



The Deloitte Millennial Survey 2020: An Irish perspective

Millennial trends highlight opportunities for change

Contents



- | | | | | | |
|----|--|--------------------|----|--|--------------------|
| 01 | Introduction: The resilient generations | 01 | 06 | A reduction in overall stress in 2020 | 07 |
| 02 | The impact of COVID-19: The global insights uncovered during the pandemic | 02 | 07 | How brands respond to world events | 09 |
| 03 | A view from Ireland | 03 | 08 | Conclusion: The message for leaders and society | 11 |
| 04 | Financial prudence becomes integral | 04 | | | |
| 05 | Job security | 06 | | | |

Introduction: The resilient generations

“Things aren’t going to go back to normal.

The young are going to play an active part in either destroying or creating a new world. That’s kind of extraordinary.”

— Jon Savage, author of
Teenage: The Creation of Youth 1875–1945

A survey was issued in late 2019 to a global cohort, encompassing 18.4k millennials and Gen Zs across 43 countries, including 326 millennial respondents from Ireland. This survey sought to understand millennial’s views on work, society, and the world at large. Soon after, the global pandemic hit and ushered in a new reality. Seeking to understand the impact of COVID-19 on millennials, a supplementary “pulse” survey was issued to 9,100 millennials and Gen Zs across 13 countries (excluding Ireland) in May of this year. This second survey included many of the same questions from this first study, to allow us to gauge the effect of the pandemic on millennials.¹

This report comparatively analyses the views of millennials both pre-pandemic and during the crisis, to understand the impact of the crisis on this generational cohort. Supplementary data of relevance to Ireland from the results of Deloitte’s August 2020 ‘State of the Consumer Tracker’ has also been included.²

The report highlights that millennials now face a number of new stressors that directly correlate to this pandemic such as financial pressures, job security and family well-being. However an interesting trend emerging is that many of the values and beliefs of millennials have remained consistent despite global turmoil. Millennials remain committed to driving social change, and show support for organisations that align to this agenda.

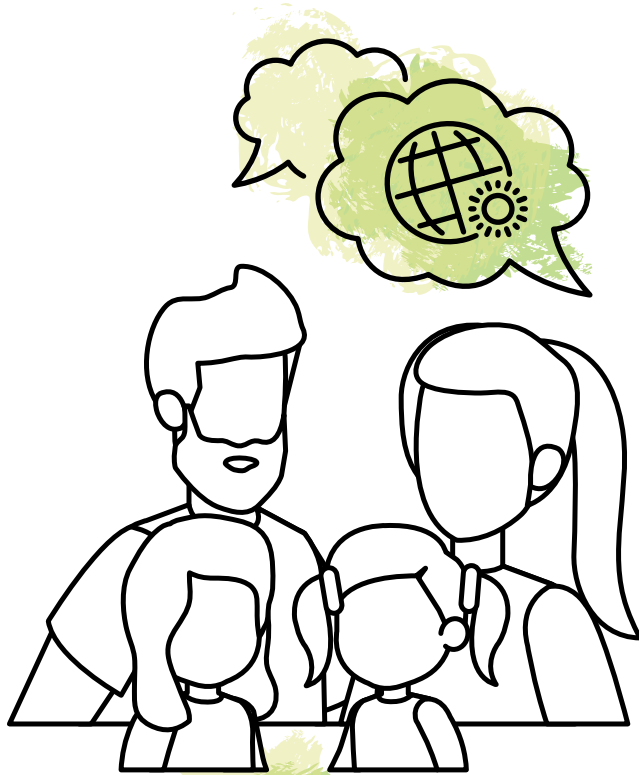
As we move towards a new post-COVID-19 normal, it is becoming increasingly evident that organisation’s that are deemed to have responded positively to this crisis, will hold the key to this generational cohort’s loyalty.

1. *The Deloitte Global Millennial Survey 2020 Report*, <https://www2.deloitte.com/global/en/pages/about-deloitte/articles/millennialsurvey.html>

2. *Deloitte State of the Consumer Tracker, 2020* <https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/insights/industry/retail-distribution/consumer-behavior-trends-state-of-the-consumer-tracker.html>



The impact of COVID-19: The global insights uncovered during the pandemic



- **Finances:** While long-term finances are a top cause of stress for millennials and the majority expect their financial situations to worsen or stagnate in the next year, almost half of millennials and Gen Zs have savings equaling 3 months of income and more said they could pay their bills in full each month.
- **Work and loyalty:** Before the pandemic, more millennials said they'd like to stay with their employers for at least five years than those who would prefer to leave within two, signaling employers may be better addressing their needs. It remains to be seen how loyalty will be affected by the pandemic. However, three in five stated that the actions their employers took during the pandemic have made them want to stay with their employers for the long-term.
- **Mental health:** Before the pandemic, close to half of the respondents said they were stressed all or most of the time. But anxiety levels fell eight points for both generations in the peak-pandemic pulse survey, indicating a potential silver lining to the disruption caused by the pandemic. We explore balancing factors further in the report.
- **Relationships with brands:** A majority of respondents gave businesses and governments high marks for their pandemic responses. Actions taken during the crisis, however, did not translate into overall better opinions of these institutions or their leaders. Prior to the pandemic, half of respondents said they believed it was too late to repair the damage caused by climate change. Yet, this figure dropped in the pulse survey, suggesting the environmental improvements resulting from reduced human activity during the pandemic has given hope there is still time to take action.



01

02

03

04

05

06

07

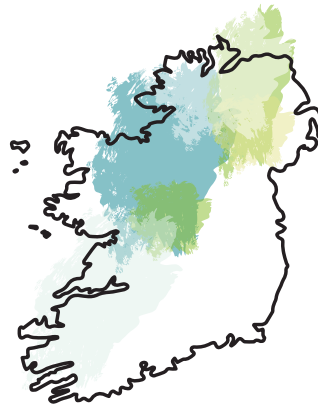
08

A view from Ireland

In Ireland, prior to the pandemic, millennials were concerned about their long term financial stability, and indeed their job security. Interestingly, health and well-being was another primary source of stress with concerns for the health of their family in particular remaining high.

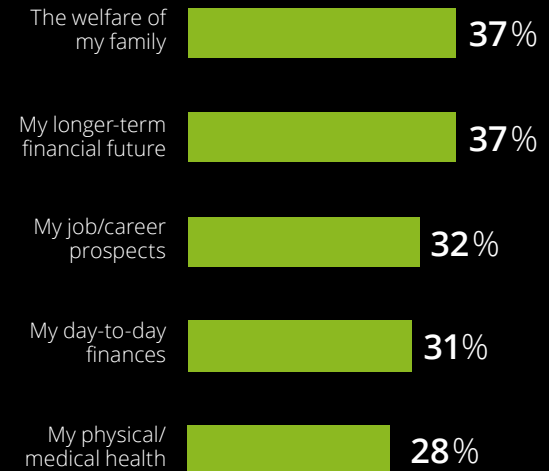
Climate change remains a top anxiety, however a positive from the pandemic is that it has given millennial's hope that there is time to take action to protect the environment. Importantly, Irish millennials

retain strong affinity to brands and businesses who have a positive impact on society, placing businesses that are deemed to have responded well to this crisis in a rewarding position with this consumer cohort.



Ireland's Millennial Survey – November 2019

% **Millennials** who are regularly stressed say... contribute a lot to their feelings of stress



Q: To what extent do each of the following contribute to your feelings of anxiety or stress?



01

02

03

04

05

06

07

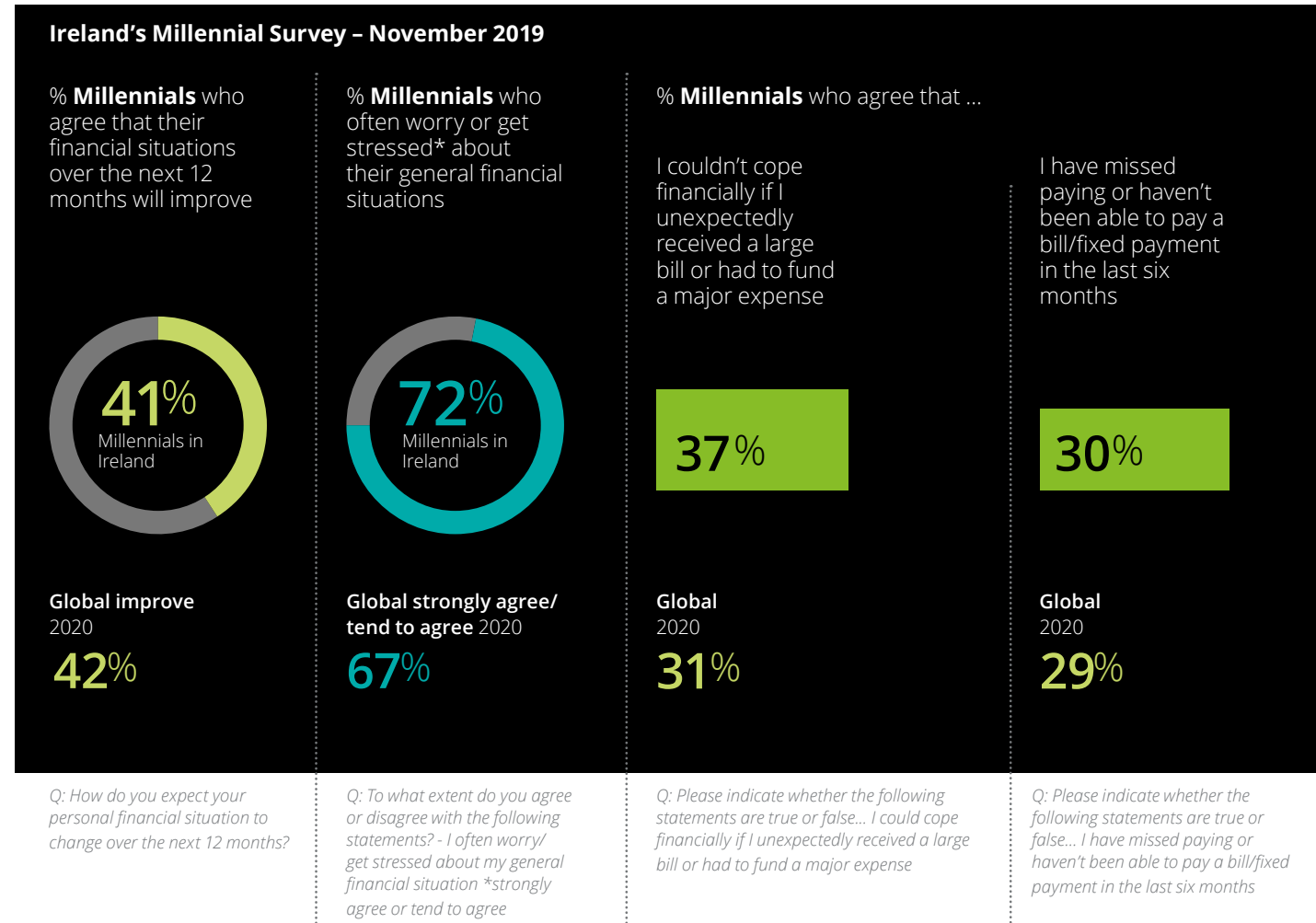
08

Financial prudence becomes integral

Having enough money to pay the bills is a long-running cause of stress for many, but it's especially concerning for millennials and Gen Zs. Prior to the pandemic, 37% of millennials were concerned about their longer term financial future and 31% were anxious about their day to day finances. Even more significantly, 72% of millennials noted they were worried or got stressed about their general financial situations. This reflects a trend which has continued for a number of years where millennials have had an increasingly pessimistic view of the world that has impacted spending patterns and their consumer confidence.

Looking at spending patterns in Ireland in August 2020 from Deloitte's 'State of the Consumer Tracker', 46% of 18-34 year olds are delaying large purchases and 31% are concerned about making upcoming payments.³ Clearly, this pessimistic financial view is continuing and has been reinforced by the pandemic.

3. Deloitte's State of the Consumer Tracker, <https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/insights/industry/retail-distribution/consumer-behavior-trends-state-of-the-consumer-tracker.html>



01

02

03

04

05

06

07

08



01

02

03

04

05

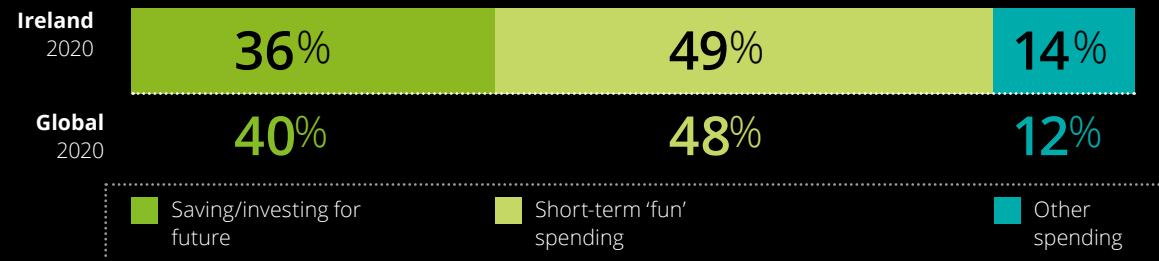
06

07

08

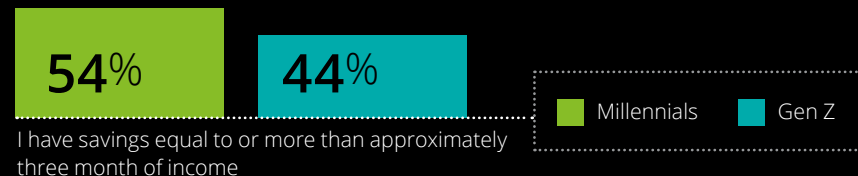
Ireland's Millennial Survey – November 2019

% Millennials' distribution of "discretionary" spending



Q: Once you've covered things you have to pay for (e.g. taxes, rent/mortgage, food, etc.), what proportion of the money you are left with do you typically devote to... Saving/investing in the future (general savings to put towards large future purchases, my pension/retirement funds, investments/financial portfolio, saving for my child's/children's education), short-term 'fun' spending (general spending/social life/entertainment, saving or spending on travel/holidays, charities/causes that are important to me), other spending (other spending not covered above). Rebased to exclude 'don't know'.

Global's pulse survey May 2020



Q: Please indicate whether the following statements are true or false...



Whilst the pandemic is a significant financial stressor for many millennials, it may also provide an opportunity to address some of these financial concerns. Between the Millennial's Survey results in May and the Irish results from the 'State of the Consumer Tracker' in August millennials savings as a proportion of spending has increased from 9% to 25%. This is likely due to the reduced spending opportunities available in the market and demonstrates that for many millennials, short term financial concerns are not as prevalent. In fact, at least 44% of millennials and Gen Zs report savings equal to or more than approximately three months of income which may be a reflection of the delay in spending on large purchases. Organisations will be interested in whether or not this trend will continue to increase towards a longer-term saving amount for these generations.

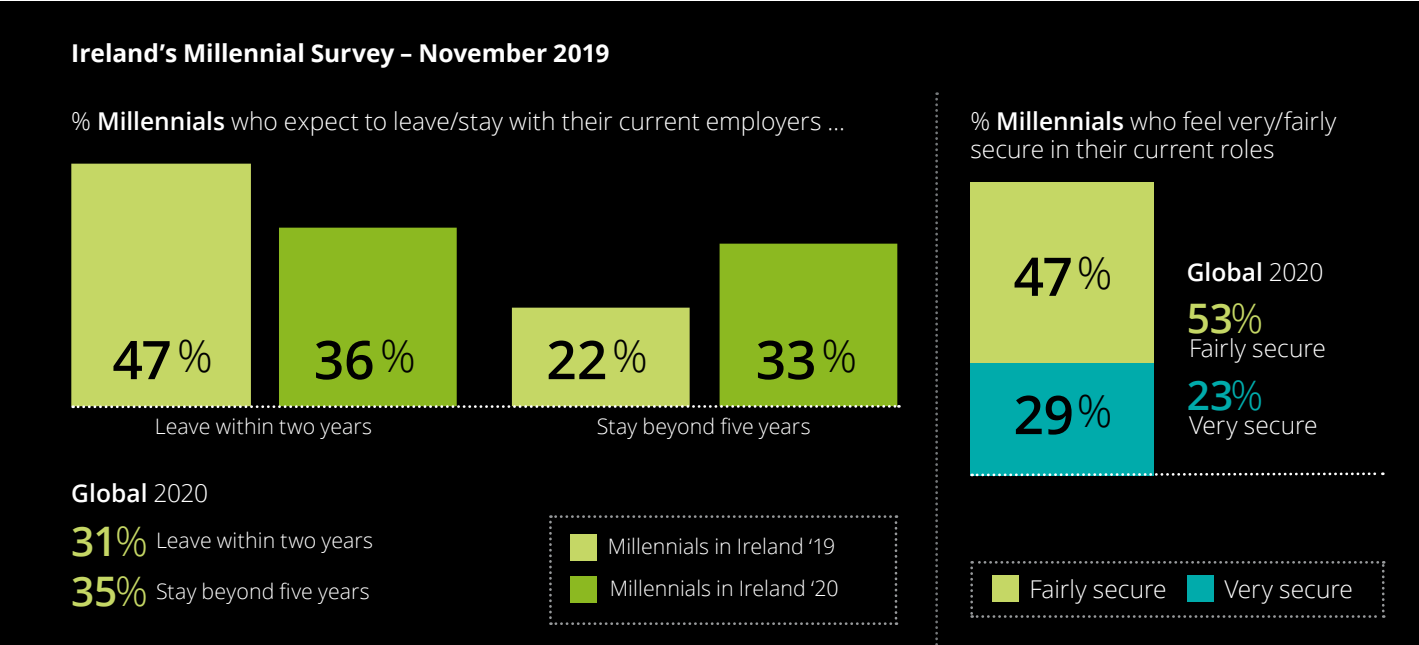
However, there may be a wider impact on this generation giving up rental properties as the requirement to live near places of work has decreased in the short-term. It remains to be seen if the property market becomes a source of stress on this generation as the longer term impact of COVID-19 becomes evident.

Job security

Coupled with the trend of increased anxiety over financial wellbeing, COVID-19 has highlighted job security as a primary concern and a significant contributor of stress for millennials. Prior to COVID-19, Irish millennials enjoyed relatively high employment security, with 76% of respondents indicating they felt either very secure, or secure in employment. This

reflects the global trend where 76% of millennials felt either fairly or very secure in their current roles. The results of the July pulse survey highlighted that more than 40% of the respondents who said they experience stress acknowledged that their job career prospects contributed “a lot” to their anxiety related to losing their job.

Evidently this pandemic has placed millennials in a curious market position. Large amounts of savings, limited spending opportunities and concerns over job security have created a situation in which millennials have significant spending power, but do not have the confidence to act on it. If confidence is returned, this cohort will be a very valuable one, with greater purchasing power than prior to COVID-19, and potentially pent-up demand across a range of sectors and services. Businesses should plan for how to engage millennials effectively if this scenario becomes reality.



Q: If you had a choice, how long would you stay with your current employer(s) before leaving to join a new organisation or do something different?

Q: How secure do you feel in your current role where you work?



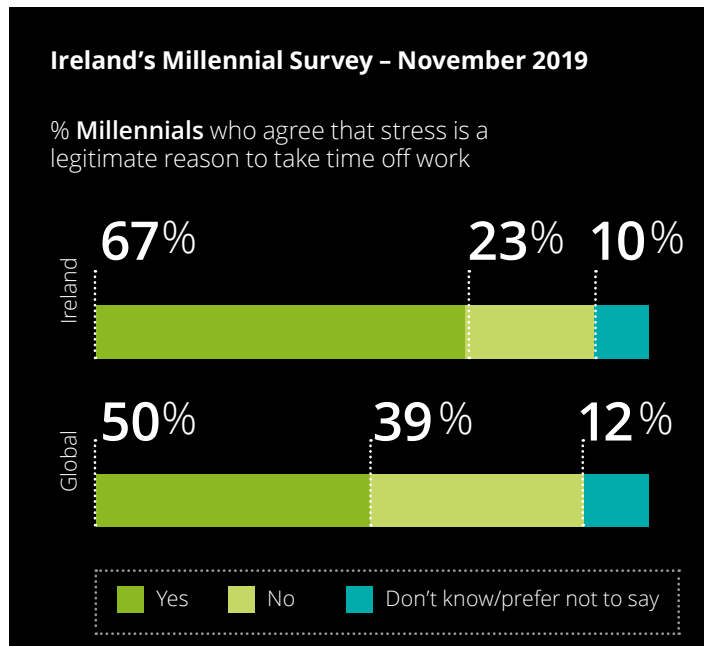
A reduction in overall stress in 2020

Independently of COVID-19, anxiety and its impact on mental health has become an increasingly prominent feature of millennial's lives. This is reflected in the Millennial Survey results where half of Irish respondents stated they felt anxious most or all of the time, and 28% revealed they had taken time off work as a result of this

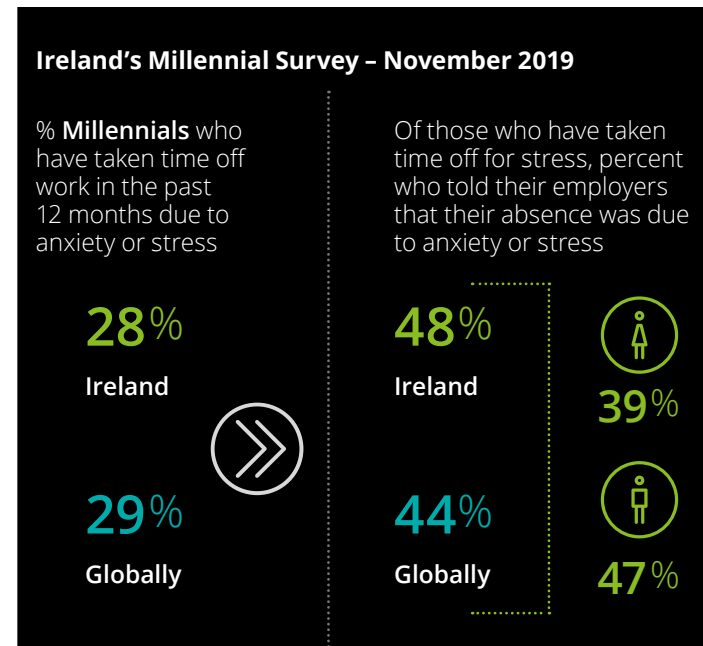
stress. Given the upheaval to lives resulting from this pandemic, it would be reasonable to expect increased anxiety levels amongst this generation. Many millennials have reported concern for the health and wellbeing of their families, with 37% of the global pulse survey respondents noting this as a contributor to their feelings

of stress. The results from the 'State of the Consumer Tracker' in August showed that 64% of respondents reported concerns for the health of their families.

While this global pandemic may be re-shaping the root causes of anxiety, interestingly, millennials are not reporting increased stress levels. The results of the global pulse survey indicate that amongst millennials, anxiety levels have declined throughout this period with an 8% decrease in stress reported when compared to pre COVID-19 results.⁴ This may in part be due to the way in which remote working resulting from the pandemic has re-shaped working patterns and lifestyles for this cohort. Our global pulse survey supports this assertion, with 67% of millennials globally stating that remote working enables a better work life balance, and 69% stating that having the option to work from home in the future would relieve stress. Based on these results, it is important that employers offer a variety of preferences regarding working from home.



Q: Do you believe feelings of anxiety or stress are a legitimate reason to take time off from work? (i.e. as a sick day/leave of absence)



Q: In the past 12 months, have you ever taken time off work (i.e. a sick day/leave of absence) due to feelings of anxiety or stress? (regardless of whether anxiety or stress was the reason you gave to your employer at the time)

Q: When you took time off work due to feelings of anxiety or stress, did you tell your employer this was the reason? Or did you say it was because of a different reason? **Among those who have taken time off due to anxiety or stress in the past 12 months

4. The Deloitte Global Millennial Survey 2020 Report, <https://www2.deloitte.com/global/en/pages/about-deloitte/articles/millennialsurvey.html>



01

02

03

04

05

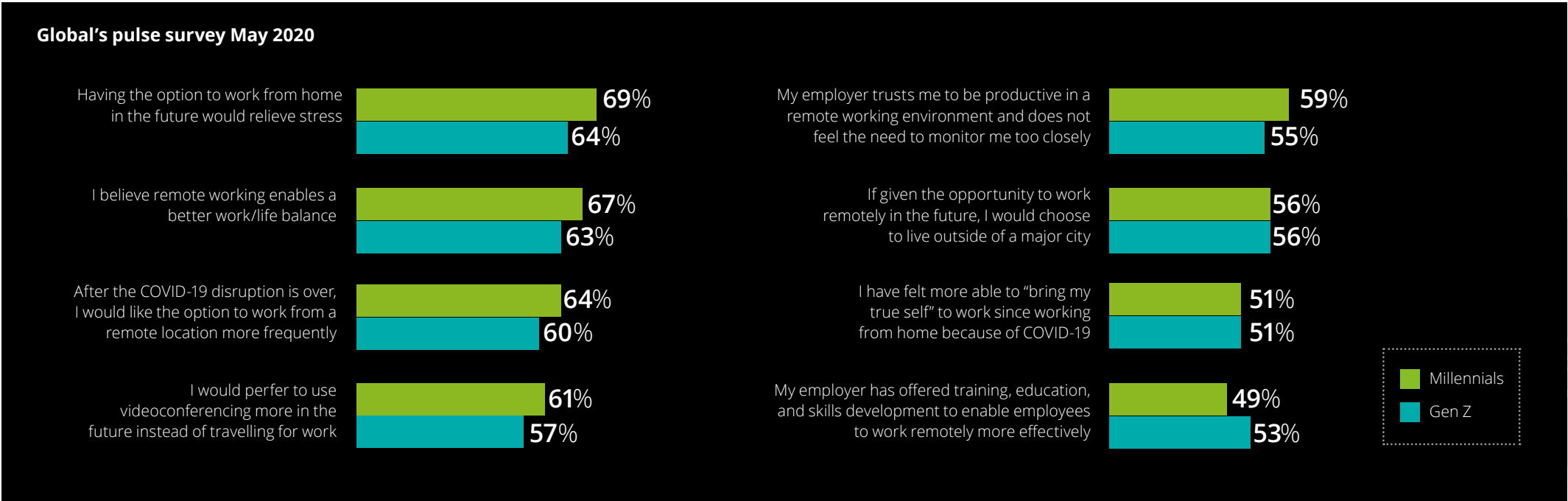
06

07

08

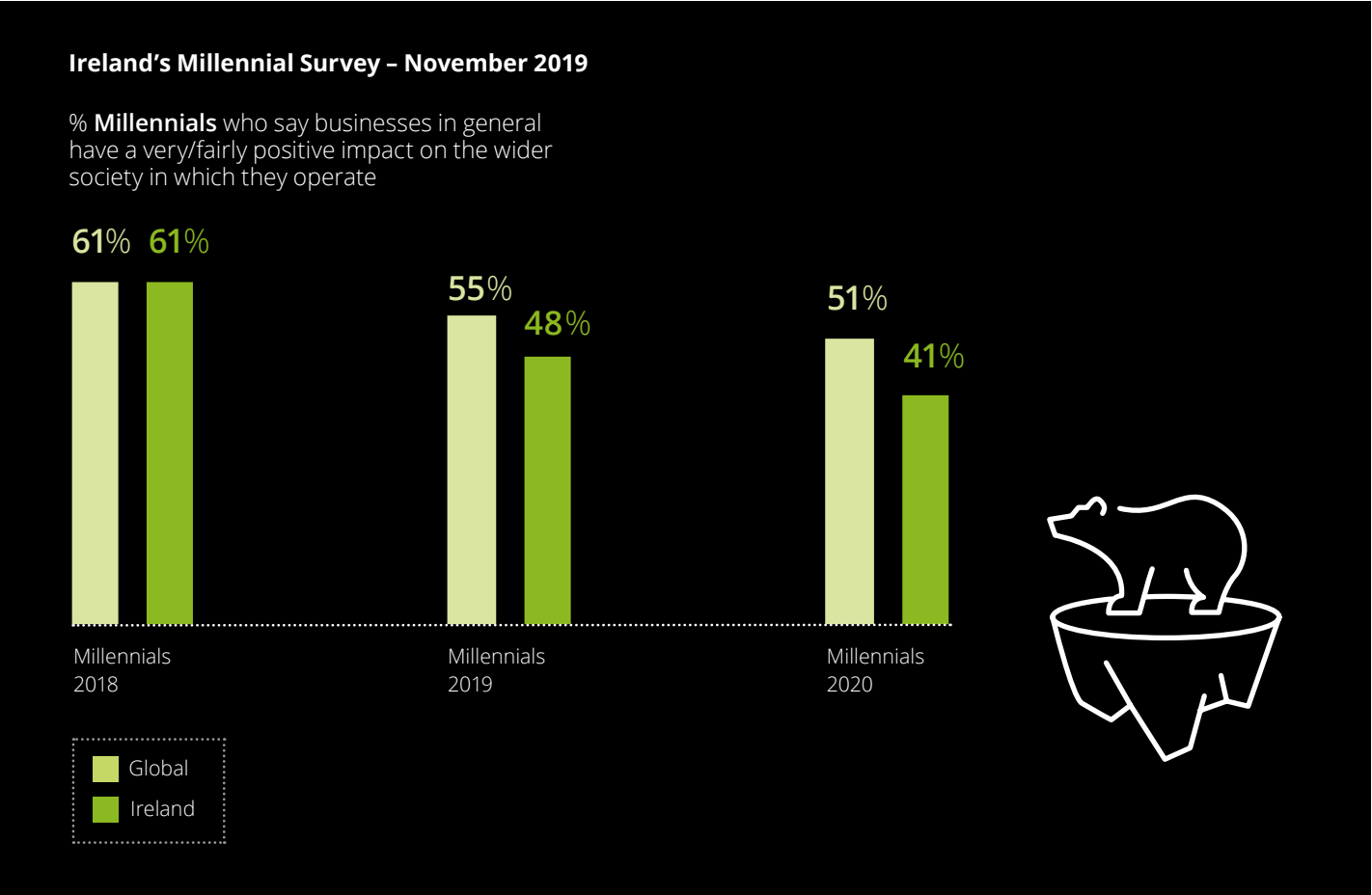
While this trend is positive, it does not negate the new stressors brought on by COVID-19. Naturally, concerns for the well-being of family members and personal finances will be front of mind for millennials throughout this pandemic. As remote working continues to be

the norm, it is important that organisations find ways to touch base with employees regarding their mental wellbeing. Staying aware of and on top of the key stressors employees face could ensure this downward trend is maintained and the impact of stress on business continuity is lessened.



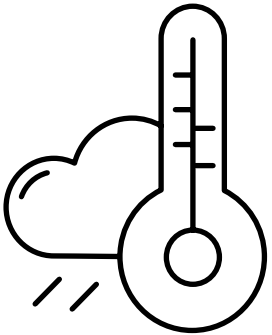
Q: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about working from home/a remote location, rather than working from your employer's premises/offices?

How brands respond to world events



Q: Thinking about businesses in general around the world, what impact do you think they are having on the wider society in which they operate?

Climate change and social justice are topics that resonate heavily with millennials. How organisations are perceived by millennials to respond to these challenges has been highlighted, time and time again, as a cause that impacts millennial's spending patterns and career choices. Despite a number of businesses increasing their focus on sustainability in recent years, the results of this year's millennials survey has highlighted that their views on the impact of business on the world remains low. Prior to COVID-19, just 41% of Irish millennials indicated that business around the world have a fairly or very positive impact on society. 37% of millennials opted to stop their relationship with a brand they deemed to be negatively impacting the environment. This cohort will act on their perceptions of business reputation and performance on these topics.



Ireland's Millennial Survey – November 2019

% Millennials who have stopped or started a relationship with a business because of ...

	Stopped	Started
Balance achieved between "doing good" and making profits	16%	27%

Positive or negative impact of products/ services on the environment	37%	40%
--	-----	-----

Its position/performance on diversity and inclusion	14%	16%
---	-----	-----

The amount of tax it pays relative to its profits/revenues	19%	14%
--	-----	-----

The pay/reward it provides to senior executives relative to the average employee	23%	18%
--	-----	-----

Its ability to protect personal data	31%	24%
--------------------------------------	-----	-----

The position the company's CEO/ leader has taken on political issues	20%	10%
--	-----	-----

Although millennials have retained a pessimistic view of the impact of business, this pandemic may provide an opportunity to shift this trend. In the Irish results of the 'State of the Consumer Tracker' in August 2020, 46% of people said they would be more likely to purchase from brands that have responded well to the crisis. Evidently, consumer choices are still linked to the perceived responsiveness of organisations to the environment in which they operate and COVID-19 is a crisis that has affected society at large.⁵ This pandemic provides businesses with an opportunity to examine the impact they make and to positively respond to an event that has changed most of our lives. The actions of businesses in response to this pandemic will be closely monitored by millennials.

Responsiveness to this world event, in an efficient and positively perceived manner, will be integral to securing future positive brand perception and loyalty from millennials in Ireland.

5. Deloitte's State of the Consumer Tracker – Ireland, 2020, <https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/insights/industry/retail-distribution/consumer-behavior-trends-state-of-the-consumer-tracker.html>



Q: As a consumer, have you ever started or deepened a relationship with a business because of the following?

Q: As a consumer, have you ever stopped or lessened a relationship with a business because of the following?

Conclusion: The message for leaders and society

It is undeniable that we are at a pivotal point, the world has changed rapidly since the beginning of 2020 and with this change brings immense opportunity to create a brighter future. The feedback from millennials and Gen Zs suggests that despite recent hardships and stressors, they remain steadfast in their belief to support and engage with organisations that strive for this brighter future. As a generation, and as a society, we have demonstrated resilience and agility in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, organisations must be aware of the impact this will have had on their behaviours, priorities and demands, potentially for years to come. Already we have seen that despite the turmoil, reported stress levels are decreasing and if this downward trend can be maintained, it demonstrates a movement in the right direction towards addressing the impact of stress on mental health. Having demonstrated agility and resilience, organisations must now look to opportunities to adapt and grow further for the better as we have seen the

desire for change will not go away. Based on the results, the future of work is evolving rapidly and organisations need to re-architect work for greater productivity, and consider the changing preferences of your current and future employees' "ways of working". Leaders have an opportunity to help their own organisations indirectly by striving for a better future. Initiatives which have a focus on, and deliver, socially responsible improvements to the world can improve prominent issues such as climate change, economic equality and diversity and inclusion. Indirectly in doing so, leaders should see an increase in engagement from the millennials and Gen Zs who hold these initiatives close and are willing to act in order to ensure they are prioritised.

As we continue to monitor responses and trends in our volatile world, we have the opportunity to recalibrate and adjust with a focus on improving the future outlook for the new workforce, and future generations to come.



01

02

03

04

05

06

07

08



At Deloitte, we make an impact that matters for our clients, our people, our profession, and in the wider society by delivering the solutions and insights they need to address their most complex business challenges. As the largest global professional services and consulting network, with over 312,000 professionals in more than 150 countries, we bring world-class capabilities and high-quality services to our clients. In Ireland, Deloitte has over 3,000 people providing audit, tax, consulting, and corporate finance services to public and private clients spanning multiple industries. Our people have the leadership capabilities, experience and insight to collaborate with clients so they can move forward with confidence.

This publication has been written in general terms and we recommend that you obtain professional advice before acting or refraining from action on any of the contents of this publication. Deloitte Ireland LLP accepts no liability for any loss occasioned to any person acting or refraining from action as a result of any material in this publication.

Deloitte Ireland LLP is a limited liability partnership registered in Northern Ireland with registered number NC1499 and its registered office at 19 Bedford Street, Belfast BT2 7EJ, Northern Ireland.

Deloitte Ireland LLP is the Ireland affiliate of Deloitte NSE LLP, a member firm of Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited, a UK private company limited by guarantee ("DTTL"). DTTL and each of its member firms are legally separate and independent entities. DTTL and Deloitte NSE LLP do not provide services to clients. Please see www.deloitte.com/about to learn more about our global network of member firms.

© 2020 Deloitte Ireland LLP. All rights reserved.

Get in contact

Interested in hearing more about millennials and how you should be engaging with them as an employer and as a brand? Please get in touch



Valarie Daunt

Partner – Human Capital
vdaunt@deloitte.ie



Ian Curtin

Director
icurtin@deloitte.ie



Vicky Menzies

Director
vmenzies@deloitte.ie



Gary Notley

Director
gnotley@deloitte.ie



Ciaran Duffy

Director
ciduffy@deloitte.ie

Deloitte.ie



**MAKING AN
IMPACT THAT
MATTERS**
Since 1845