

GEN Z & GRIEVANCE: A GENERATION'S RESPONSE TO A WORLD UNDER THREAT

*An Edelman Gen Z Lab Special Report
with Findings from the 2025 Edelman Trust Barometer*



THE UNCERTAIN REALITY GEN Z FACES DEMANDS *A NEW PLAYBOOK* FOR BRANDS.

Gen Z grew up in chaos — a pandemic, social upheaval, economic crises, culture wars and political instability. What they're left with isn't just disillusionment, it's grievance. In short: **The kids are not all right.**

This report explores how grievance is reshaping the way Gen Z engages with the world around them and explains their overall expectations of brands and businesses:

- They don't look up to institutions — they look across to each other.
- They don't want statements — they want receipts.
- They don't trust easily — but they *will*... and it's built through closeness and consistency.

Brands are facing an inflection point: the choices they make today will determine their future as they seek to capture the attention of the biggest and most influential generation we've ever seen.

ONCE A GENERATION KNOWN FOR THEIR UNITY AND SHARED VALUES, **GEN Z IS DEFINED BY DISPARITY AND THEIR HIGH-LEVEL OF GRIEVANCE*.**

In the 2025 Edelman Trust Barometer, ***grievance** was defined by the following statements: *I hold a sense of grievance because: Business and government serve select few, business and government actions hurt me, the system favors the rich, the rich are getting richer.*

58%

of Gen Z's globally say,
"my sense of grievance is
moderate or higher."¹

Gen Z is disproportionately aggrieved and disillusioned with traditional systems, as they see them as outdated, unequal and unresponsive to their needs.

THEY WERE RAISED IN A *PRESSURE COOKER*.

After more seismic shifts and cultural upheavals in a shorter timeframe than any generation before them, Gen Z is overwhelmed.

THE  TIMES

The Times view on Gen Z's bleak view: Generational Trauma

Much of the disaffection and view of Britain derives from the time at which the generation came of age

Psychology Today

Have We Overburdened Gen Z With Fears of the Future?

A Personal Perspective: Zoomers' apocalyptic anxieties.

NEW YORK POST

HEALTH

Gen Z is already having a 'mid-life crisis' — US Surgeon General warns social media is to blame

COVID-19 CAUSED A CATAclysmic SHIFT TO *GEN Z'S FOUNDATION.*

The pandemic upended Gen Z's most formative years — pausing their education, delaying their careers, limiting their spending power and triggering a lasting mental health crisis. Now, they're facing significant emotional and financial fallout.

58%

of young adults (18-34) feel isolated, lonely, as a result of COVID-19.²

43% (avg)

of young adults (18-34) across global markets say they feel left behind or angry at the rich and powerful due to the pandemic.³

61%

of young adults (18-34) report increased economic stress because of the COVID-19 pandemic.⁴

MORE THAN PREVIOUS GENERATIONS, GEN Z STRUGGLES TO FIND FOOTING IN A FRACTURED, FAST-MOVING WORLD.



The Decline of Monoculture

“But Gen Z and the younger millennials are particularly hard to generalize because **they live in an era of fracturing culture**. Tens of millions of Americans no longer huddle around single television shows that air at one particular time on a weeknight, as Seinfeld and Friends once did. They no longer take their hip political cues from late night TV shows such as The Daily Show. Linear television has been collapsing, with networks like MSNBC and CNN bleeding viewers since the end of the presidential election. Hollywood, meanwhile, no longer enjoys centrality in the culture.”



The Impact of the Content Waterfall

Gen Z loses over four days a month to content consumption (meaning they wasted what they think is too much time watching TV/movies or consuming social media content). Out of all the generations, Gen Z Americans lose the most time to content consumption.



The Outcomes of Inflation and Economic Strain

“Gen Z dollars today have **86% less purchasing power** than those from when Baby Boomers were in their twenties.”

GEN Z HAS EVOLVED FROM A
CONNECTED, COHESIVE GENERATION
INTO A ***GENERATION OF
CONTRADICTIONS.***

FROM “***WE***” —————→ TO “***ME***”

In 2021, **homogeny** was their superpower,
and they craved society-wide change.

In 2025, they present as a **generation of differences**; small-
scale, personal impact is what they care about.

WITHIN THEIR NEW *INDIVIDUALISM*, CONFLICTING BELIEFS WITH CONTRADICTIONARY BEHAVIORS ARE EMERGING.

70% of Gen Z respondents say they are passionate about mental health issues and advocacy.

YET

Gen Z employees in the UK reportedly lose an average of 54 productive days per year (one day a week) due to poor mental health.

85% of American Gen Zers say they are moderately worried about the climate crisis.

YET

Over two thirds (62%) shop from fast fashion retailers like Shein once a month; only 10% claim to have never purchased fast fashion.

Four out of five (82.7%) Gen Z adults say they are concerned with data privacy when interacting with brands online.

YET

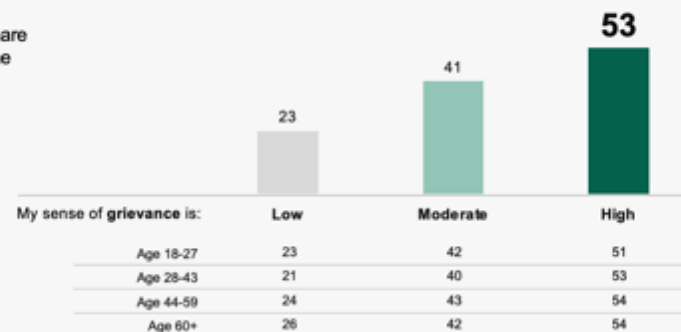
Nearly 88% of Gen Zers are willing to share some personal data with social media companies to improve their online interactions, compared to 67% of older adults.

BUT DESPITE THEIR DIFFERENCES,
THEY'RE UNITED IN A SENSE THAT THE
CURRENT SYSTEM ***DOESN'T WORK
FOR THEM.***

More than half (51%) of highly aggrieved Gen Zers have a zero-sum mindset, believing, “what helps people who don't share my politics or beliefs comes at a cost to me.”⁵

GLOBAL 26 excl. China, Thailand

I have a zero-sum mindset:
What helps people who don't share
my politics comes at a cost to me



Social contract at risk:
With high grievance,
2x more likely to have a
zero-sum mindset
than low grievance⁵

TRUST IN INSTITUTIONS – GOVERNMENT, EDUCATION, MEDIA, HEALTHCARE AND CORPORATIONS – CONTINUES TO ERODE AMONG GEN Z.

6

Percent who worry	2021	2025	Change, 2021 to 2025
GENERATION Z (18-27)			
Government leaders purposely mislead people by saying things they know are false or gross exaggerations	57	67	10
Business leaders purposely mislead people by saying things they know are false or gross exaggerations	56	67	11
Journalists and reporters purposely mislead people by saying things they know are false or gross exaggerations	57	67	10

50%

of American Gen Zers report having “very little” trust in Congress. Only 3% say that have a “great deal” of trust.

31%

of French under-35s believe there are better systems than democracy, compared to only 16% of those over 80.

48%

Less than half of Gen Zers in Hong Kong trust medical practitioners as a reliable source of health information, compared to 61% of Gen X.

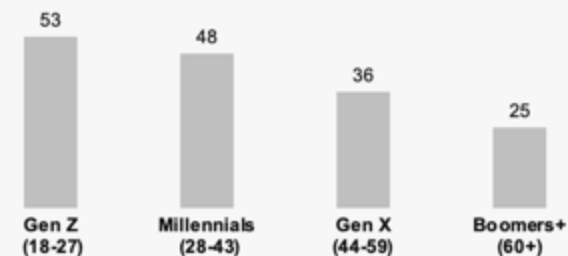
52%

of Gen Zers in Southeast Asia distrust traditional insurers because they are fearful of hidden clauses and high premiums.

WHEN TRUST BREAKS DOWN,
**GEN Z MOVES FROM APATHY
TO ACTION:**

THEY DON'T DISENGAGE. THEY
WANT TO PUSH BACK.

The majority (53%) of Gen Zers approve of hostile activism to drive change.⁷



GLOBAL 28

I approve of hostile activism
to drive change:

- Attack people online (27%)
- Intentionally spread disinformation (25%)
- Threaten or commit violence (23%)
- Damage public or private property (23%)

40% (net)

CLEARLY, THE KIDS ARE *NOT ALL RIGHT*.

THEY'RE FEARFUL

NO.1

A UCLA survey reported that the number one desire of Americans aged 10-24 was “to be safe.” Higher than classic teenage desires (e.g., “being popular,” “having fun” and “being kind.”)

THEY'RE MISINFORMED

76%

Of young Europeans, those ages 16 to 30, say they encounter fake or misleading news weekly.

THEY'RE DISCONNECTED

70%

Of people ages 15-24 spend 70% less time in person with friends and family than those of the same age did in 2003, a difference of 1,000 fewer hours per year.

FEAR.

AS THE WORLD GROWS EVER MORE
UNSTABLE, GEN Z'S GENERATION-WIDE
NEED FOR ***SAFETY AND
SECURITY*** REMAINS.

FEAR DICTATES THE ACTIONS, ATTITUDES AND ASPIRATIONS AMONG GEN Z

Nearly three in four (72%) Gen Zers, globally, state that their personal safety and security is one of their biggest concerns.⁸

\$588K

American Gen Zers deem an annual salary of nearly \$600k a “successful” salary. Millennials mark a ~\$180k annual salary as an indicator of success.

76%

Nearly eight in ten Gen Zers in Latin America feel fearful of violence that could occur in their country.

39%

of American Gen Zers report always feeling uncertain about the future. Only 27% of the general population feels the same.



Gus
@Nobummmmer

Follow

...

I say this as a Zoomer but the most defining trait of Gen Z is fear. Afraid to call people on the phone, schedule appointments, smoke, drink, have sex, etc. Very strange

GEN Z’S TELEPHOBIA

In the UK a quarter (23%) of young people of the ages 18-34 say they never answer phone calls, with more than half (56%) thinking that an “out of the blue” call means bad news.

EGREGIOUS? NO — THEY ARE JUST *AFRAID (AND MISUNDERSTOOD).*

Gen Z's fear — and the resulting attitudes or actions they take to protect themselves — are often misunderstood as entitlement or apathy. This is especially true in the workplace where, for the first time in history, five very different generations are having to work side-by-side.

42%

of Australian Gen Zers fear that AI is a risk to their jobs. Only 20% of Boomers feel the same.

37%

of U.S. Gen Zers, higher than any other generation, actively fears losing their job.

FAST COMPANY

Gen Z is vocal with their demands in the workplace in a way no other generation has been before. While this tends to be perceived as entitlement, their reality—their context—makes clear that they are asking these questions because they are concerned about their security. This core understanding is what's missing in conversations about Gen Z's entitlement.

In the workplace, Gen Z feels shut out even before their first interview. In some cases, their fears are founded:

80%

of Gen Z employees have to navigate negative stereotypes at work.

45%

of U.S. hiring managers say Gen Z is the hardest generation to work with.

MISINFORMATION.

WITH *UNVERIFIED CONTENT AND
MANIPULATED NARRATIVES* RIFE,
GEN Z IS SHIFTING TRADITIONAL NORMS
ON TRUST AND AUTHORITY.

GEN Z'S INTEREST IN
NICHE CULTURES AND
COMMUNITIES HAS
GROWN *GLOBALLY*.

Through their ability to personally curate culture, Gen Z gives more weight and importance to the sub-communities they participate in. These communities are not limited by geographical locations, showing the truly global nature of cultural trends for Gen Z.

TWO-WAY DIALOGUE

Gen Z places greater trust in specified, community-driven, micro-influencers who engage in two-way dialogue more than traditional media.

Gen Z is rejecting monolithic, mass-culture narratives and instead embracing hyper-focused, online-first communities that are formed around shared interests, values and identities.



“Core” aesthetics (e.g., Cottagecore, Weirdcore, Clean Girl Aesthetic)



Digital-native hobbies (e.g., BookTok, ArtTok, Crypto communities, DIY fashion)



“Stan” fandoms (hyper-engaged groups are focused on music artists, TV shows or anime)

GEN Z DOESN'T LOOK UP — THEY *LOOK ACROSS*.

In a world where institutions feel distant and distrusted, Gen Z turns to those who share their reality. They seek truth laterally — from peers, micro-creators, group chats and shared experiences — not from the top down. For them, credibility comes from closeness, not credentials.

58%

of Gen Z individuals in the UK reported trusting social media posts from friends as much as, or more than, traditional journalism.

70%

of Gen Zers always fact check what you say and will unfollow you if you're not truthful.



Trends like the “Mob Wife” aesthetic start from peers, not fashion houses.



More than 50% Gen Zers self-diagnose mental health conditions based on social media content — often before ever speaking to a doctor.



Reddit serves as a “reality-check” for job offers, college decisions — not official websites.

GEN Z FEELS LET DOWN BY *TRADITIONAL AUTHORITY.*

The power dynamics have shifted: Gen Z is making new decisions about who they trust and why. This, of course, shapes who can influence them. As a result, they often place more trust in their peers than professionals.

WHAT MAKES YOU SEE SOMEONE AS A LEGITIMATE INFLUENCE?

69%

of Gen Zers say, “you understand what people like me need and want.”⁹

60%

of Gen Zers say, “you occupy a formal position of power.”⁹

Two thirds of Gen Z, globally, worry that government and business leaders, journalists and reporters are intentionally misleading them.¹⁰

62%

of those aged 13-27 in the UK believe that there is one law for the rich and one for the poor.

DISCONNECTION.

EVEN GEN Z'S *DISTRACTIONS* –
FROM TECHNOLOGY USAGE TO
ENTERTAINMENT AND HOBBIES – AREN'T
IMMUNE TO MISTRUST OR GRIEVANCE.

WHAT WAS ONCE A WELCOME DISTRACTION FOR GEN Z NOW CAUSES *DISCONTENT.*

For many Gen Zers, entertainment is no longer an escape. Due to their mistrust in the businesses and powerholders *behind* the media, it has become something to question. Even Gen Z's hobbies aren't safe, as politics and beliefs cause division and disrupt participation.

ENTERTAINMENT MEDIA IS TAINTED

Gen Z lacks trust – and craves change – in entertainment because of the systemic issues they see within the industry: nepotism and wealth drive decisions, representation is lacking and transparency and authenticity are missing.

65%

of Gen Zers, globally, think the wealthy's selfishness causes many problems.¹¹

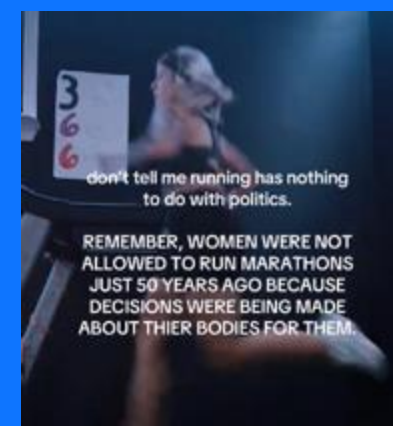
The Dartmouth

Trends: Are Awards Shows Losing Relevance?

As they lose viewership, awards shows are increasingly disconnected from younger audiences.

HOBBIES HAVE GONE POLITICAL

What used to be Gen Z's casual interests or distractions now often serve as signals where someone stands, socially or ideologically, bringing them back to the uncomfortable reality of the real world during their escapes.



The Guardian

Games: Video games can't escape their role in the radicalisation of young men

TRENDS AND TECHNOLOGY ARE TOO MUCH, TOO OFTEN.

Gen Z's digital-native environment has left them feeling disconnected, overwhelmed by trend cycles and craving more authentic, in-person experiences and spontaneous content. Problem being, many Zers feel awkward IRL; for example, more than 50% of Canadian Gen Zers who have worked or studied remotely in recent years feel that their social skills have declined.

DIGITAL UPBRINGING HAS BRED DISCONNECTION

Between remote school, virtual interviews and social media overload, the constantly-connected Gen Z is craving IRL interactions.

69%

of Gen Z says technology has made them feel less connected and more isolated from others in their industry.

WWD

Spotify's Report Finds Gen Z Craving Connection and In-person Experiences

The streaming service's latest Culture Next report looks at the younger generation's cohort attitudes based on their music, podcasts, playlists and more.

TRENDS ARE TIRING

On social and offline, trend overload is tiring out Gen Zers who are trying to catch up or are left out entirely.

The New York Times

Too Many Trends!

Every generation has chased trends. But to some members of Gen Z, the objects of teenage yearning feel more plentiful and less durable than ever before.

By Callie Holtermann March 7, 2025

ALGORITHMIC CURATION BORES

“

...it can feel like I'm stuck in a loop of the same content, voices or trends. I miss the randomness and discovery that used to make social media feel more like exploring than just being fed what it thinks I want.”

- Edelman Gen Z Lab Member, Canada

GEN Z ONCE LOOKED TO BRANDS FOR LEADERSHIP — NOW THEY *LOOK FOR PROOF.*

BRANDS AREN'T MEETING THE MARK

58%

of brand leaders believe their company meets social responsibility expectations. *Only 15% of Gen Zers agree.*

GEN Z WANTS THE RIGHT KIND OF CHANGE

72%

of Gen Z want brands to take a stand on issues — but *only when it's done with action*, not just words.

WHAT GEN Z NEEDS, AND ***WHERE BRANDS CAN LEAD:***

FROM:

TO:

Feeling Fear and Anxiety



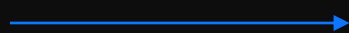
Feeling Safe, Secure and Supported

Navigating Misinformation



Assured with Accuracy, Knowing What's Right

Sense of Disconnection or Isolation



Able to Connect and Create Community

TRUST IS BUILT *UP*
CLOSE AND
PERSONAL.

Gen Z doesn't expect perfection – but they expect you to show up when they're feeling insecure.

Trust is built in the details: the raises you promised, the policies you stand by, the transparency you say you deliver to your audiences.

Talk is cheap – action is everything. Consistently commit to provide them with a sense of safety, security and opportunity for the future.

IF THEY DON'T FEEL SAFE, THEY'RE OUT

Forbes
Quiet Quitting Is Out.
Now Gen Z Is Revenge
Quitting.

THEY EXPECT ACTION WITH WORDS

Sustainability
PRACTISING

Article • **Supply Chain Sustainability**

PUMA, Patagonia, H&M: How Gen Z is Greening Supply Chains

By James Darley

February 14, 2025 • 6 mins

JUST A SPOONFUL OF SUGAR: *THE POWER OF HOPE AND LEVITY.*

Gen Z wants to laugh — especially if it feels relevant to them and gives them accurate information they need.

They don't expect brands to fix the world, but they do expect them to acknowledge the realities of the world around them.

Levity works when it's authentic, self-aware, culturally in tune and provides clarity... not just comedy.

DON'T TAKE YOURSELF TOO SERIOUSLY



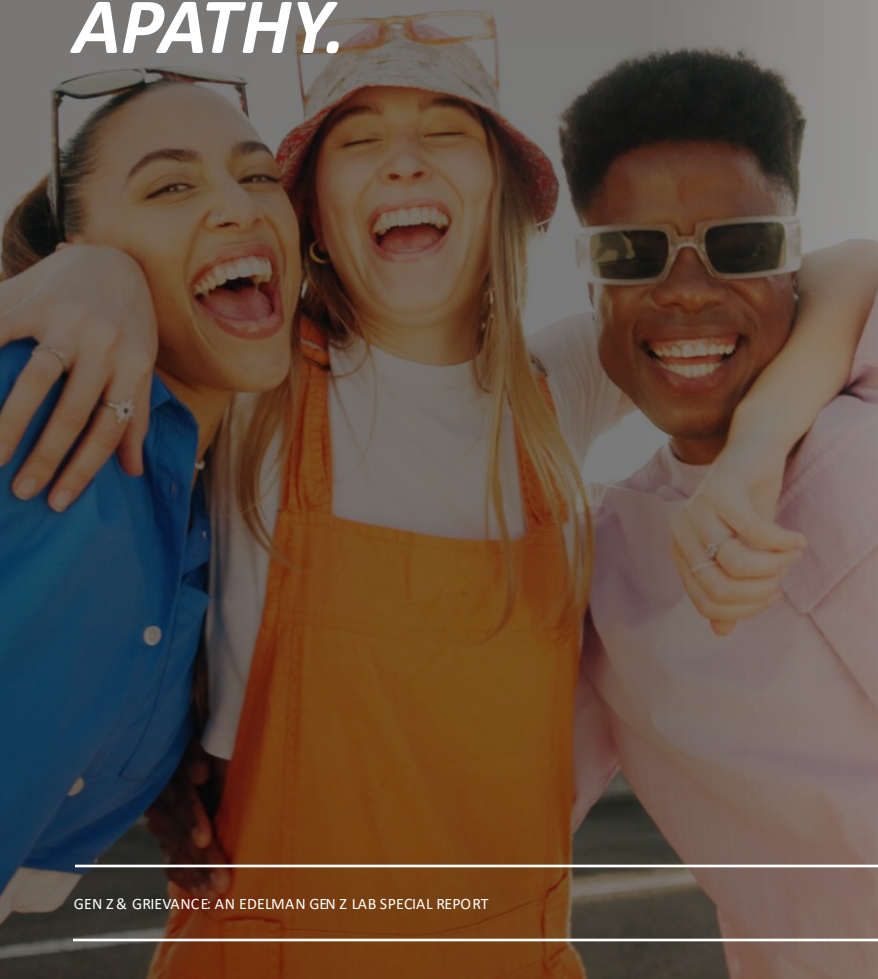
Progresso launches Soup Drops, a hard candy that's 'soup you can suck on'

Soup Drops are packed with chicken noodle soup flavors and are available for a limited time during National Soup Month.

DO WHAT YOU CAN TO MAKE THEM LAUGH



COMMUNITY AND CONNECTIONS CAN BE THE *ANTIDOTE FOR APATHY.*



Gen Z doesn't trust institutions – but they trust the communities they're regularly connecting with.

They reject one-size fits all. They run to micro-communities, hyper-niche culture and their peers. They don't just want to be spoken to, they want to create the future together.

Brands that enable connection – not just conversation – win.

THEY WANT TO BE ENGAGED



Rare Beauty CMO on winning Gen Z through community-oriented marketing

The brand founded by Selena Gomez spent years building up its social media fandom before launching a major ad campaign, CMO Katie Welch said at SXSW.

THEY NEED THE TOOLS TO CONNECT



Strava's year-end trend report shows run clubs are in, nightclubs are out

Gen Z's are four times more likely to want to meet people through working out than at a bar, report says

READY TO BUILD REAL IMPACT WITH *GEN Z*?

Contact the Edelman Gen Z Lab at
GenZLab@edelman.com



2025 EDELMAN TRUST BAROMETER

CITATIONS

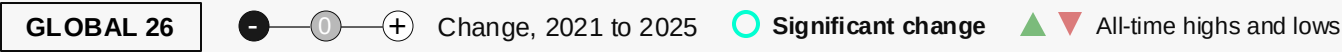
1. 2025 Edelman Trust Barometer. Sense of Grievance scale. General population, 26-mkt avg., by age 18-27. Certain data included in the scale was not collected in China or Thailand. For a full explanation of how the Sense of Grievance scale was developed, please see the Technical Appendix in the 2025 Edelman Trust Barometer Report.
2. 2025 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: The Unseen Impacts of COVID. COV_LEG_EFF. Do you experience any of the following as a direct or indirect result of living through the COVID-19 pandemic? Code 1, yes. General population, 4-mkt avg., by age 18-34.
3. 2025 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: The Unseen Impacts of COVID. COV_LEG_EFF. Do you experience any of the following as a direct or indirect result of living through the COVID-19 pandemic? Code 1, yes. General population, 4-mkt avg., by age 18-34. Data is an average of “I feel left behind” and “I feel angry at the rich and powerful.
4. 2025 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: The Unseen Impacts of COVID. COV_LEG_EFF. Do you experience any of the following as a direct or indirect result of living through the COVID-19 pandemic? Code 1, yes. General population, 4-mkt avg., by age 18-34.
5. 2025 Edelman Trust Barometer. POL_AFF. Please specify where your feelings about people in your own country who have different political beliefs than you fall on the scale between two opposing directions. 11-point scale; bottom 5 box, negative. Question asked of half the sample. General population, 26-mkt avg., and by generation, by Sense of Grievance scale. Certain data included in the scale was not collected in China or Thailand. For a full explanation of how the Sense of Grievance scale was developed, please see the Technical Appendix in the 2025 Edelman Trust Barometer Report
6. 2025 Edelman Trust Barometer. POP_EMO. Some people say they worry about many things while others say they have few concerns. We are interested in what you worry about. Specifically, how much do you worry about each of the following? 9-point scale; top 4 box, worry. Attributes asked of half the sample. General population, 26-mkt avg., by age 18-27. Year-over-year changes were tested for significance using a t-test set at the 99%+ confidence level
7. 2025 Edelman Trust Barometer. CNG_MECH. Which actions would you approve of as ways to bring about societal changes you felt would give you and your family a better future? For each of the potential ways to bring about change listed below, pick the statement which best describes how you would feel if someone did this. 4-point scale, codes 3-4, approve. Question asked of half the sample. General population, 28-mkt avg., and by age 18-34. The “Hostile Activism” data is a net percentage of attributes 7-10, meaning the percentage of respondents who approved of one or more of the four items shown.
8. 2024 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: Brands and Politics. PERS_EMO. How much do you worry about each of the following? Please indicate your answer using a nine-point scale where one means “I do not worry about this at all” and nine means “I am extremely worried about this”. 9-point scale; top 4 box, worried. General population, 14-mkt avg., by age 18-27.
9. 2025 Edelman Trust Barometer. LEG_INF. There are many people who share information, recommendations, and their opinions in an attempt to influence the views and behavior of people like you or people in positions of power and authority. Some of these people you might consider to be legitimate sources of influence and expertise, while others you might not. How important is each of the following in making you see someone as a legitimate influence or expert, such that you willingly give them influence on your life decisions and you would be comfortable with them influencing the views and behaviors of people in positions of power and authority? 9-point scale; top 4 box, important. Question asked of half the sample. General population, 28-mkt avg., by age 18-27
10. 2025 Edelman Trust Barometer. POP_EMO. Some people say they worry about many things while others say they have few concerns. We are interested in what you worry about. Specifically, how much do you worry about each of the following? 9-point scale; top 4 box, worry. Attributes asked of half the sample. General population, 26-mkt avg., by age 18-27
11. 2025 Edelman Trust Barometer. WEA_AGR. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? 9-point scale; top 4 box, agree. Question asked of half the sample. General population, 28-mkt avg., by age 18-27

SUPPLEMENTAL DATA APPENDIX

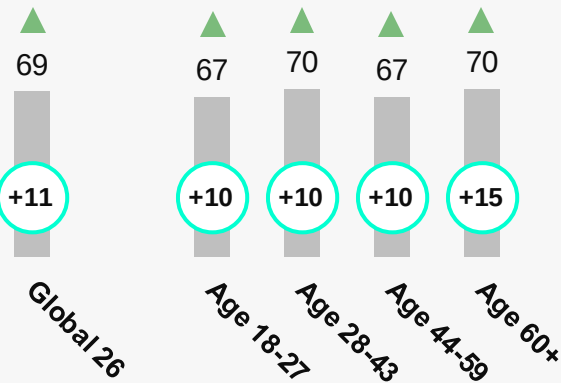
FROM THE 2025 EDELMAN TRUST BAROMETER

Fear That Leaders Lie to Us at All-Time High Across Generations

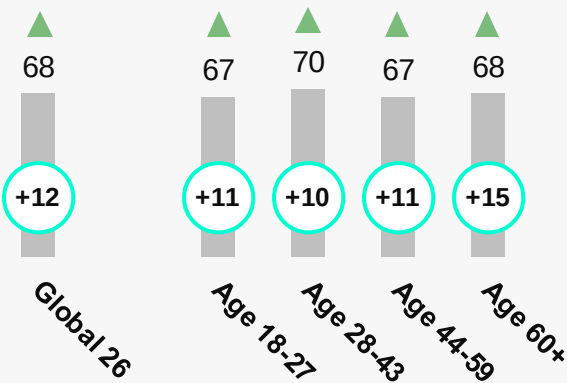
Percent who worry



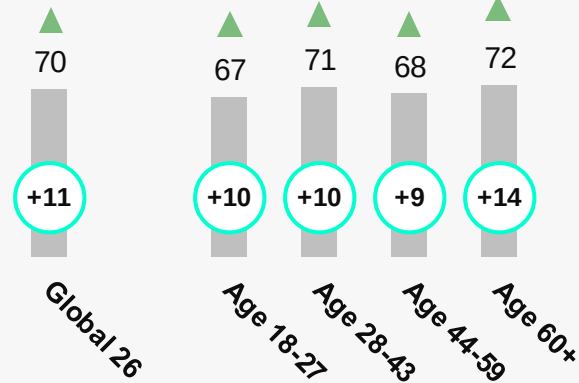
Government leaders



Business leaders



Journalists and reporters

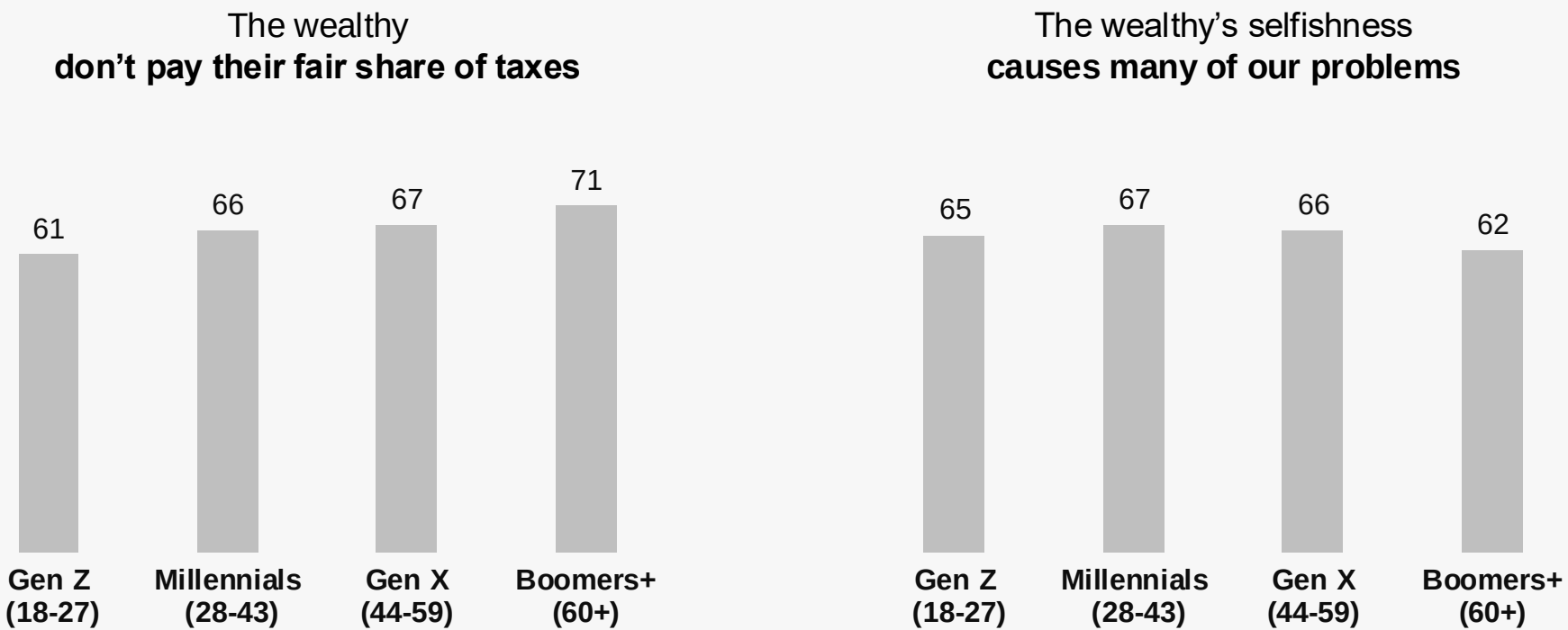


purposely mislead people
by saying things they know are false or gross exaggerations

Majority Convinced the Wealthy Take More Than Their Fair Share

Percent who agree

GLOBAL 28



Gen Z Most Likely to See Hostile Activism as a Viable Means to Drive Change

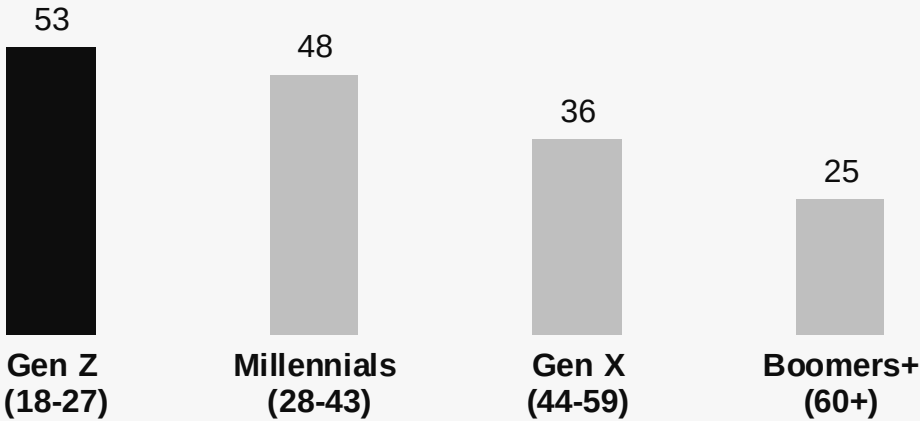
Percent who say

GLOBAL 28

I approve of hostile activism to drive change:

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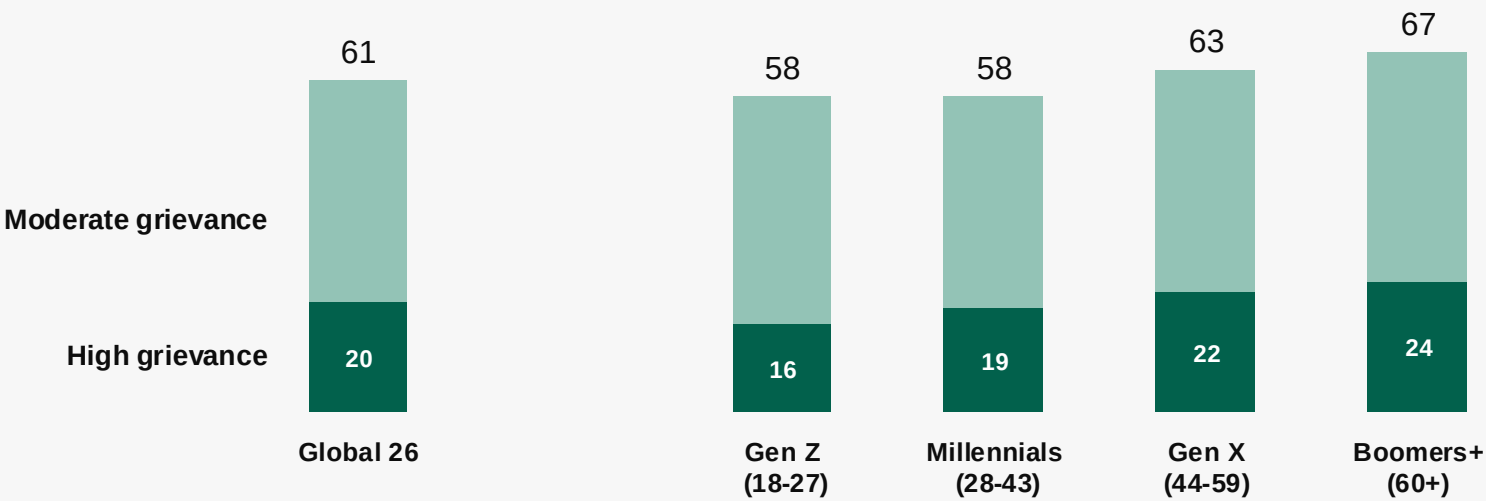


Grievance High Across Generations

Percent who say

GLOBAL 26 excl. China, Thailand

My sense of grievance against business, government, and the rich is moderate or higher



2025 Edelman Trust Barometer. Sense of Grievance scale. General population, 26-mkt avg., and by generation. Certain data included in the scale was not collected in China or Thailand. For a full explanation of how the Sense of Grievance scale was developed, please see the Technical Appendix.

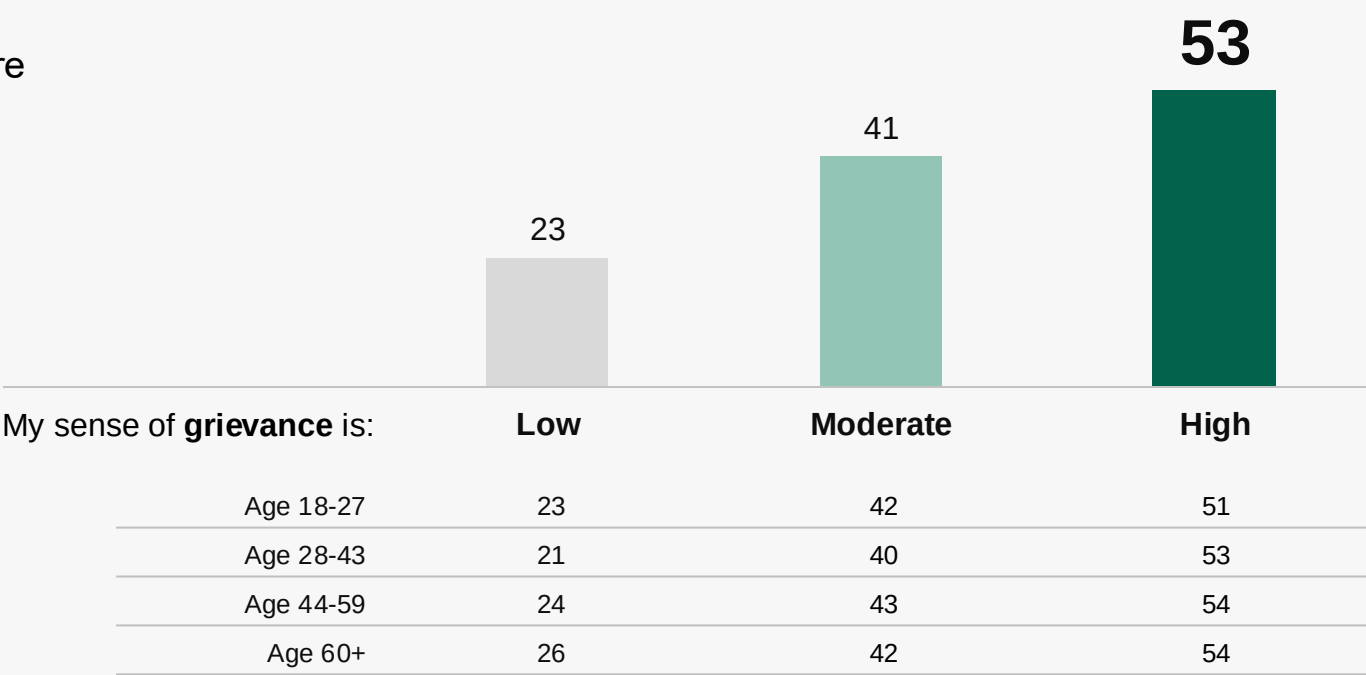


Across Generations, With High Grievance, Majority Hold a Zero-Sum Mindset

Percent who say, by sense of grievance

GLOBAL 26 excl. China, Thailand

I have a **zero-sum mindset**:
What helps people who don't share
my politics comes at a cost to me



Social contract at risk:
*With high grievance,
2x more likely to have a
zero-sum mindset
than low grievance*

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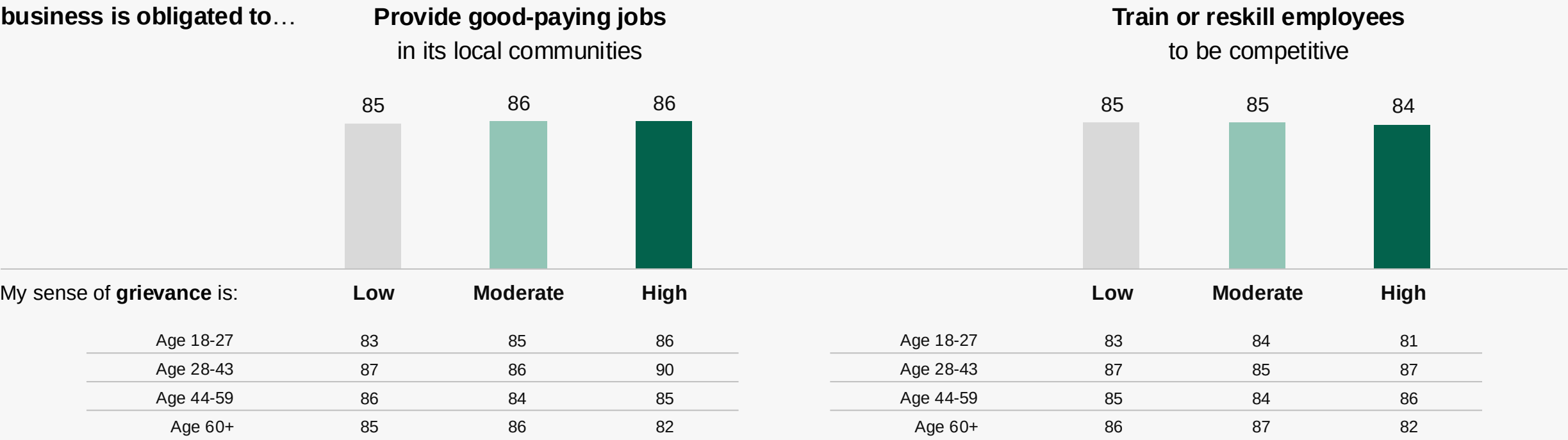


Business: Empower Us with Well-Paid Jobs and Skills for the Future

Percent who say, by sense of grievance

GLOBAL 26 excl. China, Thailand

To ensure a better future,
business is obligated to...



2025 Edelman Trust Barometer. BUS_EXP_FUT. How obligated do you believe business is to do each of the following in order to help us achieve a better future? 5-point scale; top 3 box, business is obligated to do this. Question asked of half the sample. General population, 26-mkt avg., and by generation, by Sense of Grievance scale. Certain data included in the scale was not collected in China or Thailand. For a full explanation of how the Sense of Grievance scale was developed, please see the Technical Appendix.

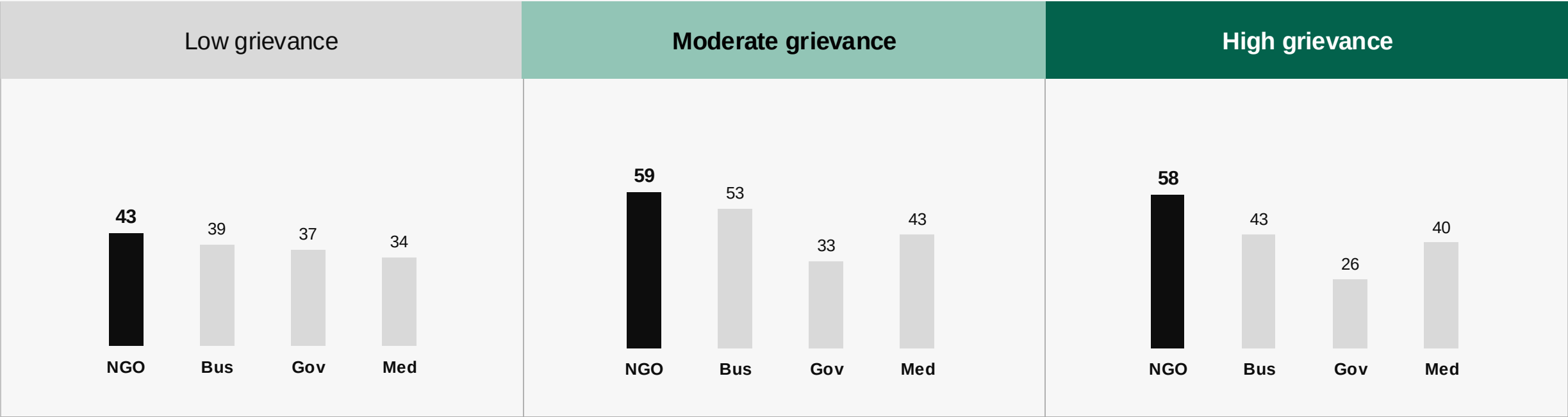


NGOs: Fight Divisiveness and Repair the Social Fabric

Percent who say, by sense of grievance, among ages 18-27

GLOBAL 24 excl. China, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, UAE

This institution is a **unifying force that brings people together**:



2025 Edelman Trust Barometer. [INS]_PER_DIM. In thinking about why you do or do not trust [INSTITUTION], please specify where you think they fall on the scale between the two opposing descriptions. 11-point scale; top 5 box, positive. Media and NGOs were only asked of half the sample. General population, 24-mkt avg., among those age 18-27, by Sense of Grievance scale. Data not collected in China and Thailand; Due to a translation inconsistency in Saudi Arabia and UAE, they have been excluded from this analysis. For full details regarding how this data was calculated and plotted, please see the Technical Appendix. "Bus" represents Business, "Gov" represents Government, "NGO" represents NGOs, and "Med" represents Media.



Influence is Earned Through Compassion, Not Power

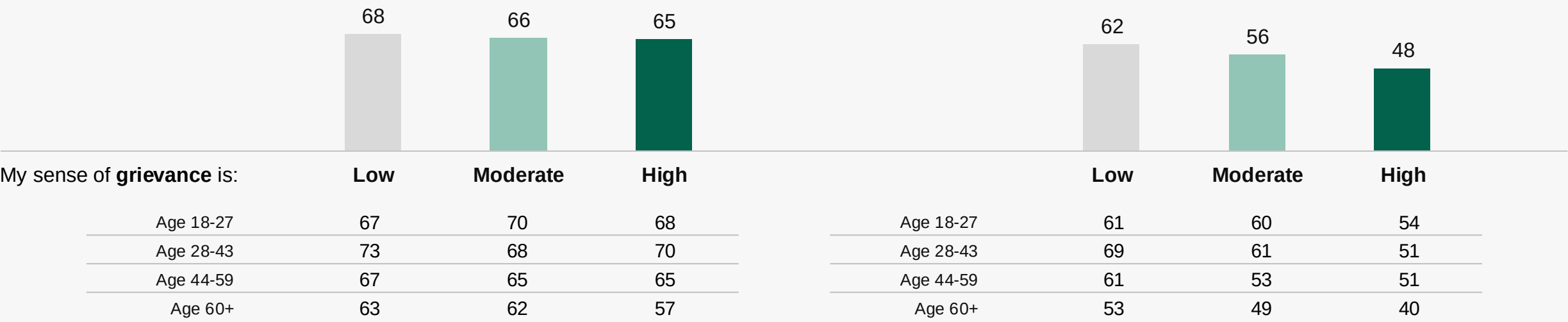
Percent who say, by sense of grievance

GLOBAL 26 excl. China, Thailand

You will earn legitimate influence with me if you...

Understand what people like me need and want

Occupy a formal position of power

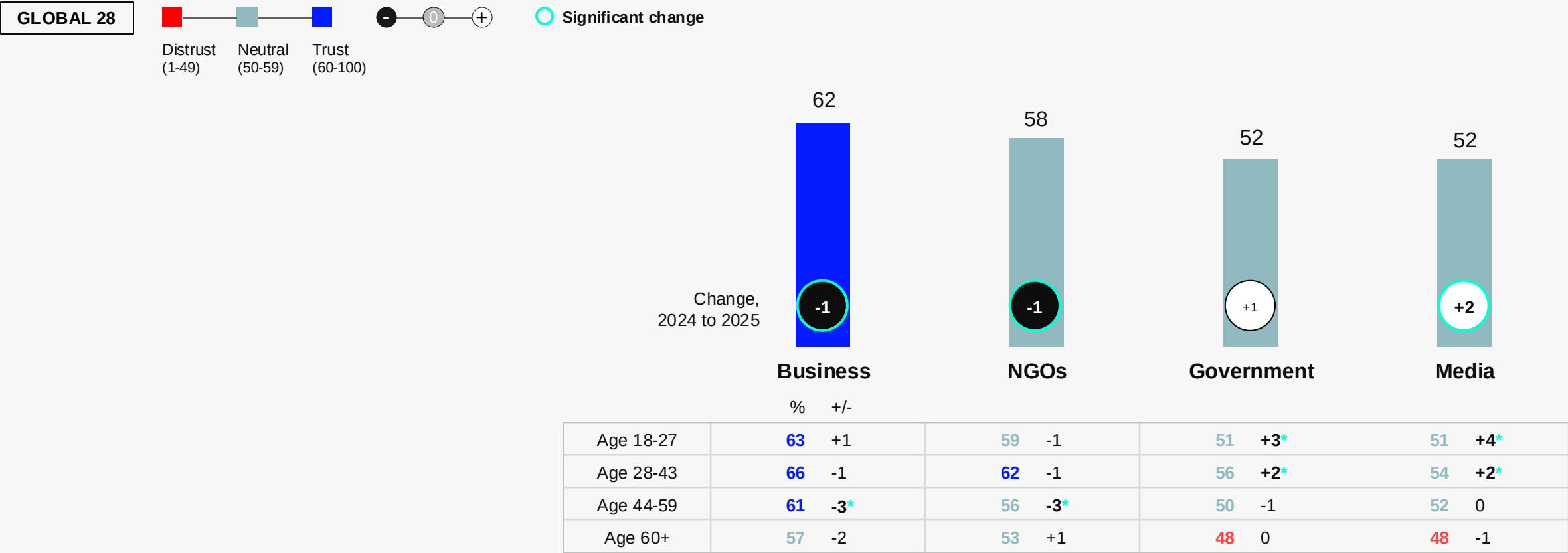


2025 Edelman Trust Barometer. LEG_INF. There are many people who share information, recommendations, and their opinions in an attempt to influence the views and behavior of people like you or people in positions of power and authority. Some of these people you might consider to be legitimate sources of influence and expertise, while others you might not. How important is each of the following in making you see someone as a legitimate influence or expert, such that you willingly give them influence on your life decisions and you would be comfortable with them influencing the views and behaviors of people in positions of power and authority? 9-point scale; top 4 box, important. Question asked of half the sample. General population, 26-mkt avg., and by generation, by Sense of Grievance scale. Certain data included in the scale was not collected in China or Thailand. For a full explanation of how the Sense of Grievance scale was developed, please see the Technical Appendix.



Business Remains Most Trusted Institution

Percent trust



2025 Edelman Trust Barometer. TRU_INS. Below is a list of institutions. For each one, please indicate how much you trust that institution to do what is right. 9-point scale; top 4 box, trust. General population, 28-mkt avg. and by generation. Year-over-year changes were tested for significance using a t-test set at the 99%+ confidence level.

