



The French rolling census : adaptations in the face of structural evolutions but also... unexpected events !

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Abstract:

The French census has evolved since 1 999 from a 7 or 9 yearly event to an annual event relying on samples selected on a rolling basis. In municipalities of less than 10 000 inhabitants, an exhaustive census is still implemented one year out of five. In municipalities of more than 10 000 inhabitants, a register of the dwellings is updated and 8 % of the households are interviewed each year.

Many innovations have taken place since 2004 to adapt the rolling census to changes in society. The questionnaire has evolved, the possibility of responding by internet was introduced, some changes in the protocol of data collection occurred. The rolling census has proven to be adaptable to these structural changes. It is also a useful tool that enables the organization of large tests before implementing an innovation and the measure of the effects of these innovations.

Nevertheless, the Covid-19 pandemic has presented major challenges and raised questions about the feasibility of the 2021 annual Census survey and how administrative data can support the production of census data. Initially, we adapted our protocol to minimize the contacts during the survey and to promote e-training. But in November 2020, we had to postpone completely the 2021 survey because of the pandemic. Nevertheless, we will still estimate updated populations this year just like we do every year since 2008 but with adapted methods. In this presentation, we will set out the challenges we face and the adaptations that are being implemented in the face of structural evolutions but also unexpected events like the Covid-19 pandemic.

Keywords:

Census; rolling census, Covid-19, adaption, innovation