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Russia-China Trade Grows 25.6% in First Half of 2026

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Vladimir Putin and Xi Jinping. **kremlin.ru**

Trade between Russia and China rose 25.6% year-on-year in the first half of 2026, reaching $134.2 billion, according to official data cited by Russia's trade mission in China on Tuesday.

Russian exports to China grew 23.3% to $73.6 billion between January and June. Russian imports from China, meanwhile, rose 28.4% to $60.6 billion, giving Russia a trade surplus with its largest trading partner.

The rebound marks a reversal from 2025, when bilateral trade fell for the first time in five years, dragged down by lower Chinese vehicle exports to Russia and falling Russian oil revenues.

Last month, President Vladimir Putin boasted of a "steady" 10% increase in bilateral trade. "We hope to keep this momentum going," Putin told China's Vice President Han Zheng on the sidelines of the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum.

China’s overall foreign trade also expanded in the first half of 2026, growing 21.2% to $3.67 trillion, official customs data showed. Exports were up 17.6% to $2.13 trillion, and imports up 26.6% to $1.55 trillion.

Russia and China have expanded political and economic cooperation since Putin launched the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, with the two countries describing their relationship as a “no-limits” partnership.

Russia has become increasingly reliant on China for selling oil as its access to Western markets has diminished.

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