



NEXT STEPS

LEARNING FROM YOUR GENERATION

LIFE IN
YOUR EARLY

30s

UPDATE 2020-21

YOUR
EXPERIENCES
OF THE
PANDEMIC

UNUSUAL
TIMES



NEXTSTEPSSTUDY.ORG.UK

LIVING THROUGH A PANDEMIC

A series of black silhouettes of people walking, scattered across the top half of the page. Some are alone, some in pairs, and some in small groups, moving in various directions.

It's been a really difficult year for so many of us, with the pandemic reaching almost every part of the world, and affecting billions of people. Since the start of the crisis, we have been asking you, and participants in four other studies (born in 1946, 1958, 1970 and 2000-02), to tell us about your experiences, through a series of online surveys.

There are lots of coronavirus surveys – but what makes ours so special is that we can link your responses to the information you've given us before, which greatly improves our

understanding of the effects of the pandemic. As we will be following your lives into the future, we will also be able to track the longer term impacts of COVID-19. This is much more powerful than only capturing a moment in time.

Our researchers have analysed the information study participants provided in the first COVID-19 survey in May, revealing important insights about the experiences of different generations in relation to mental health, employment and finances and family responsibilities.

THANK YOU

Thank you to all those who took part in our COVID-19 surveys. Over 18,000 people across five studies, including Next Steps, completed our first survey, and more than 25,000 took part in the second one. Researchers have already downloaded data from these surveys for over 120 projects.

MENTAL HEALTH

A single black silhouette of a person walking, located on the left side of the page, near the 'MENTAL HEALTH' section.

During the first lockdown, 20% of women and 14% of men of your generation showed signs of depression. However, poor mental health was even more common among younger people, with just over one third of

19-year-old women and just under one quarter of 19-year-old men experiencing symptoms of depression.

Comparing your responses to our COVID-19 survey with the information you gave us when you were 25, the researchers also found

levels of poor mental health had increased significantly among women of your age. However, they noted that this could reflect change that naturally occurs at this stage of life as well as the impact of the pandemic.



EMPLOYMENT AND FINANCES

The researchers found that during lockdown in May, the average hours worked had decreased by 36% for your generation (from 34 to 22 hours), compared to 60% for Gen Z (born in 2000-02), and 32% for Gen X (born in 1970). Among millennials who had stopped working during lockdown, 81% of those in employment and 35% of the self-employed were on paid leave (including furlough). The lower level of financial protection given to the self-employed might explain why only 29% of employees in your generation said they were worse off, compared to 70% of those self-employed.

FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES

Across all age groups surveyed, mothers were more likely than fathers to sacrifice work for home schooling and developmental play with their children during lockdown. Next Steps mums with younger children (under 5) spent on average 6.2 hours a day doing interactive

activities with them. Next Steps dads, on the other hand, spent an average of three hours a day on these activities. Among 30-year-olds, mothers with children of primary school age or younger were also considerably more likely than fathers of children at the same age, to have stopped work.

LIFE IN LOCKDOWN FOR NEXT STEPS STUDY MEMBERS



36%

drop in average hours worked



29%

worse off among the employed



70%

worse off among the self-employed



20%

of women showed signs of depression



1 IN 4

men experienced loneliness



6.2 HOURS

a day spent by mothers on interactive activities for children

Find out more at:
[NEXTSTEPSTUDY.ORG.UK](https://nextstepsstudy.org.uk)

ETHNIC MINORITY MILLENNIALS IN UNSTABLE EMPLOYMENT

Research using Next Steps has found that young people of your generation from ethnic minority backgrounds were more likely to be unemployed or in precarious work at age 25 than their White peers.

GIVING ETHNIC MINORITIES A VOICE

Next Steps includes more people from ethnic minority backgrounds in the study to ensure that the diverse voices of your generation are heard. Thanks to the information you provide during surveys, we can make the case for policies that will help address racial inequalities.

RACE INEQUALITY IN THE WORKFORCE

When we surveyed you at age 25 we asked what you did for work, and we asked about your emotional health and wellbeing. The researchers took account of a range of other factors which could affect labour market status, including gender, family background and qualifications.

On the whole, young people from ethnic minorities were 58% more likely to be unemployed than their White counterparts, although experiences differed for each ethnic group. They were also 47% more likely to be on a zero-hours contract, 10% more likely

to be working a second job, and 5% more likely to be doing shift work than their White peers. Despite these challenges, the overwhelming majority of ethnic minority young people were in permanent employment at age 25.

The researchers also found that young people in precarious work, and those without a job, were more likely to experience poor mental health.

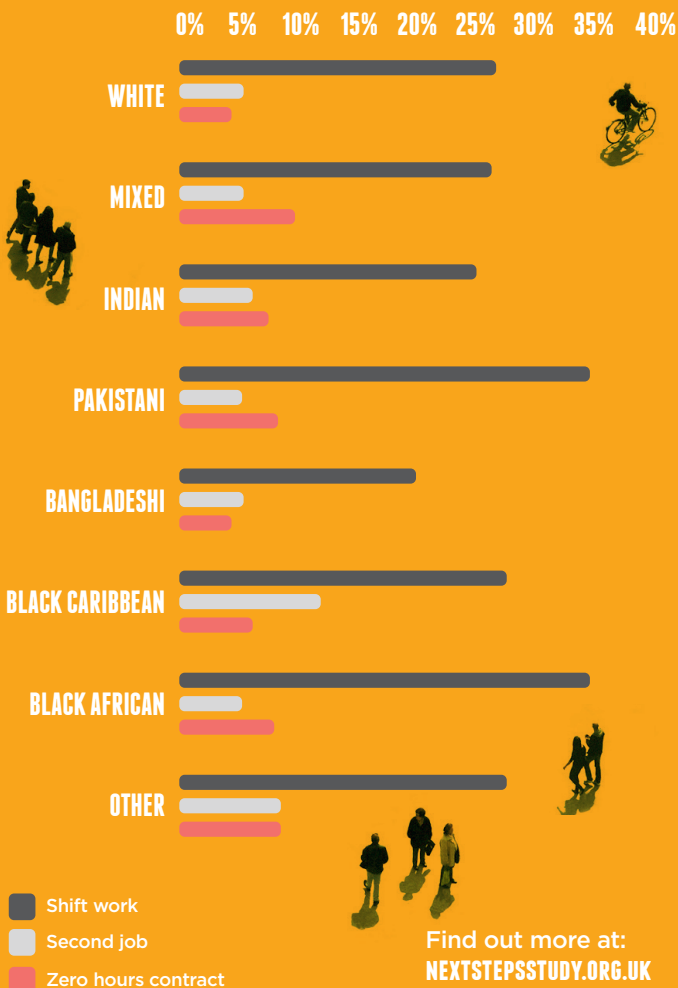


A WAKE UP CALL

Published jointly by the Carnegie UK Trust, the UCL Centre for Longitudinal Studies and Operation Black Vote, this major and influential report, 'Race inequality in the workforce: exploring connections between work, ethnicity and mental health', highlights the challenges people of your generation from different communities face in the job market, and the impact this can have on their health. Lord Simon Woolley of Operation Black Vote said: "This report must be a serious wake up call for the government, industry and our mental health practitioners."

The research was presented to parliament and was extensively covered in the media, including in The Guardian and the BBC.

LIKELIHOOD OF BEING IN PRECARIOUS WORK BY ETHNICITY AT AGE 25



IN BRIEF



THE PRIVATE SCHOOL BOOST

Researchers from UCL analysed information from the first seven surveys of Next Steps (when you were aged 14-20), as well as information from the National Pupil Database which has been linked to the survey, including A-level results. After taking into account other factors such as GCSE results and family background, they found that going to a private school led to an increase in average A-level results of about 8%. Members of your generation who had gone to private school were also 6% more likely to go to university.



DIMINISHING GRADUATE PREMIUM

When you were 25, we asked you how much you earned, and whether you'd gone to university. A research team from HESA (Higher Education Statistic Agency) and Warwick University compared your answers with those of another study, the 1970 British Cohort Study, when they were 26, to see how much a university degree boosted hourly pay then and now.

They found that by age 25, university graduates in your generation earned 11% more per hour on average than those who hadn't gone to university. By comparison, among those born in 1970, graduates earned 19% more on average than non-graduates by age 26.



BUCKING THE TREND

When you were 14, we asked you if you planned on applying to university, how likely you thought you were to get in, how good you thought you were in various subjects, and how happy you were at school. When you were 20, we asked you if you were enrolled at university, and at age 25, if you had completed your

degree. Researchers from UCL and King's College London found that young people who aimed high, believed in themselves and were engaged at school were most likely to succeed at university whatever their family background.



BUILDING A PICTURE OF YOUR LIFE



YOUR CONTRIBUTION MAKES A DIFFERENCE



Next Steps is the only national study of your generation. By continuing to follow your experiences over time, through your adult lives, researchers can see how your lives are changing. Your contribution to the study helps us build a detailed picture of the big issues affecting people your age today. Government and service providers can

then use this information to work out ways to make things better, for everyone, including future generations. Your continuing support also helps us analyse major societal changes, such as the evolution of social mobility or the gender wage gap, by comparing your experiences to those of other generations.

Information you shared at age 25, for example, has provided new, important evidence for policymakers, charities and education providers on a wide range of issues, including mental health, racial inequalities and the impact of precarious employment.

LIFE IN YOUR EARLY 30s



We will soon ask for your help with another big survey – which is different to the COVID-19 surveys – so we can see how your generation navigates the early 30s. This is an important period in your lives – many of you will experience major changes like making your next

career move, moving in with a partner, having children or buying a house. Checking in with you at this age helps us to understand what your lives are like now and how your choices and experiences will affect the rest of your lives.

We look forward to continuing to follow your lives so that together we can provide evidence to tackle the issues that affect your generation and those to come.



Find out more at:
NEXTSTEPSSTUDY.ORG.UK





KEEP IN TOUCH



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