

SITUATION OF THE NEW MEMBER STATES REGARDING THEIR TRANSITION TO THE INTRASTAT SYSTEM



FINLAND

The Finnish Board of Customs is fully responsible for the collection and compilation of foreign trade statistics. Each trader sends the monthly Intrastat declarations to the local customs office (there are 21 in total) which records and controls the data received.

The implementation of Intrastat has not posed major problems in Finland. Great effort has been made to implement the system and the attitude of traders has been positive. Some problems have however been encountered, particularly in the set up and update of the register of intra-Community traders and in the adoption of the Combined Nomenclature (outlined below).

Some 10 000 to 15 000 companies have intra-Community arrivals and roughly 5 000 have intra-Community dispatches. Approximately 6 000 of importers and 2 400 exporters are required to make Intrastat declarations. The register of intra-Community operators covers approximately 99 per cent of the total value of intra-Community trade and a proportionally large number of small traders are included in this register. This

reflects rigorous quality requirements applied in Finland. While the assimilation threshold for dispatches amounts to FIM 650 000 (= 100,000 ECU), it is equal to FIM 300 000 for arrivals. A simplification threshold of FIM 650 000 is also applied for arrivals.

The transmission of data is mainly being done through paper forms. Electronic transmission however is expected to increase when traders have adapted their systems to the requirements of the EU in the field of foreign trade statistics. Finland is currently investigating the possibility of introducing the Intrastat Data Entry Package (IDEP) software programme.

As in most Member States, Intrastat is not fully integrated to the VAT reporting system (i.e. the European Intrastat form serves as the only medium for making the Intrastat declaration.). The VAT administration however provides the Board of Customs with information to check the Intrastat data and the first monthly control data are awaited in April.

The results of the January 1995 data are expected to become available in May at the earliest. Intra- and extra-Community trade data will be merged and published in Finland as combined foreign trade statistics.

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OFICINA ESTADÍSTICA DE LAS COMUNIDADES EUROPEAS
DE EUROPÆISKE FÆLLESSKABERS STATISTISKE KONTOR
STATISTISCHES AMT DER EUROPÄISCHEN GEMEINSCHAFTEN
ΣΤΑΤΙΣΤΙΚΗ ΥΠΗΡΕΣΙΑ ΤΩΝ ΕΥΡΩΠΑΪΚΩΝ ΚΟΙΝΟΤΗΤΩΝ
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CORRIGENDUM

We would like to draw the reader's attention to the fact that the table on page 12, concerning the principal suppliers to Member States within intra-European Union trade, is unfortunately erroneous.

Please find below a new corrected table.

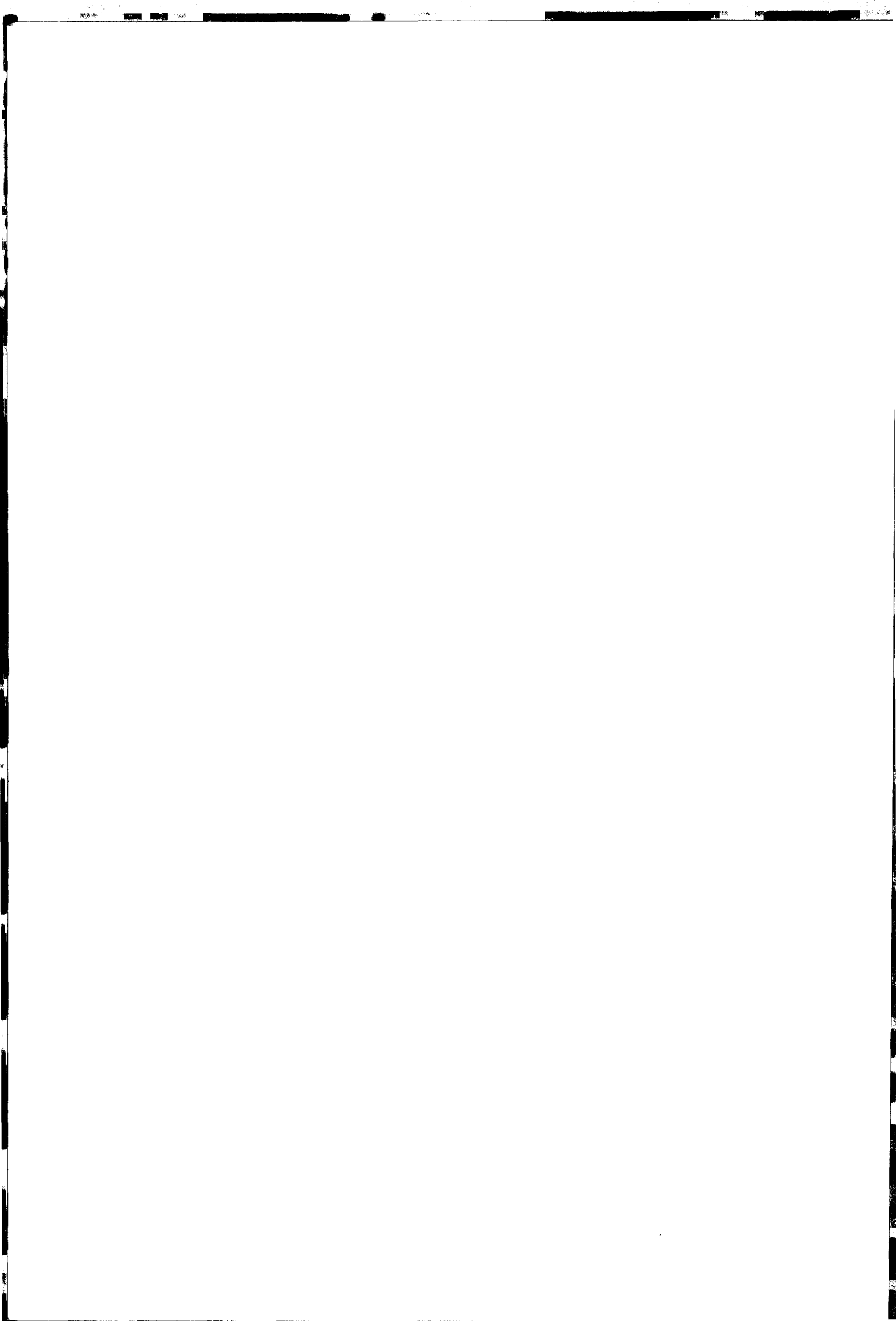
PRINCIPAL CUSTOMERS OF MEMBER STATES WITHIN INTRA-EUROPEAN UNION TRADE

- From January to September 1994 -

Flow : arrivals

REPORTING COUNTRIES	PARTNER COUNTRIES										
	<i>Belg-Luxbg</i>	<i>Denmark</i>	<i>Germany</i>	<i>Greece</i>	<i>Spain</i>	<i>France</i>	<i>Ireland</i>	<i>Italy</i>	<i>Netherlands</i>	<i>Portugal</i>	<i>United Kingdom</i>
<i>Belg-Luxbg (e)</i>	-	0.9%	27.8%	0.2%	2.2%	22.3%	1.5%	6.0%	24.5%	0.7%	13.8%
<i>Denmark</i>	6.5%	-	42.2%	0.3%	2.2%	10.4%	1.3%	9.0%	12.2%	3.0%	12.8%
<i>Germany</i>	14.1%	3.6%	-	1.0%	5.4%	22.4%	2.2%	16.3%	20.8%	1.7%	12.4%
<i>Greece (e)</i>	6.0%	2.2%	24.9%	-	4.8%	12.3%	1.5%	25.7%	11.8%	0.6%	10.2%
<i>Spain</i>	6.0%	1.3%	24.3%	0.4%	-	28.3%	1.4%	14.2%	7.1%	4.5%	12.6%
<i>France</i>	16.0%	1.6%	31.3%	0.3%	9.0%	-	2.1%	15.5%	10.1%	1.7%	12.5%
<i>Ireland</i>	2.6%	1.3%	11.9%	0.1%	1.4%	5.7%	-	3.3%	5.8%	0.4%	67.6%
<i>Italy</i>	8.5%	1.8%	34.2%	1.4%	6.8%	24.1%	1.6%	-	10.2%	0.6%	10.8%
<i>Netherlands</i>	19.6%	1.9%	38.4%	0.3%	3.0%	12.4%	2.0%	6.1%	-	0.9%	15.4%
<i>Portugal</i>	5.0%	1.2%	19.9%	0.2%	28.0%	17.1%	0.9%	12.3%	6.1%	-	9.4%
<i>United Kingdom</i>	9.7%	2.9%	29.9%	0.5%	5.0%	19.7%	7.6%	9.8%	13.2%	1.7%	-

OSCE: 3L



Main problems identified

□ Set up and update of business register:

Although the first information package was sent to intra-Community traders after the Finnish referendum last October, the final register of Intrastat traders could not be finalised until after the Norwegian referendum. As such some traders only received the instructions shortly before Finland's accession to the European Union which resulted in time constraints in implementing the Intrastat system.

The set up of the register of intra-Community traders is based entirely on customs clearance data. Contacts with traders have shown that part of the information in the register was not up to date and a number of corrections had to be made before the register was operational. The maintenance of the register is based on information received from traders and from the VAT authorities and a significant amount of work is going into keeping this register up to date.

□ Adoption of Combined nomenclature:

The fact that the Combined Nomenclature is not yet available in printed form in Finnish has resulted in many practical difficulties, particularly for traders. One temporary solution however has been to use the Customs tariff, which also includes CN headings, although practical problems appear in the cases where the VAT procedures differ from statistical practices (e.g. currency conversion, triangular trade, processing under contract).

Significant administrative assistance has been provided, particularly to smaller traders by providing copies of the pages of the Tariff that they required. Special assistance is also provided to traders who earlier used forwarding agents in customs procedures and now complete the statistical forms by themselves.



SWEDEN

In Sweden, the Board of Customs is the authority responsible for the collection and compi-

lation of foreign trade statistics while Statistics Sweden publishes and analyses the data. The implementation of the Intrastat system has hitherto not presented major difficulties in Sweden.

Most providers of statistical information have been cooperative and have endeavoured to provide Intrastat data in time and in line with the instructions provided. The main problem identified in Sweden relates to the set up and update of the register of intra-Community operators (outlined below). There has been a very high demand for further information on who is required to complete the Intrastat declaration and on the criteria selected such as the threshold system, supply of 1995 CN-codes etc.). This has resulted in a heavy work load for Statistics Sweden and the Swedish Board of Customs.

In Sweden, approximately 80 000 operators had intra-Community trade in 1994. The initial number of providers of Intrastat data was 13 500 for January 1995. This reflects an assimilation threshold of SEK 900 000 (= ECU 100 000) for 1995.

Most enterprises currently supply Intrastat data in paper forms (some 1 000 currently use EDI). In cooperation with the Board of Customs an investigation of a future use of IDEP for Intrastat returns via telecommunication has been initiated.

Statistics Sweden started to process January 1995 data and expects to receive February data as well as complementary January data in April. Concerning the January 1995 data (compiled until March 10), the data received from the providers of statistical information was roughly 61 per cent of that received in the corresponding month in 1994. This corresponds to a response rate of 34 per cent lower for arrivals and 26 per cent lower for dispatches compared to March 1994.

As in Finland, Intrastat is not fully integrated to the VAT reporting system and the tax authorities provide Statistics Sweden with information to update the register of intra-Community operators and to check the Intrastat data. The first tape was received on March 30 for January 1995 data.

Although Statistics Sweden has not been able to determine the exact date of release of the Intrastat data, Sweden is able to give preliminary estimates on monthly global figures for dispatches and arrivals of intra-Community trade. These are compiled from a sample of 900 companies selected from the providers of statistical information, to provide Statistics Sweden with information on their total values of their monthly dispatches and/or arrivals. This was in response to a demand put forward by major users in the Swedish Government and the Central bank which required information quickly (in the former system of trade statistics these figures were provided at the latest 20 days after the end of the reference period). These estimated figures were released on March 9th and March 28th for January and February 1995 respectively.

Main problem identified

□ Set up and update of business register:

The initial set up of the register of intra-Community traders was established on the basis of companies which between September 1993 and August 1994 had intra-Community arrivals and dispatches above ECU 100 000 in transaction flows. It became gradually evident however that the knowledge of the actual operators on the market was far from perfect. A substantial part of arrivals to smaller importing companies had for example been completed by shipping agents and many companies had subsequently reorganised including sale of parts of their business or in some cases the entire business. These factors have meant that a significant amount of work is required to update the register. This register is updated on a monthly basis.



AUSTRIA

In Austria, the Austrian Statistical Office (ÖSTAT) is responsible for the compilation and collection of foreign trade statistics. The main problems associated with the transition to the Intrastat system are lack of resources at ÖSTAT and shortcomings

in the organisation of the VAT system (see below). However enterprises have generally been cooperative in the development of the Intrastat system.

ÖSTAT has started to set up a register of intra-Community traders. This is based on questionnaires sent to 70,000 enterprises which had foreign trade in 1994 (for companies which did not respond to this questionnaire, inclusion in the register is based on their total exports). Based on the assimilation threshold of 1,500,000 OS, approximately 15,000 to 20,000 businesses are required to make Intrastat declarations. Information based on VAT number provided by the Ministry of Finance helps to update this register.

Austria has also attached great priority to electronic transmission. Although companies may transmit the data by paper, they have also the possibility of transmitting the data by diskette, magnetic tape or IDEP software programme.

ÖSTAT has also contracts with a number of EDI services which accept data from companies by disk/tape and subsequently convert it to EDI. ÖSTAT is also investigating the possibility of introducing IDEP to these services.

As in Finland and Sweden, the VAT system does not serve as a medium for making the Intrastat declaration. While VAT data will be available in Autumn 1996, data from the VIES database will be available on a quarterly basis as of July 1995. Because of the organisation of the VAT system, estimates of response rates will only be made available at the earliest this Autumn. The first Intrastat data are also not expected to be made available before this Autumn.

Main problems identified

□ *Lack of resources:*
Resource constraints at ÖSTAT inevitably results in administrative delays in

implementing the new collection system (e.g. companies experience delays in receiving Intrastat forms, declarations cannot be processed quickly enough, there is insufficient staff to assist the providers of statistical information).

□ *Organisation of the VAT system:*
Although ÖSTAT enjoys good cooperation with the Ministry of Finance, one difficulty is that VAT declarations are only required on an annual basis which could lead to difficulties in making comparisons between statistical and tax data.

□ *A less important problem relates to the adoption of the Combined Nomenclature.*

In particular, delays in receiving this Nomenclature has resulted in problems for companies in applying it. Some companies are also dissatisfied that product names have to be listed in the Intrastat declaration.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE QUALITY

ANALYSIS OF «MIRROR DISCREPANCIES» AND GROWTH RATES

When analysing the quarterly «mirror discrepancies» (i.e. the percentage difference between intra-EU arrivals and dispatches), there appears to have been no great change in 1994 compared to 1993. Discrepancies are at around 5% for each quarter. However, growth rates for arrivals and dispatches are now moving in parallel with each other for 1994. (See annex 1.)

CORRECTION OF DATA COLLECTED PRIOR TO 1993

Between 1989 and 1992, the difference between annual dispatches

and arrivals of the EU increased, reaching ECU 20 000 million in 1992. This difference can partly be explained by the fact that, prior to the introduction of Intrastat and according to the Community concept, goods originating in a non-Member State and entered for free circulation only before being exported to another Member State were not generally considered as a dispatch. On the other hand, the Member State of destination included the value of such goods in their arrivals statistics. Thus the difference was mainly due to dispatches being under estimated.

In order to produce figures which were comparable with Intrastat data, it was necessary to adjust the figures for 1989-1992 for re-exports. Although these adjustments are not yet complete, corrected 1992 data now show a discrepancy between arrivals and dispatches of a mere 0.1% (2.7% for non-adjusted data) and a large cross over in the absolute values of arrivals and dispatches no longer exists. Furthermore, the difference in the annual

growth rates of arrivals (-9.8%) and dispatches (-5.6%) for 1993/1992 narrows from 7.0% points to 4.2% points. (See annex 2.)

These adjustments will be made available in the COMEXT database in the very near future.

ACTIONS

Current actions being undertaken in the area of quality include the following:

Quadrilateral group exercise

This is a project carried out by France, the Netherlands, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom, which compares bilateral trade flows in order to identify deficiencies in the Intrastat system. In a first phase, data were

exchanged at the 2-digit level for the period February-April 1993. Chapters with large discrepancies were identified in order to define the commodity areas to be subjected to more detailed investigations.

In a second phase, the UK and the NL exchanged data at enterprise level and at commodity level. It is hoped that Italy and maybe Germany will also be able to provide detailed data at enterprise level for the comparison exercise.

Quality appraisal

A team of experts will visit all Member States in the near future to conduct interviews and to carry out checks on their collection and compilation sys-

tems. A detailed questionnaire has already been prepared for this purpose. The final objectives are to ensure a common application of the rules laid down and the harmonisation control and adjustment procedures.

EDICOM actions on quality

Whilst modernising the infrastructure in Member States, more emphasis needs to be put on the quality aspects. Infrastructures should be developed to enable the software to carry out controls of fiscal and statistical data.

Eurostat analysis of data quality at HS4 level

Eurostat has undertaken a project to analyse the quality of data at HS4

level for all Member States, using mirror statistics and time series analysis, as well as forecasting models to identify breaks in time series. The aim is to have an overall idea of the quality of data at HS4 level and to identify countries whose results are more affected by problems than others. First results are expected in the coming months

Opinion polls

These will be conducted in all Member States, to obtain the opinions of both users and providers about the functioning of Intrastat.



ANNEX 1

Mirror Discrepancies (EUR12)

1992				1993				1994		
Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
-2.0%	-2.7%	-2.8%	-3.4%	6.2%	4.4%	5.8%	3.4%	6.9%	3.8%	5.5%

Calculation: (dispatches - arrivals) / arrivals

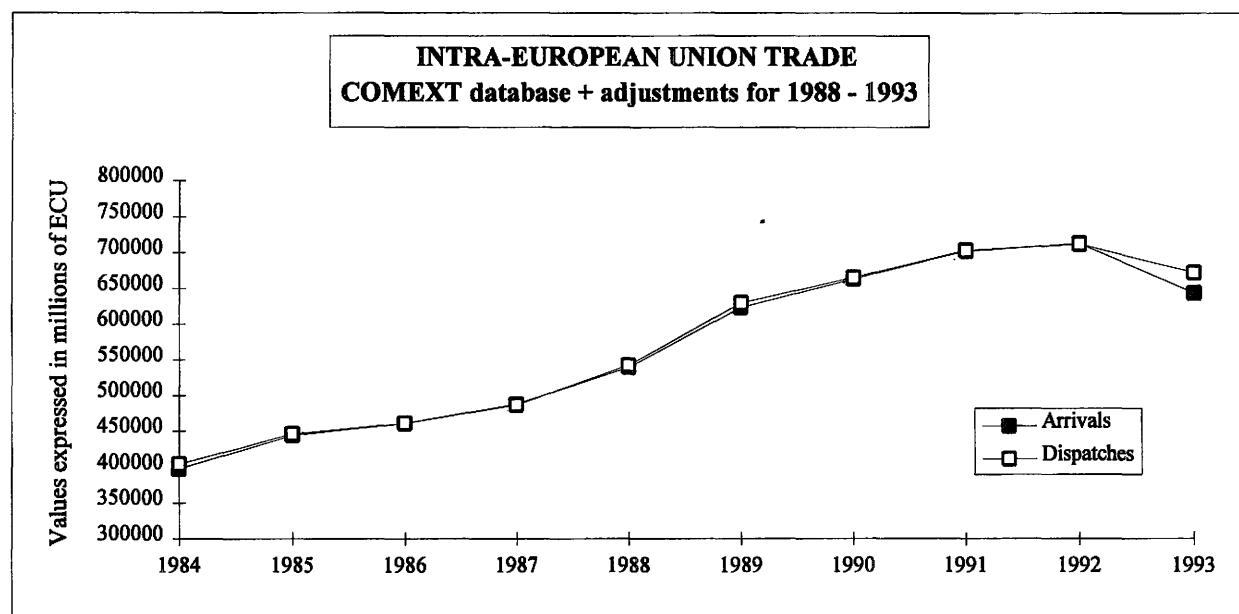
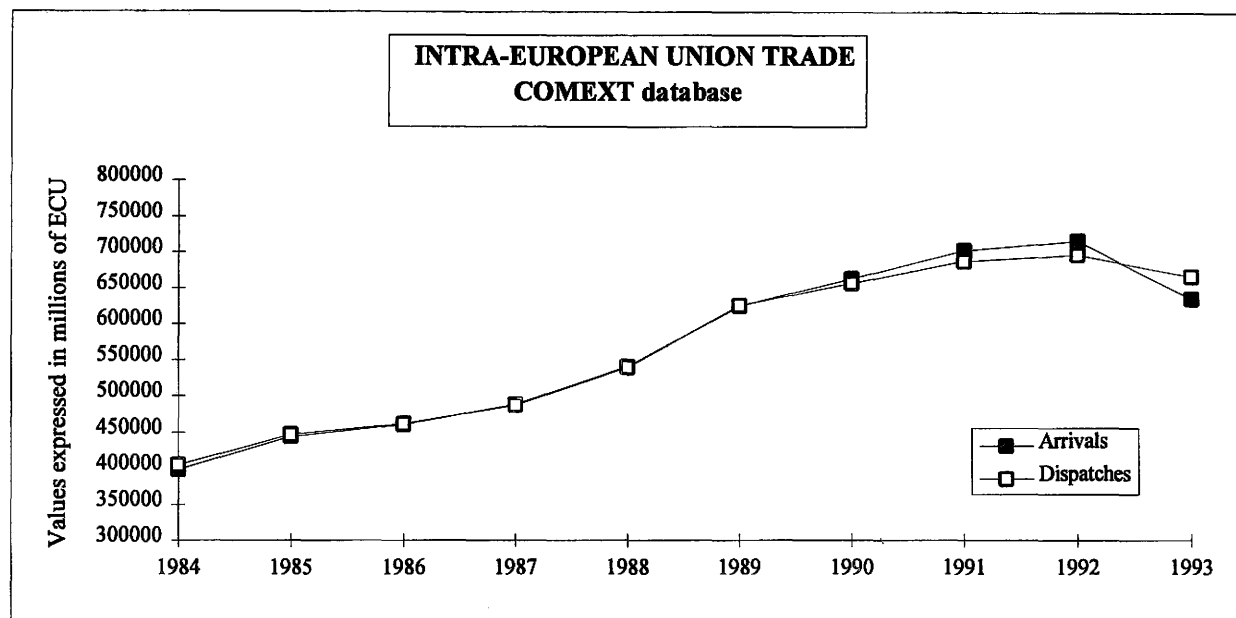
Growth Rates (EUR12)

	1992/1991				1993/1992				1994/1993		
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
Dispatches	4.9%	1.7%	1.3%	-2.2%	-5.2%	-3.3%	-1.2%	-2.4%	7.7%	11.1%	11.3%
Arrivals	5.3%	2.4%	0.4%	-0.6%	-12.5%	-9.9%	-9.2%	-8.8%	7.0%	11.8%	12.0%

Calculation: (Q1/93 - Q1/92) / (Q1/92) etc.

Source: Comext (1992) excl. corrections and Rapid Exchange (1993 & 1994) incl. corrections

ANNEX 2



NB: Prior to 1993, adjustments for dispatches have been made for BLEU (88-92), NL (July 90-92) & D (89-92).

1993 data are taken from the Rapid Exchange data base which includes adjustments for non-response and below threshold trade for most Member States.

INTRA-EUROPEAN UNION TRADE UP BY 10% IN THE FIRST NINE MONTHS OF 1994

After the drop observed in 1993, intra-EU trade increased substantially (+10%) during the first nine months of 1994. This upswing was similar than the growth observed in the external trade of the European Union (extra-EU trade), for which the rates in 1994 were +10.5% for exports and +10.3% for imports.

The change in the collection method following the introduction of the Intrastat system makes it difficult to compare the intra-Community trade figures before and after 1993. Discrepancies, often inherent in the system, continue to exist both in comparison with past figures and between the two flows measured.

The majority of Member States (all except Greece, Spain, France and Italy) have undertaken to correct the total intra-EU trade figures broken down by partner country in order to take account of non-response and the effect of thresholds. These estimates cannot be broken down at the most detailed level of the product classifications. In spite of these adjustments, the discrepancies between arrivals and dispatches (-5.1% in 1994) suggests that arrivals are more seriously underestimated, the degree of underestimation varying according to the country concerned.

BELGIUM AND LUXEMBOURG



According to Eurostat's estimates, the BLEU's trade surplus with its partners in the European Union seems to have increased slightly in 1994 from ECU 8.4 billion to ECU 9 billion in spite of a greater increase in arrivals (+14.4%). After two years of deficit (1991, 1992) the new positive result reflects the commercial dynamism of the BLEU, which can also be observed in its trade with non-Member countries (+18% for both exports and imports).

The absence of BLEU data broken down by product means that these trends cannot be analyzed in greater detail.

DENMARK



After a surplus of ECU 2.9 billion at the end of 1993, Denmark's intra-EU trade balance dropped over the first nine months of 1994. The cumulative figure for January to September thus shows a surplus of ECU 1.4 billion compared with over ECU 2.2 billion in the same period in 1993. A substantial increase in arrivals (+12.5%) and a moderate increase in dispatches (+3.3%) explain this result.

Similar results have been observed with non-Member countries, with a sharper increase in imports (+16.4%) than in exports (+12.9%). This has not, however, prevented Denmark from finishing 1994 with a further extra-EU surplus of ECU 2.5 billion.

In spite of a slight increase in the positive balance on food products (+ECU 0.2 billion), the ECU 0.5 billion increase in the deficit on manufactured products - and particularly machinery and transport equipment - explains the reduction in the intra-EU trade surplus.

GERMANY



Germany's intra-EU trade surplus, which remained above ECU 9 billion over the first nine months of 1994, must be put into perspective in the light of the fact that arrivals appear to be underestimated. Even after significant adjustment of the figures presented, Germany's arrivals are

still substantially lower (around ECU 14 billion) than the dispatches declared by its trade partners. This phenomenon, which is particularly marked for the BLEU, Italy, the Netherlands, France and Denmark (cf. table 8), can also be observed, albeit to a lesser extent, in the case of dispatches.

Arrivals (+5.4%) and dispatches (+4.6%) developed in a similar fashion between 1993 and 1994 but, contrary to the general trend, Germany's extra-EU trade increased more rapidly than intra-EU trade, with imports up 9.7% and exports up 11.9%.

The intra-EU trade surplus on manufactured products increased from ECU 22.5 billion to ECU 24.5 billion in the first nine months of 1994 compared with the same period in 1993, mainly as a result of an increase of ECU 1.9 billion in the trade surplus on machinery and transport equipment. The positive balance on chemical products increased by ECU 1.1 billion. The deficit in the energy products item was stable, while in the case of food products it increased by ECU 0.8 billion. The deficit in the «adjustments» item (and SITC 9) mainly shows that adjustments are more important in the case of arrivals.

GREECE



Greece was the only State in the Union with negative growth rates in 1994. According to Eurostat's estimates, Greece's intra-EU deficit during the first nine months of 1994 (ECU 5.4 billion) will be equivalent to that of 1993 (ECU 5.2 billion). While arrivals remained stable (+0.7%), dispatches would appear to have dropped by around 4%. Similarly, imports from non-Member countries appear to have dropped in 1994 (-14.1%).

It is not possible to analyse these trends in greater detail since no data broken down by product are available for Greece.

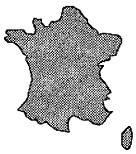
SPAIN



Spain's intra-EU trade deficit continued to diminish, falling from ECU 4.8 billion to ECU 4.2 billion in the first nine months of 1994 compared with the same period in 1993. The sharp increase in dispatches (+21.1%) outweighed the increase in arrivals (+15.7%). This trend can also be observed on extra-EU markets (+10.4% for exports and +8.9% for imports).

The improvement in Spain's intra-EU trade balance is almost entirely due to the reduction in the trade deficit on manufactured products (from ECU 5.2 billion to ECU 4.6 billion), other items having remained stable. The surplus on food products was ECU 0.6 billion.

FRANCE



As in the majority of other countries, the recovery of intra-EU trade appears to have continued in 1994. During the first nine months of the year, dispatches (+11.4%) increased more rapidly than arrivals (+10.7%). This difference contributed to a slight reduction in France's intra-EU trade deficit (from ECU 3.7 billion to ECU 3.5 billion).

In the first nine months of 1994, the trade deficit on manufacturing articles fell to ECU 7.1 billion, compared with ECU 7.9 billion in the same period in 1993, thanks to a reduction of ECU 1 billion in the trade deficit on machinery and transport equipment. The positive balance on food products was down ECU 0.8 billion as a result of a substantial increase in arrivals.

IRELAND



Ireland's intra-EU trade surplus increased again, from ECU 3.8 billion in the first nine months of 1993 to ECU 4.8 billion over the same period in 1994. Dispatches to Ireland declared by the other Member States were ECU 0.7 billion in excess of the arrivals declared by Ireland, which suggests that this trade surplus may have been overestimated. Dispatches (+17.3%) increased more rapidly than arrivals (+13.1%).

It is not possible to analyse these trends in greater detail since no data broken down by product are available for Ireland.

ITALY



The continuing weakness of the lira contributed towards maintaining a substantial surplus in the intra-EU trade balance (+ECU 5.2 billion in the first nine months of the year). Italy's commercial dynamism is reflected in both its intra-EU trade (arrivals +11.3%, dispatches +9.8%) and in its trade with non-Member countries (imports +9.7%, exports +10.6%). Compared with the same period in 1993, Italy's intra-EU trade by type of product did not change significantly during the first nine months of the year. There was a substantial surplus in trade on manufactured articles (+ECU 12.7 billion) due to machinery and transport equipment (+ECU 1.8 billion) and, in particular, "other manufactured articles" (+ECU 15.5 billion). In the case of chemical products and food products, on the other hand, Italy continued to have trade deficits of ECU 4.6 billion and ECU 3.7 billion respectively.

NETHERLANDS



The Netherlands' intra-EU trade surplus in-

creased still further, from ECU 18.7 billion to ECU 18.9 billion for the first nine months of the year, in spite of a smaller increase in dispatches (+11.6%) than in arrivals (+13.7%). A not insignificant proportion of these results (13% of arrivals, 7% of dispatches) comes from estimates which cannot be broken down at product level.

In contrast, the Netherlands' trade deficit with non-Member countries worsened still further by ECU 5.7 billion (rising from ECU 12.1 billion to ECU 17.8 billion in 1994).

Between 1993 and 1994, the intra-EU trade surplus increased once more in the case of food products (from ECU 6.7 billion to ECU 7.7 billion), energy products (from ECU 4.3 billion to ECU 5.4 billion) and chemical products (from ECU 2.9 billion to ECU 3.6 billion). The balance on machinery and transport equipment, which had been in deficit in 1993, returned to a surplus of ECU 0.5 billion and contributed to the increase in the positive balance of +ECU 1.9 billion on manufactured products.

PORTUGAL



Portugal's intra-EU deficit fell slightly from ECU 3.7 billion to ECU 3.1 billion. However, this should be viewed in the light of the discrepancy between arrivals declared by Portugal (ECU 11.3 billion) and dispatches to Portugal declared by its trade partners (ECU 12.2 billion). This result can be explained by a sharper increase in consignments than in arrivals (+10.6% and +1.9% respectively).

The intra-EU deficit observed for manufactured products was reduced by almost ECU 0.5 billion, largely as a result of a reduction of arrivals of machinery and transport equipment. The deficit on food products increased slightly (+ECU 0.1 billion).

UNITED KINGDOM



While the trade deficit with non-Member countries increased in 1994 (from ECU 18.4 billion to ECU 20.7 billion), the United Kingdom's intra-EU deficit in the first nine months of 1994 remained

relatively unchanged compared with its level in 1993: ECU 5.0 billion as against -ECU 4.8 billion. Dispatches increased by 9.8%, or 0.5% more than arrivals.

Between 1993 and 1994, the United Kingdom's negative balance on manufactured products increased by ECU 1.2 billion. The results improved in the case of chemical products (surplus of ECU 0.7

billion and other manufactured products, but the deficit on machinery and transport equipment fell from ECU 2.9 billion to ECU 5.0 billion over the period observed. Finally, the trade balances on energy products (+ECU 3.5 billion) and food products (-ECU 2.9 billion) increased slightly.

NB: ① For tables relating to intra-European Union trade:

- Extraction date: 24/04/95
- Sources: Comext and Rapid Exchange of Data
- (e): figures estimated by Eurostat

② For tables relating to extra-European Union trade:

- Extraction date: 24/04/95
- Source: Comext

EVOLUTION OF INTRA-EUROPEAN UNION ARRIVALS
- Values in millions of ECU -

	1990	1991		1992		1993		Jan-Sept 93	January-September 94	
	Values	Values	Evolution	Values	Evolution	Values	Evolution	Values	Values	Evolution
<i>EUR12</i>	663 419	703 102	6.0%	716 663	1.9%	650 030	-9.3%	478 059	526 045 (e)	10.0%
<i>B.L.E.U.</i>	69 713	72 289	3.7%	72 599	0.4%	64 523	-11.1%	48 308	55 284 (e)	14.4%
<i>Denmark</i>	13 691	14 467	5.7%	14 862	2.7%	14 132	-4.9%	10 316	11 601	12.5%
<i>Germany</i>	145 716	171 684	17.8%	172 731	0.6%	149 752	-13.3%	110 749	116 724	5.4%
<i>Greece</i>	9 987	10 490	5.0%	11 427	8.9%	11 287	-1.2%	8 286	8 341 (e)	0.7%
<i>Spain</i>	38 898	43 454	11.7%	45 124	3.8%	41 071	-9.0%	29 783	34 473	15.7%
<i>France</i>	124 340	128 402	3.3%	130 909	2.0%	118 421	-9.5%	87 160	96 485	10.7%
<i>Ireland</i>	11 530	11 633	0.9%	12 074	3.8%	11 763	-2.6%	8 629	9 763	13.1%
<i>Italy</i>	82 167	84 970	3.4%	85 693	0.9%	70 224	-18.1%	50 925	56 679	11.3%
<i>Netherlands</i>	63 997	65 387	2.2%	67 063	2.6%	65 157	-2.8%	47 701	54 223	13.7%
<i>Portugal</i>	13 678	15 347	12.2%	17 271	12.5%	14 852	-14.0%	11 093	11 299	1.9%
<i>United Kingdom</i>	89 702	84 979	-5.3%	86 911	2.3%	88 848	2.2%	65 108	71 173	9.3%

EVOLUTION OF INTRA-EUROPEAN UNION DISPATCHES
- Values in millions of ECU -

	1990	1991		1992		1993		Jan-Sept 93	January-September 94	
	Values	Values	Evolution	Values	Evolution	Values	Evolution	Values	Values	Evolution
EUR12	656 475	688 195	4.8%	697 431	1.3%	682 784	-2.1%	504 130	554 338 (e)	10.0%
B.L.E.U.	69 854	71 691	2.6%	71 412	-0.4%	75 836	6.2%	56 734	64 283 (e)	13.3%
Denmark	14 482	15 856	9.5%	17 023	7.4%	17 081	0.3%	12 549	12 960	3.3%
Germany	169 617	174 289	2.8%	179 201	2.8%	161 758	-9.7%	120 467	126 052	4.6%
Greece	4 063	4 454	9.6%	4 957	11.3%	4 035	-18.6%	3 087	2 966 (e)	-3.9%
Spain	29 961	34 116	13.9%	35 163	3.1%	34 306	-2.4%	24 977	30 240	21.1%
France	109 464	117 458	7.3%	121 381	3.3%	113 334	-6.6%	83 436	92 944	11.4%
Ireland	13 937	14 527	4.2%	16 203	11.5%	16 945	4.6%	12 424	14 577	17.3%
Italy	77 906	80 642	3.5%	79 388	-1.6%	77 275	-2.7%	56 357	61 855	9.8%
Netherlands	82 027	82 450	0.5%	81 871	-0.7%	90 279	10.3%	66 433	74 133	11.6%
Portugal	9 471	9 898	4.5%	10 623	7.3%	9 905	-6.8%	7 375	8 154	10.6%
United Kingdom	75 695	82 814	9.4%	80 209	-3.1%	82 030	2.3%	60 290	66 174	9.8%

ARRIVALS BY PRINCIPAL PRODUCT GROUPS
- From January to September 1994 -

Values in millions of ECU

REPORTING COUNTRIES	Foods, beverages tobacco SITC 0+1	Raw materials SITC 2+4	Fuel products SITC 3	Chemicals SITC 5	Machinery, trans- port equipment SITC 7	Others manufac- tured goods SITC 6+8	Others SITC9 + adjustments
B.L.E.U.							
Denmark	1 268	311	104	1 581	3 684	3 192	1 461
Germany	14 771	3 837	6 033	12 869	40 443	31 832	6 939
Greece							
Spain	3 817	1 387	488	5 003	14 400	9 269	109
France	11 047	2 493	2 824	12 257	39 091	28 742	31
Ireland							
Italy	8 529	3 547	899	9 354	19 845	13 648	857
Netherlands	6 667	1 813	1 501	7 584	14 803	14 594	7 261
Portugal	1 297	297	210	1 342	4 155	3 660	337
United Kingdom	8 218	1 770	1 182	9 280	30 026	18 204	2 494

DISPATCHES BY PRINCIPAL PRODUCT GROUPS
- From January to September 1994 -

Values in millions of ECU

REPORTING COUNTRIES	Foods, beverages tobacco SITC 0+1	Raw materials SITC 2+4	Fuel products SITC 3	Chemicals SITC 5	Machinery, transport equipment SITC 7	Others manufactured goods SITC 6+8	Others SITC 9 + adjustments
B.L.E.U.							
Denmark	3 742	502	176	968	2 357	3 423	1 792
Germany	8 217	3 128	1 263	17 541	58 162	33 957	3 784
Greece							
Spain	4 449	1 148	491	2 365	13 742	7 918	126
France	14 372	3 162	2 139	12 147	37 197	23 662	265
Ireland							
Italy	4 801	742	339	4 711	21 607	29 183	473
Netherlands	14 392	4 777	6 859	11 171	15 342	15 917	5 676
Portugal	464	445	220	389	1 785	4 547	304
United Kingdom	5 269	1 449	4 666	9 999	25 051	17 849	1 891

TRADE BALANCES BETWEEN MEMBER STATES
- From January to September 1994 -

Values in millions of ECU

Reporting countries	PARTNER COUNTRIES										
	Belg./Luxbg	Denmark	Germany	Greece	Spain	France	Ireland	Italy	Netherlands	Portugal	United Kingdom
Belg./Luxbg (e)	-	308	3 142	444	1 251	4 894	-468	1 084	-1 979	309	14
Denmark	-279	-	872	174	205	247	-47	-10	-330	-205	733
Germany	828	567	-	993	1 652	4 644	-1 369	410	-4 885	223	6 266
Greece (e)	-413	-141	-905	-	-279	-724	-107	-1 375	-860	-25	-546
Spain	-762	-161	-2 089	273	-	-897	-342	-754	-684	1 899	-715
France	-2 452	-107	-2 995	782	1 862	-	-1 125	216	-2 968	443	2 802
Ireland	596	67	1 805	103	346	1 368	-	506	579	53	-529
Italy	-1 275	-48	2 751	1 236	1 409	1 437	-514	-	-2 464	1 207	1 436
Netherlands	2 305	575	7 561	843	822	3 830	-487	2 050	-	282	1 171
Portugal	-151	122	-205	25	-1 603	-306	-43	-1 034	-134	-	173
United Kingdom	398	-385	-5 105	587	1 115	-1 484	1 268	-690	-715	11	-

Value of dispatches - value of arrivals

PRINCIPAL SUPPLIERS TO MEMBER STATES WITHIN INTRA-EUROPEAN UNION TRADE
- From January to September 1994 -

Flow : arrivals

REPORTING COUNTRIES	PARTNER COUNTRIES										
	Belg/ Luxbg	Denmark	Germany	Greece	Spain	France	Ireland	Italy	Nether- lands	Portugal	United Kingdom
Belg./Luxbg (e)	-	0.9%	27.8%	0.2%	2.2%	22.3%	1.5%	6.0%	24.5%	0.7%	13.8%
Denmark	6.5%	-	42.2%	0.3%	2.2%	10.4%	1.3%	9.0%	12.2%	3.0%	12.8%
Germany	14.1%	3.6%	-	1.0%	5.4%	22.4%	2.2%	16.3%	20.8%	1.7%	12.4%
Greece (e)	6.0%	2.2%	24.9%	-	4.8%	12.3%	1.5%	25.7%	11.8%	0.6%	10.2%
Spain	6.0%	1.3%	24.3%	0.4%	-	28.3%	1.4%	14.2%	7.1%	4.5%	12.6%
France	2.6%	1.3%	11.9%	0.1%	1.4%	5.7%	-	3.3%	5.8%	0.4%	67.6%
Ireland	8.5%	1.8%	34.2%	1.4%	6.8%	24.1%	1.6%	-	10.2%	0.6%	10.8%
Italy	19.6%	1.9%	38.4%	0.3%	3.0%	12.4%	2.0%	6.1%	-	0.9%	15.4%
Netherlands	5.0%	1.2%	19.9%	0.2%	28.0%	17.1%	0.9%	12.3%	6.1%	-	9.4%
Portugal	9.7%	2.9%	29.9%	0.5%	5.0%	19.7%	7.6%	9.8%	13.2%	1.7%	-
United Kingdom	16.0%	1.6%	31.3%	0.3%	9.0%	-	2.1%	15.5%	10.1%	1.7%	12.5%

PRINCIPAL CUSTOMERS OF MEMBER STATES WITHIN INTRA-EUROPEAN UNION TRADE
- From January to September 1994 -

Flow : dispatches

REPORTING COUNTRIES	PARTNER COUNTRIES										
	Belg. /Luxbg	Denmark	Germany	Greece	Spain	France	Ireland	Italy	Nether- lands	Portugal	United Kingdom
Belg./Luxbg (e)	-	1.2%	28.8%	0.9%	3.9%	26.8%	0.6%	6.9%	18.0%	1.1%	11.9%
Denmark	3.7%	-	44.5%	1.6%	3.5%	11.3%	0.8%	8.0%	8.4%	1.1%	17.1%
Germany	13.7%	3.8%	-	1.8%	6.3%	24.4%	1.0%	15.5%	15.4%	1.7%	16.4%
Greece (e)	2.9%	1.5%	39.6%	-	4.0%	10.3%	0.5%	25.9%	4.3%	0.8%	10.2%
Spain	4.4%	0.9%	20.7%	1.4%	-	29.3%	0.5%	13.7%	5.8%	11.4%	11.9%
France	14.0%	1.5%	29.3%	1.2%	11.3%	-	1.0%	16.3%	7.3%	2.2%	15.9%
Ireland	5.9%	1.3%	20.5%	0.8%	3.4%	13.3%	-	5.7%	7.8%	0.6%	40.6%
Italy	5.7%	1.5%	35.8%	3.3%	8.5%	24.4%	0.6%	-	5.4%	2.5%	12.2%
Netherlands	17.7%	2.2%	38.8%	1.4%	3.3%	14.5%	0.8%	7.3%	-	1.1%	13.0%
Portugal	5.1%	3.1%	25.1%	0.5%	19.2%	19.9%	0.7%	4.4%	6.8%	-	15.2%
United Kingdom	11.1%	2.6%	24.4%	1.4%	7.0%	18.9%	10.1%	9.5%	13.1%	1.8%	-

EVOLUTION OF EXTRA-EUROPEAN UNION IMPORTS
- Values in millions of ECU -

	1990	1991		1992		1993		1994	
	Values	Values	Evolution	Values	Evolution	Values	Evolution	Values	Evolution
EUR12	461 762	494 060	7.0%	487 617	-1.3%	484 789	-0.6%	534 916 (e)	10.3%
B.L.E.U.	28 731	30 073	4.7%	28 685	-4.6%	28 541	-0.5%	33 770	18.3%
Denmark	11 744	12 205	3.9%	11 972	-1.9%	11 884	-0.7%	13 835	16.4%
Germany	122 492	142 937	16.7%	142 758	-0.1%	142 757	0.0%	156 560	9.7%
Greece	5 575	6 916	24.0%	6 633	-4.1%	7 510	13.2%	6 448 (e)	-14.1%
Spain	27 252	29 167	7.0%	29 531	1.2%	25 133	-14.9%	27 378	8.9%
France	66 943	71 098	6.2%	67 866	-4.5%	66 625	-1.8%	71 557	7.4%
Ireland	4 626	5 082	9.9%	4 612	-9.3%	6 320	37.0%	7 694	21.7%
Italy	60 385	61 697	2.2%	59 178	-4.1%	56 242	-5.0%	61 698	9.7%
Netherlands	42 895	45 510	6.1%	46 906	3.1%	42 567	-9.3%	51 257 (e)	20.4%
Portugal	6 133	5 975	-2.6%	6 117	2.4%	5 824	-4.8%	6 214	6.7%
United Kingdom	84 985	83 400	-1.9%	83 359	0.0%	91 386	9.6%	98 504	7.8%

EVOLUTION OF EXTRA-EUROPEAN UNION EXPORTS
- Values in millions of ECU -

	1990	1991		1992		1993		1994	
	Values	Values	Evolution	Values	Evolution	Values	Evolution	Values	Evolution
EUR12	415 441	423 466	1.9%	436 088	3.0%	486 850	11.6%	537 900 (e)	10.5%
B.L.E.U.	22 388	22 870	2.2%	23 372	2.2%	27 987	19.7%	33 071	18.2%
Denmark	13 314	13 416	0.8%	14 178	5.7%	14 472	2.1%	16 345	12.9%
Germany	142 248	149 085	4.8%	151 558	1.7%	162 840	7.4%	182 143	11.9%
Greece	2 233	2 506	12.2%	2 567	2.5%	3 174	23.6%	3 350 (e)	5.5%
Spain	15 696	16 670	6.2%	17 747	6.5%	20 863	17.6%	23 039	10.4%
France	64 993	67 221	3.4%	71 020	5.7%	75 997	7.0%	82 314	8.3%
Ireland	4 532	4 840	6.8%	5 471	13.0%	7 499	37.1%	8 561	14.2%
Italy	55 384	55 524	0.3%	57 718	4.0%	67 230	16.5%	74 365	10.6%
Netherlands	24 366	24 988	2.5%	26 020	4.1%	30 490	17.2%	33 418 (e)	9.6%
Portugal	3 286	3 146	-4.3%	3 418	8.7%	3 270	-4.3%	3 534	8.1%
United Kingdom	67 000	63 201	-5.7%	63 018	-0.3%	73 028	15.9%	77 761	6.5%

GLOBALISATION

I - BACKGROUND

Economic activities are increasingly organised on a global basis with the result that traditional economic boundaries are being blurred: the products that we purchase may have been conceived in Germany, manufactured in Hungary, assembled in Spain and distributed to the four corners of the world. Ownership, management, production, marketing are global rather than national and the development of a global market for many products has resulted in international competition across nearly the full array of economic activity. In the EU, this process has been further accelerated by the creation of a single internal market and the increased economic integration of the Community.

The increased economic interdependence between countries is reflected in an expanding range of cross-border economic relationships. This includes not only international trade, but also foreign investment activity, the increasingly more complex international operations of firms and the wider relationships between firms worldwide.

II - ESTABLISHMENT OF EUROSTAT TASK FORCE ON GLOBALISATION

Genesis

For the EU, the impact of globalisation on trade and investments and on the long-term competitiveness of the European Union has meant that for policy making, it is critical to have an understanding of the forces at work. Current analysis is however hampered by the limitations of existing information. Traditionally data has mainly focused on the trade area, placing much

less emphasis on the other cross boundary economic links between countries such as the activities of multinational firms, intra-firm flows and international sub-contracting arrangements. The result is that statistics may fail to fully capture the scope of increasing cross-border activities.

It is against this background, that an internal Task Force on Globalisation (TFG) was created in December 1992. Although there are financial constraints in undertaking new studies, high-level consultations within the Commission revealed a strong need for globalisation indicators and the formation of a Task Force to coordinate these efforts within EUROSTAT was supported.

Objectives

The objectives of the TFG are to study the feasibility of completing and harmonising available information in order to provide the Commission with a set of more relevant and harmonised figures to describe aspects of the globalisation process. The TFG is in the process of preparing a Communication to be submitted to Council which will recommend the preparation of a detailed feasibility study on globalisation indicators.

Given the complexity of the issue, the preparation of a set of statistical indicators is a long-run exercise. As a first step the focus will be on the possibilities of the existing national collection systems, seeking as much as possible to integrate additional information into existing surveys. The setting up of the TFG is also viewed as necessary on a broader level to coordinate the related activities of organisations such as the IMF, OECD and UN on the subject as these will often go beyond the national statistical frameworks.

III - ACTIVITIES OF THE EXTERNAL AND INTRA-COMMUNITY TRADE DIVISION

Background

The external and intra-Community trade Division of Eurostat participates actively in the work of the TFG. In close cooperation with the Member States, it is focusing in two important aspects of globalisation, intra-firm trade and international sub-contracting.

The focus reflects the increasingly important role of these relationships in international trade as corporations have responded to global markets and increased competition by internationalising production and seeking lowest cost production means available. The international location of production has resulted in an increase in intra-firm flows and processes are also increasingly being carried out by third party companies (sub-contracting) for cost reasons.

The pervasiveness of these relationships and their implications on cross-border economic influences needs to be incorporated in policy making. In these areas, detailed discussions with the Commission services revealed the need for detailed data by products and/or by partner countries for a variety of policy issues such as the measurement of the competitiveness of the European industry, development of industrial cooperation trade agreements and evaluation of the impact of the Single Market.

Program

In close cooperation with the statistical offices of the Member States, the external and intra-Community trade

Division is examining the feasibility of integrating information on intra-firm trade and international sub-contracting into foreign trade statistics and evaluating the extent to which existing statistics can contribute to the identification and possible collection of this information. This also takes account of the resource constraint on the extension of statistical information.

Initial progress was made during the Committee meeting on External Trade Statistics in February 1995. Discussions were initiated with the Member States to examine potential solutions to the integration of this information into foreign trade statistics. While some Member States indicated that this would be difficult to carry out, it was agreed to

provide Eurostat with comments on the extent to which intra-firm trade and international sub-contracting data can be identified within the framework of existing foreign trade statistics.

The next steps will be:

- Analysis of comments received from Member States;
- Comprehensive needs study within Commission services, international organisations, trade associations and professional organisations;
- Analysis of French Pilot Survey on globalisation;

- Detailed analysis of the US and Japanese approach of collecting intra-firm trade data;
- Evaluation of Canadian customs documents used in the identification of information on intra-firm trade;
- Follow-up of the work carried out by the «Establishment Trade» Task Force;
- Analysis of data relating to processing under contract for extra- as well intra-community trade.



LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK!



Eurostat and the Member States of the European Union have started looking at how the system of collecting data on intra-Community trade (Intrastat) is going to develop in the medium term. A seminar (see page entitled In brief) has already been scheduled on this topic. As an introduction to the work of the seminar, it has been decided to organize two opinion polls of «providers of statistical information» and users of Intrastat data to elicit their views, identify their difficulties and determine their wants regarding the current and future collection system.

These surveys, involving 4 150 providers and 2 100 users in the twelve «old» Member States, have been devised and will be conducted in the field on the basis of close collaboration between a specialist firm, Eurostat and the relevant national department in each Member State.

Since the primary objective is to measure the workload generated by Intrastat, the questionnaires have been designed to be short and not to create any unacceptable extra work. Whether you are a «producer» or a «user» of data compiled from the Intrastat system, you are asked to devote some time to the questionnaires and/or interviews and to take this opportunity of expressing an opinion which will be of tremendous use to us.

THE COMEXT2 SYSTEM

INTRODUCTION

In September 1992 Eurostat launched the project of replacement of all its systems handling the foreign trade statistics and auxiliary information, such as nomenclatures, tariffs, conversion factors. The objectives of this huge operation (thousands of sequential files, data created since the seventies, three DBMS and two operating systems used) were:

- ☞ Create a single system holding the entire set of informations.
- ☞ Create a portable system using non proprietary technology.
- ☞ Create a system which could exploit the recent evolutions in hardware and network technology.

The first target has been fulfilled by creating a layered application in order to create a generic storage space handling statistical objects with well known properties. This permits to store, manipulate and preserve the integrity of objects such as nomenclatures and their labels, associations between nomenclatures, extraction definitions, discrete time dependent data as foreign trade, indices, conversion factors etc.

The second target has been fulfilled by choosing a portable database and operating system technology; COMEXT2 is written in C and runs under UNIX and Oracle.

The third target has been fulfilled by using a client server approach. The client application runs under Windows and offers local manipulation and storage facilities. It is written in Visual C++ and communicates with the Oracle server through TCP/IP calls using an object oriented protocol adapted to the needs of a multidimensional approach.

While the above system part is the most visible one, there are two other subcomponents equally important for the life of

the system. The first is a generalized data validation and correction application. The second is a multiuser PC/LAN based nomenclature production application. They both permit the prompt feeding of the server with correct and complete data.

COMEXT2 CURRENT CONTENTS

Since two months the COMEXT2 database contains and offers on line access (trial users only) to the following data:

- Quarterly and annual foreign trade data for the EU reporters and for the years 1976 to 1987 expressed in two product nomenclatures (NIMEXE, SITC-REV2)
- Monthly, quarterly and annual foreign trade data for EU reporters and for the periods 1988 up to now, in three product nomenclatures: Taric, Combined nomenclature, SITC-REV3.
- Annual foreign trade data for some selected third countries, using the HS-level 6 product nomenclature from 1989 up to now (EFTA, USA, Japan, Hong-Kong, Taiwan).
- More than 500 nomenclatures/codelists and correspondence tables followed by textual and numeric information.

While the above information normally represents the main data load, to talling 35 Gigabytes of compressed information, COMEXT2 contents will continue to be enhanced. It is planned that by the end of 1995 the following information will be additionally on line:

- EU monthly, quarterly and annual trade indices.
- Quarterly and annual trade figures for which the GSP has been granted.
- Annual trade figures for the major-

ity of world trade reporters (more than 100).

It is planned to use the contents of the COMTRADE data base for 1980 and subsequent years (the product nomenclatures will be SITC-REV2 and HS-96 version).

THE COMEXT2 INTERNAL LOGIC

Given the high diversity of data to be stored, a generic description and access mechanism has been implemented.

This permits the addition of new data without any program modification if the new data fulfil properties known by the system. Data become accessible as soon as they are described in the Metabase. The metabase is the heart of COMEXT2 containing inter alia information about:

- The names and types of contained objects (currently the recognised object types are nomenclatures, associations, codelists and data sets)
- The physical location and format of the objects.

COMEXT2, for efficiency reasons, recognises two ways of physical storage for the datasets: the normalised and the horizontal one. This fact has no impact in the way the data are presented or loaded because the low level routines take care of all the particularities.

- Access information to be used by the server. This includes indices to use depending on the size of the query in comparison with the entire data set. This is critical for the way the server will generate the SQL statement given that a query may need access to millions of records.
- Default values for all non key attributes. In the context of trade data COMEXT2 stores only non default information and missing values are re-

placed upon extraction by the default ones.

- Label and codelist information for key attributes.

COMEXT2 USER FACILITIES

The user accesses the server data through the client application, of-

fering the following facilities:

- Local storage of queries.
- Definition and local storage of dynamic aggregations.
- Multidimensional-like browsing facilities.
- Import facilities to spreadsheets.
- Print facilities of bidimensional and hierarchical tables.

- Massive extraction facilities in sequential ASCII file format.



STATUS OF DATA SENT TO EUROSTAT ON 16 MAY 1995

- Detailed data Intra + Extra
- ★ Detailed data Extra and global data Intra
- Detailed data Extra
- Global data Intra (with breakdown by partner country)
- Intra totals (without breakdown by partner country)

Detailed data: breakdown by product (CN8) and partner country

PERIOD	Eur.12	BLEU	DK	D	GR	E	F	IRL	I	NL	P	UK
1 January	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
9 February	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
9 March	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
4 April	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
1 May	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
9 June	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
9 July	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
4 August	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
September	□	■	■	■	□	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
October	□	□	■	■	□	■	■	□	■	■	■	■
November	□	□	■	■	□	■	■	□	■	■	■	■
December		□	■	■		■	■	□	■	□	■	■

PERIOD	Eur.12	BLEU	DK	D	GR	E	F	IRL	I	NL	P	UK	Ö	FIN	SW
1 January				●		■	■		●		●	■			
9 February						●	■				●	*			
9 March															
5 April															



EUROSTAT'S EDICOM PROJECTS

IDEPCN8

The first link in the chain is IDEPCN8 (Intrastat data input package with the 8-digit Combined Nomenclature), the software package used by enterprises to record statistical data on their trade within the Union and to compile monthly declarations. The CN8 component of the package contains the full goods classification and allows a search to be carried out for goods codes in various ways.

Eurostat makes IDEPCN8 available to the national bodies responsible for Intrastat, who then forward the software to enterprises free of charge. Version 3 is currently in use, and development work on version 4, which is the version for 1996, began in April.

IDEPCN8 is currently in use in eight Member States - Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg and Spain. Italy is planning to distribute the package this year, bringing the figure to nine.

EDIFACT

Declarations compiled using IDEPCN8 correspond to the INSTAT (Intrastat Declaration) EDIFACT standard, which is a subset of a more general EDIFACT message, namely CUSDEC (Customs Declaration). Work on these and other EDIFACT formats constitutes the second link in the EDICOM chain. The EXSTAT format for declarations relating to trade with countries outside the Union is largely complete, as is INSRES (which is used to reply to INSTAT messages). Another project currently running in this field comprises investigations into the safe transmission of EDIFACT messages via networks.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

The third link in the chain is the telecommunications project. This

All EDICOM projects carried out by Eurostat link up in a logical way. This article looks at the EDICOM «chain» and describes how things stand in the individual projects.

makes it possible for enterprises to transmit EDIFACT messages (as well as other formats) directly to the relevant national bodies via telematic networks. Answers can also be sent back to enterprises in the same way. For further information on this topic, readers are referred to the article on the meeting of the EDICOM task force held in London on 20 March 1995. This meeting concentrated on telecommunications, with specific reference to Intrastat.

DISK/FAX

A large proportion of Intrastat declarations are, however, still being submitted in the form of diskettes or tapes. Eurostat has developed a system for reading large volumes of diskettes and tapes and converting data into a local format. This system, known as Disk/Fax, constitutes the fourth link in the EDICOM chain, and can also be used to send faxes to enterprises whose declarations have not been accepted for one reason or another (e.g. formatting errors). Eurostat has delivered DISK/FAX systems to nine countries - Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom. No changes to the DISK/FAX system are currently planned.

OTHER EUROSTAT PROJECTS

Once the statistical data from enterprises have arrived at the national statistical offices, they are processed on local information systems and forwarded to Eurostat in aggregate form. Eurostat is also running a number of projects for

this link in the chain (transmission of data from Member States to Eurostat), although these are outside EDICOM, as the products can also be used in other areas of statistics. Mention should be made of Eurostat projects such as Statel, Stadium, PC-Simple and NSPP (National Server Pilot Project). All these projects are concerned with the networking of national and European statistical bodies.

COMEXT DATABASE AND CD-ROM

The fifth link in the EDICOM chain concerns the storage of trade data at Eurostat. A new version of the COMEXT database was developed for this purpose, and has been operational since 1 January 1995. This is a client-server configuration with PC clients and an Amdahl computer as the database server.

In addition to the COMEXT database, Eurostat trade statistics are also available through a second channel. The dissemination of data via CD-ROM is the sixth and final link in the EDICOM chain. In addition to data, the monthly COMEXT CD-ROM contains user-friendly DOS and Windows software for data searches.

EDICOM TASK FORCE

Eurostat gives progress reports on EDICOM projects at the meetings of the EDICOM task force, which are held three times a year. The next meeting will be held in Athens in June 1995, and the third meeting for 1995 is scheduled for 6 November.

EDICOM TASK FORCE MEETING LONDON 20 MARCH 1995

On 20 March, the EDICOM Task Force meeting took place in London, kindly hosted by the staff of the Statistical Office of HM Customs and Excise of the UK. The morning session was mainly dedicated to the progress reporting concerning the EDICOM projects, by both Member States and Eurostat. An important decision was made concerning the arrangements on the schedule and contents of the 1996 release of the software IDEP/CN8. Furthermore the Task Force participants exchanged views on more general subjects as the implementation of an EDIFACT message for external trade statistics, security measures, the recommendation of the Commission on PRODCOM-system (statistics on

In the afternoon, as the main topic presentations were given on the relation to the Intrastat data editions of this Newsletter, a more architecture in the various Member States will be published. Therefore in the next paragraphs, only a general outline of the Task Force session is given.

INSTAT EDI

of the meeting, several use of telecommunications in collection system. In subsequent in depth analysis of the telematics policy and

software or services meeting the official Intrastat requirements.

Eurostat informed participants about the user-friendliness of STATEL as a protocol independent tool for linking a variety of applications to telecom networks. The available version of the software already provides a wide scale of connection protocols. Each (new) protocol on the market can rather simply be added to the program sources. Once installed in the user environment of the economic operator, the software can be used for the electronic transmission of all statistical surveys and (if installed at the reception side) also for other official reporting.

The Belgium presenter emphasised the need for an individual approach combined with tailor made solutions for each potential telecommunications user. The persons responsible for the compilation of the Intrastat declarations at the companies in Belgium show, in general, clear interest in using the transmission technology. A lack of adequate technical means in this sector of the business administration seems to prevent a fast evolution in this direction. Special fee arrangements with a leading Network Operator did not appear to be effectual.

In the Netherlands, on the other hand, Statistics Netherlands (CBS) experienced a more or less autonomous increase in the number of telecom interchanges by just opening an option (available after request) within the IRIS-software. According to the Dutch presenter, the declarants estimate the payment of the costs of the transmission by the statistical institute as a main incentive. After a fast growth to about two hundred and fifty monthly declarants, a stagnation occurred. CBS planned additional measures and promotion/information rounds in order to obtain a higher percentage of connections.

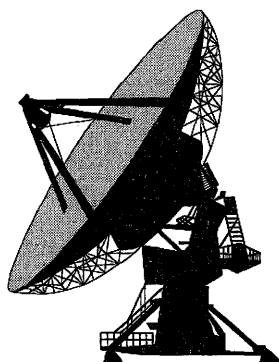
In Spain and Finland the network architecture in force for customs and VAT purposes, is also used for Intrastat. A relatively high percentage of «electronic declaration lines» could be reached by the involvement of «service companies» (agents or other third declarants), who return declarations for several companies together. Most of these service providers were already used to transmitting (customs) declarations by electronic means.

In Austria the central statistical office, Östat, opened a direct telecom gateway for the declarants at the beginning of 1995. The Intrastat returns may either be transmitted directly or via clearing houses. Use of the EDIFACT format is exclusively prescribed.

A special position was expressed by representatives of *the United Kingdom*. The general policy in the UK is to «allow» a broad range of declaration transmission methods and formats. The market mechanism has to lead to the most efficient processing systems for the declarants. A British consultant suggested that Eurostat and the Member States issue a kind of «conformity seal» for



TELECOMMUNICATIONS FOR THE INTRASTAT DATA COLLECTION SYSTEMS



In this and following editions of the Newsletter, we will describe the situation in the various Member States concerning the use of telecommunications systems for the collection of Intrastat data. The first issue deals with the Netherlands and Finland respectively. Special attention is given but because of ongoing processes in the various countries rapid changes are likely. Therefore we only can give the status at the moment of writing the articles. In one of the next editions we will, however, give a comparative and summarising analysis with an update of the «older» descriptions.

STATISTICS NETHERLANDS (CBS)

Statistics Netherlands (CBS) is the competent national administration for Intrastat in the Netherlands. CBS is fully responsible for both the collection and processing of the Intrastat returns. The number of companies obliged to submit declarations, is about 30.000.

Since the beginning of the Intrastat preparations, the Dutch statistical institute has paid much attention to facilitating the work of the reporting companies. CBS developed its own data entry package: CBS-IRIS, which has a large distribution (over 10.000 users). Apart from starting-up problems at the beginning of 1993, the approach towards the companies seemed to be successful. The declarants appear to appreciate the software and the provided help-desk services.

A relatively high number of declarations on diskettes resulted from the success of CBS-IRIS. This imposed new, logistic and budgetary problems. Statistics Netherlands provides users with blank diskettes for the declarations (in order to guarantee a maximum uniformity). The related costs are rather high. Also, the handling of the diskettes is costly because it requires much manpower.

CBS decided therefore at an early stage to develop the alternative of return transmission by telecommunications. For this purpose a special module was developed for the CBS-IRIS package. After extensive testing by about a hundred selected companies, the module was added as standard to the software. The users can only activate the module after contacting the CBS help-desk by phone. During this contact session the user is guided through the pre-setting of the transmission parameters and the connection of the modem. Once the option is activated, the transmission of declarations may simply be done by selecting the appropriate menu option. The system automatically dials the packet switch network, which transfers the call to DATANET, the public X25 network. CBS receives the data coming from DATANET on an upload server.

Because of security reasons, transmission is restricted to one way communication. Users do not have the possibility to enter the CBS computer for using or downloading files. Furthermore, all IRIS files are in flat ASCII format and packed and encrypted before sending. After unpacking and decrypting the received files, their validity is checked within the upload server. The system rejects all non-valid files.

Regularly, several times a day, the so called Maillock system is activated. This is a device that handles the link between the CBS WAN (extended internal

network of computers) and the outer world. First, the «door» is opened for the import of all received information. It switches automatically to a disconnection of the WAN. After importing the received information, both the WAN and upload server are disconnected and the system carries out further conformity testing. If all files are checked and approved, the WAN door opens (upload server door closes) and the import starts.

In the beginning, CBS did not undertake a real promotion effort for the use of telecommunications via CBS-IRIS. Yet, about 150 companies joined the original testing group on their own initiative. According to the CBS, further growth requires special action. Declarants appreciate the important incentive of the reversed charge of the transmission costs. A disadvantage of the DATANET solution is the momentary low baud-rate for the transmission (2400). If the transfer time exceeds 6 or 7 minutes, the user gets worried and calls the help desk.

In general it is recommended that companies with larger data sets, use other electronic data interchange methods. Statistics Netherlands accepts various other media, like magnetic tapes and cassettes. But also telecommunications on the basis of «own» or commercial software of the enterprises is accepted. The usual data format is a prescribed ASCII lay-out. The EDIFACT message INSTAT may, however, also be applied.

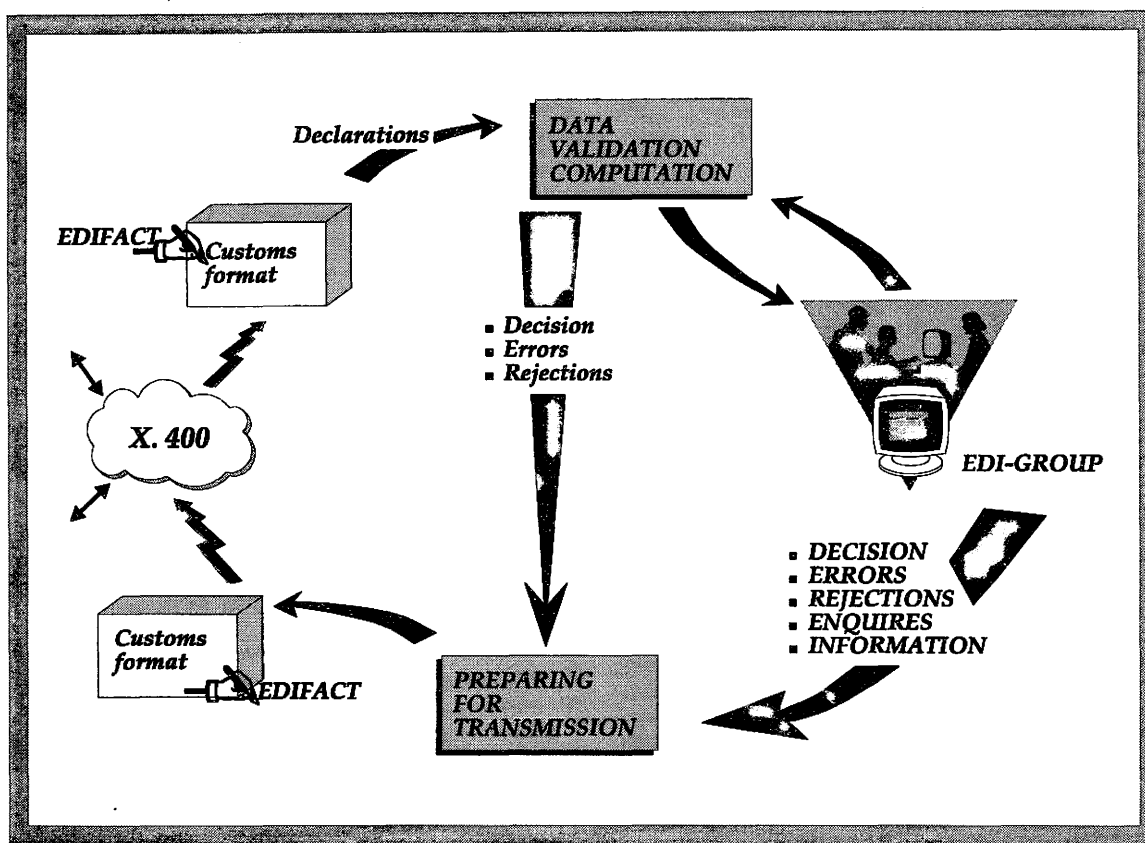
**NATIONAL BOARD
OF CUSTOMS - FINLAND**

As one of the new members of the European Union, Finland started the Intrastat data collection on the first of January 1995. The responsible administration is the National Board of Customs, more precisely, the directorate Statistics Production and Service. The collection of data is decentralised and executed by the regional customs offices. The final check of the data and the

The EDI solution is built by Finnish Telecom on basis of a contract with the Board of Customs. The provisions are hardware, software and (network) services, available for both private companies (the declarants or their agents) and Finnish administration. Customs agents are entitled to get clearing-house status and can buy an EDICENTER configuration for this purpose. For «normal» usage by a trading company the EDISERVER option is the most appropriate. Both configurations require an UNIX-platform.

generated, in order to inform the sender immediately on the status of acceptance of the declaration. In parallel, sample testing on the received declarations is undertaken by specialised staff. In the response messages, the company gets the final approval or additional (information) requests.

The Statistical department may periodically extract the (intra and extra) trade data from the main frame for further statistical processing. The difference between the two parts of the international trade data lies only in the number of obliged data elements and the level of detail.



compilation of the statistics is carried out by the statistical directorate. The number of Intrastat declarants is about 20.000.

Finnish Customs has been an early adopter of modern information technology. Since the beginning of the 1980's, Customs accepted declarations for imports on magnetic tape. In the autumn of 1991, an EDI system was introduced for the automation of the imports procedures. Extension towards other procedures (exports and Intrastat) gradually took place. The communication structure is the same for all applications.

The general declaration procedure for all applications is the following. In-house files of the trading operators are converted into the EDIFACT format by either the EDICENTER or EDISERVER system. Both systems operate as a gateway for X400 data transmission to the Customs office. At this office a centralised automated Data Validation Computation process is carried out after the conversion of the EDIFACT format into the in-house customs format. Data may be accepted, rejected or put on the waiting list for decision by the responsible staff. Automatically a response message (also EDIFACT format) is

For Intrastat the declarants have to submit only a subset of the CUSDEC message.

The pilot project of this EDI application was carried out by five companies, of which three were forwarding agents. The results were encouraging and opened the way for further extension towards other companies. Of course Finland is still in the phase of building up the Intrastat system in general and, more specifically, the telecommunications application. By the involvement of third declarants, the expectation is that a fast growth of the EDI part of the Intrastat return lines may be foreseen.

IN BRIEF

PREPARING THE COMBINED NOMENCLATURE FOR 1996

Many changes are expected in the new version of the Combined Nomenclature which will come into use on 1 January 1996.

Changes in its structure result mainly from the alignment of the CN with the new Harmonised System (HS) which will also apply from 1 January 1996. This involves 200 four-digit HS groups, and 1300 CN codes requiring changes.

Changes began with a phase of automatic replacement, followed by an initial adjustment by Eurostat, and a further review from the tariff point of view by DG XXI.

Eurostat then prepared the working documents, and these were subsequently examined by the Customs Code Committee, Tariff and Statistical Nomenclature section.

In view of the large number of working papers to discuss, several meetings have been planned by Eurostat and DG XXI for 1995.

So far three have taken place. They have been used to dispose of all amendments to the chapters from Chapter 24 onwards ¾ around 150 documents.

The remaining documents, dealing with the agricultural sector (Chapters 1-24) will be examined at forthcoming meetings.

In addition to this alignment with the HS, the Committee will be considering simplifying the CN.

Although a large number of papers remain to be examined by the Committee, it is essential that the CN96 is published before 30 October 1995.

NOMENCLATURE OF COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES

GEONOM, the nomenclature of countries and territories for intra- and extra-Community trade statistics, came into force on 1 January 1995. It is implemented by Commission Regulation (EC) 3079/94, published in Official Journal L 325 of 17 December 1994.

Published statistics of external trade will from 1995 onwards use the new system for geographical and economic zones.

CALENDAR OF 1995 MEETINGS WITH MEMBER STATES

A few minor changes relating to 1995 meetings have been made to the schedule of meetings published in Newsletter No 2/1994:

① *Committee on external trade statistics / Committee on the Statistics relating to the Trading of goods between Member States*

- from 13 to 14 June 1995
- from 17 to 19 October 1995
- from 18 to 19 December 1995

② *Customs Code Committee - Nomenclature (Luxembourg)*

- from 15 to 16 June 1995
- from 25 to 28 September 1995
- from 21 to 24 November 1995

③ *EDICOM*

- 1 June 1995
- 6 November 1995

INTRASTAT II SEMINAR

Intrastat is the system for the collection of data enabling Eurostat to compile the statistics of trade in goods between Member States. It came into effect on 1 January 1993.

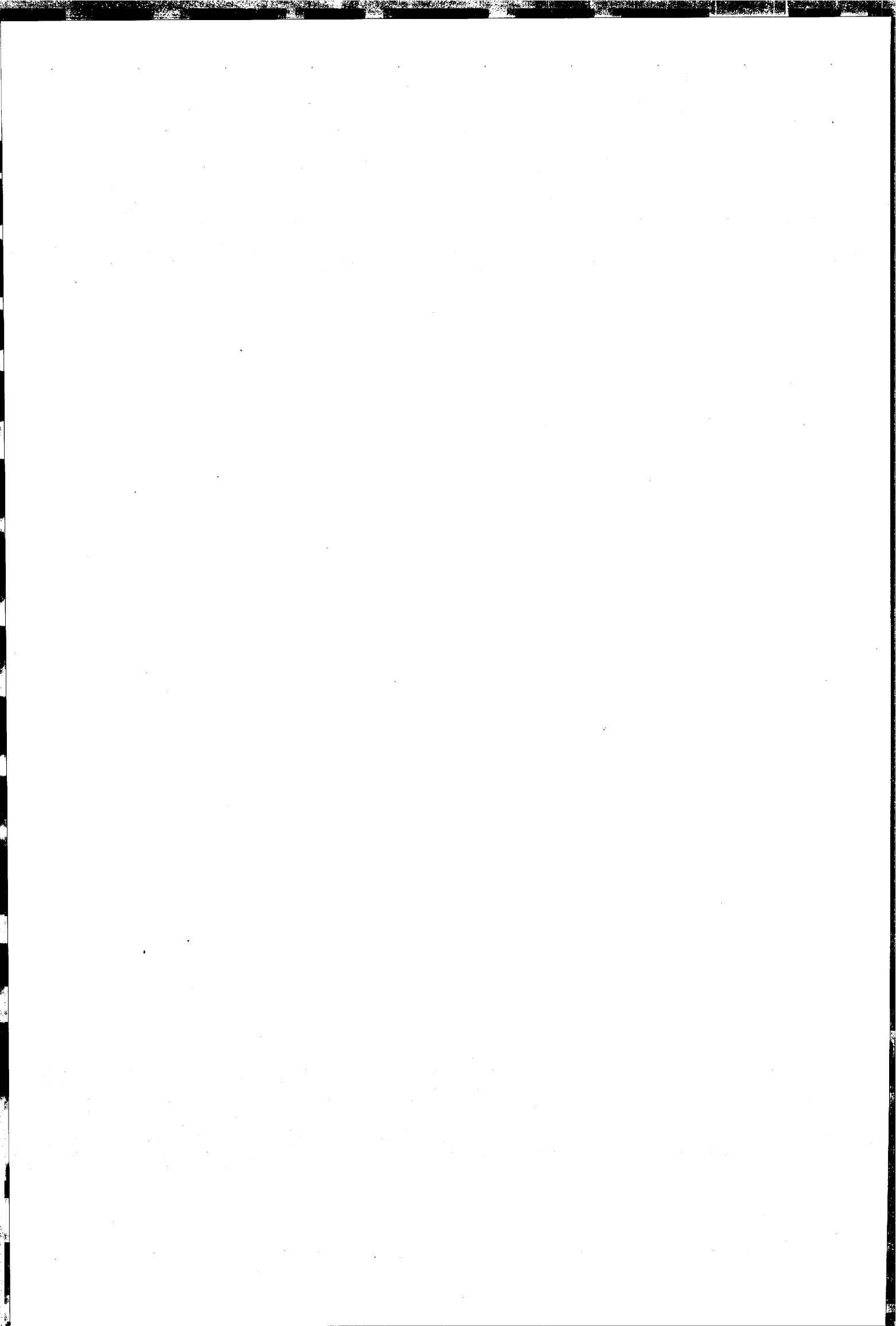
In view of the links established by Council Regulation (EEC) 3330/91 with the VAT system, the Intrastat system must be adapted to take account of the transition to the definitive taxation system due to come into effect on 1 January 1997.

This change is the opportunity to examine the working of Intrastat and, in particular, to reopen the question of the balance between the needs of the users of statistics and the need for simplification expressed by the suppliers of the data.

Eurostat has consequently decided to organise a seminar to debate these questions and extend the debate to anyone involved in intra-Community trade. The seminar will be held in Luxembourg sometime during the first two weeks of March 1996.

Further details will follow in the next Newsletter.







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