

Annex 28. Measuring national business tourism by using CATI techniques in Austria, shortcomings and challenges

Measuring national business tourism by using CATI techniques in Austria, shortcomings and challenges

By P. Laimer, Statistics Austria, 2013

Statistics Austria is currently conducting quarterly surveys regarding the travel habits of individuals living in Austria aged 15 and above, which concern domestic and outbound trips of the Austrians. Every quarter, 3500 representatively chosen respondents (=net sample) are contacted by telephone (CATI). The participation on the survey is voluntary. The selection framework for the proportionally stratified random sample is the Central Register of Residence Registrations, the telephone numbers are received from the public telephone book. - Since the reference year 2000 the collected information concerns data on holiday and business trips with at least one overnight stay and same-day trips, as well (see Table 1 related business trips); for the reference years 1969 till 1999 detailed data regarding holiday trips with at least four overnight stays is available, only.

Table 1: Travel habits of the Austrians 2000-2012 (business tourism)

Aggregate	Reference year												
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Business tourists													
Travel intensity													
Total (in 1000) ¹⁾	526,5	797,5	977,7	987,5	1.096,1	1.104,6	1.224,9	1.133,3	1.219,8	1.139,1	1.103,1	1.237,0	1.310,4
of which male (in %)	71,6	70,8	78,4	67,2	72,4	66,2	67,7	66,5	67,5	69,1	70,5	60,4	63,0
of which female (in %)	28,4	29,2	21,6	32,8	27,6	33,8	32,3	33,5	32,5	30,9	29,5	39,6	37,0
Share related to overall population (in %)	7,9	11,9	14,6	14,8	16,4	16,3	17,8	16,3	17,5	16,2	15,7	17,4	18,4
Business trips (in 1000)													
Total	3.397,2	3.959,2	3.765,8	3.920,0	3.348,1	3.532,7	4.588,8	4.958,6	4.651,3	4.096,6	3.223,7	3.665,6	3.920,6
Domestic	2.056,1	2.317,9	2.113,6	2.156,2	1.774,5	1.891,0	2.231,6	2.641,2	2.442,2	2.153,5	1.743,4	1.945,6	1.946,7
of which trips with 1-3 overnight stays	1.715,6	1.858,7	1.790,6	1.847,6	1.486,1	1.415,3	1.842,1	2.208,1	2.151,9	1.821,0	1.469,6	1.673,7	1.717,3
Abroad	1.341,1	1.641,2	1.652,2	1.763,8	1.573,5	1.641,7	2.357,2	2.317,4	2.209,1	1.943,1	1.480,2	1.719,9	1.973,9
of which trips with 1-3 overnight stays	911,5	1.102,9	1.120,5	1.257,2	1.084,1	1.209,3	1.747,6	1.707,3	1.623,9	1.358,9	1.008,6	1.177,9	1.355,4
By main destinations abroad ²⁾													
Germany	557,9	758,0	664,7	729,1	668,1	628,4	879,0	1.025,6	844,4	768,7	605,1	642,1	845,0
Italy	125,7	149,4	171,4	161,0	115,4	125,6	188,4	150,0	160,6	153,2	120,5	155,7	148,3
Switzerland (incl. Liechtenstein)	76,0	94,5	85,7	77,3	117,3	55,3	77,9	121,6	137,1	97,9	89,0	82,9	82,9
By months													
January	306,5	210,9	307,6	298,4	211,1	169,1	420,9	400,8	314,0	373,5	223,2	183,3	271,2
February	353,6	272,4	323,0	397,6	278,1	224,8	373,2	423,0	388,2	413,2	267,0	211,3	289,6
March	434,8	432,8	355,9	473,5	308,9	232,1	492,3	519,4	402,5	471,1	246,0	344,0	461,5
April	248,8	336,2	320,8	253,4	294,4	294,4	377,7	430,8	358,7	355,4	221,3	339,3	397,8
May	288,1	487,8	410,9	293,0	291,0	360,4	460,5	468,8	417,2	345,1	305,5	401,8	371,8
June	361,5	353,7	419,6	310,7	308,5	361,2	378,2	446,2	348,8	341,2	297,6	404,7	353,4
July	196,4	327,4	276,8	278,2	282,7	262,3	276,7	310,0	314,6	312,5	258,5	250,8	318,1
August	209,5	254,9	215,3	255,6	228,6	271,2	186,5	297,1	292,8	289,1	214,8	237,3	210,0
September	301,2	349,3	261,5	355,0	355,7	352,9	325,8	463,0	483,6	360,1	349,4	364,9	286,8
October	235,7	323,0	344,9	346,2	292,3	320,4	533,5	493,1	498,0	305,2	384,9	370,0	421,1
November	282,9	355,9	298,8	373,3	278,8	367,9	421,7	395,4	507,3	336,5	274,6	339,0	326,7
December	178,1	254,9	230,7	287,0	219,9	316,0	341,7	310,9	325,5	193,7	180,9	219,2	212,5
By kind of accommodation													
Hotels and similar	2.731,9	3.275,9	3.168,2	3.215,4	2.816,7	2.910,1	3.811,2	4.128,8	3.869,2	3.333,4	2.574,1	2.976,4	3.156,1
Private accommodation (rented)	96,9	147,2	94,5	229,3	61,9	68,8	105,0	185,9	183,7	108,0	146,4	125,7	150,0
Private accommodation (non-rented)	296,0	283,4	318,6	375,7	321,9	154,5	105,0	360,5	376,2	354,5	222,7	305,0	285,3
Other	272,4	252,7	184,5	99,5	147,5	399,3	105,0	283,3	222,2	300,8	280,5	258,4	329,2

S: Statistics Austria. - 1) Number of persons aged 15 and above with at least one business trip. 2) According to ranking 2012.

The major advantage of this method is that information on the basic population is available, and the coverage of the whole volume is possible since the sample is amenable for extrapolations. Nevertheless, due to the fact that the survey is based on a rather small sample (3500 net interviews) detailed data related to particular items are hardly available or/and due to huge sample errors not sufficiently reliable for drawing reasonable conclusions (e.g. the sample error increases with the level of information's detail).

This also concerns information on business tourism (apart from other items, such as same-day visits) since the number of cases doing business trips is rather low, for several reasons:

- In general, in Austria the number of persons doing business trips is rather low; the travel intensity (share of persons with at least one trip per year compared to overall population) related to business trips is about 50%-points below of that of holiday trips (2012: 18.4% versus 76.2%).
- In particular business tourists are traveling a lot and they - if a telephone number is available - are not easy to reach, therefore; this causes a systematic bias.
- Related to business tourists the phenomenon of the so called “silent numbers” is evident since business phone numbers are not open to the public (i.e. cell phones).
- However, in particular for business tourist time restraints during the interview are becoming obvious; respondents who are doing holiday and business trips as well abort the interview after a while because of the interview length, therefore.

Furthermore, for several sub-items for holiday and in particular for business tourists - such as monetary information – either no data or data of less quality are available, only, which is mainly due to two reasons:

- There is commonly a recall problem concerning the expenses during a trip, because the respondents simply cannot remember.
- Some respondents have no information on the expenditures, because they did not pay for themselves which is rather often the case with business trips (i.e. hotel and transport costs).

The quarterly CATI surveys are fully in line with the methodological requirements of UNWTO “International Recommendations on Tourism Statistics 2008” (IRTS 2008), including the definition of holiday and business tourists, as well. According to these recommendations “Business and professional” is including “activities of the self-employed and employees as long as they do not correspond to an implicit or explicit employer-employee relationship with a resident producer in the country or place visited, those of investors, businessmen, etc. It also includes, for example, attending meetings, conferences or congresses, trade fairs and exhibitions.....” (see IRTS 2008, para. 3.17).

However, IRTS 2008 definition of business tourism is including the “Meeting Industry” (MICE), as well. According to UNWTO, ICCA and MPI (Meeting Professional International) and Reed Travel Exhibitions the term “meeting” concerns three areas: “Congresses, conventions, conferences, seminars”, “Trade fairs and exhibitions” and “Incentive activities”.

Apart from the difficulty to explain the respondents within a time-limited CATI-based survey the term “meeting industry”, the quality of the received data (i.e. concerning the number of business trips concerning the “meeting industry”) would be rather low. Since the results are based on a sample, the extrapolated values are afflicted with a certain sample error which is rather high for results with a low number of cases; so it can be assumed that the values would vary between different reference periods which would not allow significant conclusions. The higher the level of information detail wished (i.e. meetings as part of business trips), the greater the random sample size must be ensuring reliable extrapolations.

Concluding, in order to receive more reliable figures related to business tourism additional data sources – namely based on business statistics, administrative data or mirror data (in the case of outbound trips) – have to be taken into consideration. Furthermore, the investigations related alternative data sources must be intensified (i.e. analysis of the roaming statistics from mobile phone companies).

Further links

- IAPCO: http://www.iapco.org/dictionary.cfm?page_id=130# (Meetings Industry Terminology Dictionary)

- Statistics Austria:
http://www.statistik.at/web_en/statistics/tourism/travel_habits/index.html (travel habits of the Austrians, results)
- Statistics Austria:
[http://www.statistik.at/web_de/wcmsprod/groups/gd/documents/stddok/035991.pdf - pagemode=bookmarks](http://www.statistik.at/web_de/wcmsprod/groups/gd/documents/stddok/035991.pdf_-_pagemode=bookmarks) (travel habits of the Austrians, methodology; in German only)
- UNWTO:
http://www.iccaworld.com/cnt/docs/UNWTO_Complete%20Stats%20Report.pdf
(Measuring the Economic Importance of the Meetings Industry)

References

European Parliament and Council, Regulation (EU) No 692/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 July 2011 concerning European statistics on tourism and repealing Council Directive 95/57/EC.

Eurostat, Methodological Manual for Tourism Statistics, version 1.2, 2012 edition, ISBN 978-92-79-21480-6, Luxembourg 2012.

Laimer, P., Ostertag, J., Methodological issues concerning the compilation of same-day trips in Austria, Research Paper for Session 3 “Selected measurement issues related to visitor surveys” of the 9th International Forum on Tourism Statistics, 19-21 November 2008, Paris.

Statistics Austria, Holiday and Business Trips in the year 2012, rapid report, Vienna 2013 (in German only).

Commission of the European Communities, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, United Nations and World Tourism Organization (2010), *Tourism Satellite Account: Recommended Methodological Framework 2008*, (online), available at: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/tradeserv/tourism/manual.html>

United Nations (2010), *International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics 2008*, (online), available at: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/tradeserv/tourism/manual.html>