

# Northern Ireland Broad Economy Sales and Exports Statistics: Headline Results 2014



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Geographical Area: Northern Ireland

Theme: Economy

Frequency: Annual

NISRA introduced a more comprehensive measure of local businesses' sales to markets outside Northern Ireland in 2015. The latest estimates remain designated as 'experimental' to reflect the fact that they are under development.

## Key points

- Total sales by companies in Northern Ireland (NI) were estimated to be worth £65.8 billion in 2014, an increase of 2.0% (£1.3 billion) over the year.
- Sales within Northern Ireland increased by £829 million to £43.3 billion, up 1.9% over the year and at the highest level on survey record.
- Sales to Great Britain (GB) increased by £643 million to £12.7 billion, up 5.3% over the year.
- External sales to markets outside of NI rose by £458 million (2.1%) to £22.5 billion, and accounted for over a third of total sales in 2014 (34.1%).
- External sales and GB sales are at their highest levels on survey record.
- Exports fell by £185 million (1.9%) over the year, to £9.8 billion, a fall which was largely driven by a decrease in sales to the Republic of Ireland.
- Exports to the Republic of Ireland (ROI) decreased by £117 million (3.1%) over the year, to £3.6 billion.
- Exports to the Rest of the EU (excluding ROI) fell over the year by £4 million (0.2%) to £2.2 billion. Exports to the Rest of the World decreased by £65 million (1.6%) over the year, to £4.0 billion.
- Over the year 2013 to 2014, the number of businesses selling to destinations outside NI fell by 3.8% (450 businesses) while the number of businesses exporting fell by 8.8% (828 businesses).

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# 1. Introduction and context

## Experimental Status

The Broad Economy Sales and Exports Statistics (BESES) is an experimental annual measure of local businesses' sales to markets outside Northern Ireland (NI). Estimates of the *number* of businesses selling to markets outside NI are presented for the first time.

Ongoing development of the methodology (as outlined in the associated published [methodology paper](#) (March 2015)) will be informed by user feedback, both in terms of the usefulness and reliability of the estimates and their comparability with other sources and the statistics will remain experimental until user feedback indicates that they are useful and credible. Any comments should be sent to [statistics@dfpni.gov.uk](mailto:statistics@dfpni.gov.uk).

NISRA has engaged extensively throughout the evolution of this output with expert users of NI economic statistics whose views have already helped to inform the current approach. Users include DETI, DFP, and DARD economists, the Ulster University Economic Policy Centre and a number of NI economic commentators and ONS methodologists. NISRA will continue to consult on any further methodological changes which may improve the quality and value of the statistics.

## Background

The Northern Ireland Executive's Economic Strategy referred to the need to improve the measurement of Northern Ireland's exports beyond that of the manufacturing sector. NISRA subsequently published initial estimates of 'broad economy' sales and exports by industry sector in March 2015 <https://www.detini.gov.uk/articles/broad-economy-exports>.

This release provides revised estimates for 2011 and 2012 and provisional estimates for 2013 and 2014. In addition, estimates of the number of businesses selling to markets outside Northern Ireland are presented for the first time.

To support this release a set of reference tables with further sectoral and geographic breakdowns are available at the following link:

<https://www.detini.gov.uk/publications/current-publication-broad-economy-sales-exports-statistics/BESES-internet-tables-2011-2014.xlsx>

The contents of this report will be of interest to government policy makers, Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs), the business community, economic commentators, academics and members of the general public with an interest in the NI economy. Previous uses and users of the MSES are separately documented at: <https://www.detini.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/deti/summary-of-usage-of-the-mses.pdf>

The latest Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment Economic Commentary provides an overview of the state of the Northern Ireland economy, setting it in a global context. This can be found at:

<https://www.detini.gov.uk/publications/deti-economic-commentary>

The most up-to-date official statistics on the economy and labour market are available on the Economic Overview page of the DETI website at: <https://www.detini.gov.uk/articles/economic-overview>.

### **Other sources**

Further information relating to Northern Ireland exports is available from the Exporting Northern Ireland Services Study (ENIS). The Exporting Northern Ireland Services (ENIS) Study is a survey which was first introduced by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment in 2003 to further understand and estimate the value to the Northern Ireland economy of exporting services. The study is based on information collected via the International Trade in Services Survey (ITIS). In light of developments on the production of the BESES NISRA are reviewing the continuation of the ENIS series and will consult with users on future plans in relation to this.

The International Trade in Services (ITIS) survey is a UK wide survey which collects information on overseas transactions of consultants and companies offering business services. Information collected from the survey is fed into the UK balance of payments and published at the UK level. The full bulletin can be accessed at: [http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171778\\_431553.pdf](http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171778_431553.pdf).

While directly comparable UK data for the BESES do not exist (the BESES covers goods and services produced in Northern Ireland), HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) are responsible for collecting the UK's international trade in goods data, which are published as two National Statistics series - the 'Overseas Trade Statistics (OTS) of the UK' and the 'UK Regional Trade Statistics (RTS)'. These UK regional statistics can be accessed at: <https://www.uktradeinfo.com/Statistics/RTS/Pages/default.aspx>

It should, however, be noted that the HMRC estimates are based on customs declarations; employ regional allocation for London based large businesses and include the exports of goods from other industry sectors as well as Manufacturing. The HMRC estimates also include exports not covered by the BESES (e.g. live animals).

### **Counts of Businesses Exporting**

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) has recently begun to produce an experimental count of importers and exporters in GB. For conceptual reasons, ONS were not able to derive data for NI as part of this series. While the methodologies used by NISRA and ONS to produce their respective counts are broadly similar, users should be aware that differences still exist and caution should be exercised when comparing the two measures.

An information paper describing the methodology used by ONS can be found here: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/method-quality/specific/business-and-energy/annual-business-survey/quality-and-methods/information-paper--annual-business-survey--abs---exporters-and-importers-in-great-britain--2014.pdf>.

The Scottish Government also publish export statistics from the Exports Statistics Scotland series (formerly called the Global Connections Survey). These statistics can be accessed at:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Economy/Exports/ESSPublication>

The Government Statistical Service (GSS) has issued guidance on comparing official statistics produced by each nation of the UK. This guidance can be accessed here:

<https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Comparability-Report-Final.pdf>

NISRA's exports statistics are considered as "Partially Comparable at Level D" with the ONS's statistics on importers and exporters in GB (most recent publication at <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/abs/annual-business-survey/exporters-and-importers-in-great-britain--2014/sty-exporters-and-importers.html>).

Level D comparability is described as:

*"Figures which are produced from separate sources of data. Methods and standards are broadly comparable, but users should be made aware of the limitations."*

## **Status of figures in current bulletin**

The most recent figures, 2013 and 2014, are provisional and are subject to revision in the next reporting period.

Sales and exports values are reported in £ million unless otherwise specified.

Percentage changes are reported to one decimal place.

The Broad Economy Sales and Exports series is classified as experimental (see above).

## **Definitions used in this publication**

### **Broad Economy:**

The information needed to produce BESES is collected via the NI Annual Business Inquiry (NIABI). Like NIABI, the BESES results are classified according to the Standard Industrial Classification of Economic Activities (SIC) system. The SIC 2007 sections covered by the NIABI defines the term 'Broad Economy' and are as follows:

- A. Agriculture (support activities), forestry and fishing
- B. Mining and quarrying
- C. Manufacturing
- D. Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply
- E. Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities
- F. Construction

- G. Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motor cycles (Distribution industries)
- H. Transport and storage
- I. Accommodation and food service activities
- J. Information and communication
- L. Real estate activities
- M. Professional, scientific and technical activities
- N. Administrative and support service activities
- P. Education (excludes local authority and central government bodies)
- Q. Human health and social work activities (excludes local authority and central government, and medical and dental practice activities (group 86.2))
- R. Arts, entertainment and recreation
- S. Other service activities

**Total sales** are defined as the sum of sales to Northern Ireland, Great Britain, the Republic of Ireland, the Rest of the European Union and the Rest of the World. Total sales include all taxes and duties on goods invoiced with the exception of VAT which is excluded from total sales.

**External sales** are comprised of those sales made outside Northern Ireland, that is, sales to Great Britain, the Republic of Ireland, the Rest of the European Union and the Rest of the World.

**Exports** consist of all sales made outside the United Kingdom.

### **Further Information**

Further information on the BESES can be accessed at:  
<https://www.detini.gov.uk/articles/broad-economy-exports>

## 2. Summary and commentary

### Sales and Exports Performance

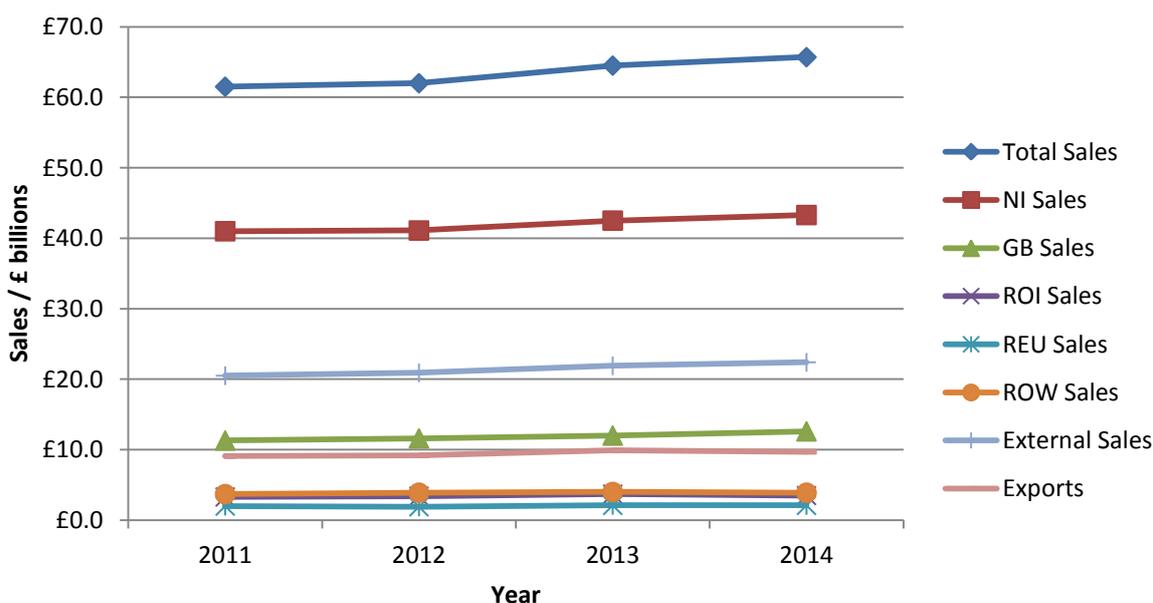
Total sales by companies in Northern Ireland (NI) were estimated to be worth £65.8 billion in 2014. This represents an increase of 2.0% (£1.3 billion) over the year and compares to an increase of 3.9% in 2013.

In 2014, 34.1% of total sales were made to customers outside NI (external sales). This equated to £22.5 billion, representing an increase of 2.1% (£458 million) over the year. This figure exceeds the previously recorded peak in 2013 (£22.0 billion), and external sales and are therefore at their highest on survey record.

Sales outside the UK (exports) were estimated to be worth just under £9.8 billion in 2014. This represented a decrease of 1.9% over the year, compared to an increase in the previous period (2012 – 2013) of 7.0%. This fall in exports was largely driven by a decrease in sales to the Republic of Ireland (ROI), which fell by 3.1% (£117 million) over the year.

Figure 1 shows the values of total sales, and their broad destinations over the 4 year period (2011 to 2014). Over this period, sales to all broad destinations have increased. When considering export sales there has been an increase of 7.1% over the 4 year period to 2014.

**Figure 1: Total Sales and their broad destinations: 2011 – 2014 (£ billions)**

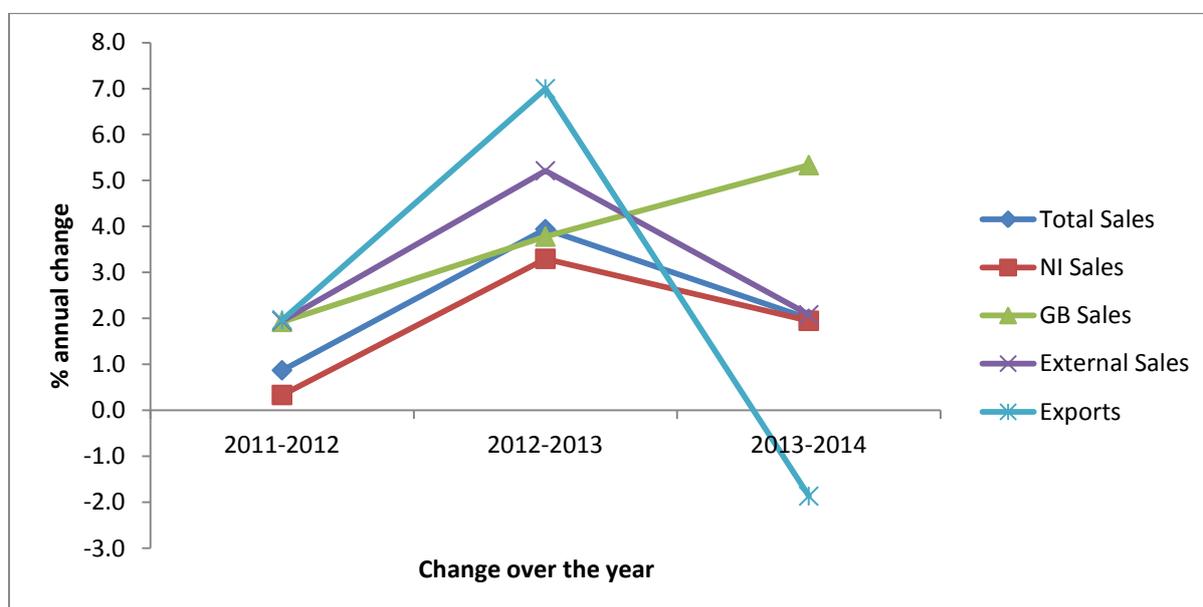


## Annual Changes in Sales over Time

Figure 2 provides information on annual percentage changes in total sales to selected destinations.

The annual rate of growth of sales increased in the period 2011/12 – 2012/13 for all destinations. However there was a fall in growth across the board in the period 2013/14 with the exception of sales to GB, which continue to grow. Exports fell in the period 2013/14 by 1.9%.

**Figure 2: Annual Growth of Sales to Selected Destinations: 2011 – 2014**



## Analysis by Destination

Over the last year, total sales increased by 2.0% (£1.3 billion). This was largely driven by increasing sales to NI (up 1.9% or £829 million) and sales to GB (up 5.3% or £643 million). These increases offset a fall in exports, down by 1.9%, from £9.9 billion in 2013 to £9.8 billion in 2014.

Over the last year, sales to ROI have decreased by 3.1% (£117 million). This compared to growth of 8.4% the previous year. Sales to the Rest of the EU were relatively static, falling by 0.2% over the year while sales to the Rest of the World decreased by 1.6%.

Sales to Great Britain saw the largest proportional and actual increases over the year for external markets, rising by 5.3% or £643 million to £12.7 billion in 2014. Great Britain remains the most significant single market for external sales from

Northern Ireland businesses, accounting for 19.3% (£12.7 billion) of total sales. These are the highest level of sales to GB on survey record.

Sales destined for international customers (exports) accounted for 14.8% of total sales. Sales to the ROI decreased over the year by 3.1% and account for 5.5% of total sales and over a third (36.9%) of exports.

Total sales to the ROI in 2014 were £3.6 billion, down £117 million (3.1%) over the year. This is the first fall in sales to ROI on survey record, following two consecutive years of increasing sales.

Over the last year sales to the rest of the EU<sup>1</sup> decreased by 0.2% (£4 million) to £2.2 billion. Sales to the rest of the EU account for 3.3% of total sales and almost a quarter of exports (22.3%).

Exports to the rest of the World<sup>2</sup> decreased by £65 million (1.6%) over the year, to £4.0 billion. Rest of World sales account for 6.1% of total sales, and 40.9% of all exports.

External sales to markets outside Northern Ireland are comprised of sales to GB plus the value of exports combined. These increased by £458 million to £22.5 billion, and accounted for over one third of total sales in 2014 (34.1%). This figure exceeds the previously recorded peak in 2013 (£22.0 billion), and external sales are therefore at their highest on survey record.

## **Analysis by Industry Section**

In 2014, the largest proportion of export sales was from the Manufacturing sector (Section C) which made up 61.7% (£6.0 billion) of all exports sales. Manufacturing exports fell by 1.5% over the year, but have increased by 8.6% to £6.0 billion between 2011 and 2014.

The report “Northern Ireland Manufacturing Sales & Exports Headline Results 2014”, published in December 2014, provides a detailed breakdown of the Manufacturing results. The report can be accessed at this address:

<https://www.detini.gov.uk/publications/current-publication-manufacturing-sales-exports-survey>

The next largest exporter was Section G (Wholesale and Retail Trade) with 20.3% (£2.0 billion) of all exports sales. Exports in this section fell by 3.1% over the year. This was followed by Section J (Information and Communication) which accounted for 3.9% of export sales (£385 million).

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<sup>1</sup> A list of EU member countries is available at: [http://europa.eu/about-eu/countries/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/about-eu/countries/index_en.htm)

<sup>2</sup> The Rest of World refers to all destinations outside the European Union

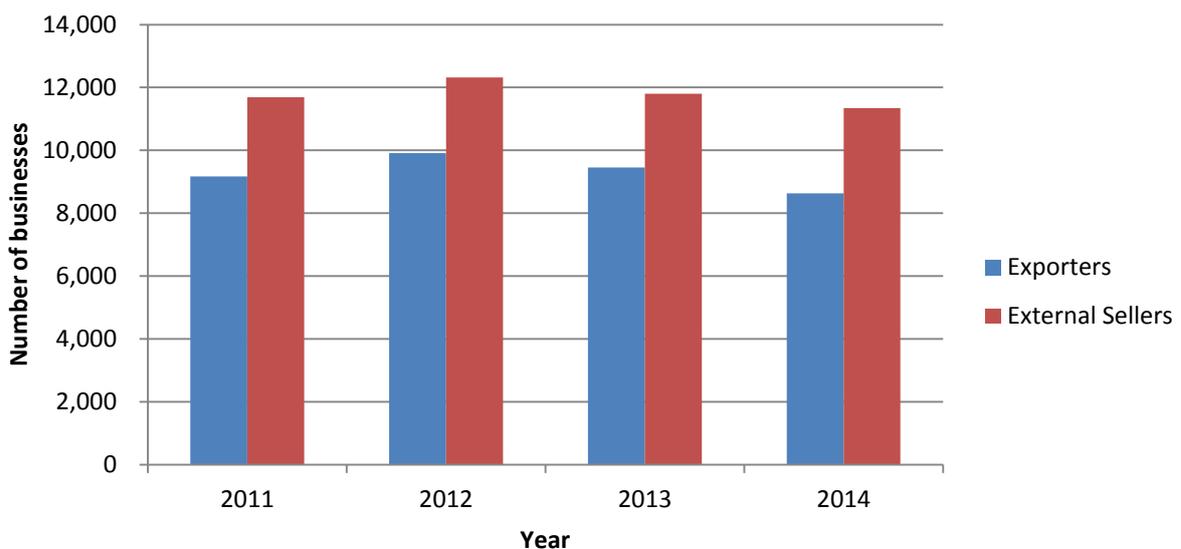
Section F (Construction) was the next largest exporter, with 3.3% (£324 million) of total export sales. Businesses in the construction sector reported the highest actual increase over the year of £71 million (28.3%). Construction exports have increased by 48.5% since 2011.

## Number of Businesses Selling Outside NI

Ongoing developments in the BESES series have allowed the inclusion of first estimates of the number of businesses that trade to particular destinations. The methodology used to compute these counts is likely to evolve and, at this stage, the estimates should also be considered as experimental statistics.

The number of businesses that sell outside NI (external sellers) and the number of businesses that export (exporters) are presented in Figure 3 below (please note that these groups are not mutually exclusive. An individual business can sell to both GB and export and thus will appear in both counts).

**Figure 3: Number of businesses selling outside NI: 2011 – 2014**



Over the calendar year 2013 to 2014, the number of businesses selling to destinations outside NI fell by 3.8% (450 businesses) while the number of businesses exporting fell by 8.8% (828 businesses).

### 3: Results tables: 2011 to 2014

Table 1: Total Sales, External Sales and Exports: 2011 – 2014 (£ millions)

Broad Destination	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total Sales	£61,530	£62,067	£64,514	£65,800
NI Sales	£41,022	£41,159	£42,517	£43,345
GB Sales	£11,392	£11,612	£12,051	£12,694
ROI Sales	£3,330	£3,428	£3,716	£3,599
REU Sales	£2,044	£1,911	£2,177	£2,174
ROW Sales	£3,741	£3,956	£4,053	£3,988
External Sales	£20,508	£20,907	£21,997	£22,455
Exports	£9,116	£9,295	£9,946	£9,761

**Table 2 – Broad Destination by Industry Section: 2014 (£ millions)**

Standard Industrial Classification	Description	Total Sales	NI Sales	GB Sales	ROI Sales	REU Sales	ROW Sales	External Sales	Exports
A – S	Agriculture, fishing, production, construction, distribution and services	£65,800	£43,345	£12,694	£3,599	£2,174	£3,988	£22,455	£9,761
A (part)	Agriculture, forestry and fishing	£118	£81	£11	£8	*	*	£36	£25
B	Mining and quarrying	£373	£272	£66	£32	*	*	£102	£36
C	Manufacturing	£18,120	£3,813	£8,288	£1,414	£1,498	£3,107	£14,307	£6,020
D	Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	£2,083	£2,017	£26	£35	*	*	£66	£41
E	Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	£836	£612	£84	£12	£74	£54	£224	£140
F	Construction	£5,454	£3,962	£1,168	£273	£38	£13	£1,492	£324
G	Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motor cycles	£25,552	£21,909	£1,661	£1,307	£307	£368	£3,643	£1,982
H	Transport and storage	£2,905	£2,140	£475	£179	£93	£17	£765	£290
I	Accommodation and food service activities	£1,480	£1,449	£15	£12	*	*	£31	£17
J	Information and communication	£1,872	£1,153	£334	£89	£23	£272	£719	£385
L	Real estate activities	£817	£728	£71	£14	£3	£1	£88	£17
M	Professional, scientific and technical activities	£1,891	£1,446	£225	£93	£60	£66	£445	£220
N	Administrative and support service activities	£1,728	£1,266	£234	£113	£51	£64	£462	£228
P - S	Others	£2,570	£2,496	£36	£18	£14	£6	£74	£37

\* = Cells have been suppressed to protect confidentiality

**Table 3 – Exports by Industry Section: 2011 – 2014 (£ millions)**

Standard Industrial Classification	Description	2011	2012	2013	2014
A – S	Agriculture, fishing, production, construction, distribution and services	£9,116	£9,295	£9,946	£9,761
A (part)	Agriculture, forestry and fishing	£25	£29	£33	£25
B	Mining and quarrying	£52	£56	£49	£36
C	Manufacturing	£5,543	£5,660	£6,109	£6,020
D	Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	£73	£44	£40	£41
E	Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	£184	£141	£116	£140
F	Construction	£218	£297	£252	£324
G	Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motor cycles	£2,017	£1,964	£2,045	£1,982
H	Transport and storage	£303	£307	£324	£290
I	Accommodation and food service activities	£10	£14	£17	£17
J	Information and communication	£248	£252	£475	£385
L	Real estate activities	£15	£24	£15	£17
M	Professional, scientific and technical activities	£237	£249	£205	£220
N	Administrative and support service activities	£170	£225	£227	£228
P - S	Others	£22	£33	£37	£37

**Table 4 - Share of Total Sales by Broad Destination as %: 2011 - 2014**

Broad Destination	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total Sales	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
NI Sales	66.7	66.3	65.9	65.9
GB Sales	18.5	18.7	18.7	19.3
ROI Sales	5.4	5.5	5.8	5.5
REU Sales	3.3	3.1	3.4	3.3
ROW Sales	6.1	6.4	6.3	6.1
External Sales	33.3	33.7	34.1	34.1
Exports	14.8	15.0	15.4	14.8

**Table 5 – Exports to markets within the rest of the EU: 2011 – 2014, £ millions**

Country	2011	2012	2013	2014
REU Sales	£2,044	£1,911	£2,177	£2,174
Germany Sales	£475	£510	£473	£508
France Sales	£375	£345	£486	£448
Belgium Sales	£136	£119	£113	£99
Luxembourg Sales	£3	£2	£3	£2
Netherlands Sales	£224	£222	£398	£422
Italy Sales	£138	£121	£118	£111
Denmark Sales	£71	£73	£64	£63
Portugal Sales	£54	£48	£44	£46
Spain Sales	£204	£156	£185	£174
Greece Sales	£18	£22	£19	£14
Austria Sales	£24	£33	£22	£18
Sweden Sales	£69	£49	£54	£42
Finland Sales	£50	£33	£31	£40
Cyprus Sales	£5	£7	£6	£7
Czech Republic Sales	£22	£25	£26	£41
Estonia Sales	£2	£7	£3	£7
Hungary Sales	£31	£44	£22	£32
Latvia Sales	£9	£7	£6	£5
Lithuania Sales	£4	£8	£8	£8
Malta Sales	£5	£3	£12	£8
Poland Sales	£95	£49	£46	£46
Slovakia Sales	£5	£5	£7	£7
Slovenia Sales	£3	£3	£3	£2
Bulgaria Sales	£4	£4	£5	£5
Romania Sales	£18	£17	£24	£15
Croatia Sales <sup>1</sup>	-	-	-	£1

<sup>1</sup> Croatia joined the EU in July 2013 and is included for the first time in the 2014 reporting period. A list of EU member countries is available at: [http://europa.eu/about-eu/countries/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/about-eu/countries/index_en.htm)

**Table 6 – Exports to markets outside the EU: 2011 – 2014, £ millions**

Country	2011	2012	2013	2014
ROW Sales	£3,741	£3,956	£4,053	£3,988
Switzerland Sales	£748	£865	£784	£888
Turkey Sales	£41	£32	£40	£21
Eastern Europe	£5	£9	£19	£11
Norway Sales	£42	£55	£93	£58
Russia Sales	£81	£104	£121	£104
Rest of Europe Other	£19	£23	£19	£19
Australia Sales	£225	£251	£189	£177
New Zealand Sales	£20	£16	£13	£15
Rest of World Other	£13	£19	£18	£44
North America Total	£1,323	£1,320	£1,548	£1,563
Central and South America Total	£110	£153	£94	£87
Middle East Total	£289	£273	£276	£252
Asia Total	£550	£566	£582	£520
Africa Total	£275	£272	£256	£229

**Table 7 – Number of businesses selling to destinations outside NI (External sales) by industry section: 2011 - 2014**

Standard Industrial Classification	Description	2011	2012	2013	2014
A – S	Agriculture, fishing, production, construction, distribution and services	11,689	12,320	11,798	11,348
A (part)	Agriculture, forestry and fishing	117	94	86	79
B	Mining and quarrying	32	24	39	52
C	Manufacturing	2,239	2,243	2,294	2,252
D	Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	12	21	23	23
E	Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	101	68	60	53
F	Construction	1,244	1,338	1,282	1,373
G	Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motor cycles	3,943	4,257	3,486	3,373
H	Transport and storage	683	731	684	461
I	Accommodation and food service activities	225	80	65	49
J	Information and communication	579	756	899	858
L	Real estate activities	223	234	292	279
M	Professional, scientific and technical activities	1,455	1,665	1,708	1,725
N	Administrative and support service activities	374	208	268	225
P	Education	112	311	270	151
Q	Human Health And Social Work Activities	80	45	62	75
R	Arts, Entertainment And Recreation	139	149	161	222
S	Other Service Activities	133	95	119	97

**Table 8 – Number of businesses exporting from NI by industry section: 2011 - 2014**

Standard Industrial Classification	Description	2011	2012	2013	2014
A – S	Agriculture, fishing, production, construction, distribution and services	9,170	9,917	9,457	8,629
A (part)	Agriculture, forestry and fishing	86	70	51	60
B	Mining and quarrying	32	24	39	52
C	Manufacturing	2,074	2,035	2,005	2,026
D	Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	9	12	18	11
E	Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	82	63	45	42
F	Construction	766	959	796	907
G	Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motor cycles	3,295	3,767	3,145	2,905
H	Transport and storage	458	446	443	383
I	Accommodation and food service activities	121	53	20	29
J	Information and communication	486	590	874	523
L	Real estate activities	69	61	50	61
M	Professional, scientific and technical activities	1,061	1,273	1,297	1,128
N	Administrative and support service activities	301	107	161	125
P	Education	106	222	201	88
Q	Human Health And Social Work Activities	72	44	58	72
R	Arts, Entertainment And Recreation	100	130	159	162
S	Other Service Activities	53	60	96	54

## Appendix A: Overview of Methodology to Estimate the Number of Businesses Selling Outside NI

Ongoing advancements in the Broad Economy Sales and Exports Statistics series include the development of an estimate of the number of businesses that trade to particular destinations.

The method for creating the counts is an adaptation of the method used to derive population estimates for the destination variables. Full details of the BESES methodology can be found in Appendix B of the methodology paper on the Production of Northern Ireland Broad Economy Exports Estimates:

<https://www.detini.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/deti/broad-economy-exports-methodology-paper-2011-and-2012.pdf>

To derive the counts, only the design weight is used when weighting returned data. The design or 'a' weight is a simple expansion estimator (i.e.  $\frac{N}{n}$ ) for similar groups in the population

An example of how the number of exporters in a particular stratum is found is shown below:

- In stratum  $x$  there are 6 returns ( $n_x$ ) from a population of 12 businesses ( $N_x$ ).
- The  $a$  weight for stratum  $x$  ( $a_x$ ) is given by:

$$a_x = \frac{N_x}{n_x} = \frac{12}{6} = 2$$

- If, say, 3 of the 6 responders in stratum  $x$  are exporters, then the estimated number of exports in  $x$  is given by:

$$\text{exporters}_x = a_x \times \text{number of returned exporters in } x, \text{ so}$$

$$\text{exporters}_x = 2 \times 3 = 6$$

- The total number of exporters in the population is thus given by summing the number of exporters in each stratum.

The methodology used to compute these counts is in its infancy and, at this stage, the estimates should be considered as experimental statistics.

NISRA is constantly working to improve and develop BESES output and welcomes any feedback users might have. Ongoing development of the methodology will be informed by user feedback, both in terms of the usefulness and reliability of the estimates and their comparability with other sources. Any comments should be sent to [statistics@dfpni.gov.uk](mailto:statistics@dfpni.gov.uk).