

Media release

scienceindustries

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Foreign trade in 2017 for Chemistry Pharma Biotech:

Further increase in foreign trade for Switzerland's largest export industry

Exports for Chemistry Pharma Biotech improved to CHF 98.5 billion in 2017. At 44.7%, the share of total Swiss exports was on a par with the previous year, so that Chemistry Pharma Biotech is still the largest export industry in Switzerland. Although pharma exports could not maintain the gains posted in the previous year, they still grew by CHF 3.4 billion to CHF 83.8 billion. At 5.6%, exports by the other Chemistry Pharma Biotech segments increased slightly to CHF 14.7 billion, while their share of the exports of Chemistry Pharma Biotech remains 15%.

Chemistry Pharma Biotech exports grew by 4.5% year-on-year. This growth reflects the trend for total Swiss exports, which improved to the same extent (4.7%). At 7.1%, imports grew slightly stronger to CHF 46.7 billion, thus increasing Chemistry Pharma Biotech's export surplus by 2.2% or CHF 1.1 billion year-on-year to CHF 51.8 billion in total. Of this surplus, 93.7% was generated by pharmaceutical products.

Organic products, essential oils and aromatic substances improved

At 4.3%, exports of pharmaceutical products grew substantially slower than in the previous year (+14.2%) to reach CHF 83.8 billion in total. The share of life sciences products was stable at 85.1% of total Chemistry Pharma Biotech exports and 38% of total Swiss exports.

At plus 10.5% and 4.3% respectively, both organic products and essential oils and aromatic substances gained ground. Plant protection products, however, continued to contract at -17.5%. Exports of all other product groups increased substantially.

Exports by segment	2016 in CHF billion	2017 in CHF billion	+/- in %	Share in %
Total exports	94.28	98.50	4.5	100.0
of which				
- Organic products	3.36	3.72	10.5	3.8
- Pharmaceutical products, vitamins, diagnostics	80.34	83.79	4.3	85.1
- Plant protection products	2.19	1.81	-17.5	1.8
- Dyes and pigments	0.36	0.40	10.4	0.4
- Essential oils, aromatic substances	1.65	1.72	4.3	1.7
- Other segments	6.38	7.06	11.0	7.2

US grows as biggest purchasing country while EU exports stagnate

Exports to the EU stagnated and only increased by 0.7% to CHF 49.4 billion. However, at half of all exports, the EU is still the most important purchasing region by far. Exports rose for all other regions of the world. The strongest growth of 10.1% to CHF 17.5 billion was reported for Asia, followed by "other regions" at 8.2% to CHF 3.1 billion, North America at 8.0% to CHF 21.9 billion and Latin America at 6.5% to CHF 4.1 billion.

The US as the biggest purchaser of Chemistry Pharma Biotech products further cemented its position with an increase of 8.7%. Exports to Germany, the second most important country of export, stagnated at plus 0.5%. With an export volume of CHF 19.5 billion, the US is now well ahead of Germany with CHF 15.3 billion. At CHF 5.8 billion, Italy was the third-largest purchasing country, while the UK dropped to place 4 with a decline of -8.1% to CHF 5.3 billion. China is already in fifth place with CHF 4.9 billion and an increase of 12.7%. The other three BRIC countries also improved year-on-year: Brazil by 18.3%, India by 12.8% and Russia by 6.1%. While the export surplus for the US rose from CHF 12.8 billion in 2016 to CHF 14.6 billion, it shrank from CHF 4.4 billion to CHF 2.9 billion for Germany.

The US gained further importance in the pharma segment with an increase of 9.6% and a share of 21.4%, while Germany lost ground with a decline of -0.9% and a share of 14.7%. Italy is the third-biggest buyer of pharma products, followed by the UK. With an increase of 12.2% and a share of 5.2%, China is now the fifth-largest purchasing country.

Exports by region	2016 in CHF billion	2017 in CHF billion	+/- in %	Share in %
Total exports	94.28	98.50	4.5	100.0
of which				
- Europe	51.35	51.87	1.0	52.7
- of which EU countries	49.01	49.36	0.7	50.1
- North America	20.31	21.93	8.0	22.3
- Latin America	3.84	4.09	6.5	4.2
- Asia	15.92	17.53	10.1	17.8
- Other regions	2.85	3.09	8.2	3.0
- BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China)	7.31	8.26	13.0	8.4

EU is still the biggest supplier for Chemistry Pharma Biotech

There was no change with regard to the share of Chemistry Pharma Biotech imports from the EU. It remained on a par with the previous year at 78.3%, so that the EU is still the most important supplier of raw materials, semi-finished and finished products. Germany leads the pack with a share of 26.5%, followed by Ireland (14.9%), the US (10.5%) and Italy (8.9%).

More information on this media release:

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About scienceindustries:

scienceindustries, the Swiss Business Association Chemistry Pharma Biotech, works to ensure excellent international framework conditions for its around 250 member companies. The Chemistry Pharma Biotech industry employs some 67,000 people in Switzerland. As Switzerland's biggest export industry, it makes an important contribution to Swiss prosperity.