UNITED NATIONS

ECONOMIC

AND

SOCIAL COUNCIL
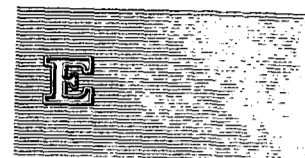
E C L A

Economic Commission for Latin America

ACCESS TO INFORMATION SOURCES ON LATIN AMERICAN
FOREIGN TRADE STATISTICS

84-1-241

CONTENTS

Introduction

In compliance with resolution 437 (XIX) on Access to Sources of Information, 217th meeting, 15 May 1981, the Economic Commission for Latin America has prepared the following study.

Interpreting the spirit of this resolution, emphasis has been placed on examining the availability of foreign trade statistics, since our experience has shown this to be the most useful information for the studies of the countries of the region. The fields of research specifically mentioned in the resolution have also been taken into consideration, including the information sources of the ECLA system, the United Nations system, and of other international bodies specializing in this area.

The study is divided into five parts. The first section is a review of the availability of information in the ECLA system concerning the foreign trade of the countries of the region. In order to make its contents more readily understandable, a brief description of the international classifications which have been included in the External Trade Data Bank for Latin America and the Caribbean (BADECEL) is given, and the external sector variables stored in the data base of annual series (BADEANU) have been detailed. Part II contains an overview of the activities of subregional bodies in the field of foreign trade statistics and an outline of their main publications.

Parts III and IV summarize the contents of the most important sources of statistical data on foreign trade, both within the United Nations system and outside of it, by analysing the main publications of the international bodies which specialize in this area. Information is also provided about the possibilities for accessing existing information, either through publications or by acquiring microdata systems which can be processed directly by computer -such as tapes, floppy disks, etc.- thus permitting special information to be obtained from the corresponding data bases.

Lastly, Part V contains some observations regarding the regional statistical information system. In that connection, a comprehensive review of the evolution of foreign trade statistics is presented, beginning with their origin -customs documentation- and their main characteristics are discussed. The conclusion is reached that significant progress has been made in this field, but that delays in the reporting of data continue to be the weakest point of the system. Finally, a very brief description is given of the stages which would appear to be necessary in order to create a regional system of foreign trade statistics which, if it were eventually to become an inter-connected network, would provide immediate access to the sources of information on regional foreign trade.

/I. FOREIGN

I. FOREIGN TRADE INFORMATION WITHIN THE ECLA SYSTEM

1. The External Trade Data Bank for Latin America and the Caribbean (BADECEL)

a) Structure

For some years now ECLA has been organizing a Latin American Bank of Economic and Social Statistics (BADESTAL) by setting up data bases on specific subject areas, each with its own computing features, under the technical supervision of a section of the Statistics and Quantitative Analysis Division. One of these areas is the External Trade Data Bank for Latin America and the Caribbean (BADECEL).

BADECEL incorporates the annual statistics on the export and import trade of the countries of the region based on two criteria: the national tariff heading and the trading partner. The basic data include the volume in kilograms and the value in the currency of the country and in United States dollars. These statistics have also been arranged according to the following international classifications (the characteristics of these systems are detailed later on in this document):

- Customs Co-operation Council Nomenclature (CCCN; formerly BTN).

- Standard International Trade Classification (SITC).

- Classification by Use or Economic Destination (CUODE).

- UNCTAD product classification. Classification by Broad Economic Categories (BEC).

- International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC).

In order to ensure that the foreign trade statistics will be internationally comparable and will serve various analytical purposes, ECLA has incorporated the correlations between national tariff headings and each one of the above-mentioned international classifications into the BADECEL data base.

With respect to most of the countries, the sequence of data acquisition, at the level of national tariff headings, begins when they send the corresponding statistics, recorded on tape, to the subregional integration organization to which they belong (ALADI, JUNAC, SIECA). These organizations, in turn, check for consistency and verify the tariff codes before supplying a copy of these files to ECLA. In this connection, the co-operation provided by these institutions has been very important; their work with respect to the dissemination of regional foreign trade statistics is described in a later part of this study.

The BADECEL system has been designed so that the information can be used flexibly -to prepare statistical tables involving varying degrees of aggregation as regards the classifications used, to access any selected datum or data set, as input for quantitative analysis systems, or to construct foreign trade indexes according to variable groups of traded goods.

/The current

The current availability of data from each country which are incorporated in the BADECEL system is presented in annex 1. In general, the delays which occur are due to a combination of factors affecting the sequence of data collection; the main factor, however, relates to delays in the provision of information by the countries. The subregional integration bodies and ECLA are making a concerted effort to ensure that data are provided more promptly and to improve their processing and utilization. Part of this effort will consist of helping the countries to identify the main obstacles to the timely processing of their foreign trade statistics as well as providing them with advisory services, when appropriate, as regards the search for appropriate technical assistance in eliminating these obstacles. ECLA is also collaborating in the ongoing efforts of the United Nations Statistical Office (UNSO) to collect information from the Caribbean countries.

Although considerable progress has been made in the structuring and administration of the BADECEL system, the above-mentioned delays in obtaining information are not the only factors which prevent national and international institutions from having complete access to up-to-date information. Given the resources available, the compilations prepared to date using the basic data from BADECEL have mainly been utilized in the studies prepared by the ECLA Secretariat on the basis of special tabulations. Information has been provided to regional bodies, however, in standardized tabulated form. Currently, compact files are being compiled for each country; these files will provide a multi-purpose data base one tenth the size of the BADECEL master file, which currently stores over 4 million such records.

b)   Alternative classifications of foreign trade statistics

   i) Customs Co-operation Council Nomenclature (CCCN), formerly the Brussel's Tariff Nomenclature (BTN). This nomenclature was agreed upon internationally (1955) by most of the European countries and a number of non-European nations. The goods are grouped according to the type of material of which they are made, as has traditionally been the case with customs nomenclatures. Consequently, the data based on this classification can be organized for the analysis of types of goods, such as food, raw materials, chemicals, transport equipment and machinery, and can also be grouped according to the degree of processing and industrial origin.

   ii) Standard International Trade Classification (SITC).1/ The SITC was developed in 1950 in order to facilitate international comparisons in the area of trade. This classification has been progressively revised in order to reflect the most significant changes which have occurred in the structure of international trade. In 1960 the original version of the SITC was modified and expanded; one of the reasons for doing so was to ensure an adequate correspondence with the CCCN, which was also modified for the same purpose. This was an attempt to provide the countries with the advantages of a customs nomenclature and of an internationally accepted statistical classification suitable for economic analysis. The SITC is organized in such a way that goods are classified in terms of their degree of processing, including everything from raw materials and food to high-precision manufactures.

/iii) Foreign

iii) Foreign Trade Classification by Use or Economic Destination (CUODE).2/
This classification was designed by ECLA (1965) in order to facilitate the
analysis of the major foreign trade flows and, above all, to investigate the
possibilities of import substitution in Latin America. Its application is limited
to imports of 10 categories of products under the following headings: durable
and non-durable consumer goods; metallic and non-metallic raw materials and
intermediate products; fuels; capital equipment for agriculture, construction
and industry; and transport material.

Although CUODE correlates with the SITC in BADECEL, which facilitates
electronic data processing, its usefulness as a means of international comparison
is limited to the regional sphere, since this classification has not been adopted
internationally. Furthermore, the use or economic destination of imported goods
frequently cannot be accurately delimited. In any event, it is an alternative
which merits consideration in relation to the macroeconomic analysis of the
countries of the region.

iv) The classification of exports according to the UNCTAD system.3/ This
classification relates only to exports, on the basis of four broad groups:
commodities, semi-manufactures, manufactures and miscellaneous products. The
product categories have generally been based on the SITC groups (three digits)
and are oriented towards the analysis of major foreign trade flows. This
classification will be of greater interest to the countries of the region as
export diversification increases.

v) Classification by Broad Economic Categories (BEC).4/ This classification
was originally designed by the United Nations Statistical Office in order to
make data on international trade compatible throughout the world and with a view
towards providing an international classification which could serve as a guideline
for the grouping of imports at a national level. The 19 broad economic categories
comprise product groups based on the SITC and are intended to serve as a link,
whenever possible, with some of the basic components of the System of National
Accounts, such as capital goods, consumer goods and intermediate products.
Actually, the BECs are largely based on the main end use of the goods, and there
is thus some ambiguity as to the ultimate categorization of the product. It is,
however, an international classification employed by a number of countries, which
even publish their import figures by the BEC in the United Nations Yearbook of
International Trade Statistics.

vi) International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC).5/ This
classification is organized by economic activity, including services. From the
standpoint of foreign trade statistics, it allows exports to be classified
according to their industrial origin and, in the case of agricultural products,
according to the respective sector of production. Although this classification
covers both goods and services, the link between the ISIC and the SITC only
relates to goods. Exports of products which are obviously not produced in the
reporting countries are grouped by the industry under which they would have been
classified in the producer countries.

/The various

The various versions of the SITC and the ISIC are undoubtedly the most suitable statistical bases for analysing the linkages between foreign trade and the structure of production, both because of their theoretical frame of reference and their widespread international acceptance. Hence the fact that the successive revised versions of these classifications, which have largely been made in response to changes in the structure of foreign trade, are almost parallel.

2. Latin American foreign trade indexes

Since its inception, an ongoing concern of ECLA has been the preparation of indexes of the unit value and volume of exports and imports for use in the study of price movements, the terms of trade and real foreign trade flows. Its endeavours in this area have made it possible to compile statistics and to produce indexes of unit value and volume going back over half a century.

The most extensive series of foreign trade indexes use 1963 as their base year and cover the period from 1928 to 1972.6/ The base year was later changed to 1970, and series were prepared covering the 1950-1983 period. In this revision, the flow of services was divided into shipments, passenger transport, port services, tourism and other services. With respect to imports, product indexes were also calculated for nine CUODE groups.

A computarized system for calculating these indexes is currently being designed using the BADECEL data. This involves changing the base year to 1980 and opening up the indexes to permit different levels of aggregation according to the most appropriate international classifications for that purpose. In addition, in view of the above-mentioned delays, there are plans for developing provisional procedures to update those indexes as part of the updating of the BADECEL data base.

3. Balance of payments statistics

The system of balance of payments statistics (BADEPAG) also forms part of the computerized systems of the Latin American Bank of Economic and Social Statistics (BADESTAL).

ECLA currently stores and processes the balance-of-payments statistics concerning 26 countries of the region which are provided by the International Monetary Fund in the BADEPAG system, and aggregates these data for some subregional groups: ALADI, the Andean Group, the Central American Common Market, five English-speaking countries of the Caribbean, and the groups of oil exporting and non-oil exporting countries. The data series cover the period 1950-1982 for 22 countries and the period 1960-1982 for Barbados and Guyana; for the Bahamas and Grenada, figures are only available from 1973 and 1974 onwards, respectively.

The current balance-of-payments   are denominated in United States dollars and are provided on a regular basis by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). In late 1980 the Fund introduced an expanded version, which is broken down into 112 components; ECLA has used this version as the basis for its own format for the analyses carried out at the Secretariat.

/The foreign

The foreign trade indexes discussed in the preceding section are also incorporated into the annual data base of the BADEPAG system, which makes it possible to compute the current account at constant values. This information allows the main variables of the balance of payments to be analysed in real terms.

Access to information on the balance of payments is relatively prompt, standard information request forms have been designed for this purpose so that information needs may be indicated rapidly.

4. Publications containing foreign trade statistics

a) Statistical Yearbook for Latin America

This is without question the most complete ECLA publication as regards statistics on the economic and social trends in the region. It covers a variety of areas, ranging from population, employment, social development and economic growth to a country-by-country systematization of national accounts and of the balance of payments, with a chronological coverage going back to 1950.

Thus far there has been a time lag of nearly two years in the publication of the data; this period will probably be shortened to one year, now that the preparation of the numerous tables making up this broad statistical data base concerning the countries of the region has been computerized. The complete time span of corresponding annual series has been incorporated into the BADEANU system, which forms part of the Latin American Bank of Economic and Social Statistics (BADESTAL), and it is therefore possible to access the updated data base prior to its publication in the Yearbook.

The following foreign trade series, by country and aggregated for all Latin America should be noted:

- Value of exports of goods, at current prices in dollars: totals, primary products and manufactures.

- Value of exports of goods, at constant 1970 prices.

- Value of imports of goods, at current prices in dollars: totals and by CUODE groups.

- Value of imports of goods, at constant 1970 prices.

- Value of intra-regional trade in goods, by countries of origin and destination and by subregional groups.

In addition, the following indexes (which were mentioned in section 2 above) are given for each country, for the region as a whole and for the groups of oil exporting and non-oil exporting countries. These indexes use 1970 as the base year, and are calculated by ECLA:

/- Quantum and

- Quantum and unit value of exports of goods.

- Quantum and unit value of imports of goods.

- Terms of trade for goods.

- Purchasing power of exports of goods.

The vast majority of the series concerning the external sector which are published in the Yearbook covering the period since 1950 are stored in the annual series data base (BADEANU). This not only makes it possible to include them in the computerized edition of the Statistical Yearbook for Latin America, but also to use them in compiling the topic-related statistics which are published in the ECLA Cuadernos Estadísticos series.

b) ECLA Cuadernos Estadísticos series

i) External trade indexes. The first issue of the ECLA Cuadernos Estadísticos series 7/ was devoted to this subject. Its first section includes general observations regarding the indexes, their scope and limitations at the country and the regional levels, as well as analyses of the terms of trade in relation to national borders and the regional border, the composition of intra-regional trade and of trade with other countries, and the nature of the products traded. The methodology used to calculate the external trade indexes is also discussed. The second part contains statistics on the values and indexes of external trade for the 20 countries of Latin America. It includes trade series at current values and at constant 1963 values, as well as the corresponding indexes of unit value, quantum, terms of trade and the purchasing power of exports for the 1928-1972 period.

ii) Balance of payments. An issue of Cuadernos Estadísticos was published on this subject four years ago which sets forth the series corresponding to the period 1950-1977,8/ and a new version has recently been prepared for the period 1950-1982. It includes methodological notes related to the balance-of-payments format of the IMF and of ECLA as regards both the current and the capital accounts. It also analyses the correlation between the entries contained in both organizations' formats and describes the concepts used by ECLA. It also discusses at length the deflation indexes used to obtain the current account figures at constant prices, the terms of trade and the purchasing power of exports.

The second part contains the statistical series corresponding to the current account and the capital account at current values and to the current account at constant 1970 values. Other derivative indicators are also presented, such as the growth rates of value, volume and unit value. All this information is presented by country and by subregional group, as noted under section 3 in reference to the statistics of the BADEPAG system.

iii) <u>External debt</u>. Due to the extremely limited access to information about the external debt of the countries of Latin America, for some years now ECLA has been preparing estimates based on statistics from various sources, including the Bank for International Settlements, the World Bank and the data on capital movements recorded in the balance of payments. These estimates have raised some methodological questions, which have been systematized in a <u>Cuaderno</u> that is soon to be published. These estimates are one case in which the <u>information</u> has been extrapolated, due to the lack of access to original sources.

c) <u>Matrices of the exports and imports of the countries of the region</u>

An extensive study is currently being prepared on the external relations of Latin America which involves plans for a statistical paper comprised of foreign trade matrices for 27 countries of the region for the years 1970, 1975, 1979, 1980 and 1981. These 27 countries include 11 member countries of ALADI, five member countries of the Central American Common Market (CACM), and the Bahamas, Barbados, Belice, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Panama, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago.

These matrices have been constructed so that they will be compatible with the world trade matrices, by region and product group, which are published by the United Nations Statistical Office in the <u>Yearbook of International Trade Statistics</u> (see "World trade by commodity classes and regions", Special table C).

At the regional level, the trading partner zones which are considerad are Latin America (27 countries), ALADI and the Central American Common Market. At the extra-regional level, they include the developed countries, with headings for the European Economic Community, the United States, Canada and Japan; the countries with centrally-planned economies, with headings for Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union and Asia; and the developing countries, with headings for Africa (excluding the Middle East) and Oceania.

Lastly, products have been grouped as follows: food and agricultural raw materials, minerals and common metals, and fuels and manufactures.

II. FOREIGN TRADE INFORMATION AVAILABLE FROM
SUBREGIONAL BODIES

1. Latin American Integration Association (ALADI)

The foreign trade statistical information system developed by LAFTA in the 1960s and 1970s and since 1980 by its successor, ALADI, has mainly been aimed at providing the information needed for studies on trade flows in connection with the promotion of trade and integration.

The Statistical Service of ALADI receives information tapes from each member country in accordance with resolution 368, which also provides for the design of standardized statistical records. It then processes this information by adding the codes of other international classifications and by monitoring the correspondence of codes, while also identifying and resolving any inconsistencies which might exist. Such discrepancies may arise with respect to the national code, its correspondence to the LAFTA system codes (NABALALC), the type of trade or the transport code; the majority of them arise in relation to intra-zone trade.

In some cases there is a considerable delay -two years or even more- before the processed information becomes available, principally because the national offices have difficulty in making their dispatches in accordance with the procedures, codes, methodologies and standards approved by ALADI, as specified in the Manual de instrucciones para el procedimiento y suministro uniforme de datos.

The data base which is compiled in this manner is used in a series of statistical documents, namely:

ALADI/SEC. This document contains information which complements the data formerly published by LAFTA in the CEP/Repartido series. Its purpose is to disseminate data concerning the imports of the member countries as soon as they are supplied by the respective countries. In order for the information to be timely, it is published after the data have been checked but before their compatibility and consistency are analysed, and is thus of a provisional nature.

This publication is prepared for each member country, covers an annual period and presents data on global trade by partner country, economic zone and BTN sub-item with totals for each chapter. At the intra-zone level, this information is broken down into traded and non-traded products.

ALADI, Series A. This annual publication concerns the exports of each member country. It contains data on global and intra-zone exports by BTN section and chapter, the above-mentioned classification categories of UNCTAD and the main groups of SITC, Rev. 1.

ALADI, Series B. This is an annual publication regarding the imports of each member country; the way in which the statistics are structured is similar to that of Series A.

/ALADI, Series

ALADI, Series C. This annual publication deals with imports by zone. It includes the imports of products covered by the "liberalization programme". which are classified by NABALALC items, UNCTAD categories and SITC, Rev. 1, groups.

Lastly, it should be mentioned that ALADI is endeavouring to overcome the current limitations of foreign trade statistics by carrying out a project, with the co-operation of the Inter-American Development Bank, to improve the ALADI Central Foreign Trade Information System. The end purpose of this project is to establish an ALADI Central Foreign Trade Information System which will function on a flexible and timely basis and which may be used systematically not only for the direct dissemination of information but also to facilitate the economic analysis and the periodic assessment of the progress made in integrating the functioning of the treaty machinery. ECLA and JUNAC have pledged their collaboration in this undertaking, and there are already plans for holding a meeting of expert regional groups on foreign statistics during the first half of 1984 sponsored by the three bodies.

2. Permanent Secretariat of the General Treaty for Economic Integration (SIECA)

As in the case of ALADI, the foreign trade information system of SIECA is based on the tapes of statistics sent by the member countries. The entries are subsequently arranged in accordance with the Uniform Central American Customs Nomenclature (NAUCA); the data are then authenticated and screened before being distributed to governments and organizations, including ECLA.

The main publication of SIECA in this field is the Anuario estadístico centroamericano de comercio exterior, which provides information concerning the foreign trade of each member country and for the countries of the Central American Common Market as a group with countries and economic zones by NAUCA sections and items, expressed in Central American pesos and in metric tons. Data are also included on the trade balance of each one of the five countries and of Central America as a whole.

Integración en cifras. This is a quarterly publication which presents foreign trade statistics for the five countries of the Central American Common Market (CACM) for monthly and annual periods. The most recent issues also cover Panama. The information includes annual data on trade within Central America, arranged according to NAUCA sections, by country. It also includes foreign trade price series and price indexes. The trade balance of Panama with the Central American countries is shown according to NAUCA sections.

3. Board of the Cartagena Agreement (JUNAC)

The member countries of JUNAC, like the other subregional bodies, provide statistical information on tape, in accordance with the guidelines agreed upon for that purpose.

/Even before

Even before electronic data processing was instituted, however, JUNAC was already concerned with improving the countries' data base. In 1977 it therefore created the Subregional Statistical Information System (Decision 115) and a Programme for the Harmonization of National Accounts (Decision 114). Both mechanisms attempt to pool the efforts of the countries' administrations in order to solve problems raised by the heterogeneity of statistical concepts, definitions and coverage.

The Subregional System of Statistical Information has, initially, covered foreign trade and the agricultural and manufacturing sectors; these areas and others go to make up the most comprehensive JUNAC publication, entitled Indicadores Socioeconômicos.

Indicadores Socioeconômicos. This document provides information concerning all the member countries, and includes indicators relating to 18 different subjects, which may be grouped into the four broad categories of social aspects, production, the external sector and finance. In the specific area of foreign trade, this publication presents the trade balance, the value of exports and imports of goods and their respective trends and structure, broken down by the main products which are traded, for each country and for the five countries of the subregion as a group. In addition, it includes a breakdown of the origin and destination of transactions by country, economic zone and geographic bloc. Intra-subregional trade is also analysed using trade matrices while intra-subregional exports are divided into traditional and non-traditional products, and are set forth according to the "liberalization programme" rosters.

Generally speaking, this publication is more suitable for macroeconomic analysis, since this is the focus of the foreign trade statistics it contains. Nevertheless, it should be borne in mind that the Cartagena Agreement has a clearly integrationist orientation and therefore requires detailed information on foreign trade: the organization's Subregional System of Statistical Information provides that information.

III. POSSIBILITIES OF USING THE INFORMATION AVAILABLE
WITHIN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

1. United Nations Statistical Office

The United Nations Statistical Office, a division of the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs, collects and systematizes international statistics on foreign trade by country and by the product traded. The Centre of International Trade Statistics at Geneva maintains a data bank on foreign trade statistics by product and partner country. The Standard International Trade Classification (SITC) is used to systematize the statistics for each country, and each country of the region appears individually in this context. Annex 2 lists the tapes available as of December 1983 which contain annual foreign trade information corresponding to each one of the countries of the region.

Using this data base, the Statistical Office prepares the following publications:

a) Yearbook of International Trade Statistics

This publication provides basic information on foreign trade by country, including current values, volumes and prices of exports and imports, broken down according to the goods which are traded and the countries involved. It appears regularly in two volumes:

i) Volume I: Trade by Country. This volume covers over 150 countries, including the 29 member countries of ECLA. It contains detailed information on the trade of each country by region and according to the main trading partners, as well as the volume and value of exports and imports, classified according to the SITC (up to the five-digit level), for those products whose value exceeds 3 per one thousand of total trade. It also contains summary tables showing the contribution of the trade of each country to the trade of the region and of the world. In addition, it analyses the trade flows between countries and indicates the price fluctuations for internationally-traded goods. These tables include information on: world trade flows by region, country or economic area; world trade according to the type of good and region; current values, and unit value and quantum indexes of the exports of the market-economy countries; indexes by type of goods; unit value, quantum and terms of trade indexes by region; and similar index numbers by country and economic area.

Volume I also contains calculations of the distribution of world trade by region and according to the most important types of products; annual growth rates according to goods, types of goods and regions; and, finally, indicates world trade trends in relation to population and production trends.

Despite the advances made in the area of computing, this type of information is generally at least two years old by the time it is published, and thus is more useful for retrospective or prospective long-term analyses.

ii) Volume II: Trade by Commodity: Commodity Matrix Tables. This volume includes special tables showing exports and imports by product according to SITC groups (three digits), by country, region, and for the world as a whole. It also includes trade matrices, also according to SITC groups (three digits) covering around 20 of the exporting and importing countries which are most important to the trade of each group. This type of information has been published since 1951.

This volume provides a picture of the world trade position of the countries of the region as regards the exports and imports of given groups of products, as well as the magnitude of the transactions, which is useful in assessing the share of each country, or of the region as a whole, in the world market for those goods.

b)   World Trade Annual (and Supplement)

This is a special series which is published by Walker and Company of New York under an agreement with the United Nations Statistical Office. The five-volume World Trade Annual provides details on the flow of international trade for over 1 300 SITC product categories. This information is based on data provided directly by 24 developed countries, covering over 80% of world trade. The reason for using this methodology is that national information sources pose difficulties with respect to language, valuation, weights and measures, and even classification. Values are denominated in thousands of dollars and quantities are expressed in metric tons, whenever this information is available and germane. For each transaction the total imports and exports of each reporting country are also indicated in the analysis of trade according to partner country. In addition to such detailed information, figures are published for the four stages of SITC summarization, i.e., 625 subgroups, 82 selected groups, 56 chapters and 10 sections which together comprise this classification of foreign trade.

The World Trade Annual includes information arranged by product for users interested in specific products. Since 1968, this information has been published in five volumes. The Supplement to the World Trade Annual, which began publication in 1963, provides information on foreign trade by region, by subregional group and by country separately for the 154 partner countries which trade with the 24 reporting countries. Volume II corresponds to Latin America, covering the countries of Central America (including Mexico), South America, the Caribbean and Bermuda. With respect to subregional groups, it includes the Latin American Free Trade Association (LAFTA) -now the Latin American Integration Association (ALADI)- the Central American Common Market (CACM) and the Caribbean Free Trade Association (CARIFTA). Like the World Trade Annual, it provides information according to SITC sections, chapters, groups, subgroups and items.

Generally speaking, these are very comprehensive and valuable data for macro-economic analyses and for the analysis of foreign trade structures; the information is also suitable for preparing retrospective studies on the evolution of product markets. However, due to the volume and level of detail of the information which must be compiled and systematized, the average amount of time which elapses between the recording of the statistics and the publication of the information exceeds two years, and it is not out of the ordinary for the delay to approach three years. Nevertheless, because of recent advances in computing systems, these time periods may become significantly shorter in the future.

/c) Commodity

c) Commodity Trade Statistics

These statistical documents contain data on a specified number of countries, which are included in various volumes without reference to their geographic location. They provide quarterly and annual foreign trade information based on 625 SITC subgroups, arranged according to the origin of imports and destination of exports, and specify the regions, economic zones and countries with which the transactions are made.

This information has been published in the same format since 1962 and is currently available on microfiche; it has the advantage of providing a complete picture of the country concerned, and is more up-to-date than the yearbooks.

2. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

The Handbook of International Trade and Development Statistics is an annual publication which attempts to provide a statistical data base of the most relevant information as regards the analysis of world trade for use by UNCTAD, governments and specialists in those subjects. Of the seven parts into which it is divided, the following sections relate to information on the region:

a) Part one. Value of world trade. This section indicates the value of exports (FOB) and imports (CIF) at current prices in millions of dollars for all the developing countries of the Americas, both individually and by subregional economic groupings. The 1983 Handbook contains information for 1950, 1955 and for the period 1960-1981. Since the treatment of the other countries, regions and sub-regional economic groupings of the world is similar, in macro-economic terms this information is relevant to the analysis of the position of the countries and of the region as a whole in world trade. Other indicators are derived from this information, such as the trade balance and annual growth rates.

b) Part two. Indicators and prices. Indexes (1975 = 100) of volume, unit value and the terms of trade are presented for groups of countries according to main economic areas of the world; however, Latin America is not identified as such. Consequently, from a regional standpoint only some of the indexes of the exports of goods as per the UNCTAD classification groups are of interest. It also includes information on the trends in the export prices of the main commodities (wheat, maize, sugar, coffee, cocoa, tea, bananas, beef, etc.) for the 1960-1982 period, and presents these data on a quarterly basis for the past five years.

c) Part three. Network of world trade. This section includes information by selected regions of origin and destination and the structure of exports and imports by selected commodity groups. The only element which is of interest from a regional standpoint is the comparative analysis with other regions of the export and import structures by selected groups of products based on the SITC classification.

d) Part four. Structure of trade by country. At the country level this section which includes all the countries of the region, presents the structure of exports and imports by the main SITC product categories, as well as the share of selected homogeneous groups of goods. It also sets forth the export structure of each country based on the 15 most important headings, at the SITC three-digit level,

/as regards

as regards the exports of each country. Finally, 56 types of goods and the main exporting countries of those products are covered; this section indicates the share of the various countries of the region in world exports under each heading.

e) Parts five to seven. The information contained in these sections does not refer to foreign trade as such; instead, statistical data are provided on the balance of payments, external financing, basic indicators of development and special studies. In relation to the countries of the region, these subjects have been dealt with in greater detail in ECLA studies.

3. FAO Trade Yearbook

This publication is made possible by the co-operation of governments, which provide information either through their national publications or through FAO questionnaires. In addition, use is made of the computer tabulations supplied by the Statistical Office of the United Nations. This information is incorporated in the ICS, which is the computerized system for the storage and processing of data on food products and agricultural that is maintained by FAO.

Trade in agricultural products. This section includes transactions involving over 120 agricultural and agroindustrial products by country, geographic zone and for the world as a whole. The volume and value of exports and imports are given according to the SITC, Rev. 2, classification. The indexes of value, volume and unit value for trade in agricultural products by region are also given.

Values of foreign agricultural trade by country. A standarized classification of exports and imports of agricultural products is used, based on four sections and around 18 chapters of the SITC. A total of 20 countries of the region are included among the countries considered.

4. International Monetary Fund

The Data Fund System is maintained by the Statistical Office of the International Monetary Fund. It contains economic and descriptive data relating to national and international statistics, and uses a computer system to maintain and manipulate the information. The time series concerning the foreign trade of the countries, which are incorporated in the Data Fund, appear in the following publications:

a) Direction of Trade Statistics (DOTS). This publication gives data on the FOB value of exports and the CIF value of imports for 157 countries which trade with one another; it also includes regional and world aggregates showing trade flows between the major areas of the world.

The country classification is composed of three main categories: industrial countries, developing countries and a group of countries with centrally planned economies, designated as "USSR, Eastern Europe, etc.". The developing countries are divided into oil exporting and non-oil exporting nations, and the latter group is further subdivided into five regions; Africa, Asia, Europe, America and the Middle East. The only country of the region included among the oil exporting nations is Venezuela.

Most of the data for individual countries are those reported by national compilers who supply information to the Fund on a regular basis. In general, before the end of the first half of each year this information accounts for around three fourths of the world total of foreign trade during the preceding year. In order to arrive at provisional updated series for those countries which delay in reporting the detailed information on their trade flows, estimates are prepared based on the records of the countries with which they trade. Thus, if country X has recorded information which involves a second country that has not provided data, an estimate is made concerning the latter, with adjustments for freight and insurance. In 1982, such derived data represented 13% of world trade; this information, together with the total and partial data reported, amounted to 96% of world exports and 97% of world imports.

This publication is available on computer-readable tapes, containing the most up-to-date version of the series, which the Fund distributes each month.

b) International Financial Statistics (IFS). Although this publication primarily contains financial statistics, it also includes summary series on the foreign trade of each country. In these series, the countries are grouped in the same way as they are in the Direction of Trade. Quarterly and monthly statistics on the total value of imports and exports are given, including series on the value of the main primary product exports of each country and the value of oil imports. Volume and unit value indexes are also presented for total exports and the main primary product exports as well as the price movements of these commodities on world markets.

The value of foreign trade includes the transactions of merchandise which are ordinarily recorded by customs authorities. All the countries report their export figures in FOB values, and most report their import figures in CIF values. The values of imports are published under both system of valuation by applying the FOB-CIF factors derived from the balance of payments.

International Financial Statistics is one of the most up-to-date sources of general foreign trade indicators.

5. Regional use of the computerized data bases of the United Nations system

The information in the data bank of foreign trade statistics maintained by the Statistical Office of the United Nations at Geneva is being used by ECLA to incorporate the foreign trade statistics of some Caribbean countries into BADECEL. The Statistical Office sends the corresponding data tapes, which are at the five-digit SITC level, for this purpose.

/The UNCTAD

The UNCTAD data bank relies to a great extent on the foreign trade statistics maintained by the United Nations Statistical Office, although they are presented in a form which is more suitable for certain types of analysis. Nevertheless, the information on primary product prices and unit values maintained in the data bank, which is constantly updated by UNCTAD, serves as useful supplementary information for any regional information system. Currently, ECLA is analysing the feasibility of using these data in the provisional updating of its new foreign trade indexes for Latin America in order to fill the gap between the time when the statistics on the value of the trade of the countries of the region are first available and the point in time when it becomes operationally feasible to compute the indexes for each country using the complete information which is already in the BADECEL data bank.

The possibility of also using the information on trade in agricultural products which is maintained by FAO for the above purpose is currently being examined; an agreement has already been reached with FAO for the transfer of information to the Latin American Bank of Economic and Social Statistics (BADESTAL), which is maintained by ECLA.

As already noted, the system of balance-of-payments statistics (BADEPAG), which is also maintained by ECLA as part of the BADESTAL data bank, is based on the data tapes sent monthly to the International Monetary Fund.

/IV. INFORMATION

IV. INFORMATION AVAILABLE FROM INTERNATIONAL BODIES OUTSIDE THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

1. General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT)

GATT maintains a file of tariff and trade data which is broken down by country and which includes the customs tariff rates and the imports of selected countries according to the customs positions assigned to them in the Customs Co-operation Council Nomenclature (CCCN). GATT also issues the following publication:

International Trade. This publication contains analyses of the major trends in the world trade of merchandise, the trade of the industrial countries, and the trade of non-industrialized areas. The region is included in this last group as Central and South America, and is broken down by country only with respect to the value of exports (FOB) and imports (CIF). It includes a statistical appendix which makes it possible to analyse world trade by products or product groups and by broad economic areas or the main countries engaging in world trade. For this reason, only the most industrialized countries of the region appear, and then only sporadically, on an individual basis.

In general, the statistics which GATT includes in this publication are compilations of data provided by the United Nations Statistical Office, the International Monetary Fund and the member countries of the OECD.

2. Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

The OECD maintains two foreign trade data bases concerning its 25 member countries in its computerized data bank:

a) Monthly Foreign Trade Statistics (A)

This publication contains information on the trade totals of each member country, broken down by partner country and by product at the one-digit level of SITC.

The following publications are issued on the basis of this data:

Statistics of Foreign Trade, Monthly Bulletin Series A. This bulletin contains a summary of foreign trade statistics for each one of the 25 member countries of the OECD, broken down by country of origin and destination. The monthly average value of exports and imports is given in millions of United States dollars by month, quarter and year -generally the last two. The major element of interest in this publication as far as Latin America and the countries of the region are concerned is the possibility it offers for analysing the status of foreign trade between the countries of Latin America and those of the OECD, or between the two groups of countries. Naturally, in view of the high percentage of regional trade which is conducted with this economic group (over 80%), this information is of great interest.

/b) Foreign

b)   Foreign Trade by Commodities and Partner Countries

This document contains detailed trade statistics going back to 1961 for each member country which are broken down by partner country and by product, in values and quantities, and are classified according to the SITC, Rev.1 and Rev.2.

The following publications are issued on the basis of this information:

Statistics of Foreign Trade. Series B. These yearbooks, with tables arranged by reporting country, are devoted to an analysis of the trade flows between each member country and the OECD countries and the flows between them and other partner countries or groups of countries based on the geographical classification of the OECD. They set forth the trade structure according to SITC, Rev.2, sections, chapters and groups. Latin America is presented as a region, and only Brazil figures individually.

Trade by Commodities. Series C. This yearbook is published in two volumes, one for exports and one for imports. It supplies detailed information on the structure of the foreign trade of each OECD member country with countries, groups of countries or economic areas on the basis of the SITC. It differs from the Series B publications in its complete disaggregation by country. The countries of the region which trade with the OECD therefore figure individually. The SITC, Rev.1, was used for the period 1961-1977, and from 1978 onwards the SITC, Rev.2, is being applied.

Each volume has two parts. The first contains summary tables in the form of matrices in which trade is wholly disaggregated on a geographical basis, in values only, according to SITC sections and chapters. The second part contains the foreign trade figures by SITC groups, in both quantities and values.

The data provided by the above-mentioned OECD publications relating to the foreign trade of products, arranged according to the SITC classification, may be obtained through tape or microfiche subscriptions. Special tabulations may also be requested.

3.   Statistical Office of the European Communities (EUROSTAT)

The European Economic Community (EEC) maintains the monthly statistics on the total trade of its member countries, by partner country, and on trade within the Community and outside of it, by product, in its CRONOS data base. These statistics are especially compiled in the member countries, and are previously brought into alignment with one another. Using this data base, the following publications are issued:

Monthly External Trade Bulletin. The foreign trade of the Community is presented by partner country and is denominated in European currency units (ECU), whose conversion table is also included. In addition, it presents the trends in the intra- and extra-regional trade of each EEC country by SITC sections, chapters and groups, both in quantities and in values.

/A more

A more detailed treatment of the EEC foreign trade data, organized as mentioned above, is available in <u>Analytical Tables of Foreign Trade</u>, an annual publication.

V. TOWARDS A REGIONAL STATISTICAL INFORMATION SYSTEM ON FOREIGN TRADE

1. <u>The current situation with respect to foreign
trade statistics</u>

Governments have been party to many resolutions and commitments to supply statistical information, in general, and foreign trade statistics, in particular, to the United Nations and to regional and subregional bodies. At times these commitments are not honoured due to technical or organizational obstacles which thwart the desires of governments or the willingness of the national agencies responsible for supplying the information. In this regard, some factors should be mentioned which have hindered a more dynamic flow of foreign trade statistics and the supply of information as inputs for the subregional and regional information systems.

Firstly, the fact that the foreign trade statistics come from customs records is a decisive factor in determining the quality and nature of the information. Its quality clearly depends upon the accuracy of the records, which ultimately determine what information will subsequently be processed for statistical purposes. As far as the nature of the records is concerned, since they are used for collecting customs duties, they conform to tariff characteristics and do not lend themselves to economic analysis. In order to adapt the information for these purposes, in 1960 a key was established between the Brussel's Tariff Nomenclature (BTN) and the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC), which have been adopted by most of the countries in the region.

The system of customs record-keeping is not the only factor, governing the quality of the information, however; some foreign trade practices, such as the operational and marketing systems for foreign trade transactions, have distinctive features which influence the corresponding records and the type of statistics which are compiled.

If customs administration systems are not modernized and appropriate methods for recording non-routine trade operations are not developed, the advances made with respect to international classifications and the impetus given to the foreign trade statistics system by subregional integration organizations will be compromised, above all with respect to the quality and discrimination of foreign trade statistics.

At this point it may be appropriate to look into the evolution of the foreign trade statistics of the region. If it is granted that the usefulness of statistics increases in proportion to their explicitness, currency and reliability, then attention should be focused on the main factors of timeliness, quality, coverage and the degree of disaggregation.9/

/Timeliness is

Timeliness is a factor of the greatest importance with respect to foreign trade, since the statistics are records of administrative events related to the contemporary situation. In Latin America, despite the introduction of electronic data processing, and even the publication of foreign trade yearbooks, efforts to produce statistics promptly for use in short-term analyses of foreign trade at disaggregated levels have, on the whole, still not been successful. In general, the countries which are the most prompt in publishing their foreign trade yearbooks do so with a time-lag of no less than 16 months, with the average delay being over 24 months. Under these conditions, the information is usually used primarily for retrospective studies, and it becomes necessary to make provisional estimates updating the series, at relatively aggregated levels, in order to carry out current and prospective analyses.

The situation with regard to quality has improved considerably, except in those countries where the customs administrations are inadequate and the foreign trade systems militate against good record-keeping with respect to the transactions.

The improvement in the quality of foreign trade statistics is in large part due to the rigorous supervision of operations. Some examples in this respect are the monitoring of export and import records by central banks or other agencies as well as the foreign exchange controls and the reconciliation of these records with balance-of-payments compilations carried out by those agencies. Lastly, the equally important problem of customs checks should also be mentioned. The findings of these bodies should at some point be double-checked, and in each case the responsible authorities must follow the pre-established procedures. Nevertheless, on occasion the economic situation and loopholes in the systems for monitoring foreign exchange, exchange insurance or charges and subsidies produce systematic biases towards the underestimation of exports or the overestimation of imports.

The coverage of foreign trade records sets them apart from most other statistics. Foreign trade data attempt to cover the statistical universe of transactions, including the partner countries, the flags flown by the ships which transport the merchandise and other technical specifications. Thus, in this case, the problem of selecting samples from which to extrapolate information does not arise. Although the countries of the region have made great strides forward with respect to universalizing customs records, gaps in their coverage persist due to the existence of special trade régimes -principally those administered by certain official agencies- which bypass normal record-keeping procedures.

As regards disaggregation, largely because of the above-mentioned administrative controls, it is possible to obtain even more comprehensive and detailed information than is needed to analyse the trade structure. This is the case, for example, with transport and insurance. There is still, however, room for improvement as regards a more precise application of the subregional tariff nomenclatures and the SITC, particularly with regard to the adoption of the SITC, Rev.2.

It follows from the above that, except in the case of the promptness with which foreign trade information is submitted, the nature of the activity and the inertia of administrative controls have contributed to a significant improvement

/as regards

as regards such statistics. The problem of the time factor, however, cannot be ignored since under certain circumstances delays in the submission of information may nullify or detract from the value of the data.

The causes of delays in the compilation and publication of foreign trade statistics naturally vary from one country to another. Nonetheless, these causes may bear less relation to the technical aspects of statistics than to the administrative superstructure and the way in which their processing is organized. Moreover, it would seem that the customs administrations are the factor which poses the most sensitive problems because of the many specifications they must record, and that, it is probably not yet feasible to introduce electronic data processing systems.

In sum, the foreign trade statistics for the region have in general improved significantly, although there are considerable differences from one country to another. In this respect, the subregional integration bodies have played a leading role, since in order to conduct studies and carry out negotiations concerning integration processes it has become necessary for them to prepare specialized statistics and, further, to make strides in the field of statistical homogenization and international comparability.

2. A scheme for an integrated regional system of foreign trade statistics

Notwithstanding the efforts being made by subregional integration bodies and by ECLA to establish the respective subregional and regional information systems, delays in the compilation and submission of detailed foreign trade statistics by the countries limit their operational possibilities, particularly in view of the considerable disparities among the different countries of the region in this regard. Annex 1, which indicates the information available in the regional BADECEL data bank that is maintained by ECLA with the co-operation of the subregional integration bodies, illustrates both aspects of the situation.

However, this is an interactive process, in which the development of the regional information system points up the difficulties encountered by the countries in systematizing and processing their foreign trade statistics as well as the nature of the obstacles which must be overcome in order to rectify these processes, while the types of demands for regional, subregional and national analyses of trade flows indicate the direction in which the regional information system should be developed.

There are still considerable limitations at the regional and subregional levels as regards progress in the fields of organization and information science with a view to ensuring flexible and timely access to the detailed foreign trade statistics of the countries of the region. Nevertheless, such progress will lose a good deal of its significance if it is not accompanied by the more timely submission of information and an improvement in its systematization and harmonization by the member countries.

The current make-up of the regional and subregional systems for foreign trade statistics has already been discussed in detail in the corresponding sections of this document. The steps being taken by the subregional organizations and ECLA to

/co-ordinate their

co-ordinate their efforts have also been mentioned. The common goal is to develop and perfect a regional system for foreign trade statistics which is integrated in terms of its technical/statistical and computing aspects and as regards the division of labour among the participating organizations.

This process may be thought of as involving a number of increasingly complex methodological -rather than chronological- phases.

A first phase, which is already in progress, consists of the operational co-ordination of the subregional information systems and the External Trade Data Bank for Latin America and the Caribbean (BADECEL) which is maintained by ECLA at the regional level. ALADI has undertaken an ambitious programme to transform its present information system into a data bank. JUNAC is engaged in a similar process. For its part, ECLA is attempting to complement these efforts and those of SIECA with a free-flowing transfer of data from the countries of the Caribbean, in close co-ordination with the Centre for International Trade Statistics of the United Nations Statistical Office at Geneva.

As a part of this phase of consolidating BADECEL, ECLA is endeavouring to rationalize its computing system and to design new foreign trade indicators to be incorporated into the data bank on a regular basis. Meanwhile, as long as no significant progress is made with regard to the second phase -i.e., improving the supply of information by the countries- ECLA is studying the feasibility of incorporating the series which can regularly be made available by UNCTAD, FAO and the OECD from their previously-described data bases into BADECEL to serve as supplementary data bases to facilitate provisional updatings. This phase should culminate in a free-flowing exchange of microdata and series between BADECEL and the subregional data banks, thereby facilitating the member countries' access to any one of these data banks by providing standardized or special compilations on request, either in the form of tabulations or systems which can be directly processed.

A second phase that is absolutely necessary for the full development of the regional information system -and which should therefore start to move forward now- consists of improving the supply of statistics by the countries: their promptness and the harmonization of classifications, criteria and computer formats, etc. As previously mentioned, the obstacles to the achievement of this goal are considerable for some countries. In many cases, their removal will require any technical co-operation which can be obtained through multilateral and bilateral machinery. In any event, a regional mechanism for technical consultation will have to be brought into being using the machinery which has already been established at the level of the subregional integration organizations.

A third phase, which would presuppose a more highly developed integrated regional system of foreign trade information, could be the actual integration of the regional data bank with the subregional data banks, thus permitting direct access by any country to the data bases maintained in these banks. In order for the system to enter into this phase of development, BADECEL and the data banks of the subregional organizations would first have had to reach a similar level of development and to achieve full computational and operational compatibility. It

/would also

would also mean that the data banks would have to have the technical capability to maintain or transmit directly those sections of their data bases which might be requested and would have to be hooked up to telecommunications networks which the countries could have access. The countries, for their part, would need to have the computer capacity to take full advantage of such access to the regional data bases as well as a complete operational mastery of the characteristics of those data bases. The financial and organizational efforts required by a scheme of this sort are considerable in relation to present resources and costs. Therefore, any consideration given to developing this phase should be based on a careful analysis of the current and potential demand of the member countries for detailed statistics. Moreover, such a complex system would probably only be justified when it becomes possible to supply it with statistics on a quaterly or even monthly basis.

However, one of the lessons of history is that projections of future progress should not be confined to a linear perspective. Another of its lessons is that organizational progress often lags considerably behind technological progress, thereby limiting its application. This is all the more reason for urging that rapid progress should be made in the preceding phases of consolidating a regional information system for foreign trade statistics.

Furthermore, if a regional system of the kind described above were to become feasible, it would be helpful to augment it with other information which is pertinent to the analysis of trade, in addition to statistics, such as data on trade charges and regulations. ALADI, which has been systematizing this type of information for its member countries for years, plans to incorporate a system of this sort into its data bank, which would then be incorporated into the regional information system on foreign trade, along with the corresponding access arrangements.

No matter how remote it might seem, a fourth phase which could conceivably take place in the development of an integrated regional system of foreign trade information should be mentioned. This would consist of an interconnected regional network of national data banks, with focal points in the subregional banks and the regional data bank. Such a network would provide immediate access for any country, through teleprocessing, to the data base of any other country or to the regional and subregional bases; these, in turn, could directly obtain the data of each country for use in the compilation of aggregated statistics or for comparative studies. A network of this type, in addition to including the integrated system of foreign trade statistics and the tariff information system, could also serve as a very suitable technical support for the establishment of a trade information system containing continually updated prices, offers and orders, which would promote the expansion of intra-regional trade and would further the integration of commerce. The technical means of establishing a network with these features are already on the horizon. The investment in equipment could be considerable, but is practicable. The greatest difficulties may be encountered in the institutional and organizational spheres, particularly at the national level.

Notes

1/ See United Nations, Standard International Trade Classification, Revised, Statistical Papers, Series M, No. 34, New York, 1961.

2/ See ECLA, Clasificación del Comercio Exterior según Uso o Destino Económico, Series C/CN.12/739, Santiago, Chile, 27 October 1965.

3/ See UNCTAD, "Definition of primary commodities, semi-manufactures and manufactures. Measures related to the report of the Special Committee on Preferences. Note by the UNCTAD secretariat", TD/B/C.2/3, Geneva, July 1965.

4/ See United Nations, Classification by Broad Economic Categories, Statistical Papers, Series M, No. 53 and Series M, No. 53, Rev.1.

5/ See United Nations, International Standard Industrial Classification of all Economic Activities, Statistical Papers, Series M, No. 4, Rev.1 and Series M, No. 4, Rev.2.

6/ See ECLA, América Latina: relación de precios del intercambio, ECLA Cuadernos Estadísticos series, No. 1, Santiago, Chile, 1976.

7/ Ibid.

8/ ECLA, El balance de pagos de América Latina 1950-1977, ECLA Cuadernos series, No. 5, E/CEPAL/G.1097, September 1979.

9/ For a more detailed discussion of the factors affecting the development of foreign trade statistics, see Mario Movarec, "External sector statistics for development planning: a matter for statisticians and planners?", CEPAL Review, No. 11, Santiago, Chile, August 1980.

Annex 1

STATUS OF THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THE EXTERNAL TRADE DATA BANK FOR
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (BADECEL)

Country and type of trade	Years for which data are available but not yet incorporated into the system	Years for which data are available and have been incorporated into the system	
		With incomplete ISIC correlations a/	With complete correlations b/
Argentina			
Exp.	1961 to 1969		1970 to 1981
Imp.	1961 to 1969		1970 to 1981
Bolivia			
Exp.	1961 to 1969	1970 to 1977, 1979 to 1981	-
Imp.	1961 to 1969	1970 to 1972, 1974 to 1976 1979, 1981	-
Brazil			
Exp.	1961 to 1969	-	1970 to 1981
Imp.	1961 to 1969	-	1970 to 1981
Colombia			
Exp.	1961 to 1969	1975 to 1981	1970 to 1974
Imp.	1961 to 1969	1975 to 1981	1970 to 1974
Chile			
Exp.	1961 to 1969	1979 to 1981	1970 to 1978
Imp.	1961 to 1969	1970 to 1981	-
Ecuador			
Exp.	1961 to 1969	1971, 1975 to 1980	1970, 1972 to 1974
Imp.	1961 to 1969	1970 to 1971, 1975 to 1980	1972 to 1974
Mexico			
Exp.	1961 to 1969, 1978	1975 to 1977, 1979 to 1981	1970 to 1974
Imp.	1961 to 1969, 1978	1975 to 1976, 1979 to 1981	1970 to 1974
Paraguay			
Exp.	1961 to 1969	1970 to 1981	-
Imp.	1961 to 1969	1970 to 1981	-
Peru			
Exp.	1961 to 1969	1970 to 1977, 1979 to 1981	-
Imp.	1961 to 1969	1979 to 1981	1970 to 1977
Uruguay			
Exp.	1961 to 1969	1970 to 1981	-
Imp.		1970 to 1981	-
Venezuela			
Exp.	1961 to 1969	1976 to 1981	1970 to 1975
Imp.	1961 to 1969	1971 to 1973, 1976 to 1981	1970, 1974 to 1975

Annex 1 (conclusion)

Country and type of trade	Years for which data are available but not yet incorporated into the system	Years for which data are available and have been incorporated into the system	
		With incomplete ISIC correlations a/	With complete correlations b/
Costa Rica			
Exp.	–	–	1970 to 1980
Imp.	–	–	1970 to 1980
El Salvador			
Exp.	–	–	1970 to 1980
Imp.	–	–	1970 to 1980
Guatemala			
Exp.	–	–	1970 to 1980
Imp.	–	–	1970 to 1980
Honduras			
Exp.	–	–	1970 to 1980
Imp.	–	–	1970 to 1980
Nicaragua			
Exp.	–	–	1970 to 1980
Imp.	–	–	1970 to 1980
Guyana			
Exp.	1979	–	–
Imp.	1979	–	–
Jamaica			
Exp.	1978 to 1980	–	–
Imp.	1978 to 1980	–	–
Panama			
Exp.	1979	–	–
Imp.	1979	–	–
Dominican Republic			
Exp.	1973 to 1982	–	–
Imp.	1972 to 1974, 1977 1978, 1980	–	–
Trinidad and Tobago			
Exp.	1980	–	–
Imp.	1980	–	–

a/ Indicates that the national statistical classification fully correlates with the BTN, SITC, Rev. 1, CUODE, BEC, UNCTAD and LAFTA classifications, and only lacks designations for some ISIC, Rev.1, and ISIC, Rev.2, items.

b/ Indicates that the national statistical classification fully correlates with the BTN, SITC, Rev.1, CUODE, BEC, UNCTAD, LAFTA, ISIC, Rev.1 and ISIC, Rev.2, classifications.

Annex 2

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN: FOREIGN TRADE INFORMATION AVAILABLE IN THE UNITED
NATIONS STATISTICAL OFFICE a/

Country and medium	Year Vol.	70 20	71 21	72 22	73 23	74 24	75 25	76 26	77 27	78 28	79 29	80 30	81 31	82 32	83 33	84 34
ARGENTINA																
Tape		5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	*5R	*5R	*5R	.	.
Publication, fascicle No.		47	18	17	40	38	8	5	16	17	22	23	P	.	.	.
Microfiche		2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	+2R	.	.	.	.
BAHAMAS																
Tape		.	.	.	.	5	5	5	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Publication, fascicle No.		.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Microfiche		.	.	.	.	1	1	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
BARBADOS																
Tape		5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5R	.	.	.	.
Publication, fascicle No.		47	17	16	48	46	18	16	15	18	26	.	.	.	.	.
Microfiche		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2R	.	.	.	.
BELIZE																
Tape		.	.	.	.	.	5	5	5	5	5	5	.	.	.	.
Publication, fascicle No.		.	.	.	.	.	20	21	22	24	P	.	.	.	.	.
Microfiche		.	.	.	.	.	1	1	1	1	1	1	.	.	.	.
BOLIVIA																
Tape		5	5	5	+5	5	5	5	5R	5R	5R	.	.	.	.	.
Publication, fascicle No.		50	19	19	48	.	.	22	24	.	P	.	.	.	.	.
Microfiche		1	1	1	+1	1	1	1	2R	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
BRAZIL																
Tape		5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	.	.
Publication, fascicle No.		45	15	16	40	38	16	10	9	12	11	16	16	P	.	.
Microfiche		2	2	2	2	3	3	2	2	3	3	3	3	.	.	.
CHILE																
Tape		5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	.	5	.	.	.	.
Publication, fascicle No.		49	18	17	45	38	20	21	23	22	.	.	.	.	.	.
Microfiche		2	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	.	.	.	.	.	.
COLOMBIA																
Tape		5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5R	5R	5R	5	5R	.	.
Publication, fascicle No.		47	17	17	44	42	8	16	18	22	22	18	21	P	.	.
Microfiche		2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2R	2R	2R	2	.	.	.
COSTA RICA																
Tape		5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	*5	.	.
Publication, fascicle No.		46	17	16	47	45	13	17	18	18	20	18	P	.	.	.
Microfiche		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	.	.	.	.
ECUADOR																
Tape		5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5R	+5R	*5R	.	.	.	.
Publication, fascicle No.		49	.	20	46	47	20	18	19	22	.	.	.	.	.	.
Microfiche		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2R	+1	+1R	.	.	.	.
EL SALVADOR																
Tape		5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	.	.	.
Publication, fascicle No.		46	17	16	48	46	18	20	20	18	22	21	P	.	.	.
Microfiche		2	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	.	.	.	.
GUATEMALA																
Tape		5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	.	.	.
Publication, fascicle No.		46	17	16	47	46	21	22	21	22	.	.	.	.	.	.
Microfiche		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	.	.	.	.	.
GUYANA																
Tape		5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	.	.	.	.	.
Publication, fascicle No.		50	19	19	47	46	.	22	22	21	20	.	.	.	.	.
Microfiche		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	.	.	.	.	.

Annex 2 (concl.)

Country and medium	Year Vol.	70 20	71 21	72 22	73 23	74 24	75 25	76 26	77 27	78 28	79 29	80 30	81 31	82 32	83 33	84 34
HAITI																
Tape		#4	#4	#4	#4	#4	#4	#4	#4	#4	#4R	.	.	.	.	.
Publication, fascicle No.		.	.	.	.	47	19	20	20	24	.	.	.	.	.	.
Microfiche		#1	#1	#1	#1	#1	#1	#1	#1	#1	.	.	.	.	.	.
HONDURAS																
Tape		5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	.	.	.
Publication, fascicle No.		46	17	16	46	44	13	10	16	24	26	21	P	.	.	.
Microfiche		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	.	.	.
JAMAICA																
Tape		.	.	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5R	5R	5R	.	.	.
Publication, fascicle No.		.	.	.	.	.	19	20	22	22	23	19	.	.	.	.
Microfiche		.	.	1	2	.	2	2	2	1	2R	2R	2R	.	.	.
MEXICO																
Tape		5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	.	.	.	.	.
Publication, fascicle No.		47	14	14	43	44	19	18	19	24	P	.	.	.	.	.
Microfiche		2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	.	.	.	.	.
NICARAGUA																
Tape		5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	.	.
Publication, fascicle No.		47	17	16	46	45	13	17	18	18	20	16	P	P	.	.
Microfiche		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	.	.	.
PANAMA																
Tape		5	5	5	.5	5	5	5	5	5	5	.	.	.	.	.
Publication, fascicle No.		47	17	16	48	46	17	20	18	24	P	.	.	.	.	.
Microfiche		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	.	.	.
PARAGUAY																
Tape		5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	.	.	.	.	.
Publication, fascicle No.		50	19	19	48	47	19	18	23	22	26	.	.	.	.	.
Microfiche		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	.	.	.	.	.
PERU																
Tape		5	5	5	5	5	5	5R	5R	5R	5R	5R	5R	5R	.	.
Publication, fascicle No.		49	18	19	47	47	20	22	20	26	P	22	.	.	.	.
Microfiche		1	1	1	2	2	2	1R	2R	2R	2R	2R	.	.	.	.
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO																
Tape		5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5R	5R	5R	5R	.	.
Publication, fascicle No.		49	13	15	45	42	10	8	10	15	13	11	17	P	.	.
Microfiche		1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2R	2R	2R	.	.	.
URUGUAY																
Tape		5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	.	.	.
Publication, fascicle No.		.	.	.	.	.	18	10	20	22	20	18	21	.	.	.
Microfiche		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	.	.	.
VENEZUELA																
Tape		5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	.	.	.
Publication, fascicle No.		49	18	17	46	44	13	18	22	22	26	23	.	.	.	.
Microfiche		2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	.	.	.	.

Source: United Nations Statistical Office, International Trade and Related Statistics Branch.
a/ Since 1970. For most of the countries, there is also information covering previous years.
Symbols
R = Available annual data based on SITC, Rev.1, and SITC, Rev.2.   Quarterly data only, SITC, Rev.2.
2 = Chapter (SITC, two digits).
3 = Group (SITC, three digits).
4 = Subgroup (SITC, four digits).
5 = Item (SITC, five digits).
* = Imports only.
+ = Exports only.
# = The year ends on 30 September of the year indicated.