

**Documentation of statistics for  
Income Statistics 2017**

## 1 Introduction

The purpose of the Income Statistics - is to provide statistics on the population's incomes and tax payments as well as the distribution of incomes. The statistics are useful in the field of social sciences and form the basis for effective policymaking in areas that affect the economic situation of the households. Statistics Denmark has published statistics on incomes since 1905 and has coherent time series going back to the 1980s.

## 2 Statistical presentation

The income statistics is based on a full population register. It contains information on annual incomes at both the personal and family level as well as data on the distribution of income. The Income is available both pre- and post taxes and can be split into sub-categories such as primary incomes, transfers, property income and taxes. In the income statistics the population is divided into groups by age, Socio economic status, gender, municipalities(NUTS-3), type of family and into income intervals.

### 2.1 Data description

The income statistics are based on annual incomes. Income statistics is presented at both the personal and the family level. The income register contains more than 100 types of income of which the 40 most important are presented in the Statbank.

In addition to measuring the level of income there is also focus on income distribution. This includes indicators such as decile distributions, Risk of Poverty and the Gini Coefficient, which are measured using the equivalised disposable income.

*History:* From 1905 to 2016 Statistics Denmark has published an annual publication on incomes. The Income Statistics are for the first time published in the Statbank in the year 2002. Income Statistics For the period 1983 - 2001 is published in the Tax-oriented Income publication. The information on income was before 1983 published in the so-called Tax Return Survey (selvangivelses undersøgelsen). It was based on a sample of income tax returns.

The Tax-Related Income statistics are based on the Income Statistics Register, which has been constructed since 1970. Comparing data on income over time was not possible until 1976, when the design of the Income Statistics Register was changed.

Income statistics for families and households was published annually in an extended newsletter (Statistiske Efterretninger) from 1984-2005 and in the annual income publication.

### 2.2 Classification system

The personal income statistics is primarily grouped by: type of income, municipality, socio-economic status, gender, age and education. pre-tax total income and disposable income is furthermore divided into income intervals.

The family income statistics is furthermore divisible by type of family, socio-economic status for the main breadwinner, highest attained education within the family and home ownership.

### 2.3 Sector coverage

Not relevant for this statistics.

### 2.4 Statistical concepts and definitions

**Disposable income:** Disposable income is the amount of money that a person or household has available for spending and saving after income taxes and interest expenses have been accounted for.

**Pre-tax income, total:** Pre-tax income is the sum of primary income, public transfer incomes, private pensions, property income and other personal income.

**Primary income:** Primary income includes wages and salaries, entrepreneurial income and received fees subject to labour market contributions.

**Public transfer incomes:** Public transfer incomes includes disability and old age pensions, early retirement pay, unemployment and cash benefits, public educational grants, housing benefits, child benefits and green check.

**Private pensions:** In the income statistics private pensions includes public servants pension, pension from the ATP (Labour Market Supplementary Pension Scheme) and Labour market and private pensions (Annuities only).

**Property income:** Property income (gross) refers to profit or income received by virtue of owning property. It includes received interests and other property income (From stocks etc.). When comparing consumer spending power between home owners and tenants imputed rent and interest expenses should be included in property income (= Property income (gross) + Imputed rent - Interest expenses).

**Imputed rent:** Imputed rent is a computed value that shows how much a home owner in theory should pay to rent a corresponding dwelling. Imputed rent is included in disposable income to ensure comparability in consumer spending power between home owners and tenants.

**Tax, total:** Tax (total) includes income taxes and labour market contributions.

**Equivalised Income:** Equivalised disposable income is mainly used for calculation on the income distribution. The purpose of equivalising the income is to ensure comparability between the income for a person living alone, with that of a large family. The equivalised income should be interpreted as the amount a one-person family should have in order to obtain the same possibilities of consumption as a large family. The assumption is made that income is perfectly redistributed within the family, so that all family members receive the same equivalised income. The OECD modified-scale is used for equivalisation. The first adult is assigned a weight of 1, the subsequent adults over 14 years old has the weight of 0.5 and children 0.3. Thus the Equivalised disposable income for all family members in a family of 2 adults and 2 children with a total disposable income of 400.000 DKK is  $400.000 / (1 + 0.5 + 0.3 + 0.3) = 190.476$  DKK.

**Socio-economic status:** The main source of income and/or labor market status for the year.

**Low income:** Low income is an indicator that measures the number of people living in families with a total income that is lower than 50 or 60 percent of the median income. It is a group with an income that is significantly lower than the standard in the Danish society. The measure is almost similar to Eurostat's term Risk of Poverty and OECD's Poverty.

**Decile groups and deciles:** The population is sorted according to its income and then divided into 10 equally large groups. The first decile group is the 10 percent with the lowest income. The 10th decile

group is the 10 per cent with the highest income. The deciles are the values separating each of the decile groups.

**P90/10:** P90/10 measures the economic difference between low and high income families. This indicator is not affected by individuals with extreme income like many other inequality measures. This makes P90/10 a good indicator of inequality over time and in small populations, e.g. in the Municipalities. P90/10 is the upper decile divided by the lower decile.

**S80/20:** S80/20 is an indicator of inequality based on the mean income in the decile groups. S80/20 is the total income of the 20 per cent with the highest income divided by the total income of the 20 per cent with the lowest income. This measure is affected by individuals with extreme income.

**Gini coefficient:** The Gini coefficient is one of the world's most commonly used measures of inequality. With a single number it states the degree of inequality in an income distribution. The Gini coefficient is a number between 0 and 100. The closer Gini is to 0, the more equal the income distribution.

**The Hoover index:** The Hoover index is an indicator of inequality. It is equal to the share of the total income in the society that would have to be redistributed from people with incomes above the mean to people with incomes below the mean, in order to reach income uniformity. The higher the Hoover index, the more unequal the income distribution.

**Age:** Age on the 31st of December of the income year.

**Region/Municipality:** Residence 31st of December of the income year.

## **2.5 Statistical unit**

- Persons living in Denmark
- Families living in Denmark

## **2.6 Statistical population**

The following populations are used in publications.

**Persons:** All that are at least 15 years old by the 31st of December and have had a registered address in Denmark for the entire year. Thus the statistics does not include people migrating in and out of the country nor the people who died during the year.

**Families:** The family is defined on the 31st of December. Only families with at least one person over the age of 15, who have been registered to live in Denmark the entire year, is included.

**Distribution of incomes:** Persons in families on the 31st of December. Only persons living in families with at least one person over the age of 15, who have been registered to live in Denmark the entire year, is included.

## **2.7 Reference area**

Denmark.

## **2.8 Time coverage**

The current Statistics cover the period from 2010.

## **2.9 Base period**

Not relevant for this statistics.

## **2.10 Unit of measure**

- number of persons
- 1.000 DKK

## **2.11 Reference period**

The income year refers to the incomes for that entire year.

## **2.12 Frequency of dissemination**

Annually.

## **2.13 Legal acts and other agreements**

Section 6 of the Act on Statistics Denmark (most recently amended by Act no. 599 of 22 June, 2000).

The statistics is an important source for data requested by Eurostat for the "Statistics on Income and Living Conditions" (Regulation (EC) No 1177/2003).

## **2.14 Cost and burden**

There is no response burden for private citizens or businesses is zero as all data is collected via Central Customs and Tax Administrations registers.

## **2.15 Comment**

Additional information is available on Statistics Denmark website under the topic of incomes. It's also possible to contact us by phone or E-mail for further information.

## **3 Statistical processing**

Data is collected and published yearly. The primary source is administrative data from the Danish tax authorities. Using secondary sources from the municipalities and unemployment funds the incomes are subdivided into more detailed types of income. Finally other registers in Statistics Denmark, such as the population register, provides background information.

In case of inconsistencies between data sources on the total income amounts, the data are fitted to match the level of the the tax authorities, which are assumed to be correct.

### 3.1 Source data

The main source are registers operated by the Central Tax Administration. This includes the Central Taxpayers' Register (CSR), the Central Pension Register (CPS), and the Pension Tax Register (PAF).

In addition, the following registers maintained by Statistics Denmark are used:

- Central Business Register
- Register for Labour Market Policy Measures (AMFORA)
- Register of Unemployment Benefit Payments (DUR)
- Register of Population Statistics
- Employment Classification Module (AKM)
- Statistic Denmark's Register of Child Allowance Statistics
- Register of Pension Statistics
- Register of Housing Allowance Statistics

*The Central Taxpayers' Register (CSR):* Data is produced by the Central Customs and Tax Administration. It is based on final tax assessment from the Central Taxpayers' Register. It contains data on income, income tax allowance, and wealth, reported by municipalities to the Central Customs and Tax Administration on the basis of the income tax return forms. Furthermore, the register contains a range of data reported by employers, banks, and municipalities to the tax authorities according to the Danish Tax Control Act. The register also contains information used in valuing social benefits. Finally, the register contains different background information for administrative use: e.g. concerning pensions, joint taxation, and various estimated amounts in connection with income tax assessment.

*Statistic Denmark's e-income Register (The Salary Information Register (COR): Data Produced by the Central Customs and Tax Administration):* The register is based on the information that has to be sent to the tax authority by employers and others who pay out wages and salaries, remunerations, pensions etc. For each employee the pay declaration slip contains information regarding all employment including size and kind of income, size of ATP contributions (labor market supplementary pension contributions) and the amount withheld to A-tax (provisional tax). The register, in this way, makes it possible to split up the A-income into various income types, e.g. wages and salaries, unemployment benefits and social pensions. The register also contains information about some kinds of B-income (other income than A-income dividend from shares and tax free social pensions), e.g. unemployment benefits for self-employed.

*The Central Pension Register (CPS): Data Produced by the Central Customs and Tax Administration in August:* The register contains information about contributions to pension funds which has to be sent to the tax authority by insurance companies, pension funds, financial institution and other administrators of pension capital.

*The Pension Tax Register (PAF): Data Produced by the Central Customs and Tax Administration in August:* The register is based on information about pension withdrawals subject to duties, which have to be sent to the tax authority by insurance companies, pension funds, financial institutions and other administrators of pension capital.

*Statistics Denmark's Central Business Register:* The register contains information about legal enterprise units and possibly their departments. The Register also contains information about the responsible owners of the registered enterprises. A number of identification items are contained in the register, for instance possible responsible owners, civil registration number, information about geographic location, type of ownership, sector, and size.

*Statistics Denmark's Register for Labor Market Policy Measures (AMFORA):* For each individual person the AMFORA includes information about the duration of the periods in which the person

participated in the labor market policy measure.

*Register of Unemployment Benefit Payments:* The register contains information about persons who are insured against unemployment and receive unemployment benefits (excluding holiday allowance benefits). The register includes information about weekly paid unemployment benefits (excluding holiday allowance benefits).

*Register of Population Statistics:* The Register of Population Statistics contains basic demographic information about the Danish population. The basis for the register is the Central Population Register.

*Statistic Denmark's Register of Child Allowance Statistics, Statistic Denmark's Register of Pension Statistics and Statistic Denmark's Register of Housing Allowance Statistics.*

### **3.2 Frequency of data collection**

Once a year.

### **3.3 Data collection**

Administrative registers. Data related to income is collected monthly or annually from the Tax Authorities or *Udbetaling Danmark*, which pay out transfers in Denmark.

### **3.4 Data validation**

Data from the final tax returns are validated by the Tax authorities and the tax payers. The data is assumed to be of high quality. Yearly changes in the incomes is monitored taking into account the development and growth of the economy.

### **3.5 Data compilation**

The final tax returns is assumed to be correct. The income variables from the final tax-returns is mainly collected from the preliminary e-income register. The e-income register makes it possible to sub-categorise the transfers into different types of transfers. However as the final tax returns are fully validated by both authorities and the tax-payer, the final tax assessment is considered the best source of information. Thus incomes from the e-income register are adjusted to fit the validated final tax-returns in cases of inconsistency.

### **3.6 Adjustment**

The final tax returns is assumed to be correct. The income variables from the final tax-returns is mainly collected from the preliminary e-income register. The e-income register makes it possible to sub-categorise the transfers into different types of transfers. However as the final tax returns are fully validated by both authorities and the tax-payer, the final tax assessment is considered the best source of information. Thus incomes from the e-income register are adjusted to fit the validated final tax-returns. The effect of corrections of the micro-data is usually very small in relation to the total income mass.

## **4 Relevance**

The primary users of the income statistics is ministries, municipalities, research institutes and the media. An annual meeting with some of the users of the main welfare statistics is held in Statistics Denmark. On a daily basis users call with questions related to the statistics or comment our publications on Social Media. Through these interactions with the users we continually assess the need for improvements of the statistics.

### **4.1 User Needs**

- *Users:* Municipalities, ministries, organizations, research Institutions and the news media.
- *Application:* To show the development in and composition of income for different sections of the population and to measure income distribution.

### **4.2 User Satisfaction**

No information on user satisfaction have been collected.

### **4.3 Data completeness rate**

Data exists for the entire population. Incomes are primarily based on the final tax statement. Thus published data does not include undeclared incomes, insurance payout and losses/gain of gambling etc. The income can be revised by the tax authorities for up to 5 years, however the data used for income statistics are extracted 8 months following the end of the income reference year.

Data on Tax free cash-benefits are of bad quality in 2014 and 2015 and completely lacking in 2016. in 2016 this affected average disposable income by roughly DKK 250. In Denmark most cash-benefits are taxed. Data and tables on income distribution has been revised in 2017 and makes use of corrected data on tax-free benefits.

## **5 Accuracy and reliability**

The quality is in general considered to be very good for the income types included in the statistics as data have been validated by the Tax authorities. Undeclared incomes, winnings in lotteries etc. may result in a mismatch between actual and register incomes.

As the income statistics is based on full-population registers, there are no sampling errors.

The majority of the data in the income statistics is extracted in August. Thus revisions after this date, will not be taken into account in the income statistics. This mainly affect the self-employed.



## 5.1 Overall accuracy

The quality is in general considered to be very good for the income types included in the statistics.

As the income statistics is based on full-population registers, there are no sampling errors or risk of bias.

The income information in the registers of the Tax authorities are assumed to be correct. Undeclared incomes and mistakes in the reporting of incomes to the Tax authorities will result in a mismatch between actual and register incomes. One-time payments such as insurance payments and winnings from gambling is not part of the statistics either.

Using an earlier data extraction from the tax-registers timeliness has been improved from December to September. As tax statements can be revised for up to five years following the income reference year and the statistics are not revised, this leads to some revisions not making it into the statistics. Based on analysis from 2015 we estimated that total pre-tax income will be measured 0,05 per cent lower than it would have been if we stuck to the old schedule. The group that is primarily affected are the self-employed. Income from self-employed is measured about 1 per cent lower, than it otherwise would have been if we had stayed with the old schedule. A 2007 analysis shows that the amount of revisions declines exponentially with time. Thus the amount of revisions lost after the November extraction is assumed to be negligible.

## 5.2 Sampling error

The administrative registers fully cover the population. Thus there is no statistical uncertainty

## 5.3 Non-sampling error

Undeclared incomes and mistakes in the reporting of incomes to the Tax authorities will result in a mismatch between actual and register incomes. One-time payments such as insurance payments and winnings from gambling is not part of the statistics either.

The statistics includes imputed rent for home owners. It's assigned as a percentage of the public tax evaluation of owned real-estate. This income is purely theoretical and is subject to uncertainty.

## 5.4 Quality management

Statistics Denmark follows the recommendations on organisation and management of quality given in the Code of Practice for European Statistics (CoP) and the implementation guidelines given in the Quality Assurance Framework of the European Statistical System (QAF). A Working Group on Quality and a central quality assurance function have been established to continuously carry through control of products and processes.

## 5.5 Quality assurance

Statistics Denmark follows the principles in the Code of Practice for European Statistics (CoP) and uses the Quality Assurance Framework of the European Statistical System (QAF) for the implementation of the principles. This involves continuous decentralized and central control of products and processes based on documentation following international standards. The central quality assurance function reports to the Working Group on Quality. Reports include suggestions for improvement that are assessed, decided and subsequently implemented.

## 5.6 Quality assessment

Undeclared incomes and mistakes in the reporting of incomes to the Tax authorities will result in a mismatch between actual and register incomes. One-time payments such as insurance payments and winnings from gambling is not part of the statistics either. As the income statistics is based on full-population registers, there are no statistical uncertainty and the overall quality of the tax statement are considered to be quite good as the tax statements has to be approved both by the tax authorities and the individual tax payers.

Timeliness has been improved from December to September by using an earlier data extraction from the tax-registers . As tax statements can be revised for up to five years following the income reference year and the statistics are not revised, this leads to some revisions not making it into the statistics. Based on analysis from 2015 we estimated that total pre-tax income will be measured 0,05 per cent lower than it would have been if we stuck to the old schedule. The group that is primarily affected are the self-employed. Income from self-employed is measured about 1 per cent lower, than it otherwise would have been if we had stayed with the old schedule. A 2007 analysis show that the amount of revisions declines exponentially with time. Thus the amount of revisions lost after the November extraction is assumed to be negligible.

## 5.7 Data revision - policy

Statistics Denmark revises published figures in accordance with the [Revision Policy for Statistics Denmark](#). The common procedures and principles of the Revision Policy are for some statistics supplemented by a specific revision practice.

## 5.8 Data revision practice

There are no revision. However a preliminary statistic is published about 6 months earlier (a-income statistics). This statistic only covers wages and transfers. On these parameters the difference to the final register is less than 0,12 pct. In total the a-incomes make up 85-90 pct. of total pre-tax income as it does not include entrepreneurial and property incomes.

## 6 Timeliness and punctuality

Most tables on income statistics are published in September, nine months after after the end of the income reference year along with the annual newsletter. Socioeconomic status, imputed rent, disposable income and income distribution indicators are published in November. The statistics has always been published as planned.

### 6.1 Timeliness and time lag - final results

Most tables on income statistics are published in September, nine months after after the end of the income reference year along with the annual newsletter. Socioeconomic status, imputed rent, disposable income and income distribution indicators are published in November. For the exact dates see the [scheduled releases](#)

### 6.2 Punctuality

This statistic is normally published on the announced date with no delays.

## 7 Comparability

Income statistics are quite consistent over time if you use the coherent time series on our website. The statistics were last revised in 2013. Dating back to 1987 the data has been revised.

Eurostat and OECD are the recommended sources for making international comparisons. However users should take care not to over interpret the data as minor differences in the concepts of Incomes and data sources may skew indicators.

### 7.1 Comparability - geographical

Reliably comparing incomes for different countries is very difficult. Insurance-, pension- and welfare systems differ from country to country. In addition the price level and the level of the welfare services makes it hard to interpret differences in the disposable income, when estimating economic living conditions. Finally Denmark, the other Nordic countries, Holland and Slovenia are among the only Countries that base income statistics on complete registers. In other countries the statistics is survey based and thus affected by statistical uncertainty.

### 7.2 Comparability over time

*2013 revision:* The income statistics has been revised with the publication of 2013-data. The catalyst for this was a similar revision of the national accounts.

The main changes:

- Interest for businesses is moved from property income to entrepreneurial incomes.
- Church taxes are no longer categorized to be a tax.
- The level of imputed rent has been adjusted to fit the level in the national accounts.
- In the socio-economic distribution, students are now only considered wage earners if they work in excess of 950 hours a year.

For starters the revision has been carried out on data from 2010.

More information on the [revision](#) (In Danish):

*1994 tax reform:* Some tax-free transfers were increased and made subject for taxation. This increases the pre-tax incomes for the recipients, but have little effect on the disposable income. The same reform introduced the modern Labor Market contributions (Arbejdsmarkedetsbidrag).

### **7.3 Coherence - cross domain**

As most income related statistics share data sources, the data is often comparable.

Statistics on certain transfers are available in the Statbank. They are mostly based on data from municipal social registers. There will not be an exact match between these statistics and the income statistics, but for the large majority of individuals the data should match. Wage statistics are done on a standardized hourly wage at a selected time. This is not comparable to the annual income statistic as people change job and labour market status during the year.

EU-SILC is a survey carried out in more than 30 European countries and is the primary source for income statistics in many European countries. In SILC the income definitions is harmonised, and with the above mentioned reservations somewhat comparable. The primary difference between the income concepts in this statistic and the Danish SILC incomes is that imputed rent of housing and interest on mortgages is not included in the SILC incomes. Furthermore SILC use a different household definition, than the families used in this statistic.

Finally it's worth noting that SILC is a survey and thus is subject to statistical uncertainty. Find more information on the SILC [here](#).

[Danish Paper](#) on difference between the national registers and SILC.

### **7.4 Coherence - internal**

There are no inconsistencies.

## **8 Accessibility and clarity**

The statistics are published on our [website](#), in an annual [newsletter](#) and via the [statbank](#).

Furthermore there are tables on income in the publication [Statistisk Tiårsoversigt](#) (Danish only)

### **8.1 Release calendar**

The publication date appears in the release calendar. The date is confirmed in the weeks before.

### **8.2 Release calendar access**

The Release Calendar can be accessed on our English website: [Release Calendar](#).

### **8.3 User access**

Statistics are always published at 8:00 a.m. at the day announced in the release calendar. No one outside of Statistics Denmark can access the statistics before they are published.

### **8.4 News release**

[Annual newsletter](#) (Danish only).

## 8.5 Publications

The statistics are published on our [website](#), in an annual [newsletter](#) and via the [statbank](#).

Furthermore there are tables on income in the following publications - [Statistisk Tiårsoversigt](#) (Danish only) - [Statistical yearbook](#)

## 8.6 On-line database

Income statistics is available in the [statbank](#).

## 8.7 Micro-data access

Access to micro-data is possible through cooperation with Danish research institutions. Read more [here](#).

## 8.8 Other

Custom made tables can be ordered through our customer centre. Read more about terms and conditions, confidentiality and find contact information on our [website](#).

Income statistics based on a sample from our national income register is also available at Eurostats website. However the statistics are not fully comparable due to varying definitions on households and incomes.

## 8.9 Confidentiality - policy

The income statistics adhere to the [policies of confidentiality](#) is Statistics Denmark.

## 8.10 Confidentiality - data treatment

The small island of Christiansø have been grouped with Bornholm in publications. Discretionary measures ensures that it's not possible to identify the incomes of individuals in the publications.

## 8.11 Documentation on methodology

The income variables are documented in Times. (in Danish only) - Personal income in [Times](#) - Family incomes in [Times](#)

## 8.12 Quality documentation

Results from the quality evaluation of products and selected processes are available in detail for each statistics and in summary reports for the Working Group on Quality.

## 9 Contact

The administrative placement of this statistics is in the division of Personal Finances and Welfare Statistics. The person responsible is Jarl Quitzau, tel. +45 39 17 35 94, e-mail: [jaq@dst.dk](mailto:jaq@dst.dk)

### **9.1 Contact organisation**

Statistics Denmark

### **9.2 Contact organisation unit**

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