

# Standard-documentation Meta information

(Definitions, comments, methods, quality)

on

## Farm Structure Survey (Sample Survey 2013)

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## Executive Summary

The Farm Structure Survey provides important information about the structure of agricultural and forestry holdings and gives an overview of the development of structural changes in agriculture and forestry at both national and European level. On the basis of EU legislation, the Farm Structure Survey is currently conducted as a full survey every 10 years (at the end of the decade) and as a sample survey at regular intervals in between (most recently in 2003, 2005, 2007 and 2013). The next sample survey is planned for 2016, the next census for 2020.

Data from the Farm Structure Survey is incorporated into many other areas of agricultural statistics and provides an essential basis for making informed agricultural policy decisions at national and international level.

The statistics focus on the farm structure of agricultural and forestry holdings in 2013 with the following groups of characteristics: type of tenure, land use, labour force, livestock, machinery and equipment and rural development. The list of questions was predefined by existing EU legislation and was primarily based on the requirements of the European Commission, although comparability between the member states and with previous surveys was taken into consideration.

The characteristics are collected as primary statistics from agricultural and forestry holdings and also provided by administrative data, as has been the case since 1997. [Regulation \(EC\) No 1166/2008](#) permitted the use of data from the Integrated Administration and Control System (IACS), the Austrian programme for the promotion of environmentally friendly and extensive agriculture that protects natural habitats (ÖPUL), the Cattle Database (CDB), information from the IACS/ÖPUL system relating to organically farmed holdings and also funding data relating to rural development measures. In addition, Austria made an application to use data from the veterinary information system (VIS).

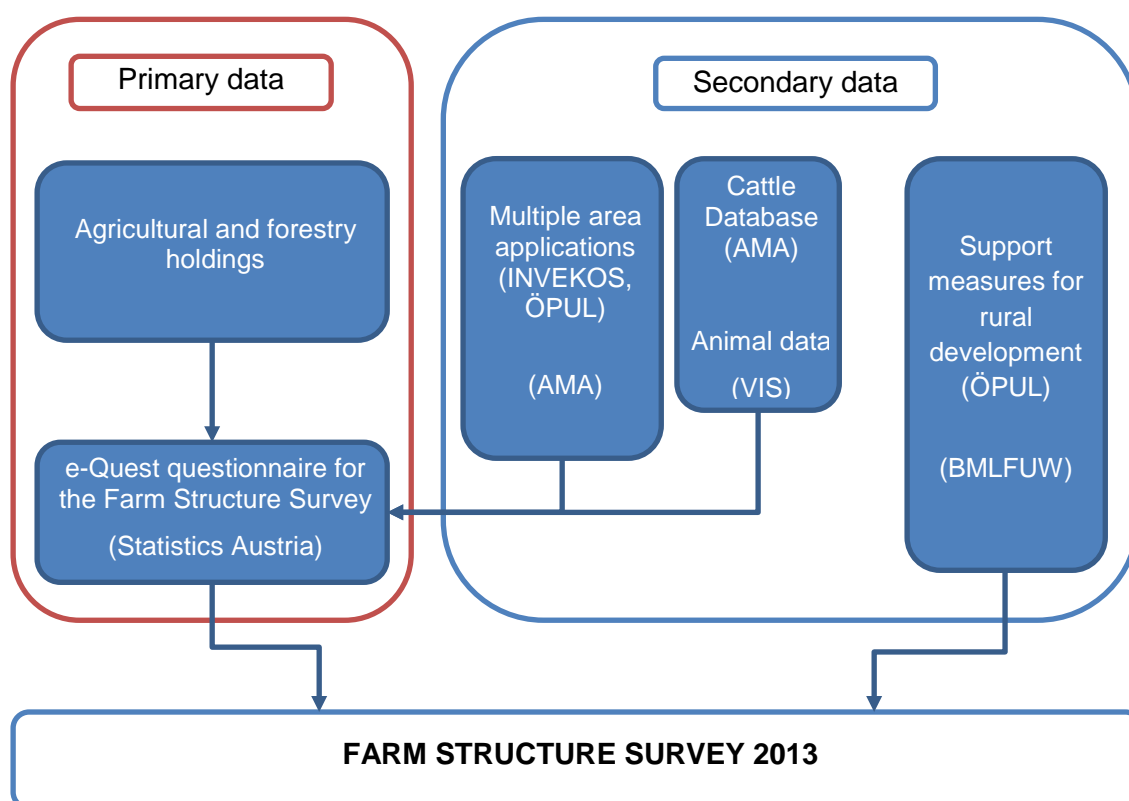


Figure 1: Data sources for the Farm Structure Survey 2013

For the first time, the Farm Structure Survey 2013 (**sample survey**) was carried out without the participation of the municipalities, using an electronic questionnaire only. The amendments and high number of respondents combined with the extensive list of questions made it necessary to redesign the questionnaire. As a result, an eQuest questionnaire (which could also be filled in offline) rather than a web-based questionnaire was used.

The **universe** was formed by active holding units entered in the Agricultural and Forestry Register (LFR), which is regularly updated using information from a variety of primary agricultural statistics surveys and by comparing the data with various administrative data sets (funding applications, etc.) and which meet the survey criteria (threshold values) on the basis of the most recent information available (see also Section 2.1.2. resp. supplement 4e).

The Farm Structure Survey compiled the potential output in the agriculture and forestry. The definition of “holding” in the Farm Structure Survey is essentially based on the practice of **agricultural and forestry activities** (with exceptions specified in more detail in Section 2.1.1), although inclusion in **NACE Section A (Agriculture, forestry and fishing)** is not the only decisive factor. All agricultural and forestry holdings that meet the survey criteria relevant to the Farm Structure Survey had to be recorded, irrespective of whether the relevant holdings undertake these activities as primary or secondary activities. In contrast to various business statistics, the data only needs to be entered for the agricultural and forestry sector and includes primary and secondary activities alike. In other words: the Farm Structure Survey included only agricultural and forestry characteristics as well as the characteristics in conjunction with those; there is no primary assignment to a NACE Section as it is in economic statistics; comparability is therefore limited.

In contrast to previous surveys, agricultural holdings were surveyed at the level of the **agricultural and forestry enterprise** for the first time in the Farm Structure Survey 2010. The survey unit (statistical unit) used was therefore the agricultural enterprise with its main holding and, if applicable, the associated agricultural and forestry sub-holdings. Due to the common use in practice, the definition “holding” is allowed to be further used in the Farm Structure Survey (regulation, questionnaire, publication of results) and the present standard documentation.

This alteration of time series had no serious consequences. Problems with sub-holdings were not evident to such an extent in previous surveys; the total areas of a holding were recorded in sum and not splitted into their possible sub-holdings.

In accordance with Eurostat’s requirements, the holdings were **assigned geographically** as far as possible according to their actual location if the relevant information was available. This was generally done using the main holding or – in its absence – an addressable object (e.g. in the case of agricultural communities, Alpine pasture holdings or woodland holdings) using the location of the most important/biggest parcel.

Although Austria performed the Farm Structure Survey very late in the year (reference day 31 October), Statistics Austria was one of the first national statistical offices in European comparison that fulfilled the delivery obligations towards Eurostat in the required quality. Reasons for a late survey date and therefore survey start lies in the most efficient use of administrative data and the resulting merest burden for survey respondents. Firstly, multiple area applications (AMA) and animal data (VIS) integrated into the questionnaire were not available until autumn. Secondly, the readiness for farmers to provide information in late autumn is higher due to lower workload peaks.

## Farm Structure Survey (Sample Survey 2013) – Main Features

Subject matter	Farm Structure Survey (FSS 2013): records of the farm structure of agricultural and forestry holdings
Population	Agricultural and forestry holdings (according to the Agricultural and Forestry Register) that meet the specific recording criteria applicable to the Farm Structure Survey (see 2.1.2 resp. supplement 4e); 166 317 holdings extrapolated
Type of statistics	Primary statistical survey (sample survey with 30 000 holdings) using administrative data
Data sources/Survey techniques	<u>eQuest questionnaire</u> with some data from administrative sources already entered (IACS including ÖPUL, Cattle Database, VIS) <u>Administrative data</u> (support measures for rural development) added after the survey In addition, the following sources were used for the specific breakdown of the results for publication of the national results: Land Register for Mountain Farms (AMA and BMLFUW) and definition of less favoured areas (BMLFUW).
Reference period or due day	<u>Due days:</u> 1 April 2013      Livestock characteristics 15 May 2013      Type of tenure 31 October 2013    All other survey characteristics <u>Reference periods:</u> 1 November 2012 to 31 October 2013:    Labour force, other gainful activities, machinery 1 November 2012 to 30 September 2013:    Land characteristics, irrigation 1 January 2011 to 31 December 2013:    Support measures for rural development 1 January 2013 to 31 December 2013:    Livestock categories if a livestock holding has no animal of the category reared on the due day of 1 April 2013.
Periodicity	2003, 2005, 2007, 2013, 2016
Survey participation (in case of a survey)	Compulsory
Main legal acts	<a href="#">Regulation (EC) No. 1166/2008</a> ; <a href="#">Regulation (EC) No. 1200/2009</a> National legal basis: Regulation <a href="#">Federal Law Gazette II No. 284/2013</a> (in German), on the basis of the <a href="#">Federal Statistics Act 2000</a> , Federal Law Gazette I No. 163/1999, as amended by Federal Law Gazette I No. 136/2001, Federal Law Gazette I No. 71/2003, Federal Law Gazette I No. 92/2007, Federal Law Gazette I No. 125/2009, Federal Law Gazette I No. 111/2010.
Most detailed regional breakdown	Federal states
Availability of results	Preliminary data: t + 5 month; Final data: t + 11 month
Other	The definition of "holding" in the Farm Structure Survey is essentially based on the practice of <b>agricultural and forestry activities</b> (with exceptions specified in more detail in Section 2.1.1), although inclusion in <b>NACE Section A (Agriculture, forestry and fishing)</b> is not the only decisive factor. All agricultural and forestry holdings that meet the survey criteria relevant to the Farm Structure Survey had to be recorded, irrespective of whether the relevant holdings undertake these activities as primary or secondary activities.  In contrast to previous surveys, agricultural holdings were surveyed at the level of the agricultural and forestry enterprise for the first time in the Farm Structure Survey 2010. The survey unit (statistical unit) used was therefore the agricultural enterprise with its main holding and, if applicable, the associated agricultural and forestry sub-holdings. Due to the common use in practise, the definition "holding" is allowed to be further used in the Farm Structure Survey (regulation, questionnaire, publication of results) and the present standard documentation.