MARIST POLL™

GenNext: Spring 2025 Survey

In an era of political and financial uncertainty, generational divides are apparent across the topics of work, technology, social media, mental health, and lifestyle. Members of Gen Z are far more worried about the state of the job market than their older counterparts. Although Millennials are slightly more optimistic than other generations about the financial well-being of future generations, it's the perceptions of Gen Z and Baby Boomers that align, with majorities saying future generations will have a harder time making ends meet.

When thinking about the impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on jobs, majorities within most generations view AI as having a mostly negative impact on employment. The exception is the Silent/Greatest generation for whom a plurality perceives a detrimental effect of AI on jobs. Baby Boomers and the Silent/Greatest generation are more likely than younger generations to think Artificial Intelligence will not impact jobs at all.

While Gen Z is most likely to view social media as having net benefits, most Americans back stricter regulation, with support increasing as Americans age. Views on sports betting are also split by age, as Gen Z, Millennials, and Gen X are far more likely than Baby Boomers and the Silent/Greatest Generations to support online or app-based sports betting.

These are the findings from the Marist Poll's latest GenNext survey. GenNext is an innovative research project that focuses on the opinions of America's next generation of leaders and how they compare with older Americans. Here's the twist – working in tandem with the professionals at the Marist Poll – student researchers conduct each survey from start to finish. This time around, students in Dr. Lee Miringoff's Spring 2025 Survey Research class developed questions on topics they thought intriguing in an era of rapid economic and technological change. Here are their results:

Gen Z Is Most Likely to Worry About the Current Job Market; Gen Z with Bleak Economic Outlook

Seven in ten members of Gen Z (70%) say that jobs are difficult to find right now compared with 58% of Millennials, 56% of Gen X, 47% of Baby Boomers, and 38% of the Silent/Greatest generation. When it comes to future finances, the perceptions of Gen Z and Baby Boomers align, and these Americans are more pessimistic than their counterparts. 53% of Gen Z and 56% of Baby Boomers think future generations will be worse off financially. This compares with 49% of Gen X and 43% of Millennials who say the same. Millennials (39%) are slightly more hopeful than other generations to believe future generations will be better off financially.

What impact will AI have on jobs? Millennials are the most optimistic about AI's effect on employment, with 40% saying AI will have a mostly positive effect on future job

opportunities. Still, except for the Silent/Greatest Generation (42%), majorities of Gen Z (56%), Millennials (52%), Gen X (56%), and Baby Boomers (59%) think AI will have a mostly negative impact on the future of jobs.

Gen Z (7%), Millennials (8%), and Gen X (9%) are far less likely than Baby Boomers (14%) and the Silent/Greatest Generation (19%) to think AI will not have any effect on the future jobs picture.

When thinking about the impact of higher education on finances, the Silent/Greatest Generation is the only one in which the majority (60%) believe those with a four-year college education are better off financially than people without a degree. This compares with 48% of Boomers, 44% of Gen X, 49% of Millennials, and 47% of Gen Z.

Majorities Across Generations Think Social Media Does More Harm Than Good, Though Gen Z and Millennials are More likely to Say It Has Some Benefits.

Majorities of *every* generation say social media does more harm than good. Gen Z is the closest to dividing, with 52% saying it does more harm than good and 48% saying it does more good than harm. Millennials (54%), Gen X (59%), Baby Boomers (66%), and the Silent/Greatest Generation (57%) say social media, in general, does more harm than good.

Similarly, majorities of every generation favor social media companies requiring account holders to be 18 years of age or older: 60% of Gen Z, 64% of Millennials, 60% of Gen X, 59% of Boomers, and 61% of the Silent/Greatest Generation.

Many Americans, across generation, think stricter regulations are needed, based on what they have heard about mental health and social media. At least 6 in 10 in all generations back tighter oversight: Gen Z (61%), Millennials (73%), Gen X (80%), Baby Boomers (86%), and the Silent/Greatest (84%).

Gen Z and Millennials Are More Open to Online and App-Based Sports Betting

A significant generational divide exists on the question of online or app-based sports betting. Gen Z (67%), Millennials (67%), and Gen X (63%) are much more likely than Baby Boomers (36%) and the Silent/Greatest Generation (26%) to be at least somewhat supportive of online betting.

Similarly, Gen Z (62%), Millennials (68%), and Gen X (60%) are much more favorable toward allowing advertisements for sports betting during games. This compares with 31% of Baby Boomers and 26% of the Silent/Greatest Generation.

Currently, sports betting is legal in some form in most states, but more than a quarter of Gen Z (26%) and Millennials (27%) believe that there should be a federal law making it legal to bet on sports everywhere in the U.S. This is more than Gen X (22%) and double Baby Boomers (11%) and members of the Silent/Greatest Generation (10%). Regardless of generation, at least a majority say the decision should be left to the states.

What is GenNext?

GenNext is an innovative research project from the Marist Institute for Public Opinion that captures the opinions of young Americans to illuminate the issues and topics that motivate, inspire, and excite America's next generation of leaders.

And here's the twist – student researchers mount each survey from start to finish. Working alongside professionals at the Marist Poll, Marist students determine what to ask and how to ask it.

In doing so, they learn best practices for measuring public opinion, including information and data fluency, identifying topics, writing scientifically rigorous questionnaires, and collecting, analyzing, and reporting the results of the survey to the public.