

Press release – 1 June 2022

## **Exclusive study: Pandemic affected eating habits of one in five people**

**Martigny, 1 June 2022. A new representative survey by Groupe Mutuel shows whether and how the diet of Switzerland's population changed during and after the pandemic. There is evidence of great discipline: two-thirds of those polled cooked for themselves and a majority did not consume more alcohol or sweet foods.**

Sweet things? Cooking? Alcohol consumption? These and other aspects of nutrition and health were investigated in a study by Groupe Mutuel. A representative study (1226 participants aged 15 to 79) conducted at the end of April 2022 by market research institute LINK on behalf of Groupe Mutuel reveals the Swiss population's perception of their diet during the pandemic.

### **Change in eating behaviour without resorting to alcohol or sweets**

Approximately one in five people changed their diet during the pandemic, in particular because they had more time to cook or had the opportunity to do so at home. More people under the age of 30 changed their diet compared to other age groups. Most of those polled did not drink more alcohol during the pandemic. The pattern is more pronounced among women. This finding is also supported by research by [Sucht Schweiz](#).

More than two-thirds of respondents reported no or only a minimal increase in how much confectionery and sugar they consumed; this was especially true of those aged 45 to 79. Nevertheless, one in five people felt the urge to adopt a healthier diet after the pandemic.

### **Moderate fluctuations in weight**

One-third of those polled said the pandemic had affected their weight. While some lost weight during the pandemic, others put it on: people in the 30 to 44 age bracket were more likely to gain weight than the other age groups.

The biggest difference between women and men is in meat consumption and maintaining a balanced diet. Most respondents eat red meat once or twice a week. The survey highlights that men eat more meat. 13 percent of men declare themselves to be vegetarians. This compares with 21 percent of women. A majority of those polled, especially people in French-speaking Switzerland and women, said they more or less heeded the recommendations of dieticians. Just under one-quarter ignores them.

### **Eating behaviour harmed mental health specifically among young people**

Very few respondents said their eating behaviour had harmed their physical or mental health during the pandemic. But it caused mental health problems for more people in the 15 to 29 age bracket than in other age groups. In Italian-speaking Switzerland, five percent of all age groups polled experienced mental health problems triggered by a change in eating behaviour.

Nutrition has a big effect on our health. That is because there is a strong link between many illnesses – particularly cardiovascular diseases – and what is served up on our plates. Such diseases then impact the cost of healthcare. Groupe Mutuel therefore strongly advocates preventive healthcare, which includes a healthy and balanced diet.



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**About Groupe Mutuel**

With over 2,800 employees throughout Switzerland, Groupe Mutuel is at the service of 1.3 million private customers and 27,000 companies.

As the only comprehensive insurer in Switzerland, Groupe Mutuel is the reference partner in the field of health and retirement benefits for private and corporate customers. Its turnover exceeds CHF 5.3 billion. Thanks to tailored solutions, whether in basic insurance (LAMa/KVG) or supplemental insurance (LCA/VVG), it is the third largest health insurer in Switzerland. Groupe Mutuel also offers an extensive range of products in individual retirement benefits and patrimony insurance. Based in Martigny, the insurer provides companies of all sizes solutions with loss of earnings in the event of illness, accident insurance (LAA/UVG) and occupational pension plans (LPP/BVG). In the field of health insurance for companies, Groupe Mutuel is ranked fifth nationwide.