

## “WATER SAFETY AT SCHOOL” – HOW WATER SAFETY BECAME PART OF SWITZERLAND’S NATIONAL SYLLABUS AND HOW IT IS BEING TAUGHT

**Mr. Reto Abächerli<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Swiss Lifesaving Society SLRG, Sursee, Switzerland

Poster Day 3, October 19, 2017, 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM

In 2007 the Swiss Lifesaving Society (SLRG) submitted a petition to the Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education (EDK) requesting the expansion of swimming instruction in state schools. At that time, the request was refused on the grounds of the high costs this would generate for the public authorities. The response also pointed out that teaching children to swim was not the exclusive task of state schools but also of parents and clubs/associations. Now, some 10 years later, the SLRG has achieved its political objective. Within the scope of the “Syllabus 21” project from 2010 to 2014 Switzerland’s 21 German-speaking cantons (out of a total of 26) developed a standard syllabus. In addition to swimming it also includes the topic of ‘water safety’. The objective is to teach pupils how to behave safely when in, on and near water and the correct procedure in emergencies.

This is a milestone for prevention of drowning in Switzerland. The first cantons have already introduced the new syllabus. The majority of the remaining cantons will be introducing it at the beginning of the 2017/2018 academic year.

This poster describes how the SLRG has influenced the political process which culminated in “Syllabus 21”; the competences which should be promoted; how the SLRG is supporting the syllabus’ introduction with comprehensive teaching materials as well as training courses for teaching personnel and where the key challenges lie.