Survey on the National Compilation Practices of International Merchandise

Self-assessment questionnaire on IMTS compilation practices

This questionnaire refers to the internationally endorsed recommendations of International Merchandise Trade Statistics (IMTS) contained in the IMTS 2010, Concepts and Definitions, manual (see http://unstats.un.org/unsd/trade/methodology%20IMTS.htm).

The purpose of the survey is to obtain an overview of the status of IMTS by comparing the existing national compilation practice against those recommendations. The questions cover the practices and circumstances in your country and are organized according to the national quality assurance framework, which was recently endorsed for use by the Statistical Commission, see http://unstats.un.org/unsd/dnss/QualityNQAF/nqaf.aspx.

This is a self-assessment questionnaire, since you know best the details of the compilation of trade statistics in your country. The results of the survey are useful for your office to update the meta-data, which accompany the dissemination of your trade statistics. In principle, you should list all deviations from the recommended standard in your meta-data. This information on your compilation practice is of great importance for the users of trade statistics, including the BOP compilers, trade analysts and researchers.

The questionnaire is expected to be completed by the institute responsible for the compilation and dissemination of the international merchandise trade statistics (usually the National Statistical Office) in close consultation with the Customs Administration (as the main data provider). Besides IMTS 2010, you are also advised to consult the IMTS 2010, Compilers Manual (available on the same web page) to better understand the terms used in this questionnaire.

1. Which agency do you work for?
(Your agency is responsible for the compilation and dissemination of international merchandise trade statistics)

- ○ National statistical office
- ○ Customs administration
- ○ Central bank
- ○ Ministry
- ○ Other agency

If other, please explain

[   ]

*2. Country

	Country
Select country	[▼]

*3. Date (DD/MM/YYYY)

[   ]

[NQAF 1] Coordinating the national statistical system

4. Which agencies collect and provide the data sources for IMTS?

	Monthly	Quarterly	Semi-annual	Annual
Customs administration	☐	☐	☐	☐
Free zones authority	☐	☐	☐	☐
Central bank	☐	☐	☐	☐
National statistical office	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ministries	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please explain

5. Do you have a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) or similar working agreement with any of the agencies mentioned above?

○ Yes

○ No

Please explain

6. If you have working agreements with other agencies, does your office regularly meet or consult with these agencies before release of the trade statistics?

○ Yes

○ No

○ Not applicable

If Yes, how often do you meet?

7. As responsible agency for the compilation and dissemination of IMTS, do you provide assistance to Balance of Payments compilers in order to adjust basic IMTS data for their use in BOP?

○ Yes

○ No

Please explain

8. Does cooperation exist between the IMTS and BOP compilers to identify transactions of goods for processing without change of ownership?

○ Yes

○ No

If Yes, please explain

[NQAF 2] Managing relationships with data users and data providers

9. Do you regularly conduct outreach and education for data users including officials from ministry of trade/economy and general public?

○ Yes

○ No

If Yes, please explain

_____

10. Do you regularly conduct outreach and education for data providers including customs officers, brokers and traders?

○ Yes

○ No

If Yes, please explain

_____

[NQAF 3] Managing statistical standards

11. Have you conducted bilateral or multilateral reconciliation studies with your trading partners in recent years or do you plan to conduct such studies in the near future?

○ Yes

○ No

If applicable, please share the result of the studies

[NQAF 7] Assuring statistical confidentiality and security

12. Is confidentiality applied to certain transactions of goods or trading partners?

	Yes	No
Goods only	○	○
Trading Partners only	○	○
Combination of both	○	○

If Yes, please explain

13. When confidentiality is applied to certain goods transactions at the detailed commodity level, do you provide information at the next higher level of commodity aggregation?

○ Yes

○ No

Please explain

14. Do you add estimates of missing or suppressed values (for major commodities or partners) at a higher level of commodity aggregation?

○ Yes

○ No

f Yes, please explain

[NQAF 10] Assuring methodological soundness

15. In general, do you record all goods which physically enter or leave the economic territory of your country?

○ Yes

○ No

If No, please explain

[ ]

16. In addition, do you use change of ownership (between residents and non-residents) as a basis for inclusion of certain goods in trade statistics (e.g.: ships and aircraft)?

○ Yes

○ No

If necessary, please provide additional explanation

[ ]

17. In addition, do you estimate and include in the trade statistics an aggregate of all goods transactions with a value below customs or statistical thresholds?

○ Yes

○ No

If Yes, please explain

[ ]

18. For certain transactions do you estimate missing or incorrect values at detailed record level?

○ Yes

○ No

If Yes, please explain for which (general) cases and how they are estimated

[ ]

19. For certain transactions do you estimate missing or incorrect quantities at detailed record level?

○ Yes

○ No

If Yes, please explain for which (general) cases and how they are estimated

[text area]

20. Which date is used for your trade statistics? (check as many as used)

☐ Date of arrival/departure (when goods carriers enter/leave the economic territory)

☐ Date of registration (when traders submit customs declaration)

☐ Date of assessment (when customs accept and verify traders' declaration)

☐ Date when customs duties and charges are paid

☐ Date of release (when goods leave/enter customs territory)

☐ Date of receipt of the source document at the statistical agency

☐ Date of change of ownership

If you use more than one choice, please explain

[text area]

21. Does the definition of the economic territory of your country coincide with the statistical territory, which is the territory with respect to which ALL trade data are being compiled?

○ Yes

○ No

If No, please explain

[text field]

22. Does the definition of the customs territory of your country coincide with the statistical territory, which is the territory with respect to which ALL trade data are being compiled?

○ Yes

○ No

If No, please explain

[text field]

23. Do you include the following territorial elements in statistical territory?

	Yes	No	Not applicable
Islands	○	○	○
Territorial waters	○	○	○
Continental shelf	○	○	○
Offshore and outer space installations and apparatus	○	○	○
Commercial free zones	○	○	○
Industrial free zones	○	○	○
Customs warehouses	○	○	○
Premises for inward processing	○	○	○
Territorial enclaves of the compiling (your) country in other countries	○	○	○
Territorial exclaves, that is, enclaves of other countries in the compiling (your) country	○	○	○

24. Which trade system do you use?

	Imports	Exports
General trade system	☐	☐
Special trade system (relaxed definition)	☐	☐
Special trade system (strict definition)	☐	☐

If you use the Special Trade System, please explain

25. Do you include in your trade statistics goods transactions into or out of the following territorial elements (from/to the rest of the world)?

	Yes	No	Not applicable
Premises for customs warehousing	○	○	○
Premises for inward processing	○	○	○
Industrial free zones	○	○	○
Commercial free zones	○	○	○

If some choice would only apply partly, please explain

26. Do you separately record goods transactions between the industrial / commercial free zones and the domestic market?

○ Yes

○ No

If you only record partly, please explain

[   ]

27. If you use the Special Trade System, do you record goods transactions between the (industrial / commercial) free zones and the domestic market, as well as between the rest of the world and the free zones?

○ Yes

○ No

Please explain

[   ]

28. Besides outright exports and imports for home use, which other (main) trade flows do you include in your trade statistics?

☐ Re-exports

☐ Re-imports

☐ Exports for outward processing

☐ Imports after outward processing

☐ Imports for inward processing

☐ Exports after inward processing

Other (please specify)

[   ]

29. If you identify transactions for (inward or outward) processing, are you also able to distinguish those transactions in which the goods do not change ownership?

○ Yes

○ No

Please explain

[   ]

30. Do you classify the commodities according to the Harmonized System (HS) in your detailed trade statistics?

○ Yes

○ No

If Yes, please mention the edition of the HS currently used, and the maximum number of digits used for your codes at the tariff-line level. If No, please explain which classification is used.

[   ]

31. Do you use non-standard HS chapters 00, 98 or 99 for special purposes?

○ Yes

○ No

If No, do you make use of any other non-standard HS codes?

[   ]

32. If you use non-standard HS chapters, please provide the description of their use:

Chapter 00   [   ]

Chapter 98   [   ]

Chapter 99   [   ]

33. Do you publish / disseminate any international merchandise trade statistics in terms of any of the following commodity classifications:

	Yes	No
Harmonized System (HS)	○	○
Standard International Trade Classification (SITC)	○	○
Classification by Broad Economic Categories (BEC)	○	○
Common Product Classification (CPC)	○	○
International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC)	○	○

Other (please specify)

[   ]

34. Please rank the most frequently requested commodity classification by users of your on-line database or via specific data requests (you can estimate, if you do not have any direct usage numbers):

[▼]	Harmonized System (HS)
[▼]	Standard International Trade Classification (SITC)
[▼]	Classification by Broad Economic Categories (BEC)
[▼]	Common Product Classification (CPC)
[▼]	International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC)

35. Do you collect quantity information (net weight and supplementary quantity units)?

	Yes	No
Gross weight	○	○
Net weight (e.g. excluding packing)?	○	○
Supplementary quantity units	○	○

If No, please explain

[   ]

36. Do you compile net weight for quantity measurement of all commodities, excluding electricity?

○ Yes

○ No

If No, please explain

[   ]

37. Do you compile the units of quantity as recommended by the World Customs Organization (WCO) for each of the HS sub-headings (6-digit codes)?

○ Yes

○ Yes, partially

○ No

Please explain

[   ]

38. If you do not compile quantity information in WCO recommended units, what are the reasons?

☐ No demand for WCO recommended unit of quantities

☐ Limited basic quantity data from original source documents

☐ No quantity conversion factors exist

☐ WCO units are not inline with industry practices

Other (please specify)

[   ]

39. Do you record a statistical value for all goods transactions covered in trade statistics, whether sold, exchanged or provided without payment?

○ Yes

○ No

40. Do you compile exports as a FOB-type value?

○ Yes

○ No

If No, please explain

[   ]

41. Do you compile imports as a CIF-type value?

⊙ Yes

○ No

If No, please explain

[   ]

42. Do you compile imports (also) as a FOB-type value?

○ Yes

○ No

If No, please explain

[   ]

43. To convert currencies, do you use the official exchange rate which is in effect at the date of exportation or importation?

○ Yes

○ No

If No, please explain

[ ]

44. Do you compile import statistics by:

☐ Country of origin

☐ Country of consignment

☐ Country of purchase

☐ Other

If you use more than one choice or other, please explain

[ ]

45. If country of origin is used, do you follow the origin criteria outlined in the Revised Kyoto Convention?

○ Yes

○ No

Please explain

[ ]

46. Are you aware that the African Union Commission is developing rules for country of origin for Africa?

○ Yes

○ No

47. Do you compile export statistics by:

☐ Country of last known destination

☐ Country of consignment

☐ Country of sale

☐ Other

If you use more than one choice or other, please explain

[ ]

48. Do you separately record country of consignment for re-imports?

○ Yes

○ No

Please explain, if necessary

[   ]

49. Do you separately record country of origin for re-exports?

○ Yes

○ No

Please explain, if necessary

[   ]

50. Do you compile mode of transport at the most detailed commodity level?

○ Yes

○ No

51. Is the mode of transport recorded as the means of transport used when goods enter or leave the country?

○ Yes

○ No

If No, please explain

[   ]

52. Do you use the mode of transport classification as outlined in IMTS 2010 (para. 7.2), at least for the main categories (1-digit)?

○ Yes

○ No

If No, please explain

[   ]

53. Does your Customs Administration use the Revised Kyoto Convention (the International Convention on the Simplification and Harmonization of Customs procedures) as the basis for the definitions of customs procedures?

○ Yes

○ No

If No, please explain

[   ]

54. Does your Customs Administration use a threshold value below which customs declarations are not required to be filed?

○ Yes

○ No

If Yes, please specify the level of the threshold

[   ]

55. Are the following items mandatory to be completed on the customs declaration?

	Yes	No	Not applicable
Transaction value	○	○	○
Insurance value	○	○	○
Freight value	○	○	○
Weight (Net)	○	○	○
Supplementary quantity	○	○	○
Supplementary quantity unit	○	○	○

If necessary, please explain

[   ]

56. Please select partner country attribution(s) that are requested on the custom declaration

	For import declaration	For export declaration
Country of origin	○	○
Country of last known destination	○	○
Country of consignment	○	○

Please explain

[   ]

57. Do you separately record returned goods?

○ Yes

○ No

Please explain, if necessary

[   ]

58. Do you separately record migrants' effects?

○ Yes

○ No

Please explain, if necessary

[   ]

59. Do you separately record transactions of goods imported for construction projects by non-resident enterprises?

○ Yes

○ No

Please explain, if necessary

[   ]

[NQAF 11] Assuring cost-effectiveness

60. Do you use customs declarations as a main source?

○ Yes

○ No

61. In addition to customs records, do you use the following sources of data in your country?

	Yes	No	Not applicable
Records from free zones authority	☐	☐	☐
Records of monetary authorities	☐	☐	☐
Reports of commodity boards	☐	☐	☐
Foreign shipping manifests	☐	☐	☐
Parcel and letter post records	☐	☐	☐
Aircraft and ship registers	☐	☐	☐
Administrative records associated with taxation	☐	☐	☐
Enterprise surveys	☐	☐	☐
Informal cross border / shuttle trade survey	☐	☐	☐

Other (please specify)

62. Are all customs declarations captured electronically?

○ Yes

○ No

If No, please provide percentage of customs declarations (approximately) that are not captured electronically

63. Does your Customs Administration use a computerized system to register customs declarations?

○ Yes

○ No

If Yes, please provide details about the system

64. Do you use EUROTRACE for data processing?

○ Yes

○ No

If No, please describe the software used for data processing

[   ]

65. Do you have stable and reliable communication connectivity (for data exchange)?

○ Yes

○ No

Please explain

[   ]

66. How do you receive the data from providing agencies?

	Hand delivered / Mail	Email	FTP	Web
Printed records / PDF	☐	☐	☐	☐
Plain Text format (such as CSV)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Database format (such as MS Access)	☐	☐	☐	☐
XML format	☐	☐	☐	☐

Other (please specify)

[   ]

67. Which kind of challenges does your office face?

☐ Not enough staff dedicated to compilation of IMTS

☐ Lack of knowledge about IMTS methodology

☐ Lack of knowledge using available IT tools

☐ Lack of up-to-date IT equipment

☐ Lack of up-to-date IT software

☐ Lack of support by other agencies

Other (please specify)

[   ]

[NQAF15] Assuring accuracy and reliability

68. Do you produce quality reports about the production of international merchandise trade statistics?

○ Yes

○ No

If Yes, at which frequency

[   ]

69. Do you regularly revise data (when additional information is available)?

○ Yes

○ No

If Yes, please explain

[   ]

70. What is the level of detail of publicly available monthly, quarterly, semi annual and annual data?

	Aggregated data	Detailed data
Monthly data	▼	▼
Quarterly data	▼	▼
Semi annual data	▼	▼
Annual data	▼	▼

If necessary, please provide additional explanation

[   ]

71. Do you make publicly available or report to international organizations the following data items?

☐ Trade Flow

☐ Individual Trading Partner

☐ Detailed Commodity at least 6-digit HS

☐ Customs Procedure Code

☐ Mode of Transport

If necessary, please provide additional explanation

[   ]

72. Do you compile and disseminate trade indicators, external trade indices or seasonally adjusted data?

	Yes	No
Trade indicators	○	○
External trade indices	○	○
Seasonally adjusted data	○	○

Please explain, if necessary

[ ]

73. Do those agencies, which collect the data sources (such as Customs) or compile trade data (such as NSO), also validate data entries according to the coding for commodity nomenclature, country nomenclature, modes of transport, customs procedure, quantity unit or other?

	Yes	No
Data providers	○	○
Data compiler	○	○

Please provide details, if possible

[ ]

74. Do those agencies, which collect the data sources (such as Customs) or compile trade data (such as NSO), also perform value and quantity checks for individual records on the basis of unit value, list price or values from time series?

	Yes	No
Data providers	○	○
Data compiler	○	○

Please provide details, if possible

[ ]

75. Does your office implement macro level checks, such as checking growth rates or checking against other statistics, e.g., domestic production?

○ Yes

○ No

If you would like to highlight other related information, please provide details

[ ]

76. If errors are detected, do you request clarification to the data providers and correct the errors?

○ Yes

○ No

Please explain

[NQAF16] Assuring timeliness and punctuality

77. Do you publicly announce scheduled release dates?

○ Yes

○ No

If Yes, please provide link on your website, if applicable

[   ]

78. Do you publish provisional trade statistics after the end of the reference period?

○ Yes

○ No

If yes, please specify when and at which level of detail

[   ]

79. In how many days after the closing of the reference period (approximately), do data become available to the public?

	Monthly data	Quarterly data	Semi annual data	Annual data
Printed or CD/DVD Publications	[▼]	[▼]	[▼]	[▼]
Press releases	[▼]	[▼]	[▼]	[▼]
Web sites	[▼]	[▼]	[▼]	[▼]

[NQAF17] Assuring accessibility and clarity

80. Do you publish the trade data in database format or other electronic format on your website? If so, please provide a link.

81. If printed publications are available, please indicate the name of publications:

82. Do you make documentation on your sources and methods publicly available?

○ Yes

○ No

If Yes, please provide link on your website, if applicable

83. Do you disseminate data and metadata in the Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange (SDMX) format?

○ Yes

○ No

Please explain

84. If you report data to regional organizations in regular basis, please select the name of organizations:

- ☐ UEMOA
- ☐ CEMAC
- ☐ AMU
- ☐ CEN-SAD
- ☐ ECOWAS
- ☐ ECCAS
- ☐ EAC
- ☐ IGAD
- ☐ COMESA
- ☐ SADC
- ☐ AUC
- ☐ UNECA
- ☐ AfDB
- ☐ ACBF

Other(s), please indicate:

[NQAF18] Assuring coherence and comparability

85. Does the National Statistical Office maintain a statistical business register?

○ Yes

○ No

Please explain

[   ]

86. Has any agency in your country attempted to link the detailed trade statistics with the statistical business register?

○ Yes

○ No

If Yes, please explain

[   ]

87. Do you publish data on trade by enterprise characteristics or by industries?

○ Yes

○ No

Please explain, if necessary

[   ]

[NQAF19] Managing metadata

88. Do you cover the following categories of metadata?

	Yes	No	Not applicable
Description of underlying concepts and definitions, including deviation from international standards	☐	☐	☐
Legal framework, institutional arrangements and data sources	☐	☐	☐
Description of data collection and processing procedures	☐	☐	☐
Description of estimation methods	☐	☐	☐
Descriptions of all data fields/variables	☐	☐	☐
Explanations and footnotes of data	☐	☐	☐
Quality reporting	☐	☐	☐

Other (please specify)

[   ]

89. Do you publish the metadata for or following IMF SDDS (Special Data Definition Standard) / GDDS (General Data Definition Standard)?

○ Yes

○ No

Please explain

[   ]

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General questions

90. What are the greatest obstacles your office faces in IMTS compilation and dissemination?

91. What are the plans of your office for further improvement in IMTS compilation and dissemination?

92. In case you would like to highlight other related issues and information, please provide details: