

# Northern Ireland Trade and Investment Patterns

## Purchases and Imports of Goods and Services

The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) introduced the Broad Economy Sales and Exports Statistics<sup>1</sup> (BESES) in 2015 as a more comprehensive measure of local businesses' purchases and imports from markets outside Northern Ireland.

Total purchases by companies in Northern Ireland (NI) were estimated to be worth £45.9 billion in 2018, an increase of 4.5% over the year. This is split into goods and services as shown in figures 1 and 2.

In terms of **goods** purchased outside the domestic NI market, the origin for the majority of purchases and imports in 2018 was Great Britain (GB) at £10.4bn, followed by Republic of Ireland (RoI) and Rest of EU (REU) at £2.4bn, and Rest of World (RoW) at £2.1bn.

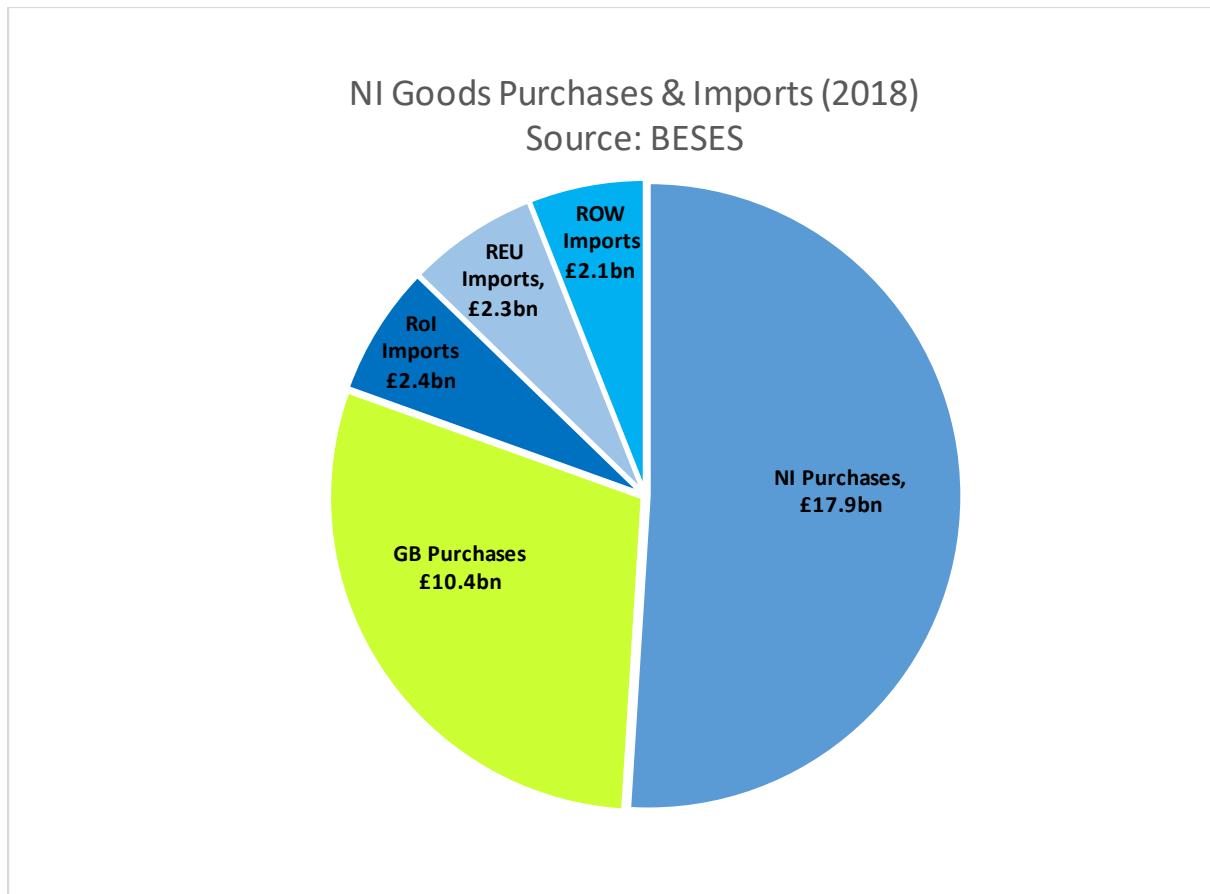
Similarly for purchases and imports of **services**, outside the domestic market of Northern Ireland, the origin of the majority of NI purchases in 2018 was again GB at £3.0bn, RoI at £0.4bn, RoW at £0.3bn and REU at £0.25bn.<sup>2</sup>

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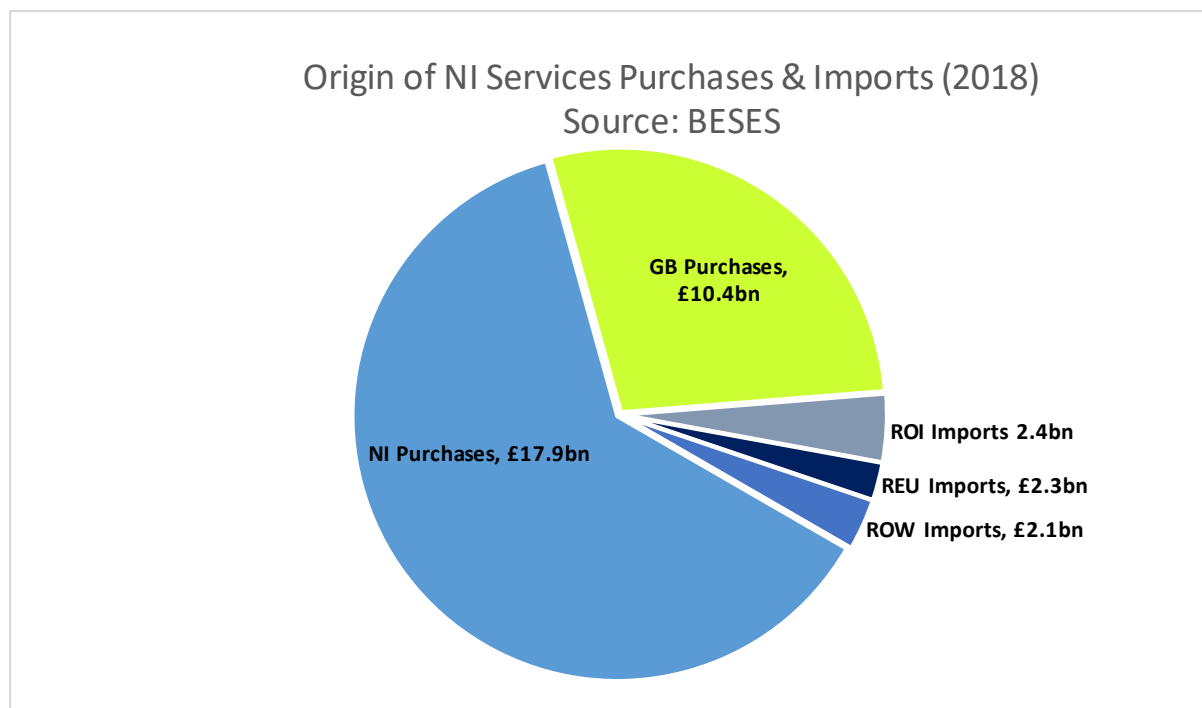
<sup>1</sup> [Broad Economy sales and exports statistics](#)

<sup>2</sup> [BESES Purchases and Imports Publication 2018](#)

**Figure 1 - Broad Origin of Northern Ireland Goods Purchases (2018)**



**Figure 2 - Broad Origin of Northern Ireland Services Purchases (2018)**



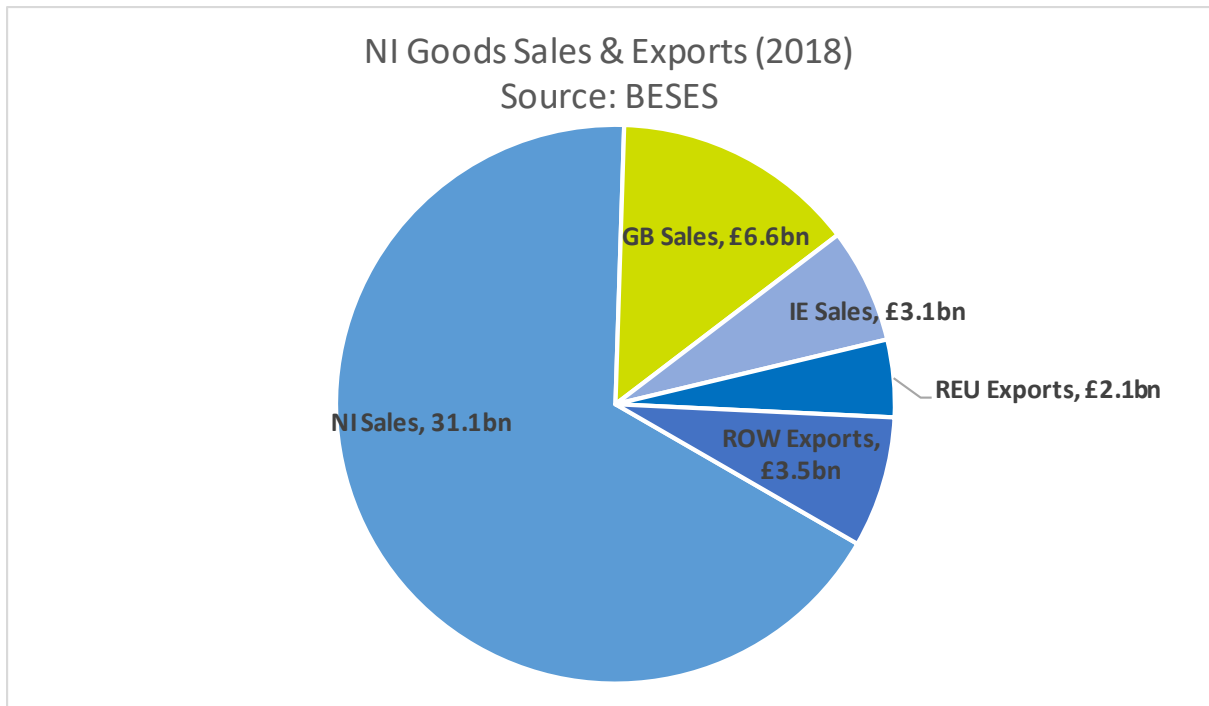
### **Sales of NI Goods and Services**

BESES<sup>3</sup> details that total sales by companies in Northern Ireland were estimated to be worth £68.4bn in 2018, which is split into goods and services as shown in Figures 3 and 4. In terms of sales of **goods**, outside the domestic market of Northern Ireland, the destination for the majority of NI sales in 2018 was GB at £6.6bn, followed by RoW at £3.5bn, RoI at £3.1bn and REU at £2.1bn.

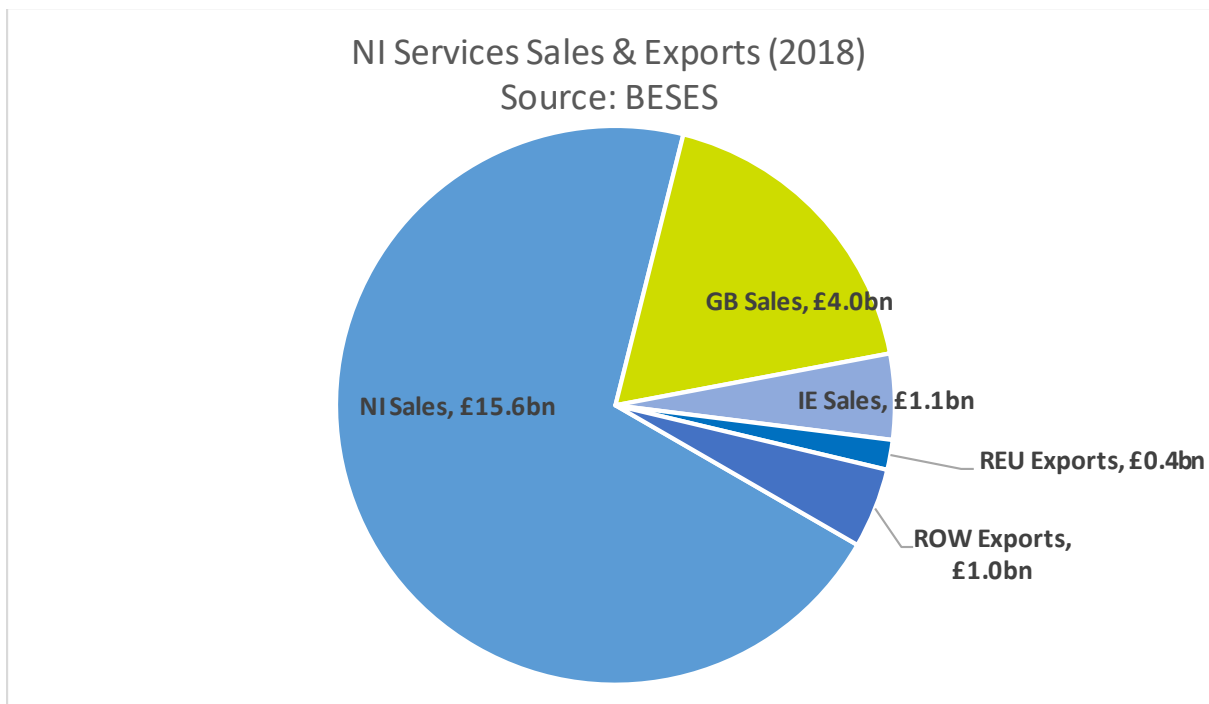
By comparison for sales of **services** outside the domestic market of Northern Ireland, the destination of the majority of NI sales in 2018 was GB at £4.0bn followed by RoI at £1.1bn, RoW at £1.0bn and then REU sales at £0.4bn.

<sup>3</sup> [nisra.gov.uk](http://nisra.gov.uk) BESES Goods Services Publication 2018

**Figure 3 Broad Destination of NI Goods Sales (2018)**



**Figure 4 Broad Destination of NI Services Sales (2018)**



At a sectoral level, the following made up the majority of sales of goods and services in 2018, accounting for just over 70% of sales:

- wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles;

- manufacturing; and,
- construction.<sup>4</sup>

## **Inward Investment**

Invest Northern Ireland's International Strategy 2017 – 2021 provides details of inward investment activity between 2014/15 and 2018/19 based on its key performance indicator data. The split of inward investment by country and sector is shown in Figures 5 and 6<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup>[nisra.gov.uk BESES Goods Services Publication 2018](https://www.nisra.gov.uk/BESES-Goods-Services-Publication-2018)

<sup>5</sup> Note: Tables include projects that are aimed at creating jobs and developing R&D, skills, innovation and trade.

**Figure 5 – Inward Investment by Country into NI (2014/15 to 2018/19)**

Country	Number of companies	Investment £m	% Share
United States of America	106	£516.8	34%
Great Britain	139	£489.9	32%
Brazil	1	£182.5	12%
Canada	6	£140.6	9%
Ireland	71	£138.5	9%
France	9	£20.4	1%
Netherlands	6	£10.8	1%
Other	37	£36.9	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>369</b>	<b>£1536.4</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Invest NI

**Figure 6 – Inward Investment by Sector into NI (2014/15 – 2018/19)**

Sector	Number of Companies	Investment £m	% Share
Financial, Professional & Business Services	81	£463.3	30%
Advanced Engineering and Manufacturing	110	£404.5	26%
Digital & Creative Technologies	98	£378.5	25%
Agri-Food	23	£221.1	14%
Life & Health Sciences	27	£39.8	3%
Construction	21	£27.6	2%
Leisure and Tourism	3	£0.00	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>363</b>	<b>£1534.8</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Not classified at Sector level</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>£1.6</b>	

Source: Invest NI