



CBS Embargo policy

15 May 2017

Statistics Netherlands (CBS) can give public-sector organisations and news organisations a preview of new messages under embargo before the official publication date and time announced in the schedule. As such, CBS meets the wish of stakeholders to be able to prepare themselves using the figures. On its website, CBS announces the publications and parties concerned.

CBS reserves the right to allow a preview under embargo if such is requested. No party is entitled to issuance under embargo; whether and to whom information is issued under embargo is assessed on a case-by-case basis. Reasons for issuance include if the requesting party can be regarded as a party involved in the figures in any way and if the issuance of an embargo may result in a better quality of dissemination.

Under no circumstance can issuance under embargo lead to influencing of CBS, attempted or otherwise, with regard to the content of the publication and/or the timing of publication. When an embargo is violated, the possibility of a preview is cancelled for a certain period of time.

In principle, a preview is given no more than 24 hours before the moment of publication. That period can be extended if there are good reasons to do so. On the other hand, at times, messages are *not* available 24 hours before the moment of publication. In that case, the purport of the message may be shared under embargo. That decision is taken by the Director responsible (when it concerns issuance to government institutions) and the Editor-in-chief (when it concerns issuance to the media).

Ministries can be given a preview under embargo in order to enable government members to prepare themselves for questions. In a number of cases, it concerns a regular issuance under embargo to ministries, the CPB (Netherlands Bureau for Economic Policy Analysis) and DNB (Dutch Central Bank). This is published on the CBS

website. Again, the preview period is, in principle, a maximum of 24 hours. This applies to the following messages and parties¹:

Statistics	Party
Employment (monthly)	Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment (SZW), Ministry of General Affairs (AZ)
Economic growth (quarterly)	Ministry of Economic Affairs (EZ), Ministry of General Affairs (AZ), Ministry of Finance (FIN), CPB, DNB
Government finances (quarterly) Affairs (AZ)	Ministry of Finance (FIN), Ministry of General
International trade (monthly)	Ministry of Foreign Affairs (BuZa)

It is also possible for a message to be issued to government institutions under embargo on an occasional basis. Government institutions can send such requests to their account manager at CBS. The CBS Director responsible decides on a case-by-case basis, in coordination with the Director General, if necessary. Non-regular issuances are recorded on a list that is published on the website.

A preview under embargo may also be granted to the media. This enables news organisations to prepare their coverage of CBS messages. Messages that may be issued to the media under embargo are marked (E) in the publication schedule. Requests for issuance under embargo can be sent to persdienst@cbs.nl. The Editor-in-chief, in coordination with the Director General, if necessary, decides which productions and which parties qualify for issuance under embargo. Messages that contain information that might affect stock market prices are never issued to the media under embargo. The media or other parties are not granted any exclusivity.

In the case of a paid commissioned project, the client may be granted a preview in order to check if the instruction was complied with. Agreements about this are made in advance. In the case of a collaboration with other institutes such as joint publications,

¹ At the time of this memorandum being published. The updated list can be found on the CBS website, separately.

for instance, information is, in general, exchanged during different stages of the process. This too, is documented in advance.

In individual cases, the policy may be deviated from when the situation gives rise to it. This is at the discretion of the Director General. The “apply or explain” principle applies in that respect. This means that when the general policy is deviated from, an explanation is given as to why it is deemed important to deviate from the general policy rule in that specific and individual case.

CBS evaluates the embargo policy on an annual basis and the results thereof will be submitted to the Advisory Council. On the basis of its own evaluations, questions and feedback from parties involved, CBS may decide to change the formulated policy as part of its general quality policy.