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### Expenditures on research and development stagnated in 2020

**Vienna**, 2021-04-22 – According to Statistics Austria's estimate, €12.1 billion were spent on Research and Development (R&D) in Austria in 2020, which was slightly less than the year before (2019: €12.3 billion). The relation of the gross domestic expenditure on R&D to the nominal Gross Domestic Product (GDP), the so-called research intensity, however, has reached an all-time high of 3.23%. The increase of the research intensity of 3.10% in 2019 to 3.23% in 2020 is only due to the fact that the overall economic performance in this period decreased more sharply than the R&D expenditures.

### No collapsing R&D expenditure despite of the crisis

The nominal decrease of the total Austrian R&D expenditure from 2019 to 2020 is estimated to be 2%, while in the same period the Gross Domestic Product fell by 5.5%. Once more, R&D expenditures proved to be stable in times of crises. In the recession period around 2009 a similar phenomenon could be observed. A strong decrease of the economic performance was accompanied by stagnating, but not by collapsing R&D expenditures. In the business enterprise sector R&D is still mainly conducted in manufacturing and business services, and more rarely in such industries which are more affected by pandemic-related restrictions. Likewise, R&D activities at universities and other public research institutes are less affected by circumstances caused by COVID-19.

### Half of Austrian R&D expenditure funded by businesses

In 2020, businesses have financed research with €6.1 billion, which amounted to 50% of total Austrian R&D expenditure. R&D funding from enterprises also includes reimbursements from the research premium ("Forschungsprämie") which were reported by the Federal Ministry of Finance to be around €1 billion in 2020. €4.0 billion fall upon the government sector (approx. 33% of total R&D funding). The largest share comes from the federal government and amounts to €3.3 billion. The regional governments ("Bundesländer") contribute €550 million to R&D funding. €2 billion (16%) was financed from abroad, mostly from enterprises whose affiliates carry out R&D in Austria.

The financing structure of the R&D expenditure has shifted between 2019 and 2020. A reduction of provision of business funding goes along with a higher public funding. While in 2019 53% of total R&D expenditure was funded by businesses, this share decreased to 50% in 2020; the share of public money increased from 30% to 33%, in parallel.

### Austrian research intensity significantly above the EU average

The Austrian research intensity in 2019 (3.10%) lies behind Sweden (3.40%) and Germany (3.18%), is the third highest among the EU-27, and lies well above the EU average of 2.20%. This figure is significantly below the research intensity of Switzerland (3.18%, 2017) and the most important non-European countries like South Korea (4.52%, 2018), Japan (3.28%, 2018) and the USA (2.82%, 2018), but slightly above the one from China (2.14%, 2018).

Due to the imponderabilities about the economic developments no estimation of the expected R&D expenditures for the current calendar year 2021 is carried out. Based on a forecast from around 100 large R&D performing firms, R&D expenditures 2021 will increase by 1% compared to 2020. If the economic development should normalise in 2021, a decrease of the research intensity can be expected.

For more detailed results and further information concerning R&D statistics please refer to our [website](#).

**Information on methods:** The global estimate of gross domestic expenditure on R&D (GERD) was carried out based on results from the R&D surveys as well as other currently available documents and information, particularly the R&D-relevant budget appropriations and final outlays of the federal government ("Bund") and the regional governments ("Länder"), the latest macro-economic forecasts, preliminary results from the R&D survey 2019 in the business enterprise sector and forecasts of around 150 large R&D performing enterprises on the year 2020. Expenditures on and funding for expenditures on R&D performed in Austria is presented according to the definitions of the Frascati Manual, which is valid world-wide (OECD, EU). National payments for R&D performed abroad is not included in the gross domestic expenditure on R&D. Reimbursements from the R&D tax incentive ("research premium") are, in line with the recommendations of the Frascati Manual, considered as funding by the business enterprise sector. Data for the years 2002, 2004, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015, and 2017 are results from the detailed R&D surveys among R&D performing institutions, which are usually carried out every two years. Values for the remaining years are estimates based information which was available at the time of the respective estimate.

## Gross domestic expenditure on R&D in Austria from 2000 to 2020

Year	Gross domestic expenditure on R&D	
	In million €	As percentage of GDP
2000	4 028.67	1.89
2001	4 393.09	1.99
2002	4 684.31	2.07
2003	5 041.98	2.17
2004	5 249.55	2.17
2005	6 029.81	2.37
2006	6 318.59	2.36
2007	6 867.82	2.42
2008	7 548.06	2.57
2009	7 479.75	2.60
2010	8 066.44	2.73
2011	8 276.34	2.67
2012	9 287.84	2.91
2013	9 571.28	2.95
2014	10 275.18	3.08
2015	10 499.15	3.05
2016	11 135.56	3.12
2017	11 289.78	3.06
2018	11 911.85	3.09
2019	12 344.57	3.10
2020	12 143.11	3.23

S: STATISTICS AUSTRIA. – Gross domestic expenditure on R&D until 2017 final data, from 2018 onwards preliminary data.

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