

UNITED NATIONS  
ECONOMIC  
AND  
SOCIAL COUNCIL



GENERAL

E/CN.3/C.1/19  
6 April 1950

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

STATISTICAL COMMISSION

Fifth Session

COMMITTEE ON STATISTICAL CLASSIFICATION

2 May 1950

Lake Success, N.Y.

UNITED NATIONS  
MINIMUM LIST OF COMMODITIES

FOR INTERNATIONAL TRADE STATISTICS

Memorandum prepared by the Secretariat for consideration under item 3 of the provisional agenda of the Committee on Statistical Classification.

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PART I

1. At its fourth session in May 1949 the Statistical Commission considered the report of the group of expert consultants which had been assembled by the Secretary-General to examine the comments of countries on the first draft revision (1948) of the Minimum List of Commodities for International Trade Statistics. The expert report was contained in document E/CN.3/C.1/13.
2. The Commission expressed the opinion that the new list (second draft 1949) of 592 items was likely, with some amendments, to prove more acceptable for statistics of external trade than the League of Nations Minimum List. Before recommending that the items of the new list be finally adopted, the Commission requested the Secretary-General to circulate the new list to countries with a request for comments on the ability of each country to prepare or reassemble national data in accordance with the items of the new list.
3. The Commission considered separately the problem of the grouping or classification of the items of the new list. The Commission recognized that the grouping of items in any scheme of classification could not be ideal for all purposes, and it requested the Secretary-General to ascertain from countries their preferences in the matter of the grouping of items.
4. The Secretary-General circulated the list of items to Governments beginning August 1949 (document E/CN.3/C.1/W.4) and requested countries to comment firstly on their ability to prepare or reassemble national data for these items, and secondly on their preferences in the matter of the grouping of items. Two possible groupings were presented to countries, one, the grouping of the League of Nations Minimum List, and two, the grouping drafted by the expert consultants. Countries were asked to state their preference between these two or for any third classification.
5. It was clear from the comments received that the majority of countries were willing to subordinate their national preferences in favour of international unanimity. A number of countries (seventeen) expressed their readiness to report their data according to the requirements finally laid down by the Commission and approved by the Economic and Social Council. A similar desire to be guided by international requirements on the subject was expressed by the Second Inter-American Statistical Congress held in

Bogotá, Colombia in January 1950, where the following resolutions were passed:

- (a) That the list of items as finally adjusted by the Statistical Commission of the United Nations be adopted and brought into use in the American countries at the earliest possible date, in order to achieve international comparability;
- (b) That the Statistical Commission of the United Nations be requested to establish the grouping of the items in the manner best suited to give effect to the preferences expressed by international agencies and individual countries;
- (c) That the Statistical Commission of the United Nations be informed that the American countries urgently require a final international recommendation on this matter;
- (d) That the IASI develop proposals for such additional details in the international standard classification, as may be necessary or desirable to meet the regional needs of the western hemisphere;
- (e) That the IASI, as soon as its resources permit, develop a Spanish Coding Manual to facilitate the application of the international standard list finally established, in co-ordination with the development of a multilingual coding manual by the United Nations;
- (f) That the Statistical Commission of the United Nations be requested to establish means by which periodic revision may be made in the standard list in the light of the experience of international and regional organizations and individual countries in using the list.

It may be mentioned that a number of the countries (ten) which submitted comments to the Secretary-General expressed their intention of following the decisions taken at the Bogotá Congress. Of the remaining countries which commented, eleven countries preferred the classification system drafted by the expert consultants, but certain of these countries also indicated that they would accept a different type of classification if international agreement required it. There were nine countries which expressed a preference for the League of Nations Classification with certain modifications.

6. Countries which submitted their comments did not limit themselves

to the problem of classification, but also offered a number of valuable suggestions on individual items. In some instances, such suggestions were a result of special studies carried on by the Governments through inter-departmental and Ad Hoc committees.

7. In addition to the comments from member Governments, three international organizations actively participated in the development of the list, offering valuable suggestions made in every case as a result of special studies.

8. In considering the comments which have been made by countries, both on the second draft, 1949, and on the first draft, 1948, the Secretariat have been impressed by the fact that a large number of countries are keenly desirous that an agreed international classification should be adopted. They have been impressed, too, by the willingness of countries to conform with recommendations to be made by the Statistical Commission on this subject. The views submitted by countries have varied between two extremes. On the one hand a number of countries desired an international classification which would preserve the main structure of the League of Nations Minimum List. On the other hand a number of countries desired a more analytical kind of classification as represented by the 1948 draft. Document E/CN.3/C.1/19/Add.1 sets out two classifications which embody these divergent views. Pages 1 to 125 present 583 items (which are composed of the 592 items which were generally accepted by the Statistical Commission at its last session), classified basically according to the structure of the League of Nations Minimum List. Page 126 and onwards presents the same items classified according to the 1948 draft. The difference between these two classifications is fundamental since it extends not only to the broad sections but also to the divisions and groups. Adoption of one of these classifications would therefore be contrary to the views expressed by countries which preferred the other kind of classification. Fortunately a number of countries which originally preferred one or the other of these extremes have indicated a preference for the intermediate kind of classification represented by the 1949 draft scheme compiled by the expert group (E/CN.3/C.1/W4, appendix II). A number of views were expressed, however, concerning the improvement of

the food section as drafted by the expert group. To take account of these views certain changes have been made in the food section which have resulted in a grouping of items in this section more similar to the grouping of the League of Nations Minimum List. It has been possible to draw up a classification which consists of 141 groups which can easily be assembled either on the basis of the revised Minimum List as set out in documents E/CN.3/C.1/19/Add.1, pages 1-125, or on the basis of the classification system drafted by the expert consultants in 1949 (E/CN.3/C.1/W4, appendix II). The 141 groups consist of items which are normally separately identified in group fashion in the trade statistics of many countries, and it is possible that the use of these groups may well result in a standard system of classification which can be used by many countries, not merely as a supplementary classification but as a basic classification. This arrangement of the basic groups is set out in the draft standard classification outlined in part II of this document. It will be seen that since the number of groups involved amounts only to 141, comparatively little work is involved in reassembling them either on the basis of the revised Minimum List or in what has been tentatively described as the Draft Standard Classification.

The groups fall into ten broad sections, namely:

- (a) Live animals;
- (b) Food;
- (c) Beverages and tobacco;
- (d) Crude materials, excluding fuel and fertilizers;
- (e) Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material;
- (f) Chemicals, oils and fuels;
- (g) Machinery and transport;
- (h) Clothing and footwear;
- (i) Furniture and miscellaneous articles;
- (j) Returned goods and special transactions.

## SUMMARY

9. The Committee has before it three classifications, viz.:

(a) The classification set out in document E/CN.3/C.1/19/Add.1, pages 1-125. This classification follows the main structure of the League of Nations Minimum List.

(b) The classification set out in document E/CN.3/C.1/19/Add.1, pages 126-179. This is substantially the classification drawn up by the Secretariat in 1948.

(c) The draft standard classification set out in part II of this document. This classification is a revised version of the classification scheme drawn up by the expert group in 1949. The details according to items, groups, divisions and sections will be found in document E/CN.3/C.1/19 Add.2.

The Committee is asked to recommend to the Commission which of these classifications may be accepted as the international standard classification. The three schemes of classification have at different times been considered by the Committee. Comments made by countries and international agencies ; have indicated that the 141 groups of items which are practically identical in both (a) and (c) above would command the approval of a substantial majority of countries. The arrangement of these groups in the divisions and sections set out in part II appears to be favored by a majority of countries.

PART II

DRAFT STANDARD CLASSIFICATION

CLASSIFICATION OF THE SECTIONS, DIVISIONS AND GROUPS

SECTION 0. - LIVE ANIMALS

Division Group

01 Live Animals

- 011 Live animals, chiefly for food
- 012 Live animals, except those chiefly for food

SECTION 1. - FOOD

11 Meat and Meat Preparations

- 111 Meat: fresh, chilled or frozen
- 112 Meat: dried, salted or smoked, not canned (not in tins)
- 113 Meat canned and meat preparations, canned and not canned

12 Dairy Products, Eggs and Honey

- 121 Milk and cream: fresh or sour
- 122 Milk and cream: evaporated, condensed or dried
- 123 Butter
- 124 Cheese
- 125 Eggs
- 126 Natural honey
- 129 Miscellaneous dairy products

13 Fish and Fish Preparations

- 131 Fish: fresh or simply preserved
- 132 Fish canned and fish preparations

14 Cereals and Cereal Preparations

- 141 Cereals, unmilled
- 142 Cereals, milled
- 143 Cereal preparations

Division Group

15 Fruits and Vegetables

- 151 Fruits and nuts, fresh (not including oil nuts)
- 152 Dried fruits
- 153 Fruits preserved and fruit preparations
- 154 Fresh and dry vegetables, roots and tubers, not including  
artificially dehydrated
- 155 Vegetables preserved and vegetable preparations

16 Sugar and Sugar Preparations

- 161 Sugar
- 162 Sugar preparations

17 Coffee, Tea, Cocoa, Spices and Manufactures Thereof

- 171 Coffee
- 172 Cocoa
- 173 Chocolate and chocolate preparations
- 174 Tea and mate
- 175 Spices and vinegar

18 181 Feeding Stuff for Animals (not including unmilled cereals)

19 191 Miscellaneous Food Preparations

SECTION 2. - BEVERAGES AND TOBACCO

21 Beverages

- 211 Water and other non-alcoholic beverages
- 212 Alcoholic beverages

22 Tobacco and Tobacco Manufactures

- 221 Tobacco unmanufactured
- 222 Tobacco manufactures

SECTION 3. - CRUDE MATERIALS, INEDIBLE,  
EXCEPT FUELS AND FERTILIZERS

31 Hides, Skins and Fur Skins, Undressed

- 311 Hides and skins (except fur skins), undressed
- 312 Fur skins, undressed

32 321 Oil-Seeds, Oil Nuts and Oil Kernels



Division Group

- 33      331    Crude Rubber, including Synthetic and Reclaimed
- 34            Wood and Cork
  - 341    Fuelwood and charcoal
  - 342    Wood in the round
  - 343    Cork, raw
- 35            Textile Fibres Not Manufactured into Yarn, Thread or Fabrics  
              and Waste
  - 351    Silk
  - 352    Wool and other animal hair
  - 353    Cotton
  - 354    Jute
  - 355    Vegetable fibres except cotton and jute
  - 356    Synthetic fibres
  - 357    Waste materials from textile fabrics
- 36      361    Crude minerals, excluding Coal, Petroleum, Fertilizer  
              materials and Precious Stones
- 37            Ores of Precious Metals, and Precious Stones Uncut  
              and Pearls Unworked
  - 371    Precious metal ores and concentrates
  - 372    Precious and semi-precious stones uncut and pearls unworked
- 38            Ores of Base Metals
  - 381    Iron ore
  - Ores of non-ferrous metals\*
  - 382    Slag and waste
- 39            Animal and Vegetable Crude Materials, n.e.s.
  - 391    Crude animal materials inedible, n.e.s.
  - 392    Crude vegetable materials, inedible, n.e.s., and ice

\*Metal content of ores is classified with their metals.

SECTION 4. - MANUFACTURED GOODS CLASSIFIED CHIEFLY BY MATERIAL

Division Group

- 41            Leather, Leather Manufactures n.e.s. and Dressed Furs
  - 411    Leather
  - 412    Manufactures of leather, n.e.s.
  - 413    Furs dressed or dressed-and-dyed
- 42            Rubber Manufactures n.e.s.
  - 421    Rubber fabricated materials
  - 422    Rubber manufactured articles n.e.s.
- 43            Wood and Cork Manufactures (not Furniture)
  - 431    Wood shaped or simply worked
  - 432    Veneers, plywood, boards, artificial or reconstituted wood, and wood, n.e.s.
  - 433    Wood manufactures, n.e.s.
  - 434    Cork manufactures
- 44            Pulp, Paper, Paperboard and Manufactures Thereof
  - 441    Pulp and waste paper
  - 442    Paper and paperboard
  - 443    Articles made of pulp, of paper and of paperboard
- 45            Textile Yarns, Fabrics and Made-up Articles and Related Products
  - 451    Textile yarns and thread
  - 452    Cotton fabrics of standard type (not including narrow and special fabrics)
  - 453    Textile fabrics of standard type (not including narrow and special fabrics), other than cotton fabrics
  - 454    Tulle, lace, embroidery, ribbons, trimmings and other small wares
  - 455    Special textile fabrics and related products
  - 456    Made-up articles wholly or chiefly of textile materials n.e.s. (other than clothing)
  - 457    Floor coverings and tapestries

Division Group

- 46                    Non-Metallic Mineral Manufactures n.e.s.
  - 461    Lime, cement, and fabricated building materials except glass and clay materials
  - 462    Clay construction materials and refractory construction materials
  - 463    Mineral manufactures n.e.s., not including clay and glass
  - 464    Glass
  - 465    Glassware
  - 466    Pottery
  
- 47                    Precious Metals, Stones and Pearls
  - 471    Precious metals (gold, silver, and platinum group)
  - 472    Precious and semi-precious stones and pearls, worked
  - 473    Jewellery, and goldsmiths' and silversmiths' wares
  
- 48                    Base Metals
  - 481    Iron and steel
  - 482    Copper
  - 483    Nickel
  - 484    Aluminium
  - 485    Lead
  - 486    Zinc
  - 487    Tin
  - 488    Miscellaneous non-ferrous base metals employed in metallurgy
  
- 49                    491    Manufactures of Base Metals
  
- SECTION 5. - CHEMICALS, OILS, AND FUELS
  
- 51                    Chemical Elements and Compounds
  - 511    Inorganic chemicals
  - 512    Organic chemicals
  
- 52                    521    Mineral Tar and Crude Chemicals from Coal, Petroleum and Natural Gas
  
- 53                    Dyeing, Tanning and Colouring Materials
  - 531    Coal-tar dyes
  - 532    Dyeing and tanning extracts, and synthetic tanning materials
  - 533    Pigments, paints, varnishes, and related materials

Division Gro

- 54      541      Medicinal and Pharmaceutical Products
- 55           Essential Oils and Perfume Materials; Toilet, Polishing and Cleansing Preparations
- 551      Essential oils, perfume and flavour materials
- 552      Perfumery, cosmetics, soaps, and cleansing and polishing preparations
- 56           Fertilizers
- 561      Fertilizers, crude
- 562      Fertilizers, manufactured
- 57           Animal and Vegetable Oils (not Essential Oils), Fats, Greases, and Derivatives
- 571      Animal oils and fats
- 572      Vegetable oils
- 572      Oils and fats processed, and waxes of animal or vegetable origin
- 58           Mineral Fuels, Lubricants and Related Materials
- 581      Coal, coke, and briquettes
- 582      Petroleum, crude and partly refined
- 583      Petroleum products
- 584      Gas, natural and manufactured
- 585      Electric energy
- 59      591      Miscellaneous Chemical Materials and Products

SECTION 6. - MACHINERY AND TRANSPORT EQUIPMENT

- 61           Machinery Other Than Electric
- 611      Power generating (except electric) machinery
- 612      Agricultural machinery and implements
- 613      Office machinery
- 614      Household machinery and appliances
- 615      Mining, construction and other industrial machinery
- 62      621      Electric Machinery, Apparatus and Appliances

Division Group

- 63            Transport Equipment
- 631    Railway vehicles
- 632    Road motor vehicles
- 633    Road vehicles other than motor vehicles
- 634    Aircraft
- 635    Ships and boats

SECTION 7. - CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR

- 71            Clothing
- 711    Clothing except fur clothing
- 712    Fur clothing
- 72            Footwear

SECTION 8. - MISCELLANEOUS MANUFACTURED ARTICLES

- 81            Prefabricated Buildings; Sanitary, Plumbing, Heating  
and Lighting Fixtures and Fittings
- 811    Prefabricated buildings and their assembled parts
- 812    Sanitary, plumbing, heating and lighting fixtures  
and fittings
- 82            Furniture
- 83            Travel Goods and Handbags
- 84            Professional, Scientific and Controlling Instruments;  
Photographic and Optical Goods; Watches and Clocks
- 841    Scientific, medical, optical, measuring and controlling  
instruments and apparatus
- 842    Photographic and cinematographic supplies
- 843    Exposed cinematographic films
- 844    Watches and clocks
- 89            Miscellaneous Manufactured Articles n.e.s.
- 891    Musical instruments, phonographs and phonograph records
- 892    Printed matter
- 893    Ordnance and related articles
- 899    Manufactured articles, n.e.s.

SECTION 9. - RETURNED GOODS, SPECIAL TRANSACTIONS,  
GOLD AND COIN

Division Group

91	911	<u>Returned Goods and Special Transactions</u>
92		<u>Gold, and Gold and Other Coin</u>
	921	Gold unworked and gold coin
	922	Coin other than gold