

**Title :**       **PubliForum on transplantation medicine**

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**Reference :** **Citizen Panel Report, TA-P 2/2000**, 50 pages, available in English, French, German and Italian  
<http://www.publiforum2000.ch>

**Aim :**

Developments in the transplantation of organs, tissues and cells raise many hopes – numerous uncertainties and problems, however, are also emerging. This PubliForum would like to help initiate a broad debate on the possibilities and limits of transplantation medicine and promote the exchange of ideas between specialists and the man and woman on the street. Such a dialogue is especially important, as the Swiss authorities are currently drafting a legislation on transplantation.

**Conclusions and results :**

The PubliForum has given a group of 30 laypeople the possibility of discussing various aspects of transplantation medicine with professionals from a broad array of specialized branches. The laypeople wrote then down a report with their appreciation of the situation, as well as recommendations for decision-makers in the fields of politics, the economy, medicine and scientific research.

**Recommendations :**

The laypanel made, among others, the following recommendations :

- We are seriously concerned in seeing that the general population be better informed on transplantation medicine so as to enhance transparency and increase the willingness to donate.
- Although the explicit prior patient consent solution respects the dignity of the donor to the highest degree, we would recommend that Parliament incorporate the extended solution into the law on transplantation in view of increasing the availability of organs.
- It appears that medical personnel exert significant influence on the willingness to donate organs. For this reason, we would recommend that stronger emphasis be placed on training them in the area of communication and in dealing with family members.
- The advantages of xenotransplantations mentioned by the experts are hardly capable of offsetting the extensive risks. We therefore place an enormous amount of emphasis on alternatives (e.g. artificial organs, stem cells).

**Methods :**

The PubliForum has been developed on the basis of the method of "Consensus Conferences".

Following steps were involved in this PubliForum :

- About 10'000 persons living in Switzerland were randomly contacted.
- From the 100 persons who registered, 30 were selected taking into consideration age, sex, profession, and linguistic region.
- The Citizen Panel met for two preparatory week-ends in order to determine which questions were to be discussed in the course of the PubliForum and also which experts asked to provide information on these questions.
- The Citizen Panel met these experts for two days and, consecutively, wrote a report.

A professional mediator assisted the Citizen Panel throughout the whole process.