

ADULT EDUCATION SURVEY (AES) - 2016

NATIONAL REFERENCE METADATA IN ESS STANDARD FOR QUALITY REPORTS STRUCTURE (ESQRS)

CONCEPT 1 – CONTACT

Sub-concept 1.1 – Contact Organisation

National Statistics Office Malta

Sub-concept 1.2 – Contact Organisation Unit

Tourism, Education and Information Society Statistics Unit

Sub-concept 1.5 – Contact mail address

National Statistics Office (NSO),
Lascaris, Valletta,
VLT 2000, Malta.

CONCEPT 2 – STATISTICAL PRESENTATION

Sub-concept 2.1 – Data description

The Adult Education Survey (AES) covers adults' participation in education and training (formal - FED, non-formal - NFE and informal learning - INF). The 2016 AES focuses on people aged 25-64. The reference period for the participation in education and training is the twelve months prior to the interview.

Information available from the AES is grouped around the following topics:

- Participation in formal education, non-formal education and training and informal learning
- Volume of instruction hours
- Characteristics of the learning activities
- Reasons for participating
- Obstacles to participation
- Access to information on learning possibilities and guidance
- Employer financing and costs of learning
- Self-reported language skills

For further information see the 2016 AES legislation (<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/education-and-training/legislation>) and the 2016 AES implementation manual (<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/education-and-training/methodology>)

Sub-concept 2.2 – Classification System

- Classification of Learning Activities (CLA, 2016 edition)
- International Standard Classification of Education 2011 (ISCED 2011)
- Classification of Occupations 2008 (ISCO 08)
- Classification of economic activities Rev. 2 (NACE Rev. 2)

Sub-concept 2.3 - Coverage – Sector

AES covers all economic sectors.

Sub-concept 2.4 - Statistical concepts and definitions

Definitions as well as the list of variables covered are available in the 2016 AES implementation manual (<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/education-and-training/methodology>).

Sub-concept 2.5 - Statistical unit

There were no deviations from the definition of statistical unit as per guidelines.

Sub-concept 2.6 - Statistical population

The target population applied followed the set guidelines, with no deviations.

Sub-concept 2.7 - Reference area

No geographical deviations present.

Sub-concept 2.8 – Coverage – Time

AES 2009: 17/04/2009 - 24/04/2009;
AES 2012: 02/05/2012 - 30/07/2012;
AES 2016: 19/10/2016 - 07/12/2016.

Sub-concept 2.9 – Base Period

The previous year, as from date of interview (i.e. 2016).

CONCEPT 3 – STATISTICAL PROCESSING

Sub-concept 3.1 – Source data

- 1) The Population Register maintained by NSO by a specific Unit;
- 2) Simple random sampling of households;
- 3) The projected population according to sex and age-group categories was used as a target population for weighting;

Sub-concept 3.2 – Frequency of Data Collection

No difference from the established 5-year cycle.

Sub-concept 3.3 – Data Collection

Refer to concept 1.5 of the [Adult Education Survey Report](#).

Sub-concept 3.4 - Data Validation

All questionnaires were entered as the interview took place, thus minimising data entry errors at later stages.

Data entry programme incorporated various checks and warning/error producing systems in order to further minimise data entry error and validation of data.

Audits were also conducted.

Sub-concept 3.5 - Data Compilation

From the data entry programme, an extract of the collected data was made and basic data analysis following the rules established in the manuals was made.

Any queries with the data was made at this step, while additional imputations were tagged for later analysis.

Sub-concept 3.6 – Adjustment

Imputations based on similar information from other sources (e.g. LFS, Population, Education) were compared to the corresponding data, where imputation was made based on this information.

CONCEPT 4 – QUALITY MANAGEMENT

Sub-concept 4.1 – Quality Assurance

Audits and validations on the collected data were made by trained technical staff, at times also involving directly the households.

Sub-concept 4.2 – Quality Management - Assessment

Overall, the survey output was of good quality. Whenever some variables provided suspect of over/under-reporting, this was treated through imputation methods which were checked against biases.

Sampled audits were also conducted when suspicion of misinterpretation of questions during collection were made.

CONCEPT 5 – RELEVANCE

Sub-concept 5.1. Relevance - User Needs

The list of National users include; Institutions, Ministries, Governmental Departments, Media, Enterprises, Researcher and Students.

Sub-concept 5.2. Relevance - User Satisfaction

The latest measure available was a User Satisfaction Survey conducted in 2014, in which the Unit responsible for AES data showed to fulfil users' expectations with respect to timeliness, usefulness and quality.

Sub-concept 5.3 - Completeness

All statistics stipulated by the regulation have been collected in this survey. This way, NSO ensured that all European and National users' needs are met.

Sub-concept 5.3.1. Data completeness – Rate

100%.

CONCEPT 6 – ACCURACY AND RELIABILITY

Sub-concept 6.1 - Accuracy - overall

The below measures were taken in order to increase results' accuracy as much as possible:

- Pilot testing the questionnaire
- Briefing of interviewers
- Avoidance of proxy interviews
- Use of software to minimise data entry errors
- Human errors related to recall biases are reduced as data collected reports to the most recent educational activities

Sub-concept 6.2 - Sampling error

Refer to concept 1.9 of the [Adult Education Survey Report](#).

Sub-concept 6.2.1. Sampling error – Indicators

Refer to concept 1.9 of the [Adult Education Survey Report](#).

Sub-concept 6.3 - Non-sampling error

Every effort is made to reduce the following non-sampling errors:

1. Interviewers' bias
2. Recall bias
3. Data entry errors
4. Response error (e.g. misinterpretation of questions, etc.)

Sub-concept 6.3.1 - Coverage error

The NSO makes regular updates of its household and individuals register, which in turn is used as the sampling frame of this survey. A time lag however still exists between these updates and the time when the sampling actually takes place.

Furthermore, no amount of updating will ultimately eliminate all biases. In many cases, these biases relate to under coverage problems which are generally attributed to population sub-groups (e.g. migrants, new-formed households, etc.)

Sub-concept 6.3.1.1 - Coverage error - Rate

N/A.

Sub-concept 6.3.1.2. Common Units – Proportion

N/A.

Sub-concept 6.3.2 - Measurement Error

Every survey has a potential source for measurement errors when recoding data into numerical format. Such errors are kept to a minimum by means of careful questionnaire design and providing thorough training for interviewers and processing staff.

Sub-concept 6.3.3 - Non-response Error

No high-level of item non-response which exceeds the 10% mark was seen, especially in core and key variables.
Certain sensitive questions relating to expenditure and costs were re-validated in order to minimise the risk of under-reporting.

Sub-concept 6.3.3.1 - Unit non-response – Rate

N/A.

Sub-concept 6.3.3.2 - Item non-response - Rate

N/A.

Sub-concept 6.3.4 - Processing error

The main issues with regards to processing errors were that of auditing of data entry in order to minimise coding errors. While analysing, tools and imputation methods used were chosen such that past information (whenever available, even from other sources) was kept relevant and not create any biases. Additional coherence checks with other statistical sources were also made.

Sub-concept 6.3.4.1 - Imputation – Rate

N/A.

Sub-concept 6.3.5 - Model assumption error

N/A.

Sub-concept 6.4 - Seasonal adjustment

N/A.

Sub-concept 6.5 - Data revision – Policy

N/A.

Sub-concept 6.6 - Data revision – Practice

N/A.

Sub-concept 6.6.1. Data revision - Average size

N/A.

CONCEPT 7 – TIMELINESS AND PUNCTUALITY

Sub-concept 7.1 – Timeliness

The reference period for the 2016 AES was the 12 months period prior to the interview.

Sub-concept 7.1.1. Time lag - First Result

Date of publication is not yet available.

Sub-concept 7.1.2 - Time lag - Final Result

Date of publication is not yet available.

Sub-concept 7.2. Punctuality

N/A.

Sub-concept 7.2.1. Punctuality - Delivery and Publication

N/A.

CONCEPT 8 – COHERENCE AND COMPARABILITY

Sub-concept 8.1 - Comparability - Geographical

The AES manual is adhered to for the whole procedure and this enables geographical comparability among EU member states, OECD members and the EFTA countries.

Sub-concept 8.1.1. Asymmetry for mirror flow statistics – Coefficient

N/A.

Sub-concept 8.2. Comparability - Over Time

Main 2016 AES results are comparable with previous cycles.

Sub-concept 8.2.1 - Length of comparable time series

The AES has so far been conducted in 2007, 2011 and 2016. The next AES will occur in 5 years' time.

Sub-concept 8.3. Coherence - Cross domain

Comparison of similar indicators between AES and other sources was made. However, discrepancies between their definitions have to be kept in mind.

Sub-concept 8.4. Coherence – Sub-annual and annual statistics

N/A.

Sub-concept 8.5. Coherence - National Accounts

N/A.

Sub-concept 8.6. Coherence - Internal

N/A.

CONCEPT 9 – ACCESSIBILITY AND CLARITY

Sub-concept 9.1. Dissemination format - News release

Usual practice is that of disseminating information through a News Release. However, for AES 2016, a scheduled slot has not yet been provided in the NSO calendar.

Sub-concept 9.2. Dissemination format - Publications

Dissemination of results through a News Release is planned instead.

Sub-concept 9.3. Dissemination format - Online Database

Excluding Eurostat online database, no other online database is currently available for publication of AES results.

Sub-concept 9.3.1. Data tables – Consultations

N/A.

Sub-concept 9.4. Dissemination format - Microdata access

N/A.

Sub-concept 9.5. Dissemination format – Other

N/A.

Sub-concept 9.6. Documentation on methodology

Reference is made to AES manual and other related documentation provided by Eurostat. The methodological techniques undertaken for this survey are also explained in the news release which will be published by the NSO.

Sub-concept 9.7. Quality management – Documentation

N/A.

Sub-concept 9.7.1. Metadata completeness – Rate

N/A.

Sub-concept 9.7.2. Metadata – Consultations

N/A.

CONCEPT 10 – COST AND BURDEN

Two full-time statisticians are involved in the collection of AES data, while one full-time statistician carried out the analysis of results. Other major costs associated with this survey mainly included payments to interviewers. Burden on respondents was kept as low as possible in an effort to ensure that correct and reliable data was collected.

CONCEPT 11 - CONFIDENTIALITY

Sub-concept 11.1 – Confidentiality - Policy

Confidentiality is one of the major principles guiding the activities of the NSO. Article 40 of the MSA Act stipulates the restrictions on the use of information and in Article 41, the prohibition of disclosure of information. Furthermore, Section IX of the same Act lays down the measures to be taken in cases of unlawful exercise of any officer of statistics regarding confidentiality. In addition, the NSO has always operated under the strict Data Protection Act of 2000, which seeks to protect individuals against the violations of their privacy by processing personal data.

Sub-concept 11.2 - Confidentiality - Data Treatment

Data on AES is only published at the discretion of the Office. If disseminated, the NSO guarantees confidentiality of data by publishing only aggregated and un-identifiable data.

Furthermore, in order to avoid publication of figures which are statistically unreliable, NSO applies the

(:) flag for estimates with less than 20 unweighted counts; and

(u) for estimates having between 20-50 responding counts.

CONCEPT 12 – COMMENT

[AES 2016 Questionnaire](#).