



Hope Barometer 2020

Results for Switzerland

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Since 2009, the Hope Barometer has been performed annually for the coming year as a broad Internet survey with the support of the national newspaper 20 Minutes. Starting in Switzerland, the survey is now being conducted in cooperation with renowned universities in Australia, Colombia, the Czech Republic, France, India, Israel, Italy, Malta, Nigeria, Poland, Portugal, Spain and South Africa. This report presents the current results of the November 2019 Hope Barometer in Switzerland. The public was asked about their satisfaction and future expectations in various areas, about long-term social trends and scenarios, about their personal hopes, about the sources of hope, about their personal and social well-being and about the social support they experience.

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The most important in brief

The results of the 2020 survey of the Barometer of Hope lead to seven basic findings:

1. A majority of the population associates the global social, economic, political and ecological trends above all with negative expectations of the future.
2. These negative expectations show an obvious connection with a reduced (social) well-being experienced by people.
3. Despite negative future prospects in almost all areas of society, the majority of the population remains hopeful and optimistic about their own lives.
4. An essential factor in maintaining hope and confidence is the sense of solidarity and support within the immediate social environment.
5. The main hopes of the population relate to good personal health, a harmonious and balanced life, good social relations with family and friends, and a meaningful role in life.
6. Many people find the most significant sources of hope in the relationship with nature, in good social bonds, in personal self-efficacy and motivation, and in experiences of mutual helpfulness.
7. Thus, a majority of the population would like to see a "greener" and more harmonious society, with an emphasis on cohesion, community and family.

Comment:

In today's society, two almost opposite phenomena seem to shape people's lives. On the one hand, a general lack of perspective becomes apparent in connection with social and global developments. We live in a time in which most people assume that the future will be different and above all, unfortunately, worse than the present.

On the other hand, current prosperity, a high level of education and social institutions such as science, business and democracy continue to provide individuals with good framework conditions for new opportunities for personal development and thus for a hopeful and fulfilled life.

How these two opposing realities can be reconciled and how they can lead to a meaningful social commitment and progress remains the subject of social science research.

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I Introduction

In November 2019, for the eleventh time in a row, the Swiss population was asked about their expectations and hopes for the future. New this year is the inclusion of people from the Italian-speaking region in the survey. The sample of 238 Italian-speaking survey participants is still relatively small compared to the German-speaking (2,195) and French-speaking (1,502) respondents. However, this number is valuable for initial statistical analyses and findings. With the evaluation of this smaller sample, we also wanted to pay tribute to the willingness of the people in Italian-speaking Switzerland who took part in the survey and by doing so express our gratitude. Of course, we are very grateful to all those who invested their time and participated in the survey.

This year's survey focuses on the assessment of long-term expectations, trends and future scenarios. Existing questionnaires by Australian futurologists Richard Eckersley and Carmen Stewart were used for this purpose (Eckersley et al., 2007; Stewart, 2002). In addition to the short-term prospects and areas of hope, the participants in the survey were also transported into the year 2040: we were interested in their long-term expectations in various areas of life (health, family, employment, environment, etc.) and their assessment of possible future trends, such as the social effects of political and technological developments. They were also presented with various future scenarios that they could evaluate in terms of their probability and desirability.

As in previous years, the general sense of hope (Krafft et al., 2017) and personal sources of hope (Krafft & Walker, 2018) were also assessed. The expectations of the future and the feeling of social support and belonging can have a significant impact on the personal and social well-being of the population, which is why this year the dimensions of social support (Cyranowski et al., 2013) and well-being (Keyes, 2002) were also surveyed.

2 Satisfaction in 2019 and Outlook for 2020

2.1 Satisfaction in 2019

At the beginning of the Hope Barometer, participants are asked how satisfied they are with their personal lives, as well as with national politics, the economy, social issues and developments regarding the climate and the environment over the past year (Fig. 1). As in previous years, a majority of the population is more satisfied with their personal lives. *In German-speaking Switzerland, satisfaction is slightly but significantly higher than in French and Italian-speaking Switzerland.*

The population is partly satisfied and partly unsatisfied with the national economy. People are rather unsatisfied with national politics, social issues and the climate and environment. *The French and Italian language regions in particular are the most dissatisfied with climate and environmental developments.* The possible reasons for this general dissatisfaction is a particular focus of this year's Hope Barometer.

The first finding remains the fact that many people are basically satisfied with their lives, even if they are less satisfied or even dissatisfied with the more general societal contexts. This is followed by the question of how people look to the future and which are the essential hopes of people as well as the sources of this hope.

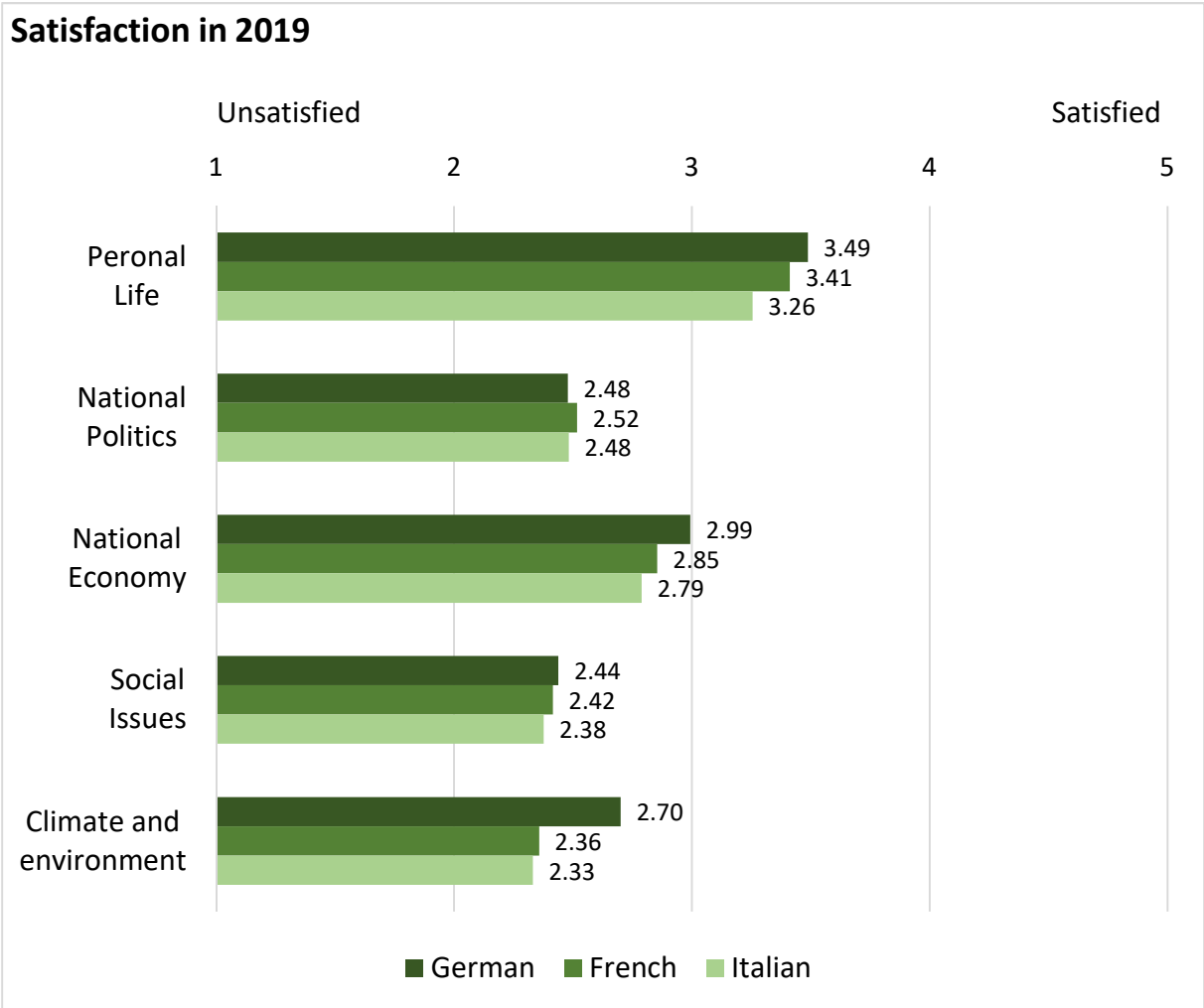


Figure 1: Satisfaction in 2019 in five areas of life - mean values

2.2 Personal well-being

Satisfaction or dissatisfaction in these areas can have an effect on one's own well-being. For this reason, this year's Hope Barometer surveyed personal and social well-being (Keyes, 2007).

Personal well-being includes, for example, feelings of interest, self-confidence, self-esteem, a sense of purpose and personal growth. Social well-being is characterized by an assessment of the society in which one lives and by one's own role within that society. If one is rather of the opinion that society functions well, it develops in the right direction, people are basically good by nature, one feels part of a community and can make an important contribution to it or rather not.

The results in Figure 2 show *the above-average personal well-being of the population in all three parts of the country*. The situation is different with regard to social well-being. In French and Italian Switzerland in particular, social well-being is far below the mean value of the scale (3.5).

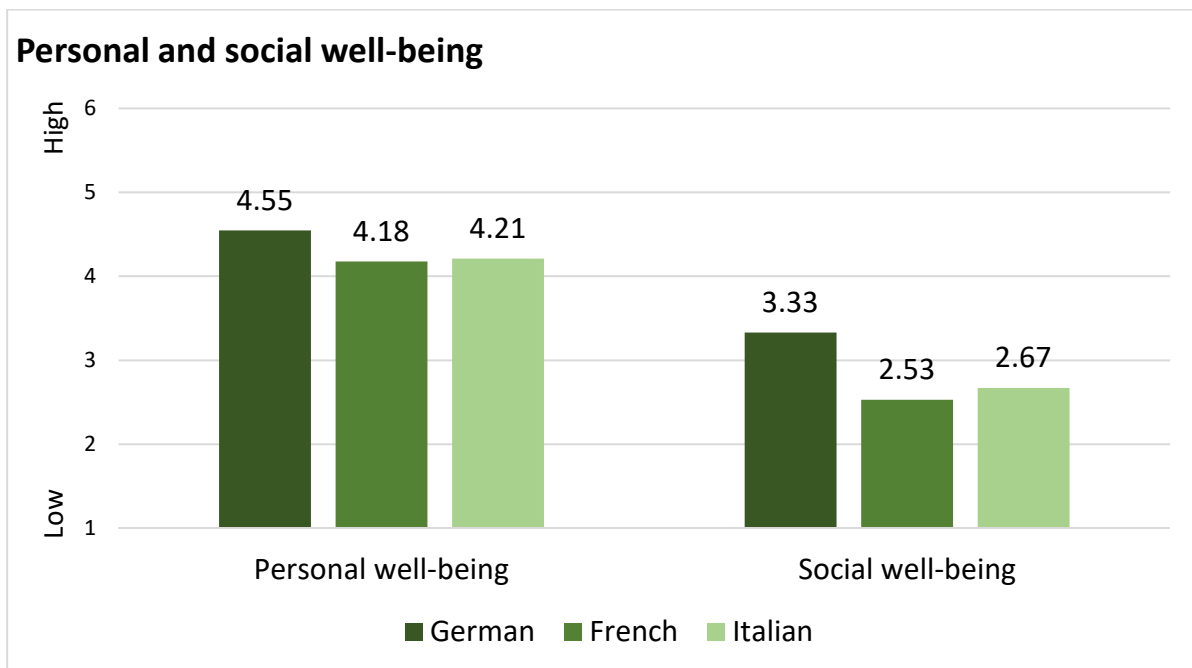


Figure 2: Personal and social well-being - mean values

The statements and results in Figures 3 and 4 are exemplary for the low values of social well-being.

In Figure 3, two thirds of people in French-speaking Switzerland and more than 60% in Italian-speaking Switzerland rate the way our society functions as making little sense. In German-speaking Switzerland, the number of negative assessments is considerably lower but still 40.2% of the interviewees.

The way our society works makes sense to me.

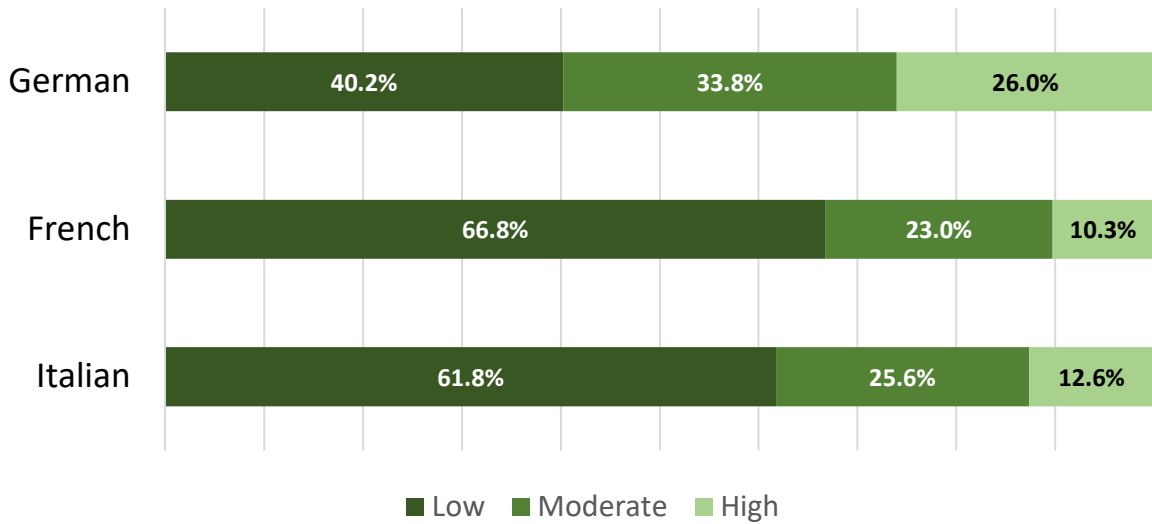


Figure 3: Functioning of society - Percentage distribution

Even more extreme is the rejection to the question of whether society is developing positively for most people (Fig. 4). Here, three-quarters of respondents in French and Italian-speaking Switzerland rate this statement low or even reject it. In German-speaking Switzerland, more than half of the population tends to rate this statement as negative.

Our society is becoming a better place for people.

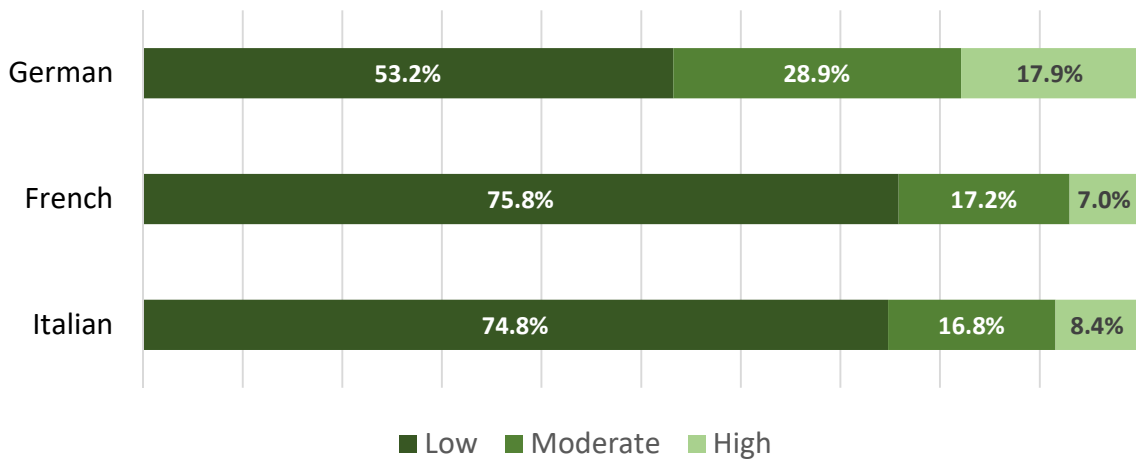


Figure 4: Social development - Percentage distribution

2.3 Outlook for 2020

The outlook for 2020 is similar (Fig. 5). As far as their own lives are concerned, the majority of the population is still optimistic about the future. In German-speaking Switzerland, people are slightly but significantly more optimistic than in French and Italian-speaking Switzerland.

The differences between the three language regions are only small in terms of the slightly pessimistic outlook for political, economic, environmental and social developments.

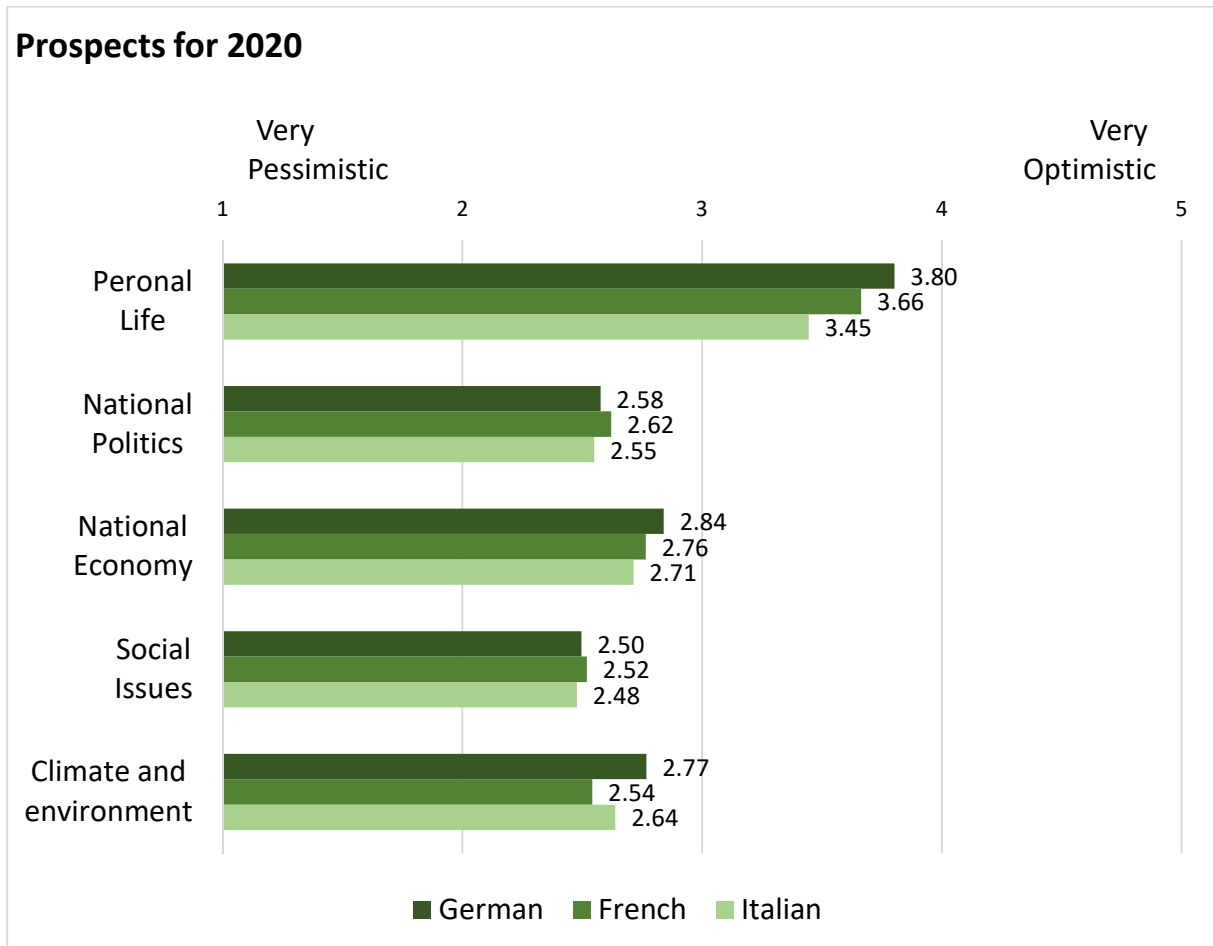


Figure 5: Outlook for the year 2020 in five life domains - mean values

3 Future expectations for the year 2040

3.1 General quality of life in 2040

Against the background of the rather negative social prospects for the future, we wanted to know how the Swiss population views long-term developments and trends in various areas of society.

The first question relates to the development of the general quality of life up to the year 2040 (Fig. 6). In all three language regions. More than half (between 50 and 60%) of the population estimates that the quality of life in Switzerland in 2040 will be worse than it is today. Only a minority of about 10 to 12% see the quality of life in 2040 better than it is today.

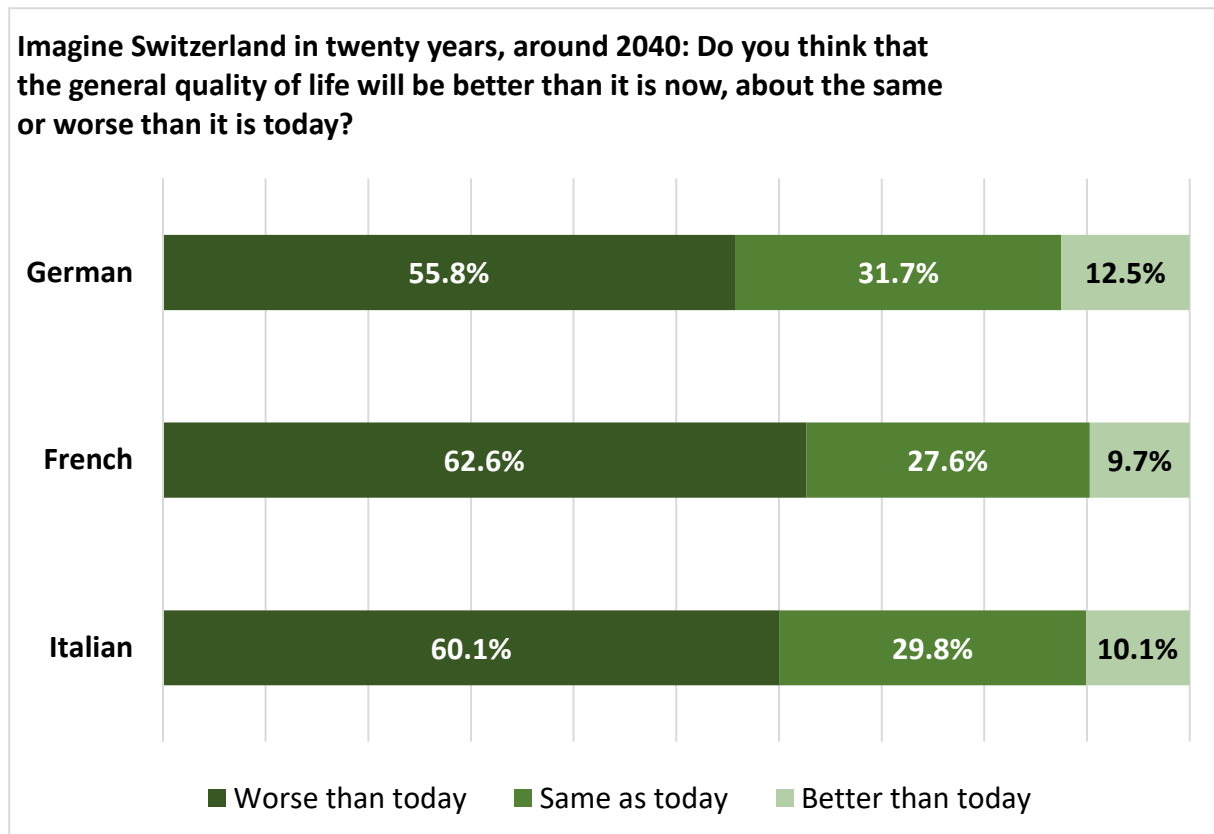


Figure 6: *Quality of life in Switzerland in 2040 - Percentage distribution*

3.2 Quality of life in the year 2040 in different areas

The assessment of the quality of life in the year 2040 is differentiated in individual areas of society (Fig. 7). Average expectations are below the scale mean in all areas.

The most problematic aspects are the increasing gap between rich and poor, the deterioration of the mental health of the population and the growing crime and violence. In French and Italian-speaking Switzerland, the future employment situation is also assessed particularly critically.

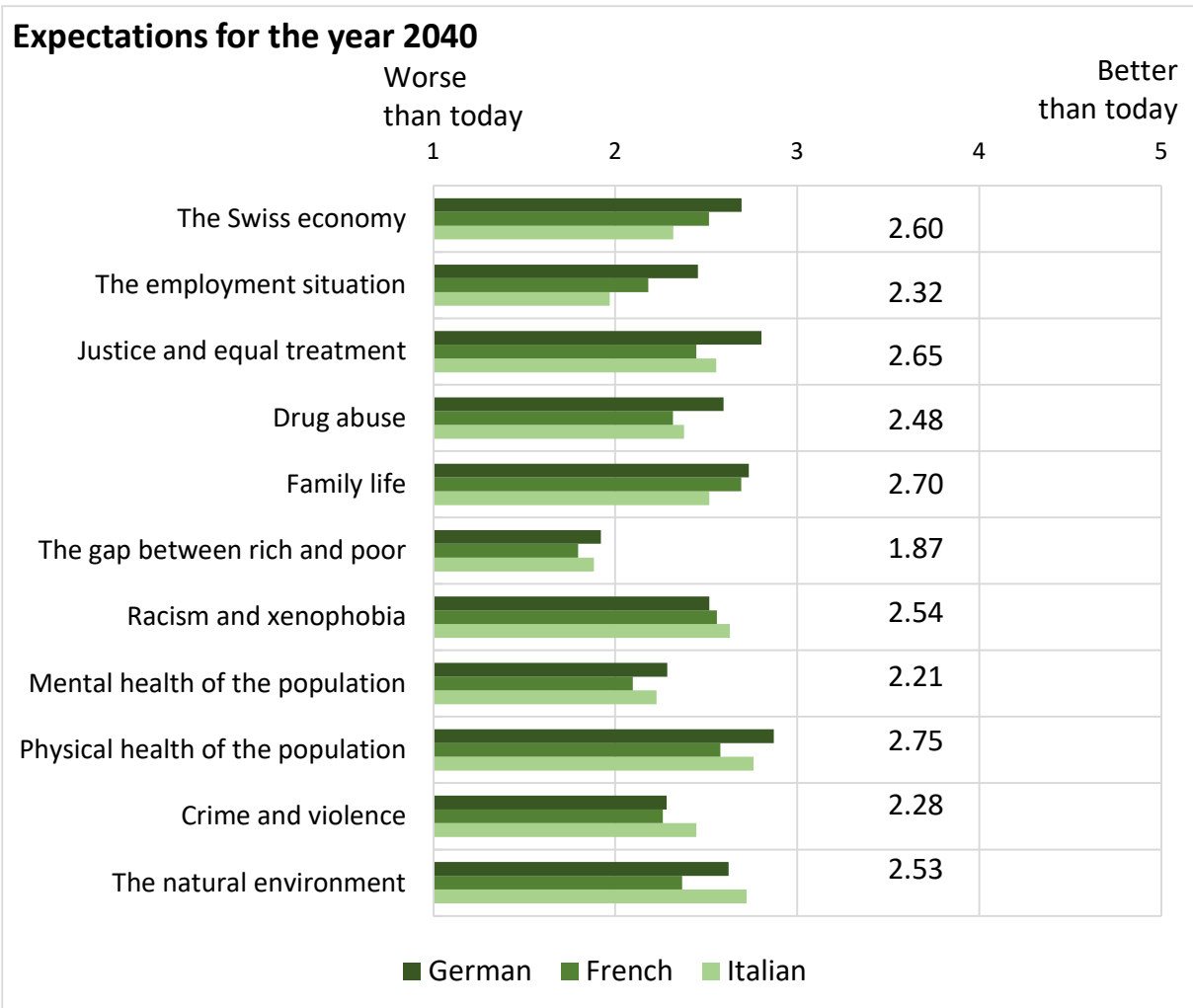


Figure 7: Quality of life in different areas in 2040 - mean values

3.3 General hope in relation to one's own life

At the same time, a large proportion of the population is convinced that they are fundamentally hopeful about their own lives (Fig. 8) and that they can remain hopeful even in difficult times (Fig. 9). The values are significantly higher in German-speaking Switzerland than in French and Italian-speaking Switzerland.

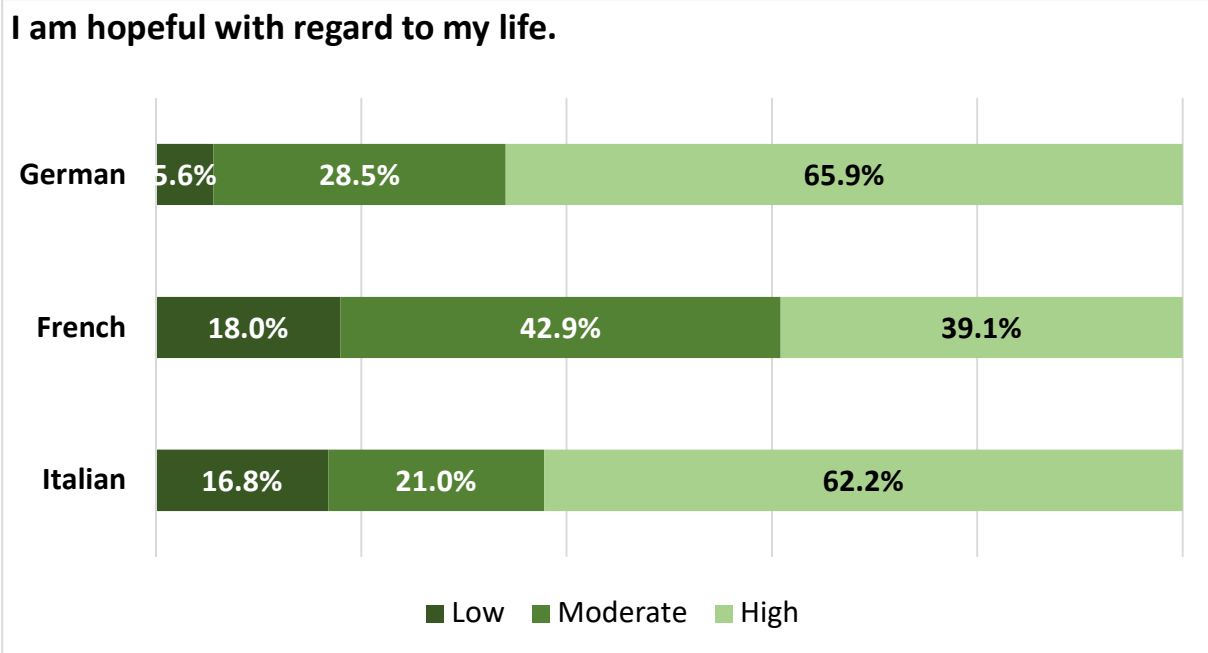


Figure 8: Hope in one's own life - Percentage distribution

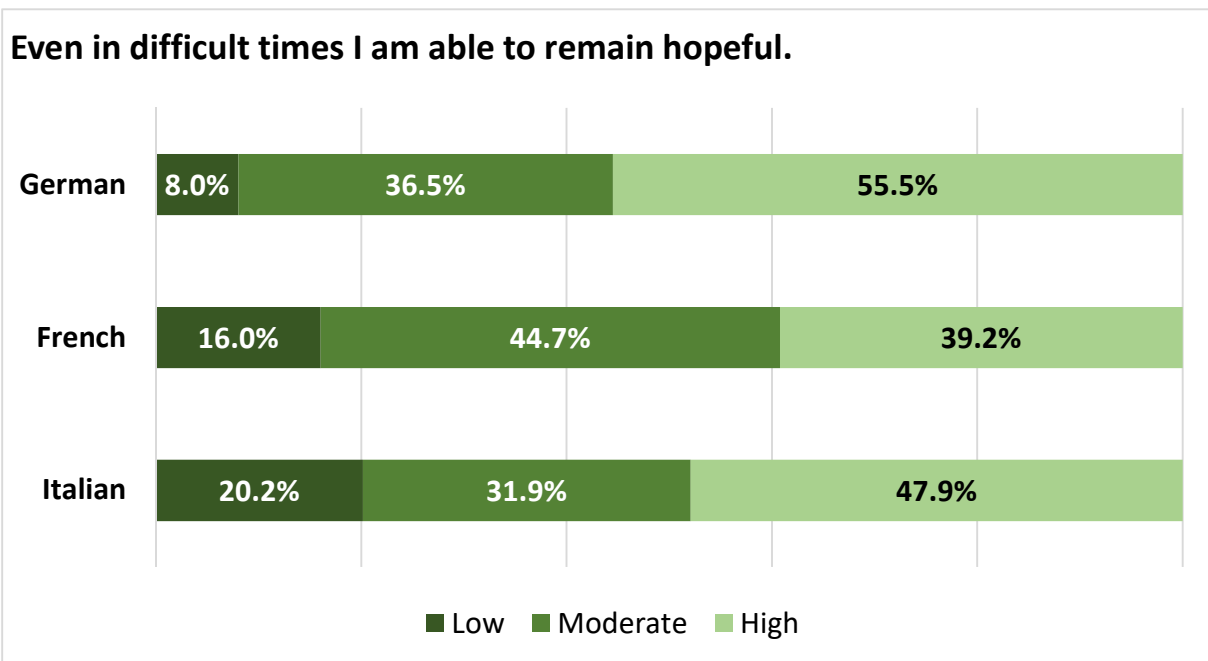


Figure 9: Hope in difficult times - Percentage distribution

The fact that most people (especially in German-speaking Switzerland) are generally hopeful about their own lives, despite the bleak outlook for general social developments, is shown by the above-average figures in Figure 10.

Of particular relevance is the fact that most people are convinced that hope and a hopeful attitude would improve their quality of life.

General Hope with regard to one's own life

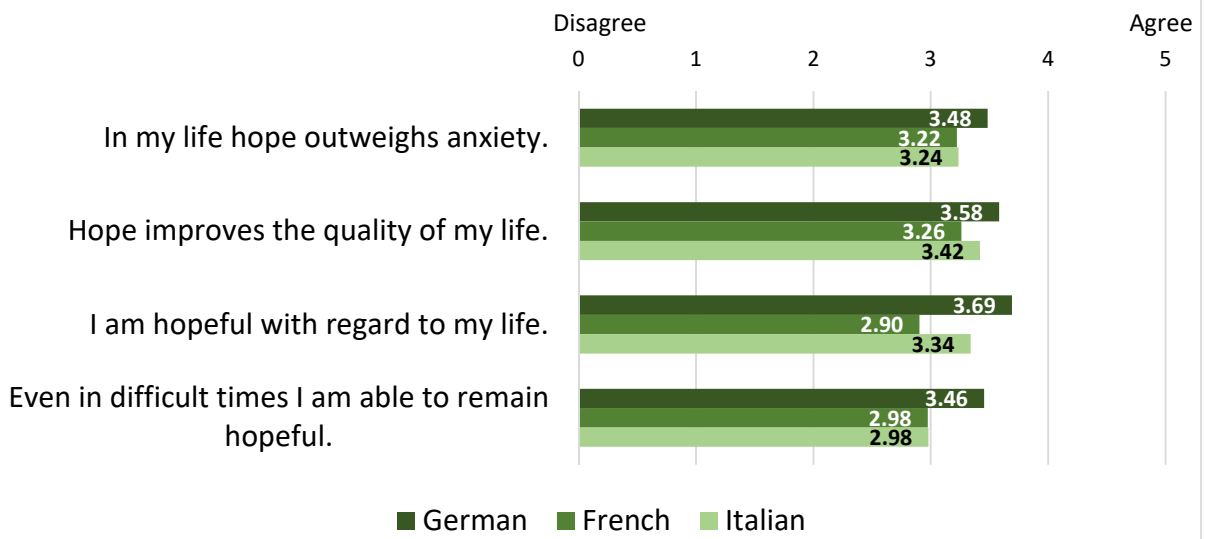


Figure 10: General hope in relation to one's own life - mean values

4 Global future trends 2040

Further future trends up to 2040 and their assessment as likely or unlikely can be found in Figures 11 and 12. Many people consider the loss of jobs and an increase in unemployment due to new technologies to be more likely.

There is also a fear that new technologies will threaten society by alienating people from each other and from nature. This view is significantly stronger in Italian and French-speaking Switzerland.

The skepticism about new technologies and their social impact is reflected in the assumption that these new technologies would not necessarily strengthen democracies, but promote the surveillance state.

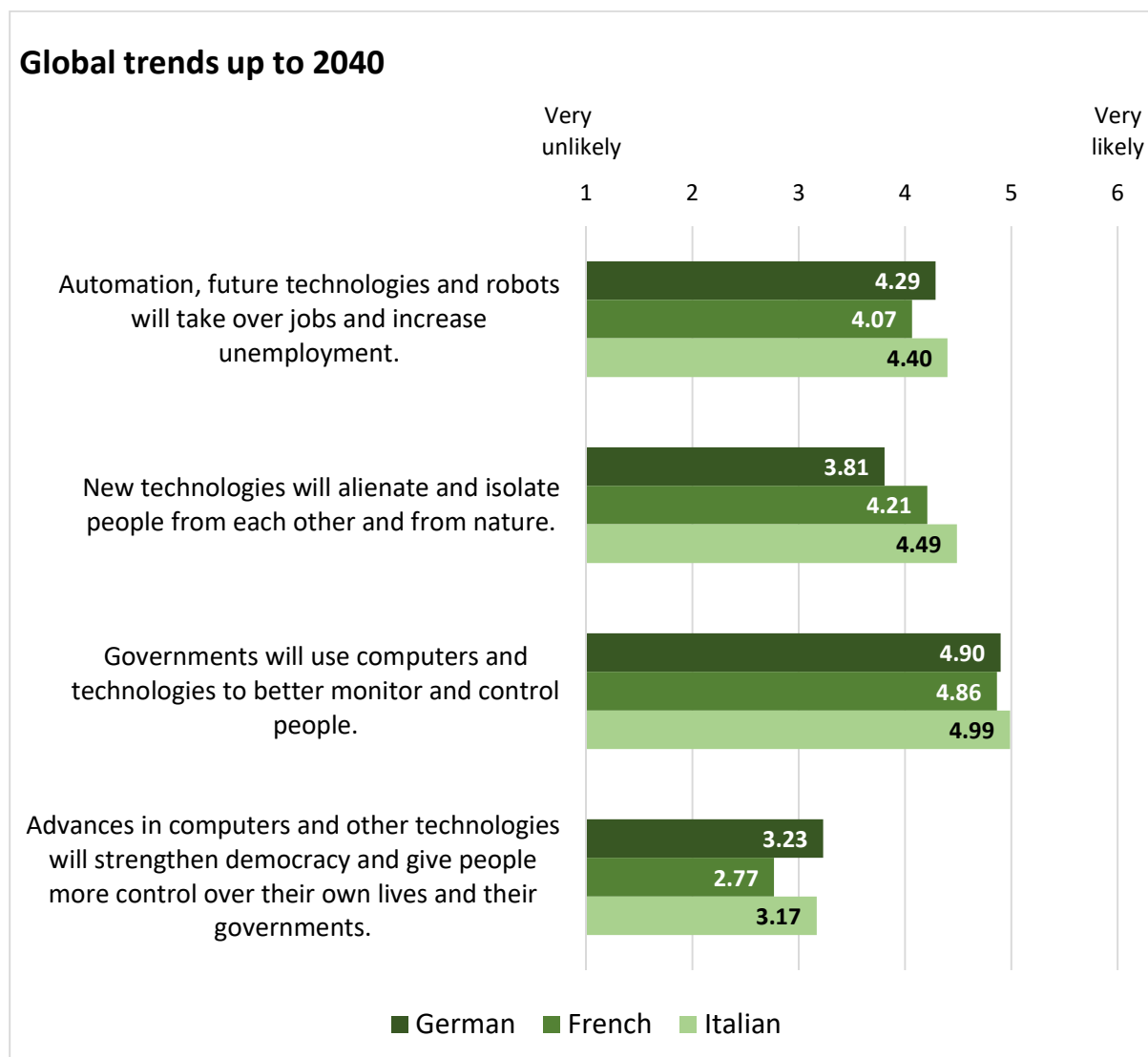


Figure 11: Global trends 2040 in relation to society and state - mean values

Views are divided on the role and potential of scientific and technological progress in improving the quality of life (Figure 12).

Whether the scientific and technological developments up to the year 2040 offer good conditions for overcoming the present challenges, approx. 50% of the population finds them probable and 50% unlikely.

The possibility of being able to defeat existing and new diseases thanks to scientific findings is rather positively assessed. The solution of environmental problems and the food situation in the world is considered less likely.

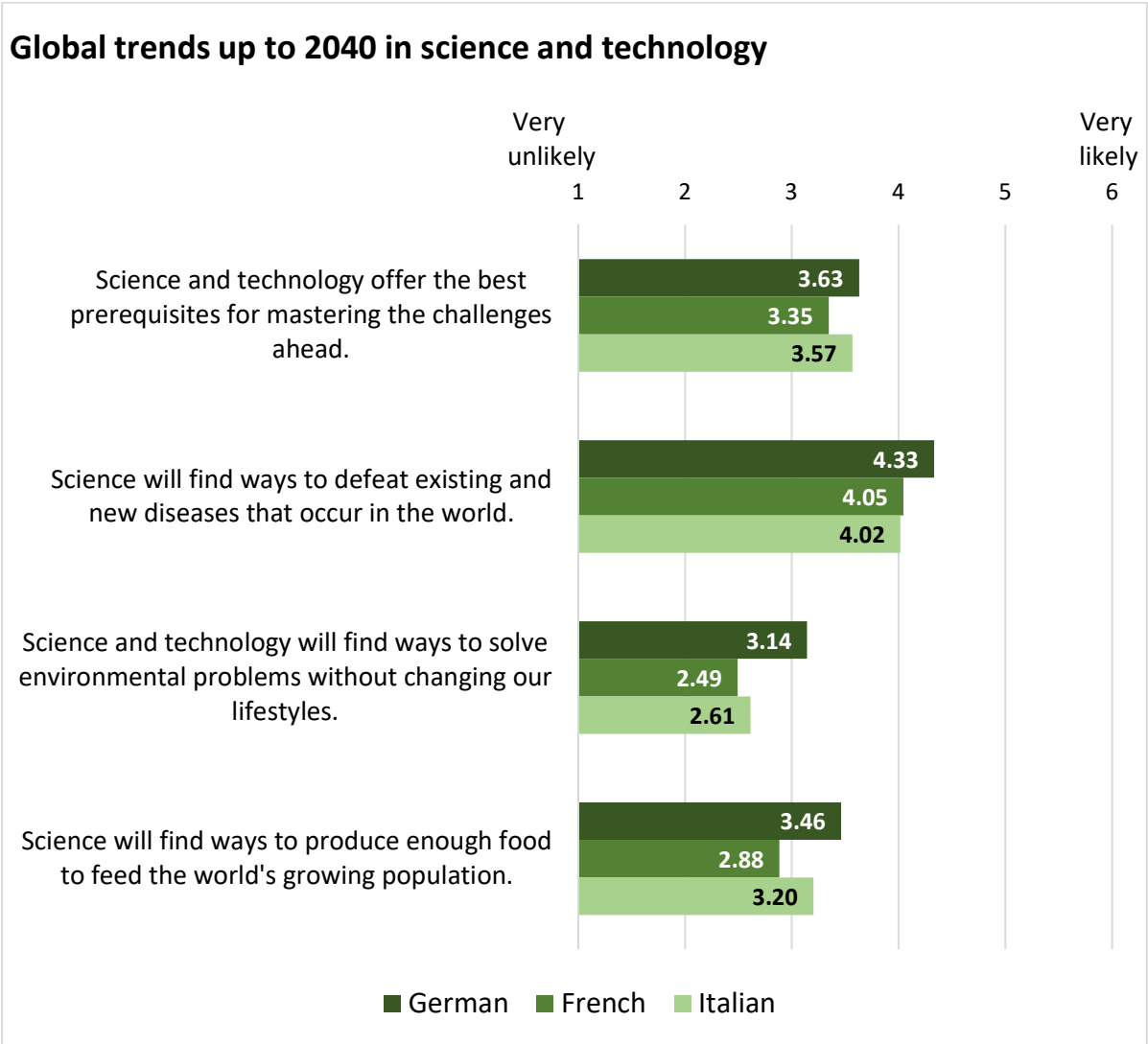


Figure 12: Global trends 2040 in science and technology - averages

5 Global Future Scenarios 2040

As a result of global trends and the expectations of the population for the long-term future, various scenarios can be derived. These can be assessed as more or less likely and more or less desirable.

Four scenarios were presented to the participants for evaluation. Two of them could be assessed in terms of probability of occurrence and the other two in terms of their desirability.

5.1 Probable Scenarios 2040

The first scenario (1a) describes a world marked by crises and problems, in which a growing population causes more environmental degradation and in which ethnic and regional conflicts and new diseases are characteristic (Fig. 13).

Scenario (1b) presents a positive development towards a world of sustainability, peace and prosperity. In this scenario, thanks to economic and technological progress, humanity will be able to overcome the current problems (Fig. 14).

The first problematic and conflict-laden scenario (1a) is estimated by a large majority, i.e. 77.2% of people in German-speaking Switzerland, 83.1% in French-speaking Switzerland and 78.6% in Italian-speaking Switzerland, to be rather or pretty probable (Fig. 13).

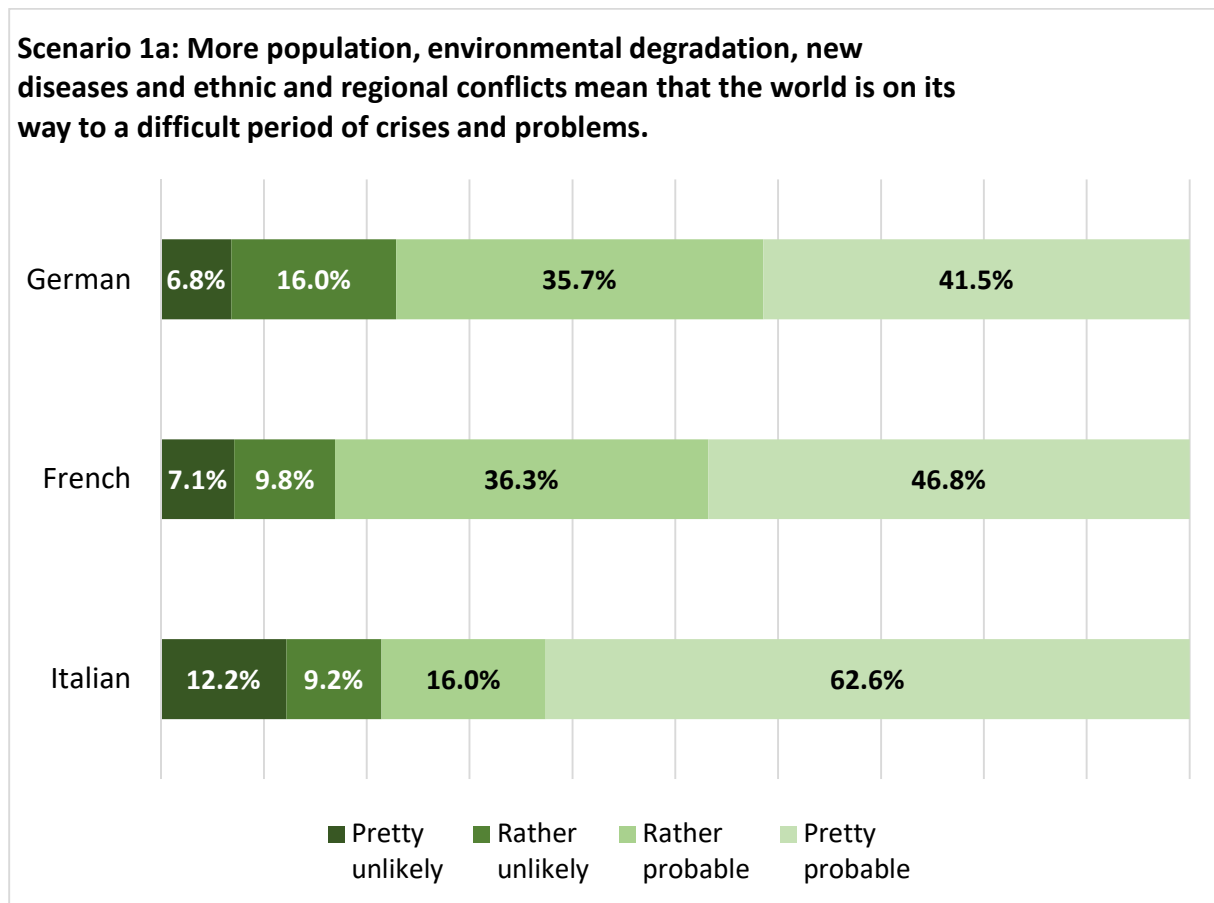


Figure 13: Likelihood of scenario 1a for the year 2040 - Percentage Distribution

On the other hand, the positive scenario (1b) is assessed as rather or pretty unlikely by 68% of the population in German-speaking Switzerland and almost 75% of the population in French-speaking Switzerland. Only in Italian-speaking Switzerland does slightly more than half of the survey participants see this scenario as more or less probable (Fig. 14).

Scenario 1b: By continuing on its current path of economic and technological development, humanity will overcome obstacles and enter a new era of sustainability, peace and prosperity.

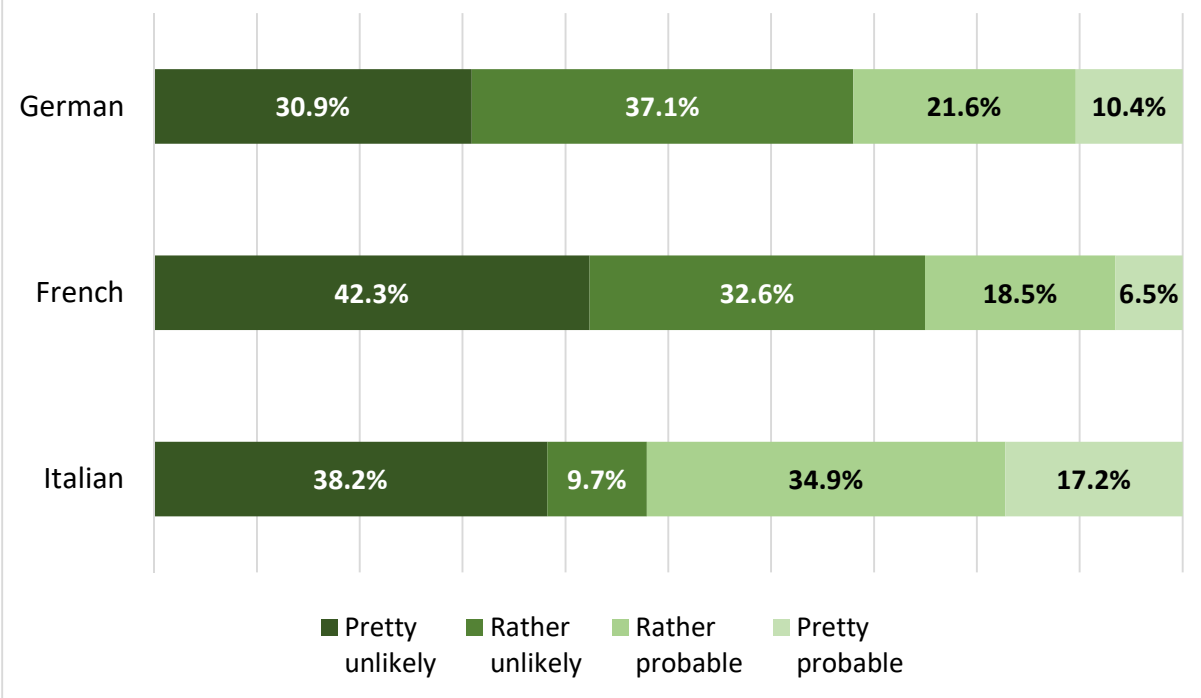


Figure 14: Likelihood of scenario 1b for the year 2040 - Percentage Distribution

5.2 Desirable Scenarios 2040

The interviewees were also able to assess how desirable or undesirable two other scenarios were in their eyes.

The first scenario (2a) outlines a (modern) fast-moving, internationally competitive society with a focus on the individual, wealth creation and technological progress (Fig. 15).

The next scenario (2b) portrays a (post-modern) greener, more harmonious society, focusing on cooperation, community and family, a more even distribution of wealth and greater economic self-sufficiency (Fig. 16).

Between approx. 80% of people in German-speaking Switzerland and 90% of people in French and Italian-speaking Switzerland support the post-modern scenario (2b) of a greener and more socially just society (Fig. 16).

In contrast, about two thirds of people in German- and Italian-speaking Switzerland and about 75% of people in French-speaking Switzerland reject the modern scenario (2a) (Fig. 15).

Scenario 2a: A fast-moving, internationally competitive society focusing on the individual, wealth creation and technological progress.

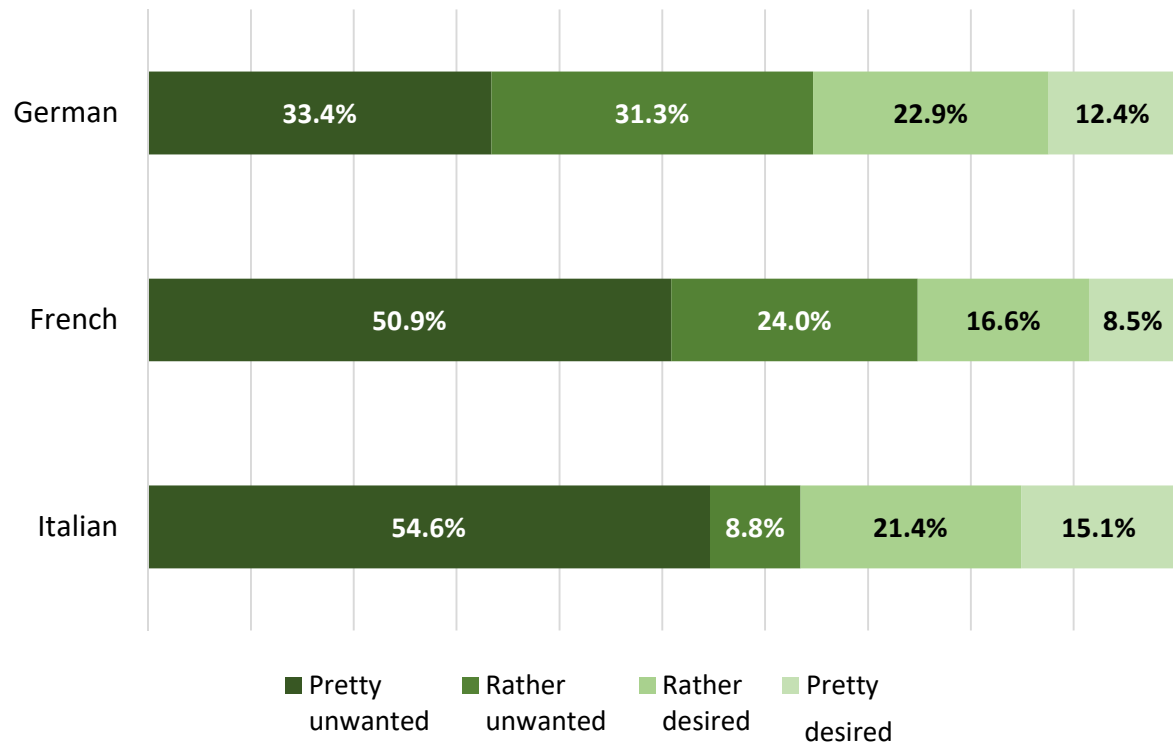


Figure 15: Desirability of scenario 2a for the year 2040 - Percentage Distribution

Scenario 2b: A greener, more harmonious society with a focus on collaboration, community and family, a more even distribution of wealth and greater economic self-sufficiency.

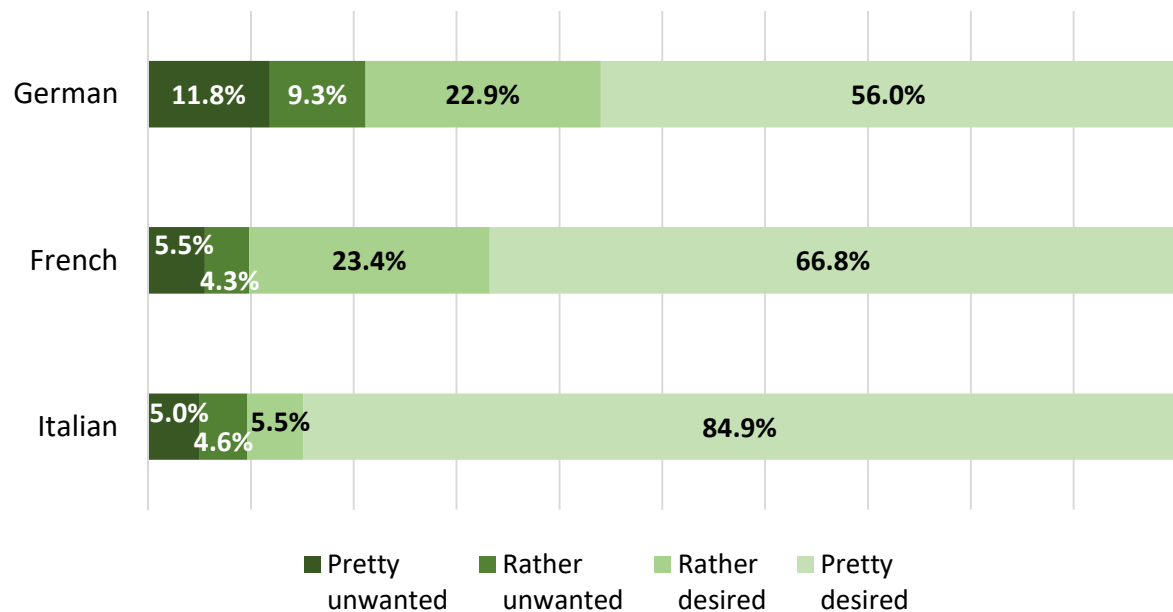


Figure 16: Desirability of scenario 2b for the year 2040 - Percentage Distribution

6 Personal Hopes of the Population

What are the concrete hopes of the Swiss population for the coming years? This year's results presented Figure 17 are almost identical to those of the last 10 years.

In all three language regions, health, a happy marriage, family or partnership as well as a harmonious life are the first priorities. This is followed, especially in German-speaking Switzerland, by the hope for more independence and self-determination, for good and trusting relationships with other people and for a meaningful and satisfying task in life.

What is significantly less important are hopes for religious and spiritual experiences, for more money, for more sex and romantic relationships, and for personal success at the workplace etc.

In Italian-speaking Switzerland, hopes for more money, success, personal growth and job security are more pronounced than in German and French-speaking Switzerland.

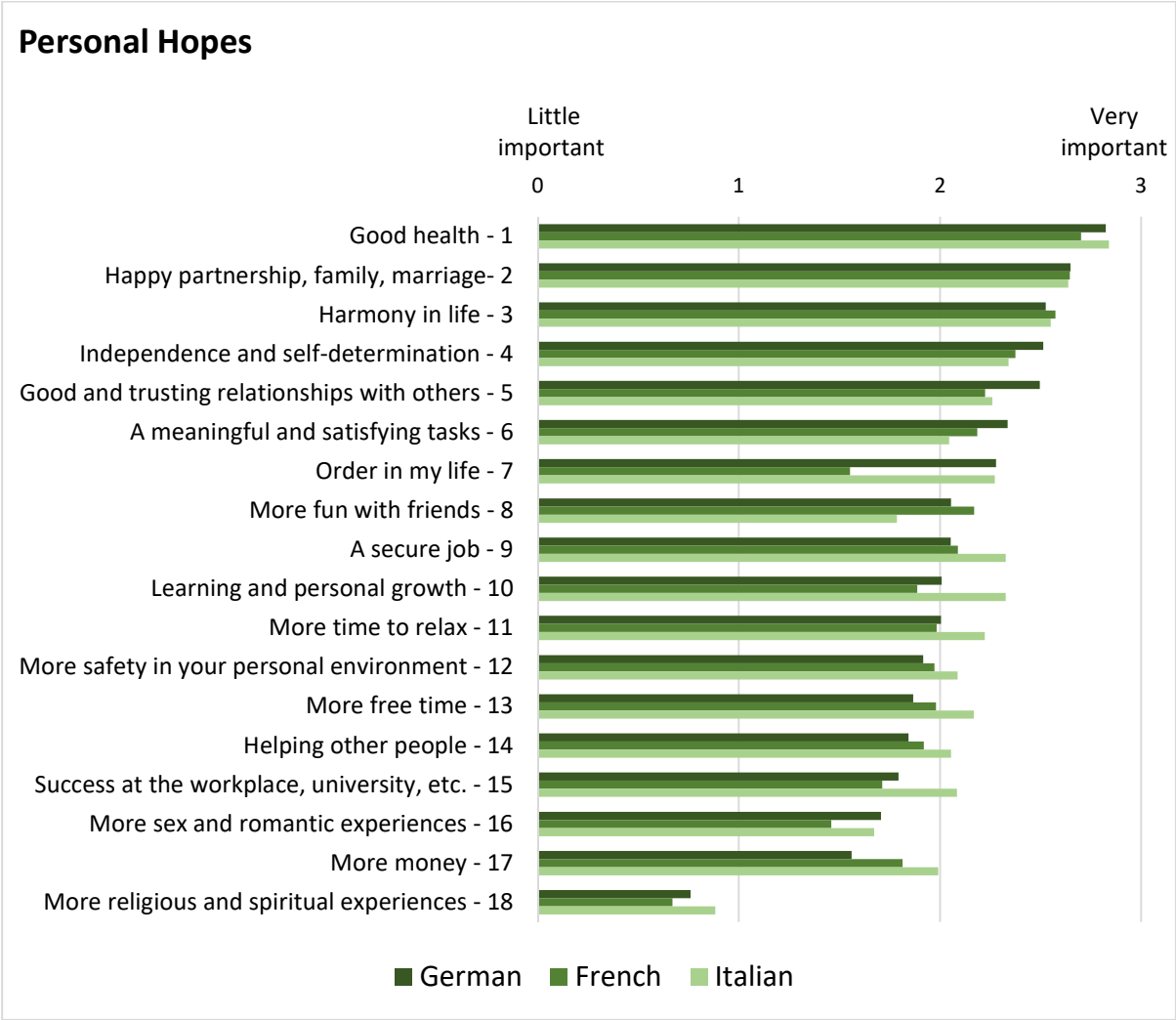


Figure 17: Personal hopes of the population - mean values

7 Sources of Hope

Against the background of global threats on the one hand and personal hopes on the other, the question arises from which sources people draw hope for everyday life. Figure 18 shows the evaluation of 17 sources of hope.

First and foremost in Switzerland are the links with nature (No. 1 in German-speaking Switzerland and No. 2 in the rest of Switzerland) and the support of family and friends (No. 1 in French and Italian-speaking Switzerland). Here the importance of the environment and good social relations for a hopeful attitude to life are expressed in a pointed way.

These two sources of hope are followed by a sense of self-efficacy (e.g. problem-solving capacity and professional and academic successes and achievements) as well as social and altruistic experiences (doing good for a meaningful purpose, gratitude of people you have helped and the help of other people).

Political commitment, religious experience, money making and technological progress are seen as less relevant to strengthening one's own hope.

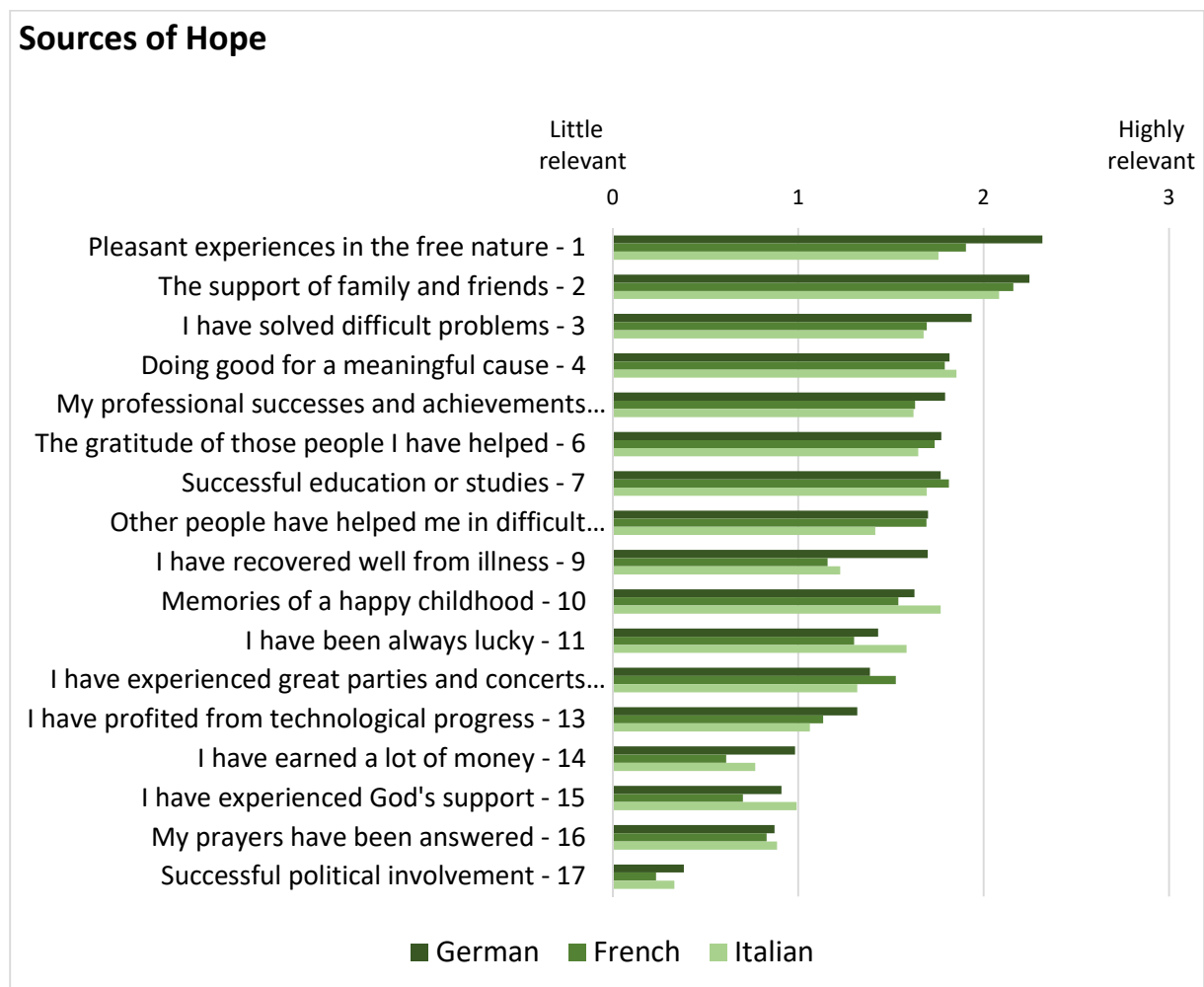


Figure 18: Sources of Hope - mean values

8 Social Support

Due to the great importance of social relationships both as a source of hope and well-being, the extent of social support as well as loneliness and social rejection was evaluated this year.

Figure 19 shows the above-mean level of social support and the lower values of perceived loneliness and social rejection among the population. It is remarkable that people in German-speaking Switzerland report significantly higher social support and less loneliness and social rejection.

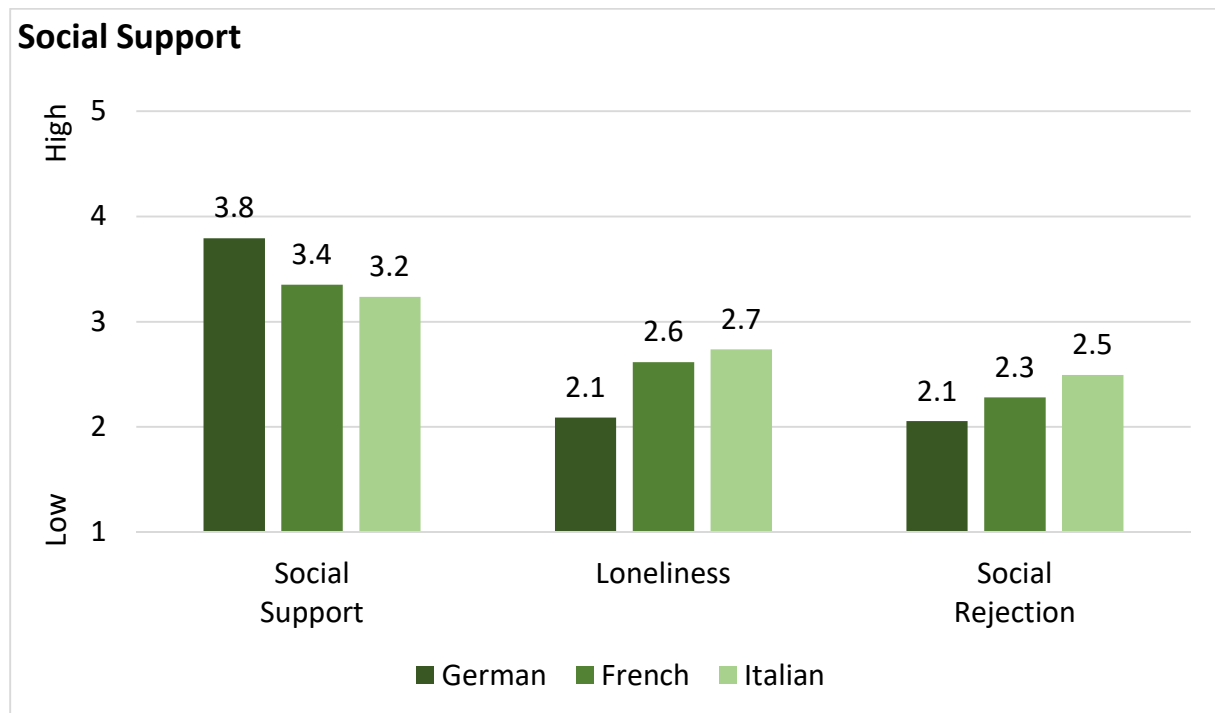


Figure 19: Social Support - mean values

The importance of social support and, in the negative sense, the feelings of loneliness and social rejection are shown by the correlations with the feeling of hope, personal motivation and self-efficacy as well as personal and social well-being (Tab. 1.).

Personal well-being ($r=.517$) as well as the feeling of hope ($r=.464$) seem to be particularly strongly related to the experience of social support. People who feel lonely or suffer from social rejection report significantly lower well-being, less hope, personal motivation and self-efficacy.

Tab. I. Bivariate correlations

	Hope	Personal motivation and self-efficacy	Personal well-being	Social well-being
Social support	.464**	.396**	.517**	.389**
Loneliness	-.489**	-.482**	-.652**	-.479**
Social rejection	-.389**	-.349**	-.516**	-.367**

** Correlations are significant at $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed). Correlation values range from 0 to 1 (positive relationships) and from 0 to -1 (negative relationships). Values up to 0.2 show a low relationship between the variables, between 0.2 and 0.4 a moderate one, between 0.4 and 0.6 a strong one and above 0.6 a very strong one.

9 Conclusions

The main conclusion of this year's Hope Barometer is that although people are largely pessimistic about many social developments, they look to the future with hope for their own lives. Most future studies show that people's expectations (what they expect to be likely) are almost diametrically opposed to their ideals and hopes.

People have a feeling for what's not going right in this world. Many are concerned about the environment, the economy and political radicalization. The state of the world is often seen as difficult and uncertain. There is unease about the direction the world is taking at the moment. Many people fear that the current global problems will worsen in the future, seem to have lost confidence in a meaningful global future and no longer believe in unlimited progress that could solve the world's problems. The coming decades are generally seen as an age of crises and problems rather than of peace and prosperity.

The lack of faith in social progress, i.e. in a better world, has led many people to adopt a pessimistic attitude towards the global future. *Pessimism about the future is a consequence of rising uncertainty. The more complex and unmanageable the world presents itself, the more a feeling of powerlessness is expressed, because many people have the impression that they cannot do anything about it.* These experiences trigger negative feelings of fear and helplessness. Increasing pressure and competition also lead to dissatisfaction and discomfort. In a seemingly uncontrollable world, it is almost impossible to change anything. Cynicism, conformism and totalitarianism (e.g. in the form of nationalism) are phenomena that can already be observed in some places today, especially among young people.

Today's visions of the future are mostly linked to phenomena that need to be avoided (less pollution, extinction of species, climate change, social imbalances, etc.). In many areas there is a lack of positive visions for the future, which could give orientation and direction as well as the confidence and faith that the current problems of the world can be solved. The lack of positive visions of the future can become an obstacle to social progress, especially because it can turn the future into a projection field of anxiety rather than hope.

Whether the world can be shaped positively in the future depends above all on the extent to which we are able to develop images of a desirable future and define the associated values and norms of a better society. Very early on, futurologists realized that it made little sense to focus on problems. What carries us rather than lamenting the current state of affairs are hopes and dreams in the form of positive visions and future images of a more livable and sustainable world. It is human hope rather than fear that release the energy for a better future.

Positive scenarios offer people the image of an ideal future to which they can commit themselves and emphasize human freedom and dignity. Man is always free to imagine and strive for a completely different and better world. As soon as people are asked to outline their visions and hopes about desired images of the future, completely different topics are expressed. Some values seem to be almost universal: Altruism, generosity, forgiveness, peace, honesty, harmony, idealism and sustainability. In people's dreams, it is less the individual, competition and material prosperity that are emphasized than community, family, cohesion and the environment. Most of all, people are concerned with the natural, human and partly also moral-altruistic aspects of life (Krafft, 2019).

Only when one develops new and powerful images of desirable futures does a society begin to mobilize its creative energy again. Hopes (but also fears) determine the perception of possible future states and options for action. Depending on how people look into the future, they will also shape their daily lives in the here and now. What people do and how they shape their lives depends to a large extent on what their ideas of the future are, what their goals are and what means they employ to achieve them.

If we are to be guided by the ideals of social progress, as has been evident in the history of humanity for centuries, the task is to combine individual goals with visions of a good life in a better world, thereby enabling a new and more fundamental hope for happiness and fulfilment. Such a future can occur above all if we can imagine it today and realize it step by step.

All the great upheavals of history, be it the discovery of America, the Copernican Revolution, the Enlightenment, the Reformation, the abolition of slavery, equality between women and men, the

emergence of human rights, the founding of the European Union, etc. are based on such visions, i.e. projections of positive images of the future.

There is a need, especially in these days, to develop positive images so that young people in particular can think about the world in which they would like to live in the future. Thinking about the future can give people new dimensions of meaning and orientation. Images of a better world can give them inspiration and hope.

The fundamental question is how we want to shape our lives in the future. For this, we first need a picture of the good life and of a better world. It needs not only short-term goals, but also long-term visions for the individual and society. And it needs clarity about what is really important in life.

The aim is to examine probable, alternative and desirable futures, in the conviction that we must not merely adapt to the future, but must actively and responsibly shape it. This requires future plans based on individual and collective interests, values and dreams of a better world, supported above all by positive relations between people.

Hope is the opposite of fear and sorrow, apathy and despondency, because it inspires faith and confidence in the achievement of a better future. This is possible above all within the framework of a human community in which one focuses on the positive aspects of life, especially on the hope and confidence that even in difficult times, despite problems and disappointments, it is possible to lead a better life if one adopts the appropriate attitude and actively commits oneself to it together.

10 Key figures on the structure of the study

Method:	Online survey
Instrument:	Electronic Questionnaire
Population:	Web- and e-mail-active persons of all age groups from Switzerland
Scope:	Total of 147 closed and 1 open questions 9 socio-demographic questions
Sample size:	3'935 questionnaires evaluated (complete, correct and from adult participants)
Representativeness:	Broad-based survey through cooperation with 20minuten as media partner and broad presence on various social media platforms
Survey period:	01.11.2019 - 30.11.2019
Management:	Dr. oec HSG Andreas Krafft
Citation style:	Use permitted provided the source is acknowledged

The following tables show the demographic distribution of the respondent groups.

Language region	Number	%
German	2195	55.8
French	1502	38.2
Italian	238	6.0

Gender	Number	%
Male	1797	45.7
Female	2138	54.3

Age	Number	%
18-29	684	17.3
30-39	691	17.6
40-49	702	17.8
50-59	915	23.3
60-69	641	16.3
70+	302	7.7

Education and training	Number	%
No completed school education	41	1.0
Elementary school completed	190	4.8
Technical (secondary) school without A-levels	168	4.3
Grammar school with Matura / Abitur	943	24.0
Vocational training	1154	29.3
Higher vocational training with diploma	992	25.2
University / Polytechnic	447	11.4

Marital status	Number	%
Still living with the parents	231	5.9
Single, unmarried	589	15.0
Living in a partnership, but separated households	314	8.0
Living together in a partnership	719	18.3
Married	1531	38.9
Divorced/separated	459	11.7
Widowed	92	2.3

Main occupation	Number	%
In training	197	5.0
Family work, housework, raising children	181	4.6
Part-time employment	830	21.1
Full-time employment	1777	45.2
Unemployed	212	5.4
Retired (Pension or IV)	738	18.8

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