



**Welfare and Coercion**  
National Research Programme

Second call for proposals



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## Contents

<b>1. Background</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>2. Research focuses</b> .....	<b>5</b>
2.1 Interactions between non-state actors and the state.....	5
2.2 Rights, proceedings, legal remedies.....	5
2.3 Economic entanglements.....	6
2.4 Transgenerational transmission of social, material and psychological disadvantages.....	7
2.5 Removal of children and adoptions in coercive situations.....	7
<b>3. Structural and content requirements for research projects</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>4. Submission procedure</b> .....	<b>8</b>
4.1 Letters of intent .....	8
4.2 Research proposals: Submission via mySNF .....	8
4.3 Project selection and evaluation criteria .....	9
4.4 Schedule for the second call .....	9
4.5 Contact.....	10
<b>5. Governance</b> .....	<b>10</b>

## 1. Background

On 22 February 2017, the Federal Council mandated the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) to conduct the National Research Programme "Welfare and Coercion - Past, Present and Future" (NRP 76) in order to investigate compulsory social measures and placements - including those imposed privately - in a broader context. NRP 76 studies the legal and social dimensions of welfare and coercion, covering their history up to the present and looking ahead into the future. The programme's main goals are:

1. Analysing the characteristics, mechanisms and impact of Swiss welfare policy and its practices in their diversity against a backdrop of both change and continuity;
2. Identifying possible causes of welfare practices that, drawn between social order and individual rights, had an impact on the integrity of the persons affected;
3. Investigating the impact of welfare practices on the persons affected and on their economic and social situation.

The first call for the programme was published on 4 April 2017<sup>1</sup>. To date, the National Research Council has approved 22 applications<sup>2</sup>. The research phase will start in summer 2018.

After evaluation of the projects submitted for the first call, it became clear that some themes of great importance to the NRP were not yet adequately covered. For this reason, the Steering Committee decided to launch a second call.

The second call is for project proposals in the **following five research focuses**:

- Interactions between non-state actors and the state
- Rights, proceedings, legal remedies
- Economic entanglements
- Transgenerational transmission of social, material and psychological disadvantages
- Removal of children and adoptions in coercive situations

A total amount of CHF 2.5 million is available for projects in this area. Letters of intent can be submitted until 22 August 2018. Submission of a letter of intent is expressly requested by the Steering Committee, but not compulsory. The submission deadline for applications via mySNF is 15 November 2018. The duration of research is limited to a maximum of 36 months. A maximum amount of CHF 400,000 has been set as a benchmark for the project budget. Projects selected from the second call must take up their work by August 2019.

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<sup>1</sup> Call for proposals for NRP 76: [www.nfp76.ch/SiteCollectionDocuments/call\\_nfp\\_76\\_en.pdf](http://www.nfp76.ch/SiteCollectionDocuments/call_nfp_76_en.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Approved projects: [www.nrp76.ch/en/projects/all-projects](http://www.nrp76.ch/en/projects/all-projects)

## **2. Research focuses**

Like the projects from the first call, projects from the second call for NRP 76 aim to analyse the characteristics, mechanisms and effects of Swiss welfare policy and practices in various contexts. They should identify possible reasons for welfare practices that had an impact on the integrity of the persons affected and explore how they were affected by these practices. The projects must approach their research questions from a historical perspective, bearing in mind the challenges relating to our times, or else from a present-day perspective, but taking the historical dimension into account. Cross-cutting projects spanning more than one research focus are welcome.

### **2.1 Interactions between non-state actors and the state**

Non-state civilian actors play a prominent role in compulsory social measures today and in the past. In the 19th century, the church and philanthropists associated with the church were the key sponsors of the welfare and placements system. In the 20th century, non-state sponsors played an even more prominent role in the homes and institutions sector. Today, it is the state that provides financing and oversight in the case of placements. Other tasks, such as running homes and institutions for the placement of children, are performed by civil society organisations, among them religious or denominational, charitable/philanthropic or humanitarian sponsors.

The delegations and interactions between state and non-state actors are as yet under-researched and there is in particular a dearth of overarching and comparative studies. In addition, only very few studies have been undertaken on the historical emergence and current transformations of relations between the state and non-state actors. Existing research points to a great regional and ideological diversity, also with regard to the forms of organisation and legal framework conditions of the relevant activities. The question is how this fragmented landscape has evolved and developed its diverse features. What are the interrelations and dependencies between non-state actors and the state? How is the field of civil society actors and institutions structured, both functionally and sociographically? Which ideas and ideologies have influenced civil society? To what extent is the private homes sector affected by professionalisation and scientisation processes and what role do the professional associations play in this? Finally: How have economic relations between the state and private institutions developed, from deficit guarantees and subsidy practices to the management-oriented financing models of New Public Management?

### **2.2 Rights, proceedings, legal remedies**

The right to due process is an essential pillar of any proceedings under the rule of law. Key aspects include safeguarding the right to be heard, the independence of the court, the right to legal representation, the principle of equal chances in litigation between state and citizen, the right to take evidence and the right to speedy proceedings.

In the context of compulsory social measures and placements, two questions arise: 1. Which principles of the rule of law were established before 1981 and how did these legal bases develop? 2. How were the principles of the rule of law applied and perceived, or what was the actual situation in the absence of a legal framework? These questions arise on three levels:

Institutional cooperation, interaction and interdependence: Which institutions (guardianship authority, social welfare authority, school, hospital, psychiatry, cantonal medical service, church, etc.) were involved in the procedure? How did cooperation work within the various authorities or

between the authorities, their information sources and (where applicable) the experts who provided reports? How was the independence of the persons providing information and the experts guaranteed? What information did these people receive? Were the persons affected involved in the information procedure or in the expert report and, if yes, how?

The procedural rights of the person affected and members of his/her family: How was the person affected involved in the procedure? What form did communication with the person affected take (verbal/written)? How did one ensure that he/she understood the information and questions correctly? Was the involvement of trusted third parties possible and, if so, under what conditions did it take place? In which cases did the persons affected enjoy professional legal representation? Could the persons affected participate in framing the questions for the experts and, if so, how?

Legal remedies: To whom and how were the rulings served? Were they provided with instructions on how to appeal? How was it ensured that the persons affected could actually take legal action if they did not accept a ruling? Did they have access to the necessary information, assistance or official legal representatives?

### **2.3 Economic entanglements**

The causes, mechanisms and effects of welfare practice also have an economic dimension. There are considerable differences in the communal and cantonal mechanisms for funding welfare expenditure (including fiscal equalisation within and among cantons), in the budgetary practices of homes and institutions, and in the complex traditions of "earning one's keep" in the system of contract children («Verdingkinder») "or in other foster families. Federalism also plays a role in communal and cantonal differences, which still exist to this day in some cases, with regard to the level of payments (e.g. to institutions and foster families) and in the counselling and care services that precede residential institutions and care services. Whether and how these differences have affected and continue to affect specific welfare practices has not been sufficiently researched until now. It may well be that actors chose the most cost-effective solution possible or that admission to institutions and the associated forced labour occasionally had the primary purpose of limiting welfare expenditure. Considering that young people and adults living in homes, prisons and other institutions were usually obliged to carry out a substantial amount of work without payment, it would be interesting to establish who profited economically from these services and to what extent. Another interesting question is whether the economic situation of the communes responsible for funding affected their welfare practices.

The key research questions in this research focus include: How do federalist differences in welfare economics manifest themselves? Who used to pay and who currently pays for welfare measures? What effects did the associated incentive structures have on the behaviour and the decisions of the actors involved, and what effects do they have now? Was and is there a correlation between specific welfare practices and their funding, and if so what is it? To what extent do the legal framework ("Bundesgesetz über die Zuständigkeit für die Unterstützung Bedürftiger", ZUG, cantonal social welfare decrees, guidelines of the Swiss Association of Welfare Organisations (SKOS), "Interkantonale Vereinbarung für soziale Einrichtungen", IVSE) influence - i.e. facilitate or prevent - decisions that are misguided and do not address the needs of the persons affected? Can differences in welfare practices be traced back to the different economic situations of the responsible communities? Which economic factors have led to the delegation of welfare tasks to private and church institutions? Are we able to identify structures and decision-making mechanisms that

are well-suited to addressing the needs of the persons affected and are not primarily there for the economic benefit of the actors?

## **2.4 Transgenerational transmission of social, material and psychological disadvantages**

In the initial call for proposals for NRP 76, the research focus "Impact on the persons affected" addressed traumatic experiences and long-term effects. How did the persons affected experience traumatic situations, how did they, or do they, cope with it, and what influence have these experiences had on their personal development and that of their children? The second call for proposals will focus on the transgenerational transmission of social, material and psychological disadvantages among individuals or among victim groups. The following research questions are of interest:

Can similar consequences be identified for the second and third generation of victims of compulsory social measures and, if yes, what are they? Can specific challenges and coping strategies be identified in future generations? What influence have the materially precarious living conditions caused by victim status had on the lives of the children or grandchildren of the persons affected (career prospects, family and social network, mental and physical health)? What was or is the individual significance of the parents' acknowledged or unacknowledged experiences of suffering for family dynamics and for the self-image of children as they grew up? How do the public debates and compensation practices affect the dynamics within the family and the self-image of the next generation?

## **2.5 Removal of children and adoptions in coercive situations**

One of the most stringent placement measures - and one which involves permanent changes in legal relationships - is forced adoption. Until the 1970s, the boundary between voluntary and forced adoptions was often fluid. Authorities often used adoption as an educational tool for parents with stigmatised lifestyles - notably illegitimate mothers. Parents were forced to accept adoptions under the threat of more stringent measures, such as the child being committed to an institution. The children's perspective was of little importance.

Apart from forced adoptions among the travelling people of the *Jenische* as part of the *Pro Juventute* programme "Kinder der Landstrasse", little research has been done on adoption in the historical and social sciences. Analysis of this issue can be expected to deliver important insights into the intergenerational dimensions of placements and of the foster childcare system, which closely parallels adoption. Special attention must be paid to legislative landmarks (such as the entry into force of the Swiss Civil Code in 1907) and the social embedding of adoption. In particular, the motives and scope of action of the various actors must be examined, from biological parents and grandparents and the intermediary institutions (birth centres, clinics, placement agencies) to the authorities and the stepfamily. Light should also be shed on the gender-specific dimensions of adoption - both at the level of parents and children - and its economic aspects. At the institutional level, the relationship between state authorities, intermediary organisations and the parents and children involved must be investigated. How was adoption regulated and supervised? Finally, the changing relationship between domestic and international adoptions is of great importance, in particular the unregulated issues and problems of monitoring in international adoption.

### **3. Structural and content requirements for research projects**

The requirements for research projects in terms of their structure and content are set out in chapters 6 (Requirements for the research projects) and 7 (Practical relevance and target audience) of the first call document (see [www.nrp76.ch](http://www.nrp76.ch)).

### **4. Submission procedure**

This call does not include a pre-proposal stage. The process is launched by submitting a letter of intent. Research proposals are submitted at the second stage (see timetable under 4.4). Submission of a letter of intent is expressly welcomed by the Steering Committee, but not compulsory: research proposals may be submitted even if no letter of intent was sent.

#### **4.1 Letters of intent**

The letter of intent should take the form of a short letter of one to a maximum of two pages. It should be sent to [nrp76@snf.ch](mailto:nrp76@snf.ch) and should contain the following information:

- Name and institution of the applicant
- Research question and goal of the project
- Start of research and research duration
- Collaboration with working groups in Switzerland and abroad
- Budget estimate

The information provided in the letters of intent gives the Steering Committee an initial idea of the project and helps them in selecting suitable international reviewers. An examination of the statements made in the letters of intent is intended to ensure that the projects are compatible with the objectives of NRP 76 and the second call. The authors will receive a short feedback on the letter of intent. If a project is deemed incompatible, the author(s) of the corresponding letter will be informed accordingly.

#### **4.2 Research proposals: Submission via mySNF**

Research proposals must be in English and must be submitted online via the mySNF platform ([www.mysnf.ch](http://www.mysnf.ch)). User registration is required in order to gain access to mySNF. User accounts opened in the past remain valid and provide access to all SNSF funding schemes. It is advisable to request new user accounts as early as possible on the mySNF homepage.

The deadline for the submission of applications is 15 November 2018 at 5 p.m. (CET).

Make sure you reserve enough time for entering data (e.g. the data management plan) on mySNF.



Besides the data to be entered directly on mySNF, the following documents must be uploaded:

- **Research plan** (in PDF format): Applicants must use the template provided in the newly created application on the mySNF platform. The research plan must not exceed 20 pages.
- **Short CVs and publication lists of all applicants** (one PDF file per applicant): CVs must not exceed two pages each. The publication list must meet the requirements set out in mySNF. Links to the publication lists may be inserted.

Additional documents (recommendation letters, confirmation of cooperation or co-financing, forms regarding international cooperation, etc.) can also be uploaded.

### 4.3 Project selection and evaluation criteria

Based on internationally recognised external reviews and on its own evaluation, the Steering Committee recommends research proposals to the National Research Council (Programmes division and Presiding Board) for approval or rejection.

Research proposals will be reviewed based on the following criteria:

- Consistency with the goals of NRP 76
- Scientific quality
- Inter-, multi- and transdisciplinarity
- Relevance for policy, society and practice
- Personnel and infrastructure

For details of the evaluation criteria, please refer to chapter 8 of the first call.

The Programmes division of the SNSF Administrative Offices will examine the project proposals to confirm compliance with the formal requirements and the eligibility of the applicants, before forwarding the application for scientific appraisal. Applications that fail to meet the personal and the formal requirements will not receive further consideration.

### 4.4 Schedule for the second call

The timetable for NRP 76 is the following:

Call for proposals	25 July 2018
Letters of intent	22 August 2018
Submission of research proposals	15 November 2018
Final decisions on research proposals	May 2019
Start of research (at the latest)	August 2019

## 4.5 Contact

For questions of a general nature about NRP 76 and questions on the submission of research proposals, please contact the Programme Manager:

Dr. Stephanie Schönholzer, nrp76@snf.ch, Tel. + 41 (0)31 308 23 63

For questions about salaries and eligible costs, please contact the head of finance of the Programmes division:

Roman Sollberger, roman.sollberger@snf.ch, Tel. + 41 (0)31 308 21 05.

### **Technical support hotline for mySNF and electronic submission:**

Tel. + 41 (0)31 308 22 00 (German)

Tel. + 41 (0)31 308 22 88 (English)

Tel. + 41 (0)31 308 22 99 (French)

E-mail: [mysnf.support@snf.ch](mailto:mysnf.support@snf.ch)

### **mySNF homepage:**

[www.mysnf.ch](http://www.mysnf.ch)

## 5. Governance

### **Steering Committee**

Prof. Dr. Alexander Grob, Personality and Developmental Psychology, Faculty of Psychology, University of Basel, Switzerland (President)

Prof. Dr. Vincent Barras, Institut des humanités en médecine, CHUV et Faculté de biologie et médecine, University of Lausanne, Switzerland

Prof. Dr. Monika Bobbert, Seminar für Moraltheologie, Catholic theological faculty, University of Münster, Germany

Prof. em. Christoph Häfeli, legal consultant for child and adult protection authorities, Switzerland

Prof. Dr. René Knüsel, Institute of Social Sciences, Life Course and Social Inequality Research Centre, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, University of Lausanne, Switzerland

Prof. Dr. Martin Lengwiler, Departement of History, Philosophical-Historic Faculty, University of Basel, Switzerland, vice president UEK "Administrative Versorgung"

Prof. Dr. Alexandra Jungo, Civil Law, Faculty of Law, University of Fribourg, Switzerland

Prof. Dr. Annegret Wigger, Institute of Social Work, University of Applied Sciences, St. Gallen Switzerland

### **Delegates of the Programmes division of the National Research Council**

Prof. Dr. Regina Aebi-Müller, Private Law and Comparative Private Law, Faculty of Law, University of Lucerne, Switzerland

### **Programme Manager**

Dr. Stephanie Schönholzer, Swiss National Science Foundation

### **Team of Knowledge Transfer**

Dominik Büchel, advocacy ag, communication and consulting, Basel

Dr. Frauke Sassnick Spohn, Sassnick Spohn GmbH, Büro für Soziales, Bildung & Gesundheit, Winterthur

### **Representative of the federal administration**

Prof. emeritus Dr. Luzius Mader, former Deputy Director Federal Office of Justice, Delegate for victims of coercive measures and roundtable moderator