

Switzerland

Roland Stübi

Bern, December 2007

1 The Foundation of the National Section

Switzerland was initially represented within FICE by Arthur Bill, Head of the Pestalozzi Children's Village. In 1949 Adolphe Ferrière tried to get members of NEF to establish a Swiss National Section but, as they assumed that FICE was only relevant to establishments like the Pestalozzi Children's Village, they saw no need for a National Section prompting Adolphe Ferrière to write to Elisabeth Rotten on 19 February 1950 suggesting the need for a new definition of children's communities. However, by this time the foundation of a Swiss National Section had become a sort of requirement for the Canada House construction at Trogen and on 13 January 1950 eight people, including Elisabeth Rotten, Walter Robert Corti and Marie Meierhofer, had formed an Initiative Committee, four of whose members were also members of the Swiss UNESCO Commission. *FICE Vereinigung* was founded on 21 April 1951 with the adoption of its Articles of Association.

2 Organisation and finance

FICE Switzerland is an Association within the meaning of Article 60 ff of the Swiss Civil Code.

The organs of the association are:

- the General Assembly
- the Board consisting of five to nine members
- the Audit Committee Die Kontrollstelle

FICE Switzerland has no secretariat or paid staff or board members.

Day to day expenses and the FICE International subscription are almost entirely paid for from membership subscriptions. For projects specific financing is sought.

3 Membership

The membership consists of:

- individual members

- organisations and establishments as collective members

At around 80, more than two thirds of the membership are collective members, predominantly homes for children and young people. In addition, a few educational institutions and organisations for extra-familial care are members.

4 Activities

4.1 As an organisation

- a publication *Die UNO-Kinderrechtskonvention und ihre Umsetzung in der ausserfamiliären Erziehung — Eine Arbeitshilfe*
- the project Quality4Children together with three other national organisations
- participating in the Swiss Children’s Rights Network
- consultancy in analysis and policy development abroad for the Swiss authorities, in particular the Swiss Agency for Cooperation and Development (DEZA)
- occasional organisation of visits and courses with international themes in Switzerland or abroad

4.2 With other FICE members

- organisation, management and partial financing of the project *Dialogue in South East Europe 2000 — 2006*
- contributing to the organisation and financing of the FICE Congress 2006 in Sarajevo
- active participation in the committees of FICE International and FICE Europa and their projects

4.3 In relation to the country as a whole

Expertise is brought to bear particularly through participating in committees, for example, the Swiss Children’s Rights Network and Quality4Children, or through the briefings to various state authorities or cantonal administrations.

5 Future

FICE Switzerland will be focusing on two areas in the next year:

1. embedding children’s rights in extra-familial care with the aim of making lasting improvements to the life and relationships of children; the project Quality4Children is central to this
2. international exchanges and cooperation in the committees and projects of FICE International and FICE Europe

6 Special Features

Members of FICE Switzerland have since the founding of FICE International shaped and shared the responsibility for it. For many years the full time secretariat was secured through the assistance of the Pestalozzi Children's Village Association in Trogen.