



**An
Phríomh-Oifig
Staidrimh**

Central
Statistics
Office

Standard SIMS Report: Livestock Slaughterings



Single Integrated Metadata Structure (SIMS) Report

For

Livestock Slaughtering

This documentation applies to the reporting period:
2025

Last edited: February 2025



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2. Introduction

The purpose of the Livestock Slaughterings survey is to collect statistical information pertaining to the slaughtering of livestock in the state. Information from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) and Local Authority abattoirs is collated to provide the total number and weight of cattle, sheep and pigs that are slaughtered in Ireland each month.

3. Contact

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4. Metadata Update

4.1. Metadata last certified

18th February 2025

4.2. Metadata last posted

27th February 2025

4.3. Metadata last update

18th February 2025



5. Statistical Presentation

5.1. Data Description

The Livestock Slaughtering release provides details on the number and carcass weight of cattle, sheep and pigs slaughtered in a calendar month. These figures include slaughterings at both meat establishments approved by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) and slaughterhouses and meat plants approved by Local Authorities under S.I.432 of 2009.

5.2. Classification System

Three broad output categories are used to detail the slaughterings: Cattle, Sheep and Pigs.

The former two are further broken down into:

- Cattle: Steers, Heifers, Cows, Bulls and Calves
- Sheep: Lambs and Sheep

5.3. Sector Coverage

Not applicable.

5.4. Statistical Concepts and Definitions

The results are mainly compiled based on administrative data with a small amount of survey work also carried out.

Cattle: Average weights for adult cattle by category are provided monthly by DAFM. A fixed average weight is used for calves. The same figures are used for animals slaughtered at both DAFM and Local Authority approved plants.

The cattle carcass weight is defined as the weight of the slaughtered animal's cold body after being skinned, bled and eviscerated and after removal of external genitalia, the limb at the carpus and tarsus, head, tail, kidneys and kidney fats and the udder.

Sheep: Weekly average carcass weights for lambs are provided by DAFM and are used to calculate a monthly figure which is used with the data on numbers from DAFM approved plants. A set average weight is used for Ewes/Rams. The same figures are used for animals slaughtered at both DAFM and Local Authority approved plants.

The sheep carcass weight is defined as the weight of the slaughtered animal's cold body after being skinned, bled and eviscerated and after removal of the head, feet, tail and genital organs including the udder. Kidneys and kidney fats are included in the carcass.

Pigs: Average weights are calculated using data provided by the 3 Pork and Bacon premises that we survey.

The pig carcass weight is defined as the weight of the slaughtered animal's cold body either whole or divided in half along the mid-line, after being bled and eviscerated and after the removal of the tongue, bristles, hooves, genitalia, flare fat, kidneys and diaphragm.

5.5. Statistical Unit

Slaughterhouses and meat plants.

5.6. Statistical Population

Slaughterhouses and meat plants operating in Ireland.



5.7. Reference Area

State.

5.8. Time Coverage

1975–2025

5.9. Base Period

Not applicable.

6. Unit of Measure

The number of animals slaughtered is published in thousands of heads, while weights are published in thousands of tonnes.

7. Reference Period

1975–2025

8. Institutional Mandate

8.1. Legal Acts and Other Agreements

8.1.1. National Legal Acts

The subject of the statistics is the number and carcass weight of cattle, sheep and pigs slaughtered at both meat establishments approved by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) and slaughterhouses and meat plants approved by Local Authorities under S.I.432 of 2009.

8.1.2. European Legal Acts

The collection of monthly slaughtering data for pigs, cattle and sheep is governed by Regulation (EU) 2022/2379 and Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/2745.

8.2. Data Sharing

Not applicable.

9. Confidentiality

9.1. Confidentiality – Policy

All information supplied to the CSO is treated as strictly confidential. The Statistics Act, 1993 sets stringent confidentiality standards: Information collected may be used only for statistical purposes, and no details that might be related to an identifiable person or business undertaking may be divulged to any other government department or body.

These national statistical confidentiality provisions are reinforced by the following EU legislation: Council Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 on European statistics for data collected for EU statistical purposes. Further details are outlined in the CSO's Code of Practice on Statistical Confidentiality.

For more information on the CSO confidentiality policy please visit:

<https://www.cso.ie/en/aboutus/lgdp/csodatapolicies/statisticalconfidentiality/>



9.2. Confidentiality – Data treatment

There are no confidentiality constraints/issues with the data in this release.
All the information is aggregated to industry level.

10. Release Policy

10.1. Release Calendar

The date of dissemination of all statistics released by CSO can be found in the Release Calendar published on the CSO website. This calendar is regularly updated.

10.2. Release Calendar Access

The release calendar can be accessed via the CSO website, www.cso.ie, or directly from this link:
<https://www.cso.ie/en/csolatestnews/releasecalendar/>

10.3. User Access

In accordance with Principle 6 of the European Statistics Code of Practice all users of CSO statistics have equal access via the CSO website at the same time of 11 am. Any privileged pre-release access to any outside user is limited, controlled, and publicised. In the event that leaks occur, pre-release arrangements are revised so as to ensure impartiality.

The CSO recognises that in very limited circumstances a business need for pre-release access may be substantiated. Any form of pre-release access is a privilege and a strict CSO pre-release access policy is adhered to for these special requests. The full pre-release access policy can be accessed at:
<https://www.cso.ie/en/aboutus/lgdp/csodatapolicies/csopolicyonpre-releaseaccess/>

The various results are published nationally in statistical release format as well as on the CSO website (www.cso.ie). Selected extracts from the results are posted on the CSO's data dissemination database, PxStat.

11. Frequency of Dissemination

Monthly.

12. Accessibility and Clarity

12.1. News Release

There are no news releases for this publication.

12.2. Publications

The most recent release is available on the CSO website:
<https://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/agriculture/livestockslaughterings/>

12.3. On-line Database

The livestock slaughtering data is accessible from the CSO dissemination database, PxStat:
<https://data.cso.ie/product/ls>



12.3.1. AC 1. Data tables – Consultations

In 2024, the Livestock Slaughtering Survey had 3,631 page views. The number of active users for this period was 1,269. There were 20,445 hits on PxStat.

12.4. Micro-data Access

Not applicable.

12.5. Other

Not applicable.

12.5.1. AC2. Metadata Consultations

Not calculated.

12.6. Documentation on Methodology

Further information on the methodology used to compile the Livestock Slaughtering Survey can be found on the CSO's Methods page for the release:

<https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/agriculture/livestockslaughterings/>

12.6.1. AC3 – Metadata Completeness – Rate

Not calculated.

12.7. Quality Documentation

For more information and documentation on the quality associated to this release please refer to the CSO's Methods page for the release:

<https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/qualityreports/livestockslaughterings>

13. Quality Management

13.1. Quality Assurance

Quality Management Framework

The CSO avails of an office wide Quality Management Framework (QMF). This framework allows all CSO processes and outputs to meet the required standard as set out in the European Statistics Code of Practice (ESCoP). The QMF foundations are based on establishing the UNECE's Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM) as the operating statistical production model to achieve a standardised approach to Quality Management. All and any changes implemented to CSO processes and outputs require adherence to the QMF.

13.2. Quality Assessment

The CSO requires that all produced outputs complete an annual self-assessment exercise to review the quality of the process used to generate disseminated products and the quality of the product itself. The latest iteration of this exercise highlighted that a revision of the methodology used to compile these statistics might be beneficial to generate processing efficiencies.



14. Relevance

14.1. User Needs

Regulation (EU) 2022/2379 and Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/2745 sets the legal basis for establishing a harmonised methodology for the compilation of meat production data across all EU member states.

14.1.1. Main National Users

- Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM)
- Bord Bia
- CSO

14.1.2. Principal External Users

- Eurostat

14.2. User Satisfaction

Not measured.

14.3. Data Completeness

Not calculated.

14.3.1. Data Completeness Rate

Not calculated.

15. Accuracy and Reliability

15.1. Overall Accuracy

DAFM is the main data provider for slaughtering data. All slaughterings carried out on DAFM approved plants are recorded by DAFM. Therefore, DAFM can provide comprehensive and reliable data to the CSO.

The data is timely, usually arriving in the CSO no more than a week after the reference period.

The reference period is a calendar month and where data is provided for an accounting month, CSO carry out the necessary adjustments to ensure data relates only to the reference period.

15.2. Sampling Error

Not applicable.

15.2.1. A1. Sampling Error Indicator

Not applicable.

15.3. Non-Sampling Error

The main sources of non-sampling error refer to measurement, non-response error and processing errors and are further explained in this report.

15.3.1. Coverage Error

Not applicable.



15.3.1.1. A2. Over Coverage Rate

Not applicable.

15.3.1.2. A3. Common Units – Proportion

Not applicable.

15.3.2. Measurement Error

CSO relies largely on administrative data from DAFM and as such has no control over any possible measurement error.

15.3.3. Non-Response Error

DAFM is the main data provider. The data is timely, usually arriving in the CSO no more than a week after the reference period. Therefore, non-response is limited to the 28 Local Authorities. Typically, more than half of these will return completed survey questionnaires within the required period. Where no survey questionnaire is returned, data provided for the previous period is carried until revised data becomes available.

15.3.3.1. Unit Non-Response Rate

Not applicable.

15.3.3.2. Item Non-Response Rate

Not applicable.

15.3.4. Processing Error

All work goes through an extensive checking process after completion, ensuring verification of each step of the computation right back to source data. All amendments/changes are commented on in the Excel spreadsheet. The source of the data is also listed in the spreadsheet and a copy of the data is kept on the file to enable checking and verification at each stage.

Once the data has been compiled, it is passed to the next supervisor for checking.

The checking process is escalated upwards to HEO level. It is then passed to the Statistician for further checking and analysis.

15.3.5. Model Assumption Error

Not calculated.

16. Timeliness and Punctuality

16.1. Timeliness

The use of administrative data sources translates into timeliness of the published results being excellent.

16.1.1. TP1. Time lag – First results

Preliminary results are not compiled.



16.1.2. TP2. Time lag – Final results

T+1 month.

The final results are prepared, published by the CSO and transmitted to Eurostat within 1 month of the end of the reference period.

16.2. Punctuality

The Livestock Slaughterings statistics are disseminated within the timeframe indicated in the CSO's advance release calendar.

16.2.1. TP3. Punctuality – Delivery and Publication

0 days. Statistics always disseminated on time.

17. Comparability

17.1. Comparability – Geographical

Not applicable.

17.1.1. CC1. Asymmetry for Mirror Flow statistics

Not applicable.

17.2. Comparability over time

The existing series starts in 1975. The results are governed by the Regulation (EU) 2022/2379 and Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/2745.

It is worth pointing out that results submitted to Eurostat prior to 2009 include on-farm kill.

Results for periods after Jan 1st 2010 do not include on-farm slaughterings.

In some countries, the numbers slaughtered on-farm is significant and so results are not comparable with earlier years. This is not the case for Ireland.

The methodology used to calculate the weight of slaughtered sheep changed in July 2013 due to the availability of new data sources. As a result, there is a break in series and the data prior to July 2013 are not directly comparable with those of subsequent months. Otherwise, methodological and definitional practices have not changed significantly in recent years.

17.2.1. Length of Comparable Time series

12 years.

17.3. Coherence – Cross domain

Similar data on slaughterings carried out in DAFM approved premises are published in DAFM's Meat Market Report and on Bord Bia's website. These serve as useful cross-checks when compiling CSO's final results. However, the CSO's published results differ from these two other sources of slaughtering data due to different reference periods and the completeness of the data.

The CSO data is based on data received from both DAFM and Local Authority approved slaughtering facilities and is compiled on a calendar monthly basis. Bord Bia's Throughput figures and DAFM's Meat Market Report are compiled on a weekly basis and cover data from DAFM approved slaughtering facilities only.



17.3.1. Coherence – Sub annual and Annual statistics

Not applicable.

17.3.2. Coherence with National Accounts

Not applicable.

17.4. Coherence – Internal

Not applicable.

18. Cost and Burden

Estimates of Cost and Burden can be obtained from the Response Burden Barometer:
<https://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/enterprisestatistics/responseburdenbarometer/>

Survey specific information is available via CSO's dissemination database PxStat:
<https://data.cso.ie/product/RBB>

19. Data Revision

19.1. Data Revision Policy

Published statistics are subject to correction and revision for a variety of reasons. The most common reasons include the receipt of additional information (for example, late survey responses) and updated seasonal factors. Occasional revisions also occur as a result of changes to definitions, methodology, classifications and general updating of statistical series.

It is recognised internationally that the existence of a sound revisions policy maintains credibility in official statistics. The CSO General Revisions Policy, which details how revisions should be managed and communicated to users, outlines the three main types of revisions:

- Planned Routine Revisions
- Planned Major Revisions
- Unplanned Revisions.

One reason for unplanned revisions occurring can be when errors are detected after publication. The 'CSO Error Correction Policy – How to deal with Publication Errors' outlines the steps taken when these errors are detected. As required under Principle 6.3 of the European Statistics Code of Practice, errors detected in published statistics are corrected at the earliest possible date and users are informed. An important step in the process is the documentation and analysis of errors that have occurred and their causes. This allows the CSO to take measures preventing similar errors from occurring in the future and uniformity in dealing with them when they do.

The data revision policy that CSO statistics adheres to can be found via the following link:
<https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/quality/treatmentofrevisions/>

19.2. Data Revision Practice

Results cannot be considered final until six months after the relevant reference period. Revisions are generally very small and do not significantly impact the overall results.

19.2.1. Data Revision – Average size

Not calculated.



20. Statistical Processing

20.1. Source Data

DAFM forwards to the CSO the data on the number of slaughterings in meat establishments approved by the Department monthly, which covers approximately 95% of the total number of livestock slaughterings. The remaining 5% are carried out in slaughterhouses and meat plants approved by Local Authorities under S.I.432 of 2009 and each Local Authority collects data on these premises in their area.

Average carcass weights of cattle are obtained from the Department's Beef Carcass Classification Scheme. Average weights of sheep are derived from the data provided by DAFM. Average weights of pigs are based on information provided directly by the Pork and Bacon export factories.

20.1.1. Population and Sampling frame

All slaughtering in slaughterhouses and meat plants operating in Ireland.

20.1.2. Sampling Design

Not applicable.

20.1.3. Survey Size

Not applicable.

20.1.4. Survey Technique

A request for the administrative data is sent to DAFM by email a few days after the month end. The data is returned to CSO by email.

Local Authorities make their returns through electronic questionnaire.

20.2. Frequency of Data collection

Monthly.

20.3. Data Collection

DAFM forwards to the CSO the data on the number of slaughterings in meat establishments approved by the Department monthly, which covers approximately 95% of the total number of livestock slaughterings.

The remaining 5% are carried out in slaughterhouses and meat plants approved by Local Authorities under S.I.432 of 2009 and each Local Authority collects data on these premises in their area.

CSO surveys Local Authorities via an electronic questionnaire.

20.3.1. Type of Survey/Process

DAFM: Administrative data requested by CSO and returned by email each month.

Local Authorities: Electronic survey questionnaire (eQ) issued each month to 28 Local Authorities.

Pork and Bacon Premises: Electronic survey questionnaire (eQ) issued each month to 3 plants.

20.3.2. Questionnaire (including explanations)

Not applicable.



20.3.3. Survey Participation

Participation in the survey is voluntary.

20.3.4. Data Capture

Data is received from DAFM by email in Excel format.

Data is received from Local Authorities via electronic questionnaire and processed in SAS.

Further processing occurs in Microsoft Excel spreadsheets.

20.4. Data Validation

Verification: Once received, data is checked through for any obvious errors. Large deviations from previous periods or expected values are queried with the respondent and changed if necessary. Otherwise, note is taken of the explanation for the change.

Crosschecking: Slaughterings can be cross-checked against Agri Industry publications and Throughput data on the Bord Bia website. e.g., <https://www.bordbia.ie/farmers-growers/prices-markets/>

Checking: Once the data has been compiled, it is passed to the next supervisor for checking. The checking process is escalated upwards to HEO level. The completed release & tables are then passed to the Statistician for analysis before proceeding to publication stage.

Comments, where necessary, are entered into cells of Excel spreadsheet detailing any communication with respondent, reasons for deviations and/or any revisions.

20.5. Data Compilation

There is no further manipulation of the data once received other than the imputation methodology explained below.

20.5.1. Imputation (for Non-Response or Incomplete Data Sets)

As most of the data is provided by one administrative source (DAFM), the potential for non-response is limited to the 28 Local Authorities. Typically, more than half of these will return completed survey questionnaires within the required period. Where no survey questionnaire is returned, data for the previous period is carried until revised data becomes available, usually before the next release.

20.5.1.1. A7. Imputation Rate

Not calculated.

20.5.2. Grossing and Weighting

Neither grossing nor weighting methods are required to arrive at the final estimate.

20.6. Adjustment

20.6.1. Seasonal Adjustment

Easter falls each year on a Sunday between March 22nd and April 25th, inclusively. The level of sheep slaughterings in March and April each year is greatly influenced by when Easter falls.

21. Comment