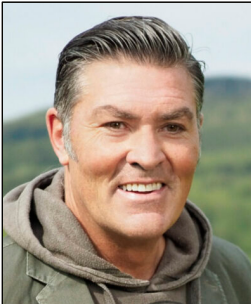


How Generation Z can save the world

by Mathias Müller,* *canton Bern, Switzerland*



Mathias Müller.
(Picture ma)

Today's youth is regarded to be oversensitive and lazy. But if you look closely, you can see that Gen Z is more resilient and freedom-loving than their self-righteous predecessors.

In the elections of recent months, for example in France, Germany, Belgium

or most recently in Austria, it was often reported that young people were moving to the right. While a shift to the left is often welcomed, experts ask how it could come to a shift to the right. There is a lot of talk about young people, but little with them. There is also a lack of self-reflection on the part of the older generations. Perhaps it would be recognised that it is not young people who are moving to the right, but the older generations who are moving to the left.

Through my work as a career military officer, I have direct contact with many people of Generation Z. I am also the father of three teenagers. I am convinced that Generation Z is great.

Generation Z is often labelled by older generations as whiny, weak and lazy. However, in my opinion, this is a misinterpretation of their actual resilience and potential. Similar to the people described by American journalist and author *Tom Brokaw* in his book "The Greatest Generation" – those who grew up during the Great Depression and experienced World War II – Generation Z could be closer to the ideal of strength, duty and determination than the spoiled baby boomers, the materialistic Generation X or the self-important millennials.

The new "greatest generation"

The world in which Gen Z is growing up is full of challenges: geopolitical tensions, social division,

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"Generation Z is willing to work harder and more dedicated than previous generations."
(KEYSTONE/WESTEND61/Uwe Umstaetter)

overregulation, growing state influence and increasing surveillance that borders on *Orwell's* "1984". Despite technological progress, we are experiencing a decline in freedom and stagnation in prosperity. These young people are confronted with a world in which their achievements are often ignored in favour of ideological identity politics and in which the expression of dissenting opinions is increasingly restricted.

Looking at the election results in European countries, it is evident that young people are increasingly supporting parties that stand for individual freedom and less state interference. This suggests that they want to correct the ideological and political mistakes of the past.

What's more, Gen Z has the chance to prove itself as the new "greatest generation". It could be the driving force for real change, leaving outdated ideologies behind and developing new, pragmatic solutions for a fairer and freer world.

What counts is character and achievement

Despite the odds, Gen Z is showing remarkable resilience. Studies show that while struggling with more mental health stresses, they are also seeking out solutions, whether through mindfulness, therapy or building supportive communities – whereas previous generations often turned to the bottle or numbed themselves with drugs.

I am convinced that Generation Z is not only concerned about their dwindling financial secur-

ity and individual freedom but is also actively fighting against the outdated ideologies that have dominated the cultural and political landscapes for decades. Generation Z brings a fresh perspective that clearly turns away from the often-hypocritical political correctness, wokeness, paternalistic etatism and globalism of previous generations.

These young people demand real diversity and freedom – defined by personal choice and responsibility, not by government mandates. Forty-nine per cent of Gen Z say they would rather start their own business and take responsibility than look for a secure job. They judge people on their character and achievements and reject a society in which identity politics and quotas are placed above merit and freedom. Gen Z has no problem with someone being gay or a woman preferring to live as a traditional housewife, true to the motto “live and let live”.

Search for meaning

According to a study by the Vanderbilt University, members of Generation Z are willing to

work harder and more dedicated than previous generations. Why? Because they are more passionate about what they do, provided they see the point of it. A 2023 Wall Street Journal study confirms that religiosity among young people has also increased significantly in recent years, demonstrating their search for values and meaning.

It is time to give Generation Z the freedom to shape its own future. The older generations should be mentors to Gen Z, not authoritarian, patronising teachers. Let us support their efforts to live in genuine diversity and freedom instead of stifling them with ideological prejudices! Generation Z could not only survive but change our world for the better. In his novel “Those Who Remain”, American author *G. Michael Hopf* wrote: “Hard times create strong men, strong men create good times, good times create weak men, and weak men create hard times.” This strengthens my hope in Gen Z!

*Source: Der stoische Pirat. <https://schweizermonat.ch/wie-die-generation-z-die-welt-retten-koennte/>, 3 October 2024
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