



The Information Manager

Statistics Austria

Statistics Austria is principal provider of scientific services in the area of federal statistics. At the beginning of 2000, the former Austrian Central Statistical Office was separated from Government Services by the Federal Statistics Act 2000. Statistics Austria is an independent and non-profit-making federal institution under public law and is called Statistics Austria.

The Federal Statistics Act 2000 defines federal statistics as a (non-personal) information system of the government providing data on the economic, demographic, social, ecological and cultural situation in Austria. The statistical products help administrative bodies in planning and political decision-making procedures and in controlling the measures taken by them. Moreover, data are made available to the scientific and economic community and to the general public. Federal statistics comprises the compilation of statistics of all kinds as well as analyses, prognoses and other applications of statistical models which reach beyond the interests of an individual Austrian province. The production of statistics is decreed either by international legal acts of the European Community, by federal laws, or by regulations.

In performing its duties, Statistics Austria must comply with the following principles:

- to maintain objectivity and impartiality in the compilation of statistics
- to apply statistical methods and procedures according to internationally accepted scientific principles and standards and to disclose them
- to continuously control for quality improvements
- to maintain a high degree of topicality
- to publish statistics and their underlying concepts, definitions and explanations immediately; main results are available via the Internet free of charge
- to keep the responding costs to relevant persons and business enterprises as low as possible and to supply respondents with sufficient information
- to keep personal data confidential

Compliance with these principles is controlled by the Statistical Council

The Austrian system of official statistics is centralized to a very high degree, although according to the Federal Statistics Act other federal institutions may also act as organs of federal statistics, based on European regulations or on federal law. Besides Statistics Austria only a few other Austrian bodies are providers for the production of Community statistics; the corresponding statistical products are limited to few domains.

Statistics Austria has one central office in Vienna and no regional agencies subordinated to the national statistical bureau. However, the "Länder" and municipalities maintain small statistical services. Special agreements between Statistics Austria and these statistical services ease communication and data exchange. These statistical services use federal statistics for their own purposes, but may also produce statistics on their own.

Statistics Austria has two managing directors (Director General-Statistics, Director General-Finance). A staffing act applies to the appointments of the Director General-Statistics and of the Director General-Finance. Each of them is appointed by the Federal Chancellor for up to five years. The Director General-Statistics is responsible for the management of the Federal Institution with regard to statistical and sovereign duties. In all scientific methodological questions he is not bound by any instructions in the performance of the tasks he is responsible for. The Director General-Finance is responsible for the business management of the Federal Institution and for all other tasks the Director General-Statistics is not in charge of. In doing so, the Director General-Finance has to use the diligence of a prudent businessman and to consider commercial principles.

The management is obliged to submit the annual work programme and the annual budget as well as the four years programme and the four years budget to the Statistical Council for comments and to the Economic Council for decision.

Statistics Austria is organized in four Directorates (Population Statistics, Business Statistics, Spatial Statistics, and Macro-Economic Statistics), a Registers, Classifications and Methods Division, an Information Technology Division, an Administrative Division (Central Services), a Quality Management Unit, an International Relations Unit, an Internal Audit Unit, and a Media and Information Policy Unit.

The Statistical Council and the Economic Council are supervisory boards; the Central Statistical Commission (CSC) is an advisory board with special advisory sub-committees.

The Statistical Council consists of 15 members, appointed by the Federal Chancellor (4), ministries (4), the Austrian National Bank (1) and interest groups (6). All members of the Statistical Council are appointed as experts but not representing the nominating institutions. Main tasks of the Statistical Council: Provision of annual reports to the Federal Chancellor on the compliance of the federal institution with the basic principles - the Federal Government has to pass the activity report on to the National Council - , provision of recommendations on the compilation of statistics, release of statements on the legal foundations of statistics, provision of statements and recommendations on the working programmes and budgets.

The Economic Council consists of 12 members, appointed by the Federal Chancellor (3), ministries (5) and the workers council (4). Main tasks of the Economic Council: To supervise the financial gestation of the institution, to examine the annual statement of accounts and the status report of the Federal Institution, including reports to the Federal Chancellor.

The Central Statistical Commission (CSC) is chaired by the Director-General of Statistics and is composed of representatives of the Federal Ministries and other interest groups, the members represent their organisations. It is the task of the Central Statistical Commission to advise the federal ministries, the organs of federal statistics and Statistics Austria in questions of official statistics of general concern. The fulfilment of these tasks rests with special advisory bodies (technical subcommittees) installed for that purpose.

For more information:

www.statistik.at