

C. Integrating trade and business statistics in data compilation: possibilities and examples

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11.10. *Principle requirements.* The core elements for the integration of trade and business statistics are (a) the availability of a functioning and up-to-date statistical business register (SBR), which assigns a unique identification number for all registered business entities (e.g., enterprises, establishments or local units) and which either contains or can be linked with relevant information on current activities of those entities, (b) the mandatory entry on the customs declaration of a unique identification number of the company on whose behalf the declaration is lodged and (c) the establishment of an electronic and automatic link between the identification number used for declaration purposes and the SBR identification number, if they are different.

Box XI.2 Common use of relevant terminology

Exporter/seller/consignor

The exporter is the institutional unit that sends goods to other countries; most often goods are sent for sale and therefore the exporter can also be referred to as the seller. The term “consignor” refers to the natural or legal person identified on the customs declaration that is sending the goods to another country. The terms “exporter”, “seller” and “consignor” can, in general, be used synonymously.

Importer/ buyer/ consignee

The importer is the institutional unit that brings goods from abroad and frequently the importer is the buyer of the good. The term “consignee” refers to the natural or legal person identified on the customs declaration to which the goods are sent and who will physically receive the goods; the consignee, however, is not necessarily the importer or buyer;

Broker/ trader/ agent

These are institutional units that facilitate the sending of the goods to another country

Declarant

The term “declarant” refers to the natural or legal person that completes the customs declaration. The exporter or seller can complete the customs declaration himself but frequently specialized brokers/ traders/agents are in charge of completing the customs formalities, including the filling in of the custom declaration.

Box XI.3 Statistical units in a business register

For the purposes of the statistical production process, the principle statistical units are the enterprise, the establishment (local kind of activity) and the enterprise group.

Enterprise

An enterprise is the view of an institutional unit as a producer of goods and services. The term “enterprise” may refer to a corporation, a quasi-corporation (unincorporated enterprises belonging to households or government units), an non-profit institution (NPI) or an unincorporated enterprise (2008 SNA,^a para. 5.1).

Establishment

An establishment is an enterprise, or part of an enterprise, that is situated in a single location and in which only a single productive activity is carried out or in which the principal productive activity accounts for most of the value added (2008 SNA, para. 5.2).

Enterprise group

Many enterprises operating within an economy are linked with other enterprises by complete or partial common ownership and a shared management structure to form an enterprise group (2008 SNA, para. A4.12).

^a System of National Accounts 2008 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.08.XVII.29)

11.11. *The taxonomy of statistical outputs developed by Italy.* To provide business analysts and policymakers with information about key actors and drivers of competitiveness in global trade, a change from a product-based towards a business-oriented perspective in the compilation of trade statistics is required. The link between the list of trade operators and the business register provides the gateway for developing an array of new outputs. The National Statistical Institute of Italy (ISTAT) developed a taxonomy of statistical outputs which could be achieved from the linkage between trade and business statistics at the enterprise level. The core of this new statistical framework is the business register. Three different types of output, depending on the level of integration achieved, are differentiated:

- Type one: by reclassifying trade flow by trade operators, where the trade operator is identified by the VAT code, it is possible, for instance, to derive trade statistics based on the number of trade operators by products and markets
- Type two: if trade figures are linked and integrated with the business register using the trade operator ID code matched to the company register ID code, statistics based on the business characteristics of exporting and importing enterprises can be derived.

- Type three: a full integration of trade and business statistics is achieved when the business register is further linked to and integrated with existing business surveys, administrative and fiscal data, and special surveys on globalization, inter alia, on multinationals and international sourcing. This allows the conduct of in-depth analyses of trade and business activity.

11.12. *New statistics and future developments in Italy.* ISTAT has experience in the production of new integrated trade statistics of types one and two. A large set of tables on trade operators and exporting and importing companies is published in the Foreign Trade Statistics Yearbook, providing information on the business structure of the exporting community. Further, ISTAT has developed new statistics on the spatial distribution of exports and on the contribution of multinational enterprises (MNEs) to foreign trade, and provided additional analyses on firms involved in international trade. ISTAT is in the process of setting up a firm-level data warehouse that integrates a number of national surveys, data on foreign trade in goods, outward and inward multinational enterprise data and international databases, which will allow to effectively monitor the behaviour of firms deeply engaged in globalization. One challenge is that product-based and enterprise-based surveys are not fully harmonized. Also, there is a need for benchmarking and calibration with respect to different target populations. The intention is to make this warehouse accessible to researchers, taking into account confidentiality constraints. In the case of Italy, there are no additional costs for respondents.

11.13. *Linking trade and business statistics: experience of Brazil.* The SISCOMEX system of Brazil integrates the tracking and administrative, customs and exchange control of foreign trade. It is linked to all commercial information through the national code for companies (CNPJ) and the national code for individuals (CPF), which are mandatory fields for the declarations of exports and imports. When a company enters its code, SISCOMEX accesses automatically the database of companies registered at the Ministry of Finance, through which the code is confirmed and all commercial information is transferred (complete address, city, State, national code of economic activity, number of employees, etc.). The national code for companies consists of 14 digits: the first 8 digits represent the company group, the following 4 digits represent the enterprise (filial) and the last 2 digits are used to validate the complete number. This system allows the generation and dissemination of a wide array of special reports, such as on exports by company size, industry or State. Information deemed confidential is accessible only to the enterprise itself and authorized Government officials, while the public information is available on the Internet online system AL/ICEWE/B2 (<http://aliceweb2.mdic.gov.br>).

11.14. *OECD-Eurostat Trade by Enterprise Characteristics (TEC) database.* TEC is a joint OECD-Eurostat exercise in which data sets are compiled by linking microdata (data at trader level) with business registers. Under the guidance of the OECD Steering Group "Business Economic Statistics and Trade (BEST)", a first OECD set of linkage tables was sent out to participating non-EU-OECD member countries in June 2007 (see box XI.5 below for details). However, the tables currently provided by countries are frequently not fully comparable across countries and over time. Future goals are improved access to microdata, improved comparability, and inclusion of additional enterprise information. Regarding EU member States, the revision of EU trade statistics legislation makes the annual compilation of these statistics compulsory from reference years 2009 and 2010 onwards.