

TABLE OF CONTENT

1	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	Purpose of the user guide	1
1.2	Use of international trade statistics.....	1
1.3	Links with balance of payments and national accounts	2
1.4	Institutional framework	2
1.4.1	General	2
1.4.2	National authorities	3
1.4.3	Community authorities	3
1.5	Legal background	3
1.5.1	General	3
1.5.2	Intra-European Union trade.....	4
1.5.3	Extra-European Union trade.....	5
1.5.4	Other Community legislation	5
1.5.5	International recommendations and provisions.....	5
1.5.6	National legislation.....	6
2	METHODS.....	6
2.1	General	6
2.2	Trade systems	6
2.2.1	General trade and special trade.....	6
2.2.2	Intra-European Union trade.....	7
2.2.3	Extra-European Union trade.....	8
2.3	Coverage.....	9
2.4	Exclusions.....	10
2.5	Specific movements.....	10
2.6	Statistical territory	11
2.7	Nomenclatures and classifications.....	11
2.7.1	General	11
2.7.2	Product classifications.....	11
2.7.3	Combined Nomenclature.....	11
2.7.4	TARIC.....	12
2.7.5	Standard International Trade Classification	12
2.7.6	Other product classifications	13
2.7.7	Classification by activity	13
2.7.8	Nomenclature of countries and territories	13
2.8	Reference period.....	14
2.9	Statistical thresholds.....	14
2.9.1	General	14
2.9.2	Intra-EU trade thresholds	14
2.9.3	Extra-EU trade threshold.....	15
2.10	Statistical data.....	15
2.10.1	Intra-EU trade data	15
2.10.2	Extra-EU trade data	16

2.11	Statistical procedure	16
2.11.1	General	16
2.11.2	Normal imports and exports	16
2.11.3	Inward processing trade.....	16
2.11.4	Outward processing trade	17
2.12	Partner country	17
2.13	Valuation	18
2.14	Quantity measurement.....	18
2.14.1	Net mass	18
2.14.2	Supplementary units	18
2.15	Transport data.....	18
2.15.1	Mode of transport	18
2.15.2	Nationality of means of transport	19
2.15.3	Containerisation.....	19
2.16	Confidentiality (methodology)	19
2.16.1	Confidential data.....	19
2.16.2	Passive confidentiality	20
2.16.3	Active confidentiality	20
2.16.4	Product confidentiality	20
2.16.5	Country confidentiality.....	20
2.17	Statistical discrepancies and asymmetries.....	20
2.17.1	Asymmetries and "mirror" statistics.....	20
2.17.2	Intra-EU statistical discrepancies	21
2.17.3	Extra-EU statistical discrepancies	23
2.18	Methodological differences	23
2.18.1	Differences between Community and national figures.....	23
2.18.2	Differences between Community figures and other international sources	24
3	DATA COLLECTION.....	25
3.1	General	25
3.2	Data sources.....	25
3.3	Register of Providers of Statistical Information (PSIs).....	26
3.4	Data transmission	26
4	DATA PROCESSING AND ANALYSIS.....	26
4.1	Quality control.....	26
4.2	Adjustments	27
4.2.1	General	27
4.2.2	Adjustment of values.....	28
4.2.3	Adjustment of quantities	28
4.2.4	Adjustments to a balance of payments basis	28
4.3	Revisions	29
4.4	Confidentiality (processing)	29
4.4.1	Confidential data	29
4.4.2	Country confidentiality.....	30
4.4.3	Product confidentiality	30

4.5	Treatment of discontinuities	31
4.6	Currency conversion (of aggregates).....	32
4.7	Analyses	32
4.7.1	Unit value and volume indices	32
4.7.2	Price indices	34
4.7.3	Other analyses	34
4.8	Regional aggregation.....	34
4.8.1	General	34
4.8.2	Geographic zones	35
4.8.3	Economic zones.....	35
4.9	Correction for working days and seasonal adjustment.....	35
5	DISSEMINATION	36
5.1	Type of users	36
5.2	Publications on line	37
5.3	Data on line.....	38
5.4	DVD-ROM	38
5.5	COMEXT database.....	39
5.6	Metadata	40
5.7	European Statistical Data Support.....	40

LIST OF ANNEXES

Annex 1:	National Authorities responsible for the compilation of foreign trade Statistics.....	41
Annex 2:	Scheme of statistical recording of imports (extra-EU trade) and arrivals (intra-EU trade).....	44
Annex 3:	Scheme of statistical recording of exports (extra-EU trade) and dispatches (intra-EU trade).....	45
Annex 4:	Exclusions.....	46
Annex 5:	Alphanumeric Codes	47
Annex 6:	Conceptual differences between national figures and those sent to Eurostat by Member States	48
Annex 7:	Overview on external trade products.....	49