

EU lose out on UK imports to rest of world

The first quarter trade figures for the UK show a sharp decline in the trade deficit, Much of this relates to higher stock levels last year which needed using up. The figures also show, however, some shift in our pattern of imports, bringing in less from the EU and more from the rest of the world. This probably reflects the aggressive and unhelpful stance of the EU over trade matters.

If we compare the month of March 2021 with March 2019 before the pandemic disrupted economies and trade we see a £1.3bn fall in imports of EU miscellaneous manufactures, a £2.8bn fall in imports of EU machinery and transport items, a £0.4bn fall in EU food and a £2bn fall in EU chemicals. In contrast the same period sees a rise of £0.2bn in rest of the world imported miscellaneous manufactures, a much smaller £0.5bn fall in rest of the world machinery and transport, a £0.1bn increase in rest of the world food and a £0.6bn increase in rest of the world chemical imports. It is always a better idea to be helpful to customers, as the rest of the world is demonstrating.