

# HOW TO USE INTERNATIONAL TRADE STATISTICS

*by Olegario Llamazares*

When a company decides to sell (export) or buy (import) its products in international markets is essential to know the statistics of international trade of that products that can be obtain freely on Internet and in a few minutes. This information is really useful to design the international marketing strategies and negotiate operations. **In this article we always refer to international trade of goods** (tangible products) because for international trade in services (intangible) there are no detailed statistics.

The three steps to obtain international trade statistics are:

## **1. Identify the tariff code of the product you want to export or import**

Tariff codes consists of 8 digits refer to chapter (digits 1 and 2), code (3 and 4), sub-code (5 and 6) and position (7 and 8). For the purposes of international trade statistics there will be necessary to identify only the first six digits and, if not possible, the first four.

Identification of tariff codes for each product can be made through the website [Taric](http://www.taric.es) The search path for the tariff code for a specific product is:

*www.taric.es - link of "Aplicaciones online" - Net Tariff Taric - in the window of "search" put the name of the product to be exported or imported - from tariff codes that appear choose the most conforming to the product being sought.*

For example, if you are looking for the product "gates", it will appear several tariff codes including doors and windows. If you are searching the code for "wooden doors" the most appropriate will be 441820 ("Doors and their frames and threshold"), but in general to identify correctly the code, you will have to analyze in detail the type of product to be exported or imported.

## Tariff code for the product "gates" (www.taric.es)

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**Taric**  
Grupo Taric

Catálogo Aplicaciones Online Acceso a Servicios Soporte Técnico Taric S.A. [Iniciar sesión]

Taric > Acceso a servicios > metTaric > English

Search: doors  
as text as code  
Start Search

**Search results for text: doors**  
Items 1-10 of 17  
Update: 01-10-2012. Release: 261.0

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3920.43.10.96	Film of a gloss level of 70 or more, measured at an angle of 60 ° using a gloss meter (as determined by the ISO 2813:2000 method), consisting of a layer of poly(ethylene terephthalate) and a layer of colored poly(vinyl chloride), for coating panels and <b>doors</b> of a kind used in the manufacture of domestic appliances
3921.90.60.93	Film of a gloss level of 30 or more but not exceeding 60, measured at an angle of 60 ° using a gloss meter (as determined by the ISO 2813:2000 method), consisting of a layer of poly(ethylene terephthalate) and a layer of colored poly(vinyl chloride), joined by a metalized adhesive coating, for coating panels and <b>doors</b> of a kind used in the manufacture of domestic appliances
3925.20.00.00	<b>Doors</b> , windows and their frames and thresholds for <b>doors</b>
3925.90.10.00	Fittings and mountings intended for permanent installation in or on <b>doors</b> , windows, staircases, walls or other parts of buildings
4418.20	<b>Doors</b> and their frames and thresholds
73.08	Structures (excluding prefabricated buildings of heading 9406) and parts of structures (for example, bridges and bridge-sections, lock-gates, towers, lattice masts, roofs, roofing frameworks, <b>doors</b> and windows and their frames and thresholds for <b>doors</b> , shutters, balustrades, pillars and columns), of iron or steel; plates, rods, angles, shapes, sections, tubes and the like, prepared for use in structures, of iron or steel
7308.30.00.00	<b>Doors</b> , windows and their frames and thresholds for <b>doors</b>
76.10	Aluminium structures (excluding prefabricated buildings of heading 9406) and parts of structures (for example, bridges and bridge-sections, towers, lattice masts, roofs, roofing frameworks, <b>doors</b> and windows and their frames and thresholds for <b>doors</b> , balustrades, pillars and columns); aluminium plates, rods, profiles, tubes and the like, prepared for use in structures
7610.10.00.00	<b>Doors</b> , windows and their frames and thresholds for <b>doors</b>
n.c.	Locks of a kind used for <b>doors</b> of buildings

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## 2. Obtain international trade statistics (export or import)

Once you know the tariff code, the second step is to obtain through Internet statistics of export and import of the country or countries of your interest. You can get that information for free and in a few minutes through the United Nations website [Comtrade](http://comtrade.un.org), although the search path is somewhat complex. It is as follows:

*http://comtrade.un.org/db - Data availability - by reporter - choose country-year in the first column - check "I have read Readme" - choose import / export - quick filter put in tariff heading (4 or 6 digits) - search - select HS2002-Apply*

Thus, in the example above for the product "wooden doors" if you want to know the imports of Japan of that product the data obtained is that Japan imports "wooden doors and windows" for a total of 189,3 MM USD (year 2011), especially from the China (129,7), Philippines (22,0 and Malaysia (19,5).

## Imports from Japan of "wooden doors and windows" (Comtrade)

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United Nations Commodity Trade Statistics Database | Statistics Division

Home Data Query Data Availability Metadata & Reference Subscription & Support Fast tracks

Home Data Query Express Selection Query Result

**Basic Query Results:** 30 rows returned in 1.17 seconds.

Quick filter Search Clear ? Clear Apply

Selected classification: HS2002  
Selected commodities: 441820 (Doors & their frames & thresholds, of wood, incl. cellular wood panels)  
Selected reporters: Japan  
Selected years: 2011  
Selected partners: All  
Selected trade flows: Import

Sort Order: --None-- Refresh

Direct Download SDMX Download Printable Format

Modify Selection View Graph & Map View Explanatory Notes View Not-Available-Data

Switch to any HS classifications

Period	Trade Flow	Reporter	Partner	Code	Trade Value	NetWeight (kg)	Quantity Unit	Trade Quantity	Flag
2011	Import	Japan	World	441820	\$189,307,068	51,571,751	g	51,571,751	0
2011	Import	Japan	China	441820	\$109,785,323	28,479,736	g	28,479,736	0
2011	Import	Japan	Philippines	441820	\$22,094,139	4,071,923	g	4,071,923	0
2011	Import	Japan	Malaysia	441820	\$19,517,656	9,412,810	g	9,412,810	0
2011	Import	Japan	Indonesia	441820	\$18,792,247	7,008,449	g	7,008,449	0
2011	Import	Japan	USA	441820	\$6,323,464	876,358	g	876,358	0
2011	Import	Japan	Sweden	441820	\$4,286,021	357,831	g	357,831	0
2011	Import	Japan	Thailand	441820	\$3,372,295	519,728	g	519,728	0
2011	Import	Japan	Canada	441820	\$1,805,850	440,211	g	440,211	0
2011	Import	Japan	Finland	441820	\$1,462,536	226,521	g	226,521	0
2011	Import	Japan	Italy	441820	\$637,235	44,157	g	44,157	0
2011	Import	Japan	Other Asia, nes	441820	\$172,542	28,470	g	28,470	0
2011	Import	Japan	United Kingdom	441820	\$168,360	20,662	g	20,662	0
2011	Import	Japan	France	441820	\$144,336	8,720	g	8,720	0
2011	Import	Japan	Denmark	441820	\$114,622	6,488	g	6,488	0
2011	Import	Japan	Australia	441820	\$107,401	9,070	g	9,070	0
2011	Import	Japan	Belgium	441820	\$99,276	5,089	g	5,089	0
2011	Import	Japan	Rep. of Korea	441820	\$96,927	10,899	g	10,899	0
2011	Import	Japan	Germany	441820	\$79,923	10,107	g	10,107	0
2011	Import	Japan	Estonia	441820	\$59,967	9,961	g	9,961	0

Estimated quantity/netweight shown in *italics*  
Flag refers to quantity/netweight estimation:  
0 = no estimation, 2 = quantity, 4 = netweight, 6 = both quantity and netweight

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- National Compilation and Dissemination Practices
- Reported and converted data / conversion issues
- SDMX data format
- UN Comtrade Web Service
- Reproduction and re-dissemination
- Note on quantity information
- Knowledge Base (search)

**Released data**

# of country periods

today (2012-10-23)	#
in a week	0
in a month	38
year-to-date	229
in a year	253
all data	6452

**Not yet available reporters of 2011 data**

- Spain [1.83%]
- Saudi Arabia [1.38%]
- United Arab Emirates [1.36%]
- Austria [0.97%]
- Viet Nam [0.64%]
- Iran [0.57%]
- Nigeria [0.44%]
- Kazakhstan [0.35%]

If you search for trade statistics of countries in the European Union or Latin America there is two other websites below, whose use is free of charge:

- Export Help Desk:** in the Trade Statistics Section there are available exports and imports of products, according to tariff code, from the 27 member countries of the European Union.
- Aladi:** in Section of "Estadísticas/Comerio Exterior de Bienes" there are available exports and imports of products, according to tariff code, from the 13 countries that are members of this organization.

### 3. Statistical analysis

Once statistics of export and imports have been obtained, the next and final step is to analyze them. To do this it is best to get the statistics for the last three years so you can see the evolution of international trade for the country and product being analyzed.

For a company that wants to export a product to a given country, the information can be obtained analyzing international trade statistics is:

- The size of the market, that which will be the total import volume of a particular product, expressed in dollars.
- Market evolution: growth or decline in imports in the last three years.
- Main importing countries.
- The position of the country from which you want to export.
- In some products, the average price per unit.

All this information is very useful to design international marketing strategies and negotiate export and import operations.

\* Managing Director of Global Marketing Strategies and author of the bestseller *How to negotiate successfully in 50 countries*.

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To access directly to main international trade statistics websites, click [here](#)

# NEGOTIATION AND ETIQUETTE GUIDES IN 70 COUNTRIES



## Negotiation and Etiquette in Brazil



## Negotiation and Etiquette in China



## Negotiation and Etiquette in Russia



## Negotiation and Etiquette in Australia

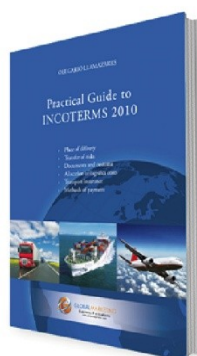


## Negotiation and Etiquette in Germany

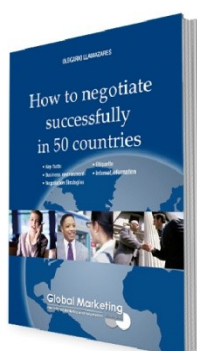


## Negotiation and Etiquette in Japan

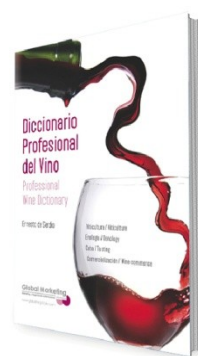
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