

Western Cape Goods Trade Trends, 2025 - Top 10 Export Destinations and Import Sources

23 February 2026

1. KEY POINTS

This report aims to present a snapshot overview of the Western Cape's goods trade performance measured in Rand (ZAR) terms over the 2021–2025 period, highlighting the province's steady export growth, more volatile import cycle, and the reshuffle within the top export destinations following the release of the 2025 goods trade data. The report also provides a concise, data-backed view of overall trade trends, the direction of the trade balance, and the top partner markets driving growth and concentration risks.

- **Steady export growth:** Exports rose consistently from ZAR160.9bn in 2021 to ZAR219.7bn in 2025, a 36.56% increase over five years, with year-on-year growth slowing but positive.
- **Top export destinations and shifts:** The Netherlands remained the largest export market in 2025, showing 14% average growth over the review period. The UK rose to second place, overtaking the US, which experienced a 16% export decline in 2025. Namibia, China, UAE, Russia, and Zimbabwe showed notable growth, signalling expanding trade corridors beyond traditional partners.
- **Import sources and volatility:** Imports were larger and more volatile, peaking at ZAR337.9bn in 2025 after sharp swings. China dominated imports with stable growth, accounting for 18.9% share of total imports in 2025. India and the US showed strong upward momentum, while Oman contracted sharply by 30%, illustrating import volatility driven by concentrated patterns. Other key import partners included the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Angola, Nigeria, Italy, and Germany.
- **Trade balance and growth dynamics:** Despite export growth, the Western Cape remained a net importer with a trade deficit over the five years under consideration. Export growth rates slowed but remained positive, whereas import growth rates exhibited larger cyclical swings. High-growth export markets like the UAE and Russia contrast with mature markets that are either declining or stable, such as the US and UK.

2. Western Cape Trade: Steady Export Growth, Volatile Imports, and a Reshuffle Inside the Top Export Destinations (2021–2025)

The Western Cape's trade profile over the past five years tells a clear story:

- **Exports** are on a steady upward trajectory, reaching a high of ZAR219.7bn in 2025, a 4.61% year-on-year (y-o-y) increase on the ZAR210.06bn earned in 2024, and some 36.56% greater than the ZAR160.9bn earned in 2021.
- **Imports** are larger and more volatile, swinging sharply in 2022, moderating through 2024, and rising again in 2025 to a cost of ZAR337.93bn, up from ZAR319.36bn incurred in 2024.

Within exports, the top destinations remain concentrated, but there are notable shifts in rankings and a clear set of high-growth partners emerging. Exports grew consistently throughout the five-year period under review, albeit at a slowing growth rate, while imports showed larger cyclical swings.

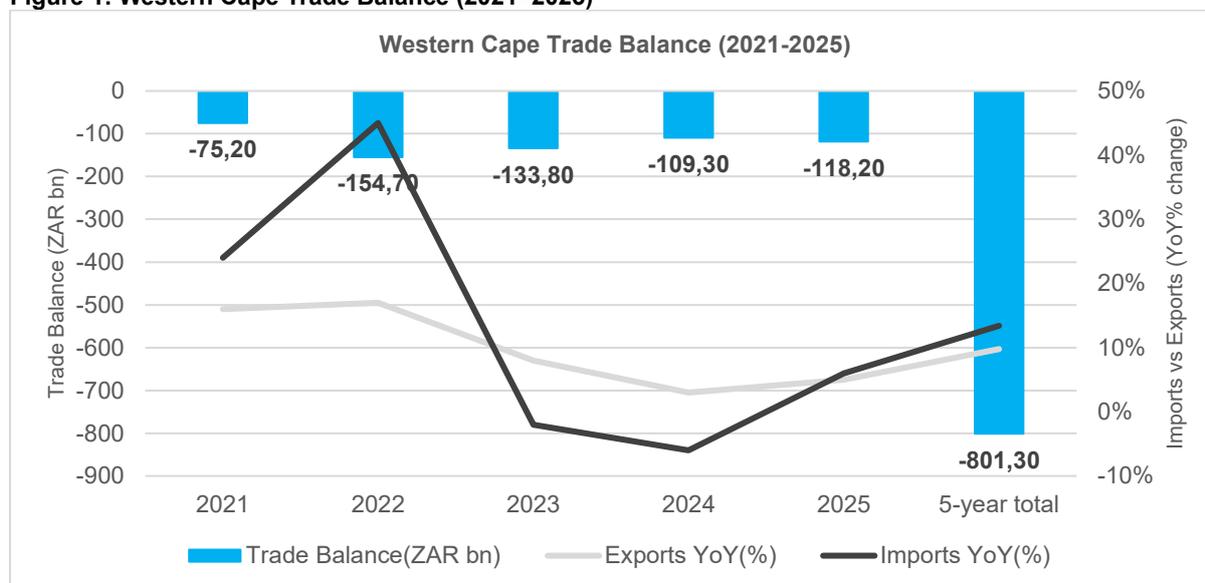
Table 1: Western Cape Total Exports and Imports Value, 2021-2025

Year	Exports (ZAR)	Exports Growth (%), YoY	Imports (ZAR)	Imports Growth (%), YoY
2021	160,913,896,178	16%	236,145,822,670	24%
2022	188,708,245,718	17%	343,396,666,810	45%
2023	204,165,340,630	8%	338,008,432,073	-2%
2024	210,059,322,694	3%	319,364,371,120	-6%
2025	219,745,566,795	5%	337,926,233,597	6%
5-year total	773,533,049,321		1,574,841,526,270	

Source: Quantec 2026

As a net importer, the province's global trade balance remained firmly in deficit throughout the five-year period under consideration.

Figure 1: Western Cape Trade Balance (2021–2025)



Source: Quantec 2026

3. Top Export Destinations: Concentration, Ranking Shifts and Growth Leaders 2024 vis-à-vis 2025

The Western Cape's exports remain highly concentrated in a small set of destination markets, which means that even modest shifts in demand, pricing, logistics or policy in those markets can shift the overall export picture. To separate short-term volatility from the longer-run trajectory, we pair the latest 2025 value and year-on-year growth with a five-year view of average growth. This highlights which markets combine scale and momentum (e.g., the Netherlands and UAE) and which appear to be structurally weakening on average (notably Botswana and the US on a five-year basis).

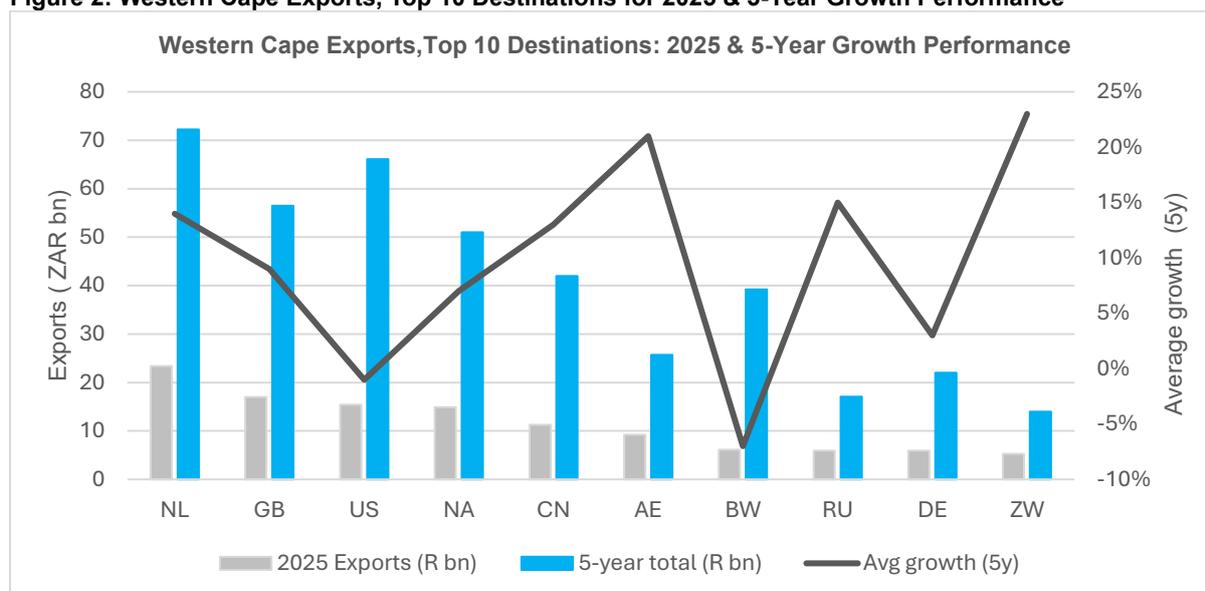
Table 2: Western Cape's Top 10 Export Markets: Value and Growth Snapshot, 2021-2025

2025 Rank	Ranking 2024 vs 2025	Export Destination Market	2025 Export Value (ZAR)	%Share Exports 2025	% Growth, y-o-y) 2025	5-year Export Value Total (ZAR)	Avg. Growth (%), (2021-2025)
1	0	Netherlands (NL)	23,358,357,622	10,6%	14%	72,176,706,903	14%
2	0	United Kingdom (GB)	16,987,871,425	7,7%	-1%	56,535,227,436	9%
3	0	United States (US)	15,387,414,221	7,0%	-16%	66,053,190,744	-1%
4	0	Namibia (NA)	14,878,465,414	6,7%	8%	51,012,352,136	7%
5	0	China (CN)	11,328,996,235	5,1%	-4%	42,004,480,198	13%
6	▲1	United Arab Emirates (AE)	9,228,575,079	4,2%	23%	25,679,836,987	21%
7	▼1	Botswana (BW)	6,066,990,280	2,7%	-25%	39,158,656,022	-7%
8	▲1	Russian Federation (RU)	5,912,652,880	2,6%	31%	17,058,355,106	15%
9	▼1	Germany (DE)	5,882,739,252	2,6%	4%	21,979,580,301	3%
10	0	Zimbabwe (ZW)	5,291,431,701	2,4%	36%	13,963,845,321	23%

Source: Quantec 2026

Figure 2 compares the value of Western Cape goods exports to its top 10 destination markets in 2025 with each market's cumulative exports over the past five years, alongside the average annual growth rate over that period. Markets such as the Netherlands, China, the UAE, and Zimbabwe combine relatively high export values with strong 5-year growth, while more mature markets like Great Britain and the United States show lower but stable growth.

Figure 2: Western Cape Exports, Top 10 Destinations for 2025 & 5-Year Growth Performance



Source: Quantec 2026

4. Western Cape Imports: Top 10 Import Source Markets

Western Cape imports remain highly concentrated, with a small group of source markets accounting for the bulk of inbound trade. China dominates, supplying close to one-fifth of total imports in 2025, underscoring its role as a structural supplier to the province. At the same time, the 2025 profile highlights pronounced partner-level volatility, with import rankings shifting quickly as conditions change.

Growth during 2025 was driven by sharp rebounds in a handful of markets, most notably India and the United States, alongside contractions elsewhere, including Oman, reflecting changing procurement strategies, and underlying price and volume cycles. **Table 3 integrates 2025 outcomes with five-year trends** to differentiate between stable structural suppliers and more volatile swing suppliers.

Table 3: Top Import Partners: 2025 Snapshot

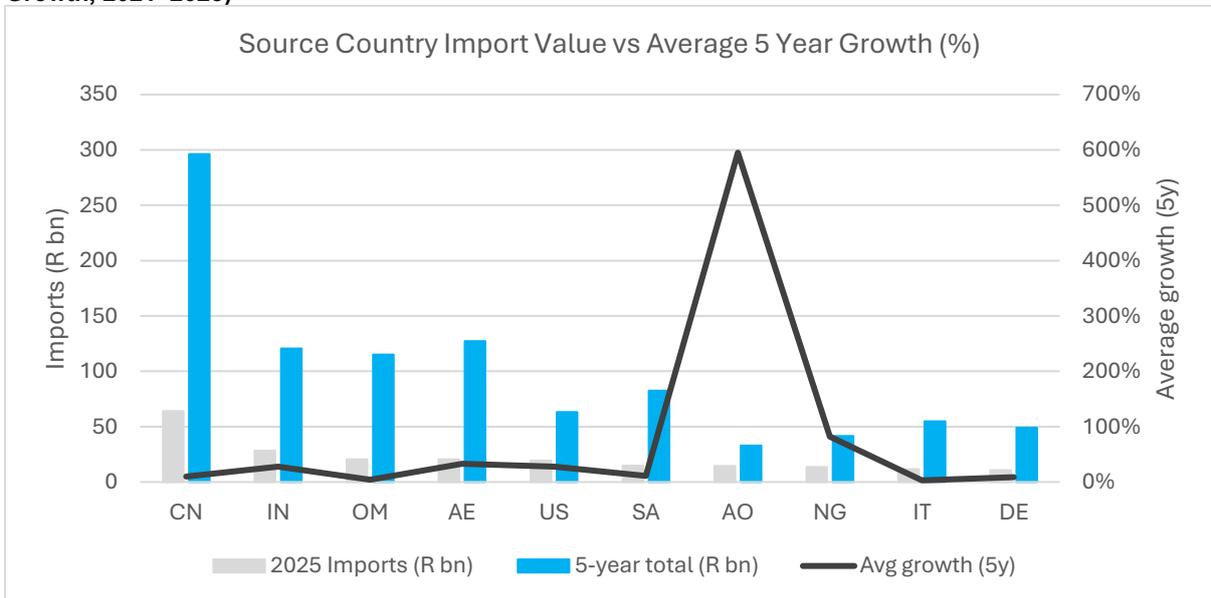
2025 Rank	Ranking 2024 vs 2025	Import Source Market	2025 Import Value (ZAR)	%Share of imports, 2025	% Growth, (y-o-y) 2025	5-year Import Value Total (ZAR)	Avg. Growth (%), (2021-2025)
1	0	China (CN)	64,027,456,603	18,9%	4%	296,338,989,840	10%
2	▲2	India (IN)	28,282,121,691	8,4%	72%	120,453,782,519	28%
3	▼1	Oman (OM)	20,619,563,362	6,1%	-30%	114,988,176,750	4%
4	▼1	United Arab Emirates (AE)	20,577,982,473	6,1%	-5%	127,088,347,328	33%
5	0	United States (US)	19,338,741,872	5,7%	28%	63,057,993,996	28%
6	▲2	Saudi Arabia (SA)	14,706,409,497	4,4%	31%	82,417,201,748	11%

7	▼1	Angola (AO)	14,510,348,847	4,3%	10%	32,906,739,356	595%
8	▲2	Nigeria (NG)	13,729,503,601	4,1%	37%	41,603,733,688	82%
9	▼2	Italy (IT)	11,638,797,633	3,4%	-8%	54,916,750,102	3%
10	0	Germany (DE)	10,743,833,177	3,2%	10%	48,975,137,365	9%

Source: Quantec 2026

Figure 3 contrasts import concentration (2025 values and 5-year totals) with momentum (average 5-year growth). China dominates on scale, indicating a structurally concentrated import basket. India and the UAE show both meaningful scale and stronger medium-term growth, suggesting rising sourcing dependence. The extreme growth outliers (notably Angola and Nigeria to a lesser extent) are base-effect/commodity-cycle signals rather than large-scale suppliers.

Figure 3: Western Cape Imports — Top 10 Source Markets (2025 Value, 5-Year Import Total and Average Growth, 2021–2025)



Source: Quantec 2026

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