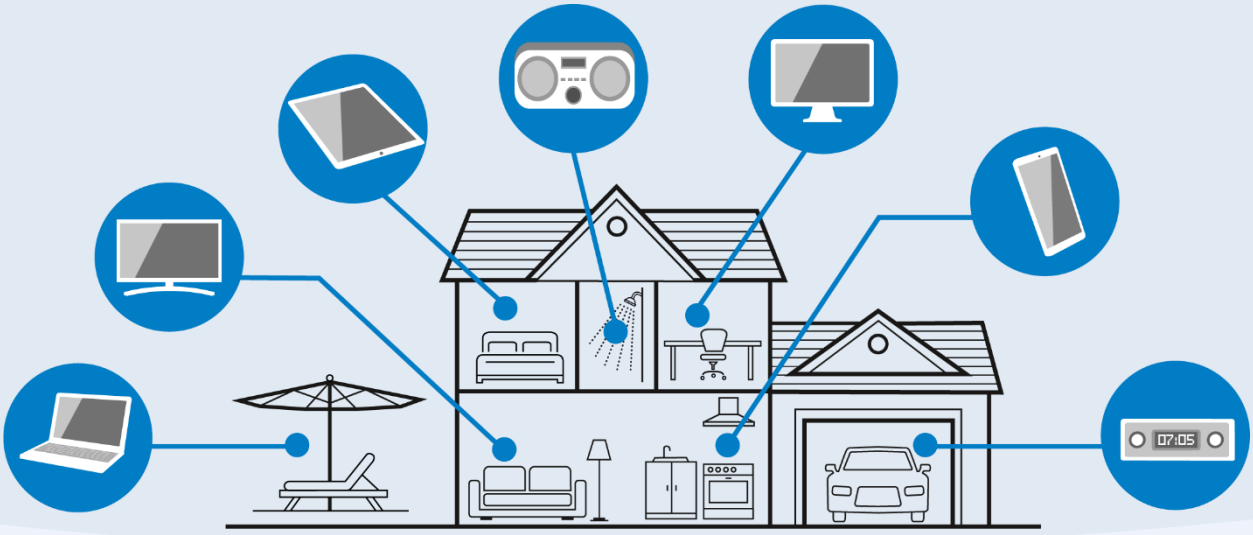


Mediapulse Establishment Survey

Methodology Factsheet

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AG für Medienforschung
SA pour la recherche sur les médias
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Corporation for Media Research

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1 Introduction

The following document describes the methodological design of the Mediapulse Establishment Survey (ES), which has been conducted in its current form since 2009. All information in the following text refers to the current edition of the ES. The ES is commissioned by Mediapulse and carried out by the research institute M.I.S Trend.

The purpose of this document is to provide a generally understandable, transparent explanation of the methodological principles of the Establishment Survey, on which the research process is also based. This will enable data users to properly comprehend and evaluate the collection, processing and quality of the survey data.

2 Object of investigation

The Mediapulse Establishment Survey collects detailed information on the distribution and reception of radio, television and internet in Switzerland. In the long-term study, Mediapulse keeps a continuous record of the devices owned by Swiss households. Thus the ES provides important information for the monitoring of new technologies and the configuration of the various sampling panels operated by Mediapulse (e.g. for the calculation of the TV universes and, derived from this, the recruitment rates and weighting characteristics). With the ES, Mediapulse fulfils the key requirement of the Federal Act on Radio and Television (RTVA) to provide data on the distribution of conventional and new reception devices to the Federal Office of Communications (OFCOM).

The study focuses on the effective penetration of technologies in households by directly surveying the households. The data can be broken down by region, municipality size categories and various household characteristics and is suitable for cross-media analyses via television, radio and the internet. Through the unbroken continuation of the study since 2009, it is possible to systematically track the distribution channels and the evolution of individual media.

3 Universe

The universe of the ES consists of private households in Switzerland with at least one linguistically assimilated household member. The official STATPOP figures of the Federal Statistical Office, which are updated annually, serve as the external specifications for the calculation of the population.

4 Methodological design

The research design of the ES is based on the following two core elements:

- Recruitment and survey of individuals aged 15 years and over residing in private households in Switzerland, based on the Swiss Post address directory and a physical household visit;
- Survey of the technical equipment for receiving radio, television and internet on the basis of a household survey by telephone (CATI), online (CAWI) or a paper questionnaire (PAPI).

The representative survey is conducted twice a year in all three language regions of Switzerland.

5 Survey basis

5.1 Recruitment of the sample

Recruitment of the sample takes place in two stages: firstly, the address is drawn based on the Swiss Post address directory, and secondly, the household is visited to verify and select households at the relevant addresses. The two stages are described in the following.

In order to obtain truly representative statements, the sample needs to include all Swiss households and not only those who request a listing in the telephone directories, as is usual in surveys. The basis for reaching the whole of Switzerland is Swiss Post's complete, continuously updated address directory.[1] However, having the street address alone is not enough to guarantee a survey, as the full address details (name and address) of the household must be known. These are ascertained by field staff from the research institute by means of an in-person visit. Once the name/address combinations have been collected, a survey can take place. The drawing of the addresses and the survey of name/address combinations take place once a year in the spring and summer months and result in the sample for the surveys of the following two ES waves.

5.2 Sample size and structure

The size of the sample drawn from the address directory is around 25,000 addresses, so as to ensure 12,000 completed surveys (households) per year. In addition to the addresses, the address directory also lists the number of associated households per building. This permits the effective drawing of households. The names of the households are read from doorbells and letterboxes. For buildings with multiple households, the households to be drawn are selected at the address using a random key. The address directory does not distinguish between business addresses and private households. If the team find only businesses at the address, they do not include the address. A 10% higher number of addresses is selected initially to make up for such losses.

Since the ES is a household sample, in principle every member of the household aged 15 and over who is able to provide information can answer the questionnaire (by phone, in writing or online). Random selection is not used; instead, an attempt is made to conduct the interview with the household member who is most familiar with the technical equipment in the household.

The annual random drawing of addresses from the address directory is stratified according to the three language regions and the municipality size categories of the Federal Statistical Office (FSO). The language regions are disproportionately represented in the ratio 55:28:17 compared to the real size ratio of 71:24:4. The disproportionality has to correspond to the television panel and allows the smaller regions to be depicted in similar detail to the larger ones. The municipality size categories of the Federal Statistical Office divide Swiss municipalities into urban and rural areas. A slightly disproportionate number of households are drawn from urban areas (since 2015) to compensate for the sample loss, which is usually larger in surveys in urban areas than in rural areas. Taking into account the two strata of language region and urbanity, a purely random drawing proportional to household density is applied. Due to the large sample size, all Swiss municipalities are taken into account each year. In a municipality, the drawing covers the complete area; for the rural areas outside the municipalities the household addresses are drawn from randomly selected communities (sample points). The sample points permit an economical address recruitment process and are redefined at random every year.

[1] https://www.post.ch/de/geschaeftlich/themen-a-z/kundenadressen-pflegen/adressstammdaten

5.3 Ensuring sample quality

For a survey wave, a sufficiently large quantity (usually about 10,000 households) is randomly drawn from the annually renewed address pool. The addresses are checked against the public telephone directories. A telephone survey is preferable in principle, as it usually achieves a better response rate. People who cannot be reached by telephone tend to be younger, more often male, somewhat more highly educated and have a higher income. As such they comprise an indispensable segment for the purpose of obtaining representative figures for the research question of the ES. For this reason, the letter sent to them invites them directly to take part in a written or an online survey.

M.I.S. Trend is instructed to aim for an ideal sample response of 65 percent for telephone contacts and 45 percent for postal contacts, which is supported with a financial incentive through a bonus-malus system.

Targeted measures are taken to optimise the response. Households that can be reached by phone are sent a letter in advance announcing the call that will follow a few days later, and informing them of the purpose of the study. An unlimited number of call attempts are made on varying days of the week and at different times of the day to reach the mobile population. If a person answers but is unable to go through with the call at that time, the interview will be scheduled in the system and conducted later, if necessary by another interviewer. Persons who initially refuse to participate will be contacted a second time, again with a suitable letter sent in advance. These second calls are made by specially qualified and trained staff. If the telephone interview is refused, the paper or online questionnaire can be offered.

The paper questionnaire is accompanied by a similar information letter, login details for the online questionnaire, a prepaid reply envelope and an incentive. A reminder letter will be sent to the non-responding households, enclosing a new questionnaire. The research institute offers a free hotline to all contacted households in case they have questions.

The telephone survey is conducted by trained interviewers from at the headquarters of the M.I.S Trend research institute in Lausanne and Bern. Before each survey wave, the interviewers are briefed in the presence of Mediapulse. The briefing includes an introduction to the study design as well as a detailed explanation of the questionnaire and the technical details it asks about. The interviews can be observed, allowing Mediapulse and the Media Science Commission to regularly assess the quality of the survey.

5.4 Survey method

The ES is conducted using different survey methods. Households with known telephone numbers are surveyed by phone. Households without a telephone number are sent the paper questionnaire. This questionnaire can also be filled out online.

In case of invalid telephone numbers, a paper questionnaire is also sent. All three methods are conducted in the three national languages. If no person in the household over the age of 14 speaks one of the three national languages sufficiently well, the interview cannot be conducted. With the paper questionnaire, however, there is no way of verifying respondents' language skills.

The fieldwork for a survey wave takes four to five months. The wave of the telephone survey is usually completed a little earlier.

5.5 Ensuring the data quality

Most questions in the ES are of a technical nature. Some technical features of the devices and the way in which media is consumed are not readily apparent. In order to obtain the most reliable information possible, the questionnaire is deliberately kept simple. Technical features and their identification are described in

more detail with additional information. The survey form also requests that the person in the household who is most familiar with technical devices should answer the questions.

The average interview duration for the ES is between seven and eight minutes, depending on the size of the household and the devices present. The written version takes between five and fifteen minutes. The survey is kept short to ensure a high willingness to participate.

Furthermore, the first question asked in the ES is whether the address of the household is the primary residence. If this is not the case (second home), the survey is terminated and no interview is conducted. Instead, an interview is conducted with another household.

5.6 Data processing

There are two different weightings used for the ES. The annual figures are published with the household weightings supplied by the M.I.S Trend research institute with the dataset. To calculate the TV universes, the supplier Fifty5Blue Media Switzerland processes the ES and weights it according to its own procedure. The use of the traditional weighting by M.I.S. Trend allows the published values in the annual reports to be compared over time at household level (continuity of the time series). Fifty5Blue, on the other hand, is forced to transform the household data in the ES to the person level and weight it accordingly with personal characteristics such as age and gender in order to subsequently derive the required TV universes from the ES.

5.7 Ensuring the quality of data processing

Various manual checks are carried out to verify the accuracy of the data processing. All variables are checked for completeness in each wave. In addition, the long-term trends of all variables are checked for plausibility in each preparation. If necessary, manual corrections are made after the quality check has been carried out to ensure that the data is completely correct.

6 Data release

In accordance with the legal mandate, the most important key data from the ES on device ownership and the reception situation of radio and television is published in the Mediapulse Annual Report. The complete ES data is marketed by Mediapulse and made available to interested parties in the form of an online evaluation tool.