

Methodological note: What is Trade in goods statistics by Enterprise Characteristics (TEC)?

OBJECTIVE

International trade in goods statistics (ITGS) provide a lot of information about trade in goods between countries but offers no insight as to who generates these import and export flows. 'Trade in goods statistics by Enterprise Characteristics (TEC)' ensures that we can actually get a better picture of this. TEC combines international trade on the one hand with information about companies, such as size, economic activity or export intensity, on the other hand.

TEC can help provide answers to such questions as:

- What contribution does a given sector of activity make to international goods trade?
- What is the share of small and medium-sized enterprises in international goods trade?
- What are the main goods-importing countries and which are the most important trade partners for exports?

PUBLICATION ON NBB.STAT

The publication consists of eleven tables, each one of which highlights an aspect of international trade in goods.

Summary table

This table displays the totals for the different flows (imports and exports inside and outside the European Union). In each following table, imports and exports will be recorded with an additional distinction between European Union Member States and non-member countries.

Trade by type of trader

In this summary table, we can see whether traders import, export or are involved in both flows, for each sector of activity (NACE code based on NACE Rev. 2). This makes it clear which sectors are important for imports and exports of goods.

Trade by activity and enterprise size class

This table shows, for each sector of activity, how many people were employed in a company at the end of the calendar year. In this way, the impact of employment on international goods trade is measured for each sector of activity.

Concentration of trade by activity sector

To find out the extent to which international trade in goods is concentrated in the hands of a limited number of companies, it can be seen from this table what share in imports and exports is held by the 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 500 and 1000 biggest companies. It also gives a breakdown by sector of activity.

Trade by partner country and by activity sector

The breakdown of figures here gives a clear picture of which countries goods are being traded. This applies to individual countries as well as groups of countries (EU, North Africa, South America, etc.).

Trade by number of partner countries and by activity sector

Besides information about which countries are trade partners, it is also interesting to examine how many partner countries there are for imports and exports per sector of activity. It is thus possible to analyse to what extent sectors diversify into import and export channels.

Trade by product classification and activity sector

Up to now, the detailed breakdown in the tables described here has been based on companies' sectors of activity (NACE code), but product codes (CPA) also provide interesting information about the distribution of trade **in goods**. This table shows which products are traded. Lastly, it shows how the goods (based on their product code) are broken down across the various sectors of activity (based on their NACE code).

Trade by type of enterprise ownership

This table breaks down international trade statistics based on type of ownership. This approach indicates the importance of multinationals in the import and export of goods.

Trade by export intensity

Export intensity is calculated for a company from the value of exported goods divided by sales turnover. In this way, it is clear which sectors rely heavily on exports and which ones are sharply focused on the Belgian market.

Trade by activity sector

This table makes it clear which sectors of activity have an impact on total imports and/or exports. What is the value of goods imported and exported by enterprises within a given sector.

Trade by partner country and enterprise size

In this last table a distinction is made between, on the one hand, the number of workers employed in companies, and on the other hand, with which countries import and export trade is conducted. In this way, we can gain some insight into the extent that small, medium-sized and large enterprises are involved in international goods trade.

METHODOLOGY

In compiling the TEC, European legislation and requirements^{1 2} are used, as coordinated in the 'Compilers guide on European statistics on international trade in goods by enterprise characteristics'.

The TEC is published on NBB.Stat annually in August (T+20 months)

For further information: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/international-trade-in-goods/data/focus-on-enterprise-characteristics-tec>

¹ REGULATION (EC) No. 222/2009 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 11 March 2009 amending Regulation (EC) No. 638/2004 on Community statistics relating to the trading of goods between Member States, Paragraph 8C

² REGULATION (EC) No. 96/2010 OF THE COMMISSION of 4 February 2010 amending Regulation (EC) No. 1982/2004 implementing Regulation (EC) No. 638/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on Community statistics relating to the trading of goods between Member States, as regards the simplification threshold, trade by business characteristics, specific goods and movements and nature of transaction codes, Article 13A