

TRADE AND TRANSPORT STATISTICS

Progress Report prepared by the United Nations Statistical Office

Data Collection

1. The Statistical Office continued to process national external trade statistics into international format and to disseminate these to the international community through hard copies, disketts, tapes and on-line access. The number of country/periods available in the Comtrade Data Base as at end of February 1989 and at the same date in previous years is as follows:

Processing
↓

Number of Country/Periods Available in the Comtrade Data Base at the end of February of the year indicated for each year

Y E A R D A T A R E F E R

	1988	1987	1986	1985	1984	1983	1982	1981
1989	2	48	64	79	93	96	111	120
1988		3	52	69	89	94	110	119
1987			1	47	72	88	103	118
1986				1	52	78	99	113
1985					1	59	87	108

⊕ step slower in providing data

Feb

hope to turn this around with the changes in organ for processing

2. Machine-readable commodity trade data for countries which do not provide the Statistical Office with data in this form continue to be compiled from national publications and supplemented by estimates prepared by the Statistical Office. These non-Series D data are available on magnetic tapes for the period 1962-1987.

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lots of other data for cty that do not supply full detail

3. The Compressed Trade Data Base (Comtrade) now comprises 5148 country periods. This occupies 41,330 tracks or disc space which amount to more than 1.77 billion bytes.

International Trade Publications

International Trade Statistics Yearbook

4. The 1987 International Trade Statistics Yearbook will be published within the next few weeks. The 1985 World Trade Annual and Supplement have been published. The data for the 1986 World Trade Annual and Supplement are with the Printers - Walker and Company. The office is suspending the preparation of data and publication of the World Trade Annual and its Supplement publications after the 1986 issues. The suspension is a consequence of the Organization's policy of reduction of staff and rationalization of outputs. Since the data published in these two publications are available in the Comtrade Data Base, requests from interested subscribers for specific data will be met on an ad hoc basis.

- also the publisher could well supply the data & publish if he wished

5. The special analytical tables of trade, including world and regional aggregates, price, unit value and quantum indexes and flows of major commodity groups between regions, continue to be prepared and published in the Monthly Bulletin of Statistics, Statistical Yearbook and International Trade Statistics Yearbook and supplied to a number of interested organizations.

Normal monthly tables

Commodity Indexes to the SITC/ Rev.3

6. These indexes are being prepared in 2 volumes. Volume I was expected to have been completed at the end of 1988. This could not be achieved because of non-availability of adequate appropriate resources. It is now scheduled for completion at the end of 1989. Volume II is similarly postponed and is now expected to be completed during the first quarter of 1991.

*end 1990
volume gap between Vol I & Vol II*

Methods Used in Compiling the United Nations Price Index for External Trade

7. Work in preparing this methodology has been temporarily postponed because of non-availability of adequate appropriate resources. A tentative completion date of the fourth quarter 1990 has been set.

Simply a description of how we compile the index.

Customs Areas of the World

8. The revised draft has been sent to the printers. It is expected that it will be published during the third quarter of 1989.

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Shipping Statistics Programme

9. The United Nations Statistical Office has not been able to obtain additional extrabudgetary funds for this programme and the funds available will finally run out at the end of this year (1989). The Office will abandon all work connected with this programme, including the publication of the International Seaborne Trade Statistics Yearbook unless a system can be designed for obtaining the Yearbook data from the Comtrade data base without additional resources. The 1986 International Seaborne Trade Statistics Yearbook is still being prepared and will so far, be the last issue. The final draft is expected to be sent for printing as soon as possible. Similarly the office will not be able to provide data on Goods Loaded and Unloaded in International Seaborne Shipping for other organizations. *zde?*

Improving the Timeliness of Trade Statistics

10. Efforts continue to be made to improve the availability of external trade data from developing countries. Unfortunately the United Nations Statistical Office has been unable to obtain funds from extrabudgetary sources to mount technical missions to countries, but other steps are being taken to encourage developing countries to improve on the timeliness and availability of their external trade statistics.

11. An interregional training workshop will be held in Accra, Ghana late in September 1989 on the Use of the Asycuda software programme by customs/statistics and construction of unit value and quantum indexes for external trade. This workshop is being held in collaboration with UNCTAD. The first week of the workshop will be devoted entirely to the Asycuda software programme, and the following week to the construction of indexes. It is expected that 25 staff from developing countries (about half each from customs and statistics offices) will participate, and that practical demonstration of the use of the Asycuda Software Programme will be made using Ghanaian customs data and equipment.