

Editorial

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Editorial

Christian Suter* and Nora Linder*

This Editorial gives an overview of the most important events and decisions regarding the Swiss Journal of Sociology, and summarizes the activities of its editorial team for the calendar year 2014.¹ As in the last few years, the Editorial will also appear on the website of the journal together with some additional information.

Special issue: Last year's special issue dealt with the topic of "Gender equality policies in Switzerland: Institutional factors of success and failure." The nine articles (and an introduction) highlighted the persistence of gender inequality in Switzerland and investigated how politics impacted on gender (in)equality. For 2015, as an exception, two special issues are planned: They will address the themes of "Economic socialization and the financial practices of young people" (vol. 41, issue 2) and "Transformation of retirement policies" (vol. 41, issue 3). For 2016 the special issue will deal with the "new second generation," i. e., the situation of the current generation of migrants' children. In this connection, we should like to thank all guest editors for their valuable contributions and commitment to the journal. We would also like to take this opportunity to invite proposals for the special issue planned for 2017. Deadline for proposal submission is April 1st, 2015.²

Book reviews: With the current issue, the book review section of the Swiss Journal of Sociology will be upgraded by adding two new forms to the existing standard review (of 7 000–10 000 characters): firstly, review articles or in-depth reviews of several books (of 15 000–25 000 characters), and secondly, short review notes (of about 3 500 characters). Review articles and in-depth reviews will go through a peer-review process.³

Indexing: Two years ago the Swiss Journal of Sociology submitted its application for the inclusion of the journal in the Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI). Unfortunately, Thomson Reuters informed us recently that they will not be selecting our journal for the coverage of sociology at present. The editorial team will nevertheless continue its efforts to get the Swiss Journal of Sociology included in the major social sciences indexes, including the SSCI. The Swiss Journal of Sociology is currently indexed by EBSCO.

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1 During 2014 the editorial team was composed of Christian Suter, serving as editor-in-chief, Nora Linder and Fabienne Robert-Nicoud as submission manager and editorial assistant.

2 See also the guidelines on the website of the Swiss Journal of Sociology at <http://www.sgs-sss.ch/sociojournal>.

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Awards: The quality of a journal is also reflected in the winning of scientific awards by the articles published. The editorial team is therefore very pleased to announce that in the past year the first prize from the Fritz Thyssen Foundation for journal articles in the social sciences (volume 2013), one of the most important awards for social sciences articles, was granted to Jonna Milena Blanck, Benjamin Edelstein and Justin J. W. Powell. Their article “Persistent School Segregation or Change Toward Inclusive Education? The Impact of the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities on Reform Processes in Germany’s Bundesländer” appeared in the July issue of the Swiss Journal of Sociology in 2013 (vol. 39, 267–292). We should like to congratulate the authors on this award.

Articles published and manuscript submissions: During the calendar year 2014 the Swiss Journal of Sociology published 22 articles and 13 book reviews in the three issues (March, July, November) – all three were published on time. In 2014, 38 manuscripts were submitted to the journal. A detailed overview of the published articles and manuscripts submitted can be found in Table 1. It should be noted that success rates cannot be calculated from these numbers, as the data bases of published and submitted manuscripts are not identical.

Publications: A clear majority of the articles published in the year 2014, namely 21 out of 22, were empirical, half of them (eleven articles) using quantitative methods and two fifths (nine articles) qualitative methods of analysis. With regard to language, the 22 published articles are almost equally balanced between French (eight articles), German (eight articles) and English (six articles). Regarding language region of origin, eleven contributions came from German-speaking Switzerland, ten from French-speaking Switzerland and one from France. With regard to the gender of the first author, we see that equality was almost realized (12 women compared to 10 men). A more detailed examination further reveals that half of the articles were written by mixed-gender teams.

Submissions: The largest portion of manuscript submissions was empirical quantitative (52%), followed by empirical qualitative (37%); 8% of submissions were theoretical and the remaining 3% empirical articles with a combined qualitative-quantitative analytical design. With regard to language, we observe a dominance of French (50%), followed by English (32%) and German (18%). This distribution, with an over-representation of French, is reflected by the (language) region of origin of the (first) authors with 34% from French-speaking Switzerland, 16% from German-speaking Switzerland, 5% from Italian-speaking Switzerland, 11% from France, 8% from Germany, and 26% from various other countries (including Argentina, Belgium, Cameroon, Canada, Morocco and the United Kingdom). As to the gender of the first author, we see a dominance of male submissions (66%). However, a substantial proportion of submissions consisted of mixed-gender co-authored papers (26%). A more detailed analysis reveals that submissions from

Table 1 Swiss Journal of Sociology: Articles published and manuscripts submitted in the calendar year 2014

	Articles published		Manuscripts submitted	
	N	%	N	%
Total	22	100	38	100
Methods				
Empirical – qualitative	9	41	14	37
Empirical – quantitative	11	50	20	52
Empirical – mixed	1	5	1	3
Theoretical	0	0	3	8
Methodological	0	0	0	0
Introductory & review articles	1	5	0	0
Language				
German	8	36	7	18
French	8	36	19	50
English	6	27	12	32
Region of origin (first author)				
German-speaking Switzerland	11	50	6	16
French-speaking Switzerland	10	45	13	34
Italian-speaking Switzerland	0	0	2	5
Germany	0	0	3	8
France	1	5	4	11
Other countries	0	0	10	26
Sex (first author)				
Female	12	55	13	34
Male	10	45	25	66

Note: Figures for “articles published” and “manuscripts submitted” cannot be compared directly as their data bases are not identical. “Articles published” have been submitted in 2012 and 2013, whereas “manuscripts submitted” have been submitted in 2014.

mixed-gender teams had the highest acceptance rate in 2014 and submissions from single male authors the lowest.

Review process: During the review process, 146 experts were approached and 90 agreed to write one or more reviews. Altogether the editorial team requested 166 reviews, of which 102 were completed. These figures illustrate not only the considerable effort required to carry out the review procedures on the part of the editorial team, but also the great contribution made by the Editorial Committee and the reviewers contacted. We should like to take this opportunity to express our grateful thanks to all those involved in this work. A list of the reviewers’ names can be found on the journal’s website.

Of the 38 manuscripts submitted, 35 were reviewed and a decision was taken during the calendar year. The number of reviews per manuscript varied in 2014 between two and four. In 61% of the reviewed manuscripts, our internal guideline of three reviews was achieved. The average duration of the review process (i. e., mean response time from submission to decision) was 4.3 months, which is slightly above our internal guideline of four months. In 60% of the decisions taken, the response time was below four months. About 57% of the submitted (and reviewed) manuscripts were accepted, the majority, however, on condition that amendments were made. About one third of the reviewed manuscripts (31%) had to be refused, and the remaining 12% were returned for extensive revision, after which the revised versions of these manuscripts were reviewed once more.

Financial support: Enhancing the journal's professional standing requires additional financial means. A part of these resources was contributed by our readers via the journal's subscription fees. In addition, the sociological institutes of various universities in Switzerland were contacted requesting financial support. The editorial team and the Swiss Sociological Association is exceptionally grateful that six of the institutes approached gave such financial support in 2014 (the Sociological Institute of the University of Zurich, the Sociology Seminar of the University of Basel, the Department of Social Sciences of the University of Fribourg, the Sociology Department of the University of Geneva, the Institute of Social Sciences of the University of Lausanne, and the Department of Sociology of the University of Neuchâtel); moreover several of these institutes have already agreed to support the journal again in 2015. These funds allow the editorial team to continue its efforts to improve the journal's quality and professional standing.

Neuchâtel, January 2015.