

# 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 constantly appears in newspapers, on the covers of magazines and has even been given a place of prominence in book stands. Generation Y consists of young people born between the beginning of the 1980s and the mid-90s. Society does not always depict this generation in a favourable light, labelling them with characteristics such as: individualistic, selfish, unmanageable, impertinent, glued to their smartphone, addicted to social media, impatient, etc.

It is not easy for managers to cope with these young people who are completely comfortable and at ease with their own behaviour, which can ultimately lead to the further widening of the intergenerational gap.

Since Generation Y will account for 15% of the European population and 40% of the workforce in France by 2015, Mazars and WoMen’Up both wanted to explore Generation Y in all 5 continents. 1,011 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 are their relationships with diversity?

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

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

## EVOLUTION REVOLUTION OR GENERATIONAL EPIPHENOMENON ?

We have, Mazars, an international organisation, specialising in auditing and consulting, which relies on the expertise of 13,000 professionals in 69 countries and finds itself confronted with the on-going changes to its staff, all whilst managing trans-generational teams. And we have, 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 1,011 Yers from 64 different nationalities. In order to decipher the results, we asked Laurent Choain, Chief HR Officer at Mazars Group, as well as Emmanuelle Duez and Adeline Braescu-Kerlan, co-founders of WoMen'Up, to exchange their views on this subject.



Laurent Choain



Emmanuelle Duez



Adeline Braescu-Kerlan

## WHY HAVE YOU CONDUCTED THIS SURVEY?

WoMen'Up says:

We are the only association to date for and by Generation Y that works on diversity in business within France. Our conclusion is as follows: for the past thirty years, there have been two major opinions, two strategies and almost two opposing ideologies when it comes to gender equality in the workplace: for some people it is a matter of social justice since women account for 50% of the world's population and 50% of the student population at higher education institutions; thus, it is only logical that 50% of the board of directors should be women. For others, particularly people within companies, it is necessary to present a "business case" to legitimise 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 on this subject, it is still a source of debate.

WoMen'Up stands by a completely alternative, yet very innovative, vision: the business case would be different; the diversity policies to be implemented at companies would be a contributing factor in attracting and retaining talents from this famous generation. Why? Because nowadays, men and women under the age of thirty, the first generation whose mothers were mostly employed, share the same need for equilibrium and demand that companies respect their work-life balance. Young men are now naturally and easily taking part in what was once considered a struggle for only women, isn't this the sign of a true revolution in progress?

We have conducted this study with Mazars in order to test our initial hypotheses: is achieving balance in life really a major concern for Generation Y? Does this play a role when men and women choose a specific company and to stay working there? Do men and women of this generation have the same, different, or equal opinions, especially within the business realm?

Laurent Choain says:

Mazars is a multidisciplinary and multicultural group. We are present in 69 countries and diversity varies extremely. 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 WORK AT MAZARS?

Laurent Choain says:

Approximately 50% of employees recruited are women and 50% are men. But when looking at the partner and executive level of the company, we no longer have this balance. We need to work on experienced 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 continuously improving and moving in the right direction, even if we have to wait patiently for the results. It will be a long process, indeed, but it is also the responsibility of companies 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 BOTH, EMMANUELLE AND ADELIN, THINK?**

WoMen'Up says:

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 look up to in order to visualise themselves in a position of leadership. To address the issue, a solution exists which is not ideal but necessary and which has already proven itself in other struggles: quotas. In 2012 under the French 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 this change for the long term: the legislation on paternity leave represents a major breakthrough, because in the same way that women need role models to enter high-flying careers, men need male references in the highest levels of management who are not afraid to show that they are fathers, partners or more broadly speaking, fulfilled individuals.

## GENERATION Y:

### IS THIS GENERATION THE SAME AS THE OTHERS WHO HAD NEW IDEAS OR DOES IT CONSIST OF A REAL MOVEMENT 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 companies before being dismissed in times of crisis. Rather than rejecting companies, Yers acknowledge the fact that if work is a source of fulfilment, it is just one of many, and that happiness lies in the harmony and balance between these different spheres. Thus, 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 organisation consists primarily of Yers and constantly renews itself due to the nature of our profession. We must operate like a school in the sense that learning is a continual process. Most of our former professionals have fond memories and have built a strong bond with Mazars. My goal as Chief HR Officer is to make our members highly employable, whether they become our partners or continue their successful careers elsewhere. More generally speaking, I view 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 the main objectives for young people are to live life to the fullest, maintain a good work–life balance and be financially independent; in the opposite order than their parents. This appears to be a global phenomenon.

## IS THIS SELFISHNESS OR INDIVIDUALISM?

WoMen'Up says:

Generation Y is labelled with a number of attributes, not all flattering, and individualism is one of the highest ranking. This trait can be given two interpretations: firstly, an individualism that has a selfish tendency, which causes young people to only think about themselves and no longer be committed to companies and to others. And secondly, one can also see a strong trend towards placing the individual, the human, at the centre of choices and the professional and personal spheres. Yers do not reject companies and do not refuse to get involved; on the contrary, they ask companies to evolve and adapt, so that they become a place of fulfilment and balance where Yers can get fully involved. Similarly, Yers are two times more likely than their parents to commit to a role that seems just and meaningful. In conclusion, they are definitely self-centred. But are they selfish? Allow us to change your opinion and respond with the title of the excellent essay by François de Singly, "Individualism is a humanism"...

## FOCUS GENERATION Y'S PRIORITIES

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 hierarchy and acts in a faster and more direct manner. If you had asked previous generations, at least mine, if they saw themselves on one career path with just one company, they would have mostly answered "no". However, I agree with you on one thing, Generation Y is very eager to find meaning in life and wants different work methods. I had to force myself to react in a "professional way" when my son asked me for a video game for Christmas that I considered to be violent. Despite my initial reaction, I forced myself to find out what it was about and I found interesting learning dimensions, particularly in the historical perspective. As far as in business, understanding, adapting and adopting 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 speak about a new method of communication and Adeline and Emmanuelle, you speak about a real movement. And yet this generation has new professional criteria which favours human qualities and places expertise much further behind.  
HOW CAN WE BRING THE COMPANY AND THESE YOUNG PEOPLE TOGETHER?**

**WoMen'Up says:**

Instead of bringing them together, we prefer to speak about adapting. There is no break-up in this relationship. The company remains a place of engagement and fulfilment. Top management needs to understand these new aspirations and change the business models to make them more sustainable, because this means being more suited to the new generation entering the labour market. Yers need to explain their expectations clearly and 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 creative force and will bring major innovations to the table.

Throughout the study, several paths have emerged allowing reflection, improvement, evolution and revolution. A positive revelation is 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 over diplomas and work titles and the development of human qualities all pave the way to explore... together!

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

**Laurent Choain says:**

Yes, I am totally convinced that companies should offer continuous learning, or even issue degrees, it is a dream that I have always had. We are not there yet, but we are working towards it at Mazars. We are also working on the concepts of flexibility and quality of time spent working, which vary greatly depending on the continent, but are now fully integrated in China, Russia and France.

Means of communication completely change our relationships, for that matter, we conducted the survey solely through the internet and social media. This is a first for Mazars. But I do not think that Generation Y should be the sole object of our attention, what counts is generational gender equality and social promotion, which is now only offered by two systems: schools and companies.



# 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 MADE, GENERATION Y IS EAGER TO SEE GENDER EQUALITY EMERGE IN BUSINESS

According to 77% of the 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 made 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 for Yers to find their rightful place within the company.

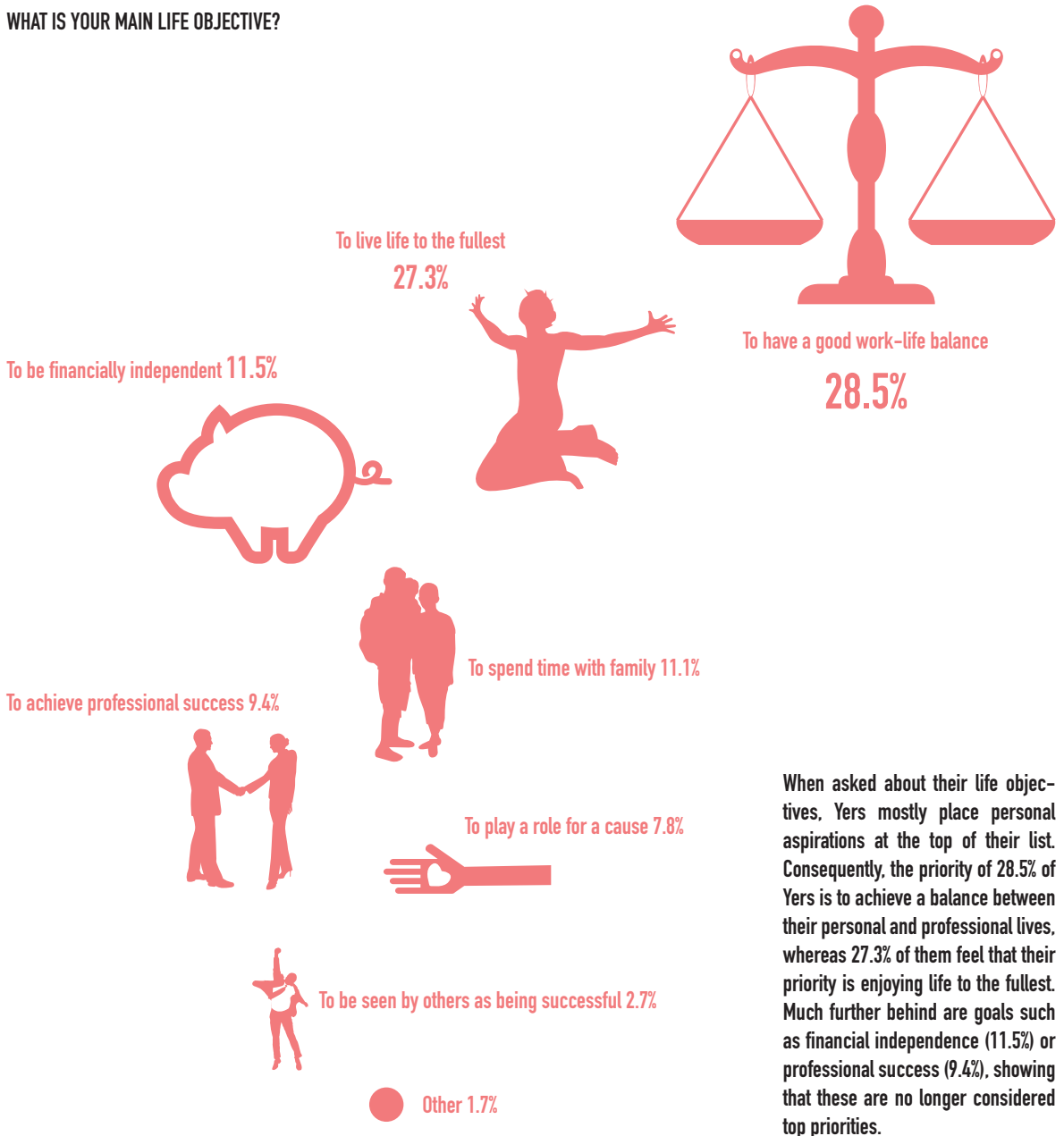
# 1. WHEN **GENERATION Y** **REINVENTS THE RIGHT** **TO** **HAPPINESS**

Because Generation Y is in search of balance, they place happiness ahead of objectives. This includes building a life outside of work, living life to the fullest; aspirations that take precedence over financial independence and professional success, which were important to their parents' generation. This is the description of a generation in search of meaning.

# A GENERATION

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

WHAT IS YOUR MAIN LIFE OBJECTIVE?



When asked about their life objectives, Yers mostly place personal aspirations at the top of their list. Consequently, the priority of 28.5% of Yers is to achieve a balance between their personal and professional lives, whereas 27.3% of them feel that their 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 top priorities.

## ■ 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 WORK LIFE?



To be financially independent

32%



To spend time with family

25%



To have a good work-life balance

18%

When asked to imagine the concerns of their parents when they were the same age as them, Generation Y feels that there is an opposition to the previous generation.

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

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

Generation Y seems to recognise the pioneering role of their predecessors when it comes to topics that preoccupy them today. 18% of Yers think that their parents were primarily concerned with achieving a balance between their personal and professional lives.



One can clearly see the sign of a generation whose mothers have, for the first time, mostly been employed and became aware of the difficulty in finding and achieving a work-life balance. This was part of the movement that caused HR policies to evolve. 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 criticised regularly 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 in individualism. Yers distance themselves from the opinions of others and assert themselves with ease.

Only 6% of Yers imagine that their parents' primary objective was to enjoy life to the fullest, whereas 27.3% of them selected it as their primary objective.

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

Rather than looking at Generation Y as an individualistic generation, one should view them more as a generation which places greater emphasis on the individual.

Thus, the responses from Generation Y imply a strong collective dimension. 7.8% reported that they would commit themselves to a cause, which is two times more than what they actually believed 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, basically all leisure activities that Yers' parents would have considered to be practiced in a group during their era.



## FOCUS

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

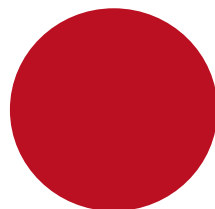
Whilst analysing the life objectives named by Yers, we were surprised to see that there was hardly any variation in the statistics from one continent to another.

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

In Oceania, 19% of Yers are in search of financial independence, as well as 11% in Europe; whereas family comes third as a life objective in Asia and North America, after finding balance and living life to the fullest. Finally, 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**

The same way that Generation Y feels comfortable with outlining their personal life goals and claiming their individual aspirations, is the same way in which they approach their professional lives and shatter certain well-established conventions. They shattered these conventions by bringing their personal life to the workplace via social media, challenging presenteeism, requesting flexible work hours, and reconsidering traditional authority... the list of Generation Y's demands is long and can be daunting. Companies are faced with this assertive generation that does not seem willing to change for them; should companies 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 OR ARE COMPANIES UNSUITABLE FOR YERS?

Influenced by the professional experiences of their parents who have undergone unemployment, redundancies and sometimes 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.

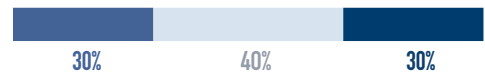
As we have seen, the main objective in life for Generation Y is the balance between their personal and professional lives. It is evident that a gap exists between the aspirations of Generation Y and the current working methods of companies, 80% of Yers say that they are dissatisfied or somewhat satisfied with the current balance between private and professional life in the corporate world. This gap can result in feelings of frustration and misunderstanding. On the contrary, Yers do feel motivated by companies (43% are satisfied) and also feel that companies offer opportunities and challenges (55%).

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

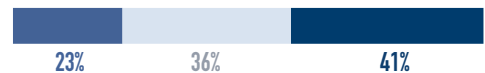
### STIMULATION/MOTIVATION



### RECOGNITION



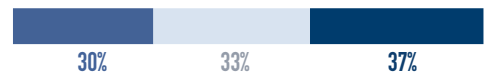
### ABILITY TO LISTEN



### WORK-LIFE BALANCE



### EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES



### OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES



### FLEXIBILITY

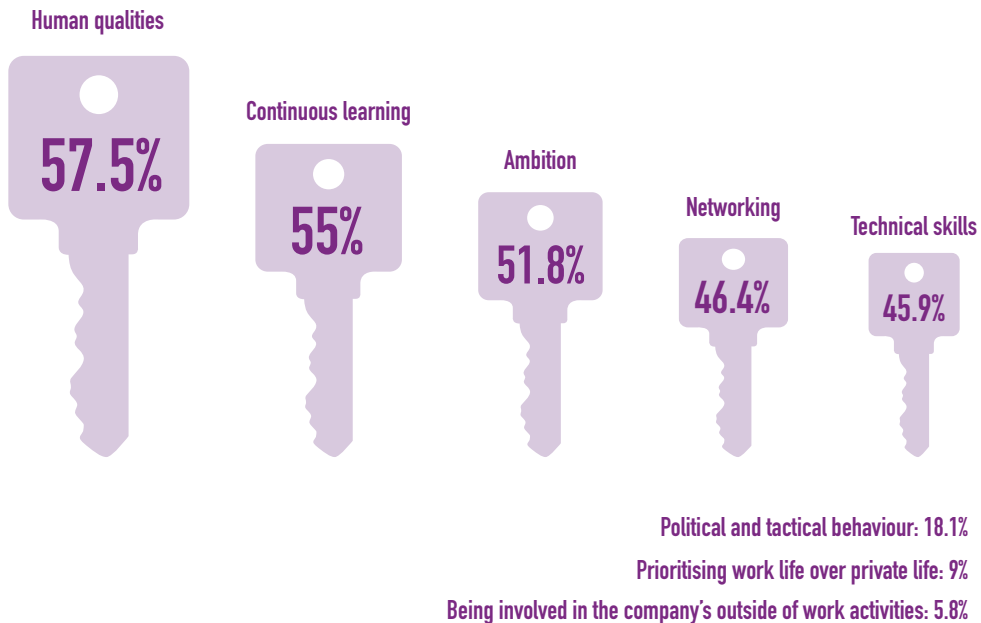


## ■ GENERATION Y WANTS TO POSITION PEOPLE AT THE HEART OF BUSINESS

Although disgruntled, Generation Y is still full of ideas about what the corporate world should be like and what values should be given precedence.

This revelation breaks some of the stereotypes about Yers.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE KEY ELEMENTS TO PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS? (3 MAXIMUM)



### FOCUS

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

The results vary according to the continent. There is a clear consensus on strong people skills being the key to professional success: 68% of Yers thought this in Asia, followed by 56% in North America and 82% in Africa. Furthermore, there are mixed feelings on the belief that having ambition is the key to professional success. Both 56% of European Yers and 65% of African Yers think that having ambition is the key to success, compared to just 31% of Yers in Asia and 25% of Yers in the Middle East who think this is the case. Furthermore, in Asia, the emphasis is placed on having technical skills (66%), even though the average is 40% across Europe, Oceania and the Americas.



## **Stereotype # 1**

### **Yers are selfish and only think about 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 in order to succeed professionally, one must first have robust human qualities.

## **Stereotype # 2**

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

Even though Yers do not hesitate to express their opinions in a loud and uninhibited manner, they are much less overbearing than one might imagine. 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 their ability to adapt and to question themselves and their knowledge in order to gain a deeper understanding. These skills are real assets in the business world.

## **Stereotype # 3**

### **Yers are no longer interested in business and do not have any professional ambitions**

On the contrary, 51.8% of Generation Y believe that having ambition is a key factor in professional success. This demonstrates their motivation and desire to succeed. Their disinterest towards work is more linked to their disapproval of work methods rather than 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 it with political behaviour and tactics. Accustomed to using social networks in their personal and professional lives, will Generation Y be skilful when networking in person?

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 continuously update their knowledge.

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 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 in order to help them 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 processes

12%

Lack of mobility

4%



First and foremost, Yers point out the atmosphere of mistrust in which they are accustomed to working in. Almost a quarter of Yers (24%) think that companies do not trust their younger recruits. If they are constantly asking questions (after all, they are not called Generation “Why” for nothing), companies need to pay more attention and listen to the solutions that Yers suggest. 20.3% of Generation Y want companies to be more supportive, when it comes to solidarity, and be more inclusive.

Finally, Generation Y is disappointed that not enough importance is given to their creativity, flexibility and self-reliance and want the opportunity to put these skills to the best possible use. These points could also 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**

# ?

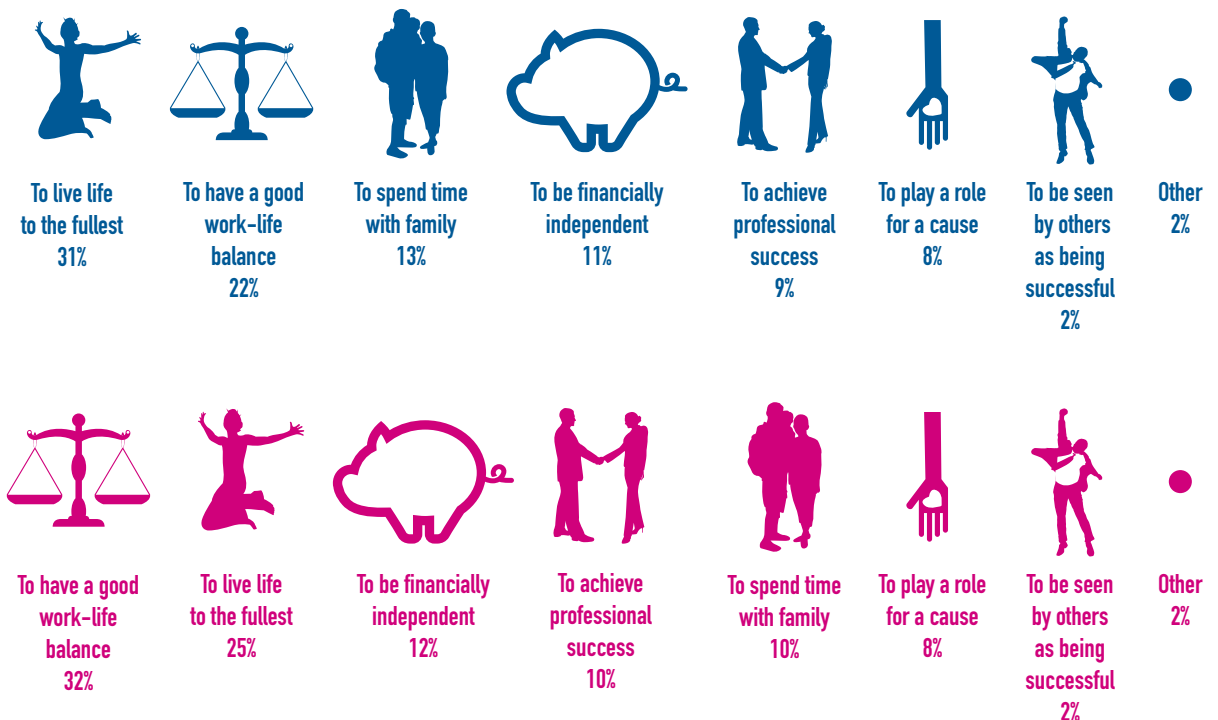
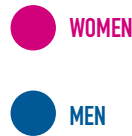
We are now aware of the fact that Generation Y places importance on their desire to find equilibrium in life and wants to solve the impossible equation that their parents once started: how to be satisfied at work and at home? For the first time, it has been reported that males and females are sharing 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 equal 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 this generation's evolution in the years to come, as they bring hope.

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

Since these young women have been influenced by the difficulties that they saw their mothers endure when they tried to juggle everything at once, they 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 for both groups (53.2% for men and 57.1% for women).

Interestingly enough, men were more likely to give preference to family life than women (13.3% compared to 10%), followed by financial independence, which women selected more, reflecting a change in their mind-set and a new relationship concerning parenthood and family.

## WHAT IS YOUR MAIN LIFE OBJECTIVE?

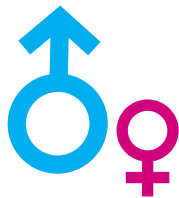


## ■ IS THIS THE FIRST GENERATION TO BE 100% MIXED GENDER?

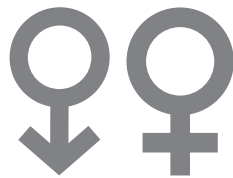
The men and women of Generation Y are very different from those of previous generations. Thus, when we analysed the results, many of those who participated commented that they would have preferred to answer the question about their parents' life objectives in two parts: the first part for their father and the latter for their mother, since they feel that their opinions differed. Nowadays, men and women's opinions do not differ, which is a very strong signal for gender equality.

Moreover, 95% of the people interviewed agreed on the fact that men and women have equal rights; but they do not deny the differences between the two genders, since 75% of them think that even if men and women have equal rights, they are different nonetheless.

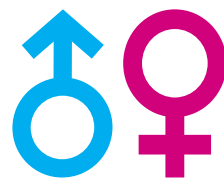
IN YOUR OPINION, MEN AND WOMEN ARE:



Not equal in their rights  
**5%**



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



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



## ■ A GENERATION PREDOMINANTLY CONSCIOUS OF THE PROGRESSES THAT STILL NEED TO HAPPEN IN SOCIETY

# EQUALITY?

HOW DO YOU VIEW GENDER EQUALITY?

44%	An obvious issue
16%	A trending 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 relevant topic. In fact, 43.7% think that this issue is obvious, 15.8% say that it is a trending topic (although it is not possible to interpret this as positive or negative answer) and less than 10% consider diversity to be a struggle. This last statistic is interesting to point out since it reinforces a more peaceful vision of gender equality.

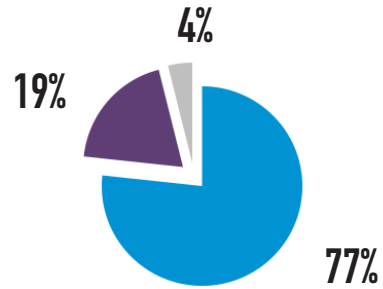
It is important to note that nearly a quarter of those who took part in the survey do not feel any concern for the subject; either they have no interest in it (9.6%) or view it as a secondary issue (13.9%).

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

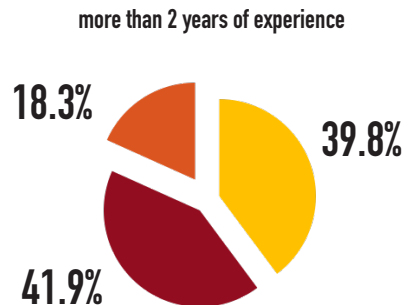
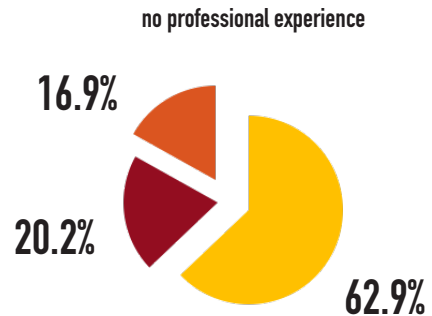
Even if some Yers remain sceptical about the reality of gender equality in society, they are, nevertheless, more aware of persistent inequalities in the workplace as 77% consider this to be a major challenge for companies.

A larger proportion of women acknowledge this challenge (83.3%) compared to men, however, two thirds of the latter (66.4%) still recognise the need for companies to address the issue. Awareness of the importance of these issues changes drastically according to the professional level and experience of the men and women surveyed. Subsequently, we also questioned them on the existence of the glass ceiling. If 62.9% of young people without professional experience had never heard of this phenomenon before, after 2 years of work, only 38.8% of them would continue to be unaware of the issue. 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 goes from 26.2% to 41.9% within the two categories.

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



IN YOUR OPINION, THE GLASS CEILING IS:



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 YOUR MAIN RECOMMENDATION FOR COMPANIES TO IMPROVE GENDER EQUALITY IN COMPANIES?

raise employee awareness



modify the evaluation of criteria



enforce quotas for women in top management positions



enforce an obligatory paternity leave at childbirth



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. Yers point out the need to raise employee awareness on diversity issues, since almost a third of them (31%) consider it 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 effectiveness of gender equality education in schools. At first glance, it appears that only a third of those surveyed (33.2%) had lessons on this topic during their studies. Gender equality education was useful for more than half of the females surveyed (56.1%) – and thankfully, since their gender is predominantly affected by this issue! – whereas this type of education is shown to have a more limited impact on males (since just 38.5% of them think that gender equality education was relevant).

The question of the usefulness of this type of education in schools is always open to discussion, especially when speaking about the way it should be taught in order for it to benefit both males and females.

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

YES



33.2%

NO



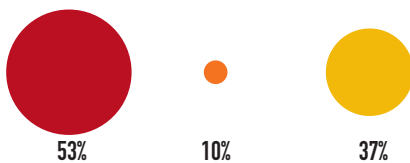
66.8%

#### IF YES, WAS IT USEFUL?

no professional experience

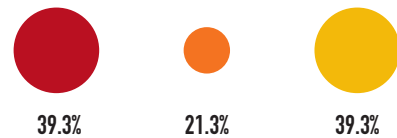


more than 2 years of experience

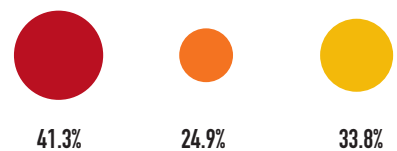


#### IF NO, WOULD YOU FIND IT USEFUL?

no professional experience



more than 2 years of experience



● YES ● NO ● N/A

## ■ ...AS WELL AS IMPLEMENTING A VARIETY OF HR POLICIES

Generation Y participants selected a variety of HR policies to be implemented in companies in order to promote diversity: 25% of Yers believe it is necessary to first deal with the men – 13% think that establishing compulsory paternity leave is the answer, followed by 12% who think that men should be involved in the debate. Furthermore, Yers believe 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 emphasised by 10.5% of Yers who wish to prohibit meetings after 7pm.

### And quotas?

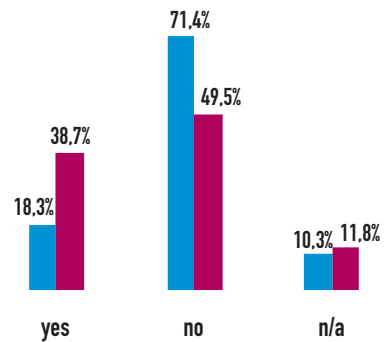
The eternal topic of debate, when it comes to gender equality, is the possibility of having quotas in companies. Out of all the Yers who gave their opinion on this topic, (11.4% of them did not wish to express an opinion) 58.1% were opposed to the introduction of quotas. 71.4% of men showed a strong opposition to the use of quotas (possibly because they have the most to lose if they are implemented), as well as a nearly 49.5% of women who are opposed. One of the reasons that women are opposed to quotas may be the fact that they want to succeed based on their own merit and perhaps there is also a certain optimism in the solidarity advocated by Generation Y.

It is also interesting to note that this opinion changes when women enter the workforce. Only 31% of women declared themselves as being in favour of quotas before entering the workforce; this percentage increases to 46% after two years of employment. This demonstrates how reality changes opinions.

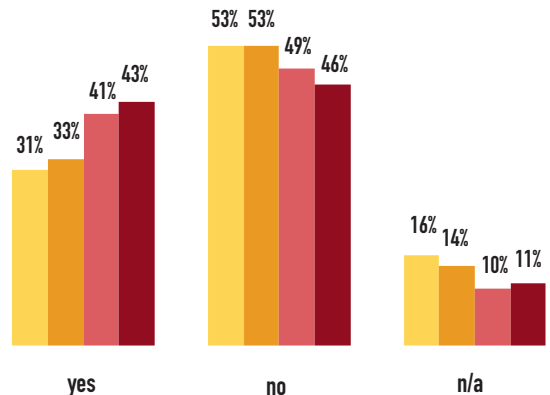
Positive discrimination policies in favour of women are not limited to quotas; there are also mentoring and coaching programmes that support women in their career development, education on gender stereotyping and professional networks amongst others that can be put in place by companies.

### 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 Mazars, an international organisation specialising in audit and advisory services, and Wo-Men'Up, a French association. It was conducted from July to August 2012 via the website [surveymonkey.com](http://surveymonkey.com) with the help of social media 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%

## PROFESIONAL 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> November 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.

Since Mazars recruits 3 000 young people worldwide each year, Mazars decided to explore Generation Y and understand this generation's expectations and goals. 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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