



**YOUNG
WOMEN'S
TRUST**

**NO
COUNTRY
FOR
YOUNG WOMEN**

Young Women's Trust Annual Survey 2016

INTRODUCTION

The Young Women's Trust Annual Survey 2016 reveals a generation of young people despairing and anxious, many of whose lives are on hold because of serious financial, work and housing problems – with young women hit hardest.

The findings reveal that high numbers of young men and women are despondent, pessimistic and facing serious financial issues, with young women most likely to report money problems, experience of discrimination in the jobs market, worries about the future, health problems and low self-confidence.

Too many young people are struggling to make ends meet, financial problems are endemic and being debt-free in the future seems a pipe dream. As a result, young people are in limbo, living with their parents and delaying having children.

The survey also shows that the majority of young people do not expect sex equality to happen any time soon.

Perhaps not surprisingly given the scale of these challenges, only a minority of young people feel optimistic and increasing numbers, compared to last year, reported feeling worn down, worried about the future and depressed.

METHODOLOGY AND TERMINOLOGY

This report is based on findings from a survey carried out on behalf of Young Women's Trust by Populus Data Solutions. A representative sample of 4,044 18-30 year olds in Great Britain, from the Populus Live Online Panel, were surveyed between 27 June-13 July 2016.

For ease of reference unless stated otherwise, when we talk about findings relating to young people in this report, including young men and young women, we are referring to 18-30 year olds. In several places we have been able to make comparisons with a survey we published last year which asked some of the same questions. More detailed breakdowns are available on request.

MONEY AND WORK

Young people are facing serious financial pressures, which are impacting heavily on their ability to lead independent lives and on their plans for the future. Although both genders are facing challenges, young women are being hit harder than young men.

Our survey also shows that young people from Black, Asian, Minority and Ethnic (BAME) groups and lower socio-economic groups are facing particular financial and workplace challenges. It is highly shocking in the 21st century that discrimination in the workplace continues to be a common occurrence.

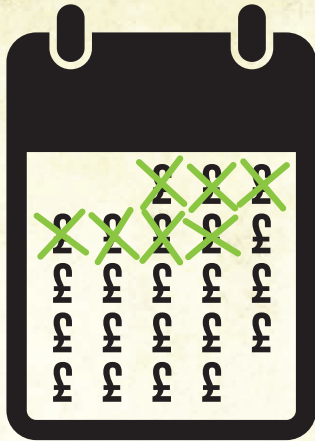
High numbers of young people are facing serious and enduring financial problems

Young people are struggling to make ends meet and to deal with debt:

- 39% of young women said it was a real struggle to make their cash last until the end of the month (compared with 27% of young men).
- 25% of young women said they are in debt all of the time (compared with 21% of young men).
- 45% of young women said it would be a big financial problem if they had to replace a large item such as a fridge or washing machine this year (compared with 39% of young men).
- One in 12 young parents (8%) reported using a foodbank because they couldn't afford to buy food. This compares with one in fifty of young people who are not parents (2%).
- Young people don't hold out much hope of paying off debts. 18-24 year olds thought that it was far more likely that humans will have landed on Mars by the time they are 40 (46%) than that they will be debt-free (30%).



45% OF YOUNG WOMEN SAID IT WOULD BE A BIG FINANCIAL PROBLEM TO REPLACE A LARGE ITEM SUCH AS A WASHING MACHINE THIS YEAR (COMPARED WITH 39% OF YOUNG MEN)



39% OF YOUNG WOMEN SAID IT WAS A REAL STRUGGLE TO MAKE THEIR CASH LAST UNTIL THE END OF THE MONTH (COMPARED WITH 27% OF YOUNG MEN)

However, young people don't feel there is much they can do to improve work and pay and many would consider moving abroad.

- Less than a quarter of young people (22%) said they would be confident asking for a pay rise, with young women much less likely to have said this (16%) than young men (27%).
- Young women (35%) are less likely than young men (43%) to be confident about changing career.
- More than half of young people (56%) said they would consider moving abroad for work if they couldn't find a job in this country (51% of young women, 61% of young men).

As a result of financial pressures, young people are having to put their lives on hold:

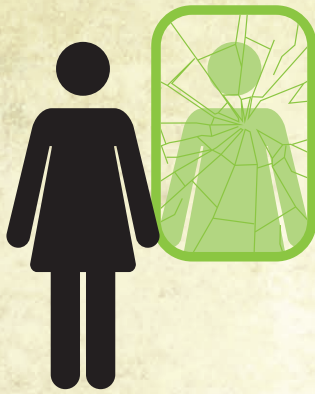
- Almost half of young people (48%) said they may have to put off having children until they can afford to have them.
- More than four in ten young people aged 18-30 live with their parents (43%), with almost one in four (24%) of those aged 25-30 having said this.
- Almost one in four of all young people (24%) had to move back home with their parents/guardian/carer after a period away because they couldn't afford to live away from them.

Pay and job security are major issues, especially for young women and parents

Low paid, insecure work are major problems for young people:

- 30% of young people have been offered a zero hours contract (32% of young women, 28% of young men).
- More than one in five of young people (22%) have been paid less than the minimum wage (23% of young women, 20% of young men).
- Over a quarter of young people in work (28%) are worried about not having enough paid hours (30% of young women, 26% of young men).
- Almost four in ten young people in work (38%) are worried about their job security.
- Young people in work from the lowest socio-economic group DE and from BAME groups are more likely than others to be worried about their job security (43% DE, 44% BAME) and not having enough paid hours (47% DE, 39% BAME).





OVER HALF OF YOUNG WOMEN LACK **SELF- CONFIDENCE** (54% FEMALE, 39% MALE)

Discrimination in the workplace is disturbingly high

- Three in ten young women (30%) said they experienced sex discrimination when working or looking for work.
- 7% of young women said they were treated less well than others when working or looking for work because they turned down sexual advances.
- 40% of BAME young people said they have been discriminated against when working or looking for work because of their ethnicity (compared with 5% White).
- Over four in ten of young people (41%) said they had been discriminated against when working or looking for work because of their age (44% of young women and 37% of young men). Women aged 18-24 were the most likely group (55%) to have said they were treated less well because of their age.
- Less than one in three young people (31%) said it was likely they would turn to a trade union for advice about their rights if they were being treated unfairly at work. In contrast, 80% said it was likely they would turn to a friend, 77% to a partner, 74% to the internet, 72% to their parent, 56% to their manager or someone else senior at work and 46% to the HR department at work.



HEALTH, WELLBEING AND CONFIDENCE

Amongst the striking findings in our survey are the alarmingly high numbers of young people who have health concerns, are worried about the future, lack confidence and don't feel optimistic. These findings are not surprising in the context of the intractable financial problems that so many young people are facing.

Significant numbers of young people, especially young women, are worried about their health

- More than a third of young people (34%) said they were worried about their physical health (37% of young women, 32% of young men).
- 33% of young people said they were worried about their mental health (38% of young women, 29% of young men).
- More than one in five of young people (22%) said they felt depressed (22% of young women, 21% of young men). This increased to 35% for young people from the lowest socio-economic group DE.
- 14% of young people said they have a longstanding physical or mental condition that has lasted or is likely to last 12 months and which has a substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out day to day activities (17% of young women, 11% of young men).

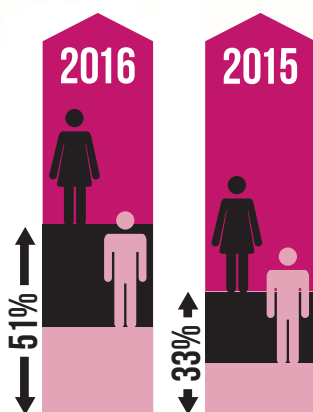
Only a minority of young people are optimistic about the future - with young women particularly worried and lacking in confidence

- Over half of young people (51%) said they feel worried for the future (55% of young women, compared with 47% of young men). This is a significant deterioration since 2015, when we found 33% of young people said they felt worried for the future (38% of young women, compared with 28% of young men). A Brexit factor when comparing this year to last cannot be ruled out, given the fieldwork for the 2016 survey took place immediately after the referendum on UK membership of the EU.
- More than four in ten of young people (42%) said they feel worn down (46% young women, compared with 38% young men). This compares with 30% in 2015 (36% young women, 28% young men). Only just over a third (36%) feel optimistic (34% young women, 39% young men).

- More than half of young women said they lack self-confidence (54% of young women, 39% of young men).
- Almost half of young women are worried about their appearance (46% of young women, 32% of young men).
- Less than half of young people (46%) agreed that people like them can achieve whatever they want to in life. Young women (43%) are less likely to have said this than young men (49%).



38% OF YOUNG WOMEN SAID THEY WERE WORRIED ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH
(COMPARED WITH 29% OF YOUNG MEN)



51% OF YOUNG PEOPLE SAID THEY FEEL WORRIED FOR THE FUTURE A SIGNIFICANT DETERIORATION SINCE 2015



48% OF YOUNG PEOPLE SAID THEY MAY HAVE TO PUT OFF HAVING CHILDREN UNTIL THEY CAN AFFORD TO HAVE THEM

YOUNG PEOPLE'S VIEWS ON GENDER EQUALITY – IT MAY NEVER HAPPEN

Young people want a partner who treats men and women equally – but they don't need to be a feminist

- It is more important to young people when looking for a husband/wife/partner that they like animals (53%) than that they are a feminist (28%). However, while having a partner who is a feminist wasn't important to most young people, the vast majority said it would be important to have a partner who treated men and women equally (86%).
- The majority of young people said when looking for a husband/wife/partner it was important that they found someone who wanted to get on in their career (62%). Young women (69%) were more likely to have said this than young men (56%).
- Young women (68%) are more likely than young men (41%) to have said it is important to find a partner who can provide financial security. This suggests that young women are more likely to assume that it is their partner who can find financial independence than themselves.

The majority of young people think there is sex discrimination in the workplace – and gender stereotypes still prevail although appear to have improved

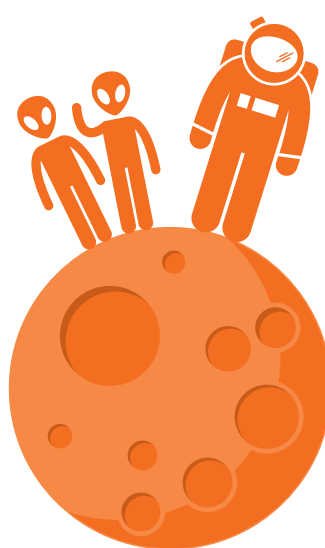
- 63% of young people agreed that women still face discrimination in the workplace. Young women (72%) are much more likely to think this than young men (54%).
- Just 28% of young people said it is likely that gender discrimination in the UK will be a thing of the past by the time they are 40 (21% of young women, 36% of young men). Less than half believe it is likely that men and women will be treated equally in the workplace (37% of young women, 59% of young men).
- Young people continued to have gendered views about career choices. For example, 59% thought being a construction worker was best suited to young men, 1% that it was best suited to young women and 38% that it was equally suited to men and women. In contrast, less than 1% thought hairdressing was

best suited to young men, 30% that it was a career best suited to young women and 68% that it was equally suited. Interestingly given the challenges faced in getting more women into engineering, the majority of young people (71%) said this was a career equally suited to both sexes.

- There are encouraging, albeit early signs, of reduced gender stereotyping of roles amongst young people. Compared to last year significantly more people said that jobs were equally suited to young men and young women.

Most young people don't think there is sex equality now – and many don't think it will ever happen

- A quarter of young people (26%) said that it would take over 25 years for women's average earnings to be as high as men's, or that it would never be achieved.
- Just over one in five young people (22%) said that men and women currently take an equal role in caring for children. 21% said this will happen within 10 years, but 17% said it will never be achieved.
- Just over a quarter of young people (27%) said that men and women currently do equal amounts of housework. Young women were less likely to say men and women do equal amounts already (21% of young women, 33% of young men).
- More than half of young people (56%) said it will take at least a decade before there are equal numbers of men and women MPs. One in five (20%) said this would take over 25 years, while an additional 13% said it would never be achieved.
- Almost a quarter of young people (23%) said it would take at least 25 years for there to be equal numbers of women business leaders as men, while an additional 12% said it will never be achieved.



**BY THE TIME
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MANY YOUNG PEOPLE THINK
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CONCLUSIONS

The Young Women's Trust Annual Survey 2016 paints a depressing picture.

At a time of life traditionally characterised by youthful confidence and optimism, it is striking that so many young people, especially young women, are struggling to make ends meet and are increasingly worn down and worried for the future.

While this report is based on the findings from the Young Women's Trust's most comprehensive survey and does not attempt to set out detailed policy solutions, it sheds much light on where priorities must be.

Young people told us their top concerns were housing, followed by unemployment and pay/job security. These must all be areas of concerted focus across government. Tackling the discrimination that many young people are facing because of their age, gender and ethnicity must also be a priority.

We urge policymakers to focus activity on where the need is greatest, on those young people who are losing out the most. And what is very clear from our survey is that while life is hard for many young people, it's likely to be considerably tougher if you're a young woman, BAME, a parent and/or from a lower socio-economic group. Addressing these inequalities should be at the heart of government policy.





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