

Sources and Methods

Malta

Also available at: <http://www.nso.gov.mt/site/page.aspx?pageid=32>

Maltese Statistics

Information on our statistical sources and methods is being provided in order to help users of statistics assess the relevance of our data to their needs and to improve our users' understanding and awareness of the quality of our data.

1. Legislation

The National Statistics Office (NSO) was set up by virtue of the Malta Statistics Authority Act XXIV 2000.

2. Publication of NSO data

All NSO data is published by the office directly and with the assistance of the Department of Information. All News Releases are broadcast and disseminated concurrently to all interested parties and the media either by the NSO itself or by the Department of Information as the case may be.

3. Access to statistical data prior to release.

(a) In general, the NSO does not provide access to statistical data to third parties prior to release. Statistical data is made available to third parties at the same time.

(b) The above-mentioned practice is excepted to in the following two cases:

(1) NSO News Releases may be sent to Ministers twenty-four (24) hours prior to release in order to avoid them being caught unaware upon the release of the data.

(2) In the case of the Retail Price Index, the Director of Statistics provides prior access to the monthly compilations to an 'ad hoc' board - The Retail Price Index Management Board - which is made up of representatives of

the three social partners, namely the Government, private industry and the trade unions. The Board is led by Government-appointed chairperson. This Board is composed as follows:

- A chairperson
- The Director, National Statistics Office (ex-officio member)
- Two Government representatives
- Two representatives of private industry (one from the General Retailers and Traders Union and another one from the Federation of Industry)
- Two workers' union representatives (one from the Confederation of Malta Trade Unions and another one from the General Workers' Union)

During its monthly meetings and prior to the release of the index, the Director of Statistics presents the index to this Board and provides answers to questions and additional information on the index.

All information provided to the members of this Board is maintained in strict confidence and permanently embargoed. The members of the Board are also barred from disseminating the index prior to its publication by the NSO.

The Retail Price Index is published by the NSO at the end of each Board's meeting.

(c) **Employment and Unemployment** data are published monthly by the National Statistics Office. However, this data are compiled and made available by the Employment and Training Corporation.

(d) **Government Finance** data are made available to the National Statistics Office by the Treasury. Government Finance statistics are first released by the Treasury through the Government Gazette.

4. Ministerial Commentary

No ministerial commentary is allowed in any NSO publication. However, such commentary is normally made under separate cover and released through the Department of Information or made directly with the media.

5. Revisions and changes in methodology

It is the policy of the NSO to

- (a) provide full and annotated revisions whenever necessary and required; and
- (b) to explain fully current and changes in methodology.

In general, revisions to monthly, quarterly and annual data are normally carried out on a $t+1$ basis. Such revisions are normally applied to the Gross Domestic Product, the Balance of Payments, Trade and Industry data. Revisions to Tourism, Labour, Government Finance, Prices and other socio-demographic data are rare and infrequent.