Instructions on how to use the bulk download facility

The COMEXT bulk download facility allows users to download International Trade in Goods Statistics (ITGS) in csv format, which can easily be imported into a chosen tool for further analysis. The data are accompanied by metadata (classifications, information on data availability etc.) and methodological notes.

Since 2018 a new structure for the Bulk Download functionality has been in place. The coherence and accessibility of the data has been improved and more detailed data are now available to the users.

Where to find the latest Comext data

Data from 2001 up to the latest reference months can be downloaded from the 'COMEXT_DATA' subfolders.

The following statistics are available for the EU Member States:

Subfolder PREFERENCES:

- Annual trade values (in euros) 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:

- Monthly trade values (in euros) and quantities (in kg and, if applicable, in supplementary quantity), according to the product codes of the Combined Nomenclature, the SITC, the CPA (2002, 2008 and 2.1), BEC and SECTIONS classifications, by intra- and extra-EU partner country. All the classifications are grouped in one single file.

Subfolder TRANSPORT_HS:

- Trade values (in euros) 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_NSTR:

- Trade values (in euros) and quantities (in kg) by mode of transport, container mode and nationality of the means of transport, according to product codes of the NSTR, by extra-EU partner country.

Note:

- The declarant and the partner country are available both in numeric and in alpha-2 ISO format for all the files.
- The records contain no pre-calculated aggregates, except for the 'TOTAL' product codes.

Where to find historical Comext data

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

Explanation of the codes (all folders)

The following pages provide some brief explanations about the codes used in the different files of the bulkdownload facility. For more detailed information, especially about the methodological background, please consult the *User guide on European statistics on international trade in goods (ITGS)*.

Declarant and Declarant_ISO

The Declarant (or reporting country) is the country compiling and sending data to Eurostat. As a general principle, Member States should record an import when goods enter their statistical territory and an export when goods leave that territory, except if those goods are in simple transit. Goods should be recorded only 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. Eurostat uses the *Geonomenclature applicable to European statistics on international trade in goods* to identify the reporting country.

Partner and Partner_ISO

The partner country is the last known country of destination for exports, the country of origin for imports from non-EU countries and the country of consignment for imports from Member States. The partner can be a EU Member State, a non-EU country or a geo-economic area. Eurostat uses the *Geonomenclature applicable to European statistics on international trade in goods* to identify the partner country.

More information on the partners and partner-geozones can also be found under the folder 'CLASSIFICATIONS_AND_RELATIONS'

Trade type

International trade in goods statistics (ITGS) are based on intra-EU and extra-EU trade. Intra-EU trade (type I) deals with the trade in goods between EU Member States, extra-EU trade (type E) with the trade in goods with non-EU countries.

Product

A product is a good classified by commodity code, according to the relevant classification: CN, SITC, CPA_2002, CPA_2008, CPA_2.1, BEC or by SECTION.

The classifications and the respective correspondence tables are available under the folder 'CLASSIFICATIONS_AND_RELATIONS'

Flow

The flow can be an import (1) or an export (2). Except for some specific goods, like vessels and aircraft, International trade in goods statistics follow the physical movement of the goods. Member States record an import when goods enter their statistical territory and an export when goods leave that territory except if those goods are in simple transit.

Statistical regime

In extra-EU trade, goods may be transferred from a Member State to a non-EU country, or the other way round, 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, for a given imported product, the share of the import which is transformed and re-exported and the share which is

imported definitively.

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.

  • 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)' from January 2010 as reference period.

  • 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.

NOTE: 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 so codes 5, 6 and 7). There will be no double counting as there is no code overlapping.

The description of the statistical regime codes can also be found under the folder 'CLASSIFICATIONS_AND_RELATIONS' (Statistical_procedures.txt)

Supplementary Unit / Supplementary Quantity

For certain goods, a supplementary quantity is provided in addition to the net mass. This quantity is expressed in a unit which provides useful information. Supplementary units are units other than kilograms such as, 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.

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 providers of statistical information. The Member States can define whether the information about net mass is systematically collected for all CN8 codes or only for part of them. From the 2010 reference year onwards, the non-collected net mass is estimated by the national statistical authority.

The description of the Supplementary Unit codes can be found under the folder 'CLASSIFICATIONS_AND_RELATIONS' (SU.txt and CN8-SU.txt)

Period

This code refers to the reference period:
When the customs declaration is the source for records on imports and exports, the reference period is the calendar year and month when the declaration is accepted by the customs authorities. Within the Intrastat system, the reference period is in principle the calendar month of import or export of the goods or, for sales and purchases, the calendar month when the chargeable event for VAT purposes occurs. The chargeable event relates to the issue date of the invoice.

Value in Euros

This is the statistical value or trade value, expressed in Euros. It corresponds to the amount that would be invoiced in the event of sale or purchase at the national border of the reporting country. It is said to be a FOB valuation for exports and a CIF valuation for imports.

Quantity in kg (or net mass)

This is the weight of the goods in kilograms without packaging.

Eligibility and Use (or tariff regime)

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.

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).
The eligibility reflects the tariff status as indicated in the TARIC database on the first day of each month. NB: Changes occurring during the course of the month are not taken into account.

Eligibility codes in the Bulkdownload files/ Comext database are the following:

• E1 = ONLY MFN (MFN rate equal to zero or no preference)
• E2 = ONLY GSP (GSP rate equal to zero or no preference)
• E3 = ONLY PREFERENCES
• E5 = GSP and PREFRERNCES
• EZ = UNKNOWN

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:
- U10 = MFN ZERO
- U11 = MFN NON-ZERO
- U20 = GSP ZERO
- U21 = GSP NON-ZERO
- U30 = PREFERENCE ZERO
- U31 = PREFERENCE NON ZERO
- UZZ = UNKNOWN

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';

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.

• 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 dispatch/export, the goods leave the national statistical territory of the exporting Member State and, on arrival/import, the goods enter the national statistical territory of the importing Member State.

The different modes of transport are the following:
- 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

NB: 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.

Container mode

In addition to the mode of transport, for extra-EU trade, information is collected on whether or not goods are transported in containers (except when the mode of transport is postal consignment, fixed transport installation or the own propulsion category).
The different container modes are the following:

- Code 0 = Goods not transported in containers
- Code 1 = Goods transported in containers

NB: Code 9 is indicated when the container information is unknown or not applicable. The information is not relevant (and then not applicable) for the following modes of transport: postal consignment (mode 5), fixed transport installations (mode 7) and own propulsion (mode 9).

Transport Means - Nationality

In addition to the mode of transport, for extra-EU trade, information is collected on the nationality of the active means of transport of the goods when they leave/enter the statistical territory of the EU (except when the mode of transport is rail, postal consignment, fixed transport installations and own propulsion).

The codification is done according to the codes of the Geonomenclature except QQ (950) 'Stores and provisions', QR (951) 'Stores and provisions within the framework of intra-Community trade', QS (952) 'Stores and provisions within the framework of trade with third countries' and QP (955) 'High seas'.

NB: Code QU (958) 'Countries and territories not specified' is indicated when the nationality of the active means of transport is unknown or not applicable. The information is not relevant (and then not applicable) for the following modes of transport: rail (mode 2), postal consignment (mode 5), fixed transport installations (mode 7) and own propulsion (mode 9).