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## The Swiss Household Panel 2004-2007

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## Scientific Part

### Summary

The principal aim of the *Swiss Household Panel* (SHP) is to observe social change, in particular, the dynamics of changing *living conditions* in the population of Switzerland, which is carried out by annual surveys since 1999. The Swiss Household Panel is a joint project run by Swiss Priority Programme (SPP) *Demain la Suisse*, the *Swiss Federal Statistical Office* and the *University of Neuchâtel*.

The SHP is part of the structural measures undertaken by the SPP *Demain la Suisse* and aims to fulfil the following two main purposes (Budowski et al. 1998a; Budowski et al. 1998b; Farago 1996; Höpflinger and Wyss 1997; Joye and Scherpenzeel 1997):

- 1) To ensure a solid database for social reporting about stability and changes in living arrangements and well-being in Switzerland that complements data collected by the Swiss Federal Statistical Office.
- 2) To promote the opportunities for quantitative social science research by making high quality data available to Swiss social scientists and to the international social science research community.

The *Living in Switzerland* survey of the Swiss Household Panel (SHP) provides a unique longitudinal database in Switzerland. The SHP survey is conducted using computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI). In comparison with panels such as the SOEP in Germany and the BHPS in Britain concentrating on socio-economic conditions, the SHP covers a broader range of topics and approaches in the social sciences. Subjective assessments complement the factual information. To date, the first three waves have been carried out successfully and the fourth wave has just finished. In 1999, the first panel wave, 7,799 members of 5,074 households – from a stratified random sample of the permanent resident population of Switzerland – were interviewed about their living conditions by means of computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI). In the second wave, 4,301 households and 7,073 individuals, and in the third wave 4314 households and 6603 individuals were interviewed. The longitudinal sample over the three waves comprises 5433 individuals. The net response rates for the individuals are between 84% and 88% in the three years, for the households 64% in 1999 and 91% respectively 88% for the years 2000 and 2001.

In August 2001, the research network "Living in Switzerland" had over 150 registered members and about 50 researchers analysing the data on a variety of topics: types of households and families, poverty, health, victimisation, living conditions of elderly people, living conditions of first and second generation immigrants, political participation and life satisfaction, etc. This number has increased to 240 registered members and the 150 active data users as of October 2002. The members of the SHP research team also dedicate part of their time to the analyses of the data. The number of articles published and submitted is growing continuously, as is the number of reports for public organisations (see list in Appendix G). This process has been strongly aided by the NSF "SHP-Data Analysis Grant" administered the SHP Scientific Board. A growing number

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of researchers are including the SHP data in their applications to the Swiss National Science Foundation, for analyses or to situate their own specific research within a national framework.

The Swiss Household Panel is engaged in *national* and *international* cooperation. The SHP cooperates with the Swiss Federal Statistical Office (SFSO) in the areas of survey methods, data quality and social reporting. The joint venture project "Living in Switzerland 2020" (Appendix I) is to consolidate this already fruitful collaboration and to create considerable synergies between the statistical and the scientific research communities. Complementary data will be collected for the *European statistics of Income and Living Conditions* (SILC) by both the SFSO and the SHP. Starting in 2004, the SHP data will be comparable to the data from the European Statistics of Income and Living conditions (SILC). SILC is the continuation of the European Community Household Panel (ECHP). Its main purpose is to collect comparable cross-sectional and longitudinal data on living conditions and income, especially with regard to poverty and social exclusion, for each of the EU countries and for the EU as a whole.

At the international level, the SHP has actively participated in the CHER (Consortium of Household Panels for European Socio-Economic Research) that has harmonised and standardised information available in various household panels. The CHER core data set on income, employment, living conditions and health is to be released in July 2003. It contains information from the following countries:<sup>1</sup> *Germany* (since 1984); *United Kingdom* (since 1991); *Denmark, Netherlands, France, Ireland, Italy, Greece, Spain and Portugal* (since 1994); *Austria and Finland* (since 1995); *Sweden* (since 1997); *Switzerland* (since 1999). The SHP also provides its data to the LIS (Luxembourg Income Study). Both data sets allow for international comparisons in the fields of labour market participation and incomes from various sources both at the household and individual levels.

The present proposal for funding covers the *fifth to eighth wave of data collection* of the *Swiss Household Panel* (SHP) during the years 2004-2007, as well as "in-house" data analysis in certain areas of social science research. It is the continuation of the initial overall grant request NR. 5504-53205 (December 1997) and the follow-on requests NR. 5004-57894 (October 1999), 5004-067304 (September 2001).

The comprehensive costs for the four years 2004-2007 are 8,8 million CHF. The costs for running the Swiss Household Panel are highest in 2004 and then decline with a slight upturn in 2007. After the five initial panel waves (1999, 2000, 2001, 2002 and 2003), a refreshment sample of an estimated 3'000 households is necessary as panel membership will have declined from approximately 5'000 households in 1999 to about 3000 in 2003 (wave 5) to obtain total number of 6'000 households effectively interviewed in 2004. Beginning 2005 the number of interviewed households and persons will again diminish due to losses of different kinds (moving abroad, untraceable addresses, refusals, and death). Households still members of the SHP will receive a small gift in the year 2007.

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<sup>1</sup> Updated information can be obtained on the website [cher.ceps.lu/scripts/public.cfm](http://cher.ceps.lu/scripts/public.cfm) or by writing to Mr. Adrian Birch: [Adrian.birch@ceps.lu](mailto:Adrian.birch@ceps.lu).

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## 1. Research plan

### 1.1 Account of the state of research in the field

Dynamic transformations on a multitude of levels constitute an important characteristic of modern societies (Giddens 1991; Giesen and Schmid 1990; Leisering and Walker 1998; Suter 2000; Therborn 1995). Demographic changes call for analyses (Fux and Baumgartner 1998; Fux et al. 1997; Gabadinho and Wanner 1999), as well as various changes in the labour market (Flückiger 2000). The latter, in particular, are considered to impact on the well-being (material and psychological) of households and individuals (Flückiger 2000; Paugam 2000), as well as on the informal production of services, such as child care or care of elderly (Bauer 1998; Bundesamt für Statistik 2000a; Bundesamt für Statistik 2000b). The participation rate of women in the labour market is increasing, often entailing changes in the organisation of domestic life (Buchmann et al. 2002; Bühler 2001; Höpflinger, Charles, and Debrunner 1991). In Switzerland, data is available to describe the current social structure. Panel data allow for more: *panel data* are data collected about the same units at more than one point in time. They allow for insights into dynamic transformations – social processes and changes across time (Berthoud and Gershuny 2000; Buck et al. 1994; Duncan 1992; Duncan and Hill 1985; Duncan and Kalton 1987; Gershuny 1998; Kasprzyk et al. 1989; Leisering and Walker 1998). Instead of simply taking a snapshot of people and households at one given point in time, what cross-sectional data allows for, interviewing the same households and their members annually enables the observation of changes for the same entities and the reconstruction of the nature and development of their actions, the examination of precedents, concurrent dynamics, and the consequences of alternative strategies.

*Household panels* allow for insights about the population on three levels: (i), social change can be studied at a micro-level, (ii), on an intermediate level (the level linking the individual with society, i.e. the household level) and (iii) is the level regarding the assessments of dynamics between the structural and the cultural dimension and behavior over time. (i) *The first perspective* enables the observation of individual life-courses, relating them to living conditions, and decisions made according to or reactions following life events. (ii) An intermediate level of analysis permits an understanding of the interrelationship between socio-structural and cultural aspects and individuals' resources, constraints, and strategic responses or deliberate choices. Household and family dynamics shed light on gender, generation relationships and their possible consequences. Household and family strategies and reactions may be studied, as in principle all the household members aged 14 and older are interviewed. This perspective leads to a better understanding of the link between individuals and society. Households (often equivalent with families) as units of analysis provide a rare opportunity to examining the "black box" of household dynamics, i.e. the constraints or privileges of unequal access to resources across time (e.g. division of labor in terms of paid and unpaid work, or caring responsibilities, unequal access to household resources such as time and money, life events, etc.) (e.g. Berthoud and Gershuny 2000; Budowski and Scherpenzeel 2003). (iii) Finally, panel data offer the opportunity to go beyond the description of the status quo, by allowing for the assessment of the dynamics between the structural and the cultural dimension and behavior over time. In many domains, change takes place slowly and gradually, even though it may not be immediately apparent. Furthermore, although the

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dynamics and/or patterns of the same social phenomenon may have changed, the phenomenon as such continues to exist. For example, although poverty may continue, the mechanisms of entry and exit may have altered, or the population groups constituting the "poverty-prone" may have changed. Alternatively the institution "family" may continue to exist but its meaning, internal organisation or other factors may have varied. Snapshots from transversal surveys reveal a status quo and over time may reveal net change or document stability. Gross changes, however, cannot be measured. In sum, household panels are considered to be tools for fine-tuning our conceptions and analyses of social dynamics (Berthoud and Gershuny 2000; Rose 1995). The dynamics (or social changes) at the macrosocial level do not directly belong to the field of observation covered by a panel survey. What panel surveys are intended to investigate, however, are the effects of changes at the macrosocial level on the living conditions of individuals and households, the manner in which these changes affect them and how they produce social change on a microsocial level.

There are various types of longitudinal data: retrospective recall of events; repeat surveys; cohort surveys; and household panel surveys. Longitudinal surveys include, notably, retrospective (biographical) surveys and other types of panels (cohort panels, rotating panels). In all cases, the main characteristic of the longitudinal survey is to provide repeated (reproduced) observations over a period of time for a set of variables for the group of individuals (or households) interviewed. Consequently these allow for richer dynamic analyses than is possible by repeating cross-sectional surveys. Household panels, such as the SHP survey, are obviously not the only type of longitudinal survey (Buck, Ermisch, and Jenkins 1996). However, household panel surveys are considered to have the "widest general applications" (Berthoud and Gershuny 2000:15-16). As they are prospective surveys, they need less to deal with recall errors. By observing the same households and individuals over the course of time, panel surveys furnish the database necessary for investigating the effects that macro-social changes have on the living conditions of individuals and households, the manner in which these changes affect the individuals and households, and how they produce social change on a micro-social level. The main purpose of household panels is therefore to understand the processes, causes and effects of the social changes.

While a repeated cross-sectional survey allows for calculating *net transitions* between two dates (e.g. a drop in the proportion of the population receiving social benefits, or a rise in unemployment), *gross transitions* (e.g. the number of unemployed still without a job one year later) can only be estimated with panel or cohort data. Beyond the sheer estimation of gross transitions the analysis of panel data also helps to "understand" the observed transitions i.e. the circumstances (family events, a change in the activity status, events related to the state of health, etc.) causing movements in and out of a given state (e.g. the fact that an individual or a household is living below the poverty line). In other words, it is not only possible to study the change in numbers but also the flows between various states and to establish links of causal relationships between different factors and sequences of events. Last but not least, panel data also reveal the continuities, the stable features over time. Where a status quo can be defined, change as well as continuity can be examined. Indeed, despite profound structural changes that contemporary societies are currently undergoing, which are the consequence of economic globalisation, uneven

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regional developments around the world, and worldwide demographic changes in general daily life is characterised more by stability than change. This is true as much for social structures, norms and values, as for individual and institutional behaviour. Daily life is enacted within a prevalent social order in time and place, characterised by a structural and cultural dimension, that is lived, produced, reproduced, and altered by behaviour. These dimensions (the structural and cultural dimension, and that concerning behaviour) are found both on a macro and a micro level. Change may take place within any of the three dimensions and need not necessarily go hand in hand with changes in the other dimensions (Budowski et al. 1998a; Budowski et al. 2001; Tillmann et al. 2001).

That transformations or social change can indeed be studied in more detail, is evidenced by the yield of publications using panel data (visible on the websites of the respective panels) as well as the two exemplary publications of the British Household Panel survey precisely dedicated to demonstrate what panel data can reveal (Berthoud and Gershuny 2000; Buck et al. 1994).

Household panel publications satisfy not only the needs of research but also political needs. The data from household panel surveys is used for a better understanding of particular research questions (the functioning of the labour market or the social security system) as well as in social monitoring and for developing enlightened policies (Rose 1995). Indeed, in the United States as well as in the United Kingdom, the household panel data have been of great interest for social science research, policy formulation and evaluation. As the list of *Reports and other Publications with SHP Data* in Appendix G reveals, such needs have also been satisfied by analyses with the SHP data.

The European Household Panel survey, for example, is an instrument monitoring the developments within the EU, in particular the "income components including social transfers, income related to domains such as labour market, education, etc., poverty, equal opportunities and education and training" (European Commission 1998: 2-3). In 1995 over 60,000 private households and persons were surveyed about issues concerning income, living conditions, housing, health and work in the then 12 member states. The new EU-members are not included in the survey but cross-sectional information is extracted from administrative registers and the national Living Conditions Survey (the latter for Sweden only). Future surveys, such as the EU-SILC, the *European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions* project, will include questions with regard to "social exclusion, labour market exclusion, ins and outs from poverty and social exclusion as well as labour market policies (including specific training for the unemployed...), ins and outs from long term unemployment, ins and outs from youth unemployment" (ibid) and income. Not all countries continued to regularly carry out the interviews, but derived data from either from comparable data from other existing surveys or from information from registers. "After a duration of eight years (1994-2001), Eurostat together with Member States decided to stop the European Community Household Panel (ECHP) project and to replace it in 2003 with a new instrument, EU-SILC (Statistics on Income and Living Conditions)" (Clémenceau and Wirtz 2001:2). SILC's main purpose is to collect comparable cross-sectional and longitudinal data on living conditions and income, especially with regard to poverty and social exclusion, for each of the EU countries and for the EU as a whole. Starting in 2004, the SHP data will be comparable to the data from the European Statistics of Income and Living conditions

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(SILC). Indeed, in a joint-venture project the SHP will together with the Swiss Federal Statistical office ensure data comparable to SILC (Zimmermann et al. 2002).

According to information displayed on the PSID website ([www.isr.umich.edu/src/psid/panelstudies.html](http://www.isr.umich.edu/src/psid/panelstudies.html)), household panels now exist or previously existed in the following European and North American countries: Belgium, Canada, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, (Spain, however with no specifications), Sweden, United Kingdom, United States and Germany. Australia is building up a household panel and the data should be available at the earliest at the end of 2001. In Eastern and Central European countries, there are household panels in Hungary, Poland and Russia, in Asian countries in Japan, Korea, Indonesia and Taiwan. In Latin American countries, a household panel exists in Mexico. A review of the topics addressed by the panels reveals a focus on the socio-economic domains (labour market, income and the household composition) in the European and North American panels as well as those in the Central and Eastern European countries. However, most include either few basic indicators of other domains and go somewhat more into depth in one or another further domain (e.g. health, satisfaction, poverty, division of labour within the households, childcare arrangements or time allocation). The British Household Panel Survey and the Swiss Household Panel appear the most "comprehensive" in terms of the topics addressed, including also subjective assessments. The Japanese and the Korean panels focus mainly on income, the labour market, and the household and family, as does the Australian as well. The Mexican and Indonesian panels by contrast are rather comprehensive and broad surveys, including questions regarding demography, childcare and fertility, migration. In a brief comparison with the various existing panels, in particular with the most known, the BHPS, the SOEP and the PSID, the Swiss compares well in terms of issues addressed, comparability (standardised variables) and initial number of households interviewed in 1999 (all started with approximately 5000 households). The number of individuals varies due to the size of the households in the respective country and the earlier dates of begin (PSID in 1968, SOEP in 1984 and the BHPS in 1991). The BHPS, the SOEP and the PSID have all been extremely valuable for research and many relevant questions have been addressed empirically by means of the data available

The *Panel Comparability Project* (PACO) pools a great deal of the by now very rich international experience with household panels. With regard to international collaborations, the SHP participates in the *Consortium of Household Panels for European Socio-Economic Research* (CHER). CHER (Consortium of Household Panels for European Socio-Economic Research) has harmonised and standardised information available in various household panels. The CHER core data set on income, employment, living conditions and health is to be released in July 2003. It contains information from the following countries:<sup>2</sup> *Germany* (since 1984); *United Kingdom* (since 1991); *Denmark*, *Netherlands*, *France*, *Ireland*, *Italy*, *Greece*, *Spain* and *Portugal* (since 1994); *Austria* and *Finland* (since 1995); *Sweden* (since 1997); *Switzerland* (since 1999). The SHP also provides its data to the LIS (Luxembourg Income Study). Both data sets allow for

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international comparisons in the fields of labour market participation and incomes from various sources both at the household and individual levels.

The situation in Switzerland regarding research on social change and the availability of data has been described in some depth in the initial grant application for the Swiss Household Panel (SHP)<sup>3</sup>. The two main conclusions were:

1. Despite the wealth of data collected stemming mainly from statistical sources and repeated surveys, only aggregate social change can be studied adequately;
2. To observe processes of social change and its repercussion on various population groups, a Household Panel comparable to panel studies abroad was to be initiated for Switzerland.

The Swiss Household Panel was inspired by various international panel studies. However, it is not a blend of existing panels for two main reasons: the SHP (1) covers various domains of every day life and not only one or two in depth and (2) attempts to distinguish the dimensions necessary to anticipate social change in Switzerland continuously. This is done by means of a yearly panel survey based on an architecture, situating the types of questions to be chosen for the survey ("objective questions" such as questions about living conditions, "subjective questions", such as the evaluation of and behaviour as reaction to certain objective situations). The two types of questions are necessary to understand both the change of "objective" conditions and the importance given to them or the assessments made about them. Changes may occur on regarding the subjective assessments or regarding the objective conditions, and they need not occur simultaneously. Thematic and methodological adaptations to the particularities of Switzerland were carried out and proved to be necessary.

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<sup>3</sup> NSF Grant NR. 5504-53205.

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## 1.2 Account of own research in the field – project history

### 1.2.1 Preparatory steps

In January 1998, the Swiss National Science Foundation took the final decision to fund the SHP. When the panel survey was being designed, roughly 80 researchers stated their interest in certain topics and methodologies, and they became the core of the Living in Switzerland research network. In tandem with establishing the scientific basis, defining the relevant indicators and drawing up the questionnaires, two important decisions were made. The first was that *telephone interviewing would be used*, CATI (computer-assisted telephone interviewing) rather than face-to-face using CAPI (computer-assisted personal interviewing) due to considerations of quality and cost (Scherpenzeel 2000c; Scherpenzeel, Wernli, and Eichenberger 1999). The second decision was that *a survey institute would be mandated to carry out the interviews*. A call for tenders was launched in early September 1998 among institutes which are members of the nation-wide survey research association called SWISS-Interview. After a detailed examination of the tenders from interested parties, and discussions and negotiations with the various institutes, M.I.S. Trend in Lausanne was chosen mid-December 1998. In January 1999, the household and individual questionnaires were submitted to the Living in Switzerland research network for consultation, then passed to the Steering Committee for approval. Over 50 researchers provided comments and suggestions which were systematically evaluated according to various criteria: compatibility with the panel structure, necessity of a longitudinal perspective, and implications for the questionnaire in the long term. In the light of these criteria, it was not possible to take all the remarks into account. A series of *qualitative and quantitative pre-tests* were conducted from February to the end of June 1999. These were used to fine-tune the questionnaires and the survey procedure and helped to improve communication with the households and the interviewees.

### 1.2.2 Project Organisation

The SHP survey (also named the Living in Switzerland survey) represents the major element of the structural measures undertaken by the Swiss Priority Programme (SPP) *Demain la Suisse* for collecting basic data<sup>4</sup>. Its purpose is to contribute to improving the situation for social sciences in terms of quantitative data, to act as a reliable barometer of social change and provide an in-depth analysis of social dynamics in Switzerland (Farago 1996; Farago 2000).

The Swiss Household Panel survey is a joint project run by the *SPP Demain la Suisse*, the *University of Neuchâtel* and the *Swiss Federal Statistical Office*. These three partners are represented on the *SHP Steering Committee ("Steuerausschuss")* and make strategic decisions regarding the content and running of the Living in Switzerland panel survey.

During the years 1998 and 1999 a *project group*, composed of members from the *Swiss Federal Statistical Office (SFSO)* and the *SHP-Team*, advised the SHP on technical issues (e.g. methodology, sampling, etc.) and allowed the SHP research team to benefit from the experiences and knowledge of the Swiss Federal Statistical Office. Because of

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<sup>4</sup> Demain la Suisse – Phase 2: Are listed under Basic Data the Swiss Household Panel Survey, the European Social Survey, the International Social Survey Program ISSP, the Luxembourg Income/Employment Study, Eurobarometer.

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this project group, good relations have been established between the two institutions (SHP-SFSO) and the knowledge transfer works well.

Based at the University of Neuchâtel, the interdisciplinary *SHP team* is composed by six social scientists, one data management specialist and a part-time webmaster. The SHP team has the operational responsibility for designing and managing the survey, and for appropriately distributing the data to interested researchers. The own scientific interests of the panel team cover a wide range of topics: "precariousness and poverty", "social stratification and social mobility", "living conditions and health", "changes in living conditions of single mothers", "living conditions and social networks", "the impact of social change on political participation and values", "social change and quality of life".

On behalf of the Swiss Household Panel the Survey Institute *M.I.S. Trend*<sup>5</sup> is mandated to carry out all field related tasks: a) to keep track of all the SHP households and their members to be interviewed, b) to programme the SHP questionnaires into the CATI system and ascertain the correctness of the sequence of questions depending on complex filtering, c) to hire, train and supervise the interviewers, d) to realise all the necessary telephone interviews each year totalling in a several thousand interview hours yearly, e) to transmit the data collected in an appropriate format to the SHP team in Neuchâtel, and last but not least f) to warrant confidentiality during the interview process and the protection of the identities of all persons and households that have been interviewed.

In Spring 2001, a Scientific Board was constituted comprising nine experts from Switzerland and abroad. It has the dual role of guaranteeing the scientific quality of the collection and the analysis of the data, of promoting projects using the SHP data by providing them financial support and of ensuring scientific publications (see Appendix F).

The *Research Network Living in Switzerland* (Appendix D): In May 1998, 3'500 Swiss social scientists were contacted by the Swiss Information and *Data Archive Service for the Social Sciences* (SIDOS). The heads of all social science departments and institutes in Switzerland received the same letter from the Swiss National Science Foundation and were requested to communicate its contents to all interested researchers within their institution. The letter contained a call for proposals on research topics requiring panel data and questions related to them. The same call was published in the bulletins of the political sciences and sociology. Fifty-five people responded, sending proposals, comments, or suggestions. The panel team evaluated these according to the following criteria: a) the need for a panel design (i.e. excluding interests that could be sufficiently covered by cross sectional designs, such as the incidence of a particular issue), b) the relevance of the issue for social change and monitoring, and c) the number of questions necessary to address the proposed issue in a satisfactory way. The concept of the SHP and

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<sup>5</sup> The survey institute M.I.S. Trend is owned and headed by Mrs. Marie-Hélène Miauton. It is located in Lausanne. Founded in the early 1980s, M.I.S. has been pioneering computer assisted interviewing in Switzerland (Pont Bessières 3,1005 Lausanne, E-mail: miss@vtx.ch). – Professor André Kuhn (Université de Lausanne) is the project leader at M.I.S. Trend; he is assisted by: Mrs. Corina Fleischhacker (lic. phil.) responsible for the training of supervisors and interviewers; Mr. Süreya Ozkan is responsible for the CATI-programming and the organisation of the CATI survey laboratory; Mrs. Pia Frey, Ms. Chantal Fauchère, Mr. Birger Hogrefe, Mr. Jonas Ziegler, Mr. Till Mrosk, Mr. David Edelman and Mr. Christophe Addor are in charge of the supervision of the interviewers.

the criteria guiding the SHP team's decisions concerning the evaluation of the proposals were presented and discussed in the June 1999 seminar.

A second wave of consultation with researchers related to the preliminary version of the questionnaire was launched in January 1999. Eighty-five researchers, affiliated to the research network and expressing interest in the panel, received the draft version of the questionnaire. About forty of them offered critical and constructive comments. These comments were documented and taken into consideration for the final version of the questionnaire.

The resulting SHP questionnaire is the product of the panel architecture elaborated to guide the decisions as well as the extensive consultation period and procedures. It collects data on households and their members about living conditions (i.e. housing, financial situation, environment), work and job situation, family composition and social networks, health, time budget and leisure activities, social integration and participation, political participation and values, life satisfaction and expectations. Conceptually the first wave is to provide a "base line", a "departure point". The first wave comprises detailed information on various domains. From the second wave onwards, the "longitudinal" nature of the data set is emphasized. Most of the indicators available in the first wave remained, yet the number of questions per indicator were considerably reduced in order to add a work status calendar and a life-events module.

In order to maintain the contact with the researchers that contributed to the elaboration of the questionnaire and with researchers using the data, the SHP team periodically organises seminars and working sessions. These seminars are to an increasing extent based on the contributions of the researchers themselves. Up to date seven workshops have been organized:

Table 1: Workshops of the research network *Living in Switzerland* - 1999-2003

Date	Topics
01.10.1998	SHP: architecture, concepts, and indicators
17.06.1999	Experiences from the pilot-study and discussion of proposed modifications of the questionnaires
11.11.1999	Quality of survey methods
06.07.2000	Data workshop for 1 <sup>st</sup> wave beta-version data users
12-13.12.2000	Social stratification and applications to panel data
22-23.11.2001	Cross-sectional and longitudinal analysis of the Swiss Household Panel Data
10.4.2003	Peer-reviews and discussion of contributions to the reader " <i>Living in Switzerland. One year in the lives of households and families in Switzerland</i> " among the authors

### 1.2.3 The first four waves of the survey (1999-2002)

The data collection of the *first wave* was carried out from September 1999 to February 2000. Out of the 14,174 addresses receiving an invitation to participate in the survey, telephone contacts were made with 12,084 households (85%). At the household level, the net response rate was 64%. To warrant reliable extrapolations for the whole resident population of Switzerland and a panel of about 4,000 households and 6,600 individuals for the second wave, it was necessary to obtain the participation of at least 5,000 households in the first wave. This goal was achieved, as the first wave yielded valid data

for 5,074 households and 7,799 individuals. As the first wave was to furnish a wealth of "baseline information", the questionnaire was very detailed and rather long regarding the interview time. The household interviews lasted an average of 12 minutes and individual interviews an average of 55 minutes. In total, slightly fewer than 8,500 hours of telephone interviews were carried out. The finalised set, with transversal weighting and constructed variables, was available in spring 2001.

From the *second wave* onwards, the questionnaire was to be reduced and slightly altered, to include a working status calendar and the occurrence of life events in the year between the interviews. The data collection of the second wave started in September 2000 and ended in February 2001. Valid data was collected for approximately 4,300 households and 7,000 individuals (see Tables 1 and 2). The longitudinal sample (individuals interviewed in the first and second waves) comprises approximately 6,400 individuals. The data of the second wave has been first released in autumn 2001.

The data collection of the *third wave* was carried out from mid-September 2001 to the end of January 2002. With the exception of "final refusals", all the first wave households were contacted early September 2001. 4314 households participated and 6'601 persons were validly interviewed. The CD containing the three first waves will be distributed before the summer break 2003.

The data collection of the *fourth wave* has just finished. The SHP team is presently carrying out its routine controls. Approximately 4600 households and 5700 individuals were interviewed.

Table 2: Participation in the " Living in Switzerland Survey"

Number of participating units	1999	2000	2001
Participating households	5,074	4,532	4,314
Persons living in participating households	12,931	11,678	11,116
Persons aged 14 years and older eligible for individual interviewing	10,148	9,420	8,600
Personal interviews	7,799	7,073	6,601
Proxy Interviews	2,638	2,381	2,174
Persons responding in current and all previous waves	-----	6,335	5,433

Source: Swiss Household Panel, 1999, 2000, 2001

Table 3: Response rates

	1999		2000		2001	
	gross	net	gross	net	gross	net
Grid level	42%	64%	87%	91%	82%	88%
Individual level	76%	85%	76%	84%	74%	88%

Source: Swiss Household Panel, 1999, 2000, 2001

Remarks: The *gross* response rate is the ratio of number of respective interviews completed to number of individuals or households who were contacted but did not participate for whatever reason. The first year, 1999, however, is an exception, as the gross individual response rate refers to the ratio of number of individuals interviewed to the number of all household members eligible to be interviewed. The *net* response rate is the ratio of the number of interviews completed to the number of individuals or household reached excluding those who did not participate for neutral reasons.

#### 1.2.4 The biographical self-administered questionnaire

From the very start, the SHP planned to obtain, at a single occasion, additional information about the respondents life course prior to their panel study involvement. A retrospective biographical questionnaire was developed for that purpose, asking about educational -, working -, and family history. This questionnaire was to be sent by mail. However, the main objective of a panel study is to obtain repeated measures and it therefore is crucial to keep the drop-out rate between interviewing waves as low as possible. It was feared that an extra mail questionnaire between two regular interview waves would burden the respondents and thus discourage some of them from further participation in the phone survey.

In general, the drop-out rate of panels appears to be highest at the second wave of interviewing and attain a stable rate from the third wave onwards (GSOEP, BHSP: personal communication). Therefore, the biographical questionnaire was only sent after the second survey wave.. A pre-test was carried out to estimate the effect of the mailing of the biographical questionnaire on the response rates in the subsequent panel wave. In addition, the effect of combining the questionnaire with a special incentive<sup>6</sup> was evaluated (Scherpenzeel et al. 2002). The "experiment" with the biographical self-administered questionnaire was carried out mid-May 2001 till mid-June 2001. The data was evaluated by the PAVIE (Institut lémanique d'étude des parcours et modes de vie, Universities of Lausanne and Geneva) and suggestions to improve the questionnaire, despite the high quality of data it yielded were made. Accordingly, some adaptations were made to the final self-administered biographic questionnaire. As a result of the evaluation of the "experiment", namely that no particularly high drop out rate (defined as more than 5%) could be found, the final biographical self-administered questionnaire was sent after the third wave (2002) to all persons, 14 years and older that are eligible

<sup>6</sup> The incentive consisted in the announced participation in a lottery with cash prizes totalling 20,000 CHF (First price: 10,000 CHF, 5 times 1,000 CHF and 10 times 500 CHF). The effect of incentives on response rates has well been documented for cross-sectional studies. Less is known about the effect on drop-out rates in panel studies (Singer 1998).

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respondents of participating households<sup>7</sup>, that had not been sent a biographical questionnaire after the second wave (2001) during the "experiment". The participation rate is 70% for the "experiment" and slightly lower for the final survey. All informations collected by the means of the biographical questionnaire were again treated by the PAVIE. For the common SHP data user this effort yields a few constructed *synthetic variables* (e.g. household composition during childhood, age when living home, age at first paid job, number of marriages) that will be added to the already existing survey data, in order to obtain a greater timespan for longitudinal analyses. The final biographical data are ready since end of May 2003 and will shortly be released.

Such a biographical questionnaire mailing will be carried out once every four years with those participants who have not filled in (or refused to fill in) the biographical questionnaire previously. The mailing will take place in the "second" wave for the "new", i.e. the samples periodically refreshing the existing longitudinal sample.

### 1.2.5 Documentation and diffusion of the data

If the SHP-data should be analysed by an increasing number of social scientists, the data needs to be well documented and easy to use. Consequently, a very important investment has been made resulting in the following products and services:

*SHP Electronic Documentation System(EDS)*. The SHP Electronic Documentation System is a further development of the documentation system VARINFO<sup>8</sup> that was used in 1999. The SHP Electronic Documentation System is specifically adapted to the particular needs of the Swiss Household Panel. It facilitates the presentation of the questionnaires and the codebooks on the website allowing for searches of variables online and displays of frequencies counts by year. The SHP Electronic Documentation System is further an important instrument in the daily working routine of the SHP Team. It contains all information about the questions, the modifications, the filters, etc. The household and individual questionnaires can easily be made prepared in all four available languages (German, French, Italian and English) or any of them separately. The EDS also provides the syntax for SPSS and SAS<sup>9</sup> variables and value labels in same four languages. Thus, the service the SHP team can offer to researchers has been considerably improved. By 2004, *SHP Electronic Documentation System* is to be linked to the relational ORACLE driven database containing the SHP data.

*SPSS, SAS and STATA data files*. The data are available in the form of portable SPSS, SAS and STATA system files, the almost universally used statistical programs in the

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<sup>7</sup> A household is defined as "participating" when the composition of the household has been given by one of the eligible persons ("household grid"), a longer questionnaire about living conditions of the household as a whole has been filled in by one person ("household questionnaire") and at least one of the eligible members of the household has completed his/her personal interview ("individual questionnaire"). This is all done by telephone.

<sup>8</sup> The VARINFO was set up in collaboration with the SIDOS<sup>8</sup> in Neuchâtel to document the various questionnaires in four languages and to produce a codebook; this for each of the consecutive panel survey waves.

<sup>9</sup> SPSS – Statistical Program for the Social Sciences, 444 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60611 (U.S.A) / SAS – Statistical Analysis System.

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social sciences. The data in these files are labelled so that the users need little additional information for the analysis, except for the precise question wordings (available in the SHP Electronic Documentation System, see above).

*SHP-CD-ROM and HTML navigation system.* The SHP data including all the relevant additional information are made available on a CD-ROM. The HTML navigation system allows for a easy access to the various pieces of information. The main documentation as well as working papers and already existing publications can be printed and downloaded. With the exception of the panel data, all this information is also accessible on the SHP web-site.

*SHP Web-site* <http://www.swisspanel.ch> is mainly oriented towards the Research Network *Living in Switzerland*. The participating researchers and their interests are listed and updated weekly. Any information regarding the data is regularly put on the web, be this new (synthetic) variables or detected errors, further detailed information, etc.

The beta-version of the first wave data has been made available to the interested researchers in August 2000; the final version in June 2001. The second wave final version data was distributed in May 2002 (the beta version was available from June 2001 onwards). The beta version of the third wave was available in June 2002, the final version will be released in June 2003. The fourth wave beta version data should be available in August 2003, the final version approximately June 2004. The beta version is available rather quickly, but does not contain all the constructed and synthetic variables. Various manual tasks are necessary to produce the final data set, such as the manual coding of professions, when numeric codes could not be attributed during the interview (done at MIS Trend in Lausanne), the manual coding of the companies (the manual codings of the company's address, the manual codings of area codes according to the exact addresses (executed by Microgis, Geomatics in St-Sulpice). Furthermore, the panel team invests much time in plausibilising demographic (carried out in part by a Mandate to Dr. Philippe Wanner at the Swiss Migration Forum) and income data (Budowski, Gabadinho, and Tillmann 2002; Gabadinho and Budowski 2002) due to their complexity.

By and large, there are no restrictions on the use of SHP data. However, interested parties must sign a contract with the SHP undertaking to 1) use the data only for predefined research purposes; 2) inform the SHP of their experiences and their publications; 3) refrain from transmitting the data to third parties; 4) play an active role in the Living in Switzerland research network; finally 5) the data users must refrain from using the data for commercial purposes; the use of the SHP data for commercial purposes is strictly forbidden. Research purposes refer to scientific research, social reporting, research for Federal Departments, work with the data for purposes of study (thesis or semester papers) and teaching. The topics being analysed and the identity of members of the network are listed on the SHP web-site <http://www.swisspanel.ch>. On signature of the contract, the data and the documentation is provided on a CD-ROM for PC or Mac.

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### 1.3 Detailed research plan

The scientific and political foundation for the SHP have been already described in the earlier proposals (main proposal NR. 5504-53205 December 1997 / follow-up proposal NR. 5004-57894 October 1999, (Zimmermann, Hainard, and Gilomen 1997; Zimmermann et al. 1999). A detailed description of the SHP was published in June 2001 by the Swiss Federal Statistical Office in German and French (Tillmann et al. 2001a; Tillmann et al. 2001b). A somewhat shortened English language version was published in Schmoller's Jahrbuch (Budowski et al. 2002) and a the full version in the ZUMA Nachrichten (Budowski and Wanner 2001). The SHP is to continue the already proven fruitful collaboration with the Swiss Federal Statistical Office. The "Living in Switzerland 2020"(LiS 2020),a joint-venture project between the SHP and the SFSO benefits both parties by producing valuable synergies (know-how transfer, lower costs, creation of the opportunity of a larger sample size for both parties involved). The joint-venture project "Living in Switzerland 2020" creates a "win-win" situation for both parties, reinforces the cooperation between the Swiss Federal Statistical Office and the Swiss social science community and warrants the SHP's autonomy over the long term (Zimmermann et al. 2002).

Briefly summarised, the main characteristics of the *Swiss Household Panel* (SHP) are:

The SHP study is based on a *comprehensive survey* covering a broad range of social fields and a variety of topics. Data on households and individuals are collected about the following issues: a) *household composition* and *links* between all the members of the household, b) *life events* dated by month, c) *living conditions* such as housing, financial situation, environment, d) *work and job situation*, as well as *employment calendar* between interviews, e) *social networks*, f) *health*, g) *leisure activities*, h) *social integration and participation*, i) *political participation and values*, j) *gender*, and k) *life satisfaction and expectations*. To add depth in time, retrospective biographical data is collected (see research instruments "biographical questionnaire").

The *sample* of the SHP is a stratified random sample of private households whose members represent the non-institutional population resident in Switzerland (for details see section 1.3.3). The first wave of the SHP-survey data was collected in autumn 1999 through February 2000. These households and their members are to be re-interviewed annually for 10 to 15 years. Due to continuous loss of these original (longitudinal) sample members (deaths, hospitalisation, migration, refusals) the SHP will refresh the sample every four years by injecting the number of "new" households required to obtain in 2004 a starting base of 6000 households that includes the remaining number of households with longitudinal respondents.

The method of data collection is CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing). This method was complemented by a written self-administrated biographical questionnaire that was carried out during the months of April to June in 2001 as an experiment to examine whether this written survey would negatively impact on the CATI-survey response rates. With the result that this was not the case (Scherpenzeel et al. 2002), the written self-administrated biographical questionnaire was sent in 2002 to all the 2001 wave respondents that had not been participants of the "experiment". Therefore, the written self-administrated biographical questionnaire will also in future complement

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the CATI method periodically for the panel survey once in between four consecutive waves to obtain the same information from the "new" members of the panel as are available for the original sample members from 1999 in order to provide a greater "depth" for longitudinal analyses of the data collected with the CATI mode. It is planned that the "new" respondents receive the self-administrated biographical questionnaire after their second wave of CATI interviewing, that is in the wave 2005.

One of the key focuses of social science is the understanding of causal relationships. Previous experiences or events in time and place, their intensity, and their duration are likely to impact upon subsequent experiences, events and behaviour, on social structure, and on norms and values. Prospective panel studies constitute potentially effective instruments for disentangling causes from effects in the study of social change, for connecting events sequentially, placing them in time and space, and for studying the interrelationships between changes on several dimensions.

The longitudinal SHP data base thus increasingly offers opportunities for analysing gross social change and for studying social trajectories of individuals and groups comprising the resident population of Switzerland. However, at least three data waves are necessary for reliable longitudinal data analysis to be performed. As the ESRC formulates it, prospective studies such as the Swiss Household Panel, need to be "'laid down' (like wine). You start to collect panel data in year one but it does not even start to become really useful (at least as panel data) until year three at the earliest, and it takes more years of waiting before it finally matures" (The ESRC Research Centre on Microsocial Change and the British Household Panel Survey 1994:22). Mid-2003 the third wave of SHP data is available, finally allowing "true" panel analyses. Also, many of the effects of events are time lagged over an even longer period. For example the consequences of unfavourable working conditions on health may only show up 20 years later. (Hunt 2002; McDonough and Berglund 2001). The self-administered biographic questionnaire is a means to fill the void of lack of information over a long period of time for the young prospective SHP survey.

As the data from consecutive panel waves become available, causal relationships can be examined in greater detail and meso-level analyses performed. René Levy (1998) argues that meso-level institutions increasingly structure the lives and trajectories of individuals and groups. The possibility of combining the SHP data to longitudinal data in other countries for the first time opens up the opportunity of examining the meso-level influence. A pioneer work by Hans-Peter Blossfeld (1995) has done just this. Such endeavours are also found in working papers with CHER data. However, this type of research requires the intense collaboration of the researchers from different nations, knowledgeable of their own countries, in order to identify correctly the institutional impact (meso-level impact) on the individual life trajectories as opposed to cohort effects or national particularities.

### *1.3.1 Theoretical Foundations of the Swiss Household Panel Survey*

Early 1997, the SHP was the subject of various preparatory steps which focused in particular on: 1) clarifying the objectives of the systematic observation of social change in Switzerland; 2) assessing European experiences, such as the Socio-economic Panel (SOEP) in Germany, the British Household Panel Study (BHPS) in Great Britain and the

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European Community Household Panel (ECHP) run by EUROSTAT; and 3) defining topics and indicators, and the data collection method (Farago 1996; Joye and Scherpenzeel 1997). The SHP covers a broad range of topics and approaches in the social sciences (e.g. composition of and changes to the family, health, social networks, leisure and lifestyles, political behaviour, and satisfaction). In addition to this, factual information is complemented by subjective assessments.

The construction of the SHP survey (Budowski et al. 1998a; Budowski et al. 1998b) is drawn from international knowledge of the social sciences and the experiences of various panel surveys in Europe and North America (Farago 1996; Joye and Scherpenzeel 1997). The structure of the Living in Switzerland survey satisfies its primary objective, which is to measure the multiple dimensions of social change as they occur over 10 to 15 years in Switzerland.

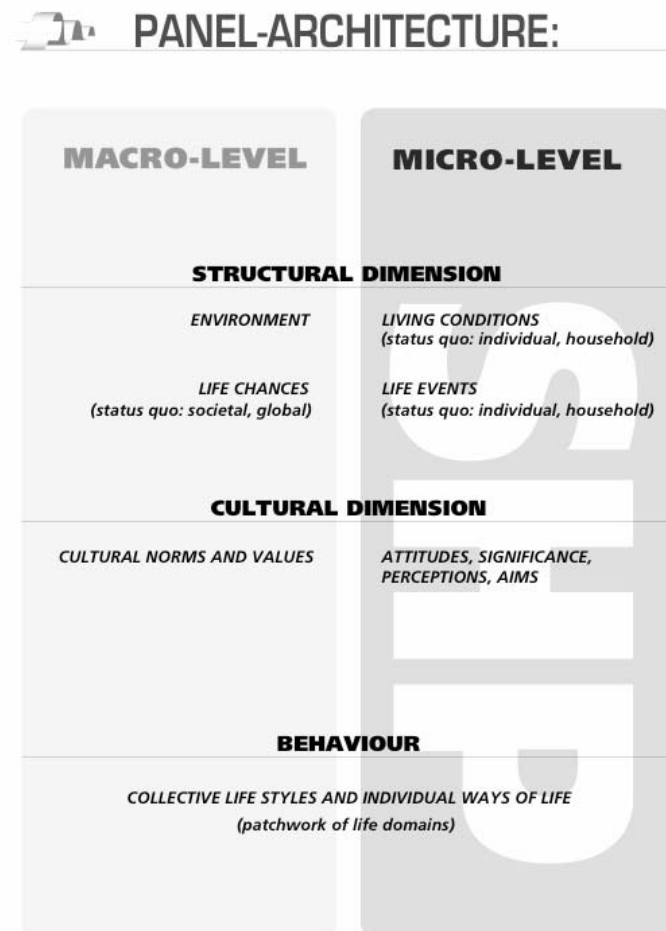
The SHP survey was designed and structured on the basis of experience gathered over the past three decades in Switzerland and abroad. Its design is primarily based on theoretical work related to the structure and development of contemporary societies (Beck 1986; Bourdieu 1983; Eisenstadt 1990; Haferkamp 1990; Konietzka 1995; Leisering and Walker 1998; Mayer 1991; Müller and Schmid 1995) and to recent analyses of Swiss society and the way it functions (Höpflinger, Charles, and Debrunner 1991; Leu, Burri, and Priester 1997; Levy et al. 1997). The idea is to allow for analysis by various disciplines and researchers using different conceptual approaches.

Contemporary societies are currently undergoing profound structural changes which are the consequence of globalisation of the economy, uneven regional developments around the world, and world-wide demographic changes. Despite the new opportunities this evolution offers for households and their members, these changes are affecting current living conditions and lifestyles as well as those aspired to in the future. The way individuals and households adapt to the new realities is only partially the result of their own preferences and abilities; it is also to a major extent dependent on the social structures, standards and values present in the immediate social environment and society at large. *Individual behaviour patterns therefore result from a dynamic relationship between the structural and the cultural dimensions.*

The SHP survey design distinguishes two levels: a) the *macro-social and micro-social levels* and b) the *structural, cultural and behavioural dimensions*. The data actually collected from households and individuals reflect the micro-social level, while contextual information to be added from available external statistical sources (e.g. size of place of residence, local unemployment rate) pertain to the macro-social level (see Graph 1).

The SHP has been designed to meet a high scientific standard and has been set up in such a way that international comparative analyses are feasible. For this purpose, the SHP participates in the CHER programme (Consortium of Household Panels for European Socio-Economic Research) has elaborated a joint-venture project with the Swiss Federal Statistical office to be comparable to the EU-SILC (European Statistics on Income and Living Conditions) (Zimmermann et al. 2002) and has provided the Luxembourg Income Study with its data.

Graph 1: Panel-Architecture



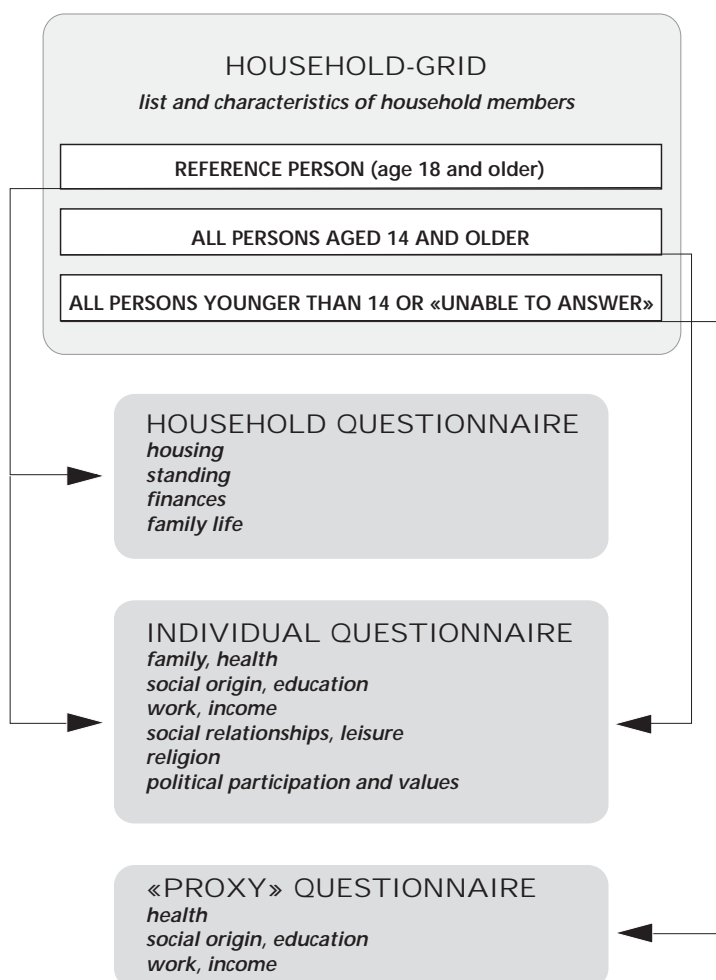
### 1.3.2 Contents of research instruments

The Living in Switzerland survey is a comprehensive survey covering a broad range of social fields and topics. The questionnaires (household and individual) are designed to collect both "*objective*" data (resources, living conditions, life events, social position, participation, etc.) and "*subjective*" data (attitudes, perceptions, satisfaction with various life domains, values, lifestyles/ways, etc.) (Appendix A).

In general, the sequence of the research instruments is the following:

Graph 2: Sequence of interviews

## SEQUENCE OF INTERVIEWS:



The *household questionnaire* covers the following areas:

- *composition of the household*: containing basic information about all the members of the household, such as the age, sex, relations between the members of the household, nationality, level of education and occupational status;
- *accommodation*: containing "objective" elements, such as the type and size of the accommodation, home ownership or tenancy, the cost of and/or the subsidies received for housing, as well as "subjective" elements, such as satisfaction with the accommodation, evaluation of the state of the accommodation and assessment of perceived nuisances;
- *standard of living*: referring to a list of goods owned by the household or activities that its members can carry out, together with the reason (financial or otherwise) why goods are not owned or activities not carried out;
- *the household's financial situation*: containing "objective" information such as the existence of financial difficulties (and the household's reactions to different situations), indebtedness and the reasons for it, the total household income, the amount of tax paid, and the social and private transfers, as well as "subjective" elements, such as satisfaction, an estimate of the minimum income the household considers necessary or an evaluation of how the household's financial situation has evolved;
- *the household and the family*: collecting information on any external help available to the household for housework or child-care, the sharing of tasks, and decision-making within the household.

The *individual questionnaire* is administered to every household member aged 14 years or older; the interviews cover the following topics:

- *the household and the family*: comprising "objective" elements, such as the existence of children living outside the household, the sharing of housework and child-care, as well as "subjective" elements, such as satisfaction with private life and with the sharing of the housework;
- *health and "victimisation"*: covering "objective" elements, such as general illness and health problems, visits to the doctor and hospitalisation, long-term handicaps, threats or attacks endured, together with "subjective" elements such as the self-perceived state of health, the estimated evolution of the state of health, or satisfaction with one's own health;
- *social origins*: referring to information related to profession, professional position, educational level, and the nationality of both parents together with possible financial difficulties in the family of origin;
- *education*: covering the various levels of achieved education, education currently being pursued, fluency in foreign languages, and participation in on-the-job training;
- *employment*: considering four different aspects: firstly, the collection of information necessary to determine the status of the interviewee in the labour market, secondly, information covering the current main employment, thirdly, information on second jobs, and finally details about the last main job held; these modules also comprise "objective" elements, such as profession, status of the profession, the number of hours worked, work schedule, atypical work, as well as "subjective" elements such as satisfaction with various aspects of the job, the evaluation of promotion prospects or of personal qualifications;
- *income*: including "objective" elements such as total personal income, total professional income, received social transfers, received private transfers, and other income, and "subjective" elements, such as satisfaction with the financial situation and an evaluation of changes concerning the personal financial situation;
- *participation, integration, networks*: taking into account "objective" elements, such as frequency of social contacts, non-remunerated work outside home, participation in associations, membership of and participation in religious groups, and "subjective" elements such as the evaluation of potential practical help and emotional support (from the partner, family, friends, etc.);
- *politics and values*: referring to "objective" elements such as political participation, membership, party identification, political positioning; and "subjective" elements such as satisfaction with the political system, the evaluation of issues or even political values; a few indicators of gender attitudes are available and finally

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- *leisure and media*: comprising "objective" elements, such as leisure activities and the use of the media as well as "subjective" elements, such as satisfaction with leisure and free time.

From the second wave on, the questionnaire also includes a "life events" module and an "occupational calendar" module (covering the 12 months prior to the interview). From the third wave onwards a module about the situation young people in school or studying are in, containing both subjective and objective elements regarding their area of occupation was added. The income module was continuously improved and has become comparable with the SILC (European Statistics on Income and Living Conditions) for all questions that can be asked with the CATI data collection mode. In principle, the questionnaires is to remain identical but minor technical adjustments are to be made. For the continuation of the panel 2004 to 2007 the questionnaires will be overhauled. The adaption to the SILC requirements has already taken place, and some minor adaptations with existing surveys at the Swiss Federal Statistical Office will be required.

*Nomenclatures, standard variables, and comparability with other surveys*: From the outset, the SHP was designed to allow for comparisons with national and international data sources, making comparative analyses feasible. For example, the *professions* of the interviewees (and their parents) are classified using a uniform nomenclature drawn up by the Swiss Federal Statistical Office (SFSO). This means it is possible to apply the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO), which enables comparisons with the results of various surveys of the Swiss Federal Statistical Office and with various other surveys carried out in Europe. Furthermore, the interviewees give the name of the company in which they work (or used to work). The attribution of the company to one of the economic sectors of the EUROSTAT general nomenclature of economic activities is carried out by means of the *Register of Enterprises* (NOGA codes drawn up by the SFSO).

The *Living in Switzerland* survey data also allows for the construction of most of the *recommended variables* on working life (status in the labour market, status of activity, level of occupation, atypical working conditions, duration of the activity, etc.), education, state of health as well as income. By means of these standardised objective variables the comparison with various surveys and analyses carried out either in Switzerland or abroad is feasible. In particular, the results of the Living in Switzerland survey can be compared or combined with results from different data sets held by the SFSO, such as the *General Census*, the *Swiss Labour Force* survey, the *Swiss Health* survey or the *Household Budget* survey, by means of variables comparable to be *standard variables* presented in Table 1. Furthermore, the data set contains contains a certain number of indicators aimed at making their use easier: various household typologies (Budowski and Wanner 2001) various indices of social position (such as ISCO, CH\_CSP, Goldthorpe, Treiman, Wright, CAMSIS Bergman and Joye forthcoming; Joye, Bergman, and Budowski 2002), the yearly equivalent household income with the SKOS and the modified OECD equivalence scale), the typology of communes, the economic sector of companies, etc.

In addition to the nomenclatures, definitions and questions taken from the household surveys carried out by the official statistics, the Living in Switzerland survey has also picked up on a series of questions from surveys recently carried out in Switzerland, in

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particular the *Quality of Life and Poverty in Switzerland* and *The Swiss and their Society*, (Leu, Burri, and Priester 1997; Levy et al. 1997) and abroad, notably from the questionnaires of the *European Community Household Panel*, and the *British Household Panel*.

### 1.3.3 Methods

#### a) *The permanent resident population of Switzerland and the SHP sampling frame*

The reference population for the Living in Switzerland survey is the population permanently resident in Switzerland. The sample which has been chosen is representative of the whole of Switzerland, without regional imbalances. It includes households of various nationalities provided that their members live on Swiss territory throughout the year. Seasonal workers, cross-border workers, and foreign tourists are not part of the permanent resident population and are therefore not taken into account in the sample (Table 4).

Switzerland is divided into seven large statistical regions<sup>10</sup>. The methodology section of the Swiss Federal Statistical Office drew a random sample in each of these on the basis of the SWISSCOM's electronic telephone directory (TERCO) which covers over 98% of all private households<sup>11</sup>. The households selected in this way are a proportionally stratified random sample of the various social groups in all regions of Switzerland. However, as the interviews are carried out in the three official national languages (German, French, and Italian), population groups who have recently migrated to Switzerland are likely to be under-represented.

The periodical refreshments of the sample will again be carried out by the Swiss Federal Statistical Office, the first one in spring, 2004 for the 6<sup>th</sup> wave of the SHP survey and the first for the continuation of the timespan 2004-2007, for which this application is submitted.

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<sup>10</sup> These seven major regions of Switzerland are approved of by EUROSTAT and are part of the NUTS (Nomenclature des unités territoriales statistiques).

<sup>11</sup> In 1999, only 2 percent of the households in Switzerland did not have a phone connection (Schmugge and Grau 1998). In the absence of a reliable and accessible comprehensive register of Swiss households, the phone directory TERCO by Swisscom offers the best base for random sampling of households. Due to the considerable expansion of mobile phones, the situation is changing quickly. In 2000, an estimated 8 percent of the households do not have a registered phone connection.

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Table 4: The resident population of Switzerland and SHP sample characteristics

Code	Regions of the national territory (cantons)	Population in 1999	in %	SHP sample, 1999 (1st wave) number of eligible persons	in %	SHP sample, 1999 (1st wave, number of individual interviews)	in %
1	Lake Geneva region (VD, VS, GE)	1,295,000	18%	1,797	17%	1,366	17%
2	Mittelland (BE, FR, SO, NE, JU)	1,656,000	23%	2,622	25%	2,001	26%
3	North-west Switzerland (BS, BL, AG)	988,000	14%	1,491	14%	1,146	15%
4	Zurich	1,199,000	17%	1,680	16%	1,254	16%
5	Eastern Switzerland (GL, SH, AR, AI, SG, GR, TG)	1,042,000	15%	1,406	14%	1,012	13%
6	Central Switzerland (LU, UR, SZ, OW, NW, ZG)	677,000	9%	920	9%	693	9%
7	Ticino	308	4%	453	4%	327	4%
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>7,164</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>10,369</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>7,799</b>	<b>100%</b>

***Private households are the primary sampling and survey units.*** The *household* concept refers not only to households comprising individuals or groups of individuals but also collective households (e.g. homes or prisons) and non-profit organisations (NPO) such as charitable organisations, political parties, trade unions, religious communities. However, the Living in Switzerland survey includes *only private households*, collective households and NPOs are excluded. The Living in Switzerland survey has adopted a fairly broad definition of a "household" so that it does not automatically underestimate new types of cohabitation (in particular collective non-institutionalised ways of living) as compared with the classic concept of the "household/family". Consequently, the *SHP household definition* is based on five fundamental cumulative criteria: 1) sharing *at least one common dwelling room*; 2) *sharing certain expenses*; 3) taking *at least one meal together per week*; 4) *stability* (the household is considered a long-term arrangement); and 5) the individuals consider it to be their *main dwelling* (rather than a second home, work-related accommodation, etc.).

In each household a "reference person" needs to be defined. In the Living in Switzerland survey the reference person is designated freely by the household itself. However, it is specified that this person should *know the household very well*. The reference person should also, as far as possible, be 1) an adult (age 18 or older), 2) a *longitudinal respondent* of the panel – an original sample member (OSM), and 3) the *same person* from one wave to the next. In the first wave, it is the reference person who answers the questions of the grid and the household questionnaire (in addition to the individual questionnaire).

b) *Research instruments: data collection tools*

Like other household panels, the SHP survey uses three kinds of data collection tools: the *household grid*, the *household questionnaire* and the *individual questionnaire*.

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The data collected by the means of *household grid* include basic information about the *household* (exact address, number of cohabitants, phone extensions ...) and all the individual household members (sex, age, education, occupation, nationality...).

The grid's *main functions* are:

1. to check and trace changes within the sample (for both households and individuals) over time;
2. to collect information on the non-respondents;
3. to provide information necessary to link households and individuals over time;
4. to collect basic data on the households and individuals.

The household grid is an operational control tool and it is absolutely crucial to keep it up to date to ensure the smooth operation of the data collection process. Every year the new grid, which is based on the previous one is updated taking into account address changes in between waves. This makes it possible to contact households and check whether their composition has changed, how many people they comprise, who must be interviewed and how (by personal interview or by proxy, etc.). The grid therefore provides information on the composition of the households and any changes concerning the structure of the households' "resources" (education, work, nationality, etc.). Given that much of this information is subject to data protection laws, researchers receive access to it in the form of aggregate variables (such as the relationship of the interviewee with the reference person, household typologies).

The *household questionnaire* contains questions about accommodation, living standards, the household's financial situation, the household's organisation, and the family. The Living in Switzerland survey has opted for a single version of the household questionnaire but adapts the wording and the questions depending on the type of household (i.e. households comprising a single adult or households with more than one adult).

In the first wave, the household questionnaire was answered by the household's reference person. To reduce the number of contacts and increase the response rate, this questionnaire is to be answered, if possible, immediately after the household grid. From the second wave on, it may also be completed by any adult member of the household.

The *individual questionnaire* has two forms: a) the "*standard*" questionnaire contains the questions on the various topics (family, health, social origins, education, employment, income, networks, religion, leisure, media, politics, and values) and b) the "*proxy*" questionnaire, which comprises a limited number of questions and is intended for ineligible candidates (children under 14 years), those unable to respond (handicapped, too old, etc.) or temporarily absent. The household's reference person answers the latter questionnaire in the first wave. In the following waves it can be answered by the same adult in the household who responds to the household questionnaire. Unlike the "standard" questionnaire, it only contains factual questions about health, education, professional activity and income. For evident ethical reasons, the proxy questionnaire is not completed for those individuals who are eligible but refuse to be interviewed. From the second wave on, the various questionnaires use a filter system taking account of the status

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of interviewees: those who are already members of the panel and the newcomers (the cohabitants and children born to first wave members).

c) *Data collection mode CATI*

In the original project proposal made by Joye and Scherpenzeel (1997), the face-to-face CAPI (Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing) mode was given preference over telephonic CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) mode as a data collection method. The CAPI mode is used by most other European household panel studies (BHPS, SOEP, Eurostat). However, during the practical set-up of the project in spring and summer 1998, doubts arose in terms of the sample size and the costs, followed by concerns about the quality of the interview situation and the monitoring of the interviewers if the CATI-mode were to be used.

- A direct link between *address and interview management* exists in the CATI mode; "misses or losses" of households and/or persons to be interviewed are practically impossible.

- Both methods, CAPI and CATI, ascertain high quality data collection as a result of computer assisted standardised interviewing. However, previous studies have shown that about 30% of face-to-face interviews are conducted in the presence of a third person. Such a presence is likely to influence many answers.

- The major survey institutes in Switzerland are all experiencing *increasing difficulties* to carry out face-to-face interviewing. People are less willing to tolerate "strangers" (interviewers) in their homes. As all household members aged 14 and older are to be interviewed, the resistance is likely to be even greater. For example, interviews in a three-member household may require three separate visits. This might result in the household perceiving the interviewer as a "permanent non-invited guest," and contribute to the attrition rate in subsequent waves. Even for CAPI interviews, a considerable number of phone calls is necessary to interview a larger family group, given the distinct data collection instruments.

- A CAPI interview costs about 1.5 times as much as a CATI interview. Given the very limited financial resources, the CAPI face-to-face interviewing method would have lead to a considerable reduction of the average sample size (5'300 instead of 8'000 persons).

Therefore, the SHP decided to use CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing). As no previous major household panel had started off with the CATI data collection mode, the SHP-team decided to carry out a method study jointly with the Swiss Federal Statistical Office (Scherpenzeel and Eichenberger 1998; Scherpenzeel and Eichenberger 2000) in order to compare the "real life" data collection procedures, that is: to study the *overall* effects of the two data collection modes CAPI and CATI<sup>12</sup>. A methodological experiment was then designed in which the two data collection strategies were compared. The experimental design was a combination of the split-ballot design and the Multitrait-Multimethod approach. The Multitrait-Multimethod design is somewhat related to the test-retest

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<sup>12</sup> The significance of a mere experimental study of the marginal effect of the medium of communication was considered to be very limited for survey practitioners.

approach. It also consists of repeating the same questions to the same people, but in addition, one aspect of the repeated questions is systematically varied. In this way, random variance can be distinguished from systematic method variance and estimates of both reliability as the complement of random error variance and validity the complement of systematic method variance are obtained. The criteria for comparison of the data collection strategies provided by the split-ballot design were the classical ones: costs, speed, response rates, answer distributions and summary statistics. The criteria for comparison provided by the Multitrait-Multimethod design were the reliability and validity of the data obtained (Andrews 1994; Saris and Andrews 1991; Scherpenzeel 1995). The experiment was carried out in the Swiss (German speaking) agglomeration of Bern between January 25 and April 13, 1999. The result of the experiment was: CATI saves time and costs in comparison with CAPI and should not be regarded a second choice among data collection techniques. The response rates and data obtained by CATI are at least as good as those by CAPI. The response rates on the household level are in fact somewhat better with CATI, although this difference is compensated for by a slightly lower individual response rate. Very similar in both modes of interviewing are most answer distributions, as are the overall validity and reliability of the data.

The only reason to select CAPI over CATI is when many sensitive questions or questions that require a good memory are asked. Indeed, interaction effects of data collection mode and these types of questions were found. However, strategies exist that help to overcome this shortcoming, such as stimulating confidentiality between interviewer and respondent, avoiding to formulate questions in a way that provokes socially desirable answers, introducing memory aids and stimulating respondents to take their time to think.<sup>13</sup>

d) *The biographical questionnaire*

At each of the future "2<sup>nd</sup>" wave (i.e. for the first time in 2005 for the "new" sample) the self-administered biographical questionnaire will be mailed to everyone who had not yet received one in the former waves. This will allow to obtain the same long term information, which will allow for more opportunities for analyses.

e) *Periodicity of the survey*

Like other household panels, the SHP chose to interview the households and individuals annually. Due to memory lapses, answers to questions covering a longer period may be significantly biased. In a study focusing on such problems, Bailar (1989) showed that the longer a reference period gets, the greater the likelihood that the interviewees' memories are random. It further showed that certain phenomena studied are minimised, leading to significant underreporting. In addition, a prolonged reference period has been shown to pose major problems of telescoping and omissions (Cantor 1989). Owing to a long time span under review, interviewees tend to lose the dimension of time, with the risk of that they might either quote the same event twice in the same period or, forget it altogether. The periodicity of the panel surveys also has repercussions on the response rate, because of the greater probability of respondents moving and the difficulties encountered in finding them

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<sup>13</sup> For more details see: Scherpenzeel (2000c).

again for the following wave. Finally, problems can arise with regard to the motivation of respondents to continue in the panel when the periodicity is extended to 24 months between waves. The interviewees need to feel that they are part of an “experiment” which is of use to society and that the panel “lives” through them. For this feeling to be maintained they must stay in regular contact with the survey institute and the panel team. This is less feasible if the periodicity increases.

f) *Follow-up rules*

Follow-up rules make it possible to determine which people must be interviewed in the first wave and which people must be interviewed again in subsequent waves. The following rules were chosen for the Living in Switzerland survey. At the *household level*, in the first wave, all the households from the sample drawn are to be interviewed. A household becomes an *original sample member* (OSM) if the household questionnaire is completed together with at least one individual questionnaire. From the second wave on, the households are screened according to whether they satisfy the conditions for becoming original sample members. Among the original sample members the households which do not meet the following criteria are dropped: 1) those which do not respond to two subsequent waves; 2) those which have given a “refusal” considered as final; 3) those which move out of national territory; 4) those whose members are totally and “definitively” institutionalised. At the *individual level*, a distinction is made between individuals that are *original sample members* and those considered *cohabitants*. Those persons stemming from the first wave households are defined as original sample members or longitudinal members. Children born to original sample members after the first wave of the study also become such. The original sample members (OSM) defined in this way are followed constantly.<sup>14</sup> Individuals joining or living in a household of at least one ordinary sample member in the second or any consecutive wave of the survey are defined as cohabitants. Cohabitants are, however, only followed while they continue to live with an ordinary sample member.<sup>15</sup>

g) *Maintaining and encouraging participation*

Encouraging and maintaining participation has become particularly important as in many countries the participation rates in surveys in general have decreased; a paper and pencil survey (PAPI) in 1971 about political behaviour reached a participation rate of 80% whereas the Eurobarometer in 1999 reached only 25% (Joye 2000:4). Thus, if the participation rate in panel studies drops considerably then the consequences are even more drastic. As Joye (2000) argues, complex social processes make it increasingly difficult to obtain a high participation rate for any type of survey to begin with. This not only a problem of social science research but also of official statistics. Longitudinal participation rates are most important for Panel Surveys for various reasons. (1) The number of participants is restricted after having completed the first wave. Thus, in the worst of cases, the Panel “dies” after a certain period or does not allow for statistical analyses due to lack or too small a

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<sup>14</sup> In principle until they die or are definitely institutionalised.

<sup>15</sup> For more details see: Wernli, Boris, Monica Budowski, Matthias Niklowitz, Annette Scherpenzeel, Robin Tillmann, and Erwin Zimmermann (1999).

number of cases. (2) All population groups need to be represented. If the participation rates drop considerably, the probability of small groups becoming eliminated from the sample also increases. (3) Given the aim of observing causal relationships, a sufficiently high number of the "causes" of the events or the changes needs to be available, which again, depends on the representativity of population and the size of the sample.

Given that in a panel survey it is important that the data obtained continue to be representative of the target population, it is most important to ensure that respondents continue to participate year-on-year, or more precisely said, that no systematic losses of participants occur. Given that the losses are most probably not random, a high and continued participation rate is the best solution to ensure representativity. Representativity of the sample is important not only for the examination of incidences of phenomena, but also for the analyses of changes in individual's trajectories and circumstances and the identification of the reasons therefore. Various means or strategies are possible to counteract attrition: (i) measures of encouragement for participation and panel maintenance strategies (information, utility, interest), and (ii) methodological analyses as to which strategies might be most conducive to best response rates. The Swiss Household Panel has from the beginning applied both these two strategies.<sup>16</sup> A list of the communication measures is found in Appendix B.

*h) Cross-sectional and longitudinal weights*

For panel designs, *cross-sectional* and *longitudinal* weights need to be distinguished. The cross-sectional weights are to improve the *sample estimates* for the population from which the sample is drawn. The longitudinal weights aim at maintaining the first wave sample characteristics over time, despite losses of original sample members.

*Cross-sectional weights* compensate for unequal selection probabilities (*design weights*) and response rates (*response weights*), most public surveys assign weights to the response units (households and persons). Under certain conditions, weighting the data helps obtain approximately unbiased estimates of population parameters. The characteristics of a sample may still be improved by adjusting sample distributions to the distributions observed in the population (*post stratification weights*).

The *cross-sectional household weights* for the SHP-first wave data adjust for *design* and *non-response* biases (Cornali and Vonlanthen 2001). The household weights correct mainly for the non-response of households composed by foreign nationals and elderly persons, a bias, which is common in Swiss household surveys. For the first wave data collected in 1999, the standardized *household weights* range from .82 to 1.54.

Within the participating households *individual weights* are computed in order to adjust a) for *non-response* differences according to sex, age and nationality and b) for deviations from the structural characteristics of the resident population in

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<sup>16</sup> For more details see: (Budowski et al. 2003 (submitted)).

Switzerland, mainly sex within age groups, nationality and geographic regions. The standardized *individual weights* vary from .63 to 2.05 (1999, 1<sup>st</sup> wave).

*Statistics Canada* has been mandated to calculate the *cross-sectional* and *longitudinal weights* for the waves 2 through 4 (Latouche 2001; Latouche and Naud 2001; Naud and Latouche 2001). Given this expertise, the mandate to StatCan is to be reconducted for the years 2004-2007.

#### *h) Data protection issues*

For the SHP purposes, data protection is to warrant a) that interviewers divulge no information given by the respondents and b) that at no time the data obtained from the interviewees can be linked to their personal identity by data analysts or anyone else.

At the institute M.I.S. Trend, interviewers are bound by strict rules of confidentiality<sup>17</sup> and are forbidden to use any information obtained for their own purposes or to communicate such information to anyone else. M.I.S. Trend is responsible for the follow-up of the SHP households (phone numbers, addresses). There is a "fire wall" between M.I.S. Trend and the SHP-Team at the University of Neuchâtel. Only M.I.S. Trend holds the access-key to the interviewees: the survey data are prepared by M.I.S. Trend contain no other identifying information than ID-numbers for households and their respective members. All correspondence with and mailing of information to the participating households is done by M.I.S. Trend.

The data collected is to be used exclusively for inference about the population and statistical analysis: the data is made anonymous in such a way that it is impossible for data users to identify a particular household or person participating in the SHP study. Anonymity includes calculating the age of participants, instead of listing their exact birth dates, or re-coding the localities and postal codes into a general typology of localities.

#### *1.3.4 Research activities of SHP-Team*

The researchers of the SHP-Team have pursued the analysis of the SHP data primarily in the following areas (as the list of publications and reports in Appendix G evidences):

- Relationships between changes in professional activity, family structure and gender.
- Relationships between living conditions, poverty and various sources of social support.
- Impact of living and employment conditions on health. Bad health as a negative resource for later standard of living and quality of life.
- Impact of living conditions on social networks, and social and political participation.

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<sup>17</sup> Rules and code of conduct are suggested by the overarching organisation SWISS INTERVIEW.

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- Constellations of political attitudes and behaviours within the family and political socialisation processes.

Unfortunately the panel team members have little time to dedicate to data analyses, given the heavy burden of routine work to ensure quality data, its diffusion, motivation and encouragement measures for the communication with the interviewees, etc. The recent hiring of a data management specialist will help alleviate the work load.

To facilitate data analyses and academic publications, each SHP-Team member is spend a 3 months sabbatical time period every three years. Furthermore, the SHP has taken the initiative to publish a book "Living in Switzerland – One Year in the Lives of Households and Families – 1999-2000", in which the all team members have participated (see Appendix G).

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## 2. Implementation Plan

### 2.1 Previous attainments and achievements

#### 2.1.1 SHP yearly milestones 1998-2003 and achievements in short

**Year 1998:** The *Swiss Household Panel* (SHP) project started in March 1998. The first few months were dedicated to setting up the office infrastructure at the University of Neuchâtel and to the hiring of a highly professional team of social science researchers (see Appendix B: National and international collaboration and activities 1998-2001). A broad theoretical foundation called *SHP Architecture* was elaborated by the end of 1998 describing *basic concepts* and *main indicators* (Budowski et al. 1998a). In autumn a public call was launched among the members of *SwissInterview* for carrying out the SHP data collection; as a result of a very careful selection process the Survey Institute M.I.S. TREND in Lausanne mandated in December 1999 for conducting the field work.

**Year 1999 (1<sup>st</sup> wave):** The first few months of the year 1999 were dedicated to constructing and testing the survey instruments (household register, household and individual questionnaires, proxy questionnaires). For reasons of quality and costs Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) was chosen in place of the originally planned "face-to-face" CAPI data collection method (Joye and Scherpenzeel 1997; Scherpenzeel, Wernli, and Eichenberger 1999). Two successive quantitative pre-tests ascertained the programming quality and stability of the CATI-System at M.I.S. Trend. By September 1999 the first wave of the SHP survey was successfully launched and the data collection ended by February 2000 with valid data for 5'074 households and 7'799 persons aged 14 years and over. Interview times of first wave "status quo" data collection on households and individuals were 5 minutes for the household register, 12 minutes for the household questionnaire and 55 minutes for the individual questionnaire; the individual interview time was well above the originally planned 35 minutes.

**Year 2000 (2<sup>nd</sup> wave):** The remodelling of the research instruments took place during the first few months of the year 2000. While the household register and questionnaire were overhauled and streamlined correcting for minor technical deficiencies, the individual questionnaire was substantially modified. The questionnaire module "social origin" and other indications about the past were not needed anymore for the previously interviewed persons and quite a few redundant questions could be dropped for the following interview waves. Modules containing "life events" and a "work calendar" were added. The interview time for the individual questionnaire could be shortened to 35 minutes by these modifications.

The data transfer from M.I.S. Trend and the cleaning of the 1999 wave data engaged the SHP team for several weeks. However, in less than six months after the interviewing had finished, the beta-version of the first wave *SHP-Data-1999* was made available to interested researchers participating in the *Living in Switzerland* research network in August 2000.

After successful pre-tests of the revised data collection instruments on the CATI-System, the 2<sup>nd</sup> SHP wave of interviews started mid-September 2000 and ended mid-February

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2001 with valid data for 4,301 households and 7,073 persons, out of which 6,345 individuals have been interviewed in wave one and wave two.

Other activities included the cleaning and preparation of the 1999 data (such as plausibilizing the links among household members and other demographic information, information on individual and household income, the construction of stratification variables, the coding of professions and the typology of communities). The professional documentation of all research instruments – called initially VARINFO<sup>18</sup> - was carried out in collaboration with the SIDOS in Neuchâtel, that is currently developing a program to document surveys in a standard way (NESTAR).

Preliminary versions of a self-administered paper-pencil "biographical questionnaire" were submitted to subsequent qualitative pre-tests; as a result the final questionnaire became available for quantitative testing.

**Year 2001 (wave 3):** In June 2001 the final version of the first wave data was released, including a detailed and user-friendly documentation. The preliminary second wave data were available for the research community by September 2001. The preparation of the third wave demanded quite some effort. The household grid needed to be adapted to manage various situations such as split-members returning in wave three to the household they had left after the first wave, etc.. Except for a few technical adjustments, the individual questionnaire remained identical to the 2<sup>nd</sup> wave; however, a few quality of life related questions were added at the very end.

A quantitative pre-test of the "biographical questionnaire" was conducted with all the members of a random sub-sample of 600 households which had previously participated in the second interview wave 2000 (for details, see below 2.1.3).

**Year 2002 (wave 4):** For the contributors to the book "*Living in Switzerland 1999-2000 - One Year in the Lives of Swiss Households and Families*" a special longitudinal file containing the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> wave data was made available in February 2002. The *second wave* final data with all the constructed and plausibilised variables (e.g. social position, income) including cross-sectional and longitudinal weights provided by Statistics Canada was released by June 2002. The Beta-version of the *third wave* data is available to interested researchers since September 2002. The final release is scheduled for the end of June 2003. Except for minor technical adjustments of the CATI program, the fourth wave questionnaire remained identical to the one used for the third data collection wave. The data collection for the fourth wave began in mid-September 2002 and ended in mid-February 2003 with approximately 3,500 households and 5,700 interviewed persons.

The fourth wave data have been delivered by M.I.S. Trend to the SHP-Team mid-April 2003. The beta-version of the *fourth wave* data will be available in August 2003.

**Year 2003 (wave 5):** The *fourth wave data* have been delivered by M.I.S. Trend to the SHP-Team mid-April 2003. Routine data checking and validations are under way. The beta-version of the *fourth wave* data will be available in August 2003.

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<sup>18</sup> The VARINFO tool initially developed by Reta Hadorn at SIDOS was adapted by the A. Gabadinho (SHP) during the years 2001 / 2002 into the *Electronic Documentation System (EDS)* currently in use. The at the EDS can be accessed on the SHP website [www.swisspanel.ch](http://www.swisspanel.ch) allowing for searches on survey topics, question wordings, frequency counts for variables, etc.

The questionnaire for wave 5 is identical to the one of wave 4. To ascertain the perfect working of the CATI programming, a quantitative test will be performed in July. In August 2003 a reminder will be sent to roughly 3'300 still participating households. The wave 5 interviews will start mi-September and end by February 2004.

### 2.1.2 The SHP Data Collection waves 1 to 4 (1999-2002)

Table 5, below, displays interview participation figures for the years 1999-2004 and projections for 2005. Due to panel attrition (non-traceable departures, refusals, deaths, etc.), the number of households and individuals validly interviewed in wave 4 represent roughly 70% of the corresponding numbers in 1999 (wave 1).

Table 5: Participation households and individuals 1999-2004, projections for 2005

SHP	Year	Households			Individuals		
		Eligible	Crude rate	Valid interviews	Eligible	Crude rate	Valid interviews
1	1999	10,000	50.0% <sup>a</sup>	5,074	10,148	76.9%	7,799
2	2000	5,074	89.3%	4,532	9,420	75.1%	7,073
3	2001	4,532	91.3%	4,139	8,600	76.7%	6,601
4	2002	4,100	85.0%	3,483	7,750	73.6%	5,707
*5	2003	3,690	90.0%	3,320	6,970	77.0%	5,370

\* Projections

For the first three waves, the numbers of full *longitudinal individual respondents* are: 6'345 in 2000, 5'422 in 2001 and about 4'500 in 2002.

#### a) *The first wave of SHP-Data collection (September 1999 – February 2000)*

In early September 1999, from the 14'174 addresses, to which letters inviting the sampled households to participate were sent, a phone contact could be made with 12'084 households (85%): 1'065 losses are due to "no answer" on the phone<sup>19</sup> and 1'025 calls ended with a fax, computer line, or answering machine.

By the end of February 2000, the data collection objective was met: complete data is available for 5'074 households 7 799 individuals<sup>20</sup>. The estimated net response rate is 61%<sup>21</sup> at the household level and 75% at the individual level. The response

<sup>19</sup> The number of redials was virtually unlimited: valid but "no answer" telephone numbers were called as many as 150 times. A large proportion of these "no answer" telephone numbers are most probably related to vacation homes.

<sup>20</sup> A household is considered to be "complete" if the household grid, the household questionnaire and at least one personal questionnaire are completed.

<sup>21</sup> At the household level, the estimated net response rate depends on the treatment given to households having completed the household-grid but still pending for further interviewing at the end of the interview period. The conservative estimate of the response rate is 56% and is obtained by treating all

rates are very similar for the seven major statistical regions and for the three language groups.

b) *The second wave of SHP-Data collection (September 2000 – February 2001)*

Mid-September 2000 the 5'074 households from which valid data had been obtained during the first wave, were invited to participate again in the second wave of interviewing. 4,301 households and 7,073 individuals could be re-interviewed yielding a participation rate of 85% at both levels.

A preliminary analysis of the non-response at the household level tends to indicate that the non-response rates are particularly high among households composed by a single person younger than 30 years of age, when the reference person is a foreigner in Switzerland, has a low educational level, is unemployed or in bad health condition.

c) *The third wave of SHP-Data collection (September 2001 – February 2002)*

The *third wave* started by mid-September 2001 and ended January 2002. With the exception of "final refusals", all the first wave households had been contacted early September 2001. Finally, 3,483 households and roughly 6'707 persons were validly interviewed.

d) *The fourth wave of SHP-Data collection (September 2002 – February 2003)*

The *fourth wave* started by mid-September 2001 and has ended mid-February 2003. of January 2002. 3,483 households and roughly 6'507 persons have been validly interviewed.

### 2.1.3 *The data collected by "biographical questionnaire"*

The self-administered paper and pencil "biographical questionnaire" (BQ) is intended to add "depth" to the prospectively designed SHP-panel study<sup>22</sup>. The BQ covers the key areas of the person's life history: a) living situation (with parents, in own household, etc.) b) demographic events (birth, marriage, divorce), c) basic schooling, professional and other educational experiences, d) detailed employment history (jobs, position, professional activity), and e) other information such as stays in other countries, military service, etc. All these "events" are dated by indications of the year at the "beginning" and at the "end" of the period<sup>23</sup>.

Biographical data have been collected from all individuals 14 years and older, living in household which have participated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> SHP-wave (2000-2001). The quantitative

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such households as "refusals". The optimistic estimate is 64% and is based on the assumption that all of these households would have accepted the interview. The best estimate of the true response rate may be obtained by assuming that the remaining households do not differ with regard to their response rate from the overall response rate of the interviews already completed, which corresponds to a *net response rate of 61%*.

<sup>22</sup> For understanding current situations and events it may often be necessary to know at least in part the life history of people prior to the onset of the panel study: e.g. the re-integration of women into the labour market after the child rearing period is likely to be strongly influenced by their prior employment experience.

<sup>23</sup> Unfortunately, the qualitative pre-tests showed that more precise dating (month and year) proved not feasible, as a too heavy burden would be placed on the respondents affecting the response rate.

pre-test carried out in May-June 2001 had the following three objectives: a) to estimate response rates to the BQ, b) to evaluate the incidence on the subsequent CATI-interview wave, and c) to measure the impact monetary incentives<sup>24</sup>. The following experimental design was applied:

Table 6: Experimental design for pre-test of biographical questionnaire

Biographical Questionnaire	Announcement of participation in lottery	
	Yes	No
Yes	<b>Group I:</b> (n=300 households /600 individuals) - Letter of thanks and - Participation in lottery and - Biographical questionnaire to fill out	<b>Group II:</b> (n=300 households /600 individuals) - Letter of thanks and - -----not applicable----- - Biographical questionnaire to fill out
No	<b>Group III:</b> (n=300 households /600 individuals) - Letter of thanks and - Participation in lottery and - -----not applicable-----	<b>Group IV:</b> (n=300 households /600 individuals) - -----not applicable----- - -----not applicable----- - -----not applicable-----

The overall response rate to the biographical questionnaire was 71% (72% for Group I and 69% for Group II) showing that the perspective of winning a price at the lottery made no difference. The quantitative pre-test was designed in such a way that the maximum supplementary loss of respondents should not exceed 5%.

As a result of the evaluation of the "experiment", namely that no particularly high drop out rate (defined as more than 5%) could be found, the final biographical self-administered questionnaire was sent after the third wave (April 2002) to all persons, 14 years and older that are eligible respondents of participating households<sup>25</sup>, that had not been sent a biographical questionnaire after the second wave (2001) during the "experiment". The participation rate is 70% for the "experiment" and slightly lower for the final survey. By June 2003, detailed biographical data can be released to interested researchers for 5'500 panelised respondents.

#### 2.1.4 Validity of the data

The data obtained was checked for its validity by comparison with existing data sources. The comparison with 1990 census data indicates that single person households are somewhat underrepresented within the SHP. This tends to be the case in surveys in general as single persons are more difficult to be reached at home (see Table 7).

<sup>24</sup> The "incentive" consisted in the promise to participate in a lottery with cash prizes as follows: 1<sup>st</sup> price: 10'000 CHF, 2<sup>nd</sup> prices: 5 times 1,000 CHF and 3<sup>rd</sup> prices: 10 times 500 CHF.

<sup>25</sup> A household is defined as "participating" when the composition of the household has been given by one of the eligible persons ("household grid"), a longer questionnaire about living conditions of the household as a whole has been filled in by one person ("household questionnaire") and at least one of the eligible members of the household has completed his/her personal interview ("individual questionnaire"). This is all done by telephone.

Table 7: The SHP household structure in comparison with the census data 1990

Type of households	SHP-1999	%	SFSO-1990*	%
Single person households	1355	26.7%	920'330	32.2%
Single parents	300	5.9%	145'108	5.1%
Couples without children	1442	28.4%	755'989	26.4%
Couples with children	1811	35.7%	919'433	32.2%
Other households	166	3.3%	118'906	4.2%
Total	5074	100.0%	2'859'766	100.0%

The data from the first wave of the SHP is very similar to that obtained in other household surveys carried out periodically by the Swiss Federal Statistical Office. For example, in Table 8 the distribution of the population according to status within the labour market is compared.

Table 8: Status in the labour market according to sex (percentages, weighted results)

Status in the Labour Force	Swiss Labour Force Survey 1999			ERC98 Living conditions			Living in Switzerland 1999		
	men	women	total	men	women	total	men	women	total
Working employed	74.4	55.5	64.7	76.4	56.7	66.2	74.4	55.1	64.4
Unemployed	3.7	2.6	3.1	1.9	2.3	2.1	1.4	2.3	1.9
Non-working	21.9	41.8	32.2	21.7	40.9	31.6	24.2	42.6	33.7

The 1999 SHP-Data have also been compared with the responses to the identical questions asked within the 1997 Swiss Health Survey (SHS97): self-rated health and physician visits.

Table 9: Persons in "good and very good health" (percentages, weighted results)

Variables Sex / Age	Swiss Health Survey 1997			Living in Switzerland 1999		
	men	women	total	men	women	total
14-24	93.0	89.4	<b>91.2</b>	92.7	89.9	<b>91.3</b>
25-34	90.7	89.4	<b>90.1</b>	89.4	87.0	<b>88.2</b>
35-44	87.1	84.2	<b>85.6</b>	85.3	84.8	<b>85.0</b>
45-54	86.2	81.2	<b>83.7</b>	83.9	76.4	<b>80.2</b>
55-64	82.7	76.0	<b>79.3</b>	77.3	75.9	<b>76.5</b>
65-74	78.6	68.3	<b>72.7</b>	79.2	72.0	<b>75.4</b>
75+	72.1	62.3	<b>65.9</b>	72.8	63.6	<b>67.1</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>86.2</b>	<b>80.4</b>	<b>83.2</b>	<b>84.7</b>	<b>80.3</b>	<b>82.4</b>

The results obtained in both surveys are very similar: self-rated health steadily declines with age for both sexes and at all ages women rate their health worse.

Table 10: Persons with at least one physician visit during the last 12 months (percentages, weighted results)

Variables Sex / Age	Swiss Health Survey 1997			Living in Switzerland 1999		
	men	women	total	men	women	total
14-24	72.4	82.3	<b>77.2</b>	77.2	78.6	<b>77.9</b>
25-34	71.4	84.9	<b>78.3</b>	71.2	87.6	<b>79.4</b>
35-44	66.5	81.2	<b>73.7</b>	70.1	84.7	<b>77.3</b>
45-54	72.0	79.9	<b>76.0</b>	72.3	84.7	<b>78.5</b>
55-64	74.7	85.3	<b>80.1</b>	79.7	86.8	<b>83.8</b>
65-74	85.5	88.6	<b>87.3</b>	88.6	86.1	<b>87.4</b>
75+	88.6	90.5	<b>89.8</b>	88.4	90.4	<b>89.7</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>73.6</b>	<b>84.2</b>	<b>79.1</b>	<b>75.8</b>	<b>85.2</b>	<b>80.7</b>

The similarity of the results is also confirmed regarding visits to physicians: the proportion of persons indicating at least one visit to a physician over the last 12 months increases with age and at all ages, a sensibly higher proportion of women enjoyed at least one visit.

## 2.2 Planned activities 2004-2007

Funding is requested for the continuation of the *Swiss Household Panel* for the years 2004-2007 comprising the following major objectives and tasks:

### A. Realisation of the panel survey waves 6 to 9 during the years 2004-2007.

*Sample refreshment:* The wave 6 sample will be refreshed in order a) to compensate for the past attrition and b) to increase the sample size to 6'000 households<sup>26</sup> (see Table below). The new sample will again be drawn by the Methodology Section of the *Swiss Federal Statistical Office* (Dr. Philippe Eichenberger) on the basis of the complete Swisscom Phone Directory.

<sup>26</sup> The experience with the analyses of the already available panel data shows that the initial sample size of 5'074 effectively interviewed households and 7,799 persons is rather too small for certain kinds of longitudinal analyses including not to frequent life events. As the number of longitudinal panel members declines rapidly over the years (neutral losses, refusals and deaths, etc.), we plan to increase the new baseline sample size (2004, wave 6) to a total of 6'000 validly interviewed households.

Table 11: Estimated Number of Surveyed Households and Individuals for the period 2004-2007.

<i>Number of participating units</i>	2004*	2005*	2006*	2007*
Participating households	6,000	5,200	4,600	4,000
<i>Persons living in participating households</i>	15,291	13,252	11,723	10,194
Persons aged 14 years and older eligible for individual interviewing	12,000	10,400	9,200	8,000
Personal interviews	9,500	8,200	7,400	6,300
Proxy Interviews	2,638	2,286	2,022	1,758
Persons responding in current and all previous waves	-----	7,695	6,612	4750

\* Combined SHP and M.I.S. Trend estimations based on the previous waves 1-4 (1999-2002)

*Revision and Pre-testing of research instruments:* The necessary adaptations of the SHP questionnaires in relation to the requirements of the *European Statistics of Income and Living Conditions* (CH-SILC, see Appendix I) have already been made. Longitudinal panel data analyses heavily rely on data from several panel waves for which measurements have been identical (same questions, same wordings, same response categories). Consequently, the research instruments used in wave 5 (2003) will also be used in waves 6-9. Nevertheless, it appears desirable to carefully scrutinize all questionnaires and to make adjustments if materially necessary and justified by the experience of past data use by researchers (respectively non-use).

Pre-tests of the questionnaires will be performed for each of the forthcoming four waves. The experience shows that even minor technical adjustments are absolutely necessary in order to keep the risk of a CATI System failure at the lowest possible level, extensive quantitative pre-testing will be necessary.

*SHP CATI Survey waves VI to IX:* The over 30'000 CATI Interviews will be carried out by M.I.S. Trend (Lausanne) in German, French and Italian (see Appendix H for the detailed offer by M.I.S. Trend (Lausanne) : VIVRE EN SUISSE- PANEL SUISSE DES MÉNAGES 2004-2007, June 2003).

### ***B. Motivation and care of panel interviewees to minimise panel attrition over time***

The SHP has gained quite some experience on how to motivate households and their members to participate in the *Living in Switzerland* panel survey. In Switzerland, the number of scientific and commercial surveys has sharply increased over the past few years<sup>27</sup>. It tends to become harder and harder to motivate people to participate in interviews.

The previous focus group analysis, undertaken by M.I.S. Trend, the quantitative pretest of the biographical questionnaire, and the direct telephone communication of the interviewers with the interviewees lead us to pursue mainly a strategy of information

<sup>27</sup> According to the figures from SWISS INTERVIEW, in 2001 approximately 2.8 million interviews were conducted in Switzerland. The overwhelming proportion of these interviews are conducted by phone.

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about the project and its results as a means of motivation instead of offering financial or other incentives. As in the past SHP intends to combine *collective motivational measures* (media communication) and *individual incentives* (brochures, leaflets presenting a few attractive results, letter of thanks, Christmas cards, etc.). In addition, every person having participated in all the four interview waves (2004-2007) is to receive a small gift (see Appendix J).

### ***C. Complementary collection of biographical data in 2005***

Data on life histories will be collected for all persons (14 years and older) by the means of the previously used self-administered biographical questionnaire after the sixth wave during the period April-June 2005. It is also planned to approach again all persons who had refused to fill it out during waves 1-5. All informations collected by the means of the biographical questionnaire will again be treated by the PAVIE (Institut Lémanique d'étude des parcours et modes de vie, Universities of Lausanne and Geneva) with which the SHP intends to develop strong synergies with regards to methods of event history analysis.

### ***D. Data Control, Preparation, Documentation and Diffusion***

Data quality and a complete and user-friendly documentation are necessary to insure data use by the national and international communities of social science researcher.

The extraction of the data from the CATI system by M.I.S. Trend does not correspond to the final version distributed among researchers. The SHP team is currently setting up a *ORACLE data bank* for storing the large amounts of data corresponding to the consecutive panel waves and the periodically collected biography data.

Though quite a few of the *plausibilisation* procedures are well routinised and automatised by computerised applications, each year offers new data that must be compared with previous information. The question of imputation of missing values for certain key variables, especially in the area of income data, will be adressed in collaboration with *Statistics Canada*.

Thanks to the *Electronic Documentation System* (EDS) the SHP data documentation may be considered very high quality compared to national and international standards. However, given the particularities of the SHP data, the four languages and the amount of information, the SHP team will continue adjusting the program to its specific needs. Acces to the EDS on the SHP website will not only be granted but somewhat improved over the coming years ([www. swisspanel.ch](http://www.swisspanel.ch))

*Data diffusion and access:* The SHP is by now quite well known among quantitatively oriented social science researches. Data access is granted after signature of the SHP Data Contract for non-commercial use. Researchers and institutions which are part of the Research Network "Living in Switzerland" (see Appendix D) are regularly informed about the available data and receive automatically the consecutive releases on CD-Rom. Updates, the construction of synthetic variables or more detailed documentation are regularly displayed on SHP web-site ([www. swisspanel.ch](http://www. swisspanel.ch)).

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### **E. Methodological support to the users**

The SHP team offers methodological support to researchers if necessary. In the past much effort has been invested into the high quality questionnaire and data documentation that is available on the Data CD and on the web-site. Though over 150 researchers already use to some extent the available SHP data from the first three waves, only few inquiries relate to these matters. Most questions are more sophisticated and are related to quite complex data extractions as well as multilevel and longitudinal data analysis techniques. Consequently, the SHP plans to organise workshops on specific statistical data analysis techniques.

### **F. Activities of the research network Living in Switzerland**

The SHP-team plans to organise one or two seminars per year: one on technical and methodological matters and one open to the presentation of substantive results stemming almost exclusively from the analysis of SHP data. Researchers from the SHP research network "Living in Switzerland" are to take increased responsibility for the organisation and the conduct of such workshops.

### **G. Research Activities by the SHP Team**

The SHP team is constituted by highly qualified researchers, not only interested in the production of data, but also in its analyses. Therefore the SHP team dedicates as much time as possible to data analyses and publications. Depending on their substantive interests, panel team members are to work more closely with external researchers in conducting data analyses and in preparing publications.

### **H. National and international collaboration**

Besides the animation of the its research network, the SHP actively collaborates with the *Service suisse d'information et d'archivage de données pour les sciences sociales* (SIDOS), the *Swiss Forum for Migration and Population Studies* (FSM), and the *Institut pour l'étude des parcours et modes de vie* (PAVIE, Université de Lausanne) and the *Swiss Federal Statistical Office* (SFSO). All these collaborations are to be enforced during the years 2004-2007. The main effort will be put on the implementation of the *Living in Switzerland 2020* joint venture project, signed in May 2002 on behalf the Swiss National Science Foundation by Dr. Hans-Peter Hertig and for the SFSO by its Director Dr. Adelheid Bürgi-Schmelz (see Appendix I).

At the *international level*, the *Swiss Household Panel* will continue to participate in the *Consortium of Household Panels for European Socio-economic Research* (CHER) financed by the European Union. The CHER project aims at "Developing and enhancing a comparative database for longitudinal household studies by harmonising and integrating micro data sets from a large variety of independent national panels and from the European Community Household Panel".<sup>28</sup> The SHP set-up will be presented in the context of international conventions in order to promote internationally comparative data analysis and common publications. The facilitation of easy access to the data (for example by linking them to the PACO group or to the PSID-GSOEP data set) is a means

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<sup>28</sup> European Commission Research Directorate-General, Directorate F – Human potential and mobility, Contract No HPSE-CT-1999-00037.

to motivate joint analysis with colleagues from other countries. Furthermore, the SHP has placed links to its web-site on sites of other projects (for example the PSID).

### 2.2.3 Organisation and research interests of the SHP team

Composed by qualified social scientists and an outstanding staff, the Swiss household panel greatly benefits from its highly professional interdisciplinary team (see Table below):

Table 12: The SHP-Team: the members, qualifications and responsibilities

Name	Qualifications	Main responsibility	Function	Activity
Zimmermann, Erwin (1947)	Associate Professor, Ph.D. (Sociology)	Research and project management, PR	Director	100%
Budwoski, Monica (1957)	Dr. phil. I (Ethnology / Sociology)	Scientific co-ordination, documentation	Deputy director	100%
Scherpenzeel, Annette (1964)	Ph.D. (Psychology)	Survey methodology, statistical modelling	Scientific advisor	50%
Wernli, Boris (1968)	Dr en sciences politiques	Data management, statistical data analyses	Scientific advisor	80%
Tillmann, Robin (1967)*	lic. en sociologie et anthropologie	Research instruments, data collection, team coordination	Scientific coordinator	80%
Gabadinho, Alexis (1969)	Maîtrise de sociologie, Expert démographe	Data management, SAS programming	Scientific coordinator	70%
Ravel, Jean-Hugues (1971)	lic. en géographie	Web-master	Technical staff	50%
Genesi, Roberto (1971)	Informaticien de gestion, ESNIG - Neuchâtel	Data bank programming and management specialist	Technical staff	100%
Bloch, Denise (1957)	Office management	Accounting / administration, organisation of seminars	Administrative staff	70%

\* Mr. Tillmann is employed by the Swiss Federal Statistical Office and is not on the SNF payroll. The SFSO (Dr. W. Haug) is again committed to make Mr. Tillmann available to the SHP under the authority of its director for the years 2004-2007.

The members of the Panel Team cover a wide range of scientific interests and approaches relevant to the Swiss Household Panel Study: "precarisation and poverty" (Tillmann / Budowski), "living conditions and health" (Zimmermann / Scherpenzeel / Budowski),





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For the SHP, the valorisation includes mainly the following components:

- to make the data of the consecutive waves available to the national and international scientific community;
- to create synergies among data users by organising seminars and workshops;
- to encourage the analysis of the data by the means of adequate user documentation and support;
- to produce scientific publications in well-reputed journals;
- to establish contacts between researchers disposing of policy relevant results and the media
- to promote the use of the SHP data for social monitoring
- to promote international comparisons, in particular as Switzerland is not part of the European Union (and thus often excluded in cross-country-analyses).

The valorisation is part of the ongoing data collection and research process .

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### 3. Significance of the planned work and institutional perspectives

#### 3.1 Scientific significance

The Swiss Household Panel is the core of the social monitoring built up by the Swiss Priority Programme DEMAINE LA SUISSE. The significance of the SHP was described in detail in the main application for the Swiss Household Panel in December 1997 (Grant requestion Nr. 5504-53205, pages 3.19-3.20). The most important arguments are the following:

The Swiss Household Panel is an important step towards an *improvement of the data base* for the analyses of social change on the level of households and individuals. The large number of propositions received in July 1998, resulting from a call for such by the Swiss Household Panel, already confirmed the great interest in such data by social scientists in Switzerland.

Although panel studies are increasingly international, there has been a lack of such data in Switzerland. The SHP survey offers such a data set for the Swiss context. This data set motivates social scientists to acquire *new methods for the analyses of longitudinal data*, a necessary step to maintain a high quality and international standard of research in Switzerland. Fortunately, methodological know-how is strongly promoted by the Summer School which is financed by the SPP DEMAINE LA SUISSE and organised every year in Lugano under the responsibility of SIDOS.

Longitudinal data are a "bridge between qualitative and quantitative research" as various articles in the special issue of Quality and Quantity (Ruspini 1999) demonstrate. Qualitative research often includes a process-oriented view. Quantitative cross-sectional studies are limited to inference about processes. Longitudinal data, such as the SHP data render *process-oriented analyses* feasible, and allow for a new way of "thinking dynamically" (Gershuny 1998).

As a comprehensive survey, the SHP data allow for the *analyses of present-day issues*: e.g. the analyses of household and individual strategies as a result of changes in the labour market, evidenced by data from the Swiss Labour Force Survey. Such strategies may refer to the demand for childcare or housekeeping or the (possibly diminishing) informal offer of care for elderly, handicapped and disabled, or to a change in intergenerational social support and point at changing relevance of the voluntary, private/domestic, public and labour market sector. The public and politicians are interested in such up-to-date results, the former because they experience such changes, the latter possibly to elaborate policies to direct the observed direction of change.

The SHP also allows for a better understanding of *areas of general interest*. Such areas may be the *household and family*, or the *labour market*. The SHP data allow for the observation demographic changes in terms of marriage, family types, family obligations and movements of members into and out of the households. For the first time in Switzerland, the SHP data allow the examination of "patchwork families", where the boarders of families and households are not necessarily clear-cut. Of great interest for the labour market may be the assessments of different situations and positions within it and

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its impact on family and household life, health, leisure or geographical mobility over time.

The SHP data contributes to *poverty research*. The questions asked concerning income distinguish different sources of income for the individual. On the household level, subjective and objective measures allow for the construction of various different types of poverty measures. In combination with the labour market and household/family situation, this kind of analyses greatly contribute to the international discussion of poverty and social exclusion, a high priority for the European Union.

*Stratification* is and will be a further very interesting area for research made possible by the SHP data, in particular, the biographical data. The professional trajectories of the individuals will be able to be analysed in combination with the family situation.

The SHP is of great scientific importance also with regard to the opportunities opened for methodological research, be this research about response rates or about different types data error. The SHP has emphasised methodological studies from its beginning, for example when the decision to use CATI instead of CAPI was made. In addition, an experiment has been carried out about the effect of a self-administered biographical questionnaire in terms of response rates to the biographical questionnaire as well as to the telephone interview in the following year.

The Swiss Household Panel enhances the international network for the social sciences in Switzerland. The SHP has been able to build up various fruitful contacts with foreign household panels (such as the GSOEP, PSID, BHPS, PACO, CHER). The Swiss Household Panel is strongly engaged in making the Swiss data comparable with the other countries (see 2.3).

### **3.2 Social and economic significance**

The analysis of the SHP data allows to address a great variety of research questions and produces a wealth of results with potentially important socio-economic implications (Appendix G). The broad public also receives information about the developments and changes in society that affect everyone and where everyone participates and contributes with their own behaviour. The contacts with the Swiss media are very positive. The press is very interested in results presenting (1) real situations of households in Switzerland; (2) individually perceived changes over time; and (3) the possible impact of social policy measures on the development of household types and the life course of their members.

Issues of *social and economic significance* may be approached around a non-exhaustive list of sets of questions such as:

*Evolving patterns in changing living conditions, quality of life and life satisfaction:* Who is progressively better or worse off and why? What are the necessary living conditions for warranting a good quality of life? Which objective and subjective factors most strongly determine life satisfaction?

*Family life and exchanges with the larger society*<sup>29</sup>: What are the consequences of various forms of living together for social support and solidarity? Which "services" are produced and consumed within the family unit, obtained from the out-side or provided to external units (e.g. care for children and the elderly) ?

*Labour market participation and work and life satisfaction*<sup>30</sup>: What are the different forms of labour market participation (full-time vs. part-time employment, precarious and insecure employment, sub-employment vs. over-employment, under- and over-qualification, etc.) and their relationships with work and life satisfaction? How do people (especially women with small children) manage conflicting demands from the workplace and from home?

*Poverty and social exclusion*: What kind of living conditions are associated with poverty and social exclusion? What are the family and individual characteristics of the poor and the mechanisms which lead into poverty and out of poverty? Who are the poor who remain poor despite policy measures of support? What are the complex relationships between poverty, social isolation and externally induced social exclusions?

*Gender and social and economic participation*: How do life trajectories diverge according to gender? Why do professional careers of men and women with similar educational resources still diverge?

*Social determinants of health*: How is the life course of individuals and families of widely different origins and social conditions related health behavior and outcomes ? What are the consequences of worsening living conditions on health? What impact does ill-health have on living conditions, employment and quality of life latter in time?

Evidence based answers to these and other questions are highly valuable for the formulation and the implementation of new policies; by the means of increased transparency they facilitate political decision-making.

### 3.3 Institutional perspectives

An annual collection of panel data from a relatively large sample is a costly undertaking. The Swiss National Science Foundation's Swiss Priority Program (SSP) *DEMAIN LA SUISSE* has committed considerable financial resources to the Swiss Household Panel since its inception in 1998. As the SPP will come to an end in December 2003, the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNF) is committed to finance the continuation of the SHP starting in 2004 (Appendix D).

Various organisations located in Neuchâtel and in some way connected to its university are engaged in quantitative social science research. They are: the *Swiss Household Panel* (SHP), the *Service suisse d'information et d'archivage de données pour les sciences sociales* (SIDOS) and the *Swiss Forum for Migration and Population Studies* (FSM), the *Swiss Federal Statistical Office* (SFSO) and the *University of Neuchâtel Statistics Group*.

<sup>29</sup> See also the research network "Family Life in Switzerland" (SPP *Demain la suisse*).

<sup>30</sup> See also the research network "Experiences at Work and Quality of Life in Switzerland" (SPP *Demain la suisse*)

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They represent considerable potential for a strong pole in applied quantitative social science research. The University of Neuchâtel has committed itself to the creation of a centre of excellence, called the *Swiss Observatory of Social Change*, as an integrating platform for the already existing project oriented collaborations and scientific exchanges. The SHP is also developing a strong link to the PAVIE (Institut Lémanique d'étude des parcours et modes de vie, Universities of Lausanne and Geneva).

*"The proof is in pudding"!* Data, researchers and institutions are necessary but are not enough in themselves to guarantee success. The Swiss Household Panel is the largest "data generator" specifically aimed at a) sustaining the development of quantitatively oriented social sciences in Switzerland and b) providing key data and analysis for understanding social change in the country. While it may take quite a few years to decide on the success or failure of such an undertaking, it is now already possible to pinpoint a few elements which appear to be crucial to success:

*Sustained funding for quantitative social science research by the Swiss National Science Foundation.* The SPP DEMAIN LA SUISSE has contributed considerably to the creation of topically oriented research networks in the Swiss social sciences and stimulated scientific exchanges on indicators and methods. It offers a perspective of sustainable research development which should be continued in one form or another over the coming decade.

*Renewal of the academic and scientific culture of social science:* It appears necessary to move from individualistic to cooperative research, from discipline centered studies to interdisciplinarity, from national to internationally comparative research endeavours.

*Increased co-operation and exchange between academic and applied social science research.* The SHP is an example of the kind of cooperation which might be extended to the domains of data analysis and social reporting.

*Activities of institutions specialising in policy-oriented social reporting.* While the Swiss Federal Statistical Office is by mission and tradition dedicated to statistical reporting across a very large spectrum, more recent institutions such *the Swiss Forum for Migration and Population Studies* and the *Swiss Health Observatory* have a narrower topical focus. The planned *Observatory of Social Change* in Neuchâtel could act in the coming years as an integrating platform for the various institutions including the Swiss Household Panel.

Neuchâtel, June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2003

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