

Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Statistics Division

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Statistics Yearbook

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Trade by Country



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DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

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INTRODUCTION

The new yearbook

1. The *2010 International Trade Statistics Yearbook* (2010 ITSY) is being issued in two volumes which are prepared at different points in time during 2011.¹ Volume I is compiled early in 2011 to allow for an advanced release of an overview of international merchandise trade in 2010 and for a much earlier publication of the available 2010 country (area) data. Volume II contains the detailed tables showing international trade in main commodity groups and is finalized approximately six months after the completion of Volume I as the preparation of those tables requires additional country data which, normally, become available later in the year. Volume II contains also updated versions of the two world trade tables published in Volume I.

2. Detailed data for a total of 175 countries (or areas) are shown in Volume I with the 2010 data on imports and exports by commodity and trading partner provided for 93 countries (areas), representing approximately 74% of world trade of 2010. All tables of Volume I are made available electronically shortly after the completion of the manuscript. Beginning with the 2008 edition Volume I is published in a redesigned format in respect to the presentation of data for individual countries with the aim to provide a more analytical and condensed view of a country's trade performance (country trade profile).

3. The detailed information about the trade of particular countries by commodity and partner (values and quantities) contained in the tables and graphs for individual countries in Volume I and commodities in Volume II are taken from the publicly available database UN Comtrade (<http://comtrade.un.org/db/default.aspx>). Users are advised to visit UN Comtrade for any additional and more current information as it is continuously updated.

Concepts and definitions of International Merchandise Trade Statistics

4. The statistics in this Yearbook have been compiled by national statistical authorities largely consistent with the United Nations recommended *International Merchandise Trade Statistics, Concepts and Definitions, Revision 2*.² The main elements of the concepts and definitions are:

1. **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. Goods simply being transported through a country (goods in transit) or temporarily admitted or withdrawn (except for goods for inward or outward processing)

¹ The 2010 ITSY is the fifty-ninth edition of this yearbook.

² Statistical Papers, Series M No. 52, Rev.2, (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.98.XVII.16). At its forty-first session, held from 23 to 26 February 2010, the Statistical Commission adopted the revised recommendations "International merchandise trade statistics: concepts and definitions 2010" (IMTS 2010) which provide very important amendments while retaining the existing conceptual framework (available at: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/trade/EG-IMTS/EG-IMTS%20web%20announcement.htm>).

do not add to or subtract from the stock of material resources of a country and are not included in the international merchandise trade statistics. The general guidelines serve as a basis for a set of specific recommendations on the inclusion or exclusion of certain categories of goods.

2. Time of recording: Coherence with the System of National Accounts and the Balance of Payments requires that transactions be recorded at the time when the change of ownership takes place. As a general guideline it is recommended that goods be included at the time when they enter or leave the economic territory of a country.

3. Statistical territory: In international merchandise trade statistics the objective is to record goods entering and leaving the economic territory of a country. In practice, what is recorded is goods that enter or leave the statistical territory, which is the territory with respect to which data are being collected. The statistical territory may coincide with the economic territory of a country or with some part of it. 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.

4. The trade systems: There are two trade systems in common use by which international merchandise trade statistics are compiled: the general trade system and the special trade system in its strict definition and relaxed definition.

(a) *The general trade system* is in use when the statistical territory of a country coincides with its economic territory. Consequently, under the general trade system, imports include all goods entering the economic territory of a compiling country and exports include all goods leaving the economic territory of a compiling country.

(b) *The special trade system* is in use when the statistical territory comprises only a particular part of the economic territory. *The special trade system (strict definition)* is in use when the statistical territory comprises only the free circulation area, that is, the part within which goods "may be disposed of without customs restriction". Consequently, in such a case, imports include all goods entering the free circulation area of a compiling country, which means cleared through customs for home use, and exports include all goods leaving the free circulation area of a compiling country.

(c) *The special trade system (relaxed definition)* is in use when (a) goods that enter a country for or leave it after inward processing and (b) goods that enter or leave an industrial free zone are also recorded and included in international merchandise trade statistics.

5. Classification: It is recommended that countries use the *Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System* (HS) for the collection, compilation and dissemination of international merchandise trade statistics as suggested by the Statistical Commission at its twenty-seventh session (22 February to 3 March 1993).³ The

³ See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1993, Supplement No. 6 (E/1993/26), para. 162 (d).

Harmonized System was adopted by the Customs Co-operation Council in June 1983, and the International Convention on the Harmonized System (HS Convention) entered into force on 1 January 1988 (HS 1988).⁴ In accordance with the preamble to the HS Convention, which recognized the importance of ensuring that the HS be kept up to date in the light of changes in technology or in patterns of international trade, the HS is regularly reviewed and revised. The fourth edition, HS 2007 which is a substantial revision from previous versions came into effect 1 January 2007.⁵ The *Standard International Trade Classification (SITC)*⁶ which was in the past used by countries in data compilation and reporting has been recognized for its continued use in analysis.⁷

6. Valuation: At its fifteenth session, in 1953, the Economic and Social Council, taking the view that trade statistics must reflect economic realities, recommended that the Governments of Member States of the United Nations, wherever possible, use transaction values in the compilation of their national statistics of external trade or, when national practices are based on other values, endeavor to provide supplementary statistical data based on transaction values (Economic and Social Council resolution 469 B (XV)). To promote the comparability of international merchandise trade statistics and taking into account the commercial and data reporting practices of the majority of countries, it is recommended that: (a) The statistical value of imported goods be a CIF-type value; (b) The statistical value of exported goods be an FOB-type value. FOB-type values include the transaction value of the goods and the value of services performed to deliver goods to the border of the exporting country. CIF-type values include the transaction value of the goods, the value of services performed to deliver goods to the border of the exporting country and the value of the services performed to deliver the goods from the border of the exporting country to the border of the importing country.

7. Partner country: It is recommended that in the case of imports, the country of origin be recorded; and that in the case of exports, the country of last known destination be recorded. The country of origin of a good (for imports) is determined by rules of origin established by each country. The country of last known destination is the last country - as far as it is known at the time of exportation - to which goods are to be delivered, irrespective of where they have been initially dispatched to and whether or not, on their way to that last country, they are subject to any commercial transactions or other operations which change their legal status.

5. The pages containing the country profiles (part 2 of this publication) indicate the trade system, valuation and partner attribution each country is following. For more detailed information on national practices in the compilation and dissemination of international

⁴ See Customs Co-operation Council, The Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System, Brussels, 1989.

⁵ See World Customs Organization, Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System, Fourth Edition (2007), Brussels 2005.

⁶ Standard International Trade Classification, Original, Statistical Papers, Series M No.10, Second Edition, 1951 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.51.XVII.1); subsequent editions are published as United Nations publications under Series M No.34.

⁷ See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1999, Supplement No. 4 (E/1993/24), para. 24 (c).

merchandise trade data please go to http://unstats.un.org/unsd/tradereport/introduction_MM.asp.

Sources and Presentation

6. Sources: Figures on the total imports and exports of countries (or areas) presented in world table A are mainly taken from *International Financial Statistics* (IFS) published monthly by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) but also from other sources such as national publications and websites and the *United Nations Monthly Bulletin of Statistics Questionnaire* for the following countries: Andorra, Bermuda, Cayman Islands, Cuba, Gibraltar, Montenegro (beginning 2006), Occupied Palestinian Territory, Russian Federation, Serbia and Montenegro (before 2006), Turkmenistan, Turks and Caicos, Tuvalu and Uzbekistan. Estimates for missing data are made in order to arrive to regional totals but are otherwise not shown. The estimation process is automated using quarterly year-on-year growth rates for the extrapolation of missing quarterly data (unless quarterly data can be estimated using available monthly data within the quarter). Regional totals containing estimated data are printed in bold. Estimates are reviewed and adjusted where necessary. Table A shows data as available by end of May 2011.

7. Figures presented in world table D are calculated using UN Comtrade data (see details below). Data for missing reporters are estimated either through the extrapolation of the data of the two adjacent years, or, if this is not possible, through the use of the data reported by the trading partners (so called mirror data). Mirror statistics is also used in case the partner distribution or confidential data make it necessary to adjust the reported data. All estimates are reviewed and adjusted where necessary. Table D uses data as available on UN Comtrade by end of May 2011.

8. The figures in the country tables and graphs of part 2 (country trade profiles) are obtained from data directly submitted by countries to the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) or received via international and regional partner organizations such as the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Trade Centre (ITC), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat, the Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the UN regional commissions such as the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). Data for the European Union

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