



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
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Swiss Confederation

Federal Department of Home Affairs FDHA

Swiss Federal Statistical Office FSO
Resources and International Affairs

Written comments for the 47th UN Statistical Com- mission in March 2017

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Swiss Position

The principle that *“refugees should be included in the usual resident population count if they comply with the usual residence criteria”* will be applied in Switzerland. However, certain restrictions apply to the application of this principle: Migratory flows of asylum seekers can only be recorded in official statistics with a time lag (the immigration of persons in the asylum process only appears in the calendar year after their actual immigration, i.e. after a stay of at least 12 months) and are incomplete (persons who stay in Switzerland for less than a year never appear in the migration statistics). The same applies to the numbers of people in the asylum process.

Given the current political situation in the world, nobody can deny the importance of reliable, complete and timely data. It is also clear that concepts, classifications and definitions must be standardized in order to produce data that is comparable at international level.

But as mentioned in the UN document, national asylum statistics are not necessarily based on EU provisions. At international level, the UNHCR publishes data which is compiled on the basis of other criteria. We should be aiming for harmonized and standardized data collection and dissemination. UN recommendations on this subject should of course be valid not only for the situation in Europe (or in the EU) but for all world regions.

Switzerland agrees with the Statistical Commission's proposal on the establishment of a committee of experts on refugee statistics with participants drawn from both national authorities and international statistical organizations; developing the international recommendations on refugee statistics as well as a refugee statistics compiler's manual.

The management of differently defined statistics and the clarification of these differences already represent today a considerable task. For this reason, further definitions which deviate from national or Eurostat statistics must be avoided at all costs in our opinion.