

Editorial

Felix Bühlmann* and Marie Métrailler*

As every year, in this first issue of the Swiss Journal of Sociology we provide an overview of the major events and developments with regard to our journal in the last year – and also an outlook on some of our plans in 2020.

Over the last four years as editor-in-chief of the Swiss Journal of Sociology I have tried to carefully modernise and adapt the journal to keep up with the current challenges of academic publishing: digitalisation, open access and internationalisation. As many other aspects of our lives, also sociological publishing is touched and transformed by the trend towards an increasing *digitalisation*. While only ten years ago scholars would still go to libraries in order to read entire issues of a scientific journal, nowadays most of us are looking for articles in digital databases or on Google Scholar and we are reading specific contributions – hardly whole issues of a journal. This is accompanied by a transformation of the publishing format: most of the academic journals now have hybrid publishing models or even exclusively publish in digital format. At the Swiss Journal of Sociology, we have tried to react to these changes by offering a digital edition of our articles on the Sciendo platform and by making accessible the whole back catalogue of our journal since 1975 on E-periodica. This process of digitalisation has been paralleled by a trend towards *open access publishing*. As the scientific community became aware of the unhealthy commercialisation and exploitation of scientific publishing by multinational publishing houses such as Elsevier, Springer, Sage, Wiley-Blackwell or Taylor Francis, funding agencies began to press for more open access publications. This means that the scientific communities and the universities have to get involved further, in order to reorganise their publishing activities in a more independent and less commercialised way. As a reaction to this, since 2016 the Swiss Journal of Sociology is published as a full open access journal with a creative common licence, leaving the copyright with the authors. Finally, sociological research and those calling themselves “sociologists” in Switzerland have become *more international and diverse*. It is increasingly difficult, I think, to create and maintain a “national scientific community” through a scientific journal. Many members of the Swiss Sociological Association are also part of other national or international associations, are engaged in international research projects and publish also (or exclusively) internationally. At the same time, sociology as a discipline also “loses” scholars to sub-disciplines such as gender studies, science and technology study or migration studies. This has consequences for a “national” and “generalist” journal such as the Swiss Journal of Sociology.

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After four years of service as Editor-in-Chief I will pass the baton to a successor (or a group of successors) at the end of 2020. Hopefully, these colleagues will find answers to address these challenges and to continually develop the Swiss Journal of Sociology as place of debate and insight in the Swiss society as well as its place in the international context. I would like to thank Marion Beetschen who helped me as a submission manager to organise the review process, to edit the manuscripts and to respond to the many mails and questions that arrived in our mail-box. My thanks include also the book review editors with whom I had the pleasure to work: Dietmar Wetzel (who will also retire from his functions in 2019), Julie Falcon and Kevin Toffel. My thanks go also to the members of the editorial board, as well as to all the reviewers who invested their time and passion in order to help us to improve the manuscripts and make the SZS a better journal. Finally, I also wish to express my gratefulness to all the people at Seismo for the quality of their editing and layout during the last years.

In 2019 we published two regular issues and a special issue on “*How the World of Work Transforms Educational Institutions*” edited by Barbara Duc and Kerstin Duemmler from the Swiss Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training and Héloïse Durler and Phillippe Losego from the Haute école pédagogique Vaud. Also in 2019, during its yearly meeting in May, the editorial board made an important decision to continue to attract a good number of high quality manuscripts in the future. Besides the regular “special issue”, in which a group of guest-editors, curates a whole issue with about 6 to 9 contributions, we will introduce so called “focus” sections. In these sections, which can be combined with various contributions in the same issue, a group of guest editors will present a series of 4–5 articles addressing a specific topic. This new feature will help us to handle the high number of proposition for special issues we receive each year and it will also be the occasion to organize smaller and more focussed debates for the scientific community.

Articles published and manuscripts submitted: in the three issues of the calendar year 2019 the Swiss Journal of Sociology published 20 articles and 8 book reviews. All three issues were published on time. The number of submitted manuscripts has again risen compared to 2018 and was at 43 in 2019. This number is comparable to those of the years 2015 and 2016, when we received 47 manuscripts each. A detailed overview of the published and submitted manuscripts can be found in Table 1. Please note that the rejection rate cannot be deduced from a comparison of submissions and publications in the same year.

Publication: As in the last years, most articles the Swiss Journal of Sociology publishes are empirical papers – only rarely do we publish theoretical, essayistic or purely methodological contributions. While the numbers of quantitative and qualitative papers are more or less even (seven and ten), no article used a mixed-method design in 2019. As in the years before, a majority of the articles published in 2019 (11) were written in English, four in German and five in French. A large majority

Table 1 Swiss Journal of Sociology: Articles published and manuscripts submitted in the calendar year 2019

	Articles published		Manuscripts submitted	
	N	%	N	%
Total	20	100	43	100
Methods				
Empirical qualitative	10	50	13	30
Empirical quantitative	7	35	18	42
Empirical mixed	0	0	6	14
Theoretical	2	10	6	14
Essayistic	0	0	0	0
Methodological	1	5	0	0
Total	20	100	43	100
Language				
German	4	20	14	33
English	11	55	19	44
French	5	25	10	23
Total	20	100	43	100
Region of Origin (first author)				
German-speaking Switzerland	6	30	14	33
French-speaking Switzerland	7	35	18	42
Italian-speaking Switzerland	0	0	0	0
Germany	3	15	0	0
France	1	5	2	5
Other European countries	2	10	5	12
Non-European countries	1	5	4	9
Total	20	100	43	100
Sex (first author)				
Female	8	40	21	49
Male	12	60	22	51
Total	20	100	43	100

of our first authors work at Swiss institutions, the remaining scholars come either from Germany (3), France (1) or other countries (3). There are also slightly more male (12) than female (8) authors.

Submissions: of the 43 manuscripts submitted in 2019, a majority uses quantitative methods (18), 13 manuscripts use qualitative methods, six a mixed-method design and six are theoretical. Again, a majority of the papers is written in English (19), 14 in German and 10 in French. The lion's share of authors of the submitted manuscripts work in Switzerland, two are employed at French institutions and

nine in other countries. The sex of the first authors of submitted papers was quite balanced in 2019.

Review process: in 2019 we have contacted 78 reviewers. 59 of those colleagues graciously accepted to write one or several reviews for the Swiss Journal of Sociology. We would like to thank our reviewers for their commitment and their interest for the submitted manuscripts. During the year 2019, nine manuscripts were rejected, nine were accepted, four received a “encourage to resubmit” and five a decision “permit to resubmit”. Eight manuscripts still await a final decision. Finally, three manuscripts were withdrawn by the authors.

Financial support: the members of the Swiss sociological associations are the main funders of the Swiss Journal of Sociology. In addition, also in 2019 we received generous funding from the Swiss Academy of Humanities and Social Sciences. Last but not least, we obtained a much welcome support from the following sociological institutes or departments of the Swiss Universities: University of Fribourg, University of Geneva, University of Lausanne, University of Neuchâtel and University of Zurich. We would like to thank all these institutions for their generous contribution!

In 2020, the Issue 46(1) will be a regular issue, issues 46(2) and 46(3) will be special issues on the topics “Intersections between Ageing and Migration: Current Trends and Challenges” and “Understanding Social Dynamics: 20 Years of the Swiss Household Panel”. We wish you all the best for the year 2020 and are looking forward to your submissions and contributions to the Swiss Journal of Sociology.

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