



Media release

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The majority of the Swiss population is satisfied with healthcare

The majority of people aged 18 and over in Switzerland are satisfied with the quality of healthcare. This is the finding of this year's survey 2023 conducted in ten countries under the aegis of the Commonwealth Fund. The survey also shows that the great majority of people rate their own health as good. At the same time, almost half (48 per cent) of those polled suffer from at least one chronic condition. Sixty per cent of those surveyed find it difficult to get medical treatment in the evening or at the weekend. Every fourth person has visited an emergency unit in the last two years.

Every three years the Commonwealth Fund surveys the resident population in several countries, including Switzerland, about their experiences with the healthcare system. Of the 2,292 people over the age of 18 surveyed in Switzerland, almost two-thirds (63 per cent) described the quality of medical care in this country as "excellent" or "very good". That is a slightly lower figure than in the last two surveys conducted in 2020 (74 per cent) and 2016 (66 per cent). Healthcare is rated more highly in German-speaking (64 per cent) and French-speaking Switzerland (61 per cent) than in the Italian-speaking part of the country (52 per cent).

Primary care physician (GP) the first point of contact

When they have a medical problem, nine out of ten people in Switzerland go to a GP (general practitioner/family doctor) or a medical centre. Of those surveyed, 89 per cent rate the medical treatment provided by their regular doctor's practice as "excellent" or "very good".

However, the responses in relation to various concrete points are more critical than in previous surveys. Various criteria are rated lower: whether the GP knows important information about the patient's medical history (2023: 71 per cent; 2020: 82 per cent and 2010: 89 per cent); whether he or she spends enough time with the patient (2023: 76 per cent, 2020: 86 per cent, 2010: 90 per cent); whether he or she involves the patient as much as they want in decisions about their care and treatment (2023: 73 per cent, 2020: 83 per cent, 2010: 85 per cent); whether he or she explains things in a way that is easy to understand (2023: 83 per cent, 2020: 92 per cent, 2010: 94 per cent).

Differences in visits to emergency departments depending on language region

Since the last survey in 2020, it has become more difficult for people to get medical treatment outside normal opening hours.

Sixty per cent of respondents state that it is “very difficult” or “somewhat difficult” to get medical care in the evenings, on weekends or public holidays without visiting an emergency (A and E) department or emergency unit (2020: 49 per cent).

Of those surveyed, 25 per cent have visited a hospital emergency department in the last two years (2020: 29 per cent, 2016: 31 per cent, 2010: 22 per cent). This is the third-lowest figure of any of the countries in the comparison. Over a third of those who had visited an emergency department say that their complaints could also have been treated by their family doctor if he or she had been available. Use of emergency departments varies according to language region: it is more frequent in French-speaking (31 per cent) than in German-speaking Switzerland (23 per cent).

Majority describe their own health as good

The vast majority of the Swiss population (85 per cent) rate their own health as “good”, “very good” or even “excellent”. This figure is lower than in previous years (2020: 91 per cent, 2016: 89 per cent, 2010: 90 per cent). This means that Switzerland is no longer in first place in an international comparison of self-perceived health, but in second place behind New Zealand (87 per cent) and ahead of the US (85 per cent).

Chronic diseases widespread

Just under half of the population in Switzerland (48 per cent) suffers from at least one chronic illness, with the proportion of over-65s (73 per cent) significantly higher. High blood pressure, mental illnesses such as depression or anxiety and asthma, and chronic lung diseases are the three most common chronic conditions. In an international comparison, Switzerland has the second-lowest percentage (just under 48 per cent) after France (48 per cent) and ahead of the Netherlands (49 per cent). In the US, almost two-thirds (66 per cent) and in Australia even more than two-thirds (69 per cent) have at least one chronic illness. This figure has increased in Switzerland since 2010 (2020: 47 per cent, 2016: 40 per cent, 2010: 41 per cent) – a trend that can also be observed in Australia, the US, Canada, the UK and Germany.

The survey also shows that in 2023, one in ten people in Switzerland was receiving treatment for a mental health problem (12 per cent). The proportion is higher in French-speaking (17 per cent) than in German-speaking Switzerland (10 per cent).

Family caregivers

A fifth of the population provides help for relatives in everyday life or with care (21 per cent). More than half of them do this at least once a week. The figure is slightly higher in German-speaking (22 per cent) and French-speaking Switzerland (19 per cent) than in the Italian-speaking part of the country (13 per cent). The 50 to 64 age group provides the most support to relatives (28 per cent).

More than a third of respondents describe the help they give as a burden. Only around five per cent of respondents receive financial support as family caregivers.

Foregoing medical services

Almost a quarter of the population state that they have foregone a medical service – most frequently a visit to the doctor, but also a test recommended by a doctor, a follow-up or a medicine in the last year – owing to the costs. At 24 per cent, the overall proportion is roughly the same as in the last survey in 2020 (23 per cent).

Younger people and people with lower incomes are more likely to forego treatment than older people and people with higher incomes. However, the survey does not allow any clear conclusions to be drawn as to whether the decision to forego medical services is voluntary, based on an assessment of the costs and benefits or because of financial problems.

Switzerland has been taking part in the Commonwealth Fund's international survey on healthcare since 2010. The Commonwealth Fund is a private, non-profit American foundation that aims to promote well-functioning and efficient healthcare systems with better access to health insurance and to improve the quality of services.

As in 2010, 2013, 2016 and 2020, the 2023 survey focuses on the resident population aged 18 and over and their experiences with the healthcare system. Switzerland took part in the 2023 International Health Policy Survey conducted by the Commonwealth Fund, New York, alongside Australia, Canada, France, Germany, the UK, New Zealand, the Netherlands, Sweden and the US. On behalf of the Federal Office of Public Health FOPH, 2,292 people over the age of 18 in the three language regions of Switzerland were surveyed. The generally positive self-assessment of people's own health coincides with the findings of the Swiss Health Survey 2022 conducted by the Federal Statistical Office.

Further information:

Federal Office of Public Health:

[IHP Surveys: Residential population aged over 18 \(admin.ch\)](#)

Swiss Health Observatory

[Obsan report 10/2023](#)

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