

65  
عَاماً  
YEARS



الهيئة العامة للإحصاء  
General Authority for Statistics

---

## Methodology and Quality Report for International Trade in Goods Statistics (Monthly)

---

V-3.2

Quality Management

## Table of Contents

<b>1. Contact</b> .....	5
1.1. Contact organization .....	5
1.2. Contact organization unit .....	5
1.3. Contact person function .....	5
1.4. Contact mail address .....	5
1.5. Contact email address .....	5
1.6. Contact phone number .....	5
<b>2. Methodology and Quality Update</b> .....	5
2.1. Latest Update on Methodology and Quality .....	5
<b>3. Statistical Presentation</b> .....	5
3.1. Data description .....	5
3.2. Classification system.....	6
3.3. Sector coverage .....	7
3.4. Statistical concepts and definitions .....	8
3.5. Statistical unit.....	10
3.6. Statistical population .....	10
3.7. Reference area.....	10
3.8. Time coverage.....	10
3.9. Base period .....	10
<b>4. Unit of measure</b> .....	10
<b>5. Reference period</b> .....	11
<b>6. Confidentiality</b> .....	11
6.1. Confidentiality - policy .....	11
6.2. Confidentiality - data treatment.....	11
<b>7. Release policy</b> .....	11
7.1. Release calendar .....	11
7.2. Release calendar access .....	12
7.3. User access .....	12
<b>8. Frequency of dissemination</b> .....	12
<b>9. Accessibility and clarity</b> .....	13

9.1.	News release .....	13
9.2.	Publications .....	13
9.3.	On-line database .....	13
9.4.	Micro-data access .....	13
9.5.	Other .....	13
9.6.	General methodology .....	14
9.7.	Quality documentation.....	14
<b>10.</b>	<b>Quality management.....</b>	<b>14</b>
10.1.	Quality assurance.....	14
10.2.	Quality assessment .....	15
<b>11.</b>	<b>Relevance .....</b>	<b>15</b>
11.1.	User needs .....	15
11.2.	User satisfaction .....	15
11.3.	Completeness .....	16
<b>12.</b>	<b>Accuracy and reliability .....</b>	<b>16</b>
12.1.	Overall accuracy .....	16
<b>13.</b>	<b>Timeliness and punctuality .....</b>	<b>16</b>
13.1.	Timeliness .....	16
13.2.	Punctuality.....	17
<b>14.</b>	<b>Coherence and comparability .....</b>	<b>17</b>
14.1.	Comparability - geographical .....	17
14.2.	Comparability - over time .....	17
14.3.	Coherence- cross domain .....	17
14.3.1.	Coherence - sub annual and annual statistics .....	17
14.3.2.	Coherence- National Accounts .....	17
14.4.	Coherence - internal .....	18
<b>15.</b>	<b>Data revision .....</b>	<b>18</b>
15.1.	Data revision - policy .....	18
15.2.	data revision- practice.....	18
<b>16.</b>	<b>Statistical processing .....</b>	<b>18</b>
16.1.	Source data .....	18
16.2.	Frequency of data collection .....	18

16.3.	Data collection.....	19
16.4.	Data validation .....	19
16.5.	Data compilation .....	19
16.6.	Adjustment .....	20
<b>17.</b>	<b>Comment.....</b>	<b>20</b>

## 1. Contact

1.1. Contact organization	General Authority for Statistics
1.2. Contact organization unit	Business, investment, and international trade Statistics
1.3. Contact person function	Director of Business, Investment, and International Trade Statistics Department
1.4. Contact mail address	P.O. Box: 3735 Riyadh, 11481 Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
1.5. Contact email address	<a href="mailto:info@stats.gov.sa">info@stats.gov.sa</a>
1.6. Contact phone number	199009

## 2. Methodology and Quality Update

2.1. Latest Update on Methodology and Quality	29/04/2025
---	------------

## 3. Statistical Presentation

3.1. Data description
<p>The international trade in goods report presents data on export and import statistics in Saudi Arabia.</p> <p><b>The international trade in goods report consists of administrative data that is collected, processed, and classified based on the following key characteristics:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Goods code and goods description.</li></ul>

- Value of goods and the quantity and weight of goods.
- Country of origin in imports and country of destination in exports.

**Data is also used to display:**

- Exports of the Kingdom.
- Imports of the Kingdom.
- Trade exchange between the Kingdom and its partners.
- Trade size and trade balance.
- Re-export.
- The most important countries to which goods are exported and from which goods are imported.
- The most important goods exported and received.

### 3.2. Classification system

Classification is defined as an ordered set of relevant categories used to compile data based on similarity. It serves as the foundation for data collection and dissemination across various statistical areas, such as: The classification of data and information allows for organizing it into meaningful categories to produce useful statistics. Data collection requires a precise and systematic arrangement based on common characteristics to ensure that statistics are reliable and comparable. Saudi Arabia's commodity export and import statistics adhere to international standards in data collection and classification. These statistics are classified according to the Harmonized System (HS 2022) issued by the World Customs Organization (WCO). The Harmonized System is a framework for describing and categorizing goods, including subheadings, numerical codes, sections, and chapters, in accordance with the Harmonized System Convention signed in Brussels.

**Other classifications:**

**Standard International Trade Classification (SITC):**

It is a classification of goods used to classify exports and imports in a country in order to compare different countries and years. It is currently in the fourth revision, issued in 2006, and is issued by the United Nations.

**Broad Economic Categories Classification (BEC):**

It is a three-house classification, which groups transported goods according to their main end use. It is often used in the general economic analysis of international merchandise trade data,

as well as the Standard International Trade Classification. The original version was published in 1971, revised in 1976 and 1986, and most recently in 1988.

**(ISIC4) International Standard Industrial Classification of Economic Activities, Fourth Revision:**

It is the international reference classification of productive activities issued by the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. The main purpose of this classification is to provide a structured set of sections, groups, branches, and categories of activities that can be used for collecting and publishing statistics by economic activity.

**Countries are categorized into country groups according to continents and geographic regions:**

- **Africa:**
  - North Africa.
  - Sub-Saharan Africa.
  - East Africa.
  - Central Africa.
  - Southern Africa.
  - West Africa.
- **America:**
  - North America.
  - Latin America and the Caribbean.
  - The Caribbean.
  - Central America.
  - South America.
- **Asia:**
  - Central Asia.
  - East Asia.
  - Southeast Asia.
  - South Asia.
  - West Asia.
- **Europe:**
  - Eastern Europe.
  - Northern Europe.
  - Southern Europe.
  - Western Europe.
- **Oceania.**
- **Other regions.**

### 3.3. Sector coverage

The report on international trade in goods covers all economic activities.

### 3.4. Statistical concepts and definitions

#### Terminologies and concepts of international trade in goods statistics:

- Exports (Total):

Exports consist of exports of domestic goods (national exports) and exports of foreign goods (re-exports), and the valuation is based on the basis of delivery on board (FOB).

- National exports:

According to the international trade in goods system, it refers to all goods intended for export outside the Kingdom, which have been entirely produced or manufactured locally, or have undergone an industrial process that changed their form and value.

- Re-export:

These are goods that were previously imported and were subjected to all customs procedures and were re-exported without a clear modification being made to them.

- Oil exports:

These are exports of goods classified under Chapter 27 (Mineral fuels, mineral oils, and their products, bituminous substances, mineral waxes) of the Harmonized System (HS).

- Non-oil exports:

Total exports minus exports of goods classified under Chapter 27 (mineral fuels, mineral oils, and their distillation products, bituminous substances, mineral waxes) of the Harmonized System (HS).

- Imports of goods:

Refers to all goods entering the country to meet its local needs after undergoing customs procedures, with valuation based on cost, insurance, and freight (CIF).

- Trade volume:

It is the sum of the value of exports and imports over a given period of time.

- Trade balance:

It is the difference between the value of exports and imports during a certain period of time.

- Countries:

It is the origin of goods for import statistics and the final destination for export statistics.

- Country groups:

Countries are classified geographically according to continents or according to international organizations, federations and associations.

- Partner country:

It is the country that engages in economic transactions with the Kingdom, from which exports are made, and imports are received. Based on these transactions, the value of exports and imports, the volume of trade between the two countries, the trade balance, and the most important exported and imported goods are estimated.

- Port of Entry:

It refers to the port through which goods and commodities pass for customs clearance.

- Means of transportation:

This means the inference of a pattern or means of determining whether transport has taken place by air, land or sea.

- Country of origin of goods:

It refers to the country of origin for agricultural and animal products, the country where the final stage of production occurred for manufactured goods, and for raw materials, the country that extracted these materials from its mines.

- Year of comparison:

The year or period in which prices are attributed to the prices of the base year for the purpose of price change, the comparison year is called the major year.

- Net weight:

Means the full weight of the goods excluding the weight of the packaging materials.

- The existing weight:

Means the full weight of the goods including the weight of the packaging materials.

- Monthly change:

Change from the previous month.

- Quarterly change:

Change from the previous quarter.

- Annual change:

Change from the previous year.

### 3.5. Statistical unit

Not applicable.

### 3.6. Statistical population

Not applicable.

### 3.7. Reference area

The data covers exports and imports of Saudi Arabia.

### 3.8. Time coverage

The international trade in goods data is obtained from administrative records on a monthly basis, according to the Gregorian calendar. It is available from the year 2000 to the current month of 2025.

### 3.9. Base period

Not applicable.

## 4. Unit of measure

Any quantity of a commodity is expressed in net weight. In addition, there are some commodities and items whose quantities are expressed in numbers, as the nature of some

commodities requires their numbers to be stated: (Such as sheep, cars, watches, and the like) in addition to their weight in kilograms, and the value is in Saudi riyals.

## 5. Reference period

The data obtained are assigned to the Gregorian month of the reporting period.

## 6. Confidentiality

### 6.1. Confidentiality - policy

According to the Royal Decree No. 23 dated 07-12-1397, data must always be kept confidential and must be used by GASTAT only for statistical purposes.

Therefore, the data are protected in the data servers of the Authority.

### 6.2. Confidentiality - data treatment

Data were displayed in appropriate tables to facilitate its summarization, comprehension, and results extraction. Also, to compare data with other data and extract statistical meanings for the study community. It is also easier to check tables without the need to see any sensitive or confidential data, which violates data confidentiality of statistical data.

## 7. Release policy

### 7.1. Release calendar

The report on international trade in goods has been included in the statistical calendar.

## 7.2. Release calendar access

The release calendar is available at: <https://www.stats.gov.sa/en/statistical-calendar-releases>

## 7.3. User access

One of GASTAT's objectives is to better meet its clients' needs, so it immediately provides them with the publication's results once the International Trade in goods Publication is published.

**It also receives questions and inquiries of the clients about the Publication and its results through various communication channels, such as:**

- GASTAT official website: [www.stats.gov.sa](http://www.stats.gov.sa)
- GASTAT official e-mail address: [info@stats.gov.sa](mailto:info@stats.gov.sa)
- Client support e-mail address: [info@stats.gov.sa](mailto:info@stats.gov.sa)
- Official visits to GASTAT's official head office in Riyadh or one of its branches in Saudi Arabia.
- Official letters.
- Statistical telephone: (199009).

## 8. Frequency of dissemination

Monthly.

## 9. Accessibility and clarity

### 9.1. News release

The announcements of each publication are available on release calendar as mentioned in 7.2. Release calendar access. The news release can be viewed on the website of GASTAT through the following link:

<https://www.stats.gov.sa/en/news>

### 9.2. Publications

GASTAT issues International Trade in goods publications and reports regularly within a pre-prepared dissemination plan and is published on GASTAT's website. GASTAT is keen to publish its publications in a way that serves all users of different types, including publications in different formats that contain (publication tables, data graphs, indicators, metadata, methodology, and questionnaires) in both English and Arabic.

**The results of the international trade in goods report are available on:**

<https://www.stats.gov.sa/statistics>

### 9.3. On-line database

**The data is published on the statistical database:**

[GASTAT \(stats.gov.sa\)](https://www.stats.gov.sa)

### 9.4. Micro-data access

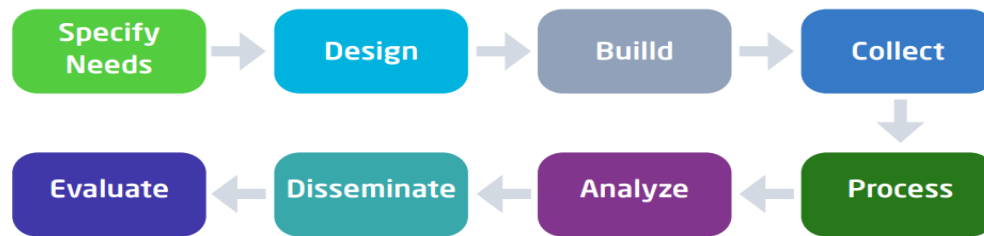
Not available.

### 9.5. Other

Not available.

## 9.6. General methodology

The statistical operations for International Trade Statistics are carried out according to the Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM) with its eight stages:



The stages include sub-processes and activities. The Generic Statistical Business Process Model published on the Authority's website can be accessed through the link:

[Generic Statistical Business Process Model \(GSBPM\)](#)

## 9.7. Quality documentation

Quality documentation covers documentation on methods and standards for assessing, measuring, and monitoring the quality of statistical process and output. It is based on standard quality criteria such as relevance, accuracy and reliability, timeliness and punctuality, accessibility and clarity, comparability, and coherence.

# 10. Quality management

## 10.1. Quality assurance

GASTAT declares that it considers the following principles: impartiality, user orientated, quality of processes and output, effectiveness of statistical processes, reducing the workload for respondents.

Quality controls and validation of data are actions carried out throughout the process in different stages such as the data input and data collection and other final controls.

## 10.2. Quality assessment

GASTAT performs all statistical activities according to a national model (Generic Statistical Business Process Model - GSBPM). According to the GSBPM, the final phase of statistical activities is overall evaluation using information gathered in each phase or sub-process. This information is used to prepare the evaluation report which outlines all the quality issues related to the specific statistical activity and serves as input for improvement actions.

# 11. Relevance

## 11.1. User needs

**Internal users in the GASTAT for International Trade in goods data:**

- National accounts.
- Prices.

**Some several external users and beneficiaries greatly benefit from the International Trade in goods, including:**

- Government entities.
- Regional and international organizations.
- Research institutions.
- Media.
- Individuals.

**The disseminated key variables used by external users:**

Ministry of Trade and Investment	Exports, imports, trade exchange
Ministry of Economy and Planning	
Saudi General Authority of Foreign Trade	Exports and imports
Saudi Exports Development Authority	
Saudi Central Bank	

## 11.2. User satisfaction

Not available.

### 11.3. Completeness

The international trade data in goods rely on two main sources to obtain the essential data related to export and import statistics from government entities, as follows:

- Updated data from the Ministry of Energy: It is a major source of oil exports.
- Updated data from the Zakat, Tax and Customs Authority: It is a major source of exports and imports of non-oil goods.
- Data status is complete.

## 12. Accuracy and reliability

### 12.1. Overall accuracy

- International merchandise trade data is periodically reviewed to ensure comprehensive coverage and relevance.
- The main and sub-number totals are reviewed and matched to ensure that the totals are consistent.
- The indicators are calculated in accordance with the recommendations outlined in the International Guide to International Trade in Goods, including the use of standardized concepts and classifications in international trade that are consistent with global practices.

## 13. Timeliness and punctuality

### 13.1. Timeliness

GASTAT uses the Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS) issued by the International Monetary Fund. According to this Standard, all statistics agencies are required to publish data on a monthly basis, and with a delay of no more than 6 weeks (42 days) after the end of the

reference period. If the data are from different source, they may be published in a different frequency.

### 13.2. Punctuality

The publication is made according to the publication dates in the statistical calendar for International Trade, which is published on the General Authority for Statistics' website. Data will be available on time as scheduled in the statistical release calendar.

## 14. Coherence and comparability

### 14.1. Comparability - geographical

The data is geographically comparable.

### 14.2. Comparability - over time

The indicators are comparable over time, and the reference year for the data is updated monthly according to what is received from the main data sources to ensure comparability with previous years.

### 14.3. Coherence- cross domain

International trade in goods statistics is consistent as they are based on international standards for international trade statistics.

#### 14.3.1. Coherence - sub annual and annual statistics

Export and import data are consistent as they apply international standards in international trade statistics.

#### 14.3.2. Coherence- National Accounts

The data on exports and imports are consistent and come as an input within the variables and indicators of national accounts in the balance of payments.

#### 14.4. Coherence - internal

Export and import statistics for goods have complete internal consistency as they are based on the standards of the World Trade Organization and customs and are calculated using internationally approved methods.

## 15. Data revision

#### 15.1. Data revision - policy

Not applicable, only final results will be published.

#### 15.2. data revision- practice

Not applicable, only final results will be published.

## 16. Statistical processing

#### 16.1. Source data

**Source of administrative records for the International Trade Report in goods:**

- General Authority for Zakat, Tax and Customs: Exports and imports of goods.
- Ministry of Energy: Oil exports.

#### 16.2. Frequency of data collection

Monthly.

### 16.3. Data collection

#### **Data collection from administrative records:**

The data for the International Trade in Goods Report publication are obtained from the Zakat, Tax and Customs Authority, which includes the values and weights of non-oil exports and imports, and from the Ministry of Energy for oil export data.

The data is stored in the authority's databases after undergoing auditing and review processes following approved statistical methods and recognized quality standards. If errors or discrepancies are discovered, the data is cross-referenced with the data source for correction or clarification.

### 16.4. Data validation

Data are reviewed and matched to ensure their accuracy and precision in a way that suits their nature with the aim of giving the presented statistics quality and accuracy.

The data for the current month's publication are compared with the data from the same month of the previous year to ensure their integrity and consistency in preparation for data processing, result extraction, and review.

In addition to the data processing and tabulation to check their accuracy, all the outputs are stored and uploaded to the database after being calculated by GASTAT to be reviewed and processed by specialists in International Trade Statistics through modern technologies and software designed for this purpose.

### 16.5. Data compilation

#### **Data Coding:**

In the International Trade in Goods Report, this information is internally coded through an automated process, which is reviewed by a dedicated team of coding experts using a series of consistency checks.

#### **Data Editing:**

The specialists in the International Trade Department processed and analyzed the data in this stage, and this step was based on the following measures:

- Sorting and arranging data in groups or different categories in a serial order.

- Summarizing detailed data into key points or data.
- Combining many data segments and ensuring their interconnection.
- Processing incomplete or missing data.
- Processing illogical data.
- Converting data into statistically significant data.
- Arranging, presenting, and interpreting data.

#### 16.6. Adjustment

Not applicable, only final results will be published.

### 17. Comment