6. Organizational and workplace culture issues (Statistics Austria)

back to case study home page

6.1 Overview of roles and responsibilities

Statistical projects are planned and compiled in four subject matter divisions. The survey manager is responsible to compile a standard-documentation. When electronic questionnaires are used for raw data collection, the corresponding e-Quest metadata are defined by the subject matter divisions as well.
Statistics Austria does not have a unit which is responsible for centralised metadata systems. The responsibilities for specific types of metadata are distributed among various organizational units.

An important role is played by the "Registers, Classifications and Methods" department (approximately 70 persons). One of its sub-units, the GIS unit (Geographical Information Systems), is concerned with metadata because of the EU directive "INSPIRE".

The administration of the statistical database ISIS is done by a unit attached to the Directorate-General.

Regarding the topic "quality of statistics", a "Total Quality Management (TQM) board" was established in 2000, consisting of five members. In 2003, a quality management unit (consisting of two persons) was installed, which is directly subordinate to the Directorate-General. The tasks of this unit are to initiate, to plan, to co-ordinate, to implement and to control TQM measures in consultation with the Directors General and in close co-operation with the TQM Board.

It is the particular duty of the quality management unit - in co-operation with the TQM Board - to define actual quality projects within all TQM areas, and it is responsible for the co-ordination, the planning and management of projects (for example, the implementation of an in-house system for quality reporting and of so called "feedback talks", staff opinion surveys, etc.).

With respect to metadata, the IT department plays a very important role. As was mentioned above, the initiative for many projects related to metadata originated in this department. Members of the IT department have a leading function in the conceptual planning and realization of metadata systems (for instance, e-Quest, ISIS and ISIS New, Publication Database, conceptual design of the IMS architecture).

6.2 Metadata management team

See section 6.1

6.3 Training and knowledge management

The training programme of Statistics Austria includes two courses related to metadata:

- Course on the definition of electronic questionnaires with the "e-Quest Metadata Manager" software.
- Course on quality reporting.

As part of TQM, once a month the standard documentation of a certain statistical project is discussed by a group of experts and the quality subgroup of the Statistical Council. After the discussion the concerned standard documentation is reworked according to the proposals resulting from the discussion.

6.4 Partnerships and cooperation

Some metadata projects were conducted in cooperation with the well-known expert for metadata Prof. Fröschl (University of Vienna).

Members of Statistics Austria participate in international conferences and work sessions (METIS, Metadata Working Group).

6.5 Other issues