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# Research at the Swiss Federal Office for Migration

Presentation at the

National Conference of the European Migration Network (EMN)  
“Linking Research and Policy in the field of  
Migration, Asylum and Integration”

12 december 2011

# Content



- ✖ 1. Research in Swiss Government Departments (“Ressortforschung”)
- ✖ 2. The Swiss Federal Office of Migration (FOM)
- ✖ 3. The Research Desk



# 1. Research in Swiss Government Departments

- ✘ So called “Ressortforschung”
- ✘ Most of the departments and the offices have budget for research and development activities (R&D)
  - ✓ 2008: CHF 220 Mio ( $\approx$  € 178 Mio)
- ✘ R&D activities are usually mandated to a university, a public or private research institute (“extra muros”). Generally, there are no human resources within the offices to carry out own research (“intra muros”). Important exceptions are:
  - Swiss Meteorological Institute MeteoSwiss
  - Agroscope



# 1. Research in Swiss Government Departments

- ✧ **Steering committee to guarantee quality standards and to have some priority setting**
- ✧ **Headed by the State Secretary for Science and Research and the Director of the Federal Office of Professional Education and Technology (OPET).**
- ✧ **Other members are the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF), the Commission for Technology and Innovation (CTI), the Federal Institutes of Technology (ETH) and directors of federal offices that have relevant research budget.**



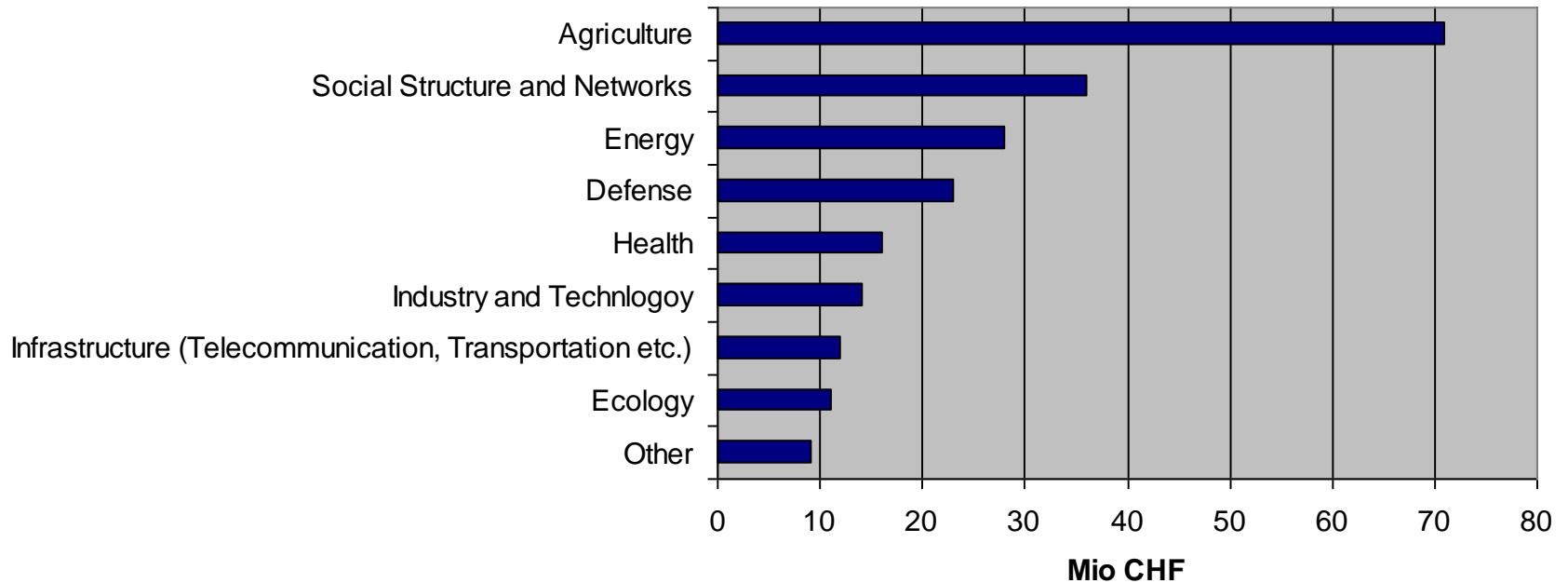
# 1. Research in Swiss Government Departments

- ✧ The current research priorities of the federal administration are (defined in the Message for Education, Research and Innovation 2008-2011):
  - ✓ Health
  - ✓ Social security state
  - ✓ Ecology
  - ✓ Agriculture
  - ✓ Energy
  - ✓ Regional development planning and mobility
  - ✓ Development and cooperation
  - ✓ Defense and security
  - ✓ Professional education
  - ✓ Sports
  - ✓ Infrastructure (Communication, Transportation)



# 1. Research in Swiss Government Departments

## R&D Expenditures by Swiss Federal Departments 2008



Source: Federal Statistical Office



# 1. Research in Swiss Government Departments

- ✘ Offices responsible for one of these topics are asked to draft a research concept (four-year-period)
- ✘ The offices define their research priorities on their own
- ✘ They are also asked to report every year about their research activities
- ✘ Most of the research activity in the administration is done within these research concepts
- ✘ The FOM does not take part of the steering committee and is not forced to have a research concept (small budget, not research priority)
- ✘ Nevertheless, the FOM has to report about its research activities (only financial reporting)
- ✘ The main instrument for reporting is ARAMIS: open for the public (transparency law)



# 1. Research in Swiss Government Departments

- ✧ Evaluation of the research quality by the Swiss Science and Technology Council in April 2010: generally high quality standards, but some points for improvement (e.g. knowledge transfer, involvement of all offices, use of scientific advisory boards)

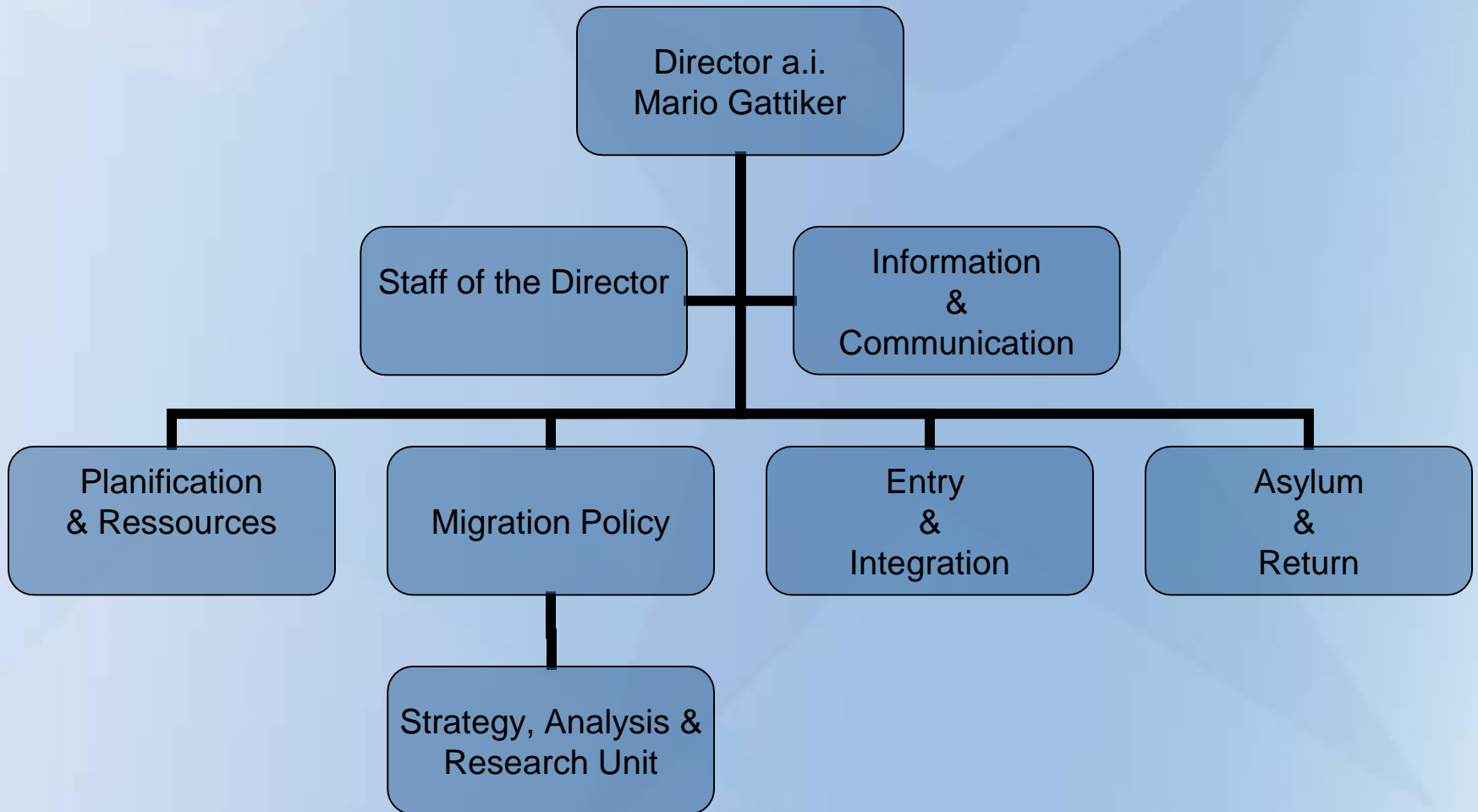


## 2. The FOM - A Short Presentation

- ✘ Part of the Federal Department of Justice and Police (FDJP)
- ✘ Staff: around 700
- ✘ Headquarters: Wabern near Berne
- ✘ five Federal Reception and Procedure Centres in Altstätten/SG, Basel, Chiasso, Kreuzlingen and Vallorbe and a field office at Zurich Airport



## 2. The FOM - Organizational Structure



## 2. The FOM - Main Tasks



- ✘ Entry and stay
- ✘ Work
- ✘ Integration
- ✘ Naturalization
- ✘ Protection from persecution
- ✘ Return to the country of origin



# 3. The Research Desk - Why?



- ✘ Requests and proposals by members of parliament
- ✘ Votes, ideas by the head of the department



- ✘ Implementing new and evaluation of existing programmes and instruments



- ✘ Own initiatives: Need for new knowledge

# 3. The Research Desk



## Legal basis

Art.51 Abs.3 AsylV2

*„Das BFM kann Projekte wissenschaftlicher Institutionen, namentlich im Bereich der Früherkennung und Steuerung von grenzüberschreitenden unkontrollierten Flucht- und Migrationsbewegungen, der Festlegung von Standards bei der Behandlung von Asylsuchenden und Flüchtlingen sowie der Politikevaluation, ganz oder teilweise finanzieren. Ziel der Forschungsprojekte ist insbesondere die Bereitstellung von Entscheidungsgrundlagen für die Ausgestaltung von Recht und Praxis im Asyl- und Migrationsbereich.“*

Since 1 September 2010, the FOM has one full-time position for the coordination of research activities. The Research Desk is affiliated to the Strategy, Analysis and Research unit.

# 3. The Research Desk

## Responsibilities and services

- ✘ Responsible for the budget (around CHF 600'000.-/year; ≈ € 485'000.-)
- ✘ Call for research projects in the FOM
- ✘ Evaluation and prioritizing of project ideas
- ✘ Providing support throughout the whole project: drafting calls, finding project partners, project management etc.
- ✘ Contracts, controlling etc.
- ✘ Responsible for updating the database “Aramis“
- ✘ Networking
- ✘ Publications, knowledge management, intranet etc.

# 3. The Research Desk

## The Research Concept in Practice



### 1. Stage: Initiation

- ✘✘ Desk Research by the unit
- ✘✘ First draft of call: defining research questions, aims etc.
- ✘✘ First contact with the Coordinator:
  - ✓ Is there any budget?
  - ✓ Fits it into the FOM's research priorities?
  - ✓ Ideal project partners?
  - ✓ Procedures?

# 3. The Research Desk

## The Research Concept in Practice



### 2. Stage: Development and approval

- ✘ Finalizing of call
- ✘ Quality control by the coordinator
  - ✓ Criteria: clear idea about the aim of the project, project organization, realistic deadlines, budget etc.
- ✘ Request towards the direction of the FOM for approval



# 3. The Research Desk

## The Research Concept in Practice



### 3. Stage: Call for proposals

- ✘✘ Projects up to CHF. 50'000.- can be mandated directly to a particular institution
- ✘✘ For projects exceeding CHF 50'000.-, the FOM has to invite at least three organizations to hand in proposals (legal basis - competition)
- ✘✘ For projects whose budget exceeds CHF 230'000, a public tender according to WTO guidelines must be issued

# 3. The Research Desk

## The Research Concept in Practice



### 4. Stage: Execution of the project

- ✘ The units have the lead of the project
- ✘ The coordinator takes part in the advisory board of the project (knowledge transfer, quality management, risk management)
- ✘ Contract management, financial controlling

# 3. The Research Desk

## The Research Concept in Practice



### 5. Stage: Closing of the project

- ✘ Publication, Intranet etc.
- ✘ Presentation at the FOM
- ✘ Public Relations: Press release, press conference etc.



# 3. The Research Desk: Current Projects

## 1. Development of measures to protect persons affected by forced marriage

- ✘ Inventory of forms of forced marriages in Switzerland
- ✘ Inventory of measures and instruments of relevant organizations at the cantonal and the communal level (responsible for integration and social support services)
- ✘ Suggestions for new and adequate instruments

## 2. Muslim population in Switzerland

- Basic research about demographic indicators about Muslim population in Switzerland
- Identification of areas of conflict of social interaction between Muslims and official bodies
- Suggestions for measures to improve integration of Muslim population (if needed)



# 3. The Research Desk: Current Projects

## 3. Maghrebinian Diaspora in Switzerland

- ✘ Demographic indicators about Maghrebinian population in Switzerland
- ✘ Networks of Maghrebinians back home and in Europe (as far as possible)
- ✘ Area of conflicts
- ✘ Inventory of maghrebinian organizations in Switzerland

## 4. Integration of refugees into the job market

- Statistical long time analysis and trends
- Differences between ethnic or national categories
- Influence of education, language etc.
- Attitudes of employers
- Influence of the Swiss social system (does it prevent people from being hired?)

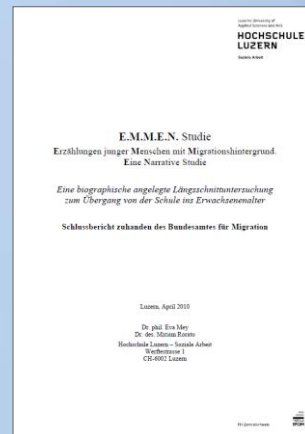
## 5. Health monitoring of the migrant population in Switzerland

(joint project with the Federal Office of Public Health)

- ✘ Identify changing trends in the health status and behaviour of the migrant population and their use of healthcare services

# 3. The Research Desk - Finished Projects


[http://www.bfm.admin.ch/content/bfm/de/home/themen/migration\\_analysen/forschung.html](http://www.bfm.admin.ch/content/bfm/de/home/themen/migration_analysen/forschung.html)





### 3. The Research Desk: Recent Experiences

- ✘ Units often neglect project management
- ✘ Lack of human resources: units underestimate time needed for reading reports, translations etc.
- ✘ Lack of scientific and research knowledge: not clear about aims, undefined research questions, lack of evaluation skills etc.
- ✘ Units often „forget“ to contact research coordination at an early stage: they plan projects without knowing if there is budget left
- ✘ Units and head of units sometimes don't respect the rules (mandating directly an organization they know to do a favour)
- ✘ Lack of „lessons learned“ (esp. best practice, research partners)



**Thank you for your attention!**

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