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Exports and imports of cultural goods in Abu Dhabi - Introductory report

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2021 Report

CultureSTATS -AD

Exports and Imports of Cultural Goods in Abu Dhabi: Introductory Report

دائرة الثقافة والسياحة
DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE
AND TOURISM



2021 Report

CultureSTATS -AD

**Exports and Imports
of Cultural Goods in
Abu Dhabi: Introductory
Report**



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Produced as part of
CultureSTATS-AD

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HIGHLIGHTS

This report is the first statistical overview of the exports and imports of cultural goods in Abu Dhabi. The analysis is based on Statistics Centre Abu Dhabi (SCAD) data available for the 2014–20 period and data from Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ADCCI) Certificates of Origin (2020). The approach to the data analysis has been harmonised with a leading international benchmark in culture statistics – the Eurostat ESS-Net Culture framework.

Main findings

- Since 2017, Abu Dhabi has recorded a trade deficit for cultural goods – i.e. imports are much higher than exports for cultural goods.
- The value of the trade deficit increased from 2017 to 2019, reflecting a faster increase in the value of imports than that of exports. The ratio of exports to imports – otherwise known as the cover ratio – decreased as well, from a value of 43 in 2014 to 0.4 in 2019, confirming that the value of Abu Dhabi’s imports of cultural goods increased at a faster pace than the value of its exports.
- Imports of cultural goods as a share of total imports has been rising since 2017 and is higher than exports of cultural goods as a share of total non-oil exports.
- The imports and exports of cultural goods in the emirate of Abu Dhabi are much higher relatively compared with other countries, especially nations in the European Union.
- The main contributors to imports and exports of cultural goods are ‘Printed books, newspapers and pictures’; ‘Pearls, precious or semi-precious stones, imitation jewellery’; ‘Electrical machinery; sound and television recorders’; and ‘Works of art, collectors’ pieces and antiques’.
- There is an increasing trend in the exports of ‘Printed books, newspapers and pictures’, while imports under this category have declined significantly. In addition, imports and exports of goods in the ‘Works of art, collectors’ pieces and antiques’ category have increased dramatically; however, imports under this category are higher than exports.
- The top three destination countries for cultural goods produced in the United Arab Emirates are Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Oman.
- Abu Dhabi tends to import cultural goods mainly from the United States of America, China and Canada.
- Some Gulf countries such as Kuwait, Oman and Qatar tend to import cultural goods from other countries via Abu Dhabi. Similarly, countries like the United Kingdom and the USA export cultural goods to other countries via Abu Dhabi. This shows that Abu Dhabi is also acting as an intermediary in the global trade of cultural goods.

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Introduction

This report is the first statistical overview of the exports and imports of cultural goods in Abu Dhabi. The analysis is based on Statistics Centre Abu Dhabi (SCAD) data available for the 2014–20 period and Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ADCCI) Certificates of Origin data (available for 2020). The approach to the data analysis has been harmonised with a leading international benchmark in culture statistics (the Eurostat ESS-Net Culture framework).

The ESSnet-Culture framework has been followed to calculate the exports and imports of cultural goods. Accordingly, cultural goods are defined as “products of artistic creativity that convey artistic, symbolic and aesthetic values. Examples include antiques, works of art, jewellery, books, newspapers, photos, films, music or video games. The cultural goods heading is very heterogeneous: while some of these goods are products of mass consumption, others are much-specialised items where demand or supply may be small. For example, there is much lower demand for embroidery, maps, architectural plans or drawings, than

for books, video game consoles or jewellery.” Furthermore, the definition used by the ESSnet-Culture framework “excludes large-scale manufactured products that facilitate access to cultural content (for example, television sets, Blu-ray players, hi-fi equipment, smartphones, computers or tablets). For film, music and video games, the category includes all recorded media, magnetic or optical, which provides support to access cultural content. Musical instruments, which represent a means of artistic expression, are also included.”¹

In particular, the ESSnet-Culture framework identifies cultural goods based upon a list of eight-digit codes within 10 cultural domains that include: Heritage, Archives, Libraries, Books and Press, Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Audio-visual and Multimedia, Architecture, Advertising and Art Crafts. For the sake of consistency and to facilitate the analysis of developments over time, the various product codes were aggregated into 12 types of cultural products. These are as follows:

Cultural Aggregate	Description
Antiques	Antiques; postage or revenue stamps; collections and collector’s pieces
Works of art	Works of art (paintings, engravings, sculpture and designs)
Crafts	Crafts (handmade fabrics and ornamental articles)
Jewellery	Articles of jewellery (of precious and semi-precious metals and stones)
Books	Books
Newspapers	Newspapers, journals and periodicals
Maps	Maps and hydrographical or similar charts
Architecture plans	Plans and drawings for architectural or other similar purposes
Photographic plates and films	Photographic plates and films, exposed and developed
Recorded media	Music in manuscripts, gramophone records, recorded magnetic tapes and optical media (CDs); audio-visual and interactive media (films, videos and video games, excluding video game consoles)
Video game consoles	Video game consoles (excluding those operated by any means of payment), since 2012
Musical instruments	Musical instruments; parts and accessories thereof

Table 1 - Cultural imports and exports aggregates as per the ESSnet-Culture framework

¹https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Culture_statistics_-_international_trade_in_cultural_goods&oldid=518407#Cultural_trade_2014-2019_at_EU-27_and_national_level

Based on the ESSnet-Culture framework, data was then requested from SCAD on the imports and exports of cultural goods and data was received on the specified products from 2014 to 2020. Some of the key insights from the data are highlighted below.

IMPORTS AND EXPORTS OF CULTURAL GOODS IN ABU DHABI: A GENERAL OVERVIEW

Since 2017, Abu Dhabi has recorded a trade deficit for cultural goods - i.e. cultural goods imports have been greater than exports since 2017 (see Figure 1). The value of the trade deficit increased from 2017 to 2019, reflecting a faster increase in the value of imports than the value of exports.

The ratio of exports to imports - otherwise known as the cover ratio - declined as well, from a value of 43 in 2014 to 0.4 in 2019, confirming that the value of Abu Dhabi's imports of cultural goods increased at a faster pace than the value of its exports.

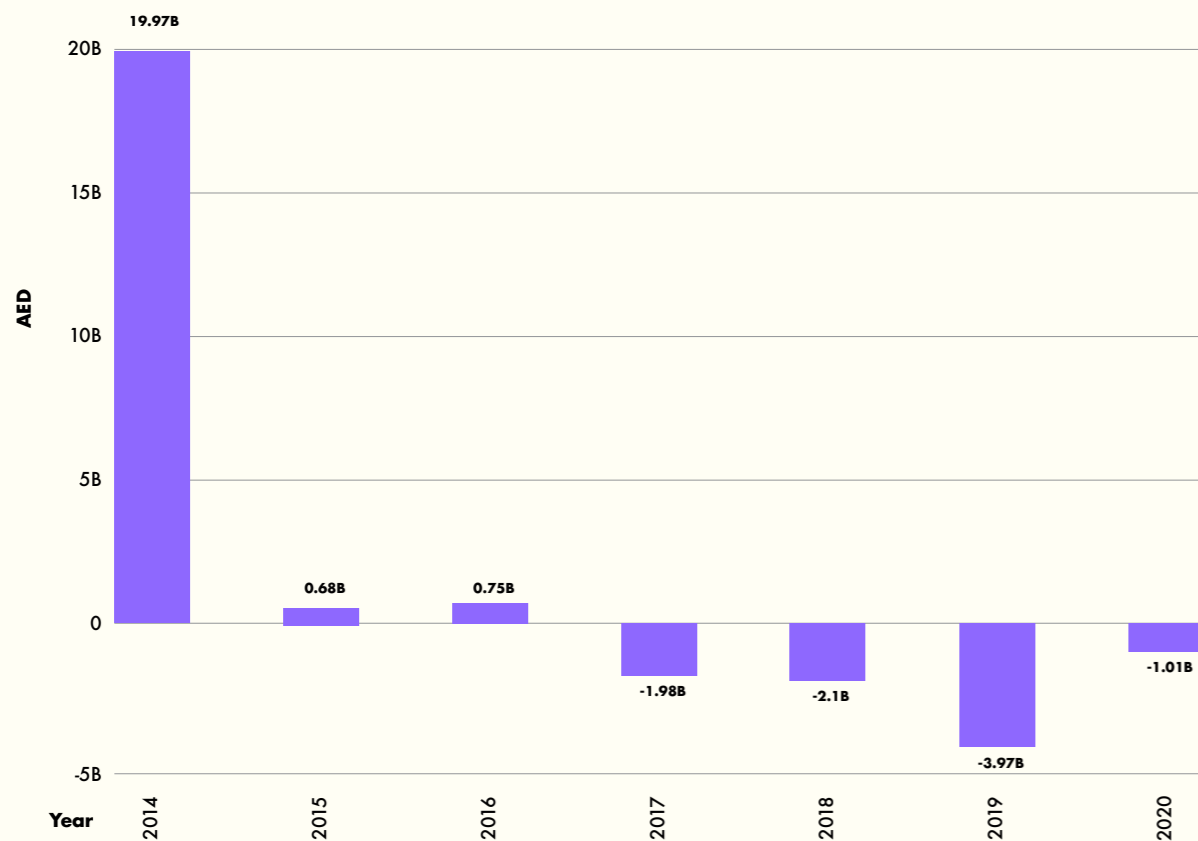


Figure 1 - Since 2017, imports of cultural goods have been higher than the exports

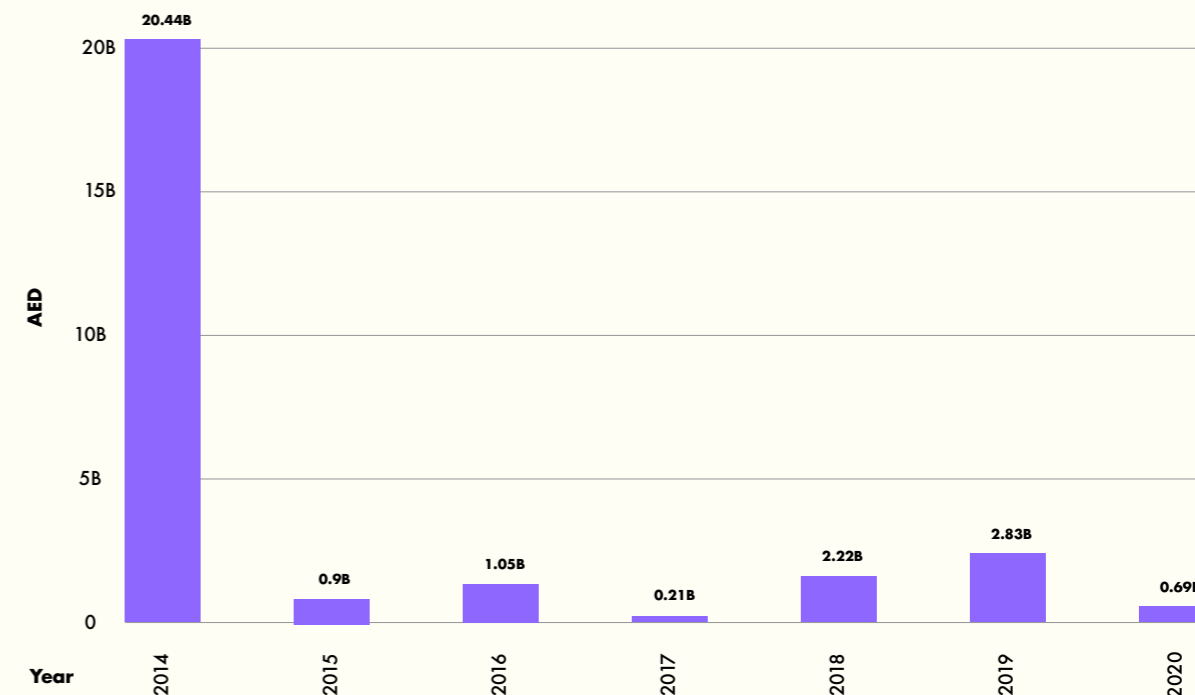


Figure 2 - Total exports of cultural goods, 20-2014

Figure 3 shows the total imports of cultural goods in Abu Dhabi. There is an increase between 2017 (AED 2.2 billion) and 2019 (AED 6.8 billion). In 2020, there was a decrease in the total imports of cultural goods, which may be explained by the COVID-19 pandemic. A fuller perspective will be achieved when post-pandemic economic data is available in 2022.

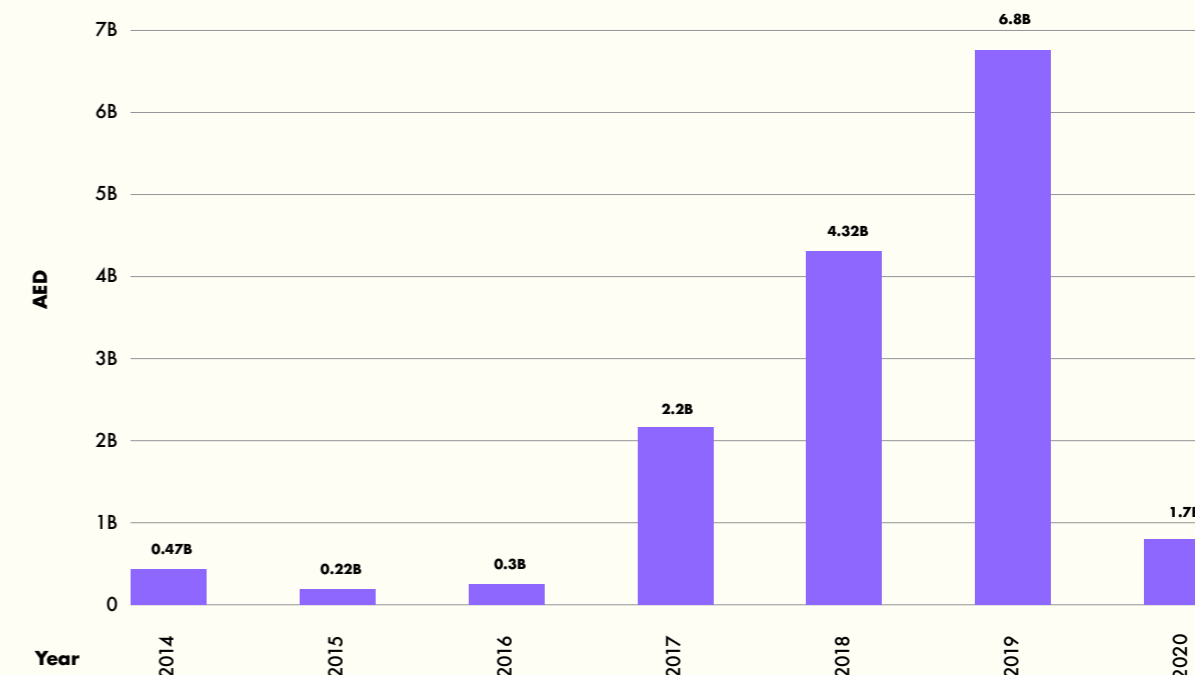


Figure 3 - Total imports of cultural goods

A DETAILED ANALYSIS BY PRODUCT

Similarly, as shown in Figures 4 and 5, imports of cultural goods as a share of total imports have increased since 2017 and are higher than cultural goods exports, as a share of total non-oil exports. It is worth noting that, in 2014, the exports of cultural goods were dramatically high, accounting for almost 16 per cent of the total non-oil exports.

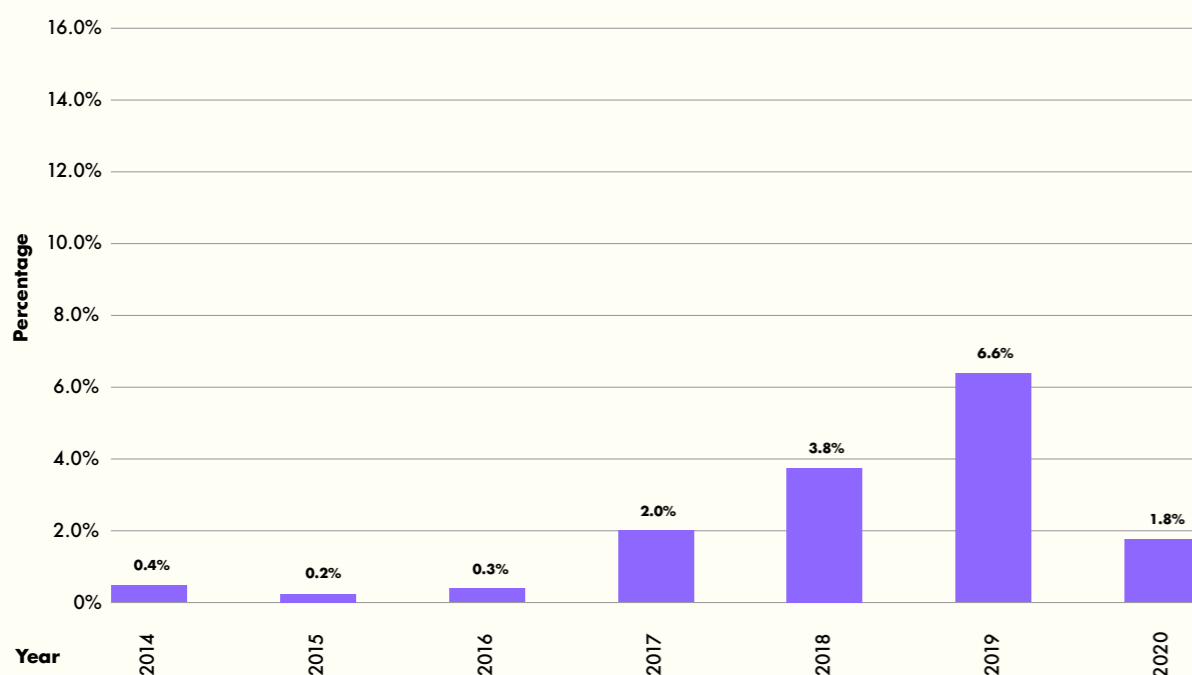


Figure 4 - Cultural goods imports as a share of total imports

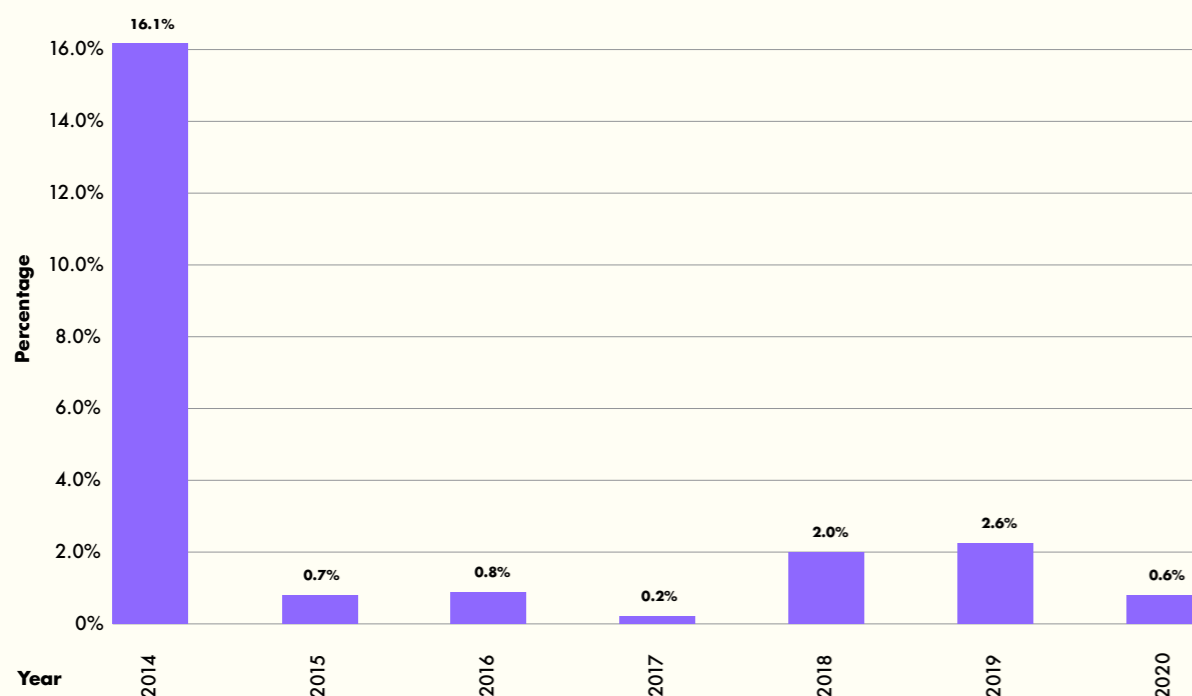


Figure 5 - Cultural goods imports as a share of total non-oil exports

A more detailed analysis by product at the HS2 level reveals that the main contributors to imports and exports of cultural goods are 'Printed books, newspapers and pictures'; 'Pearls, precious or semi-precious stones, imitation jewellery'; 'Electrical machinery; sound and television recorders'; and 'Works of art, collectors' pieces and antiques' (see Table 2).

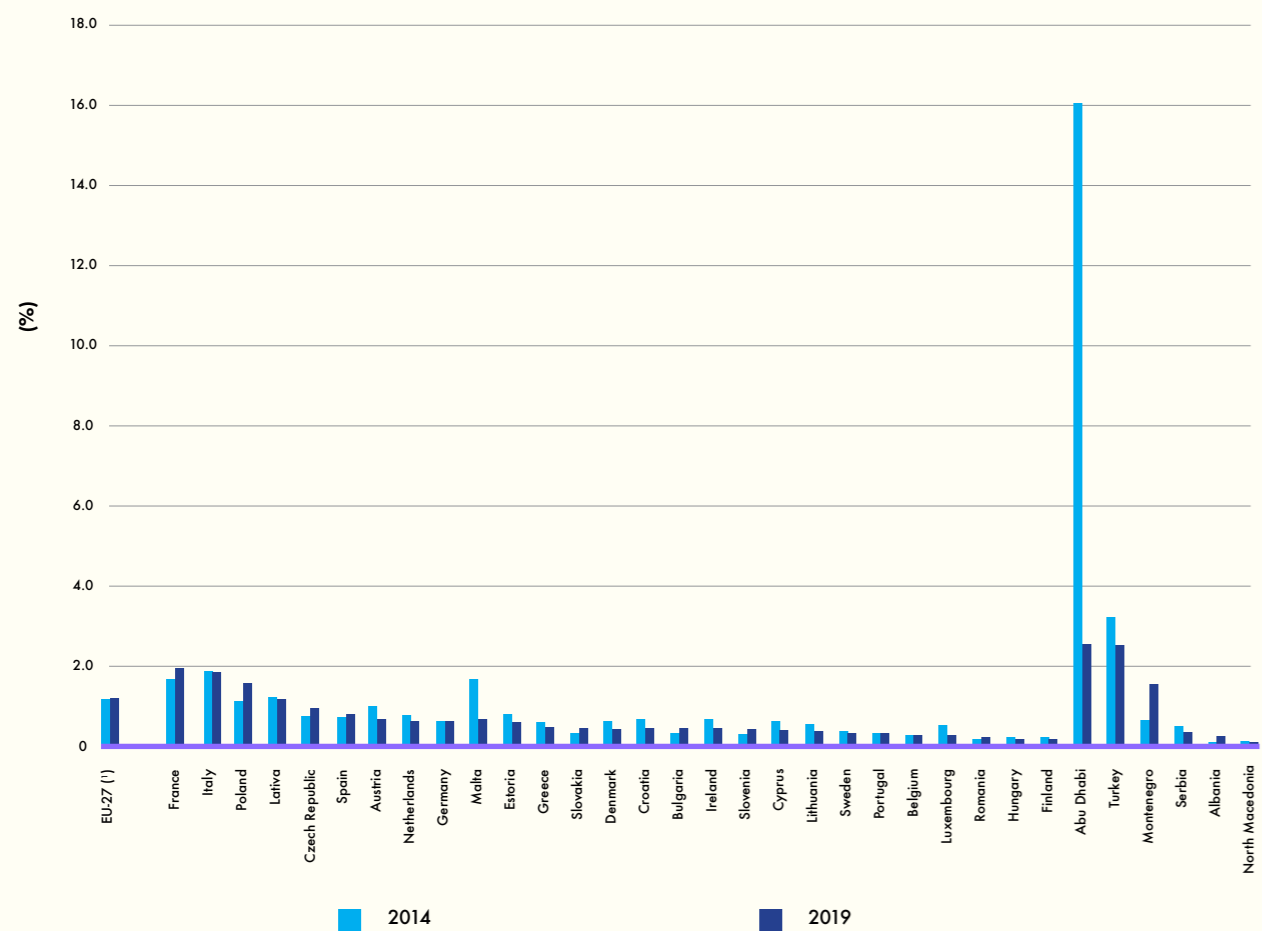
HS2 - Chapter Code	HS2 - Chapter Desc.	2014		2015	
		Import	Export	Import	Export
37	Photographic or cinematographic goods	0.28	0.24	0.20	0.00
44	Woods, articles of wood and charcoal	9.40	8.91	3.48	6.21
49	Printed books, newspapers and pictures	194.19	70.32	109.63	83.80
58	Woven fabrics; textile fabrics; lace and tapestries	1.71	3.68	0.77	3.73
60	Knitted or crocheted fabric	0.67	8.26	0.71	6.50
69	Ceramic products	1.86	4.85	0.74	5.18
70	Glass and glassware	1.28	0.29	0.24	0.33
71	Pearls, precious or semi precious stones, imitation jewellery	45.22	20,266.23	42.43	634.25
85	Electrical machinery; sound and television recorders	53.93	24.25	37.86	34.19
92	Musical instruments; parts and accessories	26.42	23.33	15.69	29.76
95	Toys, games and sports requisites and parts	1.61	15.81	1.30	19.60
96	Miscellaneous manufactured articles	0.11	0.70	0.07	0.40
97	Works of art, collectors pieces and antiques	136.82	15.10	8.77	78.68
	Total	473.49	20,441.93	221.88	902.61

HS2 - Chapter Code	HS2 - Chapter Desc.	2016		2017	
		Import	Export	Import	Export
37	Photographic or cinematographic goods	0.15	0.00	0.43	0.68
44	Woods, articles of wood and charcoal	2.56	8.20	2.63	7.69
49	Printed books, newspapers and pictures	130.33	72.80	140.66	35.13
58	Woven fabrics; textile fabrics; lace and tapestries	1.17	1.04	2.35	0.28
60	Knitted or crocheted fabric	0.03	0.80	1.16	1.08
69	Ceramic products	1.68	4.58	1.72	3.02
70	Glass and glassware	0.13	1.52	0.28	0.92
71	Pearls, precious or semi precious stones, imitation jewellery	105.02	749.85	172.43	105.65
85	Electrical machinery; sound and television recorders	28.73	14.69	15.30	18.32
92	Musical instruments; parts and accessories	7.84	13.55	3.28	2.29
95	Toys, games and sports requisites and parts	11.55	36.08	0.33	21.43
96	Miscellaneous manufactured articles	0.02	0.05	0.03	0.07
97	Works of art, collectors pieces and antiques	12.14	148.04	1,855.83	16.17
	Total	301.33	1,051.20	2,196.43	212.73

2018		2019		2020	
Import	Export	Import	Export	Import	Export
0.21	0.03	0.01	0.10	0.19	0.40
1.04	7.07	2.38	10.02	1.45	6.75
77.88	147.40	81.78	167.13	59.25	427.41
1.65	0.01	1.22	1.18	0.64	0.03
0.12	0.26	0.40	0.28	0.11	0.27
1.46	2.06	0.63	3.49	1.25	2.23
0.53	1.71	0.09	0.58	0.38	-
56.01	174.69	87.51	85.73	144.14	92.24
22.83	14.86	26.73	13.32	43.28	6.51
4.18	1.39	6.67	1.85	3.78	0.53
0.33	15.06	0.76	6.88	1.26	1.22
0.08	0.10	0.31	0.76	0.06	0.00
4,152.60	1,857.34	6,591.26	2,535.64	1,444.32	151.29
4,318.92	2,221.98	6,799.76	2,826.96	1,700.12	688.88

Table 2 - Imports and exports of cultural goods

Exports of cultural goods as a share of total exports, 2014 and 2019

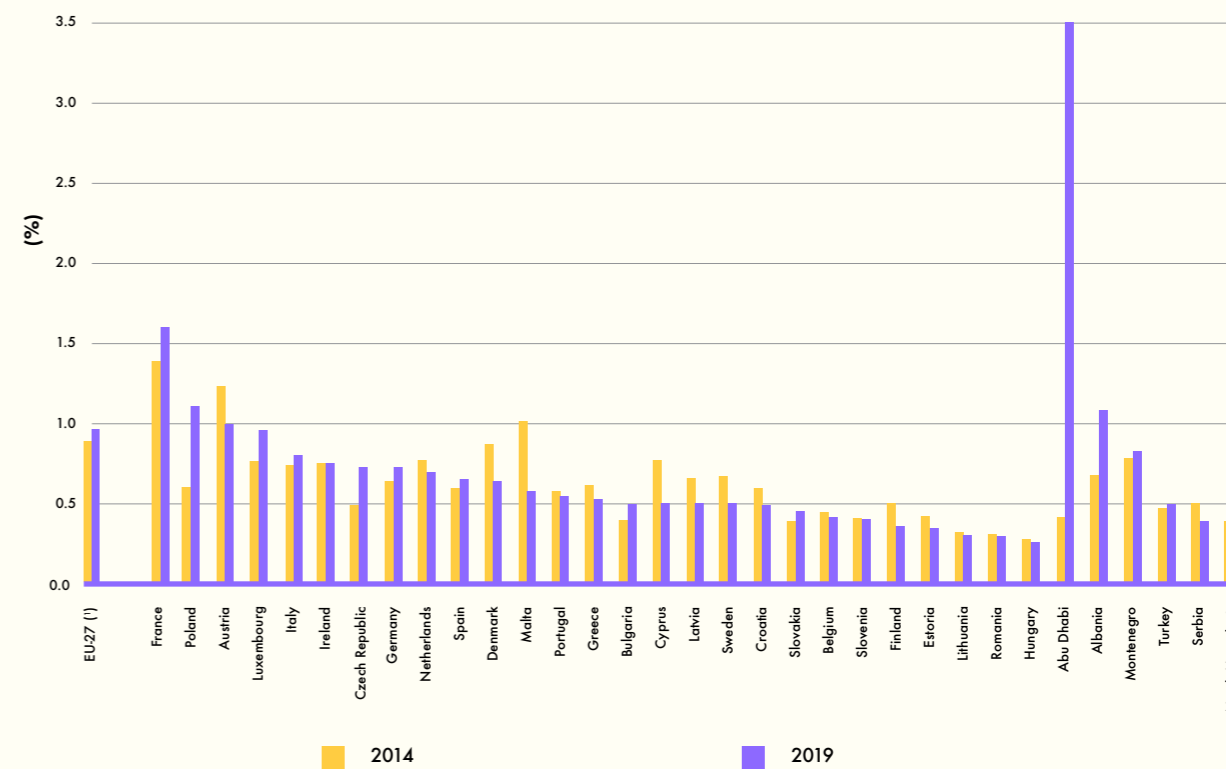


(1) Extra-EU exports.
Source: Eurostat (online data code: cult_trd_prd)

Figure 9 - Compared with EU countries, exports of cultural goods (as a percentage of total exports) in the United Arab Emirates are relatively higher

The same trend can be seen in the imports of cultural goods (see Figure 10). Among EU countries, the highest imports of cultural goods as a share of total imports are observable in France and Austria, but the 2019 data reveals that this indicator is more than two times higher in the case of Abu Dhabi.

Exports of cultural goods as a share of total exports, 2014 and 2019



(1) Extra-EU exports.
Source: Eurostat (online data code: cult_trd_prd)

Figure 10 - Compared with EU countries, imports of cultural goods (as a percentage of total imports) in the United Arab Emirates are relatively higher.

TRADING PARTNERS OF ABU DHABI

While the overall imports and exports value of cultural goods provides information on trends in the trading of cultural goods, the identification of Abu Dhabi's trading partners is also of interest. However, to explore this, more granular data is required regarding these trading partners. This data was not available from SCAD and so this report used secondary data available from the Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce.

Figure 9 shows the main exporter countries for cultural goods from the United Arab Emirates in 2020. The top three destination countries for cultural goods produced in the United Arab Emirates were Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Oman (see Figure 11).



Figure 11 - Top destination countries for cultural goods produced in the United Arab Emirates.

At the same time, Abu Dhabi, as part of the United Arab Emirates, tends to import cultural goods mainly from the USA, China and Canada (see Figure 12).



Figure 12 - Top origin countries of imported cultural goods to the United Arab Emirates.

A similar picture is presented in Figure 13, which also confirms that some of the largest importers of cultural goods from Abu Dhabi are within the Gulf Cooperation Council, while the USA, China and Canada are the top countries from which Abu Dhabi purchases cultural goods. Figure 13 also highlights another important fact – that some Gulf countries such as Kuwait, Oman and Qatar tend to import cultural goods from other countries via Abu Dhabi. Similarly, countries like the UK and USA export cultural goods to other countries via Abu Dhabi. This indicates that Abu Dhabi is also acting as an intermediary in the global trade of cultural goods.

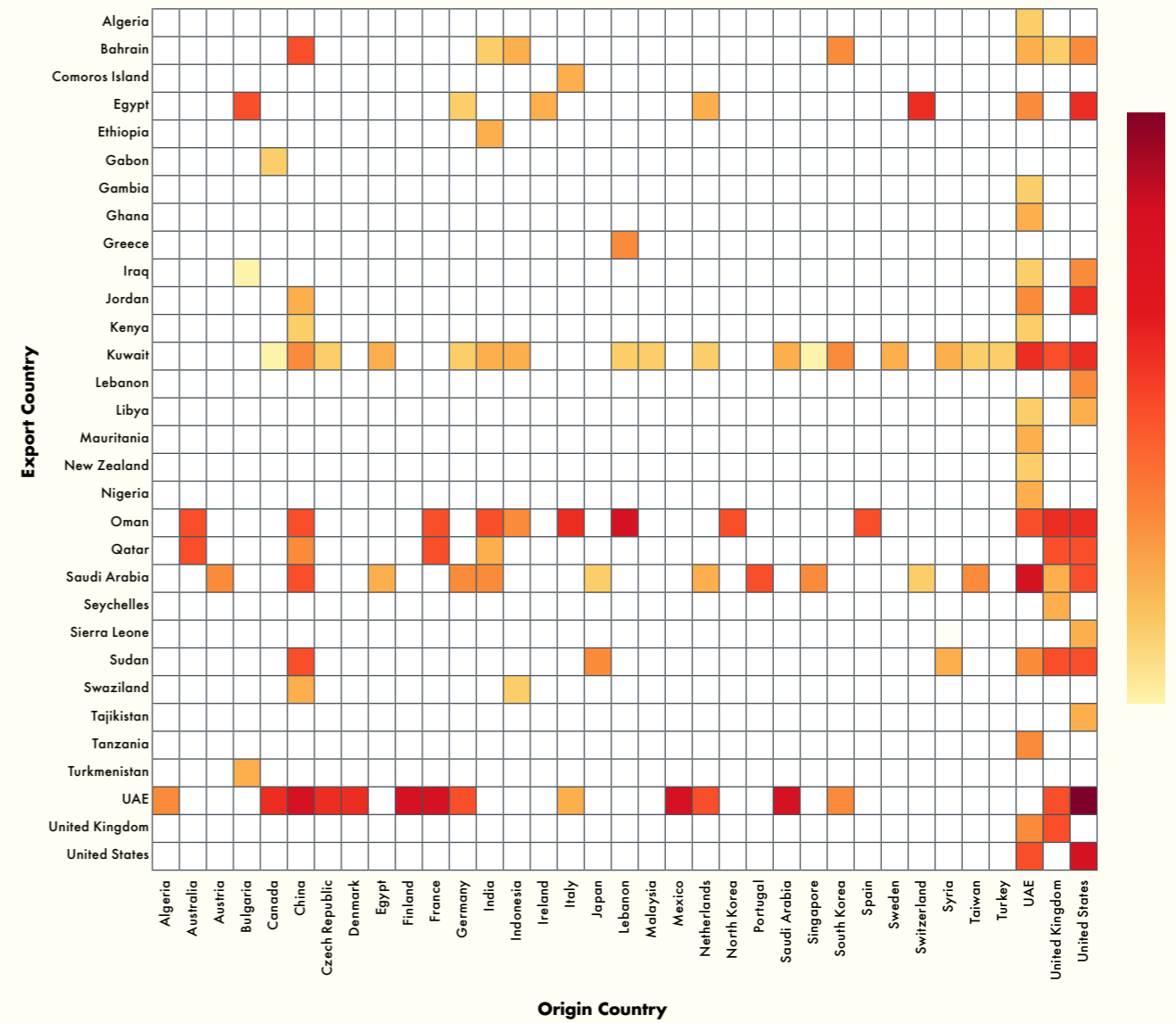


Figure 13 - Imports and exports of cultural goods by partner country. White means no trade, while the darker the colour, the higher the value of trade.

APPENDIX: THE STATISTICAL SCOPE OF CULTURAL IMPORTS AND EXPORTS

The ESSnet-Culture framework uses the following indicators to capture the imports and exports of cultural material.

Name of the indicator	Purpose
Share of cultural goods in total imports	To compare the ratio of the import of cultural goods with total imports.
Share of cultural goods in total exports	To compare the ratio of the export of cultural goods with total exports.

The ESSnet-Culture methodology report recognises that the production of these statistics depends on the availability of sources and data, and as such, these indicators are suggested as basic guides for the collection of data on the imports and exports of cultural activities from harmonised data sources.

The data requirement, methodology, interpretation and limitations of the above indicators are as follows:

Share of cultural goods in total imports	
<p>Data requirement:</p> <p>The total cost of the imported cultural goods into the country. The total cost of the whole imports of goods into the country</p>	<p>Formula:</p> $(l_{cg}/I) * 100$ <p>l_{cg} = Total cost of the imported cultural goods into the country. I = Total cost of the whole imports of goods.</p>
<p>Analysis and interpretation:</p> <p>A high value of the indicator would indicate good availability of the imported cultural goods in the area. Indirectly, it shows a higher level of demand for the imported cultural goods in the area. A low value of the indicator would indicate the poor availability of the imported cultural goods. It may indicate low demand for specific goods and a higher level of taxes or possible restrictions for importing cultural goods.</p>	
<p>Methodological and definition issues or operational limitations:</p> <p>Methodological and definition issues or operational limitations: When analysing data of retail trade enterprises, the specifics of their countries (such as different taxation and restrictions as well as possible support or subsidies of the cultural products) must be considered. The concentration of retail trade enterprises may also be affected by the density of the population in the area.</p>	

Share of cultural goods in total exports	
<p>Data requirement:</p> <p>The total cost of the exported cultural goods from the country. The total cost of the whole exports of goods from the country</p>	<p>Formula:</p> $(E_{cg}/E) * 100$ <p>E_{cg} = Total cost of the exported cultural goods from the country. E = Total cost of the whole exports of goods.</p>
<p>Analysis and interpretation:</p> <p>A high value of the indicator would indicate good availability of the exported cultural goods abroad. Indirectly, it shows a higher level of demand for the exported cultural goods abroad. A low value of the indicator may indicate low demand for the specific goods abroad, and a higher level of taxes or possible restrictions for exporting cultural goods.</p>	
<p>Methodological and definition issues or operational limitations:</p> <p>When analysing data of retail trade enterprises, the specifics of their countries (such as different taxation and restrictions as well as possible support or subsidies of the cultural products) must be considered. The concentration of the retail trade enterprises may also be affected by the density of the population in the area.</p>	

For the purpose of calculating these indicators, ESSnet-Culture cultural goods are identified based on a list of eight-digit codes within 10 cultural domains, that include: Heritage, Archives, Libraries, Books and Press, Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Audio-visual and Multimedia, Architecture, Advertising and Art Crafts. For the sake of consistency and to facilitate the analysis of developments over time, the various product codes were aggregated into 12 types of cultural products. These are as follows:

Share of cultural goods in total exports	Share of cultural goods in total exports
Antiques	Antiques; postage or revenue stamps; collections and collector's pieces
Works of art	Works of art (paintings, engravings, sculpture and designs)
Crafts	Crafts (handmade fabrics and ornamental articles)
Jewellery	Articles of jewellery (of precious and semi-precious metals and stones)
Books	Books
Newspapers	Newspapers, journals and periodicals
Maps	Maps and hydrographical or similar charts
Architecture plans	Plans and drawings for architectural or other similar purposes
Photographic plates and films	Photographic plates and films, exposed and developed
Recorded media	Music in manuscripts, gramophone records, recorded magnetic tapes and optical media (CDs); audio-visual and interactive media (films, videos and video games, excluding video game consoles)
Video game consoles	Video game consoles (excluding those operated by any means of payment), since 2012
Musical instruments	Musical instruments; parts and accessories thereof

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