



# Household Budget Survey

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## Description

The Household Budget Survey (HBS) is a household survey that has been conducted every year since 2000 in around 3000 private households in Switzerland. Its main objective is to record the income and expenditure of private households.

Findings published:

- The HBS is conducted annually enabling the CPI (Swiss Consumer Price Index) basket of commodities to be updated every year in line with current consumer behaviour and to adjust price trends accordingly.
- The different elements of the household budget, such as expenditure, income and savings, are shown in detail.
- Regular reporting on the consumer behaviour of private households in Switzerland, in particular on the quantities consumed and durable goods.
- Calculation of indicators for the financial burden on households (from taxes, social contributions, etc.).

Findings are published in the following form:

- Synoptic tables about the household budget (income and expenditure)
- Detailed tables on expenditure
- Detailed tables on quantities consumed of food, petrol and diesel

By grouping three survey years together, the number of observations is increased and the HBS findings can also be shown for the following household groups:

[02–04]: geographical units: major region, language region and large cantons

[11–13]: reference person's age group, income group, and household type

[21–23]: persons living alone, by age and income group

[31–33]: couples without children, by age and income group

[41–43]: couples with children, by age group of eldest child, income group and number of children

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## Methodology

Methodology used:

Random sample survey. The random sample is stratified by Switzerland's seven major regions. About 3000 households take part. They are chosen randomly from the FSO random sample register. The HBS is conducted by means of telephone interviews and written questionnaires.

Statistical population and survey units:

Permanent resident population in private households (incl. persons with no permanent residence living in a household with at least one permanently resident person).

Variables used (selection):

- Income and expenditure: Type of expenditure or income, date, amount, period of payment or income, quantities consumed of food, petrol and diesel.
- Household: Household size, household type, place of residence, residential status, secondary residence, dwelling's furnishings and fittings, internet access, and pets.
- Persons: Reference person (person with household's highest income), relationship to reference person, age, civil status, nationality, employment situation(s), and income situation(s).

Survey date:

A given calendar year

Survey period:

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Available since 1990

Two major household budget surveys were conducted among Swiss households in 1990 and 1998. Since 2000, data are collected on a continuous basis.

Periodicity of publication:

For all households together: published annually

By separate household groups: published every three years for three survey years together: 2006–2008, 2009–2011, 2012–2014, 2015–2017. As an exception for two survey years together: 2018–2019 (period before COVID-19 pandemic)

Degree of regionalisation:

Major regions

Data linked with:

Population and Household Statistics (STATPOP), Business and Enterprise Register (BER), Buildings and Dwellings Statistics (BDS) and Social Insurances Register (Central Compensation Office [CCO])

Quality of statistical information:

For a realistic depiction of Switzerland's permanent resident population, HBS findings are extrapolated using a suitable weighting method.

In the HBS, the coefficient of variation is indicated for each estimate. Estimates are classified as follows:

a very good, coefficient of variation < 1%,

b good, coefficient of variation  $\geq$  1% and < 2%,

c quite good, coefficient of variation  $\geq$  2% and < 5%,

d satisfactory, coefficient of variation  $\geq$  5% and < 10%,

e poor, coefficient of variation  $\geq$  10%.

() If the number of observations is insufficient, the result is not published and the estimate is replaced in the table by empty brackets.

Most of the main annual estimates of the HBS are classified a to c.

## Revision policy

Routine revision:

None

Revision to methodology:

Revisions to the methodology are carried out as necessary and are described in full in the revision report.

2021: Revision of data collection and processing in the health care sector.

Paper questionnaires were adapted to incorporate all health care information in a single chapter.

Since 2021, all medical prescription expenditure and reimbursements have been collected over a six-month period (survey month and previous five months), regardless of the amount, and a monthly average calculated.

2019: Revision of the weighting model 20

The new model includes important additional variables to correct distortion due to non-response, such as household composition and income. The results have been recalculated with the new weighting from 2015 onward.

2008: Change of name to 'Household Budget Survey (HBS)'

2006: Revision of content and process improvement

This revision made it possible to calculate the amounts saved by adding household incomes and deducting expenditure.

2003: Revision of the weighting model

A new weighting model was introduced, which included a correction procedure to ensure

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that the structure of the weighted sample is as close as possible to that of the population. This significantly improved the quality of expenditure and income estimates. Furthermore, this new method enabled data from several years to be grouped together to analyse population groups whose size is insufficient for reliable results to be obtained on the basis of a single year.

2000: Annual Income and Consumption Survey (ICS)

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**Legal  
bases**

Ordinance of 30 June 1993 on the Conduct of Federal Statistical Surveys (SR 431.012.1)

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**Organisation**

Federal Statistical Office (FSO), in cooperation with DemoSCOPE Adligenswil

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