TECHNICAL NOTES

I.   Introduction

The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) serves as the central statistical authority of the government that compiles and generates International Merchandise Trade Statistics (IMTS) or commonly known as Foreign Trade Statistics. IMTS is one of the designated statistics released by PSA, which was approved under Executive Order No. 352 - Designation of Statistical Activities That Will Generate Critical Data for Decision Making of the Government and the Private Sector.

IMTS is compiled by PSA from the copies of export and import documents submitted to the Bureau of Customs (BOC) by exporters and importers or their authorized representatives as required by law.

This Press Release features the Highlights of the Philippine Export and Import Statistics for August 2023 (Preliminary).

All documents (hard copies and electronic files) received within the cut-off date, which is every 25th day of the month, are compiled, processed, summarized, analyzed, and disseminated through statistical tables and releases. The processing includes coding, editing, reviewing, and validating results.

I.1. Objective

IMTS is compiled to serve the needs of many users including the government; the business community; compilers of other economic statistics, such as the Balance of Payments (BOP) and National Accounts of the Philippines (NAP); various regional, supranational, and international organizations; researchers; and the public at large.

The main uses are as inputs to the following:
1. Computing BOP by Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas;
2. Estimating NAP by PSA;
3. Formulating national, regional, and international policies by National Economic Development Authority and Department of Trade and Industry; and
4. Other pertinent activities such as research studies on trade by public and private entities.

I.2. Historical Background

In 1973, the former National Statistics Office (NSO) (now part of the PSA) became the sole agency to compile foreign trade statistics. Prior to this period, the Central Bank of the Philippines (now known as the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas) also compiled and released foreign trade data. However, the differences in the concepts used by these two agencies resulted in conflicting foreign trade data. This led to an agreement that made NSO (now part of the PSA) the sole compiler of the official foreign trade statistics.

I.3. Coverage

The IMTS relate to the movements of goods between the Philippines and other countries and areas by sea or air, whether the goods are for private or government use or commercial purposes, gifts, or donations. However, the following classes of goods are excluded from the compilation of IMTS:

a. Goods simply being transported through a country, includes goods under "in transit" or "in transshipment" customs procedures;
b. Goods temporarily admitted or dispatched;
c. Monetary gold;
d. Issued banknotes and securities and coins in circulation;
e. Goods consigned to and from the territorial enclaves;
f. Goods under merchanting;
g. Goods under operating lease;
h. Goods lost or destroyed after ownership has been acquired by the importer;
i. Goods functioning as means of transport;
j. Content delivered electronically;
k. Goods for repair or maintenance;
l. Waste and scrap with no commercial value;
m. Goods entering or leaving the economic territory of a country illegally;
n. Goods treated as part of the trade in services;
o. Fish and other marine products landed by Philippine vessels direct from the sea;
p. Stores and fuels purchased abroad by ships and aircraft of the Philippine registry;
q. Goods sent through parcel post; and
r. Goods with Free on Board (FOB) value less than USD 25.

II.   Data Collection

II.1. Data Collection Procedure

The PSA regularly receives copies of export and import declaration in electronic format provided by the BOC as stipulated in the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) on the Electronic Exchange of Information between the BOC and the PSA.

Other export and import documents (hard copy) that did not pass through the online system of the BOC and its authorized VASPs are collected by the Central Office (CO) staff from the BOC collection points located in the National Capital Region (NCR) three times a week. Provincial Office staff collects the hard copies of export documents from the BOC collection points located in areas outside NCR at least once a week to complete the monthly coverage of the export and import statistics.

II.2. Sources of Information

The PSA regularly collects from BOC the following documents which are the sources of trade data:

   a. Export Declaration (ED);
   b. Informal Import Declaration and Entry (IIDE); and
   c. Single Administrative Documents (SAD) for Export Declaration (ED) and Import Entry and Internal Revenue Declaration (IEIRD).

The electronic copies of the SAD-ED and SAD-IEIRD that pass through the Automated Export Documentation System (AEDS) and Electronic to Mobile (E2M) System are provided by BOC and its authorized Value Added Service Providers (VASPs) to PSA every month through email and via shared Google Drive.

These electronic copies of export and import documents are utilized to generate export and import statistics together with the processed hard copy documents collected at ports located at NCR and outside NCR.

II.3. Data Items

A. Export Declaration (ED)

The ED form contains 52 boxes or items of information. Export trade statistics are obtained from the 11 of the boxes as follows:

BOX NUMBER	DESCRIPTION
Box 2	Exporter / Supplier of Exporter and Address
Box 15	Province of Origin
Box 18	Vessel / Aircraft
Box 22	Currency, Total FOB Value
Box 27	Port of Loading
Box 31	Description of Goods
Box 33	Harmonized System (HS Code)
Box 34	Gross Weight (in Kilos)
Box 37	Customs Procedure Code (CPC)
Box 42	FOB Price
Box 46	FOB Value of Imported Raw Materials

B. Import Entry and Internal Revenue Declaration (IEIRD)

The form is divided into 69 boxes with boxes 1 to 52 on the first page and boxes 53 to 69 on the back page of the document. The latter refers to all the charges and obligations of the importer when the transactions occur. Of the information, import data are obtained in 14 of the boxes as follows:

BOX NUMBER	DESCRIPTION
Box 8	Name of Trader
Box 9	Freight
Box 9b	Insurance
Box 16	Country of Origin
Box 18	Vessel
Box 20	Terms of Delivery (FOB)
Box 22	Foreign Currency (FOB Value)
Box 27	Transshipment Port
Box 29	Port of Destination
Box 30	Location of Goods

Box 31	Description of Goods
Box 33	Code (HS and AHTN)
Box 35	Item Gross Weight
Box 36	Preference
Box 37	CPC Code
Box 42	Item Customs Value (FOB Value)
Box 43	Valuation Method

II.4. Trade System

The Philippines adopts the "General" trade system of recording foreign trade statistics. The customs frontier (not the national boundary) is used as the statistical frontier. Under this system, all goods entering any of the seaports or airports of the Philippines, which are properly cleared through customs and are remaining or under customs control, are considered imports, whether the goods are for direct consumption, merchandising, warehousing, or further processing. On the other hand, all goods leaving the country, which are properly cleared through customs, are considered exports.

III.   Other Information

III.1. Time of Recording

As a general guideline stipulated in the 2010 IMTS Compilers Manual, it is recommended that goods be recorded at the time when they enter or leave the economic territory of a country. The Date of Registry of the exported or imported goods in the BOC is used as the proxy date in recording the time when the goods enter or leave the economic territory.

III.2. Customs Procedures

A customs procedure is a treatment applied by the customs to goods which are subject to customs control. The customs procedure is the basis for the correct identification of the flows of goods for inclusion or exclusion under general or special trade. Customs usually apply a system of codes that allows flows of goods to be identified and prevents the double recording of the goods which have undergone several customs procedures.

III.3. Classification of Commodities

The 2022 Philippine Standard Commodity Classification (PSCC) is used to classify the commodities at the 11-digit code level for statistical purposes. The 2022 PSCC is the latest revision of the country's commodity classification. It is a detailed classification of all commodities on imports and exports being used for tariff and statistical purposes. The 2022 PSCC is an integration of the 2022 ASEAN Harmonized Tariff Nomenclature (AHTN) based on the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System (HS) issued by the World Customs Organizations (WCO) and the Standard International Trade Commodity (SITC) Revision 4 by the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD).

IV. Concepts and Definitions of Terms

Balance of Trade (BoT) refers to the difference between the exports and imports of goods. A positive value indicates a favorable trade balance while a negative value indicates an unfavorable trade balance.

Exports refer to all goods leaving the country, which are properly cleared through customs. A distinction, however, is made between export for goods grown, mined, or manufactured in the Philippines (domestic exports) and exports of imported goods that do not undergo physical and/or chemical transformation in the Philippines (re-exports).

Imports refer to all articles, wares, goods, or merchandise of every kind or class entering the jurisdiction of the Philippines from any foreign port, either with intent to unload therein, or which, after such entering, are assumed therein, or incorporated in the general mass or property of the Philippines.

Free on Board (FOB). This term means that the seller's obligation to deliver is fulfilled when the goods have passed over the ship's rail at the named port of shipment. This means that the buyer has to bear all costs and risks of loss or damage to the goods from that point.

V.   Dissemination of Results and Revision

V.1. Dissemination of Results

All documents (hard copies and electronic files) received within the cut-off date, which is every 25th day of the month, are compiled, processed, summarized, analyzed, and disseminated through monthly statistical tables and Press Releases (PRs) and annual and first semester Special Releases.

Preliminary results of export and import statistics are disseminated in the form of PRs. The PR is disseminated every 40th day after the reference month except for the last month of every quarter as follows: December - 27 days after the reference month; March and June - 37 days after the reference month; and September - 36 days after the reference month. However, if the release date falls on a Saturday, the release is made a day earlier (Friday). If it falls on a Sunday or Monday, the release is on Tuesday. Moreover, if the release date falls on a holiday, the date of release is moved accordingly. Preliminary results are posted on the PSA website (www.psa.gov.ph).

V.2. Revision Policy

All documents received after the cut-off date, which is every 25th day of the month, are included in the generation of the revised results. The revised data of the previous month are reported during the release of the preliminary report for the current month. Revisions are made for the previous months until the annual report is released three months after the reference year. These revised data are reflected in the annual publication of the IMTS.

Moreover, all documents received from April to December after the reference year are included in the second revision of the annual export and import statistics. The revised data are reported 15 months after the reference year.

VI.   Citation

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VII. Contact Information

Ma. Julieta P. Soliven
Chief Statistical Specialist
Trade Statistics Division
8376-1975
j.soliven@psa.gov.ph

For data requests, you may contact the:
Knowledge Management and Communications Division
Telephone: (02) 8462-6600 locals 839, 833 and 834
E-mail: info@psa.gov.ph