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THE FUTURE IS A RITE OF PASSAGE

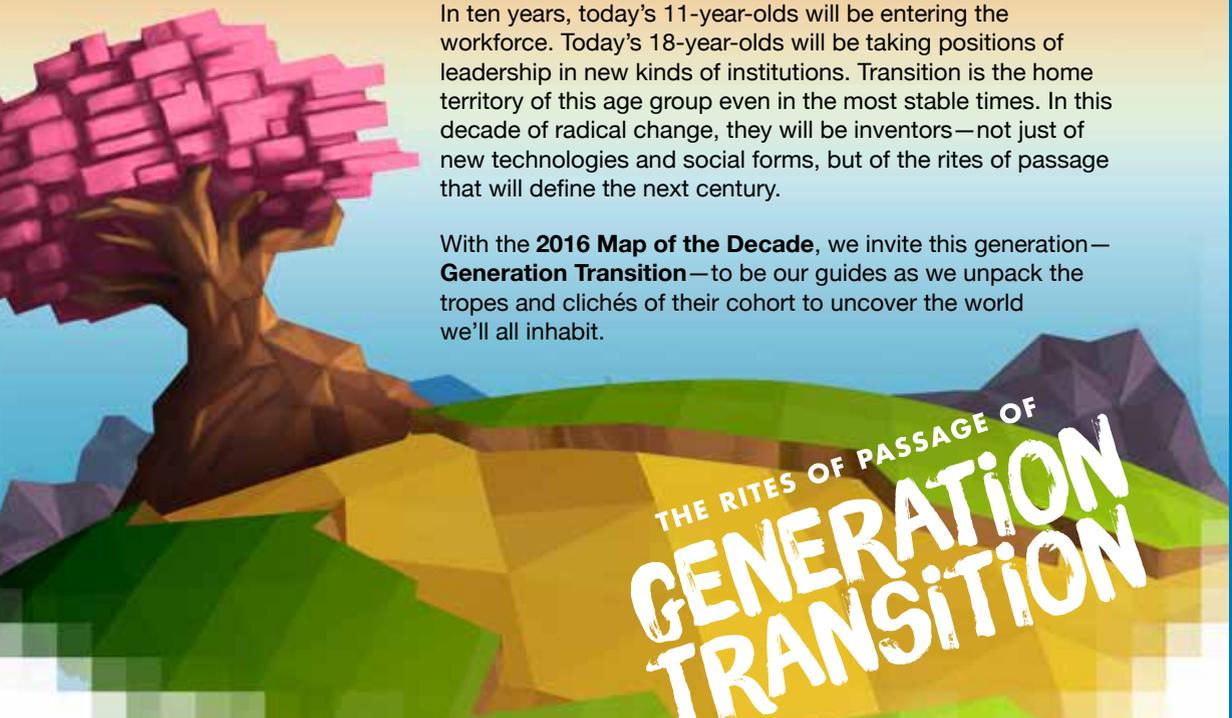
MAP

We live in a time of transitions. Between technological advancements and social revolutions, the next decade will transform the way we work, learn, and play. To navigate this time of tumult and uncertainty, we'll need new strategies for resilience and adaptation. We'll seek fresh perspectives to reframe our offerings for the global, hyper-connected world that's emerging. We'll tell new stories to weave the fabric of our fragmented workplaces, markets, and communities.

As we traverse a decade built on platforms, we'll hone our network strategies and look ahead to a post-platform world. We'll strive to build personal economies and negotiate our way through collaborative battles. We'll transcend collapses of familiar thresholds as we seek, ultimately, to harmonize our efforts into new forms of organizations—what we might call superorganisms. Who will be our guides through this transition? Who will forge the rites of passage that take us across this turbulent landscape of emergencies and exigencies?

In ten years, today's 11-year-olds will be entering the workforce. Today's 18-year-olds will be taking positions of leadership in new kinds of institutions. Transition is the home territory of this age group even in the most stable times. In this decade of radical change, they will be inventors—not just of new technologies and social forms, but of the rites of passage that will define the next century.

With the **2016 Map of the Decade**, we invite this generation—**Generation Transition**—to be our guides as we unpack the tropes and clichés of their cohort to uncover the world we'll all inhabit.



THE RITES OF PASSAGE OF
**GENERATION
TRANSITION**

**TYF
2016**



INSTITUTE FOR THE FUTURE

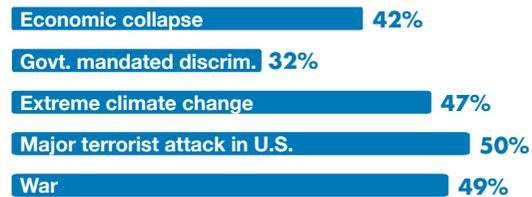
MEET GENERATION TRANSITION

Demographers and trend analysts have given today's young people many disparate names and labels in order to understand who they are and what they'll do with their lives. Gen Z. Digital natives. Founders. This year's Ten-Year Forecast seeks to understand both the changing experiences of this generation and their own assumptions about the world, as a way to reveal the emerging landscape.

Generational designations are always confounded by their ambiguous edges, including those between this generation and the now twenty and thirtysomething Millennials that came before them. However, looking at the shifts between generational cohorts can provide important insights into both slow-moving structural changes, and sudden discontinuities.

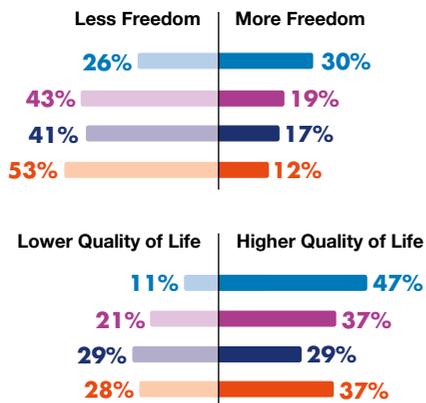
To explore this critical space, the Ten-Year Forecast team has partnered with the polling firm YouGov to conduct a representative survey of four American generations. Three of these cohorts are familiar to us: **MILLENNIALS (19–34)**, **GENERATION X (35–50)**, **BABY BOOMERS (51–69)**. And one is new. Meet today's 14–18 year olds, the young people that are forming their worldviews during this time of historic upheaval and volatility—a cohort we refer to as **GENERATION TRANSITION (14–18)**.

Generation Transition anticipates major challenges in the coming decade ...



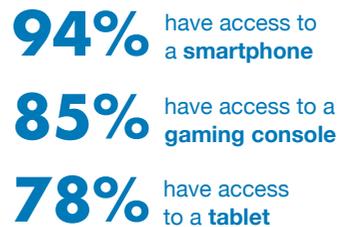
% of Gen Transition who believe a crisis will occur in the next 10 years.

... yet is optimistic about their lives.



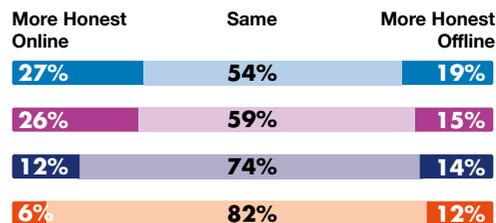
% who believe that today's youth's personal freedom and quality of life will be better or worse than their parents' generations.

Generation Transition is tech enabled ...



% of Gen Transition who have access to each device in their household.

... and presents different personas online and offline.



% who report that they are more open and honest online/offline.



A WORLD IN FLUX

At some level, every adolescent can personally relate to the volatility and uncertainty that has come to define the current moment in human history. Like teenagers navigating the fraught path to adulthood, the technological and social disruptions of recent decades have thrown our traditional assumptions and norms into near-existential crisis. As unfamiliar new hormones course through our global system, we lack the experience and perspective to manage our growing needs and powerful new capabilities. Our organizational structures are changing faster than we can keep up, causing our geopolitical complexion to break out in constant irritation, and our authoritative voices to falter where they were recently so confident.

TECHNOLOGY is changing the way we communicate information and coordinate human activity at every scale. Cheap and fast computing devices are diffusing across the world on the backbone of advanced high-speed networks, promising to link every person, institution, and object together regardless of hierarchical orientation or geographical location.

BUSINESS is changing as the marketplaces for goods and services adapt to these new affordances, allowing supercharged individuals and geographically remote manufacturers to advertise and sell products directly to consumers, eliminating many of the traditional advantages enjoyed by multinational incumbents.

WORK is changing as hyper-networked platforms accelerate the outsourcing of information-based jobs and as self-improving algorithms join self-driving robotics in facilitating the automation of many others.

THE GEOPOLITICAL LANDSCAPE

Like teenagers in the throes of puberty, we have few guarantees that we will successfully navigate this transition, or that we will adapt to the realities of the stage that comes next. We shudder at the massive coordination that will be required to survive and thrive in a fully-connected hyper-networked world, just as teenagers envision dark scenarios surrounding the foreboding responsibilities of adulthood.

But we cannot let that fear be our guide. Like every rite of passage throughout every human life, these transitions are defined both by their uncertainty and by the personal transformations they facilitate. No butterfly emerges from the chrysalis wishing it could return to its days as a caterpillar.

is changing as a generation of young people from all over the world grow up with smartphones and reliable internet access, leapfrogging traditional infrastructures and threatening the primacy of national governments.

THE PLANET is changing as the climate reacts to the turbulent urbanization of seven billion people, spawning record-breaking heatwaves and endangering our planetary reserves of fuel, food, and clean water.

LEARNING is changing as the skills required to compete in the rapidly shifting workforce outpace the curricula and priorities of schools. Academic institutions struggle to develop new frameworks that will accommodate the unprecedented influx of high-resolution data.

INSTITUTIONAL ASSUMPTIONS are changing as distributed and software-based organizations produce more resilient and cost-effective outcomes than the centralized institutions of our past, overturning entire industries seemingly overnight.

FOUR EXTREME PERSONAS for a decade of extremes

drone-selfie celebrities | post-global climate wanderers
quantum workforce | VRchitects

As Generation Transition navigates the volatility of the coming decade, its members will take advantage of unique literacies and capabilities that have emerged during their childhoods. These four extreme personas portray the striking attitudes and assumptions that differentiate this

generation from those who came before them. The forecast the different lifestyles and aspirations that today's young people will pursue as they come of age over the next ten years.

STRIVING

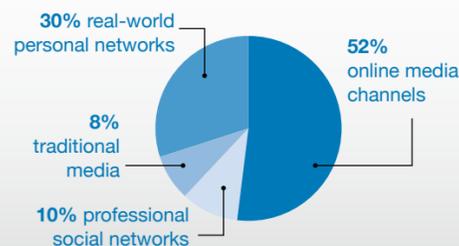
Every generation has its leaders—those who possess the charisma and the ambition to make a name for themselves in the world. For Generation Transition, those who strive will have access to new tools for building and managing their personal brand and online reputations as a key component of their personal and professional lives. This is less about the current obsession with selfies, but more importantly about the hyper-awareness that the Internet represents as a marketplace of attention. When it's trivially easy to broadcast yourself to everyone in the world, it's not necessarily about narcissism. It's about recognizing opportunities.

Generation Transition is entrepreneurial ...

... and promotes their personal brand online.

NEARLY **1/4** of youth believe they will spend their lives working for themselves.

THAT'S ALMOST **2x** more than other generations!



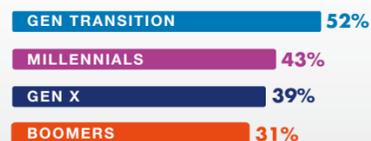
% of Gen Transition beliefs about best place to express personal brand.

NEGOTIATING

In 2016, ninety percent of people under thirty years old are living in the high-delta landscape of emerging and developing economies. They are growing up online and between countries, fleeing income inequality, conflict, and climate change. Even the most basic institutions have failed to earn their trust. Regardless of where they're born, these young people are increasingly off-grid and on-platform, taking advantage of crypto currencies and bottom-up coordination tools that thrive in the shadows of the networked world.

Generation Transition believes that people, not institutions, catalyze local change ...

... and looks to ground-up efforts to solve global problems.



% who believe the most effective way to create change is through public activism.

NEARLY **1/3** of youth think that activism and grassroots organizing are the best ways to confront major global challenges like climate change.

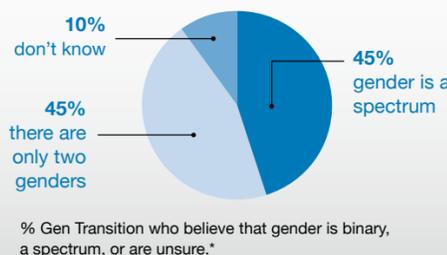
ONLY **1/5** of Millennials and Boomers—and even fewer Gen Xers—agree.

TRANSCENDING

For skilled workers in the world's growing megacities, the false boundaries of the past century hold little sway. Gender is not binary, but a nuanced spectrum. Learning isn't confined to formal institutions, but, like work, transportation, and lodging, can be readily accessed through the apps and platforms of the networked economy. As Generation Transition grows up using digital hubs like Snapchat and WeChat, they are training themselves to switch between contexts as easily as they switch between apps. Unemployed, but always working. Not in school, but always learning. Accessing everything while owning as little as possible.

Generation Transition sees gender as more than binary ...

... and learns everywhere, not just in school.



82% of youth have learned on YouTube VS **67%** of other cohorts.

61% of youth have used a learning app on their phone VS **28%** of other cohorts.

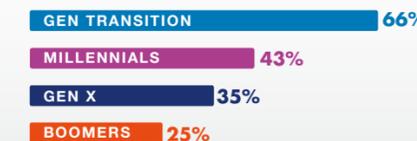
HARMONIZING

There have always been those who thought differently, visionaries who changed the world despite not fitting in. Just as the piano gave us Mozart and the typewriter gave us Hemingway, virtual reality sandboxes will give outlet to the creative geniuses of Generation Transition. These immersive tools will empower millions of young people to express themselves in new ways while collaborating with thousands of others to design, prototype, and simulate the environments and processes of tomorrow.

Generation Transition is beginning to embrace virtual reality ...

... and creates things together online.

7% of youth and Millennials have a VR headset in their home, THAT'S OVER **2x** the number of Gen X and Boomers.



% who have used social media to co-create art, projects, or games in the past month.

The drone-selfie celebrities of PERSONAL ECONOMIES



Armed with **drone-selfies** and **wearable cameras** for instant self-broadcasting

Managing and trading their reputation and identity data as **virtual assets**

Skillstreaming on platforms like Twitch to push leading-edge behaviors forward

Not narcissistic, but personally **ambitious**

An un- and under-employed generation leverages emerging reputation metrics to forge new opportunities.

The post-global climate wanderers of COLLABORATIVE BATTLES



Experimenting with **bottom-up decision-making platforms** like Reddit to make their voices heard

Taking advantage of **alternative currencies** and **on-demand food-reuse apps**

Resilient, forming **peer-to-peer community** with other wanderers online and off

Armed with **survival-grade smartphones** for living off-grid but on-platform

The global **90%** migrate between systems and nations as they negotiate for better terms from **overwhelmed power structures.**

The quantum workforce of THRESHOLD COLLAPSES



Equipped with **multi-purpose clothing and tools** for maximum mobility and context-switching

Flocking to **hyper-connected cities** where infrastructure can be navigated as a service

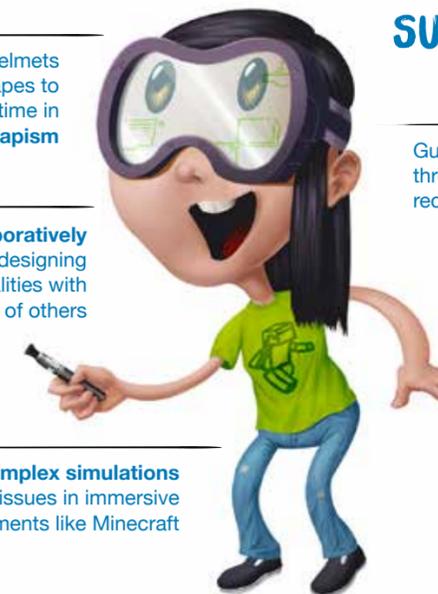
Relying on **digital hubs** like Snapchat and WeChat for all aspects of work and life

Flexible socially and professionally

Urban microworkers live entirely within the **digital hubs of the networked economy** as they blur the boundaries of **gender, work, and access to services.**

*Survey question design was drawn from the Benenson Strategy Group's Fusion.net Millennial Survey, 2015.

The VRchitects of the SUPERORGANISM



Armed with VR helmets and nutrient vapes to spend all of their time in **productive escapism**

Collaboratively creative, designing new realities with thousands of others

Creating **complex simulations** of global issues in immersive environments like Minecraft

Guiding each other's efforts through **meta-structures** that reclassify complex systems

High-resolution simulation environments supercharge the creative class with new canvases for **creativity, collaboration, and problem-solving.**

STRIVING

NEGOTIATING

DRIVER
COMPUTING POWER AND NETWORK SPEED
continue to increase as costs fall, propelling ubiquitous device-based networking around the world.

DRIVER
AUTOMATION AND OUTSOURCING
of traditional jobs drive underemployment for young people, increasing risk for those who pursue inflexible skillsets.



DRIVER
BUSINESS PROFITS
in retail, advertising, and media continue to shift toward platforms, pressuring other industries to leverage mobile networked strategies.

PERSONAL ECONOMIES NEW ASSETS

FORECAST
SKILLSTREAMING
on platforms like Twitch rapidly diffuses leading-edge behaviors.

FORECAST
Powerful **VIRTUAL ASSISTANTS** vie for influence and provide necessary guidance for personal development and asset management.

POST-PLATFORM SCENARIO
CRYPTO SEAS
In the growing shadows of the formal economy, the blockchain-based distributed grid grows in influence and importance. As traditional governments and institutions drag their feet on the collective dilemmas of privacy, security, and access, crypto seas offer a short-term solution with long-term implications. For those with much to lose, crypto seas provide personal hidden pools for keeping valued assets away from prying eyes. For those who never found a foothold in the mainstream economy to begin with, it's the only network they've ever relied on, and they trust it with everything they have.

DRIVER
SPIKES IN GLOBAL MIGRATION
spur nationalistic policies from distressed states, driving many migrants into underground systems for health, education, and asset management.

DRIVER
WORSENING RESOURCE AND CLIMATE CHANGE
impacts drive migration around the globe as people seek more hospitable environments.

DRIVER
INSTITUTIONAL TRUST
continues to decline across the board, driving steady demand for Bitcoin-like currencies and peer-to-peer alternatives to traditional systems.

COLLABORATIVE BATTLES NEW SOCIAL CONTRACTS



FORECAST
NEW SURVEILLANCE TECHNOLOGIES, including everything from "citizen scores" to neuro-surveillance, drive youth into the shadows of networked society for their daily needs.

FORECAST
THE GLOBAL 90% are born into emerging high-delta economies, armed with cheap phones and robust network literacies.

FORECAST
DISTRIBUTED SMART CONTRACTS built on technologies like blockchain create tools for youth to renegotiate the social contract with traditional power structures.

POST-PLATFORM SCENARIO
POCKET MARKETS
Pocket markets can appear anywhere and disappear just as quickly—on a phone, an ATM, the dashboard of a car, or the label of a household product. They are the saloons and frontier towns of the digital wild west. Every institution with user-facing touchpoints will at least consider creating their own pocket markets to act as central hubs for all of their consumer/worker/user needs. But they'll also need to create services for every other pocket market that is owned by someone else. As an early byproduct of the hyper-networked world, pocket markets will overwhelm consumers with noisy and conflicted offerings.

FORECAST
AN UN- AND UNDER-EMPLOYED GENERATION of young people strives to compete in the on-demand global workforce of 5.5 billion people.

FORECAST
Young people manage a **COMPLEX PORTFOLIO** of reputation, skills, relationships, and physical assets to create personal wealth from diverse activities.

THE RITES OF PASSAGE OF GENERATION TRANSITION

FORECAST
BOTTOM-UP GENERAL-PURPOSE ORGANIZATIONAL PLATFORMS like Reddit transform youthful revolutionary movements into persistent processes of co-created change.

POST-PLATFORM SCENARIO
MEME HIVES
Whether they take the form of grassroots campaign slogans or online hashtags, memes provide authentic signals about what's important to large and diverse communities of people. For complex systems that lack centralized control, memes are the glue that cultivates buy-in and maintains organizational cohesion. The meme hives of the networked world are fickle, and resist coercion from established power structures, but they also retain the power to make or destroy individual fortunes. They don't speak softly, but they do carry the stick.



DRIVER
MEGACITIES continue to proliferate as young people flock to opportunity centers, forcing future-looking cities to compete by providing the best networked services.

THRESHOLD COLLAPSES NEW LIFESTYLES

FORECAST
Platforms like Snapchat compete to be the **ONE-STOP-HUB** for young people to lease their "life-as-a-service."

FORECAST
Retailers and traditional **BRANDS ARE DISINTERMEDIATED** by raw manufacturers and maker collectives that can sell directly to individuals.

FORECAST
SMART CITIES transform the urban grid into an adaptable network of on-demand housing, work, and transportation for young people who are not invested in ownership.

POST-PLATFORM SCENARIO
METANARRATIVES
As we rely less on traditional institutions and more on networked platforms, metanarratives will emerge to fill the power vacuum created within API (Application Programming Interface) plumbing itself, across the thousands of platforms that compete for people's trust and attention. They will act as buffers and translators, bridging the gaps between individual platforms and influencing decisions about which platforms to trust. Through a combination of algorithmic management and institutional coercion, the strongest metanarratives will overtake the role that governments, markets, and churches have fought over forever: the goal-setting and direction of individual human lives.

FORECAST
IMMERSIVE TECHNOLOGIES leverage platforms like Minecraft to simulate the large-scale distributed organization of resources, services, and information in response to global-scale challenges.

FORECAST
Without a central brain or control system, new kinds of **MEMES** and meme channels suggest the most compelling actionable patterns for coordination.

SUPERORGANISM NEW CAPABILITIES

FORECAST
ALGORITHMIC MANAGEMENT OF WORK of all kinds lays the foundation for a *de facto* massive-scale operating system for managing not just organizations, but civilizations.

FORECAST
DIRECT-TO-CONSUMER GENETICS and new platforms for DNA design and fabrication transform the consumer market for high-resolution health goods and well-being services.



DRIVER
ALGORITHMS become increasingly intelligent, translating activities across institutional silos and distributing work tasks to qualified individuals.

DRIVER
GENETIC SEQUENCING AND DESIGN continue to decline in cost and increase in capability, super-powering biomimicry as a general-purpose engineering tool.

DRIVER
SELF-DRIVING VEHICLES AND NETWORKED DRONES gradually augment and transform the transportation grid and global supply chains.

DRIVER
THE RISE OF VIRTUAL WORK allows smaller communities to rethink their dependence on highway infrastructure, parking, and zoning constraints, creating unlikely success stories in smaller hubs.

DRIVER
VIRTUAL AND AUGMENTED REALITY TECHNOLOGIES drive improvements in high-resolution simulated environments, creating new forms of co-creation, sharing, and learning.

TRANSCENDING

HARMONIZING

ABOUT THIS MAP

The **2016 Map of the Decade** explores the emerging landscape of the ten-year horizon through the lens of the young people who will be entering the workforce over the next decade. It is a guide to the forces that are shaping the future today and that will define the challenges and opportunities of the coming decade.

MEET GENERATION TRANSITION

What are the beliefs of today's young people concerning the rapidly changing world they're growing up in? Take a peek at our national survey—and orient yourself to this generation's unique perspective.*

EXPLORE FOUR EXTREME PERSONAS FOR A DECADE OF EXTREMES

What might adulthood look like for today's young people as the ways they work, learn, coordinate, and communicate evolve over the course of their lives? These four provocations are designed to stretch your thinking and imagine counterintuitive new possibilities.

OPEN THE MAP FOR AN OVERVIEW OF THE DECADE

The inside of the map provides an at-a-glance view of the zones of innovation and disruption that will define the next ten years. Track the drivers of change that give rise to four forecasts in each zone—the ways that today's young people will strive, negotiate, transcend, and harmonize across the different sectors of society. Explore the four scenarios of a post-platform world that emerge at the intersections of these zones of innovation.



DIVE DEEPER INTO THE WORLD OF GENERATION TRANSITION

IMMERSE YOURSELF IN FOUR ZONES OF TRANSITION

Generation Transition will create new practices, new values, and new stories about who we are. Four perspective manuals—Personal Economies, Collaborative Battles, Threshold Collapses, and Superorganism—provide in-depth synthesis and signals of change to provoke deeper insights about the many urgent futures facing our world.

DEVELOP POST-PLATFORM STRATEGIES

The Interfaces of Transition Toolkit distills and contrasts the leading-edge behaviors of both today's platform companies and world to come. Use the four post-platform scenarios to develop new strategies that go beyond today's platform practices to weave together a new global landscape for 2026.

*All survey data are drawn from the Institute for the Future's 2016 Ten-Year Forecast Survey, unless otherwise specified. The survey was conducted online by YouGov between 9-25 February, 2016. The survey included four sub-samples: Gen Transition (n=600, margin of error $\pm 4.6\%$) Millennial (n=385, margin of error $\pm 6.6\%$), Gen X (n=385, margin of error $\pm 6.6\%$), and Baby Boomer (n=385, margin of error $\pm 6.2\%$).



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