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Alex.Rossi@theguardian.com



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Debunking the myths of Generation Z with the Guardian and VCCP Media



Gen Z



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Introduction



We're delighted to have commissioned this piece of research in conjunction with VCCP Media to better understand how young people think and feel about the world they find themselves in. They're our future readers, contributors, consumers, ambassadors and employees - the more we know the better we can support them and help you to deliver effective and authentic campaigns.

Trina Everall
Head of student and youth
The Guardian



Meet the new traditionalists

Generation Z - those aged 24 and under - are already having a major impact on society. Their influence is being felt both online, where they harness social media tools for “clicktivist” campaigning and internet shaming, and offline, where Corbynistas are rocking the vote at elections.

Yet they're not an easy generation to understand, and no wonder. The first people to never know a world without the internet say they spend up to 11 hours a day on social media - in closed conversations that the rest of us can't hear.

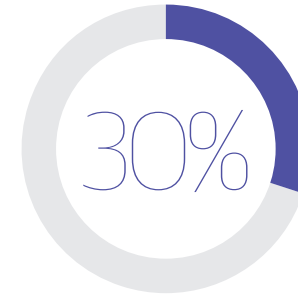
But our research shows Generation Z aren't so different. They want the same things as young people before them; to land a dream job, to own a house and to travel the world. In short, they want to live a traditional life, a bit like their parents did.



It's not simply a case of the same old, same young. The world has changed and so have the challenges facing today's youth. But if the game has new rules, it also has new tools - and Gen Z is using them to build a different kind of old-fashioned life: a new traditional.

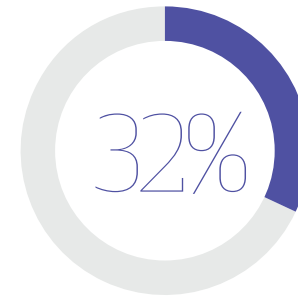
Laurence Wakefield
Guardian students journalist

Generational differences

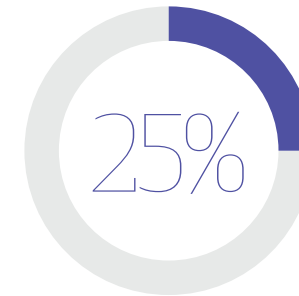


of young people think they'll be worse off than their parent's generation

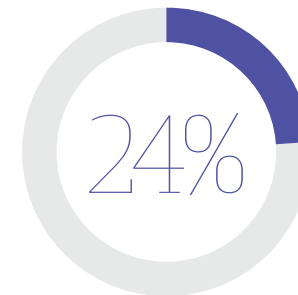
Life goals



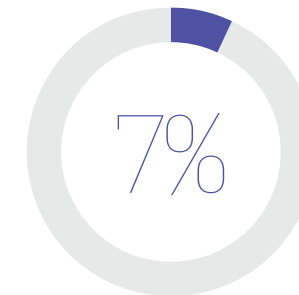
getting their dream job



buying a house



travelling the world



starting their own business

Further education and student life

Their optimism or pessimism about the future depended on what they thought would happen with their career. They feel a lot of pressure to define their career paths before leaving school.

Student debt is not their main worry anymore - 2/3 of young people who have been or go to university said debt didn't make them hesitate about going to university and the same number of people think they're not going to pay back their loans.

42% of students were concerned about their debt.

University is still the primary choice - 71% of young people at school planned to do a full time undergraduate degree, while 7% were planning on full time employment.

Parents are more supportive of apprenticeships and they no longer have the same stigma - 45% of young people who went/go to university thought their parents would've been happy with them doing an apprenticeship instead of a degree, and 80% agree that you can get a real job from doing an apprenticeship.

They would use a variety of sources to help with their university decision. The most common were the university's website 84%, open days 81% and prospectus (physical or online) 74%. Over a third, 36% would use the Guardian University Guide.



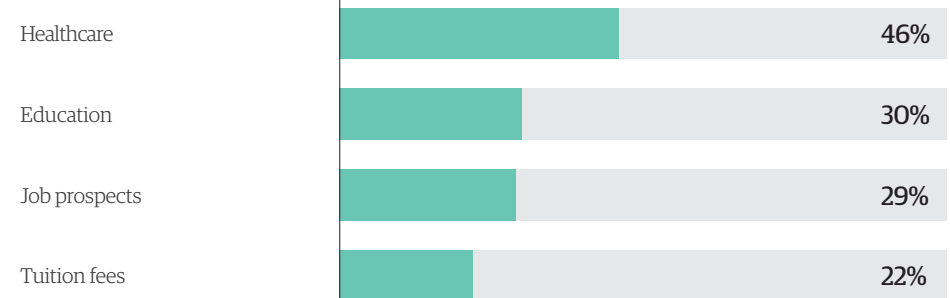
Activists (ish) - and politics

Overall, young people were most likely to have done 'slacktivism' activities and intend to do them again in the future: signing a petition online 77%, sharing a link to a petition online 47%, actively encouraging others to sign a petition 44%, as opposed to 16% who have gone on a march or 11% who have joined a political party. But 32% have boycotted a brand.

How they feel about politics



The most important issues for young people



General election



Community, identity and social media



39%

would buy clothes marketed to a different gender

2 in 5

males would consider wearing unisex clothing

55%

of young people define community by location and 54% by interests

Digital detox

Phone detox - Almost two-thirds of school children would not mind if social media had never been invented, a survey has indicated. 71% said they had taken temporary digital detoxes to escape social media.

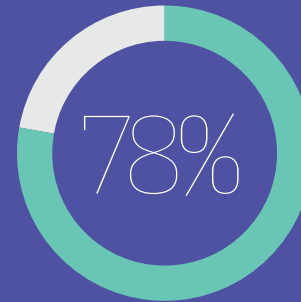
Sexuality and gender

Young people thought that more exposure to different sexualities and genders has helped them to be more inclusive and accepting than previous generations.

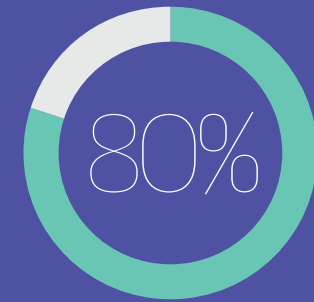
Personal recognition and location tracking

They have reservations about facial recognition and location tracking technology. They are less likely to freely and happily give away this information, as they are aware of negative consequences, e.g. stalking based on apps showing locations.

This generation are more gender fluid - a National Citizen Service (NCS) poll found that only 78% of young men identified as 100% male, and 80% of young women identified as 100% female. However, trans people may be less accepted when they're younger. The young people thought that acceptance increases and bullying decreases as they have got older and become more mature.



Young men identified as 100% male



Young women identified as 100% female

Young people think they have been taught to be more accepting of different sexualities and encouraged to explore their sexuality more than previous generations. However, there may be a gender difference as males tended to talk about it less and see it as more taboo. A YouGov survey suggests that half don't consider themselves 100% heterosexual.

Young people thought that negative feelings towards immigrants were more present in older generations. They were surprised at these attitudes, especially the backlash against immigrants after the Brexit result.

Many respondents indicated that social media was having a negative impact on their emotional wellbeing.



Summary

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Gen Z are the most traditional generation in decades.

34%

of Gen Zs top life goal is to buy a dream house

57%

regularly put money into savings

55%

think it's important to start saving for a pension as soon as possible

28%

of employed graduates got a job through their connections

“

Gen Z feel pressure to define their career path before they leave school.

They feel their decisions at a young age will affect the rest of their life.

They want advice on these decisions from people who have very recently made these same decisions.



VCCP Media

VCCP is an international integrated communications agency, founded in 2002 on the principles of simplicity, collaboration, un-preciousness and integration around ideas rather than channels.

We are the challenger media agency for challenger clients. With our integrated, client-first offering, we aim to put an end to the old, standard media solutions, to do away with the idea of media vs. creative and to quash the concept of agency silos. We have set out to remedy the bad habits of the industry by providing our clients with communications solutions that are rooted in deep understanding of consumers and values that shape their decisions and behaviours.

With offices in Berlin, London, Madrid, New York, Prague, San Francisco and Sydney, VCCP produces award-winning work for clients including O2, comparethemarket.com, easyJet, Canon and Cadbury.



The Guardian

At a time when **32%** of young people are boycotting brands the Guardian's youth readership has grown by a third since last year. **We reach 76% of all 16-24 year olds in the UK**. They come to the Guardian to help make sense of the world around them. They trust the Guardian.

In 2018 we'll be focusing on supporting young people with their finance, lifestyle and education choices and we'll be speaking their language.

How you can work with us

Cash Points

With the increase in fees and ever increasing student debt, students need to be able to manage their finances more than ever. In a brand new content series Guardian students will provide practical advice and tips on how to go through university without finances spiralling out of control.

Sponsor this year long student finance series with Guardian students from £75,000.

Cooking on a bootstrap

Best selling author of 'A Girl Called Jack', Jack Monroe is partnering with the Guardian in 2018 to come up with new and exciting recipes for Guardian students. All the recipes and meal plans are designed with budgets in mind and with many being under £1, it is no wonder that Jack already has a huge following when it comes to cooking on a budget.

Sponsor this year-long student recipe series on Guardian students from £100,000.

Guardian university guide

In May 2018 the Guardian university guide will publish the university league tables for 2019. With overall rankings for universities and 54 tables for each subject area, the tables are compiled independently and have been recognised as the most influential university rankings in the UK. The tables are now a crucial resource for students, parents and influencers plus the higher education sector and remain among the top read content pieces in Guardian education throughout the year.

Sponsor the Guardian University Guide for 12 months from £150,000.

Speak to alex.rossi@theguardian.com about commercial youth partnerships.



Notes

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