

Standard-documentation Meta information

(Definitions, comments, methods, quality)

on

Register-based Census 2011

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Executive Summary

In 2011, the traditional population census which was conducted in 2001 for the last time, has been replaced by a register-based census. For the first time in history, no questionnaires were distributed to the population for this purpose. Instead, information was taken from existing registers which are already maintained for administrative purposes. The data do not contain names but are encrypted, full data protection is thus guaranteed. The new method has two major advantages: On the one hand, the citizens are relieved of the obligation to fill in paper questionnaires and on the other hand the costs are considerably lower than those of a traditional census.

As in the previous census rounds, the 2011 Census consists of the population census, the census of enterprises and their local units as well as of the building and dwelling census. The aim was to achieve the most complete comparability of the results with those from previous years, but some topics are no longer available with the new survey method, because they are not included in any of the registers used - e.g. colloquial language or religious denomination.

Since the introduction of the register-based census, Austria has taken an international pioneering role together with the Scandinavian countries. Only a few countries have so far carried out a census based solely on administrative data.

The results of the 2011 Register-based Census show a numerical picture of the structure of the population, households and families, workplaces and enterprises as well as buildings and dwellings in Austria. Their great strength is the availability of comprehensive and comparable data on the smallest regional level. The figures obtained contribute to the equitable allocation of tax revenues to the federal provinces and municipalities (fiscal equalisation¹) and are used to allocate National Assembly seats to the constituencies.

The 2011 Register-based Census is a statistics that is designed as a full enumeration based on data from existing administrative registers. This means that all census topics were obtained from registers. The basis for all individual, household and family characteristics is the central population register (CPR), which was established during the 2001 Population Census in preparation for the Register-based Census. All individuals registered in Austria are recorded in this electronic directory with their main and secondary residences. In addition to the CPR, the basic registers used include the tax register, data from the central social security register, the unemployment register as well as the register of educational attainment, school and university statistics. Other basic registers are the business register of enterprises and their local units including the farm register and the buildings and dwellings register. These basic registers provide all the characteristics that are needed for the register-based census. For quality assurance purposes, the data are checked for accuracy and completeness using comparison registers. If information from different data sources is redundant, rules, which were set up after detailed analysis, help to establish the final value. The comparison registers include the register of foreigners, employer data from the federal republic of Austria and the Länder, the register of social welfare recipients, the family allowance register, the register of alternative civilian service, the conscription register and the central vehicle licensing records. The redundancy principle, which is a special feature of the Austrian register-based census compared to other countries, makes up for losses in quality as a result of registers being less than perfect and ensures high-quality results.

A test census in 2006 served as a first run and provided results of high quality. The methodology of the 2011 Register-based Census continued to be developed on the basis of experience gained and takes as its legal basis the 2006 Register-based Census Act as last amended². This act specifies both the method and the characteristics to be surveyed.

¹ The Financial Equalisation Act 2008 (FAG 2008), adopted in December 2007, stipulates that from the financial year 2009 onwards, the Federal Statistical Office of Austria, in accordance with section 9 (9), shall determine the population number on 31 October for the financial equalisation. This population is the result of the "mini" register-based census with deadline 31-10 each year respective the result of the 2011 Register-based Census.

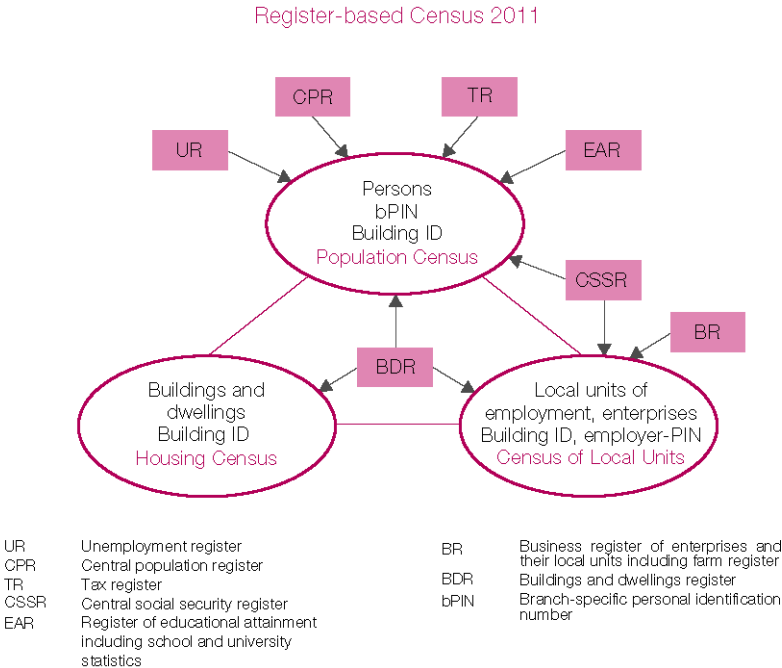
² Register-based Census Act, Federal Law Gazette I No. 33/2006.

Furthermore, it sets the deadlines for dissemination of the final results. Great emphasis is placed on personal data protection.

Thanks to the eGovernment Act, registers can be linked while fully maintaining the protection of data. This is done using the branch-specific personal identification number for official statistics (bPIN OS), which is generated by the Data Protection Commission in its capacity as the identification number register authority and does not allow any conclusions to be drawn about individual persons. Data is therefore linked without names.

The buildings and dwellings register is the register that links all three survey subjects via a numerical address code, the building ID (see figure 1). The bPIN OS and the employer-PIN of the Main Association of Austrian Social Security Organisations enable individuals to be linked to the business register of enterprises and their local units or to the census of enterprises and their local units of employment.

Figure 1 Linking the Survey Subjects and the Basic Registers



The list of topics and their concepts, definitions and classifications are based on the Recommendations for the 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses of the Conference of European Statisticians. The aim was to ensure the best possible comparability of the 2011 Census with results from previous years. In the year 2011, a population and housing census was conducted in all EU member states along uniform criteria ensuring comparability within the EU. The results of the national censuses had to be provided to Eurostat.

Further methodological explanations, which go beyond the scope of this documentation, are linked to the [inventory of methods](#) of the Register-based Census (in German language only).

Register-based Census 2011 – Main Features	
Subject Matter	Population, households, families, enterprises and local units of employment, buildings and dwellings on reference day 31-10-2011
Population	Population (about 8.4 million); Local units of employment (about 700,000), enterprises (about 620,000); Buildings (about 2.2 million), dwellings (about 4.4 million);
Type of statistics	Statistics based on administrative data and statistical registers
Data sources/Survey techniques	Register-based enumeration Base registers: Central population register, central social security register, tax register, unemployment register, register on educational attainment including school and university statistics, buildings and dwellings register, business register of enterprises and their local units including the farm register; other so called "comparison" registers for data validation
Reference period or due day	Reference day 31-10-2011
Periodicity	Every 10 years
Survey participation (in case of a survey)	-
Main legal acts	Register-based Census Act, Federal Law Gazette I No. 33/2006 as amended; Regulation (EC) No 763/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 July 2008 on population and housing censuses
Most detailed regional breakdown	Municipalities; statistical enumeration districts, localities and statistical grids for user-defined tabulations
Availability of results	Preliminary population number: 01-12-2011 Final results: Population number, number of citizens: 21-06-2013 Public announcement of the population number and number of citizens: 24-06-2013 Results of the Population Census: 04-11-2013 Results of the Census of Enterprises and their Local Units of Employment: 28-11-2013 Results of the Buildings and Dwellings Census: 04-12-2013 Eurostat Census Hub: 31-03-2014
Other	The concepts, classifications and definitions of the topics are based on the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) Recommendations for the 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses. The EU Census Hub contains the results of the 2011 Population and Housing Censuses of 28 member states and of EFTA countries.