



**STATISTICS DIRECTORATE  
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**Data Reporting from Member Countries to the OECD Assessment of Reporting Quality for Selected Statistics**

**OECD EXPERT GROUP ON STATISTICAL DATA AND METADATA EXCHANGE**

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## **DATA REPORTING FROM MEMBER COUNTRIES TO THE OECD ASSESSMENT OF REPORTING QUALITY FOR SELECTED STATISTICS**

1. This report is prepared at the request of the OECD High Level Group on Statistics. It contains a description of some of the problems related to data reporting by OECD Member countries, and shows, in a number of summary tables, whether the OECD Statistics Directorate considers the transmission by the Member country, for the given domain of statistics, satisfactory (“Yes”) or non-satisfactory (“No”). Some of the transmission may be satisfactory in substance but not in terms of delay (“Yes (delay)”). A few other remarks are given in some tables. This is when data for 2002 is not yet available in October 2003. Detailed tables are attached in separate appendices.
2. The report covers the following domains of statistical data collection:
  1. National accounts
  2. Trade statistics
  3. Price statistics
  4. Labour force statistics

### **1. National Accounts**

3. Regarding national accounts, the OECD would like Member countries to adopt the two following principles: (1) transmit to the OECD the data on the day of their publication on a national basis; (2) for European countries, send to the OECD the exact same data that is transmitted to Eurostat. While the second principle is largely, but not always, respected, it is fair to say that the first principle is largely not respected. It is important to stress that OECD databases are used by numerous economists (starting with OECD economists) as privileged sources to update their analytical and forecasting models. Delays in the transmission of the data are therefore costly for these national and international users.

4. The OECD adopts two different approaches to its acquisition of annual and quarterly data. In the case of *annual data* the OECD asks national statistical offices (NSOs) to complete a questionnaire and transmit the data to the OECD. In the case of *quarterly data* there is no OECD-wide standard questionnaire (although there is an EU quarterly standard questionnaire). Instead, the OECD adopts an ad hoc approach in which the data items obtained may differ from country to country, and they are either sent to the OECD or the OECD extracts them from the NSO’s website or output database. This difference in approach reflects two factors. First, annual data are generally much more comprehensive than quarterly data and there is a great deal of difference in the extent of country quarterly data. Second, it is imperative that the quarterly data are obtained very quickly. Given these differences it is best to consider the two frequencies separately.

#### ***Annual Data***

5. As shown in Table 1, there are numerous cases of missing data, even for very statistically developed countries. In many cases, the data exist at the national level but they are not transmitted to the OECD because countries have not completely developed the conversion table between their database format and the transmission format. In these cases, countries should complete these conversion tables. If this were

done, it would be possible to achieve the ideal of supplying all the available data required by the OECD on the day of publication.

6. In the short term, the priority should be put on the prompt transmission of institutional sector accounts and detailed general government accounts. A special effort would be welcome in 2004 regarding capital stock data and, most importantly, households' non-financial assets. Indeed, the international analysis of household net wealth is hampered by the absence of data on non-financial assets (dwellings) and dwelling land.

### ***Quarterly Data***

7. In principle, data should be transmitted in the agreed format on the day of publication or made accessible on the NSO's website or other output database that can be accessed by the OECD.

8. The common approach for EU countries is for them to send the OECD the EU questionnaire and a separate file containing additional data if available. Non-EU countries either send files to the OECD or the OECD accesses their databases to extract the data. Some of the NSOs that supply their quarterly data to the OECD (as opposed to the OECD accessing their website) sometimes fail to do so at the appropriate time. Also, quite often NSOs change the format of the data on the spreadsheets they supply without warning. Therefore, it would be greatly appreciated if data sent to the OECD were sent on the day of publication and the OECD were given reasonable warning of any format changes. The alternative is for NSOs to make their quarterly national accounts available on their websites or output databases as part of their publication process.

9. One of the drawbacks of the OECD's quarterly data collection strategy is that there may be quarterly data published that the OECD requires but is unaware of. Essentially, the OECD would like to obtain all available quarterly national accounts data, except regional data. The OECD will send each NSO, under separate cover, a word file listing its holdings of that country's quarterly national accounts. Could each NSO please compare this list with what it is able to release and advise the OECD of any gaps that could be filled?

10. In 2004, we would like efforts to be made regarding Quarterly National Accounts prompt transmission by Greece, Portugal and Slovakia.

### ***Metadata***

11. The OECD also releases metadata relating to countries' national accounts. While the OECD endeavours to ensure that this information is as accurate and as current as possible, this is not always easy to do. It would be a great help if NSOs could check the metadata released by the OECD from time to time and, in particular, advise the OECD when changes are going to be needed.

**Table 1. National Accounts, by domain**

Yes = satisfactory, Yes (delay) = satisfactory on substance but delay in transmission, No = not satisfactory

	Quarterly accounts	Annual Accounts					
	GDP and Counterparts	Major breakdown of GDP	Detailed breakdown of GDP	Institutional Sector Accounts	General Government Accounts	Capital Stock and Balance Sheets	Financial Accounts
Australia	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes
Austria	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (delay)
Belgium	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Canada	Yes	Yes	Yes (delay)	No	No	No	Yes
Czech republic	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Denmark	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (delay)	Yes	No	Yes (delay)
Finland	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (delay)
France	Yes	Yes	Yes (delay)	Yes	Yes	Yes (delay)	Yes
Germany	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (delay)	Yes (delay)	Yes	Yes (delay)
Greece	No	Yes	Yes (delay)	Yes (delay)	Yes (delay, no sub-sectors)	No	No
Hungary	Yes	Yes (delay)	Yes (delay)	No	No	No	Yes
Iceland	Yes	Yes	Yes (delay)	No	Yes (delay, no sub-sectors)	No	No
Ireland	Yes	Yes	Yes (delay)	No	Yes (delay, no sub-sectors)	No	No
Italy	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (delay)	Yes (delay, no sub-sectors)	Yes	Yes (delay)
Japan	Yes	Yes (delay)	Yes (delay)	Yes (delay)	Yes (no sub-sectors)	No	Yes but no consolidation
Korea	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (delay)	No	Yes (delay)	Yes
Luxemburg	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Mexico	Yes	Yes (delay)	Yes (delay)	Yes (delay)	Yes (delay, no sub-sectors)	No	No (only transactions)

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	Quarterly accounts	Annual Accounts					
	GDP and Counterparts	Major breakdown of GDP	Detailed breakdown of GDP	Institutional Sector Accounts	General Government Accounts	Capital Stock and Balance Sheets	Financial Accounts
Netherlands	Yes	Yes	Yes (delay)	Yes (delay)	Yes (no sub-sectors)	No	Yes (delay)
New Zealand	Yes	Yes	Yes (delay)	No	No	No	No
Norway	Yes	Yes	Yes (important delay)	Yes (delay)	No	No	Yes (delay)
Poland	Yes	Yes (delay)	Yes (delay)	No	No	No	Yes (delay)
Portugal	Yes (delay)	Yes	Yes (delay)	Yes (delay)	Yes (delay, no sub-sectors)	No	Yes (delay)
Slovakia	No	Yes (delay)	Yes (delay)	No	No	No	No (important delay)
Spain	Yes	Yes	Yes (delay)	Yes (delay)	Yes (delay)	No	Yes
Sweden	Yes	Yes	Yes (delay)	Yes (delay)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Switzerland	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
Turkey	Yes (delay)	No	No	No	No	No	No
United Kingdom	Yes	Yes	Yes (delay)	Yes (delay)	Yes	No	Yes but no consolidation
United States	Yes	Yes	Yes (delay)	No	No	No	Yes

## 2. Trade Statistics

### *Monthly Data*

12. Monthly trade data is either directly received by email (or paper in one case) and tailored to our needs; or directly accessed and downloaded from Internet. Significant improvements have been implemented regarding our efforts towards earlier availability. Further effort is required in 2004.

13. The main reporting problems occur in the case of Greece (see table). The problems relating to Germany and Belgium are quite different from this and are expected to be resolved this year.

### *Annual Data*

14. Overall, the situation with respect to the provision of yearly merchandise trade data is satisfactory. In the framework of the shared database with UNSD, the OECD will send out another joint letter to countries asking them (again) for earliest delivery to OECD (according to stated publication dates), and will inform them of a new standard follow-up procedure to be applied as of this year to ensure earliest delivery or catching up with given deadlines.

**Table 2. Trade Statistics**

	Monthly trade statistics			Yearly trade statistics
	Monthly data by partner country	Trade data by SITC Sections	Indices	
Australia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Austria	Yes	Yes	Yes (delay once per year)	Yes
Belgium	Yes (delay)	Yes (internet)	Yes (internet)	No (not received)
Canada	Yes	Yes	Yes (internet)	Yes
Switzerland	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Czech Republic	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (delay)
Germany	Yes	Yes (paper)	Yes (paper)	No (no HS data)
Denmark	Yes	Yes	Yes (internet)	Yes
Spain	Yes (internet)	Yes (internet)	Yes (internet)	Yes (delay)
Finland	Yes	Yes	Yes (internet)	Yes
France	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
United Kingdom	Yes (internet)	Yes (internet)	Yes	Yes
Greece	No	No data	No data	No
Hungary	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ireland	Yes (delay)	Yes (internet)	Yes (internet)	Yes
Iceland	Yes		No data	Yes
Italy	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Japan	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Korea	Yes (internet)	Yes (internet)	Yes (internet)	No (not received)
Luxembourg	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mexico	Yes (internet but longer)	NO DATA	Yes (internet)	Yes

	Monthly trade statistics			Yearly trade statistics
	Monthly data by partner country	Trade data by SITC Sections	Indices	
Netherlands	Yes	Yes	NO DATA	Yes
Norway	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
New Zealand	Yes (recent updates not regular)	Yes (recent updates not regular)	Yes	Yes
Poland	Yes	Yes	Yes (delay)	Yes
Portugal	Yes	Yes	NO DATA	Yes (delay)
Slovak Republic	Yes	Yes	Yes (delay once per year)	Yes (delay)
Sweden	Yes (internet)	Yes (internet)	Yes	Yes
Turkey	Yes (delay)	Yes (delay)	Yes (internet)	Yes
United States	Yes (delay)	Yes (delay)	Yes	Yes

Note: Yes = satisfactory, Yes (delay) = satisfactory on substance but delay in transmission,

Yes (Internet) = satisfactory, data retrieved by OECD from national web site, No = not satisfactory

### 3. Price Statistics

15. Price statistics for publication in the OECD's *Main Economic Indicators* (MEI), other statistical outputs and for use within the OECD are obtained from direct access to national databases in 18 countries and from files sent by 13 countries; within these 13 countries some data are available from press releases published on the NSO's websites.



**Table 3. Price Statistics**

Country	Source	Consumer prices	Producer prices	Construction prices
Australia	NSO	Yes	Yes	n.a.
Austria	NSO	Yes	Yes	Yes
Belgium	C.B.	Yes	Yes	n.a.
Canada	NSO	Yes	Yes	n.a.
Czech republic	NSO	Yes (minor delay)	Yes (minor delay)	n.a.
Denmark	NSO	Yes	Yes	Yes
Finland	NSO	Yes	Yes	Yes
France	NSO	Yes	Yes	Yes
Germany	NSO	Yes	Yes	Yes
Greece	NSO	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hungary	NSO	Yes	Yes	n.a.
Iceland	NSO	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ireland	NSO	Yes	Yes	Yes
Italy	NSO	Yes	Yes	Yes
Japan	NSO for CPI and C. B. for PPI	Yes (irregular delay)	Yes (irregular delay)	n.a.
Korea	NSO	Yes	Yes	n.a.
Luxembourg	NSO	Yes	Yes	n.a.
Mexico	NSO	Yes	Yes	Yes
Netherlands	NSO	Yes	Yes	Yes
New Zealand	NSO	Yes	Yes	n.a.
Norway	NSO	Yes	Yes	Yes
Poland	NSO	Yes	Yes	n.a.
Portugal	NSO	Yes	Yes	Yes
Slovak republic	NSO	Yes	Yes	n.a.
Spain	C. B. & Ministry for Economy	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sweden	NSO	Yes	Yes	Yes
Switzerland	NSO	Yes	Yes	n.a.
Turkey	NSO	Yes	Yes	Yes
United Kingdom	NSO	Yes	Yes	n.a.
United States	NSO	Yes	Yes	Yes
Euro area	Eurostat	Yes	Yes	n.a.

Note: Yes = satisfactory, Yes (delay) = satisfactory on substance but delay in transmission, Yes (substance) = satisfactory on delay but two flows of data transmission for a single source, no = not satisfactory, n.a. = not applicable.

#### 4. Labour Force Statistics

16. Labour force statistics are collected by the OECD for dissemination to internal and external users in three databases, monthly MEI, *Quarterly Labour Force Statistics* (QLFS) and annual *Labour Force Statistics* (ALFS). As previously reported to the High Level Group, data for the MEI and QLFS are mainly obtained by the OECD via on-line access to national databases and time series on-line databases through

websites and by national transmission of files to the OECD. On-line access to national databases and time series on-line through websites are the preferred access mechanism and considerable effort has been made over the last two years to extend this means of our obtaining national data. The OECD encourages all member countries to locate as much data as possible on such databases. The Organisation is also working with Eurostat on a very detailed evaluation to assess the feasibility of the co-ordinated collection of EU short-term statistics in a way that will still address the needs of users for both organizations. Member country transmission performance is summarized in Table 4 below.

17. Data for the ALFS publication are primarily collected in an Excel file questionnaire prepared by the Statistics Directorate and sent jointly by the Directorate for Employment, Labour and Social Affairs (DELSA) and the Statistics Directorate around the end of January each year. The entire set of “questionnaires” comprises around 12 Excel files, most of which collect detailed data required by DELSA which are not published in ALFS. Around 80% of Member countries generally forward their ALFS information either by the due date or soon thereafter and speed of transmission is generally not of major concern. However, considerable OECD resources are used in obtaining information where data are incomplete and more intensive action with the agencies concerned is envisaged in 2004.

Table 4. Labour Force Statistics

Country	Main Economic Indicators		Quarterly labor force statistics		Annual labour force statistics	
	Source	Assessment	Source	Assessment	Source	Assessment
Australia	NSO	Yes	NSO	Yes	NSO	Yes
Austria	WIFO	Yes	NSO	Yes	NSO	Yes
Belgium	NSO/CB	Yes	n.a.	n.a.	NSO	No (a)
Canada	NSO	DA, Yes	NSO	DA, Yes	NSO	Yes
Czech Rep.	NSO	Yes	NSO	Yes	NSO	Yes
Denmark	NSO	DA, Yes	NSO	Yes	NSO	Yes
Finland	NSO	DA, Yes	NSO	Yes	NSO	Yes
France	NSO	DA	NSO	Yes	NSO	Yes
Germany	NSO & C.B.	DA, Yes	NSO	Yes	NSO	Yes
Greece	NSO	NO (b)	n.a.	n.a.	NSO	Yes
Hungary	NSO	Yes	NSO	Yes	NSO	Yes
Iceland	NSO & C.B.	Yes	n.a.	n.a.	NSO	Yes
Ireland	NSO	DA, Yes	NSO	DA, Yes	NSO	Yes
Italy	NSO	Yes	NSO	Yes	NSO	Yes
Japan	NSO & DRI	Yes	NSO	Yes	NSO	Yes
Korea	NSO	Yes	NSO	Yes	NSO	Yes
Luxembourg	NSO	Yes	n.a.	n.a.	NSO	Yes
Mexico	NSO	DA	n.a.	n.a.	NSO	Yes
Netherlands	NSO	DA, Yes	n.a.	n.a.	NSO	Yes
New Zealand	NSO	DA, Yes	NSO	Yes	NSO	Yes
Norway	NSO	DA, Yes	NSO	Yes	NSO	Yes
Poland	NSO	Yes	NSO	Yes	NSO	Yes
Portugal	NSO & C.B.	Yes (Delay)(c)	NSO	Yes	NSO	Yes
Slovak Rep.	NSO	Yes	NSO	Yes	NSO	Yes
Spain	MIN & C.B.	DA, Yes	MIN	Yes	NSO	Yes
Sweden	NSO	DA, Yes	NSO	Yes	NSO	Yes
Switzerland	NSO & MIN	Yes	NSO	Yes	NSO	Yes
Turkey	NSO	Yes	n.a.	n.a.	NSO	No (d)
UK	NSO	DA, Yes	NSO	Yes	NSO	Yes
US	NSO & DRI	DA, Yes	NSO & DRI	Yes DA	NSO	Yes

Note:

**Yes** = satisfactory

**Yes (delay)** = satisfactory on substance but delay in transmission

**Yes (substance)** = satisfactory on delay but two flows of data transmission for a single source

**No** = not satisfactory

**n.a.** = not applicable

**D.A.** Yes = Direct access mainly by OECD to national database or through internet and satisfactory on substance

(a) ALFS data for Belgium are not from Labor Force Survey

(b) MEI Greece: OECD has recently re-established a suitable contact in the NSO and the situation is expected to improve in the near future.

(c) MEI Portugal: lack of timeliness previously mentioned to NSO

(d) ALFS Turkey: no reply in 2003