

TRADE SYSEM

International merchandise trade statistics

- **System and coverage of Trade Statistics**

- The External Trade Statistics of the Gambia are compiled on the basis of 'general trade' of the Gambia.
- The basic source of information is customs and Excise Department of the Gambia. The import/export statistics are compiled from the bills of entries prepared by importers/exporters or their agents. The statistical data were provided by customs and Excise Department in electronic form and later transferred using software called the Euro-trace. The daily trade forms of air and sea are also supplied to us by Customs and Excise Department.
- The data on principal exports commodities were collected from exporting agencies.

- **SYSTEM OF TRADE CLASSIFICATION**

- The (H.S) Harmonised system of classification is adopted as the basics of system of classification used in the Gambia as issued by UN. However, some minor modifications have been made to suit local requirements.

- **MEASUREMENTS OF COMMODITIES**

- Data are collected both for quantities and values, which are based on the declaration of importers and exporters or their agents and always verified by customs officials.
- Quantities are not recorded in respect of all of goods. But where goods are required to be entered by weight, the quantities given represent the net weight of the goods.
- The valuation of imports is done on CIF basis while the exports are recorded on FOB basis.

- **COUNTRIES TO WHICH IMPORTS AND EXPORTS ARE CREDITED**

- Imports of all commodities are classified as received from the place or country of origin i.e. the place or country in which the goods were produced or manufactured i.e. similarly exports of commodities are classified by destination. The country to which the goods are dispatched or consign with or without breaking bulk, in course of transport but without any intermediate country.

- **DOMESTIC EXPORTS**

- These are wholly or mainly produced in the Gambia constitute domestic exports. Imported goods that have been subjected to any operation in the Gambia which had allied their character, composition or to any appreciable extent, their value are on exportation regarded as domestic exports.

- **RE-EXPORTS**

- The exports of goods, which were wholly or mainly produced abroad, are regarded as re-exports. Goods which are exported in the condition in which they were imported or which have after importation been merely sorted, repacked or blended in the Gambia, are on exportation regarded as re-exports.
- The Customs Department sends a magnetic data medium with details of all imports and exports transactions to Central Statistics Department where the data is cleared and aggregated by product and country, usually on monthly basis. (1) By air, (2) By sea.
- According to the statistical Act 1972, Central Statistics Department should forcefully collect data but this is sometimes not strictly followed, as we do not collect everyone's or unreliable data. We often subject the raw data to elaborate screening process, which are time consuming and liable to delay the publication of trade statistics.
- Apart from customs declarations, there are other primary data sources for foreign trade statistics, namely exporting firms like Hides and Skins Company, cotton ginners, fisheries department etc. To get data from most of these firms is not very easy, with all the explanations, some still feel we do not collect the data for tax purposes. Because of time of recording and valuation methods there is always a difference between the 2 parties.

- **VALUE AND QUANTITIES**

- Customs sometimes-replete information on the quantities of goods traded. This may be partially explained by the relatively poor quantity of data on export and import quantities. In many cases, weight is given without other units of measurement such as number, square, cubic metres, pairs and carats. Indicators for analysing trends in international trade. This because of inflation and exchange rate variation may greatly distort a time series of foreign trade values.

- **GAMBIA EXTERNAL TRADE FROM 1999 TO 2004 CALENDAR YEARS.**

- **TABLE 1**

Year	Trade balance	Imports	Exports	Total	
1999		2,189,875	140,019	2,329,894	-
2,049,856					
2000		2,428,762	206,774	2,635,536	-
2,221,922					
2001		2,106,963	139,335	2,246,298	-
1,967,628					
2002		3,214,555	340,400	3,554,955	-
2,874,155					
2003		4,334,035	134,296	134,297	-
4,199,738					
2004		7,105,235	538,547	7,643,782	-
6,566,688					
Total		17,045,390	1,499,371	18,544,762	-
15,608,209					

- During the period 1999 to 2004 calendar years total value of Gambia's international trade increased from D2, 329 billion in 1999 to D18, 544, million in 2004. The trade balance however ever maintained a widening trend between 1999 to 2004 calendar years.

- **TABLE 2**
- **EXTERNAL TRADE/STATISTICS CENTRAL STATISTICS DEPARTMENT**
- **DIRECTION OF TRADE FROM ECOWAS COUNTRIES FOR 2004 AND 2003.**
- **Ranking on Partner code CIF Value('000 Dalasis) CIF Value(2003)**

BENIN (COT110-GHANA	14,9109,117	GUINEA	3,8976,529	COTE D'IVO	857,596	136,750	LIBERIA	104431	MALI	1,856619	MAURITANIA	858134	NIGER	199	NIGERIA	12,7308,418	GUINEA BISSAU	1,245486	SENEGAL	219,936200,467	SIERRA LEONE	3,573835	TOGO	767453	BURKINA FASO	11178	TOTAL	1,117,612364,426
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- **TABLE 3**
- **EXTERNAL TRADE STATISTICS/CENTRAL STATISTICS DEPARTMENT**
- **DIRECTION OF TRADE FROM EU COUNTRIES FOR 2004 AND 2003**
- **Ranking on Partner code CIF Value('000 Dalasis) CIF Value(2003)**

AUSTRIA	5384,859	BELGIUM	215,137116,269	DENMARK	468,33788,996	FINLAND	8-FRANCE	418,301271,338	GERMANY	F.801,5911,568,567	IRELAND	6,9071,469	ITALY	117,10076,343	NETHERLAND	284,591121,571	PORTUGAL	4,7373,501	SPAIN	118,54285,645	SWEDEN	29,58620,888	UNITED KINGDOM	558,074449,337	TOTAL	3,023,4492,807,783
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■ DATA USERS

■ **TRADE STATISTICS IS MAINLY USED BY**

- Government official for planning purposes
- Parliamentarians
- Research institutions like universities, and colleges
- Education Institutions like high schools etc.
- Public media e.g. the journalist
- Private sector business
- General public
- International Institution like UN