**News Release**

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"Artificial Intelligence" in Switzerland 2024: Rapid Diffusion and Increasing Digital Inequality

This report examines how the current technological developments in "Artificial Intelligence," specifically generative AI based on large language models (e.g., tools like ChatGPT), have been integrated into the daily lives of the Swiss and what they think about them.

Rapid diffusion: Within a year and a half of launch, AI tools are known across Switzerland, with half the population and nearly all of the young using them
Nearly all Swiss internet users (98%) have heard of AI tools, a figure that has increased since 2023 (79%). Half of Swiss internet users (54%) have already used AI tools. Among the youngest age group, nearly everyone (93%) has tried AI tools, with 43% using them frequently. In contrast, in the oldest age group, only 8% use them frequently, while almost three-quarters (72%) have never used them. The use of AI tools has risen by 17 percentage points since mid-2023 (2024: 54%, 2023: 37%).
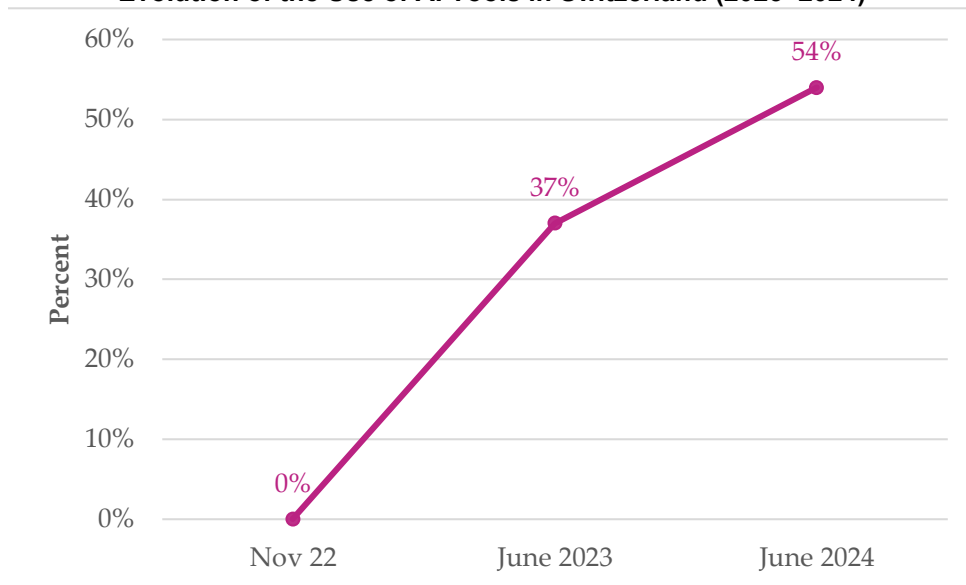
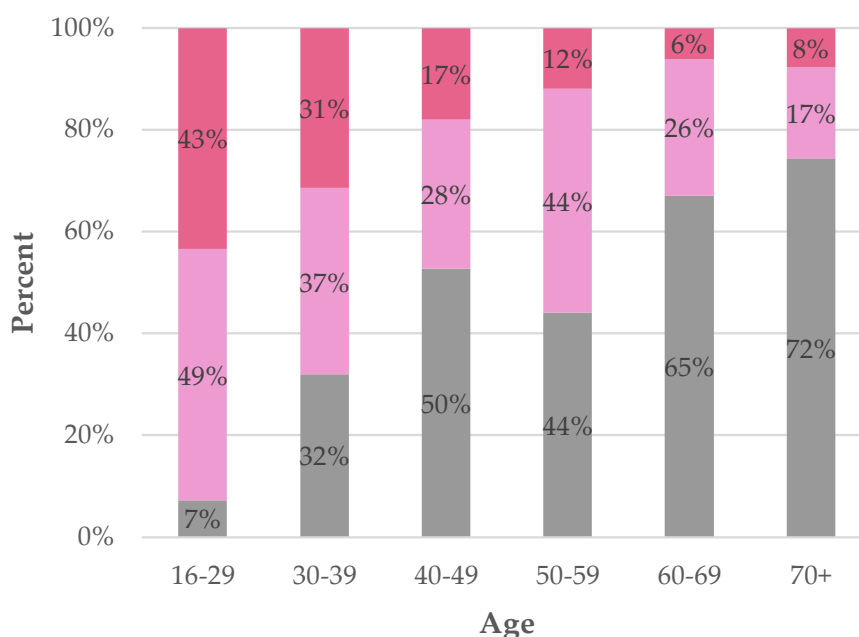Data basis: Swiss internet users 16+, $N = 1'000$.

Digital inequalities in the Swiss society by age and education are amplified by Artificial Intelligence
Knowledge of AI tools is significantly higher among younger age groups (61% among the youngest vs. 7% among the oldest). Younger individuals are also much more likely to be AI users (ages 16–29: 93%, ages 70+: 24%). Additionally, the proportion of users rises sharply with increasing levels of educational attainment (low: 37%, medium: 42%, high: 70%). Among non-users, those aged 30–39 show the highest intention to use AI tools within the next six months (mean = 2.27) compared to older

groups (mean = 1.75–1.96). Highly educated non-users (mean = 2.09) also demonstrate slightly higher usage intentions compared to those with medium (mean = 1.93) or low education levels (mean = 1.86). Given the already higher usage rates and strong usage intentions among young and highly educated non-users, existing digital inequalities in Switzerland are expected to deepen with the growing use of generative AI. Younger and more highly educated Swiss internet users also feel more comfortable using AI, perceive these tools as more useful, and have a more optimistic view of their impact on our lives.

Use of AI Tools by Age Groups in Switzerland 2024

Data basis: Swiss internet users 16+, N = 1'000. Deviations of the total sums from 100% result from rounding differences and the omission of the "don't know" category (<5%).

Use of AI tools still mostly experimental ("to see how good they are")

The most common reason given by Swiss internet users for using AI tools is curiosity: to see how good they are (54%). Another 38% reported using AI tools to process long texts, solve academic or professional problems, or learn new things. Three out of ten (30%) use them for entertainment, and two out of ten (19%) use generative AI tools to create information they should have created themselves. Swiss AI-tool users generally feel relatively comfortable using these services, even though such tools have only been available for 1.5 years and are often quite opaque to users. About one-third (32%) feel very comfortable, and 40% feel somewhat comfortable. This sentiment is consistent across all sociodemographic groups. Nearly half (48%) of users have found these services to be useful (35%) or very useful (13%) so far.

Early signs of saturation; Incorrect information from AI tools is the main reason for non-use
There appears to be a certain level of saturation in the adoption of AI tools: 77% of current non-users consider it (very) unlikely that they will use AI tools in the next six months. The most common reason for non-use is that "generative AI often produces incorrect information" (mean = 4.01). An almost equally important reason is that AI tools have little relevance to the daily lives of respondents (mean = 3.93).

Intention to Use AI Tools in the Next Six Months Among Non-Users in Switzerland 2024
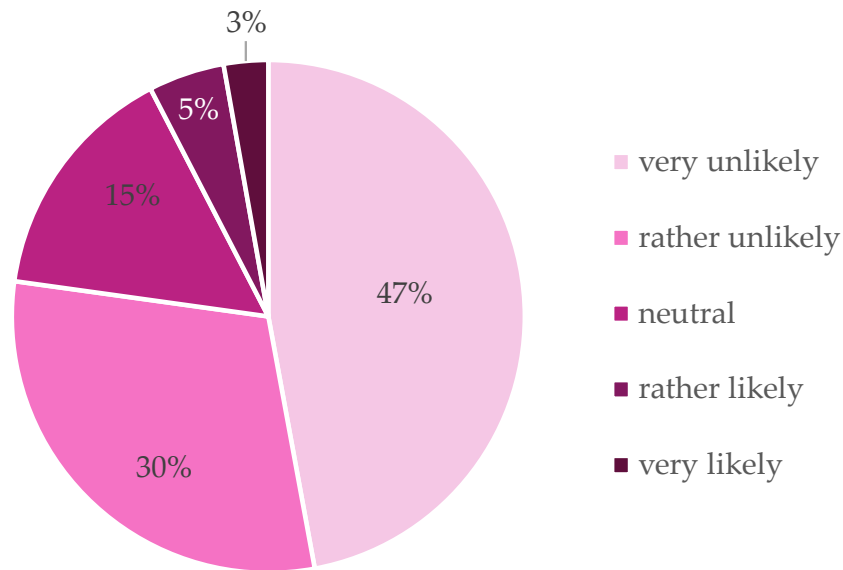
Data basis: Swiss Non-users of AI tools 16+, *N* = 464

Trade-off: High privacy concerns amid high expectations for increased efficiency through AI
Swiss internet users predominantly believe that AI can be used to monitor people's private lives (mean = 3.86). At the same time, Swiss citizens believe that AI will help us perform tasks more efficiently (mean = 3.42). Younger people and men are more optimistic about the influence of generative AI on our lives.

Half of Swiss internet users are skeptical about children using AI tools; AI users, younger people, and men view it more positively
Half (54%) of Swiss internet users aged 16 and older believe that children should not have access to AI tools. A third (33%) support access, and 13% are undecided. Younger individuals, men, and AI users are more likely to support children using AI tools. The primary reasons for opposing children's use of AI tools include concerns about its impact on their learning abilities and critical thinking. Supporters, on the other hand, believe that access to AI tools could spark greater interest in new technologies and provide children with resources.

Attitudes Towards Access to AI Tools for Children by Use of AI Tools in Switzerland 2024
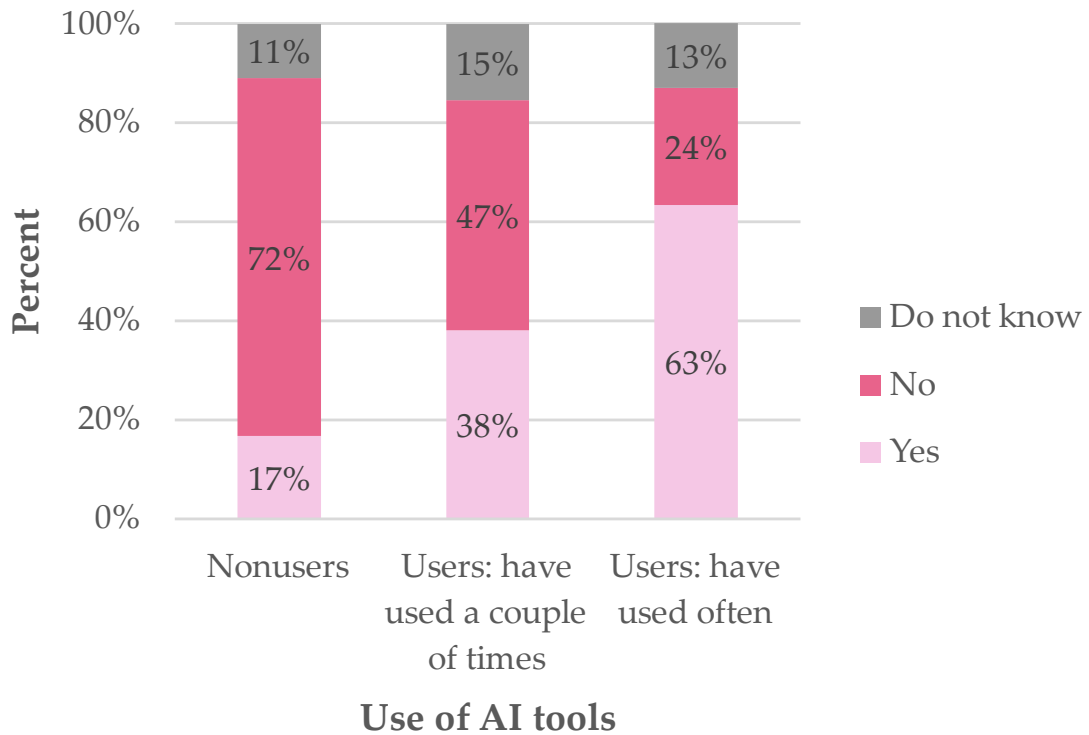
Data basis: Swiss internet users 16+, *N* = 1'000.

Divided opinions on the possibility of regulating AI tools

A third (34%) believe that it is possible to regulate AI tools, while 22% disagree with that. A quarter (24%) think it is too early to know what needs to be regulated and suggest waiting. One-fifth (19%) are uncertain or do not know. Younger individuals are generally more optimistic about the possibility of regulating AI tools.

Switzerland leads the Czech Republic and Macao in knowledge and use of AI Tools

Compared to almost all Swiss internet users (98%) who are aware of AI tools, knowledge of these technologies is lower in the Czech Republic (83%) and Macao (64%). Similarly, the proportion of AI-tool users is higher in Switzerland (54%) than in the Czech Republic (39%) and Macao (27%). Similar sociodemographic patterns regarding knowledge and use of AI tools are observed in all three countries.

"Artificial Intelligence" in Switzerland 2024:
This report addresses the following questions: How do people in Switzerland use tools with generative AI like ChatGPT or Google Gemini in their daily lives? Who uses them? For what purposes are they used, and how comfortable do users feel with them? How helpful are they? What do Swiss internet users think about these AI tools and their regulation?

The survey was conducted by the Media Change & Innovation division of the Department of Communication and Media Research (IKMZ) at the University of Zurich, led by Prof. Michael Latzer, in collaboration with the Swiss Radio and Television Corporation (SRG). The results are based on a representative online survey of 1,000 internet users aged 16 and older, carried out by gfs.bern in May/June 2024. Noemi Festic was part of the project team.

You can download the report in German at https://media-change.ch/research/artificial-intelligence-applications/. The report in English will be available soon.

Universität Zürich

IKMZ – Institut für Kommunikationswissenschaft und Medienforschung
Forschungsbericht – Abteilung Medienwandel & Innovation

«Künstliche Intelligenz» in der Schweiz 2024: Kenntnisse, Nutzung und Einstellungen zur generativen KI

Michael Latzer (Projektleitung)
Noemi Festic

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