



HM Revenue
& Customs

Regional Trade Statistics

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Regional Trade Statistics Methodology Paper

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1 Introduction

HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC), formerly HM Customs and Excise, introduced the Regional Trade Statistics (RTS) series in January 1999 to support the economic decision-making of the devolved Scottish and Welsh Governments and other regional bodies within the UK. These statistics provide a useful breakdown of the flows of goods imports and exports between regions of the UK and other countries. RTS was designed to provide a meaningful breakdown of the UK's Overseas Trade Statistics (OTS), presented in the standard 'Government Office Region' geography:

United Kingdom

England

North East

North West

Yorkshire and the Humber

East Midlands

West Midlands

East

London

South East

South West

Wales

Scotland

Northern Ireland

RTS includes all merchandise trade within the scope of the UK's OTS. It therefore excludes trade in services (e.g. banking, tourism) and intangibles (e.g. financial investments or transfers) and also the movement of goods between regions of the UK.

In 2015, a public consultation of the RTS methodology and publication was carried out by the Trade Statistics Unit in HMRC.

The main reasons for reviewing the RTS were:

- To ensure the statistics produced are fit for purpose and still required by users;
- To look at options that improve the usability and quality of the statistics produced;
- To harmonise if possible with the methodologies employed for other regional based statistics produced across the Government Statistical Service (GSS);

- To identify the right balance between producing statistics at regions / locations, with product and partner country; but still ensuring disclosure controls; and
- To improve the accuracy of the count of number of businesses, incorporating additional data sources if possible.

This paper covers the methodology used in the production of RTS, including the source of the data, the scope and limitations of trade statistics information received by HMRC, and provides a brief discussion of outputs and data dissemination.

A description of the methodology used by HMRC in the preparation of the OTS can be found [here](#).

2 Source of data

This section provides an overview of the production process of the RTS figures.

2.1 Data collection process

The RTS figures are derived from OTS data and its methodology makes use of transaction information such as commodity code, value of trade (in £), weight of trade (in kg), partner country/country group and other data fields. It also uses business information such as the business' postcode and data from the Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR) provided by the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

Trade below the Intrastat threshold is contained within OTS in the form of 'below threshold trade allocations' (BTTAs), and is also included within the RTS methodology. Although these BTTAs do not contain business information, the same methodology used in OTS to calculate BTTAs is replicated in RTS. This is described further in section 4.13.

Note that where businesses are not VAT-registered, there is no mechanism in place to collect information on EU trade movements. These trade flows are therefore not included in either the EU OTS or RTS figures.

A change in legislation on 1st May 2016, affected the way in which goods are declared to Customs, therefore UK trade statistics are prepared on the special trade basis¹. Prior to this, UK trade statistics were compiled on a general trade basis.

2.2 Administrative information

In order to produce the RTS, the business is matched against data held in the IDBR. Where there is no match a further match is tried against the National Statistic

¹ Under the **special trade system**, goods imported into customs warehouses and free zones are only recorded once they are removed and enter free circulation or certain customs procedures (e.g. Inward Processing). Re-exports from customs warehouses and free zones are not recorded under the special trade system.

Postcode Look-up (NSPL) file. This replaced the use of the ONS All Fields Postcode Directory (AFPD) used in the previous methodology due to changes in GSS guidelines. Aggregation at the product level is achieved by matching commodity information with various accepted classification systems. These data sources are described more fully below.

2.3 Inter-Departmental Business Register

This database is a comprehensive list of UK businesses liable for VAT/PAYE, used by government for statistical purposes. Specific use is made of the local unit file which contains details of employment and location details of each branch of each business. This file is the key to the new methodology where trade of multi-branch companies is allocated to different regions based the location of that business' employees.

Following advice from other GSS statistics producers who use a similar methodology, the RTS methodology uses an annual update to ensure timeliness of postcode data.

2.4 National Statistic Postcode Look-up file

Where there is no match against the IDBR, trade is matched against the National Statistic Postcode Look-up (NSPL) file. This file matches geographic units such as regions, counties and unitary authorities to 8-digit postcodes in the UK. The postcode of the business is matched against the contents of the postcode database, to allocate a region to the trade of that business. Also an update is carried out to ensure consistency of postcode data.

2.5 HMRC Departmental Trader Register (DTR)

This database contains administrative details on every VAT-registered business in the UK (of which there are in excess of 2 million). The DTR is used to match the VAT registration number and branch identifier of the business to the current postcode recorded for that business. The trader register is updated monthly and is used to assist the matching of businesses with the NSPL.

2.6 Commodity correlation tables

UK trade figures presented within the OTS publications are broken down by 8 digit Combined Nomenclature (CN8) descriptions, which are grouped within the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC, Rev. 4) 5-digit headings.

The introduction of regional breakdowns within the RTS methodology makes it necessary to aggregate commodity code information for two main reasons. First, the presentation of RTS figures is simplified if all CN8 descriptions can be combined

within a manageable number of higher levels. Second, aggregation helps to ensure business confidentiality.

The system for aggregation within RTS is based on the SITC (Rev. 4) 2-digit headings (called 'SITC Divisions'). A list of SITC Divisions is contained in Annex 1. For regular outputs, each unique CN8 code is correlated to one unique SITC Division. Being an internationally accepted classification system that forms the basis for the publication of OTS figures, SITC is the system of choice to use within the RTS methodology. The SITC correlation is managed by the United Nations.

3 Methodology

This section provides an overview of the production process of the RTS figures.

3.1 Data collection process

The data required for the allocation of trade to regions are taken from various sources within HMRC and the ONS.

3.2 Collecting business specific data

The methodology collects a list of the VAT Registration of all businesses making imports or exports each month. The initial merge is with the IDBR, the secondary merge with the NSPL postcode file.

3.3 Collecting trade declarations data

The methodology collects all lines of trade made for the month of account from the OTS data systems. The category fields include the month of account, flow (import or export), the business' reference (the VAT registration number), the partner country, the commodity code of the goods (in Combined Nomenclature 8 digit form), whether the statistics require suppression e.g. for military goods.

The statistical data fields are the 'statistical value' of the shipment (in £) and its weight (in kg, excluding packaging). Note that for EU trade, the 'statistical value' of the shipment is a figure calculated by HMRC from the declared invoice value submitted by the business plus data on delivery terms. This adjustment is to reflect the value of the shipment as at the boundary of the UK customs territory².

3.4 Merging data sources

There is a two stage matching process that matches a business' trade to a region.

² This is consistent with the 'special trade' method of international trade accounting.

i. Allocate trade to a region based on its employment within each region

This method allocates trade to a region based on its employee count in each region. Where a business has branches in more than one region, its trade is proportionally allocated to each region based on the proportion of its employees in each region. Breakdowns of that business' trade by commodity and partner country are applied uniformly across each region. Where a business has one branch (or multiple branches which fall in just one region) all their trade is allocated to that region.

ii. Allocate trade to a region based on postcode

If the business does not match with the IDBR, the methodology matches the business information and trade data with the contents of the 'National Statistics Postcode Look-up' file. This match is at 9-digit VAT Registration Number for the location of the Head Office.

The combined process is outlined in Annex 3.

3.5 Matching regionalised data with other fields

Data are merged with the CN8/SITC correlation table to introduce a 5-digit SITC code for each CN8 code. The SITC code is then truncated to 2-digit level (SITC Division) for the production of outputs.

Data are matched with country groups as defined within the UK statistical reporting system. Producing outputs based on country groups, rather than on individual countries, are sometimes useful where a query demands more detail at the commodity or regional level. Grouping countries into one of eight continents or country groupings e.g. EU28, renders the outputs less disclosive.

To ensure that all calculations have been carried out correctly, consistency checks are conducted at each point of the matching and aggregation process, so that any discrepancy can be quickly identified and resolved.

3.6 Incomplete or incorrect business information

The quality of the RTS outputs is to a large part dependent on the accuracy and completeness of OTS data. Within the Trade Statistics Unit, significant efforts are made to assess the quality of the statistical information provided by businesses and agents on the supplementary declarations (EU trade), while Customs processes provide checks on the single administrative documents (non-EU trade). These procedures are used to quality assure the OTS outputs.

Looking specifically at RTS, the two fields that are essential for the matching process to work are the business VAT number and the postcode fields. Allocation of business to a region may not be possible, depending on the outcome of the matching procedure outlined in Annex 3.

3.7 Regional allocation

Where a business has branches in more than region, that business' trade is allocated to each region based on the proportion of their total employees in that region. These proportions are applied uniformly across the commodities that the business trades in and similarly for partner countries.

Where there is no match with the IDBR the postcode of the business' head office is obtained from the DTR and the business then allocated to a region based on the NSPL.

3.8 Natural gas and electricity

Trade data relating to natural gas and electricity is obtained directly from pipeline and grid operators. Therefore, the appropriate methodology here is to allocate to the region where it enters or leaves the UK based on information supplied by the operators.

Natural Gas in a Gaseous State (CN8 27112100)

| Flow | Notes |
|----------------|---|
| EU Imports | All trade allocated to East as enters UK via Bacton Interconnector |
| EU Exports | Exports to Belgium allocated to East via Bacton Interconnector |
| EU Exports | Exports to Ireland allocated to Scotland via Moffat Interconnector |
| EU Exports | Exports to Netherlands allocated to East (trade from Markham gas field) or East Midlands (trade from Wingate gas field) based on information from gas terminals |
| Non-EU Imports | Allocated to Yorkshire & the Humber (trade via Easington) or Scotland (trade via Peterhead) |

Electricity (CN8 27160000)

| Flow | Notes |
|------------|---|
| EU Imports | Trade from France is allocated to South East (Folkestone) |
| EU Imports | Trade from Netherlands allocated to South East (Isle of Grain) |
| EU Imports | Trade from Ireland allocated to Wales (Deeside) or Northern Ireland (Strabane, Enniskillen and Tandragee) based on information from electricity terminals |
| EU Imports | Trade via Jersey allocated to 'Unallocated – Known' as per methodology |

| | |
|------------|---|
| EU Exports | Trade to France allocated to South East (Folkestone) |
| EU Exports | Trade to Netherlands allocated to South East (Isle of Grain) |
| EU Exports | Trade to Ireland allocated to Wales (Deeside) or Northern Ireland (Strabane, Enniskillen and Tandragee) based on information from electricity terminals |

3.9 Crude Oil trade

Where oil is processed on rigs in the North Sea and dispatched directly to other countries, the oil does not enter the UK and therefore does not obtain any regional coding. The RTS methodology categorises this oil trade based on the location of the oil rig. This allocation also uses information from the Scottish Adjacent Waters Boundaries Order 1999.

Oil imported or exported into or out of the UK via ship will be associated with a business. Trade is allocated to the region where the business is registered subject to the main allocation method outlined above.

3.10 Treatment of unusual trade

There are a number of categories of trade that present difficulties in terms of assigning regions to the business or activities responsible for the trade flows. These are described below. These are recorded in the 'Unallocated' category, split 'Unallocated – Known' where full details are known but it is not realistic to allocate it to a region; and 'Unallocated – Unknown' where not enough detail is known to allocate to a region.

3.11 Overseas businesses registered in the UK

There are a number of businesses who act within the UK on behalf of foreign companies overseas, operating as 'ghost presences'. For ease of administration, the majority of these businesses are registered for VAT purposes with Customs House, Aberdeen. The RTS methodology categorises this ghost trade as 'Unallocated-known', as allocating it all to Scotland would falsely inflate the Scottish share and we do not have any information to enable us to re-allocate these data to other regions.

3.12 Private individuals' trade

Where individuals are importing goods from non-EU countries, the declaration will not contain a valid business reference number, but an alternative number which is usually prefixed by P (for internal administrative purposes). These individuals do not provide other address and postcode information; therefore the trade within this category cannot be allocated to a specific region. The RTS methodology categorises this trade under 'Unallocated - Unknown'.

3.13 Non-registered entities' trade

Similar to the preceding section, this category reflects trade carried out not by individuals but by entities that for whatever reason are not registered for VAT. No address information is available. The RTS methodology categorises this trade under 'Unallocated - Unknown'.

3.14 Government trade

Government departments (including Health Authorities) carry out some international trade, the information for which is classed under dummy business references. This trade is very small and is classified by the RTS methodology under 'Unallocated – Known'.

3.15 Channel Islands and Isle of Man trade

For the purposes of the OTS, 'United Kingdom' is defined as Great Britain, Northern Ireland, the Isle of Man, the Channel Islands and the Continental Shelf (UK governed area of the North Sea). Therefore the OTS excludes trade between these different parts of the UK but include their trade with other countries. The Channel Islands (CI) and the Isle of Man (IoM) do not belong in a political or administrative sense to any particular UK Government Office Region. For RTS purposes overseas trade carried out by CI and IoM is therefore classified as 'Unallocated - Known'.

3.16 Parcel Post

Parcels sent through the international post system with a value less than £2,000 require only a simplified declaration to allow transit through customs and the calculation of taxes. Declarations are made on forms which are attached to the package. An estimation system calculates a value of such trade by partner country based on information supplied by Parcel Force and the ONS.

This system is only in place for trade with non-EU countries. For EU trade, if a business is above the threshold, postal transactions are included in a business' monthly declarations in the same way as goods moving by other means of transport.

For Non-EU trade, this trade is classified as 'Unallocated Known'.

3.17 Below Threshold Trade Allocations

OTS

For EU trade only, businesses below the Intrastat Supplementary Declaration threshold (below-threshold business) are not required to submit details of their EU trade to HMRC. Estimates known as 'below threshold trade allocations' are made of this trade; these are broken down by partner country and commodity (HS2 and SITC2) and are included in OTS. It is assumed that the distribution of below-

threshold trade by partner country and commodity is similar to the distribution of trade carried out by businesses who are just above the Supplementary Declaration Threshold (this is known as 'just-above threshold trade' or JATT). The methodology is implemented separately for arrivals and dispatches and produces monthly allocations.

The below threshold trade (BTT) total for a month is calculated by adding up the global declarations (total supplies and acquisitions to/from the EU taken from the VAT returns) for all businesses not on the Intrastat register that month. The below threshold trade total is used both in the calculation of the factors and their implementation.

The JATT for a period is calculated by adding up all the Supplementary Declarations for each business over the period, then selecting the trade from the smallest businesses, ascending until the BTT total is just exceeded. The JATT is calculated separately for Northern Ireland and Great Britain, then combined together.

Each month the BTTA allocation factors are calculated for each combination of 4-digit commodity code and country; these are based on the Intrastat trade received on Supplementary Declarations for the same month the previous year. Each factor represents the proportion of total trade in that commodity/country combination that is attributable to JATT.

Initial BTT allocations are then derived by multiplying the total trade received in each 8-digit commodity code and country combination by the appropriate factor. These initial allocations are scaled uniformly to ensure they add up to the required BTT total for the month. These are then aggregated to HS2 and SITC2 for publication.

When the OTS monthly releases for a calendar year are revised for the final time, at the time of the June release of the following year, the monthly BTT allocations are re-scaled to match the revised BTT total for the year, taking account of amendments to VAT returns and retrospective additions to the Intrastat register.

RTS

Paralleling the process for the OTS, allocation factors are created for each combination of 4-digit commodity code, country, and additionally NUTS1. The NUTS1 region is taken from the division of declared trade by the RTS in the same month previous year. Initial allocations are then also created at the HS2, SITC2, country and NUTS1 combination level. The actual level of below threshold trade in each NUTS1 region is also calculated by splitting the global declarations for businesses not on the Intrastat register that month by the same process used for businesses above the Intrastat threshold.

The initial allocations are ranked so that the HS2/SITC2/country combinations precisely equal those in the OTS, and so that the amount of below threshold trade allocated to each region closely matches the actual level of below threshold trade in each region calculated above.

3.18 Discontinuities in time series

Changes in Combined Nomenclature commodity codes may introduce breaks in the time series. Where an existing commodity code is essentially split so that a new commodity is created, then at the SITC Division level the amount of trade within that Division is unchanged. It is extremely rare for commodity codes to move from one Division to another unless part of a planned overhaul of the SITC managed by the United Nations. The last SITC revision (SITC Rev. 4) was implemented in 2007.

There have recently been some breaks in time series as a result of:

- The switch in basis on which the Trade Statistics are compiled from General to Special trade
- The change in regional allocation methodology outlined elsewhere in this document.

These discontinuities are treated differently in each output:

- **Press Release Commentary:** All numbers in Press release to be on the new methodology and special trade basis as comparisons are made across periods.
- **Press Release accompanying tables (including info graphics):** All trade in static tables (back to 2013) are on the new methodology and Special Trade basis
- **Interactive Tables**
 - General Trade up to and including 2016 Q1
 - Special 2016 Q2 only
 - New methodology 2016 Q3 onwards
 - Scheduled updates to open periods as per how that period is dealt with above

3.19 Updates and revisions

The RTS methodology includes trade amendments for previous months, as published in the OTS, so that the outputs generated at any one point in time contains as much up-to-date information as is possible.

The addition of these items means that revised data for previous months continue to be provisional and open for revision until the trade year is officially 'closed down' in the following June's month of account. For example, trade data relating to 2016 are not finalised until August 2017, and may change in each intervening month. Fully revised data are published to the trade statistics website www.uktradeinfo.com to ensure consistency with other published outputs, including the quarterly press release.

Exceptionally, HMRC may find large errors or significant values of missing data in earlier years. In these cases, it may be decided that the earlier series should be revised. Users will be informed of these revisions on the www.uktradeinfo.com site.

3.20 Exclusions

The RTS data matches the 'total reported trade' figures in the OTS with the exception of trade in non-monetary gold, which is included in OTS data from 2005 onwards but is excluded from RTS. Furthermore, the RTS do not include any estimates for late response or for the impact of Missing Trader Intra-Community (MTIC) fraud. Information concerning these estimates can be found on www.uktradeinfo.com. These estimates cannot be attributed to individual businesses, and so cannot be allocated to regions. Therefore adding them to the RTS figures would not add any value to the outputs.

3.21 Suppression

The suppression regime operates to ensure that movements of particular transactions cannot be identified. Suppression is also applied to ensure that published RTS data, whether in the quarterly press release or on the www.uktradeinfo.com website, are at a level that protects business' confidentiality.

The full 'Suppressions and Confidentiality' policy for published trade data can be found on www.uktradeinfo.com.

3.22 OTS suppression policy

OTS figures published at the CN8 level and grouped by SITC5, follow suppression principles as set out in the EC legislation on trade statistics. This permits 'passive' confidentiality which means an individual business may request that HMRC suppress trade figures within a particular commodity code. Suppression is usually agreed where the applicant's trade forms the major part of the trade within that commodity code or where they are one of only two or three businesses in the area. In addition, HMRC may suppress defence goods on the grounds of 'military secrecy.'

The suppression may only affect the partner country or weight, depending on the outcome of the analysis. The application of suppression will determine the presentation of the statistics, depending on whether the value, weight, partner country or any combinations of these are suppressed. However, the important point to note is that suppression acts at the CN8 commodity level, because this is the lowest level of detail for published outputs. For OTS outputs aggregated to SITC 4-digit or higher, suppression is not required.

3.23 RTS suppression and confidentiality policy

The important point to note is that the RTS outputs are grouped at SITC 2-digit, outside the OTS rules on suppression.

However, a distinction is drawn here between the OTS and RTS as the OTS is governed by EU legislation, which does not permit active suppression, while the RTS is a national dataset. The RTS has confidentiality and disclosure restrictions applied in order to comply with the National Statistics Code of Practice. RTS data are only available at SITC division (2-digit).

It is inevitable that the use of suppression will in some cases limit the detail that can be provided in the range of outputs available.

RTS data is not available for all partner countries. In the current methodology, data is available for a country only if the country's total trade (Imports and Exports combined) exceeds one per cent of the total trade of that country's World Region (based on a historical baseline). However, this suppression policy does not apply to EU countries where data for all member states is available. A full list of suppressed and unsuppressed countries can be found in Annex 3.

3.24 Business counts

For reasons of confidentiality, HMRC do not publish business counts at detailed level for RTS. Instead, a separate table has been devised that provides information on the business population in each particular region. Businesses that are active in both EU and non-EU markets are counted once only in the total business counts. Under this new methodology, the counts for businesses dealing with the EU do now include businesses where the value of their intra-EU trade is below the Intrastat Exemption Threshold. Businesses that are active in more than one UK region are counted in each of these regions in the total business count.

Initially there are two methods of dealing with businesses that have branches in multiple regions.

- **Whole Number Method:** A business will be counted as one in every region they have employees. This represents the actual count of businesses in any region. However, it will mean the sum of the business count for each region will be greater than that for the UK.
- **Proportion Method:** A business will be counted as a fraction in each region they trade based on the proportion of their employees in each region. An individual business counts as one business in the UK. The sum of businesses (whole and fractions) gives the total business count for a region.

4 Outputs

RTS data are provided to users in a number of formats.

4.1 Quarterly RTS release

Since 2000, HMRC have issued a quarterly set of tables presenting RTS, broken down by Government Office Region and showing value totals and business count totals. A brief commentary is provided on a quarterly basis with a more detailed commentary provided with the quarter 4 release each year. The tables and commentaries can be accessed via the [archive](#) page on www.uktradeinfo.com.

The tables show RTS data for the preceding three years by quarter, plus the data for the current year's quarters. The right-hand column shows the figures for the quarter just released; the preceding columns will reflect amendments and adjustments to previous quarters.

This approach has been taken to mirror the treatment of OTS and the inclusion of amendments and adjustments within the OTS outputs

The RTS release dates are pre-announced on gov.uk and the Trade Statistics website www.uktradeinfo.com.

4.2 Web-based outputs

HMRC makes trade statistics available to customers and the public via its dedicated website www.uktradeinfo.com. There are tables that accompany the commentary.

Alternatively, more detailed trade statistics are available from the [Interactive Data Tables](#) area. This is a free service but registration enables users to save tables for future use. Users select category variables such as country, period, flow, product groups (SITC Section and Division) and the output variables. A dynamic table is returned which can be viewed online or downloaded into a data-processing package.

4.3 Bespoke outputs

There is a limited service to provide RTS outputs directly from HMRC Trade Statistics where the data cannot be obtained from other sources. This service is subject to HMRC standard disclosure rules applied to previously un-published data.

A description of the range of variables available for analysis can be reviewed in the paper '*RTS: Form and Content of Data Series*' in Annex 1.

Annex 1 - Format and content of data series

Statistics:

- Statistical Value expressed in £000s (Sterling), nominal prices
- Weight expressed in tonnes

Categories:

- Flow (import / export)
- Commodity (SITC Division (2 digit) classification of product traded)
- Partner Country (individual or grouped depending on country)
- Region (England (by Government Office Region), Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland or 'Unallocated-Known', 'Unallocated-Unknown')
- Period (from quarter one 1996 onward, tabulated quarterly or annually)

Exclusions:

RTS includes all merchandisable trade within the scope of the UK's OTS with the exception of trade in Non-Monetary Gold. It therefore excludes trade in services (e.g. banking, tourism) and intangibles (e.g. financial investments or transfers) and also the movement of goods between regions of the UK. It also excludes estimates for MTIC and late response.

Note:

1. The data are prepared in accordance with the methodology detailed in this paper. Issues relating to data completeness and quality are presented therein. Users of the data should be aware of these issues when interpreting data. HMRC Trade Statistics will inform all users of methodological and quality issues that affect the RTS time series as they arise.

2. For further information, please contact uktradeinfo Customer Services, HMRC:

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SITC (Rev.4) Divisions

Section 0 Food and live animals

- Division 00 Live animals other than animals of division 03
- Division 01 Meat and meat preparations
- Division 02 Dairy products and birds' eggs
- Division 03 Fish (not marine mammals), crustaceans, molluscs and aquatic invertebrates, and preparations thereof
- Division 04 Cereals and cereal preparations
- Division 05 Vegetables and fruit
- Division 06 Sugars, sugar preparations and honey
- Division 07 Coffee, tea, cocoa, spices, and manufactures thereof
- Division 08 Feeding stuff for animals (not including unmilled cereals)
- Division 09 Miscellaneous edible products and preparations

Section 1 Beverages and tobacco

- Division 11 Beverages
- Division 12 Tobacco and tobacco manufactures

Section 2 Crude materials, inedible, except fuels

- Division 21 Hides, skins and furskins, raw
- Division 22 Oil-seeds and oleaginous fruits
- Division 23 Crude rubber (including synthetic and reclaimed)
- Division 24 Cork and wood
- Division 25 Pulp and waste paper
- Division 26 Textile fibres (other than wool tops and other combed wool) and their wastes (not manufactured into yarn or fabric)
- Division 27 Crude fertilizers, other than those of division 56, and crude minerals (excluding coal, petroleum and precious stones)
- Division 28 Metalliferous ores and metal scrap
- Division 29 Crude animal and vegetable materials, n.e.s.

Section 3 Mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials

- Division 32 Coal, coke and briquettes
- Division 33 Petroleum, petroleum products and related materials
- Division 34 Gas, natural and manufactured
- Division 35 Electric current

Section 4 Animal and vegetable oils, fats and waxes

- Division 41 Animal oils and fats
- Division 42 Fixed vegetable fats and oils, crude, refined or fractionated
- Division 43 Animal or vegetable fats and oils, processed; waxes of animal or vegetable origin; inedible mixtures or preparations of animal or vegetable fats or oils, n.e.s.

Section 5 Chemicals and related products, n.e.s.

- Division 51 Organic chemicals
- Division 52 Inorganic chemicals
- Division 53 Dyeing, tanning and colouring materials
- Division 54 Medicinal and pharmaceutical products
- Division 55 Essential oils and resinoids and perfume materials; toilet, polishing and cleaning preparations
- Division 56 Fertilizers (other than those of group 272)
- Division 57 Plastics in primary forms
- Division 58 Plastics in non primary forms
- Division 59 Chemical materials and products, n.e.s.

Section 6 Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material

- Division 61 Leather, leather manufactures, n.e.s., and dressed furskins
- Division 62 Rubber manufactures, n.e.s.

Division 63 Cork and wood manufactures (excluding furniture)
Division 64 Paper, paperboard and articles of paper pulp, of paper or of paperboard
Division 65 Textile yarn, fabrics, made up articles, n.e.s., and related products
Division 66 Non metallic mineral manufactures, n.e.s.
Division 67 Iron and steel
Division 68 Non ferrous metals
Division 69 Manufactures of metals, n.e.s.

Section 7 Machinery and transport equipment

Division 71 Power generating machinery and equipment
Division 72 Machinery specialized for particular industries
Division 73 Metalworking machinery
Division 74 General industrial machinery and equipment, n.e.s., and machine parts, n.e.s.
Division 75 Office machines and automatic data processing machines
Division 76 Telecommunications and sound recording and reproducing apparatus and equipment
Division 77 Electrical machinery, apparatus and appliances, n.e.s., and electrical parts thereof (including non electrical counterparts, n.e.s., of electrical household type equipment)
Division 78 Road vehicles (including air cushion vehicles)
Division 79 Other transport equipment

Section 8 Miscellaneous manufactured articles

Division 81 Prefabricated buildings; sanitary, plumbing, heating and lighting fixtures and fittings, n.e.s.
Division 82 Furniture, and parts thereof; bedding, mattresses, mattress supports, cushions and similar stuffed furnishings
Division 83 Travel goods, handbags and similar containers
Division 84 Articles of apparel and clothing accessories
Division 85 Footwear
Division 87 Professional, scientific and controlling instruments and apparatus, n.e.s.
Division 88 Photographic apparatus, equipment and supplies and optical goods, n.e.s.; watches and clocks
Division 89 Miscellaneous manufactured articles, n.e.s.

Section 9 Commodities and transactions not classified elsewhere in the SITC

Country Groups

Up to December 2006

Asia and Oceania
Eastern Europe (excluding EU25)
European Union25
Latin America and Caribbean
Middle East and North Africa (excluding EU25)
North America
Sub-Saharan Africa
Western Europe (excluding EU25)

January 2007 – June 2013

Asia and Oceania
Eastern Europe (excluding EU27)
European Union27
Latin America and Caribbean
Middle East and North Africa (excluding EU27)
North America
Sub-Saharan Africa
Western Europe (excluding EU27)

From July 2013

Asia and Oceania
Eastern Europe (excluding EU28)
European Union28
Latin America and Caribbean
Middle East and North Africa (excluding EU28)
North America
Sub-Saharan Africa
Western Europe (excluding EU28)

UK Regions

North East
North West
Yorkshire and the Humber
East Midlands
West Midlands
East
London
South East
South West
Wales
Scotland
Northern Ireland

Unallocated – Known
Unallocated - Unknown

Annex 2 – Suppressed countries on RTS

The following is a list of all countries for which OTS data is available, with their current suppression status for RTS. This list is applied from 2016 Q3 release onwards and will be reviewed every five years. RTS data is not available at country level for those countries that are suppressed:

| Country | Geographical Area | Suppressed Country |
|------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Australia | Asia and Oceania | No |
| Bangladesh | Asia and Oceania | No |
| China | Asia and Oceania | No |
| Hong Kong | Asia and Oceania | No |
| India | Asia and Oceania | No |
| Indonesia | Asia and Oceania | No |
| Japan | Asia and Oceania | No |
| Malaysia | Asia and Oceania | No |
| New Zealand | Asia and Oceania | No |
| Pakistan | Asia and Oceania | No |
| Singapore | Asia and Oceania | No |
| South Korea | Asia and Oceania | No |
| Sri Lanka | Asia and Oceania | No |
| Taiwan | Asia and Oceania | No |
| Thailand | Asia and Oceania | No |
| Vietnam | Asia and Oceania | No |
| Afghanistan | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| American Samoa | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| Antarctica | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| Bhutan | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| Bouvet Island | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| Brunei | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| Burma | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| Cambodia | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| Christmas Is | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| Cocos Islands | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| Cook Islands | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| Fiji | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| Fr Southern Terr | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| French Polynesia | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| Guam | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| Heard & Mcdonald | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| Kiribati | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| Laos | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| Macao | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| Maldives | Asia and Oceania | Yes |

| Country | Geographical Area | Suppressed Country |
|------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Marshall Islands | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| Micronesia | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| Mongolia | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| N Mariana Is | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| Nauru | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| Nepal | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| New Caledonia | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| Niue Island | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| Norfolk Island | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| North Korea | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| Palau | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| Papua New Guinea | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| Philippines | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| Pitcairn | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| Samoa | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| Solomon Islands | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| Timor-Leste | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| Tonga | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| Tuvalu | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| Us Minor Islands | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| Vanuatu | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| Wallis & Futuna | Asia and Oceania | Yes |
| Azerbaijan | Eastern Europe (excl. EU) | No |
| Fyr Macedonia | Eastern Europe (excl. EU) | No |
| Georgia | Eastern Europe (excl. EU) | No |
| Kazakhstan | Eastern Europe (excl. EU) | No |
| Russia | Eastern Europe (excl. EU) | No |
| Serbia | Eastern Europe (excl. EU) | No |
| Ukraine | Eastern Europe (excl. EU) | No |
| Albania | Eastern Europe (excl. EU) | Yes |
| Armenia | Eastern Europe (excl. EU) | Yes |
| Belarus | Eastern Europe (excl. EU) | Yes |
| Bosnia & Herz. | Eastern Europe (excl. EU) | Yes |
| Kosovo | Eastern Europe (excl. EU) | Yes |
| Kyrkyz Republic | Eastern Europe (excl. EU) | Yes |
| Moldova | Eastern Europe (excl. EU) | Yes |
| Montenegro | Eastern Europe (excl. EU) | Yes |
| Tajikistan | Eastern Europe (excl. EU) | Yes |
| Turkmenistan | Eastern Europe (excl. EU) | Yes |
| Uzbekistan | Eastern Europe (excl. EU) | Yes |
| Austria | European Union | No |
| Belgium | European Union | No |
| Bulgaria | European Union | No |

| Country | Geographical Area | Suppressed Country |
|------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Cyprus | European Union | No |
| Czech Republic | European Union | No |
| Denmark | European Union | No |
| Estonia | European Union | No |
| Finland | European Union | No |
| France | European Union | No |
| Germany | European Union | No |
| Greece | European Union | No |
| Hungary | European Union | No |
| Irish Republic | European Union | No |
| Italy | European Union | No |
| Latvia | European Union | No |
| Lithuania | European Union | No |
| Luxembourg | European Union | No |
| Malta | European Union | No |
| Netherlands | European Union | No |
| Poland | European Union | No |
| Portugal | European Union | No |
| Romania | European Union | No |
| Slovakia | European Union | No |
| Slovenia | European Union | No |
| Spain | European Union | No |
| Sweden | European Union | No |
| Argentina | Latin America and Caribbean | No |
| Brazil | Latin America and Caribbean | No |
| Chile | Latin America and Caribbean | No |
| Colombia | Latin America and Caribbean | No |
| Costa Rica | Latin America and Caribbean | No |
| Dominican Rep | Latin America and Caribbean | No |
| Ecuador | Latin America and Caribbean | No |
| Falkland Islands | Latin America and Caribbean | No |
| Guatemala | Latin America and Caribbean | No |
| Honduras | Latin America and Caribbean | No |
| Panama | Latin America and Caribbean | No |
| Peru | Latin America and Caribbean | No |
| Trinidad:Tobago | Latin America and Caribbean | No |
| Uruguay | Latin America and Caribbean | No |
| Venezuela | Latin America and Caribbean | No |
| Anguilla | Latin America and Caribbean | Yes |
| Antigua:Barbuda | Latin America and Caribbean | Yes |
| Aruba | Latin America and Caribbean | Yes |
| Bahamas | Latin America and Caribbean | Yes |
| Barbados | Latin America and Caribbean | Yes |

| Country | Geographical Area | Suppressed Country |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Belize | Latin America and Caribbean | Yes |
| Bermuda | Latin America and Caribbean | Yes |
| Bolivia | Latin America and Caribbean | Yes |
| Bonaire | Latin America and Caribbean | Yes |
| Br Virgin Is | Latin America and Caribbean | Yes |
| Cayman Islands | Latin America and Caribbean | Yes |
| Cuba | Latin America and Caribbean | Yes |
| Curacao | Latin America and Caribbean | Yes |
| Dominica | Latin America and Caribbean | Yes |
| El Salvador | Latin America and Caribbean | Yes |
| Grenada | Latin America and Caribbean | Yes |
| Guyana | Latin America and Caribbean | Yes |
| Haiti | Latin America and Caribbean | Yes |
| Jamaica | Latin America and Caribbean | Yes |
| Montserrat | Latin America and Caribbean | Yes |
| Nicaragua | Latin America and Caribbean | Yes |
| Paraguay | Latin America and Caribbean | Yes |
| Saint Barthelemy | Latin America and Caribbean | Yes |
| Saint Maarten | Latin America and Caribbean | Yes |
| St Kitts & Nevis | Latin America and Caribbean | Yes |
| St Lucia | Latin America and Caribbean | Yes |
| St Vincent | Latin America and Caribbean | Yes |
| Surinam | Latin America and Caribbean | Yes |
| Turks & Caicos | Latin America and Caribbean | Yes |
| Us Virgin Is | Latin America and Caribbean | Yes |
| Algeria | Middle East and North Africa | No |
| Bahrain | Middle East and North Africa | No |
| Egypt | Middle East and North Africa | No |
| Iraq | Middle East and North Africa | No |
| Israel | Middle East and North Africa | No |
| Jordan | Middle East and North Africa | No |
| Kuwait | Middle East and North Africa | No |
| Lebanon | Middle East and North Africa | No |
| Morocco | Middle East and North Africa | No |
| Oman | Middle East and North Africa | No |
| Qatar | Middle East and North Africa | No |
| Saudi Arabia | Middle East and North Africa | No |
| UAE | Middle East and North Africa | No |
| Ceuta | Middle East and North Africa | Yes |
| Iran | Middle East and North Africa | Yes |
| Libya | Middle East and North Africa | Yes |
| Melilla | Middle East and North Africa | Yes |
| Occ Palestinian Territories | Middle East and North Africa | Yes |

| Country | Geographical Area | Suppressed Country |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| South Sudan | Middle East and North Africa | Yes |
| Sudan | Middle East and North Africa | Yes |
| Syria | Middle East and North Africa | Yes |
| Tunisia | Middle East and North Africa | Yes |
| Yemen | Middle East and North Africa | Yes |
| Canada | North America | No |
| Mexico | North America | No |
| USA incl. Puerto Rico | North America | No |
| Greenland | North America | Yes |
| St Pierre-Mique | North America | Yes |
| Angola | Sub-Saharan Africa | No |
| Cameroon | Sub-Saharan Africa | No |
| Congo (Republic) | Sub-Saharan Africa | No |
| Equat. Guinea | Sub-Saharan Africa | No |
| Ethiopia | Sub-Saharan Africa | No |
| Ghana | Sub-Saharan Africa | No |
| Ivory Coast | Sub-Saharan Africa | No |
| Kenya | Sub-Saharan Africa | No |
| Mauritius | Sub-Saharan Africa | No |
| Nigeria | Sub-Saharan Africa | No |
| Senegal | Sub-Saharan Africa | No |
| South Africa | Sub-Saharan Africa | No |
| Tanzania | Sub-Saharan Africa | No |
| Benin | Sub-Saharan Africa | Yes |
| Botswana | Sub-Saharan Africa | Yes |
| Br Ind Oc Terr | Sub-Saharan Africa | Yes |
| Burkina | Sub-Saharan Africa | Yes |
| Burundi | Sub-Saharan Africa | Yes |
| Cape Verde | Sub-Saharan Africa | Yes |
| Cent Afr Rep | Sub-Saharan Africa | Yes |
| Chad | Sub-Saharan Africa | Yes |
| Comoros | Sub-Saharan Africa | Yes |
| Congo (Dem. Rep) | Sub-Saharan Africa | Yes |
| Djibouti | Sub-Saharan Africa | Yes |
| Eritrea | Sub-Saharan Africa | Yes |
| Gabon | Sub-Saharan Africa | Yes |
| Gambia | Sub-Saharan Africa | Yes |
| Guinea | Sub-Saharan Africa | Yes |
| Guinea-Bissau | Sub-Saharan Africa | Yes |
| Lesotho | Sub-Saharan Africa | Yes |
| Liberia | Sub-Saharan Africa | Yes |
| Madagascar | Sub-Saharan Africa | Yes |
| Malawi | Sub-Saharan Africa | Yes |

| Country | Geographical Area | Suppressed Country |
|-----------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Mali | Sub-Saharan Africa | Yes |
| Mauritania | Sub-Saharan Africa | Yes |
| Mozambique | Sub-Saharan Africa | Yes |
| Namibia | Sub-Saharan Africa | Yes |
| Niger | Sub-Saharan Africa | Yes |
| Rwanda | Sub-Saharan Africa | Yes |
| Sao Tome-Princ. | Sub-Saharan Africa | Yes |
| Seychelles | Sub-Saharan Africa | Yes |
| Sierra Leone | Sub-Saharan Africa | Yes |
| Somalia | Sub-Saharan Africa | Yes |
| St Helena | Sub-Saharan Africa | Yes |
| Swaziland | Sub-Saharan Africa | Yes |
| Togo | Sub-Saharan Africa | Yes |
| Uganda | Sub-Saharan Africa | Yes |
| Western Sahara | Sub-Saharan Africa | Yes |
| Zambia | Sub-Saharan Africa | Yes |
| Zimbabwe | Sub-Saharan Africa | Yes |
| Gibraltar | Western Europe (excl. EU) | No |
| Iceland | Western Europe (excl. EU) | No |
| Norway | Western Europe (excl. EU) | No |
| Switzerland | Western Europe (excl. EU) | No |
| Turkey | Western Europe (excl. EU) | No |
| Andorra | Western Europe (excl. EU) | Yes |
| Faroe Islands | Western Europe (excl. EU) | Yes |
| Liechtenstein | Western Europe (excl. EU) | Yes |
| San Marino | Western Europe (excl. EU) | Yes |
| Vatican City | Western Europe (excl. EU) | Yes |

Annex 3 – Matching geographic information

Step 1: Is the business 9-digit VAT Registration Number present?

If yes go to step 2

If no, there cannot be a postcode match and the trade is classified to 'Unallocated-unknown'. Missing VAT numbers may arise because the business has omitted to fill out the relevant box, or because a forwarding agent has submitted a declaration on behalf of the business, and has left the VAT registration box blank.

Step 2: Is the business on the Interdepartmental Business Register?

If yes go to step 3

If no go to step 5

Step 3: Does the business have one branch on the IDBR?

If yes, allocate business' trade to the Government Region of that branch

If no, go to step 5

Step 4: Does the business have more than one branch on the IDBR?

If yes, use the IDBR to calculate that business' number of employees within each region and across the UK. Calculate the proportion of business' employees in each region. Allocate a business' value of trade to each region using the proportions calculated above. A business' trade by Partner Country and commodity is allocated uniformly based on these proportions.

Step 5: Can the VRN be matched at Head Office level with the DTR?

If this produces a valid VRN according to DTR then retrieve the postcode information from DTR and go to step 5.

If not, then the trade is classified to 'Unallocated-unknown'.

Step 6: According to the ONS 'National Statistics Postcode Lookup', is the business' postcode valid?

If yes, the methodology will adopt the ONS geographic information.

If no, the methodology will attempt to match at the next level postcode. For example, the postcode 'SS99 1ZZ' would be trimmed to 'SS99 1Z'. If no match is found again, it is further trimmed to 'SS99 1', at which point postcodes beginning with 'SS99 1??' are identified as Southend-on-Sea, Essex, East of England Region. This process iterates up as far as 2-digit until the first match is found. If no postcode match is found, the trade is classified to 'Unknown region'.

Glossary

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Arrivals | Goods sent from the rest of the EU to the UK, commonly referred to as imports. |
| BTTA | Below Threshold Trade Allocation |
| Dispatches | Dispatches Goods sent from the UK to the rest of the EU, commonly referred to as exports. |
| EU | European Union |
| Eurostat | The European Statistical Agency |
| Exemption threshold | See Threshold |
| Exports | Goods sent from the UK to non EU countries, but often used to describe EU trade as well. |
| HMRC | Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs |
| HS | Harmonised System |
| Imports | Goods sent from non EU countries to the UK, but often used to describe EU trade as well. |
| Intrastat | Survey of trade in goods between EU Member States. |
| JATT | Just Above Trade Threshold |
| MTIC | Missing Trader Intra-Community (VAT Fraud) |
| Net Mass | The net mass is the weight of the goods themselves without any packaging. Net mass, if required, is shown in kilograms, rounded up to the nearest kilogram. |
| ONS | Office for National Statistics |
| OTS | Overseas Trade Statistics |
| SITC | Standard International Trade Classification |
| Statistical value | On export, the value of the goods at the place and time where they leave the statistical territory of the exporting Member State. On import the value of goods at the place and time where they enter the statistical territory of the importing Member State. |
| TSu | Trade Statistics Unit |
| Threshold | The Intrastat system has two thresholds, an exemption threshold (above which business must submit details of their trade with the rest of the EU) and a delivery terms threshold (above which businesses additionally submit details on delivery terms and costs). |

| | |
|-------------|--|
| UK | United Kingdom |
| uktradeinfo | UK Trade Information is a site providing current UK Trade statistics from HM Revenue & Customs covering UK, world wide global trading and international trade in goods data. |
| VAT | Value Added Tax |
| VAT returns | Submissions from VAT registered businesses – all businesses above a predetermined threshold must submit information about their business transactions. |