

# Editorial

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## Editorial

Christian Suter and Pascale Gazareth\*

In the Editorial of the first issue of each year, the editorial team of the Swiss Journal of Sociology will give an overview of the most important events and decisions in the previous calendar year, as well as information on the articles published, manuscripts submitted and review procedures. The Editorial will also appear on the website in the form of an annual report, together with additional detailed information.

With the current issue, the editor responsible for German-language book reviews will change. Jürgen Raab (formerly University of Lucerne) is leaving Switzerland to take up a professorship at the University of Magdeburg. The new editor for German-language book reviews is Dietmar Wetzel (University of Berne). We should like to express our grateful thanks to Jürgen Raab for his great commitment to the journal over the past four years and we wish him every success in his new appointment in Germany.

Within the framework of preparing for the indexing of the Swiss Journal of Sociology, the editorial team, together with Seismo Print, has adjusted and optimized the procedures in order to guarantee the punctual publication of the journal. In this connection, the publication dates of the journal have been brought forward. As from now, the first issue of the year will appear on March 1<sup>st</sup>, the second before the summer vacation on July 1<sup>st</sup> and the third on November 1<sup>st</sup>. At present the editorial team is preparing the folder necessary for the journal's inclusion in the Social Sciences Citation Index, the application for inclusion will be made shortly.

The quality of a journal is reflected in the winning of scientific awards for articles published. The editorial team is therefore very pleased to announce that in the past year the CORECHED prize of Fr. 25,000 from the Swiss Coordination Centre for Research in Education was awarded to Sonja Engelage and Andreas Hadjar. Their article "PhD and Career – Is a Doctoral Degree Worth It? Analyses with the Swiss Graduate Study" appeared in the first issue of the Swiss Journal of Sociology in 2008 (Vol. 34, 71–93) and we congratulate the authors on this award. At the same time, we should like to reiterate that (German or English) articles published in the Swiss Journal of Sociology may still enter in the competition for the Fritz Thyssen Prize for journal essays in the social sciences.

In the Editorial of 2010, we announced that the Swiss Journal of Sociology would in future publish one special issue annually, as the journal's second issue (in July) of each year. The corresponding guidelines can be found on the website of the journal. Proposals for the topics of future special issues should be submitted

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by the end of April in each year. It should be noted, however, that a period of approximately two years is required (from the time of proposal up to publication of a special issue) to allow for decisions by the Editorial Committee, public call for papers, reviews, corrections, editing work as well as setting and printing. Last year the special issue included eight contributions – some of them international – on the theme of the global financial and economic crisis (Global Economic Crisis: Perceptions and Impacts, Vol. 37, Issue 2). The special issue to be published in July 2012 will contain eight contributions on the theme of persistent social inequalities in Switzerland (Vol. 38, Issue 2) and in 2013 it will deal with “Change and Reforms in Educational Systems and Organizations.” We would like to thank all guest editors for their valuable contribution and their commitment to the journal.

In all, 21 articles were published in the three issues during the calendar year 2011; in the same time frame 42 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.

First of all, about the *publications*: The majority of the articles published in the year 2011, namely about three-quarters, were empirical, with qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis being quite balanced (eight each); the remaining five were theoretically oriented, introductory or review articles. Most were written in English (nine); seven articles were published in German and five in French. Regarding language region of origin, nine contributions came from German-speaking Switzerland, five from French-speaking Switzerland and seven from other countries (of these, two were from France and one from Germany). The strong representation of English contributions and foreign authors is particularly due to the fact that the contributions to the special issues are mainly written in English and fortunately several foreign authors also responded to the call for papers. With regard to the gender of first authors, the clear dominance of men is still shown in the published articles (13 men compared to eight women), which, however, is not due to different rates of success, but to the fact that in the past clearly more men (about two-thirds) than women (about one third) have submitted manuscripts (cf. details regarding manuscript submission in the Editorial 2010).

Of the *manuscript submissions*, the majority were empirical quantitative (57%) or empirical qualitative (29%), the remaining 14% being distributed between purely theoretical and methodological contributions and empirical articles with a combined qualitative-quantitative analytical design. With regard to language (43% German, 38% English, 19% French) and language region of origin, the distribution is relatively balanced (33% from German-speaking Switzerland, 26% from French-speaking Switzerland, 12% from Germany, 5% from France, and 24% from various other countries). As to the gender of first authors, the proportions are quite balanced: 48% female and 52% male (first) authors.

Table 1 Swiss Journal of Sociology: Articles published and manuscript submitted in the calendar year 2011

	Articles published		Manuscripts submitted	
	N	%	N	%
Total	21	100%	42	100%
<b>Methods</b>				
Empirical – qualitative	8	38%	12	29%
Empirical – quantitative	8	38%	24	57%
Empirical – mixed	0	0%	3	7%
Theoretical	4	19%	2	5%
Methodological	0	0%	1	2%
Introductory and review articles	1	5%		
<b>Language</b>				
German	7	33%	18	43%
French	5	24%	8	19%
English	9	43%	16	38%
<b>Region of origin (first author)</b>				
German-speaking Switzerland	9	43%	14	33%
French-speaking Switzerland	5	24%	11	26%
Germany	1	5%	5	12%
France	2	10%	2	5%
Other countries	4	19%	10	24%
<b>Sex (first author)</b>				
Female	8	38%	20	48%
Male	13	62%	22	52%

During the review process, 114 experts were approached, and 75 wrote reviews. Altogether the editorial team requested 136 reviews, 92 of which 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 thank very much all those involved in this work. A list of the reviewers' names can be found on the journal's website.

Of the 42 manuscripts submitted, 36 were reviewed during the calendar year and a decision taken. The number of reviews per manuscript varied in 2011 between two and four. In 64% of the reviewed manuscripts, our internal guideline of three reviews was achieved. The average duration of review was 4.1 months, which is slightly over the internal guideline of four months. About 40% of the submitted (and reviewed) manuscripts were accepted, the majority, however, on condition

that substantial corrections were made. Almost 30% of the reviewed manuscripts had to be refused, or were withdrawn by the author, and the remaining 30% were returned for extensive revision, whereby the revised versions of these manuscripts were reviewed once more.

The efforts of the Swiss Journal of Sociology to professionalize their activities and improve the quality and standing of the journal (e. g., with the planned inclusion in the SSCI system) require both more time and money. The Swiss Sociological Association and the editorial team of the journal have, therefore, approached all the sociological institutes of the various universities in Switzerland requesting that they support the journal with a donation. The editorial team is exceptionally grateful that, up to January 2012, five of the institutes approached have already agreed to give such financial support (Sociological Institute of the University of Zurich, Sociological Institute of the University of Basel, Chair of Sociology, Social Policy and Social Work of the University of Fribourg, Department of Sociology of the University of Geneva, Department of Sociology of the University of Neuchâtel). These funds will allow the editorial team to continue its efforts to realize the planned professionalization, particularly the indexing and the creation of a new website, in the current year.