

Key facts of the HFCS in Austria

Methodological framework at a glance

Questionnaire

The HFCS in Austria is based on an internationally harmonized questionnaire that covers the key stock and flow components of the household balance sheet, integrating them with socioeconomic characteristics. Data were collected from households.

Reference period

The data on stock positions and socioeconomic characteristics refer to the survey date (the fieldwork was carried out between June 2014 and February 2015). Income-related data refer to the 2013 calendar year. The data on household consumption refer to a typical month.

Geographical scope

Austria

Sampling

Target population

All households in Austria (irrespective of nationality and citizenship)

Sampling frame

Postal addresses of all households in Austria.

Sampling design

Stratified two-stage cluster sample design

- Stratification: NUTS 3 regions divided into 8 classes by municipality size
- Primary sampling unit (PSU): enumeration districts (“Zählsprenkel”)
- Secondary sampling unit (SSU): postal addresses

The gross sample comprised a total of 619 PSUs and 6,308 SSUs in 185 strata.

Survey company

Institut für empirische Sozialforschung GmbH – IFES

Fieldwork

General information

Fieldwork period:	June 2014 to February 2015
Number of interviewers:	72
Method of data collection:	computer-assisted personal interview (CAPI)

Interviewer training

Number of interviewer training sessions:	6
Duration of HFCS interviewer training:	1 day

Pilot survey

Number of pilot interviews:	55
-----------------------------	----

Contact strategy

All households received a personalized letter from the governor of the Oesterreichische Nationalbank (OeNB) and an information leaflet distributed by IFES before they were contacted by the interviewers. The interviewers had instructions to make up to five contact attempts per household over a period of at least three weeks. At least two of these attempts were to be made in person, at least one attempt was to be made on a weekend and another outside regular working hours (9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.).

Incentives for participation

Participation in the HFCS was voluntary.

Each household that successfully completed an interview received a silver coin with a face value of EUR 5 (worth some EUR 15 at the time of fieldwork).

In addition, all participating households had the opportunity to enter a draw for travel vouchers (one worth EUR 1,000, five vouchers worth EUR 200 each).

Documents used during interviews

Showcards, interviewer manual, glossary

Interviewer monitoring

The survey company monitored the conduct of the interviews by randomly checking (by telephone) around every one in six interviews.

The (anonymized) data from the completed household interviews were forwarded to the OeNB in 15 batches during the field phase, to enable prompt assessment of each interview and interviewer. Four interviewers who were found to have delivered seriously flawed interviews were withdrawn from the survey.

Follow-up queries by telephone

Outliers and inconsistent responses were looked into again after the interviews. These follow-up investigations resulted in the confirmation or correction of the respective values (for 370 households).

Editing and consistency checks

Number and type of edits

Number of observations:	around 1.3 million
Thereof edited observations:	around 65,000 (more than two-thirds on the basis of verbatim records)
Percentage of edited observations:	4.8%

Consistency checks during the interviews

Number of consistency checks programmed into the questionnaire:	around 250
---	------------

Postinterview consistency checks

Expert analysis of the data from each interview, follow-up phone calls to clarify uncertainties, investigation of outliers and consistency checks of the information collected, technical review of filtering.

Documentation

Flag variables are used to document all edits and imputations.

Imputations

Method:	multiple imputation by chained equations (broad conditioning approach)
Number of multiple imputation samples:	5
Number of iterations per imputation sample:	10
Median of the variables with missing values per household:	18
Mean of the variables with missing values per household:	29.9

Sample size and response rate

Number of households in the sample (gross sample):	6,308
Number of successfully interviewed households (net sample):	2,997
Number of households that could not be reached (despite five contact attempts):	136
Number of households that refused to participate:	2,657
Number of households that did not participate for other reasons:	204
Number of addresses whose eligibility was unknown:	30
Number of ineligible addresses:	284
Incomplete interviews and interviews discarded after fieldwork:	42
Response rate:	around 50%

Weighting

Final weights computed with nonresponse and poststratification adjustments to design weights:

- Method of nonresponse adjustment: model-based adjustment combined with weighting-class adjustment, based on optimum number of classes
- Method of poststratification adjustment: cell adjustment

Smallest final weight:	287
Median final weight:	1,207
Mean final weight:	1,289
Highest final weight:	4,360
Sum of final weights (target population):	3,862,526
Unequal weighting effect:	1.167
Trimming and normalization of weights	none

Variance estimation

Method:	rescaling bootstrap procedure
Number of replicates:	1,000
Number of pseudo-strata:	135
Replicate weights computed with same adjustments to design weights as those to the final weights	
Finite population corrections were applied to all resampling weights.	