



THE USE OF REGISTERS IN SWEDEN FOR CONDUCTING A CENSUS

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BACKGROUND Statistics Sweden has a long tradition of using registers together with questionnaires when conducting Population and Housing Censuses. The first register was used in 1970 and the usage has since then increased for every census taking. The number of questions in the questionnaire have at the same time been reduced more and more. The total number of items in each census has been close to the same (see annex 1), but the method of collection has been changed. We have in these mixed-mode censuses used the de-jure concept for place of usual residence.

There are at least three circumstances that has made this development possible:

1. Personal identification number

We have in Sweden since 1947 had a personal identification number (PIN) that is unique for each person and that is build on date of birth and a serial number. The PIN is given to you when you are born. That PIN has since 1947 been used more and more as a universal identification for the individuals living in and using the Swedish society. You are using the PIN to identify yourself as soon as you have some contact with any authority, i.e. school, employer, tax system, insurance, health care, social insurance and more.

2. Civil registration system

Sweden has a very long tradition of civil registration. In the beginning the state church was in charge of registering all changes. You were then visited by the priest and was asked of all changes in your household since the last visit, i.e. births, deaths, migration. In later days you yourself were obliged to report to the parish administration all internal or external migrations. The other changes, i.e. births, deaths, marital status, were reported by authorities. In 1967 the civil registration was computerized. In 1991 the tax authority took over the responsibility of the civil

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