



**An
Phríomh-Oifig
Staidrimh**

Central
Statistics
Office

Standard SIMS Report: Goods Exports and Imports



Single Integrated Metadata Structure (SIMS) Report

For

Goods Exports and Imports

This documentation applies to the reporting period:

2024

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2. Introduction

Goods Exports and Imports statistics provide data on the movement of goods between countries. The statistics are a combination of Customs-based non-EU trade statistics and data from the Intrastat Survey of Irish traders involved in trade with other EU member states. The collection of trade data is the responsibility of VIMA (a branch of Revenue). The CSO is responsible for processing and disseminating the data.

Goods Export and Import figures, produced by the CSO External Trade Section, are published monthly. The principal outputs are the value and volume figures for merchandise exports and imports. The monthly Goods Exports and Imports statistical release gives commodity and geographical analyses. A retrospective view is also provided in the chapter on External Trade in the CSO's annual Statistical Yearbook.

Trade in Goods data published by the CSO. The Intrastat system, covering intra-EU trade, has two components. Firstly, the Intrastat survey (conducted by the Revenue Commissioners), in which traders, above the Intrastat survey trade thresholds, make detailed monthly returns giving information on the quantity and value of all exports to or imports from EU countries. The Intrastat data are subject to revision on foot of late Intrastat and VAT returns and corrections made by traders. When the preliminary results for a month are published, the results for months -1 and -6 are revised.

The second component of the Intrastat system is the regular VAT return, on which all traders are required to record the total value of goods imported from and exported to other EU countries. This information provides the basis for determining total EU trade for those traders below the Intrastat survey thresholds. It is also used to maintain the register of EU traders.

The statistics of trade with non-EU countries are compiled from Customs declarations supplied by importers and exporters to the Customs authorities. Imports are currently collected on the AIS (Automated Import System) and Exports on AES (Automated Export System). Prior to this data were collected on SAD (Single Administrative Document).

Since the completion of the EU Single Market at the end of 1992, trade statistics with EU member states and trade statistics with non-EU countries are compiled from two separate sources. Customs declarations, the traditional source of almost all trade statistics, were no longer required for most movements of goods within the EU. A new EU-wide system for collecting intra-EU trade statistics, Intrastat, was introduced in January 1993. The Intrastat survey, which is conducted by the Revenue Commissioners (VIMA Office), is linked to VAT and applies to all EU member states.

3. Contact

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4. Metadata Update

4.1. Metadata last certified

26/09/2024



4.2. Metadata last posted

26/09/2024

4.3. Metadata last update

26/09/2024



5. Statistical Presentation

5.1. Data Description

External Trade statistics are concerned with the exports and imports of goods to and from the State. Merchandise is measured in quantity and value terms. Exports are published on the FOB (free on board) basis to the point of exit from the state. Imports are published on a CIF basis (inclusive of cost, insurance and freight to the point of entry in the state). Non-EU trade figures are published nationally using the general trade system but sent to EUROSTAT using the special trade system. No distinction is drawn between the general trade system and the special trade system for intra-EU trade.

General Trade and Special Trade are broadly two approaches, closely linked with customs procedures, used for the measurement of international trade in goods. The general trade system is the wider concept, and it includes all goods entering or leaving the economic territory of a country, with the exception of simple transit trade. In particular, all goods which are received into customs warehouses are recorded as imports at that stage whether or not they subsequently go into free circulation in the member state of receipt. Similarly, outgoing goods from customs warehouses are included in the general trade aggregates at the time they leave the member state.

The special trade system, on the other hand, is a narrower concept. Goods from a foreign country which are received into customs warehouses are not recorded in the special trade aggregates unless they subsequently go into free circulation in the country of receipt (or are placed under the customs procedures for inward processing or processing under customs control). Similarly, outgoing goods from customs warehouses are not recorded as exports.

The differences between the two approaches are in particular a time lag when the movements are recorded, but it may be more than that. For example, goods from country A, placed in a customs warehouse of country B and re-exported from there to country C will appear in general trade statistics for country B (if such a system is applied) but never in special trade statistics for that country.

Goods Export and Import figures, produced by the CSO External Trade Section, are published monthly. The principal outputs are the value and volume figures for merchandise exports and imports. The monthly Goods Exports and Imports statistical release gives commodity and geographical analyses.

5.2. Classification System

Four major classifications are used in the compilation of trade data:

- A. Trade data are classified by traders according to the 8-digit Combined Nomenclature (CN) classification. This nomenclature is managed and updated annually by EUROSTAT in cooperation with EU member states. The CN is aligned with the 6-digit Harmonised Commodity Description and Coding System (HS) which is used globally for applying customs tariffs and compiling external trade statistics. The CN contains about 9,400 8-digit subheadings, the first 6 digits of which correspond to the HS code.
- B. Trade Data are coded and published by the CSO at the five digit level of the United Nations' Standard Trade Classification Revision 4 (SITC classification). The SITC has been developed by the United Nations for the advancement of the international comparability of external trade statistics. SITC Rev 4 contains about 2,970 basic headings (5 digits), which are combined into 261 groups (3 digit), 67 Divisions (2-digit) and 10 Sections (1 digit).
- C. Countries are also classified by traders using EUROSTAT's country nomenclature (Geonomenclature) as set out annually in the Official Journal of the European Union. From January 1999, this follows the United Nation's coding system, where each country is identified by a two letter code.
- D. Delivery terms are also recorded by traders using a classification with three digit alphabetical code. This information is only required of traders with annual EU trade of arrivals over €5 million and/or dispatches over €34 million. There are 11 three digit delivery term codes. The purpose of these "Incoterms" terms is to provide a set of international rules for the interpretation of the chief



terms used in foreign trade contracts as defined and published by the International Chamber of Commerce. They aim at defining the liability of parties as clearly and precisely as possible. Further information is available from the ICC website: <http://www.iccwbo.org/> and also in the Traders manual on www.revenue.ie.

E.

5.3. Statistical Unit

The statistical unit is the enterprise, with a focus on traders, importers and/or exporters, of goods.

The units of observation refer to the exports and imports of individual traders detailed by product (commodity CN) description, geographic origin/destination and by value and quantity. The units of collection are the traders involved in exporting or importing goods to and from the State.

5.4. Statistical Population

The statistical population should comprise all the enterprises involved in intra- and extra-EU trade flows.

5.5. Reference Area

Ireland.

5.6. Time Coverage

1996-2024

5.7. Base period

Not applicable.

6. Unit of Measure

The usual units of value and quantity are tonnes and euro.

Where tonnes are not ideal, quantity may also or instead, be collected under a more appropriate unit – such as kilogram's or hecto-litres. These are referred to as Supplementary Units and are defined under the CN nomenclature.

7. Reference Period

The calendar month is the basic period for compiling the data. Export and import transactions to non-EU countries are classified to the month in which the relevant customs entry is registered. The data for the Parcel Post trade relate to the month of shipment into or out of the country.

8. Institutional Mandate

8.1. Legal Acts and other agreements

Trade in Goods with partner countries are collected by VIMA, is carried out under [European Parliament and Council Regulation \(EU\) No 2019/2152](#) and [Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2020/1197](#)

General statistical legislation

Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council on European statistics



Business Registers legislation

- Regulation (EC) No 177/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a common framework for Business Registers for statistical purposes
- Implementing Commission Regulation (EC) No 192/2009
- Implementing Commission Regulation (EU) No 1097/2010

All regulations relevant for the European statistics on international trade in goods can be found in the publication [Legislation on European statistics on international trade in goods](#) or consulted from the 'Legislation' page of the 'International trade in goods' section on Eurostat website. All legal texts are also accessible online on [Eur-Lex](#).

8.2. Data Sharing

Not applicable.

9. Confidentiality

9.1. Confidentiality – policy

All information supplied to the CSO is treated as strictly confidential. The Statistics Act, 1993 sets stringent confidentiality standards: Information collected may be used only for statistical purposes, and no details that might be related to an identifiable person or business undertaking may be divulged to any other government department or body.

These national statistical confidentiality provisions are reinforced by the following EU legislation: Council Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 on European statistics for data collected for EU statistical purposes. Further details are outlined in the CSO's Code of Practice on Statistical Confidentiality.

For more information on the CSO confidentiality policy please visit:
<https://www.cso.ie/en/aboutus/lqdp/csodatapolicies/statisticalconfidentiality/>

9.2. Confidentiality – data treatment

International Trade in Goods operates a system of passive confidentiality. Confidentiality applies only where a trader requests that its data be treated as confidential and where it would be possible to identify that trader if full data was disclosed. The value of such confidential trade is included in the overall total value of imports or exports. However, the value, quantity or country of transaction may be concealed at the detailed level.

10. Release Policy

10.1. Release Calendar

The date of dissemination of all statistics released by CSO can be found in the Release Calendar published in CSO.ie. This calendar is regularly updated.

10.2. Release calendar access

The release calendar can be accessed via the CSO website, www.cso.ie, or directly from this link:
<https://www.cso.ie/en/csolatestnews/releasecalendar/>



10.3. User access

In accordance with Principle 6 of the European Statistics Code of Practice all users of CSO statistics have equal access via the CSO website at the same time of 11 am. Any privileged pre-release access to any outside user is limited, controlled and publicised. In the event that leaks occur, pre-release arrangements are revised so as to ensure impartiality.

The CSO recognises that in very limited circumstances a business need for pre-release access may be substantiated. Any form of pre-release access is a privilege and a strict CSO pre-release access policy is adhered to for these special requests. The full pre-release access policy can be accessed at <https://www.cso.ie/en/aboutus/lgdp/csodatapolicies/csopolicyonpre-releaseaccess/>

The various results are published nationally in statistical release format as well as on the CSO website (www.cso.ie). Selected extracts from the results are posted on the CSO's data dissemination database, PxStat.

11. Frequency of Dissemination

Data are compiled and published on a monthly basis.

12. Accessibility and clarity

12.1. News release

Not applicable.

12.2. Publications

The Goods Exports and Imports Release is a monthly statistical release giving preliminary figures for the month. It is published within one month after the reference month. It is available from the CSO website at <https://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/externaltrade/goodsexportsandimports/>

The Profile of Trading Enterprises is a publication on the size profile of trading enterprises based on the number of employees and broad NACE category. It can be accessed from the CSO website via <https://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/externaltrade/profileoftradingenterprises/>

Ireland's Trade in Goods is an annual publication which gives an overall view of exports and imports in the previous year, and each year examines a particular topic in detail. The statistics can be accessed via <https://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/externaltrade/irelandstradeingoods/>

12.3. On-line database

All trade data can be found in tabular format in the CSO's main dissemination database, PxStat. Trade data can be accessed directly from this link <https://data.cso.ie/product/GEI>

12.3.1. AC 1. Data tables - consultations

Over a one-year period from April 2021 to April 2022, the release was visited approximately 10031 times of which 4641 were unique views.

12.4. Micro-data Access

Not applicable.



12.5. Other

Historical data are available on the CSO website at:

<https://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/externaltrade/goodsexportsandimports/goodsexportsandimportsarchive2023/>

Queries from users are dealt with by the Trade Help Desk usually within one day. Special Return analyses and commodity reports are issued on a periodic basis to clients or on request. Special analyses and reports are also prepared in response to parliamentary questions.

The chapter on External Trade in the Statistical Yearbook of Ireland, published on the CSO website, analyses changes in trade flows.

Other relevant websites include the following:

EUROSTAT: <http://ec.europa.eu/trade/>

And http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/international_trade/data/database

12.5.1. AC2. Metadata consultations

Not calculated.

12.6. Documentation on Methodology

Further information on the Methodology used to complete this release can be found on the CSO website of by following the following links <https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/internationaltradeingoods/extra-statcollectionofnon-euradedata/>

<https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/internationaltradeingoods/intrastatcollectionofintraeuradedata/>

12.6.1. AC3 – Metadata completeness – rate

Not calculated.

12.7. Quality Documentation

For more information on the quality of the Trade publications please refer to the CSO's Methods page for trade, available at <https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/internationaltradeingoods/extra-statcollectionofnon-euradedata/>

<https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/internationaltradeingoods/intrastatcollectionofintraeuradedata/>

13. Quality Management

13.1. Quality Assurance

Quality Management Framework

The CSO avails of an office wide Quality Management Framework (QMF). This framework allows all CSO processes and outputs to meet the required standard as set out in the European Statistics Code of Practice (ESCoP). The QMF foundations are based on establishing the UNECE's Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM) as the operating statistical production model to achieve a standardised approach to Quality Management. All and any changes implemented to CSO processes and outputs require adherence to the QMF.



13.2. Quality Assessment

The CSO and VIMA maintain close contact and cooperation with each other in order to ensure data quality is acceptable.

14. Relevance

14.1. User Needs

Trade in Goods data are considered an important short term indicator and are a key component of EU and Euro area trade statistics compiled by EUROSTAT. At a national level it is one of the key monthly economic indicators, In the CSO, Balance of Payments (BOP) and National Accounts require trade data. Trade data is also used by government departments and state agencies, academics, companies and media organisations.

Goods Exports and Imports statistics are an important data source for many public and private sector analysts and decision-makers at national, European Union and international level.

14.1.1. Main National Users

General public
Media
Government departments
Internally within the CSO

14.1.2. Principal External Users

Eurostat.

14.2. User Satisfaction

Not measured.

14.3. Data Completeness

14.3.1. Data Completeness rate

Not calculated.

15. Accuracy and reliability

15.1. Overall accuracy

The accuracy is tackled at national and European levels, by eliminating as much as possible the non-sampling errors. It should be noted that the accuracy of TEC data depends not only on the accuracy of trade in goods statistics but also on the quality of the trade and business registers.

15.2. Sampling Error

Not applicable.

Neither the international trade in goods statistics, nor the business registers are affected by errors related to sample surveys.



15.2.1. A1. Sampling error indicator

Not applicable.

15.3. Non-sampling Error

The accuracy of Trade data is primarily impacted by issues in the collection and compilation of detailed trade in goods statistics (e.g. thresholds, non-response, delayed declarations, estimated trade value) as well as in the management of the trade and business registers (e.g. invalid ID number in the Trade Register, missing activity sector in the Business Register).

Issues may also occur in the linkage between the Trade Register and the Business Register. Although the general principles on data linking are clear and straight-forward, there are several methodologically complex issues which need to be addressed more carefully, like business demographic changes, problematic linkages caused by complex business structures, missing or estimated data and non-established traders.

Non sampling errors can be further broken down into Coverage, Measurement, Non-Response, Processing and Model assumption errors. These are individually specified in the subsections below.

15.3.1. Coverage error

Not applicable.

15.3.1.1. A2. Over coverage rate

Not applicable.

15.3.1.2. A3. Common units – proportion

Not applicable.

15.3.2. Measurement error

Where data errors are suspected VIMA queries the traders involved and asks them to check the data supplied. VIMA passes on trade data to the International Trade in Goods Division of the CSO who may query VIMA if anomalies are suspected.

15.3.3. Non-Response Error

The statistics for trade with non-EU countries are based on Customs declarations used for Customs clearance purposes by all companies engaged in extra-EU trade. Non response is not an issue.

The statistics for trade with intra-EU countries are based on the Intrastat survey form filled in by about 3,500 importers and about 2,100 exporters. Data problems may arise if companies do not send in their Intrastat survey responses on time or do not respond at all to the Intrastat survey. In these cases estimates are generated and these estimates may differ from the true value of transactions.

The CSO generates estimates for firms below the Intrastat threshold and for non-respondents. VIMA has a team specifically dealing with large companies in order to improve the response rate and accuracy of returns, while persistent offenders who do not submit returns to VIMA may be prosecuted.

15.3.3.1. Unit non-response rate

The response rate in terms of number of traders is about 66%, covering about 99% of the total value of intra-EU trade.



15.3.3.2. Item non-response rate

Not calculated.

15.3.4. Processing error

Data capture, coding and editing are all potential sources of error.

CSO checks data for coding errors and if returns are inconsistent with previous or expected figures. The CSO may send VIMA queries about the accuracy of such data. VIMA will contact the trader and if required, traders send back revised data to VIMA who in turn provide the CSO with revised data.

15.3.5. Model assumption error

Model-related effects may be associated with two processes: Imputation and seasonal adjustment. Imputation for non-respondents above the threshold engaged in intra-EU trade is based on the values of previous returns, which may cause some degree of inaccuracy in the figures.

From the April 2020 release, monthly imports, exports, trade surplus, and the volume series for imports and exports are seasonally adjusted using the X-13 ARIMA model. The X-13 ARIMA model is implemented in JDEMETERA+, the standard Eurostat software package for seasonal adjustment. The pattern of trade may be affected by irregular movements. The seasonal adjustment process does not remove the irregularities, and so isolated extreme values should not be given too much weight. The series are recalculated at the end of each year using up-to-date seasonal patterns available at the time.

16. Timeliness and punctuality

16.1. Timeliness

According to the Community legislation, EUROSTAT is provided with:

- extra and intra-EU aggregated statistics within t+40 days of the reference month,
- extra-EU detailed statistics within t+40 days of the reference month,
- intra-EU detailed statistics within t+70 days of the reference month.

Preliminary data in the Trade Statistics Release is published within t+1 month of the reference month.

The final version of a year's trade figures is available and is sent to EUROSTAT by the end of August of the following year.

The final revised figures are also published nationally 6 months after the publication of the preliminary monthly trade figures. Final figures incorporate late returns and revised data.

It should be noted that data may be revised beyond this point if there are significant adjustments to be made. This can be due to methodological reasons or data errors. Where it is due to methodological reasons an information note will be published explaining the reason for the revisions.

16.1.1. TP1. Time lag – First results

T+30 days for national release.

16.1.2. TP2. Time lag – Final results

T+ 6 months for national release.



16.2. Punctuality

Trade publications are consistently in line with the 4 monthly advance release calendar.

16.2.1. TP3. Punctuality – Punctuality - delivery and publication

0 days.

17. Comparability

17.1. Comparability – Geographical

17.1.1. CC1. Asymmetry for mirror flow statistics

Not applicable.

17.2. Comparability over time

Historical trade data is available electronically on the CSO database since 1992. A fundamental change in the data collection system occurred in 1993 with the completion of the EU single market. Since 1993, data has been collected using the Intrastat survey for intra-EU transactions and Customs declarations for non-EU transactions.

The methodology for compiling the external trade data has remained constant over the time-series, and therefore there is a high degree of comparability of data over this time.

17.2.1. Length of Comparable Time series

32 years.

17.3. Coherence – cross domain

The data published in the monthly Statistical Release are checked for coherence. The Large Cases Unit in the CSO seeks to ensure the consistency and reliability of the figures supplied by large companies to different divisions of the CSO. The CSO also examines the coherence of Irish trade figures with those “mirror statistics” published by other National Statistical Institutes. All short-term figures are subject to revision following the discovery of new or corrected figures. Such revisions are usually minor in nature.

There are a number of reasons why the external trade figures may vary over time, differ from those used by other divisions of the CSO and disagree with mirror statistics compiled by other National Statistics institutes:

- i. Differences in concept (e.g. the valuation of goods as they change ownership in BOP compared with goods that physically cross the border in External Trade);
- ii. Revisions to the data;
- iii. Differences in the classification of the country of origin/destination versus country of consignment used in Balance of Payments(BOP);
- iv. The fact that the country of origin or destination may not be known by the trader;
- v. Differences in the time of recording
- vi. Differences in coverage.

17.3.1. Coherence – Sub annual and annual statistics

Not applicable.



17.3.2. Coherence with National Accounts

Not applicable.

17.4. Coherence – internal

Not applicable.

18. Cost and Burden

Estimates of Cost and Burden can be obtained from the Response Burden Barometer <https://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/enterprisestatistics/responseburdenbarometer/>

Survey specific information is available via CSO's dissemination database PxStat. <https://data.cso.ie/product/RBB>

19. Data Revision

19.1. Data Revision Policy

Published statistics are subject to correction and revision for a variety of reasons. The most common reasons include the receipt of additional information (for example, late survey responses) and updated seasonal factors. Occasional revisions also occur as a result of changes to definitions, methodology, classifications and general updating of statistical series.

It is recognised internationally that the existence of a sound revisions policy maintains credibility in official statistics. The CSO General Revisions Policy, which details how revisions should be managed and communicated to users, outlines the three main types of revisions:

- Planned Routine Revisions
- Planned Major Revisions
- Unplanned Revisions.

One reason for unplanned revisions occurring can be when errors are detected after publication. The 'CSO Error Correction Policy – How to deal with Publication Errors' outlines the steps taken when these errors are detected. As required under Principle 6.3 of the European Statistics Code of Practice, errors detected in published statistics are corrected at the earliest possible date and users are informed. An important step in the process is the documentation and analysis of errors that have occurred and their causes. This allows the CSO to take measures preventing similar errors from occurring in the future and uniformity in dealing with them when they do.

The data revision policy that CSO statistics adheres to can be found via the following link: <https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/quality/treatmentofrevisions/>

19.2. Data Revision Practice

Each month of data is received three times. The data are subject to revision on the incorporation of late Intrastat and VAT returns and corrections made by traders to Intrastat returns already submitted. Final trade figures are published nationally six months after the publication of each month's preliminary figures. However, further revisions are possible in exceptional cases and asymmetries are the subject of ongoing examination.

19.2.1. Data Revision – Average size

Not applicable.



20. Statistical processing

20.1. Source Data

Our main data source is the VIMA office which provides information data from Customs declarations for extra-EU and on Intrastat returns for intra-EU trade. Enterprises are legally obliged to complete Customs declarations for extra-EU trade and the Intrastat survey the traders whose intra-EU trade transactions exceed the Intrastat thresholds. All Intrastat transactions are captured on the Revenue onLine Service (ROS). This system will highlight invalid codes when being inputted or uploaded by the traders. All other data processing is done by the CSO upon receipt of the data from VIMA. The Register of Shipping is used to capture trade in shipping vessels. VIMA also have a trader education section who educate traders in completing the Intrastat returns. Therefore, any recurring error made by a trader can be rectified through contact with this section.

Trade with EU countries is based on the two components of the Intrastat system.

- i. The Intrastat survey is conducted by VIMA. Traders whose exports to EU countries in the previous twelve months exceed the threshold, currently €635,000, must make a detailed export return each month while traders whose imports from EU countries in the previous twelve months exceed the current threshold of €500,000 must make a detailed import return each month.. Around 50,000 traders are involved in intra-EU trade, of which about 2,200 are required to make Intrastat export returns and 5,200 Intrastat import returns.
- ii. The regular VAT return to the Revenue Commissioners, on which all traders are required to record the total value of goods imported from and exported to other EU member states. The information provided on the VAT returns forms the basis for:
 - determining total EU trade for those traders below the Intrastat thresholds;
 - estimating trade for non-respondents above the thresholds;
 - maintaining the VIMA trader register of EU traders; and
 - identifying those exceeding the thresholds required to make the detailed Intrastat return.

Traders not registered for VAT and private individuals who move goods within the EU have no obligations under the Intrastat system, and their intra EU trade is therefore not included in the statistics

Trade in goods with non-EU countries are compiled from Customs declaration supplied by importers and exporters (or their agents) to the Customs authorities. Exporters report on the AES system, (Automated Export System)

Trade in aircraft is recorded when the economic ownership of an aircraft is transferred between an entity established in two different countries, regardless of where the aircraft is situated for aviation purposes.

20.1.1. Population and sampling frame

VIMA is responsible for maintaining the register of traders. VIMA receives a file every month from the Revenue Commissioners which contains a list of all VAT registered companies and uses this list to update its own register.

VIMA use the Register of all VAT registered traders to compile a Register of traders liable for Intrastat Trade. Traders are liable to complete the monthly Intrastat return when their trade exceeds the Intrastat Export and Import thresholds.

The survey population for Intrastat consists of VAT registered traders involved in trade with other EU countries. The sampling frame consists of traders registered for VAT and who are above either the import or export value threshold. Non-EU trade is based on administrative data rather than survey data.

20.1.2. Sampling design

Not applicable.



20.1.3. Survey size

Number of movement record numbers (MRN) is approx.. 3 million per month. This includes imports and exports.

20.1.4. Survey technique

All Intrastat data is collected by VIMA via the Revenue On Line Service (ROS). This data is then transferred by secure electronic means to the International Trade in Goods section in the CSO for processing and dissemination. The Non-EU data is collected via the Customs AES and AIS system and then securely transferred to the CSO.

20.2. Frequency of data collection

Monthly

20.3. Data Collection

- For intra EU trade, any VAT-registered business that trades goods with other EU Member States is required to provide information on its transactions. The information is obtained directly by the national authority responsible for the collection of trade in goods statistics, using the various media available (in paper or electronic form). All businesses are legally required to provide information on their total sales and purchases to and from other EU countries on their VAT returns. The largest ones also submit Intrastat declarations on a monthly basis within a fixed deadline.
- For the compilation of extra-EU trade statistics, the standard data source is the customs declaration submitted by businesses and, in some cases, by private individuals involved in an international transaction of goods with a non-EU country. The customs declaration may be in paper form – the Single Administrative Document (SAD) – but is most commonly in electronic format.

20.3.1. Type of Survey/Process

The compilation of trade statistics is based on VAT and Intrastat survey data provided by VIMA; Customs declarations for non-EU trade.

20.3.2. Questionnaire (including explanations)

Details of the information collected by ROS for Intrastat are available in the Traders Manual on the Office of the Revenue Commissioners website (<http://www.revenue.ie/en/customs/businesses/vies-intrastat.html>). Similarly for the non-EU data, guidelines for exporters and importers are also available on Revenue's website.

20.3.3. Survey Participation

It is compulsory for traders to complete Customs declarations for Non-EU trade. For intra-EU trade, completion for VIMA of the Intrastat survey is compulsory for transactions above the thresholds set out in the Data Sources section.

20.3.4. Data Capture

All Intrastat data is collected by VIMA via the Revenue On Line Service (ROS). This data is then transferred by secure electronic means to the External Trade section in the CSO for processing and dissemination. The Non-EU data is collected via the Customs AEP system and then securely transferred by VIMA to the CSO. Three months of data are sent to the CSO on a monthly basis – the preliminary month which are published along with data revised months t-1, and final t-6 months.



The compilation process in the Trade section involves a three step process which is applied to each of the three monthly Intrastat data files.

- Step 1 generates query files which are edited and forwarded to VIMA for follow-up with the traders.
- Step 2 generates estimates and identifies types of estimates.
- Step 3 incorporates revisions to the data.

Following the processing, data are transferred to EUROSTAT, published in the monthly the Statistical Release and made available on the CSO's PX Stat Statistical Database. Trade in Goods division also has a Helpdesk for any ad-hoc queries..

20.4. Data Validation

Trade data is pre-coded in ROS using the 8-digit Combined Nomenclature (CN) classification and EUROSTAT's country nomenclature referred to in Section 3.11 above. The CSO then codes and publishes the trade figures using the United Nation's Standard Trade Classification Revision 4 (SITC Rev 4).

All data received are subject to credibility / validation checks by VIMA and then by the CSO using SAS and Excel. The editing method applied examines the data for anomalies by checking the consistency of the figures against previous and other returns at micro and macro level. Companies are contacted by VIMA if necessary to confirm the accuracy of their figures.

20.5. Data Compilation

Data are collected by VIMA from SAD's (for Non-EU trade) and the Intrastat survey (for Intra-EU trade). VIMA sends the data securely to the CSO who are responsible for the main processing and dissemination of results.

The CSO processing includes not only checking data but also the estimates for non-response and below threshold trade are generated. The data is then aggregated and disseminated. VIMA contact the traders directly should there be any queries on their data. There is a monthly Goods Exports and Imports publication Release.

Trade data is based on statistical value as opposed to invoice value. The principle that applies in the case of Arrivals is that any transport /insurance etc. costs attributable to that part of the journey of the goods which takes place on the statistical territory of the State must be excluded for statistical value purposes. In the case of Dispatches it is any transport/insurance etc. costs attributable to the part of the journey of the goods, which takes place on the statistical territory of the State, which must be included for statistical value purposes. In delivery terms, the statistical value is the invoice value adjusted as necessary to a CIF (Cost Insurance Freight) basis at point of entry to the State, in the case of Arrivals, and to a FOB (Free on Board) basis at point of exit from the State in the case of Dispatches. Statistical Value is only required of traders with annual EU trade of Arrivals over €5 million and/or Dispatches over €34 million. The CSO use the invoice value to estimate statistical value for the remaining traders.

Once the estimates are generated for non-response and below threshold data, the aggregate outputs are aggregated, computed and published by the CSO.

20.5.1. Imputation (for Non-Response or Incomplete Data Sets)

In the case of Intra-EU traders below the Intrastat thresholds, two different methods are used to create product breakdowns at individual trader level. For exports a product profile is created at NACE level i.e., the economic classification of activity (Nomenclature of Economic Activities) using the data from Intrastat respondents within that NACE group. The estimated data can then be broken down by product using the NACE of the trader to find a corresponding product profile.

For imports, if there is a match at VAT number with the received microdata then this information is used to estimate the products that they are importing. Approximately 85% of the import data can be matched



using this method. Although the import microdata is only available for 2022 the same profile was applied to 2021 data also to create a longer time series for users.

For any importers where there is no match on the received import microdata, a NACE product profile is used similar to the export methodology.

Some trade remains unallocated, this can be due to reported CN codes (Combined Nomenclature) which are classified under SITC9, low value transactions which are not broken down further, and non-matching during the estimation process described above.

Intra-EU trade figures above a threshold are collected by means of the Intrastat survey managed by VIMA. In the case of a non-response in respect of a company where the company has a history of returns, that series is used to forecast a value for its missing arrivals/dispatches at total level.

Extra-EU trade figures are based on the completion of SAD's by traders. No imputation is needed because the system is a census of traders rather than a sample survey. The figures are collected by the Customs AEP system and forwarded to VIMA and then to the CSO.

20.5.1.1. A7. Imputation rate

Not calculated.

20.5.2. Grossing and Weighting

No grossing is necessary for the compilation of extra-EU trade data because all trade is covered by Customs declarations.

20.6. Adjustment

Not applicable.

20.6.1. Seasonal Adjustment

In the April 2020 release the seasonal adjustment methodology for trade in goods data was updated from X-11 to X-13-ARIMA model. The X-13-ARIMA method is implemented in JDEMETRA+, the standard Eurostat software package for Seasonal Adjustment.

X-13-ARIMA incorporates significant new types of modelling capability for the issues commonly faced in seasonal adjustment, and also produces sophisticated diagnostics to help improve seasonal adjustment.

The seasonally adjusted series have been revised back to January 2010 using the new methodology.

21. Comment