

*International Health Regulations (IHR)*

# Uphold the rule of law

## Recognise WHO as an instrument of power and act accordingly

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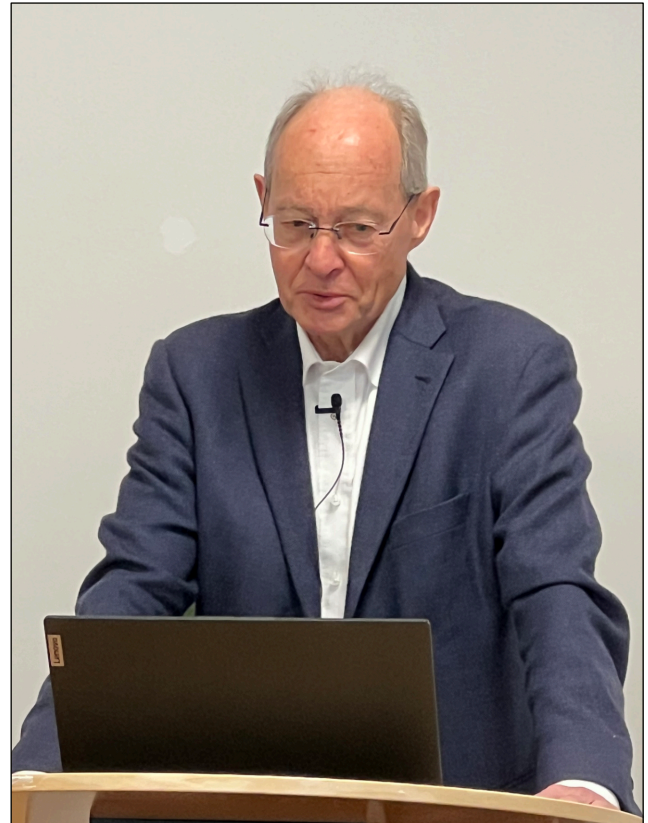
*The event organised by the "Swiss Standpoint" on 3/4 January 2025 with lic. iur. Jürg Vollenweider, former Senior Public Prosecutor in the Canton of Zurich, was met with great interest. His lecture more than met his objective: "We have to educate people about the new WHO regulations and their impact on our fundamental freedoms in their own language, so that they can understand the dangerous tendencies towards the expansion of uncontrolled power structures." His stimulating, differentiated presentation informed and encouraged the audience to ask many questions and develop their own considerations.*

First published by the WHO in 1951 as "International Sanitary Regulations" and renamed "International Health Regulations" (IHR) in 2005, these regulations were intended to organise the necessary cooperation between states worldwide in the field of infections. However, since 1 June 2024, the IHR have been in place, and represent an instrument of the autocratic rule of the Director-General of the WHO in the handling of global infectious diseases. They go far beyond the primary goal. Those who accept them consciously accept a loss of sovereignty in their own national health policy, since the IHR are binding international law.

### Key points of criticism

The speaker made the legal language of the IHR understandable for the audience.

He named information control as the centrepiece of his criticism. Under the guise of combating "misinformation and disinformation" member states are to commit themselves to restricting freedom of speech and expression. The



Jürg Vollenweider at the conference of «Schweizer Standpunkt». (Picture mt)

WHO sees itself as the sole repository of the "truth". It is not fundamentally bad, but it has been hijacked by the pharmaceutical industry. 80% of the WHO budget is made up of earmarked, voluntary donations from countries and private individuals. The WHO defines "misinformation and disinformation" as information that does not correspond to the interests of the "donors" and must therefore be suppressed.

The WHO also wants to prescribe the "relevant health products" such as tests, vaccinations and

\* The slides illustrating Jürg Vollenweider's presentation and a synopsis of the four successive versions of the IGV, including the one that has been in force since 1 June 2024, can be accessed here. (In German language)

Presentation:

[https://schweizer-standpunkt.ch/files/schweizer\\_stand-](https://schweizer-standpunkt.ch/files/schweizer_standpunkt/PDF/Originalversionen/Frist%20ist%20Frist%20-%20Schweizer%20Standpunkt%203.1.2025.pdf)

[punkt/PDF/Originalversionen/Frist%20ist%20Frist%20-%20Schweizer%20Standpunkt%203.1.2025.pdf](https://schweizer-standpunkt.ch/files/schweizer_standpunkt/PDF/Originalversionen/IHR-IGV%20-%20A%C-88nderungen%20-%20Synopsis%20der%204%20Fassungen.pdf)

Synopsis:

[https://schweizer-standpunkt.ch/files/schweizer\\_standpunkt/PDF/Originalversionen/IHR-IGV%20-%20A%C-88nderungen%20-%20Synopsis%20der%204%20Fassungen.pdf](https://schweizer-standpunkt.ch/files/schweizer_standpunkt/PDF/Originalversionen/IHR-IGV%20-%20A%C-88nderungen%20-%20Synopsis%20der%204%20Fassungen.pdf)

medicines that may be used in this situation. Just think of already tested, low-cost alternative medicines whose use was prevented during the Covid crisis.

Furthermore, each member state, including Switzerland, must provide human and financial resources and adapt national laws to establish an additional “permanent point of contact” for the WHO. In Switzerland, the *Federal Office of Public Health* (FOPH) considers itself suitable for this.

The Director-General can, as before, declare a “public health emergency of international concern” on his own, but this is now supplemented by the idea of a “pandemic emergency”. His decisions are not subject to any controlling authority; he is immune.<sup>1</sup> With the declaration of one or the other (probable) “emergency”, all member countries – 194 in number – are obliged to take the measures prescribed by the WHO.

All these far-reaching adjustments were repeatedly described by the Federal Council to parliamentarians as “minor technical adjustments of limited scope”. Their significance is being criminally downplayed.

#### **“Adopted” by so-called consensus**

The speaker’s clarifications of how the new amendments to the IHR were adopted at the 77<sup>th</sup> World Health Assembly (WHA) were alarming. It met in Geneva from 27–31 May 2024.

The WHO violated Art. 55 para. 2 of its own IHR by not observing the four-month period between the transmission of the final proposed amendments and their adoption at the World Health Assembly. This period is a mandatory procedural requirement. It serves the purpose of legal certainty. Country representatives should have sufficient time to consider the amendments and to assess their domestic implications.

However, a consolidated draft version of the relevant working group was not published until 17 April 2024, instead of 27 January 2024 at the latest, with further changes following on 20 May and 1 June.

By not meeting this deadline, a breach of law was committed, which in itself is reason enough to reject these amendments.

But it went even further: on 30 May, the last proper vote on the IGV revision was held in the appropriate responsible Committee A. It resulted in 26 yes, 67 no votes and 9 abstentions,

with a total of 177 registered and 75 absent voters, i.e. the IGV revision was clearly rejected by this committee. On 1 June, at around 7:30 p.m., the plenary session of the WHA was interrupted and the same committee was convened at short notice. This time, no quorum was established as it had been on 30 May. Instead, a “consensus vote” was taken:

The Chairman:

“[...] In view of the time pressure, I propose that the two remaining agenda items be transferred to the plenary session. Is that acceptable to the committee? I hear a ‘YES’ and no objections. Since there are no objections, it is hereby decided. [...]”<sup>2</sup>

A short time later, at around 9:07 p.m., the entire IGV revision was adopted in the WHA plenary, again without a quorum being established, by so-called consensus, as follows:

The Chairman:

“Is the assembly now ready to adopt the resolution as read out? I see no objection; the resolution, including the amendments contained in document A77/A/CONF./14, is adopted.”<sup>3</sup>

Voting by consensus is not even provided for in the WHO’s rules of procedure.

Jürg Vollenweider was disdinct about this approach: not only does it clearly contradict the WHO’s own rules of procedure, but it is also incompatible with the Swiss understanding of democracy and with the “ordre public”. At any rate, it is an unworthy farce that contradicts any common sense of democracy!

#### **Will the Federal Council also commit a breach of law?**

Without intervening and rejecting the unlawfully adopted IHR amendments, every contracting state would also be violating international law and nationally applicable statutory law, according to the speaker. This is a statement that ought to give the Federal Council some food for thought. It has the opportunity – or rather the duty, if it does not want to commit a breach of law itself – to reject the amendments to the IHR by 19 July 2025 at the latest.

According to the speaker, however, only “pressure from the bottom” can persuade the Federal Council to opt-out, i.e. to reject them.

On 13 November 2024, the Federal Council opened a consultation on the IHR.<sup>4</sup> Many organisations will express their criticism, and every citizen is invited to do so as well. The consultation period ends on 27 February 2025.

The “Aktionsbündnis freie Schweiz” (Alliance for a Free Switzerland), for which Jürg Vollenweider works as a legal adviser, has launched a petition called “Switzerland-wide campaign for opting-out IGV”. Its motto: “We are acting. You too!”<sup>5</sup>

*(Translation Swiss Standpoint)*

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.fedlex.admin.ch/eli/cc/1956/1120\\_1198\\_1210/de](https://www.fedlex.admin.ch/eli/cc/1956/1120_1198_1210/de)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.who.int/about/governance/world-health-as>

[sembly/seventy-seventh](#)  
(anklicken rechts: WHA77 – Committee A)

<sup>3</sup> Plenary meeting from 1 June 2024, approx. 09:07pm; official video: WHA77 Plenary, 9th Plenary Meeting 01 June 2024 – 08:55-10:50pm : <https://www.who.int/about/governance/world-health-assembly/seventy-seventh>  
(from time mark 12:50am)

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.fedlex.admin.ch/de/consultation-procedures/ongoing#https://fedlex.data.admin.ch/eli/dl/proj/2024/87/cons\\_1](https://www.fedlex.admin.ch/de/consultation-procedures/ongoing#https://fedlex.data.admin.ch/eli/dl/proj/2024/87/cons_1)

<sup>5</sup> <https://opting-out-igv.ch>