As the fifth largest exporting state in the U.S. -- and the largest in the Midwest -- exports are a major part of the Illinois economy. In 2021, Illinois exported $65.9 billion worth of goods, with international trade supporting more than 1.6 million jobs in the state.

In Illinois, 1,632,000 jobs were supported by trade in 2019, representing 20.5% of all jobs in the state.

In 2020, 21,836 companies exported goods from Illinois of which 89% were small- and medium-sized enterprises. In 2019, 381,100 people were employed by affiliates of companies at least 50% foreign-owned.

Illinois exported $65.9 billion in goods to foreign markets in 2021, a 24% increase compared to 2020 driven by continued economic recovery from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the global economy. Illinois’s largest markets in 2021 were:

- Canada ($18.4 billion)
- Mexico ($8.9 billion)
- Germany ($3.8 billion)
- Australia ($3.5 billion)
- China ($3.5 billion)

Agricultural exports are important to Illinois’s economy, totaling $8.8 billion in 2020, according to the USDA.

Since 2014, the U.S. Export-Import Bank has financed $3 billion in exports from 230 companies in Illinois.

Since 1971, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation - which has been modernized into the Development Finance Corporation (DFC) - has invested $2.1 billion in Illinois companies for overseas investment.

Since 1992, the U.S. Trade and Development Agency has helped facilitate $2.5 billion in exports from Illinois companies.

Since 1961, 9,274 Peace Corps volunteers from Illinois have served in dozens of countries overseas. In 2018-2019, 10,547 Illinois students studied abroad. During 2020, 51,966 international students were enrolled in Illinois colleges and universities and contributed $1.7 billion to the Illinois economy.

For sources, please visit http://usglc.org/Illinois