2 Questionnaire

2.1 Introduction

In December 2006, the Governing Council of the ECB decided to establish the Household Finance and Consumption Network (HFCN) to collect data on wealth, income and consumption from a representative sample of households. Despite cross-country differences in the technical conditions for conducting the Eurosystem HFCS, for example with respect to sampling design (chapter 6) and multiple imputation (chapter 5), ex ante harmonization has been achieved with regard to the information to be collected, and broadly achieved with regard to methodology. The plan is to conduct the HFCS every three years; in Austria, it has so far been conducted twice (HFCS 2010 and HFCS 2014).

The questionnaire used for the second HFCS wave was modeled on that of the first wave. This chapter presents the Austrian questionnaire, which was designed on the basis of the euro area blueprint questionnaire (drafted in English).[1] The Austrian survey covers both the internationally agreed variables and country-specific features (e.g. foreign currency loans or the national variant of housing association apartments).

This chapter is structured as follows: First we outline the objectives of the HFCS survey in Austria (section 2.2) and define the unit of collection (section 2.3) and the reference period (section 2.4). Then we describe the sequence of the questionnaire and highlight some core questions and variables (section 2.5). We subsequently discuss special features of the questionnaire (section 2.6) and list interviewer documents (section 2.7) and other participating countries (section 2.8). Section 2.9 refers to further information provided in an online appendix.

2.2 Objectives of the survey

The main goal of the HFCS is to collect microdata on the structure of euro area households' assets and liabilities, as these data allow for the analysis of households' investment and consumption decisions. These survey data can be used e.g. to:
- gain insights into various aspects of the monetary transmission mechanism and of financial stability,
- gain insights into individual household behavior,
- analyze the impact of economic policy measures and macroeconomic shocks, and to
- make cross-country comparisons.

The HFCS, which is the most comprehensive household-level survey conducted on this subject in the euro area, has now been carried out a second time.[2]

Household-level finance and expenditure data are indispensable for a central bank, as they contribute significantly to improving the analysis of monetary policy and financial stability. Also, as the economic developments of the past decade have clearly shown, it is not the level of household debt – which can be calculated from macrodata – that matters most in the assessment of stability risks, but the analysis of the specific burden on different income, occupational and age groups. Hence,

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[1] For further details about the HFCN and the HFCS (including the euro area blueprint questionnaire), see www.ecb.europa.eu/pub/economic-research/research-networks/html/researcher_hfcn.en.html (accessed on December 9, 2016).

[2] Some euro area countries (such as Ireland and Estonia), which did not participate in the first wave (HFCS 2010), have conducted the HFCS only once so far.

decision-making on monetary policy and financial stability issues is also informed by HFCS-based analyses. Publications attesting to the variety of insights gained from analyses relying on the microdata from the first HFCS wave are, amongst others, Albacete and Lindner (2013 and 2015), Albacete et al. (2014), Fessler and Schürz (2013), Fessler et al. (2015) and Wagner (2014).

2.3 Unit of collection

To begin with, designing a survey involves defining the target population (see also chapter 6) and the unit of data collection. In the case of the HFCS, households represent the main unit of collection, but some data are also collected at the individual level.

2.3.1 Definition of "household"

For the purpose of the HFCS, a household is defined as an individual living alone or a group of people living together in the same private dwelling who share household expenses and jointly take expenditure decisions. Specifically, household members include:
- people who live in the same household and are related to each other,
- people who share household expenses and live in the same household but are not related,
- people who usually live in the same household (the reference period being the six months before the interview) but are temporarily absent e.g. because of holiday travel, job assignments away from home, hospital stays or boarding school stays, and
- children who are educated away from home but do not constitute a separate household and remain financially dependent on the household.

The household definition also includes people who have been members of the household for less than six months at the time of the interview (e.g. a new partner or a new child), provided that they share household expenses with the other members or are fully financially dependent on the household (children).

Employees of residents, like au-pairs or nursing staff, short-time visitors or subtenants are considered separate households. In shared apartments, all residents are treated as separate households unless they also share household expenses. This means that a single address can be used by more than one household as defined for HFCS purposes (e.g. people sharing a residence). In such cases, we selected the household whose member received the letter of invitation to participate in the survey.

The definition also includes households with non-German speaking household members, households living at a place registered as their second home in the centralized residence registry and households not officially registered at a particular residence but living there.[3]

2.3.2 Financially knowledgeable person

All household questions were put to the person that the members of the household deemed to be most familiar with the household's finances, i.e. liabilities, assets, income and expenditure. This person, referred to as the financially knowledgeable

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[3] *See chapter 6 for a more detailed definition of a household.*

person (FKP), answered all questions relating to the household as a whole (green sections in chart 1) as well as individual questions on behalf of absent household members. As a rule, questions relating to individuals were meant to be answered individually by all household members aged 16 and over.

Since the FKP was typically a member of the household, he or she was also the reference person of the given household. While this continued to be the case with almost all households, it was not a prerequisite in the second wave of the HFCS in Austria. The FKP could also be a family member (e.g. a son or daughter) who was in charge of the household's finances but was no longer a member of the household. Theoretically, a household's tax consultant or financial advisor could also participate as the FKP in the HFCS on behalf of the household, but there was no such case in Austria. In cases where the FKP was not a member of the household, a reference person was selected from the members of the household.

2.4 Data collection period and reference period

In general, all the questions asked in the HFCS, especially those related to stock data, referred to the status quo at the time of the interview, which was conducted during the field phase from June 2014 to February 2015. In contrast, the questions about income (except the one about average monthly net household income)[4] referred to the calendar year 2013 (reference period), as this was the last full calendar year before the survey was started.

2.5 Interview structure and content

2.5.1 Questionnaire structure

The questionnaire has three main parts, relating to the preinterview phase, the main interview (divided into household questions and individual questions) and the postinterview phase. This structure was chosen to make the survey as user-friendly as possible and to keep the duration of the interviews short. Chart 1 shows the sequence of the sections of interview questions in the HFCS.

Chart 1

Sequence of interview questions

Source: HFCS Austria 2014, OeNB.

Preinterview

Before the actual interview, households were informed about the content and structure of the survey.[5] If a household was willing to participate, the interviewer first recorded the household matrix and identified the FKP. Recording the household matrix data involved determining the size of the household,

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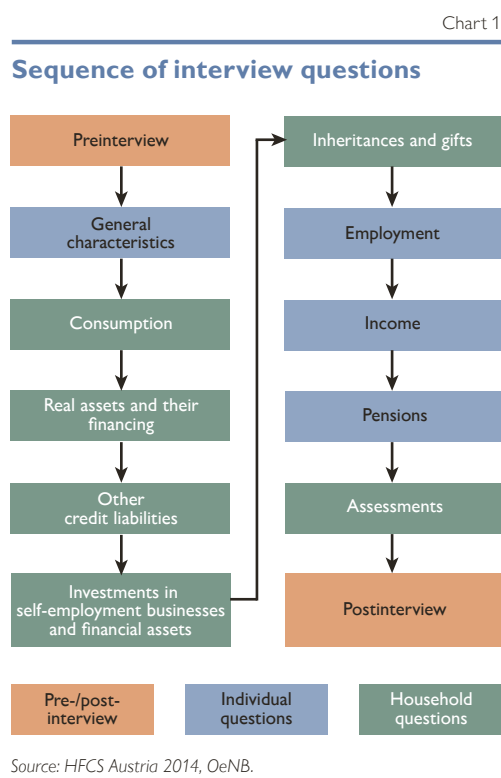
[4] This is a noncore variable specific to Austria that is not included in the international HFCS dataset.

[5] See chapter 3 for a detailed description of the contact strategy.

in line with the HFCS definition, listing the individual household members and identifying the main respondent among them, i.e. the FKP or, if the FKP was not a household member, a reference person. This was also the stage when key identifying data were collected for all household members, namely gender, age and relation to the main respondent. Finally, all basic household data were listed in a table to facilitate verification and, if necessary, revision. If the FKP was present, the interview proceeded immediately – or, if the household so wished, at a later date – with the questions about general household characteristics.

General characteristics

In this section of the questionnaire, more sociodemographic characteristics were collected for all household members: country of birth as well as length of stay in Austria for persons not born in Austria, and, if applicable, migration background. For household members aged 16 and over, information about the level of education (including that of their parents) and marital status was recorded as well.

The following sections (on consumption, real assets and their financing, other liabilities and credit constraints, investments in self-employment businesses and financial assets, inheritances and gifts) served to collect information about the household as a whole.

Consumption

In this section, respondents were asked about the household's consumption and saving behavior and some components of household income. The questions on consumption aim at collecting information about households' typical average monthly expenditure on food, utility costs, total consumption spending and transfers to people outside the household. The information on household income was collected to verify whether this income was high enough to finance the household's expenditure; if not, further information was collected on how households financed any expenses in excess of their income.

Real assets and their financing

This section contained questions about the household's housing situation and most of the other real assets (excluding investments in self-employment businesses, which are addressed below) as well as their financing. The first set of questions established the location and size of a household's main residence and then focused on the tenure status of the household main residence (variable (A)HB0300), grouping households into (partial) owners, tenants or free users of their homes.

Homeowners were asked to indicate when and how they had acquired their main residence as well as how much the property was worth at the time of the interview and at the time they first acquired ownership. In addition, homeowners were asked whether they had taken out a mortgage on their main residence to finance the property. For outstanding mortgages using the residence as collateral, the following data were collected separately for a maximum of three loans: initial amount, duration of the loan, outstanding principal, interest rate and type of interest, repayment rates and other characteristics. If a household had taken out more than three mortgages, the FKP was asked to provide summary information on the outstanding amounts and repayment rates.

Households living in a rented home were asked about their rental cost (including and excluding utilities). Tenants of housing association apartments were asked to indicate the deposit made to the housing association. Any debt tenant households had incurred to finance such deposits was recorded together with unsecured loans (see "Other credit liabilities").

Households that enjoyed free use of their main residence did not have to answer any further questions in the first half of this section.

The next set of questions for all three groups addressed additional real estate holdings, including holdings abroad, as highlighted in the questionnaire. Specifically, loop questions[6] were used to identify the fundamentals (i.e. type, size, value at the time of ownership transfer and at the time of the interview, and use) for up to three other real estate properties, and a summary question was used to establish the total value for any further properties. Any outstanding mortgages taken out on these properties were established using loop questions for a maximum of three loans, as with the main residence. Again, only a summary of the information was collected for additional mortgages taken out on additional properties.

Finally, households were asked to indicate the value of any cars or other vehicles as well as of any valuables (e.g. jewelry, works of art, antiques) they owned. To conclude this section, respondents were asked whether they had bought a car or any other vehicles in the previous 12 months and if so, at what price.

Other credit liabilities

This category covered all other credit liabilities: leasing contracts, outstanding balances on current accounts, outstanding balances on credit cards and uncollateralized loans.

For the first three types of liabilities, interviewers asked whether a household held such liabilities and how much was outstanding (for leasing contracts: the monthly amount of lease payments instead of the total amount outstanding). For outstanding balances on credit cards, the interviewer asked only about the amount in excess of the usual payments, not about the monthly bill that is repaid at the end of a particular month.

The questions about unsecured loans were asked in two parts using a loop with up to three iterations. First, households were asked whether they had also borrowed money from relatives or friends, in addition to the loans already recorded, and they were asked to indicate the purpose and outstanding amount of any such loans. All other (unsecured) loans were recorded in a second part. If a household held more than three such loans, interviewers only recorded the total outstanding principal and, for other credit liabilities, the sum of repayment rates. In the loop for other loans, respondents were asked about the same indicators as for the mortgage(s) secured against property.

In addition, this section of the questionnaire addressed households' risk attitude and the outcome of any loan application they might have made recently.

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[6] *See section 2.6.2 on the structure and navigation of loops.*

Private businesses and financial assets

In this section, the HFCS survey documented all wealth components of the household balance sheet beyond the real assets covered before. Interviewers started out by asking whether a household, partly or entirely, owned any self-employment businesses, and, if so, recorded separate information for up to three such businesses (industry, legal form, number of employees and current value). Information about any additional private businesses was summarized to provide a total value.

The next questions focused on assets held in sight accounts, savings accounts, savings plans with building and loan associations, life insurance funds, mutual funds, bonds, listed stock, silent partnerships, as well as assets in private foundations and managed accounts. For each of these items, FKPs were asked to indicate whether their household held such assets (yes/no question) and, if the answer was yes, what the total value of these assets was. For all life insurance contracts, interviewers asked about the date of conclusion, the type (benefits to be provided at the death of the policy holder or at a given date, or a combination thereof), duration of contract and the frequency and amount of payments into the life insurance plan, to enable a projection of the amounts held in such funds. In addition, interviewers asked about financial debt owed to the household and other financial assets as well as the household's estimated total wealth. This estimate was used to assess the plausibility[7] of the information provided, i.e. the sum of itemized figures was cross-checked with the total.

Inheritances and gifts

The next section of the questionnaire focused on the transfer of asset ownership in the form of inheritances and gifts. In a loop, interviewers asked about up to five inheritances or gifts,[8] recording information about the value at the time of transfer, the type and source of inheritance or gift, and when the transfer was made. The inheritances or gifts were listed in descending order, starting with the most important one for a household's current wealth. Only the total value was recorded for all inheritances or gifts in excess of five. The dataset also includes information about inheritances or gifts households expect to receive.

Up to this point, all questions (excluding those about the sociodemographic makeup of household) focused on the household as a whole. In contrast, the questions in the three subsequent sections of the HFCS questionnaire related to individual household members aged 16 and over, and not to the household as a whole.

Employment

Household members aged 16 and over were asked to provide information on their employment status. The first set of questions focused on people active in the labor market. Pensioners, homemakers, schoolchildren, students and unemployed people were only asked about their expected retirement age and number of years spent in employment so far, before moving on directly to the second set of questions. Employed individuals answered questions about their occupation (ISCO

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[7] For further details on consistency checks, see chapter 4.

[8] The international core dataset only contains up to three inheritances/gifts. Information about more than three inheritances/gifts is not provided. More than three inheritances were reported by 0.3% of households.

code[9]), the number of working hours (and seasonal fluctuations), the employer's main economic activity (ÖNACE code[10]), the amount of time they had worked both for their current employer and overall in their working life, and about their expected retirement age. In the second part, all individuals aged 16 and above were asked to answer questions about their job history and their personal background.[11] The information provided in this section of the questionnaire is especially relevant in combination with that of the next section, which deals with income.

Income

The information on income was recorded by types of income. Respondents first indicated whether they received a certain type of income, and if so, what the annual amount was (information on annual income being usually readily available, e.g. on the income tax declaration). All types of income were recorded for the calendar year 2013, as this was the last full calendar year before the start of fieldwork in 2014.

The types of income covered were employee and self-employment income, income from the state pension system and from private and occupational pension plans as well as income from unemployment benefits. For the first four types of income, respondents could provide either gross or net figures. (In the editing stage (see chapter 4) all net figures were converted to gross income figures using the Austrian Finance Ministry's gross-to-net calculator.)

In addition to asking about income at the individual level, the interviewer also asked in the interview with FKPs whether a household received income from regular (public or private) social transfers, from the rental or leasing of real estate or from financial assets or private businesses. If respondents were unable to provide the gross income from financial investments, the relevant net income was also accepted. Finally, interviewers asked about other sources of income and about expected income growth.

Pensions

The main pension variables collected in the HFCS questionnaire included eligibility for future income from the state pension system and the number of state pensions to which respondents are entitled. Likewise, they were asked to indicate the number of contribution years and the account balances of, or their total contributions, to occupational or private pension plans.

Assessments[12]

In this section, FKPs were invited to provide their assessment of social issues in Austria and of their households' position in the national wealth distribution.

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[9] ISCO: International Standard Classification of Occupations, see www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/stat/isco/isco08/index.htm (accessed on December 9, 2016).

[10] ÖNACE: ÖNACE is the national version of the Statistical Classification of Economic Activities in the European Community (NACE – Nomenclature statistique des activités économiques dans la Communauté européenne); see www.statistik.at/web_en/classifications/implementation_of_the_onace2008/index.html (accessed on December 9, 2016).

[11] The questions from the second part of this section in the questionnaire are not part of the international core dataset.

[12] These are noncore variables specific to Austria that is not included in the international HFCS dataset.

Postinterview

After the interview, respondents were encouraged to comment on questions they had found particularly hard to answer, items not covered by the questionnaire they would have deemed relevant and any other issues. Any comments were recorded as verbatim text. In addition, a so-called paradata section collected background information from interviewers about the interviews (see section 2.6.4.2).

2.5.2 Field phase

2.5.2.1 CAPI implementation (questionnaire programming)

The questionnaire was programmed using IBM's Quancept CAPI software on the basis of a Word template, which is available in the online appendix. In addition to filtering, the questionnaire also contains internal consistency checks (see chapter 4) that allow corrections of possible errors in data entry while the interview is ongoing. The use of the CAPI (computer-assisted personal interviewing) technique combines the advantages of a personal interview with those of real-time digital recording and data cross-checking. In addition, it allows for the implementation of complex filtering techniques, producing tailor-made questionnaires for each household.

2.5.2.2 CAPI test

After the first programming phase, the questionnaire was tested by members of the OeNB's HFCS team and in a pilot survey of 55 households.

2.5.2.3 CAPI problems

Given the experience gained with the first wave of the HFCS in Austria and in-depth checks of the questionnaire and of the questionnaire programming before the start of fieldwork, it was possible to eliminate errors to a great extent. Below is a list of reprogramming issues that had to be dealt with during the field phase:

- Account balances of public pension plans (PF0510 and APF0520):[13] In the initial field phase there was a problem with filtering based on variable PF0300 (number of contribution years) which caused "Don't know" respondents to be wrongly routed to question PF0600 (occupational pension), skipping the variables APF0520 and PF0510. Only 13 people were affected by this problem. The missing information was queried by phone, and the dataset was corrected.
- Confirmation of numeric variables (also section 2.6.2 on euro loops): Again in the initial field phase two households had indicated negative net wealth. In the case of these households, the minus sign was also indicated by mistake in the subsequent cross-checking of the amounts, even though the amounts recorded were positive. The information provided by those households was queried, and the questionnaire programming was corrected.
- Additional borrowing (HB150$x): This variable was incorrectly filtered for a couple of weeks during fieldwork, causing this question to be skipped. This glitch was corrected after a total of 39 households had not answered this question by mistake. The missing data were flagged for imputation (see also chapter 5), to put no unnecessary burden on the respondents.

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[13] *This is a noncore variable specific to Austria that is not included in the international HFCS dataset.*

- Checking the consistency of questions on income from dependent employment and the public pension system (PG0100 and PG0300): During the field phase, an additional consistency check was added for these two questions (see also section 4.3). The consistency check served to alert respondents to an unusual mix of answers if they had first indicated to have been dependently employed or drawing retirement benefits for several years, but subsequently answered "No" to the yes/no question on the relevant type of income (income from dependent employment or the public pension system).
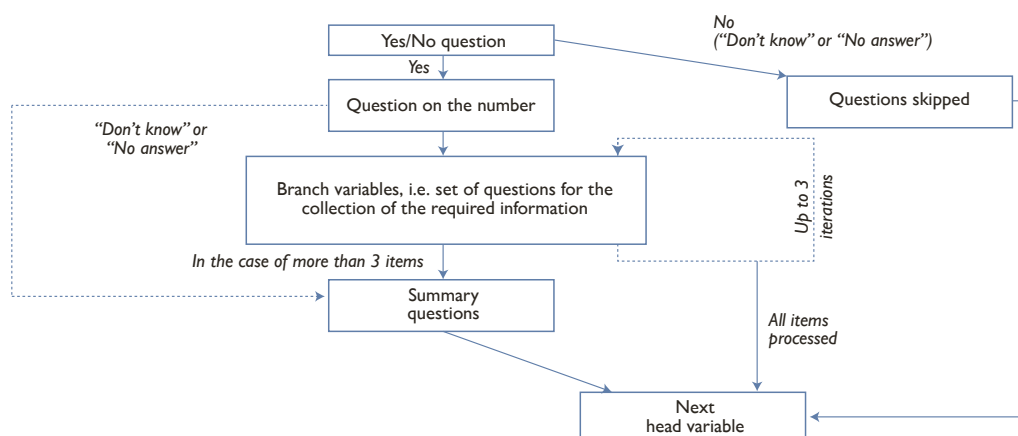
2.6 Special features
2.6.1 Loops

Various aspects of a household that are especially relevant for the HFCS were asked using loops, i.e. sets of identical questions to collect information on each of possibly multiple items applicable to a household (e.g. loans). Chart 2 shows the schematic cycle of these loops.

Chart 2

Structure of a loop

Source: HFCS Austria 2014, OeNB.

Loops were used for the following items:
- mortgage loans using the household's main residence as collateral
- real estate holdings other than the household's main residence
- mortgage loans that used these other properties as collateral
- unsecured loans from family and friends
- other unsecured loans
- investments in self-employment businesses (other than holdings of listed shares)
- life insurance contracts (no maximum number of iterations)
- ownership transfers through inheritances or gifts

First, respondents indicated whether a specific item applied to their household, and if so, the number of such items held by the household. Then the details were recorded in a loop for every one of these items. For instance, if a household held two other unsecured loans, the respondent was asked to first provide details of the loan with the higher outstanding balance and then details of the second loan. As a rule, this procedure was repeated up to three times. If a household had received

multiple inheritances and gifts, the procedure was repeated up to five times. When there were more than three items (five in the case of gifts and inheritances), interviewers recorded a summary of the information.[14] The sequence of items was predefined in the questionnaire. In the case of life insurance contracts, the questionnaire did not predefine a maximum number of iterations in order to record all the contracts.

To make the survey as user-friendly as possible, interviewers could exit loops at any time. In this case, information was collected in summary questions. Interviewers were instructed not to overuse the option of exiting loops; this feature was only meant to prevent respondents from breaking off the interview early, if they were unwilling to answer a given question for more than one item.

2.6.2 Euro loops

All questions involving monetary amounts were asked in a loop to avoid data entry errors and to obtain a range containing the approximate amount if respondents were unable or unwilling to state specific amounts. This section describes the structure of the so-called euro loops. See the online appendix on "Euro loops" for a schematic overview.

In the first step, respondents were asked to provide specific amounts ("How much…?". If the amount was stated, the respondent could freely select any currency. After the information had been recorded, respondents were asked to confirm the amount and the currency. ("You said the amount is … *[currency]*. Is that correct?")

If no specific amount was provided, respondents were asked to indicate a range ("Could you provide a range for the amount?"). Rather than having an upper and a lower bound, the range could also be limited at one end and open at the other end (e.g. "no more than EUR …" or "at least ATS …"). If respondents stated a range, the interviewer continued as before when seeking to get specific amounts, asking respondents to first indicate the currency and then confirm the range and the currency.

If respondents were unable ("Don't know") or unwilling ("No answer") to indicate an individual range themselves, they were asked to choose a range from a list. Depending on the question at hand, interviewers used one of three lists of ranges (see table 1).

The three lists of predefined ranges (A to C) are based on the (unweighted) empirical distribution of the answers to the questions in the first wave of the HFCS in Austria. This evidence showed that, for specific questions, the main part of the distribution called for smaller and hence more specific ranges than the remaining parts of the distribution. List A was used for questions about consumption expenditure and repayment of loans. List B was used for questions related to properties and investment in self-employment businesses, and list C was typically used for outstanding loans and incomes. Questions about financial assets were aligned either with list A or list C, depending on the distribution of assets as observed in the first wave of the survey.[15] The predefined ranges referred to amounts in euro

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[14] Only very few households indicated that they held more than three of the relevant items.

[15] See the online appendix at https://hfcs.at/en/publikationen/dokumentation.html for a detailed overview of which ranges (list A, B or C) were used for which questions.

Table 1

List of predefined ranges for euro questions

List A		List B		List C	
EUR					
A	1 – below 101	A	1 – below 10,001	A	1 – below 1,001
B	101 – below 201	B	10,001 – below 50,001	B	1,001 – below 2,501
C	201 – below 301	C	50,001 – below 75,001	C	2,501 – below 5,001
D	301 – below 401	D	75,001 – below 100,001	D	5,001 – below 7,501
E	401 – below 501	E	100,001 – below 150,001	E	7,501 – below 10,001
F	501 – below 751	F	150,001 – below 200,001	F	10,001 – below 15,001
G	751 – below 1,001	G	200,001 – below 300,001	G	15,001 – below 20,001
H	1,001 – below 1,501	H	300,001 – below 400,001	H	20,001 – below 25,001
I	1,501 – below 2,001	I	400,001 – below 500,001	I	25,001 – below 30,001
J	2,001 – below 3,001	J	500,001 – below 750,001	J	30,001 – below 35,001
K	3,001 – below 5,001	K	750,001 – below 1 million	K	35,001 – below 40,001
L	5,001 – below 7,501	L	more than 1 million – 3 million	L	40,001 – below 50,001
M	7,501 – below 10,001	M	more than 3 million – 5 million	M	50,001 – below 75,001
N	10,001 – below 25,001	N	more than 5 million – 10 million	N	75,001 – below 100,001
O	25,001 – below 50,001	O	more than 10 million	O	100,001 – below 200,001
P	more than 50,001			P	200,001 – below 300,001
				Q	300,001 – below 500,001
				R	500,001 – 1 million
				S	more than 1 million

Source: HFCS Austria 2014, OeNB.

only. Interviewers moved on to the confirmation question as soon as the respondent had chosen a range. The lists of predefined ranges were used as showcards for all questions involving monetary amounts (see also section 3.5.4).

Only if a respondent also refused to choose from the list of predefined ranges was the status of the question recorded as not answered ("Don't know" or "No answer"). The information on ranges was especially important for multiple imputation (see chapter 5).

2.6.3 Recording households owning a farm

Recording the real assets of farmers is known – from past experience of the first wave – to be a particular challenge for respondents, especially when it came to breaking down the assets into the household main residence and business assets. In the second wave, the business assets of farmers were again recorded in the loop on investment in self-employment businesses. However, in order to elicit more precise answers, the second-wave questionnaire contained a number of additional questions for farmers as well as some additional guidance. The procedure can be summarized as follows:
• Before the actual interview started, respondents were classified by interviewers as farmers or non-farmers. The classification was straightforward in almost all cases. Even when a respondent was incorrectly identified, all essential information was still gathered.
• Specifically, the following extra information was recorded for households classified as farmers:
    – Was it possible to separate housing assets (i.e. the household main residence) from business assets? [in the main residence chapter of the questionnaire]

— If not, what percentage of the recorded value did respondents allocate to their main residence? [in the main residence chapter of the questionnaire]

— Does the value recorded for investment in a self-employment business include the main residence recorded? [in the investments into self-employment businesses chapter of the questionnaire]

• Moreover, for questions relating to the value of their main residence, the yes/no question on properties other than the main residence, as well as for the question about investment in a self-employment business and its value, farmers received detailed guidance as to which components of their household balance sheet were to be recorded under which position.

In addition, all interviewers were specifically trained to handle such cases (see also section 3.3). The additional information thus collected proved to be particularly relevant for multiple imputation (see also section 5.4).

2.6.4 Additional information

2.6.4.1 Contact attempts

Every household in the sample population had to be contacted unsuccessfully on at least five separate occasions before it could be classified as a unit nonresponse (see also the contact rules in section 3.4).[16]

The contact attempts were recorded in the dataset,[17] thus providing additional information. The exact time (year, month, day, hour and minute), mode and outcome of every single contact attempt were documented, as was the total number of contact attempts. Interviewers were instructed to write this information down on paper first and record it in the electronic questionnaire only following the completion of the workload (interview, refusal, etc.) on a particular household.

2.6.4.2 Paradata

Two kinds of so-called paradata were collected: While the first type of paradata was collected for all households – including those that ultimately did not participate in the survey – the second type covered additional information on the households that were interviewed.

The first section covered all information that could be obtained without actually entering a household's residence or completing an interview: the interviewer's assessment of the building and construction type, the geographical location (urban or rural area), the condition of the building, the residential area and special security measures.

If an interview took place, interviewers also collected the following additional paradata: the condition of the dwelling's interior, the interview language (in Austria all interviews were conducted in German), the interviewer's assessment of the accuracy of the information provided, the venue in which the interview was conducted, the number of people present during the interview and the interest they showed in the interview, the frequency with which respondents consulted documentation to answer questions, and the type of documentation used. In addition, interviewers had to submit written comments about the interview for every

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[16] *Interviewers had to make at least two contact attempts in person over a period of at least three weeks.*

[17] *These variables were not included in the user database due to anonymization requirements.*

single household. These comments, to be made on five questions covering the interview as a whole, proved very helpful at different stages of the project.

The first section of paradata was recorded in the sample register file, which is not part of the user database due to anonymization requirements. It was used mainly to calculate nonresponse weights.[18] The second section (excluding interviewer comments) was recorded in variables HR0100 to HR1600 in the household data file.

2.7 Interviewer documents

Among other things, interviewers had access to the following documentation to help them prepare for an interview and as a reference point during the interview (also available in the online appendix):[19]
- the showcards which were used during interviews to provide respondents with a list of possible response options for several questions in the questionnaire,
- a glossary, which contained simple definitions of the terminology used in the questionnaire, and
- a copy of the study entitled "Eurosystem Finance and Consumption Survey 2010: First Results for Austria" (Fessler et al., 2012) to illustrate how the data obtained in the first wave of the HFCS in Austria were used for analysis.

2.8 Participating countries

The second wave of the Eurosystem HFCS was conducted in the following euro area countries: Belgium, Germany,[20] Estonia, Ireland,[21] Greece, Spain,[22] France, Italy,[23] Cyprus,[24] Luxembourg, Latvia, Malta,[25] Austria, the Netherlands, Portugal, Slovenia,[26] Slovakia and Finland.

The survey was prepared by the Household Finance and Consumption Network (HFCN) launched by the ECB. The aim was to achieve ex ante harmonization at as many levels of the survey as possible. In doing so, it was necessary to take features specific to individual countries into account, leading to discrepancies and to additional questions in some cases. In addition to the core output variables, the

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[18] These weights are used for the correction of the nonrandom participation of households in a survey and are needed to construct the final household weights (see chapter 7).

[19] For a detailed description of the documentation, see chapter 3.

[20] Information on the survey in Germany is available at www.bundesbank.de/Navigation/EN/Bundesbank/Research/Panel_on_household_finances/panel_on_household_finances.html (accessed on December 9, 2016).

[21] Information on the survey in Ireland is available at www.cso.ie/en/surveysandmethodology/socialconditions/hfcsurvey/ (accessed on December 9, 2016).

[22] Information on the survey in Spain is available at www.bde.es/bde/en/areas/estadis/Otras_estadistic/Encuesta_Financi/ (accessed on December 9, 2016).

[23] Information on the survey in Italy is available at www.bancaditalia.it/statistiche/tematiche/indagini-famiglie-imprese/bilanci-famiglie/index.html?com.dotmarketing.htmlpage.language=1 (accessed on December 9, 2016).

[24] Information on the survey in Cyprus is available at www.centralbank.gov.cy/nqcontent.cfm?a_id=11840&lang=en (accessed on December 9, 2016).

[25] Information on the survey in Malta is available at https://www.centralbankmalta.org/en/household-finance-and-consumption-survey (accessed on December 9, 2016).

[26] Information on the survey in Slovenia is available at www.bsi.si/en/financial-data.asp?MapaId=1584 (accessed on December 9, 2016).

Austrian survey also collected data that are specific to Austrian households (e.g. information on foreign currency loans). Moreover, the answer options for some questions were categorized in greater detail in the national datasets. A case in point is the question about respondents' marital status, which came with six answer options in the national dataset but only five answer options in the international dataset. The OeNB is planning to provide the country-specific details in addition to the datasets that the ECB is expected to publish in fall 2016.

2.9 Online appendix

The following PDF documents are available in German for download from the Austrian HFCS website (www.hfcs.at) as an appendix to this chapter:
- the questionnaire
- the euro loops
- the paradata questions
- the variable list
- the showcards
- the glossary