

Media release, 28 October 2025

First Swiss Gender Medicine Symposium sets the tone for gender-sensitive and future-oriented medicine

- On 20 and 21 October, around 280 experts from the fields of medicine, science, business and politics gathered in Bern for the first Swiss Gender Medicine Symposium to discuss the future of gender-sensitive healthcare.
- The symposium created the first national forum for gender medicine in Switzerland.
- Participants enjoyed a varied programme featuring internationally renowned experts, interdisciplinary sessions covering topics from medicine to economics, innovative poster walks on research, practice and big data, and numerous opportunities for scientific exchange.
- The private funding agency Initiative Switzerland initiated the Swiss Gender Medicine Symposium together with the University of Zurich and carried it out with the support of two national foundations, Roche and the medical faculties of Switzerland.



Bern, 28 October 2025 – On 20 and 21 October, the Swiss Gender Medicine Symposium took place for the first time at the Kursaal Bern with the aim of establishing gender medicine as an integral part of modern, equitable and future-oriented healthcare.

The high-profile event brought together around 280 experts from the fields of medicine, science, business and politics to discuss current developments and challenges in gender-specific medicine. The programme ranged from keynote speeches and panel discussions to poster walks featuring around 40 research projects and sessions on gender medicine in education, legal frameworks and the healthcare workforce. It was a diverse event offering knowledge, inspiration and numerous networking opportunities. Topics included healthcare and prevention, ethical and regulatory issues, and technological developments such as AI and big data. Michael Rauchenstein, well known from SRF Tagesschau, hosted the programme on both days.

The private promotion agency Initiative Switzerland supported the establishment of a national network and the launch of the Swiss Gender Medicine Symposium. Stefan Linder, head of Initiative Switzerland and co-founder of the Swiss Economic Forum, explains: "The Swiss Gender Medicine Symposium has succeeded in creating the first international forum in Switzerland that brings together the relevant players in gender medicine. This has provided important impetus for deepening understanding of gender-specific differences in medicine and promoting long-term exchange between science, practice and politics."

International perspectives and Swiss expertise

The international speakers made an important contribution. Prof. Louise Pilote, a specialist in cardiovascular disease (McGill University, Montreal), highlighted the gender-specific differences in the relationship between blood pressure and cardiovascular events. Prof. Londa Schiebinger, a pioneer in gender research in the natural sciences (Stanford University), provided insight into her research on gendered innovations – and how these are opening up new scientific perspectives worldwide .

Representatives from Switzerland also made significant contributions. In a panel discussion,

Prof. Carole Clair (Unisanté Lausanne), Prof. Carolin Lerchenmüller (University Hospital Zurich) and Prof. Catherine Gebhard (Inselspital Bern) jointly addressed the status of gender medicine in Switzerland. The panel discussion highlighted the importance of interdisciplinary exchange and how the institutionalisation of gender medicine can be promoted.

An important step for gender-sensitive medicine in Switzerland

The first Swiss Gender Medicine Symposium demonstrated that there is considerable interest in gender-sensitive medicine in Switzerland. It became clear that gender-sensitive approaches not only improve the quality of research and care, but also strengthen innovation and equal opportunities in the healthcare system.

The symposium thus sent a strong signal and marked the start of a long-term development that aims to establish gender medicine as an integral part of modern, precise and fair healthcare in Switzerland.

About the Swiss Gender Medicine Symposium

The Swiss Gender Medicine Symposium is organised under the leadership of the University of Zurich (UZH), in cooperation with Switzerland's five medical faculties and with project support from foundations and industry.

The symposium is being prepared by the University Medicine Zurich (UMZH) at the University of Zurich and is being led by **Prof. Beatrice Beck Schimmer**.

Prof. Beatrice Beck Schimmer is Professor of Anesthesiology at UZH and, since 2018, Director of University Medicine Zurich and thus a member of the seven-person UZH Executive Board.

www.swiss-gendermedicine.org

About the Initiative Switzerland

Initiative Switzerland is a private promotion agency that supports innovative ideas and projects in all parts of Switzerland and all language regions. In doing so, it is committed to promoting competitiveness and prosperity in Switzerland. Through its activities and projects, it aims to help Switzerland secure its global leadership position and innovative strength in the long term. Initiative Switzerland is financed by F.G. Pfister Holding AG and the dividends generated by the holding company.

Initiative Switzerland is headed by **Stefan Linder**, co-founder, long-standing CEO and delegate of the Swiss Economic Forum.

www.initiative-schweiz.org

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