Part II

Intraregional trade of ESCWA member countries
Introduction

This chapter presents analysis and statistics for ESCWA member countries on which data on intraregional trade in non-oil goods were available for 2013. Based on these statistics, intraregional non-oil exports increased by US$11.1 billion from 2012 to 2013. Figures also highlight the increasing importance of the share of intraregional exports in the Arab region to total non-oil exports, which reached 19.7 per cent in 2013 compared to 16.4 per cent in 2012.

Non-oil intraregional exports continued their remarkable progress noticed in recent years. The increment in intraregional exports in 2013 reached about 17 per cent, while the region’s total non-oil exports grew by less than 1 per cent. This remarkable export growth indicates that intraregional non-oil exports are leading trade development and growth in the Arab region. This trend is also observed during the last few years. Yemen claimed the highest growth rate in its intraregional exports, which reached 172 per cent in 2013 in a strong rebound after the 2012 decline. Oman maintained an exceptionally high growth rate of intraregional exports, which reached 109 per cent in 2013. Kuwait, Lebanon and the United Arab Emirates recorded growth rates of 22, 15.8 and 20 per cent respectively. However, Palestine suffered a 16.8 per cent decline in its intraregional exports in 2013, while Egypt and Tunisia also experienced a slight decrease by less than 1 per cent.

Available statistics on regional trade integration in non-oil goods indicate that the most integrated countries in the region in 2013 were the more diversified Arab economies. Claiming the first rank, Lebanon had the highest share of intraregional exports to its total exports, which reached 50.4 per cent, followed by Jordan with a share of 48.5 per cent, Oman with a share of 39.4 per cent and Egypt with a share of 34.3 per cent. Available statistics indicate that Palestine, Kuwait, Qatar and Tunisia were the least integrated economies, as the shares of their intraregional non-oil exports to total exports ranged between 7.3 and 9.6 per cent.

وبالنسبة للتكامل التجاري الإقليمي، تبين أن أكثر اقتصادات المنطقة ترابطًا من حيث صادراتها غير النفطية، وهي لبنان، حيث تراوحت نسبة صادراتها غير النفطية من إجمالي صادراتها في عام 2013 بين 50.4% و50.4%، تلاها الأردن بنسبة 48.5%، وتلاه عمان بنسبة 39.4%، وتلاها مصر بنسبة 34.3%. وفيما يتعلق بالدول العربية التي تمتلك نسبًا من صادراتها غير النفطية الأقل، كانت فلسطين والكويت وقطر وتونس التي تراوحت نسبة صادراتها غير النفطية من إجمالي صادراتها بين 7.3% و9.6% في المائة.
In addition to the share of total exports and rates of growth, the absolute value of intraregional exports is a significant element for a comprehensive analysis and to highlight the importance of intraregional trade. Available statistics on the values of intraregional non-oil exports for 2013 show that the United Arab Emirates was by far the largest exporter of non-oil goods to the rest of the region with US$26.2 billion, followed by Qatar with US$9.6 billion, Oman with US$9.2 billion, Egypt with US$8.8 billion and Jordan with US$3.8 billion. The smallest values of intraregional non-oil exports in 2013 were recorded in Palestine, whose intraregional exports reached US$85 million, followed by Yemen with US$1.1 billion, and Tunisia with US$1.3 billion. These modest values were yielded in countries that, by contrast, exhibited the highest rates of growth of intraregional exports or high shares to total exports, as in the case of Yemen.

Unfortunately, and due to the unavailability of data on foreign and regional trade in all Arab countries to date, it is difficult to provide a complete view of intraregional trade in the region. Available statistics for earlier years show high rates of intraregional trade in Bahrain, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, the Sudan and the Syrian Arab Republic. For instance, Bahrain exported around 60 per cent of its total trade to the region in 2011, while Iraq’s share of intraregional to total exports reached 77.2 per cent in 2012. Intraregional exports in Saudi Arabia reached 46.3 per cent in 2005; 58.1 per cent in the Sudan in 2012; and 36.4 per cent in the Syrian Arab Republic in 2011.