

Standard documentation Meta information

(Definitions, comments, methods, quality)

on

International trade in goods statistics

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STATISTICS AUSTRIA
Bundesanstalt Statistik Österreich
A-1110 Vienna, Guglgasse 13
Phone: +43 1 711 28-0
www.statistik.at

Directorate Business Statistics Organizational unit International trade in goods

Survey: Werner Kern Tel.: +43 1 711 28-7583 werner.kern@statistik.gv.at	Publication Melanie Kalina Tel.: +43 1 711 28-7732 melanie.kalina@statistik.gv.at	TEC, BDL Stefan Lenes Tel.: +43 1 711 28-7166 stefan.lenes@statistik.gv.at	ITGS general Walter Seiringer Tel.: +43 1 711 28-7558 walter.seiringer@statistik.gv.at
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Executive Summary

Monthly international trade in goods statistics (ITGS, previously foreign trade) covers imports and exports including electricity. Therefore, it constitutes essential economic information on cross-border movement of commodities between the national statistical territory and foreign countries and is a key indicator for the assessment of the economic situation and economic development. The statistical territory for imports and exports conforms the customs area of application in accordance with paragraph 3 of the Customs implementation law, [Federal Law Gazette \(BGBl.\) No. 659/1994](#). The Austrian international trade in goods volume in 2022 amounted import-sided to 44.7 % and export-sided to 44.6 % in relation to the GDP (gross domestic product), and showed once again, that international trade in goods is a major economic factor in the context of the Austrian economy (cf. [Statistische Nachrichten 8/2023](#)).

European legislation in the field of international trade in goods statistics warrants the statistics to be based on precise legal texts directly applicable in the Member States as well as highly harmonised definitions and procedures. Austrian international trade in goods statistics are legally regulated on two levels, the EU (European Union) level and the national level, which essentially refers to EU laws and simultaneously considers specific national situations.

International trade in goods statistics are based on the data collection systems INTRASTAT (cross-border movement of commodities within the EU) and EXTRASTAT (cross-border movement of commodities with third countries). The realisation of the internal market on 1 January 1993 disestablishing customs formalities, led to the introduction of the data collection system INTRASTAT as a basis for the statistics of trade within the EU. After Austria accessed the European Community on 1 January 1995, the INTRASTAT system entered into force in Austria. It is based on a close connection to the monthly VAT return system for the internal market. Trade in goods is collected according to the system of special trade. According to the primary statistical survey system INTRASTAT data on trade with EU Member States are collected directly from approx. 12 000 providers of statistical information (PSIs) which covers about 94 % of all imports and 97 % of all exports for reporting year 2022.

In principle, all kind of services are not subject of international trade in goods statistics, except processing transactions in context with cross-border movements of goods. These are recorded and included in international trade in goods statistics.

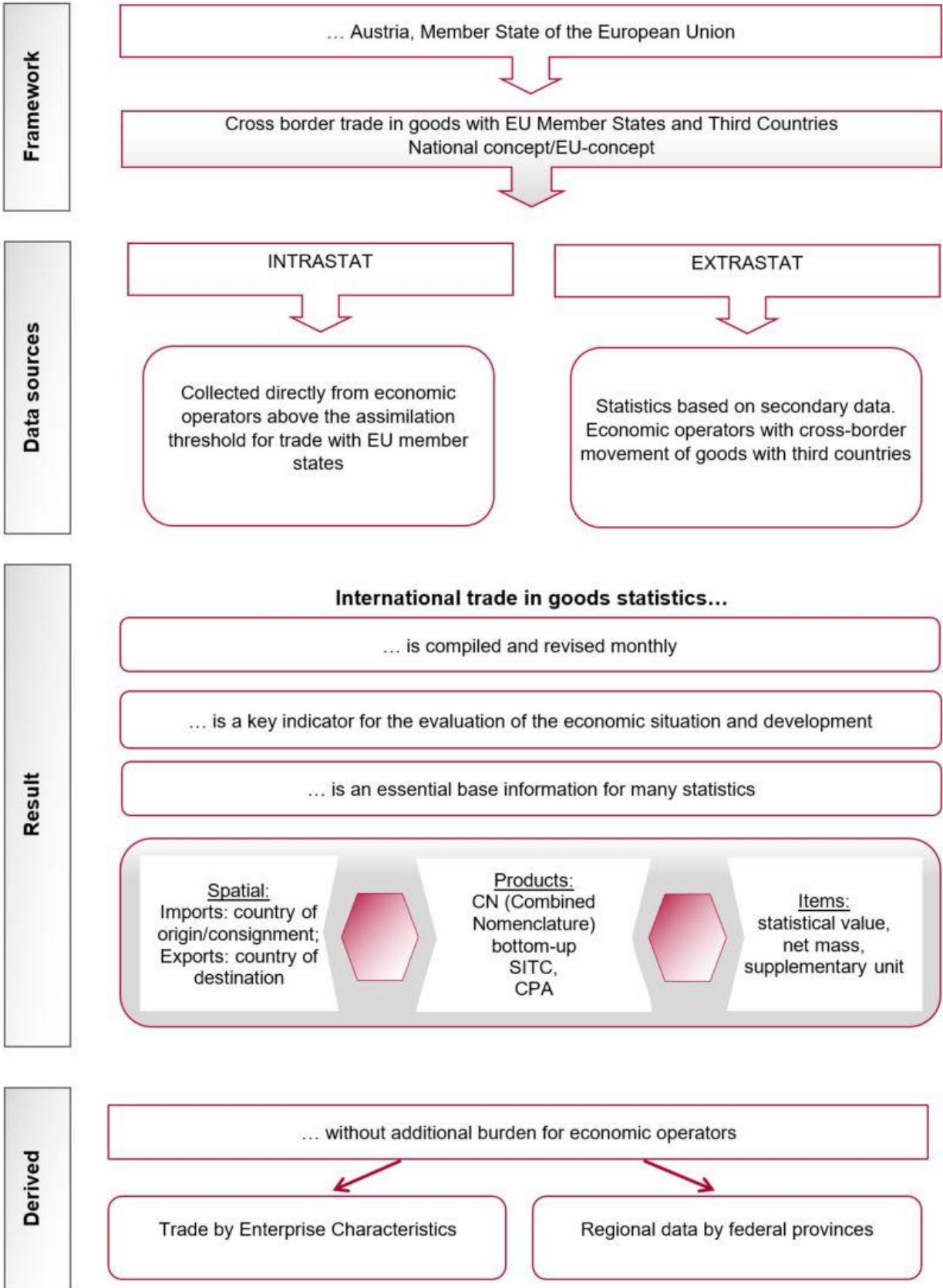
Data on trade with third countries (EXTRASTAT) is completely gathered from customs authorities based on customs declarations and is transmitted directly to Statistics Austria.

The collected data from both survey sources is checked for validity and credibility. Mostly INTRASTAT and EXTRASTAT are validated in the same way. The monitoring of the content of the information is divided into a formal plausibility test (validity of variables), a logical plausibility check (combined control) and quantity control (quantity-value ratio control). For testing the INTRASTAT records' completeness further checks are relevant. Statistical offices of the Member States in accordance with EU legislation obtain information from other secondary data sources, such as from the monthly VAT return data (national monthly Value Added Tax returns, European VAT collection on trade within the EU – VIES (VAT Information Exchange System)) respectively the aircraft or vessels register.

To ensure the quality of the data, numerous quality management actions in the framework of processing of the survey data are performed (such as electronic reporting tools, plausibility checks, personal economic operator care by competent officials in charge, completeness checks, on-going training of employees, use of automation-assisted checking programs). Non-response due to the application of a threshold system and due to missing consciousness of reporting in INTRASTAT can be compensated with the help of secondary data (national VAT return), a long term proven estimation system at the most detailed level and a consistent reminder system. The quality of the survey data in INTRASTAT is therefore also related to the quality of the tax data from the EU-wide VIES data and from the national monthly VAT returns, used for plausibility purposes as well as for estimation purposes. The survey data from EXTRASTAT is provided almost entirely from customs data survey and broadly depend, in terms of quality, on the thoroughness and reliability of this secondary source.

The analysis and release of results of Austrian international trade in goods statistics by Statistics Austria takes place from the Austrian perspective according to national concept. These results cannot be compared directly with the Austrian results published by Eurostat, which are analysed from the European perspective according to EU-concept, although both concepts are based on the principle of special trade. There are two essential differences between EU-concept and national concept, being the definition of partner country imports and the statistical treatment of indirect movement of goods.

Figure 1 International trade in goods statistics in Austria



International trade in goods statistics – Main Key Points

Subject matter	Austrian International Trade in Goods Statistics (ITGS) describes the cross-border movement of goods of the survey territory with foreign countries. A foreign country in international trade in goods statistics means the area outside the survey territory. The statistical territory corresponds to the customs area of application.
Population	All VAT registered economic operators or customs declarants with cross-border movement of goods.
Type of statistics	INTRASTAT: Primary statistical survey EXTRASTAT: Secondary statistics
Data sources/Survey techniques	INTRASTAT: Census with variable threshold values with mandatory representation criteria. EXTRASTAT: Census
Reference period	2022
Periodicity	Monthly
Survey participation (in case of a survey)	Mandatory (no INTRASTAT reporting obligation for economic operators below the assimilation threshold for each trade flow)
Main legal acts	<p>National:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Trading Statistics Act Gazette 173/1995 - as amended 2. Regulation on statistical thresholds and characteristics in the trade statistics application Gazette 17/2022 <p>EU:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. EU Basic and Implementing regulations EBS - European Business Statistics RG (EU) 2019/2152, RG (EU) 2020/1197
Most detailed regional breakdown	Structure by partner countries and groups of countries according to ISO alpha2-digit code and Geonomenclature (GEONOM).
Availability of results	Preliminary data: t + 70 Final data: June of the following year
Other	Austrian International Trade in Goods Statistics are compiled and published according to the national concept. Application of passive confidentiality.