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Supply and use tables and input-output tables

The Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia (SORS) is presenting for the first time supply and use tables and input-output tables for the Republic of Serbia. The latest input-output tables for the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia were published by the then Federal Bureau of Statistics back in 1996 ("Mutual Relations of Economic Activities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1994"). From 2019, supply and use tables and symmetric input-output tables will be regularly published in accordance with the Eurostat transmission program.

This significant achievement of the SORS is the result of many years of intensive development work in the field of input-output statistics, with the support and supervision of the Eurostat and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). First, within the framework of the IPA 2012 national project (Strengthening the Serbian Statistical System by Upgrading Methodologies and Standards and by Appliance of Good Practice - Component 2: Improve the National Accounts System), in 2016 and 2017, methodological foundations of the input-output system were established and the first experimental tables were compiled, and, as a follow-up, in the course of the second IPA 2015 regional project (Project 1.3: National Accounts Methodology) during 2018 and 2019, in parallel with the major revision process, the compilation of tables for the years 2015, 2016 and 2017 was intensified and successfully finalized. We emphasize that the tables have been produced in close cooperation with eminent European experts in the field of national accounts with a permanent monitoring of Eurostat and we would like to point out the support of the French National Statistics Institute (INSEE) in this respect. The system itself and the tools for the compilation of tables are of French origin and based on the practice of French statistics adapted to our data sources and the system of national accounts of the SORS.

The development of input-output statistics is at the same time the result of the continuous efforts and development processes of the SORS aimed at improvement of statistical data sources and implementation of the European statistical methodology not only in the field of national accounts but also in other domains of statistics. The supply and use tables which we are presenting to our users also incorporate improvements in the field of structural business statistics, price statistics, agriculture, labor and other business statistics.

With the establishment of the input-output subsystem, after almost a quarter of a century, the SORS has finally completed the system of national accounts applied by all European Union countries, as well as advanced national statistics in the world. The system of national accounts comprising the annual GDP calculation with sectoral accounts, quarterly and regional accounts, now complemented by the input-output subsystem, is now an integrated whole that provides a comprehensive picture of the dynamic, sectoral, structural and territorial characteristics of the Serbian economy. The input-output subsystem, together with other components of the national accounts system, enables multidimensional macroeconomic and structural analysis, forecasting and modeling and is an indispensable tool for macroeconomic decision making, policy creation and monitoring.

The regular compilation of supply and use tables and input-output tables starting in 2019 with the release of tables for the years 2015, 2016 and 2017, is at the same time an extremely important step forward in terms of harmonizing the statistical system of the Republic of Serbia with European statistical standards and regulations, since the tables were a missing component of Eurostat's transmission program for which both Eurostat and the IMF and other institutional users at home and abroad have always shown great interest. The European Commission and Eurostat provided extensive, irreplaceable support to the SORS in the development of input-output statistics, and on this occasion the SORS and its expert team that worked on the compilation of tables express their deep gratitude. We would also like to thank the distinguished colleagues of the IMF who provided valuable professional assistance and support in our development activities. By publishing the tables, the SORS fulfilled at the same time all the commitments made in the Program Statement of July 2018, outlining the Government's objectives and economic policies that the Government and the National Bank of Serbia (NBS) intend to implement under the new macroeconomic and structural program reforms supported by the IMF - Policy Coordination Instrument (PCI), for the period August 2018 - January 2021.

The reference years of the first supply and use tables are 2015, 2016 and 2017 at current and previous year prices (for 2016 and 2017). Please note that according to the Eurostat Transmission Program, supply and use tables are submitted to Eurostat three years after the end of the accounting period ($t + 3$), which means that this year the EU Member States submit to Eurostat tables for 2016, while the SORS will release the tables for 2017 as well. When it comes to symmetric input-output tables, they are, according to Eurostat regulation, transmitted in a five-year period and EU member states will send to Eurostat input-output tables for the year 2015 next year (2020) which are available to our users can now (2019).

We point out that the tables have been verified by Eurostat who has approved their release. The IMF also approved the publication of the tables. In accordance with the recommendations of Eurostat and the IMF, in 2020 the SORS will initiate reconciliation of the annual national accounts with supply and use tables, after providing a complete series of tables from 2010 as required by the Eurostat's transmission program. Therefore, in accordance with the recommendations of Eurostat, in 2020 the SORS will conduct so-called a routine revision of the GDP series for the years 2010–2018 eliminating temporary inconsistencies with the supply and use tables. Thus, a new program of GDP estimation and publication of the results of annual GDP calculation announced by the SORS in 2018 will commence. Namely, the practice of GDP releases so far has meant that the so-called the September estimate of annual GDP (30 September for the previous year) was at the same time the final estimate which was not subject of revision so far. The new estimation and publishing program involves three successive GDP estimates: the first preliminary estimate as the sum of four quarterly GDP, which, as before, will be published at the end of February; the September estimate will be the second preliminary estimate of GDP, and the definite estimate will be released one year later based on the results of input-output statistics, i.e. supply and use tables. This is a standard practice of all European countries, approved by the Eurostat's transmission program, which is necessary due to the long, complex process of compiling annual accounts, and in particular the supply and use tables, which cannot be optimally finalized in a short period of time of 3 to 4 months from the moment when the database of financial statements of enterprises (as the main data source for GDP estimation) is transmitted to the SORS by the Serbian Business Registers Agency (May-June of the current year for the previous year), when the preparation of the annual accounts can actually start.

In connection with the above, we emphasize that the data on annual GDP for the period 2015-2017 published on October 1st 2018 in NR-30 press release are still the only official GDP data for the Republic of Serbia. The data presented in the supply and use tables, as mentioned, represent provisional (complementary) calculations until the planned routine revision in 2020 is completed. On this occasion, we reiterate that routine revisions are one of the basic features of national accounts, both annual and quarterly, and are common in all national statistics. This practice is also supported by Eurostat. Also, as before, all decisions regarding the revision and introduction of new calculations, methods and data sources will be made with the prior consent of Eurostat and the IMF.

The methodological framework used for compilation of supply and use tables and input-output tables is the European System of Accounts (ESA 2010) and the Eurostat Manual for Supply, Use and Input-Output Tables. The basic data sources are the same as for the compilation of annual accounts (financial statements of enterprises, tax administration data and numerous administrative and statistical data sources), supplemented by the specialized input-output survey on the structure of operating income and costs of business entities, which, as a separate module within the annual survey of structural business statistics is regularly conducted since 2016 for the purpose of compiling supply and use tables. The compilation of the tables and all the accompanying calculations were, as already pointed out, done with the direct assistance and supervision of European experts.

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