

# THE Y REVOLUTION?

An international survey on Generation Y:  
Their aspirations and relationship with gender equality and business





In recent months, it has been impossible to avoid “Generation Y”. It has appeared in newspapers, in magazines and has been given a place of prominence in bookstores. The Generation Y consists of young people born between the beginning of the 1980s and the mid-90s. Modern literature does not always depict this generation in a favourable light, labelling them with characteristics such as: individualistic or even selfish, unmanageable, impertinent, glued to their smartphone, addicted to social media, impatient, etc.

Faced with these young people who assume their behaviour with such an ease that it can sometimes be disconcerting, the position of managers is not always obvious and the intergenerational gap could widen all too quickly.

As Generation Y will account for 15% of the European population and 40% of the active population in France by 2015, Mazars and WoMen’Up wanted a common approach, starting with the discovery of Generation Y in 5 continents. 1011 young people from 64 different nationalities participated in the study.

Do they share common characteristics?

What do they dream of?

What are their aspirations in business?

What is their relationship with diversity?

Here are a few elements to help you to understand their outlook on the world.

# CROSS-INTERVIEW

Laurent CHOAIN, HRD, Mazars Group  
Emmanuelle DUEZ and Adeline BRAESCU-KERLAN, co-founders of WoMen'Up

## EVOLUTION REVOLUTION OR GENERATIONAL EPIPHENOMENON ?

On the one hand, Mazars, an international organisation, specialising in audit and consulting, which relies on the expertise of 13,000 professionals in 69 countries, finds itself confronted with changes being made to staff whilst also managing transgenerational teams. On the other hand, WoMen'Up, the first association to address the issues of gender diversity in business exclusively from the perspective of Generation Y.

Together, they conducted a survey of 1011 Yers from 64 different nationalities. In order to decipher the results, we asked Laurent Choain, Director of Human Resources, Mazars Group, as well as Emmanuelle Duez and Adeline Braescu-Kerlan, co-founders of WoMen'Up, to exchange their views.



Laurent Choain



Emmanuelle Duez



Adeline Braescu-Kerlan

## WHY HAVE YOU CONDUCTED THIS SURVEY?

WoMen'Up says:

To date, we are the only association by and for Generation Y to work on gender equality in business within France. Our conclusion is as follows: for the past thirty years, when we talk about gender equality in the workplace there are two theses, two strategies and almost two opposing ideologies: for some people, it is a matter of social justice, women account for 50% of the planet's population and 50% of those in higher education, therefore logically, there should be 50% women on the board of council. For others, particularly within business, it is necessary to legitimate the "business case" with internal policies for diversity: a link must be established between the presence of women, especially at the highest levels of management and the economic performance of the company. It is clear that despite numerous serious studies about this subject, it is still a source of contention.

WoMen'Up defends a completely different vision, one that is very innovative: the business case would be elsewhere; the diversity policies implemented within enterprises would be a contributing factor in the attraction and retention of talents from the famous Generation Y. Why? Because presently, men and women under the age of thirty, the first generation whose mothers were mostly employed, share common aspirations of equilibrium and demand that companies respect the work-life balance. Since young men are taking part in a struggle that was once the reserve of women in such an uninhibited and natural manner, is this not the sign of a true revolution in progress?

We have conducted this study with Mazars to test our initial hypothesis: is achieving balance in life really a major concern shared by the representatives of Generation Y? Does this have a part to play when men and women choose a specific company and also whether or not they decide to stay there? Do men and women of this generation have opinions that are different, identical or equal, especially regarding competition within business?

Laurent Choain says:

Mazars is a multidisciplinary and multicultural group. We are present in 69 countries and diversity is an extremely variable reality. We recruit more than 3,000 young people worldwide each year, therefore, Mazars is young by nature. Understanding the motivations of this generation is essential for us. Subsequently, we are a company that provides services, with collective intelligence being the founding principle and it is necessary to be knowledgeable about the expectations of this generation.

## HOW DOES GENDER EQUALITY FUNCTION AT MAZARS?

Laurent Choain says:

Approximately 50% of employees recruited are women and 50% are men. But moving up to partner level, we no longer have this balance. We need to work on proven talents, among which we have identified 43% to be women. My generation has moved on from the milestone of equality, men and women alike receive an education and have a profession. I think that the legislations and regulations are in line with a continuous and sincere improvement, even if the results are often expected. It will be a long process, indeed, and it is also the responsibility of businesses such as ours to accelerate the pace.

**The results show that there is very little difference between the expectations of men and women, but they also demonstrate the concerns of women who feel that they are in competition with men. 37.8% of these women want quotas.**

**WHAT DO YOU THINK EMMANUELLE AND ADELINE?**

WoMen'Up says:

Effectively, even if Generation Y is the intrinsic bearer of change due to their convictions and behaviour, a revolution on the subject of diversity will take time. At the moment, there is a lack of role models in the highest levels of management who young women can identify themselves with and help them to plan for careers in positions of leadership. To address the issue, in the short/medium term, a solution exists, it is not ideal but it is necessary and has already proven itself in other struggles: quotas. In 2012 under the legislative impact, the diversity ratios in boards of administration reached 23.4% compared to 20.8% in 2011.

But let's not forget the men, the cornerstone of the problem that will allow us to permanently transform proceedings: the legislation on paternity leave forms part of a major breakthrough, because in the same way that women need role models to enter into high-flying careers, men need male references in the highest levels of management who will take on a father-like role, a companion, or more broadly speaking, an individual who has had many experiences.

## GENERATION Y:

# IS THIS GENERATION THE SAME AS THE OTHERS WHO HAD NEW IDEAS OR WILL THERE BE A REAL SHIFT IN SOCIETY?

### WoMen'Up says:

We believe that what we call Generation Y is more than just an isolated generational effect, it is a culture, a fundamental movement that will intensify with the arrival of the new generation, "Z". This common culture challenges traditional models, especially those of the company. Our generation has been a first-hand witness to the disastrous consequences of unemployment and parents who sacrificed everything for the company before being dismissed in times of crisis. In a fairly logical and positive manner, and far from out rightly rejecting companies, young Yers simply assume that if work is a source of fulfilment, it is just one of many, and happiness lies in the harmony and balance between these different spheres. Logically, they ask organisations to be understanding and to adapt. This aspect emerges clearly from the study.

### Laurent Choain says:

Mazars is very young by nature; our population consists primarily of Yers and renews itself constantly by the same model of our industry. We must operate like a school in the sense that learning is a continual process. Most of our former members have fond memories and a strong bond with Mazars. My goal as HRD is to make our members highly employable, whether they become our partners or continue their accomplished careers elsewhere. More generally speaking, I view the Generation Y as a generation in its own right, a source of influence as well as subject to influence, just like all the others.

Your survey shows that young people firstly want to live life to the fullest, maintain a good work-life balance and finally, be financially independent; the opposite of their parents. This appears to be a global phenomenon.  
**IS IT SELFISHNESS OR INDIVIDUALISM?**

WoMen'Up says:

Generation Y is labelled with a number of attributes, not always flattering, and individualism is one of the highest ranking. This trait can be given two interpretations: individualism that tends to be selfish, in which young people are only thinking about themselves and are no longer committed to the company and others. One can also see a strong trend towards putting the individual, the human, at the centre of choices and the professional and personal spheres. The Yers do not reject the company and do not refuse to get involved, on the contrary, they ask the company to adapt, to evolve in order for it to become a place of fulfilment and balance so that the Yer can fully get involved. Similarly, Yers are two times more likely than their parents to commit to a role that seems just and meaningful. In conclusion, we are self-centred, certainly. Selfish? Allow us to contradict you and respond with the title of the excellent essay by François de Singly, "Individualism is a humanism"...

## FOCUS

### THE PRIORITIES OF GENERATION Y

According to men, 31% want to live life to the fullest, 21% want to find a balance between their personal and professional life, 13.3% want to spend time with family and 10.5% want to be financially independent.

According to women, 31.9% want to find a balance between their personal and professional life, 25.2% want to live life to the fullest, 11.9% want to be financially independent and 10% want to succeed professionally.

Laurent Choain says:

Generation Y challenges the hierarchy and functions in a faster and more direct manner. However, if you had asked the previous generations, at least mine already, if they saw themselves on one career path in just one company, they would have mostly answered in the negative. However, I agree with you on one point. Generation Y is very eager in the sense of wanting more varied methods of working. I had to force myself to react in "professional mode" when, for Christmas, my son asked me for a video game that is considered to be violent. Despite my initial reaction, I forced myself to find out what it was about, and I did find interesting dimensions of learning, particularly the historical perspective. As far as in business, to understand, adapt and adopt some of Generation Y's new cognitive frameworks cannot be avoided.

**There is still a difference in opinion of Generation Y between yourselves because, Laurent, you talk about a new method of communication and you, WoMen'Up, talk about a real movement. Yet this generation has new professional criteria that favours human qualities with expertise placed much further behind.**

**HOW CAN WE RECONCILE THE COMPANY WITH THESE YOUNG PEOPLE?**

**WoMen'Up says:**

Instead of reconciliation, we prefer to speak about adaptation. The breakdown is not at all completed, far from it. The company remains a place of engagement and fulfilment. Help managers to understand the new aspirations and change the models to make them more sustainable, because this means being more suited to the new generation entering into the labour market. Help Yers to also explain their expectations and to accept the necessary constraints related to the business world in return. But we are very confident: Generation Y is less WHY than HOW, it will be a propositional force and will bring major innovations to the table.

Throughout the study, small avenues have emerged to allow for reflection, improvement, evolution, revolution and especially the revelation that the reactions of young people from 64 different nationalities are almost identical. Life-long learning, working in collaborative ways, levelling out hierarchies, valuing merits and skills rather than diplomas or degrees and the development of human qualities all pave the way to exploring... together!

**IS THIS NOT WHAT YOU DREAM OF OFFERING, LAURENT, A UNIVERSITY IN BUSINESS?**

**Laurent Choain says:**

Yes, I am totally convinced that the company should offer continuous learning, or even issue degrees, it is a dream that I have always had. We're not there yet, but we're working towards it at Mazars. We are also working with the concept of flexibility and quality of time spent working, which is very diverse depending on the continents, but now present in China, as in Russia and France. Means of communication completely change our relationship, as you will be aware; we conducted the survey uniquely through the internet and social networks. This is a first for Mazars. But fundamentally, I do not think that Generation Y should be the sole object of our attention, and I'm in agreement with the remarkable work of WoMen'Up on promoting gender diversity: what counts is generational gender equality and social promotion, which is now only offered by two systems: school and the company.



# THE Y REVOLUTION: THE KEY FIGURES



## HAPPINESS

### A GENERATION THAT DEMANDS ITS RIGHT TO HAPPINESS

When asked about their life goals, 28.5% of Yers give priority to the balance between their private and professional life and 27.3% want to live life to the fullest.

## PEOPLE

### A GENERATION THAT PUTS PEOPLE AT THE HEART OF BUSINESS

Yers believe that human qualities (57.5%), the capacity to learn throughout life (55%) and ambition (51%) are the keys to professional success. This is followed by networking (46.4%) and technical skills (45.9%).

## EQUALITY

### AWARE OF THE PROGRESS THAT STILL REMAINS TO BE COMPLETED, GENERATION Y IS EAGER TO SEE GENDER EQUALITY EMERGE IN BUSINESS

According to 77% of young people asked, gender equality is a major challenge for companies: a challenge which was particularly significant for the women who participated, as 83.3% think that it is necessary for companies to work on the subject, men are also not far behind with a positive response of 66.4%.

## ADVICE

### FOR THOSE WHO WANT TO MANAGE GENERATION Y

This study outlines the picture of our companies and the substantial progress that remains to be completed in order to measure up to Generation Y's expectations, regardless of the country or continent. More open, more flexible, more creative, more respectful of gender equality, the company is transformed under the pressure of currently employed generations and will continue its inevitable evolution with the arrival of Generation Y, a generation that questions the existing model. This generation is calling today's company into question, not in order to destroy it, but rather, to fully participate in its development and find its rightful place within the company.

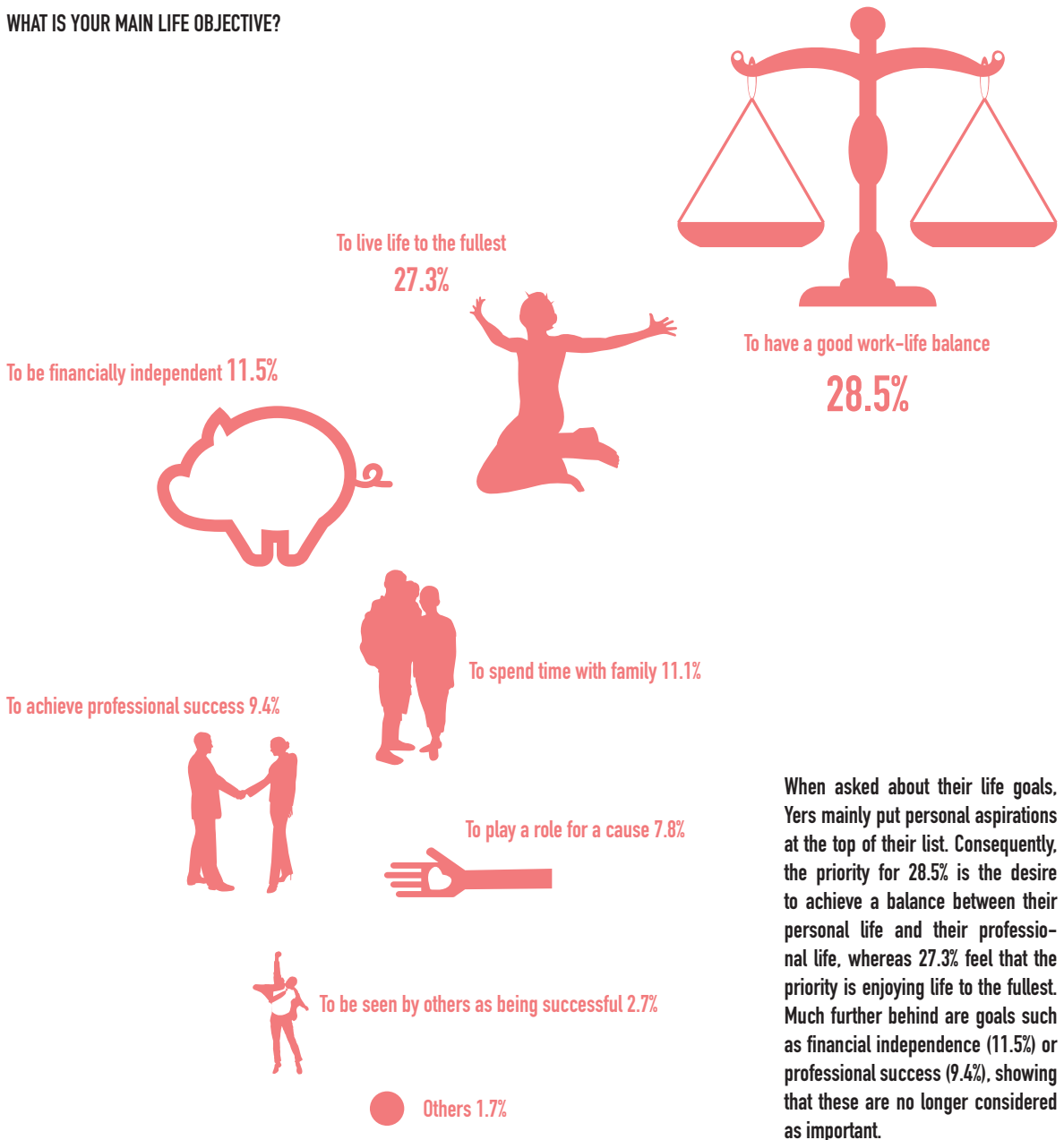
# 1. WHEN THE **GENERATION Y** **REINVENTS THE RIGHT** **TO** **HAPPINESS**

In search of balance, Generation Y places happiness ahead of objectives. This includes building a life outside of work, living life to the fullest, having numerous aspirations that take precedence over financial independence, professional success and the objectives that were important to their parents' generation. This is the portrait of a generation in search of meaning.

# A GENERATION

## THAT PLACES PERSONAL ASPIRATIONS AT THE HEART OF LIFE GOALS

WHAT IS YOUR MAIN LIFE OBJECTIVE?



When asked about their life goals, Yers mainly put personal aspirations at the top of their list. Consequently, the priority for 28.5% is the desire to achieve a balance between their personal life and their professional life, whereas 27.3% feel that the priority is enjoying life to the fullest. Much further behind are goals such as financial independence (11.5%) or professional success (9.4%), showing that these are no longer considered as important.

## ■ IN RESPONSE TO PARENTS WHO ARE PERCEIVED AS BEING RATHER CONSERVATIVE...

IN YOUR OPINION,

WHAT WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT LIFE GOAL FOR YOUR PARENTS WHEN THEY STARTED THEIR ACTIVE LIFE?



To be financially independent

32%



To spend time with family

25%



To have a good work-life balance

18%

When they were asked to imagine the concerns of their parents when they were the same age, Generation Y see themselves as having a different opinion to the previous generation.

They view their parents as being primarily oriented towards traditional values such as work and family. Almost one third (32%) think that their parents placed financial independence at the top of the list, as oppose to one quarter (25%) who think that their parents' priority was wanting to spend time with family.

## ...BUT WHOSE PIONEERING ROLE IS STILL RECOGNISED ■

Generation Y seems to recognise the pioneering role of its predecessors regarding topics that preoccupy Yers today. It was revealed that 18% think that their parents were primarily concerned with achieving a balance between their personal and professional life.



One can clearly see the mark of a generation who are aware of the difficulty in finding and constructing a work-life balance, are part of the movement in which companies have recalibrated HR policies to be more inclusive and a generation whose mothers have, for the first time, mostly been employed. Generation Y fits in well with this trend and its aspirations can be interpreted as the logical consequence of three decades of actions in favour of women in business.

## ■ AN INDIVIDUALISTIC GENERATION...

The representatives of Generation Y are regularly criticised for being selfish, thinking only of themselves and prioritising their individual goals. At first glance, the results of the study may indeed suggest a rise of individualism. The Yers distance themselves from the opinions of others and are accustomed to expressing themselves with ease. For 27.3% of Yers, enjoying life to the fullest was identified as their primary objective, compared to the fact that they imagine only 6% of their parents also viewed this as a primary objective in the past.

## ■ ...OR A GENERATION OF INDIVIDUALS?

However, rather than an individualistic generation, one could refer to Generation Y as the generation that puts the individual at the centre of everything.

Thus, the responses from Generation Y imply a strong collective dimension. Only 7.8% reported wanting to play a role for a cause, which is more than what they believe to be true of their parents (2.7%).

The concept of a work-life balance includes spending time with family and should also encompass friends, sports and culture. In short, all of the leisure activities that parents would have identified as being practiced as part of a group during their era.



## FOCUS

### A COMMON VISION OF HAPPINESS AMONGST YERS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

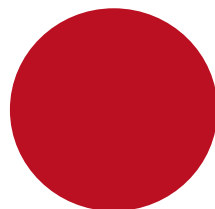
Whilst analysing the life objectives put forward by Yers, we were surprised to see that there was hardly any variation in the statistics from continent to continent.

The balance between the private and professional life as well as living life to the fullest are the 2 main elements of happiness in Asia, North America and Europe. According to half of Yers in Latin America, the reconciliation of different spheres is the primary objective.

In Oceania, 19% of Yers are in search of financial independence as well as 11% in Europe, whereas family dominates in Asia and North America as the life objective just behind finding balance and living life to the fullest. To conclude, in Africa, the objective of professional success has the highest percentage: 21% compared to 6% in Europe and 10% in North America.



Hence, a question posed by a growing number of managers:



**HOW CAN COMPANIES COPE WITH THESE REQUIREMENTS EVEN THOUGH THEY MAY SEEM INCOMPATIBLE WITH WHAT IS PROFITABLE FOR THE BUSINESS?**

## 2. A **GENERATION THAT ASPIRES TO REVOLUTIONISE COMPANIES**

As Generation Y has mastered the ability to outline personal life goals and assert individual aspirations, it is with this same ease that Yers approach their professional life and set about completely transforming certain well-established conventions. These transformations include the intrusion of the personal life into the professional sphere via social networks, being distracted whilst at work, requesting flexible work patterns, calling traditional authority practises into question... the list of Generation Y's demands is long and can be daunting. Faced with a very assertive generation that does not seem willing to change for the company, should the company be obliged to change instead? If so, the questions are how, and to what extent? Is a new world of employment on the cusp of emergence?



## ■ ARE YERS UNSUITABLE FOR COMPANIES, ARE COMPANIES UNSUITABLE FOR YERS?

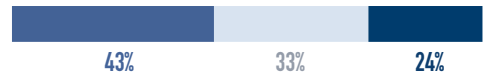
Influenced by the professional experiences of their parents who have undergone unemployment, redundancies and sometimes have even been forced into early retirement, Generation Y has not been left with a very positive image of the corporate world. They are conscious of the fact that this world does not necessarily support their aspirations.

The main objective in life for Generation Y is, as we have seen, the reconciliation of the personal life with that of the professional. Highlighting the gap that exists between the aspirations of Generation Y and the current modes of operation in companies, 80% of Yers say that they are dissatisfied or somewhat satisfied with the current balance between private and professional life in the corporate world. This gap can result in feelings of frustration and misunderstanding. In contrast, the companies respond to Yers' expectations in terms of stimulation (43% satisfaction) and opportunities and challenges offered (55%).

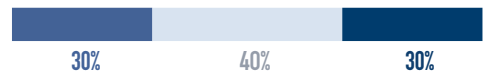


DOES THE CURRENT BUSINESS WORLD MEET YOUR EXPECTATIONS IN TERMS OF:

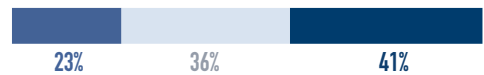
### STIMULATION



### RECOGNITION



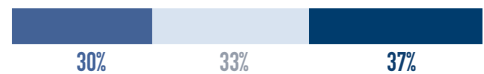
### ABILITY TO LISTEN



### WORK-LIFE BALANCE



### EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES



### OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES



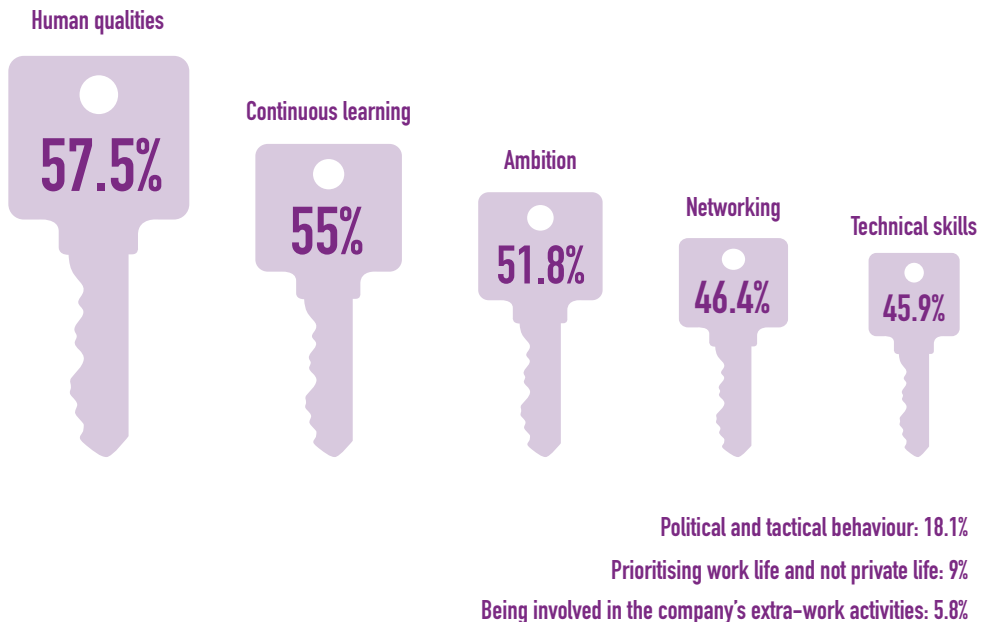
### FLEXIBILITY



## ■ GENERATION Y WANTS TO POSITION PEOPLE AT THE HEART OF BUSINESS

Although disgruntled, Generation Y is still equipped with ideas about what the corporate world should consist of and the values that should be given precedence. This revelation breaks down some of the stereotypes about Yers.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE KEYS TO SUCCEEDING PROFESSIONALLY? (3 MAXIMUM)



### FOCUS

## ARE THE KEYS TO SUCCESS VIEWED IN THE SAME WAY INTERNATIONALLY?

The results vary according to the continent. A clear consensus has appeared regarding the link between professional success and human qualities, with results of 68% in Asia, 56% in North America and 82% in Africa. There is more of a contrast concerning the link with ambition: 56% of Europeans and 65% of Africans who were asked view this as a key to success, compared to just 31% of young people in Asia and 25% of young people in the Middle East. Furthermore, in Asia, the emphasis is placed on technical skills (66%) even though the average is 40% across Europe, Oceania and the Americas.



## **Stereotype # 1**

### **Yers are selfish and think only of themselves**

Yers are undoubtedly individualistic: they have placed the individual (and often themselves) at the heart of everything. However, they are also deeply humanistic: 57.5% believe that to succeed professionally, we must first have robust human qualities.

## **Stereotype # 2**

### **Yers are insolent and do not listen to anyone or anything**

As Yers do not hesitate to express their opinions in a loud and uninhibited manner, they are surprisingly much less resolute than one might have imagined. Thus, 55% of them consider it necessary to adopt a life-long approach to learning in order to succeed. However, learning is rarely done alone but rather, with others. This promotes a sharing process, often taking place between generations.

This willingness to learn also demonstrates the ability to be questioning and gain a deeper understanding, but also a great adaptability, which is a real asset in the business world.

## **Stereotype # 3**

### **Yers are not interested in business anymore and do not have any professional ambition**

On the contrary, 51.8% of Generation Y believe that ambition is a key factor in professional success. This demonstrates their motivation and desire to succeed. The disenchantment towards their work could be more related to the way that the work is completed rather than the work itself.

## BUT THEY ARE NOT IDEALISTIC ABOUT WHAT LENGTHS THEY WILL GO TO IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE WHAT THEY WANT

Generation Y offers a positive vision of professional success, based on human qualities, learning and healthy ambition.

They are also aware that they will need to deploy other skills in order to succeed. Subsequently, they highlight the importance of “networking”, however, they do not confuse this with political behaviour and tactics. Accustomed to social networks in their personal lives, but also professional social networks, will Generation Y be able to use this tool to its advantage in vis-à-vis networking?

Moreover, they do not underestimate technical skills and think that these should be mastered, even if they do not appear to be the main factors of success. The need to develop technical skills can be compared to their desire to learn throughout their lives and update their knowledge on a daily basis.

Finally, Yers also establish clear boundaries between what they are willing to do for their career and what they are not. Thus, the importance given to balancing the personal and professional life goes hand in hand with having a limited interest in the activities organised by the company outside of office hours, as these are considered to be of little value. If companies spend a lot of money on organising extra activities outside of work, they should reflect upon whether or not the activities are really of use...

**TECHNICAL SKILLS**  
**PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS**  
**NETWORKING**  
**BALANCE**

## ■ IN A RESTRUCTURED BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

Generation Y wants a change in the work environment to help them to achieve their aspirations.

WHAT SHOCKS YOU THE MOST ABOUT THE CURRENT BUSINESS WORLD?

Lack of confidence in young graduates

24%

Lack of solidarity

20%

Lack of creativity

14%

Lack of flexibility

13.5%

Lack of skills


12.5%

Lack of autonomy in decision-making process

12%

Lack of mobility

4%



First and foremost, the elements point towards an atmosphere of mistrust in which they are accustomed to change. Almost a quarter (24%), think that companies do not trust their younger recruits. If they constantly ask questions (after all, they are not called Generation “Why” by chance), companies also need to pay more attention when it comes to the solutions that Yers are suggesting. For 20.3% of Generation Y, they want companies to be more supportive of inclusion in the social setting of the company.

Finally, Generation Y is disappointed that not enough importance is given to their creativity, flexibility and self-reliance and they want the opportunity to put these skills to the best use possible. These qualities appear to be rather positive for businesses that are suffering from the tough economic crisis, after all, a little pinch of enthusiasm can do no harm.

### **3. THE SEARCH FOR BALANCE: A REVIVAL FOR GENDER EQUALITY**

# ?

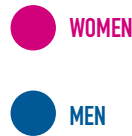
We are aware of the fact that Generation Y places importance on the desire to find equilibrium in life and to solve the impossible equation started by their parents: being satisfied at work and at home. For the first time, it has been reported that males and females are sharing common goals. Will this have an impact on diversity in businesses? Is Generation Y really responsible for bringing about a world that is more interdependent, more egalitarian and more just? It is probably too soon to assess the durability of their aspirations against economic and societal constraints, but it is still interesting to follow the evolution throughout the coming years which are full of expectancy.

# ■ A GENERATION WHERE LIFE OBJECTIVES ARE GLOBALLY SHARED BY MEN AND WOMEN

If women are influenced by the difficulties that they have seen their mothers attempting to reconcile, they will have a greater awareness of the need to balance the professional and private spheres (31.9%), whereas men tend to focus on enjoying life to the fullest (31.1%). However, these two objectives combined came out in the lead in both groups (53.2% for men and 57.1% for women).

Interestingly, men are more likely than women to report that they preferred family life (13.3% compared to 10%), followed by financial independence, which is an area more preferred by women, reflecting a change in mind-set and a new relationship concerning parenthood and family.

## WHAT IS YOUR MAIN LIFE OBJECTIVE?

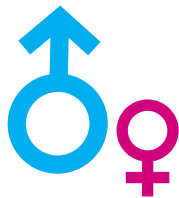


## ■ IS THIS THE FIRST GENERATION TO BE 100% GENDER MIXED?

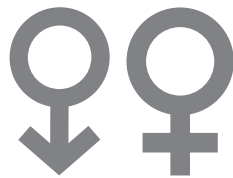
In this respect, the men and women of Generation Y are very different from the previous generations. Thus, when we analysed the results, many of those who participated have commented that they would have preferred to answer the question about the objectives of their parents' lives in two stages: the first part for their father and the latter for their mother, because they feel that these opinions differed. This is no longer the case today, which is a very strong signal in favour of diversity.

Moreover, 95% of the people interviewed agreed on the fact that men and women have equal rights. They do not differentiate between the sexes, since 75% of them think that if men and women have equal rights, they are no different.

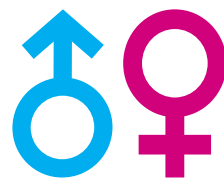
IN YOUR OPINION, MEN AND WOMEN ARE:



Not equal in their rights  
**5%**



Equal in their rights and identical  
**20%**



Equal in their rights but different  
**75%**



## ■ A GENERATION MOSTLY CONSCIOUS OF THE PROGRESS STILL TO BE MADE IN SOCIETY

# EQUALITY?

HOW DO YOU VIEW GENDER EQUALITY?

44%	An obvious issue
16%	A trendy issue
14%	A secondary issue
12%	A struggle
10%	An irrelevant issue
5%	Other

Generation Y is completely consumed by the subject of gender equality since more than 70% consider it to be a topic worth exploring. Furthermore, 43.7% think that this issue is obvious, 15.8% say that it is fashionable (although it is not possible to interpret this as positive or negative) and less than 10%, however, consider gender equality to be a struggle. This last statistic is also interesting because it reinforces a more peaceful vision of diversity, which is not based on crude opposites.

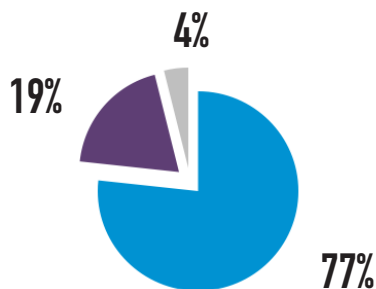
However, it is important to note that nearly a quarter of those who took part do not feel concerned by the subject, have no interest in it (9.6%) or they view it as a secondary issue (13.9%).

## AND MORE PARTICULARLY IN COMPANIES WHERE THEY ARE AWARE THAT THE MARGIN FOR PROGRESS IS HIGH

If some Yers remain sceptical about the reality of gender equality issues and women in society, they are, nevertheless, more aware of persistent inequalities in the workplace as 77% consider this to be a major challenge for companies.

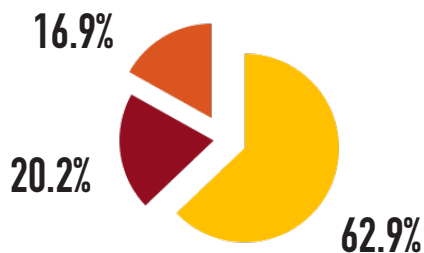
This observation relates mostly to females (83.3%) rather than males, however, two thirds of the latter (66.4%) still recognise the need for companies to address the subject. Awareness of the importance of these issues is changing drastically according to previous experiences. Subsequently, we have questioned the existence of the glass ceiling. If 62.9% of young people without professional experience had never heard of this phenomenon, the statistic would drop to 38.8% after two years of being in work. With awareness comes the need to act. This is demonstrated by the fact that the proportion of young people who believe that the glass ceiling is a real problem in business has gone from 26.2% to 41.9% within these two categories.

DO YOU CONSIDER GENDER EQUALITY IN COMPANIES AS AN IMPORTANT CHALLENGE?

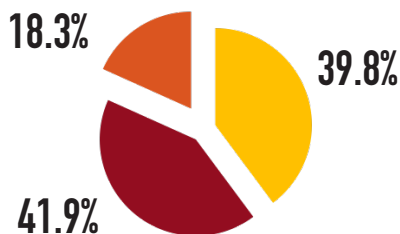


IN YOUR OPINION, THE GLASS CEILING IS:

no professional experience



more than 2 years of experience



YES ●  
NO ●  
N/A ●

I don't know what the glass ceiling is ●  
a concept that is no longer relevant ●  
a real issue in business ●

## THERE IS NO “MIRACLE SOLUTION”, BUT CHANGE WILL COME ABOUT THROUGH RAISING AWARENESS...

IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT WOULD BE THE MAIN RECOMMENDATION IN ORDER TO IMPROVE GENDER EQUALITY IN COMPANIES?

raise employees' awareness



modify the evaluation of criteria



enforce quotas for women in top management positions



enforce an obligatory paternity leave at the birth of their child



involve men in the debate



ban meetings after 7pm



wait for change to happen



When asked about solutions that need to be implemented in order to promote equality between men and women, Yers are not in a position to wait, they want to act now! Subsequently, only 5% think that waiting for change to happen is sufficient. The need to raise the awareness of issues of diversity amongst employees seems to be the answer and almost a third (31%) consider this to be the best solution.

But how should raising this awareness take place? In what context and at what age?

We questioned Generation Y on the validity of gender equality education in schools. At first glance, it appears that only a third of those surveyed (33.2%) were knowledgeable about these issues. More importantly, gender equality education was useful for more than half of the females (56.1%) – and for good reason as they are the gender most affected by this issue! This type of education is shown to have a more limited impact on males (as just 38.5% think that gender equality education taught them things that they consider to be somewhat relevant).

The question of the usefulness of this type of education in schools is always open to discussion, especially regarding the form that it should take in order to benefit both males and females.

#### HAVE YOU HAD ANY LESSONS ON GENDER EQUALITY DURING YOUR STUDIES?

YES



33.2%

NO



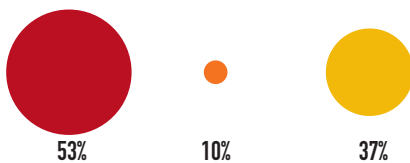
66.8%

#### IF YES, WAS IT USEFUL?

no professional experience

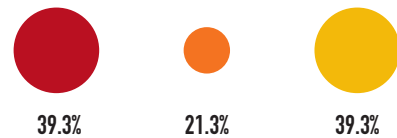


more than 2 years of experience

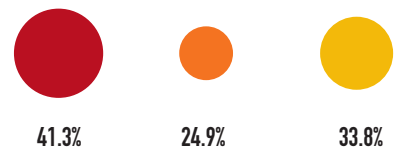


#### IF NO, WHAT COULD BE DONE TO MAKE IT USEFUL?

no professional experience



more than 2 years of experience



● YES ● NO ● N/A

## ■ ...AS WELL AS A MIX OF HR POLICIES

The Generation Y participants agreed on an almost equal mix of HR solutions traditionally implemented in companies to promote diversity: for 25%, it is necessary to first deal with men, 13% think that establishing compulsory paternity leave is the answer, followed by 12% who think that men should be involved in the debate. It is also a question of changing promotion policies by recalibrating the evaluation criteria (16%) or by establishing quotas for women (13.1%). Finally, the change of corporate culture is underlined by 10.5% of respondents who wish to prohibit meetings after 7pm.

### And quotas?

The eternal topic of debate when it comes to gender equality is the possibility of quotas existing in companies, which still sparks off strong opinions.

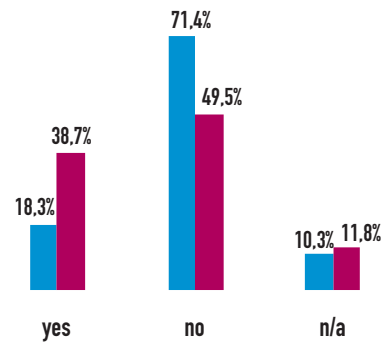
Out of all the respondents of Generation Y who spoke on the subject (11.4% of respondents did not wish to express an opinion), 58.1% were opposed to the introduction of quotas. If men were strongly opposed to quotas (because they have the most to lose), nearly half of women are also opposed (48.5%). One of the reasons given may be the desire to succeed based on their own merit and perhaps there is also a certain optimism in the social solidarity advocated by Generation Y.

However, it is interesting to note that this opinion is changing with the entry of women into the workforce. As only 31% of women declare themselves to be in favour of quotas before having entered into the workforce, this percentage is set to increase to 46% after two years in employment, a demonstration of how reality changes things.

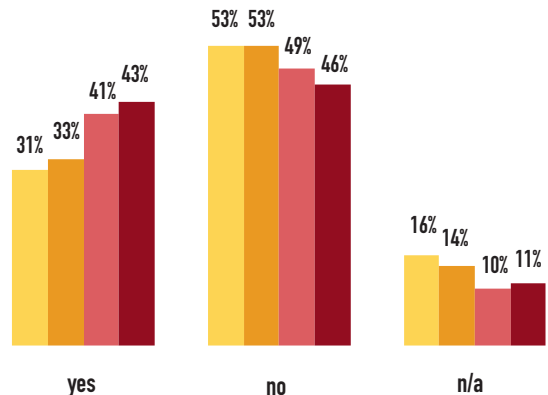
Positive discrimination policies in favour of women are not limited to quotas; there are mentoring and coaching programmes that support women in their career development, education on gender stereotyping and professional networks amongst others that can be put in place by companies.

### ARE YOU IN FAVOUR OF A POSITIVE DISCRIMINATION POLICY FOR WOMEN?

● MEN  
● WOMEN



● no professional experience  
● less than 6 months of experience  
● between 6 months and 2 years of experience  
● more than 2 years of experience





# METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted by the audit and advisory group, Mazars, and the French association for young graduates, WoMen'Up. It was conducted from July–August 2012 via the website [surveymonkey.com](http://surveymonkey.com) with the help of social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc. and international contacts.

## GENDER SPREAD

MEN	39,5%
WOMEN	60,5%

## AGE RANGE

18 years old	1%
19 years old	1%
20 years old	4%
21 years old	13%
22 years old	15%
23 years old	15%
24 years old	13%
25 years old	10%
26 years old	7%
27 years old	6%
28 years old	5%
29 years old	4%
30 years old	4%
31 years old	2%
32 years old	2%

## GEOGRAPHIC SPREAD

Africa	8%
North America	5%
South America	8%
Asia	15%
Europe	59%
Middle East	1%
Oceania	4%

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE SPREAD

No professional experience	12,3%
Less than 6 months of professional experience	23,1%
Between 6 months and 2 years of professional experience	32,7%
More than 2 years of professional experience	31,8%



Mazars is an international, integrated and independent organisation, specialising in audit, advisory, accounting, tax and legal services. As of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012, the Group has a direct presence in 69 countries and draws on the expertise of more than 13,000 professionals to assist companies – major international groups, SMEs and entrepreneurs – and public bodies, at every stage in their development.

In the conviction that our partnership is truly enriched by the variety and mix of the people who choose to join us, Mazars has activated a policy for promoting diversity by offering not only equal opportunities for employment but the same potential for developing a career. Mazars focuses on a better representation of women in the organisation, mainly in management positions. Supporting the Women's Forum since 2007, Mazars has published a book entitled "A women's world, a better world?" (by L'Archipel Publisher, October 2011) which gathers the testimonies of 100 women living in 33 countries.

Recruiting 3,000 young people from around the world each year, Mazars has decided to explore the Generation Y and understand its expectations. Launched during the 2012 edition of the Women's Forum and released at Group level, this study will provide the foundation for debates and intergenerational dialogues.

[www.mazars.com](http://www.mazars.com)

WoMen'Up is working towards a greater diversity in companies, at all levels and focuses its action on Yers, men and women under the age of 30, representatives of Generation Y. WoMen'Up creates a network for companies and Yers designed to promote exchanges and the emergence of innovative and sustainable policies in favour of gender diversity. Specifically, WoMen'Up pursues two types of actions:

- Throughout the year, raising awareness around the theme of Generation Y and gender diversity.
- From January to June, action targeted at creating networks between Yers who are already aware of the topic of diversity and our company partners, through Clüüb.

In 2012, WoMen'Up directly made 5000 people aware of these issues and helped 40 male and female students to integrate their Clüüb in order to push diversity in business forward.

[www.network-womenup.com](http://www.network-womenup.com)

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