

Quality description: Foreign trade of goods by enterprise sizes / country-specific surveys

1. Relevance of statistics

1.1 Content and use of statistics

Data on foreign trade of goods by the enterprise sizes are also published as country-specific surveys. They describe the development of export and import by various countries according to enterprise sizes. The data by the enterprise sizes are calculated in the survey according to both industries (NACE) and products by activities (CPA).

The surveys on foreign trade of goods by enterprise sizes describe the development of foreign trade in particular from the viewpoint of small and medium-sized enterprises. The statistics indicated by the enterprise size categories constitute an important instrument for the decision makers as well as planners and researchers in the public and private sectors, both at the national level and within the operations of the EU and several international organizations.

1.2 Central concepts and classifications

Information on the internal trade i.e. the trade between the EU Member States is collected through the Intrastat system from the operators who are obliged to provide information. The statistics on the external trade i.e. the trade with countries not in the EU are obtained from the customs clearance system.

The compilation of statistics on commodities is based on the Combined Nomenclature CN of the EU. The export statistics are gathered as per the countries of destination according to the FOB ("free on board") value, and the import statistics as per the countries of origin according to the CIF ("cost, insurance, and freight") value. The country of origin is the country in which the goods were produced or in which the latest economically important production stage took place. The packaging of the commodities is not regarded as production. As for export, the country of destination is the last country known at the time of export of the commodities from Finland, either direct or via another country.

In the survey on the foreign trade of goods by the enterprise sizes, the CN-based statistical material has been combined according to the following classifications:

- Classification of Products by Activities (CPA)
- Classification of the European Community according to industries i.e. Nomenclature générale des activités économiques dans les Communautés européennes (NACE 2002). The NACE category data of each enterprise are composed according to its main branch of industry.

The data by the enterprise sizes are compiled at the Statistics Finland. The contents of the enterprise size categories comply with those of the Statistics Finland. As regards the business register data, the latest available information is used in the survey. The up-date delay is one year plus two months. This means that the business register material supplied in, say, year 2007 contains the definite enterprise data relating to the statistical year of 2005.

The Statistics Finland classifies enterprises into size categories according to the following criteria:

- **Micro enterprises:** enterprises employing fewer than 10 salary /wage earners and having an annual turnover or a balance sheet total lower than 2 million €.
- **Small enterprises:** enterprises employing fewer than 50 salary /wage earners and having an annual turnover or a balance sheet total lower than 10 million €.
- **Medium-sized enterprises:** enterprises employing fewer than 250 salary /wage earners and having an annual turnover or a balance sheet total lower than 43 million €.
- **"SME" enterprises** include micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises. In the survey, "SME total" refers to a combined category of those three types.
- **Large enterprises:** enterprises employing more than 250 salary/wage earners. Beside this condition, also enterprises having an annual turnover exceeding 50 million € and a balance sheet total exceeding 43 million € are large enterprises.

The business register at the Statistics Finland contains register information on foreign communities on which no data are available regarding the sizes of the personnel or the balance sheet total. For the purposes of this survey, the size category information of those enterprises is defined on the basis of the turnover only. Despite this, there are operators which cannot be classified into any size category. In this survey, those operators are referred to the title "Unspecified".

1.3 Acts and Decrees

Foreign trade statistics are based on the legislation of the European Community as well as the national Statistics Act (280/4) and Customs Act (1466/94). Within the EU legislation, the compilation of statistics is steered by the Basic Regulation on internal trade statistics (EC, 638/2004), Basic Regulation on external trade statistics (EC, 1172/95), and the respective implementation provisions.

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

2. Method description

The information on the trade carried on by Finland with the other EU Member States is collected from the compulsory statistical declarations provided monthly by importers and exporters through the Intrastat system of the internal trade. The information on the trade between Finland and Third Countries is obtained from customs declarations, which have to be submitted on every import and export consignment. The data on both internal and external trade are put together to form statistics on the foreign trade of Finland.

The National Board of Customs produces the data for the survey on the foreign trade of goods by the enterprise sizes through combining the material on foreign trade with the business register material of the Statistics Finland.

3. Correctness and accuracy of information

The country-specific surveys on the foreign trade of goods by the enterprise sizes are produced on the basis of the definite statistics on the foreign trade.

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

The accurate publication date is announced on the web site of the National Board of Customs about one week in advance.

5. Availability and transparency / clarity of data

The surveys are published on the web site of the National Board of Customs on the dates announced in advance. They can also be ordered to be transmitted by e-mail.

Further information on the statistics on foreign trade is available on the web site of Customs -> Foreign trade statistics. This site comprises e.g. the principles of compiling foreign trade statistics as well as all the surveys on the foreign trade of Finland published by the National Board of Customs.

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 (replace [at] in the address with @)
- Internet: www.tulli.fi
- Statistical database Uljas: uljas.tulli.fi

6. Comparability of statistics

Country-specific surveys on the foreign trade of goods by enterprise sizes were first produced in 2006.

7. Clarity and consistency / coherence

Beside foreign trade statistics, statistical information on foreign trade is available from the National Accounts of the Statistics Finland and the Balance of Payments statistics of the Bank of Finland.

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

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

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.