



Hope Barometer 2023

Hope despite a bleak future

Results for Switzerland

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Since 2009, the Hope Barometer has been collected annually for the coming year in a broad-based Internet survey with the support of Switzerland's largest media publication, 20 Minuten. Starting in Switzerland, the survey is now also conducted in collaboration with renowned universities in Austria, Australia, Colombia, the Czech Republic, France, India, Israel, Italy, Nigeria, Poland, Portugal, Spain and South Africa. This report presents the latest results of the November-December 2022 Hope Barometer survey in Switzerland. The public was asked about their expectations for the future in various areas, about long-term future scenarios, about their personal hopes, about the sources of hope, and about their attitudes toward war and peace.

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The most important results in a nutshell

The results of the Hope Barometer 2023, in which 6,283 people in Switzerland participated, lead to the following findings:

1. For a majority of the population, the general quality of life in Switzerland will be worse in the future than it has been in the past.
2. Above all, people fear a widening gap between rich and poor, more crime and violence, a deterioration in the mental health of the population, and further environmental problems.
3. A majority of the population would like to see a greener and more harmonious society, with an emphasis on cohesion, community and family.
4. The war in Ukraine is seen by many people as a threat to the country and to their own lives.
5. A large majority of the population is fundamentally opposed to war and in favor of peace. Switzerland should actively work for peace in the world.
6. Despite negative future prospects in almost all areas of society, the population does not lose hope for a better future.
7. Most people can hope even in difficult times and their hopes are stronger than their fears.
8. The main personal wishes of the population relate to good personal health, a harmonious and balanced life, good social relationships with family and friends, and a meaningful purpose in life.
9. Most people find the most significant sources of hope in their relationship with nature, in good social relationships, in personal capabilities and motivation, and in experiences of mutual helpfulness.
10. The main pillars of hope are the desire for a better future, the belief that this is not necessarily probable but nevertheless possible, and trust in oneself and in other people.

Hope is a fundamental human ability that is of existential importance, especially in times of crisis. Fear and hope are almost the two sides of the same coin. While fear puts people in a survival mode, hope is the prerequisite for progress and development. It is hope that helps us cope with and overcome crises and grow from them. The history of mankind is a great proof of this. In times of illness, people become aware of the value of health, and in times of war, they long for peace. As soon as hope is lost, courage and willpower also disappear. That is why hope is the most important resource right now, in order not to give up faith in a better future despite a seemingly gloomy future, and to regain confidence in the human ability to learn and develop.

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I Introduction

For the 14th time in a row, people in Switzerland were surveyed in November-December 2022 regarding their expectations and hopes for the future. The experiences of recent years - pandemic, war, energy crisis, inflation and social tensions - have already left deep scars on the population and do not promise anything good for the future. Many people wonder what still gives us hope in these difficult times. However, the concept of hope has an ambivalent reputation: Particularly in German-speaking countries, there is sometimes a misconception about what hope means, how hope works and what significance hope has for people's lives and development. Hope is often associated with powerlessness, lack of help and drive, fatalism or dejection. When nothing more can be done and everything seems to be lost, there is nothing left but to hope. However, hope is exactly the opposite of surrender. Lack of help and drive are a sign of hopelessness instead of hope. Rather, hope is the prerequisite for any kind of action. As soon as we give up hope, we stop committing ourselves to a cause.

The wrong understanding of hope often occurs because hope is confused with wishful thinking or even blind optimism. Moreover, people are often afraid to hope because hoping is always associated with possible disappointment. Wishes are always a central component of hope. People hope especially when they have a heartfelt wish, that is, when they heed a wish that is of special importance to them: In times of war, people hope for peace, and in times of pandemic, they hope for health. In addition to the wish, uncertainty is also an essential component of hope. It is precisely the awareness of the seriousness of the situation that is an essential aspect of hope. If the realization of our wishes were not uncertain, there would be no reason for hope. Thanks to hope, people in uncertain situations stand up for their wishes and ideals and commit themselves to their realization.

With the Hope Barometer 2023, we wanted to know how people assess the future, which trends they perceive, which future scenarios they consider likely and desirable, and which values they consider important. What do people in Switzerland think about the future of the world? What fears and wishes do they have? Which future scenarios are seen as probable, and which futures are considered desirable for a good life? These images and conceptions of the future will influence people's expectations and hopes as well as their fears. For this purpose, we used existing questionnaires by the futurologists Richard Eckersley (Eckersley et al., 2007) and Carmen Stewart (2002) as well as Julius Grund and Antje Brock (2019). Survey participants were mentally transported to the year 2042. We were interested in their assessments regarding future quality of life, their long-term expectations in different areas of life (health, family, employment, environment, etc.), and their assessment of possible future trends and scenarios. Against the backdrop of the war in Ukraine, we also wanted to learn about the population's concern, anxiety, and fundamental attitude toward war and peace, and used the validated questionnaires by Bizumic et al. (2013), van der Linden et al. (2017), and McAlister (2001).

What keeps people hoping? How strong is hope in Switzerland? As in previous years, the general sense of hope (Krafft et al., 2017) and the personal sources of hope (Krafft, 2019; Krafft & Walker, 2018) were determined. The results demonstrate the existential nature and importance of hope in times of crisis and anxiety about the future.

2 Future Quality of Life

First of all, we wanted to know from the Swiss population what expectations they have regarding the long-term future. The negative events of the past year, such as the global pandemic, the war in Ukraine, rising inflation and the modest progress (or regression) in implementing environmentally friendly measures, have a significant impact on people's images of the future.

2.1 General Quality of Life 2042

Against the backdrop of the current crises, we asked the population in Switzerland about their assessment regarding the long-term development of the general quality of life. The question was: "Imagine your country in 20 years' time, i.e. around the year 2042: Do you think the general quality of life will be better than it is now, about the same or worse than today?". According to more than 60% of the population, the quality of life in 20 years-time will be worse to much worse than it is today. In contrast, only 11.5% of people believe that the quality of life will improve (Fig. 1).

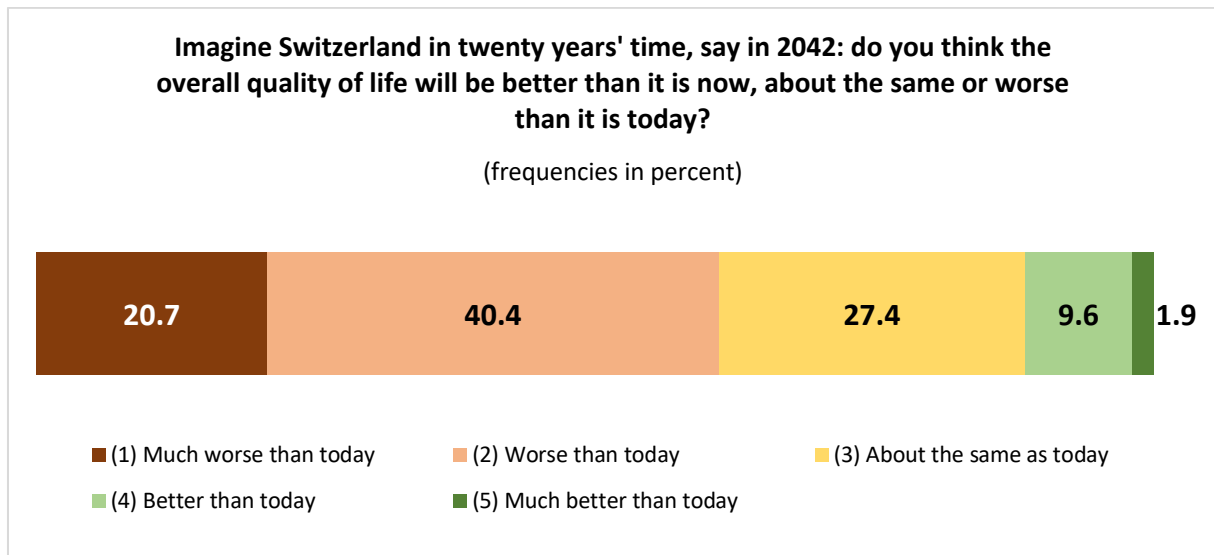


Figure 1: General quality of life in Switzerland 2042

In countries with a high level of prosperity like Switzerland, many people fear a deterioration in the general quality of life. On a scale of 1 (much worse than today) and 5 (much better than today), this results in a mean value of $M=2.32$.

Fig. 2 compares the results from the three language regions. In French-speaking Switzerland, people are slightly more pessimistic than in German-speaking and Italian-speaking Switzerland.

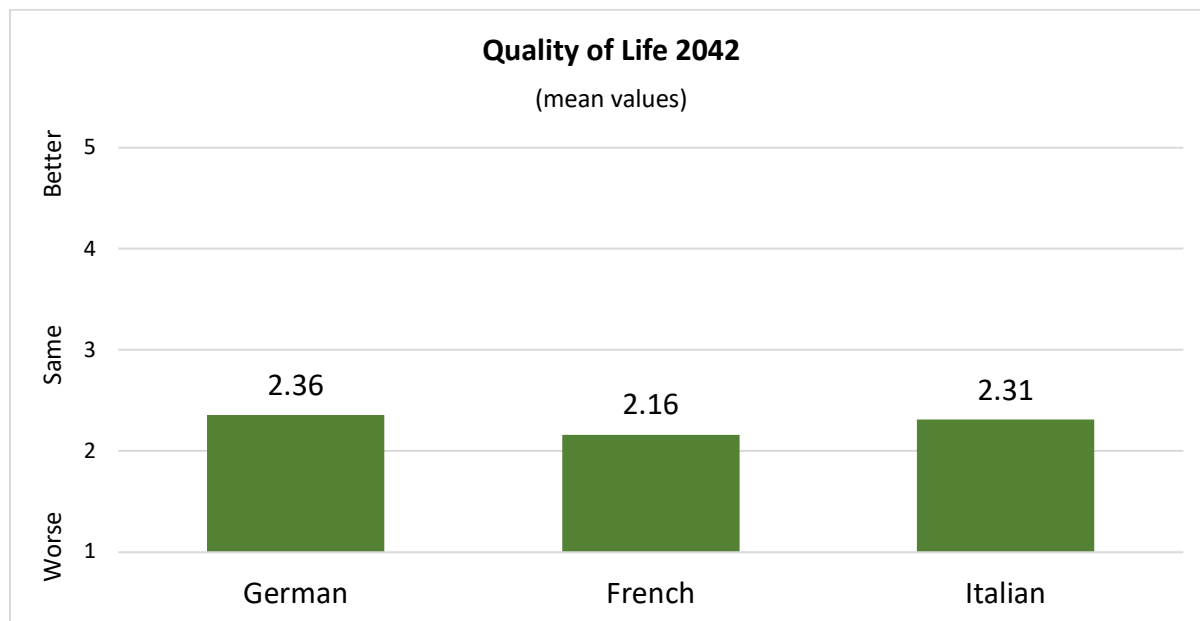


Figure 2: General quality of life in Switzerland in 2042 by language region

No significant differences were found in the future expectations of men and women (Fig. 3).

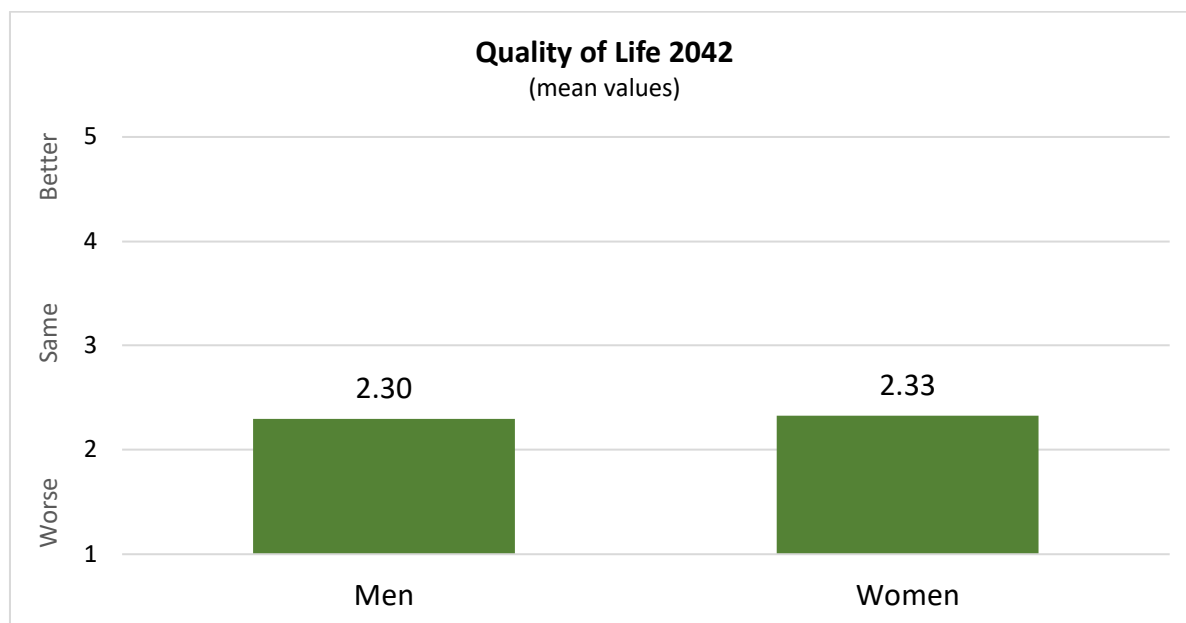


Figure 3: General quality of life in Switzerland in 2042 by gender

Looking at the different age groups, the future prospects are also very similar (Fig. 3). People between 30 and 69 assess the quality of life in the future slightly more negatively than younger and older people.

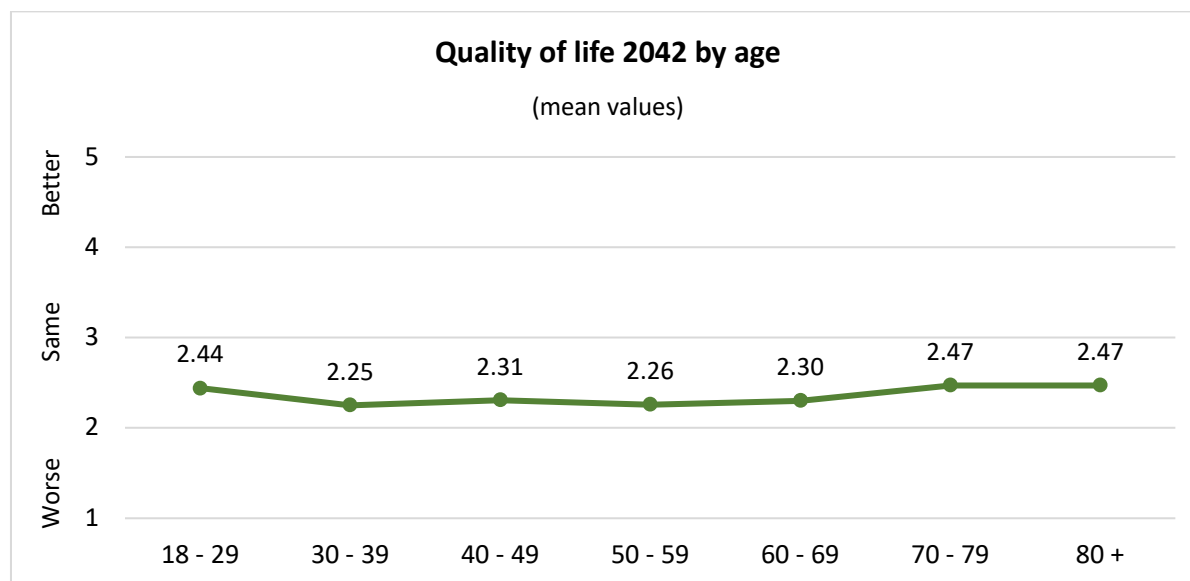


Figure 4: General quality of life in Switzerland in 2042 by age

2.2 Quality of life 2042 in different life domains

After assessing the general quality of life, the participants of the Hope Barometer 2023 were asked to evaluate future trends in several domains of life in a differentiated manner. Global trends are socially relevant developments with various consequences for our lives and the future. They affect almost all areas of our society (economy, environment, politics, education, etc.), trigger fundamental changes and have long-term effects.

On a scale of 1 (much worse) and 5 (much better), the results in all areas of life are below the mean value of 3 (same) (Fig. 5). The future outlook is seen as particularly negative with regard to the gap between the rich and the poor, the increase in the cost of living, the deteriorating mental health of the population and increasing crime and violence.

Perceived stress and the increase in mental illnesses such as burnout have taken on worrying dimensions in Switzerland. Another issue is personal and economic security. In one of the safest countries in the world, fears of an increase in crime and violence - perhaps as a result of a polarizing society - are particularly pronounced.

Developments in the areas of family life, education of the population, physical health, justice and equal treatment are viewed least critically. However, many people expect a slight deterioration in these areas of life too.

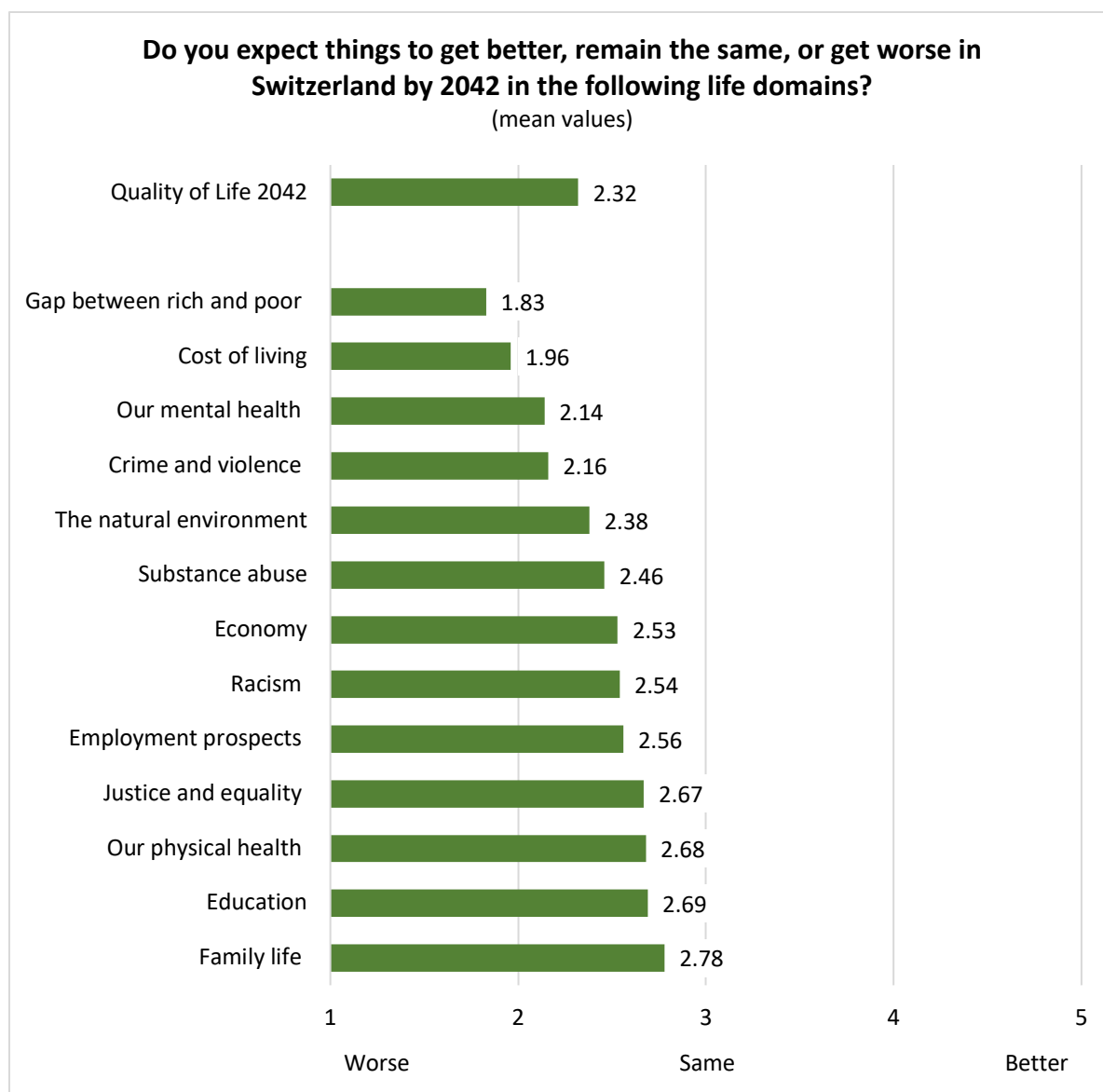


Figure 5: *Quality of life in individual areas in Switzerland 2042*

If we compare the three language regions with one another, the following differences stand out: People in French- and Italian-speaking Switzerland view future prospects in several domains of life more negatively than those in German-speaking Switzerland (Fig. 6). This is particularly the case in economic aspects such as the increase in the cost of living, the general deterioration in economic conditions and the general employment situation. In French-speaking Switzerland, there is also a more pessimistic assessment of the future of the natural environment, mental health, education and justice and equality.

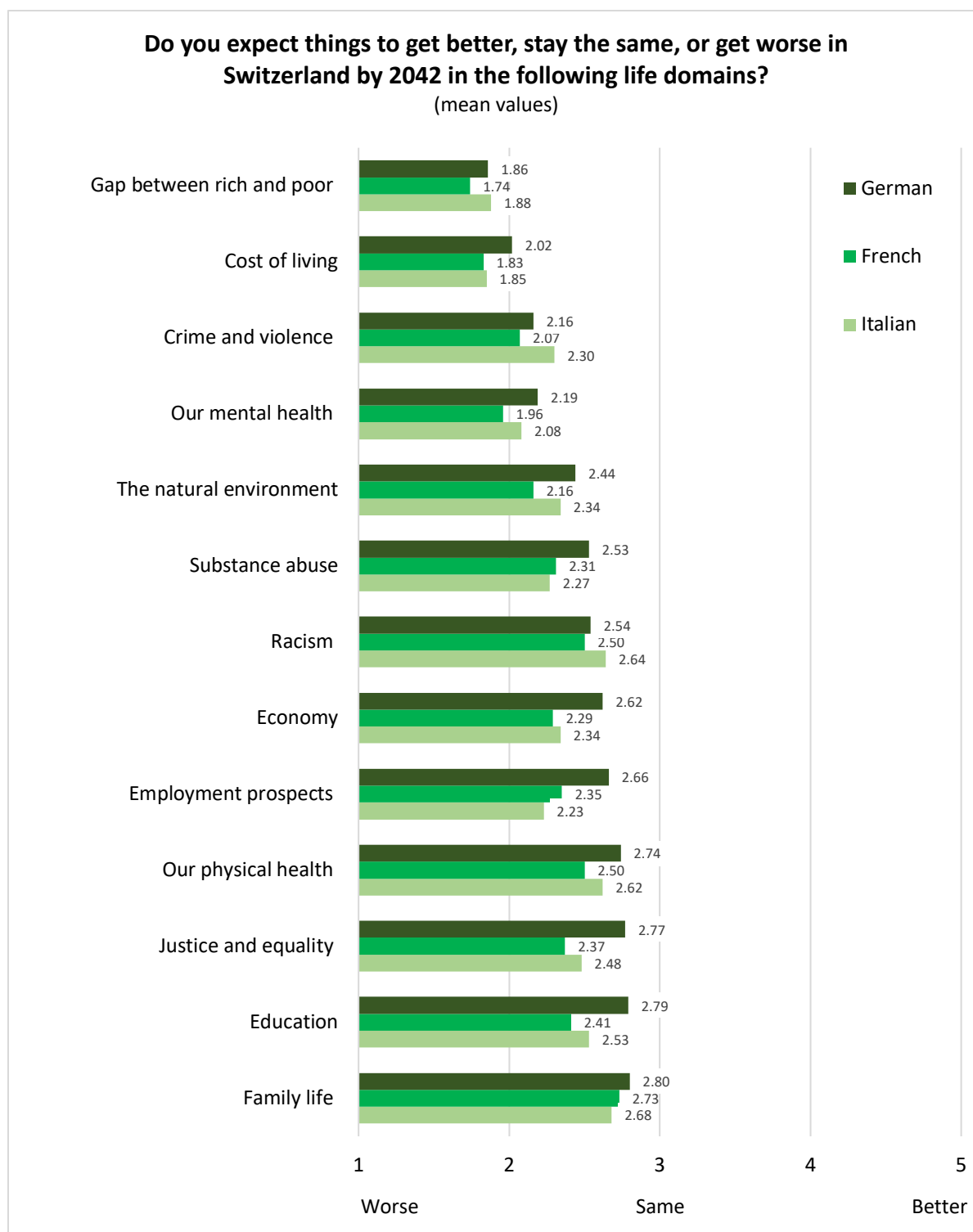


Figure 6: Quality of life in individual areas in Switzerland 2042 by language region

Figure 7 presents the future prospects of men and women, which for the most part show similar results. Men see a slightly worse development with regard to education, equal treatment and racism. In contrast, women are slightly more critical about the environment and the economy.

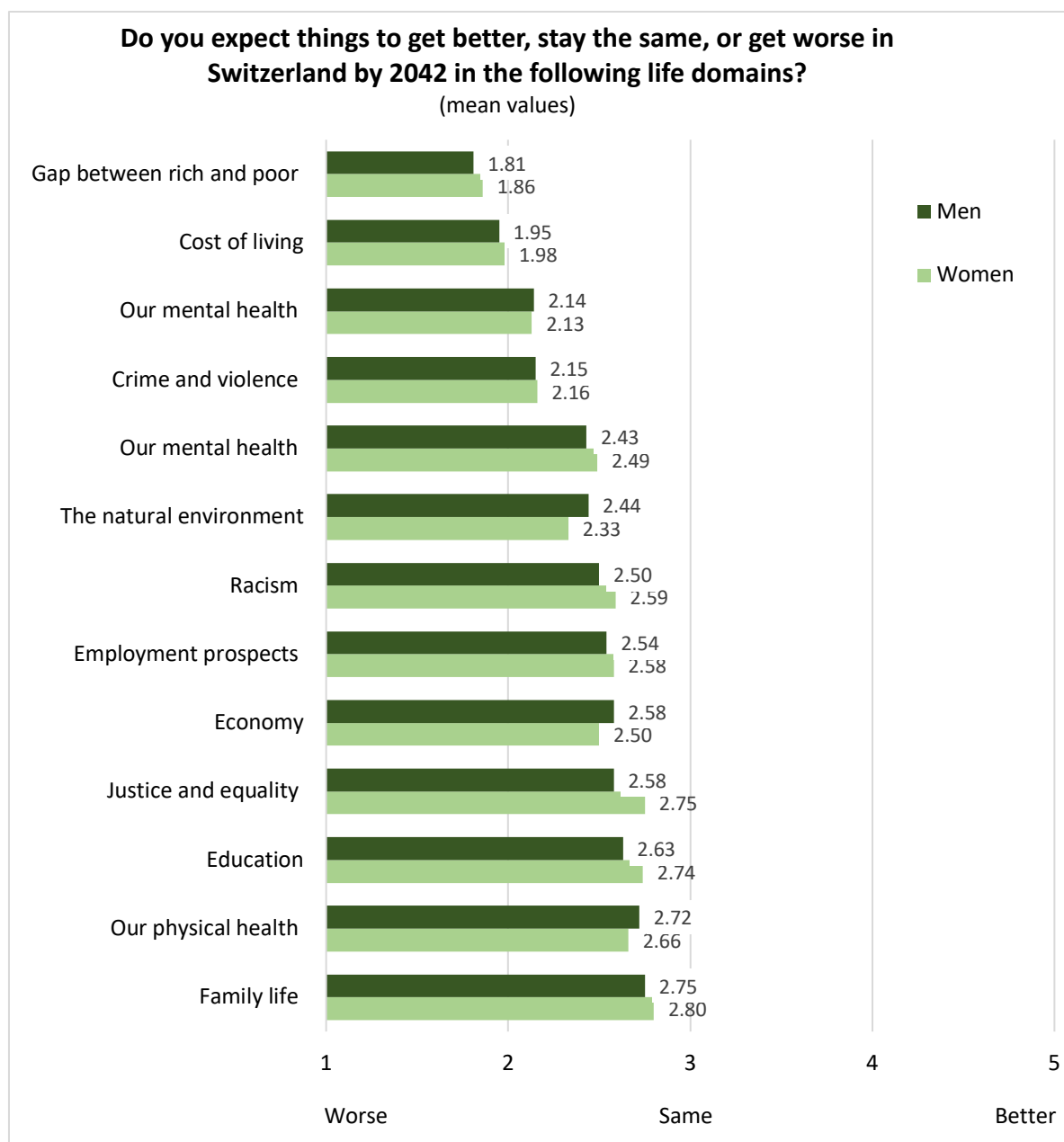


Figure 7: *Quality of life in individual areas of life in Switzerland in 2042 by gender*

No significant differences have become apparent between the various age groups. Those aged 18 to 29 are somewhat more pessimistic about the development of the cost of living, for those aged 30 to 69 the gap between rich and poor seems to be slightly more negative, and people over 70 take a somewhat gloomier view of the increase in crime and violence.

3 Future scenarios 2042

As a result of global developments and the subjective future perspectives of the population, different images of the future are formed in people's perception, which can be described in form of scenarios. Scenarios are like short portraits or stories about the future that describe possible and alternative states, taking into consideration future trends and prospects. These can be assessed as more or less likely and as more or less desirable. This creates positive and negative images of the future, telling stories about feared and ideal futures.

In this and the next section, we will look at likely, possible, and desirable scenarios from the perspective of the population, which provide valuable insights into society's views of the future.

3.1 Probable future scenarios 2042

In the 2023 Hope Barometer, participants were firstly asked to assess the likelihood of four possible scenarios (Eckersley et al., 2007; Grund & Brock, 2019). The four future scenarios were called Flourishing scenario, Digital scenario, Clash scenario, and Crisis scenario. Participants in our survey could rate these scenarios on a scale from 1 (very unlikely) to 6 (very likely).

The **Flourishing scenario** describes a positive development towards a world characterized by sustainability, peace and prosperity. In this scenario, humanity will be able to overcome current problems thanks to current and future economic and technological progress.

The **Digital scenario** sees the dawn of an age in which mankind will be able to improve general living conditions with the help of artificial intelligence and robots. This will also solve the major environmental problems of our times.

In the **Clash scenario**, social inequality becomes even more accentuated and the gap between rich and poor countries even more pronounced, so that great economic, political and social instability determines people's everyday lives.

The **Crisis scenario** describes a world marked by crises and problems, in which a growing population causes more environmental degradation and in which ethnic and regional conflicts and new diseases determine life.

Fig. 8 shows the population's assessments of the four future scenarios in summarized form. Most people in Switzerland consider the **Flourishing** scenario to be the least likely. The **Digital** scenario follows with a score around the midpoint of the scale. The **Clash** and **Crisis** scenarios are considered most likely by most of the people surveyed. A more differentiated presentation of the results for each individual scenario can be found in Figs. 9 to 12.

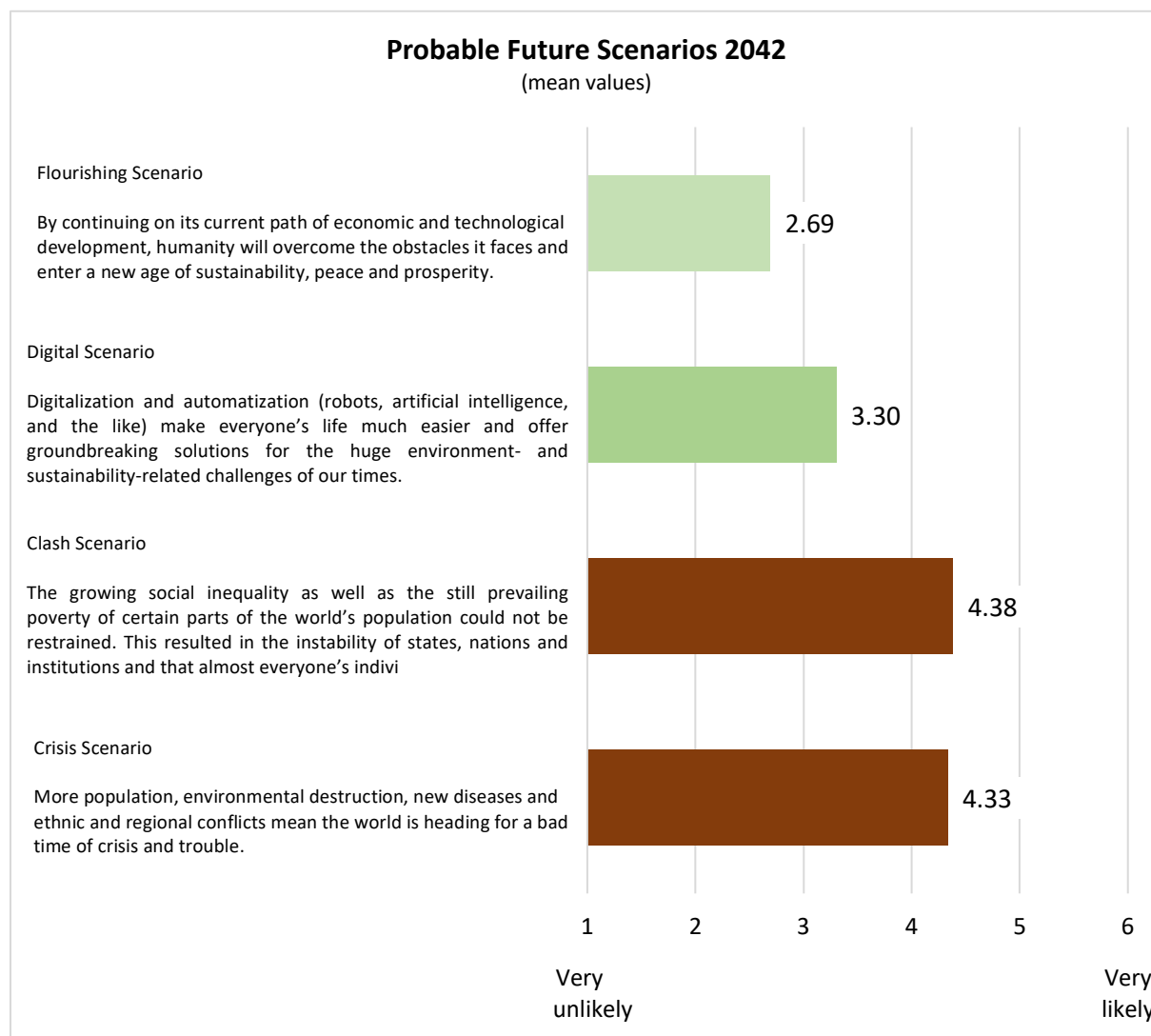


Figure 8: Probable future scenarios for the world in 2042

Around 75% of respondents in Switzerland assess the **Flourishing** scenario as rather to quite unlikely (Fig. 9). Most people hardly believe in a positive future, which again confirms the negative future expectations and trends in section I (quality of life 2042).

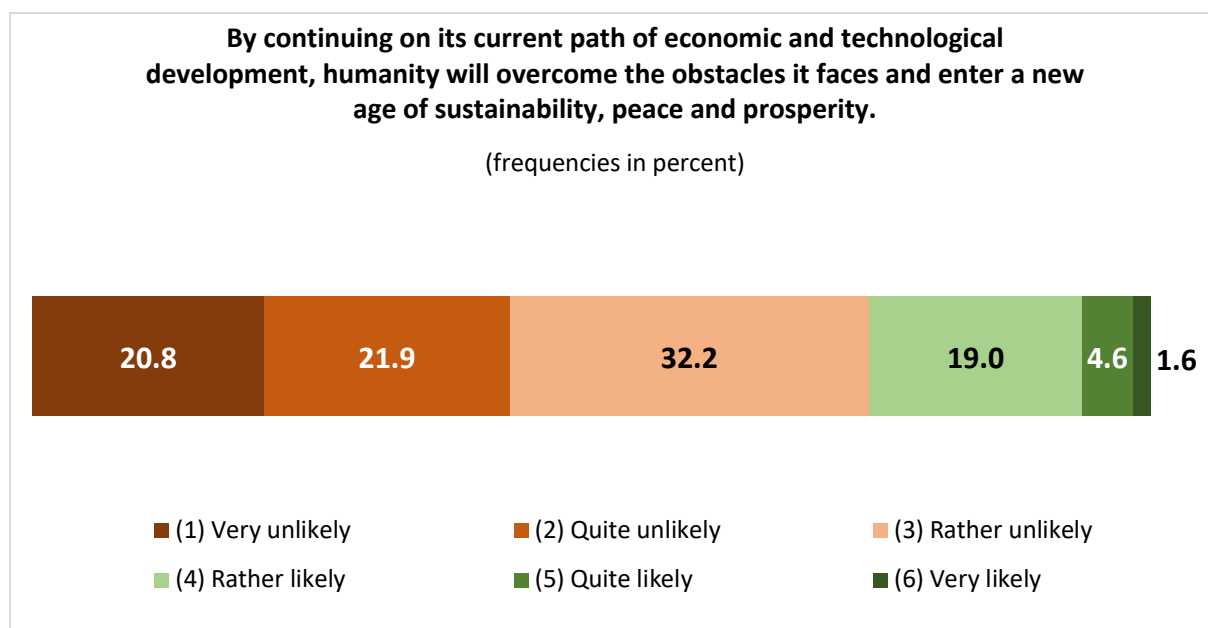


Figure 9: Flourishing scenario for the world 2042

Regarding the **Digital** scenario, a split is noticeable in the answers of the respondents (Fig. 10). Just under half of the population (47.1%) considers the possibility that we will be able to solve the great challenges of our times through technological development to be rather to very likely. This contrasts with the other half of respondents (52.9%), who regard this development as rather to very unlikely. The optimistic view of the future assumes that environmentally friendly solutions can be found and the environment relieved through innovative thinking and technological developments. The rather pessimistic assessment believes little or not at all in technological development as a panacea.

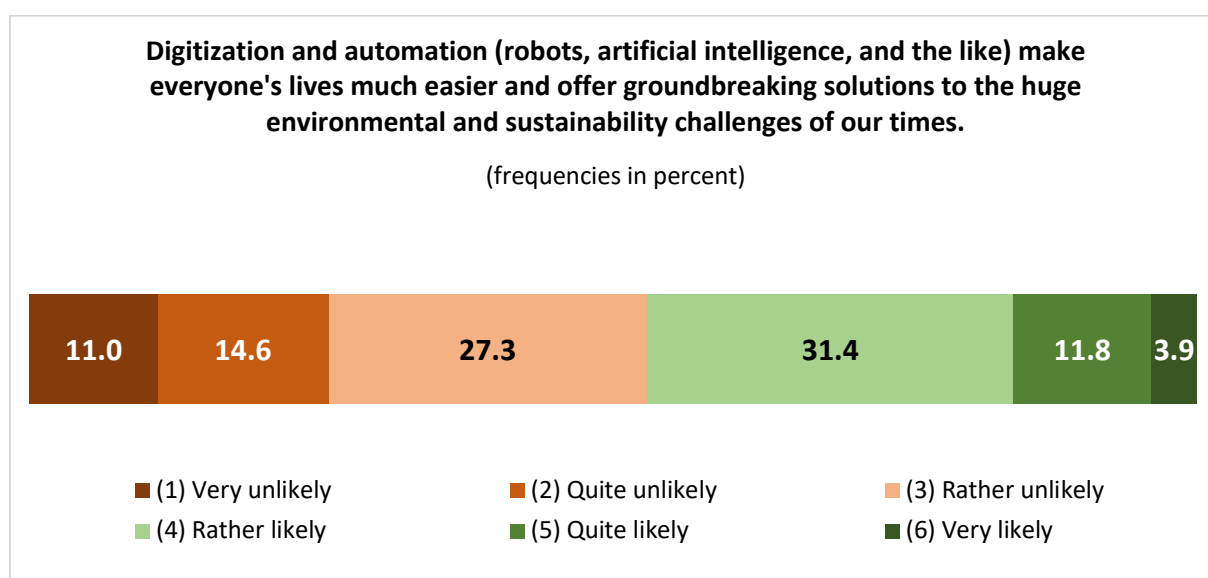


Figure 10: Probability for the digital future scenario for the world 2042

Against the scene of the current world situation, the prospects for the future appear desolate and frightening in the eyes of many people. Mankind faces enormous challenges such as climate change, the fight against poverty and the resolution of international conflicts. This is reflected in the assessment of the next two future scenarios. The **Clash** scenario is rated as rather to very likely by a large majority of 82% of respondents (Fig. 11).

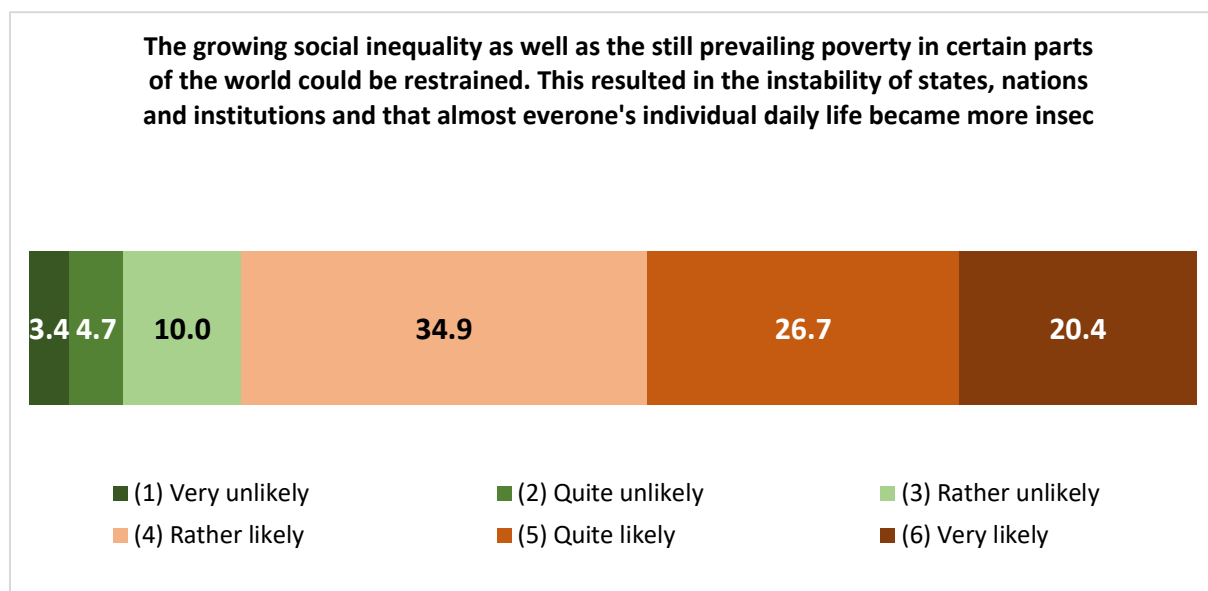


Figure 11: Probability for the clash scenario for the world 2042

For the **Crisis** scenario the results look very similar. Around 82% of the population rated this scenario as rather to very likely (Fig. 12). Pessimism about the future is a consequence of increasing uncertainty. The coming decades are generally seen as an age of crises and problems instead of peace and prosperity. A majority fears a worsening of current global problems in the future, seems to have lost confidence in a meaningful future and also no longer believes in unlimited progress that could solve the world's problems.

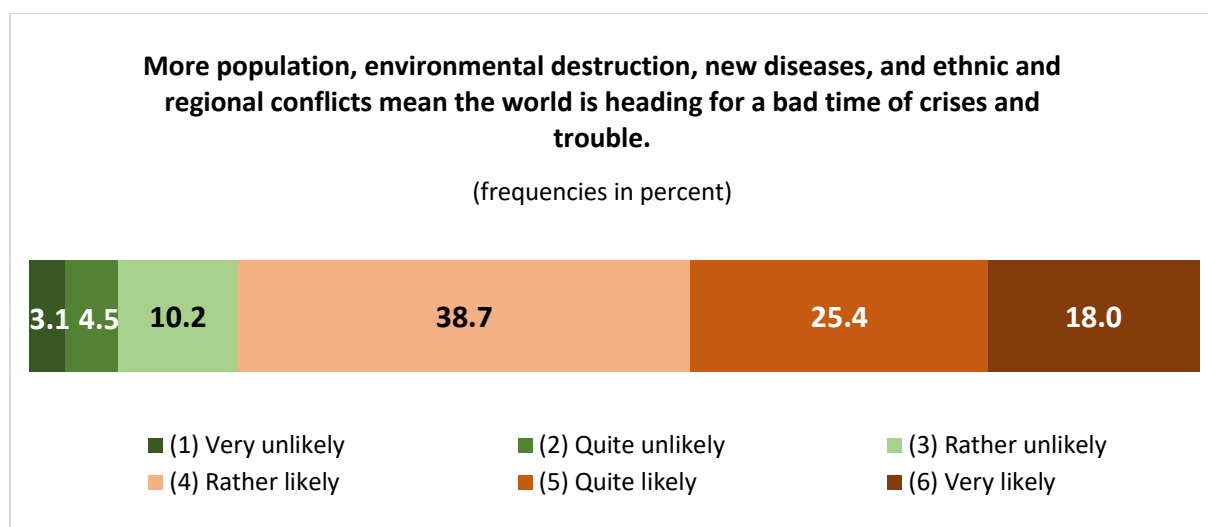


Figure 12: Probability for the crisis scenario for the world in 2042

A quick look at the results in Fig. 13 shows very similar values in the three language regions. People in German-speaking Switzerland are slightly less pessimistic about the Flourishing and Digital scenarios. The perception of the crisis scenario is slightly more pronounced in French-speaking Switzerland.

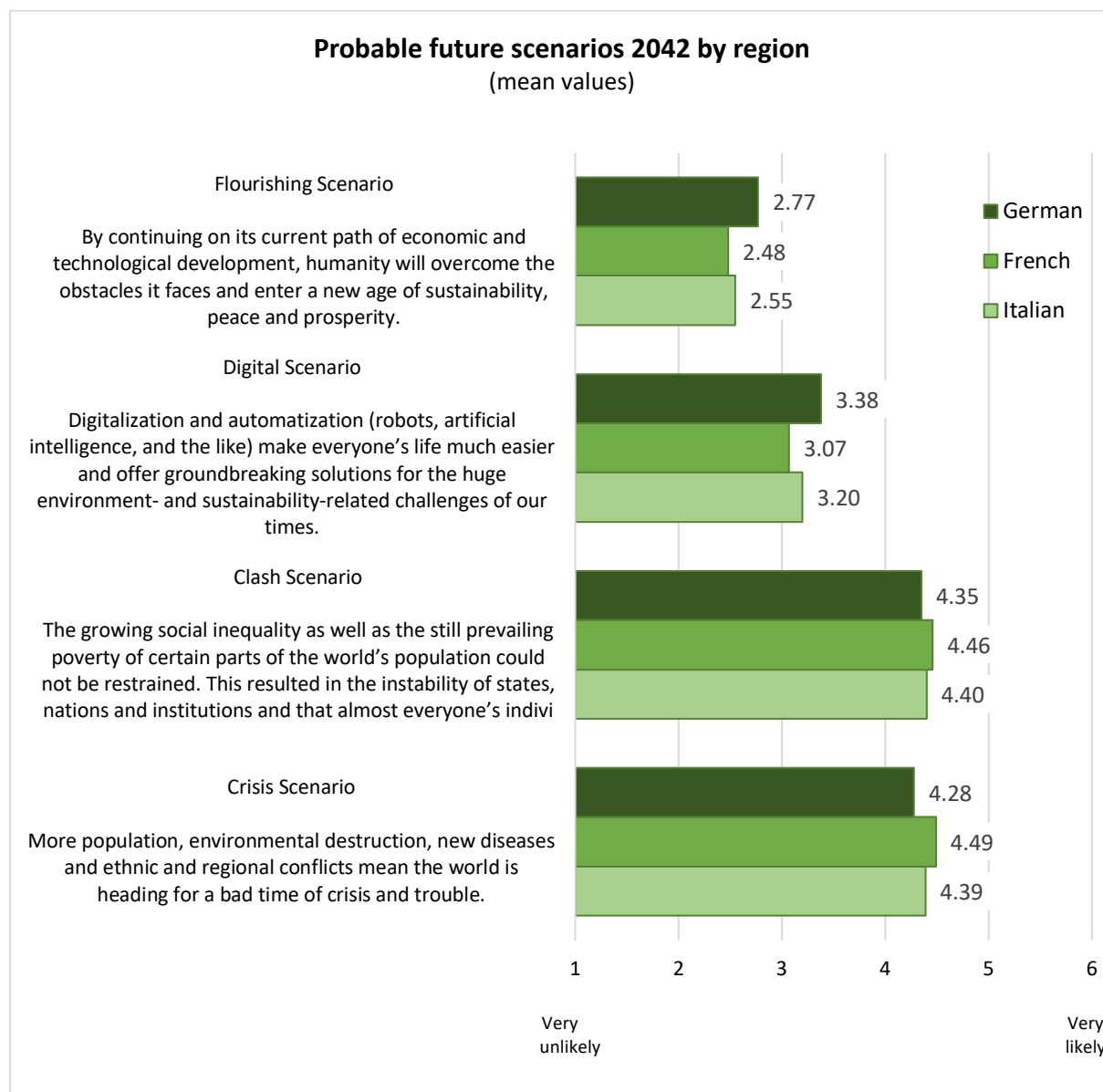


Figure 13: Probable future scenarios for the world in 2042 by language region

There are almost no differences between the assessments of men and women (Fig. 14).

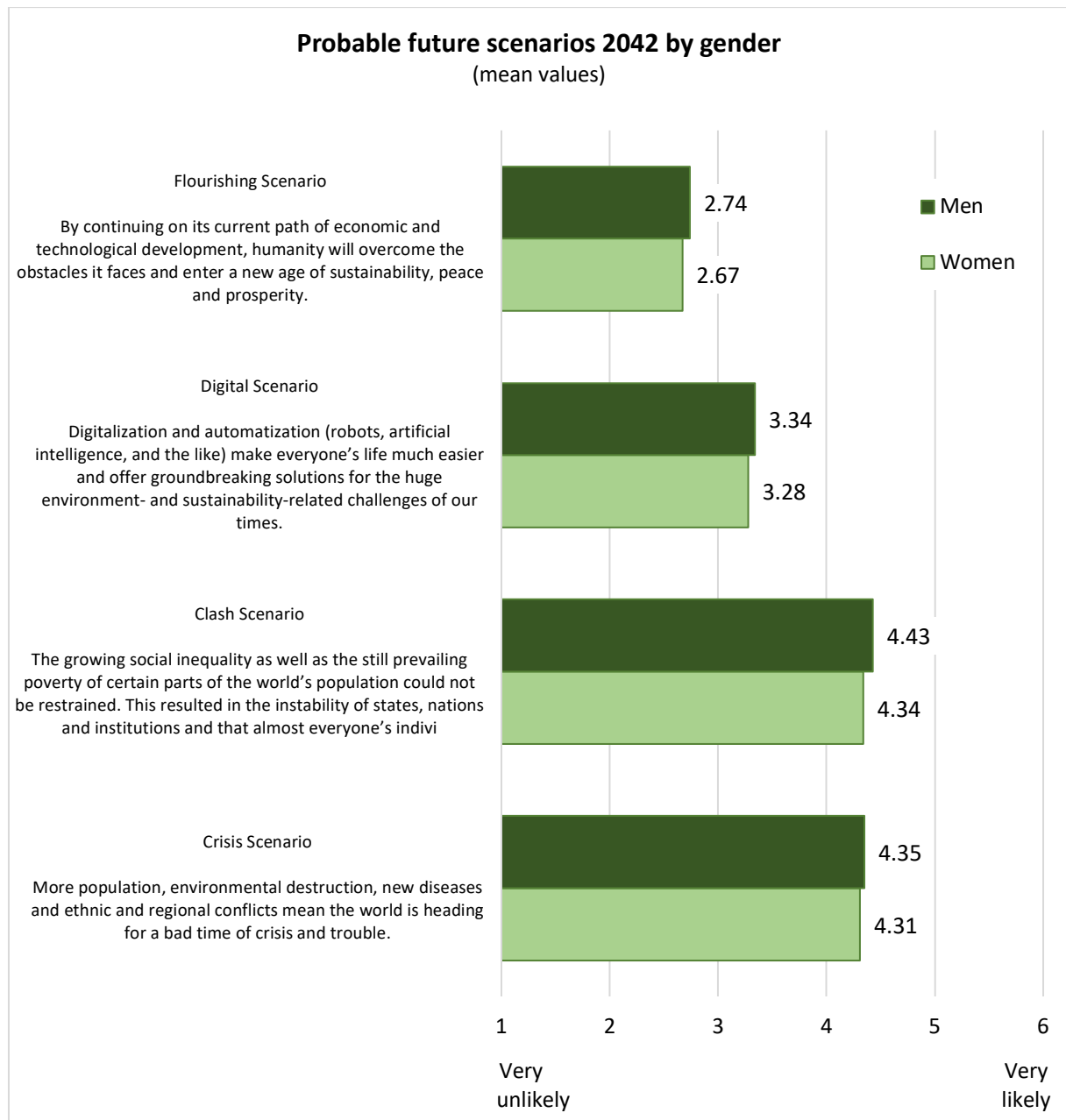


Figure 14: Probable future scenarios for the world in 2042 by gender

If we look at the ratings of the future scenarios by age groups, the following findings stand out (Fig. 15): With age, the subjective probability of the **Crisis** scenario decreases and that of the **Flourishing** scenario increases. This means that young people's views of the future tend to be more pessimistic than those of older people. Contrary to expectations, young people are not significantly more optimistic than older people with regard to the **Digital** scenario. The differences between the age groups are also hardly significant with regard to the **Clash** scenario. Younger and older people are only slightly less pessimistic.

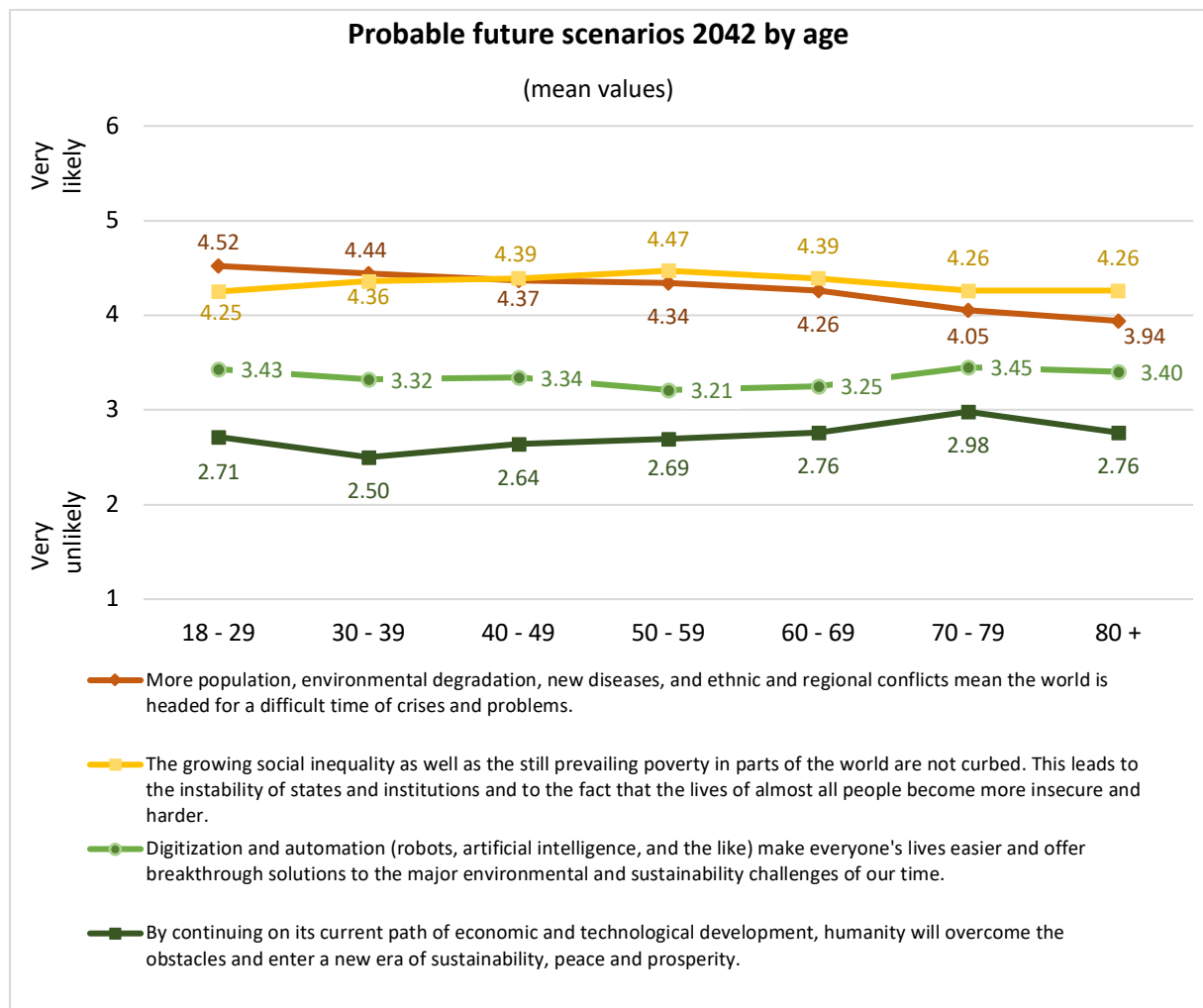


Figure 15: Probable future scenarios for the world in 2042 by age

3.2 Desirable future scenarios 2042

What drives history is the human ambition to change a state of affairs so that it corresponds to its hopes (Burke, 2012). Such a future can occur especially if we can imagine it today and realize it step by step. The goal is to engage with alternative and desirable visions of the future, believing that we must not merely adapt to the future, but actively and responsibly shape it. Positive future scenarios offer people the image of an ideal future to which they can commit themselves (Krafft, 2022).

In the 2023 Hope Barometer, respondents were asked to rate how desirable or undesirable two conceivable future scenarios, the **Competitive** scenario and the **Sustainability** scenario, are in their eyes (Eckersley et al., 2007). The **Competitive** scenario outlines a fast-paced, internationally competitive society with a focus on the individual, wealth creation, and technological advancement. The **Sustainability** scenario portrays a greener and more harmonious society with an emphasis on cooperation, community and family, a more equal distribution of wealth, and greater economic self-reliance.

As can be seen in Fig. 16, for a majority of people in Switzerland, the **Sustainability** scenario appears to be significantly more desirable than the **Competitive** scenario. This does not mean, however, that the **Competitive** scenario is completely undesirable.

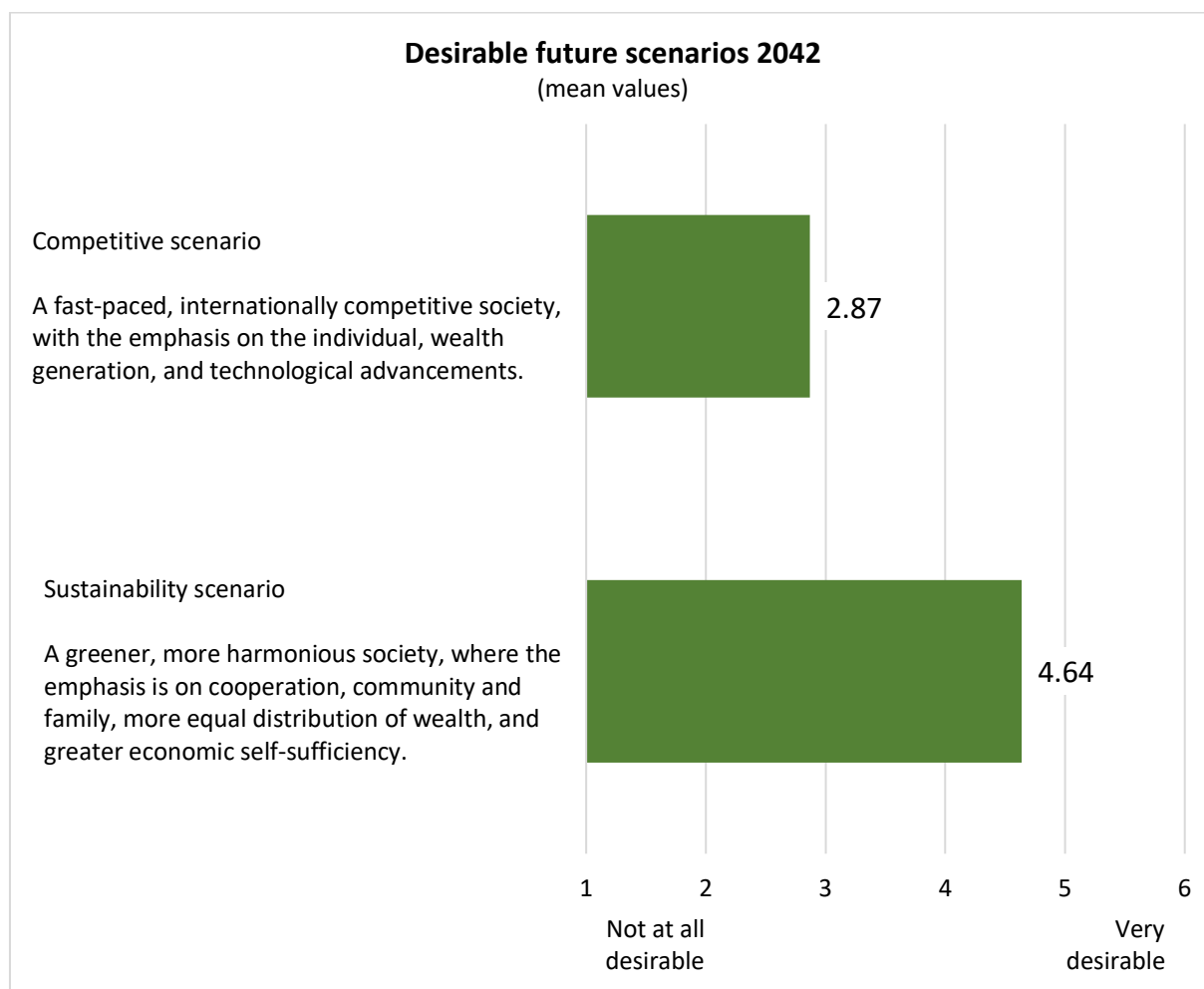


Figure 16: Desirable future scenarios for the world in 2042

In countries like Switzerland, the idea that the world can and should continue to function as it does now is seen by the majority as inadequate. This is not to say, however, that economic competition, individuality, prosperity and technological progress are fundamentally wrong. However, these areas no longer serve many people as desirable visions for a better future, especially because their negative effects on health, well-being and the environment are seen as burdensome (Krafft, 2022).

Around two thirds of people in Switzerland consider the **Competitive** scenario to be rather to not at all desirable (Fig. 17). For around 20% of respondents, however, this future scenario is rather desirable and for just under 12% of people it is even fairly to very desirable.

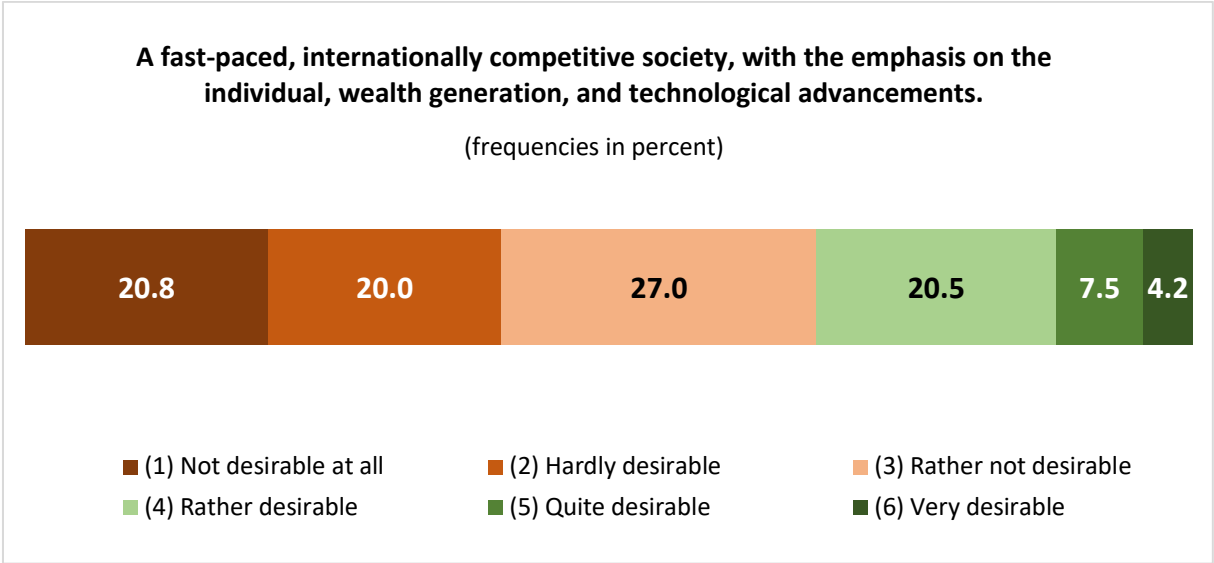


Figure 17: Individualistic competitive scenario for the world in 2042

The situation is quite different with regard to the **Sustainability** scenario. More than 80% of the people surveyed would like to see a greener and more harmonious society in which cooperation, community and family, as well as more justice and economic independence, are in the foreground (Fig. 18). For around 60% of people, this **Sustainable** future scenario is even quite to very desirable.

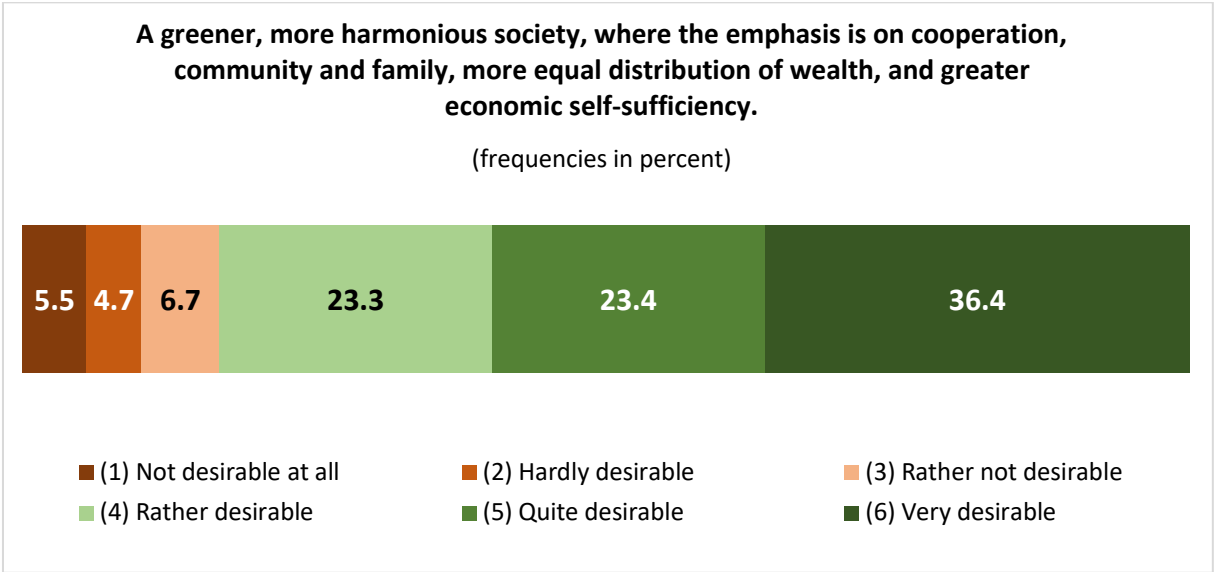


Figure 18: Sustainable future scenario for the world in 2042

The significant differences between the three language regions are particularly striking (Fig. 19). All three groups consider the **Sustainability** scenario to be significantly more desirable than the

Competitive scenario. However, people in Italian-speaking Switzerland consider the **Competitive** scenario the least as desirable and the **Sustainability** scenario the most as desirable. In German-speaking Switzerland, on the other hand, the **Competitive** scenario appears to be the least undesirable and the **Sustainability** scenario the least desirable.

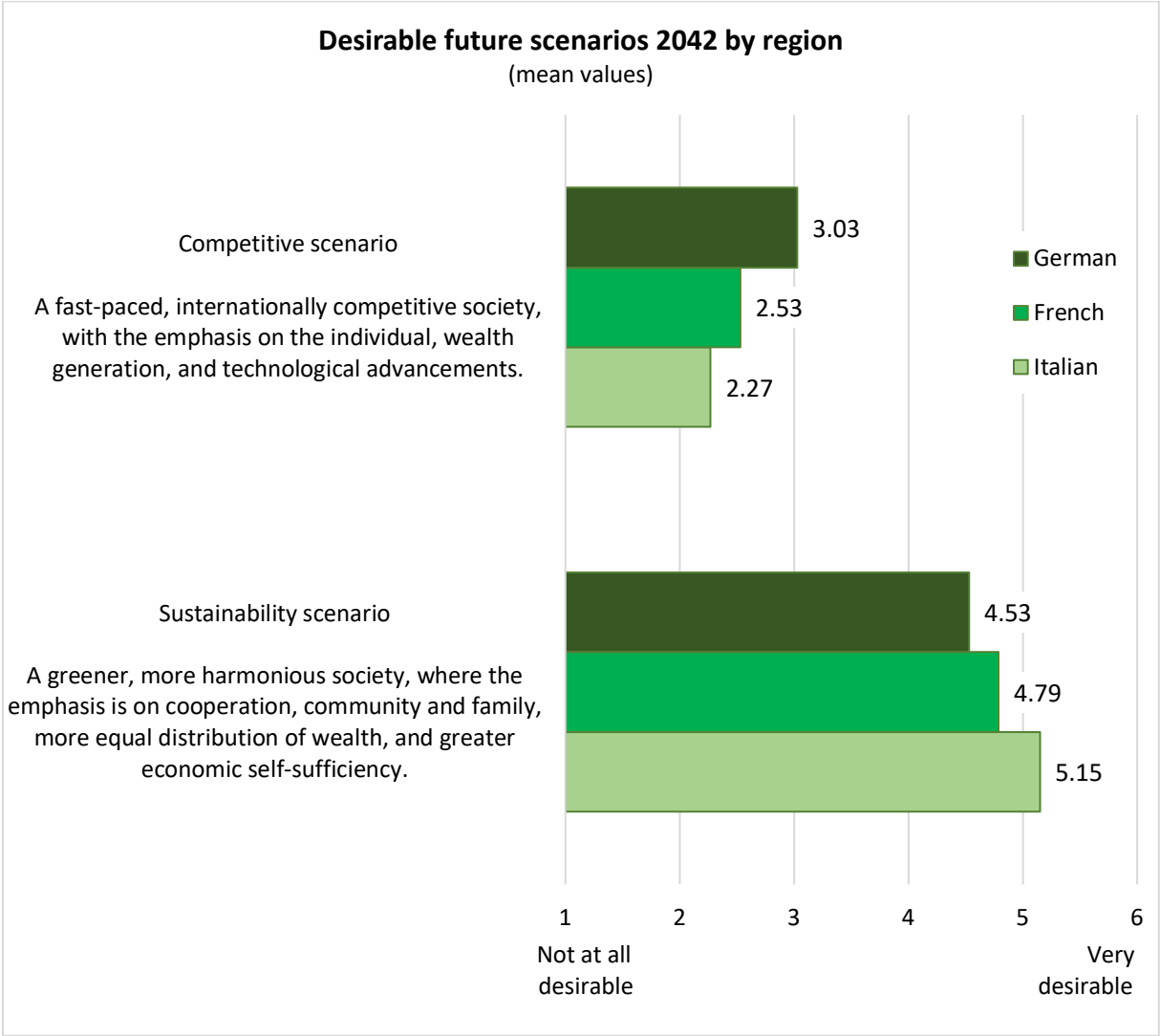


Figure 19: Desirable future scenarios for the world in 2042 by language region

There are also significant differences between the future wishes of men and women (Fig. 20). Although both genders consider the **Sustainability** scenario to be more desirable than the **Competitive** scenario, this is significantly more pronounced among women than among men. It is also known that values such as cohesion, sustainability and community are particularly important for women and that men are more in favor of individuality and competition (Statista, 2022).

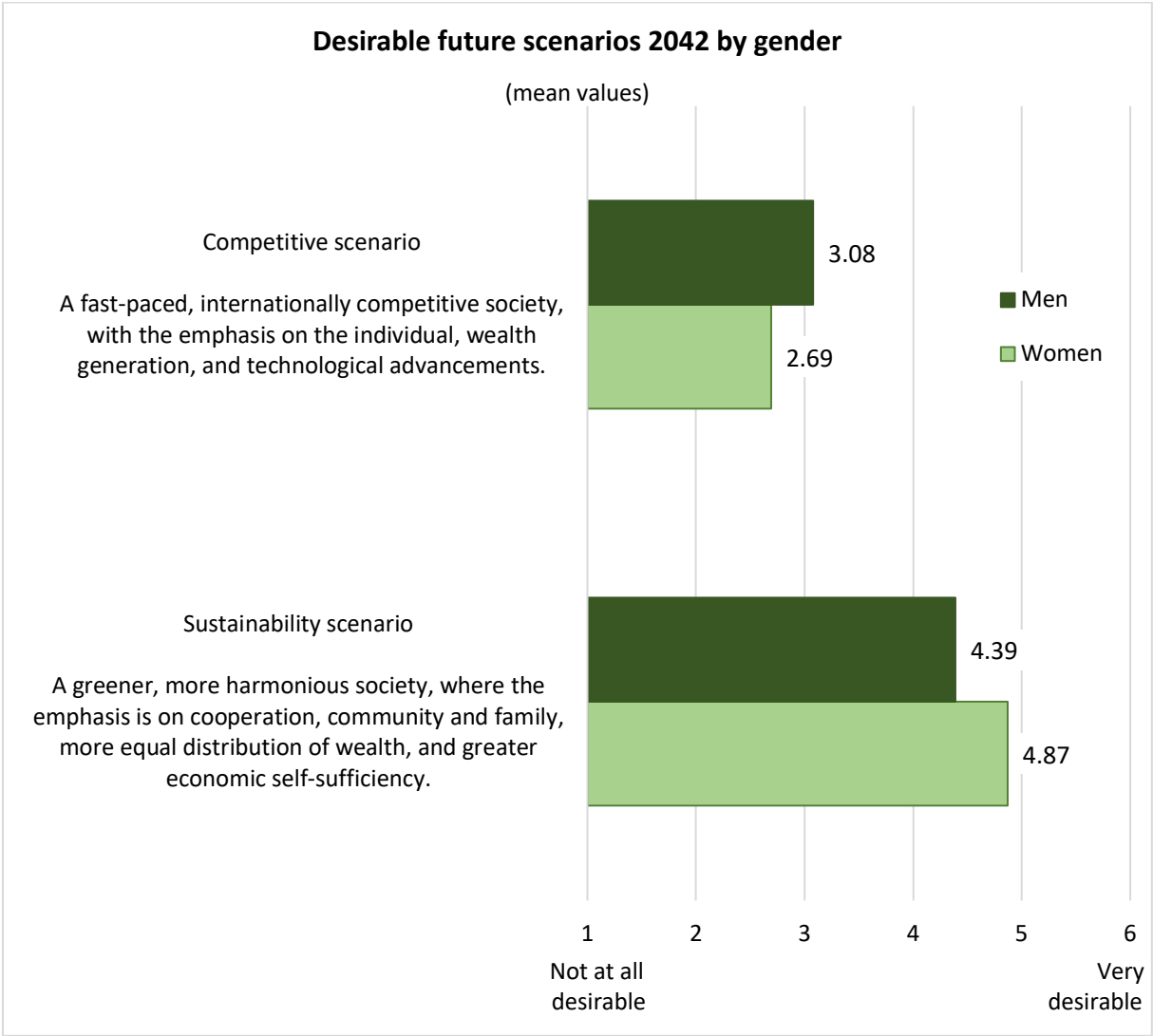


Figure 20: Desirable future scenarios for the world in 2042 by gender

Significant differences are also evident between age groups (Fig. 21). The results are particularly striking for the older generation. The difference between the **Competitive** scenario and the **Sustainability** scenario is the smallest for people over 70. Among this age group, the **Sustainability** scenario is still more desirable than the **Competitive** scenario, but the gap between both is much less pronounced. This generation has grown up with the dream of greater prosperity and progress and has contributed significantly to the realization of this dream. In contrast, people between 40 and 60 may feel the negative consequences of an individualistic and competitive environment most strongly. For both, this and the younger generation, a **Sustainable** future is particularly important, to the point of being vital.

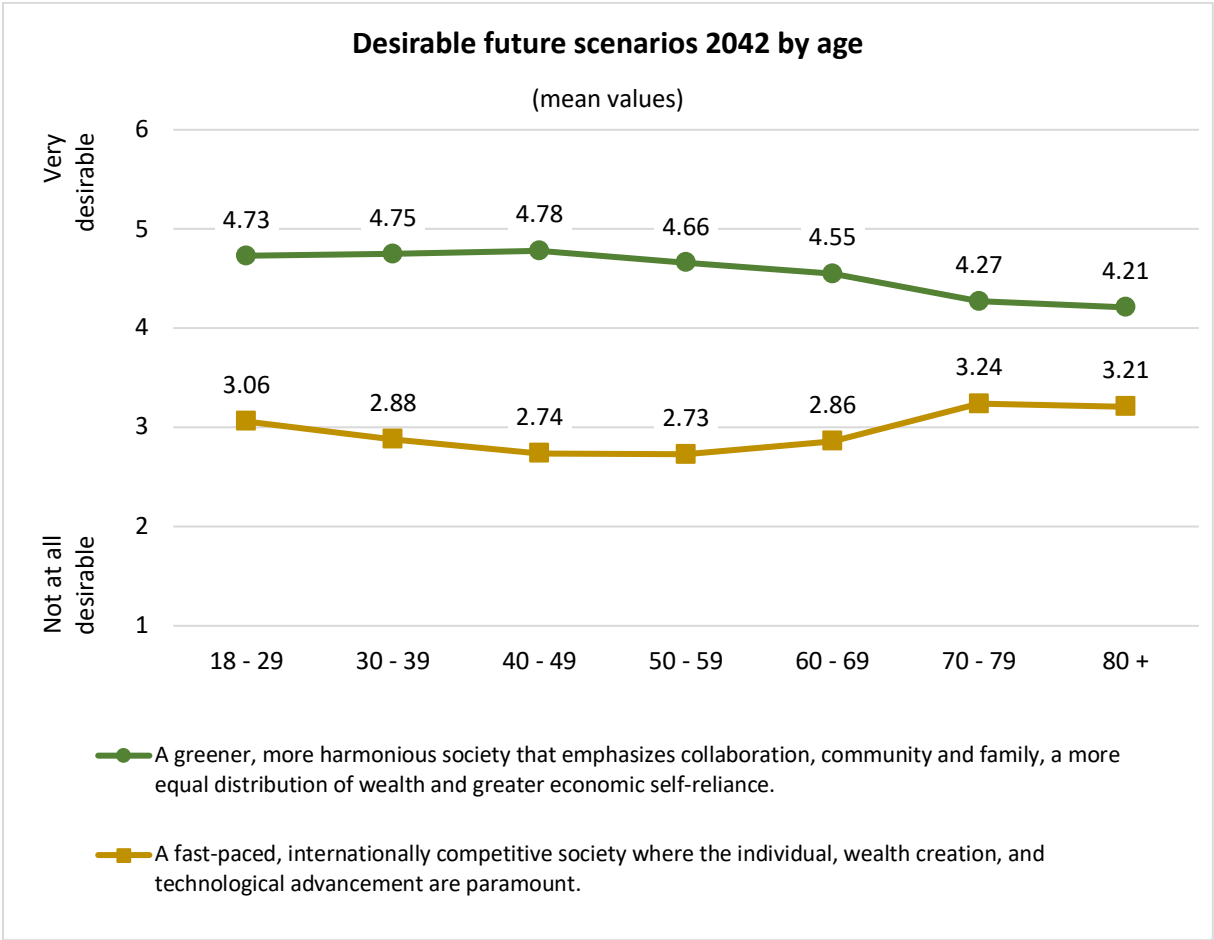


Figure 21: Desirable future scenarios for the world in 2042 by age

4 War and Peace in Europe

On February 24, 2022, at the time of the invasion of Ukraine by Russian troops, president Ignazio Cassis commented this as follows:

"Today is a sad day, the likes of which we have not seen in a long time. A day like we never wanted to see again. An armed conflict has begun on European soil. A situation that could not be prevented despite all diplomatic efforts. The current crisis does not only affect Russia and Ukraine. It affects all of Europe."

In Europe in particular, the consequences of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine and the mutual sanctions are placing an enormous burden on the region. Millions of people are fleeing their homes, and raw materials and energy sources are becoming scarcer and more expensive. As a result, inflation is on the rise. Last year, Switzerland took in more than 70,000 people from Ukraine, pushing its capacities to the limit. The impact of the war on regional energy and raw material supplies shows the great dependence on countries like Russia and China. Finally, the Ukraine war ushered in a new era of political and military uncertainty.

In November 2022, we wanted to find out how affected the population in Switzerland feels by the war in Ukraine and what their attitudes are toward war and peace in general. For this purpose, a short version of the questionnaire on "Attitudes toward peace and war" by Bizumic et al. (2013) was used (Van der Linden et al. 2017). In addition, general situations in which people in Switzerland would support the use of their own armed forces were surveyed (McAlister 2001).

4.1 Experiences with the war

The extent to which the population in Switzerland feels affected and threatened by the war in Ukraine is shown by the results in Fig. 22. On a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high), people in Switzerland feel moderately affected ($M=3.03$) and personally threatened ($M=2.76$). In comparison, people in more eastern countries such as the Czech Republic and Poland feel much more affected by the war (Czech Republic $M=4.40$ and Poland $M=4.01$) and threatened (Czech Republic $M=3.43$ and Poland $M=3.53$).

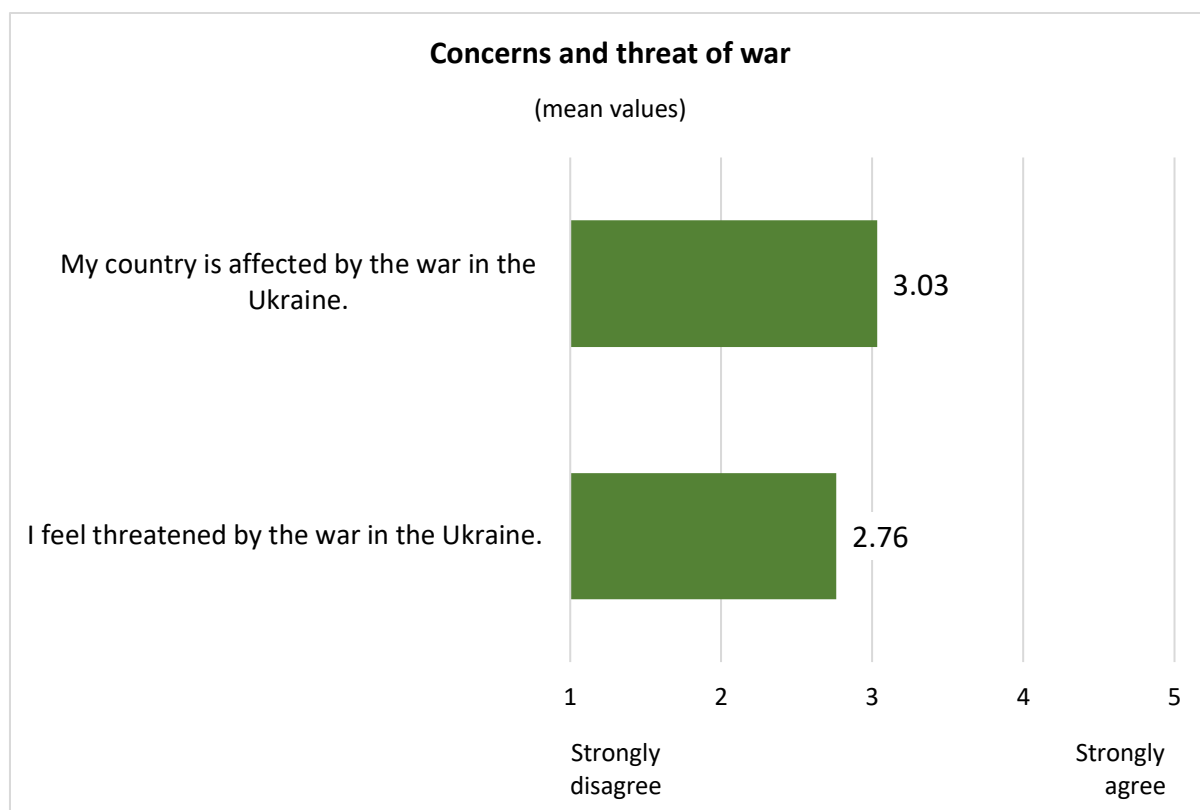


Figure 22: Concerns and threat of war I

In detail, 43.3% of the population feel that Switzerland is fairly to strongly affected by the war in Ukraine, around 22% that it is moderately affected, and around 35% that it is hardly or not at all affected. Around 32% of people feel fairly to strongly threatened by the war, a quarter moderately, and around 43% little or not at all (Fig. 23).

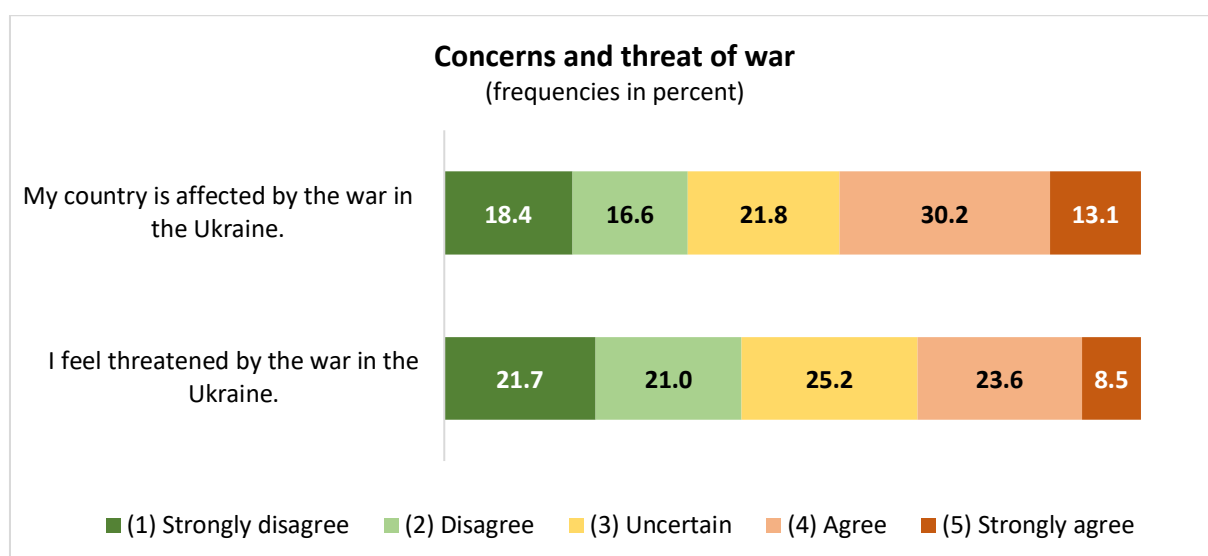


Figure 23: Affectedness and threat of war II

Compared to German- and Italian-speaking Switzerland, people in French-speaking Switzerland rate the consequences of the war in Ukraine for Switzerland significantly higher, although they feel equally personally threatened by it (Fig. 24).

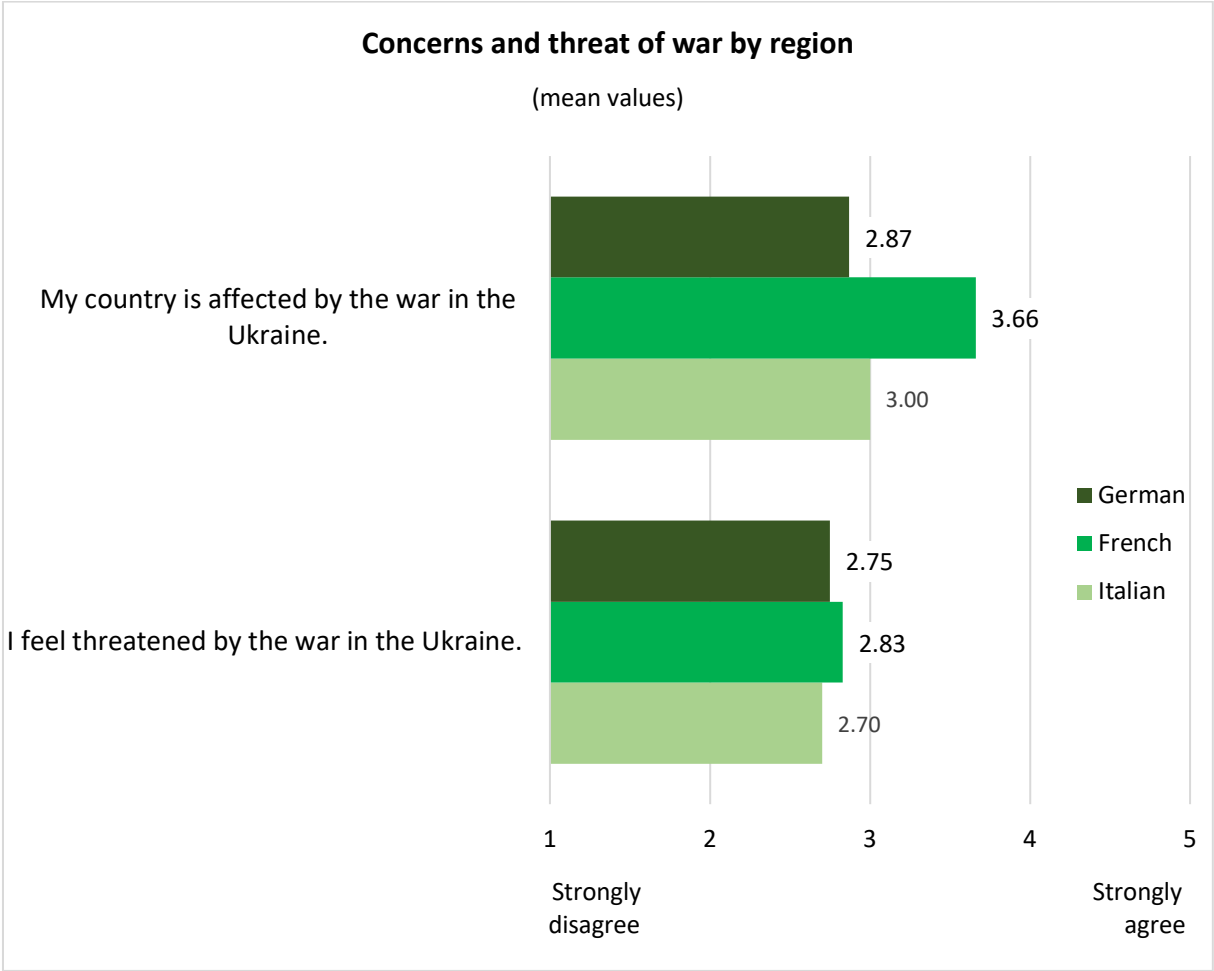


Figure 24: Concern and threat of war by language region

Interestingly, women feel a stronger threat from war than men (Fig. 25). This may be related to the fact that women are fundamentally more opposed to war (see Fig. 29 below) and feel more vulnerable to the effects of war.

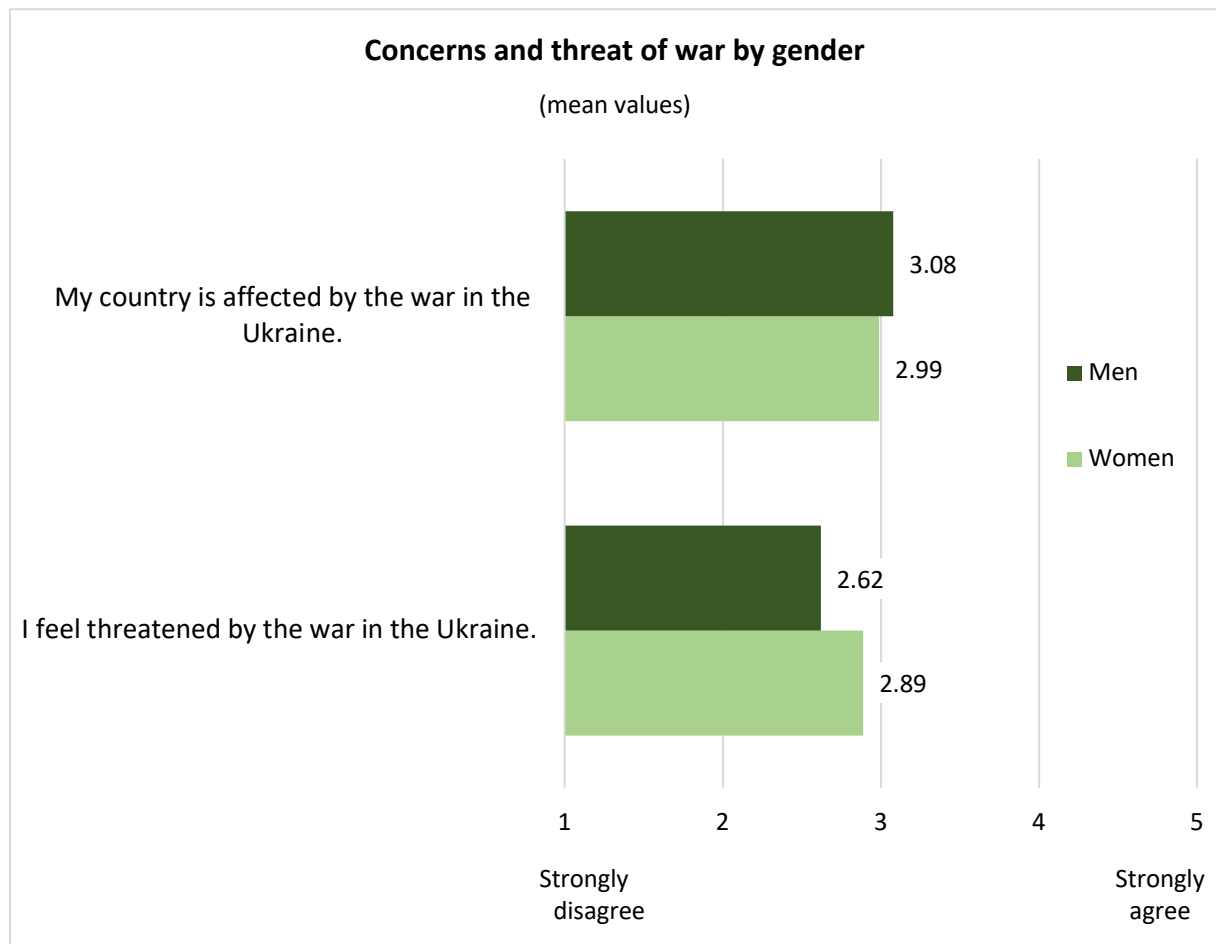


Figure 25: Concern and threat of war by gender

In terms of age, the perceived concern and threat of war are most pronounced among people aged 40 to 59. Younger people between 18 and 29 in particular feel the least affected and threatened.

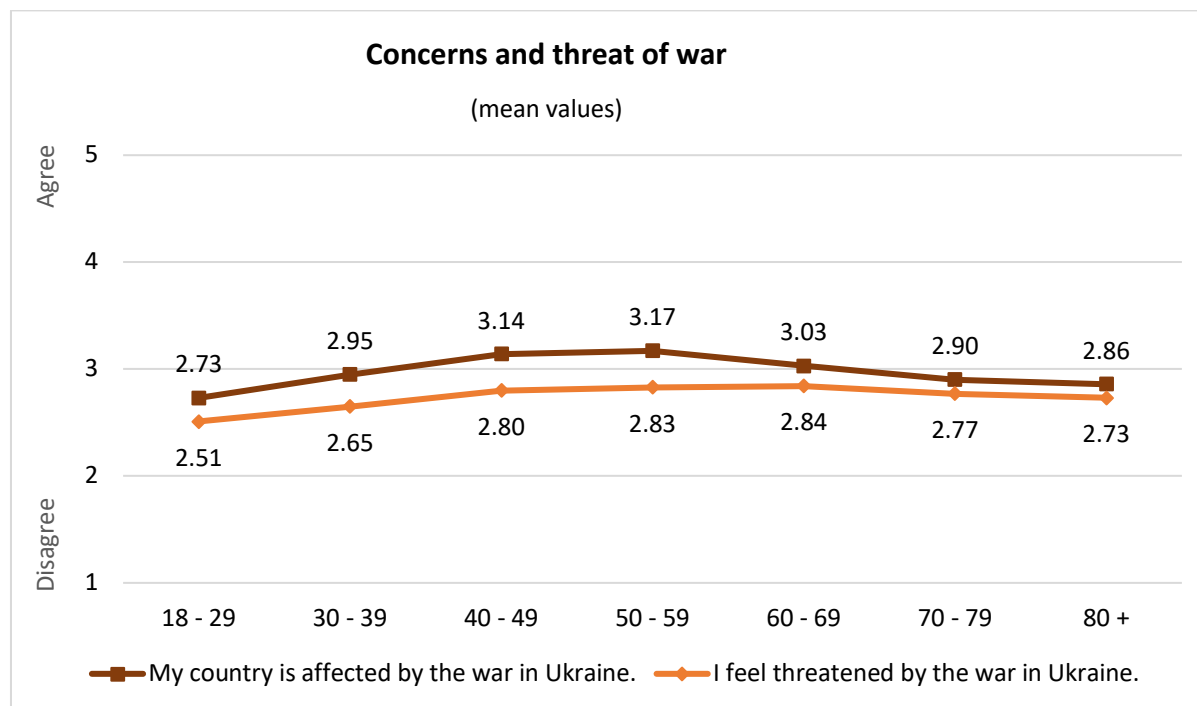


Figure 26: Affectedness and threat of war by age

4.2 Attitude towards war and peace

On June 9, 2022, Switzerland was elected as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for 2023 and 2024. On this occasion, President Cassis declared: "We want to contribute Swiss expertise for peace in the world, represent our values and, as a neutral country, contribute to solutions that are capable of compromise". In doing so, "a stable peace order for all states must be the common, long-term goal. All initiatives and measures that pursue this goal are supported by Switzerland. We are of course always ready to contribute to this within the framework of our good service." (EDA, 08/31/2022)

The attitude of the population in Switzerland toward war and peace is presented by way of example in Figs. 27 and 28. Around 70% of the respondents believe that Switzerland's first priority should be world peace and that the country should therefore devote all its energy to securing peace in the world (Fig. 27).

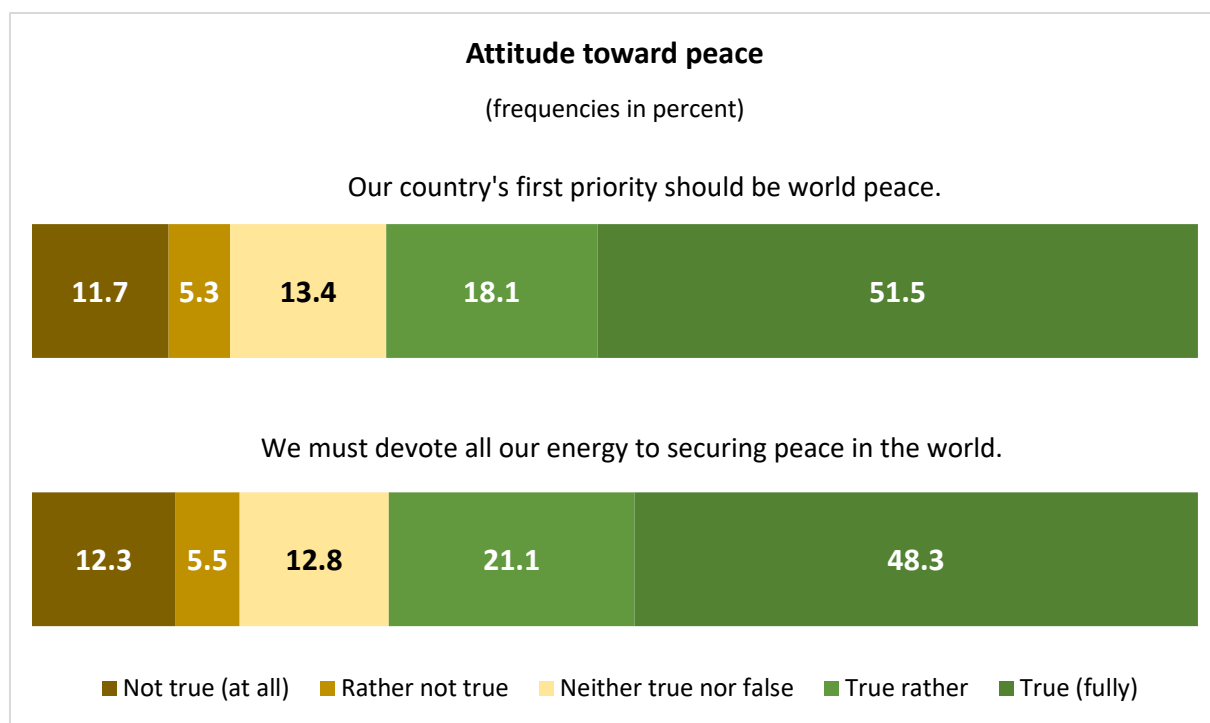


Figure 27: Attitude towards peace (selected items)

A large majority of around 78% to 89% see war as fundamentally not a means of resolving conflicts between countries (Fig. 28). At the same time, around 60% to 75% of people in Switzerland believe that there is no conceivable justification for war and that war ultimately leads to self-destruction.

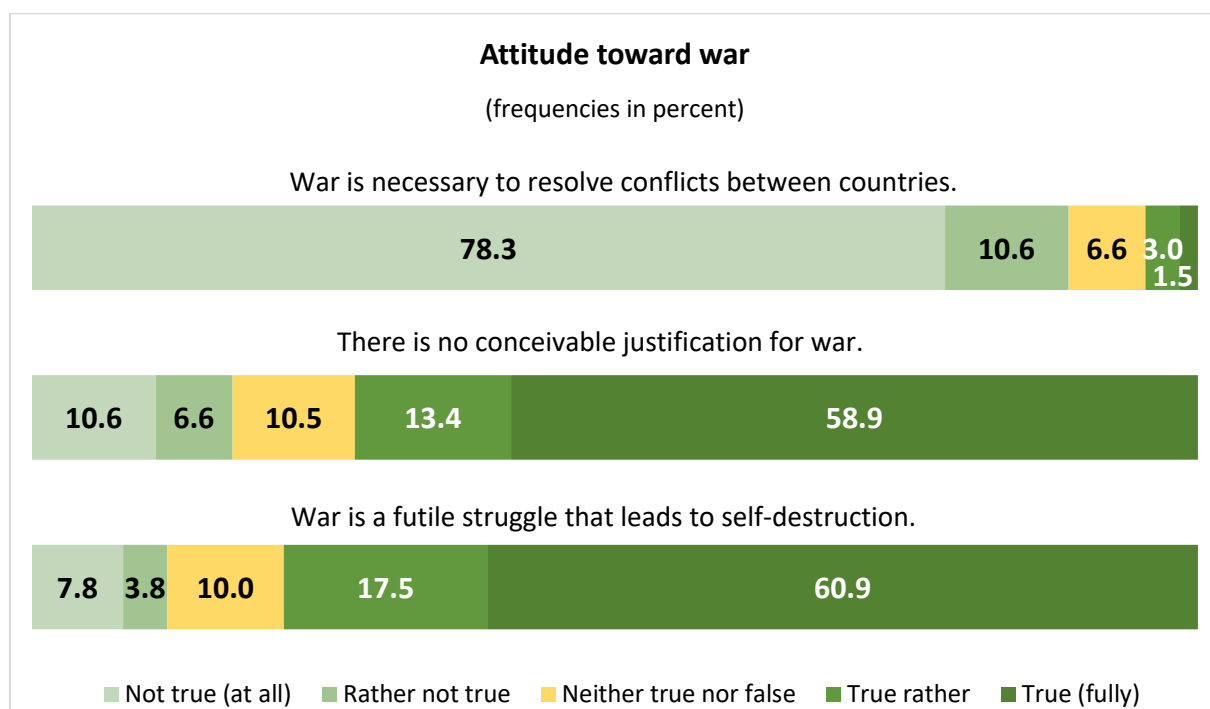


Figure 28: Attitude towards war (selected items)

In a comparison between the three language regions, hardly any differences can be seen (Fig. 29):

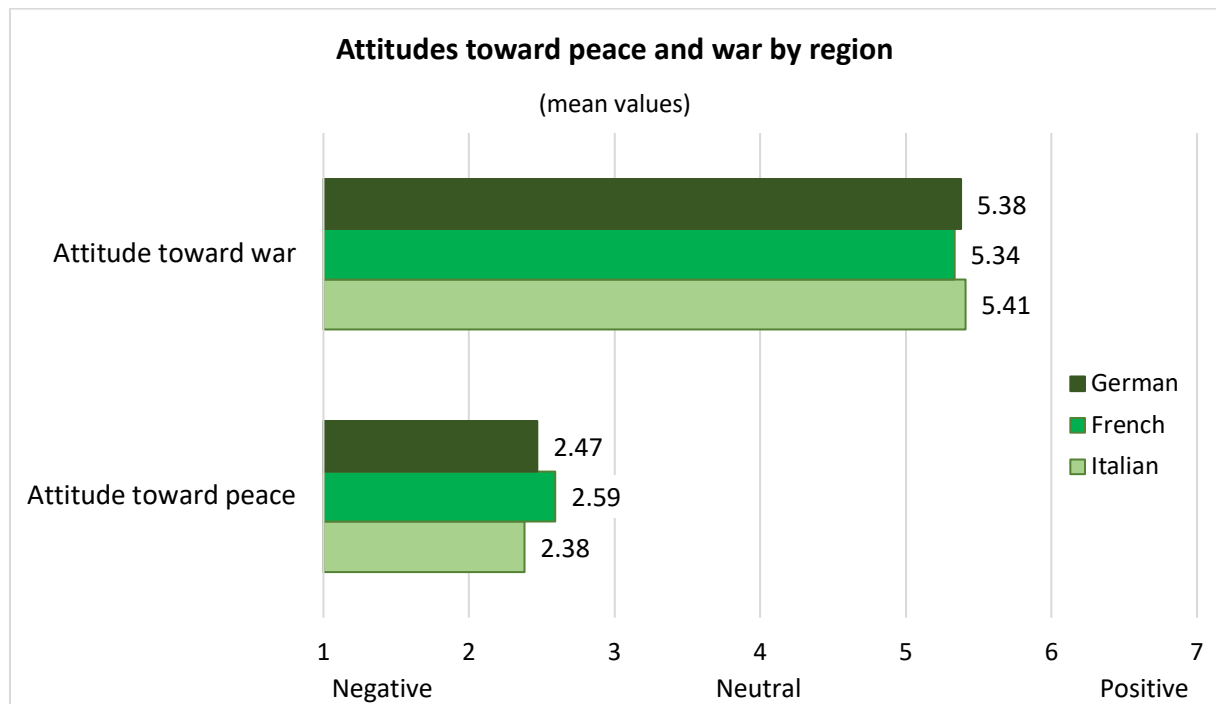


Figure 29: Attitudes toward peace and war by language region

As studies in other countries also show, women in Switzerland are more clearly in favor of peace and against war than men (Fig. 30) (see also Brooks & Valentino, 2011).

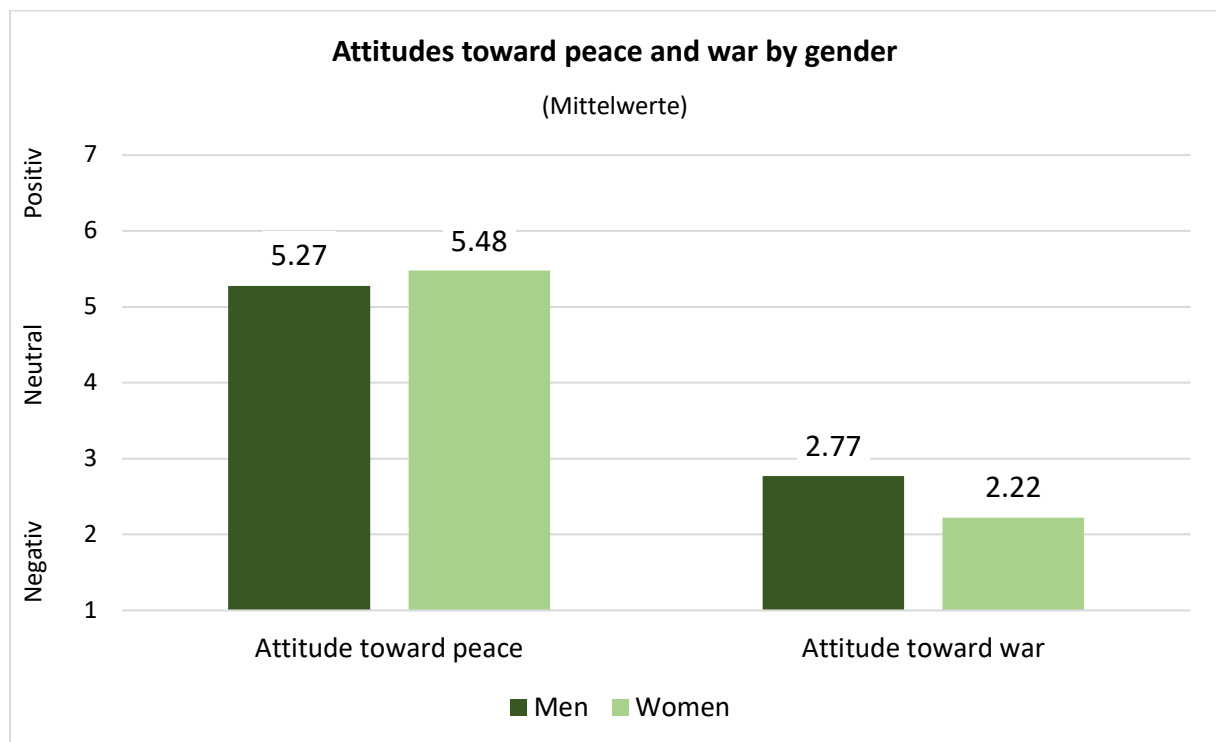


Figure 30: Attitude towards peace by gender

The rejection of war is almost comparable for all age groups (Fig. 31). Irrespective of this, the importance of peace increases with age.

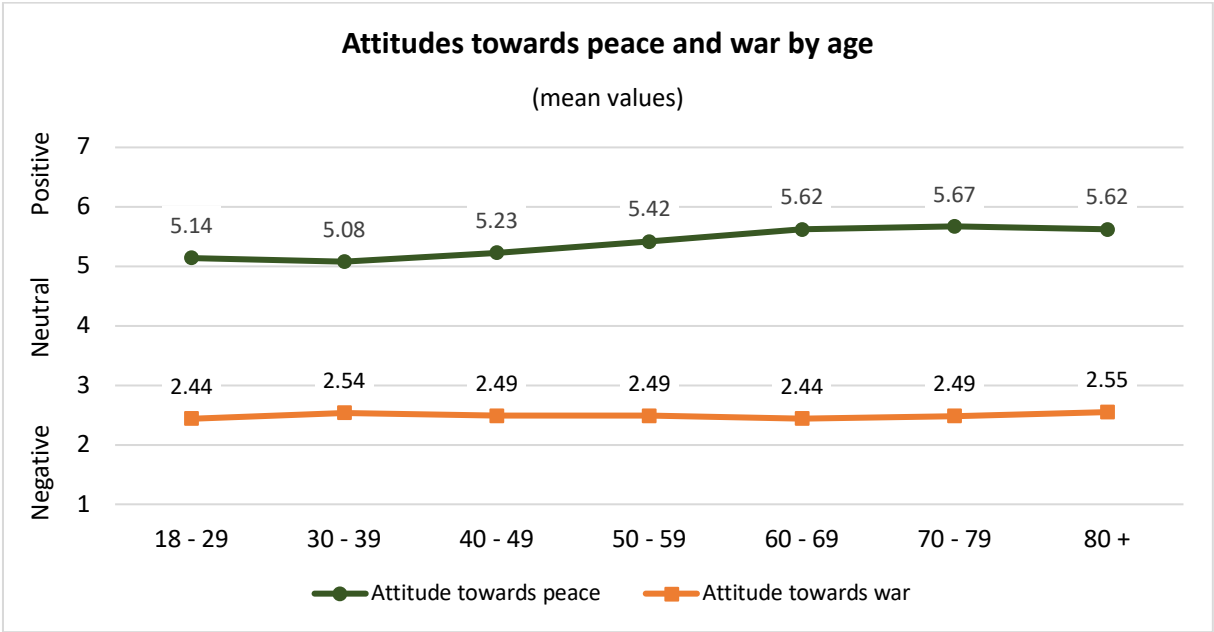


Figure 31: Attitude towards peace according to age

The agreement of the reasons for using one's own armed forces is shown in Fig. 32. The question was: "National governments may sometimes decide that certain military measures are necessary. When would you accept the use of your country's armed forces (army, navy, or air force)?" (McAlister, 2001). People would agree most to a military deployment if Switzerland were attacked by another country or if acts of terrorist violence were to be expected. For all other reasons, the approval of the population is not clear. A more in-depth analysis would go beyond the scope of this report and will be carried out in a next publication.

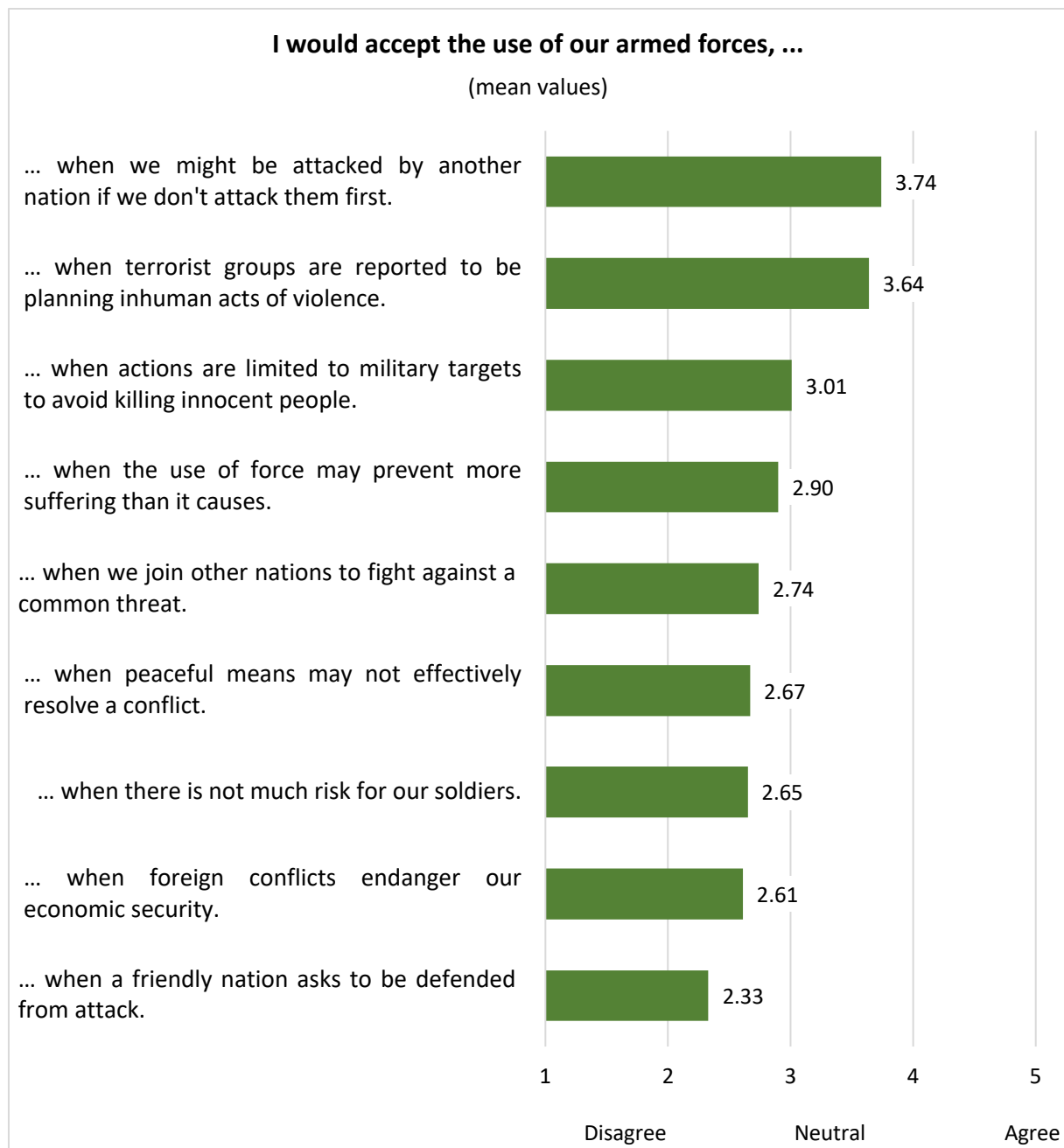


Figure 32: Reasons for accepting the intervention of armed forces

5 Hope despite crisis

In recent years, the phenomenon of hope has continuously gained presence and importance in people's everyday lives and thus also in the media as well as in the scientific community. The more people are confronted with crises such as the global pandemic, war and the consequences of environmental disasters, the more important hope for a better future becomes for them.

The difference between hope and optimism is generally little known but of central importance especially in relation to current crises and future challenges. While an optimistic attitude basically assumes that everything will be all right, hope assumes that the fulfillment of a desirable future is possible but by no means certain. For people to be able to hope at all in the face of existing and future problems and difficulties, they need above all to believe that a good outcome, while not necessarily probable, is nevertheless possible.

In order for us not to give up faith in the realizability of our wishes and to hold on to our ideals and goals despite disappointments, setbacks and defeats and to continue to hope, we need confidence in ourselves as well as in the helpfulness and support of other people.

In the broadest sense, hope is based on the belief in a better future, which is difficult to achieve but not impossible. It also requires confidence in the abilities, resources, and mutual support to accomplish what is desired. Even if we do not yet possess these abilities, we can continue to believe and trust that we can succeed in realizing our desires in the future.

In addition to individual hope, there is also collective hope. Collective hope consists of a shared desire for a better future not only for oneself but for all humanity, a belief that a better future for all is possible but not necessarily guaranteed or even probable, and confidence in the human capacity to create a better world through collective action despite current adversities and challenges (Krafft, 2022).

5.1 Perceived hope

The extent of general hope in the population has been measured for several years with six questions (Krafft et al., 2017). Particularly relevant is the degree of hope one is able to maintain, especially in difficult situations, as well as the intensity of hope compared to feelings of anxiety and worry. The questions can be rated on a 6-point scale from 0 (low) to 5 (high).

How existentially important and stable hope is in our lives is shown by the results of the last 5 years in comparison. Despite the current crises, the feeling of hope remained almost constant at a moderate level (Fig. 33).

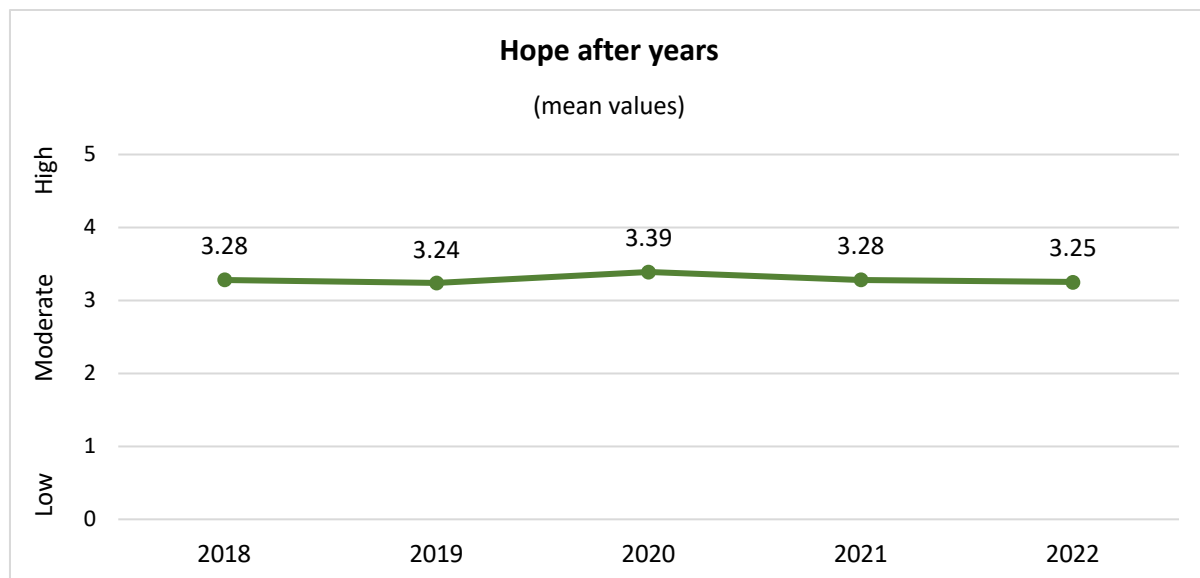


Figure 33: Hope in Switzerland by year 2018-2022

Fig. 34 presents the results by language region. Here, too, the relative constancy of hope in the population is evident. Only in the French-speaking part of Switzerland does the trend over the last two years show a slight decline. The extent to which this may represent a worrying trend will have to be observed in the coming years.

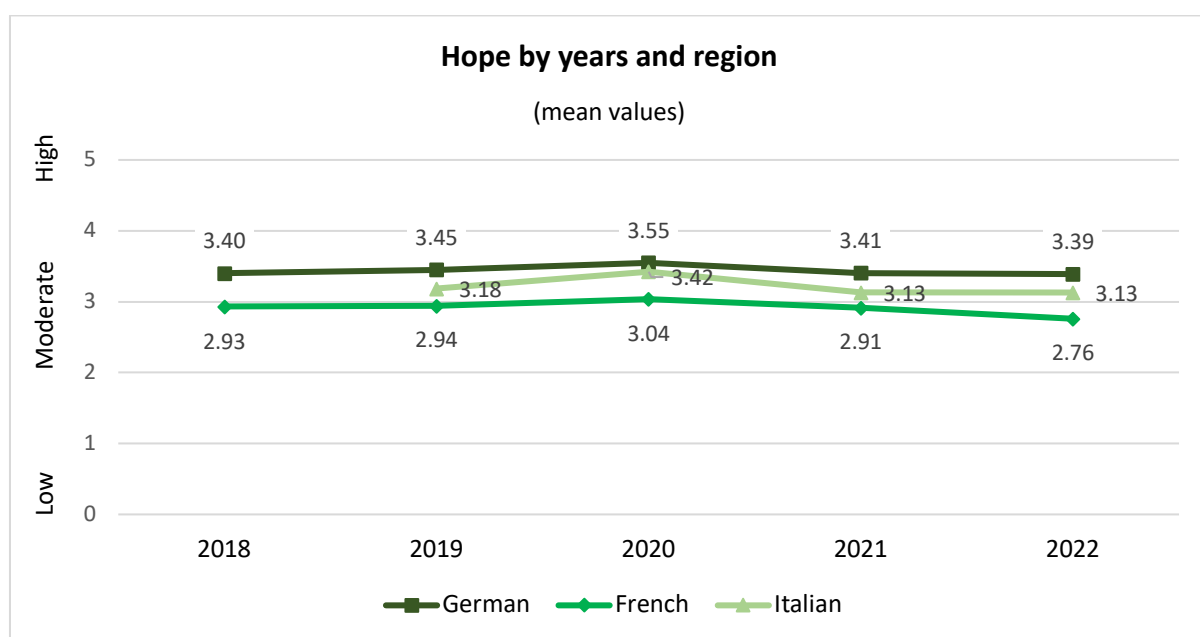


Figure 34: Hope by language region and year 2018-2022

In order to better understand the significance of the previous mean values and thus also the meaning of hope, Figure 35 shows the responses to the two statements "I can remain hopeful even in difficult times" and "In my life, hopes rather outweigh fears". Just half of the respondents can remain hopeful even in difficult times (answers "fairly true" and "completely true"). For another 26.5% of respondents, this is also rather the case. In addition, for about 55% of people, hopes clearly outweigh fears in their

lives, and another 20% also slightly agree. However, about a quarter of the population rather disagree or disagree at all with these two statements.

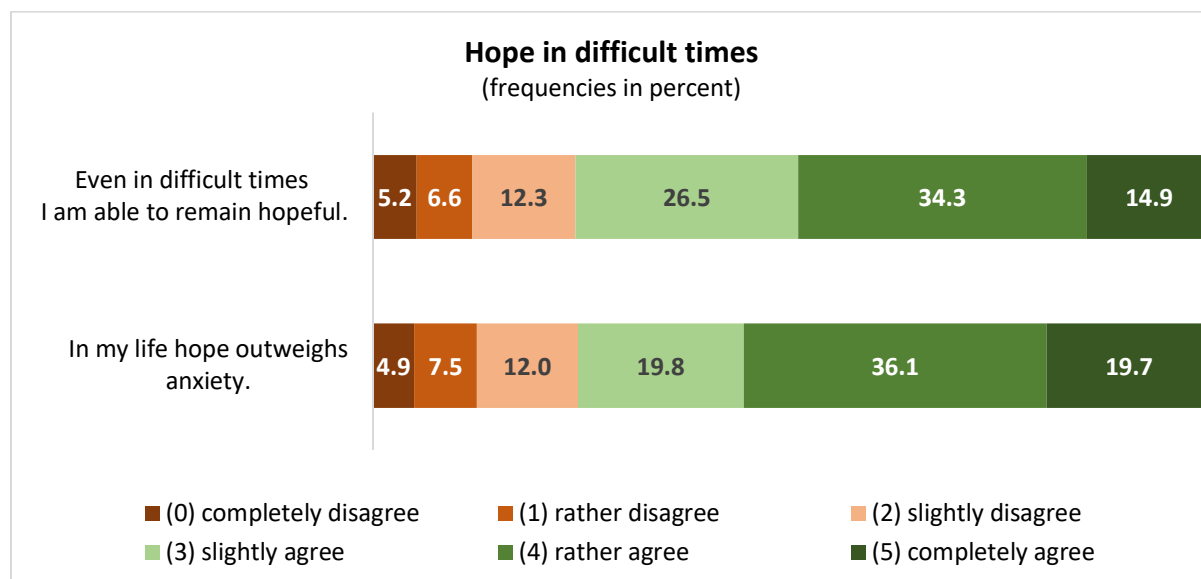


Figure 35: Hope in difficult times

As in previous years, there are no significant differences between the hopefulness of men ($M=3.26$) and women ($M=3.24$). However, men and women differ in the sources from which they draw hope in everyday life (see Fig. 40 below).

Also as in previous years, hope raises with age (Fig. 36). Due to their life experiences, social relationships, personal skills and resources, people can remain more hopeful with increasing age, especially in critical situations.

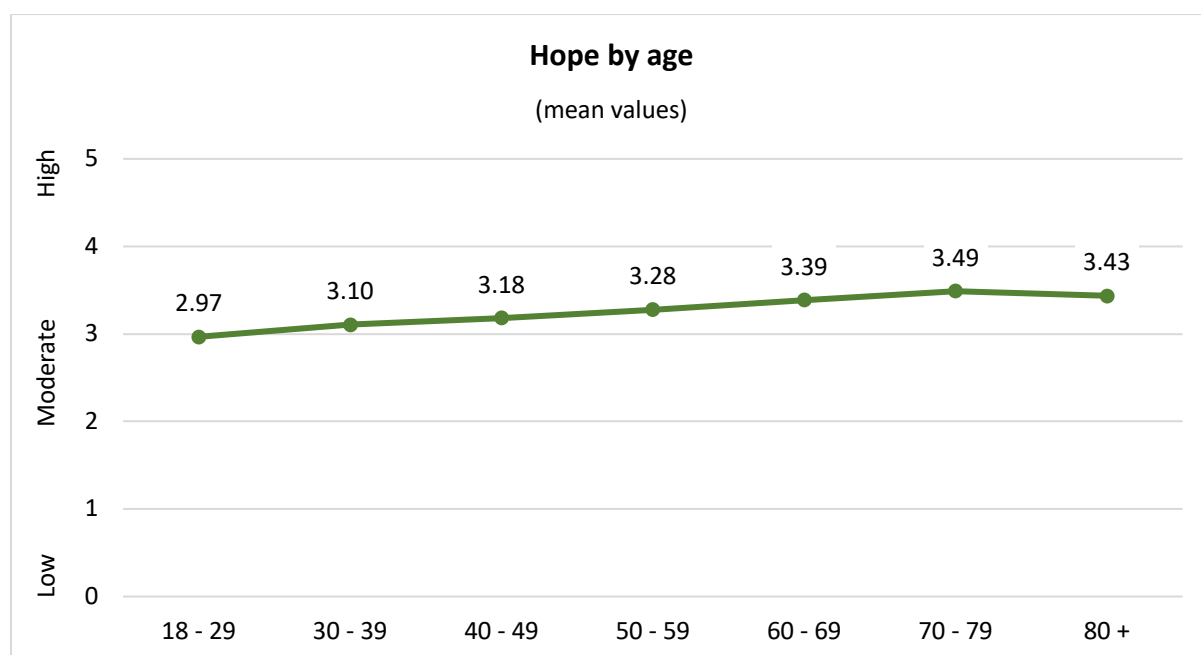


Figure 36: Hope by age

5.2 Personal hopes

As in previous years, we asked people about their personal wishes and hopes for 2023. Personal hopes refer to areas of life that are particularly important to the person and are assessed as possible and achievable, regardless of the subjective probability of their realization.

The 17 domains of life presented to respondents for evaluation in the Hope Barometer relate to the following six categories, which could be rated on a scale from 0 = "not important" to 3 = "very important."

1. Personal well-being (e.g. personal health, harmony)
2. Social relationships (e.g., happy marriage, family, partnership, good relationships with other people).
3. Success and material goods (e.g. more money, success, achievement and career)
4. Lust and pleasure (e.g., more sex, romantic experiences, leisure time).
5. Safety (e.g. in the personal environment or at the workplace)
6. Altruism (e.g. being able to help other people)

The values of recent years are remarkably constant not only in terms of the level of hope, but also in terms of the areas of life to which people direct their hopes. The most important hopes of the population still include good health, a happy marriage, family or partnership, and harmony in life, followed by personal independence and self-determination, good and trusting relationships with other people, and a meaningful task (Fig. 37). These are areas known in psychology to enable a fulfilled life. In contrast, other desires such as more money, success and career as well as more sex and romantic experiences are of secondary importance.

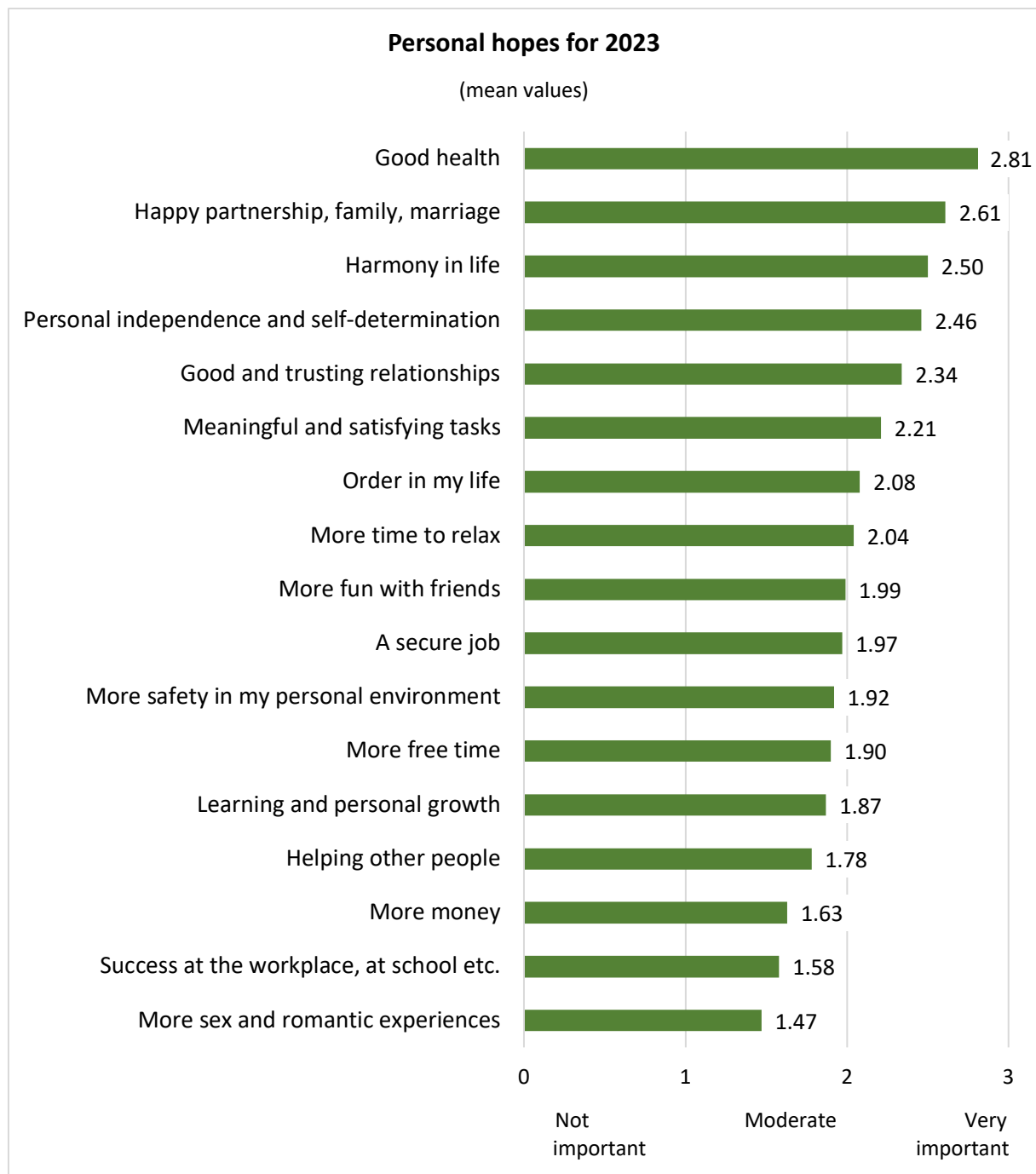


Figure 37: Personal hopes for 2023

Similarities and differences between the three language regions can be observed in Fig. 38. In all three language regions, health, family and harmony in life are of greatest importance to most people. While a meaningful task and personal independence appear to be more important for people in German-speaking Switzerland than for people in French- and Italian-speaking Switzerland, more money, career and a secure job are more important for people in Italian-speaking Switzerland than for people in the other two language regions. At the same time, compared to the rest of Switzerland, respondents in Italian-speaking Switzerland want more free time, whether to relax or to be able to help other people. Learning and personal growth are also somewhat more pronounced in Italian-speaking Switzerland. In contrast, the desire for more fun with friends is more important among people in French-speaking Switzerland than in the German and Italian regions.

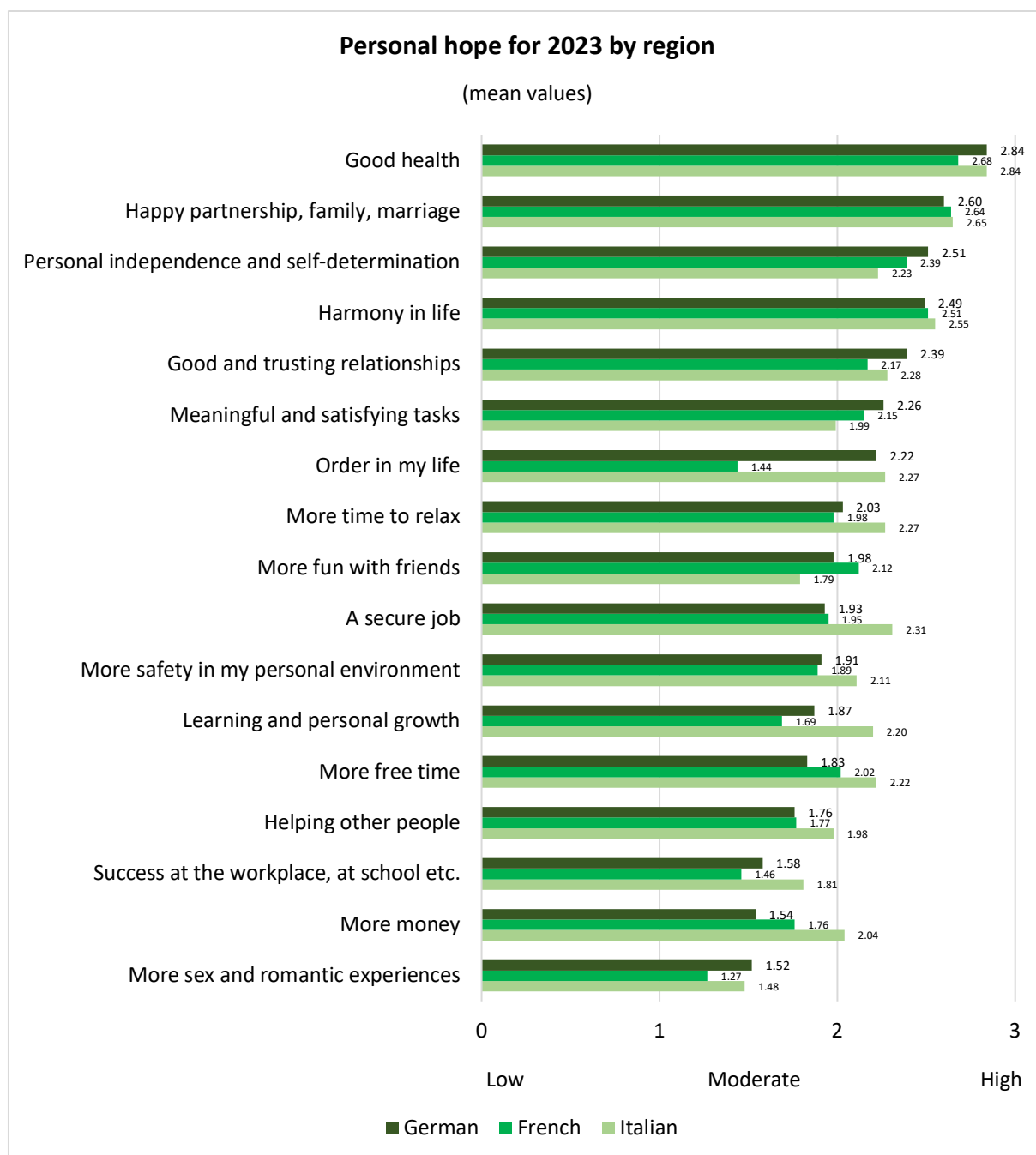


Figure 38: Personal hopes for 2023 by language region

5.3 Sources of hope

Against the backdrop of global threats on the one hand and personal hopes on the other, the question arises as to which sources and experiences strengthen people's hope in everyday life. Sources of hope generally include personal abilities, social relationships, positive experiences, and religious or spiritual faith (Krafft, 2019).

Figure 39 shows the rating of 17 sources of hope on a scale of 0 (low) and 3 (high). In first place are the connection to nature (especially in German-speaking Switzerland) and the support of family and friends (No. 1 in French and Italian-speaking Switzerland). Here, the importance of the natural

environment as well as good social relationships for a hopeful attitude toward life are pointedly expressed.

After nature and social relationships, a sense of self-efficacy or self-confidence (e.g., through problem-solving skills) is a significant source of hope both in terms of professional and academic success and in doing good for a meaningful purpose.

Political involvement, religious experiences, making money and technological progress are rated as less relevant for strengthening one's own hope.

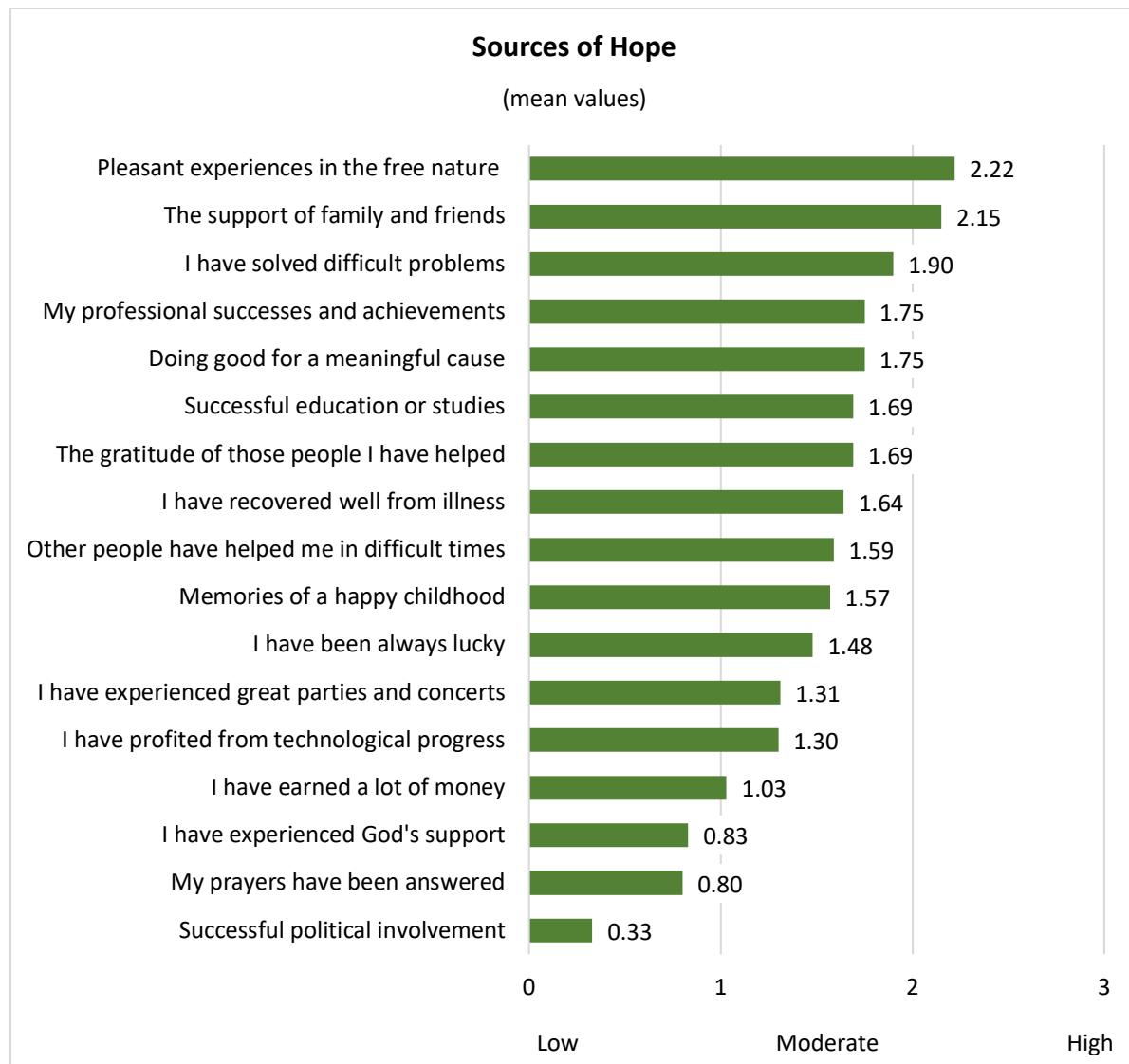


Figure 39: Sources of hope

Similarities and differences between the language regions are shown in Fig. 40. The power of nature is particularly significant for people in German-speaking Switzerland. In Italian-speaking Switzerland, professional success and technological progress are less relevant than in the other two language regions. In contrast, money is a stronger source of hope for people in French-speaking Switzerland than for people in the rest of Switzerland.

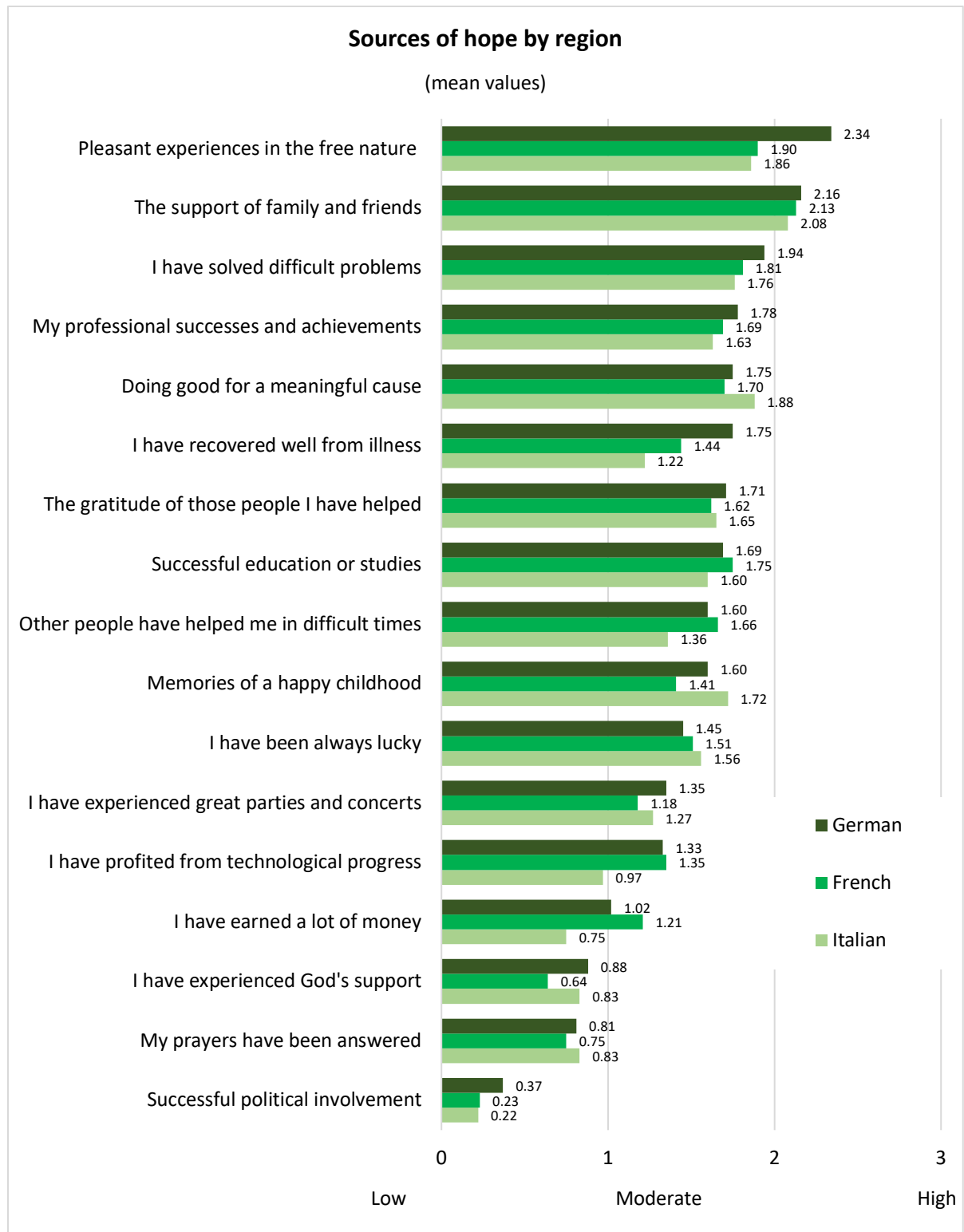


Figure 40: Sources of hope by language region

There are also clear similarities and differences between the genders (Fig. 41). For example, professional success, technological progress and money are significantly more important for men than for women. In contrast, nature as well as all aspects related to social relationships (family, friendships, helpfulness, doing good, etc.) and also religious faith are more relevant for women than for men.

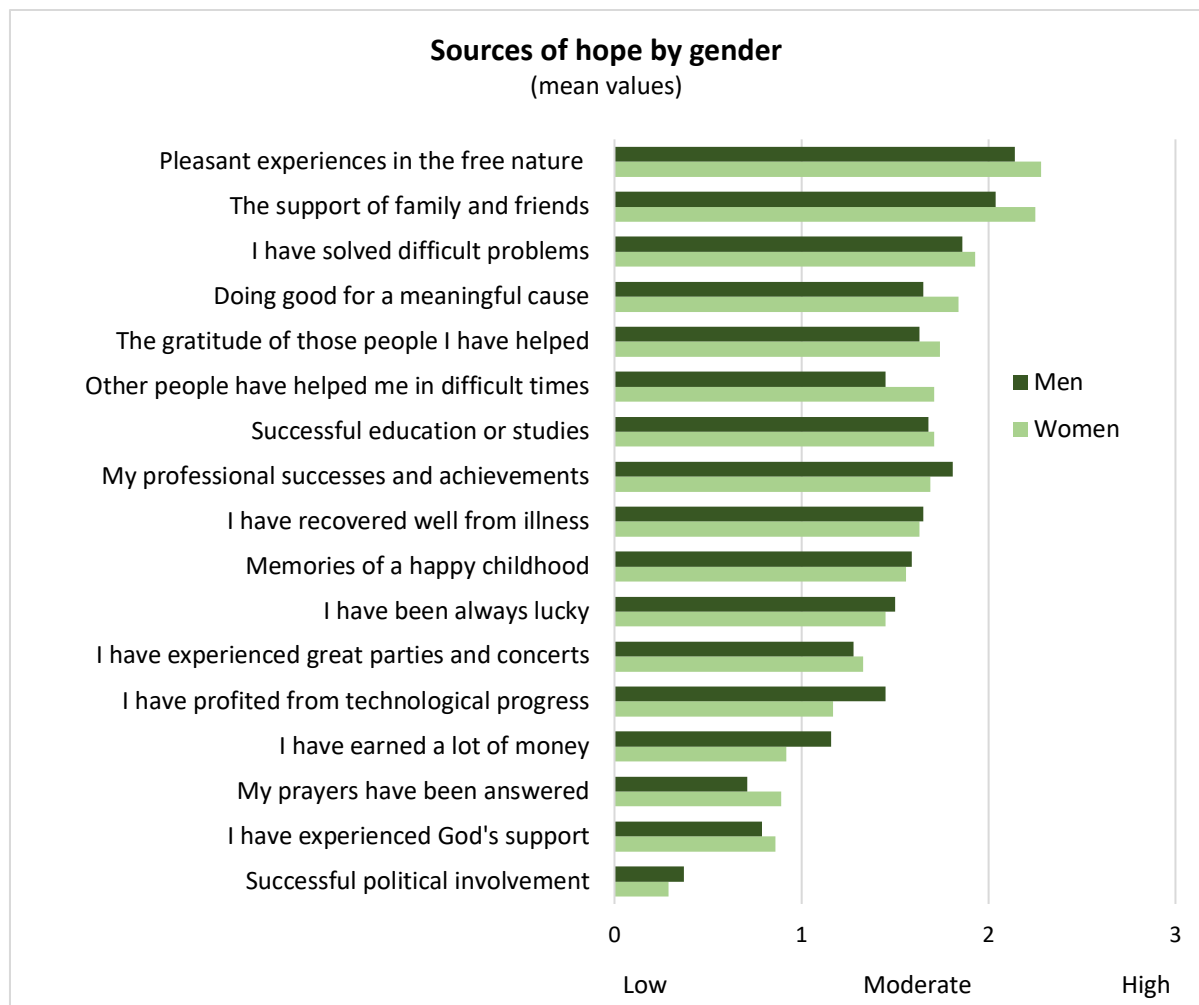


Figure 41: Sources of hope by gender

Even though relatively few people believe in a Higher Power that hears their prayers and grants their wishes, people with stronger religiosity (scores above 2.5 on a scale of 1 to 4; n=952 (15.2%)) report significantly more hope in life (Fig. 42).

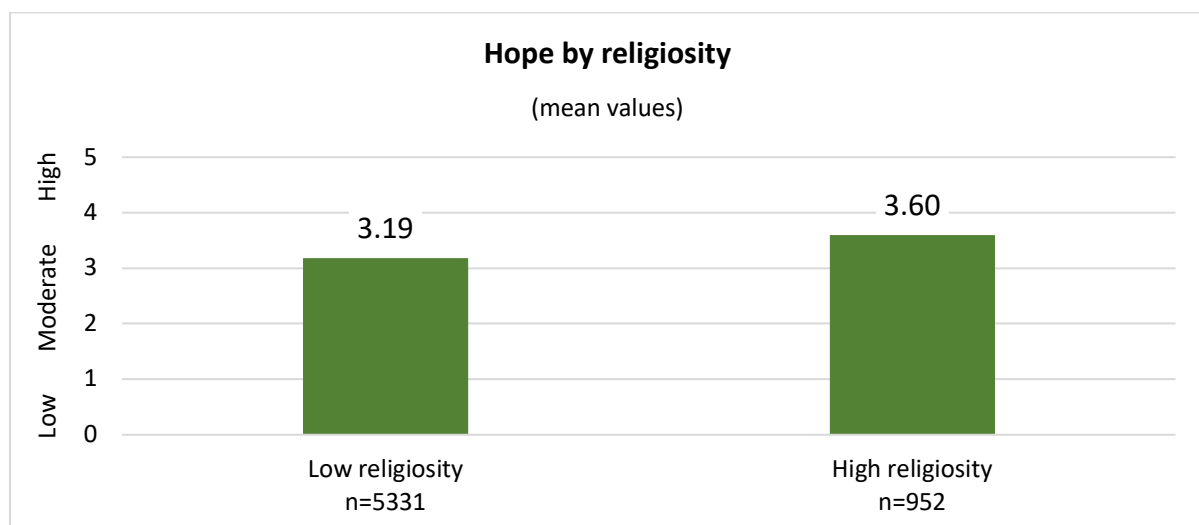


Figure 42: Hope by religiosity

6 Conclusion and findings

The phenomenon of hope is as diverse as life itself. Individuals direct their hopes toward different things. With the annual Hope Barometer survey, we have been investigating for 14 years people's various expectations for the future and hopes, as well as the sources people refer to in order to remain hopeful, especially in difficult situations. On an individual level, the most important hopes are predominantly directed toward good health, a happy marriage, family or partnership, trusting relationships with other people, harmony in life, and a meaningful task. These desires are much more important to most people than more money, career and romantic relationships or sex.

The most important sources of hope include, first and foremost, a connection to nature and the support of family and friends, followed by the experience of having solved difficult problems and done something good for a meaningful purpose. These annually recurring findings show how important nature, loving relationships, and mutual care, in addition to one's own self-efficacy, are to hope. Some people also draw hope from their spiritual or religious beliefs.

In addition to individual hopes, there are also collective hopes, i.e., hopes that are heeded by society as a whole at certain times. Collective hopes consist of a shared desire for a better future not only for oneself but for all humanity, a belief that a better future for all is possible but not necessarily guaranteed or even probable, and a trust in the human capacity to create a better world through collective action despite current adversities and challenges.

However, current social, economic, political and ecological developments pose major challenges for us. In Switzerland, most people believe that the general quality of life will be worse in the future (in 20 years' time) than it is today. People are particularly critical of the deterioration in mental health, the widening gap between rich and poor, increased crime and violence, and progressive environmental degradation. For a majority of the population, it is rather to quite unlikely that the current path of economic and technological development will enable a new era of sustainability, peace and prosperity. In contrast, a majority of people expect that environmental destruction, new diseases, and ethnic and regional conflicts will plunge the world into a difficult period of crises and problems.

People will be able to hope for a better life if they can develop images of a desirable future and believe that these are not merely wishful thinking but can be achieved. Without this, neither the individual nor humanity as a whole would undertake the meaningful goals and tasks that are worth working for. An overwhelming majority of the population would like to see a greener and more harmonious society, with an emphasis on cooperation, community and family, a more equal distribution of wealth, and greater economic self-reliance. Given the gloomy forecasts, however, the question is whether this picture is merely wishful thinking or whether we can believe in the possibility - though not the likelihood - of such a future and want to work for it accordingly.

Collective hope through the centuries

When we think about the great longings, wishes and hopes of people and their fulfillment, it is worth taking a look at history: Mankind has repeatedly faced great challenges and transformations that required a great deal of patience and perseverance. The events of the last 300-400 years show us how slow, turbulent but also unstoppable the great developments are. Each century seems to be characterized by certain overarching hopes. Of course, different developments take place in different regions of the world and the great hopes are accompanied or even overlaid by many individual hopes. Nevertheless, certain patterns of changing zeitgeist and positive development can be discerned in the course of the last centuries - at least in the Western countries of the North.

What can we learn from the hopes of the past? The 18th century was characterized by the great hope for freedom. People wanted to be free from the oppressive social conditions of an absolutist church and despotic nobility of the Middle Ages. Characteristic of this time were the humanistic developments at the universities (e.g. by Immanuel Kant) as well as the French Revolution and the American Declaration of Independence. By the 19th century, many people had achieved freedom but were suffering from hunger and disease. In this century, the great hope of society was directed towards material prosperity. It is the century of industrialization, mercantilism and the construction of urban infrastructures. Unprecedented prosperity became possible as a result. However, undesirable developments at that time plunged the economy and society into a deep crisis. For the 20th century, the hope for justice and equality was now on the agenda. The two world wars and the Russian and Chinese revolutions were a consequence of this. Finally, however, this was the century of the social market economy, human rights, the women's movement, racial equality, the United Nations and the like. Many things could be achieved and the world - not only the western world - gained more democracy and equality. In the course of time, the great hopes of mankind could not be completely fulfilled, but could be fulfilled step by step: More freedom, prosperity and justice.

The hopes of the 21st century

Now the question arises as to what the great hopes of the 21st century are. Freedom, prosperity and justice remain important goals that must not be lost sight of. Indeed, the achievements of each preceding epoch provide the conditions for meeting coming challenges. The great tasks of the 21st century, for which freedom, prosperity and justice serve as prerequisites, are peace, harmony, sustainability and well-being. Now it can be rightly said that we are currently experiencing exactly the opposite in these areas: Pandemic, war and environmental disasters. Yes, that is true. But that is precisely why these hopes are so significant. We are only at the beginning of the 21st century. Let's think back again to the 20th century and compare the conditions in 1922 with those in 1992. There are worlds between the beginning and the end of the 20th century. These experiences make us believe again in the possibilities ahead of us and trust that we will also be able to fulfill the hopes of the 21st century step by step. It will not be easy and the probability of failure is great. But if we give up hope for a sustainable world in harmony and peace, failure would not be likely, but certain. But as long as we hold our hope high, we will do something about it and make the fulfillment of our most ardent wishes seem possible again.

7 Key figures on the structure of the study

Method:	Online survey
Instrument:	Electronic questionnaire
Population:	Web- and e-mail-active persons of all age groups from Switzerland
Scope:	A total of 135 closed-ended and 9 socio-demographic questions
Sample size:	6,283 questionnaires evaluated in German, French and Italian (complete, correct and adult participants)
Representativeness:	Broad-based survey through collaboration with 20 Minuten as media partner in German-, French- and Italian-speaking Switzerland, as well as presence on various social media platforms
Survey period:	Nov. 13, until Dec. 05, 2022
Management:	Dr. oec. HSG Andreas M. Krafft
Citation:	Use permitted with citation of source

The following tables show the demographic distribution of respondents.

Language region	Quantity	%
German	4500	71.6
French	1195	19.0
Italian	588	9.4

Gender	Quantity	%
Male	2892	46.0
Female	3331	53.0
Other	60	1.0

Age	Quantity	%
18-29	580	9.2
30-39	956	15.2
40-49	1185	18.9
50-59	1570	25.0
60-69	1349	21.5
70-79	548	8.7
80+	95	1.5

Training	Quantity	%
No completed school education	41	0.7
Compulsory school / elementary school completed	180	2.9
Technical (secondary) school without Bacc.	328	5.2
High School with Baccalaureate	1005	16.0
Vocational training	1788	28.5
Higher vocational education with diploma	1820	29.0
University / (technical) college	1121	17.8

Marital status	Quantity	%
Still living with parents	164	2.6
Single	925	14.7
In a partnership but living separately	434	6.9
Living together in a partnership	1194	19.0
Married	2739	43.6
Divorced / separated	651	10.4
Widowed	176	2.8

Main occupation	Quantity	%
In training	154	2.5
Family, housework, raising children	227	3.6
Part-time employment	1376	21.9
Full-time employment	2824	44.9
Unemployed	212	3.4
Pension (old age or IV)	1490	23.7

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