

*Seminar on International Trade Statistics*  
**Implementation of IMTS 2010 and follow-up to the Global Forum**  
26 – 30 September 2011, Vilnius, Lithuania

**Agenda item 21:**  
**An overview of the UN Comtrade database and**  
**IMTS Analytical Outputs**  
**UN Comtrade enhancement programme**



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## What is UN Comtrade

- The United Nations Commodity Trade Statistics Database
- Maintained by UN Statistics Division / Trade Statistics Branch
- Contains detailed imports and exports statistics reported by statistical authorities of close to 200 countries or areas since year 1962
- Considered the most comprehensive trade database available in Internet with more than 1.5 billion records.

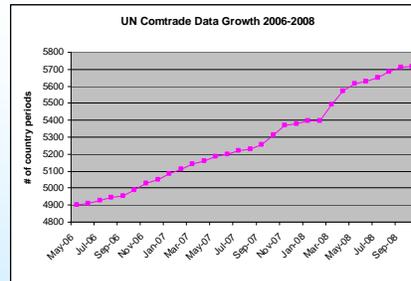


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## Coverage

- A typical record is – for instance – the exports of cars from Germany to the United States in 2007 in terms of value (US dollars), weight and supplementary quantity (number of cars).
- Only up to HS 6-digits
- The database is continuously updated. Whenever trade data are received from the national authorities, they are standardized by the UN Statistics Division and then added to UN Comtrade.



## Main Features

### Data Extraction

Search for  data  help

- Various basic extraction methods: Text search, Short Cut Query, Basic Selection, Express Selection
  - Download up to 20 millions records per query
- Comtrade data also disseminated in UNdata → 
- Advanced data extraction via Web Service for large unattended data transfer

### Personalization

- Save frequently used query; Set new data alert; Automated data extraction
- Create country or commodity groupings; Set frequently used countries / commodities
- Customize download/output format

## Main Features (cont.)

### Data Availability and Metadata

- Multiple way to view available data
- Each data release accompanied by Explanatory and Publication notes
- Individual footnote records also available

Data Availability	Metad	Released data
Interactive		# of country periods
In Graph		today (2009-04-17)
by Reporter		in a week
by Commodity		in a month
by Year		year-to-date
by Date of Loading		in a year
In Tag Cloud & Map		all data

### Support and Help

- Browse Knowledge Base for any questions
- Use Community Forum for peer support
- Chat during business hours [Live Help](#)
- Email to [comtrade@un.org](mailto:comtrade@un.org)

Most Popular Articles...
<a href="#">Q10062 - INFO: First Time User</a>
<a href="#">Q10173 - INFO: Commodity Trade Statistics Publications</a>
<a href="#">Q10102 - INFO: UN Comtrade Reference Tables</a>
<a href="#">Q10104 - INFO: Comtrade: Manuals &amp; Documentations</a>
<a href="#">Q10146 - INFO: Data Query &amp; Extraction Manual</a>

Latest Additions...
<a href="#">Q10259 - INFO: Areas NES codes redefined</a>
<a href="#">Q10050 - INFO: UN Comtrade SDMX</a>
<a href="#">Q10102 - INFO: UN Comtrade Reference Tables</a>
<a href="#">Q10256 - INFO: Areas not elsewhere specified (Areas_NEE)</a>
<a href="#">Q10255 - FAQ: Values on different levels of HS/CITC Classification</a>

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## Useful FAQ

- Why our data are needed?
  - To have a complete world or regional coverage (for various analytical outputs); otherwise your data will be estimated
- How's about data confidentiality?
  - It is usually sufficient to protect confidentiality in HS 6-digits. If not, data can be suppressed as long as the chapter can still be identified (see presentation on data confidentiality)
- What are the benefits for data providers?
  - Visibility for your trade data, as UN Comtrade is used / referenced by many users, such as trade negotiation in WTO
  - Free unlimited access, can be used as a starting point in reconciliation study

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## Useful FAQ (cont.)

- When do you need the data?
  - Initial request is sent in February. It is preferable to have data within 6 months after the end of the reference year
- Final data is not ready within 6 months, but the preliminary data is available, do you accept it?
  - Yes, of course. If it is a preliminary data, please mention it explicitly so that the data set will be clearly flagged / noted as provisional data
- What are the required data items?
  - Annual trade by partners and detailed commodities with value, net weight and supplementary quantity. Data in HS 6-digits are required, tariff line level are preferred
- Is there any special requirement for data format?
  - No. It can be in any electronic format that can be easily transformed, such as text, excel, dbase, etc

## IMTS Analytical Outputs

- Three working areas:
  - Total trade: values, indices and conversion factors
  - Trade in manufactured goods and fuel: values, unit values and volume indices
  - Trade matrix data: complete world coverage
- Publications:
  - Tables on Monthly Bulletin of Statistics (MBS)
  - International Trade Statistics Yearbook, Vol. I: Trade by Country and Vol. II: Trade by Commodity (new design for 2008 edition)
  - Annual Totals Table (Country totals compared)

## IMTS Analytical Outputs (cont.)

- Frequency:
  - Total trade: monthly, quarterly and annual
  - Trade in manufactured goods and fuel: quarterly and annual
  - Trade matrix: generated in May, July, Sept, Nov, and Dec
- Data Source:
  - Total trade: IMF, MBS Questionnaire, country websites
  - Trade in manufactured goods and fuel: MBS Questionnaire, country websites, and UN Comtrade
  - Trade matrix: UN Comtrade

Thank you for your attention!