

*English is not an official language of the Swiss Confederation. This translation is provided for information purposes only and has no legal force.*

## **Federal Act on the Federal Census (Census Act)**

of 22 June 2007 (Status as of 1 January 2017)

---

*The Federal Assembly of the Swiss Confederation,  
based on Article 65 of the Federal Constitution<sup>1</sup>,  
and having considered the Federal Council Dispatch dated 29 November 2006<sup>2</sup>,  
decrees:*

### **Section 1      General Provisions**

#### **Art. 1            Principles**

<sup>1</sup> Data shall be collected annually or at shorter intervals on the structure of the population and social developments in Switzerland.

<sup>2</sup> Data shall be collected on:

- a. the status, structure and development of the population;
- b. families, households and living conditions;
- c. work and earnings;
- d. health and social issues;
- e.<sup>3</sup> continuing education and training;
- f. migration;
- g. languages, religions and culture;
- h. transport and environment;
- i. buildings, apartments and workplaces and school establishments.

<sup>3</sup> As far as possible, the survey is based on official registers.

AS **2007** 6743

<sup>1</sup> SR **101**

<sup>2</sup> BBl **2007** 53

<sup>3</sup> The amendment in accordance with the Federal Act of 20 June 2014 on Continuing Education and Training, in force since 1 Jan. 2017 only concerns the French and Italian texts (AS **2016** 689; BBl **2013** 3729).

<sup>4</sup> For attributes not contained in the registers, random sample surveys shall be carried out.

## **Art. 2** Subject matter

The census is a survey of persons, households as well as buildings and dwellings that provides the authorities, the business community, research institutions and other interested parties with statistical data that forms the basis for:

- a. planning;
- b. political decisions;
- c. research;
- d. information given to the general public;
- e. the compilation of other statistics.

## **Art. 3** Statistical populations and survey attributes

<sup>1</sup> The Federal Council determines the statistical populations and the survey attributes for the census in an overview.

<sup>2</sup> It updates the overview regularly.

<sup>3</sup> It consults with the cantons in advance and seeks their cooperation.

## **Section 2 Elements of the Census**

### **Art. 4** Register-related surveys and random sample surveys

<sup>1</sup> The census comprises register-related surveys and additional random sample surveys.

<sup>2</sup> The census is constituted by all register-related surveys and random sample surveys in accordance with this Act over ten years.

<sup>3</sup> For the census in general, the Federal Council shall issue more detailed regulations in particular on:

- a. the subject matter of the survey;
- b. the modalities of the survey;
- c. the identifiers;
- d. the quality assurance measures.

### **Art. 5** Register-related survey

<sup>1</sup> In the case of the register-related surveys, in order to compile statistics on persons and household as well as statistics on buildings and dwellings, data in electronic form or in the form of data carriers is compiled from:

- a. the harmonised official federal registers of persons of the Confederation, the cantons and the communes;
- b. the Federal Register of Buildings and Dwellings.

<sup>2</sup> The provision of data is governed by:

- a. the Register Harmonisation Act of 23 June 2006<sup>4</sup> (RHA) and the related implementing provisions;
- b. the provisions on the Federal Register of Buildings and Dwellings.

<sup>3</sup> If the official registers of persons of the Confederation, the cantons and the communes are not harmonised within the periods laid down in the RHA and the related implementing provisions, the competent agencies responsible for maintaining the registers must provide the data in another suitable form on the same due date as the harmonised register data. The Federal Council may instruct the Federal Statistical Office to issue directives that regulate the details.

#### **Art. 6** Random sampling

<sup>1</sup> Random sampling is the representative collection of data from a section of the population or from another group under investigation that is selected randomly according to scientific principles.

<sup>2</sup> It includes:

- a. a structure survey: random sample survey on attributes that are not contained in the Federal Register of Buildings and Dwellings or in the harmonised official federal registers of persons of the Confederation, the cantons or the communes;
- b. thematic random sample surveys: random sample surveys on various social, demographic and cultural subject areas.

<sup>3</sup> The Federal Council shall issue more detailed regulations for each random sample survey and in particular on:

- a. the subject matter of the survey;
- b. the body responsible for the survey;
- c. the periodicity;
- d. the time;
- e. the conduct of the survey;
- f. the method.

#### **Art. 7** Standard programme

<sup>1</sup> The standard programme consists of the register-related surveys and those random sample surveys that are regularly conducted by the Confederation independently of the surveys conducted by the cantons.

<sup>4</sup> SR 431.02