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Wikimedia CH Education Strategy

2019-2021

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“Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself”
– John Dewey

1. Wikipedia belongs in education

Education is one main pillar of Wikimedia CH strategy together with GLAM (Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums) and Community and it's a quite new program for Switzerland.

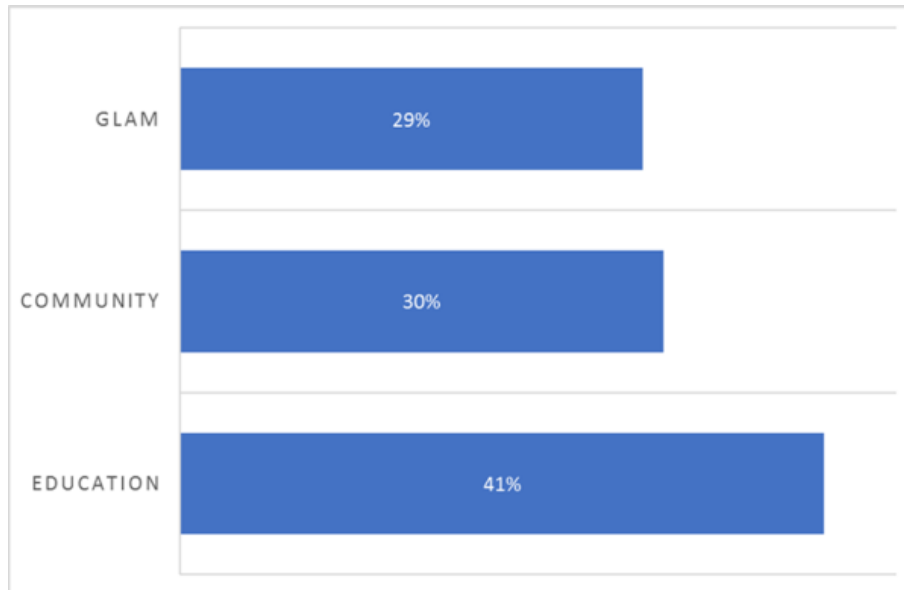


FIGURE 1 RESULT TO THE QUESTION "WHICH OF THESE WOULD YOU BE INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT?"

In our community surveys, submitted to the community every year¹, we discovered that education is considered one of the most important topics by the Swiss community² even if Wikimedia Switzerland started a program only in the 2017.

At the same time Education is also an important topic for the Global Movement and, in this case, **Wikimedia Switzerland would take inspiration from the movement strategy but adapting it the topics to the Swiss context** which is quite peculiar compared to other countries mainly considering the question of **plurilingualism** which is an important point of discussion of the Swiss Parliament too³ or the **high presence of immigrants**⁴.

To all these points we must add also **the question of decentralization of the Swiss system of education** assigning the main responsibility for the education to the 26 cantons: the cantons are responsible for the

¹ [Community Survey 2016](#)

² [Community Survey 2017](#)

³ [Promotion of Plurilingualism](#)

⁴ [Switzerland, land of European immigrants](#)

education system wherever the Federal Constitution does not stipulate that the Confederation is responsible⁵.

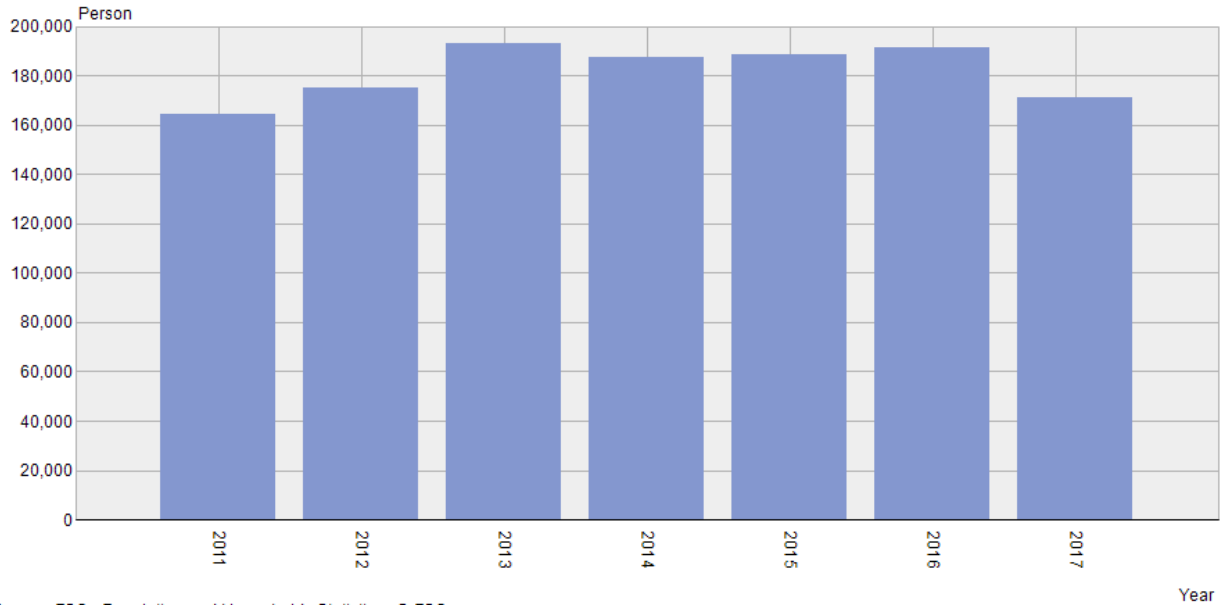


FIGURE 2 NUMBER OF YEARLY IMMIGRANTS IN SWITZERLAND

Not having a long history and consolidated basis, the **first years have been considered important to setup a framework and to explore the Swiss context.**

⁵ [The Swiss education system](#)

2. Education strategy development approach

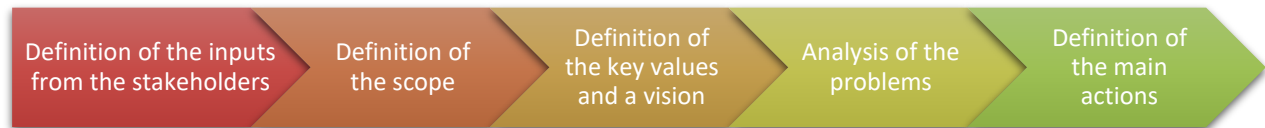
Following what has been said in the introduction, this strategy therefore takes inspiration from four inputs:

- [Wikimedia Movement strategy](#)
- [Wikipedia Education Program](#)
- [Wikimedia CH strategy](#) and Community surveys
- The Swiss and the European context

In this document the strategy will be defined as follow:

- It will be analyzed all inputs from all above stakeholders ([background](#))
- Definition of the scope ([Scope](#))
- Definition of key values to consider for the education ([Key values and vision](#))
- Analysis of the problems
- Definition of the main actions to be taken

After that, there will be a separate document as action plan which will be defined yearly.



3. Background

Wikimedia movement strategy

Wikimedia movement considers important a concept: **knowledge must be accessible to every humankind.**

Reporting the results of the first phase of the strategic movement this is the summary⁶:

*By 2030, Wikimedia will become **the essential infrastructure of the ecosystem of free knowledge**, and anyone who shares our vision will be able to join us.*

We, the Wikimedia contributors, communities, and organizations, will advance our world by collecting knowledge that fully represents human diversity, and by building the services and structures that enable others to do the same.

We will carry on our mission of developing content as we have done in the past, and we will go further.

Knowledge as a service: *To serve our users, we will become a platform that serves open knowledge to the world across interfaces and communities. We will build tools for allies and partners to organize and exchange free knowledge beyond Wikimedia. Our infrastructure will enable us and others to collect and use different forms of free, trusted knowledge.*

Knowledge equity: *As a social movement, we will focus our efforts on the knowledge and communities that have been left out by structures of power and privilege. We will welcome people from every background to build strong and diverse communities. We will break down the social, political, and technical barriers preventing people from accessing and contributing to free knowledge.*

In this case some topics can be more connected with the Swiss context:

- To consider Wikimedia as an infrastructure of ecosystem of free knowledge;
- To consider building tools and infrastructure where partners can exchange free knowledge beyond Wikimedia;
- To focus the effort to open the possibility to open this infrastructure to everyone;
- To consider Wikimedia projects as an opportunity to build skills for life mainly for people who are prevented from accessing and contributing to free knowledge.

These inputs are important to define the strategic pillars of the education for Wikimedia Switzerland.

⁶ [Wikimedia movement 2018-2020](#)

Wikipedia Education Program

As part of the Wikimedia movement, the Wikipedia Education Program is an important aspect to consider for Wikimedia CH.

In this case the **Theory of Change**⁷ of the Wikipedia Education Program is an important aspect.

This theory gives some inspirational points. The first one is that **a wikipedian cannot be made:**

“...Wikipedia editors are born, not made. We believe that you can teach someone the skills required to contribute to Wikipedia but can't teach someone to become a Wikipedian — if you're predisposed to contributing to Wikipedia, then exposure to Wikipedia editing as part of a class assignment will encourage you to transition from reader to editor. But we believe that if you're not already inclined to edit, you will never become a long-term contributor”.

Another important aspect relates to the **creation of the content which is important to serve students.** This is quite connected with the concept of knowledge as a service⁸:

“Instead, we focus on generating significant high-quality content from student editors each term. A small fraction of these students will continue to edit but recruiting them to become long-term Wikipedians is not the focus of our program”.

A third fundamental point relates to the retention of professors⁹:

Rather than fruitlessly trying to convert students to become editors, then, we instead wish to recruit the instructors to be long-term users of Wikipedia as a teaching tool. Our theory goes: if we recruit and retain one instructor, that instructor will bring 20–30 students to Wikipedia up to two times each year and teach them how to edit Wikipedia.

The research of the team of Wikipedia Education Program defines that students make a significant and positive impact to the articles, but they need to have a very experienced instructor.

Once a professor had used Wikipedia as a teaching tool a few terms, the volunteer time required to assist the class is minimal without much effort from education program staff or volunteer Ambassadors.

⁷ https://outreach.wikimedia.org/wiki/Education/Theory_of_change

⁸ https://outreach.wikimedia.org/wiki/Education/Theory_of_change

⁹ https://outreach.wikimedia.org/wiki/Education/Theory_of_change

Wikimedia CH strategy

The vision of Wikimedia Switzerland underlined in the strategy of 2017-2020 is as follow:

As Wikimedia CH we open doors and bring people together with the aim of disseminating free knowledge for a smart & open society. We enable our communities to share knowledge and connect them with the Wikimedia universe. We are a collaborative and accountable association representing the interest of our multilingual communities in Switzerland¹⁰.

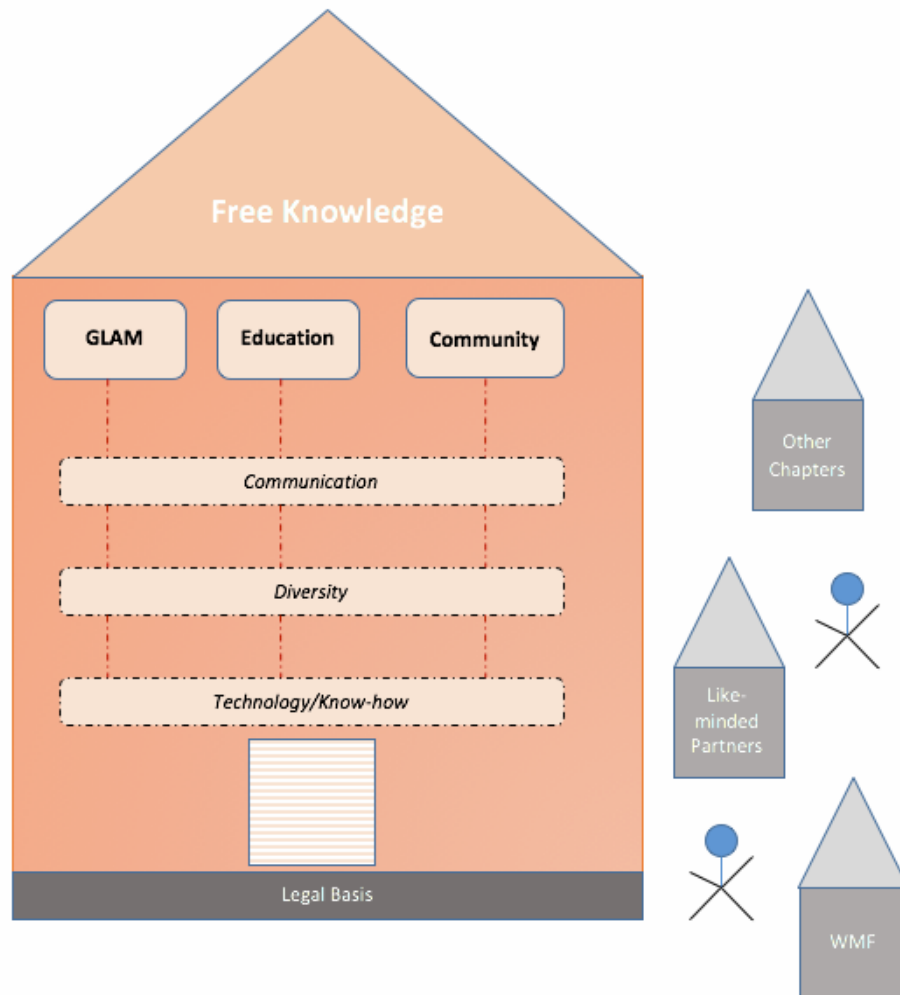


FIGURE 3 METAPHOR ILLUSTRATING THE STRATEGIC DIRECTION OF WM CH

The metaphor of Wikimedia CH is represented by a house having the roof represents content sharing, curating and collecting in terms of free knowledge. The house is made up of three main impact

¹⁰ [Wikimedia Ch strategy 2017-2020](#)

directions that we will focus our efforts on: Education, GLAM and Community (support, bridge, train). Underneath with dotted lines are our three enablers: **Communication, Diversity, Technology/Knowledge**. These enablers will allow us to evaluate whether a project/program should be integrated into our annual plan or not.

Specifically, for Education the program should consider the three enablers and is focused to produce **Free Knowledge**.

In the same strategy Wikimedia CH has defined these goals until 2020¹¹:

- Knowledge (this goal is of course also connected to the impact direction of Community): ordinary Swiss readers know that they can edit Wikipedia themselves
- Teachers consider Wikimedia projects as their own thus something they can influence and actively use; they consider Wikimedia and related projects as an opportunity for free knowledge rather than a threat to their activities
- Wikipedia as such has its place in curricula across as many cantons in Switzerland as possible
- Students get credits when they work for editing Wikipedia articles (campus credits at University)
- The contribution of PhD students to Wikipedia will be institutionalized through professors who will make contributing to a mandatory task for their students
- Creation of laboratories where classrooms can experiment coding and Wikimedia projects (Wikispaces)
- Creation of a toolkit to be used at school by teachers (independently) to start their training with Wikipedia (a good example here would be Coderdojo with “create a Dojo”)
- Introducing a new approach for teachers using and building upon the experience of Coderdojo
- Production of various resources and targeted materials to be placed on relevant communication channels
- More and extended collaboration with like-minded associations (organization of events, joint programming, youth hackathons)
- Joint projects with like-minded associations to propose Wikimedia projects in schools as a solution to introduce the “school 2.0” (i.e. coding or security or social media)

This strategy has been defined before the strategy of the movement, but it’s not in conflict; in this case the goals of Wikimedia CH can be re-adapted easily including more values to those already existing.

¹¹ [Wikimedia Ch strategy 2017-2020](#)

The Swiss context

The state schools

The Swiss education system comprises the following educational levels¹²:

- primary level (including Kindergarten or first learning cycle)
- lower secondary level (8 years of primary school and 3-4 years of secondary school)
- upper secondary level: vocational education and training (VET) and general education schools (Baccalaureate schools and upper secondary schools)
- tertiary level education: tertiary level professional education in the non-university sector and universities
- continuing education and training (CET)

The main responsibility for education lies primarily with the 26 cantons. the cantons are responsible for the education system wherever the Federal Constitution does not stipulate that the Confederation is responsible¹³.

For this reason, in Switzerland **we cannot speak about a Minister of education but in general there are “ministers of education” known as “directors of education”**. They are members of the cantonal governments and preside over the cantonal departments of education¹⁴.

The responsibilities of the Confederation apply to post-compulsory education but, about Baccalaureate schools, vocational and professional education and training, and universities, the Confederation and the cantons are partners, sharing responsibility for the public education system¹⁵.

State schools play an important role in integration. Children who have different social, linguistic and cultural backgrounds all attend the same school. The language of instruction is German, French, Italian or Romansh, depending on the language region, though Romansh-language municipalities represent a special case. Traditionally, language learning has an important role in Switzerland. Students learn a second official language of Switzerland as well as English during their compulsory school years¹⁶.

Attendance of state schools is free of charge and the cantons and their local municipalities finance 90% of public expenditure on education¹⁷.

The municipalities perform various tasks, particularly regarding compulsory education¹⁸.

More than 90% of young people complete upper secondary education, which facilitates direct entry into the job market, enables them to attend a college of higher education or – with a baccalaureate from a

¹² [The Swiss education system](#)

¹³ [The Swiss education system \(educa.ch\)](#)

¹⁴ [EDK Portrait](#)

¹⁵ [The Swiss education system \(educa.ch\)](#)

¹⁶ [The Swiss education system \(educa.ch\)](#)

¹⁷ [The Swiss education system](#)

¹⁸ [The Swiss education system \(educa.ch\)](#)

baccalaureate school (Gymnasium/gymnase), a specialised baccalaureate (Fachmaturität / maturité spécialisée) or a vocational baccalaureate (Berufsmaturität / maturité professionnelle) – allows them to continue their education at a university¹⁹.

At federal level all matters relating to education, research and innovation have been brought together in the Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research (EAER). The State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation, (SERI), is the federal government's specialised agency for national and international matters concerning education, research and innovation policy²⁰.

The international schools

As of January 2015, the International Schools Consultancy (ISC)²¹ listed Switzerland as having 105 international schools. ISC defines an “international school” in the following terms:

“ISC includes an international school if the school delivers a curriculum to any combination of pre-school, primary or secondary students, wholly or partly in English outside an English-speaking country, or if a school in a country where English is one of the official languages, offers an English-medium curriculum other than the country’s national curriculum and is international in its orientation”.

The high number of these international schools is connected also with the relevant presence of international organizations and NGOs.

Switzerland was the birthplace of the International Baccalaureate in 1968 and 50 schools in Switzerland offer one or more of the IB programmes (Primary, Middle Years, Diploma and Career-related Programs)²².

The tertiary level

Swiss tertiary level is divided into two sectors: the higher education sector and the professional education sector.

The first sector is classified as Tertiary level A. It is comprised of higher education institutions (HEIs), i.e. cantonal universities, two federal institutes of technology (ETHZ, EPFL), universities of applied sciences (UAS) and universities of teacher education (UTES)²³.

The second sector is classified as Tertiary level B. It is comprised of professional education institutions (PEIs) as well as guided or self-preparation for initial and advanced federal professional examinations²⁴.

¹⁹ [The Swiss education system](#)

²⁰ [The Swiss education system \(educa.ch\)](#)

²¹ [International schools market reaches 8,000 schools](#)

²² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Baccalaureate

²³ [Tertiary education](#)

²⁴ [Tertiary education](#)

Lifelong learning or Continuing Education and Training (CET)

Switzerland has a comprehensive system of continuing education and training (CET) with many providers and a wide range of education and training options. Some CET courses lead to work-related certifications and others to more advanced training²⁵.

Continuing education and training (CET) serve to improve and update skills, abilities and knowledge, and to expand them to encompass new fields and tasks. CET activities take place alongside the formal education and training system. It includes general educational or job-related education and training activities which are conducted within an organised framework and do not lead to state-recognised qualifications (e.g. CET courses or seminars), as well as learning processes which take place without a teaching/learning relationship or outside a learning setting (e.g. reading specialist literature or learning at the workplace)²⁶.

Most people living in Switzerland take part in some form of continuing education and training. The participation in CET activities depend, among other things, on the individual motivation, the available time, the individual financial resources or the continuing education and training offered. People who work full-time or with a workload over 50% participate more often in CET activities than people with a workload below 50% and employed people do so more often than the unemployed. With rising the level of education, the amount of participation in CET activities increases²⁷²⁸.

The importance of CET is reflected in high rates of CET participation – even by international standards – among the economically active Swiss population. Most of the highly productive countries whose economic structures have evolved towards a service economy demonstrate high rates of CET participation. This is particularly the case for Switzerland, with its highly advanced technology and economy Swiss CET participation rates are above average for all education categories²⁹.

²⁵ [Lifelong training](#)

²⁶ [Continuing education and training \(CET\)](#)

²⁷ [Continuing education and training \(CET\)](#)

²⁸ [Continuing education and training in Switzerland: a heterogeneous system](#)

²⁹ [Swiss Education Report 2014](#)

The Swiss and European context

Switzerland is not part of the European Union, however it is influenced by European policies due to close relations with neighboring countries, so that the Swiss education system has been properly adequate to European policies. Indeed, Switzerland is part of Eurydice, a network of 42 national units based in all 38 countries of the Erasmus+ programme³⁰.

Two aspects influence the Swiss education system and specifically the Open Education and the efforts to introduce the technologies in the Lifelong learning.

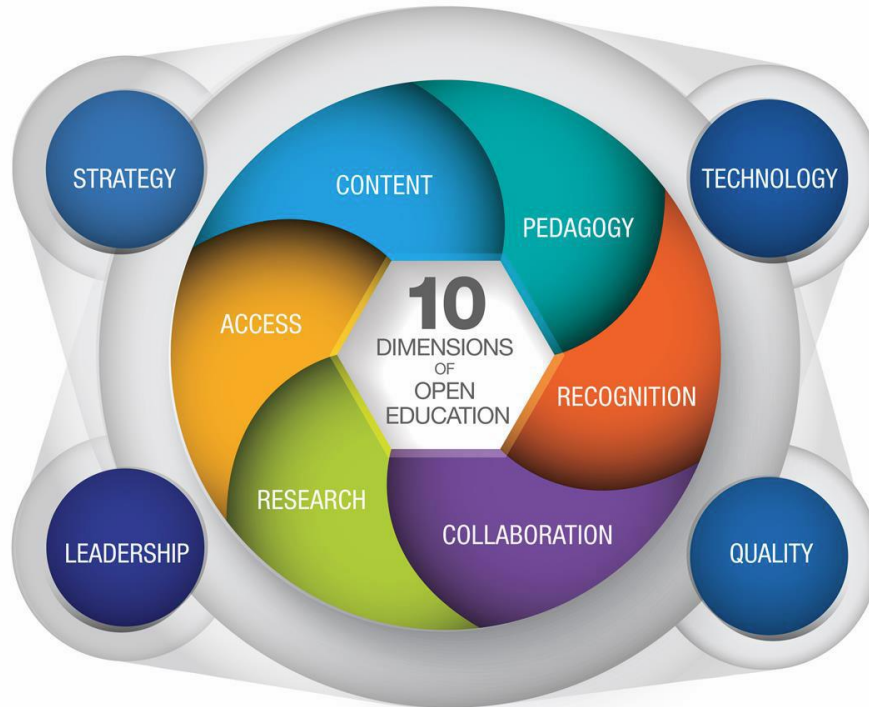


FIGURE 4 THE 10 DIMENSIONS OF OPEN EDUCATION

The definition of Open Education by the European Commission is:

“a way of carrying out education, often using digital technologies. Its aim is to **widen access and participation to everyone** by **removing barriers and making learning accessible, abundant, and customisable** for all. It offers multiple ways of teaching and learning, building and sharing knowledge. It also provides a variety of access routes to formal and non-formal education and connects”³¹.

³⁰ [Welcome to Eurydice](#)

³¹ [Opening up Education. A Support Framework for Higher Education Institutions](#)

This definition has several interesting aspects connected with the concepts indicated in the Wikimedia Movement’s strategy like the **knowledge as a service** and the **knowledge equity** mainly if we consider the explanation of the definition:

“Through open education each and every individual, at every stage in their lives and career development, can have appropriate and meaningful educational opportunities available to them. These include access to content, courses, support, assessment and certification in ways that are flexible and accommodate diverse needs. Barriers, for example those related to entry and cost, are reduced or eliminated”³².

The European commission considers the Open Education important to modernise the education in Europe, since contemporary open education is largely carried out via digital technologies³³.

The current changes connected with the new technologies are creating several opportunities and threats in the job market.

The frequent automatization of the processes is producing several unemployed while at the opposite the same process is creating a huge request of new professions.

The same European Union is aware of this big challenge and in the Digital skills and job coalition³⁴ is requesting that all entities work together to produce:

- Digital skills for all – developing digital skills to enable all citizens to be active in our digital society;
- Digital skills for the labour force – developing digital skills for the digital economy, e.g. upskilling and reskilling workers, jobseekers; actions on career advice and guidance;
- Digital skills for ICT professionals – developing high level digital skills for ICT professionals in all industry sectors;
- Digital skills in education – transforming teaching and learning of digital skills in a lifelong learning perspective, including the training of teachers.

Switzerland is following a similar example with the New Regional Policy³⁵.

All these initiatives consider that the solution to the problem can be found as stated by the World Summit on the Information Society³⁶: *We recognize that building an inclusive Information Society requires **new forms of solidarity, partnership and cooperation among governments and other stakeholders**, i.e. the private sector, civil society and international organizations. Realizing that the ambitious goal of this Declaration - bridging the digital divide and ensuring harmonious, fair and equitable development for all - will require strong commitment by all stakeholders, we call for **digital solidarity**, both at national and international levels.*

³² [Opening up Education. A Support Framework for Higher Education Institutions](#)

³³ [What is Open education?](#)

³⁴ <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/digital-skills-jobs-coalition>

³⁵ <http://regiosuisse.ch/en/new-regional-policy-nrp>

³⁶ <http://www.itu.int/net/wsis/docs/geneva/official/dop.html>

4. Scope

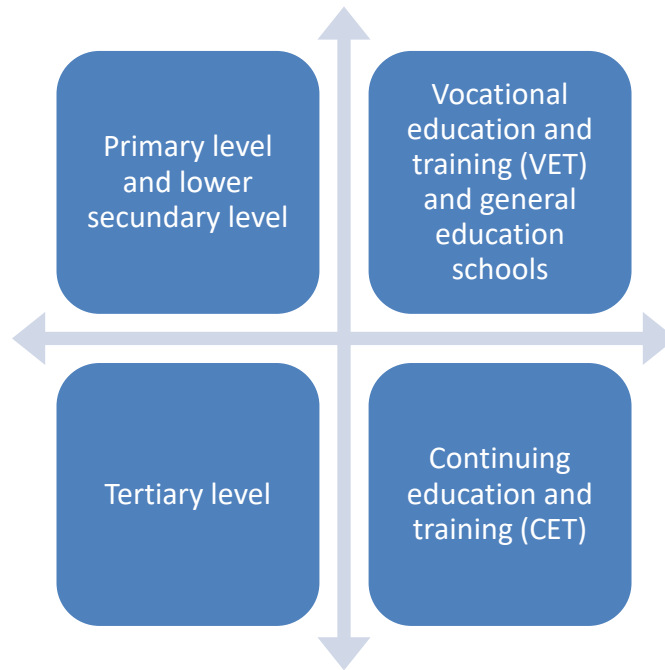
Target

Taking inspiration from the Swiss education system^{37,38}, the education program considers the scope the area of learning and training from primary schools to universities and the area of continuing education and training (CET) of Lifelong learning.

In this case this strategy applies to:

- the education in general considered like activity with children and young people until high schools;
- activities with universities focused to the training and to the research or finalized to manage students or events finalized to the students and researchers (i.e. Hackathons);
- activities connected to continuing education and training (CET).

In this case, there should be a separation between community and GLAM. Anything is finalized to train or to improve the knowledge should be considered part of the education in order to give to this aspect the right approach in terms of preparation on point of view of pedagogy and methodology.



³⁷ [Swiss education system \(educa.ch\)](http://educa.ch)

³⁸ [Adult Education Training in Eurydice](#)

5. Key values and vision

Inputs from stakeholders

Analyzing the inputs, we have from all stakeholders, these are the main topics.

Wikimedia movement ³⁹	Wikipedia education program ⁴⁰	Wikimedia CH strategy ⁴¹	Swiss and European context
Human diversity and knowledge equity	Wikipedians cannot be made	Diversity as enabler and multilingualism	Diversified communities and inclusivity
Knowledge as a service	To serve high quality content to students	Enable communities to share knowledge	Skills for life and Lifelong training
Tools for partners to exchange free knowledge	Train the trainers	Technology as enabler	Open education (OER)
Collaboration with partners and allies		Collaboration with like-minded associations and groups	
Open infrastructure of free knowledge to everyone		Openness	Open education (OER)

³⁹ [Wikimedia movement strategy](#)

⁴⁰ https://outreach.wikimedia.org/wiki/Education/Theory_of_change

⁴¹ [Wikimedia Ch strategy 2017-2020](#)

Results and key values

From the previous matrix we can define the follows values:

Equity and multiculturalism

Switzerland is a multicultural country, it means not only plurilingual country because there is a difference of religion, of cultures and so on. Switzerland is a mosaic of people and of cultures and the diversity has a wide range of aspects. In this case the **knowledge equity** matches perfectly with the politic of integration of Switzerland. In this case this strategy considers this difference more as a value than as weaknesses because in all level of education the **problem of integration** is an important issue.

Quality and skills for life

Quality is an important value for Switzerland where **people consider important their own personal growth** and what is called the lifelong training. In this case qualitative content and qualitative projects attract people, students, schools and trainers interested to learn **skills for life**.

Technology and tools

To approach potential partners and allies it's important to propose them innovative technology and innovative tools. Technology is an enabler of Wikimedia CH but it's also presents in the statement of the strategic direction of Wikimedia Foundation as **knowledge as a service**. The tools help also to train trainers as suggested by the Wikipedia Education Program.

Collaboration and partnerships

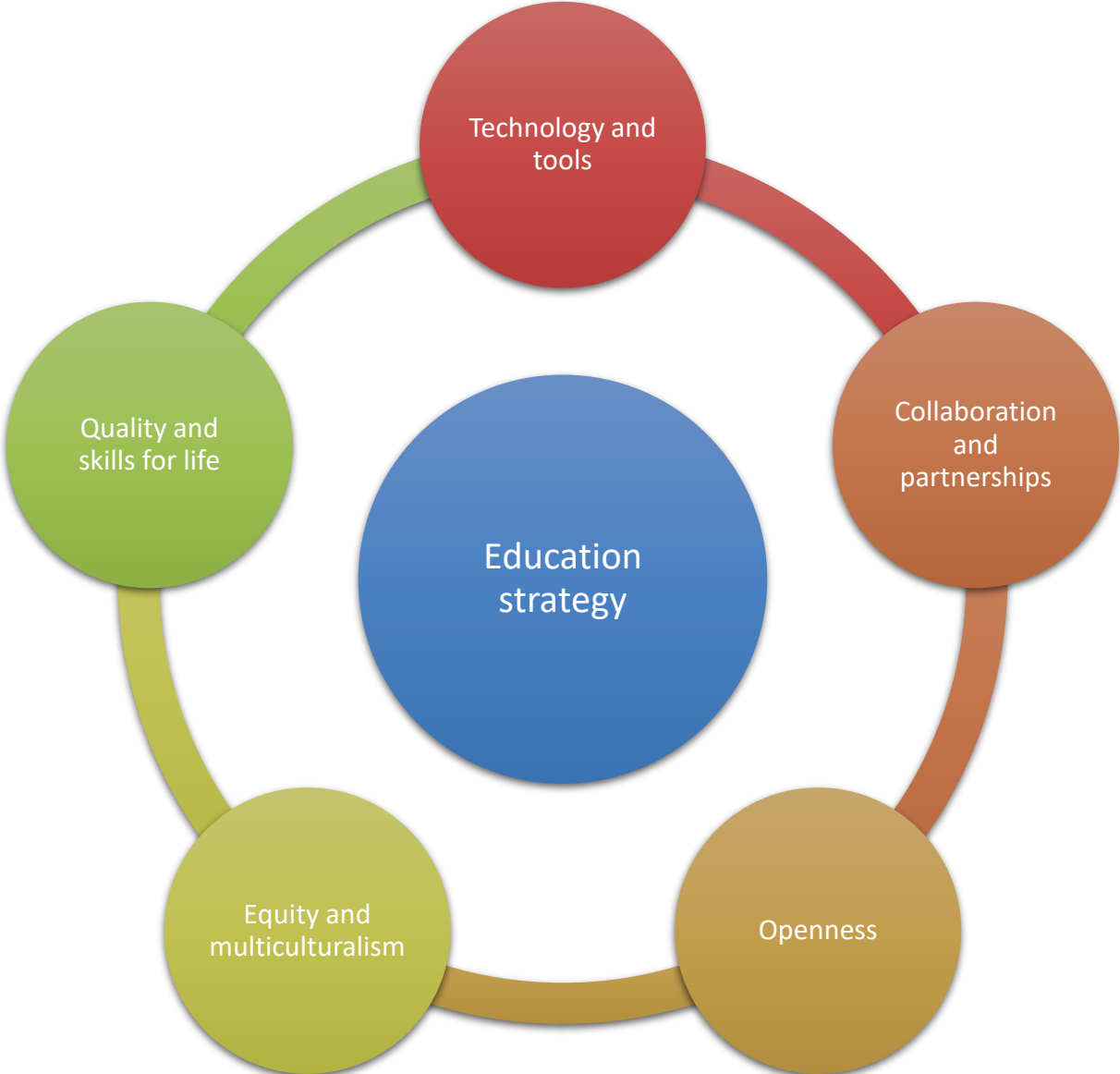
The collaboration with like-minded associations and partners is an important value defined by the stakeholders and by the vision of Wikimedia CH. In this strategy the collaboration is considered a value too.

Openness

Open content, open education, open knowledge are important aspects to include in this strategy. An "open infrastructure for open knowledge" is what Wikimedia Foundation is looking for and the Swiss context considers **the open access and the open education important values** to improve the quality of the learning.

The vision of the Education for Wikimedia CH can be summarized with:

The Wikimedia CH education program supports the growth and improvement of people's skills through free knowledge considering diversity as a value and not a weakness and offering everyone qualitative content and tools and open and accessible infrastructures and tools in collaboration with partners.



6. Strategic direction

To proceed with the strategical directions, it will be defined a matrix combining three main layers:

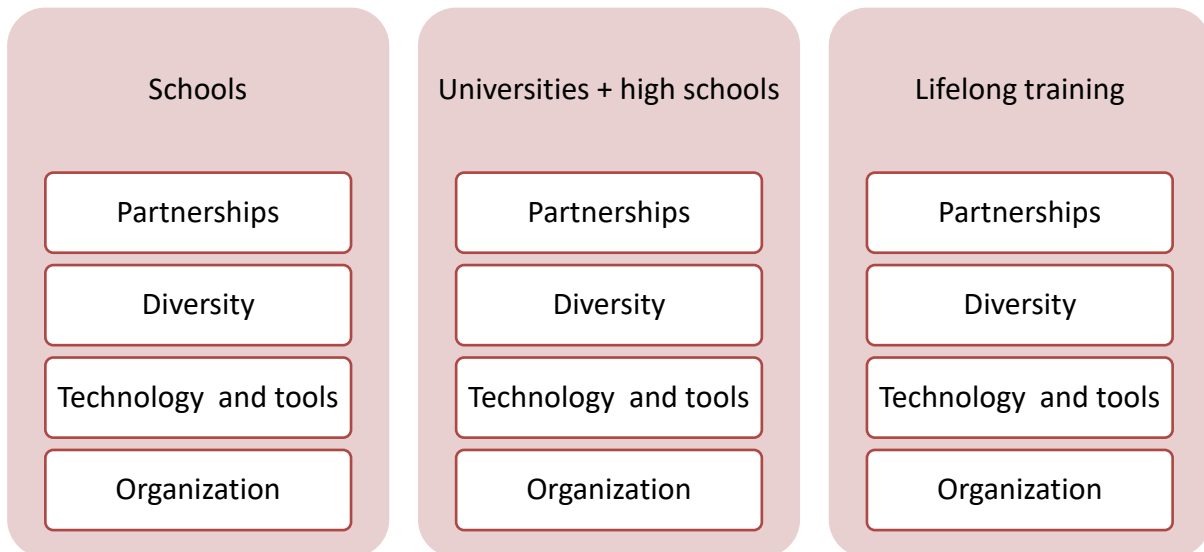
- Schools: compulsory education (primary and lower secondary level)⁴²;
- Universities/high schools: Tertiary⁴³ and upper secondary level⁴⁴ and vocational education;
- Lifelong training⁴⁵.

This separation reflects the same separation applied by the Swiss Confederation because there is a difference of competencies (cantons and Swiss Confederation). It makes sense to separate between compulsory and not compulsory education because the value skills for life is more present in the second one for instance or the approach to the diversity and integration at the schools is different for all three layers.

These directions will be combined with four transversal directions where we will match our values:

- Partnerships with a specific stress about openness;
- Diversity with a specific stress about equity and multiculturalism value;
- Technologies and tools;
- Organization with a specific stress about quality and skills fir life.

This matrix will define the strategical directions for Wikimedia CH and will define the action plan:



⁴² [Compulsory education in Switzerland](#)

⁴³ [Tertiary level in Switzerland](#)

⁴⁴ [Upper secondary level in Switzerland](#)

⁴⁵ [Lifelong training for adults](#)