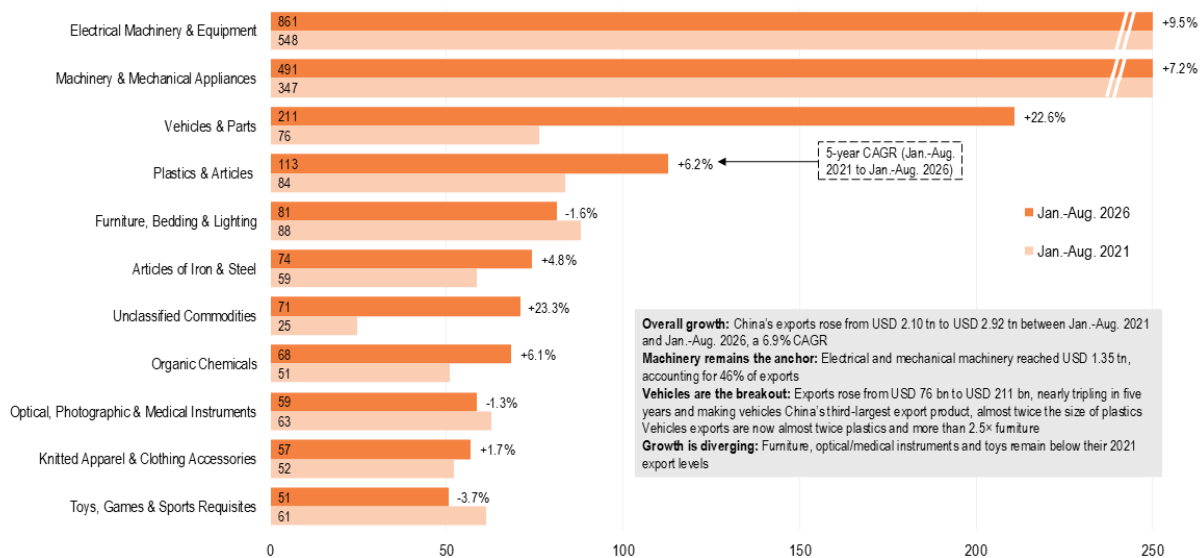


Machinery Anchors China's Exports, But Vehicles Are the Breakout Growth Story

Electrical and mechanical equipment remain China's largest export products, while vehicles have nearly tripled since 2021, even as several other major exports have declined

China's Largest Export Products (above USD 50 bn), USD bn (Jan.-Aug. 2021 vs Jan.-Aug. 2026)



Source: China Customs, ANDAMAN PARTNERS Analysis

China's export growth is not simply a story of selling more of the same products. Electrical machinery and mechanical appliances remain the backbone of the export economy, reaching a combined USD 1.35 trillion in Jan.- Aug. 2026; 46% of China's total exports.

But beneath that dominance, the hierarchy is changing. Vehicles and parts have risen from just USD 76 billion in 2021 to USD 211 billion in 2026, nearly tripling in five years and becoming China's third-largest export product.

That rise is particularly striking against the performance of other established exports. Vehicle exports are now almost twice the size of plastics and more than 2.5 times furniture, while furniture, optical & medical instruments and toys remain below their 2021 levels. Overall exports have still grown strongly, from USD 2.10 trillion to USD 2.92 trillion, but the gains are increasingly uneven across products.

The shift matters because it points to an evolving Chinese export model. Machinery continues to provide enormous scale, while vehicles are emerging as a new growth pillar. China's export strength is increasingly being shaped by large, sophisticated industrial products rather than expanding uniformly across its traditional export base.

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