

SWITZERLAND 1992: Survey Information

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A. General characteristics

Name

Nationale Armutsstudie (National Poverty Survey)

This survey was conducted for the first time in 1992. The main purpose of the survey was to 'picture' the extent of poverty in Switzerland and to collect information about the living conditions and income in Switzerland. In this regard it is not a traditional income survey that is done on a regular basis. Data collection started in September 1992 and was completed in May 1996. The results of the survey became available as micro data in 1996.

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Administrative unit responsible for the survey

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B. Population, sample size and sampling methods

Sample frame

Persons included in the survey were selected from different registers:

- Electoral registers for Swiss citizens
- Federal data file for foreign nationals
- Resident population database

The selected people were taken from the resident population; the latter includes all adults above the age of 20 and consists of 5.307 million people. (Foreigners with a permanent resident permit are included in this)

The sample also included persons who are living in institutions, nursing homes, hospitals or prisons.

Some groups within the resident population had a greater chance of being selected, namely

- Persons older than 60
- Persons with low income (lowest 3 income deciles)

After the selection of the sample from the sample frame, no specific groups were excluded from the sample.

All geographic areas were covered in the sample frame.

For 6301 persons from the sample was a sufficient amount of information collected. However for another 3652 persons were no data obtained although they were part of the sample.

Sample design

The sample design used for the survey was a stratified sample, in which persons with a low income and persons above 60 years of age were over represented. The sample is self-weighting.

C. Data collection and acquisition

All persons selected in the sample received a letter announcing that they were selected to participate in the study and that an interviewer would contact them. Participation was voluntarily and the participants' privacy was assured.

The data were collected through personal interviews. In addition to these personal interviews, administrative records on social security and welfare were consulted.

During the interview, only the person who was drawn in the sample had to answer the questions related to housing, work, education, social integration, health, coping strategies, income and demographic variables. Questions with regard to personal opinions, subjective matters had to be answered personally by the selected household members and could not be answered by any other member of the household.

D. Definition of the survey units

Survey unit

The person who was selected in the sample is the one who was interviewed and is considered to be the survey unit head, regardless if this person is the head of household or not. All other persons are considered to be a member of the 'survey unit' if they are living there on a regularly basis. For example, husbands on military duty who return home at regular points in time and children attending school are considered to be members of the survey unit. The survey unit head also answers questions with regard to other household members, these questions are limited to: relation towards the interviewed (spouse, children, ...), sex of the person, year of birth, marital status, nationality, residence status, member of sickness insurance fund or not.

This means that there is less information for other household members than for the selected person.

Children

Children are defined as persons under the age of 18. A distinction is made between the children of the person drawn in the sample (survey unit head) and children of other persons in the household. This distinction is possible since the interviewed person is asked about his/her relation towards all the other persons in the household.

Spouses

A person is considered to be the spouse of the person drawn in the sample if they are legally married or if the person considers someone to be his/her spouse.

E. Weighting procedures

A weight is assigned to each sample case. The weights were used to adjust for missing data and other non-sampling errors. Since it was a stratified sample the weight used was inverse to the probability of selection.

We can differentiate between three weights:

Person weight: refers to the selection probability of the interviewed person and this weight is used for all the questions that are related to the interviewed person and that cannot be generalized to the household level.

Household weight: refers to the selection probability of the interviewed person in dependence of other household members. This weight is used for questions related to the household (regardless the number of persons in the household).

The population weight: refers to the number of persons in the household (children included). It is used for all analysis that refers to all persons in the household. For instance when equivalence scales are used, the population weight has to be used.

Calculation of the different weights

Household weight is equal to the person weight divided by the number of adults in the household

Population weight is equal to the household weight multiplied by the number of persons in the household (children included)

Weights are normalized in such a way that their sum equals the size of the sample and that their average is 1.

F. Quality of the data

Non response

As earlier mentioned, 3652 persons of those selected, were either not interviewed or not enough data could be obtained/gathered. This corresponds to a percentage of 36.7 %.