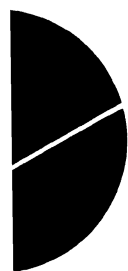


Statistics Norway  
Research Department

*Øyvind Hagen and  
Hans Kristian Østereng*

**Inter-Baltic Working Group  
Meeting in Bodø 3-6 August  
1997 Foreign Trade Statistics**



## **Preface**

At the Riga seminar in October 1995 an Inter-Baltic Working Group on Foreign Trade Statistics was proposed to be set up and a group was established at a meeting in Vilnius in January 1996.

One main objective of the Group is to harmonise the production of foreign trade statistics within the Baltic states and with international standards and international requirement to meet the demands for increased comparability and data quality year by year.

The Group consists of representatives from both Customs (main data source) and the statistical institutions (official publisher of trade statistics). Another important task for the Group is to increase the understanding and the efficiency of the persons involved from these institutions in order to create the best possible basis for cooperation.

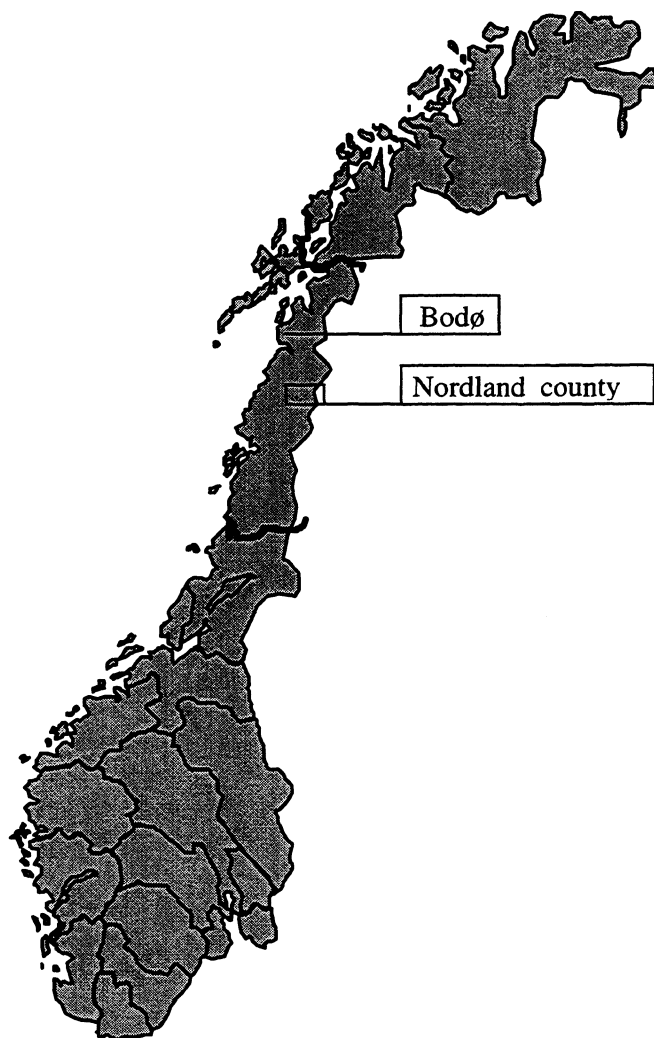
Leadership management and the handling policy of colleagues are big challenges for all leaders; and should also be a very important part of our international cooperation. Increased understanding can be learned by facing new situations and new environments. That is why some of our activities are selected to take place outside the urban areas and well-known office facilities and not following the traditional procedures for travel and organisation.

This report and the conclusions from the meetings were agreed upon to be presented as a consolidated report for all participants. The individual contributions from the WG members for the seminar/meeting are copied in this report as well.

16 September 1997.  
Inter-Baltic Working Group  
Foreign Trade Statistics  
ESO, Tallinn  
Customs Board, Tallinn  
Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia, Riga  
Customs Board, Riga  
Statistical department, Vilnius  
Customs department, Vilnius  
Statistics Norway

# The joint EU/EFTA Cooperation with the Baltic States

Foreign Trade Statistics - project 41



Meeting/seminar in Bodø  
3 - 6 August 1997

Activity  
BAS-41-1997-04  
(EE-41-1/4, LV-41-1/1, LT-41-1/4)

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# **1. Main conclusions**

## **1.1. Future WG activities**

As a minimum, two WG meetings are necessary each year. Additional meetings could be agreed upon in case the WG starts new projects and will be involved directly in the planning and the implementation. For 1998 meetings are scheduled in May and September, see Module Action Table (MAT) plans below.

The Working Group made a joint decision to concentrate on the following main items during 1998:

- preparation of the publication "Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania. Foreign Trade 1997";
- project for the establishment of a common database for production of an inter-Baltic publication;
- correspondence of the foreign trade statistics methodology of the Baltic States to the EU Regulations and further development of the production systems in all three countries.

## **1.2. WG leadership and organisation**

The WG agreed upon that for the next period (1998/1999) the meetings should be held in turn in all the three Baltic States and the function as Working Group leader also rotate as to be the representative of the hosting country. However, the responsibility for producing a manuscript and to publish the bulletin will be decided one year ahead; for the 1997 Bulletin this work will take place in Riga.

## **1.3. The 1997 Inter-Baltic Bulletin**

The next edition of the publication "Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania. Foreign Trade 1997" will be published by the Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia. The members of the Working Group agreed that the structure of the next bulletin could be based on the last publication "Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania. Foreign Trade 1996 ". Besides, the participants of the meeting made some proposals for some changes in the next publication:

- to change the "Introduction" of the publication taking as an example the publications of different international organizations;
- to put graphs in the end of the publication;
- to give more explanatory notes and comments regarding the tables ;
- to send the draft bulletin for checking to the Members of the Working Group 1-2 weeks before the discussion in the Working Group meeting.

## **1.4. Common Inter-Baltic Dissemination**

Project for the establishment of a common database for the production of an inter-Baltic publication;

The working group wants to create a common data base to make the production of the inter -Baltic publication easier and quicker. Of course it will take time and resources to create a new data base and to prepare the programs to produce the tables and graphs for a publication. However, for the future this would be a great advantage.

The Working group decided to start a new Baltic publication production system from 1999.

It was decided to prepare for the next Working group meeting a database structure and discuss the level of data aggregates. The preliminary proposal was to create a database on four digits of commodity code aggregation level, but this has to be considered more carefully.

For the next meeting the Working group members (from the Statistical offices) should make clear what problems they meet, starting this project, and what official plans and papers which are necessary to prepare. In addition everyone should study what software which may be the best for creating the database and for automatic table production.

*In case it could be possible to achieve support from Eurostat and the Phare programme, it is a desire to have the opinion of Eurostat and the PCU about how the support could be arranged (e.g. by promoting a pilot project), and how this could be done practically.*

*Concerning projects on the development of a Foreign trade Statistics production system, could these be organized within the frame of a proposed 'Joint Application Development' (W. Haeder, April 1997)?*

## **1.5. EU - Regulations, harmonisation**

The WG decided to investigate the correspondence between the Baltic trade data and the EU Regulations. It proves to be a difficult task to explain what the differences are in the present Baltic trade data and the EU Regulations.

*As a result, we decided to request that Eurostat arranges an additional meeting 11 - 13 November, with the help of experts from the Committee to clarify these questions; see annexed fax sent Eurostat 28.8.1997.*

## **1.6. Visits to Bodø and Junkerdalen Customs Houses**

The meeting with the Customs authorities in the local district of Nordland was a positive surprise. Their hospitality seems unlimited and the honest interest in giving us information about all sides of customs activities was great.

A main learning experience at the Junkerdalen Station was the demonstration on how the Norwegian and the Swedish Customs share the job of declaring for each other. At Junkerdalen, the Swedish Customs have not at all a customs station; the Norwegian colleagues declare everything, -both ways.

When a Norwegian truck leaves Norway, the staff at Junkerdalen first fill in a Norwegian export declaration. Then they switch to the Swedish TDS system (separate hardware installations) and make a Swedish import declaration. When a truck arrives from Sweden, an opposite procedure takes place. Because of big budget cuts in the Swedish Customs the latest years, the Norwegian staff suffer a bit from lack of training, as the Norwegian officers have to travel to Happaranda in the very north of Sweden (training center), but the Swedish staff is now too small with too few instructors to help their Norwegian colleagues.

Further north, the Norwegian Customs border station Bjørnefjell works in the same manner as Junkerdalen. In return, the Swedish station Tarnaby south of Junkerdalen has the job of declaring Norwegian imports and exports and is on-line connected to the Norwegian declaration system, TVINN.

For further details about the visits and discussions at Bodø Customs House, please read the report below (point 4.1 below).

## **1.7. The Bodø activity; a positive experience?**

To arrange some of the meetings and seminars outside the big cities, with untraditional solutions for travel and living like we did for the Bodø meetings; seems to have been a positive experience.

Naturally, this takes more preparations and energy from the host institution, but it gives more back in the long run. The main point is to find persons willing to take this challenge. We may encourage administrators of the cooperation programme to have in mind such alternative solutions and to use them from time to time.

Another advantage from choosing a country-side places, is the costs. Depending on the place and the contacts, the chance is greater to reduce the costs significantly, compared with the traditional city/

hotel-solutions. In our case we rented a whole school (conference room fully equipped, office with equipment, classrooms, etc.) for a price not possible in city centers).

There were no restaurants, kiosks, cinemas, cars etc, but plenty of silence and beautiful sceneries.

## **2. MAT Plans for 1998/199**

### **2.1. Pilot projects**

The WG discussed the possibilities to start with 'Pilot projects'; a new activity type which will be introduced from the new cooperation period 1998-2000.

There is the problem that all project leaders already have enough to do, and little time to engage in planning and implementation of such 'bigger' projects as a pilot project would be.

Of the new ideas discussed (under Main conclusions above);

- establishment of a common database for production of an inter-Baltic publication;
- correspondence of the foreign trade statistics methodology of the Baltic States with the EU Regulations;
- further development of the production systems in all three countries,

No definite plans, however, were made for these projects.

### **2.2. MAT 1998/1999**

Here are some proposals for new plans under the programme  
Production of Statistics (visits/consultancies/seminars/working groups):

#### **WG meetings**

The Working Group agreed to propose two Working Group meetings in 1998:

1. Meeting in Riga, May 1998,
2. Meeting in Tallinn, September 1998.

Additional meetings will be proposed in case additional projects show up.

#### **Index project (in cooperation with FI/Mr. Lehtinen)**

- 1998: 3 consultancies in total from NO to EE, LV, LT  
1 seminar/meeting in NO, part. from EE/LV/LT/?? autumn/98  
1 study trip outside Scandinavia

#### **Development of a new FTS production system**

(Data flows/content, data controls, communication with customs)

- 1998: 3 consultancies in total from NO to EE, LV, LT  
1-3 stay in NO from EE/LV/LT (to be decided upon by the project leaders)

The project leaders and the project coordinator will have to decide upon what activities to propose for 1998 MAT, within the end of the autumn (Liason Group meeting in November?)



### **3. Programme**

#### **3.1. WG meeting in BODØ, 3 - 6 August 1997**

**Sunday 3 August 1997, 14.00 - 16.00**

Study visit at Junkerdalen Customs Border station

- Their work. What are the most complicated and time consuming part of their duties?
- How do they organise the cooperation between Norwegian and Swedish officers?  
What kinds of education are the NO officers offered in EU-rules and declaring procedures?  
What kinds of training are given to the Swedish colleagues in the use of the TVINN system, and vice versa, how much do the Norwegians know about the TDS-system?
- The volume of auto-declaration in TVINN in comparison with filling in the SAD at the border

**Monday 4 August 1997, 10.00 - 14.00**

Meeting at the Bodø Customs House and the work at Nordland Customs District

- Organisation of the Nordland Customs District and the Bodø Customs house. What are the duties placed at the customs stations
- Responsibilities. What are the decisions to be taken at the District level, and what is necessary to bring to the Customs Directorate in Oslo.
- The special problems after Sweden became an EU member ( e.g. fish in transit)
- The use of TVINN at Bodø Customs House
- Control filters in TVINN, individual checking of importers and exporters
- Use of 'central checks' in TVINN. The most useful ones. How are the checks operated
- Statistical data checking and the cooperation with Statistics Norway,  
Price controls in TVINN. Errors in country codes.
- The software that declarants may use for producing declarations (for TVINN input), and computing the statistical value.

**Tuesday 5. August, 10.00 - 17.00. Lunch, 12.30-13.30**

Meløy school, meeting

Presentations/discussions:

1. (Elga) Introduction and adaption of the agenda.
2. (Østereng) Meeting target. Better leaders: Leadership management and strategies.
3. (Hagen) Main guidelines and principal solutions in a new FTS production system.
4. (Elga/Martins) Presentation of the Lavian project on electronic transmission of data from CB to CSB. The content of Agreements made until now. The CSB data checks; - will they differ from the present CSB controls (keying paper declarations) and in what way? Is there a system for returns of error messages from CSB to CB and the Customs Houses, and how does this function? How are extractions from Customs databases arranged and what are the deadlines for transmissions.
5. (Rima) What is the ASYCUDA system (a software programme, programme packages)? What is expected to be the structure and the main solutions in a new ASYCUDA-based declaration system? What are the possibilities to implement modules of a new FTS production system within the ASYCUDA-based system?

6. (Anneli) The use of statistics and statistical methods in customs work to detect errors in the customs declarations and to investigate companies? How may statistical results be utilised to increase work efficiency and data quality?
7. (Merle) The ongoing EU preparations for Baltic EU membership: What kind of information could be expected to be requested from EU and the national institutions, and what would be the most difficult questions. How could the Statistical Office (ESO) plan to better meet this challenge?
8. (Hagen) Data deliveries to EU/international organizations. The situation in Norway and what with the Baltic states?
9. (Østereng) Mirror statistics. Experience from Fish trade between Norway and Denmark.
10. (Valdone) Mirror statistics. Fish Trade between Norway and Lithuania.
11. (Hagen) Valuation problems. FOB and CIF adjustments in the customs declarations. To what extent is this done?

**Wednesday 6 (or Thursday 7) August. 9.00 - 16.00. Lunch, 12.00-13.00**

Meløy school, meeting discussions

1. (Østereng) The Phare program. Next period; organising projects, budgets and implementation.
2. (All members) Presentations of proposals for the 1998 activities (comments below)
  - Identification of new Pilot Projects for 1998 - 1999
3. (All members/Østereng) Meeting programme for 1998/1999; specify actions for 1998/1999 MAT
4. (Elga) Selection of WG leader and for
  - Bulletin secretary and responsible editor(s);
  - Setting the WG meetings for 1997/1998
5. (Valdone) Bulletin:
  - (All members) Evaluation of the 1996 Bulletin; What's good, bad??
  - (All members) The strategy for future Bulletins; involvement from the customs side, content, production techniques etc..
  - Frame proposals for a 1997 Bulletin
  - What to delete from the 1996 Bulletin
  - More text, comments, definitions, explanations?
  - Customs contributions and relevant tables
6. (Østereng) Sales of FTS. How to organise and promote increased sales and profit?
7. (Elga) Any other matters

Conclusions

## **4. List of Participants**

### **4.1. List of participants for the Foreign Trade WG meeting in Bodø**

#### **Participants / organizations:**

*Participant from Customs Board, Tallinn:*

Ms. Anneli Kimmel, Head of Statistics section

*Participant from Estonian Statistical Office, Tallinn:*

Ms. Merle Saaliste, senior specialist, Foreign Trade Statistics Section

*Participant from Central Bureau of Statistics, Riga:*

Ms. Elga Bendrate, Head of Foreign Trade Section

*Participant from Customs Department, Riga:*

Mr. Martins Kaskins, Head of Data Processing Section

*Participant from Customs Department, Vilnius:*

Ms. Rima Petrulyte, Informatics division

*Participant from Statistical Department, Vilnius:*

Ms. Valdone Kasperiuuniene, Head of Foreign Trade Section

*Participants from Statistics Norway:*

Mr. Hans Kristian Ostereng, Advisor

Mr. Øyvind Hagen, Executive officer

## **5. Report from Bodø Customs**

### ***Nordland Customs District***

The Nordland Customs District includes the area from Mosjøen in the south to Narvik in the north, and is identical to the county "Nordland". Besides the Bodø Customs House, customs stations are located in Mosjøen, Mo, Junkerdal, Sortland and Narvik. The district has in total 67 customs officers; 30 in Bodø, 4 in Mosjøen, 6 in Mo, 7 in Junkerdal, 3 in Sortland and 17 in Narvik.

Narvik includes the custom clearance unit at Bjørnfjell which services the Swedish Custom authorities as well. Same system as for Junkerdal. In return, the Swedish Customs station Tarnaby south of Junkerdalen handles the Norwegian declarations (via the TVINN system).

In 1997 Bodø district is expected to handle 30 700 import declarations and 16 300 export declarations. For Bodø Customs House the volume is calculated to be 13 500 import and 4 500 export declarations.

### ***Bodø Customs District***

The Bodø Customs District was recently reorganised as a part of a nation-wide plan implemented by the Customs Directorate in Oslo. This plan resulted in the closing of a number of (smaller) customs stations all over Norway. The Bodø Customs District is now organised like this:

#### **Head of the Custom District (Head Erik Sannes)**

Acting Head Odd Pedersen  
(Administration and Management)

#### **Customs stations in:**

**Junkerdal: Head Einar Bøtker**  
**Bjørnefjell, Narvik, Mo, Mosjoen, Sortland**

#### **Head of Division**

(Management for the whole region, personal and budgets, in close cooperation with the Head. Will not interfere in matters related to customs formalities)

#### **--> Collection and Accounts Department**

Ann H. Lillejord (Accountancy and economic activity for the whole district)

#### **--> Custom Procedures and Enforcement Department**

Hans G. Bakkejord (physical check-tasks and custom procedures and other custom formalities)

##### **-- Enforcement section**

(Physical checking of vessels, aircraft or passengers but also inspections of accounts in certain companies)

##### **-- Custom procedures section**

(-- **Custom-clearance unit:** the electronic clearance of goods, the TVINN-system, control-filters etc.)  
Supervising-inspector John I. Abelsen; Tore Hagen

### **5.1. Control activities**

One of the places with physical control of goods in Bodø is at the international airport. There is no regular international traffic, only a few charter-flights, mostly from Turkey and Spain, but more military aircraft. Once or twice a year a big international military exercise takes place at the airport.

Some of the many vessels arriving from abroad come directly to Bodø, but most of them go directly to factories around in the district; like the company 'Norwegian Hydro' in Glomfjord producing fertiliser; and the company 'Elkem Salten Verk' producing raw material for the metal industry. It is impossible to check all vessels, and much of the control activity is based on international customs intelligence and police information.

893 vessels arrived Bodø in 1996 and for the whole district 2 838 vessels were registered. Other shipping activity is from Mosjøen and Mo; metal industry with imports of aluminium and iron raw material; Sortland with fish industries like exports of herring, also to the Baltic states. In Narvik there is an export industry extracting metal from local ore.

At all stations controls of road transport take place.

Parts of the activity are based on specialised trained audit enforcement officers. They inspect the accounting of selected import and export companies. Customs also engage in collection of other taxes than duties and import taxes, e.g. -a special tax on electric power; -restaurants which make use of foreign artists for entertainment have to pay a special tax.

### ***The Customs Stations and Relations with Bodø***

The customs stations select partly independently of Bodø the physical checks-tasks and how to do their work. They have a system of writing reports back to Bodø in cases of violations. Officers at Bodø make further decisions in several cases based on reports from the stations. Bodø also take cares of complaints from importers or declarants and applications concerning refunding of taxes.

The customs stations do not have their own accountancy, but are responsible for cash payments. Bodø takes care of credit payments concerning import taxes or special taxes; as well as reminder payments of the credit system. The head of the Bodø Customs House has to deliver a "management plan" to the Customs Directorate in Oslo, who decides upon a maximum budget frame and staff size, but within this frame the Bodø head may use money for salaries or management and he may transfer money from one budget year to another.

## **5.2. The TVINN-system**

### ***History***

TVINN in Bodø started in 1989. Now, in January 1996, more than 900 declarants are connected. Outside the Bodø area test work started in 1991 and developed gradually. Today all customs stations are fully connected to the system. More than 50 declarants are connected to the system, most of them are forwarding agents (all connected).

Customs put pressure on both forwarding agents and local companies to use TVINN. This created frustration in a period, but was necessary in order to abandon the paper declarations. Now 90-95 percent of the declarations are transmitted by lines. The rest of the declarations are keyed at the station by officers (Mostly travellers at the border or airport and importation of used automobiles).

### ***Data Transmission***

Declaration data from the declarants are sent trough a line belonging to the network companies NIT (Norwegian Information Technology) or IBM-net. (NIT was the first and has a great majority of the customers).

A declarant may be a forwarding agent, an import or an export company. They need special data programmes to communicate with TVINN. More and more of the biggest import and export companies connect to the TVINN system instead of paying forwarding agents.

### ***Data checking***

Declarations forwarded to TVINN will first be checked for invalid coding (the input control). Errors result instantly in automatic return.

Secondly TVINN activates two kinds of **control filters: central and local.**

When no warnings from the input control or the control filters, the declaration will automatically be accepted and a message sent back with an acceptance number.

If the declaration is hit by a control filter it must be manually accepted by an officer, who will consider to start a control, and either investigate only documents (invoice, freight papers, origin certificate) or physically check the goods.

The officer may accept the declaration as is, or ask for a new version.

**Local control filters** check and create warnings systematically. Local means that the filters or data combinations are active only for one customs house or station. The local control filters are divided in two groups:

- *Local Coincidence filters* are used all the time. The results are good. The programme picks up a certain percent (1-2) of the declarations from forwarding agents, and e.g. declarants new in business.

It is also efficient to use these filters in holiday periods when temporary employees work instead of the trained staff. Besides it has a preventive effect on the declarants.

Local coincidence filters may give good results. In February of this year a local television studio imported a shipment containing 20 000 videotapes. The electronic declaration was sent by a forwarding agent. The declaration was stopped because of a filter control by pure coincidence. The deliverance was declared as plastic-boxes to avoid the special video tax. The result was 447 000 NOK or 106 000 DEM. Good news for customs, but not good for the television studio.

**Other local filters** are used to check and follow up:

- occurrence of consignees or specific declarants; -both companies and forwarding agents; often
- combined with the use of coincidence function
- all shipments from one specific country, both imports and exports
- all declarations with one particular tariff number
- or combination of many other data variables (type of imports/exports; value limits; different forms of transport at the border; weight; codes of different taxes etc.)

So in order to create good local control filters reliable information about the companies is needed, and long experience in this field is of great help. A formal group of customs officers together with our intelligence unit try to create the best control filters. Good cooperation with Customs in other districts is also very useful in making efficient filters.

In practise the custom-clearance unit has far too little time to spend on this very important work and there should be 4 employees in the office, but for different reasons there are often only 3 or even 2 . They hope to once a year to arrange a meeting with participants from the other customs stations in the district to discuss the control filter settings and to get new ideas.

### **Central control filters**

These control filters are set by the Directorate of Custom and Excise in Oslo. They are obligatory and the customs stations can not change them. A lot of these filters are very much based on statistics. They are very useful for checking statistical value, quantities, tariff (commodity) number and country of origin. The price controls are main parts of the central filters.

Examples of messages are

"unusual combination between classification number and country of origin";

"value (price) outside the limits for this commodity number ";

"unusual combinations between this commodity number and restrictions or special taxes

Bodø Customs informs us that they try to maintain a good and close contact with the import and export companies and to give good and correct information about the laws and rules that will concern them. They have lately arranged courses in different subjects with a very good response from the companies.

Customs try to give declarants and companies a good service. The policy is to keep strict control with the unreliable importers and exporters, but help to maximise the paper and transport speed for the serious ones.

### **5.3. EU and problems with veterinary routines**

When Sweden joined the EU they also bought the EU Regulations. One of these set rules about the veterinary control under importation of fish and fish products. After entering the EU Swedish authorities decided that veterinary control should only take place at a few Swedish customs stations (like Kiruna near Bjørnefjell station in the Bodø district) and this have resulted in delaying seriously the transports of Norwegian fish. The closest alternative to pass the border is at Storlien in the middle of Norway. Neither at Junkerdal or Tarnaby can fish pass. One solution is to come to an understanding with EU to accept Norwegian veterinary control.

## 6. Leadership management

### Bodø seminar - Better leaders

#### A General view and reminder list to check why things do not function

##### What to look for:

##### What to think about and to do otherwise:

Communication

To talk briefly and clearly  
To like people and social contact  
To encourage learning and personal staff development  
To create a good working environment  
To cooperate by sharing responsibility  
To be able to speak up and offer ideas

Creation of new solution

To be imaginative and create new ideas  
To be persistent and patient in reaching goals

A good example

Be honest and reliable and unselfish  
Show professional interest

Staff handling policy

To be able to select the right colleagues  
To promote their development continuously

High level contact and influence

To argue and influence decision makers  
To contribute to better leadership/strategies

Delegation of work

To trust other persons  
To tolerate differences

International understanding and experience

To behave properly in new situations  
To learn tolerance and profit from international contacts

## **7. New Foreign Trade Statistics (FTS) production systems (sketches of proposals for progress and solutions)**

### **Starting point for an international standardised Foreign Trade Statistics (FTS) production system:**

1. FTS data based on the international SAD declarations and international standards
2. Increased international use of FTS information and of bilateral comparisons
3. Cost-benefit advantages possible in advanced international collaboration
4. A great contribution to create a future set of international homogeneous FTS data

**\*\*\*\*\*00000\*\*\*\*\***

### **What to make:**

1. Project descriptions
2. Specifications of demands and system functions  
(List rough: Problems to solve; Solutions, and why)
3. Data flow charts, level zero
4. Data file descriptions; Metadata files
5. Detailed data flow charts  
(detailed functionality specifications)
6. Implementation and programming work

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## **Examples for a Specification List:**

### ***A. The focus on problems to solve (not solutions )***

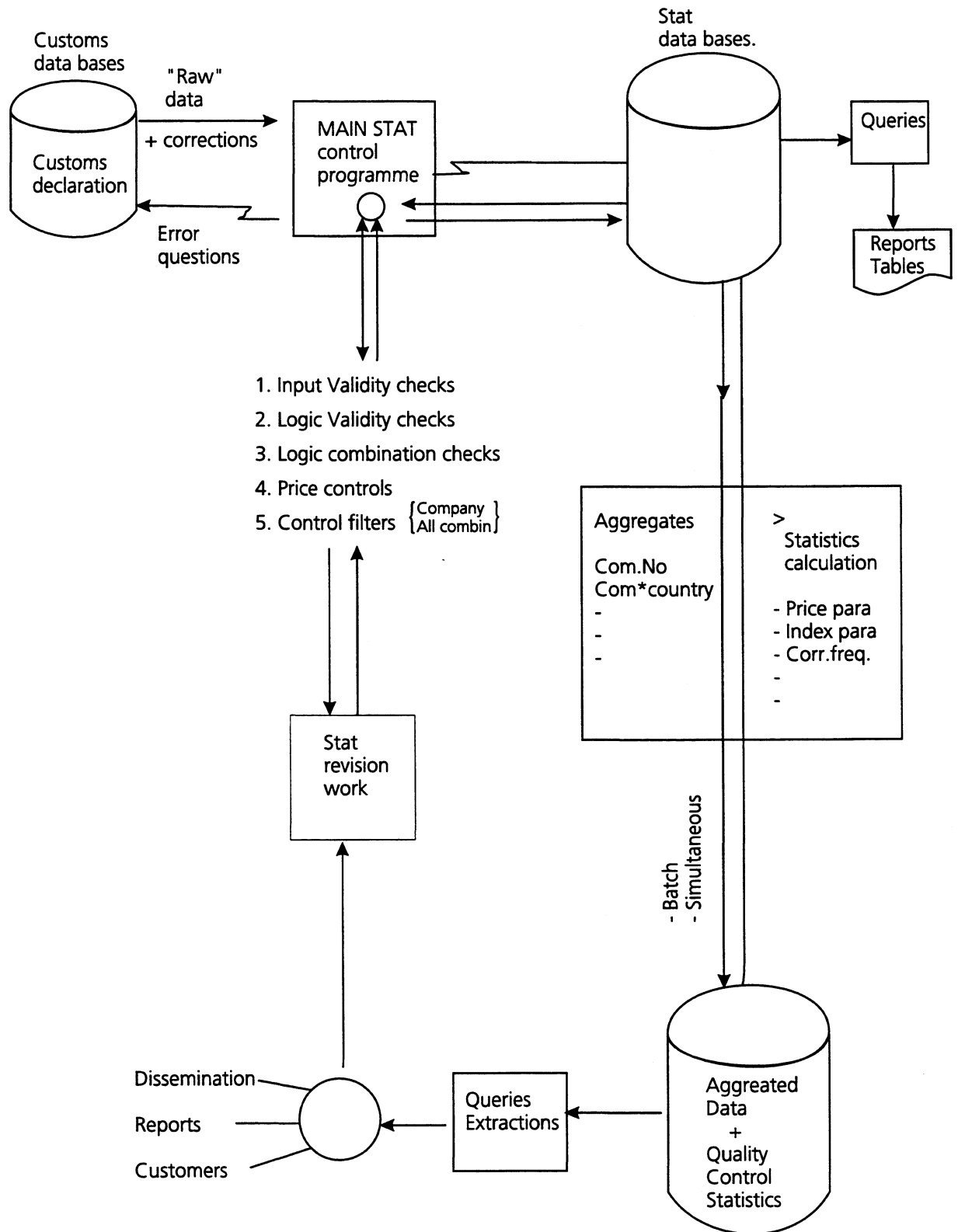
1. All declarations (detailed) data in one (logic) database
2. Rapid data transmission and updating of databases
3. Collect all checks in one mail control system; independent of batch or interactive execution
4. Control parameters must be easy to adjust and update  
Catalogue information must have validity date  
History records have to be stored
5. Recording of all changes in the data records  
Marks on user and date for changes  
Easy to trace back to old versions
6. Apply 'accounting' system: It must be possible to reconstruct published data  
Marks with publishing date; creation or disclosure of files  
Cross-checking of totals through the system
7. Aggregated files in databases; frequent or simultaneous updating  
Immediate updating while correcting detailed data, both batch - interactive  
Instant updating of price and index data calculations
8. Automatic feed-back with Customs Declaration Systems  
Statistical errors in the Statistical Institutions: a feedback return into Customs systems  
Customs post-investigations resulting in the need to correct previously delivered stat data

### ***B. Technical problems to solve***

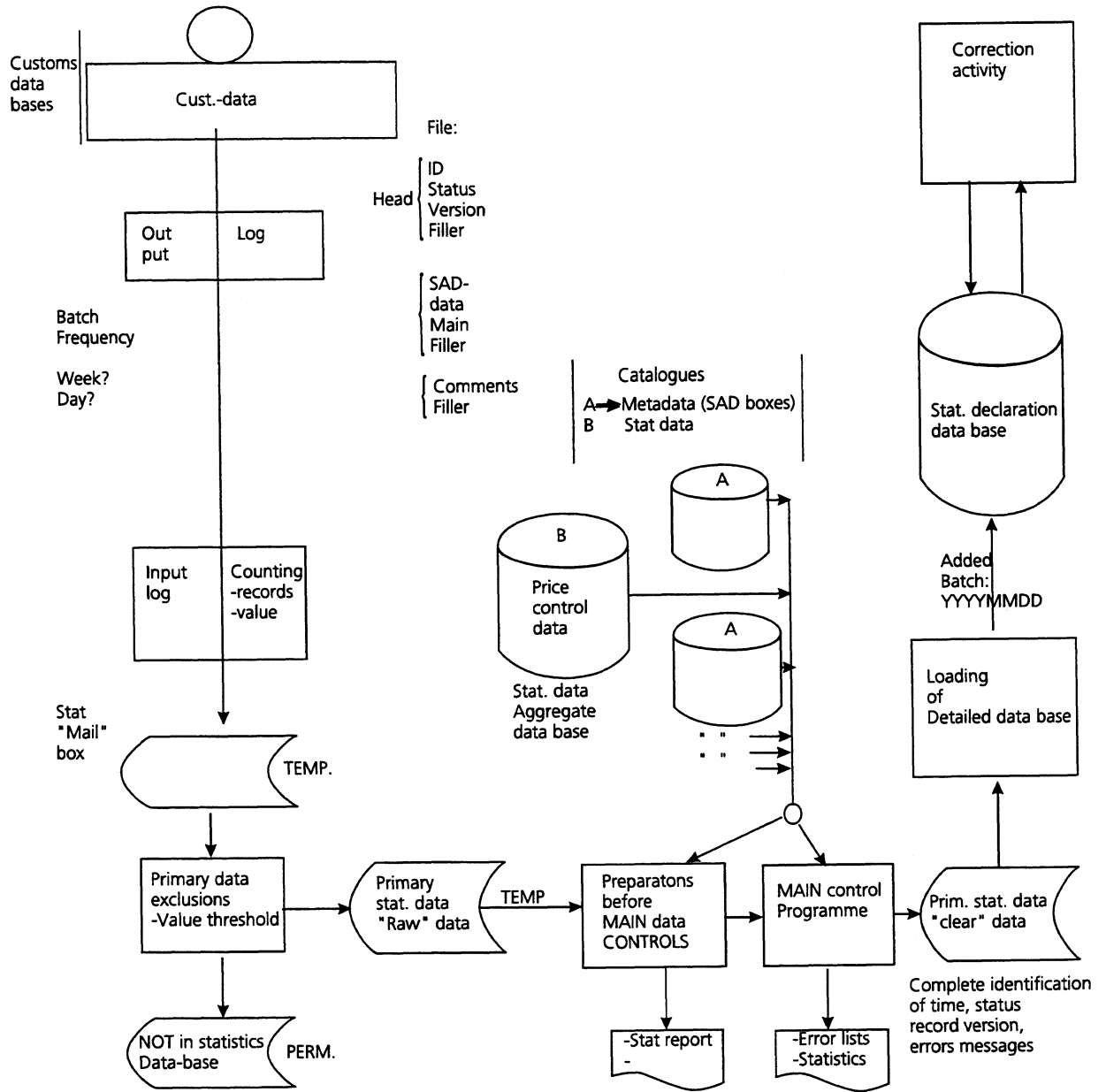
1. Data transfer Statistical Institutions - Customs systems  
On-line; E-mail; int. standards
2. To define and describe data (Metadata)  
Detailed (declaration) file descriptions; Aggregated data files; Catalogues data files
3. Basic data flow charts; set up  
Main activities; content; sequence
4. Correction work and the data checking; including a *main control programme*
5. Solutions for a data transfer and feed-back system between Stat. inst. and Customs
6. Data extraction from databases and production of publications  
Software and technical solutions

5.4. New production system. B0

Data flow chart = 0



### 5.4. New production system. B1



## Customs declaration and the production of trade statistics

*How to organize the share of work between the Customs and the NSI*

CUSTOMS MATTERS  STATISTICAL MATTERS

### 1. SAD adapted declarations.

- ⇒ Operators responsible for filling in declarations:
- ⇒ Importer/exporter
- ⇒ Declarant
- ⇒ Customs officer.

### 2. Keying and Control of declarations

- ⇒ Main Purposes:
- ⇒ Fulfil legislation and regulations
- ⇒ Collecting duties, taxes
- ⇒ Implement government trade policies
- ⇒ Collect statistical information

### 3. Hardware/Software system owner.

System as INFO-TOLL/TVINN (indekl, udekl)

The use of data, data most important to whom:

- ⇒ Goods and declarations' Status (and identity)
- ⇒ Taxes, duties credit no
- ⇒ Declarant (for economic guarantee)
- ⇒ Identity of declaration/Customs station
- ⇒ Licences/quotas/Preferences
- ⇒ Gross weight
  - ⇒ Importer/exporter
  - ⇒ Commodity code, country codes
  - ⇒ Invoiced value, Currency, delivery terms
  - ⇒ Procedure codes

VAT number ←  
Transport mode ←  
Net weight, quantity ←  
Statistical value ←

### 4. Declaration clearance finished and declaration FINAL version made.

### 5. Later recalculations/corrections of previous final declarations.

## **Production on the trade statistics**

### **6. SELECTIONS according to definition of the statistics.**

- ⇒ exclusion of declaration data.
- ⇒ Procedure code (Box 37).
- ⇒ Data, in addition to declaration data.
- ⇒ Exclusion of items below lower value limit.

## **Production of trade statistics.**

### **\*\* “Accounting system”\*\***

- ⇒ Accounting system means that:
- ⇒ All published figures can be reproduced any time.
- ⇒ All corrections to made on most detailed level.
- ⇒ All corrections made after the first publishing stored.
- ⇒ All sequences of corrections are recorded and stored.

### **7. Monthly statistical detail data files.**

### **8. Monthly correction data.**

Sources of fault discoveries:

- ⇒ From Point 5 above. Declaration corrections made by the Customs.
- ⇒ Feedback on errors discovered by users of the Statistics.  
(Message link back to the Customs ??)

### **9. Regrouping from registers and catalogues.**

- ⇒ Firm reg. no ⇒ link to NACE (ISIC)
- ⇒ Commodity no ⇒ link to SITC, CPA, BEC
- ⇒ VAT no (Norway) ⇒ link to prod. area of the exports
- ⇒ Country codes ⇒ groups of countries
- ⇒ Restrictions in publishing on specific commodities.

DATA FROM: 7 + 8 + 9 = INPUT  
TO BATCH PROGRAMMES PRODUCING:

### **10. Aggregate files.**

### **11. TABLES with final layout, ready for printing.**

### **12. INDICES, deflators for the National Accounts.**

### **13. Data input to Balance of Payment.**

### **14. Information for authorities, international org. and private companies.**

## **TRADE STATISTICS FOR THE CUSTOMS AND the GOVERNMENT**

### **15. Tables for use in int. trade negotiations.**

Country distribution by commodities, stat value and duty amount.

## **8. Latvian project on electronic transmission of Foreign Trade Statistics data**

### **Latvian Project on Electronic Transmission of Data from the Customs Board of Latvia (CB) to the Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia (CSB)**

#### **The existing system of data transfer**

At present the CB twice a week delivers to the CSB packages of the SAD. The CSB keys the information, checks the data and finally compiles the foreign trade statistics.

The main reasons for such existing system were the following:

- the unacceptable data quality of the SAD including also the SAD electronic copies;
- the CB had internal problems with the data transfer system.

The situation has changed during the last couple of years:

- the data quality of the SAD is improving.
- it became difficult for the CSB to cope with the data keying because the number of the SAD is growing continuously.

#### **The preparation work for the receiving the SAD data from the CB in the electronic format**

The CSB and the State Revenue Service signed agreement in the end of 1996. This agreement states that in 1998 the Customs Board will deliver to the CSB the SAD data in the electronic format. The data in these data files will contain the acceptable quality data for the statistical purposes.

To fulfil the above mentioned the CSB agreed with the CB on the following:

- that the CSB would take for analysis the data files from the CB data base and the CSB would check these data files according to its statistical data control programs;
- the results of these data controls would be delivered to the CB for further analysis;
- the CSB and the CB jointly based upon the analysis of CB data files would adopt the decisions regarding the data quality.

The CSB managed to analyse the data files of September 1996 and March 1997. Besides, in the course of work the CSB took away the so called "possible data errors" control programs from the data controls.

The results of the data file analysis are the following:

- the largest part of the errors refers to the supplementary unit of measure (for instance, none supplementary unit as requested in the nomenclature, wrong supplementary units, etc.);
- the wrong commodity code ( for example, commodity code contains only 4,6,8 digits, wrong commodity codes, commodity codes without national commodity digit where it is required, etc .
- errors concerning the countries of destination, countries of consignment;
- the CSB has analysed these errors also by the customs posts and in many cases it is obvious that some kinds of errors refer to the fixed customs posts;
- **besides, the CSB have discovered *that data in paper SADs differ from the SAD data in electronic format and in most of the cases the data in the paper SADs are correct.***

The CSB concluded from these data analyses that SAD data quality is comparatively satisfactory and it is possible to start the implementation of electronic data transmission from the CB to the CSB. But the both state institutions (CB and CSB) have to continue their common work to reach a really good data quality.

In 30 May 1997 the State Revenue Service and the Central Statistical Bureau agreed on that starting with October the CB will deliver to the CSB the SAD copies in electronic format for testing. The CB will hand over the data files three times per month.

The CSB anticipates that there will not be major changes in the foreign trade statistics production system due to the implementation of the new data transmission arrangement. It foresees that the data checks basically will not differ from data checks which are used now. Nevertheless the CSB has to modify its distribution of work and electronic data processing system.

### **The problems which have to be solved in the future**

The CSB considers that

- it is completely necessary to continue the co-operation work in SAD data quality improvement between the CB and the CSB;
- it is indispensable to create the system for returns of error messages from the CSB to the CB;
- to realize the above mentioned there is an urgent need for officials in the CB who could more concentrate on the statistical matters.

## 9. The new Customs ASYCUDA system

1. ASYCUDA++ has been designed to fully satisfy the needs of Customs and Statistical Services in relation to foreign trade transactions, starting from the most basic Customs functions and going on to more complex user-defined facilities. Consequently it is suitable for use in the smallest Customs offices as well as in large regional offices with very high throughput of declarations and where there is a need for a much more sophisticated environment.
2. The implementation of ASYCUDA++ in the Baltic States will provide or improve, and manage:
  - Collection and accounting of Customs duties, value added tax and other fiscal charges relating to all Customs procedures on foreign trade;
  - Speedier clearance of goods;
  - High quality management information.
3. The objectives will be accomplished by:
  - automatic verification, registration, assessment and accounting for duty on Customs declarations;
  - uniform application of the law, correct duty rates, and the ability to monitor and trace payment of duty;
  - control of misdeclaration of value and false description of goods through the use of on-line valuation and tariff files;
  - improved selection of targets for control purposes;
  - faster processing of documents, and minimised manual document handling;
  - more systematic working methods and optimal allocation of tasks and resources.
4. Furthermore, ASYCUDA++ will promote and support the application of standard operational principles which the Customs Departments plan to implement including:
  - Selective examination practice;
  - Declarant compliance incentives;
  - Effective management of the Customs clearance process;
  - Prepayment and payment guarantee schemes to facilitate trade and secure duty and tax collection.
  - Control of the routing of trade to approved Customs clearance offices.

In summary, data can be selected, filtered, extracted and compiled in any way and at any level according to the needs of the Users. The data may be aggregated using inter-office telecommunication facilities, or if not available, on magnetic media.

Report lay-outs can be standardised for regular outputs or user-defined. All data can be interrogated on multiple criteria and the results displayed on the screen or printed out in the form of reports, charts, graphs, or user-defined forms.

Data can be extracted on to ASCII files and transferred using the media available to any other computer system and any software package.

Data can be extracted and transferred to other hardware presently used by Customs or other Government Ministries for statistical purposes. Data can be transferred to commercial dBase, spreadsheet and statistical software packages.



## 10. Customs work to check and correct FST data

**The use of statistics and statistical methods in customs work to detect errors in the customs declarations and to investigate companies. How many statistical results could be used to increase work efficiency and data quality?**

### **Present situation**

Some of the main tasks of the Statistics Division of Estonian National Customs Board are collection and post-clearance quality controls of information from customs declarations.

Some input checks are run on the data while the declaration is entered into the INFOTOLL system. These checks include for example validation of codes and code combinations (formats and contents). The price-control system, which gives a warning messages when the price of the goods is not inside the limits, is also in use. A lot of errors in the data are not found out or eliminated by the system due to the shortages of the INFOTOLL. There should be more strict input checks in the system and the system of data transfer should be more reliable. Therefore a lot of work has to be done during post-clearance checking of the data.

The post-clearance quality checking of the data is done on our central database by running of different programs and queries in order to find possible errors in the database and improve data quality.

The main tasks during controlling of the data are following:

- following the weekly deadlines of receiving the data from Customs Houses and adding the data to our central database,
- checking the completeness of our central database (all necessary records have to be in necessary files, existence of the date of border-crossing etc.),
- checking the validity of the contents of data (controls of codes, price controls).

At the moment we do not use any particular statistical methods for analysing the data, but mainly check the validity of data formats and cross-field validity. The cross-field validity checks include for example the average price controls and unit weight controls. The reasons, why we do not yet use automated methods of statistical analysis for quicker and more comfortable data checking, lie mainly in the limitations of the software. We have been using the same checks for a long time already. We have implemented some new checks, when we have received information on errors from the Board of Statistics and have found a way to avoid this kind of mistakes to be sent them in the future.

A lot of mistakes, which we find and correct, are caused by mistakes, which are made during keying in of the data. There are also the mistakes, which have been done intentionally by declarants in order to falsify the amount of taxes to be paid.

There have been quite many cases, when we have found out the falsified stamps on SAD copies while comparing the data in our database with the documents presented by declarants. For example, each month we look for missing records of declarations in our database. When we ask declarants to invalidate the declarations in case the goods have not crossed the border or to present documents which prove the border-crossing, there have been quite many declarations presented with falsified stamps proving the border-crossing. With this procedure many fines have been paid and our database has been of a great help.

### **Future plans**

As a part of a programme of reform in the Estonian National Customs Board, employees of the Statistics Division are working to improve the quality of information that the Customs Board collects from customs declarations. At the same time we are making preparations for implementation of a new Customs Information System and Statistical Analysis System.

At the moment one of our main goals for Statistics Division is to make proposals for building up a strong system of input checks for the new information system in order to avoid data with errors being added to our Customs database. We are preparing a list of all necessary checks (format checks, cross-field checks etc.) to be used by our new input programmes. We also plan to develop our system with credibility checks and post-clearance data checks done in Statistics Division. We plan to implement a system where information about declarations with possible errors, found out during post-clearance credibility checking of data, are sent back to the station, where the declaration was accepted. There the customs officer will check additional documents or contact the declarant requesting the correct information.

We try to use experiences of other countries in aforementioned subjects as much as possible. We have gained a lot of information from Norwegian and Swedish Customs, right now the co-operation work with the Board of Customs and Excise of UK is going on.

The proposals will be done for the input checks in our new Customs Information System ASYCUDA and for the new post-clearance checks to be done with the new Statistics Software.

In order to collect statistical data with high quality, to produce statistical reports and to analyse the data in connection with the implementation of a new customs information system, it is necessary to make a selection of a statistical analysis system to be used.

We have almost finished the work of determining the user requirements for the new system. We contacted some state institutions (Ministry of Finance, Tax Board, Statistics Board etc.), who receive the statistical information from us, as well as the Customs Departments and Customs Houses, asking for their interests and needs.

The main requirements for our new statistical software system are:

- quick processing of large amounts of data;
- processing of data from different files into one report;
- quick presentation of data by queries and in reports;
- forecasting;
- analysis of time-series;
- visual presentation of data;
- good graphical tools etc.

From aforementioned subjects for example visual presentation of data and analysis of time-series would be the tools to help us to improve the data quality.

We have been investigating the field for some time already and for now it seems that we are interested of buying the Statistical Analysis System SAS. We have had a brief demonstration of SAS in the Latvian Board of Statistics, the Norwegian Board of Statistics and in the Lithuanian Customs Board. We also attended the SEUGI annual conference in Madrid in May and have had a demonstration of the system at our office, using our real databases.

We hope to start using a new system in the end of this year or in the beginning of next year.

## **11. EU Regulations; Baltic FTS and the EU negotiations**

The ongoing EU preparations for Baltic EU membership: What kind of information could be expected to be requested from EU and national institutions, and what would be the most difficult questions. How could the Statistical Office (ESO) plan to better meet this challenge?

The integration with the EU is very pertinent problem for Estonia and for Estonian Statistical Office as well. There are three major questions for foreign trade statistics section:

### **1. Why is Estonian trade deficit so big? Is it natural or Estonian trade figures are shown distorted conditioned by methodological reasons?**

At present the General trade system is used for producing official foreign trade statistics. Investigations showed that Estonian trade deficit is smaller by using Special trade system. This discrepancy is obviously caused by imprecise description of movements of goods in customs warehouses. This problem need more detailed investigations at the hands of Statistical Office and Customs Board.

The second subject for investigations is "fish sold abroad or to foreign vessels from national vessels". Until 1995 Statistical Office got information on this from one big company, but after bankruptcy of this company, is fish sold abroad out of observation. As today have appeared some new companies dealing with fish catch and sell abroad, is our mission first find the contact with them and then get the correct and reliable information.

### **2. Is ESO able to deliver the all required information to Eurostat?**

We got from Eurostat document 400 rev.5 where all requirements of information were specified. At the present ESO is able to deliver majority of required information, but there are some points we do not have information about or the use of these data-fields has different consequence. For example at present we don't collect the information on containers, internal mode of transport, preferences and statistical procedures in ESO. Preferences and internal mode of transport used by customs are not identical with Eurostat requirements by meaning. We have some work to do here, but in fact our present state is not very bad.

### **3. In what degree is Estonian methodological basis identical to Eurostat regulations?**

We got a questionnaire on this matter. We had to give the answers on following questions: are EU regulations mentioned in this document available, are our regulations in compliance whit them and if not, we had to mark planned terms of achieving compliance. Necessity of translation was also asked. In the first we didn't find all regulations. In the second it was very hard to read and understand them as the regulations are at present not available in our mother-tongue, they are connected to each other and amended many times. Making decision on compliance was also difficult because often extra and intra trade problems are treated in the same regulation. After trying to answer those questions the situation is still confusing for us.

## **12. Data deliveries to international organisations**

### **12.1. Norwegian data deliveries to Eurostat/international organisations**

We deliver external trade information to several international organisations. Often one organisation receives more than one delivery of data. If we look at the way we handle the different deliveries, this again closely related to the total amount of data we transmit, we can talk about five main categories. The first is organisations that receive larger quantities of data on a regular basis. Secondly we have a number of organisations that require individual treatment in the sense that we have made separate computer programmes for each one. The third group receives extracts from our database. To group four we simply send copies of other tables we produce (e.g. from the Monthly Bulletin). The last group sends us forms to fill in that require a lot of manual labour. For these last forms we often have

to pick information from other tables and make a lot of calculations before filling in the forms. Luckily we don't have too many forms of this kind.

**To summarise:**

*Five main categories.*

- 1 Large amount of data on a regular basis usually on cassettes
2. Separate computer programmes for each report.
3. Extracts from our table base.
4. Copies of tables produced for other purpose.
5. Forms that require a lot of manual handling

*All the international organisations that receive external trade statistics are listed in one of the annexes to this paper. Looking at these organisations it is one interesting thing to observe: Even though we send complete commodity by country information to several larger international organisations, most of the work that has to be done are for the small ones. This because the smaller organisations are not able to use information that already has been transferred to larger organisations. This fact we have put forward to more than one small organisation, but the answers are all the time that they are not able to make use of these sources.*

## **12.2. Deliveries of data on cassettes**

*For all these deliveries we use our own file descriptions, this of course provided that we have given the necessary information. The organisations are normally interested in all the Norwegian trade figures, either on detailed or more aggregated level. Based on demands from our commercial clients we have worked out some standard file formats to use when submitting data on different, well-known levels of aggregation.*

*To the new delivery of data to EUROSTAT we have to use a common file description that applies to EU members.*

### **12.2.1. To FAO, OECD and UN**

The most used one (File 1) gives information on the most detailed level, distribution by commodity and country. This file gives figures for the last month and summary January - month. We will not comment on the separate fields we all regard as necessities to produce standard commodity by country information. On the other hand we will go through how to handle commodities not for publication. In order not to reveal these commodities we have given these the commodity number 9999.9999. All these commodities that have been given this commodity number are aggregated into one data record for each country, imports and exports. By doing so we enable the receiver of the data to produce, for each country, exact total figures. The disadvantage is that in the Norwegian exports quite a lot of commodity numbers are not for publication. This makes it impossible to produce exact figures on more aggregated figures either by HS or SITC.

### **12.2.2. To UN, 2, 3, 4 and 5-digit SITC by country**

This file is used to deliver data by 2-3-4-5 digit SITC to the UN, New York. In this shipment we produce four separate tables (levels of SITC). This enables us to a great extent to avoid the difficulties concerning data not for publication. On the other hand, combining two or more of the tables may allow the user to expose information not for publication.

As these tables are simply copies from printer tables primarily used in our information office, they therefore contain aggregated levels which have to be removed by the UN.

### **12.2.3. To OECD, two-digit SITC by country**

This file is just a copy of one of the files recorded in our database for external trade. This file contains two-digit SITC by country on a monthly basis. Having finished a month in our production we transmit a file that contains the most updated figures, on 2-digit SITC by country, for all the previous months. In addition to two-digit SITC recorded we have introduced an additional field named «commodity

classification». This rude division has been introduced in order to generate, in an easy way, the main total figures normally used in the Norwegian External Trade.

#### **12.2.4. To EUROSTAT, commodity number by country, Geonom**

##### *Present file:*

We will not pay much attention to the layout we now use for the delivery to EUROSTAT, but rather have a closer look at the future layout. In the same way as OECD is interested in monthly updated figures this file we now use, also is more or less a copy of the most detailed information recorded in our database. The usual way to transmit data is to send files containing data for the last month and corrections on earlier transmitted data. Instead of transmitting corrections to earlier published figures separately, we have chosen to give new updated figures for each month in this delivery. The commodities not for publication are dealt with in the same way as described in file 1.

##### *Future file:*

The contents and the format of this delivery were presented in a separate paper prepared to a visit from Macedonia in the end of 1996. In this short general view we will present some elements regarding the contents of such a file.

Compared with the present file this new one will decompose the external trade figures much more than today. Only introducing procedure codes, box 37 (SAD), both the imports and exports are to be divided into five separate streams. To do so you must have national procedure codes that enable you to meet the specifications needed. Having brought this in order you have to check the data in order to avoid transmitting incorrect combinations of commodities and statistical procedures. Different from the present file, commodities usually not for publication will be transmitted. These commodities have to be marked with specific information (codes) telling what kind of level for both HS and SITC publishing is permitted.

In order to avoid mistakes regarding corrections on previously published monthly data, we plan to produce new updated monthly figures from January on each new month we transmit data.

#### **12.2.5. To World Trade Organisation (WTO). The deliveries include both external trade statistics as well as tariff information and other trade information such as quantitative restrictions with necessary references.**

For some years now, since the winding up of GATT, Norway has not reported or forwarded import statistics to WTO. The secretariat of WTO has now put forward a simpler suggestion to the content of the information from each country to be loaded into an integrated database (IDB). This because many countries had problems to meet the old more extensive requirements.

This new content of the integrated database will need input both from import statistics and information from customs. Much of the same information were required when Norway applied for membership in the European Market.

The content may be divided into three main categories.

- a. Tariff information
- b. Import statistics
- c. Other information

##### *Tariff information, content*

Tariff line number

Product description - This is of course a description of the national customs tariff

Duty/duties - At least one Most Favoured Nation (MFN) should be provided

Partner - Would be recorded where applicable, to identify the partner to which the duty applies

Binding situation - Has to be a valid binding situation, (bound, bound at different levels, unbound, etc)

### *Import information, content*

Tariff line number - These numbers must have a corresponding entry in the tariff file.

Partner - a valid national partner code for the reporting country. Should not represent a group of trading partners.

Customs value

Quantity 1

Quantity unit 1

Quantity 2

Quantity unit 2

### *Other information*

Quantitative restrictions, including voluntary exports restraints and orderly marketing arrangements affecting imports. Non-tariff measures such as licensing and mixing requirements; variable levies

## **12.3. Deliveries, individual programmes, on paper**

Just a few organisations require running individual computer programmes. The reasons for having separate programmes are several. The results from running the programmes are adjusted to the forms these organisations request us to fill in. These forms are often in need of aggregates not available in our standard external trade base. We often have aggregates of more than one commodity number. One other reason may be that the year differ (e.g. crop year).

### **General system of preferences for import of goods from developing countries (GSP)**

In this section we specially have to mention the delivery of GSP-statistics to UNCTAD and other organisations. In Norway we produce some special reports that give some measures of the utilisation of this agreement. Producing these statistics we have to combine both external trade statistics and tariff information. In the annex to this paper you will find examples showing the different ways of expressing several measures of utilisation.

In the new file delivered to EUROSTAT one of the fields to report is just preference code. In Norway we do not have the three-digit preference code used in EU, and therefore we will not be able to report this data field. This means that we will still have to produce these special statistics on our own.

The GSP-tables we produce are:

- a. Country with summary for agricultural (HS 01-24) and industrial (HS 25-99) products
- b. The five largest commodities for each country.
- c. Summaries for the least developed (LDC) and all developing countries (DC).
- d. Time series showing the utilisation for LDCs and DCs.

## **12.4. Extracts, from the external trade base, on paper**

The organisations represented here receive mostly some extracts from our most detailed file, commodity by country. The distinctions between these last receivers and those being produced individually are somewhat vague. As time goes by we have more and more often new forms to fill in, with the purpose of only supplying these smaller organisations with extracts from our external trade base.

## **12.5. Copies of an already existing table**

Of this kind we only send copies of a monthly summary table to three main international organisations. This table gives monthly and summary figures for each country, imports and exports. This table is now also available on INTERNET, but the receivers are not able to connect.

## 12.6. Filling in forms, manually

This last group all receives data on a yearly basis. Not a frequent delivery and the fact that you have to consider data not for publication are the main reasons that the information to these organisations are worked out manually.

# 13. Data Deliveries to EUROSTAT. Contents and Format

## 13.1. Regulations and rules

The *regulations* of the European Union (EU) determine the contents of a reporting country's data transmissions to Eurostat. *Technical documents* describe the format to use for the transmission.

This means that under the European Economic Area agreement (EEA) between the EU and Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein, we have to follow the EU regulations and technical documents listed below, when we put together our external trade statistics transmissions to Eurostat.

- *Council Regulation* (EC) No 1172/92 of 22 May 1995 on the statistics relating to the trading of goods by the Community and its Member States with non-member countries («Basic Regulation»)
- *Commission Regulation* (EC) No 840/96 laying down certain provisions for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 1172/95 relating to the trading of goods by the Community and its Member States with non-member countries («Implementing Regulation»)
- *Data Transmission* DOC.METH 400 rev. 5, Transmission of the results of Intra- and Extra-community trade Eurostat C-4 External Trade Statistics (For Internal Use) («Technical Document»)
- Explanations on Doc.Prod 400 («Technical Explanations»)

The «Basic Regulation» determines the theoretical scope of the statistics, the «Implementing Regulation» contains the detailed definitions of the scope and variables. Both regulations have close ties to the EU Customs regulations and nomenclatures. Furthermore the «Technical Document» contains additional codes and information necessary for the programming and transmission of the data. The «Technical Explanations» is a file description summary, complete with the special codes from the «Technical Document».

### 13.1.1. National adaptations to the regulations

Any individual country entering into an obligation of transmitting data to the Eurostat, may have to make formal reservations in their agreement with the EU as to which data the country is able to transmit.

A country with an a priori adaptation to the customs regime of the EU, will of course more readily be able to fulfil any obligations to transmit data to Eurostat. This may be the case for Macedonia, unlike Norway.

We will take a brief look at two variables to get an idea of what this may mean, firstly commodity numbers and secondly country nomenclature. (In chapter 2 we will discuss all variables).

Example 1: Data should be reported according to the commodity nomenclature 8-digit CN for the exports and 10-digit TARIC for the imports. The EEA-agreement therefore has a formal reference to the fact that Norway will transmit data only «at least down to the CN six-digit-level», which is of course the level of the Harmonized System. (For reasons we will deal with later, Norway also has to transmit its national 7th and 8th digits.)

Example 2: Data must be reported according to the EU's country nomenclature, the so-called Geonomenclature or GEONOM which is used by the Customs in EU. In Norway the Customs use the two-letter ISO country nomenclature. The necessary re-coding is done in Statistics Norway. If EU introduces the ISO alpha 2 codes (by 1998), this re-coding will no longer be necessary.

It is very important that the external trade statisticians should take part in the process when the national authorities determine which adaptations (amendments) have to be formally included in the trade agreement between the country and the EU. The policy of Statistics Norway is to try to keep the adaptations (amendments) to the EEA agreement at a minimum. Our task is to bring attention to the necessary amendments that may need to be formally included in the statistics appendix of the EEA agreement.

### ***13.1.2. Special and General Trade systems vs. the EUROSTAT delineation***

The theoretical delineation of which categories of transactions should be included in the transmission to Eurostat is set down in the Council Regulation, article 6. When comparing it with the description of the Special and General Trade system in the new draft UN recommendations, the Eurostat delineation is somewhere in-between General and Special trade. (More practically, the most recent EU guidelines on which four-digit codes to include in the reporting to Eurostat: e.g. «Correlation between customs procedure codes and statistical procedures» Doc. MET no. 361 of 11.10.1994, or a more recent one, if any.)

For the actual reporting (programming) this delineation is translated into the question of which four-digit procedure codes (EU) from SAD box 37 are to be included, as per specific instruction along the line of e.g. the above mentioned «Correlation-document». For a reporting country that has a national code set for box 37, differing from the EU codes, the delineation must be solved in the national context. If need be: by defining additional, national codes for box 37.

### ***13.1.3. Confidential data***

The Council Regulation, article 13, requires that the reporting country shall also include data declared confidential pursuant to the country's national legislation or practises (provided the country is obliged by the particular EU regulation mentioned in the article, the Council Regulation 1588/90).

In Norway we have a regime of «suppression upon request», which means that all data declared confidential in our statistics are, as a matter of fact, very sensitive. Our problem at present is: In the EEA agreement Norway has accepted the Council Regulation 1588/90. But what of the legal consequences in case any of the importers or exporters claim to be hurt by a real or imagined breach of confidence in the databases outside of Statistics Norway (i.e. in Eurostat)? One crucial point here may be which authority actually owns the data. In Norwegian the detailed input data from the Directorate of Customs and Excise is their property. Taking also the Norwegian Law on Statistics into account, our in-house lawyers have examined the question of whether Norway shall comply, and include the confidential data in the transmissions, or request a formal adaption in the EEA agreement. The lawyers concluded that under the circumstances there is no legal hindrance preventing detailed, open ETS data to be transmitted to Eurostat.

## **13.2. Data contents and formats**

In this chapter we will follow the general disposition of the Technical Document. We will, however, focus only on the chapters that deal with Extra-Community statistics.

The *General Introduction* (p. 3) says that the reporting country shall transmit the following results to Eurostat, within **six weeks** of the reference month:

- **a single monthly tape** which contains, on a single medium, basic statistics, transport statistics and tariff statistics. For the results considered confidential by the reporting country, the tape contains non-camouflaged data and instructions on the application of confidentiality.

The data sections described below that are marked with an asterisk \* are obligatory.



### 13.2.1. Data contents, codes and nomenclatures

#### **\*Reference period**

The reference period is the calendar month. In practice in the EU Member States as well as in Norway and in Macedonia (?) statistical information is classified in the calendar month of the date of receipt of the customs declaration.

Six digit code, e.g.: 199601 for January 96. (Section 1 in the data record transmission)

#### **\*Reporting country code**

Identification of the Geonomenclature code identifying the reporting country, e.g. 095 for Macedonia, 028 for Norway. (Section 3)

#### **\*Flow code**

1 = imports

2 = exports

(Section 4)

#### **\*Product code**

Imports: Ten-digit code composed of the eight digits of the Combined Nomenclature (CN), plus two digits from the TARIC. Exports: CN. As for our reporting, Norway has only the first six digits in common with the EU Member States. We shall continue to transmit our national 7th and 8th digits. This is on one hand in accordance with the wish of the head of the database at Eurostat. On the other hand it will be necessary, if it is eventually decided that Norway shall transmit non-camouflaged data also where results are considered confidential.

(Section 5)

#### **\*Partner country conforming to regulations**

The partner country for imports is (as a main rule) the *country of origin*. For the following cases, however, the partner country is the *country of consignment*:

- goods in Chapter 97 of CN (works of art, antiques)
- goods imported after outward processing
- returned goods and other goods of reporting country origin
- goods of which the origin is not known

The partner country for exports is the country of destination.

The Geonomenclature is to be used for coding, also in the cases where confidential treatment is to be given to the country in a later data section, see below. (Section 6)

#### **Other partner country**

Optional variable, imports only: Indication of the Geonomenclature code of the country of consignment. (Section 7)

#### **\*Statistical procedures**

Imports:

1 = normal

3 = after outward processing

5 = for inward processing, suspension system

6 = for inward processing, drawback system

7 = after economic outward processing for textiles

Exports:

1 = normal

3 = for outward processing

5 = after inward processing, suspension system

6 = after inward processing, drawback system

7 = for economic outward processing of textiles

For the EU Member States the input into each of the five categories in each of the two trade directions follows directly, in theory, from their procedure codes in SAD box 37. However, a survey in 1994 showed that the national practices differed for several of the box 37 codes. The External Trade Committee in Luxembourg is therefore in the process of preparing specific guidelines on which four-digit codes to include into which of the sub-streams.

The underlying rationale (and need) for specifying the processing trade categories is, of course, to enable production of statistics on these increasingly important kinds of trade. The EU customs regime has specific rules and regulations on processing trade. Many countries have comparable customs regimes to the EU's. This is the case for Norway. Since we have a national code regime for box 37, our Directorate of Customs and Excise (TAD) has met with our requirements for data transmission to Eurostat by defining new national procedure codes for box 37. Macedonia, on the other hand, could possibly directly follow the EU guidelines on allocation according to procedure code. (Section 8)

#### **\* Preference**

For imports the Member States here have to give a three-digit code set down in the EU customs codes and regulations, from SAD box 36.

This variable has a close connection to the 10-digit TARIC product number.

Norway has a simple, national one-position GSP-code, which is not relevant to transmit (for sake of order this may need to be mentioned as an adaption in the EEA agreement).

(Section 9)

#### **\*Mode of transport at the frontier**

Indication of the mode of transport at the external frontier, from SAD box 25. The international coding (applies in Macedonia, too?) is categories 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9; 0 if unknown.

(Section 10)

#### **\*Container code**

Container transport at the point of crossing the reporting country's frontier should be indicated, except when the mode of transport is 5, 7 or 9.

For goods not transported in containers the relevant code is 0, for goods transported in container the code is 1. If data are not provided, the section must remain blank.

The code is in principle available from EU's SAD box 21, and from box 19 in the Norwegian SAD. (Section 11)

#### **\*Nationality code of means of transport**

Indication of the nationality of the active means of transport according to the Geonomenclature. The code is in principle available from SAD box 21.

(Section 12)

#### **Internal mode of transport**

Indication of the internal mode of transport with the same code as for Mode of transport at the frontier. The reporting country is to provide this information only in the cases where it is foreseen by the national Customs regulation, otherwise blank.

(Section 13)

#### **Nature of the transaction**

Optional; to be transmitted if the reporting country collects this data, and if so, according to the following coding:

- 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90 when a code from column A of the list of the (EU) codes for SAD box 24 «nature of transaction» is collected
- 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 20, 21, 22, 23, 30, 31, 32, 33, 40, 41, 42, 43, 50, 51, 52, 53, 60, 61, 62, 70, 80, 90 when a code from columns A and B of the (EU) code list is collected

(Section 14)

**\*Confidentiality (confidentiality flag)**

One single position on the data record (section 16):

- 1 in the case of confidentiality of the product and/or the country (access to confidential data restricted to Eurostat)
- 2 (access to confidential data restricted to Eurostat and other services within the Commission)
- 0 confidentiality not applied

If code 1 or 2 is indicated, the following sections must be completed (if 0 is indicated they must all remain blank):

- *CN confidentiality code* (section 17)
- *SITC confidentiality code* (section 18)
- *Partner country conforming to regulations (confidentiality code)* (section 19)
- *Other partner country (confidentiality code)* (section 20)
- *Procedure confidentiality code* (section 21)
- *Application of confidentiality to the value* (section 22)
- *Application of confidentiality to net mass* (section 24)
- *Application of confidentiality to supplementary units* (section 25)

**\*Value**

The statistical value in terms of national currency units, from SAD box 46.  
(Section 26)

**\*Net mass**

Indication of the net mass expressed in 100 kilogrammes, based on SAD box 38.  
(Section 28)

**\*Supplementary units**

Indication of the supplementary units, from box 41 of the SAD. When no supplementary units, this section must be completed with zeros.  
(Section 29)

**13.2.2. Checklist to accompany the magnetic tape**

The Technical Document (p.10) demands that the magnetic tape is to be accompanied by a checklist for each chapter of the CN (two digit HS in the case of Norway), as follows:

- a table comprising the totals for value, net mass and supplementary units for each CN (HS) chapter
- the grand total (all countries and all products together)

**13.2.3. Methods of transmitting corrections**

Replacement files (complete files, containing all data for the pertaining months) should be transmitted at least quarterly. In addition a file containing the final results, the annual grand total, is also to be transmitted annually. When this is loaded into the Eurostat databases, as the final version, the Eurostat also at the same time aims to check that the system for transmitting corrected results is functioning properly. (So far, this has been a major problem at Eurostat, and is one of the major reasons for the brand-new version of the transmission format described in the «Technical Document», effective from January 96.)

It will still be possible to make corrections manually, but the Technical Document presses the point that this practise must be strictly limited. Furthermore it is pointed out that, in the case of manual corrections, all the basic information should be sent. That is: it is not enough to send manual corrections concerning aggregate data.

**13.2.4. Further Technical Details**

As a general rule, all sections where data shall not be transmitted, or where the country is unable to follow the prescribed codes, should remain blank.

## 14. A list giving the international organisations receiving external trade information from Statistics Norway

### TAPES OR CASSETTES

FAO/ECE (All commodities by country, final figures) Yearly figures	S 95060 Italy
Nordic Statistical Secretariat (Country by to-digit SITC) Yearly figures	S 60200 Denmark
FAO/ECE (All commodities by country.) Yearly figures	S 60210 Italy
United Nations (2-3-4-5 SITC by country) Quarterly figures	S 60060 New York
Eurostat (All commodities by country) Monthly figures	S 60240 Luxembourg
OECD (Country by to-digit SITC) Monthly figures	S 77260 Paris
In addition all commodities by country, yearly final figures	

WTO - World Trade Org.

This organisation requests annual import statistics on commodity by country level. They also need information from Customs concerning tariffs to all necessary groups of countries MFN , GSP- countries, other trade agreements. Thirdly they also ask for information on quotas, imports/exports restrictions or licenses.

UNCTAD (several different reports, see amendments )

Yearly figures : special treatment that applies a lot of both computer programmes and manual labour  
GSP- preferences sent through department of foreign affairs

### PAPERS THAT REQUIRE INDIVIDUAL COMPUTER PROGRAMMES

International Tropical Timber Org. Yearly figures	S 95040 Japan
FAO/ECE (Grain, Food and Agriculture) Yearly figures	S 95050 Italy
EFE/ECE (Agriculture and Timber) Quarterly figures	S 95000 Swiss
International Cacao Organisation Quarterly figures	S 95010 Switzerland
ECE (Industry & technology) Quarterly figures	S 95020 Switzerland
ECE (Steel- and steel products) Quarterly figures	S 95020

### PAPERS BASED ON EXTRACTS FROM OUR DATABASE

International Olive Council Yearly figures	S 25090 Spain
FAO (Jute, Kenaf etc) Yearly figures	S 25080

FAO (Hard fibres)	S 25070
Yearly figures	
ILZSG (Lead and Zinc)	S 20220
Yearly- and half yearly	
International Pepper Community	S 20130 Indonesia
Final yearly figures.	
UNCTAD (Tin)	S 20140 Switzerland
Quarterly and final yearly figures	
International Sugar Organisation	S 25010 England
Final yearly figures (+ monthly at same time)	
UNCTAD (Iron Ore)	S 25020 Switzerland
Preliminary yearly figures	
FAO (Sugar and Tropical Products)	S 25050 Italy
Final yearly figures (+total each month)	

#### **COPIES OF TABLE 12 IN MONTHLY BULLETIN (Totals each country imports and exports)**

United Nations (Table 12 MU)	S 77240 New York
Monthly figures	
International Monetary Fund (Table 12 MU)	S 77250 Washington DC
Monthly figures	
OECD (Table 12 MU)	S 77260 Paris
Monthly figures	

#### **PAPERS PRODUCED MANUALLY**

ECE (Chemical products)
Yearly figures
ECE (Engineering)
Yearly figures
FAO (Oilseeds, Oils and fats)
Yearly

## **15. FTS valuation problems**

### **15.1. Valuation problems. FOB and CIF adjustments in the customs declarations. To what extent is this done ?**

Before we start discussing the questions above, we will comment on how Norwegian companies deal with the use of delivery terms and thereby FOB and CIF. Studies made in 1995 show that few companies make a conscious effort to handle delivery terms. By old habit even major companies use FOB and CIF, but this doesn't work well in the 1990s. Many companies use FOB and CIF not knowing that these are delivery terms only to be used in sea transport.

*A short list of the main issues in this presentation:*

- 11.1. A minor description of the Incoterms 1990*
- 11.2. The different costs while buying and selling goods*
- 11.3. The delivery terms for total Norwegian imports and exports*
- 11.4. Comparison of customs value and invoice value using delivery terms*

#### **15.1.1. Delivery terms. Incoterms 1990**

The most used set of rules used by the companies is **Incoterms 1990**. This or other sets of delivery terms in international trade are not governed by laws. It is voluntary, and quite up to the companies if

they will use any kind of rules for delivery terms in their buying and selling of commodities. The most important thing with Incoterms is that the set of delivery terms given there, thirteen in all, define the place of the delivery, or to be more precise the point of delivery. Doing so, Incoterms also solves a number of other questions, such as:

Who is responsible for the commodities, the distribution of costs between the buyer and seller, who should arrange and pay for the transport, make out or supply customs documents and possible licences, make inspections, insure the commodities during transport, give information about the transport and be responsible for proper packing.

### **What is Incoterms ?**

Incoterms is a set of standard delivery terms worked out by The International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) for the first time in 1936. The purpose was, and still is, to facilitate world trade. This set of rules was revised and modernised in 1980 and 1990.

The revised version of 1990 has taken into consideration that documents used when buying and selling across borders more and more are transferred electronically. Furthermore, that commodities more often are handled roll-on/roll-off or in containers.

*A complete list explaining the Incoterm codes is given in appendix A.*

### **Two other important definitions.**

*Using Incoterms also takes care of the two important definitions(questions) explained below:*

*Risk* - that may occur during purchase and sales between dealers, it means the risk for the commodities making the way from the seller to the buyer. This covers damage, as well as loss and delays.

*Delivery* - the point of delivery decides when the risk for the commodities moves from seller to buyer. Delivery in the sense of ownership may occur at any point in the transport process, depending on the delivery terms the two parties have decided upon. This implies that delivery does not necessarily mean that the purchaser receives the goods unless this is specified in the agreement terms.

### ***15.1.2. The different costs that occur during selling or buying a commodity. The list is not meant to be complete***

In explaining the use of delivery terms and to what extent import and export values are converted into CIF and FOB values it is useful to list the different costs. Some of these costs are fixed, while others may depend on the value or of the weight of the goods.

- a. The production costs in the factory
- b. Transport to the border (and insurance)
- c. Clearing through customs (domestic)
- d. Other domestic fees or taxes
- e. Transport from domestic border to buyer
- f. Insurance of that transport
- g. Clearing through customs in the import country

### ***15.1.3. March 1997. Delivery terms***

In appendix B to this paper you will find the delivery terms used in March of 1997. The total figures may represent traditional imports and exports. This information is based on item lines received through Customs, and therefore does not include commodities such as ships, natural gas, crude oil and electric current.

### *Imports*

Only one fifth of the import value used the delivery term CIF. The other delivery term with over 20 per cent was EXW. The delivery terms FOB, DDU and DDP showed percentages of 16.8, 15.5 and 11.1 respectively. See appendix B.

### *Exports*

In the export statistics only 13.4, percent was registered with the delivery term FOB. The delivery term DDP was used in 20 per cent of the export transactions, while CIF represented barely one third of the export value. See appendix B.

#### ***15.1. 4. Comparison of invoice value and import/export value in the declarations from March 1997 using delivery terms, and declarations with one single item line only.***

Of the total import value 17.5 billion kroner from March 1997, the declarations with one single item counted for 4.2 billion, or some 24 per cent. The similar figures for the exports statistics were 12.0 billion and 3.9 billion, or 32.5 per cent.

Together with the delivery terms we must also combine the place of delivery. The combination of these two pieces of information decides what kind of costs to be included in the import or export transaction.

In several declarations we use in this survey - the invoice value has not been corrected. Going through the single transactions we have found some large errors when comparing statistical and invoice value. These errors may affect the conclusions we make concerning the adjustments to CIF and FOB values.

These errors may disturb the results you will find when investigating the appendix C. These annexes show the discrepancies between statistical and invoice value. In the surveys the delivery terms are ranked according to percentage deviation.

Even if we found deviations between invoice value (IV) and statistical value (SV) going in the right direction as expected according to delivery terms, we couldn't be sure that the level was right. In order to verify the level we had to know the cost structure to all the countries and places there as well. Looking at the survey for the import in appendix C we see that only the delivery terms DES, EXW, FCA and FOB look to be in order. For both EXW and FCA the deviations are less than for FOB. This is probably correct because FOB is normally used in ship transport, and therefore often imply a higher transport distance (cost). EXW and FCA are most often used for road transport.

In the export survey in appendix C we found that among the delivery terms with large values, DDP, FCA and EXW all seemed correct. EXW showed maybe a bit too large deviation.

### *Investigations on detailed level*

To make some more conclusive description of the situation in Norway regarding CIF and FOB adjustments we have drawn attention to four major countries in the two sections below. The selection of these specific countries, Sweden, Germany, USA and Japan are not accidental. By selecting both overseas and European countries we will try to investigate whether the deviations are larger for similar delivery terms for overseas countries.

### **Imports**

*In order to be able to use the place of delivery actively we have accumulated on the country of consignment.*

For all the four countries we found that the delivery terms from main group C the SV more or less equal the IV. This was the case even if the place of delivery was somewhere else than the border. For the other larger delivery terms, where the exporter more or less bears all the costs, the main group D showed that the IV was not adjusted. The last main group where the exporter was not paying the main transport showed that the SV was adjusted. This group covers both EXW and main group F.

## **Exports**

For all the four countries apply that the two groups EXW and group F show that SV and IV are often the same. This is also the case when the combination of delivery terms and place indicates that there must have been some domestic transport before passing the border. Anyhow, in Norway the distance to the border isn't that long, so the error is small.

The main group C showed for many of the transactions that costs accumulated outside the Norwegian border are not adjusted for. In most of these cases IV equals SV.

The group D with the exporter carrying all the costs, showed that in most of these declarations the SV equals the IV. To those countries where the exports of fish are high the SV were adjusted in most of the cases. This is due to the fact that the fish industry has established a special registration system for buying and selling fish.



## References

Basic Regulation: *Council Regulation (EC) No 1172/95 of 22 May 1995 on the statistics relating to the trading of goods by the Community and its Member States with non-member countries*

Geonomenclature 1996: *Commission Regulation (EC) No 68/96 of 18 January 1996 on the country nomenclature for the external trade statistics of the Community and statistics of trade between Member States*

Implementing Regulation: *Commission Regulation (EC) No 840/96 of 7 May laying down certain provisions for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 1172/95*

Technical Document: *Data Transmission DOC.METH 400 rev. 5, Transmission of the results of Intra- and Extra-community trade Eurostat C-4 External Trade Statistics (For Internal Use)*

Technical Document Explanations: *Explanations on Doc.Prod 400 Luxembourg 19.12.95*

## **Incoterms, list of delivery terms**

Incoterms has 13 delivery terms, divided in four main categories.

### **GROUP E**

*Departure - The commodities are ready for the buyer at the sellers*

**EXW** - Ex Works , named place

### **GROUP F**

*Main transport not paid -The commodities to be delivered to the carrier appointed by the buyer*

**FOB** - Free On Board, named port of shipment

**FAS** - Free Along Side, named port of shipment

**FCA** - Free Carrier, named place

### **GROUP C**

*Main transport paid and arranged by seller , but the risk rests on the buyer*

**CFR** - Cost and Freight, named port of destination

**CIF** - Cost Insurance and Freight, named port of destination

**CPT** - Carriage Paid To, named place of destination

**CIP** - Carriage and Insurance Paid to - named place of destination

### **GROUP D**

*Seller carries all costs and risk to the country of arrival*

**DAF** - Cost and Freight - named port of destination

**DES** - Delivered Ex Ship - named port of destination

**DEQ** - Delivered Ex Quay - named port of destination

**DDU** - Delivered Duty Unpaid - named place of destination

**DDP** - Delivered Duty Paid - named place of destination

**Imports March 1997 by delivery terms**

Delivery terms	Statistical value. Mill.NOK	Percent
CFR	526	3.01
CIF	3 630	20.76
CIP	910	5.20
CPT	290	1.66
DAF	258	1.47
DDP	1 933	11.05
DDU	2 710	15.50
DEQ	17	0.10
DES	52	0.30
EXW	3 686	21.08
FAS	13	0.07
FCA	521	2.98
FOB	2 939	16.81
FOT	0	0.00
XXX	1	0.01
	17 487	100.00

**Exports March 1997 by delivery terms**

Delivery terms	Statistical value. Mill.NOK	Percent
CFR	391	3.25
CIF	3 414	28.42
CIP	1 018	8.47
CPT	212	1.76
DAF	6	0.05
DDP	2 401	19.98
DDU	1 078	8.98
DEQ	13	0.11
DES	16	0.13
EXW	1 171	9.75
FAS	74	0.62
FCA	594	4.95
FOB	1 607	13.38
FOT	0	0.00
XXX	20	0.17
	12 016	100.00

**March 1997. Imports by INCO-code. Invoice value minus statistical value. Percent of statistical value**

Delivery terms	Statistical value. Mill. NOK	Invoiced value. Mill NOK	Discrepancy percent
DDP	692	693	0.03
DES	17	17	0.00
DEQ	6	6	-0.31
CFR	84	84	-0.32
FAS	4	4	-1.55
DAF	21	21	-2.11
EXW	857	828	-3.36
FCA	83	79	-4.28
CIF	870	820	-5.74
Total and mean	4 209	3 929	-6.66
FOB	348	319	-8.24
DDU	790	721	-8.70
CPT	108	98	-9.42
CIP	329	239	-27.33

**March 1997. Exports by INCO-code. Invoice value minus statistical value. Percent of statistical value**

Delivery terms	Statistical value. Mill. NOK	Invoiced value. Mill NOK	Discrepancy percent
DAF	2	2	11.49
XXX	9	10	10.50
DEQ	0	0	8.39
DDP	713	752	5.46
CIP	429	436	1.68
CPT	47	47	1.31
FCA	236	237	0.27
FAS	5	5	0.24
FOT	0	0	0.00
CIF	843	826	-2.01
Total and mean	3 916	3836	-2.00
DDU	482	464	-3.72
CFR	113	108	-4.01
FOB	425	392	-7.81
EXW	612	557	-9.02



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Dear Gilles Rambaud-Chanoz

**The EU/EFTA Cooperation with the Baltic States, Project 41, Foreign Trade Statistics  
Extra meeting in Luxembourg (11 - 13) November?**

At the Working Group meeting in Bodø 3 - 6 August, we discussed the cooperation program for 1998/99 on foreign trade statistics.

The Foreign Trade Section leaders from the Baltic statistical institutions in Tallinn, Riga and Vilnius have received the question - to what extent are the Baltic foreign trade data in line with the EU Regulations?

As you know, it is a big job to dig down in all the relevant Regulations; - to interpret them and to clarify the data content and quality demands.

From our discussions at the meeting, we would like to ask you if it is a good idea to use the next November meeting in Luxembourg to arrange an additional meeting, with the aim to clarify the difference between the Baltic foreign trade data (content and definitions as it is now) and the EU

demands as in the Regulations. We agreed I could send this request to you on behalf of the Baltic project leaders.

First of all our Baltic colleagues would like to have a complete copy of all the Regulations, to get an overview, and to start from the beginning. Copies could be available latest at the meeting.

Practical work for a meeting could be to discuss the single variables each by one; to be able to give a complete picture of what is equal and what is different. If time, the data deliveries to Eurostat could be discussed as well.

Assistance from qualified persons among your staff could be a positive support for the Baltic colleagues. It would better secure a correct interpretation of the EU needs written in the Regulations. In case other CEEC countries should have a similar need, it makes no problem to invite them too.

The last extra-meeting you arranged with the CEEC countries had clearly a positive influence on the communication between Eurostat and the CEEC representatives. It is my impression that they appreciated your initiative very much.

May be it is still vacation time in Luxembourg, but I hope you soon may have time to consider the idea to meet and to inform us about your opinion.

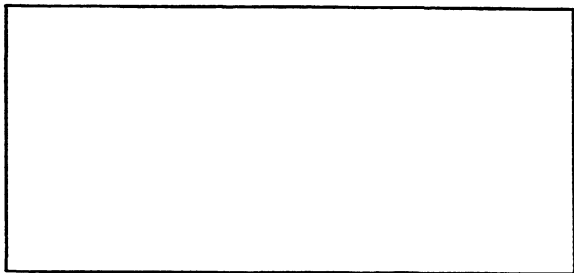
With best regards

.....  
Hans Kristian Østereng

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