

A message from the Director-General

Roberto Azevêdo

Promoting transparency in trade and trade policy and monitoring trends in the global economy are amongst the key functions of the World Trade Organization. In providing information on trade and market access developments through a range of publications and online databases, the WTO offers policy-makers and analysts an encompassing tool to help them understand and monitor these developments.

The annual International Trade Statistics report contributes to this mission by providing consistent long-term statistics on trade in merchandise, commercial services and other relevant indicators. Thanks to the active cooperation of national and multilateral research institutions, the 2014 issue continues to present estimates of trade in value added terms derived from the OECD-WTO database.

By linking in a consistent way trade statistics and the national accounts of the trade partners, these indicators provide invaluable information not only in trade-related matters, but also for other issues ranging from employment to environment.

On more strictly trade-related aspects, estimates on trade in value added show that services take a more pronounced role in international trade than conventional trade statistics suggest. Because services are increasingly embodied in the production of manufactures, they play a key role in defining the competitiveness of a country's exports. Additionally, services can be instrumental in helping countries to upgrade to higher value-added tasks in global value chains. More generally, the initial results derived from this new way of measuring the global economy reveals the importance of trade in intermediate inputs, both goods and services, for national economies that are increasingly interconnected. Recognizing this close inter-dependence translates into a further call for better multilateral trade governance and international coordination.

Finally, let me emphasize that the provision of all these statistics would not be possible without the excellent cooperation received from members' missions, international organizations and national statistical authorities. The WTO Secretariat wishes to recognize here their invaluable contribution to this report.

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