

## INTRODUCTION

Since 2003, the Statistical Yearbook produced by the Regione Siciliana has been advocating itself as a source of official statistical information for Sicily, comprising an up-to date factual synthesis at the disposal of the general public. Last year's edition was innovative in the sense of launching a collaboration between the ISTAT Regional Office for Sicily and the Statistical Service of the Regione Siciliana, which, through an agreement signed by all interested parties, set up an apposite scientific committee and introduced several modifications to the publication; these have been kept in the present edition. The introductory comments for each chapter aim to be user-friendly in describing the most significant and important indicators; the tables have been arranged in a uniform fashion for each section. A historical series of Regional data has been provided, which might help delineate the mid-period trends; there is also a decomposition at the Provincial level of the final year of the time series. There are constant comparisons between Regional data and the North/centre and South/islands, as well as the overall national figures, and the glossary of terminology has also been expanded.

In the chapter structure, from 1<sup>st</sup> (Environment and Territory) to 17<sup>th</sup> (Industry), the sequences of statistics per sector, which had already been proposed in previous editions, has remained unaltered. On the other hand, the two subsequent sections provide information regarding more specific topics, i.e. the complex and variegated area of territorial comparisons. In the first of these, devoted to the performance of Sicily in relation to the lines of development laid down by the council of Europe in the "Lisbon 2010" strategy, one can find indicators that (on the basis of Eurostat methodology) enable one to make comparisons between the NUTS2 regions in the European classification. The 19<sup>th</sup> and final chapter is devoted to "Provincial differences in Italy" and contains 40 charts representing the provincial distribution of several demographic, social and economic indicators, providing a rapid overview of the territorial differences existing in Italy.

This publication aims to add further pieces of information to the Regional jigsaw puzzle, enabling the reader to compare it to other areas in Italy and to better understand a region in a state of continuous evolution. A composite profile emerges, made up of shadows and light, which links each chapter with a different topic of interest, ranging from the economy to public administration, from the state of the environment to demographic and social trends, concentrating the latest statistical data in a single and complex whole. The data in this yearbook is also available on the web-site of the Statistical Services of

the Regione Siciliana ([www.regione.sicilia.it/bilancio/statistica](http://www.regione.sicilia.it/bilancio/statistica)), with additional indications regarding further reading and other on-line links for each topic; these will enable the user to pursue his/her own lines of research in the individual areas of interest.

***On behalf of the scientific  
committee -  
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