Universität Zürich[UZH]

IKMZ – Department of Communication and Media Research

Research Report – Media Change & Innovation Division

The Transforming Relationship Between Humans and Technology: Convergent Technologies and Digital Everyday Religion in Switzerland 2025

Thematic Report 4 of the World Internet Project – Switzerland 2025

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MEDIACHANGE and innovation a division of ikmz

Imprint

Publisher

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We would like to express our sincere thanks to Sarah Daoust-Braun, M.A., Giulia Frascaria, M.A., and Sarah Häusermann, B.A., for their support.

Recommended Citation

Latzer, M., Festic, N., Odermatt, C., Birrer, A. (2025). The Transforming Relationship Between Humans and Technology: Convergent Technologies and Digital Everyday Religion in Switzerland 2025. Thematic Report 4 of the World Internet Project – Switzerland 2025. Zurich: University of Zurich.
http://mediachange.ch/research/wip-ch-2025

The World Internet Project – Switzerland (WIP-CH) is a project partner of the World Internet Project coordinated by the Annenberg School Centre for the Digital Future, University of Southern California (USC), Los Angeles.

Zurich, November 2025

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Executive Summary

The World Internet Project (WIP) is an international collaborative research project which has been recording the dissemination and use of the internet on an international comparison since 1999. Switzerland has been part of this project since 2011. In 2025, the Media Change & Innovation Division of the IKMZ conducted its eighth representative survey with the World Internet Project – Switzerland (WIP-CH). A representative sample of the Swiss population was surveyed about their internet use and attitudes towards the internet.

The results are summarized in four thematic reports: Internet Diffusion and Digital Divides, Use of the Internet and Generative AI, Trust and Concerns When Using the Internet, and The Transforming Relationship Between Humans and Technology.

The ongoing digitalization of society and recent technological developments are shedding new light on the transforming relationship between humans and technology, and thus also on the question of what it means to be human today. This report focuses on a new generation of technologies in which the internet, including applications of generative artificial intelligence, can no longer be viewed in isolation, but rather in combination with other, increasingly converging technologies. These so-called *convergent* technologies are emerging from the interconnection of various fields of research, in particular nano-, bio-, information technology and cognitive science. They are therefore grouped under the term *NBIC technologies*. As a case study of convergent technologies, this report focuses on cyborg technologies, which aim to overcome the biological limitations of humans by merging humans and technology, thereby technically controlling human evolution. This survey shows the extent to which Swiss internet users are familiar with and use cyborg technologies, how they assess their opportunities and risks, and to what extent they intend to use such services in the future. It also examines the social and personal benefits they attribute to these convergent technologies.

The development towards convergent technologies is largely driven by the ideology of transhumanism, the belief in a technological future for humanity (Latzer, 2022). Transhumanist visions, which are particularly widespread in Silicon Valley's big tech companies, are shaping this technological development. Supporters of transhumanism see convergent technologies as an opportunity to overcome the limits of biological evolution, enhance human capabilities and well-being, and solve all social problems. This is linked to the idea that individuals and society have a moral obligation to make use of this potential with the help of convergent technologies. Another aspect of transhumanism is the belief

in the imminent development of *artificial general intelligence* (AGI): general-purpose applications with artificial intelligence that are superior to humans not only in individual abilities, but in almost all areas of life. This survey examines the extent to which these transhumanist visions have already found resonance among the Swiss population.

The transhumanist influence on digitalization also forms the basis for the emergence of a techno-religion (Latzer, 2025). Behind this lies the understanding that digitalization takes on similar functions in society as traditional religions and that the everyday, routine use of digital services also has religious characteristics. Corresponding indicators of such an implicit digital everyday religion are empirically explored in this report. Specifically, it examines how widespread mythological ideas about digital services, their ritualized use and transcendent experiences in internet use are.

One in three is aware of cyborg technologies, a quarter of them use them

- 31% of Swiss internet users are aware of wearable or implantable cyborg technologies such as headbands or microchips. Among them, 26% say they use them. The proportion of users in the online population is 8%.
- A minority sees the potential of cyborgisation. A quarter (25%) think that cyborg technologies can make everyday life significantly more convenient, and 19% believe that they can increase human productivity.
- The majority of Swiss internet users are sceptical and believe that the spread and use of cyborg technologies entails risks. The most widespread view is that cyborg technologies will give rise to additional forms of cybercrime (78%) and privacy violations (67%).

One in ten wants to use cyborg technologies in the future

- 10% of Swiss internet users want to use cyborg technologies in the future as soon as they become available and affordable.
- Proponents of convergent technologies show a higher intention to use them (21–22%).

Silicon Valley visions find little resonance: low perceived usefulness and weak transhumanist beliefs

- A minority of Swiss internet users sees the benefits of convergent technologies such as cyborg products. In particular, the advantages for their own lives are hardly recognized. 21% and 17%, respectively think that convergent technologies primarily benefit society or themselves.
- People who regularly use generative AI applications (e.g., ChatGPT) attribute greater social and personal benefits to convergent technologies

(29% and 26%, respectively) than those who do not (regularly) use generative AI (13% and 9%, respectively) and the population as a whole (21% and 17%, respectively).

- Internet users with stronger transhumanist beliefs are significantly more supportive of convergent technologies.
- A minority in Switzerland shares transhumanist ideas. One to two in ten believe that human capabilities can be further developed through convergent technologies (21%), that evolution can be surpassed (19%), that the use of convergent technologies is morally obligatory (14%), and that almost all societal problems can be solved as a result (8%).
- Regular AI users show stronger transhumanist beliefs. 1 to 3 out of 10 think that convergent technologies can significantly further develop human capabilities (30%) and surpass biological evolution (25%), that their use is morally obligatory (17%), and that they can solve almost all societal problems (12%).
- Men tend to attribute greater societal and personal benefits to convergent technologies (27% and 22%, respectively) than women (14% and 11%, respectively) and have slightly stronger transhumanist beliefs (11–26% vs. women: 6–15%).
- Younger internet users perceive greater benefits of convergent technologies for society and their own lives (20–29 years: 31% and 24%, respectively vs. 70+ years: 11% and 7%) and share transhumanist visions more frequently (14–19 years: 12–30% vs. 70+ years: 4–12%).

Majority expects General Artificial Intelligence to emerge soon, with negative consequences

- The most widespread transhumanist vision in Switzerland is the expectation that artificial general intelligence (AGI) will emerge: general-purpose applications with AI that are superior to humans in almost all areas of life.
- Almost half of the Swiss online population (45%) believes in the development of such general artificial intelligence. Among them, 6 out of 10 (59%) expect such applications to emerge within the next five years.
- More than half (55%) of regular users of generative AI believe in the emergence of AGI. 4 out of 10 people (38%) who do not use AI (regularly) believe in it.
- Internet users are generally sceptical about artificial general intelligence. 6 out of 10 (60%) think that its impact on humanity would be negative.
- Regular AI users are slightly more confident: half of them (49%) expect negative effects, while a quarter (24%) expect positive effects.
- Men are more likely to believe in the emergence of general artificial intelligence (52%) and are slightly more likely to view its impact as positive (21%) than women (38% and 11%, respectively).

Digital everyday religion in Switzerland: young and regular AI users are more likely to be "believers"

- There are indications that a considerable proportion of Swiss internet users' use of digital services has religious characteristics.
- Mythological ideas about digital services are particularly prevalent: 23% feel that suggestions in their preferred digital services they use regularly are controlled by a higher instance.
- For around a quarter, the use of these services has a ritual-like character: for 28%, regular use of these services is an integral part of their daily routine. 25% say they begin and end their days using these services.
- Between 8% and 16% of internet users report transcendent experiences beyond the everyday in connection with the use of their preferred digital services.
- All these indications of an implicit digital everyday religion are more prevalent among younger people than among older people. Particularly strong age differences can be seen in ritualized use (20–29 years: 41–44% vs. 70+ years: 12–14%) and transcendent experiences (14–19 years: 13–34% vs. 70+ years: 4–11%).
- Regular users of generative AI experience the use of their preferred services more often as ritualized (31–37%) and report transcendent experiences more frequently (12–25%) than people who do not use AI (regularly) (19–20% and 4–10%, respectively).

Data Basis WIP-CH

The analyses are based on representative samples from the entire language-assimilated Swiss population (2011–2021) and the Swiss online population (2023–2025) aged 14 and above. Around 1,000 people were surveyed in each survey year. This resulted in the following sample sizes as the basis for the calculations and illustrations:

Sample for	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	2021	2023	2025
Swiss population	1104	1114	1121	1120	1122	1120	-	-
Internet users	851	949	981	1013	1035	1069	1008	1078
Employed internet users	589	587	706	710	737	715	639	722
Non-users	253	165	140	107	85	51	-	-
Proxy users	90	79	56	54	34	11	-	-

Calculations of absolute figures are based on current data from the Federal Statistical Office (https://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/de/home/statistiken/bevoelkerung.html) and refer to the Swiss resident population aged 14 and older.

1 Convergent Technologies and The Cyberization of Humans

Next generation of convergent technologies

The spread of the internet, the ongoing digitalization of society and recent technological developments are not only changing politics and economics. They also mark a decisive phase in the transformation of the relationship between humans and technology and thus the question of what it means to be human today. This report examines a new generation of technologies in which the internet, including applications of generative artificial intelligence, can no longer be viewed in isolation, but rather in combination with other, increasingly converging technologies. These so-called *convergent technologies* are emerging from the interconnection of various fields of research, in particular nano-, bio-, information technology and cognitive science. They are therefore grouped under the term *NBIC technologies*.

Cyborg technologies as a case study of convergent technologies

As a case study of convergent technologies, this report focuses on cyborg technologies, which aim to overcome the biological limitations of humans by merging humans and technology, thereby technologically controlling human evolution. In 2023 and 2025, the WIP-CH survey therefore examined this next generation of new technologies and asked internet users about their prevalence and their attitudes towards cyborg technologies. Some of these technologies are already commercially available. They can be used to transcend one's own biological limits, measure and influence bodily functions, detect physical warning signs at an early stage, expand one's own senses or acquire new abilities. This definition of cyborg technologies only includes products that are not used for medical reasons (e.g., pacemakers) but are specifically used for self-optimization and the expansion of physical limits. This report refers to cyborg technologies that can be *worn on the body* or *implanted in the body*.

Wearable and implantable cyborg technologies

Wearable, removable cyborg technologies include commercially available digital devices that measure and specifically influence bodily functions. Examples include wireless headbands that record brain activity and are designed to improve concentration, productivity, stress levels, or sleep quality through electrical impulses or personalized feedback. The data collected is displayed and interpreted in a smartphone app to provide feedback on mental or physical condition. Such devices can, for example, play music tailored to brain activity or guide users through personalized breathing exercises or meditations. Cyborg technologies that can be implanted in the body include microchips that measure bodily functions such as body temperature, heart rate or fertility and evaluate them via an app. These internal measurements are intended to detect fluctuations in health at an early stage and prevent potential illnesses. Other microchips store personal information and

enable identity checks, payments and door opening, among other things.

Transhumanism drives the next generation of technology

Technological development towards convergent technologies such as cyborg technologies is largely propagated by the techno-philosophical transhumanism movement, the belief in a technological future for humanity (Latzer, 2022). Transhumanist visions are particularly widespread in big tech companies in Silicon Valley: supporters see convergent technologies as an opportunity to improve human physical and mental abilities, overcome the limits of biological evolution and thereby increase life expectancy, well-being and prosperity, as well as solve all societal problems. Transhumanism thus pursues the goal of controlling human evolution through technology. This is linked to the idea that individuals and society have a moral obligation to make use of this potential with the help of convergent technologies.

Belief in the emergence of Artificial General Intelligence (AGI)

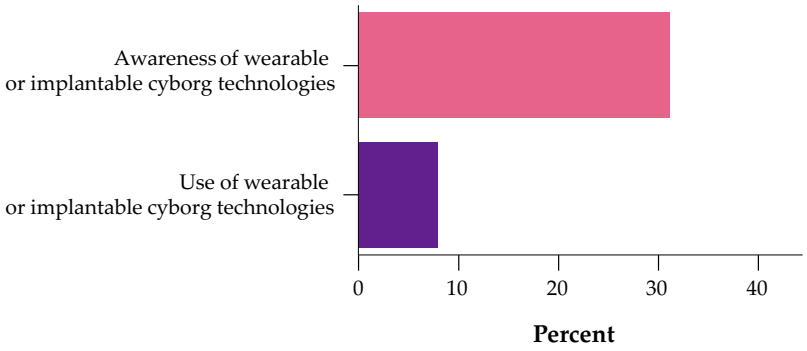
Transhumanist visions also include the belief in the imminent development of *Artificial General Intelligence* (AGI): general-purpose applications with AI that are superior to humans not only in individual abilities, but simultaneously in almost all areas of life.

Specifically, this chapter addresses the following questions in the context of human cyborgisation: Are Swiss internet users aware of cyborg technologies as an example of convergent technologies, and are they already using them? What opportunities and risks do they associate with these technologies? To what extent do they intend to use such technologies in the future? In addition, the report shows the societal and personal benefits that Swiss internet users generally attribute to convergent technologies. On the other hand, the survey highlights the extent to which transhumanist visions have already found resonance among the Swiss online population, the extent to which internet users believe in the emergence of Artificial General Intelligence, and how they assess its consequences.

This chapter first provides insights into how widespread the awareness and use of cyborg technologies are.

1.1 Awareness and Use of Cyborg Technologies

Figure 1: Awareness and Use of Cyborg Technologies



Data basis: Swiss internet users, WIP-CH 2025.

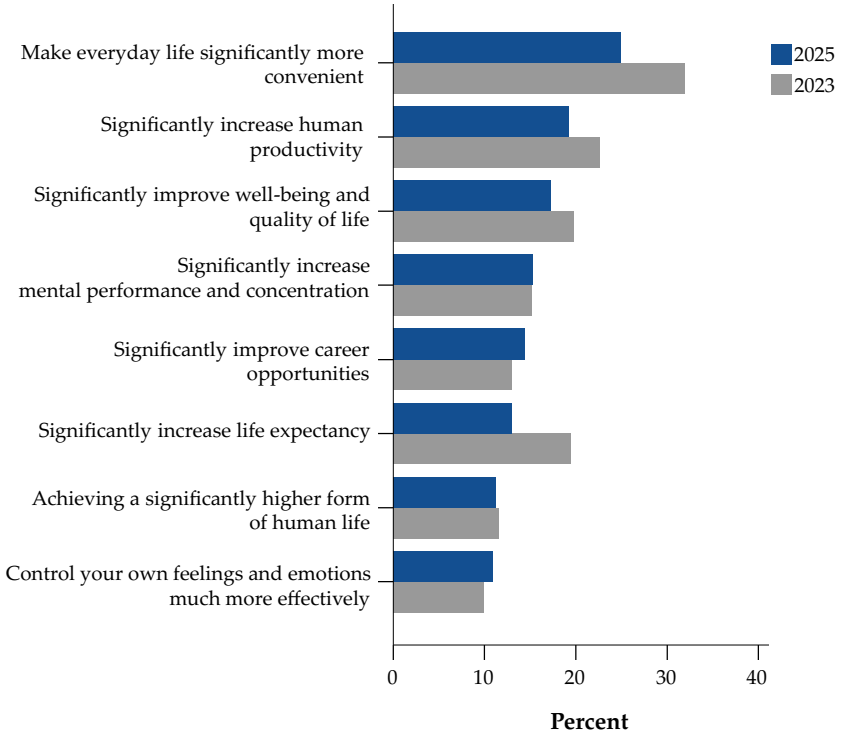
3 out of 10 are aware of cyborg technologies, but only a few already use them

– 31% of Swiss internet users aged 14 and above are aware of wearable or implantable cyborg technologies. A quarter (26%) of those who are already aware of these products also use them. Overall, 8% of internet users say they use these products.
– More men (36%) than women (27%) know of cyborg technologies.
– The proportion of people younger than 30 who are aware of these products is highest (43–44% vs. 70+: 16%).
– In 2023, more than a third of internet users knew of wearable (37%) and implantable (35%) cyborg technologies. The proportion of users was 11% and 3%, respectively.
– Current users of cyborg technologies were asked to provide information about the products they use. The open-ended responses to this question included examples of wearable, non-medically necessary cyborg technologies that affect the nervous system and brain functions. No implantable cyborg technologies were mentioned.
– However, the open-ended responses also included examples of services used for medical purposes (e.g., blood sugar and blood pressure monitors) or purely for recording health or fitness status (e.g., fitness watches and smart jewellery). These examples do not fall under the definition of cyborg technologies used in this report. This suggests that the results tend to overestimate the current user base of cyborg technologies and that the use of cyborg technologies is less than 8% among Swiss internet users.

In addition to their awareness of these products, internet users were also asked about their assessment of the opportunities and risks of cyborg technologies in general.

1.2 Opportunities and Risks of Cyborg Technologies

Figure 2: Opportunities of Cyborg Technologies Over Time, 2023–2025



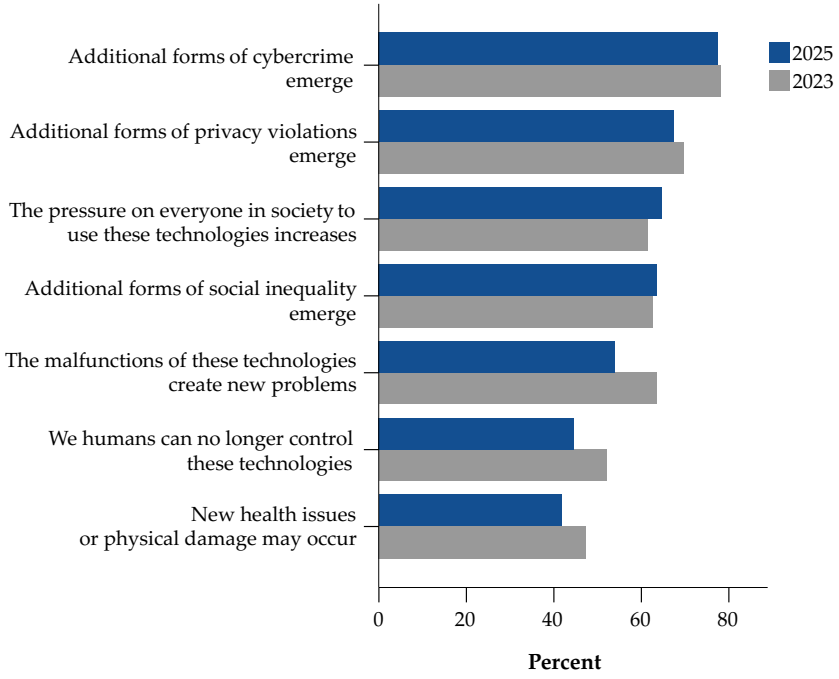
Data basis: Swiss internet users, WIP-CH.

A quarter of internet users think that cyborg technologies can make everyday life significantly more convenient

– Overall, 11–25% of internet users believe in the potential of cyborg technologies.
– The strongest agreement was reported for the opportunity that cyborg technologies can make everyday life significantly more convenient (25%).
– Increased human productivity (19%) and improved well-being and quality of life (17%) are also seen as opportunities.
– A smaller proportion of Swiss internet users sees increasing mental capacities and concentration (15%), improving career opportunities (14%), extending life expectancy (13%), achieving a higher form of life and controlling one's own emotions more consciously (11% each) as opportunities offered by cyborg technologies.
– Men, younger people and those with lower levels of education attribute slightly more potential to cyborg technologies than women, older people and those with higher levels of education.
– The more internet users support transhumanist visions, the higher they rate the opportunities offered by cyborg technologies.
– Overall, the assessment of the opportunities for cyborg technologies has remained stable since 2023. Only the approval ratings for the opportunities for a more comfortable everyday life and a longer lifespan were significantly higher in 2023 (32% and 20%, respectively).

In addition to their assessment of the opportunities associated with cyborg technologies, internet users were also asked about their assessment of the potential risks.

Figure 3: Risks of Cyborg Technologies Over Time, 2023–2025



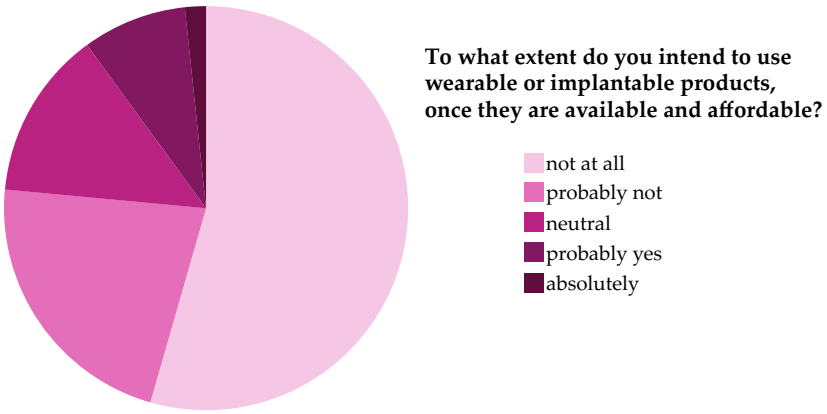
Data basis: Swiss internet users, WIP-CH.

3 out of 4 fear new forms of cybercrime in connection with cyborg technologies

– The highest agreement was reported for the risk that cyborg technologies will give rise to additional forms of cybercrime (78%) and privacy violations (67%).
– Increasing pressure to use these technologies (65%) and the belief that additional forms of inequality will arise among the population (64%) are also widespread concerns.
– Around half of the Swiss online population considers the risk of new problems arising from malfunctions (54%), technologies no longer being controllable by humans (45%), and additional health problems arising (42%) to be significant. These three risks are considered less significant than in 2023 (64%, 52% and 47%, respectively). The other risks, on the other hand, have hardly changed.
– Men and younger people attribute slightly fewer risks to these technologies than women and older people.

Overall, Swiss internet users associate cyborg technologies more with risks than with opportunities. In addition to the opportunities and risks, respondents were also asked to indicate the extent to which they intend to use such technologies in the future, once they become available and affordable.

Figure 4: Intention to Use Cyborg Technologies



Data basis: Swiss internet users who are aware of cyborg technologies but do not use them, WIP-CH 2025.

10% want to use cyborg technologies once they are available and affordable

– One in ten internet users (10%) say they would (probably) use wearable or implantable cyborg technologies once they become available and affordable.

– Three quarters of Swiss internet users (77%) report they do not want to use these technologies in the future, even if they are available and affordable.

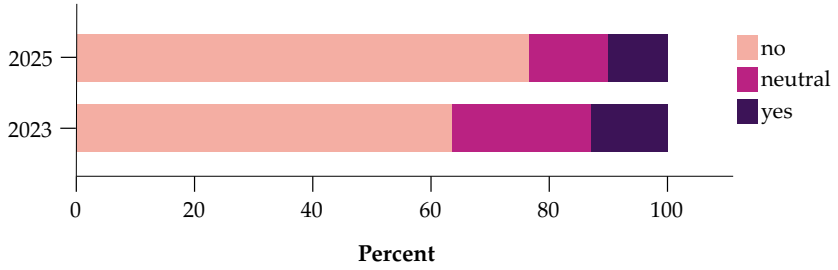
– A smaller proportion (14%) of Swiss internet users chose the middle of the scale, indicating undecidedness about the future use of cyborg technologies.

– The intention to use such cyborg technologies decreases with age (14–19: 22%, 70+: 13%).

Proponents of convergent technologies have a higher intention to use cyborg technologies

– The intention to use cyborg technologies also differs according to the perceived benefits of convergent technologies in general. Proponents of convergent technologies who see more advantages than disadvantages in these technologies for society and for themselves are more likely to say they want to use cyborg technologies in the future (21–22%) than anyone else.

Figure 5: Intention to Use Cyborg Technologies Over Time, 2023–2025



Data basis: Swiss internet users who are aware of cyborg technologies but do not use them, WIP-CH.

Intention to use cyborg technologies low since 2023

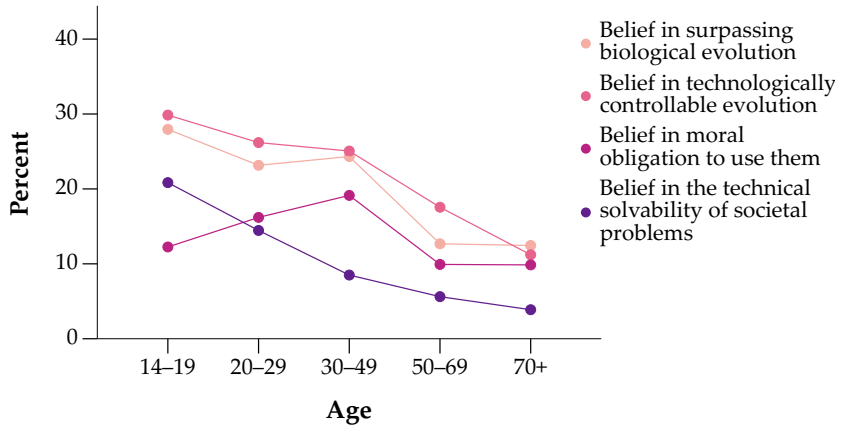
– The intention to use wearable or implantable cyborg technologies has remained at a similarly low level since 2023 (2025: 10%, 2023: 13%).

– The proportion of people who do not want to use these technologies has risen by 13 percentage points since 2023 (2025: 77%, 2023: 64%). The proportion of undecided people has fallen by 10 percentage points (2025: 14%, 2023: 24%).

1.3 Benefit Assessment of Convergent Technologies

Cyborg technologies are an example of convergent technologies, also known as NBIC technologies. They arise from the combination of the research fields of nano-, bio- and information technology as well as cognitive science, and thus go beyond isolated digital technologies such as the internet, including artificial intelligence. Respondents indicated how they generally assess the social and personal benefits of such convergent technologies.

Figure 6: Benefit Assessment of Convergent Technologies Over Time, 2023–2025



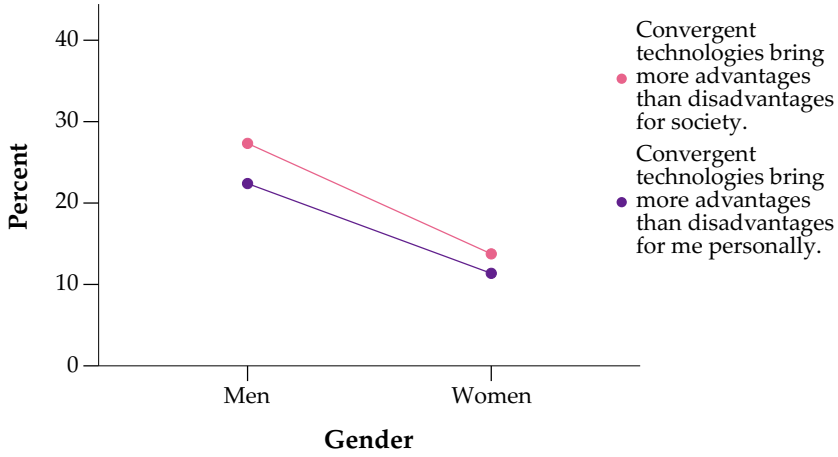
Data basis: Swiss internet users, WIP-CH.

Moderate assessment of the benefits of convergent technologies in Switzerland

– A minority of Swiss internet users see the benefits of convergent technologies. In particular, the advantages for their own lives are hardly recognized. One in five (21%) and one in six (17%) Swiss internet users believe that the advantages of these technologies for society and themselves outweigh the disadvantages.
– People who use generative AI applications such as ChatGPT and Google Gemini at least once a month and thus regularly are more likely to be advocates of convergent technologies. They attribute greater societal and personal benefits to them (29% and 26%, respectively) than those who do not use generative AI (regularly) (13% and 9%, respectively).
– Overall assessments of societal and personal benefits have remained stable since 2023 (24% and 21%, respectively).

The assessment of the benefits of convergent technologies is shown below by gender.

Figure 7: Benefit Assessment of Convergent Technologies by Gender



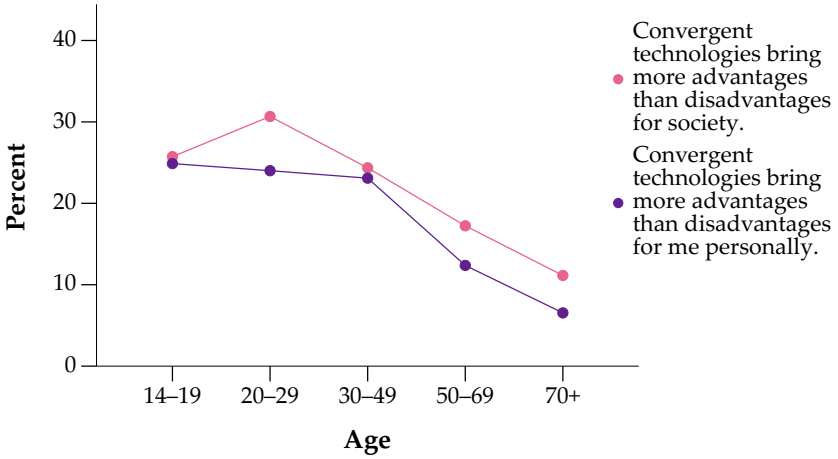
Data basis: Swiss internet users, WIP-CH 2025.

Men are more likely than women to support convergent technologies

– There are differences between the genders: men are slightly more convinced of the benefits of convergent technologies for society (27%) and for themselves personally (22%) than women (14% and 11%, respectively).
– Both genders show a slightly higher assessment of the social benefits (27% and 14%, respectively). They believe to a slightly lesser extent (22% and 11%, respectively) that these technologies bring them more advantages than disadvantages personally.

The following section outlines the assessment of the societal and personal benefits of convergent technologies by age.

Figure 8: Assessment of the Benefits of Convergent Technologies by Age



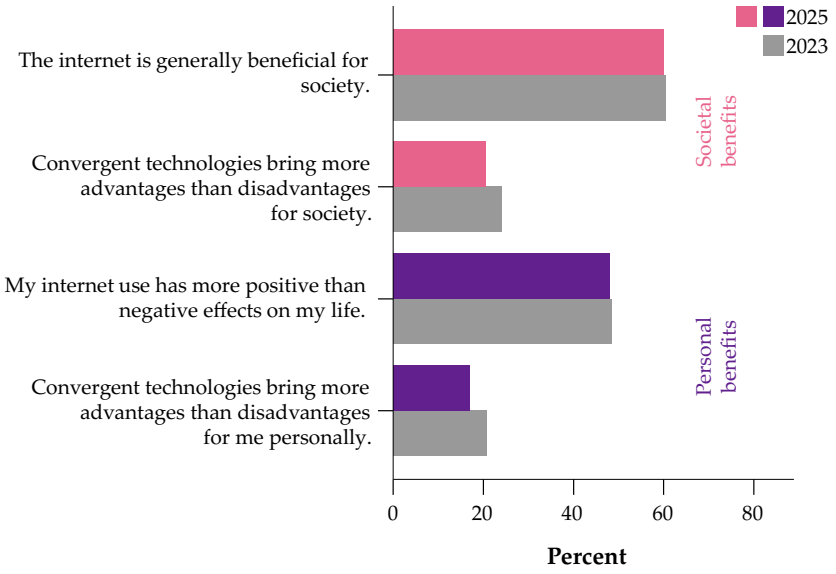
Data basis: Swiss internet users, WIP-CH 2025.

Younger people are more likely to support convergent technologies than older people

– There are also differences between age groups. Younger internet users see significantly more benefits in convergent technologies, both for society and for their own lives. Around a quarter of people younger than 50 are in favour of these technologies (24–31% and 23–25%, respectively). Older people rate the benefits much lower (50–69: 17% and 12%, respectively, 70+: 11% and 7%, respectively).
– Internet users between the ages of 14 and 19 and between 30 and 49 believe equally in societal and personal benefits (14–19: 26% and 25%, respectively, 30–49: 24% and 23%, respectively). Users aged 20 through 29 and those aged 50 and above are more convinced of the societal benefits than the personal ones, with this difference being particularly pronounced in the age group 20 to 29 (31% and 24%, respectively, 70+: 11% and 7%). These groups seem to be somewhat less convinced of the benefits of convergent technologies for themselves personally.
– In terms of education, there are hardly any differences in the assessment of the benefits of convergent technologies.

In addition to assessing the benefits of convergent technologies, respondents also indicated how they assess the benefits of the internet for society and for themselves personally.

Figure 9: Benefit Assessment of the Internet and Convergent Technologies Over Time, 2023–2025



Data basis: Swiss internet users, WIP-CH.

Swiss internet users see more advantages for society than for themselves

– Overall, the advantages of convergent technologies tend to be seen more for society (21%) than for oneself (17%), although the difference is small.
– This difference is more pronounced when it comes to attitudes towards the internet. Swiss internet users agree more strongly that the internet

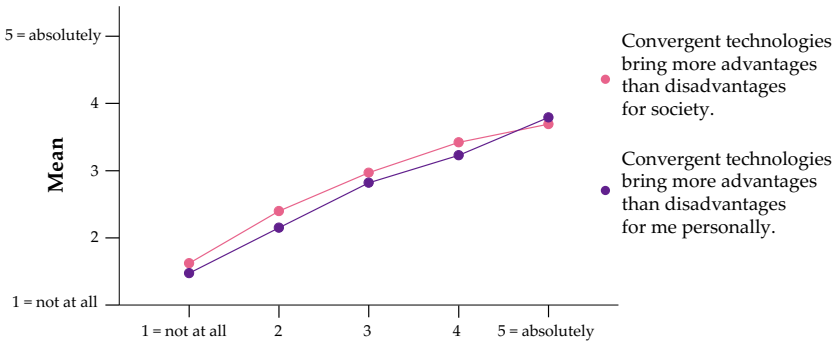
is a good thing for society (60%) than that internet use has more positive than negative effects on their lives (48%).

– Users who attribute high societal and personal benefits to the internet are also more likely to see the advantages of convergent technologies. As the perceived benefits of the internet increase, so does the perceived societal and personal benefits of convergent technologies.

– Since 2023, the assessment of the societal and personal benefits of the internet (61% and 48%, respectively) and convergent technologies (24% and 21%, respectively) has remained stable.

This next generation of convergent technologies is being promoted by transhumanist visions, which are particularly widespread in big tech companies in Silicon Valley. Among other things, followers of this ideology believe in a technologically controllable evolution of humans. The following section therefore outlines the extent to which the perceived benefits of convergent technologies are linked to a belief in a technologically controllable evolution.

Figure 10: Benefit Assessment of Convergent Technologies by Belief in the Technologically Controllable Evolution of Humans



Data basis: Swiss internet users, WIP-CH 2025.

– The assessment of benefits, both in terms of society and personally, increases significantly with a growing belief in a technologically controllable evolution of humans.

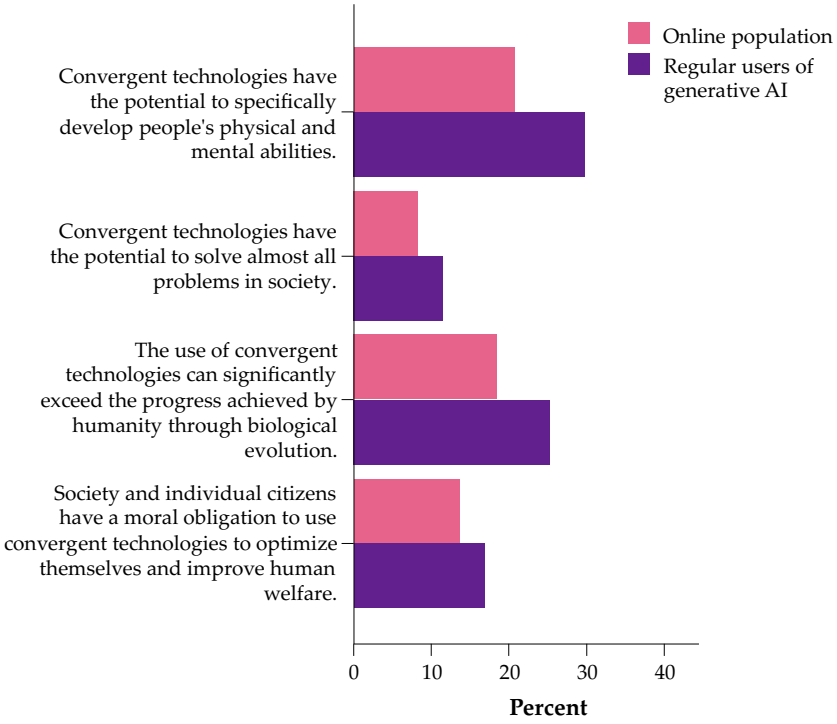
Gender and age differences in convergent technologies: men and younger people are more confident

The empirical analysis of convergent technologies in Switzerland reveals differences based on gender, age, and education: men and younger people generally attribute more opportunities and fewer risks to cyborg technologies and rate the personal and social benefits of the internet higher than women and older people. Men and younger people also show a greater intention to use cyborg technologies and see greater social and personal benefits in convergent technologies in general.

1.4 Prevalence of Transhumanist Beliefs

Transhumanist beliefs can be measured using certain indicators related to convergent technologies that reflect key features of this ideology. These ideas are already widespread in the tech industry. To investigate the extent to which transhumanist beliefs are prevalent among the Swiss population, respondents were asked to indicate how strongly they agree with these transhumanist visions.

Figure 11: Indicators of Transhumanist Beliefs



Data basis: Swiss internet users and regular users of generative AI, WIP-CH 2025.

Transhumanist beliefs are not widespread among the population

– Overall, transhumanist beliefs are not very widespread in Switzerland.
– 1 to 2 out of 10 internet users share transhumanist visions. 21% believe in a technologically controllable evolution and therefore think that convergent technologies have the potential to specifically further develop human physical and mental abilities. 19% believe that the use of convergent technologies can significantly surpass the progress achieved by biological evolution. One in seven (14%) thinks that society and individual citizens have a moral obligation to use convergent technologies for their own optimization and the improvement of humanity's well-being. 8% believe that convergent technologies have the potential to solve almost all problems in society.

Regular AI users are more likely to believe in transhumanism

– Regular users of generative AI show stronger transhumanist beliefs than the population as a whole.
– 3 out of 10 regular AI users (30% vs. 21% overall) think that convergent technologies can specifically advance human capabilities. A quarter

(25% vs. 19% overall) believe that the targeted use of convergent technologies will surpass biological evolution. 17% (vs. 14% overall) believe that society and individual citizens have a moral obligation to use convergent technologies to optimize and improve the well-being of humanity, and 12% (vs. 8% overall) think that convergent technologies can solve almost all societal problems.

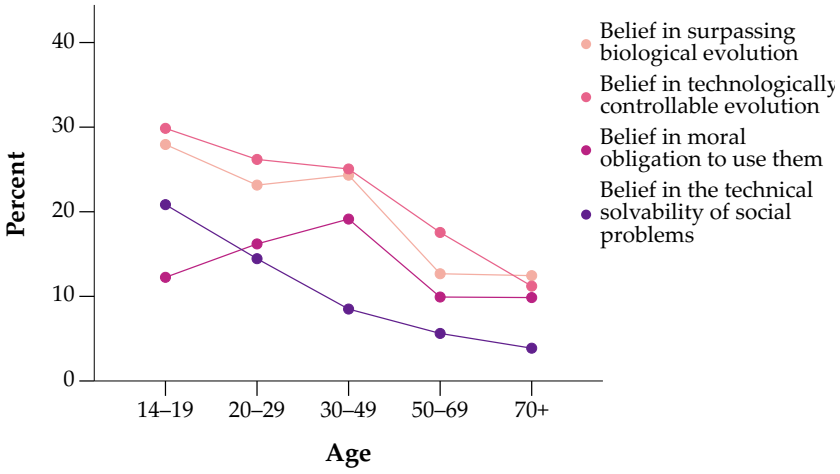
– The belief among the population that convergent technologies have the potential to specifically develop people's physical and mental abilities and solve almost all problems in society is significantly lower than in 2023 (27% and 13%, respectively).

– Internet users who rate the societal and personal benefits of convergent technologies higher show significantly stronger transhumanist beliefs.

– Internet users were also asked to what extent they agree that people should be completely free to decide to what extent they use convergent technologies to improve their abilities or well-being. 6 out of 10 internet users (63%) agree with this. Given the comparatively low prevalence of transhumanist beliefs, this suggests a need for the freedom *not* to use convergent technologies.

The following section outlines age differences in the assessment of the benefits of the internet and transhumanist beliefs.

Figure 12: Indicators of Transhumanist Beliefs by Age



Data basis: Swiss internet users, WIP-CH 2025.

Younger people have the strongest transhumanist beliefs

– Overall, younger internet users believe more strongly in transhumanism than older users.

– 3 out of 10 14- to 19-year-olds (30%) believe in the potential of convergent technologies to further develop human physical and mental abilities. This belief in a technologically controllable evolution declines significantly with age and is still prevalent among one in ten (11%) in the 70+ age group.

– Similar differences can be found when asked whether convergent technologies have the potential to surpass the progress achieved through human evolution. For example, 28% of 14- to 19-year-olds say they believe in surpassing human evolution, compared to 12% in the oldest group.
– When asked whether convergent technologies have the potential to solve almost all problems in society, 21% of 14- to 19-year-olds say they believe this to be the case, compared to 4% of those over 70.
– 2 out of 10 users (19%) in the middle age group (30–49) think that society and individual citizens have a moral obligation to use convergent technologies to optimize themselves and improve human welfare. Fewer people in the other groups think so (10–16%).
– Transhumanist beliefs are more widespread among men than women: 1 to 2 out of 10 men (11–26%) share transhumanist visions, compared to about half that proportion of women (6–15%).

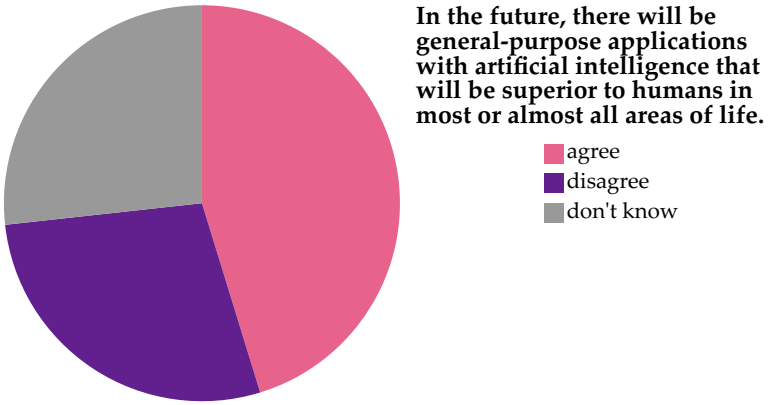
Men are more likely to believe in transhumanism than women

1.5 Belief in the Emergence of Artificial General Intelligence

Another indicator of transhumanism is the belief in the imminent development of *Artificial General Intelligence (AGI)* or *Strong* Artificial Intelligence. This refers to general-purpose applications of artificial intelligence that are superior to humans in most or almost all areas of life. Transhumanist visions link the development of Artificial General Intelligence with the expectation of profound changes in society, the economy, and the lives of individual citizens. Expectations range from immeasurable increases in welfare through the overcoming of human limitations to existential risks for humanity due to a loss of control to superior technology.

The following section examines whether Swiss internet users believe that such Artificial General Intelligence will emerge in the future, when they expect it to emerge, and how they assess its impact on humanity.

Figure 13: Belief in the Emergence of Artificial General Intelligence



Data basis: Swiss internet users, WIP-CH 2025.

Almost half believe in the emergence of Artificial General Intelligence

– Almost half of the Swiss online population (45%) believes that in the future there will be Artificial General Intelligence or general-purpose applications with artificial intelligence that will be superior to humans in most or almost all areas of life. This indicator of transhumanist belief is therefore most pronounced in Switzerland.

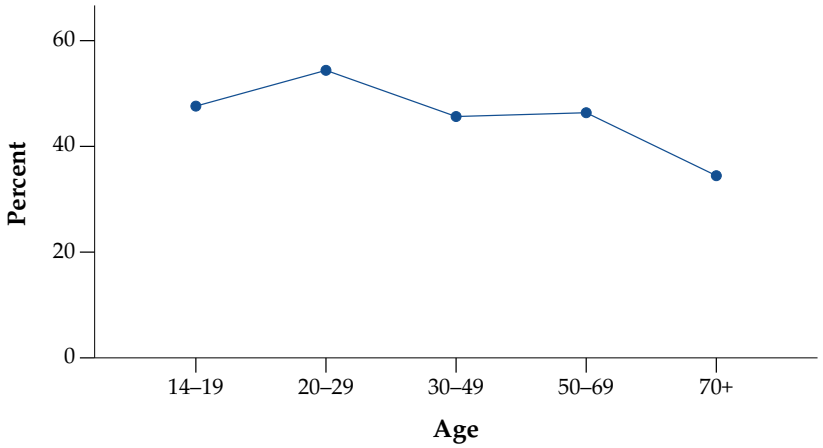
– Around a quarter does not believe that AGI will exist (28%) or is unsure (27%).

Regular AI users are more likely to believe in the emergence of AGI

– Regular users of generative AI are more likely to believe in the emergence of Artificial General Intelligence. Over half of them believe in the emergence of AGI (55%). Among those who do not use AI (regularly), 38% believe this.

The following section outlines age differences in this belief in the emergence of Artificial General Intelligence.

Figure 14: Belief in the Emergence of Artificial General Intelligence by Age



Data basis: Swiss internet users, WIP-CH 2025.

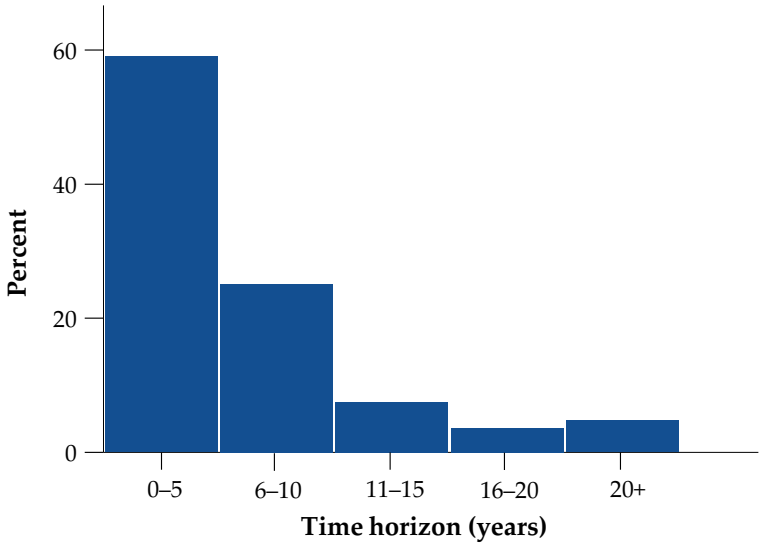
Younger people and men are more likely to believe in the emergence of AGI

– More than half (54%) of 20- to 29-year-olds believe that Artificial General Intelligence will become a reality. In the youngest age group, 48% share this view, while 46% of both 30- to 49-year-olds and 50- to 69-year-olds believe this. Among those aged 70 and older, a third (35%) believes in it.

– There are also differences regarding gender. Half of the men (52%) believe in AGI, compared to 4 out of 10 women (38%).

Internet users who believe in the emergence of Artificial General Intelligence were also asked how many years they think it will take before such general-purpose applications with artificial intelligence become available. This expected time frame is outlined below.

Figure 15: Emergence of General Artificial Intelligence by Time Horizon



Data basis: Swiss internet users who believe in the emergence of Artificial General Intelligence, WIP-CH 2025.

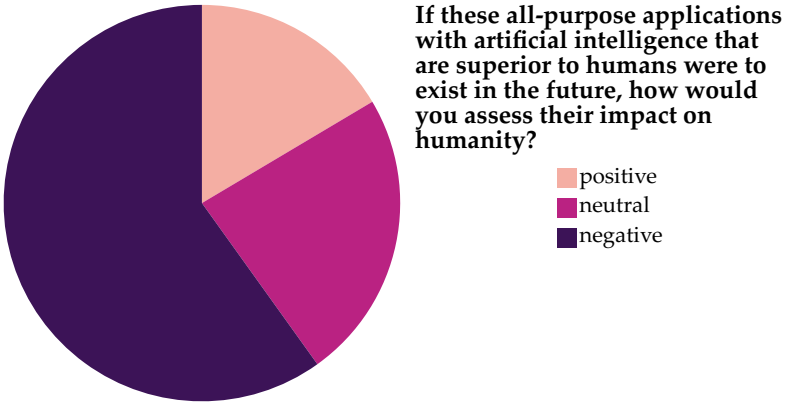
Majority expects Artificial General Intelligence to emerge soon

– Swiss internet users expect such Artificial General Intelligence to emerge soon. 6 out of 10 users (59%) who believe in AGI expect it to emerge within the next five years. One in four (25%) think it will emerge in six to ten years. A relatively small proportion (4–8% each) think it will take more than ten years.

– Regular users of generative AI expect AGI to emerge somewhat later than those who do not use AI (regularly) (0–5 years: 56% and 63%, respectively).

Swiss internet users also assessed the impact of Artificial General Intelligence on humanity if it were to exist in the future.

Figure 16: Impact Assessment of Artificial General Intelligence



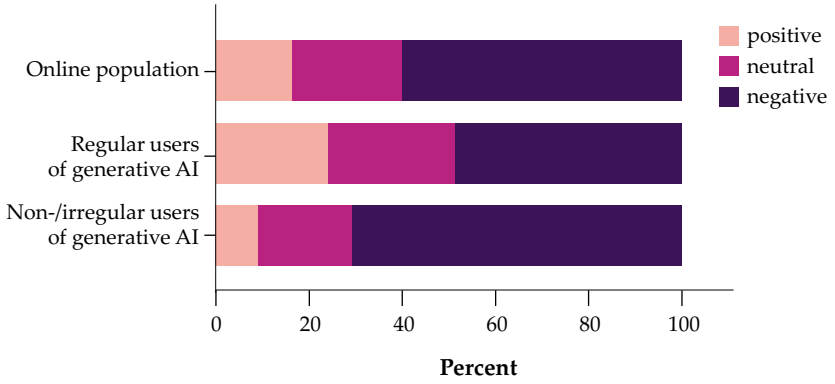
Data basis: Swiss internet users, WIP-CH 2025.

Scepticism towards AGI: 6 out of 10 think the impact on humanity would be negative

– The Swiss online population is generally sceptical about Artificial General Intelligence. 6 out of 10 users (60%) believe it will have a negative impact on humanity.
– One in six (17%) believe that Artificial General Intelligence would have a positive impact on humanity. A quarter (24%) believes that the impact would be neutral.

The assessment of the impact of Artificial General Intelligence on humanity differs between people who regularly use generative AI applications such as ChatGPT and Google Gemini and those who do not (regularly) use these applications.

Figure 17: Impact Assessment of Artificial General Intelligence by Use of Generative AI



Data basis: Swiss internet users, WIP-CH 2025.

– Regular users of generative AI have a slightly more positive view of the impact of Artificial General Intelligence on humanity. Almost half (49%) of them expect negative consequences, while a quarter (24%) expects positive ones. Among those who do not use generative AI applications (regularly), 7 out of 10 expect negative effects (71%) from AGI and 9% expect positive effects.

Regular AI users and men are more optimistic about the impact of AGI

– Men are also more optimistic about the impact of AGI on humanity. They are slightly more likely to view it positively (21%) and slightly less likely to view it negatively (55%) than women (11% and 66%, respectively). There is little difference in the assessment of the impact on humanity according to age and education.

2 Digital Everyday Religion

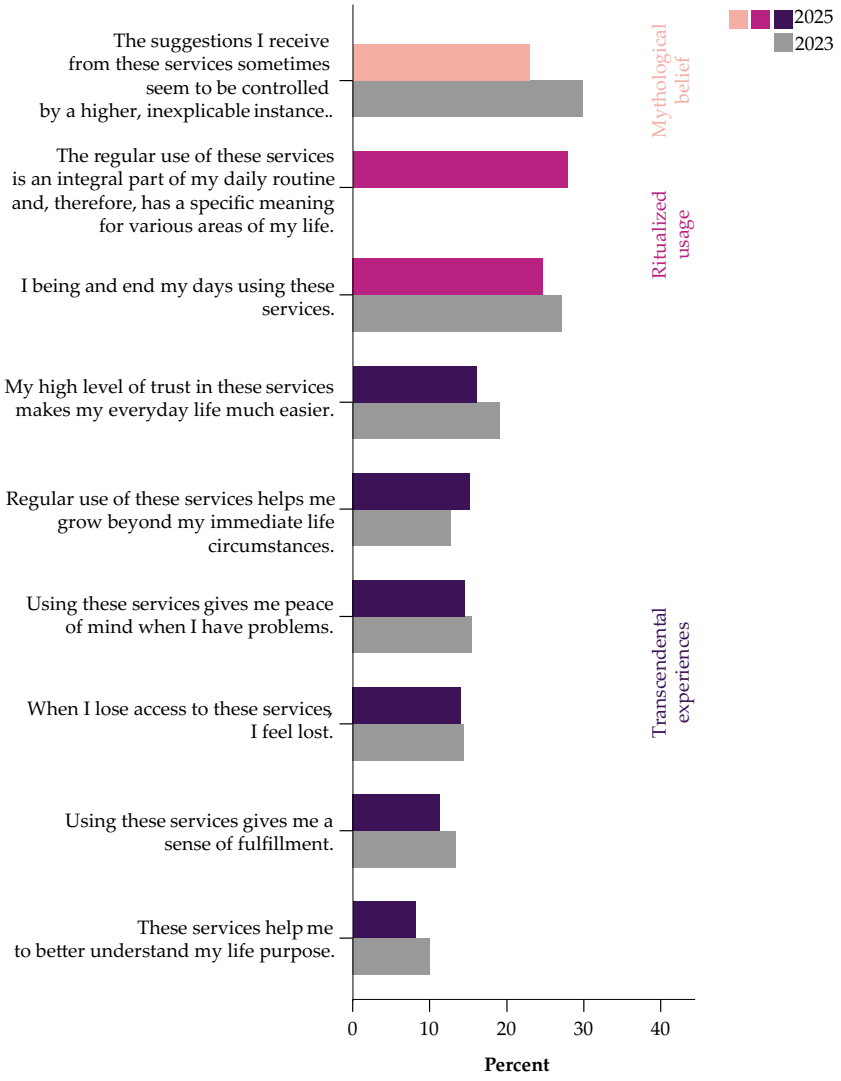
The advancing digitalization is permeating all areas of life and fundamentally changing the relationship between humans and technology. This socio-technical transformation process is increasingly shaped by transhumanist visions based on the idea that technological developments can improve humans and extend their biological limits. This transhumanist influence on digitalization provides the basis for the emergence of a technology religion (Latzer, 2025): a new social form of religion that is comparable to other "traditional" religions in that it performs typical functions in society and creates religion-like everyday experiences (Latzer, 2022; 2025). These include, on the one hand, the reduction of complexity through (blind) trust in the decisions of automated algorithmic selection services and the influence of ontological security and social cohesion through the use of digital services. On the other hand, the daily practice of an *implicit digital everyday religion* is also recognizable, characterized, among other things, by transcendental experiences when using the internet, which transcend the usual boundaries of everyday experiences and make the otherwise inexplicable explainable. Everyday internet use is increasingly resembling a routine, implicit religion. "Implicit" means that it appears religious when viewed from the outside, even if users do not necessarily perceive it as such.

2.1 Mythological Ideas, Ritualized Use, Transcendental Experiences

The implicit digital everyday religion manifests itself through mythological ideas about digital services, their ritualized use, and transcendental experiences that can occur when using the internet.[1] The following figure shows how widespread these indicators of an implicit digital everyday religion are among Swiss internet users. Respondents were asked to answer the questions with regard to their preferred and regularly used digital services. These could be social media (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, TikTok), applications with generative artificial intelligence (e.g., ChatGPT, Google Gemini), YouTube, WhatsApp, health and well-being apps, time management apps, or apps for mental abilities (e.g., Headspace). Internet users were asked about mythological ideas of digital services, their ritualized use and transcendental experiences when using digital services.

[1] See Schnell (2003). The statements about transcendental experiences in the survey are based on the Spiritual Transcendence Index (Seidlitz et al., 2002).

Figure 18: Prevalence of Indicators of Everyday Digital Religion Over Time, 2023–2025



Data basis: Swiss internet users, WIP-CH. * Variable new in 2025.

Mythological beliefs and ritualized use of digital services: 1 in 4 agree

– Almost a quarter of Swiss internet users (23%) feels that suggestions from the services they use regularly and prefer are controlled by a higher, inexplicable instance.

– A comparable proportion (25%) say that using these services is like a ritual for them, as they begin and end their days using them. 28% say that regular use of these services is an integral part of their daily routine, giving them specific significance for different areas of life.

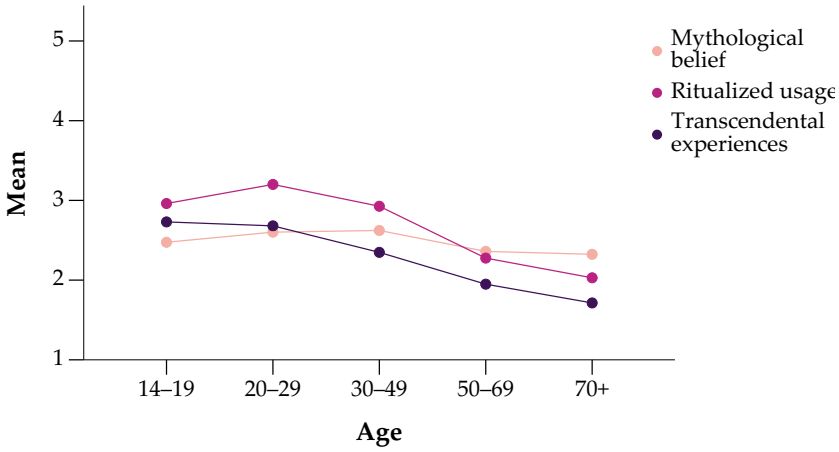
– Regular users of generative AI experience the use of their preferred services slightly more often as ritualized (31–37%) than those who do not use AI (regularly) (19–20%).

Around 1–2 in 10 have transcendental experiences when using their preferred digital services

– Between 8% and 16% of Swiss internet users say they have transcendent experiences when using their preferred digital services, transcending the boundaries of everyday experiences.
– Specifically, 16% report that their high level of trust in these services significantly simplifies their everyday lives.
– 1 out of 6 Swiss internet users (15%) says that using these services gives them peace of mind when problems arise, and just as many say that regular use helps them to transcend their immediate circumstances.
– 1 out of 7 (14%) feels lost when they lose access to these services, and for 11%, using these services gives them a sense of fulfilment.
– 8% say that these services help them to better understand their own purpose in life.
– Regular AI users experience transcendental experiences (12–25%) more often than people who do not use AI (regularly) (4–10%).
– The mythological idea is significantly less prevalent in 2025 than in 2023 (30%). Ritualized use and transcendental experiences have remained stable.

The following section outlines the prevalence of these three indicators of everyday digital religion by age.

Figure 19: Indicators of Everyday Digital Religion by Age



Data basis: Swiss internet users, WIP-CH 2025.

– Users answered several questions about ritualized use and transcendental experiences (see Figure 18). These were summarized into a mean index for Figure 19.

Indications of digital everyday religion more prevalent among younger people

– Overall, digital everyday religion is more prevalent among younger internet users: for all three indicators, their mean values are higher than those of older users.
– The differences are particularly pronounced in the ritualized use of digital services (20–29: m=3.2 vs. 70+: m=2.0). Among 20- to 29-year-olds, 44% begin and end their days using these services, compared to 14% of

those over 50 and those aged 70 or above. For 41% of 20- to 29-year-olds, digital services are also an integral part of their daily routine and therefore important for various areas of life. This applies to 12% of those 70 or above.

- Mythological ideas about how digital services work are most pronounced among those younger than 50 (m=2.5–2.6 vs. 50+: m=2.3–2.4), although this indicator of a digital everyday religion is most balanced across age groups.
- Transcendental experiences in connection with the use of digital services are also more common among younger people than among older people (14–19: m=2.7 vs. 70+: m=1.7).
- These age differences are particularly pronounced in some of the questions about transcendental experiences. For example, 34% of 14- to 19-year-olds agree that using their favourite digital services brings them peace of mind when they have problems. In addition, 26% of the youngest group say that the regular use of these services helps them to transcend their immediate circumstances. In the oldest group, these figures are only 9% and 7%, respectively.
- Slight differences can also be observed in relation to education level: Among users with a lower level of education, mythological ideas and experiences of transcendence when using digital services are more widespread (m=2.9 and m=2.7, respectively) than among those with a medium (m=2.5 and m=2.2, respectively) and high level of education (m=2.3 and m=2.0, respectively). Men and women do not differ in their agreement with these statements.

World Internet Project – Switzerland

The Media Change & Innovation Division of the IKMZ at the University of Zurich has been the Swiss country partner of the World Internet Project (WIP) since 2010. The WIP is an international, collaborative research project which has tracked the dissemination and use of the internet on an international comparison since 1999. It is located in the Center for Digital Future of the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Southern California (USC) in Los Angeles and is chaired by Prof. Jeff Cole. As of today, universities and research institutions in over 30 countries, e.g., Italy, Sweden, Portugal, Belgium, United Kingdom, Qatar, China, Indonesia, Taiwan, Chile, Colombia, and New Zealand, are partnering in the WIP.

Internationally comparable long-term data on the social, political and economic implications of internet development

The WIP aims to collect independent and internationally comparative long-term data on the development of the internet. The dissemination and use of the internet, as well as the associated social, political, and economic implications, form the focal point of research. The WIP produces a variety of scientific publications and organizes annual conferences. Findings are further shared within the fields of politics, administrations, economics, media, and interested civil societies.

The relevance of the WIP stems from a number of qualitative specifics:

- The combination of international comparability and long-term character, whereby general changing trends as well as characteristics of internet development can be measured in participating countries of the WIP.
- The combined survey of behaviours (What is used in what intensity?) and perceptions (What impact does internet use have in the private, professional, and political sphere?) enabling analyses of meaningful statistical relationships.
- The combination of an internationally standardized core questionnaire and a country-specific extension means that national focus areas can be set according to need.
- The periodic (CH: biennial) adaptation of the questionnaire, which allows for the inclusion of current issues and trends, such as the dissemination of convergent technologies.

World Internet Project – Switzerland 2011–2025

In 2025, Switzerland conducted its eighth representative survey for the World Internet Project – Switzerland (WIP-CH), asking the Swiss online population about their internet use and attitudes toward the internet.

Methods

Representative survey of Swiss internet users

The WIP study is a representative survey of Swiss internet users aged 14 and above, which is based on a periodically repeated random sample. In Switzerland, as in other partner countries, a country-specific catalogue of questions was added to the internationally standardized WIP questionnaire by the Media Change & Innovation Division of the IKMZ (University of Zurich). The 2025 Swiss survey was conducted in three languages as an online survey by the market and opinion research company gfs.bern from 2 June to 27 August 2025 in Switzerland.

Since 2023: Switch from telephone to online survey

The first six WIP surveys in Switzerland were conducted as telephone surveys (CATI – Computer Assisted Telephone Interview). Unlike purely online surveys, CATI surveys make it possible to reach both internet users and non-users. As the proportion of internet users in Switzerland has grown steadily from 2011 to 2021 and internet penetration is now reaching its saturation point (2021: 95% internet users), the 2023 and 2025 surveys were conducted as purely online surveys. Although this means that non-users are no longer included in the survey, this change promises a higher willingness to participate and enables expanded survey options (e.g., inclusion of image material). Despite this methodological change from a telephone to an online survey, the long-term comparability of the data remains intact. When interpreting the results, it should be noted that the two survey methods can lead to slightly different results, especially for sensitive questions, and that social desirability effects are less prevalent in online surveys (see, among others, Dillman, 2009; Milton et al., 2017).

Recruitment from two online panels

Recruitment for the online survey was carried out using a combination of two different panels (the Polittrends panel with slightly more highly educated, more intrinsically motivated individuals and the Bilendi panel with slightly less educated, more monetarily incentivized individuals) to enable high-quality statements. The total sample of 1,078 individuals is representative of Swiss internet users aged 14 and above in terms of age, gender, education, household income, and the three language regions of Switzerland (German-speaking, French-speaking, and Italian-speaking).To ensure the representativeness of the findings and to compensate for minor deviations of the sample from the population, the data was weighted to reflect the actual circumstances. With the number of respondents, a maximum confidence interval of ± 2.98 percentage points is achieved at a 95% confidence level.

The survey took an average of 19 minutes to complete. The online survey was conducted on desktop and mobile devices.

Interviews conducted in absolute numbers:

Age	Total	D-CH	F-CH	I-CH
14–19	**83**	**63**	**13**	**5**
20–29	**141**	**96**	**39**	**4**
30–49	**359**	**240**	**97**	**15**
50–69	**345**	**250**	**77**	**14**
70–88	**150**	**107**	**33**	**8**
	1078	**756**	**259**	**46**

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