

FOREIGN TRADE

Reference Metadata in Euro SDMX Metadata Structure
(ESMS)

INSTAT

Reference Metadata

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1. Contact	
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2. Metadata update	
2.1. Metadata last certified	17/06/2019
2.2. Metadata last posted	17/05/2018
2.3. Metadata last update	17/06/2019
3. Statistical presentation	
3.1. Data description	<p>External trade statistics of goods are a very important instrument for decision makers in the public's and private sectors. The statistical information is mainly used in the preparation of bilateral and multilateral negotiations in the context of trade policy and for the assessment of market economies, market research and in determining their trading strategies. These statistics are important not only for these relationships, but at the same time is an important instrument for other statistics. They have an important role in the national accounts statistics, are an important element in the Balance of Payments (BOP), etc. External trade statistics of goods are intended to provide data on trade goods, exportimport of goods in Albania. The main source of statistical data providing of foreign trade of goods is the General Authority of Customs. Information collected each month, through the Customs Declarations. This declaration provides necessary data for customs and statistical purposes and also collects statistical data for the period of the transaction, for the type of goods, net weight, gross weight, the statistical value of the goods, country of destination, country of exporter, origin country, type of transaction, type of</p>

	concession etc.
3.2. Classification system	<p>External trade statistics published at the national level, by country/group of states, 2-digit level and grouped by sections 21 and nine commodity groups of the Combined Nomenclature (CN): http://www.instat.gov.al/en/documentation/classifications-nomenclature/</p> <p>External trade statistics process the data of import and export by 9 groups of Trade International Standard Classification (SITC). These statistics are processed also by another classifications (e.g. Nomenclature of economic activities, products Nomenclature, Classification by Broad Economic Categories) used for the needs of other sectors in INSTAT and various institutions.</p>
3.3. Sector coverage	All sectors producing physical commercial goods are covered.
3.4. Statistical concepts and definitions	<p>Key definitions of indicators used and published in foreign trade statistics are: Exports These in general are goods destined to be send to a third country, subject to customs regime or outside processing arrangements, or re-exported after inside processing. Imports These in general are goods coming from a third country and are directly unloaded or placed to a warehouse according to the customs procedures to accomplish free zones processing, active or customs processing. F.O.B (Free on board) It's the delivery condition of goods, indicating that the price of goods includes transport and handling cost to a specified port for shipment. C.I.F. (Cost, Insurance, Freight) It's the delivery condition of goods indicating that the price includes insurance and freight to an agreed port of destination. The general trade The general trade system records all goods entering or leaving the economic territory of a country with the exception of simple transit trade. So in this case are recorded as imports of all goods entering the customs warehouse of a country, even if they do not appear in free circulation in this country. At the same time, outgoing goods from customs warehouse country recorded as exports of the country. The special trade The special trade system is a narrower concept. In this case all goods from a foreign country that are received into customs warehouses, are not recorded in the special trade aggregates unless they subsequently go into free circulation in the country of receipt or are placed under the customs procedures for inward processing. Similarly, outgoing 4 goods from customs warehouses are not recorded as exports.</p>
3.5. Statistical unit	Any physical and juridical person lodging a customs declaration.
3.6. Statistical population	Trade in goods of the includes all goods which add or subtract from the stock of material resources of Albania by entering (imports) or leaving (exports) its economic territory including goods for processing. Information on the goods is provided by physical and juridical person.
3.7. Reference area	External trade statistics in goods cover trade flows entering or living the statistical territory of Albania (country level).

3.8. Time coverage	Time series of annual trade data on a consistent basis for most aggregates are available electronically as from 1991. Time series of monthly trade data on a consistent basis for most aggregates are available electronically as from 2005.
3.9. Base period	The previous year is used as a base year for unit value indices calculations.
4. Unit of measure	The value of trade is expressed in ALL; Million ALL. The net mass in kg and the quantity in supplementary unit (e.g. m, m2, number of items) are used to measure the volume of the trade
5. Reference period	The data for which the report refers is 2018. The reference period for the information on external trade data is the calendar month of export / import of the goods. In practice the reference period is in general the calendar month during which the customs declaration is registered (the date when the goods cross the border/lodging date) by customs authorities.
6. Institutional mandate	
6.1. Legal acts and other agreements	<p>At national level External Trade Statistics are based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · National Statistical Law No.9180 “On Official Statistics”, date 05.02.2004, as amended, http://www.instat.gov.al/media/1504/statistical_law.pdf · Official Statistics National Program for the period 2017-2021, http://www.instat.gov.al/media/3705/psz-2017-2021_english.pdf. · Memorandum of Understanding with General Directorate of Customs; At European level External Trade Statistics are based on: · Regulation (EC) No 471/2009 of the European Parliament · Council Commission Regulation (EC) No 92/2010 · Commission Regulation (EC) No 113/2010.
6.2. Data sharing	Agreement with Eurostat to disseminate the External Trade Data for Albania.
7. Confidentiality	
7.1. Confidentiality - policy	Article 31 on Statistics Law reads as follows: Data collected, processed and stored for the production of official statistics shall be treated by INSTAT, statistical agencies and any organization or person mandated by them, as strictly confidential when they allow statistical units to be identified, either directly or indirectly, thereby disclosing individual information that has not already been made public on other grounds. All employees of the bodies/controllers mentioned in the first paragraph of this point, who are aware about the data they use during they daily work, are obligated to maintain the confidentiality of reliability even after the end of their working function. Direct identification means when a statistical unit is directly identified from its name or address or any officially allocated and commonly known identification number. When data processing is made in a manner that allows the identification of the data subject, the data should immediately be encrypted in order for the subjects to be no longer

	identifiable
7.2. Confidentiality - data treatment	INSTAT publishes data at aggregated level only. In order to protect the identification of trader the published total should include at least three traders, from which one trader should not exceed 85% of the total value. Internal decision: For goods for CN chapter 93, active confidentiality is applied directly by customs: all 8 digit codes of CN chapter 93 are replaced by code CN 930000000 before the data are provided to INSTAT.
8. Release policy	
8.1. Release calendar	Monthly External Trade is published 17 days after the end of the reference period (T+17 days). Annual External Trade is published 173 days after the end of the year (T+173 days) Releases and delays are preannounced in publication calendar. In the case of delays is specified the next date of publication as well as the explanation related to the reasons of delays.
8.2. Release calendar access	Access to the release calendar is granted through the following link: http://www.instat.gov.al/en/publications/calendar/
8.3. User access	In line with the article 34 of National Statistical Law No.17/2018 on Official Statistics, INSTAT disseminates statistics on INSTAT website and other media for simultaneous access, respecting professional independence and in an objective, professional and transparent manner in which all users are treated equitably. The following dissemination channels are used to release the results of External Trade: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website – online release • E-mail • Written requests • Special publications (General printed publications, Foreign Trade, Statistical Yearbook) • Data request, session available for external users in the link below http://www.instat.gov.al/en/about-us/data-request/
9. Frequency of dissemination	Detailed data: Monthly and annual Aggregated data: Monthly and annual
10. Accessibility and clarity	
10.1. News release	Regular press releases organized at a fixed date (17th of each month) at 11.00 o'clock.
10.2. Publications	External Trade Statistics publications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Monthly: External trade · Yearly: External trade and External trade by enterprise characteristics General publications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Yearly: Albania in figure, Statistical Yearbook

10.3. On-line database	All the information is available in both Albanian and English language. Since 2011, through the Pc-Axis system is provided to external users in web a longer time series data for Monthly External trade and Annual External Trade. A simple methodological explanation exists also in the web page. The database link: http://databaza.instat.gov.al/pxweb/en/DST/?rxid=a66b12e1-4b38-4430-825a-67d819195237
10.4. Micro – data access	Micro data are given to specific users after filling standard requesting forms. The micro data are given to the users in the case these data are not confidential based on Article 31 of Official Statistical Law No.17/2018. In the case of confidentiality, data are hidden at the detailed level, which means that the trade is not allocated to the real product code and/or the real partner. It is nevertheless included in the total trade and allocated to the real chapter (i.e. to the real HS2 code).
10.5. Other	Users can submit specific requests for data from the External Trade through the INSTAT website: http://www.instat.gov.al/en/about-us/data-request/
10.6. Documentation on methodology	A short explanation related to the definitions of the main concepts and methodological explanations are provided to users in the end of press releases and publications. Additional support information is given to internal users when needed or required. Also the methodological notes are published at INSTATs website as follow: http://www.instat.gov.al/en/themes/international-trade/international-trade-in-goods/#tab4
10.7. Quality documentation	The foreign trade statistics, tourism and transport unit documents all the work process and procedure for internal purposes.
11. Quality management	
11.1. Quality assurance	INSTAT is committed to ensure the highest quality with respect to the compilation of statistical information. In accordance with the Statistics Law, INSTAT use statistical methods and processes in compliance with internationally recognized scientific principles and standards conduct ongoing analyses of the statistics with a view to quality improvements and ensure that statistics are as up-to-date. In performing its tasks it follows the general principles of quality management from the European Statistics Code of Practice. INSTAT declares that it takes into account the following principles: impartiality, quality of processes and products, user orientation, employee orientation, effectiveness of statistical processes, reducing the workload for respondents.
11.2. Quality assessments	Processes are in place to monitor adequately the quality of compiled and disseminated statistics. The unit regularly undertakes data checks for coverage, classification, and missing data. In addition, it monitors the internal consistency of source data and consistency across source datasets. It notes and investigates all unusual movements in the source data received.

12. Relevance	
12.1. User needs	<p>Users of trade data are classified as external and internal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External users are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutions of Public Administration. • Universities. • National and international NGOs. • Business • General public and other groups of interest. Some main indicators are sent to European Commission, World Bank; IMF; UN - Organizations etc. • Internal users are those within INSTAT, who use External Trade Statistics as input for their work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Account Directory • Agriculture Directory • Short Term Statistics Sectors • Structural Business Register
12.2. User satisfaction	<p>Page Views (Hits) about Foreign Trade in 2018 are around 17,891 clicks while in 2017 were 18,046 clicks. INSTAT during 2018 conduct the User Satisfaction Survey. Users to the questions: “How do you rate the overall quality of Foreign Trade?” using a scale from 1 to 5 (1=very poor, 2=poor, 3=adequate, 4=good, 5=very good), have assessed the quality of the data with an average of 3.56 (71.2%). The results of User Satisfaction Survey are published in the following link: http://www.instat.gov.al/en/documentation/quality-in-statistics/usersatisfaction-survey/</p>
12.3. Completeness	<p>Data completeness of External Trade data for 2018 is given by comparing the quality and quantity of indicators covered by INSTAT with those of regulations. The data completeness rate for Foreign Trade for 2018 is 91.7%.</p>
13. Accuracy and reliability	
13.1. Overall accuracy	<p>The main source of error is wrong information being made by traders on the costumer. Whenever traders aware of error, they can easily correct them with an additional declaration. These corrections are reflected to the data by INSTAT as soon as possible. The affects of these corrections to the variables are low</p>
13.2. Sampling error	<p>The data for external trade are collected by administrative sources so there is no sampling error. Validity checks applied by INSTAT to identify errors in the following fields: · Records with National Customs Procedure Code initialized with “ANU” are deleted as they correspond to a cancellation: it is an intermediate stage before the status “cancelled” is attributed to the item. · Records with customs procedure codes starting with 65 (re-importation of repaired goods), 93 (destructions of goods), and 99 (natural or technical losses) are deleted. · Code fields: Combined Nomenclature 8</p>

	<p>digits, customs procedure codes, national customs procedure codes, delivery terms, office code, transport mode, container, country, supplementary unit, trader, preference, quota, currency. · CN code must be compliant with the official Combined Nomenclature of the year. · Partner can not be Albania except for declaration with CPC "7200", "9600"(entry in duty free), and "6910" (re importation of exported goods). · Terms of delivery should never be empty. · Electricity ("2716000000") can not be associated to another mode of transport than "7. Fixed transport installation". · Monetary gold checks regarding the CN code "71082000": If the code 71082000 refers to a huge amount and the trader is BOA, then it needs to be excluded, from ITGS, but included in the data sent to BOA. · Otherwise it is most probably an error and the commodity code probably needs to be changed to non-monetary gold. · Preference code not valid after 2011 ("MTLYU", "SPA_BE", "MTLRO", "MTLKS") · Customs should always enter the same quantity with a given CN codes else the aggregation of declaration will not be meaningful for quantity of SU. The following tests are then applied: 9 · Quantity of SU found in the declaration is in the SU required for the CN code. · The quantity in SU should not be filled in if it is not required by CN. · If the SU quantity field is not empty, the SU code should be filled in · If the SU code is filled in, then the quantity must not be 0. · Net mass and SU quantity can not be both equal to 0. · Net mass should not be bigger than gross mass · Statistical value must be above 0 when customs procedure is different from "7200", "9600" ("(entry in duty free), and "6910" (re importation of exported goods) as the value could be 0 in order to avoid double counting with the linked declaration)</p>
13.3. Non - sampling error	Not available.Possible sources of non-sampling errors include: misclassification of commodity codes, non response, late response ect.
14. Timeliness and punctuality	
14.1. Timeliness	Monthly data: 17 days after the reference period. This report refers to the 2018 data of External Trade.
14.2. Punctuality	The dissemination of the data is carried out in accordance with the external trade statistics availability calendar that the INSTAT compiles and publishes for each year. http://www.instat.gov.al/en/publications/calendar/ . The publication of external trade has been punctuality in time to 100% of publications carried out over the years.
15. Coherence and comparability	
15.1. Comparability - geographical	Differences between the methodology, concepts and definitions used to collect and process the data can influence in the comparability of data between Albania and other countries.
15.2. Comparability - over time	Over the years there are many changes regarding definitions, coverage or methods, classifications. These changes influence in the comparability over time, especially in detailed level in the case of changes to classification. INSTAT revises the data each month, and in case of significant changes it

	can be possible to revise the data back.
15.3. Coherence - cross domain	INSTAT is the official institution to publish the external trade statistics, based on the statistical law.
15.4. Coherence - internal	The internal consistency of the data is checked before it is finalized. The links between variables are checked and coherence between different data series confirmed.
16. Cost and burden	Being the administrative source as the unique source, the burden on respondents is almost zero. People working on the external trade statistics data are: · Total staff in Central Office: 2 employees;
17. Data revision	
17.1. Data revision - policy	Revision policy of External Trade is done in accordance with general revision policy and errors treatment policy introduced by INSTAT in the links below: http://www.instat.gov.al/media/2940/revision_policy_2016.pdf http://www.instat.gov.al/media/2939/the_errors_treatment_policy.pdf
17.2. Data revision - practise	General Directorate of Customs(GDC) provides the national statistical authorities with revised records on imports and exports where statistical data already provided are amended or changed. External trade statistics sector revise each month the data and the revisions are released in the next publication. The final data for the year it's released in the External Trade Statistics yearly publication of the next year. The revisions done each month are reflected not only in publications, but in the same time they are reflected in the database available in the INSTAT web page.
18. Statistical processing	
18.1. Source data	The only source for external trade data is the Customs Authorities. Goods covered by Customs include Electricity and Crude Oil. Pipelined gas or water is not subject to international trade in Albania. 'Ships' and 'Aircrafts' are included in external trade statistics based on customs declaration. At the moment INSTAT does not use any other source.
18.2. Frequency of data collection	External Trade data are collected monthly, from administrative source.
18.3. Data collection	GDC is responsible for collecting and checking the customs declarations. The data are collected electronically by Customs Officials. For statistical purposes these data are delivered monthly to INSTAT for statistical data checking and processing Provisional monthly data are provided to INSTAT every month on the 18th of the month following reference month. Data are controlled, and then a first release is published around the 25th of the month on paper and web site. In June, the final updated data relating to previous year's twelve months are sent by Customs. The final revision is published by INSTAT in October. The data is currently provided in excel format on CD (by mail). There are no delays in data deliveries.

18.4. Data validation	<p>Data processing is done with a special program (Eurotrace) for processing external trade data used in other European country. In program (Eurotrace) are located some validity checks errors, for example. controls related with goods value that needs to be >0, net weight < gross weight, the partner 11 country shouldn't be AL (Albania), checks for specific codes that should be analyzed, the unit of products should be the same as the unit set by custom in CN, unit should not exist if is not determined in NK, should have quantity > 0 if unit is determined, adjustments to the product codes or countries according to Eurostat standards, etc.</p>
18.5. Data compilation	<p>Since March 2012, Eurotrace system is implemented and some basic data controls are introduced. GDC performs some data controls but not for statistical purpose. These controls are done for taxation purpose so the data received have some validity errors that are corrected in INSTAT. Statistical Value Customs calculate statistical value FOB for exports; and for import, when the statistical value is underestimated in comparison with the values provided in reference tables; the Customs officers apply an adjustment rate to raise the customs value. The adjusted value is used as statistical value as it is closer to reality. INSTAT does not have a regular routine for the estimation of statistical value. In the case when the Statistical value is missing, INSTAT contacts custom to correct and put the value. In the case of no answer we estimate the value using the average price for that product. The statistical data does not include the nature of the transaction. The Customs is investigating on how to collect it as this information was requested by several institutions. Until now, no way was found to collect it in the current system. GDC does not apply simplification. Transactions are recorded using customs declarations and data are used in statistics. Specific goods: Industrial plants GDC does not use simplification procedures for industrial plants. Transactions are recorded under the relevant CN codes. Vessels and aircraft INSTAT includes 'Vessels' and 'Aircraft' in the trade data based on Customs Declarations. Motor vehicle and aircraft part INSTAT includes 'Motor vehicles and aircraft part' in the trade data based on Customs Declarations. Goods delivered to vessels and aircraft The Goods delivered to vessels and aircraft are considered as normal export. Sea products The sea products are considered as normal export. 12 Electricity and gas INSTAT include 'Electricity' in its data. The data are provided monthly by General Directorate of Customs. For the moment trade on electricity and gas (group 271112) is registered by customs and taken into account in the trade of Albania. Military goods There are no special procedures in Customs to declare goods under military secrecy. Confidentiality on national level is applied by Customs before sending data to INSTAT by replacing all commodity codes belonging to the CN chapter 93 with CN code 93000000. This confidentiality is based in an internal decision of General Director of Customs.</p>
18.6. Adjustment	<p>External Trade data does not make any adjustment.</p>

19. Comment	
Annex	