

Online meetings on measuring poverty and inequality, 30 November - 2 December 2021

I. ABSTRACT

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| Title | <i>Covid-19 and living conditions in Switzerland (SILC)</i> |
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| Topic | <i>Survey response in the pandemic context</i> |

In Switzerland, the results of the Survey of Income and Living Conditions (SILC) are usually published about 20 months after the survey phase is completed. This is primarily due to the integration of registry data, the provision of weighting variables, and comprehensive quality controls. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to an increased need for timely statistical information, so options for more rapid publication of certain indicators have been explored.

With experimental analyses based on SILC 2020 and 2021, the FSO was able to provide initial information on the impact of the pandemic on the living conditions of the Swiss resident population only a few months after the last interviews were conducted. This was possible by restricting the analysis to subjective, directly asked questions and by developing an experimental weighting.

The analyses compare the population's subjective assessments of important areas of life (personal relationships, health, financial situation, feeling of happiness, job security etc.) between 2019 and 2021. In 2021, variables from the EU COVID module were also analysed. The results were disaggregated by socio-demographic characteristics including income groups based on self-assessed income at the time of the interview. In 2020, the sample was split in two parts so that interviews held before and during the partial lockdown in March 2020 could be compared. As a result, we were able to compare four points in time.

Main findings were that the COVID-19 pandemic had little impact on the generally high level of satisfaction with personal relationships and one's own state of health. The population's trust in the political system in Switzerland has increased since the beginning of the pandemic. More than 10% of the population faced income losses due to the pandemic; especially those who were already disadvantaged before the crisis. Nevertheless, the share of people making ends meet easily or very easily has increased. This could be explained by a general decline in consumption and a more frequent abandonment of leisure activities during this period. Young people in particular reported that the COVID-19 pandemic had a negative impact on their mood.

The presentation will describe the experimental weighting and show some more detailed results of the evaluations.