

# Conference

## Educational institutions in Switzerland and their paradoxical contribution to social cohesion and disintegration

Conference of the Sociology of Education Research Network  
of the Swiss Sociological Association (SSA)

**Date: 23-24 June 2022**

Organizers:

University of Teacher Education, FHNW, Chair for Sociology of Education  
University of Basel, Institute for Educational Sciences

**Venue: University of Basel (Kollegienhaus, Petersplatz 1, Basel, Room 117 & 119)**



<https://education.sgs-sss.ch/education/>

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Schweizerische Akademie der Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaften  
Académie suisse des sciences humaines et sociales  
Accademia svizzera di scienze umane e sociali  
Academia svizra da ciencias humanas e sociais  
Swiss Academy of Humanities and Social Sciences



## **Conference Topic**

Institutionalised educational processes have extended biographically backwards with "early childhood education, care and education" and forwards with "lifelong learning". Educational institutions thus increasingly shape our individual life course. They are co-responsible for the social cohesion, well-being, and prosperity of the population in Switzerland. Education is integrating, qualifying and enables the transmission of central values and knowledge to the next generation. For this very reason, the sociology of education also critically asks under what conditions education fails to unfold this potential and through which structures and processes education can lead to stigmatisation, exclusion, and inequality, thus threatening social cohesion.

At this 5th meeting of the **Sociology of Education Research Network** of the **Swiss Sociological Association**, we would like to address these *two paradoxical perspectives on educational institutions in Switzerland*, also including institutions of non-formal learning such as early childhood education, extracurricular courses, or continuing education.

In doing so, we focus on the corresponding *particularities of the institutions* studied. These particularities include, among others, the structure of pre-compulsory, compulsory, and post-compulsory education; the question of political responsibility (education, world of work, social welfare); the uniquely Swiss situation of educational federalism; the question of access regulations or of financing.

Authors had been invited to submit proposals that focus on the potentials as well as on the problematic issues of particular educational institutions in Switzerland. We especially invited proposals that address the following research questions:

1/ Which *historical roots and social conditions* – e.g. social structure, occupational structure, migration, demography, pandemic, economic situation – as well as *educational structures* – e.g. early selection, binary divide of pathways on upper secondary and tertiary level – strengthen or weaken the task of integration and qualification?

2/ Which *rules, norms and values of the educational institution and society in general* promote inclusion of individuals from different backgrounds, social affiliations, or disabilities, and which hinder it?

3/ Which *orientations and practices of teachers and supervisors* lead to successful education and socialisation of pupils, students, and apprentices without reification of social group memberships, which ones make this more difficult and (re)produce social classifications?

4/ Which *reforms, policies, and discourses* support and enable equity and equality in educational processes and outcomes; which impair and limit educational justice?

## **Registration**

To register for the conference please use the following link:

[link for registration](#)

## **Conference fee**

50 CHF. (beverages, snacks, and lunch on Thursday included)

## **Dinner on Thursday evening**

Please register for the dinner when registering for the conference

Costs: at your own expense

## **Contact**

Please feel free to contact the organizing committee ([congress-soceduc.ph@fhnw.ch](mailto:congress-soceduc.ph@fhnw.ch)) should you have any questions.

## **Scientific committee**

Michael Beck (PHSG); Barbara Duc (IFFP Lausanne); Kerstin Duemmler (EHB Lausanne & Zollikofen); Gaële Goastellec (University of Lausanne); Miriam Grønning (EHB Zollikofen); Georges Felouzis (University of Geneva); David Glauser (University of Bern); Sandra Hafner (PH FHNW); Chantal Hinni (University of Fribourg); Kenneth Horvath (University of Lucerne); Sandra Hupka-Brunner (University of Bern, TREE); Christian Imdorf (University of Hannover); Irene Kriesi (EHB Zollikofen); Regula Julia Leemann (PH FHNW); Philippe Losego (HEP Vaud); Caroline Sahli Lozano (University of Teacher Education, Bern); Elena Makarova (University of Basel); Mathias Mejeh (University of Bern); Thomas Meyer (University of Bern, TREE); Luca Preite (PH FHNW)

## **Organizing committee**

Regula Julia Leemann (University of Teacher Education, FHNW, Chair for Sociology of Education)

Elena Makarova (University of Basel, Institute for Educational Sciences)

## **Coordinating board of the research committee**

Barbara Fouquet-Chauprade (University of Geneva), David Glauser (University of Bern), Chantal Hinni (University of Fribourg), Irene Kriesi (SFIVET, Zollikofen), Philippe Losego (HEP Vaud), Mario Steinberg (Uni Basel and PH FHNW)

**Thursday, 23 June 2022**

	<b>ROOM 117</b>
Ab 9.45	Registration, Welcome Coffee /Tea
10.15 –	<b>Welcome and Introduction</b>
10.30	<i>Prof. Dr. Regula Julia Leemann, Chair for Sociology of Education, University of Teacher Education FHNW</i> <i>Prof. Dr. Elena Makarova, Institute for Educational Sciences, University of Basel</i>
10.30 –	<b>KEY NOTE</b> (Chair: Mario Steinberg)
11.20	<i>Prof. Dr. Kenneth Horvath, University of Teacher Education, Zurich</i> SOCIAL COHESION AND THE TEACHING PROFESSION: FACING THE MERITOCRATIC CONUNDRUM

Pause

	<b>Session A: ROOM 117</b>	<b>Session B: ROOM 119</b>
11.30 – 12.10	Session A TEACHING PROFESSIONS Chair: Kerstin Duemmler	Session B EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION(S) Chair: Elena Makarova
	Slot A1 (40') <i>Maritza Le Breton (Olten), Susanne Burren (Windisch), Carolina Toletti (Olten), Andrea Blaser (Windisch)</i> (Re-)production of differences in higher education: Perspectives of lecturers and practical trainers at Swiss Universities of Applied Sciences	Slot B1 (40') <i>Moritz Rosenmund (Zurich); Urs Kiener (Winterthur)</i> Assessing the Linkage of Society with its Education Institution

Lunch

Mensa Universität Basel, Bernoullistrasse 16, 4056 Basel

13.40 – 15.00	Session A TEACHING PROFESSIONS Chair: Kerstin Duemmler	Session B EDUCATIONAL TRANSITIONS, SKILLS AND OUTCOMES Chair: Irene Kriesi
	Slot A2 (40') <i>Roberta Besozzi (Manno)</i> On-the-job trainers: their practices and their role in the socialisation process of apprentices	Slot B2 (40') <i>Miriam Grønning (Zollikofen)</i> Do wage scarring effects depend on the type of workers' skills?
	Slot A3 (40') <i>Ursina Jaeger (Tübingen)</i> Rendering childhood pedagogical	Slot B3 (40') <i>David Glauser (Berne)</i> Ethnic choice effects at the transition to upper secondary education in Switzerland

Coffee-/Tea-Break

15.30 – 16.50-	Session A EDUCATIONAL REFORMS Chair: Rebekka Sagelsdorff	Session B POLITICS AND POLICY DISCOURSES Chair: Gaële Goastellec
	Slot A4 (40') <i>Sonia Revaz, Kilian Winz-Wirth (Geneva)</i> Social cohesion in political and professional discourses: Case studies of two compulsory education reforms in two French-speaking cantons	Slot B4 (40') <i>Regula Julia Leemann, Sandra Hafner, Raffaella Simona Esposito (Muttenz)</i> Governance of access to baccalaureate school: Politics and policies on school structures, the number of places and admission regulations in Swiss cantons
	Slot A5 (40') <i>Deborah Lagler (Basel)</i> Path-dependent developments of two different cantonal implementations of the integrative school form	

16.50 –	<b>KEY NOTE</b> (Chair: David Glauser)
17.40	<i>Prof. Dr. Georges Felouzis, University of Geneva</i> SCHOOL STRUCTURE AND SOCIAL COHESION: HOW TO PRODUCE MORE EQUITABLE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM?

17.50 – 18.30	Section Meeting
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19.00	Dinner
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Friday, 24 June 2022

**ROOM 117**

08.40 – **KEY NOTE** (Chair: Elena Makarova)

09.30 *Prof. Dr. Raphael Zahnd, University of Teacher Education, Muttenz*

FROM SEGREGATION TO INCLUSION – SPECIAL EDUCATIONS PARADOXICAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO SOCIAL COHESION

09.30 – **KEY NOTE** (Chair: Regula Julia Leemann)

10.20 *Prof. Dr. Irene Kriesi, Swiss Federal University of Vocational Education and Training, Zollikofen*

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING: A STEPPING STONE OR A TRAP?

Coffee-/Tea-Break

**Session A: ROOM 117**

**Session B: ROOM 119**

10.50 –  
12.10  
Session A  
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION  
Chair: Chantal Hinni

Session B  
EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION(S)  
Chair: Elena Makarova

Slot A6 (40')  
*Julia Napoli (Geneva)*  
How teachers' practices and discourse show the underlying weight of stereotypes and prejudices within the institution in compensatory education schools

Slot B6 (40')  
*Goastellec, Gaële (Lausanne)*  
Explaining inequalities in access to Higher Education in Switzerland: comparative counterpoint and historical perspective

Slot A7 (40')  
*Katharina Papke (Muttenz)*  
The focus on organization as missing link for analyzing exclusion and approaching inclusion

Slot B7 (40')  
*Luca Preite (Muttenz)*  
Vocational education for sale. A quantitative and qualitative rapprochement to vocational private schools at upper secondary level

12.10 End of Conference

## **Abstracts Key Notes**

### **Social cohesion and the teaching profession: facing the meritocratic conundrum**

Prof. Dr. Kenneth Horvath (University of Teacher Education, Zurich)

Teachers face the paradoxical task of ensuring both equality and selectivity. Understanding how they deal with this double-task marks a pressing challenge for the sociology of education. In this talk, I draw on Boltanski's neopragmatic "sociology of critique" to paint a clearer picture of the analytical problem at stake. This perspective suggests putting our analytical focus on the manifold forms of *testing* through which institutions aim to achieve fair and valid classifications of social actors. Regarding teachers' role and responsibility for social cohesion and disintegration, the category of "talent" and how it is tested (or not) in everyday school situations deserves special attention. The notion of talent is indispensable in meritocratic education systems, yet it turns out to be systematically impossible to test. Several research puzzles follow from this observation. Addressing these puzzles is essential for understanding the durability of educational disadvantages that persist despite egalitarian claims.

### **School structure and social cohesion: how to produce more equitable educational system?**

Prof. Dr. Georges Felouzis (University of Geneva, Faculty of psychology and education science, Geneva)

The organisation of compulsory school, especially at the lower secondary level, is widely debated in the scientific literature as well as in the authorities responsible for organizing education in the various cantons in Switzerland. Most cantons in Switzerland offer an organization in tracks from the end of primary education, producing a segregation of pupils according to their level of learning but very often according to their social and migratory characteristics. However, some cantons, particularly in French-speaking Switzerland, have evolved their school system towards forms close to a comprehensive school with various forms of organisation, in order to improve the equity of their education system. Based on the study of some recent school reforms, we will examine the effects of these reforms on the equity of education systems and their ability to promote social cohesion through education.

### **From Segregation to Inclusion – Special Educations Paradoxical Contributions to Social Cohesion**

Prof. Dr. Raphael Zahnd (University of Teacher Education, Muttenz)

The transition from a segregative to an inclusive education system changes the role of special education significantly. Thus, the way special education contributes (paradoxically) to the school's promise of promoting social cohesion has changed over time. While problematic effects of special schools and classes for social cohesion seem to be obvious (historically and now-a-days), it seems to be less clear what effects (more or less) inclusive forms of schooling do have on the social participation of all children. According to current research, the extent to which special education has a positive or negative impact on social cohesion (within a school or a class) depends on three levels – the structure of the education system, the structure and culture of a school-unit, and the way educators act in their classrooms. Besides the partly segregative structure of the Swiss (special) education system, the way (special) educators pedagogically intervene in the field can have a positive or negative impact on social cohesion.

### **Vocational Education and Training: A stepping stone or a trap?**

Prof. Dr. Irene Kriesi (Swiss Federal University of Vocational Education and Training, Zollikofen)

Vocational education and training (VET) is still the dominant form of upper-secondary education in Switzerland. Approximately two thirds of all young people enter a – mostly firm-based - VET programme after compulsory school. Educational policy promotes VET as the silver bullet for young people's successful labour market entry and for providing the economy with skilled personnel. The scientific discussion is more ambiguous. On the one hand, VET is credited with integrating academically weaker students into upper-secondary education and facilitating young people's school-to-work transitions. On the other hand, VET is seen as a means of diverting students with low SES backgrounds from academic tracks, thus contributing to social inequality. Against this background, the presentation will review the role of Swiss VET in defining educational and labour market outcomes. It will also discuss the structure and heterogenous characteristics of Swiss VET and their implications for VET diploma holders' further educational trajectories and career prospects.