

A.600 Statistics

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Access to data in the field of statistics

The purpose of official statistics is to continuously collect, compile, process, present and analyse data on mass phenomena (Section 1, first sentence, of the Federal Statistics Act (BStatG)). The results of these statistics “break down social, economic and environmental interrelationships for the Federal Government, the Länder, including local authorities and associations of local authorities, society, the business sector, academia and research” (Section 1, sentence 4 of the F BStatG). Federal statistics are mandated by law (Section 5(1), sentence 1 of the BStatG). There is an obligation to provide information for the collection of data, insofar as such an obligation has been established for federal statistics (§ 6(1), second sentence, BStatG). Economic and environmental statistics may be mandated by statutory order of the Federal Government with an obligation to provide information; other federal statistics may only be mandated without such an obligation (§ 5(2), second sentence, BStatG).

Section 15 of the BStatG sets out the requirements that a statutory provision mandating the compilation of federal statistics must meet. The statutory provision must specify whether data collection is to take place with or without an obligation to provide information (Section 15(1), first sentence, BStatG). Where an obligation to provide information is laid down, all persons subject to the law are obliged to answer the questions put to them in the proper manner (§ 15(1), second sentence, BStatG). The obligation to provide information applies to survey officers and survey agencies (§ 15(2) BStatG).