

Quality description: Annual publication on foreign trade of goods, CD ROM, Parts 1 and 2

1. Relevance of statistics

1.1 Content and use of statistics

The essence of Part 1 of the Annual Publication consists in statistics on goods in accordance with the Combined Nomenclature CN of the EU. These detailed statistics indicate which articles are imported and exported, their values and quantities, and the distribution of the trade among the individual countries. This publication indicates the importation of goods according to their countries of origin and dispatch, respectively, and the exportation of goods according to their countries of destination.

Part 2 of the Annual Publication covers the foreign trade in goods in accordance with the SITC goods classification as per branches of industry, product categories, and main uses. Furthermore, the publication indicates the unit values and volume indexes of foreign trade, total trade turnover, foreign trade according to countries and groups thereof as well as transport and traffic statistics.

Foreign Trade Statistics describes the trade in goods between Finland and the other Member States of the European Union EU (the internal trade) and between Finland and Third Countries (the external trade). These statistics constitute the official source of information on the import, export, and trade balance of Finland. They are an important tool for decision-making, planning, and research undertaken within the public and private sectors, both at the national level and within the EU and numerous international organizations.

1.2 Central concepts and classifications

Foreign Trade Statistics comprises data relating to the value and quantity of the import and export of goods according to customs headings, countries, and territories. The import statistics are compiled according to the countries of origin and countries of dispatch. The export data are collected according to the countries of destination.

As a rule, all goods exported from and imported to Finland are included in the statistics on the internal and external trade. The inclusion in statistics requires that the goods arrive in or depart from this country physically. On the other hand, it is not important from the viewpoint of statistics whether any payments traffic is involved in the import or export of the goods.

The statistical value of imported goods is the price to be actually paid for the goods. The statistical import value includes the transport and insurance costs until the first crossing point at the Finnish border. The statistical value of export goods is the tax-exempt selling price of the goods. The statistical export value includes the transport and insurance costs until the place of exportation at the Finnish border.

The concepts applied when referring to the trading countries are the country of origin and country of dispatch at import, and the country of destination at export. The country of origin is that country in which the goods were produced or prepared. If the goods were prepared in two or more countries, the country of origin is that country in which the latest important and financially relevant preparation took place. The country of dispatch is that country from which the goods were originally dispatched to be exported to Finland. The country of destination is the latest country known at the time of dispatch to which the goods were to be exported from Finland either direct or through another country.

The Annual Publications apply the following classification criteria:

- EU Combined Nomenclature CN
- Standard International Trade Classification (SITC, rev.4, ex 2007)
- Classification of Products by Activities (CPA)
- Nomenclature générale des Activités économiques dans les Communautés européennes (NACE 2002) (classification of the EC according to industries)
- Main Industrial Groupings (MIG), according to the main use of goods. This product classification is not official.
- Commodity Classification for Transport Statistics in Europe (CSTE)

The country classification is based on the Commission Regulation EC 1833/2006 on the country classification of the statistics on the external Community trade and on the trade between the Member States. The country codes comply with those of the ISO/DIS 3166 standard of the International Organization for Standardization.

1.3 Acts and Decrees

Foreign Trade Statistics of Finland is based on the legislation of the European Community as well as the national Statistics Act (280/04) and Customs Act (1466/94).

The basic Regulation 638/2004 issued by the Council on the compilation of statistics on the internal trade constitutes the methodological basis of the compilation of statistics on internal trade. Its implementation is regulated by the Commission Regulation (EC) No. 1982/2004.

The compilation of statistics on the external trade i.e. the trade in goods by the Community and its Member States with the Third Countries is regulated through the basic Council Regulation (EC) No. 1172/1995. The implementation rules on the compilation of statistics on the external trade are contained in the Commission Regulation (EC) No. 1917/2000. The basic Regulation on the external trade has been amended by the Council Regulations (EC) No. 476/1997 and (EC) No. 374/1998.

Where applicable, the European Community law has observed the recommendations on the international merchandise trade statistics issued by the UN Statistical Division (International Merchandise Trade Statistics: Concepts and Definitions, United Nations, 1998).

2. Method description

The data on the trade carried on by Finland with the other EU Member States is collected from the statistical declarations provided monthly by importers and exporters through the Intrastat system of the internal trade. The data on the trade between Finland and the Third Countries is obtained from customs declarations, which have to be submitted on every import and export consignment. The data on both the internal and the external trade are put together to form the statistics describing the foreign trade of Finland. On the part of those declarants not obliged to provide statistical values, these values are estimated under the application of heading-specific coefficients which were calculated on such data material involving both statistical and invoice values. Information regarding the liability to lodge a declaration is available in the Intrastat Guidebook issued by the National Board of Customs as well as the manual included in the Annual Publication on Merchandise Trade and at the web site of the National Board of Customs.

3. Correctness and accuracy of information

The monthly published statistics are preliminary. The figures change as the basic material gets completed and elaborated. The monthly figures are supplemented e.g. by the estimated values of the omitted statistical declarations and the performances of companies which failed to achieve the minimum threshold values. Each EU Member State defines its threshold i.e. minimum value of an inclusion in the statistics on the calendar year involved, on the basis of the annual values of import and export by companies.

As a rule, all goods exported from and imported in Finland are recorded to statistics. The prerequisite for the inclusion in statistics is that the goods physically arrive in or depart from the country. By way of exception, water- and aircraft are recorded to statistics upon a change in the status of ownership. Among other things, neither through-transportations nor economic measures of insignificant commercial values are included in the statistics. Also the smallest companies are released from the liability to declare statistics on the internal trade. Neither is foreign trade in services recorded to Customs' statistics on foreign trade.

4. Up-to-dateness and timeliness of published data

The statistics on the calendar year are confirmed by the end of April in the following year. The statistics presented in the Annual Publications constitute the definite statistics on the respective year.

Part 1 of the Annual Publication gets completed in the summer and Part 2 in the autumn.

5. Availability and transparency / clarity of data

The Annual Publication can be ordered from the customer service of Edita, Tel. +358 20 45005, or at the Internet address <http://netmarket.edita.fi/>.

Further information on foreign trade statistics is available under Foreign Trade Statistics on the web site of Finnish Customs. The site presents e.g. the principles of compiling statistics on foreign trade and lists all the reviews published by the National Board of Customs on the foreign trade of Finland.

Detailed statistical information is also available from the Uljas database (free of charge).

Further information is also available from the Statistics Service at:

- telephone: +358 9 6141 (exchange) or +358 20 690 603 (Statistics Service direct)
- e-mail: [statistics\[at\]tulli.fi](mailto:statistics[at]tulli.fi) (replace [at] in the address with @)
- Internet: www.tulli.fi
- Statistical database Uljas: uljas.tulli.fi

6. Comparability of statistics

As the goods classifications are subject to changes, it is not possible to compile consistent time series on all articles. The CN classification changes slightly each year, but the other classifications change less often.

Changes in the list on countries restrict the compilation of country-specific time series.

7. Clarity and consistency / coherence

Beside the Foreign Trade Statistics, statistical data on foreign trade may also be obtained from the National Accounts of the Statistics Finland and the Balance of Trade statistics of the Bank of Finland.

Statistics on the international trade of other countries are also accessible at the reading room of the Statistics Service.

Further information on the foreign trade by the EU Member States is obtainable from the publications, web site, and Easy Comext database of Eurostat. The database can be consulted through Internet free of charge.

The foreign trade statistics compiled by the UN (the COMTRADE database) are accessible free of charge at the Internet site of the UN.

The dissimilarities of the concepts and definitions applied by the EU Member States and their most important trading partners may affect the comparability of statistics.