REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS

STATISTICAL SERVICE

REVISION POLICY

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1. INTRODUCTION

Revisions are broadly defined as any change in a value of a statistic released to the public. In general, revisions may occur due to one or a combination of the following: a) availability of new data for the reporting period, b) adjustments and methodological changes are applied, c) new national or European regulations are applied and d) errors in data sources and in the compilation of statistics are detected.

Revisions are a normal procedure associated with the production of statistics with the goal of improving the quality of published data. A revision policy defines the framework and rules to be followed when revising data, thus enabling the standardisation of the relevant procedures. This, in turn, promotes transparency, an important aspect to users, as it enables them to be informed appropriately on revisions and relevant information, making it easier for them to incorporate revised data into their statistical analysis. Consequently, confidence among users regarding published statistics is enhanced.

For this reason, a revision policy is an important aspect of good governance in official statistics. Acknowledging this, the European Statistics Code of Practice[1] refers to revisions in 3 out of its 16 principles, namely, principles 6 "Impartiality and Objectivity", 8 "Appropriate Statistical Procedures" and 12 "Accuracy and Reliability" and requires that "revisions follow standard, well-established and transparent procedures".

This document provides the Revision Policy of the Statistical Service of Cyprus (CYSTAT), describing the general rules and principles governing the procedure of revising data published by CYSTAT. The policy is based on the guidelines of the European Statistical System (ESS) regarding revision policies for principal European economic indicators[2], also taking into account the Quality Assurance Framework of the ESS[3] and the European Statistics Code of Practice. The policy is of a general nature, applicable to revisions in all statistical domains. Domain specific policies are described in the relevant quality reports.

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[1] Eurostat, *European Statistics Code of Practice,* 2017
https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-catalogues/-/ks-02-18-142
[2]Eurostat, *ESS guidelines on revision policy for PEEIs,* 2013
http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/en/web/products-manuals-and-guidelines/-/KS-RA-13-016
[3] Eurostat, *The Quality Assurance Framework of the European Statistical System (ESS QAF),* version 2.0
https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/64157/4392716/ESS-QAF-V1-2final.pdf/bbf5970c-1adf-46c8-afc3-58ce177a0646

2. TYPOLOGY OF REVISIONS

Revisions can be classified as follows:

2.1. Scheduled revisions

Regular revisions (routine revisions):

Accuracy and timeliness are two important quality factors of official statistics. During the production process there is a need to balance the timeliness aspect against the accuracy aspect. For this reason, the need to produce timely statistics leads to the dissemination of provisional results, which are to be revised at least once, when new information becomes available, in order to improve the accuracy of the statistics.

These revisions to published data, classified as routine or regular revisions, are inherent to the regular data production process and they occur mainly due to the incorporation of new data in the production process.

Major revisions (non-regular revisions):

These are changes in published data, often substantial, due to one or more of the following reasons:

- Availability of a new structural source that is only collected at long intervals (e.g. census of population).
- An update of the base year and the weights of an index series.
- Methodological changes such as changes in concepts, definitions and/or classifications used to produce the data.
- New legal acts entering into force.

2.2. Non-scheduled revisions (extraordinary revisions)

These extraordinary revisions are by definition non-scheduled and they arise from unforeseeable events, such as errors either from the data provider or errors during compilation.

3. PRINCIPLES

The following principles govern all procedures relevant to the revision of statistical results released by CYSTAT.

3.1. General principles

Principle 1 - General and domain specific revision policies should be stable over time and publicly available.

To this end:

a. CYSTAT publishes its Revision Policy on its web portal, containing the definition of different types of revisions and the rules applied for each type, so that they are accessible to users.

b. The Revision Policy is in accordance with the Dissemination Policy of CYSTAT[4], in terms of the principles regulating the dissemination of statistical data and the procedures followed when dealing with errors.

c. Domain specific revision policies in CYSTAT are compliant with the general revision policy.

d. Domain specific revision policies are incorporated in the relevant quality reports (SIMS/ESMS/ESQRS structure), published on CYSTAT's and/or Eurostat's website.

e. Domain specific revision policies are kept stable over time. Any changes to such policies are pre-announced, well-documented and communicated to users appropriately.

Principle 2 - Qualitative and quantitative information on revisions should be communicated to users.

To this end:

a. CYSTAT maintains and releases a revision calendar for scheduled revisions on its web portal, so that users are informed in advance when revised data are released.

b. When published statistical data are provisional, this is indicated both in text and in relevant tables.

c. When revised data are disseminated by CYSTAT, they are appropriately flagged both in text and in relevant tables and they are accompanied by explanatory notes, whenever the revisions are not regular.

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[4] CYSTAT, *Dissemination Policy,* 2022
https://www.cystat.gov.cy/en/StaticPage?id=1064

d. When the revisions are major, non-regular or non-scheduled, the explanatory notes contain information explaining the reasons for revising the data and, where relevant, new methodologies or new sources.

e. CYSTAT carries out regular revision analysis at statistical domain level, in order to assess and improve the quality of provisional figures published and the overall revisions procedure.

3.2. Principles by category of revision

Regular revisions (routine revisions)
Principle 3 - Routine revisions should be defined and disseminated in the framework of domain specific policies and a revision calendar updated accordingly on a regular basis, aiming to improve the quality of the statistical product.

To this end:

a. Routine revisions are carried out by CYSTAT in order to improve disseminated provisional figures, up to the time that all data considered necessary for the calculation of a stable value for the published statistic are available.

b. Routine revisions follow a domain specific revision policy. Choices regarding the revisions of seasonally adjusted data are in line with the ESS guidelines on seasonal adjustment[5].

c. Routine revisions are made in a way that important information is published as promptly as possible, while at the same time keeping the number of such revisions to the minimum over a given period of time.

d. Routine revisions are pre-announced and are included in CYSTAT's revision calendar, available on its web portal.

e. Routine revisions for infra-annual statistics are backwards implemented for only a few periods at each release. Longer revisions are implemented less frequently.

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[5] Eurostat, *ESS Guidelines on Seasonal Adjustment,* 2015
http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/3859598/6830795/KS-GQ-15-001-EN-N.pdf/d8f1e5f5-251b-4a69-93e3-079031b74bd3

Major revisions (non-regular revisions)
Principle 4 – Major revisions should only take place in larger intervals. They should be pre-announced, backwards implemented to the greatest extent possible and coordinated across statistical domains.

To this end:

a. Major revisions only take place between long periods of time (usually 5 to 10 years).

b. Major revisions are pre-announced and are included in CYSTAT's revision calendar, available on its web portal.

c. Major revisions are used, to the greatest extent possible, as a way to introduce new statistical sources, changes to the conceptual framework and improvements in methodology.

d. Major revisions are backwards implemented for the complete time-series or up to the point where it is feasible.

e. Major revisions are coordinated across statistical domains.

f. Major revisions are well documented and made public, with an explanation of the reasons for the revision.

Non-scheduled revisions (extraordinary revisions)
Principle 5 – Non-scheduled revisions should be restricted to cases of errors and unforeseeable events occurring in the production process. Corrections should be released immediately without waiting for scheduled revisions. They should be accompanied by appropriate explanations.

To this end:

a. CYSTAT assesses the impact of errors or other unexpected events on data before revising.

b. Extraordinary/non-scheduled revisions are avoided as much as possible.

c. Extraordinary/non-scheduled revisions are made public without delay, with all the necessary explanations.

d. In cases of error detections, the procedure for error treatment is followed, as described in CYSTAT's Dissemination Policy.