



### SPECIAL FEATURE 1:

## INTRODUCING THE NEW INTERNATIONAL TRADE NEWSLETTER

Dear Reader, the purpose of this new newsletter is to give our data users, as well as the practicing country trade statisticians, some insights in the

### The new trade newsletter: Reporting on major events

backstage life of international trade statistics compiled by the International Trade Statistics Section of the United Nations Statistics Division. No attempt is made to cover all issues in detail or to be a comprehensive record of our work. Instead this newsletter will try to combine reporting on major events in our work with fun worthy trade facts and figures as well as with methodological curiosities. The newsletter will

contain seven recognizable parts as shown in the table of contents in the box on the right. These parts are: Special feature of the issue (this time we have two special feature articles), Databases and Publications, Cooperation with countries and agencies, Did you know...?, You have asked us, Upcoming events and the Editorial Note. Hopefully, the intended content of these categories is self-explanatory. With time we may change these categories to better reflect our priorities and your suggestions. Needless to say that we would very much appreciate your comments (both praises and criticisms). Please send your comments to [tradedstat@un.org](mailto:tradedstat@un.org).

### SPECIAL FEATURE 2:

## IMTS RELATED ISSUES ON AGENDA OF 36<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE UN STATISTICAL COMMISSION

This session of the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) does not have International Merchandise Trade Statistics (IMTS) as a separate item on its agenda. However, issues relevant to it will be discussed under other agenda items. For example, under agenda item "International economic and social classifications" the Commission will have before it the report of the Secretary-General on international economic and social classifications providing information on recent developments. Part of this report is a brief description of the status of the fourth revision of the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC), which is being prepared by UNSD in cooperation with the interested international organizations and countries. SITC, Rev.4 is needed in view of accumu-

lated changes in the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System (HS) and further amendments to HS, which will come into effect on 1 January 2007. We expect to report in more detail on preparation of SITC, Rev.4 in

### The fourth revision of SITC is under way

the third issue of this newsletter. The other agenda items, under which issues relevant to IMTS might be discussed, include, for instance, national accounts, international trade in services, and common open standards for the exchange and sharing of data and metadata. Of course, the Commission will look into the UNSD work program in the area of international trade statistics and might propose amendments to it.

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data analyses on a  
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## DATABASES AND PUBLICATIONS: COMPILERS MANUAL, INTERNATIONAL TRADE STATISTICS 2004, DEVELOPMENT AND GLOBALISATION: FACTS AND FIGURES

**International Merchandise Trade Statistics Compilers Manual** The Compilers Manual is directed to all institutions which play a role in the collection, compilation and dissemination of trade statistics, and it may also serve as a guide to users who wish to understand better the nature of trade data. The Manual discusses in detail the conceptual and institutional framework of data collection, the sources of data, methods of data compilation, and data dissemination, reconciliation and exchange. Reference is also made to the relationship between international merchandise trade statistics and statistics on balance of payments and national accounts. Available for free download in Chinese, English, Russian and Spanish at <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/pubs/>. For paper copies please go to <http://unp.un.org/> (Sales No. 02.XVII.17).



**International Trade Statistics 2004 (WTO)**: While the price increases for oil may dampen growth in trade and over-

all output in 2005, these effects are being outweighed in 2004 by vigorous trade expansion in many countries and stronger than expected recovery in several others. The statistics show that world merchandise trade increased by 16% to \$7.3 trillion in 2003. Trade in commercial services grew by 13% to \$1.8 trillion (for more information see [http://www.wto.org/english/news\\_e/pres04\\_e/pr386\\_e.htm](http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/pres04_e/pr386_e.htm)).



**Development and Globalisation: Fact and Figures (UNCTAD)** surveys major developments in the world economy over the past 40 years through succinct explanations and presentation of key figures. Aimed at a broad audience, it describes the evolution of developing countries, particularly in the context of globalization (for more details see <http://www.unctad.org/Templates/Webflyer.asp?intItemID=3096>).



## COOPERATION WITH COUNTRIES AND AGENCIES COOPERATION WITH OTHER INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES

Compilation of international trade statistics is done by UNSD in cooperation with countries and many international organizations. The most active partnership is with the following organizations: **World Customs Organization (WCO)** - the WCO is responsible for the commodity classification, the availability and quality of statistical information in customs records and technical assistance to developing countries; **World Trade Organization (WTO)** - the WTO is a convener of the Task Force on International Merchandise Trade Statistics and a major user of our data; **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** - the IMF

agreed to collect merchandise trade series in compliance with the Statistical Commission's recommendations for merchandise trade statistics; We use their monthly data in our tables and we also cooperate in preparation of methodological publications. There are plans to expand our cooperation to the compilation of trade in services; **Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)** - with OECD we have an memorandum of understanding (MoU) by which OECD adopts UNSD's approach to data proc-

*(Continued on page 3)*

*AOAD is the Arab Organization of Agricultural Development. It is one of the specialized Arab organizations, functioning under the umbrella of the League of Arab States, which has 22 member states.*

*(Continued from page 2)*

essing and data dissemination and is responsible for the compilation of data from OECD members in accordance with the jointly developed data processing standards; Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) - with FAO we have a MoU by which both organizations share data collection efforts; United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) - we cooperate with UNCTAD in data dissemination and technical as-

sistance to developing countries; World Bank - with the World Bank we have a MoU on cooperation in data dissemination; International Trade Center - with the ITC we have a MoU on cooperation in data dissemination and technical assistance to developing countries. In addition, UNSD works closely with the UN Regional Commissions and other regional organizations.

### COOPERATION WITH COUNTRIES AND AGENCIES RECENT WORKSHOPS IN KHARTOUM AND ADDIS

UNSD/UNCTAD/UNECA Workshop on the Compilation of International Merchandise Trade Statistics, Addis Ababa, 8-11 November 2004. The purpose of this workshop was to find solutions for the production of timely and high quality international merchandise trade statistics while using mostly automated customs systems. In particular, it addressed the roles of the customs office and the national statistical office to achieve this goal. In **conclusion**, it was recommended that (1) ASYCUDA++ be used as the system for processing declarations by Customs, (2) the latest version of EUROTRACE be used as a tool for producing trade statistics, (3) the completeness of data be investigated, (4) the General Trade System be used and, finally, (5) the trade data be reported ac-

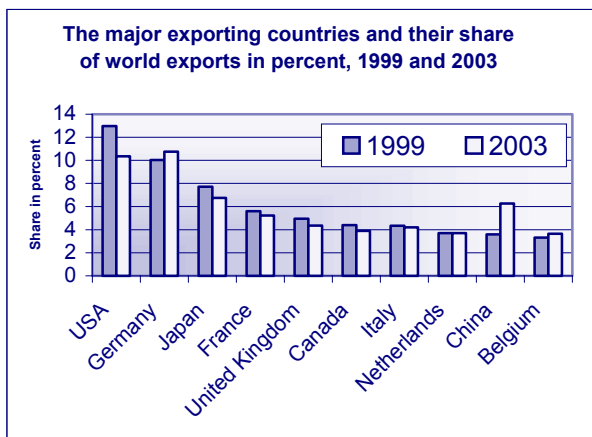
ding to a regular schedule.

FAO/AOAD Workshop on Methodology, Collection, Processing, Analysis and Dissemination of Agricultural Trade Statistics, 19-22 September 2004, Khartoum, Sudan: Participants were trade statisticians from the Middle East and northern Africa. They gave presentations of the status of trade data compilation within their countries. An important **outcome** of the meeting was that the collection of trade statistics in this region would be channeled via the AOAD secretariat. Further, participants stressed the need for workshops completely devoted to the IMTS Compiler's Manual (see page 2) and they were looking forward to receive the compiler's manual in Arabic.

### DID YOU KNOW...?

#### CHANGING SHARES OF WORLD EXPORTS

An analysis of world exports in 1999 and 2003 shows that market share for the USA decreased over the 5-year period by approximately 3%. As a result, in 2003, it lost the 1<sup>st</sup> place position as the major exporter to Germany. China on the other hand has gained market share by approximately 3%; jumping from 9<sup>th</sup> place in 1999 to 4<sup>th</sup> place in 2003. The analysis also (continued on page 4)



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*Reconciliation studies have been done by various countries, e.g. USA, Canada and Mexico in 1997*

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For merchandise trade data by partner country please visit UN Comtrade at <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/comtrade/>

(continued from page 3) reveals that Japan, France, UK, Canada, and Italy, lost market share of world exports over the 5-year period. (The data used is available to the public through the Monthly Bulletin of Statistics at: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/mbs/>).

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## YOU HAVE ASKED US

### WHY ARE IMPORTS AND EXPORTS DIFFERENT?

**Q:** Is there a logical reason why the top exports of Senegal to Japan for the year 2001 (HS1996) present no coherence with the top imports of Japan from Senegal for the same year and the same classification?

**A:** There are many valid reasons why the reported exports of one country may not coincide with the reported imports of its partner country. These reasons relate to the very nature of the trading process: goods going via third countries; countries having different trade systems which makes that one country will record all goods crossing the border while another country will only record the goods once they are

cleared by customs; goods being classified differently; goods being valued differently etc. More specifically, at the time of exports from Senegal the country of final destination may not yet be determined, which means that Senegal can only report the country of consignment of the shipment; by contrast, Japan probably knows that Senegal is the country of origin. In general, depending on the purpose of the study, a decision should be made whether to use Import or Export statistics. If the purpose is to identify goods, which were produced in Senegal and are made available for consumption in Japan, Japanese Import statistics is to be used.

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

### INTER-AGENCY TASK FORCE ON INTERNATIONAL MERCHANDISE TRADE STATISTICS

[Inter-agency Task Force on International Merchandise Trade Statistics, 15-17 March 2005, Bangkok, Thailand](#): The agenda of this annual meeting of the Interagency Task Force on International Merchandise Trade Statistics (IMTS/TF) focuses on the status of the work on a number of methodological publications such as the *Supplement to the International Merchandise Trade Statistics Compilers Manual*, the

*Standard International Trade Classification (SITC), Revision 4*, and the *Manual on External Trade Price indices*. The IMTS/TF members will review also the outstanding issues in the areas of data compilation, data dissemination and data exchange. A number of other cross-cutting issues will be discussed as well. The outcome of the meeting will be described in the next edition of this newsletter.

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## EDITORIAL NOTE

The Trade Statistics Newsletter is a quarterly publication prepared by the International 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: Vladimir Markhonko, Ronald Jansen, Greta Salisbury and Matthias Reister (Executive Editor).

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