

ANNEX VI

Quality indicators

The information on the quality of the data provided by the Member States shall be based on a common set of quality indicators and the necessary descriptive metadata.

1. **Relevance** of statistical concepts means that the data meet users' needs.
2. **Accuracy** is one of the main needs of users. It can be assessed by indicators made up as follows:
 - (a) *Thresholds*
 - (i) member States shall report the levels of current threshold.
 - (ii) in order to monitor the levels at which thresholds have been set, Member States shall report:
 - the coverage rate (%), expressed in terms of value, of trade above the exemption threshold.
 - (iii) in order to monitor the impact of the thresholds, Member States shall report:
 - the method of adjustment used to estimate trade below the thresholds,
 - the share (%) of estimated trade below the thresholds.
 - (b) *Non-response*

In order to assess the level of non-response, Member States shall report:

 - the method of adjustment used to estimate missing trade,
 - the share (%) of values estimated for missing trade.
 - (c) *Statistical value*

In order to assess the impact of calculating the statistical value, Member States shall report:

 - the methodology used to calculate the statistical value,
 - the quantitative impact of calculating the statistical value.
 - (d) *Revisions*

In order to assess the impact of the revisions procedures, Member States shall report:

 - a description of the revision policy,
 - the change (%) of the total trade value between the first results and the last available results.
 - (e) *Confidentiality*

In order to assess the impact of confidential trade, Member States shall report:

 - a description of confidentiality rules,
 - the share (%) of confidential trade expressed in value terms,
 - the number of product codes within the CN affected by confidentiality.
 - (f) *Other links to accuracy*

Other indicators are useful for assessing the quality of data, so Member States shall include the following in the quality report:

- description of control procedures,
- monthly average number of lines in the declarations,
- number of PSIs (Providers of Statistical Information),
- % of electronic declarations,
- % of values declared electronically.

3. **Timeliness** shall be assessed by Eurostat by calculating the average time between the end of the reference month and transmission of the data to Eurostat, as follows:
 - annual average delay (+ X days) or advance (– Y days) in the transmission of aggregate results, in calendar days, with reference to the legal deadline.
 - annual average delay (+ X days) or advance (– Y days) in the transmission of detailed results, in calendar days, with reference to the legal deadline.
4. **Accessibility** to users gives value to statistical data, which is increased if the data are readily available in formats required by users. **Clarity** of the data available depends on the assistance provided in using and interpreting the statistics and on the available comments and analysis of results.

Consequently, Member States shall include in the quality report the media used to disseminate external trade statistics and references to further information that can assist the users of the statistics (e.g. methodological information, previous or similar publications, etc.).

5. **Comparability** aims at measuring the impact of differences in applied statistical concepts and definitions when statistics are compared between geographical areas, non-geographical domains, or reference periods.

The use of differing concepts and definitions in Member States may affect comparability in foreign trade statistics (comparability over space).

To evaluate the impact, Member States shall report mirror exercises conducted by them and the investigation of asymmetry carried out if the mirror effect becomes significant.

Comparability over time is another important aspect of quality. Member States shall report any changes to definitions, coverage or methods that will have an impact on continuity.

6. **Coherence** is defined by how well sets of statistics can be used together. Apart from External Trade Statistics, information on external trade can be found in National Accounts, Business Statistics and Balance of Payments.

In this context, Member States shall report any information concerning the coherence of foreign trade statistics and statistics originating from other sources.

7. **Completeness** refers to the fact that the themes for which statistics are available reflect the needs and the priorities expressed by users of the European Statistical System.