

Outlook on the future work to address bilateral asymmetries in the context of microdata exchange of merchandise trade statistics data

Bilateral asymmetries in international merchandise trade statistics (IMTS) relate to discrepancies in bilateral trade flows between trading partners. They occur when the declaration of the importer in country A is not consistent with the mirror declaration of the exporter in country B. Asymmetries come either from errors in reporting or from differences in the concepts and definitions applied by the partner countries. Asymmetries have an impact on bilateral trade balances and are thus of concern for the users of IMTS.

The **first part** of this presentation provides an overview of the actions currently undertaken by Eurostat (the statistical office of the European Union) to address bilateral asymmetries between the European Union (EU) member States in IMTS.

In the **second part**, the presentation describes the exchange of data at traders' level which will take place between the EU member states from early 2022. These microdata will have great potential in terms of data quality improvement by providing new means to investigate intra-EU asymmetries and carry out reconciliation exercises.

Keywords

International merchandise trade statistics, bilateral trade asymmetries, trade balance, microdata exchange, European Union, Eurostat