



# Human rights theme

## SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES FROM PREVIOUS CYCLES

Broken Chalk recommends that the government of Switzerland address the experiencing problems in gaining access to secondary education for asylum seekers and undocumented children.

## NATIONAL FRAMEWORK

In the last review of Switzerland of 2017, the Swiss Confederation received 49 recommendations and observations from 7 different human rights mechanisms, that focused on education and other issues such as the gender gap, discrimination, and human trafficking, which affect education's access, outputs, and outcomes. Switzerland is a federal and multilingual country with a decentralised education system. The 26 Cantons (states) are responsible for the development of education within their respective territories. While the Cantons are responsible for compulsory education, the Federal Government also takes the lead in support of the Cantons for post-compulsory education

## CHALLENGES

- A. The Quality, Access, and Outcomes from Swiss Educational System**
- B. Discrimination & Exclusion:**

## IMPACTS

- A) In compulsory education 95% of all pupils attend public schools in their local municipality. There is no free choice of school in compulsory education. Public schools are important for the integration. Indeed, children who have different social, linguistic and cultural backgrounds all attend the same school. Public schools in compulsory education are free of charge. Each Canton manages its own curriculum including the weekly teaching periods per subject and class. There is no national curriculum. However, the Federal Constitution obliges the Cantons to coordinate and harmonise their educational systems with regard to structure and objectives. The Cantons have, for instance, developed language-region curricula for compulsory education, which are currently being introduced.
- B) Switzerland has a strong vocational and professional education system (VET). It offers mostly dual-track VET programmes at upper secondary level (combining an apprenticeship in a training company with 1-2 days of classroom instruction at a vocational school) and broad tertiary-level professional education programmes.
- C) In Switzerland, the percentage of children from the bottom quartile of the PISA index of economic, social and cultural status (ESCS) achieving at least PISA level 2 in reading in 2018 was 32% lower than that of children from the top ESCS quartile, a larger share than the OECD average of 29%.
- D) Significant differences in educational achievement may lead to starker earnings inequality in many countries. In Switzerland, 30% of 25-64



### CHALLENGES

### IMPACTS

E) On average across OECD countries, among adults without upper secondary attainment, 57% of native-born adults are employed compared to 61% of foreign-born adults. In Switzerland, the employment rate of foreign-born adults without upper secondary attainment was 71% in 2020, higher than that of their native-born peers (65%).

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering targets 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6 and 4.a of the Sustainable Development Goals, Broken Chalk recommends that Switzerland:

1. Broken Chalk recommends that the government of Switzerland address the experiencing problems in gaining access to secondary education for asylum seekers and undocumented children.
2. strengthen public policies to ensure that children of foreign origin enjoyed the best possible level of teaching and that child asylum seekers and undocumented children were given access to education, particularly at secondary level.
3. Strengthen programmes and awareness-raising activities against violence, abuse and bullying in schools;
4. Strengthen its efforts to address the high rates of repetition and school dropout, in particular in secondary education, including by rolling out its second opportunity education programme at the Federal and Cantonal level in collaboration with both public and private partners;
5. Switzerland should encourage further diversification of the educational choices of girls and boys, take steps to revise educational materials at the cantonal level and ensure that gender sensitive teaching materials were available across all cantons and communities.
6. And finally, Switzerland should strengthen strategies to address discriminatory stereotypes and structural barriers that might deter girls from progressing beyond secondary education and enrolling in traditionally male-dominated fields of study.

### QUESTIONS

### SOURCES

### CONTACT DETAILS

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