



Call for Papers

Thematic Issue: Swiss Disability Policies at the Crossroads?

Submission of Abstracts: 31 August 2023

Submission of Full Papers: 29 February 2024

Publication of the Issue: Autumn 2024

Editors

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The year 2024 marks many anniversaries in the field of disability and social policy in Switzerland. First, 100 years ago, the Swiss Parliament was preparing Article 34 of its Federal Constitution, which laid the constitutional foundation for the IV/AI but also gave priority to the AHV/AVS over the IV/AI. Twenty-five years ago, in 1999, the first direct payment was made to a person in Switzerland to cover personal assistance, in the spirit of the Independent Living movement, as part of the Experiment Assistenzdienst. The same year, the new Federal Constitution proclaimed in its Article 8 the principle of non-discrimination against people with disabilities and provided a new legal basis for the adoption of legislative measures to eliminate the inequalities that affect them. Second, 2024 also marks the respective tenth and twentieth anniversaries of two instruments that represent the shift from disability as a welfare phenomenon to a question of human rights and inclusion: Switzerland's ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2014, and the Behindertengleichstellungsgesetz/Loi sur l'égalité pour les personnes handicapées, adopted in 2004. However, twenty years ago, on January 1, 2004, the implementation of the 4th IV/AI revision represented the first step in a series of major reforms guided by a new activation paradigm that rendered access to disability

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benefits more selective and conditional upon participation in return-to-work rehabilitation programs.

Taken together, the various developments behind these anniversaries represent diverse and ambivalent paths, sometimes with paradoxical outcomes. The development of Swiss disability policies is driven by antagonistic forces, resulting in diverging political agendas, often implemented half-heartedly. These include the priority given to the AHV/AVS over the IV/AI or the Behindertengleichstellungsgesetz/Loi sur l'égalité pour les personnes handicapées, which was a partial response to the much more far-reaching demands of a competing popular initiative. These limited advances often fail to address fundamental social inequalities. More broadly, we observe in recent decades a disconnect within disability policies, which promote inclusion, participation, non-discrimination, and self-determination for all disabled people on the one hand while restricting the delivery of IV/AI benefits on the other, thus (re-)producing exclusionary effects for those who do not meet the requirements of the labor market. As such, the disability movement was compelled to deploy itself in the Swiss context at a time of partial withdrawal of social security; thus, it coexists with principles that are contrary to and conflict with the social model of disability promoted.

In consideration of these anniversaries, we seek contributions to a special issue that deals critically with either the genesis or the content of disability policies and related practices in Switzerland. We invite scholars from a variety of disciplines, such as social policy, social work, sociology, political science, history, anthropology, law, and disability studies who are concerned with the history and/or recent developments of disability policies in Switzerland. We are especially but by no means exclusively interested in the descriptions of structures, institutions, and paradigms and their effects on collectives and individuals, as well as in the uncovering of ambivalences, paradoxes, and dilemmas that have arisen through the simultaneous (partial) progress and setbacks of Swiss disability policies. We are also particularly looking for research that explores the perspectives of people with disabilities and professionals and institutions in the field of disability, as well as political approaches to disability. Contributions that reflect on the role of research, scholars, and their various academic disciplines in the development of disability policies in Switzerland are also most welcome. Abstracts and contributions can be submitted in English, German, or French.

Time line and Guidelines

31 August 2023: Please submit an abstract (250-500 words), accompanied by your affiliation and contact information, by 31 August 2023. We will notify you September/ October 2023 if your abstract has been accepted.

29 February 2024: The deadline for submission of the selected full papers is 29 February 2024. To submit your paper, please go to [sozialpolitik.ch](https://www.sozialpolitik.ch) and follow the instructions under Publishing (<https://www.sozialpolitik.ch>) carefully.

March 2024: Start of peer review process. All contributions will be subject to the usual peer review procedures of socialpolicy.ch involving the home editors and two reviewers.

Autumn 2024: Publication on socialpolicy.ch

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