



Press release

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Embargo

The new census system meets all expectations

At its sitting of 1 December 2017, the Federal Council read and approved the assessment report of the new population census system. From a comprehensive census conducted every 10 years, the federal census became an annual event in 2010. It is now based on data from administration registers and sample surveys. The assessment of this new system shows that the mandate has been successfully fulfilled and that its main users are entirely satisfied.

Since 2010, the federal population census has been conducted annually and relies first and foremost on the use of communal and cantonal population registers, federal registers of persons as well as on the Federal Buildings and Dwellings Register. In addition to the data collected, further information comes from sample surveys.

Overall a very positive assessment

The assessment reveals a high level of satisfaction with the new census system. The burden on the population interviewed and on communes has been considerably reduced in comparison with the previous system. Thanks to the use of administration registers for statistical purposes, now only a minute proportion of the population is interviewed each year.

A flexible system adapted to current needs

The new solution is extremely adaptable and takes into account the numerous and diverse topics covered as well as the need to produce data that is always up to date. It provides information on a variety of topics: family, housing, mobility, language, religion, education and health. From the point of view of its main users, the topicality of data and the diversity of topics covered outweigh any loss of geographic detail. The system also ensures comparability of data at international level.

Important contribution to digitalisation

By introducing this new population census system, the Confederation has made an important contribution to the eGovernment project. Thanks to harmonisation, data can be exchanged electronically between federal, cantonal and communal registers of persons.

This new system also signals a trend towards the complete digitalisation of processes, from data collection to the dissemination of results. In this regard it is a driving force in the modernisation of official statistics in Switzerland.

A long-term investment

The new system costs some CHF 100 million less than the previous one. The investments made, whether in terms of managing the registers or the production system, are long-term investments that will reap benefits beyond the census itself such as electronic data exchange between communes.

Potential for development

The system has potential for development, particularly in matching data from different sources for statistical purposes. Data cross-referencing enables the production of information without having to conduct new surveys. Another strength of the new system is in the statistical analysis of life trajectories, i.e. following people's lives over several years.

Information:

Markus Schwyn, Vice-director, Population and
Education Division, Federal Statistical Office
markus.schwyn@bfs.admin.ch,
+41 46 367 02

Department responsible:

Federal Department of Home Affairs (FDHA)

Documents :

[Assessment report](#)

[The new population census](#)