FLASH

SCB EIC

Exports Continued to Expand, but Imports Grew at a Faster Pace,

Keeping Thailand's Trade Deficit High Despite an Improvement in July 2026; Additional US Tariff Risks Warrant Close Monitoring

27 August 2026

Exports Continued to Expand, but Imports Grew at a Faster Pace, Keeping Thailand's Trade Deficit High Despite an Improvement in July 2026; Additional US Tariff Risks Warrant Close Monitoring

Overall, Thai exports in July 2026 continued to expand strongly.

Export value in July stood at USD 34,789.13 million, expanding strongly by 21.6%, up from 20.8% in the previous month and broadly in line with expectations (SCB EIC estimated 22.5%, while the Reuters Poll median was 17.8%). Seasonally adjusted export value expanded by 1.8%MOM_SA. **Overall, Thai export value during the first 7 months of 2026 expanded strongly by 18.2%** (Figures 1 and 2).

Exports this month continued to be supported by electronic products and the US market.

1. **Exports of electronic products expanded strongly by 67.8%,** accelerating from 66% in the previous month. This product group continued to be supported by the electronics upcycle, as well as the global expansion of investment in the electronics industry and data centers. This was reflected in exports of this product group to 14 out of Thailand's 15 key trading partners continuing to expand well. Electronic products contributed 14.5% to Thai export growth this month, accounting for more than two-thirds of the total export growth of 21.6%.
2. **Exports to the US expanded strongly by 45.3%,** continuing from 44.3% in the previous month. In particular, exports of electronic products, which have not yet been subject to additional US import tariffs, surged by 81.7%. Meanwhile, other product groups also expanded strongly by 18.3%, reflecting demand for Thai products in the US market. Part of this growth may have reflected accelerated shipments of Thai products to the US amid uncertainty over additional import tariffs under Section 301. Exports to the US contributed 10% to Thai export growth this month.

Import value growth moderated somewhat this month but remained very strong.

Import value in July stood at USD 38,399.64 million, expanding by 36.7%, slowing from 50.3% in the previous month and below expectations (SCB EIC estimated 45.8%, while the Reuters Poll median was 42.2%). **Overall, Thai import value during the first 7 months of 2026 expanded strongly by 37.8%** (Figures 3 and 4).

Strong growth in imports of raw materials and intermediate goods and capital goods was consistent with accelerating export and investment data, while fuel imports accelerated this month.

(1) **Raw materials and intermediate goods expanded strongly by 41.1%, slowing from 71.2%** but remaining at a very high level. Imports in this category contributed 18.1% to import growth this month, accounting for nearly half of the total import growth of 36.7%. Imports from China and Taiwan accounted for 47.6% of Thailand's total imports of raw materials and intermediate goods this month. Key products included electrical appliance and electronic equipment components, which expanded by 138.4% (CTG: 15.6%), particularly printed circuit boards, which surged by 161.9% (CTG: 14.1%). The continued strong growth in imports of electrical appliance and electronic equipment components was consistent with the sustained robust expansion in electronic product exports.

(2) **Capital goods expanded by 39%, slowing somewhat from 42.7% in the previous month.** Imports in this category contributed 11.4% to import growth this month, with imports from China accounting for 55.1% of Thailand's total capital goods import value. Key products included electrical machinery and parts, and computers, equipment and parts. This was consistent with the strong expansion in private investment in recent periods, particularly investment related to electronics and digital industries, such as data centers, while Thailand's domestic production capacity for these types of capital goods remains limited.

(3) **Fuel products expanded by 54.4%, accelerating from 39.5% in the previous month.** Imports in this category contributed 5.5% to Thai import growth this month.

The trade balance (customs basis) continued to record a deficit of USD -3,610.5 million in July, the smallest deficit in 4 months and better than expected (SCB EIC estimated USD -5,700 million, while the Reuters Poll median was USD -5,380 million). Overall, Thailand's cumulative trade deficit during the first 7 months of this year stood at USD -35,354.5 million.

SCB EIC revised up its 2026 Thai export and import growth forecasts to 16% and 28%, respectively, while the trade deficit is expected to widen further this year.

SCB EIC revised up its 2026 Thai export value growth forecast to 16%YOY (from the previous forecast of 10%, balance of payments basis), in line with the strong export growth recorded so far and expectations that the momentum will remain robust going forward, particularly for electronic products. This will be supported by global AI-related demand and investment, including data centers, semiconductors, and electronic equipment, as reflected in South Korea's exports of electrical appliances and electronics during the first 25 days of August, which surged by more than 122.8%. In addition, the US remains a key market for this product group, which has not yet been subject to additional US import tariffs.

Although the outlook for Thai exports remains strong, the growth has been K-shaped and highly concentrated in certain product categories and key markets, particularly electronic products and the US market. Meanwhile, other products and markets have recorded relatively limited growth, reflecting that the expansion in Thailand's export sector has yet to become broad-based (Figure 6).

The 2026 import value growth forecast was also revised up to 28% (from the previous forecast of 16.9%, balance of payments basis). Thailand's import growth has significantly outpaced export growth, with imports expanding strongly by 37.8% during the first 7 months of the year. For the remainder of the year, although energy import value may decline if the Middle East conflict eases, uncertainty remains high. Meanwhile, imports of raw materials and intermediate goods, as well as capital goods, are likely to continue expanding strongly. As a result, Thailand's trade balance in 2026 (both balance of payments and customs basis) is likely to record a larger deficit than last year.

<u>Special Topic: The Great Transshipment Scam:</u> Thailand Is Classified as Tier 2 for Transshipment, Raising the Risk of Tighter US Scrutiny

Looking ahead, Thai exports continue to face high risks from additional US trade measures, particularly the investigation under Section 301 concerning Structural Excess Capacity. Thailand is one of only 16 US trading partners currently under investigation on this issue, with the outcome expected by September 2026.

In addition, on August 13, 2026, the US released a report titled *The Great Transshipment Scam*, highlighting the risks of illegal transshipment of goods into the US through third countries to circumvent US import tariffs and trade measures, particularly for China-linked goods in terms of raw material sources, components, shareholders, production processes, or trade routes. The US found that since it began imposing import tariffs on Chinese goods under Section 301 in 2018, some Chinese products have increasingly been rerouted through third countries, potentially involving only final-stage assembly, repackaging, relabeling, or changes to rules-of-origin documentation before being exported to the US. **The report identified more than 40 countries at risk of transshipment scams, classified into three main groups as follows:**

- **Tier 1: Diversified Scale Leaders** — Countries with high volumes of transshipment involving China-linked goods but with large and diversified industrial production bases, including Canada, the European Union, India, Israel, Japan, Mexico, South Korea, and Taiwan.
- **Tier 2: Scale Leaders with Significant Economic Integration with China** — Countries with high volumes of transshipment involving China-linked goods and supply chains that are highly integrated with China, including Brazil, Indonesia, Malaysia, <u>Thailand</u>, Türkiye, and Vietnam.
- **Tier 3: Small, Opportunistic Chinese Targets** — Countries with relatively low volumes of transshipment involving Chinese goods but with certain advantages that could make them targets for illegal transshipment of Chinese goods to the US, such as low labor costs, free trade zones, or weak law enforcement. These countries include Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Panama, and Jordan.

SCB EIC views that Thai exporters and manufacturers face increasing risks in trading with the US market, as Thailand's Tier 2 classification reflects the US view that Thailand is highly integrated with China's supply chain and has the potential to serve as a channel for goods destined for the US market, particularly products with a high dependence on Chinese inputs. Going forward, Thai exporters may therefore face stricter scrutiny of rules of origin, trade routes, the share of Chinese inputs, and actual domestic production capacity. They may also face a higher risk of investigations or additional trade measures if the US considers exports from Thailand to involve changes in origin intended to circumvent tariffs rather than genuine production taking place in Thailand.

Figure 1: Thai Export Value by Product Category and Key Markets.

Thai Export Value by Product Category

Unit: %YOY (Share in 2025)

Product Category	2025	2026Q1	2026Q2	Jun-26	Jul-26	YTD
Total	13.1%	17.4%	17.7%	20.8%	21.6%	18.2%
Total (ex. gold) (96.2%)	12.1%	15.5%	18.5%	24.4%	24.6%	18.1%
1. Agricultural (8.2%)	-3.3%	-7.1%	0.0%	-10.8%	0.6%	-2.5%
2. Agro (7.2%)	4.6%	1.6%	-7.9%	-0.9%	-3.3%	-3.5%
3. Manufacturing (82.1%)	17.5%	21.3%	21.9%	25.1%	24.2%	22.0%
Electrical appliances (9.6%)	10.8%	13.8%	11.8%	19.8%	30.7%	15.4%
Electronic Products (21.6%)	38.3%	54.3%	52.9%	66.0%	67.8%	55.7%
Auto & parts (9.3%)	1.2%	3.5%	-0.8%	8.0%	2.3%	1.5%
Iron, Steel, and Products Thereof (2%)	2.1%	22.2%	6.8%	6.7%	10.9%	13.6%
Rubber products (4.6%)	9.6%	0.4%	7.6%	11.4%	8.6%	4.7%
Machinery and parts (3.5%)	15.4%	18.3%	15.5%	22.6%	21.7%	17.7%
Chemicals and plastics (6.5%)	1.1%	2.3%	15.3%	19.5%	13.0%	9.4%
Textiles (1.8%)	-0.5%	-2.7%	6.9%	5.8%	5.0%	2.5%
4. Mining and fuel (2.6%)	-19.7%	9.3%	35.2%	67.5%	106.8%	32.0%
Refined fuel (2.2%)	-19.8%	7.5%	44.2%	80.9%	120.1%	36.7%

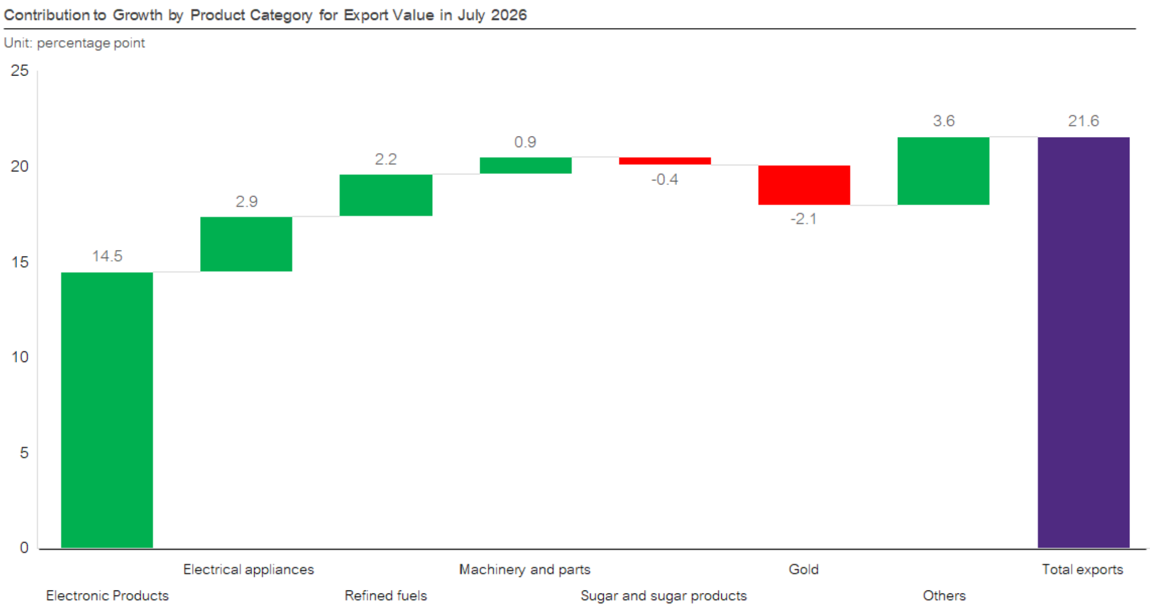
Thai export value by destination country

Unit: %YOY (share in 2025)

Country	2025	2026Q1	2026Q2	Jun-26	Jul-26	YTD
Total	13.1%	17.4%	17.7%	20.8%	21.6%	18.2%
U.S. (21.3%)	32.0%	41.8%	40.4%	44.3%	45.3%	41.7%
China (11.7%)	12.9%	9.8%	6.9%	4.9%	15.2%	9.1%
ASEAN 5 (12.6%)	7.0%	24.3%	34.8%	40.5%	16.8%	27.6%
CLMV (9%)	1.1%	-6.4%	-12.0%	-5.6%	13.0%	-6.4%
Japan (6.9%)	1.1%	7.0%	18.9%	22.7%	21.3%	14.1%
EU 28 (9%)	8.7%	19.7%	18.4%	21.9%	24.9%	19.9%
Hong Kong (3.3%)	2.9%	13.9%	-7.1%	7.8%	52.1%	7.9%
Australia (3.5%)	-2.5%	54.5%	33.3%	35.8%	33.6%	42.5%
Middle East (3.7%)	5.4%	-13.2%	0.8%	-6.8%	-12.0%	-7.3%
India (4.7%)	35.0%	20.4%	-5.1%	-8.0%	-6.5%	8.0%
Republic of Korea (1.7%)	-3.1%	-1.0%	21.5%	43.7%	5.9%	9.9%
Taiwan (1.6%)	12.0%	-1.8%	12.8%	16.0%	10.9%	6.5%
Switzerland (2.1%)	79.9%	-16.7%	-28.6%	-85.7%	-27.3%	-21.3%
Laos (1.7%)	19.8%	43.9%	28.8%	41.8%	19.1%	33.8%
Myanmar (1.3%)	6.8%	8.1%	6.6%	-4.0%	22.9%	9.4%

Source: SCB EIC analysis based on data from the Ministry of Commerce.

Figure 2: Electronic products remained the key export category in July 2026.



Source: SCB EIC analysis based on data from the Ministry of Commerce.

Figure 3: Thai Import Value by Product Category and Key Markets.

Thai Import Value by Product Category

Unit: %YOY (share in 2025)

Product Category	2025	2026Q1	2026Q2	Jun-26	Jul-26	YTD
Total (100%)	12.6%	32.4%	43.3%	50.3%	36.7%	37.8%
Total ex. gold (93.9%)	11.3%	25.7%	44.5%	44.8%	40.7%	36.1%
Fuel Products (12.6%)	-13.9%	-8.7%	87.7%	39.5%	54.4%	39.7%
Capital Goods (27.2%)	20.9%	34.6%	33.0%	42.7%	39.0%	34.6%
Raw and intermediate materials (43.4%)	17.5%	56.1%	47.1%	71.2%	41.1%	49.8%
Consumer Goods (11.5%)	12.2%	8.7%	11.7%	12.3%	4.0%	9.3%
Vehicles and logistics equipment (3.7%)	8.4%	9.6%	22.6%	41.2%	20.1%	16.8%
Arms and ammunition (1.7%)	32.1%	8.3%	31.1%	22.2%	35.6%	18.9%

Thai Import Value by Country

Unit: %YOY (share in 2025)

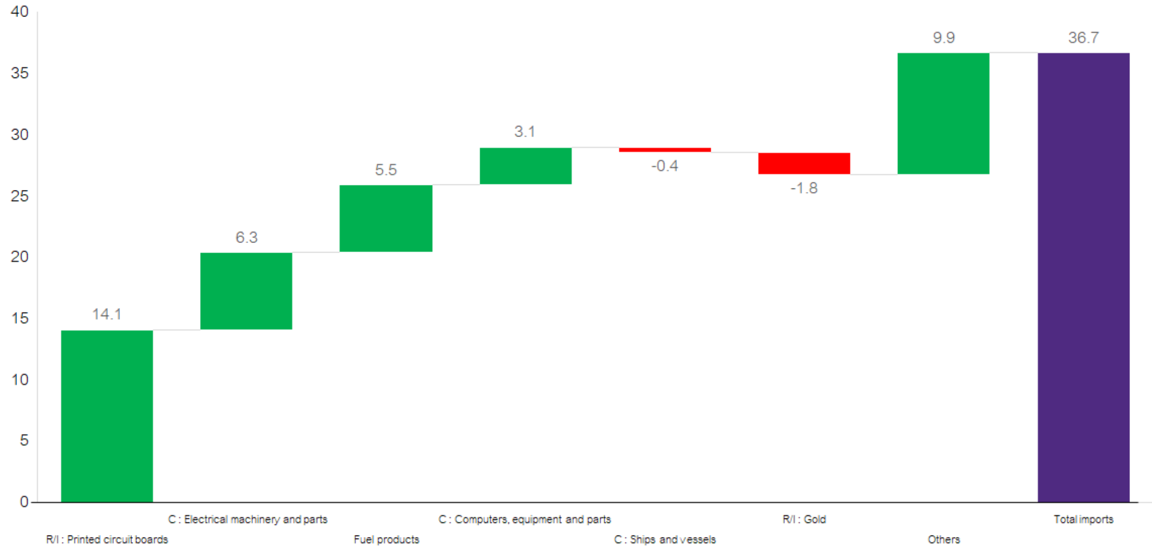
Country	2025	2026Q1	2026Q2	Jun-26	Jul-26	YTD
Total Imports	12.6%	32.4%	43.3%	50.3%	36.7%	37.8%
U.S. (6.1%)	8.1%	12.0%	58.2%	53.0%	34.5%	35.9%
China (31.3%)	33.5%	37.0%	40.7%	49.5%	35.7%	38.5%
ASEAN 5 (10.6%)	8.7%	19.8%	35.3%	39.0%	23.6%	26.9%
CLMV (5.5%)	12.5%	0.3%	21.7%	11.5%	14.3%	11.0%
Japan (8.6%)	3.2%	10.6%	3.1%	-3.2%	4.0%	6.3%
EU 28 (6.1%)	-3.5%	9.1%	22.2%	17.6%	16.5%	15.9%
Taiwan (7.5%)	24.3%	177.6%	104.8%	187.3%	214.1%	143.0%
Hong Kong (1.6%)	-12.3%	38.7%	47.4%	171.8%	-18.1%	35.8%
Australia (1.5%)	-3.3%	46.8%	74.5%	95.9%	19.7%	54.1%
Middle East (7.9%)	-2.4%	20.3%	27.0%	7.6%	2.0%	20.9%
India (1.7%)	5.4%	9.9%	6.7%	2.2%	8.4%	8.4%

Source: SCB EIC analysis based on data from the Ministry of Commerce.

Figure 4: Raw Materials and Intermediate Goods and Capital Goods Were the Key Import Categories in July 2026.

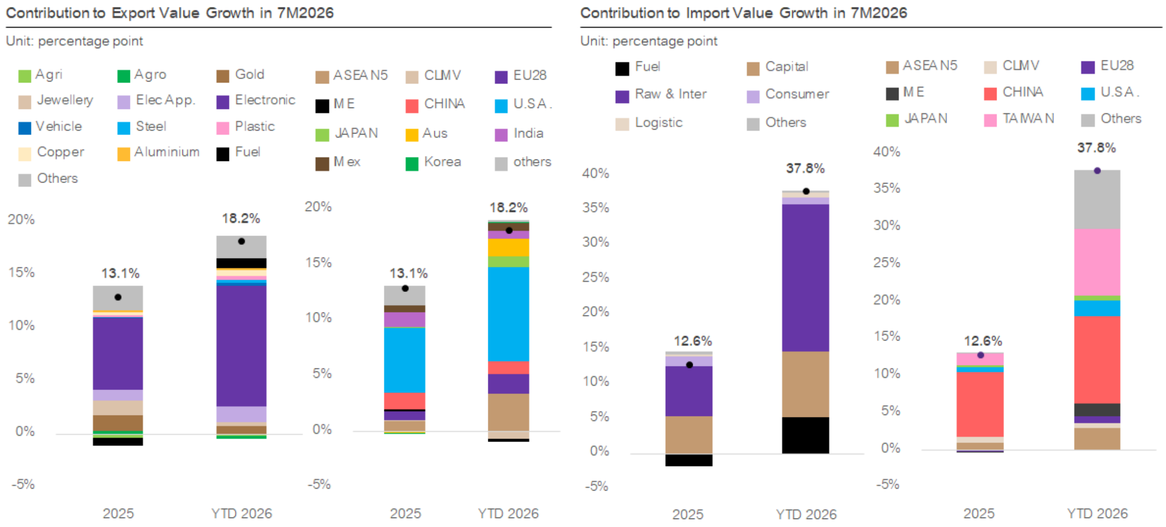
Contribution to Growth by Product Category for Import Value in July 2026

Unit: percentage point (R/I = raw materials and intermediate goods ; C : capital goods)



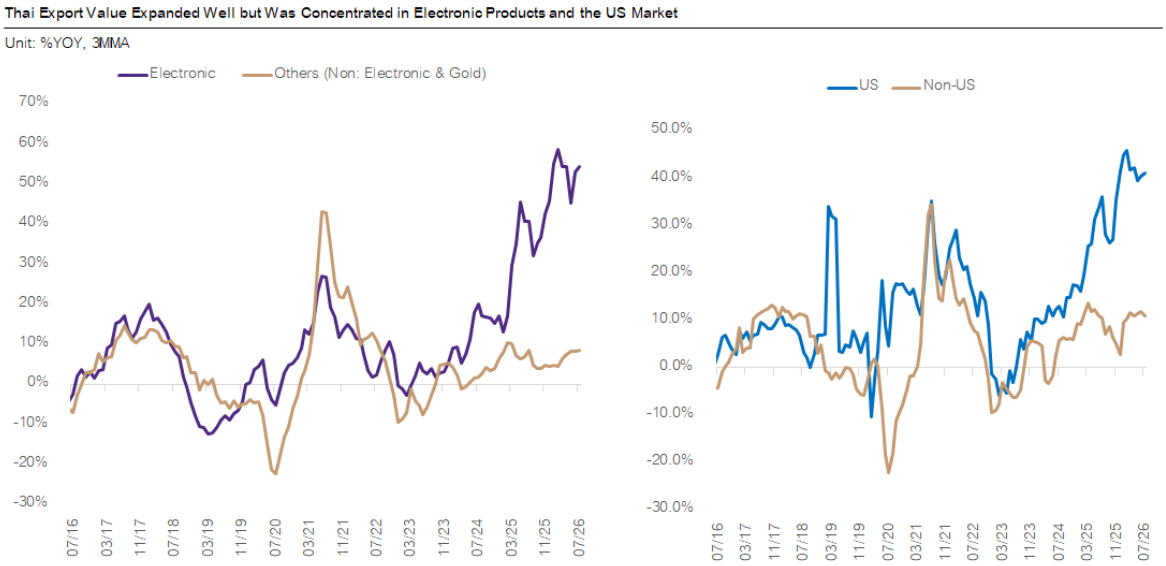
Source: SCB EIC analysis based on data from the Ministry of Commerce.

Figure 5: Export Growth During the First 7 Months of 2026 Was Concentrated in Electronic Products and the US Market, While Imports Were Concentrated in Raw Materials and Intermediate Goods and Capital Goods from China and Taiwan.



Source: SCB EIC analysis based on data from the Ministry of Commerce.

Figure 6: Thai Export Growth Was K-Shaped, Concentrated in Electronic Products and the US Market.



Source: SCB EIC analysis based on data from the Ministry of Commerce.

Author

PAWAT SAWAENGSAT (pawat.sawaengsat@scb.co.th)

ECONOMIST

VISHAL GULATI (vishal.gulati@scb.co.th)

SENIOR ECONOMIST

MACROECONOMICS RESEARCH

YUNYONG THAICHAROEN, Ph.D.

CHIEF ECONOMIST AND SUSTAINABILITY OFFICER

THITIMA CHUCHERD, Ph.D.

HEAD OF MACROECONOMICS RESEARCH

POONYAWAT SREESING, Ph.D.

SENIOR ECONOMIST

NOND PRUEKSIRI

SENIOR ECONOMIST

VISHAL GULATI

SENIOR ECONOMIST

KUSALIN CHARUCHART

SENIOR

NATHAPONG TUNTICHIRANON

SENIOR

PAKKAPON TONTIWICH

SENIOR

PAWAT SAWAENGSAT

SENIOR

How satisfied are you with this analysis?

YOUR OPINION IS IMPORTANT TO US

Please take a 7-question survey to help improve SCB EIC's analysis

Click to take the survey

SCB EIC

"Economic and business intelligence for effective decision making"

ECONOMIC INTELLIGENCE CENTER

Siam Commercial Bank

In-depth:
Economics Indicators

Impact:
Business Briefs

Update:
Stories that Matter

Stay connected

Find us at

LINE @scbeic

www.scbeic.com