

FOREWORD

The Bank of Italy attaches great importance to the collection, analysis and dissemination of statistical information as being essential for carrying out its institutional role. With the aim of improving the services provided, the Bank's Strategic Plan for 2014-16 sought to upgrade the quality of its statistics and enhance communication with users by reviewing the format of its publications and adapting its methods for disseminating statistics.

From 16 January 2017, Bank of Italy statistics will be published with a layout that makes their consultation easier and more efficient and their content has been renewed, in light of the changes to the financial system and the Italian economy. The statistics are still presented in PDF format for the easy reading and interpretation of interrelated elements, while the publications have been integrated into the Statistical database (BDS), which remains the main tool for the dissemination of the underlying time series. This revision project has been greatly helped by the valuable suggestions and comments collected from users in a special survey conducted through the Bank's website.

The revision has removed the traditional division of statistical material between the Statistical Bulletin, which was established in its original form in 1945 and has been updated several times, and the Supplements to the Bulletin, introduced gradually over time to provide additional information on banks, the financial market, balance of payments, the public finances, financial accounts, the payment system, household income and wealth and business conditions.

All the material is now published in a single series called 'Statistics' which includes various thematic publications. The data previously reported in the Statistical Bulletin have been reviewed and presented in three publications on: the territorial organization of banks and financial institutions, financing and bank funding by sector and by territory, and the conditions and credit risk by sector and by territory. The transition to the new model will take place gradually throughout 2017, when the Statistical Bulletin runs parallel with the new 'Statistics' series. The other publications have been redeveloped as well, though continuity is ensured with what used to be published in the Supplements to the Statistical Bulletin. The main innovations are summarized on the [Bank's website](#), and explanations of the data published can be requested by contacting this address: statistiche@bancaditalia.it.

Updating the manuals that describe the sources and methods for producing the balance of payments and the financial accounts published in 2016, compliance with the International Monetary Fund's new requirements for the dissemination of statistics (SDDS plus) since 2015 and expanding the BDS with a new section published in December 2016 on the main indicators of the Italian economy are all recent initiatives for keeping up with the progress in methodologies and international standards and responding to user needs and the Eurosystem's guidelines.

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