2021 American Youth Priorities Report:
A Compilation of Input for the 10th UNA-USA Youth Observer to the United Nations to Amplify Voices of U.S. Youth

September 2021
Overview

The UNA-USA Youth Observer to the United Nations program is an initiative that elevates youth voices in the global policy dialogue around international issues. For a one-year term, an American between the ages of 18 and 25 is selected to engage and connect young people in the U.S. to the work of the UN. The Youth Observer garners feedback and input from young Americans throughout the U.S. to discover the issues important to them. The Youth Observer amplifies these voices by participating as a representative of UNA-USA at both UN and U.S. convenings. Cynthia Yue was selected in August 2021 to serve as the 10th UNA-USA’s Youth Observer to the UN.

What follows is UNA-USA’s report on youth priorities gleaned from the Listening Tour, preliminary results of the online survey, information from UNA-USA’s UN75 consultations in 2020, Our Future Agenda report outlined by Next Generation Fellows, and outcomes from a Fall 2021 youth poll conducted by Morning Consult and sponsored by our sister organization, the Better World Campaign. These priorities help to inform Cynthia Yue’s platform of engagement during her tenure as 2021 UNA-USA Youth Observer to the United Nations and ensure that UNA-USA is serving as a liaison between American youth and the United Nations.
In 2021, Cynthia Yue, UNA-USA’s 10th Youth Observer to the United Nations, embarked upon a Listening Tour to capture the priorities of young people around the United States. With a focus on empowering U.S. youth and underrepresented communities, Cynthia met with twenty-two synchronous virtual and hybrid youth groups across the nation, over a two-week period. Cynthia collaborated with organizations including Girl Up, Key Club International, and the Miss America Foundation, and focused the conversations on the UN Sustainable Development Goals, U.S. and UN priorities, youth advocacy, youth engagement, and youth leadership. In addition to the tour stops, the UNA-USA released a survey for U.S. youth under the age of 26 to gather more information on general U.S. youth sentiment on the United Nations.
Summary of Findings from 2021 Youth Observer Listening Tour and Online Survey

YOUNG PEOPLE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT INEQUITY

- Every young person who participated in the Listening Tour has either directly experienced or knows someone who has directly experienced inequity. Young people feel as if they inherited centuries of inaction, greenhouse gas emissions, and prejudice that continues to compound today. Whether they have experienced environmental disasters, hate crimes, or injustices leveled against peaceful protesters, young people are deeply disturbed by current events on local, national, and international levels.

- The most commonly mentioned Global Goal was SDG 13, Climate Action; participants noted that the climate crisis will exacerbate all of our world’s issues. Even if they did not choose SDG 13 as our world’s most pressing issue, they referenced it alongside other concerns.

- Amidst a global pandemic that has heightened the digital divide and drastically uprooted education systems, young people have also highlighted SDG 4, Quality Education, as another priority.

- In light of recent events that have brought centuries of systemic racism and inequality to many people’s attention, SDG 10, Reducing Inequalities, was also a commonly cited SDG. Moreover, young people cited SDG 10 as an important objective to ensure that all Americans have equal access to healthcare.

- In the findings from the Youth Priorities Survey, SDG 13, Climate Action, was selected by 39.3% of respondents as the most critical global issue. However, when asked which SDG best represents the most critical issue within the United States, 23.1% selected SDG 10, Reducing Inequalities, while only 17.1% selected Climate Action.
Summary of Findings from 2021 Youth Observer Listening Tour and Online Survey

DIVERSE VOICES ARE MISSING

- Attaining a more perfect union requires equitable representation regardless of age, race, gender, or zip code. Traditionally, underrepresented groups including youth, BIPOCs, women, the LGBTQIA+ community, and rural areas have been largely disconnected from global affairs.
- While most young people believe that many opportunities for leadership and the SDGs exist in their communities, these opportunities are unequal. Opportunities not only vary by region but also tend to be highly localized and, from young people’s perspectives, isolated from larger entities such as the UN.
- Young people, especially students, believe that the SDGs should be introduced into their curricula, especially from a young age. Moreover, global leaders and representatives should make an effort to conduct grassroots outreach to students in elementary, middle, and high schools—especially in traditionally underrepresented communities.
- Some students have noted that even when they have an opportunity to speak or lead, they face ageism and are not taken seriously. Young people need to be heard and cannot be discriminated against on the basis of age.
- Our leaders must make a conscious effort to bring diverse voices directly to the table—not just uplift them. A common thread heard by participants was that they are used to being asked their opinion and having someone represent them within discussions, but preferred to actually participate directly in the conversation.
Young People Are Taking Action

- From direct leadership to active participation, youth are engaging deeply in the issues they care about. Participants have taken part in marches, strikes, rallies, petition signings, legislative meetings, and online activism to create change in their communities.
- Generation Z is capitalizing on new technologies, platforms, and forms of media to advocate for social change on systemic issues. As a generation largely defined by its exposure to the internet, young people are comfortable combining innovation and digital action.
- Even against setbacks such as school boards refusing to teach African-American history or city governments failing to adopt climate-focused legislation, young people are creatively addressing these obstacles through activism and peer-to-peer influence. They are using new channels, including social media platforms like TikTok, to push forward the ideas that matter to them and lobbying those in power to take a stand on these issues.
- Most participants believe that young people have been extremely involved in addressing critical problems and issues happening all over the world. In the Youth Priorities Survey, more respondents believe that young people are involved in addressing these issues worldwide than within the United States.
- UN principles and ideals align with the issues that Generation Z wants to take action on, but in general, young people have two divergent views of the UN: an image of a building in New York City where politicians meet, and an image of changemakers out in the field. Some young people are still unsure of what the UN actually does, skeptical of its effectiveness, or misinterpret the work of UN agencies such as UNICEF and WFP as separate from the UN.
- When asked in the Youth Priorities Survey whether respondents felt connected to the UN, responses varied widely without a clear trend. However, fewer than 15% of responses indicated feeling very connected to the UN.
UNA-USA’s UN75 Initiative and the UN’s 75th Anniversary Campaign

In 2020, to mark the 75th anniversary of the United Nations, UNA-USA conducted 80+ consultations with more than 1,850 participants under the UN75 Initiative. These consultations answered three questions posed by UN Secretary-General António Guterres:

1. What kind of future do we want to create?
2. Are we on track to secure a better world?
3. What action is needed to help us achieve a brighter future?

These three questions influenced the prompts and discussions that occurred via the consultations throughout 2020—notwithstanding the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Demographics indicated that only 14% of the participants were students at the time, which means that more non-youth participants weighed in on the next generation’s opportunities and welfare.

The overarching themes from the UN75 Initiative were used to stimulate discussion within the Listening Tour stops and inspired the questions for the online survey in 2021.
UNA-USA’s UN75 Initiative and the UN’s 75th Anniversary Campaign

WHAT KIND OF FUTURE DO WE WANT TO CREATE?

As a result of the UNA-USA UN75 Initiative, respondents indicated four main SDGs as areas of focus:

- Quality Education (SDG 4)
- Reduced Inequalities (SDG 10)
- Climate Action (SDG 13)
- Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions (SDG 16)

While education was not explicitly mentioned as frequently within the Listening Tour, the remaining three SDGs aligned with the main themes captured through virtual meetings and the online survey. One reason that education might have been emphasized more in 2020 during the UN75 Initiative might be the COVID-19 pandemic. Schools around the world were closed and access to education was limited to those who had more resources for online or virtual learning.

It should be noted that during UN75 consultations, participants indicated that the COVID-19 pandemic was a compelling reminder of our collective fragility and extreme interconnectedness. This further emphasized the idea that only multilateral cooperation would allow countries to recover from the pandemic.
When asked whether their children or grandchildren would have fewer or more opportunities and/or be better off, 77% of UNA-USA’s UN75 Initiative participants indicated that future generations would be worse off.

Participants indicated the following as barriers to a better world:

- Conflict and human rights violations
- Displacement and homelessness
- Rising inequity of access and opportunity
- Health risks and lack of access to healthcare
- Impact of climate change
- Lack of education equity
- Lack of gender equity
- Lack of leadership
- Lack of trust in and cooperation across governments
- Limited and declining resources
- Poverty, income gaps, job losses
- Systemic racism, including policy racism
Organizations like UNA-USA play a significant role in helping to create a better future by engaging local individuals, organizations, and elected officials in the UN’s efforts to drive positive change around global issues.

Individuals have a responsibility to contribute to a better future through:

- Activism and community engagement, including engagement with local organizations like UNA-USA
- Civic engagement
- Education of oneself and others
- Sustainable lifestyle choices (recycling, reducing carbon emissions)

Aggregated data from the UNA-USA UN75 Initiative indicated that:

WHAT ACTION IS NEEDED TO CREATE A BRIGHTER FUTURE?

UNA-USA’s UN75 Initiative and the UN’s 75th Anniversary Campaign
UNA-USA’s UN75 Initiative and the UN’s 75th Anniversary Campaign

WHAT ACTION IS NEEDED TO CREATE A BRIGHTER FUTURE?

Respondents were asked to explicitly indicate how UNA-USA can play a role in shaping the future that we want. They feel that UNA-USA should engage constituents based in the U.S. like individuals, other organizations, and the government to support the UN’s efforts to drive positive change around global issues. UNA-USA has used this information to bolster support for programs and initiatives that seek to connect with other stakeholders such as:

- Youth Observer Program to amplify voices of youth to other stakeholders
- In-district meetings and Lobby Day on Capitol Hill with elected officials
- Programs like Global Engagement Online Series (GEOS), the Global Engagement Summit, MyDiplomat app, and workshops, trainings, and other interventions in collaboration with UN agencies with the goal of educating Americans about their impact
- Establishing UNA-USA chapters in communities and on campuses to engage individuals in the pursuit of actualizing the Sustainable Development Goals and to increase awareness about the United Nations
WHAT ACTION IS NEEDED TO CREATE A BRIGHTER FUTURE?

The UN’s global UN75 campaign, using information and feedback from reports submitted by member states (like that of UNA-USA’s national report), developed the 12 Commitments aimed at advancing Our Common Agenda. The 12 Commitments (listed in Appendix E) reaffirm the need in a post-UN75 world for inclusivity and cooperation in order to address the most important issues raised by participants. UNA-USA will use the 12 Commitments as a guide to seek input from Americans throughout 2021-2022 that can inform Our Common Agenda.
Our Future Agenda

As a follow-up to the UN’s global UN75 campaign, the UN Foundation Next Generation Fellows were invited by UN Secretary-General António Guterres to support the development of Our Common Agenda and to publish their own vision and plan, Our Future Agenda.

Similar to feedback garnered through the Listening Tour, young people who were consulted in order to inform findings within Our Future Agenda indicated “consultation fatigue.” As noted in the online survey, young people are frustrated with sharing their opinions and proposed solutions without seeing real results. Along those same lines, the need for intergenerational justice and representation at the table underscores young people’s desire to be a part of the decision-making process which affects their future. As such, the report calls for a “Contract for the Future/Declaration for the Future.”
Our Future Agenda

Our Future Agenda outlined “A New Deal for a New Generation,” which called for reform in education, employment, and the environment, were priorities that were incorporated into Our Common Agenda. These priorities are outlined in more detail below, along with other themes captured from the report:

- The need for rapid reinvestment in education to repair the damage done by the pandemic. The call for all governments to provide a 10% booster fund over the next 2 years and for 10% of international finance to be spent on critical global public goods in education.
- The UN Secretary General’s parallel call for a ‘Transforming Education Summit’ in 2022 is a chance to rethink our education systems. It also calls for the creation of a global jobs strategy designed by international organizations and for decisive and binding action to be taken to address the planetary emergency at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP 26) in November 2021.
- The need for a rejuvenated multilateral system that is better at listening to and working with young people. We need an international system that supports young countries and young staff members. In line for the UN Secretary General’s call for more engaged youth–UN Youth–Our Future Agenda calls for UN Futures, a program that brings together international organizations from within the UN systems and beyond to coordinate existing efforts to deliver for young people.
Youth want world leaders to know:
  - They’re hard-working
  - They value human rights and equality
  - They want to make a difference
  - They feel their generations are mischaracterized.

- 69% agree with the statement “my generation wants our voice heard when it comes to solving global issues.”
- 67% want world leaders to take their generation into consideration when making decisions.
- The top two global issues on their minds are promoting human rights for all and slowing climate change.
- Within 1 year, over half say it is likely we will see improvements in:
  - Global health (58%)
  - Access to education (56%)
  - Digital economies (55%)
  - Access to clean water (54%)
A third or more believe that the President (41%), the federal government (37%), and the United Nations (35%) are the most responsible for addressing global issues.

The most trustworthy when it comes to solving global problems:

- Scientists (62%)
- Research institutions (60%)
- Non-profit organizations (62%)
- Local or small businesses (62%)*

Within 10 years, half or more say we will see improvements in all global issues that comprise the Sustainable Development Goals.

A majority say they believe younger generations can have a positive impact on achieving the individual Sustainable Development Goals.

*Note that respondents were allowed to select multiple responses
Bringing It All Together:
A Yearlong Approach to Amplifying Diverse Youth Voices in Our Country

SUMMARY OF YOUTH PRIORITIES
There are common themes indicated by youth via the Listening Tour, online survey, UNA-USA’s UN75 Initiative, Our Future Agenda, and the BWC Youth Poll. The following bullet points summarize what youth feel and how they want to create a better future:

- Youth want to not only feel heard, but also to be a part of the decision-making and discussion process. Consultation and survey fatigue are plaguing young people in particular.
- It is important that ALL voices are being captured and represented, including those who may not typically have had the resources, access, or ability to participate in sharing their opinions, ideas, or experiences.
- Youth want to correct mischaracterizations that they are apathetic or self-involved—they are hard-working, care about the world around them, and want to make a difference, including at a local level in their communities, and on a global level by addressing the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals.
- They are confident that their generation will be able to address key challenges if given the chance, but without a paradigm shift, they feel very concerned about the state of the world, especially related to climate change.
- Human rights and equality are exceptionally important to youth, both in their local communities and around the world.
- Young people believe that education and climate are the two biggest concerns with the most drastic consequences if interventions are not put in place.
- A variety of stakeholders, including individuals, organizations (explicitly including UNA-USA), governments, and the United Nations have a responsibility to take action to create a better world.
As indicated by participants in the Listening Tour, online survey, UNA-USA UN75 Initiative, Next Generation Fellows, and the youth poll, organizations like UNA-USA present meaningful opportunities to empower individuals and to create changes needed for a better future.

By serving as an ambassador of UNA-USA, Cynthia will seek to represent the various elements of the UNA-USA mission: to inspire, mobilize, and educate. Using the youth priorities and feedback that was garnered by the various methods of outreach, Cynthia has outlined the following tactics and methods of engagement to uphold UNA-USA’s mission and to address concerns indicated by youth, including focuses on representation, equality, access to education, and efforts to combat or reverse climate change.
CYNTHIA’S 2021-2022 ENGAGEMENT PLAN

- Empower young people, especially underrepresented communities, through direct engagements and conversations, championing their concerns at high-level meetings and events, and hosting takeovers and events that enable other young people and diverse communities the opportunities to speak on behalf of themselves.
  - This initiative will include a focus on organizations representing women, people with disabilities, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), and organizations and groups based in rural areas.
- Amplify topics of concern from American youth through advocacy actions including signing on to issues-based petitions, participating in text banking, and encouraging virtual in-district meetings.
- Support outreach to elementary, middle, and high schools across the nation, especially in geographic areas that have been traditionally disconnected from global issues.
  - Create a case competition in collaboration with a UN agency to provide a skill-building opportunity for youth in both UNA-USA campus chapters and as individual members to sharpen presentation and research skills and to learn more from UN subject matter experts about a global topic.
  - Promote UNA-USA’s MyDiplomat app for educators to engage students in scenarios reflecting critical issues and multilateral problems.
  - Encourage participation in and help provide support for local Model UN activities.
- Bridge the knowledge gap between the UN’s work and the general public’s understanding of the UN through educational social media posts, speaking engagements, and UNA-USA programs like the Global Engagement Online Series (GEOS) and the Global Engagement Summit in February 2022.
- Build a community of global citizens and changemakers through monthly virtual gatherings that foster friendships through activities that relate to the UN SDGs.
- Collaborate with and actively support youth-oriented organizations focused on preventing or reversing the effects of climate change.
- Seek opportunities to bring leadership roles and foster global citizenship to high school students.
  - Promote the establishment of UNA-USA campus chapters to allow for individual learning and leadership opportunities.
- Serve as a representative of a diverse array of American youth at both UN and U.S. federal-level convenings and initiatives
  - Host additional consultations and listening tour stops—both with current UNA-USA chapters and with organizations representing diverse groups—across the country in order to capture information and feedback
  - Partner with the UN Foundation’s Next Generation Fellows as they support recommendations from Our Future Agenda and together relay inputs for the UN’s Our Common Agenda.
Appendix A: About UNA-USA and the 10th UNA-US Youth Observer to the United Nations

ABOUT UNA-USA

The United Nations Association of the USA (UNA-USA) is a movement of Americans dedicated to supporting the United Nations. With over 20,000 members (60% under the age of 26) and more than 200 chapters across the country, UNA-USA members are united in their commitment to global engagement and their belief that each of us can play a part in advancing the UN's mission and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The nationwide network is committed to strengthening the United Nations system, promoting constructive United States leadership in that system, and achieving the goals set forth in the UN Charter. UNA-USA is a program of the United Nations Foundation. UNA-USA and its partner organization, the Better World Campaign, comprise the largest network of UN advocates in the world.

ABOUT CYNTHIA YUE, 10th UNA-USA YOUTH OBSERVER TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Cynthia Yue is a student studying International Affairs at the George Washington University and the 10th UNA-USA Youth Observer to the United Nations. Cynthia brings nearly seven years of experience as a leader at UNICEF USA, where she has spearheaded national initiatives promoting civic engagement, leadership development, and diversity to over 30,000 supporters. In 2019, she also attended the United Nations General Assembly to interview global leaders on the 30th Anniversary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, culminating in the reinforcement of the European Union’s commitment to child welfare and the promotion of #TheRealChallenge youth advocacy campaign, which amassed over 450 million engagements across more than 50 countries.

Previously, she has also served as a Fellow for sustainability and youth deliberation initiatives with the Embassy of France in the United States and the Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of Indonesia; in addition, she has interned in the U.S. Senate, U.S. Department of Transportation, and U.S. Small Business Administration. This year, Cynthia hopes to continue bridging the gap between youth and the UN by elevating young people’s voices, building community within the UNA-USA youth and student network, and supporting youth leaders across the United States.
Appendix B: 2021 Listening Tour Virtual Stops

Methodology
The 2021 Listening Tour was conducted at 10 virtual stops over the course of two weeks. Many stops were hosted by community and campus chapters of UNA-USA, as well as by youth-facing organizations and campaigns. The Youth Observer asked a series of questions of the participants in the focus group and a note-taker recorded their responses. More than 100 participants attended the focus groups to share their experiences and concerns.

Questions
1. Are you a UNA-USA member?
2. Age range
3. Do you know what the UN’s 17 Sustainable Development Goals are?
4. Show SDG image. Please indicate the SDG which you think most represents critical issues or priorities today in the UNITED STATES?
5. Show SDG image. Please indicate the SDG which you think most represents the critical issue or priority today in the WORLD?
6. On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being very involved and 10 being not involved at all), from your perspective, how involved do you think young people have been in addressing the critical problems and issues facing the UNITED STATES?
7. On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being very involved and 10 being not involved at all), from your perspective, how involved do you think young people have been in addressing critical problems and issues happening all over the WORLD?
8. On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being very connected and 10 being not connected at all), how connected do you feel to the United Nations?
9. What opportunities or activities can the UNA-USA facilitate to help you better understand and connect with the United Nations?
10. Change based on whether talking to a community or campus chapter/ask if applicable: On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being very connected and 10 being not connected at all), how connected do you feel to your neighboring community/campus chapter(s).
11. For UNA-USA chapters: How can the UNA-USA and/or Youth Observer help connect you with your neighboring community/campus chapters?
Appendix C: 2021 Youth Priorities Survey

Methodology
The Youth Priorities Survey was conducted from August 17, 2021 to September 22, 2021. The survey was conducted using Google Forms, and was shared through Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram through the US Youth Observer accounts. Respondents were asked to answer eight questions.

Questions
1. Are you a UNA-USA Member?
2. Please select your age range:
3. Do you know what the UN’s 17 Sustainable Development Goals are?
   Respondents were given a chart of the SDGs to use in responding to questions 4-8.
4. Which SDG do you think best represents the most critical issue or priority today in the United States?
5. Which SDG do you think best represents the most critical issue or priority today in the world?
6. On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being very involved and 10 being not involved at all), how involved do you think young people have been in addressing the critical problems and issues facing the United States?
7. On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being very involved and 10 being not involved at all), how involved do you think young people have been in addressing critical problems and issues happening all over the world?
8. On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being very connected and 10 being not connected at all), how connected do you feel to the United Nations?

Responses and Demographics
117 respondents participated in the survey. 53% fell in the 12-17 age range, while 38.5% were between the ages of 18 and 24. The remaining 8.5% was divided evenly between 25 to 29 and 30 to 34. 62.4% of respondents were UNA-USA members.
Appendix D: UNA-USA UN75 Initiative

As part of the UN75’s global dialogue initiative, the UNA-USA UN75 Committee was established in June 2019 to develop and conduct consultations to capture voices from all 50 US States, Washington D.C., and Puerto Rico to understand American sentiments and priorities about the future of the world. The output of the consultations will be used to elevate policy recommendations to achieve a sustainable future by 2045. Notes and recommendations from the Global Consultation will be provided to the United Nations and key decision makers within the public sector, including Members of Congress. A special UN75 Commission was created to gather the data and develop a report for the UN Secretary-General to present at the UN General Assembly in 2020.

More than 80 consultations reached over 1,850 participants across 52 states and territories, and in Washington D.C. On average, consultations were mostly of mixed-gender participants, with 72% of consultations being mixed-gender. 60% of consultations consisted of participants holding professional or managerial jobs. Additionally, the majority of consultations were of participants with higher education levels.

To read the full UNA-USA UN75 Initiative report, click here.
APPENDIX E: UN’s 12 Commitments Post-UN75

UN75 DECLARATION 12 COMMITMENTS

01 LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND
02 PROTECT OUR PLANET
03 PROMOTE PEACE & PREVENT CONFLICTS
04 ABIDE BY INTERNATIONAL LAW & ENSURE JUSTICE

05 PLACE WOMEN & GIRLS AT THE CENTER
06 BUILD TRUST
07 IMPROVE DIGITAL COOPERATION
08 UPGRADE THE UNITED NATIONS

09 ENSURE SUSTAINABLE FINANCING
10 BOOST PARTNERSHIPS
11 LISTEN TO & WORK WITH YOUTH
12 BE PREPARED
Gen Z and Millennial adults closely follow news and engage globally as much as they do at the national and local level. These generations are concerned about the state of the world and are motivated to engage by a desire to make a difference. Gen Z and Millennials are generally optimistic about their generations’ ability to solve global issues moving forward.

News and Engagement

**GEN Z AND MILLENNIAL ADULTS FOLLOW GLOBAL NEWS (66%) APPROXIMATELY AS MUCH AS THEY FOLLOW LOCAL (71%) AND NATIONAL (68%) NEWS AT LEAST SOMewhat CLOSELY.**

- Thirty-one percent of Gen Z and Millennial adults follow local or community news very closely, compared to 25% who say the same for global news, and 28% who say the same for national or domestic news.

**WHEN IT COMES TO ENGAGING, GEN Z AND MILLENNIAL ADULTS ARE EQUALLY AS LIKELY TO SAY THEY ENGAGE WITH GLOBAL ISSUES AS THEY ARE WITH NATIONAL OR LOCAL ISSUES AT LEAST SOMEWHAT OFTEN.**

“How often, if at all, do you engage with each of the following types of issues?”

**GLOBAL ISSUES...facing all people all around the world**

- Very often: 15%
- Somewhat often: 30%
- Not too often: 23%
- Never: 14%
- Don’t know/unsure: 10%

**NATIONAL OR DOMESTIC ISSUES...facing only Americans**

- Very often: 14%
- Somewhat often: 52%
- Not too often: 21%
- Never: 21%
- Don’t know/unsure: 9%

**LOCAL OR COMMUNITY ISSUES...specific to your city or state**

- Very often: 14%
- Somewhat often: 54%
- Not too often: 23%
- Never: 22%
- Don’t know/unsure: 9%

Methodology: This poll was conducted between August 23-September 1, 2021 among a sample of 2000 Gen Z and Millennial Adults. The interviews were conducted online. Results from the full survey have a margin of error of plus or minus 2 percentage points.
Global Issue Engagement: Motivations and Barriers

Gen Z and Millennial adults are motivated to engage in global issues by a desire to make a difference in the world (36%), feeling a connection to the issue (31%), and feeling that their contribution is making an impact (30%).

- When asked to choose their top motivation for engaging with global issues, nearly one in five Gen Z and Millennial adults (18%) cited a desire to make a difference in the world.

“And, what motivates you most to engage in global issues?”

For Gen Z and Millennial adults, a lack of money (42%), time (33%), and feeling like you can’t make a difference (38%) are the most frequently selected barriers to engaging with global issues, among those tested.

- When asked to choose which factor is the largest barrier to engaging with global issues, close to one quarter of Gen Z and Millennials select not having enough money (23%). Other top barriers include not understanding enough about the issue (15%) and not thinking that they can make a difference (14%).

“And, what is the largest barrier when it comes to engaging with global issues?”

* 1-2% of sample selected “other, please specify”
Global Issue Engagement: Current and Likely Engagement Actions

Over two in five Gen Z and Millennial adults say they engage with issues by talking to family or friends (45%) and by educating themselves on the issues (42%).

- Additionally, one third of Gen Z and Millennial adults (34%) say they engage with global issues by posting on social media.

| Percentage of Gen Z and Millennial Adults who are Engage in the Following Actions |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Actions                        | % Engaged |
| Talking to family or friends    | 45%       |
| Educating yourself on the issues| 42%       |
| Posting on social media         | 34%       |
| Participating in petitions      | 21%       |
| Changing your purchasing habits (boycott or boycott) | 20% |
| Donating to non-profit organizations | 19% |
| Volunteering                    | 17%       |
| Contacting your representative or member of Congress | 13% |
| Attending a rally or protest    | 13%       |
| Encouraging your employer, university or college to engage | 13% |

Human rights (52%), Education access (50%), Hunger (50%) and Clean water issues (50%) are all issues that half or more Gen Z and Millennial adults say they’re likely to engage with, among others.

| Percentage of Gen Z and Millennial Adults who are Likely to Engage in the Following Global Issues |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Actions                        | % Likely to Engage (Certain + Very Likely) |
| Promoting human rights         | 52%                                           |
| Ensuring access to education   | 50%                                           |
| Ending hunger                  | 50%                                           |
| Ensuring access to clean water | 50%                                           |
| Achieving gender equality      | 49%                                           |
| Slowing climate change         | 49%                                           |
| Protecting peace               | 48%                                           |
| Securing employment opportunities | 48%                                        |
| Advancing global health        | 47%                                           |
| Investing in green economies   | 47%                                           |
| Achieving the sustainable development goals | 45% |
| Promoting democracy            | 42%                                           |
| Investing in digital economies | 39%                                           |
| Supporting American diplomacy  | 38%                                           |
| Providing American financial support | 37%                                        |
Global Issue Engagement: Current and Likely Engagement Actions

While Gen Z and Millennial adults are split on which global issues they are most likely to engage with, one in ten selected promoting human rights for all (11%) and slowing down climate change (8%).

| Percentage of Gen Z and Millennial Adults who are Most Likely to Engage in the Following Global Issues |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------------|
| Actions                                      | % Selected    |
| Promoting human rights                       | 11%           |
| Slowing climate change                       | 9%            |
| Ending hunger                                 | 8%            |
| Ensuring access to education                 | 7%            |
| Protecting peace                             | 7%            |
| Advancing global health                      | 5%            |
| Achieving gender equality                    | 5%            |
| Securing employment opportunities            | 5%            |
| Achieving sustainable development goals      | 5%            |
| Investing in green economies                 | 5%            |
| Supporting American diplomacy                | 4%            |
| Ensuring access to clean water               | 4%            |
| Promoting democracy                          | 3%            |
| Providing American financial support         | 3%            |
| Investing in digital economies               | 3%            |

When it comes to getting things done, close to a third of Gen Z and Millennial adults say they believe scientists (33%), the President (33%), the United Nations (30%), and non-profits (30%) have the ability to make a strong positive impact on global issues.

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<th>Percentage of Gen Z and Millennial Adults who believe each of the following have the ability to make a strong positive impact on global issues.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scientists</td>
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<td>The President</td>
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<tr>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-profit organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Federal government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research institutions/academia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billionaires</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individuals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local/small businesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philanthropists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your local government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your state government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celebrities or influencers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American corporations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Looking Forward: Improvements in Global Issues

HALF OR MORE OF GEN Z AND MILLENNIAL ADULTS BELIEVE WE WILL SEE IMPROVEMENT IN EACH OF THE TESTED ISSUE OPTIONS WITHIN 10 YEARS.

- Around three in five Gen Z and Millennial adults believe that each of the following will improve in the next 10 years: Advancing global health (60%), investing in digital economies (60%), achieving gender equality (59%), ensuring access to education (59%), and ensuring access to clean water (56%).

WHEN ASKED TO CHOOSE BETWEEN ISSUES AT THE LOCAL, NATIONAL, AND GLOBAL LEVELS, THE PLURALITY OF GEN Z AND MILLENNIAL ADULTS BELIEVE AN INDIVIDUAL CAN MAKE THE BIGGEST DIFFERENCE LOCALLY.

- Two in five (41%) Millennial and Gen Z adults say individuals can make a difference with local issues, when asked to choose.
- Nearly one quarter (22%) believe individuals can make the biggest difference with the global issues, while 12% say national or domestic issues are where individuals can make the difference. One quarter (24%) of Gen Z and Millennial adults say they feel an individual can’t make a difference with any of these types of issues.

Generational Perceptions

THE PLURALITY OF GEN Z AND MILLENNIAL ADULTS (39%) BELIEVE THEIR GENERATION IS MORE EQUIPPED THAN OLDER GENERATIONS TO SOLVE THE MOST PRESSING GLOBAL ISSUES.

- Eighteen percent of Gen Z and Millennial adults say they’re less equipped than older generations to solve these issues, while 25% say there’s no difference either way.

GEN Z AND MILLENNIAL ADULTS WANT TO BE HEARD BY GLOBAL LEADERS.

- Two thirds of Gen Z and Millennial adults agree that “my generation wants our voice heard when it comes to solving global issues” (69%) and “world leaders should take my generation into consideration when making decisions” (67%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Somewhat agree</th>
<th>Don’t know/no opinion</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My generation wants our voice heard when it comes to solving global issues</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World leaders should take my generation into consideration when making decisions</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>10% 6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My generation is more connected to the rest of the world than previous generations</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>14% 6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My generation understands the global issues we will face in the future</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>13% 8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My generation is underutilized and ready to lead</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>15% 8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My generation is well equipped to address the issues facing the world</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>16% 9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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