

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

**SWITZERLAND**

**AGENDA: IMPROVING THE ACCESS TO IMMUNISATION AND HALTING THE SPREAD OF VACCINE-PREVENTABLE DISEASES.**

Switzerland is situated in the centre of Western Europe, surrounded by Germany, Austria, France, and Italy. Although its population size is modest at 7.6 million inhabitants, this small federalist country has three major language regions and is divided into 26 cantons, which consist of municipalities, the number varying from three to almost 400 municipalities per canton. There are 19 cantons in the German-speaking region, six cantons in the French-speaking region (in two of these cantons, two-thirds are French-speaking and one-third are German-speaking), and one canton in the Italian-speaking region.

The Delegate of Switzerland would like to clarify its stances on the topic improving access to immunisation and halting the spread of vaccine preventable diseases. The World Health Organisation is driving a Global Vaccine Action Plan (GAVP) that aims to prevent deaths due to vaccine preventable diseases. The Swiss Health Foreign Policy, adopted by the Federal Council in 2012 and updated in 2019. One of Switzerland’s aims is to improve protection against global health risks for the Swiss population. In pursuit of this aim, it is involved in efforts within the World Health Organization (WHO) to strengthen the international system set up to detect, monitor, prevent and combat transmissible diseases.

The objective of the strategy is that: “The population as well as healthcare

Professionals consider the officially recommended vaccinations as very important to the wellbeing and health of the public, and act accordingly.”

Vaccination coverage is usually high for young children, but in older age groups coverage drops and varies widely from one region to another. Lower vaccination rates allow infections to spread through the population. For instance, flares of measles still occur in parts of Switzerland, taking advantage of locally low rates of vaccination. No vaccination is compulsory in Switzerland; everyone can decide for themselves. Some people avoid vaccines because they harbour doubts about their Effectiveness, or fear harmful side-effects. More often, people miss vaccinations because of lack of information, because access to vaccinations is not easy enough, or simply because they forget to make the necessary appointments with a doctor or healthcare service, especially for booster doses. These all are the challenges faced by the Swiss government in improving the access to immunisation.

The Federal Council adopted an updated version of its health foreign policy covering the period from 2019 to 2024. Switzerland takes part in an international effort on public health described in WHO’s 2011-2020 Global Vaccine Action Plan (WHO, 2013), and in the European 2015-2020 Vaccine Action Plan (WHO Europe, 2014). One of the objectives of these action plans is the complete eradication of pathogens responsible for some epidemics, such as the measles virus.

These all are the solutions for the challenges faced by the Swiss government. Healthcare professionals must be able to provide good advice on vaccination. They need adequate training and the proper tools to help patients. For instance, an electronic vaccination record (connected to an expert system) would allow the vaccination status of patients to be ascertained easily, and vaccine reminders could be sent automatically, so that people can receive booster vaccines or catch up with missing vaccinations. Public information about vaccinations should be objective, and include possible adverse effects. To maintain and increase the trust of the public, the vaccination process must be as transparent as possible, including the process leading to the recommendations in the Swiss Vaccination Schedule.

In Switzerland vaccine is not compulsory for all the people. It is their own decision to take vaccination. Administrators must take actions against people who are spreading negative information about the vaccination. So that the rate of people taking vaccination will be increasing.

**DELEGATE**

**NAME:** S. Shree Devi

**STD:** IX B

**SCHOOL:** Adarsh Vidya Kendra

REFERENCE: WHO WEBSITE (with region EUROPE), SWISS Official Websites.

<https://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/293689/Switzerland-HiT.pdf?u>.

<https://www.bag.admin.ch/bag/en/home/strategie-und-politik/internationale-beziehungen/internationale-gesundheitsthemen.html>.