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2024 Gen Z and Millennial Survey Living and working with purpose in a transforming world

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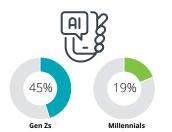
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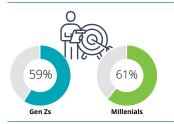
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Executive summary

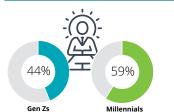
The 2024 survey of Gen Z and millennials in Belgium reveals how these generations are redefining their expectations towards employers. A good work-life balance remains crucial, but other priorities such as purpose, learning and development (L&D), career perspective, and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) are becoming noticeably more significant. Consequently, employers that align with these values are better positioned to attract and retain top talent while focusing on creating lasting value for employees as human being.

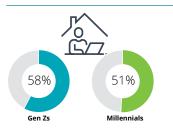
Key findings include:





68% 59% Gen Zs Millenials





Generative AI (GenAI) adoption: While 51% of millennials and 48% of Gen Zs view GenAI positively, significant uncertainty remains. As only 27% of Gen Zs and 18% of millennials report having a good understanding of GenAI, organisations need to bridge the gap between current adoption and future potential by fostering trust and GenAI fluency which goes beyond standard communication and training. Frequent users of GenAI, however, tend to have a more positive attitude. Among those who use it regularly, 69% of Gen Zs and 57% of millennials believe GenAI will free up time and improve work-life balance, compared to just 45% of Gen Zs and 19% of millennials who have never used it.

Purpose and career progression: While Gen Zs tend to place high importance on purpose, millennials instead tend to prioritise career progression when choosing an employer. Both Gen Zs and millennials are largely satisfied with the purpose they derive from their job (75% of Gen Zs and 73% of millennials). **However, only 59% of millennials (61% of Gen Zs) are satisfied with their career progression opportunities**. Employers should effectively communicate their purpose and provide clear career paths to meet these expectations.

Learning and development and career growth: Job satisfaction is closely linked to opportunities for learning and career growth, highlighting the importance of continuous development in fostering overall job satisfaction. Both millennials and Gen Zs show a moderate level of satisfaction with the opportunities for learning, development, and mentoring in their jobs, with Gen Zs slightly more satisfied overall. 68% of Gen Zs and 59% of millennials express satisfaction with the learning and development opportunities provided by their employers.

Mental health: Stress and anxiety are prevalent as 44% of Gen Z and 59% of millennials experience high levels of stress and/or anxiety. With even higher numbers for employees from a minority group. While stress/anxiety is triggered by a variety of factors, one in three still points at work as a contributing factor. Leadership support is critical. Both generations expect that their leaders support them in this challenge by for example, yet many employees do feel unsupported. Only 30-35% of younger employees indicate their employers or leaders adequately prioritise mental health.

Flexibility: Satisfaction with flexible work arrangements, including (but not restricted to) when and where employees can work, plays a significant role in overall job contentment. In Belgium, 58% of Gen Zs and 51% of millennials are satisfied with the flexibility to work WHERE they want, while 60% of Gen Zs and 58% of millennials express satisfaction with the flexibility to work WHEN they want. Given the value that younger generations place on having control over their work environment and schedule, this still leaves room for improvement.

This survey underscores the importance of human sustainability in shaping the future of work. Organisations that prioritise purpose, continuous learning, DEI, and mental health will create environments where employees can thrive. This focus is essential for long-term success and the well-being of the whole workforce.

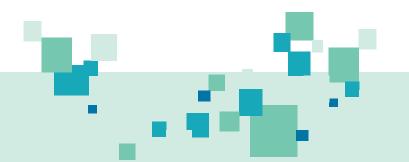
Research methodology

In the 2024 survey of Gen Z and Millennials in Belgium, we explore the expectations and hopes that these generations have toward today's employers.

Marking its 13th annual edition, Deloitte's 2024 Gen Z and Millennial Survey connected with respondents around the globe to gauge their views about work and the world around them. The survey was conducted using an online, self-complete-style interview. Fieldwork was completed between 24 November 2023 and 11 March 2024.

The report represents a broad range of respondents, from those with executive positions in large organisations to others who are participating in the gig economy, doing unpaid work or are unemployed. Additionally, respondents include students who have completed or are pursuing degrees, those who have completed or plan to complete vocational studies, and others who are in secondary school and may or may not pursue higher education. Gen Zs respondents were born between January 1995 and December 2005, and millennial respondents were born between January 1983 and December 1994.

The Belgian report is based on a sample size of 300 Gen Zs and 200 millennials. It includes quotes from Deloitte experts who provided their insights into the quantitative data gathered through the survey.





The importance of human sustainability

Human sustainability, centered on making work better for humans and humans better for work, has emerged as a pivotal theme for organisations striving to attract and retain younger generations. This concept goes beyond business sustainability in the traditional sense by focusing on how organisations can create lasting value for their people rather than their workforce. Human sustainability measures the degree to which organisations creates value for people as human beings, leaving them with greater health and well-being, stronger skills and greater employability, good jobs, opportunities for advancement, progress towards equity, increased belonging, and heightened connection to purpose¹.

Purpose and career opportunities now drive employment choices

In today's rapidly changing work environment, a good work-life balance continues to be the most significant factor for both Gen Zs and millennials when choosing an employer. This preference underscores the enduring need for employers to prioritise the wellbeing of their employees by fostering a balance between work and personal life.

Beyond the traditional drivers of work-life balance, financial compensation, and flexibility, new factors are emerging as significant considerations for younger generations when choosing an employer. This year, we observe two additional key drivers: purpose and career opportunities.

For Gen Z, a strong sense of purpose has become increasingly important. They value the alignment of job roles with their personal values, seeing purpose not just as a pathway to job satisfaction but as a cornerstone of their overall well-being. Remarkably, 79% of Gen Zs and 76% of millennials report that having a sense of purpose in their job is crucial for their job satisfaction and wellbeing. Furthermore, 75% of Gen Zs and 73% of millennials believe that their current job provides them with this sense of purpose. On the other hand, millennials place even greater emphasis on career progression. Opportunities for growth and advancement within their careers are critical for their long-term commitment to an employer. As such, career opportunities have become a pivotal factor for millennials when evaluating potential employers.

Timothy Bruneel, Total Reward Partner & Pay Equity offering leader

At Deloitte Belgium

"Considering the upcoming impact of the EU Pay Transparency Directive and the related greater pay disclosure that it will provide to job seekers, the importance of other drivers going beyond pay, such as purpose as well as career & learning development opportunities, will only increase."

Gen Zs		easons for selecting an employer <u>Millennials</u>		
	Good work-life balance	ŝ	Good work-life balance	
	Flexible hours and/or a reduced workweek		High salary or financial benefits	
	Deriving a sense of meaning from their work	\odot	Flexible hours and/or a reduced workweek	
	Positive workplace culture	°F-	Opportunities to progress and advance their careers	
	Hybrid or remote working models		Hybrid or remote working models	

1 Deloitte Human Capital Trends 2024: 2024 Global Human Capital Trends (deloitte.com)

Growth boosts loyalty

For Gen Z, opportunities to learn, develop new skills, and receive mentoring from senior colleagues are particularly significant. These opportunities not only contribute to their professional growth but also enhance their job satisfaction, making them more likely to remain with an employer that prioritises their development.

Millennials, while also valuing learning opportunities, are more sensitive to overall career growth prospects. Their retention is closely tied to the availability of clear pathways for career advancement. Employers that can provide both learning and career progression opportunities are more likely to retain their millennial employees over the long term.

DEI is a decisive factor for Gen Z

Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) have emerged as a critical factor for Gen Zs when it comes to employment decisions, particularly regarding their willingness to stay with or leave an employer. This year, the main reasons for Gen Zs having left their previous employer include insufficient pay, lack of flexibility, and mental health concerns. However, a significant new factor is the lack of diversity and inclusion, as well as the absence of role models with whom they can identify.

For Gen Z, working in an environment that actively promotes DEI is not just a preference—it turns into a necessity. They seek workplaces where they can see themselves reflected in the leadership and where their identities and experiences are valued. Employers who fail to prioritise DEI risk losing this generation's talent as they are increasingly likely to leave organisations that do not meet these expectations.



New factors for choosing an employer:

Gen Zs: Purpose	Millennials: Career opportunities				
New factors for staying with their employer:					
Gen Zs: Learning, developing new skills and/or receiving mentoring	Millennials: Career growth prospects				
New factors for leaving their employer:					
Gen 7s:					

Lack of diversity, equity, and inclusion

Creating sustainable employability through career perspective

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The power of learning and career opportunities: Enhancing career satisfaction

Understanding generational differences

The relationship between learning and development opportunities and job satisfaction is evident among both Gen Zs and millennials. However, there are nuances in how these generations perceive and value these opportunities. In Belgium, especially Gen Zs express satisfaction with the learning, development, and mentoring opportunities provided by their employers, with a satisfaction of 68%. Millennials, on the other hand, show a slightly lower level of satisfaction at 59%.

Additionally, **61% of Gen Zs and 59% of millennials are satisfied with the opportunities to progress and grow in their careers.** These numbers should be higher, especially given that satisfaction with career growth opportunities is closely linked to overall job satisfaction. Employees who perceive their organisation as supportive of mental health and well-being, and who feel a strong fit between themselves and the organisation, also **tend to be more satisfied with the present opportunities to grow and progress in their career: 84% of Gen Zs and 85% of millennials**



Career progression:

Do you understand this as going up the ladder or growing as a person in your career?

Career progression satisfaction

When my organisation **does not** value mental health





When my organisation does

Zs 📕 Millennials

The role of learning and development in employee retention

While a significant portion of millennials and Gen Zs are generally satisfied with the learning and development opportunities provided by their employers, the impact of these opportunities on retention becomes even clearer when considering tenure and future intentions. Among millennials, satisfaction with learning and development opportunities rises notably, reaching **71% for those who have been with their organisation for more than five years (versus 59% in general).**

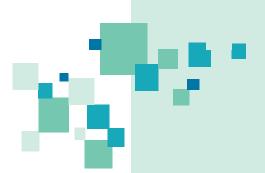
Gen Zs, while still early in their careers, also show a higher commitment to their employers when they are satisfied with development opportunities. Among those who intend to stay with their employer for two to five years, a remarkable 89% report being happy with the available growth opportunities (versus 68% in general).

These findings suggest that creating tailored learning and development paths, catering both to long-tenured employees and those at the start of their careers, can significantly improve employee retention. By offering continuous opportunities for growth, organisations can build a stronger, more loyal workforce that is invested in its future.

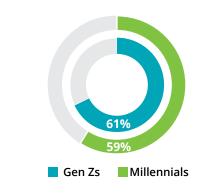


Koen Beirens, Team Manager HR Policy Preparation BOSA:

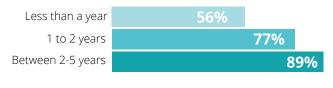
"We have successfully piloted opportunities for learning that enhance employees' connection to the organisation. Faced with challenges in finding specific profiles for critical roles, we decided to develop internal training pathways. By hiring individuals with general competencies and the right motivation and providing them with the technical skills needed through structured training, we've seen positive results. For example, our recent pilot for IT developers enabled those with minimal experience in IT to learn essential technical skills through intensive classroom training, combined with on-the-job training over the first six months. This initiative not only improved employee retention but also demonstrated the value of nurturing talent from within."



Overall satisfaction with the learning & development opportunities



Gen Zs satisfaction per intended loyalty to current employer



Millennials satisfaction per tenure with current employer





From uncertainty to mastery: The role of GenAl fluency in workforce development

Bridging the GenAl adoption gap

The rapid integration of generative AI (GenAI) into the workplace has been received with mixed reactions by Gen Zs and millennials. This section explores their perspectives on GenAI and outlines how employers can address not only the current adoption gap but also build trust and fluency around this technology.

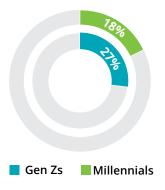
Both generations maintain a generally positive outlook on GenAl with 51% of millennials and 48% of Gen Zs viewing Al favourably, yet this optimistic sentiment is tempered by significant feelings of uncertainty. This uncertainty shows the need for more than just communication and education; organisations must foster a sense of trust in GenAl's capabilities and its ethical use. Building this trust requires transparency in why and how Al is implemented and a focus on long-term collaboration between humans and Al².

Understanding of GenAl remains moderate: 27% of GenZs report having a good grasp of generative Al, compared to just 18% of millennials. This can likely be linked to the limited use of GenAl by both generations with 50% of GenZs and 47% of millennials rarely or never using GenAl at work. However, we do see a higher adoption rate among remote workers (69% of millennials and 53% of GenZs). This stands in stark contrast to their fully on-site counterparts, with only 13% of millennials and 15% of GenZs actively using GenAl in their roles.

These gaps in usage point to a deeper need for organisations to broaden GenAl fluency. It's not just about introducing the technology but ensuring that employees across all job types understand its potential and limitations. Furthermore, by nurturing Al fluency—beyond basic training—employers can empower younger generations to become more confident and competent in using these tools. This approach not only boosts productivity but also helps alleviate concerns about Al taking jobs, replacing them with a sense of collaboration and mutual benefit.

Understanding of GenAI*

I have a good understanding of GenAl



 Helb

 myour Al assistant

 ow can i help?

Tom Verstraete, Al Expert Deloitte:



"While Gen Zs and millennials are comfortable with technology in their personal lives, uncertainty remains around its application in the workplace. Although training is essential, organisations must go further by fostering environments that build AI trust, encourage experimentation (cfr. digital playground3) and cultivate AI fluency. GenAI users may be digital natives, but they aren't necessarily AI natives. Expanding their understanding through these broader efforts will be crucial to unlocking the full potential of GenAI in the workplace."

- 2 The State of Generative AI in the Enterprise: <u>State of Generative AI in the Enterprise 2024 | Deloitte US</u>
- 3 Deloitte Human Capital Trends 2024: 2024 Global Human Capital Trends (deloitte.com)
- * Survey data retrieved between Nov 23 and March 24

Enhancing workforce confidence through GenAI fluency

As with many emerging technologies, familiarity breeds comfort and optimism. The survey reveals that frequent users of GenAl tend to have a more positive attitude toward the technology. Among those who regularly use GenAl, 69% of Gen Zs and 57% of millennials believe that it will free up time and improve their worklife balance. In stark contrast, only **45% of Gen Zs and 19% of millennials who have never used GenAl share this belief.**

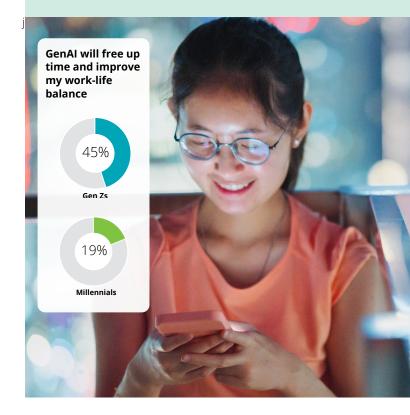
Recognising the importance of GenAl, employers are beginning to invest in training programmes. Currently, half of both generations report that they have already undergone GenAl training or expect to do so within the next year. Also, half of the respondents believe that GenAl will meaningfully improve the way they work in the coming year, signaling that while efforts are being made, there is still considerable work to be done.

There remains a clear gap between the training provided and the confidence levels of employees. Fifty-four percent of Gen Zs, but only 39% of millennials strongly agreeing that their employer is sufficiently training them on the capabilities, benefits, and value of GenAI. Furthermore, only 49% of Gen Zs and 42% of millennials feel comfortable working alongside GenAI systems and tools.

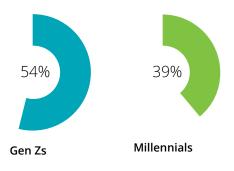
This disparity underscores that training alone is not sufficient to bridge the adoption gap. Employers need to go beyond basic training by fostering AI fluency and building trust, for example providing their employees a hands-on opportunity to experiment with AI. By doing so, they can reduce uncertainty and help employees fully engage with GenAI. To fully unlock the potential of AI for the workforce, a behaviour first approach⁴ is critical. An AI fluency programme should go beyond standard e-learning or demos on AI tools, it should foster trust, curiosity, critical

Tom Verstraete, Al Expert Deloitte:

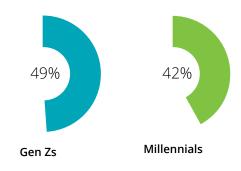
"Introducing GenAI without paying attention to the human angle can hinder adoption, turning it into an expensive misstep. To truly scale GenAI and create value both for employees and the organisation, organisations need to foster AI trust and AI fluency. This requires amongst other defining a clear (AI) purpose, being transparent, creating time and space to experiment, and providing reliable AI solutions that augment humans in their work. As GenAI evolves, those who invest wisely and prepare their workforce will stay ahead, while others risk falling behind."



Percentage of respondents who strongly agree that their employer is sufficiently training them on the capabilities, benefits, and value of GenAl.*



Percentage of respondents who feel comfortable working alongside GenAl systems and tools.*





To learn more about GenAl,

consult the Deloitte report <u>State of Generative</u> <u>Al in the Enterprise 2024 | Deloitte US</u>

* Survey data retrieved between Nov 23 and March 24

Increasing the levels of well-being by focusing on mental health at work

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From stress to support: How leaders can foster well-being in the workplace

The impact of work on younger generations

In today's rapidly evolving (work) environment, mental health has become a critical issue, particularly for younger generations. While many factors contribute to their feelings of anxiety or stress, such as their day-to-day finances and longer-term financial future, their mental health, family and personal relationships, their health/ welfare, etc., one consistent source of stress remains: work. **The latest survey data reveals a troubling trend: 44% of Gen Zs and an even higher 59% of millennials report feeling anxious or stressed all or almost all the time.** Alarmingly, this represents a drastic increase in stress levels for millennials compared to last year.

Historical data shows that in 2021, 46% of Gen Zs and 44% of millennials reported high stress levels, followed by 45% of Gen Zs and 41% of millennials in 2022. Last year, in 2023, stress levels remained high with 44% of Gen Zs and 34% of millennials reporting significant stress. These persistent levels of anxiety highlight an ongoing issue that demands attention.

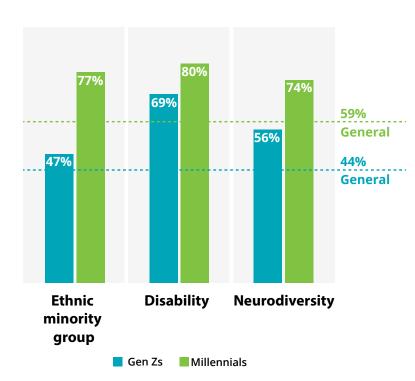
The impact of stress on diverse employees

The burden of stress is not evenly distributed. Individuals from various minority groups, particularly ethnic minorities and those with disabilities or neurodiversity, are disproportionately affected. Among Gen Zs, the highest levels of stress are reported by those with a disability (69%), followed by those with neurodiversity (56%) and those from ethnic minority back-grounds (47%).

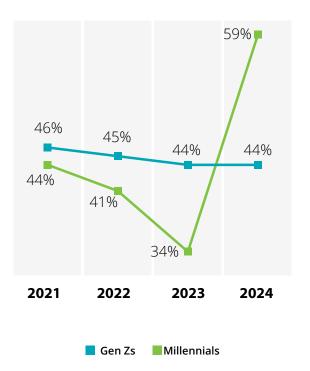
A similar trend is observed among millennials, where minority groups also experience higher levels of stress. However, compared to the general millennial population, the differences are striking. For example, 74% of millennials with neurodiversity or from ethnic minority backgrounds report feeling anxious or stressed all or most of the time— 15% higher than the overall millennial average. The figure is even more pronounced for millennials with disabilities, with 80% reporting elevated stress levels, a 21% increase compared to the general population.

These figures once more show the urgent need for organisations to prioritise diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives. By fostering an inclusive and supportive work environment, organisations can play a vital role in reducing stress and improving overall mental health for their employees.

Percentage of respondents who said they feel anxious or stressed all or most of the time.



Percentage of respondents who said they feel anxious all or most of the time



Identifying key work-related stress factors

As previously stated, work has been a significant contributor to anxiety and stress for several years, a fact that has become increasingly apparent. Despite a growing awareness among organisations, there remains a critical need for a more nuanced understanding of the specific work-related elements that contribute to stress and how best to address them. Key stressors identified include:

1

Lack of support from leaders:

Long working hours: 2.

Insufficient time to complete tasks: 3. The pressure to meet tight deadlines or manage heavy workloads without enough time leads to heightened stress levels among employees

The role of leaders, particularly direct managers and senior executives is becoming increasingly important in addressing workplace mental health. The survey reveals that about one in three of both generations...

- ...feels like their employer does not take their health seriously (34% of Gen Zs and 32% of millennials)
- ...does not feel comfortable speaking openly about their mental health (30% of Gen Zs and 32% of millennials)
- ...says their manager does not know what to do when • their employee feels stressed or anxious (35% of Gen Zs and 32% of millennials)

These statistics indicate a significant gap in leadership support for mental health. Although it is known that leaders play an important role, they do not always act upon it. The Deloitte survey 'Wellbeing at Work'⁵ revealed that there is a big perception gap in what they think they do for the well-being of their employees versus how this is actually perceived by the employees themselves.

Perhaps many leaders feel like they focus on mental health and well-being in their organisation or team. However, again about one in three of both generations say that their (senior) leaders...

- ... do not speak about prioritising mental health in their organisation (30% of both Gen Zs and millennials)
- ... do not share their own lived experiences of mental health challenges (27% of Gen Zs and millennials)

This lack of open dialogue likely contributes to the broader issue of silence around mental health in the workplace. As a result, one in three younger employees do not feel comfortable speaking openly with their direct managers about their feelings of stress, anxiety, or other mental health challenges.

Annelies Verbruggen, **Technology & Transformation People** & Purpose Leader Deloitte:

"There has been a notable shift in the conversation around" mental health and well-being, including the ongoing debate about the boundaries between work and personal life. Some perspective has its advantages and challenges, making it complex for organisations to navigate the question of how best to support their employees' mental health. Finding a balance in this

Addressing key work-related stress factors

To effectively address these challenges, organisations must prioritise mental health as a core component of their workplace culture. This involves more than just offering resources; it requires creating an environment where mental health is openly discussed and supported at all levels of leadership. Senior leaders must lead by example, sharing their experiences and actively working to destigmatise mental health issues.

By doing so they can foster a more supportive and inclusive workplace where employees feel safe to express their concerns and seek the help they need. This shift is not only crucial for the well-being of employees but also for the overall health and productivity of the organisation.

⁵ Six leader/worker disconnect affecting workplace well-being: Well-being leadership disconnects | Deloitte Insights

Beyond remote work: Broadening flexibilityfor better mental health

Satisfaction with flexible work arrangements

Belgian organisations have recognised the importance of flexibility in the sense of remote work, particularly for younger generations. A significant majority, 65% of Gen Zs and 60% of millennials, have the option to work either fully remote or in a hybrid setup. This stands in contrast to the global trend, where fewer employees have the option to work remotely, and more are required to work fully on-site.

Despite this, Gen Zs and millennials in Belgium exhibit only moderate satisfaction with flexible working arrangements. For instance, millennials report a 51% satisfaction rate for the flexibility to work WHERE they want and 58% for the flexibility to work WHEN they want. Gen Zs shows slightly higher satisfaction, with 58% satisfied with the flexibility to work WHERE they want and 60% with the flexibility to work WHEN they want. However, to truly embrace flexibility in the workplace, we must consider it in a broader sense—not only focusing on WHEN and WHERE work happens, but also WHAT employees are working on.



Nathalie Dom, Human Sustainability Expert Deloitte:

"Sustainable employability and meaningful work are paramount in today's evolving workplace. To achieve these goals, we must shift our focus beyond traditional notions of flexibility and delve into how employees can actively shape their careers. This means for example embracing intrapreneurship, allowing individuals to (co-)create meaningful work experiences, drive innovation, and contribute to both their own success and that of their organisations. It's an opportunity to take ownership of your career and shape it according to your own unique aspirations."

Job crafting is a very practical example which empowers individuals to tailor their roles to align with their passions and strengths, fostering a sense of purpose and engagement. Practices such as job shadowing offer employees the opportunity to explore different departments and roles without commitment, enabling them to discover energising avenues within the organisation. By embracing these strategies, organisations can create a work environment where employees feel valued, acknowledged, fulfilled, and empowered to pursue meaningful careers.



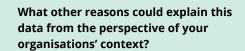
Parental status and gender impact on flexibility satisfaction

Despite the general satisfaction, there are notable differences in how flexibility is perceived across various demographic groups, particularly when it comes to generation, parental status, and gender:

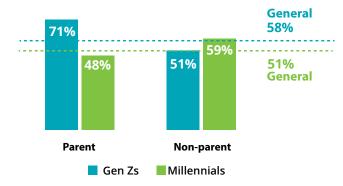
- Non-parents among millennials express higher satisfaction with flexible work arrangements compared to parents. Female non-parents are particularly satisfied, with 66% satisfied with where they work and 83% with when they work.
- Interestingly, for Gen Zs the satisfaction levels point in the other direction. Parents are particularly happy with their ability to work where they want, with a satisfaction rate of 71%. Female parents in this group report even higher satisfaction, with 87% satisfaction with where they work.

This variation in satisfaction between millennial and Gen Zs parents could be attributed to several factors. Although no clear reasons are apparent, a possible hypothesis could be that Gen Zs parents might have younger children who require more care, making flexibility in work location and hours more critical and recipients of such flexibility more grateful. Alternatively, Gen Zs parents tend to have younger and fewer children and current flexibility options may be especially suited for that setup but lacking when it comes to having more children with different ages.

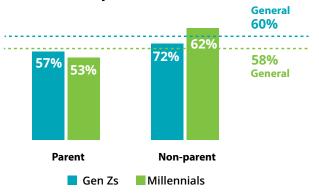




Satisfaction rate for the flexibility to work where they want.



Satisfaction rate for the flexibility to work when they want.



5 Six leader/worker disconnect affecting workplace well-being: Well-being leadership disconnects | Deloitte Insights

The indisputable benefits of workplace flexibility

Another critical factor influencing satisfaction with flexible work arrangements is the level of stress experienced by employees. **The data shows that Gen Zs who face higher levels of stress and anxiety tend to appreciate flexible working hours more, with a satisfaction rate of 72% (versus 60%).** This indicates that flexibility not only contributes to work-life balance but can also serve as an essential buffer against the pressures of work, enhancing overall mental health and well-being.

In conclusion, flexibility in the workplace should be seen as a multi-faceted strategy that goes beyond the ability to work from home. It should encompass various aspects of work-life balance to truly support the mental health and well-being of employees across different demographics.

Conclusion Building a sustainable future for the workforce

The 2024 Gen Z and Millennial Survey shows the growing importance of human sustainability in shaping the future of work. Purpose, learning and career opportunities, DEI, and mental health are not just buzzwords; they are critical components of a sustainable workplace that attracts and retains the best talent.

As we move forward, it is clear that the future of work is about more than just economic performance. It is about creating workplaces that are sustainable for the people who work there—places where they can find purpose, grow their skills, feel included, and maintain their mental well-being. By focusing on these areas, organisations can ensure their long-term success while contributing positively to the lives of their employees.

Contact



Nathalie Vandaele Human Capital Portfolio leader nvandaele@deloitte.com



Helena Van Loon HR Transformation Consultant hvanloon@deloitte.com



Global page: The Deloitte Global 2024 Gen Zs and Millennial Survey

Belgian page: The Deloitte Belgium 2024 Gen Zs and Millennial Survey

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