

STRATEGY 2020

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Covering the period from 2016 to 2020, Strategy 2020 can build on a high level of achievement that ensures an appropriate response to the challenges expected in the production of statistics. An important basis for Strategy 2020 was the 2015 Strategy Concept (2011-2015) with its objectives and actions focusing on the cornerstones of relevance, quality and efficiency.

Many of the objectives in the preceding strategy concept are of a long-term and fundamental nature for a national statistics institute (NSI) and will therefore continue to play a key role in the 2020 strategy concept, albeit in a slightly modified form depending on the individual case.

It should be noted that the underlying conditions have changed since the previous 2015 Strategy Concept was established meaning an adjustment of former priorities is therefore required. This relates firstly to the rapid pace of technological development, which has had a lasting impact on statistical production processes. Secondly, there have been changes to the legal environment at international level. In 2015, the revision of Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 on European Statistics by Regulation (EU) 2015/759 of the European Parliament and of the Council (referred to below as the EU Statistics Regulation) was published. Furthermore, the new version of the European Statistics Code of Practice and subsequent second round of peer reviews for Austria and the other members of the European Statistical System (ESS) led to a number of implementing measures. Finally, the current strategy for the ESS represents the principal determinant in the international sphere. Based on a strategy paper prepared in 2014, “The European Statistical System in 2020” (ESS Vision 2020), specific actions to implement ESS Vision 2020 were developed at European Union (EU) level. These “Vision Implementation Projects” (VIP projects or ESS.VIP) are multinational collaborations that define the implementing measures designed to enable the whole ESS, even in the face of current and future challenges, to achieve the objective of supplying the necessary medium- and long-term statistical basis for political decision-making as an efficient and modern information provider.

Against the background of the diversity of national and international frameworks that are essential to Strategy 2020, Statistics Austria has decided to assign the measures in the current strategy document, which are more diversified than in the previous version, to five main pillars. Implementing these effectively must be seen as an essential prerequisite in order for Statistics Austria to be positioned in 2020 as a modern, high-quality information provider for society, science, business and politics that produces and communicates relevant “facts of life”, which are made available in a comprehensible manner and in accordance with scientific principles employing various communication channels in form of easily accessible data for the use of a wider public.

THE STRUCTURE OF STRATEGY 2020

Statistics Austria's objective is to be a modern, high-quality information provider for society, science, business, politics and administration. A key element of this is to produce and communicate relevant "facts of life", which are made available in a comprehensible manner and in accordance with scientific principles employing various communication channels in form of easily accessible data for the use of a wider public.

Strategy 2020 for the period 2016-2020 lays down the main principles for achieving this goal, focusing on the following five pillars:

| MODERN, EFFICIENT AND INTEGRATED DATA PRODUCTION

Statistics Austria aims to produce its statistics efficiently in accordance with best practices, using all available data sources as well as seeking new ones, and by means of up-to-date integrated methods.

| TRANSFORMATION OF DATA INTO INFORMATION

Statistical results should be passed on in a modern and user-friendly way, while contextual information should help statistical information to be interpreted. Data should be communicated more effectively and should be suitable for optimum use by all user groups.

| RELEVANCE TO SOCIETY ENSURED BY WIDE COVERAGE OF TOPICS AND FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

In its role as a leading and innovative information provider, Statistics Austria aims to cover the widest possible range of topics of relevance to business and society. Further it aims to constantly develop and expand access to information about the above mentioned topic areas.

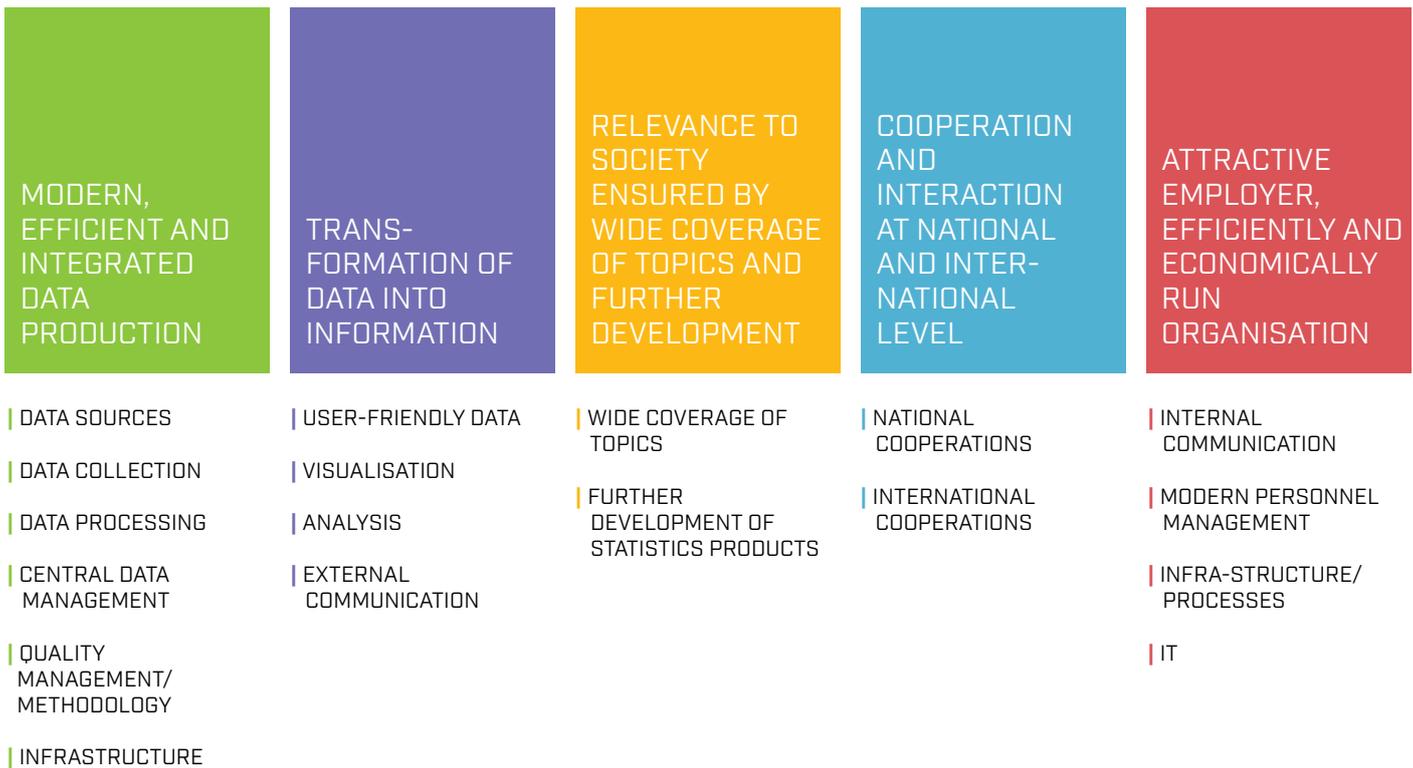
| COOPERATION AND INTERACTION AT NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

Cooperation and knowledge exchange at national and international level should create the best possible conditions for the development, production and dissemination of statistics and achieve high user satisfaction.

| ATTRACTIVE EMPLOYER, EFFICIENTLY AND ECONOMICALLY RUN ORGANISATION

Statistics Austria aims to be an attractive employer offering secure jobs and state-of-the-art workplaces thanks to its economical and efficient organisation. A prerequisite for achieving all Statistics Austria's goals is a secure financial footing, with highly motivated and committed staff forming a strong backbone.

The five thematic pillars of Statistics Austria's Strategy 2020:



| MODERN, EFFICIENT AND INTEGRATED DATA PRODUCTION

Producing statistical results is one of the core tasks of an NSI. The increase in tasks in combination with diminishing resources calls for constant modernisation, which enables data to be produced in an efficient and integrated way. Modernisation involves in particular **locating and tapping new data sources**, “big data” being a key concept. This subject and the associated issues related to the **use of administrative data** form an important set of measures within Strategy 2020. As indicated in recent years by the project “Optimising Data Collection”, the focus on the steps involved in **data collection** continues to be reflected in the continuation and implementation of planned measures. At international level too, Statistics Austria will continue its commitment concerning the modernisation of data collection and **data production processes**. In particular single market statistics (SIM-STAT) should be mentioned; Statistics Austria has been actively involved in the preparation of this project for a number of years. In order to be able to optimise **data processing** processes in a way similar to that for data collection, the individual elements of the process must be analysed and evaluated. The development of a **central data and metadata management system**, in other words a **data warehouse** (DWH) that will enable synergistic work, will be a key challenge in coming years. To ensure that the process elements mentioned above meet the quality standards required, Statistics Austria will need to press ahead with the **development of quality management** over the next few years, in particular by introducing in-house quality audits and enhancing the methodology used for quality measurement. Since modern data production cannot be achieved without a **suitable infrastructure** and possible solutions can be expected here due to international collaboration as part of the ESS.VIP projects, Statistics Austria will have

to actively participate within this framework. Likewise, the sub-process structure of the statistical production process introduced at Statistics Austria in 1999 will also need to be reviewed.

| TRANSFORMATION OF DATA INTO INFORMATION

The correct interpretation of statistical data requires additional information beyond the merely tabular display of results. Data does not generally receive information content until contextual information from other statistics and metadata such as correlations, fluctuation margins, definitions and methods is made available to users. Transforming data into information is a central challenge for NSIs partly due to the rapidly changing communication culture of our society and greater technological possibilities. For the provision of meta-information an in-depth knowledge of the individual statistical products is prerequisite. Against this background, further expansion of multidisciplinary **analytical skills** and the intensification of in-house and external expert dialogue are a key element of Strategy 2020. To ensure the provision of **user-friendly data**, improvements first need to be made to the data currently available such as STATcube and open data as well as to microdata access (in compliance with data protection provisions). Second, taking account of technological developments, statistical results must be communicated more effectively and the implementation of new information services (such as apps) must be considered. **Displaying statistical information in a visualised form** is becoming ever more important and this trend is set to continue in the coming years. This strategy therefore calls for the development of relevant skills/capabilities and proposes the promotion of existing geographical information systems. **External communication** is a key issue for today's statistics institutes. This involves not just specialist publications but Statistics Austria's entire image, with regular evaluations of the website and an increased presence on social media both playing a role. The content side includes modernising *Statistische Nachrichten* as a flagship publication and encouraging greater topic-oriented access.

| RELEVANCE TO SOCIETY ENSURED BY WIDE COVERAGE OF TOPICS AND FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

The mission of an NSI is to statistically depict the complete range of topics that are relevant to economic and social policy in an appropriate way. This also applies to the coverage of topics that have not yet been addressed, meaning that continuing **globalisation** will need to be taken into account in coming years e.g. the necessity of **profiling companies** – in other words, recording corporations and groups of companies as meaningful economic units – as an essential measure. Existing statistical products should also be further developed or extended to include additional features. **Developing business statistics** in the context of implementing the Framework Regulation Integrating Business Statistics (FRIBS) will thus be an important objective over the next few years. The availability of new additional product components such as the business cycle monitor and the intensified provision of geo-based statistics are also intended to expand the range of products. In the field of social statistics too, globalisation phenomena (such as labour migration) also need

to be depicted. The increasing focus on **topic-related rather than survey-related product development** is to be seen as an innovative step that enables a broader view of current social policy issues. Enhancing competence in the field of National Accounts (NA) will also be an important concern over the next few years. The continuation of initiatives related to “**GDP and beyond**”, in which Statistics Austria is recognised as an international pioneer, must also be seen as a strategic measure in terms of innovative depiction.

| COOPERATION AND INTERACTION AT NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

To implement strategic objectives as described in this text, NSIs must be able to cooperate with the societies and bodies surrounding them. **Co-operations at national and international level** are a key prerequisite enabling to deal with challenges and tasks in a way that is as efficient and customer-oriented as possible. At national level, encouraging partnerships with data owners must be seen as an urgent strategic objective. This involves the owners of administrative data on the one hand. On the other hand, the form of partnerships to be pursued with the owners of new data sources must be defined in order to facilitate statistical use. Statistics Austria’s role as a coordinating body in the national statistical system, as laid down in the EU Statistics Regulation, requires partnerships with the other national bodies that compile European statistics to be strengthened. The most important partnership for the compilation of statistics continues to be the partnership with **respondents**. Despite the variety of alternative data sources, there would be no statistical results if respondents were not motivated to participate in direct data surveys. In addition to partnerships that enable data to be collected, cooperation with customers should also be promoted. Science, media and schools are important strategic contacts in this regard.

In the international sphere, it is mainly activities at EU level and in particular collaboration in the ESS that are of high relevance. Within the ESS, strategic decisions on its focus are made, statistical standards and norms are developed, and strategic concepts relating to these are adopted. The EU Statistics Regulation as revised in 2015 is the cornerstone for European statistics; the resulting implementation obligations are one of the measures in this strategy paper. Traditionally strong at all levels, from operational working groups to high-level committees and initiatives, Statistics Austria’s commitment will be continued and, where necessary, intensified, in particular within the new Centres of Excellence (CoE) to be created. Moreover, Austria will also hold presidency of the Council of the EU in 2019, which will provide extensive opportunities to shape goals and priorities in areas including statistics. Finally, Statistics Austria’s collaborations in the international sphere are also reflected in a multilateral setting beyond the EU – relevant co-operations being primarily with the United Nations (UN) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) – and bilaterally through collaborative projects, assistance services and networking.

| ATTRACTIVE EMPLOYER, EFFICIENTLY AND ECONOMICALLY RUN ORGANISATION

In addition to the co-operations described above, the prerequisites needed to achieve the strategic objectives include in particular motivated and competent employees and the appropriate level of technical resources. Statistics Austria must therefore continue to be an attractive employer and an efficiently and economically run organisation. Since efficiency and content-related development are based on **well-functioning internal communication channels**, one of the objectives is to encourage informal communication within the organisation. To ensure efficient staff-assignment as well as employee satisfaction, there must be an increased emphasis on measures that are in line with **modern personnel management**. These include the development of teleworking, the opportunity to follow a specialist career path, and the promotion of employee mobility. An efficient organisation and modern workplace require **appropriate infrastructures, processes** and, in particular, **IT tools**. To ensure that this is the case and also in order to support and monitor the production processes being modernised, a series of evaluation processes in the hardware and software are provided by IT. In accordance with the Code of Practice, high priority is given to the aspect of IT security. Finally, IT projects of particular strategic importance are assessed in terms of knowledge management, risks and cost-benefit aspects. Statistics Austria can ultimately only achieve all its goals if a secure **financial footing** is in place.