

**European business statistics  
user manual on EU international  
trade in goods statistics**

**2022 edition**





European business statistics  
user manual on EU international  
trade in goods statistics

**2022 edition**

Manuscript completed in December 2022

This document should not be considered as representative of the European Commission's official position.

Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2023

© European Union, 2023



The reuse policy of European Commission documents is implemented based on Commission Decision 2011/833/EU of 12 December 2011 on the reuse of Commission documents (OJ L 330, 14.12.2011, p. 39). Except otherwise noted, the reuse of this document is authorised under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC-BY 4.0) licence (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>). This means that reuse is allowed provided appropriate credit is given and any changes are indicated.

For any use or reproduction of elements that are not owned by the European Union, permission may need to be sought directly from the respective rightholders. The European Union does not own the copyright in relation to the following elements:

Copyright for the photograph:

Cover © Aerial-motion/Shutterstock

Theme: International trade

Collection: Manuals and guidelines

PDF	ISBN 978-92-76-46703-8	2315-0815	doi:10.2785/15563	KS-GQ-22-001-EN-N
HTML	ISBN 978-92-76-46688-8	2315-0815	doi:10.2785/393717	KS-GQ-22-001-EN-Q



# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>9</b>
1.1.	What is the purpose of this manual?	9
1.2.	What is the structure of the manual?	9
1.3.	How is the information on European ITGS presented online?	10
1.4.	Which are the main statistical dimensions in the ITGS datasets?	12
1.5.	Where can I find further guidance and metadata on ITGS?	12
<b>2</b>	<b>Background information</b>	<b>14</b>
2.1.	What are European statistics on international trade in goods?	14
2.2.	Who uses ITGS and what for?	14
2.2.1.	Types of users and their needs	14
2.2.2.	Use of trade data in other statistical fields	15
2.3.	Who is responsible for European ITGS?	15
2.4.	Where can I find the rules governing European ITGS?	16
2.4.1.	EU legislation on ITGS <sup>Rev</sup>	16
2.4.2.	EBS compilers' manual on detailed data	18
2.4.3.	International recommendations and provisions relevant to ITGS	18
2.5.	Is the distinction between intra-EU and extra-EU trade still in place after the repeal of the Intrastat and Extrastat legislation acts? <sup>New</sup>	19
<b>3</b>	<b>Scope of ITGS</b>	<b>20</b>
3.1.	What is the scope of ITGS?	20
3.2.	How is the statistical territory defined?	20
3.3.	Which trade system is applicable to European ITGS?	20
3.4.	Which are the exceptions to the physical movement principle? <sup>Rev</sup>	21
3.5.	Which goods and movements are included in ITGS? <sup>Rev</sup>	22
3.6.	Why are some goods and movements excluded from ITGS?	22
3.7.	Is processing trade included in ITGS? <sup>New</sup>	23
3.8.	What are 'Union' vs 'non-Union' goods?	24
3.9.	Which Union / non-Union goods are included in intra-EU trade?	24
3.10.	Which Union/ non-Union goods are included in extra-EU trade?	25
3.11.	Are goods in transit recorded in ITGS?	25
<b>4</b>	<b>Data sources and definitions</b>	<b>27</b>
4.1.	How are ITGS data collected?	27
4.2.	Which were the main changes to European ITGS over time?	27

4.3.	How is the reporting country defined? <sup>Rev</sup> .....	28
4.4.	How is the partner country defined? .....	29
4.4.1.	General rule <sup>Rev</sup> .....	29
4.4.2.	Exceptions .....	30
4.5.	How are goods classified? .....	31
4.6.	When are movements of goods recorded? <sup>Rev</sup> .....	33
4.7.	What are the measurement units? .....	33
4.7.1.	Trade value .....	33
4.7.2.	Net mass .....	35
4.7.3.	Supplementary quantity .....	36
4.8.	Are there specific provisions for particular types of goods or movements? .....	37
<b>5</b>	<b>Data compilation</b> .....	<b>38</b>
5.1.	How are EU trade data compiled? .....	38
5.2.	How are euro area trade data compiled? .....	38
5.3.	How is the trade with the world defined? .....	39
5.4.	How are the trade balances of the EU Member States compiled? .....	39
5.5.	Are estimates used in intra-EU trade data? .....	39
5.5.1.	Estimating missing intra-EU trade .....	39
5.5.2.	Estimating the statistical value in intra-EU trade .....	40
5.5.3.	Estimating the net mass in intra-EU trade .....	40
5.6.	Are estimates used in extra-EU trade data? .....	41
5.7.	Why are some of the ITGS confidential? .....	41
5.7.1.	What are confidential data? .....	41
5.7.2.	What is the difference between active and passive confidentiality? .....	41
5.7.3.	Which rules apply? .....	41
5.7.4.	To which data elements does confidentiality apply? .....	42
5.7.5.	How does confidentiality apply to partner countries? .....	42
5.7.6.	How does product confidentiality apply? .....	42
5.8.	What data are sent to Eurostat and when? .....	44
5.9.	When are data revised and considered final? .....	44
5.10.	What are the main reasons for revising data? .....	45
5.11.	How are changes in concepts and definitions dealt with? .....	45
5.12.	What data does Eurostat compile? .....	45
5.12.1.	Unit value and volume indices .....	45
5.12.2.	Data adjusted for working days and seasonal components .....	46
5.13.	Does Eurostat compile data under classifications other than the CN? <sup>Rev</sup> .....	47



<b>6</b>	<b>Data quality</b>	<b>48</b>
6.1.	<b>Accuracy</b>	<b>48</b>
6.1.1.	How accurate are ITGS?	48
6.1.2.	How is the data quality checked and monitored?	48
6.1.3.	What are the main causes of errors in reporting?	49
6.1.4.	What is the impact of quasi-transit or the so-called 'Rotterdam effect'?	49
6.1.5.	How do simplification measures in data collection impact data accuracy? <sup>Rev</sup>	50
6.1.6.	Why are intra-EU export values generally considered more reliable than intra-eu import values? <sup>New</sup>	50
6.2.	<b>Comparability over space and time and across domains</b>	<b>51</b>
6.2.1.	Why do asymmetries always exist?	51
6.2.2.	What are the methodological causes of asymmetries?	51
6.2.3.	Why is the intra-EU trade balance not equal to zero?	52
6.2.4.	Why are breaks in time series unavoidable?	52
6.2.5.	Why can European data differ from national data?	53
6.3.	<b>Coherence with other statistics</b>	<b>55</b>
6.4.	<b>Why do ITGS differ from trade in goods in balance of payments and national accounts?</b>	<b>55</b>
6.5.	<b>Where can I find more information on the quality of European ITGS?</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Data dissemination</b>	<b>57</b>
7.1.	How is the data dissemination organised?	57
7.2.	<b>What classifications are used?</b>	<b>58</b>
7.2.1.	The Combined Nomenclature as primary product classification	58
7.2.2.	Other product classifications	59
7.2.3.	The Geonomenclature as country classification	61
7.2.4.	The NACE as classification by activity	62
7.3.	<b>What is the difference between 'aggregated' and 'detailed' published data?</b>	<b>62</b>
7.4.	<b>Which indicators are available for aggregated data?</b>	<b>63</b>
7.4.1.	Monthly Aggregated data — Short-term indicators	63
7.4.2.	Annual aggregated data — Long-term indicators	63
7.5.	<b>Which indicators are available for detailed data?</b>	<b>63</b>
7.6.	<b>What are the basic statistical fields?</b>	<b>63</b>
7.7.	<b>What additional statistical information is available?</b>	<b>64</b>
7.7.1.	Statistical procedure	64
7.7.2.	Trade by mode of transport	65
7.7.3.	Trade by eligibility and tariff regimes <sup>More</sup>	66
7.7.4.	Trade by enterprise characteristics (TEC)	67
7.7.5.	Trade by invoicing currency (TIC)	70
7.8.	<b>When are data updated?</b>	<b>72</b>
7.9.	<b>Does Eurostat publish ITGS only for EU Member States?</b>	<b>72</b>

<b>8 Data access</b> .....	<b>73</b>
8.1. How can I access data online? .....	73
8.1.1. The ITGS database .....	73
8.1.2. The Comext database .....	76
8.1.3. The bulk download facility <sup>Rev</sup> .....	79
8.2. Publications .....	81
8.2.1. Calendar .....	81
8.2.2. News Releases .....	81
8.2.3. News Items .....	82
8.2.4. Statistics Explained .....	82
8.3. Where can I find reference metadata? .....	82
8.4. Multilingual user support .....	83
<b>Annex 1</b> .....	<b>84</b>
List of goods or movements excluded from ITGS <sup>Rev</sup> .....	84
<b>Annex 2</b> .....	<b>86</b>
Compilation rules applicable to specific goods or movements <sup>More</sup> .....	86
<b>Annex 3</b> .....	<b>96</b>
Alphanumeric product codes in Comext <sup>Rev</sup> .....	96
<b>Annex 4</b> .....	<b>97</b>
National authorities involved in ITGS .....	97
<b>Annex 5</b> .....	<b>99</b>
Overview of the Easy-Comext datasets <sup>Rev</sup> .....	99
EU datasets .....	99
Non-EU datasets .....	102
<b>Annex 6</b> .....	<b>106</b>
Supplementary units in the bulk download files .....	106
<b>Glossary</b> .....	<b>108</b>

# Abbreviations

<b>BoP</b>	Balance of payments
<b>CDE</b>	Customs data exchange
<b>CN</b>	Combined Nomenclature
<b>Comext</b>	Eurostat external trade database
<b>EA</b>	Euro area
<b>EEZ</b>	Exclusive Economic Zone
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>GEONOM</b>	Geonomenclature applicable to European statistics on ITGS
<b>GSP</b>	Generalised Scheme of Tariff Preferences
<b>HS</b>	Harmonised System
<b>IMTS</b>	International Merchandise Trade Statistics: Concepts and Definitions
<b>ITGS</b>	International trade in goods statistics
<b>MDE</b>	Micro data exchange
<b>NSA</b>	National Statistical Authority
<b>NSI</b>	National Statistical Institute
<b>SAD</b>	Single Administrative Document
<b>SASP</b>	Single Authorisation for Simplified Procedure
<b>SITC</b>	Standard International Trade Classification
<b>TARIC</b>	Integrated Tariff of the European Union
<b>TEC</b>	Trade by enterprise characteristics
<b>TIC</b>	Trade by invoicing currency
<b>VAT</b>	Value added tax
<b>VIIES</b>	VAT Information Exchange System



## Symbols

The following flags point out changes compared with the previous edition of this publication:

**New** Flag for new questions

**Rev** Flag for questions to which answers have been revised in order to reflect the latest changes

**More** Flag for questions to which answers have been further elaborated

# 1

## Introduction

### 1.1. What is the purpose of this manual?

The purpose of this manual is to explain to a wide range of users the main concepts and definitions relating to international trade in goods statistics (ITGS). ITGS cover the trade between EU Member States and with non-EU countries. This manual shows how statistics on trade are collected, compiled, processed and published at European level.

The manual is one of Eurostat's main reference documents to help non-expert users understand the nature and functioning of ITGS. Questions not answered in this manual can be addressed to the Eurostat Central User Support at: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/xtnetassist/support-centres.htm>.

The users who are familiar with the Comext database can find interesting hints for a better use and understanding of its content via the 'Tips for Comext users'.

### 1.2. What is the structure of the manual?

After a short introduction presenting Eurostat's ITGS webpage ([chapter 1](#)), the manual provides definitions and other background information on EU international trade in goods statistics ([chapter 2](#)).

[Chapter 3](#) introduces the main concepts relating to inclusion or exclusion of goods in ITGS.

[Chapter 4](#) explains how ITGS data is collected, and how it is further harmonised in the statistical system.

[Chapter 5](#) provides the users with information about data compilation in the reporting countries. In addition, it gives an overview of the steps taken by Eurostat when calculating EU indicators, protecting statistical confidentiality or building indexes.

[Chapter 6](#) presents the main concepts relevant to data quality (accuracy, comparability, coherence), and shows how they apply to ITGS.

[Chapter 7](#) combines all aspects relating to data release.

[Chapter 8](#) guides the users on how to find data, metadata and publications on Eurostat's website.

The annexes to the manual are:

- [Annex 1](#) – List of goods or movements excluded from ITGS
- [Annex 2](#) – Compilation rules applicable to specific goods or movements
- [Annex 3](#) – Alphanumeric product codes in Comext
- [Annex 4](#) – National authorities involved in ITGS in all EU member states

- [Annex 5](#) – Overview of the datasets in Easy Comext
- [Annex 6](#) – Supplementary units in the bulk download files
- [Glossary](#)

## 1.3. How is the information on European ITGS presented online?

The [Eurostat website](#) provides access to various sections dealing with specific statistical themes. One of these sections relates to [international trade in goods statistics](#) (ITGS).

The page provides basic definitions and information about the structure of ITGS data. It is also an entry point towards:

- **Complete database:** the page presenting the Eurostat database for the statistical theme International trade in goods (and services);
- **Selected tables:** the page presenting all Eurostat tables corresponding to the statistical theme international trade in goods (and services);
- **Comext:** the reference database for detailed statistics on international trade in goods, from which all other datasets presented in the Eurostat database are derived;
- **Trade by enterprise characteristics** datasets and tables;
- **Information on data**, presenting the data available and the distinction between long-term and short-term indicators;
- **Frequently asked questions** about ITGS;
- **Visualisations** – offering a range of infographics tools;
- **Publications**, grouped by collections, ranging from analysis of current topical issues to quality reports;
- **Statistics explained**, a website in wiki format presenting the main ITGS concepts and statistical analyses;
- **Methodology**, providing links to metadata such as guidelines and nomenclatures;
- **Legislation**, providing links towards EU legal acts as available in the Official Journal of the EU; and
- **Links to further information:** contacts of other EU and international institutions and bodies releasing data or methodological information relating to ITGS.

All the data are available free of charge. Different 'entry points' to the datasets offer a variety of tools to select and extract the data. See [chapter 8](#) for an overview of the available data and the ways to access them.



## 1.4. Which are the main statistical dimensions in the ITGS datasets?

International trade in goods statistics are published in different datasets. The frequency at which the data are compiled (data periodicity) and the product nomenclature differ depending on the dataset, but the following statistical dimensions are always available:

- reporting country: country or geo-economic area (EU or euro area);
- partner country: EU Member State, non-EU country or geo-economic area;
- reference period: month or year;
- trade flows: import and export;
- product according to the relevant classification; and
- trade indicators, namely the trade value (in euro); net mass (in kilograms); and, if applicable, the trade quantity in supplementary units like, for example, litres or square metres.

## 1.5. Where can I find further guidance and metadata on ITGS?

Further guidance and metadata on ITGS are available from the following sources:

- The [Statistics explained on international trade in goods page](#) – it provides an overview of all ‘Statistics Explained’ articles dealing with international trade in goods.
- The [International trade in goods - Manuals and guidelines - page](#) – in addition to the present user manual, it provides access to the following publications:
- The [European business statistics compilers’ manual for international trade in goods statistics – detailed data](#). This manual provides clarifications and concrete examples to help the National Statistical Authorities involved in the compilation of European ITGS to better interpret and apply the complex legislation on ITGS.
- The [European business statistics compilers’ manual for international trade in goods statistics – aggregated data](#). It provides definitions and practical instructions regarding the preparation and transmission of aggregated data to Eurostat.
- The [European business statistics compilers’ manual for international trade in goods statistics – trade by invoicing currency \(TIC\)](#). It provides definitions and practical instructions regarding the preparation and transmission of TIC data to Eurostat.
- The [European business statistics compilers’ manual for international trade in goods statistics – trade by enterprise characteristics \(TEC\)](#). It provides definitions and practical instructions regarding the preparation and transmission of TEC data to Eurostat.
- The [European business statistics geonomenclature applicable to European statistics on international trade in goods](#) — it provides the compilers and users of European ITGS with information on the nomenclature used to classify the reporting and partner countries. It includes the latest version of the ‘*nomenclature of countries and territories for the European statistics on international trade in goods and on the geographical breakdown for other business statistics*’ — known as the ‘Geonomenclature’ or ‘GEONOM’ —, as well as information on how to interpret the content of this country classification and understand the evolution of its codes. A further aim of this publication is to document the geographical and economic areas covered by the trade in goods statistics as disseminated by Eurostat.
- The [Quality monitoring page](#), featuring the **Quality report on European statistics on international trade in goods**. The latter allows users to assess the quality of ITGS published by Eurostat. The data

quality is measured against indicators covering the following components: relevance, accuracy, timeliness and punctuality, accessibility and clarity, comparability and coherence.

- The [International trade reference metadata](#) in Euro SDMX Metadata Structure (ESMS) — these metadata cover methodological, qualitative and quantitative information following a standardized structure.
- The [Legislation on European business statistics and international trade in goods page](#) — it provides a complete overview of the legal acts laying down the rules to be followed for the statistical data collection, compilation and dissemination.
- The [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

# 2

## Background information

### 2.1. What are European statistics on international trade in goods?

International trade in goods statistics (ITGS) published by Eurostat measure the value and quantity of goods traded between the EU Member States (**intra-EU trade**) and goods traded by the EU Member States with non-EU countries (**extra-EU trade**). Their aim is to measure the physical flow of goods.

- 'Goods' means all movable property including electrical energy and natural gas.
- 'European statistics' means that the statistics published by Eurostat are compiled by National Statistical Authorities in the Member States on the basis of the concepts and definitions set out in the EU ITGS legislation.
- 'National statistics' refer to ITGS published at national level by the Member States and compiled on the basis of national rules that may differ from EU rules.

European ITGS are the official, harmonised source of information about the exports, imports and trade balances of the EU, its Member States and the euro area.

### 2.2. Who uses ITGS and what for?

#### 2.2.1. Types of users and their needs

As international trade forms a major part of the world economy, statistics on trade in goods are an instrument of primary importance for numerous users, including public and private sector decision makers. For example, international trade in goods statistics:

- inform about recent and long-term developments in trade and economy;
- help EU businesses conduct market research and define their commercial strategy;
- enable EU authorities to prepare multilateral and bilateral negotiations under the common commercial policy;
- enable EU authorities to evaluate the progress of the Single Market and the integration of EU economies;
- enable EU authorities to define and implement anti-dumping policies; and
- constitute an essential source of information for other statistical domains, such as balance of payments statistics or national accounts.

Statistics meet the users' needs in a variety of ways. Users may need either annual aggregated or detailed monthly data on products or partner countries. They may be interested in trade values,

whether in current or at constant prices. Alternatively, their interest may be in quantities rather than in values. Eurostat strives to meet these needs. In addition, statistics adapt to a changing environment, such as changes due to globalisation.

### 2.2.2. Use of trade data in other statistical fields

An important use of international trade statistics in most countries is as a data source for estimating the components of the balance of payments and the national accounts that relate to trade in goods. The most appropriate definitions for these components are internationally agreed in the *Balance of Payments Manual (Sixth edition)* (BPM6) published by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 2009 and in the *System of National Accounts — 2008* adopted by the United Nations.

The United Nations' [International Merchandise Trade Statistics: Concepts and Definitions 2010 \(IMTS 2010\)](#) manual takes into account the recommendations of BPM6 and recommends a move towards harmonising different concepts. However, there are methodological differences between the international trade in goods statistics and the goods account of the balance of payments in terms of, for example, scope, valuation and some other specific aspects. These reflect both the differing priorities of users and the problems of data collection due to the more detailed requirements of international trade statistics.

The purpose of this manual is not to discuss in detail the adjustments that need to be made to international trade statistics to convert them into figures on a balance of payments basis (where it is the trade statistics that are the source of the balance of payments figures). Users should nevertheless bear in mind that these adjustments may have a substantial effect on the figures, for example as a result of the different methods of valuation used for imports. A reconciliation table between trade and balance of payments statistics is available in Annex 3 of the [European business statistics compilers' manual for international trade in goods statistics – detailed data](#).

## 2.3. Who is responsible for European ITGS?

The EU Member States have the responsibility to compile European trade in goods statistics in line with the established rules and send them to Eurostat within the legal deadlines. The national authority responsible for ITGS in the Member States is usually the national statistical institute, but in some Member States it may involve customs or tax authorities and, for Belgium, even the National Bank. In practice, the division of responsibilities for collecting, processing and publishing trade data may be quite complex and vary from one Member State to another. The list of national authorities involved in ITGS is available in [Annex 4](#).

As the Statistical Office of the European Union, Eurostat has the responsibility for overseeing and developing the work on ITGS, for making the trade in goods statistics of the EU, its Member States and the euro area publicly available and for ensuring high quality and harmonisation of the data. In addition, Eurostat prepares legislative proposals, monitors their correct application and provides methodological and technical support. This work is carried out in close cooperation with the Member States in working groups and task forces.

# 2.4. Where can I find the rules governing European ITGS?

## 2.4.1. EU legislation on ITGS <sup>Rev</sup>

The rules governing European ITGS are laid down in EU regulations. The [‘Legislation’ page](#) incorporates the relevant international recommendations and provisions.

Generally speaking, the EU law (the *acquis communautaire*) comprises primary and secondary legislation:

- **The primary legislation** consists mainly of the Treaties, principally the Treaty of Lisbon which came into force in 2009. It incorporates and amends the provisions of founding treaties such as the Treaty of Rome and the Maastricht Treaty, which entered into force in 1958 and 1993 respectively. Note that the recent [Agreement on the withdrawal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community](#) (OJ L29 of 31.01.2020) also forms part of the primary legislation.
- **The secondary legislation** consists of regulations, directives, decisions, recommendations and opinions based on the Treaties. Regulations are directly applicable in the Member States, so no national laws are needed to implement them.

**As regards the production of ITGS, the legislation aims at ensuring that all the Member States follow a harmonised approach.** It sets out the rules, concepts and definitions to be applied and the obligations of every stakeholder in European ITGS. The EU provisions apply to European statistics only; they do not regulate the methods of compiling national statistics.

**The provisions on European ITGS are set out in several regulations.** The basic regulations adopted by the European Parliament and the Council establish the essential rules governing business statistics including ITGS. The implementing provisions are adopted by the European Commission and contain more details on implementing certain articles of the basic regulations. The Commission can lay down implementing rules only for the articles for which it has been given the implementing power.

The EU regulations and classifications for international trade in goods are regularly revised to reflect changes in the economic and administrative environment and in the needs of users. The latest revision of the EU basic regulation on ITGS took place in 2019 and became applicable in 2022.

The [new regulation](#) repeals the two basic acts on ITGS which addressed intra- and extra-EU trade separately and establishes a common legal framework for trade and business statistics.

## LEGISLATION APPLICABLE AS OF 1 JANUARY 2022

### Basic regulation

[Regulation \(EU\) 2019/2152](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 November 2019 on European business statistics repealing 10 legal acts in the field of business statistics.

### Implementing provisions

- [Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2020/1197](#) of 30 July 2020 laying down technical specifications and arrangements pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2019/2152 of the European Parliament and of the Council on European business statistics repealing 10 legal acts in the field of business statistics
- [Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2021/1225](#) of 27 July 2021 specifying the arrangements for the data exchanges pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2019/2152 of the European Parliament and of the Council and amending Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/1197, as regards the Member State of extra-EU export and the obligations of reporting units.
- [Delegated Regulation \(EU\) 2021/1704](#) of 14 July 2021 supplementing Regulation (EU) 2019/2152 of the European Parliament and of the Council by further specifying the details for the statistical information to be provided by tax and customs authorities and amending its Annexes V and VI of Regulation (EU) 2019/2152.

While the basic regulation and Commission implementing regulation (EU) 2020/1197 apply from 1 January 2021, the provisions regarding ITGS take effect from 1 January 2022.

## LEGISLATION APPLICABLE UP TO 31 DECEMBER 2021

### Intra-EU trade legislation (no longer in force)

#### Basic regulation

[Regulation \(EC\) No 638/2004](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council on Community statistics relating to the trading of goods between Member States

amended by

- [Regulation \(EC\) No 222/2009](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council
- [Commission Regulation \(EU\) No 1093/2013](#)
- [Regulation \(EU\) No 659/2014](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council

#### Implementing provisions

[Commission Regulation \(EC\) No 1982/2004](#) implementing Regulation (EC) No 638/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on Community statistics relating to the trading of goods between Member States

amended by

- [Commission Regulation \(EC\) No 1915/2005](#)
- [Commission Regulation \(EU\) No 91/2010](#)
- [Commission Regulation \(EU\) No 96/2010](#)
- [Commission Regulation \(EU\) No 1093/2013](#)

Note: This set of legal acts is commonly referred to as 'Intrastat legislation'.

### Extra-EU trade legislation (no longer in force)

#### Basic regulation

[Regulation \(EC\) No 471/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council](#) on Community statistics relating to external trade with non-member countries

amended by

- [Regulation \(EU\) 2016/1724 of the European Parliament and of the Council](#)
- [Commission Regulation \(EU\) 2016/2119](#)

#### Implementing provisions

[Commission Regulation \(EU\) No 113/2010](#) implementing [Regulation \(EC\) No 471/2009](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council on Community statistics relating to external trade with non-member countries, as regards trade coverage, definition of the data, compilation of statistics on trade by business characteristics and by invoicing currency, and specific goods or movements

- amended by [Commission Regulation \(EU\) 2016/2119](#)

[Commission Regulation \(EU\) No 92/2010](#) implementing [Regulation \(EC\) No 471/2009](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council on Community statistics relating to external trade with non-member countries, as regards data exchange between customs authorities and national statistical authorities, compilation of statistics and quality assessment

- amended by [Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2016/1253](#)

Note: This set of legal acts is commonly referred to as 'Extrastat legislation'.

There exists a range of other European legislative acts related to ITGS. The regulation on European statistics — [Regulation \(EC\) No 223/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council](#) — provides a reference framework for all statistics, including those for trade, the customs regulations — particularly the [Union Customs Code](#) — and regulations for product and country nomenclatures.

Legal provisions regarding the nomenclature of countries and territories for the European ITGS as included in the [Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2020/1470](#) entered into force on 1 January 2021.

The '[Legislation](#)' page of the 'International trade in goods' section on Eurostat's website presents the general statistics legislation, as well as the provisions impacting ITGS in nomenclatures, customs and fiscal (VAT) legislation. All legal texts are also available online on the [Eur-Lex website](#).

### 2.4.2. EBS compilers' manual on detailed data

As its name suggests, the [European business statistics compilers' manual for international trade in goods statistics – detailed data](#) primarily addresses the compilers of ITGS. The compilers' manual aims to facilitate the application of the legal provisions and thus ensure harmonisation of compilation practices among the EU Member States. The content also covers instructions for data compilation and transmission to Eurostat.

### 2.4.3. International recommendations and provisions relevant to ITGS

In addition to the EU legal requirements, there are a number of international recommendations and conventions relevant to ITGS, although they do not generally have direct legal force. Many of these

recommendations are contained in the United Nations Statistics Division publication '[International Merchandise Trade Statistics: Concepts and Definitions \(IMTS 2010\)](#)' and the accompanying '[International Merchandise Trade Statistics: Compilers' Manual](#)' which are international reference publications on this subject. The compilation of IMTS in the vast majority of countries is based on data collected by Customs administrations. Therefore, instructions and recommendations by IMTS 2010 for the compilation of statistics are directly linked with the definitions, practices and procedures applied by Customs. These documents are regularly updated to reflect any changes in the international trade environment.

The EU legislation has been aligned to the most possible extent with IMTS 2010. However, due to specific features of the EU - a customs union with no customs controls at the borders between the EU Member States - the European ITGS differs in some aspects from the international IMTS 2010.

A set of definitions concerning customs issues that are relevant for some data on trade statistics is listed in the [Kyoto Convention](#) (International convention on the simplification and harmonisation of customs procedures).

## 2.5. Is the distinction between intra-EU and extra-EU trade still in place after the repeal of the Intrastat and Extrastat legislation acts? <sup>New</sup>

Yes, legal provisions for intra-EU and extra-EU trade remain distinct, whenever necessary, even after their integration into a single legislative framework: [Regulation \(EU\) 2019/2152](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council. For ITGS, the new 'EBS' legislation has been applicable since 1 January 2022.

**Intra-EU** trade statistics record the movement of goods between Member States.

**Extra-EU** trade statistics record goods imported and exported by the EU from and to non-EU countries.

### Tip for Comext users

The UK became an extra-EU partner country in February 2020, with the entry into force of the Agreement on the withdrawal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from the European Union (Withdrawal agreement). During the transition period that followed for the remaining months of 2020, the UK remained part of the Single market.

In this context, 2020 data reported by the UK to Eurostat are available as follows:

- January data are included in all EU datasets;
- February to October data are included in the non-EU datasets folder 'Trade of the United Kingdom (UK) since February 2020'.

As from reference month January 2021, the trade data for reporter United Kingdom (Northern Ireland) are included in the non-EU dataset folder 'Trade of the United Kingdom (Northern Ireland) since 2021'. Even though included in a non-EU dataset, the trade reported by the United Kingdom for Northern Ireland is still subject to the provisions applicable to intra-EU trade statistics. This is in application of the Protocol on Ireland / Northern Ireland included in the Withdrawal Agreement.

# 3

## Scope of ITGS

### 3.1. What is the scope of ITGS?

In line with the international recommendations (IMTS 2010), the aim of international trade statistics is to record all goods which:

- add to the stock of material resources of a country by entering its economic territory (**imports**);
- subtract from the stock of material resources of a country by leaving its economic territory (**exports**).

**EU ITGS record the flows of goods to and from the statistical territories of the Member States.**

As a matter of principle, international trade in goods statistics relate to the **physical movement of goods across the (national) border** of the reporting country. Adding to or subtracting from the stock of material resources means that movements of goods 'in transit' through a Member State are not recorded in ITGS.

An exception to the principle of physical movement of goods across the border is applied for products like vessels and aircraft, or spacecraft. For these cases, the principle of **transfer of economic ownership** applies. This 'economic' characteristic is part of the ITGS legislation since 2010, to respond to the needs of National Accounts and balance of payments, for which ITGS are one of the primary data sources.

### 3.2. How is the statistical territory defined?

At EU level, the 'statistical territory' of a Member State corresponds to its **customs territory, with one exception**: the statistical territory of Germany includes Heligoland but the customs territory does not.

### 3.3. Which trade system is applicable to European ITGS?

The UN IMTS manual defines **two trade systems** for ITGS:

- the general trade system; and
- the special trade system.

They are both closely linked with customs procedures.

Under the **general trade system**, the statistical territory includes customs warehouses, all types of free zones, free circulation area and premises for inward processing. The UN recommends implementing the general trade system for ITGS.

The **special trade system** is the narrower concept: here the customs warehouses and all types of free zones and premises for inward processing are excluded from the statistical territory by strict definition. Only imports and exports of the free circulation area are recorded. The **relaxed definition** of the special trade adds industrial free zones and premises of inward processing to the statistical territory.

The European ITGS use different definitions of the trade system:

- extra-EU trade follows the relaxed definition of the special trade system, whereas
- intra-EU trade is close to the general trade system.

Therefore, for extra-EU trade, goods from a non-EU country imported into customs warehouses are not recorded unless they subsequently go into free circulation in the country of receipt (or are placed under the customs procedures for inward processing or, until April 2016, for processing under customs control). Conversely, outgoing goods from customs warehouses are not recorded as exports.

The EBS legislation does not define the scope of extra- and intra-EU trade statistics directly referring to the trade system to be applied. Instead, it lists the flows of goods to be covered in intra-EU trade statistics and the flows of goods in relation to certain customs procedures that have to be recorded for extra-EU trade statistics. This amounts to a slightly different approach compared to IMTS 2010 UN recommendations.

Note that some EU Member States publish their national figures applying the general trade concept to all their international trade (see item 6.2.5 [Why can European data differ from national data](#) for more information).

## 3.4. Which are the exceptions to the physical movement principle? <sup>Rev</sup>

In ITGS, the physical movement principle relates to the physical movement of goods across the national border of the reporting country. However, the following exceptions or particularities apply to European ITGS:

- **Trade in ships and aircraft** — For seagoing ships and medium and large airplanes, the physical movement is replaced by the transfer of the economic ownership of the ship/aircraft between a resident company and a non-resident one, irrespectively if the goods physically enter or leave the territory of the reporting Member State.
- **Supplies to ships and aircraft** — The supplies to ships and aircraft on the territory of the reporting Member State which are destined to leave the territory of this Member State on-board are accounted as exports to the Member State or non-EU country in which the economic owner of the ship or aircraft is resident. Note that this approach creates an asymmetry in ITGS as a mirroring acquisition by the ship or the aircraft falls outside the scope of ITGS, for simplification purposes.
- **Goods covered by the Single Authorisation for Simplified Procedure (SASP)** — This customs simplification allows that the customs declaration is lodged in one Member State while the goods are located in another Member State, in which they have either arrived from a non-EU country (imports) or from which they are transported to a non-EU country (exports).
- Before 2022, although goods did physically cross the border of an EU country, the trade flow under this customs procedure had to be reported by the (other) EU country, the one where the customs declaration was lodged. For this reason, SASP trade was an exception to the physical movement principle. As from 1 January 2022, under the new EBS legislation, the trade flow must be reported by

the Member State where the goods are located, regardless of the Member State where the customs declaration was lodged.

- **Goods in transit** — Cross-border movements of goods which, for transport related reasons, enter a Member State with the aim of reaching another Member State (intra-EU transit) fall outside the scope of ITGS. Extra-EU transit occurs when, for transport related reasons, movements of goods cross the border of a Member State, in their transit from an extra-EU country towards another extra-EU country. All these goods in simple transit fall outside the scope of ITGS.

### 3.5. Which goods and movements are included in ITGS? <sup>Rev</sup>

ITGS include all movable property if they 'add to or subtract from the stock of material resources' as defined in IMTS 2010. In practice, however, some problems inevitably arise when it comes to define which goods or movements are to be included.

The Combined Nomenclature classifies the goods for which statistics are collected on the basis of around 9 700 product codes. [Annex 2](#) presents additional provisions (including relevant CN codes) regarding goods and movements to be included in European ITGS according to the EU legislation for:

- vessels and aircraft and goods delivered to vessels and aircraft;
- offshore installations;
- sea products;
- spacecraft;
- electrical energy; and
- natural gas (in gaseous state).

In ITGS, these cases are referred to as 'specific goods or movements' because they require specific data sources or compilation techniques.

Users should be aware that the following goods and movements are included in ITGS:

- non-monetary gold;
- means of payment and securities not in circulation;
- processing trade; (see [3.7](#) for more information)
- direct trade with/by private consumers (incl. distance sales);
- call-off and consignment stock (these are goods intended for sale but not actually sold at the time they cross the frontier);
- goods on financial lease (a financial lease effectively transfers ownership of the goods to the lessee);
- goods traded between companies under common ownership (although this may raise problems of valuation);
- goods traded on government account;
- industrial plant.

### 3.6. Why are some goods and movements excluded from ITGS?

Although they may physically cross the borders of Member States, some goods or movements are excluded from ITGS because they do not 'add to or subtract from the stock of material resources' as defined in IMTS 2010. This is for instance the case of monetary gold and means of payment, goods for temporary use under certain conditions, goods for repair or software downloaded from the internet. It is also the case for goods in simple transit.

Other exclusions are due to methodological reasons, as for example non-commercial goods declared orally to customs authorities, or commercial goods declared orally and falling under the extra-EU trade statistical threshold of EUR 1 000 in value or 1 000 kg in net mass.

The list of exclusions as provided in the legal act is available in [Annex 1](#) of this manual. See as well section [3.5](#) for the list of related goods included in European ITGS.

## 3.7. Is processing trade included in ITGS? <sup>New</sup>

Yes. If goods move across countries' borders in connection with processing transactions, they are in the scope of ITGS (both intra-EU and extra-EU trade statistics). This holds for both the raw materials and the semi-finished products sent out to be processed, as well as the processed goods returning after processing even if there is no change of ownership (direct application of the cross-border movement principle).

Processing covers activities with the aim to obtain or produce a new or significantly improved commodity, by means of: manufacturing, transformation, construction, assembling, enhancement, renovation. The following operations are frequently considered to be processing activities. Note that the list is not exhaustive:

- Manufacturing/assembly of goods (e.g., semiconductors);
- Oil refining, gold refining, etc.;
- Conservation (e.g., by the addition of preservatives);
- Treatment (e.g., against parasites or rust);
- Mixing goods of different qualities to produce goods of a new quality;
- Labelling of goods, provided the labels are part of a sale transaction; if not, labelling is a service;
- Bottling of liquid (e.g., wine from barrels);
- Canning of goods (e.g., tinned food);
- Making up of textiles into products (e.g., clothing, handbags, curtains);
- Dilution or concentration of liquids (e.g., orange juice);
- Uranium enrichment.

In trade with non-EU countries, processing activities may be identified through the inward or the outward processing customs procedure:

- **Inward processing** is a customs procedure that allows imported raw materials or semi-manufactured goods to be processed for re-export within the EU, without a requirement that the (EU) manufacturers have to pay customs duty and VAT on the goods being used.
- **Outward processing** is a customs procedure allowing the export of Union goods for processing abroad and the re-import of the processed products under total or partial duty relief.

### Tip for Comext users

Information about inward and outward processing is available under the dimension 'statistical procedure' in the dataset 'EU trade since 1988 by statistical procedure, by HS2-4-6 and CN8'.

## 3.8. What are 'Union' vs 'non-Union' goods?

The EU legislation distinguishes between 'Union' and 'non-Union' goods. The term '**Union**' was introduced by the Lisbon Treaty which entered into force on 1 December 2009. It replaced the term 'Community'. This change is reflected in all new legal acts from 2010.

The terms 'Union' or 'non-Union' goods are defined by EU customs legislation.

- **Union goods** are in general goods entirely obtained/produced in the European Union or released for free circulation after importation from a non-EU country. Those goods can move freely within the EU. They are recorded in intra-EU trade statistics as long as their move is not only transport-inherent. They are recorded in extra-EU trade statistics in the case they leave the Union customs territory to be exported to a non-EU country.
- **Non-Union goods** are goods which do not have Union goods status. They are recorded in extra-EU trade statistics as imports if:
  - they enter the EU customs territory and are released for free circulation; or
  - they temporarily enter the EU customs territory for the customs procedure of inward processing.

### Can non-Union goods be recorded in intra-EU trade statistics?

**Yes**, intra-EU trade statistics cover both Union and non-Union goods, although non-Union goods do not refer to the usual case. Those non-Union goods have entered temporarily the EU and were placed under inward processing. They can move within the EU — cases where several Member States are involved in the inward processing — but still under customs supervision.

### Can non-Union goods be recorded in extra-EU trade exports?

**Yes**, non-Union goods may also be recorded in extra-EU exports. It happens when non-Union goods put under inward processing within the EU are exported after the processing.

Note that Union goods that are taken out of the EU customs territory usually lose their 'Union' status and become non-Union goods.

## 3.9. Which Union / non-Union goods are included in intra-EU trade?

Intra-EU trade statistics record the movement of goods between Member States. Note that movements of goods 'in transit' through a Member State are not recorded.

The EU legislation distinguishes between 'Union' and 'non-Union' goods:

- **Union goods** are those that circulate between Member States and which are not under customs control. These are said to be in 'free circulation'. Note that goods are in free circulation either when they are entirely obtained/produced in the EU or when they are released for free circulation after importation from a non-EU country.
- **Non-Union goods** on the other hand are those originating from outside the EU. They become Union goods and are released into free circulation after being subject to import formalities.

**Intra-EU imports** into a given Member State include:

- Union goods, except goods which are in transit between Member States; or

- non-Union goods earlier placed under the inward processing customs procedure in another EU country (or, until April 2016, for processing under customs control).

**Intra-EU exports** from a given Member State include goods destined for another Member State which are:

- Union goods, except goods which are in transit between Member States; or
- non-Union goods placed in the Member State of export under the inward processing customs procedure (or, until April 2016, non-Union goods which are maintained under the inwards customs procedure or released for free circulation into the Member state of import).

## 3.10. Which Union/ non-Union goods are included in extra-EU trade?

Extra-EU trade statistics record goods imported and exported by the EU from and to non-EU countries (note that movements of goods 'in transit' through a Member State are not recorded).

**Extra-EU imports** include goods entering the statistical territory of the Union in accordance with the Union Customs code for:

- release for free circulation including end-use; or
- [inward processing](#) (usually goods intended for subsequent re-export).

**Extra-EU exports** include goods leaving the statistical territory of the Union for:

- export or
- [outward processing](#).

They also include:

- non-Union goods temporarily re-exported for further processing;
- Union goods taken out of the customs territory of the Union after having being placed under the end-use procedure;
- re-exported non-Union goods, to discharge the inward processing procedure.

## 3.11. Are goods in transit recorded in ITGS?

Goods in **simple transit** are not recorded in ITGS while goods in **quasi-transit** are.

**Simple transit** occurs in the context of trade between Member States or with non-EU countries when goods are brought into or taken out of a Member State with the exclusive purpose of reaching another Member State/country. By 'exclusive purpose' it is understood that, in the transit Member State, no change of ownership takes place in the form of an acquisition, nor customs clearance in the case of non-Union goods. Goods are simply transported through the national territory. They may stop but only for transport or logistic reasons. Goods in simple transit are excluded from the trade in goods statistics of the transit Member State.

**Quasi-transit** occurs only in the context of trade with non-EU countries, when the goods are exported from (or are destined to) one Member State while customs clearance takes place in another Member State without this Member State having acquired ownership of the goods. In quasi-transit, neither the exporter in case of extra-EU exports, nor the importer in case of extra-EU imports is established in the Member State in which customs clearance takes place. Goods in quasi-transit are included in the trade

in goods statistics of the quasi-transit Member State, as imports followed by exports. Even if it has no impact on the trade balance of this Member State, the inclusion of quasi-transit changes the trade turnover figures (an effect known as 'the Rotterdam effect'). See section 6.1.4 for more information. In order to enhance the economic relevance of their ITGS national figures, some Member States exclude quasi-transit from the data they publish at national level. Depending on the Member State, this compilation method can bring significant differences between national and European figures relating to imports and exports (not for trade balance). See more under section 6.2.5.

# 4

## Data sources and definitions

### 4.1. How are ITGS data collected?

Data are collected differently for extra-EU and intra-EU trade.

The compilation of extra-EU trade statistics relies primarily on the **customs declarations** submitted by businesses or, in some cases, by private individuals involved in an international transaction of goods with a non-EU country.

For the compilation of intra-EU trade statistics, the standard data source is the **statistical declaration** collected monthly by the [national statistical authorities](#) from the largest traders (traders whose annual total trade value exceeds a certain threshold). In addition, national statistical authorities estimate for each month the volume of trade of small and medium traders from their fiscal declarations (intra-EU acquisitions and supplies reported to the national tax administration).

### 4.2. Which were the main changes to European ITGS over time?

Traditionally, ITGS are based on the data collected by customs authorities on trade transactions between countries. Customs declarations are used as the basic data source for statistical purposes, providing detailed information on exports and imports of goods with a geographical breakdown. The developments and changes in customs systems therefore have direct implications for the compilation of statistical data. The harmonisation of customs procedures in the EU and introduction of the Combined Nomenclature (CN) and the Single Administrative Document (SAD) in 1988 have had a positive impact on the development of trade statistics as well.

The first piece of EU legislation on ITGS was adopted in 1975; it provided general guidelines on data collection and required Member States to provide data to Eurostat. The advent of the Single Market on 1 January 1993, with its removal of customs formalities between Member States and subsequent loss of trade statistics data sources, required the establishment of a new data collection system: Intrastat, based on statistical surveys. Intrastat was introduced by Council Regulation (EEC) No 3330/91 on the statistics relating to the trading of goods between Member States and started to be applied in 1993. Extrastat was the term used for statistics relating to the extra-EU trade.

After 1 January 2022, with the new EBS regulation, the Intrastat and Extrastat terms to designate two different data collection systems are no longer used in the EU legislation.

The [intra-EU data collection system \(former Intrastat\)](#) can be characterised as follows:

- data are collected from traders, who are VAT registered;

- it is closely interlinked with the VAT system relating to intra-EU trade to ensure the completeness and quality of the statistical data;
- a system of thresholds is established to simplify data provision and reduce the overall burden on traders, particularly small ones;
- after 1 January 2022, a mandatory microdata exchange system on export data between the Member States started to be put in place. The long-term goal is to reuse statistical information and reduce the administrative burden on the providers of statistical information.

The extra-EU data collection system remains closely linked to customs' provisions.

### 4.3. How is the reporting country defined? <sup>Rev</sup>

The reporting country is the country compiling and sending data to Eurostat. As a general principle, the EU Member States should record an import when the goods enter their statistical territory and an export when the goods leave that territory. Exceptions cover goods in simple transit, as well as particular types of goods or movements. Goods are in principle recorded when adding to or subtracting from the stock of national material resources or, in the context of extra-EU trade, when customs formalities are applied.

The '*nomenclature of countries and territories for the European statistics on international trade in goods and on the geographical breakdown for other business statistics*', known as the '*Geonomenclature*', provides the country codes to be used. Depending on the dataset, an alpha-2 coding or a 3-digit numerical coding applies.

#### Tip for Comext users

- Before 1 January 2022, in the case of extra-EU trade, the reporting country was the Member State where the customs declaration was lodged, except in the case of [SASP](#);
- After 1 January 2022, the reporting country is the Member State in which the goods are located, regardless of the Member State where the customs declaration was lodged.

## 4.4. How is the partner country defined?

### 4.4.1. General rule <sup>Rev</sup>

#### Definition according to the trade flow

<b>Extra- EU exports</b>	The partner country is the non-EU country, which is presumed to be the destination of the goods, i.e. to which it is agreed between the parties of the export contract that the goods are to be delivered.
<b>Extra- EU imports</b>	<p>The partner country is the country of origin of the goods, as defined under EU's customs legislation. These provisions are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• goods wholly obtained in a single country have their origin in that country;</li> <li>• where in the actual production of goods more than one country is involved, the goods originate in the country where the last substantial processing or working took place.</li> </ul> <p>For several goods, customs provisions have concretised the very general term 'substantial processing or working'; consequently, if the conditions for 'substantial processing or working' are not met in one country involved in the production, the goods keep their initial origin.</p>
<b>Intra- EU exports</b>	The partner country is the Member State, which is presumed to be the destination of the goods, i.e. to which it is agreed between the parties of the export contract that the goods are to be delivered.
<b>Intra- EU imports</b>	The partner country is the Member State of consignment. This is the Member State from which the goods were actually exported to the Member State of import of the goods according to the export/import contract.

#### Tip for Comext users

The different definitions of EU import flows brought an important change in statistical concepts for the EU trade with the UK after Brexit:

- Until the end of 2020, the partner country UK was the country of consignment. This meant that goods imported by EU countries from the UK were physically transported out of the UK, but could have originated in a country other than the UK.
- As of 1 January 2021, the Protocol on Ireland / Northern Ireland applies. As a result, data on imports from the UK are based on a mixed concept:
  - The concept of country of consignment continues to be used for imports from Northern Ireland (Northern Ireland being part of the Internal market); while
  - The concept of country of origin applies for the imports from the UK (excluding Northern Ireland), as for any other extra-EU partner country.

Where goods pass through a country or a Member State for purely transport related reasons (including consolidation of freight), the entry into or the exit from this country has no effect on defining the partner country. This is called transit.

The partner country code is mentioned in the '*nomenclature of countries and territories for the European statistics on international trade in goods and on the geographical breakdown for other business statistics*', known as the '[Geonomenclature](#)'.

## Example of reporting changes in trade with UK before and after 2021

In the situation of a German business importing a good from China, which is dispatched to Germany from the UK:

- Before 2021 – Assuming that the good was put into free circulation in the UK, the transaction was recorded as import by Germany from the UK in accordance with rules in force for intra-EU trade (the UK representing the country of consignment).
- After 2021 – The entry into force of the Protocol on Ireland/ Northern Ireland means that the good can still be put into free circulation in Northern Ireland but no longer in the rest of the UK.
  - If the good is dispatched from Northern Ireland after being put into free circulation, the transaction is then recorded as import by Germany from Northern Ireland (as country of consignment) in accordance with rules in force for intra-EU trade.
  - If the good is dispatched from the rest of the UK, the transaction is then recorded as import by Germany from China (as country of origin) in accordance with rules in force for extra-EU trade.

### 4.4.2. Exceptions

For a limited number of very specific goods, the criterion for trade in goods is not necessarily related to the cross-border movement of the goods or to their origin, but to different criteria.

**Users can find more information on the compilation rules applying to the ‘specific goods or movements’ listed below in [Annex 2](#).**

#### Vessels and aircraft

Due to the specificities of the maritime and aviation sector, the sole criterion for trade in goods is the change of the economic ownership of the vessel or aircraft. ‘Economic ownership’ in this context means the right of a natural or legal person to claim the benefits from the operations of the vessel/aircraft and to also accept the associated risks.

Note that the ‘economic owner’ does not necessarily have to be the legal owner, as ‘economic ownership’ can also be acquired under certain leasing arrangements.

#### Goods delivered to vessels and aircraft

This comprises the delivery of products for the crew and passengers as well as for the operation of engines, machines and other equipment of vessels or aircraft. Only goods which are intended for consumption during the journey are concerned. In general, it is unlikely that these goods are taken off the vessel or aircraft again.

The criterion for trade in goods is the **economic ownership of the vessel or aircraft to which the goods were delivered.**

#### Spacecraft

Are concerned the satellites or components for space stations whose construction is completed and which are therefore technically in a state to fulfil their mission on launching.

The criterion for trade in goods is the **change of the ‘economic ownership’ of the spacecraft and more precisely, the acquisition of economic ownership of the new spacecraft by the first economic owner.**

Note that:

- the transfers of economic ownership of satellites which are in orbit are excluded from trade in goods statistics;
- the launch of vehicles is not covered by the specific provisions but treated as a movement of a 'normal' means of transport.

### **Goods delivered to or from offshore installations which are stationary on the high sea**

The criterion for trade in goods is related to the area ('exclusive economic zone' - 'EEZ') where a given non-EU country or EU Member State has the exclusive right to exploit the seabed and subsoil.

The EEZ is conceptually considered as part of the respective Member State's or non-EU country's statistical territory, so that trade in goods to or from an offshore installation is considered as trade with the respective EU Member State or non-EU country.

Note that trade in goods between two offshore installations established in areas where two different countries have exclusive rights to exploit the seabed and subsoil shall also be recorded.

### **Sea products**

'Sea products' mainly cover:

- fish catch, minerals and salvage landed after catching; and
- fish catch processed in board of factory vessels at sea, with the processed goods landed afterwards.

For trade in sea products, the non-EU country or EU Member State where the economic owner of the catching vessel is established is also to be considered for certain flows.

### **Electrical energy**

The criterion for trade in goods is the physical flow of electrical energy transferred in border-crossing electricity grids. Trade is then recorded only with neighbouring countries.

### **Natural gas in gaseous state**

The criterion for trade in goods is the physical flow of natural gas in gaseous state supplied through natural gas distribution systems.

Special provisions on natural gas concern only the natural gas which is moving through the pipeline. Natural gas in liquid state or in gaseous state which is not transported via pipelines shall be statistically treated as all other goods.

## **4.5. How are goods classified?**

Goods are classified by commodity code as set out in the EU Combined Nomenclature. In practical terms, when a business submits information on its trade, it has to provide the corresponding CN code for the goods traded.

In the Combined Nomenclature, the full commodity code for a particular product is broken down as follows:

- The first six digits are taken from the Harmonised Commodity Description and Coding System (known as the Harmonised System, or HS), developed and maintained by the World Customs Organisation. The Harmonised System is used worldwide by the majority of trading nations; it is reviewed and updated in five-year cycles (although in exceptional cases the time between updates

may differ). It was introduced in 1988 and, since then, was revised six times: in 1996, 2002, 2007, 2012, 2017 and 2022.

- The seventh and eighth digits of the EU Combined Nomenclature add a further subheading to the Harmonised System, applying customs tariffs which follow and support EU policies or provide valuable information to traders.

### Example of the eight-digit CN structure

HS Chapter	18	Cocoa and Cocoa Preparations
HS Heading	18 06	Chocolate and other food preparations containing cocoa
HS Subheading	18 06 10	Cocoa powder, containing added sugar or other sweetening matter
CN Subheading	18 06 10 15	Containing no sucrose or containing less than 5 % by weight of sucrose (including invert sugar expressed as sucrose) or isoglucose expressed as sucrose

The CN is revised annually to take account of new goods coming onto the market or outdated goods, which are no longer traded. Changes may be made as a result of requests from EU trade federations (sometimes representing Member States at national level) to reflect certain industry developments, or from European Commission Directorates-General to monitor EU policies, accommodate international requirements or respond to legal needs. Note that other classifications are often mapped to the CN to produce data from a different economic perspective.

**Table 1: Changes to the CN8 codes over time**

Year	Creations	Deletions	Total	Net change	CN Codes
2023	42	23	65	19	9 755
2022	592	350	942	242	9 736
2021	18	7	25	11	9 494
2020	47	97	144	-50	9 483
2019	7	7	14	0	9 533
2018	16	11	27	5	9 533
2017	687	573	1 260	114	9 528
2016	55	27	82	28	9 414
2015	21	14	35	7	9 386
2014	43	40	83	3	9 379
2013	35	42	77	-7	9 376
2012	907	818	1 725	89	9 383
2011	132	281	413	-149	9 294
2010	180	306	486	-126	9 443

## 4.6. When are movements of goods recorded? <sup>Rev</sup>

In theory, the reference period for the information on international trade in goods transactions is the calendar month of export or import of the goods. However, in practice the reference period for extra-EU trade is generally the calendar month during which the customs declaration is accepted by the customs authorities. The reference period for intra-EU trade may be adapted, in case of sales or purchases, to the calendar month during which the VAT on the intra-EU supplies or acquisitions becomes chargeable.

Although the vast majority of goods are recorded following the general principle, there are some exemptions for specific types of goods. Where it is difficult to record the exact month in which the goods crossed the border or where reporting simplifications are introduced, the goods may be recorded according to different rules. These deviations in recording time do not affect the analysis of the data, but they should be taken into account when mirroring bilateral trade between two countries.

### Staggered consignments (applies up to December 2021)

Where a delivery of components of a complete item in unassembled state is shipped over a period of more than one month, the reference period for imports or exports of staggered consignments may be adjusted so that the data are reported only once, i.e. in the month in which the last consignment is imported or exported. The same simplification can be applied for the delivery of complete industrial plants.

### Vessels and aircraft and spacecraft

The trade of these goods is recorded in the month in which the transfer of economic ownership of the vessel, aircraft or spacecraft took place.

## 4.7. What are the measurement units?

The volume of trade is expressed in value and quantity.

The **value** is expressed in currency unit. The **quantity** is measured in kilograms (net mass) and, when relevant, in another unit like square metres or litres (supplementary quantity).

### 4.7.1. Trade value

#### Definition

In ITGS, the trade value corresponds to the **statistical value**, i.e. to the amount which would be paid in the event of sale or purchase at the time and place the goods cross the national border of the reporting Member State.

- For the purposes of intra-EU trade in goods statistics, the statistical value is calculated on the basis of the taxable amount and its equivalent.
- For the purposes of extra-EU trade in goods statistics, the statistical value is calculated on the basis of the value of the goods adjusted, where necessary, for the incidental expenses.

The statistical value is said to be a **FOB type value** (free on board) for exports and a **CIF type value** (cost, insurance, freight) for imports:

- For exports, the statistical value includes only incidental expenses (freight, insurance) incurred on the part of the transport journey located on the territory of the exporting Member State.
- For imports, it includes only incidental expenses incurred on the part of the transport journey located outside the territory of the importing Member State.

Note that the statistical value does not include taxes on import or export, such as customs and excise duties or VAT.

In the case of **goods imported or exported in the context of processing**, the value of the goods corresponds to their total value, before and after processing, not just the value added by the processing procedure.

### Collection or estimation of the trade value

- **In extra-EU trade**, the statistical value is based on the value determined for customs purposes; therefore, there is generally no need to estimate it.
- **In intra-EU trade**, only the value which was or would have been invoiced in the case of sale or purchase is systematically collected from the reporting units. Most Member States either do not collect the statistical value at all or collect the statistical value only from the traders whose annual trade is above a certain data collection threshold. When not provided by the trader, the statistical value is estimated by the national statistical authority. The estimation is based on the invoice value and other information collected, such as the delivery terms and the mode of transport.

### Conversion from national currency to euro

Import and export trade values transmitted to Eurostat are expressed in national currency units. In Eurostat's data dissemination, all these values are expressed in euro in order to enable cross-country comparisons and the compilation of country aggregates, in particular the trade of the European Union, as one single entity.

The conversion of trade values from national currency to euro is based on average exchange rates, either monthly or annual:

- Monthly trade values are converted from national currency to euro by applying a monthly average exchange rate. Note that annual trade values derived from monthly detailed statistics correspond to the sum of monthly values already converted in euros.
- Annual trade values by enterprise characteristics (TEC data) are converted from national currency to euro on the basis of annual average exchange rates.

The monthly and annual exchange rates are available on the Eurostat website (Data navigation tree), under 'Database by themes / Economy and finance / Exchange rates / Bilateral exchange rates / Euro/ECU exchange rates':

Monthly rates: [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/ert\\_bil\\_eur\\_m/default/table?lang=en](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/ert_bil_eur_m/default/table?lang=en)

Annual rates: [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/ert\\_bil\\_eur\\_a/default/table?lang=en](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/ert_bil_eur_a/default/table?lang=en)

Related metadata: [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/metadata/en/ert\\_bil\\_eur\\_esms.htm](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/metadata/en/ert_bil_eur_esms.htm)

## 4.7.2. Net mass

### Definition

The net mass, i.e. the weight of the goods without any packaging, is a pertinent statistical information for all goods except for a few ones under HS chapter 89 'Ships, boats and floating structures' and the product code 2716 00 00 'Electrical energy'. Net mass is expressed in kilograms.

### Collection or estimation of the net mass

Under the provisions on extra-EU trade statistics, any information about the net mass (and the supplementary quantity, if applicable) is derived from the customs declaration.

Under the Intra-EU data collection system, the collection of the net mass is not always required.

Under the provisions on intra-EU trade statistics, where there is a supplementary unit laid down for a specific product code of the Combined Nomenclature, it is not mandatory to request the net mass from the reporting units. Member States can define whether the information about the net mass is systematically collected for all CN8 codes or only for part of them. **From reference year 2010 onwards, the non-collected net mass is estimated by the national statistical authority.**

See also section [5.5.3 Estimating the net mass](#).

### Missing net mass

The net mass can be missing for transactions for which the traded goods are not fully identified. The full identification of the traded goods is not required in the following cases:

- In Member States which apply the simplification for low value consignments, reporting units do not have to report the net mass for transactions below the **individual transaction threshold** (amounting to maximum EUR 1 000). All these transactions can be classified under the product code 99AAA000.
- **Deliveries to vessels and aircraft** – The net mass is only required for goods belonging to CN chapter 27 (product code 27BBB000). It is optional for goods belonging to other chapters (all gathered under product code 24BBB000).
- **Deliveries to and from offshore installations** – The net mass is only required for goods belonging to CN chapter 27 (product code 27FFF000). It is optional for goods belonging to other chapters (all gathered under product code 24FFF000).

In addition, in Member States which apply a simplification threshold, the reporting units may be exempted from providing information on the net mass if they belong to the group which benefits from the simplified reporting obligation.

Last but not least, the net mass is not relevant and therefore not available for the following goods:

- Electrical energy: 2716 00 00
- Ships, boats and floating structures:

CN 2021	CN 2022		Description
	CN 2023		
8901 10 10			Seagoing cruise ships, excursion boats and similar vessels principally designed for the transport of persons; ferry-boats of all kinds
8901 20 10			Seagoing tankers
8901 30 10			Seagoing refrigerated vessels (excl. tankers)
8901 90 10			Seagoing vessels for the transport of goods and seagoing vessels for the transport of both persons and goods
8902 00 10			Seagoing fishing vessels, factory ships and other vessels for processing or preserving fishery products
8903 91 10	8903 22 10		Seagoing sailboats
	8903 23 10		
8903 92 10	8903 32 10		Seagoing motor boats
	8903 33 10		
8904 00 10			Tugs, seagoing and for inland waterways
8904 00 91			Seagoing pusher craft
8905 10 10			Seagoing dredgers
8905 20 00			Floating or submersible drilling or production platforms
8905 90 10			Seagoing light-vessels, fire-floats, floating cranes and other vessels, the navigability of which is subsidiary to their main function
8906 10 00			Warships of all kinds
8906 90 10			Sea-going vessels, incl. lifeboats

### Why is the net mass sometimes equal to zero?

There may be several reasons:

- If the weight is lower than 0.5 kg the rounded figure without decimals shows 0;
- The net mass is hidden for confidentiality reasons (commercially sensitive information);
- The net mass was neither collected nor estimated (cases for which simplification provisions apply).

### 4.7.3. Supplementary quantity

For certain goods, a **supplementary quantity** is provided in addition to the net mass. This quantity is expressed in a unit that provides more useful information than the net mass expressed in kg. Supplementary units are, for example, litres, numbers of pieces, carats, terajoules or square metres. For each CN8 code, the Combined Nomenclature indicates whether a supplementary quantity should be provided and, if so, in which supplementary unit.

#### Tip for Comext users

- Users interested in the supplementary quantity should refer to the Combined Nomenclature to know which supplementary unit applies to which CN8 code.
- Users of the bulk download facility should refer to the related metadata to make the link between the 1-digit code appearing in the 'SU' field and the corresponding supplementary unit. Annex 6 to this manual provides the nomenclature (codes and labels) as displayed in the bulk download files.

## 4.8. Are there specific provisions for particular types of goods or movements?

Although in most cases it is possible to record the physical movement of goods crossing borders from one territory to another, there are occasions when different criteria or data sources need to be used, as it may be difficult to collect the required data using standard declarations. There are also cases which present particular classification problems.

As a result there are specific harmonised provisions for the compilation of information relating to these goods, referred to as '**specific goods or movements**' in the intra- and extra-EU legislation. The goods concerned and the related provisions are described below:

<b>Vessels, aircraft and spacecraft</b>	Trade in sea-going vessels, aircraft and spacecraft cannot be measured as they cross borders for obvious reasons. Instead, the 'change of economic ownership' principle is used to determine when a transaction has occurred and also which partner country should be recorded. Additional data sources, such as maritime and aircraft registers, may be used to obtain this information.
<b>Electrical energy and natural gas in gaseous state</b>	As it is particularly difficult to track this trade because of specific distribution systems, other data sources, such as information from grid operators, may be used.
<b>Sea products</b>	'Sea products' means fishery products, minerals, savage and all other products which have not yet been landed by sea-going vessels. The partner country is determined on the basis of the economic ownership of the vessel. Because it is often difficult to capture this trade, additional data sources, such as fishery statistics, may be used.
<b>Goods delivered to vessels and aircraft</b>	For goods delivered to sea-going vessels and aircraft, the economic ownership of the vessel or aircraft is used to determine the partner country.
<b>Goods delivered to and from offshore installations</b>	Where the export or import involves an offshore installation, this offshore is considered, for ITGS purposes, as belonging to the <i>country that has the exclusive rights to exploit the seabed</i> . Member States must therefore report trade where goods enter or leave 'their' offshore installations in the context of trade with other countries. Where goods leave a Member State under trade with the offshore installations of another country, the partner of that Member State is that other country.
<b>Industrial plants</b>	There exists a simplified coding system to record the movement of components of industrial plants where certain conditions are met. These apply only to export flows.
<b>Military goods</b>	Where goods are subject to military secrecy in the Member State concerned, less detailed information may be provided.

More information on the specific goods or movements can be found in [Annex 2](#) of this manual.

# 5

## Data compilation

### 5.1. How are EU trade data compiled?

Where not otherwise specified, the EU trade corresponds to the **aggregation of the extra-EU trade flows** of the EU Member States.

More concretely, the EU trade flows are compiled as follows:

- **EU imports** = Sum of the extra-EU imports of the EU Member States
- **EU exports** = Sum of the extra-EU exports of the EU Member States
- **EU trade balance** = EU exports – EU imports

Since 1 February 2020, the European Union is composed of the 27 following countries (in protocol order): Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechia, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland and Sweden.

### 5.2. How are euro area trade data compiled?

The trade of the euro area (EA) corresponds to the aggregation of the extra-EA trade flows of the EA Member States. More concretely, the EA trade flows are compiled as follows:

- **EA imports** = Sum of the extra-EA imports of the EA Member States
- **EA exports** = Sum of the extra-EA exports of the EA Member States
- **EA trade balance** = EA exports – EA imports

From 1 January 2023 the euro area (also known as the Eurozone) will be composed of the 20 following countries (in protocol order): Belgium, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Austria, Portugal, Slovenia, Slovakia and Finland.

The 'extra-EA' area is composed of the non-EU countries and of the EU Member States not belonging to the euro area (Bulgaria, Czechia, Denmark, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Sweden). This means that part of the intra-EU trade flows — the ones recorded by the EA Member States with the EU Member States not belonging to the euro area — play a particular role in the euro area trade balance.

## 5.3. How is the trade with the world defined?

For the European Union as an entity, trade with the world refers to extra-EU trade only. Intra-EU trade is not taken into account here, in the same way as regional trade is not taken into account for individual countries.

For a specific EU Member State, trade with the world refers to trade with all other countries. In other words, it corresponds to the aggregation of the trade with all other EU Member States (intra-EU trade) and with all non-EU countries (extra-EU trade).

### Tip for Comext users

- Select the partner aggregate '**EU27\_2020\_Extra**' to get the trade of the EU as one single entity with the rest of the world.
- Select the partner aggregate '**WORLD**' to get the trade of an individual country with the rest of the world. NB: Partner WORLD corresponds to the aggregation of partners EU27\_2020\_Extra and EU27\_2020\_Intra.

## 5.4. How are the trade balances of the EU Member States compiled?

The trade balance of a Member State corresponds to the difference between its total exports and its total imports, i.e. considering both its intra- and extra-EU trade. As the EU trade balance refers only to extra-EU trade flows, it does not correspond to the aggregation of the EU Member States' individual trade balances.

## 5.5. Are estimates used in intra-EU trade data?

Yes. As a result of the data collection thresholds and other simplification measures, estimates need to be compiled by the Member States to ensure full trade coverage. The statistics published by Eurostat include estimates for missing data as computed and provided by the Member States.

### 5.5.1. Estimating missing intra-EU trade

Estimates need to be made for data that cannot be collected, e.g. because the trader falls out of the statistical sample or is late in supplying the data. The main information sources used by the Member States to estimate missing data in intra-EU trade are the VAT returns and VAT recapitulative statements (VIES data) sent by intra-EU traders to the national tax administration. Data collected via statistical declarations are used to allocate estimated total values by product and partner Member States.

Estimates for missing data must be compiled at least by HS2 codes and partner Member State. Some Member States estimate missing data at HS4- or even at the most detailed CN8 level.

Note that the legislation in principle excludes trade carried out by private individuals or very small businesses which are not subject to VAT obligations. As a result, no estimates are made to balance this loss of information.

### 5.5.2. Estimating the statistical value in intra-EU trade

In intra-EU trade, most Member States either do not collect the statistical value at all or collect it only from reporting units with an annual trade amount exceeding a 'statistical value threshold'. When not provided by the reporting unit, the statistical value is estimated by adjusting the collected invoiced value.

Except for transactions involving processing, this adjustment consists in adding or removing the incidental expenses for the relevant part of the journey. If incidental expenses are not known, they may be assessed on the basis of costs usually payable for transport and insurance services.

For transactions involving processing, the value of the goods corresponds to their total value, before and after processing, not just the value added by the processing procedure. Processing covers activities (e.g. manufacture, construction, assembling, improvement, renovation) with the aim to obtain a new or significantly improved good.

Note that trade values published by Eurostat reflect only statistical values.

### 5.5.3. Estimating the net mass in intra-EU trade

The EU legislation does not require NSAs to collect data on the net mass when there is a supplementary unit associated to the CN product code. Member States can decide for themselves whether to collect the net mass for all CN8 codes or only for some of them. However, they are legally required to estimate the non-collected net mass.

**Table 2: Collection of net mass in intra-EU trade, 2021**

<b>Net mass collected for all CN8 codes</b>	16 MS (59%)	BG CZ EE IE EL ES FR HR LV LT MT PL PT RO SI SK
<b>Net mass collected for all CN8 codes except for some with a supplementary unit</b>	2 MS (7%)	CY SE
<b>Net mass collected for all CN8 codes except the ones with a supplementary unit</b>	9 MS (33%)	BE DK DE IT <sup>(1)</sup> LU HU NL AT FI

(1) Only reporting units below the optional variable threshold are exempted from reporting the net mass for all CN codes with a supplementary unit.

Source: National quality and metadata reports transmitted by the countries

Until reference year 2021, i.e. as long as required by the legislation, Eurostat provided European average conversion factors for all CN8 codes with a supplementary unit. The lists of net mass conversion factors for the years 2009 to 2021 are available on the Eurostat website, under the Easy Comext metadata: <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/newxtweb/setuplistmeta.do?keepsessionkey=true>

## 5.6. Are estimates used in extra-EU trade data?

Yes, but to a smaller extent than in intra-EU trade. Under the ITGS legislation, Member States must compile estimates for delayed or incomplete records at least by HS2 code and partner country. In Eurostat's data dissemination, estimates compiled at chapter (HS2) level can be identified through product codes including the letters M or Y (see [Annex 3](#)).

## 5.7. Why are some of the ITGS confidential?

### 5.7.1. What are confidential data?

As a general definition, data used by national and EU authorities for producing statistics are considered confidential if statistical units can be identified, either directly or indirectly, and information about individuals or businesses is disclosed as a result.

### 5.7.2. What is the difference between active and passive confidentiality?

**Principle of passive confidentiality:** Member States have to take appropriate measures only if requested to do so by companies which feel that their interests would be harmed by the publication of the data. This principle is applied in the EU ITGS. It has the big advantage of limiting the loss of information for users and thus making the data more useful.

**Principle of active confidentiality:** Under this principle, confidential data are automatically hidden by the national statistical authority if certain criteria are met, without the company needing to send a request. In ITGS, this principle applies only to the data by enterprise characteristics (i.e. by size, sector of economic activity or level of concentration).

### 5.7.3. Which rules apply?

The precise operational criteria determining which statistical data are considered confidential are fixed by each Member State in the light of national legislation or practices.

**Criteria for granting confidentiality:** The choice of the criteria to be met by the company is left to the Member States. The most common criteria are the following:

- the number of companies on the market is limited, e.g. fewer than three companies contribute to a single data cell; or
- the company is in a dominant position on the market (by representing, for instance, at least 75 % of the total trade) or is at least an important stakeholder contributing to a single data cell.

Note that the criteria for granting or not the confidentiality are the same under both principles, passive and active.

### 5.7.4. To which data elements does confidentiality apply?

Confidentiality can apply to the product code and/or the partner country. Information about a product or partner may be considered commercially sensitive by the provider of the statistical information for the trade value, the quantity or the unit value (value/quantity) which can be considered a proxy for the price.

When confidentiality is granted, data are hidden at the detailed level, which means that the trade is not allocated to the real product code and/or the real partner. It is nevertheless included in the total trade of the Member State and even allocated to the real chapter (i.e. to the real HS2 code) as long as confidentiality remains ensured.

### 5.7.5. How does confidentiality apply to partner countries?

When confidentiality applies to the partner country, the real partner country code is replaced by a specific code used for 'countries and territories not specified for commercial or military reasons'. A distinction is made between intra-EU trade and extra-EU trade.

#### Tip for Comext users

In Comext, the codes for 'countries and territories not specified for commercial or military reasons' are:

- Code QY (or 0978) for intra-EU trade; and
- Code QZ (or 0979) for extra-EU trade.

Table 3 illustrates how confidential trading partners are not disclosed in the public data, preserving however the total intra-EU and extra-EU trade values not affected by confidentiality. In this example, Germany and Japan are confidential partners, and for this reason the public values of that trade are set at zero. However, the value of trade will show in the specific codes QY and QZ, and will be taken into the aggregations for intra-EU trade and extra-EU trade.

**Table 3: Example of partner country confidentiality**

	Partner code, label and confidentiality	Values declared	Public values
<b>DE</b>	Germany ( <i>confidential partner</i> )	1 000	0
<b>IT</b>	Italy	500	500
<b>JP</b>	Japan ( <i>confidential partner</i> )	3 000	0
<b>CA</b>	Canada	200	200
<b>QY</b>	Countries and territories not specified for commercial or military reasons in the framework of intra-EU trade	0	1 000
<b>QZ</b>	Countries and territories not specified for commercial or military reasons in the framework of extra-EU trade	0	3 000
<b>EU_INTRA</b>	Intra-EU trade	1 500	1 500
<b>EU_EXTRA</b>	Extra-EU trade	3 200	3 200

### 5.7.6. How does product confidentiality apply?

When confidentiality applies to the product, the real product code is replaced by a specific code dedicated to confidential trade. The EU legislation requires that Member States transmit their confidential data to the Commission (Eurostat) so that they can be published at least at chapter level (i.e. under the real HS2 code) provided confidentiality remains ensured.

Only in exceptional cases is confidential trade hidden under chapter 99 (Other products).

In complement to the chapter minimum legal requirement, it is recommended to keep maximum information on the goods by indicating, wherever possible without disclosing the confidentiality, the real HS4 or HS6 code and/or the real SITC code at one-, two- or three-digit level.

In Eurostat's databases, the 'confidential' eight-digit codes are identified by the letter 'S' indicated between the third and the eight position.

#### Examples:

17SS061	Confidential information about trade in Chapter 17 'Sugars and sugar confectionery' and in SITC group 061 'Sugars, molasses and honey'
17SS999	Confidential information about trade in Chapter 17 'Sugars and sugar confectionery' and in unknown SITC group
3004S541	Confidential information about trade in HS4 code 3004 'Medicaments (excluding goods of heading 3002, 3005 or 3006) consisting of mixed or unmixed products for therapeutic or prophylactic uses, put up in measured doses (including those in the form of transdermal administration systems) or in forms or packings for retail sale' and in SITC group 541 'Medicinal and pharmaceutical products, other than medicaments of group 542'
30SS541	Confidential information about trade in Chapter 30 'Pharmaceutical products' and in SITC group 541 'Medicinal and pharmaceutical products, other than medicaments of group 542'
2711S34S	Confidential information about trade in HS4 code 2711 'Petroleum gases and other gaseous hydrocarbons' and in SITC group 34 'gas, natural and manufactured'
2711S999	Confidential information about trade in HS4 code 2711 'Petroleum gases and other gaseous hydrocarbons' and in unknown SITC group
840734SS	Confidential information about trade in HS6 code 8407 34 'Of a cylinder capacity exceeding 1000 cm <sup>3</sup> '
8407S713	Confidential information about trade in HS4 code 8407 'Spark-ignition reciprocating or rotary internal combustion piston engines' and in SITC group 713 'Internal combustion piston engines and parts thereof, n.e.s.'
84SS713	Confidential information about trade in Chapter 84 'Nuclear reactors, boilers, machinery and mechanical appliances; parts thereof' and in SITC group 713 'Internal combustion piston engines and parts thereof, n.e.s.'
99SS541	Confidential information about SITC group 541 'Medicinal and pharmaceutical products, other than medicaments of group 542'
99SS999	Confidential information, unknown product

### Why does the sum of products not always add up to the total?

When a Member State applies partner or product confidentiality, the declared values are not published under their real codes but under specific codes dedicated to confidential trade.

At total level, Eurostat publishes the **real** trade values, i.e. the sum of official trade (real codes) and of confidential trade (specific codes).

## 5.8. What data are sent to Eurostat and when?

Once data have been collected, checked and processed by the Member States, they are sent to Eurostat.

The **EU legislation** requires the Member States to provide Eurostat with:

- monthly aggregated data (for each flow: total intra-EU trade value and, for Member States belonging to the euro area (EA) only, total intra-EA trade value plus total extra-EA trade value broken down by 1-digit SITC code) no later than 40 days after the end of the reference month;
- monthly detailed data by 10-digit codes for extra-EU imports (8 first digits corresponding to the CN subheadings, 9th and 10th digits corresponding to further subdivisions used for the application of EU measures concerning imports) and by 8-digit codes (CN subheadings) for extra-EU exports no later than 40 days after the end of the reference month;
- monthly detailed intra-EU trade data by 8-digit CN codes no later than 70 days after the end of the reference month;
- detailed annual data by enterprise characteristics (i.e. by size, sector of economic activity or level of concentration) within 18 months after the end of the reference year (within 12 months after the end of the reference year starting with reference year 2022). For example, the 2022 data are to be transmitted by 31 December 2023; and
- aggregated annual data by invoicing currency within three months after the end of the reference year. For example, the 2022 data are to be transmitted by 31 March 2023. The data transmission is mandatory every two (odd) years, for the previous (even) reference years. However, the Member States may transmit the data annually, on an optional basis.

### Tip for Comext users

Since 1 January 2021, in application of the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland, the EU Member States collect and send trade data for partner UK via two separate channels:

- UK (excluding Northern Ireland) data – code XU – are collected via customs declarations, like any other extra-EU trade data. The legal deadline for sending the data to Eurostat is 40 days after the end of the reference month.
- UK (Northern Ireland) data – code XI – continue to be collected via intra-EU declarations. The legal deadline for sending the data to Eurostat is 70 days after the end of the reference month.

Eurostat aggregates the data (codes XU and XI) and publishes them for the UK as a whole (code: GB). This explains why detailed data for UK become available later than for the other extra-EU trade partners.

## 5.9. When are data revised and considered final?

International trade in goods statistics, like many published statistics, must balance the need for timely information with the need for accuracy. The detailed data sent for a given month are subject to the possibility of later revision as a consequence of errors, omissions or — particularly with the intra-EU data collection system — late declarations by the providers of the statistical information. When monthly results already sent to Eurostat are subject to revision at national level, the revised results are to be transmitted no later than the month after they become available.

Data are revised frequently according to national needs and practices. Member States should provide Eurostat with final detailed data at the latest by October following the reference year. Even if revisions become less likely after that moment, they remain possible.

The impact of a revision depends largely on the data users and what use they make of the data. To aid both the monitoring of revisions and the users' understanding of their impact, Eurostat publishes each month reports showing the revisions that were applied to EU and euro area aggregates and to individual Member State data. The reports show how much the data have changed since their previous publication ('Subsequent data publications') as well as since they were first published ('first and last data publications'). The latest version of those reports can be found on the '[Focus on Comext](#)' page of the 'International trade in goods' section on Eurostat's website.

Note that all the latest revisions sent by the Member States are included in the monthly updates.

## 5.10. What are the main reasons for revising data?

Revisions are performed to improve data quality. They generally aim to correct erroneous data, improve the data completeness (by limiting data omissions) or replace estimates with collected data.

Revisions may also occur as a result of the introduction of new estimation methods.

Exceptionally, revisions may be made when new legal provisions have not been fully implemented on time.

## 5.11. How are changes in concepts and definitions dealt with?

Changes in concepts and definitions introduced by new legal provisions on intra- and extra-EU trade in goods apply only to future reference periods. This is different from the practice in BoP statistics of re-compiling time series when methodological changes occur.

## 5.12. What data does Eurostat compile?

Most trade in goods data published by Eurostat are compiled by the Member States, including the estimates for missing data.

In addition, Eurostat compiles:

- Unit value and volume indices; and
- Seasonally adjusted time series.

### 5.12.1. Unit value and volume indices

The data provided by the Member States to Eurostat are expressed in current prices, which are prices relevant to the reference period concerned. For several analyses it is satisfactory to work with those values and, if needed, to convert the series of values into an index form following a simple arithmetic operation.

However, the development over time of the value of trade flows is determined by both the quantities sold and by the price variations. For a number of analytical purposes it is then necessary to distinguish between these two elements and, in particular, to measure possible movements in the volume of trade estimated in the constant prices of some previous base years. It is therefore desirable to have an appropriate measure of how price movements in international trade have developed.

Information on values and related quantities is taken from ITGS to estimate a set of deflators which are then used to calculate unit value indices and derive estimates of volumes. Intra- and extra-EU trade statistics are used at their most detailed level — eight-digit CN subheadings by partner country — for calculating indices. The fluctuations in ‘unit values’, which are derived from current price values divided by quantities for each flow, are used as indicators of price variations.

Although the calculation system uses weights that change annually, for the users’ convenience, the published indices are based on reference years that are usually changed every five years. The current reference year for the unit value and volume indices is 2015. Data are available monthly as an index (2015=100) showing the percentage change from both the previous month and the same month of the previous year.

Unit value and volume indices are calculated for the various aggregates. Volume indices are also adjusted for working days and seasonal variations.

Indices are compiled separately for imports and exports. Eurostat also provides trade flow ratios.

Unit value indices are available in euro, national currency for Member States not belonging to the euro area and US dollars. The first compilation step consists in compiling unit-value indices from trade values all expressed in euro. The indices in euro are then converted into national currencies and US dollars.

## 5.12.2. Data adjusted for working days and seasonal components

The data provided by the Member States to Eurostat are not adjusted for seasonal components or the number of working days. However, as with most economic data, the interpretation of monthly or quarterly time series is complicated by regular seasonal fluctuations. For instance, trade in many agricultural products is highly seasonal and month to month fluctuations are often dominated by these seasonal factors. Monthly and quarterly data are also affected by the varying lengths of months (and in particular the number of working days they contain) and the effects of public holidays whose dates may change from year to year: Easter is the prime example.

A partial solution is to compare a month with that of the previous year. However, this solution is not entirely satisfactory because it cannot provide a proper measure of the fluctuations due to the impact of the calendar. The best solution is therefore to “adjust” the data by cleaning the series from seasonal and calendar effects.

To solve this problem, Eurostat has elaborated a range of procedures to estimate the seasonal (including working day and holiday) effects and then remove them from the time series. The series on trade in goods are processed by JDemetra+, a tool developed by the National Bank of Belgium (NBB) in cooperation with Eurostat and Deutsche Bundesbank, in accordance with the [ESS guidelines on seasonal adjustment](#). To extract the components on which each time series can be broken down (trend-cycle, seasonal effects and calendar effects, residuals), the TRAMO-SEATS method is used.

The ITGS time series are computed with the direct method except for the European aggregates referring to intra-EU, extra-EU and world at total level, where the indirect approach is preferred.

Trade data and volume indices are seasonally adjusted, while unit value indices are not adjusted for the number of working days and seasonal variations due to their modest seasonality.

All data adjusted for working days and seasonal components can be found under the ‘[International trade in goods – short-term indicators](#)’ domain on the Eurostat website.

## 5.13. Does Eurostat compile data under classifications other than the CN? <sup>Rev</sup>

The data provided by the Member States to Eurostat are based on the Combined Nomenclature as regards the classification of the goods. In addition, Eurostat compiles data according to the following product nomenclatures:

- the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC);
- the Classification of Products by Activity (CPA);
- the Broad Economic Activities (BEC); and
- the Standard Goods Classification for transport statistics (NST/R).

All classifications and correspondence tables are available as Linked Open data in [EU Vocabularies](#) (former RAMON).

# 6

## Data quality

### 6.1. Accuracy

#### 6.1.1. How accurate are ITGS?

As in all statistical work, a balance has to be struck between the resources devoted to checking and the likely benefit. With many millions of individual data elements forming the basis of trade in goods statistics it is impossible to achieve complete accuracy. This leads to two important recommended actions for users:

- The first is to become aware of the margin of inaccuracies in the data used. This is particularly important for the commodity codes. The structure of the Combined Nomenclature is detailed and, while it is supported by very precise explanatory notes, choosing the right code is not always easy. A further major problem which may lead to inaccurate statistics, and that is certainly a constraint on the use of detailed data, is the practice of hiding confidential information. Simplification measures that fully or partly exempt the trade operators from their statistical reporting obligations also play a role, especially for intra-EU trade statistics. See section 6.1.5 for more details.
- The second recommendation for users of detailed information is that they should consider themselves part of the verification process. In practice, they often have expertise that enables them to assess the plausibility of the published data. Eurostat and the national statistical authorities generally welcome any comments on the data they publish.

#### 6.1.2. How is the data quality checked and monitored?

The prime responsibility for assuring the accuracy of the published trade data rests with the national statistical authorities. They have access to the detailed data, often at the individual transaction level, which facilitates many checking procedures. They are in contact with the traders to follow up incorrect or doubtful declarations and ask for clarification or correction if needed. Some checks are quite basic. They ensure that the declarations have been fully completed, that the codes entered are valid and the correct units have been used. Other checks are more sophisticated and assess the plausibility of the basic data, sometimes of aggregates, both in themselves and in comparison with other variables (for example past data).

Further checks are carried out by Eurostat each month, essentially to ensure that the requested data have been satisfactorily transmitted. Eurostat has developed an advanced data quality monitoring system, as required by the legislation, to ensure that the ITGS meet a high quality standard. Within this framework, the Member States must document their methods and practices and provide Eurostat with a set of quality indicators each year, which are then published in [Eurostat's quality reports](#).

Mirror exercises are other types of checks which can be carried out under the auspices of Eurostat or by Member States. The aim is to compare trade flows between two countries as measured by both of

them (comparison of country A's exports to country B with country B's imports from country A). This is a useful method for identifying recurring problem areas which may result from errors in reporting or from methodological differences.

### 6.1.3. What are the main causes of errors in reporting?

Errors often arise when trying to capture movements of goods or trade activities about which little information is available or which are inherently complex to measure, such as:

- **Goods that by their nature are difficult to classify** — Errors may arise in the product code allocated due to the complexity of the classification. With about 9 500 subheadings in the Combined Nomenclature, classifying goods can be a complicated task. When comparing ITGS at the most detailed level, product misclassifications are one of the main causes of asymmetry.
- **Processing trade valuation** — Errors arise when the processing costs are reported rather than the trade value corresponding to the total amount which would be invoiced if the goods were sold or bought.
- **Product with embedded services** — Errors arise when the total amount of the contract (transaction including the supply of goods and services) is reported rather than the value of the goods alone.
- **Repairs versus processing** — Repairs should be excluded from trade in goods statistics but processing should be included. Errors may arise when the distinction between repairs and processing is difficult to make.
- **Quasi transit** — Statistical declarations may be missing for goods imported from a non-EU country for immediate dispatch to another Member State or goods imported from another Member State for immediate dispatch to a non-EU country.
- **Triangular trade** — Trade involving three Member States through sales/purchase contracts but with physical movement of goods between only two of them. A problem arises when the trade is reported according to the sales/purchase contract rather than the physical movement.

### 6.1.4. What is the impact of quasi-transit or the so-called 'Rotterdam effect'?

In European ITGS, Dutch trade flows are over-estimated because of the so-called '**Rotterdam effect**' (or quasi-transit trade): that is goods bound for other EU countries arrive in Dutch ports and, according to EU rules, are recorded as extra-EU imports by the Netherlands (the country where goods are released for free circulation). This in turn increases the intra-EU flows from the Netherlands to those Member States to which the goods are re-exported.

The quasi-transit impacts mostly the Member States with sea ports (like the Netherlands and, to a lesser extent, Belgium), but the same effect can also be observed in landlocked countries, like Luxembourg.

As a result, trade flows of the EU Member States may be overvalued. At the same time, the trade balance of the concerned Member State is not impacted as the quasi-transit should increase by the same amount as the intra- and extra-EU trade flows (extra-EU imports followed by intra-EU exports to the Member State of actual destination or intra-EU imports from the Member State of actual export followed by extra-EU exports to the non-EU country of actual destination).

Note that some Member States exclude quasi-transit from the data published at national level to enhance the economic relevance of their national figures.

Although the Rotterdam effect is best known for its effects on imports into the EU, quasi-transit trade concerns both imports and exports:

- for imports, it occurs when goods are brought into a Member State to be declared there as imports for customs or tax purposes without this Member State having acquired ownership of the goods;

- for exports, it occurs when goods are taken out of a Member State to be declared there as exports for customs or tax purposes without this Member State having had ownership of the goods.

### 6.1.5. How do simplification measures in data collection impact data accuracy? <sup>Rev</sup>

The simplification measures are a response to the search for a compromise between the statistical burden on trade operators and the accuracy of the data. It should be born in mind that the data accuracy is only affected at the most detailed level, since the National statistical authorities (NSAs) have the obligation to ensure full coverage of trade, thanks to the use of estimates, both for extra- and intra-EU trade. It should also be noted that NSAs are free to decide whether or not to apply simplification measures.

Extra-EU trade statistics are based on administrative data collected for customs purposes. As such, the margin for simplification is very narrow, which means that the data accuracy is affected in a negligible way. In most cases, estimates are only temporarily needed, namely until the full customs declaration is made available. They have to be compiled at least by chapter (HS2 codes) and partner country.

In contrast, the data collection system designed for intra-EU trade statistics encompasses a wide range of simplification measures aimed at minimising the statistical burden for the traders, especially the small and medium-sized enterprises. The main measures and their respective impact are listed below:

- Statistical samples exempting part of the traders from all statistical obligations – Non-collected data must be estimated at least by chapter (HS2 codes) and partner country. When defining the samples, NSAs must ensure that the collected data correspond to a minimum coverage:
  - For the intra-EU exports, collected data should represent at least 97% of the total value until 2021 included and 95% from 2022 onwards.
  - For the intra-EU imports, collected data should represent at least 93% of the total value until 2021 included. There is no longer a minimum coverage from 2022 onwards.
- Statistical value not collected from traders – In these cases, the statistical value has to be estimated by the NSA at record level. In general, estimates are based on the collected invoice value and on additional information such as the delivery terms or the mode of transport. The information needed could also be collected via trade surveys.
- Net mass not collected for goods allocated to CN8 codes with a supplementary unit, like the litre or the number of pieces – The non-collected net mass is estimated by the NSA.
- Information on the product code not collected at the most detailed level – This possible simplification concerns:
  - small consignments below EUR 1000;
  - motor vehicle and aircraft parts; and
  - industrial plants exceeding 3 million EUR.

### 6.1.6. Why are intra-EU export values generally considered more reliable than intra-eu import values? <sup>New</sup>

When an indicator on the intra-EU trade is published at EU level, the intra-EU exports are taken as reference; they are considered to be of better quality than the intra-EU imports for the following reasons:

- Among exporters are often producers and the latter are better acquainted with the correct codes of their own commodities – which avoids misclassifications, one of the main causes of asymmetries.

- It is easier for exporters to indicate the country of destination on exports, while importers may have more difficulties to trace the country of consignment on imports. This is also related to the [Rotterdam effect](#).
- Minimum coverages to be reached from collected data are higher for exports than imports. As a result, importing companies are more frequently exempted from declaring their trade. NSAs estimate the non-collected data but estimates cannot be as accurate as collected data.
- Exporting companies are often large firms, with a significant expertise in completing statistical declarations. This might not be the case for small importing companies.

## 6.2. Comparability over space and time and across domains

### 6.2.1. Why do asymmetries always exist?

Asymmetries occur when the declaration of the importer in country A is not consistent with the declaration of the exporter in country B. Asymmetries come either from errors in reporting or from differences in the concepts and definitions applied by the partner countries. Some of the asymmetries of a methodological nature could disappear thanks to further harmonisation in national practices; others will continue as they are linked to basic principles for compiling ITGS which are unlikely to change (e.g. different valuation principles for import and export).

There is no doubt that the existence of disparities between mirror data of Member States, especially at detailed level contributes to substantial quality issues. The asymmetries also impact the comparability and coherence of GDP and BoP figures. The newly established exchange of micro-data among the Member States brings new opportunities to improve data quality: data compilers will be able to compare the collected micro-data with the mirror data received from other Member States, identify and analyse discrepancies and gradually reduce them.

### 6.2.2. What are the methodological causes of asymmetries?

The most common causes of methodological asymmetries are the following:

- **simplified product reporting** — Where the EU legislation allows simplified codification of goods for certain transactions, some Member States apply the simplifications but others do not;
- **only exports (i.e. deliveries) to be reported** in the case of supplies to ships and aircraft;
- **different approaches for estimating or compiling trade data** for specific goods or movements not covered by customs or statistical declarations, such as natural gas, electrical energy, vessels or aircraft;
- **confidentiality** — It is possible that data are considered confidential by only one of the two partners. However, the application of the confidentiality procedures should not impact the results at total trade level;
- **time lag** — The same transaction may be recorded in a different reference period due to transport times or processing delays;
- **CIF/FOB valuation** — Imports are valued on a CIF basis and exports on a FOB basis. This causes a systematic asymmetry as the value of the imports should then be higher than the value of the mirror exports;
- **differences in methods and data** used to estimate missing or non-collected trade;
- **different practices in the treatment of revisions**;
- **currency conversion**; and
- **other methodological differences** such as definition of partner country, definition of statistical territory, trade system (special or general).

Users should be aware of these possible causes for asymmetries. Other factors relating to the data analysed (how old, how detailed, from which source) might play a role as well. It is worth noting that Eurostat's database is based on a monthly data flow that allows revisions to be included on a regular basis.

### 6.2.3. Why is the intra-EU trade balance not equal to zero?

Considering that the intra-EU trade data are based on common and largely harmonised rules, one might expect the intra-EU trade balance to be zero or at least close to it. However, it is worth underlining that a perfect match is impossible.

One key factor is the different valuation principle applied to import and export (the CIF/FOB approach), under which the import value should be higher than the mirror export value as it includes extra transport costs. However, the fact that the trading partners within the EU are often neighbouring countries mitigates this risk and a close match could nevertheless be legitimately expected. Another methodological reason preventing the intra-EU trade balance to be zero are deliveries to vessels and aircraft, as in such movements of goods specific legal provisions stipulate that only intra-EU exports are to be reported.

At global level, most methodological reasons for asymmetries disappear. The remaining issues are in data reporting (e.g. missing statistical declarations, trade in specific goods like sea-going vessels and aircraft not being properly captured).

### 6.2.4. Why are breaks in time series unavoidable?

Periodic changes in concepts and definitions are necessary to meet users' needs. When such changes occur, time series are recompiled backwards to the extent possible. Nevertheless, breaks cannot always be avoided.

Table 4 shows how the continuity of ITGS time series has been affected by changes generating break in series from 1996 to 2022.

**Table 4: Changes affecting comparability of European ITGS, 1996-2022**

	Type of trade	Event
2022	Intra-EU	For intra-EU exports, minimum coverage from collected data reduced from 97 % to 95 % of total trade value For intra-EU imports, the previous minimum coverage of direct collection is lifted, in order to take into account the legislative changes brought by EBS (among which the micro-data exchanges)
	Extra-EU	The reporting country is no longer the Member State where the customs declaration was lodged but the Member State in which the goods are located, regardless of the Member State where the customs declaration was lodged
	Intra- and extra-EU	Combined Nomenclature impacted by the sixth revision of the Harmonised System Change in the definition of the partner country for trade in electrical energy, from the standard definition to "neighbouring country"
2021	Intra- and extra-EU	Entry into force of the Protocol on Ireland / Northern Ireland. Data on EU's imports from the UK represent the UK as country of consignment if goods were dispatched from Northern Ireland (reflecting the concept applicable in intra-EU trade); or, reflecting the concept applicable in extra-EU trade, the UK as country of origin if goods of UK origin were exported from the UK excluding Northern Ireland
2020	Intra- and extra-EU	Change in the definition of intra- and extra- EU trade due to the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union on 31 January 2020 <sup>(1)</sup>
2017	Intra- and extra-EU	Combined Nomenclature impacted by the fifth revision of the Harmonised System

	Type of trade	Event
2014	Intra-EU	For intra- EU imports, minimum coverage from collected data reduced from 95 % to 93 % of total trade value
2013	Intra- and extra-EU	Change in the definition of intra- and extra-EU trade due to Croatia's EU accession on 1 July 2013
2012	Intra- and extra-EU	Combined Nomenclature impacted by the fourth revision of the Harmonised System
	Intra- and extra-EU	Introduction of the concept of change in economic ownership to record trade in vessels and aircraft and determine the partner country allocation for sea products and deliveries to vessels and aircraft (based on the economic ownership of the vessels/aircraft)
2010	Intra- and extra-EU	Reporting Member State and partner country for goods delivered to and from offshore installations determined by the exclusive rights of a country to exploit seabed or subsoil of the area (exclusive economic zone) where the offshore installation is established
	Intra-EU	Estimates for non-collected net mass made mandatory
2009	Intra-EU	For intra-EU imports, minimum coverage from collected data reduced from 97 % to 95 % of total trade value
	Intra- and extra-EU	Change in the definition of intra- and extra-EU trade due to the EU accession of Bulgaria and Romania on 1 January 2007
2007	Intra- and extra-EU	Combined Nomenclature impacted by the third revision of the Harmonised System
	Extra-EU	Repairs excluded from the scope of extra-EU trade
2006	Intra-EU	Collection of net mass in Intrastat no longer mandatory if a supplementary quantity is collected
	Intra-EU	Repairs excluded from the scope of intra-EU trade
2005	Intra-EU	Collection of net mass in Intrastat no longer mandatory for a specific list of CN8 codes for which a supplementary quantity is collected
2004	Intra- and extra-EU	Change in the definition of intra- and extra-EU trade due to the EU accession of Cyprus, Czechia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia on 1 May 2004
2002	Intra- and extra-EU	Combined Nomenclature impacted by the second revision of the Harmonised System
1996	Intra- and extra-EU	Combined Nomenclature impacted by the first revision of the Harmonised System

(1) While the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union took place on 31 January 2020, the UK has been part of the internal market until 31 December 2020, date which marks the end of the transition period. During the transition period, data on trade with the UK were still based on statistical concepts applicable to trade between the EU Member States. As a consequence, while imports from any other extra-EU27 trade partner are grouped by country of origin, the UK data reflected during 2020 the country of consignment.

## 6.2.5. Why can European data differ from national data?

Discrepancies between Eurostat data and national data may exist due to the application of different concepts and definitions.

When there is no methodological reason for discrepancies, it should nevertheless be kept in mind that data revisions may also alter the comparability of European and national data, at least for a transitional period. According to the EU legislation, revised data should be communicated to Eurostat within one month each time a revision occurs at national level.

Table 5 shows, for each Member State, the main differences between the ITGS data published at national level and by Eurostat. The most frequent discrepancy is the exclusion of quasi-transit from national data, while it is included in European ITGS.

**Table 5:** Conceptual differences between European statistics and national statistics, 2021

	General Trade System	Exclusion of quasi transit	Inclusion of repairs	Country of origin for intra-EU imports	Other <sup>(1)</sup>
<b>Belgium</b>		*			*
<b>Bulgaria</b>					*
<b>Czechia</b>				*	
<b>Denmark</b>	*	*			
<b>Germany</b>				*	*
<b>Estonia</b>					*
<b>Ireland</b>	*		*	*	
<b>Greece</b>					
<b>Spain</b>	*			*	*
<b>France</b>				*	*
<b>Croatia</b>		*			
<b>Italy</b>					
<b>Cyprus</b>	*				
<b>Latvia</b>		*			
<b>Lithuania</b>					
<b>Luxembourg</b>		*	*		
<b>Hungary</b>		*			*
<b>Malta</b>	*	*		*	
<b>Netherlands</b>		*			
<b>Austria</b>		*		*	*
<b>Poland</b>				*	
<b>Portugal</b>					
<b>Romania</b>					
<b>Slovenia</b>		*			*
<b>Slovakia</b>		*		*	*
<b>Finland</b>				*	*
<b>Sweden</b>					

(1) The other conceptual differences are the following:  
 Belgium: Returned goods are excluded from national statistics.  
 Bulgaria: Extra-EU imports at national level are by country of consignment; goods covered by Single Authorisation for Simplified Procedures (ASP) are included in national statistics.  
 Germany: Additional statistical procedures are included in national statistics.  
 Estonia: Extra-EU imports at national level are by country of consignment.  
 Spain: Ceuta and Melilla are included in national statistics.  
 France: Goods delivered to sea-going vessels and aircraft are excluded from national statistics.  
 Hungary: Extra-EU imports at national level are by country of consignment.  
 Austria: Goods covered by Single Authorisation for Simplified Procedures (ASP) are included in national statistics.  
 Slovenia: Trade by non-residents which is not connected with activity on the Slovenian market is excluded from national statistics.  
 Slovakia: Import data are valued on a FOB basis. SASP data directly collected from importers and exporters are included in national statistics.  
 Finland: Country codes QR, QV and QY are not included in the euro area in national statistics.

Source: National quality and metadata reports transmitted by the countries

## 6.3. Coherence with other statistics

Apart from the ITGS, information on trade flows can be found in national accounts, business statistics and BoP data. These are compiled and produced according to the recommendations (sources and methods) of various international organisations, e.g. Eurostat, International Monetary Fund, United Nations.

**Table 6: Coherence across domains**

	International trade in goods statistics	National accounts	Balance of payments	Business statistics
<b>Concepts &amp; Definitions</b>	European concept and definitions	Aggregation of national statistics based on ESA 2010	Aggregation of national statistics based upon IMF Balance of Payments Manual (Sixth edition) (BPM6). It implies some methodological discrepancies (FOB/FOB, difference of coverage) in comparison to the ITGS concepts. Trade in goods data in BoP statistics are derived from Member States' ITGS. BoP statistics sent to Eurostat are compiled according to the European concept.	Statistics are based on activity sector.
<b>Statistical unit/ object/ population</b>	ITGS statistics record cross-border movement of goods. Statistical unit concept is not applicable for ITGS.	Not applicable	BoP statistics record cross border transaction with change of economic ownership. Statistical unit concept is not applicable in BoP.	Enterprise, local unit
<b>Classifications (nomenclature)</b>	Combined Nomenclature (CN) for recording products and Geonomenclature for recording of partner countries.	Institutional sectors	BoP classification for BoP items, goods, services and geographical breakdowns	NACE, CPA, Prodcod
<b>Geographical breakdown</b>	Detailed geographical breakdown	Intra-EU, Extra-EU, World	Less detailed geographical breakdown	Less detailed geographical breakdown
<b>Reference period</b>	Monthly	Annual, quarterly	Annual, quarterly, monthly	Annual, quarterly, monthly
<b>Correction methods</b>	National corrections	National corrections	National corrections	National corrections

## 6.4. Why do ITGS differ from trade in goods in balance of payments and national accounts?

Although most Member States compile the goods account of their balance of payments from their ITGS, adjustments need to be made to meet the different definitions. In practice, these adjustments aim to convert trade in goods statistics to the basis required for National Accounts. This is because, in the manuals relating to national accounts and balance of payments, the flows of goods and services are defined almost identically in terms of coverage. The adjustments address differences in coverage, the treatment of particular operations, the valuation of transactions (conversion of import value from CIF to FOB) and the time of recording of the transactions. In addition, as already mentioned, some Member States make adjustments to deal with the incomplete coverage of their trade statistics.

These adjustments are not discussed further in this manual but are set out in the publication '[Differences between Balance of Payments and Foreign Trade Statistics](#)'. In order to avoid any confusion,

it is of utmost importance to make a clear distinction between the two methods of calculation. Users should keep in mind that ITGS provide the most suitable dataset for measuring the physical flows of goods.

## 6.5. Where can I find more information on the quality of European ITGS?

It should be underlined that 'quality' does not only cover the accuracy and comparability of the statistics but also their relevance, timeliness, punctuality, clarity, accessibility and coherence. The different quality dimensions are exhaustively covered by the [Quality Report on European statistics on international trade in goods](#). The main purpose of this report is to provide users with information on the different factors affecting statistics so that they can appraise the data quality for themselves.

# 7

## Data dissemination

### 7.1. How is the data dissemination organised?

The EU Member States transmit new data files to Eurostat on a monthly basis. These data files contain not only the data for the new reference month, but in most cases also revisions for previous months. Eurostat receives around 5 500 monthly datasets per year from the Member States and other reporting countries.

For its monthly news release, Eurostat uses 'aggregated data', which shows trade by broad categories of products as defined by the one-digit codes of the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC) and with specific partner areas. These (still provisional) figures are used temporarily, as long as the detailed data for the same partner area and reference month are not yet available. The aim is to speed up the dissemination of the first figures on international trade in goods.

By the time the news release is issued, updated, detailed data are published in the [Easy Comext](#) public database, in the [bulk download facility](#) and on the [ITGS website](#), under the theme 'International trade in goods'. Because the deadlines for data transmissions to Eurostat are not the same for extra-EU and intra-EU trade statistics, extra-EU data become available before intra-EU data (even though there are countries providing the two datasets at the same time). Intra-EU data becoming available after the press-release are gradually added to the database as soon as they are validated by Eurostat.

Annual data are computed on the basis of monthly data. The first extra-EU figures become available as early as mid-February of the following year. However, given the time lag necessary for the intra-EU data arrival, first estimates for all indicators become available in March. Data quality is still improving in the following months, as late declarations are included to detailed data, and cross-checks with other statistical domains are performed in Member States. As a rule of thumb, by October, data of the previous year can be considered final. Revisions, if any, are an exception.

As trade by enterprise characteristics and trade by invoicing currency do not involve a monthly statistical production, data dissemination is simpler. It involves the transmission of annual data from the Member States and release by Eurostat as soon as the data are checked and validated. Data corrections and updates are still possible after the first release. See [chapters 7.4](#) for more information on trade by enterprise characteristics and [7.5](#) for trade by invoicing currency.

## 7.2. What classifications are used?

### 7.2.1. The Combined Nomenclature as primary product classification

The main classification for European ITGS is the **Combined Nomenclature (CN)**. This is the primary nomenclature as it is the one used by the EU Member States to collect detailed data on their trading of goods.

The CN is based on the Harmonised Commodity Description and Coding System classification managed by the World Customs Organisation (WCO). The Harmonised System (HS) is an international classification at two, four and six-digit level which classifies goods according to their nature. It was introduced in 1988 and, since then, was revised six times: in 1996, 2002, 2007, 2012, 2017 and 2022. It is usually revised every five years.

The CN corresponds to the HS plus a further breakdown at eight-digit level defined to meet EU needs. It includes around 9 700 eight-digit codes (see [chapter 4.5](#) for more information) and is subject to annual revisions that ensure it is kept up to date in the light of changes in technology or patterns of international trade in goods.

#### What's in the CN nomenclature?

The Combined Nomenclature includes:

- preliminary provisions (general rules for classification, rules related to duties or to nomenclatures, etc.);
- descriptions of the goods;
- additional section/chapter notes and footnotes relating to CN subdivisions;
- conventional duty rates – the EU tariff commitments in the WTO, and some EU autonomous duties;
- supplementary units;
- a set of tariff-related annexes (agriculture, pharmaceutical substances) and a special coding system (Chapters 98 and 99); and
- an annex presenting indicative statistical TARIC codes.

**In Eurostat's dissemination, the CN is extended with some alphanumeric codes (see Annex 3)** that cover confidential or estimated trade as well as trade for which a breakdown at 8-digit level is not possible because of simplification measures.

#### Latest version

Every year, **Annex I** to the basic CN Regulation ([Council Regulation \(EEC\) No 2658/87](#) on the tariff and statistical nomenclature and on the Common Customs Tariff) is updated and **published as a stand-alone regulation** in the EU's Official Journal. Such updates take into account any changes that were agreed at international level, either at the [World Customs Organization](#) (WCO) with regard to the Harmonized System (HS) nomenclature or within the framework of the World Trade Organization (WTO) with regard to conventional duty rates. Other changes may be required to reflect, for instance, the evolution of commercial policy, technological or statistical requirements.

#### Interpreting the nomenclature

The explanatory notes presenting the scope of the various tariff headings are established by [Council Regulation \(EEC\) No 2658/87 on the tariff and statistical nomenclature and on the Common Customs Tariff](#).

The CN codes refer to the CN version in force at the time of publication of the classification decision or explanatory note.

## 7.2.2. Other product classifications

Eurostat manages correspondence tables enabling the transposition of detailed data collected according to the Combined Nomenclature into other classifications like the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC), the Classification of Products by Activity (CPA), the Broad Economic Activities (BEC) or the Standard goods classification for transport statistics (NST/R). All classifications and correspondence tables are available on the [Eurostat classifications page \(RAMON archives\) on the CIRCABC workspace](#) or under [Classifications and Relations in the Comext bulk download facility](#). The most important ones can also be found in the 'Relations' section, in [Easy Comext](#).

<b>Standard International Trade Classification (SITC)</b>	This classification is used to provide aggregated data (short-term and long-term indicators). The SITC (managed by the United Nations) is correlated with the subheadings of the Harmonised System. Aggregated data on trade are often presented in the one- and two-digit categories of the SITC. An example of a one-digit category (section) is 'chemical products' and of a two-digit category (division) 'medicinal and pharmaceutical products'. The latest version of the SITC, the SITC Rev. 4 was endorsed by the United Nations Statistical Commission at its thirty-seventh session (March 2006). It comprises 2 970 basic headings (items) which are grouped into 1 023 subgroups, 262 groups, 67 divisions and 9 sections.
<b>Broad Economic Categories (BEC)</b>	The BEC classification is used to provide aggregated data (short-term indicators). The BEC (like the SITC, managed by the United Nations) allows for the conversion of international trade data based on the SITC into end-use categories. This enables trade statistics to be considered jointly with other sets of general economic statistics — such as national accounts and industrial statistics — for national, regional or global economic analysis. The BEC Rev4 comprises 19 basic categories that can be aggregated to approximate the three basic classes of goods (capital, intermediate and consumption goods). The fifth and latest revision of the BEC (BEC Rev.5) was endorsed by the UN Statistical Commission in 2016. BEC Rev.5 differs from BEC Rev.4 in that its structure is more detailed, thus responding to the need for more relevant economic categories and the analysis of global value chains. BEC Rev.5 includes services in addition to goods, and more clearly distinguishes the end use of products. New broad categories include "mining and energy", "construction and housing", "textile and footwear", "information and communication" and "health and education". It also distinguishes generic and specified intermediate products as a new 'specification dimension'.
<b>Classification of Products by Activity (CPA)</b>	The CPA is a European version of the United Nations' Central Product Classification (CPC), but arranged so that each product heading is assignable to a single heading of the European activity classification (NACE). The CPA enables trade statistics to be considered jointly with other sets of general economic statistics — such as national accounts, employment statistics and industrial statistics — for productivity analysis, links with input-output tables and the impact of trade on employment.
<b>Nimexe</b>	Before the introduction of the Combined Nomenclature in 1988, ITGS were based on a product classification called Nimexe. This is no longer used but users may come across some historic series using this classification.
<b>Standard goods classification for transport statistics (NST/R)</b>	The ' <i>Nomenclature uniforme des marchandises pour les Statistiques de Transport/ révisée</i> ' was implemented in 1967. Although other versions followed in 2000 and 2007, the 1967 version continues to be used in ITGS to publish detailed trade in goods data by mode of transport. The classification comprises 3 levels: level 1: 10 chapters identified by one-digit numerical codes (0 to 9), level 2: 52 groups identified by two-digit numerical codes and level 3: 176 headings identified by three-digit numerical codes.
<b>Other classifications</b>	Other classifications are often mapped to the CN to produce data from a given economic perspective (e.g. high tech products).

### More on the BEC Rev.5 <sup>NEW</sup>

The latest revision of the BEC differs significantly from previous revisions in that:

- The broad economic categories are completely separated from the end-use categories;
- The product dimension has been expanded to include services;
- The specification dimension has been enlarged by generic and specific intermediate products.

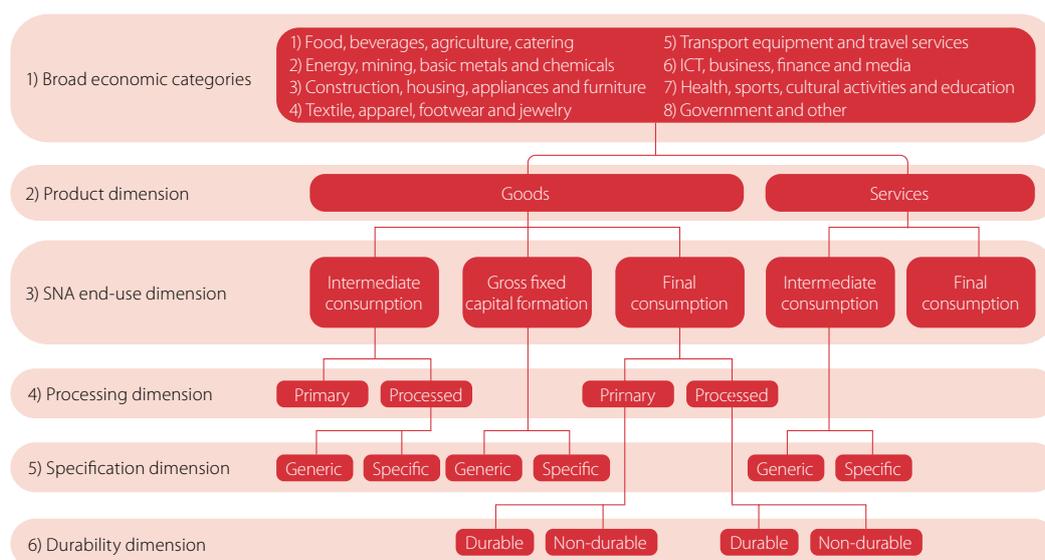
Due to these changes a direct conversion from the fourth revision is not possible.

Eurostat included the BEC Rev.5 in its classification and correspondence tables as from reference year 2017. The end-use codes 4, 5 and 6 were created by Eurostat to handle the cases of 'dual use' products. They stand for:

- 4: Intermediate or final consumption;
- 5: Intermediate consumption or gross fixed capital formation; and
- 6: Final consumption or gross fixed capital formation.

Note that the code 0 is used when no information on the end-use is available.

### Illustration of the BEC Rev.5 structure



Source: United Nations, Statistical papers, series M, No.53, Rev.5 (2016)

### More on the Classification of Products by Activity (CPA)

The CPA consists of a hierarchical structure (as established in the CPA Regulation), introductory guidelines and explanatory notes. The structure of the CPA is described in the CPA Regulation as follows:

- a first level, comprising headings identified by an alphabetical code (21 sections);
- a second level, comprising headings identified by a two-digit numerical code (88 divisions);
- a third level, comprising headings identified by a three-digit numerical code (261 groups);
- a fourth level, comprising headings identified by a four-digit numerical code (575 classes);
- a fifth level, comprising headings identified by a five-digit numerical code (1 342 categories); and
- a sixth level, comprising headings identified by a six-digit numerical code (3 142 subcategories).

In November 2012, an update of the Classification of Products by Activity (CPA) was launched. The Regulation establishing CPA version 2.1 was adopted in October 2014, entering into force on 1 January 2015. While some sections of the CPA were aligned to the UN Central Product Classification and its new version 2.1 (commonly referred to as the CPC Ver.2.1) and the explanatory notes were reviewed, the overall characteristics of the CPA remained unchanged.

The CPA has been aligned to updated concepts, such as the updated Frascati manual, resulting in a new structure of division 72 (Scientific research and development services). Services rendered to households have been introduced in parts of the CPA. Appropriate detail of the Classification of Types of Constructions (commonly referred to as the CC) has been integrated into division 41 (Buildings and building construction works). Detail has also been added to various sections of the updated CPC Ver.2.1.

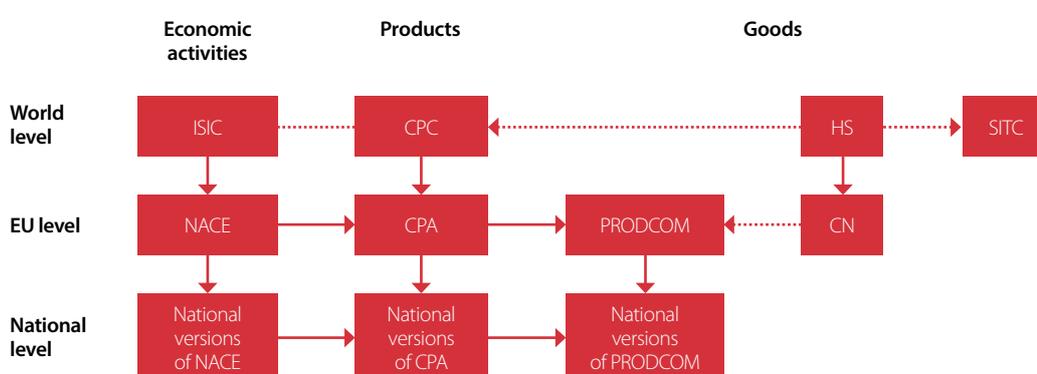
Simultaneously, the structure of the classification down to four digit level has not been changed, in order to maintain consistency with the structure of the activity classification, NACE Rev. 2.

The detail has increased, from 3 142 to 3 218 subcategories. The increase in detail primarily affected the lower level of the classification.

Since CPA version 2.1 is more detailed than CPA 2008, but the coding system remains the same, identical codes can be used in both versions of CPA but with different content, i.e. corresponding to different sections, divisions, groups, classes, categories and subcategories.

### Relationships between the various classifications

The following diagram illustrates how various international, European and national classifications relevant to trade statistics relate to each other. Each arrow indicates a relationship between a reference classification and a classification derived from it. Solid arrows show classifications linked by structure. Dotted arrows and lines show classifications linked through conversion tables.



Where:

**ISIC:** United Nations' International Standard Industrial Classification of all Economic Activities

**NACE:** Statistical classification of economic activities in the EU

**CPC:** United Nations' Central Product Classification

**CPA:** European Classification of Products by Activity

**HS:** Harmonised Commodity Description and Coding System, managed by the World Customs Organisation

**CN:** Combined Nomenclature, the European classification of goods used for trade in goods statistics

**SITC:** United Nations' Standard International Trade Classification, an international classification of goods used for trade in goods statistics

**PRODCOM:** Classification of goods used for statistics on industrial production in the EU

Source: CPA 2008 introductory guidelines

### 7.2.3. The Geonomenclature as country classification

The 'European business statistics geonomenclature applicable to European statistics on international trade in goods', known as the 'Geonomenclature' is used to collect and disseminate trade in goods data. It is the only country nomenclature used in Eurostat publications to identify both the reporting country and the partner country.

The Geonomenclature is managed by Eurostat. It is subject to periodic revision to take account of geopolitical changes. Every country — EU Member States and non-EU countries combined — is identified on the basis of two-letter alphabetical codes. Note that the relationship with the 3-digit numerical codes previously applied continues to be maintained for reasons of consistency.

Eurostat has also defined geographical zones (e.g. North America, the Near and Middle East, Oceania and the Polar regions) covering the whole world without overlaps. Countries can also be grouped by common economic features (e.g. EU, euro area, EFTA countries). The evolution of this nomenclature takes into account the tariff policy needs of the European Union. Consequently it may differ from other international geographical classifications.

The GEONOM implementing act on the *nomenclature of countries and territories for the European statistics on international trade in goods and on the geographical breakdown for other business statistics* was

published in the Official Journal of the EU on 13 October 2020 as [Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2020/1470](#). The GEONOM implementing act entered into force on 1 January 2021.

#### 7.2.4. The NACE as classification by activity

The Statistical Classification of Economic Activities, commonly referred to as NACE, is the classification by activities used in the EU. It is used to produce statistics by enterprise characteristics (e.g. by size in terms of number of employees or by level of concentration).

The NACE was introduced in 1993. It is derived from the United Nations' International Standard Industrial Classification of all Economic Activities (ISIC) but is more detailed. NACE Revision 2 (referred to as 'NACE Rev. 2') has been in force since 2008 for most statistical domains.

As the [trade by enterprise characteristics \(TEC\)](#) domain aims to categorise trade flows according to economic sectors, a product classification based on the industrial origin of the goods is more suitable for analysis than a classification based on the material of goods. For this reason, CPA is used as the product classification in TEC.

### 7.3. What is the difference between 'aggregated' and 'detailed' published data?

The difference mainly lies in the nomenclature used to classify the traded goods and in the level of detail. Moreover, aggregated data include special compilations of data like indices and seasonally adjusted data.

**Aggregated data** refer to macroeconomic indicators for the EU and euro area. Data are aggregated by broad product categories, both monthly (**short-term indicators**) and annually (**long-term indicators**). Broad product categories are defined as one-digit codes of the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC) or aggregates of the Broad Economic Categories (BEC).

**Detailed data** refer to the most detailed level of the following product nomenclatures: the Combined Nomenclature (CN), the SITC, the BEC, the Classification of Products by Activity (CPA) and the Standard Goods Classification for Transport Statistics/Revised (NST/R). Detailed data also contain aggregations at higher levels.

## 7.4. Which indicators are available for aggregated data?

### 7.4.1. Monthly Aggregated data — Short-term indicators

---

<b>Short-term indicators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• gross and seasonally adjusted value (in million euro) for exports, imports and trade balances;</li> <li>• growth rates for exports and imports based on gross and seasonally adjusted values;</li> <li>• unit-value indices;</li> <li>• gross and seasonally adjusted volume indices;</li> <li>• ratio of export and import indices; and</li> <li>• growth rates for gross and seasonally adjusted indices.</li> </ul>
------------------------------	---

---

### 7.4.2. Annual aggregated data — Long-term indicators

Data available in the long-term indicators datasets are of interest for users needing annual data for the European Union, the euro area or the individual Member States.

---

<b>Long-term indicators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• trade value (in billion euro);</li> <li>• shares by reporting country or by main trading partners;</li> <li>• unit-value indices;</li> <li>• volume indices; and</li> <li>• shares by invoicing currency.</li> </ul>
-----------------------------	---

---

## 7.5. Which indicators are available for detailed data?

The following indicators are available for imports and exports:

- trade value (in euro);
- net mass (in kilograms); and
- trade quantity in supplementary units like, for example, litres or square metres. The supplementary quantity is only available for certain goods defined in the Combined Nomenclature and only at CN8 level.

For more details, see item [4.7. What are the measurement units?](#)

## 7.6. What are the basic statistical fields?

Eurostat publishes ITGS in different datasets. The frequency at which the data are compiled (data periodicity) and the product nomenclature differ, depending on the dataset, but the following statistical fields are always available:

- reporting country: country or geo-economic area, such as EU-27 or euro area;
- partner country: EU Member State, non-EU country or geo-economic area;
- reference period: month or year;

- trade flow: import or export;
- product according to the relevant classification.

## 7.7. What additional statistical information is available?

### 7.7.1. Statistical procedure

#### Definition

In extra-EU trade, goods may be transferred from a Member State to a non-EU country, or the other way round, under customs control, and then return to the country of departure. The EU legislation requires these movements to be classified under specific statistical procedures derived from customs procedures. For instance, this breakdown allows users to distinguish between goods permanently imported and goods imported to be transformed in the EU before being re-exported.

**Table 7:** Conceptual overview of the relation between statistical and customs procedures

Statistical procedure	Customs procedures and formalities
1 — normal imports or exports	release for free circulation end-use export
2 — imports or exports covered by the customs inward processing procedure	inward processing re-exportation of processed goods
3 — imports or exports covered by the customs outward processing procedure	outward processing re-importation of processed goods
9 — imports or exports recorded from data sources other than customs declarations	Not applicable

Prior to any analysis and interpretation, it should be noted that the application of a procedure is independent of the nature of the transaction concerned (purchase/sale, processing under contract, etc.). In particular, some of the goods traded for processing, in the more general economic sense of the term, are included under normal imports and exports.

#### List of statistical procedures

- **Code 1 — normal imports and exports** are mainly goods exported definitively, or released into free circulation, either directly or via a customs warehouse.
- **Code 2 — The inward processing procedure** makes it possible to import goods temporarily so that they can be processed (transformed) and then to export the resulting products, while benefiting from an exemption from duties, levies or checks which would be carried out under the trade policy normally applicable to imported goods. Data are available separately on (i) imports for inward processing and (ii) exports after inward processing. Note that code 2 has replaced codes 5 'Inward processing (suspension)' and 6 'Inward processing (drawback)' as of reference month January 2010.
- **Code 3 — The outward processing procedure** makes it possible to export goods temporarily for processing and to import the resulting products with a full or partial exemption from duties and levies. Data are available separately on (i) imports after outward processing and (ii) exports for outward processing.

- **Code 9 — The ‘not recorded from customs declaration’ procedure** relates solely to **imports or exports** for which the customs declaration is not the data source. It is especially relevant under the ‘specific movements’ provisions, for example on sea-going vessels and aircraft, where the flows relate to the change of economic owner (and not the physical movement as is generally the case) and the data are therefore obtained from data sources other than customs declarations.

### Tip for Comext users

Codes 5 ‘Inward processing (suspension)’ and 6 ‘Inward processing (drawback)’ were closed in December 2009 to be replaced by code 2 ‘Inward processing’. Code 7 ‘Economic processing arrangements for textiles’ was also closed in December 2009. Users interested in getting total trade values whatever the reference period should aggregate all statistical procedure codes from 1 to 9 (including codes 5, 6 and 7 – as they do not overlap) or use code T.

## 7.7.2. Trade by mode of transport

Trade data by mode of transport are very important for many purposes, including formulation of transportation policy, monitoring of international transport routes and assessment of the impact of trade on the environment.

### Definitions

- For extra-EU trade, the mode of transport corresponds to the active means of transport (e.g. road, rail, sea) by which, on export, the goods are presumed to have left the statistical territory of the European Union and, on import, the goods are presumed to have entered the statistical territory of the European Union.
- For intra-EU trade, the mode of transport corresponds to the active means of transport by which on export, the goods leave the national statistical territory of the exporting Member State and, on import, the goods enter the national statistical territory of the importing Member State.

### List of modes of transport

- Code 1 = Sea transport
- Code 2 = Rail transport
- Code 3 = Road transport
- Code 4 = Air transport
- Code 5 = Postal consignment
- Code 7 = Fixed transport installations
- Code 8 = Inland waterway transport
- Code 9 = Own propulsion

Note: Code 0 is indicated when the mode of transport is unknown or not applicable.

**More on code 5 ‘Postal consignment’** — Code 5 is reported in cases where the means of transport is unknown and goods are transferred by a postal service, i.e. postal operators authorised by a Member State to provide services governed by the Universal Postal Union Convention. Goods transported by private courier services are also included into this category in cases where the active means of transport is unknown.

**More on code 7 ‘Fixed transport installations’** — Code 7 applies to installations for continuous transport such as pipelines or electric power lines.

**More on code 9 ‘Own propulsion’** — Code 9 applies to means of transport (mainly aircraft and ships) which are themselves the subject of the trade transaction and cross the border under their own propulsion. In cases where these means of transport are carried on other means of transport (e.g. lorries, vessels, trains), the code corresponding to the other means of transport is reported.

### Data availability

- For extra-EU trade, data by mode of transport are available from January 2000 according to both the 'Standard goods classification for transport statistics (NST/R)' and the Harmonised System (HS6, HS4 and HS2 codes). Data relating to the EU aggregate correspond to the aggregation of the extra-EU trade values (in euro) and quantities (in tons and 100 kg).
- For intra-EU trade, data by mode of transport are available from January 2010 according to the 'Standard goods classification for transport statistics (NST/R)' for some but not all the Member states (optional data element).

### 7.7.3. Trade by eligibility and tariff regimes <sup>More</sup>

Imports by tariff regime are of particular interest to users monitoring trade policies and looking for information on the share of duty-free imports and/or preferential imports into the EU. Tariff preferences are applied to extra-EU imports with, in particular, a distinction made between the most favoured nation (MFN) tariffs and preferential ones.

Goods can be imported into the EU under different trade regimes depending on the product and the country of origin. The main trade regime is the MFN which applies, in principle, to all countries. But there are other regimes that provide a specific country or group of countries with a preferential tariff for all or part of their products. The best known is the [Generalised System of Preferences for developing countries](#) but there are also other [bilateral or multilateral agreements](#).

#### EU legislation regarding the Generalised Scheme of Preferences

- The EU's current [Generalised System of Preferences \(GSP\)](#) (Regulation (EU) 978/2012) has been in force since 1 January 2014. The three arrangements of the scheme — the **general GSP scheme**, the **"GSP+" incentive scheme**, and the **"Everything but Arms"** scheme (EBA) — are reinforced by re-adjusting the preferences and ensuring a higher impact.
- The conditions to apply for the [special incentive arrangement for sustainable development and good governance, GSP+](#), are defined in Regulation (EU) No 978/2012 and [Commission Delegated Regulation \(EU\) No 155/2013](#).
- It is important to note that there are basic differences in the GSP schemes offered by different donor countries. Goods complying with the conditions of the USA GSP rules of origin, for example, do not necessarily comply with the EU GSP [rules of origin](#).

To provide information on the share of duty-free and/or preferential imports into the EU from a theoretical and practical perspective, data are presented under two classifications: the **Eligibility** and **Tariff regime**. The cross-tabulation of these classifications provides data from both perspectives, showing which regime the goods could be imported under (MFN or preferential) and which regime/duty they were actually imported under (zero, non-zero). It could be the case that EU importers do not ask for benefitting from preferences because they are not informed or they do not dispose of the certificate of origin or, considering the small value of the import, they prefer to pay the normal rate — no preference or MFN rate — instead of producing administrative documents.

<b>Eligibility</b>	<p>The eligibility reflects the tariff status as indicated in the <a href="#">TARIC database</a> on the first day of each month. Changes occurring during the course of the month are not taken into account. Eligibility codes in the Comext database are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• E1 = ONLY MFN (MFN rate equal to zero or no preference)</li> <li>• E2 = ONLY GSP (GSP rate equal to zero or no preference)</li> <li>• E3 = ONLY PREFERENCES</li> <li>• E5 = GSP and PREFERENCES</li> <li>• EZ = UNKNOWN</li> </ul>
<b>Tariff regime or Use</b>	<p>The tariff regime (or use) reflects the preference as reported in data transmitted by the Member States to Eurostat (source: customs declarations, box 36 of the Single Administrative Document) combined with the duty rate and possibly adjusted. Tariff regime codes in the Comext database are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• U10 = MFN ZERO</li> <li>• U11 = MFN NON-ZERO</li> <li>• U20 = GSP ZERO</li> <li>• U21 = GSP NON-ZERO</li> <li>• U30 = PREFERENCE ZERO</li> <li>• U31 = PREFERENCE NON ZERO</li> <li>• UZZ = UNKNOWN</li> </ul>

The tariff regime is adjusted in order to correct any inconsistencies like, for instance, a request of GSP tariff rate for imports from USA. The following adjustments apply:

- When the product is eligible for 'MFN zero' rate, 'GSP zero' and 'Preference zero' are converted into the tariff regime 'MFN zero';
- When the combination of eligibility and reported preference is most likely to be wrong, the tariff regime becomes 'Unknown'.

### Tip for Comext users

- In the dataset 'Adjusted extra-EU imports since 2000 by tariff regime, by HS2-4-6 and CN8' the tariff regime is provided under the dimension 'IMPORT\_REGIME'.
- In the bulk download facility the information about tariff regime can be found in the 'Preferences' dataset.

## 7.7.4. Trade by enterprise characteristics (TEC)

TEC data combine ITGS with the characteristics of businesses actively engaged in importing and exporting such as size, sector of economic activity or level of concentration. This allows for a deeper analysis of the impact of trade on employment, production and value added, essential in a globalised world where economies are increasingly interconnected.

When reporting ITGS by enterprise characteristics Member States are required to produce a dataset that is independent of their monthly trade statistics. This requirement was included in the revised Intrastat and Extrastat Regulations that came into force from reference years 2009 and 2010 respectively. Statistics on trade by enterprise characteristics are compiled once a year by linking intra- and extra-EU trade micro-data with [business register](#) data.

### Available datasets

The TEC datasets have a narrower scope than ITGS aggregated and detailed datasets. Indeed, TEC datasets reflect the trade carried out by companies identified in the business register. Trade by non-resident traders and private individuals is excluded. Hence, whatever the level of aggregation selected

(including the TOTAL level of NACE), the values obtained are lower than the total trade values extracted from the datasets under the “aggregated data” and “detailed data” headings.

The following datasets are available under ‘[International trade in goods – trade by enterprise characteristics](#)’ on the ITGS website and in the [Easy Comext database](#):

**1. Trade by activity sector and enterprise size class** — Trade by activity sector and employment size class shows the contributions of economic activities and size classes (measured in terms of number of employees) to total trade. This allows the impact of international trade on employment to be analysed and the importance of small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs) to be estimated.

**2. Concentration of trade by activity** — International trade being typically dominated by a few businesses, this indicator shows the share of the total trade accounted for by the top 5, 10, 20, etc. companies.

**3. Trade by partner country and activity** — Trade by partner country shows how many companies were trading with certain partner countries or country zones, and the value they accounted for. This indicator enables the most typical export or import markets to be identified.

**4. Trade by number of partner countries and activity** — Trade by number of partner countries shows how geographically diversified the export markets are. For imports, it shows the number of countries from which goods are imported.

**5. Trade by commodity and activity** — Trade by commodity and activity sector allocates the trade of each commodity to the activity of the trading enterprise. This indicator shows which sectors were involved in the trading of each product group.

**6. Trade by type of trader** — This indicator provides information on how traders are involved in international trade. It shows the number of companies trading within only one flow or in both flows and the trade value these companies account for.

**7. Trade by type of ownership** — The type of ownership is referring to the concept of control and to affiliation of an enterprise. It indicates whether an enterprise is domestically or foreign controlled and, if domestically controlled, whether it has affiliates abroad or not. This indicator can be used to analyse the impact of globalisation on international trade and to estimate the importance of multinational companies for trade.

**8. Trade by export intensity** — Export intensity categorises enterprises according to the importance of foreign markets in their sales. It refers to the share of exports in total turnover.

**9. Trade by activity sector** — In comparison with trade by activity and enterprise size class (first dataset), this indicator provides more details on the activity sector (2- or 3-digit level) but does not contain information about the enterprise size.

**10. Trade by partner country and size class** — This indicator gives insights into the internationalisation of small- and medium sized enterprises. It complements indicator 3 on trade by partner country and activity by applying the same detailed breakdown of partner countries but categorising enterprises by size class instead of activity sector.

## Reporting countries

Data are available for all the EU Member States and for the following non-EU countries:

- United Kingdom up to reference year 2018;
- All EFTA countries except Liechtenstein for which a derogation applies: Iceland, Norway and Switzerland;
- Some enlargement countries: North Macedonia (MK), Montenegro (ME), Serbia (XS), Türkiye (TR), as well as Bosnia and Herzegovina (BA) and Kosovo\* (XK).

\*: in line with UNSCR 1244/1999

## Timeliness

The reporting countries must provide Eurostat with annual data by enterprise characteristics no later than:

- 18 months after the end of the reference year, up to the delivery of 2021 data; and
- 12 months after the end of the reference year, from the delivery of 2022 data.

The transmitted data are disseminated by Eurostat with a time lag of a couple of weeks which is necessary for the data checking and validation.

## Reference period

The first reference year for which statistics by enterprise characteristics are available is 2012 (not for all reporting countries).

## Coverage

The scope of TEC is the same as for monthly trade in goods statistics. TEC data are compiled according to the European concept and comprise both intra- and extra-EU trade flows.

The country coverage is partial in datasets 7 to 10 as the information is provided on a voluntary basis. As from reference year 2021 (data provided by 30 June 2023), the data delivery is mandatory for all datasets (1-10).

*NB: Until 2019, some countries used an exclusion threshold for smallest traders from the core dataset when compiling their TEC tables. The TEC exclusion threshold was not to exceed an annual trade value of 5000 euro. This threshold was abolished in 2019 for reasons of 'inconsistent application'. Eurostat and the Member States concluded that it distorted the share of SMEs in the total number of enterprises and, hence, did not allow for an effective analysis of TEC data. Furthermore, the exclusion threshold hampered the comparability of data between Member States*

## Classifications

**Classification of economic activities** – Economic activities are classified according to the 'statistical classification of economic activities' (NACE Rev. 2). NACE Rev. 2 is based on the fourth revision of the United Nations' International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC Rev. 4). Within the international trade in goods statistics, the NACE classification refers to the economic activity of enterprises that are active in international trade in goods.

TEC data cover all activity sectors, from sections A to U of the NACE Rev. 2 classification.

**Product classification** – As the TEC domain aims to categorise trade flows according to economic activities, product classifications which are based on the industrial origin of the goods are more suitable for analysis than classifications based on material of goods. For this reason, the Classification of Products by Activity (CPA) is used as the product classification in TEC. CPA is a European version of the United Nations' Central Product Classification (CPC), but arranged so that each product heading is assignable to a single heading of the European activity classification, the NACE Rev. 2. CPA version 2008 is used for TEC data relating to reference years 2012-2015. CPA version 2.1 is used since 2016 as reference year.

**Country classification** – The reporting and partner countries are classified according to the 'European business statistics nomenclature applicable to European statistics on international trade in goods', known as the 'Geonomenclature'. An alpha-2 coding applies, which means that each country is identified with a two-letter alphabetical code. Exceptions: code CN\_X\_HK instead of CN for China (except Hong Kong); code UK instead of GB for United Kingdom; code EL instead of GR for Greece.

All classifications and correspondence tables are available as Linked Open Data in [EU Vocabularies](#).

### Where to find more information on TEC data

- All reference documents and relevant information on TEC can be found on the [‘Focus on enterprise characteristics \(TEC\)’](#) page of the ITGS website;
- Additional information on the TEC related metadata is available on the [EU and national metadata page](#) as well as in the metadata files provided next to the respective datasets;
- The [EBS compilers’ manual for international trade in goods statistics - trade by enterprise characteristics](#) provides definitions, instructions and methodological guidance for the compilation of TEC statistics.

### 7.7.5. Trade by invoicing currency (TIC)

The invoicing currency is the currency in which the commercial invoice is drawn up. Data by invoicing currency can be used for instance to explore the use of the euro in the EU’s international trade, to compare it with the role of the United States dollar (USD) or to analyse the role of the euro in the euro area and in the EU. These statistics are very useful to central banks, including the European Central Bank, for comparing the euro with other major international currencies. These data are also used by financial market segments or foreign investors.

The data source is the information recorded from customs declarations according to Article 4(1) of Regulation (EC) No 471/2009. If the invoicing currency for exports is not available on the customs declaration, Member States are required to carry out a survey for compiling exports broken down by invoicing currency which provides statistics with accurate results.

#### Available dataset

**Shares of trade by invoicing currency** — Shares by invoicing currency are calculated, within each product group, on the total Extra-EU trade for the EU Member States and on world imports and exports for the UK and the EFTA and enlargement countries. The available indicator is the ‘Observation value’.

The dataset is available under [‘International trade in goods - aggregated data - long-term indicators’](#) and in the [Easy Comext database](#).

#### Reporting countries

Data are available for all the EU Member States as well as for the following non-EU countries:

- the United Kingdom (until 2018 as reference year);
- the EFTA countries except Liechtenstein for which a derogation applies: Iceland, Norway and Switzerland; and
- all enlargement countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Türkiye.

#### Timeliness

The reporting countries must provide Eurostat with data by invoicing currency once every two years, no later than 3 months after the end of the reference year. The transmitted data are disseminated by Eurostat with a time lag of a couple of weeks. Data deliveries relating to in-between years are optional.

#### Reference period

The first reference year for which statistics by invoicing currency are available is 2010 (2012 for Switzerland, 2014 for Croatia). Data relating to in-between years are optional. 2017 is the first in-between year for which optional TIC data are available.

## Coverage

Data deliveries relating to in-between years being optional, this results in incomplete geographical coverage.

The scope of TIC data is the same as for monthly detailed data on extra-EU trade in goods. They cover all goods entering (imports) or leaving (exports) the statistical territories of the EU Member States and for which the trading partner is a non-EU country. Like ITGS, TIC data cover all sectors of the economy.

For the UK as well as the EFTA and enlargement countries, the scope of TIC data is the trade with the rest of the world.

## Classifications

**Product classification** – TIC data are based on the 10 sections of the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC Rev4):

- SITC sections 0-4: Raw materials without oil;
- SITC sections 5-8: Manufactured products; and
- SITC section 9: Residual category;

complemented by

- SITC division 33: Oil.

**Country classification** – TIC data are disseminated only at aggregated partner level: 'extra-EU' for the data reported by the EU Member States and partner 'world' for the data reported by the UK as well as the EFTA and enlargement countries.

## Currencies

Since 2010, TIC data have been disseminated by four currencies: euro, national currencies of EU Member States not belonging to the euro area, US dollar and 'other' (aggregated group of currencies of all non-EU countries except the United States).

Since reference year 2021, the mandatory currency field has been extended to include the UK pound sterling and 'unknown'. In addition, countries can report data for 25 optional currencies.

As from reference year 2022, some additional changes relating to the transmission of individual currencies are foreseen. Firstly, the national currency of the reporting country should be systematically reported. In addition, two different lists apply according to whether or not data sources other than customs declarations are used:

- Additional currency breakdown if data sources other than customs declarations are used: UK pound sterling;
- Additional currency breakdowns if the customs declarations are used as data source: UK pound; Brazilian real, Canadian dollar, Swiss franc, Chinese renminbi-yuan, Indian rupee, Japanese yen, South Korean won, Mexican peso, Norwegian krone, Russian rouble, Singapore dollar, Turkish lira.

The first data complying with these new requirements are to be transmitted by 31 March 2023.

## Where to find more information on TIC data

- More information on TIC data can be found in the [EBS compilers' manual for international trade in goods statistics – trade by invoicing currency](#). This is the reference document for all National Statistical Authorities involved in the compilation of EU statistics on trade in goods by invoicing currency (TIC). As such, it provides the necessary definitions and practical instructions regarding the preparation and transmission of TIC data to Eurostat.
- Additional TIC related metadata are available on the [EU and national metadata page](#) as well as in the metadata files provided next to the respective datasets.

## 7.8. When are data updated?

All the datasets in the Easy Comext database and on the ITGS dedicated web page are updated **monthly**, on the date of the news release (about 46 days after the end of the reference month) except for:

- one **daily** updated dataset, giving users immediate access to the most recently revised data;
- the 'Trade by enterprise characteristics (TEC)' datasets, which are updated **once a year** (usually in July) for the new reference year and whenever revisions are received;
- the 'Trade by invoicing currency (TIC)' datasets, which are updated **every year** (generally in May) but are complete only **every two years** since data deliveries are mandatory every two years and optional in-between. The TIC datasets are also updated whenever revisions are received;

## 7.9. Does Eurostat publish ITGS only for EU Member States?

**No** – Thanks to specific cooperation agreements, Eurostat also publishes trade in goods data for the non-EU reporting countries below:

<b>EFTA countries</b>	Aggregated and detailed data are published monthly for Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland. Macro series are available from 1995 (Liechtenstein from 2008). Detailed data by SITC Rev.4 are available from 1995 and by HS from 2003 (except for Liechtenstein, from 2009).
<b>Enlargement countries (candidate and potential candidate countries)</b>	Aggregated and detailed data are published monthly for Albania (AL), North Macedonia (MK), Montenegro (ME), Serbia (XS), Türkiye (TR), as well as for Bosnia and Herzegovina (BA), and Kosovo* (XK) Macro series (raw data and growth rates) are available from 1999 (TR), 2002 (AL, MK), 2004 (XK), 2005 (ME, XS) and 2008 (BA) respectively. Detailed data by CN are available from 2002 (AL, MK, TR), 2004 (XK) and 2005 (ME, XS, BA).
<b>South Mediterranean countries</b>	Detailed data are published for Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Morocco, the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Syria and Tunisia. Data are published monthly, except for those of the Occupied Palestinian Territory which are published annually. The available reference periods are variable, the earliest starting in 2000.
<b>United Kingdom and Northern Ireland</b>	Separate datasets are available for reporter UK (February – October 2020) and for reporter Northern Ireland (since reference month January 2021).

\*: in line with UNSCR 1244/1999

# 8

## Data access

One of Eurostat's missions is to provide international trade in goods statistics for the European Union and the euro area to meet the needs of a wide spectrum of users, ranging from the layman to the data analyst, from students, researchers and journalists to businesses and trade associations, from national statistical authorities to the European institutions, including the European Central Bank.

All data, metadata and electronic publications are accessible free of charge via the [Eurostat website](#).

### 8.1. How can I access data online?

The Eurostat website is the only place where the European ITGS are published. The data are accessible via different paths, the main one being the Data page of the [International trade in goods](#) dedicated section.

The 'Data' section on the Eurostat webpage provides the statistical data in a hierarchical structure (navigation tree) made up of themes, categories and subcategories, with datasets attached at the lowest category level. Each category and sub-category in a theme of the navigation tree can be expanded. The navigation tree can be customised to display newly added datasets, latest updates or the most recently visited datasets.

The 'Main tables' are predefined tables focusing on key indicators. They are refreshed automatically when data are loaded into the databases. They include key indicators for the EU, its Member States and the euro area both annual (long-term indicators) and monthly (short-term indicators). Data are available by EU27 and EA19/EA20 aggregates, for a limited range of products (e.g. SITC aggregates).

The 'Database' entry point offers users an advanced tool for selecting and extracting data. All trade in goods data, i.e. not only the detailed data but also the short and long-term indicators are accessible via this link.

The 'Data Browser' interface  on the Eurostat website allows users to customise, visualise and extract statistical data in an easy and interactive way.

The TSV  format replaces ZIP for downloading complete tables.

The Easy Comext interface  provides full access to the detailed statistics.

#### 8.1.1. The ITGS database

The 'Database' [entry point](#) gives access to several datasets classified under the folders 'International trade in goods':

- International trade in goods - aggregated data (short and long-term indicators);

- International trade in goods – trade by enterprise characteristics;
- International trade in goods – detailed data.

### 8.1.1.1. ITGS 'DATABASE' – AGGREGATED DATA

#### Long-term indicators

Long-term indicators refer to annual data aggregated according to the major SITC groups (1-digit codes from 0 to 9). Data for most datasets are available from 2002 as reference year.

**DATABASE**

- International trade
  - International trade in goods - aggregated data (ext\_go\_agg)
    - International trade in goods - long-term indicators (ext\_go\_lti)
      - International trade (ext\_go\_lti\_int)
        - Share of European Union EU27 (from 2020) in the World Trade (ext\_lt\_introeu27\_2020)
        - International trade of EU, the euro area and the Member States by SITC product group (ext\_lt\_intertrd)
        - International trade of EFTA and enlargement countries (ext\_lt\_intercc)
        - Extra-Euro area trade by partner and by SITC product group (ext\_lt\_mainez)
      - EU trade by Member State, partner and product group (ext\_go\_lti\_ext)
        - Intra and Extra-EU trade by Member State and by product group (ext\_lt\_intratrd)
        - Extra-EU trade by partner (ext\_lt\_maineu)
        - Extra-EU trade of food, drinks and tobacco (SITC 0+1) by partner (ext\_lt\_mainagri)
        - Extra EU trade of raw materials (SITC 2+4), by partner (ext\_lt\_mainrawm)
        - Extra-EU trade of mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials (SITC 3) by partner (ext\_lt\_mainmine)
        - Extra-EU trade of chemicals and related products (SITC 5) by partner (ext\_lt\_mainchem)
        - Extra-EU trade of other manufactured goods (SITC 6+8) by partner (ext\_lt\_mainmanu)
        - Extra-EU trade of machinery and transport equipment (SITC 7) by partner (ext\_lt\_mainmach)
      - Extra-EU trade by Member State, shares by invoicing currency (ext\_lt\_invcur)

Source: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/international-trade-in-goods/data/database>

#### Short-term indicators

Short-term indicators refer to monthly data aggregated according to the major SITC groups (1-digit codes from 0 to 9) and high-level BEC products (CAP, CNS, CTR and INT).

**DATABASE**

- International trade
  - International trade in goods - aggregated data (ext\_go\_agg)
    - International trade in goods - long-term indicators (ext\_go\_lti)
      - International trade in goods - short-term indicators (ext\_go\_sti)
        - EU27 (from 2020) trade by SITC product group (ext\_st\_eu27\_2020sitc)
        - Euro area19 trade by SITC product group since 1999 (ext\_st\_ea19sitc)
        - EU27 (from 2020) trade by BEC product group (ext\_st\_eu27\_2020bec)
        - Euro area19 trade by BEC product group since 1999 (ext\_st\_ea19bec)
        - Member States EU27 (from 2020) trade by BEC product group since 1999 (ext\_st\_27\_2020msbec)
        - Macro series for EFTA, enlargement countries and Northern Ireland (raw data and growth rates) (ext\_st\_eftacc)

Source: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/international-trade-in-goods/data/database>

### 8.1.1.2. ITGS 'DATABASE' — TRADE BY ENTERPRISE CHARACTERISTICS

Statistics on trade by enterprise characteristics are compiled once a year by linking intra- and extra-EU trade micro-data with [business register](#) data. The following datasets are available:

**DATABASE**

- International trade
  - International trade in goods - aggregated data (ext\_go\_agg) 
  - International trade in goods - trade by enterprise characteristics (TEC) (ext\_tec) 
    - Trade by NACE Rev. 2 activity and enterprise size class (ext\_tec01)  
    - Concentration of trade by NACE Rev. 2 activity (ext\_tec02)  
    - Trade by partner country and NACE Rev. 2 activity (ext\_tec03)  
    - Trade by number of partner countries and NACE Rev. 2 activity (ext\_tec04)  
    - Trade by commodity and NACE Rev. 2 activity (ext\_tec05)  
    - Trade by type of trader (ext\_tec06)  
    - Trade by type of ownership (optional table) (ext\_tec07)  
    - Trade by exports intensity (optional table) (ext\_tec08)  
    - Trade by NACE Rev. 2 activity sector (optional table) (ext\_tec09)  
    - Trade by partner country and enterprise size class (optional table) (ext\_tec10)  

Source: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/international-trade-in-goods/data/database>

### 8.1.1.3. ITGS 'DATABASE' — DETAILED DATA

Detailed data for the EU Member States, the EFTA countries and the UK (NI) are directly accessible from the navigation tree. More EU and non-EU data are available via the link to the Easy Comext database (last line in the navigation tree), a tailor-made application for ITGS and Prodcom statistics. Easy Comext can also be accessed directly via <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/newxtweb/> or via an internet search for 'Easy Comext'.

More on the Comext interfaces under section 8.2.

**DATABASE**

- International trade
  - International trade in goods - aggregated data (ext\_go\_agg) 
  - International trade in goods - trade by enterprise characteristics (TEC) (ext\_tec) 
  - International trade in goods - detailed data (ext\_go\_detail) 
    - EU trade since 1988 by HS2-4-6 and CN8 (DS-645593) 
    - EU trade since 2015 of COVID-19 medical supplies by categories (DS-1180622) 
    - EU trade since 1999 by HS2-4-6 and CN8 (daily updated) (DS-575274) 
    - EU trade since 1999 by SITC (DS-018995) 
    - EU trade since 1988 by BEC/rev.4 (DS-032655) 
    - EU trade since 2017 by BEC/rev.5 (DS-1288854) 
    - EU trade since 1988 by CPA 2008 (DS-1060915) 
    - EU trade since 2002 by CPA 2.1 (DS-1062396) 
    - Extra-EU trade since 2000 by mode of transport, by HS2-4-6 (DS-1262527) 
    - Adjusted extra-EU imports since 2000 by tariff regime, by HS2-4-6 and CN8 (DS-1262672) 
    - Extra-EU trade since 2000 by mode of transport, by NST/R (DS-022469) 
    - EU trade with UK(NI) and UK(excl. NI) since 2021 by HS2-4-6 and CN8 (DS-1267031) 
    - EU enlargement countries trade since 2002, by HS2-4-6 and CN8 (DS-056697) 
    - EFTA trade since 1995 by SITC (DS-043227) 
    - UK trade Feb-Oct 2020 by HS2-4-6 and CN8 (DS-1165455) 
    - UK(NI) trade since 2021 by HS2-4-6 and CN8 (DS-1267290) 
    - Full access to detailed statistics on international trade in goods (Comext) (comext) 

Source: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/international-trade-in-goods/data/database>

## 8.1.2. The Comext database

Comext is a public database for international trade in goods. It provides full access to recent and historical data for the EU, the euro area and the EU Member States. It also contains detailed statistics for many non-EU countries.

In addition to international trade in goods statistics, COMEXT provides access to statistics on the production of manufactured goods linked to international trade (Europroms), as well as to the main product classifications and correspondence tables.

### COMEXT in figures

- The COMEXT users downloaded about 110 billion lines from the COMEXT database in 2022.
- The COMEXT database contains roughly 4.5 billion records, 25% of which are updated on a daily basis.
- On 1 January 2022 Easy Comext counted about 26.000 registered users across the world. That is without considering the many unregistered users who regularly or occasionally access Easy Comext via the web.
- If in batch mode, the registered users can download up to 30 million cells in one go.

## Easy Comext – a user-friendly access point to Comext

Easy Comext is a user-friendly interface to access COMEXT. It allows users to extract large volumes of data, define and save tailor-made queries, create aggregates or define (advanced) functions (e.g. calculation of the value to quantity ratio to approximate the price). Extracted data can be visualised in tabular or graphical form, downloaded or sent automatically by e-mail.

Easy Comext can be accessed directly via <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/newxtweb/> or by searching for 'Easy Comext' on the internet.

The Easy Comext datasets are shown hereafter.

A description of their content is provided in [Annex 5](#).

Available datasets

- INTERNATIONAL TRADE
  - EU trade since 1988 by HS2-4-6 and CN8 (DS-045409)   
  - EU trade since 1988 by statistical procedure, by HS2-4-6 and CN8 (DS-059313)   
  - EU trade since 2015 of COVID-19 medical supplies by categories (DS-059283)   
  - Extra-EU imports since 2010 by country of origin and country of consignment, by HS2-4-6 and CN8 (DS-059071)   
  - EU trade since 1995 by CN sections (DS-058342)   
  - EU trade since 1999 by HS2-4-6 and CN8 (daily updated) (DS-057380)   
  - EU trade since 1999 by SITC (DS-018995)   
  - EU trade since 1988 by BEC/rev.4 (DS-057555)   
  - EU trade since 2017 by BEC/rev.5 (DS-059301)   
  - EU trade 1988-2021 by CPA 2002 (DS-056992)   
  - EU trade 1988-2022 by CPA 2008 (DS-057009)   
  - EU trade since 2002 by CPA 2.1 (DS-059268)   
  - EU trade since 1988 by BEC/rev.4 and CPA 2008 (DS-058397)   
  - Extra-EU trade since 2000 by mode of transport, by NST/R (DS-022469)   
  - Intra-EU trade since 2010 by mode of transport, by NST/R (DS-058814)   
  - Extra-EU trade since 2000 by mode of transport, by HS2-4-6 (DS-058213)   
  - Adjusted extra-EU imports since 2000 by tariff regime, by HS2-4-6 and CN8 (DS-059281)   
  - EU trade with UK(NI) and UK(excl. NI) since 2021 by HS2-4-6 and CN8 (DS-059299)   
- Indices
  - Trade in goods by Invoicing Currency (TIC) since 2010
  - Trade in goods by Enterprise Characteristics (TEC) since 2012
- Non-EU Datasets
  - Statistics on the production of manufactured goods and international trade (Europroms)
- Available nomenclatures
- Available relations

Source: <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/newxtweb/>

- Trade in goods by Invoicing Currency (TIC) since 2010
  - Shares of trade by invoicing currency (DS-059270)   
- Trade in goods by Enterprise Characteristics (TEC) since 2012
  - DS01: Trade by NACE Rev. 2 activity and enterprise size class (DS-059258)   
  - DS02: Concentration of trade by NACE Rev. 2 activity (DS-059259)   
  - DS03: Trade by partner country and NACE Rev. 2 activity (DS-059260)   
  - DS04: Trade by number of partner countries and NACE Rev. 2 activity (DS-059261)   
  - DS05: Trade by commodity and NACE Rev. 2 activity (DS-059262)   
  - DS06: Trade by type of trader (DS-059263)   
  - DS07: Trade by type of ownership (optional table) (DS-059264)   
  - DS08: Trade by exports intensity (optional table) (DS-059265)   
  - DS09: Trade by NACE Rev. 2 activity sector (optional table) (DS-059266)   
  - DS10: Trade by partner country and enterprise size class (optional table) (DS-059267)   
- Non-EU Datasets
  - South Mediterranean trade since 2000, by HS2-4-6 (DS-057705)   
  - EU enlargement countries trade since 2002
    - EU enlargement countries trade since 2002, by HS2-4-6 and CN8 (DS-056697)   
    - EU enlargement countries trade since 2002 by mode of transport, by NST/R (DS-059300)   
  - EFTA trade
    - EFTA trade since 1995 by SITC (DS-043227)   
    - EFTA trade since 2003 by HS2-4-6 (DS-044225)   
    - EFTA trade since 2003 by national products classification (8-digit) – CH (DS-043955)   
    - EFTA trade since 2003 by national products classification (8-digit) – NO (DS-044156)   
    - EFTA trade since 2003 by national products classification (8-digit) – IS (DS-044571)   
  - Trade of the United Kingdom (Northern Ireland) since 2021
    - UK(NI) trade since 2021 by HS2-4-6 and CN8 (DS-059292)   
    - UK(NI) trade since 2021 by BEC/rev.4 (DS-059293)   
    - UK(NI) trade since 2021 by SITC (DS-059294)   
    - UK(NI) trade since 2021 by CPA 2.1 (DS-059295)   
    - UK(NI) trade since 2021 by mode of transport (HS2-4-6) (DS-059296)   
    - UK(NI) trade since 2021 by mode of transport, by NST/R (DS-059297)   
  - Trade of the United Kingdom (UK) since February 2020
    - UK trade Feb-Oct 2020 by HS2-4-6 and CN8 (DS-059271)   
    - UK trade Feb-Oct 2020 by BEC/rev.4 (DS-059278)  
    - UK trade Feb-Oct 2020 by SITC (DS-059279)  
    - UK trade Feb-Oct 2020 by CPA 2.1 (DS-059280)  
    - UK trade Feb-Oct 2020 by mode of transport, by NST/R (DS-059275)  
    - UK trade Feb-Oct 2020 by mode of transport (HS2-4-6) (DS-059277)  

Source: <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/newxtweb/>

- [-] Indices
  - [-] BEC/rev.4 classification (DS-001707)   
  - [-] CPA 2008 classification (1-digit) (DS-001715)   
  - [-] CPA 2008 classification (2-digit) (DS-008151)   
  - [-] SITC classification (1-digit) (DS-001722)   
  - [-] SITC classification (2-digit) (DS-001727)   
- [-] Statistics on the production of manufactured goods and international trade (Europroms)
  - [-] Annual detailed data since 1995 by PRODCOM list (NACE/rev.2)
    - [-] Sold production, exports and imports (DS-056120)  
    - [-] Total production (DS-056121)  
- [-] Available nomenclatures
  - [-] BEC/rev.4  
  - [-] BEC/rev.5  
  - [-] CN SECTIONS  
  - [-] CPA 2002  
  - [-] CPA 2008  
  - [-] CPA 2.1  
  - [-] GEO - numerical codes  
  - [-] GEO - alpha codes  
  - [-] CN  
  - [-] NST/R  
  - [-] PRODCOM PRODUCTS  
  - [-] SITC  
  - [-] SUPPLEMENTARY UNIT (SU)  
- [-] Available relations
  - [-] CN8-BEC/rev.5  
  - [-] CN8-BEC/rev.4  
  - [-] CPA2008-CN8  
  - [-] CPA21-CN8  
  - [-] SITC/rev.4-CN8  
  - [-] CN8-NST/R  
  - [-] CPA2002-CN8  
  - [-] SU-NC8  

Source: <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/newxtweb/>

### 8.1.3. The bulk download facility <sup>Rev</sup>

The [Bulk Download facility](#) in the Comext Domain contains ITGS data in csv format (comma separated values, dot separated decimals), which can be easily imported into a chosen tool for further analysis. The main advantage of this functionality, compared to the Comext database, is that each monthly (or annual) file contains the complete set of data, downloadable in one go. The data in the bulk are

accompanied by metadata, such as classifications, correspondence tables, methodological notes or manuals.

Name	Size	Type	Date	
<a href="#">↑ up one level</a>				
[COMEXT_DATA]		DIR	14/02/2022 15:46:55	
[COMEXT_HISTORICAL_DATA]		DIR	08/04/2021 13:53:56	
[COMEXT_METADATA]		DIR	16/12/2021 10:32:28	
[COMEXT_OTHER_DATA]		DIR	17/12/2021 09:14:10	
<a href="#">Instructions on how to use the bulkdownload facility.pdf</a>	356.71 KB	pdf	27/08/2020 17:30:57	<a href="#">Download</a>

Source: [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/estat-navtree-portlet-prod/BulkDownloadListing?sort=1&dir=comext%2Fbulk\\_download](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/estat-navtree-portlet-prod/BulkDownloadListing?sort=1&dir=comext%2Fbulk_download)

## Where to find the latest data for the EU Member States

The latest data can be found in the COMEXT\_DATA section. The data are presented in five subfolders:

- Subfolder PREFERENCES: 'prefsYYYY.7z' files starting from reference year 2000, containing monthly and annual trade values (in euro) and quantities (in kg and, if applicable, in supplementary quantity), by eligibility and tariff regime, according to the product codes of the Combined Nomenclature, by extra-EU partner country.
- Subfolder PRODUCTS:
  - 'fullYYYYMM.7z' and 'fullYYYY52.7z' files, starting from reference month January 1988. They contain monthly and annual trade values (in euro) and quantities (in kg and, if applicable, in supplementary quantity), according to the product codes of the Combined Nomenclature (CN), the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC), the Statistical Classification of Products (CPA 2002 (until December 2021), CPA 2008 and 2.1), the Classification by Broad Economic Categories (BEC4, BEC5 (from 2017 onwards)) and SECTIONS (Groups of CN chapters), by intra- and extra-EU partner country.
  - 'fullxixuYYYYMM.7z' and 'fullxixuYYYY52.7z' files, starting from reference month January 2021: monthly and annual trade values (in euro) and quantities (in kg and, if applicable, in supplementary quantity), according to the product codes of the CN, the SITC, the CPA 2002 (until December 2021), the CPA 2008 and 2.1, BEC4, BEC5 and SECTIONS, by partners XI (United Kingdom (Northern Ireland)) and XU (United Kingdom (excluding Northern Ireland)).
- Subfolder TRANSPORT\_HS: 'trhsYYYYMM.7z' and 'trhsYYYY52.7z' files starting from reference month January 2001. They contain monthly and annual trade values (in euro) and quantities (in kg) by mode of transport, according to the product codes of the Harmonised System (HS6), by extra-EU partner country.
- Subfolder TRANSPORT\_INTRA: 'tr\_intra\_YYYYMM.7z' and 'tr\_intra\_YYYY52.7z' files, starting from reference month January 2010. They contain monthly and annual trade values (in euro) and quantities (in kg) by mode of transport, according to the product codes of the Standard goods classification for transport statistics (NST/R), by intra-EU partner country.  
NB: Not all the Member States provide data for this dataset (partial coverage).
- Subfolder TRANSPORT\_NSTR: 'trYYYYMM.7z' and 'trYYYY52.7z' files, starting from reference month January 2010. They contain monthly and annual trade values (in euro) and quantities (in kg) by mode of transport, according to the product codes of the Standard goods classification for transport statistics (NST/R), by extra-EU partner country.

## Tips for bulk download users

- The declarant and the partner country are available both in numeric and in alpha-2 format for all the files.
- The records contain no pre-calculated aggregates, except for the 'TOTAL' product codes.
- For the groups of CN chapters, see CN\_SECTIONS.txt under COMEXT METADATA/ CLASSIFICATIONS AND RELATIONS/ CLASSIFICATIONS in the BULK
- The UK data as from February 2020 are available under COMEXT\_OTHER\_DATA / NON\_EU\_DATASETS

## Where to find historical Comext data

Historical ITGS data can be found in the dataset 1976-1987 Nimex — the latter contains annual intra and extra-EU trade data from 1976 to 1987, broken down by product according to the Nimex classification. The Nimex classification was used to collect trade statistics before the implementation of the Combined Nomenclature, in January 1988.

## Where to find metadata

Additional information about the content and structure of the data in the bulk download facility can be found under [COMEXT\\_METADATA](#):

Name	Size	Type	Date	
↑ up one level				
[CLASSIFICATIONS_AND_RELATIONS]		DIR	11/01/2018 11:51:37	
[DOCS_AND_GUIDES]		DIR	05/03/2021 11:27:10	
[MONTHLY_MLIADAIA]		DIR	15/02/2022 10:42:45	
2022 Publication calendar.pdf	26.90 KB	pdf	10/11/2021 16:52:57	<a href="#">Download</a>
Important_Note-03May2021.txt	509 bytes	txt	13/12/2021 09:13:20	<a href="#">Download</a>

Source: [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/estat-navtree-portlet-prod/BulkDownloadListing?sort=1&dir=comext%2Fbulk\\_download%2FCOMEXT\\_METADATA](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/estat-navtree-portlet-prod/BulkDownloadListing?sort=1&dir=comext%2Fbulk_download%2FCOMEXT_METADATA)

## 8.2. Publications

International trade publications in PDF format are provided free of charge to the general public. The complete collection of ITGS related publications can be found on the dedicated [International trade in goods](#) - Publications page on the Eurostat website.

### 8.2.1. Calendar

To keep users up-to-date on forthcoming publications, various calendars are made available by Eurostat:

- the [Euro indicators release calendar](#) providing the scheduled dates of the monthly Euro indicators news releases; and
- the [publications calendar](#) providing an overview of forthcoming Eurostat publications such as news items, data releases, statistics explained articles or visualisation publications by theme and by week. The weekly schedule is confirmed each Friday for the following week.

### 8.2.2. News Releases

- Euro Indicators provide general economic information on the euro area, European Union and individual Member States. They contain timely, high quality, monthly and/or quarterly indicators, and

are issued simultaneously with data releases according to a set calendar, planned a year in advance. The [news releases on the Euro indicators for international trade](#) give the first results (including estimates) on euro area and EU trade flows. They are published online around 46 days after the reference month. The precise dates of the monthly releases are announced in the dedicated Euro indicators release calendar. The headline indicators are the non-seasonally adjusted euro area and EU trade balances for the latest reference month. Detailed results by main products, main partners and Member State are given for the cumulated period, i.e. from January to the month preceding the latest reference month. Seasonally and working day adjusted aggregates (imports, exports and trade balance) are also available for the euro area and the EU. Note that the seasonally adjusted trade balance is one of the **principal European Economic Indicators** (PEEIs) used to give an overall picture of the macroeconomic situation in the EU and the euro area.

- In addition to the monthly news release, Eurostat publishes a yearly news release in the second half of March covering the main developments in the EU trade of the previous year. The exact dates can be found in the [Eurostat release calendar](#).

### 8.2.3. News Items

News items are short news releases relating to important EU events, international days and topical subjects. They are also used to summarise the key points of the Statistics Explained articles. All news items can be found on the dedicated [International trade in goods - Publications](#) page.

### 8.2.4. Statistics Explained

'Statistics Explained' is an official [Eurostat](#) website presenting statistical topics in an easily understandable way. Together, the articles make up an encyclopaedia of European statistics, completed by a [statistical glossary](#) and links to further information and to the latest data and metadata. The website is a portal for occasional and regular users alike. All 'Statistics Explained' articles relating to ITGS can be accessed via the [Eurostat - Statistics explained – International trade in goods](#) home page.

The online publication '[International trade in goods – a statistical picture](#)' provides an overview and recent statistics on the EU's international trade by main partners, main products traded, by enterprise characteristics and by invoicing currency. Other topics covered are trade in products related to the green economy, trade in COVID-19 related products and trade in cultural goods. A separate section deals with statistics for beginners.

Statistics explained articles focussing on globalisation can be found under [Globalisation patterns in EU trade and investment](#).

## 8.3. Where can I find reference metadata?

Eurostat publishes a wide array of descriptive and methodological notes to help users understand the scope of ITGS. They can be found in the following pages of the 'International trade in goods' section on the Eurostat website:

- [EU and national metadata](#)
- [Manuals and guidelines](#)

## 8.4. Multilingual user support

Together with the members of the European Statistical System Eurostat has established a network of multilingual support centres in all the EU Member States as well as in some EFTA countries. Their mission is to provide help and guidance to users of European statistical data. Details of this user support network can be found in the [Help section](#) of Eurostat's website. Eurostat also provides specific support to journalists via its [Press centre](#).

Questions or requests concerning the ITGS data in Comext or on the Eurostat website can be sent to [comextsupport@ec.europa.eu](mailto:comextsupport@ec.europa.eu)

# Annex 1

## List of goods or movements excluded from ITGS<sup>Rev</sup>

The list of exclusions are given in the Appendix of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/1197 of 30 July 2020.

List of goods or movements excluded from European statistics on international trade in goods:

- (a) monetary gold;
  - (b) means of payment which are legal tender and securities, including means which are payments for services such as postage, taxes, user fees;
  - (c) goods for or following temporary use (e.g. hire, loan, operational leasing), provided all the following conditions are met:
    - no processing is or was planned or carried out,
    - the expected duration of the temporary use was or is not intended to be longer than 24 months,
    - the intra-EU export/import has not to be declared as an intra-EU supply/acquisition for VAT purposes or no change of ownership took place or is intended to take place for extra-EU export/import;
  - (d) goods moving between:
    - a Member State and its territorial enclaves in other Member States or non-member countries, and
    - the host Member State and territorial enclaves of other Member States, non-member countries or international organisations.
- Territorial enclaves include embassies, consulates, military bases and scientific bases outside the territory of the mother country;
- (e) goods used as carriers of customised information, including software;
  - (f) data and software downloaded from the internet;
  - (g) goods supplied free of charge which are themselves not the subject of a commercial transaction, provided that the movement is with the sole intention of preparing or supporting an intended subsequent trade transaction by demonstrating the characteristics of goods or services such as:
    - advertising material,
    - commercial samples;
  - (h) goods for and after repair or maintenance and replacement parts that are incorporated in the framework of the repair or maintenance and replaced defective parts;

- (i) means of transport travelling in the course of their work, including spacecraft launchers at the time of launching;
- (j) goods declared orally to Customs authorities which are either of a commercial nature provided that their value does not exceed the extra-EU trade statistical threshold of EUR 1 000 in value or 1 000 kg in net mass, or of a non-commercial nature;
- (k) goods released for free circulation after being subject to the customs procedures of inward processing are excluded from extra-EU trade in goods;
- (l) periodicals under subscription;
- (m) personal property belonging to natural persons transferring their normal place of residence; trousseaux and household effects belonging to a person transferring his or her normal place of residence on the occasion of his or her marriage; personal property acquired by inheritance; school outfits, educational materials and related household effects; coffins containing bodies, funerary urns containing the ashes of deceased persons, and ornamental funerary articles transported with the coffins and urns; goods for charitable or philanthropic organisations and goods for the benefit of disaster victims.

## Annex 2

### Compilation rules applicable to specific goods or movements [More](#)

#### Vessels and aircraft – Transfer of economic ownership

<b>Scope</b>	Transfer of economic ownership of vessels and aircraft. Specific compilation rules are needed, because of the lack of relevance of the cross-border movement principle for that type of goods.
<b>Reference period</b>	Month when transfer of ownership takes place
<b>Flow</b>	Intra-EU/extra-EU imports and exports
<b>Partner country</b>	<b>For imports</b> — Country of construction for new vessels and aircraft, otherwise residence country of previous economic owner <b>For exports</b> — Residence country of new economic owner
<b>Commodity codes</b>	<b>Vessels:</b> seagoing vessels, tugs, warship and floating structure: 8901 10 10, 8901 20 10, 8901 30 10, 8901 90 10, 8902 00 10, 8903 22 10, 8903 23 10, 8903 32 10, 8903 33 10, 8904 00 10, 8904 00 91, 8905 10 10, 8905 20 00, 8905 90 10, 8906 10 00 and 8906 90 10. <b>Aircraft:</b> 8802 30 00 and 8802 40 00
<b>Trade value</b>	Value that would be invoiced in case of sale/purchase of the whole vessel and aircraft.
<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Net mass:</b> only for aircraft <b>Supplementary quantity:</b> in number of items

### More on the partner country

---

<b>Extra-EU exports</b>	The partner country is the non-EU country where the new economic owner is established with his business activities. The economic ownership was transferred from a natural/legal person established in the reporting Member State. Note that, for new vessels and aircraft, the reporting Member State is the country of construction.
<b>Extra-EU imports</b>	The partner country is the non-EU country where the previous economic owner was established with his business activities. The economic ownership was transferred to a natural/legal person established in the reporting Member State. Note that, for new vessels and aircraft, the partner country is the country of construction.
<b>Intra-EU exports</b>	The partner country is the Member State where the new economic owner is established with his business activities. The economic ownership was transferred from a natural/legal person established in the reporting Member State. Note that, for new vessels and aircraft, the reporting Member State is the country of construction.
<b>Intra-EU imports</b>	The partner country is the Member State where the previous economic owner was established with his business activities. The economic ownership was transferred to a natural/legal person established in the reporting Member State. Note that, for new vessels and aircraft, the partner country is the country of construction.

---

### Vessels and aircraft – Processing operation

<b>Scope</b>	Processing operation of vessels and aircraft. Special compilation rules apply by linking the goods to the country of the economic owner
<b>Reference period</b>	<b>Intra-EU trade:</b> month of import or export (when vessel or aircraft is brought to/ leaves the premises of processor) <b>Extra-EU trade:</b> month of acceptance of customs declaration
<b>Flow</b>	Intra-EU/extra-EU imports and exports
<b>Partner country</b>	<b>Imports in view of processing:</b> residence country of economic owner <b>Imports after processing:</b> country of processing <b>Exports in view of processing:</b> country of processing <b>Exports after processing:</b> residence country of economic owner
<b>Commodity codes</b>	<b>Vessels:</b> seagoing vessels, tugs, warship and floating structure: 8901 10 10, 8901 20 10, 8901 30 10, 8901 90 10, 8902 00 10, 8903 22 10, 8903 23 10, 8903 32 10, 8903 33 10, 8904 00 10, 8904 00 91, 8905 10 10, 8905 20 00, 8905 90 10, 8906 10 00 and 8906 90 10  <b>Aircraft:</b> 8802 30 00 and 8802 40 00
<b>Trade value</b>	<b>Movement in view of processing:</b> value of unprocessed goods that would be invoiced in case of sale/purchase <b>Movement after processing:</b> value of unprocessed goods plus value added by processing
<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Net mass:</b> only for aircraft <b>Supplementary quantity:</b> in number of items

## Goods delivered to vessels and aircraft

<b>Scope</b>	Special compilation rules apply for the physical delivery of goods from the reporting Member state to a vessel or aircraft belonging to another Member state or non-EU country where the legal or natural person exercising the economic ownership is established.
<b>Reference period</b>	Month when the goods are delivered
<b>Flow</b>	Intra-EU/extra-EU exports
<b>Partner country</b>	Residence country of the economic owner of the vessel/aircraft or, if not determined, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• QR 'Stores and provisions within the framework of intra-EU trade', or</li> <li>• QS 'Stores and provisions within the framework of extra-EU trade'</li> </ul>
<b>Commodity codes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any relevant CN8 codes corresponding to products delivered for the crew and passengers for consumption during the journey, and for the operation of the engines, machines and other equipment of vessels or aircraft or</li> <li>• Simplified 8-digit codes containing the letter B (see Annex 3) or X</li> </ul>
<b>Trade value</b>	Standard definition including statistical value in case of processing
<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Net mass:</b> Mandatory for goods belonging to CN chapter 27, otherwise optional <b>Supplementary quantity:</b> Optional

### More on the partner country

<b>Extra-EU exports</b>	The partner country is the non-EU country where the economic owner of the vessel or aircraft to which the goods are delivered is established. Note that, if the partner country is not determined, the code QS 'Stores and provisions within the framework of extra-EU trade' may be used instead of the real partner country.
<b>Intra-EU exports</b>	The partner country is the Member State where the economic owner of the vessel or aircraft to which the goods are delivered is established. Note that, if the partner country is not determined, the code QR 'Stores and provisions within the framework of intra-EU trade' may be used instead of the real partner country.

## Goods delivered to and from offshore installations

<b>Scope</b>	<p>Physical movement of goods to and from offshore installation occur:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• between a Member State and another Member State's or a non-EU country's offshore installation ; or</li> <li>• between a Member State's offshore installation and another Member State's or a non-EU country's offshore installation</li> </ul> <p>In order to be considered an offshore installation of a country, the offshore installation has to be located in the exclusive economic zone of that country. Special compilation rules apply because this trade is subject to simplification measures allowing the use of simplified codes.</p>
<b>Reference period</b>	Month when the goods are delivered
<b>Flow</b>	Intra-EU/extra-EU imports and exports
<b>Partner country</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Member State or non-EU country from/to which goods are delivered</li> <li>• Member State or a non-EU country from/to whose exclusive economic zone goods are delivered</li> </ul> <p>Note: The codes QV 'Countries and territories not specified in the framework of intra-Union trade' or QW 'Countries and territories not specified within the framework of extra- Union trade' may be used instead of real partner country.</p>
<b>Commodity codes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For goods delivered to offshore installations, i.e. delivery of products for the crew and for the operation of engines, machines and other equipment of the offshore installation, standard CN8 codes or simplified 8-digit codes containing the letter F (see Annex 3) or X can be used.</li> <li>• For goods obtained from or produced by offshore installations, i.e. products extracted from the seabed or subsoil, or manufactured by the offshore installations — the standard CN8 codes shall be used.</li> </ul>
<b>Trade value</b>	Standard definition
<b>Quantity</b>	<p><b>Net mass:</b> Mandatory for goods belonging to CN chapter 27, otherwise optional</p> <p><b>Supplementary quantity:</b> Mandatory for goods belonging to CN chapter 27, otherwise optional</p>

### More on the partner country

**In the case of goods obtained from or produced by an offshore installation**, i.e. products extracted from the seabed or subsoil, or manufactured/produced by the offshore installation:

<b>Extra-EU exports</b>	The partner country is the non-EU country to which the goods are delivered from the offshore installation. The latter is established in an area where the exporting Member State has the exclusive rights to exploit that seabed or subsoil.
<b>Extra-EU imports</b>	The partner country is the non-EU country where the offshore installation from which the goods are delivered to the importing Member State is established. The offshore installation is established in an area where this non-EU country has exclusive rights to exploit that seabed or subsoil.
<b>Intra-EU exports</b>	The partner country is the Member State to which the goods are delivered from the offshore installation. The latter is established in an area where the exporting Member State has the exclusive rights to exploit that seabed or subsoil.
<b>Intra-EU imports</b>	The partner country is the Member State where the offshore installation from which the goods are delivered to the importing Member State is established. The offshore installation is established in an area where the partner Member State has exclusive rights to exploit that seabed or subsoil.

**In the case of goods delivered to an offshore installation**, i.e. products for the crew and for the operation of the engines, machines and other equipment of the offshore installation:

<b>Extra-EU exports</b>	The partner country is the non-EU country to whose offshore installation goods are delivered by the exporting Member State. The offshore installation is established in an area where this non-EU country has exclusive rights to exploit that seabed or subsoil. Note that the code QW 'Countries and territories not specified within the framework of extra-EU trade' may be used instead of the real partner country.
<b>Extra-EU imports</b>	The partner country is the non-EU country from which goods are delivered to the offshore installation established in an area where the importing Member State has the exclusive rights to exploit that seabed or subsoil. Note that the code QW 'Countries and territories not specified within the framework of extra-EU trade' may be used instead of the real partner country.
<b>Intra-EU exports</b>	The partner country is the Member State to whose offshore installation goods are delivered by the exporting Member State. The offshore installation is established in an area where this partner Member State has exclusive rights to exploit that seabed or subsoil. Note that the code QV 'Countries and territories not specified in the framework of intra-EU trade' may be used instead of the real partner country.
<b>Intra-EU imports</b>	The partner country is the Member State from which goods are delivered to the offshore installation established in an area where the importing Member State has the exclusive rights to exploit that seabed or subsoil. Note that the code QV 'Countries and territories not specified in the framework of intra-EU trade' may be used instead of the real partner country.

## Sea products

<b>Scope</b>	Special compilation measures apply whenever trade involves a Member State's vessel or port and another Member State's/country's vessel, as follows: <b>Imports</b> — Acquisition of sea products by a Member State's vessel from another Member State's/country's vessel <b>Exports</b> — Landing of sea products in a Member State's port by another Member State's/country's vessel Note: A vessel is deemed a country's vessel if the economic owner of the vessel is established in that country.
<b>Reference period</b>	Month when the sea products are landed in a Member State's port and month when the sea products are acquired by a processing Member State's vessel
<b>Flow</b>	Intra-EU/extra-EU imports and exports
<b>Partner country</b>	Country where the economic owner of the vessel is established (no matter in which geographical location the sea products were caught or acquired). <b>For imports</b> — Member State/country from whose vessels the sea products were acquired. In case of extra- EU imports, the partner country is the country of origin defined on the basis of the vessel's flag (Customs definition). In case of intra- EU imports, the partner country is the country of consignment defined as the country of residence of the economic owner of the vessel. <b>For exports</b> — Member State/country where the port is located
<b>Commodity codes</b>	Any relevant CN8 codes covering fishes and salvages
<b>Trade value</b>	Standard definition
<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Net mass:</b> Mandatory <b>Supplementary quantity:</b> Mandatory

## More on the partner country

<b>Extra-EU exports</b>	Where sea products having <b>Union status</b> are landed in a port of a non-EU country, <b>the partner country is the non-EU country of landing</b> . They are extra-EU exports of the Member State where the operator of the catching vessel is established. Where sea products having <b>Union status</b> are transhipped at sea by the operator of the catching vessel to a vessel operated by a person resident in a non-EU country, <b>the partner country is the non-EU country where the operator of the receiving vessel is established</b> . They are extra-EU exports of the Member State where the operator of the catching vessel is established.
<b>Extra-EU imports</b>	Where sea products having <b>non-Union status</b> are landed in a port of a Member State, they are extra-EU imports of that Member State. <b>The partner country is the country of origin</b> . Additionally to the country of origin, the country where the operator of the catching vessel is registered is also collected.
<b>Intra-EU exports</b>	Where sea products having <b>Union status</b> are landed in a port of a Member State, they are recorded as intra-EU exports of the Member State where the operator of the catching vessel is registered and <b>the partner country is the Member State of landing</b> . Where sea products having <b>Union status</b> are transhipped at sea by the operator of the catching vessel to a vessel operated by a person resident in another Member State, they are recorded as intra-EU exports of the Member State where the operator of the catching vessel is established and <b>the partner country is the Member State where the operator of the receiving vessel is registered</b> .
<b>Intra-EU imports</b>	Where sea products having <b>Union status</b> are landed in a port of a Member State, they are recorded as intra-EU imports in that Member State and <b>the partner country is the Member State where the operator of the catching vessel is registered</b> . Where sea products having <b>Union status</b> are transhipped at sea to a vessel operated by a person resident in a Member State, they are recorded as intra-EU imports of the Member State where the operator of the receiving vessel is established and <b>the partner country is the Member State where the operator of the catching vessel is registered</b> .

## Spacecraft

<b>Scope</b>	Special compilation measures apply whenever commercial transactions involve finished spacecraft at the time of launching. The transfer of economic ownership principle applies, assuming such a transfer takes place. Transactions involving the transfer of economic ownership of satellites in orbit are excluded from trade statistics.
<b>Reference period</b>	Month when the spacecraft is launched / when the transfer of ownership takes place
<b>Flow</b>	Intra-EU/extra-EU imports and exports
<b>Partner country</b>	<b>For imports</b> — Member State/country of construction <b>For exports</b> — Member State/country where the first economic owner of the new satellite is resident once the transfer has taken place.
<b>Commodity codes</b>	8802 60 11, 8802 60 19
<b>Trade value</b>	Value of the spacecraft excluding transport and insurance costs
<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Net mass:</b> Mandatory <b>Supplementary quantity:</b> Mandatory

### More on the partner country

<b>Extra-EU exports</b>	The partner country is the non-EU country where the new economic owner of the spacecraft is established.
<b>Extra-EU imports</b>	The partner country is the country of construction.
<b>Intra-EU exports</b>	The partner country is the Member State where the new economic owner of the spacecraft is established.
<b>Intra-EU imports</b>	The partner country is the Member State of construction.

Electrical energy <sup>more</sup>

<b>Scope</b>	Specific compilation methods started applying to the physical flows of electrical energy transferred in border-crossing electricity grids in 2022. This is because of the difficulty to apply the country of origin concept in the context of electricity grids.
<b>Reference period</b>	Month of import and export
<b>Flow</b>	Intra- EU/extra-EU imports and exports
<b>Partner country</b>	<p><b>From January 2022 onwards</b> For imports and exports — Neighbouring Member State/country In practice it means that the partner country is a country with a direct power grid connection to the reporting Member State.</p> <p><b>Until December 2021 included</b> For imports — Country of origin (extra-EU trade) or consignment (intra-EU trade) For exports — Member State/country of destination</p>
<b>Commodity code</b>	2716 00 00
<b>Trade value</b>	Standard definition but may be based on estimates. Member States may choose any data source available for the estimations, e.g. weekly or monthly market prices, statistical surveys or customs declaration. The new EBS regulation provides NSAs with access to all available data sources which they may need to compile statistics on electrical energy.
<b>Quantity</b>	<p><b>Net mass:</b> no net mass (null value)</p> <p><b>Supplementary quantity:</b> Mandatory.</p>

## Natural gas in gaseous state<sup>more</sup>

<b>Scope</b>	Special provisions on natural gas in gaseous state concern only the natural gas which is moving through the pipeline (the physical flow supplied through natural gas distribution systems). Natural gas in gaseous state which is not transported via pipelines shall be statistically treated as all other goods.
<b>Reference period</b>	Month of import and export
<b>Flow</b>	Intra-EU/extra-EU imports and exports
<b>Partner country</b>	<b>For imports</b> — Member State of consignment for intra-EU imports and country of origin for extra-EU imports. <b>For exports</b> — Member State/country of destination Since January 2022 NSAs are allowed to estimate the partner Member State or partner country.
<b>Commodity code</b>	2711 21 00 (natural gas in gaseous state)
<b>Trade value</b>	Standard definition but may be based on estimates
<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Net mass:</b> Mandatory <b>Supplementary quantity:</b> Mandatory

## Annex 3

### Alphanumeric product codes in Comext<sup>Rev</sup>

Alphanumeric codes are used in intra- and extra-EU trade statistics to identify confidential or adjusted data and trade for which a breakdown of the results at a detailed level of the product classification is not possible. This usually concerns goods for which some Member States allow a simplified declaration to be made. In principle, the results relating to the alphanumeric codes are included under the relevant chapter of the CN (e.g. 63III000 Selections of goods of Chapter 63). If the chapter cannot be identified, the results are included under Chapter 99 (e.g. 99III000 Selections of goods not specified elsewhere).

<b>Code 99AAA000</b>	Intra-EU trade involving transactions falling below the 'small scale transaction threshold' or residual products collected under the simplification scheme.
<b>Codes containing the letter B</b>	Deliveries of products for the crew and passengers, and for the operation of the engines, machines and other equipment of sea-going vessels or aircraft
<b>Codes containing the letter C</b>	Corrections due to the reporting of erroneous codes
<b>Codes containing the letter E</b>	Selections of goods for which a simplified declaration applies
<b>Codes containing the letter F</b>	Goods destined for the operators of an offshore installation or for the operation of the engines, machines and other equipment of the offshore installation
<b>Codes containing the letter I</b>	Components of complete industrial plants for which a simplified declaration applies. 'Industrial plant' is a combination of machines, apparatus, appliances, equipment, instruments and materials which together make up large-scale, stationary units producing goods or providing services
<b>Codes containing the letter M</b>	Estimates for missing data, broken down at chapter level
<b>Codes containing the letter P</b>	Goods carried by post for which a simplified declaration applies
<b>Codes containing the letter S</b>	Confidential data
<b>Code 87VVV000</b>	Motor vehicle components for which simplified national provisions apply
<b>Code 88WWW000</b>	Aircraft components for which simplified national provisions apply
<b>Code 99YY000</b>	Estimates for missing data not broken down by chapter (under the declaration limit)
<b>Code 99RRR100</b>	Returned goods n.e.c. ( <i>no longer valid from 1 January 2022</i> )
<b>Code 99RRR200</b>	Imported and exported goods n.e.c.
<b>Code 99RRR000</b>	Goods not elsewhere classified

## Annex 4

### National authorities involved in ITGS

		Leading administration	Primary data collection	Data processing and control	Dissemination
<b>Belgium</b>	<b>Intra-EU</b>	National Bank	National Bank	National Bank	National Bank
	<b>Extra-EU</b>	National Bank	Customs	National Bank	National Bank
<b>Bulgaria</b>	<b>Intra-EU</b>	NSI	VAT Offices	NSI	NSI
	<b>Extra-EU</b>	NSI	Customs	NSI	NSI
<b>Czechia</b>	<b>Intra-EU</b>	NSI	Customs	NSI	NSI
	<b>Extra-EU</b>	NSI	Customs	NSI	NSI
<b>Denmark</b>	<b>Intra-EU</b>	NSI	NSI	NSI	NSI
	<b>Extra-EU</b>	NSI	Customs	NSI	NSI
<b>Germany</b>	<b>Intra-EU</b>	NSI	NSI	NSI	NSI
	<b>Extra-EU</b>	NSI	Customs	NSI/Customs	NSI
<b>Estonia</b>	<b>Intra-EU</b>	NSI	NSI	NSI	NSI
	<b>Extra-EU</b>	NSI	Customs	NSI	NSI
<b>Ireland</b>	<b>Intra-EU</b>	NSI	Revenue & Customs	Revenue & Customs/NSI	NSI
	<b>Extra-EU</b>	NSI	Revenue & Customs	Revenue & Customs/NSI	NSI
<b>Greece</b>	<b>Intra-EU</b>	NSI	NSI/VAT Offices	NSI	NSI
	<b>Extra-EU</b>	NSI	Customs	NSI	NSI
<b>Spain</b>	<b>Intra-EU</b>	Customs	Customs	Customs	Customs
	<b>Extra-EU</b>	Customs	Customs	Customs	Customs
<b>France</b>	<b>Intra-EU</b>	Customs	Customs	Customs	Customs
	<b>Extra-EU</b>	Customs	Customs	Customs	Customs
<b>Croatia</b>	<b>Intra-EU</b>	NSI	Customs	Custom/NSI	NSI
	<b>Extra-EU</b>	NSI	Customs	NSI	NSI
<b>Italy</b>	<b>Intra-EU</b>	NSI	Customs	NSI	NSI
	<b>Extra-EU</b>	NSI	Customs	NSI	NSI
<b>Cyprus</b>	<b>Intra-EU</b>	NSI	VAT Offices	NSI	NSI
	<b>Extra-EU</b>	NSI	Customs	NSI	NSI
<b>Latvia</b>	<b>Intra-EU</b>	NSI	NSI	NSI	NSI
	<b>Extra-EU</b>	NSI	Customs	NSI	NSI

		Leading administration	Primary data collection	Data processing and control	Dissemination
<b>Lithuania</b>	<b>Intra-EU</b>	NSI	Customs	NSI	NSI
	<b>Extra-EU</b>	NSI	Customs	NSI	NSI
<b>Luxembourg</b>	<b>Intra-EU</b>	NSI	NSI	NSI	NSI
	<b>Extra-EU</b>	NSI	Customs	NSI	NSI
<b>Hungary</b>	<b>Intra-EU</b>	NSI	NSI	NSI	NSI
	<b>Extra-EU</b>	NSI	Customs	NSI	NSI
<b>Malta</b>	<b>Intra-EU</b>	NSI	VAT offices/NSI	NSI	NSI
	<b>Extra-EU</b>	NSI	Customs	NSI	NSI
<b>Netherlands</b>	<b>Intra-EU</b>	NSI	NSI	NSI	NSI
	<b>Extra-EU</b>	NSI	Customs	NSI	NSI
<b>Austria</b>	<b>Intra-EU</b>	NSI	NSI	NSI	NSI
	<b>Extra-EU</b>	NSI	Customs	NSI	NSI
<b>Poland</b>	<b>Intra-EU</b>	NSI	Customs	Customs	NSI/Customs
	<b>Extra-EU</b>	NSI	Customs	Customs	NSI/Customs
<b>Portugal</b>	<b>Intra-EU</b>	NSI	NSI	NSI	NSI
	<b>Extra-EU</b>	NSI	Customs	NSI	NSI
<b>Romania</b>	<b>Intra-EU</b>	NSI	NSI	NSI	NSI
	<b>Extra-EU</b>	NSI	Customs	Customs	NSI
<b>Slovenia</b>	<b>Intra-EU</b>	NSI	Customs	Customs/NSI	NSI
	<b>Extra-EU</b>	NSI	Customs	NSI	NSI
<b>Slovakia</b>	<b>Intra-EU</b>	NSI	Customs	NSI	NSI
	<b>Extra-EU</b>	NSI	Customs	NSI	NSI
<b>Finland</b>	<b>Intra-EU</b>	Customs	Customs	Customs	Customs
	<b>Extra-EU</b>	Customs	Customs	Customs	Customs
<b>Sweden</b>	<b>Intra-EU</b>	NSI	NSI	NSI	NSI
	<b>Extra-EU</b>	NSI	Customs	NSI	NSI

## Notes:

- NSI: National Statistical Institute
- In the context of this table Intra-EU/Extra-EU should be understood as data collection system for intra-EU/extra-EU trade statistics.
- By data processing is meant validity and credibility checks, estimation of missing trade, adjustments and quality related analysis.

# Annex 5

## Overview of the Easy-Comext datasets <sup>Rev</sup>

### EU datasets

#### EU trade since 1988 by CN, SITC, BEC and CPA

These datasets contain monthly and annual time series for the imports and exports of the European Union, the euro area and the EU Member States. The available indicators are the trade value in euro, the quantity (net mass) in 100 kg and the supplementary quantity wherever relevant. Data are given by trading partner (all countries of the Geonomenclature plus the intra- and extra-EU areas and the World) and by product according to the different levels of the following product nomenclatures: Combined Nomenclature (HS2-4-6, CN8), Standard International Trade Classification (SITC), the Broad Economic Categories (BECrev4 and BECrev5) and the Classification of Products by Activity (CPA 2002 (closed end 2021), CPA 2008 (closed end 2022), CPA 2.1)).

The starting date of the time series is:

- January 1988 for the EU (evolutionary definition) and for Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom;
- January 1995 for Austria, Finland and Sweden;
- January 1999 for the Euro Area, the EU27\_2020 aggregate and for Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovenia and Slovakia;
- January 2002 for all the reporters in dataset by CPA\_2.1;
- January 2017 for all the reporters in dataset BECrev5.

**Note** that from reference month February 2020 the UK no longer appears as a reporting country in the EU datasets.

#### EU trade since 1988 by statistical procedure, by HS2-4-6 and CN8

This dataset contains monthly and annual time series for the imports and exports of the European Union, the euro area and the EU Member States. The available indicators are the trade value in euro, the quantity (net mass) in 100 kg and the supplementary quantity wherever relevant. Data are given by trading partner (all countries of the Geonomenclature plus the intra- and extra-EU areas and the World) and by product according to the Combined Nomenclature (HS2-4-6, CN8). One additional dimension is the statistical procedure, with the following breakdown: normal, inward processing, outward processing, economic processing arrangements for textiles (closed in 2009) and 'not recorded from customs declarations'.

The starting date of the time series is the same as described under the 1<sup>st</sup> dataset.

### EU trade since 2015 of COVID-19 medical supplies, by categories

This dataset was created in April 2020 following the outbreak of the COVID19 pandemic. It covers about 100 medical and non-medical products, in line with the list of the most referred commodities to be admitted free of import duties and value-added tax (Commission Decisions [C\(2021\)2146](#) and [C\(2021\)2313](#)) and the [Joint WCO/WHO classification reference for Covid-19 medical supplies](#), ed. 3.01. The products are classified in categories and sub-categories, according to the CN8, HS6 or HS4. The available indicators are the trade value in euro, the quantity (net mass) in 100 kg and the supplementary quantity if applicable.

### Extra-EU imports since 2010 by country of origin and country of consignment, by HS2-4-6 and CN8

This dataset contains monthly and annual data on extra-EU imports since 2010. As it contains the two partner dimensions –the country of origin and the country of consignment – it is notably useful for comparing EU mirror data with non-EU countries data.

The starting date of the time series is January 2010.

The available indicators are the trade value in euro, the quantity (net mass) in 100 kg and the supplementary quantity if applicable.

**It should be noted** that for a limited number of specific goods, like vessels and aircraft, the partner country is neither the country of consignment nor the country of origin but, for example the Member State where the previous economic owner was established with his business activities.

### EU trade since 1995 by CN sections

This dataset contains monthly and annual time series for the imports and exports of the European Union, the euro area and the EU Member States. The available indicators are the trade value in euro and the quantity (net mass) in 100 kg. Data are given by trading partner (all countries of the Geonomenclature, the intra- and extra-EU/EA areas and the world) and by product according to the 21 sections of part two of the Combined Nomenclature.

The starting date of the time series is

- January 1995 for the EU (evolutionary definition), Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom;
- January 1999 for the euro area, the EU27\_2020 aggregate and for Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovenia and Slovakia.

**Note** that from reference month February 2020 the UK no longer appears as a reporting country in the EU datasets.

### EU trade since 1999 by HS2-4-6 and CN8 (daily updated)

This dataset is the only one in the data tree that is updated on a daily basis. For this reason, it does not contain any pre-calculated reporter or partner aggregates. It contains monthly time series for the imports and exports of the EU Member States. The available indicators are the trade value in thousands of euro, the quantity in tons (net mass) and the supplementary quantity wherever relevant. Data are given by trading partner (all countries of the Geonomenclature) and by product according to the different levels of the Combined Nomenclature (CN8, HS6, HS4 and HS2).

The starting date of the time series is January 1999.

**Note** that from reference month February 2020 the UK no longer appears as a reporting country in the EU datasets.

### EU trade since 1988 by BEC/Rev.4 and CPA\_2008

This dataset contains monthly and annual time series for the imports and exports of the European Union, the euro area and the EU Member States. The available indicators are the trade value in euro and the quantity (net mass) in 100 kg. Data are given by trading partner (all countries of the Geonomenclature, the intra- and extra-EU/EA areas and the world) and by product according to the BEC/Rev.4 (3 digits) and the CPA\_2008 (2 digits) classifications.

The starting date of the time series is January 1988.

**Note** that from reference month February 2020 the UK no longer appears as a reporting country in the EU datasets.

### Extra-EU trade by mode of transport since 2000, by NST/R or HS2-4-6

These datasets contain monthly and annual time series for the imports and exports of the European Union and the EU Member States from January 2000 until the last month available. Indicators are the trade value in euro and the quantity (net mass) in 100 kg and tons. Data are given by trading partner (all non-EU countries of the Geonomenclature plus the extra-EU area) and by product according to the different levels of the Standard goods classification for transport statistics (NST/R) or the Harmonised System (HS2-4-6).

In addition to the basic information, these datasets include one more dimension: the mode of transport. The latter is classified according to the following codification: 0: Unknown mode of transport, 1: Sea transport, 2: Rail transport, 3: Road transport, 4: Air transport, 5: Postal consignment, 7: Fixed transport installations; 8: Inland waterway transport and 9: Own propulsion.

**Note** that from reference month February 2020 the UK no longer appears as a reporting country in the EU datasets.

### Intra-EU trade since 2010 by mode of transport (by NST/R)

This dataset contains monthly and annual time series for the imports and exports of some (not all) EU Member States as the data are collected on an optional basis. Time series start in January 2010. The available indicators are the trade value in euro and the quantity (net mass) in 100 kg and tons. Data are given by trading partner (individual EU Member States plus the intra-EU area) and by product according to the Standard goods classification for transport statistics (NST/R).

In addition to the basic information, these datasets include one more dimension: the mode of transport. The mode of transport is classified according to the following codification: 0: Unknown mode of transport, 1: Sea transport, 2: Rail transport, 3: Road transport, 4: Air transport and 8: Inland waterway transport.

### Adjusted extra-EU imports by tariff regime since 2000, by HS2-4-6 and CN8

This dataset contains monthly and annual time series for the imports of the EU Member States. The available indicators are the trade value in euro, the quantity (net mass) in 100 kg and tons, and the supplementary quantity if applicable. Data are given by trading partner (all non-EU countries of the Geonomenclature plus the extra-EU area) and by product according to the different levels of the Combined Nomenclature (CN8, HS6, HS4 and HS2).

The starting date of the time series is January 2000.

In addition to the basic information, these datasets include two more dimensions:

- the eligibility which reflects the tariff status as indicated in the [TARIC database](#) on the first day of each month; and

- the tariff regime (or use) which reflects the preference as reported in data transmitted by the Member States to Eurostat (source: customs declarations, box 36 of the Single Administrative Document) combined with the duty rate and possibly adjusted.

**Note** that from reference month February 2020 the UK no longer appears as a reporting country in the EU datasets.

### EU trade with UK (NI) and UK (excl. NI) since 2021 by HS2-4-6 and CN8

This dataset contains data for the trade of the EU with three partners (only):

- XI: United Kingdom (Northern Ireland);
- XU: United Kingdom (excluding Northern Ireland) and
- GB: XI + XU.

The starting date of the time series is January 2021.

Indicators are the value in euro, quantity in 100kg and the supplementary quantity, if applicable.

## Non-EU datasets

### Trade of the United Kingdom (UK) since February 2020

This heading contains the data for reporter United Kingdom (code GB) as from February 2020. Trading partners are all EU and non-EU countries of the Geonomenclature. The available indicators are the trade value in euro, the quantity (net mass) in 100 kg and the supplementary quantity if applicable.

The following datasets are available:

- UK trade Feb-Oct 2020, by HS2-4-6 and CN8
- UK trade Feb-Oct 2020, by BEC/rev4
- UK trade Feb-Oct 2020, by SITC
- UK trade Feb-Oct 2020, by CPA 2.1
- UK trade Feb-Oct 2020 by mode of transport, by NST/R
- UK trade Feb-Oct 2020 by mode of transport (HS2-4-6)

**Note** that during this period (Feb-Oct 2020) the UK continued to report its trade data according to the intra-EU methodology, i.e. as if it were still a Member State.

### Trade of the United Kingdom (Northern Ireland) since January 2021

This heading contains the data for reporter 'United Kingdom (Northern Ireland)' (code XI) as from January 2021. Trading partners are all EU and non-EU countries of the Geonomenclature. The available indicators are the trade value in euro, the quantity (net mass) in 100 kg and the supplementary quantity if applicable.

The following datasets are available:

- UK(NI) trade since 2021, by HS2-4-6 and CN8
- UK(NI) trade since 2021, by BEC/rev4
- UK(NI) trade since 2021, by SITC
- UK(NI) trade since 2021, by CPA 2.1

- UK(NI) trade since 2021 by mode of transport, by NST/R
- UK(NI) trade since 2021 by mode of transport (HS2-4-6)

### EFTA trade

This heading contains five datasets for the trade of the EFTA countries (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland). The available indicators are the trade value in euro and the quantity (net mass) in 100 kg and tons. The datasets by national classification provide also the supplementary quantity, if applicable. Data are given by trading partner (all countries of the Geonomenclature) and by product, according to the classification of the dataset:

- EFTA trade since 1995\* by SITC
- EFTA trade since 2003\* by HS2-4-6
- EFTA trade since 2003 by national products classification (8-digit) –CH
- EFTA trade since 2003 by national products classification (8-digit) –NO
- EFTA trade since 2003 by national products classification (8-digit) –IS

\*2009 for Liechtenstein

### EU enlargement countries trade

This heading contains two datasets for the trade of the candidate and potential candidate countries(\*). The available indicators are the trade value in thousand euro, the quantity (net mass) in 100 kilos and tons, and the supplementary quantity if applicable. Data are given by trading partner (all countries of the Geonomenclature) and by product according to the classification of the dataset:

- EU enlargement countries trade since 2002 by HS2-4-6 and CN8
- EU enlargement countries trade since 2002 by mode of transport, by NST/R

The starting date of the series depends on the reporting country:

- from 2002 for Albania, Croatia (until June 2013), North Macedonia and Türkiye;
- from 2004 for Kosovo;
- from 2005 for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia.

\*Data for the new candidate countries Ukraine and Moldova, as well as for the new potential candidate country Georgia are not yet available.

### South Mediterranean trade since 2000, by HS2-4-6

This dataset contains monthly and annual time series for the imports and exports of the South Mediterranean countries. The available indicators are the trade value in thousand euro, the quantity (net mass) in tons and the supplementary quantity if applicable. Data are given by trading partner (all countries of the Geonomenclature) and by product according to the different levels of the Harmonised System (HS2-4-6).

The starting date of the series depends on the reporting country:

- from 2000 for Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia;
- from 2002 for Syria;
- from 2005 for Israel;
- from 2007 for the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

Note that the data transmissions are irregular and that recent data are mostly unavailable.

### Indices by SITC, BEC and CPA

These datasets contain monthly and annual time series for the imports and exports of the European Union, the euro area and each EU Member State starting from January 2000. The available indicators are the unit value indices (UVI) in euro, national currencies and US dollars and the volume indices in euro. Data are given by trading partner (mainly economic and geographical areas but also some individual countries) and by product according to the Standard International Trade Classification (1- and 2-digit SITC (rev.3 and rev.4) codes), the Broad Economic Categories (BEC rev.4) and the Classification of Products by Activity (1- and 2-digit codes of the CPA 2008).

### Trade in goods by Invoicing Currency (TIC) since 2010

The 'Shares of trade by invoicing currency' dataset under this heading contains annual time series from 2010 for the EU aggregate, the Member States, the EFTA countries (except Liechtenstein) and the enlargement (candidate and potential candidate) countries. TIC statistics are compiled by the Member States and supplied to Eurostat on a mandatory basis in even reference years and on a voluntary basis in odd reference years. The available indicator is the 'Observation value', expressing the share of trade by invoicing currency. The data are available by product group and currency as follows:

- by three product groups: Raw materials without oil (SITC sections 0-4, excluding division 33), Oil (SITC division 33) and Manufactured products (SITC sections 5-8)
- by four currencies: euro, national currencies of EU Member States not belonging to the euro area, US dollar and 'other' (i.e. aggregated group of currencies of all non-EU countries except the United States).

Shares by invoicing currency are calculated, within each product group, on the total Extra-EU trade for the EU Member States and on world imports and exports for the EFTA and enlargement countries.

The TIC data are also published under [aggregated data/ long-term indicators/ EU trade by Member State, partner and product group](#).

### Trade in goods by Enterprise Characteristics (TEC) since 2012

Statistics on trade by enterprise characteristics are compiled once a year by linking intra- and extra-EU trade micro-data with [business register](#) data.

This folder contains the following tables:

- DS01: Trade by NACE Rev.2 activity and enterprise size class
- DS02: Concentration of trade by NACE Rev.2 activity
- DS03: Trade by partner country and NACE Rev.2 activity
- DS04: Trade by number of partner countries and NACE Rev.2 activity
- DS05: Trade by commodity and NACE Rev.2 activity
- DS06: Trade by type of trader
- DS07: Trade by type of ownership (optional table)
- DS08: Trade by export intensity (optional table)
- DS09: Trade by NACE Rev.2 activity sector (optional table)
- DS10: Trade by partner country and enterprise size class (optional table)

More on the TEC data under section 7.7.4.

## Statistics on the production of manufactured goods and international trade (Europroms)

Europrom statistics combine international trade in goods statistics with industrial production statistics (Prodcum) collected via a business survey.

The two following datasets are available:

- Sold production, exports and imports
- Total production

Both datasets contain annual data from 1995 for the EU Member States, EFTA countries and candidate countries. Data for the potential candidate countries are incomplete. The products are classified according to the PRODCOM nomenclature.

Indicators for the first dataset are the Value and Quantity for production, imports and exports.

The second dataset contains data on annual total production (sold production plus any production retained by the producing enterprise for further processing). Total production is only reported by volume, because goods that are not sold cannot be valued. In addition, there is no relation between total production and external trade, so imports and exports are not shown.

## Annex 6

### Supplementary units in the bulk download files

Code	Start	End	Label
1	1992	2500	terajoule (gross calorific value)
2	1992	2500	number of cells
3	1993	2500	hundred items
4	1993	2021	thousand litres
5	1994	2500	kilogram of methylamines (met.am.)
6	1995	2500	kilogram drained net weight
A	1958	2500	number of items
B	1958	2500	thousand items
C	1958	2500	till 1992: hectolitre; from 1993: litre
D	1958	2500	till 1992: hl. pure alcohol; from 1993: litre pure (100%) alcohol
E	1958	2500	till 1992: mwh; from 1993: thousand kilowatt hours
F	1958	2500	metre
G	1958	1983	thousand metres
G	1997	2021	gross tonnage
H	1958	2500	square metre
I	1958	1983	thousand square metres
J	1981	2500	till 1992: kilogram of fissile isotopes; from 1993: gram of fissile isotopes
K	1958	2500	cubic metre
L	1958	2500	thousand cubic metres
M	1958	2500	gram
N	1958	2500	till 1992: t of p2o5; from 1993: kg of diposphorus pentaoxide (p2o5)
O	1958	2500	till 1992: t of naoh; from 1993: kg of sodium hydroxide (naoh)
P	1958	2500	number of pairs
Q	1958	2500	till 1992: tof n; from 1993: kg of nitrogen (n)
R	1958	2500	till 1992: t of k2o; from 1993: kg of potassium oxide (k2o)
S	1958	2500	till 1992: t of 90% dry; from 1993: kg of substance 90% dry
T	1958	2500	till 1992: tof koh; from 1993: kg of potassium hydroxide (koh)
U	1958	1992	kilogram

Code	Start	End	Label
U	1997	2021	kilogram of choline chloride (c5h14clno)
V	1958	1996	grt
W	1958	2500	carrying capacity in tons
X	1958	2500	kilogram of hydrogen peroxide (h2o2)
Y	1977	2500	carats
Z	1981	2500	kilogram of uranium (u)

# Glossary

## **BALANCE OF PAYMENTS**

The statistical system through which economic transactions between an economy and the rest of the world over specific time periods can be summarized in a systematic way. The sixth edition of the IMF Balance of Payments Manual (BPM6) provides conceptual guidelines for compiling balance of payments statistics according to international standards.

## **CIF-TYPE VALUE**

**Cost, insurance, and freight** (CIF) valuation principle, where the value includes the transaction value of the goods, the value of services performed to deliver goods to the border of the exporting country and the value of the services performed to deliver the goods from the border of the exporting country to the border of the importing country.

## **COMBINED NOMENCLATURE**

The European classification of goods based on the WCO's Harmonised System. Established by COUNCIL REGULATION (EEC) No 2658/87 of 23 July 1987 (OJ L 256), it is meant to meet the requirements of both the Common Customs Tariff and the trade in goods statistics of the EU.

## **COMEXT**

Eurostat's reference database for international trade in goods statistics

## **COUNTRY OF ORIGIN**

The country where the goods originate. Goods that are wholly obtained or produced in a country originate in that country. Goods whose production involved more than one country are deemed to originate in the country where they underwent either their last, substantial, economically justified processing or the processing resulting in the manufacture of a new product.

## **CUSTOMS DECLARATION**

The act whereby a person indicates, in the prescribed form and manner, a wish to place goods under a given customs procedure, with an indication, where appropriate, of any specific arrangements to be applied.

## **CUSTOMS PROCEDURE**

The Union Customs Code provides for three customs procedures:

- release for free circulation;
- special procedure; and
- export.

## EXPORTS

Goods which subtract from to the stock of material resources of a country by leaving its economic territory.

## EXTRASTAT

The system used for the production of statistics relating to the trading of goods of the EU with non-EU countries.

## FOB-TYPE VALUE

Free on board (FOB) valuation principle, where the value includes the transaction value of the goods and the value of services performed to deliver goods to the border of the exporting country.

## GOODS

All movable property, including electrical energy and natural gas.

## IMPORTS

Goods which add to the stock of material resources of a country by entering its economic territory.

## INDUSTRIAL PLANT

A combination of machines, apparatus, appliances, equipment, instruments and materials which together make up large-scale, stationary unit producing goods or providing services.

## INTRASTAT

Intrastat refers to the system used for the production of statistics relating to the trading of goods in the European single market; it was largely based on direct data collection from providers of statistical information. Until 1 January 2022, the functioning of the system was subject to the specific, Intrastat legislation. With the entry into force of the Regulation (EU) 2019/2152, data compilation has become more flexible, as additional data sources have become available. Even though the Intrastat system continues to be applied in several countries, it is no longer legally in force.

## NATIONAL STATISTICAL AUTHORITY (NSA)

Within the meaning of the intra- and extra-EU regulations, the national statistical institutes and other bodies responsible in each Member State for producing international trade in goods statistics.

## PRODCOM

Prodcum provides statistics on the **production of manufactured goods** carried out by enterprises on the national territory of the reporting countries. The term comes from the French "PRODUCTION COMMunautaire". It covers Mining and quarrying, Manufacturing and Materials recovery, sections B, C and E of the Statistical classification of economic activities in the European Union (NACE 2). Prodcum statistics aim at providing a full picture at EU level of all kinds of developments in industrial production (for a given product or for an industry) in a comparable manner across countries.

### QUASI-IMPORT (GOODS IN)

Goods in **quasi-import** are goods which are released for free circulation in a Member State, without the importer being established in that Member State, and which are subsequently exported to another Member State.

### QUASI-EXPORT (GOODS IN)

Goods in **quasi-export** are goods which are brought from another Member State to the Member State in which the goods are located at the time of release into the customs procedure, for the purpose of declaring these goods for export. Two conditions must be met: the exporter must not be established in the Member State in which the goods are located at the time of release into the customs procedure, and the entry into the Member State where the goods are located at the time of release into the customs procedure must not be an intra-EU acquisition or transaction.

### QUASI TRANSIT

Quasi-import: occurs when goods are imported by non-residents into the reporting economy from outside the EU and subsequently re-exported to another Member State.

Quasi-export: occurs when goods exported from a Member State to a non-EU country are cleared for export in another Member State.

### REPORTING UNIT

Any business, 'institutional' body (e.g. public and non-profit institution, school, hospital) or individual who provides statistical information.

### SINGLE AUTHORISATION FOR SIMPLIFIED PROCEDURE (SASP)

EU customs simplification measure allowing that the customs declaration is lodged in one Member State while the goods are located in another Member State, in which they have either arrived from a non-EU country (imports) or from which they are transported to a non-EU country (exports)

### STATISTICAL VALUE

The statistical value is based on the value of the goods at the time and place they cross the border of the Member State of destination on import or of the Member State of actual export on export.

Statistical value includes the transport and insurance costs incurred in delivering the goods from the place of their departure to the border of the importing or exporting Member State.

### TARIC CODE

TARIC codes indicate the rules applying to certain products when imported into the EU.

### TARIC DATABASE

TARIC, the integrated Tariff of the European Union, is a multilingual database integrating all measures relating to EU customs tariff, commercial and agricultural legislation. It is managed by DG TAXUD.

### TRAMO-SEATS METHOD

The TRAMO (Time series Regression with ARIMA noise, Missing values and Outliers) - SEATS (Signal Extraction in ARIMA Time Series) method is a model-based seasonal adjustment method developed

by the Bank of Spain and the Spanish Ministry of Finance for the analysis of time series. Its main applications are forecasting, seasonal adjustment, trend-cycle estimation, interpolation, outlier detection and correction, and estimation of calendar effects.

## **TRANSIT**

Operation/movements of goods when the goods are transported through the reporting economy on the way to their final destination without any halt or with a halt only inherent to the transport.

## **UNION CUSTOMS CODE**

Regulation (EU) No 952/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council setting the general rules and procedures applicable to goods brought into or out of the customs territory of the EU.

It aims to facilitate trade by simplifying and computerising customs procedures and ensuring the interoperability between the IT systems of the 27 customs administrations, while ensuring a high level of safety and security at the external borders.

## **UNION GOODS**

- Goods entirely obtained in the customs territory of the European Union, without the addition of goods from non-EU countries or territories which are not part of the customs territory of the EU;
- Goods from non-EU countries or territories which are not part of the customs territory of the European Union which have been released for free circulation in a Member State; and
- Goods obtained or produced in the customs territory of the European Union either exclusively from the goods referred to in point 2 or from those referred to in points 1 and 2.

## **UNION STATUS**

A product is said to have Union status if it meets the criteria of the 'Union good' as described above.

## **VIES**

The VAT Information Exchange System (VIES) enables:

- businesses to rapidly obtain confirmation of the VAT numbers of their intra-EU trading partners; and
- tax administrations to monitor and control the flow of intra-EU trade to detect all kinds of irregularity.



## Getting in touch with the EU

### ***In person***

All over the European Union there are hundreds of Europe Direct information centres. You can find the address of the centre nearest you at: [https://europa.eu/european-union/contact\\_en](https://europa.eu/european-union/contact_en)

### ***On the phone or by email***

Europe Direct is a service that answers your questions about the European Union. You can contact this service:

- by freephone: 00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11 (certain operators may charge for these calls),
- at the following standard number: +32 22999696 or
- by email via: [https://europa.eu/european-union/contact\\_en](https://europa.eu/european-union/contact_en)

## Finding information about the EU

### ***Online***

Information about the European Union in all the official languages of the EU is available on the Europa website at: [https://europa.eu/european-union/index\\_en](https://europa.eu/european-union/index_en)

### ***EU publications***

You can download or order free and priced EU publications at: <https://op.europa.eu/en/publications>. Multiple copies of free publications may be obtained by contacting Europe Direct or your local information centre (see [https://europa.eu/european-union/contact\\_en](https://europa.eu/european-union/contact_en)).

### ***EU law and related documents***

For access to legal information from the EU, including all EU law since 1951 in all the official language versions, go to EUR-Lex at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu>

### ***Open data from the EU***

The EU Open Data Portal (<https://data.europa.eu/en>) provides access to datasets from the EU. Data can be downloaded and reused for free, for both commercial and non-commercial purposes.

# European business statistics user manual on EU international trade in goods statistics

The purpose of this user manual is to explain to a wide range of users how the statistics relating to trade in goods, both between EU Member States and with non-EU countries, are collected, compiled, processed and published at European level. The different issues are tackled in a question and answer format.

---

For more information

<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/>



Publications Office  
of the European Union