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## ***APPENDICES***

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## **Appendix 1 - Summary technical description of Wholesale-Trade Survey**

### **1. Survey name and status**

Official name: “Business Survey on the Situation and Outlook in the Wholesale Trade”.

Abbreviated names: “Business Survey of the Wholesale Trade” or “Wholesale-Trade Survey”.

On 19 June 2003, the Survey was submitted for review to the Quality Label Committee of the National Council for Statistical Information (Conseil National de l'Information Statistique: CNIS), which designated it as a statistical operation “of public interest” and certified its statistical quality.

### **2. Producer**

INSEE, Departement of Short-Term Analysis, Business Surveys Division.

### **3. Frequency**

Two-monthly (January, March, May, July, September, and November).

### **4. General purposes of Survey, main topics covered, and Survey variables**

The purpose of the Wholesale-Trade Survey is to supply timely information on conditions in the wholesale trade, for economic analysis and short-term forecasting of wholesalers' activity.

The Survey seeks to record wholesalers' opinions on their recent business activity and outlook. It does so by tracking the volume of sales of products and services and related variables such as stocks, deliveries, ordering intentions, and changes in workforce size and prices. Business owners also provide an opinion on their cash-flow position and on payment times. The Survey thus provides information on the business trend in each wholesaling sector, but also explanations of these trends.

The questions are worded to facilitate fast response. Most questions are qualitative with a choice of three answers expressed in “increasing/decreasing/unchanged” or “above normal/normal/below normal” form. The number of questions is approximately fifteen or twenty, depending on the questionnaire. The responses to the quantitative questions (total sales, sales by product, share of purchases from abroad and export sales, workforce size, total number of enterprise's local units) and to the open “framework” question (designation of product categories) are preprinted: the enterprise is asked to update its responses only once a year, when the structural constants are revised in March.

### **5. Characteristics of sample (units surveyed, survey field, sampling method, coverage rate, and response)**

The units surveyed are enterprises (legal units). The Survey is conducted by means of stratified sampling (by sector at the NAF700 level and using five brackets for enterprise size) of 4,000 wholesale enterprises with the exception of the following:

- wholesale-trade intermediaries
- wholesale of non-manufactured tobacco products
- wholesale of tobacco
- wholesale of waste and scrap
- other wholesale trade.

The sectors covered are defined by the following NAF codes: Division 50: 51.2 (excluding 52.1J), 51.3 (excluding 51.3L), 51.4, 51.5 (excluding 51.5Q), and 51.8.

The Survey covers all enterprises with more than 200 employees or whose sales exceed a ceiling that varies according to the industry.

The sample consists of an enterprise panel. It is tracked continuously and revised once a year. Revision operations include removal of enterprises that have discontinued operations; addition of newly established large enterprises belonging to the “exhaustive-coverage” stratum; random sampling without replacement of the number of small and medium-sized enterprises needed to obtain a sample of the desired size; and so on. The sampling frame is INSEE’s Annual Enterprise Survey.

In September 2005, the sample’s coverage of the wholesale trade was about 51% as a percentage of sales by wholesale enterprises, 41% as a percentage of their workforce, and approximately 4.4% of the number of wholesale enterprises<sup>1</sup>.

Between November 2004 and September 2005, the mean response rate was 68% (percentage of enterprises having returned a questionnaire out of total number of questionnaires sent), 67% in sales-weighted terms, and 67% in workforce-weighted terms.

## **6. Collection period and publication date**

The Survey is performed every two months. Collection takes place by postal mail from the end of the month before the Survey month  $m$  to a few days before the end of month  $m$ : questionnaires are posted around the 25th of month  $m-1$ , reminders are sent out around the 7th of month  $m$ , and results are published at the end of month  $m$  or at the start of month  $m+1$ . Online data collection is conducted in parallel with the postal gathering: the online collection period begins when the printed questionnaires are posted.

## **7. Processing of results**

The results of a Survey  $S$  are initially published in provisional form at the end of the Survey execution month. When the following Survey ( $S+1$ ) is published, they are revised to incorporate late responses: these are referred to as the final figures.

To ensure comparability, the results of the two latest Surveys are computed on the same sample of responding or “imputed” enterprises (“constant sample” procedure). For qualitative questions, an answer actually provided in Survey  $S-1$  is carried forward, in the event of a non-response in Survey  $S$ , to allow the provisional processing of the latter. For the final processing of Survey  $S-1$ , an intermediate response between the responses to Surveys  $S-2$  and  $S$  is imputed to non-responding enterprises if needed.

INSEE calculates weighted averages of actual and imputed responses in the primary strata. The primary strata are defined by cross-tabulating activity sectors at the NAF700 level and the five size categories. Depending on the question, the weighting is based on product sales, enterprise sales or workforce size. The primary averages computed in the primary aggregation are aggregated to the various levels of publication or analysis using a weighted average based on adjustment coefficients derived from sources external to the business survey (INSEE’s Annual Enterprise Survey).

## **8. Precision of balances of opinion**

The rigorous method for computing the precision of a balance of opinion (or, more accurately, of its standard deviation linked to the sampling error) is described in detail in Caron, Ravalet, and Sautory (1996). When this method is applied to the balances of opinion for the total wholesale trade (field of survey), the sampling-related margin of uncertainty obtained does not exceed two to three points of the balance at the most aggregated level.

<sup>1</sup> Estimate based on 2003 Annual Enterprise Survey.

## **9. Users and uses of results**

The Wholesale-Trade Survey is used by: economic analysts and forecasters at INSEE, in the Forecasting Directorate of the French Ministry of Economy, Finance, and Industry (Direction de la Prévision) and other institutes; business statisticians (in particular for preparing sessions of the commissions in charge of preparing the commerce-sector accounts for the French National Accounts [Commissions des Comptes du Commerce]); decision-makers (government officials, enterprises, and trade organisations); economists; and economic journalists.

The Survey results are used at two levels: national and regional. At each level, they serve to track short-term developments in the economic activity sectors covered, as well as to prepare short-term business forecasts (one or two quarters):

- at the national level, they are one of the sources used to develop short-term analyses of the French economy;
- at the regional level in France, some INSEE Regional Offices rely on the Survey results as a source of initial indications on local wholesale-trade conditions. For this purpose, they use a reprocessing method that applies regional weightings to the detailed Survey figures. When used for such tracking of regional short-term developments, the Survey provides insights that allow regional analysts to corroborate or, on the contrary, to qualify impressions formed by examining other sources. This type of application seeks to respond to the strong demand for short-term information often expressed by regional government bodies, local elected officials, and regional trade organisations.

## **10. Role and contribution of Survey in existing statistical system covering the same field**

Business surveys are published very rapidly—faster than quantitative statistics. They also provide a relatively comprehensive and consistent view of an activity sector, shedding light on areas that are covered with considerable lags, if at all, by traditional statistics. They are a key source for gauging the expectations of businesses.

Calibration models estimated from Wholesale-Trade Survey results are used quarterly to compile the short-term forecasts of several economic aggregates published in INSEE's *Notes de Conjoncture* and *Points de Conjoncture*.

## Appendix 2 - Short-term questions in Wholesale-Trade Survey

Type of question	Question subject	Response	Frequency of question	Constant sample
product	Volume of sales realised in months $m-2$ and $m-1$	above normal normal below normal	two-monthly	yes
product	Volume of export sales realised in months $m-2$ and $m-1$	above normal normal below normal	two-monthly	yes
product	Volume of merchandise received in months $m-2$ and $m-1$	above normal normal below normal	two-monthly	yes
product	Volume of merchandise received from abroad in months $m-2$ and $m-1$	above normal normal below normal	two-monthly	yes
product	Ordering intentions in months $m$ and $m+1$	above normal normal below normal	two-monthly	yes
product	Ordering intentions for merchandise from abroad in $m$ and $m+1$	above normal normal below normal	two-monthly	yes
product	Orders for shipment abroad in months $m$ and $m+1$	above normal normal below normal	two-monthly	yes
product	Opinion on stock at this time of year	above normal normal below normal	two-monthly	yes
product	Trend in selling prices in past two months	increasing unchanged decreasing	two-monthly	no
product	Trend in selling prices in three or four months ahead	increasing unchanged decreasing	two-monthly	no
product	Trend in export selling prices in three or four months ahead	increasing unchanged decreasing	two-monthly	no
product	Trend in suppliers' selling prices in three or four months ahead	increasing unchanged decreasing	two-monthly	no

Type of question	Question subject	Response	Frequency of question	Constant sample
<b>product</b>	Trend in foreign suppliers' selling prices in three or four months ahead	increasing unchanged decreasing	two-monthly	no
<b>enterprise</b>	Change in wholesale/retail business in three or four months ahead	increasing unchanged decreasing	two-monthly	no
<b>enterprise</b>	Number of persons employed in past two months	increasing unchanged decreasing	two-monthly	yes
<b>enterprise</b>	Number of persons employed in two months ahead	increasing unchanged decreasing	two-monthly	yes
<b>enterprise</b>	Cash-flow position for the season	comfortable normal tight	two-monthly	yes
<b>enterprise</b>	Settlement times agreed by your suppliers in past six months	getting shorter unchanged getting longer	six-monthly January - July	no
<b>enterprise</b>	Settlement times for private-sector customers in past six months	getting shorter unchanged getting longer	six-monthly January - July	no
<b>enterprise</b>	Settlement times for public-sector customers in past six months	getting shorter unchanged getting longer	six-monthly January - July	no
<b>enterprise</b>	Late payments to suppliers in past six months	getting shorter unchanged getting longer	six-monthly January - July	no
<b>enterprise</b>	Late payments by private-sector customers in past six months	getting shorter unchanged getting longer	six-monthly January - July	no
<b>enterprise</b>	Late payments by public-sector customers in past six months	getting shorter unchanged getting longer	six-monthly January - July	no

### **Appendix 3 - *Questionnaire models for 2005***

This Appendix shows the two questionnaire models used in the Wholesale-Trade Survey. The first model is used in January and July, the second in March, May, September, and November.



Space for INSEE use only
QN34E/V 0001 SIRET -

INSEE contact for this questionnaire:

Paris, [date]

Phone: 01 41 17 59 43  
Fax: 01 41 17 36 24

## BUSINESS SURVEY ON THE SITUATION AND OUTLOOK IN THE WHOLESALE TRADE January 2005

Please return this questionnaire by

INSEE wishes you a Happy 2005 and thanks you for participating in this survey.

Dear Respondent,

Thank you for filling in this questionnaire. Your responses will help us to assess current conditions in your economic activity sector. The summary of Survey results, *Informations Rapides*, will be put online on the INSEE website on the Survey publication date ([www.insee.fr](http://www.insee.fr), click on *Les grands indicateurs* [Key Indicators] heading, then *Autres indicateurs* [Other indicators] subheading).

M. Devilliers

Head of Department of Short-Term Economic Analysis

The National Council for Statistical Information [CNIS] has recognised this Survey as being **in the public interest** and certified its **statistical quality**. CNIS Quality Label n° 2005B708EC valid for 2005.

Confidential questionnaire for INSEE use.

Act 78-17 of 6 January 1978 on information technology, data files, and civil liberties gives private individuals concerned the right to access and correct data concerning them. This right may be exercised by filing a request with the INSEE Head Office.

### COMMENTS

Name and position of respondent:

Phone:

E-mail:

Your e-mail address will enable INSEE to inform you of the availability of business surveys on the data-collection website: <http://conjoncture.entreprises.insee.fr>. It will be used solely for that purpose. Please correct any errors in the enterprise address.

Please fill in the questionnaire as indicated and return it in the enclosed postage-paid envelope.

## I - TYPE AND SIZE OF YOUR ENTERPRISE

1. Order of magnitude of your sales (excluding taxes) in **2003** ..... thousand euros
2. Number of employees working in your enterprise at 31 December **2003** ..... employees
3. Total number of local units in your enterprise at 31 December **2003** ..... local units [establishments]
4. Type of business activity of your enterprise .....

## II - QUESTIONS ON THE ENTERPRISE AS A WHOLE

### A. YOUR CASH-FLOW POSITION:

For the season, your cash-flow position is currently:

comfortable ☐

normal ☐

tight ☐

### B. YOUR WORKFORCE:

1. In the past 2 months, the number of persons at work in your enterprise has been..... ↗      ⇒      ↘
2. How do you expect your firm's total employment to change over the next 2 months?..... ↗      ⇒      ↘

*The products we may have preprinted in the columns below are those for which you usually respond. If your business has changed, please list the names of the new product(s) at the top of the column(s).*

## IV - QUESTIONS ON YOUR ENTERPRISE'S PRODUCTS

1. Product category.....
2. Approximate sales (excluding taxes) in **2003** .....
3. Approximate share of your export sales in **2003** .....
4. Approximate share of your purchases abroad in **2003** .....

### A. YOUR SALES:

For the season, your sales in **November and December 2004**  
have been .....

- of which: export sales .....

### B. YOUR PROCUREMENT:

For the season, your merchandise received in **November and December 2004**  
is .....

- of which: merchandise received from abroad .....

### C. YOUR CURRENT STOCK:

For the season, your current volume of stock is .....

### D. ORDERS:

1. For the season, your shipments abroad in **January and February 2005**  
are .....

2. For the season, your ordering intentions for **January and February 2005**  
are .....

- of which: orders from abroad .....

### E. PRICES:

1. Trend in your selling prices in the past 2 months .....

2. Trend in your selling prices in the 3 or 4 months ahead.....

- of which: selling prices to your customers abroad .....

3. Trend in your suppliers' selling prices in the 3 or 4 months ahead.....

- of which: selling prices of your suppliers abroad .....

## II - QUESTIONS ON THE ENTERPRISE AS A WHOLE (CONTINUED)

**C. CHANGE IN SETTLEMENT TIMES AND LATE PAYMENTS:**

1. In the past 6 months, your customers' settlement times have been:

Private-sector customers      getting shorter ☐      unchanged ☐      getting longer ☐

Public-sector customers\*      getting shorter ☐      unchanged ☐      getting longer ☐

2. In the past 6 months, your customers' late payments have been:

Private-sector customers      getting shorter ☐      unchanged ☐      getting longer ☐

Public-sector customers\*      getting shorter ☐      unchanged ☐      getting longer ☐

\*Central government, local government, hospitals, schools, and public-sector enterprises in areas not open to competition [power utilities, railways].

3. In the past 6 months, settlement times agreed by your suppliers have been:

getting shorter ☐      unchanged ☐      getting longer ☐

. In the past 6 months, your late payments to suppliers (including negotiated and non-negotiated delays) have been:

getting shorter ☐      unchanged ☐      getting longer ☐

### III - YOUR OPINION ON FUTURE TREND IN TOTAL FRENCH WHOLESALE/RETAIL TRADE

What do you see now as the most likely overall trend in French wholesale/retail sales in the next 3 months?.....

[illegible]

Space for INSEE use only
QN15E/V 0001 SIRET -

INSEE contact for this questionnaire:

Paris, [date]

Phone: 01 41 17 59 43  
Fax: 01 41 17 36 24

## BUSINESS SURVEY ON THE SITUATION AND OUTLOOK IN THE WHOLESALE TRADE

**March 2005**

**Please return this questionnaire by**

Responding online is simple, fast, and efficient—for you and for us: <http://conjoncture.entreprises.insee.fr>  
If you have lost your access codes, contact telephone assistance at 02 40 99 90 65  
or by e-mail [assistance-conjoncture@insee.fr](mailto:assistance-conjoncture@insee.fr)

Dear Respondent,

Thank you for filling in this questionnaire. Your responses will help us to assess current conditions in your economic activity sector. The summary of Survey results, *Informations Rapides*, will be put online on the INSEE website on the Survey publication date ([www.insee.fr](http://www.insee.fr), click on *Les grands indicateurs* [Key Indicators] heading, then *Autres indicateurs* [Other indicators] subheading).

*M. Devilliers*

*Head of Department of Short-Term Economic Analysis*

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### COMMENTS

**Name and position of respondent:**

**Phone:**

**E-mail:**

Your e-mail address will enable INSEE to inform you of the availability of business surveys on the data-collection website: <http://conjoncture.entreprises.insee.fr>. It will be used solely for that purpose. Please correct any errors in the enterprise address.

**Please fill in the questionnaire as indicated and return it in the enclosed postage-paid envelope.**

## I - TYPE AND SIZE OF YOUR ENTERPRISE

1. Order of magnitude of your sales (excluding taxes) in **2004** ..... thousand euros
2. Number of employees working in your enterprise at 31 December **2004** ..... employees
3. Total number of local units in your enterprise at 31 December **2004** ..... local units [establishments]
4. Type of business activity of your enterprise .....

## II - QUESTIONS ON THE ENTERPRISE AS A WHOLE

### A. YOUR CASH-FLOW POSITION:

For the season, your cash-flow position is currently:

comfortable ☐

normal ☐

tight ☐

### B. YOUR WORKFORCE:

1. In the past 2 months, the number of persons at work in your enterprise has been.....



2. How do you expect your firm's total employment to change over the next 2 months?.....



## IV - QUESTIONS ON YOUR ENTERPRISE'S PRODUCTS

1. Product category.....
2. Approximate sales (excluding taxes) in **2004** .....
3. Approximate share of your export sales in **2004** .....
4. Approximate share of your purchases abroad in **2004** .....

### A. YOUR SALES:

For the season, your sales in **January and February 2005**  
have been .....

- of which: export sales .....

### B. YOUR PROCUREMENT:

For the season, your merchandise received in **January and February 2005**  
is .....

- of which: merchandise received from abroad .....

### C. YOUR CURRENT STOCK:

For the season, your current volume of stock is .....

### D. ORDERS:

1. For the season, your shipments abroad in **March and April 2005**  
are .....

2. For the season, your ordering intentions for **March and April 2005**  
are .....

- of which: orders from abroad .....

### E. PRICES:

1. Trend in your selling prices in the past 2 months .....

2. Trend in your selling prices in the 3 or 4 months ahead.....

- of which: selling prices to your customers abroad .....

3. Trend in your suppliers' selling prices in the 3 or 4 months ahead.....

- of which: selling prices of your suppliers abroad .....

### III - YOUR OPINION ON FUTURE TREND IN TOTAL FRENCH WHOLESALE/RETAIL TRADE

What do you see now as the most likely overall trend in French wholesale/retail sales in the next 3 months?



**The products we may have preprinted in the columns below are those for which you usually respond. If your business has changed, please list the names of the new product(s) at the top of the column(s).**

<p>..... .....</p> <p>..... thousand euros</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>			<p>..... .....</p> <p>..... thousand euros</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>			<p>..... .....</p> <p>..... thousand euros</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>			<p>..... .....</p> <p>..... thousand euros</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>		
above normal	normal	below normal	above normal	normal	below normal	above normal	normal	below normal	above normal	normal	below normal
above normal	normal	below normal	above normal	normal	below normal	above normal	normal	below normal	above normal	normal	below normal
above normal	normal	below normal	above normal	normal	below normal	above normal	normal	below normal	above normal	normal	below normal
above normal	normal	below normal	above normal	normal	below normal	above normal	normal	below normal	above normal	normal	below normal
above normal	normal	below normal	above normal	normal	below normal	above normal	normal	below normal	above normal	normal	below normal
above normal	normal	below normal	above normal	normal	below normal	above normal	normal	below normal	above normal	normal	below normal
above normal	normal	below normal	above normal	normal	below normal	above normal	normal	below normal	above normal	normal	below normal
above normal	normal	below normal	above normal	normal	below normal	above normal	normal	below normal	above normal	normal	below normal
↗	⇒	↘	↗	⇒	↘	↗	⇒	↘	↗	⇒	↘
↗	⇒	↘	↗	⇒	↘	↗	⇒	↘	↗	⇒	↘
↗	⇒	↘	↗	⇒	↘	↗	⇒	↘	↗	⇒	↘
↗	⇒	↘	↗	⇒	↘	↗	⇒	↘	↗	⇒	↘
↗	⇒	↘	↗	⇒	↘	↗	⇒	↘	↗	⇒	↘