



FOUNDATION FOR EUROPEAN
PROGRESSIVE STUDIES
FONDATION EUROPÉENNE
D'ÉTUDES PROGRESSISTES

Think Young
We lobby for young people



MILLENNIAL DIALOGUE ON EUROPE

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Millennials aged 18 to 35 make up roughly a quarter of Europe's entire population. But do Europe's leaders listen to their voices and respond to their needs? Do they know their hopes and dreams for the future? Are leaders encouraging this generation to exercise their growing political power?

This latest report from the Millennial Dialogue offers insights to answer these questions and deliver on the promise and potential of this generation. It is one of the most comprehensive research projects ever completed on European Millennials with over 10,000 survey participants and 72 people engaging in focus groups across 10 EU Member States.

The results of this extraordinary research capture Millennials' views on the big challenges facing Europe at a decisive moment for the European project.

Just as the 2019 European elections arrive, Eurosceptic and populist movements are gaining ground across the Union. The elections are also the first following the 'Brexit' vote for the United Kingdom to leave the EU, leaving 27 seats to fill in the European Parliament.¹

¹Martin Bank, 2019 European elections 'could be the most decisive yet' on future of EU. The Parliament Magazine, 2018, retrieved 12 November, 2018, <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/news/2019-european-elections-could-be-most-decisive-yet-future-eu>



Yet, Millennials have a record of not showing up at the polls. In 2014, just 27% of youth aged 18 to 24 voted for a European Member of Parliament. Some credit this voter apathy to Millennials' lack of trust in political institutions and the widespread sentiment that the EU is too far removed from people's daily lives.²

With the Millennial Dialogue, we aspire to reverse these trends. We are empowering Millennials to build and shape Europe's democratic institutions. Our research bridges the divide between the policymakers and young people who must work together to determine Europe's future.

This report presents four distinct windows into the views and beliefs of the Millennial generation. Look through them. And discover windows of opportunity for engagement during the 'year of change' ahead.

This survey was conducted by the Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS) in cooperation with ThinkYoung, with support from Stichting Gerrit Kreveld, Institut Emile Vandervelde, BCW, Microsoft, and Coca-Cola.

Pictures by Oliviero Toscani, Ali Toscani, Rocco Toscani, and Stefano Beggiano - in the framework of Razza Umana photo exhibition (11 January - 1st April, ASBL MNEMA – La Cité Miroir). The pictures are included in this report with the kind support and partnership of Les Territoires de la Mémoire, asbl.

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Think Young
the survey for young people



The FEPS Millennial Dialogue is a pioneering research project to use 'connected research' technology to engage and understand Millennials. Learn more at MillennialDialogue.com

Windows into Millennial views

Overall, we found that Millennials clearly want to feel more connected to the EU and have their voices heard and respected.

This report gives European leaders the insights to do just that, offering four 'windows' into Millennial views on Europe's major policy challenges.

1. Window on democracy

2. Window on integration

3. Window on society

4. Window on the world

²Sonia Piedrafita and Anne Lauenroth. 'Between Apathy and Anger: Challenges to the Union from the 2014 Elections to the EP in Member States'. EPIN Paper No.39/May 2014.

Our research uncovered a split in the minds of Millennials. They strongly support the European Union as a project. But they also believe more countries are likely to leave the Union in the future.

Millennials called for greater economic solidarity between EU Member States to financially support European countries going through an economic downturn.

Having grown up during the recent global economic crisis, it should come as no surprise that Millennials want to strengthen social welfare. They enthusiastically support establishing a European minimum wage and EU-funded unemployment benefits for all workers.

Since Millennials are the primary beneficiaries of the EU's Erasmus exchange programme for university students, it is predictably popular among them. They are split, however, on to what degree the programme should be extended beyond the traditional classroom to offer vocational training for young workers.

While Millennials are often described as apathetic, our research shows that they are reacting to major global issues. They want leaders to fight more aggressively on climate change and to develop better solutions to the refugee crisis. They support giving the EU stronger powers to represent Europe on the world stage.

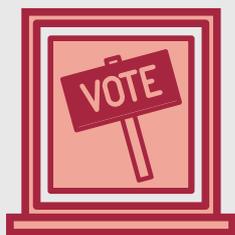


WHO ARE MILLENNIALS?

They are the first generation to come of age in the new millennium, aged 18 to 35 for the purposes of this research. Their views are shaped by their unique life experiences, including:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1. economic recession | 2. terrorist attacks |
| 3. digital transformations | 4. social media |
| 5. globalisation | 6. racial and ethnic diversity |
| 7. expanded educational opportunity | |

Windows into Europe's biggest challenges



1. Window on democracy

Despite believing in the European project, Millennials agree that EU institutions do not sufficiently engage and encourage young people in decision-making. On economic policy specifically, they strongly see the need for citizens to exert more influence. An overwhelming majority showed support for granting EU institutions stronger powers to challenge Member States that defy EU law.



80%

hold favourable views towards the EU



85%

want the EU to involve and empower more young people in decision-making



82%

believe citizens should have more say on how the EU handles the economy



66%

want to empower the EU to challenge law-breaking Member States



2. Window on integration

A majority of Millennials believe that more countries are likely to leave the Union in the future. A significant number support greater economic solidarity between Member States. They are nearly split on whether the EU is heading in the right or wrong direction. They called for more coherent and effective action on key priorities such as reducing inequality.



58%

believe more countries are likely to leave the EU in the future



55%

support the creation of a single European army

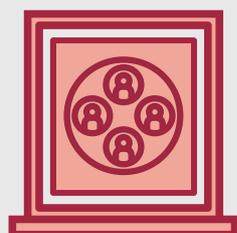


only 10% called for no further integration



52%

believe tackling poverty and reducing social and economic inequalities should be among the EU's top priorities.



3. Window on society

Millennials overwhelmingly support greater EU involvement on issues of social welfare. A large majority support a minimum wage and unemployment benefits for all workers in the Union. They are divided on the best policy action to reduce gender inequalities. And also divided on what degree to expand the popular Erasmus programme with vocational training for young workers. Clear consensus emerged to provide greater financial aid for children through EU funding.



83%

believe the EU should ensure a minimum wage for all workers



81%

want more EU financial aid for children



47%

believe reducing gender gaps in salaries and pensions is one of the best ways to tackle gender inequalities in Europe

62% in Hungary

want to further expand Erasmus with vocational training for young workers

vs

59% in Greece

who want to keep the focus on students and those in training



4. Window on the world

The EU should have stronger powers to represent Europe with a single voice on the world stage, believe a narrow majority of Millennials. On climate change specifically, they want Europe to take stronger action globally. Almost two-thirds of Millennials want Europe to do more to protect its external borders. A narrow majority support merging the EU's armed forces into a single army.

1 in 10 in Poland and Hungary

want the EU to make it easier for refugees to come to Europe, compared to

over 50% in Spain and Portugal



60%

want the EU to do more to tackle the refugee crisis and protect external borders



56%

believe the EU should have more powers to represent Europe with a single voice on the world stage



MILLENNIAL DIALOGUE ON EUROPE

Building on the insights originally gained in the FEPS 'Millennial Dialogue' project – 'Millennial Dialogue on Europe' focuses on the most pressing contemporary EU and global issues, and analyses the key policies, priority action areas, hopes and visions for the future of Europe according to European young people.

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Stichting
Gerrit
Kreveld

- This executive summary is edited by FEPS with the financial support of the European Parliament
- ISBN number 978-2-930769-09-7 9782930769097