

Standard documentation Meta information

(Definitions, comments, methods, quality)

on

Survey on research and experimental development (R&D) in the Business Enterprise Sector

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Executive Summary

The “Survey on research and experimental development (R&D) in the Business Enterprise Sector“ is a primary data collection which has been carried out among enterprises (according to the Frascati Manual) since 2002 every two years (except 2006 and 2007) by Statistics Austria. Since 2007, the reference periods are all odd years. The purpose of the statistics is to compile policy-relevant data about the performance of R&D in enterprises (“intramural R&D”), the quantity and type of intramural R&D expenditures, the funding of intramural R&D expenditures and personnel engaged with R&D. As R&D, in economic theory as well as in economic policy, is considered key for economic growth and increase in productivity, the R&D-relevant input and output indicators which are derived from the results of the R&D statistics (especially the gross domestic expenditures on R&D (GERD) which is an important European “structural indicator”) are given special attention, due to its extraordinary practical and political significance on a national and European level.

Furthermore, the figures on R&D expenditures and its funding form a substantial input for the Global estimate of the gross domestic expenditure on R&D, which is made annually by Statistics Austria, and for the annual Research and Technology Report of the federal government.

The statistical survey which is used as a data source targets at the complete inclusion of all R&D-relevant enterprises; it includes sectors A-S (by NACE Rev. 2), without O. All enterprises with 100 and more persons employed are included and subject to a census. Smaller enterprises (less than 100 persons employed) are surveyed when they are listed in a register of R&D performing enterprises which is maintained at Statistics Austria. Altogether, approximately 8,000 enterprises are surveyed, while the participation in the survey is compulsory.

As a source to identify those enterprises which carry out R&D regularly but have less than 100 employed persons, the following information sources are used: results of the previous R&D surveys and innovation surveys, information from the Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG) about the applicants for direct R&D funding, own media observation as well as a couple of other information sources (such as e.g. reports of several funding agencies or patent applications). Because of the compulsory character of the survey response rates are regularly above 95%. Due to the implementation of standardised definitions the results show high comparability to the greatest possible extent over time and between regions and countries. In 2021, a break in the time series occurred due to the change of the statistical unit from "legal unit" to "statistical enterprise".

The business enterprise sector comprises basically all firms which are engaged in market production in order to generate a profit or any other financial gain. Those units are classified in the Austrian R&D statistics as “company R&D sub-sector”. Institutes which are not targeting at profits, but perform R&D for enterprises, are also part of the Business enterprise sector and are in Austria classified as “institutes sub-sector”. Up to now these two sub-sectors were surveyed with different questionnaires; since 2017 the units of the institutes sub-sector are also surveyed with the questionnaire of the company R&D sub-sector.

All definitions are based on the methodology laid down in the international framework, the Frascati Manual of the OECD. The business enterprise sector is one of the four sectors which are distinguished by R&D statistics in terms of the R&D performing units. The other sectors of performance are the “higher education sector”, the “government sector” and the “private non-profit sector”.

Research and experimental development (R&D) comprise creative and systematic work undertaken in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of humankind, culture and society, and to devise new applications of available knowledge. It must be pointed out that the operationalisation of the definition on which this survey is based on, and therefore the distinction of research and experimental development from other activities as well as the identification of funding of R&D, is a not a simple exercise and can potentially result in fuzziness.

Survey on research and experimental development (R&D) in the Business Enterprise Sector – Main Key Points

Subject matter	Capturing Research and Development activities of enterprises
Population	R&D performing enterprises of NACE Rev. 2 sectors A to S (except O)
Type of statistics	Primary survey
Data sources/Survey techniques	Direct information from enterprises
Reference period or due day	Odd calendar years
Periodicity	Every two years
Survey participation (in case of a survey)	Compulsory
Main legal acts	<p>Verordnung der Bundesministerin für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Kultur, des Bundesministers für Verkehr, Innovation und Technologie und des Bundesministers für Wirtschaft und Arbeit über Statistiken betreffend Forschung und experimentelle Entwicklung (F&E-Statistik-Verordnung) vom 29. August 2003, BGBl. II Nr. 396/2003 (national regulation)</p> <p>Commission implementing regulation (EU) 2020/1197 of 30 July 2020 laying down technical specifications and arrangements pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2019/2152 of the European Parliament and of the Council on European business statistics repealing 10 legal acts in the field of business</p>
Most detailed regional breakdown	Regions (“Bundesländer“), NUTS2
Availability of results	Final data: t + 18 months
Other	-