

# Steps to download Comtrade data

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December 2022

To work with aggregated trade data at country level one can download the detailed trade flows from The United Nations Comtrade database. It contains aggregated annual and monthly statistics by product and trading partner (countries). It covers 200 countries and represents +99% of the world's merchandise trade.

There are several ways to download the information but I choose the one offered in the website (<https://comtrade.un.org/data>), following these steps:

The screenshot shows the UN Comtrade Database search interface. It includes a navigation bar at the top with links like 'UN Comtrade Database', 'Extract data', 'Data Availability', 'Metadata', 'Reference', 'Knowledge base', and 'API portal'. A yellow banner at the top right states: 'Please visit the new and enhanced Comtrade <https://comtradeplus.un.org/>. This page and associated data API will be discontinued at the end of Q1 2023'. The main search area is divided into four sections: 1. Type of product & Frequency, 2. Classification, 3. Select desired data, and 4. See the results. Section 1 has 'Type of product' (Goods selected) and 'Frequency' (Annual selected). Section 2 has 'HS' (As reported selected), 'SITC' (As reported selected), and 'BEC' (BEC selected). Section 3 has 'Periods (year)' (2021 selected), 'Reporters' (EU selected), 'Partners' (Canada and USA selected), and 'Trade flows' (Export and Import selected). Section 4 has 'HS (as reported) commodity codes' (AG2 - All 2-digit HS commodities selected). At the bottom, there are buttons for 'Get data', 'Download CSV', and 'More information about data'. Arrows numbered 1 through 10 point to specific elements: 1. Type of product, 2. Frequency, 3. HS, 4. Periods (year), 5. Reporters, 6. Partners, 7. Trade flows, 8. HS (as reported) commodity codes, 9. Get data button, and 10. Download CSV button.

1. Restrict the data to only goods.
2. Yearly data to exploit shocks (Free Trade Agreement - FTA) that occur in a given year.
3. Select the product-classification system. Choose the standard Harmonised System (HS) "as reported". This system assigns a six-digits code to each commodity group that is traded. The first two digits are the "chapter" of the catalogue (e.g.: 01 = "live animals."). The following two digits correspond to the "heading" within the chapter (e.g.: 01.01 = "live horses, asses, mules and hinnies."). The last two digits correspond to the sub-heading within the heading (e.g.: 01.01.10 = "pure breeding animals."). Choose the first 2 digits (HS - 2) in option #8, that corresponds to the product-sector. HS is revised every 5 years (1992, 1997, 2002, 2007,

2012, 2017, 2022), meaning that HS codes need to be standardised across years. HS revisions affect mostly HS-6. Therefore, download HS code as reported (without standardise the codes to a specific year).

4. Download the series from 2000-2021. There are some downloading restrictions (e.g.: no more than 5 years). Downloading each year individually will avoid technical issues.
5. Country reporting the trade: EU
6. Partner countries: Australia, Canada, India, Israel, Japan, Mexico, Rep. of Korea, Russian Federation, South Africa, Turkey, USA.
7. Trade flows: Exports for simplicity
8. 2-digits HS
9. Visualise the data
10. Download the data (csv format)

The next step is to save the 22 files generated into the same folder called “COMTRADE” in your PC.



