
Central Statistical Bureau

Dissemination policy

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1. Key principles of dissemination

Neutrality and professional independence

Statistics, analysis and other materials are prepared and published solely on the basis of conclusions derived from statistical data and do not contain opinions that support or criticize certain political or economic interests.

Press releases and analytical descriptions do not contain any political statements, impacts, headlines and data descriptions are informative, neutral and objective or based on provable facts.

In cases of erroneous or deliberate misuse of statistical information, the CSB takes the necessary response measures. In case the erroneous or biased use of statistical data may pose a threat to the image of the CSB, the CSB is obliged to respond to it.

Accessibility and transparency

The statistics are published on the Official statistics portal and its database, making it available to the general public.

Statistics are published together with metadata, which facilitates correct interpretation of the data and meaningful comparisons. Metadata contains information about definitions of indicators, data sources, calculation methods.

The data are published in as much detail as possible and in as long time-series as possible, providing the greatest possible analytical potential of the data.

Errors spotted in the published statistics are corrected as soon as possible.

Timeliness and punctuality

Data on new official statistics indicators or data on new periods are published in accordance with a predefined and publicly available data dissemination calendar on the Official statistics portal, which specifies the date of publication.

Changes to a previously published data dissemination calendar are made as timely as possible by setting a new publication deadline.

Relevance to user needs

The tools used in dissemination of statistics are constantly being improved by understanding the needs of users and going into habits of using the tools. In the process of developing new tools, the user experience and needs are explored, which is further used to create interfaces and functionality of the tool.

The analysis of requests for statistical information and user feedback is used to assess the need to expand the range of indicators to be published in statistical databases and to obtain an opinion on the content published.

In order to ensure the dissemination of statistics in accordance with the user needs, seminars and meetings with data users are organized, where it is possible to present the available statistics to the CSB structural units and listen to the point of view of users.

Confidentiality and data protection of individual data

Prior to the publication of statistical information, measures are taken to ensure the protection of individual information provided by respondents. The publication or disclosure of data that may pose threat to privacy in any other way is prohibited.

The use of anonymised individual statistical information for scientific purposes is ensured, and requests for the use of information are evaluated to exclude unreasonable data requests and use of information for inappropriate purposes. In the process of preparation, transmission and monitoring of individual statistical data, the protection of individual information of respondents is ensured by applying appropriate data disclosure control methods.

2. Data dissemination calendar

2.1. Publication date and time

Statistical data are published on a predefined date and indicated in the data dissemination calendar at 13:00.

In accordance with the deadlines specified in the CSB work plan, data dissemination calendar is created and published on the Official statistics portal, which contains information on the planned publication of data in databases, planned press releases and publications.

The deadlines of the data dissemination plan are specified in the CSB work plan, which is developed in accordance with the QMS process “2.2. CSB work plan”.

2.2. Changes

Changes to a previously published statistics dissemination calendar are made as timely as possible by setting a new publication date. The public is informed of any changes to the dissemination calendar by publishing this information in the data dissemination calendar of the Official statistics portal.

Any changes to the data dissemination calendar are made by changing the work plan in accordance with the QMS process scheme “2.2.2. Changes to the CSB work plan”.

2.3. Access before the official publication time

Prior to the official publication time, a limited number of officials is granted an access to statistics to allow them time to analyse, understand and prepare their opinion on the data. Before providing such information, the CSB assesses the necessity and the benefit to the society, as well as concludes an agreement on data confidentiality.

The CSB agrees with the relevant state officials that they undertake not to disclose these data, the text of the press release, their opinion on the data, nor to indicate descriptively the trend that these data reflect before the press release is published.

The CSB may grant privileges to access data prior to press releases on such topics:

- Consumer price statistics,
- Producer price statistics,
- Gross Domestic Product,

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- Employment, wages and salaries,
- Industrial production output,
- Retail trade turnover,
- Foreign trade.

Officials who have been granted an access to the data prior to a press release undertake:

- not to disclose the data or the contents of the press release to third parties in any way before their official publication,
- not to express, directly or indirectly, their view on the data or the content of the press release prior to their official publication,
- not to try delaying the determined date and time of the press release,
- not to try making that the press release data or content is changed,
- use the data solely to prepare for journalists' questions about the socio-economic phenomenon or process covered in the relevant press release.

Privileges to access data prior to the publication of a press release are granted to:

- Ministry of Economics (3 officials).

The CSB sends a press release to officials who have the privilege to access the data before the press release via e-mail, which contains a reminder about the confidentiality of this information.

3. Statistical products, services and communication channels

3.1. CSB website

Current events on the activity of the CSB, information on CSB services, population and enterprises' surveys, a catalogue of official statistical forms, a catalogue of statistical classifications and other information related to the CSB are published on the CSB website.

3.2. Official statistics portal

Official statistics portal is the main dissemination channel for statistics prepared by the CSB. It's easy to use both on PC and mobile devices. The website is designed in two languages: Latvian and English, most of the information is translated into English.

In accordance with the user behaviour, the portal has both a content structure and a statistical data search engine. According to the needs of regular data users, the structure of the content should be stable and with as few changes as possible, which are made only for essential needs or needs of data users.

The performance of the statistics search engine can be improved by creating new global synonyms (e.g. salary, remuneration) that apply to the entire content of the website, or by adding keywords to the specific content (for example, keyword "local tourism" for the data table "Overnight domestic trips of Latvian residents by gender and age groups of travellers").

Statistics are published so that they are indexed by the most popular Internet search engine, Google Search.

3.3. Press releases

The purpose of the communication of CSB press release is to ensure coverage of statistics in the media, to raise awareness of statistics and available data, to promote publicity of the CSB in the media and social networks, to reach and activate new data users in social media.

The procedure of preparation and dissemination of press releases is specified in the QMS process scheme “7.1. Press release”.

3.4. Database

Data are published on the date indicated in the data dissemination calendar at 13:00. The data are published in as much detail as possible and in as long time-series as possible, which provides analytical potential of the data. In the Official statistics portal, the content framework or the minimum level of detail is determined by the “Official Statistics Programme”.

In the database of the Official statistics portal the CSB also publishes experimental statistics.

The data published in the database is available to users as open data, i.e., in a format that is convenient for re-use and further processing of the data, as well as providing machine-reading capabilities.

The procedure for supplementing the database with the new data is specified in the CSB quality management process scheme “7.3. Databases of the CSB”.

3.5. Descriptive metadata

The data are published together with the descriptive metadata, which facilitates correct interpretation of the data and meaningful comparisons. Metadata contains information about definitions of indicators, data sources, calculation methods, comparability of the data and any other information, which helps the data user to understand the data:

- Contacts (responsible authority and a person to whom additional questions can be addressed);
- Data description;
- Terms and definitions;
- Statistical unit;
- Statistical population;
- Comparability - geographical (information on where it is possible to learn comparable statistics of other countries on the relevant subject);
- Data source;
- Data collection;
- Data compilation.

Terms and definitions. Contains explanation of terms of indicators published in the table. All definitions of database indicators are also available in the section “Glossary of Terms” on the Official statistics portal, where the definitions are arranged in an alphabetical order and the required information can be found using the search engine.

3.6. Publications

All CSB publications (electronic versions) are placed on the Official statistics portal in accordance with the date specified in the data dissemination plan and are available free of charge.

The CSB also publishes a limited number of paper publications (for example, “Statistical Yearbook of Latvia”, “Latvia. Statistics in Brief” or a publication devoted to a specific subject), which can be used mainly as statistical dissemination materials in various forums, conferences and other face-to-face meetings with data users.

Information Section prepares a catalogue of publications, which contains information on the planned publications, and places it on the CSB website.

The procedure of preparation and dissemination of statistical publications is specified in the QMS process scheme 7.2. “Statistical publications”.

3.7. Data visualisations (infographics, maps, interactive tools)

3.7.1. Infographics and maps

In addition to the planned releases of official statistics, the CSB actively monitors what is happening in society and, as far as possible, promotes current statistical indicators with appropriate visualizations, which could supplement public discussions with fact-based arguments.

The prepared infographics and maps are published on the Official statistics portal, social networks and sent to the media.

3.7.2. Interactive visualisation tools

The CSB creates new, innovative products that promote data analysis, which allows to easily see what is common and different with the help of statistics, as well as to assess development trends in various topics that are relevant and interesting to society.

Interactive visualisation tools are developed by the Dissemination Solutions Section in cooperation with the Information Section and other CSB structural units.

3.8. Availability of individual data for scientific and teaching purposes

The CSB provides anonymized individual statistical information for research, scientific and teaching purposes.

Two types of anonymized files are distinguished according to the degree of anonymization: publicly available survey files and confidential data for scientific purposes.

3.8.1. Anonymized individual data for teaching

Anonymized individual data for teaching are generated using personal survey files. They are available to anyone on the open data portal. Due to strict anonymization, their analytical potential is low and they are mainly used in the learning process to learn various statistical methods. To ensure the confidentiality of individual information provided by respondents, identifiers are deleted or changed.

Files of anonymized individual data of surveys are prepared in CSV and SAV for SPSS format.

3.8.2. Anonymized individual data for research

The CSB can prepare confidential data to be used for scientific purposes, subject to the following preconditions: the use of the data has a research or scientific purpose; the CSB can ensure data protection; the data requester has confirmed ability to ensure data protection and disclosure control.

Based on the requested information, the CSB can release confidential data as a file for use at the applicant's premises or offer to use a remote access system.

The Official statistics portal publishes information on surveys, data of which are available for scientific use at the applicant's premises, as well as instructions on how to acquire these data (application forms, indicators, content of the contract) and description of the receipt procedure.

If the information requested is not on the survey list, the data protection and provision options are assessed by the Confidentiality board.

3.9. Cooperation with media

Cooperation with media is carried out by public relations managers of the CSB. This includes the dissemination of CSB press releases to the media, answering media questions (see also Section 3.8). Answers to user questions and specially prepared data), including providing comments on the television and radio, organizing press conferences, organizing interviews with CSB officials, etc.

The CSB press conferences are planned by the public relations manager and the decision on their organization is taken by the head of the CSB. Press conferences are convened on important economic or social data, such as Gross Domestic Product, current population of Latvia and migration data.

3.10. Answers to user questions and custom made data

3.10.1. Answers to questions

Communication Section receives information requests by e-mail, post, "Ask us" form on the Official statistics portal or by telephone.

Within its competence, the CSB also answers questions about data published by the Eurostat.

The CSB provides its services related to the provision and interpretation of statistics obtained within the framework of the official statistical information programme free of charge.

Advice and support in acquiring data is provided as soon as possible. Answers to questions about the data available on the CSB website and inquiries are prepared within 1-3 working days. If the preparation of information requires more work and is more time-consuming, the information requester is informed thereof.

The CSB Information Centre is opened upon the request of the data user and there it is possible to get acquainted with the historical publications of the CSB and publications of other statistical institutions and international organizations. The Information Centre has access to almost all statistical publications of Latvia for different periods – from the 20th-40th years of the 20th century, from the Soviet times, as well as the latest CSB publications are also available.

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The questions of journalists are answered by the public relations managers of the CSB in cooperation with the specialists of other structural units. Answers to journalists' questions are provided free of charge and within a time limit agreed with the journalists.

3.10.2. Custom made data

Using the data sources at its disposal, the CSB can prepare information that is not included in the Official Statistics Programme. Data preparation is a paid service, the payment is determined in accordance with the regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers "Price list of paid services of the CSB".

Custom made statistical information in cooperation with sections of the CSB is prepared within two weeks. In case of large and complex orders, the time may be longer if the data needs to be further processed. The customer is notified in advance.

Only those services are provided for a charge, for the performance of which the CSB needs to invest additional resources (various lists of enterprises, samples, inquiries). The recipient of the service covers only those costs of the service which are not covered within the framework of the Official Statistics Programme.

The procedure of answering user questions is specified in the CSB quality management process scheme "7.4. Processing requests for statistical information".

3.11. Social networks

Social networks provide short and focused communication and prompt response. The advantage of social media over traditional media is that there is no intermediary between the sender and the recipient of the message. Communication between the two parties is direct, immediate and interactive. When creating content, it should be taken into account that the language is different from statistical "working" language, etc.

In addition to its informative function, social networks also serve as a tool for discussion with data users. It provides prompt answers to the questions or comments of the followers. There is no response to unfounded comments about the CSB and/or employees of the institution.

The CSB has three active CSB social network profiles – two *Twitter* accounts @CSP_Latvija (~6 700 followers) and @CSB_Latvia (~3 250 followers) and profile on *Facebook* @csplatvija (~2 800 followers). Social network accounts are managed by the Communication Section.

4. Confidentiality of individual data

When obtaining statistical information on respondents, the CSB undertakes to use the data only for the purposes specified in the Statistics Law, as well as to protect them from unauthorized access and improper use. The commitment to ensure the confidentiality of the information provided by the respondents is not only a matter of legal and ethical nature, also public trust and functioning of the statistical system depends on it, thus the CSB assesses risks of disclosure of individual information before publishing the data.

The CSB ensures the confidentiality (non-disclosure) of summary information before the specified publication deadline, thus providing simultaneous access to all data users.

4.1. Ensuring confidentiality

During the process of compiling the data, the structural unit holding the data is responsible for ensuring confidentiality. In all publications, confidential data are replaced by a confidentiality mark.

If the customer has requested the preparation of CSB data and it is already concluded before the data processing that the data requested are confidential, the Communication Section informs the customer about the confidentiality of the data.

4.2. Confidentiality before the official publication date

Statistics are not published before the publication deadline (the date indicated in the data dissemination calendar).

For the first time the most important statistics are officially published in a press release at 13:00 on a predefined date in accordance with the press release calendar and preferably published simultaneously or as soon as possible in the CSB database. Prior to the publication deadline, the data shall not be disclosed, trends – described, but any conclusions – drawn from them.

5. Unscheduled data revisions and correction of errors detected

Unscheduled data revisions are performed in exceptional cases when the scope of the audit, according to the CSB experts, significantly affects the quality of other statistical data.

Correction of errors in the database. If errors are detected or a data user reports errors in the data, the responsible head of the structural unit is informed, who reviews the error and decides on further actions to correct the data and communicate with the data users.

Minor errors. Errors that do not significantly affect the use and interpretation of the data, such as an error in the rounding process. The error is corrected immediately in the database and data users are not notified.

Significant errors. Errors that significantly affect the further use of the data. The responsible structural unit decides on the impact of the error on the quality of the statistics and the follow-up action. Data users are informed about the correction of the data.

The procedure for correcting the errors detected is specified in the QMS process scheme “7.6. Errors in information published”.

6. Improvement of products, services and communication

6.1. Media monitoring

Every working day the CSB receives a media monitoring service, which provides information on the publicity of the CSB and officials of the institution, as well as the coverage of disseminated statistical data in the media – the printed national and regional press, Internet portals, television and radio channels. Thus, it is possible to monitor both the publicity of the institution and officials and the media coverage of the disseminated data and, if necessary, take corrective action – correct incorrectly

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published data or respond to negative publications if non-response may adversely affect the CSB image and/or reliability of the disseminated data.

According to media monitoring statistics, on average per month CSB data and/or officials of the institution are mentioned in 700–800 different media publications and news stories.

The Communication Section prepares an analysis of publicity in the media on a quarterly basis and sends it to the heads of structural units involved in the dissemination of statistics.

6.2. User Comments

The Communication Section receives comments and suggestions both by e-mail and social networks, as well as by telephone. The CSB uses social networks not only to convey its message, but also to monitor user comments on published statistics and to collect information on user opinions. If, after assessing the user suggestions or complaints, it is established that they are justified and the possible solution is feasible with the resources available to the CSB, the necessary changes are made.