

Metadata Report for Statistics of Flash Estimates of real GDP

V-3.2

Quality Management

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1. Contact

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1.6.	Contact phone number	199009

2. Methodology and Quality Update

2.1.	Latest Update on Methodology and Quality	29/04/2025

3. Statistical Presentation

3.1. Data description
Flash Estimates of real GDP are an estimation process of the GDP conducted shortly after the end of the reference quarter and before the publication of the actual quarterly data, during which the data related to the quarter are still incomplete. The report on flash estimates of real GDP includes real GDP growth rates by main economic activities (a year-on-year basis) and seasonally adjusted real GDP growth rates by main economic activities on a quarterly basis.

Flash estimates of GDP data are collected on key characteristics as follows:

- Flash estimates of quarterly GDP are based on two main sources:
  - Statistical surveys, carried out by the General Authority for Statistics.
  - Administrative records, from which data can be obtained on a quarterly basis.
- The Flash estimates of GDP report are released quarterly.
- The frame of reference for quarterly national accounts statistics is the Quarterly System of National Accounts.
- The Flash estimates of quarterly real GDP are subject to international standards in data collection and classification. Some of the most important classifications on which the report's data rely are:
  - National Classification of Economic activities (ISIC 4).
  - The Government Finance Statistics Manual (GFS).

3.2. Classification system

The following classifications are applied in Flash estimates of real GDP.

National Classification of Economic activities (ISIC 4):

It is a statistical classification based on the International Standard Industrial Classification of all economic activities, as the International Standard Industrial Classification of Economic Activities is the reference classification for productive activities. Economic activity is also defined as (all the works or services that an establishment practices or provides that generate a financial return for it sometimes the establishment does not reap a financial return from its work, as is the case with charitable organizations that rely on donation).

The Government Finance Statistics Manual (GFS):

The Government Finance Statistics Manual 2014 is a specialized macroeconomic statistical framework designed to support the analysis of public finances. This manual provides economic and statistical reporting principles for use in compiling statistics and describes guidelines for presenting large-scale statistics within an analytical framework that includes appropriate budget line consistent within guidelines.

The classifications are available on the GASTAT's website: https://www.stats.gov.sa/

3.3. Sector coverage

Flash estimates of real GDP cover the following major economic activities:

- Oil activities:

Includes crude oil, natural gas and refining activities.

- Government services activities:

Includes the activities of all government entities listed in the final account of the government and those providing non-market services controlled by the government.

- Non-oil activities:

Includes all other economic activities except oil and government services activities.

3.4. Statistical concepts and definitions

Terms and concepts related to Flash estimates of real GDP:

- Gross domestic product (GDP):

It is the monetary (market) value of all final goods and services produced in an economy during a given period, usually a year.

- Real GDP growth rates on a year-on-year basis (%):

It is the rate of change, either an increase or decrease, in GDP during a given period compared to the same period of the previous year.

- Real GDP growth rates on a quarterly basis (%):

It is the rate of increase or decrease in the seasonally adjusted Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in a period compared to the previous period.

- Seasonal adjustments:

It is the process of estimating and removing seasonal and calendar effects from data. Seasonally adjusted data means that it does not include seasonal effects caused by climatic conditions, social customs, or calendar events such as the Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha holidays, the National Day, Foundation Day, or changes in weekend structures.

3.5. Statistical unit

Not applicable.

3.6. Statistical population

Not applicable.

3.7. Reference area

Flash estimates of real GDP cover the economic activities in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

3.8. Time coverage

Data are available from the first quarter of 2020 to the current quarter.

3.9. Base period

Real GDP and seasonally adjusted GDP are measured using the chain-linking methodology of 2023.

4. Unit of measure

- Growth rate on year-on-year basis (%).

The growth rate is calculated by dividing the quarter of the current year by the corresponding quarter of the previous year.

- Growth rate on a quarterly basis (%).

The growth rate is calculated by dividing the quarter of the current year by the previous quarter.

5. Reference period

The reference period varies due to differences in the timing of receipt of data sources during the year, including economic and social survey data and administrative data.

6. Confidentiality

6.1. Confidentiality - policy

According to the Royal Decree No. 23 dated 07-12-1379, data must always be kept confidential and must be used by GASTAT only for statistical purposes.

Therefore, the data are protected in the data servers of the Authority.

6.2. Confidentiality - data treatment

Data were displayed in appropriate tables to facilitate its summarization, comprehension, and results extraction. Also, to compare data with other data and extract statistical meanings for the study community. It is also easier to check tables without the need to see any sensitive or confidential data, which violates data confidentiality of statistical data.

7. Release policy

7.1. Release calendar

Flash estimates of real GDP are included in the statistical calendar.

7.2. Release calendar access

The release calendar is available at: https://www.stats.gov.sa/statistical-calendar-releases

7.3. User access

One of GASTAT's objectives is to better meet its clients' needs, so it immediately provides them with the results of the flash estimates of real GDP once the report is published.

It also receives questions and inquiries of the clients about the Publication and its results through various communication channels, such as:

- GASTAT official website: www.stats.gov.sa
- GASTAT official e-mail address: info@stats.gov.sa
- Client support e-mail: info@stats.gov.sa
- Official visits to GASTAT's official head office in Riyadh or one of its branches in Saudi Arabia.
- Official letters.
- Statistical phone (199009).

8. Frequency of dissemination

Quarterly.

9. Accessibility and clarity

9.1. News release

The announcements of each publication are available on release calendar as mentioned in 7.2. Release calendar access. The news release can be viewed on the website of GASTAT through the following link:

https://stats.gov.sa/news

9.2. Publications

GASTAT issues reports and publications of the Flash Estimates of real GDP on a regular basis within a pre-prepared dissemination plan which is published on GASTAT's website. GASTAT is keen to publish its publications in a way that serves all users of different types, including publications in different formats that contain (publication tables, data graphs, indicators, and metadata) in both English and Arabic.

Results of Flash estimates of real GDP are available at:

GDP and indicators of National Accounts | General Authority for Statistics (stats.gov.sa)

9.3. On-line database

Not available.

9.4. Micro-data access

Not available.

9.5. Other

Not available.

9.6. Documentation on methodology

The framework for Flash estimates of real GDP is the Quarterly System of National Accounts (QNA), and the concepts, definitions and classifications are based on international standards.

(QNA)Quarterly System of National Accounts

The quarterly SNA adopts the same principles, definitions and structure of annual national accounts in principle. The quarterly national accounts cover the full sequence of accounts and balance sheet in the 2008 SNA (2008 SNA) in practice and since quarterly national accounts are usually less complete than the two annual national accounts.(Reference)

9.7. Quality documentation

Quality documentation covers documentation on methods and standards for assessing, measuring, and monitoring the quality of statistical process and output. It is based on standard quality criteria such as relevance, accuracy and reliability, timeliness and punctuality, accessibility and clarity, comparability, and coherence.

10. Quality management

10.1. Quality assurance

GASTAT declares that it considers the following principles: impartiality, user orientated, quality of processes and output, effectiveness of statistical processes, reducing the workload for respondents.

Quality controls and validation of data are actions carried out throughout the process in different stages such as the data input and data collection and other final controls.

10.2. Quality assessment

GASTAT performs all statistical activities according to a national model (Generic Statistical Business Process Model - GSBPM). According to the GSBPM, the final phase of statistical activities is overall evaluation using information gathered in each phase or sub-process. This information is used to prepare the evaluation report which outlines all the quality issues related to the specific statistical activity and serves as input for improvement actions.

11. Relevance

11.1. User needs

External users and major beneficiaries for National accounts statistics data, include:

- Government entities.
- Private sector

- Regional and international organizations.
- Academic and research institutions.
- International investors.

The disseminated key variables that external users benefit from include:

- Flash estimates of real GDP cover the following major economic activities.
- Flash estimates of real GDP with seasonal adjustments by major economic activities.

11.2. User satisfaction

Not available.

11.3. Completeness

The data is complete.

12. Accuracy and reliability

12.1. Overall accuracy

The data is compared with previous quarters to identify any significant changes, and the internal consistency of the data is verified before finalizing it. The links between variables are checked and coherence between different data series is confirmed.

13. Timeliness and punctuality

13.1. Timeliness

GASTAT uses the Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS) issued by the International Monetary Fund. According to this standard, all statistical agencies are required to publish data on a quarterly basis, with a time lag not exceeding 90 days after the end of the reference period. If the data are from different source, they may be published in a different frequency.

13.2. Punctuality

The publication is carried out according to the published statistical calendar of Flash estimates of real GDP on the web page of the General Authority for Statistics.

The data are available at the expected time, as scheduled in the statistical release calendar, If the publication is delayed, reasons shall be provided.

14. Coherence and comparability

14.1. Comparability - geographical

The Department of National Accounts shall prepare statistics in accordance with internationally established standards and methodologies, with a focus on meeting the current and future statistical requirements of users, taking into account the highest degree of accuracy and efficiency in estimates, with easy access to and interpretation of data, and comparability regionally and internationally. This is in addition to taking into account the appropriate period between the information readiness and the reference period described by this information.

14.2. Comparability - over time

Flash estimates of real GDP are an extension of the regular estimates of quarterly GDP and as such can be compared with their counterpart data from the regular quarterly series. The series Quarterly estimates of GDP in Saudi Arabia is available from the start of 2010.

14.3. Coherence- cross domain

Not applicable.

14.3.1. Coherence - sub annual and annual statistics

Not applicable.

14.3.2. Coherence- National Accounts

Not applicable.

14.4. Coherence - internal

Flash estimates of real GDP have complete internal consistency, as they are all based on the same set of accurate data and are calculated using the same estimation methods.

15. Data revision

15.1. Data revision - policy

Not applicable, only final results will be published.

15.2. data revision- practice

Not applicable, only final results will be published.

16. Statistical processing

16.1. Source data

Flash estimates of GDP are based on two main sources:

First source: Estimates of real GDP:

Economic and social surveys, carried out by the General Authority for Statistics.

Second source: Estimates of real GDP:

Administrative records, from which data can be obtained on a quarterly basis such as: (Saudi Central Bank, Ministry of Energy, Zakat, Tax and Customs Authority, National Information Center).

16.2. Frequency of data collection

Quarterly.

16.3. Data collection

Data collection from administrative records:

In coordination with the General Directorate of Data Collection and Management, to obtain the registry data for the Flash estimates of real GDP report from the Saudi Central Bank, the Ministry of Energy, the Zakat, Tax and Customs Authority, and the National Information Center.

The data is stored in the authority's databases after undergoing auditing and review processes following approved statistical methods and recognized quality standards. If errors or discrepancies are discovered, the data is cross-referenced with the data source for correction or clarification.

16.4. Data validation

Data are reviewed and matched to ensure their accuracy and precision in a way that suits their nature with the aim of giving the presented statistics quality and accuracy.

The data for the current quarter of the publication is compared with the data of the previous year to ensure their integrity and consistency in preparation for processing data and extracting and reviewing results.

In addition to the data processing and tabulation to check their accuracy, all the outputs are stored and uploaded to the database after being calculated by GASTAT to be reviewed and processed by specialists of the National Accounts Statistics Department.

16.5. Data compilation

Data editing:

Specialists of the National Accounts Statistics Department process and analyze data in this stage, some of the steps include the following:

- Reclassifying data from administrative records so that data is consistent with standards, evidence, and relevant classifications.
- Summarizing detailed data into key points or data.

- Combining many data segments and ensuring their interconnection.
- Processing incomplete or missing data.
- Processing illogical data.
- Arranging, presenting, and interpreting data.

Applied statistical estimation:

The method of flash estimates for quarterly real GDP:

The estimation process is the same as in quarterly national accounts but adopts simplified assumptions about extrapolation of certain indicators (monthly or quarterly). ~~s~~Several indicators related to production, expenditure, income, prices and foreign trade are used to estimate the value added of non-oil activities by building a standard economic model that measures its growth rate product by estimating the remaining portion of it after directly measuring the growth rate of both oil and government service activities (reference).

Method of Flash estimates of quarterly real GDP with seasonal adjustments:

It is the process of estimating and removing seasonal and calendar effects from data. Seasonally adjusted data means that it does not include seasonal effects caused by climatic conditions, social customs, or calendar events such as the Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha holidays, the National Day, Foundation Day, or changes in weekend structures.

- **Methodology used:** The (JDemetra+) program is one of the programs used and applied by statistical offices and committees around the world when studying and analyzing time series to measure seasonally adjusted GDP. The (TRAMO-SEATS) method is used, relying on the ARIMA model, which is employed by many international organizations (reference).

16.6. Adjustment

Not applicable, only final results will be published.

17. Comment