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Statistics Division

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Trade by Country



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DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

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PREFACE

The 2017 *International Trade Statistics Yearbook* (2017 ITSY) is the sixty-sixth edition of this yearbook. Its objective is to inform about the detailed merchandise and services imports and exports of individual countries (areas) by commodity and service categories and by partner countries (volume I), the world trade in individual commodities (3-digit SITC groups and 11 main EBOPS categories) (volume II) and total world merchandise trade up to the year 2017. The two volumes are prepared at different points in time: *Volume I - Trade by Country* is made electronically available in June-July, and *Volume II - Trade by Commodity*, in December, as the preparation of the tables in Volume II requires additional country statistics which, normally, become available later in the year.

Beginning with 2017 edition, part 1 of the yearbook was completely redesigned to consider new additions of graphs, tables and analytical text for global, regional and selected trade or economic groupings. The data used in the tables and graphs in both volumes of the yearbook were taken at a specific time (October 2018) from the publicly available UN Comtrade database¹. Users are advised to visit the database for additional and more current information as it is continuously updated.

This *International Trade Statistics Yearbook* has been prepared by the Economic Statistics Branch of the Statistics Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, under the general supervision of the Chief of Branch, Ivo Havinga. The team consists of Markie Muryawan as the programme manager, Vysaul Nyirongo as the chief editor, assisted by Melissa Paca and Marjorie Imperial-Damaso, Bekuretsion Amdemariam and Htu Aung (as supervisors of the processing of merchandise trade and trade in services statistics respectively) and Aida Diawara, Daniel Buenavad Mendez, Edem Kludza, Govindaraj Rangaraj, Jing Zhang, Lingyan Hu, Lubov Zeifman, Nancy Snyder, Shirley Ang, Swe Winn Mar, Su Thant and Tewabe Mihret Kebede (contributed to the processing and validation of the collected trade data and the review of the yearbook). The IT manager was Govindaraj Rangaraj, assisted by Daniel Buenavad Mendez and Melissa Paca. Aida Diawara, Loïc Coënt and Lubov Zeifman provided valuable contribution in the re-design of part 1.

Comments and feedback on the yearbook are welcome. They may be sent to tradestat@un.org or to United Nations Statistics Division, Economic Statistics Branch, New York, New York 10017, USA.

¹ <https://comtrade.un.org>

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INTRODUCTION

1. The *International Trade Statistics Yearbook: Volume I - Trade by Country*, provides an overview of the latest trends of trade in goods and services of most countries and areas in the world. The publication is aimed at both specialist and general trade statistics users from government, academic and business sectors.
2. The main content of the yearbook is divided into two parts. Part 1 consists of merchandise trade profiles for the world, regional and selected trade or economic groupings. The profiles offer an insight into the merchandise trade performance, composition and structure of the global, regional and selected trade or economic groupings by means of infographics and brief descriptive text, using latest available statistics. Part 2 contains the country trade profiles for most countries and areas in the world. The profiles offer an insight into the trade performance in goods and services of individual countries and areas by means of brief descriptive texts and statistics in concise tables and charts using latest available data. For further information on data availability, please see the sources section of this Introduction.
3. The yearbook is also made available online at the publications repository of the UN Statistics Division². For more detailed and latest available data, please visit UN Comtrade, which is the source of the information presented in the yearbook and is continuously updated.

² <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/publications>

Concepts and definitions of International Merchandise Trade Statistics

4. The merchandise trade data used in this Yearbook have been compiled by national statistical authorities largely complying with the United Nations recommended *International Merchandise Trade Statistics, Concepts and Definitions 2010* (IMTS 2010).³ The main elements of the concepts and definitions are:

i. Coverage: As a general guideline, it is recommended that international merchandise trade statistics record all goods which add to or subtract from the stock of material resources of a country by entering (imports) or leaving (exports) its economic territory. The general guideline is subject to the clarifications provided in IMTS 2010, in particular, to the specific guidelines in chapter 1 concerning the inclusion or exclusion of certain categories of goods.

ii. Time of recording of transactions: As a general guideline, it is recommended that goods be recorded at the time when they enter or leave the economic territory of a country.

iii. Statistical territory: The statistical territory of a country is the territory with respect to which trade statistics are being compiled. The definition of the statistical territory may or may not coincide with the economic territory of a country or its customs territory, depending on the availability of data sources and other considerations. It follows that when the statistical territory of a country and its economic territory differ, international merchandise trade statistics do not provide a complete record of inward and outward flows of goods.

iv. Trade systems: Depending on what parts of the economic territory are included in the statistical territory, the trade data-compilation system adopted by a country (its trade system) may be referred to as general or special.

a) The general trade system is in use when the statistical territory coincides with the economic territory. Consequently, it is recommended that the statistical territory of a country applying the general trade system comprises all applicable territorial elements. In this case, imports include goods entering the free circulation area, premises for inward processing, industrial free zones, premises for customs warehousing or commercial free zones and exports include goods leaving those territorial elements;

b) The special trade system is in use when the statistical territory comprises only a particular

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