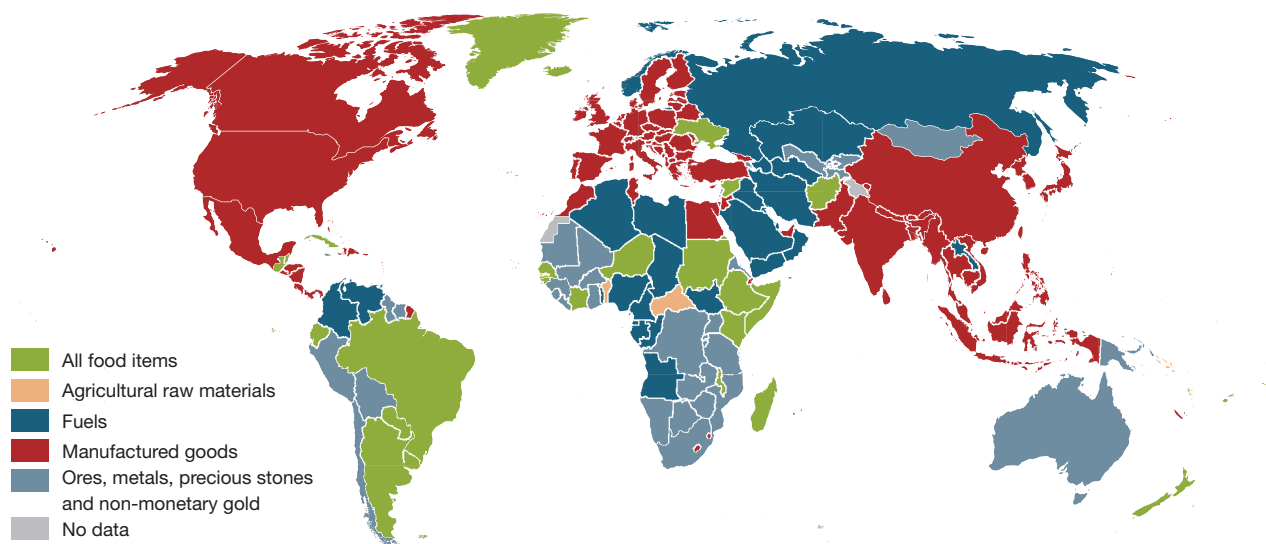


Fact sheet #3: Trade structure by product

Map 1 | Main export products, 2020



Concepts and definitions

The breakdown of merchandise trade by product group is based on the entries in the customs declarations that are coded in accordance with a globally harmonized classification system, called the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System (HS). The values of the individual customs declarations have been summed up to the level of product group, error-checked and submitted to the United Nations Statistics Division for integration in the UN Comtrade database (United Nations, 2021).

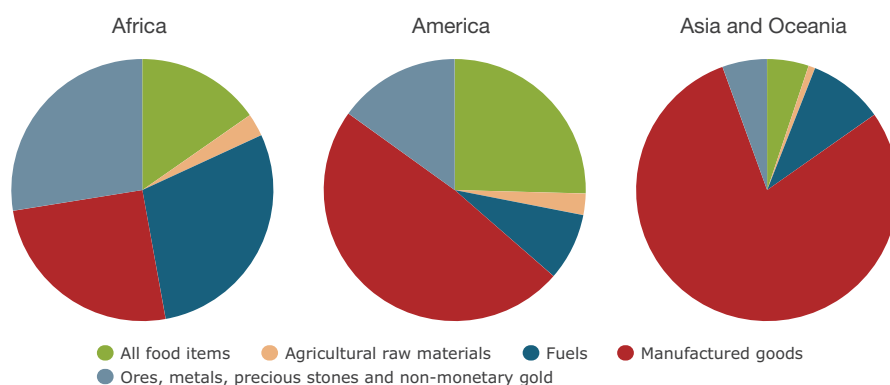
The UN Comtrade database contains product breakdowns based on the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC). These have been obtained by conversion of the raw data coded in HS and constitute the main source of the figures presented in this section. For correspondence between SITC codes and the five broad product groups presented in this section, see UNCTAD Handbook of Statistics 2021, annex 6.2.

Regional specialization patterns

The supply of goods to the world market has a regional pattern. According to 2020 figures, economies in Northern and Central America, Europe and Southern, Eastern and South-Eastern Asia export mainly manufactured goods. The main fuel exporters are located along the northern coast of South America, in Middle and Northern Africa and Western and Central Asia. Some other countries, for example Madagascar, Niger, Somalia, Ukraine and Brazil, specialized in food in 2020.

In Africa, primary goods accounted for 75 per cent of merchandise exports in 2020; of which fuels made up 39 per cent. Developing Asia and Oceania relied much less on primary goods in their exports (21 per cent). Developing America recorded the largest proportion of food exports (25 per cent) among the three developing regions.

Figure 1 | Export structure of developing economies by product group, 2020 (Percentage)



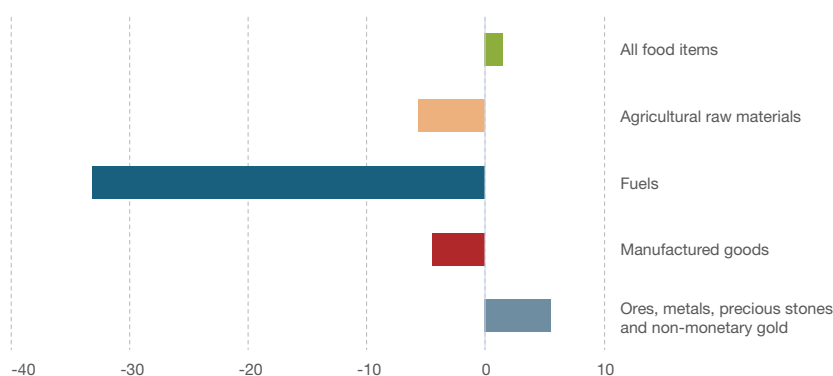
Note: Non-allocated products are not considered.



Decline in trade for several products

The contraction of world merchandise trade in 2020 (see UNCTAD Handbook of Statistics 2021, section 1.1) during the COVID-19 pandemic was strongly driven by fuel price collapse. The export of fuels fell sharply, by 33 per cent. Exports of agricultural raw materials decreased by 6 per cent and those of manufactured goods by 4 per cent. Exports of ores, metals, precious stones and non-monetary gold grew by 6 per cent and trade in food increased by almost 2 per cent.

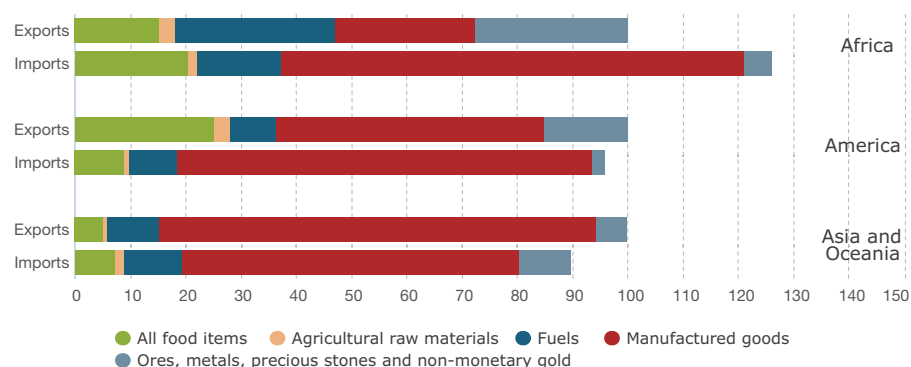
Figure 2 | Annual growth rate of exports by product group, 2020 (Percentage)



What do developing regions trade with others?

Developing regions show considerable differences in their respective trade with the rest of the world. In 2020, economies in Asia and Oceania recorded a merchandise trade surplus of 10 per cent driven by high exports of manufactured goods. In America, high imports of manufactured goods were partially offset by food exports. Overall, the region had a 7 per cent trade surplus. In contrast, the trade structure was entirely different in Africa, with imports of manufactured goods three times higher than exports. Although counterbalanced by surpluses in ores, metals, precious stones, monetary gold and in fuels, an overall deficit as large as 25 per cent remained. Developing America showed comparably high net-exports of food.

Figure 3 | Developing economies' extra-trade structure, 2020 (Percentage of exports)



Note: Non-allocated products are not considered.

For references, see UNCTAD Handbook of Statistics 2021, annex 6.4.

Manufacturing exporters are mostly in



$\frac{3}{4}$ of Africa's merchandise exports are primary goods



World fuels trade dropped by 33% in 2020



Africa imported 3 times more manufactured goods than it exported in 2020



Table 1 Exports by product group, origin and destination, 2020
(Millions of United States dollars)

All food items

Origin	Destination					
	World	Developed economies	Total	Africa	America	Asia and Oceania
World	1 581 569 (100)	916 364 (58)	663 485 (42)	86 349 (5)	81 758 (5)	495 379 (31)
Developed economies	946 990 (100)	666 401 (70)	279 643 (30)	36 877 (4)	44 863 (5)	197 903 (21)
Developing economies	634 579 (100)	249 963 (39)	383 842 (60)	49 472 (8)	36 895 (6)	297 476 (47)
Developing economies: Africa	59 249 (100)	28 030 (47)	31 174 (53)	14 871 (25)	447 (1)	15 857 (27)
Developing economies: America	231 068 (100)	107 423 (46)	123 022 (53)	10 886 (5)	30 949 (13)	81 186 (35)
Developing economies: Asia and Oceania	344 262 (100)	114 510 (33)	229 646 (67)	23 715 (7)	5 499 (2)	200 432 (58)

Note: Percentage of exports to the whole world in parentheses.

Agricultural raw materials

Origin	Destination					
	World	Developed economies	Total	Africa	America	Asia and Oceania
World	235 230 (100)	117 130 (50)	117 443 (50)	6 344 (3)	8 254 (4)	102 845 (44)
Developed economies	145 477 (100)	89 088 (61)	56 345 (39)	3 807 (3)	5 448 (4)	47 090 (32)
Developing economies	89 753 (100)	28 041 (31)	61 098 (68)	2 537 (3)	2 806 (3)	55 755 (62)
Developing economies: Africa	10 780 (100)	3 376 (31)	7 399 (69)	923 (9)	69 (1)	6 407 (59)
Developing economies: America	24 082 (100)	9 480 (39)	13 994 (58)	134 (1)	1 509 (6)	12 352 (51)
Developing economies: Asia and Oceania	54 891 (100)	15 185 (28)	39 704 (72)	1 480 (3)	1 228 (2)	36 996 (67)

Note: Percentage of exports to the whole world in parentheses.



Fuels

Origin	Destination					
	World	Developed economies	Total	Africa	America	Asia and Oceania
World	1 496 044 (100)	667 991 (45)	792 961 (53)	61 150 (4)	89 168 (6)	642 643 (43)
Developed economies	685 892 (100)	431 079 (63)	233 507 (34)	23 107 (3)	62 994 (9)	147 406 (21)
Developing economies	810 152 (100)	236 912 (29)	559 454 (69)	38 043 (5)	26 174 (3)	495 237 (61)
Developing economies: Africa	112 196 (100)	47 285 (42)	63 708 (57)	11 882 (11)	2 734 (2)	49 093 (44)
Developing economies: America	75 711 (100)	17 860 (24)	47 009 (62)	478 (1)	17 386 (23)	29 144 (38)
Developing economies: Asia and Oceania	622 245 (100)	171 766 (28)	448 736 (72)	25 683 (4)	6 054 (1)	417 000 (67)

Note: Percentage of exports to the whole world in parentheses.

Manufactured goods

Origin	Destination					
	World	Developed economies	Total	Africa	America	Asia and Oceania
World	12 373 833 (100)	7 387 749 (60)	4 975 221 (40)	350 070 (3)	642 891 (5)	3 982 260 (32)
Developed economies	6 534 214 (100)	4 757 409 (73)	1 767 707 (27)	132 618 (2)	358 299 (6)	1 276 790 (20)
Developing economies	5 839 620 (100)	2 630 340 (45)	3 207 514 (55)	217 452 (4)	284 592 (5)	2 705 471 (46)
Developing economies: Africa	97 870 (100)	48 836 (50)	48 919 (50)	30 642 (31)	3 228 (3)	15 050 (15)
Developing economies: America	441 060 (100)	352 955 (80)	87 444 (20)	1 711 (0)	67 261 (15)	18 472 (4)
Developing economies: Asia and Oceania	5 300 690 (100)	2 228 549 (42)	3 071 151 (58)	185 099 (4)	214 103 (4)	2 671 949 (50)

Note: Percentage of exports to the whole world in parentheses.

Ores, metals, precious stones and non-monetary gold

Origin	Destination					
	World	Developed economies	Total	Africa	America	Asia and Oceania
World	1 264 920 (100)	641 934 (51)	614 172 (49)	23 352 (2)	20 309 (2)	570 511 (45)
Developed economies	651 169 (100)	408 137 (63)	241 523 (37)	5 928 (1)	10 976 (2)	224 619 (34)
Developing economies	613 751 (100)	233 796 (38)	372 649 (61)	17 424 (3)	9 334 (2)	345 892 (56)
Developing economies: Africa	106 392 (100)	36 713 (35)	62 959 (59)	10 754 (10)	382 (0)	51 823 (49)
Developing economies: America	136 835 (100)	52 692 (39)	83 584 (61)	619 (0)	5 375 (4)	77 590 (57)
Developing economies: Asia and Oceania	370 523 (100)	144 391 (39)	226 106 (61)	6 051 (2)	3 577 (1)	216 479 (58)

Note: Percentage of exports to the whole world in parentheses.