Organic data network: Harmonising organic market data collection in Europe

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The overall objective is pursued by the collaborative project "Data network for better European organic market information" carried out in the 7th Framework Programme of the EU.

Background

- Organic market data collection methods and processing are inconsistent → data is not comparable
- Conclusions based on this data might be misleading
- Harmonisation of data collection and processing → solid basis for decision-making → further organic market growth

Objective

- Analysis of the current situation in organic market data collection, respectively statistical work
- Introduction of an approach to evaluate data quality
- Elaboration of a guideline for the improvement of statistical work in the organic market sector

Methodology

- Online survey (+ telephone survey to complement results)
- Basic analyses (i.e. frequency distributions) to create overview on current situation
- ESS (European Statistical System) quality dimensions for the evaluation of statistical work (Fig. 1)

Results

- 1: Descriptive results of survey analysis → overview on statistical work in the organic market sector (Tab. 1)
- 2: Application of the concept → evaluation of statistical work with the help of data quality dimensions (Fig. 1)

Conclusions

- Statistical work is carried out heterogeneously throughout Europe
- ESS quality dimensions are easy to apply for evaluation of organisations' statistical work (Fig. 1)
- "Best practice" examples can serve as a reference system for other data collectors

Further steps

- Implement the resulting recommendations in the project's case studies
- Contribute to the harmonisation of organic market data collection by improving country reports
- Communicate the ideas through multimedia presentations

RESULTS 1: OVERVIEW

Basic findings of statistical analysis:

- heterogeneous distribution of respondents (most responses from IT and DE)
- most organic market data collected from producers
- only 70% of the respondents applied data quality checks, mostly on production data (volumes)
- most of the organic market data is collected and published annually
- price data are more frequently collected and published on a weekly basis
- most common format for publications: web page

Tab. 1: Most frequently used methods in organic market data collection

	Collection method (most frequently used)
Production volumes	Census
Production values	Expert estimates
Retail sales volumes/values	Consumer/household panel
Farm level prices	Telephone survey
Consumer prices	Consumer/household panel + telephone survey
Import volumes	Census
Import values	E-mail survey
Export volumes/values	E-mail survey

RESULTS 2: APPLICATION OF CONCEPT

- Factors determining the performance in each data quality dimension are identified and evaluated to identify "best practice" examples for statistical work
- Approach was used for all dimensions to assess the quality of organic market data collection and processing, and to find possibilities for improvement

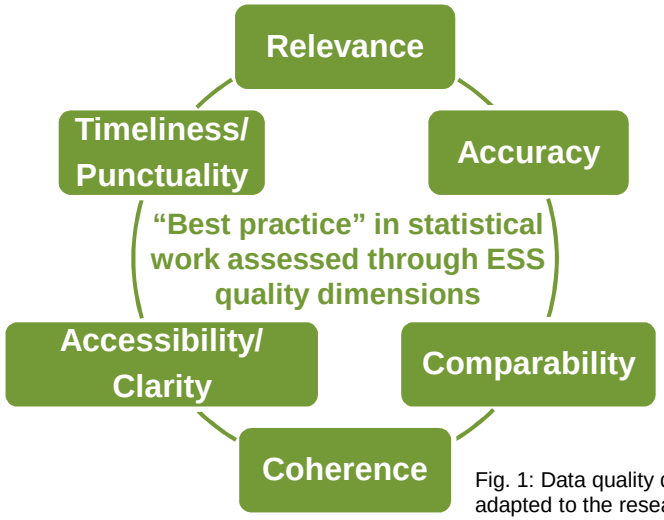

Fig. 1: Data quality dimensions adapted to the research objective

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