



**WORLD
STATISTICS
DAY**
20.10.2025
QUALITY STATISTICS
AND DATA
FOR EVERYONE

Press release

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00 Basic statistical data and overviews

World Statistics Day 2025

175 years of the federal census, 165 years of expertise: the FSO celebrates a double anniversary in society's service

On World Statistics Day, 20 October, we celebrate the importance of high-quality official statistics and data for all. Good decisions and a vibrant democracy begin with neutral and reliable information. In Switzerland, this commitment has guided our approach for 175 years, since the first federal census in 1850 and the establishment of the Federal Statistical Bureau – the predecessor of today's Federal Statistical Office (FSO).

Switzerland conducted its first census in 1850 under the guidance of pioneer of Swiss statistics Federal Councillor Stefano Franscini. Launched shortly after the founding of the federal state in 1848, the census aimed to provide a comprehensive picture of the population. How many people were there and where did they live? What were their living conditions like? What were their occupations and what languages did they speak? For the young democracy, this information was very important to enable it to plan, take decisions and measure the impact of public policy.

The FSO has been providing data on Switzerland's economy and society, its people and environment since 1860. Today, official statistics are changing to meet the demands of an interconnected, digital world. Statistical services apply modern, innovative techniques to make data accessible to all in the form of [open government data](#) (OGD).

Innovative projects

The [I14Y metadata platform](#) is one such project. Launched as part of the National Data Management programme, it aims to facilitate the multiple use of data and reduce the administrative burden on citizens and businesses. The [Data Science Competence Center](#) (DSCC) provides federal authorities with data science services and expertise to enable them to harness and gain insights from their data, even with limited resources. Now more than ever, statistics have to be digital, transparent and accountable. The FSO is committed to the secure and ethical use of modern data in the service of research, politics and society.

Internationally, the FSO works with organisations such as the EU, the UN and the OECD to develop shared standards and improve our understanding of global issues, including education, the environment, poverty and health. Swiss official statistics are thus instrumental in helping to identify and solve the problems of our time in fields such as sustainable development.

At the heart of the data ecosystem

At the heart of the data ecosystem, the FSO has launched a special webpage to mark this anniversary and highlight the importance of data and official statistics in 2025 as well as the challenges faced. Georges-Simon Ulrich, Director General of the FSO, describes what society would look like without official statistics.

As the national competence centre for official statistics, the FSO is the central hub in Switzerland's data ecosystem. It makes a key contribution to collaboration and data literacy in order to support the processing of data in the public administration.

Information

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Online content

[Dedicated page: 165 years of the FSO & 175 years of the federal census](#)

[Statistics: 175 years at the service of the modern federal state](#)

[Population surveys in Switzerland prior to 1850](#)

[30 years of the Federal Statistics Act](#)

[World Statistics Day Official UN page](#)

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