



## Hope Barometer 2025

Hope between Prosperity, Climate Change and AI

Results for Switzerland and comparison with other countries

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Since 2009, the Hope Barometer has been conducted annually through an extensive internet survey in German-speaking, French-speaking, and Italian-speaking Switzerland with the support of the 20 Minuten Group. Originating in Switzerland, the survey is now also carried out in cooperation with other universities in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania, France, India, Israel, Nigeria, Portugal, Spain, South Africa, Lebanon, Egypt, Palestine, and Japan. This report presents the November/December 2024 Hope Barometer results in Switzerland and an initial country comparison. The public was asked about their expectations for the future across various areas, long-term social future scenarios, personal hopes, sources of hope, and attitudes towards climate change and artificial intelligence (AI).

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## The most essential facts in brief

The results of the Hope Barometer 2025 lead to the following findings:

1. Most people in Switzerland continue to thrive. They are satisfied with their lives and look confidently toward the future. However, many individuals are less content with their lives and are not very optimistic about what lies ahead.
2. A subdued outlook on political, economic, social, and ecological developments is linked to greater personal dissatisfaction. Many people have little faith in politics and the economy's ability to achieve a positive turnaround.
3. Respondents in Switzerland, France, Japan, and Spain expect their countries' quality of life in their countries to decline over the long term. In contrast, most respondents from poorer countries like India, Romania, and Egypt remain hopeful that it could improve.
4. In the long term, most people anticipate a global future marked by crises and conflict, particularly in wealthy European countries. In contrast, respondents from poorer nations maintain their belief in a better future.
5. Many respondents believe economic and technological progress cannot solve social and ecological problems. Thus, a future-focused solely on economics and technology appears less desirable. However, material prosperity in poorer countries is essential for a fulfilling life.
6. Most people desire a future marked by sustainability, harmony, and social cohesion. However, material prosperity should not oppose social and ecological sustainability, and respondents from poorer countries particularly expect this.
7. Ecological sustainability and new technologies are frequently associated with climate change and advancement in artificial intelligence (AI). However, in Switzerland, many individuals are skeptical about a positive shift regarding climate issues and view AI as hardly a tool for enhancing living conditions.
8. However, many individuals do not entirely abandon their belief in positive climate and environmental development. Many would be willing to contribute personally if others, particularly politicians and businesses, took more significant action.
9. Many people, although not yet a majority, expect artificial intelligence to enhance their skills and competencies. At the same time, many hold a critical or even hostile attitude toward AI.
10. On average, personal hope in Switzerland is at a medium-high level, generally declining slightly. As in previous years, people's hopes primarily focus on individual health, a happy marriage, family or partnership, a harmonious life, positive relationships, greater self-determination, and a meaningful job.
11. Nature and social relationships, especially the family, are many people's most important sources of hope. For new technologies to become a source of hope, they must significantly contribute to fulfilling personal and social hopes.

On the one hand, people believe in a long-term future full of crises and disasters, which can be consciously or unconsciously perceived as a threat and cause unease and even worry. On the other hand, most people want a sustainable and harmonious future with more justice and cohesion.

Pessimism about the future stems from increasing uncertainty, particularly in wealthy European countries. Many individuals who were once accustomed to security and order now view the global situation as challenging and chaotic.

In this sense, hope is becoming increasingly important as it acts as a prerequisite for action and involves believing that a positive turnaround is still possible. Hope differs from wishful thinking in that individuals are willing to take action to address climate change.

Given the potential risks, scientists, researchers, and entrepreneurs must consider how to foster trust in AI. People will be more likely to accept AI and integrate it into their work if they believe it will enhance their autonomy and competence, improving their personal and social well-being.

The ranking of hopes has remained nearly constant in recent years, which can be attributed to fundamental values. People contemplate what is essential to them, particularly in challenging situations. Remarkably, the ranking of young people's hopes is almost identical to that of the broader population.

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## I Introduction

The main aim of the Hope Barometer is to provide an open and unbiased approach to people's ideas about the future and their hopes. It examines how people perceive the future based on their experiences and current events, what beliefs and attitudes they develop as a result, and what personal expectations arise. For several years now, the Hope Barometer has been conducted not only in Switzerland but also in several countries around the world. The current report focuses on the results in Switzerland. Still, it includes the first results from several European countries (France, Spain, Portugal, Czech Republic, Romania, and Slovakia) and other world regions (Israel, Palestine, Jordan, Egypt, India, Japan, Nigeria, and South Africa). The aim is to evaluate and interpret the national results within a larger international context (see Chapter 4).

This year's survey deals with several topics. To enable comparative time series, specific questions are repeated over the years. These questions examine the general feeling of hope, satisfaction, and prospects in the economic, political, environmental, and social areas, personal hopes and sources of hope, and people's long-term prospects. A particular focus of this year's report is a comparison of the long-term prospects of people in different countries. Economic, political, social, and cultural conditions influence future trends and scenarios people consider possible, probable, and desirable. How do people in poorer and conflict-ridden countries view the future? Are they more hopeless than people in more affluent countries? Or is it the other way around?

Based on two "desirable" future scenarios - the progress scenario and the sustainability scenario - the new focal points of the Hope Barometer 2025 address the general attitude of the Swiss population concerning climate change and the development of artificial intelligence. In previous years, a significant majority of respondents expressed a desire for a greener and more sustainable society in the future. In contrast, technological development was viewed as less desirable (though not entirely so). This year's survey focuses on the extent to which people believe in the possibility of a sustainable future, as well as their expectations, concerns, and hopes regarding climate change and artificial intelligence. Can humanity still avert a worsening climate crisis? Are people willing and able to take action? Can artificial intelligence enhance everyone's lives? Can the public's concerns be alleviated? Can individuals perform their tasks more self-determined and competently thanks to artificial intelligence, thereby experiencing greater motivation and fulfillment at work?

Since its inception, the Hope Barometer has aimed to reach as many people as possible and encourage them to reflect on their hopes and visions for the future. Thanks to collaboration with 20 Minuten, many individuals can participate in the survey year after year. This year, 4,293 people aged 18 to 90 participated in the survey, including roughly equal numbers of men and women from Switzerland's three largest language regions (German, French, and Italian).

## 2 Satisfaction and Well-being in 2024

At the beginning of the Hope Barometer, individuals can reflect on the past year and evaluate their satisfaction with their personal lives, national politics, the state of the economy, the management of social issues, and the progress made regarding climate and environmental concerns.

As in previous years, on a scale of 1 (very dissatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied), people in 2024 are significantly more satisfied with their own lives than with aspects of society (see Figure 1). While individuals in French-speaking Switzerland were slightly more satisfied with their personal lives than those in German-speaking and Italian-speaking regions, respondents in German-speaking Switzerland expressed somewhat greater satisfaction with the economy and the climate/environment compared to the other language areas.

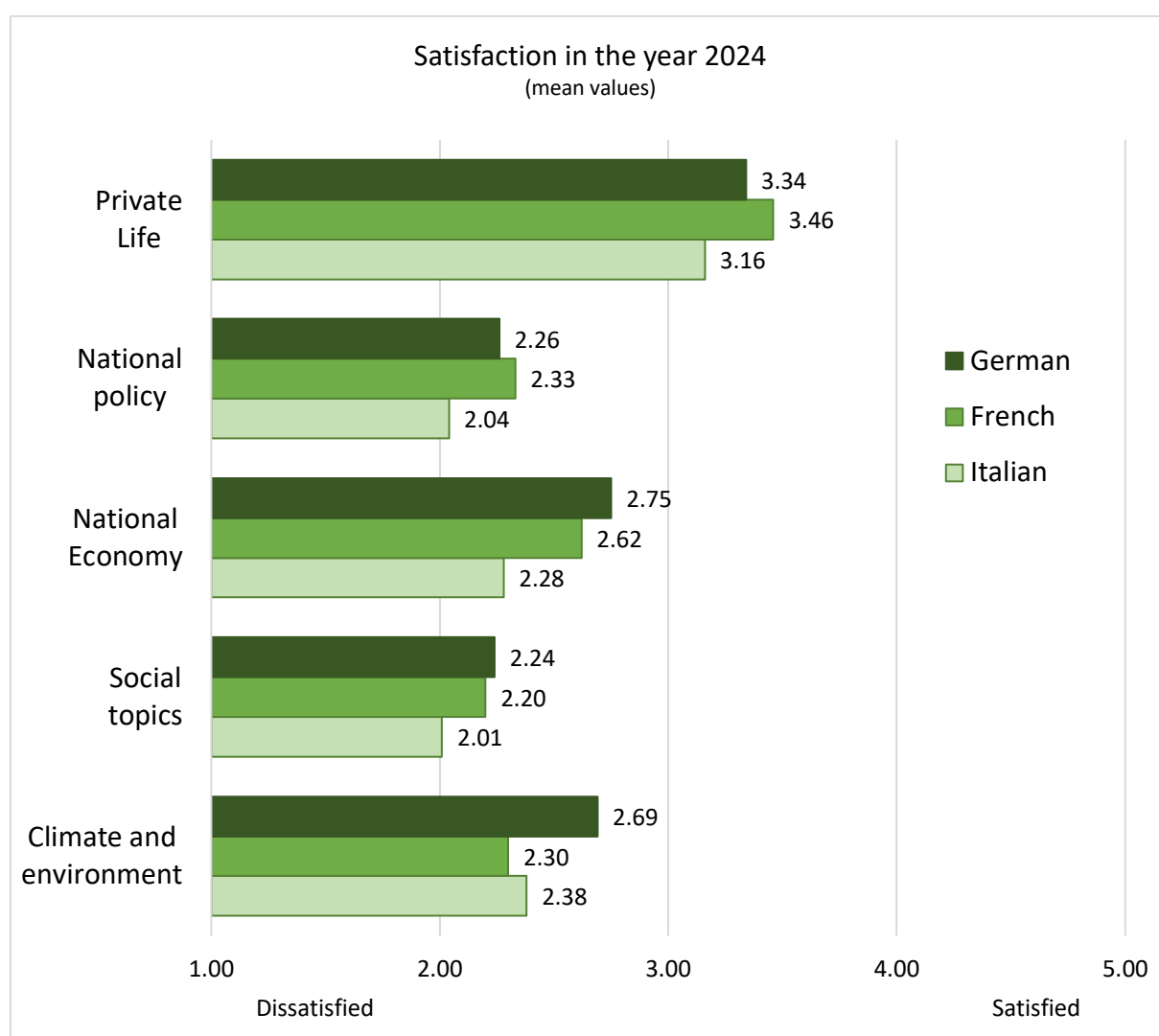
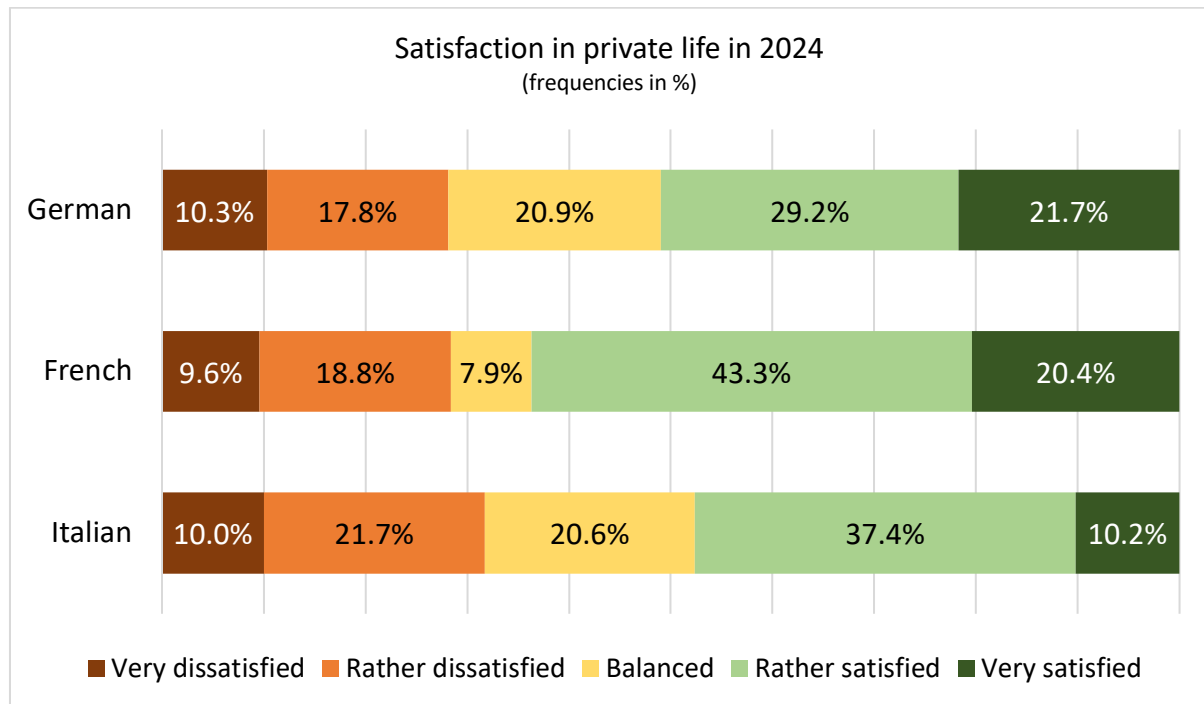


Fig.1 : Satisfaction in 2024 by language region

In German-speaking Switzerland, about 51% of those surveyed are somewhat to very satisfied with their lives in retrospect (Fig. 2). In contrast, just over 28% are somewhat dissatisfied, and approximately 21% feel neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. In French-speaking Switzerland, more than 63% of people are satisfied, while 28% are dissatisfied. Respondents in Italian-speaking Switzerland report the lowest



satisfaction levels, with just under 48% being instead very satisfied (of which around 10% are very satisfied) and approximately 32% indicating they are somewhat very dissatisfied.



*Fig.2 : Satisfaction in private life in 2024 by language region*

For a more differentiated view, we asked people about their well-being (Keyes 2002, 2014), i.e., how good they feel. Personal well-being is characterized by happiness, satisfaction, and interest in life, as well as the experience of meaning, personal growth, good relationships, and a healthy sense of self-worth.

The results in Fig. 3 indicate that on a scale of 1 (low) to 6 (high), most people feel more comfortable than average, and this comfort level increased in all three language regions by the end of 2024 compared to the end of 2023. Specifically, at the end of 2024, approximately two-thirds (67%) of respondents scored between 4 (medium-high) and 6 (high), and about 20% scored in the middle range of 3 to 4, feeling neither comfortable nor uncomfortable. Only 13% scored below 3 (indicative of relatively low personal well-being). In German-speaking Switzerland, the values are slightly more positive than in the other two language regions.



Fig.3 : Personal Well-being between 2022 and 2024 by language region

A comparison of the different age groups shows that people aged between 50 and 79 have a higher level of well-being than people aged between 18 and 49.

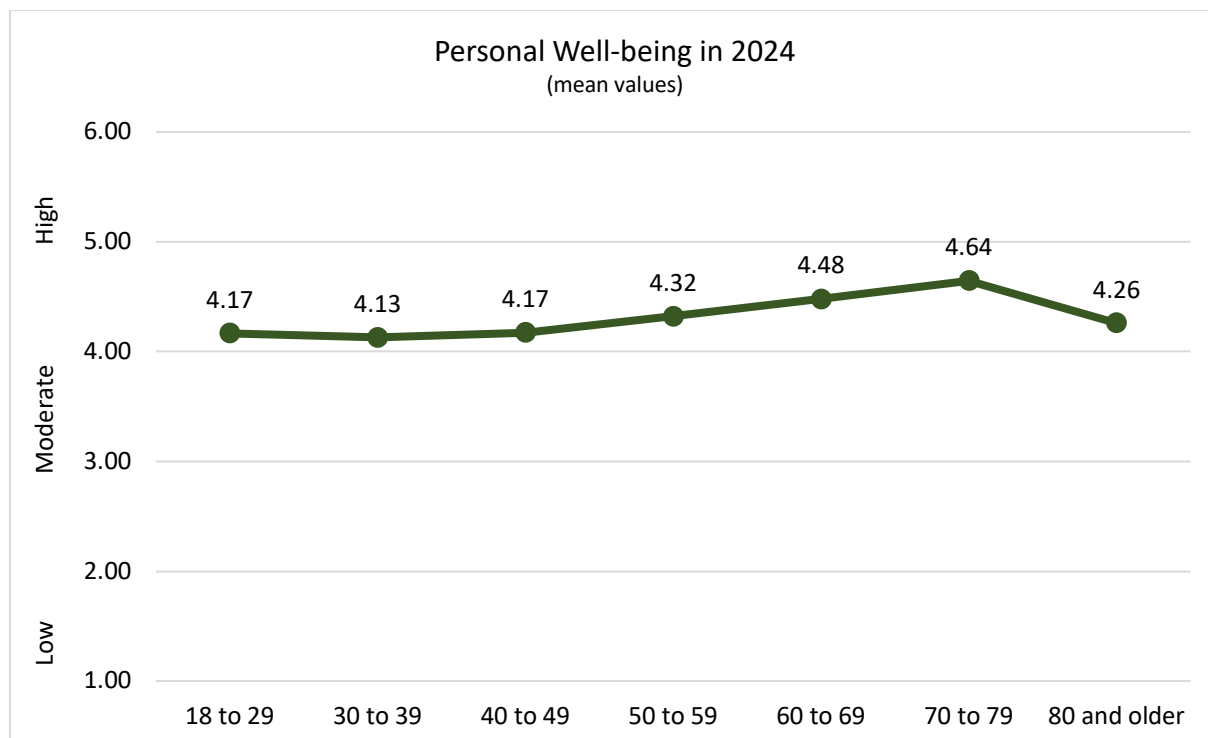


Fig.4: Personal well-being in 2024 by age group

### 3 Expectations for the Year 2025

Experiences in 2024 influence expectations for the coming year 2025. People are most optimistic about their own lives, especially in German-speaking and French-speaking Switzerland (Fig. 5). However, when it comes to political, economic, social, and environmental issues and global peace prospects, most people are rather pessimistic about the new year. In German-speaking Switzerland, economic developments are viewed less pessimistically than in the other two language regions, with respondents in Italian-speaking Switzerland being the most pessimistic.

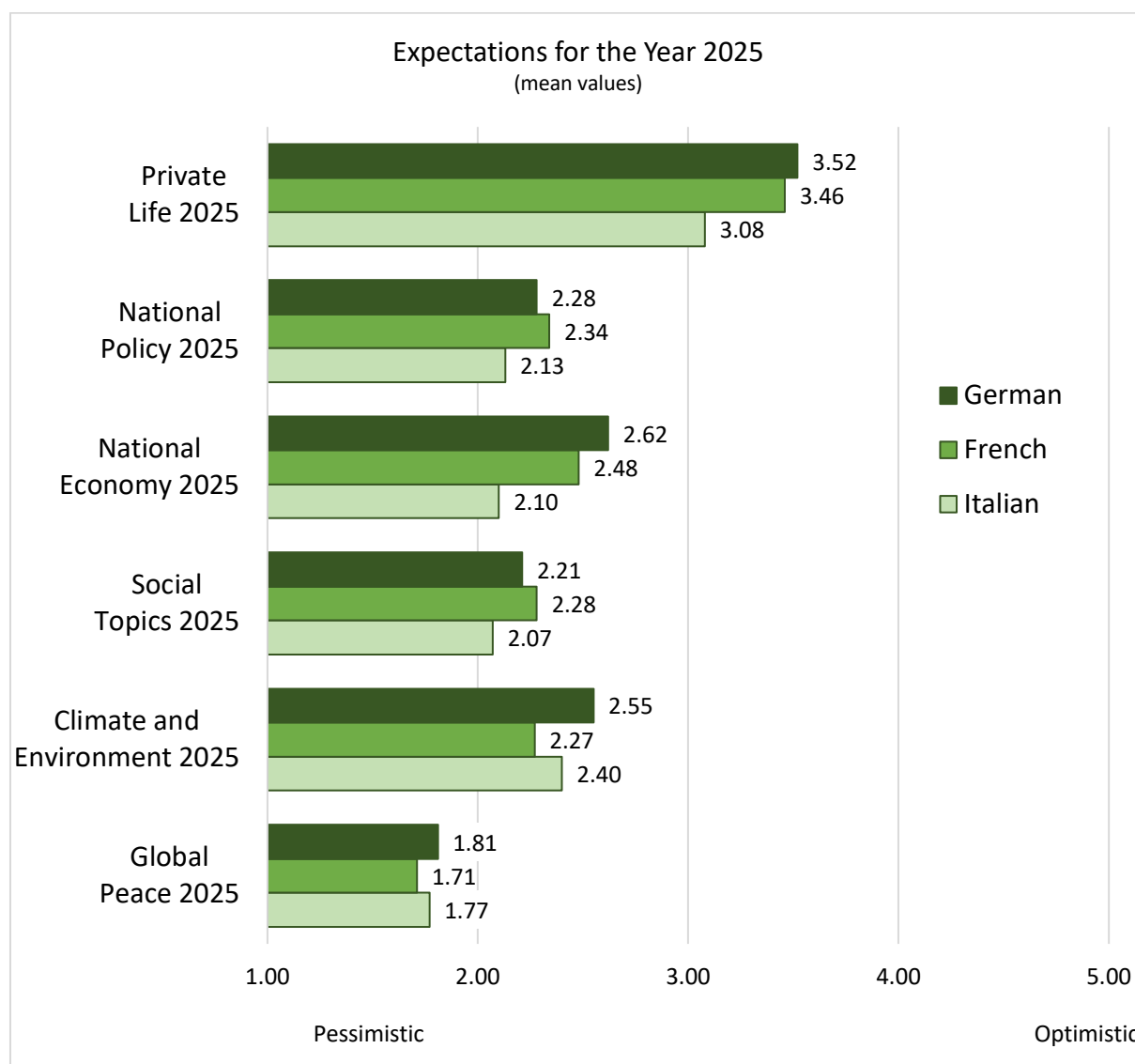


Fig.5 : Expectations for the year 2025 in the three language regions

Despite the higher level of well-being, people's average expectations for their personal lives in the coming year are slightly less optimistic than they were a year ago across all three language regions (Fig. 6). Individuals are least optimistic in Italian-speaking Switzerland, where the economic outlook is also regarded as the most negative.

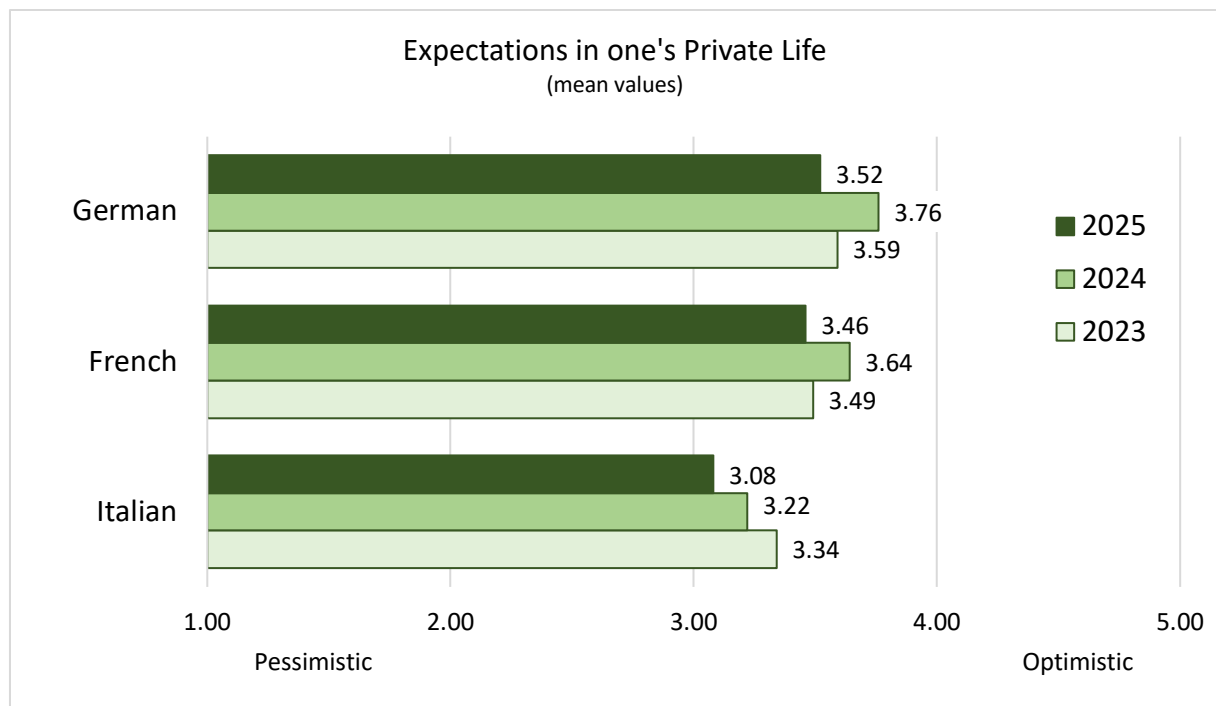


Fig.6 : Expectations with regard to private life for the coming year 2023 to 2025

Even if most people generally feel comfortable, general social developments cloud their personal life prospects. The results in Fig. 7 show a positive correlation between societal expectations for 2025 (mean values from politics, economy, social affairs, environment, and peace) and personal life expectations. The more positive (negative) the expectations in the social areas, the more positive (negative) the expectations in one's life.

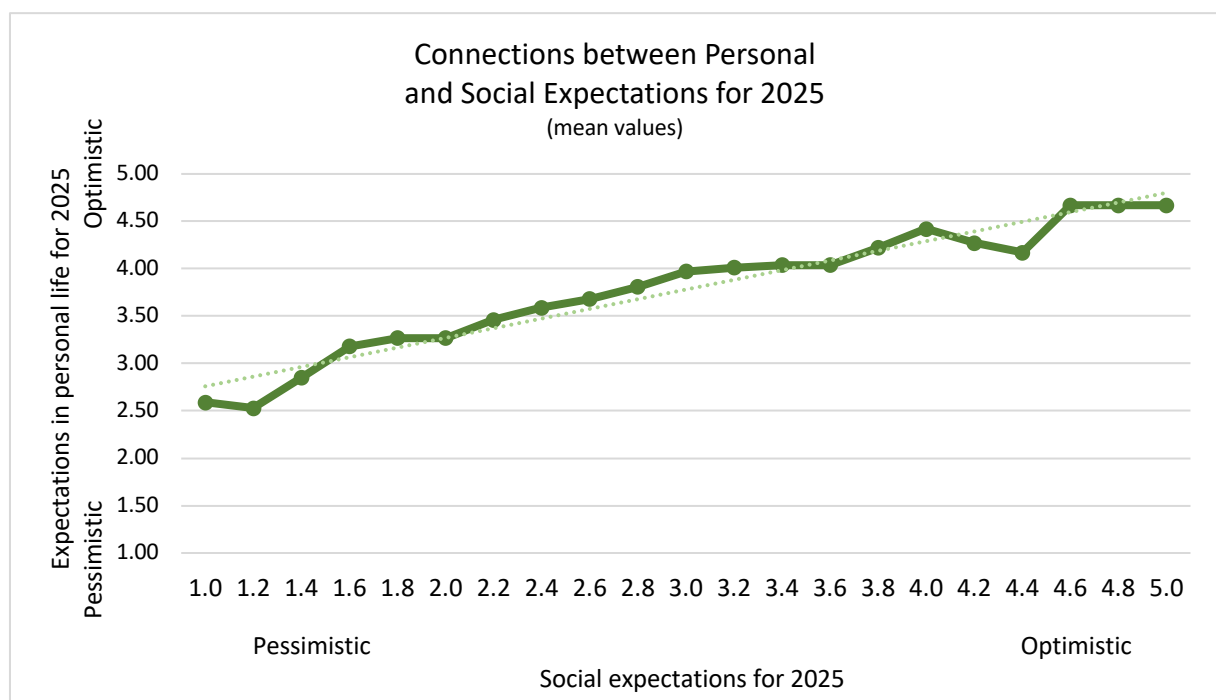


Fig.7 : Relationships between private and social expectations for 2025

## 4 Long-term Expectations for the Future

After short-term expectations, the Hope Barometer examines how people in different countries see the world in the future and which scenarios they consider likely and desirable. The focus of this part of the survey is on the assessment of long-term expectations, trends, and future scenarios. Questionnaires from the Australian futurologists Richard Eckersley (Eckersley et al., 2007) and Carmen Stewart (2002) were used. The survey participants were transported to the year 2044 and asked about their assessments of the future quality of life and various future scenarios (Krafft, 2022). What do people in Switzerland and other regions of the world think about the future of the world? What fears and wishes do they have? Which images of the future are seen as probable, and which future designs are considered desirable for a good life? These images and ideas of the future will influence people's expectations, hopes, and fears.

### 4.1 Quality of Life in 20 Years

First, survey participants in Switzerland and other regions were asked: "Imagine your country in 20 years, i.e., in around 2044: Do you think the general quality of life will be better, the same, or worse than it is today?" The possible answers ranged from 1 (much worse) to 5 (much better than today).

Fig. 8 first presents the results for Switzerland. More than two-thirds of people in all three language regions expect their quality of life to deteriorate in 20 years. People in Italian-speaking Switzerland are particularly pessimistic, followed by those in French-speaking Switzerland.

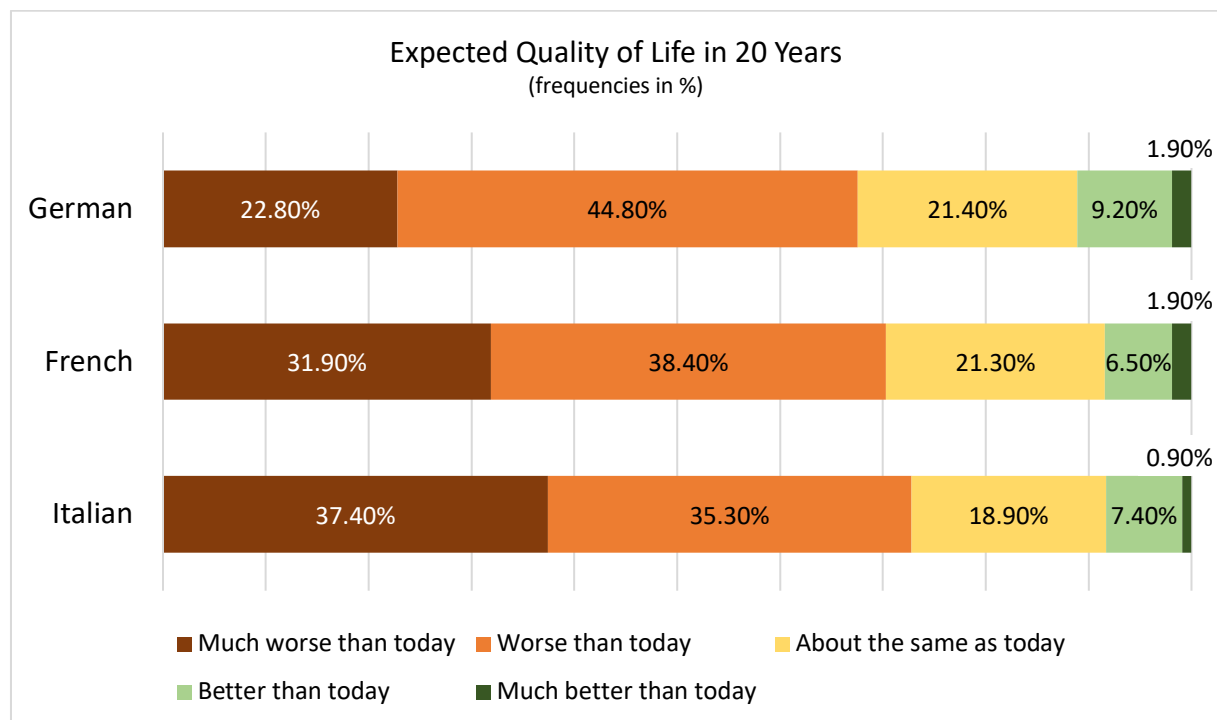


Fig.8 : Expected quality of life in Switzerland in 20 years by language region

Expectations regarding the quality of life in 20 years in Switzerland have remained low compared to previous years (Fig. 9).

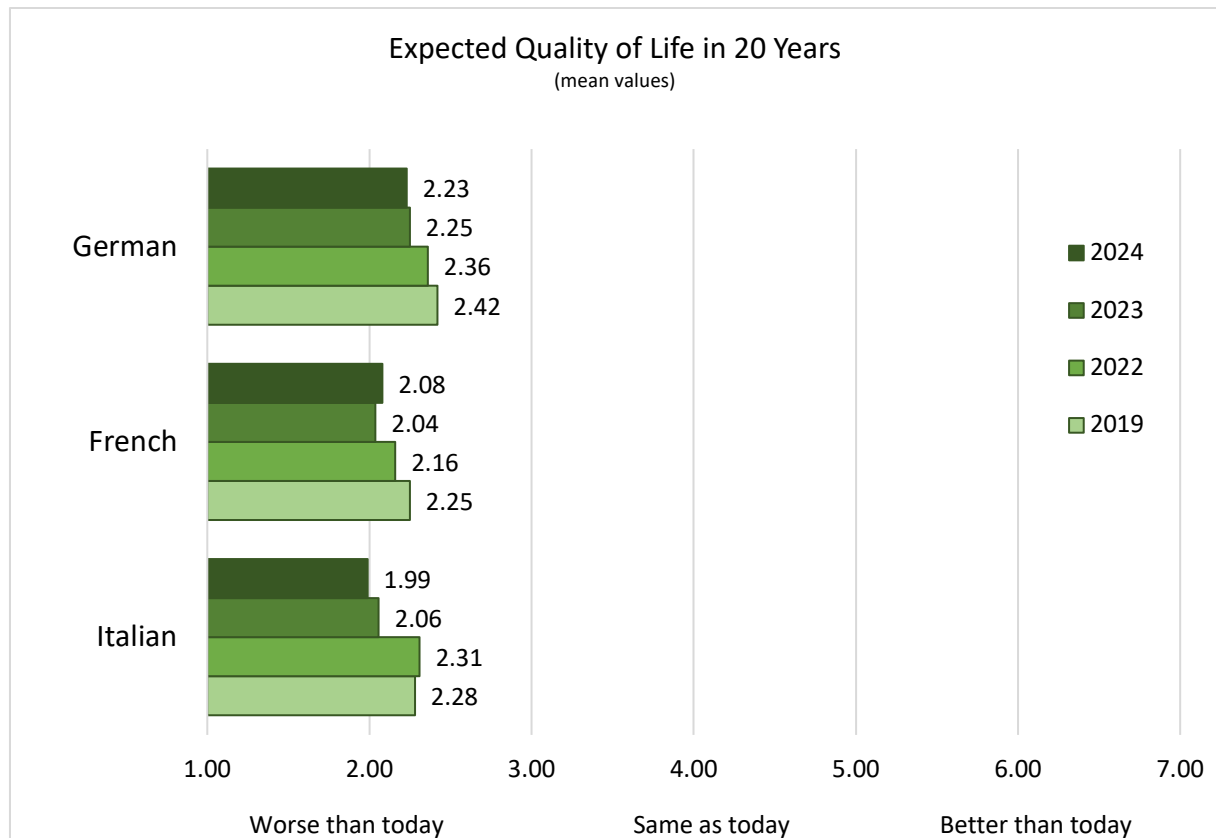


Fig.9 : Expected quality of life in Switzerland in 20 years in a year-on-year comparison by language region

The following evaluation compares expectations regarding the development of quality of life in fifteen countries. Even if the values do not represent the entire population, interesting comparisons can be made based on the data collected, and initial findings can be derived. As in most other countries, mainly young adults were surveyed; the subgroup of people aged between 18 and 39 was examined for Switzerland to ensure comparability.

As shown in Fig. 10, individuals in poorer countries tend to believe that their quality of life will improve slightly over the next 20 years. In contrast, most people in wealthier countries are convinced that the overall quality of life will be worse in 2044 than it is today. Notably, the population in Switzerland, which has the highest standard of living (gross domestic product per capita) on the list, holds the lowest expectations for the future regarding quality of life. In more prosperous countries, many individuals fear a decline in overall quality of life. Conversely, people in poorer nations expect conditions to improve in 20 years.

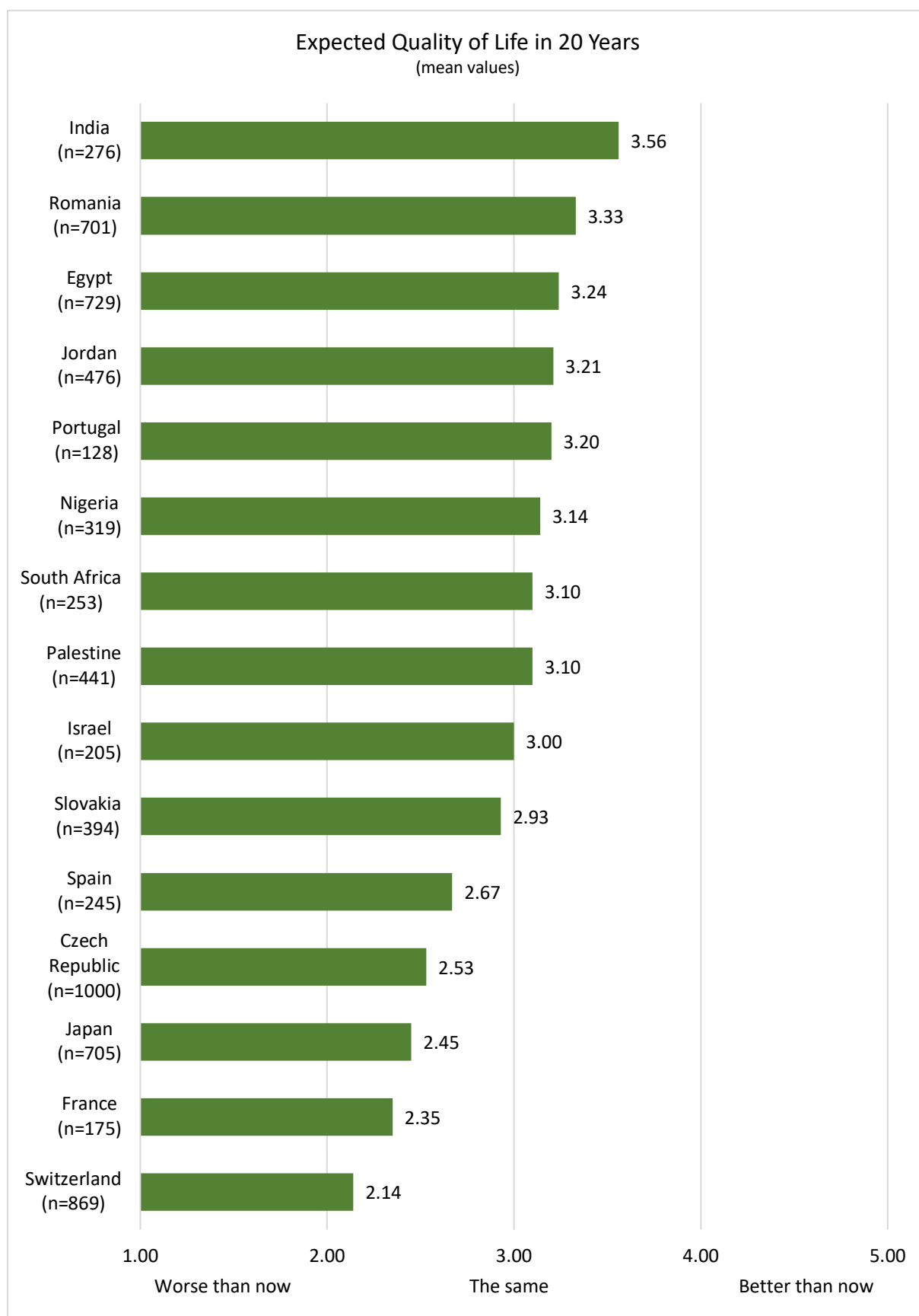


Fig.10 : Expected quality of life in 20 years in various countries

## 4.2 Probable Future Scenarios

This section and the next present the population's likely and desirable future scenarios. The respondents were presented with four scenarios to assess. Two were assessed in terms of their probability, and the other two were assessed in terms of their desirability. Future scenarios are images or descriptions of the future. They stimulate different ideas about what the world could be like in the medium to long term.

In the first step, respondents were presented with two visions of the future, which they could rate as more or less likely. The first future scenario, known as the "flourishing scenario, " depicts a world where economic and technological development continues, current problems are resolved, and a new era of sustainability, peace, and prosperity emerges. The second possibility, the "crisis scenario", outlines a world characterized by a growing population, environmental destruction, emerging diseases, and ethnic and regional conflicts that could lead to significant crises. The two scenarios could be rated on a scale from 1 (very unlikely) to 6 (very likely).

78% of people surveyed in Switzerland consider the positive Flourishing Scenario in 20 years somewhat unlikely (Fig. 11). In contrast, over 87% of people rate the Crisis Scenario as somewhat to very likely. 60% even expect it to be pretty or very likely.

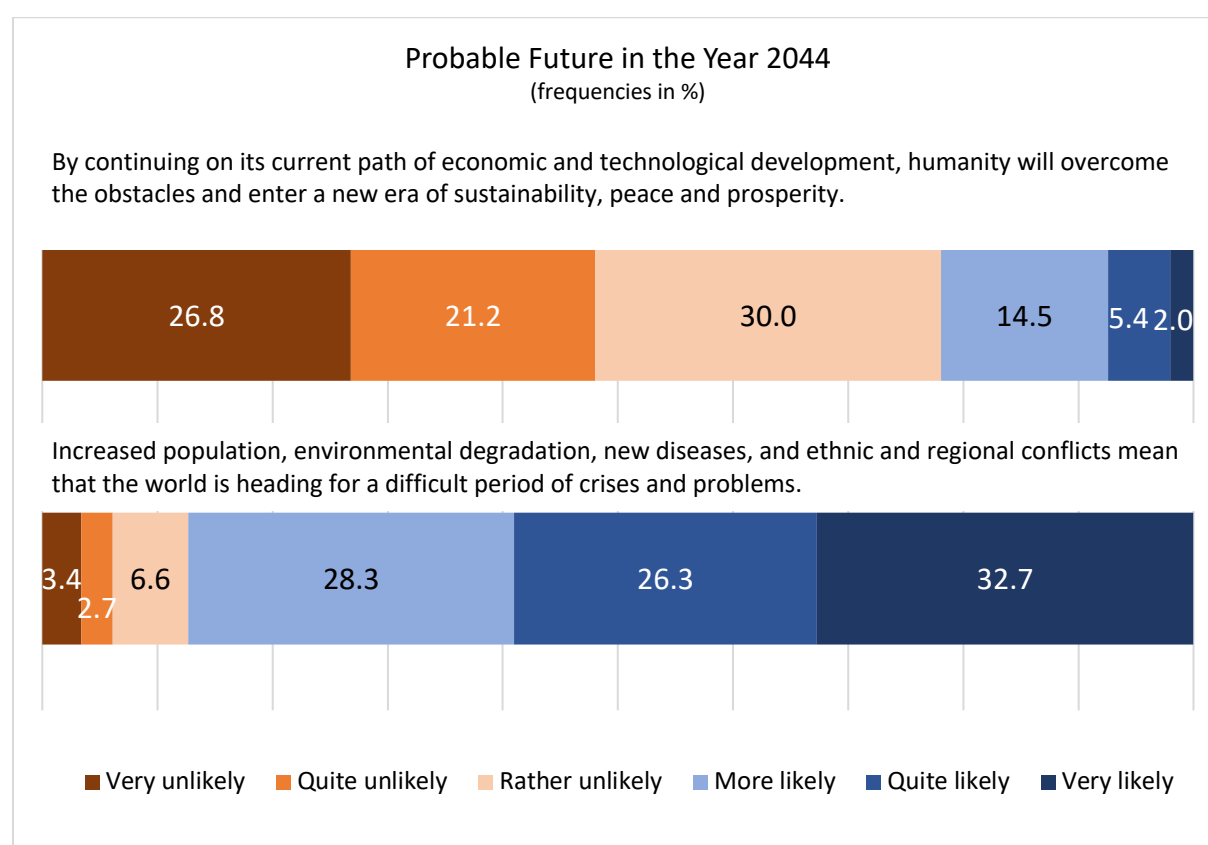
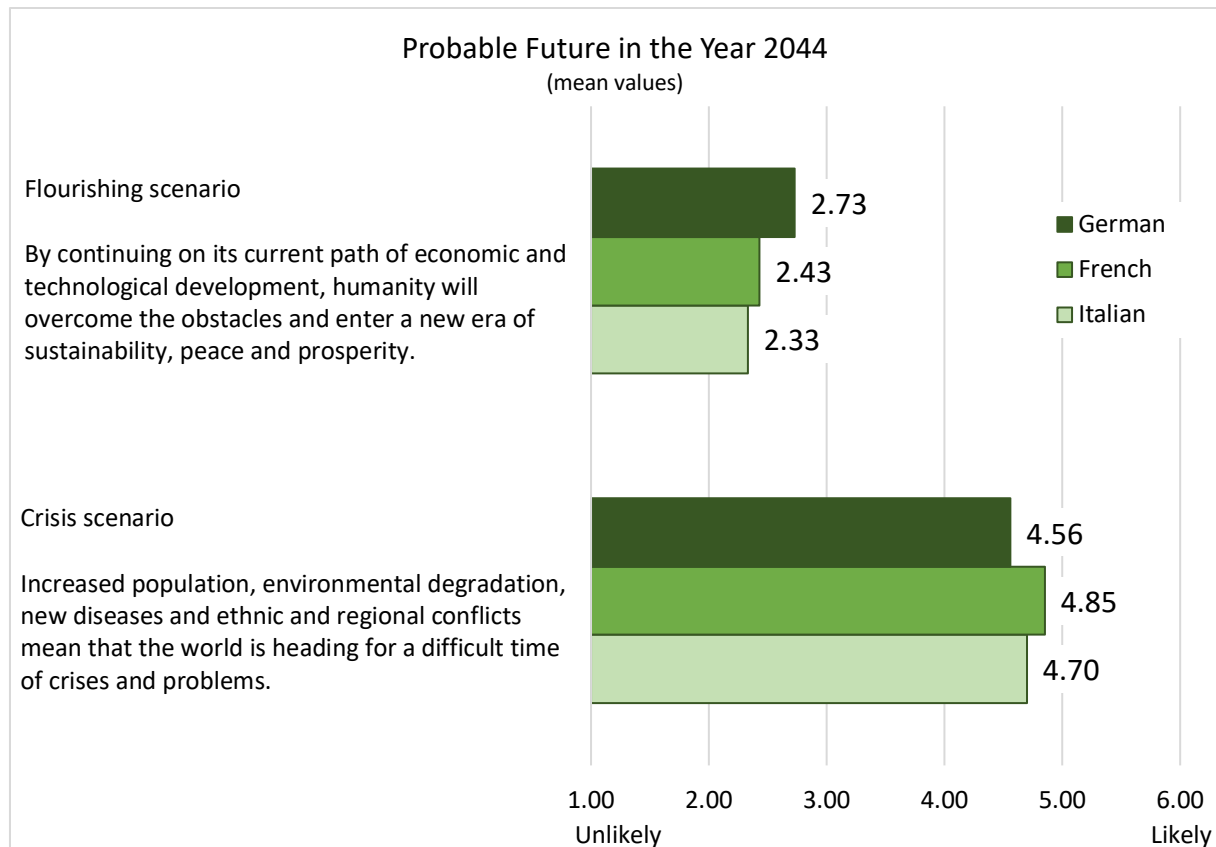
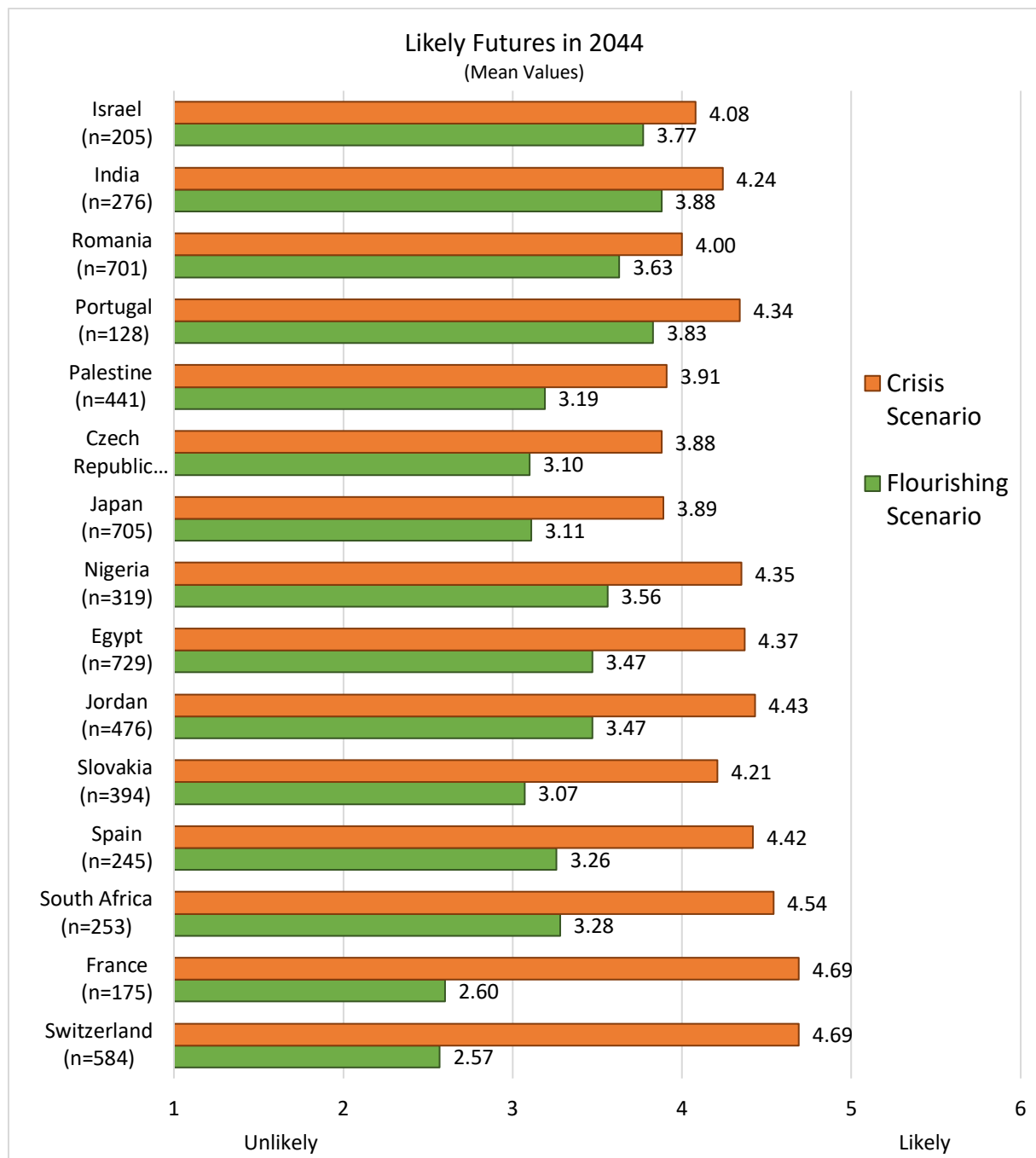


Fig.11 : Probable future scenarios in 2044 (from Switzerland's perspective)

A comparison of the three language regions shows that people in Italian-speaking and French-speaking Switzerland believe least in a long-term upturn and most strongly in a crisis-ridden future (Fig. 12).







*Fig.13 : Probable future in 20 years in various countries*

The coming decades are generally seen as an era full of crises and problems instead of peace and prosperity. Most people fear that global problems will worsen in the future, and they seem to have lost confidence in a prosperous future. They no longer believe in unlimited progress that could solve the world's problems. The pessimism about the future, which is particularly evident in the rich countries of Europe, is a consequence of increasing uncertainty. Many people who were previously accustomed to security and order now see the situation in the world as complex, uncertain, and out of control. Compared to the stability of previous decades, life has become more unstable and unpredictable in recent years. The more complex and unmanageable the world becomes, the more difficult it is to assess the consequences of current events. In an unpredictable world, it is almost impossible to change anything. These experiences can trigger negative feelings of fear, despondency, and helplessness.

## 4.3 Desirable Future Scenarios

Next, the respondents were asked to assess the desirability of two future scenarios in 20 years. The first future scenario, the so-called "progress scenario," describes a fast-paced, internationally competitive society focusing on the individual, wealth creation, and technological progress. The second, the "sustainability scenario," describes a greener, more harmonious society focusing on cooperation, community, and family, a more even distribution of wealth, and greater economic independence. The two future scenarios could be rated from 1 (not at all desirable) to 6 (very desirable).

Figures 14 and 15 below present the results for Switzerland first. While two-thirds of Swiss people consider the "progress scenario" somewhat or not desirable, more than 80% would like to see a greener and more harmonious society (Fig. 14).

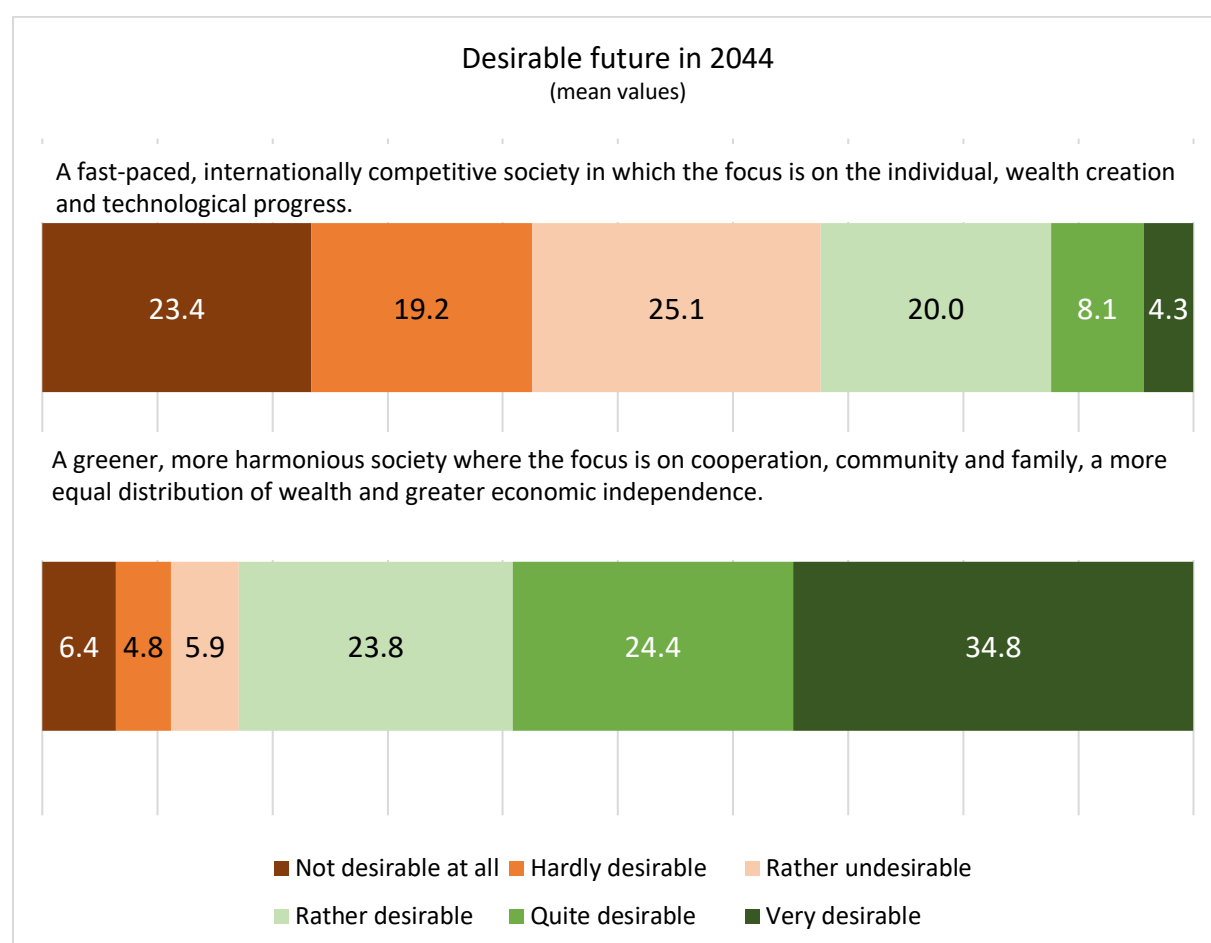
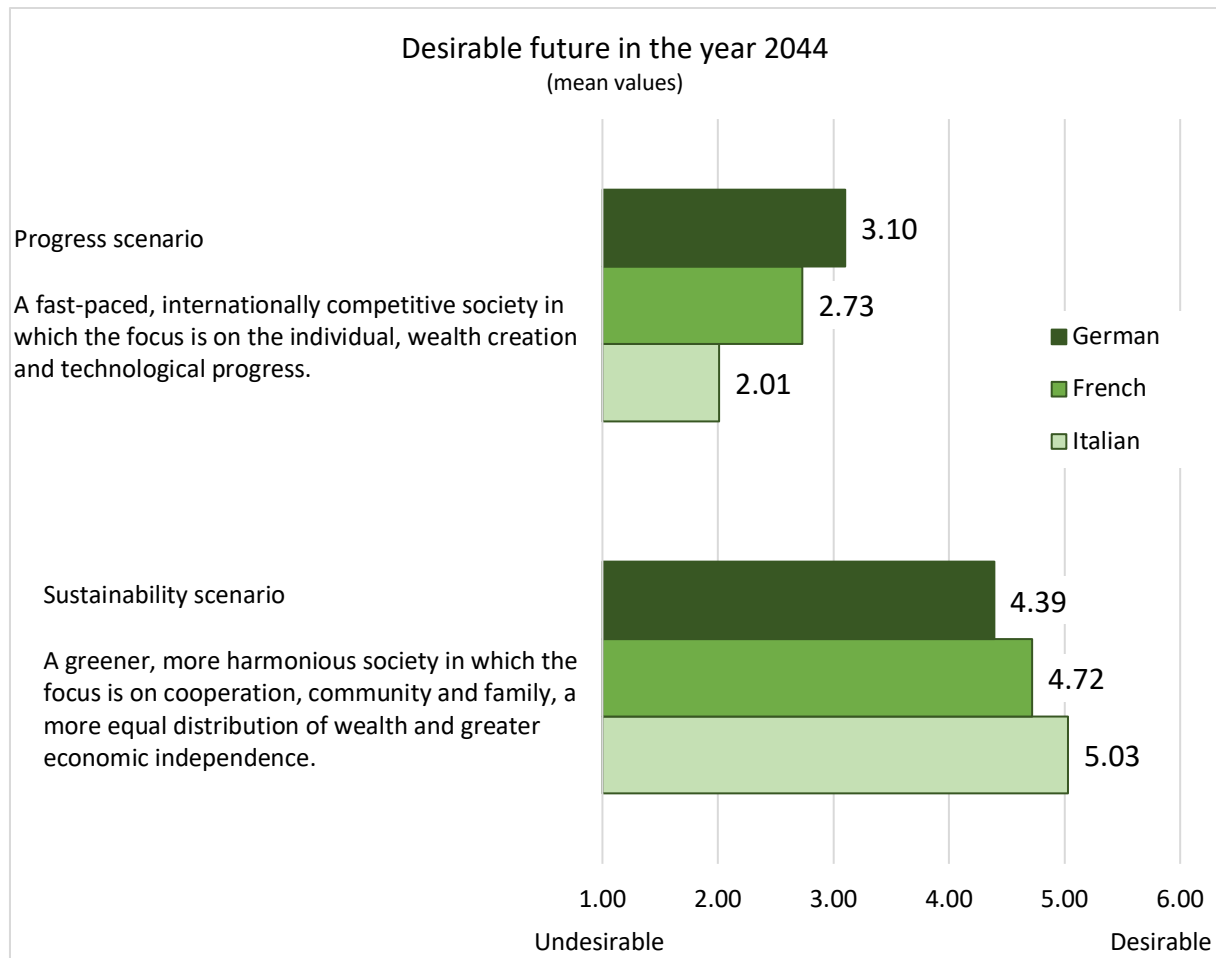
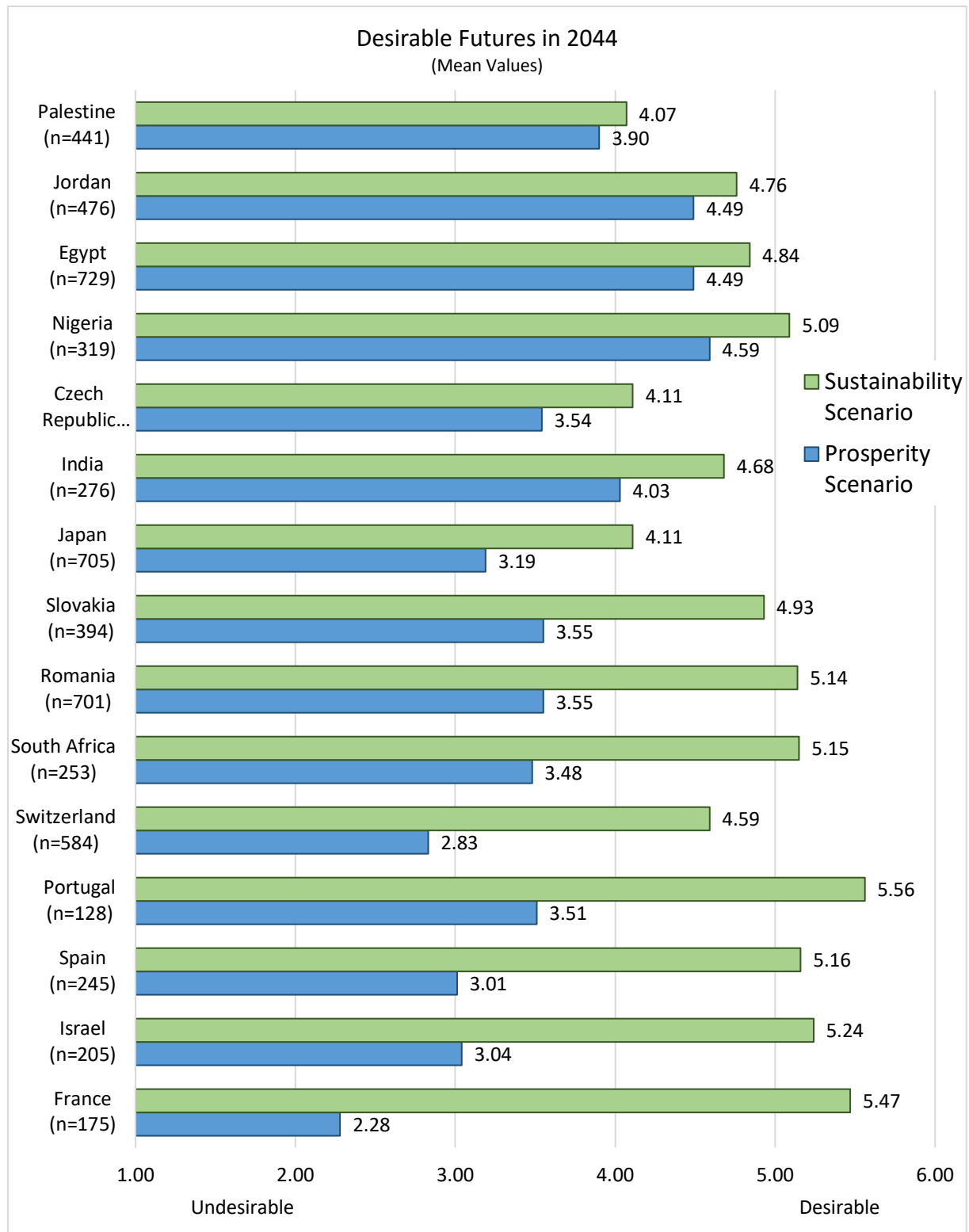


Fig.14 : Desirable future scenarios in 2044 (from Switzerland's perspective)

The regional comparison in Fig. 15 shows that people from Italian-speaking Switzerland would like the "progress scenario" the least and the "sustainability scenario" the most. In contrast, the gap between the two future scenarios is least pronounced in German-speaking Switzerland. Although people in German-speaking Switzerland also want the "sustainability scenario" the most, they do not consider the "progress scenario" to be as undesirable as people in the other two language regions.





*Fig.16 : Desirable future in 20 years in various countries*

Most Europeans see the idea that the world can and should continue functioning as before as inadequate. However, this does not mean economic competition, individuality, prosperity, and technological progress are fundamentally flawed. These areas no longer serve as desirable visions for a better future, mainly because their adverse effects on health, well-being, and the environment are no longer acceptable.

## 4.4 Worries and Hope in Switzerland

Comparing the Swiss population's perceptions of the likely and desired future reveals valuable conclusions (Fig. 17). On one hand, people envision a long-term future filled with crises and disasters, which can be consciously or unconsciously perceived as threats, leading to unease or worry. On the other hand, most individuals desire a sustainable and harmonious future characterized by greater justice and cohesion. Thus, while people aspire to a sustainable future, they harbor little faith in its realization. As long as fears surrounding the crisis overshadow hopes for the sustainability scenario, society, and politics will focus on protecting against potential threats while neglecting or obstructing future developments.

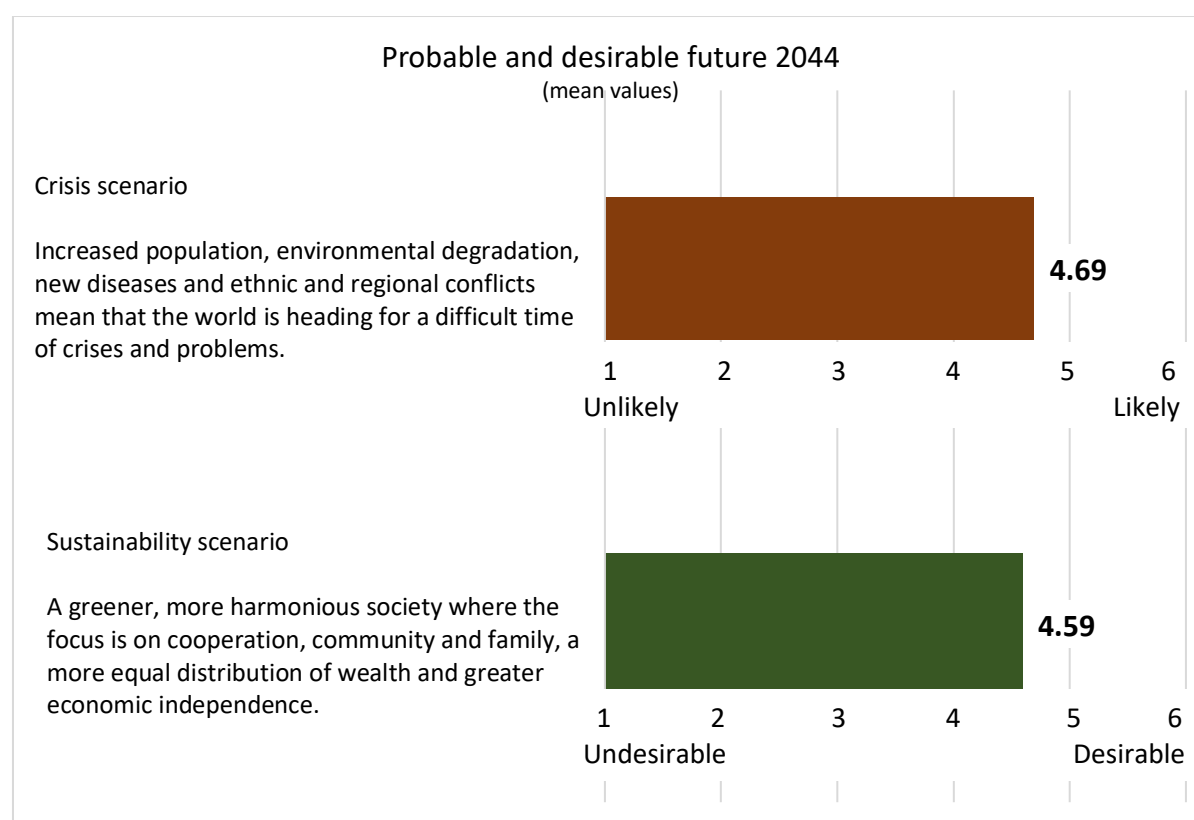


Fig.17 : Comparison of probable and desirable future in 2044

In order to better understand this phenomenon, two central trends of the 21st century will be examined in more detail in the following chapters: People's attitudes toward climate change (Chapter 5) and attitudes towards the new technology of artificial intelligence (Chapter 7).

## 5 Attitude towards Climate and Environment

Against the backdrop of the desired future and in light of the noticeable increase in climate change, a question arises regarding how phenomena such as powerlessness, helplessness, and indifference can be overcome to enable people to take active action. In this sense, hope becomes increasingly important as it serves as a prerequisite for action and embodies the belief that a positive turnaround is (still) possible. Hope differs from wishful thinking in that it encourages people to take action to address climate change (Lewandowsky et al., 2015; Markowitz & Shariff, 2012). Within this global context, (collective) hope represents a shared desire for a better future for oneself, the entire social community, and the planet. The belief is that a more sustainable future for all is achievable but not necessarily guaranteed or likely. Furthermore, it fosters confidence in individuals' ability to collaborate and support each other in achieving common goals, despite current challenges, obstacles, and setbacks.

The questions in the Hope Barometer capture the extent to which people in Switzerland believe that they and society can develop ways to solve the problems caused by climate change and are able to follow these paths (Li & Monroe, 2017). This includes personal and collective willpower and the belief in the ability to solve these problems.

The results in Fig. 18 reveal two contradictory phenomena: on the one hand, most people have little or no faith that the problems relating to climate change can be solved. On the other hand, they believe in people's willingness to persevere and not give up. A majority also believe in the possibility of working together to solve the climate crisis.

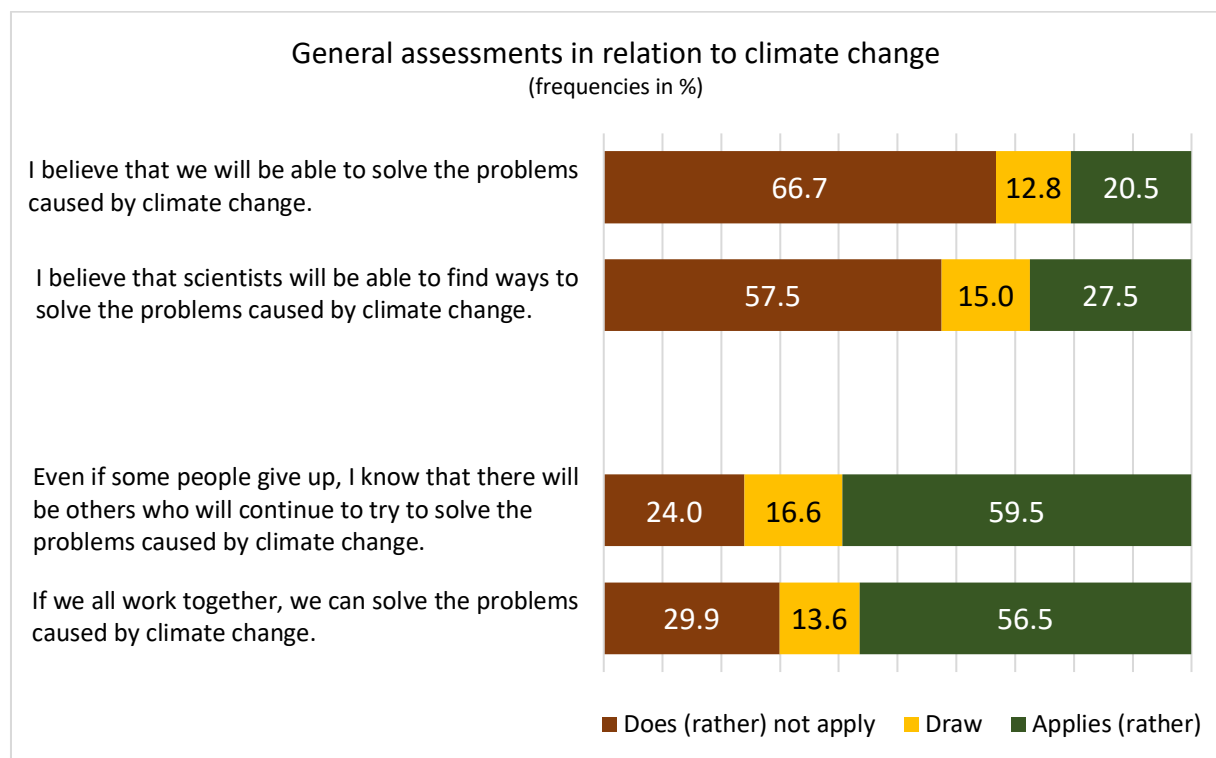
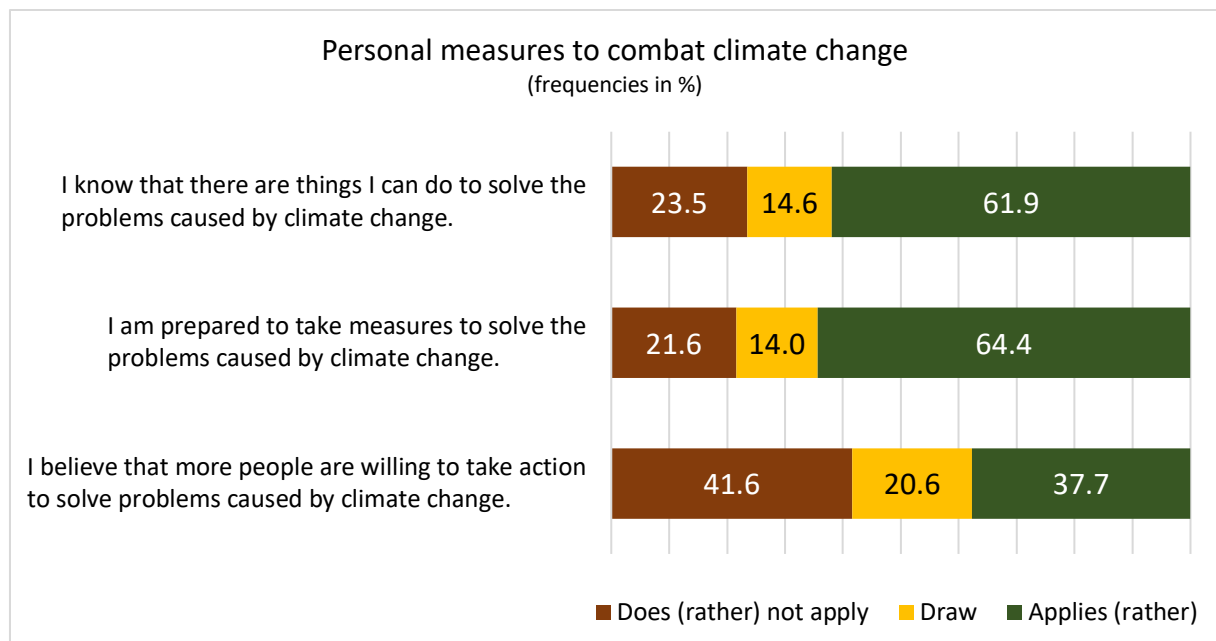


Fig.18 : General assessments in relation to climate change

Most people could do something about climate change and would be prepared to do so, but they are less likely to trust others to do so (Fig. 19).



*Fig.19 : Personal measures to combat climate change*

Most people have not lost faith and hope in the possibility of positive climate change. Likewise, many are still fundamentally willing to take action. However, the motivation to act will remain limited if the desire for a sustainable future and mutual trust is insufficiently strong. The current pressure from suffering (see satisfaction in Chapter 2) alongside positive visions of the future (see preferred sustainability scenario in Chapter 4) could enhance the desire and thus strengthen the determination and willpower to address the problems actively. However, this also requires trust in national and international politics, science, business, and society as a whole, and most people and institutions are pursuing the same goals and wish to collaborate.



## 6 Attitude toward Artificial Intelligence

Technological progress is no longer unreservedly desirable in today's world. Artificial intelligence (AI) is one of the key developments of the coming years. The use of AI is increasing rapidly and will permeate many aspects of daily life in the future, both in the private and professional spheres (Makridakis, 2017). It is expected to change the way people work, live, and interact with others at a speed and to an extent never before experienced in human history (Olhede & Wolfe, 2018).

The term "artificial intelligence" describes IT systems and machines that mimic the cognitive functions of the human brain, such as learning, thinking, and planning (Lu et al., 2018). This new industrial revolution is expected to enrich and enhance life and society (Wang & Siau, 2019). However, artificial intelligence presents both opportunities and challenges (Pereira et al., 2023). Laypeople and experts alike have varying perceptions of what artificial intelligence truly means (Stone, P. et al. 2016). AI can encompass everything from Apple Siri, ChatGPT, and DeepL to Amazon Go, as well as self-driving cars, new medical applications, and autonomous weapons.

People's general attitudes toward AI reflect their concerns and hopes and can significantly influence its introduction and acceptance. For this reason, this year's Hope Barometer explores individuals' general attitudes, fears, and hopes regarding AI.

### 6.1 Positive and negative attitudes towards AI

Recent surveys have identified a range of positive and negative attitudes towards AI (Schepman & Rodway, 2020). While the positive attitudes reflect the potential social and personal benefits, the negative statements express possible disadvantages and concerns about the technology. Thus, these statements capture the general hopes and fears regarding the future of AI.

The statements in Fig. 20 describe possible hopes in connection with AI. More than a quarter of people believe that a large part of society will benefit from AI and that AI can positively impact people's well-being. Around 30% are still undecided, and over 40% believe less so. Over 30% would use AI in their own profession, and 38.5% would like to use AI in their daily lives. In contrast, around 45 to 50% of people still do not see AI being used in their jobs and are not interested in doing so.

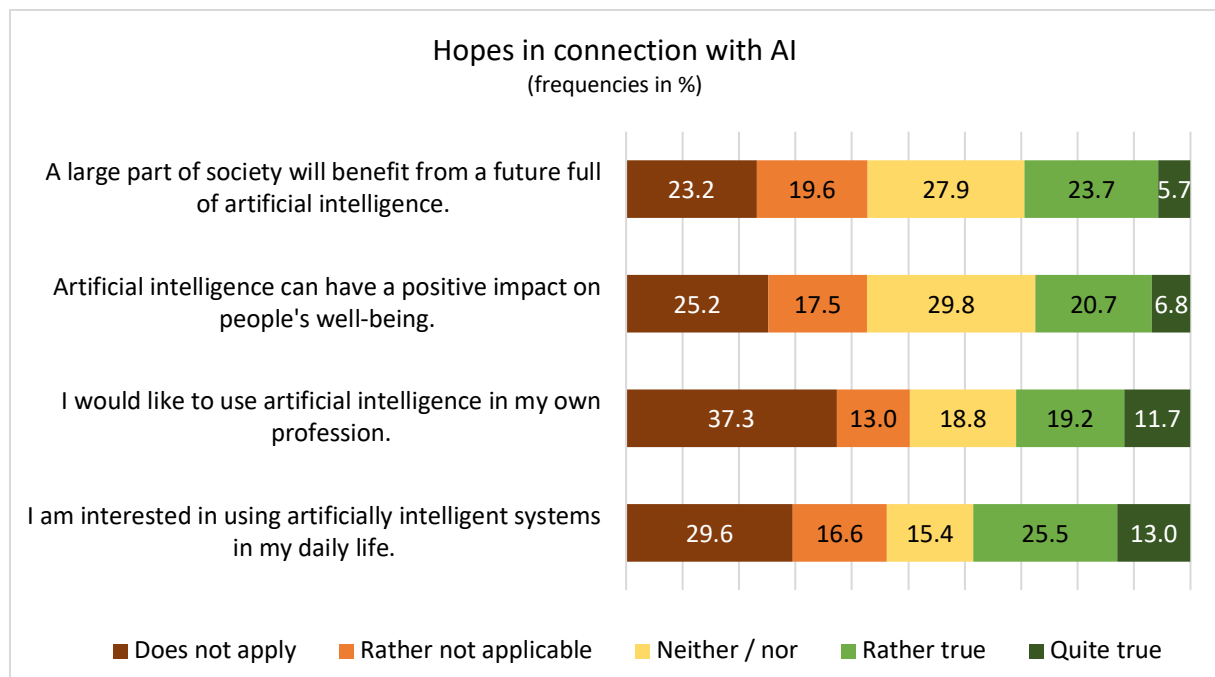


Fig.20 : Hopes in connection with AI

Fig. 21 examines possible fears related to AI. More than 68% of individuals view AI as somewhat to quite dangerous. Over half of the respondents are concerned about the unethical application of AI and a looming loss of control. Nearly 50% of people even perceive themselves as potential victims of AI.

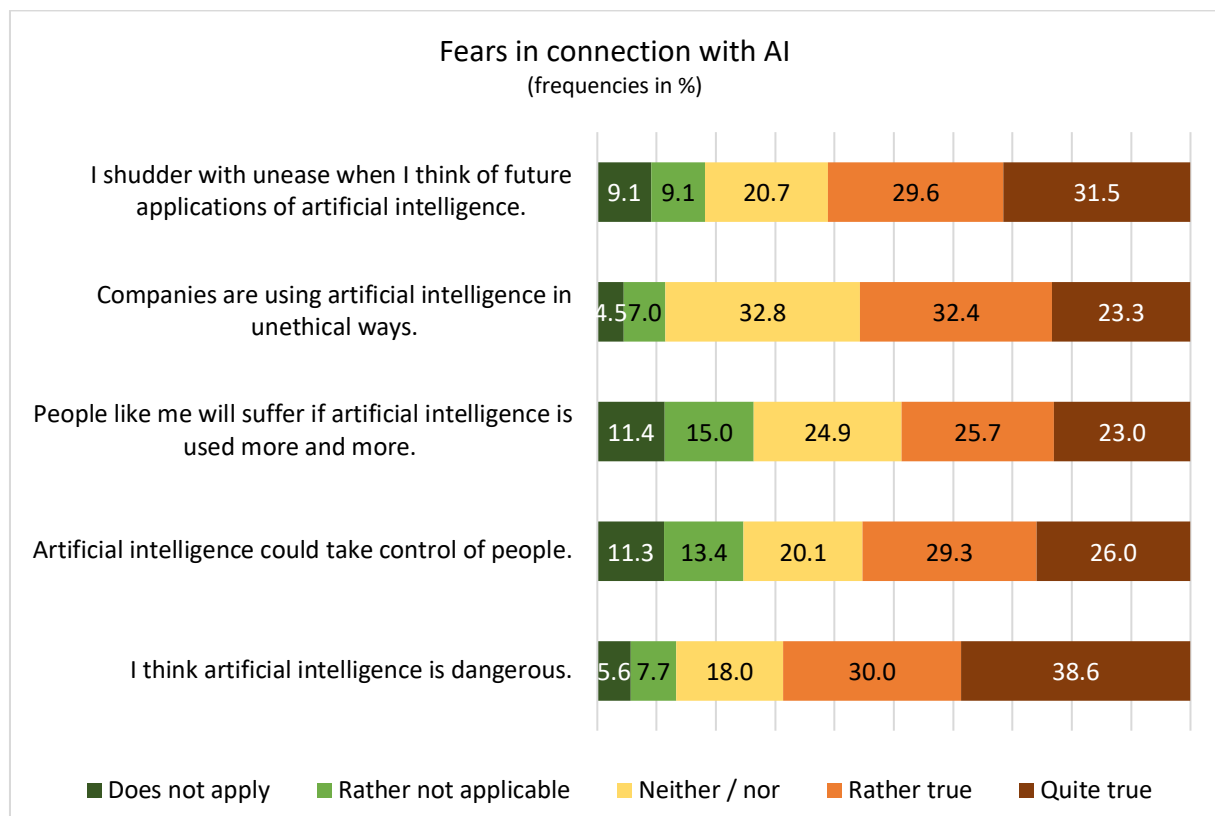


Fig.21 : Fears in connection with AI

The results in Fig. 22 show the attitudes towards AI in different age groups. In all age groups, negative perceptions of AI outweigh positive ones. However, people between the ages of 18 and 39 are less critical and believe slightly more in the potential benefits of AI. People aged 50 and over, and especially between 60 and 69, are the most negative about AI and the least likely to believe in the potential benefits of the technology.

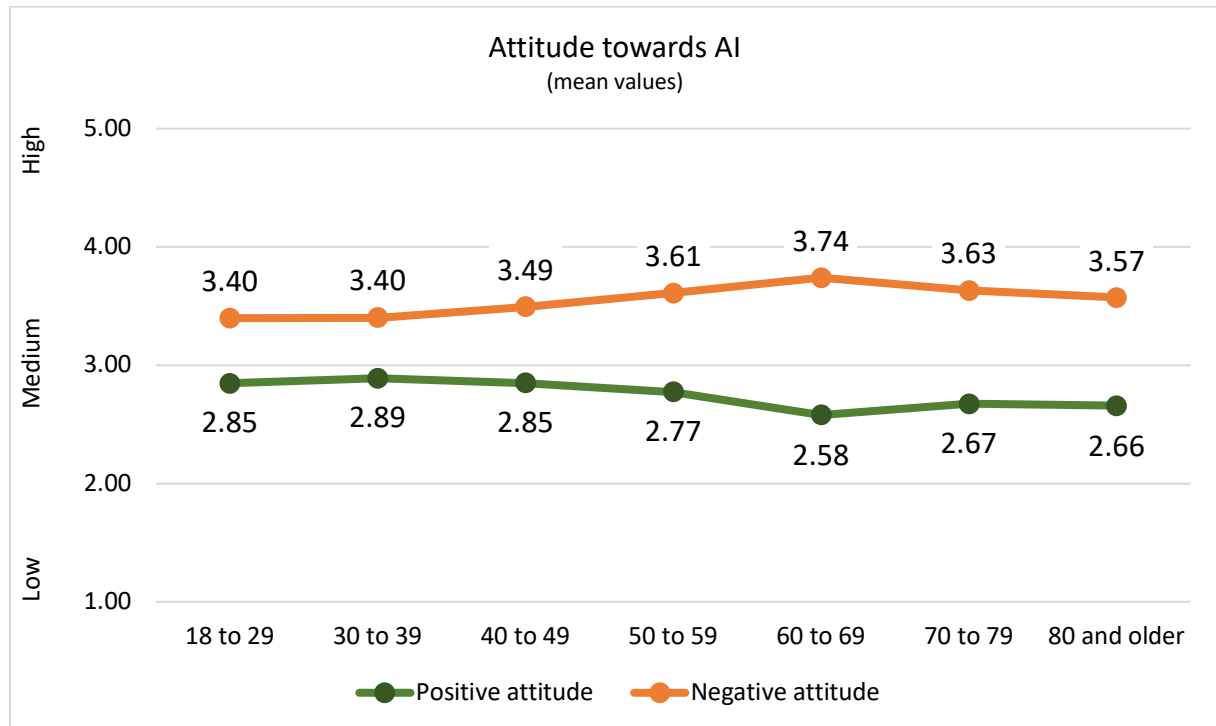


Fig.22 : Attitude towards AI by age group

As in other international surveys, these results suggest that people have mixed and mainly negative views about AI. Psychologically, the individual perception and acceptance of technological and social upheaval are linked to three main experiences (Lazarus, 1993):

1. New technologies, such as AI, make it difficult to predict future developments. The less one can assess and predict future events, the more insecure one feels.
2. Technological developments can give the impression that life is less controllable. People can feel dependent on technology because they cannot control key aspects of their lives sufficiently.
3. Increasing demands and new and constantly changing situations can lead to personal insecurity and overload.

In psychology, trust is crucial for interpersonal relationships and interactions between people and technologies (Siau et al., 2004). Thus, trust also plays an important role in adopting new technologies such as AI. Given the potential risks, scientists, researchers, and entrepreneurs must ask themselves how to establish trust in AI.

## 6.2 Personal benefits of AI - Autonomy and Competence

AI is likely to affect almost all professions, at least to some extent. New applications of AI have the potential to profoundly change job profiles, skill requirements, and personal development opportunities (Frank et al., 2019). Many people are already using AI applications at work today.

From a psychological perspective, Ryan and Deci (2000) examined the key factors that can promote intrinsic motivation and well-being at work. The results revealed three psychological needs that lead to increased self-motivation and greater satisfaction in life: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. These three needs must be given special consideration and satisfied for AI to be better accepted at work.

Autonomy refers to the human need for independence and self-determination to do things as one sees fit. When people have a choice, they act according to their values and interests.

Moreover, individuals inherently desire to feel competent. Competence signifies the need to feel capable of attaining desired goals or fulfilling wishes.

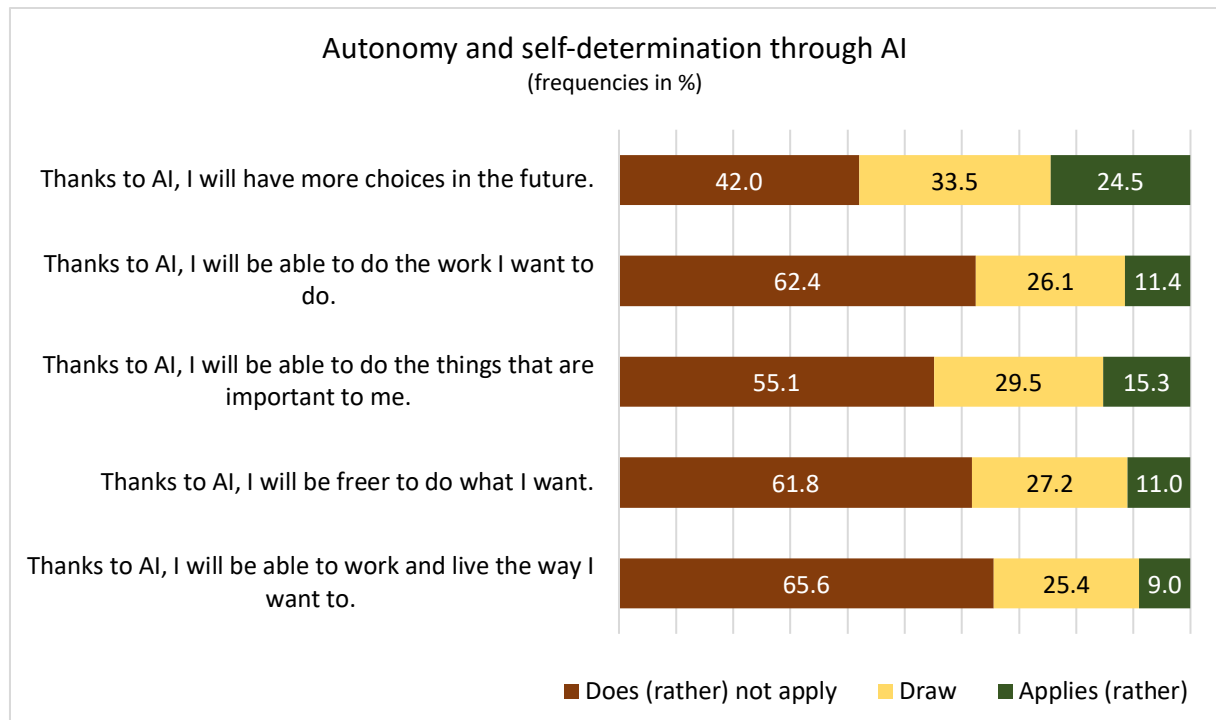
The need for social inclusion refers to a feeling of belonging to important other people or groups (e.g., friends, family, and work teams).

When the needs for autonomy, competence, and connectedness are satisfied, people are intrinsically motivated and develop extraordinary willpower.

Based on this so-called self-determination theory, several questions were developed as part of the Hope Barometer to determine the degree of autonomy and competence expected thanks to AI. People will accept AI better and integrate it into their work if they feel that it will increase their autonomy and competence

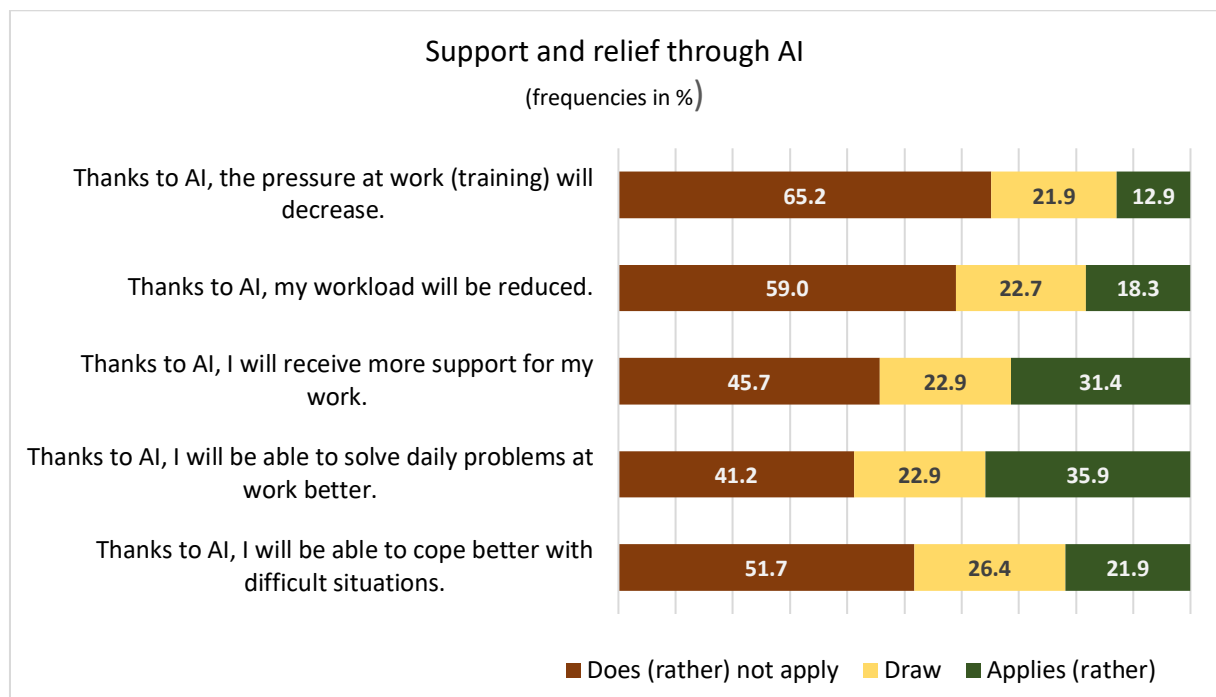
In this section of the survey, the evaluations refer to a subgroup of 2345 people aged 18 to 59 who are in training (n=71), in part-time employment (n=700), or in full-time employment (n=1574)

The results in Fig. 23 show the degree of autonomy and self-determination expected thanks to AI. Just under 25% of people believe that AI will give them more choices in the future (33.5% are undecided, and 42% tend not to believe or do not believe at all). As far as the other aspects are concerned, the majority of respondents hardly believe in increased autonomy and self-determination thanks to AI.



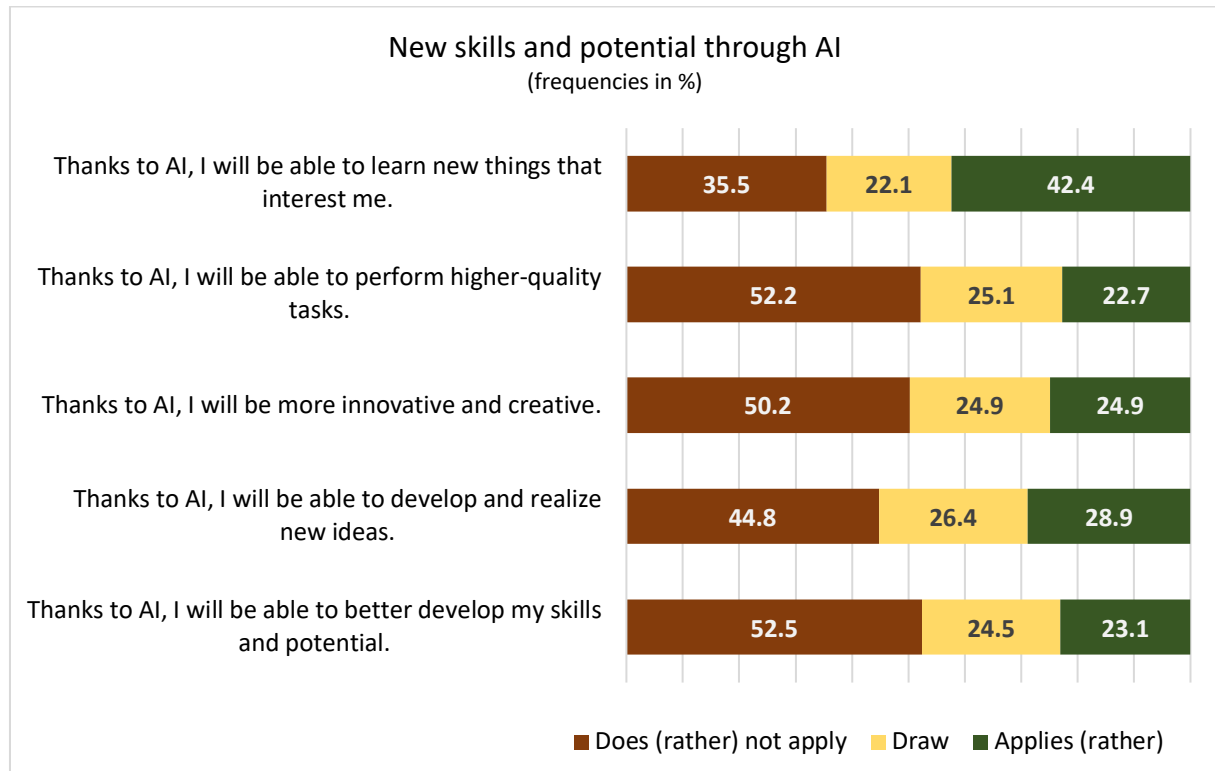
*Fig.23 : Autonomy and self-determination at work through AI*

The results regarding competence are somewhat more differentiated (Fig. 24). Around a third of people assume that AI will support them in their work and that they will be able to solve daily problems better as a result. Around 22% believe that they will be able to cope better with difficult situations. However, for 59% to 65% of people, the use of AI does not appear to reduce pressure and workload.



*Fig.24 : Support and relief at work through AI*

An exciting aspect is the possible acquisition of new skills and potential development (Fig. 25). more than 42% agree that AI would allow them to learn new and interesting things. Between 22% and 29% of respondents hope for higher-quality tasks, more creativity and innovation, implementing new ideas, and developing skills and potential. This demonstrates a fundamental willingness to engage with AI's possibilities.



*Fig.25 : New skills and potential through AI*

## 7 Personal Hope

This final chapter deals with the general phenomenon of hope, which can be divided into three dimensions:

1. The general level of hope

Hope is a basic attitude and mood independent of specific goals and desires. It is a fundamental attitude of openness and a positive attitude toward the future that determines how we react to life's situations and trials.

2. Personal aspirations are special goals, wishes, and ideals that people hope for and want to realize. Personal hopes are the driving force in life and the source of motivation for shaping a better future.
3. Sources of hope are the means and abilities to realize personal hopes and to strengthen the general ability to hope.

### 7.1 Personal Hope Level

The general level of hope is measured with various questions: The extent of hope in one's life, hope in difficult situations, belief in the fulfillment of one's hopes, the intensity of hope compared to feelings of fear, and the extent to which hope improves one's quality of life (Krafft et al., 2017, 2021).

On a scale from 0 (low) to 5 (high), the general level of hope remains medium but above-average (Fig. 26). Recent years' results show a slight decline, particularly in German-speaking Switzerland. In Italian-speaking Switzerland, this year's home value is at the previous year's level, and in French-speaking Switzerland, the home value has increased this year.

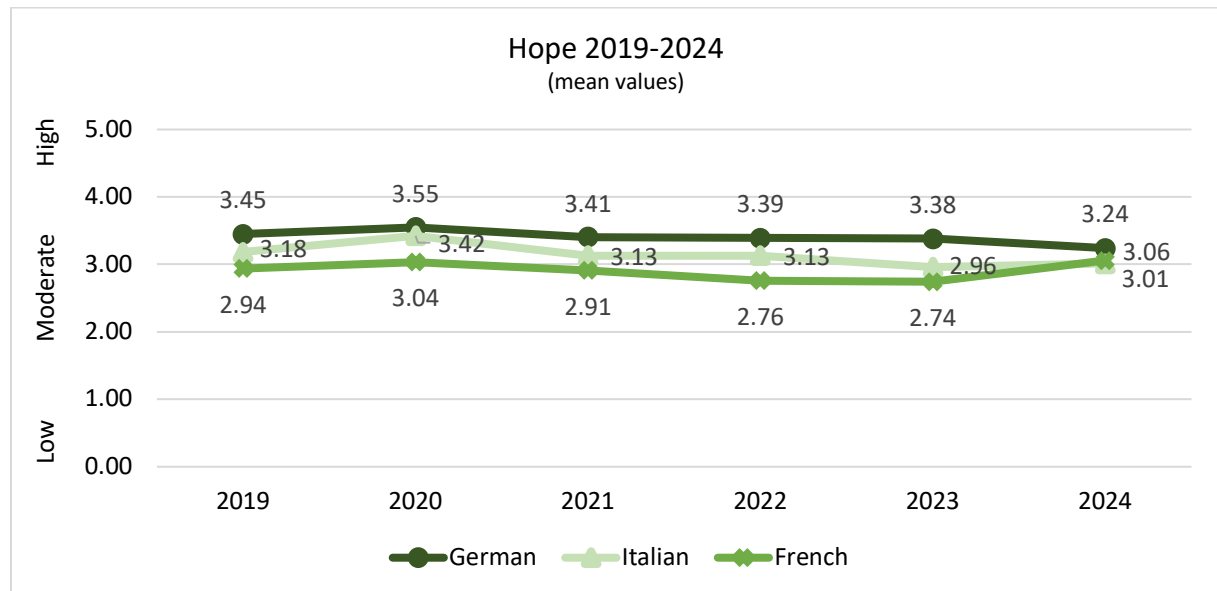


Fig.26 : Personal hope level 2019-2024 by language region

## 7.2 Personal Hopes for the Year 2025

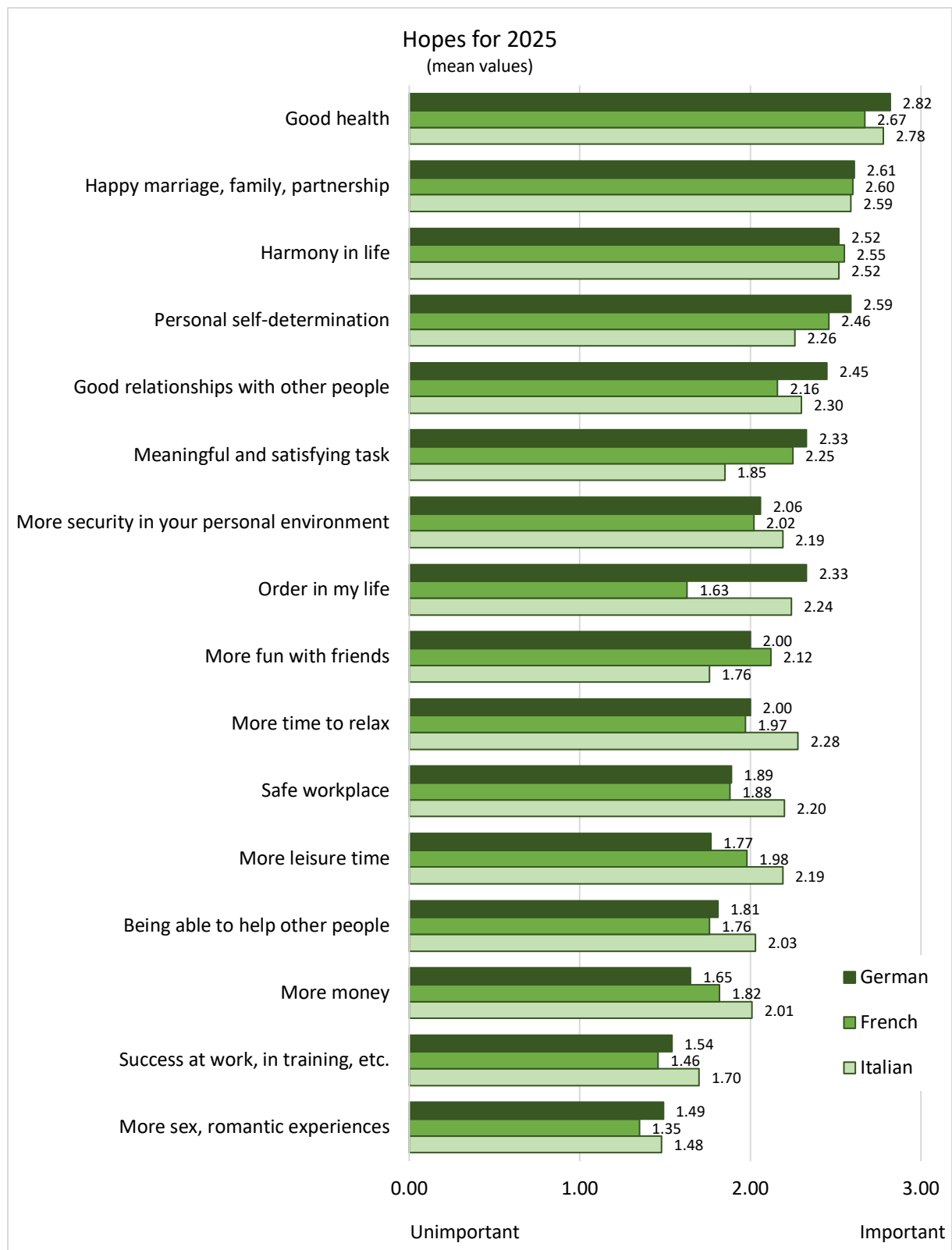
In order to better understand expectations in their personal lives, people were asked about their personal wishes and hopes for the coming year. The hopes were assessed using 16 areas of life, which were rated on a scale from 0 (not important) to 3 (very important) based on their importance (Krafft & Walker, 2018). The areas of life comprise six different categories:

1. personal well-being (e.g. personal health, harmony)
2. social relationships (e.g. happy marriage, family, partnership)
3. success and material goods (e.g. more money)
4. pleasure (e.g. more sex, romantic experiences)
5. meaning and altruism (e.g. a meaningful task and the opportunity to help other people)

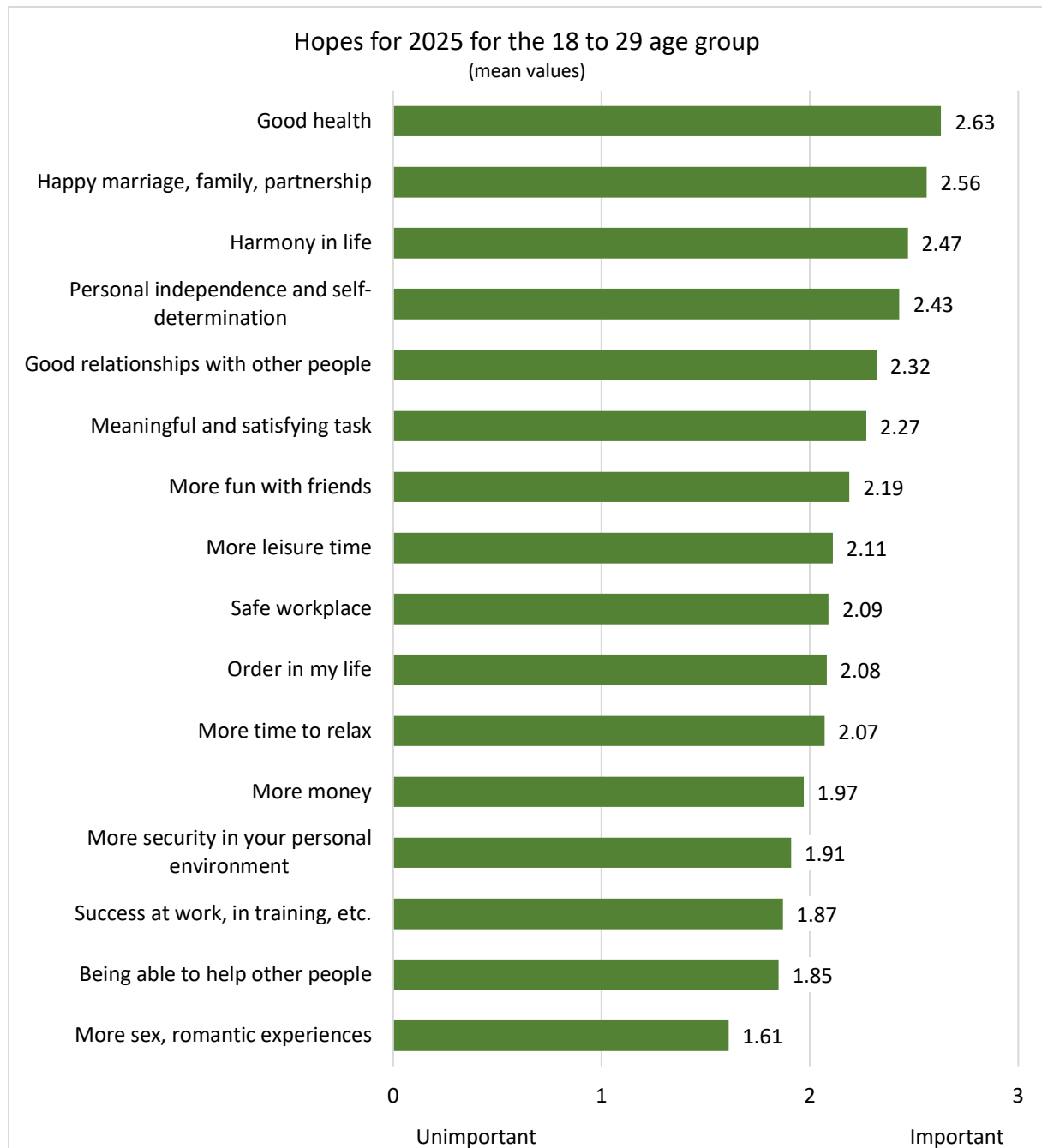
The assessment of these areas results in a ranking of personal hopes (Fig. 27). As in previous years, good health and a happy marriage, family, or partnership are in the top two places. In contrast, success at work or in education and more sex and romantic experiences rank last. The ranking of hopes has remained almost constant in recent years, which can be attributed to fundamental values. Despite or especially in difficult situations, people reflect on what is important to them in life.

There are some notable differences between the three language regions. People in German-speaking Switzerland attach particular importance to personal independence and self-determination. In Italian-speaking Switzerland, people want more leisure time. A meaningful and satisfying job is less important to them than a secure job and more money, which is linked to more negative expectations regarding economic developments. They are also more willing to help other people.





This year, the hopes of young adults aged 18 to 29 are considered in more detail (Fig. 28). Remarkably, the ranking of young people's hopes is almost identical to the rest of the population. Only the desire for more money is more important than helping other people.



*Fig.28 : Personal hopes of young adults between 18 and 29 for the year 2025*

## 7.3 Sources of Hope

The question arises of what gives people hope, particularly in difficult times. The 17 sources of hope used relate to positive experiences, personal strengths, personal resilience, positive relationships, personal commitment, and religious experiences. Participants in the survey were able to rate the sources of hope on a scale from 0 (low) to 3 (high).

Once again, beautiful experiences in the great outdoors and the support of family and friends are the top priorities (Fig. 29). What stands out here is that closeness to nature is a particular source of hope for people in German-speaking Switzerland. In contrast, doing good for a meaningful purpose and memories of a happy childhood is particularly important for people in Italian-speaking Switzerland.

Religious practices, political commitment, and money are the least relevant, especially for people in the French-speaking part of Switzerland.

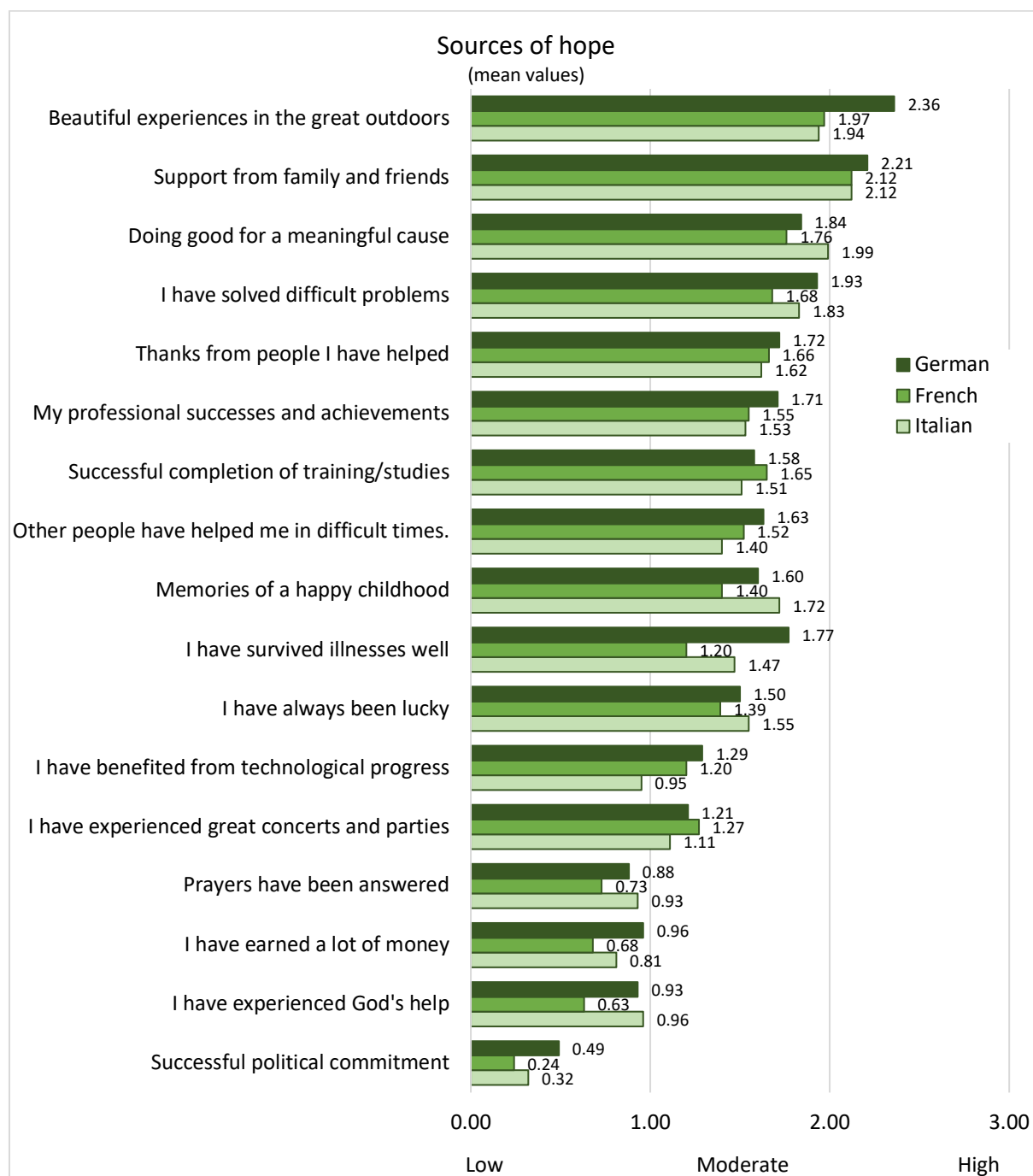


Fig.29 : Sources of hope in the three language regions

For some people, technological progress is a source of personal and social hope. To get to the bottom of this important aspect, the last topic is dedicated to people's attitudes toward artificial intelligence.

## 8 Discussion and Conclusions

Current events in the world concern many people and sometimes trigger fears about the future. However, it is precisely in such situations that individuals hope for a better life and for a peaceful, just, and sustainable world. Fear and hope are opposites and two sides of the same coin. Both emotions have their roots in the uncertainty of the future and are closely linked. Without uncertainty and fear, there would be no need for hope. The true adversaries of hope are despair and indifference. People who despair view the future as already predetermined. Despair represents a kind of capitulation to current circumstances, resulting in passivity, discouragement, and a lack of perspective. Indifference is also an opponent of hope. Those who are indifferent show no interest in what is to come. People who are indifferent to wars, environmental disasters, and political crises do not hope for peace, sustainability, or social cohesion, nor are they committed to these goals. In contrast, the attitude of hope is understood as an orientation towards an open and desirable future that offers new possibilities and can be shaped through one's own efforts.

The results of this year's Hope Barometer reveal interesting correlations and allow valuable conclusions to be drawn. Most people in Switzerland are generally satisfied with their lives and are optimistic about the future. However, personal satisfaction and confidence are dampened by a pervasive unease regarding social and global events and developments. Despite the high standard of living, many individuals do not trust politics or the economy to create a decisive turnaround, especially when it comes to addressing social and ecological issues. Regarding long-term expectations, a majority of the Swiss population anticipates a decline in quality of life and a crisis-prone global future, which also affects the overall mood. Reduced expectations for a prosperous future, along with the belief that technological and economic progress alone no longer promises a desirable future, indicate a lack of guidance and prospects, particularly in wealthier European countries. What matters most to people for the future is greater sustainability, social cohesion, harmony, and peace. At the same time, however, individuals seek prosperity without negative side effects, such as individualism, selfishness, and environmental degradation. Despite, or perhaps because of, the current crises, people in poorer countries seek positive development and hope - albeit tentatively - for a better future.

In Switzerland, the desire for more sustainability and community is offset by a low belief in a positive turnaround. Nevertheless, a majority of respondents feel that a positive development is still possible. Many people would be prepared to do something about it. However, if the fear of losing current prosperity and mistrust of change is greater than the hope of an uncertain sustainable future, then many will focus on preserving the status quo and on personal development, which ultimately has an even greater negative impact on future prospects. While a positive turnaround in the area of climate and the environment seems unlikely (but not impossible), technological developments, above all artificial intelligence, generate more unease than hopeful prospects for the future. At the same time, the new technologies hold promise.

When it comes to personal aspirations, most people desire health, a happy marriage, family or partnership, a harmonious life, good relationships with others, greater autonomy and self-determination, and a meaningful job. The development and application of new technologies should center on individual and collective hopes. This would not only strengthen but also

inspire people's trust and acceptance of technological progress. To bring about positive change, hope is essential for taking necessary action. Indeed, it is hope that can positively counter common unease, mistrust, fatalistic beliefs about the lack of alternatives to the current situation, and pessimistic forecasts.

## 9 Key figures on the structure of the study

|                     |                                                                                                              |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Method:             | Online survey                                                                                                |
| Instrument:         | Electronic questionnaire                                                                                     |
| Population:         | Web- and e-mail-active people of all age groups from Switzerland                                             |
| Scope:              | A total of 144 closed-ended and 9 socio-demographic questions                                                |
| Sample size:        | 4,293 questionnaires evaluated (complete, correct, and adult participants)                                   |
| Representativeness: | Broad-based survey through cooperation with 20 Minuten as media partner and presence on various social media |
| Survey period:      | 30.10. - 17.11.2024                                                                                          |
| Management:         | Dr. oec. HSG Andreas M. Krafft                                                                               |
| Citation:           | Use permitted, provided the source is acknowledged                                                           |

The following tables show the demographic distribution of the people surveyed in Switzerland.

| Language region | Frequency | %    |
|-----------------|-----------|------|
| German          | 2079      | 48.4 |
| French          | 1744      | 40.6 |
| Italian         | 470       | 10.9 |

| Gender | Frequency | %    |
|--------|-----------|------|
| Male   | 2222      | 51.8 |
| Female | 2031      | 47.3 |
| Others | 40        | 0.9  |

| Age   | Frequency | %    |
|-------|-----------|------|
| 18-29 | 267       | 6.2  |
| 30-39 | 602       | 14.0 |
| 40-49 | 811       | 18.9 |
| 50-59 | 1036      | 24.1 |
| 60-69 | 1025      | 23.9 |
| 70-79 | 463       | 10.8 |
| 80+   | 89        | 2.1  |

| Education                                    | Frequency | %    |
|----------------------------------------------|-----------|------|
| No completed school education                | 23        | 0.5  |
| Primary school / elementary school completed | 153       | 3.6  |
| Technical (secondary) school without Bacc.   | 227       | 5.3  |
| Grammar school with Baccalaureate            | 177       | 4.1  |
| Vocational training                          | 1321      | 30.8 |
| Higher vocational training with diploma      | 1378      | 32.1 |
| University / (technical) college             | 1014      | 23.6 |

| <b>Marital status</b>                  | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>%</b> |
|----------------------------------------|------------------|----------|
| Still living with parents              | 63               | 1.5      |
| Single                                 | 655              | 15.3     |
| In a partnership but living separately | 264              | 6.1      |
| Living together in a partnership       | 827              | 19.3     |
| Married                                | 1885             | 43.9     |
| Divorced / separated                   | 462              | 10.8     |
| Widowed                                | 137              | 3.2      |

| <b>Main occupation</b>              | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>%</b> |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|----------|
| In training                         | 77               | 1.8      |
| Family, housework, raising children | 142              | 3.3      |
| Part-time employment                | 883              | 20.6     |
| Full-time employment                | 1814             | 42.3     |
| Unemployed                          | 160              | 3.7      |
| Pension                             | 1217             | 28.3     |

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## Books on the Hope Barometer

