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22

VOICES OF THE LEADERS OF TOMORROW



## **PASSING ON THE BATON?**

TRANSFER OF DECISION-  
MAKING, PRIORITIES  
AND COLLABORATION  
ACROSS GENERATIONS  
OF LEADERS



## About the Nuremberg Institute for Market Decisions (NIM)

The Nuremberg Institute for Market Decisions is a non-profit and interdisciplinary research institute dedicated to the systematic investigation of consumer and market decisions. The institute is also the founder and anchor shareholder of GfK SE.

At the interface between science and practice, NIM explores how market decisions are changing due to trends, new technologies, and new sources of information. Our goal is to deepen the understanding of consumer decisions as well as those of marketing executives, and to use this knowledge to help improve the quality of market decisions.

NIM fosters dialogue and cooperation with experts from science and practice, with innovators and startups who are particularly interested in market decisions and market insights. Research results are shared and discussed by NIM through publications, conferences and lectures with its members, and the professional public.

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## About the St. Gallen Symposium

The St. Gallen Symposium is one of the world's leading initiatives for cross-generational dialogue on economic, political and social developments. For more than 50 years, established leaders and visionaries have been brought together with extraordinary young talents in St. Gallen and at global locations, as well as in digital formats. Together, they address the chances and challenges of our time and work on finding solutions. The symposium is a student initiative. Under the strategic guidance of the St. Gallen Foundation for International Studies, the International Students' Committee – a team comprised of about 30 students from the University of St. Gallen (HSG) – drives the dialogue between generations.

The Leaders of Tomorrow are a carefully selected, global community of the most promising young talent. Each year, 200 academics, politicians, entrepreneurs and professionals aged 30 years or younger represent the voices of the next generation at the St. Gallen Symposium. Leaders of Tomorrow qualify either through our Global Essay Competition aimed at graduate or post-graduate students, or they attend based on their professional or academic merit through a strict nomination and hand-selection process. After the symposium, they join our Leaders of Tomorrow Alumni Community, which has over 1,500 members worldwide.

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# SHAPING A LIVABLE FUTURE – TOGETHER

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For many generations, a common idea has been that children will be better off than their parents. The prospect of a brighter future for one's offspring, with better education, prosperity and well-being, motivated parents to work hard and often make sacrifices. Yet today, at least on a global scale, this intergenerational 'convention' may no longer hold. Financial debts and the looming climate collapse pose serious threats to the next generation's freedom, health and safety. And most recently, a new war has unsettled the world, reviving the old East-West conflict that we thought – wishfully maybe – we had overcome long ago.

The scale of these crises will require intergenerational cooperation, to ensure that the older generation's legacy will not become a bane but a baton, leaving the next generation sufficient freedom to create a livable future for themselves. What are the chances for successful cooperation? Which challenges should be addressed with highest priority? And how should the transition of decision power be shaped? We asked representatives of the younger and older generations to share their views on these topics.

The "Leaders of Tomorrow," a selected group of top talent from the network of the St. Gallen Symposium, represent voices of the younger generation. A total of 683 Leaders of Tomorrow from all over the world accepted the invitation to share their views on the topic of this report. As they represent a highly educated cluster of the younger generation, who will certainly shape

future economic developments and societies around the globe, the findings of this report will help the economic and political Leaders of Today to better understand the demands, opportunities and challenges of a rapidly changing world.

To acknowledge this year's focus on intergenerational discourse, we decided – for the first time in the history of this study series – to explicitly give voice to a selected sample of "Leaders of Today" in an additional survey: 300 top managers and executives (C-suite level) aged 45 and older from the 2,000 largest publicly traded global companies in 26 countries around the globe also had the opportunity to share their generation's perspective on the challenges that require intergenerational collaboration.

We hope that our findings will contribute to a fruitful dialogue between generations.

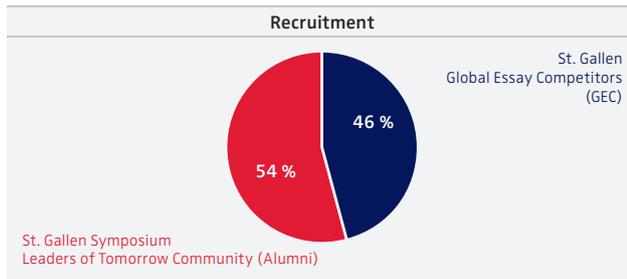
April 2022, Claudia Gaspar and Dr. Anja Dieckmann,  
Nuremberg Institute for Market Decisions

# OVERVIEW: SAMPLE AND SURVEY METHODOLOGY

Two surveys conducted in February 2022

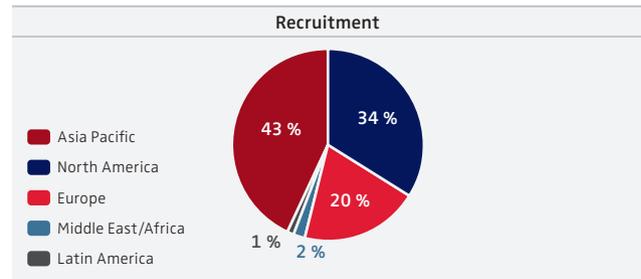
683 Leaders of Tomorrow ...

... personally invited through the network of the St. Gallen Symposium from 81 countries all over the world

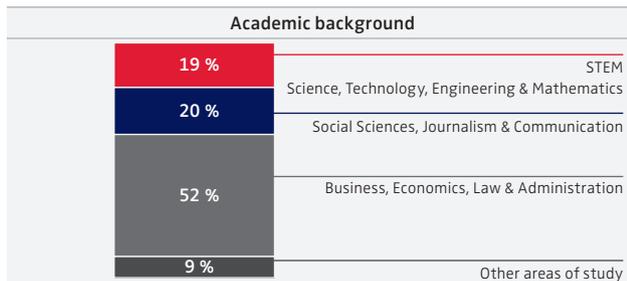


300 Leaders of Today ...

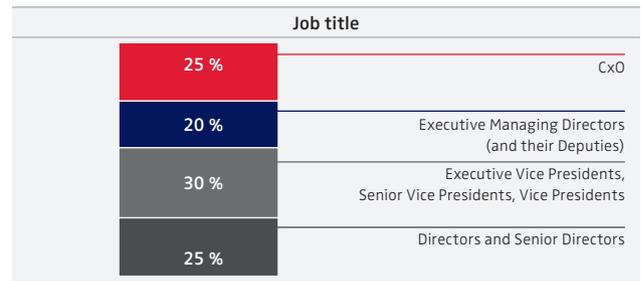
... recruited from C-level among the 2,000 largest publicly traded global companies, in 26 countries around the world



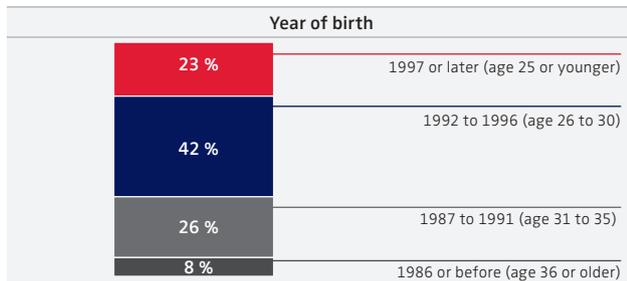
... with a great variety of academic backgrounds



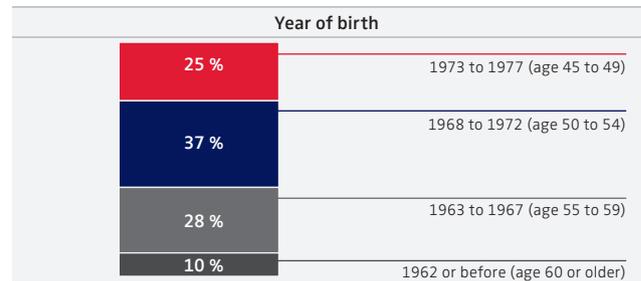
... on a high executive level (board member or C-suite level)



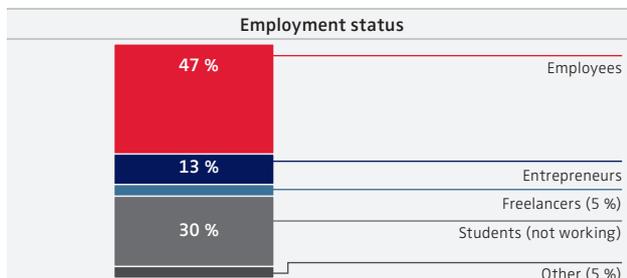
... mainly from Gen Y (Millennials)



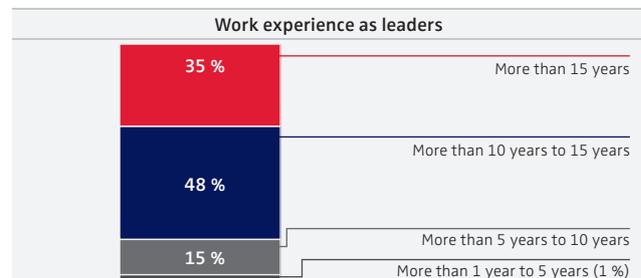
... aged 45 plus, mainly from Gen X



... both students and (young) professionals



... with long leadership experience



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## KEY INSIGHTS

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**69%** of the Leaders of Tomorrow and  
**36%** of the Leaders of Today  
are concerned about social polarization.

Polarization of society and financial burdens on the next generation are seen as major concerns in both groups of leaders. Awareness of the problem of polarization is extremely pronounced among the younger leaders. Both issues might be good topics for starting a dialogue on how to approach problems as a society.

**27%** of the Leaders of Tomorrow and  
**33%** of the Leaders of Today  
are concerned that the next generation will suffer from inherited financial problems.

---

**65%** of the Leaders of Tomorrow and  
**77%** of the Leaders of Today  
view the chances of a fruitful intergenerational collaboration as high or very high.

Both generations view the foundation for cross-generational collaboration as good, providing reason for hope that this endeavor can be successful.

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**57%** of the Leaders of Tomorrow and  
**41%** of the Leaders of Today  
say that the older generation demands too many sacrifices from the younger generation.

As both generations of leaders say that the other generation demands too many sacrifices, there is a need to arrive at a joint and realistic assessment of what 'justified' demands are.

**26%** of the Leaders of Tomorrow and  
**50%** of the Leaders of Today  
say that the younger generation demands too many sacrifices from the older generation.

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**36%** of the Leaders of Tomorrow and  
**60%** of the Leaders of Today  
say that the younger generation does not show enough willingness to take real responsibility in politics.

The Leaders of Today are skeptical that the younger generation is really willing to take more responsibility in politics (and also in business). The Leaders of Tomorrow disagree. Both sides should put their assumption to the test and perform a reality check by working together to initiate the transfer of decision-making power.

Both groups of leaders agree that more participation of the younger generation in institutional decisions is necessary. Minimum quotas are regarded as crucial instruments for ensuring this participation. This is something which Leaders of Today could start doing right away in their organizations.

**82%** of the Leaders of Tomorrow and **63%** of the Leaders of Today agree that without the participation of the younger generation in important decisions, many institutions will soon deteriorate.

**59%** of the Leaders of Tomorrow and **66%** of the Leaders of Today consider mandatory minimum quotas in all political and economic bodies necessary to ensure that the younger generation is sufficiently taken into account in decision-making.

The climate crisis, future of education, and healthcare are common ground in the cross-generational agenda. But Leaders of Tomorrow see additional pressing issues they want to discuss, such as fair distribution of wealth and pension systems. The Leaders of Today should take these issues seriously.

**88%** of the Leaders of Tomorrow and **61%** of the Leaders of Today agree that the climate crisis is an urgent or extremely urgent issue to be addressed.

**62%** of the Leaders of Tomorrow but only **36%** of the Leaders of Today consider pension systems an urgent or extremely urgent issue to be addressed.

The most desired future scenarios that both generations of leaders agree on relate to education and measures against the climate crisis. This would be a good start for initial joint action, keeping in mind that the younger leaders appear more impatient to get started.

**93%** of the Leaders of Tomorrow and **60%** of the Leaders of Today agree that assurance of citizens' access to high-quality and affordable continuing education and reskilling is a desirable or highly desirable future scenario.

**86%** of the Leaders of Tomorrow and **61%** of the Leaders of Today agree that commitment of significant financial investments and strict regulatory measures to fight the climate crisis is a desirable or highly desirable future scenario.

# PERSONAL CONCERNS IN A CHALLENGING WORLD FOR LEADERS OF TOMORROW AND TODAY

People are shaped by their various living conditions, experiences, and expectations. That gives rise to different hopes and fears, different not only between nations or social milieus, but also between generations. We wanted to know how younger and older leaders fared in this regard. What are their respective concerns? Where do they differ and where are they similar or the same? Therefore, we provided a selection of twelve possible developments from which a maximum of three could be chosen that were seen as particularly threatening.

Let's first look at the personal concerns of the Leaders of Tomorrow: According

to their responses, a clear main concern emerged. Seven out of ten respondents chose the statement: 'Political and cultural polarization will weaken social cohesion and further deepen social divides in my society' as one of their greatest concerns (see Figure 1). Recent events seem to have left their mark, like the Trump presidency and in particular its disreputable end with the Capitol attack, Brexit, and restrictions imposed by governments to contain the COVID-19 pandemic. Social media with its echo chambers has likely amplified the divide because algorithms constantly present their users with more of the same. Moreover, social media can reinforce per-

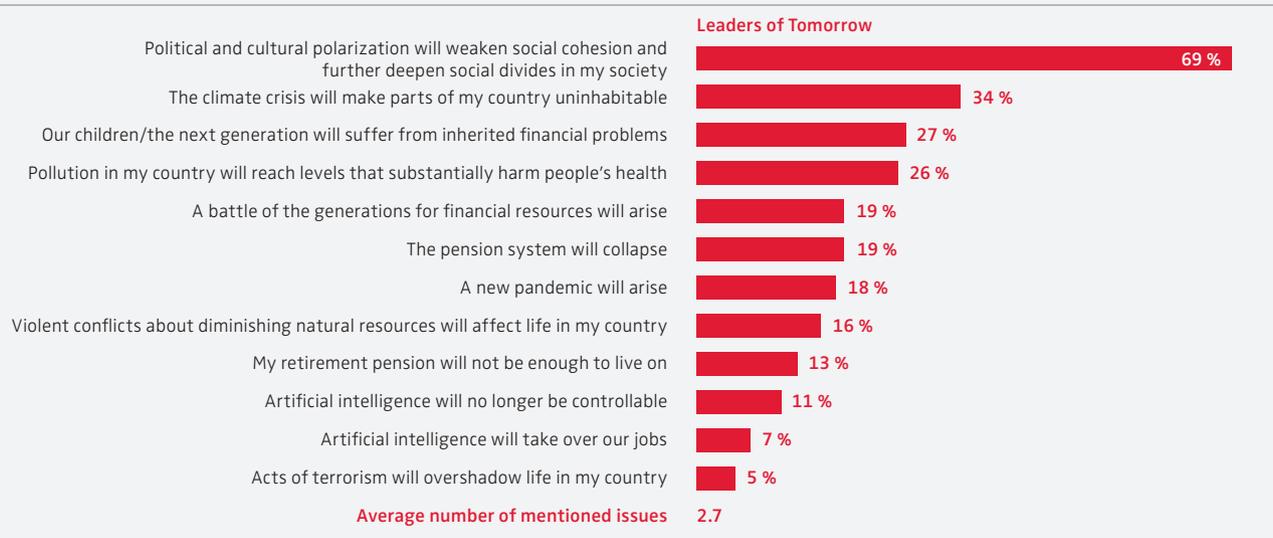
ceived polarization, as users with opposing views are often attacked very sharply under the protection of anonymity. Such a critical view of social media was expressed in last year's report "Voices of the Leaders of Tomorrow – Challenges for Human Trust" (Gaspar, Dieckmann, Neus & Kittinger-Rosanelli, 2021).

The personal worries mentioned next follow at some distance and each account for around one-third. They relate on the one hand to environmental threats affecting one's own country, and on the other hand to worries that the next generation will suffer under the burden of inherited financial problems.

FIGURE 1

## For Leaders of Tomorrow, the consequences of political and cultural polarization are by far the most important concerns

Personal concerns – related to one's own situation/country: How much are you worried by the issues on the list below?  
Prespecified statements, number of respondents = 100%, multiple responses (selected up to 3 out of 12)



## Limitations

The attack by Russian troops on Ukrainian cities began a few days after the end of the field phase for this year's Voices of the Leaders of Tomorrow (and Today) study in February 2022. Undoubtedly, the results in this chapter would have been different (much more war-related) if this event had occurred during or before the fieldwork.

Among the Leaders of Today (C-level from among the 2,000 largest publicly traded global companies, aged 45 years or older) the most important personal concerns look different from those of top young talent (see Figure 2).

Heading the list is the fear of a new pandemic, but this concern is not as clearly ranked first as the fear of polarization among the young. It was selected by 37%. It is closely followed by the effects of the increasing polarization of society and the financial burden for the next generation. Here, the generations seem to agree on the explosive nature of the issues.

The next two scenarios that follow, selected almost equally often, are: 'Violent conflicts about diminishing natural resources will affect life in my country' and 'Artificial intelligence will no longer be controllable' – problems that they may encounter in their daily business life. Both scenarios play a much smaller role among the younger respondents.

FIGURE 2

## Another pandemic, the polarization of society, and concerns about inherited financial burden for the next generation are the main personal concerns for Leaders of Today

Personal concerns – related to one's own situation/country: How much are you worried by the issues on the list below?  
Prespecified statements, number of respondents = 100%, multiple responses (selected up to 3 out of 12)



Thus, we can identify both similarities and differences between these two generations (see Figure 3). The upper right quadrant shows what both have in common: They are very worried about society drifting apart and the debt burden for the next generation. The perceptions of older and younger top talents overlap here. But in many other respects they are clearly different: The younger leaders are much more concerned about the long-term dramatic climate crisis – also affecting their own country. In contrast, the older generation is much more concerned about the possible consequences of a new pandemic, a conflict due to shortage of natural resources, and AI that can no longer be controlled.

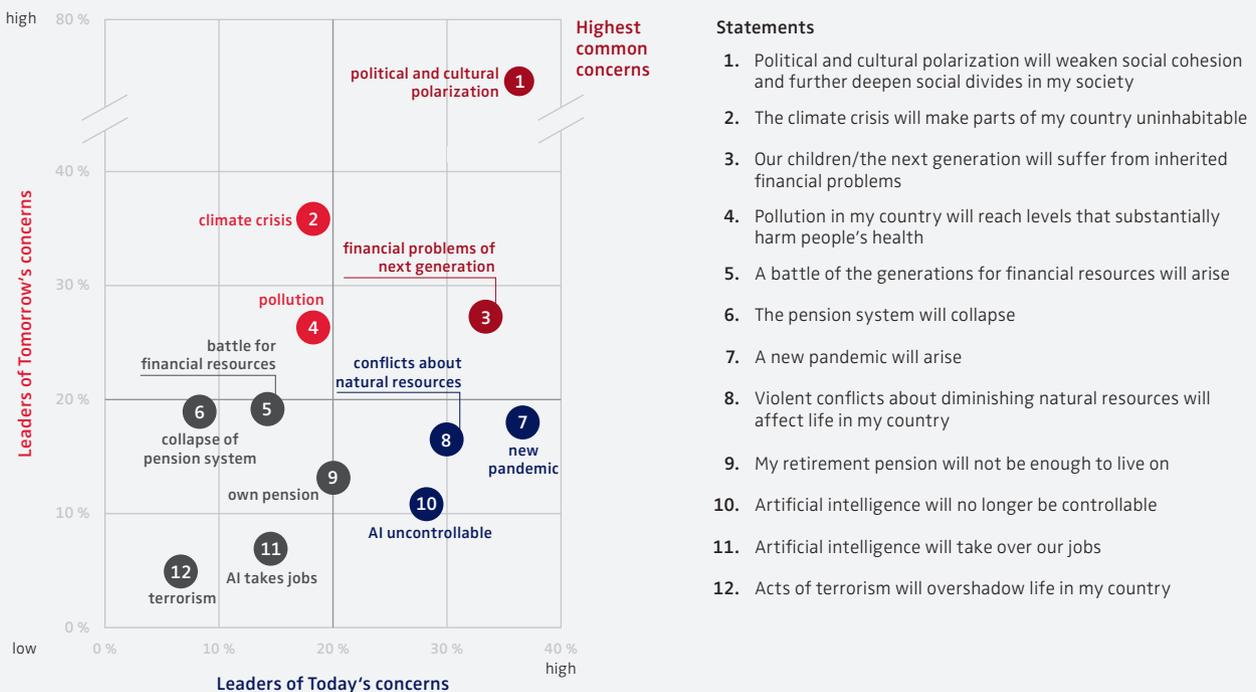
Obviously, COVID-19 has had a stronger impact on current leaders. Apart from the fear of a new pandemic, other major concerns might also be related to this exceptional period. Inherited financial problems for the next generation might be related to increased public spending during the past two years, and disrupted supply chains may have made the scarcity of (natural) supplies more salient. The difference in concern about uncontrollable artificial intelligence is strikingly high. This is probably an expression of the distinction between digital immigrants and digital natives. Digital natives seem more trusting of these new technologies than digital immigrants.

Finally, the view on most pressing concerns highlights, among other things, a very important message for inter-generational collaboration: As the Leaders of Tomorrow and Today are worried about the drifting apart of society, both groups might be motivated to bridge the divide through dialogue, including exchange between generations. Moreover, the agreement in the two major concerns – polarization of society and financial burdens on the next generation – provides common ground to start the conversation.

FIGURE 3

## Leaders of Today and Tomorrow agree on concerns about polarization and financial problems of the next generation, but they differ in the level of concern about environmental, pandemic and AI issues

Personal concerns – related to one's own situation/country: How much are you worried by the issues on the list below?  
Prespecified statements, number of respondents = 100%, multiple responses (selected up to 3 out of 12)



n = 683 Leaders of Tomorrow; n = 300 Leaders of Today

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# FOUNDATION FOR INTERGENERATIONAL COLLABORATION

Differences between generations are by no means a new phenomenon. An example of how generations can clash is the so-called '68 movement in some Western countries, in which the younger generation rebelled against everything that seemed valuable to the older generation.

Today we are again confronted with differences and misunderstandings between generations. In the context of the 'O.K. Boomer' meme, the New York Times even saw the end of friendly generational relations and diagnosed in October 2019: "Now it's war: Gen Z has finally snapped over climate change and financial inequality." (Lorenz, 2019). Are we – in the face of all new threats, but also equipped with more knowledge, skills, and tools – able and willing to

address these conflicts in dialogue, perhaps even to find new ways of working together?

## Optimism prevails

Asked for their assessment, the Leaders of Today shared much more optimism in their answers than the younger Leaders of Tomorrow. 47% of them see 'the chance for a good and fruitful collaboration between generations' to be very good, while only 14% of the younger generation see it that way (see Figure 4).

This is an impressive difference. Fortunately, it decreases when the mentions 'very high' and 'rather high' (Top-2Box) are taken together. Then they add up to 77% for the older group and

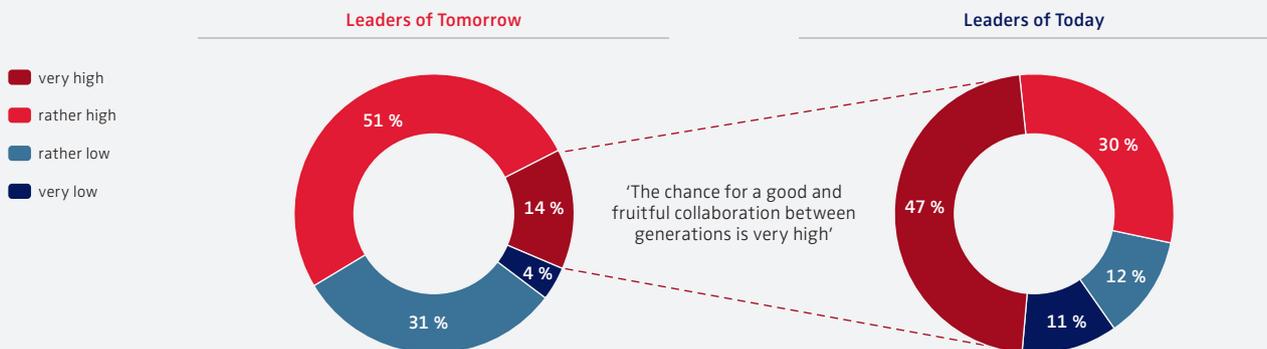
65% for the younger. So, the conclusion is that in both groups a majority is optimistic. But why are the older ones more optimistic? Are they unrealistic? Is this a statement of their good will? Or have they experienced so many successes that they find it difficult to imagine failure – expressing a kind of overconfidence? Whatever the reasons are, this difference in optimism definitely deserves further attention and discussion. Perhaps both generations need to put their views into perspective.

Box 1 (see page 10) lists comments that some respondents added to this question that further reflect the different sentiment in the two groups.

FIGURE 4

## Leaders of Today are clearly more optimistic than Leaders of Tomorrow regarding a fruitful intergenerational collaboration

Within organizations, multiple generations must work together effectively to achieve common goals. How do you rate the chance for a good and fruitful collaboration between generations? | Prespecified statements



n = 683 Leaders of Tomorrow; n = 300 Leaders of Today  
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BOX 1

Quotes from additional open comments

**Leaders of Tomorrow**

- > “Unfortunately, I do believe there is a great deal of unwillingness across the current generation in leadership (50-65) to make adjustments in their status quo whether that be related to wealth, privilege or expectations.”
- > “Politics are focusing on solving short-term issues and are accepting to pass the burden to younger generations. They have no say in the decision-making and/or their interests are underrepresented.”
- > “There is a mismatch in interests of older generations and younger generations, primarily driven by economic systems and models which are looking for infinite growth on a finite planet.”

**Leaders of Today**

- > “As per my understanding, older adults have more opportunities to share knowledge and resources with younger generations, they are also more likely to depend on the support of younger generations for longer periods of time. Hence, they should work together for a better world.”
- > “In our company, we have developed a connected culture in which we allow the younger generation to contribute to company decisions.”
- > “I think we all need to discuss how to build a better future. I believe we should make the decisions fast enough with the collaboration of our youth leaders.”

When skeptics in both target groups are asked about reservations and reasons for their pessimistic attitude, differences also emerge (see Figure 5). Skeptical Leaders of Tomorrow primarily blame a lack of willingness of the older generation ‘to listen to and engage with the younger generation in dialogue’ (88%). Slightly more than half believe that the conflicts are too large to be solved and

exactly half of the group blame their own generation for not being sufficiently willing ‘to listen to and engage with the older generation in dialogue.’

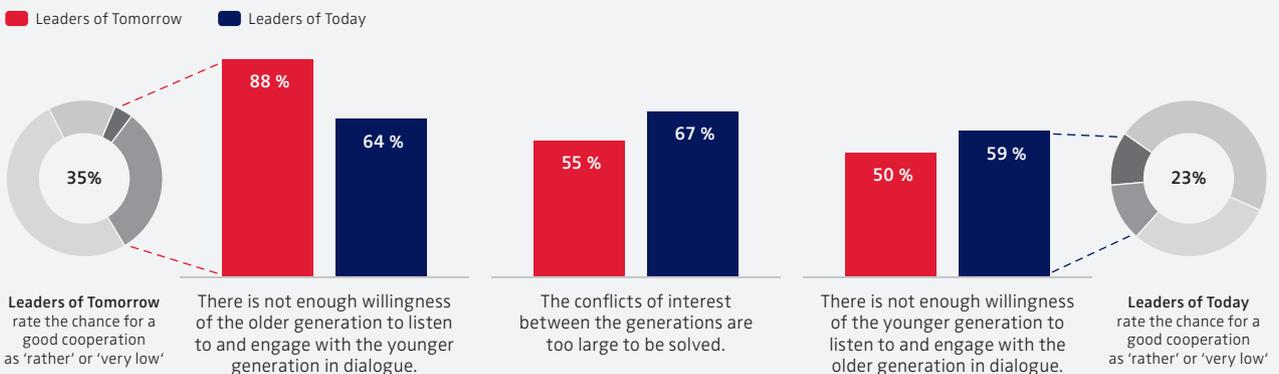
The ranking of accusations is different for the skeptical Leaders of Today. First of all, they fear that ‘conflicts are too large to be solved’ (67%). In second place, however, they also blame their

own group for not listening enough (64%) to the younger generation. So, they are aware that their own generation is part of the problem. However, 59%, also a majority, blame the lack of willingness of the younger generation for the poor prospects for fruitful collaboration.

FIGURE 5

Skeptical Leaders of Tomorrow primarily blame unwillingness of the older generation, while skeptical Leaders of Today primarily fear that conflicts are too large to be solved

Reasons for rating the chance for a good cooperation as rather or very low | For negative rating only\*: What are the reasons of your answer? Prespecified statements; Top2Box (completely agree, tend to agree) of 4 possible answers



n = 241 Leaders of Tomorrow; n = 70 Leaders of Today | \* Leaders, who assess the chances for a good cooperation low © Nuremberg Institute for Market Decisions & St. Gallen Symposium: Voices of the Leaders of Tomorrow 2022

“Each generation imagines itself to be more intelligent than the one that went before it, and wiser than the one that comes after it.” This is a quote from George Orwell (1945, retrieved from S. Orwell & Angus, 1968, p. 51), who lived quite a while before us. Even philosophers in ancient times lamented the deterioration of manners and respect in youth (Freeman, 1907). In fact, the tendency of the respective older generation to attribute negative traits to the younger is so pervasive that psychologists have dedicated a specific label to this stereotype, calling it the “kids-these-days effect” (Protzko & Schooler, 2019).

Vice versa, ageism is a negative stereotype towards older people, especially prevalent in youth-centric Western societies. In spite of counterevidence of relatively long-lasting personality and cognitive stability, older people are accused of having a rigid personality, cognitive impairment and unwillingness to learn new things (Staudinger, 2015), which can give rise to discrimination at the workplace and in society as a whole.

Do the generations in the present survey express similarly negative claims about each other?

### Blame game

Indeed, not only the skeptical but also the optimistic respondents take a critical stance on the prerequisites for intergenerational cooperation (see Figure 6). Asking the full sample about the extent to which sacrifices are demanded or interests are ignored, a commonality between the younger and older respondents becomes clear: The blame is mostly passed on to the other party. In other words: There is not much agreement between Leaders of Tomorrow and Today on how they view each other’s claims or demands.

While a great majority (76%) of the Leaders of Tomorrow agree that ‘the older generation ignores – intentionally or unintentionally – vital interests of the younger generation’ and 67% state that the older generation demands too many sacrifices from the younger generation,

only 26% believe that the younger generation is asking the older generation to make too many sacrifices.

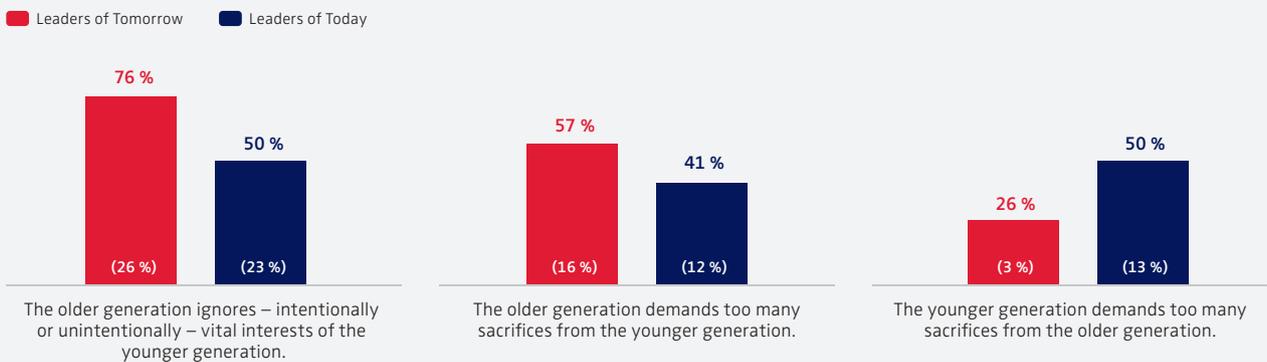
The Leaders of Today have a very different take on it: Just 50% think that the older generation ignores vital interests of the younger generation, 41% say that the older generation demands too many sacrifices from the younger, while 50% state that the younger generation demands too many sacrifices.

So, it looks like exchange is primarily needed on how to understand each other’s sides and points of view as a prerequisite for a fruitful collaboration. Since both generations consider the foundation for intergenerational cooperation to be good, there are good reasons for hope that this endeavor can be successful.

FIGURE 6

## The blame is mostly passed on to the other party – not much agreement between Leaders of Tomorrow and Today on how to assess each other’s demands

How viable is the basis for cooperation between the younger and older generation? What is your assessment of this issue?  
 Prespecified statements; Top2Box (completely agree, tend to agree) of 4 possible answers (+ n.a.); figures in brackets: completely agree



n = 683 Leaders of Tomorrow; n = 300 Leaders of Today  
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# PARTICIPATION OF THE YOUNG GENERATION IN DECISION-MAKING AND TRANSFER OF RESPONSIBILITIES

“For millennia, the rule has been: Experienced elders bear responsibility and guide inexperienced younger ones; they, in turn, freshen up traditions with innovations. Now it seems to be turning into its opposite: The young have long since shown the way, at least technologically. This overrides pecking orders and principles...” This is an excerpt from the article ‘Young against Old’ from the German newspaper Sueddeutsche Zeitung in March 2020 (Schenz, 2020).

Given the rate of technological change and the digital literacy of the younger generation, it is therefore no surprise that the issue of responsibility and decision-transfer in politics and business has become considerably more explo-

sive in recent years. Questions regarding the extent and consequences of more participation of the younger generation are important discussion points in the current generational debate. While the younger ones may complain that the older ones stick to their posts, the older ones may criticize a lack of willingness on the part of the younger ones to take on responsibility.

We asked the participants from the different generations in our study how they assess these issues and arguments – and discovered big perception gaps.

Let’s start with each party’s willingness to relinquish or assume decision-making power and responsibility respectively

(see Figure 7): 78% of the young leaders complain that the older generation does not show enough willingness to give the younger generation greater decision-making power in the political sphere, while only 36% of them believe that the younger generation does not show enough willingness to take real responsibility in politics.

In contrast, 60% of the Leaders of Today surveyed stated that the younger generation does not show enough willingness. At least, 69% of them concede that the older – that is, their own – generation does not actually show enough willingness to relinquish decision-making power. The greater difference in perception therefore appears

FIGURE 7

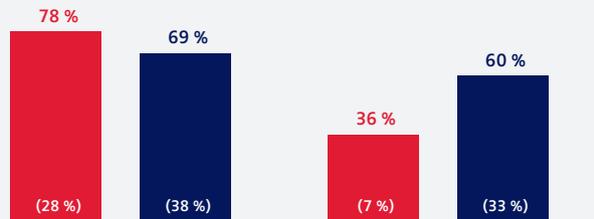
## Leaders of Tomorrow and Today disagree on the willingness of the younger generation to take real responsibility, revealing a major gap in perception

What is your opinion on the following items about transfer of decision-making and responsibility?

Prespecified statements; Top2Box (completely agree, tend to agree) of 4 possible answers (+ n.a.); figures in brackets: completely agree

Leaders of Tomorrow Leaders of Today

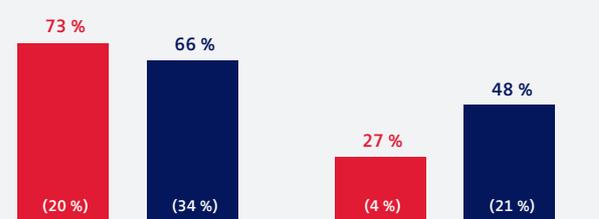
### Responsibility and decision-making in politics



The older generation does not show enough willingness to give the younger generation greater decision-making power in the political sphere.

The younger generation does not show enough willingness to take real responsibility in politics.

### Responsibility and decision-making in economy



The older generation does not show enough willingness to give the younger generation greater decision-making power in the economic sphere.

The younger generation does not show enough willingness to take real responsibility in the economy.

n = 683 Leaders of Tomorrow; n = 300 Leaders of Today

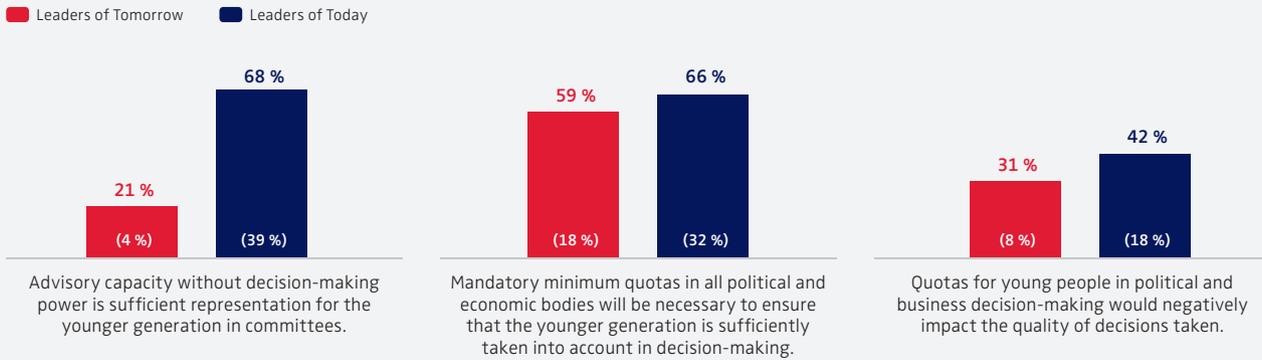
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FIGURE 8

## Quotas are deemed necessary by both groups to ensure decision-making influence of the younger generation; only the Leaders of Today see advisory capacity as sufficient

What is your opinion on the following items about decision-making transfer and responsibility?

Prespecified statements; Top2Box (completely agree, tend to agree) of 4 possible answers (+ n.a.); figures in brackets: completely agree



n = 683 Leaders of Tomorrow; n = 300 Leaders of Today

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to lie in the assessment of or trust in the younger generation's willingness to assume responsibility in the political sphere. Asking the same questions for business instead of politics yields a similar picture with similarly large differences. However, the willingness of both the older and even more the younger generation is assessed more positively.

Opinions are also divided on the question of how strong the right of participation and the influence of the younger generation should be (see Figure 8). 68% of Leaders of Today feel that an advisory role without decision-making power for the younger generation would suffice, whereas nearly 80% of the Leaders of Tomorrow disagree and reject this. Of course, consultants can have major influence in decision-making processes. However, the power asymmetry becomes problematic if there are conflicts of interest between the consultant and the decision-maker. Only strong trust in the benevolent intentions of the decision-makers could perhaps resolve such a dilemma.

### In favor of quotas

Quotas as a means of enforcing representation of certain groups in any kind of body are not without controversy. In fact, it is often a difficult topic that leads to much dispute. Many people are familiar with the negative term "quota hire" in this context. It is supposed to mean that women or minorities were chosen solely because of a certain formal quota requirement and not based on their qualifications or performance.

On the other hand, quotas may be a good first step toward breaking up entrenched structures. A 2020 OECD report acknowledges some limitations of quotas, such as suspicions towards quota hires due to perceived unfairness by fellow employees and only slow advancement toward increased representation in positions not regulated by quotas. Overall, however, the report draws mainly positive conclusions about the effectiveness of legally binding quotas implemented in various European countries in the past decades (OECD, 2020a).

In any case, Leaders of Tomorrow and Today show common ground in their assessment of the benefits of quotas. The majorities in both groups agree that they are necessary to ensure the influence of the younger generation on decision-making. Just a minority fear that quotas for young people in political and business decision-making would negatively impact the quality of the decisions.

“Many public policy issues are difficult decisions to take, as their benefits are often only reaped in the long term, while the costs are incurred in the short term.” (OECD, 2020b, p. 27). This quote from the OECD Publication ‘Innovative Citizen Participation and New Democratic Institutions’ on the dialogue between different social groups in general sums up the conflict of interests between the generations quite well.

In our political and economic systems, decision-makers are often rewarded or encouraged for short-term gains, and that is certainly a central source of inter-generational conflict. Decision-makers frequently face a dilemma: CEOs may be rewarded more for short-term revenue rather than for strategically investing in long-term success. Political leaders may be rewarded for satisfying powerful interest groups to ensure reelection rather than strategic infrastructure or education investments whose benefits are reaped only years later. These are good reasons to give the younger generation – whose future will be strongly affected by all long-term follow-up costs – more opportunities to have a greater say in

today’s measures. And institutions also need the input and collaboration of young people to remain up to date.

In fact, according to our findings, not only the majority of Leaders of Tomorrow (82%), but also 62% of the Leaders of Today believe that without the participation of the younger generation in important decisions, many institutions will soon deteriorate (see Figure 9).

The reason for this opinion is obviously not a general doubt about the ability of the older generation in decision-making. 64% of the Leaders of Tomorrow agree that ‘Age does not matter for the quality of decision-making in the interest of the younger generation.’ But maybe they are not sure about their willingness and priorities when they have to decide between their own versus other generations’ interest: Most Leaders of Today (67%) also agree with the statement that age does not matter for one’s ability to make decisions in the interest of the younger generation and even more – 70% – believe that ‘It is legitimate for older generations to have more decision-making power,

because they have more experience’ – a statement that most Leaders of Tomorrow reject. Just 42% of them agree with an experience-based decision privilege for older people.

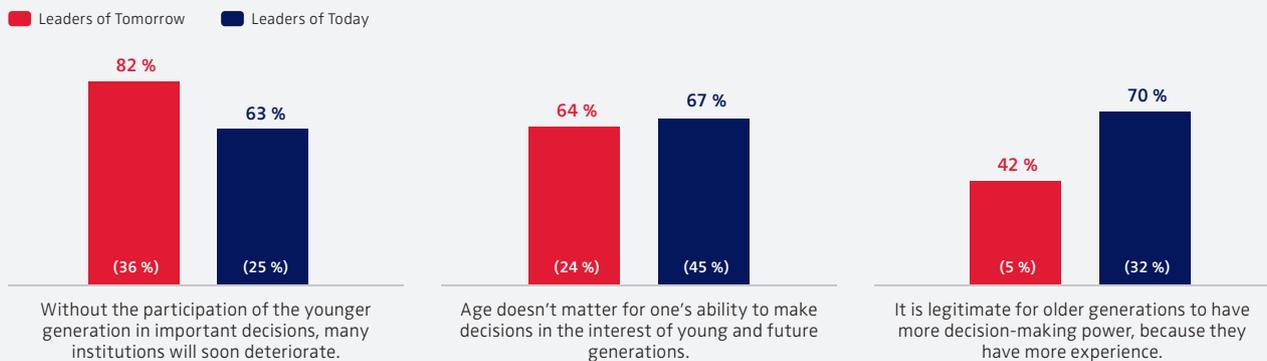
Conclusion: Although the assessment of the Leaders of Today and Tomorrow on the willingness of young people to take responsibility for decisions in business and politics diverges, both groups agree on the necessity of the younger generation’s participation. And quotas are obviously seen as a crucial instrument for its enforcement.

FIGURE 9

## Most Leaders of Tomorrow and Today agree that participation of the younger generation in public decisions is necessary; opinions differ on an age-based decision privilege

What is your opinion on the following items about decision-making transfer and responsibility?

Prespecified statements; Top2Box (completely agree, tend to agree) of 4 possible answers (+ n.a.); figures in brackets: completely agree



n = 683 Leaders of Tomorrow; n = 300 Leaders of Today

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# TOPICS AND PRIORITIES FOR INTERGENERATIONAL COLLABORATION

Participation is an important prerequisite for intergenerational cooperation. But what should be addressed – ideally in a joint effort? The better the mutual priorities of the generations overlap, the fewer power struggles and compromises are required for successful collaboration. Which topics need to be discussed most urgently? Where do priorities align and in which areas should a shared understanding first be created for a start?

To answer these questions, we first take a look at Leaders of Tomorrow's priorities. Then we look at these for the Lead-

ers of Today as well. And in the third step, we compare the two points of view.

## Generation Climate

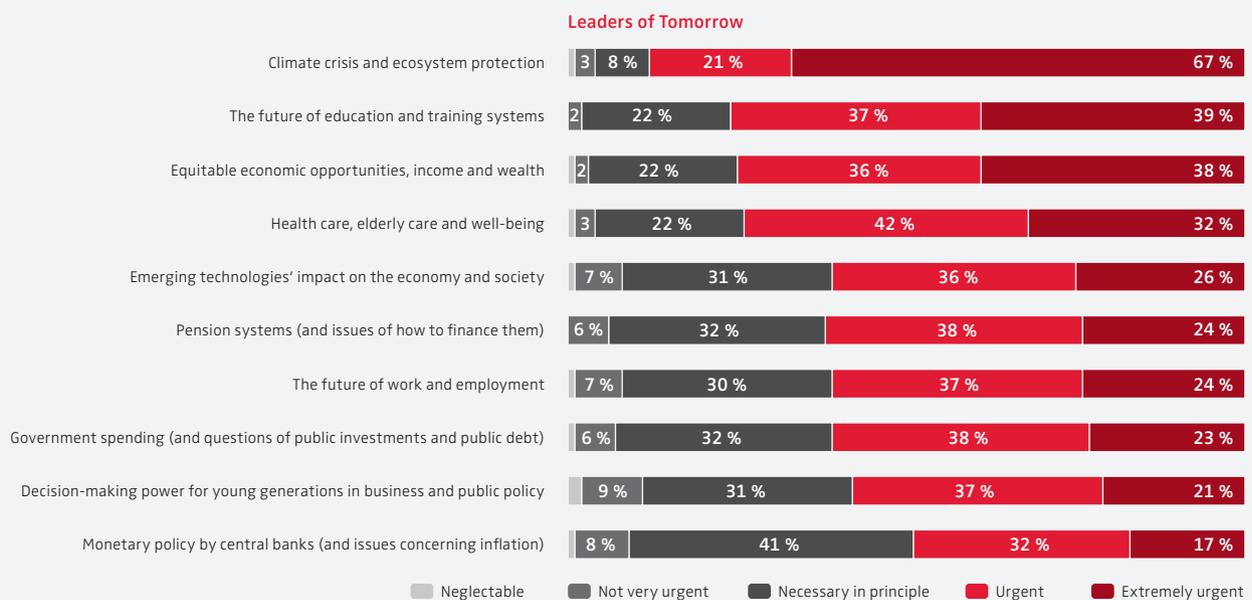
"How dare you." These three words have become emblematic for the conflict between (mostly young) climate activists and people in power kindly applauding their cause but failing to act. In her famous speech at the 2019 UN climate action summit, Greta Thunberg used these words repeatedly (Thunberg, 2019). She accused world leaders of betrayal of the younger generations, by ignoring

scientific evidence for the approaching climate catastrophe and not taking adequate countermeasures. The Leaders of Tomorrow are part of the generation sometimes referred to as 'Generation Climate' (Ramirez, 2021). So, it is not surprising that they regard the climate crisis and ecosystem protection as priorities of the utmost urgency for intergenerational dialogue (see Figure 10). 67% consider this issue to be extremely urgent and 21% say it is at least urgent. Overall, it is therefore a top priority for 88%. Another 8% say it is necessary in principle and very few consider the issue not very urgent (3%) or neglectable (1%).

FIGURE 10

## Climate, education, health care and equitable economic opportunity are the top four topics for the Leaders of Tomorrow in the intergenerational debate

How urgently do you think the following intergenerational issues should be addressed? | Prespecified issues



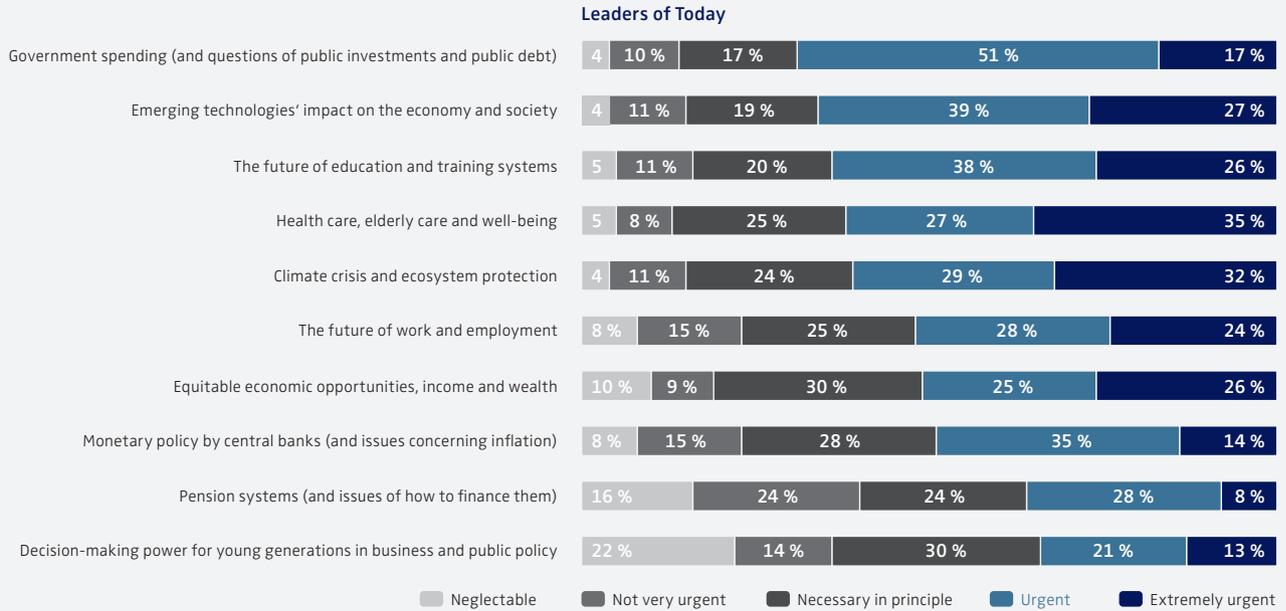
n = 683 Leaders of Tomorrow

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FIGURE 11

## Government spending, technology and education issues, health care, and climate are the top five topics in the intergenerational debate for Leaders of Today

How urgently do you think the following intergenerational issues should be addressed? | Prespecified issues



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The future of education and training comes second and is rated as extremely urgent by 39% and urgent by 37%, followed by equitable economic opportunities, income, and wealth (38%, 36%) plus health care, elderly care, and well-being (32%, 42%). The latter might be related to recent pandemic experience. But the changing age pyramid in many countries and the associated problems certainly also play a role. This issue is also related to equitable opportunities as the inversion of the age pyramid puts the younger generation under excessive economic pressure, for instance, due to increased social security contributions and retirement insurance rates.

### Diverging assessments of urgency

Leaders of Today consider government spending to be the most pressing issue (see Figure 11): 68% think this topic is urgent or extremely urgent, followed by the impact of new technologies, which 27% regard as extremely urgent and 39% as urgent. The future of education, health and elderly care and the climate crisis also range among the five most urgent topics. Even if the climate crisis comes only fifth, it comes in second for the “extremely urgent” rating (32%) – only health and elderly care shows more extremely urgent mentions (35%).

Current leaders are least interested in putting pension systems (40% think the topic is not very urgent or neglectable) and decision-making power for the young (22% think it is neglectable, 14% not very urgent) in the center of intergenerational dialogue.

## Common ground but also differences

Figure 12 shows to what extent the Leaders of Today and Tomorrow agree or disagree on relevant topics for intergenerational dialogue. The upper right quadrant reveals that there is high agreement on the climate crisis, health and elderly care as well as education and training systems. Leaders of Today also consider government spending and new technologies to be particularly urgent. As a result, the consensus between the two groups on government spending and dealing with the impact of emerging technologies can also be called promising. However, the Leaders of Tomorrow also view the future of work and employment, pension systems (and how

to finance them) and especially equitable economic opportunities, income and wealth as pressing issues. And these topics are not (yet) very much on the Leaders of Today's radar. Thus, the younger generation is tasked with raising additional awareness among current leaders for these topics – and in many countries, they have good reasons to do so, from increasing challenges in finding affordable housing (e.g., in the UK, the USA, and Germany; see Green, 2017; Olson, 2021; Lutz, 2020, respectively) to deterioration of work contracts for younger people today compared to former times (Lowrey, 2020). At the same time, Leaders of Today should try to develop a better understanding of the challenges young people face today. All in all: Discussions obviously need to be expanded.

### BOX 2 | LEADERS OF TOMORROW

#### Open comments

- > "I think there is a big disconnect in the priorities of each generation and think in order to forge a way forward one of the first things to do would be to reprioritize issues."
- > "Many of these issues are inter-linked: For example, equitable economic opportunities go hand in hand with training, education and the future of work, and largely rely on government spending. Similarly, elderly care relies on government spending, equitable economic opportunities and the pension system."

FIGURE 12

Leaders of Today and Tomorrow agree in principle on the urgency of the climate crisis, the future of education and health care, while they diverge especially on equitable economic opportunities

How urgently do you think the following intergenerational issues should be addressed?  
Prespecified issues; Top2Boxes (extremely urgent + urgent) of 5 answer options (+ n.a.)

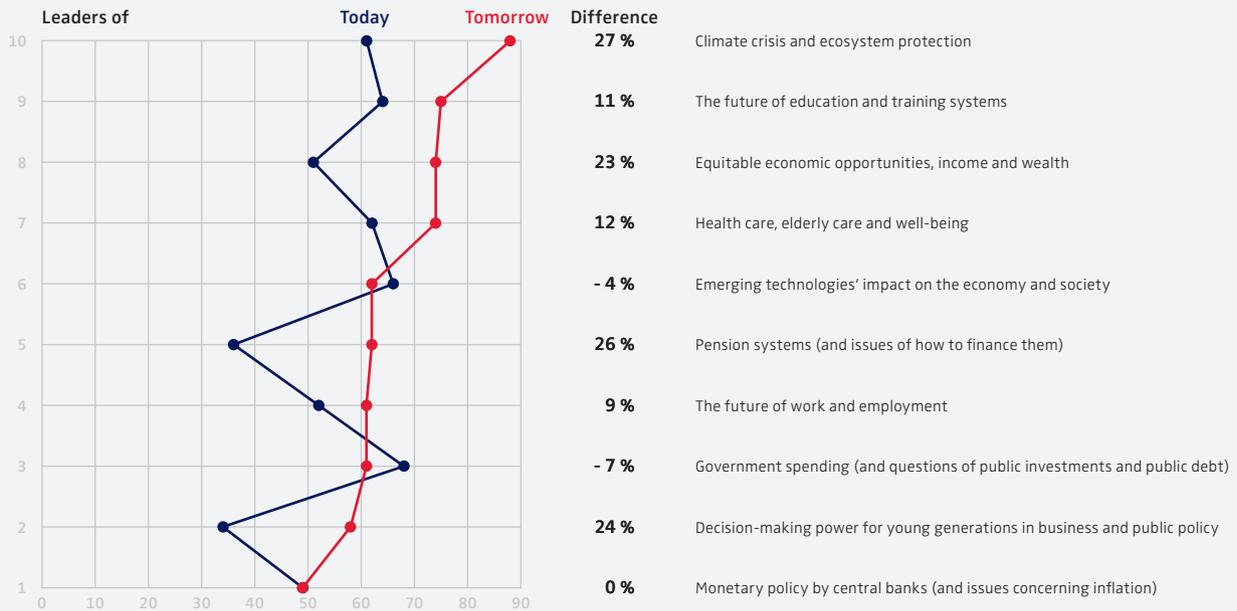


n = 683 Leaders of Tomorrow; n = 300 Leaders of Today  
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FIGURE 13

## The biggest intergenerational differences are evident in perceived urgency of climate protection, pension systems, decision-making power for the younger generation and equitable economic opportunities

How urgently do you think the following intergenerational issues should be addressed?  
 Prespecified issues; Top2Boxes (extremely urgent + urgent) of 5 answer options (+ n.a.)



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### BOX 3 | LEADERS OF TOMORROW

#### Open comments

- > “We have to fight inequality and climate change. Otherwise, we as society and humanity will lose.”
- > “Economic inequality is rising at a much faster pace than even the rate at which extreme poverty is being removed. The pandemic has further amplified this situation. It also has forced us to prioritize health-related research and innovation to be ready to fight pandemic the present one. Ageing population will further strain the health infrastructure which calls for more automation and better research to improve future health care systems.”

Many of the Leaders of Tomorrow expressed their personal sense of urgency by additional comments (see examples in Box 2, previous page, and Box 3).

Besides the topics themselves, a comparison of the perceived levels of urgency is also interesting. Figure 13 shows clearly that the Leaders of Tomorrow consider most of the topics more urgent than the Leaders of Today. The biggest urgency gap (in percentage points) concerns climate change (27%). Although both groups agree in principle that this issue is at the top of the list of shared priorities, there is a major difference on the assessment of how pressing they consider it. It seems that the Leaders of Tomorrow agree with the Fridays for Future activists in their call for immediate action and their concern that the environmental crisis is not being addressed

with sufficient speed and determination. The most recent, sixth IPCC report provides evidence that the urgency expressed by the Leaders of Tomorrow is more than justified: It can be seen as a final warning that there is no more time left to waste and humanity must take massive action “now or never” (Harvey, 2022).

The next-largest gap relates to the urgency of clarifying issues about pension systems. While 62% of the Leaders of Tomorrow consider this extremely urgent or urgent, just 36% of the Leaders of Today see it that way – a difference of 26% (percentage points). The issue of (more) decision-making power for the young comes next with 24% difference, followed by fair economic opportunities with 23%.

# ASSESSMENT OF GENERATION-RELATED FUTURE SCENARIOS

When thinking five years into the future, what are the Leaders of Tomorrow's hopes and expectations? To address this question, respondents were presented with twelve different scenarios covering a broad range of more or less utopian measures to address pressing challenges. They were asked to rate the desirability of the scenarios, to show which ones are most appealing to them, as well as the perceived likelihood that they will occur,

to reveal where the younger generation is hopeful and where instead doubts prevail. Therefore, they should indicate on a five-point scale (highly undesirable, undesirable, undecided, desirable, highly desirable) how desirable they view each of these scenarios. Subsequently they were asked how likely they think each scenario would occur within the next five years. For this question, they could also use a five-point scale (impossible, unlikely,

likely, very likely, definitely). For both questions, they additionally had the option of giving no answer.

Affordable continuing education and substantial financial investments for fighting the climate crisis are the scenarios with the highest appeal to the Leaders of Tomorrow, rated as highly desirable or desirable by 93% and 86% of respondents respectively (see Table 1).

TABLE 1

## Affordable education and fighting the climate crisis are the most important desires for the Leaders of Tomorrow

Assessment of future scenarios by the Leaders of Tomorrow

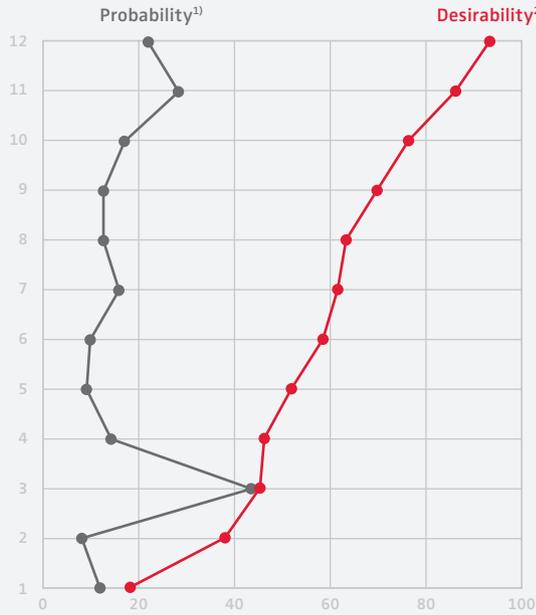
	Desirability		Probability/likelihood	
	Desirable	Highly desirable	Very likely	Definitely
A majority of countries ensure citizens' access to high-quality and affordable continuing education and reskilling.	31 %	62 %	15 %	7 %
The majority of countries commit to significant financial investments and strict regulatory measures to fight the climate crisis.	33 %	53 %	21 %	7 %
Ecocide – the destruction of crucial ecosystems – is included in international criminal law as a crime against humanity.	33 %	44 %	12 %	5 %
A principle of "intergenerational justice" is written into many countries' constitutions.	41 %	29 %	9 %	4 %
Most countries introduce basic universal income.	34 %	24 %	7 %	3 %
An upper age limit for politicians is introduced.	29 %	23 %	6 %	3 %
More countries adopt clear limits as to how much public debt they can take (similar to Maastricht criteria of EU).	43 %	20 %	10 %	3 %
A majority of large corporations decide to have a person below the age of 30 on their board or in their executive leadership team.	42 %	20 %	12 %	3 %
The retirement age is raised in many countries to relieve pressure from pension systems.	30 %	15 %	33 %	11 %
Robots and AIs performing jobs are taxed like their human counterparts ("robot tax").	33 %	13 %	12 %	2 %
Younger people receive a higher voting weight (in elections, committees, etc.), i.e., influence in elections decreases with age.	25 %	13 %	5 %	3 %
Elderly care is largely delegated to care robots.	14 %	4 %	9 %	3 %

n = 683 Leaders of Tomorrow | 5-point-scales: Desirability: highly undesirable to highly desirable; Probability: impossible to definitely  
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FIGURE 14

Utopian pessimists: The perceived likelihood is generally low compared to the desirability of the scenarios by the Leaders of Tomorrow; thus, the biggest gaps concern their highest desires

Leaders of Tomorrow | Perceived gap between desire and likelihood



Difference

71 %

58 %

59 %

57 %

51 %

46 %

49 %

43 %

32 %

2 %

30 %

6 %

A majority of countries ensure citizens' access to high-quality and affordable continuing education and reskilling.

The majority of countries commit to significant financial investments and strict regulatory measures to fight the climate crisis.

Ecocide – the destruction of crucial ecosystems – is included in international criminal law as a crime against humanity.

A principle of “intergenerational justice” is written into many countries’ constitutions.

More countries adopt clear limits as to how much public debt they can take (similar to Maastricht criteria of EU).

A majority of large corporations decide to have a person below the age of 30 on their board or in their executive leadership team.

Most countries introduce basic universal income.

An upper age limit for politicians is introduced.

Robots and AIs performing jobs are taxed like their human counterparts (“robot tax”).

The retirement age is raised in many countries to relieve pressure from pension systems.

Younger people receive a higher voting weight (in elections, committees, etc.), i.e., influence in elections decreases with age.

Elderly care is largely delegated to care robots.

n = 683 Leaders of Tomorrow | 1) Top2Box Probability: definitely + very likely | 2) Top2Box Desirability: highly desirable + desirable  
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Most other scenarios are also quite popular among the young top talents, but another two scenarios seem to be particularly well-liked: One is related to biodiversity protection (treating ecocide as an international crime), and the other is incorporating “intergenerational justice” in a country’s constitution.

### Utopian pessimists

However, the respondents are skeptical about whether the scenarios are going to happen, resulting in large gaps between desirability and probability of occurrence, particularly for the most desirable measures (see Figure 14). The apparent pessimism regarding the future of education and fighting climate change is striking, especially when considering that the Leaders of Tomorrow represent a privileged group of well-educated high potentials who will have a chance of bringing these matters forward themselves. The highest likelihood of implementation is attributed to the raising of the retirement age, which 44% expect is very likely or sure to happen – but which is not seen as very desirable.

The four least desirable scenarios are raising the retirement age, the introduction of a “robot tax” (still rated as desirable or highly desirable by 45% and 46% of respondents respectively), higher voting weight for younger people (38%) and, clearly at the low end in terms of desirability, delegation of elderly care to robots (28%). Interestingly, a higher voting weight would mostly favor the respondents themselves, by giving them more political influence, so it seems surprising that the desirability of this measure is not rated higher.

## Shared visions

The Leaders of Today consider the same two scenarios as most desirable as the younger leaders (see Table 2). Affordable continuing education and substantial financial investments for fighting the climate crisis are also on the top of the list for the Leaders of Today. They were rated as highly desirable or desirable by 60% and 61% of respondents respectively. Although these percentages are well below the level with which the younger leaders long for such measures, the two groups nevertheless agree that these two are the most desirable scenarios.

But beyond the top two positions, differences arise: Measures that tackle public and private debt burdens – raising the retirement age, public debt limit, and basic universal income – are all rated as desirable or very desirable by roughly half of the respondents.

The delegation of elderly care to robots seems less daunting to the older than to the younger ones. A reason might be that Leaders of Today may already be more involved with this topic, possibly having to balance their professional career and care for their own parents, which may contribute to the relative at-

tractiveness of delegation. Perhaps they are also already thinking about their own situation in old age: Because of the high level of mobility, children – if there are any – no longer live nearby to provide support.

TABLE 2

### Affordable education and fighting the climate crisis are the most important desires for the Leaders of Today; but the level of desire is lower than that of Leaders of Tomorrow

Assessment of future scenarios by the **Leaders of Today**

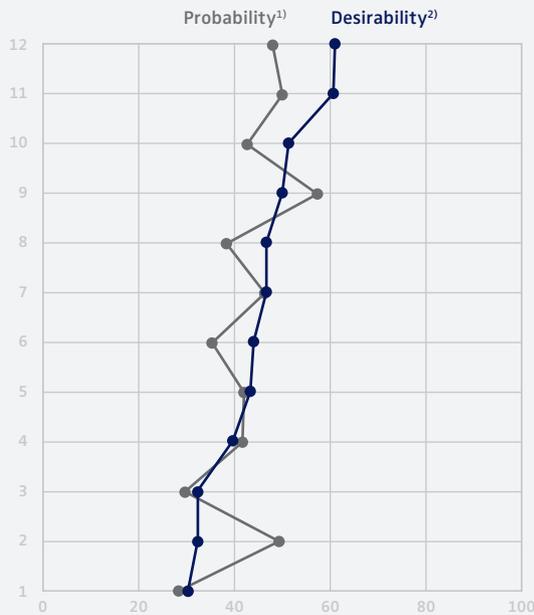
	Desirability		Probability/likelihood	
	Desirable	Highly desirable	Very likely	Definitely
A majority of countries ensure citizens' access to high-quality and affordable continuing education and reskilling.	29 %	31 %	25 %	25 %
The majority of countries commit to significant financial investments and strict regulatory measures to fight the climate crisis.	34 %	27 %	22 %	26 %
The retirement age is raised in many countries to relieve pressure from pension systems.	30 %	21 %	28 %	14 %
Most countries introduce basic universal income.	30 %	20 %	34 %	24 %
More countries adopt clear limits as to how much public debt they can take (similar to Maastricht criteria of EU).	29 %	18 %	28 %	18 %
Elderly care is largely delegated to care robots.	29 %	17 %	24 %	15 %
A principle of "intergenerational justice" is written into many countries' constitutions.	23 %	17 %	24 %	18 %
Ecocide – the destruction of crucial ecosystems – is included in international criminal law as a crime against humanity.	29 %	15 %	22 %	13 %
Younger people receive a higher voting weight (in elections, committees, etc.), i.e., influence in elections decreases with age.	29 %	14 %	28 %	14 %
An upper age limit for politicians is introduced.	21 %	11 %	31 %	19 %
Robots and AIs performing jobs are taxed like their human counterparts ("robot tax").	22 %	10 %	21 %	8 %
A majority of large corporations decide to have a person below the age of 30 on their board or in their executive leadership team.	21 %	10 %	18 %	10 %

n = 300 Leaders of Today | 5-point-scales: Desirability: highly undesirable to highly desirable; Probability: impossible to definitely  
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FIGURE 15

## Pragmatic optimists: Few notable gaps between desire and perceived likelihood

Leaders of Today | Perceived gap between desire and likelihood



**Difference**

- 13 %** The majority of countries commit to significant financial investments and strict regulatory measures to fight the climate crisis.
- 11 %** A majority of countries ensure citizens' access to high-quality and affordable continuing education and reskilling.
- 9 %** The retirement age is raised in many countries to relieve pressure from pension systems.
- 7 %** Most countries introduce basic universal income.
- 8 %** Elderly care is largely delegated to care robots.
- 0 %** More countries adopt clear limits as to how much public debt they can take (similar to Maastricht criteria of EU).
- 9 %** Ecocide – the destruction of crucial ecosystems – is included in international criminal law as a crime against humanity.
- 1 %** Younger people receive a higher voting weight (in elections, committees, etc.), i.e., influence in elections decreases with age.
- 2 %** A principle of “intergenerational justice” is written into many countries' constitutions.
- 3 %** Robots and AIs performing jobs are taxed like their human counterparts (“robot tax”).
- 17 %** An upper age limit for politicians is introduced.
- 2 %** A majority of large corporations decide to have a person below the age of 30 on their board or in their executive leadership team.

n = 300 Leaders of Today | 1) Top2Box Probability: definitely + very likely | 2) Top2Box Desirability: highly desirable + desirable  
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### Pragmatic optimists

Another interesting difference compared to the Leaders of Tomorrow concerns the less desirable scenarios. Two of the three lowest-ranking ones imply some costs or at least power-sharing for the Leaders of Today: An upper age limit for politicians and including a person below 30 in executive teams. So, while the Leaders of Tomorrow voted down, against their best interest, a scenario that would increase their influence (i.e., higher voting weight for younger people), the Leaders of Today did so for a scenario that would reduce their own influence. In other words, while the younger ones do not prioritize gaining more power for themselves, the older ones are very hesitant to embrace measures that imply giving up some of their power. This may be a sign of loss aversion: Losses loom larger than gains (Kahneman &

Tversky, 1979), so giving up a position of influence and privilege may have particularly little appeal for the generation of leaders currently in power.

### High divergence in the assessment of likelihood

The most striking difference between the two generations of respondents, however, is revealed when comparing Figures 14 and 15: The gaps between the desirability and the expected likelihood of the scenarios are much smaller in the sample of the Leaders of Today. Desirability ratings are lower, on average, but likelihood ratings are higher, which may be interpreted as a cautious, but pragmatic optimism towards the future.

A direct comparison of the desires of both leaders is shown in Figure 16: The percentages of “highly desirable” and “desirable” answers by the Leaders of Tomorrow are plotted on the vertical axis. In other words, the higher a point is positioned in the matrix, the more the scenario is desired by the young leaders. The horizontal axis shows the percentages for the Leaders of Today. The further to the right a point is positioned, the more the scenario is longed for by the Leaders of Today.

All points in the upper right quadrant are thus strongly longed for by both groups. All items in the upper left quadrant are highly valued by the Leaders

of Tomorrow, but only below average by the Leaders of Today. The reverse is true for the lower right quadrant. Here we find the scenarios that are strongly desired by the Leaders of Today but only rated comparatively low by the Leaders of Tomorrow.

It becomes clear once again: Leaders of Tomorrow and Today have a number of things in common when it comes to the desirability of concrete future scenarios (upper right quadrant). The two joint front-runners in this respect relate to improvements in educational opportunities and climate protection, scenarios that are related to the collaboration topics that are considered most urgent

by both groups. Adoption of public debt limits and basic universal income seem to be of mutual interest as well. A common basis therefore exists, i.e., some measures would have a good chance of being implemented by intergenerational consensus. Beyond that, however, there is obviously still much need for discussion on the divergent scenarios. Two scenarios are particularly controversial in this regard: The desire for ‘Executive board members below age 30’ on the part of the Leaders of Tomorrow (62%), which is shared by only 31% of the Leaders of Today. And the desire for ‘Elderly care by robots’ on the part of the Leaders of Today (46%), which is shared by only 18% of the Leaders of Tomorrow.

FIGURE 16

### Desirability: Agreement on desirability of continuing education and climate protection; disagreement on several other issues, e.g., on robotic elderly care

How desirable do you assess the following scenarios? | Prespecified issues; Top2Boxes (highly desirable + desirable) of 5 answer options (+ n.a.)

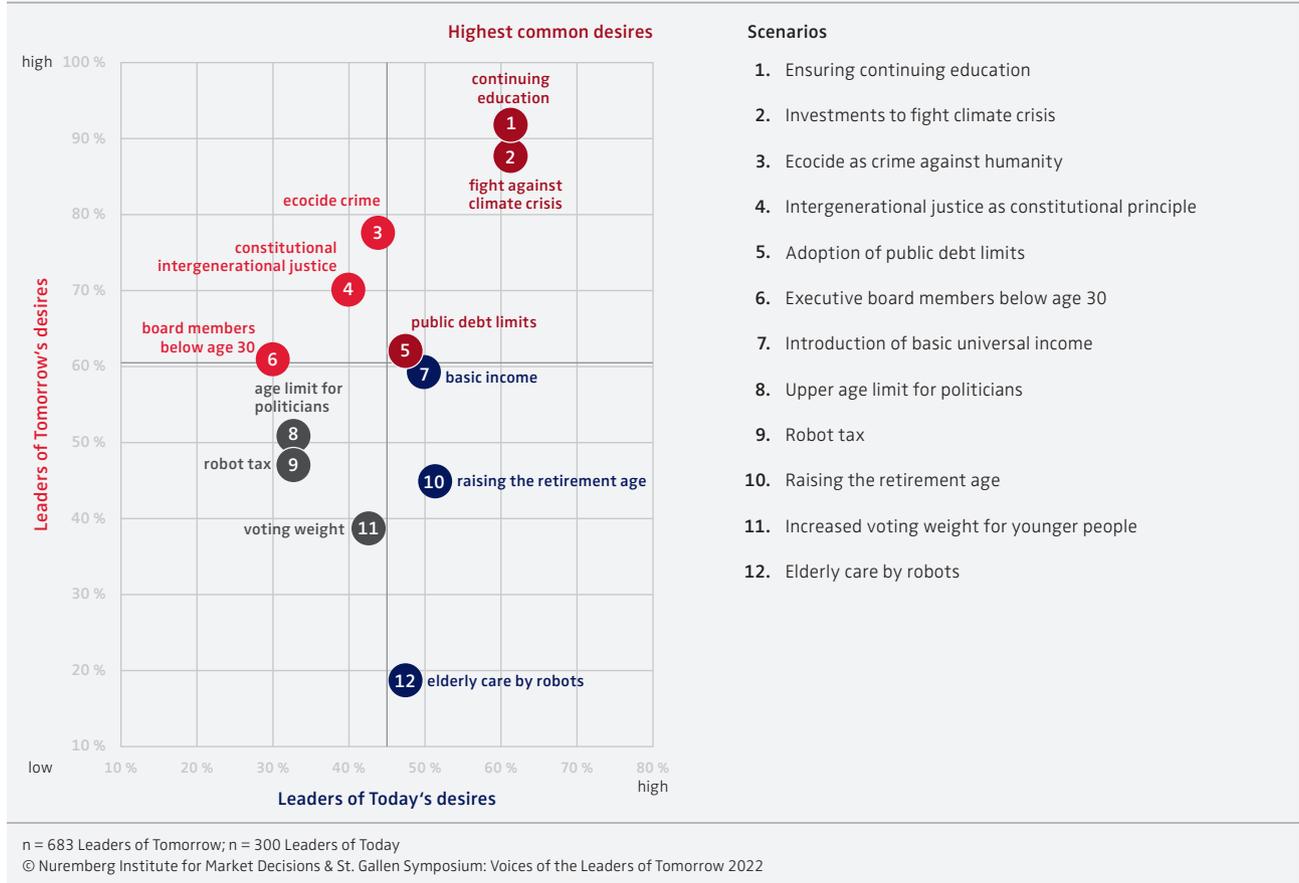
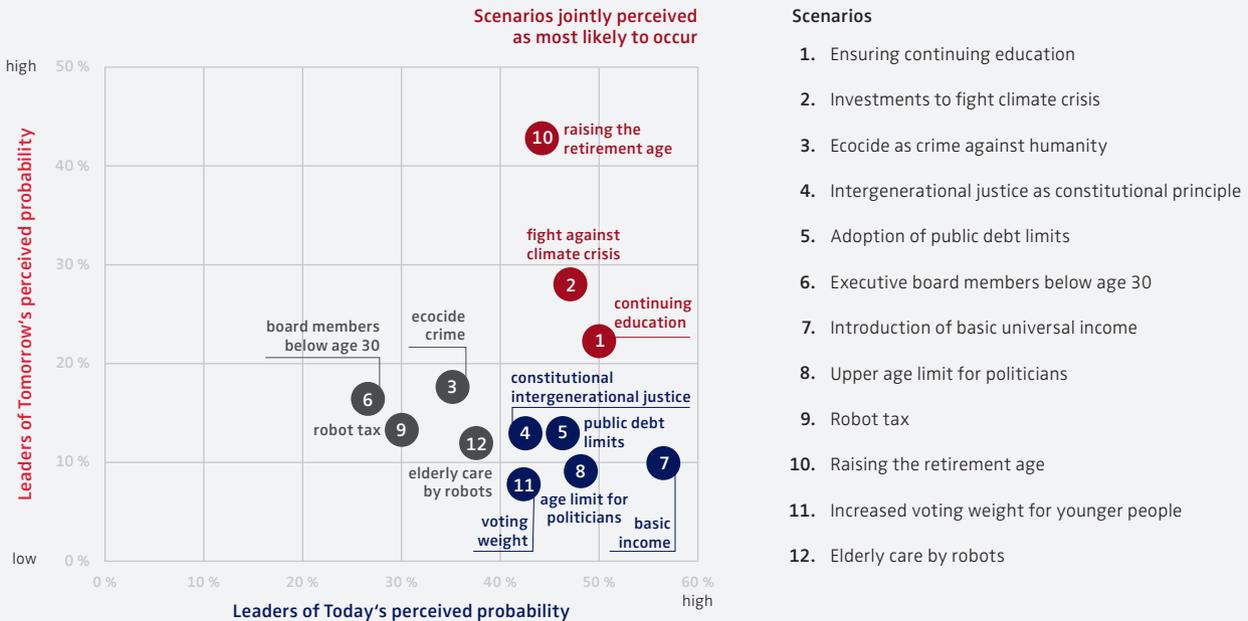


FIGURE 17

## Probability: Raising the retirement age, measures to fight the climate crisis and enabling continuing education are jointly seen as the most likely scenarios

How do you assess the probability of the following scenarios? | Prespecified issues; Top2Boxes (definitely + very likely) of 5 answer options (+ n.a.)



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When comparing the perceived likelihood of the scenarios by the two groups of leaders (see Figure 17), it is important to keep in mind that the young leaders were generally much more skeptical than the older leaders that each of the scenarios would occur. That is why there are only three items in the upper half of the matrix. These are scenarios the Leaders of Tomorrow consider at least relatively realistic and the Leaders of Today agree. After all, two of these three scenarios are also the ones that are collectively seen as most desirable: continuing education and the fight against the climate crisis.

### A case for long-term thinking

"In Iroquois society, leaders are encouraged to remember seven generations in the past and consider seven generations in the future when making decisions that affect the people." This quote is attributed to Wilma Pearl Mankiller, the first female principal chief of the Cherokee Nation (BrainyQuote). It is probably not possible or practical to – literally – have 15 generations in mind. However, it might be a good advice especially in today's fast-paced world to take a step back before making an important decision and reflect upon key learnings from our past as well as the potential impact the decision might have on future generations. Looking forward and backward might thus attenuate harmful short-term thinking, broaden one's horizon, and promote the understanding between the generations.

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# CONCLUDING REMARKS AND OUTLOOK

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In light of this year's symposium topic "Collaborative Advantage", we polled Leaders of Today in addition to the Leaders of Tomorrow, to better understand both groups' perspective on key personal, societal and global challenges, as well as their views on their own and the other generation.

## **Shared concerns about increasing polarization and financial burden on the next generation**

We found that both groups see the increasing political and cultural polarization of society as a top personal concern – with the Leaders of Tomorrow seeing it as the most extreme challenge facing them. Among them, at 69%, this issue had more than double the responses than the next runner-up – climate crisis limiting habitability of their own country (an issue that ranks only seventh place among the Leaders of Today). The financial burden on the next generation is another top concern that both groups see eye-to-eye on. But pushing back the increasing polarization would be a cause that both generations of leaders should be willing to join forces on. Unity in tackling such a clear joint problem may make it easier to work together on topics whose importance they do not (yet?) fully agree on.

## **Agreement on "too many sacrifices" – but disagreement on who is doing the sacrificing**

In what may be a case of seeing the splinter in the eye of the other but not the beam in their own, the Leaders of Today and Tomorrow both see the other generation as "demanding too many sacrifices" of their own generation. This is an indication that expectations on what constitutes a "fair" level of demand on their own generation are unaligned even between these two highly privileged

and talented groups of current and future leaders. If these two groups of leaders are to work together effectively to overcome the increasing polarization in society they both have as top concerns, then they should work hard to resolve this misalignment to avoid unnecessary side-battles in pursuing a joint goal of greater social cohesion.

## **Are the Leaders of Today reluctant to let go – or are the Leaders of Tomorrow reluctant to take on real responsibility?**

A second gap between the two generations of leaders emerges on whether the young generation is willing to accept real responsibility in economics and politics. But the good news is that despite the disconnect on the young generation's willingness to accept responsibility, both groups are in strong agreement that the older generation is not showing enough willingness to share decision-making power. This shared interpretation is also reflected in strong support for a potential remedy: mandatory minimum quotas for the younger generation in political and economic bodies. As this is a remedy with broad support, the Leaders of Tomorrow should take the Leaders of Today at their word: Such quotas could be instituted within many organizations by the Leaders of Today even without need for legal action.

## **Climate and education top desired future scenarios, but striking gap with regard to likelihood of outcomes between generations of leaders**

There is a clear alignment between the generations of leaders both on priorities for discourse – climate, education, and health care – and on desirable future scenarios regarding continuing education and fighting the climate crisis. But while the ratings of desirability and

likelihood are almost indistinguishable among the Leaders of Today, there is a striking gap between desirable and likely futures among the Leaders of Tomorrow – a pattern that we have dubbed "pragmatic optimists vs. utopian pessimists." The reason for these radically different expectations of what the future holds should be explored further.

## **The common objectives and optimism for intergenerational collaboration must be turned into action**

Both generations of leaders see eye-to-eye on many challenges – fighting divisive polarization, not burying the next generation under unresolved environmental or financial crises. They also agree on the main topics for intergenerational discourse: climate, education, health care and equitable economic opportunity. Therefore, to take this Report's findings forward, the St. Gallen Symposium and the Club of Rome are uniting to launch a joint initiative this May: "A New Generational Contract" will foster dialogue and, subsequently, encourage actions that put intergenerational fairness firmly at the centre of decisions taken during "our time" (St. Gallen Symposium and Club of Rome, 2022).

## **Strategy without execution is just hallucination – time to keep each other honest**

Both generations of leaders have declared their support to this project of sharing and handing over responsibility. This year's, as well as future symposia, are a great opportunity for both groups to engage with each other on how to tackle these topics, to hash out concrete measures, and to honestly track and assess their progress on this joint undertaking that will be vital for the future of human society and its well-being – for all generations.

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# SAMPLE AND SURVEY METHODOLOGY: RECRUITMENT OF THE LEADERS OF TOMORROW AND TODAY

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## 683 Leaders of Tomorrow and 300 Leaders of Today share their perspectives

The study was targeted at the “Leaders of Tomorrow”: A carefully selected, global community of very promising young talent invited to challenge, debate and inspire at the St. Gallen Symposium.

A total of 100 of those Leaders of Tomorrow qualify to participate through the annual St. Gallen Global Essay Competition. Students from all fields and corners of the world have been invited to share their views on pressing global challenges every year since 1989. To date, almost 30,000 thought-provoking essays from more than 1,000 universities in over 120 countries have been submitted. The other portion of the Leaders of Tomorrow are hand-selected exceptional young entrepreneurs, politicians, and professionals (the “Knowledge Pool”) who, together with the students qualifying through the essay competition as well as former attendees, form the Leaders of Tomorrow community of the St. Gallen Symposium.

### St. Gallen Global Essay Competition participants

For the Voices of the Leaders of Tomorrow report, students from over 200 universities who have competed in the St. Gallen Global Essay Competition were personally invited to take part in the study by the St. Gallen Symposium.

### St. Gallen Symposium Leaders of Tomorrow community

The St. Gallen Symposium team selected participants through their worldwide community of young talent who attended past symposia as Leaders of Tomorrow.

### Participation of selected Leaders of Today

To acknowledge this year’s focus on intergenerational discourse, we decided – for the first time in the history of this study series – to explicitly give voice to a selected sample of Leaders of Today in an additional survey: Top managers and executives (C-suite level) aged 45 and older from the 2,000 largest publicly traded global companies, in 26 countries around the globe also had the opportunity to share their generation’s perspective on the challenges regarding intergenerational collaboration.

They were recruited and interviewed by Beresford Research on behalf of the Nuremberg Institute for Market Decisions. The sample is based on an annual ranking of the top 2,000 public companies in the world. For juxtaposition within the context of this report, we refer to this group as Leaders of Today.

## Conducting the survey

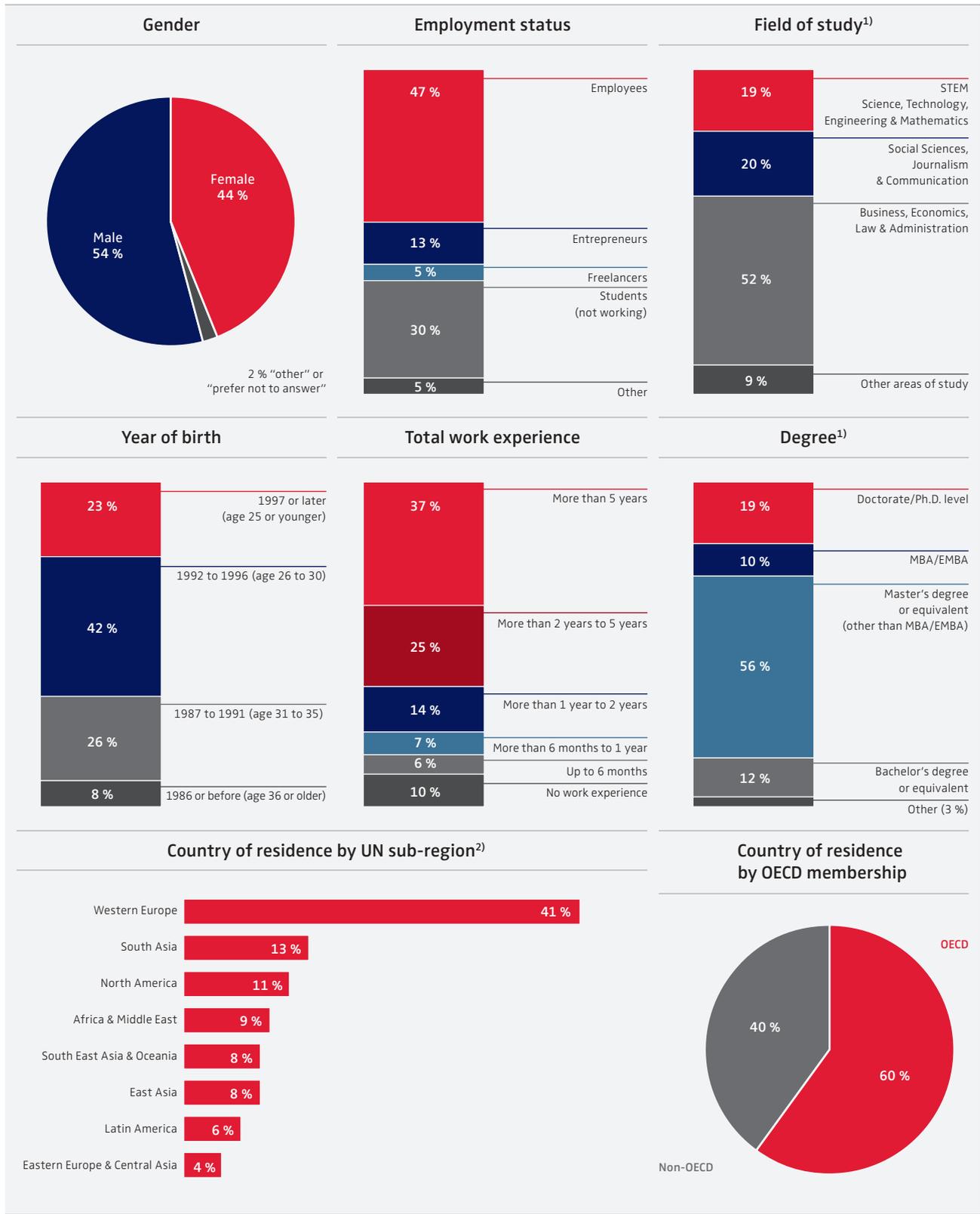
The surveys were conducted in English in February 2022. A total of 683 Leaders of Tomorrow participated online. 300 Leaders of Today were surveyed by phone and screen-sharing. The survey demanded an intensive reflection on collaboration between generations.

## Giving voice to a unique group of global talent

This survey cannot claim to be “representative” in the traditional sense of population sampling – neither of all future and current leaders in general, nor of the regions in which the participants live. However, we captured a broad and international group of participants that allows a very interesting and unique snapshot of opinions of young and qualified individuals as well as current top managers around the world.

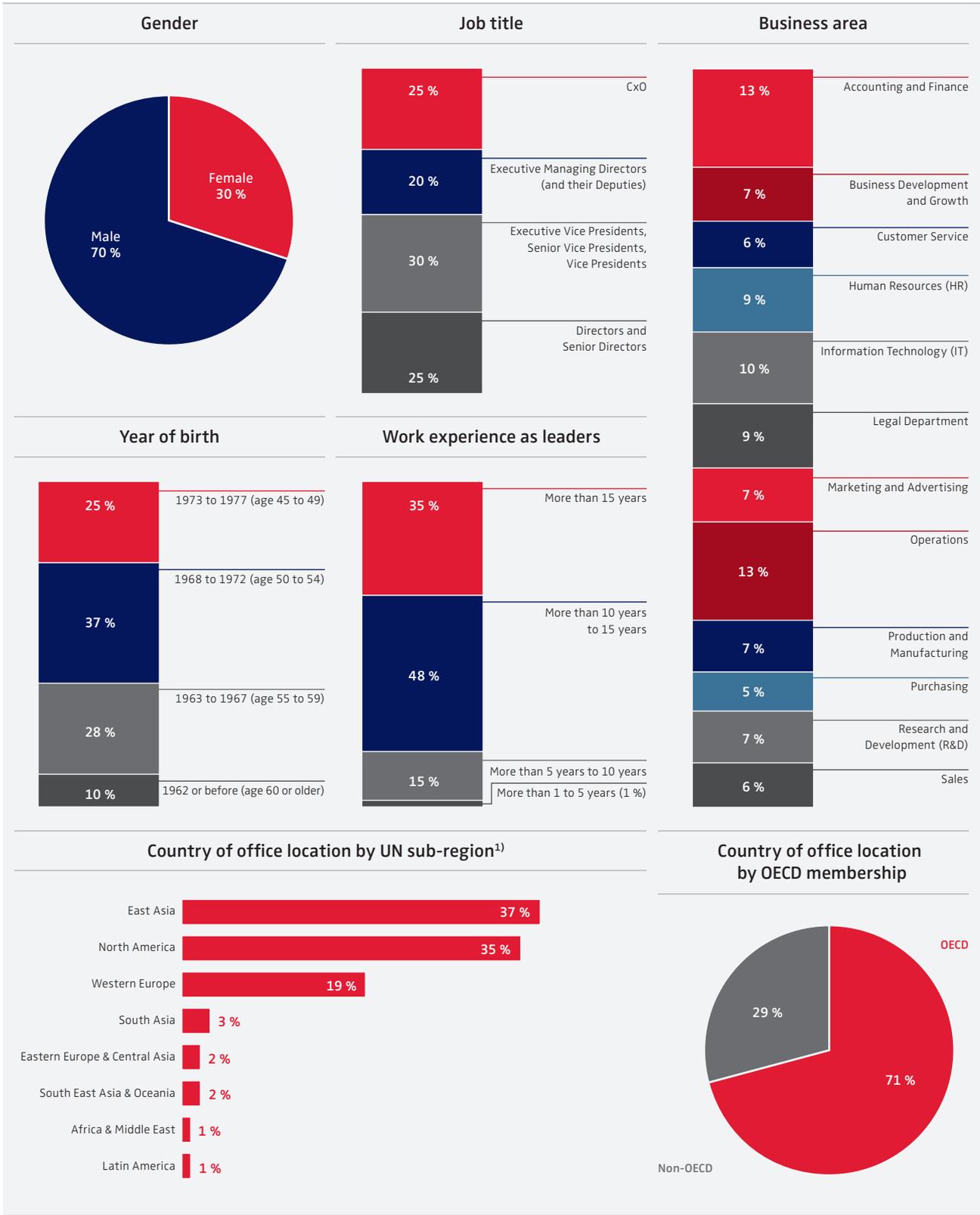
To understand how an increasingly globalized world is developing, it is important to have this broad participation from across regions and countries and from both developed and emerging or developing economies. With active and very vocal participants coming from all around the world, this study can certainly give a voice to a culturally and economically diverse set of contexts, values, desires and mental models, something that is necessary to reflect the truly global and increasingly multi-polar world we live in.

# Leaders of Tomorrow – Wave 2022



1) Current field of study/degree for students or field of study of highest degree/highest degree held for non-students  
 2) Regions follow United Nations sub-region scheme; the more common term "Middle East" was used for what is formally called "Western Asia"  
 n = 683 Leaders of Tomorrow  
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# Leaders of Today – Wave 2022



1) Regions follow United Nations sub-region scheme; the more common term "Middle East" was used for what is formally called "Western Asia"



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