



Youth  
speak  
POWERED BY AIESEC

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# IMPROVING THE JOURNEY FROM EDUCATION TO EMPLOYMENT

YouthSpeak Survey Millennial Insight Report

## About YouthSpeak

YouthSpeak is a global youth movement and youth insight survey powered by AIESEC. We are focused on **understanding** the hopes and challenges surrounding the journey from higher education to **employment** for young people. Over 100 countries and territories and 40,000 voices is captured in the 2015 comprehensive survey to engage stakeholders across government, business, third sector and educators in letting the voices of young people be heard. This survey will provide decision makers with key insights into a global youth opinion and how we can bridge the gap between young people and decision makers across sectors.



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[youthspeak.aiesec.org](http://youthspeak.aiesec.org)

## Powered by AIESEC

AIESEC is the world's largest youth-led organisation developing the **leadership** potential of young people worldwide. Present in over 125 countries and territories with 70,000+ members across 2600 universities, we offer young people a chance to develop their leadership potential through life changing professional and personal **development** experiences. Since 1948, we've developed over **one million people**, including one Nobel Peace Prize Winner, and many prominent world, business and civil society leaders.



[AIESEC.org](http://AIESEC.org)



# + How can we improve the journey from education to employment?

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## Education



*How can we evolve higher education to become more effective at meeting the needs of students and employers?*

## Transition



*How can we ensure that students transition from education to employment successfully?*

## Employment



*How can employers better support the development of youth potential in and out of the workplace?*

***Today's generation of youth***  
— the largest the world has ever known, and the vast majority of whom live in developing countries — has unprecedented ***potential*** to advance the well-being of the entire human family. Yet too many young people, including those who are highly ***educated***, suffer from low-wage, dead-end work and record levels of **unemployment.**

- Ban-Ki Moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations





# + Foreword: Bridging the gap between youth and decision makers

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By **Gordon Ching**  
Global Vice President & YouthSpeak Research Leader  
AIESEC International

## Bringing Youth Opinion to the Decision Making Table

Millennials are driving unprecedented change in society as technology, globalization and new communications have become an integral part of their lives. They have almost unlimited access to information and knowledge through the internet, but are also faced with challenges in adapting to new demands from employers and society. They will represent 75% of the global workforce by 2025 and they are also the largest youth population and the most educated generation in history. The urgency behind this number grows when we realize that 80% of these youth come from emerging, developing or fragile states.

Education is at a crossroads of rapid evolution and disruption as employers demand a whole new set of skills, competencies and behaviours. We live in a world where education itself is not limited to the classroom. The rise of online education, peer-to-peer learning and experiential learning have paved the way for a highly entrepreneurial generation.

Yet at the same time, global youth unemployment stands at 74 million worldwide and this number seems to be growing according to the 2015 World Economic and Social Outlook report. Has the degree become outdated? For many millennials, a degree can seem like a simple check mark, for some it is a gateway to expected employment, but the reality is, simply earning a degree does not guarantee a job anymore. The rise of globalization, technological change and human connectivity have created new models of learning and development.

While many businesses and organizations themselves have gone through rapid transformations to adapt to the world we live in, the majority of governments and the education system has yet to change as swiftly. For millennials, growing up in a world where major global issues have become more urgent, visible and prominent, has shaped a generation whose behaviours are closely in tune with a stronger social

consciousness. Millennials carry this behaviour to their employers and everyday actions.

Greater youth prioritization from the United Nations, as reflected in the Sustainable Development Goals that set a new course of global development over the next 15 years leading up to 2030, have put a new type of spotlight on youth. No longer are young people sitting on sidelines as reflected in our research and also in the MY World survey, where young people are actively taking action, and are increasingly being included in the decision-making process. This realization and understanding is needed to ensure that multiple generations are reflected in the discussions to form more inclusive and sustainable decisions.

With 42,257 survey respondents ages 18-25 across 100 countries and territories, these insights provide valuable information on how we can change our systems and make better decisions that include the youth opinion. YouthSpeak's mission is to bridge the gap between young people and decision makers so we can improve societal systems and enabling the potential of youth.

Beyond our comprehensive survey, this report focuses on the unique opportunity to collaborate with PwC's global human capital team to better understand the type of insights that would help business leaders to make better decisions, and our strategic partners at the United Nations agencies to connect our insights to impact policy-making and push the youth agenda.

Our partners assisted us with the creation of the survey, understanding the outcomes and producing the report so we can better help decision makers. At the end of the day, we invite leaders from across sectors to participate, engage and open their minds to rethinking how they approach decision-making, and better understand the role of today's youth.



# Respondent Demographics



# 42,257

youth respondents from  
100 countries and  
territories

## + Demographics

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### *42,257 responses - A Generation between Y&Z*

The majority of respondents are between the age of 18 - 25 -- an age group that will enter university or are already seeking their first formal jobs, making the next big wave in decision-making and market shifts. These millennials are a generation that is sitting on the edge of Generation Y&Z age brackets.

### *Demographics at a glance*

- 51% are members of AIESEC, and 49% are young people in the general public not associated directly with AIESEC
- 52% of respondents are born between 1997 - 1994
- 36% of respondents are born between 1993 - 1990
- Majority of respondents are business students, followed by social sciences and engineering
- 40/100 countries and territories that responded have over 100 responses

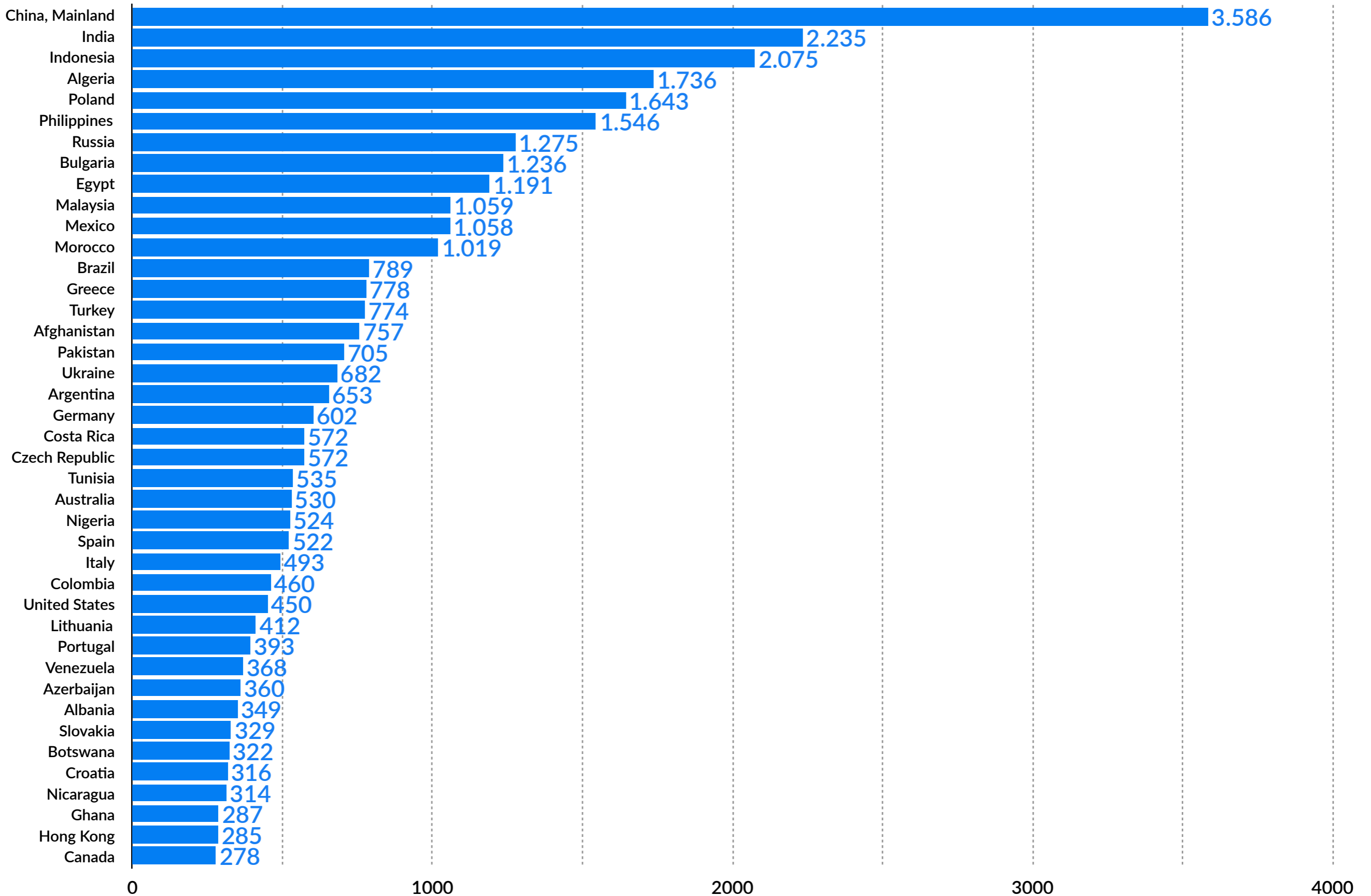
### *How we conducted the YouthSpeak Survey*

The YouthSpeak survey is implemented primarily through the global AIESEC network of 125 countries and territories, leveraging both online and offline channels to reach students in and outside of AIESEC. YouthSpeak has also developed into a broader youth movement to let young people voice their opinions and have them heard by decision makers. The PwC Global Human Capital team provided us with the input and guidance to creating the necessary questions. We also worked together with organisations to co-promote and consult, like the United Nations Millennium Campaign, MY World survey, United Nations Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, dozens of universities around the world and many other organizations that support the campaign, and more importantly, tens of thousands of young people who took part in this campaign.

It is a survey that has evolved into a broader youth campaign that enables young people to participate and engage on issues relevant to them. Through physical channels, we also develop workshops and keynotes at conferences to stimulate engagement on youth issues and to capture youth opinions on the data. Also, by launching "YouthSpeak Day" we engaged thousands of young people on social media who took a picture of the issue they care about, saying: "I speak up for..." and tagged 5 friends to activate them on the cause.



# Top 40 countries and territories of survey respondents (# of responses)



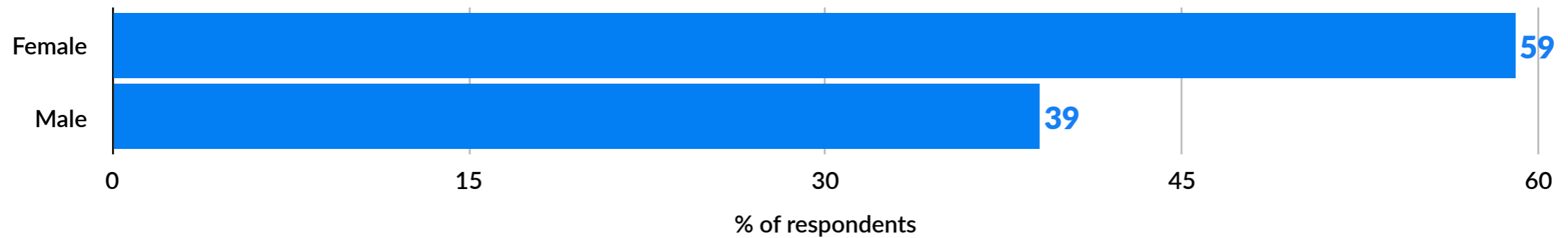




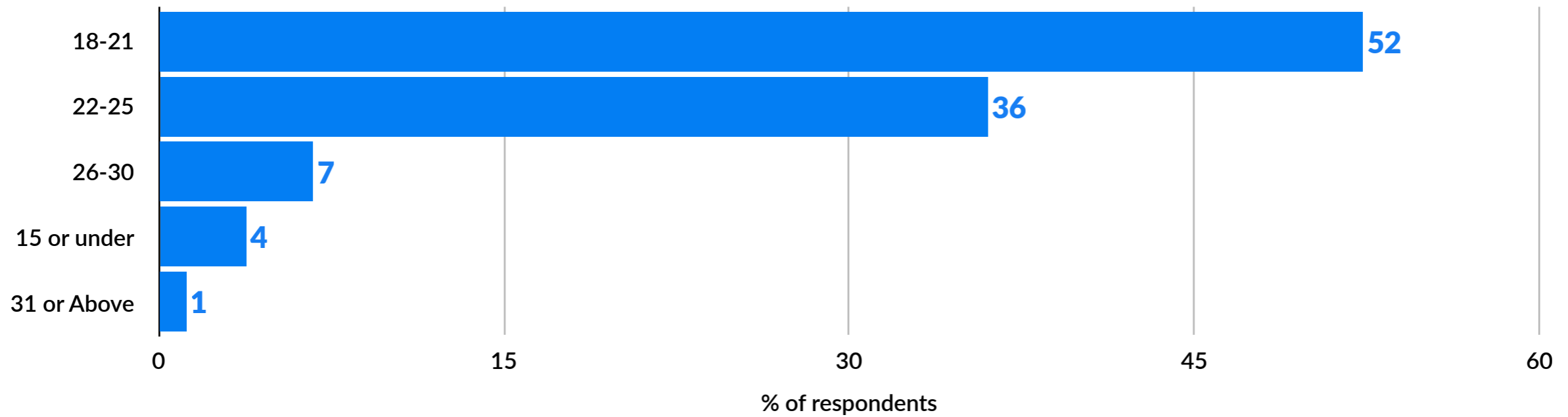
# Demographics of respondents

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## Gender



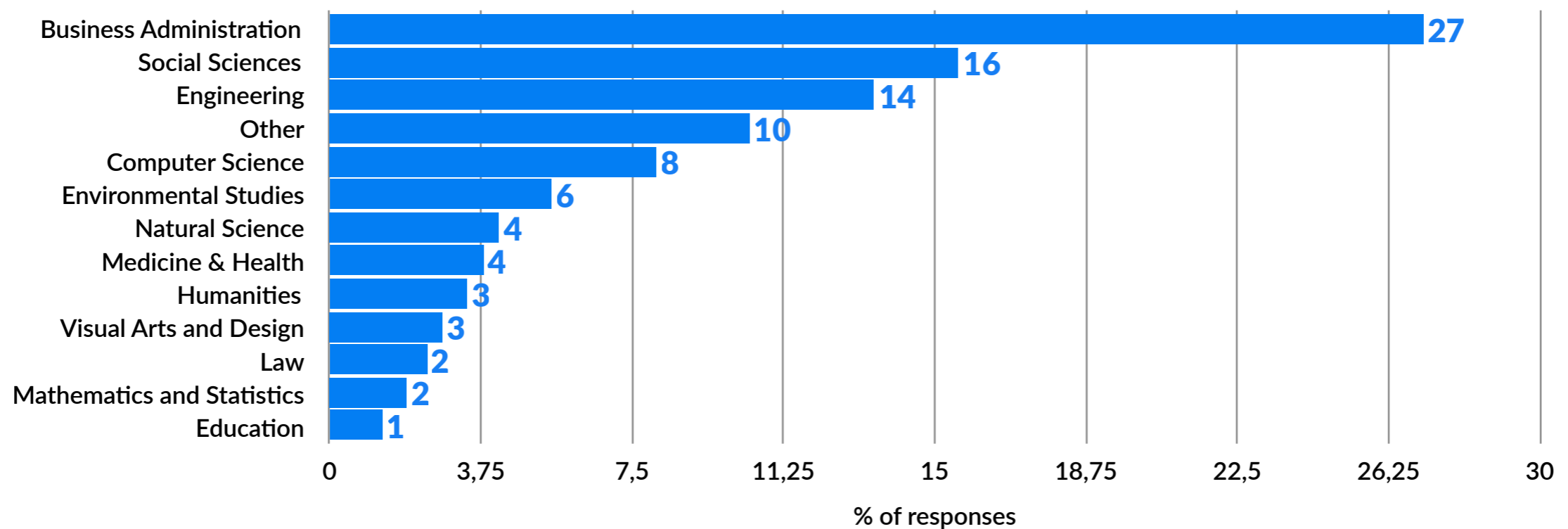
## Age of respondents



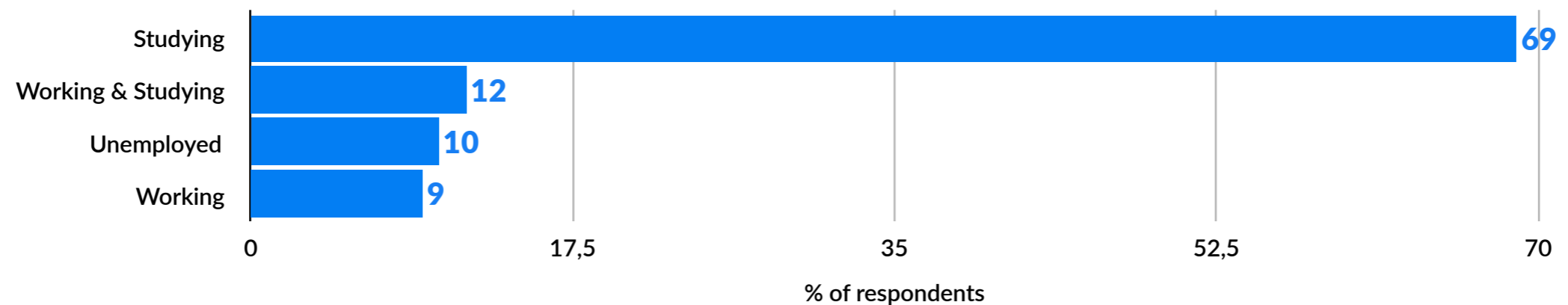


# Demographics of respondents

## What is your main area of study?



## Are you studying or working?



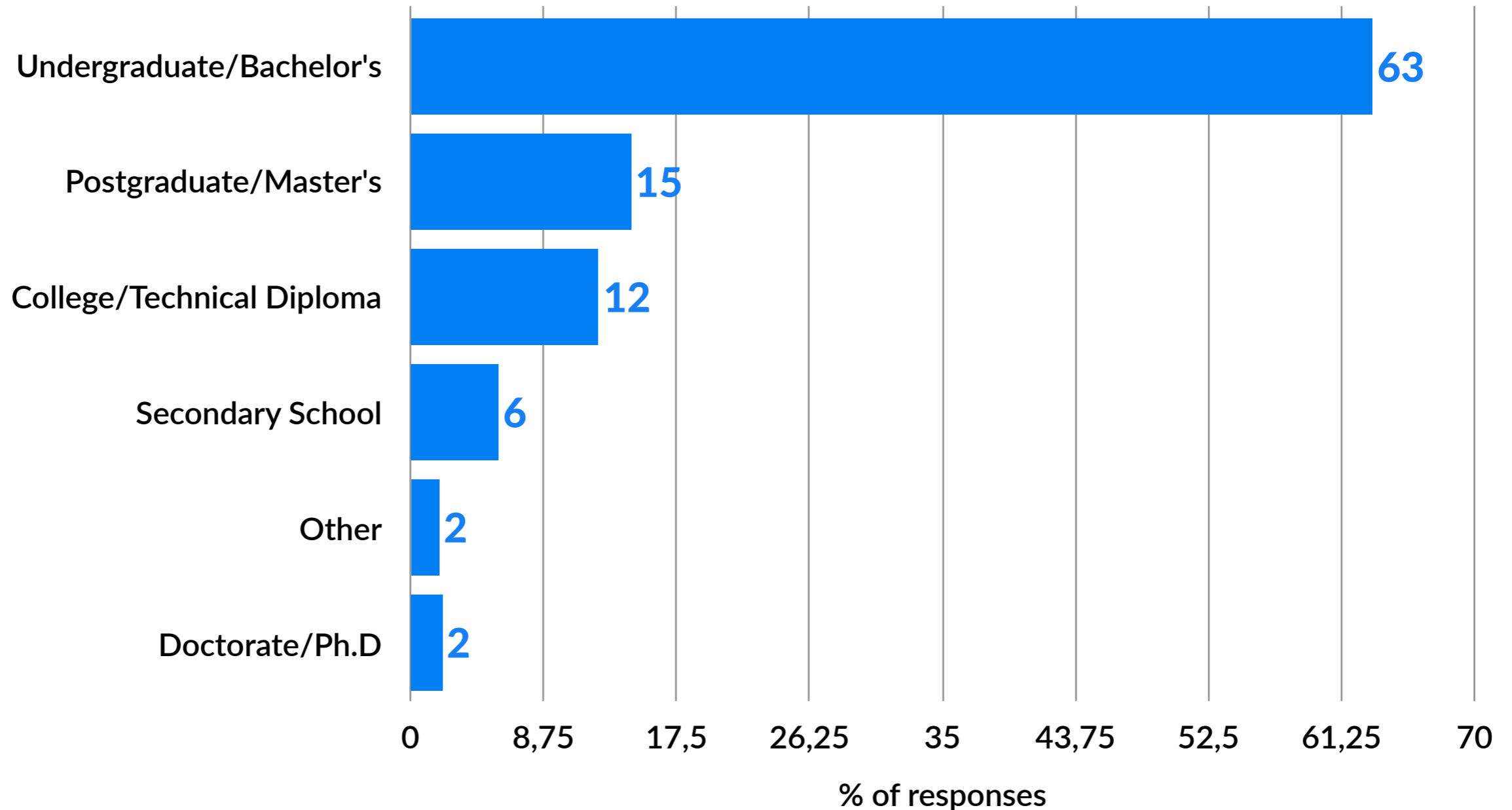




# Demographics of respondents

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## Highest level of education

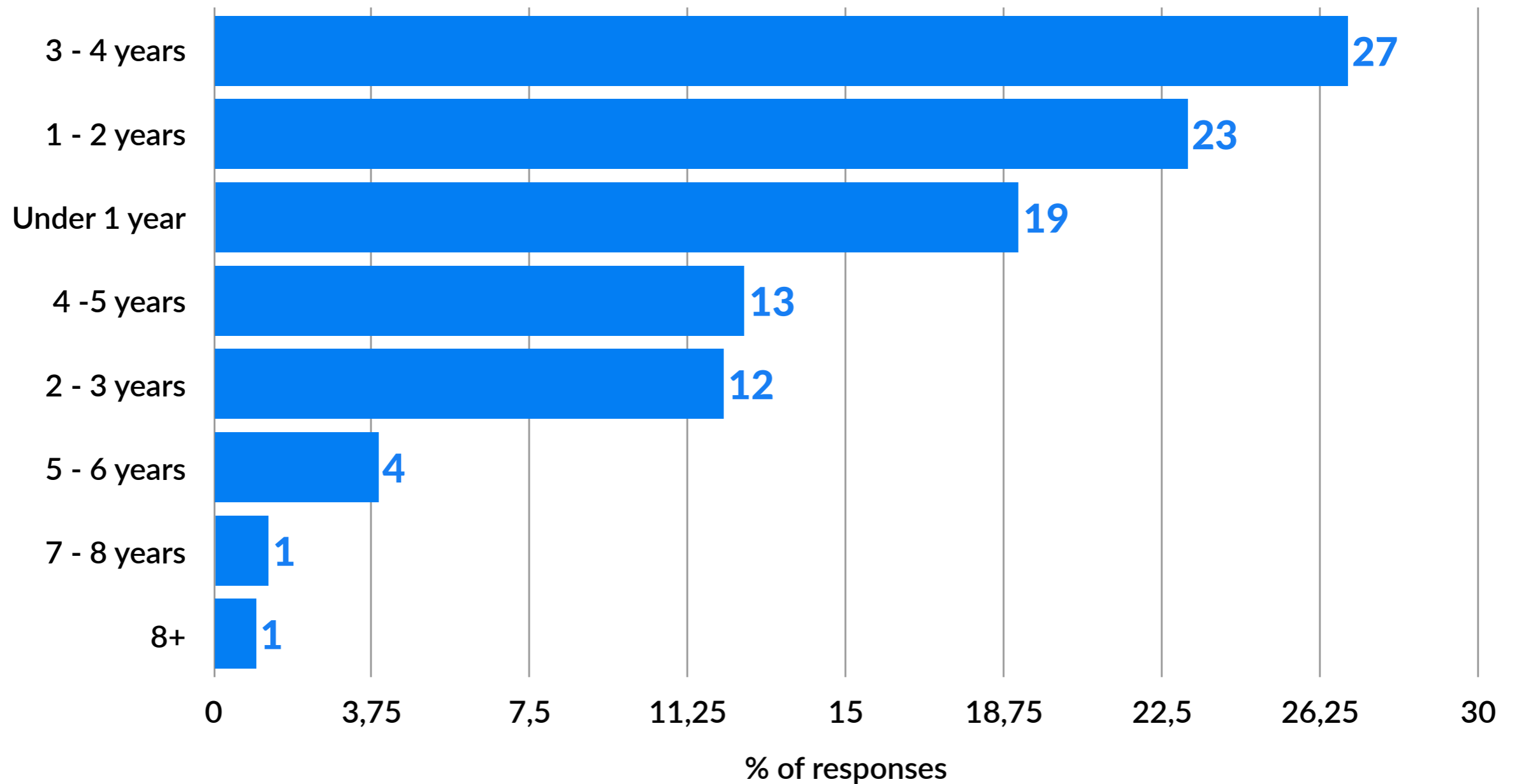




# Demographics of respondents

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How long have you been in AIESEC? (AIESEC respondents only)





Education



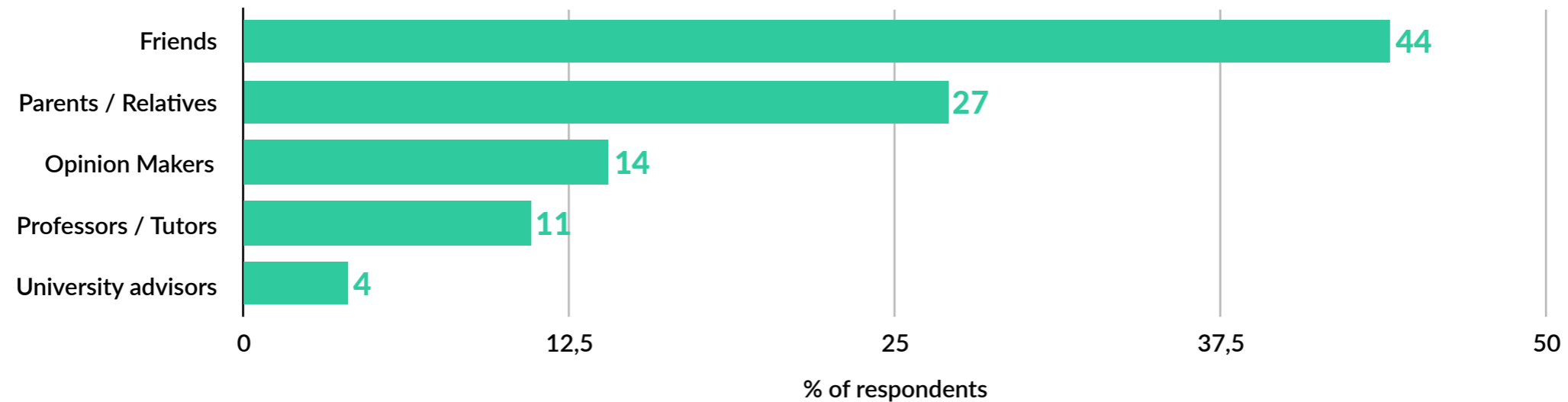


How can we evolve higher education to become more effective at *meeting the needs* of students and employers?



# Changing landscape on trust

Who are the most influential individuals helping you make career decisions?



## Rebuilding trust and evolving the education system

Young people around the world are not content with their educational experiences in school. They are not satisfied with what they are getting out of their university experiences in connection to their future goals. With university advisors ranking last in the list of influencers support in career decisions, there is a bigger story to be told surrounding the role of universities. We are looking at a world where young people can find more relevant and practical information online than at a university.

What is the evolving role of educators to bridge this gap of trust?

University advisers will need to improve their engagement with employers and students to boost credibility and their perceived value.

Employers who are focused on reaching out to university students will need to understand how to influence the people surrounding their talents and at the same time engage more meaningfully with students. For example, employers who only focus on online channels, are missing out on key opportunities to position their employees as mentors and career advisers for students on campus.

The best way to engage millennials will be through more authentic means such as

using tools like social media, public speaking, workshops and even conferences to engage young people.

For educators, the opportunity to bridge this gap of trust is needed in order to ensure that students are receiving the right information about their future careers.

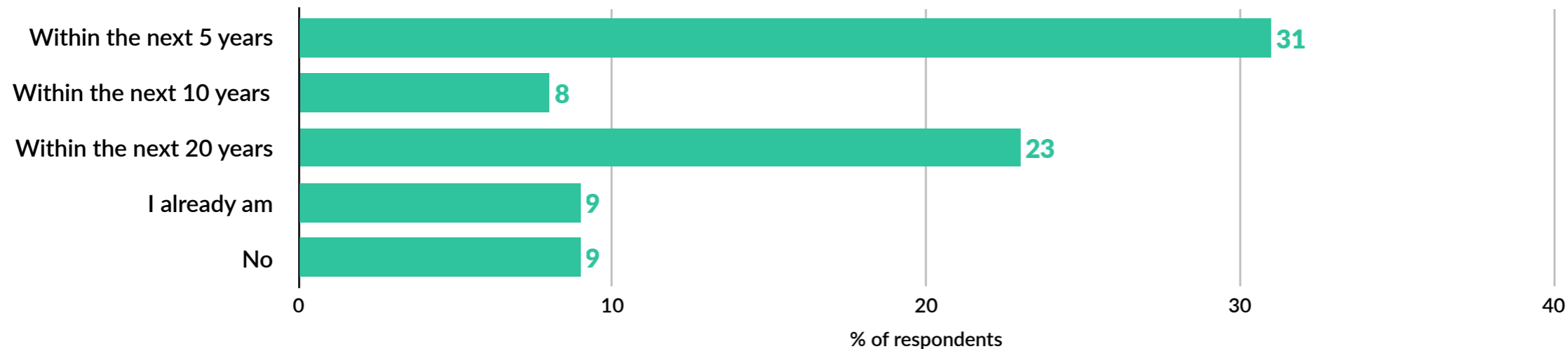


61%

of millennials have plans to become an entrepreneur / already an entrepreneur

# A generation of entrepreneurs

## Do you have plans to become an entrepreneur?



### *Greater need for entrepreneurial learning environments and stronger support systems for entrepreneurship*

61% of millennials have plans to become an entrepreneur, and another 8.7% already are.

With a generation full of future entrepreneurs, the behaviours of young millennials will greatly impact their career choices and how they view the role of their employers.

With 31.3% of respondents stating that they want to become an entrepreneur in 5 years, a significant portion of millennial talents will enter the workplace knowing they will already be job-hopping and departing within a 5 year window.

In the past decade, we have also seen a great rise of internet and technology entrepreneurs who have paved the way for an entire generation.

What are the implications of an entrepreneurial generation for employers?

- How will we create workplaces that are more welcoming and friendly to entrepreneurial profiles?
- How will we support large volumes of entrepreneurial talents?

For educators – greater practical knowledge will be needed to support an entrepreneurial generation

- How will the classroom transform to become more focused on building the capabilities of future entrepreneurs and support them?

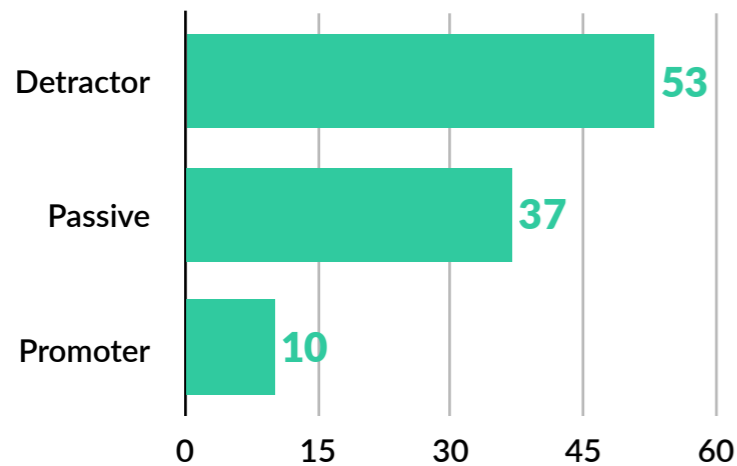


# 1 in 4

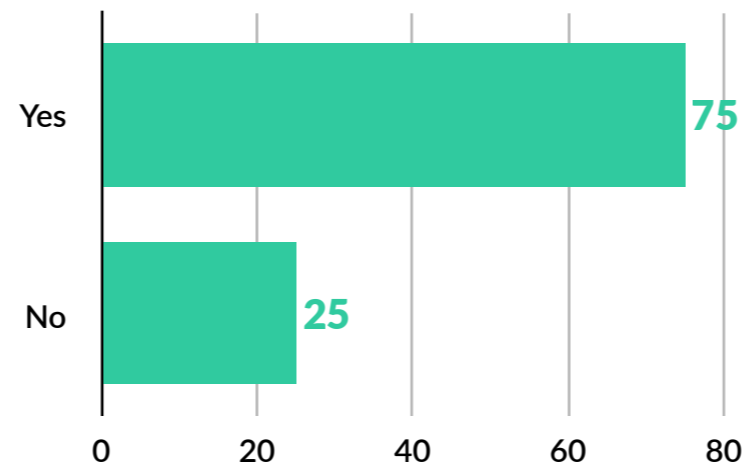
millennials see global experiences as the most important in the first 5 years of their career

## + Students see the value of education, but are not satisfied with the experience and lack the career support

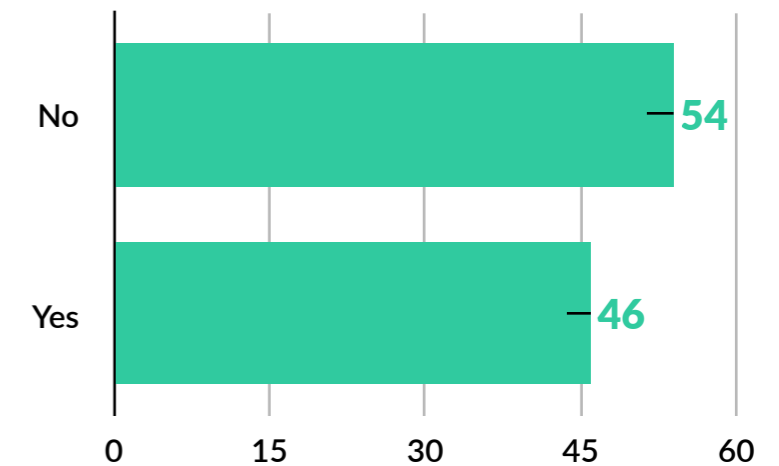
Satisfaction with higher education experience in connection with future goals



Does your education feel relevant to what you want to do in the future?



Do you feel like you have the guidance and support for your ideal post-graduation career?



### Disconnection of Education to Employment

53% of millennials see a disconnection between what they are learning today versus what they will need tomorrow. For most millennials beyond technical backgrounds, their degrees have not given them the value they were looking for.

Millennials are also largely unsatisfied with the education system, with a global Net Promoter Score of -42 as found in our survey, the expectations of what young people learn and get out of school is not meeting the needs for them personally and professionally.

For most millennials, they are certain about the relevance of an educational experience for their

future, but is greatly disconnected from the satisfaction and value they are getting in return.

At the same time, students are not getting the guidance and support to understand what they will need for their ideal post-graduation careers. Looking back at the previous slide on trust—there is a strong connection between the lack of support in university for career development and the distrust in university advisers to support career related matters.

How can we bridge this trust and support gap? With youth unemployment as high as 50% in Spain and Greece, and rapidly rising in many other economies, there is a significant challenge

for government, youth, employers and the third sector to bridge this gap.

Last year, the global youth population reached 1.8 billion, and 89% of the world's youth live in less developed countries. The need for cross-sector collaboration and the inclusion of youth opinion is urgently needed to address this issue of misalignment and disconnection of education and employment.

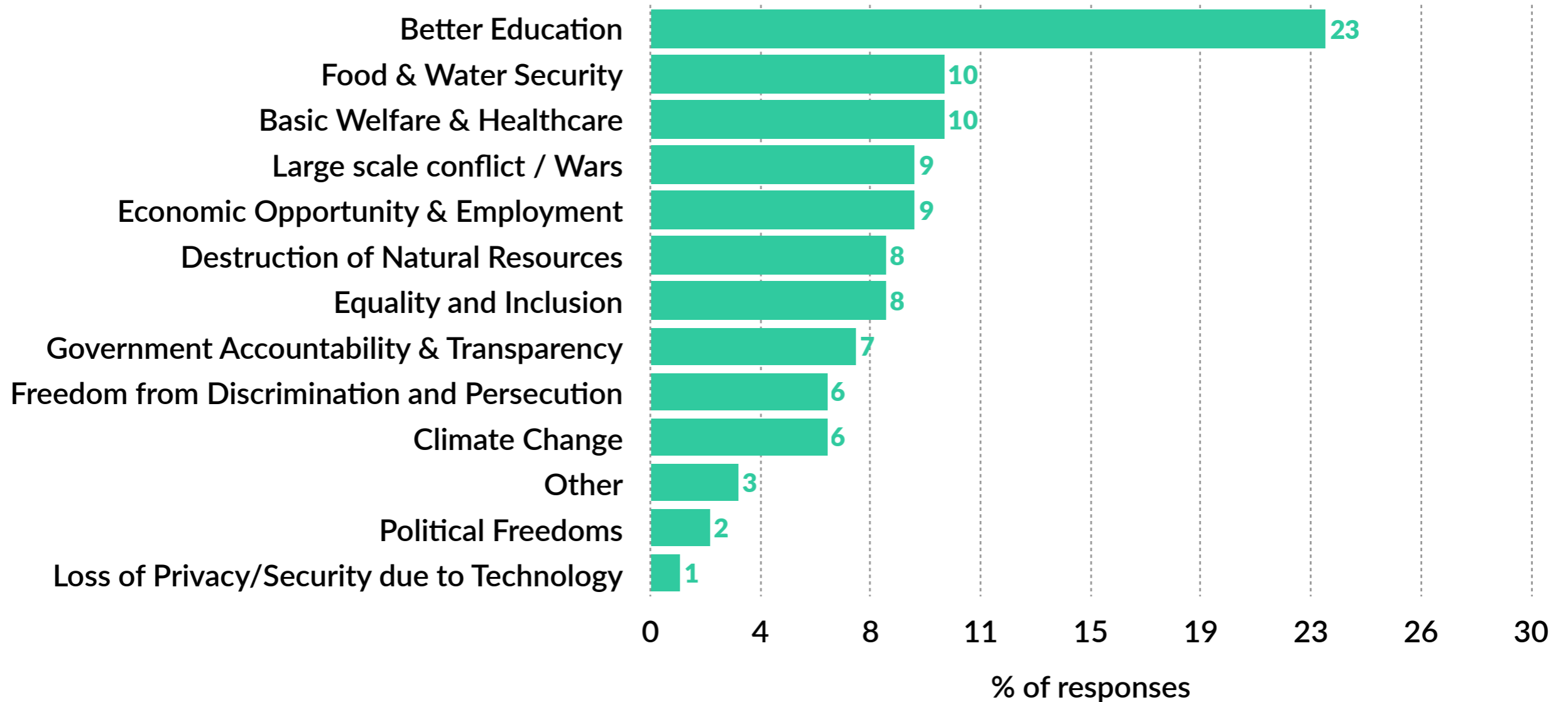
To develop the next generation, young people and leaders must come together to identify how we can bridge this gap of education and employment, including how we can better integrate the youth opinion into decision making processes and make it consistent.



# Education, the most important

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In your opinion, what is the most serious global issue?



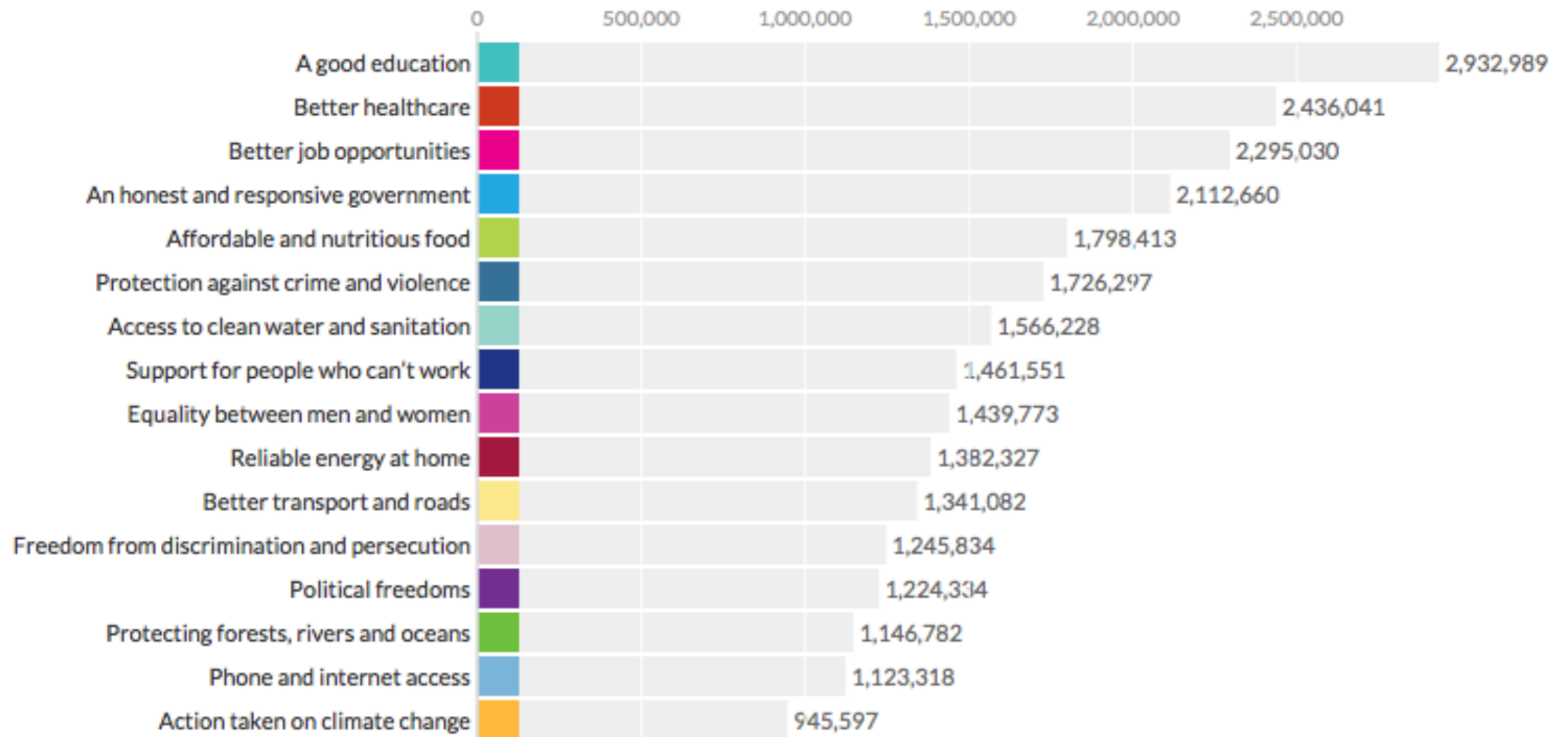


# MyWorld Survey Comparison

## Education is consistently the top ranked global issue

In parallel with the United Nations Millennium Campaign MY World survey, taken by over 7.6 million people from 194 countries, we compared our findings with the 4.4M 16 - 30 youth respondents in the survey to find the trends. Education as a whole is the highest priority topic, and young people today can feel and see it up front. View the live results on the [MY World platform](#).

**4,409,348** votes for All Countries & Country Groups / All Genders / All Education Levels / Age Group (16-30)







"The new Goals will be agreed in September 2015. Now more than ever before, we need young people and youth-led organizations such as AIESEC to engage in the new Goals in a big way, and the UNMC is currently developing a series of tools, platforms and initiatives to ensure that peoples' voices will continue to feed directly into the decision making process."

- Mitchell Toomey  
Director of the UN Millennium  
Campaign



*Universities, like the people within them, must embrace change, reimagine possibilities, and revitalize continuously.*

*- Drew Faust, President of Harvard*

## **Youth opinion: How can we transform education?**

*"I would like to see a more dynamic and fluid system that would interact better with the real world. In my business school, we are still studying management concepts from the 90's and this hasn't been as progressive as the current trends that are shaping our economy."*

**- Karmen, 24, Singapore**

*"Education needs to be beyond books. Students are often stuck in classrooms learning things that are not relevant to their future careers. I want to see more practical skills development that also enables young people to innovate and get more creative."*

**- Isha, 24, Mozambique**

*"Universities need to expand their method of defining success. Many successful people in the world aren't great at taking exams, but they are great at solving life challenges, and that is what we should be learning. Exams should only one of the many ways to rate success."*

**- Miranda, 19, Poland**

*"The university experience needs to go beyond the books. It needs to tap into the development of life skills and developing our understanding of the world. I believe that universities need to evolve beyond the place as rewarding degrees, but as a place where young people can experiment, explore and learn."*

**- Lisa, 21, United States**



# Better Education is the #1 priority of young people

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## Better education



Educators and employers need to urgently work together to address the lack of trust in supporting students with their career development within the university. Young people believe cross-sector collaboration is the #1 way to address this gap between youth and the education system. While many businesses have adapted to changing behaviours and desires of the younger generation, education systems have yet to catch up.

Greater trust needs to be fostered in the educational system and this begins with a more frequent, consistent and aligned agendas of employers, government and educators. To avoid the creation of lost generations—employers and educators will need to become more transparent with their needs, and more flexible with their approach to developing and educating the future talents in their markets.

The inclusion of youth opinion is critical to developing effective programmes and strategies that are aligned with the needs of young people and enable them to have a voice in the decision making process. Experiential learning should be highly considered as an effective learning method for skills development.

Young people are unhappy and unsatisfied with their educational experiences, but yet they see hope and see the relevance of an educational

experience. Elements of integrating real-world experiences, greater support for studying and working abroad programmes, and fostering a more entrepreneurial culture is necessary.

If we are to develop an effective education system that meets student needs, it will need greater integration of youth opinion and employer input. These inputs are critical to ensuring that curriculums are aligned with external trends and utilizing teaching methods like experiential learning that can better engage young people.

In order for schools to better prepare young people, a greater mixture of both soft and hard skills development is needed. Supporting students in taking part in dynamic opportunities like working and studying abroad will further add to their abilities and increase the chance of successful employment.

Leaders need to be more transparent and inclusive with their decision-making and enable young people to take a more active role.





# Summary of learning on education

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*Universities will need to transform themselves into a place where young people can not only study and take exams, but learn from doing. To provide them with real-world experiences that are relevant.*

Integrating practical skills  
with theoretical  
knowledge

Foster an entrepreneurial  
learning environment

Involve employers  
throughout the educational  
experience

## **Shift from papers and degrees to experiences and skills**

Young people have been frustrated about the amount of effort and investment a degree requires, only to be left with an inability to get a good career. This challenge does not fall only on governments and educators, but students and employers alike will need to be more proactive in engaging with decision makers to influence decisions. At the same time, educators and governments need to open up spaces to involve youth opinion, expand the relevance of a degree for young people and better support their learning experiences with more structured learning and development paths.





"Youth do not want to be talked at—they want to be engaged in a meaningful way. They should not only be seen as beneficiaries, they should be seen as partners."

- Ahmad Alhendawi,  
United Nation Secretary-General's  
Envoy on Youth





Transition



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How can we ensure that students transition from education to employment **successfully?**

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An aerial photograph of a vast, snow-covered mountain range, likely the Alps, viewed from the perspective of an airplane passenger. The sky is a clear, deep blue, and the wings of the aircraft are visible on the right side of the frame. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

Millennials are more mobile than the previous generation, they seek **global** experiences as a highly valued method of learning and development.

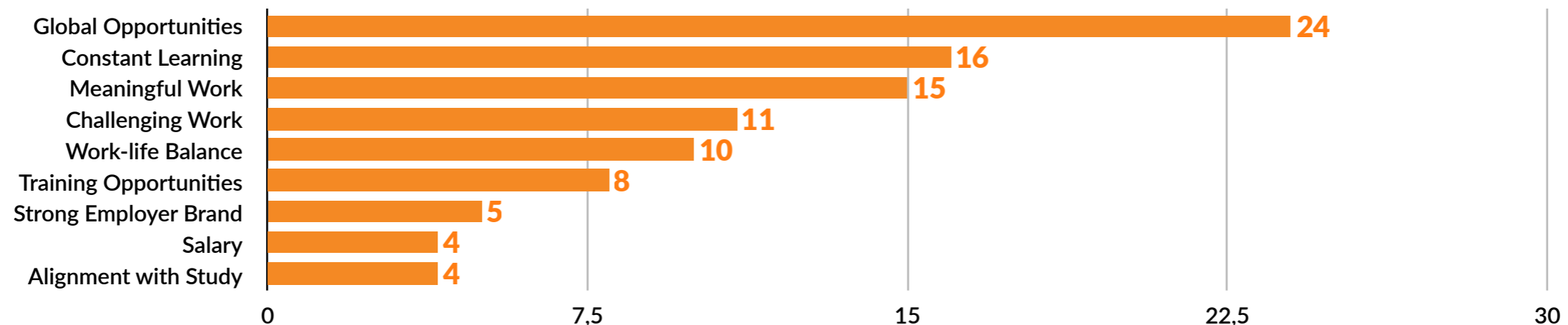


# 1 in 4

millennials see global experiences as the most important in the first 5 years of their career

## + Millennials as World Citizens

What is most important to you in the first 5 years of your career?



### A globally mobile workforce that values learning experiences over traditional benefits like salary

Millennials are looking for opportunities to see the world, to learn and grow, not just travel. Younger millennials recognize the advantages of being abroad and the opportunities for accelerated career advancement in rapidly emerging markets. Combined with the fact that 64.1% of YouthSpeak respondents state that they aspire to hold a leadership or senior-decision maker position in the future, it serves as a reminder of the ambitious nature of millennials and how they want to hold responsibility in their jobs.

With an emphasis on global opportunities, meaningful work and constant learning, employers will need to evaluate how they will adapt to such needs, while enabling millennials to get the most out of their experiences.

Millennials are seeking for employer who can provide them with the dynamic experiences that enable them to see the world, expand their horizons and contribute to a positive impact on society.

Cross-border assignments are showing no signs of a slowdown as stated in PwC's International Assignments Perspective report –in fact, 59% of CEOs surveyed plan to send more staff on international assignments. At the same time, younger millennials are recognizing and taking advantage of the tremendous opportunities of being present in rapidly emerging markets in Asia Pacific and Latin America. [PwC's Talent Mobility 2020](#) report predicts a 50% growth in talent mobility.

The data provides us with a deeper insight into the bigger story that is unfolding –young people are developing a more natural desire for being global citizens, resulting in a generation that is more comfortable with relocating, experiencing new environments and is hungry to learn about the world.

Employers will need to focus on maximizing the depth of learning experiences millennials will acquire throughout their early career stage, with global opportunities, meaningful work and constant learning at the top of the agenda.





# Youth Speak: What's meaningful work to you?

*"Is when I live to work, not work to live! Passion for what I put into, creating change, learning day by day, and sparking someone else's fire!"*

**- Valerie, 24, Bahrain**

*"For me it will be really meaningful when you believe on what you doing and getting appreciation even by saying a simple 'Thank you'".*

**- Mint, 20, Korea**

*For me, work is more than just to earn a salary. It should be about learning and having fun, and about doing a greater good.*

**- Zenas, 24, Canada**

*"Meaningful work for me is that whatever you do makes the world and humankind better, everyone clear of the impact the results bring, and not just taking decisions according to profit, without having in mind if this good for society at all"*

**- Kathy, 21, Colombia**

*"If you don't see it as work anymore, but enjoyment"*

**- Mark, 18, Australia**

*"Work is meaningful if i'm still learning new things whether it's about my self, surroundings or some technicalities . If that is missing , I won't consider it meaningful any more"*

**- Batool, 21, Egypt**

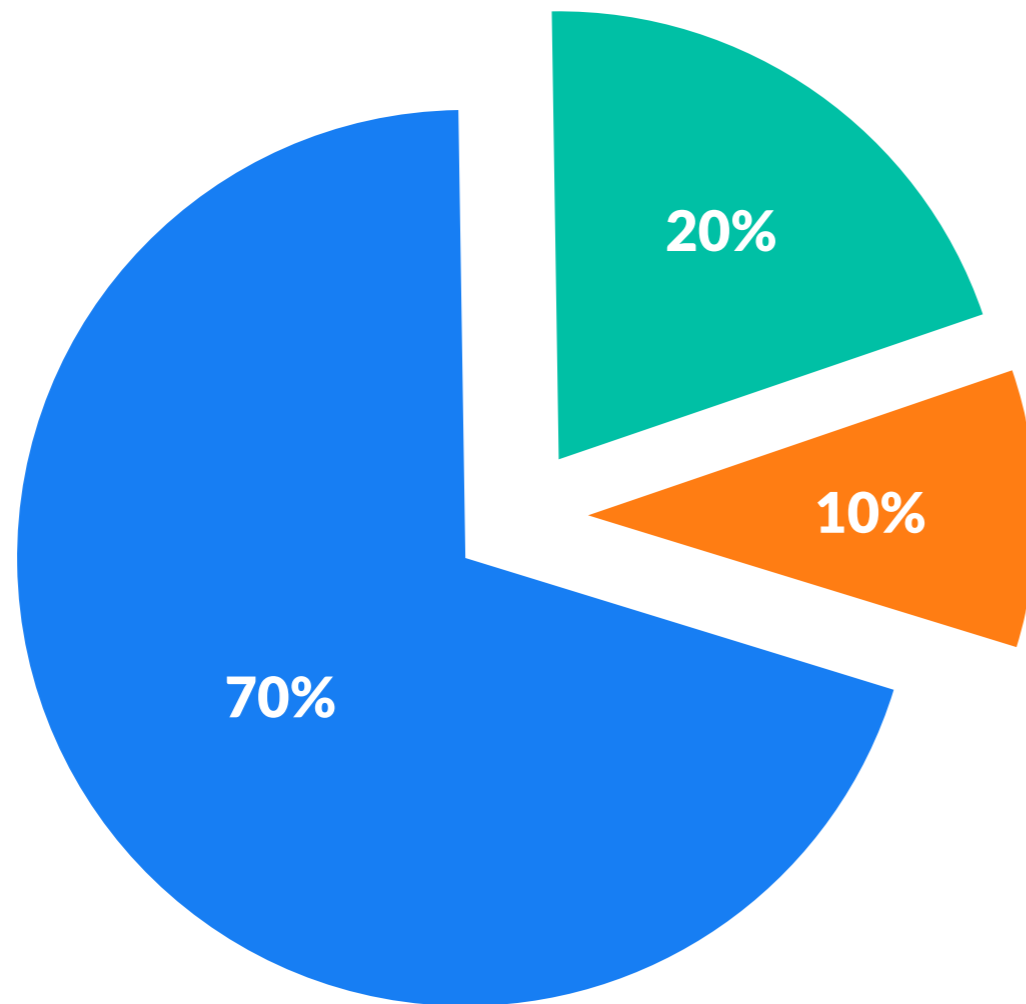


68%

of respondents list experiential learning as the #1 method of preferred learning new skills

# + A model for learning and development

● Experiential Learning ● Social ● Formal



*Learning needs to extend beyond the classroom, it needs to enable millennials to learn by doing, access strong social networks and performance feedback.*

The majority of millennials have stated that experiential learning is their most preferred method of developing new skills. In this 70-20-10 model, 70% of the learning and developing includes volunteering experiences and internships, the 20% includes mentors, managers, and peers, and the last 10% includes classrooms and formal learning environments with set curriculums.

For many students around the world, educational experiences are still designed heavily around formal learning, while the preferences of today's youth are centered around experiential learning. This shift will enable them to acquire more practical and soft skills through greater social interaction with others and develop important teamwork, communication and critical thinking skills that employers value.

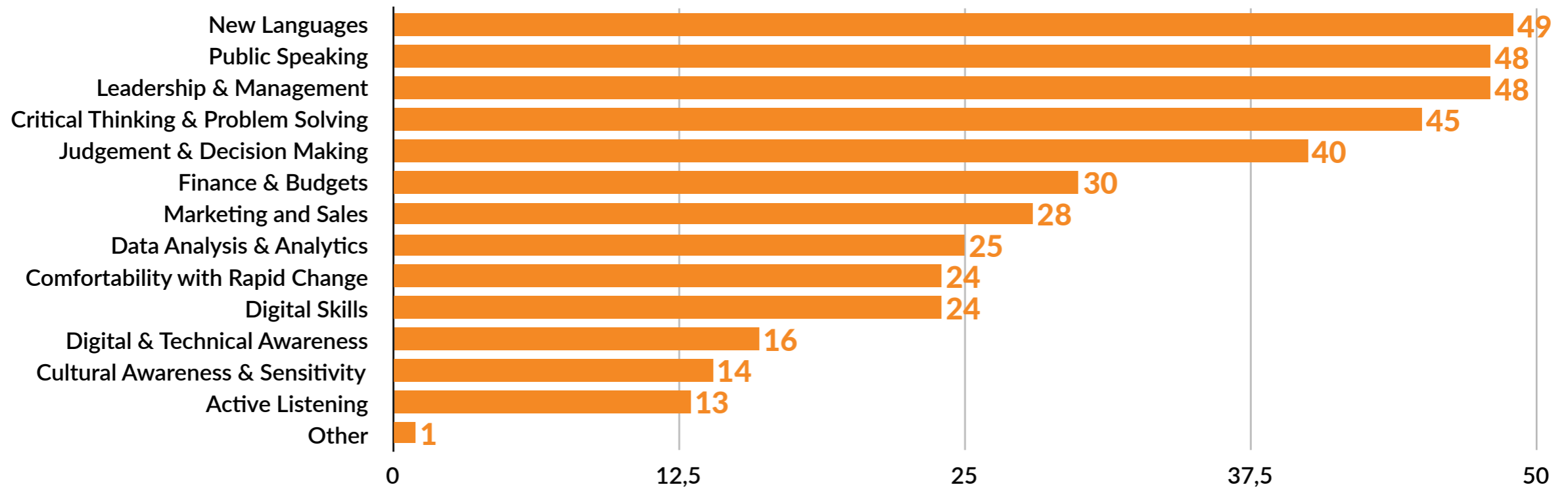
For both educators and employers, this change of preference will lead to more effective educational experiences. Students will be more prepared for what awaits and will develop necessary skills and behaviours needed to succeed in a rapidly changing world.



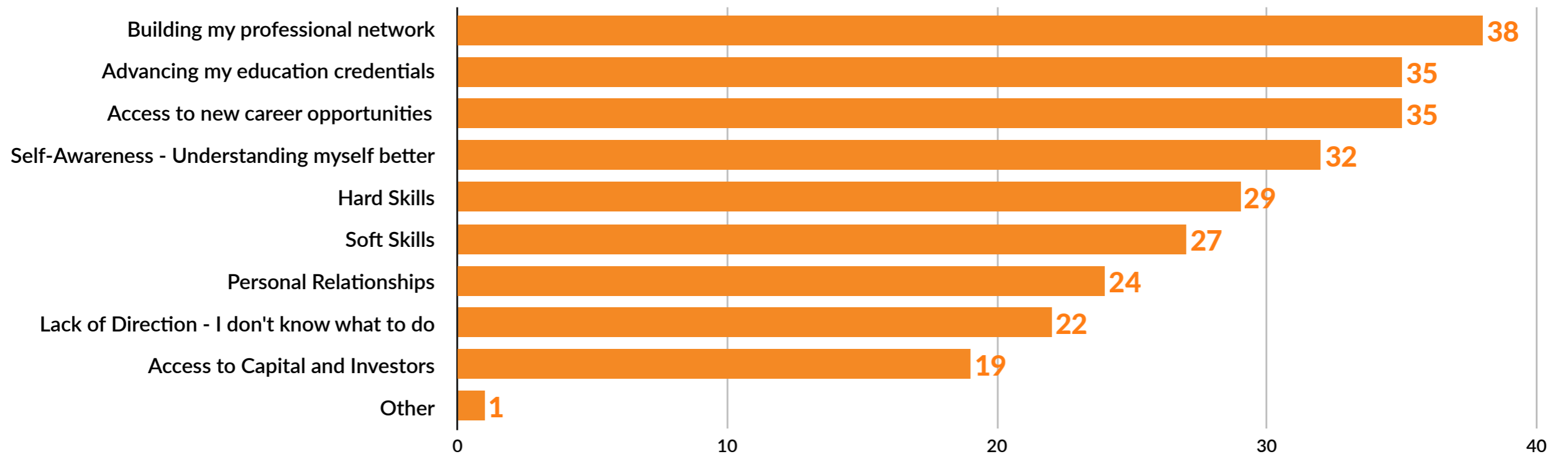
Learning for millennials goes beyond the classroom. They see the world and their social networks as a vibrant space for learning and development.



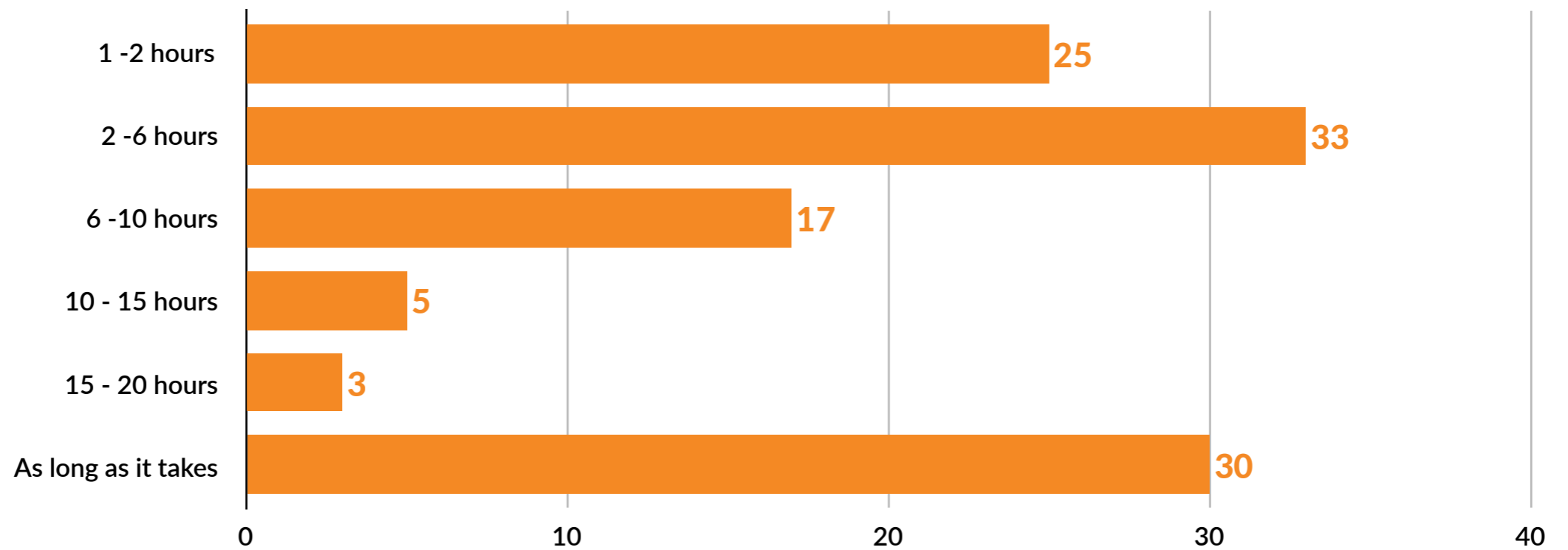
## What top 5 skills do you need to develop to help you get ahead?



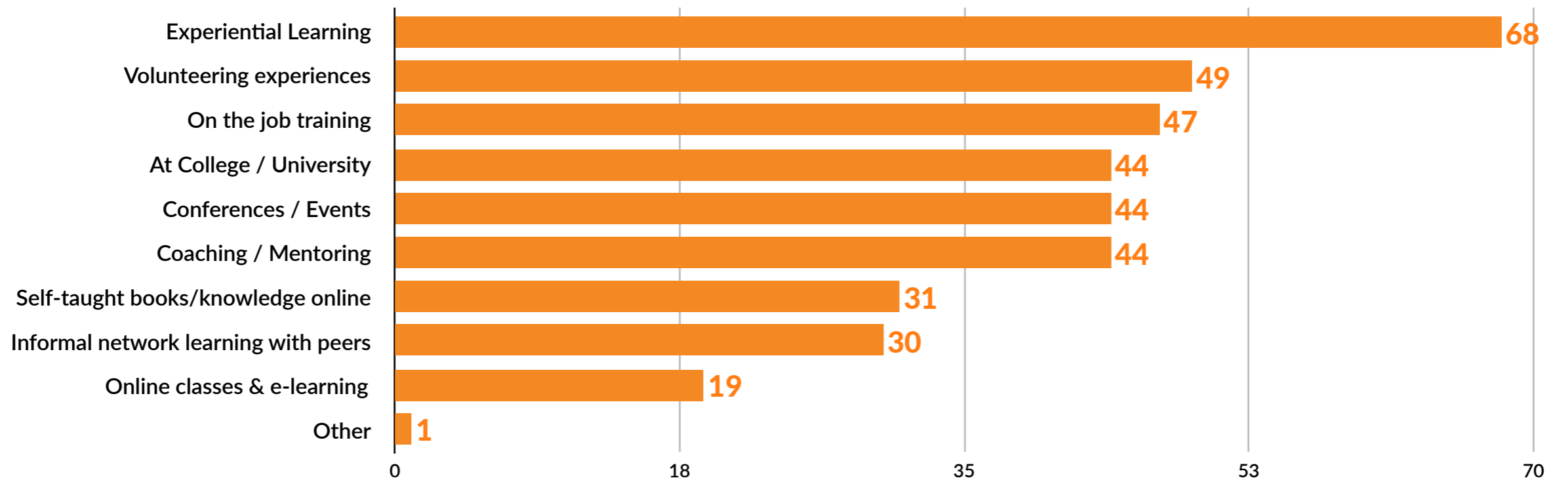
## In the next 5 years, what are the top 3 priority challenges that you will face in achieving your career goals?



## How much time per week do you currently spend on developing new skills?

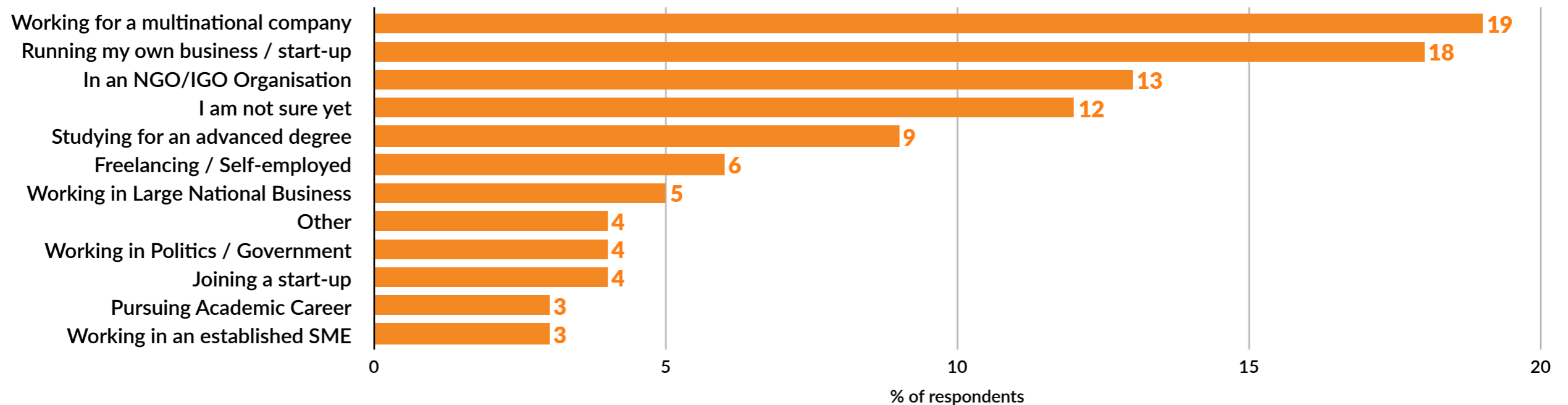


## How would you prefer to learn these new skills?



# + Where millennials want to work

If you followed your passions, where would you find yourself 5 years from now?



## *An urgency to rapidly transform to a more entrepreneurial workplace*


The talent landscape is quickly shifting and the rise for entrepreneurship is signalling a major change in how millennials may see the role of an employer in the first few years of their careers.

Running my own business/start-up leads in second ranking, showcasing a generation of entrepreneurs and individuals who are willing to take risks, pursue their dream and build it themselves. At the same time, there is a significant difference between those who have a desire to start their own business versus joining another start-up. A major challenge for new startups will be their ability to attract great talent.

Multinationals are faced not only with competition with other major brands, but in their ability to attract future entrepreneurs. MNC's will need to rapidly create a more entrepreneurial and dynamic workplace to attract top talent and demonstrate to millennials that their workplace is a place where they can thrive.

YouthSpeak data has shown that young millennials have a strong desire for global experiences, meaningful work and constant learning. Whether you are a multinational or a NGO/IGO, the fight for talent isn't just between other organisations, but your own ability to transform your workplace to meet the needs of the generation that demands rapid personal and professional development, an entrepreneurial work culture and greater transparency between employers' actions and their values.



A group of ten diverse young adults, including men and women of various ethnicities, are standing in a line against a red brick wall. They are all looking towards the right side of the frame. They are dressed in casual, contemporary clothing such as hoodies, jackets, and beanies. The lighting is soft and even, highlighting their profiles. The overall mood is one of unity and forward-looking optimism.

Millennials are significantly motivated by their ability to keep learning and be **challenged**. They see learning as a continuous **life-long journey**.





# Summary of learning on career trends

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*Great employers will foster an entrepreneurial workplace that enables millennial talents to constantly learn, grow and explore new opportunities.*

*Millennials view the purpose of the workplace as going beyond traditional benefits – focusing more on their own individual development. How will you transform your workplace to meet these needs of young millennials?*

Ability to gain access to dynamic and global experiences

Ability for constant learning and growth

Develop an entrepreneurial work culture

## **Shift from traditional benefits to learning benefits**

Millennial desire for learning experiences represents a shifting change in what attracts them to a job. Earning a high salary may not be a major attraction point for millennials as their appetite for global experiences, meaningful work and constant learning rises. They expect to start their careers with dynamic global experiences that enable them to constantly learn and be challenged with new and exciting opportunities. How will employers focus and invest more on the learning journey of their talents and showcase it in an engaging way?



Employment






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How can employers better support the development of youth potential in and out of the workplace?

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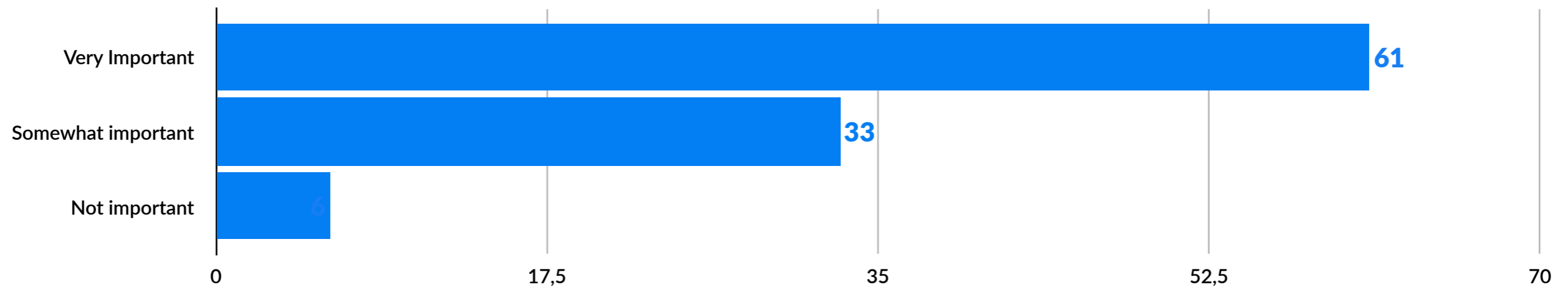




Millennials are a purposeful generation. They are strongly **influenced** by an organization's reputation and actions as a positive contributor to society.

# + Millennials think triple bottom line

What is most important to you in the first 5 years of your career?



## *The triple bottom line*

Your organisation's ability to not only demonstrate a positive impact on society, but communicate the purpose is critical for millennial talent. People, planet and profit are critical factors to millennial evaluations of employer attractiveness.

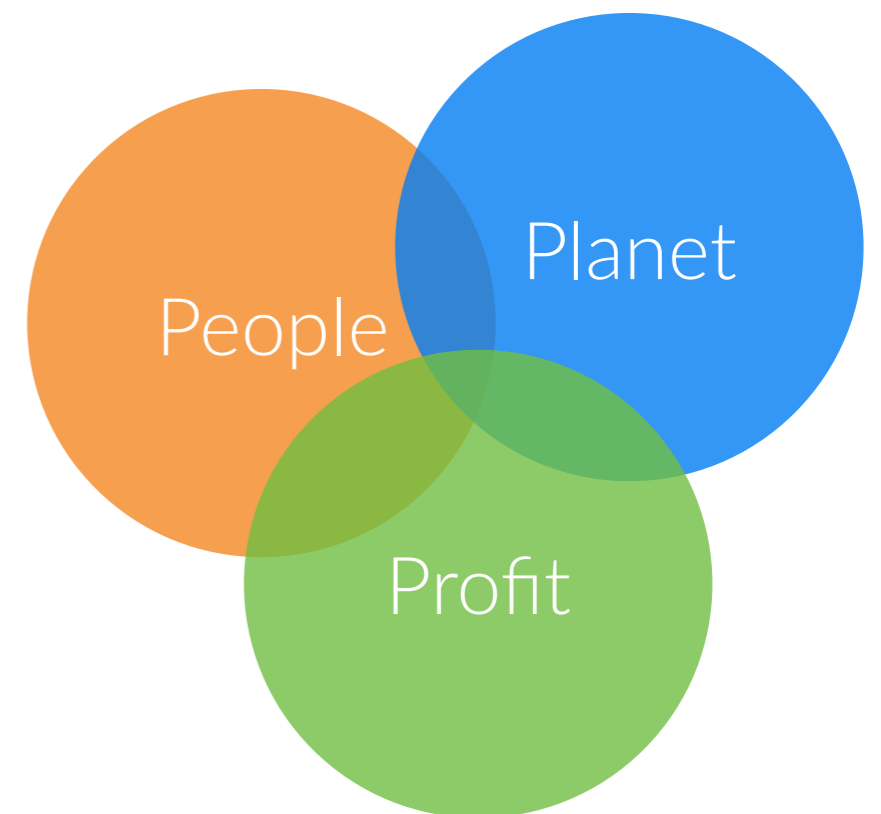
No longer is it about winning the minds of people through hard benefits like salary and prestige, but how you can win the hearts of people.

Social media has brought word-of-mouth online and has enabled conversations to spread like wildfire – what your company does in one region of the world needs to be aligned with its greater purpose.

For leaders at the top of organisations, a key question is how you are opening up yourself and your organisation in demonstrating purpose in the world and to inspire greater trust amongst employees and future talents.

## *Alignment between words and action*

Millennials value less how much money you actually make or if you increase your performance; what they value is the demonstration of your organisation's values. Decisions like where you are investing and how you are treating your employees, stakeholders and partners are important factors to pay attention to. Millennials greatly value the triple bottom line of people, planet and profit, and the employer's ability to be truly authentic and transparent.





“We know from PwC's NextGen study that for younger generations, **finding meaning** and **purpose in their work** is of **top priority**. Given what we've learned about the future workforce, at PwC we're adapting our practices to recognise the diverse needs and generational differences of our people, so that they can bring their best self to work and inspire those around them.

Clear, **two-way** communications are critical in providing them with a sense of purpose, and helping to build a more **collective community** globally, inside and outside the network of firms.”

- PwC Vice Chairwoman and  
Global Human Capital Leader  
Nora Wu





A modern office lounge with people working on laptops on beanbag chairs. The room features large windows, colorful beanbag chairs, and decorative lighting. The text "What's the ideal workplace for millennials?" is overlaid on the image.

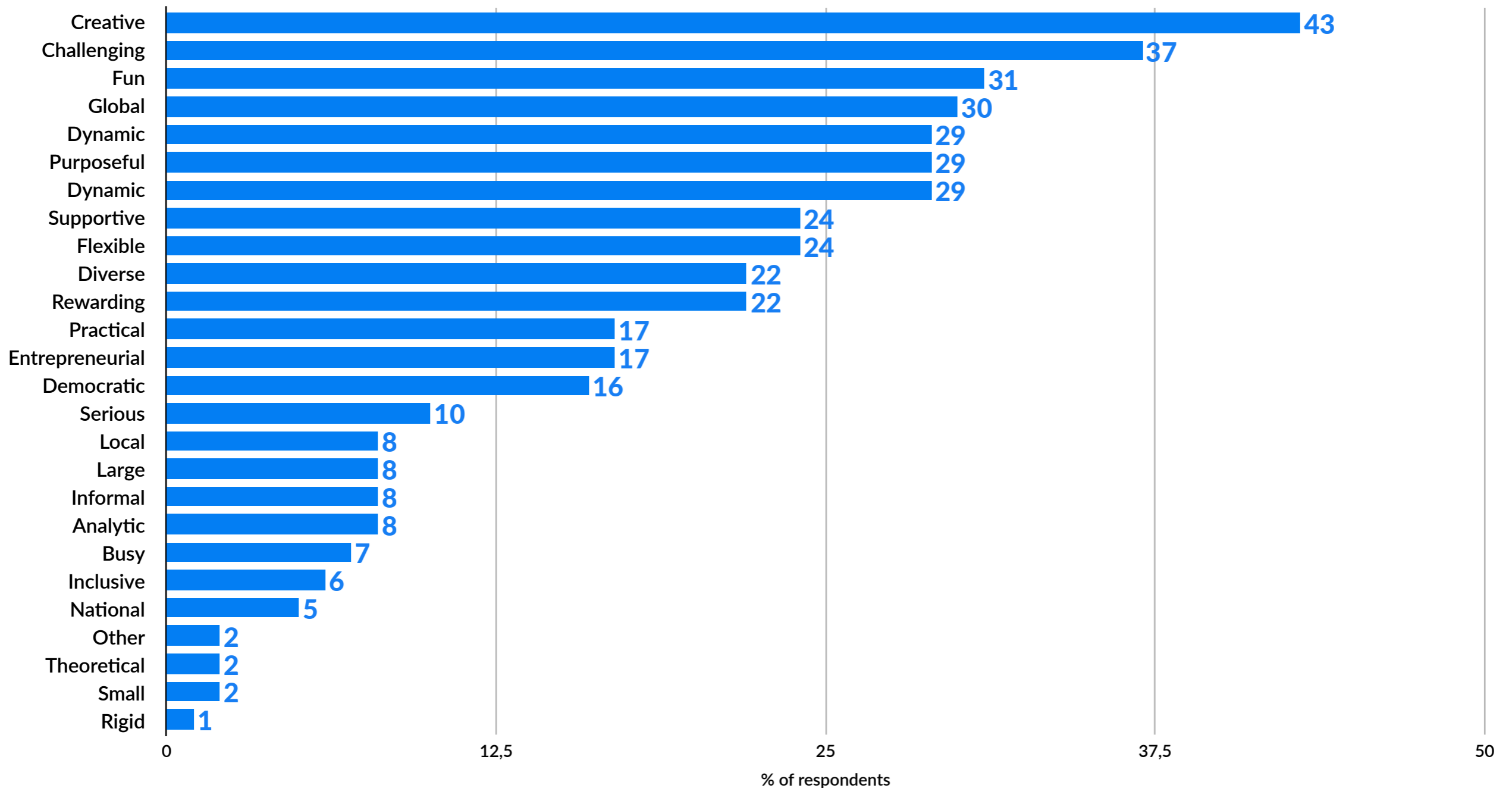
What's the  
ideal **workplace**  
for millennials?

# Creative, challenging, fun.

## The ideal workplace for young millennials

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What keywords describe your ideal workplace?





# What do you look for in employers?

*“To go beyond business as usual. It’s related to what a business can do to contribute towards the world we live in. It’s a shared responsibility as a business has the power to influence things. This is a minimum for any company I work for.”*

**- Helene, 27, Belgium**

*“To have a more agile type of work, where companies don’t just stick to one idea but is ready to be flexible. To have better employee engagement and feedback systems where we can feel more involved in decision making processes.”*

**- Dmitry, 23, Russia**

*“My employer must be purposeful—in the sense that employees see the connection of their everyday job with their end impact on the world.”*

**- Karim, 24, Egypt**

*“In my country many employers don’t care much about their employee development. Some of the best companies I’ve seen is having leadership participate more actively in the development of its people.”*

**- Ardian, 23, Indonesia**


*“I need to ensure that my employer can keep challenging me and anything I work for should have a significant impact in society.”*

**- Michael, 22, India**

*“I want to have a dynamic and autonomous role, I really need clear deliverables, but at the same time have room for flexibility to try new things and keep learning. Having nice people and food is always a bonus.”*

**- Arthur, 24, Brazil**



A man with glasses and a beard is sitting at a desk in a modern office, looking at a laptop. The office has a contemporary design with hanging lamps and other people working in the background. The text is overlaid on the image.

Bring the best out of your millennial talents by creating an environment where the office becomes a hub of **creativity**, a place where they feel comfortable to play and work in.

For millennials, workplaces are more than just a place to work. It is a place where great things can happen if you create the **experiences** and spaces that enable it.



# + A desire for learning culture

**64%** of respondents state that they aspire to hold leadership or senior-decision making positions.

## *A focus on enabling the best out of your millennial talent*

In previous generations, a job was a means to an end. People valued stability and security in their lives. In the current cultural context, a job has evolved to become an even more important part of their lifestyle. The major trend is linked with reducing barriers between their professional versus personal lives. Millennials are far more individualistic than previous generations and hold much higher standards for employers to enable them to grow and succeed.

## *What is a culture of learning?*

A culture of learning will be defined by a workplace that empowers their people to always seek for continuous improvement and learnings – it is a culture that learns from mistakes and seeks to always grow from it. It is a departure from an execution culture that was heavily focused on following rules and procedures. Millennials are looking for workplaces that enable them to solve tough challenges and apply a more entrepreneurial approach to work. Millennial demands for a challenging workplace will push employers to reconsider job descriptions and responsibilities that go beyond just

administrative work, but further tap into roles that enable them to think critically and solve complex problems.

## *An entrepreneurial approach to both work and life*

Millennials are more comfortable with improvisation and experimentation. They are born in a time where the internet and search engines enabled them to discover answers on their own. In the workplace, millennials are empowered by improvising and finding innovations as opposed to simply following the rules and executing more repetitive tasks.

Millennials who are digital natives and are more entrepreneurial than the last generation will look for employers who are more naturally aligned with their behaviours and working preferences. For employers, this presents an opportunity to transform your workplace to become a learning environment that empowers and embraces a more open minded concept of success. Innovation has become a major buzzword, but we believe it is because young millennials want to innovate and experiment. Young millennials are great innovators, experimenters and complex problem solvers.

## Execution Culture

- Focused on the plan
- Executes to meet numbers
- Eliminates low performers
- Listen to the customer
- Fix what is broken
- Strong compliance and penalties



## Learning Culture

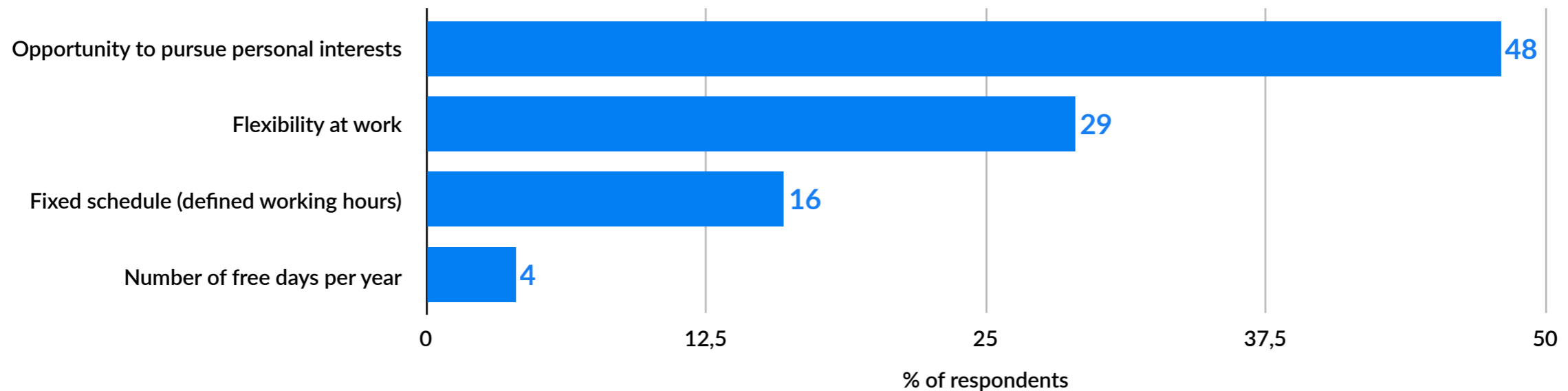
- Focused on evolution and innovation
- Goes beyond the numbers
- Improves low performers
- Learns from the customer
- Develops solutions proactively
- Principles over rules





# A focus on work-lifestyle over balance

How would you define work-life balance?




## A focus on trust - a need for stronger communities and relationships.

For millennials, a work-life balance is not simply about the division of work and their personal lives, but the prioritisation of personal interests and being able to do what they love in and outside of work. While the last generation was focused on their ability to get a 9-5 job that was secure, paid well and had vacation time. Millennials are willing to trade off free days per year in return for greater flexibility at work and their ability to pursue personal interests and keep learning. Employers can greatly benefit from these shifting behaviours of millennial desires to be more engaged with work and life together, but will require a shift in mindset of what work-life balance looks like. Executives will need to redefine learning programmes and how they compensate employees for their work. Millennials care deeply about

their own personal interests and the workplace will need to reward employees beyond traditional benefits like a high salary or extensive vacation time and to look at the ability of an employer to reward their talents on a more flexible and frequent basis.

These insights tell a story of a generation that does not seek to be completely disconnected from their work through time off and vacations, but by being able to develop themselves and grow. They want to see their employers as a positive support system, as a learning environment where the learning continues even outside the workplace.



The notion of working 9-5, earning a high salary, and having extensive vacation time is outdated.

Millennials want to be inspired to learn, to be constantly challenged and to grow **in and outside** of the workplace.





# Summary of learnings on employment

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*Employers who attract and retain top millennial talent will need to live by their actions and values, and foster a working environment that rapidly develops their people and contributes to their life ambitions. Millennials demand employers to not only post their values on their website, but have their leaders and employees exercise what they say. They see the workplace as more than just work—but a place to enjoy themselves.*

Employers will need to match their actions with their values and purpose in society

The ideal workplace is creative, challenging and fun

Leaders need to shift the mindset from following rules to enabling experimentation

## **It's not a work-life balance, but a work-lifestyle**

Millennials do not see this great separation between their professional versus personal lives. They want to be able to bring their best to the workspace, and that means being able to be themselves. Their personal interests and life passions are very important to them and they want their employers to recognise and support them. Long vacations may be a thing of the past, as they rather gain access to more dynamic opportunities and advance their own individual growth.



# YouthSpeak key *takeaways*

## **Invest**

in your employee's learning and development, with significant considerations of the individual's future career aspirations. Help them connect the dots on how their current experience with you fits with their wider career goals.

## **Live**

by your values and show it through your actions. Young people want to associate with organisations who live by their words and demonstrate a triple bottom line. Don't just leave your values on the wall, but bring it to life.

## **Empower**

their desire for challenging experiences with greater responsibilities and better support systems. Enable your employees to thrive in a more entrepreneurial and experimental learning environment.

## **Open**

the dialogue to enable young people to participate in the decision-making process. Inclusion of their youth opinions from the beginning is needed to ensure that they develop a strong trust with you.

## **Innovate**

the learning and development experience to ensure that millennial desire for creativity and challenging work is fully maximised. Millennials work best in a setting where they create and invent, this requires management to be less top-down, and more bottom-up.

## **Reduce**

hierarchical barriers and power-distance between millennials, they trust their peers more than authority figures. Evolve leadership and management approaches to be more social and facilitative as opposed to command and control.



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Learn more about how we can help you  
understand, engage and connect with millennials  
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