Understand how young people across the EMEA region are truly feeling and behaving during the COVID-19 pandemic

An online quantitative study fielded from March 20-29 via VICE, Refinery29, and i-D websites and social channels. Additional qualitative questions fielded to VICE Media Group’s proprietary insights communities, VICE Voices and Mad Chatter.

**OBJECTIVE**

N=1,840

**SAMPLE SIZE**

48% MALE

48% FEMALE

4% NON-BINARY/N/A

**MALE**

**FEMALE**

**GENDER**

**GENERATION**

35% GEN Z

50% MILLENNIAL

15% GEN X

**LOCATION**

18% RURAL

18% SUBURBAN

37% URBAN

27% MAJOR CITY (1MM+ PEOPLE)

**MARKETS**

EMEA

Austria, Belgium, Britain, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Romania, Spain, Switzerland, UAE
Youth in EMEA takes the COVID-19 crisis seriously, but still not as seriously as the rest of the world.

81% say they take this pandemic very seriously.

VS. 87% Global

Q: I am taking this epidemic very seriously.
They are doing their part, but they don’t feel everyone else does.

89% feel they do everything they can to limit the spread of Coronavirus.

32% vs. 20% NA / vs. 22% LATAM feel others do everything they can to limit the spread of Coronavirus.

Only 15% of youth in Britain feel that others do everything they can to limit the spread of Coronavirus.

“I think many people have changed...[they] are more supportive, while others have shown their most horrible human side and how selfish and individualistic they are.”

– Millennial, Woman, Spain
Emotions are running high for the EMEA youth

Youth in Italy is in this for the long run, experiencing the situation more intensely compared to the rest of the region.

88% Experience higher levels of *uncertainty* compared to before COVID-19 VS. 67% EMEA

81% Experience higher levels of *stress* compared to before COVID-19 VS. 46% EMEA

Q: How would you describe your emotions today compared to an average day before the Coronavirus?
They are worried for loved ones, while the potential of a new recession is more worrisome than getting sick themselves.

62% are mostly worried about loved ones getting the Coronavirus.

ONLY 25% say they worry about getting the Coronavirus themselves, vs. 43% global.

46% say they are worried about the economic impact.

31% say they are worried about their personal finances.

“I worry that soon I will no longer have a roof over my head because the promised government aid packages are not really being planned and will probably be too late.”

– Gen Z, Transgender, Austria
There’s still positivity and thoughts of a better tomorrow...

57%

VS. 45% NA / VS. 49% APAC

feel Coronavirus will have a positive long-term impact on society and culture

Q: How would you describe your emotions today compared to an average day before the Coronavirus?

Q: Do you feel Coronavirus will have a positive or negative long-term impact on society and culture?
Southern European countries don’t share the optimism of most EMEA countries

Only 28% of youth in Italy feels Coronavirus will have a positive long-term impact

Only 42% of youth in Spain feels Coronavirus will have a positive long-term impact
Youth in EMEA know the world will never be the same and predict long lasting changes in our economy and society.

Youth in the Netherlands are convinced that their social life will never be the same again.

- **What do you imagine will be the most lasting societal change after this pandemic?**
  - The way our economy operates: 57%
  - The way we engage with our community: 49%
  - The way we work: 44%
  - The way we socialise: 43%
  - The way we address climate change: 29%

Say there will be a long lasting change in the way we engage with our community (84%) compared to 49% EMEA.

Say there will be a long lasting change in the way we work (71%) compared to 44% EMEA.

Q: What do you imagine will be the most lasting societal change after this pandemic?
Purpose has an impact on getting them through this crisis.

- **40%** experience lower levels of purposefulness now compared to before Coronavirus.

- **41%** say that feeling a sense of purpose today and into the future makes them feel emotionally grounded.

VS. 35% Global

Q: How would you describe your emotions today compared to an average day before the Coronavirus?
Many are grateful for the gift of time that has been given to them.

“I can now look for an hour outside the window into the nature, zoning out and consciously doing nothing without any feelings of guilt.”

– Gen Z, Woman, Germany

“Having new ideas and being able to work on projects that excite me”

– Gen Z, Man, Belgium

“Time to take a break and reflect. This situation is a possibility for all of us to reboot.”

– Millenial, Man, Spain

Q: How would you describe your emotions today compared to an average day before the Coronavirus?

“Slowing down, having time to exercise, cook and spend time with my husband and kids”

– Millennial, Woman, Britain

“Having new ideas and being able to work on projects that excite me”

– Gen Z, Man, Belgium

“Time to take a break and reflect. This situation is a possibility for all of us to reboot.”

– Millenial, Man, Spain

1 in 2 say they feel more grateful today than they did before the Coronavirus.

Q: What are you unexpectedly grateful for during this time?
Staying sane in an insane situation

They have found the way to see the positive in a negative situation and stay emotionally grounded.

1 IN 2

Stay emotionally grounded through entertainment, finding comic relief to be a good distraction for them.

67%

Say that connecting with loved ones keeps them emotionally grounded.

“I notice a general movement together - friends I hadn’t heard from for a long time, lunch breaks via Skype...I am now often less lonely in quarantine than I previously felt.”

– Millennial, Man, Germany

Q: What makes you feel most emotionally grounded during this time?
They are looking for new ways to stay connected or reconnect.

72% took actions to make sure they stay connected during the COVID-19 crisis.

Compared to the rest of the world, youth in EMEA more actively seek for social contact by reaching out to those who they’ve lost touch with or virtually enjoying time with friends instead of just scrolling through social media.

Q: Have you taken any of the following actions in order to stay connected, maintain relationships, or manage your mental health?

- Reached out to someone I haven’t spoken with in a while: 38%
- Hosted or joined a virtual hangout (video happy hour, coffee, etc.): 31%
- Created a new group chat: 16%
- Increased their use of social media: 41%

VS. 47% Global
VS. 31% Global
VS. 22% Global
VS. 15% Global
Many are focusing on self-development during this time.

28% say they’ve taken up or gotten back to a hobby
+13% learned a new skill

1 in 4 say they’ve experimented with a new recipe

49% have turned to their creativity with their newly earned time

VS. 62% NA/ VS. 56% APAC

“I take care of my animals, listening to loud music and dancing, reading a lot of books and next week I am starting the renovation of my terrace.”

– Millennial, Woman, Germany
Some are focusing on their mental health and self care

“...I am scared that my mental health will be affected from the self isolation and the lack of human contact.”

34% say they feel worried about their emotional and mental health

54% say they’ve implemented a new routine to get them through the situation

Q: Have you taken any of the following actions in order to stay connected, maintain relationships, or manage your mental health?
COVID-19, EMEA YOUTH AND THE ROLE OF MEDIA
Youth in EMEA haven’t lost faith in their leaders

72% rely on their national leaders for COVID-19 information

VS. 58% Global

However, young people in certain EMEA markets do not share the same levels of trust towards their local leaders

Of youth in Britain relies on their local leaders for COVID-19 information

ONLY 30% VS. 61% EMEA

Of youth in France relies on their local leaders for COVID-19 information

ONLY 41% VS. 61% EMEA

Q: How much do you rely on information from the following sources about and surrounding Coronavirus?
At the same time Coronavirus content fatigue has already started to settle in...

60% VS. 46% Global
actively seeking non-Coronavirus content to consume online

ONLY 41% VS. 50% Global
Feel that following the news is what can make them get through this pandemic

I would like to see lots of non-coronavirus content. Everything in the media is about the virus we can't escape it.

“I would like to see lots of non-coronavirus content. Everything in the media is about the virus we can't escape it.”

– Millennial, Woman, Ireland
Young people are seeking inspiration and advice.

1 in 2 relies on alternative news outlets for information on and around COVID-19.

Q: How much do you rely on information from the following sources about and surrounding Coronavirus?

- 53% UPLIFTING/INSPIRATIONAL CONTENT
- 39% AT-HOME ENTERTAINMENT TIPS
- 39% “WHAT TO DO WHEN...” TIPS
- 35% COVID-19 PERSONAL STORIES
- 31% TIPS FOR AT-HOME ROUTINES
- 28% COOKING TIPS/RECIPES

“Healthy cooking recipes for all people who might not be healthy financially, as well as tips for single parents who may reach their limits right now.”

— Millennial, Woman, Germany

“Tips on maintaining your mental health, eating disorders, depression, anxiety disorders are all at a new high right now!”

— Gen Z, Woman, Austria
Key Takeaways

**Time for a change**

Today’s youth knows that not everything is going to be okay and they anticipate there will be consequences, but they also know something good can come out of it. Gen Z and millennials have been asking for a change for a long time and now it’s the time to get it. Brands need to listen to them more than ever and lead the change together with youth in the direction they desire. Show them what you can do for them to help them get through the crisis and aim for a better tomorrow together.

and that you have a solution to keep servicing them during the crisis. They need ways to escape the Coronavirus and figure out what they can do to make the best out of a bad situation. Drive their attention to a cause to help them find meaning.

**Resuming everyday life**

Young people are getting tired of hearing and reading about Coronavirus, while feeling that their lives have been paused. We are in this for the long run and there’s an urgency to adjust and resume our lives. Brands need to show young people that they are not just observing and waiting for things to go back to normal, but they are here to define what the new normal is and guide youth throughout the crisis and beyond, moving forward to our new reality.

**Finding a cause**

Brands need to show to young people that they are there for them. Don’t just inform them everything will be okay
THANK YOU

To dive deeper into our insights, please contact Christina Poimenidou, Director Insights EMEA | christina.poimenidou@vice.com