

Hopes & Fears 2023: tight labour market creates unsustainable workloads

Netherlands

Organisations must transform and look at AI opportunities

Younger workers experience a higher **workload** than their older **colleagues**. Additionally, about **forty** percent of young people are considering changing jobs in the coming year. These are the findings of PwC's Hopes & Fears 2023, a global survey of employees' experiences and expectations.

PwC experts Raymond Welmers and Don van der Steeg worry about the high **workload** among young people, but also see opportunities for organisations if they focus more on new technology. 'Use artificial intelligence to make work easier, to **relieve** the **workload** and thus to bind people to your organisation for longer.'

Large proportion of employees are satisfied despite high workload

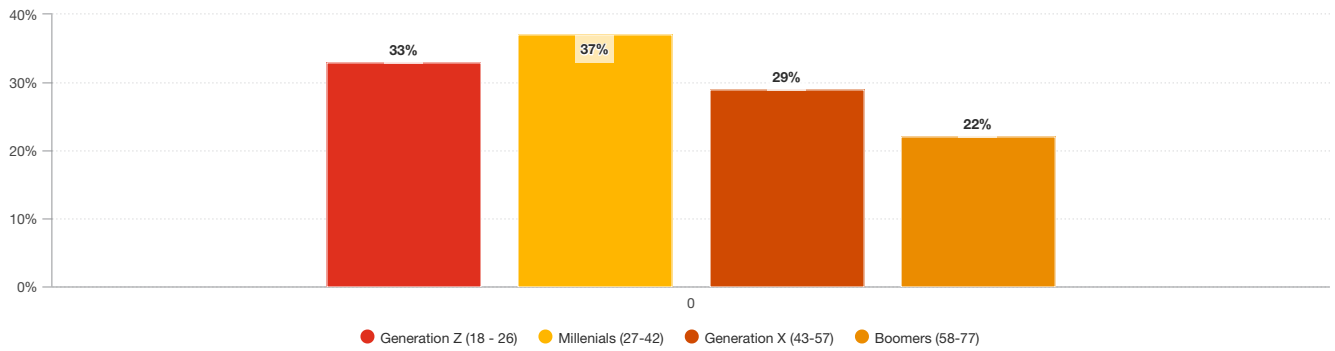
We surveyed more than 53,000 employees worldwide, of which 1,600 were in the Netherlands. Overall, 71 percent of employees are 'satisfied' to 'very satisfied' with their jobs. We see older generations are more likely to be happy with their employers. About half of the **respondents** (49 percent) are able to do their work from home. Of that group, more than half (61 percent) work hybrid. About 20 percent work entirely from home, and an equal proportion work entirely from the office.

It is striking that a large group of Dutch **respondents** (31 percent) indicated that the **workload** is too high. 41 percent of that group attribute this to a shortage of **colleagues**.

Young people in particular experience high workload

Younger generations in particular experience a higher **workload** than their older **colleagues**. Over a third of **respondents** from Generation Z and millennials say they find the **workload** too high. PwC expert Raymond Welmers considers that a hefty number. 'Young generations indicate that it is almost impossible to keep up. That's no small thing. The **tightness** in the labour market is starting to hurt, and one in three young people cannot cope. The **scarcity** and the work pressure also mean that the work of someone who drops out for whatever reason cannot immediately be absorbed by **colleagues**.'

In the past 12 months, how often have you felt like your workload was unmanageable? (Only "often/usually")



Workers on three continents, together with PwC's Global Chairman Bob Moritz, preview the new survey's themes and findings.

AI may offer the solution

According to Raymond Welmrs, the use of artificial intelligence (AI) may be a solution to reducing **workloads**. 'I **foresee** that new technology, such as AI, can play an important role in reducing **workload**. Use the influence of artificial intelligence to make work easier and **relieve** the **workload** and thus bind people to the organisation for longer.'

Employees divided on potential influence of AI

AI in particular is a topic where differences between generations are readily apparent. The younger generations estimate the influence of AI to be greater than their older **colleagues**, both positively and negatively. Welmrs and Van der Steeg find it interesting that almost a third of young people expect that AI makes their work more efficient and productive.

Welmrs: 'Young people, I think, are more closely following the development of AI. They see what kind of influence it can have.'

Van der Steeg: 'I do understand the younger and older generations. I think the older employees have more of a wait-and-see attitude toward AI. Their working lives are already largely behind them, and it will be some time before organisations deploy AI everywhere on a large scale. Young people see the opportunities of AI. At the same time, the question arises for me as to what the perspective will be for young people in the labour market if work becomes partially **automated**. We already see people asking questions on ChatGPT for fun, but systems like that are going to develop much further in the coming years.'

What impact, if any, do you expect artificial intelligence (AI) to have on your career in the next five years?

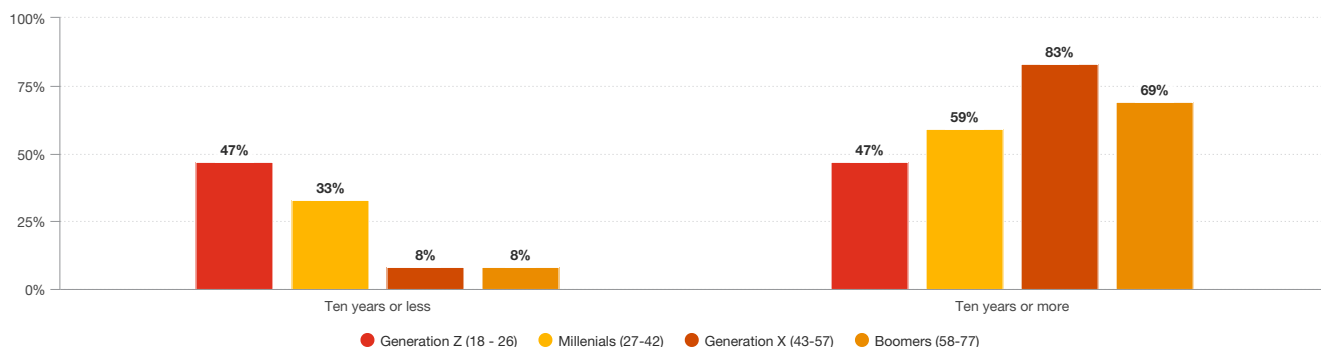


Young people fear for viability of organisations

Perhaps precisely because they assess the impact of new technology to be much greater than their older **colleagues**, young people are questioning the future **viability** of their organisations. Almost half of **respondents** from Generation Z and a third of millennials think their current employer will be gone in 10 years if it does not make changes. Gen X thinks the organisation will definitely still be there in ten years if it continues on the same path.

Don van der Steeg: 'Young people still have a long career ahead of them and they also have a point. If new technology becomes widely available and you don't adapt your business operations to it, there will come a time that you are out of business. Your costs are then too high and your products or services are no longer relevant.'

Assuming your employer continues on its current path, how long do you think the company will be in business?



'Organisations must transform'

Welmers: 'Young generations have had it pretty rough. They have reasons to doubt the **viability** of organisations, given all the uncertain circumstances they experience now compared to the past.'

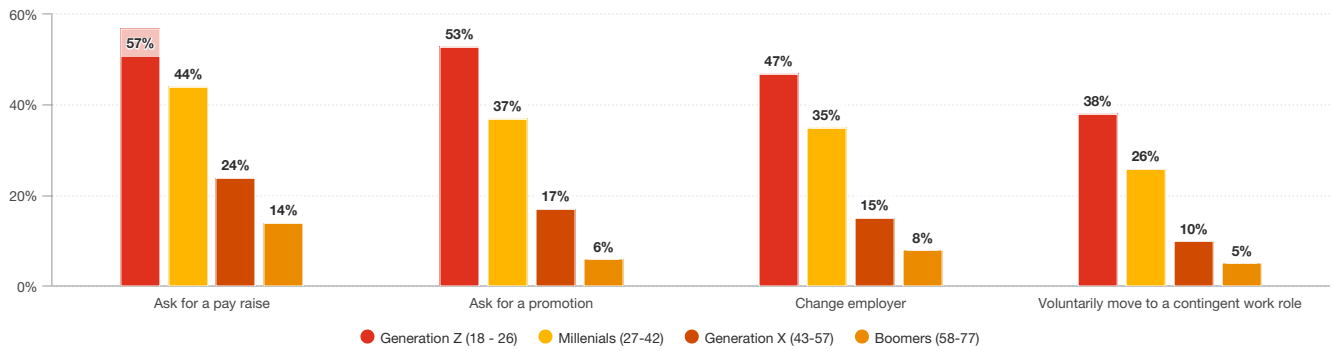
But what could be the solution for organisations? Van der Steeg: 'There is a reason that younger generations are looking further ahead. As a company, you therefore have to transform. You also have to look at what learning paths you can offer to people, so they get an idea of how they can continue to add value to the organisation and at the same time the organisation to them. Then you create a long-term relationship of **give and take**.'

Young people not very loyal to employers

The following result from Hopes & Fears shows the importance of long-term relationships between employer and employee for organisations: nearly half of Generation Z and over a third of millennials are strongly considering looking for another job in the coming year. Raymond Welmers worries about these large numbers. 'Many companies deal with young

people as if they were 45 years old. The fact that older generations are happy is because employers focus on that group with a one-size-fits-all approach and do not differentiate enough to different generations in the workplace.'

How likely are you to take the following action within the next 12 months? (Only "very likely")



'Take a customised look at what people need'

Van der Steeg and Welmers see that today's younger generation is less loyal than previously. 'But there is a difference between being with the same employer for one year or five years,' said Van der Steeg. 'I therefore think that organisations should be much more concerned about retaining people. You have to think along with your employees and **devise** learning paths with them. Step one is to clearly identify which people you need as an organisation now and in the future. Then look carefully at what these people need, in order to retain and commit them. That is a tailored approach.'

Learning from other organisations

Welmers thinks that organisations can learn from each other. You can see which organisations are able to retain people for longer. The purpose of these organisations may fit in better with the purpose of younger generations. Not that that's the solution for every organisation, I realize it's about customisation, but there are always certain elements that organisations can learn from each other.