

Stakeholder-Informed Roadmap to Reduce the Burden of HPV-Related Cancers in Switzerland

UNIVERSITÄT LUZERN



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# **Executive Summary**

A stakeholder dialogue held on February 20, 2025, in Zurich brought together representatives from public health, healthcare, cantonal authority, civil society, and academia to explore how Switzerland can reduce the burden of HPV-related cancers. The dialogue was informed by international strategies and expert interviews. It followed a collaborative policy sprint approach and resulted in a shared set of policy measures, as well as the identification of windows of opportunity and enablers.

Switzerland currently lacks a coordinated national strategy for HPV elimination. In contrast, countries with integrated approaches, combining vaccination, screening, and treatment, have made stronger progress toward the WHO's 2030 targets. The dialogue highlighted the opportunity for Switzerland to close this gap by adopting a comprehensive, national approach.

The key outcomes were organized around five "Fields of Action":

**Political Will and Governance**: Build cross-level political momentum and establish HPV elimination as a national health priority, leveraging current parliamentary motions.

**Evidence-Based Planning**: Use cost-effectiveness analyses, health impact modeling, and international benchmarking to inform strategy and strengthen advocacy.

**Data and Monitoring**: Develop a centralized vaccination and screening registry and integrate HPV data into broader health information systems.

**Stakeholder Engagement**: Formalize leadership and coordination through platforms such as the HPV Alliance and expand multi-sector collaboration, including public-private partnerships.

**Communication and Awareness Raising**: Expand school-based education and vaccination programs, create unified messaging, and use personal stories and trusted voices to reach target groups effectively.

This document serves not only as a summary of the stakeholder dialogue but also as a stakeholder-informed roadmap, providing a foundation for developing a national strategy and guiding initial planning and coordination efforts.

Following the dialogue, a smaller workshop in April 2025 helped consolidate momentum and identified a core group of stakeholders willing to stay engaged. The roadmap supports future alignment and advocacy, with the long-term goal of eliminating HPV-related cancers in Switzerland.

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# Purpose of this document

This document presents the outcomes of a stakeholder dialogue held on February 20, 2025, in Zurich, Switzerland, aimed at identifying measures to reduce the burden of HPV-related cancers in Switzerland. The dialogue brought together diverse stakeholders, including representatives from (public) health institutions, healthcare providers, cantonal administration, civil society, and other key actors involved in HPV prevention, early detection, and care.

The dialogue followed an adapted policy sprint approach (Expedition Zukunft, 2024) designed to develop and prioritize actionable policy ideas through a structured and collaborative process.

The outcomes of this process, summarized in this document, serve as both a standalone product and a starting point for further development of a strategy to reduce the burden of HPV-related cancers in Switzerland. They provide a foundation for ongoing stakeholder engagement and coordination.

# Approach

The stakeholder dialogue was informed by an input paper analyzing HPV elimination strategies in other countries. The paper reviewed approaches in thirteen countries, selected either for having formal elimination plans or for their relevance as neighbors or comparators to Switzerland. Insights were also gathered from interviews with experts from selected countries.

The analysis revealed that countries with comprehensive national strategies, integrating HPV vaccination, cervical cancer screening, and treatment, have made the most progress toward meeting the WHO's 2030 targets, which include fully vaccinating 90% of girls against HPV by age 15, screening 70% of women for cervical precancer using a high-performance HPV test by ages 35 and 45, and treating 90% of those with precancerous lesions or invasive cervical cancer. These countries, despite challenges such as limited political support, coordination hurdles, and data system gaps, are advancing more rapidly in reducing the burden of HPV-related diseases. In contrast, countries without formal strategies showed more limited progress, with Denmark standing out as an exception due to its robust prevention programs. (El Maohub & Suggs, 2025)

For Switzerland, the findings highlight a clear opportunity: Developing an integrated national strategy could significantly accelerate progress toward eliminating HPV-related cancers. Such a strategy would help overcome current limitations in vaccination uptake and opportunistic screening practices.

These insights set the stage for the stakeholder dialogue, which began by introducing the guiding question: "How can Switzerland reduce the burden of HPV-related cancers?" and sharing key findings from the input paper to spark reflection. Participants explored which international strategies and success factors could inform the Swiss context. Building on this foundation, participants worked in groups to generate practical and bold ideas across five key drivers (please see <u>Fields of Action</u>). Selected ideas were then refined into policy measures using structured canvases, considering impact, feasibility, and key actors. The dialogue concluded with group presentations and a joint discussion to identify next steps and strengthen commitment.

#### Fields of Action

Five key drivers, referred to as fields of action in the following, served as the foundation for discussion during the stakeholder dialogue. These were derived from the detailed synthesis of findings from the input paper and were identified as critical areas for strengthening strategies to reduce the burden of HPV-related cancers.

The measures and strategies associated with each field of action were synthesized from contributions made during the dialogue. Additionally, a set of potential windows of opportunity and enablers were outlined post-dialogue by the authors, drawing on insights from the dialogue as well as supplementary idea collection and external research. These windows of opportunity and enablers are intended to guide the development of a national strategy for the prevention and elimination of HPV-related cancers in Switzerland by identifying favorable timing, processes, and policy opportunities to advance the proposed actions.



Figure 1 Key drivers in the adoption of an HPV-related cancer elimination plan (El Maohub & Suggs, 2025)

#### 1. Political Will and Governance

Achieving HPV elimination in Switzerland requires a strong political will, clear national commitment, and coordinated governance. Establishing HPV elimination as a defined national goal, aligned with broader cancer and prevention strategies, creates the foundation for sustainable action. Success depends on harmonizing efforts between federal and cantonal authorities, building cross-party support, and using data and storytelling to generate public and political momentum.

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# Establish a national mandate for HPV elimination, potentially integrated with other prevention or cancer-related frameworks.

#### Windows of Opportunity and Enablers

#### Motion "Elimination of HPV-Related Cancers" (Lohr)

This motion calls for a national strategy to eliminate HPV-related cancers through vaccination, screening, and awareness. It aligns with international goals and strengthens prevention efforts in Switzerland.In May 2025, the motion was recommended for adoption by the Federal Council, marking a timely and strategic moment to build momentum around this national public health priority. This development presents an opportunity to:

- Position HPV elimination as a national mandate by integrating or aligning it with cancer and prevention strategies (NAPS, National Cancer Plan).
- Engage Members of Parliament (MPs) and key committees to ensure political support
- Mobilize healthcare providers, patient groups, and media to generate public and professional advocacy.

#### Motion "Nationaler Krebsplan" (Ettlin & Carobbio)

This motion was adopted in February 2024, mandating the development of a new National Cancer Plan by 2025. This creates a policy window to:

- Advocate for HPV elimination to be included during stakeholder consultations or working groups.
- Prepare policy briefs or joint statements highlighting HPV-related cancers as a priority area within the cancer continuum.
- Frame HPV elimination as aligned with European standards, emphasizing vaccination, as for example formulated by the Swiss Federal Vaccination Commission (EKIF), and screening targets.

#### Motion "Nationale Präventionsstrategie 2040" (Balmer)

This motion proposes a comprehensive, long-term prevention strategy encompassing all levels of care. It provides a narrative and structural anchor for HPV within the national prevention discourse:

- Ensure the strategy explicitly includes transmissible diseases, such as HPV, to avoid exclusive focus on non-communicable diseases and support alignment with infectious disease prevention priorities.
- Position HPV as a "proof-of-concept" area for coordinated, life-course prevention (primary to tertiary).
- Engage early with motion sponsors or sympathetic MPs to insert HPV in early drafts or background papers.

	- Utilize HPV data (burden, inequality, and missed opportunities) to create political urgency around prevention and equity.
Harmonize strategy, financing, and access across cantons to clarify and align responsibilities between cantons and the federal level.	Starting in 2024, the EKIF has included both girls and boys in the national <u>basic immunization schedule</u> for HPV. This gender-neutral recommendation strengthens the foundation for harmonized implementation across Switzerland and supports political momentum toward coordinated national efforts.
	<ul> <li>Use the EKIF target as a soft mandate to justify stronger federal leadership and coordination.</li> <li>Refer to the decision to advocate for a national HPV coordination framework that encompasses both vaccination and screening.</li> <li>Frame HPV as a pilot for broader harmonization efforts in public health (e.g., equitable access, standardized prevention pathways)</li> <li>Encourage concrete, scalable measures to support harmonization, such as expanding school-based vaccination programs and strengthening HPV vaccination access through the Swiss Army and civil service channels</li> </ul>
	With current federal budget cuts affecting <i>Love Life</i> and the national STI strategy, there is an opportunity to reframe the conversation around strengthening and harmonizing existing cantonal HPV programs. These programs, already in place, could be positioned as efficient, scalable platforms for broader STI prevention efforts.
	Engage political influencers at the cantonal level to advocate for alignment and action within their respective health departments and intercantonal bodies (e.g., GDK).
Engage public health and political stakeholders to build cross-party and cross-level political momentum for the elimination of HPV.	Engage health authorities and cross-party parliamentary champions who can advocate for HPV elimination as part of broader health equity and cancer prevention efforts.  Identify and engage key MPs who have previously supported public health, prevention, or cancer-related motions, and expand support across the political spectrum by identifying potential allies.
Use storytelling, data modeling, and evidence to strengthen advocacy and public engagement to mobilize political and public support.	Integrate cost, mortality, and impact projections into briefings for MPs and health officials. Co-develop narrative briefs with Krebsliga, HPV Alliance, and survivor networks.

# 2. Evidence-Based Planning

Evidence must support all policies, funding, and communication efforts related to HPV. Long-term impact modeling, economic analysis, and global benchmarking are essential for convincing decision-makers and refining interventions. Research should be integrated into strategic planning processes.

Measures	Windows of Opportunity and Enablers
Conduct cost-benefit and long- term health impact studies to demonstrate benefits in mortality reduction and financial savings	Partner with academic and public health institutions to develop a nationally coordinated HPV Evidence Report and conduct an economic impact analysis, modeling long-term benefits such as reduced mortality, improved health equity, and healthcare cost savings.
from vaccination and screening programs.	Identify and engage key academic and public partners who are already active in the field of HPV, particularly those with expertise in health economics, public health modeling, and cancer prevention. Potential collaborators may include universities, research institutes, public health agencies, cancer registries, and clinical experts working on HPV-related vaccination, screening, and treatment programs.
	Explore opportunities for a collaborative research initiative, ideally commissioned or supported by a public health authority. Where public funding is not available, consider alternative sources, such as foundations (Krebsliga Schweiz and Krebsforschung), private sector partners, or academic funding mechanisms, including the Swiss School of Public Health (SSPH+) network or other interdisciplinary programs relevant to HPV and associated health outcomes.
Integrate research into strategy development and monitoring to enable ongoing decision-making by incorporating regular HPV data	Use findings to inform strategic planning, program adjustments, and advocacy efforts, in alignment with the Federal Office of Public Health's (FOPH) reporting cycle and broader national health monitoring frameworks.
reporting and research into national health planning processes.	Combine triangulated data sources (e.g., public health reports, academic studies) to evaluate implementation and impact across cantons.
Benchmark policies against international best practices / HPV elimination strategies to align Swiss policy with successful international HPV elimination models.	Organize policy learning workshops with international partners to showcase scalable solutions. Look to international models, such as <a href="Protect Europe">Protect Europe</a> , for transferable elements.
Use research to inform legislation and communication (data-driven advocacy) to strengthen evidence-informed advocacy by	Develop policy briefs and communication toolkits tailored to MPs and health officials, utilizing data specific to Switzerland.  Build campaigns and motions around scientific and economic evidence.
translating research findings into policy briefs, communication tools, and targeted campaigns.	

# 3. Data and Monitoring

Effective HPV policies rely on reliable data systems. A centralized registry, regular reporting, and cross-sector data sharing are important for identifying gaps and guiding interventions. Transparent data also facilitates improved public communication and accountability.

Measures	Windows of Opportunity and Enablers
Create a centralized national vaccination registry to monitor vaccine uptake across various demographics, including age, gender, region, and healthcare settings.	Existing cantonal vaccination monitoring as a foundation for tracking HPV vaccine uptake across Switzerland. Expanding this system into a centralized national vaccination registry backed by the FOPH, e.g., via future integration with the electronic patient dossier (EPD), or, as a short-term solution, via anonymized health insurance billing data (see Whitepaper) would enable more consistent and comprehensive monitoring. This direction aligns with the action plan of the National Strategy for Vaccinations (NSI), which emphasizes the systematic monitoring, analysis, and communication of vaccination coverage and effectiveness. Ongoing efforts under the NSI would include continued cantonal monitoring, piloting adult immunization data collection, and developing new methods to track vaccine uptake across age groups and risk populations.
Complement vaccination monitoring with data on cervical cancer screening participation, particularly for unvaccinated or under-vaccinated groups.	Enhance HPV data collection by incorporating information from organized and opportunistic screening efforts, where available. Linkage of this data with cancer registries could support more comprehensive monitoring of screening uptake and outcomes across age groups, regions, and risk populations, helping to identify coverage gaps and inform equity-focused interventions.
Ensure that HPV-related data, including but not limited to vaccination rates, are integrated into broader health data systems to facilitate connections with, e.g., cancer registries, the education sector, or health insurance databases.	Use digital health records and existing data infrastructure (e.g., BAG/FOPH platforms).
Standardize data collection across systems to require consistent reporting from schools, healthcare providers, and military services.	Introduce standardized data collection as part of vaccination program contracts or school health frameworks.

# 4. Stakeholder Engagement

A coordinated approach is needed to drive HPV elimination efforts. Currently, no single actor holds responsibility. A national coordination structure or umbrella initiative should be established, and multi-sectoral partnerships should be formalized.

Measures	Windows of Opportunity and Enablers
Support a structured umbrella organization for HPV prevention to establish clear, national-level leadership and cross-sector	The <u>HPV Alliance</u> is already in place and well-positioned to take a leading role, ideally in collaboration with Krebsliga Schweiz, but it requires renewed momentum, visibility, and strategic support.
collaboration.	The recent and upcoming leadership changes at Public Health Schweiz and FOPH present a timely opportunity to build alignment and political will.
Establish formal public-private partnerships to share funding and awareness responsibilities with pharma or insurers.	Use proven Swiss models, such as <u>Hepatitis Schweiz</u> or <u>Corona</u> <u>Immunitas</u> , as blueprints for effective multi-stakeholder collaboration.
	To ensure greater balance and sustainability, consider reducing MSD's currently perceived outsized role by establishing formal public-private partnerships that equitably share funding and awareness responsibilities.

# 5. Communication and Awareness Raising

Awareness-raising must be targeted, evidence-informed, and multi-channeled. Schools, healthcare professionals, and tailored outreach programs (especially for boys and young men) play a key role. Messaging should be consistent, evidence-informed, and responsive to public concerns.

Measures	Windows of Opportunity and Enablers
Integrate HPV education into school curricula to deliver age-appropriate information through	Collaborate with education authorities (e.g., EDK/CDIP) to include in curriculum revisions.
school health and life skills programs.	Propose the implementation of in-school vaccination as a systematic approach across Switzerland, complementing education efforts and helping to reduce access disparities between cantons.
Develop unified, credible messaging across channels to avoid conflicting messages; use coordinated language from health, education, and policy sectors.	Create an HPV communication toolkit co-authored by public health and education professionals. Multiple organizations and cantons currently run separate awareness campaigns; a unified toolkit could standardize language across schools, clinics, and insurers.
Ground campaigns in evidence and personal narratives to combine statistics with human stories to foster emotional and rational engagement.	Partner with survivors, influencers, or youth ambassadors to humanize the message. Organizations like the HPV Alliance and patient networks can help source real-life stories. Swiss influencers (e.g., on TikTok or Instagram) have been used in mental health campaigns, and similar formats can be applied to HPV.

Expand HPV vaccination access for boys and young men through gender-inclusive school programs and military health services.	Build on existing military vaccination logistics and expand school-based programs to be inclusive of all genders.
Empower healthcare professionals as HPV vaccination advocates to be trusted multipliers.	Develop and implement HPV training modules that are integrated into university curricula and vocational training for healthcare professionals.
	Provide (accredited) Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities, supported by the HPV Alliance, in collaboration with the Swiss Medical Association (FMH) and pharmaSuisse. (Example)
	Position pharmacists as trusted HPV vaccination advocates. With the planned implementation of <u>Cost Containment Package 2</u> in 2027, pharmacists will be able to administer reimbursed HPV vaccinations without a physician's prescription, provided the vaccine is included in the Swiss vaccination plan.

### **Next Steps**

This document serves as a foundation for developing a national strategy to reduce HPV-related cancers in Switzerland. It provides a basis for identifying shared priorities, guiding initial planning efforts, and fostering cross-sector alignment. By outlining key areas for action and potential enablers, the roadmap can support discussions among stakeholders, help coordinate future activities, and inform the design of programs or funding proposals aligned with broader public health objectives.

Following the initial dialogue, a hybrid online workshop with a smaller group was held in April 2025 to consolidate momentum and identify individuals and organizations willing to remain engaged in the next phase of the strategy development. Participants reached a preliminary consensus to form a core group committed to moving the strategy forward. It was acknowledged that, in the short term, initial participation would ideally be self-funded or institutionally supported through existing roles, rather than externally sponsored. This reflects a shared commitment to maintaining independence and credibility, as well as ensuring that the next steps are shaped through broad, cross-sectoral ownership.

#### Stakeholder Groups

Throughout the consultative process, participants jointly identified and refined measures that different stakeholders and groups can directly contribute to implementing, as highlighted below.

Who?	What?
	Act as a coordination platform
HPV Alliance	Convene regular check-ins with stakeholders
nrv Attiance	(Co-)lead awareness campaigns
	Support training and advocacy toolkits
	Provide survivor voices and narratives
Vrobelica Schweiz	Co-develop communication material
Krebsliga Schweiz	Support parliamentary briefings
	Support policy briefs and stakeholder convenings
Public Health Schweiz	Support dissemination
Public realth Schweiz	Support parliamentary briefings
Professional associations (e.g., SGGG, mfe,	Promote training and professional development (CPD)
pharmaSuisse, etc.)	Support implementation through members (e.g., pharmacists, GPs, gynecologists)
Academic and research institutions	Lead (economic) modeling and policy benchmarking
Academic and research institutions	Inform strategy refinement with data and evaluation
	Enable national coordination and integration into broader
Federal actors (e.g., FOPH, EKIF)	strategies (NAPS, NSI)
	Support national coordination

	Support registry development and data integration.
	Align cantonal implementation with national targets
Cantonal health authorities	Scale harmonized programs (e.g., school-based delivery)
	Act as implementation champions in regions.
	Advocate for HPV inclusion in cancer/prevention strategies
Pauliamantam akammiana	Support motions with evidence-informed arguments
Parliamentary champions	Co-host parliamentary events
	Provide cross-party support.
	Integrate HPV into health curricula
Education sector (e.g., EDK/CDIP, cantonal education authorities)	Support inclusive school-based delivery
,	Co-create educational material with public health experts.
	Provide lived-experience stories for campaigns
Youth and survivor advocates (e.g., through Krebsliga or HPV Alliance)	Act as ambassadors for awareness
	Co-design content targeting young people.

# **Project Team**

The project team, composed of academic researchers, supported this process by facilitating structured, evidence-informed dialogue and synthesizing stakeholder input into this roadmap. As a neutral, research-oriented actor, the academic team can continue to contribute by:

- Providing technical input and evidence reviews to inform specific policy actions or program design
- Supporting cross-sectoral coordination by facilitating dialogue between cantonal and federal actors
- Mapping proposed measures to existing strategies, such as the National Strategy for Vaccinations (NSI), and identifying policy windows for implementation
- Contributing to monitoring and evaluation frameworks, pilot studies, or implementation research
- Some of these contributions may require additional financial or institutional support, particularly if the academic team takes on a sustained facilitative or analytical role.

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