



Energising Zimbabwe's Export Growth



ZIMBABWE - UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

TRADE BRIEF



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Zimbabwe – United Arab Emirates Trade Brief

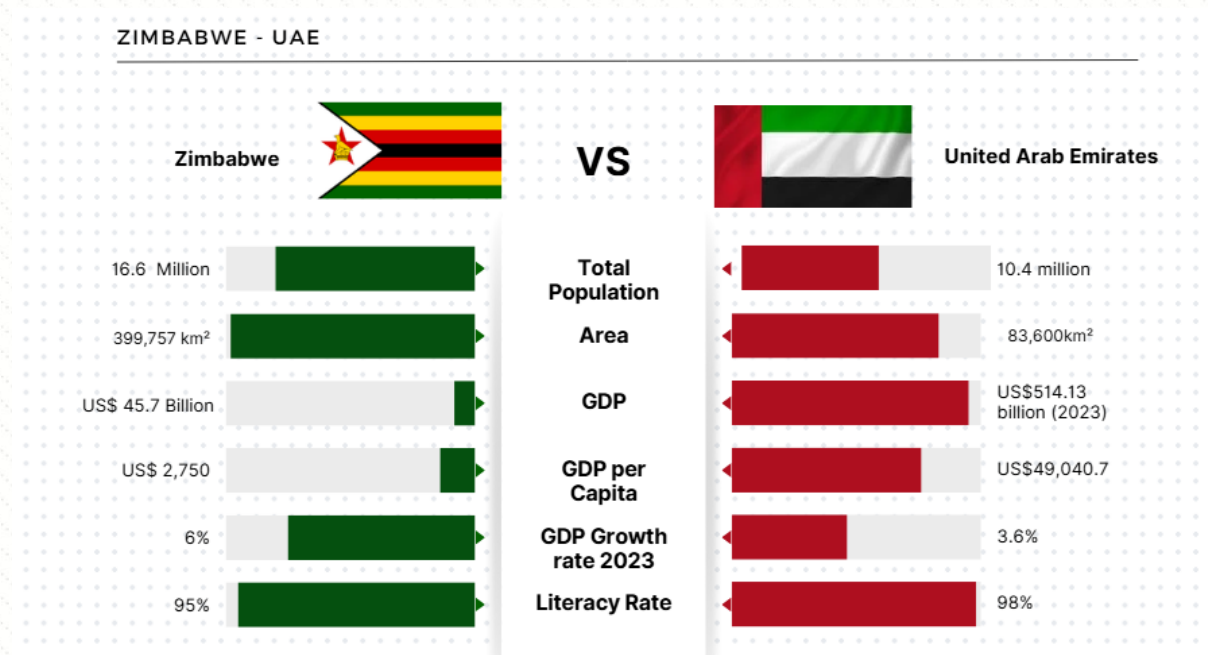
United Arab Emirates Overview

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is a federation of seven emirates, with Abu Dhabi as its capital and Dubai as its commercial hub. Established in 1971, the UAE has transformed from a primarily oil-reliant economy to one of the most diversified in the region. The UAE economy is driven by trade, real estate, tourism, and financial services as well as oil and gas.

The country is strategically located at the crossroads of major global trade routes, making it a key trade hub in the Middle East and globally. Its world-class infrastructure, business-friendly environment, and political stability further enhance its appeal as a regional and international business hub.

Key Economic Indicators

- **GDP:** US\$908 billion (2024 estimate)
- **GDP per capita:** US\$49 549.59 (2024)
- **Population** 11 million
- **Major Industries:** Oil and gas, tourism, healthcare, retail, finance and construction.
- **Currency:** United Arab Emirates Dirham
- **Key Trade Partners:** Saudi Arabia, India, Turkey, China and the United States of America.



Zimbabwe – United Arab Emirates Trade

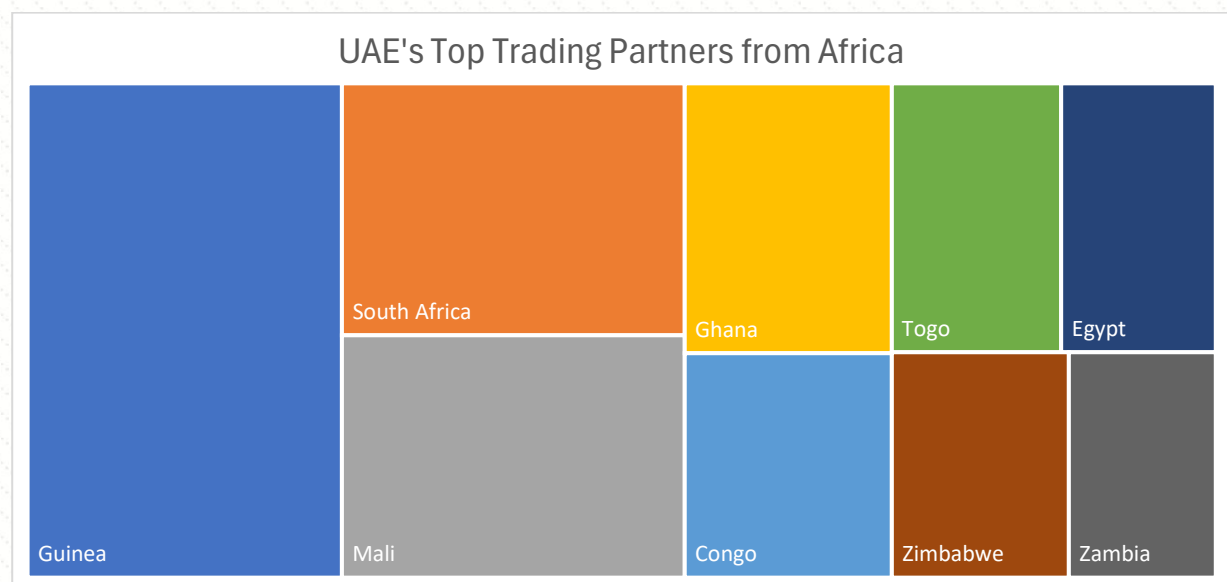
The UAE has emerged as a key trading partner for Zimbabwe, reflecting the country's strategic efforts to diversify its export markets. Trade between Zimbabwe and the UAE has grown significantly in recent years from US\$ 901.7 million in 2019 to over US\$2.3 billion in 2023 indicating a 155.27% increase. This growth has been driven by increased exports of precious metals, agricultural products and other commodities.

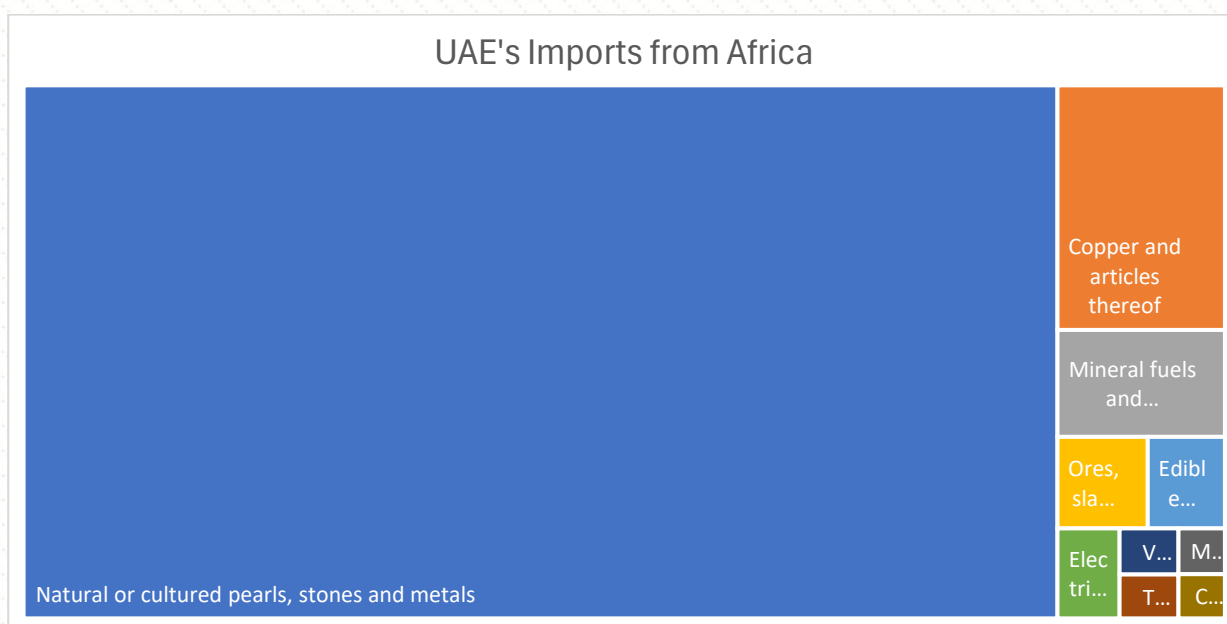
Zimbabwe's exports to UAE increased from US\$2 billion in 2021 to US\$2.7 billion in 2022, a 35% increase. However, in 2023 there was a slight decrease in the value of exports from US\$2.7 billion to US\$2.3 billion, a 14.81% decrease.

Zimbabwe's imports from UAE decreased from US\$372.4 million in 2022 to US\$268.6 million in 2023. Major products imported from the UAE in 2023 were pearls, precious stones and metals, electrical machinery and equipment and vehicle parts and accessories. According to Trademap, Zimbabwe has over the years been enjoying a positive trade balance through its increased exports to the UAE. *(Refer to Annex 1).*

1. United Arab Emirates Imports from Africa

United Arab Emirates' total imports from Africa amounted to US\$54.6 billion in 2023 up from US\$49.7 billion in 2022, representing a 9.86% increase. Most of the products imported from Africa in 2023 were minerals and agricultural products such as tobacco, edible fruits and nuts, coffee and tea. Top trading partners for the UAE from Africa in 2023 were Guinea, South Africa, Mali, Ghana and Congo. *(Refer to Annex 2 & 3).*





Zimbabwe's Products with Potential in United Arab Emirates

a. Diamonds

Trend: United Arab Emirates imported unworked diamonds worth US\$18.8 billion in 2023 from the world. From this value, US\$313.4 million was imported from Zimbabwe. Major suppliers of diamond to UAE from Africa in 2023 were South Africa, Botswana, Angola, Zimbabwe and Namibia.

Opportunity: The UAE is a major global hub for minerals trading such as gold and diamonds. Zimbabwe can competitively supply to United Arab Emirates as the country is currently supplying markets such as Belgium, South Africa, Australia, India and United Kingdom. Zimbabwe's diamond output has been on the rise due to the Government's implementation of several policies and regulations to support the diamond industry. Zimbabwe's three diamond mining companies namely, Anjin Investments, Rio Zimbabwe Murowa and the Zimbabwe Consolidated Diamond Company (ZCDC) have all performed positively over the years in terms of production and revenue output.

b. Oranges

Trend: Global import of oranges by the UAE amounted to US\$164.4 million, a 20.79%% increase from the US\$136.1 million realised in 2022. Zimbabwe exported oranges worth US\$8 million in 2023 mainly to South Africa, Zambia, Kenya and Mozambique.



Opportunity: The Beitbridge area of Zimbabwe is well known for producing large, sweet oranges with high juice quality. The area's weather conditions present a fertile ground for production of quality citrus fruits. In the past years, citrus production had been a preserve for commercial farmers but now ordinary villagers in cooperations have joined in commercial production.

c. Avocadoes

Trend: UAE imports avocadoes mainly from African countries. Top import markets for UAE for avocadoes in 2023 were Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, South Africa and Uganda. Imports of avocadoes by UAE were valued at US\$65.8 million in 2023.

Opportunity: the UAE is an emerging market for Zimbabwean avocadoes as Zimbabwe looks to diversify its exports to include high value agricultural products. The growing demand for avocadoes is due to their unsaturated fat content making them a good substitute for meat and dairy. Zimbabwean avocado producers, mainly concentrated in the Eastern Highlands of Zimbabwe, produce the Hass avocado variety, most preferred in the global market.

d. Black tea

Trend: Zimbabwe exported black tea worth US\$15.9 million to South Africa, Mozambique, Zambia and Malawi. The UAE imported black tea worth US\$161 million in 2023. The majority of these imports were from African countries such as Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Malawi.

Opportunity: Zimbabwe has been introducing a variety of indigenous offerings like zumbani and moringa which could capture the interest of the global market including the UAE. Zimbabwe's Eastern region is known as the hub for some of the country's major tea estates such as Eastern Highlands Plantations Limited (EHPL), Tanganda Tea Company and Ariston Holdings. Small scale farmers have since joined in commercial tea growing through cooperations and associations such as the Honde Valley Tea Growers Association consisting of 1200 small scale farmers.

e. Cut flowers

Trend: Trade data shows that the global market for cut flowers is valued at US\$9.8 billion. At its peak in 2021 cut flowers were valued at US\$10.2 billion. Top importing markets in 2023 were USA, Germany, Netherlands and UK.

Opportunity: In 2023, Zimbabwe exported cut flowers valued at US\$3.5 million, with the Netherlands, South Africa, and Germany emerging as the leading importers. This demonstrates the country's capability to supply fresh flowers and buds to diverse markets, including potential growth opportunities in the UAE. As Zimbabwe's floriculture sector continues to expand, it positions itself as a key player in the global

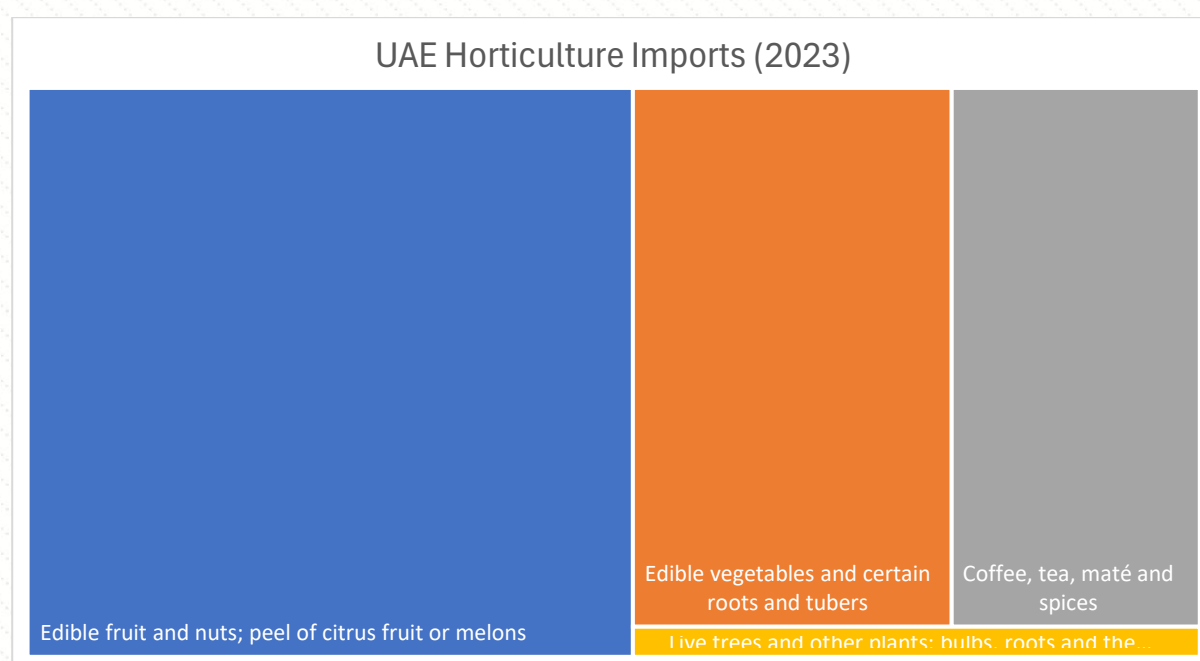
market. With the UAE importing cut flowers worth US\$50.7 million globally, Zimbabwe has a promising opportunity to tap into this lucrative market. *(Refer to Annex 4 & 5)*

2. United Arab Emirates Export Performance

The UAE is a significant exporter with a diverse range of products and a robust global reach. In 2023 UAE experienced peak exports with a record of US\$570.2 billion. The country experienced a 10.59% growth in exports from US\$515.6 billion realised in 2022. The growth was mainly anchored by mineral fuels and oils, precious stones and metals, electrical machinery, nuclear reactors, aluminium, vehicles and plastics. Top importing markets for UAE products in 2023 were Saudi Arabia, India, Iraq, Türkiye, China and United States of America. *(Refer to Annex 6, 7 & 8)*

3. United Arab Emirates Imports of Horticulture

In 2023, United Arab Emirates imports of horticultural products were valued at US\$ 5.2 billion. Major imported products include edible fruit and nuts, edible vegetables, coffee, tea, mate and spices and live trees and cut flowers. Zimbabwe's favourable climate coupled with its fertile land and available water bodies makes it ideal for growing horticultural products. The UAE is a major export hub and a lucrative market for Zimbabwean horticultural exports. *(Refer to Annex 9)*



Issues to consider

Challenges for Zimbabwean Suppliers



While the United Arab Emirates is Zimbabwe's second largest trading partner, there are challenges that Zimbabwean suppliers face in trading with the UAE.

- **Stringent Quality Standards:** The UAE enforces rigorous standards for imports, especially in food and agricultural products.
- **Market Competition:** Zimbabwean products face competition from established suppliers in Africa and Asia.
- **Logistical Barriers:** High shipping costs and limited direct trade routes.
- **Limited Market Knowledge:** Lack of awareness about UAE consumer preferences and regulations.
- **Currency Risks:** Exchange rate volatility can impact pricing.

Strategies to overcome challenges:

- **Quality Assurance:** Adhere to international standards, secure certifications (e.g., ISO, HACCP).
- **Market Research:** Invest in understanding UAE consumer behaviour and regulatory requirements.
- **Trade Facilitation:** Partner with local distributors and agents who understand the market.
- **Logistics Optimization:** Explore consolidated shipping options and regional trade hubs.
- **Promotional Activities:** Participate in trade fairs and expos
- **Government Support:** Collaborate with Zimbabwe's trade promotion agencies such as ZimTrade and leverage funding or training initiatives.
- **Bilateral Partnerships:** Strengthen ties with UAE businesses through trade missions and investment forums.

Opportunities for Zimbabwean Suppliers

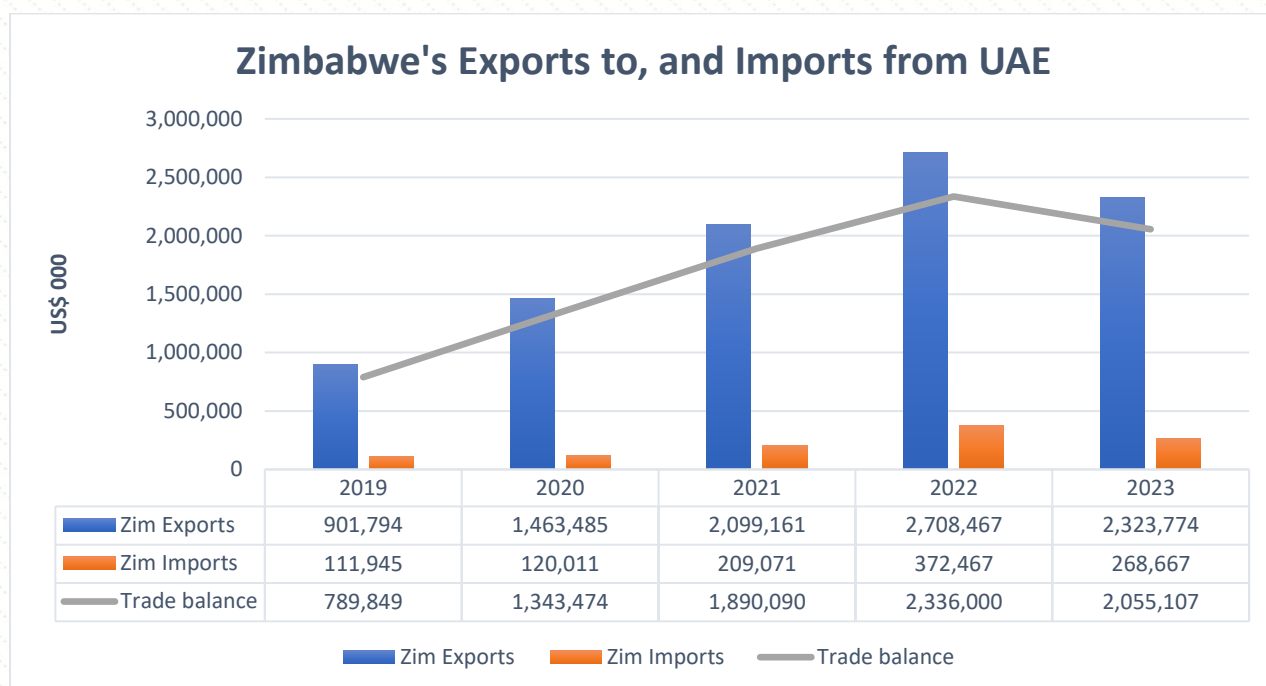
- **Growing Demand for Organic Products:** Health-conscious consumers create opportunities for organic fresh produce.
- **Trade Agreements:** Leveraging favourable trade ties between Zimbabwe and the UAE such as the bilateral agreement on investment promotion and protection.
- **Re-Export Potential:** Positioning Zimbabwean goods for re-export to other markets via the UAE.
- **Diaspora Market:** Targeting the Zimbabwean and African expatriate communities in the UAE.
- **Luxury and Niche Markets:** The UAE's affluent population values unique, high-quality, and niche products, offering opportunities for premium Zimbabwean exports such as artisanal goods, handcrafted furniture, and exclusive food items.

4. Conclusion

The UAE offers significant potential for Zimbabwean products, especially in agriculture, precious metals, and processed goods. By addressing logistical and quality-related challenges, Zimbabwean suppliers can tap into this lucrative market. Building partnerships, maintaining high standards, leveraging trade events, and aligning with UAE's market demands are key to long-term success.

Annexes

Annex 1 – United Arab Emirates Trade (2019-2023)



Source Trademap

Annex 2: – United Arab Emirates Imports from Africa

Product label	United Arab Emirates's imports from AfricaUS\$'000		
	Value in 2021	Value in 2022	Value in 2023
All products	44,112,961	49,782,614	54,667,423
Natural or cultured pearls, precious stones, precious metals	36,817,322	41,739,113	45,426,749
Copper and articles thereof	2,897,239	3,053,408	3,372,681
Mineral fuels, mineral oils and products of their distillation;	1,103,412	1,346,875	1,475,519
Ores, slag and ash	236,006	169,857	681,651
Edible fruit and nuts; peel of citrus fruit or melons	420,855	488,399	579,199
Electrical machinery and equipment	359,273	479,157	461,963
Tobacco and manufactured tobacco substitutes;	100,400	179,599	211,456
Meat and edible meat offal	176,145	196,811	175,742
Coffee, tea, maté and spices	103,127	186,084	168,099

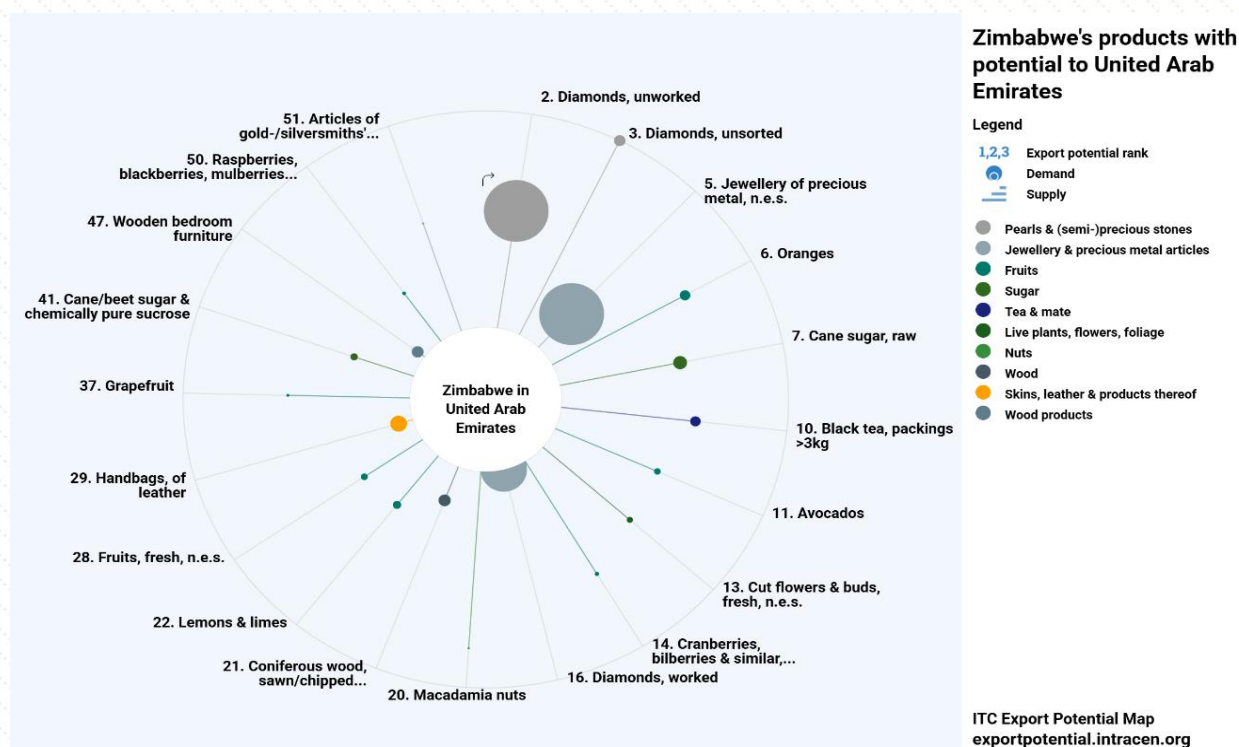
Source: Trade Map

Annex 3: United Arab Emirates Source Markets from Africa

Exporters	Imported value in 2019 US\$'000	Imported value in 2020 US\$'000	Imported value in 2021 US\$'000	Imported value in 2022 US\$'000	Imported value in 2023 US\$'000
World	267,937,296	246,961,071	347,528,998	420,493,198	470,536,020
Africa Aggregation	28,797,722	36,155,377	44,112,961	49,782,614	54,667,423
Guinea	2,381,065	6,832,793	2,580,784	2,614,046	9,047,662
South Africa	2,778,507	3,692,612	4,454,747	4,537,244	5,022,255
Mali	3,218,834	2,949,638	7,327,217	5,574,666	4,831,721
Ghana	1,305,719	1,637,109	1,734,436	4,723,057	3,254,003
Congo	1,571,050	1,546,194	1,864,521	1,931,101	2,704,304
Togo	24,279	52,781	611,186	1,184,391	2,652,287
Egypt	2,343,428	3,207,664	1,688,347	2,214,591	2,417,193
Zimbabwe	901,794	1,463,485	2,099,161	2,708,467	2,323,774
Zambia	305,219	658,059	861,666	1,838,518	1,927,534
Botswana	1,333,342	1,065,033	2,091,325	2,510,176	1,851,563

Source Trademap

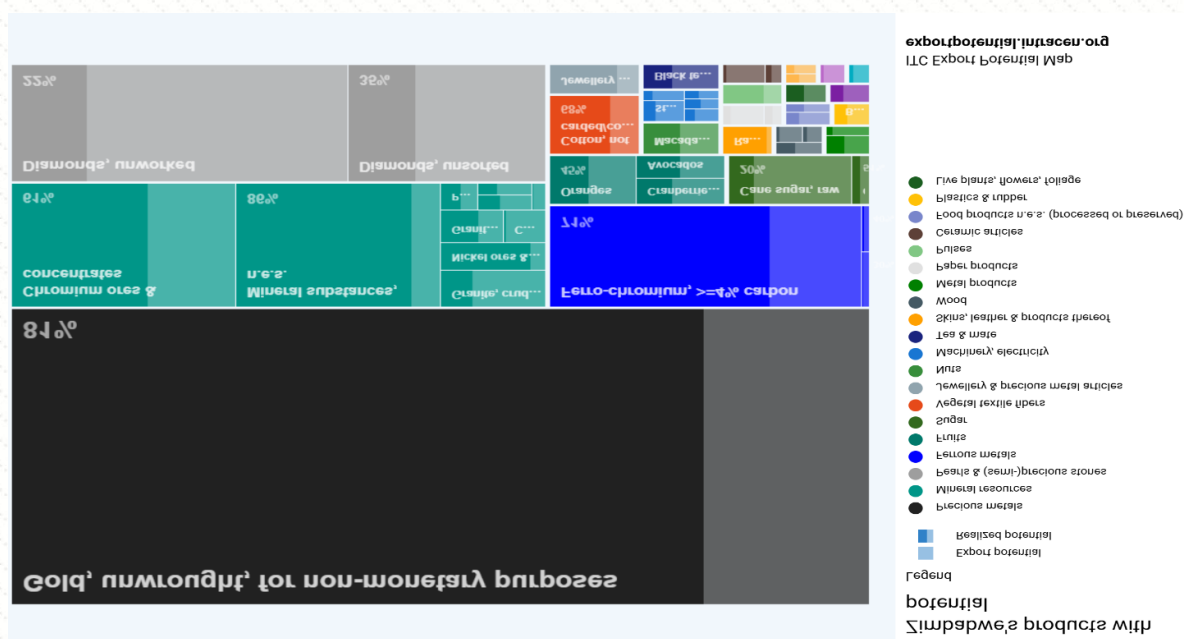
Annex 4: Zimbabwe's Export Potential to United Arab Emirates



Source Trademap

The products with greatest export potential from Zimbabwe to United Arab Emirates are diamonds unworked and diamonds unsorted, black tea (packings >3kg), oranges, cane sugar avocados and cut flowers and buds. Diamonds, unworked shows the largest absolute difference between potential and actual exports in value terms, leaving room to realize additional exports worth US\$239 million.

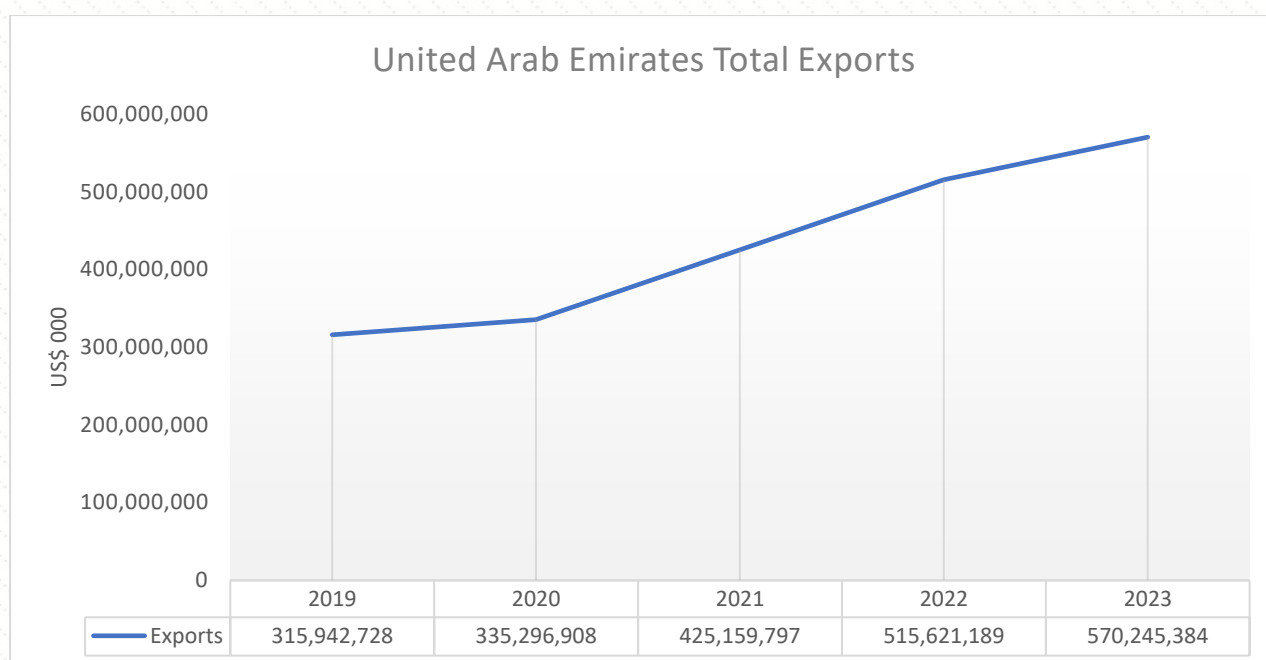
Annex 5: Zimbabwe's Export Potential - Global



Source Trademap

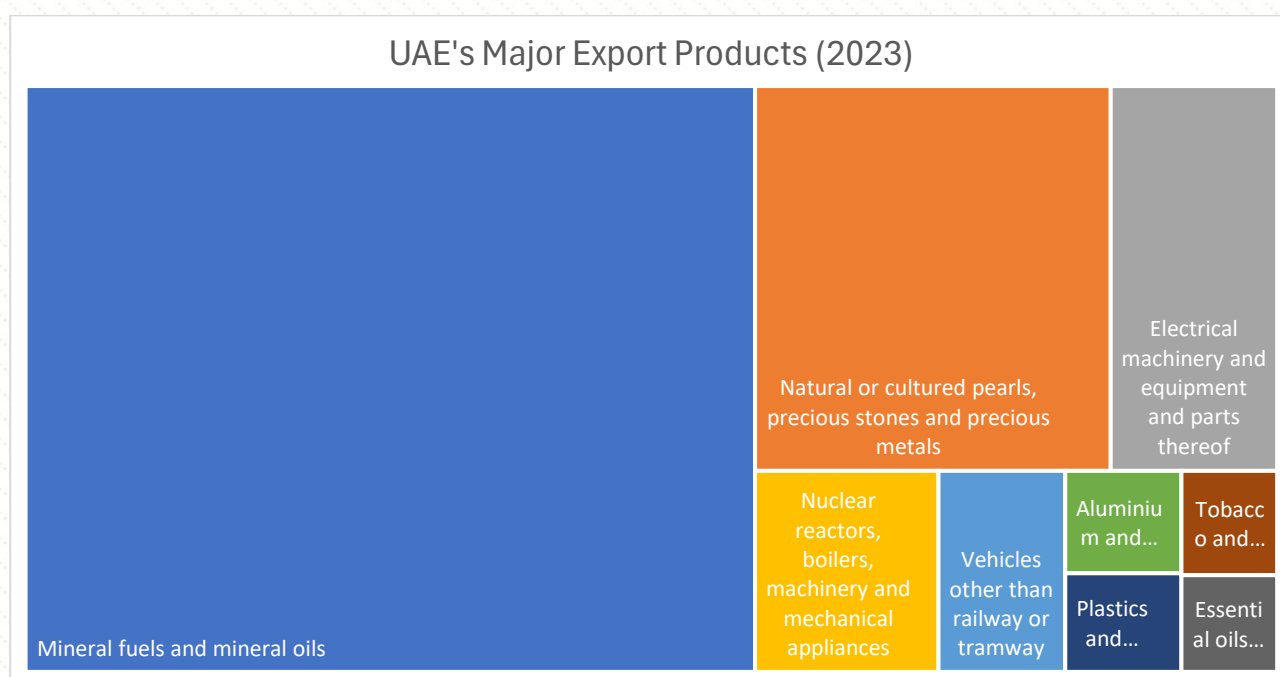
The products with greatest export potential from Zimbabwe to the World are gold, unwrought, for non-monetary purposes, diamonds, unworked, and ferrochromium (>=4% carbon), gold, unwrought, for non-monetary purposes shows the largest absolute difference between potential and actual exports in value terms, leaving room to realize additional exports worth US\$470 million.

Annex 6: United Arab Emirates Exports



Source: Trademap

Annex 7: United Arab Emirates Exports by Product



Source: Trademap

Annex 8: United Arab Emirates Exports 2019 vs 2023

Product label	Exported value in 2019	Exported value in 2023	% Change
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	US\$'000	US\$'000	
All products	315,942,728	570,245,384	80.49
Mineral fuels and mineral oils	93,958,869	282,076,795	200.21
Natural or cultured pearls, precious stones and precious metals	47,830,970	90,203,377	88.59
Electrical machinery and equipment and parts thereof	30,490,681	42,277,665	38.66
Nuclear reactors, boilers, machinery and mechanical appliances	18,650,568	24,365,671	30.64
Commodities not elsewhere specified	45,911,947	18,107,771	(60.56)
Vehicles other than railway or tramway	12,153,674	16,802,967	38.25
Aluminium and articles thereof	5,539,326	7,862,972	41.95
Plastics and articles thereof	6,018,219	7,581,826	25.98
Tobacco and manufactured tobacco substitutes	4,652,185	6,609,193	42.07
Essential oils and resinoids; perfumery	3,905,985	6,129,468	56.93

Source: Trademap

Annex 9: United Arab Emirates Horticulture Imports

Product label	Imported value in 2019 US\$'000	Imported value in 2020 US\$'000	Imported value in 2021 US\$'000	Imported value in 2022 US\$'000	Imported value in 2023 US\$'000
All products	267,937,296	246,961,071	347,528,998	420,493,198	470,536,020
Horticulture	4,072,253	3,796,542	4,280,788	5,081,261	5,253,462
Edible fruit and nuts; peel of citrus fruit or melons	2,363,108	1,957,595	2,245,924	2,539,866	2,713,496
Edible vegetables and certain roots and tubers	945,531	1,016,780	1,100,386	1,381,777	1,352,088
Coffee, tea, maté and spices	683,157	742,296	826,574	1,043,379	1,053,202
Live trees and other plants; bulbs, roots and the like; cut flowers	80,457	79,871	107,904	116,239	134,676

Source: Trademap

Annex 10: United Arab Emirates Growing Source Markets

Exporters	Imported value in 2019 US\$'000	Imported value in 2020 US\$'000	Imported value in 2021 US\$'000	Imported value in 2022 US\$'000	Imported value in 2023 US\$'000
World	267,937,296	246,961,071	347,528,998	420,493,198	470,536,020
Area Nes	18,910,883	31,739,656	77,563,806	89,479,505	78,757,210
China	40,777,643	39,387,737	51,795,572	67,215,283	77,419,156
India	26,735,301	16,474,075	20,876,187	27,277,047	30,449,187
United States of America	20,013,732	16,518,724	16,876,600	21,415,362	26,869,233
Türkiye	3,535,832	3,041,155	9,580,882	9,604,626	17,655,820
Japan	12,613,927	9,457,733	10,859,511	12,010,099	15,171,997
Germany	10,074,235	8,624,203	8,299,268	8,512,143	11,298,663
Switzerland	4,112,328	3,028,663	5,350,068	6,078,700	11,209,525
Viet Nam	7,194,111	5,852,131	7,601,250	7,467,555	11,053,925
Italy	6,561,554	5,545,313	7,983,864	8,679,869	10,082,051

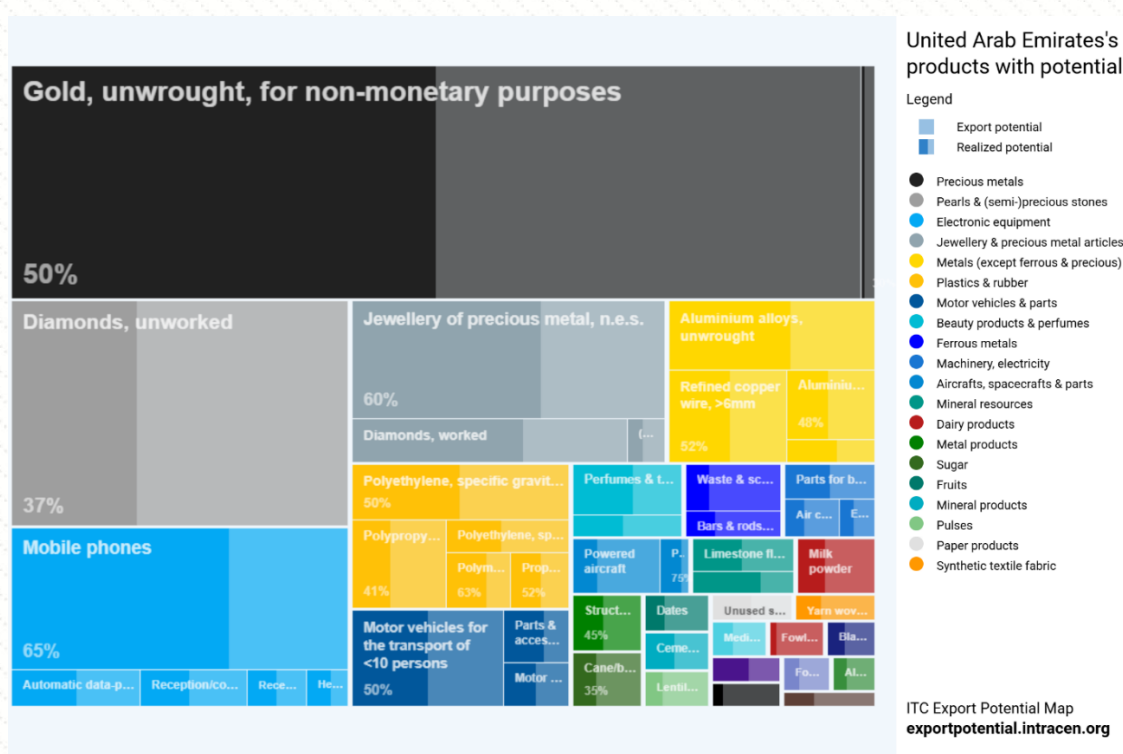
Source: Trademap

Annex 11: United Arab Emirates Growing Export Markets (2019 vs 2023)

Importers	Exported value in 2019 US\$'000	Exported value in 2023 US\$'000	% Change
World	315,942,728	570,245,384	80.49
Area Nes	72,504,841	286,627,123	295.32
Saudi Arabia	23,993,333	29,464,759	22.8
India	14,667,544	25,019,313	70.58
Iraq	13,739,818	22,700,764	65.22
Türkiye	3,833,443	18,723,106	388.41
Hong Kong, China	5,633,527	14,374,963	155.17
United States of America	6,390,409	13,544,961	111.96

Source: Trademap

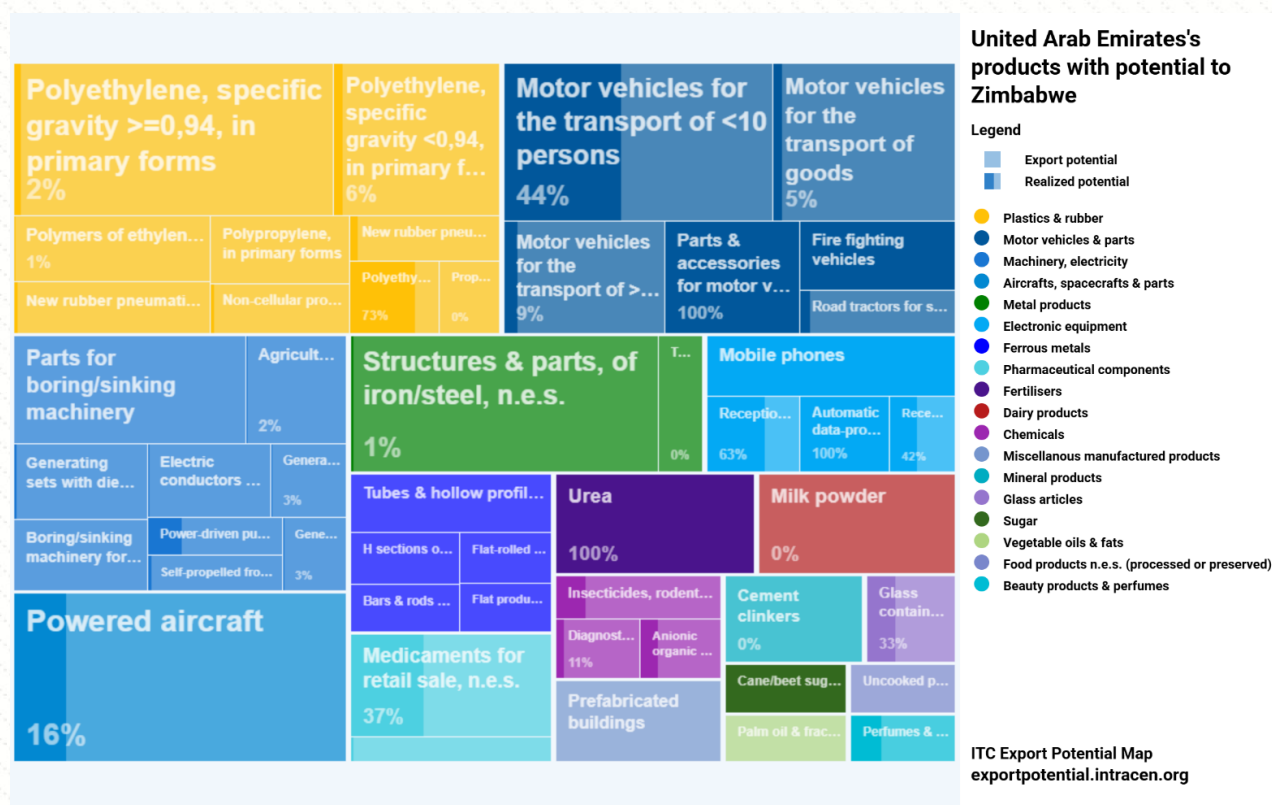
Annex 12: United Arab Emirates Export Potential



Source: Trademap

The products with greatest export potential from United Arab Emirates to the World are gold, unwrought, for non-monetary purposes, diamonds, unworked, and mobile phones. Gold, unwrought, for non-monetary purposes shows the largest absolute difference between potential and actual exports in value terms, leaving room to realize additional exports worth US\$33 billion.

Annex 13: United Arab Emirates Export Potential to Zimbabwe



The products with greatest export potential from United Arab Emirates to Zimbabwe are powered aircraft, polyethylene, specific gravity $\geq 0,94$, in primary forms, and structures & parts, of iron/steel. Powered aircraft shows the largest absolute difference between potential and actual exports in value terms, leaving room to realize additional exports worth US\$15 million.



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