

Results from the

UmU 
Barometer

Autumn 2020

Thank you for participating!

In this report, we present results from the first wave of the UmU-Barometer. In addition to what we present here, these data will provide the basis for additional reports and scientific publications that in different ways shed light on the experiences and attitudes of university students.

The UmU-Barometer was first launched in Autumn 2020 and is administered by researchers at the Department of Sociology at Umeå University.

The purpose of the barometer is to increase knowledge about what students at Umeå University think about important issues during their time here. The survey focuses on attitudes about society, but it also contains questions about politics, the environment, the university as well as student experiences.

The UmU-Barometer is planned as a four-year project, which provides important opportunities to examine students' attitudes throughout their time as university students. Surveying the same individuals over time enables the analysis of attitudes at different stages of higher education, but also allows for the examination of reactions to societal-level events, such as a pandemic or political election.

The first wave of the UmU-Barometer was conducted in October 2020. When the survey closed in early November, a total of 3277 participants had participated.

In the pages that follow, we present some summary statistics from this first wave. Initially, we provide an overview of the demographic makeup of the sample by focusing on gender, age and previous experience in higher education. We then present a number of figures illustrating your answers to key survey questions. Some of the figures also include answers from a random sample of the Swedish population, which enables comparisons between attitudes of UmU-students and the Swedish population in general. These data come from the European Social Survey (ESS) and the Swedish Covid-19 panel study (SCOV19).

The next wave of the UmU-Barometer will be launched in spring 2021.

The team behind the UmU-Barometer

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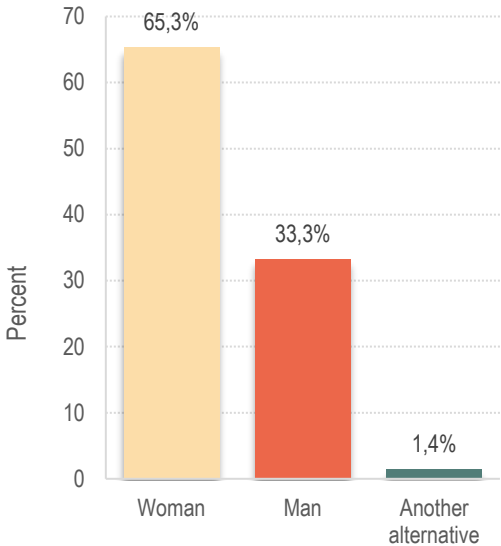
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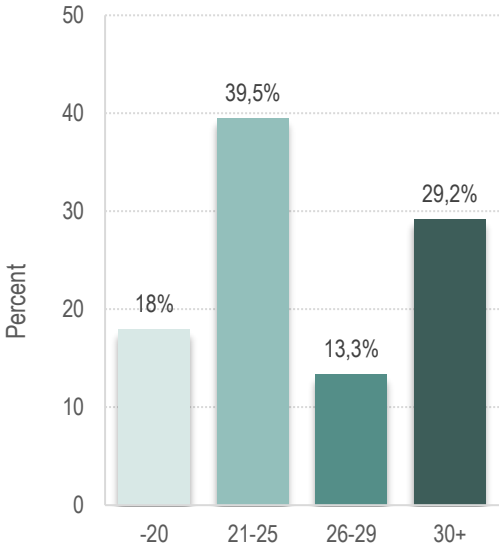
UmU-Barometer demographics, autumn 2020

Gender and Age

- ✓ A majority of the participants identify as women (65,3%).
- ✓ The largest share (39,5%) is between 21 and 25 years old.



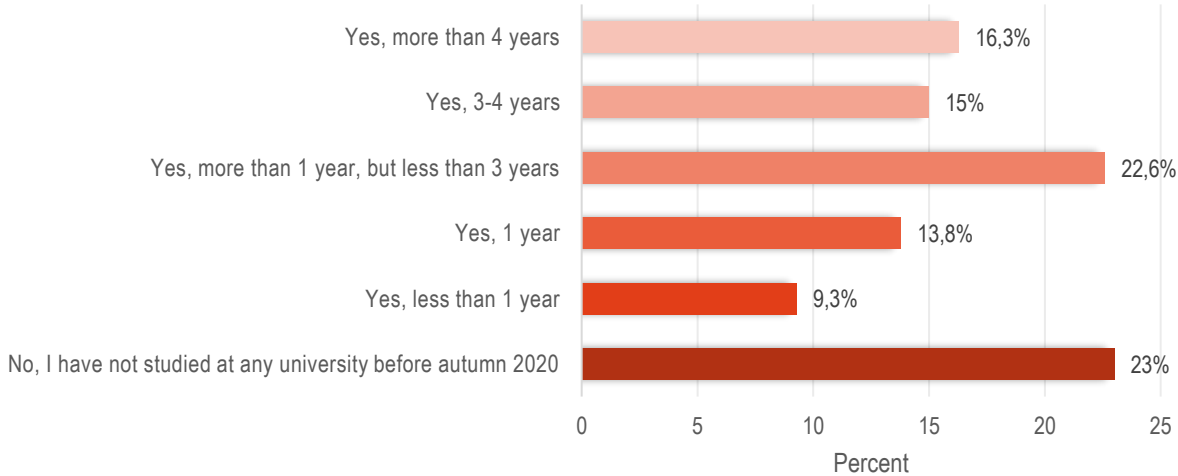
Survey question: How do you identify?



Survey question: What year were you born?

Education

- ✓ 23% of the participants started higher education autumn 2020.

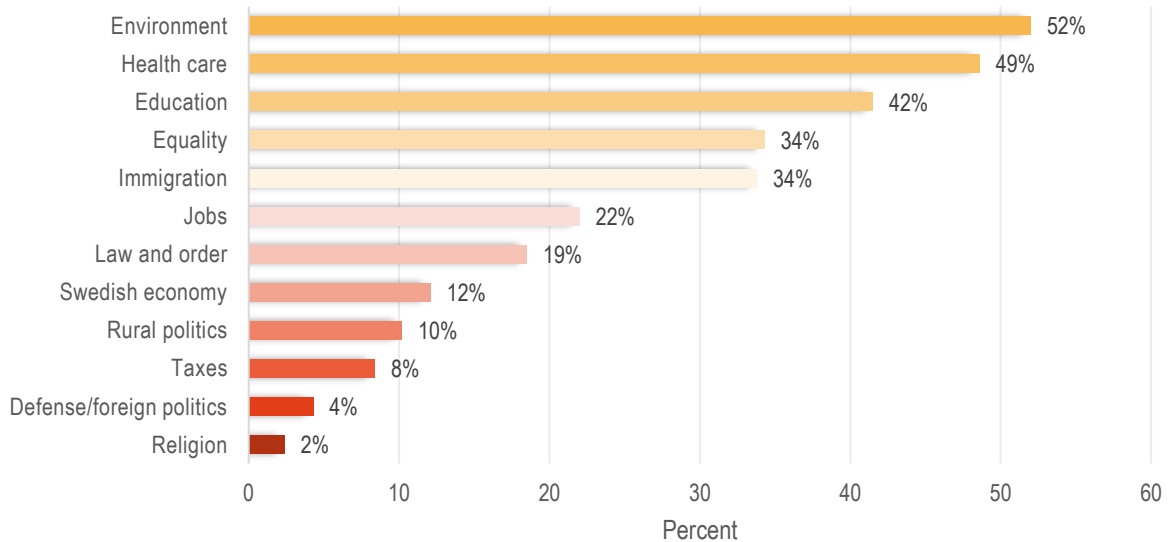


Survey question: Have you studied at any college/university before the current semester (Autumn 2020)?

Results from the UmU-Barometer

Important issues

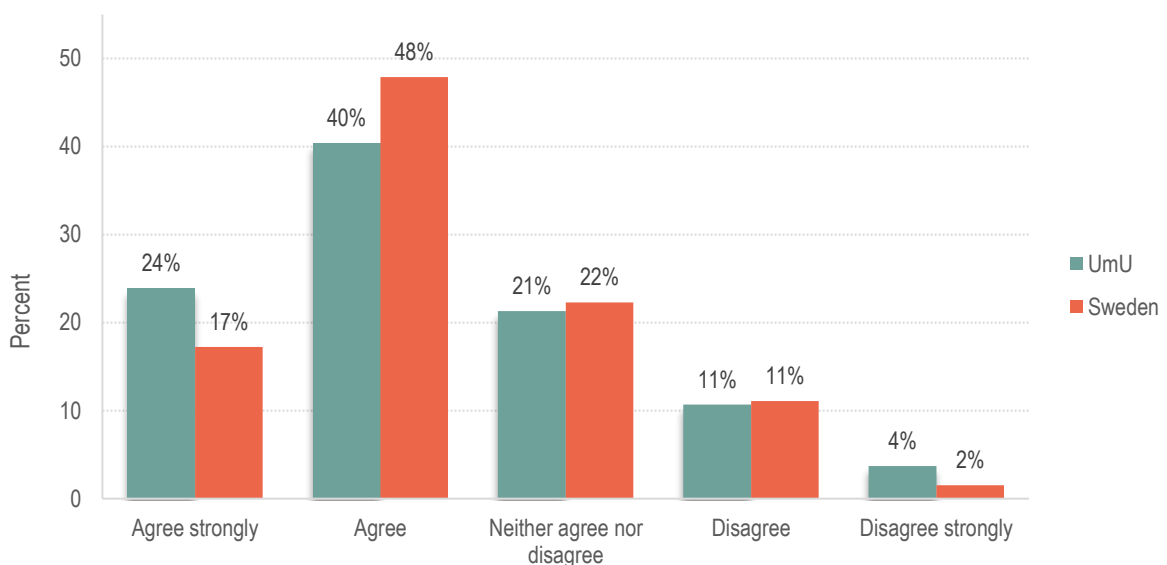
- ✓ A majority of the participants (52%) mentioned the environment as one of the three most important issues in Sweden today.



Survey question: What do you think are the most important issues or social problems in Sweden today? (Choose a maximum of 3 alternatives). The diagram displays the percent of people that mention this as one out of three choices.

Differences in income

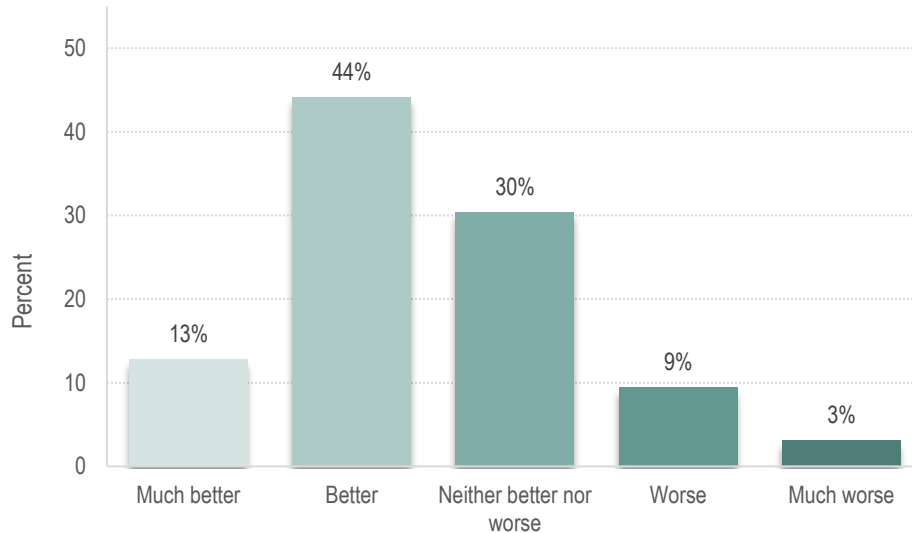
- ✓ Most respondents (64%) agree with the statement that the government should take measures to reduce differences in income levels.
- ✓ Besides some differences in the level of agreement, pattern of responses from UmU students are similar to those of the general population.



Survey question: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? The government should take measures to reduce differences in income levels. Random Sweden sample from the ESS.

Sweden's corona strategy

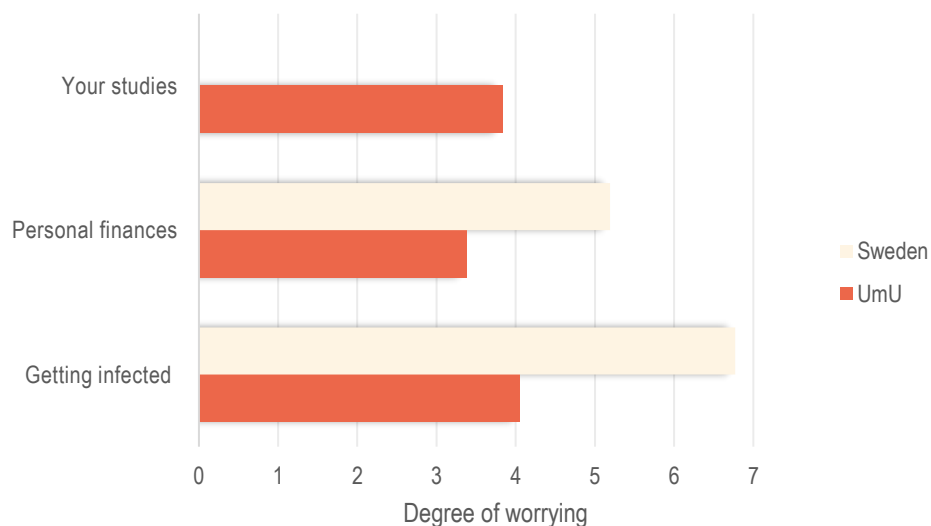
- ✓ A majority of the participants (57%) consider Sweden's national corona strategy to be better or much better compared to the strategies of other countries.
- ✓ 12% consider it to be worse or much worse compared to the strategies of other countries.



Survey question: On the whole, would you say that the Swedish strategy is better or worse than other countries' approaches?

Corona worry

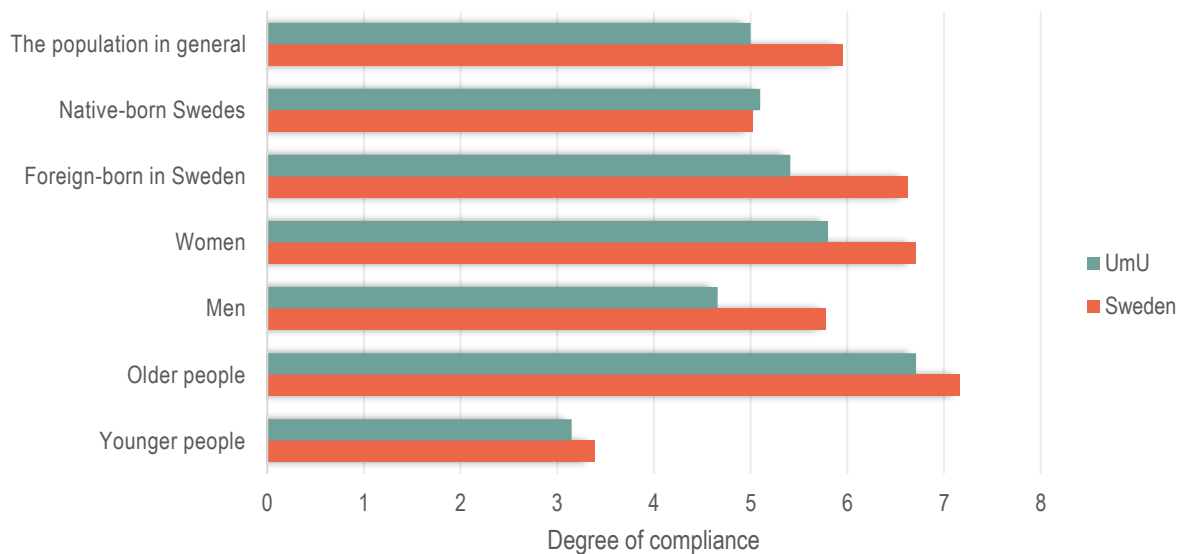
- ✓ UmU students worry less about being negatively affected by the Corona pandemic, compared to a random sample of the Swedish population.



Survey question: Thinking about the coronavirus pandemic, on a scale from 0 to 10, how worried are you about each of the following? (0-10, 0 = Not at all worried, 10 = Extremely worried). The diagram shows the average degree of worry in the UmU-Barometer, compared to a random Swedish sample (SCOV19).

Beliefs about compliance with corona recommendations

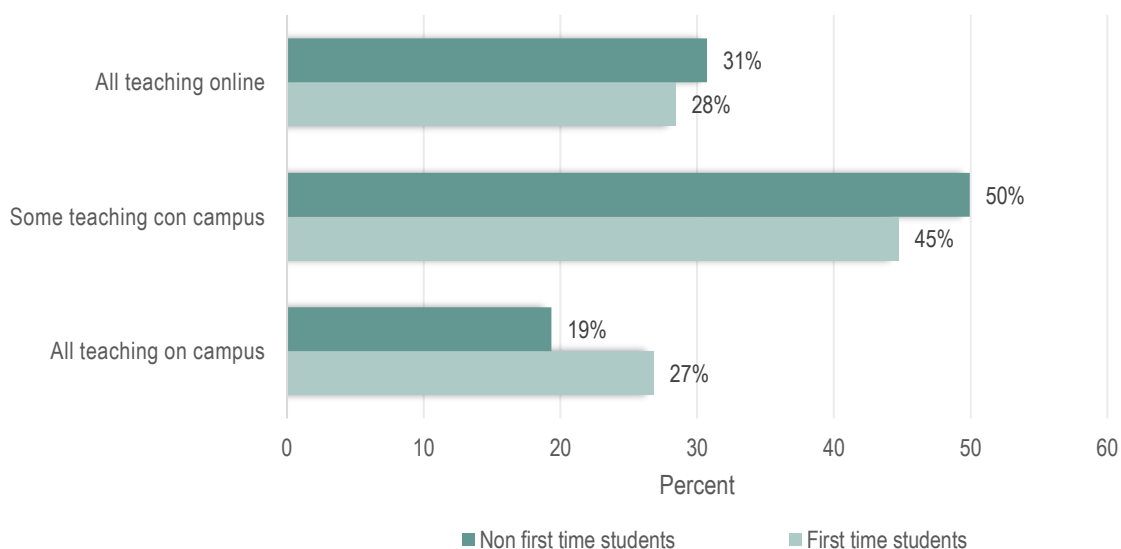
- ✓ Older individuals, women, and immigrants are perceived to follow public health recommendations the most.
- ✓ Younger individuals and men are perceived to follow public health recommendations the least.
- ✓ The participants in the UmU-Barometer are less prone to distinguish among different groups in society compared to a random sample of the Swedish population.



Survey question: To what extent do you believe that the following groups in Sweden are complying with the Swedish Public Health Agency's recommendations (0-10, 0= To a very small extent, 10= To a very large extent). The diagram displays the average belief, compared to a random sample of the Swedish population (SCOV19).

Preferred teaching during Corona

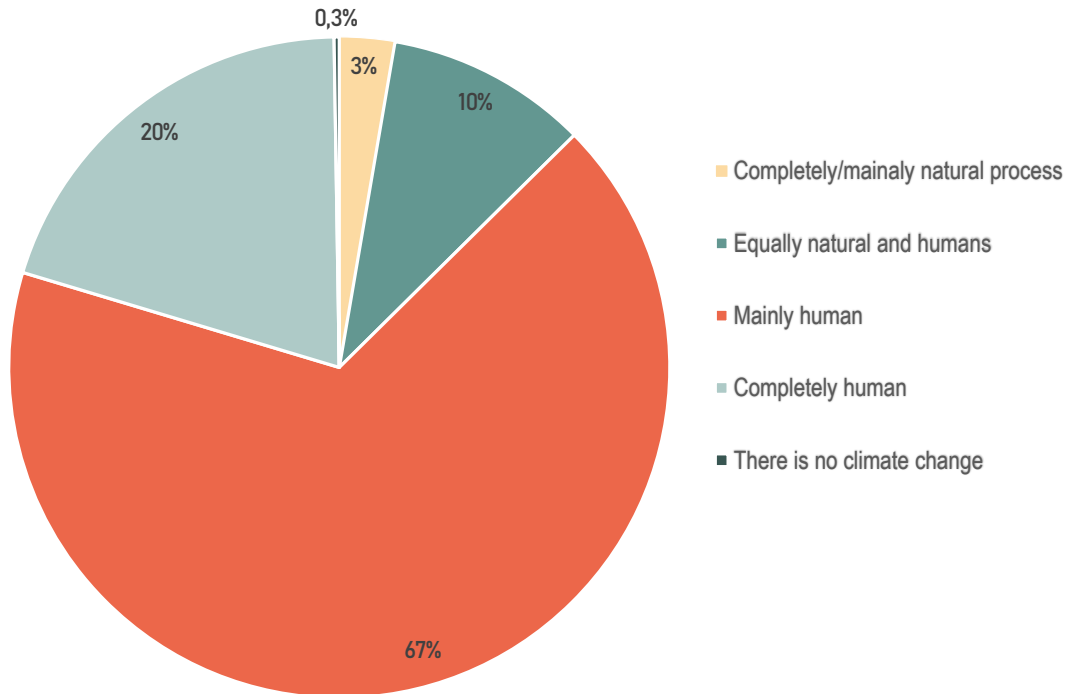
- ✓ In October 2020 the largest share of students preferred mixed teaching.
- ✓ First-time students tended to prefer on-campus teaching more than students with previous experience in higher education.



Survey question: If you could choose how teaching at the university is conducted right now, which of the following options would you prefer?

Climate change

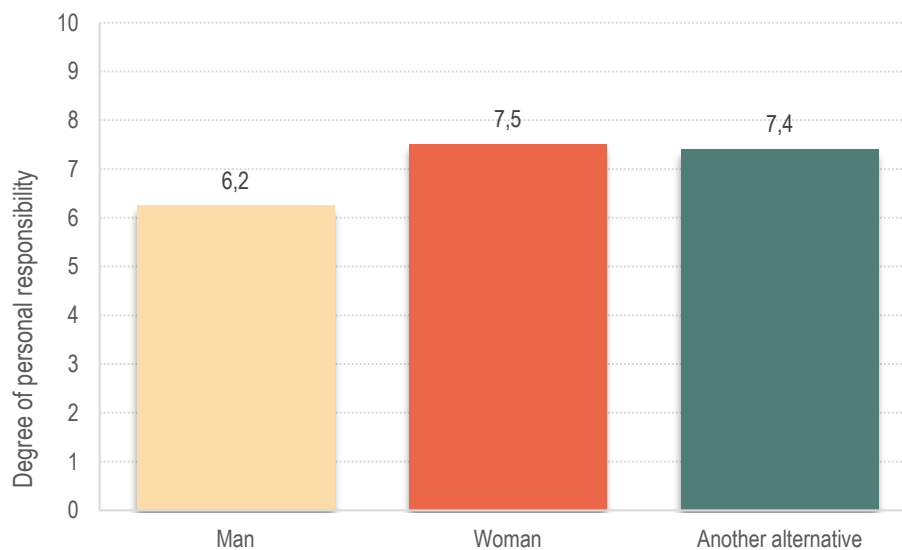
- ✓ The vast majority of UmU-Barometer participants (87%) believe that climate change is a consequence of human activity (entirely or mainly).



Survey question: Do you think that climate change is caused by natural processes, human activity, or both?

Personal responsibility

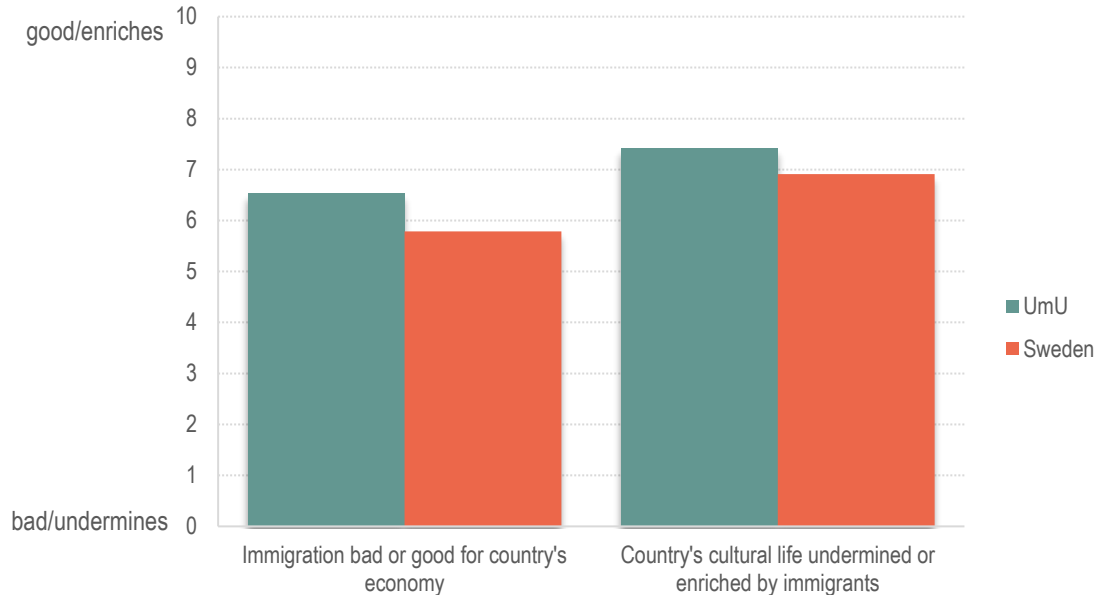
- ✓ Women and individuals who identify as neither a man nor a woman generally feel greater personal responsibility to reduce climate change.



Survey question: To what extent do you feel a personal responsibility to try to reduce climate change? (0-10, 0= Not at all, 10= A great deal).

Immigration

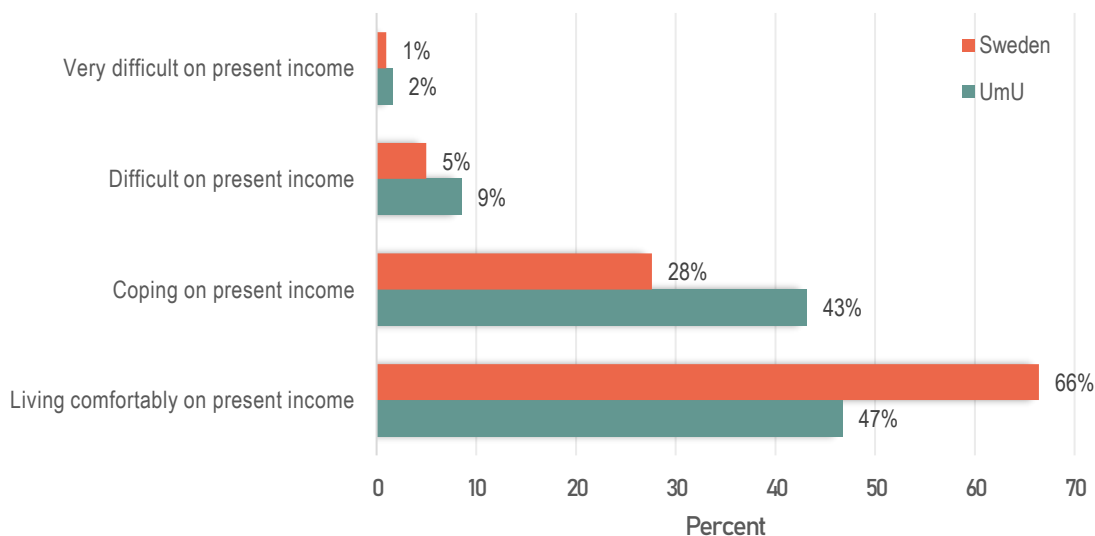
- ✓ UmU-Barometer participants generally believe that immigration is better for the culture than for the economy.
- ✓ On average, UmU-Barometer participants are somewhat more likely to see immigration as beneficial for society compared to a random sample of the Swedish population.



Survey question: Would you say it is generally bad or good for Sweden's economy that people come to live here from other countries? / Would you say that Sweden's cultural life is generally undermined or enriched by people coming to live here from other countries? (0-10, 0= Bad/Undermined, 10= Good/Enriched). Random Sweden sample from ESS.

Own economy

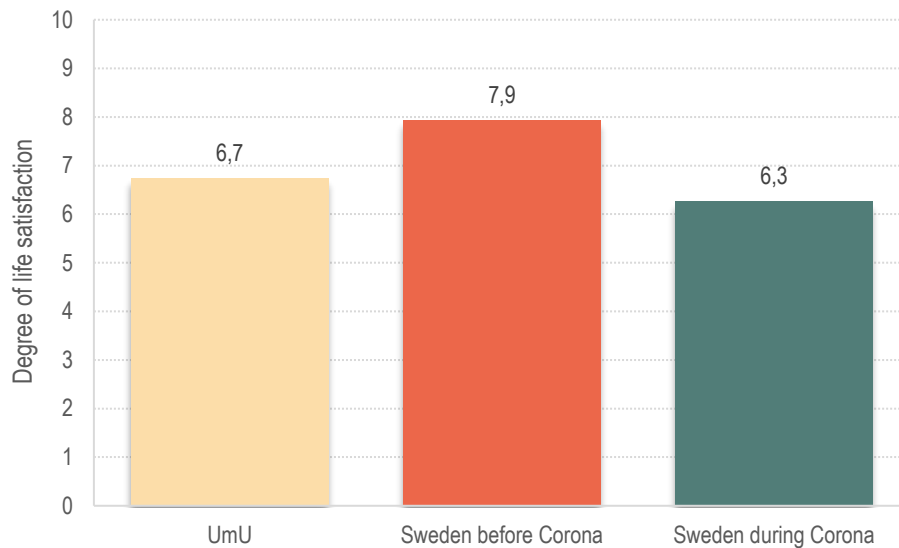
- ✓ The vast majority of the UmU-Barometer participants are living comfortably/coping on present income (90%).
- ✓ Compared to a random sample of the Swedish population, fewer UmU-Barometer participants report that they are living comfortably on present income.



Survey question: How do you feel about your household's income nowadays? Random Sweden sample from ESS.

Life satisfaction

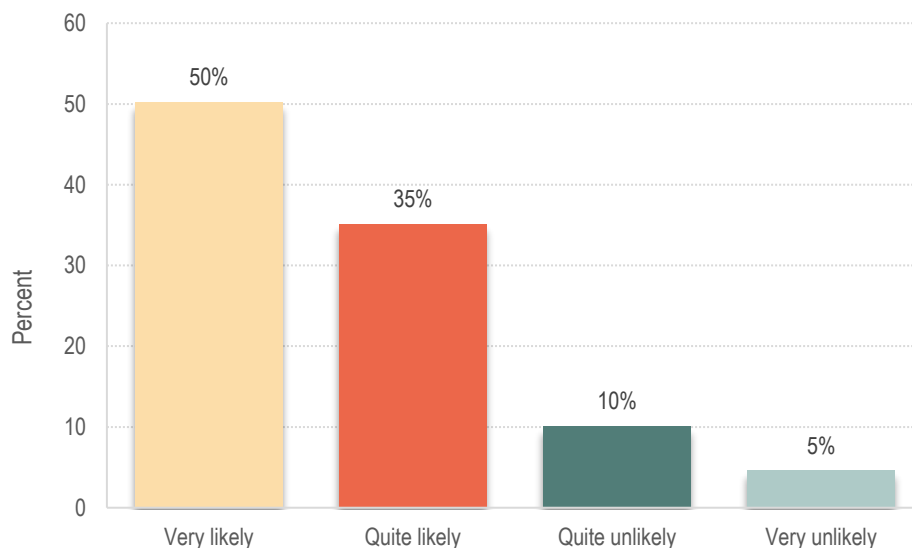
- ✓ UmU-Barometer participants are slightly more satisfied with their life as a whole, compared to a random sample of the Swedish population during the pandemic (6,7 vs 6,3).
- ✓ Compared to life satisfaction in Sweden before the pandemic, the UmU-Barometer participants are generally less satisfied (6,7 vs. 7,9).



Survey question: All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole nowadays? (0-10, 0=Extremely dissatisfied, 10=Extremely satisfied). Random Sweden sample from ESS (before Corona) and SCOV19 (during Corona).

The future

- ✓ A majority of the participants (85%) consider it very likely or quite likely that they will have a job that corresponds to their education one year after they finish their studies.



Survey question: Imagine yourself one year after finishing your university education. How likely is it that you will have a job that corresponds to your education?