Verband der
Chemischen Industrie e.V.
Elementar für Deutschland

VCI

OCTOBER 2026

COUNTRY REPORT UNITED STATES

CHEMICAL AND PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY DATA AND FACTS

THE WORLD'S SECOND-LARGEST MARKET

In 2025, the chemical and pharmaceutical industry in the United States of America generated revenue of €819 billion, a 0.7% decline from the previous year. This positioned the United States as the world's second-largest chemical producer after China, accounting for 11.8% of global chemical and pharmaceutical industry revenue.

Production in the chemical and pharmaceutical industries continued its upward trend in 2025, increasing by 3.2% year on year. Pharmaceuticals remained the main driver of growth, while chemical production recorded only moderate gains. The weak global industrial environment also weighed on growth in the United States.

The United States ranked second only to China in both chemical and pharmaceutical production and consumption in 2025. Domestic demand for chemicals and pharmaceuticals reached approximately €929 billion, accounting for just over 13% of global consumption in the sector. The healthcare sector was a significant driver of demand.

Companies in the chemical and pharmaceutical industry continued to increase their investment in property, plant, and equipment, spending a total of €36.2 billion in 2025. The United States also ranked second globally in investment, behind China.

LARGEST IMPORTEUR OF PHARMACEUTICALS

The U.S. chemical and pharmaceutical industry is highly diversified, with pharmaceuticals remaining its largest segment. After a decline in revenue beginning in 2022, the pharmaceutical sector has recently regained ground, increasing its share of total industry revenue in both relative and absolute terms. At 31.4%, however, its share remains well below the 2020 level of more than 38%. With the exception of inorganic chemicals, all chemical segments have lost market share. Moreover, none of these segments has regained its 2022 revenue peak.

The United States also maintained a trade surplus in chemicals in 2025, driven by strong exports of polymers, petrochemicals, and fine and specialty chemicals. In contrast, pharmaceutical trade recorded a trade deficit of just under €145 billion, although this narrowed compared with 2024. The United States was also the world's largest importer of pharmaceutical products by value. Consequently, the overall trade balance for the chemical and pharmaceutical industries remained negative.

GERMANY'S MOST IMPORTANT TRADING PARTNER

In 2025, Germany exported chemical and pharmaceutical products worth €36.7 billion to the United States, representing 14.5% of its total exports in these sectors worldwide. Imports from the U.S. amounted to €22.4 billion, giving Germany a trade surplus of €14.3 billion. Pharmaceuticals accounted for 76% of German exports to the U.S., with nearly 24% of Germany's total pharmaceutical exports destined for the American market. The United States was therefore Germany's most important trading partner in the chemical and pharmaceutical industries, particularly in pharmaceuticals.

Hence, the U.S. is the most important overseas market for German chemical and pharmaceutical companies. Despite ongoing trade policy uncertainties, German companies' direct investment in the U.S. chemical and pharmaceutical industries totaled approximately €40.7 billion in 2024. In 2023, 183 U.S. subsidiaries of German chemical and pharmaceutical companies were active in the U.S., generating revenue of €64.4 billion and employing around 74,000 people.

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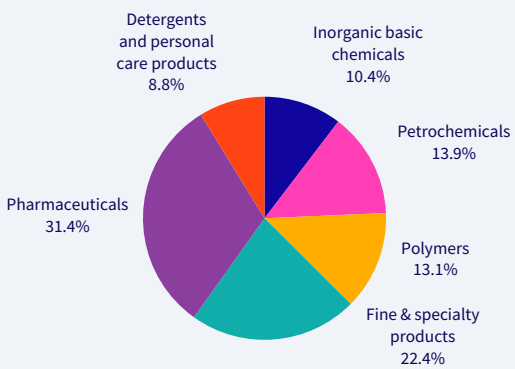
STRUCTURE OF THE US CHEMICAL AND PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY

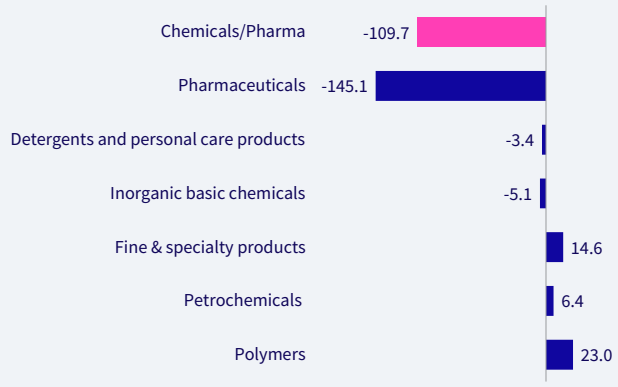
Share in %, 2025



Sources: Chemdata International, VCI

US TRADE BALANCE FOR CHEMICALS AND PHARMACEUTICALS

In € billion, 2025



Sources: Chemdata International, VCI