Generation Z: by the numbers

Also deemed "Post-Millennials," Generation Z is known for having grown up in the ever-changing digital era. With the oldest of them just graduating college, here are a few things to know about them.

**Though there are several ways to define the generation, here we will align ourselves with Pew Research Center in using 1997 and 2012 (ages 8-23) as our birthyear cutoffs.

They are currently around **66.5 million** in number. For comparison, there were 65.4 million millennials in 2002. Generation Z is expected to continue growing as immigration adds to their numbers.
Millennials are already the most diverse generation yet.²

Only a **bare majority** of Generation Z is white, and this unprecedented diversity is reflected in the U.S. general population's gradual diversification.

1 in 4 Gen Zers are of Latinx descent, a **larger proportion** than any previous generation.³
They are also on track to becoming the best educated generation yet.

18 to 20-year-olds enrolled in college

- Gen X (1986) 44%
- Millennials (2002) 53%
- Gen Z (2017) 59%

College enrollment rates among young adults continue to rise with each new generation.

This upward trend is especially notable among the young women of Gen Z, of which nearly two-thirds are enrolled in college.
They are just beginning to enter the workforce, and will keep making waves as they continue to do so.

30% of the labor force will be Generation Zers by 2030.\textsuperscript{6}

However, young adult employment rates are down, relative to previous generations.\textsuperscript{7}

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Generation Z is projected to become the largest generation of consumers by 2020, and already hold $44 billion in estimated buying power.²

Though Gen Z is only just entering adulthood, they already have high aspirations:

- 59% of young adults (18-23) report to be planning to buy a house within the next 5 years.⁹
- 86% of Generation Zers intend to pursue a college degree after high school.¹⁰

At the same time, 50% of Gen Zers report not being willing to take more than $10,000 just in student debt.

Yet the average student loan balance for Gen Zers is already $11,380, a figure that will only continue to climb as more of them age and progress through college.¹¹
Only 66% of people between ages 16 and 22 label themselves as exclusively heterosexual.

Teen birth rates have also been declining for years; Gen Z is no exception.

Young adults are getting married later and later, with marriage rates among 18 to 21 year-olds at an all time low.

Birth rate (per 1,000 women aged 15-19)

Birth rate has also been declining for years; Gen Z is no exception.

America's adult LGBTQ+ population has been steadily rising, no doubt in part due to Generation Z.

They are also changing the conversation surrounding gender identity. Roughly 33% of Gen Zers know someone who uses gender neutral pronouns. To compare, this number is 25% for millennials, and even lower for preceding generations.
As more members of Generation Z gradually reach voting age, they become an increasingly important demographic in the electorate.\(^\text{16}\)

When the oldest of them were just 19, Generation Z cast \textbf{2.7 million votes}, making up \textbf{2.0\%} of all votes in the 2016 election.

In 2018, this number rose to \textbf{4.5 million}, lending them a \textbf{30\% turnout} and \textbf{3.7\%} of all votes.

They are projected to represent \textbf{10.2\%} of the 2020 electorate.\(^\text{17}\)

\textbf{Generation Z, Millennials, and Generation X outvoted previous generations} (Baby Boomers and older) in both 2016 and 2018.\(^\text{18}\)

This shift in the electorate will only become more prominent as more Gen Zers reach legal voting age.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.


7. Fry, "Post-Millennials on Track to Be Most Diverse, Best-Educated Generation Yet."


10. Dorsey, Jason. "Gen Z and College Debt."


13. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention


