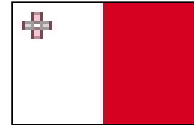


National statistical business register - Malta

National Reference Metadata in Euro SDMX
Metadata Structure (ESMS)

Compiling agency: National Statistics Office



Eurostat metadata

Reference metadata

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For any question on data and metadata, please contact: [Eurostat user support](#)

1. Contact

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1.1. Contact organisation	National Statistics Office
1.2. Contact organisation unit	Business Register, Research and Innovation Unit
1.5. Contact mail address	National Statistics Office, Lascaris, Valletta

2. Metadata update

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2.1. Metadata last certified	31/05/2023
2.2. Metadata last posted	31/05/2023
2.3. Metadata last update	31/05/2023

3. Statistical presentation

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3.1. Data description

The statistical business registers (SBR) are the basic infrastructure for the collection and compilation of data for European business statistics.

The SBR is used as the main source of information for statistical analysis of the business population and its demography, for the definition of the survey population and for establishing the link with administrative data sources.

The national statistical business register includes information on the active population of:

- all enterprises carrying out economic activities contributing to the gross domestic product (GDP) and their local units;
- the legal units of which those enterprises consist;
- enterprise groups to which those enterprises belong.

Households do not fall within the scope of the European framework for statistical business registers insofar that the goods and services they produce are destined to their own consumption, or involve letting out of own property.

Local units of foreign enterprises not constituting separate legal entities (branches), and classified as quasi- corporations in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 549/2013, are be deemed to be enterprises for the purposes of the national statistical business registers and the EuroGroups Register.

Enterprise groups shall be identified through the links of control between their legal units in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 549/2013.

The main variables recorded in the statistical business register are the following:

- Identification variables: identification number, name, address;
- Demographic events: date of commencement/cessation of the unit;
- Economic variables/stratification parameters: economic activity (NACE), employment, turnover, legal form, legal activity status;
- Information on control and ownership of units: parent/subsidiary legal unit, minority shareholder information, country of global group head, based on immediate shareholding data.

3.2. Classification system

Classification systems and code lists used in the national statistical business register are as follows:

- Statistical classification of economic activities in the European Community ([NACE Rev. 2](#));
- European System of Accounts ([ESA 2010](#));

3.3. Coverage - sector

The coverage of the national statistical business registers is defined in the [Regulation \(EU\) 2019/2152](#) on European business statistics.

The national statistical business registers comprise all enterprises resident in the national territory that are carrying out activities contributing to GDP.

Households do not fall within the scope of the European framework for statistical business registers insofar as the goods and services they produce are destined to their own consumption, or involve letting out of own property.

The SBR frame covers all units which, wholly or partially, exercise an economic activity and economically inactive legal units, which are part of an enterprise in combination with economically active legal units. For the purposes of the European framework for statistical business registers, the following economic activities are considered:

- any activity comprising the offer of goods and services on a given market;
- non-market services contributing to the GDP;
- direct and indirect holdings of active legal units.

Holding assets and/or liabilities are also considered an economic activity.

The national statistical business register also covers the following sectors:

- Non-profit organisations
- Government entities

3.4. Statistical concepts and definitions

The main statistical concepts and definitions used for the statistical business registers are as follows:

Annual copy of statistical business register

The annual copy of the statistical business register reflects the state of the register at the end of the year including all units active within the reference year. NSIs have to make a copy annually and keep that copy for at least 30 years for the purpose of analysis.

Active unit

A statistical unit is considered to have been active during the reference period, if in said period it either realized positive net turnover or produced outputs or had employees or performed investments.

A legal unit can be legally or administratively active without any economic activity, when the inactive legal unit is part of an enterprise in combination with economically active legal units. Holding assets and/or liabilities shall also be regarded as an economic activity.

Number of active enterprises

The number of active enterprises is the number of all statistical units which at any time during the reference period were 'enterprises', as defined in Council Regulation (EEC) No 696/93, and also active during the same reference period. A statistical unit is considered to have been active during the reference period, if in said period it either realized positive net turnover or produced outputs or had employees or performed investments.

Number of employees

The number of employees represents the average number of persons who were, at some time during the reference period, employees of the statistical unit.

Number of employees and self-employed persons

The number of employees and self-employed persons is the sum of the number of employees and number of self-employed persons. The number of self-employed persons is the average number of persons who were at some time during the reference period the sole owners or joint owners of the statistical unit in which they work. Family workers and outworkers whose income is a function of the value of the outputs of the statistical unit are also included.

Number of local units

A count of the number of local units as defined in Regulation (EEC) No 696/93 registered to the population concerned in the business register corrected for errors, in particular frame errors. Local units must be included even if they have no paid employees. This statistic includes all units active during at least a part of the reference period.

Net turnover

For all activities except for NACE 64, 65 and some activities of NACE 66 net turnover consists of all income arising during the reference period in the course of ordinary activities of the statistical unit, and is presented net of all price reductions, discounts and rebates granted by it.

Income is defined as increases in economic benefits during the reference period in the form of inflows or enhancements of assets or decreases of liabilities that result in increases in equity, other than those relating to contributions from equity participants.

The inflows referred to are arising from contracts with customers and are realized through the satisfaction by the statistical unit of performance obligations as foreseen in said contracts. Usually, a performance obligation is represented by the sale (transfer) of goods or the rendering of services, however, the gross inflows can also contain revenues obtained as a yield on the use by others of the statistical unit's assets.

Excluded from net turnover are:

- all taxes, duties or levies linked directly to revenue;
- any amounts collected on behalf of any principal, if the statistical unit is acting as an agent in its relationship with said principal;
- all income not arising in the course of ordinary activities of the statistical unit. Usually, these types of income are classified as 'Other (operating) income', 'Financial income', 'Extra-ordinary income' or under a similar heading, depending on the respective set of generally accepted accounting standards used to prepare the financial statements.

Infra-annual statistics may not be able to take into account aspects such as annual price reductions, subsidies, rebates and discounts.

For the activities of NACE K6411, K6419 and K649 net turnover is defined as the value of output minus subsidies or government grants.

For the activities of NACE K642 and K643 net turnover can be approximated by the total operating costs, if net turnover is not available in the financial statements.

For the activities of NACE K6511, K6512 and K652 net turnover is defined as Gross premiums earned.

For the activities of NACE K653 the net turnover is defined as total pension contributions

For activities of NACE K66 for which net turnover is not available in the financial statements, net turnover is defined as the value of output minus subsidies or government grants. For activities of NACE K66 for which net turnover is available in the financial statements, the standard definition of net turnover applies.

Principal activity

The principal (or main) activity is the activity that contributes most to the total value added of the unit under consideration. Ideally, the principal activity of the unit should be determined with reference to the value added to the goods and services produced, by applying the top-down method. The top-down method follows a hierarchical principle: the classification of the unit at the lowest level of the classification must be consistent with the classification of the unit at higher levels. The principal activity so identified does not necessarily account for 50 % or more of the unit's total value added.

In the European Union the classification of principal activity is determined by reference to NACE Rev. 2, first at the highest level of classification and then at more detailed levels (top-down method).

Secondary activity

A secondary activity is each separate activity that produces products eventually for third parties and that is not the principal activity. The outputs of secondary activities are secondary products.

More information on statistical concepts and definitions relevant to the statistical business registers could be found in the [EBS methodological manual for Statistical Business Registers \(2021 edition\)](#).

3.5. Statistical unit

The statistical units maintained in the national statistical business register are defined in accordance with [Regulation \(EEC\) No 696/93](#) on the statistical units for the observation and analysis of the production system in the Community, as follows:

- **Enterprise** - the enterprise is the smallest combination of legal units that is an organizational unit producing goods or services, which benefits from a certain degree of autonomy in decision-making, especially for the allocation of its current resources. An enterprise carries out one or more activities at one or more locations. An enterprise may be a sole legal unit.
- **Enterprise group** - an enterprise group is an association of enterprises bound together by legal and/or financial links. A group of enterprises can have more than one decision-making centre, especially for policy on production, sales and profits. It may centralize certain aspects of financial management and taxation. It constitutes an economic entity, which is empowered to make choices, particularly concerning the units, which it comprises.
- **Local unit** - the local unit is an enterprise or part thereof (e. g. a workshop, factory, warehouse, office, mine or depot) situated in a geographically identified place. At or from this place economic activity is carried out for which - save for certain exceptions - one or more persons work (even if only part-time) for one and the same enterprise.

3.6. Statistical population

The national statistical business register is the authoritative source for deriving high quality and harmonised statistical business register populations for the production of European statistics in accordance with Article 8 to the EBS Regulation 2019/2152.

The national statistical business register comprises the following units without any thresholds:

- sole traders
- partnerships and joint ventures
- limited and public liability companies
- government entities
- public corporations
- non-profit organisations

3.7. Reference area

The reference area for national statistical business register is the territory of the country. Concerning enterprise groups any country outside the national territory may be relevant.

3.8. Coverage - Time

The national statistical business register was established in 1997.

The statistical units are implemented and maintained in the national statistical business register as follows:

- Enterprise group – implemented and maintained since 2011.
- Enterprise – implemented and maintained since 2016.
- Local unit – implemented and maintained since 2019.

3.9. Base period

Not applicable.

4. Unit of measure

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The economic variables on employment are recorded in absolute figures. The net turnover is recorded in Euro.

5. Reference Period

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The reference period for the annual copy of the national statistical business register is a calendar year.

An annual copy that reflects the state of the national statistical business registers at the end of the year is taken and kept for at least 30 years for the purpose of analysis.

The latest available copy of the national statistical business register consists of the final annual master frame for 2020 reference year.

In this annual copy, the economic variables (number of employees, turnover and economic activity) refer to the 2020 reference year.

6. Institutional Mandate

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6.1. Institutional Mandate - legal acts and other agreements

Legal acts and other agreements - EU level

- [Regulation \(EU\) 2019/2152](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 November 2019 on European business statistics;
- [Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2020/1197](#) of 30 July 2020 laying down technical specifications and arrangements pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2019/2152 of the European Parliament and of the Council on European business statistics.

Legal acts and other agreements - national level

- [Malta Statistics Authority Act](#)

6.2. Institutional Mandate - data sharing

The [EBS Regulation \(EU\) 2019/2152](#) lays down provisions on the exchange of and access to confidential data for the purpose of the European framework for statistical business registers.

The [Commission implementing regulation \(EU\) 2020/1197](#) lays down technical specifications and arrangements pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2019/2152, including technical specifications for the exchange of confidential data for the purposes of the European framework for statistical business registers.

7. Confidentiality

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7.1. Confidentiality - policy

[Regulation \(EC\) No 223/2009](#) (recital 24 and Article 20(4)) of 11 March 2009 (OJ L 87, p. 164) on European statistics stipulates the need to establish common principles and guidelines ensuring the confidentiality of data used for the production of European statistics and the access to those confidential data with due account for technical developments and the requirements of users in a democratic society.

The following policy rules are applied at national level:

- Published data for active legal units is flagged as confidential if the number of units contributing to a cell value is less than 3. Secondary confidentiality is applied to other cell values, in such a way that the primary confidential cell values are not disclosed.
- Dominance occurs when the highest two turnover values make up 80% or more of the total of the turnovers of the same data set under consideration. In such cases confidentiality is also applied

7.2. Confidentiality - data treatment

According to policy rules (see section 7.1).

8. Release policy

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8.1. Release calendar

The preliminary frames of the national statistical business register are released according to the statistical user needs, as follows:

- On request to STS domain;
- T+ 8 months to SBS domain;
- T+ 16 months to FATS;
- T+ 11 months to ITGS;
- On request months to ITSS;
- T+ 2 months to CIS (Community Innovation Survey);
- T+ 2 months to ICT survey;
- T+ 6 months to R&D;
- On request months to other domains which require it.

The final frame of the national statistical business register is released in T+ 18 months.

8.2. Release calendar access

Not applicable.

8.3. Release policy - user access

The statistical users get access to the national SBR frames or receive required data in the following way:

- Via One-Drive containing the variables required and agreed only

9. Frequency of dissemination

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The national SBR preliminary frames are provided to statistical users with the following frequency:

- annually.
- on request.

The final frame for a reference year T is available on annual basis in T+ 18 months. The annual copy is kept for 30 years for the purpose of analysis.

10. Accessibility and clarity

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10.1. Dissemination format - News release

The regular news releases that are published yearly are:

- [Registered Business Units Release](#) - This news release shows the demographic patterns of registered business units in Malta and their evolution over time.
- [Business Demography News Release](#) - This news release shows the demographic patterns of active business units in Malta and their evolution over time.

10.2. Dissemination format - Publications

Restricted from publication

10.3. Dissemination format - online database

none

10.4. Dissemination format - microdata access

The NSI exchange microdata with the Commission (Eurostat) for the purposes of the European framework for statistical business registers.

The data and metadata are exchanged in electronic form and transmitted using the ESS data and metadata standards as specified by the Commission (Eurostat).

The SBR microdata are provided to the authorized statistical users, as follows:

- Administrative entities
- Research institutes and individual researchers.

NSI exchange microdata with NCB for the purposes of the European framework for statistical business registers in order to ensure the quality of multinational enterprise group information in the European Union.

Anonymised micro-data are provided to researchers via secured environment according to the procedure for dissemination of confidential data for scientific purposes. The procedure and application form, as well as the eligibility criteria to access Anonymised Microdata can be found [here](#).

10.5. Dissemination format - other

The aggregated data on national statistical business register are provided annually to Eurostat in electronic form and transmitted via EDAMIS.

Tailor-made data sets available on request for external users.

National statistical business register is the main source for the Business demography statistics that provide information for active enterprises in the business economy, the births, deaths and survival rates of enterprises, as well as information on related employment data. In the business demography domain, the business economy covers sections B to N, excluding activities of holding companies – K64.2 (NACE Rev.2).

10.6. Documentation on methodology

[European business statistics methodological manual for statistical business registers – edition 2021](#) outlines the methodology to be used for the national statistical institutes.

10.7. Quality management - documentation

ESS Data Quality Programme for statistical business registers is available on [CIRCABC](#).

11. Quality management

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11.1. Quality assurance

The quality is assured by applying the following quality management and assurance procedures:

- Manual Quality Checks during the Vetting stage prior entering the data in the SBR application
- Validation check performed by the SBR application itself
- Procedures of data cross checking and matching
- Queries to data providers and feedback from users, especially for assignment of NACE codes.

11.2. Quality management - assessment

The quality of statistical business register is monitored according the quality assurance procedure described in concept 11.1.

12. Relevance

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12.1. Relevance - User Needs

SBRs are important for the compilation of consistent and comparable European business statistics, establishing efficient statistical survey frames, providing identification numbers of all the units and for linking to many different sources, increasing statistical information and reducing the reporting burden on enterprises.

SBRs are referred to as the ‘backbone’ in the production of economic statistics because they provide the core infrastructure to ensure data consistency between various statistical outputs.

Nationally, the users for Statistical Business Registers are numerous. It is used internally, by other units within NSO and externally by the Central Bank of Malta, various government entities, as well as researchers, students, and private companies.

12.2. Relevance - User Satisfaction

Since 2017, Eurostat together with the EU Member States conducts SBR user survey addressing users and potential users of the national statistical business registers (NSBR) and the EuroGroups Register (EGR).

The latest SBR User Survey 2020 show that the NSBR are widely used at national level and users consider that its quality had been significantly improved in the recent years. Most of the NSBR

users (97%) had either no issue or manageable issue regarding business registers coverage, units, variables, timeliness and frequency of frames.

The results of the SBR User Survey 2020 are available on [CIRCABC](#).

The results of the latest national User Satisfaction Survey can viewed [here](#).

12.3. Completeness

The completeness of national statistical business registers is annually assessed by Eurostat. The SBR assessment results are provided to EU Member States and EFTA countries and presented at the Statistical Business Registers Working Group (SBR WG).

All mandatory variables are covered in the national SBR.

13. Accuracy

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13.1. Accuracy - overall

The overall level of the SBR accuracy is quite high. All new registrations are added monthly from information obtained through the relevant administrative sources (namely Value Added Tax (VAT) and the Malta Business Registry(MBR)). This data is received automatically on the first day of the month and is immediately migrated to the SBR. It also includes information relating to the NACE code at 4-digit level, legal structure, address and contact details. All these variables are also recorded. The data is cross-checked against the different sources so that any inconsistencies are immediately identified and addressed. De-registrations, mergers and conversions are also verified via data provided by the relevant administrative sources. The turnover variable is updated mainly from tax data and VAT data. Other data sources are used (such as Structural Business Statistics (SBS) data) in cases of missing data. The employment variable is taken mostly from administrative data sources (mainly the national employment agency data and tax data relating to employment) together with survey data (such as SBS, Short Term Statistics and Job Vacancy Survey). The latter is used to fill in gaps and complement as necessary to get the most accurate picture possible. The National Employment Agency provides monthly data which is used to work out the annual average. Employment figures are rigorously compared with data from the SBS for consistency and coherence. Information pertaining to the NACE code is taken from a number of sources. Various checks on the Memorandum and Articles of a company, as well as any other type of documentation/online searches are regularly performed to verify the accuracy of the data provided. When an enterprise has more than one activity, NACE is assigned according to the one which generates the most value-added. This is either verified through the SBS survey or directly with the business unit. Financial statements are also used where possible. Information about the actual economic national footprint of the business unit is also verified. Information available from SBS data is checked and taken in consideration for further enhancements with relation to the employment, activity, turnover, addresses, residency and status variables. Group structures are based on immediate shareholding data provided by the relevant administrative sources. Information obtain from financial statements, group websites, Euro Group Register and Foreign Affiliate Surveys is used to update groups structures as accurately as possible. Profiling is also an exercise undertaken that aids to understand better the group structures and enterprises belonging to the group.

13.2. Sampling error

Not applicable.

13.3. Non-sampling error

Not applicable.

14. Timeliness and punctuality

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14.1. Timeliness

Preliminary frames are available immediately after the reference year T.
Final frame is available 18 months after the reference year T.

14.2. Punctuality

Aggregated data for the SBR final frame are provided annually to Eurostat according the deadline agreed by the Statistical Business Registers Working Group.
The SBR frames are provided on time to statistical users with regard to their needs and the agreed time frame.

15. Coherence and comparability

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15.1. Comparability - geographical

The geographical comparability of national statistical business registers is ensured by the application of common definitions of the statistical units laid down in the Council Regulation (EEC) No 696/93.

The SBR variables are harmonised and set up in accordance with the Annex VIII to the Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/1197 laying down technical specifications and arrangements pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2019/2152 on European business statistics. Further guidelines on the variables implementation in the national statistical business registers are given in the [EBS methodological manual for Statistical Business Registers \(2021 edition\)](#).

15.2. Comparability - over time

The comparability over time of the frames results from the information provided in concept 3.8. No break-in-series of note have occurred.

15.3. Coherence - cross domain

The NSBR frame provides information on the active population of enterprises carrying out economic activities which contribute to the gross domestic product (GDP), the legal units of which those enterprises consist of, local units and enterprise groups, incl. all-resident and multinational enterprise groups.

The national statistical business register is used by statistical users as a coordinated frame population in order to derive consistent statistical output.

15.4. Coherence - internal

The SBR data included in the final frame are internally consistent.

16. Cost and Burden

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The annual operational costs of the SBR process is estimated to be around €280,000.

The BR Questionnaire is a short survey which is not estimated to take a lot of time or pose a lot of

burden to respond. It is also being sent via email and therefore printing and postage costs were also eliminated in this regard.

17. Data revision

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17.1. Data revision - policy

Not applicable

17.2. Data revision - practice

Not applicable

18. Statistical processing

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18.1. Source data

The national statistical business registers is set up in accordance with EBS Regulation (EU) 2019/2152 using any relevant data sources while avoiding excessive burden on respondents and taking due account of the cost effectiveness of the NSAs.

NSO uses the following data sources, including a combination thereof for the national statistical business register:

- Various Administrative Sources
- Surveys

18.2. Frequency of data collection

The national statistical business registers shall be updated by means of entries and removals at least annually. The frequency of updating shall depend on the kind of unit, the variable considered, the size of the unit and the source generally used for the update.

The frequency of updating the units and variables in the national statistical business register is as follows:

- Legal units - monthly.
- Enterprises - annually.
- Local units - annually.
- Enterprise groups - annually.

18.3. Data collection

Statistical business registers use data from administrative and statistical data sources, and from any other relevant sources that are comparable and compliant with the applicable specific quality requirements. For more details please see 18.1.

18.4. Data validation

Statistical analysis of the national statistical business register is carried out to ensure the quality of data and frame populations provided to users.

Data validation procedures include:

- inbuilt checks within the SBR application.
- cross checks between different data sources.
- feedback from respondents when data is unclear.

18.5. Data compilation

For the compilation of SBR data, different administrative sources are used. In cases of conflicting figures, a set of priority rules are in place when it comes to decide which numbers are to be recorded for each variable in the SBR.

The final frame populations and annual copy of national statistical business register is produced after the final data source becomes available and the necessary updates obtained from it, are included in the SBR.

18.6. Adjustment

Consistency checks are applied at different stages, using different sources on the basis of when they become available.

19. Comment

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None

Related metadata

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Annexes

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