

Standard documentation Meta information

(Definitions, comments, methods, quality)

on

Travel Balance of Payments

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Executive Summary

The aim of the Travel Balance of Payments as part of the balance of payments is to show international travel expenditures in accordance with the guidelines of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) published in the Balance of Payments Manual (BPM6). From Austria's perspective, this means recording all expenditures of persons with their main residence abroad (foreign travellers) in Austria, as well as the expenditures of persons with their main residence in Austria (Austrian travellers) abroad. The travel balance is a partial balance of the Austrian current account and compares the euro equivalent of tourism exports with tourism imports.

Of central importance here is that the concept of "traveller" used in the travel balance goes beyond the concept of tourist traveller. The travel balance thus has a population that includes all tourism, but is not limited to it. For example, the expenditure of frequent border crossings is recorded in the same way as the expenditure of non-tourists such as commuters, seasonal workers or students.

Since 2006, the travel balance has been compiled by Statistics Austria as an integral part of the services balance. The compilation is carried out on behalf of the Austrian National Bank, which is also responsible for publishing the results on its website and via the ECB, Eurostat and the IMF. Due to predefined revision dates, final data are only available after t+3 years, preliminary data after t+90 days.

For the calculation of the travel balance, both products of Statistics Austria as well as a whole range of external sources, which are used for secondary statistics, flow in as data sources. The plausibility and quality of the data sources used are checked and evaluated by means of triangulation so that a consistent picture of travel exports and imports can be created that meets the requirement of completeness and freedom from overlaps as well as possible.

The monthly survey of overnight stays by foreign tourists conducted by Statistics Austria provides the quantity structure for the calculation of travel exports. On the import side, the quarterly sample survey on holiday and business trips, also conducted by Statistics Austria, is the most important source. Due to the different survey methods of the travel export and import flows, the description of the survey form is given separately for these categories.

In order to meet the demand for progressive modernisation with regard to the development and integration of digital data sources the traditional approach to calculating travel exports and imports is enriched by using new data sources. As examples, data from mobile phone providers as well as payment data can be mentioned here, which can affect the quantity structure in the form of travellers on the one hand and the expenditure side on the other.

Travel Balance of Payments – Main Key Points

Subject matter	The travel balance as part of the balance of payments records the expenditures of foreigners in the course of travel to Austria and compares these with the expenditures of Austrian residents in the course of travel abroad. The travel balance is part of the balance of services.
Population	For the compilation of the credit side the population is the number of persons with their main residence abroad who travel to Austria. For the compilation of the debit side the population is the number of persons with their main residence in Austria who travel abroad.
Type of statistics	Overall accounting with elements of model-based estimates
Data sources/Survey techniques	Use of in-house and external data sources
Reference period or due day	Quarterly
Periodicity	Quarterly
Survey participation (in case of a survey)	Voluntary participation in the course of recording additional characteristics for recording day trips abroad
Main legal acts	Commissioning by the Austrian National Bank
Most detailed regional breakdown	Austria (Nuts 0)
Availability of results	Preliminary results: t+90 days Final results: t+3 years
Other	The travel balance follows the "travel" concept, which goes beyond the narrower definition of "tourism" but fully includes tourism expenditure.