

Media Release

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«ai-identities»

New UZH study reveals: With AI, most people are neither excited nor concerned – but both at the same time

- **A new «ai-identities» study by the University of Zurich, which was conducted independently and supported by Sunrise, examines how people in German- and French-speaking Switzerland perceive and use generative artificial intelligence.**
- **The results reveal a largely ambivalent attitude among respondents: concern is slightly stronger than enthusiasm – interestingly, many respondents report feeling both at the same time. The acceptance and use of AI varies according to age and gender: younger people use it significantly more often, and women in particular use generative AI a bit more frequently – and with slightly less concern – than men.**
- **This ambivalence is particularly evident in the metaphors used to describe AI – from «gingerbread: delicious, but sticky» to «Formula 1: the car can do an awful lot – but it needs a driver» or «Lego – because it encourages playing»**
- **Connectivity, processing capacity, resilient infrastructure – these are the technological prerequisites for AI. However, Sunrise also feels a responsibility to facilitate public debate on AI and therefore supports relevant research.**

As a leading Swiss telecommunications provider, Sunrise paves the way for new digital technologies to be useful in everyday life. At the same time, the company feels a responsibility to contribute to a well-informed public debate on the use of AI and the response to it. «Artificial intelligence will only create real added value if people trust and understand it,» says André Krause, CEO of Sunrise. «This requires a public debate and independent research into how individuals, groups and society at large experience this technology.» This is also the fundamental idea behind the Sunrise support for «ai-identities». Sustainable progress with AI needs more than just acceptance – it requires reflection, guidance and shared standards and guidelines that evolve alongside the technology.

Generative artificial intelligence is for many already part of everyday life in Switzerland. But enthusiasm is tempered by concerns. This is shown by a new «ai-identities» study from the University of Zurich, supported through a donation by Sunrise. The research provides one of the most comprehensive insights so far into how people in German- and French-speaking Switzerland perceive and use generative AI. An in-depth analysis, incorporating additional data and further interpretation, will be presented in Q3 2026.

According to Sandra Cortesi, lead author of the study and a researcher at the University of Zurich and Assistant Professor for Participation and Diversity in Digital Societies at the Technical University of Munich, the findings challenge common assumptions about attitudes towards AI. «In public debate, it's often assumed that there is a divide between AI enthusiasts and sceptics. Our data tells a different story: most people feel both concern and enthusiasm,» says Cortesi. «This ambivalence is not confusion; it reflects a thoughtful engagement with a technology that does indeed present both opportunities and risks. Young people are increasingly incorporating generative AI into their daily lives. Whether they possess the necessary skills remains to be seen - which makes it all the more important for society and institutions to step up: through education, clear guidelines, and the active involvement of young people in shaping the technologies that will define their present and future.»

A key feature of the study is the qualitative analysis of the metaphors people use to describe AI – from «gingerbread: delicious, but sticky» to «Formula 1: the car can do an awful lot – but it needs a driver» or «a



Lego – because it encourages playing» These metaphors illustrate just how strongly social and political concerns shape the public's understanding of AI – often going beyond what standardised opinion surveys capture.

The «ai-identities» study examines how people in Switzerland encounter, understand and use generative AI in their everyday lives. It is based on a nationally weighted survey of 1,000 people aged between 15 and 79. The results now published form part of the long-term research project «ai-identities».

An in-depth analysis, incorporating additional data and further interpretation, will be presented in Q3 2026. Further information on the study and upcoming publications is available at www.aidentities.ch.

[Report: Loved. Feared. And Here to Stay: How People in German- and French-Speaking Switzerland Think, Use, and Talk About Generative AI \(PDF\)](#)

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