

IKEA Home Life Monitor 2025

Living and Cooking
in Switzerland



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Editorial by Janie Bisset

Hej!

“Home” can be many things. For some, it is a place of retreat and relaxation, for others, the vibrant centre of family life. And for others, it is simply an expression of their own personality. For most people, home is much more than four walls and furniture. It is a part of their identity.

At IKEA, we have always been curious about how people use their homes. Our vision is to improve everyday life for lots of people. That is why we want to better understand people’s needs and habits when it comes to living and coexisting. Until now, however, Switzerland lacked a representative data basis that shows how people design, use and experience their homes. We have closed this gap with the first “IKEA Home Life Monitor – Living and Cooking in Switzerland”.

Together with the Sotomo research institute, we surveyed more than 1,800 people across the country. This gave us a nuanced picture of Swiss home and living culture – with all its facets, peculiarities and commonalities. The IKEA Home Life Monitor reveals how closely our way of life is linked to culture, community and emotions.

For us, it's about more than just presenting figures. We want to share the findings from the report to stimulate discussion about life at home and open up new perspectives. It's a topic that unites the population. Since moving to Switzerland two years ago, I have experienced first-hand how much warmth and care people in this country put into their homes.

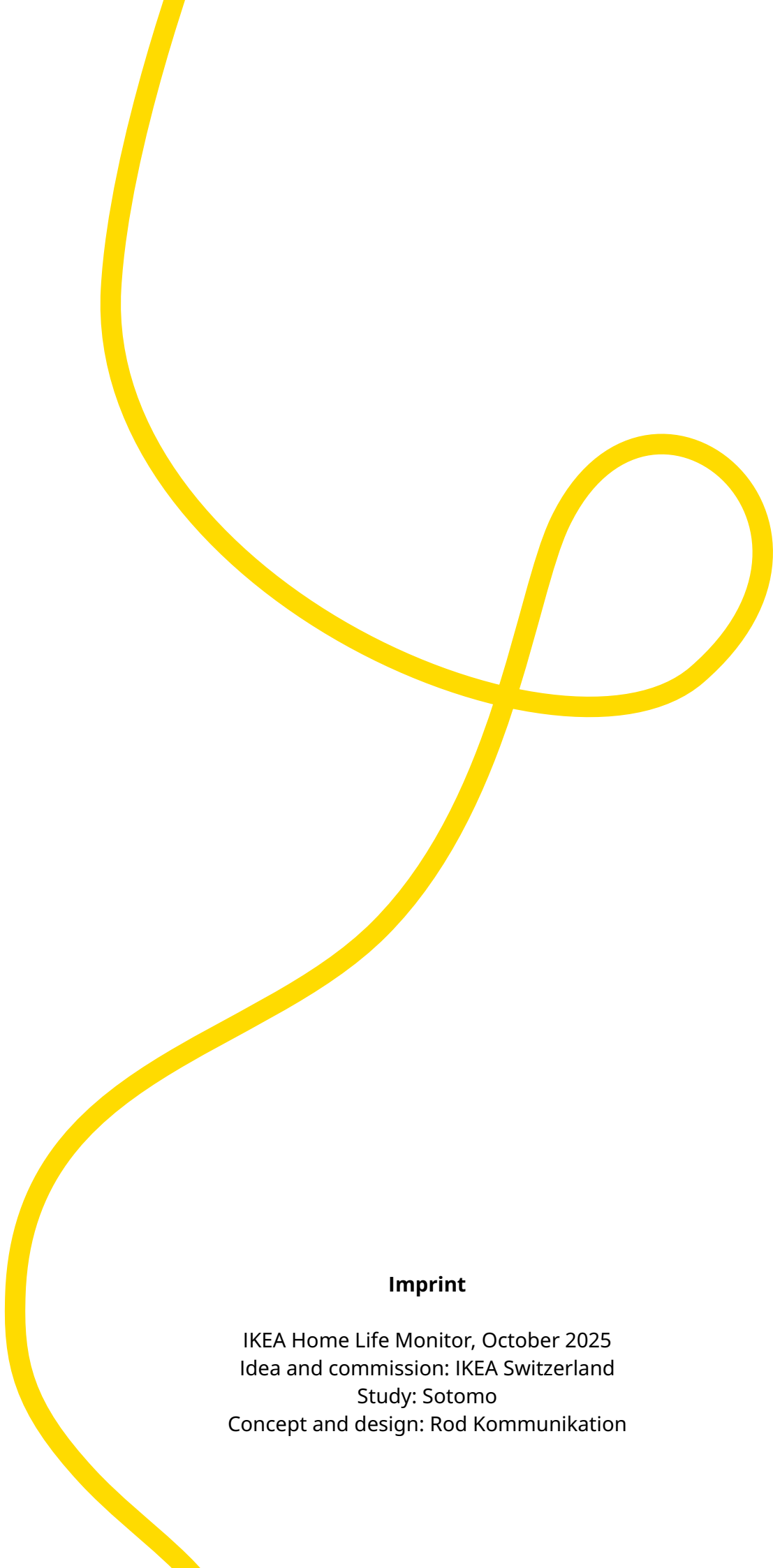
The IKEA Home Life Monitor will be published annually in future. Every year, we will choose a specific theme. This time, in addition to living, the focus lies also on cooking and eating – areas that are key to all households and have a significant impact on daily well-being.

My thanks go to everyone who contributed to this project. Without their tremendous commitment, these fascinating insights would not have been possible.

I now cordially invite everyone to dive into the first IKEA Home Life Monitor and discover the many sides of living in Switzerland.

Janie Bisset
CEO & CSO IKEA Switzerland





Imprint

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1

IKEA Home Life Monitor

1.1 About this study

With Sotomo, IKEA takes a look behind doors that are normally closed to outsiders in Switzerland and examines people's everyday lives at home: How do they live, use their rooms and furnish them? What is the attitude to life and satisfaction like at home? How is communal living organised and housework divided up? And what role do invitations and shared meals with guests play? The IKEA Home Life Monitor examines life at home in these four areas on the basis of a representative survey of the population. The first edition of the study series focuses on cooking and eating at home.

If there is one recurring theme throughout the results of the first IKEA Home Life Monitor, it is a concept of living that aligns with the well-known English saying "My home is my castle": almost everyone in Switzerland enjoys being at home. Here, people feel free and relaxed. It should be cosy. So cosy, in fact, that many even leave their toilet doors open. Stereotypes also hold true when it comes to tidiness and cleanliness. However, not only are demands high here, but they also often lead to tensions, for example between women and men, who assess their respective contributions differently. Cooking simple meals and eating together at the dining table are part of everyday life in Switzerland. Household members experience a sense of community and exchange ideas instead of looking at their mobile phones. Spontaneous visitors are rare, and overnight guests are even rarer. Nevertheless, hosting and cooking for guests are an important part of life at home. It is the moment when the private retreat, the castle itself, is opened up – not to the world, but at least to the circle of friends.

The IKEA Home Life Monitor is interested in the people behind the doors. This first edition of the study series was conducted by IKEA in collaboration with the research institute Sotomo. For this study, 1843 people from all over Switzerland were interviewed between 17 April and 5 May. The results are representative of the linguistically integrated residential population of Switzerland.

1.2 Key findings in brief

What makes a Swiss home

The heart of the home: The living and dining rooms are the heart of a typical Swiss household. No other space in the home is used as diversely as these areas (Fig. 1). In comparison, the kitchen and bedroom are mainly used for functional purposes. It is fitting that more than nine out of ten respondents say that their living and dining rooms are among their favourite rooms (Fig. 3). This is where people meet most often, have deep conversations, and where arguments are most likely to occur (Fig. 4).

Cosiness is key: When it comes to furnishing the home in Switzerland, creating a cosy atmosphere is clearly the top priority (Fig. 5). For people living in big cities in particular, furnishing is also about style and expressing their own personality (Fig. 6). Questions of style are the least important for families (Fig. 7).

The kitchen is for cooking: The demands placed on kitchen furnishings in Switzerland are primarily functional (Fig. 8). Four out of ten respondents struggle with too little counter space and one third with not enough storage space (Fig. 9). This is especially the case for tenants of rented apartments. A kitchen that is too small and impractical is the major concern of tenants in this country. Their biggest priority for their dream kitchen is usually to have more space. This shows that in Switzerland, the kitchen is more of a working space than an interior design dream.

The home as a place of retreat

Home sweet home: People in Switzerland like to spend time within their own four walls. Almost all those surveyed enjoy being at home, with eight out of ten enjoying it very much (Fig. 10). People who own their homes and those who live in the countryside feel particularly comfortable.

Often at home in the evenings: The majority of respondents say that they like to be out and about in their free time – especially city dwellers (Fig. 12). Nevertheless, even city dwellers spend an average of five and a half evenings per week at home and around one and a half of them at the weekend.

Free and relaxed: Feeling free, being oneself, not having to hide – that's how Switzerland feels at home. In line with this, half of people in Switzerland leave their toilet doors at least slightly ajar. Only 6% actually use the key to lock the toilet door at home (Fig. 13). When it comes to footwear at home, Switzerland is split into two major camps. The over-55s are mostly in the slippers camp, while the under-55s are in the socks camp (Fig. 14). While it is common for older respondents to keep their shoes on, younger respondents are very unlikely to do this (Fig. 15). For older people, private space becomes a little less private when there are guests: they keep their outdoor shoes on, as they would in a restaurant. For younger people, guests become a part of their private space – they take off their shoes, as is fitting for this space, and walk around in socks.

Living together under one roof

Tidiness is more than a cliché: Almost three-quarters have a (fairly) high standard of tidiness (Fig. 16). The people of Switzerland more than just live up to their expectations. As many as 80% consider their home to be tidy. This shows that tidiness is more than just an ideal, it is a lived reality. Even before the cleaner arrives, 40% reach for the cleaning supplies and occasionally pre-clean their home beforehand. However, most do not let a cleaner into their homes at all, either because they cannot afford it or because they want to meet their cleanliness standards themselves.

Tension when it comes to tidiness: One quarter experience weekly tensions about tidiness and tidying up. Overall, practically every second household in Switzerland argues about it at least once a month (Fig. 17). When it comes to cleanliness, the focus is on the kitchen. The number one kitchen taboo is failing to wipe down dirty work surfaces. Seven out of ten respondents cannot stand this (Fig. 18). In general, women are more bothered by dirt, while men are more bothered by disorder.

The division of housework is a matter of perception: Sixty-seven percent of women believe that they carry the main responsibility for keeping the household running. Sixty percent of men, on the other hand, believe that the mental load is shared equally (Fig. 19). When it comes to specific tasks, there are particularly large differences between the sexes when it comes to shopping and cleaning (Fig. 20a & b). Men, on the other hand, see themselves clearly in the lead when it comes to managing household finances. Here, it is women who tend to see a balanced participation of both sexes. This shows that the division of housework is a matter of perception.

Tastes differ: When it comes to furnishing the home, differences in tastes are the most common source of conflict (Fig. 23). Decisions on home furnishing are usually made jointly. This is an expression of partnership, but also increases the potential for conflict.

Cooking, eating and guests

Cooking is an integral part of everyday life: Almost all respondents eat a home-cooked meal several times a week – two-thirds even daily (Fig. 25). There are many reasons for cooking your own meals – first and foremost are health and the need to know exactly what's on your plate (Fig. 26). Italian and Swiss cuisine dominate, with a focus on simple, healthy dishes (Fig. 28).

Eating together: Almost all respondents in couple and family households consider eating together important (Fig. 29). It's about much more than just consuming food. Eating together is a social fixture where lively conversations take place, everyday life is coordinated and experiences are shared (Fig. 30). The biggest taboo at the table is mobile phones (Fig. 31). This shows just how important togetherness and mindful presence at the table still are in Switzerland today.

A visit is a special occasion: More than half of Swiss households have guests at home less than once a month – usually for a meal. Overnight guests are rare (Fig. 32). Visits typically happen by invitation, not spontaneously. Invited visitors are much rarer in the countryside than in the city. Guests are a special occasion in Swiss homes. More than nine out of ten people clean their homes before their guests arrive (Fig. 34). In Switzerland, inviting friends or relatives over is the most important reason for elaborate cooking (Fig. 35).

The IKEA Home Life Monitor is interested in the people behind the doors.



2

What makes a Swiss home



What does a typical Swiss home look like? Which rooms does it have and how are these rooms used and furnished? What is the favourite room and how is it lived in? Our look inside Swiss homes reveals that the cosy and lively heart of the home is the living and dining room. The kitchen and bedroom play a functional role for the Swiss.

2.1 The heart of the home

Which rooms are found in a typical Swiss home? This depends mainly on the composition of the household. Let's look at three typical household types:

A typical **couple household** lives in conurbations in a rented apartment with four rooms (plus kitchen):

- 1-2 living/dining rooms
- 1 bedroom
- 0-1 guest room
- 0-1 office



A typical **family household** consists of parents and two children. They live in conurbations in a detached house with five rooms (plus kitchen):

- 1–2 living/dining rooms
- 1 bedroom
- 1–2 children's rooms
- 0–1 office

A typical **single household** lives in the city in a rented apartment with two rooms (plus kitchen):

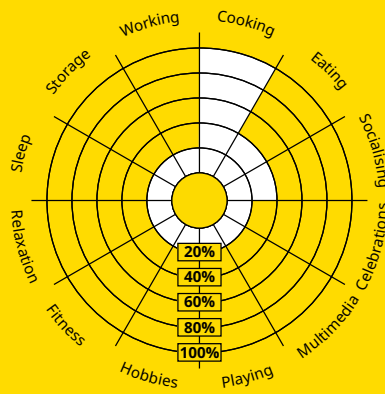
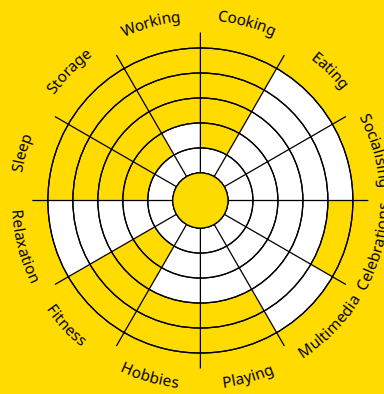
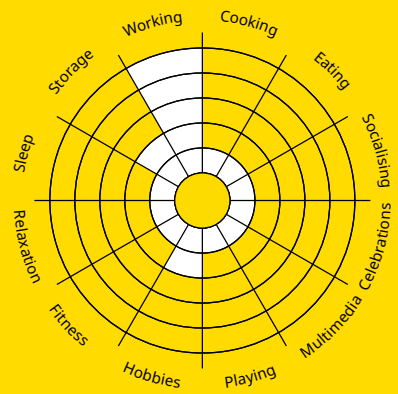
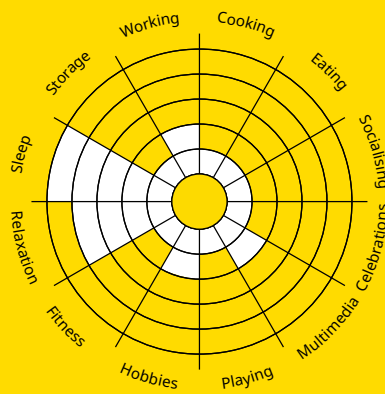
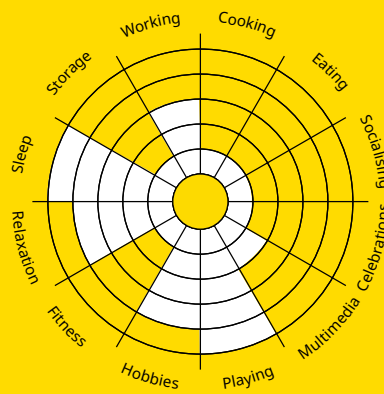
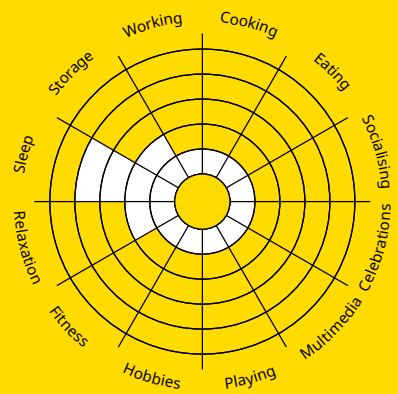
- 1 living/dining room
- 1 bedroom

The living and dining rooms are the heart of a typical Swiss household. No other part of the home is used for such a wide variety of purposes – the only exception is the children's room for families, which is a small, diverse world of its own. Nowhere else, though, is as convivial and relaxed as the living and dining room – this is the meeting place and hub of daily life in the home. In comparison, the kitchen and bedroom are less versatile in terms of their use. These two rooms are used very specifically in Switzerland. For example, only a minority work in the bedroom or watch TV there (Fig. 1) – this is where most people sleep. The situation is similar in the kitchen: As expected, the main function here is cooking and it is rarely used for eating or socialising.

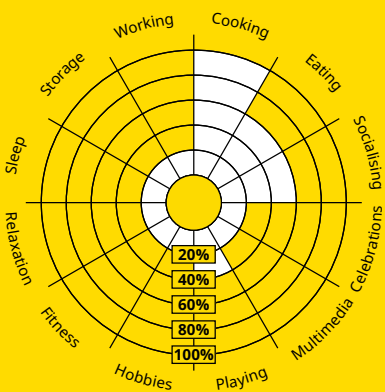
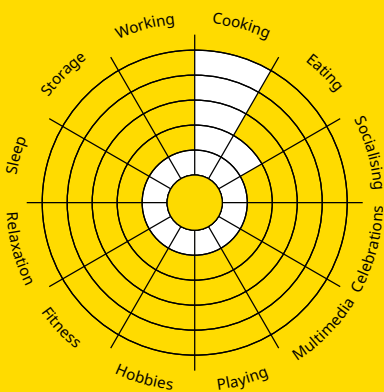
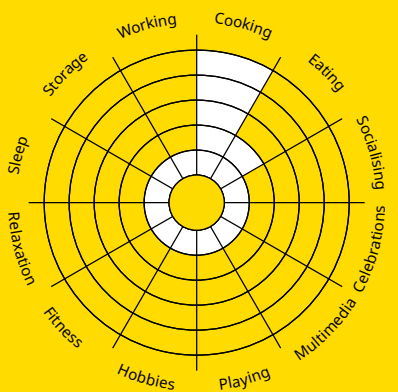


Fig. 1**Typical uses of different room types**

“What do you use each room for? (Multiple answers possible)”

Kitchen/kitchen-living room**Living/dining room****Office/study****Bedroom****Children's room****Guest room****Fig. 2****Typical use of the kitchen by household type**

“What do you use each room for? (Multiple answers possible)”

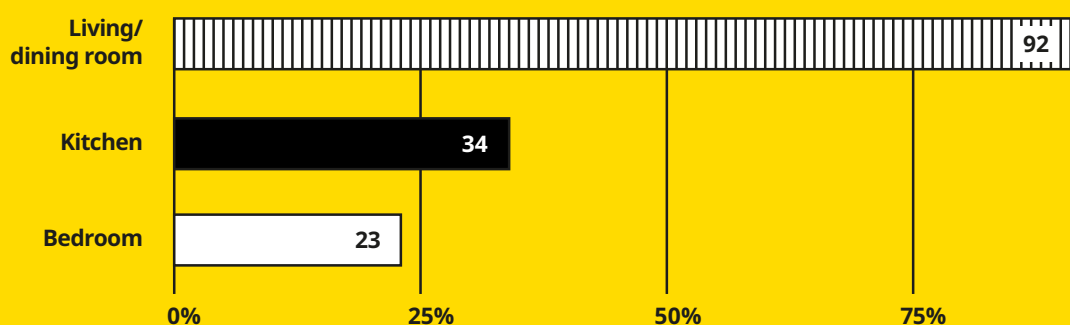
Family household**Couple household****Single-person household**

Kitchens are used a little more diversely in families. Around half of family households also eat occasionally in the kitchen (even if it is not a kitchen-living room) and just as many socialise there (Fig. 2).

Fig. 3

Favourite room

"Which rooms do you like spending time in most at home?"



Nowhere else in the home do people prefer to spend time more than in the living and dining rooms – over 90% name them as their favourite rooms. Kitchens or bedrooms are mentioned much less often (Fig. 3). For example, the popularity of a room seems to be related to the diversity of its use. Nevertheless, it is remarkable that the room where many spend most of their time and share their intimate moments – the bedroom – is considered a favourite by less than a quarter.

**The bedroom is not
a room where people
enjoy lingering.**

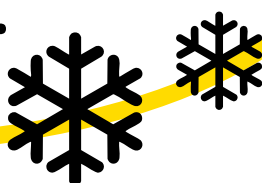
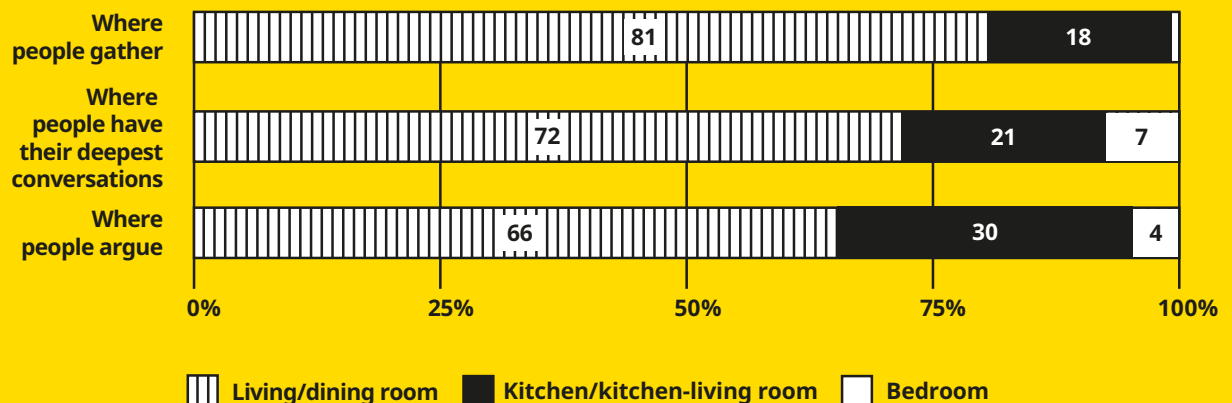


Fig. 4**Where people talk and where they argue**

"In which room do you most often spend time together at home?"

"In which room of your home do the deepest and most honest conversations take place?"

"In which room of your home do you most often argue?"



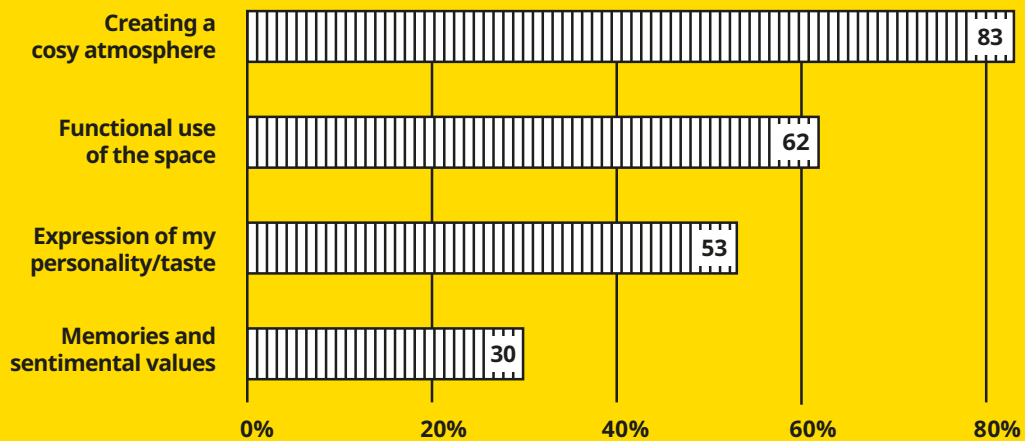
Just how much the living and dining rooms are the heart of the home is also shown in Figure 4. These are the rooms where people come together most often, have deep conversations and are most likely to argue. However, the kitchen is also a common site of conflict. One reason for this is probably that conflicts in Swiss homes often revolve around tidiness and cleanliness – which is increasingly a challenge in the kitchen in particular.

2.2 Cosiness is key

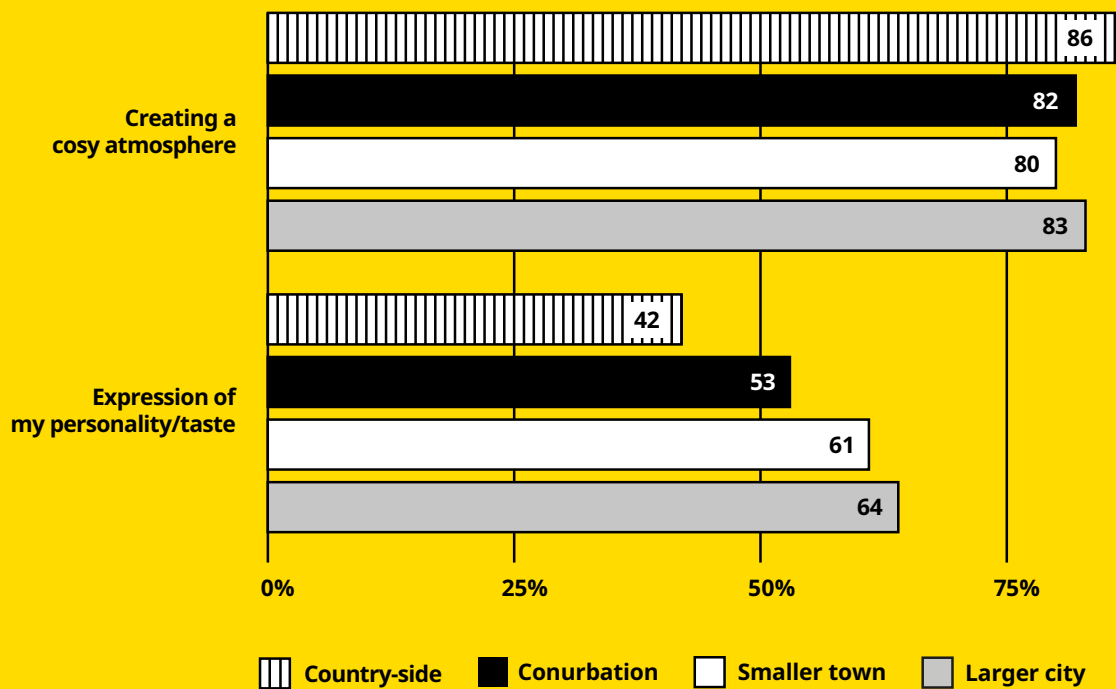
When furnishing their homes, creating a cosy atmosphere is clearly the top priority (Fig. 5). More than four out of five respondents attach particular importance to their home feeling snug and comfortable. For two-thirds, however, home furnishings should also be as functional as possible. For many people, self-expression is not the focus: only around half of those surveyed believe that home design is also about expressing their own taste and style. It is striking that these are particularly people who live in urban environments (Fig. 6). The big city is the place where trends are set, styles are shaped and one's own self is put on display. This obviously also applies to the home furnishings.

Fig. 5**Importance of home furnishings**

"How important are your home furnishings to you?"

**Fig. 6****Importance of home furnishings – by room type**

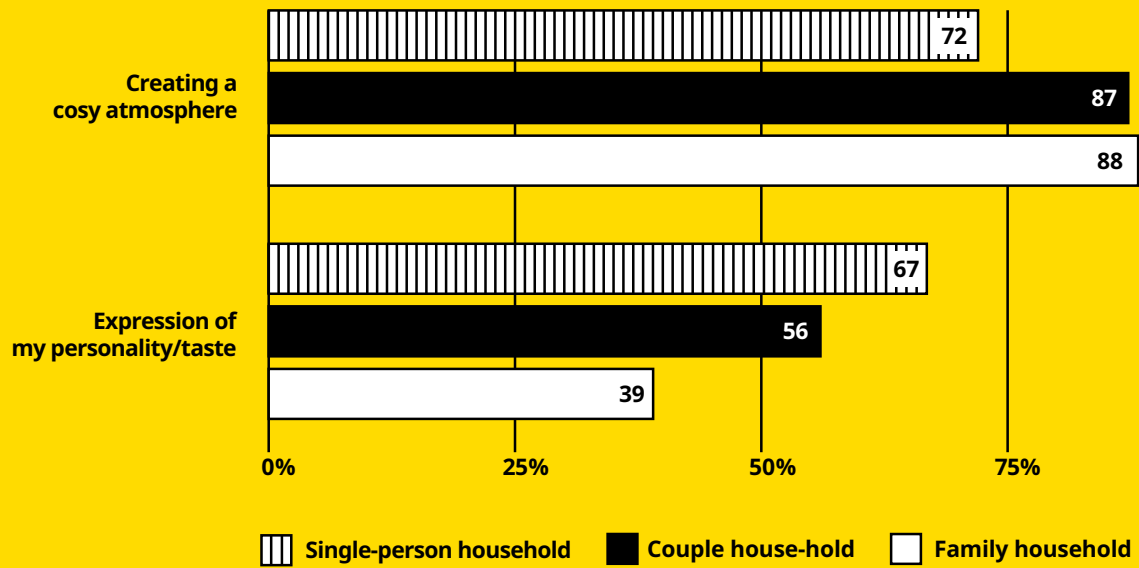
"How important are your home furnishings to you?"



Even those who live alone see their furnishings far more often as an expression of their own style and personality than those who live as a family (Fig. 7). That is logical. Once several people live in the same home, compromises have to be made and personalities and styles have to be merged. As a result, expressing one's own style takes a back seat.

Fig. 7**Importance of home furnishings – by type of household**

“How important are your home furnishings to you?”



Most people in Switzerland aim to feel safe and comfortable in their own home, while keeping it practical and functional. Around half of them also want to express their own style and personality through their home and their furnishings. This half consists in particular of people living in large cities and in single or couple households.

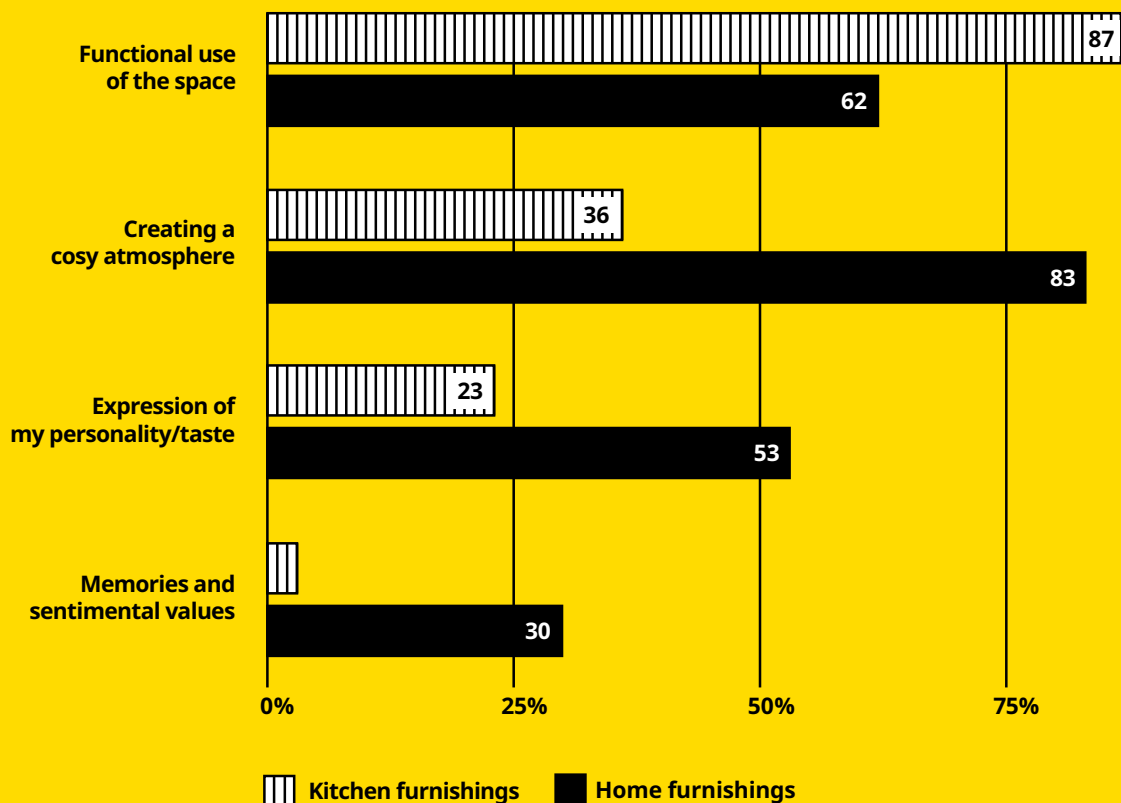
2.3 The kitchen is for cooking

While the living and dining rooms form the heart of Swiss homes, the kitchen is primarily defined by its function: the main focus here is on cooking (see Fig. 2). Accordingly, the demands placed on kitchen furnishings are first and foremost functional. Whereas the overall home should above all be cosy, for just over a third of the respondents, cosiness is a requirement they place on the kitchen (Fig. 8). Nine out of ten focus on functionality when it comes to furnishings.

Fig. 8

Key features of the kitchen

"How important are your kitchen furnishings to you?"



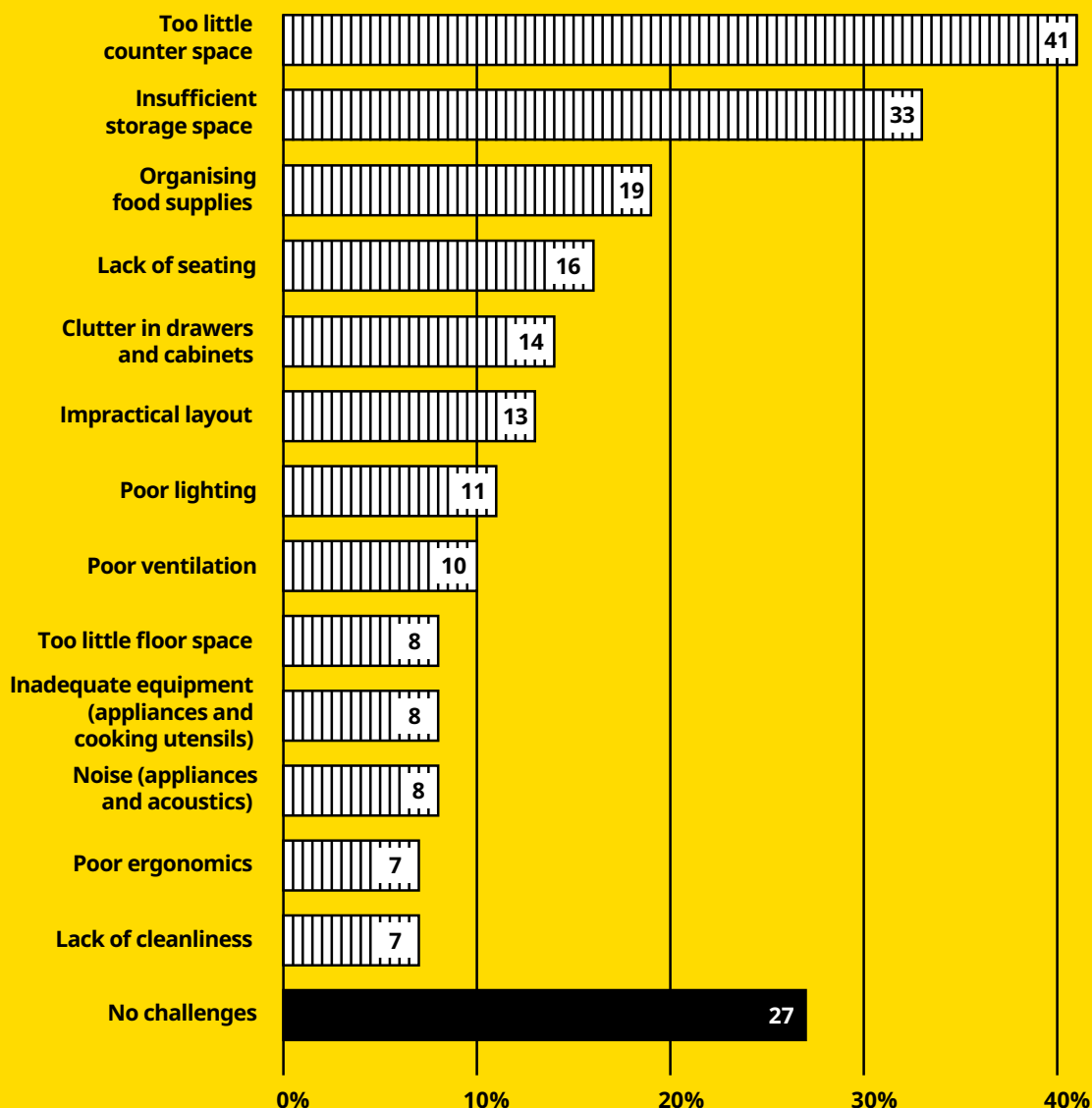
It is precisely in this functional use that many Swiss people are facing challenges. Four out of ten respondents struggled with insufficient counter space, and one third struggled with insufficient storage space (Fig. 9). Overall, almost three-quarters of respondents are dissatisfied with their kitchens. This usually relates to limited space.

It is not surprising that it is above all tenants who complain about a lack of counter space or storage space. A kitchen that is too small and impractical is the major concern of tenants in Switzerland. Those who own their own house or apartment are much less likely to share these concerns. And not just because of the space. Homeowners have usually designed their kitchens themselves, while this is usually not the case in Swiss rental apartments with their pre-installed kitchens.

Fig. 9

Challenges in using the kitchen

"What challenges do you face when using your kitchen?"



Functional and unpretentious are also the ideas associated with a dream kitchen. "Lots of space and storage" is at the top of the list, mentioned by just under 40% of respondents. A little more unusual is the "large kitchen island," which is the second most frequent answer. Once again, however, the Swiss understanding of the kitchen is confirmed here: it is regarded more as a working space than an interior design dream. The ideal Swiss kitchen is one that is spacious and practical.

The rental kitchen is rarely the kitchen of your dreams.



3

The home as a place of retreat



“My home is my castle” – this famous English saying also applies to Switzerland. Almost everyone in this country is content at home and enjoys spending time there – even city dwellers can be found within their own four walls on five and a half evenings a week. At home, in their private space, people feel free and relaxed. This is reflected in habits such as leaving toilet doors open and the footwear that is worn indoors.

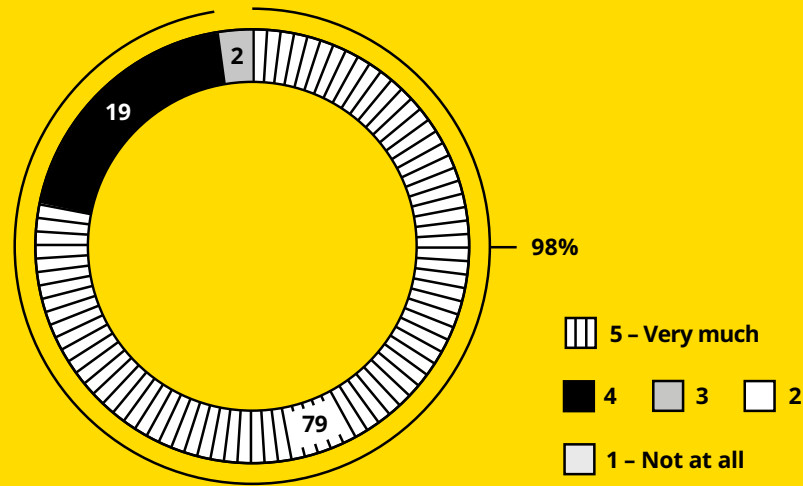
3.1 Home sweet home

People in Switzerland like to spend time within their own four walls. Almost all those surveyed enjoy being at home, with eight out of ten enjoying it very much. The following is true for respondents: “There’s no place like home!” (Fig. 10)



Fig. 10**Satisfaction with the home**

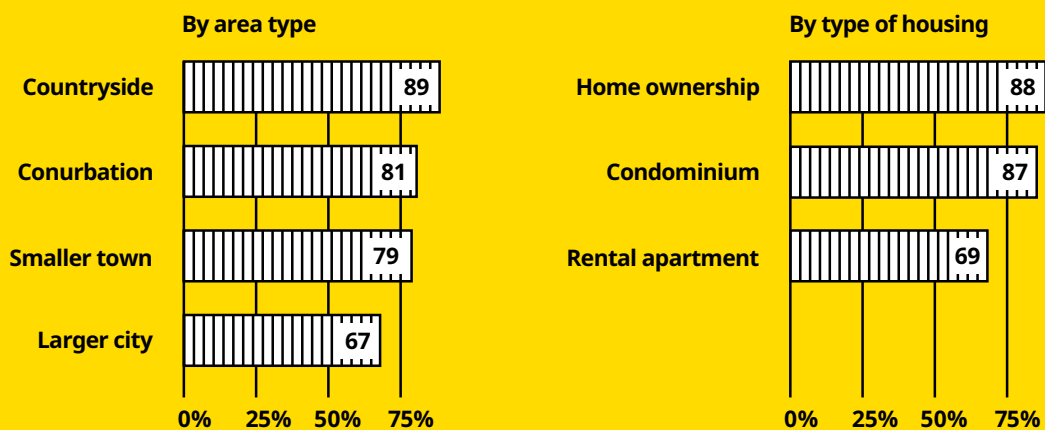
"How much do you like being at home?"



Almost all respondents enjoy being at home. However, some enjoy it more than others: those who own their own house or apartment are much more likely to enjoy being at home than those in rented apartments (Fig. 11). Ownership clearly increases satisfaction with the home – whether it's an apartment or a house. Owners have more creative freedom at home and generally also more financial resources than tenants in rental apartments.

Fig. 11**Satisfaction with the home – by room type and type of housing**

"How much do you like being at home?" – Answer: "Very much"



Whether you live in the countryside or in the city: most respondents like being at home – those who live in a large city somewhat less so. Instead of 10%, a third of them don't like being at home quite as much. There is less home ownership in urban regions than in rural areas and less living space per capita. At the same time, the vibrant urban environment is increasingly attracting people who also like to enjoy life outside their own four walls: public spaces, restaurants and cultural offerings.

Rural dwellers, by contrast, are particularly fond of being at home.



3.2 Often at home in the evenings

People in Switzerland love being at home. However, that doesn't mean they don't like being out and about. As Figure 12 shows, the majority of people are equally happy spending their free time outside the home as they are spending it at home. However, there are rare people in Switzerland who are always drawn to the outdoors or spending time with other people. These "people on the move" are in the minority compared to "home-lovers": Only 14% say that they prefer to be out and about, while a third prefer to spend their free time at home. The difference between urban and rural populations is striking. In the countryside, half of those surveyed prefer the tranquillity of their own home. In the city, on the other hand, only a quarter prefer to stay within their own four walls, while a quarter like going out.

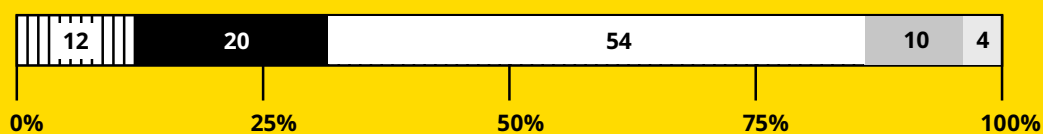
But even in urban households, the majority of everyday life takes place at home. City dwellers spend an average of five and a half evenings a week at home, with around one and a half of them at the weekend. In the countryside, this figure is even higher – a sign of the importance of one's own home for well-being, regardless of where one lives.

Fig. 12

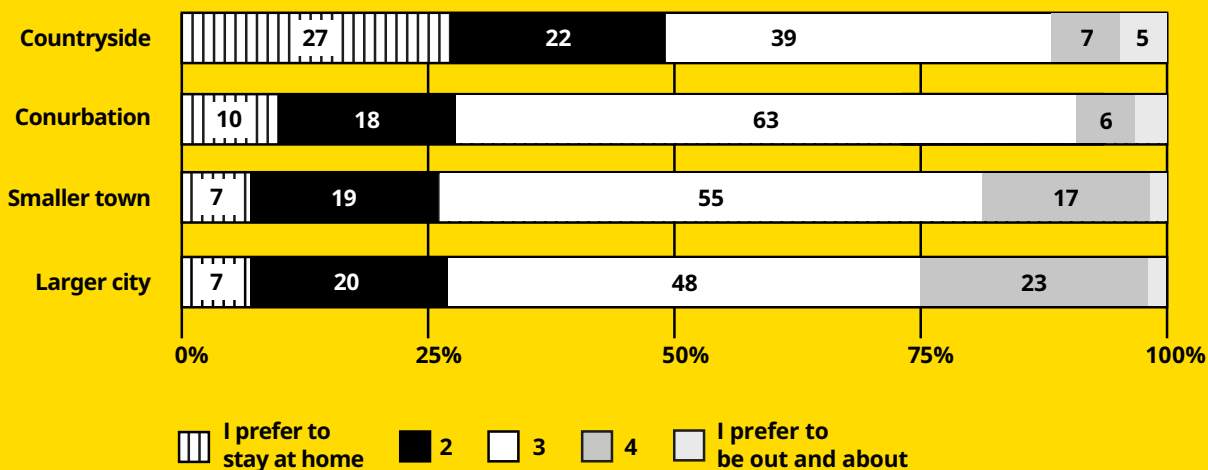
Free time: at home and out and about

"Where do you prefer to spend your free time?"

Total



By area type



3.3 Free and relaxed

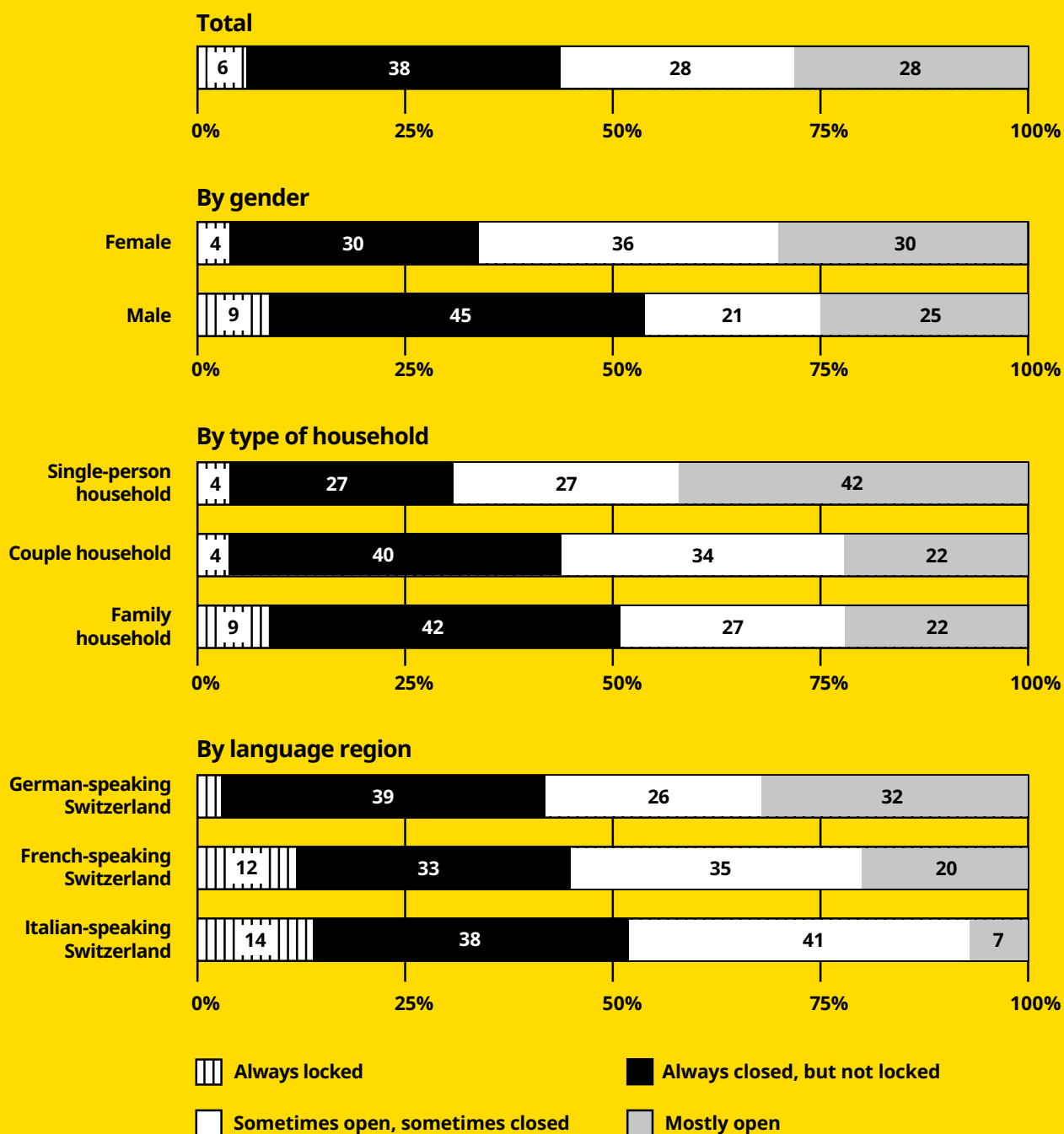
Feeling free, being yourself, not having to hide: The feeling of well-being in Swiss homes is strong – so strong that people allow themselves particular freedoms and behave in a completely relaxed way. This is particularly well illustrated by how people use the toilet door at home. More than half of people in Switzerland leave their toilet doors at least slightly ajar when they go to the toilet. Only six per cent use a key to lock the toilet door at home (Fig. 13). The home is the castle where the inhabitants move freely and without inhibition. So freely that there is hardly any need for private retreats inside the home.

Leaving the toilet door open is especially common in single-person households. This is no surprise as it will not be bothering anyone else. But even in family households, half of those surveyed sometimes leave the toilet door open. Women are even more relaxed in this respect than men. It is also striking that people in French- and Italian-speaking Switzerland tend to be somewhat more inhibited about this issue than German-speaking Swiss.

Fig. 13

Toilet door: open or closed?

"Do you close the door when you use the toilet at home?"



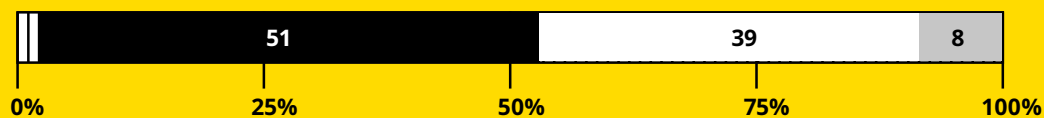
Not only do toilet-door habits reveal a lot about the attitude to life at home, but so does the choice of footwear at home, if any at all. The vast majority of people remove their outdoor shoes when coming into their home from outside. As a result, Switzerland is divided into two major camps – the slipper wearers and the sock wearers. Whether people opt for slippers or not is mainly down to what generation they are from. The over-55s are mostly in the slippers camp, while the majority of under-55s do not wear any kind of footwear when walking around at home (Fig. 14).

Fig. 14

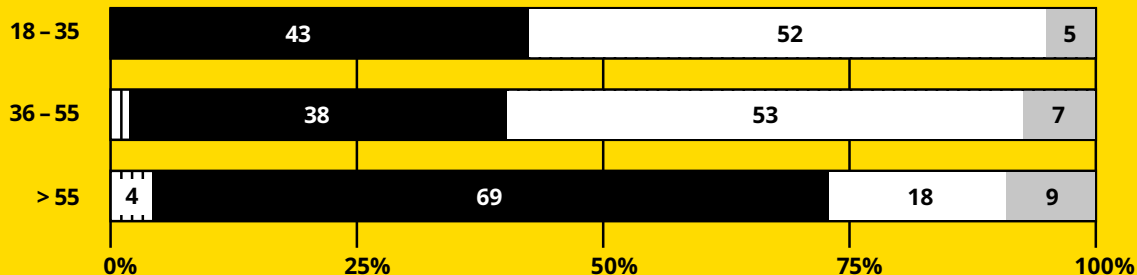
Socks or shoes – for household members

“Socks or shoes: what do household members usually wear at home?”
(Answers for household members)

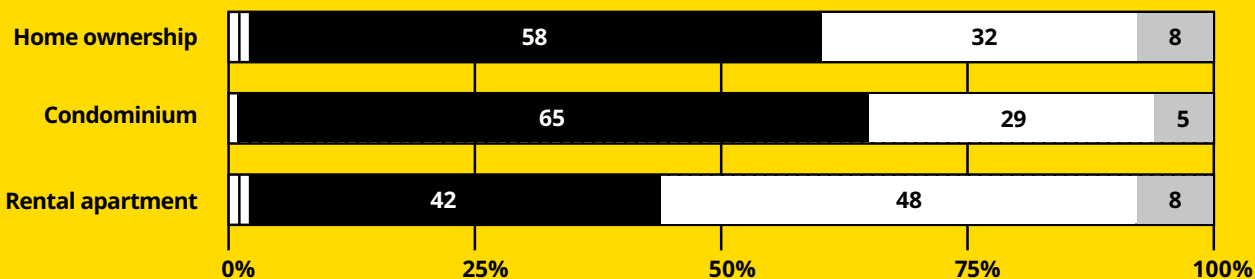
Total



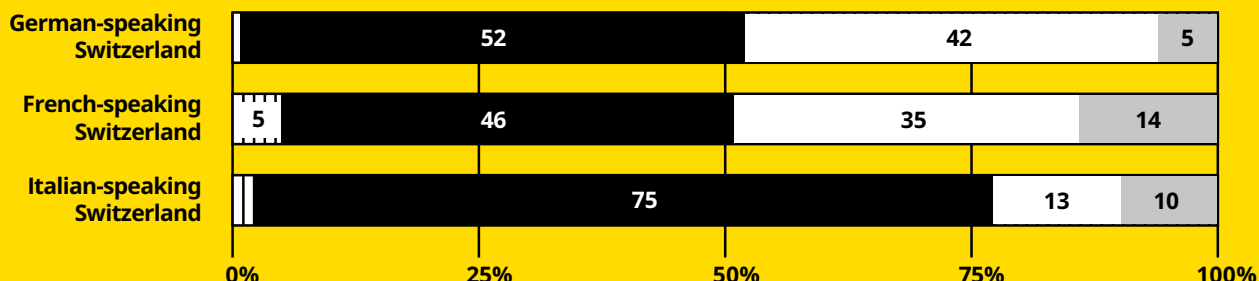
By age



By type of household



By language region



 Outdoor shoes
  Slippers
  Socks
  Barefoot

Those who tend to have cold feet are more likely to wear shoes. But the question “slippers or socks?” is about more than that: slippers seem a bit old-fashioned, socks are more relaxed. The fact that younger people prefer to wear socks shows that life at home in Switzerland is becoming more casual. However, very few people still walk around completely barefoot.

The change in the approach to guests’ footwear is even clearer (Fig. 15). While older respondents mostly allow visitors to keep their outdoor shoes on, for younger people it is natural to take them off and walk around in socks. What used to be considered intimate, even at home, is now normal for guests. The feeling of ease is thus extended to guests – or imposed on them. Around one-fifth of all respondents still offer slippers to visitors.

Fig. 15

Socks or shoes – for guests

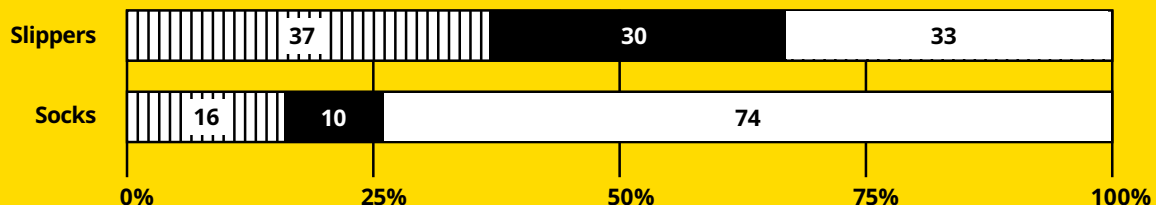
“Socks or shoes: what do guests usually wear in your home?”

(Answers for guests)

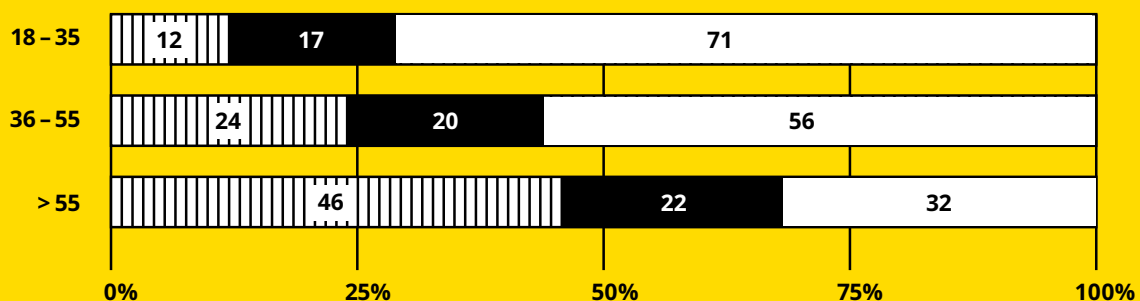
Total



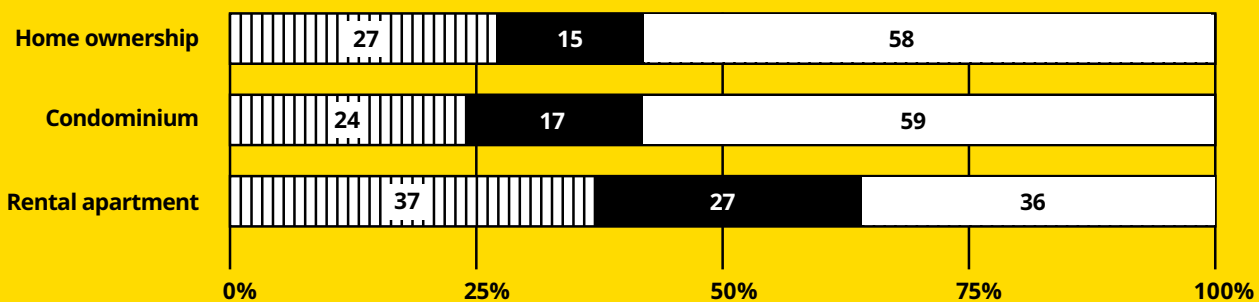
By what household members wear



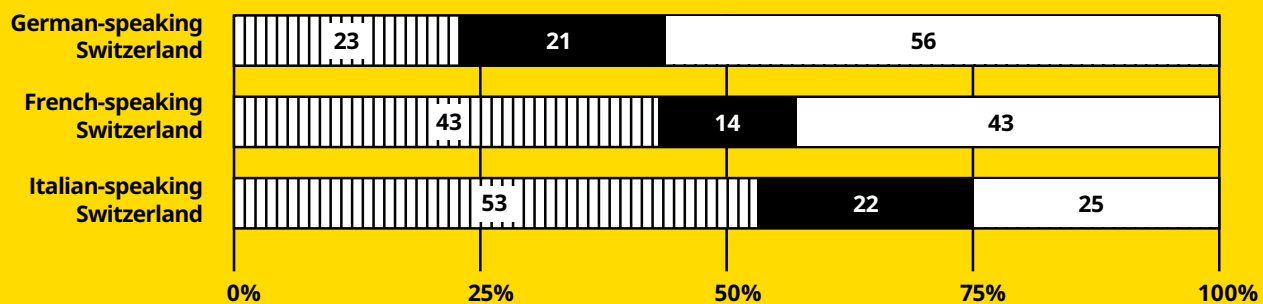
By age



By type of household



By language region



Outdoor shoes Slippers Socks

4

Living together under one roof

Swiss homes are meant to be cosy. However, life there is not always relaxed. The home is often the setting for and cause of tension and friction. This is especially because tidiness and cleanliness are very important to lots of people, but their standards do not always align.



4.1 Tidiness: more than a cliché

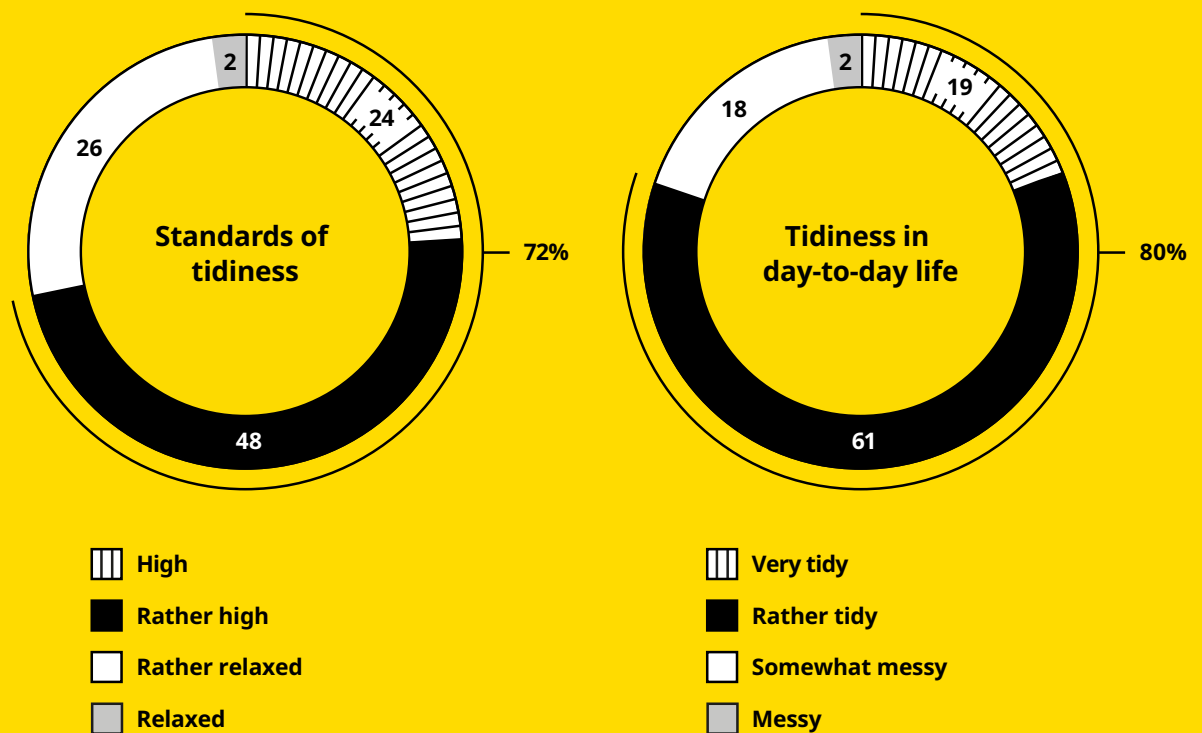
The image of the tidy and clean Swiss household is a wide-spread cliché. This survey shows that there is more to it than that. Almost three-quarters have high or fairly standards of tidiness – only a quarter are more relaxed about it (Fig. 16). Interestingly, the people of Switzerland apparently more than live up to their own standards. As many as 80% consider their home to be tidy – so even more than the number of people who expect their home to be tidy. Tidiness is more than just an ideal, it is a lived reality.

Fig. 16

Tidiness – expectation and reality

“How high are your standards in terms of tidiness at home?”

“And what does your home normally look like day-to-day?”



As we will show later, more than 90% of the population in Switzerland also clean their homes before guests arrive (see Fig. 34). But it's not just before guests arrive. Even before the cleaner arrives, 40% reach for the cleaning supplies and occasionally pre-clean their home beforehand.

This shows that in Switzerland, it's not just about tidiness and cleanliness for yourself, but also about making a good impression – on guests and, in some cases, even on your own cleaner. However, most people do not outsource the cleaning to someone else. Only 16% have a paid cleaner.

People clean before the cleaner comes.



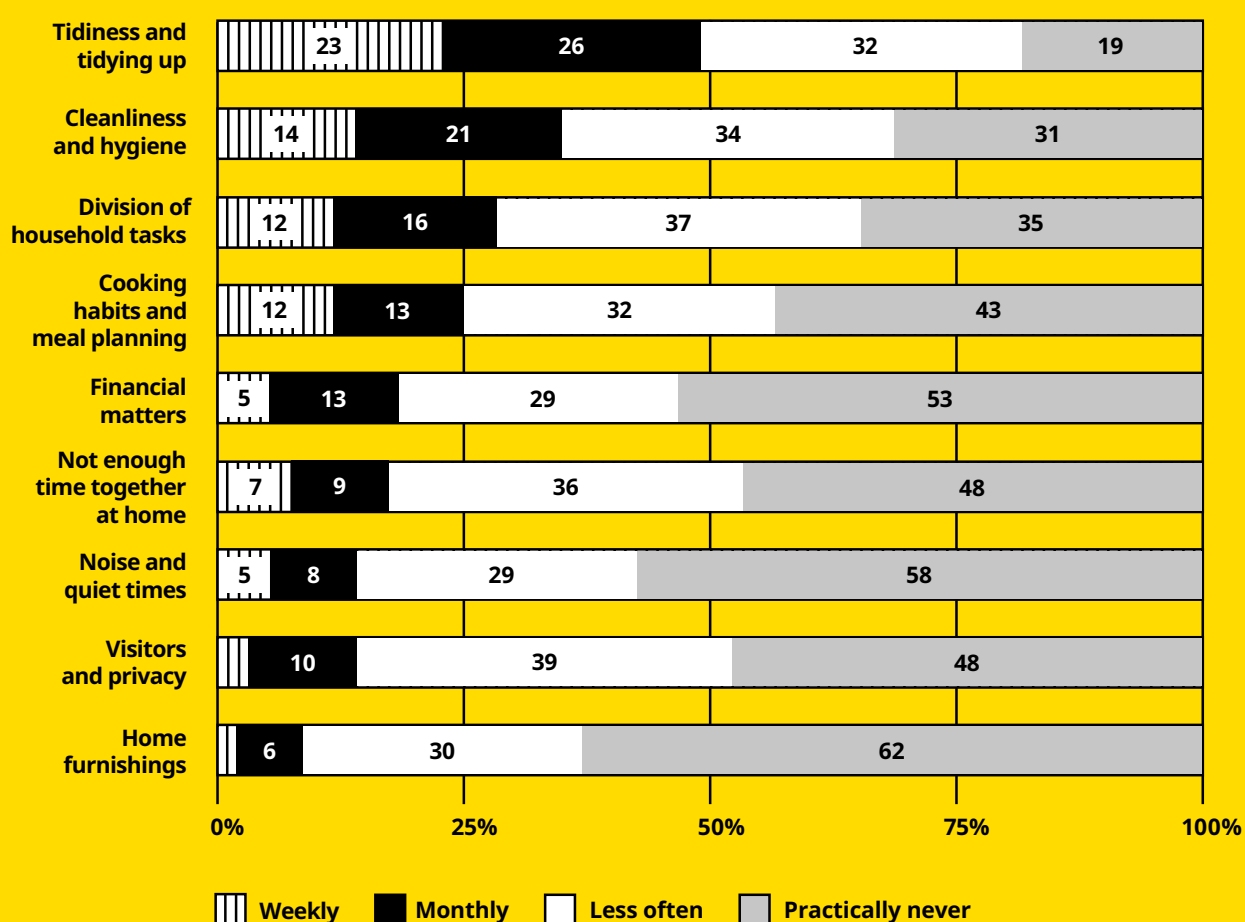
4.2 Tensions around tidiness

The tidiness and cleanliness of their own home are really important to the people of Switzerland. It is no coincidence that these two issues are among the most common causes of conflict in Swiss households. The first issue, tidying, leads to tensions in every second household at least once a month (Fig. 17). In family households, this proportion is even higher at two thirds. The second most common source of conflict is cleanliness and hygiene. Another issue related to tidiness and cleanliness is the third most frequent tension: the division of household tasks. By contrast, disputes about financial matters, noise and quiet times or privacy are far less common. These arise in fewer than one in five households.

Fig. 17

Sources of conflict

"What issues sometimes cause tensions at home?"



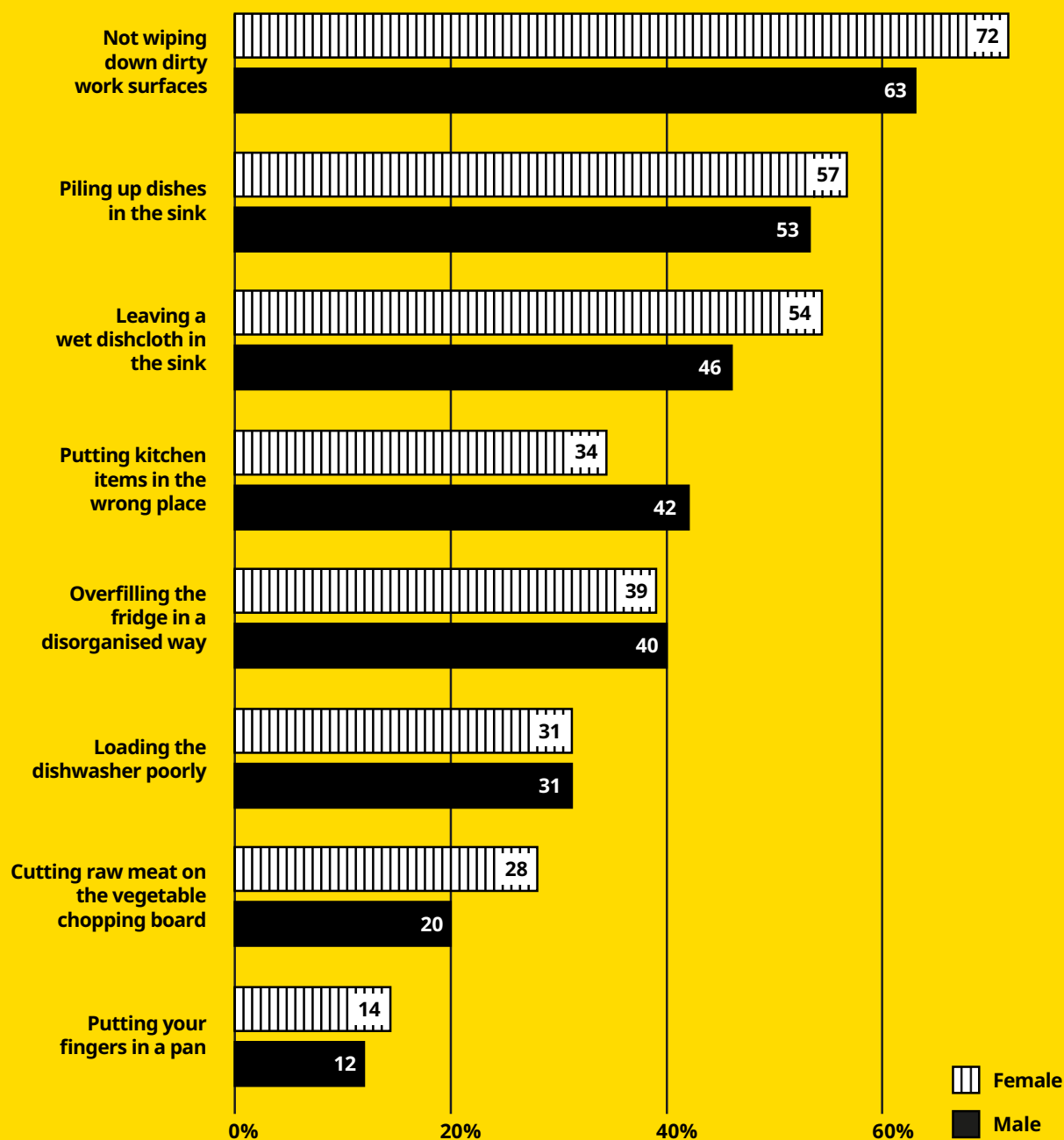
The kitchen is a great example to demonstrate what causes these tensions around tidiness and cleanliness. We asked the question: What is considered an absolute taboo in Swiss kitchens? The number one kitchen taboo is failing to wipe down dirty work surfaces. Seven out of ten respondents cannot stand this.

For most people, leaving dirty dishes or wet dishcloths in the sink is also considered a no-go (Fig. 18). The Swiss are less critical of tasting food directly from the pan with just over a tenth of people being bothered by it.

Fig. 18

Kitchen taboos- by gender

"What is an absolute taboo for you in the kitchen?"



It is striking that taboos relating to cleanliness are mentioned more by women than by men. Men, on the other hand, are more uncomfortable than women when kitchen items are in the wrong place or stored incorrectly. It would appear that women are more bothered by dirt and men are more bothered by disorder.

4.3 Housework: division is a matter of perception

Who is responsible for organising the household and keeping track of all the important tasks? This question is highly controversial. This is also due to the fact that men and women have such different answers (Fig. 19). We looked specifically at households where a man and a woman live together (as a couple or with children). Two-thirds of women see what is known as the mental load, i.e. the organisation of day-to-day household life, primarily as their responsibility. Six out of ten men, on the other hand, believe that the mental load is shared equally. Hardly any man feels primarily responsible for organising the household. There is a remarkable difference in perception between men and women, because both cannot be true at the same time.

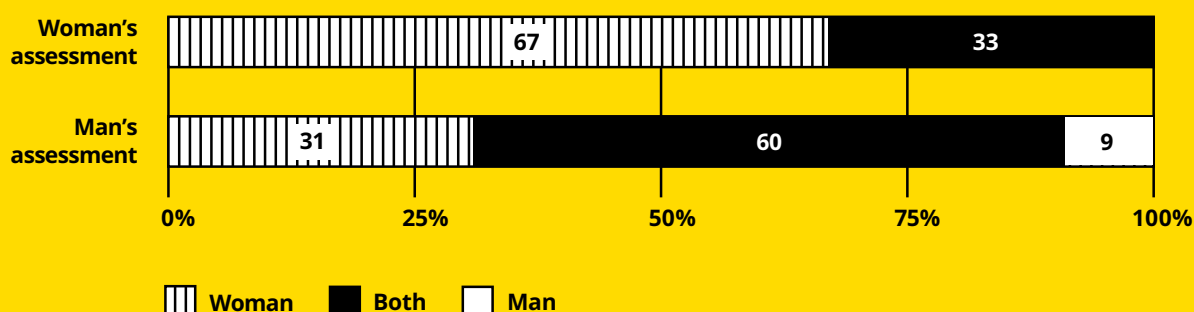
Only men see the organisation of the household as fairly divided.



Fig. 19

Mental load – for male-female couples living together

“Who is mainly responsible for organising the household in your home?”



Laundry is still the domain of women.

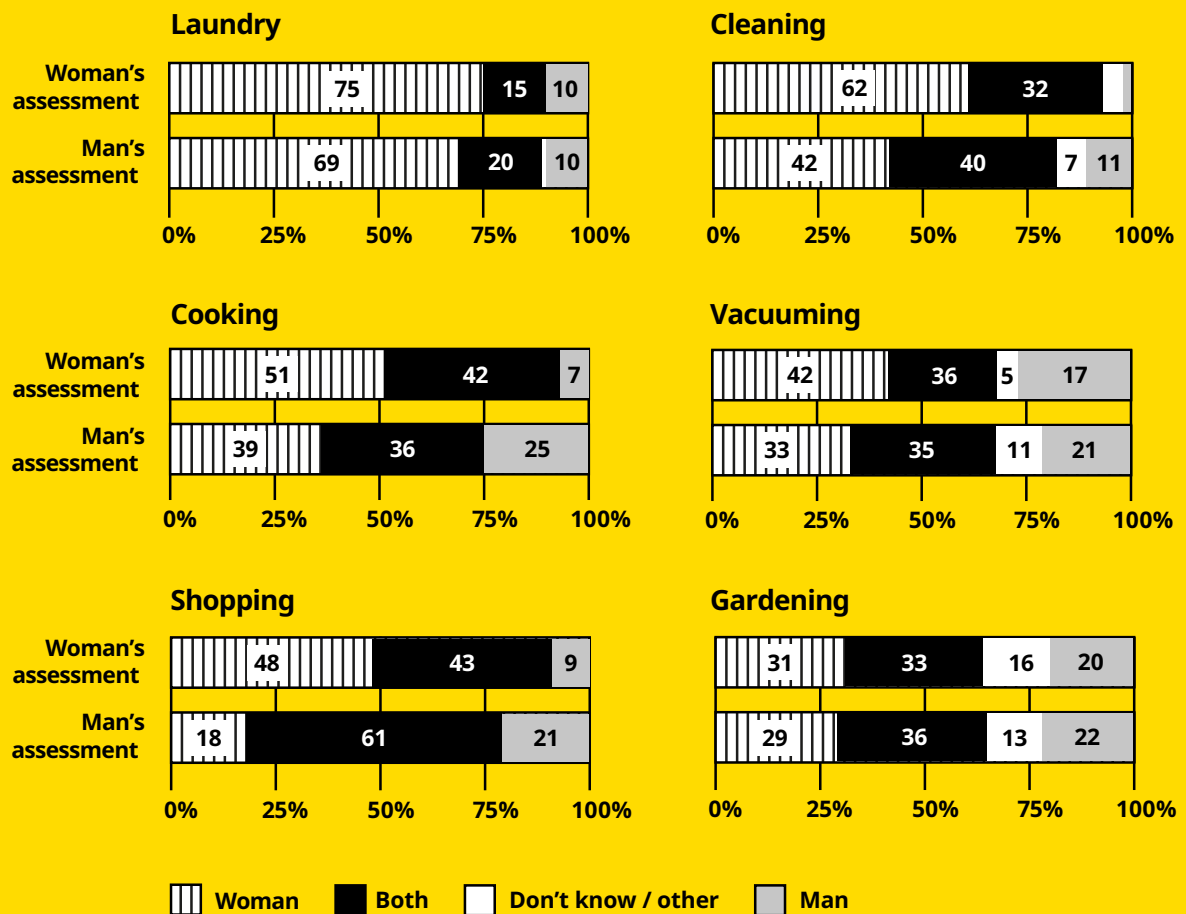


Differing assessments are also evident in the specific division of individual household tasks (Fig. 20a & 20b). Men and women each tend to overestimate their own contribution to all tasks relative to their partner. However, they agree on the areas in which women and men tend to do more. In Swiss households, laundry is still the main domain of women, while repairs are the domain of men.

Fig. 20a

Division of household tasks – for male-female couples living together

"Who does the following household tasks in your home?"

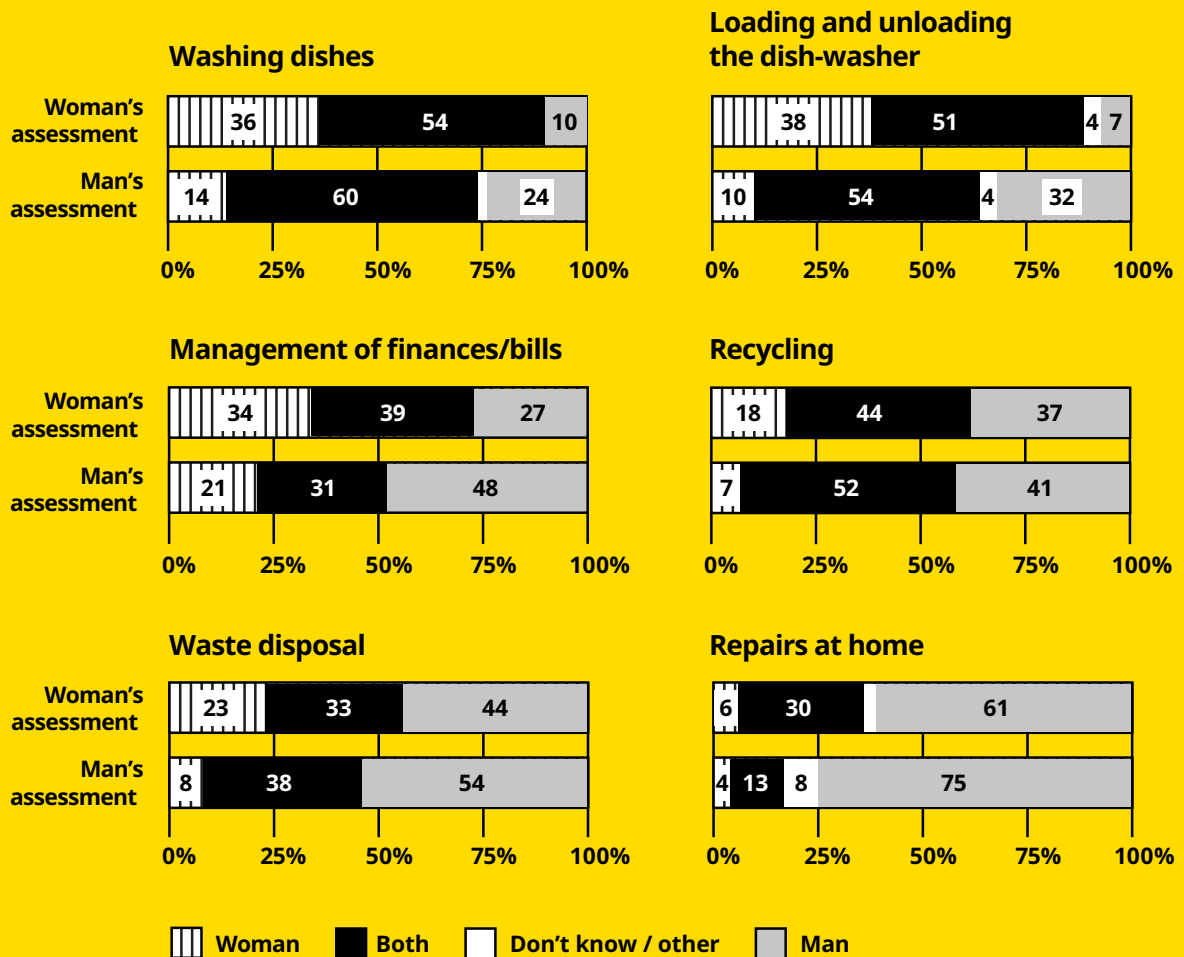


However, the differences in perception are particularly large when it comes to shopping and cleaning. Many women see themselves as primarily responsible here, while many men believe that they contribute equally. This is most pronounced when it comes to shopping. When it comes to dishwashers, men tend to see themselves as doing more, which is not how women see it. The situation is reversed for household finances. Many men see themselves as mainly responsible here, while women perceive the division overall as balanced. Overall, men and women have different perceptions of who performs which household tasks.

Fig. 20b

Division of household tasks – for male-female couples living together

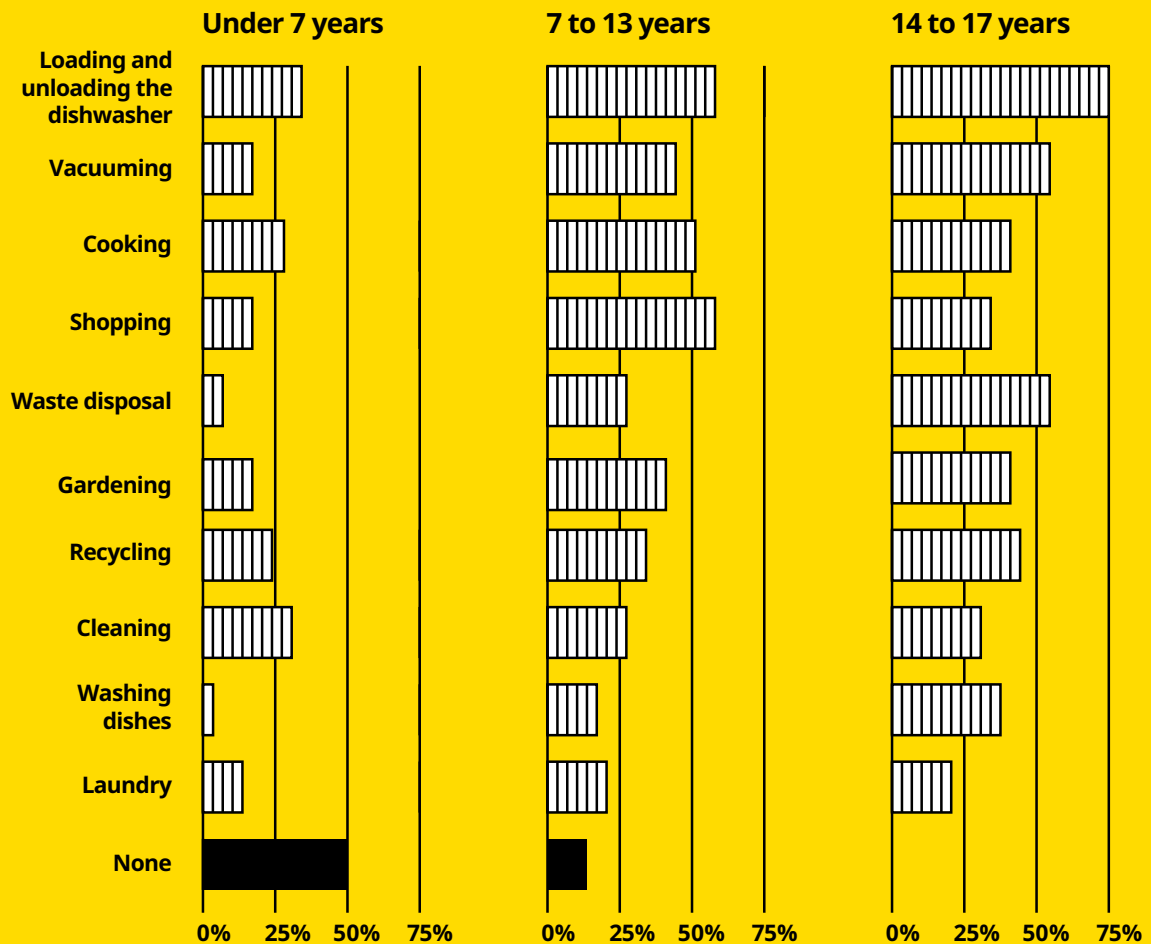
“Who does the following household tasks in your home?”



When it comes to families, it's not just the parents who help with the household. Here, we focus on all households with children living in them. The survey shows that the majority of children are also involved in household tasks (Fig. 21). The older the children, the more varied and widespread their chores. None of these chores is more common in Switzerland than loading and unloading the dishwasher. Three-quarters of those surveyed with children aged between 14 and 17 say that their children help with this task. Even a third of the youngest children under the age of seven already help.

Fig. 21**Children helping in the household – by age of the oldest child**

“Which household tasks do your children help with at home?”

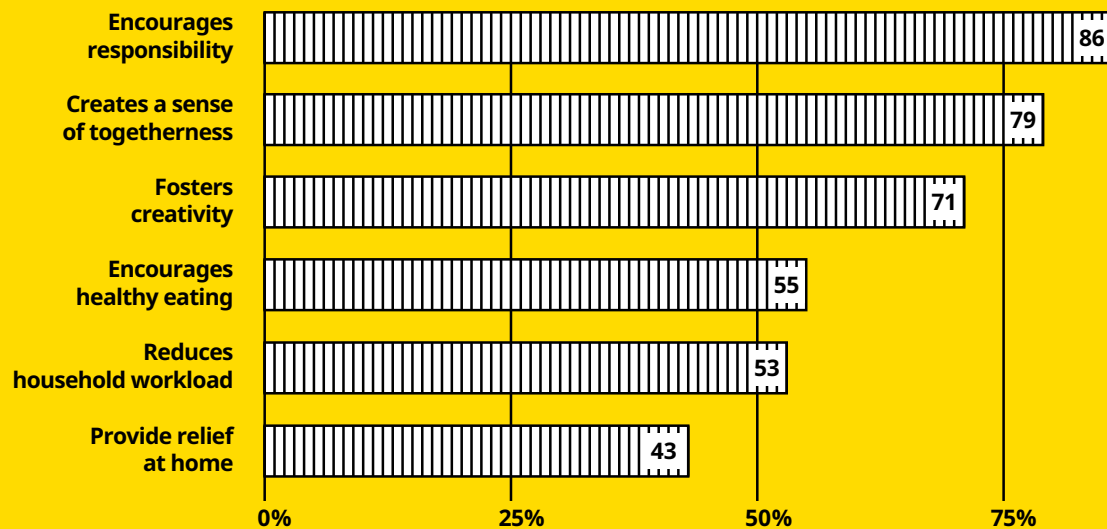


However, when children help out in the household, it is not just about relieving the burden on parents. This is particularly evident in the kitchen and with cooking. According to the parents surveyed, the most important reason for involving children in cooking is the opportunity to promote their independence and sense of responsibility (Fig. 22). For many, cooking with children is also about strengthening the sense of togetherness.

Fig. 22

Importance of children helping with cooking

"Why is it important to you that the children help out with the cooking?"



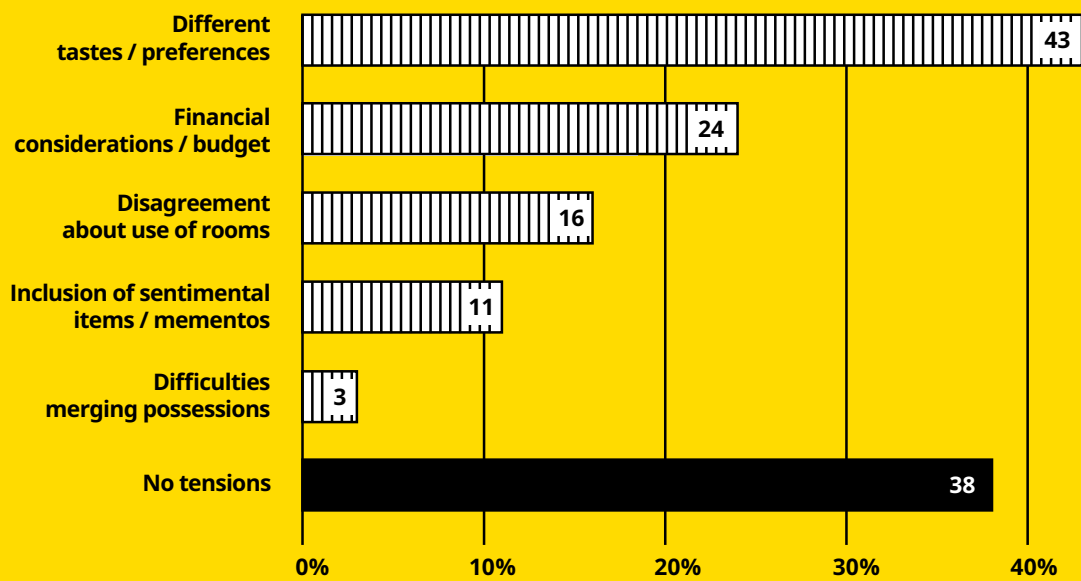
Overall, the basic attitude in Swiss households is that everyone should get involved – including the children. For some household tasks, it is clear who is mainly responsible for them, while for others, everyone is involved. Perhaps it is precisely this collective commitment that makes tidiness and cleanliness more often a source of tension. Another reason for friction is that couples living together often have different opinions about how much they each do in the household.

4.4 Tastes differ

Compared with other possible points of conflict in the home, furnishing the home rarely causes tension (see Fig. 17). This is understandable, as furnishing decisions are made less often than tidying and cleaning needs to be done. Nevertheless, only four out of ten respondents who do not live alone say they never argue about home furnishings. Differing tastes and ideas about home furnishings are the main cause of conflict (43%). For nearly a quarter, financial disagreements are the source of conflict.

Fig. 23**Reasons for tensions regarding home furnishings**

"What sometimes causes tensions regarding home furnishing?"



Decisions on home furnishings are usually made jointly, according to 56% of women and 79% of men. If only one partner makes the decision, it is usually the woman.

When decisions on home furnishings are made jointly, this is an expression of partnership. However, it also increases the potential for conflict. After all, tastes and styles differ, and disagreements over these are inevitable.

5

Cooking, eating and guests

For many, eating and togetherness go hand in hand. Whether with your own family members at home or when friends visit: the shared dining table creates moments to enjoy together.

5.1 Cooking is part of everyday life

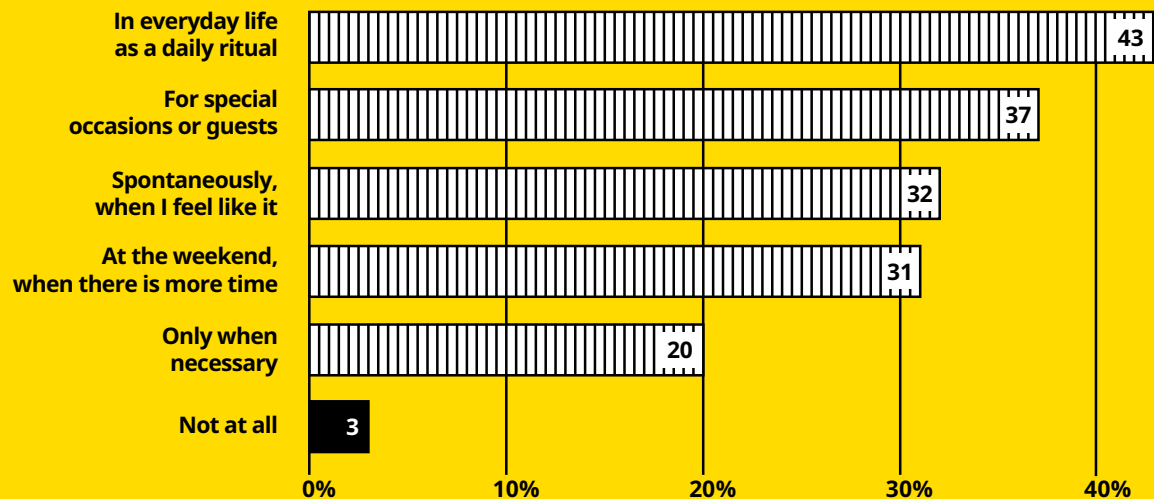
For the people of Switzerland, the kitchen is primarily for cooking (see Fig. 2). And the respondents enjoy cooking as an everyday ritual the most (Fig. 24).



Fig. 24

Preferred time for cooking

"When do you prefer to cook?"

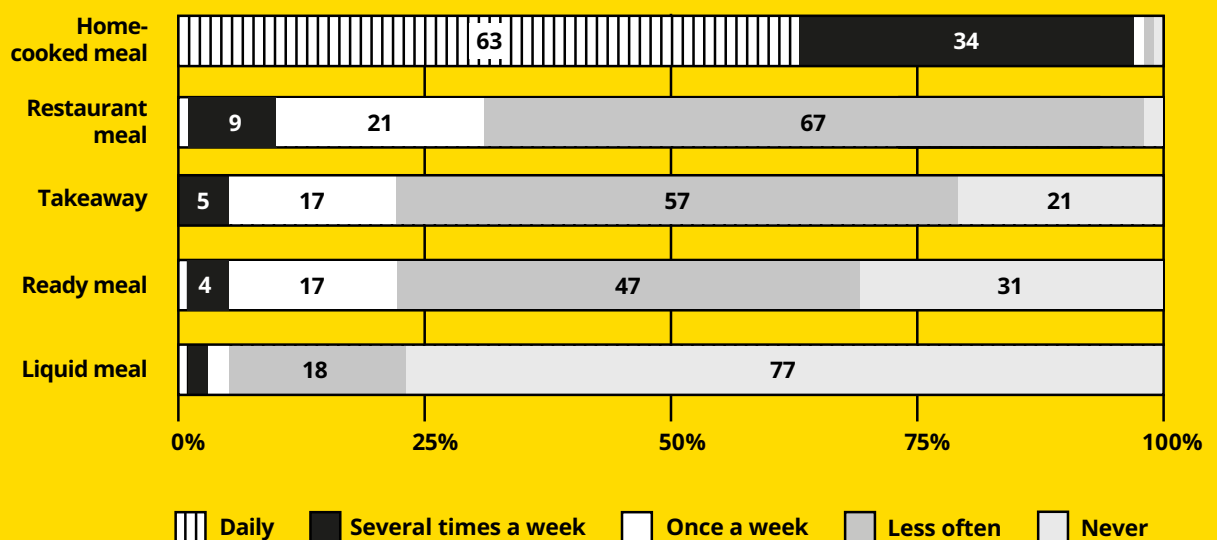


Almost all respondents eat a homecooked meal several times a week – two-thirds even daily. Conversely, ready-made meals, take-away meals or even liquid meals are consumed much less frequently (Fig. 25).

Fig. 25

Meals: from home-cooked to liquid meals

"How often do you eat the following meals as your main meal? (Excluding breakfast)"

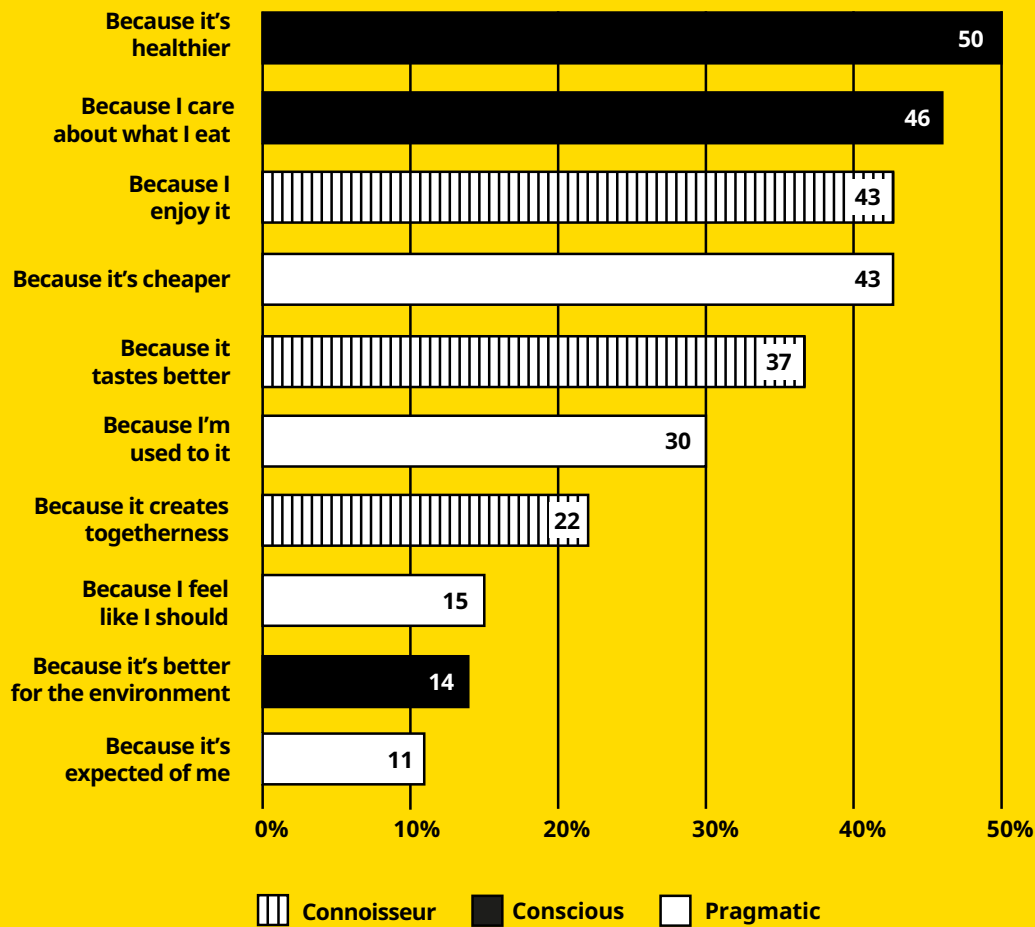


Cooking at home is popular in Switzerland. There are many reasons for this – first and foremost are health and the need to know exactly what is on your plate. For many, the enjoyment of the cooking itself plays an important role, as does the lower costs compared to eating out (Fig. 26).

Fig. 26

Why people cook their own meals

"Why do you choose to cook your own meals?"
(Multiple answers possible)



Each of these reasons why someone cooks can be assigned to one of three types of cook:

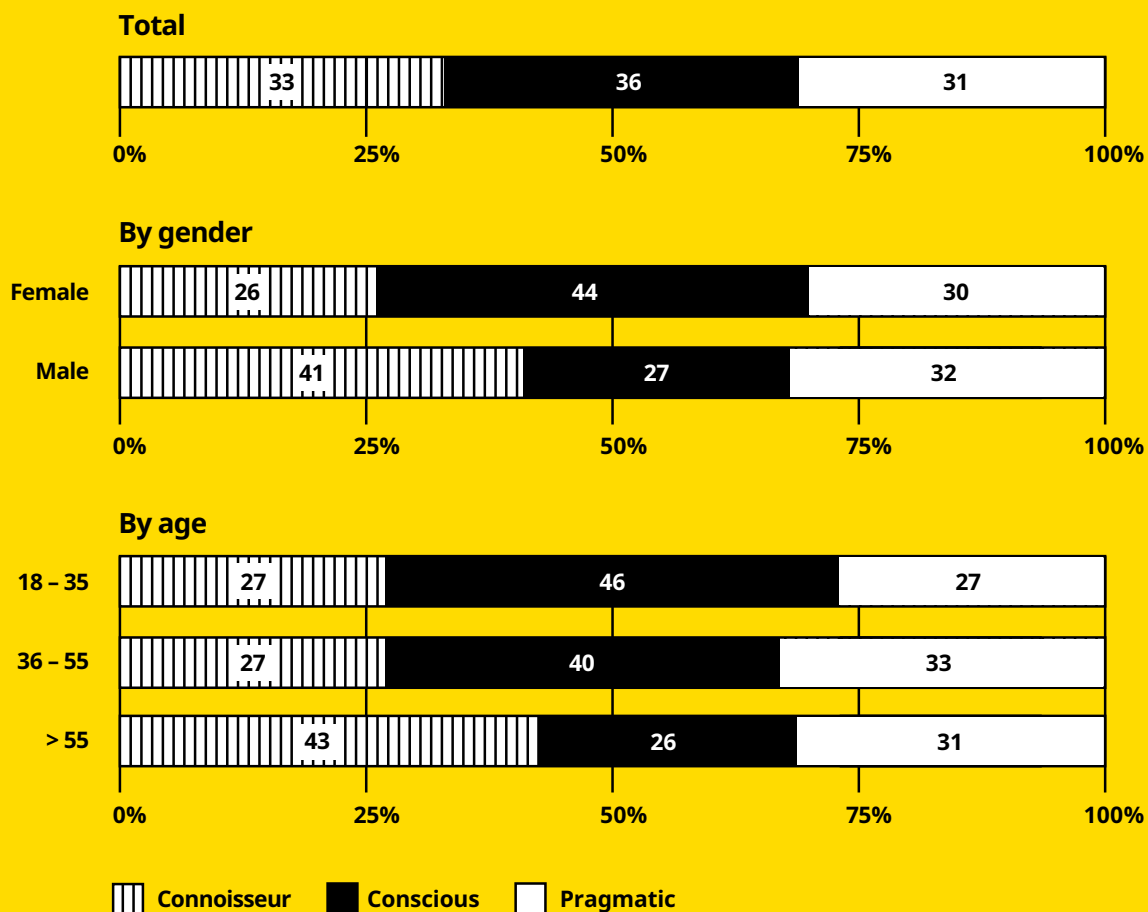
- The **connoisseur** cooks for pleasure, enjoyment and fun. They appreciate a good meal with good friends.
- The **conscious cook** pays attention to the effects of their diet. They cook because it is healthier and try to have as little impact as possible on the environment.
- The **pragmatic cook** cooks out of expediency, routine or a sense of duty.

Depending on the category for which a person has given the most reasons, they are assigned to one of these three cooking types. Women are particularly often among the conscious people when it comes to cooking, while for many men the focus is on enjoyment and togetherness. It is only men but also older people in general who belong to the connoisseur type, while conscious eating is more common among those under the age of 56 (Fig. 27).

Fig. 27

Cooking types - categorised

"Why do you choose to cook your own meals?"



For people in Switzerland, cooking is above all a positive routine that is anchored in everyday life. This is reflected in the regional cuisines and dishes that respondents prefer to cook. Italian and Swiss cuisine dominate, with simple, healthy dishes being especially popular. The most frequently mentioned dishes are pasta, risotto, curry and chicken. The larger the word in the word cloud, the more often it was named as a personal signature dish (Fig. 28).

Popular regional cuisines and signature dishes

"Which regional cuisines do you particularly enjoy cooking?"

“Which dish do you enjoy cooking and are particularly good at making?”

Popular regional cuisines

Italian (79%)

Thai (33%)

French (28%)

Popular signature dishes



Switzerland has a pragmatic and functional approach to the kitchen. The situation is very similar with cooking. The kitchen is a workspace where simple, healthy dishes are prepared for everyday life. But sometimes more elaborate dishes are made, including when entertaining guests.

5.2 Shared meals

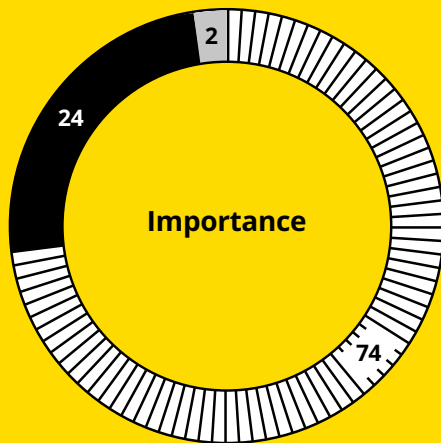
The living and dining rooms are the heart of a typical Swiss home. This is reflected in the versatility of use of the various rooms (see Fig. 1). This heart beats most strongly when eating together at the dining table. Eating together is important to almost all respondents in couple and family households. Three-quarters almost always eat together. Only a small minority eat less than half of all their meals together (Fig. 29). Eating together is firmly anchored in everyday life and is about much more than just consuming food. Eating together is a social moment in which lively conversations take place, everyday life is coordinated and experiences are shared (Fig. 30). These social functions of eating together are particularly important for family households. For Swiss families, eating together acts as an anchor, creating structure and cohesion.

Fig. 29

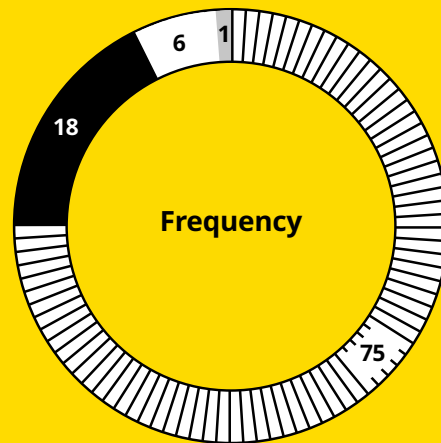
Importance of shared meals (couple and family households only)

"How important is eating together in your household to you?"

"If you eat together at home: How often does the whole household eat together at the same table?"



- Very important
- Rather important
- Rather unimportant
- Not important



- Almost always
- More than half of the time
- Less than half of the time
- Almost never

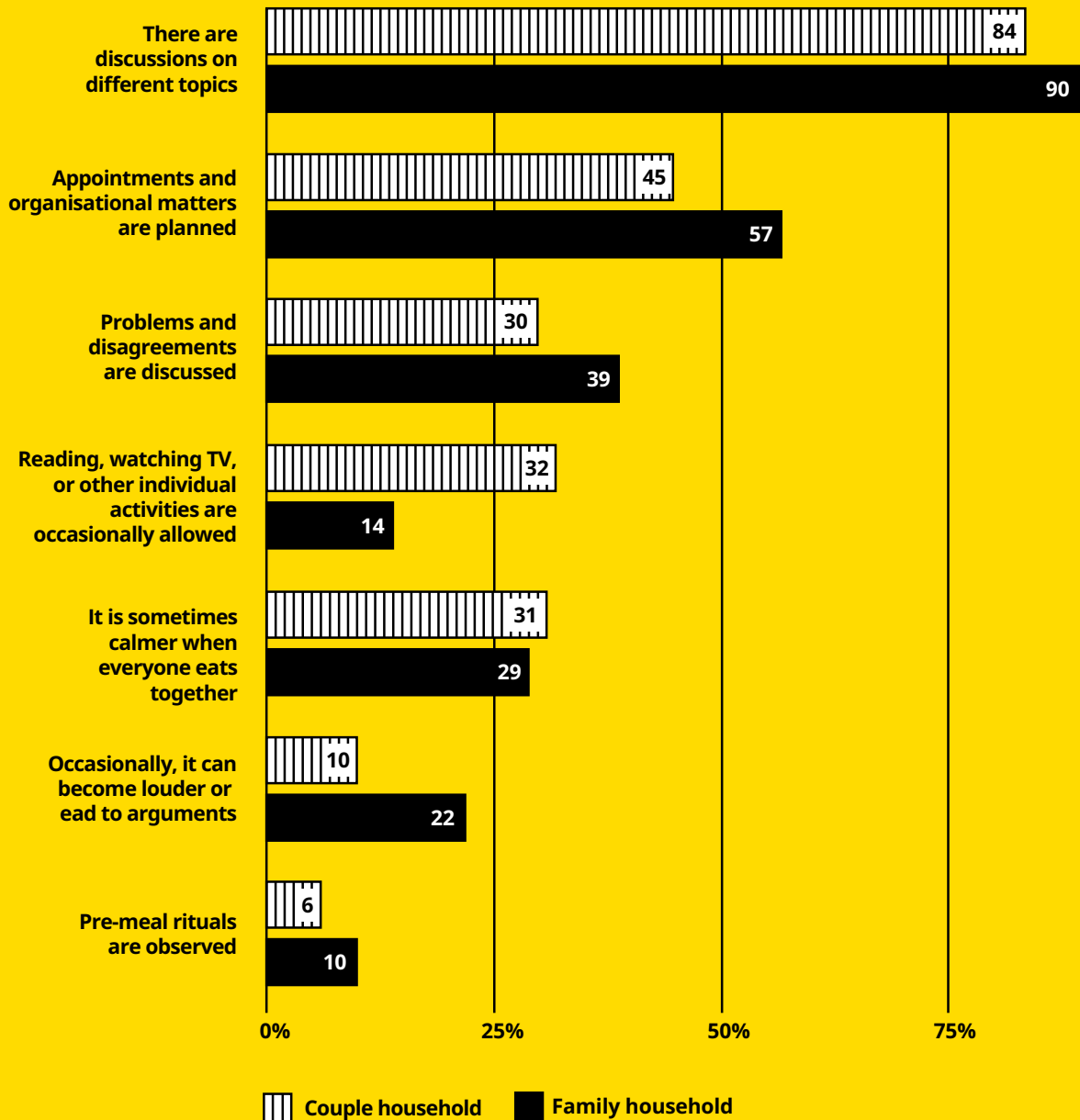
**Eating together is
a key anchor point for
Swiss families.**



Fig. 30

Typical meals

"What does eating together in your household typically look like?"

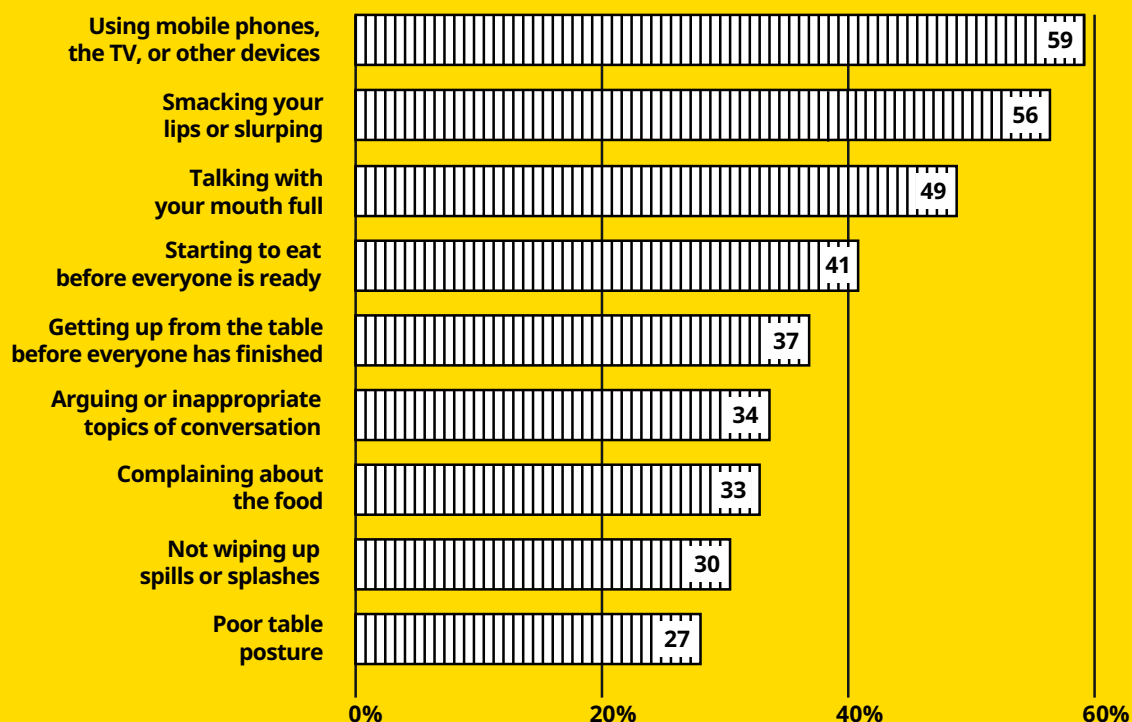


Eating together is highly valued as a moment of togetherness and discussion between the members of the household. Not all forms of behaviour are allowed or appreciated. More than half of the respondents believe that people should not smack their lips or slurp at the table. However, the most important taboo at the table does not relate to traditional table manners. It involves refraining from using mobile phones or other devices. For four out of ten respondents, mobile phones at the table are a no-go. In the case of families, the ban on mobile phones at the dining table applies in three out of four cases. This underlines the importance of togetherness at the dining table in Switzerland today (Fig. 31).

Fig. 31

Taboos at the dining table

"What is an absolute taboo for you when eating together?"



All of this makes it clear that in the dining room and when eating, the focus is not only on the functional – quite unlike in the kitchen and with cooking. At the table, people talk, laugh, make plans and share experiences. There is no room for distraction from mobile phones or other devices. What matters is being together.

5.3 A visit is a special occasion

Whereas shared meals at home are part of Swiss everyday life, hosting guests is much less frequent. Fewer than half of Swiss households have guests in their home less than once a month. Many of these guests stay for dinner, but hardly any of them stay overnight. Only one in ten Swiss homes has a guest stay overnight at least once a month. The home is a private space, a place of retreat, a castle whose walls are only rarely crossed by outsiders (Fig. 32).

The biggest taboo at the table is the mobile phone.



Fig. 32

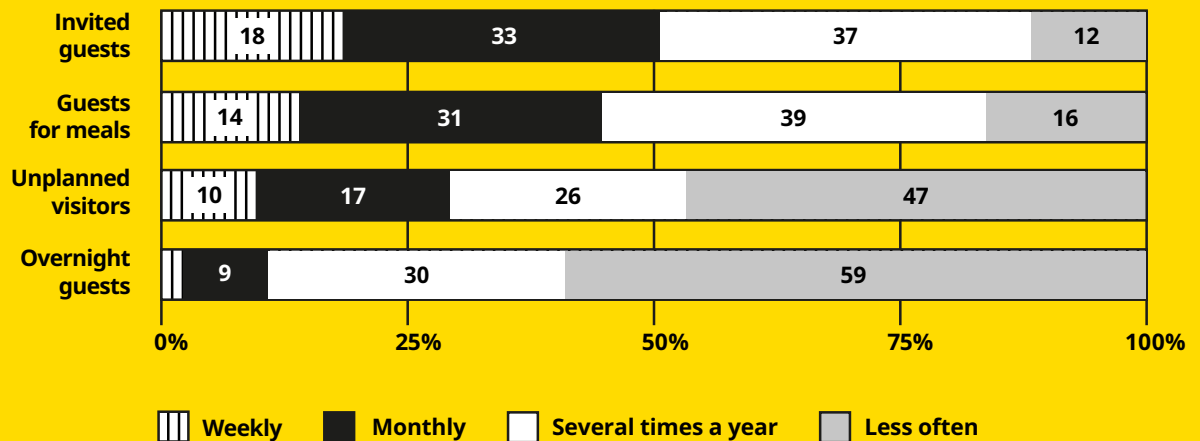
Frequency of different types of visit

"How often do you invite guests to your home?"

"How often do guests join you for a meal at home?"

"How often do you have unplanned visitors?"

"How often do guests stay overnight in your home?"



It is striking that visits occur much more often by invitation than spontaneously. In two-thirds of households, unplanned visits happen less than once a month. The cherished and relaxed privacy of home life is guarded carefully. Entry is usually only granted to those who have been invited.

The frequency of visits varies according to area type and household type (Fig. 33). Families receive visitors much more often than people living alone. Although families themselves form a social network, their home is more open to outsiders. By contrast, people who live alone are less inclined to welcome guests. Couples, while not less likely to host, are especially unlikely to accept spontaneous visitors.

Fig. 33

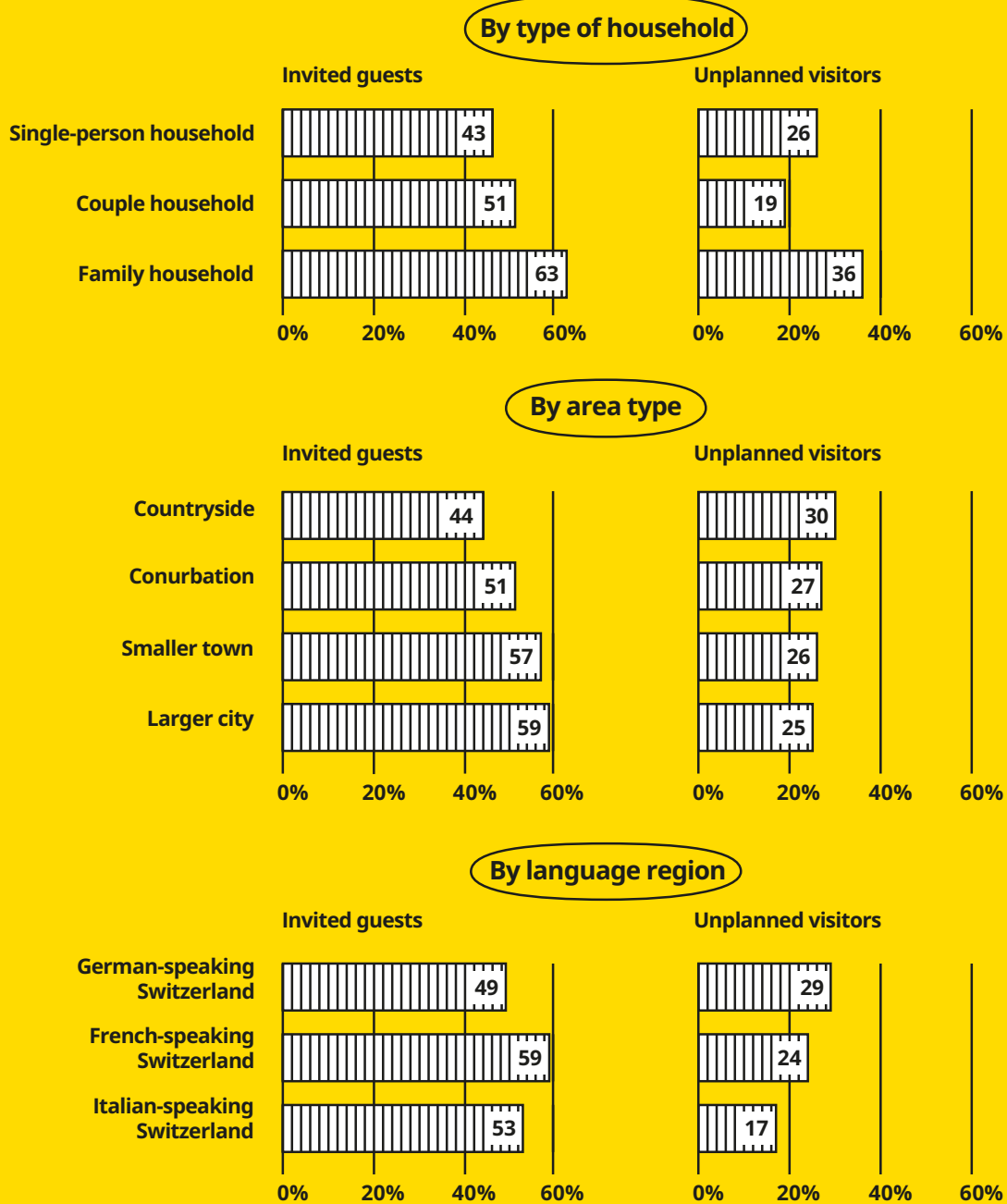
Monthly visit – by household type, area type and language region

"How often do you invite guests to your home?"

"How often do guests join you for a meal at home?"

"How often do you have unplanned visitors?"

"How often do guests stay overnight at your home?"

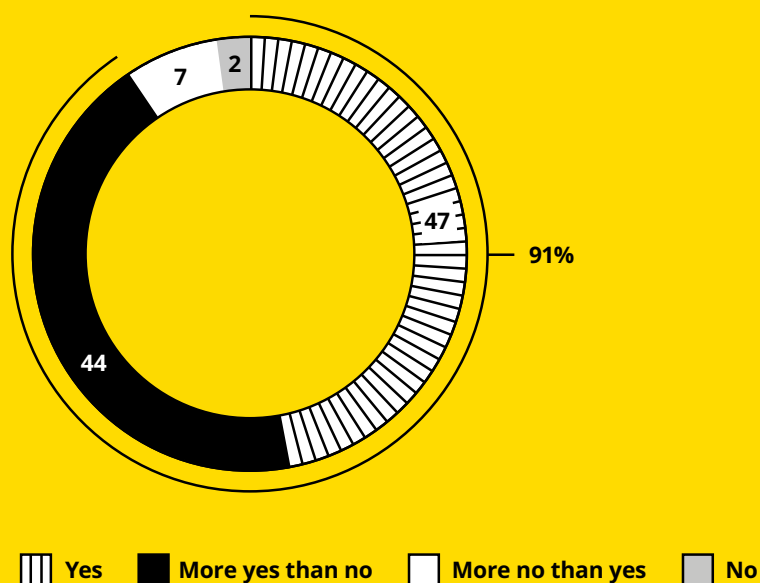


It is noteworthy that invited visitors are much rarer in the countryside than in the city. As we have seen before, people in the countryside go out less often, and we are now seeing that they are also spending more time with each other at home. In the countryside, your own apartment or house is above all a private retreat – "My home is my castle" in other words. After all, spontaneous visits to the countryside are rare, but more widespread than elsewhere.

Visiting is not commonplace at home in Switzerland and rarely spontaneous. It is a special event. Given the great importance of tidiness and cleanliness in one's own home, it is hardly surprising that cleaning before visitors arrive is the norm. It is noteworthy, however, that more than nine out of ten people clean their homes before visitors arrive (Fig. 34).

Fig. 34**Cleaning before visitors**

"Do you clean your home before guests arrive?"

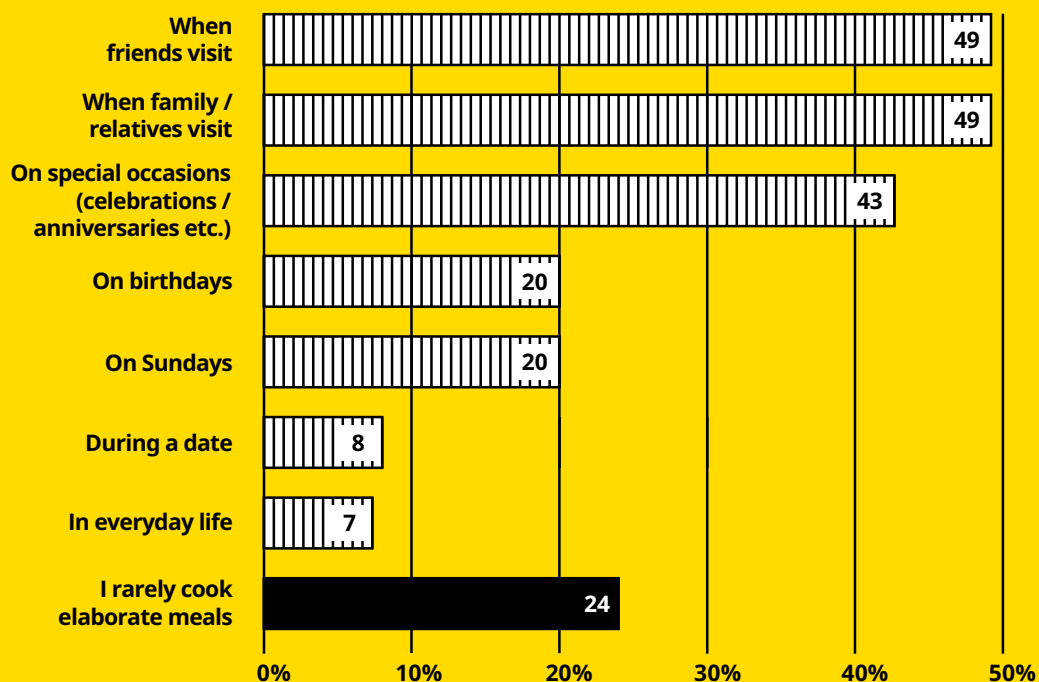


Once the guests arrive, this often includes a meal together. The people of Switzerland are enthusiastic cooks in their day-to-day lives. However, many people particularly enjoy cooking for guests (see Fig. 24). Indeed, visits from friends or relatives are the most important reason to cook elaborate meals (Fig. 35). When it comes to cooking, guests are the most important reason to go beyond the ordinary. Far fewer respondents cook extensively on Sundays or birthdays.

Fig. 35

Occasions for elaborate cooking

"When do you cook elaborate meals?"



Visits are events that are carefully prepared for.



When it comes to home life in Switzerland, there is little carelessness. Everyday cooking may be simple and pragmatic, but cooking your own meals is a fixed part of life for most people. Everyday life also includes eating together at the dining table, where the members of the household chat instead of looking at their mobile phones. The Swiss home is a cosy, informal and well-kept world of its own. Spontaneous visits are rare, and overnight guests rarer still. Yet invited visits from friends or relatives remain an important part of this world. They are not everyday occurrences, but when they happen, homes are cleaned and elaborate meals are often prepared. It is the moment when the private retreat, the castle, opens its doors – not to the world, but at least to one's circle of friends.

6

Data collection and method



The data was collected between 17 April and 5 May 2025. The population of the survey consisted of the linguistically integrated resident population of Switzerland. The survey was conducted via Sotomo's online panel and the IKEA Family newsletter. After the data had been cleaned and checked, the information from 1,843 people could be used for the evaluation. As survey participants self-recruit (opt-in), biases may occur in the composition of the sample. Statistical weighting methods are therefore applied to ensure that the sample corresponds to the population in terms of key socio-demographic characteristics. The following characteristics were taken into account in the weighting: gender, age, education and language region. This approach ensures a high level of representativeness of the target group. For this total sample, the 95% confidence interval (for 50% proportion) is ± 2.3 percentage points.

Note on population groups: The sample comprises the linguistically integrated resident population of Switzerland across all genders and relationship forms. People of other genders or outside male-female relationships are included in the sample, but are not shown separately due to the small number of cases.

