



2026

FAQ

Survey on diversity and coexistence in Switzerland

Table of contents

1	Survey subject and aims	2
1.1	What is the subject of the survey?	2
1.2	What is the purpose of the survey?.....	2
1.3	Help to combat racial discrimination.....	2
2	Definitions	3
2.1	What does coexistence mean?	3
2.2	What is racism?.....	3
2.3	What is discrimination?	3
2.4	What is integration?	3
3	Content of the questionnaire.....	4
3.1	Why is there particular interest in certain population groups?	4
4	Use of data and results.....	5
4.1	When and where will the results be published?	5
4.2	Who will use these data and for what purpose?.....	5
5	Survey participation and person selection	6
5.1	How to make sure that it is an FSO survey?	6
5.2	How are people selected?	6
5.3	How does the OFS obtain names and addresses?	6
5.4	What about data protection?	6
5.5	Is participation in the survey compulsory?.....	6

1 Survey subject and aims

1.1 What is the subject of the survey?

It's a survey on the subject of diversity and coexistence. The aim is to understand how people living in Switzerland coexist and perceive one another. It also aims to find out whether certain groups of the population, including Swiss nationals, are subjected to racism or discrimination. To find out how diversity and coexistence go together, we are interested in such questions as:

- Is racism a serious problem in Switzerland?
- Is the integration of migrants successful in Switzerland?
- How is the presence of foreigners perceived?
- How is diversity experienced on a day-to-day basis?
- Is there any prejudice against certain population groups?
- Which people feel discriminated against?

1.2 What is the purpose of the survey?

This survey enables monitoring of trends in society concerning issues such as racism, hostility towards different groups of the population as well as discrimination. It also helps us gain insight into how the population perceives current political and social policies in the area of combating racial discrimination and of integration.

By monitoring the attitudes and experiences of the population over time using reliable statistics, it is possible to put in place appropriate political measures and actions to encourage the co-existence of different groups, combat discrimination and promote the integration of people with migration backgrounds. This is in the interest of everyone living in Switzerland.

1.3 Help to combat racial discrimination

Have you suffered racial discrimination? Have you witnessed racist comments on the internet? Here are some useful contacts and links for seeking advice and reporting incidents.

[Network of advice centres for victims of racism](#)

The network currently brings together 24 specialist services from all over Switzerland, offering advice in cases of racial discrimination.

[Cantonal integration delegates](#)

The cantons and towns are setting up advice centres. The cantonal delegates for integration also offer such services.

[Federal Commission against Racism](#)

The Federal Commission against Racism's secretariat is available to provide legal advice and mediation.

[Reporting Platform for Online Racist Hate Speech](#)

Alerts are recorded and processed in a database. Reported content that meets the conditions of art. 261bis of the Swiss Criminal Code may give rise to a criminal charge.

2 Definitions

2.1 What does coexistence mean?

Coexistence is the way in which different groups coexist within the same society. Questions of diversity and otherness form the basis of the concept of coexistence. In contrast to integration, which is a process, coexistence is the situation in a society at a given moment. Are relations between the different groups harmonious or are there tensions and conflicts? Coexistence can be understood through the population's attitudes and experiences.

2.2 What is racism?

By racism we mean an ideology that classifies people into groups, on the basis of real or imagined differences (ethnicity, nationality, religion, etc.) which are deemed to be unalterable. Proponents of racism claim that people belong to a certain group by assigning a common pseudo-biological origin or culture to them. In this way of thinking, differences are emphasised to justify inequalities between groups or to defend privileges.

Racism leaves its mark on social structures, institutions and dynamics. This is how power relationships, exclusions and privileges are created or maintained. Racism cannot be attributed solely to the (malicious) actions of individuals, but is historically, socially and culturally transmitted and embedded in the structures of society.

2.3 What is discrimination?

Discrimination describes any action that denies a person certain rights, that treats them unfairly or intolerantly, that threatens or humiliates them or puts them in danger. Racial discrimination is when the above actions are carried out on account of the discriminated person's physical characteristics (such as skin colour), their ethnicity, religious beliefs or because of their culture or nationality.

2.4 What is integration?

Integration aims to establish equal opportunities for Swiss nationals, foreigners and persons with a migration background alike. It should allow people who are here legally and for an extended period of time to take part in social, economic and cultural life. It encourages coexistence, respect and mutual tolerance between different population groups. Integration requires both the participation of people with a migration background and that of members of the host society.

3 Content of the questionnaire

3.1 Why is there particular interest in certain population groups?

Racism can take many different forms. Hostility towards Muslims, black people or Jews refers to particular types of racism.

> Anti-Muslim racism

Hostility towards Muslims is a rejection of people who say they are or who are assumed to be Muslim. This can include rejection of people from a country where most people are Muslim, from a society which is deemed to be patriarchal and sexist. It can also be the rejection of people whose religious practices are deemed to be fundamentalist.

> Anti-Black racism

Racism towards black people is directly linked to a visible feature, i.e. skin colour. In this type of racism, a person is assigned negative attitudes or personal characteristics on the basis of their physical appearance.

> Antisemitism

Hostility towards Jews (or anti-Semitism) refers to negative and enduring attitudes towards Jews, seen as a homogeneous group. This hostility is a case apart as the belonging to an ethnic group is deduced from religious affiliation.

Hostility towards Muslims, anti-black racism and anti-Semitism shows certain characteristics that require a specific outlook and line of action with regard to awareness, prevention and empirical research. The choice of groups studied in the survey is likely to change over time, depending on the context and the extent to which tensions develop as regards specific affiliations and situations.

For further information on the questionnaire and its content, see the glossary of the Service for Combating Racism (SLR) at the following address:

[in French]

<https://www.frb.admin.ch/fr/glossaire>

[in German]

<https://www.frb.admin.ch/de/glossar>

4 Use of data and results

4.1 When and where will the results be published?

The results of this study were presented publicly for the first time in October 2017. The next publication is scheduled for 2027.

The most important figures and indicators will be available on the Federal Statistical Office's (FSO) website:

[Diversity and coexistence | Federal Statistical Office \(admin.ch\)](#)

[Survey on diversity and coexistence | Federal Statistical Office \(admin.ch\)](#)

The Service for Combating Racism (SCRA) also publishes the results on its webpage:

[Monitoring and reporting \(admin.ch\)](#)

[Service for Combating Racism \(admin.ch\)](#)

4.2 Who will use these data and for what purpose?

The Federal Statistical Office (FSO) produces these figures to meet the needs of the Service for Combating Racism (SCRA), the State Secretariat for Migration (SEM) and Swiss universities.

For example, the results of the survey are collected and analysed every two years by the Service for Combating Racism (SCRA), which monitors racial discrimination in Switzerland. Thanks to this detailed monitoring of the situation in Switzerland, effective measures to combat racial discrimination can be put in place.

The survey and its results can also be seen as a measure to encourage integration. As part of the cantonal integration programmes (CIP), the cantons are committed to offering counselling to victims of discrimination. The survey provides information on actual needs based on data relating to victims.

5 Survey participation and person selection

5.1 How to make sure that it is an FSO survey?

Everyone selected for this survey will receive prior written notice from the Federal Statistical Office (FSO). The letter contains a free phone number (hotline) that can be used to verify that the survey is official. The letter also contains a reference number: simply call the hotline and ask for this reference number to check that it matches the number indicated in the letter.

The questionnaire is also available on the FSO website:

<https://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/en/home/statistics/population/surveys/zids.html>

5.2 How are people selected?

To ensure that this study meets the scientific criteria, everyone interviewed is selected according to a strictly random process. The randomly selected people are taken from the Federal Statistical Office's (FSO) random sample register. Anyone from Switzerland's permanent resident population can be asked to take part, including foreign nationals. A person cannot be replaced by someone else, even someone from the same household, as that would distort the answers.

5.3 How does the OFS obtain names and addresses?

Names and addresses are obtained from the random sample register of the Federal Statistical Office (FSO). This register is compiled from communal and cantonal population registers. The advantage of using registers is that certain personal data taken from the registers no longer needs to be requested during surveys.

5.4 What about data protection?

All personal data will be treated as strictly confidential and your responses will be used for statistical purposes only. Your name and address will be deleted at the end of the survey. It will therefore no longer be possible to identify you from the data collected. The Federal Statistics Act and the Federal Act on Data Protection guarantee data protection.

5.5 Is participation in the survey compulsory?

Participation in this survey is voluntary, but your cooperation is very important for the accuracy and quality of the results. We need your answers, regardless of your age, nationality, family situation, or profession.