



Innovative Social Policies for Inclusive and Resilient Labour Markets in Europe



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In-depth analysis of processes of development and implementation of selected innovations

1. Introduction

The innovations discussed in this report belong to two distinct clusters. Three of them concern disadvantaged youths and how to improve their access to good quality vocational training. The remaining two are taken from the field of invalidity insurance.

In general, all these innovations originated from the recognition of a policy problem, i.e. a situation that was deemed unsatisfactory by a significant number of actors. The innovation then constitutes the response to the problem identified. In general, given the fragmented quality of the Swiss political system, response do not develop linearly, but are the result of complex and lengthy procedures of political exchange and consensus building. In this respect, the degree of consensus on problem definition seems an important determinant of a speedy response.

The report is structured in the following way. First we present the five innovations selected. Then we examine the policy-making process and try to isolate the key factors that were responsible for their adoption.

2. Analytic Description of the selected innovations (3-5 pages for each innovation) - short description of innovations and why we made this selection:

2.1. New management-by-objectives and control system of cantonal disability offices

Background

This innovation is part of the fourth reform of the national invalidity insurance (II), in Switzerland. The reform entailed the introduction of control measures of the practices of the cantonal invalidity insurance offices and the creation of regional medical services. The goal of the reforms was to get more information and control of the cantonal practices in implementing the invalidity insurance reforms. It is important in this case that the reader keeps in mind that Switzerland is a federal country, in which the cantonal governments have legislative competences in some areas whereas they implement national policies in other fields (Vatter, 2014). The II is a national insurance, which had been established, in 1960 (Fracheboud, 2014). The contributions are collected by the national government (until 2011 as part of the AHV fund (ES, 2011)), but the cantons are charged with the implementation. In order to coordinate the implementation, there are two intergovernmental organizations: Firstly, the conference of the cantonal invalidity insurance offices, which was founded in 1995.¹ Secondly, the conference of

¹ <http://www.ivsk.ch/dynasite.cfm?dsmid=97678>, last access June 9, 2015.

the cantonal compensation pay desks that is responsible for the retirement and invalidity insurance.²

We selected this innovation, because it is part of a larger revision of the national law on the invalidity insurance, in Switzerland, which can teach us an important lesson regarding policy learning and the adaptation of labor market policies. The same holds for the next innovation, which introduced a new set of early intervention instruments for new disability benefit claimants.

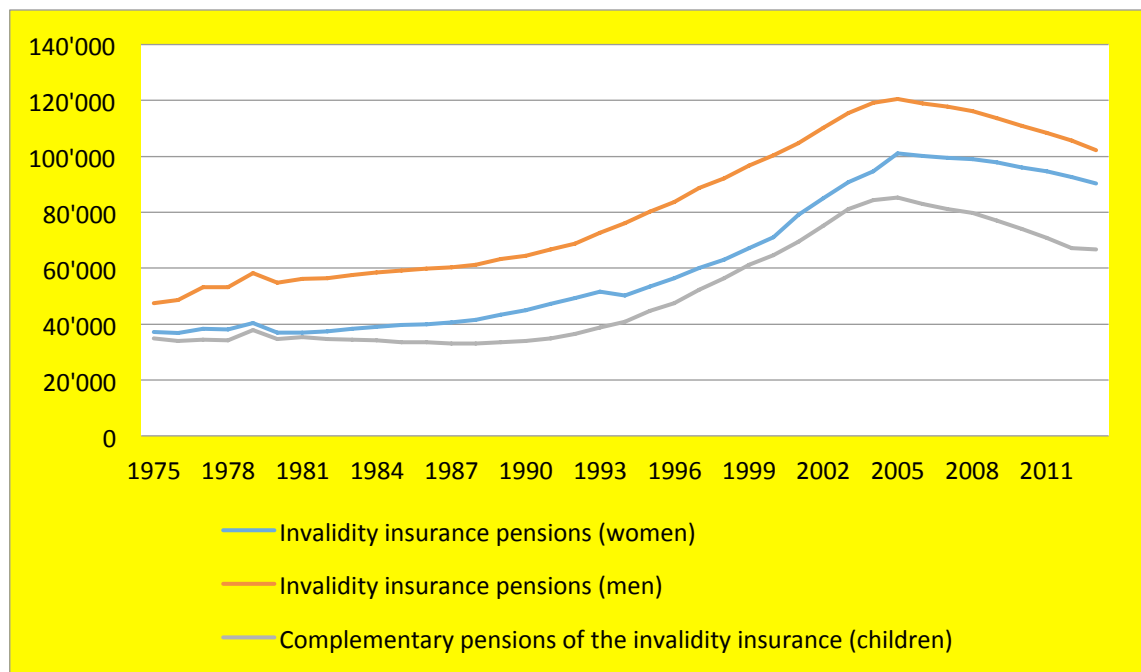
The Swiss invalidity insurance had come into a difficult situation during the 1990s. Figure 1 shows that the number of pensions granted by the invalidity insurance increased steeply for men women and children. For example between 1987 and 2005, the number of men receiving a pension from the invalidity insurance doubled and for women it increased even by 150 percent. The reason for this is twofold, as one interview partner explained: Firstly, due to the decentralized system of implementation, there was a variety of different practices in the cantons regarding the implementation of the invalidity insurance and the number of pensions that were granted. Secondly, there was a cost-shifting problem. Especially during the 1990s, which was a period of economic slump in Switzerland, cantonal governments shifted many clients in the invalidity insurance, if early pensions in the AHV were not possible. What is more, there has been clear evidence that the invalidity insurance was used for cost shifting in sectors where seasonal work is important, such as the construction sector. What is more, during the 1990s and before no systematical data had been collected on the cantonal practices in granting invalidity pensions. Once the differences in the cantonal practices came to light, politicians and administrators realized that it was urgent to make services more uniform (Int-6). Eventually, there was a lack of knowledge amongst doctors, especially GPs on the decision process in the cantonal invalidity insurance offices (Bachmann & Furrer, 1999). The differences between cantonal practices were indeed significant, as table x in the appendix shows. For example, in Basel-City, the cantonal office granted almost twice as many pensions than the office in the canton Zug, in 2003.

Figure 1: Evolution of cases in the invalidity insurance, in Switzerland³

² <http://www.ahvch.ch/de/>, last access June 9, 2015.

³ The statistics can be downloaded here:

<http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/de/index/themen/13/02/04/dos/00.html>, last access, June 17, 2015.



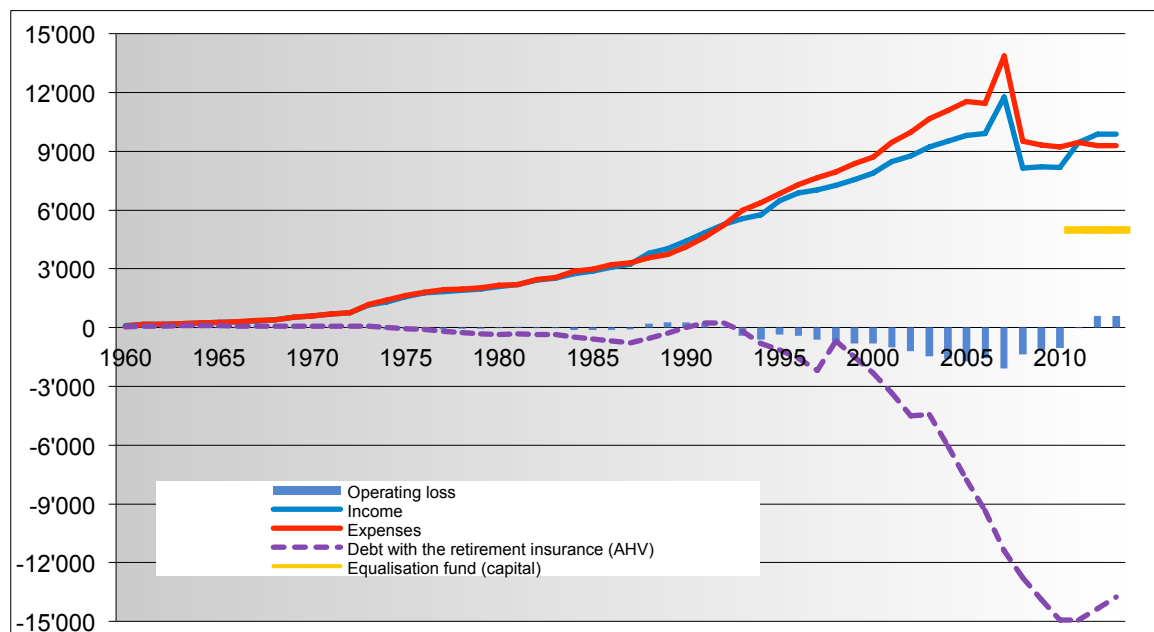
In parallel, the rising number of newly granted pensions led to a bigger budget of the invalidity insurance. Figure 2 shows an overview of the budget's development since the establishment of the Swiss invalidity insurance, in 1960. Notably, since the 1990s, the difference between income and expenditures increased and led to a negative operational loss, especially after 2000. At the same time, the invalidity insurance's debt with the national retirement insurance increased considerably. The reason for this was that until 2011, both insurances belonged to the same fund. During the 6th revision of the invalidity insurance, the two budgets were separated (Economie Suisse), but the debt of the invalidity insurance with the AHV has remained until today.

Generally, the 4th and the 5th revision of the II in Switzerland occurred in a context similar to the one in many other countries. During the 1970s and 80s expenditures for the II rose continuously. This was the case because in an environment of structural economic change the insurance was an important instrument to push people into retirement once they were sick. The commonly accepted strategy of policymakers (employers as well as unions and the state) was to extract patients from the labor market and in return grant pensions based on invalidity insurance claims. These policies led to increasing costs and augmenting cost pressure in the II. In the Swiss case, the decision about granting a pension is taken by cantonal offices of the invalidity insurance, and the practices between cantons varied a lot. This means that there were very different practices in terms of granting pensions, and consequently the access in some cantons was much easier than in others.

Given this context, reforms of the invalidity insurance were urgent. A first attempt to improve the financial situation of the invalidity insurance, namely by cost-shifting on the income side and by cuts on the expenditure side, failed in a popular referendum, in 1999, simply because pension cuts were unpopular. Originally, the Federal Council had prepared the failed proposal as a first part of the II-reform. After the people turned it down, the government decided on pulling together the measures into a common reform, which then became the 4th revision of the invalidity insurance, which entailed the measures we are interested in (BR, 2001, pp. 3223-3224).

The new management-by-objectives and control system of cantonal disability offices was part of the 4th revision of the invalidity insurance, which passed parliament, in 2003. Specifically, these innovations entailed two elements: Firstly, a new set of controlling instruments, by which the federal office of social insurances received new possibilities to control the cantonal invalidity insurance offices. The second part of the reform entailed regional medical services. Thereby, the federal government defined specific regions and the cantons that belonged to these regions hired doctors, notably medico-actuarial doctors that were specialized in insurance related questions. Consequently, the cantonal invalidity insurance offices could prescribe and undertake their own medical exams and base their decisions whether they granted a pension or not on this information. Before this reform, the cantonal offices were not allowed to undertake their own exams and had to rely on the medical information of GPs who treated the insured person (NZZ (Neue Zürcher Zeitung), January 22, 2001).

Figure 2: Budget of the invalidity insurance (in million Swiss francs)⁴



The fourth revision of the II entailed further measures, which we will not analyze in detail in this report. However, there is one additional element, which is important from the perspective of policy learning. The II revision of 2003 entailed a new article, named article 68^{ter}, which ruled that it is possible to set-up pilot projects in order to test new instruments, which depart from the current legal situation. The Federal Social Insurance Office can grant such projects if it has reasons to believe that the proposed project improves the implementation of the law.⁵ This article led to interesting developments in policy learning in the II, because it allowed to set up pilot projects for reintegration measures.

⁴ The statistics can be downloaded here:

<http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/de/index/themen/13/02/04/dos/00.html>, last access, June 17, 2015.

⁵ Decision: BG 21.03.2003 (I); Reference of the revision: AS 2003 3837.

Decision-making process

The Swiss government was aware of the problems in the invalidity insurance early on. The parliamentary commission for social security and health of the council of states had submitted a parliamentary motion, which demanded to deal with the problems in invalidity insurance, in 1995. The suggestions entailed already a better national coordination of cantonal policies (arbitrary body, right to object, easier access to courts, as well as regional medical offices).⁶ Similar propositions are the demand to better include handicapped individuals,⁷ verification of incentive models for re-integration in the labor market for handicapped,⁸ as well as a verification of the possibilities to reintegrate recipients of an invalidity pension in work life⁹ (BR, 2001, p. 3222).

As mentioned before, a first attempt to improve the financial situation of the invalidity insurance, namely by cost-shifting on the income side and by cuts on the expenditure side had failed in a popular referendum, in 1999. Originally, the Federal Council had prepared the failed proposal as a first part of the II-reform. After the people turned it down, the government decided on pulling together with measures on the oversight of the cantons and the regional medical services (BR, 2001, pp. 3223-3224). In 2001, the Federal Council presented its dispatch, in which it laid out the reform plan and the result of the consultation with interest groups and the cantons. Regarding the new management-by-objectives and control system of cantonal disability offices, it proposed two reforms.

1. ***Regional medical services (RMS)***: One of the reasons for raising expenditure is the doctors' lack of knowledge in matters of the invalidity insurance. Therefore, GPs reports need to be checked by doctors who are hired by the invalidity insurance, because the cantonal offices did not have personnel that were competent in medical matters. In order to solve this question, some of the cantons had already demanded themselves more regional coordination of invalidity insurances. In this reform, the Federal Social Insurance Office (Bundesamt für Sozialversicherungen – BSV) demanded more competences to directly oversee II doctors, and proposed to establish RMS. The federal government suggested that these services should be directly under the control of the BSV. According to the proposition of the federal government, cantonal offices should continue to check eligibility of patients. However the RMS could oversee these reports and, if it deemed necessary, demand further exams. The RMS should be accountable only the federal government. Based on this measure, the federal government argued that decisions should be unified and costs contained, especially for new pensions, however the national government admitted that it is difficult to estimate the exact effect of the reform on newly granted pensions (BR, 2001, pp. 3258-3259).
2. ***Annual oversight cantonal offices***: In order to ensure that the cantons correctly implement the II legislation when deciding on applications, the federal government has the competence to control the practices of the cantonal offices. Prior to the 4th revision of the II, the federal government supervised the cantonal implementation in certain periods. Until 1999, examinations occurred every five years and since 2000 every three years. In order to better control and harmonize application, the federal governments wants yearly controls and more personnel in the BSV (BR, 2001, pp. 3259-3260).

⁶ SGK S: 94.3377.

⁷ Postulat Ruf, 95.3337.

⁸ SGK N, 97.3394.

⁹ Motion Fraktion der Schweizerischen Volkspartei 00.3285

Overall, the goal of these reforms was to get the continuously growing number of new cases in the II under control and to harmonize the differences in cantonal practices, which led to inequalities in disability pensions granted (NZZ, January 22, 2001, BR, 2001, p. 3305). In order to implement this reform, the federal government argued that it is necessary to explicitly delegate competences from the cantonal offices to the BSV or other federal offices that are in charge (BR, 2001, p. 3316).

Both reform goals passed the two chambers of the federal parliament, in Switzerland. However, there were some important modifications to the RMS project in the national council.

Originally, the federal government had conceptualized the **regional medical services**, as a centrally governed bureaucracy, similar to the SUVA (Swiss Accident Insurance Organization), which is controlled by the federal government. However, the first chamber of the national parliament refused to centralize these powers. It preferred to give these competences to the cantonal IV-offices. This change came about, amongst others due to the lobbying of the cantonal governments in the national parliament. The reform that eventually passed the national parliament contained that the regional medical services should be a cantonal responsibility. The federal government received the competence to design the regions after hearing the cantons, but the cantons are in charge to hire the doctors that work in the regional medical services (Int-2; Int-9). The regional medical services report to the cantonal offices and they only have a consulting function in the decisions. On the other hand, the federal government has the professional oversight of the RMS (NZZ, 21.06.2003).

Concerning the **annual oversight of the cantonal offices** there was a general agreement amongst parliamentarians that the cantonal offices should be controlled more tightly. However, the National Council, which is the first chamber of the national parliament, followed the proposal by Peter Hess (C, ZG) that the cantonal II offices should not be controlled by the BSV, but by independent experts. The Council of States, the second chamber, approached the position of the National Council but did not exactly follow its recommendations. Following its own commission's recommendations, it granted the BSV general oversight of the cantonal IV offices, but financial controlling remained with in the hands of independent experts. The National Council accepted this proposal (NR/SR, 2003). In the end, the BSV received more competences regarding the financial and administrative oversight of the cantonal II offices. Consequently, the cantonal offices needed the approval of the federal government to hire personnel and the coordinating compensation fund, which needed to equalize differences between the different cantons, needed the approval of the federal government for all its expenses (NZZ, 21.06.2003).

Implementation

The federal government was responsible for the evaluation of the **regional medical services**. However, since the cantons were in charge of creating their implementation, it was not easy to achieve harmonized practices amongst these services, which had been the intention of the reform. In the beginning there were different models for these regional services. This means that there are some offices of the regional medical services, which demanded examinations from everyone applying to get a pension. Others did not examine and only decided based on paperwork (Eastern part of Switzerland). There were evaluations of each model and a comparison of which model of the regional medical services granted more pensions. But I do not remember how this happened exactly. Basically every regional medical service could do what it wanted to. The benchmark was that at least two cantons needed to be combined into one

regional medical service. For instance they could decide how many exams they did, etc. The BSV slowly tried to get the cantons to unify its decision criteria. In order to exchange practices between the different RMS-models, RM-doctors have met regularly in Bern, in order to learn from one another and to unify practices in that way, since the federal government does have the political support to unify cantonal practices by hierarchical rule (Int-2).

Another reason for this soft-governance approach was that not many doctors were qualified to work in the RMS and the BSV did not want to take the risk of many candidates resigning. According to one interview partner, it is difficult in Switzerland to give bureaucratic orders to doctors regarding their decision about patients. This and the fact that parliament had refused to grant centralized control of the RMS led to the establishment of the mentioned mutual exchange between the different services (Int-2). The regional medical services had been evaluated and were found not to be functioning very well, partially due to a lack of qualified and motivated doctors for these jobs and competitive salaries (Wapf & Peters, 2007). In Switzerland, insurance medicine is not yet a very well developed as a discipline (Int-1). Since the task in the RMS is administrative, it reduced the freedom of doctors, which is not attractive to many applicants, all the more because the RMS often intervene in the relationship between the patient and the treating doctors, which is not attractive for applicants either (Int-8). In order to solve the problems, evaluators demanded to create better evaluation tools for the RMS and more unified tools for the doctors working there (Wapf & Peters, 2007, pp. 77-78).

The implementation of the **annual oversight of the cantonal offices** was also a task of the BSV. Its implementation strategy consisted of audits and dialogues with the cantonal invalidity insurance offices. However the federal office does not have many options to penalize the cantonal authorities in case of non-compliance with its suggestions for change or for excessive over-spending. According to the official doctrine, surveillance is carried out in a cooperative manner (Int-1). Nonetheless, the oversight process led at times to open conflicts between the BSV and the cantonal offices. The reason for these conflicts was that oversight included simple controls of the outputs of the cantonal invalidity insurance offices by the BSV, most prominently the number of newly granted pensions, nr. of applications, refused applications etc. and a comparison of the cantons based on this. This happened in the following way: BSV-officers went into a cantonal invalidity insurance office, took a certain amount of files, locked themselves into a room and checked one file after the other. Controls occurred according to a checklist (Int-2; Int-8). The cantons opposed these practices, because they entailed a formal evaluation of the outputs, without taking into consideration the specific economic and social situation of a canton, which led to differences in new granted pensions between the cantons (Int-9).¹⁰

In order to adapt the evaluation to the needs of the cantons, the federal government changed the instruments of evaluation, during the 5th reform of the invalidity insurance in 2006. Notably, it introduced performance goals for each cantonal office, which is being negotiated between the federal government and the cantonal office. Consequently, the cantonal offices had more chances that the BSV took their specific problems and situation adequately into account for the evaluation process. On the other hand, the federal government received more competences to create regulations for the cantons, i.e. regarding the training of the personnel. This reform had become possible due to the problems with evaluation before, but also the introduction of the

¹⁰ For the cantonal differences in newly granted pensions, see the appendix.

new fiscal equalization scheme of 2004, in which federal government received more oversight competences overall (BR, 2005, pp. 4544-4546).

Following the 5th revision of the II, the coordination between the cantonal offices and the federal government improved. Already before the fifth revision, working groups had been created to conceptualize implementation (Int-2). The most important new instrument was an auditing process as well as indicators, which are sent out to insurance offices as benchmarks. The indicators are sent every three months and allow each cantonal office to compare its performance with other cantonal offices. The idea of the indicators is to start the process of critical reflection within each cantonal office and to learn from one another. That is the main effect of these indicators. The two most important indicators are the number of newly granted pensions and the number of completed reintegration measures, however the figures do not specify whether they are successful or whether the individual dropped out. The number of newly granted pensions is then deducted from this figure, which gives information on the number of successfully closed cases of re-integration into the labor market. Yet, the data of the BSV has not been published due to the resistance of the cantonal offices, because they insist that the information is not comparable (Only the information by the Federal Office for Statistics is available) (Int-4; Int-9).

However, the possibilities for the national government to sanction the cantonal offices are limited. The auditing reports, which the cantonal governments also know, show risks for certain topics in the II. If there is a high risk, this puts already a lot of pressure on the cantonal invalidity insurance office. If the risk is high, especially financially, the BSV is obliged to send the reports to the national financial control office (*Eidgenössische Finanzkontrolle*), because there might be negative impacts on the invalidity insurance as such. Secondly, there are goals, which are defined for each invalidity insurance office. If these goals are not met a highly ranked administrator in the BSV talks with the cantonal insurance office. And then sanctions are also possible. These entail information of the cantonal government, which is co-responsible. The next step is that the Federal Council puts a cantonal invalidity insurance office under the direct control of the federal office. This means that the director of the cantonal office is fired, which happened sometimes in the past and that all files need to be send to Bern before they are decided. Yet, this did not show any great effects. Another possible action would be to limit the financial means of the cantonal invalidity insurance office, based on their performance. But this had never happened (Int-4).

Overall, however, it seems that these reforms were successfully immediately, as we can see in Figure 1, because the number of newly granted pensions stopped to increase in 2004 and began to decline in 2005 and the following years. However, before the effect on the budget of the II cannot be seen immediately. In order to explain this, we will now turn to the next reform, which was aimed at improving reintegration measures in the II.

2.2. New set of early intervention instruments for new disability benefit claimants

Background

The second innovation that we are going to examine in this report focuses on new instruments to detect invalidity risks and to reintegrate the benefit claimants into the labor market, respectively to make sure that they do not lose their job entirely. This reform is part of the 5th revision of the II, which passed the popular referendum, in 2007 and entered into force in 2008.

This revision was a complementary reform to the aforementioned 4th revision of the invalidity insurance, which tried to get cost under control, amongst others by tightening control of cantonal practices through more medical and financial oversight.

The main goal of the 5th revision of the II was further cost control. However, other than increasing control of cantonal practices, the federal government suggested to invest into prevention and reintegration measures, in order to keep more benefit claimants in jobs. Specifically, the reform aimed at reducing expenditure of the II by about 0.5 billion per year between 2008 and 2026. Reformers planned to make half of these savings by early detection and prevention measures, for example by early registration of potential claimants, as well as interventions to keep them in their job for as long as possible. The other half the mentioned savings should come from reductions of benefits (BR, 2007).¹¹

Regarding professional reintegration the specific goals of the reform were to provide early identification procedures, allowing for a low-threshold registration of persons at risk of becoming disabled either at their own request or at the request of their employers, acquaintances or relevant social insurers. It primarily concerns people absent from work for health reasons for at least 30 days or for shorter, but repeated time periods. Several early intervention programs targeted at every new benefit claimant with a potential for labor market integration. The measures, which take the form of short-term labor market programs, are intended to help maintain the person at her workplace or find her a new job. They typically include measures of workplace adaptation, vocational guidance or placement activities, and generally last for 6 months. Participation in early intervention programs does not entitle to financial income support. Entitlement to disability pension starts at the shortest six months after the benefit claim. The intention with the introduction of this waiting period was to encourage people with health problems to submit their benefit claim as soon as possible. The expected impact of this reform was to employ sick and disabled people are more frequently when they first get into contact with disability offices (68% against 60% before the reform), and they are also more likely to get a job after participating in early intervention measures. However, the instruments have also created some new dualisms, as low-qualified people tend to benefit less frequently from early intervention measures (BR, 2005, pp. 4521-4525) (OECD 2006: 125).¹²

This revision of the invalidity insurance had become necessary, because there was a need to professionalize the practices of granting pensions in the invalidity insurance. Originally, the idea of the invalidity insurance was at first to reintegrate the insured persons into the labor market and if this failed, to grant cash benefits. However, in many cases the cantonal offices lacked the knowledge to decide whether a claimant could work part time and, in which cases it was really necessary to grant a pension. What is more, in many cases, cantonal offices did not know what to do, because they only received the results of a medical diagnosis. Therefore they decided in many cases to grant a pension, because they were afraid that their decisions would be challenged in court. In order to have more professionalized diagnoses and to support the cantonal offices, policymakers suggested creating regional medical services, to define more frameworks and goals for the cantonal offices (Wapf & Peters, 2007). In the 5th revision of the invalidity insurance, policymakers decided to create better regulations for integration measures and give more incentives to the cantonal governments to use them (Int-2).

¹¹ Reference nr. in the archives of the federal parliament: 05.052.

¹² This paragraph is also based on the description of the innovation in prior INSPIRES reports.

Apart from the reintegration and cost containment measures, the 5th II revision entailed reforms of the business oversight of the cantonal governments by the federal office of social insurances. In 2005, the audit commission of the Council of States accused the federal government and the administration of having neglected the administration of the invalidity insurance for years. Therefore it is co-responsible for the high debts and the increase of retired persons in the invalidity insurance. The Council of States argued that the federal government had enough competences to oversee the cantons, but does not use them efficiently enough (NZZ, August 8, 2005).

Decision-making process

Already during the mid-1990s, when the federal parliament had demanded the creation of new integration measures to get hold of the problems in the invalidity insurance, one of the topics was to better promote early detection and re-integration measures. In its dispatch that set the agenda for the 5th revision of the invalidity insurance, the federal government prominently advocated these measures. It comprised of an earlier registration and assistance of insured persons by the invalidity insurance, in order to assist them to either return to their working place or to stay there as long as possible. Especially the high number of pensions that were granted due to psychological reasons, notably amongst young people had alarmed policy makers and should be avoided by new integration measures (Int-5; Int-9) (BR, 2005, p. 4523). What is more, benefit claimants should receive a legal claim on assistance to find a job and assistance for the time they are trained on it. The proposal by the Federal Council suggested considerable investments, despite the high deficits of the insurance, in order to achieve a reduction of the pensions in the long-run (BR, 2005, pp. 4524-4525).

The proposal entailed a paradigmatic change in the invalidity insurance, because it explicitly demanded to prioritize prevention and reintegration measures compared to granting pensions. Consequently, the reform caused enormous political debates. At the time, the dominant idea was trying to get people back into work, rather than cutting pensions for those who already got money. The goal was to intervene as early as possible, in order to avoid costs later. Therefore, in the fifth revision of the II, the focus was on early detection and prevention to reduce the number of newly granted pensions. Originally, the federal government had proposed to test early detection and prevention measures in pilot programs, because they are a paradigmatic change for the II as the moment when individuals registered with the insurance changed. Before the 5th revision, the II focused on pensions. Now, the goal was to prevent ahead. This is something, which is difficult to regulate by law and to define for the cantonal offices. However the idea of the pilot project failed during the parliamentary hearing of interest groups and cantons. The response was to immediately implement protection and prevention measures without using pilot projects. The message by the Federal Council took two attempts before it was published. Its first version, which had entailed a suggestion for pilot programs, was torn apart in the public hearing. And between the first and the second hearing, the head of department changed from a left (Dreifuss) to a liberal minister (Couchepin). After the change in the departmental leadership, the goal was clearly to reduce the number of new pensions (Int-2).

In parliament, the heated debate about the innovation continued (NR/SR, 2007). Basically the main dispute was between those who only wanted to look at the financial side and others who wanted to make more substantial reforms of the II. The main conflicts in the fifth revision are the new definition of invalidity, which originated in the fourth revision, but was strengthened, in the fifth revision. After that there were many debates about the detection and prevention, for

example the question: who is responsible to announce a case of invalidity to the insurance family, doctors, or the employer? This was a very conflictive point, especially regarding invalidity based on psychological reasons. There was a very strong political will to reduce abuses of the category "psychological invalidity", particularly from the political right, which had politicized the topic for quite some time and used the argument of abuse in the invalidity insurance as an argument in its political campaigns.¹³ Regarding early detection and prevention, everyone agreed that something needed to be done. However, there were intensive debates regarding how to implement and finance these measures were extremely controversial. On the left side of third-party spectrum the debate occurred in a very fundamental way with strong demands for more equality. Right parties on the other hand, demanded to economize more and save money no matter how (Int-5; Int-6) (Bigovic-Balzardi & Wayland-Bigler, 2007; BR, 2007).

Implementation

Similar to the introduction of new management-by-objectives and control system of cantonal disability offices, the cantonal offices were responsible for implementing the early detection and prevention measures. Thereby, it is important to keep in mind that the federal office does not have the power to give strict instructions to the cantonal offices. However, the federal office prepared many tools to help the cantonal offices to implement the reform. In that sense, it was a service rather than an instruction from above. Though, the decree by the Federal Council to implement the fifth revision entails a series of instructions (*Kreisschreiben*) on how to implement the law. At the same time, the cantons coordinate their positions regarding these instructions for implementation in the conference of the cantonal invalidity insurance offices (IV-Stellenkonferenz). Nonetheless, these instructions (*Kreisschreiben*) leave a considerable margin to the cantonal offices regarding implementation. They can decide on questions such as: how to deal with patients or the time when the cantonal offices have to consult the regional medical service. As long as there is no obvious violation of the interest of the patients, the federal office cannot intervene in these practices (Int2; Int-7).

As we can see in table x, the number of early detection and reintegration measures increased considerably, especially in the year after their creation and still during the years after that. At the same time, medical measures declined considerably, specifically because the legal claims to the latter were limited to the age of 20. However, there were considerable differences between the cantons regarding the usage of early detection and prevention measures (Table 1 in the appendix). However, the data provided by the federal statistical offices is not weighted according to the number of insured persons. In order to compare the cantonal practices in the usage of these instruments, it would be necessary to weigh the data respectively.

Table 1: Usage of reintegration instruments 2007-2014 (Annual changes in percent)¹⁴

Year	Medical interventions.	Specific education	Early intervention	Integration measures	Vocational Training	Assistance tools
2007	0.16	2.67	-	-	1.42	2.87

¹³ The right-wing Swiss People's Party (SVP) demanded to end "mock-invalidity" (*Scheininvalidität*) (Int-7).

¹⁴ Regarding medical interventions: The 5th II revision limited claims to medical assistance until the age of 20. Concerning specific education: These entail special education measures, which were transferred to the cantons in 2008 and between 2008 and 2011 the II only paid services that had been granted before. The 5th revision established early intervention and integration measures. The statistics can be downloaded here: <http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/de/index/themen/13/02/04/dos/00.html>, last access, June 17, 2015.

2008	-1.08	-9.79	-	-	6.59	3.65
2009	-2.48	-97.57	207.27	220.34	6.55	1.69
2010	-1.18	-63.36	43.05	32.33	8.25	1.80
2011	-1.22	-4.23	16.75	17.31	7.43	-0.92
2012	-0.53	-100.00	27.78	29.51	4.31	-1.40
2013	0.41	-	17.90	31.97	7.43	-6.43
2014	0.18	-	14.24	14.78	6.85	-1.99

The evaluation of the impact of the re-integration measures was "slightly positive". However, in the evaluation it was really difficult to confirm in a robust way whether there was a significantly higher number of individuals who returned to full employment after they had been judged being partially "invalid", or were affected by the risk of invalidity. The evaluation found however that the cantonal offices generally supported the reform. They changed their practices and used prevention measures and early detection measures in the way it was foreseen by the reform, namely to intervene early without extensive administrative controls. The biggest success was that due to early detection and prevention measures it was possible in many cases to intervene early and keep people in the job. The number of individuals increased who are registered by the invalidity insurance, but they remain in their job at the same time. This shows that the system is able to react earlier. This was the intention of the revision and it was successfully implemented to a certain degree. Consequently, cases of "full invalidity" were reduced significantly. This was one of the biggest successes of this reform. Yet, the report also noticed that it is extremely difficult to reintegrate individuals in the first labor market (Int-3; Int-7)(Bolliger, Fritschi, Salzgeber, Zürcher, & Hümbelin, 2012).

Due to the overall positive evaluation of the early detection and reintegration measures, the federal government did not fundamentally change these instruments. However, the evaluation showed that it is worth using the instruments of early detection and prevention a lot and already early. The report showed that some cantons were rather careful in implementing early detection and prevention measures. However, the evaluation report explicitly recommended to use such instruments earlier and not only for cases where they are 100% sure that it will have an impact, in order to push the average effect. It is not certain whether the cantons consequently extended the use of early detection and prevention measures. New data about this have been collected recently as an evaluation of the 6th reform of the II (Int-7)(Bolliger et al., 2012).

Overall however, especially from the view point of the II budget and the number of newly granted pensions, the reform can be considered as a success, because after its implementation the number of new pensions continued to decline and the budget shows cost containment effects (Figure 1 and 2). What is more, the implementation of these measures in the cantons functioned rather well and did not lead to major conflicts (Int-9). However, whether the overall effect of the reform on the labor market and other social policies is positive remains to be seen. One problem that came up in the interviews is that the restricted practices in the invalidity insurance put pressure on other pillars of the social state, for example social assistance schemes because claimants who are refused in the II end up more quickly at this layer of social policy (Int-4; Int-9).

2.3. Vocational and Professional Education and Training Act

Historical background: from cantonalization plans to an upgrade of the national VET system

The vocational and professional training act (VPETA), in force since 1st of January 2004, is a total revision of the former law on Vocational Education and Training (VET), which dated back to 1978 (third law). Since then, for about a decade, vocational training had not been an important issue of public debate (BR, 1996). However, the economic and social situation changed substantially since the third law came into force in 1980, these changes affected also the vocational training sphere. Particularly, globalization and technological change introduced new forms of production requesting working techniques and qualifications which were very different from the traditional conception of training (BR, 1996). Indeed, the third law was entirely centered on industry, handicraft and trade (BR, 2000a). This started to become an issue in the 1990s, in the context of an economic crisis which exacerbated the problem. Hence, an increasing pressure for a reform sets forth. There were however various triggering factors leading to this increased pressure. Other than the technological and societal changes, important aspects were the scarcity of apprenticeship posts, an attempt to cantonalize the system, the relative reluctance to reform the third VET law by the Federal administration and a new constitutional amendment.

First of all, the difficult economic context was putting under pressure the offer of apprenticeship posts. Indeed, as this offer is closely linked to the general labor market and hence to the economic situation (Perriard, 2005), a harsh shortage of trainings characterized the early 1990s. It reached its minimum in 1994 and 1995, with 191'000 offered trainings, compared to the peak of 243'000 in 1985 (BR, 2000a). Moreover, a demographic trend contributed to exacerbate the situation, as the number of youth wishing to access the apprenticeship market started to increase again in the mid-1990s, after several years of decrease (BR, 2000a). Unavoidably, it was a strongly felt issue by the population, as many youngsters and parents had to deal with the problem directly. The broad coverage through the medias added to the lively discourse (see e.g. NZZ, November 21 1996; NZZ March 6 1997, NZZ, June 7 1997).

According to Rudolf Strahm (2008), the crucial years for the Swiss VET system was the decade between 1995 and 2005, when the decisive setting of its course took place. In the already critical situation of apprenticeships shortage, mainly two events shook the parliament, inducing several parliamentary requests. A respondent (Int-10) spoke of a general big awakening in those years from the Parliament's side, who asked for a reform of the third VET law over several years. The first stirring fire alarm was the proposal to cantonalize VET in the mid-1990s, in relation to the new division of tasks between the federal and cantonal state, which Strahm (2008) describes as a historical lowest point of the Swiss VET system. All VET stakeholders and supporters were against this measure, in particularly the economic spheres, as this would have meant an extreme overregulation for a rather small national labor market (UR). Considered the strong oppositions, the idea was eventually dropped (Strahm, 2008).

The second reason for a strong parliamentary upraise was a report on the VET situation, released by the Federal Council in 1996 (BR, 1996). This report made the point of the current situation, proposing 37 measures but no legislative change, even though, between 1986-1995, numerous parliamentary requests asked for revisions of the law (Strahm, 2008). As a reaction to this report, the pressure to act in the direction of a law reform further increased in the following years, with more than 30 parliamentary requests highlighting the need of action between 1996

and 1997 (Strahm, 2008). Eventually, in March 1998 the Federal Council set up an expert commission in charge of the revision of the law.

Another important element leading to the fourth law on VET was the constitutional amendment of April 1999. While this was generally more linked to the new regulation of cantonal and federal competencies, the occasion was also seized in order to introduce an article giving the Federal state the power to “issue regulations on vocational and professional education and training” (art. 63 Federal Constitution), thus opening it to all trainings outside the academic sphere, and replacing its limited power to the sectors of “industry, handicraft, trade, agriculture and services in the household economy” of the former constitutional article (art. 34^{ter} al. 1 lett. G of the old Federal Constitution). According to a respondent, this clearly illustrates the broad support and willingness to act in the direction of a reform:

“It was a good time for a reform. In the course of the complete revision of the Federal Constitution, it was easy to bring the comprehensive regulation of vocational education and training under Federal competence by inserting it in the Constitution. Like this it went through smoothly. No one discussed it. So this shows that there was a generalized support, otherwise there would have been a big discussion” (Int-10).

Shortly after, in May 1999, the Federal Council opened the consultation process on a draft law on vocational training. Of a duration of six months, this process has shown a broad support both from the spheres of training traditionally under federal control, as well as from those on which the Federal state was newly entitled to legislate since the constitutional amendment (BR, 2000b). Eventually, in September 2000, the Federal Council handed the parliament the message concerning a total revision of the VET law (BR, 2000a). In December 2002, after intense discussions in the parliament, the law was adopted by both chambers through an accelerated procedure, in order to allow it to enter into force during the course of 2004. There has been no call for referendum.

An innovative law

The VPETA is a highly important act concerning the Swiss VET system. Compared to the law it replaced, this open framework law presents several modern and innovative features, while being much more open to development. In general terms, it laid the foundations of a global promotion of vocational training and education, reinforcing the dual vocational trainings and its link to practice and to the labor market and allowing for new developments. It also favored a permeable system with multiple options and life-long learning (BR, 2010).

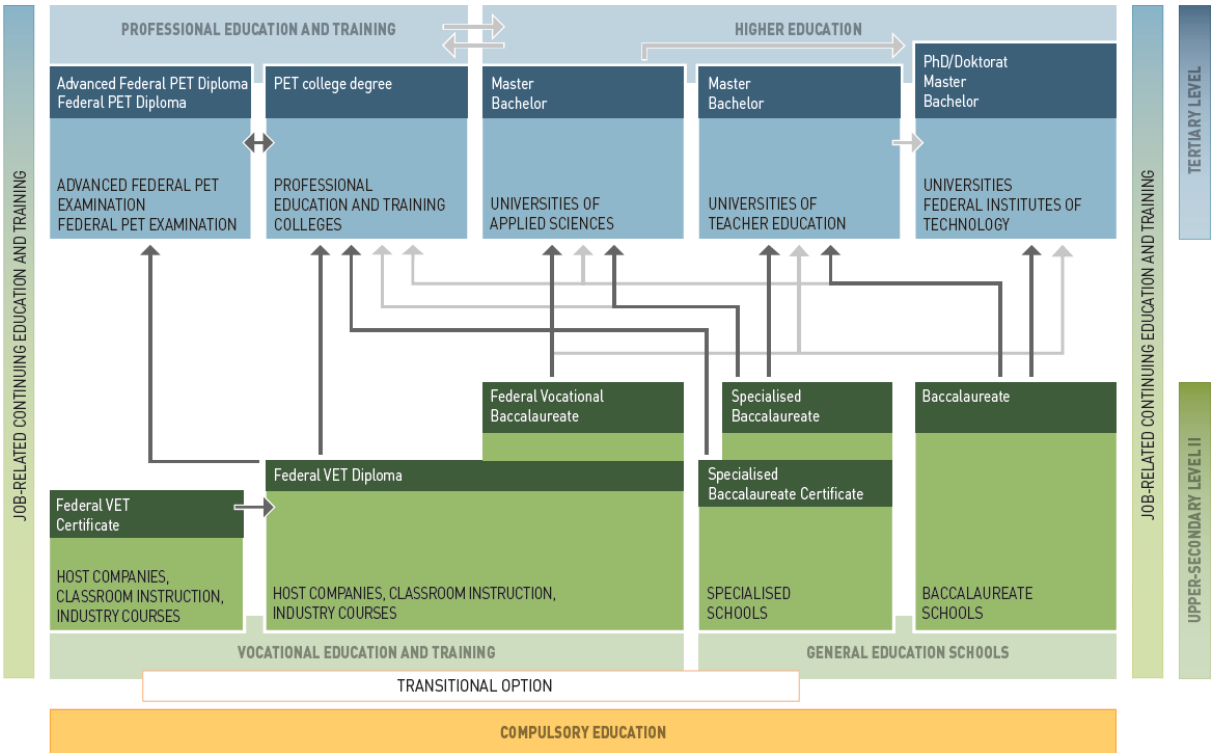
The main change it introduced was to regroup all trainings in one same law, under the competence of the Federal state. This unification of all vocational trainings allowed to structure the apprenticeships in a coherent system and actually lays the foundation of a proper upper-secondary educational system, which could not be called as such previously, due to the highly fragmented trainings situations existing before (Int-10). Indeed, until 2004, the Federal state was competent only for trainings of the more traditional dual-system professions, those the third law was centered on: in the industry, handicraft and trade sectors. The new law integrates also trainings in the agricultural sector, which previously were regulated federally, but by the law on agriculture and were of competence of the Federal agriculture office. The bigger change was however to introduce under Federal competence trainings in the health, social and artistic

spheres, which until then were of cantonal competence. By this change, for the first time, such trainings are put on the same level as the historical federally regulated trainings.

A respondent highlighted that this represented a big innovation also from a gender perspective. Indeed, during the entire history of vocational training in Switzerland, the social and health sectors, the more “feminine professions”, were excluded from a uniform nationwide recognition from which the traditional VET professions benefitted. Indeed, the trainings of the former were regulated cantonally, while the latter were under federal competence, hence benefitting from a uniform regulation and nationwide recognition. As a consequence, the social and health sector professions were generally not highly valued. With the takeover by the Federal state of all trainings outside the academic sphere, all professions were suddenly put at the same level, and the more feminine professions gained more recognition (Int-16).

Another central issue of the reform was the permeability of the educational system, which is well illustrated by the reform’s slogan: “Kein Abschluss ohne Anschluss” (“no dead-end qualifications”). As can be seen in figure 3, through a dense web of possible paths, the range of options after a qualification are numerous and varied. According to a respondent, this is “the lucky chance of this new law” (Int-20), as a pupil starting with a dual-VET has always the possibility to go further. For instance, in certain fields a youngster can begin with an apprenticeship and end with a Ph.D. This openness helped to enhance consistently the attractiveness of apprenticeships, in particular also for the more intellectually talented pupils. This supported the general increased value of the dual-VET system in society (Strahm, 2008).

Figure 3: The Swiss VET/PET system



Source: SERI 2015

An additional innovative and modern feature of the law is its attention to soft skills and lifelong learning, early recognizing that in an increasingly dynamic labor market, people need to have transferrable competencies in order to be mobile:

“This was also an important innovation at the beginning of the '90, to see that good educated people, if they want to be mobile on the labor market, they need mostly general competences, which I call "outlasting competencies": what stays, even if you change your professional domain. And in this sense it is unique” (Int-16).

Moreover, this act is more open to development and encouraging innovations compared to the previous one. Indeed, 10% of the Federal financing for VET is dedicated to innovative projects and projects of public interest (art. 54, 55 and 59 VPETA), stimulating innovations of all sorts in this field. It also explicitly encourages measures in favor of disadvantaged groups (art. 7 VPETA). In this way it gives sort of an assignment to care for the more disadvantaged, while putting resources at the disposal (Int-13). Indeed, this law enlarged the scope of action of the Federal administration responsible for VET which, through these articles, gained more freedom to act, having the money at disposal for instance to commission researches, stimulating the Cantons to propose innovative measures, or proposing measures itself, as for instance Case Management Vocational Training (Int-11).

Indeed, another important novelty of this law concerns the academically weaker pupils. The former pre-VET, a cantonal degree with very low value on the Swiss labor market, was replaced by the Federal Vocational Certificate (AFP, art. 37 VPETA). Introducing this certificate, the aim was to have an up-valued and nationwide recognized training for weaker pupils. As a respondent (Int-16) highlighted, it is important to note that there is a substantial difference between the previous pre-VET and the AFP training, stemming from different conceptions. The central aspect in the pre-VET was integration. To *somehow* integrate pupils who faced more difficulties. With the AFP, the focal point shifted to giving this target group a nationwide recognized qualification in order to increase their general labor market integration and allow them to be mobile. In order to have a federally recognized certificate, the economic partner had to define the minimal required skills. Hence, the AFP has more an economic perspective, while the pre-VET's focus was more social in nature (Int-16).

This law also puts a big emphasis on collaboration. The very first article institutionalizes the tripartite partnership, conferring vocational training to the organizations of the world of work, the Federal and the Cantonal state as a common task (BR, 2010). According to a respondent, this is the strictest way to regulate this issue (Int-16). On the other side, the law requested coordination also between the cantons (Puipe, 2004). Indeed, initially the cantonal VET offices were organized across linguistic regions, with a french-italian and a Swiss-german speaking conference of cantonal VET offices. With the new law they have been regrouped into the Swiss conference of VET offices (SBBK/CSFP), which was a precious and strong interlocutor for the Federal VET office (Int-16).

Implementation:

The implementation of this new law was a challenging task: an extremely complicated federalistic-centralistic reengineering process (Int-16). The former Federal Office of Vocational Training and Technology (OPET) was in charge of the execution of the ordinance (art. 71 VPETO)

and hence of the general supervision of the implementation. According to the law (art. 73 VPETA), in five years time from its coming into force, the over 200 job profiles had to be replaced or revised. However, since a professional reform takes from two to three years, it was quite clear since the beginning that the deadline could not be met (Int-16). The main bottleneck was at the level of the Cantons. Indeed, while the content of the job profiles is defined by the relevant professional association, the implementation is the task of each Canton. Since the professional associations are independent from each other, they could work on the reforms all the same time. The Cantons however, who could not spread the workload over different entities, had not enough resources to implement too many reforms at once. Hence, in order to manage this issue, the OPET came up with a ticket system: each professional association had to get a ticket, before being allowed to start with the reform. In order to get a ticket, the association had to propose a draft of their reform intentions and fulfill numerous requirements. This gave the OPET time to gain experience and to be able to estimate that the Cantons are able to implement about 15 profile reforms per year (Int-16).

„This led to a delay in the implementation lapse, but *de facto* it did not disturb anybody, as long as they were able to show to be on a very good path” (Int-16).

Moreover, this also gave the Cantons the possibility to step in with models for ordinances in order to simplify the process. Indeed, the first professional profiles went a bit in all directions in terms of content, as the professional organizations had complete freedom. This turned out to be extremely difficult to implement in terms of educational content. Therefore, through the new Swiss conference of VET offices, the Cantons organized themselves and came up with models for ordinances, with a limited choice of articles (Int-15).

The unbundling of previously cantonal¹⁵ functions was another extremely challenging task. Indeed, the newly acquired spheres which used to be under cantonal competence had to be transferred into the federal structure of the new law. Organizations of the world of work, representing employers and employees, had to be created in order to serve as contact partners. Once created, the associations had to forge their identity, develop a dialogue with the relevant institutions and many other delicate tasks. It took years before this worked effectively (Int-16).

The new inter-cantonal collaboration has proved precious also when it came to implement the law in concepts most Cantons were unfamiliar with, as for instance the validation of acquired professional experience. In these cases the Cantons which were familiar with the concept shared their experiences and knowledge, in order to build up a dossier, and the other Cantons could then make appropriate this dossier and apply it to their context and preferences (Int-15).

2.4. Case Management Vocational Training (CM VET)

Description of the measure

The aim of Case Management Vocational Education and Training (CM VET) is to early identify and support pupils who show serious risks of not being able to manage the transition from lower to upper-secondary education (transition I), due to multiple difficulties. Ideally starting to identify pupils at risk already in 7th grade (age 13), the aim is to intervene promptly at the end of compulsory school. At that moment, the case manager assesses the individual needs, proposing

¹⁵ Or even of other organisations' functions, as for instance the whole health sector's trainings were delegated to the Swiss Red Cross.

the most appropriate measures capable to address all problems in order to bridge the gap and allow for a smooth transition I. Hence, the case manager sets up an individualized and wholesome package of services, picked among the available measures of the various institutions (Int-16). Hence, the case manager acts as a transversal conductor, simply identifying what would be most useful, and then directing the pupil towards the already-existing measures, such as those offered by unemployment insurance, social assistance, invalidity insurance or from other available services.

As a new form of inter-agency collaboration, it aims to find cross-cutting solutions, adapting the measures to the individual needs, eliminating the “revolving doors-effect”¹⁶. In other words, to avoid that the measure proposed to a pupil is determined only by the range of offers of the service to which s/he has turned to, instead of the most appropriate measure. Moreover, as an early detection system, it aims at identifying as early as possible the youngsters who might be in difficulty at the moment of transition I, and already know what their difficulties are, in order to come into action without interruption at the end of compulsory schooling, avoiding that they simply “disappear” (Int-10). The target group of CM VET is pupils with multiple problematics, whose transition is highly put at risk by these complexity of problems, which need an ad-hoc package of measures, in order to solve the core problematics hampering the transition. If there is a clearly identified problem, for instance a linguistic problem for a newly immigrated youth, there is no need for a case manager (Int-15).

While the measure was launched by the Federal government, according to the principles of federalism, it is implemented by each Canton on a voluntary basis. The Federal state was active on the strategic level, defining guidelines in order to support the Cantonal implementation. Moreover, in order to encourage the cantons to implement it, the implementation phase (2008-2011) was totally financed by the Federal government.

Historical Background

The project was adopted in 2006, presented by Federal Councilor Doris Leuthard at the occasion of the “days of Vocational Education and Training”, during the second VET conference in Geneva (Landert, 2011). It is based on the new Law on Vocational and Professional Education and Training (VPETA), which gave both the possibility and the instruments to do something (Int-11). Indeed, this law explicitly encourages measures of public interest (art. 55 VPETA), reserving 10% of the Federal contributions to support such measures (art. 59 al. 2VPETA).

Several different factors played a role in the decision process which eventually resulted in this Federal project. First of all, Switzerland was again struggling with an economic crisis and a consequent apprenticeship-posts crisis in 2003. In this framework, under Federal Councillor Joseph Deiss, who wanted to react to the situation, a “task force apprenticeship-posts” was introduced. Regrouping all stakeholders, it aimed to discover where the problem was (Int-16). The general context was therefore favorable to such a measure.

Moreover, also in 2006, in the framework of a project called “Interface – Transition” (*Nahtstelle – Transition*), the Federal state, the Cantons and the organizations of the world of work jointly

¹⁶ The revolving doors effect describes a situation in which a pupil struggling with transition I goes to the different services looking for help, but no one is capable to solve the problem(s) (often in case of multiple problematics it is a combination of measures which is needed) and so s/he goes from one service to the other, without finding appropriate support.

agreed to raise the number of young adults below 25 years of age holding an upper-secondary education degree from 90% to 95% (OPET, 2008).

Additionally, based on the new constitutional articles on education, one of which requires better coordination of the educational sphere (art. 62 al. 4 Federal Constitution), the Cantonal and Federal governments asked for an education monitoring on the whole educational system. As a consequence, it was decided that an educational report every four years should be published. In 2006 the Swiss coordinating office for educational research published the first educational report. The idea to increase the share of young adults holding an upper-secondary education degree was reinforced through this (Int-16).

Under an increasing pressure to act, CM VET was one of the proposed measures in order to reach the political target of 95% of young adults holding an upper-secondary education. In 2007, making use of the 10% clause of the VPETA, the OPET commissioned a study in order to analyze the existing measures in the field of transition I (Egger, Dreher & Partner, 2007). This clearly showed several problems. First of all, it highlighted the problem of the little collaboration among the various services. Indeed, it showed that a pupil struggling with the transition I, was offered the measures according to the office s/he addressed to, and not according to what was really needed. Hence, it revealed that the “revolving doors effect” was consistent (Int-10 & 11). Moreover, it also pointed to a group of youths, not covered by any measure: the pupils without solution after compulsory education and who “disappeared” from official records.

This last finding resulted also from the work of the afore-mentioned Federal task force apprenticeship-posts. More precisely, it noticed that each year, several youngsters do not handle the transition I at the first attempt and that there are youngsters with multiple problematics, where it wasn't clear who is responsible. Many had to go through the “revolving doors” coming out with no solution, as in the end nobody was responsible for. Hence, it was a problem of responsibility. Therefore, the Egger, Dreher & Partner study confirmed the Federal administration's considerations and furnished a solid argument supporting the launch of CM VET (Int-10 & 11). It also helped to deepen and refine the concept. However:

“The decision was taken politically, in the sense that it was simply said that we now take care of this target group of the multiple problematics and it was already named in the apprenticeship posts conference. [...] And the Egger study added to this, in the sense that we got to know what there was and so we could improve the guidelines” (Int-16).

At that time, the head of department of VET of the OPET was the former director of the vocational training and vocational guidance office of the Canton of Valais, where he could observe a well-functioning Inter-institutional collaboration (IIC). Coupled with the finding that the inter-institutional collaboration had to be optimized, as during the transition I numerous youngsters were going from one service to another seeking for support, and each time they had to start over again because the institutions were not communicating. Hence, based on the former experience, a similar solution in the VET sphere was proposed to this problematic.

Implementation

A model was developed by the Federal administration, based on the idea that it is needed to act ahead the end of compulsory schooling, before these youngsters end without a subsequent solution. Therefore it was necessary to develop a collaboration with lower-secondary schooling,

in order to empower the teachers to identify starting as early as from the 7th school year the pupils who showed that the transition might become difficult. Since the Cantons hold supremacy concerning compulsory schooling, the Federal state had no power to interfere and hence needed the voluntary collaboration of each Canton (Int-16).

Therefore, the Cantons were invited to develop an individual, context related CM system, adapted to the existent inter-institutional collaboration vessels. So, in an initial phase each Canton had to submit to the Federal administration a general concept, defining how they planned to implement CM VET. However, since it was a new concept, in particular in the field of VET, the Cantons asked what CM actually is (Int-13). As a consequence, a background document was written (OPET, 2007), defining some principles in order to implement the concept. From then on, the Cantons had six months to hand in their proposals, in order to obtain the first payment of a lump-sum of 20'000 CHF. Moreover, a software to help to manage all the cases he was also financed by the Federal level.

The Federal financing was subdivided according to different steps, and bound to the achievement of certain defined objectives. For instance, the first step consisted in achieving the political support (interdepartmental, strategic and operational) and an official decision of the Cantonal State Council (Landert, 2011). Hence, each Canton progressed at its own pace, according to how long it took to reach the objectives.

Indeed, given the variations in the local contexts, the Cantonal concepts varied substantially. For instance, at the beginning, all but one Cantons decided to participate to the project. The Canton of Glaris decided not to do so, as it considered the target group too restraint to justify such a big bureaucracy (Int-13 & 16). However, later on, after a change in the Cantonal administration, it was introduced in this Canton as well (Int-13). Once the project was launched, meetings were organized in order to exchange experience and get inspired by each other.

During the consolidation phase (2012-2015), the Federal government set up a regressive financing model, so that the cantons could progressively take over the expenses, with the aim to institutionalize the program in the Cantons. Indeed, Federal projects of this type have a limited period of Federal financing, once performing the tasks becomes habitual and repetitive, the Cantonal level has to take it over completely (Int-15). The consolidation phase terminates at the end of 2015, which means that the cantons will have to endorse the entire financing of the measure. How and if the offer will continue to exist is totally dependent on each canton's decision. A commission of the Swiss coordination center for research in education has been created specifically to determine what measures have to be implemented in order to ensure the transition.

Synthetic analysis

CM VET is a quite unusual measure for Switzerland as it was rather top down. Indeed, even though the measure was supported by all partners of the tripartite partnership since the beginning, the main initiative came from the federal level, while, in conformity of federal principles, implementation was performed at the cantonal level. On the one hand, the guidelines left quite a big margin of maneuver to the Cantons, who were asked to forge their own concept, adapting it to the local contexts and needs. On the other hand, the Federal level was very present in the project, through partial projects and working groups who steered and developed parts of the project, as for instance the training of case managers. Moreover, through the defined

milestones to achieve in certain lapse of time in order to get the financing, it was leading the Cantons to a certain extent (Int-13). Indeed, the initial idea was to have a quite similar process across the Cantons (Int-15).

The novelty of this measure was to propose an overarching instrument, to intervene in time and to increase collaboration among the various services, in order to offer a youngster the right measure according to the individual needs, and not according to the contacted service. However, at the implementation stage, this was strongly dependent on the internal structures and task division among departments and on the collaboration among services. The existing network was crucial, both concerning lower and upper secondary education, as well as the various services offering transition measures. Indeed, on this second level, where IIC was not developed, many professionals were afraid to lose some of their competencies. It seemed to be less a problem of political support, but more on a personal level of the collaborators of the various services (Int-18). As Inter-institutional collaboration:

“is something difficult and demanding, which needs a culture to be developed in order that everyone sees that it is a win-win situation for all, and that everyone sees in the end that it doesn't concern you personally-as a worker in a certain institution-but it concerns the subscriber who has a problem”(Int-16).

The main trigger was again the problematic of apprenticeship shortage, in a context of economic crisis. In this period, many initiatives were taken in order to counterbalance this problem. Crucial was that the Federal state had totally new means at its disposal through the new law on VET, in force since 2004. In a respondent's words:

“Based on this, there was money at the disposal which could finance this, and also an assignment to do something for these youngsters who don't have a solution” (Int-13).

In this context, the claim that everyone should have a post-compulsory education, which eventually was the stepping stone for CM VET, was constantly increasing (Inte-10 & 11). According to a respondent, the political context in those years had “discovered” VET in order to put those who failed the transition back on track (Int-10). Due to the context, the problem was broadly discussed and felt important by nearly all Cantons. Hence, the objectives CM VET pursues were well supported and not questioned, the Cantons mostly welcomed it as a necessary and welcome support (Int-13):

“The Cantons were happy to get supplementary resources to integrate these youngsters, because in all the Cantons they had the same problem” (Int-18).

2.5. FORJAD

Description of the measure

FORJAD stands for “training of young adults” (*FOR*mation de *Jeunes Adultes*). Implemented in the Canton of Vaud, this measure aims to insert on the labor market young adults (18 to 25 years) at the benefit of social assistance who have not accomplished upper-secondary education. It covers the participants' training expenses and ensures them a living revenue (ARTIAS, 2009b). The measure is designed in a holistic and all-encompassing manner, in order to follow closely each participant and intervene with appropriate support, tailored on the individual needs. Indeed, an

essential aspect is to avoid as much as possible failures and interruptions, in order not to further demotivate the participants, who often come with an already long history of failures in their past. Additionally, due to their pathways disseminated with ruptures and scholastic failures, the participants struggle with multiple difficulties. Therefore, the individual support is multilayered and flexible, ranging from professional, educational, personal and social spheres (Spagnolo, 2013).

For this purpose, the Cantonal authorities rely on organizations providing social insertion measures, specialized in taking over youngsters (ARTIAS, 2007). In a first step, the candidates need to set up a professional plan with the help of the specialized staff of these organizations. This is an important step in order to assess the candidates' capacity of accomplishing vocational training. If the youth shows proof of being able to set up an appropriate and realistic professional plan, the candidate will be enrolled in an insertion measure. Once enrolled, the general aim is to address and bridge the gaps hampering the access to training. More specifically, the final objective is to help the youngster to find an apprenticeship or to subscribe to a vocational school. Moreover, the offered activities in the various insertion measures vary consistently one from another, hence each candidate is placed in the measure which addresses best the individual needs (Int-14).

As soon as a youngster is in possession of a signed apprenticeship contract or a confirmation of entry in training, the youth definitively enters the FORJAD program and the multilayered follow-up during training starts. The health and social welfare department (DSAS) has mandated the organization ACCENT for this specific follow-up. This specialized organization with a long professional experience offers an individualized socio-pedagogic support throughout the whole training period. The support consists of regular informal meetings (during the lunch break at the youngster's working place, after work in a bar, etc.) in order to best adapt to the youngster's environment (AS). If needed, the organization also provides scholastic support (ARTIAS, 2007), or helps out with any other difficulty which might arise (e.g. housing problems, childcare solutions, etc.).

In order to allow also the most fragile youngsters to get a training, the DSAS also collaborates with certain associations and foundations habilitated to offer vocational trainings. Through this collaboration, such organizations engage themselves to offer a specific and close follow-up (ARTIAS, 2007).

Historical background

All over Switzerland the number of social assistance claimants has been steadily growing over the years. Moreover, persons lacking post-compulsory education are overrepresented among social assistance beneficiaries, being particularly numerous in the 18-25 years age group (data for 2009-2013, Federal Statistical Office). Since the beginning of the 2000s, the Canton of Vaud also experienced a constant increase in the share of young adults at the benefit of social assistance. Confronted with this problem, the DSAS, and more particularly the social welfare service (SPAS), became alert. In the words of a collaborator of the service:

“I interested myself to this phenomenon at that time because I was very surprised to see that there were about 2500 youths who depended on public help to live, in a canton which showed a certain economic dynamism. Looking a bit more close to this phenomenon I noticed that 70 to 80 % of these persons were without vocational

training. Which is very particular in a country where there is a way of education, the dual apprenticeships, which is typically Swiss, which is very accessible for everyone” (Int-12).

In order to better assess the problem, in 2001 the DSAS commissioned a study to the social protestant center (Regamey, 2001). The study highlighted the phenomenon of youth precarization, with increasing unemployment and social assistance beneficiaries. To have a deeper insight and understand better the problem, the SPAS went interviewing some of these youngsters in order to see who they actually were, what their problems and difficulties were. While before the 2000s young adults at the dependence of social assistance were generally quite marginalized individuals due to problematics such as a drug addiction path, the interviews showed that the situation had changed, as many of the young adults presented a potential (Int-12). This encouraged to pursue with the plans of setting up such an innovative measure.

A dominant trait characterizing these marginalized youths was the accumulation of difficulties (Müller *et al.*, 2009). However, a determinant factor explaining the increase in young adults at the benefit of social assistance was the lack of post-compulsory education (ARTIAS, 2007). Indeed, it is recognized that youngsters without upper-secondary education face great difficulties to find a job and are at high risk of poverty (EUROSTAT, 2013). In 2007, highlighting this problematic, the Swiss conference for social benefits (CSIAS) encouraged to adopt a more long term vision, promoting a right to education for young adults at social assistance without upper-secondary education, instead of fostering their insertion through low-qualified jobs (ARTIAS, 2007).

In the Canton of Vaud, more than 70% of the young adults relying on social assistance had no upper-secondary education (ARTIAS, 2007), while in the total cantonal population this category represents only 12% (Spagnolo, 2013). As the lack of education limits to a great extent the likelihood of the youngsters’ professional reinsertion, it also considerably increases the risk of their durable dependence on social assistance and of turning the problem structural (Spagnolo, 2013). Hence, against this background, the head of the DSAS decided to adopt the proposition of the SPAS collaborators, and even turn it into a strong element of his legislature. Since autumn 2005, the DSAS intensified its exchanges with the Cantonal departments of education and youth (DFJ) and of economy (DEC) in order to put in place an insertion policy in favor of this target group particularly exposed to the risk of durable marginalization (ARTIAS, 2007).

In 2006 the Cantonal State Council decided to launch FORJAD as a pilot project. In spring 2009, considered the positive results of the first cohorts, which presented an average success rate of 70% between 2006 and 2008 (SC, 2009), the Cantonal government decided to transform the measure from a pilot project into a permanent program.

Implementation

Today, the role of the DSAS in relation to the program’s implementation is limited to a more general supervision and steering. It consists of fixing priorities and type of care in terms of insertion of the youngsters, and to communicate them to the local social assistance authorities and to the mandated organizations, to manage the administrative and financial aspects, to offer a logistical support to the local social assistance authorities and organizations, as well as to evaluate the efficacy of the measure. (ARTIAS, 2007).

However, the initial implementation was not easy, as it could not rely on any pre-existing basis. Indeed, its core, the insertion of young adults at the benefit of social assistance through vocational training, was a recent objective, so most of its structure had to be built from scratch. For instance, no official education existed for the social assistants and the insertion councilors, in charge of guiding the young adults before and during their entrance into the program. This is however a fundamental step of the program, as numerous young adults are extremely skeptic to enter another public measure, after most of them having participated to numerous transition measures with no success. An internal training has hence been created in order to give these professionals the tools to best assess a first social balance of the candidates to FORJAD. Moreover, the implementation of the social insertion measures for young adults has required a considerable investment from the DSAS in terms of communication and evaluation, as again, there were no pre-existing basis to rely on. Indeed, the DSAS had to develop guidelines and work instructions for the local social assistance institutions progressively, in order to communicate its priorities and expectations in the framework of monthly meetings with the cantonal insertion counsellors. For this purpose, visits on the field were also effectuated on a regular basis in order to keep a realistic vision on the problematics the youngsters wishing to participate to the program encounter (ARTIAS, 2007).

In order to achieve better results in terms of exits from the social assistance regime through vocational training, the DSAS elaborated a contract with the organizations offering the insertion measures, which ensures them the financing of a certain number of places in their institutions. In this way, the organizations can rely on more financial security, and really focus on the quality of their service instead of filling up the available places (ARTIAS, 2007). Indeed, the focus is really set on bringing these youth to access a vocational training. This in order to not further affect psychologically the participating youngsters with another failure. Hence, the organizations are evaluated not by how they do their job, but really by the results they achieve (Int-12).

A coordination and support group for FORJAD was created since the beginning of the pilot project, in early 2006. It is composed of representatives of the three involved Cantonal departments, namely, the DSAS, the DFJ and the DEC. In addition to these, representatives of the organizations offering the insertion measures and of employers are also part of it. This group was particularly important during the initial phases of preparation of the project, for its political acceptability and for its success at the moment of the launch of the pilot project in summer 2006, in particular concerning the search for trainings and the guidance of the youngsters towards the most appropriate training pathway. Today it keeps essentially a role of supervision and follow-up of the project (ARTIAS, 2007).

Synthetic analysis

The program is considered as a good and innovative example of labor market integration in Switzerland. An important characteristic of the measure's design is the holistic approach, aiming at reducing as much as possible interruptions and failures. This was based on the responsible person's previous personal experiences showing how fragmented the conventional follow-up was, and on studies which demonstrated the effect of a highly administrative approach on the consumer of such services. In fact, already being in a vulnerable position, these persons had to address themselves to various services seeking for support. Hence, each time they had to start over, describing again their problems and difficulties:

“And this way of doing reinforces what we call the failure dynamic (*“dynamique d’echec”*) and in a certain way the phenomenon of exclusion. The idea of an integrated program was also to say that when you enter here there is someone following you until the end, and the end can also be four or five years later. And during all this time the objective is to create a positive dynamic” (Int-12).

FORJAD made also an important institutional change happen. Indeed, at the moment of creation of the pilot project, the amount of a scholarship (a lump sum) for not autonomous youngsters¹⁷ was extremely low (120 CHF per month), while social assistance benefits were means-tested. This had a strong disincentive effect towards education (ARTIAS, 2009b). As in vocational training salaries are quite low, especially in the first year, the combination of salary and scholarship compared to the social assistance benefits would have meant a consistent financial loss. In order to eliminate this discentivizing threshold effect, the DSAS and the DFJ (the department responsible for the scholarship attribution), established a directive with the purpose to coordinate the social assistance and scholarship regimes. Through this, the youngsters enrolled in FORJAD could benefit from a scholarship, which covered their training expenses, as well as from the social assistance benefits, covering their living needs. Moreover, they could even benefit from additional 200 CHF per month, due to an allowance agreed on the training salary (ARTIAS, 2007). Hence, instead of representing a consistent financial loss, to begin training suddenly became profitable.

To accompany the transformation of the pilot project into a permanent program, the harmonization of social assistance and scholarships norms was institutionalized (ARTIAS, 2009b). Indeed, it was undesirable to give the young adults enrolled in FORJAD particularly advantageous support compared to those who were not enrolled, as this might have caused an incentive for youngsters of not well-off families wishing to start training to enter the social assistance regime only to be able to profit from this support. This meant an increase of about 11 million CHF to the scholarship budget of the time (Int-12). However, while scholarships were financed cantonally, the social assistance expenses were shared between the Canton and the municipalities according to a principle called “social bill”. Hence, the transfer of the participants to FORJAD from the social assistance to the scholarships regime, would have meant a supplementary charge for the Cantonal finances. In order to avoid this financial disequilibrium, the scholarship regime was integrated into the social bill, without however increasing the costs for the municipalities (ARTIAS, 2009a).

This transfer also engendered an important change in the participants’ status, going from assisted to students (ARTIAS, 2007). Since the student’s status enjoys a more positive image, to exit the social assistance regime to become a student, represents for these youths an important symbolic step (ARTIAS, 2009a).

2.6. Presentation of the selected cases in table format

Innovation	Goals	Target groups	Scope	Type of policy	Type of strategies	Expected or estimated impact on resilience

¹⁷ Not able to make proof of financial autonomy by an income during at least 18 consecutive months.

1. New management-by-objectives and control system of cantonal disability offices	Cost containment	Insured population / Cantonal offices	National	New financial oversight of cantonal offices by the federal government; regional medical services for medical oversight	--	Restrict numbers of pensions granted -> possibly more individuals return to work, but due to negative incentives (no other option). Otherwise they drop into social assistance
2. New set of early intervention instruments for new disability benefit claimants	Re-integration before granting pensions / cost containment	Insured population	National	Earlier registration of claimants with the invalidity insurance; Change in priorities: Integration before pension	--	Restrict numbers of pensions granted -> possibly more individuals return to work, but due to positive measures, such as integration support
3.VPETA	Reform and unify the regulation of the Vocational Education and training (VET) sphere	All actors involved with VET	National	Total Reform of the former law	--	Uniform regulation of all post-compulsory education certifications not under Federal competence; new and innovative offers (e.g. AFP); Increased permeability and inclusion of VET into the education system
4. CM VET	To facilitate transition I	Multiple problematics	National guidelines,	Program launched at the	Early detection	Better access to upper-

	for pupils at risk of not managing it without an individualized support	youngsters who risk to fail or struggle with transition I	Cantonal (not-compulsory) implementation. Since the guidelines were quite broad, not all Cantons implemented the measure in the same way, at the same moment and pace. After the end of the federal financing, some Cantons might withdraw the measure.	Federal level, implemented at the Cantonal level. Federal financing will end at the end of 2015	and case managers following closely pupils facing difficulties during transition I	secondary education for pupils with multiple problematics
5. FORJAD	To integrate young adults into the labor market through VET	Young adults (18-25 years) at the benefit of social assistance	Cantonal (Vaud)	Harmonization of social assistance and scholarship norms in order to offer VET to social assistance beneficiaries without benefits loss	Enable the youngsters to foster a realistic professional plan and support them in realizing it	Integrate young adults at the benefit of social assistance into the labor market

3. Assessment of the influence of different factors and parameters on the performance of the innovations

3.1. New management-by-objectives and control system of cantonal disability offices

Which are the factors and elements that influenced decision-making and implementation of the new management-by-objectives and control system of cantonal disability offices? In this section, I will discuss two elements, which came out as important for that especially federalism and the institutional constraints of the Swiss political system, namely two parliamentary chambers and direct democracy.

- **Federalism:** The fact that Switzerland is a decentralized federation, in which the cantonal governments enjoy considerable legislative and administrative discretion influenced on decision making and implementation of this innovation. Regarding the **decision making** process, the cantonal governments successfully lobbied against the proposal of the federal government to create RMS that are centrally governed. Originally, the federal government had proposed to organize these services as offices, which were fully under the control of the BSV. However, the cantonal governments opposed this idea and the National Council changed the proposal and gave the responsibility for running the RMS to the cantons. The federal government retained only oversight competences.

This change of the proposal during the parliamentary process was a consequence of successful lobbying by the cantonal governments (Int-9). However, the cantonal governments certainly profited from the tradition of decentralization, in Switzerland, which makes it necessary to justify every instance of centralization of power particularly well (Kriesi 2008). Concerning **implementation** the BSV needed to cooperate with the cantons and convince them of new indicators and measures. To act by hierarchical control would not have been possible, because this would have caused immediate resistance by the cantonal governments, which appoint the personnel of the cantonal II offices. Municipal governments do not play an important role for the implementation of the invalidity insurance, but have considerable discretion regarding other pillars of the welfare state, such as social assistance.

- **Institutional constraints:** A second element that impacted on the **decision making** of this reform were institutional constraints of the Swiss political system. Above all direct democracy had an impact. A first reform of the invalidity insurance failed in 1999 in a popular referendum when national government had sought to reduce pensions in order to contain costs in the invalidity insurance (BR, 2001). This proposal failed in a popular referendum and to tighten control of the cantonal practices remained the next best option for the federal government. Another factor that impacted on the decision making process in this reform were two parliamentary chambers, which negotiated a compromise regarding oversight of the cantons and delegated financial oversight to independent experts (NR/SR, 2003).

3.2. New set of early intervention instruments for new disability benefit claimants

In the second innovation that is related to the II, there were similar and different factors that impacted on the decision making and the implementation of this reform. Notably, differences between political parties had an impact on policy formulation and again the federal dimension influenced particularly on the implementation of early detection and prevention measures.

- **Party differences:** In Switzerland, the partisan and governmental system is very consensual in the sense that all main parties have a seat in the national government, named the Federal Council. Therefore, every policy needs to be negotiated within government, but after that also in parliament. In this system, the head of a department, and the party she or he adheres to are important, because this determines to a certain extent the agenda for a reform. Regarding the 5th revision of the II including the new set of early intervention instruments for new disability benefit claimants, this was an important element in the **decision making process**. Just before the reform had been put on the political agenda, the head of department changed from a left to a liberal minister, which had an impact on the agenda of the reform, because the new minister clearly put the goal in the agenda to reduce the number of pension by all means, which had an important impact on the formulation of the policy (Int-2). Secondly in parliament, namely during the political debate parties were split about priorities of the reform. Left parties wanted at first more reintegration measures and financing of these instruments, whereas right parties favored above all cost containment. In the end, a political compromise was found, which included significant investment into early detection and reintegration measures (Int-4;Int-5).
- **Federalism:** The second important element that was important is the impact of federalism on the **implementation** of new set of early intervention instruments for new

disability benefit claimants. Again, the federal government needed to cooperate with the cantonal offices and instruct them on how to implement these measures. In case there were any problems with the implementation, for example rent-seeking and non-compliance by a cantonal office, the means of the federal government were limited. In order to fire incompetent personnel, it needed the support of the cantonal government, because otherwise it would have been the scapegoat and perpetrator of the cantonal autonomy. Therefore the BSV pursued an approach of communication and negotiation, in which it tried to find out the risks and problems that are specific of a canton and to formulate performance goals based on that (Int-4). However, due to the cantonal autonomy in applying these measures acts of opportunism remain possible and the cantons can use these instruments and their reporting in a way that does not make them stand out compared to other cantons (Int-4; Int-7). On the other hand, each canton has its specific economic and social problems, which justify specific application of these instruments (Int-9).

3.3. Vocational and Professional Education and Training Act (VPETA)

Agenda setting

The triggering event setting the focus on vocational training was the economic recession which hit Switzerland between 1992 and 1999 (Strahm, 2008). This spilled over to the apprenticeship market, in terms of a severe apprenticeship posts crisis, which peaked in the years 1994-1995 (BR, 2000a). In 1995-1996, the debate on the cantonalization of vocational training (see previous chapter) mobilized the political as well as the economic sphere, where particularly the small and medium enterprises and the business enterprises were strongly against the cantonalization plan (Strahm, 2014).

From 1996-1997 on, the media broadly covered the problem of apprenticeship shortage, fueling the public debate. The issue widely engaged the parliamentary deliberations in summer 1996, where in two years' time numerous interventions concerning the situation of apprenticeship were filed. In 1997, four Federal Council parties submitted a conjoint initiative, which intended to provoke new discussions and keep pressure on the Federal Council (Strahm, 2008). Hence, the pressure to put a VET reform on the political agenda by the parliament grew strongly since 1996, with broad support across most political parties.

According to Strahm (2008), the Federal Council had little interest in vocational training, and the responsible for VET in the Federal Office for Industry, Trade and Labor (OFIAMT) was not very reactive to the situation. The newspapers spoke of the "sleeping BIGA" and about "head of departments not doing their homework" (Strahm, 2008). Under the increasing pressure and requests for action, including from his own party, Federal Councilor Delamuraz eventually initiated a total reshuffle of the OFIAMT in 1997, reorganizing it completely. A new Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology (OPET) was created, under which the steering of VET was set. Through this reorganization the former responsible for VET was replaced, "institutionally reactivating vocational training" and increasing its prestige (Strahm, 2008).

Noteworthy is also the constitutional amendment of 1999, which, through article 63, extended the Federal competence concerning vocational training to all non-academic spheres, laying the basis for a unification of the system.

Decision making

During the 1990s, in relation to the economic situations, several employment programs were run. In the framework of the second one (1997-1999), the Federal state reached out to vocational training with a credit of 60 million CHF, introducing the so-called apprenticeship posts resolutions I (*Lehrstellenbeschluss I*). In 1999, the apprenticeship posts resolutions II followed, with a credit of 100 million CHF. Under these programs, several pilot projects were created. The experiences of such projects, but also the lively discussions which led to their adoption, resulted to be very useful during the formulation and decision making process of the VPETA (Strahm, 2008).

Implementation

An important aspect of the implementation process was the absence of big conflicts. The probably most important factor allowing for such a relatively smooth implementation is ascribable to the so-called “dialogue culture”. In a respondent’s words:

„I have to say that the essential of the execution of complex reforms depends crucially on the dialogue culture of the partners. This is the big pedestal which you need previously. Or, if you do it in parallel, you need to put a lot of emphasis on it. [...] the implementation of the VPETA wouldn't have worked without this” (Int-16).

On the one hand, the new law stressed the importance of collaboration in its first article, establishing the tripartite partnership by law. This system of research for consensus is considered as the key for the development and introduction of an efficient training policy (BR, 2010). Moreover, also the OECD repeatedly highlighted the importance of collaboration among stakeholders for the good functioning of VET systems (see e.g. OECD 2009a & b).

On the other hand, at the OPET, the general conductor of the reform, it was known since the beginning that the implementation of such a complex reform was not going to be easy and that an overall steering was important (Int-16). Hence, even more weight was put on dialogue among partners, in which the Federal administration played the role of a unifying force, bringing the partners together, leading the discussions, detecting and addressing problems in due time, in order to find solutions suiting all partners. Indeed, a respondent declared:

“This is what I've learned is fundamental for the implementation of complex reforms. To involve all the people who are concerned and you need a leadership: one has to conduct [the discussions], to see where the problems are [...]. It is this high discussion culture among the tripartite partners, which in the end makes the difference if you can pass something without mayor conflicts or not” (Int-16).

For this purpose several yearly meetings were created, in order to bring all the relevant partners together, in order to inform everyone about the novelties and discuss with them the further steps. This of course was also the occasion for the partners to discuss challenges they were confronted with as well as to share strategies and best practices they came up with. Moreover, such meetings were organized according the „level of action“ of the different responsible persons, going from the ministerial level to the practitioners level, so that problems encountered at every level could be addressed in a proper way. According to our interviewee:

“The value of these meetings has to be seen in the encounters among different people, and in the dialogues which may develop. And only if you do this regularly, a

culture emerges, and along with culture trust emerges as well. And I think in 2006 we were so far, that the participants thought: *well, we can always present our problems in this meeting and we know that when we come out of these meetings we are organized again*. The problems weren't solved, but they were brought on a measures track. And the trust people gain during such a process, it is extremely valuable. Because then even if something happens they know that they can discuss it at the next meeting, they don't just run to the medias and say we have a huge problem" (Int-16).

Then, there was the ticketing system, which allowed for a feasible implementation charge for the Cantons. Again, the dialogue culture was central in making this work:

„This system gained a lot of support as what was supportable and what was not was always discussed with all partners“ (Int-16).

In the framework of this „dialogue culture“, at certain moments the concept of „quarrel culture“ would be more appropriated. Indeed, during the discussions preceding an agreement, the various stakeholders give voice to their concerns and positions, often clashing one with another. This is where the Federal administration's role of a strategic planner and general supervisor is particularly important, in order to lead the discussions towards a consensus, and to intervene when the time has come to end discussions and take decisions:

“[...] in Switzerland I noticed that if you develop a quarrel culture, where you also allow that every party says what disturbs them, but then also create the understanding that these are the problems of one out of three viewpoints, and that if you look at the other party's position, i.e. at the Cantons' problems of implementation, that you need to find a consensus. [...] This is something I noticed in the Swiss democracy: it takes a long time with us, until we reach a consensus, but once we have one, it is well accepted” (Int-16).

3.4. Case Management Vocational Training (CM VET)

Agenda setting:

Several factors came together, pushing for measures in the VET field. First of all, the economic context and the trainings shortage woke up the fear of living another apprenticeship crisis as the one of the 1990s. The pressure to increase the number of young adults holding an upper-secondary education certificate was increasing and broadly supported, vehiculated by the transition project and the first educational report. Hence, the jointly declared target to increase them from 90% to 95% by 2015, needed measures to attain this objective. Consequently, the political setting of the time was ripe to such kind of interventions (Int-10 & 11).

Another major factor enabling this project was the new law on VET, which came in force shortly before, in 2004. This new law gave new financial means and impetus to take action. In particular it clearly encouraged measures facilitating the integration into vocational training the pupils facing difficulties (art. 55 al. 1 let. F VPETA).

Decision making:

What facilitated consistently the decision making process, was the pre-existing, well-functioning dialogue culture among the partners. This also partly stems from the new VET law, as it institutionalized the tripartite partnership in its very first article. Hence, even though the concept emerged at the national level, it was refined through dialogue with all relevant partners, at the occasion of the apprenticeship conference, regrouping representatives of all VET partners, namely the Federal and Cantonal authorities, as well as employers and employees associations. Therefore, any subsequent decision could rely on the consensus of the tripartite partnership. It is interesting therefore to highlight, that employers participated in the decision, supporting the initiative. At the national operational level, the Federal VET commission again regrouped all representatives of the VET partners, who scrutinized, counselled and accompanied the realization of the political decision. As a respondent said:

“In this it is important to understand the superior structure of the law: that actually it is better to do nothing without taking in these social partners” (Int-16).

A study by Stefan Wolter (2003) also influenced the decision. Indeed, this study clearly showed the importance of supporting the employers with administrative issues, in order to facilitate the hiring of less able pupils, as the less work there is behind an apprentice, the more employers are ready to take in the weaker pupils (Int-18). Moreover, the study commissioned by the OPET to Egger, Dreher & Partner (2007) was very useful to support the design of this measure, as it clearly highlighted the problems CM VET was addressing.

Another convincing argument to advocate in favor of this big investment was based on the savings realized through the better collaboration among services, and hence through the more efficient support of the pupils. As a respondent said:

“So of course, these are cases which are difficult and "which are expensive" , but seen the advantages which we have after, and especially the savings we do after in relation to this inter-institutional collaboration, it was also a saving because it meant that we don't do the work two or three times. So this was also a calculation we did, and it wasn't too hard to get through” (Int-18)

Implementation:

The quite smooth implementation was facilitated because the measure was since its beginning embedded in a well-functioning dialogue culture. Indeed, the tripartite partnership in VET is an important strength of the system. As already mentioned for the implementation of the new VPETA, for the execution of complex reforms, the dialogue among partners is crucial:

“I think that the CM was embedded in the framework we had already, in this culture, and therefore it went off relatively smoothly, even though it is rather complex but it was possible to count on the mutual comprehension between Cantons, Federal level and the upper social partners, that there is understanding of one partner towards the other and that we try to find solutions. This is really a big asset and feature of Switzerland” (Int-16).

Indeed, the Federal steering group put a lot of weight in engaging the partners into the whole process. At the beginning, since the cantonal systems are different, consultations were held in order to discuss about the general concept, where the cantonal representatives expressed their

opinion on how it would be best to proceed. Thereafter, during the whole implementation, several meetings and conferences were organized, according to the different levels of action (from management to practitioners' level), in order to best address possible concerns at every level (Int-16). This also helped to learn from each other, and that the Cantons which were more ahead could stimulate those lagging behind (Int-18): federalism played a very resourceful role in this sense. Through the Federally institutionalized contact among all participating Cantons at the occasion of the numerous meetings, ideas, challenges and preoccupations could be shared. This also stimulated certain Cantons to further collaborate among themselves, independently from the federally organized meetings, in order to exchange best-practices, know-how but also errors to avoid (Int-17). Since the federally institutionalized contact will end at the end of 2015, with the withdrawal from the Federal state, this practice gives reason to hope that the inter-cantonal collaboration will continue beyond the Federal financing.

Moreover, it was also important that the Cantons had good and frequent bilateral contact with a representative of the Federal level, who visited them often. This helped to better accept the loss of autonomy to a certain extent, emphasizing the collaboration between the two levels rather than a purely top down measure (Int-13).

At a cantonal level, what facilitated the good implementation of the measure was a strong political support: the Cantons which implemented it best, were those where CM VET was not politically put in question (Landert, 2011; Int-13). What on the contrary was more difficult on the cantonal implementation level, was the reticence of the various services to collaborate with one another (Int-10), which however depended on the pre-existing practice in each Canton.

3.5. FORJAD

Agenda setting

The fundamental element in setting the political agenda in favor of FORJAD was most probably the strong political will by the head of the health and social welfare department (DSAS), who transformed it into a flagship policy of his legislature. However, facilitating this strong engagement, was the preceding work by the general secretary of the department, who proposed the measure.

The development of this measure can be separated in quite clear phases. First, a growing problem was identified: the increasing number of young adults at the benefit of social assistance, which was surprising, considered the quite dynamic economic situation of the Canton at that time (Int-12). Once identified, the problem was investigated. A study commissioned to the social protestant center (Regamey, 2001) highlighted the problem of youth unemployment and youth at the benefit of social assistance, a rather new phenomenon for Switzerland in general, and for the Canton of Vaud more particularly. Based on these results, individual interviews with the concerned youngsters were held, in order to better understand the situation. These interviews backed up the idea to launch a measure favoring their reinsertion through vocational training, since the interviewed young adults appeared to have a certain potential. Eventually, the problematic as well as the possible solution was exposed to the head of department, who endorsed the proposed measure.

A growing problematic, its meticulous analysis, an innovative design of the measure and a strong emphasis on the measure by the political actors ensured the success in bringing the measure on the political agenda. However, also the favorable economic and institutional context played a

fundamental role. Indeed, the dual-VET system is the measure's general framework, without which FORJAD would not be possible in its current design (Int-12).

Decision making

The strong advocacy by the head of the DSAS was fundamental to gain a broad support. A strong argument in order to gain support from everyone concerning such a measure was based on a long term cost and benefit analysis. Comparing the figures of public expenditure for a participant in FORJAD to those for a person at the benefit of social assistance between 18 years of age up to the age of 55/60 years was a convincing argument enough in order to gain the necessary support. (Int-14).

Moreover, the concerned departments have been taken in into the decision making process. Indeed, since fall 2005, the DSAS intensified its collaboration with the education and youth (DFJ) and of economy (DEC) departments, in order to come up with a joint solution to the problem (ARTIAS, 2007). Since beginning of 2006, an interdepartmental group was formed, composed by representatives of the three involved departments, of the insertion measures and of employers. It played an important role in the political acceptability of the measure, as well as for its success at the moment of its launch.

Implementation

The implementation phase has to be split in two moments: the implementation of the pilot project in 2006, and its transformation into a permanent program in 2009. However, a fundamental factor concerning the measure's implementation generally, is the aforementioned interdepartmental collaboration. This was set-up already before its implementation, and even institutionalized through the interdepartmental group FORJAD, taking in as well as with the main involved private actors (ARTIAS, 2007). Hence collaboration among the crucial actors was a strong element of the measure since the very beginning.

What facilitated to a big extent the implementation of the pilot project, was the collaboration of several partners (Int-12) and the pre-existing structures (Int-19). Indeed, the collaboration with already existing professional organizations active in the field of social and labor market integration of youth was extremely precious as it could delegate a very important and delicate part of the measure to professionals with a long experience in the field. It also enabled to implement the measure much faster, as it would have taken a long time to create such an offer from scratch, and especially to reach the necessary know-how needed for such a complex task.

Another fundamental aspect for the measure's implementation is the development of an enterprises network, to collaborate with when looking for a training for a youngster. This was also facilitated on the one hand by the interdepartmental group FORJAD, and on the other by the collaboration with pre-existing professional organizations offering insertion measures (ARTIAS, 2007).

Moreover, what enhanced the acceptability and support for FORJAD during its pilot phase, was a comprehensive, generous and transparent communication on the measure, openly communicating about successes, challenges and problems (Int-12 & 19).

Concerning the second phase, the major element facilitating the implementation was of course the pilot project. On the one hand, it allowed to rely on the good results achieved by the youngsters participating to the first cohorts of FORJAD. Indeed, in summer 2008, the first 22

“FORJADs” presented themselves at the final apprenticeships examination, 19 of them passed the examinations and 15 had already found a job in the course of one year (ARTIAS, 2009a). Moreover, the pilot project enabled to gain precious experience, as well as to build up the necessary networks, as for instance with employers willing to offer trainings to these youngsters.

Indeed, the institutionalization of the harmonization of social assistance and scholarship regimes could have been a delicate exercise. However, the good results attained by the pilot project allowed this change quite smoothly.

Moreover, as in CM VET discussed in the previous chapter, this policy supports youngsters with multiple problematics to access vocational training. The probabilities these youngsters would find an apprenticeship, even look for one, by themselves is very low. The crucial aspect of FORJAD’s design is the close follow-up before and during the whole period of training. Precisely this is a precious tool to convince employers to offer a training to less ideal candidates. Indeed, a study by Wolter (2003) highlighted that in order to increase a trainee’s profitability, administrative issues have to be contained. Hence, ensuring the employers support in case of problems with the apprentice is a crucial aspect in the attempt to find a training for hard to place youth.

Conclusion

As shown above, the paths followed by the five innovation we selected has been influenced by several factors. The context of the Swiss political system characterized by federalism, direct democracy and an overall orientation toward consensual policy making, have proved to be powerful constraints. As a result, some option could not be pursued.

In the case of invalidity insurance, rising deficits elicited cost containment initially. However, the unilateral quality of the approach arguably provoked its failure in the 1999 referendum. As a result of this, policy-makers adopted a more centrist and consensual strategy.

First, attempts were made at improving the regulation and the control over the implementation (regional medical centers, production of comparable data, etc.). Second, a bigger effort was made in the activation of II clients. This took the shape of early detection, more investment in rehabilitation, training, and so forth. These less controversial measures were able to make it through the complex policy making process and are now included in legislation. According to some, taken together these measures amount to a paradigmatic shift in the function of II, from a scheme meant to ensure above all an income stream, to disabled people, and provide some help for re-integration, to one in which reintegration is the first and main objective.

As argued above, the path taken by the reform has been shaped profoundly by the country’s political institutions, most notable direct democracy (referendums) and federalism. With regard to the latter factor, Cantonal government have resisted more centralization, putting in this way an additional constraint on federal level policy making. However, this did not occur by formal horizontal coordination. Political parties have also played a role. As the Ministry was shifted between the left and the center right, the overall orientation of policy also changed. As one would expect, left wing ministers were less inclined to cut, while those of the center right attempted to be more radical in this respect. In the end, however, the policy that emerged was a compromise between these two positions. This is quite common in the Swiss political system. Since all main parties are represented in government, heads of departments’ political

orientation is very important in the political process, because they set the agenda for the consensus-oriented decision-making process.

With regard to the cluster on disadvantaged youths, one important driving force for innovation was clearly problem pressure. In the 1990s, school-leavers started experience serious difficulties in finding a suitable apprenticeship. Difficulties were particularly important for the weaker pupils, who risked seriously to end up on social assistance. A second source of problem pressure was the lack of coordination among the support structures, which lead to the adoption of a case management system.

The tripartite governance system of VET was certainly instrumental in allowing a good resolution to the apprenticeship “crisis” of the 1990s. Employers, unions and the Federal government developed innovative solutions in a pragmatic and constructive climate.

Overall, the innovations discussed in this report, have probably helped strengthen the resilience of the national labor market. As a result of them we can expect less exclusion, since more youth access vocational training and more disabled people are helped back into jobs.

Processes of policy learning in Switzerland

1. Introduction

Policy-making in Switzerland is probably more driven by problem pressure than by policy learning. This is due to the political institutions of the country that substantially constrain the ability of governments to plan ahead. This, however does not mean that policy learning does not play a role. On the contrary, when confronted with a problem that requires intervention, Swiss policy makers do set in motion learning processes.

In this chapter, we first present briefly the policy-learning infrastructure, or the institutions and structures that are in place in order to facilitate and support learning processes. We then move on to look at the role that policy learning has played in three of our innovations.

2. The policy learning infrastructure

Policy learning in Switzerland is not particularly structured. Of course, new policies are based on various processes, including policy-learning ones, but the way in which learning influence policy can be very variable and differ between different policy areas and, within a policy, between different instances of innovation. However, the result is largely contingent on the specific policy problem, and not so much influenced by a standardized or structured process.

In contrast, what is considerably more structured, is the process of consensus building, which can contain also elements of policy learning. Basically, the standard law making process begins with a pre-proposal prepared by the federal administration. This may or may not be discussed in an expert commission (see below). It is then sent out to all relevant interests for consultation. Typically, for social and labor market policies, these would include employers, unions, political parties, cantons, cities, etc.. On the basis of the positions expressed by all these actors, the Federal government then prepares a law proposal that is discussed and possibly adopted by Parliament (Kriesi 1995). As argued above, the consultation procedure can be seen as including some elements of social learning. However, its main purpose is clearly consensus building.

More relevant to the issue of policy-learning are two different institutions: the research offices of the relevant ministries and expert commissions.

Research offices

The two relevant ministries for social and labor market policies, the ministry of the interior and the one for economic affairs, have small research offices. These do not perform research on their own, but contract it out to external researchers. Over the last 10-15 years, the quantity of research financed in this way has increased. This type of contracted out research takes different shapes. On occasions, in preparation for a large reform, a research program has been launched. For example, in the early 2000s, this was the case in preparation of the

12th reform of the basic pension scheme¹⁸. Then, research is also commissioned on an ad hoc basis on specific problems that may emerge. In general, the studies produced are published and available on the web sites of the relevant ministries¹⁹. The most important ones or some research syntheses are translated in one or two other national languages.

The unemployment insurance fund, which collects contributions and pays out benefit, has also a budget for financing research. In this case, most studies financed have been evaluations of the various instruments and policies meant to reduce unemployment and promote labor market re-entry. These evaluation studies are organized in “waves”, so as to ensure some coherence. Each wave has focused on specific aspects. For example, the first wave consisted of micro-economic evaluations, while the second one of macro-economic ones. These studies have also been published and are available on the web site of the State Secretariat for economic affairs (SECO), which is responsible of the overseeing of the implementation of unemployment insurance²⁰.

On occasions, federal ministries finance also basic research. This is the case of the Federal office for education and science (SEFRI) which currently finances 4 to 5 “leading houses”. These institutions are based within universities and produce research on specific aspects of vocational training. Their objective is to promote research in this field that is considered highly strategic in Switzerland, and has so far been somewhat neglected by the academic community²¹.

Expert commissions

A second important institution are federal expert commissions. There are several dozen such commissions, in all the main fields of policy. Their members include representatives of the various relevant interests, typically employers, the trade unions, pensioners’ associations, and other association. Typically, only a minority of the members are expert in the strict sense, i.e. researchers. It has been argued that, in spite of the name, expert commissions are more an institutions for consensus building than for policy learning (Kriesi 1995). While this interpretation has some truth in it, these commissions may better be described as a locus where experts interact with organized interests, so that they probably also fulfill a policy learning function²².

Piloting and evaluation

Over the last few years, piloting as a form of policy learning has gained substantial ground. Typically, new federal policies are tried out in a small number of cantons before being rolled out nationally. Piloting has become popular also at the cantonal level.

Interest in piloting has gone hand in hand with the development of more or less systematic evaluation of the new policies. Sometimes, the laws establishing a new scheme include also

¹⁸ As it turned out, plans for a 12th reform of the basic pension scheme were abandoned in the early 2010s, as the 11th reform was rejected first by voter and then, in an amended version, by parliament. As a result, a new and different reform strategy has been developed in this field.

¹⁹ See: <http://www.bsv.admin.ch/dokumentation/publikationen/00097/index.html?lang=fr>

²⁰ <http://www.seco.admin.ch/dokumentation/publikation/00004/00005/index.html?lang=fr>

²¹ <http://www.sbfi.admin.ch/berufsbildung/01528/01529/index.html?lang=fr>

²² Giuliano Bonoli is a member of the Federal commission on family issues (<http://www.ekff.admin.ch/>)

an article mentioning the obligation for the relevant government (Federal or cantonal) to evaluate the effects of the new scheme within a given timeframe.

Until recently, evaluation studies were mostly based on qualitative methods and performed by independent private companies. Sometimes they included also statistical analysis, but because the design did not include a randomly elected control group, results could not be easily interpreted. As a result, we now see a trend towards the development of RCT-type evaluations, especially at the federal level. This is the case for example in a new research program financed by the State secretariat for economic affairs that aims at evaluating different cooperation models between the social services and the public employment service. RCT evaluations have been performed also at the cantonal level (Flückiger et al 2007).

Over the last few years, a new form of piloting has also gained ground in the shape of Federal-cantonal or Federal-municipal collaborations. Basically, the federal government encourages Cantons and or Municipalities to submit proposals for pilot projects in response to specific policy problems. Examples include the already mentioned collaboration between social and public employment services, the provision of integrated support to nonworking people with health problems or the provision of vouchers to buy child care services. Typically, the Federal government will bear some of the costs of the pilot and pay the evaluation.

Joint Federal-cantonal pilot projects seem a promising avenue to improve the policy-learning infrastructure of Switzerland. In fact, the Cantons, who are responsible of the implementation of most policies and as a result are directly affected by policy problems often lack the administrative capacities and/or the innovation impetus to make innovative good reforms. These qualities are arguably more present at the Federal level, but cannot be deployed because implementation is cantonal. That is why Federal-cantonal collaborations seem particularly promising.

Learning from other's experiences

Policy making in Switzerland is strongly inward looking. In general, civil servants and politicians know very little about their policy area in other countries. When confronted with a new problem, they seldom ask themselves "how is this issue dealt with in other countries?" This lack of interest for the rest of the world may be explained by the country's isolation (not an EU member), but perhaps also by the fact that there is quite substantial perceived internal diversity. In fact, the typical Swiss policy maker, when confronted with a new problem, will look at how different cantons have dealt with it in the past or are dealing with it.

Cantons are often praised as "laboratories" for social and employment policies, in the sense that they do allow the trying out of different approaches to deal with a given problem. However, the extent of variation within the country is rather limited, and Cantons have little administrative capacity for policy learning, which results in very similar solutions being adapted everywhere. As a result, we can conclude that a major obstacle to policy learning in Switzerland is the inward looking orientation of its policy-making elites.

3. The role played by policy learning (2-3 pages, according to relevance)

3.1. The role of policy learning in the adoption of the new management-by-objectives and control system of cantonal disability offices

The introduction of new management-by-objectives and control system of cantonal disability offices entailed the creation of RMS and yearly controls of the cantonal offices by the BSV and independent experts. This innovation entered into force as a part of the 4th revision of the invalidity insurance, in 2003. Which role did policy-learning play in this innovation?

- (1) First of all, the reform was an instance of policy learning due to failure of the policy to deal adequately with the problem, specifically, the rising budget and the rising deficit of the II with the retirement insurance. It also failed to deal with the increasing number of young people who were granted a full invalidity pension based on psychological grounds. The new oversight and management by objective measures adapted existing instruments, because the federal government did now control the cantonal offices every year. What is more, after this reform, the BSV began the first time to collect data on all cantonal invalidity insurance offices. Before that it had been difficult to know what the problems were and why there had been so many differences in between the cantons, just because comparable data was missing – even on the number of newly granted pensions (Int-9). A second element of policy learning was the decision to create the RMS in order to implant the necessary medical knowledge into the cantonal II offices, which should enable them to better understand the sicknesses and handicaps of individuals and also to examine them within the invalidity insurance, which had not been possible prior to the reform (Int-8). Before this innovation, cantonal offices had lacked the medical competences to deal with patients adequately (Int-2; Int-3).
- (2) Due to the federal structure of Switzerland and the considerable autonomy of the cantonal offices, the entire implementation process of the new management-by-objectives and control system of cantonal disability offices was constructed as a process of mutual learning (Int-1). This means that the cantons received the outputs and indicators of other cantons, which should trigger an incentive to learn from one another. For that end, the federal government prepared conferences, working groups and trainings for cantonal administrators and the RMS doctors in order to learn from one another and adapt “good and successful practices.” However the federal government insisted on the cooperative and voluntary elements of these exchanges, which are explicitly designed to foster mutual learning but not to softly impose the “best practices” on those cantons that do not perform so well (Int-2; Int-3; Int-4). As a consequence, the cantons have a lot of legitimacy to claim that their specific situation needs for a specific implementation of each law, in order to take into account the economic and social situation (Int-9). Consequently, the harmonizing effects of this innovation are limited, as we can see in table 3 in the appendix. The number of newly granted pensions reduced, but the differences between the cantons did not level out.
- (3) Another learning process that occurred with regard to the control of the cantonal offices concerns implementation. In the beginning, BSV officials only controlled the decisions that were made and compared the numbers between the cantons and their evolution. Specifically, they checked on how the cantons exactly applied the law. The cantonal governments criticized these practices as too detached from the actual problem in each canton. As a consequence, the 5th revision of the invalidity insurance changed the implementation practices. Rather than only controlling the output, the BSV closed performance agreements with the cantonal II offices, which the latter could influence and

discuss with the federal government. Then, the federal office evaluated the implementation of these goals in auditing reports and pointed as possible risks of the cantonal invalidity insurance. This way of implementation led to fewer conflicts, but it also granted the cantonal governments a greater voice in evaluation process (Int-2; Int-4).

- (4) However, political learning played also an important role for this innovation. Already in 1999, the national government attempted to deal with the problem of the invalidity insurance by cutting pensions, but the reform failed in a popular referendum. It was only in the 5th revision of the invalidity insurance when pensions were cut significantly and the condition of invalidity was redefined in a narrower way, but at the same time with introduction of early detection and reintegration measures. Policymakers understood that it is necessary to make a compromise that included a reduction of pensions, but also measures to reintegrate individuals into the labor market. Therefore, the 4th revision of the invalidity insurance did not entail any major reductions of pensions, which came in the following revision, along with the early detection and prevention measures.
- (5) The 4th revision of the invalidity insurance contains another important element related to policy learning, yet which is not directly related to the mentioned innovations. Notably, the reform introduced a new article, Article 68^{ter}, which allows creating pilot projects that deviate from the existing legal situation but allow testing new ways to implement the II in an efficient way. This means that public and private actors could propose a research project, which would be financed and evaluated by the federal government (NZZ, September 27, 2002) (Int-1). Again, the implementation of this article proved difficult to implement, because a lot of bureaucratic hurdles needed to be passed in order to gain a project. Yet, in the course of the following revision, it became much easier to gain such projects.

3.2. The role of policy learning in the adoption of the new set of early intervention instruments for new disability benefit claimants

Early intervention instruments for new disability benefit claimants were part of the 5th revision of the II. Which role did learning play for decision making and implementation of this innovation?

- (1) The introduction of a new set of early intervention instruments for new disability benefit claimants occurred in a context where the perception of research and its role for public policymaking changed considerably. This process of change began already with the creation of the mentioned article 68^{ter} that allowed for the creation of research projects. The idea to create more prevention and early detection measures for the invalidity insurance came along with a number of research reports around this topic. Notably, the federal government of Switzerland participated in such research projects. For example the OECD report on the state and possibilities of early detection and prevention in 20 OECD countries and its combination with flexible pension arrangements (OECD, 2003). Another report compared the reintegration of handicapped persons in the labor market, in Norway, Poland and Switzerland (OECD, 2006). Especially the first report had an impact on the 5th revision of the II in Switzerland. Apart from the influence of the mentioned international reports, there has been a number of domestic factors that led to more research on the invalidity insurance. Firstly, in 2005, the federal parliament criticized the BSV that there are no research projects concerning invalidity insurance, in Switzerland. In 2005, the financial oversight commission of the Council of States criticized that the federal government did not use research to govern the invalidity

insurance.²³ As a consequence, the federal government established a research program on the invalidity insurance, in 2006.²⁴ What is more, the BSV undertook a number of voyages to other countries in order to learn from policymakers. These entailed trips to the UK and to Sweden and even to Australia (Int-2). More recently, Switzerland continues to participate in research projects by the OECD regarding invalidity insurance, for example a project that deals with the psychological problems, invalidity and employment in Switzerland (BSV & OECD, 2014).

- (2) However, the implementation of the findings of research projects or trips abroad proved difficult, in Switzerland. One reason for this was that many policymakers insisted on the fact that the Swiss invalidity insurance is a specific model, which cannot be compared to other countries and above all functioned well in the past years (Int-2). An illustration of this can be found in the debates about early detection and prevention measures, which went through a tedious process of negotiations between the two chambers of the national parliament. In the last session of this process, one MP demanded to create quotas for reintegration, which should be implemented all over Switzerland. The responsible minister refused this idea and argued that the Swiss II system is so different from others that such ideas cannot be transferred and that a Swiss solution should be found, because – in a nutshell – the Swiss II is a unique system that cannot be adapted by the means used in other countries (NR/SR, 2007). Nonetheless, the creation of early intervention instruments for new disability benefit claimants occurred to a considerable extent as the result of a policy learning process.
- (3) Pilot projects played an important role for this innovation. Originally, the federal government wanted to test the impact of early intervention instruments for new disability benefit claimants in pilot projects, but during the consultation process of the federal government, a large majority of interest groups and the cantonal governments demanded to immediately implement these measures without a pilot. Consequently, early intervention instruments for new disability benefit claimants were created without a prior test (Int-2; Int-9). However, with the 5th revision of the invalidity insurance the possibility to implement pilot projects became easier than before (Int-2; Int-3), which led to a large number of pilots to test the implementation of early intervention instruments for new disability benefit claimants (Int-1).²⁵
- (4) Concerning the new set of early intervention instruments for new disability benefit claimants, there has also been a process of political learning. Firstly, as we mentioned it in the discussion of the preceding reform, the federal government had understood that it was not possible to only present measures that cut pensions, but that it is necessary to combine them with early detection and prevention instruments, in order to find a political compromise. Thereby, it is necessary to reconcile the conservative and liberal position, which demanded above all to reduce expenditure, with the position of the political left, which wanted more investments into reintegration and prevention measures. In 1999, a first reform had failed, because it accentuated too much the pension cuts dimension. In 2007, the federal government combined cuts with investments into early intervention instruments for new disability benefit claimants (Int-5; Int-6). Yet,

²³ http://www.parlament.ch/f/mm/2005/pages/mm_2005-08-29_067_02.aspx, last access June 15, 2015.

²⁴ All the research projects can be found here, including the evaluation of the research program: <http://www.bsv.admin.ch/praxis/forschung/00106/01326/index.html?lang=de>, last access June 15, 2015.

²⁵ Pilot projects that are completed and still running can be found here: <http://www.bsv.admin.ch/themen/iv/00023/03205/index.html?lang=de>, last access June 15, 2015.

nonetheless there was a referendum about the reform (Bigovic-Balzardi & Wayland-Bigler, 2007). There was a second process of political learning, which stretched across both reforms of the II that we discussed. It entailed political learning by the cantonal government. Prior to the 4th revision, contacts between the cantonal governments – unilaterally and in the Conference of the Cantonal Invalidity Insurance Offices – had been very formal. During the reform process, which came along with more controls for the cantonal offices, but also with new responsibilities, such as the implementation of early detection and prevention measures, the cantonal offices formalized and intensified their coordination. This had two goals: One the one hand to exchange about practices in implementing the invalidity insurances, but also to improve political coordination of their positions and interests against the federal government (Int-9).

3.3. The role of policy learning in the adoption of Case Management Vocational Education and Training

The experience of the harsh apprenticeship crisis during the 1990s completely changed the position of VET in public and political debates. Indeed, since up to the 1990s finding an apprenticeship post was normal, VET was not really an issue of discussions. However, as suddenly numerous pupils were struggling finding an apprenticeship, it started to become a major issue of interest (Int-10). Particularly so because with a more selective apprenticeship market, the weaker and the more disadvantaged youngsters are particularly penalized (Perriard, 2005). Hence, as a respondent said:

“In that context, politics had *discovered* VET as a solution to the problem of hard to place youth” (Int-10).

As a consequence, when another trainings shortage hit Switzerland in the early 2000s, the Federal government reacted promptly with several initiatives. For instance, Federal Councilor Joseph Deiss launched the yearly vocational training day in 2003, introduced a Federal VET task force in the same year and a yearly apprenticeship conference in 2005. At the occasion of the second conference in 2006, Federal Councilor Doris Leuthard launched the Case Management Vocational Education and Training (CM VET) measure.

The process leading to CM VET was influenced by several factors, involving different types of learning. The main trigger was the joint agreement between the Federal state, the Cantons and the organizations of the world of work – the tripartite partnership – to increase the number of young adults holding an upper secondary education degree from 90% to 95% until 2015. With the statement of this political target, the Federal administration, in particular the VET department of the Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology (OPET), had to come up with measures to attain it.

The head of this department at that time was the former director of the vocational training and vocational guidance office of the Canton of Valais. In this former position, he observed a problem which would become central in CM VET, the so called revolving doors effect: youngsters struggling with the transition from lower to upper secondary education (transition I), who go from one service to the other without receiving the necessary support and having to start over again each time. In the Canton of Valais, in the framework of validation of skills, youngsters were followed closely by one person, in order to avoid this problem. This was also facilitated by a well-functioning Inter-Institutional Collaboration (IIC).

This former experience was coupled with a study made by Stefan Wolter (2003) about the profitability of VET for the enterprises. According to this study, the less a trainee in a certain sector is profitable, the less employers are ready to hire the weaker pupils. The study also showed that it is crucial to offer support to the enterprises, discharging them for instance concerning administrative matters, in order to increase profitability of the weaker pupils and incentivize employers to hire them. Hence, a first draft of a measure based on the idea of Case Management in VET started to emerge.

This idea was discussed with the VET partners and fine-tuned according to their input. Moreover, in 2007 a report commissioned by the OPET to Egger, Dreher & Partner on the available measures facilitating the transition I was released. This study supported perfectly the idea of CM VET. Indeed, it highlighted the problem of little collaboration among the various services, causing the revolving doors effect, as well as showing that pupils without solution after compulsory education were not covered by any specific measure. This report was of course used in order to illustrate the necessity and validity of CM VET.

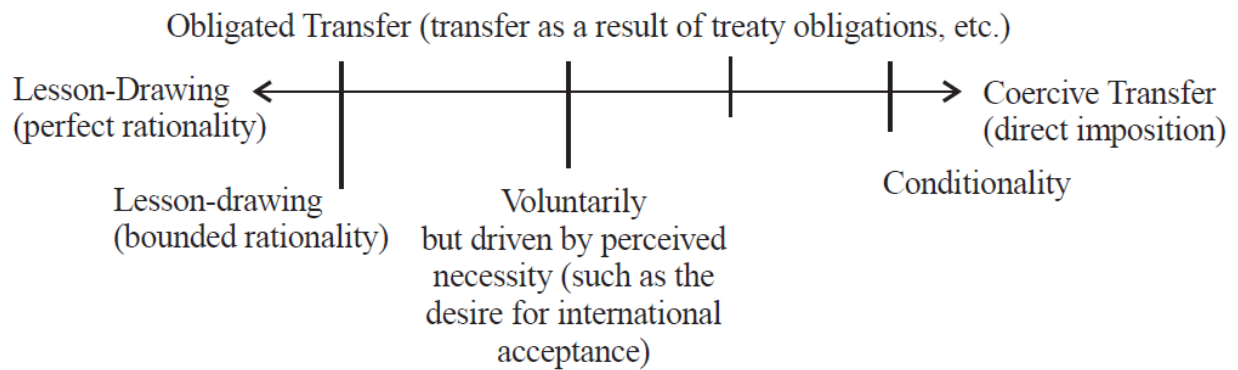
Placing the process leading to the adoption of CM VET into the policy learning literature, several strands of this literature seem to be relevant. Generally, the learning which came into play was clearly problem-solving driven, rather than strategic political learning. Indeed, the main trigger was to find a solution to the problem of youngsters struggling with the transition I, in order meet the political target of increasing the number of youngsters holding a post-compulsory education diploma. The analysis can be split between the process leading to the adoption of the policy design, and the learning happening during the implementation phase.

Adoption of the policy design

Policy transfer and lesson drawing are particularly relevant in the process leading to CM VET. Indeed, the experience in another Canton of OPET's head of the VET department, was crucial. This was above all a lesson-drawing process, as at a demand for change, a solution was searched for in order to make this change happen (Rose, 1991). In the specific case, a possible solution was identified based on another Canton's practice. More precisely, according to Dolowitz and Marsh, the policy transfer which followed this lesson-drawing can be categorized as emulation, "which involves transfer of the ideas behind the policy program" (Dolowitz & Marsh, 2000).

If we take the policy transfer continuum of Dolowitz and Marsh (2000, p. 13) represented in figure 4, CM VET would be placed somewhere between voluntary necessity and lesson-drawing. Indeed, the politically set target had a coercive impact in the sense that it imposed to solve a problem by 2015. Since however there were no indications concerning the measures to adopt in order to meet this target, the transfer was not a direct imposition. Moreover, since the policy came from the Federal level, interfering to a certain extent into the Cantonal sovereignty (as it entailed the participation of compulsory education institutes), and as it had to rely on Cantonal authorities for its implementation, it was particularly important to have the support of all VET stakeholders. Hence, rational lesson-drawing was the basis to forge an acceptable and convincing policy design, in order to gain the necessary support from all VET partners.

Figure 4 Policy transfer continuum



Source: Dolowitz & Marsh (2000)

Social learning (see Hall, 1993, 2013, 1989) also came into play concerning the design of CM VET, in form of cognitive use of knowledge. Indeed, the knowledge gained from the study of Stefan Wolter had a major influence in the way to understand the problem and how to address it.

The only strategic and legitimizing use of knowledge can be identified concerning the Egger, Dreher & Partner study, which however played rather the role of a welcome external source of arguments fortifying the decision. Indeed, according to DiMaggio and Powell (1991), maximizing legitimacy through knowledge is particularly important in unstable environments. This however was not the case of the context in which CM VET was launched. On the contrary, as seen in the beginning of this section, the Federal government promptly reacted to a training shortage in order to avoid another apprenticeship posts crisis. Indeed, vocational training was much more valued than before and considered a helpful tool to socially and economically integrate the weaker youngsters. All the respondents stated that there was a strong and broad support of the essential idea of CM VET. Hence, the Egger, Dreher & Partner study added evidence to the legitimacy of this measure, which however was not fundamentally put in question.

Implementation phase

During the implementation phase, the first problem was the operationalization of the concept. Indeed, the OPET asked the Cantons to propose CM VET models, adapted to their contexts and needs. However, the general concept was not well defined, so the Cantons first asked what CM actually means in the VET sphere (Int-13). Hence, the OPET furnished very broad guidelines, which resulted in very different concepts of CM VET from one Canton to the other, but sometimes also differing in core aspects of the policy design. According to a respondent, this could have been limited by running a pilot project in order to well sort out what CM in the VET sector means (Int-13). On the other hand, in order to gain internal support, at a Cantonal basis some pilot projects were run. For instance, the Canton of Berne bounded its decision whether to introduce the program or not on the results of a pilot project. Based on this experience, the actual CM VET program could then be adapted. Eventually, a precious arena for knowledge exchange among Cantons where the yearly meetings. Indeed, OPET institutionalized the Cantonal collaboration through several meetings at different levels. These played an important role as they consistently facilitated the transfer of knowledge and lesson drawing at a Cantonal level (Int-17).

4. General conclusion

This chapter has shown that policy learning can take a variety of forms, and that it is the result of various endeavors that produces new policies.

In the field of invalidity insurance, learning was mostly the result of implementation monitoring. For example the system of management-by-objectives and the control of cantonal II offices was introduced and then constantly adapted. A second important factor in improving the learning orientation in the field of invalidity insurance has been the introduction with the 4th revision of provision in the law allowing the setting up of pilot projects.

Ideas from abroad were admittedly resisted, on grounds that “Switzerland is different”. In spite of this perception, however, the overall orientation of Swiss reforms is very much in line with what has happened in other European countries. This suggests that in the end, the Swiss welfare system may not be so impermeable to outside influences.

In addition to policy learning, our report has shown that policy makers had also to learn how to find the right approach that would survive the various hurdles present in the Swiss policy-making process. For instance, outright retrenchment was not politically feasible, and policy-makers had to learn that before they could embark on a more consensual and creative policy course.

In the cluster of innovations concerning disadvantaged youth, a policy change was set off by the emergence of a new problem (increasingly large number of youth without an apprenticeship).

Reform was arguably facilitated by good dialogue between the Federal and Cantonal levels. This resulted in a top-down approach that was overall well accepted. The dialogue was also good between the public authorities and the VET stakeholders, particularly firms.

Policy making was strongly oriented towards problem solving process, with relatively little room for political confrontation. The definition of the problem (insufficient number of apprenticeship places and improving access to VET) was largely shared by the relevant actors. Research contributed to this, most notably Wolter study.

Appendix:

Table 2: Overview of interviews

Nr.	Role of interview partner, date, location	Innovations covered				
		II rev. 4	II rev. 5	VPETA	CM VET	FORJAD
1	Researcher, Federal Social Insurance Office, Switzerland, Bern, March 18, 2015	X	X			
2	Policy advisor, Federal Social Insurance Office, Switzerland, Bern, April 8, 2015	X	X			
3	Policy advisor, Federal Social Insurance Office, Switzerland, Bern, April 8, 2015	X	X			
4	Controlling officer, Federal Social Insurance Office, Switzerland, Bern, April 15, 2015	X	X			
5	Member of parliament, Social Democratic Party, Lausanne, April 24, 2015	X	X			
6	Member of parliament, Liberal Party, Skype, April 27, 2015	X	X			
7	Policy Analyst, Independent Policy Research Office in Bern, Skype, April 28, 2015		X			
8	Organization of Swiss Medico-Actuarial Doctors, Skype, May 12, 2015		X			
9	Conference of cantonal II insurance offices, Vevey, June 9, 2015	X	X			
10	Former deputy director of OPET, Bern, April 14 , 2015			X	X	
11	Former head of the fundamental issues and policy section, OPET, Bern, April 14 , 2015			X	X	
12	Head of the social support and insertion section; health and social welfare department, Canton of Vaud, Lausanne, April 15, 2015					X
13	Former manager of CM VET at the national level, Naters, April 16, 2015				X	
14	Head of a social insertion measure, Lausanne, April 23, 2015					X
15	Head of the division of inter-cantonal and transition affairs; department of post-compulsory schooling, Canton of Vaud, Lausanne, April 30, 2015			X	X	X
16	Former director of OPET, Zürich, May 5, 2015			X	X	
17	Former director of cantonal CM VET, Berne, May 6,				X	

	2015						
18	Former head of the VET department of the OPET, Skype, May 18, 2015					X	
19	Former deputy secretary general, health and social welfare department, Canton of Vaud, Lausanne, May 20, 2015						X
20	Former member of Federal parliament, Social Democratic Party, Berne, May 19, 2015				X		

Table 3: Newly granted pensions in the invalidity insurance in Swiss cantons²⁶

Canton	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
ZH	0.54	0.60	0.47	0.29	0.35	0.34	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.32	0.27	0.23
BE	0.47	0.37	0.41	0.30	0.30	0.27	0.24	0.23	0.23	0.24	0.18	0.26
LU	0.57	0.43	0.38	0.31	0.29	0.30	0.29	0.23	0.25	0.27	0.22	0.21
UR	0.57	0.37	0.33	0.29	0.23	0.20	0.15	0.13	0.14	0.15	0.22	0.18
SZ	0.42	0.38	0.34	0.30	0.32	0.28	0.26	0.25	0.23	0.23	0.21	0.22
OW	0.60	0.51	0.29	0.31	0.30	0.24	0.19	0.23	0.19	0.15	0.19	0.28
NW	0.40	0.38	0.30	0.29	0.28	0.21	0.20	0.27	0.25	0.19	0.20	0.23
GL	0.69	0.58	0.53	0.36	0.33	0.28	0.36	0.49	0.31	0.33	0.33	0.25
ZG	0.48	0.37	0.31	0.23	0.27	0.28	0.25	0.23	0.23	0.18	0.17	0.16
FR	0.70	0.53	0.47	0.35	0.42	0.40	0.28	0.30	0.32	0.29	0.28	0.25
SO	0.68	0.56	0.38	0.34	0.39	0.33	0.29	0.35	0.33	0.26	0.33	0.32
BS	0.80	0.66	0.65	0.46	0.57	0.55	0.39	0.38	0.49	0.35	0.35	0.34
BL	0.65	0.56	0.53	0.47	0.39	0.39	0.30	0.35	0.33	0.30	0.30	0.34
SH	0.69	0.68	0.63	0.39	0.50	0.32	0.36	0.35	0.30	0.29	0.31	0.23
AR	0.64	0.51	0.52	0.42	0.53	0.41	0.29	0.32	0.33	0.40	0.34	0.25
AI	0.62	0.40	0.50	0.33	0.43	0.34	0.24	0.28	0.26	0.21	0.14	0.19

²⁶ Share (in %) of newly granted pensions based on the insured population (18 years is the earliest entry possible) including men and women. Newly granted pensions are calculated based on the comparison of two points in time. The rate of newly granted pensions for the year N compares the number of individuals receiving a pension in December of year N, but did not receive a pension in December of year N-1. Cantons: AG (Aargau), AI (Appenzell Innerrhoden), AR (Appenzell Ausserrhoden), BE (Bern), BL (Basel-Landschaft), BS (Basel-Stadt), FR (Fribourg), GE (Geneva), GL (Glarus), GR (Graubünden), JU (Jura), LU (Luzern), NE (Neuchâtel), NW (Nidwalden), OW (Obwalden), SG (St. Gallen), SH (Schaffhausen), SO (Solothurn), SZ (Schwyz), TG (Thurgau), TI (Ticino), UR (Uri), VD (Vaud), VS (Valais), ZG (Zug), ZH (Zürich).

SG	0.67	0.65	0.55	0.41	0.40	0.33	0.35	0.28	0.25	0.29	0.29	0.27
GR	0.56	0.44	0.48	0.35	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.32	0.25	0.23	0.25	0.24
AG	0.57	0.50	0.41	0.28	0.31	0.31	0.27	0.27	0.29	0.27	0.23	0.21
TG	0.57	0.68	0.56	0.40	0.37	0.42	0.34	0.27	0.31	0.25	0.24	0.26
TI	0.86	0.67	0.62	0.43	0.48	0.38	0.41	0.43	0.43	0.43	0.34	0.32
VD	0.63	0.47	0.43	0.27	0.29	0.36	0.41	0.32	0.31	0.31	0.28	0.28
VS	0.55	0.50	0.43	0.29	0.35	0.31	0.34	0.32	0.32	0.30	0.32	0.33
NE	0.70	0.54	0.44	0.32	0.34	0.39	0.40	0.33	0.36	0.29	0.34	0.35
GE	0.61	0.45	0.41	0.33	0.38	0.47	0.25	0.24	0.31	0.22	0.26	0.30
JU	0.71	0.67	0.58	0.27	0.37	0.43	0.53	0.45	0.45	0.41	0.35	0.34
Total	0.60	0.52	0.46	0.33	0.35	0.35	0.32	0.30	0.30	0.29	0.26	0.26

Table 4: Evolution of prevention and early detection measures in the Swiss cantons (all measures)²⁷

Canton	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
ZH	53'205	54'538	53'518	49'653	49'033	50'600
BE	38'193	39'461	38'435	39'176	38'472	39'696
LU	15'340	16'117	15'953	15'895	15'363	15'502
UR	1'400	1'437	1'324	1'249	1'229	1'292
SZ	5'668	5'634	5'764	5'500	5'440	5'644
OW	1'365	1'349	1'329	1'294	1'329	1'399
NW	1'462	1'466	1'523	1'489	1'447	1'451
GL	1'739	1'695	1'755	1'761	1'724	1'779
ZG	3'499	3'638	3'635	3'665	3'528	3'489
FR	11'440	11'726	11'715	12'077	11'937	12'190
SO	10'442	10'471	10'745	10'545	10'037	10'140
BS	9'764	10'207	9'842	9'353	9'277	9'745
BL	12'525	12'745	12'320	12'259	11'829	12'114
SH	3'157	3'231	3'268	3'093	3'080	2'972

²⁷ Men and women

AR	2'329	2'395	2'230	2'188	2'118	2'071
AI	585	585	608	624	572	564
SG	22'174	21'837	21'330	20'521	19'641	20'132
GR	7'556	7'595	7'909	7'382	7'126	7'499
AG	23'856	24'678	25'891	24'985	24'030	24'845
TG	11'393	11'204	10'629	10'370	9'690	10'104
TI	12'780	13'997	13'065	12'908	13'323	13'864
VD	26'049	25'625	26'307	28'034	28'844	30'348
VS	13'830	13'564	13'971	14'007	13'840	14'730
NE	6'593	7'016	7'194	7'704	7'497	7'726
GE	15'075	18'005	17'067	16'258	18'097	16'059
JU	3'710	3'905	3'758	3'813	3'637	3'944
Insured living abroad	4'120	4'233	4'408	4'094	4'110	3'333
All	316'488	325'670	322'960	317'621	314'184	321'032

Table 5: Type of prevention and early detection measures in the Swiss cantons²⁸

Cantons	Medical measures	Early intervention measures	Integration measures	Occupation	Aides	All integration measures	Check up	All measures
ZH	19'412	1'288	823	3'677	10'314	33'426	26'115	50'600
BE	12'331	554	961	3'612	9'675	25'389	22'114	39'696
LU	4'883	101	126	1'149	3'707	9'440	8'674	15'502
UR	452	25	19	53	400	899	626	1'292
SZ	2'063	92	79	400	1'242	3'687	2'988	5'644
OW	450	23	7	75	372	883	802	1'399
NW	553	15	16	89	376	997	691	1'451
GL	684	41	40	113	347	1'156	912	1'779
ZG	1'355	15	11	213	807	2'295	1'747	3'489
FR	3'760	631	247	955	2'523	7'613	6'811	12'190
SO	3'743	691	346	936	2'793	7'726	4'009	10'140

²⁸ Men and women

BS	2'200	405	128	783	1'827	4'979	6'285	9'745
BL	3'795	411	151	1'121	2'652	7'675	6'485	12'114
SH	971	55	87	194	555	1'750	1'597	2'972
AR	785	40	40	159	470	1'383	1'116	2'071
AI	222	16	11	41	125	386	296	564
SG	7'898	317	143	1'306	4'046	13'054	10'727	20'132
GR	2'631	188	51	823	1'786	5'128	3'860	7'499
AG	7'298	874	285	1'630	6'290	15'416	14'011	24'845
TG	3'872	86	55	493	2'274	6'458	5'610	10'104
TI	4'461	763	41	690	2'110	7'744	8'325	13'864
VD	8'213	1'335	566	2'707	5'374	17'127	18'734	30'348
VS	3'893	700	215	1'209	2'748	8'280	9'249	14'730
NE	1'999	442	90	833	1'304	4'324	4'632	7'726
GE	5'194	916	94	1'174	2'785	9'716	8'873	16'059
JU	924	199	36	485	692	2'185	2'616	3'944
Insured living abroad	269	3	-	4	165	426	2'948	3'333
All	103'265	10'210	4'653	24'787	67'460	198'015	180'315	321'032

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