

# THIS IS HOW SWITZERLAND WANTS TO GROW



BY DR. JAKUB SAMOCHOWIEC AND DR. JOHANNES BAUER

# Impressum

## GDI-STUDY

This is how Switzerland wants to grow

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# Introduction

The population of Switzerland is growing. According to the reference scenario from the Swiss Federal Statistical Office, the country will be home to around 10.4 million people by 2050. This level of population growth raises ecological, social and economic questions all at once: what do we do in terms of space, how do we ensure quality of life and how do we make density sustainable? The public debate on housing often focuses on problems and revolves mainly around stress related to population density and competition for land.

This makes it all the more important to broaden our perspective and ask neutral questions about how people in Switzerland want to live (together) in the future. This survey shows what the population thinks about possible ways to deal with growth, where there is openness to change and how people feel about specific measures. More than 2,000 people, representative in terms of age, gender and the parts of the country (German-speaking, French-speaking and Italian-speaking Switzerland), were surveyed online.

The aims of the survey, which was carried out on behalf of the Migros Pioneer Fund, are to open up room for reflection and highlight opportunities. It is also intended to serve as a basis for the Migros Pioneer Fund to select funding projects.



# Executive summary

Three in four people in Switzerland are satisfied with their current living situation. Two in three would like to still be in their current place of residence in 10 years' time – even the majority of those under 30. This satisfaction is based primarily on having enough space at home, friendly neighbours and the ability to stay long term. Their surroundings, whether in terms of architecture or proximity to nature, also have a significant influence on people's satisfaction with their living situation. Hence, when people move, they look for places that offer enough space, peace and quiet, and for which the price is right. While people from the city would like to live in the countryside, people in the countryside are much more likely to stay where they are and especially can't imagine moving to a city.

Despite the high degree of satisfaction and therefore little personal pressure to change, there is an awareness of the need for change. A majority of respondents (80%) believe, at least to some degree, that the way we live and live together will have to change as a result of population growth. Construction measures, as general solutions, are preferable to trying out new ways of living. There is a willingness to repurpose office space, build larger apartment buildings and add storeys to existing buildings. However, sharing living space – such as communal workspaces or guest rooms – while at the same time reducing your own living space is rather unpopular. All respondents, from city dwellers to village residents, agree that cities are expected to absorb most of the population growth, followed by urban agglomerations. Rural areas should be protected as much as possible. Consequently, the idea of rezoning agricultural land, for example, also meets with little support.

When it comes to applying densification measures to their own place of residence, city dwellers tend to see an obligation here, too. Almost 40% of those asked would approve adding storeys to their own building or constructing an apartment building in their neighbourhood. Among rural residents, however, only about 25% feel the same. There are some reservations about this densification, with the loss of green spaces, cleanliness, and peace and quiet being the most frequently mentioned concerns. However, approval increases for around half the respondents when building density is combined with more green spaces, enhanced natural and open spaces, better public transport connections and sustainable construction methods (including the installation of PV systems and heat pumps). More greenery and natural surroundings are preferred over financial incentives.

# Methodology

<b>Survey method</b>	Online survey
<b>Region</b>	German-speaking, French-speaking and Italian-speaking Switzerland (survey conducted in the relevant languages)
<b>Target group</b>	Population aged 16 to 79
<b>Quota sampling</b>	Representative of the population in terms of language region, age and gender
<b>Sample size</b>	n = 2,098
<b>Field period</b>	25 November to 3 December 2025
<b>Panel provider</b>	Bilendi

# Overview of survey results

<b>On an individual level, respondents are satisfied with the living situation and therefore feel little pressure to change. ....</b>	<b>7</b>
– Individually, there is little pressure to change: three in four people in Switzerland are satisfied with their living situation. ....	8
– Two-thirds of the total population and even a majority of those under 30 would like to still be living where they are now in 10 years' time. ....	9
– Those who can stay long term and have space and friendly neighbours are more likely to be satisfied. But the surroundings, i.e. townscape and natural environment, are also important. ....	10
– In 10 years' time, one-third would (also) like to live somewhere different from where they do now. ....	11
– Peace and quiet, good value for money and the ability to stay over the long term are the most important features of a new place of residence. ....	12
– If there were a place that remedied the main shortcomings of their current place of residence, more than half of respondents would move there – despite a high level of satisfaction with their current place of residence. ....	13
– Younger people are more willing to move than older people, but not if the move leads to having to share more living space. ....	14
– Tendency towards the countryside: people living in urban areas are generally more willing to move and are more likely to envisage living in the countryside than rural dwellers are regarding living in the city. ....	15
<b>Essentially, people in Switzerland see a need for action to provide housing for a growing society and are open to change. ....</b>	<b>16</b>
– Three-quarters believe, at least to some degree, that in the face of population growth, we will need to change the way we live together in the future. ....	17
– Solutions meet with little resistance as long as they protect personal space and agricultural land. There seems to be a willingness to change. ....	18
– People from both rural and urban areas would like to see densification mainly in inner cities. ....	19
– The more conservative the person's preferred political party, the lower the level of approval for specific measures. The difference between urban and rural, on the other hand, is rather insignificant. ....	20
<b>Respondents are in favour of building densification measures in their own neighbourhood – as long as nature is protected. ....</b>	<b>21</b>
– One-third of those surveyed are in favour of building apartment buildings in their own neighbourhood that are bigger and taller than existing structures. ....	22
– Adding extra storeys to their own building would be approved by just under one-third of respondents. ....	23
– Only one in five car owners would be willing to share their car with other people in the neighbourhood. ....	24
– About one in six people would share their place of residence with other/additional people, either in a flat share or by renting out a room. ....	25
– Reducing the size of your own living space in order to create more rooms (e.g. workspaces or guest rooms) in the neighbourhood is supported by only one in seven people. ....	26
– Almost two in three respondents fear that densification will lead to the loss of green spaces, more waste and noise, and rent increases or loss of value of owned real estate. ....	27
– Better public transport, enhanced natural areas and sustainable construction methods (e.g. PV systems, heat pumps) will increase acceptance of densification measures by half the respondents. ....	28
<b>The Switzerland of the future – scenarios for dealing with growth. ....</b>	<b>29</b>
– Polycentric and connected – the space of short distances ....	30
– Super cities with green belts: cities and agglomerations grow (together) ....	31
– Compact and regenerative – the city grows inwards ....	32
– Housing in motion – mobile Switzerland ....	33

# On an individual level, respondents are satisfied with the living situation and therefore feel little pressure to change.

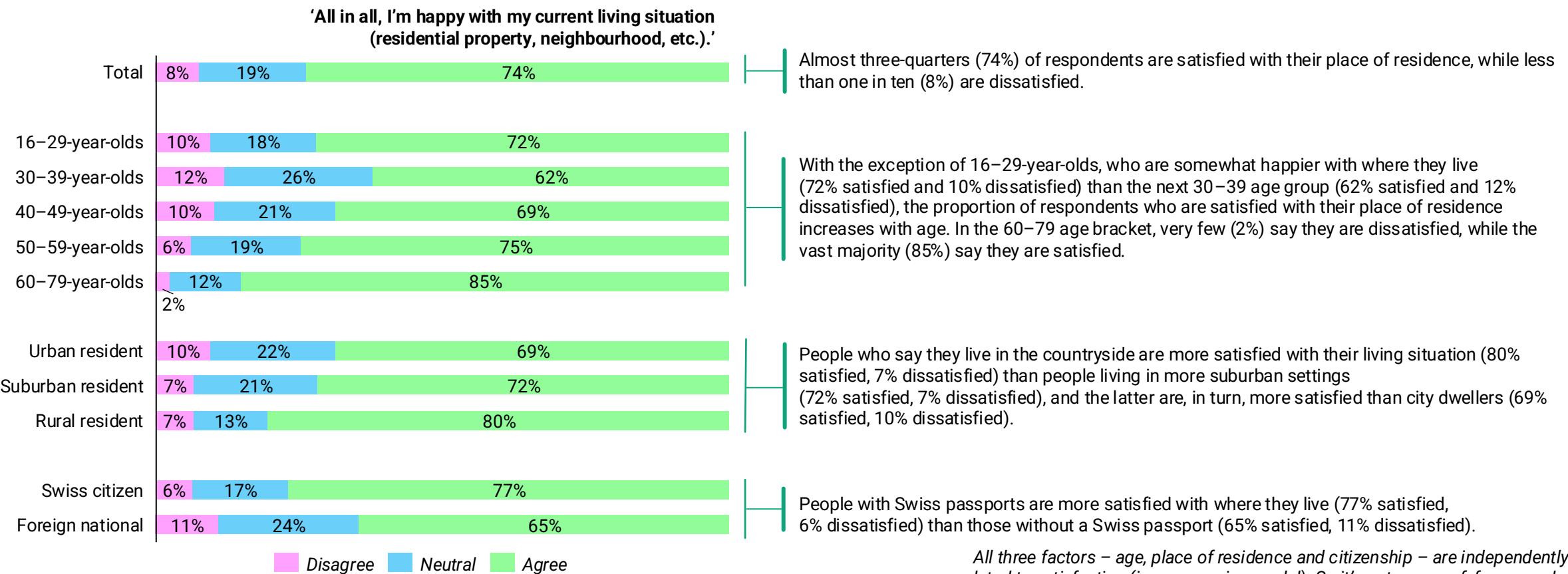


The vast majority are satisfied with their own living situation and would like to still be living in their current place of residence in 10 years' time. Those who have enough space and friendly neighbours and are able to stay long term are most likely to be satisfied with their own living situation. Their surroundings, whether in terms of architecture or proximity to nature, also have a significant influence on people's satisfaction with their living situation.

This satisfaction is more pronounced among older people, those living in rural areas and Swiss people, but also among a clear majority of younger people, city dwellers and people without a Swiss passport. Even the majority of under-30s would like to still be living in their current place of residence in 10 years' time. People's ties to their place of residence are primarily emotional and not necessarily due to administrative or organisational barriers to moving (e.g. logistics of relocation).

Despite the general satisfaction, almost half of respondents regularly look at residential listings and would also be willing to move if they found something better than their current living situation. However, this willingness to move virtually disappears if the move entails additional costs or sharing living space. Younger people and city dwellers are more likely to move than older people and those living in rural areas. People from the city are more likely to move to the countryside than people from the countryside are to move to the city.

# Individually, there is little pressure to change: three in four people in Switzerland are satisfied with their living situation.



Question: 'All in all, I'm happy with my current living situation (residential property, neighbourhood, etc.).'

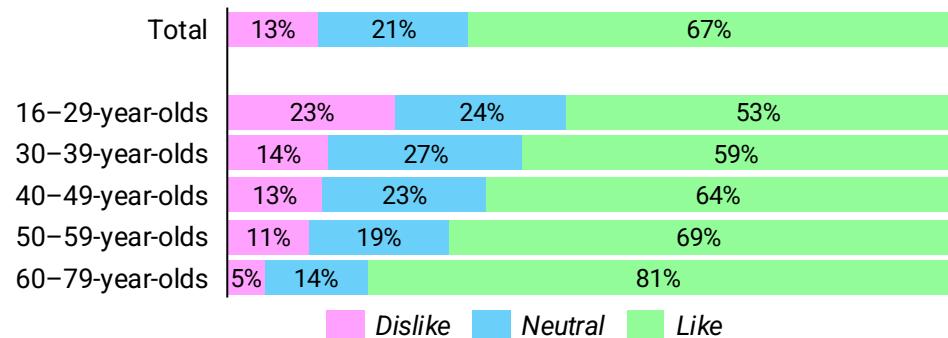
Response scale: 1 Strongly disagree; 2 Disagree; 3 Neither agree nor disagree; 4 Agree; 5 Strongly agree

Disagree = 1+2; Neutral = 3; Agree = 4+5

*All three factors – age, place of residence and citizenship – are independently related to satisfaction (in a regression model). So it's not a case of, for example, older people being happier because they tend to live in the countryside.*

# Two-thirds of the total population and even a majority of those under 30 would like to still be living where they are now in 10 years' time.

'How much would you like to still be living in these places in 10 years' time?  
'Exactly where I live now'



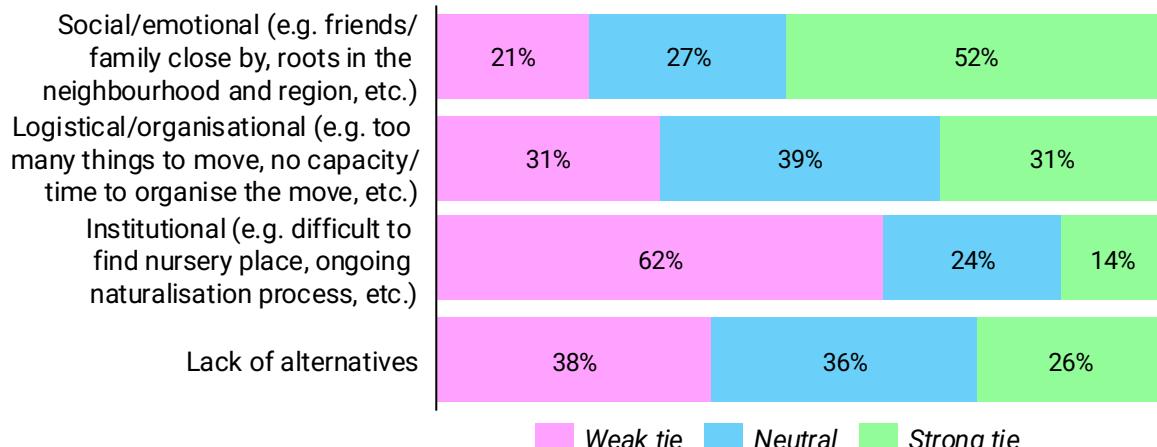
Most respondents aren't just satisfied with where they live 'for now'. Two-thirds (67%) would like to still be living where they are now in 10 years' time. Only 13% would be reluctant to do so. This long-term attachment to the place of residence increases steadily with age but is even reported by a majority (53%) of those under 30 years of age.

Question: 'How much would you like to still be living in these places in 10 years' time?' 'Exactly where I live now'

Response scale: 1 Would really not like; 2 Would not like; 3 Wouldn't like or dislike; 4 Would like; 5 Would really like

Dislike = 1+2; Neutral = 3; Like = 4+5

'How strongly are you tied to where you live?'



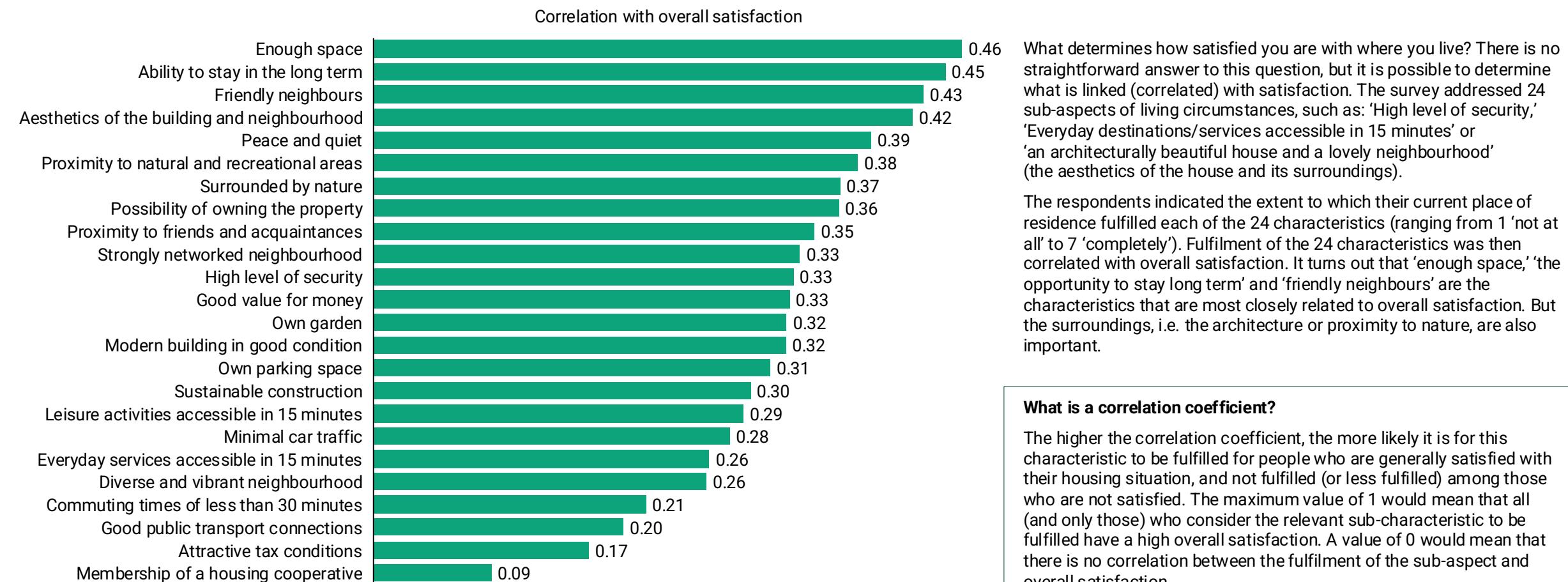
Half (52%) of respondents say they are socially and emotionally tied to where they live. A further quarter (27%) say they are partly so. The emotional tie is stronger than other forms of tie. Around one-third (31%) feel overwhelmed by the logistics and organisation involved in a move, because they are tied to their place of residence by having too much stuff, for example. Almost two in five (39%) feel overwhelmed to some extent. Two in five are wholly (14%) or partly (24%) institutionally tied to their place of residence. An example of this would be being in the middle of a process of naturalisation, which makes it impossible to move to another canton. Around one-quarter (26%) are tied to their current place of residence owing to a lack of alternatives. This is partly the case for another one-third (36%).

Question: 'How strongly are you/your household tied to where you currently live?'

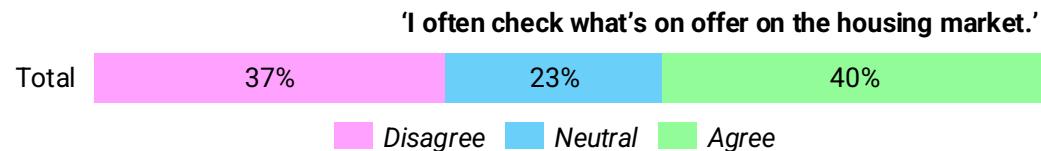
Response scale: 1 Very weak tie; 2 Weak tie; 3 Neither weak nor strong tie; 4 Strong tie; 5 Very strong tie

Weak tie = 1+2; Neutral = 3; Strong tie = 4+5

# Those who can stay long term and have space and friendly neighbours are more likely to be satisfied. But the surroundings, i.e. townscape and natural environment, are also important.



# In 10 years' time, one-third would (also) like to live somewhere different from where they do now.

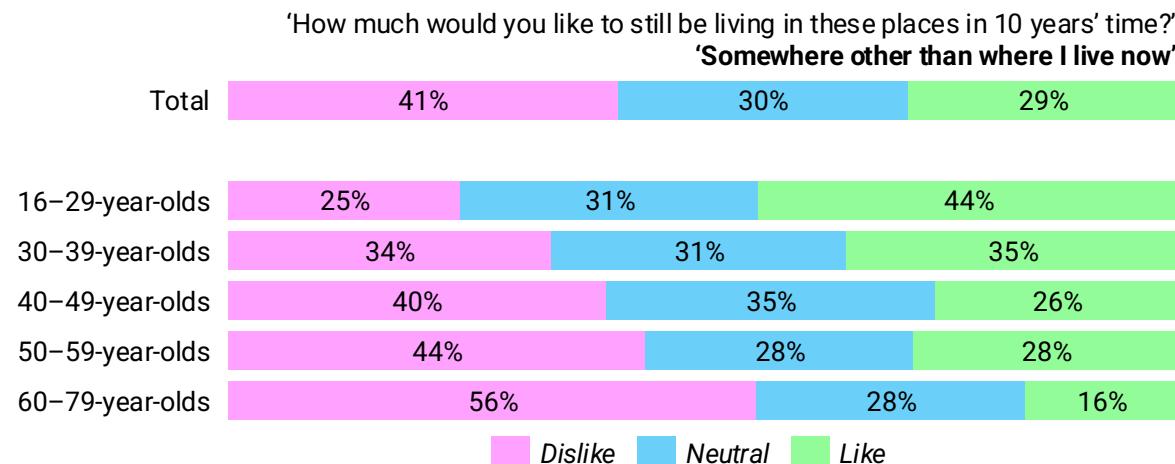


Question: 'I often check what's on offer on the housing market.'

Response scale: 1 Strongly disagree; 2 Disagree; 3 Neither agree nor disagree; 4 Agree; 5 Strongly agree

Disagree = 1+2; Neutral = 3; Agree = 4+5

Even though many people are satisfied with their living situation and can well imagine living in their current home in 10 years' time, two in five people (40%) look at listings on the housing market 'often'. A further quarter (23%) do so sometimes, which may mean, for example, that they check listings only very occasionally.



Question: 'How much would you like to still be living in these places in 10 years' time? 'Somewhere other than where I live now'

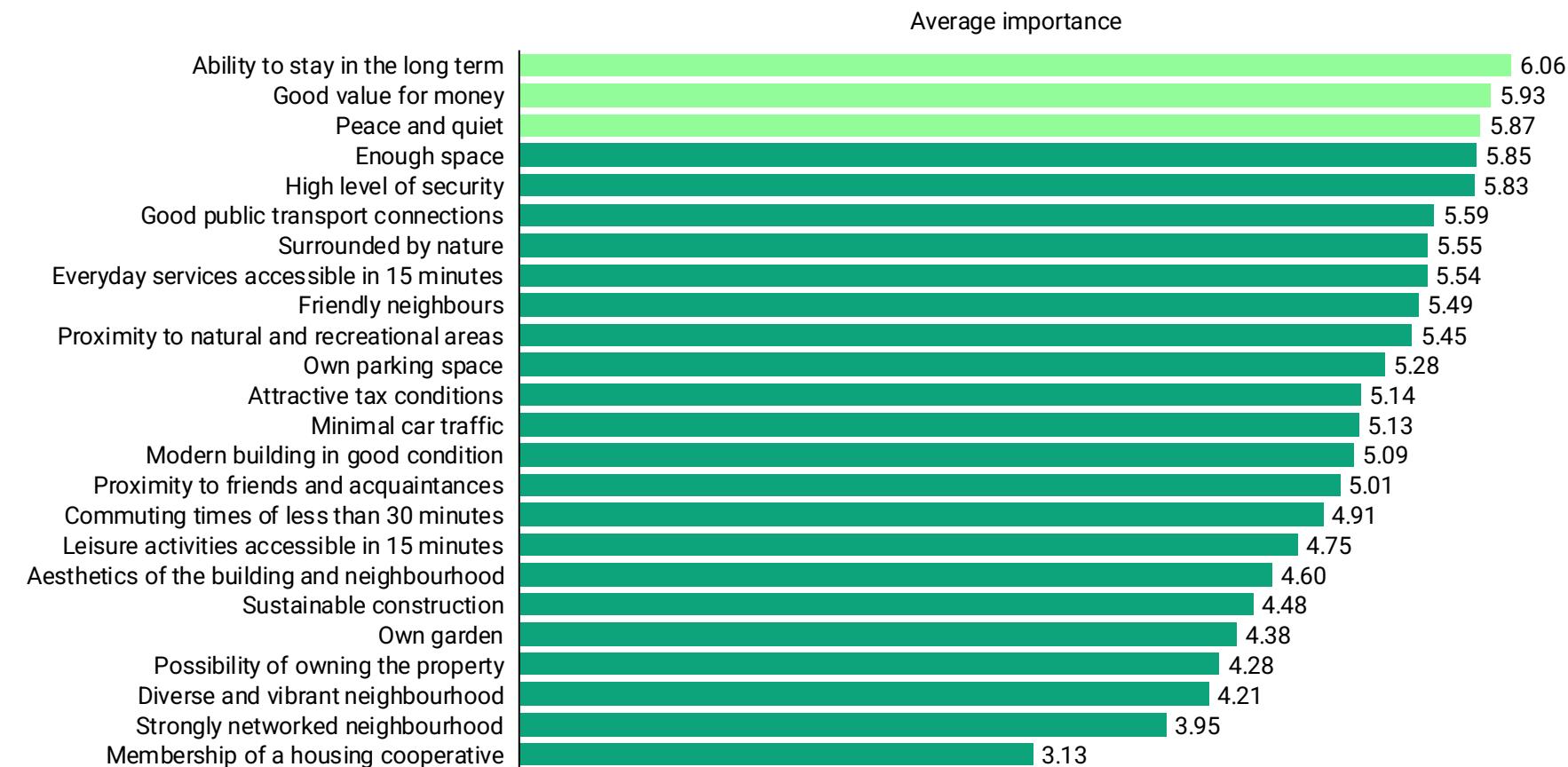
Response scale: 1 Would really not like; 2 Would not like; 3 Wouldn't like or dislike; 4 Would like; 5 Would really like

Dislike = 1+2; Neutral = 3; Like = 4+5

One-third of respondents (29%) would like to live somewhere else in 10 years' time, and a further one-third (30%) partly share this view. Here, too, there is an almost linear correlation with age. The older the age group, the lower the proportion of those who would like to live somewhere else in 10 years' time, with the majority (56%) of those over 60 being very opposed to the idea of living somewhere else.

Respondents who would like to live somewhere else in 10 years would not necessarily be reluctant to stay in their current place of residence. On the other hand, one-third (32%) of those who would like to live elsewhere (29%) also say they would like to stay in their current place of residence – in other words, they can imagine either scenario.

# Peace and quiet, good value for money and the ability to stay over the long term are the most important features of a new place of residence.



Which characteristics of a new place of residence are important, and which are insignificant? Respondents to the survey were asked about the 24 characteristics of a place of residence mentioned above and to what extent they would be important to them in a potential new place of residence.

It turns out that the most important characteristics of a potential new place of residence are peace and quiet, good value for money and the possibility of being able to stay long term. These characteristics are rated as the most important, on average.

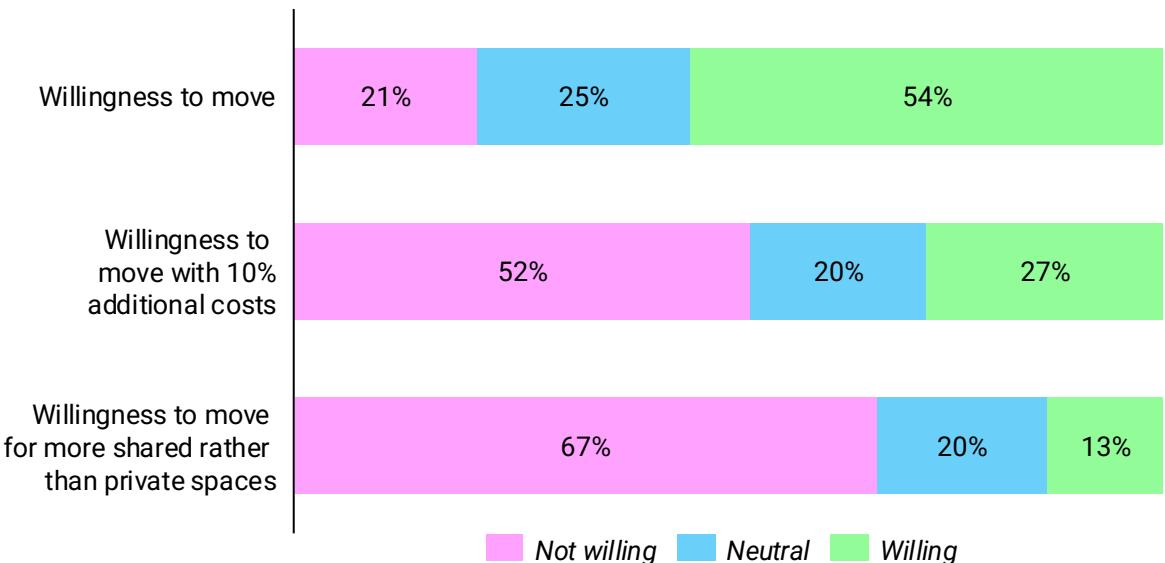
Question: 'Whether you're planning to move or not, what would be important to you in a new place of residence?'

Response scale: 1 Not at all important – 7 Very important

# If there were a place that remedied the main shortcomings of their current place of residence, more than half of respondents would move there – despite a high level of satisfaction with their current place of residence.

**'Suppose you were given the opportunity to move to a place of residence that meets the following requirements to your full satisfaction but is otherwise similar to your current place of residence. How willing would you be to move there?'**

*LIST OF THE FIVE MAIN FLAWS IN THE CURRENT PLACE OF RESIDENCE*



What if a new place of residence had the main characteristics that are not present in your current place of residence? For this purpose, participants were provided with an individual list of the five characteristics that they personally considered to be the most important but which were not present in their current place of residence. Aside from these five characteristics, this place would be similar to their current residence.

**H** If it were possible to move to this 'superior' place of residence, more than half of respondents (54%) would be prepared to move there. One-fifth (21%) would not do so, however. This value is higher than the percentage of people who say they would like to live somewhere else in 10 years' time.

**H** However, if this place of residence meant 10% higher costs, in terms of rent or purchase price, only half as many respondents – so a quarter (27%) – would be willing to move there. More than half (52%) would not be willing at all. So, there seems to be relatively little willingness to pay extra to improve the current living situation.

**H** If the new place of residence had all the important characteristics that were lacking in the current place of residence but also required sharing more rooms, such as guest rooms, workspaces or recreation rooms, with the neighbours and having less personal space, only slightly more than one in ten (13%) would want to move there, while two-thirds (67%) would not.

**Question:** 'Suppose you were given the opportunity to move to a place of residence that meets the following requirements to your full satisfaction but is otherwise similar to your current place of residence.'

*All respondents were shown the five characteristics that they personally considered to be most important and least prevalent in their place of residence.*

- How willing would you be to move there?
- How willing would you be to move there if your rent/the purchase price were 10% higher than where you currently live?
- How willing would you be to move there if you had less personal space than you do now but could use shared neighbourhood spaces, such as common rooms, workspaces or guest rooms?

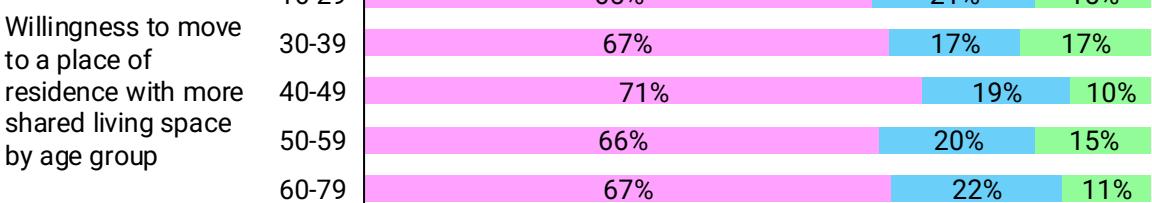
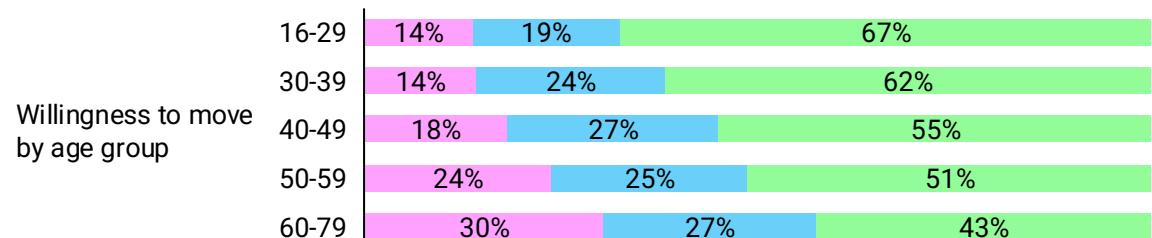
**Response scale:** 1 Not at all willing; 2 Not willing; 3 Neither willing nor unwilling; 4 Willing; 5 Very willing

**Not willing** = 1+2; **Neutral** = 3; **Willing** = 4+5

# Younger people are more willing to move than older people, but not if the move leads to having to share more living space.

'Suppose you were given the opportunity to move to a place of residence that meets the following requirements to your full satisfaction but is otherwise similar to your current place of residence. How willing would you be to move there?'

## LIST OF THE FIVE MAIN FLAWS IN THE CURRENT PLACE OF RESIDENCE



Not willing    Neutral    Willing

The willingness to move to the fictitious place of residence, which remedies the main shortcomings of the current living situation, clearly depends on age. Two-thirds of the youngest respondents would be willing to move to their essentially ideal place of residence. Among the over-60s, two in five respondents show such willingness. The same pattern emerges if moving entails additional costs of 10%, although willingness is now only about half as high in all age groups.

If the new place of residence had the main characteristics that do not feature in the current place but also meant more sharing of living space, there are no differences between the age groups. With a refusal rate of around two-thirds (65%–71%), each age group is equally reluctant to share workspaces, guest or recreation rooms with others for a better place to live that remedied the main shortcomings of the current place.

Question: 'Suppose you were given the opportunity to move to a place of residence that meets the following requirements to your full satisfaction but is otherwise similar to your current place of residence.'

All respondents were shown the five characteristics that they personally considered to be most important and least prevalent in their place of residence.

- How willing would you be to move there?
- How willing would you be to move there if you had less personal space than you do now but could use shared neighbourhood spaces, such as common rooms, workspaces or guest rooms?

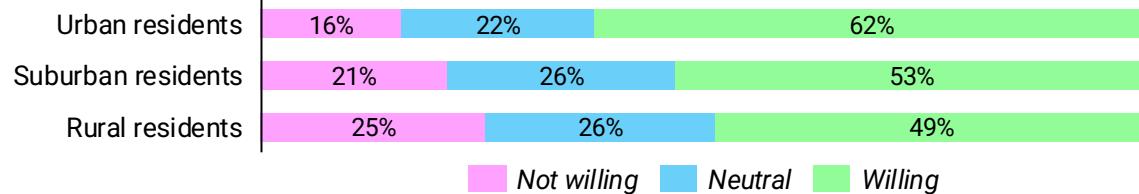
Response scale: 1 Not at all willing; 2 Not willing; 3 Neither willing nor unwilling; 4 Willing; 5 Very willing

Not willing = 1+2; Neutral = 3; Willing = 4+5

# Tendency towards the countryside: people living in urban areas are generally more willing to move and are more likely to envisage living in the countryside than rural dwellers are regarding living in the city.

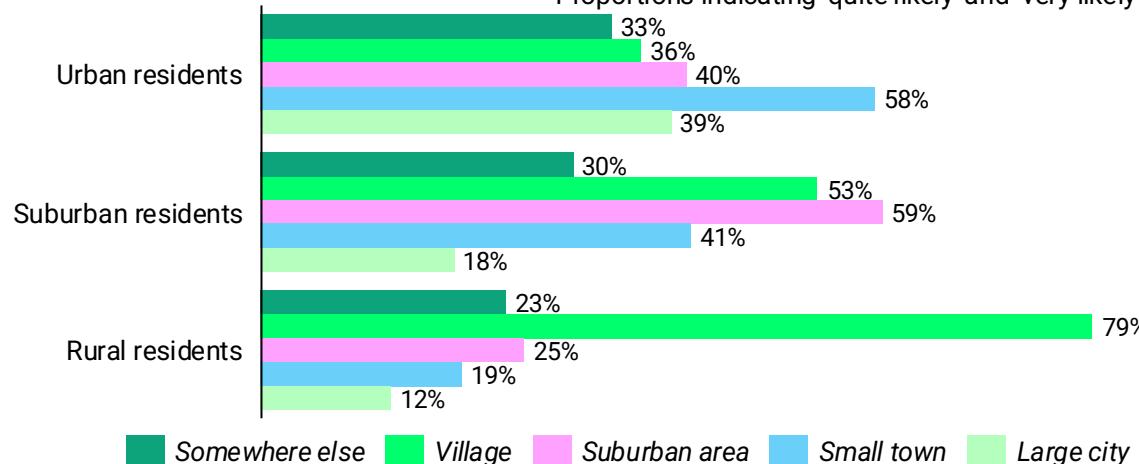
'Suppose you were given the opportunity to move to a place of residence that meets the following requirements to your full satisfaction but is otherwise similar to your current place of residence. How willing would you be to move there?'

LIST OF THE FIVE MAIN FLAWS IN THE CURRENT PLACE OF RESIDENCE



Who would move to a place of residence that does not feature the main shortcomings of their current place of residence? At almost two-thirds (62%), the willingness to move to a better place is more pronounced among people in the city than those in the countryside, where it is just under half (49%).

'How much would you like to still be living in these places in 10 years' time?'  
Proportions indicating 'quite likely' and 'very likely'



People living in cities are more likely to imagine living somewhere else in 10 years' time (33%) than people living in rural areas (23%).

Living in a small town is the most attractive option for city dwellers. 58% of them would rather or very much like to live in such a location in 10 years. The proportion of urban dwellers who would like or very much like to live in a large city, in the suburban area of a city or in a rural village is around 40% in each case.

People from rural areas find it harder to imagine living somewhere else in 10 years' time. Furthermore, a large majority would like to continue living in the countryside, while only about 20% would like to live in a small town or suburban area of a city, and only slightly more than one in ten (12%) would like to move to a large city.

While people from the city could well imagine living in the countryside, the proportion of people from the countryside who want to move to the city is much lower.

Question: 'How much would you like to still be living in these places in 10 years' time?'

- 'Somewhere else than where I live now,' 'In a rural village,' 'In the suburban area of a city,' 'In a small town,' 'In a big city'

Response scale: 1 Would really not like; 2 Would not like; 3 Wouldn't like or dislike; 4 Would like; 5 Would really like

# Essentially, people in Switzerland see a need for action to provide housing for a growing society and are open to change.



Despite little personal pressure to change, the view that we will have to change the way we live together in the future in order to provide housing for a growing society is relatively widespread. However, preference is given to measures that require little personal adjustment, such as repurposing office and industrial buildings. Traditional densification measures, such as adding storeys to buildings or constructing larger and taller apartment buildings, are also approved. Services to facilitate moves (through support and incentives), i.e. by reducing barriers to mobility, are also popular.

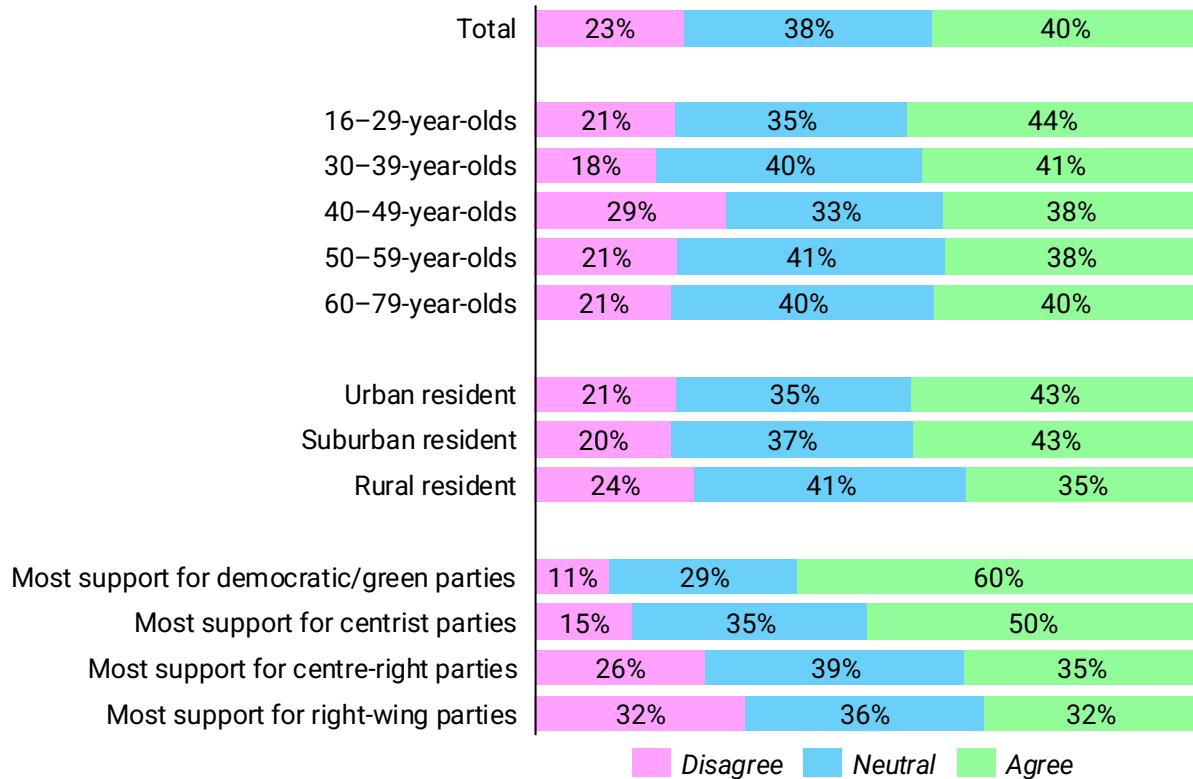
However, if personal space is compromised by smaller apartments and having to use shared spaces in the neighbourhood, such as guest rooms or workspaces, approval wanes. People would prefer building structures to be adapted than to have to adapt their own behaviour. Another unpopular option is the possible rezoning of agricultural land. Both urban and rural dwellers agree that the lion's share of densification should occur in cities.

But even the most unpopular measure, the rezoning of agricultural land, is rejected by less than half the respondents, while another third are undecided. The high proportion of undecideds can be understood as an 'it depends' scenario, i.e. that approval depends on certain conditions (for measures that increase acceptance, see slide 28).

Acceptance of a general need for change and of concrete measures is more influenced by political views than place of residence (urban/rural) or age. The more left-wing the preferred party of the respondents, the more open they are to change.

# Three-quarters believe, at least to some degree, that in the face of population growth, we will need to change the way we live together in the future.

**'In order to provide housing for a growing society, we will have to change the way we live together in the future.'**



Two in five (40%) respondents believe that we need to change how we live together in order to provide housing for a growing society. Roughly the same proportion (38%) are partly of this opinion. Less than a quarter of respondents (23%) disagree with the need for change.

The age groups differ only slightly in terms of their agreement that the way we live together must change in the future. Almost one in two of the under-30s agrees with this statement, while the figure for the other age groups is around two in five (between 38% and 41%).

The difference between urban and rural is modest. People who say they live in cities or suburban areas are more likely to agree with the statement (43%) than people who say they live in the countryside (35%).

The correlation with political views is clearer: the more conservative the parties with which the respondents sympathise most, the less the perceived need for change. People who are most likely to sympathise with the SP (social democrats) or the green parties agree almost twice as often (60%) as those who are closest to the FDP (liberals) or the SVP (right-wing).

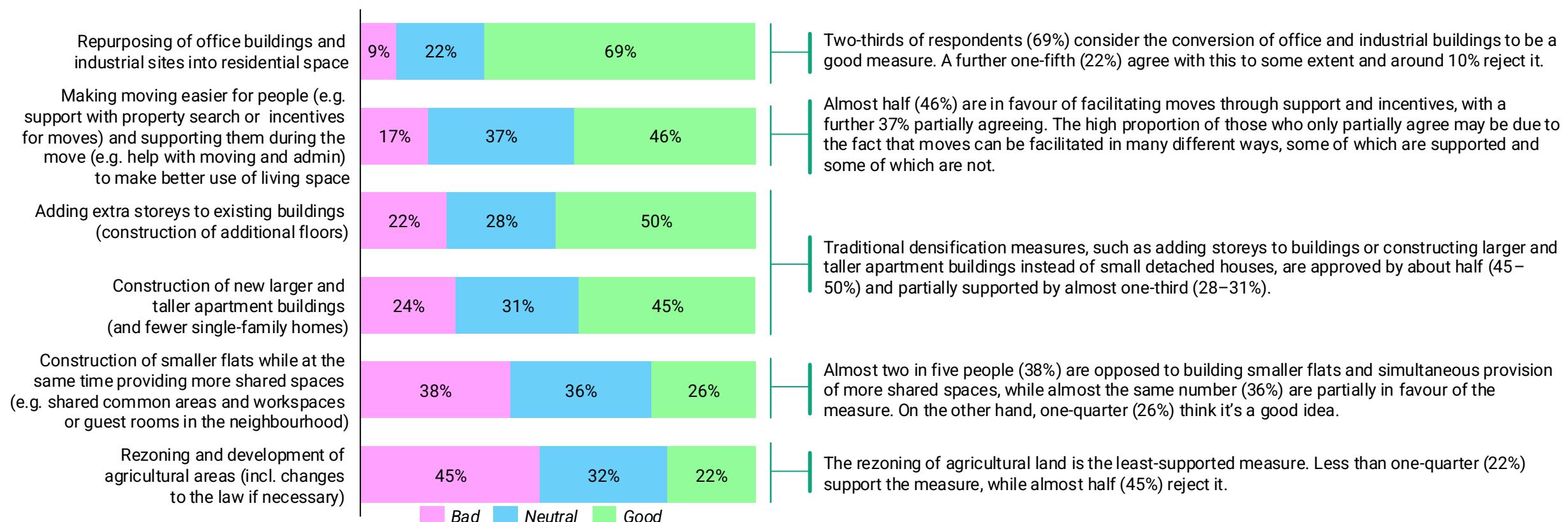
**Question:** 'In order to provide housing for a growing society, we will have to change the way we live together in the future.'

**Response scale:** 1 Strongly disagree; 2 Disagree; 3 Neither agree nor disagree; 4 Agree; 5 Strongly agree

**Disagree** = 1+2; **Neutral** = 3; **Agree** = 4+5

# Solutions meet with little resistance as long as they protect personal space and agricultural land. There seems to be a willingness to change.

'To what extent do you think the following measures are generally good solutions for providing housing for a growing population?'



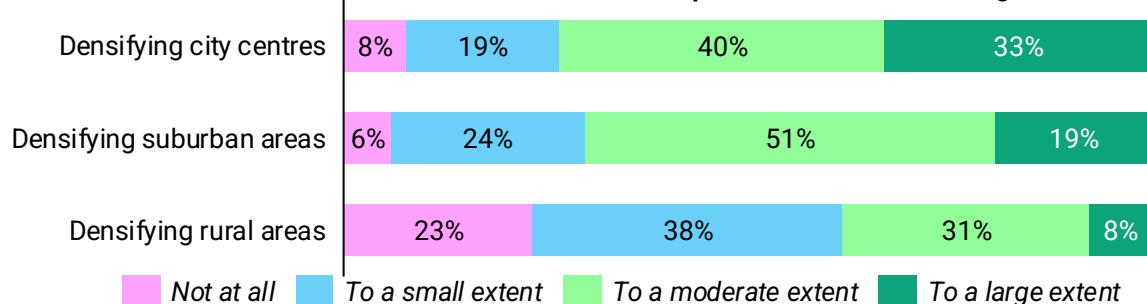
Question: 'To what extent do you think the following measures are generally good solutions for providing housing for a growing population?'

Response scale: 1 Very bad approach; 2 Bad approach; 3 Neither good nor bad; 4 Good approach; 5 Very good approach

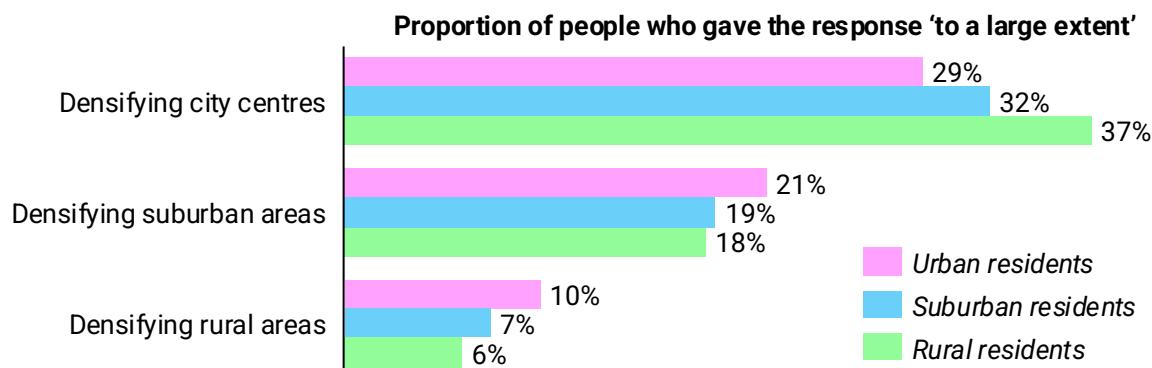
Bad = 1+2; Neutral = 3; Good = 4+5

# People from both rural and urban areas would like to see densification mainly in inner cities.

'If densification were to occur, to what extent should densification projects, such as the new construction of larger apartment buildings or the addition of storeys, be implemented in the following locations?'



Respondents feel that population growth should primarily be absorbed by cities. One-third (33%) think that inner cities should be densified the most and two in five (40%) think they should be moderately densified. The proportion of those who expect densification in suburban areas is similarly high. Compared with inner cities, however, densification is mostly expected to be 'moderate' (51%) and, less frequently, 'extensive' (19%) in suburban areas. The majority of respondents (61%) expect little or no densification in rural areas.



Although there is agreement that the lion's share of densification should occur in cities, in rural areas there is a desire to see densification occur almost exclusively in suburban areas and inner cities, while people in urban areas expect a little more balance. Nearly 40% of people in the countryside want to densify cities on a large scale, while in the city it is slightly less, at just under 30%. Conversely, 10% of city dwellers think that the countryside should be densified on a large scale, while this view is only half as common in rural areas (6%).

Question: 'If densification were to occur, to what extent should densification projects, such as the new construction of larger apartment buildings or the addition of storeys, be implemented in the following locations?'

Options: 'In the countryside', 'in suburban areas', 'in inner cities'

Response scale: 1 Not at all; 2 To a small extent; 3 To a moderate extent; 4 To a large extent

# The more conservative the person's preferred political party, the lower the level of approval for specific measures. The difference between urban and rural, on the other hand, is rather insignificant.



Question: 'To what extent do you think the following measures are generally good solutions for providing housing for a growing population?'

Response scale: 1 Very bad approach; 2 Bad approach; 3 Neither good nor bad; 4 Good approach; 5 Very good approach

Bad = 1+2; Neutral = 3; Good = 4+5

# Respondents are in favour of building densification measures in their own neighbourhood – as long as nature is protected.



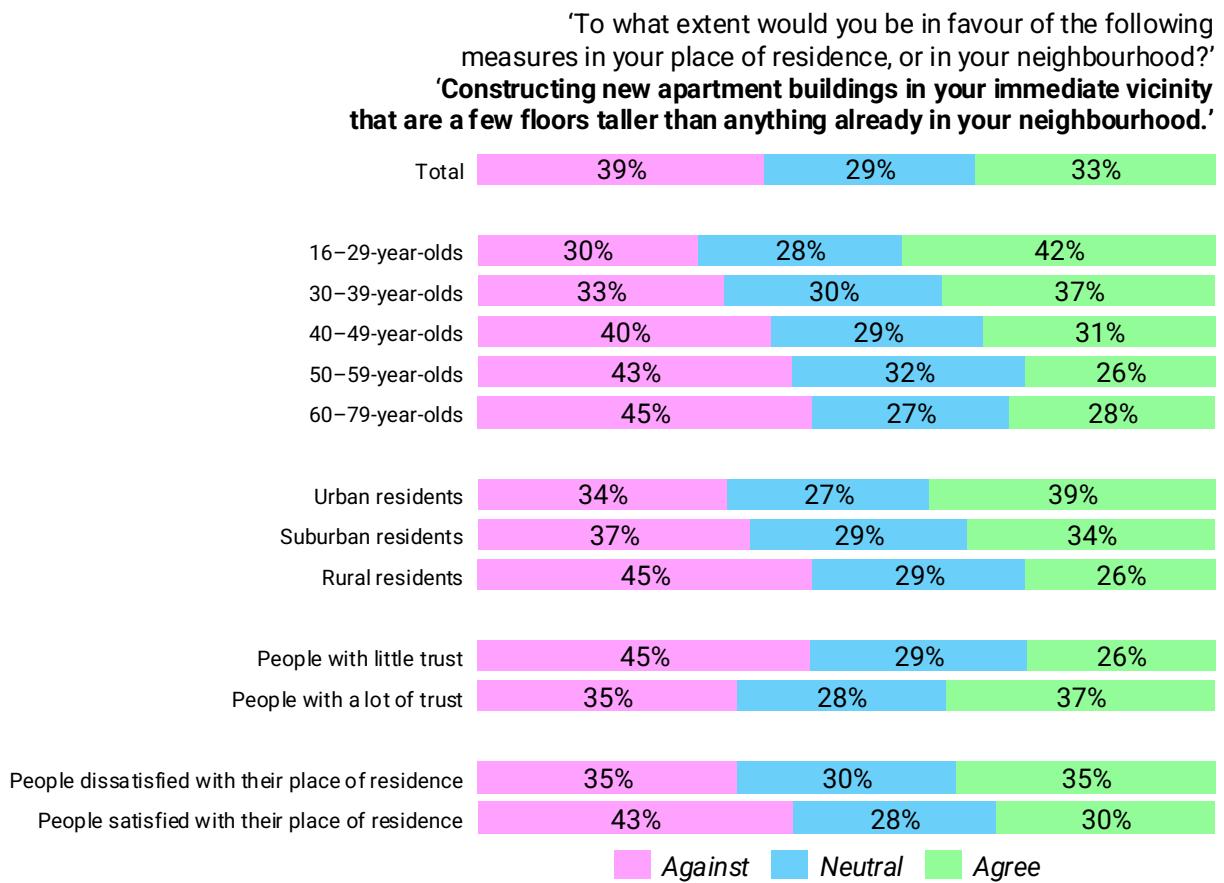
When it comes to specific densification measures in their own place of residence, people in Switzerland prefer building to sharing. Support is greatest for the construction of new apartment buildings that are taller than those already in the neighbourhood. Adding extra storeys is slightly less popular. Measures that involve sharing living space or cars are rejected by an overwhelming majority.

Whether it's to building or sharing, across all measures, younger people are more open than older people and city dwellers are more open than people in suburban areas. The latter, in turn, are more open than those from the countryside. Based on this, the NIMBY (not in my backyard) phenomenon, whereby people are generally in favour of change as long as it doesn't affect them, is less prevalent in the city.

In addition to these demographic factors, psychological factors play an important role. Those who are satisfied with their own place of residence are somewhat less willing to change it structurally or to share it with other people. Trust in densification measures correlates more strongly with openness to densification than satisfaction does. People who tend to trust strangers are more willing to share cars or living spaces and take in more strangers in their own neighbourhood.

The most frequently voiced fears about densification measures are that natural areas will disappear, there will be more exposure to noise and waste, and that rent will rise or property will lose its value. By contrast, better public transport services, enhancing the natural environment in the surrounding area and reducing dependence on fossil fuels by installing PV systems and heat pumps are actions that increase the acceptance of densification measures by the majority of respondents.

# One-third of those surveyed are in favour of building apartment buildings in their own neighbourhood that are bigger and taller than existing structures.



Constructing new apartment buildings in the neighbourhood that are larger than anything already there is the densification measure that receives the greatest support. One-third of respondents (33%) are in favour of this measure, slightly less than another third (29%) are partly in favour. Two in five respondents (39%) reject this measure.

The older the respondents, the greater the opposition to the construction of new, larger apartment buildings in the neighbourhood. This measure is rejected by 30% of the under-30s and almost half (45%) of the over-60s. Approval also falls almost linearly, ranging from almost two in five (42%) among the under-30s to one-quarter (26% and 28%) among the over-50s.

While two in five city dwellers (39%) are in favour of building larger apartment buildings in their neighbourhood, as are around one-third of suburban dwellers (34%), those living in rural areas are more critical of such construction, which is why only around one-quarter (26%) are in favour of it.

People who say they trust strangers at least partially are more likely to agree to building a new, larger apartment building (37%) than people who don't trust strangers or don't trust them at all (26%).

Among the share of respondents who are more satisfied with their living situation, 30% are slightly less likely to agree to plans to build a larger apartment building in their neighbourhood, compared with 35% among the less-satisfied share.

*All factors are loaded into the regression analysis regardless of the dependent variable.*

**Question:** 'To what extent would you be in favour of the following measures in your place of residence, or in your neighbourhood?'

- The construction of new apartment buildings in your immediate vicinity that are a few floors higher than what is already in your neighbourhood

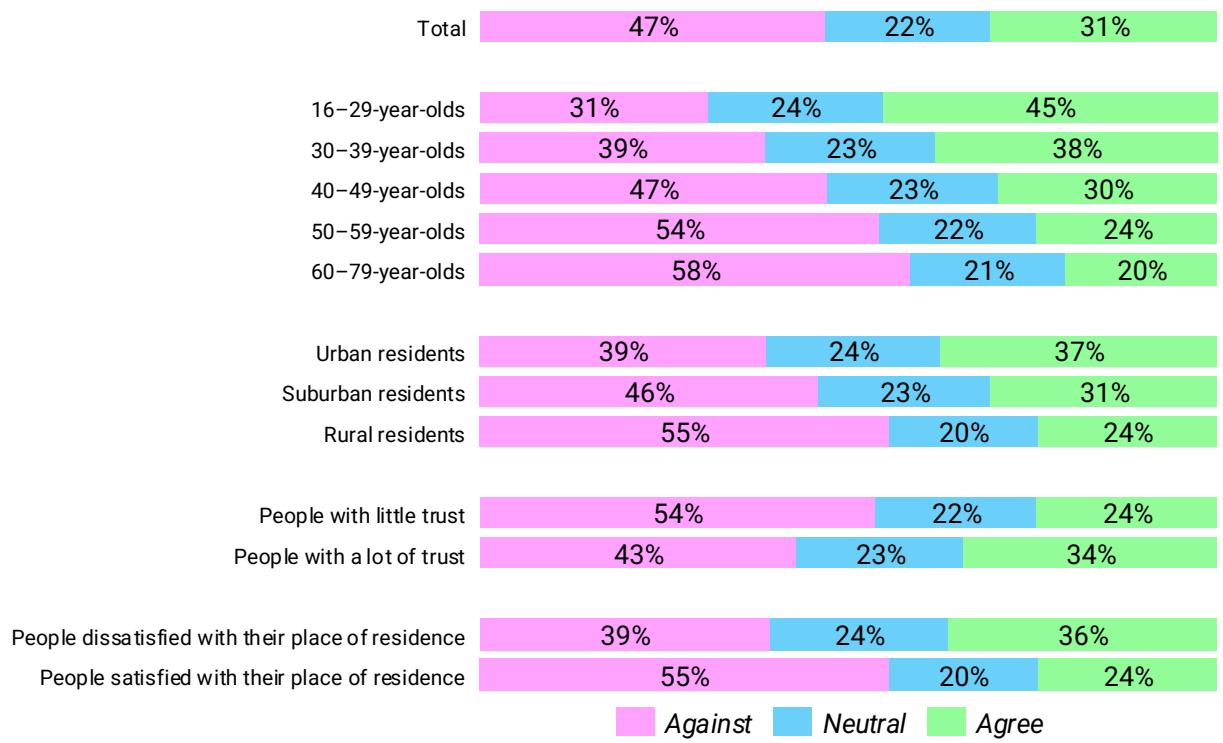
**Response scale:** 1 Not at all in favour; 2 Not in favour; 3 Not against or in favour; 4 In favour; 5 Strongly in favour;

**Against** = 1+2; **Neutral** = 3; **Agree** = 4+5

# Adding extra storeys to their own building would be approved by just under one-third of respondents.

'To what extent would you be in favour of the following measures in your place of residence, or in your neighbourhood?'

## 'Adding extra storeys to your residential building (construction of additional floors)'



Almost one-third of respondents (31%) would approve adding another storey to their own building. However, the proportion of people who reject the addition of storeys is, at almost 50%, significantly higher than that of those who are against the construction of larger apartment buildings.

The support for adding extra storeys decreases as age increases. While those under 30 have a similar opinion regarding adding extra storeys (45% in favour) and the construction of apartment buildings in the neighbourhood, opposition increases with age, in that only one in five (20%) of those over 60 would approve of adding extra storeys.

At just over one-third (37%), a greater proportion of city dwellers are in favour of extra storeys than people in suburban areas (31%) and even more so than people from the countryside, where one-quarter (24%) are in favour of extra storeys.

As with the construction of apartment buildings, people who generally trust others are more likely to be in favour of adding storeys to their own building (34%) than people who trust others less (24%).

Those who are happy with their place of residence don't want to change it. Hence, why more than one-third (36%) of those who are dissatisfied are in favour of adding extra storeys, compared with only one-quarter (24%) of those who are satisfied.

Question: 'To what extent would you be in favour of the following measures in your place of residence, or in your neighbourhood?'

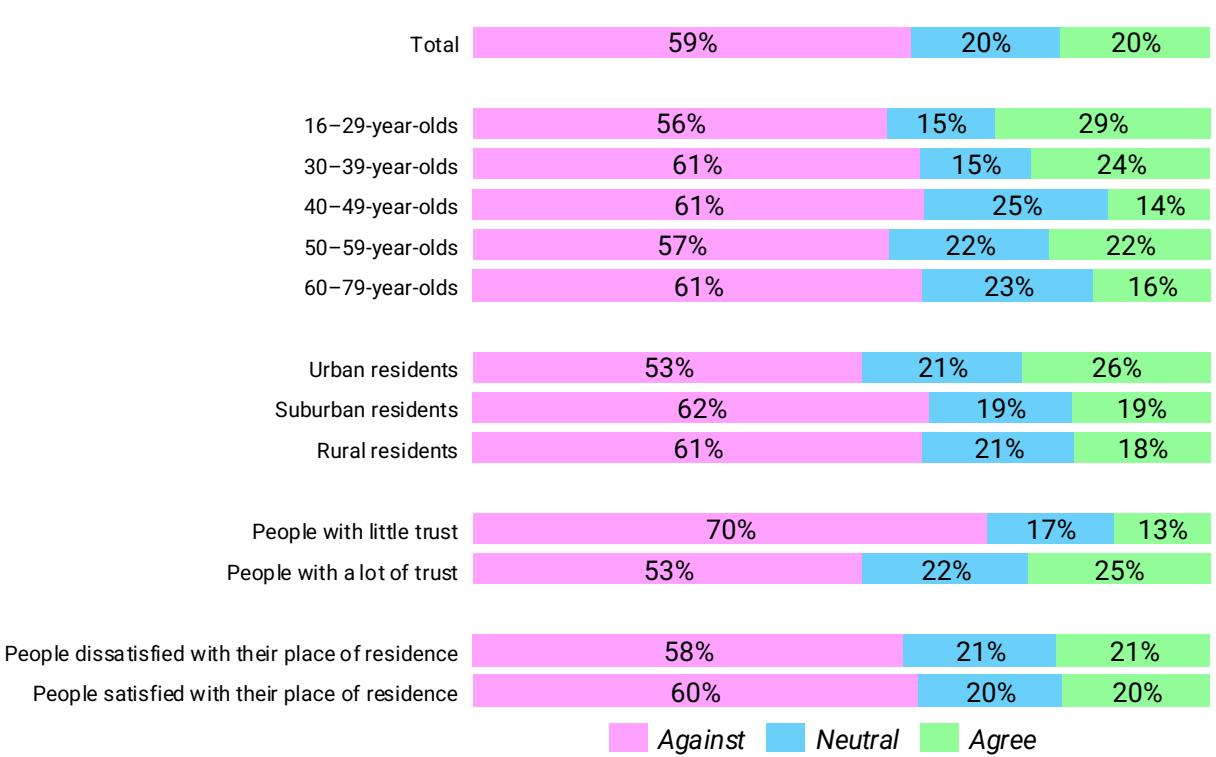
- Adding extra storeys to your residential building (construction of additional floors)

Response scale: 1 Not at all in favour; 2 Not in favour; 3 Not against or in favour; 4 In favour; 5 Strongly in favour;

Against = 1+2; Neutral = 3; Agree = 4+5

# Only one in five car owners would be willing to share their car with other people in the neighbourhood.

'To what extent would you be in favour of the following measures in your place of residence, or in your neighbourhood?'  
**'Sharing your car with people in your neighbourhood'**



One in five (20%) car owners surveyed would be willing to share their car with other people in the neighbourhood. A further one-fifth (20%) would partially consider it. Almost 60% would not want to do it.

At almost 30%, the proportion of people under 30 who would share their car with neighbours is slightly higher than that among older respondents. While the degree of opposition is similar across all age groups, partial agreement is higher among the under-40s than among older people.

With one-quarter in agreement (26%), the willingness to share cars with people in the neighbourhood is greater in cities than in suburban and rural areas, where less than one person in five (19% and 18%, respectively) would be willing to share their car.

One in four people (25%) who generally trust strangers is willing to share their car. People who generally do not trust strangers are only half as likely to do so (13%).

Satisfaction with where you live is not related to willingness to share a car.

**Question:** 'To what extent would you be in favour of the following measures in your place of residence, or in your neighbourhood?'

- Sharing your car with people in your neighbourhood

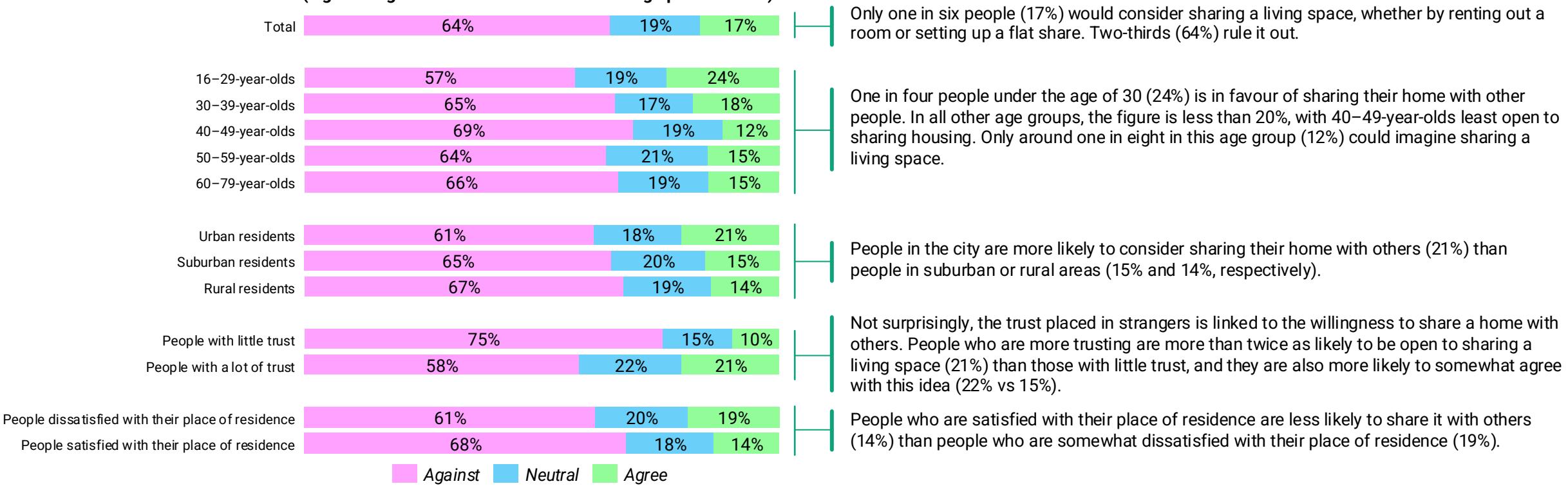
**Response scale:** 1 Not at all in favour; 2 Not in favour; 3 Not against or in favour; 4 In favour; 5 Strongly in favour;

**Against** = 1+2; **Neutral** = 3; **Agree** = 4+5

# About one in six people would share their place of residence with other/additional people, either in a flat share or by renting out a room.

'To what extent would you be in favour of the following measures in your place of residence, or in your neighbourhood?'

**'Sharing your place of residence with other/additional people (e.g. renting out a room to students or setting up a flat share)'**



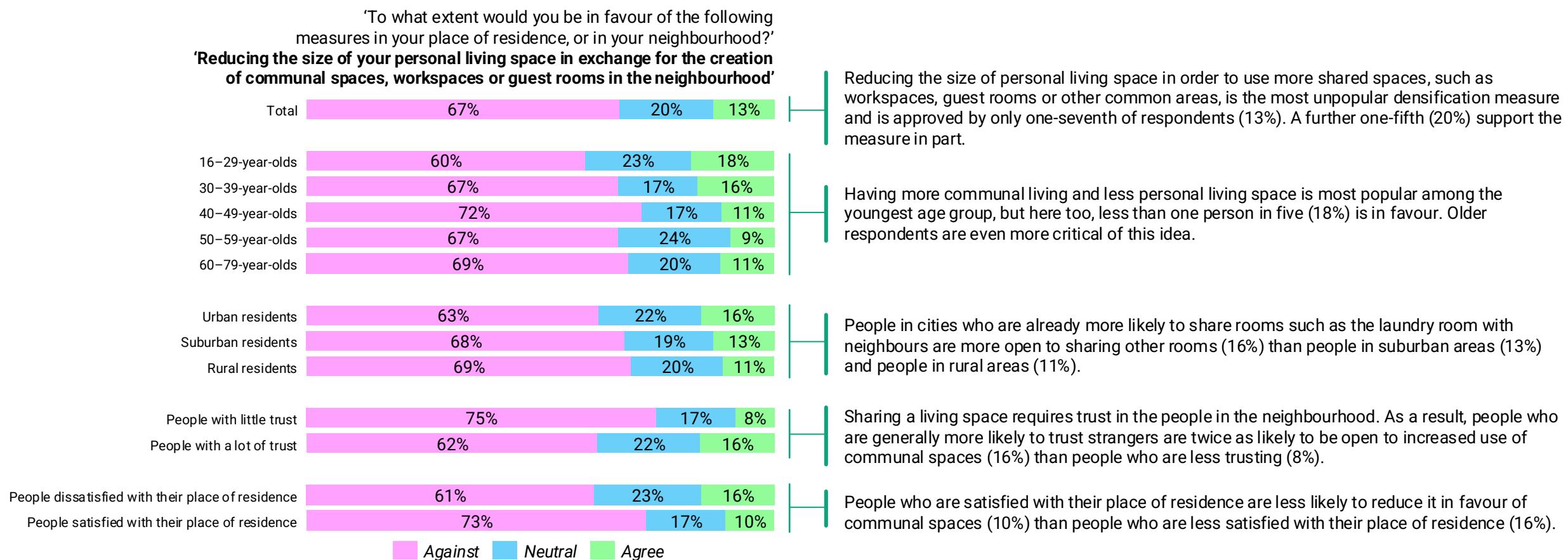
**Question:** 'To what extent would you be in favour of the following measures in your place of residence, or in your neighbourhood?'

- Sharing your place of residence with other/additional people (e.g. renting out a room to students or setting up a flat share)

**Response scale:** 1 Not at all in favour; 2 Not in favour; 3 Not against or in favour; 4 In favour; 5 Strongly in favour;

**Against** = 1+2; **Neutral** = 3; **Agree** = 4+5

# Reducing the size of your own living space in order to create more rooms (e.g. workspaces or guest rooms) in the neighbourhood is supported by only one in seven people.



**Question:** 'To what extent would you be in favour of the following measures in your place of residence, or in your neighbourhood?'

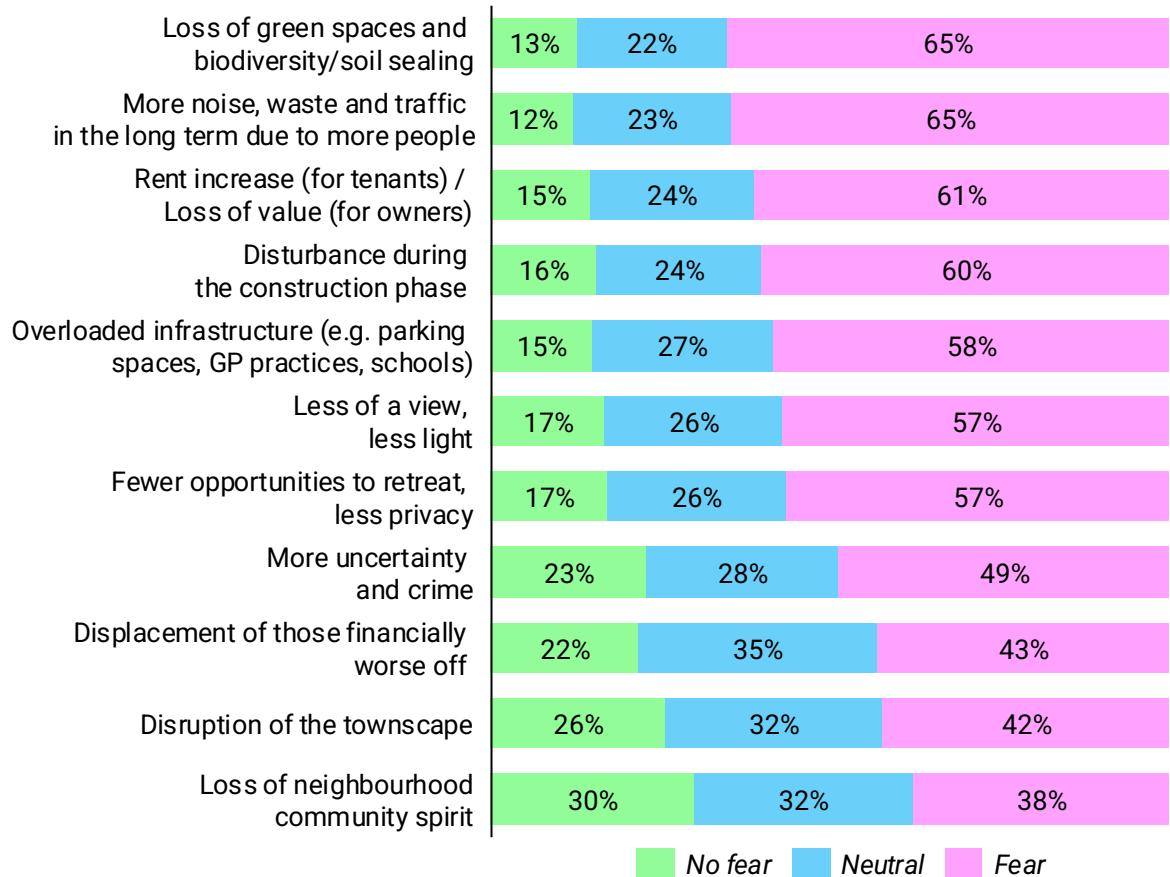
- Reducing the size of your personal living space in exchange for the creation of communal spaces, workspaces or guest rooms in the neighbourhood

**Response scale:** 1 Not at all in favour; 2 Not in favour; 3 Not against or in favour; 4 In favour; 5 Strongly in favour;

**Against** = 1+2; **Neutral** = 3; **Agree** = 4+5

# Almost two in three respondents fear that densification will lead to the loss of green spaces, more waste and noise, and rent increases or loss of value of owned real estate.

'What are your fears regarding densification measures such as additional storeys and the construction of new, taller apartment buildings in your neighbourhood?'



What fears do respondents have about densification measures?

The most common concerns in connection with densification are the loss of green spaces and the associated loss of biodiversity, as well as the long-term increase in noise and waste, both cited by two-thirds of respondents (65%).

The third most frequently cited fear is that densification will reduce the value of property or increase rents. The latter is related to the often-quoted claim that renovations or new buildings are not absolutely necessary but are carried out in order to increase profits.

Most of the fears cited were considered to be somewhat or very serious by more than half the respondents, and even the fear least frequently described as very serious, namely losing the community spirit, was considered to be somewhat or very serious by two-fifths (38%).

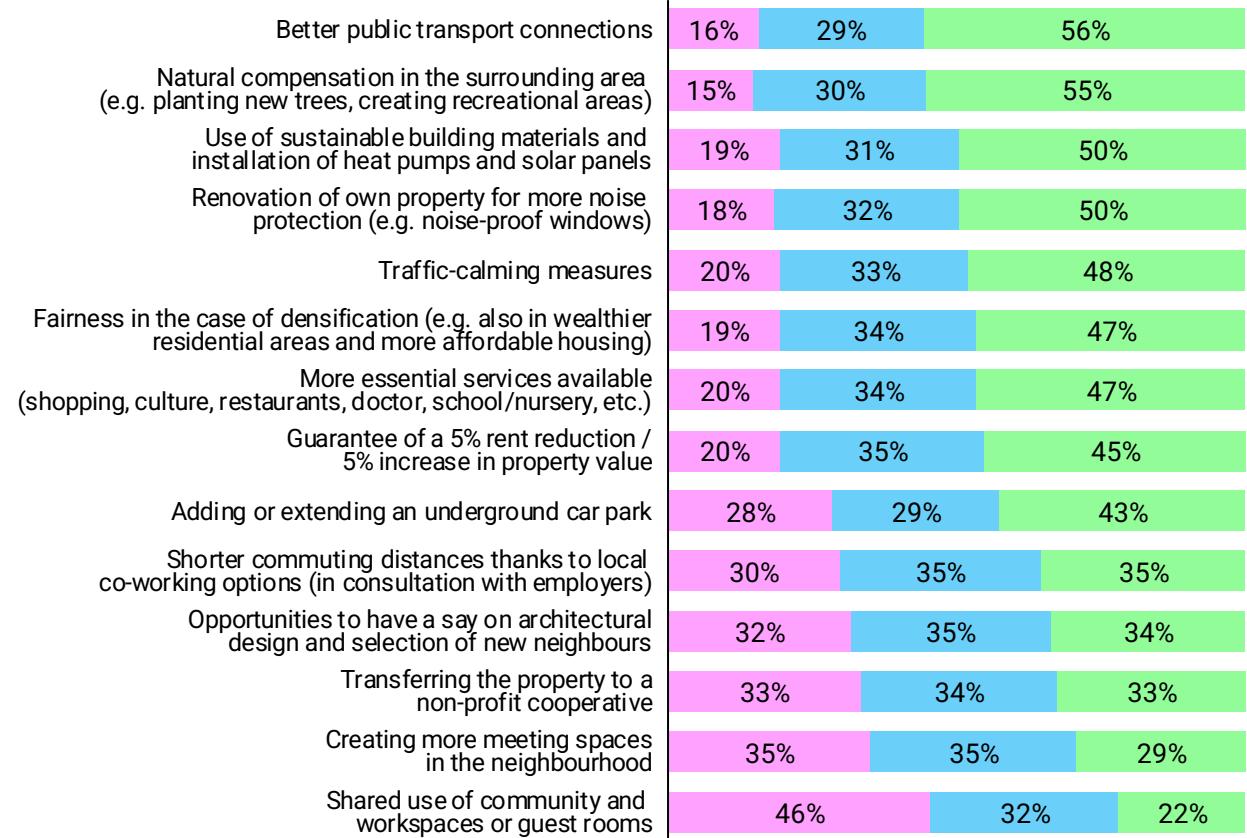
Participants were provided with a list of fears. It is therefore unclear which fears they would name if unprompted.

**Question :** 'What are your fears regarding densification measures such as additional storeys and the construction of new, taller apartment buildings in your neighbourhood?'

**Response scale:** 1 "No fear at all"; 2 "rather low fear"; 3 "Partly, partly"; 4 "rather great fear"; 5 "very great fear";  
**No fear**= 1+2; **Neutral**= 3; **Fear**= 4+5

# Better public transport, enhanced natural areas and sustainable construction methods (e.g. PV systems, heat pumps) will increase acceptance of densification measures by half the respondents.

'On the one hand, the negative consequences can be mitigated. On the other hand, densification measures also bring opportunities to improve living conditions. To what extent would the following circumstances increase your acceptance of densification measures?'



 No increase in acceptance    Neutral    Increased in acceptance

Densification measures can have negative consequences. Some of these have already been addressed in the context of people's fears about densification measures. However, negative consequences can be mitigated. In addition, changes can bring with them opportunities to improve aspects of your own living situation. Some of the 'neutral' answers are probably related to the fact that approving densification measures depends on the general conditions. So, what conditions for densification would increase acceptance?

More than half of respondents (56%) would be more likely to accept the construction of new apartment buildings in their neighbourhood or adding extra storeys to their building if the public transport infrastructure were also expanded as part of this process. Because the loss of green spaces is the greatest fear in connection with densification projects, natural compensation in the surrounding area, i.e. planting trees or unsealing soil, can increase acceptance by more than half (55%) of respondents. Exactly half (50%) would be more open to densification if their own buildings were renovated as part of it – either installing noise insulation or reducing energy consumption and dependence on fossil fuels – including in connection with the installation of PV systems and heat pumps.

Greater community spirit, whether through shared use of communal spaces, meeting areas in the neighbourhood or converting a property into a housing cooperative, are seen by only a minority (22–33%) as an incentive for densification.

**Question:** 'On the one hand, the negative consequences can be mitigated. On the other hand, densification measures also bring opportunities to improve living conditions. To what extent would the following circumstances increase your acceptance of densification measures?'

**Response scale:** 1 No increase at all; 2 Not much of an increase; 3 No increase or decrease; 4 Slight increase; 5 Strong increase;

**No increase in acceptance** = 1+2; **Neutral** = 3; **Increase in acceptance** = 4+5

# The Switzerland of the future – scenarios for dealing with growth.

How do people want to live in Switzerland in the future? With which visions of the future can the individual data points be linked? The Migros Pioneer Fund, which commissioned this survey, has already developed four scenarios of what living in Switzerland might look like in the future (see: <https://www.von0auf100.org/de/vier-szenarien>). Towards the end of the survey, the scenarios were presented to the participants in a short text. They were then asked to choose the one that appealed to them the most.

These scenarios are not to be interpreted in such a way that one will happen in its purest form and it's not possible to know which one it will be. Rather, the scenarios represent the cornerstones of a space of possibilities that, once opened up, will allow for discussion about the future is desired. The aim is to foster the capacity to act by stripping the future of its appearance of inevitability. While the scenarios must be clearly demarcated as the cornerstones of a space of possibilities, reality is usually more complex, more contradictory and does not adhere to the neat grids of models. The future is likely to involve aspects from different scenarios, perhaps depending on the region or groups of people. On the following pages, we will therefore briefly discuss which survey results speak in favour of each scenario and which response patterns suggest challenges in the implementation of the scenario.

## THE SCENARIOS:

### – Polycentric and connected – the space with short distances

- Population growth has been distributed across **small and medium-sized towns** in Switzerland. These have developed into **urban hubs** with modern infrastructure. Small-town idyll meets big-city life: thanks to new **working hubs**, there's no need to commute.

### – Super cities with green belt: cities and suburbs grow (together)

- With population growth, Switzerland's urban centres have grown into **super cities**: growth has taken place primarily on the outskirts. The city and suburbs have merged into dense, well-connected metropolitan regions. A green belt ensures ecological balance.

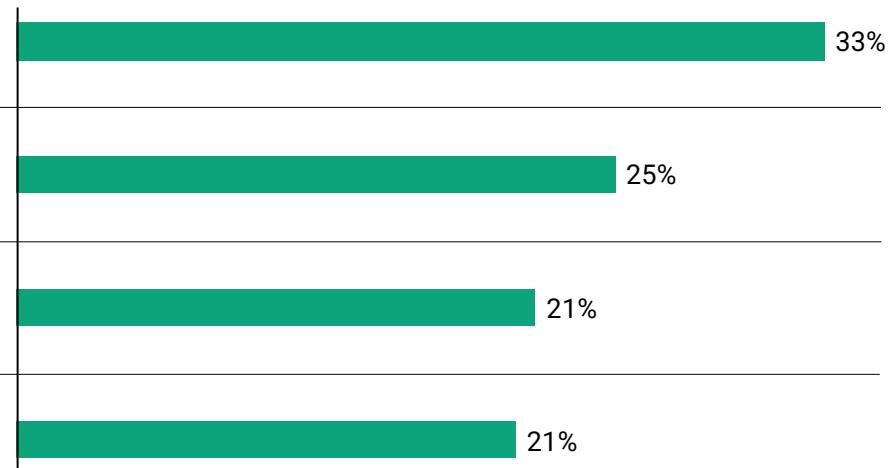
### – Compact and regenerative – the city grows inwards

- Population growth has been distributed across Switzerland's urban centres. **The cities have grown inwards**: buildings have had storeys added and been repurposed, with optimal use made of every square metre of living and green space. People have moved closer together and get by with **less space per capita**, but there are more **communal and meeting areas**.

### – Dynamic living space – Switzerland on the move

- Growth was offset not by new buildings but by **more efficient distribution across existing space**. Thanks to modular design, apartments and houses can be adapted as required or simply swapped over. Moving is no longer an obstacle, and swapping homes has become the new standard, turning the Swiss population into **modern nomads**.

## 'Which of the following scenarios appeals to you the most?'



 Proportion of respondents who found the scenario the most appealing

# Polycentric and connected – the space of short distances

*Population growth has been distributed across **small and medium-sized towns** in Switzerland. These have developed into **urban hubs** with modern infrastructure. Small-town idyll meets big-city life: thanks to new **working hubs**, there's no need to commute.*



Small and medium-sized towns (up to small cities) are not just where respondents would most like to live in the future. Many already live in such places and they want to stay. The scenario therefore corresponds to the desired living situation of the majority of respondents and so is the scenario that was most often chosen as the most appealing.

People want peace and quiet and a green environment, but also good public transport connections and services such as nearby shops and doctors' surgeries. The 'polycentric and connected' scenario offers this compromise between rural and suburban quality of life and urban infrastructure.

However, the scenario may also reveal conflicting interests among respondents. Many people want to live in small and medium-sized towns themselves but expect densification elsewhere: in inner cities. Since the densification of suburban areas is also popular, albeit not to the same extent as for inner cities, the contradiction is not fundamental. In principle, there is approval of adding extra storeys and the construction of new apartment buildings, which would be necessary in small and medium-sized locations in this scenario. However, the sharing involved in this scenario, be it in common areas or the workspaces in co-working hubs, is somewhat less popular.

One challenge will be to let small and medium-sized towns grow in a way that they do not lose the rural charm that makes these places attractive to many. The widespread resistance to the rezoning of agricultural land is both a blessing and a curse: on the one hand, it allows undeveloped landscapes to be preserved and seamlessly integrated, but on the other, it necessitates higher building density, which must be carefully planned.

# Super cities with green belts: cities and agglomerations grow (together)

*With population growth, Switzerland's urban centres have grown into **super cities**: growth has taken place primarily on the outskirts. The city and suburbs have merged into dense, well-connected metropolitan regions. A green belt ensures ecological balance.*



The second most frequently chosen scenario, super cities with green belt, corresponds to the desire of many respondents to densify mainly in inner cities and suburban areas. Also behind this are the unpopularity of rezoning agricultural land and the frequency with which the loss of green spaces was cited as a concern in the case of densification. In this scenario, densification would take place in areas that are already highly developed, while the rest would remain green. This green belt would serve as a recreational area. According to the survey, access to this kind of area is important to many participants.

In this scenario, too, the same dilemma arises as in the previous one: many people are in favour of urban densification but at the same time prefer living in the countryside. In fact, more inhabitants of the suburbs would rather live in the countryside than in a small town. In this scenario, city and suburbs merge.

However, if pocket parks, buildings with green roofs and closed water circuits are created in courtyards, as described in the detailed scenario text, it becomes a different kind of city, which in turn could be more acceptable. After all, the most frequently cited incentives for densification are nature compensation, plenty of green space and sustainable buildings. A super city would bring more public transport into what is currently the suburbs. This is not only the main incentive that people see for densification. This expansion would also increase the accessibility of the green belt, thus responding to a second key priority of respondents.

# Compact and regenerative – the city grows inwards

Population growth has been distributed across Switzerland's urban centres. **The cities have grown inwards:** buildings have had storeys added and been repurposed, with optimal use made of every square metre of living and green space. People have moved closer together and get by with less space per capita, but there are more **communal and meeting areas**.



The fact that additional storeys, as well as converting office and industrial buildings, are among the most popular densification measures speaks for a scenario in which the cities are mainly growing inwards. As does the fact that people from both the city and the countryside expect this form of densification, especially in the cities.

On the other hand, giving up personal space in favour of more communal and meeting spaces is difficult to justify. The survey respondents want their own personal space and would be reluctant to give it up for more communal spaces, whether through sharing or creating spaces for people to meet. But people in the city, at least, are the most open to such a project.

Another complicating factor is that more space and peace and quiet are among the most important characteristics that people are looking for in a place to live and that, therefore, a majority of respondents want to live in small towns, suburban areas or in the countryside for the long term. It will therefore be challenging to make less space palatable to people in city centres, where every square metre is used optimally, in favour of greater communal. However, it may be that over time people will also define the criterion of space differently and see the possibility of using the roof terrace opposite as an extension of their personal space and thus won't regard it as a restriction.

Concerns about peace and quiet and the loss of green spaces can be addressed through greening and reducing car traffic. Sustainably renovating a building, with heat pumps and PV systems, would also be seen as an opportunity.

# Housing in motion – mobile Switzerland

*Growth was offset not by new buildings but by **more efficient distribution across existing space**. Thanks to modular design, apartments and houses can be adapted as required or simply swapped over. Moving is no longer an obstacle, and swapping homes has become the new standard, turning the Swiss population into **modern nomads**.*



Facilitating moves, whether through incentives or administrative and logistical support, is one of the most popular solutions for dealing with a growing population. In addition, many respondents want to maintain green spaces in their neighbourhood and leave undeveloped land as it is. In this scenario, relatively little new construction is carried out, which takes account of these wishes.

However, a large majority of respondents want to live in their current place of residence, even in 10 years' time. The ability to stay in one place for the long term is one of the most important characteristics of a new place of residence. Sharing living space or workspaces, on the other hand, is rather unpopular. Modern nomadism is only attractive to a few people.

In addition, the strongest ties to your own place of residence are not organisational, administrative or logistical. People are emotionally tied to where they live. This tie probably also has a social value.

However, if there were a chance to move to a place of residence that is superior in many respects to the current one, about half the respondents would move. Perhaps part of the reluctance to move is due to people not expecting to find something better. The challenge is showing people the opportunities offered by more mobile living, or creating them in the first place, at least by providing incentives.

Sharing within the community is not very popular. However, it does offer the opportunity to create a sense of community across regions and overcome social divides. It is interesting in this regard that although people are not looking for a highly connected neighbourhood, this is nevertheless strongly related to living satisfaction. Approached in small steps, the value of sharing and communal living can slowly be recognised by people and allowed to develop.

CREATING

FUTURES

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