



International Trade Statistics

Newsletter

SPECIAL FEATURE:

FURTHER PROGRESS ON THE UPDATE OF THE IMTS COMPILERS MANUAL

During the second half of 2011 the work on the revision of the IMTS Compilers Manual continued with increased intensity.

Third meeting of the EG-IMTS

In its third virtual meeting on the update of the IMTS Compilers Manual from 21 September to 4 November 2011 the Expert Group on International Merchandise Trade Statistics (EG-IMTS) reviewed the initial drafts of the second set of nine chapters of the updated IMTS Compilers Manual provided by the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD).

Meeting on compilation issues

From 6-9 December 2011 a meeting on compilation issues of IMTS 2010 was organized by the UNSD in cooperation with and hosted by the Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI) of Mexico in Mexico City. This meeting reviewed the first full draft of the revised IMTS Compilers Manual with all its chapters and gathered country experiences and good practices in the IMTS data compilation for inclusion in the Manual. Specifically, this meeting focused on making improvements to the draft chap-

ters, providing additional information and filling gaps and giving overall guidance on how to improve the text and the Manual.

Fourth meeting of the EG-IMTS and submission to the Statistical Commission

At its fourth and final virtual meeting from 20 December 2011 - 19 January 2012 the EG-IMTS endorsed the draft IMTS Compilers Manual subject to multiple amendments and clarifications. Subsequently, UNSD is updating the first full draft of the IMTS Compilers Manual, taking into account the comments and inputs received during and after the Mexico meeting (as listed in the report of the Mexico meeting), generating a second full draft. This second full draft of the revised IMTS Compilers Manual will be provided to the 43rd session of the UN Statistical Commission, which takes place from 28 February to 2 March 2012, as a background document for information.

For further information please go to the website of the EG-IMTS at: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/trade/EG-IMTS/EG-IMTS%20web%20announcement.htm>.

DATABASES AND PUBLICATIONS:

2010 INTERNATIONAL TRADE STATISTICS YEARBOOK (ITSY), VOL. II – TRADE BY COMMODITY – AVAILABLE ONLINE

2010 ITSY, Volume II – Trade by Commodity presents detailed tables showing 2010 international trade data for a total of 258 commodities (3-digit SITC groups) based on data provided by 141 countries (areas), representing 97.3% of world trade of 2010 (as available by mid of November 2011). In addition Volume II contains eleven world trade tables covering trade values and indices with data up to 2010. All tables of Volume II were made available electronically at [http://](http://comtrade.un.org/pb/)

comtrade.un.org/pb/ on 14 December 2011, shortly after the completion of the manuscript.

The 2010 International Trade Statistics Yearbook (2010 ITSY) is being issued in two volumes which were prepared at different points in time during 2011. Volume I - Trade by Country has been compiled early in 2011 (in May 2011) to allow for an advanced release of an over-

IN THIS ISSUE:

Special feature:

- *Further progress on the update of the IMTS Compilers Manual* 1

Databases and Publications:

- *2010 International Trade Statistics Yearbook (ITSY), Vol. II – Trade by Commodity – available online* 1
- *Analytical trade tables published in the Monthly Bulletin of Statistics* 2

Cooperation with Countries and Agencies

- *Regional Seminar on International Trade Statistics, Beijing, China, 24 – 26 October 2011* 2
- *Seminar on merchandise trade statistics for countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Vilnius, Lithuania, 26 – 30 September 2011* 3

You Have Asked Us

- *Overview of the questions covered since 2005 – Part 1* 3

Upcoming Events:

- *United Nations Statistical Commission, New York, 28 February – 2 March 2012* 4

Editorial note

1
1
2
2
3
3
4
4



(Continued on page 2)

2010 INTERNATIONAL TRADE STATISTICS YEARBOOK (ITSY), VOL. II – TRADE BY COMMODITY – AVAILABLE ONLINE

(Continued from page 1)

All parts and tables of the Yearbook are available online:

<http://comtrade.un.org/pb/>



<http://comtrade.un.org>

view of international merchandise trade in 2010 and for a much earlier publication of the available 2010 country (area) data. Volume II has been compiled approximately six months after the submission of Volume I (in November 2011) as the preparation of these tables requires and benefits from the additional country data which, normally, become available later in the year. Volume II contains updated versions of the two world trade tables A and D published in Volume I.

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 has been 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.

The printed publication is expected to become available by June 2012 the latest, its electronic (.pdf) version much earlier. Please contact the United Nations Sales and Marketing Section at E-mail: publications@un.org (Internet: <http://unp.un.org>).

ANALYTICAL TRADE TABLES PUBLISHED IN THE MONTHLY BULLETIN OF STATISTICS

The following analytical tables on international merchandise trade statistics have been updated since the last issue of this newsletter. They are published in the Monthly Bulletin of Statistics (MBS) and are also available online at: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/trade/imts/analyticaltradetables.htm>.

| Table | Description | Latest data | Published |
|-------|--|-------------------|-----------|
| T 18 | Fuel imports, developed economies: unit values, volume indices and value | 3rd quarter, 2011 | Dec 2011 |
| T 19 | Indicators on fuel imports, developed economies | 3rd quarter, 2011 | Dec 2011 |
| T 35 | Total imports and exports by regions and countries or areas | Sep 2011 | Dec 2011 |
| T 36 | Total imports and exports: value, volume and unit value/price | Sep 2011 | Dec 2011 |
| T 37 | Trade indices for countries in U.S. dollars | 2nd quarter, 2011 | Oct 2011 |
| T 38 | External trade conversion factors by countries | 3rd quarter, 2011 | Dec 2011 |
| T 39 | Trade indices for regions in U.S. dollars | 2nd quarter, 2011 | Nov 2011 |
| T 40 | Manufactured goods exports: unit values, volume indices and value | 3rd quarter, 2011 | Dec 2011 |

COOPERATION WITH COUNTRIES AND AGENCIES:

REGIONAL SEMINAR ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE STATISTICS BEIJING , CHINA , 24 – 26 OCTOBER 2011

The United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), in collaboration with the National Bureau of Statistics of China, organized a Regional Seminar on International Trade Statistics. The Seminar aimed to enhance the capacity of national statistical offices of Asian countries to produce reliable and high quality trade statistics. The Seminar

was conducted as part of the project for strengthening statistical capacity in China and other developing countries in Asia and funded by the Chinese Government. For further information please go to <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/trade/beijing11/default.htm>.

The analytical trade tables are published in the



[UN Monthly Bulletin of Statistics \(MBS\)](http://unstats.un.org/unsd/trade/imts/analyticaltradetables.htm)

They are also available online at <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/trade/imts/analyticaltradetables.htm>

More information on IMTS international cooperation and assistance activities is available online:

http://unstats.un.org/unsd/trade/imts/intl_cooperation.htm

International Merchandise Trade Statistics: Concepts and Definitions 2010 (IMTS 2010) available at

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/pubs/gesgrid.asp?id=449>

All previous newsletters are available online at:

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/trade/newsletter.htm>

SEMINAR ON MERCHANDISE TRADE STATISTICS FOR COUNTRIES OF EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA, VILNIUS, LITHUANIA, 26 – 30 SEPTEMBER 2011

UNSD, in cooperation with Eurostat and Statistics Lithuania, organized a seminar on merchandise trade statistics for countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia from 26 to 30 September in Vilnius, Lithuania. This seminar focused on the implementation of the new recommendations for international merchandise trade statistics (IMTS 2010) with emphasis on linking trade and other economic statistics. The seminar reviewed the updated and new recommendations on IMTS and discussed country practices in data compilation and the possible implementation of the new

recommendations and data elements contained in IMTS 2010. In addition, potential issues and possible contributions for the updated IMTS Compilers Manual were discussed. All chapters of IMTS 2010 were covered. Special focus was given to linking trade and business statistics as a follow-up to the Global Forum on Trade Statistics which suggested to increase the relevance of trade statistics by linking it with business and other statistics. For further information please go to <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/trade/vilnius11/default.htm>.

YOU HAVE ASKED US:

OVERVIEW OF THE QUESTIONS COVERED SINCE 2005 – PART 1

Since its first edition in January 2005, the newsletter on International Trade Statistics regularly contained answers to questions sent in by users of the trade statistics provided by the United Nations Statistics Division via its UN Comtrade database and related outputs and publications. A total of 39 questions have been replied to since 2005. The questions covered can be broken down into questions regarding general concepts for trade statistics, questions on partner country, questions on classification, questions on data and metadata and ques-

tions regarding the functionality of UN Comtrade, although often those aspects cannot be strictly separated. The below table shows the questions that have been asked over time concerning general concepts for trade statistics, partner country and classification, and indicates in which issue of the newsletter they have been covered. The next edition of this newsletter will provide the list of questions asked regarding data and metadata and the functionality of UN Comtrade.

(Continued on page 4)

| YOU HAVE ASKED US | Newsletter | |
|--|------------|--------|
| | Issue # | Date |
| General Concepts | | |
| Why are imports and exports different? | 1 | Jan-05 |
| What is the difference between the statistical and the economic territory of a country? | 4 | Mar-06 |
| According to UN International merchandise trade statistics, should we exclude currency banknotes from exports and imports of products? | 15 | Dec-08 |
| How to register national currency banknotes newly printed abroad and imported? | 15 | Dec-08 |
| Does the trade value for electrical energy (HS1996 code 271600) include its distribution value in the Comtrade database? | 23 | Dec-10 |
| Partner country | | |
| What means "SPECIAL CATEGORIES"? | 3 | Dec-05 |
| Are changes in political boundaries taken into account in UN trade statistics? For example, are colonies such as Algeria for France or Kenya for the UK part of the territories of France and UK until their independence? Is trade between a country and its colonies reported as international trade or not reported because it is considered as domestic trade? | 4 | Mar-06 |
| If Country A exports a good to Country B, and Country B exports that same good to Country C, how should this transaction be recorded in Country A and in Country C? | 10 | Sep-07 |
| For this same example, Is there a way to differentiate in the UN Dataset the Country C – Country A information (indirect trade) from the Country C – Country B information (direct trade) for the same transaction? | 10 | Sep-07 |
| When a country lists "last known destination" as the recipient-country of exports, does that mean that the destination is the country which purchased the goods, or the country where the exporter delivered the goods? For example, if China is shipping an order of computer parts to Germany, but the goods are delivered to Spain and then taken by land to Germany, would China report Germany or Spain as the destination of the computer parts? | 12 | Mar-08 |

(Continued from page 3)

| YOU HAVE ASKED US | Newsletter Issue # Date | |
|---|---------------------------------|--------|
| Commodity classification | | |
| When do I have to use which system of classification? I do not know if I should take SITC Rev.1 or HS2002, for example. Could you please tell me which classification is normally used? | 6 | Sep-06 |
| Are there any statistics available about capital, intermediate, and consumption goods, as well as their share in world trade? | 7 | Dec-06 |
| We are preparing our computer system to comply with the adoption of HS2007 and there are quite a number of tasks involved in this preparation. How can we obtain the HS2007-SITC Revision 4 correspondence? | 7 | Dec-06 |
| Regarding the HS classification, will I always find a 6 digit detailed commodity code in the trade data? Can it happen that there is only one subcategory (at 6 digit level) within a 5 digit code? For example, a case would be for code 12333. | 9 | Jun-07 |
| Is it possible to find cases where subcategories of SITC do not add up the next higher category level? | 9 | Jun-07 |
| We are looking at Petroleum naphtha (the code in the Harmonized System, 1992 is 271016). No data is available after 2005 and we do not know which code to search, because 271016 has disappeared. We are also looking at two other categories, namely gasoline and gas oil. What are the current codes for recent data on these commodities? Can you also explain why the codes change and if it does result in the re-classification of certain commodities? | 13 | Jun-08 |
| Are most of the countries already using the SITC, Rev. 4? | 13 | Jun-08 |
| What are the commodity classifications available in UN Comtrade? | 13 | Jun-08 |
| There is sometimes a difference in some 6-digit data extracted from UN Comtrade between the classification HS2002 (H2) and "As Reported" for the year 2008. Why is it so? | 20 | Mar-10 |
| Is there a conversion table from the Harmonized System (HS) to the International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC)? | 20 | Mar-10 |
| When viewing the "As reported" import data for the United Kingdom for Chapter 88, the trade values appear to be consistent. When the same data is fetched from the HS1996 (H1) dataset, there is a very large drop in traded value between 2006 and 2007. I have looked at the correlation tables between H1, H2 and H3 data, but I cannot understand why there is such a large discrepancy when data is converted from H3 to H1. | 22 | Sep-10 |

Visit our online
knowledgebase:



[http://
comtrade.un.org/kb](http://comtrade.un.org/kb)

To learn more about
activities of the Sta-
tistics Division on
trade statistics,
please visit:

[http://
unstats.un.org/unsd/
trade/default.htm](http://unstats.un.org/unsd/trade/default.htm)

UPCOMING EVENTS:

UPDATE: UNITED NATIONS STATISTICAL COMMISSION, NEW YORK, 28 FEBRUARY – 2 MARCH 2012

The 43rd session of the United Nations Statistical Commission will take place from 28 February to 2 March 2012 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. Following its regular program of work the Commission will have on its agenda, among many other topics, international merchandise trade statistics and statistics of international trade in services as items for information.

There will be a side event on the topic of the role of official trade statistics in the measurement of globalization. In a second side event on trade statistics the new application for detailed monthly trade statistics will be introduced. For further information please go to [http://unstats.un.org/unsd/
statcom/commission_43rd_session.htm](http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/commission_43rd_session.htm)

EDITORIAL NOTE

The Trade Statistics Newsletter is a quarterly publication prepared by the International Merchandise Trade Statistics Section of the United Nations Statistics Division – Department of Economic and Social Affairs. This Newsletter is not an official document of the United Nations nor does it express the official position of the United Nations. Editorial team: C. Sean Lovell and Matthias Reister.

Contact: United Nations Statistics Division, International Merchandise Trade Statistics Section, New York, NY 10017, USA, Email address: comtrade@un.org or visit our website at [http://unstats.un.org/unsd/trade/
default.htm](http://unstats.un.org/unsd/trade/default.htm).