

Country Report USA

Chemical industry data and facts

August 2022

U.S. chemical industry - number two in the world

The United States chemical industry was the second largest chemical producer, with sales of nearly 706 billion euro in 2021. Only China recorded even higher sales.

Production in the U.S. chemical-pharmaceutical industry increased by more than 5 percent in 2021 compared to the previous year. Over the past five years, however, production has fallen by an average of 0.7 percent per year.

In 2021, the U.S. was not only the second largest chemical producer, but also the second largest chemical consumer after China. Demand for chemicals was around 753 billion euro, an increase compared to previous year. This corresponded to around 12.7 percent of global chemical consumption.

Investments in the chemical sector rose again after the coronavirus year 2020, amounting to almost 33 billion euro in 2021. This meant second place, well behind China. But similar to production, a downward trend was observed in recent years. Investments fell by an average of 0.9 percent per year over the last five years.

SPECIALIZATION IN PHARMACEUTICALS

The U.S. chemical industry specializes in the manufacture of pharmaceuticals. About 38 percent of chemical-pharmaceutical sales were generated in this sector in 2021. The value amounted to 269 billion euro. Boosted by low energy and raw material prices, basic chemicals, with inorganics, petrochemicals, and polymers, accounted for around one-third of sales.

The United States remained the world's largest importer of chemical-pharmaceutical products in 2021, followed by China and Germany. Pharmaceuticals were imported in large quantities.

The trade balance of the chemical-pharmaceutical industry in the United States was clearly negative in 2021, at minus 47.5 billion euro. By contrast, the trade balance for pure chemicals (excluding pharmaceuticals) was positive. Demand abroad was particularly strong for fine and specialty chemicals and polymers.

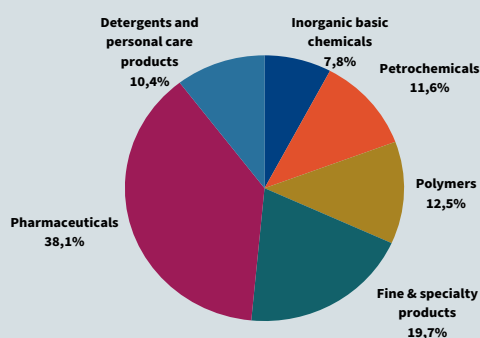
GERMANY'S MOST IMPORTANT TRADING PARTNER

The USA are the most important trading partner for the German chemical industry. Germany exported chemical products worth more than 26.6 billion euro to the United States in 2021. This represented 11.3 percent of Germany's chemical exports worldwide. Conversely, chemical imports from the United States to Germany amounted to around 15.4 billion euro. The trade balance was thus once again positive for Germany in 2021.

The United States are also the most important foreign location for the German chemical-pharmaceutical industry. Direct investments by German chemical companies in the United States amounted to around 34.5 billion euro in 2020. In 2020, 150 subsidiaries of German chemical companies were active in the United States. Together, they generated sales of around 46.7 billion euro and employed 69,000 people.

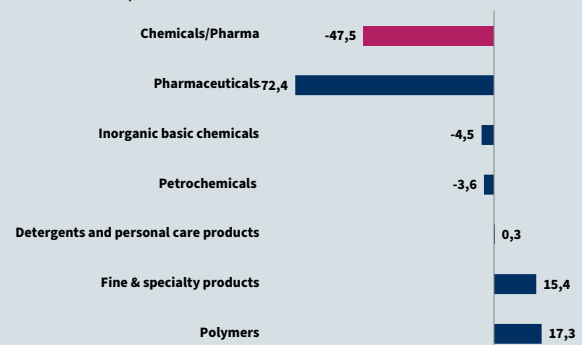
Contact: Maximilian Nichterlein | Phone: 069 / 2556 -1438 | Email: maximilian.nichterlein@plasticseurope.de

Structure of the US chemical industry
shares in percent, 2021



Sources: Chemdata International, VCI

US trade balance for chemicals
in billion euro, 2021



Sources: Chemdata International, VCI