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Belarus Tops German Exports to Russia as Global War Backlash Hits Imports

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Andrei Nikerichev / Moskva News Agency

The value of Russian imports from Belarus has surpassed that of goods arriving from Germany, news service Bloomberg reported Wednesday.

Data from Moscow's largest trading partners shows that Russian imports have plummeted amid a global backlash against the Kremlin's invasion of Ukraine.

Figures show a 40% drop in imports to Russia in April compared to the same month in 2021, adding to earlier analysis that found Russian imports had fallen to a two-decade low.

In March, Belarusian exports to Russia totaled $1.3 billion against Germany's $1.1 billion.

The trend continued into April, with Belarus ramping up sales to $1.5 billion, while German imports fell to a little over $800 million in response to European Union sanctions against Russian businesses.

Falling imports were also seen elsewhere. China, which has so far refused to join international

sanctions against Russia, cut exports to $3.8 billion in March and $3.7 billion in April, despite a year-to-year increase in trade turnover so far in 2022

Falling imports have contributed to the growth of Russia's trade surplus from $20 billion in January to $45 billion in April, according to international trade groups.

"The collapse in imports is padding the current account but reflects a painful adjustment that will take time to pass through the economy," Bloomberg economist Scott Johnson said.

"Until supply chains are reconfigured, producers will face bottlenecks and living standards are likely to deteriorate further."

Russia has classified its own import and export data following the start of sanctions and the global business exodus which followed in their wake.

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