

50th Anniversary edition

# UBS Worry Barometer 2026

## Spotlight on health, housing and the environment: Switzerland is ready for reform

For UBS marketing purposes

gfs.bern

UBS



**Sabine Keller-Busse**
President Personal & Corporate Banking and President UBS Switzerland, UBS Group AG

# Dear reader,

For the last 50 years, the Worry Barometer has revealed the issues that matter most to the people of Switzerland. Since its first edition in 1976, it has evolved into a unique survey highlighting social and economic developments over five decades. While unemployment dominated the list of concerns 50 years ago, healthcare costs and health insurance premiums now top the list.

Higher housing costs and rising rents have moved up to second place compared with last year. Environmental and climate issues remain among the population's main concerns.

This year's study also shows that stability, security and social cohesion remain important points of reference. At the same time, many people in Switzerland want to play an active role in shaping the future. They consider creativity, critical thinking, financial literacy, social skills and the responsible use of new technologies to be particularly important. Switzerland's education system, including vocational education and training, provides an important foundation for developing these skills.

These findings are also highly relevant to our day-to-day work. As a universal bank, we support our clients at different stages of their lives, helping them with their financial decisions and plans. Understanding what matters to them is key.

I hope you enjoy this informative issue of the UBS Worry Barometer 2026.



**Sabine Keller-Busse**
**President UBS Switzerland**

**This is a marketing publication.**
**It is not subject to the statutory rules governing the independence of financial analysis.**

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Chapter 1

# Introduction

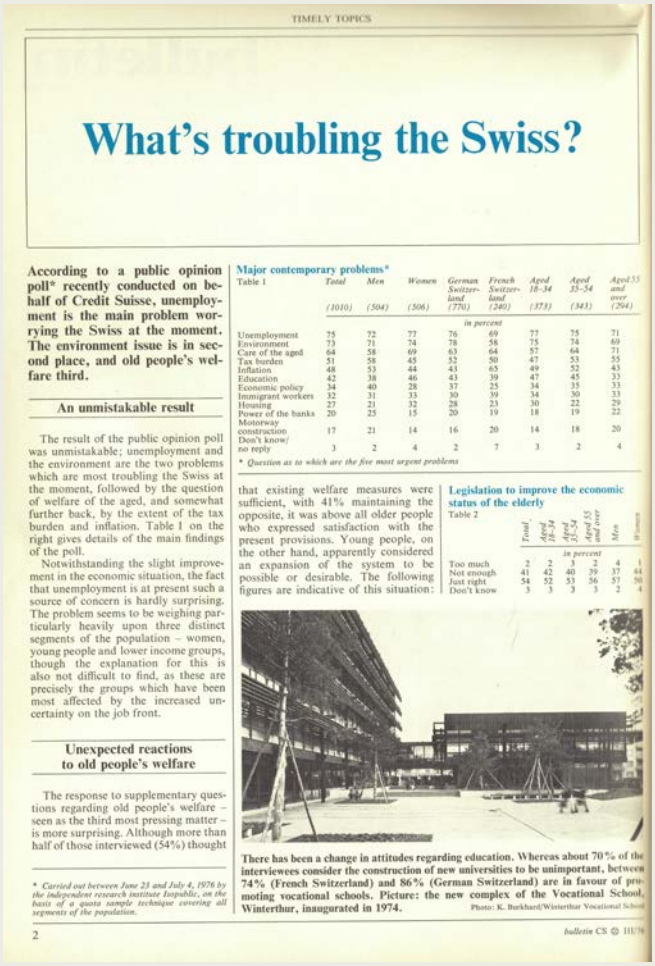
"What's troubling the Swiss?" This question appeared in the *Bulletin* of Credit Suisse in 1976, introducing the first edition of what is now the UBS Worry Barometer. At the time, unemployment topped the list of public concerns, followed by environmental problems and retirement provision. From the outset, the survey pursued an objective that continues to define the Worry Barometer today: to reveal which social, economic and political challenges the public considers particularly urgent.

50 years on, the UBS Worry Barometer is still asking the same question, but against a very different backdrop. Economically, socially and technologically, Switzerland in 2026 bears little resemblance to the country it was in 1976. Some concerns have largely faded from public attention; others have proved remarkably persistent; others still were scarcely imaginable five decades ago.

It is precisely this long time series that makes the Worry Barometer such a valuable tool for observing social change. It reveals not only what concerns people, but also how their priorities are shifting and where pressure for action is growing. In doing so, it offers valuable guidance to government, business and society. It makes public expectations visible, places change in context and provides a sound basis for debate and decision-making. This role is especially important in Switzerland's direct democracy, where public sentiment can directly shape political developments.

To mark its 50th anniversary, the Worry Barometer therefore looks to the past, present and future. Some fundamental questions remain: Which challenges are particularly urgent in 2026? What about trust, economic security and geopolitical uncertainty? At the same time, this year's edition specifically asks the Swiss electorate how they see Switzerland's future.

In its anniversary year, the UBS Worry Barometer thus becomes part of the historical record in its own right. Yet the central question is the same as it was in 1976: "What's troubling the Swiss?" By asking this overarching question, the Worry Barometer regularly takes the pulse of the nation. Over five decades, the answers tell a story of social change, long-standing concerns and the topics that have shaped the country.



TIMELY TOPICS

What's troubling the Swiss?

**According to a public opinion poll* recently conducted on behalf of Credit Suisse, unemployment is the main problem worrying the Swiss at the moment. The environment issue is in second place, and old people's welfare third.**

**An unmistakable result**

The result of the public opinion poll was unmistakable; unemployment and the environment are the two problems which are most troubling the Swiss at the moment, followed by the question of welfare of the aged, and somewhat further back, by the extent of the tax burden and inflation. Table 1 on the right gives details of the main findings of the poll.

Notwithstanding the slight improvement in the economic situation, the fact that unemployment is at present such a source of concern is hardly surprising. The problem seems to be weighing particularly heavily upon three distinct segments of the population – women, young people and lower income groups, though the explanation for this is also not difficult to find, as these are precisely the groups which have been most affected by the increased uncertainty on the job front.

**Unexpected reactions to old people's welfare**

The response to supplementary questions regarding old people's welfare – seen as the third most pressing matter – is more surprising. Although more than half of those interviewed (54%) thought that existing welfare measures were sufficient, with 41% maintaining the opposite, it was above all older people who expressed satisfaction with the present provisions. Young people, on the other hand, apparently considered an expansion of the system to be possible or desirable. The following figures are indicative of this situation:

* *Carried out between June 23 and July 4, 1976 by the independent research institute Isopublic, on the basis of a quota sample technique covering all segments of the population.*

**Major contemporary problems***

Table 1

| | Total (1010) | Men (504) | Women (506) | German Switzerland (770) | French Switzerland (240) | Aged 18–34 (373) | Aged 35–54 (343) | Aged 55 and over (294) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | in percent | | | | | | | |
| Unemployment | 75 | 72 | 77 | 76 | 69 | 77 | 75 | 71 |
| Environment | 73 | 71 | 74 | 78 | 58 | 75 | 74 | 69 |
| Care of the aged | 64 | 58 | 69 | 63 | 64 | 57 | 64 | 71 |
| Tax burden | 51 | 58 | 45 | 52 | 50 | 47 | 53 | 55 |
| Inflation | 48 | 53 | 44 | 43 | 65 | 49 | 52 | 43 |
| Education | 42 | 38 | 46 | 43 | 39 | 47 | 45 | 33 |
| Economic policy | 34 | 40 | 28 | 37 | 25 | 34 | 35 | 33 |
| Immigrant workers | 32 | 31 | 33 | 30 | 39 | 34 | 30 | 33 |
| Housing | 27 | 21 | 32 | 28 | 23 | 30 | 22 | 29 |
| Power of the banks | 20 | 25 | 15 | 20 | 19 | 18 | 19 | 22 |
| Motorway construction | 17 | 21 | 14 | 16 | 20 | 14 | 18 | 20 |
| Don't know/ no reply | 3 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 7 | 3 | 2 | 4 |

* *Question as to which are the five most urgent problems*

**Legislation to improve the economic status of the elderly**

Table 2

| | Total | Aged 18–34 | Aged 35–54 | Aged 55 and over | Men | Women |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | in percent | | | | | |
| Too much | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 1 |
| Not enough | 41 | 42 | 40 | 39 | 37 | 44 |
| Just right | 54 | 52 | 53 | 56 | 57 | 50 |
| Don't know | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 4 |

There has been a change in attitudes regarding education. Whereas about 70% of the interviewees consider the construction of new universities to be unimportant, between 74% (French Switzerland) and 86% (German Switzerland) are in favour of promoting vocational schools. Picture: the new complex of the Vocational School, Winterthur, inaugurated in 1974.

Photo: K. Burkhard/Winterthur Vocational School

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> "The Worry Barometer should be examined closely and understood as a tool that can genuinely be put to use: the aim is to move away from short-term thinking and the relentless pace, and to use the clearly longer-term concerns to support more sustainable policymaking."

**Karin Ingold,** Professor of Policy Analysis and Environmental Governance, University of Bern; Co-Director of NCCR CLIM+

# About the method

To take better account of the current political and economic situation in Switzerland, the Worry Barometer questionnaire is reevaluated annually and adapted to current social and political circumstances. This is particularly true for the perceived challenges.

To compile the UBS Worry Barometer, a mixed-mode survey was conducted involving 2,001 voters from all over Switzerland. The data collected via the different methods was checked separately for mode effects and then systematically weighted to ensure that the sample was representative. The interviews were conducted in June and July 2026. The overview below provides information on the exact parameters of this survey.

## Survey method

**Client**

UBS

**Target population**

Swiss voters

**Data collection**

150 Face-to-face (n[1])

1,562 Polittrends panel (n)

289 Online opt-in (n)

**Type of sampling**

Face-to-face: random selection of locations, quota selection of respondents by language region (age/gender interlocked)

gfs.bern "Polittrends panel": invitation via the gfs.bern panel

Online opt-in: online recruitment via social media, open access to the survey

**Survey period**

8 June to
7 July 2026

**Sample size**

2,001 Total respondents (N[1])

**Sampling error**

±2.2% at 50/50 and 95% confidence level

**Weighting**

Interlocked weighting by age and gender, language region, settlement type, party affiliation and survey mode

**1** The sample size of the overall sample is indicated by a capital "N"; a small "n" refers to a subsample.

Chapter 2

# Perception of worries

## Health and housing: everyday costs take center stage

The 2026 survey shows that financial challenges in everyday life continue to grow in importance. Healthcare and housing costs, in particular, are putting pressure on people's finances and shaping concerns in Switzerland.

Healthcare costs and health insurance premiums once again top the ranking by a clear margin. Almost half of voters cite them as being among Switzerland's five biggest concerns (48%).

The most striking development, however, concerns housing. Higher housing costs and rising rents move this concern up to second place at 30%. This makes the housing market one of the main challenges facing the Swiss population in everyday life. The issue received additional attention during the survey period following the Swiss federal vote on the popular initiative "No to a Switzerland with 10 million! (Sustainability Initiative)" on 14 June 2026. During the referendum campaign, housing shortages and rising rents were strongly linked to population growth and increasing concerns about population density. It is likely that this debate further heightened public sensitivity to conditions in the housing market, although the survey data does not support any direct causal link.

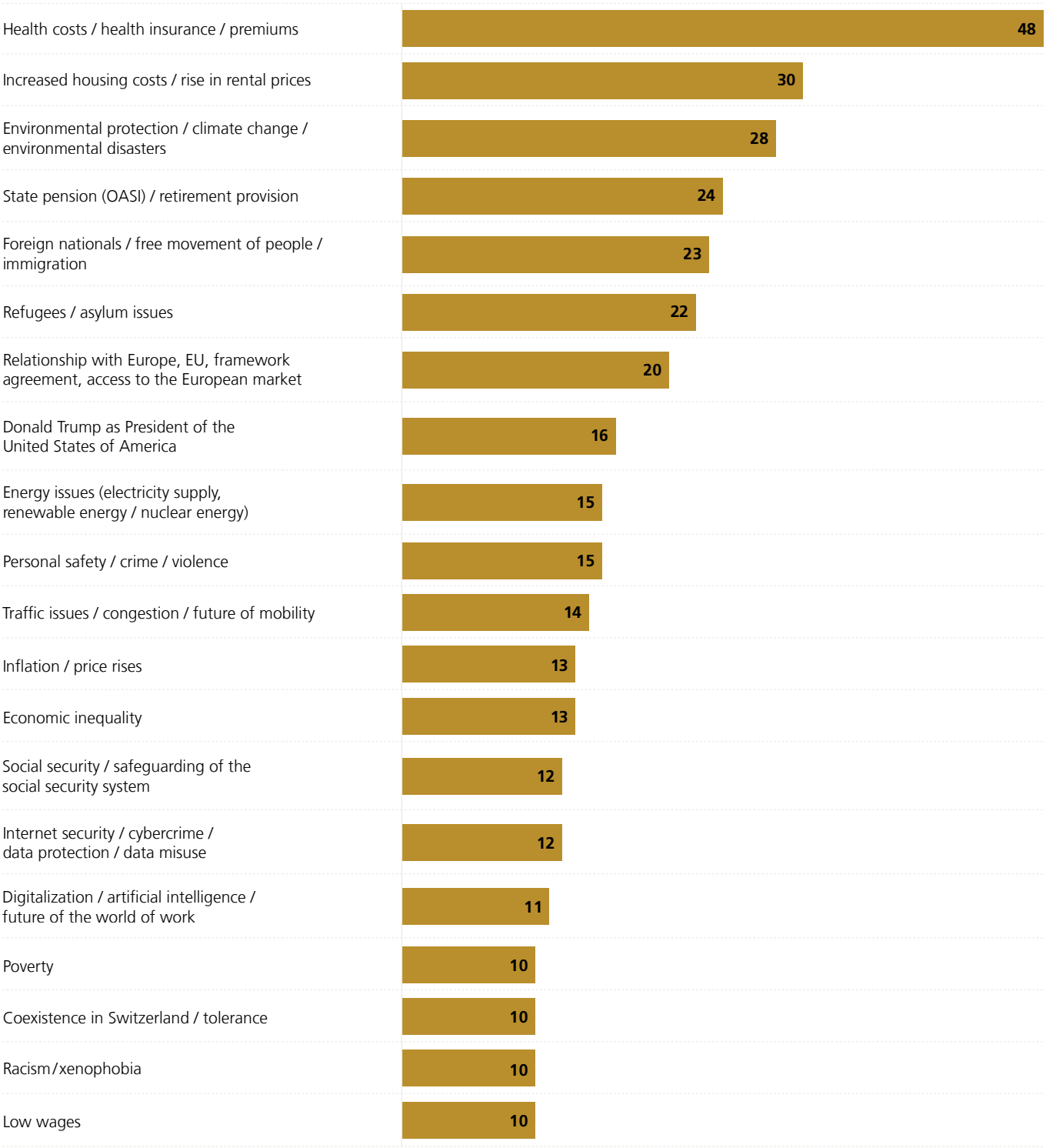
Environmental and climate issues rank third at 28%, remaining firmly among the most pressing concerns. Retirement provision follows at 24%. Migration- and Europe-related issues also remain prominent, with immigration cited by 23% of respondents, asylum issues by 22% and relations with the EU by 20%. This means that the issues that had a particularly strong influence on the previous year's pattern of concerns amid geopolitical tensions have lost some ground. Donald Trump's presidency is also cited less often than in 2025 as one of the biggest concerns, at 16%.

Overall, the findings point to a population that is increasingly focused on the affordability of everyday living expenses. Alongside healthcare and housing costs, concerns about inflation, economic inequality, low wages and poverty have moved further to the forefront. The key concern is therefore not whether people have an income at all, but whether that income remains sufficient in the face of rising fixed costs.

**Top 20 concerns**

Here you can see a list of topics that have been discussed and written about a lot recently. Please read through the list and then select the five that you personally consider to be the five most important problems facing Switzerland.

*in % of eligible voters, share of mentions*
*Multiple entries possible*




Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (N = 2,001)



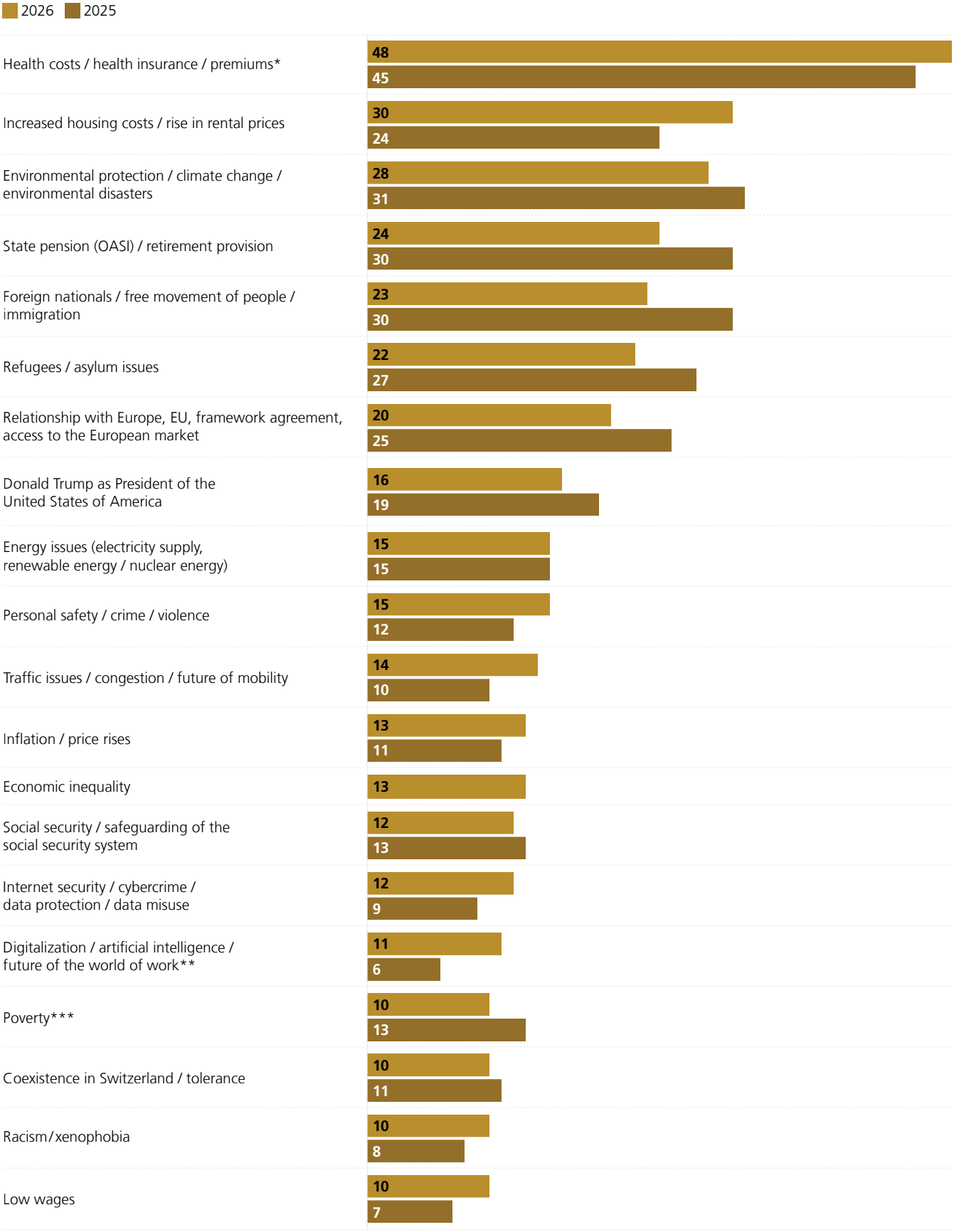
Compared with 2025, the list of concerns in 2026 is shaped more strongly by the immediate pressures of everyday life. Healthcare costs and health insurance premiums remain clearly in first place at 48%, and their importance has slightly increased once again (+3 percentage points, pp). Concern about higher housing costs and rents has risen particularly sharply. At 30%, the topic is 6 percentage points higher than in 2025.

At the same time, several long-standing political concerns have lost ground. Retirement provision has fallen to 24% (–6 pp), while immigration has declined to 23% (–7 pp). Asylum issues and relations with the EU are also mentioned less often (–5 pp). As a result, the issues related to migration and foreign policy that were uppermost among the pattern of concerns a year ago have become somewhat less prominent. By contrast, concerns about personal safety, traffic issues and cybercrime, as well as digitalization and artificial intelligence, have gained importance, albeit from a lower base.

**Top 20 concerns – 2026 vs. 2025**

Here you can see a list of topics that have been discussed and written about a lot recently. Please read through the list and then select the five that you personally consider to be the five most important problems facing Switzerland.

*in % of eligible voters, share of mentions*
*Multiple entries possible*




* 2025: "Health issues / health insurance / premiums"

** 2025: "Digitalization / technological change / future of the world of work"

*** 2025: "New forms of poverty / poverty in younger generations"

Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (N = 2,001)

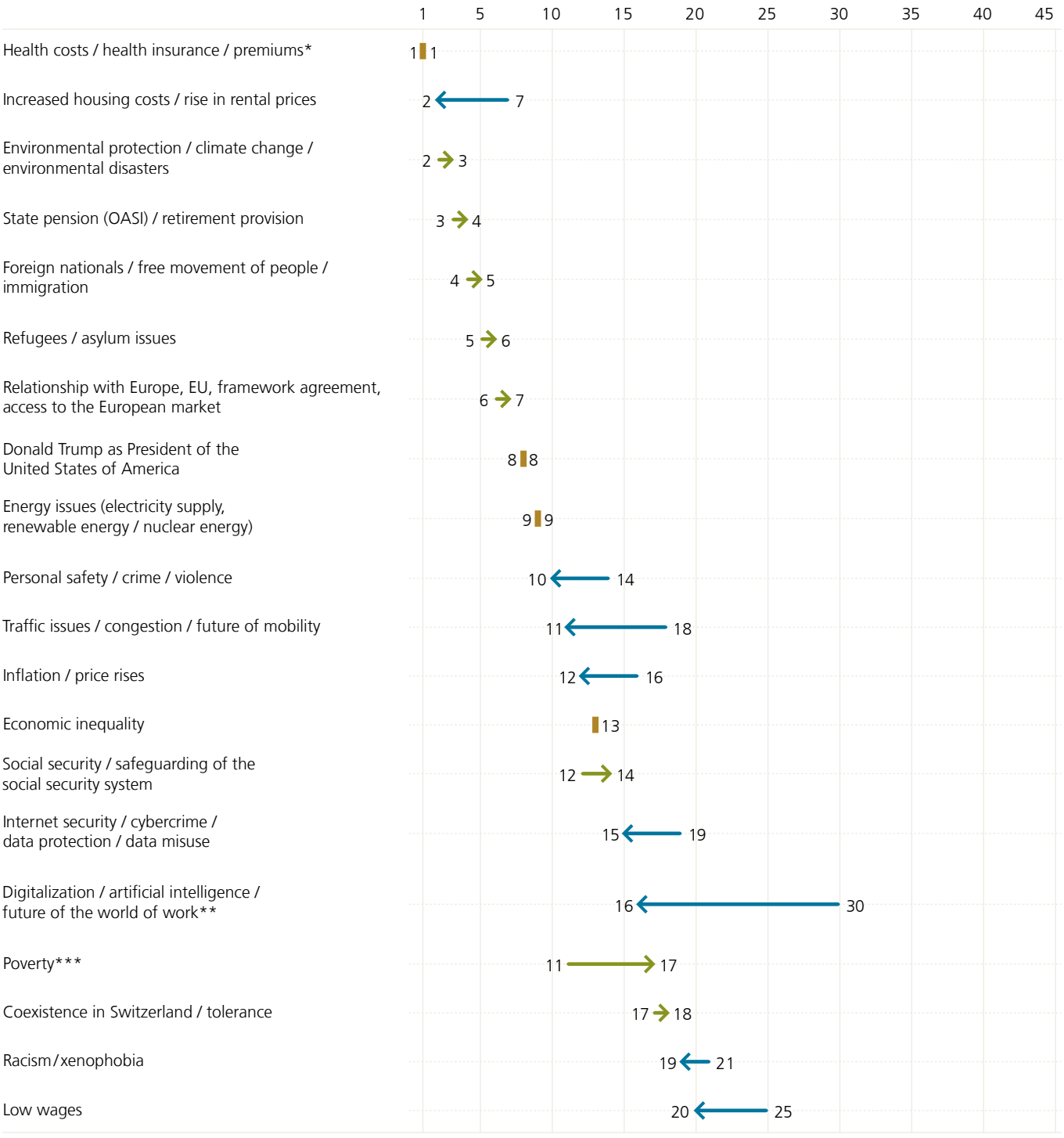
The changes in ranking between 2025 and 2026 confirm that rising everyday costs are an increasing concern for voters. While healthcare costs remain the leading concern, increased housing costs have recorded the sharpest rise among the top-ranked issues, climbing from seventh to second place.

Personal safety is also a bigger issue than a year ago, moving up from 14th to 10th place. Traffic issues have risen from 18th to 11th place, while inflation has moved from 16th to 12th place. Cybercrime and data protection, as well as low wages, have also gained importance.

The largest shift in the rankings is recorded by digitalization and artificial intelligence, which have moved from 30th to 16th place. Economic inequality has also entered the top 20, ranking 13th. By contrast, poverty has fallen from 11th to 17th place.

**Top 20 concerns – 2026 vs. 2025 ranking**

Changes in the rankings between 2025 and 2026




* 2025: "Health issues / health insurance / premiums"

** 2025: "Digitalization / technological change / future of the world of work"

*** 2025: "New forms of poverty / poverty in younger generations"

Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (N = 2,001)

# Healthcare costs generate the greatest sense of urgency

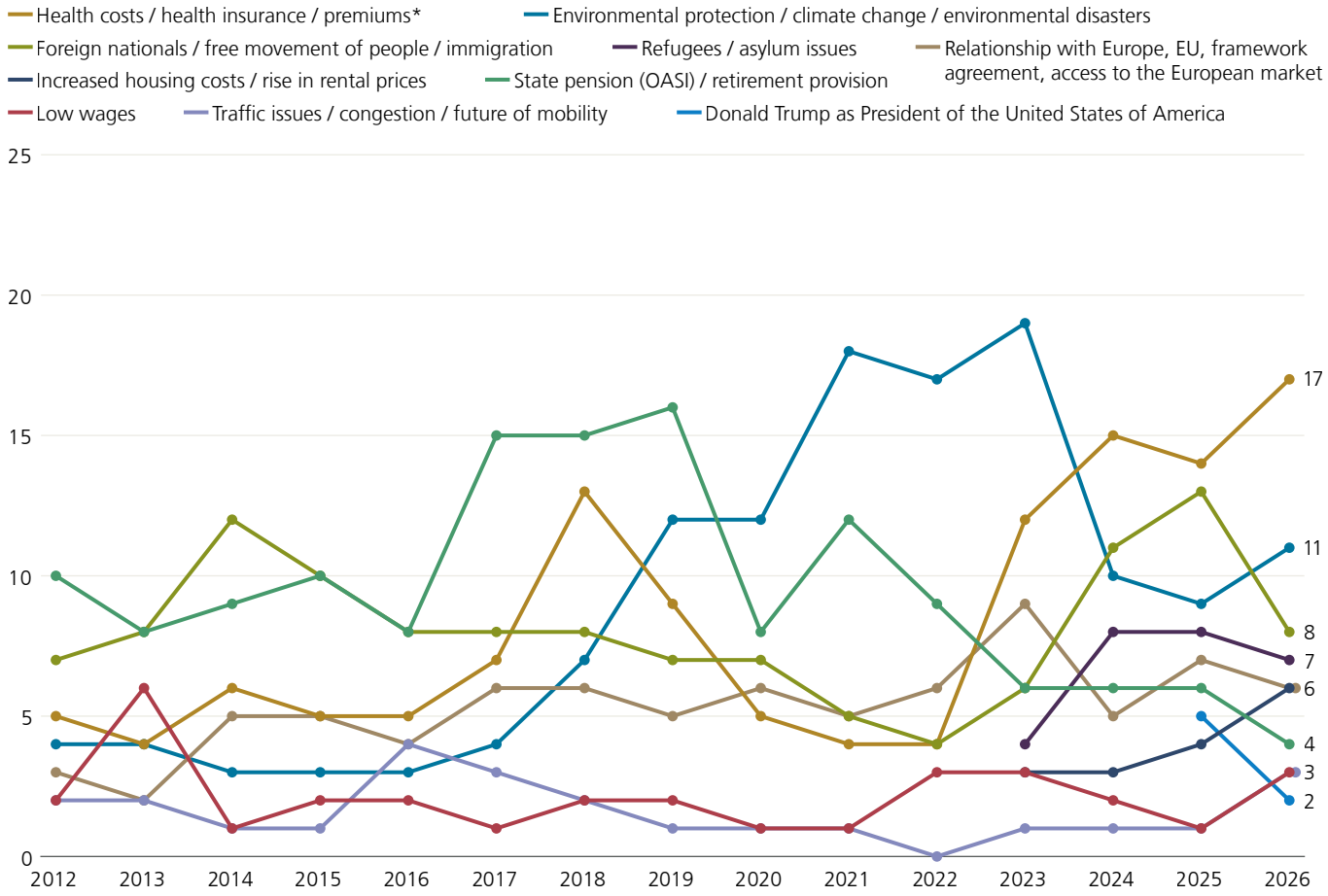
When asked which of the five selected challenges should be addressed first, healthcare costs and health insurance premiums continue to stand out. In 2026, 17% of respondents identify them as the most urgent challenge, a new high. Environmental and climate issues rank second at 11% and have regained some importance after declining over the previous two years.

Higher housing costs also show a clear increase compared with the previous year. Particularly striking is the opposite trend for immigration: only 8% of the electorate now consider it a priority, down from 13%. The most immediate pressure therefore centers on healthcare costs, while migration-related issues have become less urgent in the eyes of the public.

**Trend: the top 10 most urgent challenges**

In your opinion, which of these five most important problems should be addressed first?

*in % of eligible voters, share of mentions*




* until 2025: "Health issues / health insurance / premiums"

Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n = approx. 1,220 each)

# Social security: healthcare costs remain the leading concern

The long-term trend regarding social security reveals two diverging developments. While concern about healthcare costs and health insurance premiums has returned to a level rarely seen since the early 2000s, with 48% of respondents citing it as a concern, the perceived urgency of retirement provision has noticeably declined. At 24%, concern about the state pension system (OASI) and retirement provision fell to a new low in 2026.

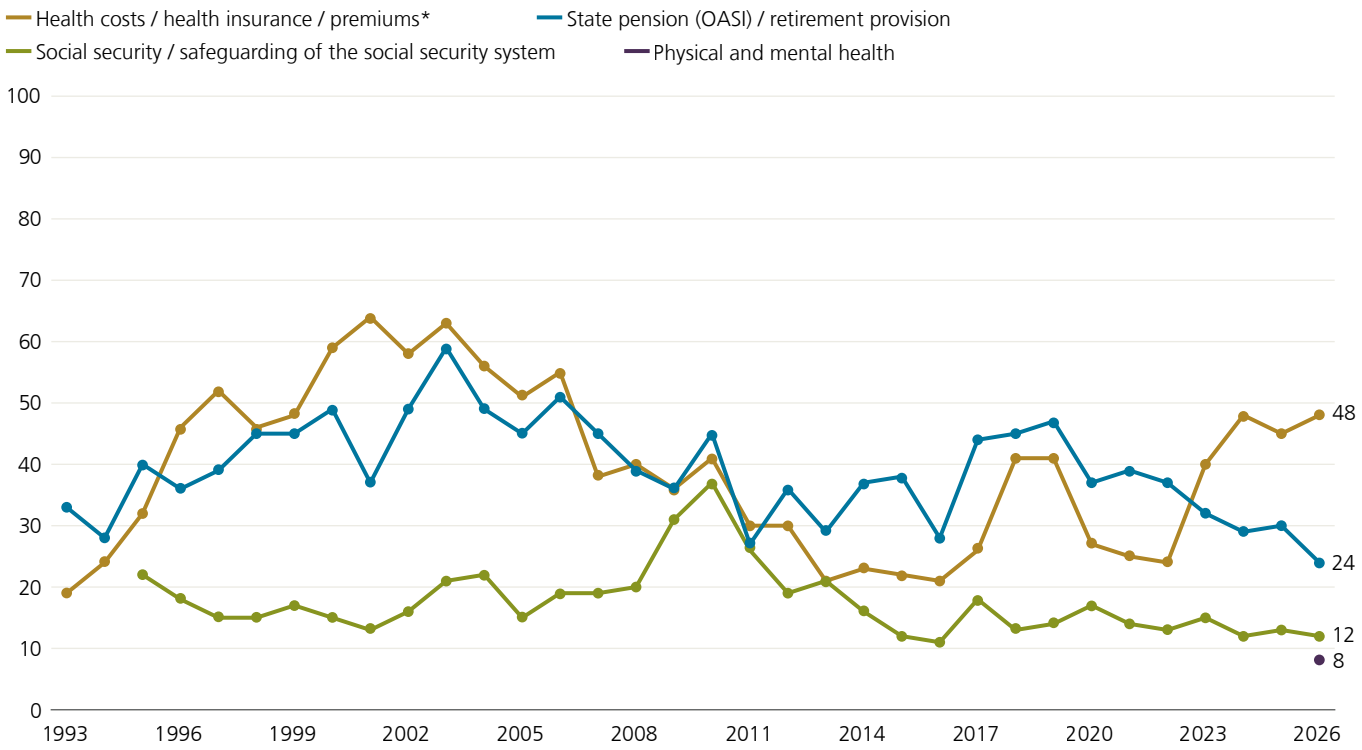
This shift may also reflect the fact that, following recent political decisions, the public perceives less immediate pressure to act on retirement provision, at least in the short term. Although the fundamental need for reform and financing remains, it is increasingly overshadowed in the pattern of concerns by the direct impact of annual health insurance premiums. This reveals a clear discrepancy between a long-term social policy challenge and a short-term financial burden.

General concern about safeguarding the social security system remains low and largely stable at 12%. Physical and mental health were measured separately for the first time, with 8% of respondents naming them among their five most important concerns. The central concern is therefore not so much individual health as how its financing can remain sustainable over the long term.

**Trend: concerns – social security, retirement provision and health**

Here you can see a list of topics that have been discussed and written about a lot recently. Please read through the list and then select the five that you personally consider to be the five most important problems facing Switzerland.

*in % of eligible voters, share of mentions*




* until 2025: "Health issues / health insurance / premiums"

Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n = approx. 1,270 each)

# Housing costs top the list of economic concerns

A closer look at economic concerns confirms how strongly day-to-day expenses are shaping people's lives. Concern about increased housing costs and rents rose to 30% in 2026, the highest level since the survey began. The housing market has thus evolved from a secondary concern into one of the public's central worries.

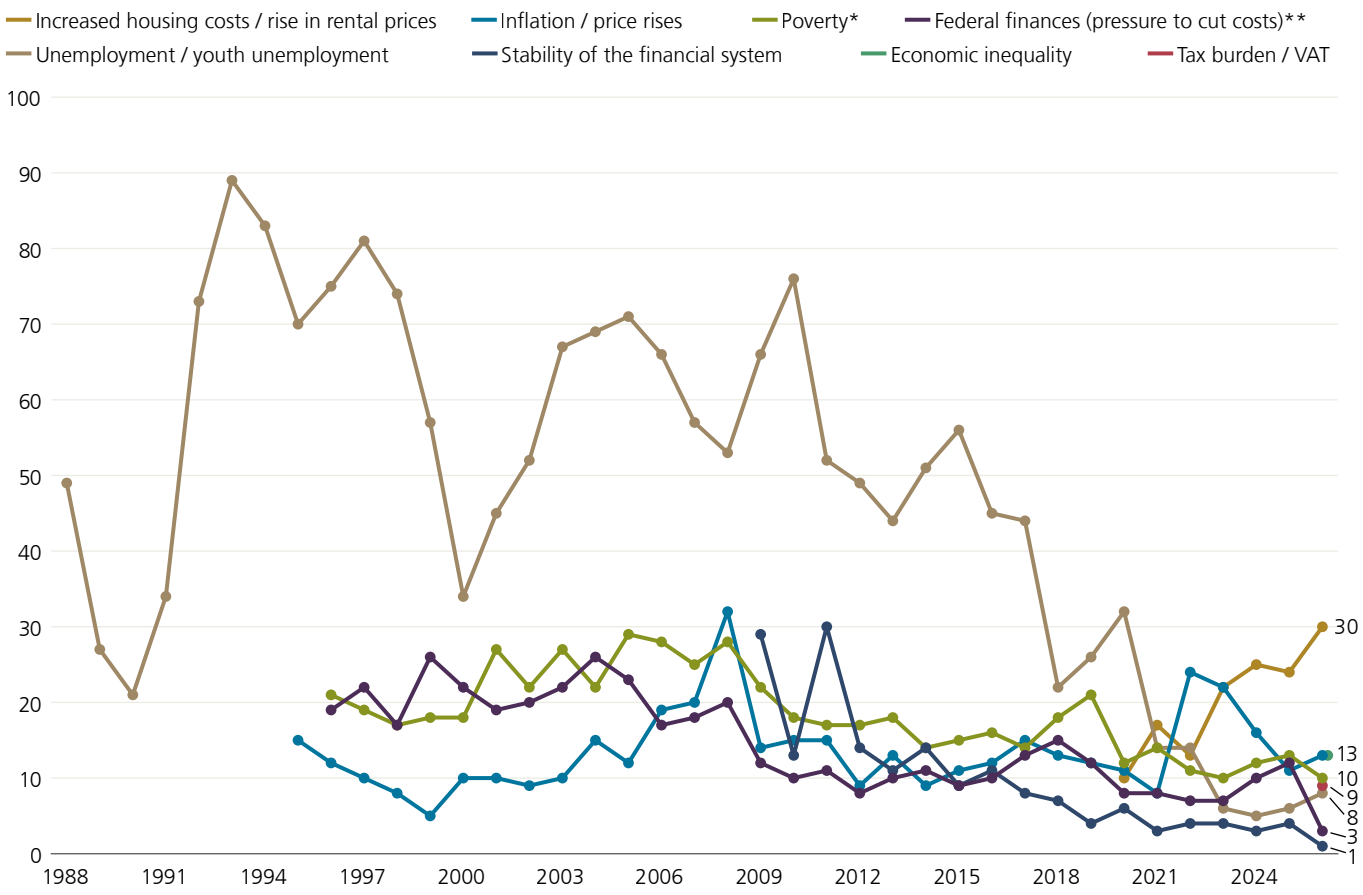
Meanwhile, inflation has slightly gained importance, cited by 13% of respondents. However, it remains well below the levels seen in 2022 and 2023. Economic inequality, which was measured separately for the first time this year, was also cited by 13% of respondents. Together with concerns about poverty and low wages, this development shows that the focus is increasingly shifting not only to rising prices, but also to the unequal distribution of financial burdens.

By contrast, and despite a slight increase, unemployment remains far less important than it once was. The stability of the financial system is also hardly perceived as a problem. The economic pattern of concern therefore continues to focus less on whether the system functions than on its concrete impact on household budgets.

**Trend: concerns – economic pressures / influencing factors**

Here you can see a list of topics that have been discussed and written about a lot recently. Please read through the list and then select the five that you personally consider to be the five most important problems facing Switzerland.

*in % of eligible voters, share of mentions*




* until 2025: "New forms of poverty / poverty in younger generations"

** until 2025: "Tax burden / federal finances / value-added tax"

Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n = approx. 1,270 each)

# Concerns about environmental protection and climate change have fallen slightly

The picture for environmental issues is comparatively stable. Environmental and climate issues remain firmly among the main concerns at 28%, although they lose ground slightly compared with 2025. After the peaks recorded from 2021 to 2023, the issue has settled at a consistently high level. Unlike short-term crisis issues, climate change has become a permanent fixture in the pattern of concerns.

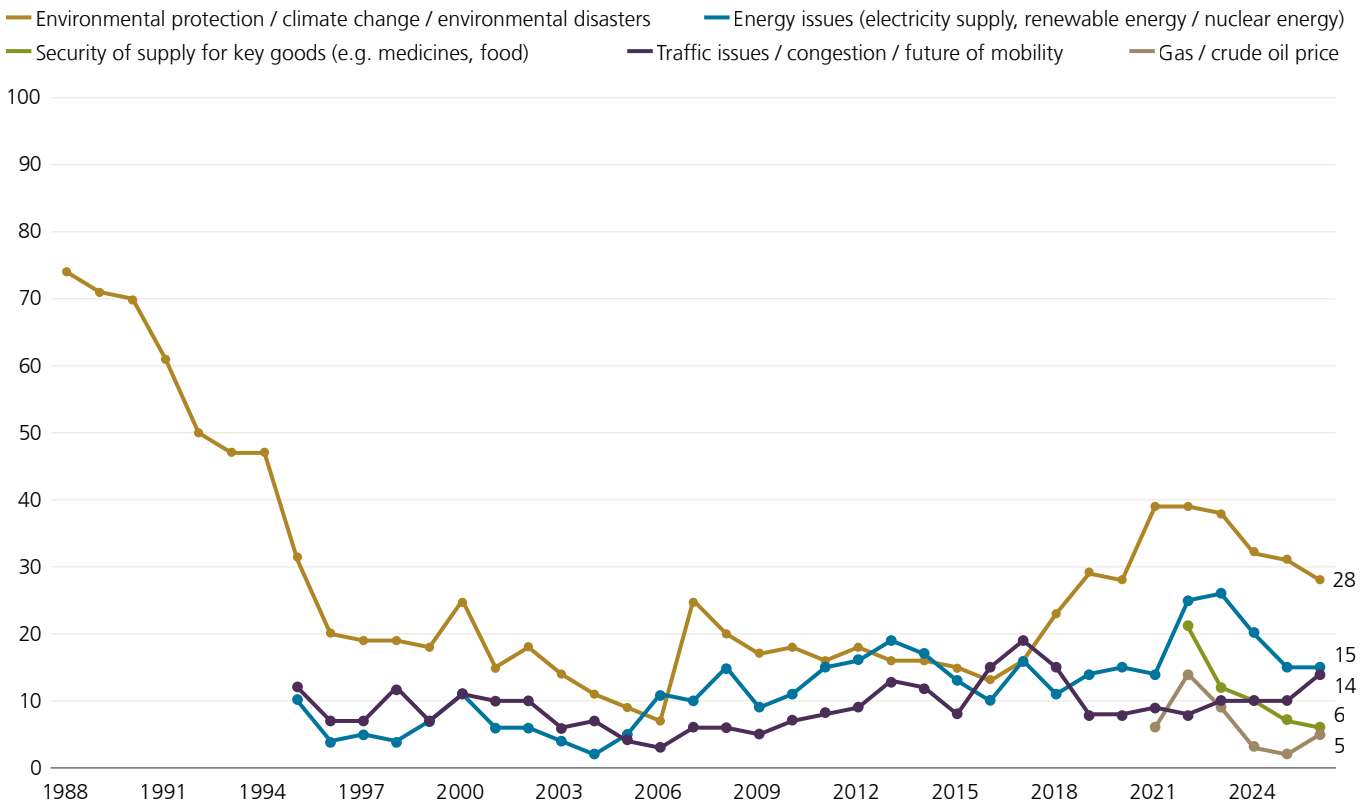
Concerns about security of supply show a similar pattern. Energy supply is cited by 15% of respondents, unchanged from last year. The sharp increase seen during the threat of electricity shortages in 2022 and 2023 has therefore subsided, although the issue remains higher on the list than it was before the energy crisis. General concerns about the availability of medicines and food have receded even further, with just 6% of respondents citing them.

Traffic issues have moved in the opposite direction, reaching their highest level in several years at 14%. Here, too, the prominence of concerns about population density may have been influenced by the campaign in support of the "No to a Switzerland with 10 million!" initiative. Overall, concerns are shifting from acute supply risks toward structural issues involving the climate, energy and mobility.

**Trend: concerns – environmental and energy issues**

Here you can see a list of topics that have been discussed and written about a lot recently. Please read through the list and then select the five that you personally consider to be the five most important problems facing Switzerland.

*in % of eligible voters, share of mentions*




Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n = approx. 1,270 each)

"On a very personal level, environmental and climate protection are a high priority for me, not least because they are closely linked to many other societal challenges."

**Aline Incici,** Co-Executive Director, Swiss Federation of Youth Parliaments (DSJ)

# Foreign policy and migration are less of a concern than in the past

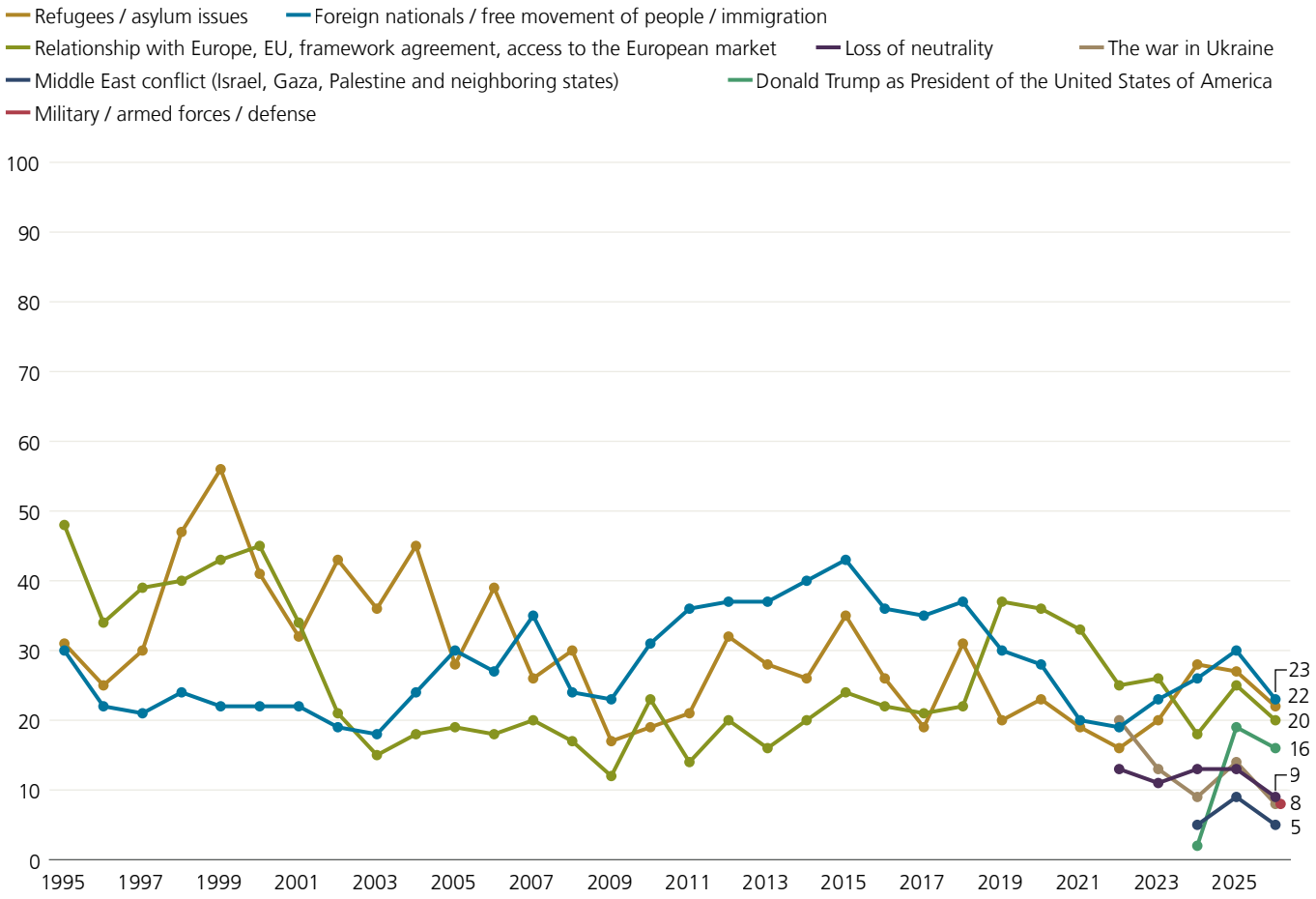
The pattern of concerns in relation to foreign policy has become less pronounced in 2026. Immigration (23%) and asylum issues (22%) remain the leading concerns in this category. However, they are cited far less frequently than at previous peaks, such as during the refugee crisis in 2015. Relations with the EU are also becoming less of a concern, falling to 20%, a level similar to that seen before 2019. Migration and European policy thus continue to stand out among foreign policy concerns, but no longer reach the peaks seen in earlier years.

Geopolitical disruptions such as the war in Ukraine and the conflict in the Middle East are generally viewed as less urgent by the electorate, even though the events themselves remain highly consequential. By contrast, the presidency of Donald Trump continues to concern a substantial share of respondents, with 16% citing it as a worry. Concerns captured under the newly introduced 2026 category "Military / armed forces / defense" are perceived as comparatively less pressing (8%).

**Trend: concerns – foreign and migration policy**

Here you can see a list of topics that have been discussed and written about a lot recently. Please read through the list and then select the five that you personally consider to be the five most important problems facing Switzerland.

*in % of eligible voters, share of mentions*




Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n = approx. 1,270 each)

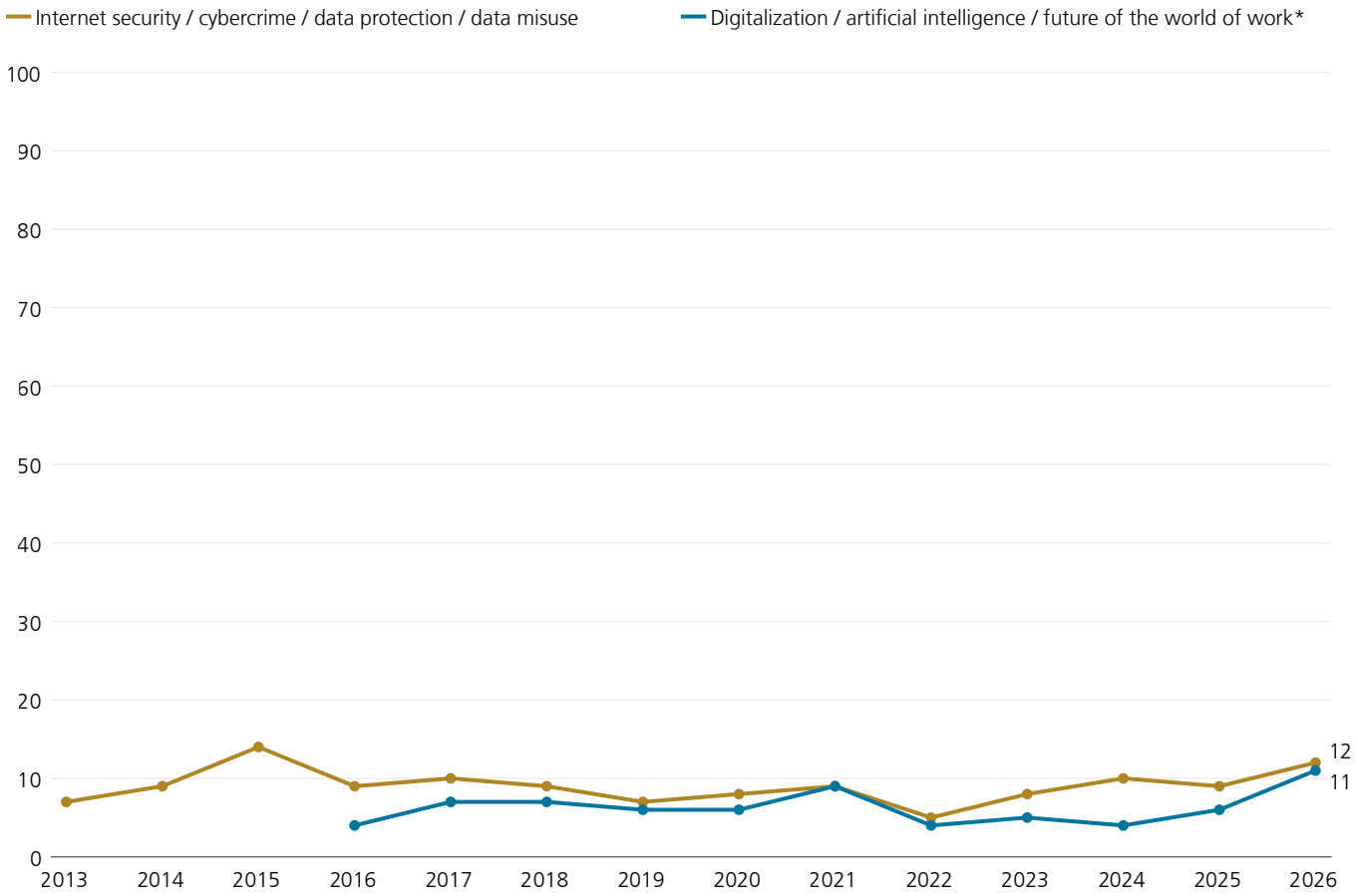
# Impacts of digitalization and AI are of increasing concern

Digitalization and artificial intelligence have become an increasingly prominent concern in recent years. Concerns about internet security, cybercrime, data protection and data misuse are cited by 12% of voters as one of their five biggest concerns, the highest level in several years. Close behind are concerns about digitalization, artificial intelligence and the future of the world of work, which have also gained importance in recent years.

As a result, perceptions of technological change are broadening. The focus is no longer limited to cyberattacks and data misuse. Increasingly, attention is turning to the potential implications of technological change for work and society. Digital risks are therefore evolving from a specialized niche issue into a distinct societal concern, albeit one that remains at a moderate level.

**Trend: concerns – digitalization and AI**

*in % of eligible voters, share of mentions*




* until 2025: "Digitalization / technological change / future of the world of work"

Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n = approx. 1,270 each)

# How do patterns of concern differ by age, gender and political affiliation?

The ranking of concerns varies markedly across different stages of life. One common denominator across all three age groups is healthcare costs and health insurance premiums, which rank as the leading concern in every group. The burden is particularly pronounced among respondents aged 65 and over (53%) and those aged 40 to 64 (50%), although younger respondents also feel the impact, with 42% citing it as a concern.

Beyond this shared concern, distinct priorities emerge. Among 18- to 39-year-olds, high living costs and economic inequality are prominent worries, although they do not diminish this group's optimism about the future. Increased housing costs are a particularly important concern (36%). Low wages, economic inequality and inflation make the top 10 only among this age group. As a result, younger respondents' concerns are strongly shaped by the question of how affordable life remains under current economic conditions. Among 40- to 64-year-olds, immigration (28%), retirement provision and the environment and climate (26% each) move more firmly into focus.

Respondents aged 65 and over, in turn, display a broader pattern of concerns shaped by foreign policy and societal issues. In addition to healthcare costs, the environment and climate (31%) and relations with the EU (27%) rank among their most prominent concerns. Energy issues, Donald Trump and traffic issues also feature in their top 10. These differences illustrate how closely patterns of concern are linked to stage of life. Younger generations tend to be more concerned about economic inequality and fairness than older Swiss citizens. At the same time, while day-to-day financial pressures are more prominent among younger respondents, concerns about social security, as well as political and international developments, become increasingly important with age.

**Top 10 concerns by age**

Here you can see a list of topics that have been discussed and written about a lot recently. Please read through the list and then select the five that you personally consider to be the five most important problems facing Switzerland.

*in % of eligible voters, share of mentions*

| | 18–39-year-olds | 40–64-year-olds | 65 years and older |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | Health costs / health insurance / premiums *(42%)* | Health costs / health insurance / premiums *(50%)* | Health costs / health insurance / premiums *(53%)* |
| **2** | Increased housing costs / rise in rental prices *(36%)* | Increased housing costs / rise in rental prices *(29%)* | Environmental protection / climate change / environmental disasters *(31%)* |
| **3** | Environmental protection / climate change / environmental disasters *(28%)* | Foreign nationals / free movement of people / immigration *(28%)* | Relationship with Europe, EU, framework agreement, access to the European market *(27%)* |
| **4** | Refugees / asylum issues *(21%)* | State pension (OASI) / retirement provision *(26%)* | Increased housing costs / rise in rental prices *(26%)* |
| **5** | State pension (OASI) / retirement provision *(20%)* | Environmental protection / climate change / environmental disasters *(26%)* | State pension (OASI) / retirement provision *(24%)* |
| **6** | Foreign nationals / free movement of people / immigration *(18%)* | Refugees / asylum issues *(23%)* | Refugees / asylum issues *(22%)* |
| **7** | Low wages *(17%)* | Relationship with Europe, EU, framework agreement, access to the European market *(23%)* | Foreign nationals / free movement of people / immigration *(20%)* |
| **8** | Economic inequality *(17%)* | Donald Trump as President of the United States of America *(19%)* | Energy issues (electricity supply, renewable energy / nuclear energy) *(17%)* |
| **9** | Inflation / price rises *(15%)* | Personal safety / crime / violence *(18%)* | Donald Trump as President of the United States of America *(17%)* |
| **10** | Personal safety / crime / violence *(14%)* | Energy issues (electricity supply, renewable energy / nuclear energy) *(16%)* | Traffic issues / congestion / future of mobility *(17%)* |

Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n between 495 and 754)

# Young women are less likely than young men to rank retirement provision among their biggest concerns

The ranking of concerns also shows clear differences by gender. The chart shows the ten biggest concerns of women aged 18 to 39 and compares them with the values for men of the same age. The findings show that healthcare costs, the environment and climate, and gender equality currently rank as bigger concerns for young women than retirement provision. The most pronounced gap relates to healthcare costs. More than half of young women (52%) mention healthcare costs as among their biggest worries, compared with 32% of young men. Young women are also more likely to be concerned about the environment and climate (33% versus 22%).

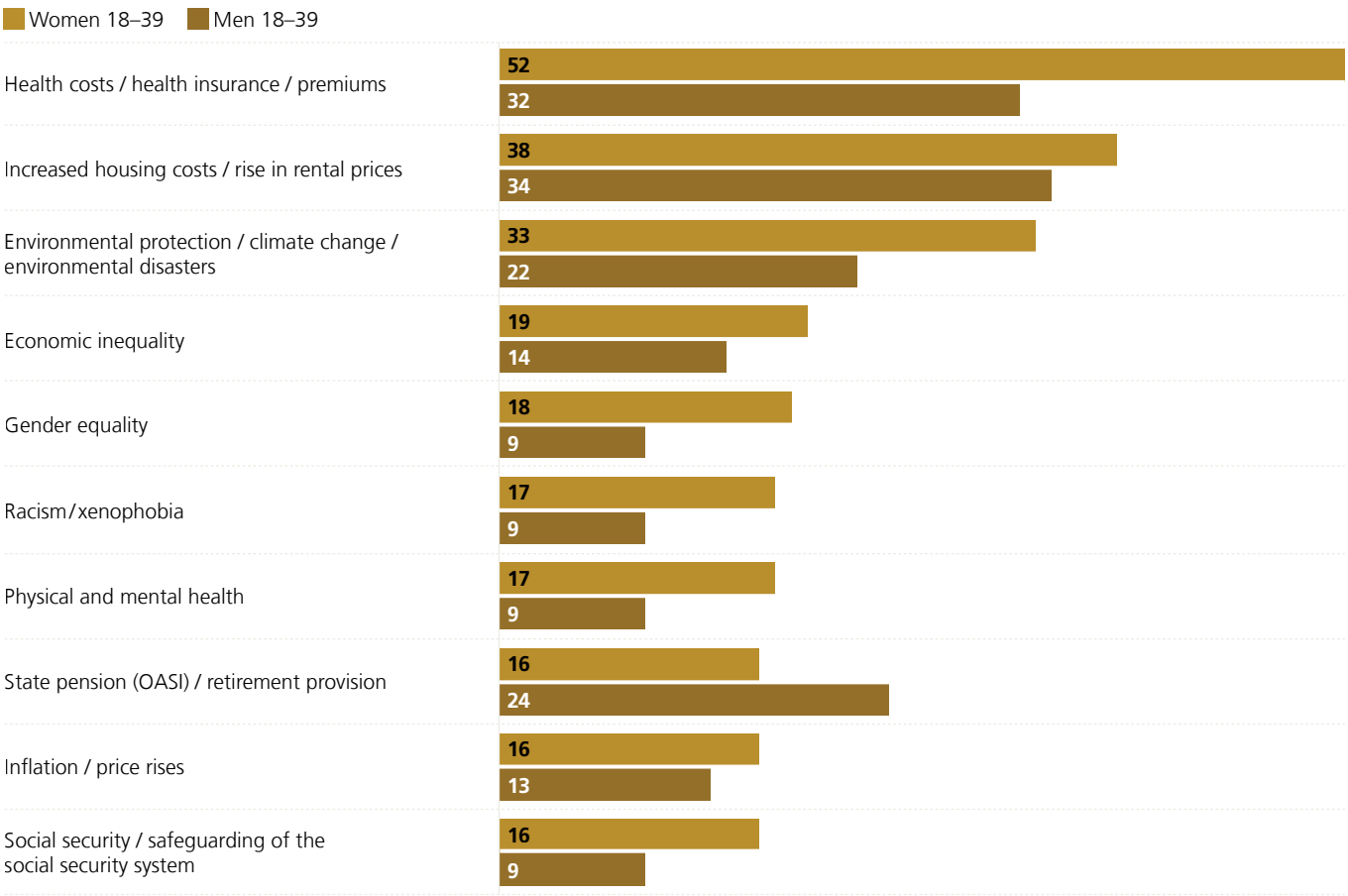
Another defining feature of young women's top 10 concerns is the strong presence of social issues. Economic inequality, gender equality, racism and xenophobia, as well as physical and mental health, all rank among their most important worries and are cited significantly more often than by young men. For young women, material pressures are therefore more closely intertwined with social participation and personal well-being.

Higher housing costs, by contrast, are a shared priority. They rank second among young women at 38% and are also frequently mentioned by young men (34%). The opposite pattern can be observed for retirement provision, which is a more prominent worry among young men (24% versus 16%).

**Top 10 concerns – young women (vs. young men)**

Here you can see a list of topics that have been discussed and written about a lot recently. Please read through the list and then select the five that you personally consider to be the five most important problems facing Switzerland.

*in % of eligible voters, share of mentions*
*Multiple entries possible*




Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n between 339 and 410)

# Young men are more concerned about migration-related issues than women of the same age

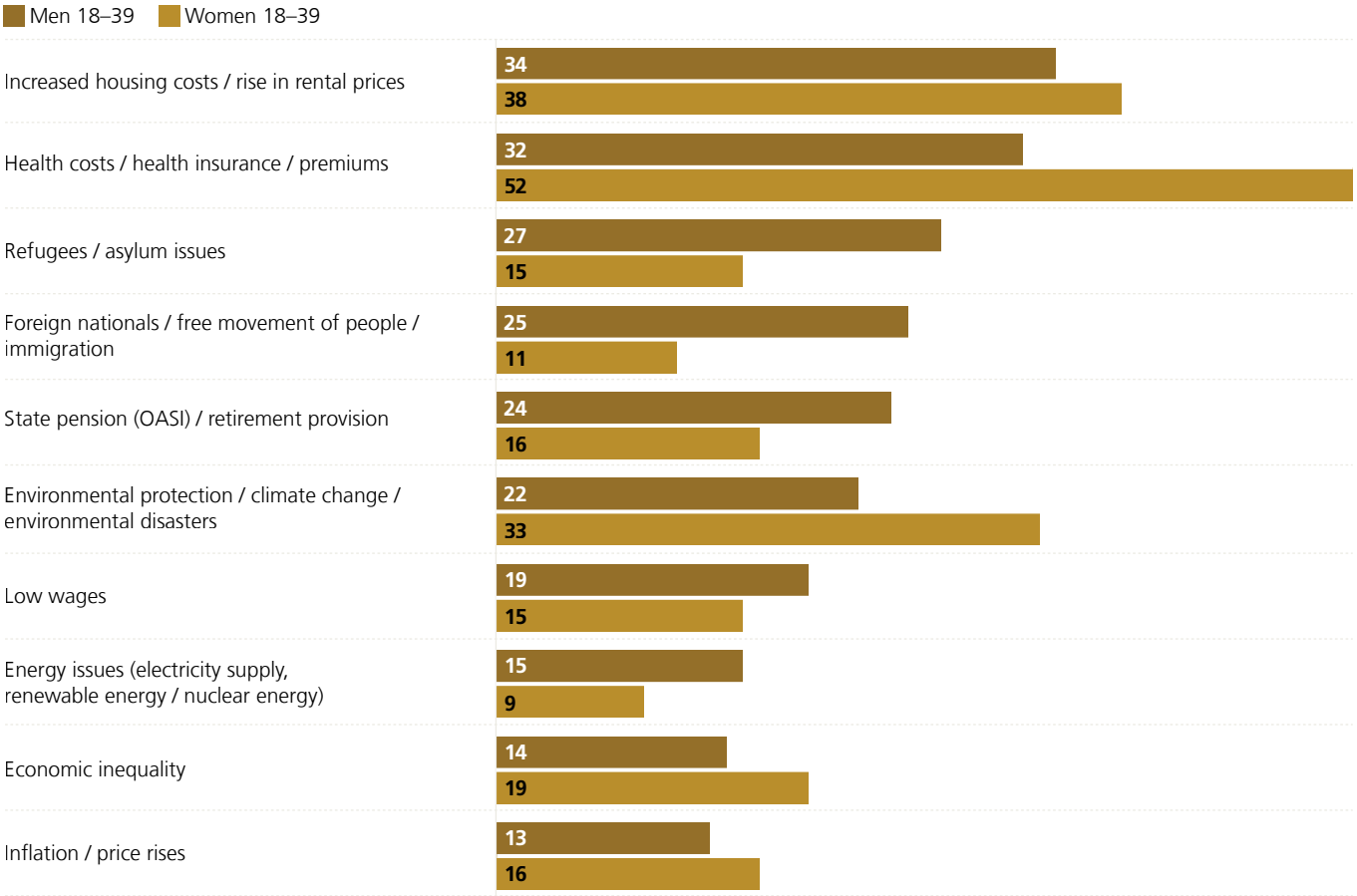
Young men's top 10 concerns have a different focus than those of women of the same age. Higher housing costs rank as the leading concern among young men (34%), followed by healthcare costs and health insurance premiums (32%). The most pronounced differences, however, emerge when it comes to migration-related issues. Asylum issues (27%) and immigration (25%) rank among the four biggest worries for young men, while they are cited considerably less often by young women (15% and 11%, respectively). Retirement provision (24%) and energy issues (15%) also concern young men more.

Taken together, the two rankings show two different patterns within the same generation. Young men are more concerned about migration, retirement provision and energy; young women are more concerned about health, the climate and social distribution issues.

**Top 10 concerns – young men (vs. young women)**

Here you can see a list of topics that have been discussed and written about a lot recently. Please read through the list and then select the five that you personally consider to be the five most important problems facing Switzerland.

*in % of eligible voters, share of mentions*
*Multiple entries possible*




Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n between 339 and 410)

# High healthcare costs rank among the top worries across the political spectrum

Patterns of concern reflect not only differing life circumstances but also the political priorities of the various party constituencies. Healthcare costs and health insurance premiums are once again the common denominator across the political spectrum, ranking among the top two concerns of every party's supporters. They even rank first among supporters of the Center Party and the FDP (50% and 55%, respectively). Higher housing costs also feature in the top 10 across party lines, underscoring that the financial pressures of everyday life are not confined to any single political camp.

To the left of the political center, environmental and societal issues dominate. Among supporters of the Greens (73%), the SP (57%) and the GLP (47%), the environment and climate rank first on the list of concerns. Supporters of the Greens and the SP are also comparatively likely to cite economic inequality and racism among their biggest concerns, while GLP supporters are particularly concerned about relations with Europe (35%) alongside the environment and health.

Among center-right and right-leaning voters, the focus shifts. Alongside healthcare costs, supporters of the Center and FDP are particularly concerned about retirement provision, as well as foreign policy and migration-related issues. Supporters of the SVP stand out the most. They view asylum issues (55%) and immigration (44%) as the most urgent issues, followed by personal security and crime (32%).

**Top 10 concerns by party affiliation**

Here you can see a list of topics that have been discussed and written about a lot recently. Please read through the list and then select the five that you personally consider to be the five most important problems facing Switzerland.

*in % of eligible voters, share of mentions*

| | Greens | SP | GLP | The Center (Die Mitte) | FDP | SVP |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | Environment/climate *(73%)* | Environment/climate *(57%)* | Environment/climate *(47%)* | Health *(50%)* | Health *(55%)* | Asylum *(55%)* |
| **2** | Health *(43%)* | Health *(42%)* | Health *(46%)* | Donald Trump, US *(27%)* | Retirement provision *(39%)* | Health *(49%)* |
| **3** | Economic inequality *(26%)* | Housing costs *(36%)* | Europe *(35%)* | Environment/climate *(26%)* | Immigration *(28%)* | Immigration *(44%)* |
| **4** | Europe *(25%)* | Economic inequality *(30%)* | Housing costs *(32%)* | Retirement provision *(24%)* | Housing costs *(25%)* | Housing costs *(32%)* |
| **5** | Racism *(23%)* | Racism *(27%)* | Energy *(25%)* | Transport *(23%)* | Europe *(24%)* | Crime *(32%)* |
| **6** | Housing costs *(21%)* | Europe *(27%)* | Coexistence in Switzerland *(23%)* | Immigration *(23%)* | IT security *(20%)* | Retirement provision *(24%)* |
| **7** | Artificial intelligence *(21%)* | Donald Trump, US *(20%)* | Retirement provision *(19%)* | Housing costs *(19%)* | Asylum *(19%)* | Inflation *(22%)* |
| **8** | Energy *(20%)* | Social security *(17%)* | Donald Trump, US *(18%)* | Asylum *(18%)* | Donald Trump, US *(19%)* | Transport *(17%)* |
| **9** | IT security *(17%)* | Coexistence in Switzerland *(17%)* | Economic inequality *(17%)* | IT security *(17%)* | Energy *(19%)* | Europe *(17%)* |
| **10** | Education *(16%)* | Retirement provision *(17%)* | Social security *(17%)* | Europe *(17%)* | Army *(17%)* | Loss of neutrality *(16%)* |

Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n between 172 and 443)

Chapter 3

# Trust and identity

## Stability and social cohesion shape Switzerland's national identity

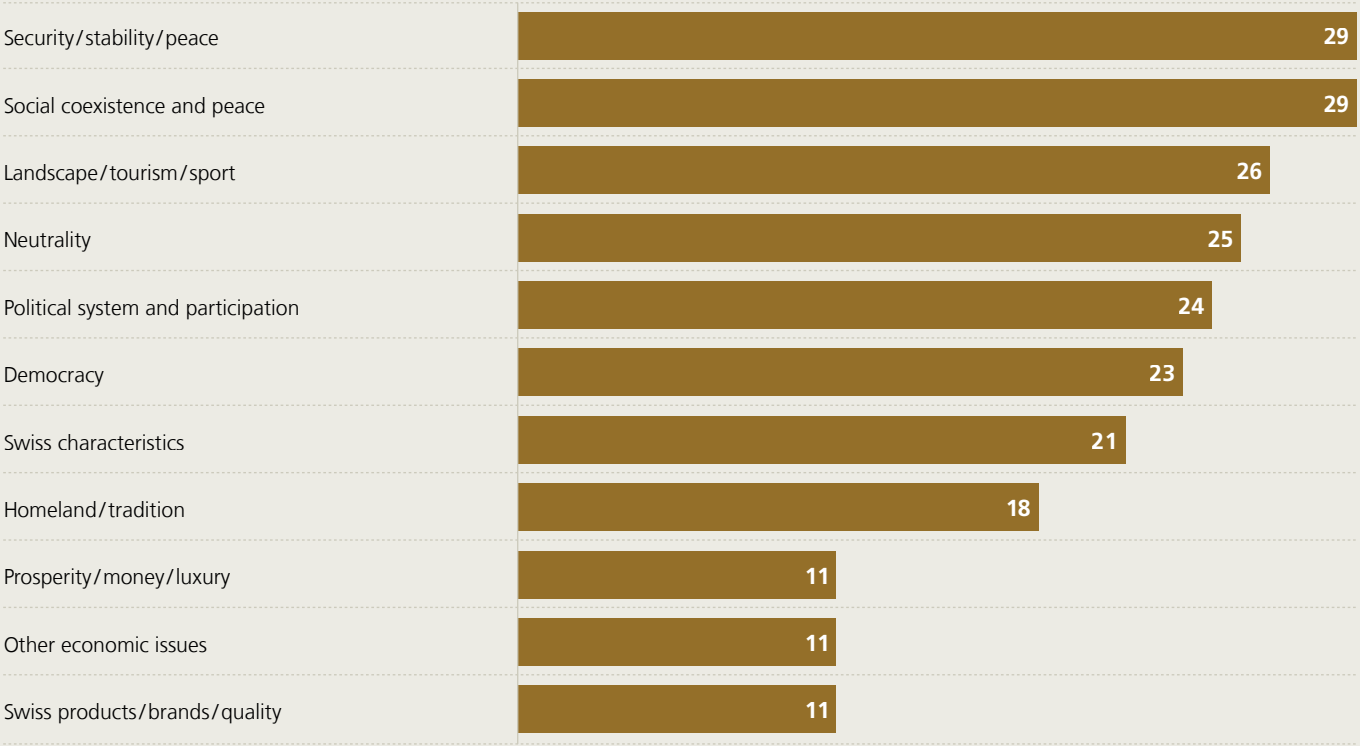
Having examined people's concerns, we now turn to the qualities that shape Switzerland's national identity. According to the Swiss electorate, these are primarily security and stability, as well as social aspects relating to coexistence and shared values (29% each). The landscape, tourism and sports are also firmly embedded in the image of Switzerland, at 26%. Neutrality (25%) and political participation (24%) follow closely behind, while 23% explicitly mention democracy. Political structures therefore remain central anchors of identity, complemented by cultural, geographical and social ties.

Traditional Swiss qualities such as reliability, orderliness and punctuality are important components of national identity for 21% of respondents, while a connection to home and tradition matters to 18%. Economic factors and well-known Swiss products rank considerably lower, each cited by 11%. Overall, Switzerland's national identity is rooted in stability, political independence, social cohesion, its natural landscape and familiar traditions. Especially in an uncertain environment, these enduring qualities provide an increasingly important sense of direction and reassurance.

**Top 10 – what Switzerland stands for**

Please note down three things in keywords that Switzerland represents to you personally.

*in % of eligible voters*
*Multiple entries possible*




Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n = 966)



"The instruments of direct democracy are among the smartest things we have invented in the past 150 years, even if the intentions at the time were not necessarily aligned with where the greatest benefit lies today."

**Walter Thurnherr,** Former Federal Chancellor and Professor

In 2026, the Swiss take the greatest pride in the institutional foundations of their political system. Political rights lead the ranking: nine in ten eligible voters are very or fairly proud of instruments such as the popular initiative and referendum (90%). Economic stability follows at 86%, while political stability and the Federal Constitution each stand at 84%. Federalism (81%) and Switzerland's sovereignty and independence (79%) are further pillars of the country's national identity.

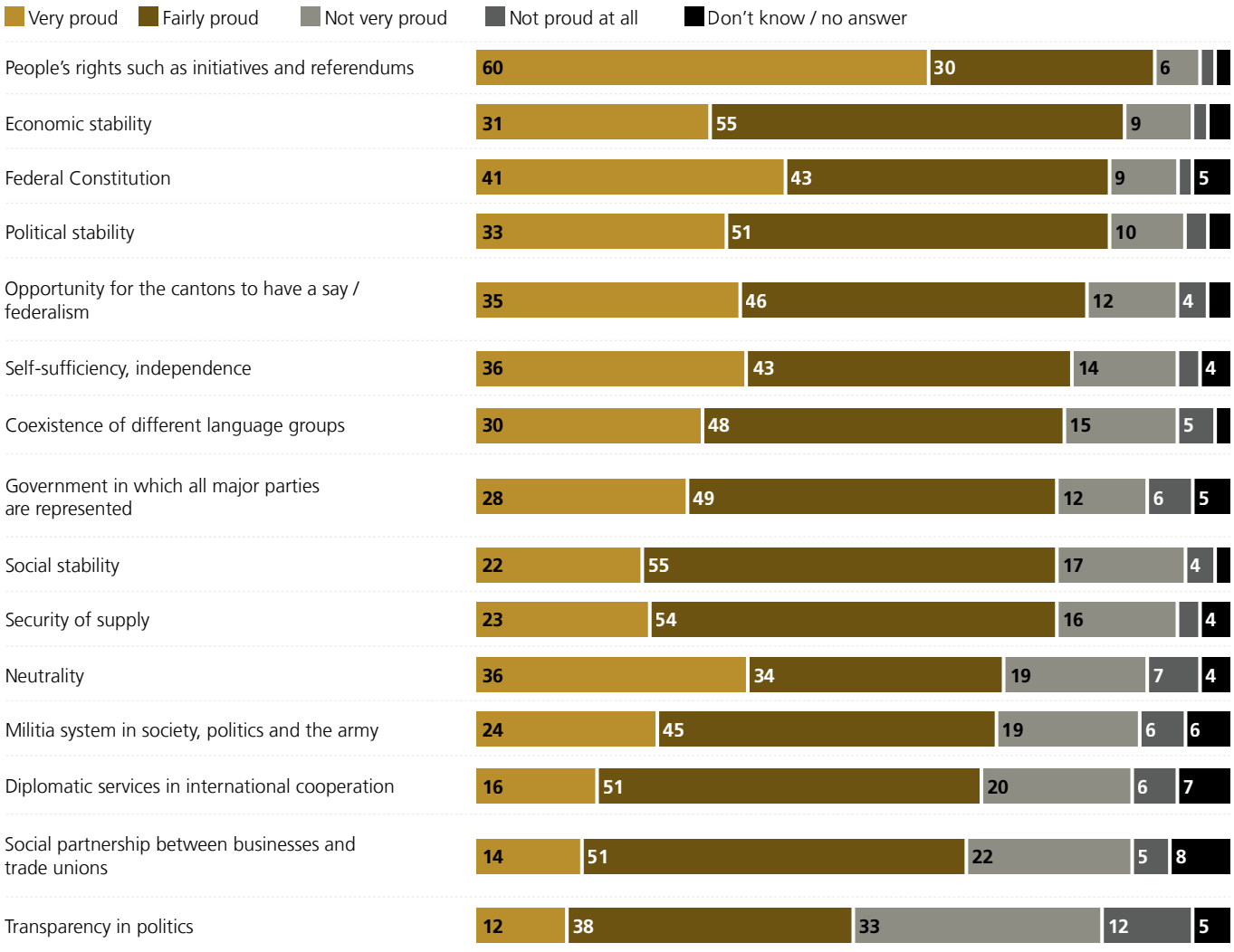
Slightly lower, but still supported by clear majorities, are coexistence among the different language groups (78%), social stability, the multiparty government and security of supply (77% each). Neutrality stands at 70% and the militia system at 69%, although the former has steadily declined in importance since measurements began. Pride is somewhat less pronounced in Switzerland's diplomatic service (67%) and the social partnership between employers and trade unions (65%).

Political transparency trails well behind: only half of eligible voters are proud of it (50%). The findings reveal a clear tension in Switzerland's political self-image. People place a high value on stability, political participation and the country's institutional independence, but take a considerably more critical view of the transparency and intelligibility of political processes.

**Pride in elements of Swiss politics**

Are there certain aspects of Swiss politics that you are particularly proud of? Are you very proud, fairly proud, not very proud or not proud at all?

*in % of eligible voters*




Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (N = 2,001)

# Trust in politics and the economy remains stable

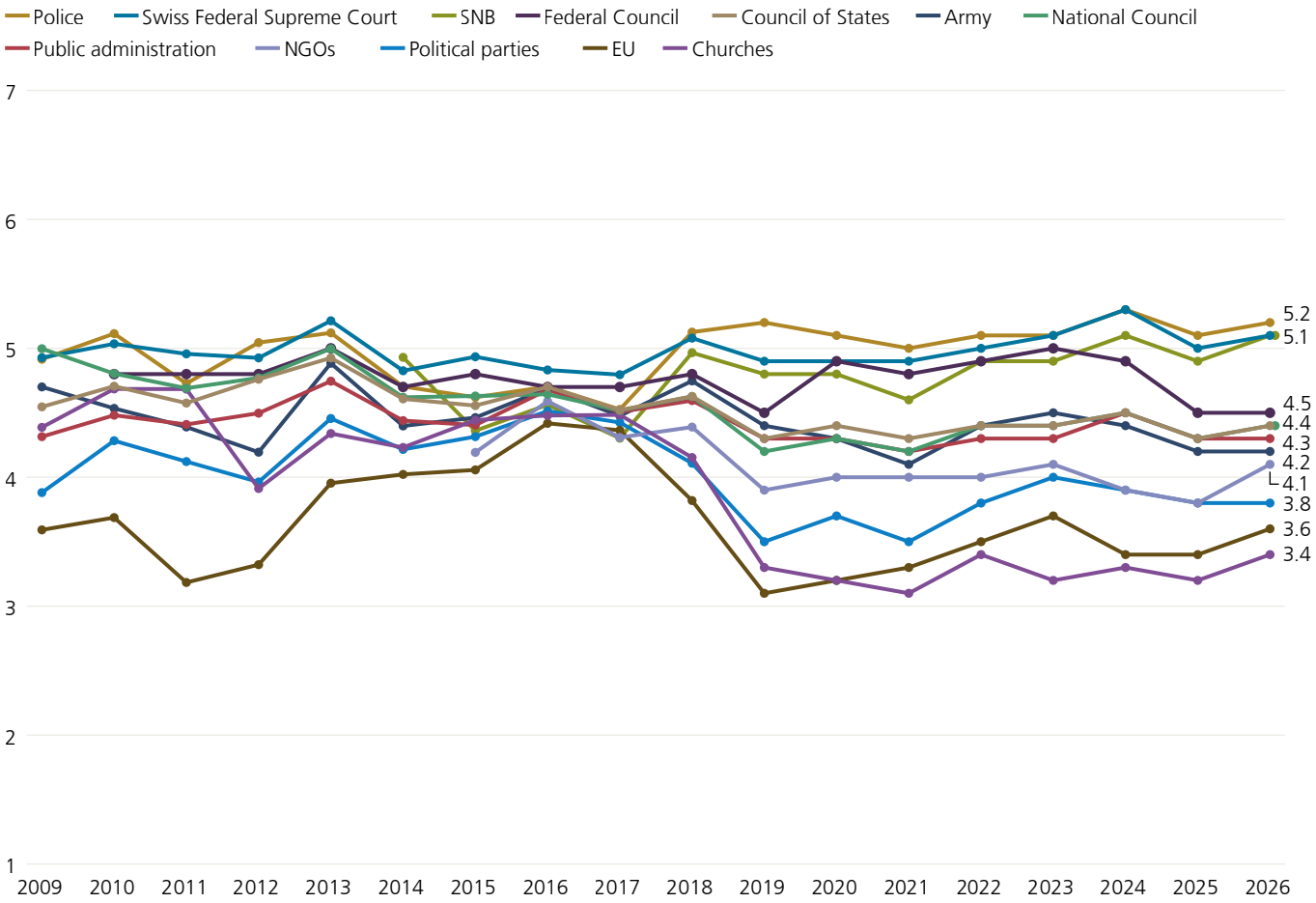
There is little change in the underlying patterns of trust in 2026. The police once again rank first, with an average score of 5.2 on a scale from 1 to 7. They are followed by the Federal Supreme Court and the Swiss National Bank, both on 5.1. These institutions represent security, the rule of law and economic stability. The Federal Council follows with an average score of 4.5, while Parliament, the armed forces and the public administration score between 4.2 and 4.4.

Trust in most actors has recovered slightly compared with the previous year. The clear dividing line nevertheless remains. Institutions command greater trust than participants in the political arena. NGOs score 4.1, political parties 3.8 and the EU 3.6, indicating comparatively lower levels of trust. Churches rank last, with a score of 3.4. Together with the strong sense of pride in political rights and the Federal Constitution, these findings show that people continue to place considerable trust in Switzerland's political system but are more cautious about the actors who shape day-to-day politics.

**Trend: average confidence in institutions (politics and authorities)**

There are various institutions in Switzerland, such as the government, courts and banks. People have varying levels of confidence in these institutions. Using this scale, please indicate how much confidence you personally have in each of the institutions listed below.

*in averages of voters, scale from 1 (no confidence) to 7 (very high confidence)*




Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n = approx. 1,050 each)

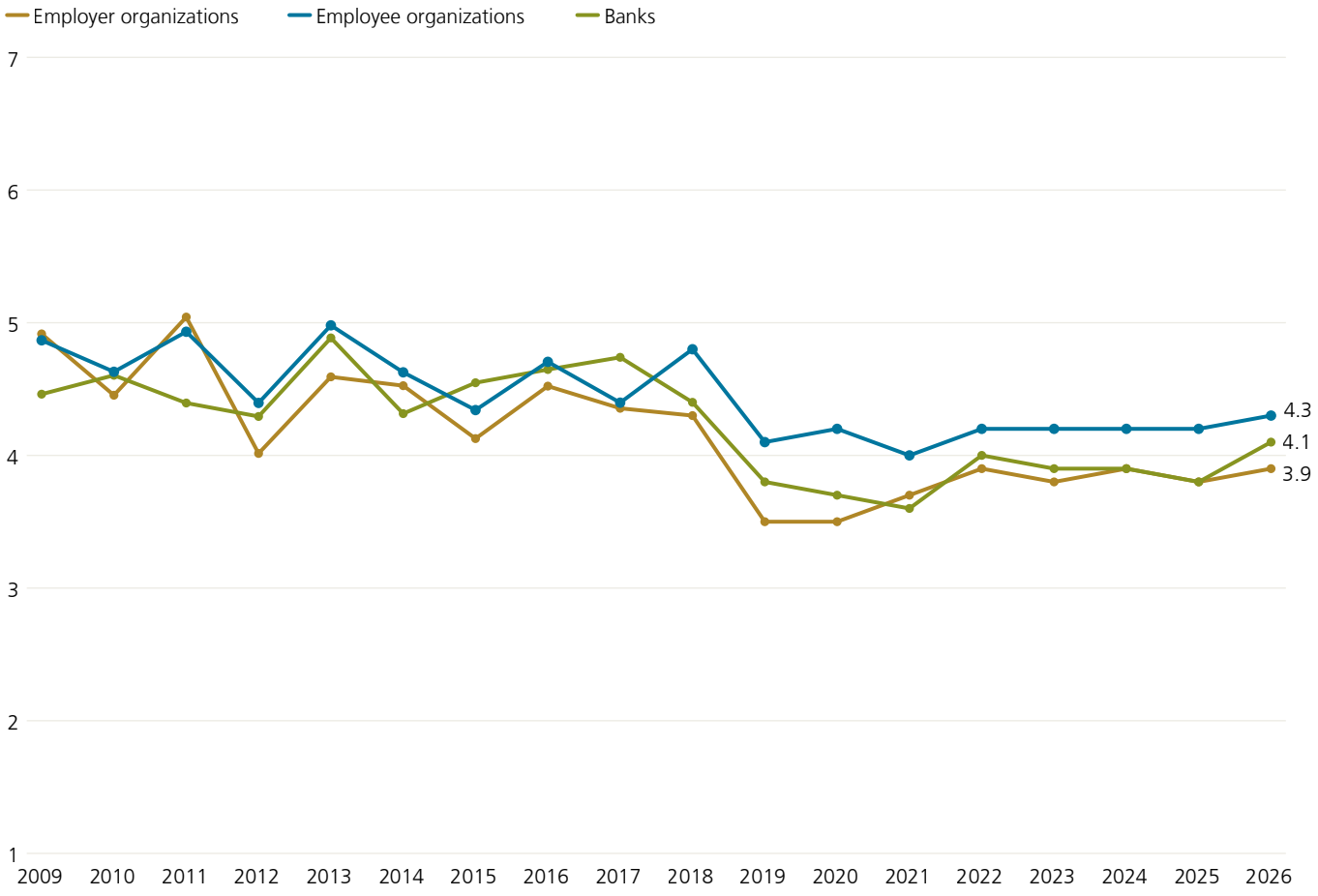
Trust in economic institutions remains relatively low in 2026 but also shows signs of a modest recovery. Employee organizations continue to lead, with a mean score of 4.3, maintaining their position ahead of banks and employer organizations that they have held for several years.

Trust in banks rose by 0.3 points year-on-year to 4.1, while employer organizations score 3.9. Despite these recent gains, all three scores remain below the levels of the early 2010s.

**Trend: average confidence in institutions (economic)**

There are various institutions in Switzerland, such as the government, courts and banks. People have varying levels of confidence in these institutions. Using this scale, please indicate how much confidence you personally have in each of the institutions listed below.

*in averages of voters, scale from 1 (no confidence) to 7 (very high confidence)*




Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n = approx. 1,040 each)

# A majority of eligible voters are dissatisfied with the performance of government and public administration

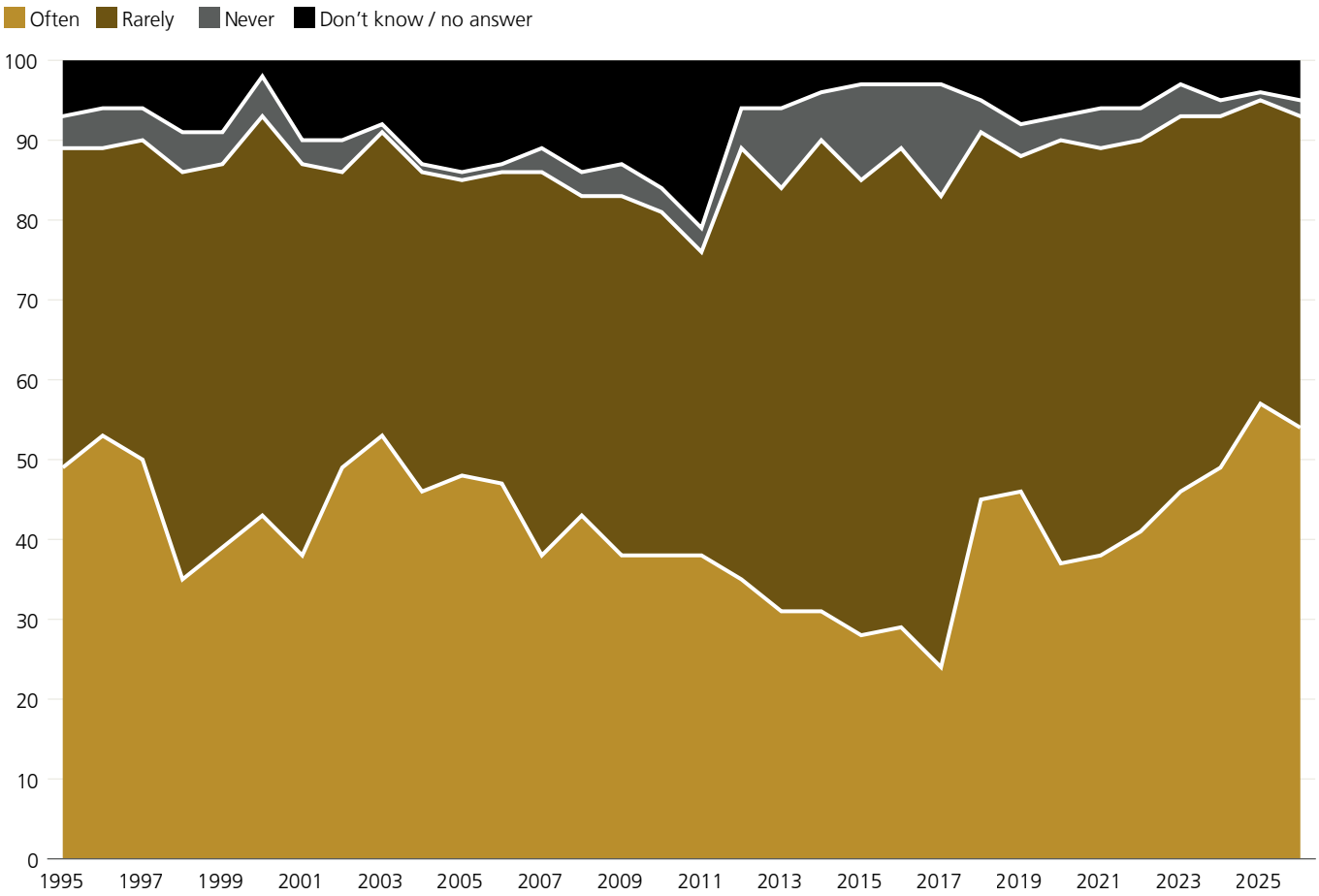
The extent to which government and public administration are seen as effective is crucial to public acceptance of political decisions. In 2026, the public remains critical. More than half of the electorate (54%) often feel that the political system fails on important issues. Although this is slightly below the previous year's peak, a majority continue to express reservations about its performance.

A further 39% of respondents rarely perceive such failures, while hardly anyone believes that the political system never fails. Across all the years the survey has been conducted we can see that following the low recorded in 2017, the proportion expressing a critical view has risen almost continuously. The slight easing in 2026 therefore does little to alter the overall picture. A clear gap remains between the strong pride people take in Switzerland's political institutions and their assessment of how effectively those institutions perform in practice.

**Trend: policy failure**

Do you feel that the policies pursued by government and administration are failing in key areas?

*in % of eligible voters*




Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n = approx. 1,300 each)

In 2026, 42% of eligible voters often feel that the economy is failing on important issues, while a narrow majority of 51% rarely perceive such failures.

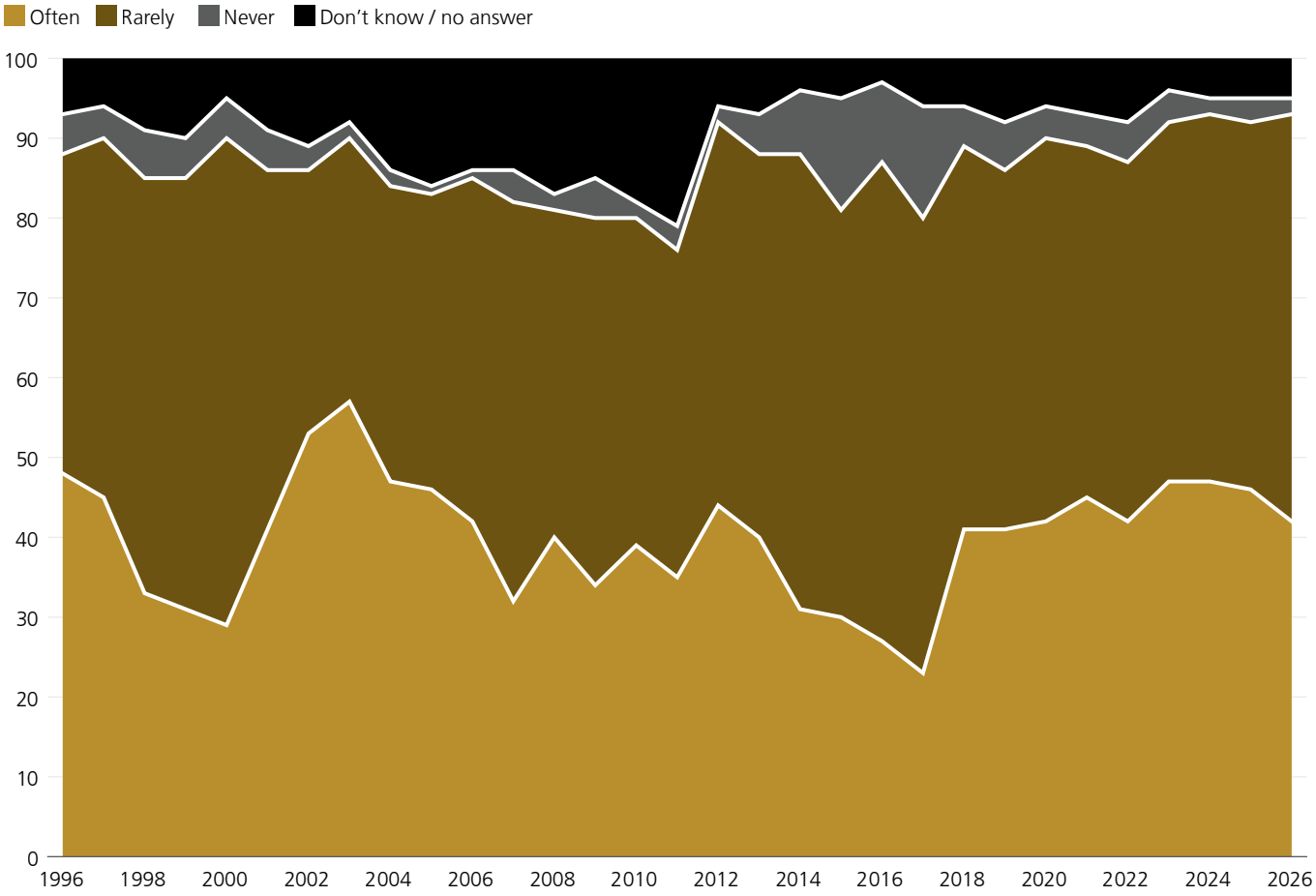
Critical sentiment has therefore declined compared with the previous two years. The longer-term picture is less consistent. Periods of pronounced skepticism, including in the early 2000s, have repeatedly been followed by substantially more positive assessments. The percentage of people taking a critical view had risen again since 2018 before edging down somewhat in 2026.

A comparison with perceived political failure is instructive. While a majority believe that government and public administration are not effective, a narrow majority take a positive view of the economy. Although concern about housing costs, inequality and low wages is growing, the economic system is fundamentally questioned less than political governance.

**Trend: economic failure**

Do you feel the economy is failing in key areas?

*in % of eligible voters*




Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n = approx. 1,310 each)

Chapter 4

# Geopolitics and economy

## International institutions inspire more confidence than major powers

In an increasingly fragmented world, trust in international actors has become a question of political orientation. Who does the public believe can provide stability and can be relied upon to take Switzerland's interests into account? In 2026, multilateral organizations and the EU once again rank well ahead of individual major powers. The UN records a trust rating of 36%, followed by the EU at 34%. Both have made clear gains since last year. NATO trails at 28%, having lost some support.

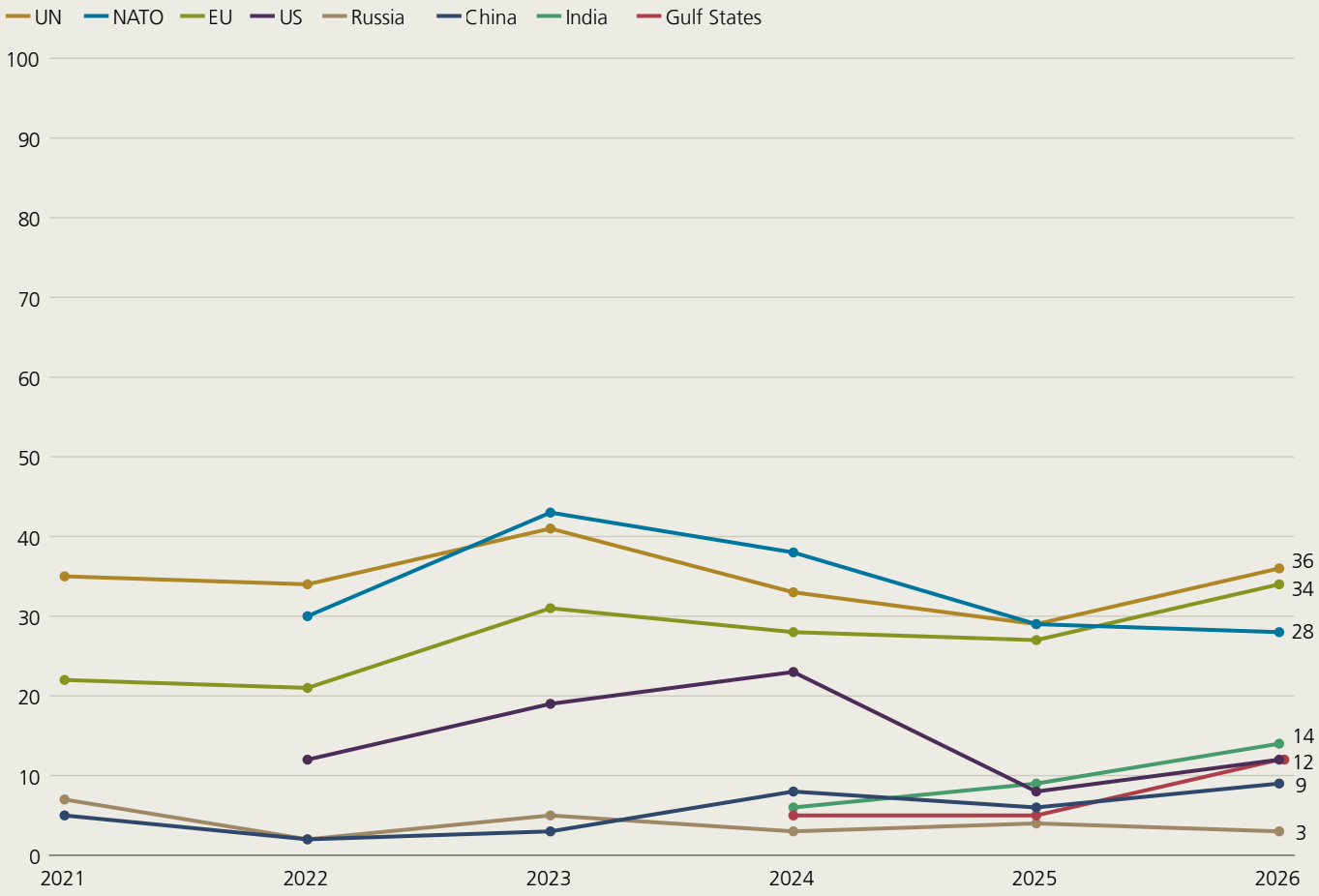
Despite a recent modest increase, trust in the US remains well below its 2024 level following political developments in Washington. Meanwhile, India, China and the Gulf States have gained trust from a low base. With ratings of between 9% and 14%, however, they remain well behind Western alliances and organizations. Russia continues to rank last, at 3%.

The Swiss public therefore continues to place greater trust in institutionalized international cooperation than in the policies of individual major powers. The recent increase has not fundamentally altered this hierarchy of trust.

**Trend: trust in states, federations and organizations**

Please specify how much confidence you have in the following countries, associations of states and organizations and their policy toward Switzerland.

*in % of eligible voters, share expressing trust (5–7), on a scale from 1 (no trust) to 7 (very high trust)*



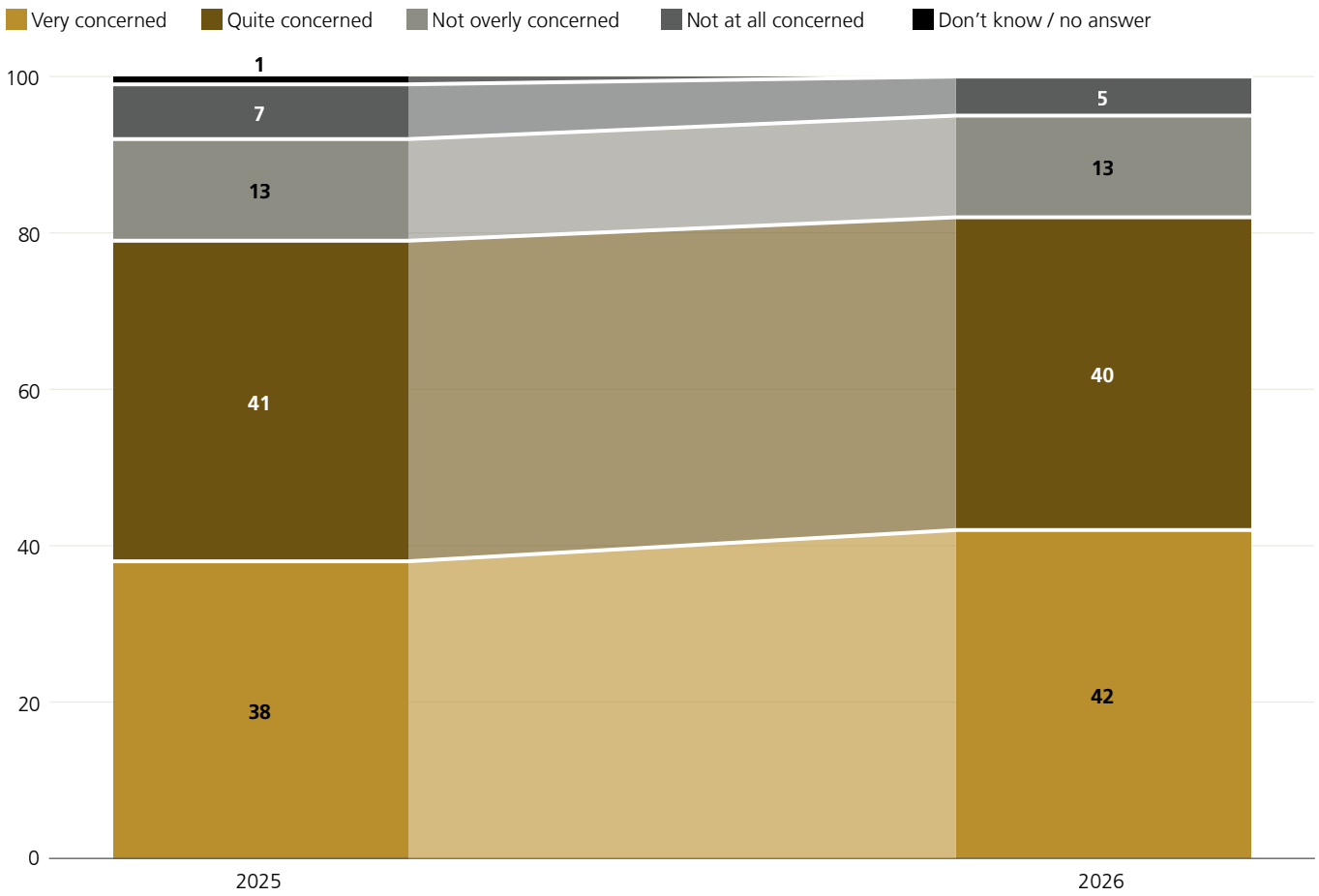

Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n = approx. 1,190 each)

Concern about the role of the US in the world remains widespread in 2026 and has increased slightly again, even as trust in the country has recovered somewhat. A total of 82% of voters are very or quite concerned, compared with 79% in the previous year. The share of voters who are very concerned has risen from 38% to 42%. Only 18% are not overly or not at all concerned about the role of the US.

**Trend: concerns about the role of the US in the world**

How concerned are you about the role of the United States in the world?

*in % of eligible voters*




Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n = approx. 1,150 each)

# Is Switzerland prepared for geopolitical change?

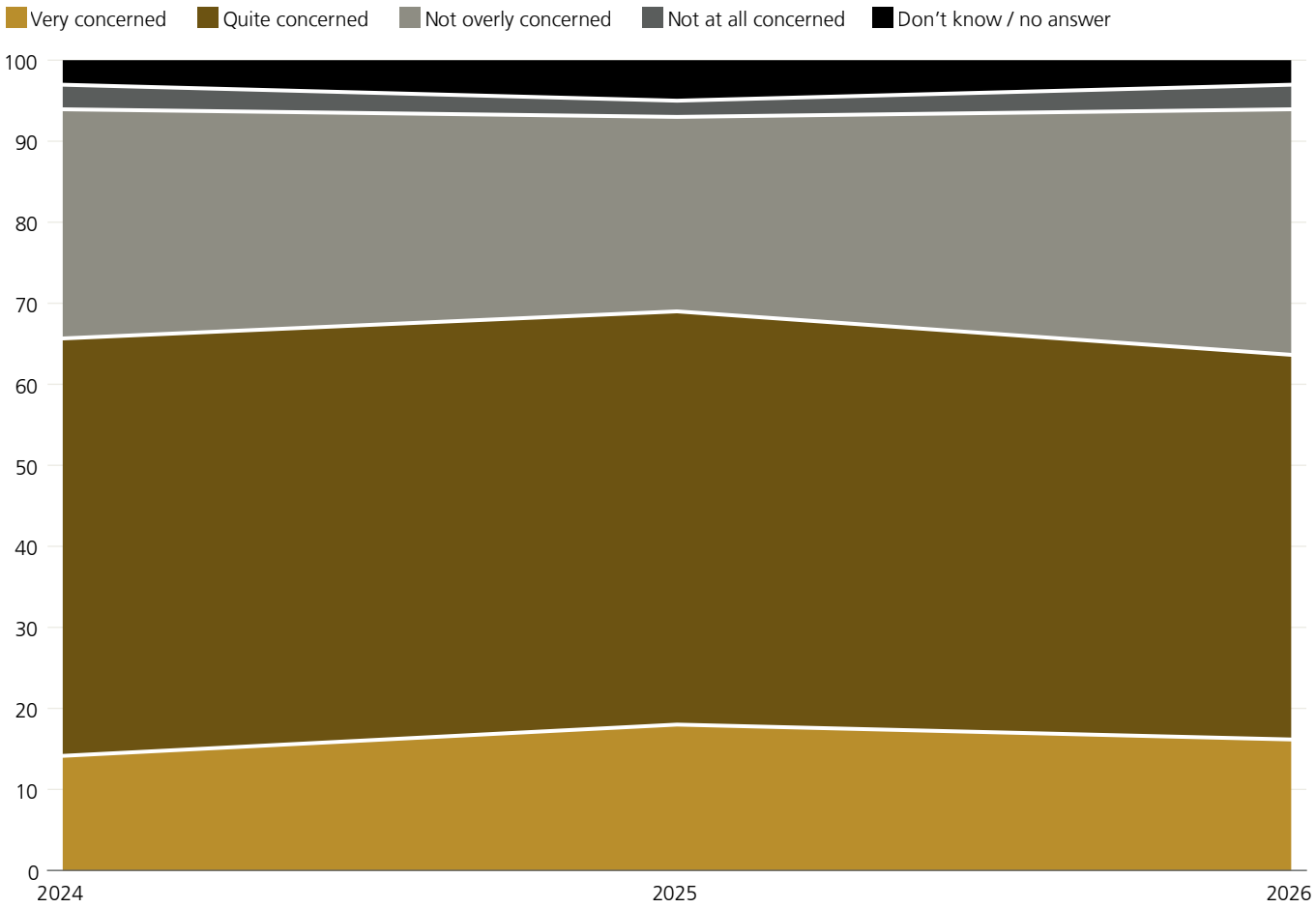
Geopolitical upheaval remains a defining issue for the Swiss public when considering the future. In 2026, just under two-thirds of voters are quite or very concerned about the possibility of major changes (63%). Although this is slightly lower than in the previous year, it remains high.

Geopolitical changes are still seen as important, although not everyone regards them as immediately pressing, which is also reflected in the current pattern of concern.

**Trend: concerns about possible major geopolitical changes in the future**

To what extent are you concerned about any major geopolitical changes in the future?

*in % of eligible voters*




Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n = approx. 1,180 each)

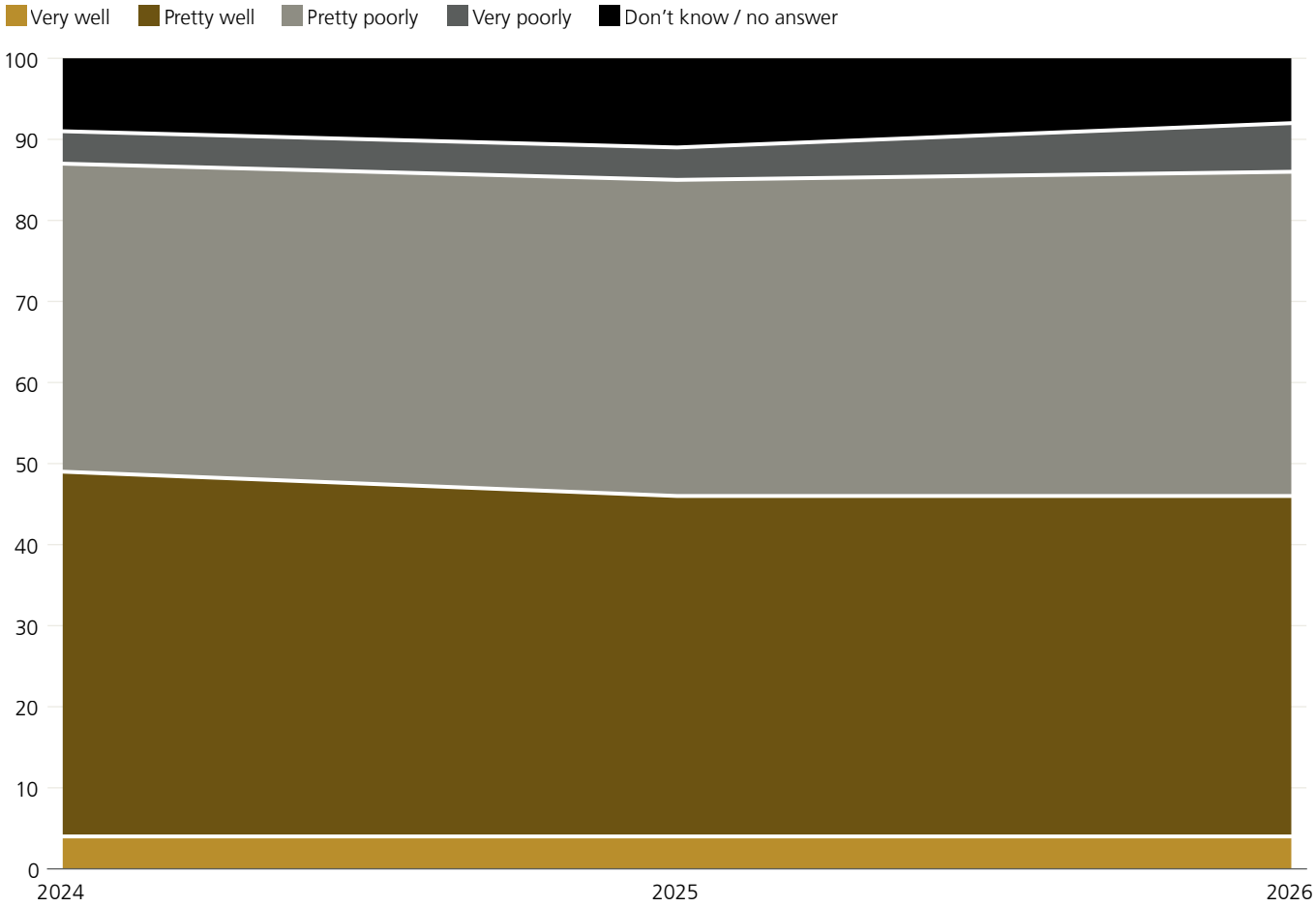
Assessments of Switzerland's current position remain marked by uncertainty. In 2026, 46% of the electorate believe that the country is very or pretty well prepared for potentially far-reaching geopolitical changes. At the same time, an equal proportion consider it pretty or very poorly prepared. Confidence and skepticism are therefore almost evenly balanced.

Given the continuing high level of concern about international developments, this divided perception is politically significant. The public recognizes the country's stability and institutional strengths, but questions whether these will be sufficient under changing global conditions. There is confidence in Switzerland's current position, but the country is not given the benefit of the doubt when it comes to security.

**Trend: assessment of Switzerland's position with regard to possible major geopolitical changes in the future**

How well do you think Switzerland is prepared for any major geopolitical changes that might occur in the future?

*in % of eligible voters*




Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n = approx. 1,180 each)

# Despite trade conflicts and political tensions: trust in the Swiss economy remains high

Despite geopolitical uncertainty and growing worries about the cost of living, trust in Switzerland's economic position remains exceptionally high. In 2026, 36% rate the Swiss economy as very good compared with economies abroad, while a clear majority of 58% rate it as pretty good. Negative assessments remain the exception: 3% said "pretty bad".

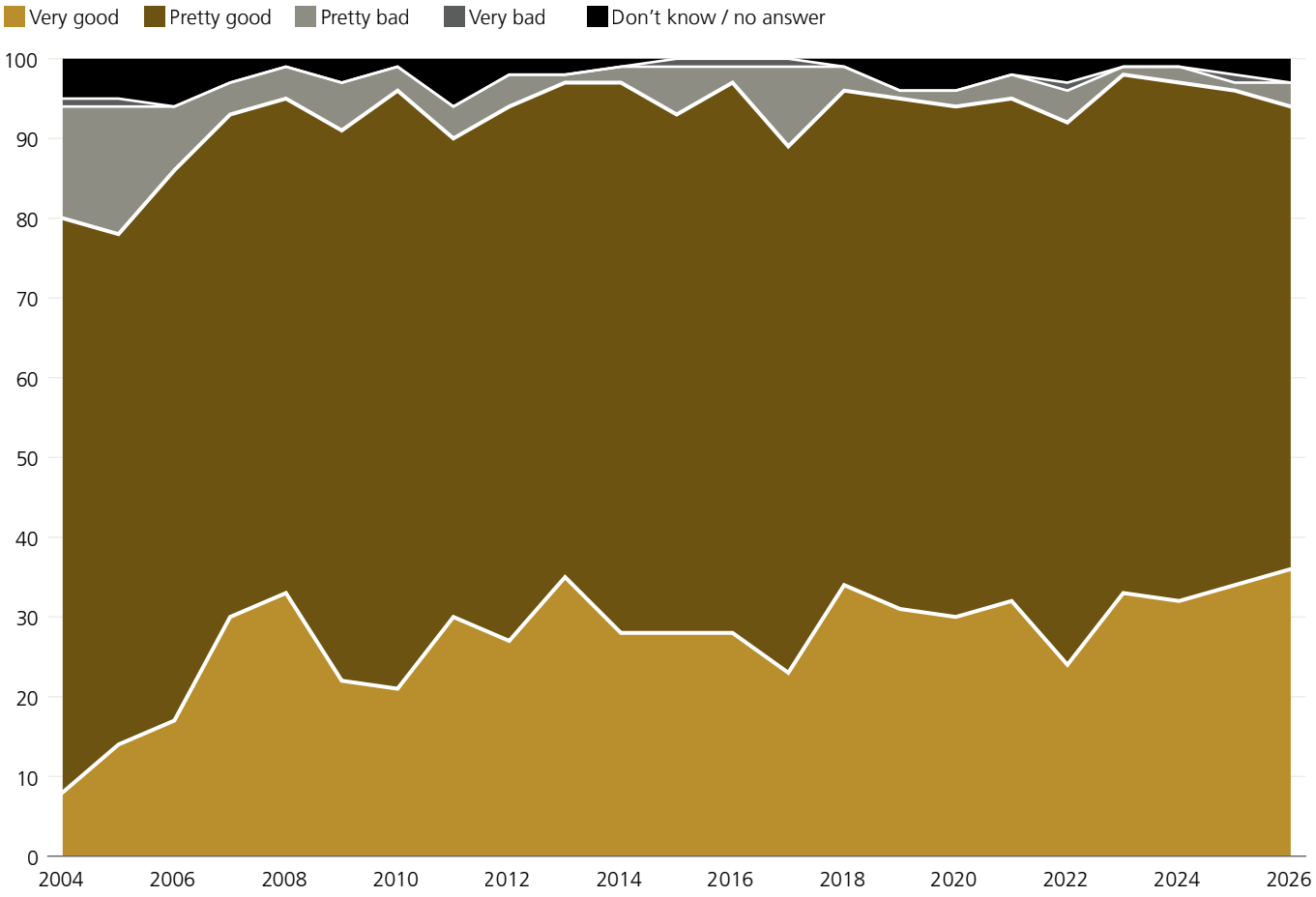
What is remarkable is not so much the current figure as its consistency: For many years, the public has been convinced that Switzerland is economically better placed than other countries. In an environment shaped by trade conflicts, global dependencies and political tensions, the country's economic strength therefore serves as an important anchor of stability.

At the same time, this creates a revealing contrast with the worries discussed so far. While the Swiss economy as a whole is rated very positively compared with economies abroad, rising housing, healthcare and everyday living costs weigh heavily on the public. Skepticism therefore concerns not so much the economy's relative performance as the extent to which its strength is actually felt in everyday life.

**Trend: comparison of Swiss and foreign economies**

How does the Swiss economy compare to the economy outside Switzerland?

*in % of eligible voters*




Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n = approx. 1,360 each)

# A narrow majority of voters favors a stronger orientation toward the EU

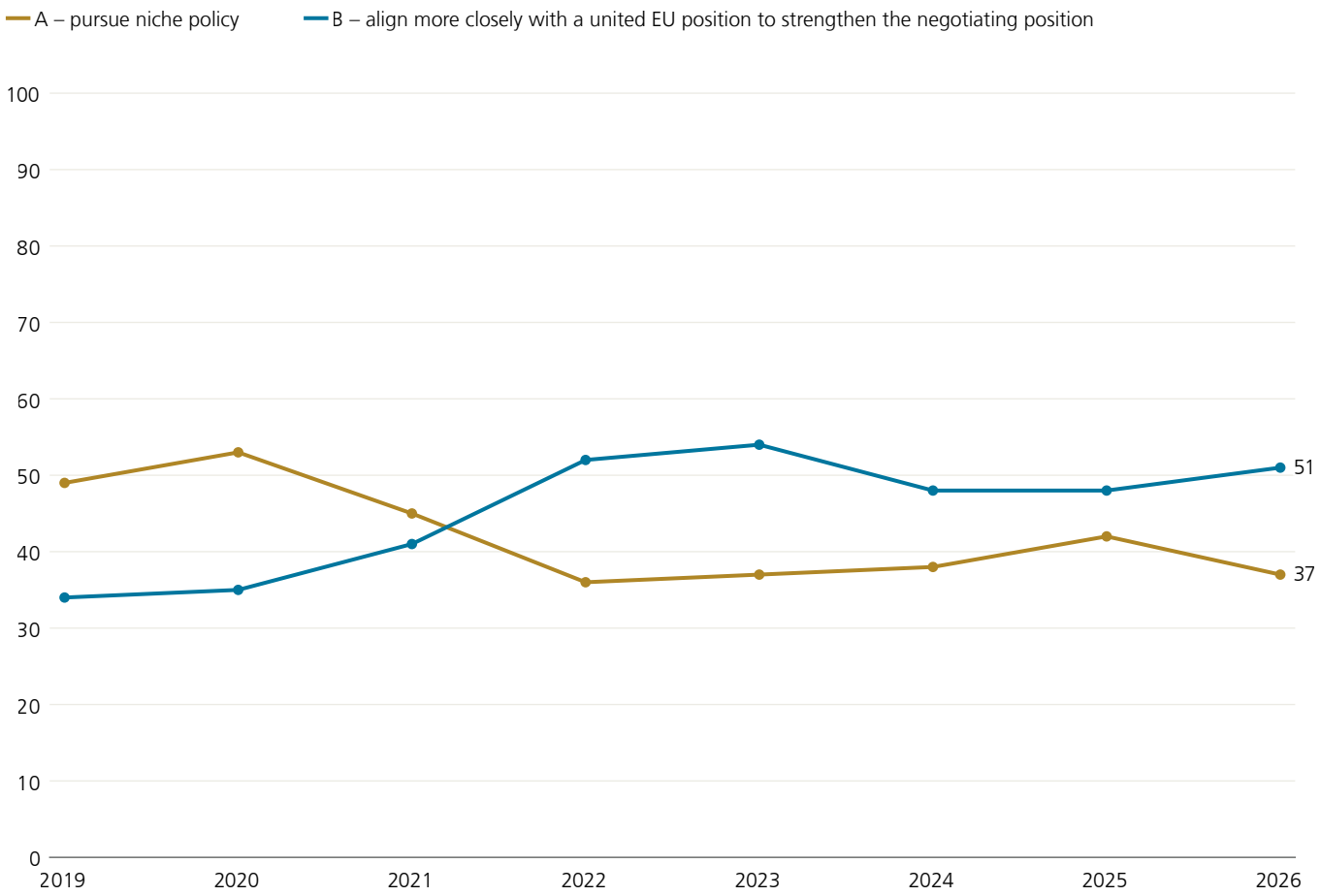
On global trade policy, the pendulum is swinging back toward Europe. In 2026, for the first time since 2023, an absolute majority again favors Switzerland aligning more closely with a unified EU position to strengthen its negotiating power vis-à-vis the major powers (51%). Support for an independent niche strategy, by contrast, has fallen to 37%.

This development is consistent with the geopolitical sentiment described so far. In a world where trade relations are increasingly shaped by power politics, tariffs and strategic dependencies, the public increasingly appears to see a common approach with Europe as effective protection against pressure from individual major powers. Nevertheless, there is no clear consensus on EU policy. More than a third still favor an independent position, while a further 12% are undecided. Switzerland therefore remains divided between economic independence and the desire for stronger international backing.

**Trend: appropriate strategy for Switzerland in global trade**

Global trade is increasingly driven by the power politics of major powers. Which strategy should Switzerland favor here: A or B?

*in % of eligible voters*




Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n = approx. 1,830 each)



# The majority are doing well financially but see little prospect of improvement

Personal life satisfaction remains high for the majority in 2026. On a scale from 0 (completely dissatisfied) to 10 (completely satisfied), 44% of the electorate rate their lives between 8 and 10, while another 24% give a rating of 6 or 7. This shows – as has been the case throughout the entire survey period – that a stable majority are at least somewhat satisfied with the current situation.

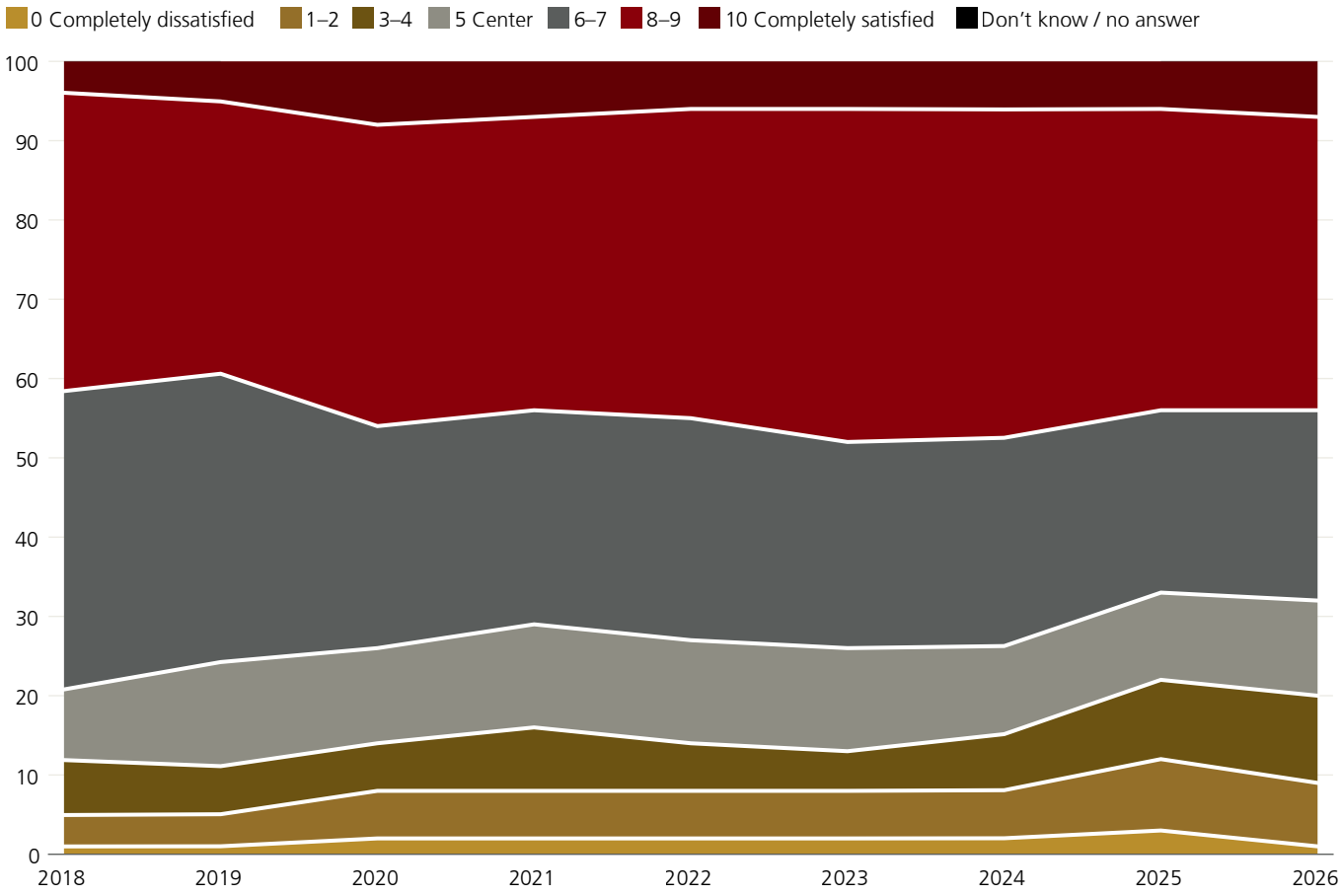
At the same time, this consistency should not obscure the fact that a substantial share of the public has expressed markedly less positive views for several years. In 2026, one in five people say they are dissatisfied with their lives (20%, ratings from 0 to 4). Personal dissatisfaction is therefore not a marginal phenomenon but affects a significant part of society.

A divided picture emerges. Although life satisfaction has proved remarkably resilient despite the pandemic, rising living costs and geopolitical uncertainty, a sizeable group apparently benefits little, if at all, from stability. Growing worries about housing costs, healthcare spending and economic inequality make this finding even more significant.

**Trend: satisfaction with current situation**

On a scale of 0 to 10, how satisfied are you with your life overall?

*in % of eligible voters*



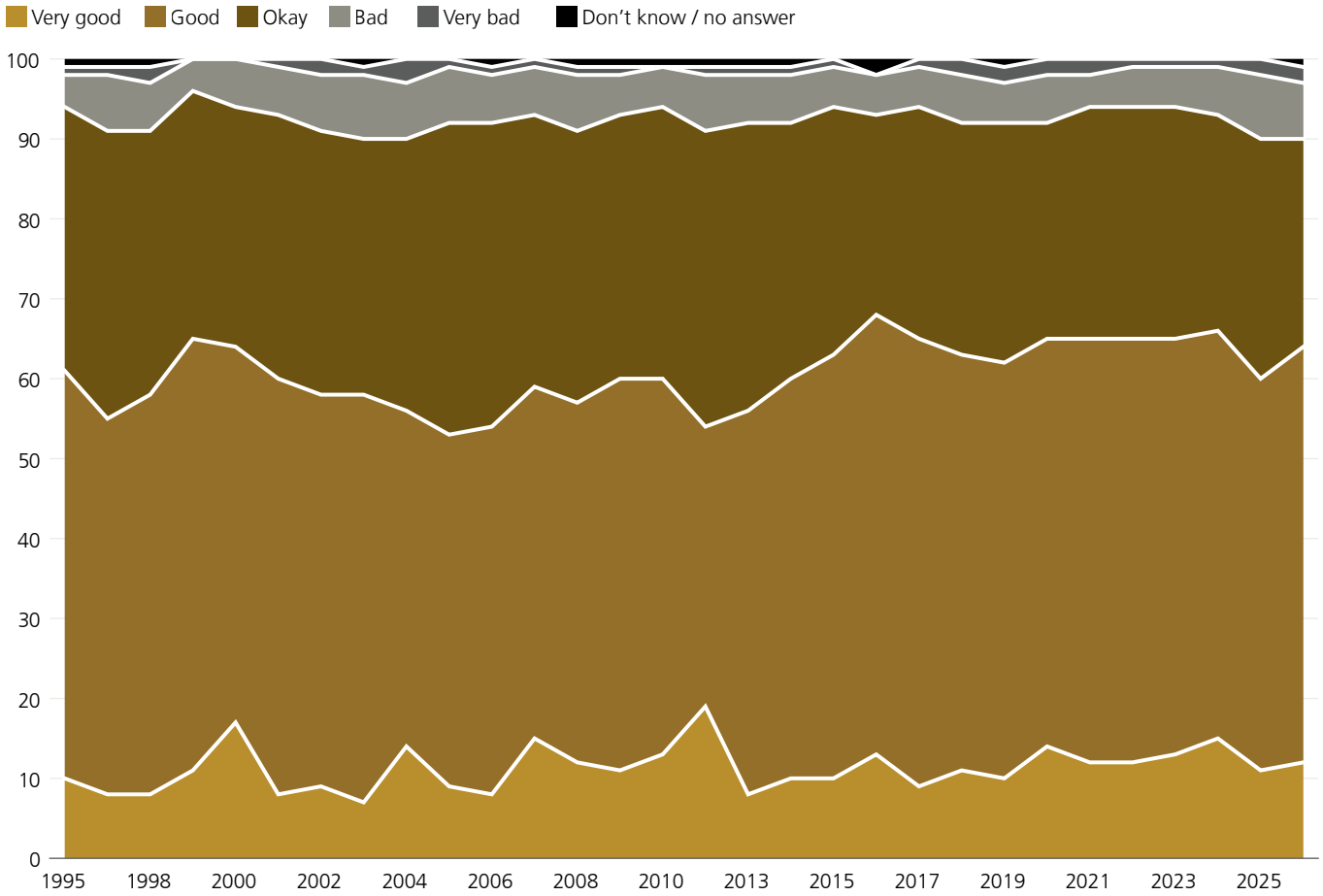

Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n = approx. 1,850 each)

In 2026, people continue to assess their personal financial situation predominantly positively. Just under two-thirds of voters say they are currently doing well or very well financially (64%). A further 26% describe their situation as "okay", and 10% as "bad". Given the prominent worries about health insurance premiums and housing costs, this is a substantial majority who, by their own assessment, are managing at least reasonably well financially.

**Trend: current individual financial situation**

How would you describe your financial situation at the moment?

*in % of eligible voters*




Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n = approx. 1,310 each)

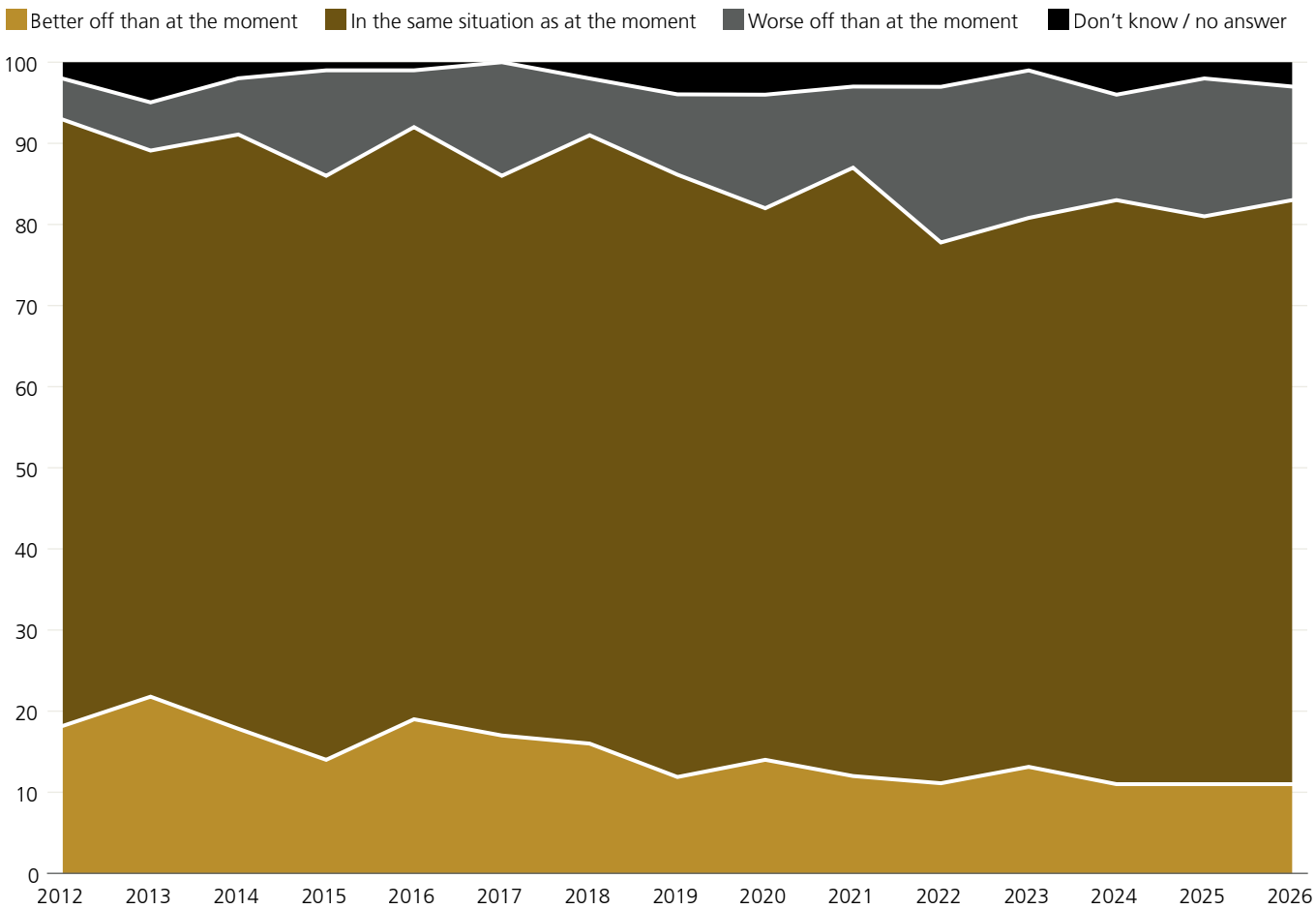
Responses about future finances reveal uncertainty. Despite high satisfaction with their current financial situation, the majority of respondents see no prospect of further improvement. Overall, responses about the expected financial situation over the next 12 months show a high degree of continuity with the previous year. In 2026, 72% of voters expect their personal financial situation to remain unchanged, while 14% expect it to worsen and only 11% expect an improvement.

Pessimism therefore continues to slightly outweigh optimism, although the balance has eased somewhat compared with 2025. Looking across the entire time series, noticeably fewer people expect to improve their economic circumstances than at the beginning of the 2010s. Although the majority view their current situation positively, the financial pressures of everyday life are increasing for many Swiss voters. Rising healthcare and housing costs in particular appear to cloud their outlook. The prevailing economic mood is therefore shaped less by an acute fear of downward mobility than by cautious expectations.

**Trend: future individual financial situation**

Thinking about the next 12 months, would you say that you will be better off, about the same or worse off financially than you are now?

*in % of eligible voters*




Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n = approx. 1,310 each)

Chapter 5

# Artificial intelligence and digitalization

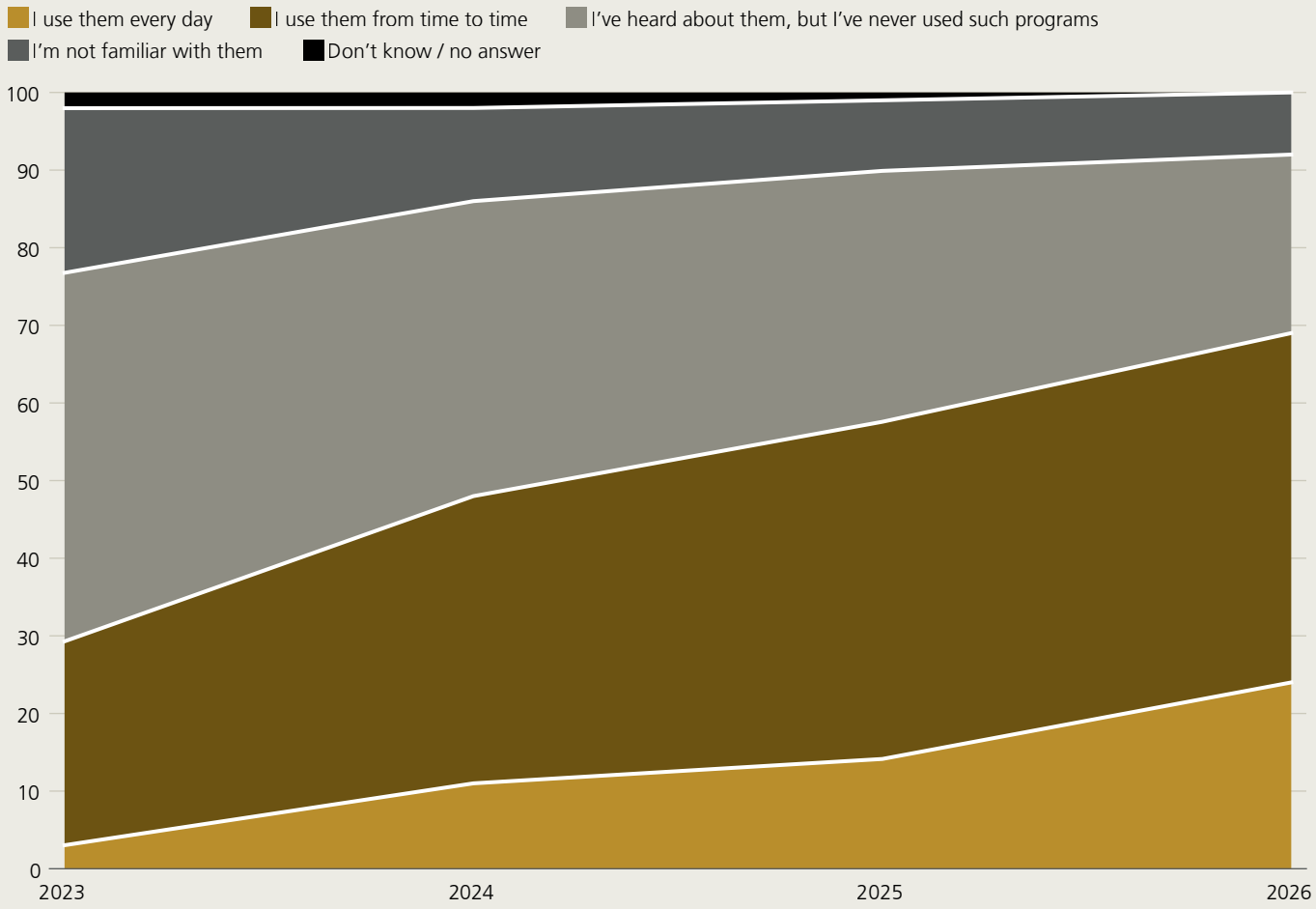
## AI has become part of everyday life

In just a few years, generative artificial intelligence has evolved from a technological novelty into an established part of everyday life. In 2026, 69% of voters already report using ChatGPT, Claude or other AI assistants. Daily use stands at 24%, with a further 45% using AI at least occasionally. The share of users has thus more than doubled compared with 2023 (29%, +40 pp). Daily use is growing particularly rapidly. In 2023, only 3% reported using such applications every day; by 2026, that figure is already eight times as high. AI assistants are therefore not only becoming better known but are also increasingly being integrated into everyday work and personal routines. In 2026, only 8% are still unfamiliar with AI programs, while just under a quarter have heard of them but have not yet used them themselves.

**Trend: knowledge and use of chatbots**

Are you familiar with and do you use ChatGPT, Claude or other AI assistants?

*in % of eligible voters*




Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n = approx. 1,110 each)

# Increased use of AI does not strengthen trust

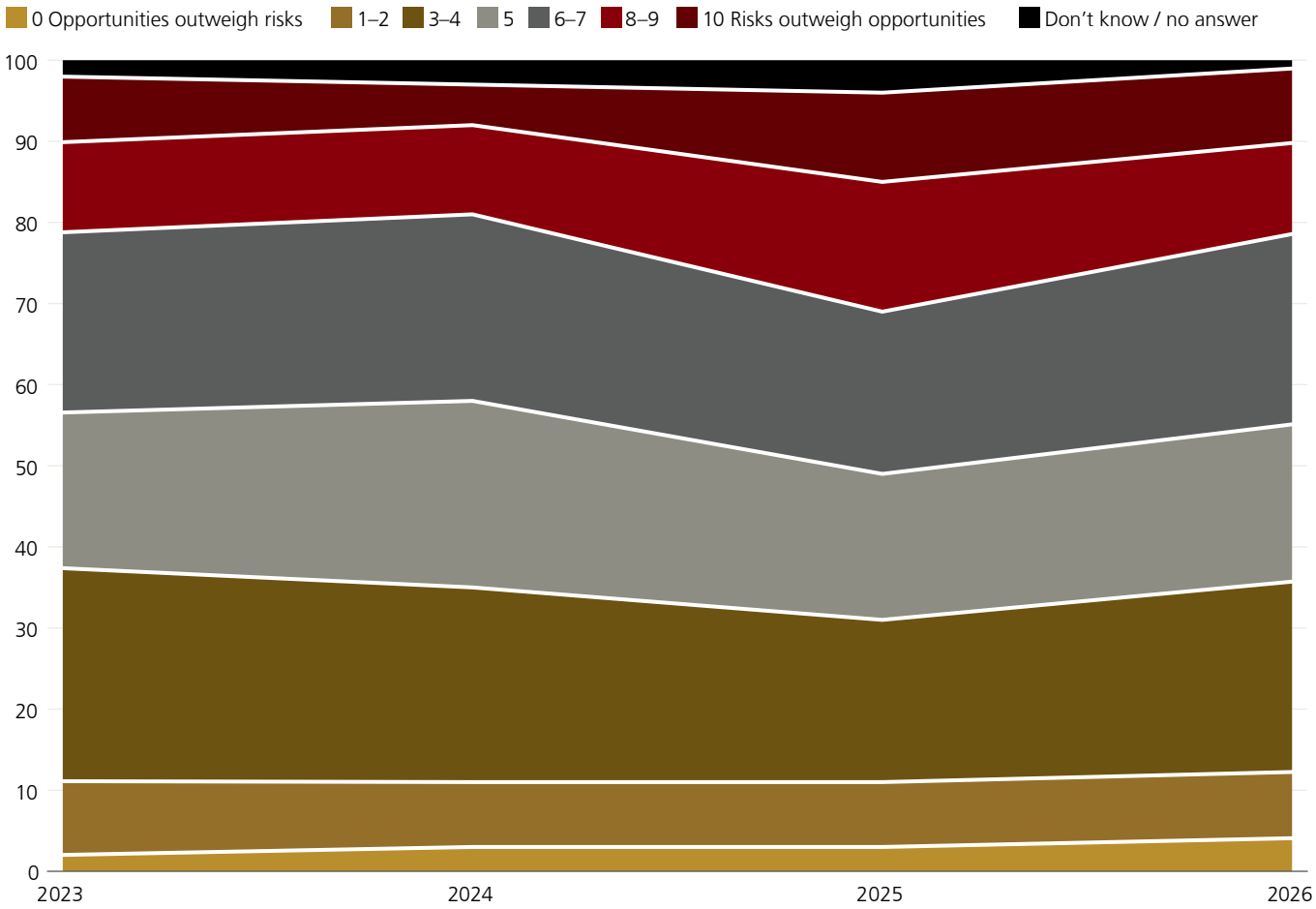
As the use of AI applications grows, the technology is becoming more commonplace. However, assessments of its implications on a scale from 0 (opportunities outweigh risks) to 10 (risks outweigh opportunities) remain cautious. In 2026, 43% of voters place greater emphasis on the risks, while 35% tend to emphasize the opportunities. Another 19% position themselves exactly in the middle. A skeptical view of AI applications therefore continues to prevail, although it is somewhat less pronounced than in the previous year.

The rapid spread of chatbots does not automatically lead to a more positive attitude. Even as using AI increasingly becomes second nature, questions about reliability, the impact on jobs, data protection and societal oversight remain. Use and confidence are therefore not developing in tandem.

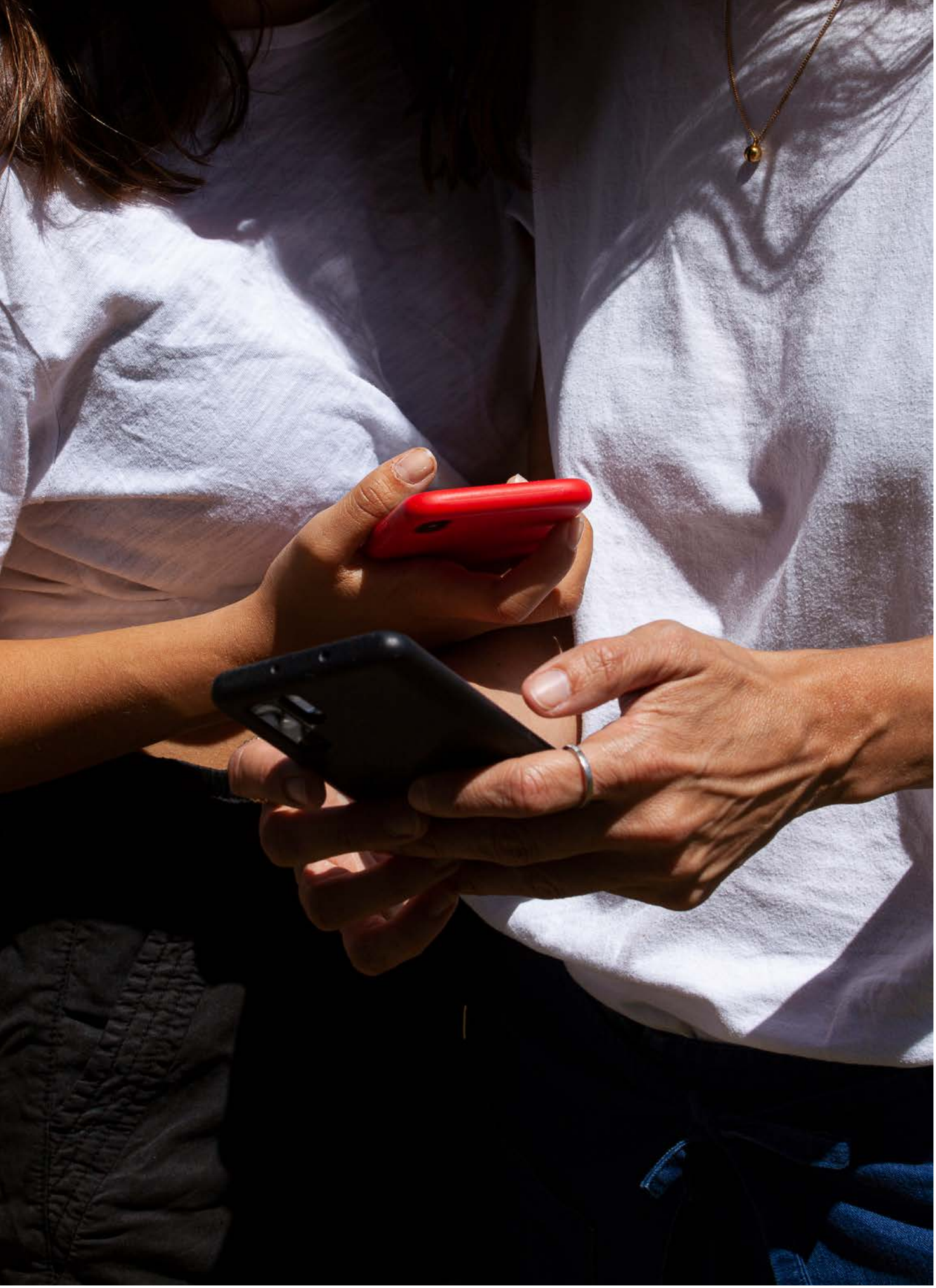
**Trend: assessing opportunities and risks of AI**

What is your assessment? Does artificial intelligence present more opportunities or risks?
Please use a scale from 0 (opportunities outweigh risks) to 10 (risks outweigh opportunities).

*in % of eligible voters*




Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n = approx. 1,110 each)



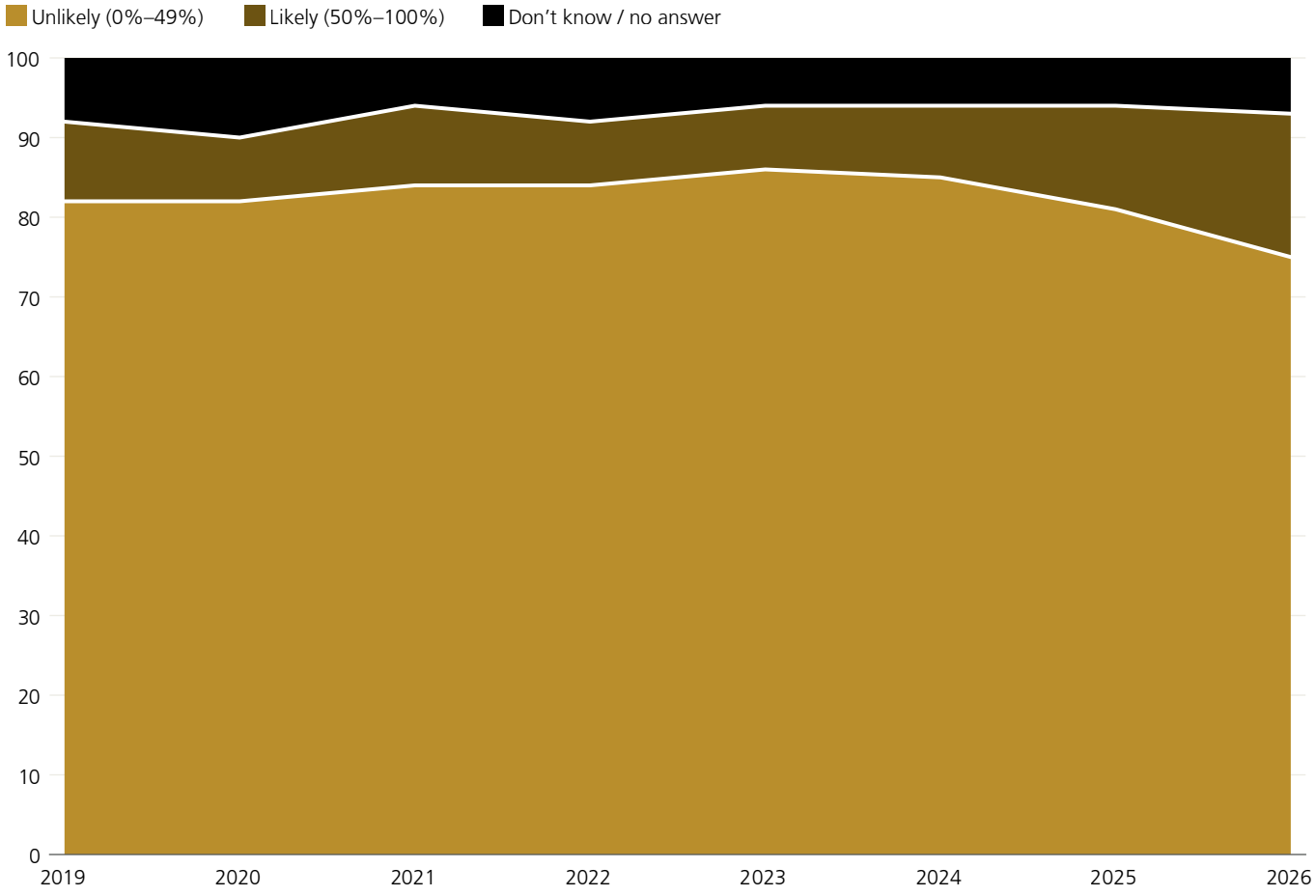
Persistent skepticism toward artificial intelligence is not merely abstract; it is increasingly extending to people's own employment situations. In 2026, a clear majority of 75% still consider it unlikely that they will lose their job as a result of technology in the next five years. However, this figure is significantly lower than in 2023, when 86% considered their jobs secure. At the same time, the share of those who consider it likely that their job will be automated has risen to 18%. This figure has thus more than doubled within three years and reached its highest level since the time series began. The rapid spread of generative AI appears to be making the potential consequences of technological change more tangible for many employees.

However, there is no evidence of widespread fear of job loss associated with the emergence of new technologies. Most people in employment still do not see their own jobs as being under immediate threat. Yet what was previously a more general concern about the future of work is beginning to have a greater impact on personal perceptions of risk.

**Trend: likelihood of job loss due to new technologies**

How likely do you think it is (0%–100%) that your job will be automated by a robot, new technology or intelligent software in the next five years?

*% of employed voters*




Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n = approx. 1,330 each)

Chapter 6

# Future

## Would you prefer to live 50 years ago or 50 years from now? Most Swiss voters prefer the past

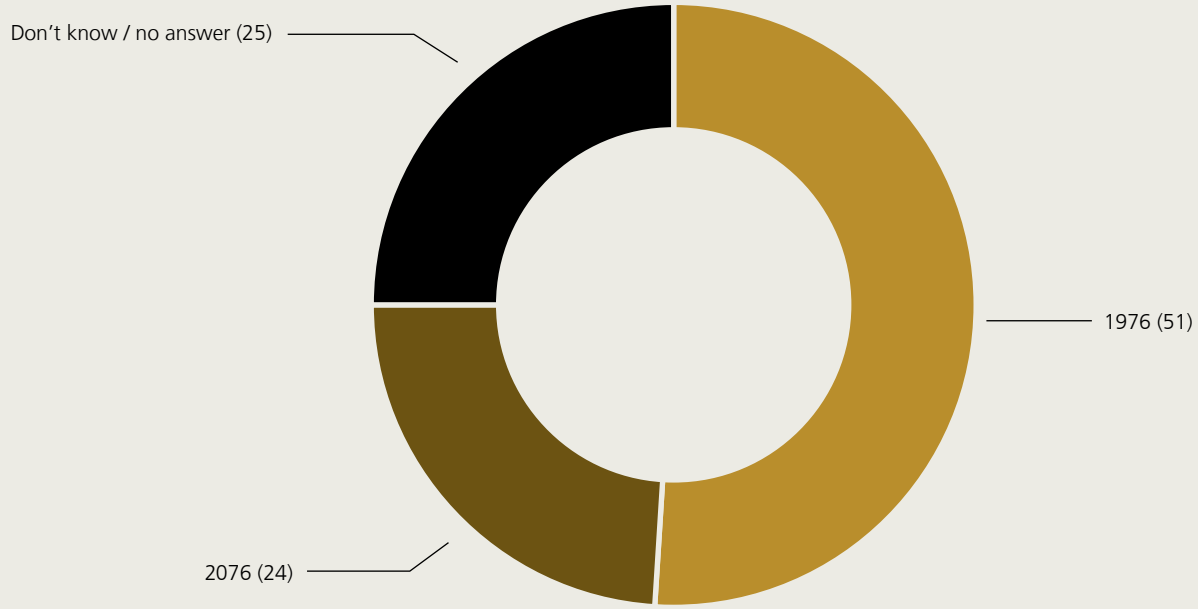
As the Worry Barometer marks its 50th anniversary, it looks not only at developments over recent decades and the present, but also at the country's future. When given the hypothetical choice of living in the past or the future, a narrow majority of voters say they would rather live in Switzerland in 1976 than in 2076 (51%). By contrast, just under a quarter (24%) choose the Switzerland of the future, while a similar proportion are unable or unwilling to decide (25%).

The result suggests a strong longing for a past perceived as easier to navigate. The fact that only one in four people prefers the Switzerland of the future also points to limited confidence in the future. The large number of undecided respondents also shows that, for many, the future remains difficult to imagine.

**Preference for the Switzerland of the past or the future**

This survey has now been running for 50 years. If you had to choose, which Switzerland would you rather live in? Switzerland 50 years AGO (1976) or Switzerland 50 years FROM NOW (2076)?

*in % of eligible voters*




Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n = 1,089)

"I would definitely choose 1976. I am fascinated by what life looked like in past decades, and I imagine the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s as very pleasant and, above all, less hectic."

**Simon Ehammer,** Professional Athlete



The preference for Switzerland in 1976 follows clear political and social patterns. Differences are particularly pronounced across age groups. As age increases, the balance shifts steadily in favor of the past. Only voters between the ages of 18 and 29 slightly prefer Switzerland in 2076 to Switzerland in 1976, while 38% of this age group say they would rather live in 1976. The younger generation's muted enthusiasm for the future is telling and suggests greater skepticism about the future.

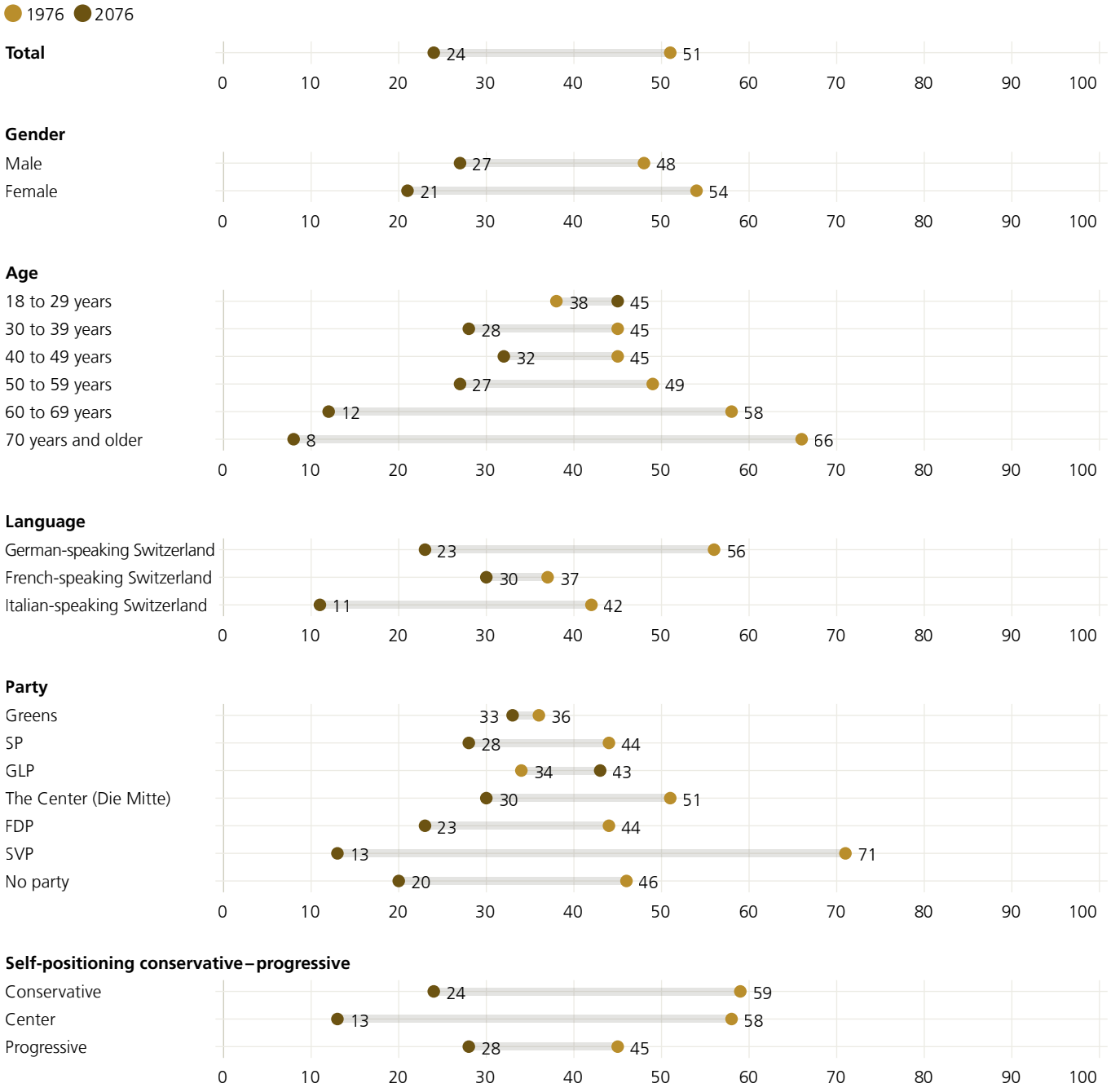
Differences across political camps also show that the question goes well beyond personal preference. Opinions are most pronounced among SVP supporters: 71% prefer 1976 and only 13% prefer 2076. By contrast, many more GLP supporters choose the future than the past. Among Green supporters, the balance is pretty much even. The responses reflect different underlying political attitudes toward social change. While some place greater emphasis on preservation, continuity and a Switzerland they perceive as familiar, others are more likely to associate change with opportunities.

Notably, however, even people who explicitly describe themselves as change-oriented prefer the past to the future. The finding therefore cannot be reduced to a simple contrast between conservative and progressive views. Rather, it points to a broader unease about long-term developments. Even those who generally favor change do not automatically look ahead to 2076 with optimism. The preference for 1976 is therefore less an expression of a uniformly backward-looking outlook than an indication of how difficult respondents currently find it to associate the future with a compelling, positive image of Switzerland. Instead, they associate the past with a sense of security and control.

**Preference for the Switzerland of the past or the future, by subgroup**

This survey has now been running for 50 years. If you had to choose, which Switzerland would you rather live in? Switzerland 50 years AGO (1976) or Switzerland 50 years FROM NOW (2076)?

*in % of eligible voters*




Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n = 1,089)

> "As a woman, I would choose 2076. Because in 1976 there were still cantons without women's suffrage and with very archaic marriage law."

**Lisa Mazzone,** President of the Swiss Green Party

The preference for Switzerland in 1976 is about far more than nostalgia alone. The most common reason for longing for the past is the desire for a simpler, slower pace of life (33%). Switzerland 50 years ago is remembered as calmer, easier to navigate and less hectic. Closely related is the longing for better social relations (24%), meaning greater consideration for others, shared values and cohesion.

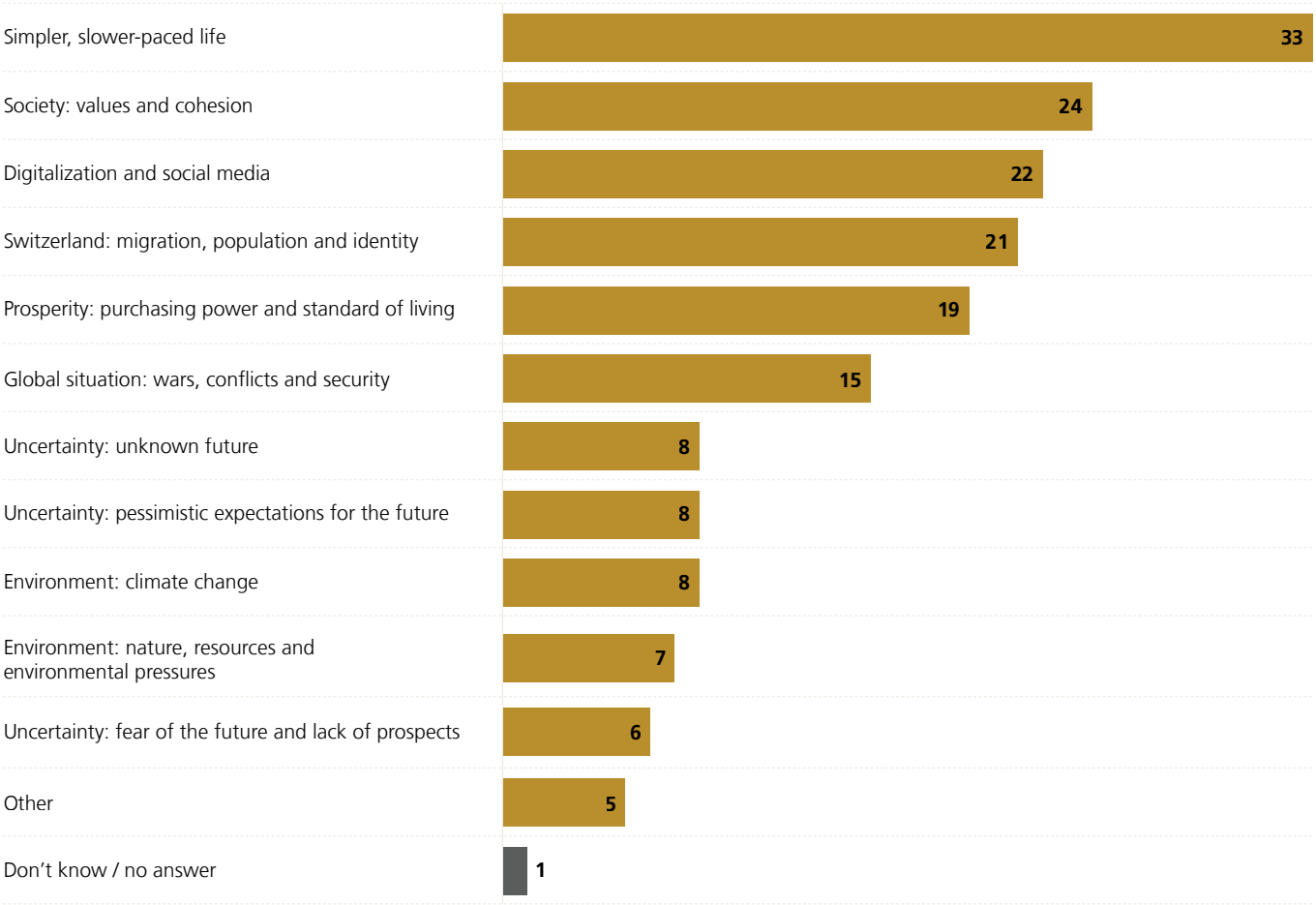
At the same time, this view of the past is shaped by very present-day concerns. A total of 22% of voters cite digitalization and the associated pressures of the internet, smartphones, social media or artificial intelligence. Developments specific to Switzerland, such as population growth, migration, bureaucracy or the loss of national independence, follow at 21%. Economic reasons also play an important role. For example, 19% of respondents associate Switzerland in the past with greater purchasing power, greater material security or the idea that one income was more likely to be enough to support a family. A further 15% explain their choice by citing the current global situation and geopolitical uncertainties.

There is also a general concern about the future. Some prefer 1976 because the past is known, whereas they find it difficult to imagine Switzerland in 2076. Others explicitly expect worse living conditions or worry about climate change, environmental destruction and resource scarcity. The subgroups reveal different motives. While personal memories and the idea of a better life are more often the dominant factors among older people, younger people look back with less nostalgia. Their preference is more likely to be shaped by fears about the future, environmental concerns and uncertainty about advancing digitalization. The group that would rather live in 1976 brings together two very different perspectives: longing for a familiar past and concern about a future that is difficult to imagine.

**Reason for preferring the Switzerland of the past**

You said you would rather live in 1976 than in 2076. What is the main reason for your choice?

*in % of eligible voters*




Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n = 451)

Curiosity is the most common reason for preferring Switzerland in 2076 (22%). Respondents want to experience how society, politics and global challenges evolve. Technological progress follows close behind (19%). Here, technology is seen not primarily as a threat, but as a driver of new possibilities and a better life.

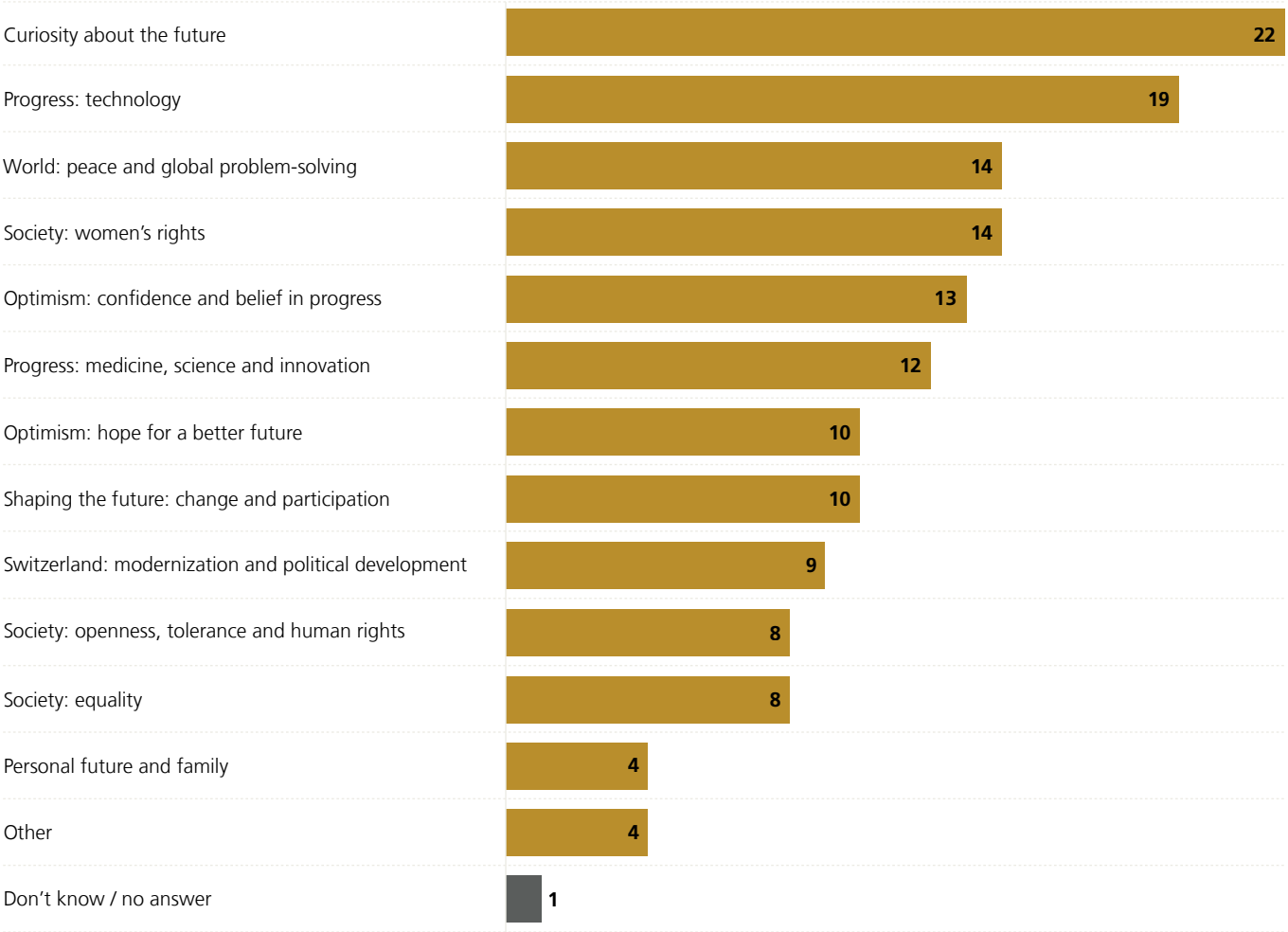
Rejecting a return to the social conditions of 1976 also plays an important role. Hopes for a better world and the advances in women's rights achieved since then are each cited by 14% of voters. A further 8% point to equality and social openness. This future-oriented approach is therefore also characterized by a spirit of emancipation. Those who enjoy more rights and freedoms today look back with less nostalgia on a past in which these could not yet be taken for granted.

Belief in progress beyond technology, such as in medicine, science and living standards, is cited by 12% and is an important argument, particularly for men. For women, women's rights play a more central role in choosing the future. Other motives include general optimism (13%), the hope that problems can be successfully solved (10%) and the desire to help actively shape the future (10%). This last point, in particular, marks a fundamental difference between the two perspectives. The preference for 2076 thus combines four motives: curiosity, progress, equal rights and freedoms, and the desire to shape the future.

**Reason for preferring the Switzerland of the future**

You said you would rather live in 2076 than in 1976. What is the main reason for your choice?

*in % of eligible voters*




Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n = 296)

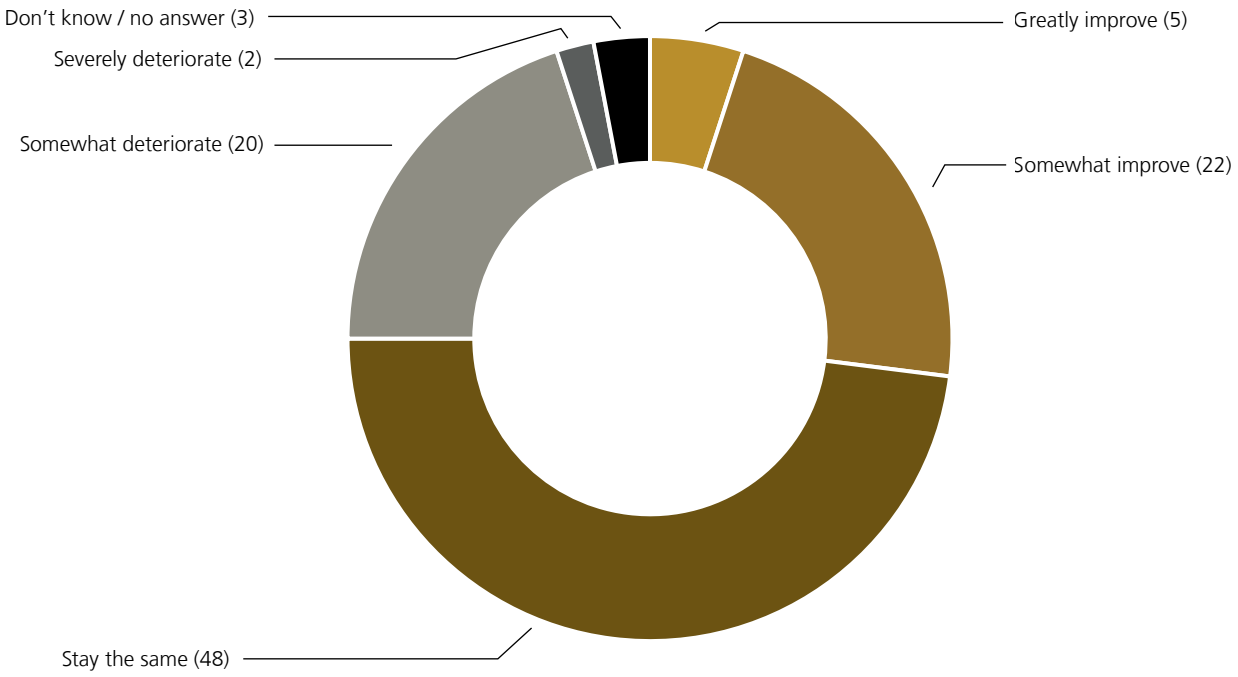
Looking ahead to the next 10 years of their own lives, just under half of voters expect a change, while the other half expect their situation to remain the same (48%). Specifically, 27% of respondents expect an improvement. At the same time, a substantial minority of 22% expect their personal situation to worsen.

The breakdown by subgroup shows that the younger the respondent, the more likely they are to expect their personal situation to improve in 10 years. Men are also more likely than women to expect an improvement. There are regional differences too: people in western and southern Switzerland are more optimistic about their personal future than those in German-speaking Switzerland.

**Expectations for changes in personal future**

Thinking about your own personal situation: how do you envisage it will develop over the next ten years?

*in % of eligible voters*




Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n = 1,089)

# Strong willingness to reform: a majority of voters support a single health insurer

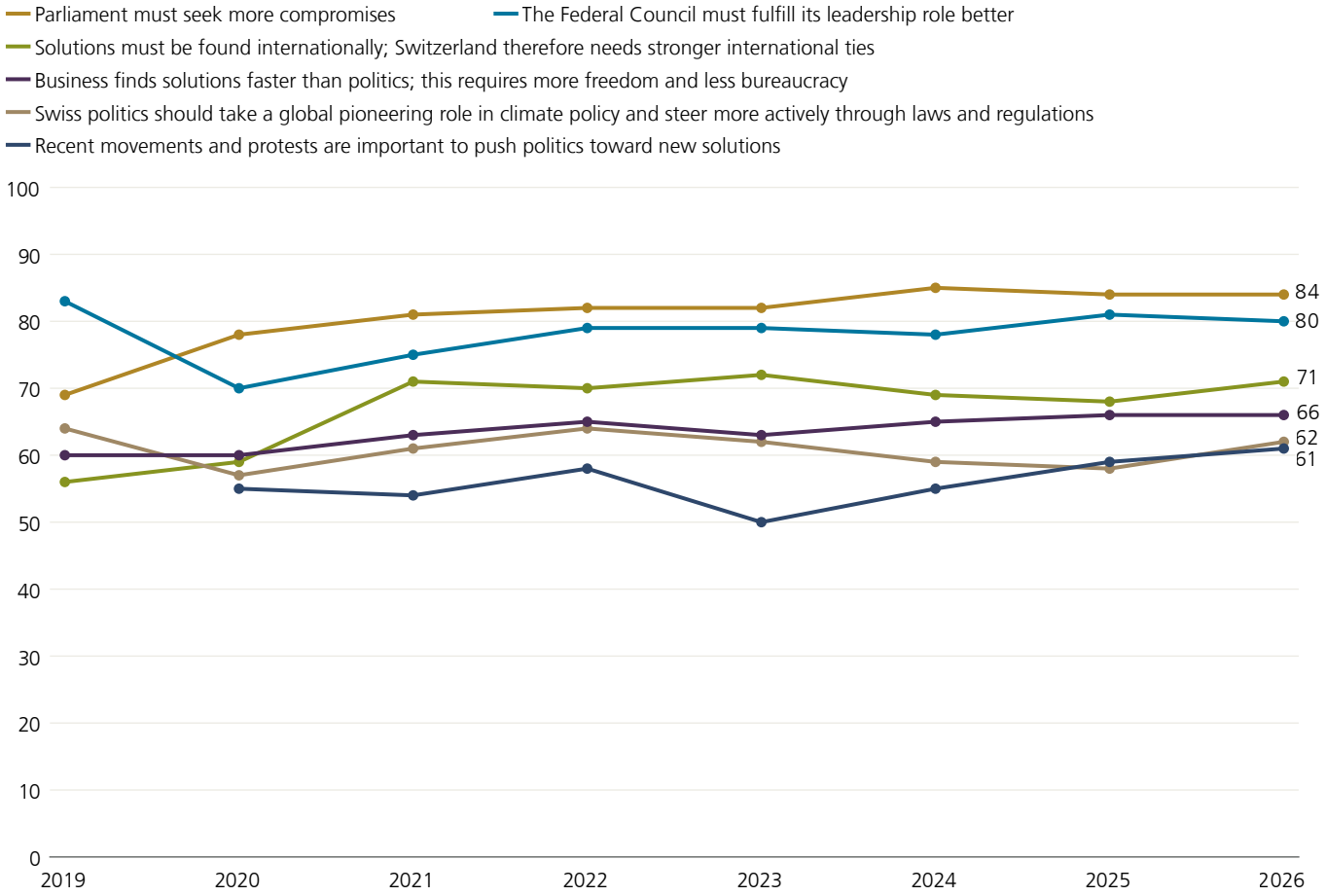
Expectations for political problem-solving combine two seemingly opposing principles: consensus and leadership. A total of 84% believe Parliament should make a greater effort to seek compromises, while 80% also call on the Federal Council to fulfill its leadership role more effectively. The public thus does not want a fundamental departure from Switzerland's consensus-based model but does want firmer decision-making within that system.

Since 2023, a growing majority has also recognized demonstrations and social movements as an important impetus for new solutions (61%, +11 pp since 2023). This suggests that the desire for new solutions is also growing among the electorate.

**Trend: views on addressing political challenges**

There are different ideas about how to seek solutions to political problems. Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements?

*in % of eligible voters, share who somewhat/strongly agree*




Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n = approx. 1,900 each)

"A system based on discussion, consultation and the consultation procedure, and geared toward consensus, provides great stability. Alongside the strength of our companies, this is an asset that we absolutely must preserve. If we can do that, I am confident."

**Monika Rühl,** Chairwoman of the Executive Board of economiesuisse

Against this backdrop, however, Switzerland shows a strong willingness to undertake far-reaching reforms, particularly where people feel tangible pressures in everyday life. Of all eighteen ideas presented, four command majority support. A total of 68% of voters support a ban on social media for under-16s, and the same proportion support replacing today's health insurers with a single state-run system. Support for a fundamental restructuring of healthcare is particularly noteworthy. Health insurance premiums have topped the list of concerns for years and apparently foster openness to reforms that go well beyond incremental adjustments.

Major changes in migration and transport policy also command majority support. A total of 60% of respondents support restricting immigration to qualified skilled workers for whom there is a demonstrable need, and 58% favor banning domestic flights and instead promoting overnight train services to European cities. The reform ideas ranked second, third and fourth thus address areas that also feature in the pattern of concerns: healthcare costs, immigration, and transport, energy and climate.

Proposals such as an unconditional basic income, a radical reduction in state services or a 25-hour workweek do not command majority support, but each attracts a substantial minority of over 40%. Opposition is more pronounced where proposals would fundamentally redistribute democratic responsibility or personal freedom. The willingness to reform is therefore pragmatic and focused on specific challenges. Voters are open to far-reaching changes, but cautious about social experiments without clearly identifiable benefits.

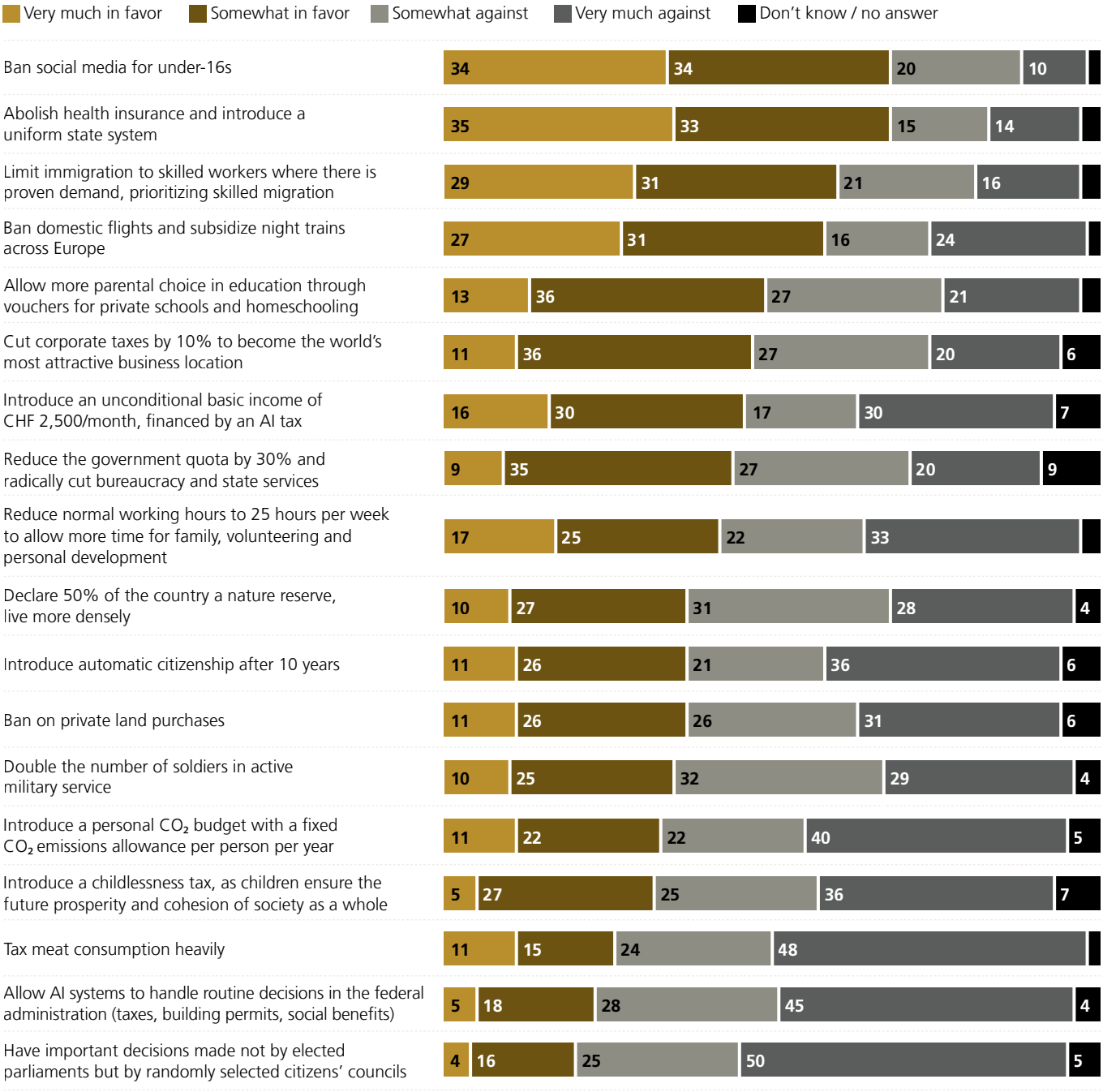
> "We must ensure a balance between individual interests and solutions for society as a whole, in other words, the common good. Maintaining this balance is a key challenge, particularly in a direct democracy. It is also a very healthy debate. Preserving these two dimensions has been one of the keys to Switzerland's success in the past and one of its great strengths. It will also be a key to its future."

**Damien Cottier,** Member of the National Council, President of the FDP The Liberals parliamentary group

**Ideas for the Switzerland of the future**

We would now like to try a thought experiment. The following ideas are deliberately bold: some will excite you; others will shock you. Imagine that each of them became a reality in Switzerland. How would you view this?

*in % of eligible voters*




Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n = 1,089)

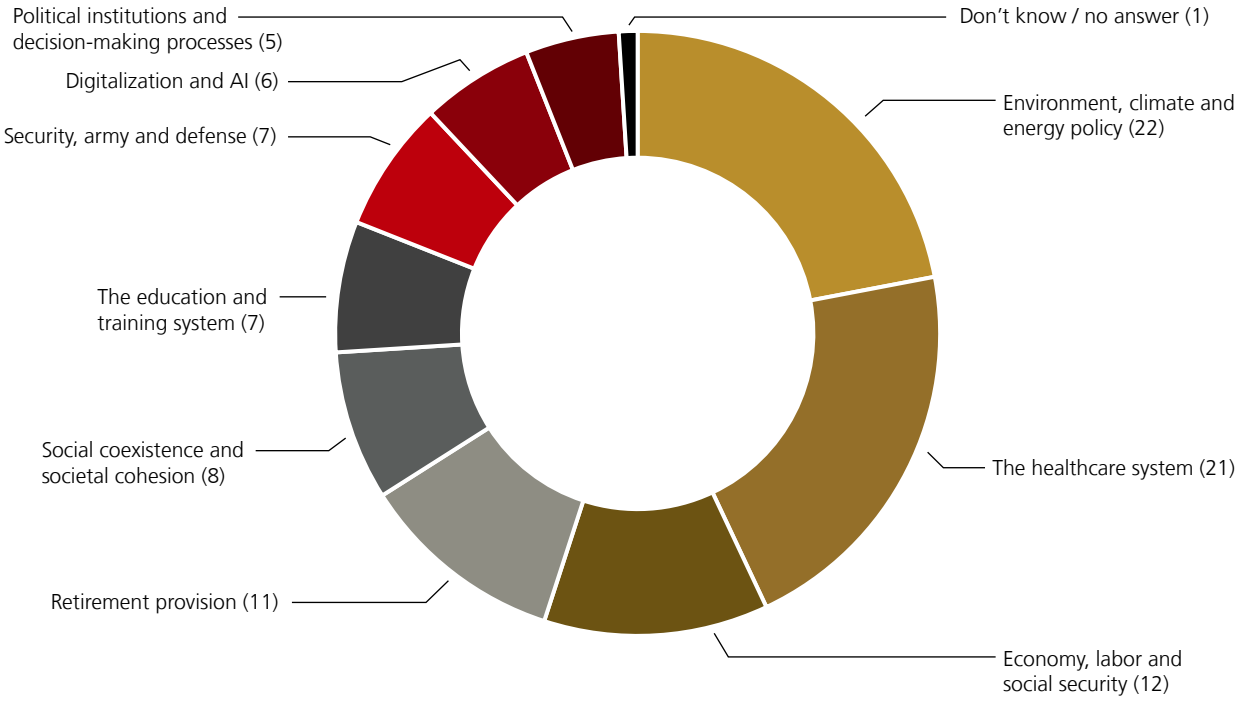
Looking ahead to the next 20 years, the desire for change focuses primarily on two major challenges for the future. Environmental, climate and energy policy comes first (22%), closely followed by the healthcare system (21%). The long-term need for reform thus largely aligns with the current list of concerns. The economy, work and social security (12%) and retirement provision (11%) follow far behind. Social relations and social cohesion are cited by 8%. Education is named as a priority by 7% of voters, as is security and defense, while digitalization and artificial intelligence are cited by 6%.

Notably, political institutions and decision-making processes are mentioned by only 5%, despite the widespread perception of political failure. The public thus appears to be calling less for a fundamental restructuring of the political system than for concrete solutions in policy areas under particular pressure.

**Most important area for change in Switzerland**

In which area is change most urgently needed in Switzerland over the next 20 years?

*in % of eligible voters*




Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n = 1,089)

Chapter 7

# Education system

## Good grades for the education system, but room for improvement

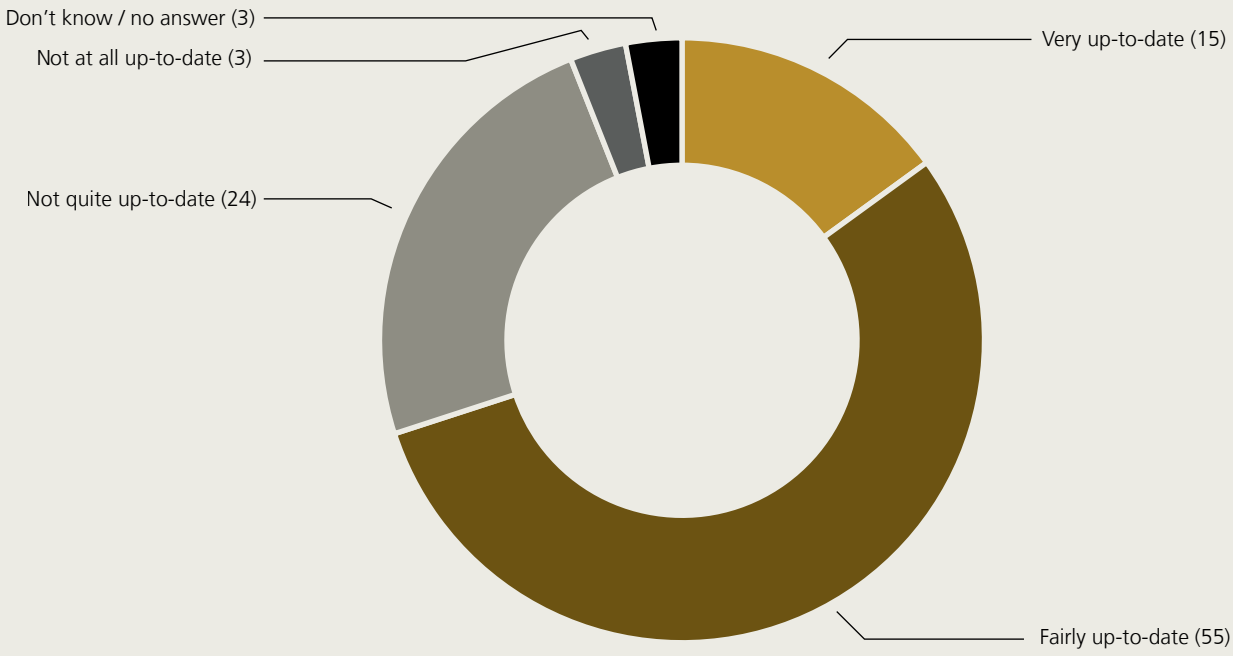
Switzerland's education system enters the debate about its readiness for the future from a position of strength. Seven in ten voters consider schools, vocational education and training, and higher education to be up-to-date overall (70%). By contrast, 27% of respondents consider the system not particularly up-to-date or not at all up-to-date.

Most therefore see the existing structures as sound, although a substantial share of the population believes they need to adapt. Consequently, the starting point for reforms is driven less by fundamental dissatisfaction than by the question of how a system that is generally well regarded can be further developed to meet the demands of the future.

**How up-to-date is Switzerland's education system?**

How well-suited is the Swiss education system as a whole, i.e. schools, vocational training and higher education, to the demands of the future?

*in % of eligible voters*




Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n = 1,089)

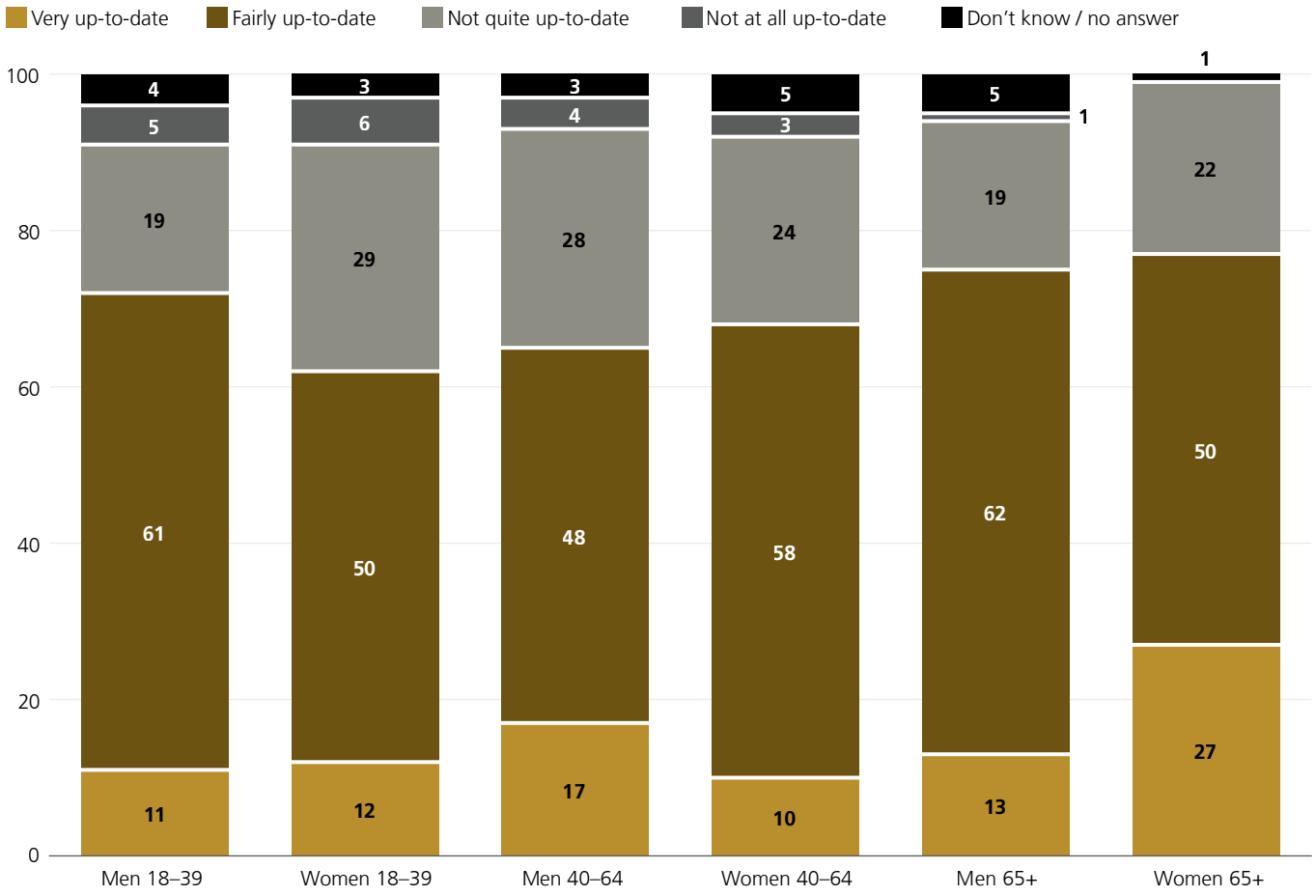
The generally positive assessment of Switzerland's education system extends across all age and gender groups, although differences are evident. Younger women are the most critical: 62% of those aged 18 to 39 consider the education system very or fairly up-to-date, while 35% rate it negatively. Among men of the same age, approval is considerably higher at 72%. In the middle-aged group, by contrast, the assessments of men (65%) and women (68%) are similar.

Those aged 65 and over are the most positive. Of these respondents, 75% of men and 77% of women consider the education system up-to-date. The generation furthest removed from today's day-to-day schooling and training therefore views the system most favorably. Younger generations, who have a direct connection to the education system through their own education or their children's, tend to be somewhat more critical.

**How up-to-date is Switzerland's education system? By age and gender**

How well-suited is the Swiss education system as a whole, i.e. schools, vocational training, and higher education, to the demands of the future?

*in % of eligible voters*




Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n = 1,088)

"When machines take over mechanical and cognitive tasks, that does not make humans redundant. Rather, we are now called upon in the areas of judgment, social skills and creativity."

**Jürg Müller,** Director of Avenir Suisse

"The skills needed to navigate the digital world will be fundamentally important in the future, because our ability to form independent, critical opinions depends on them. And that is what democracy thrives on."

**Carine Bachmann,** Director of the Federal Office of Culture (FOC)



# Digital skills alone are not enough to prepare for the future

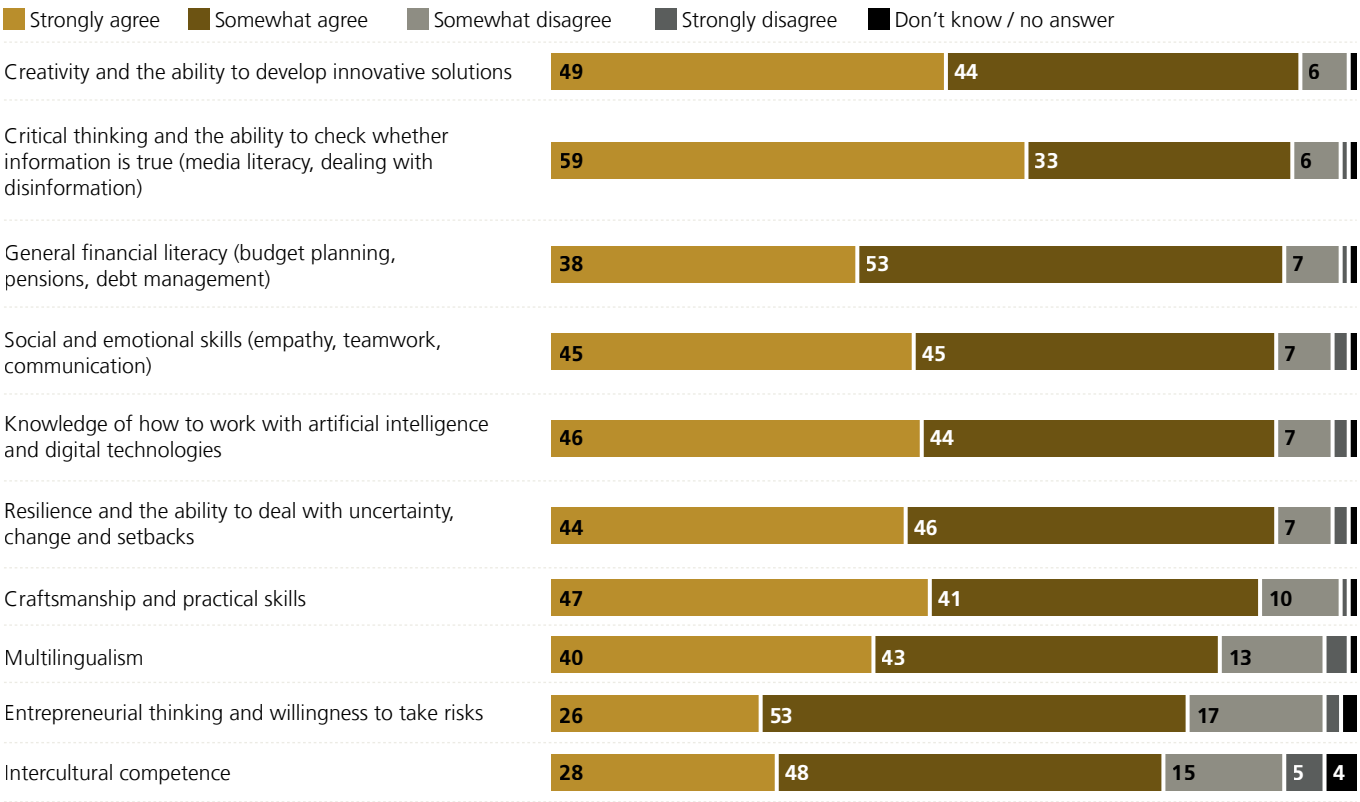
The public takes a broad view of the skills needed for the future: no single ability will suffice; instead, a combination of skills is required. Creativity and the ability to develop new solutions (93%) top the list, along with critical thinking and media literacy (92%). In an information environment increasingly shaped by social media, disinformation and artificially generated content, the ability to put information in context and verify it is therefore seen as a key skill for the future. Financial knowledge also ranks among the most important skills for the future. Among Swiss voters, 91% see it as a key skill for the coming years and decades, alongside social and emotional skills, the ability to use artificial intelligence and digital technologies, and resilience (90% each). Readiness for the future is therefore by no means seen as purely technological. Personal autonomy, collaboration and the ability to handle uncertainty confidently are seen as virtually equally important as digital knowledge.

Manual and practical skills are also considered important, at 88%. Multilingualism (83%), entrepreneurial thinking (79%) and intercultural competence (76%) follow somewhat behind, but a clear majority also consider them important. This sets a demanding agenda for the education system, which is expected to teach technological skills without displacing traditional, social and practical skills.

**Skills for the future**

Which skills do you think will be particularly important in the future? For each skill, please indicate how strongly you agree with the following statement: "This skill will be crucial in the future."

*in % of eligible voters*




Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n = 1,089)

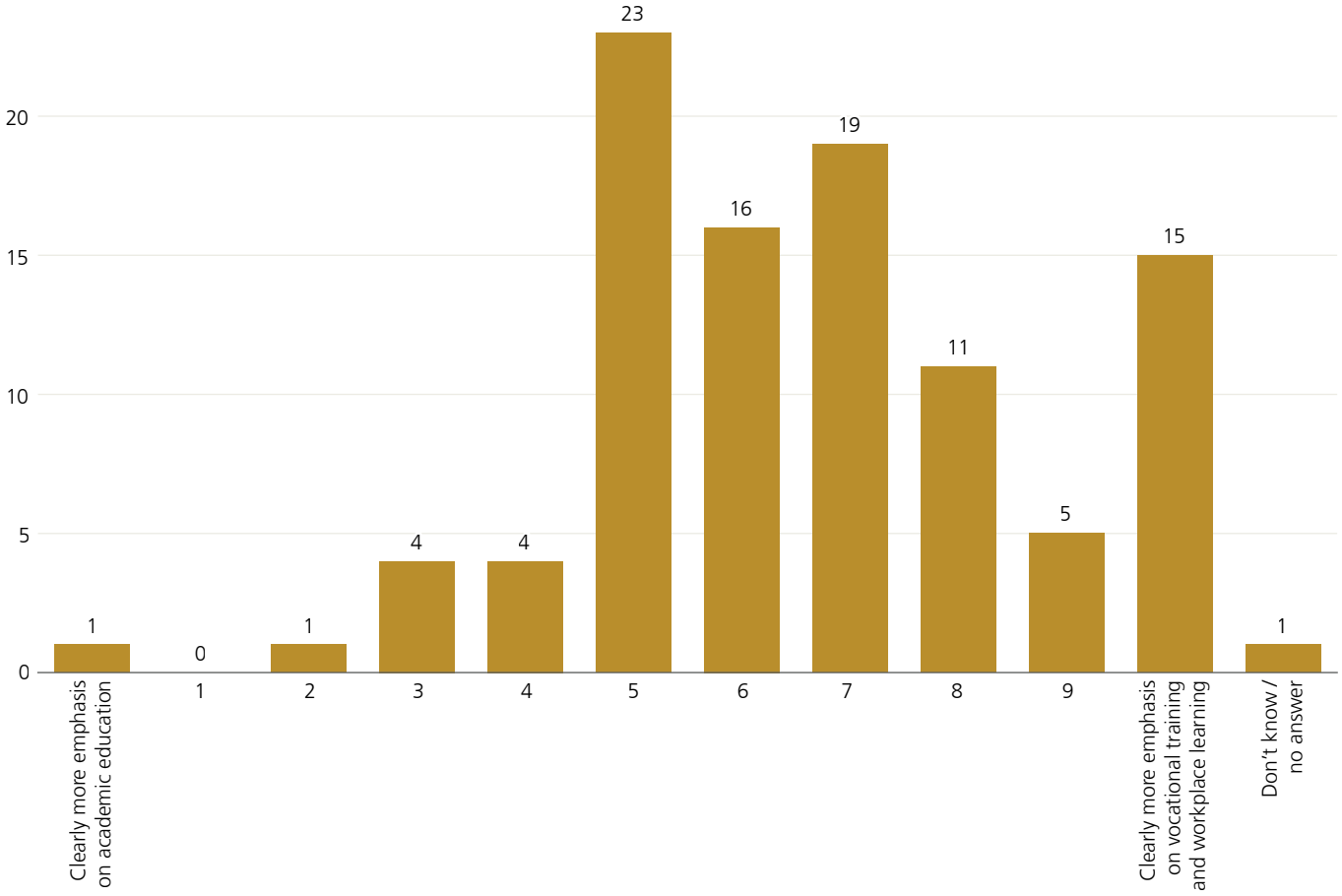
When it comes to the future direction of the education system, there is a clear preference for vocational education and training. On a scale from 0 (clearly more emphasis on academic education) to 10 (clearly more emphasis on vocational education and training and workplace learning), the average is 6.6. Only a small minority supports a greater focus on academic education.

At the same time, almost a quarter choose the midpoint of the scale (23%). People therefore do not fundamentally see academic and vocational pathways as competing options. But when asked where additional emphasis should be placed, they clearly prioritize practical relevance. This is consistent with the earlier finding that a large majority also see manual and practical skills as important for the future.

**Importance of vocational education and training vs. academic education**

Debates about the future of education often raise the following question: Should Switzerland place greater emphasis on academic education (universities and universities of applied sciences) or on vocational education and training and workplace-based learning? What do you think the priority should be? Please use a scale from 0 (clearly more emphasis on academic education) to 10 (clearly more emphasis on vocational education and training and workplace learning).

*in % of eligible voters*




Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n = 1,089)

"Our main resource is human knowledge. For more than 150 years, we have done an excellent job of building universities and a dual education system that offers everyone opportunities for advancement. And education is central to an economy's competitiveness."

**Marc Gruber,** Full Professor, Chair for Entrepreneurship and Technology Commercialization, EPFL

The preference for a stronger vocational focus is evident across all educational groups but does not decrease consistently as educational attainment rises. It is strongest among those with an intermediate level of educational attainment. With an average of 6.9 on the scale from 0 to 10, they are particularly clear in favoring greater emphasis on vocational education and training and workplace learning in the future. This group is likely to have especially close ties to the dual education system, whether through their own vocational training or their work experience.

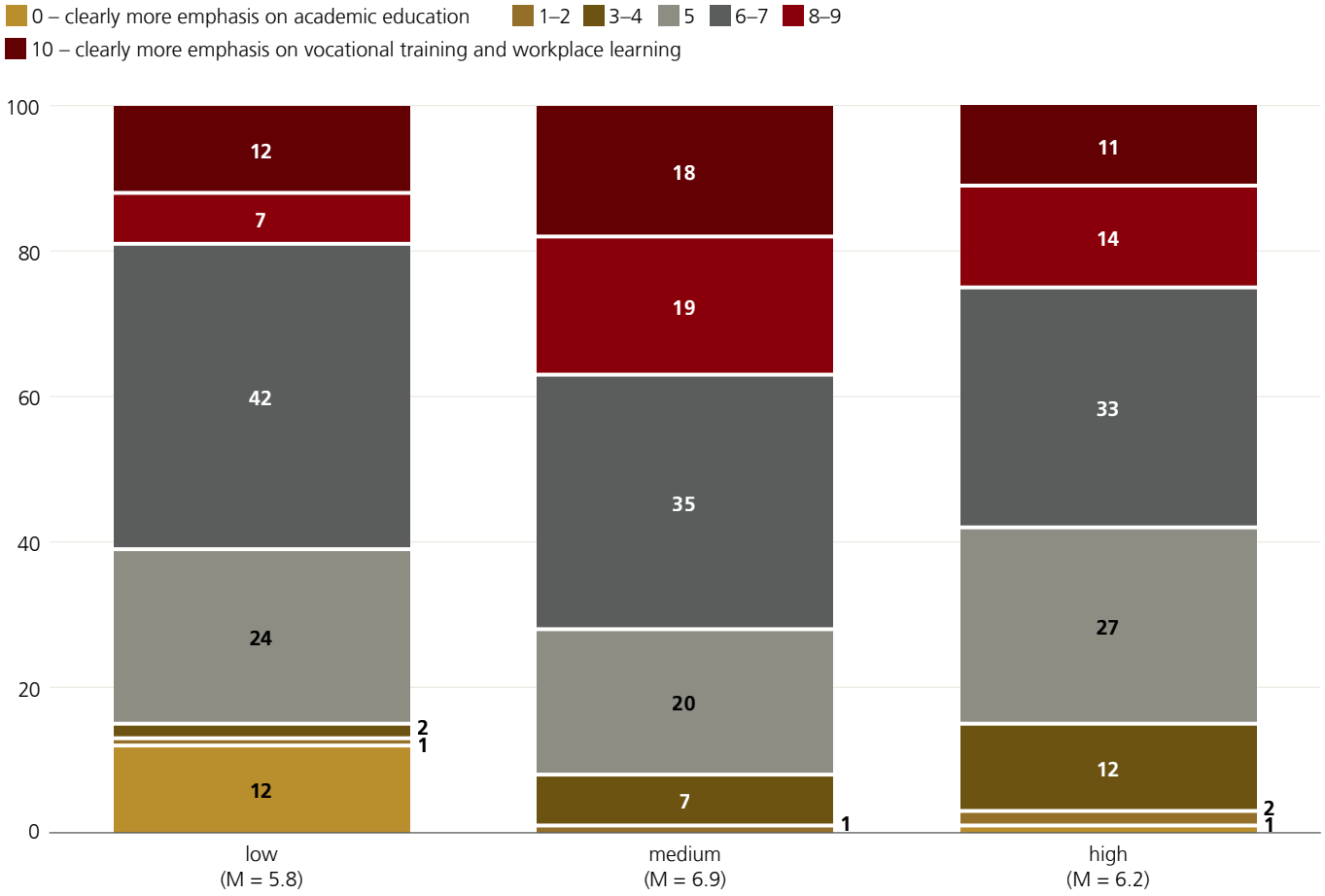
Among those with a high level of educational attainment, the preference is somewhat less pronounced, with an average of 6.2, but still favors vocational education and training. The comparatively high percentage who choose the exact midpoint is striking. Academic and vocational education appear to be seen less as opposites here, and more as complementary pathways within an education system that allows movement between them.

The preference for practical vocational education and training is weakest among people with a low level of educational attainment (average 5.8). There is therefore no pattern of "the lower the level of education, the stronger the vocational focus". In fact, support for vocational education and training is particularly strong among the middle sections of society. Those with higher levels of education also clearly see it as an important pillar for the future of Switzerland's education system.

**Importance of vocational education vs. academic education, by educational attainment**

Debates about the future of education often raise the following question: Should Switzerland place greater emphasis on academic education (universities and universities of applied sciences) or on vocational education and training and workplace-based learning? What do you think the priority should be? Please use a scale from 0 (clearly more emphasis on academic education) to 10 (clearly more emphasis on vocational education and training and workplace learning).

*in % of eligible voters*




Source: gfs.bern, UBS Worry Barometer, June–July 2026 (n = 1,076)

# Summary

Below we summarize the key findings of this study:

## Cost-of-living concerns move to the forefront while long-term issues remain

Healthcare costs, housing, and the environment and climate are the three most important concerns in 2026. The rise in concern about housing costs, now in second place, highlights how strongly perceived financial pressure has shifted toward costs that households experience directly month after month. Compared with 1976, the nature of economic insecurity has changed significantly. Back then, concerns centered on unemployment. Today, the more pressing question is whether incomes are sufficient to cover the rising cost of living. The environment and climate remain a persistent challenge. The state pension system (OASI) also remains among the leading concerns, although it is regarded as considerably less urgent than in previous years.

## High trust in institutions despite ongoing criticism of politics

The Swiss do not question the country's political system. Political rights, the Federal Constitution and political stability remain among the strongest pillars of national identity, and trust in key institutions has recovered slightly. At the same time, a narrow majority of voters often feel that government and public administration fall short in important areas. This points to a central tension, which is that while the system continues to enjoy broad support, confidence in its performance is under pressure. Consistent with this, the public is calling both for a greater willingness to compromise in Parliament and for stronger leadership from the Federal Council. What people want is not less consensus-based government, but a form of consensus that delivers visible solutions more effectively.

## Economically strong, but looking for support in a changing geopolitical environment

The public views Switzerland's economic position almost unanimously in a positive light. Internationally, however, the picture is less clear. Eight out of ten people are concerned about the role of the United States, and when asked whether Switzerland is prepared for major geopolitical changes, there is an almost even split between confidence and skepticism. At the same time, trade policy preferences are shifting back toward Europe. For the first time since 2023, an absolute majority supports closer alignment with a common EU position. Independence therefore remains important, but going it alone appears less self-evident than in the past. In a world shaped by great-power politics, having reliable backing is becoming increasingly important for safeguarding Switzerland's independence.

## Growing AI adoption is accompanied by cautious confidence

Artificial intelligence has moved from a future-focused debate into everyday life. More than two-thirds of the electorate already use AI assistants, and nearly one in four use them daily. Greater familiarity, however, has not automatically translated into greater confidence. Voters continue to see more risks than opportunities, and nearly one in five of those in employment believe their own job is at risk due to technological change. Use of AI and confidence in it are therefore not developing in tandem. AI is becoming part of everyday life, while the rules governing its role in society and its broader consequences are not yet seen as settled.

## A desire for security is not a rejection of change

One of the most striking findings of this anniversary year is that a majority would rather live in the Switzerland of 1976 than in Switzerland in 2076. In this context, the past stands for a simpler life, stronger social cohesion and greater predictability. At the same time, it reflects current concerns about digitalization, purchasing power, the climate and the global situation. However, it would be wrong to interpret this as a desire for stagnation.

The more acutely people feel the pressures of everyday life, the greater their support for far-reaching reforms. Switzerland looks back with nostalgia while remaining open to change. People appear to long less for the past itself than for the sense of security and predictability they associate with it.

## In the future, education should focus more on skills, not additional academic qualifications

There is broad trust in the education system, but expectations of what it must deliver in the future are high. Creativity, critical thinking, financial literacy, social skills, resilience and the ability to work with AI all receive almost universal support. Future readiness is therefore viewed as neither purely technological nor purely academic. This is reflected in the clear preference for more vocational education and training (VET) and workplace-based learning. The electorate does not support more academic education as an end in itself, but rather a combination of technology, good judgment and practical skills. Especially in the age of AI, the dual education system is increasingly seen not simply as a tradition, but as an important resource for the future.

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