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Base de datos de Transporte Internacional (BTI) - **International transport database**

Since late 1999, ECLAC has maintained an international transport database (BTI) containing statistics on foreign trade and associated transport modes for 11 Latin American countries. Although BTI was originally designed for internal use at ECLAC, it is now in a position to respond to external queries—something we expect to be of interest to FAL Bulletin readers.

BTI was developed by consultant Joachim Fuchsluger, with cooperation from Gastón Rigollet of the ECLAC Statistics and Economic Projections Division. The work was supervised by Jan Hoffmann, of the Transport Unit. At the present time, consultant Gabriel Pérez is in charge of maintaining and updating it. Should you require further information on this edition of the FAL Bulletin or on BTI, please contact Jan Hoffmann and/or Gabriel Pérez, Email: bti@ECLAC.cl.

The possibilities offered by BTI

Research on trade flows and transport modes carried out by international organizations, ministries, academic bodies or private firms, can raise a variety of questions. These include:

Origin and destination: What are the main origin and destination countries or regions for imports and exports of specific products from Latin American countries, measured in thousands of US dollars, or in metric tons? (See example in table 1).

Modal split: Which transport modes are used for the main export and import products, both between Latin American countries and to or from other regions? (Two examples are given in tables 2 and 3).

Products: Which are Latin American countries' leading export and import products, by volume and value, by sea or other transport modes, and from which countries do they come? (See example in table 4).

Transport costs: What is the ratio between imports CIF (Cost, Insurance, Freight) and exports FOB (Free On board) for the different Latin American countries' main import products, by air, sea or land transport? (Example in table 5).

The data stored in BTI makes it possible to answer a wide range of questions of this type. This edition of the FAL Bulletin gives several examples. More detailed information on trade flows and their modal split can be found in "Perfil Marítimo" at the following URL: <http://www.eclac.cl/transporte/perfil/indexe.html>

The database fields include the following:

- Mode of transport by which the merchandise leaves or arrives in the country; nine possibilities are distinguished: maritime, river, lake (these three also known as waterborne), rail, road, air, pipeline, mail and other.
- Product, classified according to the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC), Rev 3, up to the three digit level. The annexes to the maritime profile contain a list of the codes and their descriptions. <http://www.eclac.cl/transporte/perfil/indexe.html>
- Country of origin and final departure (in the case of imports) and country of destination (in the case of export),
- Volume in kg, and
- FOB value of export and imports, and CIF value of imports.

BTI covers the following countries: Argentina, Bolivia (no information on transport mode), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador (no information on transport mode), Mexico (no CIF import values), Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela (no CIF import values). Annual data correspond to 1997 and 1998, with figures for 1999 currently being entered. The statistics come from the Foreign Trade Data Bank for Latin America and the Caribbean (BADECEL), maintained by the Statistics and Economic Projections Division of ECLAC. The data represent information processed by each country's national customs service.

Although BTI was originally created for internal use at ECLAC, it is now able to accept external queries, depending on the availability of data and staff time at the Transport Unit. For further information, please contact Gabriel Pérez, BTI@ECLAC.cl, Fax 56-2-2080252.

Origin and destination: the example of Latin American intra- and inter-regional trade

Table 1 exemplifies the type of query that can be submitted to BTI relating to the origin and destination of international merchandise trade.

Table 1. Latin America and the Caribbean; intra- and interregional trade; 1998 (thousands of metric tons)

Exporting country:	Argentina	Bolivia	Brazil	Chile	Colombia	Ecuador	Mexico	Paraguay	Peru	Uruguay	Venezuela	Africa	Europe	North America	Rest of L. A. and the Caribbean	Asia Pacific	Undeclared
Importing country:																	
Argentina		1137	10387	595	479	212	276	679	23	1147	319	1044	4000	2586	97	1977	284
Bolivia	491		194	167	22	2	27	2	111	3	46	1	125	268	23	243	2
Brazil	19225	47		1233	330	62	1705	1189	339	1311	7712	14314	12086	16854	330	15400	937
Chile	9277	101	700		206	960	1124	75	542	49	1510	1633	1462	3511	431	5533	30
Colombia	665	209	287	307		343	608	19	191	81	2818	116	2107	5726	509	653	81
Ecuador	339	43	123	231	484		194	0	130	107	473	412	715	2198	503	345	19
Mexico	395	5	4342	681	238	432		1	816	12	833	3071	5890	87784	1186	5017	338
Paraguay	115	0	114	8	0	0	2		0	10	0	2	15	18	0	45	0
Peru	1379	304	235	402	2105	2148	210	90		76	2174	340	969	2649	251	875	14
Uruguay	1035	1	677	103	36	397	20	25	3		248	276	604	218	10	232	4
Venezuela	752	41	453	182	569	32	424	92	69	33		166	2077	5970	1580	590	0
Africa	5426	1	6851	249	42	1	1019	4	16	73	32						
Europe	14622	291	60048	3998	19742	1249	10434	1191	881	613	4060						
North America	5758	382	21401	5243	29149	7143	114406	279	4638	61	7518						
Rest of L. A. and the Caribbean	955	3	3104	244	3085	2862	5027	111	213	15	1668						
Asia Pacific	14903	12	68470	14491	584	1941	4603	23	4767	107	538						
Undeclared	247	19	4571	666	137	345	647	0	172	11	0						

Source: BTI (ECLAC). Data reported by importing countries, except for extra-regional exports.

Using BTI, it is possible to generate equivalent tables restricted to a single transport mode or a single product or group of products. These can be generated with values in thousands of US dollars, in metric tons, or in ratios such as the US dollar value per metric ton.

The example in table 1 shows that trade between Brazil and Argentina accounts for 38% (nearly 30 million tons) of a total of 55 intraregional bilateral trade flows (imports and exports) between the 11 countries. Of total external trade of the 11 countries considered, 12% corresponds to reciprocal exchange. Paraguay has the highest relative dependence on any one country, with 35% of its import volume coming from Argentina.

Transport mode: exports and imports from eight Latin American countries

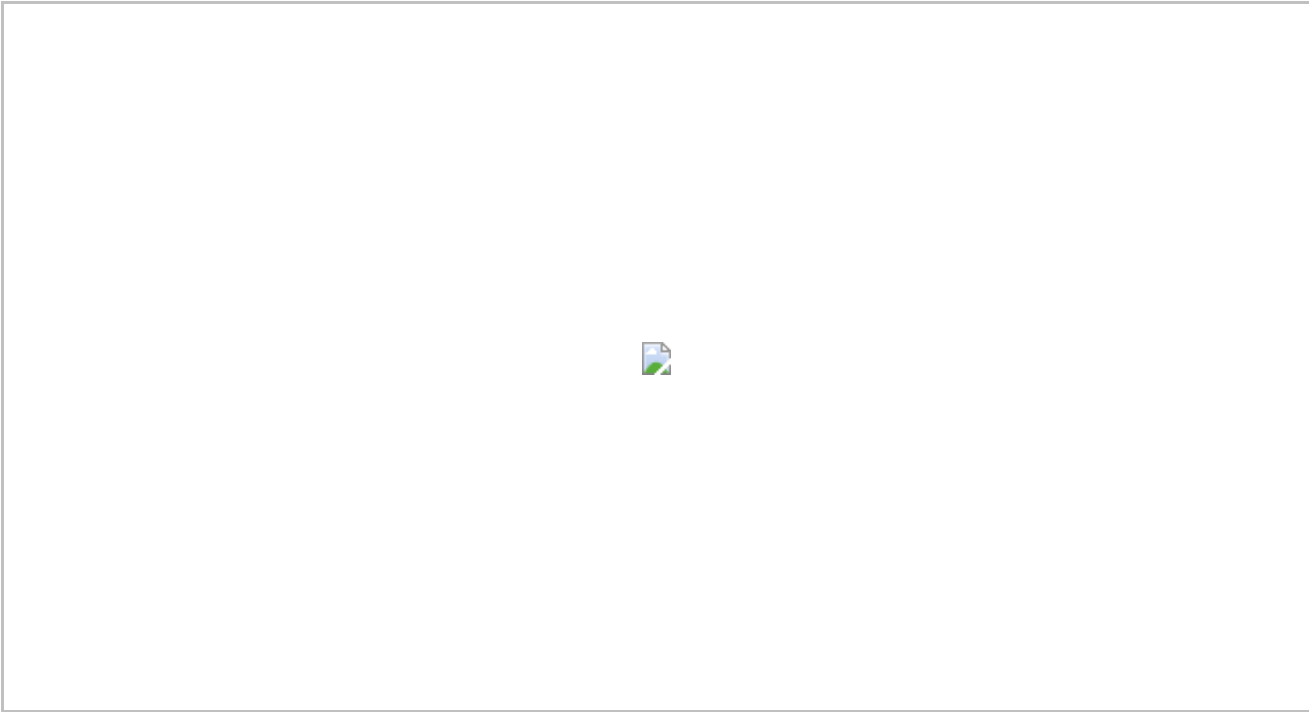
Tables 2 and 3 are examples of queries concerning the transport modes used in each country's international trade.

Table 2. Exports, percentage of each transport mode; 1998 (metric tons)



Source: BTI (ECLAC). Figures indicate the transport mode by which the merchandise leaves the country.

Table 3. Imports, percentage of each transport mode; 1998 (metric tons).



Source: BTI (ECLAC). Figures indicate the transport mode by which the merchandise arrives in the country.

The figures highlight the predominance of maritime transport in both imports and exports. This is mainly explained by dry and liquid bulk cargo trade in products such as minerals, grain and oil. The column "other and not declared" reflects gas exports from Argentina to Chile which is transported by

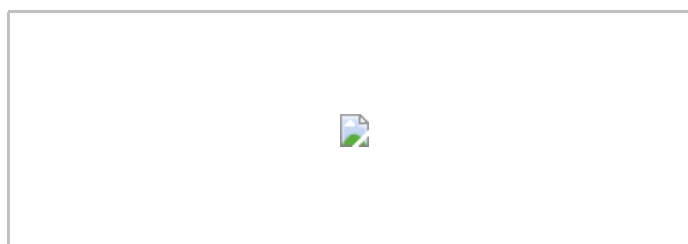
pipeline; for that reason Argentina shows a relatively high percentage in the export column, and Chile a relatively high percentage in imports.

Equivalent tables can be generated by individual product, and by origin or destination.

Products: the example of Argentine grain exports

Table 4 is an example providing a more detailed description of exports of a given product, in this case wheat:

Table 4. Argentina: Exports of unmilled wheat (SITC: 041) to the five leading countries by volume; 1998



Source: BTI (ECLAC).

This example highlights the predominance of Brazil as the main destination for this product, and maritime transport as the leading transport mode. In other cases, such as rice, a large proportion of exports are carried by road to Brazil and other neighbouring countries. Japan is the leading destination country for soybeans.

Transport costs: the example of imports from Colombia

Table 5 is an example giving details of the CIF and FOB values of Colombia's main import products arriving by sea.

Table 5. Colombia: import volume of the 10 leading products, arriving by sea, 1998



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