



Statistics on social assistance recipients

Description

The statistics on social assistance recipients, developed and conducted by the Federal Statistical Office provide information on the number of social assistance recipients, the type of means-tested social benefits received, and the duration of receipt of benefit and the family structure of the recipients. Thanks to the detailed results, these statistics fill the previous information gap at national, cantonal, and regional level.

For the statistics on social assistance recipients, the economic social assistance and means-tested social benefits upstream of social assistance are surveyed. Only the social benefits granted at cantonal level are considered here and not those at communal level.

The statistics produce :

- Knowledge of the situation and structure of social assistance recipients at national, cantonal and regional level
- Information on the social and economic situation of recipients
- Details on the structure of the social benefits received
- Information on the composition of recipient groups
- Information on the development and duration of receipt of benefit and on the reasons for stopping benefits.

Available since:

2000: Pilot survey on economic social assistance, for which the social assistance costs are financed by the cantons and communes.

2005-2006: First results of the pilot survey on economic social assistance, for which the social assistance costs are financed by the cantons and communes.

2007: Introduction of the survey on other means-tested social benefits.

2009: Survey on the economic social assistance of persons for whom the Confederation compensates the cantons with the global flat-rate subsidy 2 for refugees; "refugees granted asylum and refugees for whom less than five years have passed since their asylum request" and "temporarily admitted refugees who have been in Switzerland for less than seven years". The data are collected in the scope of the social assistance statistics in the asylum and refugee sector SH-FlüStat.

2014-2016: Project to extend the statistics on social assistance with a survey on economic social assistance for persons for whom the Confederation compensates the cantons with the global flat-rate subsidy 1 for refugees; "asylum seekers" and "temporarily admitted persons who have been in Switzerland for less than seven years".

2017: First survey on social assistance recipients in the scope of social assistance statistics in the asylum sector SH-AsylStat. The first results for the 2016 survey year were published in December.

Characteristics recorded:

See guidelines on the implementation of the survey

<https://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/en/home/statistics/social-security/surveys/shs.html>

Methodology

Individual data for the social assistance statistics are collected once every year in the subsequent year at commune level (comprehensive survey).

The agencies conducting the survey work with a case management system. The FSO provides them with the PlausEx module, which enables data to be validated and exported. The FSO has also developed the SOSTAT program and ensures its maintenance. It is provided free of charge to agencies conducting the survey that do not have their own case management system. Paper questionnaires are also still used in some cases. One standardized questionnaire per performance category is used as an instrument for collecting data.

Degree of regionalization:
National, cantonal and communal

Periodicity:
Annual

Reference period:
From 1.1. to 31.12.

Policy on revisions

Routine revisions:
None

Methodological revisions:
Revisions to the methodology are undertaken as necessary (e.g. when revising sources or conceptual adjustments).

Revision to implementation:
2011 data: the reference population changed from ESPOP to STATPOP. The social assistance rate and the rate of households supported are calculated on the entire permanent resident population according to STATPOP data from the previous year. More detailed information on the impact of this revision are available at: <https://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfsstatic/dam/assets/291617/master>

Legal bases

Federal Statistics Act of 9 October 1992 (RS 431.01) and Ordinance on the Conduct of Federal Statistical Surveys (RS 431.012.1) of 30 June 1993 (Annex, points 67 "Statistics on social assistance recipients" and 68 "Statistics on social assistance in the sector of asylum seekers and refugees").

Article 102a of the Asylum Act of 26 June 1998 (RS 142.31). This article, introduced on 16 December 2005 and entitled "Statistics on social assistance recipients", concerns the communication of data in anonymised and aggregated form by the FSO to the State Secretary for Migration (SEM.)

Organization

Federal Statistical Office (FSO) Social Welfare section

Tel: +41 58 461 44 44
info.social@bfs.admin.ch
