Highlights of the UNSD current trade statistics outputs and future work

Presentation by Matthias Reister
Chief, International Merchandise Trade Statistics Section
Trade Statistics Branch, United Nations Statistics Division
E-mail: reister@un.org
Highlights of International Merchandise Trade Statistics at UNSD - besides our methodological work on concepts and definitions (IMTS2010), compiler guidance and trade classification (SITC)
Highlights of International Merchandise Trade Statistics at UNSD - besides our methodological work on concepts and definitions (IMTS2010), compiler guidance and trade classification (SITC)

- UN Comtrade
- New Trade Statistics Yearbook
- Analytical trade tables (published in the Monthly Bulletin of Statistics)
- New Trade Statistics knowledgebase
- Newsletter
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** in **various commodity classifications**
- Considered the most **comprehensive merchandise trade database** available in Internet with more than 1.75 billions records
- Referenced by other databases as ITC’s tools, BACI, WITS, etc
From data providers to end users

End users: governments, academics, companies, international organizations, etc

Analytical databases: BACI, WITS, ECLAC SIGCI

Re-dissemination: UNData, ITC’s Tools, ESCWA Comtrade

In 2009, collection of 350 datasets and release of 501 datasets

In 2009, 4.1 millions data queries and 4.3 billions records downloaded

UN Comtrade Dissemination

UN Comtrade Collection and Processing System

Data Providers

Data Providers

Data Providers
Coverage & Data Availability

- A typical record is – for instance – the exports of cars from Germany to the United States in 2009 in terms of value (US dollars), weight and supplementary quantity (number of cars)
- Data available in various commodity classifications: HS (up to 6 digits), SITC, and BEC
- The database is continuously updated. Whenever trade data are received, they are standardized by the UN Statistics Division and then added to UN Comtrade
Main Features

Data Extraction

- Various basic extraction methods: Text search, Short Cut Query, Basic Selection, Express Selection
  - Bulk download up to 20 millions records per query
- Comtrade data also disseminated in UNdata
- Data extraction via Web Service/API for large unattended data transfer and possibility of data reusability by others

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

Support and Help

- Browse Knowledge Base for any questions
- Use Community Forum for peer support
- Chat during business hours
- Single Point of Contact: comtrade@un.org

Seminar on International Trade Statistics
New York, 25 February 2010
Summary

- Any individual records are available for free
- Updated continuously as data is received (usually within 3 days)
- Detailed data available in various commodity classifications
- Multiple ways of data extraction
- Comprehensive metadata
- Early SDMX adoption

- Navigation through data availability
- Personalization: customized aggregation, automated extraction
- Bulk data download and web services
- Users can re-disseminate limited number of records without explicit permission
- Referenced by others
Analytical Trade Tables

Monthly Bulletin of Statistics

Monthly (data t+3 months)
- Imports and exports for countries and regions in U.S. dollars and in national currency

Quarterly (most data t+3 months)
- External trade conversion factors
- Imports and exports trade indices, for countries and regions
- Trade values and indices for manufactured goods exports
- Trade values and indices for fuel imports

Annual:
- World exports by provenance and destination (in US dollars):
  - Totals
  - By commodity, total and for developed economies
Analytical Trade Tables

Annual Total Trade Tables

• Comparison of trade totals from two different sources:
  – UN Comtrade (UNSD)
  – International Financial Statistics (IFS)
• Provides totals of imports and exports for all countries beginning with the year 2000
• Latest edition: November 2009;
• Can be freely downloaded at: http://unstats.un.org/unsd/trade/imts/annual%20totals.htm
Highlights of the UNSD current trade statistics outputs and future work

International Trade Statistics Yearbook

Key Features

Redesigned
Country Profiles
Commodity Profiles
World Trade Tables
Country Profile (US)

Graph 1: Total imports and exports (Bln US$ by year)

Graph 3: Partner concentration of trade in 2008
(Cumulative share by ranked partners)

Seminars on International Trade Statistics
New York, 25 February 2010
Country Profile (China)

Graph 1: Total imports, exports and future work
(Bln US$ by year)

Graph 2: Trade Balance by MDG Regions in 2008

Graph 3: Partner concentration of trade in 2008
(Cumulative share by ranked partners)
Country Profile (Germany)

Graph 1: Total imports, exports and future work
(Bln US$ by year)

Graph 2: Trade Balance by MDG Regions in 2008
(Bln US$)

Graph 3: Partner concentration of trade in 2008
(Cumulative share by ranked partners)

Top partner

Imports (Herfindahl Index = 0.043)
Exports (Herfindahl Index = 0.044)
Country Profile (Japan)

Graph 1: Total imports, exports and future work (Bln US$ by year)

Graph 2: Trade Balance by MDG Regions in 2008

Graph 3: Partner concentration of trade in 2008
(Cumulative share by ranked partners)
2008 Edition: Commodity Profile

Includes

- A short analysis of trade by commodity
- Trade values 1994-2008
- Top importing and exporting countries
- Trade balance by MDG regions
2008 Edition: Commodity Profile

Rice (SITC group 042)

Graph 2: Trade Balance by MDG regions 2008 (Bln US$)

- Imports
- Exports
- Trade balance

- Developed Asia-Pacific
- Developed Europe
- Developed N. America
- South–eastern Europe
- CIS
- Northern Africa
- Sub–Saharan Africa
- Latin Am, Caribbean
- Eastern Asia
- Southern Asia
- South–eastern Asia
- Western Asia
- Oceania
2008 Edition: Commodity Profile

Cotton (SITC group 263)

Graph 2: Trade Balance by MDG regions 2008
(Bln US$)

- Imports
- Exports
- Trade balance

- Developed Asia-Pacific
- Developed Europe
- Developed N. America
- South-eastern Europe
- C I S
- Northern Africa
- Sub-Saharan Africa
- Latin Am, Caribbean
- Eastern Asia
- Southern Asia
- South-eastern Asia
- Western Asia
- Oceania
2008 Edition: Commodity Profile

Crude fertilizers (SITC group 272)

Graph 2: Trade Balance by MDG regions 2008
(Bln US$)

- Developed Asia-Pacific
- Developed Europe
- Developed N. America
- South–eastern Europe
- CIS
- Northern Africa
- Sub–Saharan Africa
- Latin Am, Caribbean
- Eastern Asia
- Southern Asia
- South–eastern Asia
- Western Asia
- Oceania
2008 Edition: Commodity Profile

Automatic data processing machines (SITC group 752)

Graph 2: Trade Balance by MDG regions 2008
(Bln US$)

- Developed Asia-Pacific
- Developed Europe
- Developed N. America
- South–eastern Europe
- C I S
- Northern Africa
- Sub–Saharan Africa
- Latin Am, Caribbean
- Eastern Asia
- Southern Asia
- South–eastern Asia
- Western Asia
- Oceania
International Trade Statistics Yearbook available

- Print and electronic version at https://unp.un.org/
- Individual files for download at: http://comtrade.un.org/pb/
Highlights of the UNSD current trade statistics outputs and future work

Trade Statistics Knowledgebase

http://unstats.un.org/unsd/tradekb/Knowledgebase/

New York, 25 February 2010

Trade Statistics Branch | Statistics Division
Key Features

• Serve as a single web-based access point for the information on the collection, processing, analysis and dissemination of international trade statistics;

• Metadata at both international and national levels;

• A single reference point for trade statistics with glossary for key trade statistics definitions;

• Users can look for information via 1) key words, 2) tree structure, and 3) ‘Tags’.
Basic Structure of Merchandise Trade

- Methodology
  - International recommendations
  - National practices
  - Classifications and correspondence table
- UN Comtrade Data
- Analytical tables (publications)
- Trade Indicators, Analysis and Tools
- International Cooperation and Workshops
Country Metadata and Best Practices

- Currently includes 293 articles;
- Country Metadata article serves as a single web-access point for the country;
- Will make 186 countries metadata and best practices available.
Two-way Communications

• Latest development about international standards and recommendations and other key outputs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Last Modified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EG-IMTS: UN Expert Group on...</td>
<td>Wednesday, 27 January, 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMTS: Concepts and Definitions, Rev. 3...</td>
<td>Tuesday, 26 January, 2010</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Feedback from users and more …
It covers

• Special feature (IMTS Rev. 3, EG meetings…)
• Databases and Publications
• Cooperation with Countries and Agencies (workshops,…)
• Questions from UN Comtrade users
• Upcoming events (SC, Task Forces meetings,…)

Quarterly, available at
Future work

• Revision of IMTS Compilers Manual

• UN Comtrade upgrade – new data items, metadata
  – Second partner country
  – Second value for imports (FOB in addition to CIF)
  – Mode of transport

• Trade Statistics Knowledgebase
  – Easy access support for compilers
  – Metadata on national and international level for data users
  – Access to all UNSD outputs and activities on merchandise trade

• Research agenda
  – Study of asymmetries in trade data
  – Linking trade and business statistics
  – Trade indices
  – Automated data transfer
  – Other issues (trade by value added, environmental concerns, developing use of quantity information etc.)
Thank you very much for your attention