Glossary:Lagging indicator

Statistics Explained

A **lagging indicator** is an economic statistical indicator that changes after macroeconomic conditions have already changed. Typical examples of lagging indicators are unemployment figures, profits or interest rates. Within short-term statistics the number of persons employed is a typical lagging indicator.

The lagging indicator is contrasted with the coincident indicator which changes simultaneously with economic conditions, and the leading indicator which changes in advance of expected economic evolutions.

Lagging indicators are used to confirm economic trends that have already been predicted by leading indicators or shown by coincident indicators. Although they change after the change in the general economic conditions, they are still useful since they are available before complete national accounts data.

Further information

- The Economist glossary
- Investor Glossary

Related concepts

- Coincident indicator
- Leading indicator

Statistical data

- Unemployment statistics