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Annual Report 2018

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Table of Contents

1. Editorial from the FORS Director

FORS and the future Swiss research data landscape

FORS celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2018 with a symposium on the future of data collection in the social sciences. Digitalisation is transforming research rapidly. Surveys are moving towards online or mixed-mode data collections. In many countries more people have Internet access than landlines and this also allows respondents to answer survey questions in a more flexible way. FORS adapted one of its surveys in 2018, notably MOSAiCH/ISSP. Previously a face-to face survey, MOSAiCH/ISSP was conducted as an online and paper survey in 2018 for the first time. The Swiss Election Study SELECTS will move entirely to an online survey in 2019 as well.

This shift towards online surveys requires internal adaptions. For FORS it is interesting to conduct all surveys that do not require an interviewer in-house instead of commissioning it to survey agencies. This saves transaction costs and allows assuring quality control within FORS. However, it requires knowledge and capacity. To cumulate knowledge and build the necessary resources, FORS opened a new unit in 2019 "Data collection and analyses" with additional staff that is responsible to organise the fieldwork for all FORS online and paper surveys. The new unit also organises the data collection for external mandates.

Digitalisation is not only changing the way we collect data; it has implications for the research data landscape more generally. Data production in very many areas is increasing exponentially and so does the awareness of the importance of data for advancing our knowledge about society. Personal data, meaning data involving individuals, are increasingly produced and stored as individuals interact with the Internet and social media platforms, with every purchase, when going to the doctor, in the workflows of companies, and within public administration on every interaction between citizens and the state.

Stakeholders in research have become increasingly aware that the production of and access to high quality data are key factors in advancing research and contributing to understanding our transforming societies. Moreover, data are an important strategic resource. Data access should therefore in principle be granted for all data relevant for research in Switzerland. This includes:

» data produced by researchers, research institutions and research projects;

» data produced by administration and official statistics; and

» data produced by private companies, especially data that are not specific customer data but transactional personal data collected as a by-product of usage of the Internet, such as with Google and Facebook.

Data access still faces many challenges. Some researchers are hesitant to share data. Official government data are available in a limited way and with many obstacles. Private companies are generally very unwilling to provide data access. Further, national data infrastructure that makes data available from research, public administration, or private companies according to FAIR principles (findable, accessible, inter-operable, re-usable) is only partially in place and very scattered.

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National research data strategy

While the importance of data access is undisputed, a comprehensive and coordinated national data infrastructure consisting of different well-established service providers that give access to public and private data sources is still missing. Data production and data access for data produced in Switzerland should be controlled and funded by research institutions nationally and/or within Switzerland. This will require a substantial investment in the coming years.

FORS believes that it is essential that the Swiss government collaborates with the cantons and relevant academic institutions to put in place a strategy to build a national research data infrastructure that allows access and sharing data from different sources in a more comprehensive way for research purposes. Such a comprehensive "national strategy on access to and sharing of research data" was for example approved by the Norwegian Government in early 2018.

This should include a favourable regulatory framework that requests all relevant data producers within the research community as well as the public and private sectors to make their data available for research purposes under specified conditions. It also requires that different forms of data can be linked for research purposes. An institutional framework should ensure that sufficiently funded, well-functioning and coordinated infrastructures that can store and make data available are in place. All this needs to be established while respecting current and also future data privacy and data protection rights and data protection regulations. Data protection, data access and data linking do not need to be conflicting principles as is often the case in the public discourse today. Data linking and data access can be done while respecting the privacy rights of individuals with many different safeguards and, hence, a more comprehensive access to data does not need to infringe upon individual privacy rights.

FORS will continue contributing to this national dialogue wherever possible. FORS is involved in two concrete new initiatives:

» FORS will make its technical project and archiving platform FORSbase usable in a modular way by other disciplines and universities to archive their data. FORS has entered a partnership with the Universities of Lausanne and Zurich for this development.

» FORS is building - together with several partners - a "Research Data Linking Center". This centre assembles different partners from the social sciences and other disciplines working with personal data within Switzerland in order to facilitate the use of linked data for the Swiss research community.

Prof. Dr. Georg Lutz, Director

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2. Surveys

FORS is responsible for a number of national and international surveys, mostly funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF). The surveys described below took place during the current funding period 2017-20. FORS academic surveys can also use the sample frame "Stichprobenrahmen für Haushalts- und Personenbefragungen SRPH" of the Swiss Federal Statistical Office (SFSO). This sample frame is based on official registers and allows the sampling of individuals resident within Switzerland with high precision. The sample frame centralises information from cantonal and communal population registers which are updated on a quarterly basis.

2.1 Swiss Household Panel SHP

Five principal tasks

Five principal tasks were achieved for the SHP in 2018:

1. The fieldwork for waves 19 (SHP_I: number of households interviewed = 2,620, number of individuals interviewed = 4,232), 14 (SHP_II: number of households interviewed = 1,210, number of individuals interviewed = 1,836), and 5 (SHP_III: number of households interviewed = 2,125, number of individuals interviewed = 3,411) was completed in early March (total number of households interviewed = 5,955, total number of individuals interviewed = 9,479); consult this page for more detailed information. With regard to these waves, work related to data checking, cleaning and preparation, variables construction, and documentation (including an annually updated user guide) were realised from April to December in order to prepare the data dissemination via FORSbase.

2. The fieldwork for waves 20 (SHP_I), 15 (SHP_II), and 6 (SHP_III, SHP LIVES-Vaud, LIVES Cohort) was prepared between February and September – mainly questionnaires (including psychological scales), qualitative and quantitative pre-tests, communication to participating households (with a special newsletter for the 20 years of the panel survey), training of interviewers, implementation of incentives – and started in early September 2018 for the SHP, and in October for the SHP LIVES-Vaud and the LIVES Cohort .

3. A revised and harmonised version of the SHP data waves 1 to 19 (1999 to 2017), together with a codebook, was provided to the Cross-National Equivalent File (CNEF) in December 2018 (see this page).

4. Moreover, waves 5 of the SHP LIVES-Vaud (FORSbase) and the LIVES Cohort (FORSbase) were prepared for diffusion via FORSbase.

5. Finally, the first wave of the SHP_IV pilot study was realised and analysed during the year. Roughly speaking, the SHP pilot compares two alternative designs to the current design, which predominantly uses CATI. The pilot compares a group that completes all questionnaires online to a group that is approached by an interviewer (CATI or CAPI) for the grid and household questionnaire, but completes the individual questionnaires online. In the first wave, acceptable response rates were obtained with the alternative designs, although they were lower than in the CATI group. Representativeness did not vary much across groups. Results after wave 2 (in 2019) will shed more light on differences in longitudinal participation in the three protocol groups.

Further activities

A variety of activities were conducted by the SHP team (see the event section in chapter 6). As a major publication, the final version of the book "Social Dynamics in Swiss Society: Empirical Studies Based on the Swiss Household Panel" edited by FORS collaborators was published and widely promoted by Springer International in open access. This book uses longitudinal data from the Swiss Household Panel to zoom in on continuity and change in the life course. It describes how the lives of the Swiss population have changed in terms of health, family circumstances, work, political participation, and migration over the last sixteen years.

2.2 International Surveys

2018 was centred on conducting the first survey of MOSAiCH-ISSP in its new design (2.0) as well as the preparation of the second data collection in 2019, the preparation and field start of ESS 2018, the data processing of EVS 2017, and finally for SHARE the preparation of Wave 7 data and of Wave 8 fieldwork that will take place in 2019. Moreover, SHARE won the Leenaards Foundation prize for a project on healthy ageing and social participation in Switzerland.

Synergies and collaborations between these international surveys were established at the international level: for example, the SERISS network (Synergies for Europe's Research Infrastructures in the Social Sciences) has been set up and supported by the European Commission to coordinate and enhance the role of European infrastructures in the social sciences. ESS, EVS and SHARE are members of SERISS, whilst ISSP is a member of its Board of Strategic Advice.

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ESS

The European Social Survey (ESS) is an academically driven cross-national survey that has been conducted every two years across Europe since 2002. Switzerland has participated at each round since the very beginning. This general population survey measures the attitudes, beliefs and behaviour patterns of diverse populations in more than thirty nations.

Field and research: 2018 was the year of the 9th Round of the ESS. After finalisation of the source questionnaire in which our team has been strongly involved, the questionnaire has been translated following the TRAPD procedure and, for the first time, harmonisation reviews were held with all the countries sharing the same national languages. Moreover, we used a test version of the translation tool TMT which was developed through the SERISS project. As Switzerland has the most complete and complex translation procedure with its three languages all shared by other countries, the feedback from the Swiss team are particularly helpful to improve the tool and make it fit for general use in the ESS and other international survey projects. The rotating parts of ESS 2018 concern the partially repeated module of Round 3 "Timing of life" and the new module "Justice and Fairness".

The fieldwork of the ESS 2018 started September 1 2018 and should be finished by end of January 2019, with over 1,500 interviews. The briefing material revised for the last edition, sharing more research results with the interviewers and showing the media impact, has been kept following the previous positive experience. We also maintained the separate additional training for new interviewers and the separate training for the Italian speaking team. The start of the fieldwork was particularly quick in 2018, but slowed down after a few weeks so as to reach the pace of previous editions. Interviewers in the German part of Switzerland were slower than usual, while the results for the Italian speaking part (Ticino) were still good (after some bad years). The data protection leaflet we had to add to the pre-notification letter following the application of the GDPR did not seem to have had strong negative effects. Overall, the target response rate is at least 52% as it was in the last two rounds.

Following the results of the previous rounds, we kept the unconditional cash incentive of CHF 10.- for all sample units. This is the kind of incentive that attains the highest response rate while minimising the detected response bias (namely on nationality and possession of listed landline phone number) and fostering contacts. It also presents an interesting cost-benefit ratio. In addition to the unconditional cash incentive, every respondent could choose a small gift (USB power bank, USB storage stick, telescopic umbrella, bloc-note, foldable bag), giving the interviewer the opportunity of closing the interaction with an exchange or using this gift as an additional argument to convince the respondent.

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No media reports (media claims) had to be recorded and coded before and during the fieldwork of this round, as the ESS is developing a new methodology to measure media context.

Data: The ESS data archive published the following data during 2018, all containing Swiss data: The ESS8 second release including the Interviewer's questionnaire ((the first release of the ESS8 survey data published in late 2017), MTMM data, Contact form data, Interview time data, Media Claims data media reports, and a cumulative file integrating data from Round 1 to 8. The Swiss data, with German and French documentation and some additional information compared to the international dataset, was published in FORSbase in early 2018. The ESS has over 13,000 registered users (4,300 from Switzerland), and in 2018 there were more than 30,000 downloads including Swiss data.

International: The two winning teams of the call for modules, which will define the specific content of Round 10 (ESS 2020) both include Swiss partners. The first is a repeat module of Round 6, "Europeans' understandings and evaluations of democracy" led by researchers from Italy, Germany, Hungary and Spain. The second is a new module on "Digital Social Contacts in Work and Family Life", which has included researchers from the University of Zurich and partners from Italy, USA and the Netherlands in the proposing team.

In April and November 2018, the biannual ERIC National Coordinator Forum Meetings took place in Paris and London. The first was mainly dedicated to Round 9 field preparation and included an additional whole day around translation issues, with the participation of translators and translation adjudicators of each country and language as well as members of the FORS International Survey team. The second meeting was centred on the discussion of the Round 10 modules (justice and fairness, timing of life) and a revision of some core module questions.

The ESS ERIC General Assembly met three times in 2018: the 11th GA Meeting (20/2/2018) in London, the 12th GA Meeting again in London (31/05/2018) and the 13th GA Meeting (7/11/2018) in Vienna. Switzerland is also present in the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) through a researcher from the University of Lausanne. As of October 2018, the ESS ERIC counts 23 member countries, 1 observer country (Switzerland) and 4 confirmed guest countries, thus being the Research Infrastructure Consortium with most members.

Switzerland translated two Topline results brochures from English to German and French (number 8 and 9). These publications present findings of the latest surveys on Welfare attitudes and Climate change to a larger public and are available on the ESS and FORS website. Two publications have additionally been produced through the "Public attitudes to welfare, climate change and energy in the EU and Russia" (PAWCER) project, one of which was co-authored by FORS researchers. Funded by ERA.net RUS Plus, the project aimed to conduct comparative research on public attitudes to welfare, climate change and energy. Special sessions, co-organised by the team, will be held on these topics at the next ESS International Conference 15-17 April 2019 in Mannheim.

MOSAiCH / ISSP

During 2018 the first edition of the fully redesigned MOSAiCH survey took place. It is now an annual self-completion survey (web-paper, push-to-web design) with several waves, organised internally at FORS. The content is defined by the ISSP and a public call for contribution addressing the Swiss research community for additional questions.

Field and research: MOSAiCH 2018 is composed of the ISSP 2018 module on Religion, a module repeated for the fourth time, and questions from five different proposals (involving 10 researchers of Switzerland and abroad) on topics such as alternative spirituality, gratitude, anti-Muslim attitudes, gender stereotyping and strength of attitudes. While the preparation of the MOSAiCH 2018 questionnaire has been mostly competed during 2017 (call, evaluation of the proposals, development of the new questions, and translations of the ISSP and call questions), the survey has been set up early 2018. It was decided to run the 2018 edition in two waves, all respondents of the first wave being invited to the second wave in the mode of their first response.

The fieldwork of MOSAiCH 2018 started in March 2018 (first invitation letter sent on 1 March, first answer received 2 March) and ended mid-July (last answer taken into account: 13 July 2018). The survey achieved an AAPOR response rate of 39.7%, out of which 0.5% are partial interviews. Additionally, 1% of interviews had to be invalidated because of early breakoff or wrong respondents. This response rate is slightly below our expectations, probably because of its specific topic "Religion", which is not generally appealing. As a reminder, the last MOSAiCH survey fielded face-to-face in 2017 achieved a response rate of 41.2%. 73,8% of the respondents have answered also the second part of the survey, ending in an overall response rate of wave 2 of 30.1%. With its push-to-web design (paper questionnaire sent with the second reminder), the share of answers on paper is 20%.

In MOSAiCH 2018, an experiment on contact procedures was fielded in order to identify the best way to contact respondents for the new version of MOSAiCH that started in 2018 (MOSAiCH 2.0) and to optimise future fieldwork procedures. In particular, the effectiveness in this specific survey design of a) pre-notification letters (vs direct invitation), of b) timely invitation to the second wave two weeks after the answer to wave 1 (vs a short post-notification and invitation on a single time point for all respondents), and of c) e-mail invitations for wave 2. Pre-notification showed a significant positive effect, although diminished if holding the number of contacts equivalent by adding a reminder for those without pre-notification. Moreover, an additional reminder rather brings in more of the same (rise of nonresponse bias for a majority of the known characteristics) and prolongs the fieldwork period. Sending the invitation to wave 2 at the same time for all, letting the rapid respondents wait up to 2 months, has no significantly different results in terms of response rate compared to sending it two weeks after reception of the answer, but makes the management of the fieldwork easier. The invitation to wave 2 by e-mail rather than letter has similar results: equivalent response rates but lower fieldwork costs. Finally, an experiment with a different colour of envelopes for the reminder did not yield significant results. Based on these experiments, we decided to apply the following procedure for the next editions: pre-notification – invitation – first reminder – second reminder with paper questionnaire – last reminder; invitation wave 2 at one single date, invitation per e-mail where possible.

2019 preparations: The public call for question contributions to the MOSAiCH 2019 edition including the ISSP 'Social Inequality' module has been published mid-February 2018. The Scientific Commission received and evaluated 8 proposals. During the evaluation meeting in June it was decided to retain 6 of them, involving 16 researchers from Switzerland and abroad, and to administer the questions in two follow-up waves to the ISSP questionnaire, the last wave being on web only. Two proposals had an experimental design. The accepted questions have been elaborated by the 'International Surveys' team in collaboration with the proposing authors and translated into the national languages.

Data: The complete Swiss MOSAiCH 2017 dataset, including ISSP 2016 (Role of Government V), ISSP 2017 (Social Network and Social Resources) and data from the drop-off questionnaire (on social engagement, social inequality and social services, political consumerism, and democracy in Switzerland), has been documented in German and French and published in FORSbase in spring 2018. The international ISSP-archive at GESIS published a first version of the ISSP 2016 data in March 2018 and the final version with 35 countries

in October 2018. GESIS also published a corrected cumulative file of the Religion modules I-III (1991, 1998 and 2008), in preparation of the new data collected in 2018. The GESIS archive has over 50,000 registered users (over 1,000 from Switzerland), and distributed over 10,000 ISSP datasets in 2018 including Swiss data.

ISSP international: The annual ISSP General Assembly (GA) was held in Guadalajara, Mexico, from 28 April to 2 May 2018. 31 of the 44 member countries attended this meeting. The GA discussed and voted the items of the 2019 'Social Inequality' module and the topics of the 2020 'Environment' module. The proposed and accepted topic for the 2021 module is 'Health and Health Care', a module previously fielded in 2011. Some updates and revisions on the Working Principles were discussed and amended. The Methodology Committee (MC), led by Switzerland, announces a new form for reporting and monitoring the methodological information of each ISSP country's survey. This "technical report", finalised during the summer, will be used for ISSP 2018 onwards. The Archive team, in collaboration with the MC, presented a report on the issue of duplicates in ISSP datasets and proposed a strategy to check them. The Methodological Groups also met during the meeting. New experiments on mode are planned in several countries. The Group on translation made a proposal, which was accepted, to improve the translations by asking for at least two independent translations of the source questionnaire for each language. The Group on Weighting presented some results on the disparities between countries, and currently works on making a proposition for improving the quality of weights in ISSP. 7 methodological and substantial papers were presented during the Research Session, notably a paper on measurement equivalence of social resources based on the ISSP 2017 pre-test survey. Finally, Germany was re-elected as Secretariat for a second term (2018-2021). The next GA venues will be in Jaipur,India (2019) and in Iceland (2020).

EVS

EVS 2017, the 5th wave of the European Values Study, realised every 9 years, ended its field in February 2018. 2018 was mainly devoted to the preparation of these complex data and their documentation, and to the first analyses of the methodological aspects and their dissemination.

The CAPI field, realised by an external survey company following the traditional design, ended the field in January with 673 interviews and a response rate of 48.8%.

The web-paper field was organised internally. The web questionnaire was closed at end of December 2017 while the paper questionnaires were

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accepted until February 2018. The matrix version of the questionnaire, containing half of the substantial questions and most of the socio-demographic ones, achieved a response rate of 44,5%, while the complete version of the self-administered questionnaire still achieved a response rate of 43,0% despite its length. Conversely, the follow-up of the matrix version, containing the omitted questions, was answered by 74% of the matrix respondents, ending up in a response rate of 33,5% for the completed questionnaire. Overall, the share of answers on paper was 29%, and the number of valid cases is 3,681 out of which 3,196 contain full information, all modes included. In terms of response rates it therefore seems better to administer one single questionnaire, even if very long, rather than splitting it in parts. However, the supplementary questionnaire on survey mood developed by the Swiss team reveals that answering a self-administered one- hour questionnaire leaves respondents a rather undesirable impression, which might be harmful for surveys in a long run.

The EVS meeting in Cologne (15-16 March 2018) aimed primarily at clarifying data processing and harmonisation and discussing dissemination options. Some possible future EVS scenarios were also presented, seeking a stronger long-term viability.

A first pre-release of the CAPI data was published by EVS (through GESIS) in December 2018. The GESIS archive distributed over 5,000 EVS datasets in 2018, mostly including Swiss data.

The Swiss team was strongly involved in processing the data and preparing the documentation as well as analysing and disseminating the methodological aspects of this survey and its experiments. 7 presentations were given in national and international settings, and several papers are being prepared (see chapter 5 of this report). Two specific sessions are also co-organised by its members at the next ESRA conference in July 2019.

SHARE

In 2018, the Swiss SHARE team worked on different scientific projects related to SHARE and performed the standard operational activities in view of the release of the wave 7 data and the wave 8 data collection.

In spring 2018, the Swiss SHARE team applied to the Leenaards Foundation call for projects "Qualité de vie 65+" and won the prize for its project on healthy ageing and social participation in Switzerland. The development of the related paper and pencil questionnaire on time use, distributed to SHARE respondents after wave 8, started in autumn 2018. Furthermore, in spring 2018, the Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH) commissioned an

extended report on the health of the elderly population in Switzerland using SHARE data to the Swiss SHARE team (in collaboration with the Winterthur Institute of Health Economics WIG/ZHAW). The Swiss SHARE team also worked on several peer-reviewed papers based on SHARE data examining 1) the awareness, approval and completion of advance directives; 2) the end-of-life preferences and 3) the approval of assisted suicide in Switzerland. These papers were presented at several international conferences.

Regarding the usual operational activities, the data of wave 7, including those collected with the Swiss specific self-administered paper and pencil questionnaire, were cleaned and prepared for release in spring and summer 2018. They were then internally released in the second half of 2018 and will be publicly released in spring 2019.

The preparation of the data collection of wave 8 started with a pre-test study which was conducted in July and August 2018. It was run by the survey agency LINK. About 120 interviews were completed. A second pre-test (field-rehearsal) is planned in spring 2019. One of the major tasks, in view of these pre-tests, was the preparation and testing of the new questionnaires and the newly developed CAPI instruments. The wave 8 questionnaire includes a substantial extension of the cognitive module and two new modules on saving regrets and time expenditure. The Swiss SHARE team also developed a new self-administered paper and pencil questionnaire to be handed out to Swiss respondents at the end of the main face-to-face interview. This questionnaire addresses end-of-life issues and is partly a follow-up of wave 6 questionnaire (2015). It investigates new questions on health literacy, end-of-life literacy and repeats questions on advance directives and preferences for end-of-life. The questionnaire was first tested during the pre-test and will be revised based on analysis of pre-test responses and from field experts. For the panel care, the Swiss SHARE team created a new flyer and designed a new brochure in order to inform the respondents about new findings based on SHARE data. Finally, the Swiss SHARE worked on a project aiming at improving the quality of the SHARE data by linking them to the mortality register of the Swiss National Cohort (SNC).

The Swiss SHARE team attended three SHARE meetings in 2018. The wave 8 kick-off meeting was in Malta on 8-9 February, to discuss the plans for wave 8. The "Train-The-Trainer" meeting of the pre-test took place in Munich, Germany, from 13-15 June. It is mostly intended for survey agencies to present them the questionnaire instrument (CAPI) and instruct them how to train their interviewers. The post-pretest meeting took place in Riga, from 5-7 September. The aim of this meeting was to discuss the results of the pre-test, decide possible questionnaire adjustments, and present the next operational tasks.

2.3 Political surveys

SELECTS

A main activity of SELECTS was the finalisation of a joint scientific publication with results from SELECTS 2015. In December 2018, the Special Issue entitled "The 2015 Swiss National Elections", edited by a researcher from the University of Geneva, a researcher from the EUI Florence and the SELECTS Project Director appeared in the Swiss Political Science Review (SPRS, Vol. 24, Issue 4). To ensure a wider diffusion among journalists and the general public, short versions of all contributions were additionally published on the political science blog "DeFacto". The Special Issue contains nine refreshing articles that provide new insights into the 2015 elections, plus an invited contribution by a researcher from the University of Vienna on the importance for national election studies to be officially recognised as data infrastructures. Thematically, the Special Issue echoes and contributes to three major debates in the international literature on electoral research, dealing with the two-dimensional structure of political competition, the dynamics of election campaigns, and the role of populism. These contributions were notably made possible by the inclusion of new survey questions developed by researchers via a call for modules. In addition, most articles presented in this Special Issue fully exploit the varied data collected by SELECTS, and link the different datasets on voters, candidates, and the media in innovative ways.

The preparation of the 2019 Swiss election study was another cornerstone in 2018. In April, SELECTS launched a new call for modules. This call is essential to make sure that the SELECTS study content is in line with the scientific interests of electoral researchers in Switzerland and abroad, and to ensure that the collected data will be used for scientific publications. The 18 module proposals from researchers from Swiss and foreign universities were evaluated over the summer by two international experts in the fields of electoral behaviour and survey research. In late October, the SELECTS commission decided to accept eight proposals (fully or partially) for inclusion in the different components of the 2019 election study (the three-wave panel survey, the post-election survey, and the candidate survey). For the first time, SELECTS accepted the inclusion of module proposals based on experimental designs.

SELECTS continued its activities in several international collaborative networks, such as the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES), which develops common questionnaire modules that become part of national election studies. In 2018, the former SELECTS project leader and FORS Director was re-elected to the CSES Planning Committee for a five-year term.

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SELECTS plays an active role in the framework of the Comparative Candidate Survey (CCS). CCS is a joint effort to collect data on party candidates based on common questionnaire modules. In January 2018, the SELECTS project team released a first comparative CCS Module II dataset on FORSbase, comprising 13 candidate surveys from 12 countries. A second release followed in November 2018, with 5 additional elections from 5 countries. In spring 2018, the SELECTS project leader was actively involved in the CCS Module III questionnaire development process. The new questionnaire was formally adopted by the General Assembly at the ECPR General Conference in Hamburg in September, and will be included in the 2019 Swiss election study. The General Assembly also elected a new Steering Committee (2018-2023), which is chaired by the SELECTS project leader.

VOTO

Since 1977, a survey is conducted after each direct-democratic federal vote to analyse the reasons that motivate Swiss voters to turn out and reject or accept a ballot proposal. Since summer 2016, FORS, the Center for Democracy Aarau (ZDA) and the survey institute LINK have been carrying out these analyses under the name "VOTO studies" on behalf of the Federal Chancellery.

After each federal vote, LINK is in charge of conducting CATI interviews with a representative sample of about 1,500 Swiss citizens, whereas FORS and ZDA jointly elaborate the questionnaire, and are alternately responsible for data coding, analysis and reporting. For each study, the VOTO team at FORS coordinates the mailing of invitation letters for sample members, organises the translation of the questionnaire as well as of the final report, prepares the data for distribution on FORSbase and sends out press releases to the Swiss media. Since March 2016, the programming of the questionnaire is done in the Survey Management Tool (SMT) at FORS.

In 2018, four VOTO studies were published. These studies cover the ten proposals that were submitted to the ballot in March, June, September and November 2018. Among them were six popular initiatives, one counter-proposal to a popular initiative, one federal decree and two optional referendums. All popular initiatives were rejected by a majority of voters and cantons. With the exception of the rather unconventional "Horn Cow Initiative", the VOTO study showed ideological considerations (left-right self-placement and party identification) to be key drivers of the voting decision. The VOTO studies are published in three languages (German, French, Italian) and freely accessible as barrier-free documents on the VOTO website.

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3. Data and research information services DARIS

Usage and workflow

There were 2,581 datasets downloaded or ordered from FORSbase in 2018 (see chapter 6 "Performance Indicators"). In addition, there were 64 new datasets deposited in 2018 to the FORSbase platform. The number of active users of FORSbase increased to 5,300, compared to about 3,300 in 2016 and 4,400 in 2017.

During the annual survey 2017/18, 356 new project descriptions were added to the research inventory. Most of these new research projects are situated in five core disciplines (sociology, education science, political science, economics, and psychology). As of the end of 2018, the research inventory currently comprised over 11,300 published project descriptions.

Data Promotion

The data promotion group maintained and reinforced its regular activities of direct promotion (FORS bulletin, social networking, presentations) and indirect promotion (development of materials, trainings, methodological research and data management reflections). In particular, the group intensified its work around data management, including ethical and legal aspects. It extended the pilot study that was started at the University of Lausanne to the discipline of psychology, by conducting a survey amongst psychologists at the University of Zurich. The group made significant progress with the analysis of the ch-x data, which will result in a book for the general public to be released in 2019, as well various academic publications.

Data management

DARIS continued to reinforce its expertise in data management during 2018, with a special focus on day-to-day data management as well as ethical and legal issues. DARIS pursued the pilot study, which was started in 2017 to reinforce practical know-how. The pilot was extended to more researchers at the University of Lausanne who had specific needs, such as drafting a consent form, but also to other disciplines. In particular, we developed and conducted a survey in collaboration with the University of Zurich to identify the needs and practices of researchers in psychology. Results will be published in early 2019. DARIS also established new contacts with researchers within economics and linguistics.

The implementation of formal Data Management Plans (DMPs) by the SNSF provided DARIS with the opportunity to position themselves as experts in the field of data management. DARIS organised two DMP events around the time research proposal submissions (see event section Chapter 6). DARIS was invited to give presentations as part of DMP events organised by other

institutions, such as the HES-SO (March) and the University of Neuchatel (September). Additionally, DARIS gave presentations on various data management topics, such as general introductions to data management (HEP Fribourg, February) and the archiving of qualitative data (EESP, Lausanne). As for trainings, we participated in the winter doctoral school VariaForMea for researchers in linguistics (December), and we offered a CUSO doctoral course in political sciences on the topic of anonymisation, in collaboration with national and international partners, including representatives of beQuali in France.

Beyond these events DARIS received many requests for help with respect to data management practices. They assisted many researchers in drafting consent forms, implementing storage strategies, or preparing their DMPs.

This year provided DARIS with an opportunity to develop reflexive literature for the research community. Two FORS guides were developed with respect to data management: one on consent forms and the other on research ethics within the social sciences. A special issue proposal was submitted to the journal Bulletin of Sociological Methodology and was accepted. The submission of the special issue will take place in February 2019.

DARIS collaborated internationally with CESSDA partners in evaluating an online training module for junior researchers. We offered, as part of this collaboration, a general introduction to data management to doctoral students in Lithuania.

DARIS was officially certified in February 2018 with the prestigious CoreTrustSeal that reflects the core characteristics of trustworthy data repositories. CoreTrustSeal is a community based non-profit organisation promoting sustainable data infrastructures. The certification is envisioned as the first step in a global framework for repository certification.

Other DARIS activities

As in past years, in 2018 DARIS staff members participated in a variety of international projects related to archiving and research infrastructure, including the CESSDA European Question Bank project, and the Horizon 2020 projects SERISS and CESSDA-SaW, to name a few. The SERISS project – Synergies for European Research Infrastructures in the Social Sciences – aims to improve methodologies and tools for large-scale cross-national surveys. This 4-year project will end in September 2019. The CESSDA-SaW project – Strengthening and Widening – aimed to reinforce existing capacities of national European data archives and to assist other European countries in developing their own archives. The project ended in October of 2018.

4. Scientific collaborations

Host University The University of Lausanne supports FORS based on a scientific and an administrative contractual agreement. The University of Lausanne provides the offices, human resources services as well as IT services as in kind contribution to FORS. In addition, an agreement with the Faculty of social and political sciences (SSP) of the University of Lausanne regulates the scientific collaboration. This program funds around twelve positions. Two meetings were held in 2018 between the FORS directorate and the Dean's Office of the SSP to discuss this collaboration. The work on the re-establishment of the joint research program between FORS and the SSP Faculty was on-going. Some staff changes from the SSP took place in 2018 and the SSP and FORS put a steering committêe in place in 2018 that has the responsibility of this program.

One of the activities of this collaboration is the jointly organised Methods and Research Meetings where invited guests as well as researchers from FORS or from the University of Lausanne exchange on methodological issues on a regular basis. The invitational programme sponsored by the University of Lausanne funded two postdoctoral fellows, one survey researcher, and one qualitative researcher, who were involved in joint research activities with FORS and LINES of the University of Lausanne.

National and international commitments
FORS is involved in a number of international and national partnerships.

National commitments In 2018 the sixth cohort of students started in the master programme Public Opinion and Survey Methodology (MEOP) of the Universities of Lausanne, Lucerne, and Neuchâtel in partnership with FORS, the Swiss Federal Statistical Office, and the vsms-asms. This program is important for FORS because it teaches key competences related to FORS activities, and FORS participates in the Scientific Council in charge of running the program. Two senior members of the FORS staff teach in this programme. FORS offered internship positions for master students in 2018 as well.

A mandate by the Human Research and Ethics Section of the FOPH to conduct a survey about knowledge and attitudes of the Swiss population towards human research and legislation in this field was completed in 2018. FORS conducted this web/paper-survey entirely in-house, from the development and programming of the questionnaire, to the organisation and monitoring of the fieldwork, to the processing, analysing, and storing of the resulting data. The data collection with 2,000 respondents was completed

in spring 2018. In September, the results were presented in a final report on behalf of the FOPH.

In the context of an SNSF-funded project "Do members of Parliaments have accurate perceptions of public preferences?", FORS was mandated in September 2017 by a researcher from the University of Geneva to conduct a survey on the attitudes of voters on specific policy questions. The project, which is part of an international collaboration, assess whether MPs correctly evaluate what voters in general and voters of their own party in particular think about a set of policy issues. The data collection was completed in summer 2018 among 4,000 Swiss voting age citizens using a sequential mixed mode web / paper design.

FORS has finished the data cleaning and preparation for ch-x, the Swiss Federal Surveys of Adolescents (ch-x). The SNSF collaboration with the Faculty of geography continued, based on the ch-x data, as well as the preparatory work for the forthcoming ch-x public report. The central publication for ch-x will come out in 2019.

FORS is member of the Swiss association of market and social research (vsms/asms), representing the client side in the Managing Board and responsible for the domain 'Methods'. The revision of the data protection law in Europe and Switzerland and the Swisscom call filter were still central topics in 2018. The association tackled the digitalisation of its industry and the way of including new players. FORS is also member of the World Association for Public Opinion Research (WAPOR), and participates in ad hoc committees.

International commitments

On the international level FORS continued its involvement in building and developing the European and international research infrastructure:

The SERI has delegated the official representation of Switzerland in the social science European Research Infrastructure Consortiums (ERIC) to FORS some time. Switzerland has an observer status in each of these ERICs. The FORS director represents Switzerland in the General Assemblies of the CESSDA ERIC and the ESS ERIC, which each held two meetings in 2018. The head of the Survey unit represents Switzerland in the General Assembly of SHARE. SHARE had two meetings of the General Assembly in 2018. FORS staff actively takes part in the coordinating bodies of all the three organisations. All ERICS are centrally concerned with the implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) that came into effect in 2018. This proved to require complicated arrangements, especially for the comparative project where many countries are involved. For ESS ERIC a central point of discussion

was the host country. Brexit created a substantial amount of uncertainty if and how the headquarter can still be located in London in the future. Contingency plans were developed and will be implemented in 2019.

FORS is responsible for representing Switzerland in various other European and international projects. FORS staff represents Switzerland in the ISSP Annual meeting, which decides on modules for the coming period. Switzerland currently chairs the ISSP Methodological committee through FORS. FORS collaborators represent Switzerland in governing bodies of various political science networks, such as the Comparative Study of Electoral System (CSES) and the Comparative Candidate Survey (CCS). In addition, FORS is involved in the creating of the Monitoring Electoral Democracies (MEDem) project, that aims to connect various comparative political science project (including CSES and CCS) as well as national election studies in a formal way and aims for ESFRI roadmap status in the coming years.

The FORS Director also represents Switzerland in the ESFRI Strategic Working Group on Social and Cultural Innovation. This working group was responsible for drafting the ESFRI Landscape analysis and to evaluate existing as well as new projects to get on the ESFRI roadmap in 2018. The new ESFRI roadmap was launched in 2018.

The ERA.Net RUS Plus-funded project "PAWCER – Public Attitudes to Welfare, Climate Change and Energy in the EU and Russia", acquired by FORS in collaboration with the ESS and international partners in 2015, successfully applied for a prolongation until 2019 for the Swiss part that enables the project to extend the dissemination activities. Several dissemination activities for all stakeholders (politicians, social policy makers, Russian and European researchers and data producers) were organised in 2018. A public report of the main results was published in the ESS Topline Series and presented at a policy event in Brussels. Together with ESS, FORS is also involved in the 'Synergies for Europe's Research Infrastructures in the Social Sciences' (SERISS) project, addressing some of the key challenges facing cross-national data collection.

Besides its core business of soliciting and disseminating research information and data, DARIS was actively involved in 2017 in the Assessment of Basic Educational Competencies (ÜGK), carried out by the Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education (EDK). Within this educational large-scale assessment, DARIS was responsible for the establishment and coordination of data management processes and complex data cleaning, as well as for the distribution, the documentation and the archiving of the data. DARIS' involvement includes attending regular meetings and workshops as well

as a set of diverse day-to-day coordination and communication tasks. The participation of DARIS in the ÜGK project was formalised in 2017 with a two-year mandate, which resulted in the hiring of a new staff member.

FORS currently covers the fee of the Luxemburg Income Study (LIS). This contribution allows Swiss researchers to gain access to the LIS data resource. FORS continues to pay the Swiss membership fees to the Cross-National Data Centre in Luxembourg LIS so that the data are accessible for free to researchers in Switzerland. In July the head of DARIS attended the bi-annual meeting of the international board of directors (ASBL) of LIS.

The head of the IT group was actively involved in the international project SERISS as a technical expert, as well as in CESSDA Technical Working Group and CESSDA Product and Service catalogue.

5. Methodological Research

FORS continued testing possibilities to switch surveys to the web mode. This year was mostly dedicated to data collection and data cleaning of wave 1 of the SHP IV mixed mode pilot survey, presenting first results thereof, and completing fieldwork for the EVS 2017, including producing a first data release and first results. In addition, data from the SELECTS 2015 and the MOSAiCH 2017 and 2018 surveys were used to disseminate first findings.

»   The SHP team is currently running the two-wave SHP IV mixed mode pilot survey (the fieldwork for wave 2 will start in January 2019). Using a randomised experimental design, the SHP IV pilot compares two alternatives to the current design, which predominantly uses CATI. Sample members of the first alternative complete all questionnaires online, while sample members of the second alternative are approached by an interviewer (CATI) for the grid and household questionnaire, but complete the individual questionnaires online. In the first wave, acceptable response rates were obtained with the alternative designs, although they were lower than in the CATI group. Representativeness did not vary much across groups. Results on response rates and sample composition were presented at the Methodology of Longitudinal Surveys (MOLS) II conference at the University of Essex and at the Speaker Series of the Institute of Communication and Media Research at the University of Zurich, and are forthcoming in 2019 as a chapter in the second edition of Methodology of Longitudinal Surveys. A publication on mode differences in measurement is planned as well. Results after wave 2 will shed more light on differences in longitudinal participation in the three protocol groups.

»   Non-probability samples can be a cheap alternative to probability based online panels, while respondents recruited by such panels may not well represent the general population. The SELECTS team compared two of the probability-based SELECTS 2015 surveys (the post-election survey and the rolling cross-section survey) with samples drawn from three different opt-in panel providers. We used data from the register-based sampling frame to assess the representativeness of the responding samples on sociodemographic variables and the weighted SELECTS post-election survey for political variables as benchmarks. The univariate distributions confirm that deriving population estimates from opt-in panels is highly problematic. The proportion of those who turn out to vote and voters of different parties varies widely between the different panels and these differences cannot be explained by a different sample composition. When assessing deviations of conditional

sociodemographic variables (e.g., age group by gender), we find highly uneven amounts of bias in many variable pairs in opt-in panels, including conditional turnout and party choice. Weighting did not improve the conditional representativeness significantly. Results were published in a vsms article and will soon be submitted to a scientific journal.

The SELECTS team designed a web panel survey, to run alongside the main 2019 post-election survey, which will include three waves (pre-campaign, campaign, and post-electoral). The main challenge will be to convert this short-term panel into a long-term panel, which would run until 2023, while retaining a sufficient proportion and number of respondents all the way through. Extra care has to be taken in making the experience as pleasant as possible and in how to inform and incentivise respondents in terms of the long-term component.

» While online surveys are generally cheaper in terms of implementation and interventions during the data collection, little is known about the evolution of daily response rates in such surveys and about the impact of interventions such as sending reminders. This research seeks to understand whether data collection efficiency can be optimised to increase response rates and save costs. This research based on the German Internet Panel (GIP) was presented at the MOLS II conference and is currently under-review in the journal 'Longitudinal and Life Course Studies'.

» In the absence of e-mail lists of the general population, probability-based online surveys ensure representativeness by recruiting respondents offline, for example by sending invitation letters via postal mail. To gain information about people without Internet access and less IT-savvy people, who will likely not participate in the online panel, these mail invitation letters can include paper questionnaires. Hence, a mixed mode postal recruitment design can inform about potential nonresponse error. Using data from the GIP, members from FORS and the University of Mannheim investigated whether the information about IT savviness in the paper questionnaire can be used to create survey weights to compensate for the drop out of less IT-savvy respondents in the online part of the survey. Furthermore, for those who fill in both parts of the online questionnaire the question arises whether IT savviness affect panel attrition in subsequent waves. The research will be presented at the ESRA 2019 conference.

» The International Surveys team mainly focused its methodological research on the EVS 2017 data, aiming at investigating primarily whether face-to-face surveys can be transformed into self-administered push-

to-web surveys and how much time the web survey may take. Several other researchers within and outside FORS, including international partners, contributed to this project. When switching a face-to-face survey to a web survey, challenges regarding coverage and survey length arise. In this regard, the EVS Switzerland conducted an experiment, which covered different survey designs to evaluate the feasibility as well as coverage and nonresponse issues. For this purpose, the EVS team fielded between September 2017 and end of January 2018 (1) a long face-to-face survey, (2) a long push-to-web survey announced as long survey, (3) a short push-to-web survey using matrix design announced as short survey, and (4) a short push-to-web survey using matrix design announced as short with a follow up survey. First results indicated that the distributions of the samples of the long push-to-web survey and the push-to-web with matrix designs are representative for the Swiss general population with respect to gender, age and civil status. Furthermore, we investigated relative differences and predicted probabilities between the different survey designs, which showed a more differentiated picture of the representativeness of the sample composition. Moreover, we used MOSAiCH 2017 (face-to-face) and 2018 (push-to-web) for external benchmark comparisons for categories of education and political denomination. This research has been presented at the FORS Scientific Board, the German Online Research conference (GOR) in Cologne, the World Association for Public Opinion Research (WAPOR) in Marrakech, the Nonresponse Workshop in Budapest, and the CSDI workshop in Limerick. An updated version of the results will be presented at the ESRA 2019 conference.

» After defining the optimal questionnaire split for the matrix design in the EVS 2017, we started analysing how much information is needed to get reliable estimates. For this purpose, we applied the same substantive research to data using complete case analysis and to multiply imputed data. First results indicate that multiple imputation did not improve estimates using the push-to-web survey with matrix design for models with simple dependent variables. These results show that a well-designed matrix survey design produces valid results for most cases. This research was presented at the Nonresponse Workshop 2018 in Budapest. As a next step, we will research whether multiple imputation can produce valid estimates in more complex situations where composite indicators are used that were fielded in different modules of the matrix design. This research will be presented at the ESRA 2019 conference.

» Due to the matrix design the question order between the different matrix designs varied, possibly resulting in different measurement errors. A POSM student investigated the issue of measurement bias in an MA

thesis. Furthermore, a session about this topic will be organised at the ESRA 2019 conference and a paper will be prepared in collaboration with the POSM student.

» There is still scarce knowledge on how to apply matrix designs in cross-cultural general population surveys and the methodological implications of doing so. In this regard, we will do a cross-cultural comparison of the data quality of push-to-web surveys with matrix designs. Furthermore, different imputation strategies for cross-cultural research will be evaluated in a project 'Statistical Modelling of Design Missingness in Modular Questionnaire Designs for Social Surveys', funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft. Two scientific papers are planned in collaboration with EVS partners from Germany, Iceland, Netherlands, Denmark and Finland. In addition, an ESRA session will be organised together with GESIS in 2019.

» The 2017 EVS in Switzerland used altogether 11 different experimental conditions including different modes and lengths, resulting in a large variance in survey burden. Related to the hypothesis of a long-term increasing nonresponse and declining survey culture over time, FORS will analyse the respondent's mood which was asked in a short supplementary questionnaire after completion of the survey. It may be that different survey burdens frustrate respondents differently, which may in extreme cases lead to a refusal to participate at the next survey request. It is planned to present first results at the ESRA 2019.

Fighting nonobservation

The different components of nonobservation (non-coverage, noncontact, and non-cooperation) remain a major problem in our surveys and FORS continued doing research to improve observation at all of these three stages.

» Underrepresentation due to language deficiency may be improved by offering additional survey language(s). Until now, decisions on which language(s) to add followed ad hoc criteria such as the size of the national minority speaking the candidate language or interviewer availability. In a chapter published in a Wiley book as well as in a seminar presentation at the ISER Monday Seminar series at the University of Essex, FORS showed that the link between survey languages and representation bias is multidimensional. In a potential study, we used Swiss administrative data to show that the effect of an additional language on representation bias depends primarily on the interactions between the survey topic and the language mastery necessary to complete the survey, and least so on the socio-demographic composition of the sample. One surprising result is that adding a language can even have adverse effects on migrant

representation, if this adds people to topic categories, which are already well represented.

» The extent to which mixing modes reduces selection error by adding otherwise missing parts of the population because they cannot be reached or do not want to participate in certain modes is not well researched. Using data from the LIVES-FORS mixed mode experiment conducted in 2012-13, which uses auxiliary data from the sampling register and a single mode mail survey as a benchmark, members from FORS, the UNIL, and the University of Leuven used R-indicators to assess the representativeness of samples responding at different phases of fieldwork, to different modes and mode combinations. They find that switching modes indeed helps to improve response rates and improve the representativeness of the samples but that the effectiveness of this strategy varies by mode and subgroup. The article is currently being revised for resubmission to the journal Sociological Methods and Research.

» When analysing the data quality of face-to-face surveys the role of the interviewer needs to be taken into account. Since 2002, FORS has regularly conducted small studies on contact and cooperation strategies, which were used as part of a LIVES-FORS collaboration. Results were presented at the "10ème Colloque francophone sur les sondages" in Lyon. In 2019, a second presentation is planned at the ESRA conference as well as to submit a paper in a peer-reviewed journal.

» While there is ample evidence of interviewers affecting nonresponse and some evidence regarding the factors explaining overall interviewer effects, the literature is sparse on how interviewers differentially affect specific groups of respondents despite the importance of this in terms of nonresponse bias. A reason for the sparse literature on interviewer effects on nonresponse bias may be limitations of standard use of multilevel models. Using an example from the GIP, members from FORS together with colleagues from the University of Mannheim and Leuven demonstrated how an alternative parametrisation of the random components in multilevel models, so-called separate coding, provides insights into differential interviewer effects on specific respondent groups. Results were presented at the GOR conference in Cologne. An updated version of the paper will be presented at the ESRA 2019 using an example from one of the surveys hosted at FORS, before submitting it to a peer-reviewed journal.

» In face-to-face surveys, the interviewer's assessments of the respondent's ability and reluctance to participate are shown to be

predictive of next wave participation. We add to this post-survey adjustment research by looking at this association in telephone surveys, where an interviewer typically has less information on which to base an assessment. We looked at next-wave participation, non-contact and refusal, as well as longer-term participation patterns. We found that interviewers were better able to anticipate refusal than noncontact, relative to participation, both in the next wave and in the longer term. Our findings confirm that interviewer assessments – in particular whether the respondent was difficult to convince – can help predict response at later waves, also after controlling for commonly used predictors of survey nonresponse. In addition to helping to predict nonresponse in the short term, interviewer evaluations seem to provide useful information for a long-term perspective as well, which may be used to improve nonresponse adjustments and responsive designs in longitudinal surveys. Results of this research will soon be submitted to a scientific journal.

» Although the effect of attrition on point estimates and subsequent sample composition is well researched, effects on relationships between variables are less clear, although multivariate relationships is among the most important analyses done with survey data. Using data from the SHP, members from FORS, the UNIL, and the University of Leuven tested whether regression coefficients are affected by the selectiveness of the sample after ten waves and less than half the size of the full sample. The models produced comparable coefficients for the full sample and the sample with attrition in terms of signs and significance. These results were published in the FORS Working Paper Series.

Missing variables

In line with the establishment of a data linkage center at FORS, we increasingly aim to match new samples with income variables from the Swiss social security register as a standard procedure. In addition to matching socio-demographic variables from the sampling frame, adding income information from the AHV/AVS income register further saves survey time and decreases survey burden, helps validating reported information and imputation models, and provides new possibilities of nonresponse adjustments.

» Data quality of wealth measurements in surveys have been assessed in the project "Wealth distribution in Switzerland and Germany: Evidence from Survey Data" funded by the SNF. Measuring wealth is difficult due to the complexity of the concept, frequent non-response, lack of knowledge of respondents and the undercoverage of top wealth holders. Nevertheless, surveys are an important source to measure the wealth distribution and the importance of wealth on various aspects of life. Data quality can be considered as good regarding the overall population

according to comparison with national accounts. To study the wealth distribution, surveys with detailed wealth measures (SILC, SHARE) should be preferred over surveys with simple wealth measures such as the SHP or the ISSP. To study top wealth percentiles (e.g. the top 1%), tax records should be used as data sources. Results regarding data quality have been presented and discussed with the Swiss Federal Statistical Office, and an article has been submitted to a peer-reviewed journal.

» To enrich survey data on wealth, the project "Wealth distribution in Switzerland and Germany: Evidence from Survey Data" has linked data from the SILC 2015 survey with the AHV/AVS income register and different population registers. The annual income data (since 1981), marriage data and birth year of children have been used to estimate pension wealth, as the survey data contain no information on this wealth component. Both one-to-one merges and probabilistic data linkage were used. This data linkage illustrates the potential of data linkage. The procedure was accompanied by the SFSO at several meetings and results based on the linked data have been presented at the ECSR 2nd Thematic Workshop on Wealth inequality and Mobility in Luxembourg. The publication of articles is planned for 2019.

» Results from the 2015 post-electoral survey from SELECTS matched with this register were that income and sociodemographic variables explain only a small part of the participation to the survey and unit non-respondents earn on average a little less than respondents. The amount of income had no influence on the item missing incomes. The difference between reported and registered income correlated only marginally with socio-demographic and political variables. A consolidated paper was presented at the Bigsurv18 conference in Barcelona and a peer-reviewed journal article is planned.

» Missing income values are inevitable in surveys. Due to their importance in particular as explaining variables, missing income values should be imputed to reduce possible non-response bias and to keep sample sizes when otherwise observations would be casewise deleted. While best practices have been established for cross-sectional data, longitudinal imputation methods are less developed. The state of the art is the Row and Column procedure that is based on the individual-specific mean income over time. While this imputation method performs well for cross-sectional data analysis, it is problematic for measures of income mobility and fixed effects regression analysis. Using data of the SHP, FORS showed that an alternative imputation procedure based on panel regression models showed better performance in longitudinal data analysis. Results were presented at the MOLS II conference and submitted as an article to the journal Longitudinal and Life Course Studies.

Measurement and Equivalence issues

Besides language and translation issues, different contexts might influence how respondents understand and interpret questions in different cultural contexts. In collaboration with GESIS and CeSSI, Russia, within the framework of the PAWCER project, FORS applied cognitive interviews and quantitative tests during the ESS pre-tests and regular fieldwork to investigate interpretations of two often-used variables in the ESS: the left-right scale and the question on the government's responsibility for reducing differences in income. The qualitative and quantitative results show that while the items seem to be comparable in interpretation between Russia and Switzerland, the interpretations are indeed not straightforward. While the results do not question comparability as such, they suggest prudence regarding interpretation: On the one hand, some concepts might not make sense to some respondents (more than 30% of respondents interpret the item completely different, such as inversed scale, wrong concept); on the other hand, the researchers' interpretations of an item should stay close to the original formulation of the item.

» To write questions that respondents can understand consistently is a key challenge in the design of effective survey questionnaires. The questionnaire design literature proposes the use of respondents' own terminology to facilitate comprehension and the response process. Together with colleagues from the UNIL and the EPFL, FORS published a paper on "Developing Attitude Measures Based on Respondents' Representations of Unfamiliar Objects: An Application to Attitudes Towards Biodiversity" in a peer-reviewed journal. We propose an innovative questionnaire development method to construct items using respondents' own terminology relating to an unfamiliar object (using the example of 'biodiversity'). We designed new attitude measures composed of the words identified as being central to survey respondents' representations about biodiversity. Results show that the attitude items designed on the basis of the social representation method satisfied validity and reliability quality criteria.

» Although survey practitioners implement combo boxes already, it is yet unknown how respondents use combo boxes and which response difficulties emerge when respondents answer via combo boxes. For this purpose, FORS and colleagues from GESIS conducted an eye-tracking study in combination with cognitive interviews to test the usability of combo boxes when asking the question on the highest educational qualification in the GIP. Our results indicate that respondents may not know that they can type a response rather than select a response option and vice versa. Furthermore, a split-ballot experiment was conducted in the SOEP-IS (innovation sample) to evaluate three different response formats for long-list questions with regard to differences in response burden and data quality. Currently, there are two papers under-review in peer-reviewed journals.

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» Together with a former student, now working at the SFSO, FORS investigated the question of how accurate people's self and proxy reports of educational qualifications are, using administrative data linked to survey responses. By comparing highest education levels using survey data from the Structural Survey of the Swiss population census and register data collected and harmonised for longitudinal analyses in the area of education, we showed that while point estimates at the aggregate level are quite accurate, there is a substantial rate of misreporting at the individual level, with more respondents over-reporting their highest qualification level than underreporting it. Positive associations for misreporting are found with lower levels of education, a foreign country of birth, and a foreign language. Another reason for over-reporting may be that programs are not yet completed according to registers and respondents anticipated future qualification levels. Results were presented at the WAPOR in Marrakech. A preliminary version of the paper was presented at the 13ème Journées de Méthodologie Statistique de l'INSEE, Paris and published in the INSEE JMS Conference Proceedings. A scientific paper has been submitted to the Journal of Official Statistics.

» In international surveys, a major concern about mixing modes within and between countries is that it will reduce the comparability of data. Yet the equivalence of measurement across countries is already threatened by differences in survey practice, and errors of translation. From a total survey error perspective, it is of interest to know which of these error sources poses the greatest risk to measurement equivalence so that limited resources can be invested where they are likely to have the greatest impact on error reduction. Colleagues from the UNIL and FORS investigated this using a combination of data from ESS methodological experiments testing mode effects and the effects of different question formulations, and 'natural experiments' resulting from translation errors between the French, German and Swiss French and Swiss German versions of the questionnaire. The authors tested for measurement invariance in a model measuring personal wellbeing to draw conclusions about the relative influence of different sources of non-equivalence on the comparability of the data. The results suggest that differences in translation have a greater impact than the mode of data collection. The results, a preliminary version of which were first presented at the ESRA Conference in July 2017, were finalised in 2018 and presented at the WAPOR in Marrakech, and the 73rd Annual Conference of the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR), Denver. The manuscript is currently under review for publication in a special issue on the topic of sources of measurement invariance.

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A FORS affiliate researcher and assistant professor of the UNIL was invited to present at a workshop organised by the Computation, Nature and Society Think Tank at EPFL. The aim of the workshop was to address questions at the interface of computer science and the social sciences, arising from the development of powerful algorithms with the potential to both change lives for the better, but to also be discriminatory, reinforce societal prejudices, and polarise opinions. Participants discussed some of these emerging challenges from different viewpoints and brainstormed potential ways forward. Roberts's presentation, titled 'Predicting the unpredictable: problems of representation, measurement and specification', highlighted the theoretical and empirical challenges involved in exploiting data from different sources to tackle human problems, and the fundamental need to combine expertise and skillsets across different disciplines in the search for effective methods for maximising social impact and value creation.

FORS, members from the UNIL, and a researcher from IDIAP-EPFL were awarded a small grant by the EPFL/UNIL Collaborative Research on Science and Society (CROSS) Programme. Their project, titled 'Leveraging on-device smartphone inference to address resistance to participate in social surveys' (or 'LOIS', for short), will address different aspects of resistance to participate in social surveys using smartphones, including: 1) concerns about privacy and motivation for both active (i.e., filling questionnaires, taking pictures, etc.) and passive (i.e., noise recording, GPS tracking, measuring biomarkers such as heart rate, etc.) data collection; and 2) perceived and actual burden of completing survey-related tasks on smartphone. The first aspect will be addressed through qualitative methods aimed at understanding drivers of resistance and possible solutions. The second aspect will be addressed through the development and preliminary testing of active and passive data collection methods using the crowd-sourced data collection platform 'Civique', currently under development at IDIAP-EFPL. By bringing together of expertise from survey methodologists and computer scientists specialised in social computing methods, the researchers hope to address the shared challenge of improving citizen engagement in future scientific research.

Since July 2017, Caroline Roberts has been serving as Conference Chair on the board of the European Survey Research Association, responsible for organising the next ESRA conference, which will take place in July 2019 in Zagreb, Croatia. The conference is likely to attract around 1,000 participants from all over the world, including researchers based at FORS and the SSP, and will showcase the latest research findings from research in the fields of survey methodology and survey data analysis.

6. Dissemination, publications, websites and events

Social media management

In times where open access and open science dominate the academic publishing landscape, the "science-society dialogue" becomes even more important. The strategy of spreading information online in multiple formats via various platforms seems very effective for FORS, including social media management. In 2018 efforts to spread content across social media channels like Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn have been intensified to engage with our target audiences, increasing reach and visibility. FORS gained 5% more Facebook users and the number of followers on Twitter has risen by 52% in 2018 compared to previous years. Twitter in particular has proved to be an efficient channel in sharing content quickly and efficiently.

Mobile helpdesk

As part of the general strategy to increase the visibility of FORS and its products, it was decided in 2018 that FORS would increase its presence in all Swiss universities by offering presentations during seminars or official events as well as presenting a FORS stand that showcases our services and latest publications. For this purpose, new promotional material was created. The Mobile Helpdesk initiative was taken by the data promotion team and is supported by the communication team. The helpdesk aims to reach out to the Swiss universities. In the longer run FORS will reach out to universities of applied sciences. Various Mobile Helpdesk events are planned in 2019, with either a FORS presentation, a stand or the combination of both.

Partnerships and contact points

FORS defines itself via partnerships and cooperations (see also chapter 4 national and international commitments). Special focus was given to foster exchange through regular meetings or one-to-one contact between other Communication departments and partner institutions like the UNICOM, the SSP, NCCR LIVES and CESSDA-ERIC. The "red fac" meetings organised by the UNIL UNICOM offered an ideal platform to exchange information and enhance collaborations. To show our partnerships to our community and target audience, the existing FORS webpage on partnerships was further developed and now gives a detailed overview of our major partnerships. Special focus is given to national and international "institution-related" partnerships. Project-based partnerships can be found under the project webpage.

Our goal has always been to maintain proximity to research to offer researchers the best possible services and to provide their own expertise to a wide range of interested parties. Our contact points come from

various disciplines, notably educational and political sciences, social work, gerontology, communication, psychology, media studies, journalism or computational sciences. The contact points are a valuable link to the social sciences landscape. The network initially comprised 17 contacts and currently has 29 contact points from 21 Swiss universities and universities of applied sciences.

In 2018 the exchange with the contact points in Berne, Basel and Lucerne were intensified. The results are several events in 2019 that will take place within the framework of the FORS mobile helpdesk initiative (see chapter six on mobile helpdesk).

Websites and publications

Implementation of the new FORS website
In September 2018 the newly designed FORS website went live on time. The new website was implemented entirely by the FORS IT team in collaboration with the communication group. Solely for the design, an external company was hired. The redesign of the website was a necessary technical update and not only about finding a modern design but also about a new structuring of the content to increase the visibility of FORS, its services and research outcomes. All through 2018, the communication group organised the process to redefine the structure of the content and supervised the editing of the new pages.

The new homepage offers a quick entry to our data, to our surveys, to our staff and job opportunities and presents a far less complicated menu represented by a box layout. The new website was set up from a user perspective and is based on the comprehensive feedback from various users.

Thematic web portal
With the thematic portal on the new website we created a new way to access our contents for users who are interested in a specific topic. The idea was not to create new content, but bundling the existing content in an additional way. The thematic portal includes recent publications, projects, news and events organised by topic. The current topics are methodological research, life course, political participation and public opinion, values and attitudes, social change and wellbeing.

The FORS Guides to Survey Methods and Data Management
In 2018 the first five papers of the new peer-reviewed series FORS Guides to Survey Methods and Data Management were prepared for a publication in January 2019. The new series allows a quick publication and promotion of the existing methodological knowledge at FORS in a fast and straightforward

way that demands less time and effort than the writing of an entire scientific article. The aim of the FORS Guides is a knowledge transfer within and outside of FORS in the domain of survey methods and data management, and hence it should strengthen the role of FORS. By referring to the Swiss context the guides are specifically targeted to the Swiss research community and researchers working with Swiss data. Researchers and students in social sciences who want to collect data, teachers at university level and collaborators at FORS are the main target audience. Three articles were in the pipeline on survey methods (mobile web surveys, measurement of income in surveys, refusal conversion) and two on data management (ethics in the era of open research data, informed consent as legal and ethical basis of research data production). Upon publication in January 2019, the FORS Guides will be promoted amongst scholars in Switzerland and abroad. The series is ongoing and further publications are planned in 2019. The FORS Guides are available online: www.forscenter.ch/fors-guides.

FORS Working Paper Series
The FORS Working Paper Series publishes papers related to survey research, from both methodological and substantive viewpoints. The series is intended to provide an early and relatively quick means of publication prior to further development of the work. The FORS Working Paper Series received a new logo redesign and a new article template in line with the new FORS website. The series further received DOIs for each article, a unique identifier that enables the papers to be found with one simple click on a link. In 2018 one Working Paper was published, analysing the potential impact of panel attrition on the relationship between variables (also see chapter 5 on methodological research). All papers can be consulted on the series' dedicated webpage.

Social Change in Switzerland
The bilingual online publication series Social Change in Switzerland is co-edited by FORS, the Life Course and Inequalities research unit of the University of Lausanne LINES and the NCCR LIVES. The series was established in 2015 and has published four articles in 2018. All publications, press, and media releases can be consulted on the journal's dedicated webpage.

The number of single page views of the journal's website are similar to the previous year (17,460 in 2018, compared to 17,500 in 2017). The top ten articles downloaded were published between 2015 and 2018. This even distribution shows that the articles written remain current for long periods. The journal has found a stable readership. Like in the previous year, most visits came from Switzerland, followed by Germany, France, and the United States.

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DeFacto

DeFacto publishes articles related to important and relevant political issues in Switzerland in order to make political science research more visible. Until 2016 DeFacto was an AGORA project funded by the SNSF. The continuation of the platform in 2017 and 2018 was financed by FORS, the Institute of Political Sciences of the University of Zurich, the Institute of Political Science of the University of Berne, and the Department of Humanities, Social and Political Sciences at the ETH Zurich. FORS contributed on the one hand by maintaining its website. On the other hand, it strengthened DeFacto as a bilingual national platform by organising and paying the translation of five articles. In 2018 DeFacto has published 77 articles. FORS collaborators published seven articles. The DeFacto website obtained 62,645 single visits in 2018. Most visits came from Switzerland, followed by Germany, the United States, and France.

Survey Methods, Insights from the Field

The peer-reviewed online journal Survey Methods, Insights from the Field (SMIF) published nine new papers, compared to seven in 2017. All papers handed in throughout the year went through the review process, yet two papers were rejected after review. By the end of December, nine papers were in production, thus either in the process of revision by the authors or at the review stage by the members of the editorial board. In 2018 two Associate Board members resigned; one due to other obligations in academia and one due to a change in career. In 2018 two calls for special issues were launched. One on fieldwork monitoring strategies for interviewer-administered surveys and one on probability and non-probability sampling, a special issue realised with the German Robert Koch Institute, the government's central scientific institution in the field of biomedicine. 2018 was marked by the production of the latter special issue where 16 articles were handed in via the online journal platform. Both special issues are planned for publication in 2019.

In 2018 the journal was accepted to be included in the DOAJ, the Directoy of Open Access Journals sponsored by EBSCO Information Services, the leading provider of research databases, e-journals, magazine subscriptions, eBooks and discovery service in academia. The inclusion in the DOAJ and the calls for special issues generated more page views than ever. From 1 January to 31 December, the website had 22,461 single page views, compared to 14,064 times in 2017).

Most visits came again from the United States, followed by Germany and the United Kingdom. Like in previous years, the articles most downloaded were the ones of the 2015 special issue on weighting issues.

FORS maintains a set of indicators that allow us to assess our accomplishments and progress on different fronts. Below are various results for 2018:

**Number of datasets produced by FORS surveys that are distributed to researchers**

A total of 1,522 FORS-produced datasets were distributed by FORS to researchers in 2018.
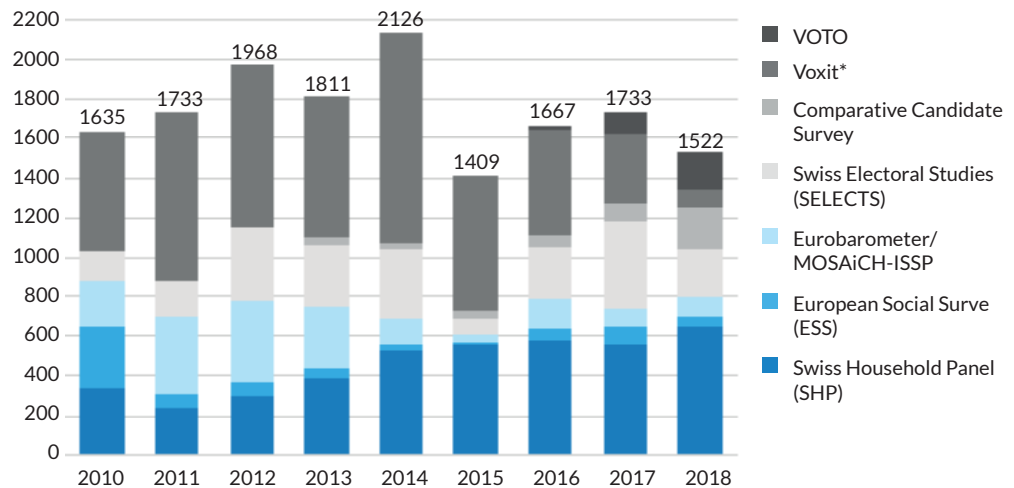
*The reason for the decline in downloads of the Voxit dataset is probably the better availability of the individual Vox datasets on FORSbase.

In addition to the distribution by FORS, the Swiss parts of the studies ESS and ISSP data can also be downloaded from the international websites of these projects. The data for the European Values Study (EVS) and the Survey of Health, Aging, and Retirement in Europe (SHARE), both conducted by FORS, are only available in this way.

Number of datasets from the FORS data service distributed to or downloaded by researchers
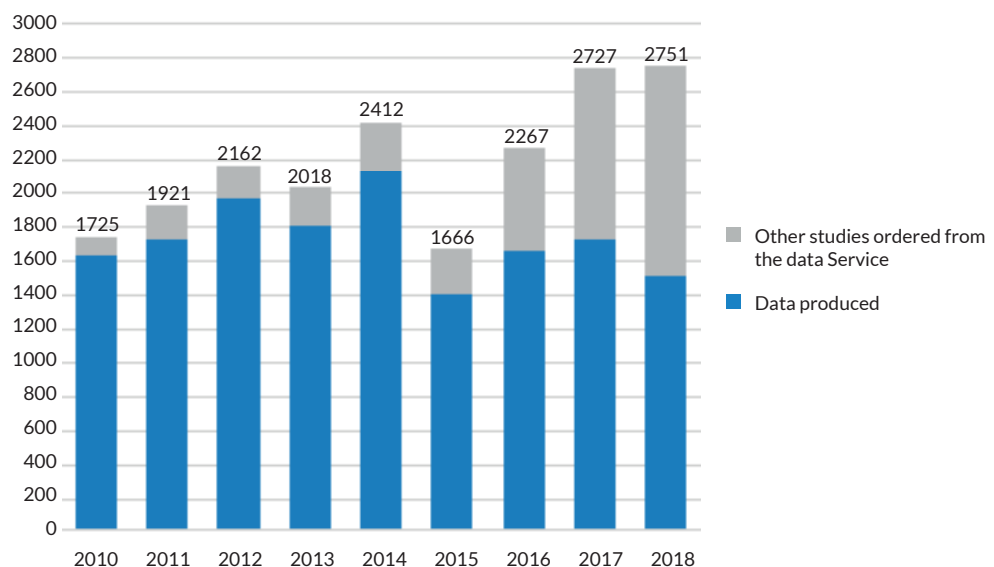
Number of new research project descriptions in the research inventory
During the annual survey 2017/18, 356 new project descriptions were added to the research inventory, compared to 406 during 2016/17. All in all, the research inventory currently comprised over 11,300 published project descriptions at the end of 2018..

Publications by FORS staff
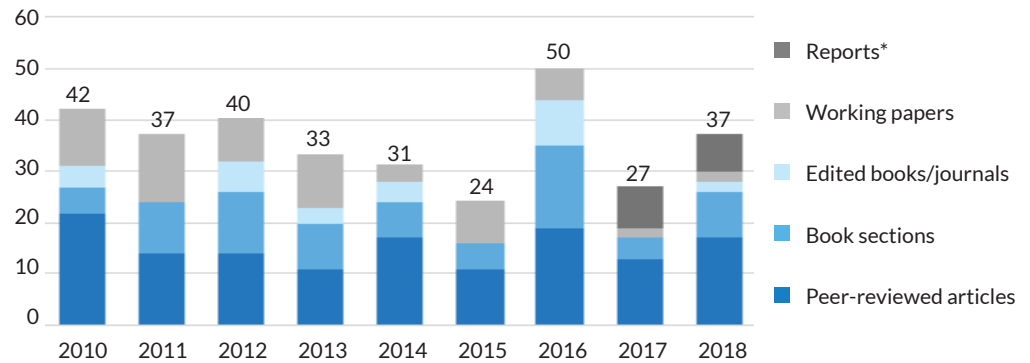
* until 2016, the reports were included in the category "Working papers".

Presentations by FORS staff at conferences and scholarly meetings
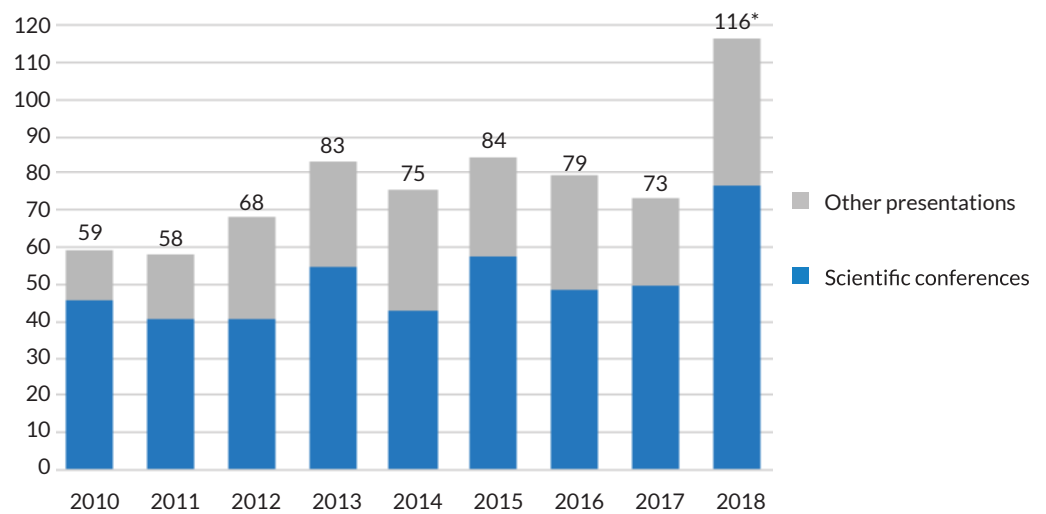
* in 2018 not only the collaborators, but also the associated researchers were asked to hand in their presentations. The associated researchers contributed with 16 presentations to the total of 116 presentations in 2018.

Also see the full list of 2018 FORS publications and presentations by FORS staff.

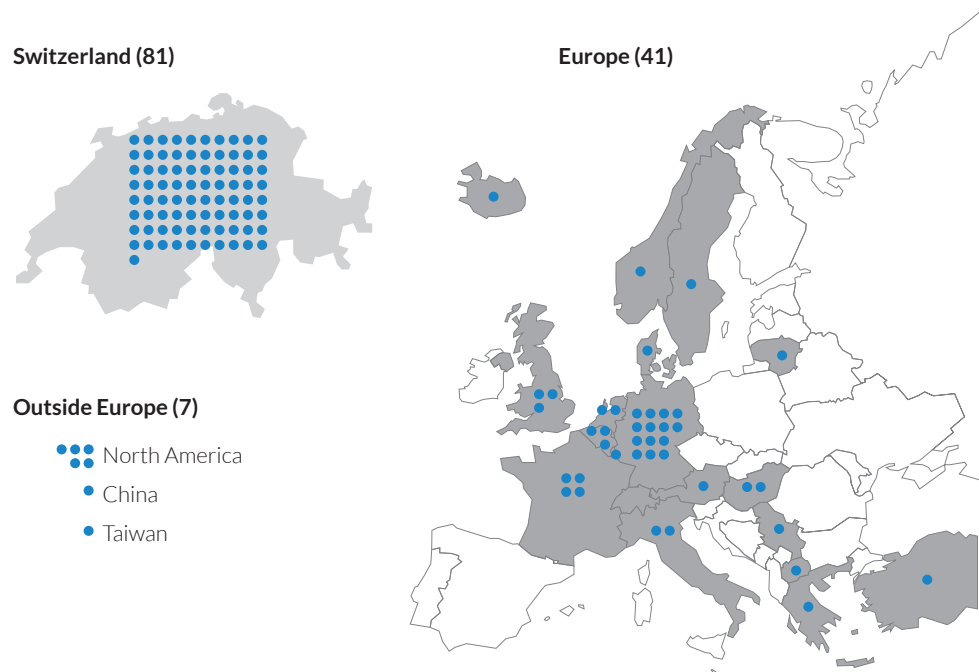**Number of national and international collaborative research projects**

Switzerland (81)

Europe (41)

Outside Europe (7)

North America

China

Taiwan

Only includes projects aiming for publications in peer-reviewed journals. Some projects involve several countries.

Number of collaborative research projects and scientific activities with outside organisations and individuals
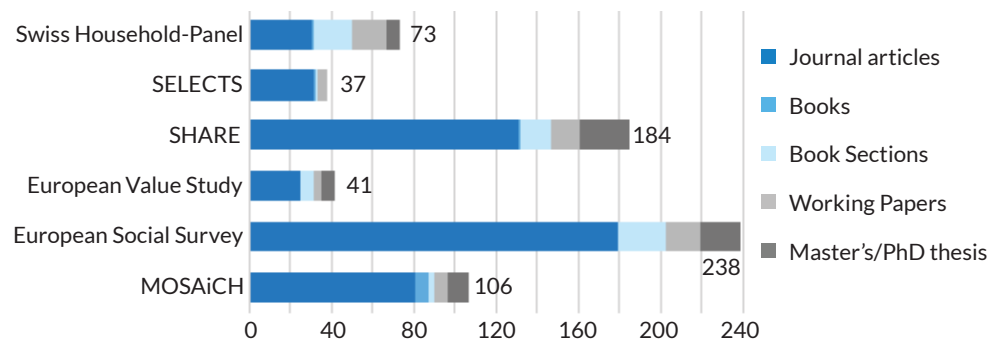
Developing and maintaining linkages and synergies between FORS staff and the outside research community is a key activity for FORS. This indicator addresses collaborative links with researchers in Switzerland and abroad.

In 2018, 23 FORS staff members were involved in 103 collaborative projects with outside organisations. Thus, around 70% of eligible FORS staff were involved in research activities. We can note a positive increase compared to last year (87 collaborative projects), notably due to the scientific network of our newly recruited staff.

About seven tenths (69%) of these collaborative projects were with individuals from the French-speaking part of Switzerland, 10% with colleagues from the German-speaking part of Switzerland and 36% with foreign institutions (some projects involved several institutions from different regions, thus total exceeds 100%).

This concentration in the French-speaking part of the country is due in particular to the close ties of some collaborators with other institutions in Lausanne and Geneva (in particular LINES/LIVES). Compared to the previous years, our international collaborations are also more diversified, including a broader range of foreign countries (21, compared to 13 for instance in 2015).

Number of publications based on FORS-produced data

Legend:
- Journal articles
- Books
- Book Sections
- Working Papers
- Master's/PhD thesis

Values shown: Swiss Household-Panel 73, SELECTS 37, SHARE 184, European Value Study 41, European Social Survey 238, MOSAiCH 106

Number of hours devoted to teaching by FORS staff

Sharing knowledge and shaping future researchers through teaching is an important task of FORS.

In total, 13 FORS staff members taught in 2018 (compared to 9 in 2017). They gave 341 teaching hours in 15 different courses at all academic levels (bachelor, master, and PhD), as well as in the context of continuing education (see list in Appendix). The topics covered concerned predominantly data analysis and data management, but also survey methodology. About three quarters (78%) of the teaching hours were provided in the French-speaking part of Switzerland, 10% in the German-speaking part, as well as at the Lugano Social science methods Swiss summer school (10%). Moreover, two short courses (2%) were given abroad, at the MOLS conference (Essex) and at Kaunas University of Technology (Lithuania), as part of a CESSDA collaboration.

Thus, about one third of eligible FORS staff were involved in teaching activities. FORS will continue to make a contribution to the training of young scientists according to its possibilities and resources.

Events

Data Management Plans (DMPs) workshops

As portrayed in chapter 3 (data promotion), the implementation of formal Data Management Plans (DMPs) by the SNSF led to two events around DMP. The first DMP event, "La gestion des données, entre plannification et mise en pratique" was organised in Lausanne (March) in collaboration with the University of Lausanne and the SNSF. This one-day event provided guidance on how to draft a DMP and recommendations for the implementation of data management practices in day-to-day research.

The second one was held in Basel and co-organised in collaboration with DaSCH in September and attracted a satisfying number of participants. In the

workshop "From DMP to Data-Sharing for Humanities and Social Sciences" participants got an introduction from the SNSF about their open research data policy, followed by an orientation about researchers' needs and tips. FORS and DaSCH pointed out their specific services for researchers.

Fifth SHP Methodological Workshop
This workshop took place on 11-14 June at the University of Lausanne. After an "Introduction to the SHP and data management using SPSS", the program contained three sessions on "Missing data and data imputation with the Swiss Household Panel". The workshop was attended by 13 participants.

The 22nd Swiss Summer School on Methods in the Social Sciences
The Summer School was held from 17-31 August 2018 at the Università della Svizzera Italiana in Lugano. The following workshops were offered (number of participants in parentheses, starred workshops were limited to 10-12 participants):

First week - 20-24 August:
- » Andrew Bell: Multilevel Analysis (14)*
- » Eugene Horber: Statistical Tools for Social Scientists (22)
- » Max Bergman: Qualitative Interviewing (15)
- » Mengis/Lobinger: Visual Data and Visual Methods for the Social Sciences (6)*
- » Sebastian Kernbach: Design Thinking and Visual Thinking for research (12)*

Second week - 27-31 August:
- » Caroline Roberts: Survey Methods (6)*
- » Lipps/Kuhn: Introduction to Panel Data Analysis (9)
- » Schmidt/Davidov: Structural Equation Modeling (16)
- » Véronique Mottier: Discourse Theory and Analysis (14)
- » Zachary Estes: Experimental Design and Analysis (6)*

The optional two-day workshop (E.Horber SPSS/Statistics Refresher) had 24 participants.

11% of the 109 participants attended two full-week courses. 61% of the participants were PhD Students.

The largest groups of this year's participants are working in the field of Education (28%), Sociology (18%), Business Studies (17%) and Psychology (11%), at Swiss universities (31%), universities of teacher education or applied sciences (31%), ETH/EPFL (10%); 16% at foreign universities or institutions: Austria(2), Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Croatia, Germany (2), Finland, India (2), Italy, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Croatia, Russia, Uganda.

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10th Anniversary symposium of FORS

On 12 September, FORS celebrated its 10th anniversary with a symposium entitled "The Future of Data Collection in the Social Sciences". The symposium discussed essential questions and issues regarding how the social sciences will produce knowledge and conduct empirical research in the future. The event took place at the theatre Grange on the campus of the University of Lausanne. Present were most of the employees, former colleagues and researchers, representatives of survey agencies and prominent persons who contributed to the existence of FORS.

The words of welcome were spoken by the rector of the University of Lausanne, Prof. Nouria Hernandez, FORS Director Prof. Georg Lutz and Prof. François Bussy, FORS president and Deputy Rector of the University of Lausanne. Retired FORS Director Prof. Peter Farago gave an impressive and complete overview on the "long and winding road that led to FORS". Keynote speaker Dr. Ineke Stoop from the Netherland Institute of Social Research talked about "the many flaws of surveys, possible alternatives and why we still need them". Keynote speaker Prof. Andreas Diekmann from ETH Zurich presented several new perspectives for survey research. For the roundtable, the following people were invited: Prof. Georges-Simon Ulrich, Director of the SFSO, Prof. Dominique Joye, from the SSP of the UNIL and Prof. Eszter Hargittai from Communication at the University of Zurich. The topic of the roundtable "stability and change in the collection of social science data in Switzerland" was then discussed from many sides and led to inspiring discussions.

GREC

The research group on Elections and Political Citizenship (GREC) founded three years ago is a research unit of the IEPHI of the University of Lausanne that meets 11 to 12 times a year for seminars and 4 to 5 presentations. The objectives of this research centre are multiple. First, GREC serves as a forum for intellectual exchange and discussion for researchers and doctoral candidates from the IEPHI and other institutions working in the fields of elections and referendums, social movements, activism and political citizenship. As such, it encourages contacts and collaborations, in particular by inviting speakers from other universities. Secondly, GREC intends to increase the visibility of research in the areas mentioned, both at the IEPHI and in partner institutions. Finally, GREC's mission is to encourage the surveys under the responsibility of FORS (in particular for SELECTS, VOTO and the Swiss Household Panel) and to strengthen collaboration between the IEPHI and FORS.

Symposium Ethical issues in social science research

As a follow-up to the 2017 Swiss Qualitative Methods Festival a three-day symposium entitled "Ethical issues in social science research" took place from 8-10 November. The symposium provided a space for reflection and debate by (re)placing ethical issues at the centre of research practice. It was organised by FORS and the Institute of Social Sciences of the University of Lausanne, in close collaboration with the Institute of Sociological Research of the University of Geneva and the Université Libre de Bruxelles and supported by the SNSF, the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences and the Science-Society Interface of the University of Lausanne. This event brought together about 60 participants who presented papers, provided keynote presentations, or participated in round tables. The event resulted in three publication projects (coordination of scientific papers and special issues).

Electoral Studies Meeting

SELECTS organised the 2018 edition of the traditional bi-annual "electoral studies meeting" (Wahlstudientreffen) with colleagues from the German Longitudinal Election Study (GLES) and the Austrian National Election Study (AUTNES) at the University of Lausanne. This two-day workshop was not only an opportunity to discuss new research findings, but also to exchange knowledge on new survey methods and questions for studying voting behaviour.

Methods and Research Meetings

The Methods and Research Meetings are a joint seminar series organised by FORS and the Faculty of social and political sciences (SSP). The meetings include presentations that cover substantive research raising interesting methodological questions (quantitative or qualitative), research focusing on methodological issues, or discussions on new methodological approaches. The full list of the speakers and presentations can be consulted on the FORS Methods and Research Meetings webpage.

FORS Lunch seminars

The monthly FORS lunch seminars were held to foster scholarly exchange between FORS researchers and to profit from their diverse scientific and cultural backgrounds. Occasionally, researchers from outside of FORS were invited to present their research findings. In 2018 the presented topics were varied. The list can be consulted on this website.

7. FORS Governance

Foundation Board

The Foundation Board is FORS' governing body. It is chaired by a representative of the host university, Prof. François Bussy, who serves as President to the Foundation. The Board consists of eight full members representing the key stakeholders (universities, the SFSO, and the Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences), and two observers from the most important funding bodies: the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI), and the SNSF.

In 2018 the Foundation Board met twice. In March, at a joint meeting with the FORS Scientific Board, the two boards discussed the future strategy of FORS which was then approved by the foundation board. During the March 2018 board meeting, the Board audited the accounts and the Annual Report 2017. In the November meeting the Foundation Board approved the FORS budget for 2019 and also the annual plan 2019 that was established for the first time within FORS. In addition, the Foundation Board discussed and approved the concept of a Swiss Research Data Linking Center that FORS plans to establish with different other Swiss partners.

The discussion on the future funding of FORS continued in 2018. Two meetings took place between the FORS management and the SNSF Directorate. In principle SERI considers moving all funding of FORS to the SNSF on a permanent and long-term basis. The SNSF agreed to fund FORS in principle. This means that not only the FORS surveys would be funded by the SNSF, but also the data archiving part of FORS. It was decided in 2018 to form a working group within the SNFS where FORS will participate to discuss the possible modalities for such a long term funding, since this requires adapted application, funding and evaluation instruments.

In 2018, Foundation and Scientific Board member Dominique Joye retired from the University of Lausanne and his functions as Foundation and Scientific Board member. During the 12 years during which Dominique Joye was first associate and then ordinary professor at the Institute of Social Sciences, he not only had a profound impact on the development of the social sciences at the University of Lausanne, and that of the Institute, but also on the development of FORS. His successor, Prof. Stephanie Steinmetz will take over his place in the FORS Foundation board as of January 2019 onwards.

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Scientific Board

The Scientific Board had a two-day meeting on 22-23 March chaired by Prof. Mick Couper. Five new members were welcomed to the board, Dr. Louise Corti, Prof. Eszter Hargittai, Prof. Ben Jann, Dr. Arja Kuula-Luumi, and Prof. Sonja Zmerli.

During the meeting the director gave an update on recent developments and presented the Annual Report 2017 for the preceding year, and the Scientific Board commented on the Annual Report. As mentioned, the future FORS strategy was a topic of a joint meeting with the foundation board.

A presentation was given on the experiment conducted in the framework of EVS. EVS moved from a long face-to-face survey to web(-paper), and was split following a matrix design, mainly to avoid having a very long online questionnaire. In addition, a parallel test with the whole questionnaire and two different types of announcement was conducted. It showed, that the long version of the questionnaire did not produce a lower response rate than the shorter versions of the questionnaire, which was unexpected.
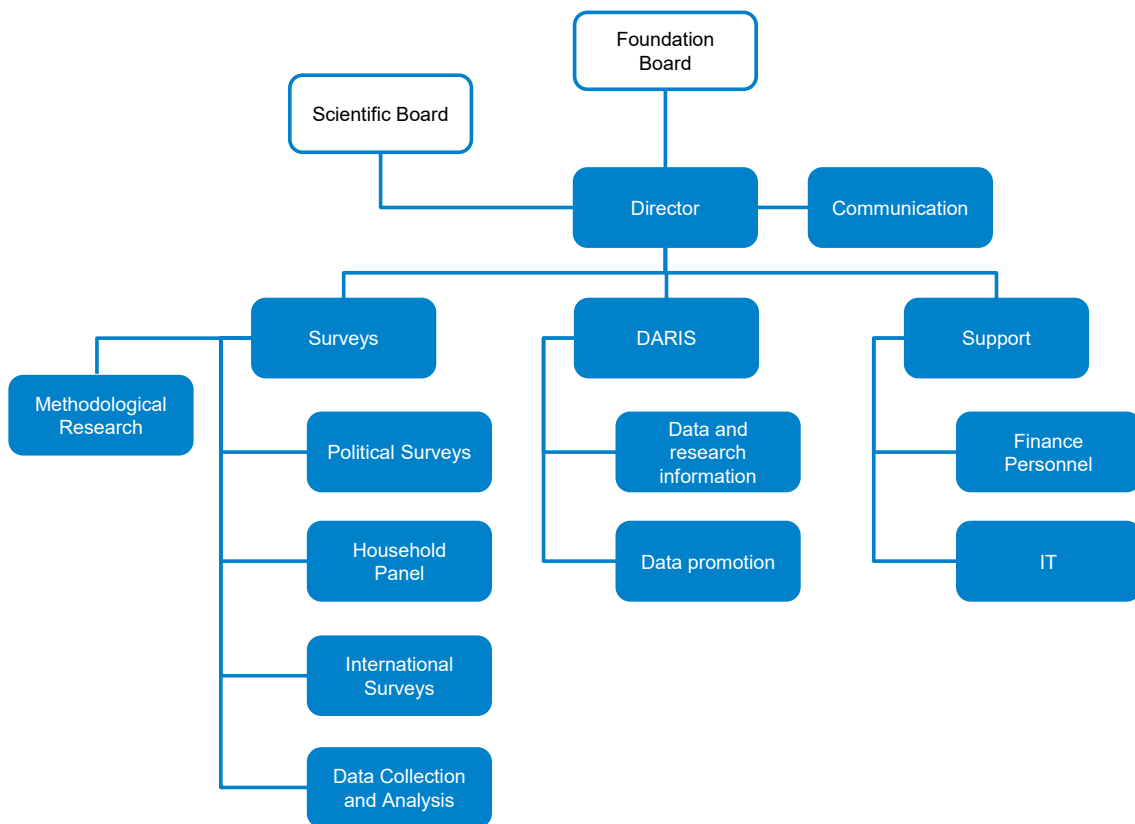
FORS then presented its methodological research program. FORS is involved in many different methodological research activities around its surveys. The change to conducting more and more surveys in-house will also provide even more opportunities to do methodological research in a flexible way in the future. A lot of different methodological research activities are taking place, however, the research depends on existing staff that is heavily involved in daily operations which then often slows down the publication output. And a lot of the staff is also involved in substantive research.

Executive Board

The FORS Executive Board is chaired by the Director and comprises the heads of the units Surveys, Data and Research Information Services, and Support. The Executive Board usually meets twice a month. Decisions are minuted and the minutes are sent to the President of the Foundation Board to keep him posted on current affairs.

The FORS executive board decided in the summer to create a new unit called "Data Collection and Analysis" and centralise all in-house data collection within this unit. As head of this new unit, FORS recruited a former team member of the SELECTS group with extensive technical, practical and methodological knowledge. FORS also hired three additional staff for this center, two were funded through saving from doing the surveys in-house, one staff member was funded with income from third-party projects.

In order to set clearer priorities and to bundle all activities, FORS introduced an annual planning process. All FORS groups and units were requested to define their priorities and objectives for the coming year. Based on these inputs the FORS executive board discussed and established an annual plan for 2019 that highlights all key projects for the coming year. This annual plan was then also discussed and approved by the FORS Foundation Board in November 2018.

Organisational Chart

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                              ┌──────────────┐
                              │  Foundation  │
                              │    Board     │
                              └──────┬───────┘
        ┌──────────────────┐         │
        │ Scientific Board │         │
        └────────┬─────────┘    ┌────┴─────┐   ┌───────────────┐
                 └──────────────┤ Director ├───┤ Communication │
                                └────┬─────┘   └───────────────┘
        ┌──────────┬───────────┐     │
   ┌────┴────┐  ┌──┴──────┐ ┌──┴──────┐  ┌──────────┐
   │ Surveys │  │  DARIS  │ │ Support │
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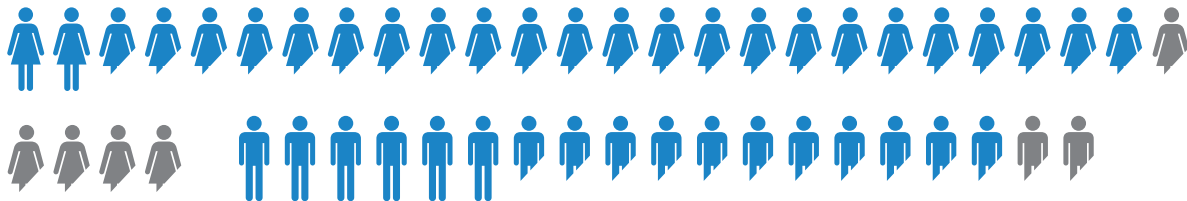| Surveys	DARIS	Support
Methodological Research	Data and research information	Finance Personnel
Political Surveys	Data promotion	IT
Household Panel		
International Surveys		
Data Collection and Analysis		

8. Staff statistics & finance

Staff

Status of employment

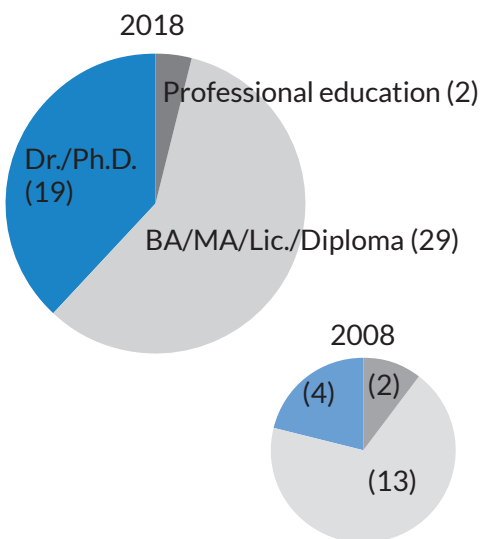2018 (50 employees, 41.1 full-time equivalents)
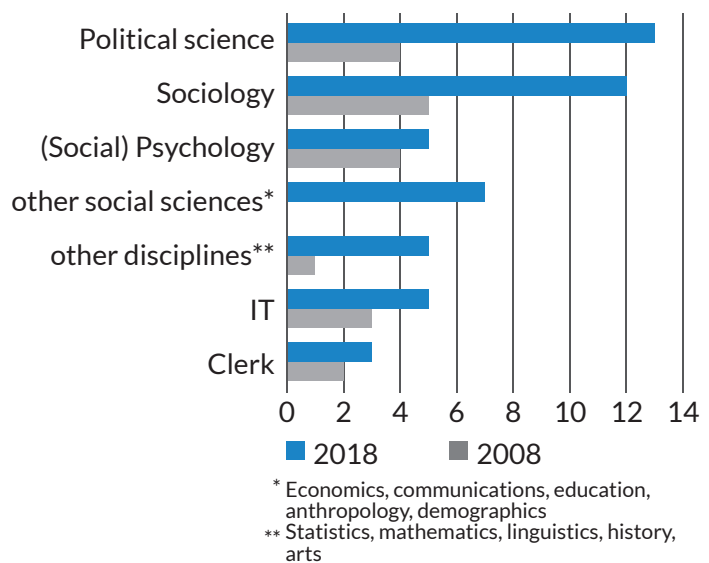
2008 (19 employees, 15.7 full-time equivalents)

- full time
- part time
- permanent (blue)
- not permanent (grey)

Degree of education

2018
- Professional education (2)
- Dr./Ph.D. (19)
- BA/MA/Lic./Diploma (29)

2008
- (4)
- (2)
- (13)

Disciplines

Discipline	2018	2008
Political science	13	4
Sociology	12	5
(Social) Psychology	5	4
other social sciences*	7	
other disciplines**	5	1
IT	5	3
Clerk	3	2

■ 2018   ■ 2008

* Economics, communications, education, anthropology, demographics
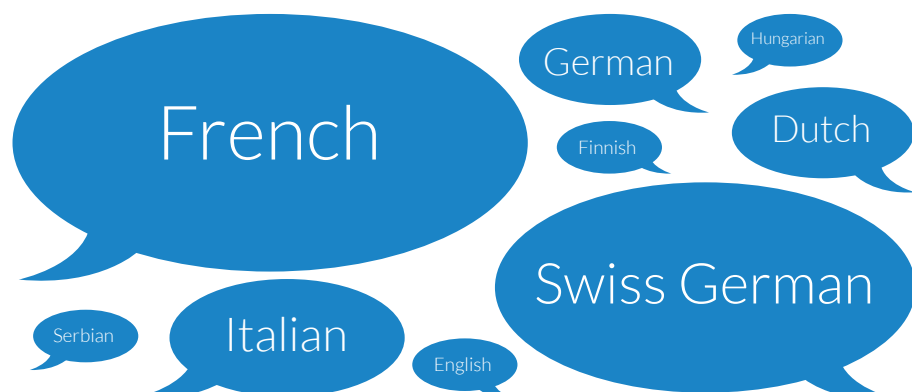** Statistics, mathematics, linguistics, history, arts
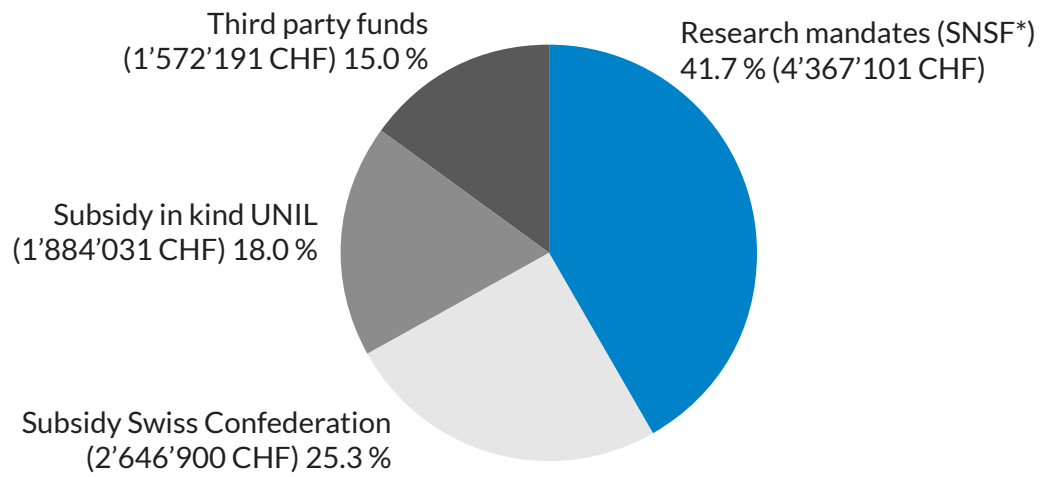
Nationalities and mother languages 2018

- 38 Swiss
- 3 Germans
- 3 Italians
- 2 Dutch
- 1 French
- 1 Hungarian
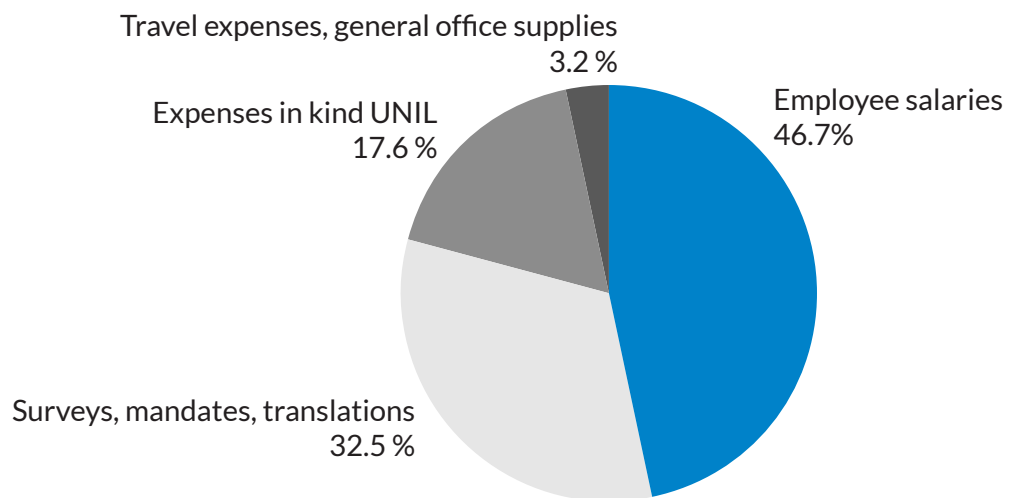- 1 Luxembourger
- 1 Serb
- 1 US citizen

French — German — Hungarian — Dutch — Finnish — Swiss German — Serbian — Italian — English

Finances

Income

Third party funds
(1'572'191 CHF) 15.0 %

Research mandates (SNSF*)
41.7 % (4'367'101 CHF)

Subsidy in kind UNIL
(1'884'031 CHF) 18.0 %

Subsidy Swiss Confederation
(2'646'900 CHF) 25.3 %

Expenses

Travel expenses, general office supplies
3.2 %

Expenses in kind UNIL
17.6 %

Employee salaries
46.7%

Surveys, mandates, translations
32.5 %

*Swiss National Science Foundation

9. List of Abbreviations

CAPI	Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing
CATI	Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing
CAWI	Computer-Aided Web Interview
CCS	Comparative Candidate Survey
CESSDA	Consortium of European Social Science Data Archives
ch-x	Swiss Federal Surveys of Adolescents
CNEF	Cross-National Equivalent File
CoCon	Swiss Survey on Children and Youth
COUPLES	Cohesion, and Conflict in Contemporary Couples
CSES	Study of Electoral Systems
DDI	Data Documentation Initiative
DMP	Data Management Plan
ERIC	European Research Infrastructure Consortium
ESFRI	European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures
ESS	European Social Survey
EVS	European Values Study
FOPH	Swiss Federal Office of Public Health
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
IEPHI	Institut d'études politiques, historiques et internationales (UNIL)
ISSP	International Social Survey Programme
LINES	Life Course and Inequality Research Centre (U Lausanne)
LIS	Cross-national Data Center in Luxembourg
LIVES	Overcoming Vulnerability – Life Course Perspectives
MEA	The Munich Center for the Economics of Aging
MEOP	Public Opinion and Survey Methodology
MOSAiCH	Measurement and Observation of Social Attitudes in Switzerland
MTMM	Multitrait - Multimethod design
NCCR	National Centre of Competence in Research
PAWCER	Public Attitudes to Welfare, Climate Change and Energy in the EU and Russia
ProPaS	Professional Paths Survey
PUMA	Plattform für Umfragen, Methoden und empirische Analysen
r4d programme	The Swiss Programme for Research on Global Issues for Development
SAGW	Swiss Academy of Humanities and Social Sciences
SEEDS	South-Eastern European Data Services
SELECTS	Swiss Electoral Studies
SERI	State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation
SERISS	Synergies for European Research Infrastructures in the Social Sciences
SFSO	Swiss Federal Statistical Office
SHARE	Survey on Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe

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SHP	Swiss Household Panel
SIDOS	Swiss Data Archive
SMIF	Survey Methods: Insights from the Field
SNSF	Swiss National Science Foundation
ÜGK	UGK Überprüfung des Erreichens der Grundkompetenzen
vsms-asms	Association of Swiss Social and Market Research
ZDA	Zentrum für Demokratie Aarau

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