hinrich foundation
advancing sustainable global trade

IMD / World Competitiveness Center

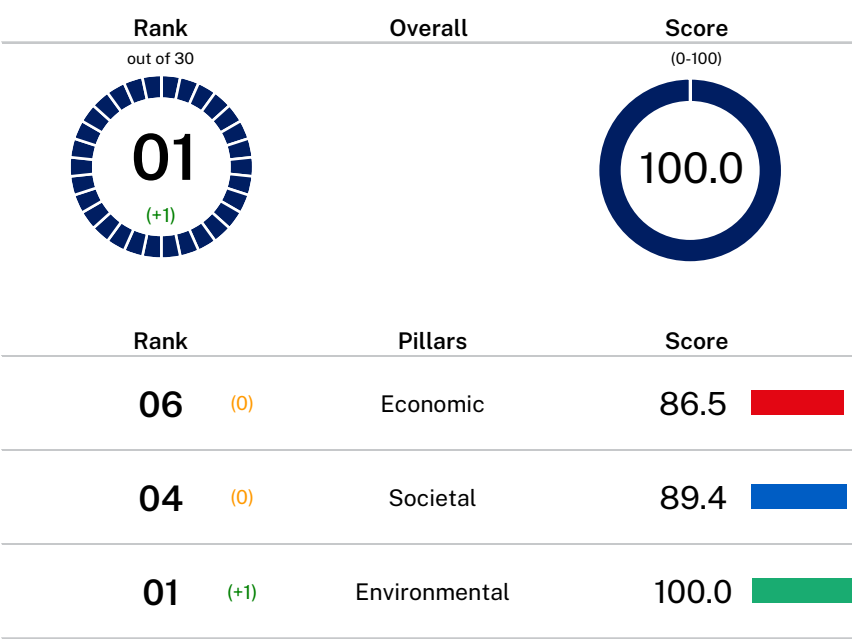Sustainable Trade Index **2025**

United Kingdom

Sustainable Trade Index

The Hinrich-IMD Sustainable Trade Index measures 30 economies' readiness and capacity to participate in the global trading system in a manner that supports the long-term goals of economic growth, environmental protection, and societal development.

Overall and pillars

United Kingdom

Rank	Overall	Score
out of 30		(0-100)
01 (+1)		**100.0**

Rank		Pillars	Score	
06	(0)	Economic	**86.5**	🟥
04	(0)	Societal	**89.4**	🟦
01	(+1)	Environmental	**100.0**	🟩

The values in (parentheses) indicate the one year ranking change

Background information

Population, millions (2024)	69.23	Large
Income level, GDP per Capita US$ (2024)	52,648	High
Membership	CPTPP	

Economic pillar

The Economic pillar measures an economy's ability to ensure and promote economic growth through international trade. In this category, economies receive scores for indicators that demonstrate a link between the trading system and economic growth.

Some indicators capture the quality of trade infrastructure, while others measure the ease of conducting international trade. We measure export diversification by evaluating an economy's bilateral trade destinations and how heavily its exports are concentrated by sector. Furthermore, we consider the technological infrastructure and innovation capabilities of an economy by assessing its emphasis on research and development investments and digital technologies.
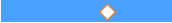
Indicators
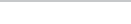
1 Economic Pillar		Rank	Rank +/-	Value	Year	Score (and 30-country average ◇)
1.01	Consumer price inflation	16	(+8)	2.53	2024	82.61
1.02	Real GDP Growth per capita, % GDP	26	(+1)	0.04	2025	31.17
1.03	Growth in labor force, %	20	(-2)	0.71	2024	43.48
1.04	Foreign direct investment, net inflows, % GDP	29	(-9)	0.10	2024	2.34
1.05	Gross fixed capital formation, % GDP	25	(-1)	17.40	2024	21.12
1.06	Tariff & non-tariff barriers	27	(-2)	-	-	59.52
1.06.01	Tariff barriers	22	(+1)	-	-	73.99
1.06.01.a	Tariff barriers in force	26	(0)	1,323	2024	77.23
1.06.01.b	New tariff barriers 2024	01	(+21)	0	2024	100.00
1.06.01.c	Net percentage of imports affected by new tariff barriers (2023)	22	(0)	0.02	2023	37.92
1.06.02	Non-tariff barriers	26	(0)	-	-	37.80
1.06.02.a	Non-tariff barriers in force	25	(0)	15,350	2024	53.56
1.06.02.b	New non-tariff barriers 2024	27	(-2)	1,647	2024	55.96
1.06.02.c	Net percentage of imports affected by new non-tariff barriers (2023)	21	(0)	0.02	2023	43.91
1.07	Trade liberalization	01	(0)	-	-	100.00
1.07.01	Regional Trade Agreements, number in force	01	(0)	39	2025	100.00
1.07.02	Capital account liberalization, index	01	(0)	2.29	2022	100.00
1.07.03	Investment Freedom, index	04	(-2)	70	2025	71.43
1.08	Exchange rate stability, parity change from national currency to SDR, 2024/2022	08	(-2)	0.04	2024	84.44
1.09	Domestic credit to private sector, % of GDP	13	(-1)	113.97	2024	46.72
1.10	Foreign trade and payments risk	12	(+1)	-	-	58.03
1.10.01	Country credit rating	09	(0)	52.0	2024	86.55
1.10.02	Gross debt, % GDP	26	(-2)	101.23	2024	57.79
1.11	Trade costs	08	(+1)	-	-	79.85
1.11.01	Logistics performance, index	08	(0)	3.70	2023	68.42
1.11.02	Corruption perceptions, index	06	(+1)	71	2024	80.88
1.11.03	Rule of law, index	06	(0)	89.15	2023	90.26
1.12	Monetary policy intervention	02	(+8)	-	-	95.02
1.12.01	Current account balance, % GDP	04	(+2)	-3.37	2024	88.70
1.12.02	Change (1-year) in total reserves (includes gold), % GDP	10	(+2)	-0.49	2024	49.76
1.13	Export concentration	05	(0)	-	-	86.20
1.13.01	Export market concentration, Top 5 as % total	04	(0)	45.16	2024	82.85
1.13.02	Export product concentration, Top 5 as % total	07	(-1)	46.69	2024	86.60
1.14	Exports of goods and services	03	(0)	-	-	53.05
1.14.01	Merchandise exports, US$ millions	08	(0)	512,840	2024	14.31
1.14.02	Commercial services exports, US$ millions	02	(0)	644,864	2024	69.79
1.15	Technological innovation	08	(-4)	-	-	57.57
1.15.01	R&D expenditure, % GDP	05	(-1)	2.90	2021	55.49
1.15.02	Researchers in R&D, per 1,000 inhabitants	-	-	-	-	-
1.15.03	Patent applications, per million inhabitants	07	(0)	693.46	2023	15.71
1.15.04	High-technology exports, % of manufactured exports	08	(-2)	28.89	2023	39.09
1.15.05	Scientific articles, per million people	06	(0)	1,557.49	2022	63.04
1.16	Technological infrastructure	08	(0)	-	-	76.10
1.16.01	Fixed internet speed, Mbps	12	(0)	149.33	2025	48.76
1.16.02	Internet users, % population	05	(-1)	96.30	2023	96.40
1.16.03	Fixed broadband subscriptions (per 100 people)	04	(-1)	41.44	2023	88.93
1.16.04	Mobile subscriptions (per 100 people)	16	(-1)	122.80	2023	30.68

Societal pillar

Social factors matter in an economy's capacity to trade internationally over the long term. Economies are measured on the environment that encourages and supports the development of human capital, such as the extent of education and labor standards.

This pillar also captures factors that influence public support for trade expansion. These include income inequality, political stability, goods produced by forced and child labor, and the government response to human trafficking.

Indicators

2 Societal Pillar		Rank	Rank +/-	Value	Year	Score (and 30-country average ◊)
2.01	Inequality (Gini coefficient)	03	(+2)	32.40	2021	63.87
2.02	Educational attainment	02	(0)	-	-	86.76
2.02.01	Mean years of schooling	03	(0)	13.49	2023	95.62
2.02.02	University education index	02	(0)	78.55	2024	68.90
2.02.03	Tertiary enrollment, % age group	07	(0)	80.15	2023	72.54
2.03	Labor standards	07	(0)	-	-	85.96
2.03.01	Gender non-discrimination in hiring, index	01	(0)	100	2024	100.00
2.03.02	Freedom of association and assembly, index	08	(-1)	0.70	2024	71.92
2.04	Political stability and absence of violence	11	(0)	62.09	2023	62.05
2.05	Goods produced by forced labor or child labor	05	(0)	-	-	98.71
2.05.01	Goods produced by forced labor	05	(0)	-	-	97.42
2.05.01.a	Goods produced by forced labor, number of goods categories	01	(0)	0	2024	100.00
2.05.01.b	% population in forced labor	05	(0)	0.18	2023	94.45
2.05.02	Goods produced by child labor, number of goods categories	01	(0)	0	2024	100.00
2.06	Government response to human trafficking	01	(0)	-	-	100.00
2.06.01	Government response to human trafficking, Criminalization	04	(0)	7	2024	80.00
2.06.02	Government response to human trafficking, Strategy	01	(0)	67.95	2023	100.00
2.06.03	Government response to human trafficking, Action	01	(0)	1	2024	100.00
2.07	Trade in goods at risk of modern slavery	22	(+2)	-	-	77.68
2.07.01	Imports of goods at risk of modern slavery, US$ millions	27	(0)	15,769	2023	74.21
2.07.02	Exports of goods at risk of modern slavery, US$ millions	01	(0)	0	2023	100.00
2.08	Social mobility, index	05	(0)	74.4	2020	95.69
2.09	Life expectancy at birth	08	(0)	81.30	2023	78.28
2.10	Uneven economic development	06	(+3)	3.6	2024	79.63
2.11	Universal Health Coverage Index	04	(0)	88.00	2021	95.08

Environmental pillar

The Environmental pillar measures the extent to which an economy's trade supports sustainable resources. The factors include measurements of non-renewable natural resources in trade and the management of externalities that arise from economic growth and participation in the global trading system.

While an economy's capacity to participate in the global trading system is dependent on economic development, achieving sustainable trade requires prudent stewardship of natural resources and limiting externalities in an economy's economic calculus to promote its overall environmental capital. The indicators chosen in this section measure an economy's environmental capital and include indicators for air and water pollution. In terms of future impact, we measure national environmental standards, carbon emissions, and share of natural resources in exports.

Indicators

3 Environmental Pillar		Rank	Rank +/-	Value	Year	Score (and 30-country average ◇)
3.01	Air pollution, PM2.5 micrograms per cubic metre	06	(0)	9.71	2020	91.83
3.02	Deforestation, index	07	(+1)	0.01	2022	31.83
3.03	% of wastewater treated	05	(-1)	97.19	2024	96.97
3.04	Energy intensity, energy consumed for each 1,000 US$ of GDP in MTOE	02	(0)	0.037	2022	93.76
3.05	Ecological footprint	17	(-1)	3.81	2024	66.67
3.06	Renewable energy, %	18	(-1)	14.8	2023	18.55
3.07	Environmental standards in trade, count	01	(0)	-	-	100.00
3.07.01	Convention: Hazardous Wastes	01	(0)	2	2024	100.00
3.07.02	Convention: Prevention of Marine Pollution	01	(0)	2	2024	100.00
3.07.03	Convention: Protection of the Ozone Layer (Vienna)	01	(0)	2	2024	100.00
3.07.04	Convention on Climate Change (Kyoto)	01	(0)	2	2024	100.00
3.07.05	The International Timber Agreement	01	(0)	2	2024	100.00
3.07.06	Convention: International Trade in Endangered Species	01	(0)	2	2024	100.00
3.07.07	Convention: Prior Informed Consent - Hazardous Chemicals (Rotterdam)	01	(0)	2	2024	100.00
3.08	Transfer emissions, million tonnes carbon	02	(0)	-45.29	2021	65.73
3.09	Share of natural resources in trade, %	18	(+2)	25.53	2024	68.69
3.10	Carbon	03	(+1)	-	-	93.83
3.10.1	Carbon pricing	01	(0)	2	2025	100.00
3.10.2	CO2 emissions per capita, tonnes per person	16	(+2)	4.42	2023	81.34

About us

Global trade has helped lift hundreds of millions of people around the world out of poverty. It is a powerful driver of economic growth and a key source of job opportunities. However, downsides may include labor disruptions, negative environmental impacts, and income inequalities. Therefore, sound public policy and responsible business leadership are essential for properly harnessing the full benefits of global trade.

The Hinrich Foundation and the IMD World Competitiveness Center have combined their expertise to build the Hinrich-IMD Sustainable Trade Index, a framework for policy makers, business executives, and civil society leaders to understand and advance sustainable global trade.

hinrich foundation
advancing sustainable global trade

The Hinrich Foundation is an Asia-based philanthropic organization dedicated to advancing mutually beneficial and sustainable global trade.

We believe that global trade – when mutually beneficial and sustainable – is a powerful force for shared prosperity, technological progress, sustainability and peaceful international cooperation. Our work is grounded in independent, fact-based research and the development of innovative trade education programs.

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IMD / World Competitiveness Center

IMD is an independent academic institution with close ties to business and a strong focus on impact. Challenging what is and inspiring what could be, it develops leaders who transform organizations for a more prosperous, sustainable, and inclusive world. Through its Executive Education, MBA, Executive MBA, and advisory work IMD helps leaders and policymakers navigate complexity and change.

The IMD World Competitiveness Center is dedicated to the advancement of knowledge on world competitiveness and offers benchmarking services for countries and companies using the latest data. The Center has pioneered research on how nations and enterprises compete to lay the foundations for future prosperity.

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