

## **Presentation**

*The VI edition of the Statistical Yearbook for the Region of Sicily, which again this year I have the pleasure of presenting, offers the general public an informational instrument that maintains its high standards of completeness and thoroughness. The Regional Statistical Service, with its offices at the Budget and Finance Department, continues to carry out its duties of providing the informational starting-point for a line of development that is dictated by the requirements imposed by the contextual conditions. The subject of “a society of knowledge” is common currency within local government, whose duty it is to work towards the possibility of a complete understanding of administrative processes.*

*It has to be said that the new frontiers of competition, between national and regional systems in the global market, transform research and innovation into a battlefield from which it is difficult to extricate oneself. One is led to think more and more often about the importance of information in all fields, and markedly so in the productive processes of the highest value added. However, the acquisition of knowledge must not be transformed into uncritical and indiscriminate accumulation. All data-input must be opportunely elaborated and selected; it must mirror real phenomena and lend itself to continuous verification in order to establish its reliability; in practical terms it needs to be backed up by statistics which, in the state sector and respecting constitutional principles, ought to be geared towards criteria of impartiality, accessibility and democratic checks.*

*Similar thinking has for some time inspired the actions of the Regional administration in this sector, and has encouraged us to proceed along the path of improvement in the quality of our products, as well as the diffusion and transparency of the results achieved. In this sense, the collaboration and synergy between the ISTAT office for Sicily and our own offices continues to be of importance, in virtue of the signed agreement, indicating in this inter-institutional collaboration (which also produced this publication) a powerful instrument for innovation.*

*Palermo, December 2007*

**Councillor for the Budget and Finance  
Department of the  
Regione Siciliana  
The Honourable Guido Lo Porto**

*Publication of the Regional Statistical Yearbook continues the policy of projection outwards on the part of the Budget and Treasury Department – Accountant General- of the Sicilian Region, operating in the sphere of statistics with the objective of providing, to both public administration and the general public, an informational basis for public decision-making processes and the opportunity to find out more about the territorial indicators.*

*The success of the initiative has been endorsed further by the results of the diffusion of the preceding editions. 1,800 copies have been printed in each of the years since 2003, and distributed, not only to bookshops, but also to local administration, libraries and any schools that might have expressed an interest; the yearbook has become something of a habitual appointment and a constant point of reference for its numerous readers. An on-line edition is also available, with a version in English, representing a compendium of data, comments and analysis about a complex region (and one that is probably one of a kind).*

*Our Statistical Service has collaborated fruitfully in the preparation of this publication with the Regional ISTAT Office for Sicily, and has thus rendered the signed agreement highly profitable, and is continually striving to improve its relations with the general public through a useful and most practical service.*

*Palermo, December 2007*

***Accountant General for the Region  
Vincenzo Emanuele***