Global generations
A global study on work-life challenges across generations
Detailed findings
Our global survey of full-time workers in eight countries finds that one-third say managing work-life has become more difficult, with younger generations and parents hit hardest.

By 2025, 75% of the global workforce will be comprised of millennials. What does this mean for global companies that need to attract millennials, retain them and help them maximize their performance at work?

We decided to conduct this research study to help us and the broader marketplace better understand the complexities facing today’s workers with an eye to helping senior leaders develop a cross-cultural perspective on managing across generations. By asking questions about management, work-life balance, career growth, financial opportunity, parenting and more, we’ve been able to develop insights into what motivates millennials to excel in what continues to be a challenging economic environment for many. We wanted to understand what impacts this generation – and the broader workforce – from the “outside in.”

We learned that millennials are highly committed to their careers. Many of them are moving into management at the same time they are becoming parents. Their work hours have increased over the last five years, they are twice as likely to travel overnight for business as other generations and they are more likely to be part of a dual-career family than their boomer counterparts. They want to work flexibly without stigmas and are willing to make tough choices and sacrifices to better manage work and home.

That’s why we’re calling them “Generation Go” – companies need to keep pace with them or risk losing out on their talent. Global generations: a global study on work-life challenges across generations helps us see what full-time employed men and women in eight countries – US, Germany, Japan, China, Mexico, Brazil, India and the UK – see as their opportunity for success so we can understand what employers need to do to help them succeed.

Global generations has already spurred debate about the opportunities to turn the energy and commitment of millennials into a competitive advantage. And as we all work to define what “modernising” our workplace means for our respective businesses, we hope this will help you prioritize the actions you take.

Karyn Tvaronite
EY Global Diversity & Inclusiveness Officer

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Our survey examined the following issues:

1. Managing work-life has gotten harder (pg. 4)
2. Who works the most hours? (pg. 6)
3. More millennials move into management (pg. 8)
4. Impact of economy on full-time workers (pg. 10)
5. Top reasons full-time workers quit (pg. 12)
6. What do workers around the world want in a job? (pg. 14)
7. Dual-career dynamics in the US (pg. 17)
8. Paid parental leave in the US (pg. 18)
9. Impact of having children on millennials in the US (pg. 19)
10. Top reasons for taking a career break (pg. 20)
11. Sacrifices made to manage work-life in the US (pg. 22)

For each country, the respondents included: 400 from Gen Y (18–33); 400 from Gen X (34–49); 400 from baby boomers (50–68). This includes 100 parents/non-managers, 100 parents/managers, and 100 non-parents/non-managers.
Our research shows that one-third of full-time workers say that managing work-life has become more difficult in the last five years. Younger generations and parents are harder hit than others, plus workers in certain countries we surveyed.

Among the key findings, the top reason one-third (33%) of full-time employees globally say it has gotten more difficult to manage work/family in the last five years is that “my salary has not increased much, but my expenses have” with almost half (49%) citing this as a reason. This was about tied (48%) with “my responsibilities at work have increased.” The other top five reasons are: “my responsibilities at home have increased” (39%), “I’m working more hours” (36%) and “I have a child or more children” (23%).

- Full-time employees in Germany (49%) and Japan (44%) are the most likely to indicate that it has gotten tougher to manage work-life, but in the US about one in four (24%) report this, too. China had the fewest number of workers who said this, at 16%.
- Women and parents (35% each) found managing work-life to be slightly more difficult than men (32%) and non-parents (31%). Parents found it more difficult to manage work-life than non-parents in all countries but in particular in Germany (54% parents, 47% non-parents), the UK (42%, 34%), India (39%, 26%), and the US (29%, 22%). These countries were followed closely by Japan, Brazil and Mexico, which all saw a 5% difference between parents and non-parents. Interestingly, 35% to 56% of full-time working parents who are managers in these countries said the number of hours they work has increased in the last five years.
- In all countries, millennials (35%) and Gen X (34%) find it slightly more difficult to manage work and family/personal responsibilities than boomers (30%). This is true in the US as well (26% each for Gen Y and Gen X and 23% for boomers). More than half of German millennials (56%) said that managing work and family has gotten more difficult – the most of any generation in the countries surveyed.
- Illustrating the tension of dual priorities for younger generations, about half of millennials (47%) and Gen X (51%) cited increased responsibilities at work as a leading cause, coupled with more than two in five citing increased responsibilities at home (millennials 44% and Gen Xers 41% versus 29% of boomers).
- Three in five managers (59%) also identified their increasing responsibilities at work compared with only one-third (33%) of non-managers.
- In a US-only question, the top three challenges managers overall face are getting enough sleep (59%), handling more responsibility and “finding time for me” (tied at 57%). The next three biggest challenges are “finding time for family and friends” and “managing personal and professional life” (53% each) and “additional hours worked” (51%).
- Demonstrating a corporate disconnect with employee interest in working flexibly, for a US-only question, the EY research found that in the US nearly one in ten (9%) overall says they have “suffered a negative consequence as a result of having a flexible work schedule” and the rate is even higher for millennials, or nearly one in six (15%). Negative consequences include losing a job, being denied a promotion or raise, being assigned to less interesting or high-profile assignments or being publicly or privately reprimanded.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Millennial</th>
<th>Gen X</th>
<th>Boomer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Non-parents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>24%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>17%</td>
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<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>22%</td>
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<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>15%</td>
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</table>

Q. How would you describe your ability to manage work and family/personal responsibilities in the last five years, from 2009 to 2014? (It has become easier, more difficult, stayed the same.)
The notion of a 40-hour workweek may be a thing of the past for managers as approximately half (46%) are working 40-plus hour weeks and four in ten (39%) say their hours have increased over the past five years. Of those that had an increase in hours, about two-thirds (64%) had an increase of two to four hours a week and one-third (36%) had an increase of five hours or more.

- A majority of managers in Mexico (61%), the US (58%), India (55%) and Brazil (51%) work more than 40 hours a week. In China, only 19% of managers work more than 40 hours a week, and in the UK, 34% of managers say they work 40-plus hours weekly.
- Managers in India (53%), Germany (44%), Brazil (43%) and Mexico (42%) were most likely to see an increase in hours per week compared with other countries. However, in every country, about a quarter to more than half of all managers reported an increase in hours. In the US, close to one-third (32%) of managers reported an increase in hours.
- On an interesting note, Germany (70%), India and the US (both at 61%) had a higher percentage of employees who had flexible work schedules while China (22%) and Japan (30%) had the least with more employees working standard office hours with no flexibility. Those two countries also had fewer managers working 40-plus hours a week.

- Globally, while more boomer managers (50%) work 40-plus hours weekly than millennials (44%) or Gen X (45%), younger generations are seeing their hours increase more in the last five years at a time when many are moving into management and also starting families. More millennial managers reported an increase in hours (47%) versus Gen X (38%) and boomer managers (28%).
- About half or more of managers are working more than 40 hours a week in Mexico (61%), the US (58%), India (55%), Brazil (51%) and Germany (45%).
- Demonstrating the trend that managing work-life has become more difficult for parents, globally there is not a significant difference between managers with children who work more than 40 hours a week (44%) versus managers without children (50%). Managers who are parents (41%) say they have seen more of an increase in hours in the last five years than managers who are not parents (37%).

### Managers working over 40-hour workweek

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>45%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>34%</td>
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<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>19%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Increase in work hours for parents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q. About how many hours do you work a week? Please give us your best estimate.

Q. In the last five years, have your hours increased, decreased or stayed the same? Respondents answered “hours increased”.
More millennials are moving into management. Close to two-thirds (65%) of Gen X full-time employees manage the work of others, followed closely by millennials (62%). Coming in a distant third, less than half (46%) of boomers say they manage the work of others. This shift has taken place in the last five years, or 2009–2014 — 85% of millennial managers say they moved into management during this time.

• China has the largest percentage of millennial managers who moved into management (90%) in the last five years and the US the least (76%).
• The US has more of an even split among the different generations as managers than other countries (39% millennials, 37% Gen X and 35% boomers). Also, US managers have more years of experience. Over twice as many US managers (46%) have been managing for over 10 years than managers in other countries (21% on average).

• Globally, the most common age for millennial managers to say they started managing is 25–29. This is the most common age in the US (47%), too.
• Globally, about the same percentage of men and women (53% and 55%, respectively) started managing under age 30.
• Nearly three quarters of parents manage the work of others, globally, compared with less than half of non-parents (72% and 47%, respectively). US parents (62%) are also more likely to start managing under age 30 than those in other countries surveyed (51% global average).
• Interestingly, the most common age for full-time employees to have/adopt a child in the US is 25–29 (27%) so US millennials are likely taking on more responsibility – as both parents and managers – at the same time.
• A majority of millennials (53%) in the US believe the early 30s (30–34) is the most desirable age to have a child, with the next age being (25–29).

Q. Are you responsible for managing the work of others?
Impact of economy on full-time workers

The economy played a substantial role in the challenges full-time workers globally face and impacted their lives in various ways in the last five years.

- About a third (31%) of employees globally changed jobs due to the economy. Millennials were more likely to do this than other generations (37% Gen Y, 31% Gen X, 24% boomers).
- More than one in five (22%) full-time employees encouraged their spouse or partner to return to the workforce and a quarter (25%) encouraged their spouse/partner “not to quit their job or reduce hours to better manage work and family.”
- Demonstrating the challenges of the economy for parents, close to a quarter (23%) of full-time workers decided not to have additional children and more than one in five (21%) delayed timing of having additional children.

- Marriages were also impacted. The economy sparked nearly one in six (15%) full-time workers to get divorced or separated and almost a sixth (13%) to delay getting a divorce.
- The economy also had a sizable impact on higher education over the past five years. Nearly a quarter (24%) of full-time employees globally were motivated to go back to pursue higher education as a result of the economy. However, global full-time workers were twice as likely to pursue higher education (24%) than US workers (12%).
- Conversely, about one in five full-time workers was forced to discontinue (19%) or delay (22%) higher education or said their ability to help pay for higher education for their children was reduced (22%).

Q. Please tell us how much the economy has impacted the following life decisions in the last five years.

**Economy’s impact on education – global**

- Motivated me to go back to pursue higher education: 24%
- Reduced my ability to help a child/children pay for higher education: 22%
- Delayed my ability to go back to pursue higher education: 22%
- Forced me to discontinue higher education: 19%

**Economy’s impact on jobs – global**

- Remained at my job as no other job opportunities were available: 34%
- Changed jobs: 31%
- Encouraged spouse/partner not to quit or reduce hours to better manage work/family responsibilities: 25%
- Encouraged spouse/partner to return to workforce/work part time: 22%
Top reasons full-time workers quit

For companies looking to retain employees as the economy improves—and as more millennials move into management and become parents—our research looked at the leading reasons full-time workers quit. The top five reasons were: minimal wage growth (76%), lack of opportunity to advance (74%), excessive overtime hours (71%), a work environment that does not encourage teamwork (71%) and a boss who doesn’t allow you to work flexibly (69%).

• Other leading factors in the top 10 included a “flexibility stigma” or perception that people who work flex hours or take leave are penalized with a lack of pay and promotion opportunities (67%). This was followed by a lack of workplace flexibility, including the option to telecommute (65%), and too much overnight travel (62%).

• Rounding out the top 10 were “limited access to mentors and sponsors (57%) and “few senior colleagues who are working parents or in dual-career families” (52%).

• Millennials are more likely to identify each factor as having slightly more importance than other generations to seriously consider leaving a job, possibly indicating a higher willingness to leave in less-than-ideal situations. The largest gaps between millennials and other generations involve flexibility issues, in particular the perception of a “flexibility stigma” (72%, 67% and 59% respectively for Gen Y, Gen X and boomers).

Q. Please rate the following factors that would cause you to seriously consider leaving a job based on how important they are to you.

Parents Non-parents

A boss that doesn’t allow you to work flexibly

72% 65%

Flexibility stigma (perception that people who work flex hours or take leave are penalized with lack of pay/promotion opportunities)

72% 62%

Lack of workplace flexibility, including no option to telecommute (meaning working from another location other than the office or a client site, such as working from home)

70% 59%

Few senior colleagues who are working parents or in dual-career families

60% 43%

Most important flexibility issues

Top five reasons millennials quit – by country

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>US</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>Brazil</th>
<th>Germany</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>Japan</th>
<th>Mexico</th>
<th>China</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minimal wage growth (%)</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of opportunity to advance (%)</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excessive overtime hours (%)</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A boss that doesn’t allow you flexibility (%)</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A work environment that doesn’t encourage teamwork (%)</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexibility stigma (%)</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too much overnight travel (%)</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A boss that doesn’t allow you flexibility (%)</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q. Please rate the following factors that would cause you to seriously consider leaving a job based on how important they are to you.
What do workers around the world want in a job?

When seeking a job, after competitive pay and benefits, flexibility issues and “not working excessive overtime” were the most important to full-time employees.

- Among the top five reasons that employees say are extremely/very important, there was a tie (74%) between “being able to work flexibly and still be on track for promotion” and “onsite or subsidized childcare” (tied at 56%), “ability to shut off emails/calls when needed” (55%) and telecommuting either one to two days a week or three to five days a week (54% and 42%, respectively).

- About half of US millennials (46%) would prefer being able to relocate to a company office closer to family, but millennials outside the US would prefer this even more (64%).

- One surprising finding is that two-thirds (64%) of full-time employees picked “being able to relocate to another company office to be closer to family.” This ranked above “ability to reduce overnight business travel” and “onsite or subsidized childcare” (tied at 56%), “ability to shut off emails/calls when needed” (55%) and telecommuting either one to two days a week or three to five days a week (54% and 42%, respectively).

- About half of US millennials (46%) would prefer being able to relocate to a company office closer to family, but millennials outside the US would prefer this even more (64%).

1 in 6 millennials has “suffered a negative consequence as a result of having a flexible work schedule.”

Q. Please rate each of the following attributes in terms of their importance in what you seek in your job to help you better manage work and family/personal responsibilities.
US spotlight

A majority of full-time employees (62%) in the US had a spouse/partner who worked at least full time, but for millennials and Gen X, the likelihood that their partner works full time is much higher than for boomers. Also, parents (70%) are much more likely than non-parents (57%) to have a partner who works at least full time.

- Millennials (78%) and Gen X (73%) are more likely to have a spouse/partner working at least full time than boomers (47%).
- Over a quarter of boomers (27%) said their spouse/partner does not work outside the home or works part-time flexible hours (10%).

US spouse/partner work schedule, by generation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work Schedule</th>
<th>Millennials</th>
<th>Gen X</th>
<th>Boomers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard office hours, more or less 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time, but flexible hours; hours based on the needs of the business and their performance goals</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My spouse/partner does not work outside the home</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time flexible hours</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant, standard office hours, plus consistently working nights and/or weekends with the ability to work flexibly</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant, standard office hours, plus consistently working nights and/or weekends without the ability to work flexibly</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On a project/as-needed basis rather than on a full-time schedule</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time hours that are not flexible (i.e., scheduled shifts)</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q. How would you describe your spouse/partner’s current work schedule?
Three-quarters (76%) of full-time employees who are parents in the US said that having a child precipitated some impact on their work situation (e.g., quitting, changing job or role, reducing hours, spouse/partner quit job/changed job or role or reduced hours). About a third (33%) said the amount of time they work stayed the same after having a child, but 16% said the number of hours they work increased, and only 7% said the amount of time they work decreased. Millennials were twice as likely as Gen X to say their hours increased after having a child.

- More than one in four millennials (26%) said the amount of time they work increased after having a child versus 13% for Gen X and 16% for boomers.
- In addition, the partner/spouse of millennials was also more likely to have increased the amount of time they work after having a child (12%, versus 6% for Gen X, 7% for boomers).
- Millennials partner/spouse was also half as likely to quit their job after having a child versus boomers (9% versus 12% for Gen X and 18% for boomers).

Salary, benefits, the ability to afford a home, paying off student loan and other debts, as well as whether an employer provides paid leave are all leading factors influencing decisions to have children and the timing of having children.

- The majority of full-time employees cited salary (72%), benefits (69%) and the ability to afford a home (62%) as the top three economic and career factors on parents’ decision to have children.
- This was followed by the “opportunity to increase salary in my organization or elsewhere” (60%), the ability to find a job near home (52%), the “opportunity to advance in my organization or elsewhere” and “the ability to work flexibly” (both 51%).
- Other top factors cited were the ability to find a job near other family members (40%) and tied at 38% were “paid off student loans and other debts” and “whether or not employer provides paid parental leave.”

- Millennials had somewhat different economic and career factors than other generations in their decision to have children. The biggest differences are that they rated the ability to afford a home (73%) at the top of their list, followed by benefits (71%), salary (70%) and the opportunity to increase salary (62%).
- The ability to work flexibly (59%) was also cited as a top factor by more millennials as was the ability to advance (56%) and find a job near other family members (47%) and whether an employer provided paid parental leave (47%).
- Almost across the board, millennials are more likely than other generations to say the economy has impacted their decisions regarding the timing of having children. Almost a third of millennials (32%) cited a lack of confidence in the general economy versus 29% of Gen X and 15% of boomers. Millennials also cited the following more than other generations regarding the timing of having children: personal debt (37%) and student loan debt in particular (30%), as well as the difficulties in finding work after college (29%), and living with their parents after college (27%).

Men (65%) and women (62%) in the US both view employment as a career (that is, an important part of my identity), not just a job (e.g., I work only as a means of making a living).

- Millennials (80%) are more likely to agree having a strong network of support (family, friends and caregivers) enables them to work outside the home than Gen X (66%) and boomers (65%).
- Millennials (77%) are more likely to say they’d be a stay-at-home parent if it made financial sense for their family, more than Gen X and boomers (both 66%).

- Millennials had somewhat different economic and career factors than other generations in their decision to have children. The biggest differences are that they rated the ability to afford a home (73%) at the top of their list, followed by benefits (71%), salary (70%) and the opportunity to increase salary (62%).
- The ability to work flexibly (59%) was also cited as a top factor by more millennials as was the ability to advance (56%) and find a job near other family members (47%) and whether an employer provided paid parental leave (47%).
- Almost across the board, millennials are more likely than other generations to say the economy has impacted their decisions regarding the timing of having children. Almost a third of millennials (32%) cited a lack of confidence in the general economy versus 29% of Gen X and 15% of boomers. Millennials also cited the following more than other generations regarding the timing of having children: personal debt (37%) and student loan debt in particular (30%), as well as the difficulties in finding work after college (29%), and living with their parents after college (27%).

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- Men (65%) and women (62%) in the US both view employment as a career (that is, an important part of my identity), not just a job (e.g., I work only as a means of making a living).
- Millennials (80%) are more likely to agree having a strong network of support (family, friends and caregivers) enables them to work outside the home than Gen X (66%) and boomers (65%).
- Millennials (77%) are more likely to say they’d be a stay-at-home parent if it made financial sense for their family, more than Gen X and boomers (both 66%).

Twenty-six percent of millennials said the amount of time they work increased after having a child versus 13% of Gen X and 16% for boomers.
Nearly two-thirds of full-time employees (63%) who are parents did not take paid parental leave in the US and over three-quarters of women (77%) indicate their spouse/partner is not eligible for paid parental leave.

- Millennials (48%) who are parents are much more likely to take paid parental leave compared to parents of older generations when they had children (Gen X 35% and boomers 24%). Women (46%) are more likely to take it than men (30%).
- On average, women took 4.5 weeks of paid parental leave while men took 2.3 weeks.
- Millennials and Gen X took 3.3 weeks on average compared with 2.3 weeks for boomers.
- Across the board, millennials appear to value increased flexibility and paid parental leave more than other generations and, if offered, are more likely to recommend that company to others (69% for millennials, 62% and 55% for Gen X and boomers), less likely to quit (86%, 81%, 68%), more likely to join the company (83%, 76%, 71%) and to work longer hours (80%, 80%, 75%).

- Gen Y (85%) and Gen X (81%) are more likely to agree than boomers (70%) that both parents take leave, they are more likely to co-parent.
- Women (78%) are more likely to agree than men (66%) that all parents should have an equal amount of paid parental leave time.
- Women (71%) are more likely to agree than men (61%) that we need both women and men to take paid parental leave in order to combat the stigma associated with taking parental leave in society.
- Women (71%) are more likely to agree that “I feel empowered to take all of the parental leave available to me” than men (60%).

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Q. How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements if your company provided increased flexibility and/or offered paid parental leave?
Sacrifices made to manage work-life in the US

Job (63%) and career changes (57%) are the most common sacrifices workers have made, or would be willing to make, to better manage work and family/personal responsibilities in the US. Also, a majority of full-time employees (54%) have, or would be willing to, give up an opportunity for a promotion to manage work-life. On an interesting note, given that the US is the only developed country without paid parental leave benefits, more than one-third of millennials (38%) would “move to another country with better parental leave benefits” versus Gen X or boomers (28% and 11%, respectively).

- Across the board, millennials are more likely to have made, or be willing to make, sacrifices to manage work and family/personal responsibilities.
- For example, US millennials are the most likely generation to say they would change jobs (77%) or careers (76%), give up an opportunity for a promotion (65%) or “move my family to another location” (66%).
- They would also be more willing to move closer to family (62%) and to “take a pay cut to have flexibility” (44%).

Surprisingly, men across the board are more willing to make sacrifices to better manage work and family than women. Men are more likely to have changed jobs (67%) or careers (60%), or said they would be willing to do so, than women (57% and 52%, respectively.) They are also more willing to give up a promotion (57% men, 49% women), move to another location (50% men, 46% women), move to be closer to family (46% men, 38% women), take a pay cut (36% men, 33% women) and move to another country with better parental leave benefits (26% men, 18% women).

To manage work and family responsibilities, men are more likely to have changed jobs (67%) than women (57%).

Q. What sacrifices or changes have you made, or would you be willing to make, to better manage work and family/personal responsibilities?
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Taking a career break for family

Nearly a third (32%) of Americans took a career break to raise a child while 44% of spouses/partners took a career break for the same reason.

- Half of women full-time workers in the US of all generations took a career break (50%), but almost a quarter of men (22%) did, too.
- Millennials (50%) are much less likely to take a career break after having children than Gen X (75%) and boomers (67%).

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Business travel

Adding to the demands of managing work and family responsibilities, while a majority of full-time employees (72%) don’t travel overnight for business, twice as many millennial parents do than non-parents. Also, significantly more Gen X and millennial employees travel overnight for business than boomers.

- Interestingly, parents are more than twice as likely to travel for business (44%) than non-parents (22%) and the number of millennial parents (47%) who travel overnight on business is almost double the rate of millennial non-parents (25%).
- Gen X (38%), followed closely by millennials (34%), travels overnight for business at more than twice the rate of boomers (18%).
- Managers (47%) travel overnight for business significantly more than non-managers (17%).
- Men (36%) are more likely to travel on overnight business trips than women (21%).
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