
Economic Interdependence Between The GDP and External Trade in Romania - A VEC Method Analyse

PhD student Artur - Emilian SIMION

The Romanian Academy / National Institute of Statistics Romania

PhD Student Florentina Viorica GHEORGHE

The Romanian Academy/National Institute of Statistics-Romania

ABSTRACT

Trading transactions between nations have a very long history, but in recent years international trade has become increasingly important with a larger share of GDP devoted to exports and imports and it is considered to be a major component of sustainable economic growth. The correlation between external trade flows and gross domestic product (GDP) have been analyzed in many specialized economic papers. The developed econometric models have demonstrated the strong connection between these macroeconomic indicators.

This paper once again demonstrates the long-term and short-term relationship between these variables using the VEC econometric model on quarterly GDP, Export, Import and GFCF data of Romania from 1995 to 2015.

The VECM analysis was performed using R statistical software and is based on data extracted from the Eurostat, European Union Statistical Office website and are expressed in millions of euro.

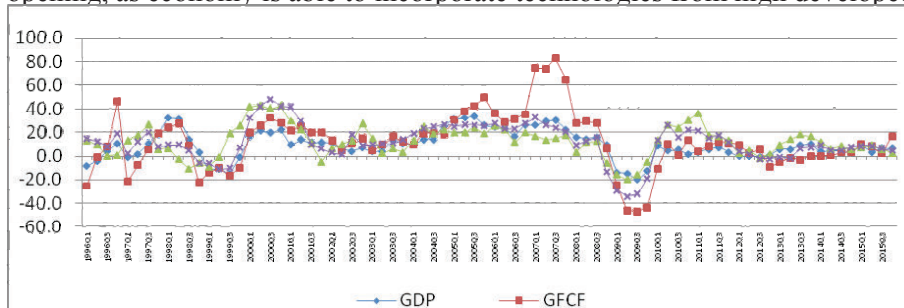
Keywords: GDP, export, import, GFCF, vector correction error, heteroscedasticity, cointegration, stationarity

JEL classification: F14, F17, Q11

1. INTRODUCTION

The relationship between GDP and external trade flows, export and import, has long been one of the most debated subject of international economic development, with particular attention to research. Fundamental economic theories show the contribution of exports to economic growth through the so called 'multiplying effect of external trade' (Tekin, 2012). At the same time, the growing exports generate higher degree of economic

opening, as economy is able to incorporate technologies from high developed



Source data: Eurostat , New Cronos database, <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database>

GDP, GFCF and trade flows, had oscillatory evolution but with similar trends (increase or decrease) over the selected period, as Figure 1 illustrates.

2. METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The research method selection

In order to analyse the connection between GDP and external trade, the present paper aims to test a multivariate VEC model. Thus, the variables used in the analysis are GDP, GFCF, import and export. For generating the regression equation, a VEC model was used, after testing the stationarity of the selected series (Dickey-Fuller Augmented unit test), cointegration (Johansen cointegration test) and the causality link between the variables (Granger test and Wald test).

Description of variables

In the study of the economic interdependence between GDP, export, import and GFCF, quarterly data from 1995-2015, were considered, GDP as a dependent variable and export, import and GFCF as independent variables. Values are expressed in millions of euro.

GDP is a macroeconomic indicator reflecting the monetary value of final goods and services – that are bought by the final user – produced in a country, in a given period of time (quarter or year).

According to the expenditure computation method:

$$GDP = FC + GFCF + \Delta S + (E-I) \quad [1]$$

where: FC – final consumption, GFCF – gross fixed capital formation, ΔS – stock change, I – import and E – export.

Gross fixed capital formation represents the value of the durable goods acquired by resident units for the purpose of subsequent use in the production process.

Exports and imports of goods and services consist of selling or purchasing transactions in goods and services (sales, barter, donations, etc.) between residents and non-residents.

Theoretical aspects of the proposed analysis

R statistical software was used for analysis, by its package named `vars`(Pfaff, 2008a), which is specific for the VAR, SVAR and SVEC analyzes. R is by far the most used open source statistical software among scientific communities, since it envisages the advantages of an open source system: low costs related only with the training of users, technical support provided by a large community of users, continuous upgrade and linkage with the way statisticians think and work.

In R software, the Augmented Dickey-Fuller test is implemented within the function `ur.df()`, from the package `urca`(Pfaff, 2008b). Johansen cointegration test was performed using `ca.jo()` function. Moreover, Granger test for causality was computed by using `grangertest()` function and also Wald test with its specific `wald.test()` function and Arch test with `arch.test()` function.

For the four data series (GDP, exports of goods and services, import of goods and services and GFCF), we tested:

- stationarity – root unit test – Dickey-Fuller Augmented,
- cointegration – Johansen and cointegration test and
- causal link between variables (Granger test and Wald test).

For the regression equation, generated with the VEC model, the following residue tests were performed:

- the normality test of the residue (Jaque-Bera – Hitogram distribution test),
- Residue correlation test (Breusch-Godfrey test) and
- heteroscedasticity (Breusch-Pagan-Godfrey test and ARCH test).

3. THE VEC ECONOMETRIC MODEL ON QUARTERLY GDP, EXPORT, IMPORT AND GFCF FOR ROMANIA

a. Basic statistics

The table below shows the Summary Statistics: average, median, maximum, minimum, standard deviation values for each of the variables:

Summary Statistics

Table 1

	GDP	GFCF	EXPORT	IMPORT
Mean	21697.72	5704.752	7359.042	8743.940
Median	18949.60	4433.300	6665.900	8687.250
Maximum	47575.60	19176.20	16927.50	17653.10
Minimum	5821.300	880.9000	1546.600	1855.300
Std. Dev.	12534.30	4351.000	4708.647	5137.808
Skewness	0.335075	0.878157	0.489688	0.115374
Kurtosis	1.688394	2.912817	1.992009	1.458280
Jarque-Bera	7.592937	10.82285	6.913274	8.505509
Probability	0.022450	0.004465	0.031536	0.014225
Sum	1822609.0	479199.2	618159.5	734491.0
Sum Sq. Dev.	1.30E+10	1.57E+09	1.84E+09	2.19E+09
Observations	84	84	84	84

Source: R output on Summary statistics

On the basis of these statistics, we can establish that the GDP is between 5,821.3 million euro in the first quarter of 1997 and 47,575.6 million euro in the fourth quarter of 2015. The average value of this indicator for the period 1995-2015 is 21,697 EUR million. The values of the Skewness and Kurtosis tests show that the distribution considered is not a symmetrical one; the majority of the values are between the minimum and the average of the data series (the median of the series is less than the average of the series).

Similarly, the GFCF is between 880.9 million euro in the first quarter of 1997 and 19,176.2 million euro in the third quarter of 2008. The average value of this indicator for the period 1995-2015 is 5,704.8 million euro. The values of the Skewness and Kurtosis tests allow us to assert that the considered distribution is not a symmetrical one; the majority of the values are between the minimum and the average of the series (the median of the series is less than the average of the series).

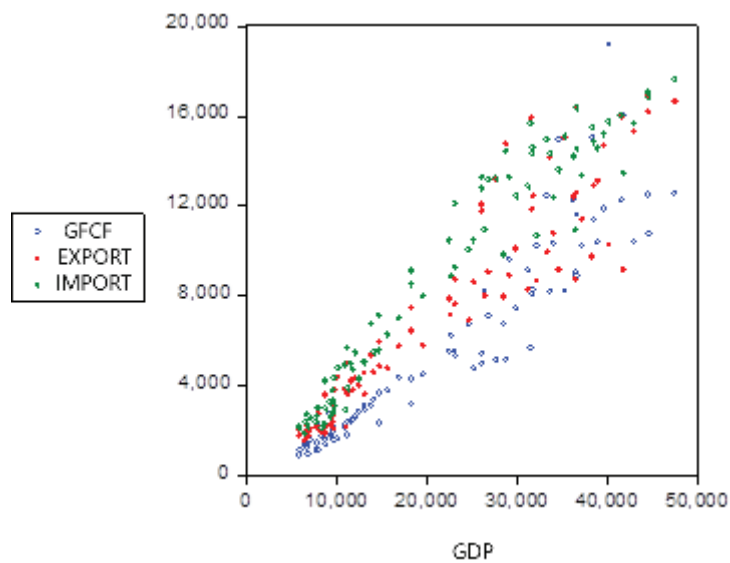
For export, the values are between 1,546.6 million euro in the first quarter of 1995 and 16,927.5 million euro in the 3rd quarter of 2015. The average value of this indicator for the period 1995-2015 is 7,359.0 million euro. Also, the values of the Skewness and Kurtosis tests allow us to assert that the considered distribution is not a symmetrical one; the majority of the values are between the minimum and the average of the series (the median of the series is less than the average of the series).

Imports have values ranging from 1,855.3 million euro in the first quarter of 1995 and 17,653.1 million euro in the fourth quarter of 2015. The average value of this indicator for the period 1995-2015 is 8,743.9 million

euro. As in the case of exports, the values of the Skewness and Kurtosis tests allow us to assert that the considered distribution is not a perfectly symmetrical one; the majority of the values are between the minimum and the average of the series (the median of the series is less than the average of the series).

GDP as against Export, Import and GFCF

Figure 2



The coefficients in the correlation diagram show that there are strong links between the four selected variables.

The correlation coefficients

Table 2

	GDP	GFCF	EXPORT	IMPORT
GDP	1	0.93	0.93	0.97
GFCF	0.93	1	0.78	0.88
EXPORT	0.93	0.78	1	0.96
IMPORT	0.97	0.88	0.96	1

Source: R output on correlation coefficient

b. Stationarity and cointegration tests of the series

Stationarity test of the series (Unit root test – Dickey-Fuller Augmented)

For each series, the stationary test (Unit root test – Dickey-Fuller Augmented) was performed on both the initial series and the differentiated series (order 1 and order 2). The tests indicated the following: the GDP, GFCF import and export data series are not stationary. They become stationary after the 2nd order differentiation.

Augmented Dickey Fuller Test-statistic values

Table 3

Time series	Type:	VEC model					
		The raw data series		1 st order differentiated		2 nd order differentiated	
		t-Statistic	Prob.	t-Statistic	Prob.	t-Statistic	Prob.
GDP	Constant	-0.461219	0.8923	-2.955982	0.0436	-59.59698	0.0001
	Constant, Linear Trend	-2.719189	0.2320	-2.945832	0.1542	-59.20549	0.0001
	None	1.226984	0.9428	-2.332456	0.0199	-59.97480	0.0000
GFCF	Constant	-0.846903	0.7996	-3.795122	0.0045	-7.419878	0.0000
	Constant, Linear Trend	-2.926148	0.1603	-3.760478	0.0242	-7.366210	0.0000
	None	0.426570	0.8033	-3.642607	0.0004	-7.468989	0.0000
Import	Constant	-0.285973	0.9213	-4.495050	0.0005	-5.867686	0.0000
	Constant, Linear Trend	-2.629423	0.2688	-4.480220	0.0030	-5.826303	0.0000
	None	1.621892	0.9737	-3.867286	0.0002	-5.907607	0.0000
Export	Constant	1.001181	0.9963	-8.355813	0.0000	-11.25015	0.0001
	Constant, Linear Trend	-2.073932	0.5523	-8.537736	0.0000	-11.17962	0.0000
	None	3.695023	0.9999	-7.329138	0.0000	-11.32422	0.0000

Source: R output on ADF tests

Cointegration test of the series (Johansen Test)

The cointegration test of the GDP, Export, Import and GFCF series (Johansen Test) indicates the presence of:

- 4 cointegration equations (Trace Test), respectively
- 4 cointegration equations (Maximum Eigenvalue Test).

Cointegration test of the series (Johansen Test)

Table 4

Test Type	No Intercept	Intercept	Intercept	Intercept	Intercept
	No Trend	No Trend	No Trend	Trend	Trend
Trace	4	4	4	4	4
Max-Eig	4	4	4	4	4

Source: R output on Johansen tests

Selection of the delay order (Schwarz criterion – SC)

The selection of the delay order is based on the Schwarz criterion: the lowest SC coefficient indicates the delay order – in this case the selected delay order is 2.

Schwarz criterion for lag selection

Table 5

Lag	0	1	2
SC	67.35190	66.49417	64.97728*

Source: R output on Schwarz criterion

Based on the above-mentioned analyzes we decided to apply the VEC model on the 2nd order differentiated data, the 2nd order delay and one cointegration equation.

c. Estimation of the model parameters

The VEC model was performed by using the facilities offered by the function SVEC(), which allows the user to set some parameters, i.e. the cointegration rank, maximum number of iteration, convergence value of algorithm, number of bootstrap replications.

The resulted regression equation is the following:

$$\Delta^2GDP = C_{(1)} * (\Delta GDP_{(-1)} - 0.7277 * \Delta GFCF_{(-1)} - 0.0284 * \Delta EXPORT_{(-1)} - 0.4791 * \Delta IMPORT_{(-1)} - 260.0107) + C_{(2)} * \Delta^2GDP_{(-1)} + C_{(3)} * \Delta^2GDP_{(-2)} + C_{(4)} * \Delta^2GFCF_{(-1)} + C_{(5)} * \Delta^2GFCF_{(-2)} + C_{(6)} * \Delta^2EXPORT_{(-1)} + C_{(7)} * \Delta^2EXPORT_{(-2)} + C_{(8)} * \Delta^2IMPORT_{(-1)} + C_{(9)} * \Delta^2IMPORT_{(-2)} + C_{(10)} \quad [2]$$

Short-term Causality Granger under the VEC environment

The short-term Causality Granger under the VEC environment shows that GDP is significantly influenced by imports and GFCF and less significant by exports;

Short-term Causality Granger under the VEC environment

Table 6

Dependent variable: Δ^2GDP			
Excluded	Chi-sq	df	Prob.
Δ^2GFCF	61.94723	2	0.0000
$\Delta^2EXPORT$	2.379645	2	0.3043
$\Delta^2IMPORT$	97.81950	2	0.0000
All	152.1148	6	0.0000

Source: R output on Short-term Causality Granger

d. The empirical results of VEC model

The ANOVA test indicates the validity of the selected model (F-statistic = 203.1143 and Prob (F-statistic) = 0.000000 <0.05). We noticed that the adjusted R2 is about 0.96 for the first equation, meaning that exports, imports and GFCF determine 96% of GDP and are very close to 1, suggesting that there is a strong link between variables.

Most of the coefficients are significant, indicating that exports, imports and GFCFs influence GDP, both in the short and long term (coefficient of cointegration equation is negative and significant).

The coefficient of the VEC model

Table 7

	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
C(1)	-4,2806	0,3423	-12,5061	0,0000
C(2)	2,0418	0,2825	7,2271	0,0000
C(3)	1,1432	0,1435	7,9648	0,0000
C(4)	-1,2675	0,3446	-3,6788	0,0005
C(5)	-1,8065	0,2295	-7,8698	0,0000
C(6)	0,5773	0,5913	0,9764	0,3322
C(7)	-0,1905	0,5955	-0,3199	0,7500
C(8)	-1,8822	0,3773	-4,9885	0,0000
C(9)	0,7414	0,4060	1,8259	0,0721
C(10)	-38,3786	199,0471	-0,1928	0,8477

Source: R output on VEC model

The high value of the free term indicates a significant influence of the factors that determine GDP and were not included in the model.

Tests diagnosis for residues

- Autocorrelation of errors

The Residue Correlation Test (Breusch-Godfrey test) shows that errors are not correlated (does not reject the null hypothesis: there is no correlation of errors – Chi-Square Probability = 0.06 > 0.05)

- Homoscedasticity of random errors

The Breusch-Pagan-Godfrey and ARCH tests show that the errors are not heteroscedastic (do not reject the null hypothesis: errors are homoscedastic):

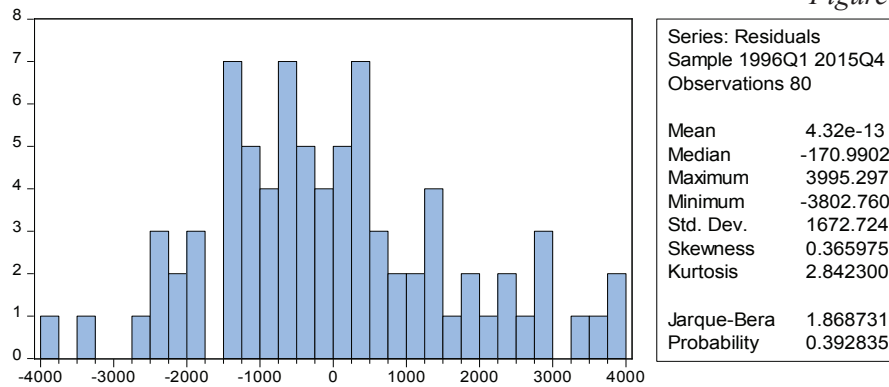
- o Breusch-Pagan-Godfrey test (Prob. Chi-Square = 0.07 > 0.05)
- o ARCH test (Prob. Chi-Square(1)=0.97 > 0.05)

- Random errors have normal distribution

The Jarque-Bera test and the histogram indicate a normal distribution of residues (Jarque-Bera = 1.87 and probability = 0.39 > 0.05 – does not reject the null hypothesis that residues are normally distributed):

The Jarque-Bera test and the histogram

Figure 3



Source: R output on the Jarque-Bera test and the histogram

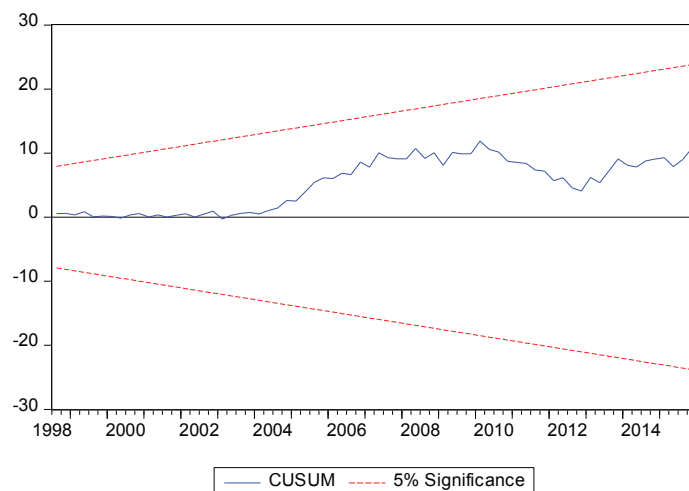
The previously generated regression function (GDP function of export, import, and GFCF) has the following characteristics:

- the R-adjusted is close to 1 (0.96), which means that exports, imports and GFCFs determine for 96% GDP and are very close to 1; it results that there is a strong link between variables.
- The ANOVA test indicates the validity of the model (F-statistic = 203.1143 and Prob (F-statistic) = 0.000000 < 0.05).
- Most of the coefficients are significant, indicating that exports, imports and GFCFs influence GDP both in the short and long term (coefficient of cointegration is negative and significant).
- Residues are not autocorrelated, have a normal distribution and are homoscedastic

Moreover, the CUSUM test indicates the stability of the regression coefficients:

The CUSUM test

Figure 4



Source: R output on CUSUM test

In conclusion, the previously VEC model can be considered representative to describe autoregressive links between GDP as the dependent variable and export, import and GFCFs as independent variables.

The dispersion of forecasting errors for GDP is explained in the long term by 48-50% GDP, 28-29% of GFCF, 6-7% exports and imports in proportion of 12-16%.

The Variance Decomposition diagram of Δ GDP

Figure 5

Period	S.E.	Δ GDP	Δ GFCF	Δ EXPORT	Δ IMPORT
1	1777.006	100.0000	0.000000	0.000000	0.000000
2	2245.774	64.86742	33.14135	1.855387	0.135835
3	2472.162	53.53104	27.63598	3.951347	14.88163
4	2483.612	53.32394	27.40623	4.273487	14.99635
5	3016.434	67.15655	18.68581	3.892076	10.26557
6	3299.282	56.48911	30.21683	4.704797	8.589270
7	3461.774	51.31616	27.56136	5.878433	15.24406
8	3473.028	51.21318	27.42494	5.922749	15.43913
9	3829.084	59.20562	22.66376	5.362978	12.76764
10	4043.297	53.15111	29.75909	5.639006	11.45080
11	4169.178	49.99329	28.03509	6.395765	15.57585
12	4182.219	49.85006	27.91057	6.443036	15.79633
13	4458.535	55.37470	24.65510	6.021675	13.94853
14	4632.615	51.29337	29.66734	6.119221	12.92007
15	4738.316	49.03117	28.37191	6.731419	15.86550
16	4751.386	48.87560	28.26495	6.770001	16.08946

Source: R output on Variance Decomposition diagram

The importance of GFCF in GDP is relatively constant over time around 30%. Imports of goods and services in the first quarter of the forecast have a small contribution to GDP (under 1%), increasing very much from the second quarter of the forecast to approx. 15%, which remains relatively constant over time.

4. CONCLUSIONS

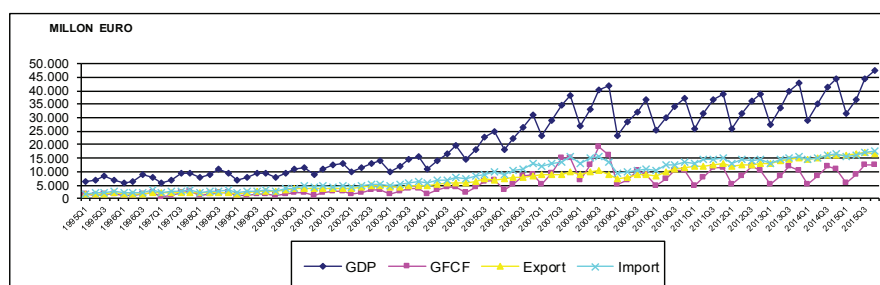
The stationary tests of the series (Unit root test – Dickey-Fuller Augmented) indicated that the series are not stationary and become stationary after the first differentiation (export, import and GFCF), respectively, after the second differentiation (GDP). The cointegration test of the series (Johansen Test) indicates the presence of 4 cointegration equations. The Short-term Causality Granger, under VEC environment, shows that there are bi-directional relations of influence between GFCF and GDP, imports and GDP and imports and GFCF. Unidirectional relations exist between: export and import (export influences import and not vice versa).

The VEC model – GDP based on export, import and GFCF – can be considered representative to describe autoregressive links between GDP, as the dependent variable, and export, import and GFCFs as independent variables because: the R adjusted index is close to 1 (0.96) which indicates that there is a strong link between the variables; the ANOVA test indicates the validity of the model (F-statistic = 203.1143 and Prob (F-statistic) = 0.000000 <0.05); most of the coefficients are significant, indicating that exports, imports and GFCFs influence GDP both on a short and long term (coefficient of cointegration equation is negative and significant); the residues are not autocorrelated, have a normal distribution and are homoscedastic; the CUSUM test indicates the stability of the regression coefficients. The coefficients of cointegration equations are negative and significant for all four regression equations, which means that in the long term there are causal bidirectional relations between the four selected variables.

In the long term, exports, imports and GFCF have an effect on GDP growth, with the largest impact on GFCF, followed by imports. In the short term, exports have a positive impact on GDP, and imports and GFCF have a slightly negative impact. All this suggests that Romania must continue to support exports in order to stimulate economic growth. However, it should be remembered that exports of primary products, products based on natural resources and low technology products (pauperization exports) do not lead to sustainable economic growth.

Evolution of Romania's GDP, GFCF, export and import in the period 1996- 2015 (value in million Euro)

Figure 6



Data source: Eurostat, New Cronos database <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database>

The long-term effect of import on GDP growth can be explained by the fact that, through imports, it is allowed faster access to high technology, which is an important positive factor for sustainable economic growth. Another explanation for the long-term effect of imports on GDP growth may be the increase in consumption from import, which does not support sustainable economic growth.

The major long-term impact of gross fixed capital formation on GDP suggests the need to increase GFCF by facilitating investment.

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Annex
- millions euro -

PERIOD	GDP	GFCF	Export	Import	PERIOD	GDP	GFCF	Export	Import
1995Q1	6,418.0	1,505.2	1,546.6	1,855.3	2005Q1	14,691.7	2,336.2	5,937.8	7,111.5
1995Q2	6,811.3	1,367.5	1,735.1	2,138.4	2005Q2	18,317.6	4,282.9	6,427.7	8,517.1
1995Q3	8,327.6	1,713.7	1,888.3	2,121.4	2005Q3	22,664.1	6,224.3	7,149.8	8,857.4
1995Q4	7,082.8	1,560.6	2,069.7	2,539.5	2005Q4	24,694.7	6,728.4	6,904.1	10,048.2
1996Q1	5,875.7	1,120.9	1,755.7	2,127.1	2006Q1	18,323.7	3,181.8	7,465.7	9,097.1
1996Q2	6,541.7	1,354.1	1,906.6	2,408.0	2006Q2	22,508.7	5,524.2	7,852.4	10,463.2
1996Q3	8,688.6	1,860.4	1,892.7	2,306.2	2006Q3	26,447.1	8,196.6	7,980.5	10,926.6
1996Q4	7,866.4	2,288.1	2,095.0	3,027.0	2006Q4	31,293.2	9,135.4	8,267.2	12,859.1
1997Q1	5,821.3	880.9	1,996.0	2,174.7	2007Q1	23,118.4	5,540.3	8,725.2	12,086.4
1997Q2	6,666.8	1,249.3	2,247.2	2,711.5	2007Q2	29,146.1	9,616.4	8,919.1	13,259.6
1997Q3	9,613.6	1,962.9	2,388.3	2,768.6	2007Q3	34,672.2	14,955.7	9,150.4	13,589.0
1997Q4	9,317.6	2,734.0	2,221.7	3,269.1	2007Q4	38,406.0	15,073.0	9,736.5	15,499.4
1998Q1	7,704.5	1,092.0	2,135.4	2,387.2	2008Q1	26,850.2	7,085.6	9,033.2	13,156.6
1998Q2	8,774.1	1,591.5	2,186.3	2,974.1	2008Q2	33,352.2	12,454.6	9,934.4	14,960.7
1998Q3	11,008.5	2,140.2	2,142.1	2,916.7	2008Q3	40,224.7	19,176.2	10,273.7	15,726.1
1998Q4	9,658.5	2,115.2	2,094.3	3,089.5	2008Q4	41,835.4	16,029.5	9,142.6	13,444.1
1999Q1	6,795.6	940.4	1,944.8	2,245.9	2009Q1	23,173.0	5,311.8	7,611.1	9,268.5
1999Q2	7,847.1	1,434.2	2,176.7	2,649.7	2009Q2	28,508.8	6,739.1	7,955.3	9,823.5
1999Q3	9,371.9	1,787.5	2,560.1	2,619.5	2009Q3	32,196.1	10,221.7	8,666.0	10,658.1
1999Q4	9,592.0	1,913.5	2,640.3	3,313.0	2009Q4	36,530.9	9,031.6	8,726.8	10,926.9
2000Q1	7,948.1	1,128.4	2,762.2	2,968.4	2010Q1	25,231.9	4,762.9	8,613.0	10,492.1
2000Q2	9,533.9	1,801.2	3,119.6	3,780.4	2010Q2	29,932.6	7,422.5	10,090.1	12,454.7
2000Q3	11,218.7	2,365.6	3,591.3	3,885.6	2010Q3	34,083.1	10,344.5	10,787.5	12,373.2
2000Q4	11,734.8	2,446.3	3,774.8	4,718.0	2010Q4	37,254.2	10,225.6	11,399.2	13,360.3
2001Q1	8,717.7	1,370.3	3,585.4	4,214.6	2011Q1	26,143.3	4,964.6	11,766.1	12,781.0
2001Q2	10,871.2	2,255.3	3,816.9	4,896.7	2011Q2	31,702.1	8,057.1	11,860.6	14,338.2
2001Q3	12,484.6	2,846.3	3,995.3	4,282.5	2011Q3	36,682.2	11,591.7	12,588.5	14,537.2
2001Q4	13,128.7	2,941.3	3,602.0	5,025.0	2011Q4	38,590.0	11,376.7	12,881.2	14,869.3
2002Q1	9,728.3	1,555.6	3,812.9	4,350.3	2012Q1	26,140.2	5,433.4	12,041.2	13,272.2
2002Q2	11,571.2	2,369.7	4,200.7	4,963.6	2012Q2	31,769.3	8,280.9	12,424.2	14,595.3
2002Q3	13,048.6	3,143.7	4,543.5	5,048.0	2012Q3	36,329.4	12,247.2	12,414.6	14,209.0
2002Q4	14,106.4	3,379.2	4,578.6	5,489.8	2012Q4	38,961.1	10,381.4	13,119.9	14,558.3
2003Q1	10,138.8	1,629.2	4,369.3	4,773.6	2013Q1	27,726.1	5,146.7	13,176.4	13,223.0
2003Q2	12,093.8	2,604.3	4,306.9	5,485.1	2013Q2	33,726.9	8,180.7	14,171.9	14,345.3
2003Q3	14,760.6	3,656.6	4,837.8	5,590.8	2013Q3	39,664.8	11,865.1	14,678.1	15,205.5
2003Q4	15,649.3	3,790.3	4,752.9	6,286.9	2013Q4	43,011.6	10,392.5	15,300.6	15,668.2
2004Q1	11,153.0	1,788.5	4,962.2	5,675.5	2014Q1	28,794.9	5,162.7	14,749.1	14,427.4
2004Q2	13,849.0	3,105.9	5,376.7	6,749.3	2014Q2	35,329.3	8,227.5	15,047.4	15,090.9
2004Q3	16,885.4	4,368.0	5,746.5	6,982.5	2014Q3	41,605.6	12,234.2	15,961.1	16,024.3
2004Q4	19,575.5	4,498.6	5,799.2	7,982.3	2014Q4	44,638.3	10,761.3	16,176.8	16,860.1

Source: Eurostat database, <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database>