

FORS 

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Annual Report 2019

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1. Editorial from the FORS Director

The Swiss research data infrastructure

Open data, data infrastructure, big data, research data management. These key words are used in many strategy documents of higher education institutions and by higher education policy makers. What data is produced and used for research? How is data stored and how can it be accessed? These aspects are not only driving research but also research policy in a dynamic and constantly changing environment.

The growing importance of data infrastructures for research has consequences on the future funding of FORS. As from 2021 onwards, the SNSF will fund all FORS data services. This means that the funding for the data repository, currently funded by the SERI directly, will also move to the SNSF. FORS welcomes these developments and the willingness of the SNSF to play a major role not just in funding research but also in funding research infrastructures.

Developments around digitalisation require that FORS needs to reflect constantly on the services it provides. In 2019 different projects moved forward to serve the Swiss research community in new ways. The FORS Data Collection and Analysis team (DCA), created in 2018 to conduct online surveys or online/paper surveys in-house, had its first full year of operation. To collect data in-house is interesting for FORS because it allows for control of the entire data collection process and, as a consequence, FORS can control the quality of the fieldwork directly in all phases of a survey. In 2019, the new team conducted the fieldwork of two large FORS scientific surveys, notably MOSAiCH and Selects in-house. In addition, the team took also responsibility for various smaller surveys mandated by academic institutions.

The work on SWISSUbase started in 2019. By extending and scaling up the established domain-specific social science research data service FORSbase, SWISSUbase will offer a national, cross-disciplinary research data service. SWISSUbase provides a technical solution and services for the management of research projects and the archiving, dissemination, and promotion of research data and metadata. SWISSUbase is one of the biggest developments FORS has undertaken since its establishment more than 10 years ago, and it changes the scope of FORS significantly. Instead of focusing on social science for its services only, FORS will be able to provide a tool for researchers from other disciplines and can therefore serve as an institutional repository for Swiss universities. SWISSUbase is a joint project by FORS and the Universities of Lausanne and Zurich in collaboration with SWITCH. FORS invests substantial resources into the development of SWISSUbase.

FORS also invested in linkhub.ch. It is a fact that data used in research are increasingly collected by the administration or by private companies. However, access to such data is not easy and raises important questions about data protection and security and privacy rights. Linkhub.ch aims to facilitate access and the ability to link such data for research purposes. This requires, first of all, a dialogue with different stakeholders, since data access depends on the willingness of the administration or private companies to make their data available. FORS and its partners organised a workshop in 2019 with many stakeholders from government agencies, research organisations and researchers to reflect on the key issues and possible solutions to facilitate access to such data.

In the future it will be important that data infrastructures and services are well connected. Having many and disconnected services and technical solutions in a small country like Switzerland is costly and inefficient. This is especially the case for data repositories: not just data in each single repository should be FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable) - the entire system of data service providers needs to be FAIR. FORS collaborates closely with other service providers in Switzerland to progress on this level. This particularly involves a close collaboration with the Data and Service Center for the Humanities DaSCH, also funded through the SNSF from 2021 onwards.

Despite all these developments, FORS will nevertheless keep the main focus on its core mission: to collect high quality data for long-term and comparative survey projects in the social sciences, to store data, to make data available and to assist researchers in social sciences. The perfect example of how a stable research institution can create value is the Swiss Household Panel (SHP). The 20th wave of this remarkable, long-term panel study was conducted in 2019 and a special scientific conference was dedicated to the 20th anniversary of the SHP. Congratulations!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Georg Lutz', written in a cursive style.

Prof. Dr. Georg Lutz, Director

2. Surveys

FORS is responsible for a number of national and international surveys, mostly funded by the SNSF. The surveys described below took place during the current funding period 2017-2020. FORS academic surveys can also use the sample frame “Stichprobenrahmen für Haushalts- und Personenbefragungen SRPH” of the SFSO. This sample frame is based on official registers and allows high-precision sampling of individuals resident within Switzerland. 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

1. The fieldwork for waves 20 (SHP_I: number of households interviewed = 2,649, number of individuals interviewed = 4,235), 15 (SHP_II: number of households interviewed = 1,248, number of individuals interviewed = 1,886), and 6 (SHP_III: number of households interviewed = 2,058, number of individuals interviewed = 3,256) was completed in early March (total number of households interviewed = 5,955, total number of individuals interviewed = 9,377). For full participation information you can [consult this page](#). 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](#), scheduled for the beginning of 2020.
2. The fieldwork for waves 21 (SHP_I), 16 (SHP_II) and 7 (SHP_III and LIVES-FORS Cohort) was prepared between February and October, with a special focus on questionnaires including new questions on childcare and “lay explanations for poverty”, qualitative and quantitative pre-tests, communication to participating households, training of interviewers, implementation of incentives. The fieldwork started in early September for the SHP and in October for the LIVES-FORS Cohort.
3. A revised and harmonised version of the SHP data waves 1 to 20 (1999 to 2018), with a codebook, was prepared and will also be provided to the Cross-National Equivalent File (CNEF) at the beginning of 2020 (see [this page](#)).
4. Waves 6 of the SHP LIVES-Vaud (see on [FORSbase](#)) and the LIVES-FORS Cohort (see on [FORSbase](#)) were prepared for distribution via FORSbase.

5. The second wave of the SHP_IV pilot study was realised and analysed during the year. In sum, the SHP pilot compares two alternative designs to the current design, which predominantly uses CATI (see section on methodological research). Based on the results of the pilot study, the design of the future SHP_IV has been defined as a mix of CATI-CAWI. In order to launch the SHP_IV in 2020, a call for tenders was organised and the choice of the research institute was made by the end of the year.

2.2 International Surveys

2019 was marked by MOSAiCH 2019, the preparation of the next edition and archiving of the previous one, the field end and data preparation of ESS 2018, the data analysis of EVS 2017, and finally for SHARE, the preparation and start of field Wave 8, the finalisation of a report for the Federal Office of Public Health and the development of the questionnaire for the project funded by the Leenaards Foundation. The International Survey projects are funded through the SNSF Infrastructure project Nr. 170373 (grant period 2017-2020) except for SHARE (SNFS project grant).

Synergies and collaborations between these international surveys are common: 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 until the end of 2019 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.

In the framework of SERISS, FORS organised on May 21 its very first webinar in cooperation with GESIS on archiving and data sharing. This free introductory webinar is hosted by CESSDA and is intended for anyone who is involved in the collection of data and is considering making (some of) their data available in accordance with funders' requirements.

ESS

The European Social Survey (ESS) is an academically driven cross-national survey that has been conducted every two years across Europe since 2002, with very high-quality standards. 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: The fieldwork of the ESS 2018 (Round 9, with rotating parts on the topics “Timing of life” and “Justice and Fairness”) started on 1 September 2018, and ended on 11 February 2019 with 1,542 valid interviews. The final response rate of 51.8% is very slightly lower than the rate of the previous edition. However, since 2010, when the new sampling frame SRPH was introduced, the response rates stay quite stable (between 51% and 53%). Previous improvements, such as the incentivisation of respondents (unconditional 10 CHF cash and a small gift given after the interview) and deep and careful interviewer training, help in maintaining such results whereas other surveys and countries struggle with dropping response rates. The extensive information about respondent’s rights related to the GDPR did not seem to significantly harm the willingness to participate. Working with the same survey agency might also contribute to the stable results. During 2019, after the end of the field stage, the ESS 2018 data preparation took place and the documentation for publication was ready in October.

For this ESS edition, we used for the first time the FMMS (Field Management and Monitoring System), developed in the frame of the SERISS project. This tool asks each country to upload the raw contact data every week, or to use the centralised mobile app to collect the contact data, so that the ESS Central Scientific Team has a standardised overview on what happens in the field of each participating country. This gives us an additional and modern way to control the field.

For the translation of the Round 9 questionnaire, a pilot version of the TMT tool (developed through the SERISS project) was tested, evaluated and improved with our contributions during 2019. Still in a pilot phase, it will be offered for Round 10 only in combination with the whole tool suite, including central programming of the survey itself by Centerdata NL. Switzerland will not use this integrated tool in 2020, mainly for timing reasons.

After a thorough revision in 2013, the team further revised the interviewer questionnaire to investigate the recruiting and interviewing strategies. In February the questionnaire was sent to all ESS 2018 interviewers. The questionnaire was designed for the first time on Qualtrics as a pure web survey. We received 50 answers out of 55 invited interviewers. A team member presented a paper on *Interviewers’ Strategies in Face-to-Face Surveys* at the ESRA Conference in 2019.

The team leader participated in the SERISS survey coding workshop in Venice in February, where comparative ways of occupation and education coding were discussed and tools presented.

Another team member co-organised a special session and presented several papers at the 4th International ESS conference on the topics of the PAWCER project, funded by ERA.net / RUS Plus. The project aims to conduct comparative research on public attitudes to welfare, climate change and energy, based on ESS.

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 survey agency delivered the raw interview data on 25 February and the contact data on 18 April. The cleaning and coding of the survey and contact data and the preparation of the documentation was achieved in early May and was timely delivered to the ESS data archive at NSD in Bergen, Norway for final proceeding. Following the introduction of the GDPR, the ESS archive established a comprehensive anonymisation and common practice guide for all countries. Some minor elements had to be improved in Switzerland, such as the limitation of the oldest ages (respondents being 90 years old and older are coded as 90+).

However, the anonymisation practice previously in place in our team was already in line with the new rules. The first edition of international data and documentation for ESS round 9 was released on October 31 and included 19 countries. The release also included data from the Interviewer's questionnaire and test data (MTMM). The contact data were released on 2 December, always including Switzerland. The complete Swiss ESS 2018 data with some additional information compared to the international dataset will be published in FORSbase in early 2020.

In addition to the mentioned first release of the ESS 9 survey and contact data, the ESS data archive published two corrections of previously released data (the ESS 8 integrated sample design data file (1.1) and a new edition (1.1) of data for ESS round 9), all containing Swiss data.

The ESS has over 150,000 registered users (4,700 from Switzerland), and in 2019 there were more than 35,000 downloads including Swiss data.

International: In April and November the biannual ERIC NC Forum Meetings took place in Mannheim and Belgrade. The main topics of these meetings were: the rotating modules for 2020 "Digital Social Contacts in Work and Family Life" and "Europeans' understandings and evaluations of democracy", the review of core items, the development of the FMMS, the changes in specifications for Round 10, the preparation of R 10 field, the set-up of the ESS internal strategic review, feedbacks from the SERISS project and a presentation of the SUSTAIN-2 project for R 10.

The ESS ERIC General Assembly met twice in 2019, at the 14th GA Meeting in London in February and at the 15th GA Meeting in Rome in October. Switzerland is also present in the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) as well as in the Methods Advisory Board (MAB) through two researchers from the UNIL. Also, Caroline Roberts (FORS and University of Lausanne) was recently elected in the Methods Advisory Board (MAB).

As of June 2019, the ESS ERIC counts 24 member countries, one observer country (Switzerland) and five confirmed guest countries, reaching 30 participating countries in R 9, and thus being the Research Infrastructure Consortium with most members.

The two teams developing the modules and defining 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”. The second is a new module on “Digital Social Contacts in Work and Family Life”, led by researchers from the Universities of Zurich and Bielefeld as well as partners from Italy, USA and the Netherlands.

MOSAiCH / ISSP During 2019 the second edition of the fully redesigned MOSAiCH survey took place. This annual self-completion survey (web-paper, push-to-web design) with several waves is realised internally. The content is defined by the ISSP and a public call for contribution addressing the Swiss research community. In 2019, MOSAiCH has been fielded for the first time in three waves.

During 2019, the team finished the data preparation and archiving of the MOSAiCH 2018 data and started preparations for the 2020 edition.

Field and research: MOSAiCH 2019 consists of the ISSP 2019 module on Social Inequality (a module repeated for the fifth time) and questions from 6 different proposals, involving 15 researchers from Switzerland and abroad. The topics of the chosen proposals are: The political dimension of social inequality, Inequalities in spatial mobility, Social Generativity, Occupational Prestige, a Modified choice experiment on the fairness of a particular distribution and a Factorial survey on income justice. Whilst the preparation of the MOSAiCH 2019 questionnaire was done during 2018 (call, evaluation of the proposals, development of the new questions, and translations of the ISSP and call questions), the survey was set up in early 2019. The MOSAiCH Commission decided to run the 2019 edition in three waves, all respondents of the first wave being invited to the second wave in the mode of their first response. The third wave was fielded on web only because of complex experimental programming, and all web participants of the first wave were invited to participate, in order to minimise attrition.

The fieldwork of MOSAiCH 2019 started in February (when the first invitation letter was sent) and ended in July (the last response was taken into account on August 1). The second wave started mid-April, and the third wave mid-May. At this stage, the data cleaning is not yet finished, so the final AAPOR response cannot be stated. Roughly 40% of the invited people answered wave 1, 25% answered wave 2 (two thirds of wave 1 respondents) and 21% answered wave 3 (two thirds of wave 1 web respondents). A little less than a fifth of the answers were given on paper. These figures are similar to those achieved in the 2018 edition.

In MOSAiCH 2019, the contact procedure was optimised based on the results of the 2018 experiment. The adopted procedure was: prenotification – invitation – first reminder – second reminder with paper questionnaire – last reminder; invitation wave 2 on one single date, invitation per e-mail, where possible, and two reminders; invitation wave 3 on one single date, per e-mail where possible and two reminders. All mailings of the same type were grouped at the same date. The stable outcomes compared to the previous edition support the choice of this lean and more cost-effective design, as opposed to more personalised timing.

2020 preparations: The public call for question contributions to the MOSAiCH 2020 edition, including the ISSP ‘Environment’ module, has been published mid-February. In March, the FORS Foundation Board elected two new MOSAiCH Commission members to replace the former members. The Scientific Commission received and evaluated six proposals. During the evaluation meeting in June it was decided to retain five of them, involving 14 researchers from Switzerland and abroad. Two proposals have an experimental design. The questions will be administered in a single follow-up wave to the ISSP questionnaire, and one proposal will be fielded on web only because of its complex experimental setup. The accepted questions have been elaborated by the International Surveys team, in collaboration with the proposing authors. 18 questions have been tested in several variants through cognitive tests in French and German by our team, and 20 questions have been pretested in French with 500 respondents of a commercial web-panel. The questionnaire also included two qualitative probes, and was evaluated very positively by the participants. All the questions have been translated into the national languages with the usual TRAPD procedure, like the ISSP questionnaire.

Data: The complete MOSAiCH 2018 dataset, including ISSP 2018 (Religion IV) and all data related to the Call, was meticulously documented and published in FORSbase in spring. The international ISSP-archive at GESIS published a partial version of the ISSP 2017 data in March and a full version

in August. GESIS also published a third release of the ISSP 2010 Environment III with four additional countries and a revised version of the cumulative file on Religion I-III (1991, 1998 and 2008) in preparation of the new data collected in 2018. All newly released datasets include Switzerland. The GESIS archive has over 50,000 registered users (over 1,000 from Switzerland) and distributed over 10,000 ISSP datasets including Swiss data. The Swiss archive distributed over 100 MOSAiCH and ISSP data files.

ISSP international: The annual ISSP General Assembly (GA) was held in Jaipur, India, in April/May. 31 of the 42 member countries attended this meeting. Three researchers from FORS and the UNIL represented Switzerland. The GA discussed and voted the items of the 2020 'Environment' module and the topics of the 2021 'Health and Health Care' module. The proposed and accepted topic for the 2022 module is 'Family and Changing Gender Roles', a module previously fielded in 2011. Some updates and revisions on the Working Principles were discussed and amended. The Methodology Committee (MC) proposed a consistent way of handling partial interviews across countries, based on AAPOR principles, and the requirement of a minimal design weight in case of household sampling, taking into account the number of eligible members. Both proposals were accepted. ISSP also introduced a switch to International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) 2011 coding for education, and the requirement to document in the technical report all changes of translation in repeated questions. Finally, seven methodological and substantial papers were presented during the research session.

The search for a successor of the secretariat from 2021 onwards was continued. The next venues of the General assembly meetings are Iceland in 2020 and Australia in 2021.

The convenors of the drafting group for the 2017 module published an extensive report on the questionnaire development and lessons learned from the pre-test versions, which represents a major contribution to the knowledge about survey instruments to measure networks in a comparative setting. A team member presented results of a study based on data from a former network study realised within MOSAiCH at the 4th European Conference on Social Networks.

EVS

EVS 2017 was fielded between September 2017 and February 2018, with a very innovative methodological design. The first data pre-release occurred at the end of 2018, using the traditional CAPI data only. During 2019, the team prepared the data for the second international pre-release and continued working on the research programme. The EVS organisation also inquired about possible scenarios for the future of this project.

Data: On 15 July the second pre-release of the data was published. In addition to the 16 countries and the CAPI data of the first pre-release, 14 countries were added, as well as the data from the new designs (web and matrix from six countries). This release also includes harmonised variables on education and occupation and first weight variables. The rationale and documentation of the weighting principle should still be improved and completed. In September GESIS published an erratum. The final release is planned for April 2020. A joint dataset EVS-WVS is also planned.

International: The annual General Assembly of the EVS took place in Ljubljana on 21-22 February and focused on data preparation for the second pre-release and learning lessons from the fieldworks, especially the new web and matrix designs. About 60 representatives from 26 countries also planned joint dissemination activities related to EVS 2017. Finally, feedback from the SERISS programme and cooperation with the WVS was given.

On 10-11 October GORBI (Georgian Opinion Research Business International) hosted the First International workshop of EVS 2017 in Tbilisi. Selected authors gave presentations discussing the potentials of EVS 2017 for substantive and methodological research making use of the pre-released data. A team member presented a paper on the “Social Responsibility of the State”. Most of the presentations were video recorded and made available on the EVS YouTube channel. Prior to the workshop, the Executive Committee and the EVS Members held meetings about dissemination and the future.

The SUSTAIN II project application has been successful and is expected to start in January 2020. This Horizon 2020 project is led by the ESS and includes a specific work package to explore whether EVS questions could be included in the ESS data collection.

The next General Assembly and the event for the final release will be held on 1 July and will be combined with the regional event in Sofia (2-5 July, 2020) organised by the Bulgarian team and involving about ten EVS partners of the region. Another event will be organised with the WVS in Lisbon the 25th of July 2020, as a pre-IPSA workshop.

Research: During 2019, the International survey team at FORS continued the work on the EVS methodological research programme, focusing on three topics:

1. Data quality when switching from face-to-face to web/paper interviewing
2. Matrix design and imputation
3. Order and context effects

The team co-organised two sessions on these topics at the ESRA in July in Zagreb and FORS researchers contributed five presentations (see also section on methodological research). Three papers are in preparation and at least one other in international cooperation.

The ESRA conference has been successful also for the EVS. Members of the EVS organised and chaired five sessions, the announcement of the second data pre-release gained a lot of interest and the cooperation interface myEVS was showcased at a SERISS event presenting the developed tools. Moreover, the EVS and WVS secretariats met to discuss future joint activities. GESIS and the WVS data archive in Madrid will work on the production of a merged data set. The release is planned for July 2020. It is expected that the new joint data set will include data for over 90 world countries. There will also be an EVS-WVS pre-IPSA workshop in July 2020 in Lisbon, Portugal.

SHARE

In 2019, SHARE activities were divided between the standard operational activities related to the preparation of wave 8, scientific activities using the SHARE data and operational activities related to the project funded by the Leenaards Foundation.

Regarding the standard operational tasks on SHARE, the preparation of wave 8 continued with a second pre-test study, the so-called field rehearsal in March. The survey agency LINK was responsible for the pre-test data collection of about 120 interviews. As a reminder, one of the major tasks of the pre-tests is to test new features of the coming data collection. For wave 8 new software was developed, new modules were added to the questionnaire whilst others were cut, and a new self-administered paper and pencil questionnaire was developed.

The main data collection started in October with five interviewer training sessions lasting two days each, which were organised by the survey agency LINK and the Swiss SHARE team. The interviewer training sessions took place in Zurich, Sursee, Fribourg, Lausanne and Lugano. Members of the Swiss SHARE team were present at each of these sessions to give their own input and to answer interviewers' questions. The main data collection started at the end of October and will last until June 2020. We aim to interview about 2,300 respondents from the longitudinal sample as well as 500 new respondents. By the end of 2019 1,301 interviews were already done (1,267 in the longitudinal sample and 34 in the refreshment sample).

The Swiss SHARE team attended three operational meetings in 2019 organised by the international coordination team, located at the Munich

Center for the Economics of Aging (MEA). The so-called Train-The-Trainers (TTT) of the field-rehearsal took place in Munich on 20-22 March. The post field-rehearsal meeting took place in Budapest on 20-21 September. The last meeting, notably the TTT for the main data collection took place in Frankfurt from 30 September to 2 October.

Concerning research using SHARE data, the Swiss SHARE team, in collaboration with the Winterthur Institute of Health Economics (WIG/ZHAW), finalised an extended report on the health of the elderly population in Switzerland commissioned by the Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH). The results were presented at a conference in Bern on 6 May, gathering stakeholders implicated in the *National Strategy for the Prevention of non-communicable Diseases* and stakeholders implicated in the *National Strategy on Addiction*. Furthermore, the Swiss SHARE team submitted three papers to peer-reviewed journals examining 1) the socio-demographic correlates of end-of-life preferences, 2) the association of trust in Swiss institutions and preferences for the end of life with attitudes and behaviour toward assisted suicide and 3) the socio-demographic correlates of attitudes and behaviour regarding assisted suicide. Finally, the SHARE team presented the results of association of end-of-life knowledge and attitudes toward death and dying with advance care planning at the *Third International Conference on End of Life Law, Ethics, Policy, and Practice*, which took place in Ghent (March 7-9).

SHARE data were also presented at the following workshop and conferences:

- » *The Swiss Longitudinal Data Fair*, Lausanne, 14.02.2019
- » Federal Office of Public Health, Berne, 13.09.2019
- » *LIVES IP3 Research Day*, Geneva, 03.10.2019

Finally, the Swiss SHARE team won a grant from the Leenaards foundation in 2018. The granted project aims to collect, among other things, information from SHARE respondents on time use and geographical and social environments between the SHARE waves 8 and 9. To this end, the Swiss SHARE team developed a paper-and-pencil questionnaire in 2019.

2.3 Political surveys

SELECTS

In the year of the Swiss federal elections, the team members of Selects were mainly occupied with the preparation and implementation of the Swiss Election Study 2019. During the first months of the year, substantial work was invested in the questionnaire development process. On the one hand, new survey questions, which were accepted by the Selects commission in autumn

2018 following an open call for modules, had to be translated. On the other hand, all core questionnaires from previous Selects surveys were thoroughly revised, translations harmonised and questions adapted for different survey modes.

Selects 2019 consisted of four components. First, an *online panel survey*, with a pre-campaign, a campaign and a post-election wave, was used to monitor short-term campaign dynamics. In May, the pre-campaign wave went into the field. Sample members were invited by postal letter and received a cheque of 10 CHF as incentive. About 8,100 Swiss citizens completed the questionnaire, which took 24 minutes on average.

The second wave started during the campaign in early September. Almost 5,900 respondents from the first wave also participated in the second survey, which lasted 13 minutes on average.

The third wave started the day after the national election in October. All participants from the first wave were invited to this post-election wave. The 5,400 interviews lasted about 16 minutes on average. It is planned to expand this three-wave short-term panel into a long-term panel with yearly waves until the next federal elections in 2023.

To be legally able to keep respondents' contact information, Selects had to ask for consent at the end of the third wave. Selects ran a randomised experiment to test three different consent forms: a neutral form with a yes/no question, as well as an opt-in and an opt-out version. Overall, about 3,400 respondents agreed to participate in the long-term component.

Second, Selects conducted a *post-election study*. The sample consisted on the one hand of a national representative sample, with a target number of at least 80 interviews in the small cantons, and on the other hand of an oversample for the cantons of Geneva, Ticino and Zurich, which was financed by these three cantons. For the first time, the post-election study was fielded as sequential mixed-mode online/paper survey, with a push to web design. Sample members were contacted by postal letter and received a check of 10 CHF as incentive. The paper questionnaire was sent with the second reminder letter. Overall, about 7,000 Swiss citizens participated in the survey, which lasted about 31 minutes on average.

Third, in collaboration with the scientific network Politools and the University of Berne, Selects conducted for the fourth time in a row an *online/paper candidate survey*, with a push to web design. All candidates for the National Council and the Council of States (N=4,734) were invited to the survey by postal letter and about 2,150 among them completed the survey.

Fourth, Selects mandated the Digital Democracy Lab of the University of Zurich to conduct a *media and social media study*. This study included an automated content analysis of more than 80 traditional news media (print and online). This large-scale analysis was possible thanks to the collaboration with the Swiss Media Database (SMD), which granted access to the data. Further, the candidates' campaign communication in the social media (Twitter and Facebook) was examined for the first time as part of Selects. All the data from Selects 2019 will be made available in 2020 on FORSbase.

In 2019, Selects participated in several international collaborative networks. The Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) develops questionnaire modules that become part of national election studies. As part of the post-election survey 2019, Selects implemented CSES Questionnaire Module IV, which examines citizens' attitudes towards political elites and out-groups.

Selects is also active in the *Comparative Candidate Survey (CCS)*. On the one hand, the new CCS Questionnaire Module III was implemented in the Selects 2019 candidate survey. On the other hand, the Selects team prepared and released a new version of the comparative CCS Module II dataset, which now comprises a total of 22 candidate surveys from 18 different countries and is a valuable source of information in the comparative study of political elites.

Additionally, the Selects project leader has served as Chair of the CCS Steering Committee since 2018. Finally, the team members of Selects also contributed to an application of FORS (in collaboration with UNIL and UNIGE) to become the host institution of the Center for Survey Data, in the framework of the planned European infrastructure project *Monitoring Electoral Democracies (MEDem)*.

VOTO

Since 1977, a survey is conducted after each direct-democratic federal vote to analyse the participation and vote decision of Swiss citizens. Since summer 2016, FORS, the Center for Democracy Studies Aarau (ZDA) and the survey institute LINK have been carrying out these analyses under the name *VOTO studies* on behalf of the Federal Chancellery.

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 team members of VOTO at FORS coordinate the mailing of invitation letters for sample members, organise the translation of the questionnaire as well as of the final report, and prepare the data for distribution on FORSbase. Since March 2018, the programming of the questionnaire is done in the Survey Management Tool (SMT) at FORS.

Due to the Swiss federal elections held in October, only two popular votes took place in 2019, one in February and one in May. Thus, two VOTO studies were published in 2019, covering three proposals submitted to voters: the popular initiative against “Urban sprawl”, the Federal Act on “Tax Reform and Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Funding” and the Federal Decree on the approval and implementation of the “amended EU Firearms Directive”. The latter two proposals were accepted by a majority of voters in May, whereas the popular initiative was rejected in February by a large majority of citizens and all cantons. The VOTO studies are published in three languages (German, French, Italian) and are freely accessible as barrier-free documents on the [VOTO website](#).

3. Data and research information services DARIS

Usage and workflow

There were 2,228 datasets downloaded or ordered from FORSbase in 2019 (see chapter 6 “Performance Indicators”). In addition, there were 80 new datasets deposited to the FORSbase platform.

The number of active users of FORSbase increased to 6,500, compared to about 3,300 in 2016 and 5,300 in 2018. During the annual survey 2019/20, 350 new project descriptions were added to the research inventory, compared to 356 during 2018/19. All in all, the research inventory comprised over 11,650 published project descriptions at the end of 2019.

Data Promotion

The data promotion group designed and developed a general PowerPoint presentation about FORS activities and services, which was presented in various academic institutions as part of the newly launched Mobile Helpdesk project. The Mobile Helpdesk included the organisation of information desks in the context of conferences or other relevant academic events. In total, the data promotion group gave 4 presentations and held 5 desks, covering the following institutions: ETH Zurich, University of Bern, University of Lausanne, University of Neuchâtel, University of Zurich, University of Luzern, and University of Geneva. The group also organised two national promotional events, which took place at the UNIL: the 2nd edition of the Swiss Longitudinal Data Fair (February) and the 7th edition of the Qualitative Methods Festival (September). Further information can be found in chapter 6.

The group also intensified its efforts to reach out to underrepresented disciplines within the data archive, in particular psychology. Specific needs with respect to replication and pre-registration were identified and integrated in our wider infrastructure development strategy. The group also developed, in collaboration with the communication group, a FORS promotion strategy to better coordinate efforts between the different units and to intensify promotion efforts in 2020. Last but not least, the group finalised and published a book on findings from the ch-x survey, officially launched in September with a press conference at the media centre in Bern. It was also active in the drafting of several scientific articles based on the ch-x data, in collaboration with partners at the UNIL.

Data management

The promotion group continued to reinforce its expertise in data management during 2019, with special focus on day-to-day data management, data management planning and ethical and legal issues. A FORS guide on data

management planning was published, providing practical recommendations on how to draft a DMP from the perspective of the social sciences, based on the SNSF template. Due to increasing demands for data management support, the group was active with providing a wide range of presentations and trainings.

Presentations were given on the topic of data management planning (HES-SO in March and in December) as well as on research ethics (LIVES, October). As for trainings, the team held three doctoral courses: a CUSO course for sociology students on ethics and data protection in collaboration with the UNIL (May), and two workshops for the graduate campus of the UNIL on ethics and data protection, as well as quantitative data anonymisation (both in October). They also participated in the doctoral school of the Faculty of sports of the UNIL with a presentation on research ethics (June) as well as in a workshop organised by the NCCR On the Move in Neuchâtel, with a course on data management practices. One staff member also participated in the research ethics training of the UNIL, with a module on ethics and data protection.

At the international level, the group gave a webinar as part of the SERISS project on the topic of archiving and data sharing and provided training on legal and ethical issues regarding data collection in Zagreb (July) in collaboration with the Norwegian Center for Research Data (NSD). They also gave two presentations in Zagreb in December as part of the CESSDA collaboration: one on data management and planning for open science, and one on ethical considerations around data sharing.

In terms of research, the group coordinated and submitted a special issue on data sharing, to be released in 2020 in the *Bulletin of Sociological Methodology*. A book, to be published in 2020, was also edited in collaboration with the UNIL and the University of Geneva (UNIGE), based on the contributions received during the ethical colloquium that took place in 2018. The group was also part of a reflection with researchers of UNIGE to create a general consent form in the form of a short animated video, to be used in the context of penitentiary medicine.

Other DARIS activities

In 2019 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 SERISS project. The SERISS project – *Synergies for European Research Infrastructures in the Social Sciences* – which aimed to improve methodologies and tools for large-scale cross-national surveys, ended in September. DARIS also participated in the CESSDA *Widening* project and the new H2020 project “SSHOC – *Social Science and Humanities Open Cloud*”.

4. Scientific collaborations

Host University The UNIL supports FORS based on a scientific and an administrative contractual agreement. As an in-kind contribution to FORS, the UNIL provides the FORS offices, various services in human resources and IT support. In addition, an agreement with the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences (SSP) of the UNIL regulates the scientific collaboration.

Formal meetings between the FORS Direction and the Dean's Office of the SSP Faculty take place regularly to discuss the collaboration. A joint research programme, financed by the UNIL, allows funding around twelve full-time equivalent positions. While the collaboration has been rather loose in the past years, the work on the re-establishment of a more focused joint research programme between FORS and the SSP Faculty continued in 2019. These efforts aim at developing clearer objectives and a stronger governance of the programme, better integration of the research activities within FORS and enhanced visibility. A new steering committee composed of members of FORS and the SSP Faculty has been put in place and started working in 2019. 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 UNIL exchange knowledge on methodological issues on a regular basis.

National commitments

In 2019 the work on the SWISSUbase project started. SWISSUbase is the new data service and archiving tool FORS develops in collaboration with the Universities of Lausanne and Zurich, co-funded by *swissuniversities* for the period 2019/2020. The three main partners, FORS and the two involved universities, control the project. The objective of the project is to provide a national, cross-disciplinary research data service by extending and scaling up the established domain-specific social science research data service FORSbase.

SWISSUbase is a research data service that provides a technical solution and services for the management of research projects and the archiving, dissemination, and promotion of research data and metadata across scientific disciplines. SWISSUbase will be available for use from January 2021 onwards.

SWISSUbase will provide:

- » a trusted and certified in-house solution to partner institutions for the archiving of research data for the long term;
- » a common workspace for research project teams to manage research data and metadata, synchronised with SWITCHdrive;
- » a FAIR, OAIS-compliant, and non-commercial data repository (requirement of the SNSF);
- » connectivity and interoperability on the European level (ERICs, EOSC, etc.) and the national level (SNSF P3);
- » control for data producers on the access to their data by defining the conditions of access to their data, ranging from open to highly restricted;
- » an online public catalogue with advanced search functionality for data and metadata discovery;
- » trust for data consumers that data, metadata, and documentation are quality-controlled;
- » availability of professional (human) services for discovery and access to data.

SWISSUbase will be the cornerstone for implementing FORS' strategic objective to contribute tools for the development of the Swiss research data infrastructure. For this project, FORS significantly increased the size of the IT team, as SWISSUbase is the key project of the FORS IT team in 2019 and 2020. In addition, DARIS dedicated significant resources to the SWISSUbase project for the conceptual work on this new archiving solution. Also, the FORS senior management is centrally involved in developing the strategic orientation of SWISSUbase and the business model.

Most of 2019 was used to work conceptually on the requirements of SWISSUbase as well as on starting to build the technical solution. In addition, work on the business model and on preparing the promotion of the tool began. The website swissubase.ch was established as well as a [brochure](#) with all the necessary information about the project. SWISSUbase will be used by DaSCH, located at the University of Basel, LiRI, (Linguistic Research Infrastructure) located at the University of Zurich and by the FORS data archiving team itself.

In 2019 the 7th cohort of students started the master programme Public Opinion and Survey Methodology (MEOP) of the Universities of Lausanne, Lucerne, and Neuchâtel in partnership with FORS, the SFSO and the

vsms-asms. This programme is important for FORS because it teaches key competences related to FORS activities, and FORS participates in the Scientific Council and is in charge of running the programme. Two senior members of the FORS staff teach in this programme. Moreover, FORS offered internship positions for master students in 2019. Unfortunately, the University of Neuchâtel decided to end the collaboration in this programme and the two remaining universities did not manage to agree on a new programme in 2019. This means that the 2019 cohort was the last cohort enrolled and the future of this master programme is, at this stage, uncertain.

FORS has been working on different mandates in 2019:

- » ch-x survey on youth mobility: FORS was in charge of the survey of the Swiss Federal Surveys of Adolescents ch-x and published its final report on mobility of youth in autumn 2019 with a press conference. For this study 40,000 young Swiss men and a sample of 2,000 young Swiss women were interviewed. The report showed, that young adults today experience various forms of temporary mobility outside the home, such as exchanges as part of training, language stays, backpacking, experiences based on work placements or voluntary work. While the ch-x part is officially completed with the release of this study, the collaboration with the Faculty of geography of the UNIL continued in a joint SNSF project, based on the ch-x data.
- » Mobility Survey – University of Lausanne: FORS conducted the annual survey on mobility among the students and staff of the UNIL. The survey analyses commuting habits and their evolution across time. A particular focus in 2019 was given on biking: what are the factors that stop people from commuting by bike and how is it perceived?
- » Mobility Survey – EPFL: FORS now also conducts the mobility survey for the EPFL, which was redesigned in collaboration with the client and stakeholders. In addition, FORS created a harmonised cumulative data file, which tracks mobility behaviour since 2003.
- » Satisfaction survey – University of Lausanne / CHUV Joint technology transfer office (PACTT): FORS conducted a survey among all researchers of the UNIL and the CHUV to measure the awareness and satisfaction regarding the services provided by the PACTT. The survey focused on the experience of users with the various services, as well as their perceived importance among respondents.
- » Satisfaction survey – UNICOM, University of Lausanne: FORS repeated the survey first realised in 2012 to find out how the teaching personnel at the UNIL perceive the services provided by the

Communication and Audiovisual Service (UNICOM) of the UNIL and how this perception has evolved over time.

- » Evaluation of STOPGETHER programme – Tobacco Control Fund. FORS collaborated with the University of Geneva on the evaluation of the STOPGETHER programme, which aims to help people quit smoking. FORS was mainly responsible for a survey among users to find out its impact and predictors of success.
- » Survey on school harassment and survey on protection of built heritage – “Cour des comptes”, Geneva. FORS collaborated on two surveys for the Cour des comptes of the Canton of Geneva, providing support especially in the design of the questionnaire, but also on usage and implementation of Limesurvey in-house.

FORS is member of the Swiss association of market and social research (vsms/asms), representing the client side in the Managing Board and is responsible for the domain ‘Methods’. With the agreement of its General Assembly, during 2019, the association worked on its opening to players in the domain of Data Science. We developed a label and rules for ‘Data Fairness’, committing members of the new sector to a transparent and responsible handling and analysis of big data. The revision of the data protection law was a less salient topic in 2019, as the new rules seem to be already well integrated.

FORS was strongly involved in building linkhub.ch, which is a collaboration of several research institutions that focus on data linking. FORS initiated the project and leads it. Partners are the NCCR Federalism, NCCR LIVES, NCCR on the move, the Swiss National Cohort and TREE.

linkhub.ch supports data linkage in the fields of social sciences and medicine to deliver relevant knowledge for society. It aims to provide an environment that allows a better use of the potential of existing data, mainly from public sources while respecting the regulations on the protection of personal data and in accordance with scientific principles. linkhub.ch plans to offer a metadata service with information on data sets and how they could be accessed and linked, a data linking service that support combining information from different data sources, a storage service with information and access to linked data in a secure environment.

A large stakeholder workshop with partners from research organisation like the SNSF, swissuniversities and several academies, representatives from different units of the federal administration and from research projects took place in 2019, where a joint strategy and a possible model for linking services were discussed. The discussions around linkhub.ch will go on in 2020, mainly

around how access to and linking of administrative data could be improved. This requires a strong commitment from the federal administration to make public data available for research.

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 Consortia (ERIC) to FORS some years ago. 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 2019. The head of the Survey unit represents Switzerland in the General Assembly of SHARE. SHARE had two meetings of the General Assembly in 2019. FORS staff members actively take part in the coordinating bodies of all the three organisations.

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 Systems* (CSES) and the *Comparative Candidate Survey* (CCS). A member of the FORS staff also chairs the steering committee of CCS, and FORS is responsible for integrating CCS data. In addition, FORS is involved in the creation of the *Monitoring Electoral Democracies* (MEDem) project. MEDem aims to connect various comparative political science projects (including CSES and CCS) and national election studies in a formal way and aims to receive an 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 will be responsible for drafting the ESFRI Landscape analysis and to evaluate existing and new projects to get on the ESFRI roadmap in 2021.

FORS 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.

The head of the IT group was actively involved in the CESSDA Technical Working Group and the CESSDA Product and Service catalogue.

5. Methodological Research

Switching complex surveys to the web

While still finalising data cleaning and analysis, staff members of FORS presented first results of experimental data concerning testing the switch of the FORS surveys (SHP IV refreshment sample, EVS 2017, MOSAiCH 2018, Selects 2019) to the web mode at major conferences.

- » The SHP team finished data collection and cleaning for wave 2 of the two-wave SHP IV mixed mode pilot survey (the fieldwork for wave 2 ended in March 2019). The main aim of the SHP IV mixed mode pilot is to analyse if a complex household panel survey can be switched from (mainly) the telephone to (mainly) the web mode without risking too high attrition and too strong biases from nonresponse and attrition and measurement issues.

Using a randomised experimental design, the SHP IV pilot compared two alternatives to the current design, which predominantly uses CATI. Sample members of the first alternative completed all questionnaires online, sample members of the second alternative were approached by an interviewer (CATI) for the grid and household questionnaire, but completed the individual questionnaires online. Based on the findings regarding response rates, representativeness and sample composition, measurement differences and data quality, it was decided that the refreshment sample SHP_IV would conduct CATI interviews when a telephone number is available and offer web questionnaires to households without a known landline number.

Results of the pilot were presented at a plenary session of the SHP Conference, at the ESRA, and, internally, at a FORS Lunch Seminar. A number of presentations and publications based on the pilot data are forthcoming or in preparation, as well as a master thesis on the pilot data completed by a student from the Master in Public Opinion and Survey Methodology during an internship with the SHP.

- » Results from comparing non-probability samples with probability-based online panels in the Selects 2015 surveys, as part of a PhD thesis, were not pursued in 2019 due to the heavy workload related to external mandates.

Similar to before, the Selects team ran a short-term web panel survey in addition to the main post-election survey in 2019, which included a pre-campaign, a campaign and a post-election wave. Although such a three-wave panel survey was already part of Selects 2015 it will, for the first time, be converted into a long-term web panel with yearly waves until the next national elections in 2023. To be able to do so Selects had to obtain consent from respondents at the end of wave 3 to be legally able to keep the contact information.

Given that the literature is inconclusive regarding the best way to ask for consent, Selects ran a randomised experiment to test three different consent forms: a “neutral” procedure with a yes/no question asking whether respondents were willing or not to participate in further surveys, an opt-in design requiring active consent to stay in the panel, and an opt-out design with passive consent, requiring respondents to explicitly state that they do not want to be contacted in the future.

A first results paper with characteristics of people accepting (or declining) the different consents will be presented at the 14th Workshops of the German-language panel surveys in February 2020 in Mannheim. Additionally, Selects plans to run further experiments to better understand how to best incentivize respondents in the long-term component.

- » Due to the increasing use of smartphones in the Swiss population and a general decline in survey participation, Selects incorporated a methodological experiment addressing innovative new research questions relating to mobile web and app-based data collection (conducted via the Civique.org data collection platform) alongside its main 2019 survey. This research was made possible as a result of a grant obtained from the EPFL-UNIL CROSS programme and was co-financed by FORS and the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences at the UNIL.

The project investigated how smartphones can be used in survey research both as a replacement and supplement to conventional online surveys completed on PCs, to make it easier and more fun for people to take part in scientific research. First results were presented at ESRA and the closing meeting of the CROSS 2019 programme, and further presentations will be given in 2020 at GOR, AAPOR, the MASS Workshop, Wahlforschungstreffen, Panel Users Conference, and the BigSurv20.

- » In 2019, the International Surveys team mainly focused its methodological research on finalising the Swiss EVS 2017 data and conducting first analyses. The EVS 2017 survey included a number of experiments aiming at investigating primarily whether (long, i.e., one hour) face-to-face surveys can be transformed into self-administered push-to-web surveys and how much time the web survey may take. Specifically, the long face-to-face questionnaire was split into varying components and only subsets (including the long questionnaire) were administered to sample members in a push-to-web survey. The rest of the questionnaire is asked in a second (follow-up) part. Several other researchers within and outside of FORS, including international partners, contributed to this project.

The experiment included the following designs: (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 not less representative for the Swiss general population than the face-to-face survey with respect to several socio-demographic variables. The research was presented at the ESRA 2019 conference and a manuscript is in preparation for submission.

- » 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. However, given the structure of missingness, it is plausible that an analysis includes variables from different splits. Analysing such models with a more complex structure of missing data, we found that multiple imputation is an efficient and adequate method to calculate estimates from data from matrix designs. It allows even for models using variables of all splits, i.e. models resulting in zero observations for complete case analysis.

There is not much knowledge on how multiple imputation is best applied to cross-cultural surveys in matrix designs. In collaboration with partners from Germany and Iceland, we extended our research to a cross-cultural context, both being able to demonstrate the usefulness of the method in producing adequate estimates as well as to formulate recommendations how to multiply impute data in a cross-cultural context from our results.

The research was presented at the ESRA 2019 conference with the partners from Germany and Iceland on cross-cultural comparability of matrix design that spawned a lot of interest in the survey methodology community. A paper will be submitted to a scientific journal in 2020.

Continuing the collaboration, joint sessions with partners from Germany, Iceland and the Netherlands will be organised at the CSDI workshop in Paris in March and at the RC33 conference in Cyprus in July 2020 to continue the work and discussion of the feasibility

of cross-cultural general population surveys on the web. The team was also invited to present the research on cross-cultural multiple imputation of data from matrix designs at the WVS/EVS event at the 2020 IPSA World Congress of Political Science.

- » Due to the matrix design, the question order between the different matrix designs varied, possibly resulting in different measurement errors. A MEOP student investigated the issue of measurement bias in an MA thesis and a session about this topic was organised at the ESRA 2019 conference. Currently, a paper is being prepared in collaboration with the MEOP student.
- » It is well-known that sample members who find the survey topic more important are more likely to respond. What is less known is whether respondents who answered more questions of importance to them in the first part of a survey are more likely to respond to the second part.

Results from the EVS 2017 in Switzerland suggest that respondents who answered more questions on topics they care for, were not more likely to participate in the second part of the survey. This shows that respondents to the first part do not self-select into the follow-up depending on topic importance. Results were presented at the ESRA conference and published in a *FORS Working Paper*. A paper is currently under review in *Social Science Computer Review*.

Fighting non-observation

The different components of non-observation (non-coverage, non-contact, and non-cooperation) remain a major problem in our surveys and FORS continued doing research to improve observation at all of these three stages. A staff member of FORS was invited to talk about “Representation and Measurement Issues in Surveys” at the Faculty of Language and Literature, Humanities, Arts and Education at the University of Luxembourg in April where, based on surveys run by FORS, a number of examples of representation and measurement issues were presented.

- » FORS organised two sessions about “Collecting, Editing, Publishing and Improving Data on Hard-to-Reach Populations in Surveys” at the ESRA, together with one colleague from the UNIL and two colleagues from the German Robert-Koch Institute. In the sessions, we discussed the current situations of hard-to-reach population research in various national and international contexts as well as practical requirements and problems.

In this context, a working paper was published within the Horizon 2020 project InGRID2. The paper explores the extent to which

different vulnerable groups in European labour markets are measured across various data sets and identifies several data gaps in European data infrastructures.

- » As an example of decision making in the context of hard-to-reach populations in surveys, decisions which language(s) to use in surveys are crucial to adequately represent language minorities in surveys. However, usually such decisions are taken ad-hoc depending on criteria such as the size of the national minority speaking the candidate's language(s), or interviewer availability.

Based on data from the Swiss Structural Survey, staff members of FORS showed that the effect 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.

Preliminary results were published in a Wiley book chapter and presented at the International Total Survey Error Workshop in Bergamo in June.

- » Mixing modes reduces selection error by adding otherwise missing parts of the population, yet the effectiveness of different mode combinations and time of the fieldwork on different population groups is not well-researched. Using data from the LIVES-FORS mixed mode experiment conducted in 2012-13, 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. This article is currently under revision.
- » A related study evaluating the utility of R-indicators as measures of the risk of nonresponse bias involved a validation using data from the European Social Survey and its nonresponse follow-up survey. The article has been conditionally accepted for publication in a special issue of the Journal of Official Statistics on the topic of nonresponse in household surveys and is currently under revision.
- » As face-to-face interviewers are non-randomly assigned to geographical areas for practical reasons, there is no realistic way to disentangle area effects from interviewer effects. Collaboration with members from the UNIL is conducted on profiles of face-to-face interviewers in a global perspective, combining both individual interviewer characteristics and spatial characteristics. This research was presented at the ESRA and will be submitted to a scientific journal in 2020.

- » The literature is sparse on how interviewers differentially affect specific groups of respondents despite the importance of this in terms of nonresponse bias.

Using an example from the GIP, staff 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 and in an updated version at the ESRA using an example from one of the surveys hosted at FORS. The paper is currently under review at the Journal of Survey Statistics and Methodology.

- » 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, staff 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 paper is currently under review in the Social Science Computer Review.

- » We know from face-to-face surveys that interviewer's assessments of the respondent's ability and reluctance to participate is predictive of next wave participation. In telephone surveys, interviewers typically have less information on which to base an assessment. Using data from the SHP, we looked at next-wave participation, non-contact and refusal, as well as longer-term participation patterns.

We found that interviewers were better in anticipating refusal than non-contact, relative to participation, both in the next wave and in the longer term. Our findings confirm that 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. This may be used to improve nonresponse adjustments and

responsive designs in longitudinal surveys. Results of this research are currently in print in the Journal of Official Statistics.

- » Still inferring from findings from face-to-face surveys, using the same interviewers across waves or matching interviewers and households on socio-demographic variables could reduce nonresponse and attrition.

Using data from the SHP, we find interviewer effects only for households that refused to participate in a previous wave. Interviewer experience, continuity, or matching has weak effects for any type of household. Telephone survey organisations therefore only need to worry about using specially trained interviewers for refusal conversion calls, while specific assignments of interviewers to households are not necessary. These results were recently published in Field Methods.

- » The International surveys team will run an incentive experiment in the MOSAiCH 2020 survey, which tests different incentives on feasibility and effects on nonresponse and response quality. This becomes necessary because the viability of the post-cheque, which is traditionally used in MOSAiCH, is not guaranteed in the long run. In addition, new forms of incentives (TWINT and PayPal) are interesting to be tested as well as cash, lottery, and a no incentive control group in order to be able to compare results with other surveys at FORS that use these incentive forms.
- » Using the experiences of the consulting mandate for switching a telephone survey to the web for the city of Zurich, the investigations on language coverage, the annual analysis of the response bias of the MOSAiCH follow-up survey and the EVS 2017 experiment, a comprehensive framework for analysis of representation bias has been developed and presented in the FORS Lunch Seminar. It will result in a FORS Guide on the topic of representation and guides the analysis of response bias of the EVS 2017 experiment.

Measurement and equivalence issues

New samples drawn for FORS surveys are now systematically matched with income variables from the Swiss social security register as a standard procedure, in addition to match socio-demographic variables from the sampling frame. Using income information from the AHV/AVS income register further saves survey time and decreases survey burden, helps validate reported information and imputation models, and provides new possibilities of nonresponse adjustments.

- » In addition to income, wealth is one of most relevant components of household finances. Three Swiss surveys have recently included questions about wealth (SHP, CH-SILC and SHARE). Following the three criteria relevance, coherence and accuracy, (OECD) FORS, together with colleagues from the UNIL and the University of Neuchâtel, compared data on housing and financial wealth in terms of question wording, comparison with national accounts and accuracy. Results suggest that SHARE is the most relevant survey in terms of financial wealth and total net worth. CH-SILC is a survey that allows for additional analysis on subjective living conditions, while the SHP focuses on ecological aspects associated to wealth issues. Results were published in the *Journal of Economic and Social Measurement*.
- » 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.

The procedure was accompanied by the SFSO at several meetings, and results based on the linked data were presented at the ECSR 2nd Thematic Workshop on Wealth inequality and Mobility in Luxembourg. Results show the influence of pension wealth on wealth inequality and the strong impact of pension entitlements on early retirement. A scientific paper is currently under review in the *Swiss Journal of Economics and Statistics*.

- » Data from the 2015 post-electoral survey from Selects were matched with the AHV/AVS register and analysed regarding non-response and data quality of the income variable. After a number of presentations at conferences, a peer-reviewed journal article is currently on hold due to time constraints.

- » In particular because income values are important explaining variables in regression analyses, missing income values should be imputed to reduce possible non-response bias and to keep sample sizes, when otherwise observations would be case-wise deleted. While best imputation 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 which imputes missing income, based on the individual-specific mean income over time, but does not use other information reported. Because we suspect that making use of reported information may be associated with changed (missing) incomes, we propose a within-individual panel regression approach as an alternative imputation method. A first paper was rejected at *Longitudinal and Life Course Studies* and a revised version is currently elaborated.

- » Besides language and translation issues, different contexts might influence how respondents understand and interpret questions in different cultural contexts. In collaboration with CeSSI Russia (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. Preliminary results have been presented at the 3rd ESS conference in Mannheim in April 2019.

- » Together with colleagues from the UNIL and GESIS, FORS published a paper in the *GESIS-Schriftenreihe* that documents the development of the ISSP module for the year 2017 titled "Social Networks and Social Resources". The paper discusses instruments that have been developed to measure social relationships and networks. The publication ends with a description of items finally selected for the 2017 ISSP module and some suggestions for analysing these data.

In addition, as a member of the Methodological Committee (MC) of the ISSP, FORS is interested in other issues of data quality such as duplicates or partial interviews, or by the problem of "weights in comparative surveys". This is particularly pertinent in surveys in which sampling frames are different across countries. A paper was published in the *Newsletter on Survey Data Harmonization* in December. This issue will continue to be discussed in 2020. Finally, as in previous years, FORS prepared the *Study Monitoring Report* of the

ISSP final dataset released by GESIS. In 2019, the ISSP 2017 data on Social Networks and Social Resources was published.

- » A joint project about harmonization of translations (French as shared language) with researchers from two national teams of the European Social Survey was conducted in 2019 resulting in a presentation at the ESRA Conference. Harmonization procedures were qualitatively analysed, stressing the mechanisms of harmonization induced by discussions emerging from diverging versions. This project will be submitted to a scientific journal in 2020.
- » 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 and are being evaluated with regard to differences in response burden and data quality. Currently, one paper was rejected for inclusion in the *Journal of Official Statistics* and is undergoing revisions before submission to *International Journal of Market Research*. A second paper was re-submitted to the *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*.

- » Together with colleagues from the UNIL, FORS investigated the comparability of multinational, multicultural and multiregional (3MC) survey data. To do so, data from the Swiss, German and French parts of the ESS were combined.

Overall, we find variant translations and other cross-national variations to be bigger sources of nonequivalence than scale format and mode. The findings are of interest both to survey designers making decisions about optimal resource allocation in the design of 3MC studies, as well as to analysts comparing countries with shared languages and interpreting cross-group differences. A paper is in press in *Survey Research Methods*.

- » A major threat to measurement quality in surveys is the so-called 'satisficing' which occurs when respondents answer questions with minimal effort. Reduced response quality due to satisficing is assumed to be caused by a combination of increased task difficulty, and reduced respondent ability and motivation.

In a metastudy we analysed the indicators of satisficing, the main predictors of satisficing, and the presence of main or interaction effects on the prevalence of satisficing involving indicators of task difficulty, respondent ability, and respondent motivation. Our analysis sheds light on potential differences in the extent to which satisficing theory holds for different types of response error, and highlights a number of avenues for future research. A research synthesis was published in *Public Opinion Quarterly* in November 2019 by researchers at the University of Lausanne.

Work on a co-edited special issue on “Prospective Qualitative Analyses: New Directions, Opportunities and Challenges” in *Longitudinal and Life Course Studies* will be published in 2020. Although qualitative life course studies are most often associated with retrospective studies that understand lives ‘backwards’ in time, prospective qualitative studies have grown in popularity over the past two decades. While these designs have advantages in shedding light on processes of change and continuity, they also present some challenges for researchers. Specifically, a range of methodological challenges arise in the process of engaging with participants in a prospective study, where time, lives, perceptions and meanings are continually shifting and under revision. This special issue will advance current debates and explore new directions in this field through a range of contemporary studies that are both international and interdisciplinary in scope.

Another co-edited special issue on Measuring LGBT populations in the *Journal of Official Statistics* was published in 2019. The special issue was devoted to the measurement of sexual and gender minorities. The eight articles contained in the issue touched upon sampling and identification of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender populations as well as the measurement and methods used to collect data on sexual orientation and gender identity.

A FORS and UNIL researcher joined the board of the European Survey Research Association for co-organising the ESRA awards. This researcher also joined the ISSP drafting group as an expert for the next ISSP module about Family and Changing Gender Roles. Over the next two years the group will be responsible in evaluating the previous modules on this topic and drafting a new questionnaire.

FORS is pleased to organise the 6th Panel Survey Methods Workshop on 1st-2nd July 2020 at the UNIL. The workshop invites world-leading scholars on innovative methods in panel survey data collection and analysis methods focusing on in-depth discussion of methodological research currently conducted in the specific field.

6. Outreach, publications and events

6.1 Dissemination

Social media management

FORS reinforced its presence in social media. FORS news (events, attendance at conferences, calls, publications, etc.) were spread through Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. Most impressions were noticed on the FORS Twitter account, which had more than 1,100 followers in 2019. Some interesting discussions with Twitter users on several topics related to FORS were held on the platform.

FORS data promotion strategy

Within FORS, the communications team and the data promotion team are responsible for promotional activities. However, other units within FORS also promote their own services and data. The number of services and products FORS offers has grown in the last years as well as the communications and the data promotion team. Promotional activities expanded, partly based on team specific strategies and partly on upcoming opportunities and individual engagement. The current promotional activities are various, rich and of good quality.

In order to align the future promotional activities of FORS and to coordinate them better among the various teams, members of the executive board, the communications team and the data promotion team met for a retreat and agreed on a common framework. Based on this, the group decided to develop a joint FORS promotion strategy.

The new FORS promotion strategy 2019 defines the products and services that FORS wants to promote, the target groups, the promotional activities and the responsibilities and division of tasks within FORS to implement these promotional activities. FORS is part of a large network of institutional and individual partners and target populations within and outside the scientific community. The core target public of our promotional activities are the social science researchers in Switzerland, who produce, use and store data.

The established strategy focuses on direct promotional activities, which primarily aim at promoting a product or service of FORS. A lot of activities from FORS do not explicitly aim at promoting FORS and its products and services, but do it indirectly by providing expertise and by increasing the general visibility of FORS, like advanced topic-specific trainings, topic-specific guides, presentations of research papers at scientific conferences, communication with survey participants, editions of special issues of scientific journals or books, focusing on a specific survey or tools for online data use and analysis like De Visu, to mention a few.

FORS defined three main objectives for its promotion:

- » The social science research community in Switzerland knows what FORS is and what products and services we offer.
- » Funders as well as national and international partners are informed about our products and services.
- » Social science researchers in Switzerland deposit and access high quality data through FORSbase.

The activities to reach the above objectives are website management, the newsletter, bulk mailings, social media management, sponsoring and organising data-specific events, consequent branding, active data solicitation, presentations on request, the printing of promotional material, contact with journalists and the Mobile Helpdesk. An action plan for the FORS promotion from 2020 until 2024 was established with a special focus on the outreach to further social science disciplines like psychology, economy and education.

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. To start with, FORS contacted the contact points to promote the concept of the Mobile Helpdesk as they are a valuable link to the social sciences landscape. The links with the universities in Switzerland was further intensified in 2019 so that three events during the spring semester and three in the autumn semester took place. FORS was present at more events than initially planned.

The following conclusions can be drawn after the first year of the Mobile Helpdesk:

- » The information desk increased the visibility of FORS and the material is appreciated.
- » Researchers are interested in specific topics, rather than information on FORS in general.

For 2020 some adjustments to the concept were decided. FORS does not continue with the general presentations, yet will focus more on active data solicitation, which involves the development and provision of advanced data management training. FORS will continue to provide specific presentations and will go on with the information desk. For this purpose, several postcards covering all of our activities were produced and distributed widely. FORS continued its sponsoring activities in 2019. FORS co-sponsored major

events like the International ESS conference in Mannheim (April), the ESRA conference in Zagreb (July), the international ECSR conference on Inequality over the life course (September) and the Congress of the Swiss Sociological Association 2019 (September).

6.2 Publications

The FORS Guides to Survey Methods and Data Management

In January 2019 the first five papers of the new peer-reviewed series FORS Guides to Survey Methods and Data Management were published. The FORS Guides are available online at www.forscenter.ch/fors-guides. Each article has a DOI, a unique identifier that enables the papers to be found with a link and its own landing webpage with a link to the pdf file.

The aim of the FORS Guides is knowledge transfer within and outside of FORS in the domain of survey methods and data management. The FORS Guides are specifically targeted to the Swiss research community and researchers working with Swiss data.

To promote the new series, an email campaign was set up and sent to researchers in the field and the information spread via social media. Additionally, print versions of the FORS Guides were available all year at the FORS Mobile Helpdesk. Two more article in survey methods (surveying national minorities, incentives in surveys) and one on data management (How to draft a DMP from the perspective of the social sciences) were published later in the year. The FORS Guides raise great interest amongst the research community and the print version of the guides are gladly taken along at the Mobile Helpdesk events. Further guides are in the pipeline for being published in 2020. The goal is to publish at least five guides a year.

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. In 2019 two Working Papers were published: one on item nonresponse and fuzzy logic, and one on the effects of topic distribution and topic importance on interest and follow-up response. All papers can be consulted on the series' [dedicated webpage](#).

Social Change in Switzerland

The bilingual (French and German) online publication series Social Change in Switzerland is co-edited by FORS, the Life Course and Inequalities research unit of the UNIL, LINES and the NCCR LIVES. Like in 2018, four articles were published in 2019. This year's publications attracted great interest amongst the Swiss media, certainly due to the topics published. Most press articles were published on the contribution on inheritances in Switzerland, followed by the one on gender pay inequalities. 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 have risen to 24,616 in 2019 from 17,460 in 2018. The top ten articles downloaded were published between 2015 and 2018. Apart from the series' homepage, most users were interested in the article "Working Poor in der Schweiz" published in 2018. Like in the previous year, most visits came from Switzerland, followed by Germany, France and the United States.

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, 2018 and 2019 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 further maintained the website. In 2019 FORS organised and paid for further translation of several articles. For 2020 the funding and governance will be broadened and re-organised.

In 2019 DeFacto has published 133 articles out of which six articles were written by FORS collaborators. In 2018 77 articles were published by DeFacto. The rise in the number of articles might partly be due to the various established partnerships and partly to the fact that 2019 was the year of federal elections.

The DeFacto website obtained 43,577 single visits, compared to 36,500 in 2018. Most visits came from Switzerland and Germany, followed by Austria and France.

Survey Methods, Insights from the Field

The peer-reviewed online journal Survey Methods, Insights from the Field ([SMIF](#)) co-edited by FORS, GESIS and PUMA published four individual articles and sixteen articles in the special issue on *Probability and Nonprobability Sampling: Sampling of Hard-to-Reach Survey populations*, realised with the German Robert Koch Institute, the government's central scientific institution in the field of biomedicine. In sum, 20 articles were published in 2019, compared to nine articles in 2018 and seven in 2017. This is the highest number of articles published since the launch of the journal in 2013.

In summer 2019, the editor-in-chief Lars Kaczmirek, Director of AUSSDA, stepped down from his function as editor-in-chief after three years in this function. He was followed by Natalja Menold, Professor at the Technische Universität Dresden and former GESIS researcher. In 2019 the aims and scope of the journal were slightly adjusted to allow the submission of short scientific reports.

At the end of 2019, sixteen papers were in production of which most articles belonged to two special issues, one on Fieldwork Monitoring Strategies for Interviewer-Administered Surveys and one on Advancements in Online and Mobile Survey Methods, both to be published in 2020.

From January to December, the website had 26,495 single page views, compared to 22,461 in 2018. The number of single page views has risen, which might partly be due to the fact that since 2018 the journal is listed in the DOAJ, the Directory of Open Access Journals, and partly because of the publication of the special issue which commonly attracts more interest than single articles.

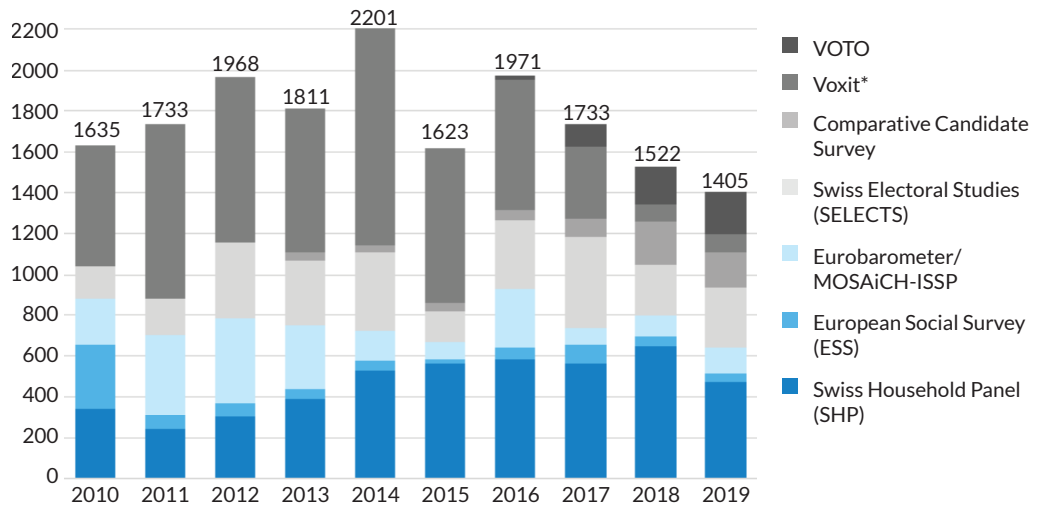
Most visits came again from the United States, followed by Germany, the United Kingdom and Canada.

6.3 Performance Indicators

FORS maintains a set of indicators that allows assessment of our accomplishments and progress on different fronts. Below are various results for 2019:

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

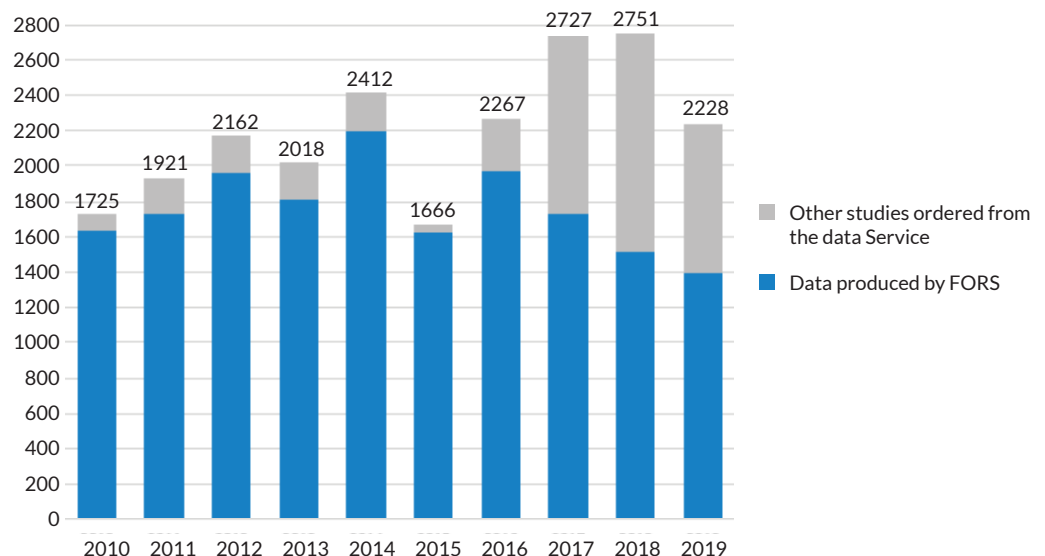
A total of 1,405 FORS-produced datasets were distributed by FORS to researchers in 2019.



*The reason for the decline in downloads of the Voxit dataset is probably the better availability of the individual Vox datasets on FORSbase.

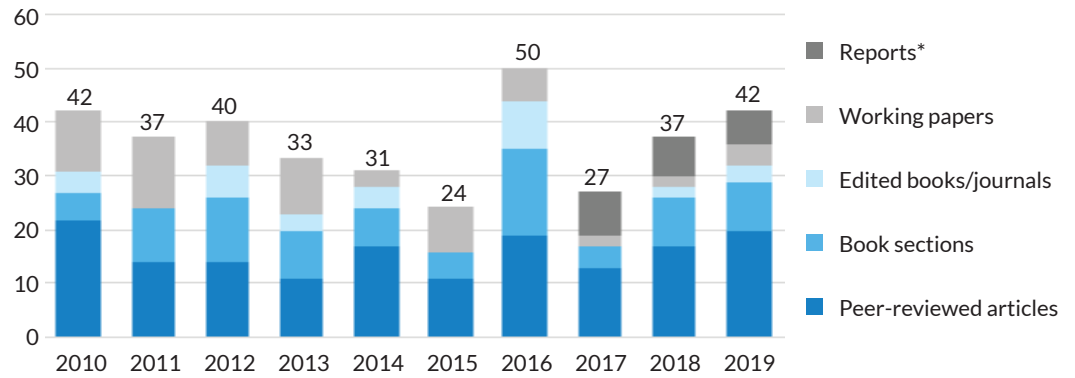
In addition to the distribution by FORS, the Swiss parts of the studies ESS and ISSP data can also be downloaded from the international websites of these projects. The data for the Survey of Health, Aging and Retirement in Europe (SHARE), conducted by FORS, are only available in this way.

Number of datasets from the FORS data service distributed to or downloaded by researchers



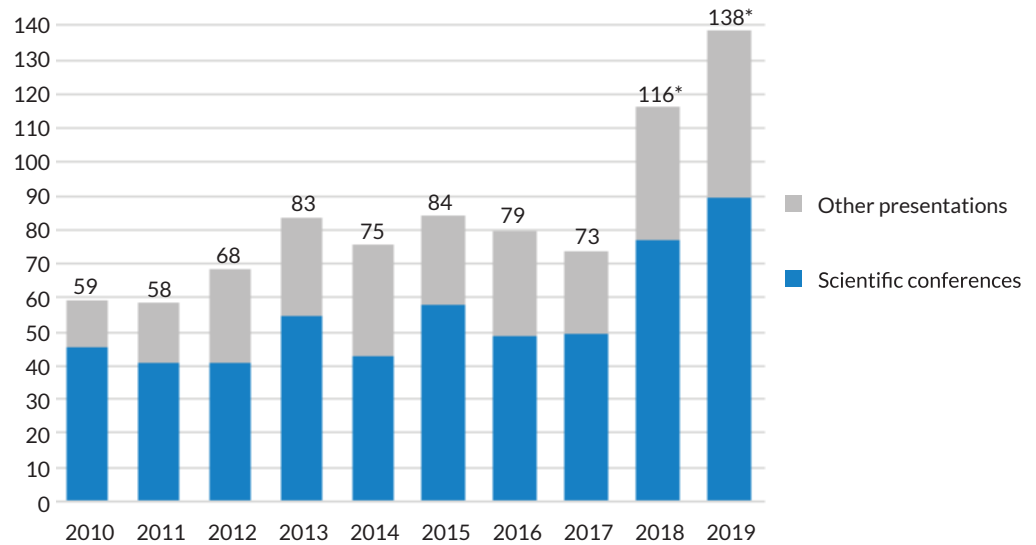
Number of new research project descriptions in the research inventory
 During the annual survey 2018/2019, 350 new project descriptions were added to the research inventory, compared to 356 during 2017/2018. At the end of 2019, the research inventory comprised over 11,650 published project descriptions.

Publications by FORS staff



* until 2016, the reports were included in the category "Working papers".

Presentations by FORS staff at conferences and scholarly meetings

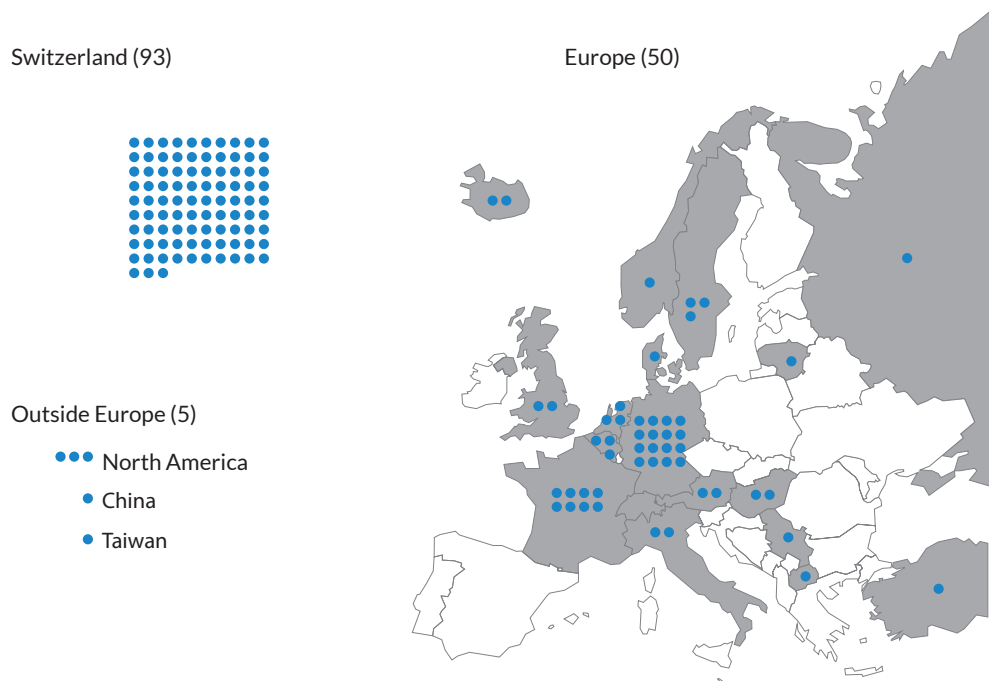


* in 2018 and 2019 not only the collaborators, but also the associated researchers were asked to hand in their presentations. The associated researchers contributed with 12 presentations to the total of 138 presentations in 2019.

There were 138 presentations of FORS staff and associated researchers at conferences and scholarly meetings in 2019. Consult all 2019 FORS publications and presentations [on this interactive webpage](#).

Number of national and international collaborative research projects

Region / Country Collaborations (some projects involve several countries)



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

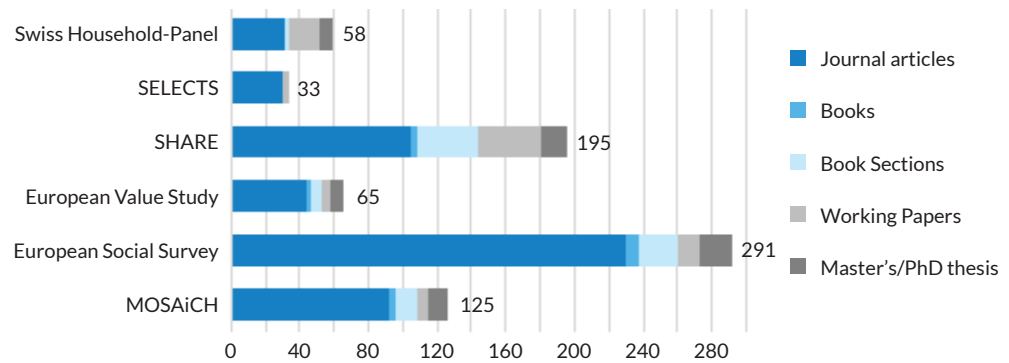
Number of collaborative research projects and scientific activities with outside organisations and individuals

In 2019, 28 FORS staff members were involved in 110 collaborative projects with outside organisations. Thus, around 75% of eligible FORS staff were involved in research activities. We can note a slight positive increase compared to last year (103 collaborative projects), notably due to the scientific network of our newly recruited staff.

About three quarters (76%) of these collaborative projects were with individuals from the French-speaking part of Switzerland, 8% with colleagues from the German-speaking part of Switzerland, and 30% with foreign institutions (some projects involved several institutions from different regions, thus total exceeds 100%).

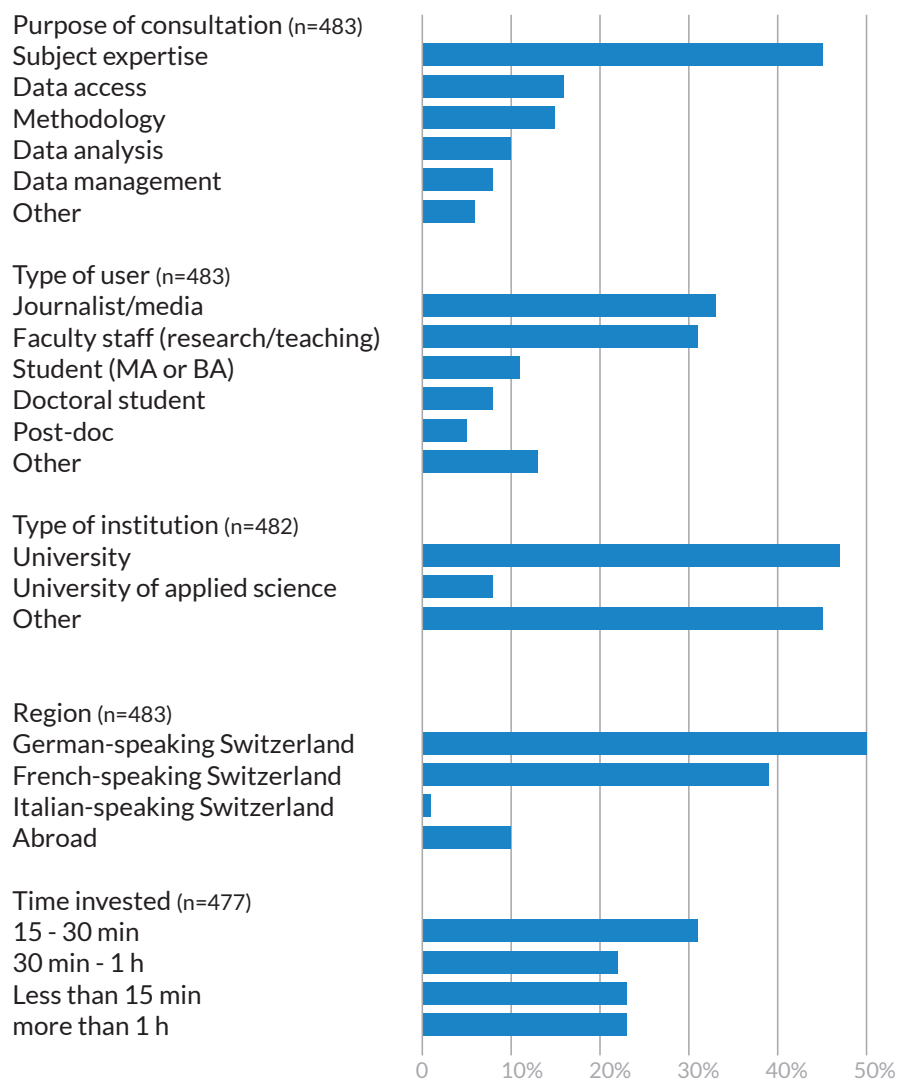
This concentration in the French-speaking part of the country is due in particular to the close ties of some collaborators with other institutions in Lausanne and Geneva (in particular LINES/LIVES). Compared to previous years, our international collaborations are also more diversified, including a broader range of foreign countries (for instance, 20 compared to 13 in 2015).

Number of 2019 publications based on FORS-produced data



In 2019, there were over 750 publications worldwide that used the Swiss data from surveys produced by FORS, including 291 for the ESS, and 195 for SHARE. Most of these publications were peer-reviewed articles in academic journals.

Characteristics of consultations by FORS collaborators (in % of all consultations)



In 2019 there were 483 documented consultations with individuals, where FORS staff members provided advice, assistance, or answers to questions from individuals from outside of the institution. Subject expertise was the most commonly cited purpose of the consultations. Most of the consultations were with journalists (probably due, in large part, to 2019 being an election year), followed by research and teaching faculty staff at Swiss universities.

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, nine FORS staff members taught in 2019. They gave 300 teaching hours in 11 different courses at all academic levels (bachelor, master, and PhD), as well as in the context of continuing education. The topics covered predominantly concerned data analysis and data management, but also survey methodology. Almost all the teaching hours were provided in the French-speaking part of Switzerland, with the exception of one course given abroad, at the ESRA Conference, in Zagreb.

Thus, about one quarter 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.

6.4 Events

The following events took place in 2019 and were organised by FORS.

20 years of the Swiss Household Panel: 10th International Conference of Panel Data Users in Switzerland

This conference, organised by the SHP team, took place at the UNIL on 5-6 June. The conference included two plenary sessions. The first retraced the historical development of the Swiss Household Panel over the past twenty years, while the second was dedicated to the future of household panels. Thematic sessions covered a variety of topics, including health and well-being, education and labour market, socio-economic inequality and mobility, family and gender, religion and religiosity, ethnic minorities and migration, politics and attitudes, households' energy demand, survey methodology, and longitudinal methods. In total, 11 workshop sessions with 40 contributions were held. 75 participants attended the conference.

Second Swiss Longitudinal Data Fair

The second Swiss Longitudinal Data Fair took place at the University of Lausanne on Valentine's Day, 14 February 2019, with an introduction by the Director of the NCCR LIVES on the topic of "I love my (longitudinal) data". This one-day event was organised by FORS, LIVES and TREE. It included presentations and posters on various major Swiss longitudinal surveys in the social sciences, including TREE, the SHP, SHARE, CoCon, the LABB of the SFSO and the DAB panel study. The presentations were followed by practical hands-on sessions in the afternoon. The participants, mainly doctoral students, were able to learn about the above-mentioned major Swiss longitudinal studies in the social sciences and find the data they need for their research projects or doctoral thesis. The Fair was well attended, with over 100 participants.

Swiss Qualitative Methods Festival

The 7th edition of the Swiss Qualitative Methods Festival was held at the University of Lausanne on 9-10 September. According to a well-established formula, the festival intends to present recent innovations in the field of qualitative and mixed methods. This edition focused on the challenges raised by open data. Three thematic workshops and two plenary sessions were dedicated to this topic. The festival offers a platform for exchange to researchers in the social sciences and humanities (especially doctoral and post-doctoral students) who wish to learn about new methods. It also aims to bring together the active qualitative research community in French-speaking Switzerland. Renowned specialists were available to discuss the application of methods and theories within the framework of various research workshops. Moreover, participants had the opportunity to address their own research questions.

Data Management Plan (DMP) workshops

As portrayed in chapter 3, 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 planification et mise en pratique” was organised in Lausanne (March) in collaboration with the UNIL 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.

The 23rd Swiss Summer School on Methods in the Social Sciences

Jointly organised by FORS and USI, the 23rd Swiss Summer School on Methods in the Social Sciences was held from 16-30 August 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: 19 – 23 August:

- » Peter Schmidt/Eldad Davidov: Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) (13)
- » Eugene Horber: Statistics with SPSS for Social Scientists (8)
- » Michael Gibbert: Case Studies: Design, Methods, and Reporting* (12)
- » Patrick Mello: Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA)* (13)
- » Duncan Guest: Analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Experimental Design* (7)
- » Thomas Hills: Content Analysis and Natural Language Processing* (8)

Second week: 26 – 30 August:

- » Andrew Bell: Multilevel Analysis* (6)
- » Karen O'Reilly: Ethnographic Methods* (6)
- » Elmar Schlüter: Multilevel Structural Equation Modeling (10)
- » Alessandro Lomi: Analysis of Social Networks (10)
- » Sebastian Kernbach: Designing Your (Academic) Future* (8)
- » The optional two-day workshop (E. Horber SPSS/Statistics Refresher) had 21 participants.

11% of the 98 participants attended two full-week courses. 74% of the participants were PhD Students.

The largest groups of this year’s participants are working in the field of

Business Studies (17%), Psychology (16%), Sociology (15%), Education and Communication Studies (14%) at Swiss universities (51%), universities of teacher education or applied sciences (23%), ETH/EPFL (7%); 19% at foreign universities or institutions: Germany (4%), Italy (4%), USA (3%), Ireland (2%), the Netherlands, India, Iran, South Africa, and Slovenia.

GREC

The research group on Elections and Political Citizenship (GREC) founded three years ago is a research unit of the [IEPHI](#) of the UNIL that meets 11 to 12 times a year for seminars and four to five 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 SHP) and to strengthen collaboration between the IEPHI and FORS.

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) from the UNIL. 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 are 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. The list can be consulted [on this website](#).

7. FORS Governance

The discussion on the future funding of FORS continued in 2019. The SERI wrote in its “[2019 Swiss Roadmap for Research Infrastructures](#)” that “from 2021 onwards, the SNSF will be responsible for funding and evaluating the existing FORS and DaSCH infrastructures”. This means, that from 2021 on, the SNSF does not only fund FORS surveys, but also the FORS research data infrastructure. To implement this decision the SNSF put together a working group consisting of representatives from the SNSF, FORS, DaSCH and a selection of international experts in order to discuss funding and evaluation modalities for the funding period 2021-2024 and beyond. It became clear during this discussion that the SNSF is willing to fund FORS within its current mission and that FORS will need sufficient resources to develop its data services. The SNSF also expects FORS and DaSCH to cooperate closely in the future. A decision on the concrete funding and evaluation modalities will be taken by the SNSF in 2020.

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 Board. 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 2019 the Foundation Board met twice. In the March meeting, the Foundation board approved the accounts as well as the audit and the Annual Report 2018. In addition, the board elected two new members to the MOSAiCH commission. For the autumn meeting, the Foundation board held a retreat for the first time with input speeches from the Director of CESSDA, Ron Dekker, and the Coordinator - National Programme on Scientific Information of swissuniversities, Patrick Furrer, and Erwin Zbinden from the DaSCH. The Foundation board recognised that FORS is well on track. However, FORS should invest further in the handling of new data (big data, linked data) and a stronger focus should be placed on training around research data management to make FORS and its services more visible, especially amongst the social science disciplines where FORS is less present (psychology, economics or educational sciences). The Foundation Board also approved of the planning of FORS for 2020 and the 2020 budget during the meeting and elected a new Selects commission for the period 2020-2023.

During the joint meeting with the FORS Scientific Board in March, the Board discussed the annual report 2018 and the FORS service catalogue. In this service catalogue the different services FORS offers are listed and a distinction was made between services free of charge (archiving of data and the use of data produced by FORS) and paid services (mainly additional services for support on specific aspects around the data life cycle). The Foundation Board then approved this service catalogue.

Scientific Board

[The Scientific Board](#) had a two-day meeting on 14-15 March chaired by Prof. Mick Couper. During the meeting the FORS Director gave an update on recent developments and presented the Annual planning for 2019. The scientific board discussed the findings from the SHP Pilot Study Experience conducted in 2018 and the recommendations for the general design of Wave IV that will start in 2020. The new wave will be conducted as a mixed-mode survey (mainly telephone/online) with greater weight given to online interviews; however, telephone will remain an important mode in order to keep response rates high. The board discussed the experience with the new MOSAiCH survey, that had started in 2018 as an annual online/paper survey with a second follow up wave. The first wave is mainly reserved for the ISSP module and the follow up wave(s) focuses on additional questions based on an open call by the MOSAiCH commission.

The new design replaced the previous face-to-face survey that took place every two years. The response rate was nearly 40%, which was slightly below the results of the EVS that was conducted in 2017. Experiments conducted in the framework of MOSAiCH have shown that pre-notification letters work well in the long run and the use of e-mail communication for the second part is as effective as postal communication when the e-mail addresses are given by the respondents. The board advised transferring the MOSAiCH study into a long-term online panel at this stage. To do such a panel well would require a lot of additional resources for which FORS does not have a budget.

The FORS Director then gave an update on the initiative to set up a Data Linking Center. Its goal is to provide knowledge on linking data, archiving and disseminating linked data and develop concrete services for the research community. This initiative should also reconcile data protection and open research policy and contribute to the policy dialogue on data access, data linking and data protection in Switzerland. For this purpose, a steering committee has been set up and a new position was created at FORS.

Executive Board and management

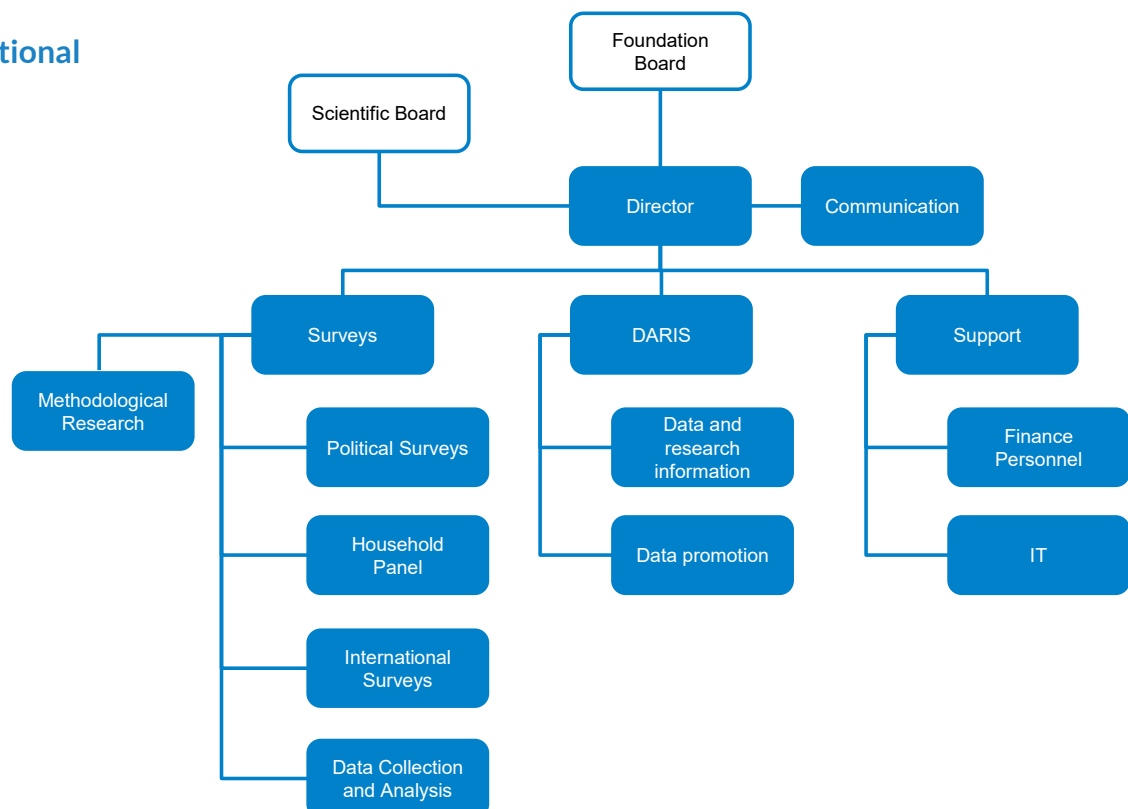
The FORS Executive Board is chaired by the Director and comprises the heads of the units Surveys, Data and Research Information Services, and Support. The Executive Board usually meets twice a month. Decisions are minuted, and the minutes are sent to the President of the Foundation Board to keep him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

A key issue in 2019 for FORS management was the handling of on-going developments. While FORS functions very well in its core operations, important on-going developments include challenges. FORS will need to better cover different social science disciplines (especially psychology and economics) and new types of data (mainly big data and qualitative data).

Recent development around SWISSUbase result in the fact that FORS becomes a service provider beyond the domain of the social sciences. These new developments will also require an adaption of the organisational structure of FORS. In order to reflect on this, an internal working group teamed up with an external expert to reflect on possible institutional adaptations to handle these developments.

An important forward-looking instrument for FORS was the planning process to set priorities for the coming year. Each team had to set up its priorities, which were then consolidated within the FORS management board. This annual plan was then approved by the FORS Foundation Board in November 2019.

Organisational Chart



8. Staff statistics & finance

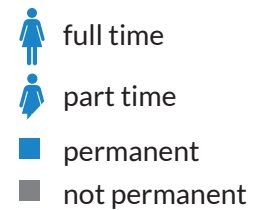
Staff

Status of employment

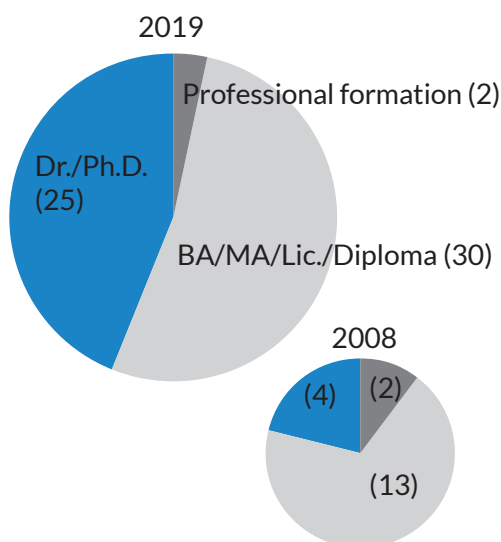
2019 (58 employees, 45.8 full-time equivalents)



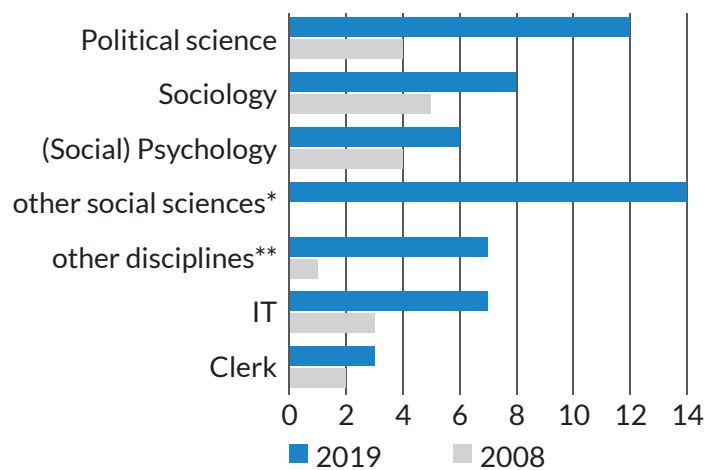
2008 (19 employees, 15.7 full-time equivalents)



Degree of formation



Disciplines



* Social sciences, economics, education, anthropology, demographic, survey methodology, behavioral science
 ** Communications, statistics, mathematics, linguistics, history, geography

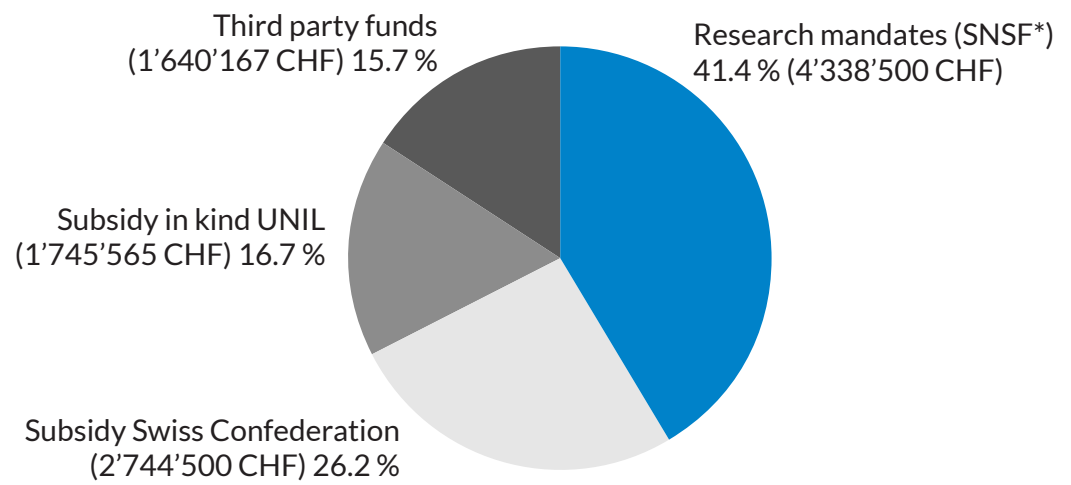
Nationalities and mother languages 2019

- 43 Swiss
- 6 Germans
- 4 French
- 3 Italians
- 1 Dutch
- 1 Hungarian
- 1 Indian
- 1 Moroccan
- 1 Serb
- 1 US-citizen

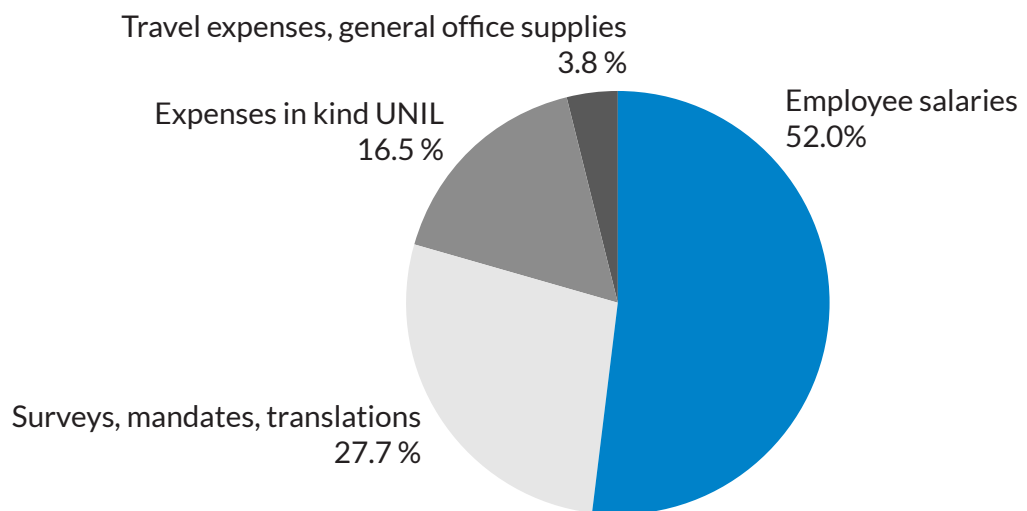


Finances

Income



Expenses



*Swiss National Science Foundation

9. List of Abbreviations

AAPOR	American Association for Public Opinion Research
CAPI	Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing
CATI	Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing
CCS	Comparative Candidate Survey
CESSDA	Consortium of European Social Science Data Archives
CeSSI	Institute for Comparative Social Research, Russia
ch-x	Swiss Federal Surveys of Adolescents
CHUV	Centre Hospitalier Universitaire Vaudois
CNEF	Cross-National Equivalent File
CoCon	Swiss Survey of Children and Youth
CSES	Study of Electoral Systems
DAB	Determinanten der Ausbildungswahl und der Berufsbildungschancen (DAB) Panel Studie
DaSCH	Data and Service Center for the Humanities
De Visu	FORS online microdata catalog
DMP	Data Management Plan
ECSR	European Consortium for Sociological Research
EDK	Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education
EPFL	Ecole polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne
ERIC	European Research Infrastructure Consortium
ESFRI	European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures
ESRA	European Survey Research Association
ESS	European Social Survey
EVS	European Values Study
FAIR	FAIR Data principles: Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable
FOPH	Swiss Federal Office of Public Health
GESIS	Leibniz-Institut für Sozialwissenschaften
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
GIP	German Internet Panel
IEPHI	Institut d'études politiques, historiques et internationales (UNIL)
InGRID2	Integrating Research Infrastructures for European expertise on Inclusive Growth from data to policy
ISSP	International Social Survey Programme
LABB	Längsschnittanalysen im Bildungsbereich / Analyses longitudinales dans le domaine de la formation
LINES	Life Course and Inequality Research Centre
LIVES	Overcoming Vulnerability – Life Course Perspectives
MEDem	Monitoring Electoral Democracies (European Research Infrastructure)
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
OAIS	Open Archival Information System
PAWCER	Public Attitudes to Welfare, Climate Change and Energy in the EU and Russia
PUMA	Plattform für Umfragen, Methoden und empirische Analysen
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
SHP	Swiss Household Panel
SILC	Survey: Statistics on Income and Living Conditions
SMIF	Survey Methods: Insights from the Field
SNSF	Swiss National Science Foundation
SOEP-IS	Socio-Economic panel-Innovation sample
SSHOC	Social Sciences and Humanities Open Cloud
TRAPD	Translation, Review, Adjudication, Pre-testing and Documentation procedure
TREE	Transitions from Education to Employment
ÜGK	Überprüfung des Erreichens der Grundkompetenzen
UNIL	Université de Lausanne
vsms-asms	Association of Swiss Social and Market Research
WVS	World Values Survey
ZDA	Zentrum für Demokratie Aarau

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