

14. International trade in selected space products

International trade in space products, i.e. satellites and rockets, is relatively limited. It remains highly regulated and subject to government control, with a rather small volume of production and a high degree of custom-made parts and materials. All these factors constrain trade; however, official trade statistics do reveal some notable trends.

There was a significant increase in export volume in the last half of the decade, with a total recorded export value of USD 15 billion for 2007-13. This compares to USD 4.4 billion total export value for 2000-06. This significant growth is due to a more internationalised manufacturing sector and increased intra-firm trade across borders (see Chapter 1). The emergence of new markets in different parts of the world, especially in the telecommunications sector, is also a major factor.

OECD economies are the main exporters of space products. During the 2007-13 timeframe, France, Germany, the United States and Italy were the top exporters of spacecraft and space vehicles. However, exports are increasingly headed to non-OECD economies as compared to the beginning of the decade (57% of exports in 2007-13, as compared to 51% in 2000-06), with the Russian Federation and China as important customers. Kazakhstan is also an important importer because of the Russian-operated launch site in Baikonur. France and Luxembourg's high ranking on the importers' list comes from being home to large satellite telecommunications operators (Eutelsat for France and SES and Intelsat for Luxembourg). These operators procure their commercial satellites internationally.

Methodological notes

Tracking trade volumes of final products of spacecraft (including satellites) and launch vehicles remains challenging. Spacecraft are defined in international classification systems as a manned or unmanned vehicle designed to orbit the earth or travel to celestial objects for the purpose of research exploration. However, statistics can only capture a limited share of space-related trade and the recorded volume is probably considerably under-reported as compared to actual production levels (and/or due to the absence of detailed codes for some systems and equipment, and statistical confidentiality issues). The data come from the International Trade by Commodity Statistics (ITCS) database jointly managed by the OECD and the United Nations. The Commodity Code used is 7925 "Spacecraft (including satellites) and spacecraft launch vehicles". These data need to be completed by industry associations' results, as many of the space manufacturing contracts do not appear in official statistical databases.

Sources

OECD International Trade by Commodity database (ITCS) database, data extracted 13 May 2014. www.oecd.org/std/its/itsinternationaltradebycommoditystatistics.htm.

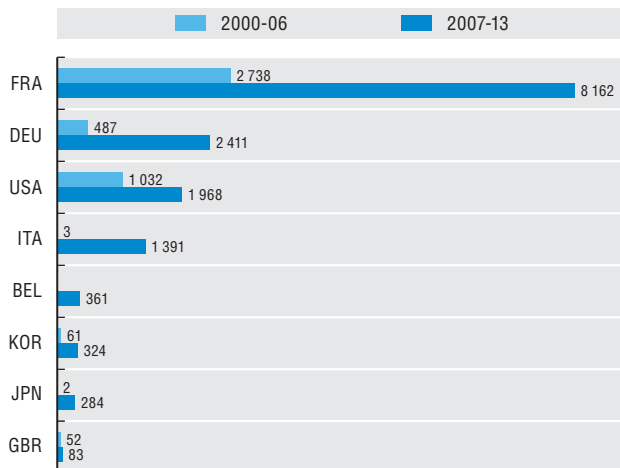
Note

14.3: Data reported by France, United States, Germany and Italy.
Information on data for Israel: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602>.

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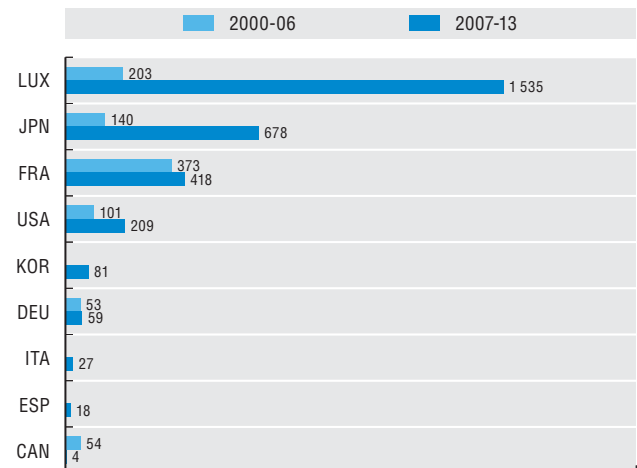
14.1. Top OECD exporters of satellites and launch vehicles

USD million (current), 2000-06 and 2007-13



14.2. Top OECD importers of satellites and launch vehicles

USD million (current), 2000-06 and 2007-13

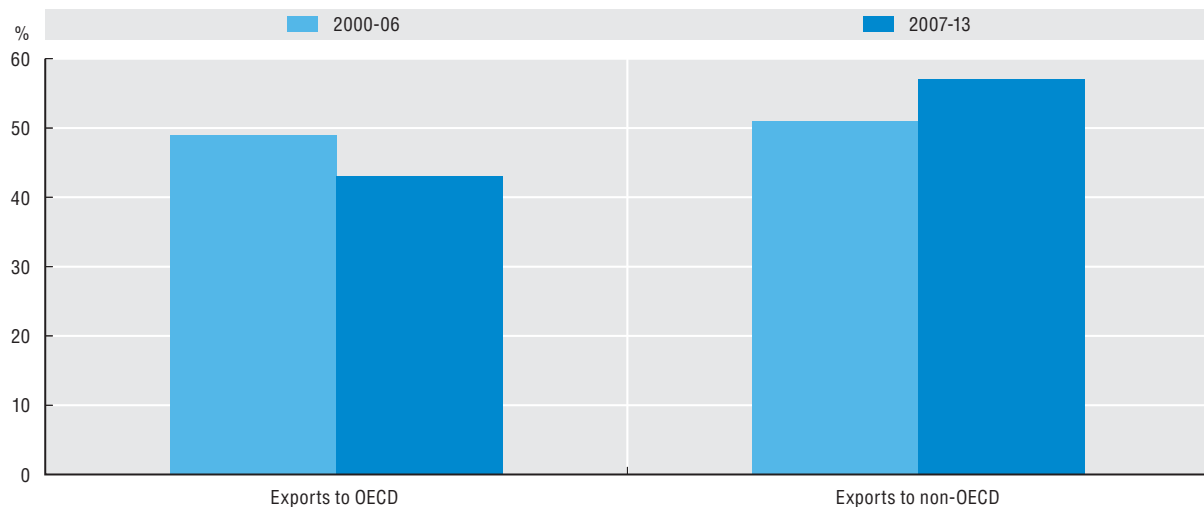


Source: OECD ITCS Database, 2014.

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933141836>

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933141855>

14.3. Space exports market distribution as reported by top four exporters



Source: OECD ITCS Database, 2014.

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933141874>



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