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Swiss Biotech Association welcomes referendum result on February 13, 2022

The industry association of the Swiss biotech start-ups and SMEs welcomes that the Swiss electorate has rejected the proposal to ban animal testing and clinical trials. This enables Switzerland to continue to play its leading international role in the development of innovative medicines and new medical therapies. Moreover, the Swiss healthcare system retains access to innovative medicines from abroad. With one of the strictest animal protection laws in the world, Switzerland also ensures that animal tests are carried out with the utmost care and will be replaced by alternative methods wherever possible.

Switzerland has become one of the world's leading research locations for biomedical innovations and has an excellent healthcare system. More than 1,000 small and medium-sized biotech companies employ over 50,000 highly qualified people. Together with their research partners in universities, hospitals, and pharmaceutical companies, they form one of Switzerland's most innovative industries, which has also become an important export factor.

The proposal to ban animal testing and clinical trials would have called these achievements into question. It would have jeopardized Switzerland as a research location and risked to significantly weaken the Swiss healthcare system. «By rejecting this initiative, Switzerland can now continue to apply one of its greatest strengths, and thus contribute to address unmet medical needs in the global healthcare system. Thanks to the rejection, we can continue to make an important contribution to the research and development of novel medicine, and we retain access to innovative medicines developed in other countries», comments Michael Altorfer, CEO of the Swiss Biotech Association.

The fact that animal tests, which are mandatory all over the world for the approval of new medicines, continue to be carried out in Switzerland serves animal welfare better than relocation to other countries. Switzerland's strict animal protection law requires and controls efficiency, effectiveness, and respect in the conduct of experiments. Wherever possible, in vitro and in silico methods are used as alternatives. It is also advantageous for clinical trials to take place with Swiss participation, and thus to further develop know-how and innovative therapy options to make them available to Swiss patients as quickly as possible.

Media contact

Swiss Biotech Association, Sabine Bamert, Head of Communications

bamert@swissbiotech.org

[swissbiotech.org/media](https://www.swissbiotech.org/media)

T: +41 44 455 56 78

About the Swiss Biotech Association

Founded in 1998, the Swiss Biotech Association represents the interests of the Swiss biotech industry. To support its members in a competitive market, the association works to secure favorable framework conditions and facilitate access to talents, novel technologies, and financial resources. To strengthen and promote the Swiss biotech industry, the Swiss Biotech Association collaborates with numerous partners and life science clusters globally under the brand Swiss Biotech™. For further information see [swissbiotech.org](https://www.swissbiotech.org)