



Commission suisse pour l'UNESCO
Schweizerische UNESCO-Kommission
Commissione svizzera per l'UNESCO
Cummissiun svizra per l'UNESCO

The implementation of SDG target 4.2 in Switzerland from an NGO perspective

OMEP 70th World Assembly. International Conference, 25-29 of June, Prague
Panel: Sustainable Development Goals

Author: Karin Augsburger

Co-Authors: Patricia Buser (OMEP Switzerland), Ulla Grob-Menges

Abstract: Switzerland is one of the most decentralized countries in the world. Early Childhood Development splits into Early Childhood Education (ECE, Kindergarten) and Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC, Kita). While Kindergarten is nowadays part of the school system (no fees), in most cantons Kitas are privately organized (fees). Therefore, Nongovernmental Organisations (NGOs) are playing a crucial role in the promotion of high quality childcare. Target 4.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) defined by the United Nations contains that “by 2030 all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education.” This study sheds light on the attitudes of Swiss NGOs towards SDG target 4.2, their mobilisation around it and the perceived responsibility patterns for the implementation across the country. We find that many NGOs are not aware of the target 4.2 and that their role in the implementation of the SDGs is mostly one of “direct implementation”. Further, we show that there are cultural differences in the evaluation of the SDG 4.2 between the German- and French-speaking parts of Switzerland.

Keywords: Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC); Sustainable Development Goals (SDG); Switzerland; Target 4.2; Nongovernmental Organisations (NGO)

Contents

1. SDG target 4.2.....	1
2. Overview: Early Childhood Education and Care in Switzerland	2
3. Methodology	3
4. Swiss ECEC NGOs and the implementation of target 4.2	4
a. Knowledge and Importance: Are Swiss NGOs aware of the SDGs?	4
b. Which main actors are identified in the implementation of target 4.2?.....	6
c. What are NGOs roles in the implementation of target 4.2?	7
5. Challenges for the Implementation of target 4.2	8
1. Financing of ECEC	8
2. Quality of ECEC services.....	9
3. National coordination and strategy	9
6. Conclusion.....	10
7. Literature	12
8. Annex	14

1. SDG target 4.2



“By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education.”

In 2015, the United Nations (UN) member states, including Switzerland, adopted the Agenda 2030 and pledged their willingness to achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the UN by 2030. Early childhood development is explicitly mentioned in target 4.2 of goal 4 “Quality Education” of the SDGs. Early childhood development, however, is not limited to education. Rather, it has the potential to have a multiplier effect on all other SDGs (ARNEC, 2016), ranging from poverty alleviation and improved health to gender equality, to just name a few. The (former) United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon put it this way: “The Sustainable Development Goals recognize that early childhood development can help drive the transformation we hope to achieve over the next 15 years” (UNSG, 2015). Due to the importance of goal 4 and specifically target 4.2 for sustainable development in many other sectors, this study focuses on the implementation of SDG target 4.2 in Switzerland from an NGO perspective. Civil society actors are, besides public authorities and private actors, an integral and essential part in the implementation of the SDGs. Despite the importance of target 4.2, there has so far not been any research studying the role of Swiss civil society organisations (NGOs) in the implementation process. We therefore formulate the following questions: What is Swiss NGO’s knowledge of the SDGs, the Agenda 2030 and target 4.2 in general? Which actors are noticed in the implementation process and perceived as responsible by Swiss NGOs? What are the NGOs’ roles and their mobilisation in the implementation process? And last, which challenges do they identify for the implementation of target 4.2 in Switzerland? To answer these questions, we conducted an online survey containing 46 NGOs from all over Switzerland and compared the differences in awareness, perceived responsibility, mobilisation and main challenges for target 4.2 between NGOs from the German- and the French-speaking part of Switzerland.

This study contains the following sections: In the second chapter, a short overview of the situation regarding Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) in federal Switzerland is given. After presenting the quantitative methodology used in this study, we proceed to the results and present findings on Swiss NGO’s knowledge about and roles in the implementation process of SDG target 4.2. The study shows that there are cultural differences in the evaluation of the SDG 4.2 between the German and French speaking parts of Switzerland: Knowledge levels vary, different actors are held responsible but there is agreement on the main challenges. In chapter 5, financial, qualitative and coordinative challenges for Switzerland in the implementation of SDG target 4.2 are identified. The last chapter summarizes the results.

2. Overview: Early Childhood Education and Care in Switzerland

In 25 out of 26 cantons in Switzerland, attending a kindergarten for at least one year is compulsory for all children. In most cantons, namely 17, two years are compulsory (EDK, n.d.). This compulsory duty leads to the fact that in 2014, almost 100% of children were participating in organized learning one year before the official primary entry age (UNSTATS, 2017). Even though these numbers simulate an optimistic outlook for Switzerland's ECEC enrolment, they must be taken with a pinch of salt. For children under the age of four, before kindergarten starts, enrolment in organized learning is less prevalent. In 2015, 47% of children aged zero to four were enrolled in institutionalized childcare (BFS, 2016). The supervision of ECEC institutions lie in the competency and responsibility of the cantons and the communities.¹ Enrolment in ECEC, as well as the provision of such institutions, is not compulsory in most Swiss cantons and municipalities. Cultural and regional differences within Switzerland as well as the prevailing conservative family model account for this situation (Swiss Network for Childcare, 2011, Adema and Thévenon, 2004).

In 2014, expenditure levels on pre-primary education in Switzerland was 0.2% of GDP while the OECD average was 0.6% (OECD, 2017, p. 273). As a result, the share of the cost for ECEC paid by the parents is high. In German-speaking Switzerland, the parents' share amounts to 66% while it is lower in the French-speaking part (38% in the canton of Vaud). In neighbouring countries, this share is systematically lower and amounts to a maximum of 25% with all children being subsidized (Bundesrat, 2015, p. 3). In Switzerland, the cantonal i.e. subnational governments subsidize ECEC only partially. As a result, in most Swiss cantons parents pay a bulk of family-supplementing childcare costs (Stern et al., 2015, p. 106). In addition, many ECEC institutions depend on untrained personal to cut costs. Finally, yet importantly, a lack of places in ECEC institutions exists (Bundesrat, 2015, p. 9). Due to this lack of resources and a growing lack of specialised personnel, quality standards in ECEC supplies are under pressure².

Affordable and accessible family-supplementing ECEC is an important factor in improving the reconciliation of family and working life. In most Swiss cities, the right to a subsidized childcare depends on the parents' income. When a family's income exceeds a certain threshold, for example due to the raise in the volume of work of one parent, community neglects subsidies. As a result, the available

¹ We define ECEC as the following: ECEC is an integral notion of education directed at all children between 0 and 4 years and supports their social, emotional, cognitive, physical and psychological development in order for them to become self-dependent and active members of society. ECEC comprises the child's own contributions to their development as well as the contributions of adults, which accompany and support the child in its endeavor (Swiss Network for Childcare and Swiss Commission for UNESCO 2012, 2016, [Orientierungsrahmen für frühkindliche Bildung, Betreuung und Erziehung](#))

² See "[Appell für frühkindliche Bildung, Betreuung und Erziehung](#)" by the Swiss Network for Childcare and the Swiss Commission for UNESCO 2015.

income may decrease due to the increase in institutional childcare costs. If the parents' costs for institutional childcare exceed the potential extra income, families' incentives to engage in gainful employment decrease (Bütler, 2007, p. 8 ff.). This situation affects mainly low- and middle-income families. Nevertheless, the importance of accessible ECEC for all children is not limited to this economic argument. Affordable and accessible ECEC is crucial to ensuring age-appropriate development for all children and, as seen in chapter one, ECEC plays an important role in strengthening the successful implementation of the other Sustainable Development Goals.

However, several Swiss institutions contribute to the implementation of Agenda's 2030 education goal 4: In 2017, the Swiss Commission for UNESCO launched the Swiss Platform for Education 2030. This yearly event aims at creating networking opportunities and linking all actors in the field of education in order to join forces to implement the SDG 4 at the national level. The Swiss Commission for UNESCO's promotes the importance of the overall Education 2030 agenda in Switzerland, but its focus currently lies on targets 4.2 concerning ECEC and 4.7 regarding Global Citizenship Education³. Likewise, the Swiss "Coalition for Education" (Bildungskolition), founded in 2012, promotes education for sustainable development. It consists of organisations working in the fields of development, youth, health, human rights and environment but does not particularly focus on ECEC.

Yet the World Organization for Early Childhood Education (OMEP) is an international, non-governmental and non-profit organisation, which defends and promotes the rights of the child to education and care worldwide and supports activities that improve accessibility to high quality education and care. OMEP has a consultative status at the United Nations and UNICEF and advocates for the implementation of target 4.2 at the international level. The Swiss national committee, OMEP Suisse, represents these efforts on the national level and wishes to contribute to these efforts on SDG 4.2 through this paper. In the following section, we present the methodology used to answer the question of NGOs' attitudes and mobilisation for the implementation of SDG target 4.2.

3. Methodology

From May 15th to June 11th, 2018, OMEP Suisse, conducted a survey among non-governmental organisations and non-profit organisations (NPOs)⁴ working in the field of early childhood education and care in Switzerland. The survey was conducted as a standardised online survey (Tool: Findmind, Analysis tool: MS Excel) with 16 questions (see annex). This paper is based on the answers of 46 NGO

³ «By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.» (UNSTATS, 2017)

⁴ Further in this paper only referred to as „NGOs“.

and NPO representatives from the German- (20), French- (24) and Italian- (2) speaking parts of Switzerland concerning the implementation of SDG target 4.2 in Switzerland. The return rate of finalized surveys is 56% (46/82)⁵. The consulted NGOs operate in different fields relating to ECEC, including health initiatives, education institutions, private care providers and playgroups.

We classify the 16 questions into the following categories:

1. NGO's knowledge of SDGs, Agenda 2030 and target 4.2
2. Perceived main actors in the implementation
3. NGO's roles and mobilisation around target 4.2
4. Perceived challenges in the implementation of target 4.2

The study "NGO mobilisation around the SDGs" by Elisabeth Hege and Damien Demailly from the *Institute du développement durable et des relations internationales* (IDDRI) in Paris served as a basis for exploring the different ways in which NGOs may use the SDGs (see section 4b).

4. Swiss ECEC NGOs and the implementation of target 4.2

As previously considered, several challenges in Switzerland exist to reach the target 4.2 that by 2030 "all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education". The following result of our survey reflects these challenges.

a. Knowledge and Importance: Are Swiss NGOs aware of the SDGs?

The SDGs are a set of global goals set by the United Nations in 2015. They are an international and national advocacy tool, which civil society actors can refer to in their projects, activities and actions to hold governments accountable in the SDG's implementation process called "localizing the SDGs". NGO's knowledge about the international agenda for sustainable development is a prerequisite and enabling factor in order to be able to localize SDG target 4.2. As national governments are the signatories of the SDGs, questions arise whether civil society actors are equally aware of the goals and to what degree they are involved in the deliberation and implementation process. These questions are particularly interesting for NGOs that do not participate in negotiations and consultations at the UN level.

⁵ We did not consider 41 participants, which did not fill out the complete survey in the analysis.

Figure 1: % of NGOs that know the SDGs / Education 2030 Agenda / SDG4 / target 4.2 (n=46)

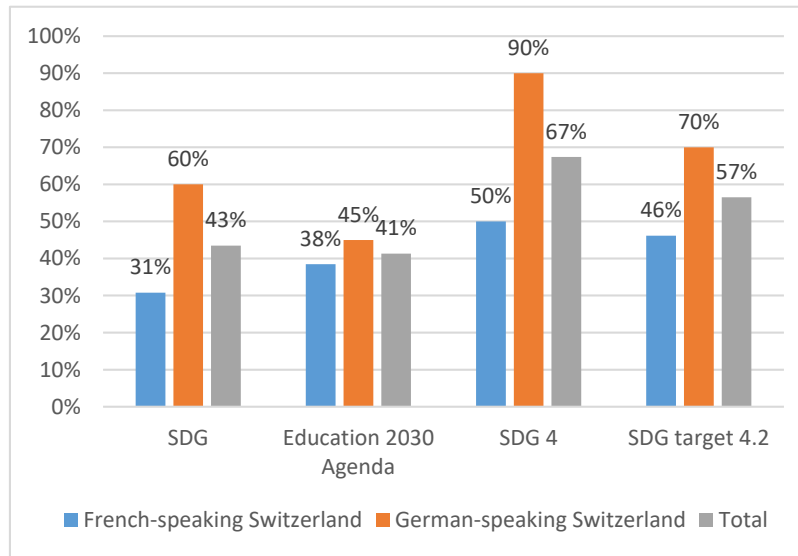


Figure 1 shows that many NGOs in ECEC in Switzerland are not yet aware of the international agenda for sustainable development: Only 43% of NGOs know the SDGs of the UN in general and 57% are aware of SDG target 4.2. However, 100% of the participants believe the target 4.2 is “very” or “rather” important. Furthermore, we

observe substantial differences concerning the knowledge about the UN’s global goals between Swiss linguistic regions. Consulted NGOs in German-speaking Switzerland are more aware of the SDGs in general and the goal 4 and target 4.2 in specific than NGOs in the French-speaking part of Switzerland. This result is rather surprising as national referendums show that French-Speaking cantons are generally more in contact with international issues and agreements. However, the difference may be explained rather by the participant’s constitution: Among the French-speaking participants there are many day-care centres which are less likely to be in direct contact with the SDG processes at the UN level. For German-speaking Switzerland, many national and cantonal organisations working in the field of ECEC participated which are more likely to be in contact with the Agenda 2030.

Historically, NGOs working on an international level as well as NGOs from the development sector are more involved in the “new” Agenda 2030 for sustainable development than NGOs acting on the national level in the social sector. The former organisations were already mobilised around the SDG’s predecessor, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The NGOs that participated in this survey generally focus their work on a specific region in Switzerland, act on the national level and rarely have been involved in the MDGs. The 2015 SDGs, however, triggered a change: Instead of mainly addressing developing countries, the SDGs are intended to be universal and hold liable all countries. Due to the more detailed and apportioned targets (17 goals and 169 targets), the new UN agenda addresses a broader variety of organisations, including social NGOs working in the field of ECEC (Hege and Demailly, 2018, p. 7). Hege and Demailly suggest in their study on the mobilisation of NGOs around the SDGs that larger organisations working internationally have the possibility to spread information and involve more actors around the mobilisation for the implementation of the SDGs (Hege and Demailly, 2018, p. 10). In Switzerland, where many ECEC organisations and institutions are still not aware of or working with the SDGs, larger organisations could take over this role.

b. Which main actors are identified in the implementation of target 4.2?

The implementation process of SDG target 4 “Quality Education” calls for joint efforts of actors from different federal levels. In Switzerland, education lies in the competency of the subnational level i.e. the cantons rather than the national authorities. Therefore, cantonal and communal actors as well as NGOs, NPOs and private actors are called upon the implementation of SDG 4. Our findings show that the perception of the responsibility of these actors in the implementation process of target 4.2 varies between French- and German-speaking Switzerland (see table 1). NGOs from the French-speaking part of Switzerland are most aware of public actors and their efforts to implement SDG target 4.2. These include the Federal Conference of the Cantonal Directors of Public Education (EDK) and the Federal Conference of the Cantonal Directors of Social Affairs (SODK), as well as cantonal and communal authorities themselves. While NGOs from German-speaking Switzerland are most aware of the role of the Swiss Commission for UNESCO (mobilisation and sensitisation) and non-governmental organisations in the SDG target 4.2 implementation process.

Table 1: Perception of actors in the implementation of SDG target 4.2

	German-speaking Switzerland					French-speaking Switzerland				
	Very strong	rather strong	rather weak	weak	don't know	Very strong	rather strong	rather weak	weak	don't know
Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education (EDK)	0	2	8	7	3	6	11	5	2	2
Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Social Issues (SODK)	0	3	9	5	3	7	14	2	0	3
Swiss Commission for UNESCO	5	11	2	1	2	6	7	7	2	4
Cantons	0	3	9	7	1	13	10	2	1	0
Communities	0	3	9	7	1	14	8	2	1	1
NGOs	0	12	4	1	3	3	8	7	4	4
Private actors (companies)	0	7	6	4	3	2	6	11	7	0
Nurseries / Day care centers	2	8	4	1	5	9	7	7	3	0

This different perception of responsibilities may have cultural as well as practical reasons. In general tendency, French-speaking Switzerland is supportive of public solutions to social issues while German-speaking Switzerland, generally speaking, tends towards being more critical of state interventions. Also, in French-speaking Switzerland, the cantons and communes subsidize ECEC institutions more than those in German-speaking Switzerland. These tendencies may also influence the perception of actors in the implementation of SDG target 4.2.

c. What are NGOs roles in the implementation of target 4.2?

Most of the consulted NGOs did not participate in the consultation process for the Agenda 2030 conducted by the Swiss authorities between June and August 2017 (see figure 2). NGOs from German-speaking Switzerland had a higher participation rate (24%) than the ones from French-speaking Switzerland (7.5%). Again, this may be due to the differences in the type of the participating organisations. However, most NGOs find that organisations like themselves and civil society have the *possibility* to play a part in the elaboration of the Swiss country report which is the fundament for later actions concerning the implementation of the SDGs (see figure 3). Limited resources that do not allow the NGOs to engage in such extracurricular activities may explain this discrepancy. An alternative explanation suggests that smaller organisations may have brought in their opinion through their membership status in larger organisations that *did* participate in the consultation process. However, further research is needed in order to answer this question.

Figure 2: Participation in the consultation process for Agenda 2030 (n=46)

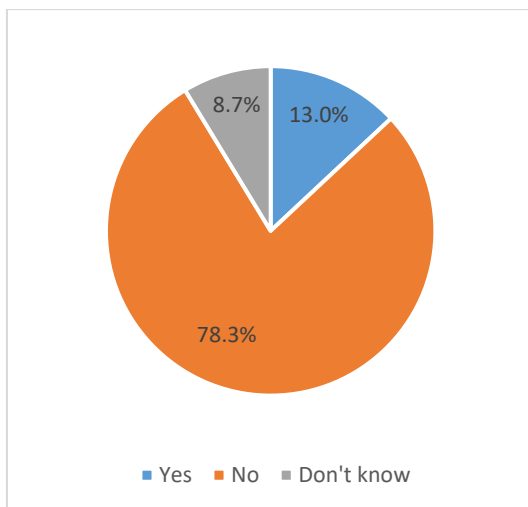
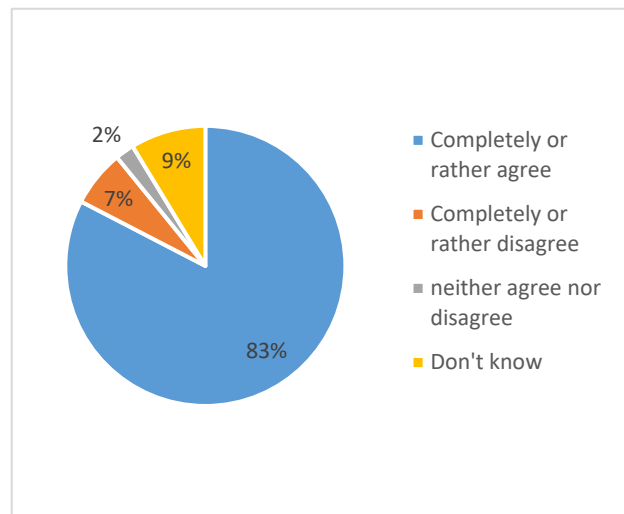


Figure 3: « Do you agree that civil society can actively participate in the elaboration of the Swiss country report? » (n=46)



According to the consulted NGOs, the direct implementation of target 4.2 through projects and activities as well as the advocacy efforts to hold the national and cantonal authorities accountable, are their main roles. In some organisations, the adoption of the SDGs led to the inclusion of aspects of the SDG target 4.2 into the organisation's strategy. NGO's mainly evaluate their own role as direct translators of SDG target 4.2 into practice. They do so by providing high quality childcare, by reaching out to underprivileged families, by consulting local authorities in regard to their ECEC policies or by providing further training to professionals in ECEC.

Less important for NGOs are the roles of communicating the Sustainable Development Goals towards the public and advocating holding private actors accountable in the active implementation of SDG target 4.2. These results imply that the participants of the survey consider that the Swiss government and the cantonal authorities hold the main responsibility for implementing target 4.2 while private actors are less involved. Companies could, and indeed do, contribute to the implementation of target 4.2 by facilitating part-time work or by offering childcare to their employees. However, NGOs may find it harder to hold private actors accountable, as they are not signatories to the SDGs, unlike the Swiss government, and therefore private actors acting less in this regard. In summary, the mobilisation of the NGOs around target 4.2 is relatively low.

5. Challenges for the Implementation of target 4.2

The structural issues regarding the financing of ECEC services in Switzerland, as outlined in the introduction (chapter 2), are identified by the NGOs participating in this survey as well. When asked for challenges facing the implementation of SDG target 4.2 in Switzerland, broadly, three issue areas could be identified: Affordable ECEC, quality of services and the need for a national strategy and coordination across sectors. The Swiss country report on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda was published on June 20th, 2018, and also addresses these challenges. Regarding goal 4 of the SDGs, the country report holds that challenges regarding ECEC include “training enough specialist staff, improving the financial sustainability of childcare, setting up a national monitoring and reporting system, and early language support” (Federal Council, 2018, p. 7).

1. Financing of ECEC

Financing of ECEC supplies is the most mentioned issue by the survey participants. This is the case for both the German and French speaking parts of Switzerland. Eight of 16 NGOs from German-speaking Switzerland emphasized reforms in the funding of ECEC while five out of 13 NGOs from French-speaking Switzerland mentioned this issue. A lack of financing torpedoes equality in the access to ECEC, which is an integral part of target 4.2. Official numbers back up this perceived financing problem: The costs for private ECEC today are mainly borne by the parents. Subsidization by the public authorities varies between cantons and communities, with most cantons in German-speaking Switzerland not substantively partaking in the financing of ECEC. Compared with Switzerland’s neighboring countries, public authorities’ involvement in the financing of ECEC is low. Official numbers on public spending on ECEC show that Switzerland finds itself at the lower end of the ranking list with only 0.2%⁶ of GDP spent on ECEC (OECD, 2017, p. 273). Children from low-income families

⁶ Only expenditures on ECEC in *public* institutions are included in this number, which may limit the comparability of the data with other countries.

and from families with migratory background are at a disadvantage when it comes to educational opportunities. ECEC that is accessible for all can help mitigate this disadvantage and contribute to equality of opportunities (Walter-Laager and Meier Magistretti, 2016, p. 5). In sum, survey participants state that an appropriate involvement of public authorities in the funding of ECEC is necessary to ensure that all children, no matter their families' background, have equal access to ECEC.

2. Quality of ECEC services

In our survey, participants emphasize the importance of high quality services for early child development. The literature review shows that in federal Switzerland, all cantons have different requirements regarding the education level of childcare workers and educators. While in French-speaking Switzerland, at least 2/3 of carers in an institution must be professionally skilled, in German-speaking Switzerland only half of the staff is required to have an educational background in pedagogy (ECOPLAN, 2016, p. 29).

Target 4.2 emphasizes that early childhood development, care and pre-primary education need to be of "quality" which is not exclusively, but interlinked with the necessary appropriate funding. Experts working in ECEC themselves recognize this as an issue. Adequate education and advanced training of pre-school teachers and other professionals is a prerequisite for high quality in ECEC. Studies have shown that high quality ECEC programs have a positive impact on children's cognitive, linguistic and social skills while low quality affects children's development adversely (Stern et al., 2016, 21). Quality ECEC calls for standardized education requirements and quality standards in ECEC institutions that focus on age-appropriate cognitive, social and linguistic development for all children.

3. National coordination and strategy

In order for Switzerland to reach target 4.2, participants in the survey believe that a national strategy and an integrated approach for ECEC are needed. ECEC, is not considered a part of the public school system in Switzerland and as a result, more than half of the children under the age of four do not participate in organized learning. Some cantons lately have recognized the importance of ECEC for the child's development, for the compatibility of family and working life and for the national economy and have legislated ECEC policies or formulated strategies. In some, no political majority can be found for these matters while in others, no political initiatives have been registered yet. Cantons also differ in terms of where the competencies for ECEC lie. In some, ECEC is in the responsibility of the department of social affairs while in others, the department of education or the one for economic affairs is in charge (Schultheiss and Stern, 2013, p. 46). Despite increased recent activities of the cantons in the field of ECEC, baseline studies show that substantial differences among cantons exist (Stern et al., 2017, p. 33).

Providing ECEC for all children requires a comprehensive approach, combining education, integration, health and social issues in one strategy. The prevailing cantonal differences in financing, coordination and number of ECEC provisions hinder the equality of opportunities for all children. In the survey, participants' recommendations are the inclusion of ECEC in the national constitution to task the cantons with a direct constitutional obligation to provide ECEC for all children and relieve the financing issues by public subsidization. The consulted NGOs believe that a comprehensive and coordinated approach is necessary for Switzerland to reach target 4.2.

6. Conclusion

This paper sheds a first light how Swiss Nongovernmental Organizations (NGO) implement the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target 4.2 concerning Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC). Furthermore, it shows the differences between NGOs in the French- and German-speaking part of Switzerland regarding the awareness, responsibility patterns mobilization and perceived challenges of SDG 4.2. The study shows that many NGOs and institutions in Switzerland working in the field of ECEC are not yet familiar with SDG target 4.2, most of all in French-speaking Switzerland. This result is surprising as French-speaking cantons in national referendums usually show a bigger approval of international submissions and agreements in comparisons to German-speaking cantons. However, the types of organisations that participated in the survey may explain this difference. Many day-care centres from French-speaking Switzerland conducted the survey while from German-speaking Switzerland, more NGOs participated. Day-care centres are likely to be less engaged with the UN Agenda 2030 than NGOs.

Moreover, NGOs from French-speaking Switzerland mainly perceive governmental actors in the implementation process as predominant. NGOs from German-speaking Switzerland mostly notice the activities of the Swiss Commission for UNESCO and non-governmental actors. In the Swiss context, this finding is not surprising as in the French-speaking cantons the culture is historically more state-oriented than in German-speaking cantons. However, this finding emphasises the challenges regarding a unified mobilisation of Swiss NGOs towards the SDG 4.2.

Despite national and subnational NGOs acknowledgement for the importance of the target 4.2, their mobilisation is rather low. Most consulted NGOs didn't participate in the consultation process. They mainly see their own role in the direct implementation of the target 4.2 by providing high quality ECEC. Unfamiliarity with UN processes and limited time resources may restrict the NGO's further mobilisation. More research is needed on this topic though. In order to increase NGOs mobilisation for SDG target 4.2, the role of international organisations, coalitions and unifying actors, such as the Swiss

Commission for UNESCO, the “Coalition for Education” or OMEP Suisse, can be crucial. As an example, this survey has, as a side effect, increased the knowledge about and the awareness of the SDGs among the consulted NGOs that usually are not in direct contact with the Agenda 2030.

Nevertheless, the consulted Swiss NGOs have already been working towards high quality ECEC before the adoption of the SDGs on the national level. They are aware of the challenges related to financial, quality and coordinative issues that ECEC in Switzerland faces, the main one being unaffordable ECEC services for many families and the resulting inequality of opportunities. There are no significant differences between French- and German-speaking Switzerland in the identified challenges.

The SDGs provide an additional advocacy tool for Swiss NGOs to address these challenges by legitimising their claims on a national level. Target 4.2 emphasizes the importance of ECEC in *all* countries and does so with great international and national legitimacy. It is thus important to take advantage of the momentum and spotlight the importance as well as the potential multiplier effect of target 4.2 in national and subnational ECEC policy.

7. Literature

Adema, Willem and Olivier Thévenon (2004). *Babys und Arbeitgeber – die Schweiz im Vergleich zu anderen OECD-Ländern*. In: Die Volkswirtschaft 2004 (11).

Asia-Pacific Regional Network for Early Childhood (ARNEC, 2016). *ECD in the SDGs. A briefing note*. Retrieved from http://www.arnec.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/ECD-in-the-SDGs-20Mar2016_final-002.pdf (09.06.2018).

Bütler, Monika (2007). *Arbeiten lohnt sich nicht – ein zweites Kind noch weniger. Zu den Auswirkungen einkommensabhängiger Tarife auf das (Arbeitsmarkt-)Verhalten der Frauen*. In: Perspektiven der Wirtschaftspolitik 2007 (8) 1, p. 1-19.

Bundesamt für Statistik (BFS, 2016). *Familienergänzende Kinderbetreuung*. Retrieved from <https://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/de/home/statistiken/bevoelkerung/familien/familienerganzende-kinderbetreuung.assetdetail.282368.html> (05.06.2018).

Bundesrat (2015). *Vollkosten und Finanzierung von Krippenplätzen im Ländervergleich. Bericht des Bundesrates in Erfüllung des Postulats 13.3259 Christine Bulliard-Marbach «Krippen vergünstigen und den Sektor dynamisieren» vom 22. März 2013*. Retrieved from <https://www.bsv.admin.ch/dam/bsv/de/dokumente/fgg/berichte-vorstoesse/br-bericht-vollkosten-finanzierung-krippenplaetze.pdf.download.pdf/br-bericht-vollkosten-finanzierung-krippenplaetze-de.pdf> (05.06.2018).

Ecoplan (2016). *Qualitätsvorgaben für Kindertagesstätten in den Kantonen, Stand 31. August 2014*. Im Auftrag der Konferenz der kantonalen Sozialdirektorinnen und Sozialdirektoren SODK. Bern. Retrieved from http://www.sodk.ch/fileadmin/user_upload/Fachbereiche/Familie_und_Gesellschaft/2016.04.05_Ecoplan_Bericht_Qualitaet_FEB_d.pdf (12.06.2018).

Federal Council (2018). *Switzerland implements the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Switzerland's Country Report 2018*. Retrieved from <https://www.newsd.admin.ch/newsd/message/attachments/52842.pdf> (22.06.2018).

Hege, Elisabeth and Damien Demailly (2018). *NGO mobilisation around the SDGs*. Studies N° 01/18, IDDRI, Paris, France.

OECD (2017). *Education at a Glance 2017: OECD Indicators*. OECD Publishing Paris. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-2017-en>

Schultheiss, Andrea and Susanne Stern (2013). *Familienergänzende Kinderbetreuung im Frühbereich – Stand in den Kantonen 2012*. Konferenz der kantonalen Sozialdirektorinnen & Sozialdirektoren (SODK). Retrieved from: http://www.sodk.ch/fileadmin/user_upload/Fachbereiche/Familie_und_Gesellschaft/d_2013.05.13_FE_B_INFRAS_Bericht_SODK_d.pdf (15.06.2018).

Schweizerische Konferenz der kantonalen Erziehungsdirektoren (EDK, n.d.). *Kindergarten-Obligatorium, effektiver Besuch*. Retrieved from <http://www.edk.ch/dyn/15332.php> (05.06.2018).

Stern, Susanne; Gschwend, Eva and Rolf Iten (2016). *Whitepaper zu den Kosten und Nutzen einer Politik der frühen Kindheit*. Jacobs Foundation. Zürich und St. Gallen. Retrieved from https://jacobsfoundation.org/app/uploads/2017/07/JF_Whitepaper_Infras_SEW_05.pdf (12.06.2018).

Stern, Susanne; Schultheiss, Andrea; Fliedner, Juliane and Rolf Iten (2015). *Analyse der Vollkosten und der Finanzierung von Krippenplätzen in Deutschland, Frankreich und Österreich im Vergleich zur Schweiz*. In: Beiträge zur Sozialen Sicherheit. Forschungsbericht 3/15.

Stern, Susanne; Schwab Cammarano, Stephanie and Ariane Da Rocchi (2017). Kantonale Strategien und Koordinationsansätze im Bereich der FBBE. Bestandsaufnahme bei den Kantonen. INFRAS: Zürich.

Swiss Network for Childcare (2011). Der Röstigraben: Setzen wir zum Sprung an! Auf den Spuren der Kinderbetreuung in der Suisse romande. Was ist anders, was ist gleich, wo können wir voneinander profitieren? Retrieved from: http://www.netzwerk-kinderbetreuung.ch/media/filer_public/9a/17/9a171ae2-dc92-4d26-b954-ea2633ab5553/nks_2011_rt_suisseromande_de.pdf (15.06.2018).

United Nations Secretary-General (UNSG; 2015). Secretary-General's remarks at event on Investing in Early Childhood Development as the Foundation for Sustainable Development [as delivered]. Retrieved from <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2015-09-22/secretary-generals-remarks-event-investing-early-childhood> (09.06.2018).

UNSTATS (2017). *SDG Indicators. Global Database. Switzerland*. Retrieved from <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/database/?area=CHE> (05.06.2018).

Walter-Laager, Catherine and Meier Magistretti, Claudia (2016). *Literaturstudie und Good-Practice-Kriterien zur Ausgestaltung von Angeboten der frühen Förderung für Kinder aus sozial benachteiligten Familien*. In: Beiträge zur Sozialen Sicherheit. Forschungsbericht 6/16.

8. Annex

Survey questions:

1. Do you know the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) / Agenda 2030 of the United Nations (UN)? (Yes – no – don't know)
2. Do you know Goal 4 “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” of the SDGs? (Yes – no – don't know)
3. Do you know Education 2030 Agenda by UNESCO? (Yes – no – don't know)
4. Do you know target 4.2 “By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education” of the SDGs? (Yes – no – don't know)
5. How do you assess the importance of target 4.2 of the SDGs? (Very important – rather important – rather unimportant – unimportant – don't know)
6. How do you assess the situation concerning the indicators of target 4.2? (very good – good – rather good – rather bad – bad – very bad – don't know)
 - a. Proportion of children under 5 years of age who are developmentally on track in health, learning and psychosocial well-being, by sex
 - b. Participation rate in organized learning (one year before the official primary entry age), by sex
7. How strongly do you perceive the following players in the implementation of target 4.2? (Very strongly – rather strongly – rather weakly – very weak – don't know)
 - a. Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education (EDK)
 - b. Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Social Issues (SODK)
 - c. Swiss Commission for UNESCO
 - d. Cantons
 - e. Communities
 - f. NGOs
 - g. Private actors (companies)
 - h. Day-care centres
8. Are you aware of the plans of the Swiss government about the implementation of Agenda 2030 and the SDGs? (Yes – no – don't know)
9. Have you participated in the consultation process regarding the elaboration of the Swiss status report (Online consultation regarding the Agenda 2030)? (Yes – no – don't know)
10. Do you agree with the following statement: “Civil society and non-profit organisations have the possibility to actively participate in the elaboration of the status report and the country report” (completely agree – rather agree – rather disagree – neither – completely disagree – don't know)
11. Do you see any challenges that need to be faced for Switzerland to be able to achieve target 4.2 of the Agenda 2030 on the national level? (yes, the following – none – don't know)
12. Does your organisation contribute to Switzerland reaching target 4.2 of the Agenda 2030 on the national level? (Yes, the following – no – don't know)
13. Since the adoption of the SDGs in general and target 4.2 in specific, has your organisation initiated any new activities or projects relating to the SDGs or target 4.2? (Yes, the following – no, don't know)
14. Does your organisation explicitly or implicitly contribute to the implementation of one or two indicators of target 4.2 of the Agenda 2030? (Yes – no – don't know)
15. How do you see your own role as a player in the implementation of target 4.2 of the Agenda 2030?
 - a. Communication of the SDGs towards the public
 - b. Implementation through projects and activities (in cooperation with other organisations)
 - c. Holding the government to account in the implementation of target 4.2
 - d. Holding cantonal offices to account in the implementation of target 4.2
 - e. Holding private actors to account in the implementation of target 4.2
 - f. Our NGO doesn't play a role in the implementation of target 4.2
16. Does target 4.2 of the Agenda 2030 play a role in the evaluation of activities and projects in our organisation? (Yes – no – don't know)