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**Item 3 b): The new and operational UNSD-OECD Joint Trade Data Collection and Processing System:  
Presentation of Main Features of the Web Browser Client**

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## **THE NEW AND OPERATIONAL UNSD-OECD JOINT TRADE DATA COLLECTION AND PROCESSING SYSTEM: PRESENTATION OF MAIN FEATURES OF THE WEB BROWSER CLIENT.**

### **Introduction**

Five years ago, the OECD and the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) joined efforts in the field of managing annual detailed international trade statistics. The scope of the project was to cover all phases of the trade data production process from data capture through standardisation, aggregation, harmonisation to query and analysis for end users. The aim of the project was and still is to reduce respondents' burden to the strict minimum and to disseminate identical detailed trade data from OECD and UNSD. The advantages for users of having identical data disseminated by these organisations are clear and it should be stressed that also the WTO and the ITC receive these data.

### **1. The main features of the joint system**

The joint trade data collection and processing system is now fully operational. It provides a common SQL-based data processing application, a set of tools for data management and for querying the database. All OECD historical data back to 1961 have been transferred from the old Oracle Express database to the new SQL database accessible from the **OECD Web Browser Client (WBC)**. This web-based end-user interface has been launched in May 2006 for OECD internal users only. It is also available on restricted access for Government officials through OLISnet.

Additional features have been added to the UNSD version, like the access to the OECD metadata warehouse MetaStore, the conversion tool into national currencies and some extra features developed for OECD data users.

#### **a) Access**

The WBC is accessible on the Intranet site of the OECD<sup>1</sup> as well as on the OECD's secure extranet for Government officials OLISnet<sup>2</sup>.

#### **b) Content**

**The WBC provides detailed exports and imports data on commodities and partner countries (up to 336 countries and areas) in terms of value (at current prices: thousand of USD) and quantity.**

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<sup>1</sup> For OECD internal users, see [http://intraweb1/oecd\\_unsd/trade/default.aspx](http://intraweb1/oecd_unsd/trade/default.aspx)

<sup>2</sup> For government officials outside the OECD, see [http://www.oecd.org/document/19/0,2340,en\\_2649\\_201185\\_1914579\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/19/0,2340,en_2649_201185_1914579_1_1_1_1,00.html)

Back to 1961, historical data previously stored and managed in the OECD Oracle Express database have been completely transferred to the SQL database. Some transformations and recalculations have been carried out during this transfer in order to match with the new statistical practices in place in the new system:

- Quantities are not anymore available for totals, at the 2-digit level of the HS, and at 1, 2 digit of the SITC;
- When relevant, HS 2-digit data have been reprocessed in order to include special trade previously stored under 98 and 99 HS chapters;
- Some country groups have been recalculated to match the new geonomenclatures OECD has adopted and which is compatible with the new geonomenclatures at UNSD.

Given the considerable size, UNSD historical data are progressively loaded into the SQL database for non-OECD countries. This process should be terminated before end 2006. The agreed Inter-agency objective is to provide two mirror databases in Paris and New York:

- Starting with 2005, data included in both databases will have the following standard characteristics: OECD data are processed by the OECD and non-OECD data are processed by UNSD. Both databases will be synchronised periodically. The process of synchronisation will start after the end of the historical backlog loading;
- Before 2005, all data referring to non-OECD countries will be loaded from the UN Comtrade database. Each organisation will keep its own historical data for OECD countries. Data harmonization has already started (with US data back to 1991 for example) and will progressively carry on.

**c) Available classifications**

Detailed trade data are available up to HS 6-digit level, SITC 5-digit level and ISIC 4-digit level.

Classifications available at the OECD are as follow:

- HS 2002, HS 1996, HS 1988;
- SITC Rev.2, SITC Rev.3;
- ISIC Rev.2, ISIC Rev.3.

From UN Comtrade, conversions to the following classifications are accessible:

- HS 2002, HS 1996, HS 1992 (almost identical to HS 1988);
- SITC Rev.1, SITC Rev.2, SITC Rev.3;
- BEC.

On both sites (OECD WBC and UN Comtrade), links to supplementary classifications will be implemented: OECD will refer to UN Comtrade for BEC and UN will refer to OECD for ISIC. In doing so, both organisations provide complementary services without any duplication.

**d) Additional data and information now available in the WBC**

Starting with 2005 data, two fields will be available for quantities: net weight and supplementary quantity units. Supplementary quantities are provided by commodity according to the World Customs Organization recommended units.

In response to new needs, in addition to imports and exports, re-imports and re-exports are also provided in the database structure. Since this issue becomes increasingly important in globalised trade, it is hoped that countries will be able to provide this information.

The OECD geonomenclature has been totally reviewed in cooperation with UNSD. In order to facilitate users' data queries with partner country groups, 34 economic and geographic areas have been added in the partner list (e.g. Africa, Asia, OECD ...). In order to reduce the volume of data stored in the database and to improve calculation flexibility, most of country groups are calculated on the fly.

Two aggregation options are available for quantities (see "others" in the dimension selection menu).

All methodological information available for detailed trade statistics is available from the WBC via a link to the common metadata repository MetaStore of OECD. It includes general concepts and definitions but also detailed country notes.

Many users of detailed trade statistics need to extract a fairly big amount of data. The batch export capability allows such extractions with an asynchronous processing. Therefore, the user keeps control after batch submission and is notified by email. Data query results are then accessible by clicking on the link sent by email which opens a Winzip file.

The user will see the following WBC welcome screen upon after log- on. Users familiar with the UN Comtrade interface will notice the strong similarity which is intentional.

Figure 1: Main features of the Web Browser Client

**OECD ITCS Database**  
UN/OECD Joint Trade Data Collection and Processing System

**Database**

**Quick Search**

**Database Access**

[Log Off](#)

**Data Query & Extraction**

[Shortcut Query](#)  
[Basic Selection](#)  
[Database Explorer](#)  
[Express Selection](#)

**Data Availability**

[Interactive](#)  
[In Graph](#)  
[Reporters](#)  
[Commodities](#)  
[Years](#)  
[by Date of Loading](#)

**Metadata & Reference**

[Commodity list](#)  
[Country list](#)  
[Explanatory Notes](#)  
[Glossary](#)

**Subscription**

**Subscription Prices**

[Order Form \(in Word\)](#)

**Support**

[Database Features](#)  
[Help Index](#)  
[Question & Answer](#)  
[Contact Us](#)

**Shortcut Query**

Show  of  in the year   
from  to   
in  classification.

**Trade in Graph**

USA in 2005: Top Import Partners

Partner	Percentage
EU 25	31.7%
Canada	18.3%
China	16.8%
Mexico	15.0%
Japan	10.0%
Other partners	8.2%

[glance more...](#)

**First Time User**

Please visit [this page](#) first!

**What's New**

**Database Access**

Welcome to OECD ITCS Database!  
As a user of [OECD](#) you can now download the data you need.  
If you have questions, please ask your Master User or [Contact Us](#).

Login as individual user:

User Name   
Password

Remember me

Forget your password? Just type your e-mail below:

**General disclaimer**

The trade data for non-OECD member countries are compiled by UNSD in accordance with UN/OECD Common Trade Data Processing Standards and are available in OECD ITCS Database in accordance with the UN/OECD Data Sharing Agreement. Any deviation from this practice is reflected in the country/period metadata.  
Where the designation "country or area" appears on this internet site, it covers countries, territories or areas.

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A complete user manual of over 100 pages is available as .PDF version from the online application. Additionally, the specific menu "First time user" (shown by default on first connexion) will guide the novice in its first steps. To take maximum benefit from the rich variety of possibilities it is highly recommended to register and create an account to access to additional capabilities offered to registered guests.

## 2. The Different Menus

The main menus are:

### a) My database

This menu is only accessible to registered users. From these menus, it is possible to manage saved queries, define and modify favourites, manage batch exports, customize the front page and download format ...

### b) Database access

As mentioned above, only registered users can save queries, favourites ... It is therefore necessary to log off from OECD user and login with your user name and password to do so.

### c) Data query and extraction

The main access to trade data for non experts is the "Basic selection" menu.

### d) Data availability

It provides either an overview or very detailed information about data availability by reporter country, commodity, year ...

### e) Metadata and references

All OECD ITCS metadata are accessible from these menus. A direct link to MetaStore has been implemented. Additional features like the new nomenclature will be added.

## 3. Conclusion

The WBC is a powerful and user friendly interactive tool for data query and extraction of OECD ITCS data. It also allows direct access to Non-OECD countries and is, hence, very suitable for global analysis.

Despite the size of the database (currently 200 GB), access and download of detailed trade data is fast, efficient and simple even for first time users.

The interface also offers all the flexibility of a web-based application and many features ease the interface customization and queries automation to frequent and expert users.

The specific nature of this joint system development with UN justifies a separate and unique place at OECD, outside the OECD.Stat framework. Users wanting to compare OECD trade data with other OECD datasets or wishing to benefit from the specific functions of OECD.Stat should use the ITCS version of OECD trade data (limitation to OECD countries for reporters).