



**Namibia Statistics
Agency**

NAMIBIA INTERNATIONAL MERCHANDISE TRADE STATISTICS

Sources and Methods



2023

BY DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC STATISTICS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acronyms	ii
Preface	iii
Introduction	1
Purpose of Merchandise Trade	2
Guide to the use of this publication	3
1. Scope, Treatment and Coverage	4
1.1 Scope of the data	4
1.2 Treatment	5
1.3 Coverage	5
2. Basis for recording: Trade system, Valuation and Time of recording	6
2.1 Trade system	6
2.1.1 General Trade System	6
2.1.2 Special Trade System	7
2.2 Valuation	8
2.3 Time of recording	8
3. Data Sources, Capturing and Compilation Methods	9
3.1 Data Sources and Capturing	9
3.2 Data Collection	9
3.3 Source data timeliness	9
4. Classifications	10
5. Mode of Transport	11
6. Trade by Partner	12
7. Quantity Measurement	13
8. Data Confidentiality	17
9. Data Dissemination	18
10. Data Quality	19

ACRONYMS

ASYCUDA:	Automated System for Customs Data
AUC:	African Union Commission
BEC:	Broad Economic Classification
CIF:	Cost, insurance, and Freight
CM:	Compiler Manual
CPC:	Central Product Classification
DBMS:	Database Management System
EUR:	EURO
FOB:	Free on Board
GBP:	Great British Pounds
HS:	Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System
IMTS:	International Merchandise Trade Statistics
ISIC:	International Standard Industrial Classification
NAD:	Namibia Dollars
NAMRA:	Namibia Revenue Agency
NSA:	Namibia Statistics Agency
SACU:	Southern Africa Customs Union
SAD:	Single Administration Document
SADC:	Southern Africa Development Community
SDDS:	Special Data Dissemination Standards
SITC:	Standard International Trade Classification
UN:	United Nations
USD:	US Dollars
WCO:	World Custom Organization

PREFACE

This publication describes the conceptual framework for Namibia's international merchandise trade statistics, the data sources and methods used to compile them. The purpose of this publication is to help users of these statistics understand and interpret the statistics.

The main NSA publications that present international merchandise trade statistics are:

- Monthly Trade Statistics Bulletin –trade statistics prior to January 2015 is also available.
- Annual Trade Statistics Bulletin –trade statistics prior to 2015 is also available.
- Informal Cross Border Trade Statistics issued annually, data is available for the years of 2014, 2015, 2018 and 2019.

From time to time, particular concepts, sources or methods used in compiling Namibia's international merchandise trade statistics are changed or modified in the light of reviews or other developments. Users will be notified of changes in the above statistical publications and in periodic updates to this publication.

The NSA invites comments on the usefulness of this publication as a guide to Namibia's international merchandise trade statistics. Such feedback will help in planning the content of future issues of this publication and the descriptive material included in the regular statistical publications. Comments should be directed to:

Trade Statistics Sub-division
Namibia Statistics Agency
P O Box 2133, Windhoek
FGI House, Post Street Mall
Email: info@nsa.org.na
Tel: +264 61 431 3200
Fax: +264 61 431 3253 | +264 61 431 3240

INTRODUCTION

The Namibia Statistics Agency is mandated by the Statistics Act number 9 of 2011 to constitute as the central repository of the state to collect, produce, analyze and disseminate official statistics including trade statistics.

Data and statistics on trade helps to monitor the movement of goods through the borders of Namibia. The NSA has produced quality trade statistics since its inception in April 2012 and continues to do such to date. The purpose of the production of trade statistics is to provide insight into Namibia's trade with the rest of the world which is of interest to government, individuals, researchers, the business community as well as users in the international sphere.

The NSA's trade statistics is produced in concordance with international best recommendations in particular the UN International Merchandise Trade Statistics: Compilers Manual, Revision 1 (IMTS 2010-CM) which provides the framework for the compilation of trade statistics.

The Namibia's Trade Statistics sources and methods publication intends to inform users with the:

- Conceptual framework under which the statistics are compiled
- Data sources and methods used to compile trade statistics
- Data quality of these statistics

PURPOSE OF MERCHANDISE TRADE

The primary purpose of Namibia's merchandise trade statistics is to provide high quality and timely statistics for an extensive economic analysis. International merchandise trade statistics keeps users informed, including government bodies, business community, compilers of other economic statistics such as balance of payment, national accounts and agriculture, international organizations, researchers, and the public at large. The NSA has recognized the growing demand of Namibia's merchandise trade statistics from a variety of local organizations, this encompasses the government (and both use trade statistics to formulate policies and for informed decision making) as well as research institutions, and international organizations in order to update their respective global trade datasets and trade agreements.

GUIDE TO THE USE OF THIS PUBLICATION

1. Scope, Treatment and Coverage of International Merchandise Trade Statistics
2. Trade System, Valuation and Time of Recording explaining the different types of trade systems, valuation, currency conversion and time of recording Namibia's trade statistics.
3. Data Sources and Compilation Methods used to compile Namibia's Trade Statistics
4. Classifications describing commodities and industry classification used to collect, compile and disseminate Namibia's Merchandise Trade Statistics.
5. Mode of Transport describes the mode of transport information collected by the Department of Customs and Excise.
6. Quantity Measurement explains how the quantity of a commodity is determined, the relationship between quantity and gross weight and unit values.
7. Data Confidentiality outlines how Namibia's Trade Statistics is treated in the utmost discrete prior to their release. It explains the legislative basis for applying confidentiality restrictions to the data, the types of restrictions that are imposed, the procedures used to manage confidentiality and the effect of confidentiality on the statistics produced.
8. Data Dissemination describes the dissemination of International Merchandise Trade Statistics. It details the release practices used, the revisions policy, what data are available on the NSA website and how it can be accessed.
9. Data Quality examines the quality of Namibia's International Merchandise Trade Statistics in terms of the eight quality dimensions defined in the Namibia Quality Assurance Framework: Institutional environment; Objectivity; Coherence and comparability; Accuracy and reliability; Relevance; Timeliness; Clarity and Accessibility.

1. SCOPE, TREATMENT AND COVERAGE

1.1 Scope of the data

This chapter explains the type of goods that are included and excluded from Namibia's International Merchandise Trade Statistics.

- Trade Statistics produced by the Namibia Statistics Agency record physical goods which add to or subtract from the stock of material resources of Namibia by entering (imports and re-imports) or leaving (exports and re-exports) its territory, these include goods that come in for warehousing and those that enter commercial free zones.
- Goods that are simply transported through Namibia (goods in transit) as well as goods that leave or enter the territory on a temporary basis for the sole purpose of repair or exhibition do not feature in Namibia's Trade Statistics as they do not necessarily add or subtract to the country's stock.

Imports are foreign goods (including compensating products after outward processing which changed their origin from domestic to foreign) entering the free circulation area, premises for inward processing, industrial free zones, and premises for customs warehousing or commercial free zones.

Re-imports are domestic goods (previously exported) imported into the free circulation area, premises for inward processing or industrial free zones, premises for customs warehousing or commercial zones.

Exports are domestic goods (including compensating products after inward processing which changed their origin from foreign to domestic) from any part of the statistical territory, including free zones and customs warehouses.

Re-exports are commodities imported by residents who assume short-term ownership of the commodities. Consequently, these commodities are exported without undergoing any significant industrial transformation. Even though there are no substantial transformation, re-exports have the potential to benefit the transitional country by rendering services such as sorting, re-packaging, storage, transport, and trade mediation services.

Goods categories included in Namibia's International Merchandise Trade Statistics

Goods on consignment: These are goods intended for sale but are not actually sold when they cross the border.

Goods for processing regardless in change of ownership: These are goods that are sent abroad or brought into a country under a specific arrangement between involved parties.

Goods for storage or transferred to a buffer stock organization: The main purpose of buffer stock organization is to use commodity storage to influence demand and supply in an entire economy or an individual market.

Goods categories excluded from Namibia's International Merchandise Trade Statistics

- **Goods being transported through a country:** These are goods that pass-through country of which their intended destination is another country and are principally considered as goods in transit.

- **Goods temporarily admitted or dispatched:** At the time these goods enter the country, it is clearly known that their stay in the receiving country is temporary and of which they are withdrawn it is done so in the same state.
- **Goods for repair or maintenance:** These are goods that are simply crossing borders for repair or maintenance abroad.

Unrecorded activity

Trade in illegal goods (drugs and smuggled items) are excluded.

1.2 Treatment

There are flows of goods which comply with the general and the specific guidelines of IMTS on the scope but are below the applicable customs or statistical thresholds for direct recording. As a general guideline, it is recommended that trade statistics includes all goods that adds to or subtract from a country's stock. Hence, countries are encouraged to include all flows in their foreign merchandise trade statistics following the present IMTS 2010 recommendations if they are economically significant as determined by the statistical authorities of the compiling country.

1.3 Coverage

Namibia, like many other countries uses imports and exports data collected by the Customs authority (Namibia Revenue Agency) for the compilation of the International Merchandise Trade Statistics. The Namibia Revenue Agency is mandated by the Customs and Excise Act No. 20 of 1998 to provide for the levying, imposition, payment and collection of customs and excise duties, of a surcharge and of a fuel levy; to prohibit and control the import, export or manufacture of certain goods; and to provide for matters incidental thereto.

Namibia Trade Statistics is inclusive of all goods that add or subtract to the country's stock, these encompasses goods that enter the economic territory as well as the statistical territory. Namibia's economic territory is the geographic area under the effective economic control of the government. This includes the land area, air space, territorial waters, and continental shelf lying in international waters over which Namibia enjoys exclusive rights or over which it has or claims to have jurisdiction over fishing rights and rights to fuels or minerals.

2. BASIS FOR RECORDING: TRADE SYSTEM, VALUATION AND TIME OF RECORDING

2.1 Trade system

In terms of compiling International Merchandise Trade Statistics there are two internationally recognized systems, one being the General Trade System and the other the Special Trade System.

The NSA uses the General Trade System in the compilation of its International Merchandise Trade Statistics; however, the NSA is able to extract data on Special Trade System upon request.

2.1.1 General Trade System

The General Trade System is in use when the statistical territory coincides with the economic territory,

- Under the General Trade System, the time of recording should be the time when goods enter or leave the economic territory of the compiling country.
- For merchandise trade statistics collected through a customs-based data collection system, the time of recording is approximated by the date of lodgment of the customs declaration (that is the date when customs accept the declaration for processing).
- If such dates differ considerably from the date when goods cross the border of the economic territory (e.g., if goods are cleared well in advance or after their arrival) more appropriate dates should be identified and used (e.g., the date of arrival/departure of the goods carrier as indicated in the transportation documents).

2.1.2 Special Trade System

The Special Trade System is in use when the statistical territory does not coincide with the economic territory; thus,

- Some goods that enter or leave the economic territory are not covered in imports or exports statistics and, on the other hand, other goods that are traded within the economic territory are covered in imports or exports statistics.
- **The strict definition of the special trade system** is in use when the statistical territory comprises only the area within which goods “may be disposed off without customs restriction”. Consequently, in such a case, imports include only goods entering the free circulation area of a compiling country and exports include only goods leaving the free circulation area of a compiling country.
- Under the strict definition, goods imported for inward processing and goods which enter or leave an industrial or commercial free zone or customs warehouses and have not been cleared through customs for free circulation area would not be recorded in imports statistics.
- Also, under this definition, goods that leave the free circulation area and enter one of the abovementioned zones will not be included in exports of goods.
- **The relaxed definition of the Special Trade System** is in use when: goods that enter a country or leave it after inward processing, and goods that enter or leave an industrial free zone are also recorded and included in IMTS together with goods entering and leaving the free circulation area.

2.2 Valuation

- Import statistics published by the NSA are based on customs value, which is a Cost, Insurance and Freight (CIF) type value. Imports based on Free on Board (FOB) valuation are available on request.
- Export statistics are published on an FOB type value and the transaction values are reported to be approximate to the market price.
- Valuation of imports and exports are all in Namibian dollars (NAD) but the data is also available in three other major currencies which are US dollars (USD), EURO (EUR) and Great British Pounds (GBP). South Africa Reserve Bank monthly exchange rates are used for all transactions carried out.

2.3 Time of recording

Namibia's exports are in practice recorded when they leave the borders of the country destined to the international market, subsequently imports are recorded when they enter the territorial borders of Namibia with a relevant custom declaration which satisfies customs officials to grant them clearance.

3. DATA SOURCES, CAPTURING AND COMPILATION METHODS

3.1 Data Sources and Capturing

The key data source of International Merchandise Trade Statistics in Namibia is Customs and Excise department within the Namibia Revenue Agency (NAMRA). By law, traders are compelled to declare all transactions of merchandise with Customs as they enter or leave the country.

Capturing of data on the SAD500 is automated via an SQL based data base, the Automated System for Customs Data (ASYCUDA). ASYCUDA is an integrated customs management system for international trade and transport operations in a modern and automated environment. The current version which Customs is using to capture the data is called ASYCUDA World, which is an advanced software application that is designed and developed for Customs Administration and trade community to comply with international standards when fulfilling import, export and transit-related procedures.

Clearing Agents are responsible for capturing data related to the information of all transaction before presenting the documents to Customs. Trade data are collected using the 'SAD500' questionnaire as recommended by World Customs Organization (WCO). All transactions of merchandise entering and leaving the country are recorded apart from informal trade.

3.2 Data Collection

The statistics agency collects data within one to five day(s) after the reference month and upload data on the Eurotrace Database Management System (DBMS) for processing. All relevant data dimensions are checked and verified for correctness during the uploading phase. In case of outliers the records are referred back to the data source for rectification, thereafter the data is updated, analysed and ready for dissemination.

3.3 Source data timeliness

The monthly International Merchandise Trade Statistics are released on the NSA website within 45 days after the end of the reference month. The timeliness is in conformity with that prescribed for Special Data Dissemination Standards (SDDS).

4. CLASSIFICATIONS

The 2010 IMTS outlines the various classifications that are used to classify international trade and goods. These include:

- ISIC: International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (Rev 4)
- CPC: Central Product Classification (Rev 2.1)
- SITC: Standard International Trade Classification (Rev 4)
- BEC: Broad Economic Classification (Rev 5)
- HS: Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System (HS 2022)

The NSA receives transactional data from the Customs and Excise Directorate in the HS classification at its most detailed level.

HS at 8-digits, a national tariff line created by customs to capture and record goods beyond the internationally recognized level of (HS at 6-digit level). The statistics agency uses the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC) and International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC) for the analysis and compilation of its monthly and annual International Merchandise Trade Statistics. While the internationally recommended classification used for individual request is the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System (HS), other classifications are available for dissemination but only on the users' request.

5. MODE OF TRANSPORT

The IMTS 2010 recommends that countries include in their International Merchandise Trade Statistics the mode in which goods are being moved through and between countries. The NSA compiles and disseminates International Merchandise Trade Statistics by mode of transport at the most detailed commodity level which is the means of transport used when goods enter or leave the economic territory.

The following classification feature in the compilation and reporting of the trade statistics by the mode of transport:

- Air Transport
- Sea Transport
- Inland waterways transport
- Transport on fixed installations
- Rail Transport
- Road Transport
- Pipelines
- Cables
- Postal consignments, mail or courier shipments
- Mode unknown
- Other

6. TRADE BY PARTNER

The analysis of Namibia's International Merchandise Trade Statistics also includes trade statistics by partner country as recommended by IMTS 2010 hence; the NSA analyzes the imports and exports market of the country. Trade by partner, both for the total value of trade in goods and for the value and quantity of trade in individual commodities, are of significant analytical value. They are used for the analysis of economic trends and regional trade patterns; the calculation of trade shares; market analysis; business decisions; trade policy monitoring and negotiations and checking the accuracy and reliability of trade data. Trade statistics by partner country contributes to better international comparability of trade data.

7. QUANTITY MEASUREMENT

IMTS 2010 recommends that countries are to collect, report and validate quantity information in the WCO standard units of quantity and in net weight on all trade transactions. Particularly, countries:

- Are to use the applicable WCO standard units of quantity when collecting and reporting international merchandise trade statistics based on the Harmonized System.
- Weight figures be reported on a net weight basis and if only gross weight is available, it should be recorded and used for estimation of the net weight.

The NSA's reporting standard units of quantity are:

- Weight: kilograms (kg)
carat
- Length: meters (m)
- Area: square meters (m²)
- Volume: cubic meters (m³)
liters (l)
- Number units: pairs
packs
parcels

SUPPLEMENTARY UNITS AVAILABLE

LAA	Litres of Absolute Alcohol
LAC	Litres of Alcohol
LBR	Pound gb _ us (0 _45359237 kg)
LBT	Troy pound _ us (373 _242 g)
LEF	Leaf
LPA	Litre of pure alcohol
LTN	Long ton gb _ us (1 _0160469 t)
LTR	Litre (1 dm3) DPR _ Dozen pairs
DRA	Dram us (3 _887935 g)
DRI	Dram gb (l _771745 g)
DRL	Dozen rolls
DRM	Drachm gb (3 _887935 g)
DTH	Hectokilogram
DTN	Centner _ metric (100 kg)
LAA	Litres of Absolute Alcohol
LAC	Litres of Alcohol
LBR	Pound gb _ us (0 _45359237 kg)
LBT	Troy pound _ us (373 _242 g)
LEF	Leaf
LPA	Litre of pure alcohol
LTN	Long ton gb _ us (1 _0160469 t)
LTR	Litre (1 dm3) DPR _ Dozen pairs
DRA	Dram us (3 _887935 g)
DRI	Dram gb (l _771745 g)
DRL	Dozen rolls
DRM	Drachm gb (3 _887935 g)
DTH	Hectokilogram
DTN	Centner _ metric (100 kg)
DWT	Pennyweight gb _ us (1 _555174 g)
DZN	Dozen
DZP	Dozen packs
FOT	Foot (0 _3048 m)
FTK	Square foot
FTQ	Cubic foot
GGR	Great gross (12 gross)
GIA	Gill (11 _8294 cm3)
phosphoric anhydride	
KSD	Kilogram of substance 90 % dry
KSH	Kilogram of caustic soda
KUR	Kilogram of uranium
10U	10 units
12U	12 units
2U	Two units
APZ	Ounce gb _ us (31 _10348 g)
ASM	Alcoholic strength by mass
ASV	Alcoholic strength by volume
BFT	Board foot
GII	Gill (0 _142065 dm3)
GLD	Dry gallon (4 _404884 dm3)

CMK	centimetre
CMQ	Cubic centimetre
CMT	Centimetre
CNP	Hundred packs
CNT	Cental gb (45 _359237 kg)
CO2	CARBON DIOXIDE
CRT	Carat
CTM	Metric carat (200 mg = 2.10-4 kg)
CWA	Hundredweight us (45 _3592 kg)
CWI	Hundredweight gb (50 _802345 kg)
DLT	Decilitre
LAA	Litres of Absolute Alcohol
LAC	Litres of Alcohol
LBR	Pound gb _ us (0 _45359237 kg)
LBT	Troy pound _ us (373 _242 g)
LEF	Leaf
LPA	Litre of pure alcohol
LTN	Long ton gb _ us (1 _0160469 t)
LTR	Litre (1 dm3)
DPR	Dozen pairs
DRA	Dram us (3 _887935 g)
DRI	Dram gb (l _771745 g)
DRL	Dozen rolls
DRM	Drachm gb (3 _887935 g)
DTH	Hectokilogram
DTN	Centner _ metric (100 kg)
HIU	Hundred international units
HLT	Hectolitre
HPA	Hectolitre of pure alcohol
INH	Inch (25 _4 mm)
INK	Square inch
INQ	Cubic inch
KGM	Kilogram
KNI	Kilogram of nitrogen
KNS	Kilogram of named substance
KPH	Kilogram of caustic potash
KPO	Kilogram of potassium oxide
KPP	Kilogram of
BHX	Hundred boxes
BLD	Dry barrel (115 _627 dm3)
BLL	Barrel (petroleum) (158 _987 dm3)
BUA	Bushel (35 _2391 dm3)
BUI	Bushel (36 _36874 dm3)
CEN	Hundred
CGM	Centigram
CLF	Hundred leaves

SUPPLEMENTARY UNITS AVAILABLE

LPA	Litre of pure alcohol
LTN	Long ton gb _ us (1 _0160469 t)
LTR	Litre (1 dm ³)
MAL	Megalitre
MAM	Megametre
MBF	Thousand board feet (2 _36 m ³)
MGM	Milligram
MIL	Thousand
MLT	Mili Liter
MTK	Square metre
MTQ	Cubic metre
MTR	Metre
NAR	Number of articles
NBB	Number of bobbins
NIU	Number of international units
NMB	Number
NMP	Number of packs
NPL	Number of parcels
NPR	Number of pairs
NPT	Number of parts
NRL	Number of rolls
NTT	Net [register] ton
ONZ	Ounce gb _ us (28 _349523 g)
OZA	Fluid ounce (29 _5735 cm ³)
OZI	Fluid ounce (28 _413 cm ³)
PCE	Piece
PGL	Proof gallon
PTD	Dry pint (0 _55061 dm ³)
PTI	Pint (0 _568262 dm ³)
PTL	Liquid pint (0 _473176 dm ³)
QTD	Dry quart (1 _101221 dm ³)
QTI	Quart (1 _136523 dm ³)
QTL	Liquid quart (0 _946353 dm ³)
QTR	Quarter _ gb (12 _700586 kg)
SET	Set
SHT	Shipping ton
STI	Stone gb (6 _350293 kg)
STN	Short ton gb _ us (0 _90718474 t)
THU	Thousand units
TNE	Metric ton (1000 kg)
TPR	Ten pairs
TSD	Tonne of substance 90 per cent dry
U	Unit
WCD	Cord (3 _63 m ³)
YDK	Square yard
YDQ	Cubic yard
YRD	Yard (0 _9144 m)

8. DATA CONFIDENTIALITY

Statistical confidentiality as defined by the IMTS 2010 refers to the protection of the information of individual statistical units. It is recommended to apply passive confidentiality on all disseminated statistical products.

- As per the Statistics Act No. 9 of 2011 (Section 44), the NSA does not disclose any information or records provided to the agency, that directly relates to an individual, household, government body or any other organization, to a third party or to a government body for non-statistical purposes or admitted as evidence in legal proceedings, except for a criminal proceedings purpose in terms of the Act.

9. DATA DISSEMINATION

Data sharing:

The NSA produces and disseminates trade statistics bulletins on a monthly and annual basis. The advanced release calendar is available on the NSA website at the very beginning of the Financial Year indicating the release dates of the trade bulletins.

- Monthly/Annual trade statistics bulletins are released to the stakeholders within 45 days after the reference month/year.

Other requests

- Apart from regular reports, the statistics agency receives Ad-hoc data requests which are attended to within three working days.

Requests are usually made by phone or email.

Users of trade statistics

Main users are:

- Government bodies
- International and Economic Organizations like AUC, SACU, SADC, UN etc.
- Researchers
- Students
- Private Organisations
- Bank of Namibia
- Consultants
- Embassies
- Investors

10. DATA QUALITY

Data Quality examines the quality of Namibia's International Merchandise Trade Statistics in terms of the eight quality dimensions defined in the Namibia Quality Assurance Framework for Statistics: Institutional environment; Objectivity; Coherence and comparability; Accuracy and reliability; Relevance; Timeliness; Clarity; and Accessibility. In order to ensure data quality, during data processing and validation, errors flagged up by the system are corrected and before data is finalised for public use or the compilation of the bulletin starts, data analysis takes place and both outliers and errors (arising from typing errors, entry of invalid or implausible codes, entry of values outside a certain range, as well as invalid or implausible combinations of entries) are rectified. The NSA requests for customs declaration documents (SAD500 documents) which contains the required information to the best possible extent from Customs and Excise headquarters. The NSA adheres to the IMTS 2010 systematic approach to data quality.

Namibia Statistics Agency
AUGUST 2023



Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA)
FGI House 44 Post Street Mall, Windhoek
Namibia P.O.Box 2133, Windhoek, Namibia
Tel: 061-431 3200, Fax: 061-4313253
www.nsa.org.na