

Thematic Report to the UN General Assembly on digital technology, social protection and human rights / Swiss response to the call for information of April 2, 2019

“Digital Switzerland” Strategy endorsed by the Federal Government in September 2018 sets out guidelines for making the most of the opportunities of digital transformation. It is conceived with a multi-stakeholder approach and applies to all sectors, including social protection. It requires for example that the persons must be involved in the processes of digital transformation ([reference](#) para 2.1). It assesses that the needs of vulnerable groups like older persons, persons with disabilities and migrants have to be considered in the course of the application-based development of technology (same, para 4.8). Based on these guidelines, digitalization is addressed specifically sector by sector on a pragmatic way.

The consequences of the digital transformation on the **labour market** are addressed in the framework of a government report ([link](#)). The measures envisaged aim to create favorable conditions for employment, in particular through training in the required skills and by making the labour market more flexible. In addition, various Government departments are examining the need for social insurance adjustments to ensure the protection of social risks; a report is expected by the end of 2019.

Continuing training has a central role in supporting the active population in the digital shift. The Law on Continuing Education (LFCo) of June 20, 2014 provides a basis for the promotion of skills in connection with digitization ([RS 419.1](#)). (See the [website of the Swiss Federation for Adult learning](#)).

Digitization offers opportunities to improve data exchange and make administrative processes more efficient. **eGovernment** Switzerland is the organization of the Confederation, the cantons and the communes for the expansion of electronic government services. It steers, plans and coordinates the joint e-government activities at the three government levels (source: [e-government Switzerland](#)).

But it involves **data protection** risks. Data protection is an essential requirement to guide the action of the public and private sectors. It is based in ordinary legislation ([Federal Law on Data Protection, 1992](#)).

In the context of the **free movement of persons** at European level, it is planned that in the future, social security bodies will no longer exchange their data in paper form, but in digital form. This will be possible thanks to the EESSI (Electronic Exchange of Social Security Information) computer system developed by the EU. Switzerland, linked to Europe by the Agreement on the Free Movement of Persons (FMPA), is participating in this exercise. The revision of the Federal Law on General Provisions concerning Legislation on Social Insurances of October 6, 2000 (LPGA) creates the necessary legal basis, particularly with regard to data protection, for Swiss institutions to be able to use information systems for the electronic exchange of data ([article published in the Social Security Review CHSS](#)).

At international level Switzerland is also committed to ensuring that this theme is high on the agenda. On April 30, 2019, the German-speaking social affairs ministers signed a declaration on digitization, affirming that workers' social security coverage must be guaranteed in new forms of work ([communiqué de presse](#)).

Parliamentary interventions concerning digitalization show that there is a constant interest by MP's (examples [Interpellation Derder 18.3298](#) [Motion Cattaneo 18.3553](#) [Interpellation Arslan 17.3075](#)).

There is a large **discussion** on the effects of digitalization on social security and the right of social insurance, with contributions of researchers and NGOs.