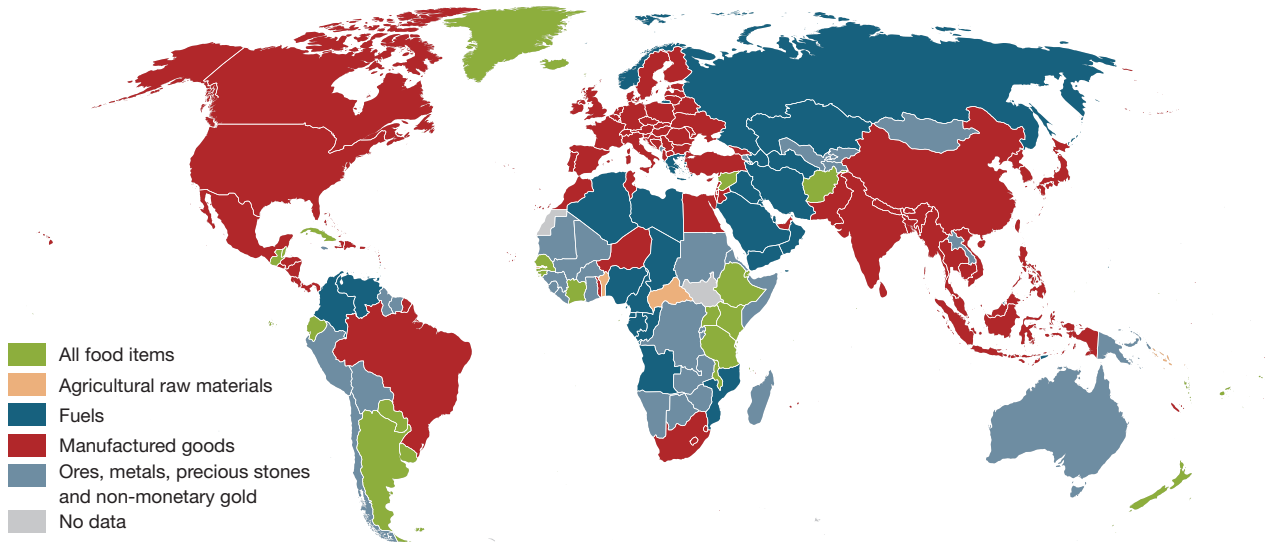




Fact sheet #3: Trade structure by product

Map 1 | Main export products, 2018



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, 2019a).

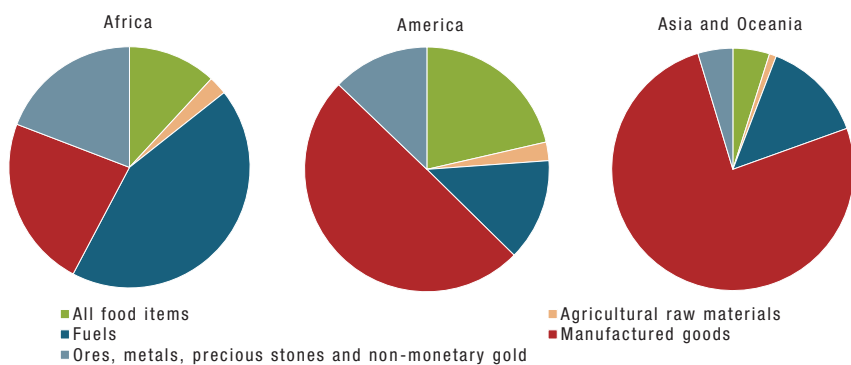
The UN Comtrade database contains product breakdowns based on the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC). These have been obtained by conversion of the raw data coded in HS and constitute the main source of the figures presented in this section. For correspondence between SITC codes and the five broad product groups presented in this section, see UNCTAD Handbook of Statistics 2019, annex 6.2.

Regional specialization patterns

The global supply of goods to the world market has a marked regional structure. Economies in Northern and Central America; Europe; and Southern, Eastern and South-Eastern Asia export mainly manufactured goods. Economies in other regions are mostly specialized in primary commodities, with the notable exceptions of Brazil, South Africa, Niger and several Northern African economies. The main fuel exporters were located along the northern coast of South America, in Middle and Northern Africa, and Western and Central Asia.

In Africa, primary commodities accounted for three quarters of merchandise exports, in developing America for one half and in developing Asia and Oceania for only one quarter. African exports were dominated by fuels (43 per cent); exports from American developing economies had a relatively high proportion of food (21 per cent).

Figure 1 | Export structure of developing economies by product group, 2018 (Percentage)



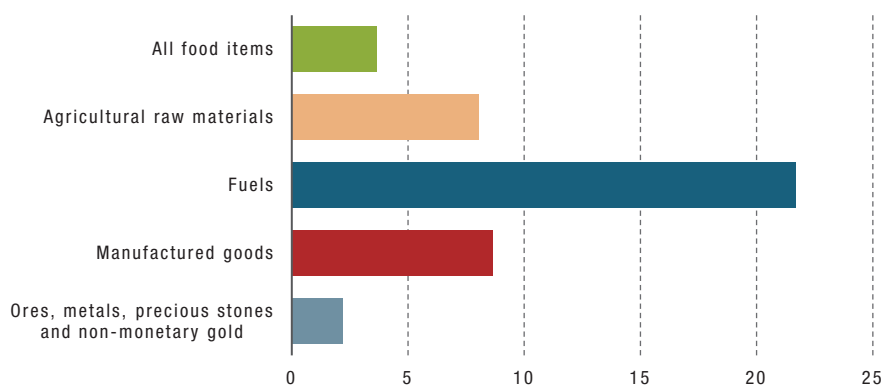
Note: Non-allocated products are not considered.



Upswing in trade across a whole range of products

The continuing surge of world merchandise trade in 2018 (see UNCTAD Handbook of Statistics 2019, section 1.1) was strongly driven by fuels, the exports of which expanded by 22 per cent. Exports of manufactured goods and agricultural raw materials grew by 9 and 8 per cent, respectively, whereas exports of ores, metals, precious stones and non-monetary gold were relatively sluggish, rising by 2 per cent. Food exports increased by 4 per cent.

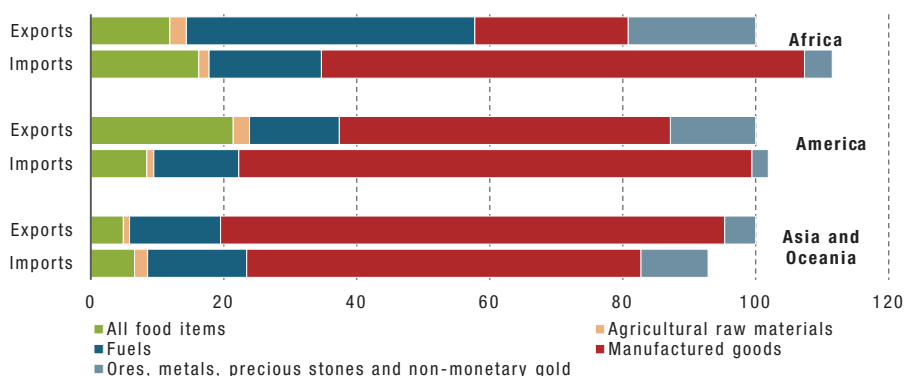
Figure 2 Annual growth rate of exports by product group, 2018 (Percentage)



What do developing regions trade with others?

Developing regions show considerable differences in their respective trade with the rest of the world. In 2018, exports of goods in developing economies of Asia and Oceania were 7 per cent higher than the value of imports. This trade surplus was driven by manufactured exports and was partially offset by a deficit in other commodity groups. In Africa, the trade structure was entirely different, with manufacturing imports three times higher than exports. Although counterbalanced by surpluses in ores, metals, precious stones and non-monetary gold and in fuels, there remained an overall deficit of 12 per cent. Developing America had a smaller trade deficit than Africa and showed comparatively high net-exports of food.

Figure 3 Developing economies' extra-trade structure, 2018 (Percentage of exports)



Note: Non-allocated products are not considered.

For references, see UNCTAD Handbook of Statistics 2019, annex 6.4.

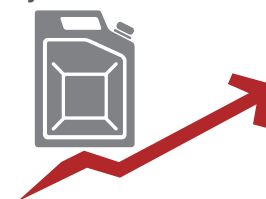
Manufacturing exporters are mostly in



$\frac{3}{4}$ of Africa's merchandise exports were primary commodities in 2018



Fuel exports up by 22% in 2018



Africa's manufacturing imports 3 times as high as manufacturing exports in 2018



Table 1 Exports by product group, origin and destination, 2018
(Millions of United States dollars)

All food items

Origin	Destination						
	World	Total	Developing economies			Transition economies	Developed economies
			Africa	America	Asia and Oceania		
World	1 565 375 (100)	625 796 (40)	80 868 (5)	86 529 (6)	458 400 (29)	52 459 (3)	884 471 (57)
Developing economies	629 629 (100)	378 586 (60)	46 874 (7)	39 712 (6)	292 000 (46)	16 538 (3)	233 558 (37)
Developing economies: Africa	57 714 (100)	30 449 (53)	14 797 (26)	556 (1)	15 096 (26)	1 491 (3)	25 744 (45)
Developing economies: America	227 554 (100)	121 594 (53)	10 524 (5)	33 522 (15)	77 548 (34)	5 316 (2)	100 071 (44)
Developing economies: Asia and Oceania	344 361 (100)	226 543 (66)	21 553 (6)	5 634 (2)	199 356 (58)	9 731 (3)	107 744 (31)
Transition economies	61 371 (100)	28 328 (46)	7 109 (12)	518 (1)	20 702 (34)	18 476 (30)	14 330 (23)
Developed economies	874 375 (100)	218 882 (25)	26 886 (3)	46 299 (5)	145 698 (17)	17 445 (2)	636 583 (73)

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

Agricultural raw materials

Origin	Destination						
	World	Total	Developing economies			Transition economies	Developed economies
			Africa	America	Asia and Oceania		
World	276 498 (100)	138 999 (50)	8 004 (3)	10 372 (4)	120 623 (44)	4 955 (2)	131 392 (48)
Developing economies	103 922 (100)	68 596 (66)	3 346 (3)	3 716 (4)	61 534 (59)	1 008 (1)	33 689 (32)
Developing economies: Africa	12 111 (100)	8 077 (67)	1 117 (9)	128 (1)	6 833 (56)	98 (1)	3 931 (32)
Developing economies: America	26 049 (100)	13 917 (53)	158 (1)	1 988 (8)	11 770 (45)	281 (1)	11 270 (43)
Developing economies: Asia and Oceania	65 762 (100)	46 602 (71)	2 071 (3)	1 600 (2)	42 931 (65)	629 (1)	18 487 (28)
Transition economies	14 388 (100)	8 068 (56)	286 (2)	157 (1)	7 625 (53)	1 521 (11)	4 785 (33)
Developed economies	158 188 (100)	62 336 (39)	4 373 (3)	6 498 (4)	51 465 (33)	2 426 (2)	92 918 (59)

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

Fuels

Origin	Destination						
	World	Total	Developing economies			Transition economies	Developed economies
			Africa	America	Asia and Oceania		
World	2 438 638 (100)	1 188 175 (49)	90 282 (4)	137 586 (6)	960 307 (39)	35 066 (1)	1 155 481 (47)
Developing economies	1 317 945 (100)	846 867 (64)	52 764 (4)	44 954 (3)	749 150 (57)	2 153 (0)	439 557 (33)
Developing economies: Africa	210 831 (100)	104 049 (49)	18 726 (9)	6 537 (3)	78 785 (37)	105 (0)	105 213 (50)
Developing economies: America	143 548 (100)	74 564 (52)	681 (0)	30 641 (21)	43 242 (30)	92 (0)	43 842 (31)
Developing economies: Asia and Oceania	963 566 (100)	668 255 (69)	33 357 (3)	7 775 (1)	627 123 (65)	1 956 (0)	290 502 (30)
Transition economies	318 162 (100)	96 484 (30)	3 444 (1)	2 473 (1)	90 568 (28)	24 321 (8)	197 258 (62)
Developed economies	802 531 (100)	244 824 (31)	34 075 (4)	90 159 (11)	120 590 (15)	8 591 (1)	518 666 (65)

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

Manufactured goods

Origin	Destination						
	World	Total	Developing economies			Transition economies	Developed economies
			Africa	America	Asia and Oceania		
World	13 320 021 (100)	5 237 044 (39)	371 784 (3)	774 765 (6)	4 090 495 (31)	354 343 (3)	7 699 417 (58)
Developing economies	5 978 584 (100)	3 285 242 (55)	219 151 (4)	324 688 (5)	2 741 404 (46)	120 329 (2)	2 569 395 (43)
Developing economies: Africa	112 150 (100)	54 003 (48)	33 439 (30)	3 755 (3)	16 809 (15)	471 (0)	57 564 (51)
Developing economies: America	529 340 (100)	120 228 (23)	2 700 (1)	94 908 (18)	22 620 (4)	1 252 (0)	407 050 (77)
Developing economies: Asia and Oceania	5 337 094 (100)	3 111 012 (58)	183 012 (3)	226 026 (4)	2 701 975 (51)	118 606 (2)	2 104 781 (39)
Transition economies	167 050 (100)	41 443 (25)	6 136 (4)	6 265 (4)	29 042 (17)	54 696 (33)	70 629 (42)
Developed economies	7 174 387 (100)	1 910 358 (27)	146 497 (2)	443 813 (6)	1 320 049 (18)	179 319 (3)	5 059 393 (71)

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

Ores, metals, precious stones and non-monetary gold

Origin	Destination						
	World	Total	Developing economies			Transition economies	Developed economies
			Africa	America	Asia and Oceania		
World	1 206 418 (100)	652 441 (54)	23 809 (2)	24 990 (2)	603 642 (50)	14 655 (1)	532 837 (44)
Developing economies	557 799 (100)	367 943 (66)	15 797 (3)	11 277 (2)	340 870 (61)	2 702 (0)	181 245 (32)
Developing economies: Africa	93 252 (100)	53 592 (57)	9 188 (10)	713 (1)	43 690 (47)	459 (0)	33 795 (36)
Developing economies: America	136 284 (100)	77 387 (57)	1 083 (1)	7 133 (5)	69 172 (51)	650 (0)	58 036 (43)
Developing economies: Asia and Oceania	328 263 (100)	236 965 (72)	5 526 (2)	3 431 (1)	228 008 (69)	1 593 (0)	89 414 (27)
Transition economies	54 967 (100)	16 047 (29)	652 (1)	260 (0)	15 135 (28)	7 190 (13)	31 730 (58)
Developed economies	593 652 (100)	268 451 (45)	7 360 (1)	13 453 (2)	247 637 (42)	4 763 (1)	319 862 (54)

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