

MIGRATION STATISTICS - 2020

NATIONAL REFERENCE METADATA IN SINGLE INTEGRATED METADATA STRUCTURE (SIMS)

CONCEPT 1 - CONTACT

Sub-Concept 1.1: Contact organisation

National Statistics Office (NSO)

Sub-Concept 1.2: Contact organisation unit

Population, Migration and Crime Statistics Unit

Sub-Concept 1.3: Contact name

Ms. Dorothy Galea Gauci

Sub-Concept 1.4: Contact person function

Head of Unit

Sub-Concept 1.5: Contact mail address

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

Sub-Concept 1.6: Contact e-mail address

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Sub-Concept 1.7: Contact phone number

+356 2599 7854

CONCEPT 2 – METADATA UPDATE

Sub-Concept 2.1: Metadata last certified

12th March 2021.

Sub-Concept 2.2: Metadata last posted

23rd March 2021.

Sub-Concept 2.3: Metadata last update

23rd March 2021.

CONCEPT 3 – STATISTICAL PRESENTATION

Sub-Concept 3.1: Data description

This domain comprises data compilation of statistics on international migration, as stipulated by Article 3 of the [European Regulation \(EC\) 862/2007](#). Data that is compiled by the NSO on annual basis entails statistics on:

- Immigrants establishing usual residence in Malta during the reference year;
- Emigrants moving from Malta during the reference year;
- Persons having their usual residence in Malta by the end of reference period.

These data are disaggregated by sex, age, citizenship group, country of birth group, and where applicable, previous/next country group of residence.

This work is carried out by NSO in collaboration with other Government Entities who provide access to administrative records for the compilation of these statistics. These include: The Office of the Refugee Commissioner, JobsPlus, the Department for Expatriates and Citizenship Affairs and the Public Registry. All migration statistics are based on harmonised methods stipulated by the Regulation, in order to ensure comparability of results across participating countries. The regulation also stipulates time frames within which this data must be transmitted to Eurostat.

A large part of this data are estimated basing on administrative registers derived from different sources. Whenever this data are not available, the NSO uses auxiliary information like survey estimates or mathematical models to estimate relevant data components.

Sub-Concept 3.2: Classification system

The regional breakdown used by the NSO is according to the [Commission Regulation \(EU\) No. 31/2011](#) amending annexes to [Regulation \(EC\) No. 1059/2003](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of a common classification of territorial units for statistics ([NUTS](#)).

The local administrative units, abbreviated as [LAUs](#), form a system for dividing up the economic territory of the European Union (EU) for the purpose of statistics at local level. They have been set up by Eurostat and they are compatible with NUTS. The LAU classification is equivalent to the classification of all Maltese localities into six districts by Malta Geographic Codes (MGC).

At local level, two levels of LAU have been defined:

- The upper level (LAU1, formerly NUTS level 4)
- The lower level (LAU2, formerly NUTS level 5)

Sub-Concept 3.3: Sector coverage

Usually resident population.

Sub-Concept 3.4: Statistical concepts and definitions

Common definitions:

1. Usually resident population- means all persons having usual residence in a country at the reference time. Usual residence means the place where a person normally spends the daily period

of rest, regardless of temporary absences for purposes of recreation, holidays, visits to friends and relatives, business, medical treatment or religious pilgrimage.

The following persons are counted as usual residents of the geographical area in question:

- Those who have lived in their place of usual residence for a continuous period of at least 12 months before the reference time; or
- Those who arrived in their place of usual residence during the 12 months before the reference time with the intention of staying there for at least one year.

2. Immigration- means the action by which a person establishes his or her usual residence in the territory of a Member State for a period that is, or is expected to be, of at least 12 months, having previously been usually resident in another Member State or a third country. An immigrant would therefore be a person undertaking an immigration.

3. Emigration- means the action by which a person, having previously been usually resident in the territory of a Member State, ceases to have his or her usual residence in that Member State for a period that is, or is expected to be, of at least 12 months. An emigrant would therefore be a person undertaking an emigration.

4. Citizenship- means the legal bond between an individual and his or her State, acquired by birth or naturalisation, whether by declaration, choice, marriage or other means according to national legislation.

5. Country of birth- means the country of residence (in its current borders, if the information is available) of the mother at the time of the birth or, in default, the country (in its current borders, if the information is available) in which the birth took place.

6. Long-term resident- means long-term resident as defined in Article 2(b) of Council Directive 003/109/EC of 25 November 2003 concerning the status of third-country nationals who are long-term residents.

7. Third-country national- means any person who is not a citizen of the European Union, including stateless persons.

Common concepts

Age:

Age represents the elapsed time since birth. The age concept includes two definitions:

- Age reached (or age reached during the year) represents the number of completed years lived at the end of calendar year in question. For example, under this age concept, a person born in 1942 will be 70 on each day of the calendar year 2012, irrespective of his/her birthday. This is the case of all the 1942 generation. The age reached during the year is also equal to the year in question minus the year of birth (2012-1942 = 70).
- Age completed (or age last birthday) represents the number of completed years lived by a person, so no decimals are considered. It is expressed as the number of birthday anniversaries passed on the date of reference.

- The concept 'Open ended age class' is meant to be a solution for presenting different open-ended age classes for data on population and deaths. The open-ended age classes for data on population and deaths are both 90 and over.

Sub-Concept 3.5: Statistical unit

Usually resident population.

Sub-Concept 3.6: Statistical population

- National citizens immigrants and national citizens emigrants (national citizens net migration flows);
- EU citizens immigrants and EU citizens emigrants (EU citizens net migration flows)
- Third country national immigrants and third country national emigrants (TCN net migration flows).

Sub-Concept 3.7: Reference area

Country: Malta
NUTS1 level: Malta
NUTS2 level: Malta
NUTS3 level: Malta and Gozo.

Sub-Concept 3.8: Time coverage

Annual.

Sub-Concept 3.9: Base period

Population and migration flow estimates use the 2011 [Census of Population and Housing](#) as the base population.

CONCEPT 4 – UNIT OF MEASURE

Migration flows are expressed in absolute values.

CONCEPT 5 – REFERENCE PERIOD

Data refers to year 2020.

CONCEPT 6 – INSTITUTIONAL MANDATE

Sub-Concept 6.1: Legal acts and other agreements

[The Malta Statistics Authority Act, 2000.](#) The Act empowers the NSO to collect, compile, extract and release official statistics related to demographic, social, environment, economic and general activities and conditions of Malta.

Migration statistics are compiled and submitted in line with Article 3 of [European Regulation \(EC\) No. 862/2007](#).

Furthermore, all data that is requested and collected is done so in line with the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulations allowing for data to be shared for statistical purposes.

Sub-Concept 6.2: Data sharing

Not applicable.

CONCEPT 7 - CONFIDENTIALITY

Sub-Concept 7.1: Confidentiality – Policy

At National level:

The NSO requests information for the compilation of official statistics according to the articles of the MSA Act – Cap. 422 and the Data Protection Act – Cap. 586 of the Laws of Malta implementing the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

Article 40 of the MSA Act stipulates the restrictions on the use of information while Article 41 stipulates the prohibition of disclosure of information. Furthermore, Section IX of the Act (Offences and Penalties) lays down the measures to be taken in case of unlawful exercise of any officer of statistics regarding confidentiality of data.

Since its inception, the NSO has always assured that all data collected remains confidential and that it is used for statistical purposes only according to the articles and derogations stipulated in the laws quoted above. The Office is obliged to protect the identify of data providers and refrain from divulging any data to third parties that might lead to the identification of persons or entities.

During 2009, the NSO has set up a Statistical Disclosure Committee to ensure that statistical confidentiality is observed, especially when requests for microdata are received.

Upon employment, all NSO employees are informed of the rules and duties pertaining to confidential information and its treatment. In line with stipulations of the MSA Act, before commencing work, every employee is required to take an oath of secrecy whose text is included in the same Act.

An internal policy on anonymisation and pseudo-anonymisation is in place to ascertain that adequate methods are used for the protection of data which the office collects and shares with the public in its capacity as the National Statistics Office. The policy is meant to safeguard confidentiality of both personal and business data entrusted to the NSO. The document provides guidance for all NSO employees who process data on a daily basis as to how anonymisation and pseudo-anonymisation methods should be applied. The policy applies to all confidential, restricted and internal information, regardless of form (paper or electronic documents, applications and databases) that is received, processed, stored and disseminated by the NSO.

At European level:

[Regulation \(EC\) No 223/2009](#) on European statistics (recital 24 and Article 20(4) of 11 March 2009 (OJ L 87, p. 164), 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.

Sub-Concept 7.2: Confidentiality – Data Treatment

Not applicable - total aggregate figures are published therefore small count rules do not apply.

Population and demographic data do not need to be flagged for confidentiality because the risk of identification is low. This is supported by the fact that the impact of unlawful disclosure is low and that consequences for respondents of a loss control are not significantly high.

CONCEPT 8 – RELEASE POLICY

Sub-Concept 8.1: Release Calendar

An advance release calendar is maintained by the NSO and published on the NSO website. The calendar projects three months of news releases (including the current and two subsequent months).

Moreover, the NSO is a member of the [Special Data Dissemination Standards \(SDDS\) Committee](#), which sets dissemination standards set by the International Monetary Fund with a view of enhancing the availability of timely and comprehensive statistics in order to support macroeconomic policies. As a member of the SDDS Committee, the NSO satisfies a number of criteria, which also entail the provision of an advanced news release calendar.

Sub-Concept 8.2: Release Calendar access

The NSO's news release calendar is available on:
https://nso.gov.mt/en/News_Releases/Release_Calendar/Pages/News-Release-Calendar.aspx

Sub-Concept 8.3: User access

An internal policy on dissemination is in place to govern the dissemination of official statistics in an impartial, independent and timely manner, making them available simultaneously to all users.

The NSO's primary channel for the dissemination of official statistics is the NSO website. Tailored requests for statistical information may also be submitted through the NSO website.

Moreover, dedicated news releases are available in electronic format on the NSO website.

CONCEPT 9 – FREQUENCY OF DISSEMINATION

Annual.

CONCEPT 10- ACCESSIBILITY AND CLARITY

Sub-Concept 10.1: News release

Migration flow estimates are published annually in July to mark World Population Day. A detailed release on asylum statistics is published annually in June to mark World Refugee Day.

Sub-Concept 10.2: Publications

Not applicable.

Sub-Concept 10.3: Online Database

Migration data are not available on the NSO's online statistical database (StatDb). However, this may be accessed through [Eurostat's online database](#).

Sub-Concept 10.4: Micro-data access

Not applicable.

Sub-Concept 10.5: Other

Specific tailored requests may be provided upon request against a cost recovery charge.

Sub-Concept 10.6: Documentation on methodology

The NSO strictly follows the methodological recommendations stipulated by Eurostat and the Regulation in order to ensure harmonisation of results. The methodology to estimate the migration flows of individuals in and out of the country are based on the usual resident definition.

Work processes and procedures for the compilation of Migration statistics are documented in a standardised reporting template and aligned to the GSBPM model. The model covers all phases of the statistical production process, from the initial stages of identifying what statistics are needed and the scope of the particular survey, to the final stages of dissemination and evaluation. The GSBPM report is only available internally and may be accessed by all NSO employees.

Sub-Concept 10.6.1: Metadata completeness rate

Information about all required metadata concepts (and sub-concepts thereof) are provided.

Sub-Concept 10.7: Quality Documentation

Refer to sub-concept 10.6.

Dedicated SIMS reports are available to the public on the [NSO's metadata website including concepts related to metadata and quality](#).

The NSO has developed an internal Quality Management Framework (QMF) which is built on common requirements of the ESS Code of Practice (ESS CoP). A document was prepared to include a set of general quality guidelines spanning over all statistical domains. Assuring methodological

soundness is an integral part of the QMF, nonetheless, the document spans also on other areas related to institutional aspects.

CONCEPT 11 – QUALITY MANAGEMENT

Sub-Concept 11.1: Quality Assurance

Many efforts are made by NSO in order to ensure the production of demographic statistics at high quality standards. Measures that are implemented during the analysis stage include:

- Thorough checks on the administrative data used for the compilation of migration flows
- Checks for double counting
- Validation and cross-checking of results with auxiliary sources and past year's data including census results.

The NSO ensures the accuracy of data released to the public and prepares clear methodological notes which explain the processes involved in the collection and production of official statistics.

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Every five to seven years, the NSO participates in a Peer Review exercise through which the compliance of its operations with principles of the ESS CoP is assessed by an expert team. Peer Reviews are indeed part of the European Statistical System (ESS) strategy to implement the ESS CoP. Each NSI is expected to provide information as requested by a standard self-assessment questionnaire. Following this an expert team visits the office to meet NSI representatives and main stakeholders. Peer Reviews result in a compliance report and the listing of a set of Improvement Actions which need to be followed up by the NSI. The next round of Peer Reviews is planned to be carried out in 2022.

Sub-Concept 11.2: Quality Assessment

The NSO has access to a comprehensive set of high-quality administrative sources for the calculation of vital events. Measuring migration flows is far more difficult, since in Malta, there is no register that can fully cover all migration flows. In view of this, the estimation of migration statistics in Malta is mainly done using different administrative sources. On the other hand, data that cannot be extracted from these registers is estimated through appropriate mathematical models. Although this procedure suffices to provide reliable migration statistics, it is still prone to errors (e.g. double counting, over-estimation of migrants; under/over reporting due to late registrations, etc.), which can hardly be quantified.

CONCEPT 12 - RELEVANCE

Sub-Concept 12.1: User needs

Migration statistics are often sought by many different users:

- Internal use: High quality migration statistics are important for updating population counts, which in turn are required for compiling the Gross Domestic Product per capita. Moreover, accurate population counts are essential for estimating probabilities of selection in survey sampling and hence the calculation of weights.
- National users include: The list of national users includes: Ministries; Government departments and Authorities working within the social and economic spheres; research institutes; University of Malta; other policy makers; etc.
- International users include: The list of international users includes: Eurostat; OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development); UNECE (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe); UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees), EASO (European Asylum Support Office), European Commission's Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion; etc.

Sub-Concept 12.2: User satisfaction

The last User Satisfaction Survey was held in 2014 with the aim to collect information about key users' satisfaction with statistical output.

The NSO keeps record of the number of News Releases and publications disseminated on its website; the users to whom statistical products are provided; as well as the number of requests that are processed every year.

News Releases and tailor-made statistical outputs were assessed on account of their quality, timeliness, and on their ability to meet users' needs.

Sub-Concept 12.3: Data Completeness

All compulsory data outlined through the Regulation are submitted.

CONCEPT 13 – ACCURACY AND RELIABILITY

Sub-Concept 13.1: Overall accuracy

Possible sources of errors:

- Under-reporting in administrative registers mainly due to late registrations
- Over-coverage due to possible inconsistencies with the usual residence definition
- Double counting of persons enlisted in more than one register
- Inaccuracies in the mathematical models used in order to estimate migration components not available in the registers

Sub-Concept 13.2: Sampling errors

Not applicable.

Sub-Concept 13.3: Non-sampling error

Possible sources of errors:

- Under-reporting in administrative registers mainly due to late registrations
- Over-coverage due to possible inconsistencies with the usual residence definition
- Double counting of persons enlisted in more than one register
- Inaccuracies in the mathematical models used in order to estimate migration components not available in the registers

Sub-Concept 13.3.1: Coverage error

Refer to sub-concept 13.1

Sub-Concept 13.3.1.1: Over Coverage

Not applicable.

Sub-Concept 13.3.1.2: Common Units Proportion

Not applicable.

Sub-Concept 13.3.2: Measurement error

Not applicable.

Sub-Concept 13.3.3: Non-response error

Not applicable.

Sub-Concept 13.3.3.1: Unit non-response

Not applicable.

Sub-Concept 13.3.3.2: Item non-response

Not applicable.

Sub-Concept 13.3.4: Processing error

Not applicable.

Sub-Concept 13.3.5: Model assumption error

There may be some inaccuracies in the mathematical models used in order to estimate migration components not available in the registers.

CONCEPT 14 – TIMELINESS AND PUNCTUALITY

Sub-Concept 14.1: Timeliness

Data are compiled and sent to Eurostat within the deadlines stipulated by the Regulation. Data are made available to users shortly afterwards either from NSO or Eurostat.

Sub-Concept 14.2: Punctuality

Data are compiled and sent to Eurostat within the deadlines stipulated by the Regulation.

CONCEPT 15 – COHERENCE AND COMPARABILITY

Sub-Concept 15.1: Comparability – Geographical

Data are fully comparable at NUTS level.

Sub-Concept 15.2: Comparability – Over time

Minor changes have been made over time in the methodology used for the compilation of population estimates. These changes were implemented in order to improve the accuracy of the estimates and cross-domain coherence. All improvements were implemented in line with the usual residence definition therefore it can be assumed that comparability over time is achieved.

Sub-Concept 15.3: Coherence – Cross Domain

Migration flow estimates are only submitted by the Population, Migration and Crime Unit. The total usual residence population transmitted by the National Statistical Offices to Eurostat in the framework of the Usual Residence Population. Data collection may differ from those available in National Accounts, the Labour Force Survey and the Survey on Income and Living Conditions. The difference can be explained through the population coverage whereby a given survey may refer to the private household population or may not adhere to the Usual Residence Definition.

Sub-Concept 15.3.1: Coherence – Sub-Annual and Annual statistics

Not applicable.

Sub-Concept 15.3.2: Coherence – National Accounts

Not applicable.

Sub-Concept 15.4: Coherence – Internal

Refer to sub-concept 15.3.

CONCEPT 16 – COST AND BURDEN

Compilation of migration statistics is mainly based on administrative registers. In view of this, the burden on the respondents is minimal. On the other hand, the compilation of these statistics is very resource intensive and requires the employment of at least two full-time experienced statisticians.

CONCEPT 17 – DATA REVISION

Sub-Concept 17.1: Data revision – Policy

At the NSO, there is currently no internal policy governing revisions that occur for all statistics produced. Nonetheless, a revisions policy is being drafted to safeguard a coordinated revisions system across statistical domains.

This policy will take account of the need and causes for revisions; time and frequency of revisions; data and other statistical products affected by such revisions; and length of periods revised.

At a European level, any revision of data as required by [Regulation 862/2007](#) is conducted in line with article 9 of this regulation.

Sub-Concept 17.2: Data revision – Practice and Data Revision

When required, post-census revisions are conducted to align updates of migration statistics with the census data, and therefore avoid breaks in time series. Such revisions are made available to users once they are completed. Other ad-hoc revisions may be conducted if deemed necessary, these include benchmarking revisions such as those which were undertaken in 2017 for the estimation of migration flows. A News Release which may be accessed via the [NSO website](#) was published in order to present the revised figures.

CONCEPT 18 – STATISTICAL PROCESSING

Sub-Concept 18.1: Source data

Migration: Compilation of migration flows is carried out mainly using administrative data, although mathematical models and survey-based estimates are used for the compilation of some migration flows.

Data sources are as follows:

- [Immigration of Maltese nationals](#) - Tourstat (Tourism Border Survey) and most recent Census
- [Emigration of Maltese nationals](#) - Tourstat (Tourism Border Survey) and most recent Census
- [Asylum Seekers](#) - Data from the Office of the Refugee Commissioner and Refugee Appeals Board
- [EU nationals](#) - Jobsplus - Engagement and Termination Forms for immigration and emigration respectively; Resident Permit Database for immigration and emigration estimates of dependents.
- [Third Country Nationals](#) - Department of Citizenship and Expatriate Affairs - Residence Permit Database
- [Foreign adoptions](#) – Public Registry, Identity Malta

Sub-Concept 18.2: Frequency of data collection

Yearly.

Sub-Concept 18.3: Data Collection

Refer to sub-concept 18.1.

Sub-Concept 18.4: Data Validation

Refer to sub-concept 18.1.

Sub-Concept 18.5: Data Compilation

Migration flows are calculated using the following components:

Maltese Nationals

- Immigration of Maltese Nationals is calculated based on figures extracted from the most recent Census of Population and Housing using the information collected regarding residence one year prior to the Census. Using figures resulting from the Tourstat border survey, the change observed between the year when the census was undertaken, and the reference year is applied on the Census figures.
- Emigration of Maltese Nationals is calculated based on the figures resulting from the Tourstat border survey for Maltese Nationals travelling from Malta. The duration of trip is analysed and an average number of persons who intend to stay away from Malta for 12 months or more over the past 3 years is calculated.

EU Nationals

- Immigration of EU Nationals is calculated based on the figures of engagement forms presented by the Jobsplus for the reference year in question. These are then linked to the termination of employment data in order to remove persons who have not been in employment for at least 1 year. The data are then checked with the ID Card database (CDB) in order to remove persons who were registered in Malta prior to the reference year.
- Emigration of EU Nationals is calculated based on the termination of employment data. Therefore, persons who terminated their job and have not been re-employed, are considered as emigrants.
- Both immigration and emigration of the dependents of EU Nationals are calculated based on a factor extracted from the EU Nationals notifying their residence in Malta from the Residence Permits database.

Third Country Nationals

Asylum Statistics:

- Immigration: The database held at the Office of the Commissioner for Refugees is used to extract persons covered by first instance decisions who have been granted refugee status, subsidiary protection status or temporary protection. The data collected by the Refugee Appeals board is used to provide figures for persons granted a positive decision following the lodging of an Appeal.

- Emigration includes resettled persons, i.e. third-country nationals who, on a resettlement request from UNHCR based on their need for international protection, are transferred to a Member State where they are permitted to reside.

Residence Permits:

- Immigration of TCNs is calculated based on resident permits available in the database managed by the Department for Citizenship and Expatriate Affairs. Estimates in the reference year are calculated based on date of entry and accumulated duration of permit/s validity in line with the intended 12-month criteria for Usual Residence.
- Emigration of TCN includes persons whose permit has not been extended and who were considered residents of the population based on the Usual Residence Definition. Data are extracted from the resident permits database managed by the Department for Citizenship and Expatriate Affairs.

Foreign Adoptions:

- Registered foreign adoptions are based on adoptions registered in the reference year at the Public Registry.

Data are not normally subject to any compilation processes since administrative sources are used. However, if information is missing with regards to a particular person and his/her identity card is available, alternative sources (like the common database (CDB)) are used to assign such information, for example, date of birth, gender etc.

Sub-Concept 18.5.1: Imputation

Not applicable.

Sub-Concept 18.6: Adjustment

Not applicable.

Sub-Concept 18.6.1: Seasonal Adjustment

Not applicable.

CONCEPT 19 - COMMENT

No further comments.