Ifo Meta Survey:
Test of the Test
in the Trade Sector

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Outline

- Motivation
- What we have done
- Some results
Motivation
Ifo Business Cycle Test

- Since 1949
- Ifo Business Climate since beginning of the 70s
- Ifo Business Climate Service Sector since 2005
- Credit Constraints Indicator since 2008
Ifo Business Climate

Current Situation (CS)

We assess our current business situation for xy as good satisfactory bad

Expectations for the next 6 months (EX)
Our business situation for XY will be – excluding seasonal fluctuations – better about the same worse
What we have done
Procedure

1. Development of questions regarding questions in the regular survey and regarding further points (e.g. seasonal adjustment)
2. Pretest phase I: Face-to-Face, open interviews
3. Development of questionnaire and answer categories
4. Pretest phase II: Test of questionnaire (understanding)
5. Final version of questionnaire
Questions

Business Situation:

- 1 question about factors, 2 questions about yardstick of comparison
- Assessments from „very important“ to „insignificant“ (4 grades)

Business Expectations:

- 1 question about factors
- Assessments from „very important“ to „insignificant“ (4 grades)
Questions

Further questions about:

- Stock of goods
- Prices
- Order plans
- Employment plans
- Seasonal adjustment
- Information about the respondent
Some results
Which factors are important in your assessment of the current business situation?
Business situation

What is your yardstick of comparison?
82% use two or more than one criteria
Business situation

When you compare with a former situation, with which one?
68% use more than one
Business expectations

Which factors are relevant for your assessment of your business expectations?
Business expectations (factors)
Inventories

What are the factors when you assess the stock of goods?
77% use 2 to 4 criteria
What are the situation you have in mind, when you answer whether your prices rise/remain unchanged/fall?
Selling prices

- Average prices of most important products (turnover)
- Average prices
- Price of most important product (turnover)
- Other
Order plans

What are the factors when you assess your order plans?
Order plans (factors)
Employment plans

What kind of employees do you count in addition to regular full and part time employees?

Do you count heads or full time equivalents?
Employment plans (heads/full time equivalents)
Seasonal adjustment

Is it possible for you to adjust for seasonal fluctuations? How are you doing this?
Seasonal adjustment