

Social security (lead: FSIO)

Priority research topics

In 2020, the FSIO commissioned a study on the effects of the planned reform of the occupational benefit scheme. In addition, other research projects generated new insights into social assistance, examined different forms of violence and measures to prevent it, and evaluated the assistance benefit provided under the invalidity insurance (IV) scheme. In the future, assistance benefit trends will be monitored, and the IV will include this financial contribution in its annual IV statistics. Finally, the FSIO published its «Social Security» research programme for 2021–2024.

Contribution of FSIO sector-specific research to social security

In accordance with the Federal Dispatch on the Promotion of Education, Research and Innovation, the FSIO is responsible for the research field «social security». The field also includes research activities of other federal offices (FOPH, SECO, FSO, FOAG, FOH, SEM). Sector-specific research at the FSIO and all the offices involved covers a broad spectrum of topics.

Success Story

The [study](#) «Participation models for people affected by and at risk of poverty in the combatting and prevention of poverty» shows how this population group can be integrated as experts in their own right in decision-making, planning, implementation and evaluation processes. To this end, Chiapparini, et al. 2020 developed a theoretically sound system of categories for analysing sample projects. Subsequently, the authors researched and analysed written evaluations and progress reports as well as websites detailing participative projects, programmes and measures to combat and prevent poverty.

In a consequent step, they conducted individual interviews with those directly affected as well as with representatives of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), associations and institutions; these interviews were either by phone or, in the case of advisory group meetings, face to face. The analysis covers projects at the communal, regional and national levels in Switzerland's different language regions, as well as initiatives in other countries.

The researchers identified and described different models of participation, which range from the further development of structures and processes of public and private service providers to community-based self-help initiatives. They set out the key conditions and challenges of these projects, and the factors that determine their success. The research findings are of particular utility for practitioners and policymakers at the cantonal, metropolitan and communal levels and for NGOs, as well as those directly affected, who play a multiplier role. They find guidance on the planning, implementation and evaluation of participative projects in their respective contexts. A best practice handbook will be developed in a next step with input from those affected by poverty, and it will be made available to all concerned.

The research findings show that the participation of people affected by and at risk of poverty is challenging but feasible. They identify the potential impact of participation at the individual, institutional, political and societal levels. For example, it can contribute to the empowerment of the affected population group and facilitate the development of more needs-driven and effective policies and technical measures. The authors recommend that participation should take place with due care at all three levels of government (communal, cantonal and federal) in Switzerland. One of the features that sets this study apart is that the approach «participation of those affected» was applied throughout the research process; it took the form of co-construction involving poverty-affected members in the advisory group.

Statistical data (in thousand Swiss francs)

2020	Research mandates	Contributions to research institutions	Intramuros – FSIO in-house research	Total	Budget 2021	Estimate 2022
FSIO expenditure (R+E budget)	345	25	0	370	532	480

Tendering procedure

Mandates are usually published on the FSIO website and awarded in accordance with the public procurement provisions (VöB/BöB).

Further information

The statistics above cover only the Research + Evaluation (R+E) budget. In addition, FSIO sector-specific research in 2020 was financed on the basis of special statutory regulations (e.g. Federal Act on Invalidity Insurance, Art. 68 [SR 831.2]) or on the basis of Federal Council decisions (e.g. child and youth protection programmes).

[Overview of FSIO sector-specific research](#) and the [Research + Evaluation Annual Report 2020](#)