

Seminar on International Trade Statistics  
(26-30 September 2011, Vilnius, Lithuania)

**Note on Latvia's National Practices and Plans for the  
Implementation of IMTS 2010**

**Compilation of foreign trade statistics**

Latvia is the European Union (EU) Member State and therefore its foreign trade statistics compilation consists of two systems:

EXTRASTAT - statistics related to external trade with non-member countries;

INTRASTAT - statistics related to the trade of goods between Member States.

Such data compilation system is established by specific EU regulations.

For national purposes the EXTRASTAT and INTRASTAT data are combined and below the characteristics of Latvia's practice in foreign trade data compilation is described.

The Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia (CSB) is responsible for the collection, processing and dissemination of foreign trade statistics data. The State Revenue Service (SRS) is the competent national administration in the customs and VAT area since the Customs Board and Main Tax Board are a part of the SRS. Cooperation with the CSB is regulated by two inter-service agreements. The agreement on Foreign Trade Statistics defines the content and frequency of customs declarations data deliveries. The Agreement on the Use of Data Warehouse Systems shall ensure the CSB on-line access to VAT data for INTRASTAT purposes.

Merchandise exports are shown in current FOB values (including transportation and insurance costs up to the border of the exporting country) and indicating the country of the final destination.

Merchandise imports are shown in current CIF values (including transportation and insurance costs up to the border of the importing country), indicating the country of origin, but if it is not known - the country of consignment. From 2004 the arrival of goods from Member States of the EU is classified by the indicated country of consignment.

Data on trade with non-member countries are compiled on the basis of information taken from customs declarations.

Starting from May 2004 foreign trade data for Member States of the EU are collected with the INTRASTAT system using monthly statistical surveys.

The CSB uses a full-scope survey for the compilation of data on trade with third countries, a sample survey according to specified parameters for trade with Member States of the European Union, as well as specific calculations.

In Latvia the calculation of foreign trade data is carried out according to the special trade system, which does not cover commodity flows to or from customs warehouses and free commercial zones.

Statistical data on foreign trade are compiled in compliance with the so-called national principle, which unlike the so-called Community principle does not include information on exports and imports of goods which a certain EU Member State sells in a certain third country (not an EU Member State) through Latvia. Starting from 2008 it also does not include data on commodity arrivals/dispatches from/to a certain EU Member State, which through Latvia exports/imports goods to/from another third

country; nevertheless in all mentioned cases customs declaration is lodged in Latvia. Besides, data according to the Community principle are prepared and sent to Eurostat.

Until May 2004 the imported and exported merchandise is classified according to the Latvian Combined Nomenclature. This is a description and coding system formed on the basis of the Harmonised Commodity Description and Coding System and the European Union Combined Nomenclature (CN). Henceforth the European Union Combined Nomenclature is used.

The European Union classification "Nomenclature of countries and territories for the external trade statistics of the Community and statistics of trade between Member States", referred to as Geonomenclature (GEONOM), is used for the data compilation by trading partners.

### **Dissemination of foreign trade statistics**

The CSB publishes monthly and quarterly press releases on foreign trade data in Latvia. There are special sections devoted to foreign trade data in the following publications: "Monthly Bulletin of Latvian Statistics", "Latvia. Statistics in Brief", "Statistical Yearbook of Latvia".

Ad hoc request for foreign trade data from the general public, private or legal persons, are charged. However, the users can access public databases containing annual, short-term and detailed statistics for the period after 1993 showing data on total exports and imports; dispatches/arrivals to/from the EU and exports/imports to/from the CIS countries and, since 2005, monthly time series on total exports and imports broken down by country at 4-digit level of the CN. The CSB disseminates the list of exporters/importers on request, in the event there are more than four companies.

### **The status of IMTS 2010 implementation**

A large part of the new recommendations is already worked in the EU Regulations regarding INTRASTAT and EXTRASTAT. These Regulations are binding to the Member States, including Latvia.

Scope and time of recording. The scope of goods recommended for inclusion, exclusion or exclusion but to be separately recorded in foreign trade statistics data in general terms corresponds to the requirements of the EU regulations and the UN requirements. Change of economic ownership principle has been introduced for specific movements.

Trade system. Latvia uses the special trade system (relaxed definition) for EXTRASTAT data but it is possible to estimate the general trade statistics figures including exports and imports from premises of customs warehouses or commercial free zones. Information about applied customs procedures is available from customs records. Concerning EXTRASTAT, information on re-imports and re-exports is available as regards customs warehouses (not included in the national figures) and on premises on inward processing (included in the national figures).

Commodity classification. Latvia can use the SITC for dissemination and analysis of trade data according to user requirements.

Valuation. Statistical value is used for all goods covered in trade statistics. Consequently, the FOB type valuation is used for exports and the CIF type valuation for imports.

Quantity measurement. For all traded goods Latvia collects the net weight and supplementary units of quantity according to the Combined Nomenclature.

Partner country. Partner country attributions have been introduced according to the UN recommendations.

Mode of transport. Information at the most detailed commodity level is available for EXTRASTAT data. For INTRASTAT data information about the mode of transport is available only from the reports of the major traders. There is indicated a mode of transport by which the goods are presumed to leave or enter the statistical territory of Latvia. The classification used indicates the main categories of mode of transport according to the UN requirements. Dissemination is available on request.

Data compilation strategies. For EXTRASTAT data, customs records are used as the main data source. Customs procedure codes are used for the compilation of the foreign trade statistics figures according to special (general) trade system. Non-customs data sources are used for compilation of trade with the EU Member States (the VAT database), ships and aircraft (registers). Use of business register and enterprise VAT registration number is taken in the data collection using non-customs data sources. Institutional arrangements have been signed with the State Revenue Service including the Customs Board, national Aircraft and Ships registers.

Data quality and metadata. Recommendations on data quality have been implemented. Latvia prepares the annual quality report based on quality indicators and requirements in line with the Eurostat definitions on quality in statistics. The main categories of metadata are available electronically, in the data base and in special publications.

Dissemination. The passive confidentiality rule is used to ensure the foreign trade data security. Data release calendar is published in the CSB website. Data are disseminated without any preference to users. Besides, foreign trade data are compiled and published linking trade and business statistics indicators.

Elga Bendrāte  
Deputy Director  
Macroeconomics Statistics Department of the CSB  
Foreign trade statistics methodology, analysis and dissemination section  
Phone +371 67366889  
e-mail: elga.bendrate@csb.gov.lv