

# Namibia Trade Statistics Bulletin

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April 2021



Namibia Statistics  
Agency





## Mission Statement

"Leveraging on partnerships and innovative technologies, to produce and disseminate relevant, quality, timely statistics and spatial data that are fit-for-purpose in accordance with international standards and best practice"



## Vision Statement

"Be a high performance institution in quality statistics delivery"



## Core Values

- Integrity
- Excellent Performance
- Accuracy
- Team Work
- Accountability
- Transparency

# Preface



International merchandise trade plays a crucial role in economic development as it links producers and consumers located in different countries into a global economic system. In this context, availability of timely and high-quality trade statistics becomes a precondition for an in-depth analysis of the employment, production, income, consumption and overall welfare both at the country and global level. It is in that light that since its establishment, the NSA has strived to make provision of timely and quality statistics through various publications. This publication outlines the monthly developments of Namibia's merchandise trade with the rest of the world during the period of April 2021. The dataset analyzed in this publication can be downloaded at [www.nsa.org.na](http://www.nsa.org.na)

The month of April 2021 saw Namibia's total merchandise trade increasing to N\$18.7 billion, an increase of 0.8 percent and 43.3 percent compared to N\$18.6 billion and N\$13.1 billion recorded in March 2021 and April 2020, respectively. However, the country's trade balance remained in a deficit amounting to N\$2 billion, increasing from N\$1.8 billion recorded in both March 2021 and April 2020.

Namibia's trade composition by partner illustrated that China continued as Namibia's largest export market while South Africa maintained her first position as Namibia's largest source of imports. The composition of the export basket mainly comprised of minerals such as copper, uranium, precious stones (diamonds), fish, non-monetary gold. As usual, fish remained the only non-mineral product among the top five exports. On the other hand, the import basket comprised mainly of vessels, copper, petroleum and petroleum products, motor vehicles and medicaments.

The April 2021 trade figures indicated that re-exports fell by 3.1 percent month-on-month while a more significant increase of 49.9 percent was noted year-on-year. Copper had the largest share of all goods re-exported, accounting for 67.6 percent of total re-exports mainly destined to China, Netherlands, Belgium, Germany and Italy. Most of the copper re-exported originated from Zambia and D.R.C. Important to note is that copper appears to dominate both trade flows which is an indication of the important role the country plays as a major logistics hub for SADC.

Let me take this opportunity to thank all our stakeholders who made it possible for the production of this report. I would also like to urge our Traders and Clearing Agents to continue providing all the required information when declaring their goods as this information is vital in the production of trade statistics. In the same vein, I would like to urge our users of statistical information to send to us any comments that may enhance the quality of this report at [info@nsa.org.na](mailto:info@nsa.org.na)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alex Shimuafeni'.

**ALEX SHIMUAFENI**  
STATISTICIAN GENERAL & CEO

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# List of acronyms

BRIC: Brazil, Russia, India and China

CIF: Cost, Insurance and Freight

COMESA: Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa

DRC: Democratic Republic of Congo

EAC: East African Community

EFTA: European Free Trade Association

EPZ: Export Processing Zone

EU: European Union

FOB: Free on Board

ROW: Rest of World

SACU: Southern African Customs Union

SADC: Southern African Development Community

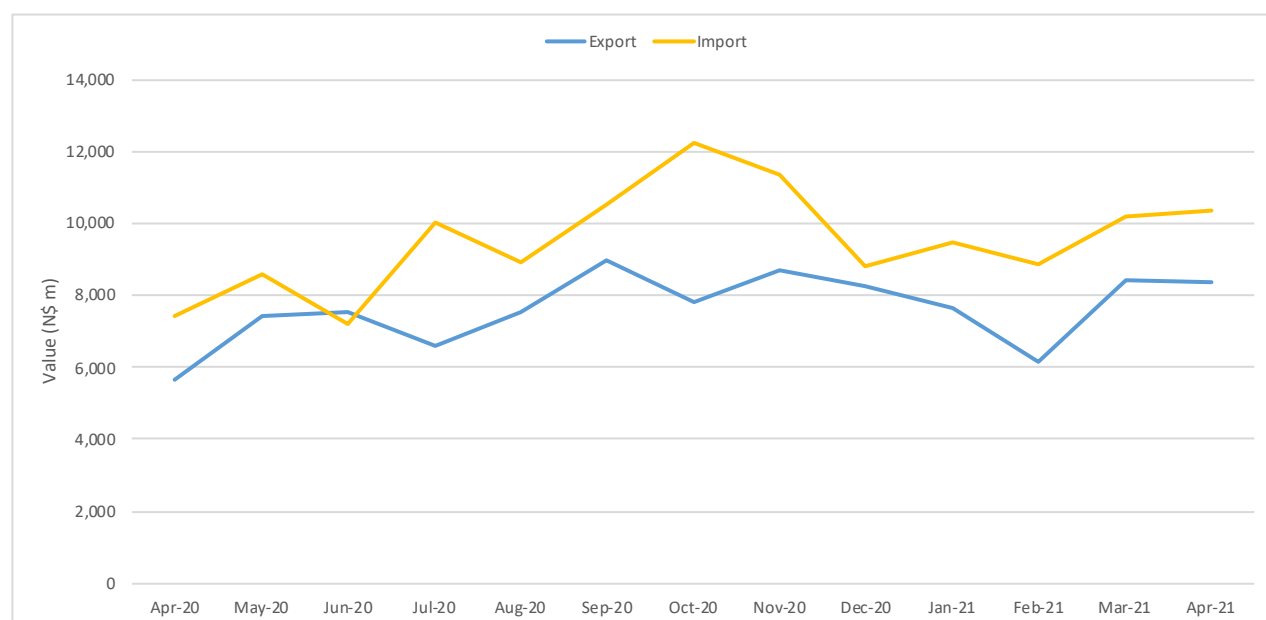
VAR: Imported from Various Countries

# SECTION 1: KEY DEVELOPMENTS

## 1.1 Total Exports and Total Imports

The value of exports<sup>1</sup> in April 2021 declined by 0.8 percent to N\$8.3 billion from its level of N\$8.4 billion recorded in March 2021. However, when compared to N\$5.7 billion recorded in April 2020, exports increased by 47.6 percent (Chart 1). Imports stood at N\$10.4 billion, increasing by 2 percent and 40 percent compared to N\$10.2 billion and N\$7.4 billion recorded in March 2021 and April 2020, respectively. Following the developments in exports and imports, Namibia's total merchandise trade with the ROW<sup>2</sup> increased by 0.8 percent from N\$18.6 billion obtained in March 2021 to N\$18.7 billion recorded in April 2021. A further increase of 43.3 percent was observed in the country's total trade when compared to its level of N\$13.1 billion registered in April 2020.

Chart 1: Total exports and imports April 2020 to April 2021



<sup>1</sup> Exports represents total exports derived from the sum of domestic exports and re-exports.

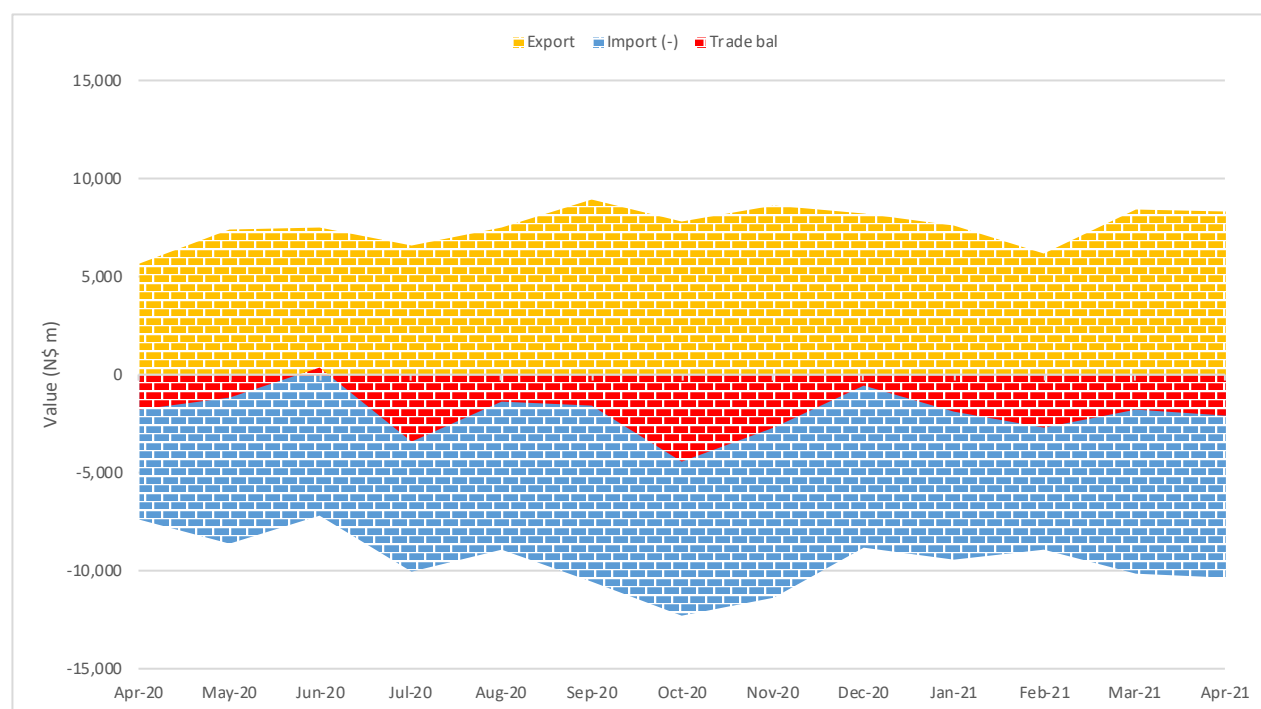
<sup>2</sup> Rest of the world (ROW).



## 1.2 Trade Balance

The trade balance<sup>3</sup> compares the country's trade flow with the ROW in terms of export earnings and expenditure on imports<sup>4</sup>. During the month under review, Namibia recorded a trade deficit to the tune of N\$2 billion compared to a deficit level of N\$1.8 billion recorded in both March 2021 and April 2020 (Chart 2). Over the period (April-20 to April-21), Namibia recorded a positive trade balance only in June 2020 amounting to N\$325 million.

Chart 2: Trade balance, April 2020 to April 2021



<sup>3</sup> Trade balance here is measured as the difference between the country's total exports and total imports. A positive balance is referred to as a surplus while a negative balance is referred to as a deficit.

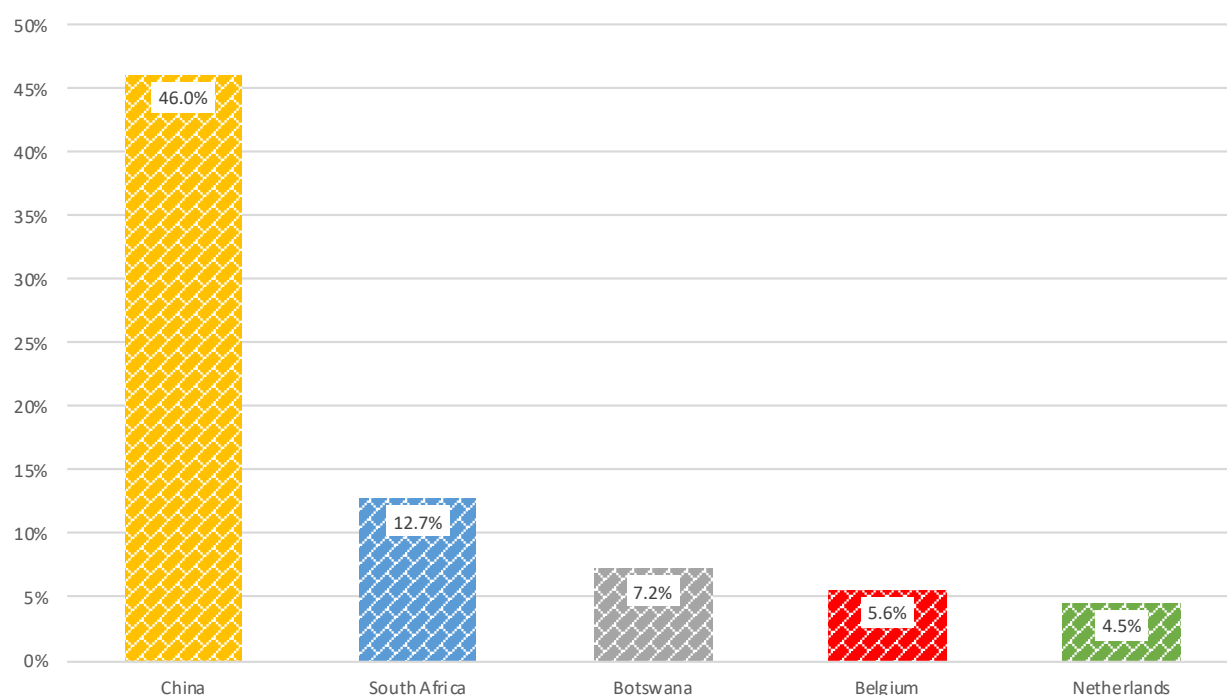
<sup>4</sup> The value of imports here is denoted as negative to show an out flow.

## SECTION 2: DIRECTION OF TRADE (DOT)

### 2.1 Top Five (5) Export Markets

During the month of April 2021, Namibia's top five trading partners in terms of exports largely remained the same as in the previous month for the top three countries (China, South Africa & Botswana) with Belgium and Netherlands making it to the list as new entrants (Chart 3). These top five markets accounted for 76 percent of Namibia's total exports, up from the 42.5 percent and 69.4 percent recorded in the March 2021 and April 2020, respectively.

Chart 3: Percentage share of export by country

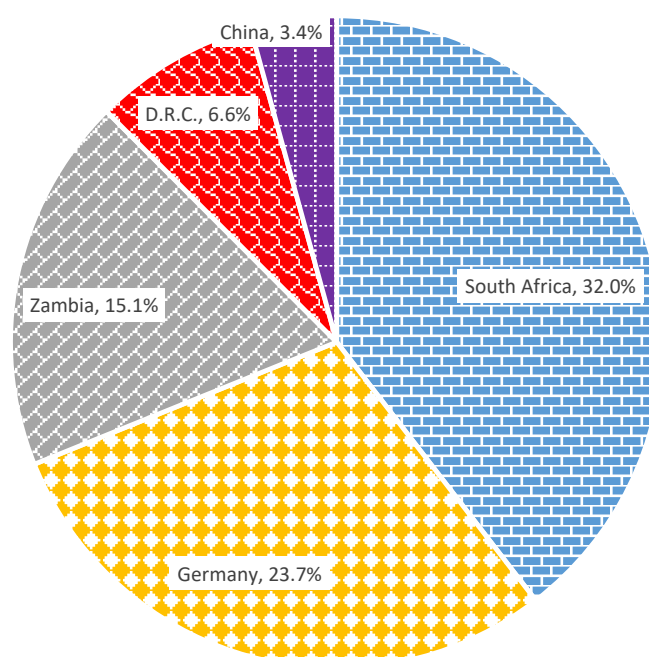


China emerged as the main export market for the country, absorbing 46.0 percent of all goods exported, ahead of South Africa in the second place whose market share of Namibia's exports stood at 12.7 percent of total exports. Botswana claimed the third position to account for 7.2 percent while Belgium and Netherlands occupied the fourth and fifth positions with respective shares of 5.6 percent and 4.5 percent.

## 2.2 Top Five (5) Import Markets

The month of April 2021 saw Namibia sourcing majority of imports mainly from South Africa, Germany, Zambia, D.R.C and China. The top five import markets supplied Namibia with 80.8 percent of all import requirements needed by the country, up from its March 2021 level of 70.9 percent and 55.6 percent in April 2020. The individual contribution of each of these countries to Namibia's total imports is shown in Chart 4.

Chart 4: Percentage share of imports by country



South Africa remained Namibia's largest import market with a share of 32.0 percent of the value of all goods received into the country during the month under review. Following in the second place was Germany with a contribution of 23.7 percent of total imports. Furthermore, Zambia came in the third place accounting for 15.1 percent of Namibia's total imports followed by D.R.C and China contributing 6.6 percent and 3.4 percent respectively.

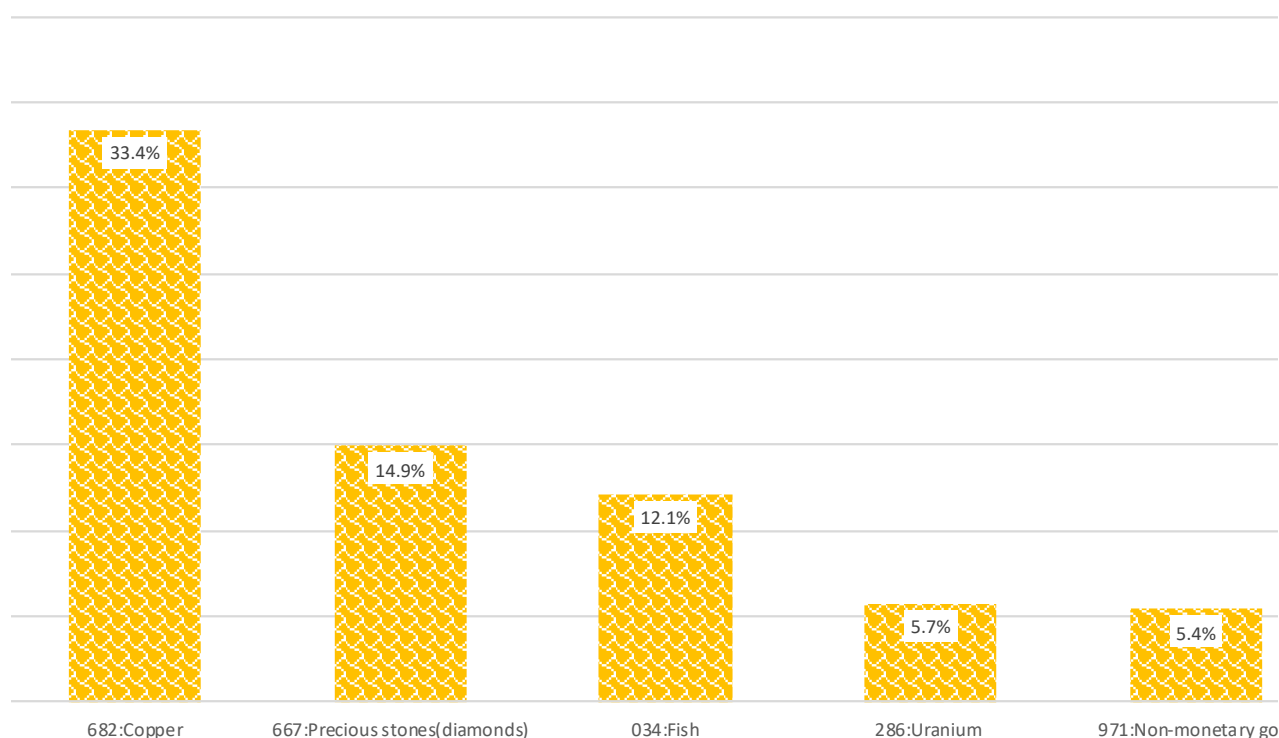
## SECTION 3: TRADE BY PRODUCTS

This section outlines Namibia's trade flow based on the Standard International Trade Classification Revision 4 (SITC rev 4). The SITC groups all commodities into headings suitable for economic analysis, in this section, the SITC is disaggregated to 3-digit level. The SITC is recommended by the United Nations for use in external trade data and thus promotes international comparability of trade statistics.

### 3.1 Top Five (5) Export Products

Copper, mainly destined to China, Netherlands and Belgium was Namibia's largest export commodity during the month under review, accounting for 32.4 percent of total exports ahead of uranium which accounted for 21.2 percent of total exports with China being the lone importer of that product for the month. Precious stones (diamonds) which accounted for 11.8 percent of total exports mainly due to the demand of that product by Botswana, United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Belgium claimed the third position. .

Chart 5: Percentage share of the top five export products

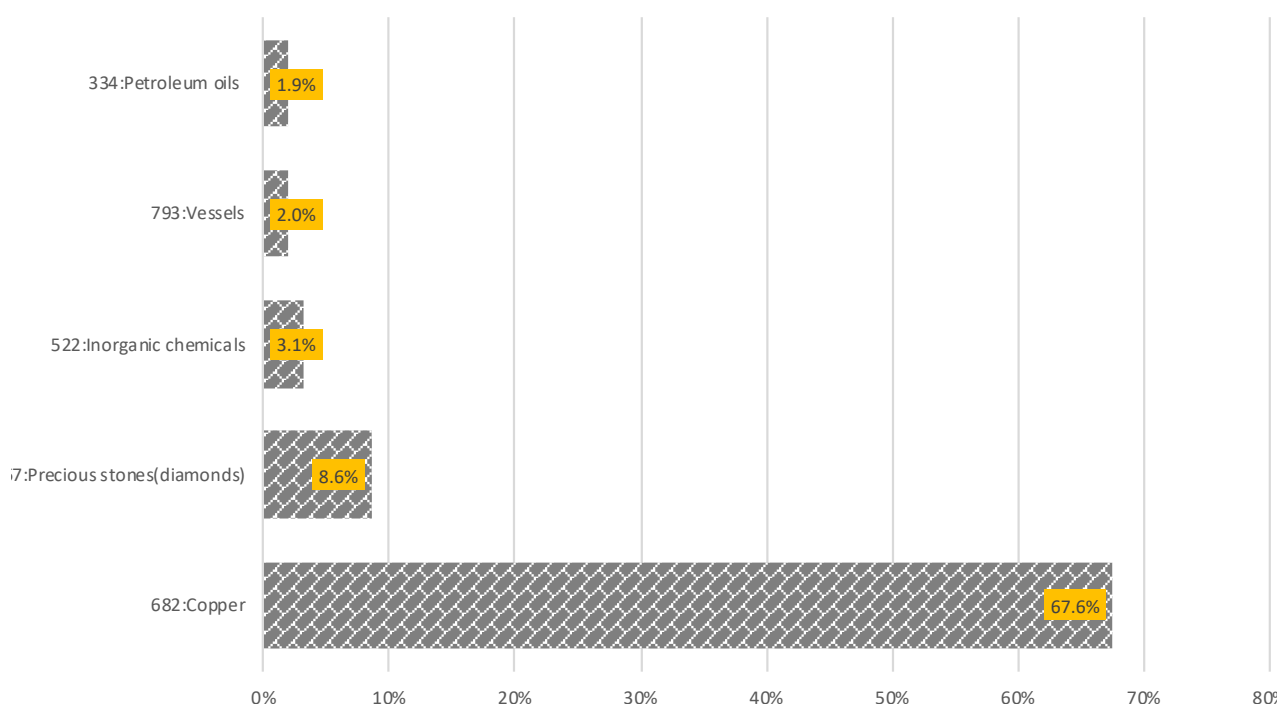


Fish, primarily destined for Spain, South Africa and Zambia, ranked fourth in the list with a contribution of 10.4 percent of the total exports followed by non-monetary gold in the fifth place with 4.4 percent, and South Africa remains the only market for that commodity. The aforementioned top five export commodities jointly accounted for 80.2 percent of total exports (Chart 5).

### 3.2 Top Five (5) Re-export Products

Re-exports are commodities imported by residents who assume short-term ownership of the commodities. The commodities are subsequently exported without undergoing any significant industrial transformation. Even though no substantial transformation is done, re-exports have the potential to benefit the intermediate country by rendering services such as sorting, re-packaging, storage, transport and trade mediation services. This implies that the country's services sector greatly benefits from activities of re-exports. Additionally, re-exports serve as an indication of favorable corporate tax in the intermediate country<sup>5</sup>.

Chart 6: Percentage share of the top five re-export products



In April 2021, total re-exports stood at N\$3.9 billion after recording N\$4.1 billion in the previous month and N\$2.6 billion during the same month of last year. This translates to a decline 3.1 percent on monthly basis and an increase by 49.9 percent, year on year.

As indicated earlier, re-exports are foreign goods and hence imported from other countries. Looking at the origin of the main products which were re-exported, copper was mainly sourced from Zambia and the DRC. Precious stones (diamonds) were mostly imported from Botswana after consolidation whereas inorganic chemicals were imported from DRC and South Africa.

The top five commodities that utilized the logistical services offered by Namibia in April 2021 were copper with a share of 67.6 percent of total re-exports mostly destined to China, Netherlands and Belgium (Chart 6). Following in the second place was precious stones (diamonds) with a share of 8.6

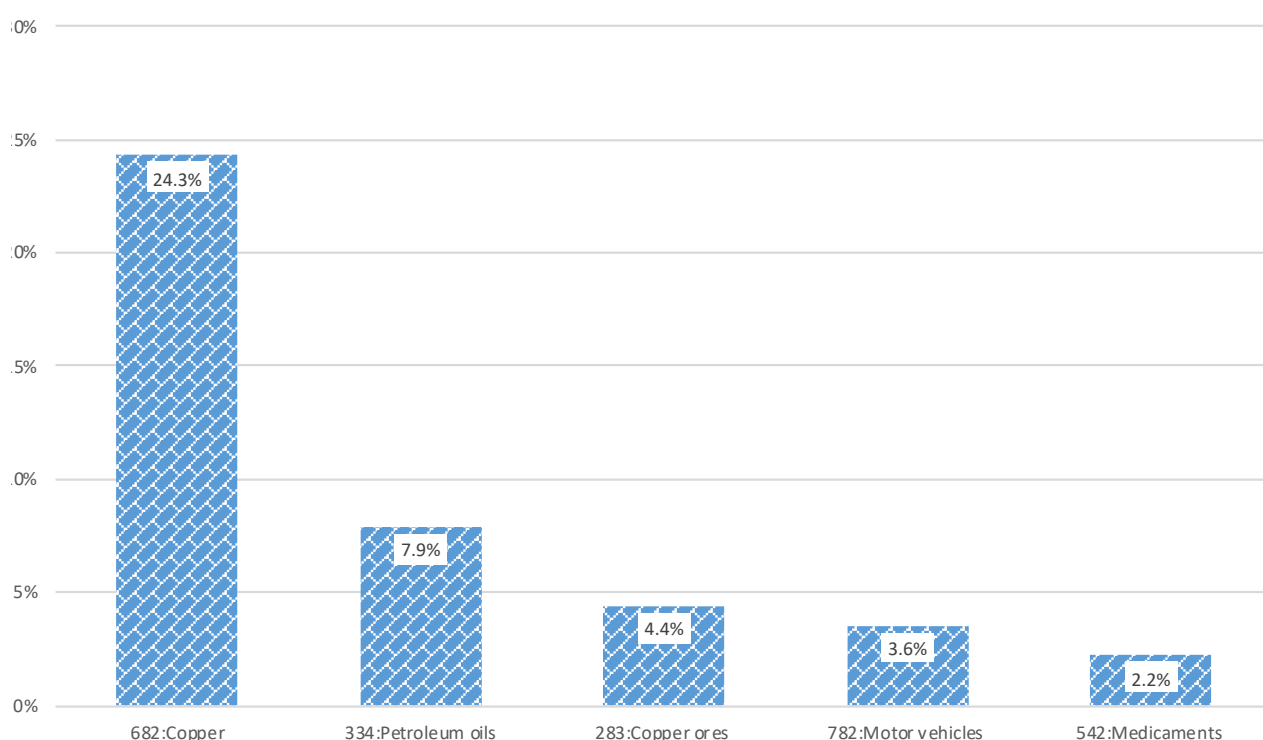
<sup>5</sup> Lankhuizen, M. & Thessen, M., 2019. The Implication of re-export for Gravity Equation Estimation, NAFTA and BREXIT. Spatial Economic Analysis, 14(4), pp.384-403

percent of total re-exports which was mostly destined to UAE, Belgium and South Africa. Inorganic chemicals accounted for 3.1 percent of all commodities re-exported and was mostly destined to China and Finland. Vessels and petroleum oils accounted for 2.0 percent and 1.9 percent, respectively. A vessel returned on high sea while Botswana absorbed most of the petroleum oils.

### 3.3 Top Five (5) Import Products

During the period under review, the value of imports into the country amounted to N\$10.4 billion up from N\$10.2 billion obtained in March 2021 and N\$7.4 billion registered in April 2020. The top five commodities imported into Namibia jointly accounted for 54.5 percent of total imports with vessels leading with the largest share of 23 percent. Following in the second position is copper with a share of 21.3 percent of all commodities imported. Petroleum oils was ranked third after contributing 6.7 percent to total imports while motor vehicles and medicaments followed in the fourth and fifth position with contributions of 1.9 percent and 1.6 percent, respectively (Chart 7).

Chart 7: Percentage share of the top five import products



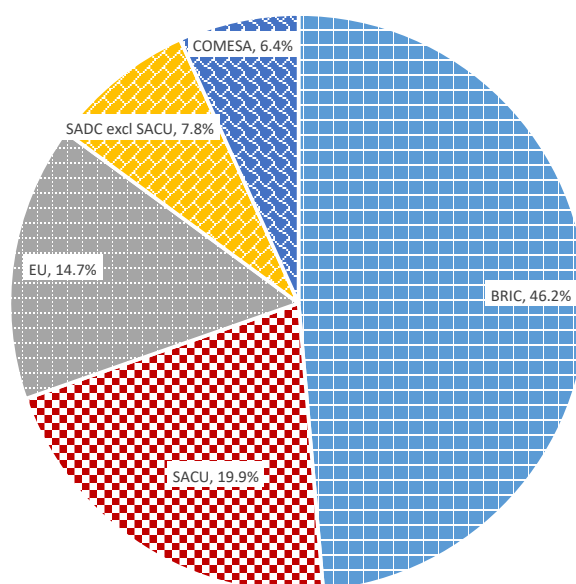
The vessels that were imported in April 2021 were mostly sourced from Germany, China and Senegal while most of the copper imported into the country mainly originated from Zambia and D.R.C. Petroleum oils were sourced from Tunisia, Malaysia and Netherlands where as domestic demand for motor vehicles were mainly met by South Africa, United Kingdom and Thailand. Midicaments were mostly sourced from South Africa and India.

## SECTION 4: TRADE BY ECONOMIC REGIONS

### 4.1 Exports by Economic Regions

Brazil, Russia, India and China (BRIC) was the largest export destination for Namibia's goods (mostly copper and uranium) during the month of review with a market share of 46.2 percent of total exports. The Southern African Customs Union (SACU) and the European Union (EU) followed in the second and third positions, accounting for a market share of 19.9 percent and 14.7 percent, respectively (Chart 8).

Chart 8: Top five export by Economic Regions (percentage share)<sup>6</sup>



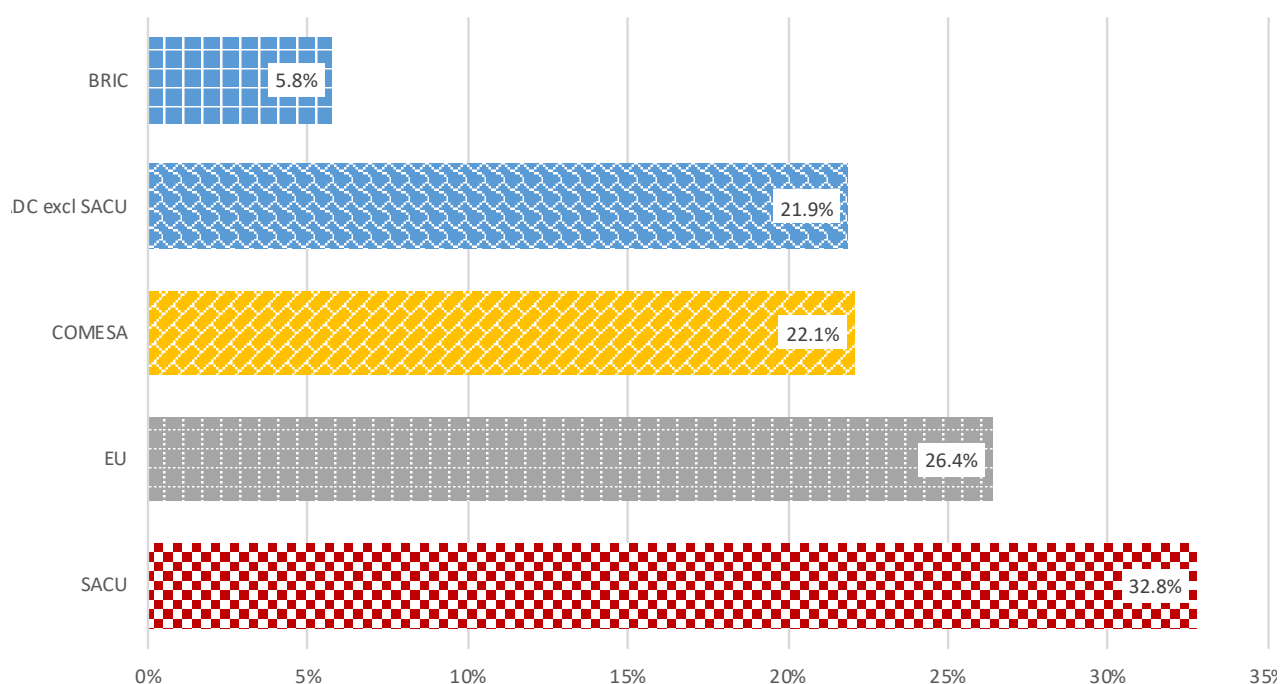
Exports to SACU comprised mainly of precious stones (diamonds), non-monetary gold and fish whereas fish and copper were the main exports destined to the EU. SADC-excluding-SACU followed in fourth place with a share of 7.8 percent due to high exports of fish. Finally, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) came in fifth position with a market share of 6.4 percent. Fish was again the largest export commodity to the COMESA region.

<sup>6</sup> The percentages for economic regions are based on the world aggregates because of overlapping member states for some regions hence the percentages do not add up to 100%.

## 4.2 Imports by Economic Regions

In April 2021, the SACU region remained the largest source of imports for Namibia, accounting for 32.8 percent of all goods imported (mainly motor vehicles, sugar and alcoholic beverages) followed by EU with a share of 26.4 percent and vessels were the main import products from this region. Copper was responsible for the high value of imports from COMESA and SADC excluding SACU which had a share of 22.1 percent and 21.9 percent, respectively and hence making these regions the third and fourth largest source of imports into the country. These were followed by the BRIC in the fifth position with contributions of 5.8 percent (Chart 9).

Chart 9: Top five import by economic regions (percentage share)



Petroleum oils, medicaments and inorganic chemicals were responsible for the high import value from the BRIC.

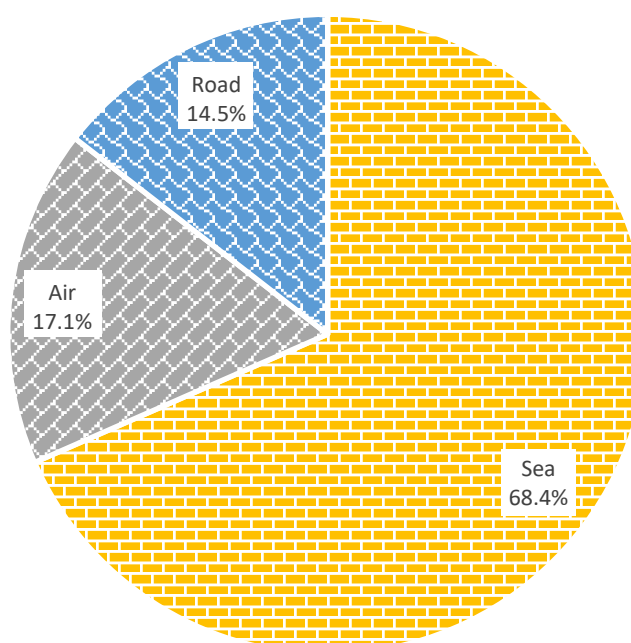


## SECTION 5: TRADE BY MODE OF TRANSPORT

### 5.1 Export by mode of transport

During the month of April 2021, exports amounting to N\$5.7 billion, representing 68.4 percent of total exports left the country by sea. This translated into an increase of 8.1 percent when compared to the value (N\$5.3 billion) of goods exported in March 2021. Moreover, a significant increase of 85.3 percent was noted when compared to its April 2020 level of N\$3.1 billion. Air and road transportation accounted for 17.1 percent and 14.5 percent of total exports, respectively (Chart 10).

Chart 10: Export by mode of transport (percentage share)

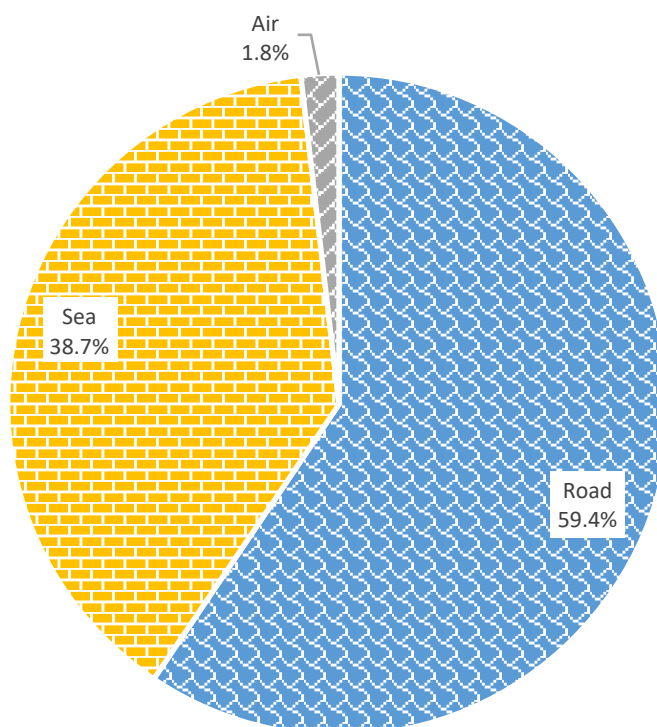


In terms of tonnage, the month under review saw about 99,278 tons of goods leaving Namibia by road. This is a decline from its March 2021 level 120,431 tons and an improvement from the level of 68,168 tons registered in April 2020. About 88,318 tons of goods left the country by sea compared to 105,525 tons registered in the previous month and from 79,616 tons recorded in the same month last year. Whereas only 352 tons left the country by air after registering 410 tons in March 2021 and 4 tons in April 2020.

## 5.2 Import by mode of transport

Transport by road was the most frequent mode of transport used for imports during the period of review. Imports by road amounted to N\$6.2 billion, representing 59.4 percent of all goods imported into the country. Following in the second place was sea transport which accounted for 38.7 percent of all the goods that reached the country while the remaining 1.8 percent arrived by air. (Chart 11).

CHART 11: Import by mode of transport (percentage share)

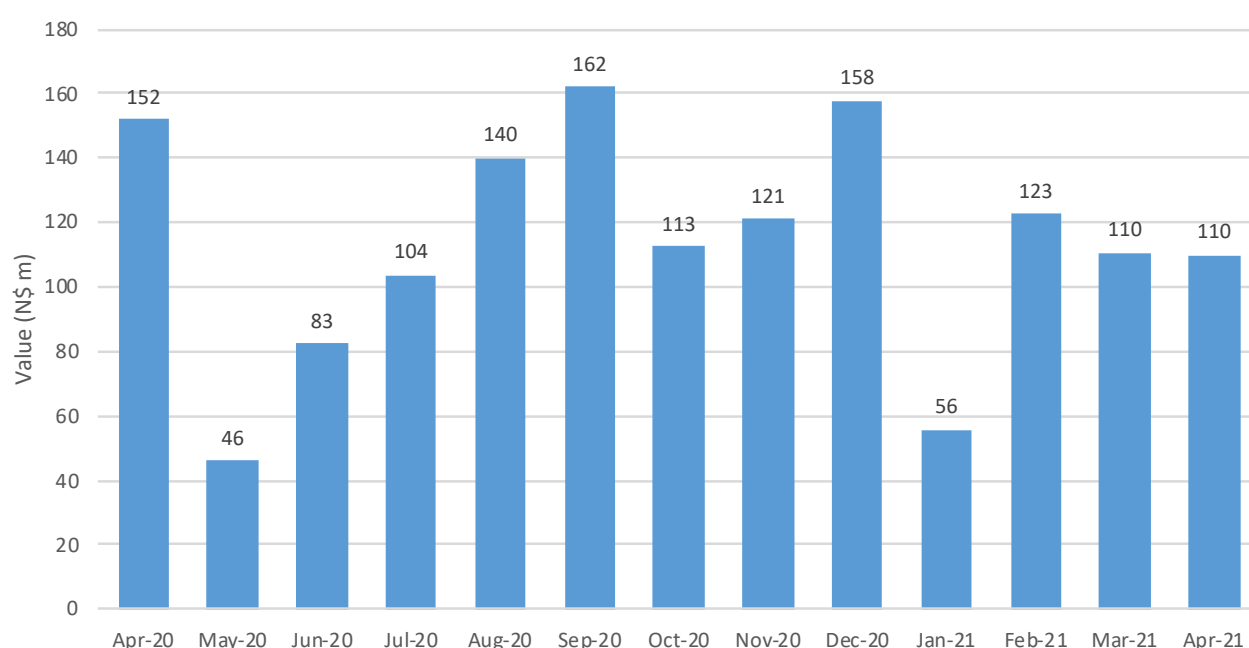


In terms of tonnage, about 491,550 tons of goods reached the country by sea. This is more than its level of 188,855 tons observed in March 2021 and 244,045 tons recorded in April 2020. Whereas 288,435 tons of goods reached the country by road compared to its level of 181,683 in March 2021 and 116,569 tons in April 2020.

## 6. Commodity of the Month

The category sugar and sugar confectionery was selected for analysis in the current report. During the period of review, the import value of this category of products amounted to N\$110 million declining by 0.4 percent from its level of N\$111 million recorded in March 2021. Similarly, it dropped by 27.7 percent when compared to the level of N\$152 million recorded in April 2020. Overall, the country imported N\$1.5 billion worth of products of this category since April 2020 (Chart 12) with an average of N\$114 million a month. The highest figure of N\$162 million-above average was recorded in September 2020, while the lowest figure of N\$46 million-below average was registered in May 2020.

CHART 12: Imports of products of the oil seed industry since March 2020 to March 2021



The import bill of this category of products amounting to N\$110 million in April 2021 mainly comprised of sugar and sugar confectionery (incl. white chocolate), accounting for 91.7 percent share in the total import of the entire category. These products were sourced from South Africa which accounted for 94.5% of the total, followed by Eswatini (2.1%) and Botswana (1.3%).

## Conclusion

In April 2021, Namibia's exports stood at N\$8.3 billion and imports at N\$10.4 billion, subsequently the country's trade balance resulted in a deficit of N\$2 billion. Overall, the country's total trade for April 2021 stood at N\$18.7 billion.

In April 2021, exports declined by 0.8 percent from its revised level of N\$8.4 billion in March 2021 while it increased by 47.6 percent when compared to its level of N\$5.7 billion recorded in April 2020. On the other hand, imports increased in both instances topping by 2 percent and 40 percent when compared to its levels of N\$10.2 billion and N\$7.4 billion in March 2021 and April 2020, respectively. China maintained her position as the country's largest export destination, with a share of 46 percent of all goods exported followed by South Africa with a share of 12.7 percent. Furthermore, Botswana, Belgium and Netherlands formed part of Namibia's top five export markets. The demand side saw South Africa maintaining the first position as the country's largest source of imports, accounting for 32 percent of total imports into Namibia followed by Germany in the second position with a 23.7 percent of the market share. Zambia, DRC and China also formed part of Namibia's top five sources of imports.

The analysis of exports by commodities revealed that copper had the largest share (32.4%) in Namibia's total exports ahead of uranium (21.2%), precious stones (diamonds) (11.8%), fish (10.4%) followed by non-monetary gold (4.4%). In terms of imports, Vessels were the most imported commodity with a relative share of 23 percent of total imports, followed by copper with a share of 21.3 percent and petroleum oils with a share of 6.7 percent. Moreover, motor vehicles and medicaments contributed 3.6 percent and 2.2 percent to Namibia's total imports, respectively.

In terms of regional composition, BRIC remained the largest export market during the month of April 2021, with a market share of 46.2 percent of total exports followed by the SACU region with relative market shares of 19.9 percent while the EU, SADC-excl-SACU, and COMESA had respective shares of 14.7 percent, 7.8 percent and 6.4 percent. On the imports side, SACU remained the largest source of Namibia's imports with a share of 32.8 percent of total import bill followed by EU and COMESA with contributions of 26.4 percent and 22.1 percent, respectively. The SADC excl SACU and BRIC had a share of 21.9 percent and 5.8 percent, respectively.

Namibia's trade by mode of transport shows that in April 2021, the majority of goods exported left the country by sea, accounting for 68.4 percent of total exports, followed by air transport with 17.1 percent and road transport with 14.5 percent. On the demand side, most goods that entered the country came in by road, accounting for 59.4 percent of total imports followed by sea (38.7%) and air (1.8%).

Finally, the category of sugar and sugar confectionery was the selected for analysis for the current report (April 2021). The import value of this category of products stood at N\$110 million in April 2021, mainly distributed among commodity such as other sugar confectionery (incl. white chocolate) and chewing gum. These commodities were mainly sourced from South Africa, Eswatini and Botswana.



# Namibia Trade Statistics Bulletin

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**April 2021**



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