**SWITZERLAND**

**Region:** Europe and Central Asia  
**Income group:** High income  

**Summary:** Switzerland has reported 5 metadata sources, which collect information on international labour migration statistics. There are two survey based sources such as the Federal Population Census and Labour Force Survey, which are carried out by the Federal Statistical Office. There are three administrative records; the Border/Admission Foreign Statistics held by SEM / FACTS; the Border/Admission Asylum Statistics held by SEM / FACTS / Service Statistics; the Central Information System on Migration held by the SEM / IT Service.

Geographically all the sources cover whole country, however different population groups such as:

- Nationals (citizens) in the country (covered by the Federal Population Census and the Labour Force Survey),
- Nationals (citizens) employed in the country (covered by the Federal Population Census and the Labour Force Survey),
- Foreigners (non-citizens) living in the country (covered by the Federal Population Census, the Labour Force Survey, and the Central Information System on Migration),
- Foreign workers (non-citizens) living in the country (covered by the Federal Population Census, the Labour Force Survey, and the Central Information System on Migration),
- Refugees (covered by the Federal Population Census, the Labour Force Survey, the Border/Admission Foreign Statistics, the Border/Admission Asylum Statistics, and the Central Information System on Migration),
- Asylum seekers (covered by the Federal Population Census, the Border/Admission Asylum Statistics, and the Central Information System on Migration), and
- Foreigners entering country to live (covered by the Border/Admission Foreign Statistics and the Border/Admission Asylum Statistics).

Periodicity of data collection varies depending on the type of sources. The Federal Population Census was last processed in 2010; the Labour Force Survey is carried out every three months starting from 1991; the Border/Admission Foreign Statistics is held monthly since 1974; the Border/Admission Asylum Statistics is held monthly starting from 2004; and the Central Information System on Migration is released monthly, starting from 2004.

Age coverage also varies depending on the type of sources. In the Labour Force Survey persons aged 15 years and older are examined. The administrative records are applied to persons of all ages.

The three essential demographic characteristics covered by all the sources are age, sex, and marital status. Questions on educational attainment and household size are added in the survey based sources.

International migration characteristic covered by all the sources is country of birth. The questions on country of citizenship, second country of citizenship, country of previous residence for foreigners, country of previous residence for citizens who lived abroad but returned, and immigrants and return migrants are commonly added in the survey based sources. The Labour Force Survey additionally collects nationality, foreign workers in the country, household members living abroad, and remittances sent by the household from someone living abroad. Other international migration statistics that can be found in the administrative records include country of residence, reason for coming to country, year of arrival, time period allowed to stay, work permit B / C / L or G, country entering from, type of decisions (permits granted) / type of refusals and shares, nationality, foreign workers in the country, country of origin, and time period allowed to stay.

Labour related characteristics such as employment status, status in employment, and hours usually worked are available in the Federal Population Census. The Labour Force Survey generates data on household income and possible benefits received from the employer. The three administrative records compile the data on industry/economic sector only.
Definitions of “international migrant workers”, “nationals living abroad”, “employment”, “overseas visitors”, and “country of residence” are applied in the sources. Definition of “employment” used in the Federal Population Census and the Labour Force Survey is the standard ILO definition.

To classify occupation, industry, status in employment, and education internationally and nationally adapted classifications are used.

Micro data files from the survey based sources are available for research and analysis outside the agency at different costs or for free.

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Findings:

The latest Federal Population Census was processed in 2010 by the Federal Statistical Office, covering the whole country and following population groups.

- Nationals (citizens) in the country,
- Nationals (citizens) employed in the country,
- Foreigners (non-citizens) living in the country,
- Foreign workers (non-citizens) living in the country,
- Refugees, and
- Asylum seekers.

The census obtains detailed data on demographic characteristics of these population groups, such as age, sex, marital status, educational attainment, and household size. The questions raised in the assessment on the topic of international migration related characteristics are:

- Country of birth,
- Country of citizenship,
- Second country of citizenship,
- Country of previous residence for foreigners, and
- Country of previous residence for citizens who lived abroad but returned.
The census contains questions, which help to collect information on immigrants and return migrants such as "Have you ever lived outside the country?" and "When did you arrive in this country?" The source covers labour related characteristics of all current household members aged 15 years and over, such as:

- Employment status,
- Status in employment, and
- Hours usually worked.

In the *Federal Population Census*, "employment" is defined in compliance with the ILO and the recommendations for the 2010 population and housing census, UNECE and Eurostat. To classify occupation, industry, status in employment, and education, both internationally and nationally adapted classifications are applied. For example:

- ISCO-08 (And in addition: NSP- Swiss Nomenclature of Professions) (where one digit is used to release the data);
- NACE, NAICS (where one digit is used to release the data);
- National nomenclature of status in employment; and
- ISCED-F 2013.

Micro data is available for research and analysis outside the agency. Cost of obtaining micro-data is from free of charge up to 1500 CHF depending on the customer type.

The *Labour Force Survey* commenced in 1991, and is held every three months by the Federal Statistical Office (FSO). A completed sample size of the examination is 126,000 individuals. It geographically measures the whole country and amasses information on the following population groups aged 15 years and over.

- Nationals (citizens) in the country,
- Nationals (citizens) employed in the country,
- Foreigners (non-citizens) living in the country,
- Foreign workers (non-citizens) living in the country, and
- Refugees.

The source obtains detailed data on demographic characteristics of each person in a household, such as age, sex, marital status, educational attainment, and household size. Statistics on the following international migration related characteristics are presented through the source:

- Country of birth,
- Country of citizenship,
- Second country of citizenship,
- Country of previous residence for foreigners,
- Country of previous residence for citizens who lived abroad but returned,
- Nationality,
- Foreign workers in the country, and
- Household members living abroad.

The *Labour Force Survey* includes questions about remittances sent by the household from someone living abroad. It also contains questions, which help to collect information on immigrants and return migrants such as "Have you ever lived outside the country?" and "When did you arrive in this country?" For the population groups assessed in the *Labour Force Survey*, the data on labour related characteristics of all current household members aged 15 years and over is available, particularly for household income. The survey additionally includes questions on the possible benefits received from the employer, such as unemployment benefits, retirement pension, and subsidized housing.
In the Labour Force Survey, "international migrant workers" refer to naturalized persons or persons with foreign nationality. "National living abroad" is registered with a Swiss representation abroad. "Employment" covers persons who were at least 15 years of age and who, during the reference week, were in one of following categories; 1) worked at least one hour for pay; 2) although temporarily absent from work (absence due to sickness, holiday, maternity leave, military service, etc.); 3) were employed as an employed or self-employed person; 4) worked in the family business without pay.

To classify occupation, industry, status in employment, and education, both internationally and nationally adapted classifications are applied. For example:

- ISCO-08 (Also: Swiss classification of occupations 2000) (where one digit is used to release the data);
- NACE, NAICS (where one digit is used to release the data);
- National adaptation of ICSE; and
- ISCED-F 2013.

Micro data is available for research and analysis outside the agency. Cost of obtaining micro-data is different depending on years of the survey.

Border/Admission Foreign Statistics commenced in 1974 and are monthly carried out by SEM / FACTS. It covers the following population groups of all ages.

- Foreigners entering country to live and
- Refugees.

The source collects data on demographic characteristics such as age, sex, and marital status. Statistics on the following international migration related characteristics are presented through the source:

- Country of birth,
- Country of residence,
- Reason for coming to country,
- Year of arrival,
- Time period allowed to stay, and
- Work permit B / C / L or G.

For the population groups assessed in the source, the data on labour related characteristics is available, particularly for industry/Economic sector.

In the source, "overseas visitor" refers to the following five components; 1) Permanent foreign resident population; 2) foreign non-permanent resident population; 3) Recognized refugees; 4) Asylum seekers; 5) Temporary admissions. "Country of residence" is the home address of the person (abroad) for cross-border workers or Switzerland for other people. "International migrant workers" are defined as employed persons with gainful occupations.

To classify economic activities, nationally adapted classification such as NOGA (General nomenclature of Economic Activities 1985), where three digits are used to release the data, is applied.

Micro data is unavailable for research and analysis outside the agency.

Border/Admission Asylum Statistics commenced in 2004 and are monthly carried out by SEM / FACTS / Service Statistics. It processes the following population groups of all ages.

- Foreigners entering country to live,
- Refugees, and
- Asylum seekers.
The statistics cover data on demographic characteristics such as age, sex, marital status, and household size. The data on the following international migration related characteristics are presented through the source:

- Country of birth,
- Country entering from,
- Year of arrival, and
- Type of decisions (permits granted) /type of refusals and shares.

For the population groups assessed in the Asylum statistics, the data on labour related characteristics is available, particularly for industry/economic sector.

In the source, "overseas visitor" means asylum seekers and foreigners with provisional admissions. "International migrant workers" are defined as employed persons with gainful employment. To classify economic activities, nationally adapted classification such as NOGA (General nomenclature of Economic Activities 1985), where three or five digits are used to release the data, is applied.

Micro data is unavailable for research and analysis outside the agency.

The Central Information System on Migration (SYMIC) is a system for recording data on foreigners and asylum in Switzerland. It is monthly carried out by the SEM / IT Service starting from 2004. The source appraises whole country and collects data on the following four population groups of all ages.

- Foreigners (non-citizens) living in the country,
- Foreign workers (non-citizens) living in the country,
- Refugees, and
- Asylum seekers.

The source collects the data on demographic characteristics such as age, sex, and marital status. It also covers the information on international migration related characteristics such as:

- Country of birth,
- Year of arrival,
- Reason for coming to country,
- Nationality,
- Foreign workers in the country,
- Country of origin, and
- Time period allowed to stay.

For the population groups assessed in the source, the data on labour related characteristics is available, particularly for industry/economic sector.

In the Central Information System on Migration (SYMIC), "international migrant workers" refer to employed persons with a gainful occupation. "Employment" means the lucrative activity. To classify economic activities, nationally adapted classifications such as NOGA (General nomenclature of Economic Activities 1985), where three or five digits are used to release the data, is applied.

Micro data is unavailable for research and analysis outside the agency.

### Q1. Population Census

**SOURCE**

**Title of source:** Federal Population Census

**Year of last census:** 2010
Agency responsible: Federal Statistical Office

**COVERAGE**

Geographical coverage: Whole country

Population groups covered: Nationals (citizens) in the country, nationals (citizens) employed in the country, foreigners (non-citizens) living in the country, foreign workers (non-citizens) living in the country, refugees, asylum seekers

- Publication/dissemination of data on population groups covered: Nationals (citizens) in the country, nationals (citizens) employed in the country, foreigners (non-citizens) living in the country, foreign workers (non-citizens) living in the country, refugees, asylum seekers

**TOPIC COVERED**

Demographic characteristics: Age, sex, marital status, educational attainment, household size

International migration related characteristics: Country of birth, country of citizenship, second country of citizenship, country of previous residence for foreigners, country of previous residence for citizens who lived abroad but returned

- Coverage for international migration related characteristics:
  - Country of birth, country of citizenship, and country of previous residence for foreigners: All persons
  - Second country of citizenship, country of previous residence for citizens who lived abroad but returned: Not for all

- Exceptions for international migration related characteristics:
  - Exceptions for second country of citizenship and for country of previous residence for citizens who lived abroad but returned: As part of the annual structural survey of the population census: a sample survey of 200,000 people each year

Information about household members left to live abroad: No

Labour related characteristics of all current household members: Employment status, status in employment, hours usually worked

- Age coverage: 15 years old and over

Remittances related characteristics: N.A.

Information on immigrants and return migrants: Yes (Questions like "Have you ever lived outside the country?" and "When did you arrive in this country?")

- Information on the situation of the person prior to leaving the household last time is obtained: N.A.

Data collected and not published/disseminated: No

**CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS**

Definition of international migrant workers: N.A.

Definition of national (citizen) living abroad: N.A.

Definition of employment: It is defined in compliance with the ILO and the recommendations for the 2010 population and housing censuses, UNECE and Eurostat
**Classification**

Classification used for occupation: ISCO-08 (And in addition: NSP- Swiss Nomenclature of Professions)
- Number of digits used to release occupation data: 1

Classification used for industry: NACE, NAICS
- Number of digits used to release industry data: 1

Classification used for status in employment: National nomenclature

Classification used for status in education: ISCED-F 2013

**Data Collection and Dissemination**

Data collection method: Self-administered mail questionnaire (household receives census questionnaire by mail, returns by mail), self-administered online (web) census questionnaire /Computer Assisted Web Interview (CAWI), administrative sources

Compulsory participation of households: Yes

Official estimate of under-coverage rate: Yes
- Under-coverage rate of total population: 0.45%
- Under-coverage rate of immigrants: 1.1%


Metadata has been prepared and disseminated: Yes

Micro-data availability outside NSO/responsible agency: Yes
- Limitations: http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/fr/index/dienstleistungen/research.html
  http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/fr/index/dienstleistungen/research/01/01.html
- Cost of obtaining micro-data: It costs from free of charge to 1’500 CHF depending on the customer type

**Q2. Household Survey**

**Source**

Title of survey: Labour Force Survey

Agency responsible: Federal Statistical Office (FSO)

**Periodicity and Coverage**

Periodicity of data collection: Every three months (Every 3 months since 2010, annually until 2009)

Year the survey first started: 1991

Geographical coverage: Whole country

Population groups covered: Nationals (citizens) in the country, nationals (citizens) employed in the country, foreigners (non-citizens) living in the country, foreign workers (non-citizens) living in the country, refugees
• **Publication/dissemination of data on population groups covered:** Nationals (citizens) in the country, nationals (citizens) employed in the country, foreigners (non-citizens) living in the country, foreign workers (non-citizens) living in the country

**Age coverage:** 15 years old and over

**TOPIC COVERED**

**Demographic characteristics:** Age, sex, marital status, educational attainment, household size

**International migration related characteristics:** Country of birth, country of citizenship, second country of citizenship, country of previous residence for foreigners, country of previous residence for citizens who lived abroad but returned, nationality, foreign workers in the country, household members living abroad

**Coverage for international migration related characteristics:** Not for all

**Exceptions for international migration related characteristics:**
- Exceptions for country of birth, for country of citizenship, and for second country of citizenship: Question asked only to the target person of the survey
- Exceptions for country of previous residence for foreigners and for country of previous residence for citizens who lived abroad but returned: Question asked only to the target person of the survey, the last country in which the target person worked for 6 months or more

**Information about household members left to live abroad:** No

**Labour related characteristics of all current household members:** Household income

**Benefits received from the employer:** Unemployment benefits, retirement pension, subsidized housing

**Remittances related characteristics:** Remittances sent

**Information on immigrants and return migrants:** Yes (Questions like "Have you ever lived outside the country?" and "When did you arrive in this country?")

**Information on the situation of the person prior to leaving the household last time is obtained:** Reason for choosing to migrate to this country

**Data collected and not published/disseminated:** Yes

- **Number and name of question not published:** C3.1 unemployment benefits and subsidized housing
- **Reason not published:** Not part of the standard indicators

**Information on persons who left to live or work abroad (recruitment, communication, assistance etc.):** No

**CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS**

**Definition of international migrant workers:** It refers to naturalized persons or persons with foreign nationality.

**Definition of national (citizen) living abroad:** It refers to those who are registered with a Swiss representation abroad.

**Definition of employment:** It covers persons who were at least 15 years of age and who, during the reference week, were in one of following categories; 1) worked at least one hour for pay; 2) although temporarily absent from work (absence due to sickness, holiday, maternity leave, military service, etc.); 3) were employed as an employed or self-employed person; 4) worked in the family business without pay.
**CLASSIFICATION**

- **Classification used for occupation**: ISCO-08 (Also: Swiss classification of occupations 2000)
  - Number of digits used to release occupation data: 1
- **Classification used for industry**: NACE, NAICS
  - Number of digits used to release industry data: 1
- **Classification used for status in employment**: National adaptation of ICSE
- **Classification used for status in education**: ISCED-F 2013

**DATA COLLECTION AND DISSEMINATION**

- **Data collection method**: Computer assisted telephone interview by enumerator with data recorded on computer (CATI)
- **Compulsory participation of households**: No
- **Dissemination of results**: Printed publication (Press releases (quarterly, annual), other analyses), electronic format (CD-ROM, DVD-ROM, diskettes, etc.), Web site (www.bfs.admin.ch)
- **Metadata has been prepared and disseminated**: Yes
- **Micro-data availability outside NSO/responsible agency**: Yes
  - **Cost of obtaining micro-data**: 1991-2000 CHF 500; 2001-2005 CHF 500; 2006-2009 CHF 500; Then CHF 500 per year of survey

**SAMPLE DESIGN**

- **Sample frame used**: Administrative register (SRPH: Survey Framework for Household and Household Surveys)
- **Completed sample size**:
  - **Total individuals**: 126,000
- **Evaluation of the overall response rate or refusal rate**: Yes


**SOURCE**

- **Title of source**: Foreign Statistics
- **Agency responsible**: SEM / FACTS

**PERIODICITY AND COVERAGE**

- **Periodicity of data collection**: Every month
- **Year the statistics first started**: 1974
- **Population coverage**: Foreigners entering country to live, refugees, foreigners reporting procedure
• **Publication/dissemination of data on population groups covered**: Foreigners entering country to live, refugees, foreigners reporting procedure

**Age coverage**: All ages

**CHARACTERISTICS OF PERSONS COVERED**

**Demographic characteristics**: Age, sex, marital status

**Migration related characteristics**: Country of birth, country of residence, reason for coming to country, year of arrival, time period allowed to stay, work permit B / C / L or G

**Labour related characteristics**: Industry/Economic sector

**Data collected and not published/disseminated**: No

**CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS**

**Definition of overseas visitor**: It refers to the following five components;

1) Permanent foreign resident population: All foreign nationals who reside in Switzerland for at least one year and who benefit from one of the following three authorizations: establishment, stay, short stay when the stay is equal to or greater than 12 months. Excluded from the permanent foreign resident population are asylum-seekers, diplomats licensed by the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, international civil servants and members of their families if they are not engaged in gainful employment.

2) Foreign non-permanent resident population: All foreign nationals who reside in Switzerland for less than one year and who are in receipt of a short-term residence permit.

3) Recognized refugees: Foreign nationals to whom Switzerland has granted asylum. Recognized refugees are entitled to a residence permit and then, after 5 years, to an establishment permit.

4) Asylum seekers - Permit N: Foreign nationals who have applied for asylum in Switzerland and who are in the process of asylum or the execution of the referral.

5) Temporary admissions - Permit F: Foreign nationals provisionally admitted without having lodged an asylum application or if the latter is rejected.

**Definition of country of residence**: It refers to the home address of the person (abroad) for cross-border workers or Switzerland for other people.

**Definition of international migrant workers**: It refers to employed persons with a gainful occupation.

**CLASSIFICATION**

**Classification used for occupation**: NOGA "General nomenclature of Economic Activities 1985"

• **Number of digits used to release occupation data**: 3

**Classification used for industry**: NOGA "General nomenclature of Economic Activities 1985"

• **Number of digits used to release industry data**: 3

**Classification used for status in employment**: N.A.

**Classification used for status in education**: N.A.

**DATA COLLECTION AND DISSEMINATION**

**Data collection method**: Extraction into the Data System
Q3.2. Border/Admission Statistics: Asylum Statistics

SOURCE

Title of source: Asylum Statistics

Agency responsible: SEM / FACTS / Statistical Service

PERIODICITY AND COVERAGE

Periodicity of data collection: Every month

Year the statistics first started: 2004

Population coverage: Foreigners entering country to live, refugees, asylum seekers, foreigners admitted provisionally (F permit)

- Publication/dissemination of data on population groups covered: Foreigners entering country to live, refugees, asylum seekers, foreigners admitted provisionally (F permit)

Age coverage: All ages

CHARACTERISTICS OF PERSONS COVERED

Demographic characteristics: Age, sex, marital status, household size

Migration related characteristics: Country of birth, country entering from, year of arrival, type of decisions (permits granted) /type of refusals and shares

Labour related characteristics: Industry/Economic sector

Data collected and not published/disseminated: No

CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

Definition of overseas visitor: It means asylum seekers and foreigners with provisional admissions.

1) Asylum seekers: Foreign nationals who have applied for asylum in Switzerland and who have been expelled from the asylum procedure (asylum decision-making or legal process) or in signposting (all persons in the asylum process in Switzerland who have legally expelled the execution of the expulsion) are located. The persons temporarily admitted (identification card F) also belong to the asylum process, but not to the asylum seekers N.

2) Foreigners with provisional admissions: Foreign nationals provisionally admitted without having lodged an asylum application or if the latter is rejected. Rejected asylum seekers are admitted on a provisional basis. In Switzerland there are some 22,000 persons admitted on a provisional basis, almost the same number as the recognized refugees. Provisional admission is granted when a referral is not
admissible, not acceptable or impossible. In most cases, the wrongfulness of the execution of the referral is due to war, civil war, general violence in the country of origin or medical emergency.

**Definition of country of residence**: N.A.

**Definition of international migrant workers**: It refers to persons with gainful employment.

**CLASSIFICATION**

**Classification used for occupation**: NOGA "General nomenclature of Economic Activities 1985"
- **Number of digits used to release occupation data**: 3

**Classification used for industry**: NOGA "General nomenclature of Economic Activities 1985"
- **Number of digits used to release industry data**: 5

**Classification used for status in employment**: N.A.

**Classification used for status in education**: N.A.

**DATA COLLECTION AND DISSEMINATION**

**Data collection method**: Extraction into the Data System

**Dissemination of results**: Printed publication (Statistical bulletin [https://www.bfm.admin.ch/bfm/fr/home/publiservice/statistik/bestellung_statistiken.html](https://www.bfm.admin.ch/bfm/fr/home/publiservice/statistik/bestellung_statistiken.html)), Web site ([https://www.bfm.admin.ch/bfm/fr/home/publiservice/statistik.html](https://www.bfm.admin.ch/bfm/fr/home/publiservice/statistik.html)), Sending various Excel / PDF files to various clients via e-mail

**Metadata has been prepared and disseminated**: No

**Micro-data availability outside NSO/responsible agency**: No

Q6. Administrative Sources

**SOURCE**

**Title of source**: Central Information System on Migration (SYMIC)

**Agency responsible**: SEM / IT Service

**Kind of source**: System for recording data on foreigners and asylum in Switzerland

**PERIODICITY AND COVERAGE**

**Periodicity of data release**: Every month

**Year the source first started**: 2004

**Geographical coverage**: Whole country

**Population coverage**: Foreigners (non-citizens) living in the country, foreign workers (non-citizens) living in the country, refugees, asylum seekers

- **Publication/dissemination of data on population groups covered**: Foreigners (non-citizens) living in the country, foreign workers (non-citizens) living in the country, refugees, asylum seekers
Age coverage: All ages

**DATA COLLECTED ON PERSONS IN THE ADMINISTRATIVE SOURCE**

Demographic characteristics: Age, sex, marital status

Migration related characteristics: Country of birth, year of arrival, reason for coming to country, nationality, foreign workers in the country, country of origin, time period allowed to stay

Labour related characteristics: Industry/economic sector

Data collected and not published/disseminated: No

**CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS**

Definition of international migrant workers: It refers to employed persons with a gainful occupation.

Definition of short-term migrant workers: N.A.

Definition of a national living abroad: N.A.

Definition of employment: It means the lucrative activity

Definition of individual earnings: N.A.

**CLASSIFICATION**

Classification used for occupation: NOGA “General Classification of Economic Activities, 1985”

- Number of digits used to release occupation data: 5

Classification used for industry: NOGA “General nomenclature of Economic Activities 1985”

- Number of digits used to release industry data: 3

Classification used for status in employment: N.A.

Classification used for status in education: N.A.

**DATA COLLECTION AND DISSEMINATION**

Compulsory registration for the population groups covered: Yes

Official estimate of coverage rate:

- Coverage rate of foreign migrants living in country: 90%
- Coverage rate of foreign migrant workers living in the country: 99%

Dissemination of results: Printed publications (Statistical bulletins [https://www.bfm.admin.ch/bfm/fr/home/publiservice/statistik/bestellung_statistiken.html](https://www.bfm.admin.ch/bfm/fr/home/publiservice/statistik/bestellung_statistiken.html)), Web site ([https://www.bfm.admin.ch/bfm/fr/home/publiservice/statistik.html](https://www.bfm.admin.ch/bfm/fr/home/publiservice/statistik.html)), Sending various Excel / PDF files to various clients via e-mail

Metadata has been prepared and disseminated: N.A.

Micro-data availability outside NSO/responsible agency: N.A.