

COVID-19 Evolution as of 11 November 2021 and it's future

The Economic Forecasting Team of the Federal Office of Public Health recommends increasing restrictions and expanding vaccine availability

The Economic Forecasting Team highly recommends that the Federal Council announces and implements new restrictions and expands the accessibility of the vaccine as soon as possible. Given the current rate of vaccination and its evolution, we estimate that the daily cases of COVID-19 to increase by XXX in the next 4 weeks. If the Federal Council does not implement new measures, this could lead to an over saturation of the Hospital system, as it would mean an increased of hospitalisations of YYY. The rate of vaccination slowing down in the previous weeks combine with the winter weather conditions are drivers for this increase of daily cases. Taken into consideration the winter holidays, which are known to be spreader events, we firmly believe that tightening restrictions and further expand the access the vaccine are necessary measures that need to be announced at the shortest notice possible.

Given Switzerland's past responses to restrictions and vaccination incentives, but also observing neighbouring countries, we recommend the Federal Council to take the following measures:

- Extension of certificate requirement: The Federal Council should imposed the widespread adoption of the so-called "2G" measure. This means to required proof of vaccination or of "guérison", and to not accept a negative test. This should apply to all indoors venues.
- Remote working for non-vaccinated individuals
- "Drive-in" and "Tent" style vaccinations booths: This is a measure that has been proven to increase vaccination. It should be adopted for places that have difficult access (such has for those living in mountains), low-income areas but also city centres.
- Vaccination-at-work: Increase the accessibility to vaccines through the workplace has been proven to be effective.
- Obligation to wear a mask at all places, outdoors or indoors.

Taken individually, all these measures have been proven to increase vaccinations rates. The most effective the measures has been the implementation of the COVID certificate. When announced, the 19th of May 2020, it tripped the amount of vaccinations that were recorded in a 20 day period. This is even before the certificate requirement was implemented. Therefore, this is a sign that the population responds to announcements and not only implementation.

As it stands, only `vax_perc(voir code)` of the Swiss population. The medical research estimate that for a vaccine that has 80% of efficacy, there is a need for 78% of the population to be vaccinated. Switzerland is far from that. During winter, the probably for more contagions is increasing and with it the probability for a more dangerous variant to appear. We therefore need to implement a policy that can reduce the daily cases but also quickly bring the vaccination rate to it's needed level.

We firmly believe that the simple extension of the certificate requirement will not be sufficient. This is due to the past experiences, where the data documents that after restriction measures, there is much slower increase vaccination rate in Switzerland that in other countries. This is also due to the approval rate of the COVID restrictions. We believe that out of defiance, there could be a segment of the population that will still refuse to get vaccinated. As such, we need to lower the barrier of vaccination as much as possible. This is only feasible by increasing the locations where one can get vaccinated. This will also reduce the waiting time between vaccines. The full coverage of the Swiss people is of course an unreachable goal. That is why we also recommend the mask mandate, as it will slow the circulation of the virus.

Our forecast show that the implementation of these policies together will increase the vaccinate coverage to 81% in 4 weeks. Compared to the current course of action, these policies will reduce daily COVID-19 cases by almost 8% in the first week. After 4 weeks, this will reduce the cases by XXXX (chiffre pas en pourcentage pour que ça claque plus).

Evaluation by professor:

Formal aspects of the non-technical report. The report respects the required structure and is clearly structured according to guidelines. Each paragraph develops the required notions in an appropriate manner. Care is taken in the aesthetics of the report.

Non-technical report. The report conveys a clear message and contains information that aims at helping decision makers to take meaningful decisions. It *stresses the main economic mechanisms behind point forecast of key target variable(s) in a clear, concise and non-technical way*. It also *provides information about uncertainty around point forecasts using a density forecast*. The conclusions presented in the report are empirically relevant and convincing.