



**Convention on the Rights
of Persons with Disabilities**

Distr.: General
29 October 2021
English
Original: French
English, French and Spanish only

Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Twenty-sixth session

7–25 March 2022

Consideration of reports submitted by parties to the Convention under article 35

**Replies of Switzerland to the list of issues in relation to its
initial report* ****

[Date received: 25 September 2020]

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

** The annexes to the present document are available on the Committee's web page.



A. Purpose and general obligations (arts. 1–4)

Reply to paragraph 1 (a) of the list of issues (CRPD/C/CHE/Q/1)

1. The Confederation and the cantons regularly exchange information in the framework of the National Dialogue on Swiss Social Policy, through, for example, the multi-year “Autonomy” programme. The cantons coordinate their activities in the various conferences of directors, and the Conference of Cantonal Directors of Social Affairs is represented on the working groups on disability policy and the “Autonomy” programme.

Reply to paragraph 1 (b) of the list of issues

2. The public consultation procedure allows civil society to express its views on the legislative reforms under way. This is the preliminary phase of the legislative procedure during which the drafts are put for comments to the cantons, the main political parties, the umbrella associations of the municipalities, towns and mountain regions, the umbrella associations for businesses and other interested parties. Anyone, whether invited to or not, can comment on the drafts under consultation. Recently, associations of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons and persons with disabilities have expressed their views on the draft revision of the Civil Code aimed at opening civil marriage to all, as well as on the government bill transmitted to Parliament on 6 December 2019 concerning change of sex on the civil register; they will also be able to express their views on the Arslan and Ruiz postulates, which call for the introduction of a third sex category. Under the “Autonomy” programme, the Confederation and the cantons are looking at ways of enhancing the inclusion of persons with disabilities and their organizations in the procedures for drafting and monitoring the implementation of laws.

Reply to paragraph 1 (c) of the list of issues

3. The rights of persons with disabilities are defined as objectives in the “equal opportunities” thematic area of the 2020–2030 Sustainable Development Strategy, which is currently under development. Public consultation is part of that process and will give a voice to organizations of persons with disabilities.

Reply to paragraph 1 (d) of the list of issues

4. The Government would like to wait to find out more about the practice of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in order to establish what the consequences of ratifying the Optional Protocol would be on the country’s legal system. The Government is prepared to provide the necessary clarifications after the first review cycle.

B. Specific rights (arts. 5–30)

Equality and non-discrimination (art. 5)

Reply to paragraph 2 (a) of the list of issues

5. The Government believes that the country’s existing law and related case law provide sufficient protection from discrimination and that the available legal instruments allow victims to defend themselves. The prohibition of discrimination is enshrined in article 8 of the Constitution. In addition, laws such as the Gender Equality Act and the Disability Discrimination Act directly address certain types of discrimination. The Swiss Centre of Expertise in Human Rights expressly notes in its study that the creation of a general anti-discrimination law is not recommended. As the issues vary greatly between the different areas, it would be difficult to draft a law that would cover all of them. That might also undermine the progress made and adversely affect monitoring and the provision of counselling and support in the areas concerned. The Government has commissioned a feasibility study from the Centre to assess whether and how data on multiple discrimination can be collected. The results are expected by the end of 2020.

Reply to paragraph 2 (b) of the list of issues

6. Article 8 (2) of the Constitution offers protection against regulations and public-law measures that have discriminatory effects. It can be invoked in all proceedings. More specifically, article 7 of the Disability Discrimination Act allows a person who suffers from unequal treatment in access to buildings or public transport to request those responsible to refrain from causing such inequality. Under article 8 of the Act, in the case of contractors or public authorities, the person discriminated against may request that the service provider eliminate or refrain from causing the inequality. If the discrimination is caused by private individuals providing services to the public, the person discriminated against may claim compensation (to a maximum of 5,000 Swiss francs (CHF)) set by the court according to the circumstances, the seriousness of the discrimination and the value of the service in question. In the case of discrimination by private individuals, the general provisions of the Civil Code on personal privacy (art. 28) apply and the victims may claim compensation.

7. Under certain conditions, organizations working to support persons with disabilities have the right to take action or appeal in their own name against unequal treatment that affects a significant number of persons with disabilities (Disability Discrimination Act, art. 9 (1)). They can have the discrimination formally recorded under article 6 of the Act and assert the rights provided for in its article 7. The Act provides that no fee may be charged for proceedings brought under its articles 7 or 8. In social insurance matters, cantonal law regulates proceedings brought before the cantonal insurance court, which must be simple, quick, as a rule public and free of charge for the parties. Disputes over the granting or denial of invalidity insurance benefits are subject to legal costs.

Reply to paragraph 2 (c) of the list of issues

8. The Government conducted a comprehensive review of the protection against discrimination provided under the law, described in its report of 25 May 2016. It considered that the civil law currently in force provides sufficient protection against discrimination. Protection against discrimination on the grounds of sexual identity or sexual orientation can be derived from the general rules (protection of personal privacy in general in civil law, protection of personal privacy of the employee, protection against unfair dismissal in labour law or unfair termination of a tenancy agreement; cf. list of issues, para. 21 (b)). On 9 February 2020, the people of Switzerland agreed to extend the criminal provision against discrimination (Criminal Code, art. 261 bis) to include discrimination based on sexual orientation.

Women with disabilities (art. 6)**Reply to paragraph 3 of the list of issues**

9. In force since 1 January 2020, the Ordinance on Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence has created the basis for the implementation and financing by the Confederation of measures to prevent and combat the forms of violence covered by the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention). Financial assistance of CHF 3 million could be granted from 2021 onwards in the context of measures to prevent violence against women and domestic violence. The needs of particularly vulnerable persons are taken into account in the priority programmes of the Federal Bureau for the Equality of Persons with Disabilities.

Children with disabilities (art. 7)**Reply to paragraph 4 (a) of the list of issues**

10. As a participant in the resettlement programmes of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Switzerland regularly receives particularly vulnerable refugees, such as families with a child with disabilities or persons with chronic diseases.

11. In addition, all cantons have integration measures in place and endeavour to eliminate discrimination against children with disabilities with refugee or provisional admission status.

Twenty cantons report having specific measures in place for undocumented children. Through the funding it allocates to children's rights, the Confederation is committed to raising awareness and coordinating the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In 2016, the Conference of Cantonal Directors of Social Services adopted recommendations on unaccompanied minors covering the provision of accommodation and support for unaccompanied minors with disabilities. They advocate an integrated approach, with the use of specialized institutions where necessary, taking account of the specific needs of unaccompanied minors, including the provision of targeted support and assistance.

Reply to paragraph 4 (b) of the list of issues

12. On 2 September 2020, the Government adopted a report entitled "The Right of the Child to be Heard – Review of the Implementation in Switzerland of Article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child", based on a study by the Swiss Centre of Expertise in Human Rights. The Government concludes that any room for improvement in the implementation of article 12 of the Convention lies not so much in federal legislation but, rather, in information and awareness-raising, except in the case of foster care, on which it will be considering whether there is a need to amend the law.

Awareness-raising (art. 8)

Reply to paragraph 5 (a) of the list of issues

13. Special education professionals are made aware of the rights of students with disabilities in their basic and in-service training. In post-secondary education, both the universities and the cantons provide the information required and uphold the rights conferred by international law. Educational institutions have academic freedom, but must provide comprehensive, quality education that covers the rights of persons with disabilities. The same applies to the cantons in the training they provide for judges and lawyers. Under the invalidity insurance system, financial aid is granted to the national and regional umbrella organizations that provide private assistance for persons with disabilities. About 70 per cent of the grants are used to pay for counselling and care and for courses targeted at persons with disabilities and their families. The remaining funding is used for indirect services, such as information or public relations campaigns. The Federal Bureau for the Equality of Persons with Disabilities also provides financial support (cf. list of issues, para. 5 (b)).

Reply to paragraph 5 (b) of the list of issues

14. This is done through awareness-raising, including through the provision of financial support from the Confederation for projects aimed at promoting equality for persons with disabilities. These include, for instance, a project rolled out in the six French-speaking cantons of Switzerland by ASA-Handicap mental, whose aim is to give a voice to persons with an intellectual disability in order to involve them in defending their rights and thus allow them to live as full citizens by participating in the decisions that concern them.

Accessibility (art. 9)

Reply to paragraph 6 (a) and (b) of the list of issues

15. The Disability Discrimination Act forms the basis for everything done to ensure or improve accessibility in Switzerland. Organizations supporting persons with disabilities and other stakeholders were involved in drafting and implementing the Act from the initial stages of the parliamentary procedure, and then through the consultation process (cf. list of issues, para. 2 (b)) and the referendum (Disability Discrimination Act, art. 24). The organizations working with persons with disabilities were also closely involved in evaluating the Act in 2015.

16. Under the Act, public transport must be accessible for persons with disabilities by the end of 2023. A directive issued by the Federal Office of Transport on the minimum proportion of independently accessible long-distance trains stipulates that, by the end of 2023,

at least one train per hour in each direction must be equipped with low floors. The remaining trains will be accessible with the assistance of a member of the railway staff. The Federal Office is working on the basis of level access being guaranteed at a minimum of one door on each regional train by the end of 2023. It has developed a tool, the Disability Discrimination Act Planning Instructions, which will speed up implementation of the Act in the area of railway infrastructure and strengthen guarantees of the right. The Federal Office has also drawn up a national implementation plan for the requirements of the European Union's technical specifications for interoperability in respect of persons with reduced mobility, in which it considers that the Act and its ordinances fulfil the role of a national plan.

17. Please see paragraphs 40 ff. of the initial report for information on the application of the Act in the area of buildings and facilities.

18. The SIA 500 standard is the basis for assessing the accessibility of residential and commercial buildings in all the cantons. Pursuant to article 5 of the Housing Act, housing provided under the aegis of the Confederation must, inter alia, meet the needs of persons with disabilities. The housing assessment system used by the Federal Office for Housing requires that residential buildings and their immediate surroundings be designed to be barrier-free, in accordance with SIA 500. Failure to comply with these rules will result in the denial of federal assistance. The Office supports the Living Every Age (LEA) association, which awards LEA certification, a system introduced in 2017. It is the first quality assurance scheme in the world that certifies housing as barrier-free and fair for older persons. LEA certification makes accessibility standards transparent, so that persons with disabilities can look for a living space that suits their needs.

19. Under the Telecommunications Act, universal services must be provided by the licensee throughout the country in such a way that they can be used by persons with disabilities in conditions comparable to those afforded to persons without disabilities. The Ordinance on Telecommunications Services specifies that persons with hearing impairments must have access, in the three official languages, to a transcription service and a text message service, as well as a video telephony relay service. A directory and switching service is also available to persons with visual impairments and persons with reduced mobility. The obligations of the universal service licensee are periodically reviewed and adjusted by the Government. In 2018, the Government renewed its "Digital Switzerland" strategy. With the strategic goal of "Innovative technologies and services that promote participation in society and integration into the labour market", the Confederation is committed to equal opportunities and barrier-free, non-discriminatory access to innovative technologies and services for all residents of Switzerland. A symposium entitled "e-Government accessible to all" was organized in May 2019 with the objective of highlighting the need to take action now to ensure the accessibility of information and services on the Internet and to offer good examples from real life.

20. On 1 January 2021, standard eCH-0059 V 3.0, laying down regulations on the accessibility of information and communication media (the Internet) for the Confederation, the cantons and the municipalities, will come into force. It also sets out new requirements in respect of easy-to-read language and sign language.

Right to life (art. 10)

Reply to paragraph 7 of the list of issues

21. Pursuant to the guidelines of the Swiss Academy of Medical Sciences, assistance in suicide may be provided only if the patient's illness is incurable and at an advanced stage. Only persons capable of discernment may obtain a medical prescription for the lethal substance from a doctor and swallow it themselves. Persons with disabilities are subject to the same conditions. Assisted suicide can also be granted to persons suffering from psychological disorders insofar as the desire to commit suicide is based on the independent decision of a person capable of discernment. A specialized, in-depth psychiatric evaluation is needed to assess whether these conditions are met. In 2017, 1,009 people died by assisted suicide. The vast majority were over 65 years of age. The statistics collected include the sex and age of the deceased person, but not whether he or she had a disability.

Situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies (art. 11)

Reply to paragraph 8 (a) of the list of issues

22. On 19 June 2020, the Government decided that Switzerland should sign the Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action. In accordance with paragraph 1.6 of the Charter, Switzerland supports the implementation of the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction and highlights the inclusion of persons with disabilities in disaster risk reduction.

23. The current national development project entitled “Future of alarm and telecommunication systems for civil protection” is scheduled for completion in 2023. Since October 2018, the Alertswiss app and website offer an overview and a detailed list of event notifications. In particular, they meet the needs of persons with hearing impairments. The application makes it possible to subscribe to receive information, alerts or alarms for pre-selected cantons or the canton where the person is located.

Reply to paragraph 8 (b) of the list of issues

24. The 2019 policy paper by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation aimed at “leaving no one behind” highlights disability as a factor of exclusion in its analysis of poverty and exclusion. It details the important aspects of project cycle management that is aimed at leaving no one behind and ensuring inclusion and access to programmes and projects for the most vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities.

25. The State Secretariat for Migration is committed to providing assistance for asylum seekers and refugees with disabilities. As part of the country’s integration agenda, a competence assessment is carried out for temporarily admitted persons and refugees. The state of health of the person concerned is taken into account in deciding on the integration plan and the objectives set in it. Within the framework of the cantonal integration programmes for the migrant population, the State Secretariat defines areas of support and strategic objectives. The cantons implement integration measures to achieve these objectives.

Equal recognition before the law (art. 12)

Reply to paragraph 9 of the list of issues

26. In a report on initial experience in the context of the new right to protection for children and adults, of 29 March 2017, the Government took note of the observations made by the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in respect of other countries with a system similar to its own. It expressed an interest in closely following the discussions taking place in Switzerland and elsewhere.

Access to justice (art. 13)

Reply to paragraph 10 (a) of the list of issues

27. The authorities are investing in accessibility at all levels. Structural access to existing administrative buildings has been simplified and, under the Disability Discrimination Act, new buildings must be accessible (cf. list of issues, para. 6). Barriers in the information sector have also been removed. For example, the canton of Zurich maintains a list of accredited sign language interpreters who can be called on in court proceedings. Important information on the judicial system itself, as well as on criminal proceedings, will be translated into easy-to-read language. On 26 February 2020, the Government adopted a message on the revision of the Code of Civil Procedure. To facilitate access to the courts, the Government is proposing to reduce the court fees that have to be paid in advance. The provisions governing the payment of procedural costs will also be adapted so that, if the unsuccessful party is insolvent, the risk of recovery of advances paid will be borne by the State and not by the parties.

Reply to paragraph 10 (b) of the list of issues

28. Human rights education is part of the training for judges. The topic of disability is discussed in police academies and during debriefings after missions.

Liberty and security of the person (art. 14)**Reply to paragraph 11 (a) of the list of issues**

29. Care-related hospitalization is used in response to a particular need for protection of the person concerned, when the life or personal integrity of the person or of others would be in danger. The measure is lifted as soon as the assistance or treatment is no longer necessary or can be provided on an outpatient basis (Civil Code, art. 426 (1)). The new provisions and their implementation in the cantons have been criticized and, in July 2020, the Government launched a call for proposals for their thorough evaluation.

30. According to hospital medical statistics, 11,879 people were subject to care-related hospitalization in the context of an inpatient stay in a psychiatric facility (hospital, clinic or ward) in 2018. The figure for 2014 was 6,704. These figures are a minimum, as the information was only recorded for 72% of cases of psychiatric hospitalization. The statistics document various patient characteristics including sex, age and region of residence, but not the existence of a disability.

Reply to paragraph 11 (b) of the list of issues

31. Switzerland is participating in the discussions on the draft additional protocol to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Dignity of the Human Being with regard to the Application of Biology and Medicine (Oviedo Convention). It has no plans at this time to oppose its adoption. It will, nevertheless, follow the progress of the work with great attention.

Reply to paragraph 11 (c) of the list of issues

32. The placement of a child in care is the consequence of the withdrawal of the right to decide on the child's place of residence, pronounced by the judge or by the child protection authority. The conditions for such placement are set out in article 310 of the Civil Code. The child may be placed in a foster home or an institutional setting. Where a child and his or her parents do not live together, they have the right to maintain contact (Civil Code, art. 273 (1)). As concerns placement in a psychiatric institution, the adult protection provisions on placement for assistance purposes apply by analogy when a child is placed in a closed institution or a psychiatric establishment (Civil Code, art. 314b). The reference to the provisions applicable to adults has been criticized, and the Government would like to have an assessment carried out on this topic (cf. list of issues, para. 4 (b)).

Freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (art. 15)**Reply to paragraph 12 (a) of the list of issues**

33. The Government intends to assess the current regulations on forced medical treatment and measures restricting the freedom of movement of a person residing in an institution as part of the evaluation of the rules on care-related hospitalization (cf. list of issues, para. 11 (a)). In accordance with the principle of equivalence, prisoners should enjoy living conditions that correspond as far as possible with those of normal life (Criminal Code, art. 75 (1)). In respect of forced medication, for example, in cases where prisoners have severe mental disorders, the Swiss Academy of Medical Sciences has noted that the principles governing the use of medically indicated coercive measures in respect of prisoners are the same as those that apply to the rest of the population.

Reply to paragraph 12 (b) of the list of issues

34. The mandate of the National Commission for the Prevention of Torture is described in the Act on the Commission for the Prevention of Torture. Pursuant to article 8 of the Act, the Commission has access to all places of deprivation of liberty, their facilities and equipment and may visit them without notice. It may interview any person deprived of liberty or any other person who may be able to provide it with the information it needs. When the Commission inspects a psychiatric facility where individuals are subject to a care-related hospitalization order, the Commission takes a particular interest in the living and housing conditions in which the patients are held. It pays particular attention to the use of measures involving the restriction of liberty and examines their compliance with the provisions on the protection of adults and human rights. The cantons are considering different concepts for the use in institutions of measures that restrict an individual's freedom, and some (Vaud and Bern) have introduced regulations governing their use.

Reply to paragraph 12 (c) of the list of issues

35. The Act on Research Involving Human Beings was evaluated between 2017 and 2019. In December 2019, the Government decided to revise the ordinances in which the provisions of the Act are laid out. Organizations of persons with disabilities can express their views during the consultation procedure. The revised ordinances are expected to come into force at the end of 2021.

Reply to paragraph 12 (d) of the list of issues

36. The Federal Department of Home Affairs has amended annex 1 of the Ordinance on Compulsory Health Insurance Benefits and, as of 1 July 2019, "packing" is excluded from the benefits reimbursed by compulsory health insurance. The same is true of invalidity insurance. Some cantons have banned the practice of "packing" within their borders. "Packing" could, furthermore, meet the criteria to be qualified as coercion (Criminal Code, art. 181).

Reply to paragraph 12 (e) of the list of issues

37. According to the Federal Court, a medical intervention – sterilization is one such intervention – meets the objective elements to qualify as an assault. Interventions for curative purposes may be justified by the consent of the person concerned or by a particular justifying fact arising from the norms governing medical practice. Aggravated common assault, serious assault and assault through negligence are prosecuted ex officio if the criminal authorities are informed that they have occurred. Non-aggravated common assault and common assault through negligence are prosecuted if a complaint is filed. The injured party may file a complaint against the perpetrator within a period of three months. The time limit shall run from the day on which the rightful claimant became aware of the identity of the perpetrator. The prescriptive period for criminal offences (Criminal Code, art. 97) is 15 years for serious assault; in the case of offences committed against a child under the age of 16 years, the prescriptive period for prosecution runs in any case until the victim reaches the age of 25. The prescriptive period is 10 years for common assault and for common assault through negligence. In the case of surgical treatment that proves to have been unlawful, a civil claim for damages or for monetary compensation for pain and suffering may be filed. From 1 January 2020, the prescriptive period for civil proceedings in cases of assault is 3 years from the day on which the injured party becomes aware of the harm caused and of the identity of person held liable (relative limitation) and 20 years from the day on which the wrongful act occurred (absolute limitation; Code of Obligations, arts. 60 (1 bis) and 128a), which improves the position of a person who has undergone a premature medical or surgical intervention.

38. On 6 July 2016, the Government adopted a position on the report of the National Ethics Commission for Human Medicine entitled "Approach to take on variations in sexual development: ethical issues on intersexuality". The Government specified that premature or unnecessary medical or surgical interventions are contrary to the right to respect for physical integrity. Wherever possible, any decision on a proposed treatment that will lead to irreversible consequences must be postponed until the child has reached a sufficient level of maturity to be able to express his or her own views. The decision on one's own sexual identity

is an absolute and strictly personal right of the child, which the child's parents cannot exercise in his or her place (Civil Code, art. 19 (2)).

Freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse (art. 16)

Reply to paragraph 13 (a) of the list of issues

39. Article 28*b* of the Civil Code lists measures that the judge may order to avoid or put an end to an unlawful violation of personal privacy. The judge may prohibit the perpetrator from approaching or making contact with the victim or frequenting specific places. On 14 December 2018, the Swiss Parliament passed the Act on Improving the Protection of Persons Affected by Violence. The measures adopted to better protect victims of domestic violence and stalking include electronic monitoring of compliance with geographical and contact bans. From 1 January 2022, the judge will be able to order that a potential perpetrator of violence be fitted with an electronic bracelet. The device will track and record his or her movements at all times. It will play a preventive role and will serve to provide evidence in the event of non-compliance with the ban, without incurring costs for the victim.

40. Hate crimes may fall under articles 111 ff. (offences against life and limb), 135 (depiction of violence), 173 ff. (offences against personal honour), 180 (threats), 181 (coercion), 188 (sexual acts with dependent persons), 191 (sexual acts committed on a person incapable of discernment or resistance) and 259 (public incitement to commit a felony or act of violence) of the Criminal Code.

Reply to paragraph 13 (b) of the list of issues

41. Pursuant to the Victim Support Act, victims of an offence committed in Switzerland that directly impinges on their physical, mental or sexual integrity are entitled to advice and support from the victim support services. The benefits provided for under the Act include appropriate medical, psychological, social, material and legal assistance (arts. 12 to 16) and possible compensation or damages for pain and suffering (arts. 19 ff.). Entitlement to such benefits is limited to those who have been unable to obtain assistance by other means, such as through criminal proceedings or civil liability procedures (Victim Support Act, art. 4), and is subject to certain conditions.

Reply to paragraph 13 (c) of the list of issues

42. In 2021, the Government will adopt a national strategy for equality between women and men, in which issues related to combating violence and sexism will be central elements. The Committee for the Implementation of the Istanbul Convention, which brings together the Confederation and the cantons, will consider the need to adopt new measures on the basis of Switzerland's first report (February 2021) to the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO) and the conclusions and recommendations relating thereto.

Reply to paragraph 13 (d) of the list of issues

43. Judicial, police and victim support statistics do not include information on the disability status of victims of exploitation, violence and abuse. According to the Swiss Health Survey 2012, one in four employed persons with disabilities aged 15 to 64 years reported having experienced at least one form of violence or discrimination at work in the previous 12 months. The results are broken down by sex and age but not by place of residence.

44. On 2 September 2020, the Government accepted a postulate that calls for a report to be drafted on violence against persons with disabilities.

Reply to paragraph 13 (e) of the list of issues

45. Intersexuality falls within the scope of invalidity insurance. For persons aged 20 and above, medical measures are covered by compulsory health insurance. The compulsory health insurance system guarantees benefits in the event of illness, accident or maternity. The scheme is based on preemptory and exhaustive legislation, and only those benefits defined in

articles 25 to 31 of the Health Insurance Act are covered. Neither health promotion nor social reintegration measures are covered.

Protecting the integrity of the person (art. 17)

Reply to paragraph 14 (a) of the list of issues

46. According to the Federal Court, the right to consent to medical treatment is a strictly personal right. It may be exercised by the legal representative of a person incapable of discernment. The Sterilization Act, which came into force on 1 July 2005, regulates the conditions under which sterilization is permitted for contraceptive purposes, as well as the applicable procedure. The sterilization of a person over 18 years of age and capable of discernment may be performed only with his or her free and informed consent, given in writing (art. 5). The sterilization of a person over 18 years of age who is temporarily incapable of discernment is prohibited (art. 4). The sterilization of a person over 18 years of age, who is capable of discernment and under general guardianship, may be performed only with his or her free and informed consent, given in writing (art. 5). The person's legal representative must also have given his or her consent (art. 6). The sterilization of an adult who is permanently incapable of discernment is in principle prohibited (art. 7 (1)) and may constitute serious assault within the meaning of the second subparagraph of article 122 of the Criminal Code, punishable by a custodial sentence of between 6 months and 10 years. It may, however, be authorized by the adult protection authority under the restrictive conditions of article 7 (2) and in accordance with the terms of article 8 (2) of the Code. No data is available on the number of sterilizations carried out on persons with disabilities each year. According to Health Statistics 2019, 9 per cent of sexually active persons aged 15–49 had opted for sterilization. The practice primarily concerns persons aged 35 and over.

Reply to paragraph 14 (b) of the list of issues

47. The Government believes that current practice respects the rights of intersex people. To the extent possible, a child must be old enough to express his or her views when a treatment that can have irreversible consequences is proposed. According to experts, the current framework ensures that the best interests of the child take precedence over medical interventions and treatments. It is important to note the statement issued by the National Advisory Commission on Biomedical Ethics in December 2016: "The support provided to the families concerned has been improved in Switzerland and the recommendations of the National Advisory Commission on Biomedical Ethics, as well as international standards, are respected as far as possible. In principle, parents who find themselves in this difficult situation are now given counselling and support by an interdisciplinary team, from the time of the birth of the child. Thus, all decisions regarding treatment and interventions must be made with the child's well-being in mind and in the context of shared decision-making."

48. There are no standard data available on this subject. According to a special analysis of hospital medical statistics, only a few cases of intersex-related operations concerning patients under the age of 18 years occurred in 2018.

Living independently and being included in the community (art. 19)

Reply to paragraph 15 (a) of the list of issues

49. Independent living is a priority theme in the policy for persons with disabilities. There is a 2018–2021 programme on the topic, and free choice of place of residence is one of its areas of action. In recent years, social insurance benefits that help persons with disabilities remain in their own homes have been expanded (invalidity insurance contribution, intensive care allowance, etc.). The institutions offer adaptable forms of housing with varying degrees of support. The placement of children and adults in institutions is voluntary and is decided in consultation with the parents, the persons with disabilities and their legal representatives. The supply of housing for persons with disabilities has increased in recent years, and now offers greater diversity, decentralization and flexibility of forms of housing and services.

Reply to paragraph 15 (b) of the list of issues

50. Invalidity insurance offers various benefits to enable persons with disabilities to choose their living environment, including various aids. Insured persons are entitled to the aids they need to allow them to be as independent and self-sufficient as possible in daily life, whether for moving around, for contacting friends and family or for developing their personal independence. LEA certification allows persons with disabilities to find out about accessible housing that meets their needs (cf. list of issues, para. 6 (a)). The supplementary benefits provided to assist with rental costs will be increased as a result of the reform adopted by Parliament in 2019. The cantons also contribute to helping persons with disabilities lead independent lives, many of them co-financing or planning the provision of care and support services in private homes.

Reply to paragraph 15 (c) of the list of issues

51. In 2015, 871 children (aged 0–17 years) were accommodated in facilities for persons with disabilities, for substance dependency or psycho-social disorders, as were 24,352 adults (18 years and older). The average length of stay was between 144 and 543 days for children and between 340 and 2,149 days for adults, depending on the type of facility. At the same time, 9 children and 4,464 adults aged between 18 and 64 years were accommodated in a long-stay facility intended primarily for the elderly, with an average stay of 41 days for children and between 1 and 2 years for adults. Those statistics include some clients who have had multiple stays at the same facility. Since 2015, the portion of the survey on facilities for persons with disabilities has not been mandatory.

Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information (art. 21)**Reply to paragraph 16 (a) of the list of issues**

52. For the framework, see the initial report, paragraphs 116 ff. (on article 21 of the Convention).

53. The Swiss Broadcasting Corporation and the associations of persons with disabilities negotiate an agreement on the scope of the services to be offered (Radio and Television Ordinance, art. 7 (6)). A new agreement was negotiated in 2017, with the aim of achieving a gradual increase each year in the proportion of programmes with subtitling in linear programming, from 50 per cent to 80 per cent. It is planned to provide subtitling for 80 per cent of web-only content, most of which has not been subtitled in the past. Since 2019, prime time programmes and live programmes on Sundays from noon onwards have been subtitled. Real-time sign language transcription is available for the main news programmes. The aim in providing audio description is to make programmes aired between 6 p.m. and 10.30 p.m. accessible to the visually impaired or to make up for any failure to do so as soon as possible thereafter. Article 15 of the Corporation's 2019 licence explicitly lays out its duty to cater for persons with disabilities. In addition to the national provider's tasks, since 2017, regional television stations with a licence have been required to provide subtitles for their daily news bulletins from the second time they are broadcast. These public services also receive some funding from licence fees.

54. The administrative units of the Confederation must ensure that their Internet-based services are accessible (Disability Discrimination Act, art. 14 (2) and Disability Discrimination Ordinance, art. 10). The Government's E-Accessibility Action Plan 2015–2017 aims to improve the accessibility of the Federal Administration's websites. A dedicated service has been set up to support and advise federal departments and offices in ensuring the accessibility of their information and communication services on the Internet. The relevant national standard, eCH 0059 V. 3.0, will take effect from January 2021.

Reply to paragraph 16 (b) of the list of issues

55. The interdepartmental working group on easy-to-read language and sign language is developing measures to encourage the use of these means of communication in the Federal Administration. The aim of the working group is to provide general information using

alternative forms of communication, such as accessible PDFs, easy-to-read language and sign language. The federal or cantonal authority covers the costs if a sign language interpreter is required to provide a service.

56. For the 2015 and 2019 elections, the Federal Chancellery set up a platform accessible to persons with disabilities, including information in sign language. Easy-to-read language was added to the platform in the context of a pilot project in 2019. Informational videos in sign language are produced on each federal proposal to be submitted to the popular vote, in addition to existing online video resources.

Respect for privacy (art. 22)

Reply to paragraph 17 (a) of the list of issues

57. The general framework laid down by the Data Protection Act defines the limits and obligations of persons or institutions processing data and the means of recourse available to ensure that erroneous data are amended or deleted (arts. 16 ff. and 22). The Federal Statistics Act and the Ordinance on Statistical Surveys address, among other things, the principles of data collection, protection and security and criminal provisions for violations of the obligation to provide information and for breaches of confidentiality. The Federal Statistics Office adheres to various national and international codes of conduct. Most federal household and individual surveys are voluntary and provide for the possibility of opting not to answer all or some of the questions (Federal Statistics Act, art. 6). Pursuant to article 8 of the Disability Discrimination Act, any person who suffers from unequal treatment by a public authority may request the court or the administrative authority to order the provider to eliminate or to refrain from causing such inequality.

Reply to paragraph 17 (b) of the list of issues

58. If it is not possible to determine from interviews and documents whether a person is entitled to social insurance benefits, covert observation may be carried out as a last resort and in cases of serious suspicion. The new articles 43a and 43b of the Federal Act on General Aspects of Social Security Law, which came into force on 1 October 2019, lay down the conditions and procedure for such covert observation. The Government has set out requirements that must be met by the experts in charge of the observation. In 2019, one such observation was ordered under accident insurance, as were two under disability insurance. The cantons are responsible for monitoring any abuse of social assistance.

Respect for home and the family (art. 23)

Reply to paragraph 18 (a) of the list of issues

59. A person under general guardianship may marry without being required to obtain the consent of his or her guardian, if he or she is capable of discernment. According to the Federal Court, the requirements in respect of the capacity of discernment of persons wishing to enter into marriage are limited so as to respect the right to marry, which is enshrined in the Constitution (art. 14).

Reply to paragraph 18 (b) of the list of issues

60. Family policy falls under the responsibility of the cantons, but many tasks are carried out on a voluntary basis by private bodies. The Confederation can provide financial support for these activities. The financial support granted by the Confederation to family organizations is intended to support counselling and training for parents, among other things. Families also receive support in the form of the individual benefits under invalidity insurance.

Reply to paragraph 18 (c) of the list of issues

61. Various benefits are provided under invalidity insurance to assist with covering the costs of care for children with disabilities within the family. The full incapacity allowance is a financial benefit granted from birth to a child who needs more help than a non-disabled

child of the same age. An intensive care supplement is granted to minors who require an average of at least four hours per day of additional assistance. Minors are also entitled to an assistance allowance to fund the provision of medical and social care at home. Furthermore, a child with disabilities has the right to the provision of aids needed to attend school, move around or be in contact with friends and family.

62. On 20 December 2019, Parliament passed the Federal Act on Improving the Compatibility of Employment and Caring for Family Members, which, inter alia, introduces 14 weeks of paid leave for the care of a seriously ill child. The date it will enter into force has yet to be set.

63. Invalidity insurance includes benefits for parents who receive a pension under invalidity insurance to enable them to care for their child in the family environment. In addition to federally funded counselling and assistance (cf. list of issues, paras. 5 (a) and 18 (b)), persons receiving a pension under invalidity insurance are entitled to an allowance for the child until he or she reaches the age of 18 or finishes his or her education (up to a maximum age of 25 years). This additional allowance corresponds to 40 per cent of the main pension. Persons receiving daily allowances while rehabilitation measures are provided in the context of invalidity insurance are entitled to a child benefit subject to the same age limits.

Education (art. 24)

Reply to paragraph 19 (a) of the list of issues

64. The cantons are responsible for the education of children and young persons with disabilities up to the age of 20, and comply with the provisions of the Constitution and the Disability Discrimination Act, which call for inclusive rather than segregated solutions. Following their 2011 agreement on special education, the cantons have been working together to establish common quality standards and common terminology. To ensure equal treatment, the agreement provides for a standardized assessment procedure to determine the individual needs of pupils with special educational needs.

Reply to paragraph 19 (b) of the list of issues

65. The statistics on special education provide information on the distribution of students with special educational needs by age, sex, type of school structure, teaching programme and type of enhanced special education measures. The school statistics do not include information on the health or functional limitations of pupils. The total school enrolment rate is 96.6 per cent; there are a few rare cases of children whose parents educate their children themselves. In 2017/18, there were 42,101 pupils in compulsory education who were the subject of a decision on enhanced special education measures. Of those, 53.2 per cent are integrated in a mainstream class, 6 per cent are in a special class in a mainstream school and 40.8 per cent are in a special school. The number of pupils in separate schools has fallen by 40 per cent over the past 15 years.

Health (art. 25)

Reply to paragraph 20 (a) of the list of issues

66. Within the framework of the 2020 strategy, individual measures have been implemented to improve the quality of life of persons with disabilities, for example, in the areas of palliative care and dementia. One of the pillars of the Health 2030 strategy is that all persons should have equal opportunities to live in good health. Persons with disabilities are mentioned explicitly in the strategy. Measures need to be developed in areas outside the health sector, as, in this context, social determinants are of great significance in achieving equal opportunities in health. There is not yet any specific action plan for the implementation of the Health 2030 strategy.

Reply to paragraph 20 (b) of the list of issues

67. Complementary insurance is optional, and there is no obligation to admit applicants. The general provisions governing protection from discrimination apply (cf. list of issues, para. 2 (b)).

Reply to paragraph 20 (c) of the list of issues

68. The Acts on the medical professions, the psychology professions and the health professions lay down regulations governing initial, postgraduate (partially) and further training for the professions concerned. The principles and objectives of the training and education provided are formulated in the abstract and as principles of general application (Medical Professions Act, art. 8). These Acts are intended to ensure that health professionals are trained to give due consideration to and respect the specific rights, needs and circumstances of their patients.

Work and employment (art. 27)**Reply to paragraph 21 (a) of the list of issues**

69. In 2017, the Department of Home Affairs organized a national conference to promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the labour market. The aim was to disseminate good practices and strengthen collaboration between the various partners in the field. Through the organizations that represent them, persons with disabilities have the opportunity to express their views in the development and review of employment-related legislation and policies during the consultation process (cf. list of issues, para. 2 (b)).

Reply to paragraph 21 (b) of the list of issues

70. Protection against discrimination and reasonable accommodation at the workplace in the private sector are based on the protection of personal privacy (Code of Obligations, art. 328) and health protection (Code of Obligations, art. 329 (1), and Employment Act, art. 6). Dismissal on the grounds of disability is unlawful (Code of Obligations, art. 336 (1) (a)) and a refusal of employment on the grounds of disability constitutes an unlawful breach of personal privacy which gives rise to the payment of compensation for moral harm. The requirements for the protection of workers' health are general requirements. Ordinance 3 on the Employment Act specifies the requirements in this respect in more detail. The Ordinance addresses health protection in such a way that individual, technical, organizational and social factors and their interaction are all taken into account. Furthermore, the aim of invalidity insurance is to ensure that a person with disabilities or at risk of disabilities can enter and remain in the mainstream labour market, including by means of reasonable adjustments at the workstation. These include the early detection system, early intervention and rehabilitation measures, the right to aids to adapt the workplace and architectural measures to help individuals get to work.

71. Within the framework of unemployment insurance, persons with disabilities may participate in labour market measures if they meet the conditions for entitlement to benefits set out in articles 8 and 15 of the Unemployment Insurance Act.

Reply to paragraph 21 (c) of the list of issues

72. The secondary labour market is based on the Federal Act on Institutions for the Rehabilitation of Persons on Invalidity Benefit and cantonal law. Occupational health and safety regulations apply to sheltered workshops. There are no specific provisions in terms of support measures. Compliance with the regulations is a precondition for registration of a sheltered workshop by a canton. The canton monitors safety at work. In the event of non-compliance, it may withdraw the company's registration as a workshop within the meaning of the Act and the cantonal funding for workplace integration. In most workshops, the level of pay depends on the skills of the person with disabilities concerned. It generally ranges from CHF 2 to CHF 10 per hour.

Reply to paragraph 21 (d) of the list of issues

73. The workplace integration of persons with disabilities is a central objective of the invalidity insurance system, which provides numerous services in this area (cf. list of issues, para. 21 (b)). The decision on whether to grant an individual benefit is taken on the basis of the specific situation of the insured person. Invalidity insurance also gives financial support to umbrella organizations for the provision of private assistance to working persons with disabilities nationwide or in a language region (cf. list of issues, para. 5 (a)). It thus promotes the social integration of persons with disabilities by enabling them to participate in social life as independently and responsibly as possible. A total of 21 per cent of women with disabilities as defined in the Disability Discrimination Act received a pension under the invalidity insurance system in 2017, representing 46 per cent of those women who had declared themselves to be severely restricted in their normal daily activities. This includes partial pensions, but not invalidity pensions from other public insurance schemes. In 2019, 5.6 per cent of the women insured under invalidity insurance received benefits from this insurance (as did 6.2 per cent of the men).

Adequate standard of living and social protection (art. 28)**Reply to paragraph 22 of the list of issues**

74. It is mandatory that all persons residing or working in Switzerland should be insured under the invalidity, old-age and survivors' insurance schemes and have compulsory health insurance. There are no restrictions concerning persons with disabilities. Insurance for health coverage in the event of an accident and for loss of earnings in the event of illness or accident and the occupational pension scheme depend on employment status and, to a large extent, on the conditions laid down by employers or in collective labour agreements. The labour market participation of persons with disabilities and the conditions under which they are employed are therefore of decisive importance.

Participation in political and public life (art. 29)**Reply to paragraph 23 (a) of the list of issues**

75. A platform accessible to persons with disabilities was set up for the federal elections in 2015 and 2019. Sign language videos were made available in the three official languages. Easy-to-read language was added to the platform in the context of a pilot project in 2019.

Reply to paragraph 23 (b) of the list of issues

76. There are no centralized statistics on the number of persons excluded from voting.

Reply to paragraph 23 (c) of the list of issues

77. An evaluation of the E-Accessibility Action Plan 2015–2017 found that the Federal Administration meets a large part of the criteria set out in the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. Three measures are foreseen for the implementation of the Action Plan: continuation of the e-accessibility specialized service; the promotion of information in sign language and in easy-to-read language; and the development of guidelines on accessible communication in the Federal Administration. The persons responsible for Internet accessibility in the departments and the Federal Chancellery have implemented the measures contained in the Action Plan under the coordination of the specialized service. The focus is on accessibility in the contracting process, implementing accessibility in federal services on the Internet, creating a barrier-free work environment, improving awareness and providing training for employees. Substantial progress has also been made in providing accessible documents by optimizing templates throughout the country and integrating appropriate tools for creating and checking accessible PDF documents. The federal guidelines on the design of barrier-free Internet services comply with the P028 standard (eCH0059 V 3.0, in force from 1 January 2021). The new requirements stipulate that federal websites must include an

accessibility statement and an accessibility feedback mechanism and must be reviewed periodically in cooperation with the national monitoring body.

Reply to paragraph 23 (d) of the list of issues

78. Swiss law provides for accommodation to be made for persons with disabilities so that they can exercise their political rights without discrimination. The Confederation has also taken measures to support the participation of persons with disabilities in public life (cf. list of issues, paras. 16 (b) and 23 (a)). The measures concern all persons with disabilities; the initial report contains more details on political rights in paragraphs 180 ff. (on article 29 of the Convention).

Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport (art. 30)

Reply to paragraph 24 (a) of the list of issues

79. The Marrakech Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled came into force in Switzerland on 11 May 2020.

Reply to paragraph 24 (b) of the list of issues

80. The Government has accepted several postulates in which a report is requested on the possible legal recognition of the three Swiss sign languages. They specifically request an analysis of the possibility of awarding the languages recognition as semi-official or cultural minority languages in order to promote sign languages and deaf culture.

Reply to paragraph 24 (c) of the list of issues

81. The invalidity insurance system provides individual benefits to children with disabilities, enabling or facilitating their inclusion in mainstream recreation, leisure and sports. In addition, the Act on the Promotion of Extracurricular Activities for Children and Adolescents provides for non-discriminatory access to extracurricular activities. Many projects and organizations that organize activities for particularly vulnerable children have received financial support in recent years. Article 2 of the Act provides that the Confederation wishes to encourage extracurricular activities to promote the well-being of children and young people and to foster their social, cultural and political integration. Since 2016, the Federal Office of Culture has provided support for national or exemplary projects aimed at strengthening the cultural participation of the whole population, including several aimed specifically at young persons with disabilities. The Office also ensures that children and young persons with disabilities have access to musical training, particularly under the national Youth and Music programme, which encourages the organizers of courses and camps to meet young people's teaching and training needs.

C. Specific obligations (arts. 31–33)

Statistics and data collection (art. 31)

Reply to paragraph 25 (a) of the list of issues

82. The Federal Statistics Office has published data on the equality of persons with disabilities since 2008. The statistics cover a broad range of living conditions, both objective and subjective, following a traditional social reporting approach. They provide many useful indicators for the development and evaluation of national disability policies. Several umbrella organizations representing persons with disabilities, including children, were invited to comment on the statistics, particularly during the development phase in 2006 and 2007.

Reply to paragraph 25 (b) of the list of issues

83. The Federal Statistics Office is the main body responsible for collecting and disseminating public statistics on the population and households. It has defined a set of characteristics measured in a systematic and standardized way, which is regularly improved and adapted, allowing the statistics to be broken down according to many of the criteria mentioned. Switzerland ensures that many of its surveys are coordinated with those of the European Union or international bodies, particularly with regard to the choice of sociodemographic and socioeconomic variables used and the way in which they are collected and constructed. This is the case for the variables concerning age, sex, migration status, geographic location and place of residence. Disability status is mainly collected through the Minimum European Health Module, which is used in social surveys of persons and households according to the needs and international obligations of each survey. The Global Activity Limitation Indicator developed by Eurostat is thus widely available. Other public bodies collect data on disability, in particular for the purpose of steering social insurance or planning care needs.

Reply to paragraph 25 (c) of the list of issues

84. The Federal Statistics Office publishes its statistics in line with the European Statistics Code of Practice. The data are made available to third parties under various conditions, which indirectly increases their dissemination. Federal Statistics Office information is widely disseminated through standard publications and tables as well as one-off analyses. In 2017, the Office requested the Access for All private foundation to assess the accessibility of its content. The improvements recommended have been or will be progressively implemented.

International cooperation (art. 32)**Reply to paragraph 26 (a) of the list of issues**

85. The new policy of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation on human rights in development and cooperation, adopted in 2019, emphasizes the importance of greater inclusion of persons with disabilities in international cooperation. The Agency pursues a twin-track approach, supporting specific projects and measures for persons with disabilities and helping the institutions and authorities responsible to meet their obligations towards such persons. It takes a multisectoral, cross-cutting and systematic approach in all its strategies, programmes and projects. The Agency became a member of the Global Action on Disability Network in December 2019. In the area of rehabilitation, it supports the Programme for Humanitarian Impact Investment of the International Committee of the Red Cross. Since 2018, the Agency has been funding a pilot project run by CBM in Pakistan and will contribute a total of CHF 30.6 million to the 2021–2024 programme of the CBM-Fairmed disability alliance. Through its contributions to international organizations, Switzerland also participates at multilateral level in strengthening the rights and equality of persons with disabilities. For example, it supports the United Nations Development Programme, which promotes the rights of persons with disabilities and plays a key role in the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Reply to paragraph 26 (b) of the list of issues

86. The gender equality and women's rights strategy of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs is based on, inter alia, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Combatting discrimination is thus one of the main objectives of the strategy. The Department is committed to promoting the economic empowerment and real participation of women, combatting all forms of gender-based violence and upholding sexual and reproductive health rights. The strategy is currently being monitored in view of its possible adaptation, including in the area of multiple and intersectional discrimination.

Reply to paragraph 26 (c) of the list of issues

87. The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation works closely with the Swiss Coalition for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in International Development

Cooperation (CBM Switzerland, Handicap International, Fairmed and the International Disability Alliance) and will formalize this work through an agreement. The concept is currently being developed in collaboration with CBM.

Reply to paragraph 26 (d) of the list of issues

88. On 19 June 2020, the Government decided that Switzerland should sign the Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action.

National implementation and monitoring (art. 33)

Reply to paragraph 27 (a) of the list of issues

89. The Working Group on Disability Policy is an important body in the coordination and implementation of the Convention, as well as in the formulation of disability policy strategies and programmes. The group is composed of representatives of the Federal Bureau for the Equality of Persons with Disabilities, the Conference of Cantonal Directors of Social Services and the Federal Social Insurance Office. All those involved in disability policy at the federal, cantonal and communal levels meet two to four times a year and with civil society. The Working Group on Disability Policy has an overview of the projects being implemented by the authorities. It reports every six months to the National Dialogue on Social Policy.

Reply to paragraph 27 (b) of the list of issues

90. On 13 December 2019, the Government approved a bill on the establishment of a national human rights institution, which will be considered by Parliament in the coming months. Under the bill, the Swiss Centre of Expertise in Human Rights will be replaced by a permanent national human rights institution established as a corporation under public law. The institution will be included in the Federal Act on Measures for Civilian Peacebuilding and the Strengthening of Human Rights. It will be independent, will ensure a pluralist representation of the social forces concerned and will receive financial support from the Confederation. It is envisaged that the institution will have a broad mandate to promote and protect human rights, but it will not have an ombudsman function, nor will it deal with individual cases.

Reply to paragraph 27 (c) of the list of issues

91. Civil society is involved in the development of disability policy, which is partly aimed at ensuring the implementation of the Convention. Persons, including children, with disabilities are therefore involved in this way (cf. list of issues, para. 27 (a)).

Coronavirus information

92. Since the beginning of the crisis, information from the Federal Office of Public Health has been disseminated by means of accessible texts, easily understandable pictograms and videos. The important instructions and protective measures are translated into easy-to-read text and sign language by the Federal Bureau for the Equality of Persons with Disabilities and the Federal Office of Public Health and are available on the Internet (<https://www.edi.admin.ch/edi/fr/home/fachstellen/aktuell.html>). Press conferences given by the federal authorities are simultaneously translated into sign language. Other information (economic or invalidity insurance measures) is also disseminated by alternative means of communication and made available on the website of the Federal Bureau for the Equality of Persons with Disabilities.

93. The government-ordered measures to protect the population affect benefits and procedures under the invalidity insurance system. For the duration of the extraordinary situation, the Federal Social Insurance Office has adopted special measures concerning procedural deadlines, medical examinations, expert opinions, medical interventions and therapies, and care and assistance.

94. The Federal Office of Public Health has issued recommendations for nursing homes and institutions for persons with disabilities, which fall under the jurisdiction of the cantons.

95. In early May, the Federal Bureau for the Equality of Persons with Disabilities, in partnership with the Federal Office of Public Health and Inclusion Handicap, sent out a questionnaire to organizations working with persons with disabilities to ascertain the needs and concerns of the persons affected with regard to rules of behaviour and hygiene. The responses showed that there was no need for specific measures, but rather for explanations on how to apply the protective measures when in contact with persons with disabilities.

96. During the period when schools were closed, institutions for children and young persons with disabilities maintained a minimum service for families in need. The demand for this type of service was between 3 and 10 per cent, depending on the canton.
