

FAQs

Structural Business Statistics (SBS) Survey

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General information

What are structural business statistics (SBS)?

- They are annual statistics about the structure, activity and performance of Austrian enterprises.
- In general, the information is collected from the (sometimes preliminary) financial statements of enterprises, especially from the **profit and loss account**.
- Structural business statistics
 - provide harmonized and comparable indicators to compare the performance and competitiveness of Austrian enterprises on an international level.
 - present figures for turnover, expenditures, value added, employment and investments by economic activity, business size and region.
 - deliver data for calculating national and regional accounts and main economic aggregates such as the gross domestic product.
- Statistics Austria exploits all possible data sources from other surveys (e.g. short-term business statistics for production) and administrative data. Therefore, the enterprises only have to report distinct features that are necessary to ensure high-quality data.
- **Special variables** (environmental variables, breakdown of turnover for trade and service enterprises)
 - Can only be reported with the online questionnaire **eQuest**.
 - Features 7B – 7D (annually) as well as 7H – 7K (every two years) are collected in reference year 2023.
 - Only if the enterprise has not participated in the survey of cross-border services, the breakdown of turnover by residence of clients has to be reported.
- **Local units:** Only local units that are based in Austria with an Austrian address have to be reported.

Electronic reporting tools – How can I report?

Tool	Variables	Enterprises	Comment
eQuest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enterprise variables • Local units variables • Special features (environmental variables, breakdown of turnover) 	For all enterprises, login details sent with the reporting requests.	Variables that have already been reported or are available from other sources are hidden in the online questionnaire.
Business Service Portal (USP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Similar to eQuest, login via Business Service Portal. 	Is only possible for enterprises themselves, no login for third party declarants.	A registration in the USP is necessary in advance.
Balance of accounts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enterprise variables • Optional: Local units variables 	Especially for corporations; only if the technical requirements are fulfilled by the accounting software in use.	Transfer of a XML-File via a web service - an interface implemented in accounting software – or via an import interface in the web portal of Statistics Austria. (Available since reference year 2021)

eQuest

- The online questionnaire is available for all enterprises, enterprises can access it via the portal of Statistics Austria (www.portal.statistik.at).
- Dependent on the enterprise selected variables are hidden, if they are available from other data sources, e.g. personnel expenditures do not have to be indicated if they have been reported in the survey for short-term business statistics for production.
- The online questionnaire is only available in **German**.

Business service portal (USP)

- The online questionnaire can also be accessed via the [Business service portal \(USP\)](#) after a successful registration. Please note that this service is not available for third party declarants.
- For further questions please contact the [USP service center](#).
- The questionnaire is only available in German.

Balance of accounts

- The new reporting tool was developed in cooperation with accounting software businesses to make reports as efficient and fast as possible.
- The balances of accounts are assigned to the variables of structural business statistics, then, a report in the form of a XML file can be generated, which is transmitted to Statistics Austria.
- If the accounting software in use has implemented the reporting tool, enterprises can directly transfer the report via their accounting software by addressing the Rest Call via the URL <https://portal.statistik.at/statistik.at/lsealden/server/sendSaldenliste>. Another possibility is the import interface in the portal of Statistics Austria where enterprises can upload the file. Please consult your software provider, if the Balance of accounts is available. Statistics Austria gladly supports new implementations of the reporting tool.
- The Balance of accounts interface has been implemented by the following software providers. The list will be extended by providers that currently plan the implementation:
 - Aptean Austria GmbH
 - BMD Systemhaus GmbH
 - CSS Computer-Systems-Support GmbH
 - Datev.at GmbH
 - DVO Software Entwicklungs- und Vertriebs- GmbH
 - IGEL Software GmbH
 - RZL Software GmbH
 - Schweighofer Manager-Software GmbH
 - SIS Informatik GmbH
 - SAP Österreich GmbH in version S4HANA
- The structure of the XML-File as well as further technical definitions can be downloaded from the [homepage](#).

Hard copies of questionnaires

- **Attention: According to article 9 paragraph 2 of the Structural Business Statistics Regulation an electronic report is obligatory if the enterprise can fulfill the necessary technical requirements.**
- If this is not the case, enterprises that are obliged to report, have to contact Statistics Austria in writing within two weeks after receiving the reporting request to order hard copies of the relevant questionnaires.
- Copies of financial statements, profit and loss accounts or annual management reports are not fulfilling the obligation to report as defined in the Federal Statistics Act of 2000.

Obligation to report and legal basis

Why do I have to report?

The obligation to report is regulated in the Federal Statistics Act 2000, Federal Law Gazette I No. 163/1999 in its current version as well as the Structural Business Statistics Regulation, article 9, Federal Law Gazette II No. 305/2022.

All enterprises are obliged to report, which have exceeded the specific thresholds of their industry according to the information Statistics Austria have at the time of selection. These enterprises receive a request to report.

Which information do I find in the regulation?

The Structural Business Statistics regulation determines the survey mass, the variables of the questionnaire, the obligation to report and the significant thresholds, the enterprises' obligation to participate and the publication of the results.

According to the regulation there is no reimbursement of costs e.g. for tax accountants fees.

Where do I find the regulation?

Please navigate on our homepage to Surveys → Enterprises → Structural Business Statistics Survey → [Legal basis, data protection](#)

How is the obligation to report defined?

Population	The population consists of enterprises that belong to sections B to J, L to N, P to R and to divisions K66, S95 and S96 of the ÖNACE 2008 classification, which were active in the relevant month of the reference year according to the statistical business register. Generally, the relevant month is December, in some cases other months are possible, e.g. if the balance sheet date is not on December 31 st , or if enterprises declared bankruptcy during the reference year etc.
Obligation to report	<p>Production (ÖNACE B-F): All enterprises of all sections with 20 or more persons employed are obliged to report. Additionally, some divisions are assigned a turnover threshold (see table with thresholds). Enterprises belonging to these divisions with less than 20 employees are also obliged to report if their turnover exceeds the respective values (indicated in thousand Euros).</p> <p>Trade and services (ÖNACE G – S): If enterprises exceed the respective turnover threshold of their industry, they are obliged to report. Moreover, enterprises with less turnover have to report if they exceed the alternative employment threshold (20,10), which was determined for their ÖNACE.</p>
Variables on environmental protection	To collect data on environmental expenditures a sample is drawn from all enterprises of the SBS survey mass whose economic activities are assigned to the ÖNACE divisions B05 to E36, group E38.3 or divisions F41 to F43. The detailed breakdowns of expenditures and investments have to reported every second year.
Breakdown of turnover according to ÖCPA codes in trade and selected service industries (pages 71, 72, 7B to 7K)	<p>For enterprises in ÖNACE divisions G46 and G47, all enterprises, which are affected by the general obligation to report due to the respective turnover or employment thresholds, have to report the breakdown of turnover. The breakdown is surveyed every five years (2021, 2025, 2030..).</p> <p>Only enterprises in the survey, which exceed their respective employment thresholds, have to report the special features of pages 7B to 7K.</p> <p>The question on the residence of clients does not have to be answered, if the enterprise has participated in the survey of cross-border services.</p>

Determination of persons employed of an enterprise	To determine the number of persons employed, the annual average is calculated: The mean of the monthly figures without apprentices is relevant for all economic industries. The data are provided by the Social Security Authorities.
Determination of turnover of an enterprise	<p>To determine turnover, the following sources are used based on availability and in descending order of value. The first source with available data is considered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual turnover from short-term business statistics for production, • Turnover from supplements of the income or corporate tax, • Annual tax turnover • Annual values of advance turnover tax return • Values from last year's structural business statistics <p>In exceptional cases, an enterprise can also be added or deleted from the survey mass due to Statistics Austria's experts' knowledge and experience.</p>

The detailed thresholds can be downloaded from the homepage, please navigate to Surveys → Enterprises → Structural Business Statistics Survey → [Obligation to provide information, survey criteria](#).

What do I have to report?

When using the "Balance of accounts" at least all obligatory variables, which are indicated in the variable list, have to be transferred. If several local units in Austria belong to the enterprise according to the statistical business register, the enterprise has to transmit values for the variables of local units. If the enterprise does not choose to report them with the Balance of accounts (the variable ARB has the value "N"), the variables have to be reported separately with eQuest. In eQuest all variables are hidden, where information are available from other sources or reports.

Until when do I have to report?

In general, the legal closing date is 30 September in the year following the reference period. Notwithstanding the legal deadline for data transmission, a longer reporting period can be allowed if enterprises contact Statistics Austria. If it is possible and does not interfere with Statistic's Austria obligation of timely data provision, we will be happy to arrange an extension.

Which reference year do I have to report?

If the accounting year of the enterprise corresponds to the calendar year, data from the financial statement of the reference year is reported.

If the accounting records do not refer to a calendar but a deviating accounting year, following rules concerning the balance sheet date should be regarded.

- If the balance sheet date is between **January and May**, please report the **most recent business year**, e.g. 2023/02/01 – 2024/01/31 or 2023/04/01 – 2024/03/31.
If the figures of the most recent year are not yet available, the previous business year can be reported.
- If the balance sheet date is between **June and December**, please report the **previous business year**, e.g. 2022/07/01 – 2023/06/30 or 2022/10/01 – 2023/09/30.

My enterprise declared bankruptcy but I received a report request?

If the enterprise was still active in the reference year (until December 31st), it belongs to the population of structural business statistics and is obliged to report. If it is no longer possible to fulfill the obligation to report, please contact Statistics Austria (+43 1 711 28-7272, LSE@statistik.gv.at).

If the enterprise concluded its activities earlier than January 1st of the reference year please send an e-mail or letter with the respective information and documents to Statistics Austria.

Information on content of SBS

Where do I find further explanations?

The complete explanations on all variables of SBS, for the reporting tools eQuest and Balance of accounts can be downloaded from our [German homepage](#) (section Erläuterungen, Hilfestellungen). Please regard that the explanations are only available in German. There are separate explanations for associations (e.g. for economic industries of water or electricity supply, sewerage or waste management).

The explanations are also online as interactive tool of the eQuest questionnaire: <https://www.statistik.at/equestresneu/fb/statatls2023u/hilfe/hilfe.html>

Technical information

I have technical problems - who can I reach out to?

In case of technical problems (e.g. access to questionnaire and the portal of Statistics Austria) our Helpdesk is happy to help and support you: +43 1 711 28-8009, helpdesk@statistik.gv.at.

How can I access the online questionnaire?

Open www.portal.statistik.at in your internet browser and enter your login details. Next, please click on the button "Webfragebogen eQuest-Web". The online questionnaire is only available in German. You can also access the import interface for the Balance of accounts.

I do not have login details and want to reset my password.

Login details can be requested online via a web form for enterprises and third party declarants, please navigate to Surveys → Enterprises → Structural Business Statistics → [Questionnaire / reporting option](#). Thereafter, the login details are sent per email.

The password can be reset in the portal of Statistics Austria. Please contact our hotline if you have further questions: +43 1 711 28-7272, LSE@statistik.gv.at.

I want to reset my questionnaire and report it again.

Please write an email to equest@statistik.gv.at.

The reporting tool „Balance of accounts“ is not available in my accounting program.

The interface of the Balance of accounts is not yet implemented in all common accounting software programs. If you are interested in the implementation and usage of the new reporting tool, please inform the customer service of your software provider and contact Statistics Austria. We are happy to support and help the implementation in new programs.

Up to now, the Balance of accounts is implemented in software by the following companies:

- Aptean Austria GmbH
- BMD Systemhaus GmbH
- CSS Computer-Systems-Support GmbH
- Datev.at GmbH
- DVO Software Entwicklungs- und Vertriebs- GmbH
- IGEL Software GmbH
- RZL Software GmbH
- Schweighofer Manager-Software GmbH
- SIS Informatik GmbH
- SAP Österreich GmbH in version S4HANA

I cannot successfully transfer the XML-file of the Balance of accounts.

When the transfer of data via the interface in the accounting software or in the portal of Statistics Austria is not successful, the respondents receive a PDF file with an error report. It outlines which variables of the XML-file have caused the error. The technical error descriptions outline the reasons. Please be aware that the XML and PDF files of the error report and transmission confirmation are coded in Base64.

I have problems with the correct assignment of accounts.

We are happy to help you, please contact our hotline: +43 1 711 28-7111, LSE-Aufarbeitung@statistik.gv.at.

Results

How can I access the results?

The main results can be downloaded from the homepage for free, please navigate to Statistics → Industry, construction, trade and services → [Structural business statistics](#).

I need individual analyses for my industry/region or a comparison with other industries.

Statistics Austria gladly conducts special analyses for you, please contact our hotline to discuss your needs: +43 1 711 28-7111, LSE-Aufarbeitung@statistik.gv.at.

Further FAQs

Several persons should participate in the report – is this possible?

Of course, you can distribute the login details to the respective colleagues. Please make sure that the questionnaire is only sent after everyone is finished with the data collection and the final checks are completed.

Please do not forget to save the questionnaire regularly; unsaved changes are dismissed (button “Speichern” at the bottom of the page).

Can I edit the report over several times?

Yes, of course – please do not forget to save the questionnaire at least every 20 minutes (there is an automatic warning after 20 minutes). Due to security reasons the connection is separated automatically after thirty minutes without activities (time-out).

For how long can I download the print version of the online questionnaire after I transferred the report?

Approximately 2 weeks – if you need the print version after this period, please write an email to equest@statistik.gv.at.

I need a hard copy of the questionnaire to collect the data within the enterprise beforehand.

You can login and access the online questionnaire to print your specific empty questionnaire to collect data and fill them in the online questionnaire later.

Moreover, there is a template of the PDF version of our questionnaire online, which can be printed. Please navigate to Surveys → Enterprises → Structural business statistics survey → [Explanations, help](#). These PDF files are not suitable and should not be used to transfer the data to Statistics Austria.

Do I have to use the Balance of accounts for my report?

Corporations need to use the balance of accounts if they have the technical possibilities and the tool is implemented in the accounting software. To simplify reports and reduce their time-consumption in the future the reporting tool “Balance of accounts” is highly recommended.

S: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, Structural Business Statistics. Compiled on 14 August 2024.