



Structural Survey

Description

The Structural Survey (SE) have been realised as part of the annual census since 2010. Their main focus is to observe the socio-economic and socio-cultural structures of the population in Switzerland. These statistics supplement the information in the registers on population, households and housing conditions. The first results are available one year after the reference day. Cumulative results are then made available for periods of three and five years.

The core statistics from the Swiss censuses are produced in line with the joint recommendations of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and Eurostat (the statistical office of the European Union) on population and housing censuses in Europe.

The statistics derived from the Structural Survey provide responses to questions in important policy areas such as the economy, territory and transport, social security, family, education as well as gender equality and minorities. These statistics also provide important data for federal and cantonal-level policy on language and religion.

Methodology

Random sample survey of persons whose addresses were randomly selected from the FSO's sampling frame for person and household surveys (SRPH). The sampling frame is based on official population registers.

The survey includes at least 200 000 people in private households who are aged 15 and over and belong to Switzerland's permanent resident population. The questionnaire can be completed online (eCensus) or on paper. Regional statistical offices may as much as double their territory's sample. The survey is compulsory.

Variables include the topics of:
Languages, religions, households and living arrangements, migration, education, work, commuter mobility, dwelling occupation status and rent

Periodicity of publication:
Annual

Degree of regionalisation:
Switzerland, major regions, cantons and communes with 15 000 inhabitants and more

Reference period:
Calendar year

Reference day:
31 December

Data linkage:
Population and Households Statistics (STATPOP), Buildings and Dwellings Statistics (BDS), Federal Register of Buildings and Dwellings (RBD), Business and Enterprise Register (BUR), membership list of the Christian Catholic Church. Starting with the 2018 Structural Survey, the previous years' income data from the Central Compensation Office (CCO) has also been used for weighting.

Quality of statistical information:

The estimated results are subject to a confidence interval (95% level).

- Extrapolation based on 49 or fewer observations: The results are given in brackets () and should be interpreted with a high degree of caution.
- Extrapolation based on 4 observations or fewer: The results are not published because of data protection reasons (X).

Policy on revisions

Regular revision (or continuous revision):

Periodic adaptation of the questionnaire at intervals of approx. 5 years and periodic evaluation (approx. every 10 years) of the information mandate.

Methodology revision (or fundamental revision):

- 2015: Revision of questionnaire questions on migration and occupational status
- In 2018, fundamental revision of the survey procedure, the weighting methodology and the method used to detect outliers. The data from the 2010 to 2017 structural surveys were not recalculated based on these methodological changes.
- 2020: Adjustment of the calculation method for the length of journeys to work and of the characteristics with regard to means of transport (distinction between bikes and e-bikes)

Legal bases

- Federal Act of 22 June 2007 on the Federal Population Census (CC 431.112)
- Ordinance of 19 December 2008 on the Federal Population Census (CC 431.112.1)
- Ordinance of 30 April 2025 on Federal Statistics (SR 431.011)

Organisation

Federal Statistical Office (FSO). The FSO commissions third parties for the dispatch and scanning of survey materials, and for the hotline and third party telephone enquiries.

Structural survey hotline:

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