

Reducing respondents' burden

Austria

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Also available at: http://www.statistik.at/web_en/about_us/responsibilities_and_principles

Statistics Austria regards the citizens and companies from whom it obtains data as partners and, adhering to the provisions of the Federal Statistics Act and its own mission statement, endeavours to minimise the workload placed on respondents as a result of surveys. The implementation of measures to reduce the workload and close cooperation with the interest groups of those with a duty to provide information are primary concerns with the highest priority.

Measures for reducing the burden

- Use of existing data sources (administrative data, public registers): clear precedence over Statistics Austria surveys
- Principle of non-obligation: surveys are prescribed only when the voluntary provision of information cannot be expected
- Precedence of random sampling: full survey only when sampling is not appropriate
- Reduction of the scale of samples by modifying survey designs (e.g. concentrated sample) and the use of suitable estimation methods in order to replace non-surveyed data with estimates

- Use of efficient, user-friendly, Internet-based survey tools.

Measuring the reduced burden

In conjunction with the cooperation agreement between WKÖ (Austrian Chamber of Commerce) and Statistics Austria, a monitoring system has been developed for measuring companies' workload resulting from obligatory Statistics Austria surveys ("workload barometer") The time input required to satisfy reporting obligations is used as the primary measure for ascertaining the workload. The results available for the period 2001-2006 show:

In the years 2001 to 2006, the workload for Austrian companies was reduced by a total of 12.8% as a result of regular, obligatory surveys conducted by Statistics Austria. This significant reduction is due primarily to the increased use of administrative data and new and more efficient survey designs.

The main results of the "workload barometer" are made available to the public at least once a year in the Statistical Newsletter and on the "Respondents' burden barometer" web page published by Statistics Austria.