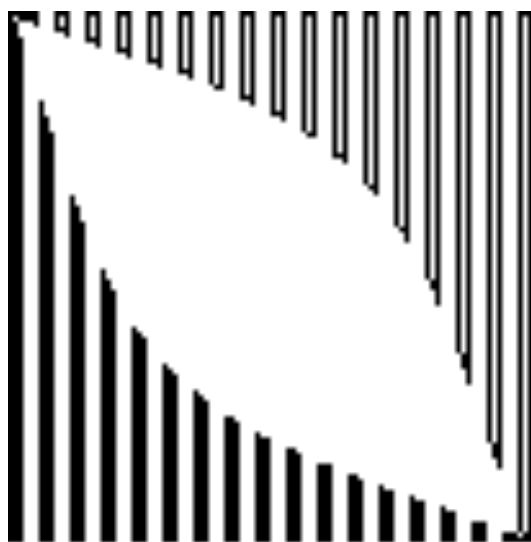


# THEMATIC REVIEW ON ADULT LEARNING



## SWITZERLAND

### COUNTRY NOTE

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### *1.1. Objectives and organisation of the review*

When they met in January 1996, OECD Education Ministers argued that far-reaching changes were needed to make lifelong learning for all a reality (OECD, 1996b). “Strategies for lifelong learning need a wholehearted commitment to new system-wide goals, standards and approaches, adapted to the culture and circumstances of each country”. Recognising that adults encountered particular problems in participating in lifelong learning, Ministers called on the OECD to “Review and explore new forms of teaching and learning appropriate for adults, whether employed, unemployed or retired”. In October 1997, OECD Labour Ministers amplified the message. They recognised the adverse labour market consequences that arise due to the lack of access to lifelong learning opportunities and “underlined the importance of ensuring that lifelong learning opportunities are broadly accessible to all persons of working age, in order to sustain and increase their employability”.

In 1998, the OECD and the US Department of Education co-organised an international conference, *How Adults Learn*, to review recent research results and practices with regard to teaching and learning adapted to the needs of adults (OECD and the US Department of Education, 1999). One of the conclusions from the Conference was that a cross-country Thematic Review could be a valuable tool for identifying and analysing the lessons from different national experiences with adult learning, and understanding how the policy and institutional environment might be made more supportive of adult learning. In late 1998, the OECD Education Committee launched the Thematic Review of Adult Learning as a joint undertaking with the Employment, Labour and Social Affairs Committee.

The purpose of the activity is to review ways of promoting adult learning in different settings. It looks at whether learning opportunities are adequate, how to improve access to and participation in adult learning and how it meets the needs of the labour market. The issues it addresses include patterns of participation and non-participation in adult learning; diagnoses of the problems that arise because of these patterns; policy programmes and institutional arrangements that have been used by Member countries, expanding learning opportunities for adults; and options that can be regarded as “good practices” under diverse institutional circumstances and how these can be applied more widely within and across countries.

National representatives met in Paris in June 1999 to discuss proposed terms of reference and identify countries wishing to participate in the Review. Ten countries subsequently confirmed their commitment to participate, namely Canada, Denmark, Finland, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States. A review team of three experts, including a rapporteur, from different countries and a variety of backgrounds (pedagogy, education, economics, social sciences) plus two members of the OECD Secretariat visit every country. The visits each take around 10 days and enable the experts to capture both education and labour market issues. Each country draws up a Background Report based on the terms of reference accepted by national representatives and the OECD Secretariat.

The review team visits are an opportunity for experts to examine adult learning, with the help of the country Background Report, discussions with government officials and representatives of administrations, employers, unions and the learning professions, as well as field trips. After each visit, the rapporteur, assisted by the team of experts, draws up a Country Note setting out the main problems posed by adult learning and the measures taken to address them. This is based on the four major themes covering the broad classes of problems that impinge on participation by adults in lifelong learning: inadequate incentives and motivations for adults to learn; complex pathways between learning settings and a lack of

transparency in signalling learning outcomes across a variety of formal and non-formal settings; inappropriate teaching and learning methods; and a lack of co-ordination between various public policies that directly or indirectly affect lifelong learning. A Comparative Report for the Thematic Review will address the same topics and compare all the policy options based on the information collected during the country visits.

## ***1.2 Participation by Switzerland***

The review visit to Switzerland took place from 12 to 17 September 1999. The members of the Swiss steering group, the authors of the Background Report and the team of experts are listed in Annexes 1 and 2 of this report. The programme of activities and the list of participants are given in Annex 3. The team of experts would like to extend their warmest thanks to the steering group, the authors of the Background Report and all those who, during the visit, provided them with insight into adult learning patterns in Switzerland and the keys to its success.

The team met over 110 people with various responsibilities in the development of adult education: a Federal Councillor<sup>1</sup>, a State Councillor<sup>2</sup>, officials in charge of developing adult education in the cantons, cantonal education officials belonging to the Swiss Conference of Cantonal Directors of Public Education (CDIP) and the Intercantonal Conference of Adult Education Officials (CIRFA), officials from the main federal institutions involved in adult education, the Federal Office for Training and Technology (OFFT), the Federal Office for Education and Science (OFES), the Secretariat for the Economy (seco), the Federal Office for Culture (OFC), the Federal Office for Statistics (OFS), officials from associations bringing together training providers, officials from schools, museums and libraries, and officials from local, cantonal or national umbrella associations that organise educational activities.

As the visit was short, albeit very well prepared, it was not possible to meet all of the stakeholders involved in the development of adult learning. The team was therefore unable to meet a sufficient number of players from the business world or those involved in enterprise-based training. Several branches of activity where training is relatively well organised could not be included either. These include the healthcare sector and ecological or environmental associations, which are not covered in our report. In other words, our description and diagnosis of the situation in Switzerland has largely been shaped by the practicalities of our mission. Parts of our analysis are therefore likely to require some qualification.

## ***1.3 Summary Report - plan***

This Summary Report comprises an introduction and three further sections. Section 2 gives an overview of adult involvement in lifelong learning in Switzerland, identifying its strengths and weaknesses. Section 3 describes the institutional framework of adult learning. These two sections are important in that they outline the general structure of the visit and the analysis of how adult learning is being developed in Switzerland. Section 4 takes up the four topics of the thematic review individually, analysing the current situation and describing stakeholder approaches. Throughout this summary, the

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1. Post equivalent to that of a federal government minister.

2. Post equivalent to that of a cantonal government minister. This particular State Councillor was also Chairman of the Swiss Conference of Cantonal Directors of Public Education (Conférence suisse des directeurs cantonaux de l'instruction publique (CDIP).

terms “learning”, “education” and “training” are used to designate learning in general<sup>3</sup>. On the other hand, “vocational training” refers solely to learning for occupational purposes.

#### ***1.4 Leading features of adult learning in Switzerland***

The development of adult learning in Switzerland is characterised primarily by high participation and deep social divides. Consequently, one of the first challenges for stakeholders is to develop education practices that will help to overcome social determinism in all its forms and offer learning opportunities to social categories and groups that do not participate in adult education. A range of options is available here, such as the many courses that promote social inclusion for foreigners, access to the labour market, or easier access to diploma courses. More enterprise-based training can also be envisaged to encourage, benefit or support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that develop training practices.

With regard to adult education institutions, the evidence confirms the primacy of the “private market”. It is not confined to private enterprise in the strict sense of the term. In fact, a considerable number of private institutions, local associations, community groups and third-sector enterprises offer a vast range of activities. What differentiates them is their size and degree of specialisation. Public institutions are also present in this market. The authorities provide financial support for numerous learning activities offered by a range of providers. Educational institutions are also involved in adult learning. For some years now, they have become increasingly involved because the federal and cantonal governments have sought to mobilise them in the drive to combat growing unemployment.

These policy changes, combined with the expansion of adult learning, have brought two problems to the fore: how to evaluate the quality of training courses and how to co-ordinate the players. When it comes to quality, even the major providers told the visiting team that adults are finding it increasingly hard to obtain the information they need to select courses that live up to expectations and to assess their quality. The market is becoming increasingly opaque, and this is hampering its expansion. The second problem is co-ordination between the main stakeholders. Competition appears to be overriding co-ordination, in spite of institutions such as the Swiss Federation for Adult Education (FSEA) and the CDIP, which have a mandate to help players work together.

Hence the substantial mobilisation among private and public players, who are seeking to obtain numerous institutional changes: a new Adult Education Forum that would bring together public and private stakeholders, the introduction of a basic quality assurance mechanism, the modularisation of vocational courses, greater incentives for staff certification, and amendments to the legislation. The amendments are aimed at increasing transparency as much as co-ordination. Broader access is also sought. Another challenge is to make the market more transparent and institute quality assurance for the courses on offer. In addition, care must be taken to ensure that current reforms actually meet their objectives.

At the same time, these changes have launched a debate around the role of the State and the scope of adult education. A leading issue is the principle of subsidiarity, whereby the cantons are responsible for education, although the federal government is in charge of vocational training. The federal bill on vocational training, now before Parliament, clearly shows that the federal policy emphasis is on the development of learning for occupational purposes whereas, for many players in the cantons, adult learning should be viewed as a whole, without distinguishing goals. Resolving this debate on the scope of adult education is a major challenge if there is to be expansion. It should be seen as an initial exercise in dialogue between the various players at federal and cantonal level. It is by setting the social and economic

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3. The term “continuing education” usually refers to those who have completed their “initial education” and is synonymous with the term “adult education/training”.

priorities for government intervention in adult education, according to people's social and economic circumstances, that a consensus can be built. The Swiss authorities can probably not afford to side-step one debate: should social and occupational integration for all social groups not be considered a prerequisite for employability and incorporated into the notion of vocational training?

The reforms of the past few years have been largely pedagogical and institutional. They are aimed at changing some of the rules of the game in adult education. The issue is whether these changes can genuinely offer easier access to adult learning for the social categories that are not, or not sufficiently, involved at present. Similarly, any involvement in adult learning requires a degree of reconciliation with initial education to foster academic achievement from an early age, since this is one of the main factors determining participation in adult education. Another challenge is to develop enterprise-based training, particularly in SMEs. And the final challenge relates to the capacity to develop adult education in co-ordination with other policy areas such as healthcare and the environment. There is closer co-ordination in the field of employment policy, and this should be the aim in other policy areas.

## **2. PARTICIPATION IN ADULT EDUCATION: BROAD ACCESS BUT DEEP SOCIAL DIVIDES**

Lifelong learning “extends from the early years through adult life; includes schooling, other organised education and training and non-formal learning; builds on complementarities and linkages among providers and partners in its organisation and financing; and emphasises the active, primary role of the individual learner” (OECD, 1999a, p. 8). There are two aspects to lifelong learning: adapting initial education to facilitate learning throughout life, and giving adults access to education. This definition provides specific ideas that will serve as foundations for a lifelong approach to learning, and as guidance for its implementation:

- Broaden lifelong access to educational resources, regardless of the type of course or personal circumstances; this means more, and more diverse, learning opportunities outside the initial education system.
- Acknowledge that the educational process is an individual and a joint responsibility.
- Recognise all forms of learning, be they formal, non-formal or informal; one of the challenges of lifelong learning is knowing how to evaluate and recognise the kind of learning that takes place outside formal educational institutions.
- Create links between initial and adult education to promote adult enrolment; this means practices that ensure academic attainment and the acquisition of generic skills paving the way to future learning.

### ***2.1. A brief look at developments in initial education***

Because lifelong learning implies comprehensive access to education and training, we need to review some of the patterns of youth participation in education and training. By and large, enrolment is high among the young, and largely oriented towards vocational training. School attendance is still slightly on the rise. Switzerland invests large amounts in initial education.

The level of initial education in the adult population is very high compared with other countries. In 1996, for instance, 80% of those aged 25-64 had been educated to at least upper secondary level. In

1995 Switzerland allocated 14.7% of its expenditure to education, ranking second in the developed world, behind Norway (OECD, 1999b).

Tables 1 and 2 show comprehensive indicators which suggest that young people are staying on longer in education. First, labour market participation (including apprentices in the dual system) indicates a slight fall in the number of young people on the labour market, from 72% to 67%, suggesting that more are remaining in the education system. This decline in numbers on the labour market is a little more marked among women than among men. Furthermore, the estimated number of years spent in training or on the labour market between the ages of 15 and 29 indicates what might be viewed as a slight rise in the number of years spent in education (Table 2).

**Table 1. Trends in labour-market participation among young people aged 14-24, by gender, 1991-1998 (Percentages)**

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Males	72.9	71.8	72.8	68.2	68.0	68.3	69.0	70.6
Females	70.3	69.7	72.2	67.8	64.4	64.5	64.8	63.7
Total	71.6	70.8	72.5	68.0	66.2	66.4	67.0	67.2

Source: OECD (1999d, Statistical Annex, Table C).

**Table 2. Estimated number of years spent in education and in the labour market between the ages of 15 and 29, by gender, 1991 and 1997**

	Years			
	Males		Females	
	1991	1997	1991	1997
Years spent in education - not employed	2.1	3.4	2.3	3.6
Years spent in education - employed	4.5	4.1	3.2	3.2
Employed	7.2	6.7	7.2	6.8
Unemployed	0.3	0.6	0.4	0.4
Outside labour force	0.9	0.3	1.9	1.0

Source: OECD (1999b, p. 24).

The high number of young people entering vocational training is a salient feature of the Swiss education system, even if this option is less popular than in the early 1990s (Table 3). In 1996, for instance, 31% of upper secondary pupils were enrolled in general courses leading to higher education (university or otherwise), a far lower figure than the OECD average. Hence more pupils are in vocational training, largely via the dual system of apprenticeships, alternating between classroom and workplace. There is also gender disparity, since there are more young women in general education courses. With regard to the implementation of lifelong learning, the question that springs to mind is whether the fact that a majority of young people enter vocational training encourages the young to view it as an end in itself or, on the contrary, as an option leading to lifelong learning?

**Table 3. Breakdown of enrolment in upper secondary education (private and public), by type of pathway, 1991 and 1996 (Percentages)**

	Male and female enrolment			
	Switzerland		OECD	
	1991	1996	1991	1996
General education	25	31	53	46
Vocational training	75	69	47	53
Classroom based	..	9	..	35
Alternating classroom/workplace	..	60	..	19

Sources : OECD (1993, Table P13) and OECD (1998, Table 2.1.).

Recent reforms in the education system may, in institutional terms, improve the links between initial and adult education for those with vocational and technical qualifications by offering them easier access to higher education<sup>4</sup>. There are now bridges allowing young people or adults with a federal proficiency diploma to obtain a vocational *maturité*<sup>5</sup> (technical secondary-school diploma), which in turn allows them to enter the *Hautes Ecoles Spécialisées* (HES, or university of applied sciences). Switzerland has increased the pathways through vocational and technical education. For instance, it is now easier for people with vocational qualifications to take further education courses during their working lives.

## 2.2. High participation in adult education<sup>6</sup>

One of the leading features of adult learning in Switzerland is the high participation rate. Several surveys indicate that, every year, over 40% of the adult population attends courses. For instance, 1.9 million people aged between 25 and 74 accounted for 2.6 million recorded attendances on educational courses or activities in 1996. Participation figures are higher over longer periods of time, implying that it is not always the same people who are attending. Over a period of five years, 60% of adults are reported to have participated in an educational activity. These figures take on greater significance when compared with adult education in other countries (Table 4). Switzerland is one of the top countries in the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS/Second IALS), at least in terms of overall participation. Six of the twenty countries in the study are ahead of Switzerland, which is ranked with the United States and above the 20-country average; in descending order they are: Finland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. In Switzerland, participation in training activities is mostly for occupational purposes, since six in ten participants are enrolled on vocational courses.

4. Since 1978, the Law on Vocational Training has allowed those with upper secondary, vocational (“dual”) qualifications to enter vocational tertiary education (level 5B in ISCED97). The latest reform actually allows entry to general tertiary education (level 5A in ISCED97).

5. Secondary-school leaver’s diploma, either general or technical depending on the pathway chosen.

6. The lifelong learning approach also emphasises the recognition of informal learning. But as the term indicates, this is by its very nature hard to identify. Participation statistics are therefore largely based on formal learning as identified in surveys on enrolment in adult education. In the course of the review the team was told that informal learning takes place in firms, that libraries also offer scope for it and that museums were developing educational activities. However, it was not possible to assess in any depth the extent of such practices.

**Table 4. Participation among adults aged 25-64, by type of course and labour force status, 1994-1998 (Percentages)**

	All	Employed	Unemployed	Outside labour force
<u>All types of course (overall rate)</u>				
Germany	18.1	23.2	26.7	6.9
Australia	35.6	42.2	28.3	16.1
Belgium (Flanders)	21.5	26.8	*16.6	9.8
Canada	36.4	41.9	30.1	23.1
Chile	19.1	22.9	22.9	11.1
Denmark	56.2	60.7	51.1	39.0
United States	41.5	48.5	*30.2	16.9
Finland	58.2	69.9	29.4	32.1
Hungary	18.1	27.7	*9.5	*2.2
Ireland	22.0	29.4	*8.6	14.5
Netherlands	36.3	43.2	38.8	21.8
Norway	48.4	54.1	*33.2	21.8
New Zealand	46.4	53.1	31.4	29.7
Poland	14.1	20.5	*7.9	2.8
Portugal	13.0	16.7	*9.8	*4.7
Czech Republic	27.2	33.5	*14.3	7.8
United Kingdom	44.9	56.0	33.1	14.3
Slovenia	33.3	42.9	*13.7	10.5
<b>Switzerland<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>41.5</b>	<b>45.7</b>	<b>32.3</b>	<b>27.3</b>
Sweden	54.3	60.1	45.6	28.7
<i>Average</i>	34.9	42.8	26.4	13.6
<u>Vocational training<sup>b</sup></u>				
Germany	14.9	20.1	25.1	*3.1
Australia	30.3	38.1	23.8	6.9
Belgium (Flanders)	14.0	19.8	*8.6	*0.9
Canada	29.6	37.5	22.0	9.9
Chile	11.7	17.0	*9.3	*2.5
Denmark	48.7	54.6	38.8	26.9
United States	37.6	45.2	*28.5	10.1
Finland	40.0	51.1	*11.6	15.8
Hungary	12.8	19.8	*6.1	*1.4
Ireland	15.8	23.5	*7.1	6.6
Netherlands	24.1	32.5	*29.4	5.9
Norway	44.4	50.9	*26.7	14.5
New Zealand	38.4	46.9	24.1	16.3
Poland	10.6	16.5	*2.4	1.1
Portugal	-	-	-	-
Czech Republic	21.7	27.3	*11.9	*4.4
United Kingdom	39.7	51.8	24.0	7.0
Slovenia	25.6	34.4	*9.1	*4.4
<b>Switzerland<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>26.3</b>	<b>31.8</b>	<b>*26.9</b>	<b>6.0</b>
Sweden	-	-	-	-
<i>Average</i>	29.3	37.6	21.4	6.9

\* Fewer than 30 respondents.

a) The German and French-speaking communities were surveyed in 1994 (IALS) and the Italian-speaking community in 1998 (SIALS).

b) Data on vocational training are not available for Portugal or Sweden.

Sources : IALS-SIALS (processed by authors).

### 2.3. Social divides

High overall participation does not mean that there are no major divides between social groups. Individual economic circumstances are one. The participation (overall and in vocational activities) of people in work is higher than that of the unemployed or those not in the workforce<sup>7</sup>, even if Switzerland is in a slightly better position in these categories (respectively 6<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>) than in the in-work category (8<sup>th</sup>) compared with the 19 other countries in the IALS/SIALS surveys.

Switzerland, like other developed countries, also displays gender disparities with regard to participation (Table 5), since slightly fewer women than men participate in vocational training (27% compared with 36%). Gonon and Schläfli (1998, p. 26) note that in 1997 “barely 20% of women and some 30% of men (of the resident population aged between 20 and 74) attend vocational courses. Some 20% of women and only 10% of men attend general courses”.

**Table 5. Participation among adults aged 25-64, by labour force status, type of training and gender, 1999 (Percentages)**

	All courses (overall rate)			Vocational training		
	All	Men	Women	All	Men	Women
All respondents	41.9	42.3	41.6	31.6	36.2	27.0
Respondents in work	45.8	44.4	47.6	36.8	38.4	24.7

Source : OFS, Swiss survey on population in work (ESPA).

Participation in adult education varies with other social and demographic variables. For instance, it declines with age (Table 6). This is not due solely to the fact that older people are less present on the labour market, for it is also observed among those in work. The participation rate also differs across regions. The data clearly indicate that it is higher in German-speaking Switzerland than in French and Italian-speaking Switzerland (Table 7). The Swiss Background Report (Bodart Senn and Schröder-Naef, 2000) provides other information to confirm this: in German-speaking Switzerland, participation is estimated at 40%, in French-speaking Switzerland 32% and in Ticino (Italian-speaking Switzerland) 30%. Another factor is nationality (Table 8). Foreigners participate less, whether or not they are in work. The same goes for participation in vocational training, as the rate is lower among those who are not Swiss citizens. Consequently, although training is provided specifically for foreigners, it is not sufficient to offset lower participation.

**Table 6. Participation among adults aged 25-64, by labour force status, type of course and age, 1999 (Percentages)**

	All courses (overall rate)				Vocational training			
	25-34 yrs	35-44 yrs	45-54 yrs	55-64 yrs	25-34 yrs	35-44 yrs	45-54 yrs	55-64 yrs
All respondents	43.8	47.3	41.8	31.2	33.1	36.0	33.0	20.7
Respondents in work	46.5	50.1	44.8	37.3	36.4	40.1	37.5	29.4

Source : OFS, ESPA.

7. The information in the Background Report indicates a similar trend: 43% of the labour force underwent training in 1996, compared with 21% for those outside the labour force (Bodart Senn and Schröder-Naef, 2000).

**Table 7. Participation among adults aged 25-64, by labour force status, type of course and place of residence, 1999 (Percentages)**

	All courses (overall rate)				Vocational training			
	Total	German-speaking	French-speaking	Italian-speaking	Total	German-speaking	French-speaking	Italian-speaking
All respondents	41.9	46.4	32.0	27.4	31.6	35.0	24.3	19.0
Respondents in employment	45.8	50.3	34.5	32.5	36.8	40.3	28.4	24.5

Source : OFS, ESPA.

**Table 8. Participation among adults aged 25-64, by labour force status, type of course and place of birth, 1999 (Percentages)**

	All courses (overall rate)			Vocational training		
	Total	Swiss	Non-Swiss	Total	Swiss	Non-Swiss
All respondents	41.9	46.1	26.2	31.6	34.5	20.7
Respondents in employment	45.8	50.2	28.2	36.8	40.1	23.5

Source: OFS, ESPA.

An analysis of participation by level of attainment indicates the importance of the latter as a factor in participation in adult education (Tables 9 and 10). Table 9 shows that 19% of participants have a level of attainment equivalent to compulsory schooling and that over half of the participants hold vocational secondary qualifications, which in fact corresponds to those obtained in the dual (apprenticeship) system. All this suggests that the wide range of adult training practices puts the emphasis on those people with a low level of schooling. Another factor is the much lower participation rate among the least educated. Holding a vocational secondary qualification pushes up the participation rate substantially, to the extent that it doubles. Those with general secondary or higher education qualifications have an even greater likelihood of participation.

**Table 9. Participation in training courses by level of educational attainment, 1999 (aged 25-64)**

	Share of the population (%)	Numbers	Participation rate (%)
University education	10.2	402 000	53.2
Higher vocational training	13.4	532 000	56.7
Upper secondary (general)	7.0	278 000	53.3
Upper secondary (vocational)	50.3	1 990 000	42.6
Compulsory education only	19.1	756 000	20.0
Total	100.0	3 958 000	41.9

Source : OFS, ESPA.

**Table 10. Participation among adults aged 25-64, by labour force status, type of course and educational attainment, 1999 (Percentages)**

	All courses			Vocational training		
	Below upper secondary	Upper secondary	Post secondary	Below upper secondary	Upper secondary	Post secondary
All respondents	20.0	44.0	55.2	11.5	31.8	47.6
Respondents in employment	21.3	47.4	57.7	14.1	36.9	51.0

Source: OFS, ESPA.

Participation in adult education increases with prior attainment<sup>8</sup>. This is a perfect illustration of what economists call the Matthew effect<sup>9</sup>. There is a substantial difference between those who have had an upper secondary education and those who have not (Table 10). The difference, which can exceed ten points, emphasises the importance of going beyond initial education as a factor conducive to participation in lifelong learning. These data should be set against the literacy levels revealed by the IALS survey, whereby between 17.6% and 19.6% of Swiss citizens, depending on where they live, are reported to be at literacy Level 1 and experiencing difficulty coping with their own language in everyday life (OECD, 2000).

Inequalities with regard to participation can to some extent be put down to personal attitudes and circumstances. Reaching a specific level of attainment in initial education is said to give more individuals a positive attitude to education, in turn making them more receptive to vocational or cultural activities. People with higher initial attainment are said to be better at identifying their educational needs, at enrolling, whether for occupational purposes or for leisure, and at reconciling the time spent at work, in training and with their families. So initial education appears to foster education-friendly attitudes whereas difficult working conditions in general may be a drawback to participation. Hence the significance of demands for education leave, which facilitates access by reducing work-related constraints. Specific personal circumstances can also be an incentive for training. A provider of training for older foreigners pointed out to the visiting team that many of them now reside permanently in Switzerland because their children live there. It is their desire to fit into society in the host country that persuades them to apply for courses.

The structure of training provision may help to explain the mechanisms that lead to unequal access to adult education. Heading the list is corporate practice. For instance, people who have spent less time in education find themselves in the least qualified jobs, precisely those for which employers provide less training. More generally, Gonon and Schläfli (1998) give survey findings on female participation in enterprise-based training which highlight the leading institutional barriers in the provision (or lack of) training:

- No training provision by enterprises, who target their resources primarily at managerial and highly skilled staff.
- Training courses primarily for full-time workers; Switzerland has more women in part-time work -- 46% compared with the OECD average of 24% of women (OECD, 1999d).
- Discrimination on the part of line managers when it comes to enrolment.

8. By and large, enrolment does increase with the level of initial education. We should point out, however, that those with higher vocational qualifications actually display the highest rate of participation in adult education.

9. The idea that the rich get richer and the poor get poorer.

- Lack of information.
- Course timetables that are incompatible with family life.

Public mechanisms to regulate training, employment and labour force development may affect the nature of training provision, and hence participation among some social categories. For instance, the adoption of the Federal Law on Mandatory Unemployment Insurance and Insolvency Compensation (LACI), together with government funding for training for the unemployed, have effectively allowed the jobless to enrol for training activities. On the other hand, Article 41 of the Federal Law on Vocational Training requires that anyone returning to education must have worked for four and a half years in the sector. Consequently, women not on the labour market, people wishing to retrain, and the unemployed who have not worked for the minimum statutory period are unable to enrol for these courses. A single option remains open to them, namely examination courses in private institutions.

To summarise, participation in adult education depends very much on how well individuals “fit” into society and hence into the world of work and social life. These stabilising elements, which include culture, personal circumstances and social resources, are part of the dynamic relationship between people and the society in which they live. Furthermore, the very nature of training provision *per se* does much to create the right environment, or on the contrary visible barriers, in the public or private arrangements governing training course organisation and labour force development.

#### ***2.4. Non-participation in adult education: some general insights***

The range of barriers to participation in adult education can be seen from the unsatisfied demand for training. The IALS survey shows that 25% of Swiss respondents saying that they wished to enrol on vocational courses had not done so (Table 11). Various reasons were given, the main ones relating to time management. For instance, 38% did not do so owing to lack of time. The other reasons given concerned the type of course and lack of resources.

**Table 11. Reasons for non-participation in adult education, 1994 and 1998\* (Percentages)**

		Vocational training **		General education and training	
Willingness to train, but failure to enrol		24.5	(21.7)	30.0	(18.1)
Reasons for not enrolling					
Time management	Lack of time	38.4	(38.8)	53.1	(52,6)
	Too much work	14.1	(16.3)	19.2	(14,2)
	Family duties <sup>10</sup>	10.0	(15.4)	12.9	(14,9)
Type of course available	No courses available	11.4	(7.1)	3.7	(3,6)
	Cost of training	12.2	(25.9)	8.2	(19,3)
	Training timetable	5.5	(9.0)	7.0	(7,2)
	Language used on course	0.8	(0.9)	1.0	(0,4)
Personal	Lack of support from employer	6.5	(7.6)	0.5	(0,4)
	Health problems	3.7	(2.6)	5.0	(4,0)
	Lack of qualifications	1.6	(1.3)	0.5	(0,3)
Others		13.5	(9.2)	9.4	(5.5)

Sources : IALS-SIALS (data processed by authors).

The percentages are for Switzerland, with the average for the 20 countries in the study in brackets.

\* The German and French-speaking communities were surveyed in 1994 (IALS) and the Italian-speaking community in 1998 (SIALS).

\*\* Data on vocational training are not available for Portugal or Sweden.

The percentage of people who are vaguely willing to enrol in some kind of training, without specifying the type, is around 22% in all the countries taking part in the IALS/SIALS survey. The main reasons for not enrolling also relate to time management. Compared with vocational training, the type of courses on offer seems to be a far less important factor in non-participation.

### **2.5. Synthesis: first impressions of the lifelong learning approach**

Our initial conclusion at the end of this section is that a variety of observations provide insight into the current adult education situation in Switzerland and serve to guide the introduction of lifelong education and training:

- The level of initial education in Switzerland is high, since 80% of the adult population have upper secondary or higher education qualifications. A major feature is the large fraction of the student population rapidly channelled into vocational training, in the form of apprenticeships (the dual system). Recent reforms in vocational training and higher education have improved mobility from one level to another by facilitating the entrance of those with vocational qualifications into higher education. This is benefiting the expansion of adult education.
- Participation in adult education is high. Switzerland has one of the highest enrolment rates in the OECD area, in both general education and vocational training.

10. We compared men and women in terms of the reasons given for non-participation. With regard to vocational training, there were significant differences on three counts: workload (men), family responsibilities (women) and cost (women). With regard to general education, there were differences on four counts: lack of time (men), workload (men), family responsibilities (women) and cost (women).

- Female participation differs from that of men in that women tend to opt more for non-vocational training.
- Reasons for non-participation in adult education have more to do with personal problems of time management than the actual courses available.
- Pathways between initial and continuing education are viewed in terms of how the former affects the latter. Here, it is worth noting that adult participation depends largely on a person's prior experience of education. Access is unequal, to the detriment of the less skilled.
- Training is available for the low-skilled (return-to-work or social integration courses, for instance), but could never close the gap between them and the more skilled.

These observations also enable educational policymakers to clarify options that will improve access to adult education. The first option concerns pathways between initial education and continuing training: access to adult education for the low-skilled is always a problem and ways must be found of developing adult education practices that eradicate all forms of social determinism, including the legacy of initial education. There is training provision for the low-skilled, but it is manifestly inadequate. Two other groups to be targeted are foreigners and women. The second policy option concerns the effective use of bridges between the various levels of vocational and technical training, for young people and adults alike. These broaden access to adult education, in that young people who have just obtained their first vocational qualification can enter the labour market and take a number of courses that will enable them to increase their qualifications. These pathways between different levels of education are directly in line with the rationale behind lifelong learning.

### 3. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

This section looks at the institutional framework for the development of adult education. It seeks to identify the private and public institutions involved in adult education and describe the principles guiding their action.

#### *3.1. Private development of adult education*

Adult education is developing largely in the private sector and on market principles. This means that the decision to participate in education and training is left very much up to the individual. The onus is on individuals to enrol. It also means that education and training provision has traditionally been the domain of private training institutions (community or otherwise). The relationship between client and provider is largely a market transaction. This also means that relations between providers are competitive.

There is a wide range of training providers, described by cantonal directors of public education as a "mixed bag"<sup>11</sup>. What does emerge is the importance of the private market. The Swiss labour force survey reports that over 80% of all adult education courses in 1996 were run by private institutions (Table 12).

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11. "Adult education is characterised by a mixed bag of public and private training institutions, run by business or government, state-approved and run for profit. Similar diversity is found with regard to responsibility and funding, and in the many forms of training provision" (CDIP, 1999, p. 14).

**Table 12. Breakdown of training (vocational and non-vocational) by type of provider, 1996**  
(Percentages)

Public schools (vocational)	18
Enterprises or employers	20
Private schools	23
Other institutions (mostly private)	25
Private teachers, self-employed	13
Total	100

Source: Borkowsky et al. (1997, 82).

### 3.1.1. Private training providers

Providers of adult training accept that they are on part of a training market and are in competition with one another. Private providers are very diverse in terms of legal status, type of training provided, and size. With regard to status, providers fall into three categories (see Box 1 for a more detailed description of specific providers):

- Private training institutions (including trade associations) that offer vocational retraining (in subjects like languages, computing, communication and management) or diploma courses (e.g. the *maturité* or higher education entrance examination for adults, or federal certificates and diplomas).
- Privately run, state-approved institutions (not-for-profit associations) which are numerous in offering training courses and activities of all kinds; some call themselves educational associations, while others are community groups that also offer training.
- Denominational, trade union, political or ethical institutions which also provide a large number of training courses for their members or the general public.

Private providers differ in terms of the kind of courses they offer. Some specialise in niche markets, with courses in the visual arts, music or languages or specialist technical fields such as computing. Others offer more socially oriented courses on major political or ethical issues. Some focus on training for “foreigners” or immigrants<sup>12</sup>, or activities to foster social integration or help find a job. Training is shifting away from the “utilitarian or industrial” towards a more civic approach. Besides these specialist institutions, some markedly more versatile groups and institutions provide a wide range of activities. The *Ecole-club Migros*, an “education club” in Saint-Gall, is a good example. It opened in summer 1999 in the town centre, occupying the former railway station which had been fully renovated, and offers a variety of activities. The list below is not complete but shows just how wide a variety there is:

- Lessons in music, visual arts, dance and handicrafts for “amateurs”;
- Business computer courses for firms and private individuals;
- Foreign language classes;

12. Among “foreign” workers, 60% are unskilled. They work mainly in three sectors of the economy: the hotel industry, agriculture and construction. It is also worth noting that half of all the unemployed are foreign, and that they are eligible for a range of back-to-work measures.

- Jewellery-making classes for “amateurs” and “semi-professionals”;
- Music classes (jazz) for professional musicians<sup>13</sup>;
- Fitness classes.

In the same town, the *Dachatelier* or "dacha workshop" holds classes in the visual arts, competing with those of the *Migros* club. It is a small umbrella association operating without federal government support; its 600 members each pay an annual subscription of SF 40. The association specialises in artistic activities and creation in the visual arts. Its courses are promoted as continuing training for art teachers, who come from neighbouring cantons and from Austria and Germany. Its clientele also includes members of the general public wishing to enrol in leisure activities. Thus, two types of clientele with different objectives (vocational in one case, general in the other) attend the same courses. The association uses premises owned by the town council, and is responsible for their upkeep. In fact, it manages to operate with a handful of volunteers, and offers a choice of 80 different training workshops. Participants pay the teachers, who pay back a portion to the association. The *Dachatelier* operates on a very small budget, hence the importance of voluntary work.

Another factor distinguishing providers is size. Side by side on the same market are major education and training centres like the *Migros* clubs or denominational groups in countrywide networks; associations, often run by volunteers, giving courses in towns and cantons; and of course private teachers. Competing with different sized institutions is often viewed as healthy. For instance the fact that the *Dachatelier* is small gives it an advantage over the *Migros* clubs, i.e. flexibility. It only needs three enrolments to hold a course, whereas the *Migros* clubs require eight.

### **3.1.2 Role of umbrella associations**

No description of adult education in Switzerland would be complete without mentioning the strategic position of umbrella associations, i.e. private, non-profit making organisations approved by the State. They “provide a range of services for institutions, trainee teachers, politicians and the media, but also the public at large” (Gonon and Schläfli, 1998). The first category is made up of the associations providing education and training. For some it is their sole activity<sup>14</sup>, while others are social institutions which also provide some training. The second category comprises the co-ordinating bodies known as “umbrella” institutions, or federations of local associations. One is the *Association suisse des universités populaires* (Swiss association of "popular" universities), which runs diploma courses for teaching staff and liaises between similar universities in Switzerland and abroad. The *Fédération suisse pour l'éducation des parents* (Swiss federation for parental education), the *Communauté de travail catholique pour la formation des adultes* (a Roman Catholic adult education institution), and *Lire et Ecrire* (a group of literacy training institutions) play the same role as training institutions.

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13. The Ecole-club serves as an academy of music for the town and the canton.

14. The *Dachatelier* is one example.

## **Box 1. Switzerland - the contrast between private training providers**

### **Ecoles-clubs Migros**

These "education clubs" form a large network of comprehensive training centres under the aegis of an agro-food distribution company. They trace their roots back to the social idealism of the 1920s and 1930s. The humanitarian vision of Gottlieb Duttweiler, founder of the Migros food-store chain, stems from the Protestant social movement of the same period. In 1944 he set up language courses for adults and broadened provision with his education clubs in the 1950s "successively for handicrafts, art and sport" (Bodart Senn and Schröder-Naef, 2000). Since then, the clubs have extended their coverage to more vocational subjects. One example is computing, with Microsoft diploma courses for adults. Languages account for 40% of all courses, leisure-related subjects 34% and business courses 20%. They are open to private individuals and firms alike. Funding comes partly from enrolment fees and partly from the "cultural 1%" contribution which makes up the shortfall between teaching revenues and the centres' operating costs, which amount to several tens of millions of Swiss francs every year.

The network comprises 48 centres, employing 8 000 teaching staff and 1 500 support staff (for planning, advertising, management and preparation of teaching materials). Each centre plans its own courses. However, for the past few years a central co-ordinating body, the *Office de co-ordination*, has dealt with advertising, the production of teaching materials and the delivery of qualifications for diploma courses.

### **"Popular" universities**

The first of these universities was founded in the 1920s by a group of academics. Subsequently, they became private, State-approved institutions. Courses are usually given by university lecturers and secondary school teachers.

They form the densest and broadest network in Switzerland, with 500 centres in both urban and rural areas.

Their aim is to develop continuing education and access to educational resources. They provide a range of activities, including courses related to ageing and healthcare, continuing education for private individuals, and labour market/social integration courses to combat exclusion. The universities rely on the support of volunteers. They also receive subsidies that vary according to their clientele and the canton.

The *Université ouvrière de Genève* (Geneva workers' university, or UOG) runs numerous foundation courses to provide basic skills and enhance cultural standards. The courses are free of charge. The UOG runs literacy classes for French speakers (60% of those enrolled) and non-French speakers (40%). These help adults to progress in a language until they are ready to enter vocational training. The UOG also provides second-language courses and refresher classes in French and mathematics prior to vocational training.

### **Parental training**

The 1 200 institutions, run by volunteers and grouped into a national federation, help parents in their work as educators. Their courses are in some cases free of charge. They help to improve public health and welfare by running courses on prevention. Recent projects have included enterprise-based courses for fathers on how to reconcile family and working life, courses for women in cultural communities who learn how to act as intermediaries and develop training in their community, and a theatrical production to launch group reflection on the subject of families.

### **Denominational, political and ethical institutions and social partners**

Many denominational organisations (Protestant and Catholic) and several social movements have set up training activities for their members and for the public at large. Political parties and trade union organisations do the same. The latter have set up the *Centrale suisse d'éducation ouvrière* (Swiss centre for worker education) and the *Ecole syndicale de Suisse* (Swiss trade union college).

One of these is FSEA, founded in 1951 to represent the whole of the continuing training sector. It brings together umbrella associations, training institutions and individual teachers. Although a private association, it represents both public and private bodies. It has a membership of 419, with 178 institutional and 241 individual members. It represents a combined staff of 35 000, teaching 1.6 million people. It acts as a spokesman to government. Its work is particularly important to the ongoing discussions on the new

vocational training law. It has put forward a general development framework for a national policy to promote continuing education and training, based on the following principles:

- Provide education and training for all; the right to education for every section of society should be acknowledged and never restricted.
- Combine general and vocational training, since continuing education should be viewed as a whole.
- Strengthen and encourage the multiplicity of continuing education provision.
- Develop a new, co-ordinated system of continuous training and recognise all the vocational and life skills a person has acquired.
- Create innovative funding models for continuing education which guarantee cost transparency and access for all.
- Federal government policy should aim to step up continuing education and training by supporting providers, promoting enrolment in continuing education and training, developing information and advisory activities and conducting applied research.

FSEA seeks to co-ordinate all the private and public education and training bodies, public bodies managing adult education, and umbrella associations. For instance, it has set up diploma courses for teachers working in adult education (FSEA certificates 1 and 2). The Federation also has a mandate to promote international relations and collaborates on an ongoing basis with the European Association for the Education of Adults.

### *3.1.3. Enterprise-based training*

Privately run adult education also includes enterprise-based training. Unlike other forms of private provision, enterprise-based training serves as a support tool for management and human resource development.

One aspect of corporate education and training efforts is the recruitment of apprentices under the dual system, a formula widely used in vocational and technical training. In 1994, firms spent SF 3.8 billion (gross) on such schemes. Bearing in mind that apprentice productivity amounted to SF 2.1 billion, firms can be said to have made a net contribution of SF 1.7 billion. In comparison, the government contributed SF 2.2 billion to the dual system.

Another aspect of corporate training is the training provided for a firm's own workers as part of its economic, technological and economic development policy. As in most industrialised countries, enrolment in enterprise-based training varies with the profile of the firm and the occupational status of its employees. Small firms, for instance, contribute less to training for their workers than medium-sized or large firms (Table 13). Acherman (1999) points out that 20% of SMEs offer in-house training, while the rest provide none or have recourse to outside training staff. Yet 88% of Swiss firms have fewer than 10 employees and one-quarter of all employees work for firms with over 250 on their payroll. To some extent these disparities stem from the organisational capacity of major firms and administrations to build formal training policies that tie in with labour management policies. They also stem from the fact that some branches of industry have a tradition of training provision (even formally acknowledged in some industrial agreements) while others do not. Switzerland also has some (not very widespread) management

mechanisms for enterprise-based training. These are cantonal schemes (as in the canton of Geneva) based on corporate levies and, in some branches, industrial agreements.

**Table 13. Enterprise-based training according to corporate size, 1999**  
(Percentages)

Size	Employees enrolled in enterprise-based training <sup>a</sup>	<i>Of which</i> employees enrolled in in-house training
Fewer than 10 employees	19.5	4.8
10 to 99 employees	30.0	13.6
100 employees and over	38.6	21.8
Total	28.3	12.6

a) The enterprise organises the training, and/or funds it, and/or allows the training to be given during working hours.  
Source : OFS, ESPA.

Sectoral disparities can be seen in the enrolment figures for courses run by public institutions such as universities or HES<sup>15</sup>. The heads of continuing education and training in these institutions said that they take on few trainees from some sectors<sup>16</sup> (e.g. industry) who are supported by their employers. They also say that labour management strategies vary across sectors, leading to differentiated use of higher education resources.

Corporate training primarily targets the more skilled categories of staff, i.e. managers, professionals and technicians (Table 14).

During our visit we met very few business leaders. Yet the development of vocational training for corporate staff would appear to be a must in the current economic climate. One training official employed by a major public corporation undergoing privatisation (Swiss postal service) described the company's new training policy, which is to teach staff to cope with a dual challenge, i.e. the advent of competition and technological change. The company's policy is to prepare and train the current workforce. At the same time, faced with the unfamiliar context of competition, it is seeking to reduce expenditure on training for future recruits<sup>17</sup>, hence the idea of creating a public qualification for anyone wishing to work in this field. This is a good illustration of the close relationship between corporate training policies and the economic background against which they are set.

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15. Both institutions are post-secondary. However, they differ in that an HES has a special remit to be more directly involved in economic and regional development. It must accordingly maintain close ties with firms working in the fields it covers in its curriculum.

16. This corporate support is particularly important as some university courses are expensive. For instance, it can cost up to SF60 000 to take an MBA course. In addition, self-funding is the rule governing the development of continuing education and training in universities.

17. The postal service used to be the only enterprise in its field and consequently trained its own workers (with the emphasis on initial training). The emergence of competition in the sector has led it to reduce investment in such training.

**Table 14. Enterprise-based training, by occupational status of learners, 1999** (percentages)

Status	Enrolled in training supported by enterprise <sup>a</sup>	<i>Of which</i> enrolled in in-house training
Managers	42.2	17.8
Professional staff	41.6	15.1
Technicians	38.2	18.1
Commercial and office workers	25.4	12.9
Sale and service employees	22.4	13.6
Skilled blue collar	18.2	5.5
Unskilled blue collar	9.7	6.7
Total	28.3	12.6

a) The enterprise organises the training, and/or funds it, and/or allows training during working hours.

Source: OFS, ESPA.

Trade union movements have made a number of demands with regard to training, the main one being the recognition of the right to training, meaning entitlement to paid educational leave as promoted by the International Labour Office (ILO) in 1974. For this, Switzerland would have to sign Convention 140. For the Swiss Federation of Trade Unions (USS), this kind of leave is a “vital means for currently neglected sections of the population to gain access to continuing training” (USS, 1999). The adoption of this principle would signify a break with the current trend, whereby individuals are asked to shoulder the cost of their vocational training and re-training.

USS has also reacted to the new vocational training bill currently being drafted, by emphasising how important it is to grant everyone the right to vocational training. It views this piece of legislation as a useful step forward, but one that has its shortcomings: the lack of any formal recognition of the right to training, insufficient funding, a lack of determination to ensure that all trainees are treated on an equal footing, the lack of details about the new institutional framework to manage the curriculum, and the absence of any interface with environmental issues.

More specifically, with regard to enterprise-based training, USS deplors the fact that many firms have failed to respond to calls to increase investment in training to cope with recent economic or technological change. In its view, firms that fail to provide sufficient training should contribute to a training fund, similar to the French vocational training levy. At the same time, management arrangements should be tighter than those currently in place, i.e. the SF15 levy on every worker in the canton of Geneva, or the training clauses featured in some industrial agreements. The following proposals are being put forward:

- Plan how to allocate the revenue from the training levy, in well organised sectors with industrial agreements.
- Step up sectoral management by social partners.
- Set up a federal training fund with the participation of the cantons and social partners, to ensure the development of all forms of vocational training.

In the course of our visit, another issue was raised regarding enterprise-based training, namely the contribution of private and public training institutions to the development of enterprise-based training. A large number of private providers of adult education and training are increasing their services to business. Some of the Migros clubs, for instance, are positioning themselves on the corporate training market by

providing computer courses. A similar trend can be seen in public institutions, where some vocational colleges are targeting this new market. There are a variety of possible approaches:

- Universities, including business study departments, would provide higher qualifications for business managers and professionals (e.g. MBA).
- HES<sup>18</sup> would focus more on further training and retraining for technical staff.
- Vocational colleges would play a dual role, supporting the kind of further vocational training that is often associated with technical and economic change, and offering workers the opportunity of obtaining vocational or technical qualifications.

Current work is focusing on how to change the relationship between training providers and enterprises. Some of the changes are not yet set in stone. For example, no decision has been taken as to the form that continuing training provision by the HES will take. At most, the ties between HES and enterprises will be closely tailored to the needs of the economy. This might mean customised training. As for universities, they would continue to provide higher education for managers and highly skilled professionals. We were told on many occasions that closer ties between training providers and enterprises would mean more competition between private and public providers. The private sector feels that the range of funding formulas available to public institutions would enable them to cut their prices.

The links between training institutions and enterprises also involve teaching staff, many of whom hold managerial or other posts in enterprises (at least in the HES), and the need to provide work experience for students on vocational courses. There are accordingly dual calls on enterprises, which must authorise some employees to teach on an occasional basis and also receive trainees for work experience.

In short, enterprise-based training does appear to be relatively widespread in Switzerland, but there are some marked inequalities across firms and sectors. The current situation holds a number of challenges regarding the development of customised training and a new training market, namely linking economic change and investment in training, recognising the right to training for all with the development of more institutionalised management, and mobilising training institutions to meet corporate demand.

### **3.2. Government policy**

The development of adult learning depends very much on federal and cantonal government policy. In the constitution, the responsibility for education lies with the cantons (principle of subsidiarity) but the federal government is responsible for the development of vocational training. Adult learning is accordingly a shared responsibility. At the same time, decentralised decision-making generates diversity when it comes to local practice.

#### *3.2.1. Government policy rationale*

Adult education has long been formally acknowledged as the government's responsibility. At both federal and cantonal level, the legislation recognises the role of governments in developing education for adults. Most cantons have articles and regulations in laws on schools, education or culture mentioning

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18. The role of the HES is to provide basic training in a specialist field, continuing education, research & development (applied research), knowledge transfer and co-operation with other institutions. It must be involved in continuing education and training if it is to obtain approval.

adult education. Other cantons base their support on the federal law on vocational training. Only 3 cantons have special laws to support adult education. These instruments determine the scope of the law and possible policy approaches (see below, Box 2, an extract from the Law on Support for Adult Education and Training, adopted by the Canton of Bern<sup>19</sup>). This stipulates that the canton may run training centres, plan training courses, subsidise institutions or individual courses, join intercantonal bodies and make school premises and facilities available.

Traditionally, government policy, in respect to adult education and continuing training, has always been based on the principle of subsidiarity -- meaning that it is conducted jointly with the other stakeholders, training providers, enterprises and learners. The principle works at two levels. The federal government acts in areas in which it has authority. In the case of social policy, the principle is that: "legislative federal power is restricted to those areas stipulated in the federal constitution; in all other cases cantons are responsible" (OECD, 1999c, p. 130). The same principle applies to relations between private players and the authorities, who should only intervene, for instance, to back up action by private providers. In other words, federal government is involved in vocational training wherever the market does not play a role<sup>20</sup>.

Another principle frequently apparent in the legislation is equal access. Government policy seeks to provide the widest possible access. Some of the legislation and the CDIP (1999) refer to interregional disparities that need to be eradicated (Article 5 of the Law on Adult Education, Canton of Bern), gender inequalities, lack of participation by disadvantaged groups such as the unemployed, immigrants, the disabled, etc.

Over the past few years, there has been a slight shift in government policy. With the steep rise in unemployment (from 0 to 5%), the Confederation has begun to take more direct steps to support labour force development and vocational training. One example was the adoption of the vocational training law at a time when structural change (see below) was being initiated in the education system and in the organisation of labour force management bodies. A variety of steps have also been taken to bring education, training and the economy closer together:

- The HES have been established to provide continuing education and to work more closely with enterprises.
- Following the 1995 revision of the Federal Law on Mandatory Unemployment Insurance and Insolvency Compensation (LACI), active labour market policies have been introduced, including training for the unemployed.
- A policy has been introduced to revamp the dual system, now called the Apprenticeship Places Scheme.

These measures, several of which extend beyond adult education and training, show that the central government is becoming more directly involved with vocational training in order to tie in educational practice more closely with economic revival and social and occupational integration. As in other countries, Switzerland has seen a shift in government labour policy, with more emphasis on active

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19. The Canton of Berne was the first to adopt a special law on adult education in 1990.

20. This requires some clarification. Government policy may supplement private initiative. For instance, because training for a specific trade requires the support of a trade association or the government, the private training market would play a lesser role, since trade associations and government often regulate the profession together. In situations where government support is not required, the private market has a free hand.

labour market policies (OECD, 1996a). This has substantially altered training provision for the jobless since it supports them in their return to the labour market. For instance, the subsidies granted to “*entreprises d’entraînement*” (training workshops) for the unemployed have led to the emergence of a new player on the adult training market. Consequently Swiss government policy has, to some extent at least, set aside the principle of subsidiarity which had until recently guided its policy on adult education, in order to play a more active role in the planning of training provision. In order to incorporate training into its active labour market policies by setting up institutions, granting subsidies to certain institutions and taking other steps, the State has altered the way in which the market for continuing training and adult education operates, and this is one reason for the malaise expressed by many of those interviewed for the Review (see Section 4).

### 3.2.2. Role of the Confederation

The federal government’s role in continuing training consists mainly of its responsibility for vocational training in the industries governed by the vocational training law, i.e. around 85% of all industries (Gonon and Schläfli, 1998). The federal government is also committed to “promoting continuing and further training when the responsibility for any continuing or further training of a vocational, personal or socio-cultural nature does not by law lie with the cantons, making the federal authorities ultimately responsible” (Gonon and Schläfli, 1998). Here again, it is the principle of subsidiarity that governs relations between the various tiers of government. Vocational training under federal responsibility is provided by the commercial and technical vocational schools. The *Ecoles polytechniques fédérales* in Lausanne and Zurich, which report to the federal government too, also provide continuing training.

In recent years, on the federal government’s initiative, a set of structures has been established to develop the labour force and continuing training; this has changed the previous planning and organisational arrangements in the field of continuing education and training. Several federal institutions play a role in this field:

- On 1<sup>st</sup> January 1998, Switzerland established the Federal Office for Vocational Training and Technology (OFFT), by merging the vocational training division of the Swiss Pedagogical Institute for Vocational Training (ISPPF) reporting to the former Federal Office for Industry, Arts and Crafts and Labour (OFIAMT), the technology department and secretariat of the Commission for Technology and Innovation (CTI) of the former Federal Office for Business Cycle Issues (OFQC) and the training section of the training and assistance department in the Federal Office for Agriculture (OFAG). OFFT is in charge of initial and continuing vocational training, under the vocational training law.
- The Secretariat for the Economy (seco) is responsible for planning vocational training under the Federal Law on Mandatory Unemployment Insurance and Insolvency Compensation (LACI). Under this law, Regional Placement Offices (*Offices régionaux de placement*, or ORP<sup>21</sup>) were set up in the cantons in 1998. As part of the country’s active labour market

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21. The federal government asked the cantons to set up ORPs to replace the 3 000 *Offices communaux du travail*. They were given until early 1998 to do so. A description of Geneva’s regional placement office gives a clearer picture of the new regional bureaux. For instance it has a professional placement service, a labour market entry service (reflecting the thrust of labour market policies), the Canton of Geneva Unemployment Fund, and the foreign workers service (Perrin, 1999).

policies, the law also provided for the creation of 25 000 jobs for the unemployed, a figure that is periodically reviewed.<sup>22</sup>

- The Federal Office for Agriculture (OFAG) is responsible for continuing vocational training in agriculture.
- The Federal Office for Education and Science (OFES) has supported the creation of university offices for the co-ordination of continuing education and training.
- The Federal Office for Culture (OFC) provides subsidiary grants and supports eight national umbrella associations in the continuing training sector with annual grants.
- The Federal Office for Social Insurance (OFAS) supports continuing training for people giving courses to the elderly and the disabled. Training activities for the latter are also given support.
- The Federal Office for Public Health (OFSP) regulates continuing training for staff working in prevention.
- The Pro Helvetia foundation finances specific continuing training projects that are cultural or general in nature and interregional or national in scale.

Government plays an indirect role in the development of adult learning via the support it provides for research in this field. There are two structured schemes. The first consists of regular surveys by OFS on participation in adult education. The second takes the form of federal research programmes which also finance academic projects on adult education and continuing training. One was PNR 33 (national research programme on training system efficiency) which ended in 1999, and another PNR 43 on the link between training and employment. This research-based support for adult education is further strengthened by OFES, which regularly finances the participation of Swiss partners in European Union projects.

### **Box 2. Law on Support for Adult Education and Training - Canton of Bern, June 1990**

While we do not claim that this legislation could serve as a model, it is interesting in the way it acknowledges adult education. For instance, it is the canton's policy to promote the development of adult education on the basis of subsidiarity (Article 1) and equal opportunities (Article 5). Having set out the general principle, the act specifies which activities are not covered (Article 2) and what form policy should take: running training centres, granting subsidies, planning educational activities, conducting surveys, joining intercantonal adult education institutions, and making school facilities available.

#### **Law on Support for Adult Education and Training (extract)**

The *Grand Conseil du Canton de Berne*, acting on a proposal by the Executive Council, rules that:

##### *Article 1*

<sup>1</sup> The State shall promote adult education within the confines of the present law. As a general rule, federal policy is subsidiary.

<sup>2</sup> Adults shall enrol in adult education of their own will and under their own responsibility.

##### *Article 2*

22. For the year 2000 the figure was cut to 15 000. Since 1 January 2001, following a revision of the Law on Unemployment Insurance, cantons no longer have to register a certain number of placements every year. Instead, they pay a levy based on the number of unemployment benefits paid out in their catchment(?) area, regardless of the number of placements registered.

<sup>1</sup> Adult education as promoted by the State shall be a means of acquiring, developing or renewing knowledge, aptitude and skills for the purposes of lifelong learning. The guiding principles shall be responsibility towards oneself, others, society and the environment.

<sup>2</sup> The incentives set out in this law shall not cover:

- a.** ordinary courses in compulsory, upper secondary and higher education;
- b.** activities aimed essentially at treating disease and mental and physical disorders;
- c.** courses and activities undertaken mainly for leisure or entertainment purposes;
- d.** courses and activities with a view to obtaining permits such as driving or shooting licences;
- e.** enterprise-based training and further training.

#### *Article 3*

<sup>1</sup> In the field of adult education, the State shall provide information, literature, co-ordination and advice. It may subsidise municipal libraries and other major institutions that are open to the public and promote adult education.

<sup>2</sup> The State shall promote training, further training and supplementary training for people working in adult education. It may subsidise the institutions providing appropriate courses, or organise courses jointly with those institutions. Where necessary, it shall itself organise courses.

<sup>3</sup> The State may:

- a.** be responsible for adult education centres;
- b.** subsidise or set up and manage general or vocational training courses, particularly with a view to helping people back into the labour market;
- c.** organise or subsidise for a limited duration surveys or new adult education projects in the canton of Bern;
- d.** join intercantonal adult education organisations and participate in their work;
- e.** allow the use of school premises and facilities for adult education, provided they are available and suitable. In principle, there will be no charge for this.

#### *Article 4*

The State shall promote adult education initiatives organised by state-approved institutions that are non-denominational and non-profit-making, by subsidising the overhead expenses relating to adult education and adult education initiatives open to the general public. The recipients of such subsidies should not be dependent upon any political party or private enterprise.

#### *Article 5*

In particular the State shall promote adult education in geographically or economically disadvantaged areas, to benefit those in disadvantaged segments of society and occupational groups, together with women seeking to return to the labour market.

#### *Article 6*

<sup>1</sup> Communes shall appoint a person or institution to be in charge of adult education; they may join similar regional associations. They shall be completely free to decide their degree of involvement in adult education.

<sup>2</sup> Communes shall allow the use of State-subsidised premises and facilities for the purposes of adult education, provided that they are available and suitable for such use. In principle, they shall do so free of charge.

#### *Article 7*

<sup>1</sup> Adult education establishments or training centres shall themselves hire the necessary staff.

<sup>2</sup> The State shall ensure that those in charge of adult education may take out at least the minimum statutory insurance required for occupational, old-age, survivors and invalidity cover.

This brief list of institutions shows how the federal government is involved in continuing training. Its involvement relates primarily to vocational training, a field in which it has adopted some basic legislation, in a variety of forms, such as amendments to the vocational training law, the establishment of HES and the introduction of active labour market management policies. It is also involved in further vocational training for some categories of public service staff (teachers and healthcare workers). A more minor field is training in the cultural sector. It is clearly here that the principle of subsidiarity takes on particular significance.

### 3.2.3. Role of the cantons

The cantons are the leading authorities in charge of education in Switzerland. They have exclusive authority over primary education and play a preponderant role in secondary and higher education. There are consequently as many education systems as there are cantons.

Adult education and training policy varies across cantons (Bodart Senn and Schröder-Naef, 2000). It is based, in most cases, on legislation that specifies their role in this field. For vocational training, policy is shaped by cantonal-enabling legislation which corresponds to the Federal Law on vocational training. For general training, school legislation shapes cantonal policy, which largely consists of supporting local voluntary associations, either on an ongoing basis or via the funding of individual projects<sup>23</sup>. Cantonal policy on adult education is in some cantons set out in laws [the cantons of Bern (see Box 2), Freiburg and Ticino have their own adult education laws], in most other cantons in specific articles on education, schools or culture. Since 1983 most cantonal directorates for public education have had officials responsible for adult education within their Education Departments. These delegates have their own co-ordinating structure, CIRFA, part of CDIP.

Cantonal responsibility for adult education takes many forms. The cantons may encourage or support the development of continuing training provision, for instance by subsidising groups or associations. Cantonal secondary and vocational schools are increasingly catering for adult learners. The cantons are also in charge of continuing training for teachers. They also run training courses for the unemployed within the framework of the ORPs (Regional Placement Offices).

Further evidence of the variety of cantonal initiatives can be seen in the widely differing financial resources allocated to adult education across cantons (Bodart Senn and Schröder-Naef, 2000). For instance the cantons of Obwald and Appenzell Rhodes-Extérieures spend SF8 000 and SF10 000, respectively, on adult education and training, while Bern and Geneva spend SF6.8 and SF3.8 million.

In 1999, when the new vocational training law was being introduced, CDIP published a paper clarifying the government's role in adult education and training (see Box 3). The main thrust was as follows:

- Adult education is considered to be an indivisible whole, forming the fourth pillar of the education system.

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23. The communes often play a similar role in supporting voluntary associations, for instance by making premises available.

- The development of every sector should be based on lifelong learning, to which the paper refers explicitly.
- Providing the broadest possible access is a basic goal in the development of adult education.
- Cantonal policy is based on: the recognition of out-of-school attainment; quality development; more flexible structures and arrangements, greater personal motivation to participate in training, and the implementation of information and advisory practices.

**Box 3. CIRFA: Suggestions on adult education and training. Proposals for a definition of the role of government**

*1. Adult education: on a par with other fields of education*

Cantons consider the education system as a whole, in which adult education -- as the fourth pillar -- is just as important as the others.

*2. Lifelong learning*

Cantons are developing education systems whose individual sectors are co-ordinated one with another, to promote lifelong learning.

The content and methods of initial education are reviewed from the angle of adult education, while continuing education and training is based on previous levels.

*3. Adult education: an indivisible whole*

Cantons use appropriate means to ensure that adult education is a unity, with no dividing lines between continuing education, general and vocational education, and training for the unemployed.

*4. Education and training for all*

Cantons take appropriate steps to make adult education and training accessible to all sections of the population. They support institutions in their efforts to provide a wide range of options. Here, special emphasis should be placed on building bridges between different levels and pathways.

*5. Regional provision*

Cantons promote the decentralisation of adult education and, in conjunction with communes or other cantons, seek to balance provision across the region as a whole. Factors of particular importance here are: educational opportunities in remote areas or for sections of the population with restricted mobility (mothers with young children, the elderly, the disabled).

*6. Resolving social problems*

Cantons give particular support to training programmes and projects that help to overcome political and social problems, foster cohabitation in a multicultural Swiss society and assist comprehension between different sections of the population and between generations.

*7. Support and creation of training courses for target groups*

Cantons support or create special remedial courses and provision for target groups who, because of their particular circumstances, are educationally disadvantaged, with a view to enabling them to take charge of their daily, working and private lives.

*8. Gender equality*

Cantons recommend gender equality in adult education, and promote measures enabling women to obtain higher vocational qualifications and facilitate their re-entry to the labour market.

*9. Recognition of prior learning*

In collaboration with the federal government, cantons draw up a system validating and recognising prior learning in the form of out-of-school achievement and occupational or life skills. They support and promote efforts to evaluate such skills.

*10. International recognition*

The cantons endeavour to see that the Confederation, in agreement with other States, ensures a mutual recognition of certificates and diplomas obtained through continuing education.

#### *11. More flexible adult education*

Lifelong learning requires the appropriate structures. The cantons want to see the modularisation of education provision and the creation or recognition of intermediate qualifications. In particular, they and the federal government seek to ensure optimal mobility between subject areas and training pathways and better horizontal mobility for those in gainful employment.

#### *12. Developing quality*

The cantons take appropriate steps to support efforts by adult-education institutions to improve the quality of provision. They recognise existing quality standards or set their own. They encourage training provision for staff working in adult education, or for institutions working in that field.

#### *13. Co-ordination*

The cantons and the federal government support and, where necessary, initiate co-ordination between the institutions in charge of adult education. For the communes, and all training institutions, they serve as a relay and information platform.

#### *14. Greater motivation and participation*

With appropriate measures such as information, awareness-raising, guidance, training provision for all and the creation of the right environment, cantons raise motivation for adult education and enrolment, in every social stratum.

#### *15. Information and advice*

The cantons provide information on adult education, enabling learners to reach informed decisions. They encourage advisory services which enable potential learners to list their knowledge and skills.

#### *16. Research*

The cantons encourage research in adult education and continuing training, with particular importance being given to applied research. Participation in international research projects on adult education, and promoting their findings in Switzerland, are also important.

#### *17. Innovation and development*

Via appropriate measures, the cantons promote innovation and developments focusing on the requirements of continuing training tomorrow. Both conceptually and materially, they encourage new forms of learning for adults -- greater flexibility in course timetables and locations -- and assist the realisation of pilot projects in various sectors of adult education.

#### *18. Financing*

The cantons devote adequate human and financial resources to adult education. They intervene in those areas where objectives may not be achieved without their support (principle of subsidiarity). Vocational training and general adult education form a single unit and must receive the same financial treatment.

The cantons do not confine themselves to supporting institutions offering appropriate training courses but also provide individual financial assistance, enabling all population groups access to adult education courses.

#### *19. Framework conditions in cantons*

The cantons establish the essential legal basis for adult education. According to their means, they provide or give support to adult education services. In this respect, they provide the necessary staffing, premises and financial resources. They encourage co-operation between all players at cantonal, regional and communal level, and ensure that their adult education promotion policy is in harmony with that of the Confederation.

*Source: CDIP, 1999.*

- The cantons promote research and foster innovation and the development of future requirements in terms of continuing training.
- Adult education can be financed in three ways: course funding, support for training institutions, and individual grants.
- The cantons and the Confederation create the legal environment for organising or supporting adult education provision.

Accordingly, the cantons are major players in the development of adult education. The aims of their policy are equal opportunity and efficiency. They play a dual role, viewing themselves as training

providers and intermediaries that support and co-ordinate the work of all the institutions involved in the development of adult education. They see this field as an entity and are unwilling to separate it into segments. This stance differs from that of the federal government, whose legislation places greater emphasis on continuing training for occupational purposes.

#### 3.2.4. *A changing institutional context*

For some time now, the world of continuing education and adult learning has been mobilised by the forthcoming bill on vocational training, which includes provisions on continuing education and is due to come before Parliament in spring 2003. An initial version has already been the subject of public consultation. The bill is currently under revision.

In the initial version, the federal legislator indicates that vocational training as a whole is the object and scope of the bill, i.e. that continuing education is effectively included inasmuch as training is conducted for occupational purposes.

The bill, in its current form at least, highlights various principles and guidelines for continuing education<sup>24</sup>:

- The bill's aims are to develop a system of vocational training conducive to occupational and personal development, as well as social and occupational integration, to ensure equal opportunities for all regions and both genders, to promote mobility throughout vocational training and between vocational training and the rest of the education system, to develop the transparency of the vocational training system, and to develop individual aptitude and openness with regard to occupational mobility.
- In respect of continuing education (Articles 32 and 33) the bill emphasises the importance of lifelong learning and encourages people to take up further training and increase their occupational mobility. The federal government's role is to encourage the provision of continuing education in the cantons, competent organisations and other providers. It should focus on measures to bring back to the labour market "those who are working fewer hours or have momentarily left employment to look after their families" (Article 33). The federal government may support the organisations and providers that promote occupational careers. It may itself take steps, where necessary, to help the disadvantaged. Finally, the federal government co-ordinates measures relating to the labour market.
- The bill also stipulates that continuing education is one of the missions of vocational training.
- Recommendations include quality development, incentives for mobility and the recognition of vocational and life skills and support for private partners. For instance, it is stated that

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24. By and large, the main proposals in the bill are: to regulate apprenticeships, which must last three years; to create short, practical training pathways for the 15 % of young people who leave compulsory education with no qualifications; to set up vocational schools specialising in high technology fields and skilled service jobs; and to restructure vocational examinations. The bill is also aimed at mobilising enterprises and professional bodies at a time when the evidence shows that their involvement in initial vocational training (dual system) is on the wane. The aim is a new partnership between the economy and education.

measures “taken under the present law should not unfairly disadvantage private providers of vocational education on the competitive market” (Article 7). The State should promote educational demand rather than supply and will grant financial support to private providers offering courses that compete with those of State-approved public institutions or providers.

- The bill also indicates that the federal government “may oblige enterprises that do not contribute of their own free will to a fund for vocational training, managed by the competent organisation, to pay an appropriate contribution when requested to do so by that organisation” (Article 56).

The bill focuses on the quality of adult education, and equal access for all. There is recognition for the role of private partners. It also stresses that competition is important to the way the field operates and is regulated, and states that government policy should not favour public providers to the detriment of private ones. In so doing, it reiterates the principle of subsidiarity that has guided government policy for some years now.

Several of the policy objectives in the bill stem from recent initiatives to bring about radical change in the way adult education is organised. Quality development is another step in the creation of a quality assurance system for education providers. Incentives for mobility between activities are an extension of recent initiatives to modularise vocational training which can also be more closely associated with the moves to recognise prior learning, currently being formalised.

Consultations for the latest version of the bill have given rise to a debate on an adult’s right to education, the relevance of continuing vocational education, and the responsibilities of the various tiers of government.

Several of those interviewed pointed out that the law recognises the importance of continuing training and emphasises the importance of lifelong learning. The revised bill is seen as a sign of support for the development of continuing education. But in spite of recognition of the strategic role played by adult education, there is no statement of the formal right to education that could lead to broader access to adult education resources and more commitment on the part of government to structure the provision of education for all.

While the notions of adult education and continuing education are widely taken to be synonymous, the same cannot be said of continuing vocational education and continuing education. The federal government has authority in the field of adult education by virtue of its responsibility for vocational training. For instance, it supports vocational training activities and encourages the relevant providers, thereby creating a divide or distortion between institutions providing vocational training and those that do not. A number of interviewees, including CIRFA and several of the umbrella associations, oppose this distinction because it introduces a factor that is said to benefit some more than others. Yet the distinction is especially problematical because courses undertaken for occupational purposes do not necessarily differ from courses taken on other grounds. This is because many training courses, which are not directly aimed at the workplace, may do much to encourage socialisation and entry to the labour market. That being so, one wonders how relevant this notion is in a bill on vocational training.

We were also told that some cantons are afraid the State will take over continuing training because the federal government’s duties are varied and not particularly specific. The federal government’s capacity for initiative, at least where vocational training is concerned, would enable it to broaden its scope, thereby reducing that of the cantons.

### 3.3. Summary

The development of adult education has largely been market oriented. Initially, private, community or other training institutions introduced a diversified range of adult education services for the purposes of retraining, social integration (e.g. second languages, courses on moral or ethical issues) or leisure and cultural development (arts, crafts, sports, etc.). Vocational training, on the other hand, was largely enterprise-based, but highly variable depending on the sector and the size of the firm. Subsequently, many private or community training organisations also began providing further vocational training or training to enhance mobility (e.g. preparatory courses for the *maturité*, or for federal proficiency examinations), mainly for people requiring remedial teaching or courses for social and occupational advancement (promotion or vocational retraining). There now appears to be a shift towards customised training courses to meet corporate demand.

Government is also involved in continuing training, with many of the earliest initiatives consisting of incentives and support (financial or logistical) for continuing civic education or cultural leisure pursuits. The resources allocated to these incentives vary depending on the canton. The universities have also developed continuing education provision such as occupational advancement courses (e.g. MBA for managerial staff) or further training (for teachers working in adult education, for instance).

The wide range of courses available has definitely helped to push up enrolment in adult education. Yet at the same time it is said to have generated a degree of opaqueness in the market, and in some cases unsystematic provision. It is also becoming hard to judge the quality of the services offered by so many providers. Many players also observed that some necessary initiatives have not been taken, with institutions planning their work far too closely in line with demand.

For some years now, following the rapid rise in unemployment and recent economic change, the federal government has been launching a series of reforms. There have been initiatives to help the unemployed into the labour market and to match educational resources more closely to the world of work. There has been administrative restructuring (OFFT) and the establishment of new institutions such as ORPs, and new training institutions like the HES, and financial resources have been made available to train the unemployed. Schools have also been called upon to provide more adult education. Reform is continuing with the introduction of the new bill on vocational training, since some provisions will alter the way adult education is organised. And, as the new bill becomes law, the phasing-in of quality assurance mechanisms and more flexible practices in the organisation of vocational training, facilitating the recognition of prior learning, will lead to changes in the regulation and functioning of adult education.

## 4. THE MAIN THEMES

The thematic review focuses on four topics which illustrate one or other aspect of adult learning. The idea of lifelong learning as a constant educational project was little employed by the people we met and in the documents available during the visit. The terms continuing training and adult education are more commonly used<sup>25</sup>. But “lifelong learning” is being used more often. The CDIP, for example, base their general framework for adult education on it.

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25. The terms “continuing training” and “adult education” are regarded as equivalent and are frequently used as synonyms, although distinctions are made to differentiate them. “In fact, the concept of adult education is used largely in contrast to education received during childhood, the reference hence being the target group, whereas continuing training is defined largely in relation to initial training and indicates also that the quaternary sector rests on what is termed the training foundation” (CDIP, 1999).

“The cantons are developing education systems which have individual sectors that are co-ordinated with one another, to promote lifelong learning. The content and methods of initial education are reviewed from the angle of adult education, while continuing education and training is based on previous levels” (CDIP, 1999).

The idea of education and training continuing throughout a person’s lifetime is also reflected in the language used in the vocational training bill. “Continuing education and training allows people to learn, in the meaning of the present law, throughout their lives. It encourages people to renew, deepen and supplement their qualifications and skills and to acquire new ones, in a structured framework and with a view to occupational activity. It encourages people to increase their occupational mobility” (Article 32). The text also takes up the idea of people’s commitment to take part in education. On the other hand, it reduces the scope of training to a largely occupational dimension, in connection with individual capability for occupational mobility.

The thematic review is taking place at a time of far-reaching changes in adult education. The market relations that used to govern supply are giving way to greater official regulation. Adult education will thus increasingly become a quasi-market. Recognition is given to the prime importance of individual responsibility in adult education, while a number of rules and mechanisms will regulate relations among stakeholders and relations between learners and training institutions.

#### ***4.1. Action by stakeholders to enhance motivation***

The diagnosis presented in the section dealing with adult participation in Switzerland is relatively precise. Overall, participation is high, but there are numerous gaps or impediments to participation. Some relate to individual circumstances: the type of courses selected is different for males and females, the previous level of education inhibits participation, life patterns prevent training activities being part of daily life, and people’s resources do not allow them to enrol. Other factors have more to do with the way training is organised and with the structure of supply:

- Opportunities for entering remedial courses are insufficient, which restricts access for disadvantaged groups.
- The range of courses varies from one region to another and there are not always appropriate link-up or catch-up arrangements for adults. The general terms and conditions differ from one canton to the next.
- There are often numerous and stiff obstacles in terms of cash and time.
- The basic and continuing education and training structures are highly impermeable.
- Some companies do more than others.

In recent years, a number of steps have been taken to reach specific target groups. Various methods have been proposed to open education up more to adults and provide broader information about training supply to the population as a whole. For instance, general awareness schemes have been introduced, along with various measures to encourage more people from particular disadvantaged social groups to take part.

#### 4.1.1. Broadening access: the target groups

There are a range of groups for whom the current arrangements need to be strengthened, extended or broadened:

- *Women wanting to take up work again.* They may have been out of the labour market for a number of years, and re-entry is often complicated because they lack the qualifications now required or because their skills are obsolete. Steps are needed to encourage women to enter vocational training, not only straight after initial education but later on as well. Only half as many women as men pursue continuing vocational training. Conversely, twice as many participate in activities unrelated to the world of work. Positive discrimination practices could be introduced to assist access to vocational and technical courses for women.
- *Foreigners and immigrants.* Intercultural training schemes have long been available. For example, the ECAP Foundation runs a range of literacy, skill-upgrading and integration courses for the Italian community and other cultural communities, as it has done for thirty years or more. There is general agreement that schemes for these groups need to be extended, in particular for retired immigrants who stay on in Switzerland, in order to secure greater occupational and social integration. It should be noted that an estimated 50% of the unemployed are foreigners.
- *People with low skills.* Activities for the low-skilled are run by community associations, training enterprises, people's universities and some universities proper. These institutions have been engaged for years in literacy and social or occupational integration schemes, often meeting substantial and regular demand. Clearly, however, these activities are not sufficient, given the size of the target population. In many cases personal reluctance has to be overcome because continuing training is associated, in the minds of many, with unhappy experiences in initial education. Here, enrolment strategies need to be found to overcome the social mechanisms that inhibit participation. Businesses may have a significant role to play (Wolter and Weber, 1999). To begin with, firms are well placed to identify staff who have literacy problems. In addition, their own training activities can include teaching support which enables the low-skilled to acquire the basic knowledge and skills needed for any ongoing learning. Lastly, businesses can also supply individual motivation, by making use of employment policy measures.
- *Employees in small businesses,* who have far narrower access to training via their employers.
- *The over-65s.* As occupational externalities are no longer a motivating factor, older people take part less in educational activities, even though their circumstances are conducive to greater involvement. Appropriate methods would combine social integration with a better understanding of today's world.

#### 4.1.2. Broadening access: activities to mobilise people

A range of measures have been taken in recent years to make people more aware of the importance of continuing training and adult education. At the start of the 1980s the Confederation launched an "adult learning offensive", which it funded until 1996. Since then, due to a lack of resources, the operation appears to have run out of steam, though the "learning festival" (*Lernfestival*) held in 1996 and again in 1999 may have taken its place. The festival is seen as an effective means of disseminating information about the training supply. The week-long operation, launched by FSEA, focuses attention on

adult education<sup>26</sup>. This is a broadly based activity: 22 cantons take part and an estimated 100 000 people were reached by one or other of the 1 200 events across Switzerland. A range of local players disseminate information in public places about local and regional training supply.

The main feature of the learning festival is its countrywide scope, attracting public attention by its broad scale and enabling training suppliers to provide information about what they can offer. Its concentration in time, bringing together all the players concerned, makes the festival a prime opportunity to disseminate information about adult education. Accordingly, the event helps make the market less opaque for potential participants.

The value of holding an event such as the learning festival is that it mobilises a large number of players who need to be present, and to co-operate, in order to achieve the widest possible effect. Information has to be presented clearly in order to ensure that the training supply is transparent. But one question remains: isn't the information provided of interest only to people who are already interested, does it reach individuals for whom education and training lie outside their cultural universe? Without minimising the impact on participation that an event of this kind may have, one limitation is that it does not reach a wider public. Here, evaluation procedures should be introduced to ensure that the awareness drive actually reaches new audiences.

Information on education and training provided in a town or region is also concentrated and disseminated in a number of public places. Some towns keep a register of activities. Public libraries hold documents describing courses. But the information is not necessarily extensive, and does not always help potential participants to choose from the range on offer. The regional placement offices are another source of information about courses, often coupled with advisory services which provide guidance through the labyrinth of adult education. Here again it needs to be determined whether the information provided covers all courses or only those which, closely or not, serve occupational purposes. More thorough evaluation should seek to determine how effective the means of dissemination are.

#### *4.1.3. Summary of theme 1: access and participation*

In terms of adult participation in education, Swiss society has several challenges to take up. To begin with, it needs to ensure that current levels of participation, at all ranges, remains stable. Cultural courses, social integration work and citizenship training need to continue. At the same time, an effort must be made to widen access to further social and occupational categories and to establish new arrangements allowing broader access for certain groups: social and occupational integration of foreigners, women returning to the labour market, training for low-skilled people, greater participation by older and retired persons, and greater involvement by businesses, including SMEs.

Trying to secure greater adult participation in education entails looking at the linkages between initial education and training and continuing training. Inasmuch as participation in continuing training is modulated by initial education, it is important to ensure that education for young people effectively flows into continuing training. This entails analysis of the conditions that promote educational achievement, and a review of curricula. But drawing in these new groups does not depend just on greater motivation and encouragement for individuals; training officers, agencies and businesses must be involved as well. Changes in the training supply and adjustments to teaching methods are necessary, for instance, to

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26. The city of Berne, for example, arranged 60 events in conjunction with 38 organisations: presentations of agencies and courses, discussions on the canton's laws, training fair involving 50 agencies, advertising in public transport, a special event in a museum, media presentations and public dissemination of information. These activities all came under the slogan "an hour's learning a day", supported by UNESCO.

integrate the low-skilled. Businesses should also take more action to promote participation by all employees. Frequently, people with less basic education do not join in continuing training at work because firms' training policies focus on more highly skilled staff.

There is a range of procedures for providing information and encouragement, with the learning festival having the greatest media impact. At the same time, a full inventory of information schemes should be drawn up. Evaluation could also be conducted to determine their true scope and their capacity to bring in new participants from the groups least committed to adult education. The review would be a precondition for a more structural and coherent policy on disseminating information.

## ***4.2. Integration of training supply***

The second theme continues the review on adult participation with particular reference to the training supply. The aim is first to examine the overall organisation of adult education. The forms of recognition of adult education, and the degree of integration of players and practices, can help identify the main issues. Additionally, institutional arrangements that can promote greater participation are reviewed.

### *4.2.1. Overall organisation of the training supply*

Adult education covers a large number of separate activities, with their own momentum. The activities often operate side by side, without connecting paths or bridges to assist integration of individual segments. Educational activities, occupational training in colleges or at work and socio-cultural or citizenship courses often operate in isolation. Individuals find it difficult to establish links and transfer knowledge, and to recognise that what has been learnt in one course can serve a purpose in another course. The autonomy of the various segments means that adult education and training cannot be viewed as an entity. This pattern of adult education is in line with the diagnosis made by a number of writers (Thévenoz, 1997; Gonon and Schläfli, 1998; CDIP, 1999; FSEA, 1999):

- Continuing education and training is not recognised as an integral part of the education system, despite its importance.
- There is no linkage to initial education: it is not clear how to lay the foundations for lifelong learning during initial education or how schools can prepare people for continuing education.
- Powers and responsibilities proliferate and the public and private sectors are pointlessly in competition, as are the various private agencies; the tendency for each agency to operate on its own prevents any constructive attempts at development.
- The cantons do not assume their full responsibilities: poorly defined powers, no statutory basis, lack of infrastructure and lack of resources.
- No overall picture of the current training supply can be obtained, and quality cannot be guaranteed; transparency could be achieved through the application of standards across the whole of the country.
- Non-academic experience is not recognised; the continuing training system is not flexible enough to encourage occupational conversion or the assumption of further functions, hence the importance of accruable units.

- Enterprise-based training is virtually self-contained. Further training in firms, and that offered by agencies, needs to be more effectively linked.

This diagnosis seems a severe one, and makes little allowance for the changes under way. The position is in fact more complex. There is formal recognition of adult education, although it is not set out in a basic law stating adult education to be the right of all. At federal level, continuing vocational training is explicitly recognised. Some cantons have also adopted regulations acknowledging the importance of adult education or continuing vocational training. But the large number of laws and regulations may certainly be regarded as a sign that courses are poorly integrated.

Greater intervention by the public authorities has, in the view of a number of people, destabilised the existing structure of adult education, traditionally based on private suppliers and community associations. Some of the latter players have grown to a considerable size, such as the Migros clubs and umbrella groups which, like the schools run by parent groups or religious bodies, cover numbers of training centres and offer a wide range of activities. Other agencies are far smaller, and operate in specific segments. Market relations prevail between suppliers and learners. The institutions often feel they are competing to attract and hold students.

The position has changed in recent years, with greater intervention by the public authorities. Adult education is explicitly included in the terms of reference of institutions such as the HES and universities. Substantial funding is invested in the training side of secondary education. The introduction of active labour market policies has led the public authorities to plan and support activities to promote occupational integration. These are largely in response to the deterioration in the economic situation and higher unemployment. The greater involvement of public institutions in continuing training is said to have increased competition among suppliers. In addition, some funding rules are not thought to be equitable towards quite a number of training institutions. As a result, there is twofold competition: among private agencies, and among the latter and public bodies. In addition, some people consider there is unfair competition, on account of the methods of funding<sup>27</sup>.

Competition does not assist the integration of practice, at least as regards suppliers' ability to consult and co-ordinate. In a market context competition may be based on price or quality, and as a consumer the learner will evaluate courses according to these two factors. That raises a further problem: the training market is becoming more and more opaque. It is impossible for potential participants to evaluate courses when around 9 000 different ones are available each year on the continuing training market.

There are also factors in the structure of government which hamper integration and co-ordination. The Confederation has responsibility for vocational training and is consequently involved in continuing training. The federal government also takes part in developing continuing training via OFES, in particular through support for R&D in adult education. The level of cantonal involvement is uneven. Some cantons provide substantial support to suppliers, while others play virtually no part. This means that the training supply can vary from one area to another. Lastly, federal government action is not always co-ordinated with action by the cantons.

Finally, the fact that enterprise-based training is developing in virtual isolation does not make for integration, either from the institutional standpoint or for individuals. Greater integration would, for example, ensure that courses in training institutions were better tailored to changing trends in employment

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27. The perception is quite different in public institutions, and a number of respondents did not consider there was any unfair competition.

and the economy. From the individuals' standpoint, transferring the skills acquired at work and in enterprise-based courses may raise problems unless clear arrangements are available.

There are factors, however, which foster greater integration and consultation among the players involved. There are already co-ordination arrangements for the main players. On the government side CIRFA, which is linked to CDIP, is a cantonal co-ordinating structure. FSEA is also a co-ordination forum for a number of private training providers. Last, the forthcoming establishment of the Swiss Adult Education Forum should assist co-ordination among providers.

The Forum stems from a 1998 research report describing how players in the area operate separately. It proposed bringing the main players together to develop adult education on a consultative and co-ordinated basis. The Forum has already started to hold informal meetings, bringing together representatives of the umbrella groups, the socio-economic partners, the Confederation (OFFT, OFES, OFC), the cantons (CDIP) and the Pro Helvetia Foundation. The terms of reference, apart from serving as an intermediary between the players, have not yet been decided. The present proposals are to make it a site for exchanging information, taking up proposals (e.g. promoting innovation) and encouraging research. Members have agreed that the Forum should give priority to certifying institutions and trainers. The general aim is to make a broad range of training supply, high-quality services and access to educational resources available to all social groups. A start-up appropriation of SF 200 000 has been authorised, but the Forum will subsequently be self-funding.

While at the outset some organisational hesitancy is understandable, the Forum's terms of reference do need to be clarified: will it provide advice and recommendations for decision-makers? Will it guide and formulate policy or distribute resources? These questions, which will have practical implications for the Forum's role in developing lifelong education and training and access to training supply, need to be answered if the Forum is to become a significant agency in developing and regulating adult education. Depending on the answers, the various representatives will have different roles. If it becomes an advisory body, the Forum will have to put forward development approaches or scenarios to be followed by the public and private agencies. If it becomes a planning forum, however, members will cease to be representatives and become joint decision-makers.

Integration also depends on the programmes and measures that are introduced. A number of criticisms have been made about the difficulty of transferring learning from one activity to another. As a result, skills and knowledge acquired in general or socio-cultural courses are not recognised on the vocational side. The issue of integration and transfers is a key point in the current debate over the new vocational training law. In addition, other factors are conducive to greater integration:

- Activities such as the learning festival promote integration, since they bring together a number of providers in the same place, giving a more comprehensive picture of what is available.
- Active labour market measures promote closer ties between access to training and unemployment management policies. There is greater linkage between social security and training. A number of schemes have been launched: reorganising the placement services, setting up work-experience businesses, funding places in training institutions, subsidies for jobless support agencies. Advisory services are being developed in the regional placement offices (ORPs), assisting the selection of courses as part of a strategy of social and occupational reintegration. The linkage of advisory services to people seeking to reintegrate the labour market with modulated vocational courses and recognition of occupational and life skills should also raise demand for training. Steps also need to be taken to ensure that regulatory provisions foster participation, rather than hamper it.

- Modularising vocational courses will also assist the transfer of skills into occupational training. The modular format is the counterpart of skill recognition practices, a significant aspect in integration for individuals since it identifies the skills acquired via formal courses or informal learning, something that is essential for transfers to other segments of adult education.

#### *4.2.2. Pursuing the institutionalisation of outreach arrangements*

A second challenge concerning the training supply is whether or not the different institutional organisations have the ability to ensure broader participation. Action needs to be considered in a number of areas, on a co-ordinated basis. For instance, linkage between training supply and transport policy can assist access to education. Concerted efforts by firms and literacy trainers can help combat illiteracy, while the recognition of skills can assist the planning of education pathways. The visit highlighted a number of factors that would assist access to adult education resources.

#### Linking adult education practices to social patterns of daily life

Improving conditions of access may assist participation and continuing enrolment. Linkage between training supply and public transport policy can be a facilitating factor. The agreement between the Swiss railways and the Migros club in Saint Gallen has led to the former station being converted into a training centre. The workers' university (UOG) is adjacent to Geneva station, which also assists physical access. Access to a childcare centre may also facilitate participation. These points show how important it is to consider participation against a background which goes beyond the strictly educational. In fact, participation has to be considered in terms of the patterns of daily life and policies such as access to transport and family support services.

#### Mobilising business

Mobilising firms to provide training is also essential for broader participation. While employees of large firms or government departments can afford to take expensive courses such as MBAs, because their employers foot the bill, that is not true for people in low-skilled socio-occupational groups. Action must be taken to assist access to continuing enterprise-based training, particularly for the low-skilled and people working in SMEs. This may take various forms: identifying low-skilled staff, referring them to specialist agencies, planning tailor-made activities, and so on. It also needs to be considered whether some procedures do not limit access, such as the requirement to take courses, in part at least, outside working hours. If firms fail to take clear steps, educational resources can be "mutualised" in various ways, such as sectoral or cantonal funds. Mutualisation would not simply pool funds; it could extend to planning relevant training supply that can be offered to businesses. Inasmuch as SMEs lack time and human resources to provide courses, making funds available is not enough to automatically increase demand.

#### Creating intermediaries

Mutualisation raises the question of intermediation between potential participants and training providers. Setting up intermediaries or brokers can be done first of all by establishing sectoral or cantonal agencies supplying a link between firms, and SMEs in particular, and the training supply. With regard to firms, again, introducing customised training, in other words courses supplied by public or private providers for particular firms, may also assist the development of continuing training in SMEs. This approach also has the advantage, for training institutions, of preserving direct links with the economic world, which may help ensure that the courses are relevant both for young people and for adults. The agencies concerned stand between individuals and providers. ORPs occupy this position for the jobless, by disseminating information and counselling. Private and community agencies have also taken up this

function, with people seeking recognition of occupational and life skills, for instance. That allows education pathways to be planned more effectively. Intermediation agencies are needed to help find information about the activities on offer. This is an important point, for it is generally acknowledged that the continuing training market has become opaque and steps are needed to make it more transparent. Providing and disseminating information about courses is essential in assisting individual choice.

### Opening up access to qualifications

One final factor is access to courses providing professional qualifications. Public agencies play little part in adult education -- at least to judge from the little statistical data available -- and this raises questions as to how far individuals can follow recognised or accredited courses leading to official qualifications. Another point is that many courses are very rigid, which does not help in attracting potential participants or securing high completion rates. For instance, Thévenot notes that “three years of evening classes, 15 to 30 hours of study a week on top of the day’s work, ending with a stiff examination where the failure rate is around 50%: that is the price that has to be paid for a business qualification, in accountancy for instance, so much in demand on the market today” (Thévenot, 1997). Access to federal higher qualifications needs to be made easier. The failure rate certainly puts off a high proportion of individuals. The introduction of the vocational *maturité*, and the modularisation of courses (Section 4.3), should assist access in coming years. Here again, firms need to be mobilised to support individuals embarking on longer courses.

Opening up the *maturité* should also allow broader access to universities; at present it is narrow, with this qualification being a condition for admission<sup>28</sup>. Just 20% of the Swiss population obtain this qualification, with the remainder pursuing vocational education based on the dual system. In addition, demand for university places is rising whereas the number of spaces available remains stable. Selection is accordingly more stringent. In these circumstances, it is no surprise that few adult participants reach university<sup>29</sup>. The position should change somewhat with the new universities of applied science (HES); the *maturité* will not be a requirement for admission, though a system of vocational examinations is being introduced.

Broader access to courses leading to public qualifications is a particularly sensitive matter because qualifications carry great weight on the labour market in the economy and in Swiss society as a whole. Qualifications are a source of social and occupational recognition. They serve to define occupational strata in firms, and confer social status. In other words, recognition of skills through formal qualifications is a form of social integration, a means of personnel management and a source of individual motivation. In those circumstances, obtaining a degree is a necessary condition for occupational integration. For instance, women wishing to enter or re-enter the labour market feel the need for qualifications.

### The question of cost

A further aspect of the current position in adult education is the cost of courses. It is small when firms support participants or the State pays for jobless people via active labour market measures. But cost

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28. Evening classes exist of course, but do not lead to public qualifications. The universities of the third age are a counter-example, as the sole condition for admission is age (60 or over). These courses, provided by university lecturers, are affordable and reach a wide public. They are regarded as an aspect of the democratisation of university resources.

29. There is a marked contrast with the policy of universities in other European countries. The University of Copenhagen, for instance, has 3 000 students admitted from school and 28 000 adults.

may be an inhibiting factor for individuals in a range of circumstances: women returning to the labour market, people who are not officially jobless, or employees following courses on a voluntary basis.

### Developing distance learning

One final aspect is that distance learning is hardly expanding at all. Information technology such as the Internet helps to disseminate course informations, but there appears to be no particular investment here. It is as though the scant supply of distance courses using traditional measures has duplicated in relation to new information and communications technologies. Yet developing these alternatives could bring much broader access to courses leading to public qualifications.

#### *4.2.3. Summary of theme 2: integrating the training supply*

Fuller integration of all players, by fostering greater co-ordination of information, should help to raise participation in adult education. Opening up to new groups means adjusting training arrangements and their linkages with health policy (in terms of prevention), for example, and social policy, environmental policy, or family and transport policies. With regard to training arrangements, access to current courses for the low-skilled needs to be broadened in order to increase their capacity for social integration. The introduction of the vocational *maturité* and the modularisation of vocational training should both help motivate adults. There are also interesting linkages between initial education and continuing training.

### **4.3. Quality of courses and teaching: recent orientations**

The judgement that a number of players make about courses and teaching may, here again, seem severe: lack of mechanisms for evaluating the quality of agencies and courses, lack of recognition of skills (whether acquired formally or informally), tendency for continuing learning to reproduce the school model, uneven standard of teachers, compartmentalisation of individual segments. In recent years, however, the public authorities and the umbrella associations have taken numerous steps to resolve these problems. The main players are genuinely being mobilised to modify courses, with the implementation of a number of schemes which will probably change the way in which adult education operates by making the market more transparent, at least in some segments such as vocational training, and make recognition of individual learning more flexible. New teaching schemes would expand the training arena to new groups, including the low-skilled and women. In other words, the proposed changes aim at greater access, transparency and effectiveness.

#### *4.3.1. Professionalisation of teachers*

Adult education is largely provided by part-time teachers who are hired “by the hour”, and hence without a pattern of continuity. It is not unusual to find that the same teacher works for various educational institutions or firms at the same time. The main reason for hiring teachers is usually their special knowledge or skills. Accordingly, specialist skills take priority over teaching skills. In addition, the umbrella associations, which organise numerous activities in local areas, are often made up of voluntary workers. This general approach raises the question of teaching skills: without a minimum grounding in adult learning, the teachers often simply reproduce school methods. The latter are often inappropriate for some groups, such as the low-skilled. Professionalisation aims to make the teaching of adults a formally recognised job in itself.

The FSEA courses (see Box 4), the training institutes in some cantons and the Geneva University adult teaching certificate share similar aims: to train people who can plan and dispense education to adults. The target groups are also similar: further training for working teachers. The aim is not to establish a new professional body but to provide training for people already working in the job. Geneva's degree course in adult education (LMEA), for its part, targets a wider range of skills and professional functions, as it places greater emphasis on management and policy implementation. It is of interest to note that the course entails partnership between teachers and representatives of a number of businesses. The partnership allows scope for in-house training.

#### **Box 4. Teacher training pathways for adult education**

There are four levels of teacher training for adult education: FSEA diploma courses (Levels 1 and 2), diploma courses in some cantons (Level 3) plus university courses for adult education teachers, including a certification course and a degree course in adult education (LMEA) at the University of Geneva. They are all based on a common strategy, namely to supplement teacher training with skills relating to pedagogy or educational management. Teachers recruited as specialists in a particular field, for instance, may supplement their expertise with other skills more closely related to education.

FSEA diploma courses cover:

- The skills required to structure, analyse and evaluate teaching.
- Group management skills.
- Different forms of learning.
- Education project building skills.

The Level 1 Certificate comprises a 130-hour course, combined with one year's practical work experience in adult education and a personal coursework project on teaching practice. Teachers can also enrol on another longer course for Level 2. Since 1995, 1 632 people have passed Level 1 and 320 Level 2. Furthermore, 44 teacher training institutions have obtained Level 1 certification and 25 Level 2. Efforts are taken to modularise the Level 2 certificate as part of a general move to modularise vocational training. On the initiative of the French-speaking FSEA, efforts are under way to set up a system that recognises and validates prior learning, leading to the award of a Level 1 Certificate.

The training institutes for adult educators in some cantons offer diploma courses of 1'200 hours (Level 3). Their diplomas are recognized by the CDIP (federal certificate for adult educators).

The University of Geneva runs a continuing education diploma course for teachers working in adult education, aimed at:

- Upgrading the skills specific to teachers in adult education: teaching, organisation/management, and context analysis.
- Building the capacity to analyse current practice in continuing education and training, in particular self-evaluation.
- Increasing the capacity for project research and development.
- Strengthening the unity, versatility and code of ethics of the education profession.

The University of Geneva also offers a degree course in adult education (LMEA) covering the three groups of skills required for work in adult education: teaching (teacher/student relations), organisation (educational engineering) and management, i.e. policies and policy implementation.

#### *4.3.2. Quality assurance*

The issue of quality is closely linked to the desire to achieve transparency in the market. At the same time, a number of providers are trying to mark themselves out in the competitive arena of continuing

training<sup>30</sup>. This helps to explain the consensus over establishing a system of accreditation for providers. Accreditation is currently following two institutional paths. The Confederation is introducing a national accreditation scheme, EDUQUA. In addition, a number of providers are obtaining Information Systems Organisation (ISO) certifications, which they regard as more pertinent. EDUQUA may be seen as a minimum quality assurance scheme, given the methods adopted. Training agencies have to supply information on their organisation and courses to a central body. EDUQUA will allow small agencies to obtain certification at relatively low cost. Potential participants can thus obtain information about the standard of courses. This scheme will also help the public authorities in awarding grants to adult education agencies. Some degree of market transparency can be obtained.

This approach is quite different from ISO accreditation, which calls for more substantial investment in updating and describing work procedures. Moreover, in setting themselves accreditation projects, local players are also seeking to mobilise the members of their institution around a common aim. Accreditation in fact becomes a genuine business project (see Box 5).

**Box 5. The quality assurance approach of the *Centre professionnel du littoral neuchâtelois (CPLN)***

CPLN's drive for accreditation, following a commitment by the vocational training centres in the Neuchâtel canton, led to the formulation of a number of principles. All the centres signed up to a shared vision and objectives and committed themselves to work as partners in promoting initial and continuing vocational training. The CPLN management clarified its own mission: "being keenly sensitive to the educational mission assigned to vocational schools, CPLN promotes the qualitative and cultural enrichment of education. Open to innovation, CPLN strives constantly to adjust its services to changes in the world of work and individuals' needs" (CPLN, 1999, p. 3).

The project was underpinned by an agreement between OFFT, Neuchâtel Canton and the four vocational training centres. A steering committee was set up at cantonal level and project leaders were appointed and quality teams formed in each centre. The operation was launched in 1998 and was to be concluded in June 2000, at the time of the final audit. The project entailed commitments by all the staff to document "work procedures" and introduce continuing improvement methods.

In fact, schools undertaking ISO accreditation schemes also use them to clarify their mission and mobilise their staff in a collective project of continuing improvement.

*4.3.3. Modularisation of courses*

At the outset, modularisation is a method of constructing training programmes. Each programme consists of a set of complementary modules associated with a job function. Each module corresponds to a given skill. It identifies the knowledge and know-how needed to perform an occupational activity. It sets the prerequisites for following this sequence, the learning targets, operational skills, skill levels, etc. Construction of the modules is hence based on an analysis of work functions, continues with formulation according to set rules, and requires validation from the occupational world.

The principle of modularising vocational courses under the responsibility of the federal government was accepted by Parliament in June 1993. An initial working party in OFIAMT (now OFFT) suggested that pilot experiments should be launched. They were co-ordinated by the *Société suisse de recherche appliquée en matière de formation professionnelle* (SRFP). Numerous people in training institutions and socio-economic circles helped to construct programmes in this format.

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30. "Quality management will in the next few years be a decisive comparative advantage for the credibility and recognition of training institutions, nationally and internationally" (CPLN, 1999). Certification is one possible way of marking oneself out. Another is to establish strategic alliances or partnerships with leading companies. For example, becoming an accredited Microsoft trainer may be regarded as a quality label designed to win the trust of firms and potential participants.

But the modularising of courses should not to be regarded simply as a technical reform. A number of educational and organisational objectives are also pursued. One is to make the continuing training market, or at least an important segment, the market for vocational training, more transparent. Transparency is achieved because participants will be able to see the content of training programmes very precisely. They will be able to identify the standard of training on offer by referring to the general framework (the modules associated with the various programmes). In addition, it will be easier for participants to have their skills recognised and to chart educational pathways to supplement their training. Modularisation explicitly seeks to ensure that the management of training programmes, and of individual learning paths, is flexible. Such flexibility combines with the following benefits and advantages:

- It sets the content of vocational and trade courses on a standard basis.
- It assists transfers from one trade to another by comparing the modules and skills required for individual occupations; accordingly, it will be easier to identify shared skills.
- It should also assist vocational retraining without unduly lengthening the courses.
- It should enhance co-operation among all those involved.
- It will be easier to build bridges between general and vocational education.

Modularisation was set in hand, and groups in various regions prepared modules. Experiments were conducted in a number of areas: catch-up courses for basic training in commerce, computing and agriculture, training of human resource managers, training for trainers (modularisation of the FSEA certificate 1 course), hotels and catering. The projects were evaluated, and it was decided that the process should be continued and broadened. The experimental phase was accordingly satisfactory and the process has been extended to all vocational courses.

The evaluation brought out a number of points worth noting:

- The advantage of a top-down approach (modules developed by the trade association and supplied to schools), which means that the content is validated without delay; the bottom-up approach, based in the schools and colleges, is not ruled out, but validation takes longer.
- Collective work by a number of training agencies took place on a co-operative footing, even though they are competitors in the training market; other experiments showed there were difficulties in working together, as the cultures of the various agencies were too different; importance was also attached to public events providing information about the modules, which is a key condition for the system's success.
- A wider range of people, in both quantity and level (new categories), have taken the courses; these groups include a larger number of women taking modular courses.
- In terms of standards, the experiments yielded differing results: in some cases the outcome is still unclear, while in others standards have risen.
- Modularisation means a greater workload on the administrative side, for example in running exams.
- The flexibility of the scheme appealed to participants, who saw the possibility of obtaining module credits as partial qualifications as a motivating factor.

- Modularisation is becoming an ongoing operation to change and develop education, which needs to alter its organisational practices.
- The evaluation also brings out the “transdisciplinary aspect of the modules and cross-recognition is still at the trial stage” (Gindros *et al.*, 1999).

The results of the experiments indicate that a number of the hoped-for benefits are actually coming through. The question of standards was directly addressed. Some experiments point to a higher standard, while others seem to have highlighted steps needed to secure this. Courses are opening up to new groups, such as women returning to work and the low-skilled. The scheme further brings greater co-ordination. Rival training agencies work together to build modules and other agencies have formed closer links with economic associations to validate the modules (bringing education and the economy closer together). Finally, the participants consider that modules will facilitate recognition of learning and the development of individual education projects.

#### 4.3.4. Advisory services and recognition of vocational and life skills

Another field of work concerns skill recognition and pre-training advice. A number of activities designed to inform potential participants about training supply have emerged in recent years. At the pre-training stage, it is not simply information that is required, but vocational counselling and advice on training as well. That leads to career assessments and skill recognition.

During the review, these practices were described by a number of organisations:

- The ORPs conduct career counselling, which may take several forms: one-to-one discussion (15 minutes), psychological counselling, vocational reorientation for the unemployed, or career assessment. A recent survey reported that on average “one-tenth of job-seekers registered at an ORP do not receive such assessment. For 60% of job-seekers it is done with the personnel adviser. In a little under 40% of cases it takes place as part of a course. 18% of job-seekers attend a course which includes drawing up a continuing learning plan” (Curti and Meins, 1999). In Berne an adviser reported that between 1991 and 1997 the number of callers at the referral centre had risen from 10 709 to 17 404.
- Some schools and training providers also offer similar services and are trying to link the skills assessment with the modular system.
- Private and community agencies (for example, the Women’s Association for Training and Employment, EFFE, and the Geneva assessment centre CEBIG) are active here and offer individual recognition approaches such as the skills portfolio.

There is clearly a strong drive, by local agencies and umbrella associations, to institutionalise the recognition of individual learning and skills in German-speaking and French-Speaking Switzerland. A number of methods are proposed: the Swiss Qualifications Record (CH.Q), skills assessments, etc. These methods may be used for various purposes:

- To recognise the learning of low-skilled people, identifying their strengths and encouraging them to enter training.
- Identifying extra-vocational skills or vocational qualifications of people entering work, changing trades or retraining, in order to plan their training paths more effectively.

- To identify the skills of employees for forward management of a firm's workforce.
- To cut the training period of people enrolled on programmes leading to formal qualifications, by comparing skills acquired and programme content.

All these features may, as many hope, broaden access for new groups to be included, due to more formal planning of training paths and by the linking of individual circumstances to training content.

#### *4.3.5. Summary of theme 3: standard of courses and teaching*

The thematic review took stock of the mobilisation of players to redefine the area after several years of change. It takes the form of a renovation of teaching, the three main features being the professionalisation of trainers, the development of quality assurance and the modularisation of courses, itself closely associated with the recognition of individual learning. The parties involved place great hopes on these projects. The consensus can be understood in noting that these major institutional schemes carry a range of social approaches. The players are convinced that the schemes will open adult education up to new groups, in particular the low-skilled. Here equity enters the social project of adult education. At the same time, quality assurance should help make the market more transparent. In other words, market relations between providers and participants will be clarified and the latter's decisions will be assisted. Lastly, the aim is to obtain enhanced and more effective services. Quality assurance and modularisation are being introduced in order to tailor courses to demand, whose requirements in turn are dictated by the labour market. The development of the recognition of individual learning, coupled with modularisation, should also assist the formulation of appropriate education paths and access to courses.

These reforms are still under way and it is hard to determine whether the aims of equity and effectiveness will be achieved. But the movement merits continuing attention.

#### *4.4. Cohesion and effectiveness of government action*

A further facet of the mobilisation of players can be seen in the policies and action of the authorities' for developing adult education. While there is a consensus on the pedagogical side, the same cannot be said for the direction and scope of government action on adult learning. The debate centres around the federal vocational training bill. On the one hand we have players seeking formal recognition of adult education as an entity in itself, and on the other, those who accept the distinction between continuing training and vocational training for adults.

The debate raises the issue of the State's role as a regulator, in other words its responsibility in setting the rules of the game and evaluating practice. In this respect its action goes beyond the public sphere because incentives and requirements apply to community agencies, private bodies and firms as well. Policy integration is an essential part of this activity by the public authorities. But their role is not confined to regulation. There is a planning role, setting the quantity and quality of financial and human resources devoted to education. That means responsibility in forecasting requirements, steering change and developing research.

##### *4.4.1. The reshaping of adult education and the future vocational training law*

The significant role which private and community agencies play in the development of adult education has already been mentioned, and so has the large number of players: public educators, private educators, firms which provide training for their employees, umbrella groups whose functions include

training, the cantons and the Confederation. A number of public authorities intervene in one way or another. The role of government was traditionally a largely subsidiary one. It provided support and intervened alongside private or community players. This role has altered in recent years, with public intervention taking a more direct form.

The Swiss Constitution does not assign specific powers for continuing education and training to the Federal Parliament. Through its support for cultural development and vocational training, however, its action has nonetheless been significant. The shift in the Confederation's stance towards vocational training has already been noted, and is due as much to the allocation of powers in the Constitution as to the sharp increase in unemployment during the 1990s. The turnaround is illustrated by the establishment of new agencies for labour market management and manpower development, by reorganisation in government services, and by the allocation of funding for occupational and social integration and reintegration. The cantons have a direct responsibility which is, in some cases, formally signposted in legislation. Recently, both levels of government stated more explicitly that adult education is one of the missions of public education institutions, helping to make the government's role there more prominent. Lastly, the public authorities have a central role in the modularisation of courses, by promoting the system, allocating resources for the early stages, and providing an institutional framework. The system may help to integrate initial education and continuing education and training, and facilitate participation. Accordingly, the public regulation function has changed somewhat, shifting from support to more active encouragement.

Government intervention in adult education has been widely discussed by the federal government, the cantons, the social partners and adult education players. The recent move to vocationalise continuing training has also set up strains within adult education. To begin with, the direction of financial resources to vocational training was held to be a breach of the principle of subsidiary. It was argued that market operation had been changed while public intervention had favoured some providers and allowed new players to enter the arena. The disequilibrium was a particular problem, it was said, because the range of courses that are classed as effective or relevant for occupational integration/reintegration purposes are broader, according to a number of players, than vocational training in the strict sense. In addition, there was a growing divide between two quite different approaches to continuing training. The Confederation is turning adult education more in the direction of labour market management by emphasising occupational integration and tailoring vocational training to the labour market. Private and community organisations, mostly members of FSEA, and the cantons prefer a more comprehensive view of adult education, declining to compartmentalise the field or to single out one segment in particular for special treatment. The positions are hardening. The government's action consolidates the vocational side of adult education whereas the other players consider that the entire field of continuing education and training should be formally recognised as a federal government responsibility and that each player's sphere of operation should be more clearly defined. In other words, they seek formal recognition and clear settlement of the powers and responsibilities of the public and private players, which would provide a framework for the development of continuing education.

In 2000, positions crystallised with the presentation of the proposed vocational training law and the consultations that followed. The aims of the law are to strengthen vocational training by relaunching the dual system in initial education and developing continuing training for vocational purposes. The latter was introduced to broaden the concept of vocational training, and hence the field of educational activities covered, but it failed to convince those in favour of developing adult education with no internal distinctions. The general thrust of the law supports the vocationalising moves by the Confederation, stressing that the most vulnerable economic and social groups can be reached only via market regulation.

The players will need to consult and reach a compromise on the State's role, both the federal government and the cantons, and on the priorities for the development of adult education. The latter concerns the target groups (excluded people, unemployed, women returning to work, social and

occupational integration of foreigners, etc.), the courses to be promoted (respective roles of vocational training and civic and cultural activities supporting social and occupational integration, basic academic education, preventive recycling and retraining courses, etc.), and the roles of the various players. FSEA's suggestion that the law's title should refer to continuing education as well as vocational training would give at least symbolic weight to adult education in general -- over and above training for vocational purposes -- and the necessary continuity between initial education and continuing education. The debate will accordingly have to clarify the position of continuing education in people's cultural, civic and occupational life, though this does not mean that the State should necessarily have to regulate the whole structure of adult education.

The debates over the proposed law also concern the funding of activities and the way in which resources are allocated. The main question relates to the State's role in encouraging and supporting continuing education, directly or indirectly. A number of players have indicated that the proportion of public resources spent on continuing education is in fact low<sup>31</sup> in relation to spending on initial education, and the government share should accordingly rise. What is more, a number of players have claimed that financial assistance is not allocated objectively, and is not sufficiently targeted.

With regard to the way resources are allocated, the debate also examines the way government intervenes: should it fund training agencies directly, or support the learners? The proposed law, now subject to public consultation, points to two courses of action: encouraging education demand, rather than supply, and providing financial assistance to private providers which compete with State supply. Few kinds of incentive are mentioned. For instance, neither education leave nor individual training vouchers are included. It needs to be borne in mind that support for training demand assumes such demand does exist and that individuals are capable of expressing their needs and taking steps to meet them. Those who, by reason of their earlier educational and social experience, are not capable of expressing demand for education are likely to be left out.

The investment which firms will have to make also raises questions. Several players in adult education stress that firms which do not spend enough on training for their employees should have to contribute to regional or sectoral funds -- such as is seen in the Geneva canton and which will also soon exist in the Neuchâtel canton. The funds would receive unspent amounts earmarked for training, and would serve as an equalising function.

Government action has also encouraged the institutional integration of adult education players through the establishment of the Swiss Adult Education Forum, to which all public and private players belong. But it is not clear what lines of work it will pursue. It may become a focus for general discussion, or take a more direct role in co-ordination and possibly in allocating resources. While this remains unclear, the establishment of the Forum is an important step towards greater organisational integration.

The debate over the future of continuing education also needs to involve a wide range of public agencies. There are already links between adult education players on the one hand and public education and training services, cultural institutions, economic agencies and bodies concerned with manpower development on the other, but during our visit we did not find any ties with agencies responsible for health or the environment, for instance. Integration with all the various spheres of government action should be pursued more systematically. It may be that such ties do exist, but during our short visit we were unable to observe them directly.

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31. Some players, such as the trade unions, report that it has declined over recent years. The new law offers no guarantee that the necessary resources will be provided.

#### *4.4.2. Evaluating practice and steering change*

Regulation calls for some degree of planning, and hence identifying and forecasting education needs. Recent analyses point to a lack of forecasting, a lack of structures for innovation, and a lack of strategic watch. They also find that, above all, needs are regarded from a standpoint of economic utilitarianism.

With significant changes taking place in policies, in the institutional frameworks for regulation and planning and in actual educational practice, the steering of change merits special attention. The Swiss Adult Education Forum and the adult education research agencies need to be brought in to assist evaluation of the changes taking place, with regular feedback to assist the steering function. The evaluation, both ongoing and in the field, should beware of unwanted side-effects inherent in all such forms of reorganisation, and the standard or quality of the information, advisory and education activities established, in particular, for the most disadvantaged groups.

Evaluation of requirements and strategic watch do not receive much attention. Even highly structured organisations, such as the Migros clubs, carry out little educational or strategic watch or evaluation of requirements. Contacts with learners and firms, monitoring enrolments, and trial and error, are the most frequent indicators used. Other local agencies also strive to keep a watch on economic and technological trends. The methods employed are not highly formalised: part-time teachers continue to work in industry and can contribute knowledge, and agencies often have joint projects such as customised courses. Examinations are also an opportunity to meet and discuss with business people, while meetings with former graduates supply information about changes in firms.

The establishment in Ticino of a labour market monitoring unit to evaluate quantitative and qualitative skills requirements is seen by some as a step forward. At the same time it is an indicator of the relative underdevelopment<sup>32</sup> of research and strategic watch with regard to employment, education and skills. Full employment may have gone some way to explain this, but the position now does call for more consistent monitoring. For instance, the updating of skills covered by the training programmes, which is shaped by the modular system now being introduced, should entail regular monitoring which would overcome at least some of the gaps observed recently. Failing this, the relevance of courses will again become an issue.

#### *4.4.3. Developing research on adult education*

Raising the issues of steering change, evaluation and strategic watch leads us to consider action to develop research. The review found that research is largely conducted in two places: OFS and the universities<sup>33</sup>. OFS conducts regular surveys on adult education by questioning individual learners. The information collected indicates who is taking part, what the activities are, the significance of individual providers, and so on. It indicates enrolment rates and the major features of participation (for example, duration, type of activities, venues). These surveys can be of value in indicating the social levels of participation. They show whether participation by the low-skilled and other target groups is rising. In the opinion of education managers and teachers, on the other hand, the information about teachers and firms is far less comprehensive. Information on providers is obtained indirectly, from the surveys of learners. So it is hard to paint a proper picture of adult education, one that covers the providers as well as the learners.

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32. We have not conducted an exhaustive review of all the arrangements for collecting and disseminating information about adult education, employment and changes at work. The term relative underdevelopment seems justified because it was a point that came up repeatedly during our visit.

33. There are also “independent” researchers who, as one of them considers, are not really part of the system.

Yet if OFS is to play a more significant role in steering the reshaping operations, it ought to be able to produce reliable information about all the individual and collective players.

There are a few research groups in universities, and some have been in operation for a number of years. Nevertheless, adult education research is hardly institutionalised. There are only two university chairs, one very recent, both at Geneva University. The other resources are scattered across a range of structures, which reduces the ability to produce and accumulate theoretical and methodological knowledge. The tensions between research and teaching do not always foster the development of university research. The modest and insecure funding (for projects presented in national research programmes, such as PNR33 and PNR43) is also an obstacle to continuity. Another problem mentioned was a lack of communication among researchers, although adult education research is acknowledged to be essentially interdisciplinary.

Action by the federal government and the cantons can be decisive in structuring adult education research. It can provide the human and financial resources needed to develop research. It can also foster co-operation by establishing meeting grounds for researchers, and career crossovers. The idea of a monitoring unit for adult education, which a number of people have considered (Malaguerra, 1999), may help to structure research. This unit, which could be linked to the Swiss co-ordinating conference for educational research (CORECHED), could build up an open and extensive programme of research, taking in various topics (analysis of providers, enterprise-based training, adult learning methods, social and economic aspects of participation, impact of the modular system, secondary analysis of administrative data, international comparisons, etc.) and allow full play to interdisciplinary.

The programme should have links to the adult education world (policy planning and formulation, umbrella groups, teacher training managers, business, etc.) to assist the transfer of knowledge and help steer change. Many aspects of adult education are still grey areas, such as the analysis of education agencies and of firms' continuing training policies, which should be tackled in a research programme. It needs to be open and bring researchers together in a dynamic network, regardless of their institutional ties. This is an institutional necessity for reducing the current fragmentation. It should bring OFS and university researchers closer. It should be open to independent researchers. The unit should also concern itself with international research. Switzerland's participation in comparative research to develop indicators should be continued. At the same time, international networking can provide useful input inasmuch as the resources available cannot cover all the possible fields of research.

#### *4.4.4. Summary of theme 4: cohesion and effectiveness of government action*

The public authorities have substantial responsibilities for adult education, which cannot develop solely on the basis of market relations. The review identified recent changes, especially those still under way. Their scale makes it hard to determine the true effects, and hence to evaluate the effectiveness of policy. But some tendencies are visible. A number of schemes are directed at greater integration and more cohesion. The linkage between training and labour market policies, the modularisation of courses and the establishment of the Forum, are the most striking examples. Clearly, integration is not yet complete. To start with, the debate over continuing education, continuing training and continuing training for vocational purposes is not yet over. Recognition of the right to continuing training is still not secured. In addition, integration with other areas of government responsibility (transport, health, environment) clearly needs to be taken further.

The visit also highlighted the value of establishing or improving the arrangements for steering change, identifying training requirements, and forecasting. Government action should be taken to create a network linking researchers (however the work is performed and co-ordinated), those managing change, and adult education players.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

Over the next few years, the development of adult education should be based on two major strategies, both of them part of the lifelong approach to learning. The first is to foster positive attitudes towards education, and more specifically adult education. These attitudes are formed primarily in and through a person's experience of initial education, hence the importance of initiatives to promote academic attainment during the early stages of schooling. In many respects Switzerland is in a relatively good position, since a high proportion of young people leave school with qualifications. 60% of them have vocational diplomas, not to mention all those leaving with more general qualifications. However, the decline in the number of apprenticeship places, together with gender disparities in vocational enrolment, are a cause for concern. Government efforts to revive interest in alternative classroom/workplace training (the dual system) are vital. At the same time, there should be initiatives to iron out gender disparities in adult enrolment. Other initiatives are creating closer ties between initial and continuing education, including the new modular system, the introduction of vocational *maturités*, and the establishment of universities of applied sciences (HES).

### **Broad policy approaches to raise participation**

- Foster academic attainment in initial education.
- Revive the dual system.
- Promote equal access by both genders to vocational training and adult education.

If people are to show an interest in adult education, it must be an integral part of everyday life. How it relates to the world of work, but also to home life and leisure, is an important factor in participation. Those most directly concerned by the link between training and work are firms. Yet the fact that Switzerland has so many SMEs is preventing access to training. Initiatives are needed to boost access. At the same time, institutional arrangements governing vocational training should facilitate access to diploma courses. Obtaining qualifications is an "externality" that definitely encourages participation. A number of factors -- successful diploma courses, funding for voluntary enrolment and the recognition of life experience and other skills -- can all promote participation. The link with the world of work is of interest not only to those in work but also to the unemployed.

### **Policy approaches to improve the link between educational demand and provision**

- Increase the amount of enterprise-based training, especially in SMEs.
- Provide more financial and organisational support mechanisms to develop training in SMEs.
- Develop and diversify the dissemination of information on adult education.
- Promote academic achievement on diploma courses.
- Improve the services responsible for recognising life experience and vocational skills.

Another factor is how to reconcile adult education with home life, family life and leisure. In many cases, the problems people encounter when combining education or training with work or family responsibilities eventually lead to them pulling out of training. These difficulties are said to discourage participation. So arrangements such as educational leave and training vouchers may encourage them to enrol. At the same time, linkages with family-friendly policies may also facilitate enrolment, if only via access to childcare. Another important point is to facilitate access to adult education centres.

#### **Specific policy approaches to raise participation**

- Facilitate access to education and training by providing associated services such as childcare and transport.
- Envisage a new financial mechanism (educational leave or training vouchers) to facilitate access to education and training.

The second strategy in developing lifelong education and training is to overcome social barriers to participation. Here, private and public initiatives should mobilise people who do not “spontaneously” see education and training as significant to their working or private lives. Opening up to a larger audience in this way requires initiatives upstream, so that people make realistic plans to continue their education. The challenge is to make learning appear significant in terms of labour market or social integration. The initiatives should include closer links with ethnic community associations, so that learning becomes a more integral part of community life. This is particularly important at a time when attitudes are changing in some communities, and there is greater willingness to fit into society. Enterprises also have a major role to play, for instance by launching schemes to detect illiteracy. More information, one-to-one advisory services and the recognition of prior learning are further examples of strategic activities that can raise participation. With regard to education and training practices *per se*, there should be more activities targeting the low-skilled and a wider range of teaching methods to go beyond the traditional form of schooling, which very often shapes a person’s impression of what education is like. At the same time, the fact that skills and competencies are to be formally recognised should promote greater participation.

#### **Policy approaches to broaden target-group access to education**

- Support educational activities that foster job entry and help women get back into the labour market.
- Help immigrants and foreigners to find their place in society and in the job market, and support initiatives promoting closer ties with the community associations working in this field.
- Develop courses for the less skilled by changing access mechanisms and methods of knowledge mediation.
- Promote literacy courses in the workplace.
- Develop distance learning.

These complementary strategies cannot be implemented without the appropriate institutional and organisational environment. The fact that the leading players are currently so mobilised is certainly a step in the right direction. It is an opportunity to set up a forum for dialogue and exchanges of views. There is even scope for improved co-ordination. New arrangements are being phased in to provide more widespread information on training courses, promote more recognition of prior learning, facilitate academic attainment and successful diploma courses, bring initial and continuing education closer together, make the market more transparent and enhance the professionalisation of teaching staff.

#### **Policy approaches to enhance the quality of teaching and learning**

- Support the development of new mechanisms for the planning and regulation of continuing education, such as modular courses and quality assurance.
- Continue professionalisation for adult education teachers.
- Monitor institutional change on an ongoing basis, bearing in mind the objectives of social equity and effective teaching methods.
- Develop research.

The wealth of institutional organisations should not mask the fact that numerous issues are still under debate, including the idea that adult education is an indivisible entity, and that a general framework needs to be identified for the development of continuing education. Both these issues will be crucial in the shaping of this area of education over the next few years. A consensus and trade-offs will effectively have to be found if practices are to become more integrated and participation boosted. Although it has not yet been set a mandate, the Swiss Adult Education Forum certainly has a crucial role to play in consensus-building.

Finally, there appear to be two institutional approaches that have not been explored much, at least as far as the review team could judge. One involves the connection with initial education. This concerns programmes and practices that foster academic attainment, and it is vital to the implementation of the first of the two strategies described above. The second approach involves building more systematic links between adult education and issues such as healthcare and the environment.

#### **Policy approaches conducive to more consistent and effective government measures**

- Waste no time in finding trade-offs to ensure that the legislation provides broader access to adult education and diversifies current practice.
- Foster the development of adult education with regard to healthcare and environmental policy.
- Clarify the Forum's scope for planning and regulating adult education.

## GLOSSARY

CDIP	Conférence suisse des directeurs cantonaux de l'instruction publique (Swiss conference of cantonal directors of public education)
CEBIG	Centre de bilan Genève (Geneva assessment centre)
CIRFA	Conférence intercantonale des responsables de la formation des adultes (Intercantonal conference of adult education officials)
CORECHED	Conférence suisse de coordination pour la recherche en éducation (Swiss co-ordinating conference for educational research)
CPLN	Centre professionnel du littoral neuchâtelois (Neuchâtel vocational centre)
CSRE	Centre suisse de coordination pour la recherche en éducation (Swiss co-ordinating centre for educational research)
CTI	Commission pour la technologie et l'innovation (Technology and innovation commission)
EFFE	Espace de femmes pour la formation et l'emploi (Women's association for training and employment)
ESPA	Enquête suisse sur la population active (Swiss labour force survey)
FSEA	Fédération suisse de l'éducation des adultes (Swiss federation for adult education)
HES	Haute école spécialisée (university of applied sciences)
IALS	International Adult Literacy Survey
ILO	International Labour Office
ISO	Information Systems Organisation

ISFPF	Institut suisse de pédagogie pour la formation professionnelle (Swiss pedagogical institute for vocational training)
LMEA	Licence mention éducation des adultes (degree in adult education)
MBA	Master of Business Administration
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OFAG	Office fédéral de l'agriculture (Federal Office for Agriculture)
OFAS	Office fédéral des assurances sociales (Federal Office for Social Insurance)
OFC	Office fédéral de la culture (Federal Office for Culture)
OFES	Office fédéral de l'éducation et de la science (Federal Office for Education and Science)
OFFT	Office fédéral de formation et de technologie (Federal Office for Education and Technology)
OFIAMT	Office fédéral de l'industrie, des arts et métiers et du travail (Federal Office for Industry, Arts and Crafts, and Labour)
OFQC	Office fédéral des questions conjoncturelles (Federal Office for Business Cycle Analysis)
OFS	Office fédéral de la statistique (Federal Office for Statistics)
OFSP	Office fédéral pour la santé publique (Federal Office for Public Health)
ORP	Offices régionaux de placement (regional placement offices)
PNR	Programme national de recherche (national research programme)
seco	Secrétariat à l'économie (Secretariat for the economy)

SIALS	Second International Adult Literacy Survey
SMEs	Small and medium-sized enterprises
SRFP	Société suisse de recherche appliquée en matière de formation professionnelle (Swiss society for applied research into vocational training)
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UOG	Université ouvrière de Geneva (Geneva workers' university)
USS	Union syndicale suisse (Swiss Federation of Trade Unions)

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**Annex 3**  
**Programme and list of participants**

**Monday 13 December– Zurich**

- 09.00                    *Briefing by the steering group*  
Venue : FSEA (Swiss Federation for Adult Education)
- Chair                    Mr. André Schläfli, FSEA, Zurich  
Participants            Mr. Bertrand Clerc, seco, Bern  
                              Mrs. Regula Schräder, in charge of the Background Report, Zurich  
                              Mrs. Stéphanie Vanhooydonck, OFFT, Bern and CORECHED, Aarau  
                              Mr. Peter Wirth, Vocational Training Office, Saint-Gall
- 11.15                    *Evaluation by cantonal governments*  
Venue : FSEA
- Chair                    Mr. Peter Wirth, President, Intercantonal Conference of Adult Education  
Participants            Officials (CIRFA), Saint-Gall  
                              Mrs. Michelle Bähler, Public Education Directorate, Adult Education Service,  
                              Bern  
                              Mr. Curdin Epprecht, Vocational Training Office, Zoug  
                              Mr. Ulrich Heer, Adult Education Service, Canton of Lucerne  
                              Mr. Claude Merazzi, Interregional Centre for Further Training (CIP), Tramelan  
                              Mr. Christian Schmid, Swiss Conference of Cantonal Directors of Public  
                              Education (CDIP), Bern  
                              Mr. Ernst Schröter, Secondary Education and Vocational Training Service,  
                              Zurich  
                              Mr. Hans Toggenburger, École professionnelle commerciale, Canton of  
                              Appenzell, Herisau
- 14.15                    *Education policy outlook by private umbrella organisations*  
Venue : KOST (Co-ordination Office, Écoles-Clubs Migros)
- Chair                    Mrs. Anita E. Calonder Gerster, Chair, FSEA, Zurich  
Participants            Mr. Hans-Peter Burch, Community for adult education in Switzerland and  
                              Liechtenstein (in German: KAGEB), Lucerne  
                              Mrs. Margrit Hagenow, KOST, Zurich  
                              Mr. Bruno Santini, KAGEB, Lucerne  
                              Mr. André Schläfli, FSEA, Zurich  
                              Mr. Thomas Schmutz, KOST, Zurich  
                              Mr. Daniel Witzig, former President, FSEA, Zurich

16.15 *Supply and demand: the role of stakeholders*  
Venue : KOST

Chair Mrs. Margrit Hagenow, KOST, Zurich  
Participants Mr. Hans-Peter Burch, KAGEB, Lucerne  
Mr. René Däschler, KAGEB, Lucerne  
Mr. Thomas Feierabend, Association for Professionals working in Continuing Education (in German : Vwbf), Engelburg  
Mrs. Sabrina Guidotti, Conferenza della Svizzera per la formazione continue degli Adulti, Vezia  
Mr. Carl Rohrer, FSEA Library, Zurich  
Mrs. Marianne Roka, Lire et Ecrire, Zurich  
Mrs. Marcela Schwarz, Langenthal  
Mrs. Margrit Siegenthaler-Reusser, Swiss Foundation for Audiovisual Training (FSFA)  
Mrs. Kathie Wiederkehr, Swiss Federation of Parental Education (FSEP), Zurich

## **Tuesday 14 December - Saint Gall**

09.00 *Visit to the Education Station*  
Venue : École-club Migros

Chairs Mrs. Heidi Ehrensperger, École-club Migros, Saint-Gall and  
Mr. Peter Wirth, President, CIRFA, Saint-Gall  
Participants Mr. Peter Greber, École-club Migros, Saint-Gall  
Mrs. Susanne Zehnder, "Dachatelier", Saint-Gall  
Learners, adult education teaching staff

11.15 *Discussion on practices*  
Venue : École-club Migros

Chair Mrs. Heidi Ehrensperger, École-club Migros, Saint-Gall  
Participants Mr. Peter Wirth, President, CIRFA, Saint-Gall  
Mr. Georges Gisclon, Rector, Academie de Saint-Gall  
Mr. André Gnägi, Rector, Centre for continuous vocational training, (in German: ZbW), Saint-Gall  
Mr. Peter Greber, École-club Migros, Saint-Gall  
Mrs. Susanne Zehnder, "Dachatelier", Saint-Gall

14.00 *Continuing education and training in universities and in the Hautes Ecoles Spécialisées (HES)*  
Venue : Centre for Continuing Education, University of Saint-Gall

Chair Mr. Jürg Manella, University of Saint-Gall  
Participants Mrs. Beate Bender, HES, Saint-Gall  
Mr. Ernst Jörin, HES-Zu, Winterthur  
Mr. Peter Pscheid, Technical HES, Saint-Gall  
Mr. Karl Weber, Co-ordination Office for Continuing Education, University of Bern  
Mrs. Barbara Wolfer, Head, Continuing Education, Rorschach Seminary

16.15 *Job seekers and employment policy*  
Venue : Labour Office

Participants Mr. Walter Abderhalden, Public economics department, Canton of Saint-Gall  
Training staff and job seekers

17.30 *Reception given by State Councillor Ulrich Stöckling*  
Venue : Town hall, «Regierungsgebäude »

Participants Mr. Peter Wirth, President, CIRFA, Saint Gall  
Mr. Walter Abderhalden, Public economics department, Canton of Saint Gall  
Mrs. Ruth Jermann, FSEA, Zürich

### **Wednesday 15 December– Bern**

10.15 *Globalisation and continuing education*  
Venue : OFFT (Federal Office for vocational training and technology)

Chair Mrs. Ruth Jermann, FSEA  
Participants Mr. Peter Sigerist, Swiss Federation of Trade Unions (USS), Bern  
Mr. Markus Klopfenstein, Swiss postal service, Bern  
Mrs. Lorenza Soncini, seco, Bern  
Mr. Leonardo Zanier, ECAP, Zurich

11.45 *Developing framework conditions*  
Venue : OFFT

Chair Mrs. Ruth Jermann, FSEA  
Participants Mr. Hugo Barmettler, OFFT, "Programme and Institutions" sector, Bern  
Mr. Robert Galliker, Conference of cantonal offices for vocational training in German-speaking Switzerland (in German: DBK), Lucerne  
Mrs. Renate Wegmüller, OFFT, "Programme and Institutions" sector, Bern  
Mrs. Elisabeth Zillig, Verband Schweiz. Privatschulen, Bern

14.00 *Development and mandate of a co-ordination body:*  
Federal government/cantons/economy/private partners  
Venue : OFFT

Chairs Mr. Christoph Reichenau, Federal Office for culture (OFC), Bern and  
Participants Mr. Heinrich Summermatter, OFFT, Bern  
Mrs. Isabelle Giovanella, seco, Bern  
Mrs. Christiane Langenberger-Jäger, State advisor, Romanel-sur-Morges  
Mr. Res Marty, Swiss society for research into vocational training (SRFP),  
Altendorf  
Mrs. Vreni Müller-Hemmi, National Councillor, Zurich  
Mr. André Schläfli, FSEA, Zurich  
Mr. Christian Schmid, CDIP, Bern

16.15 *Discussion on day-to-day practice and learning*  
Venue : Kornhaus (town hall)

Chair Mr. Ruedi Fink, Adjoint, Continuing Education Service, City of Bern  
Participants Mr. Andreas Borter, Director of Adult Education, Bern  
Mrs. Francesca Kirchhofer-Panscera, Career Guidance, City of Bern  
Mrs. Marie-Therese Sautebin, Women's Association for Education and  
Employment, Bienne  
Mrs. Barbara Zohren, Head, "Kornhaus" Library, Bern  
Others

#### **Thursday 16 December– Bern**

7.30 *Meeting with Federal Councillor Pascal Couchepin*  
Venue : Federal Department of Economics (DFE)

Participants Mrs. Vreni Müller-Hemmi, National Councillor, Zurich  
Mrs. Christiane Langenberger-Jäger, State advisor, Romanel-sur-Morges  
Mr. Marino Ostini, Federal Office for Education and Science (OFES), Bern  
Mr. André Schläfli, FSEA, Zurich  
Mrs. Ruth Jermann, FSEA, Zurich

#### **Neuchâtel**

11.00 *Statistical surveys, microsurveys and skill measurement*  
Venue : OFS

Chair Mr. Heinz Gilomen, OFS, Neuchâtel  
Participants Mr. Stefan Wolter, CSRE, Aarau  
Mrs. Anna Borkowsky, OFS, Neuchâtel  
Mr. Rolf Lischer, OFS, Neuchâtel  
Mr. Paul Amacher, OFS, Neuchâtel  
Mr. Bertrand Clerc, seco, Bern  
Mr. Pierre Fontaine, seco, Bern

11.15 *Visit to the Neuchâtel Vocational Training Centre (CPLN). Case studies*  
Venue : CPLN

Participants Mr. Bruno Grolimund, CPLN  
Mr. Gilbert Bertschi, CPLN  
Mrs. Marie-Louise Carrera, CPLN  
Mr. Jeannet, CPLN

14.00 *Teacher- training and Quality*  
Venue : CPNL

Chair Mr. Johnny Stroumza, University of Geneva  
Participants Mr. Samuel Boll, Uni pop. Neuchâtel  
Mrs. Vittoria Cesari, University of Neuchâtel  
Mr. Jean-Jaques Delémont, Intercommunal training centre, Neuchâtel Mountains  
Montagnes neuchateloises (CIFOM), La Chaux-de-Fonds  
Mr. Bruno Grolimund, CPLN  
Mr. Dominique Kohler, Arts and Crafts and Labour Service, Delémont  
Mr. Claude Merazzi, CIP, Tramelan  
Mr. Patrick Rywalski, Lausanne  
Mrs. Sabine Schüpbach-Blunier, École-club Basel  
Mr. Roberto Stocco, Swiss Centre for Training Workshops (CSEE), La Chaux-de-Fonds  
Mrs. Eva Känzig, FSEP, Neuchâtel

#### **Friday 17 December– Geneva**

09.00 *Research*  
Venue : University of Geneva

Chair Mrs. Catherine Cusin, Swiss centre for the co-ordination of educational research  
(CSRE), Aarau  
Participants Mrs. Stéphanie Vanhooydonck, OFFT, Bern and CORECHED, Aarau  
Prof. Pierre Dominicé, University of Geneva  
Prof. Guy Jobert, University of Geneva  
Mr. Charles Landert, Zurich  
Mrs. Regula Schräder, in charge of Background Report, Zurich  
Prof. Francois Stoll, University of Zurich  
Mr. Martin Straumann, Swiss Pedagogical Institute for Vocational Training  
(ISFPF), Zollikofen  
Mr. Uri Peter Trier, University of Bern  
Prof. Karl Weber, University of Bern

12.00 *Visit: « Outplacement » and career guidance*  
Venue: UOG (Geneva workers' university)

Chair Mr. Grégoire Evéquo, Centre de bilan Genève, CEBIG, Geneva  
Participants Mr. Pier-Angelo Neri, University of Geneva  
Mr. Marino Ostini, OFES, Bern  
Mrs. Anne Stahl, Carouge  
Mrs. Regula Schräder, in charge of Background Report, Zurich  
Mrs. Stéphanie Vanhooydonck, OFFT, Bern and CORECHED, Aarau

13.30

*Initial training and re-training*

Venue : UOG

Chair

Mrs. Christine Bourdet, UOG, Geneva

Participants

Mrs. Regula Schröder, in charge of Background Report, Zurich

Mrs. Corinne Boppert, Erlenbach

Mrs. Jeanne Ecklin, UOG, Geneva

Mrs. Inge Hoffmann, Uni pop, Geneva

Mrs. Henriette Lerch, UOG, Geneva

Mr. Pier-Angelo Neri, President, “Lire et Ecrire”, Genf

15.15

*Evaluation of the review team visit*

Venue : UOG

Chair

Mr. André Schläfli, FSEA, Zurich

Participants

Mrs. Josianne Bodart Senn, translator of OECD Background Report, Gland

Mr. Bertrand Clerc, seco, Bern

Mrs. Catherine Cusin, CSRE, Aarau

Mrs. Regula Schröder, in charge of Background Report, Zurich

Mr. Johnny Stroumza, University of Geneva

Mrs. Stéphanie Van hooydonck, OFFT, Bern and CORECHED, Aarau