



## Press release

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# UN World Data Forum in Bern supports the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

**The Swiss Confederation, in cooperation with the United Nations, is organising the third edition of the United Nations World Data Forum 2021 (UNWDF), to be held from 3 to 6 October 2021 in Bern. With around 700 participants from 110 countries in the Swiss capital, this global and hybrid conference is crucial to support the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with high-quality, accessible, timely and reliable data. The UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, and the Head of the Department of Home Affairs, Alain Berset, are expected to open the Forum.**

The UNWDF provides a space for discussion between data producers and users, as well as other stakeholders outside statistics, including representatives from business, science, media in addition to administrations and other fields.

### **2030 Agenda: the importance of data and official statistics**

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a collection of 17 interlinked global goals designed to be a "blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all". They were set up in 2015 by the United Nations General Assembly and are intended to be achieved by 2030. All countries need to measure their progress by addressing synergies and trade-offs between the SDGs. If we want to ensure that we "leave no one behind" as the motto of the SDGs says, all governments need enough disaggregated data to make vulnerable population groups visible. National statistical systems and accessible data are an important foundation to strengthen the responsibilities between the state and its citizens.

Switzerland has a long-standing tradition of supporting the data and statistical capacities of developing countries through our international cooperation. One of the key motivations for Switzerland hosting the UN World Data Forum was to bring the statistical and data community as well as the development community closer together.

*"The more complex the challenges, the more important international cooperation becomes. The same can be said for data. It is a common strategic good", says Alain Berset, Minister of Home Affairs in his preface to the book accompanying the conference.*

The UNWDF programme is organised around six thematic areas: new approaches to capacity development for better data; innovations and synergies across data ecosystems; leaving no one behind; understanding the world through data; building trust in data and statistics, and how far have we come.

During the opening ceremony, several talks are expected, in particular from the UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, the Head of the Department of Home Affairs, Alain Berset, the President of Microsoft, Brad Smith and various representatives from youth and civil society. In addition to the opening and closing ceremonies, there will be 7 plenary sessions and over 60 parallel sessions.

To highlight the importance of sustainable development, five Swiss personalities share their vision in five videos which will be released as teasers on the eve of the Forum. They can be viewed at <https://www.bfs.admin.ch/news/en/2021-0696>.

### **Sustainability strategy and first hybrid edition**

Since the purpose of the Forum is linked to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, it was crucial for the Swiss Confederation to make the UNWDF a sustainable international conference, respecting the principles of sustainability. The sustainability concept, which includes a set of actions and recommendations, was done in consultation with the UN, Kursaal, Swiss International Air Lines, Switzerland Tourism, Bern Welcome and CBM Global. In addition, the UNWDF 2021 has been declared a climate-neutral event.

For the first time, the third edition of the UNWDF will be held in a hybrid format, in Bern, Switzerland at the Kursaal and also online. This edition will allow for a larger participation rate, compared to a purely on-site meeting and to the two previous face-to-face editions. More than 700 participants will attend the event in-person in Bern. The online platform will make it possible to watch the live sessions and connect with the data and statistics community via the app or desktop/web interface.

### **Official final document**

As was the case for the first two editions of the UNWDF, an outcome document has been prepared and will be published at the end of the Forum.

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#### **Additional information:**

[UNWDF programme](#)  
[Sustainability concept](#)  
[Relationship between policymakers and statistics](#)  
Website: <https://roadtobern.swiss/>  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/road2bern/>  
Twitter: <https://twitter.com/road2bern/>  
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Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA)