

# GENERATION Z: LIFE AT 17

The Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth (LSAY) follows young Australians from their mid-teens to their mid-twenties as they move from school to further study, work and into adulthood. LSAY's newest survey group commenced the program in 2015 when they were about 15-years-old. Using the latest findings from their 2017 LSAY interviews, we look at the activities of Australia's Gen Z when they were 17-years-old, as they acquire the skills and experience needed to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing world.

## EDUCATION

### AT SCHOOL

**81%**

were still at school at age 17



### SCHOOL SUBJECTS TAKEN IN YEARS 11 & 12

#### FEMALES



74%

#### MATHEMATICS



#### MALES



85%

#### HUMANITIES/SOCIETY AND ENVIRONMENT

56%



44%

#### ARTS

38%



29%

#### TECHNOLOGY

13%



21%

#### IT SYSTEMS

3%



14%

#### LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ENGLISH

10%



5%

### VET SUBJECTS AT SCHOOL

**30%**

of Year 11 and 12 students did a vocational education and training (VET) subject while at school\*



\*Includes any VET subjects done at school, TAFE or another training organisation as part of a senior secondary certificate.

## WORKING WHILE AT SCHOOL

### HAD A JOB

**60%** had a job while at school

Working around five hours per week has a positive impact on post-school full-time employment, compared with not working at all.<sup>(1)</sup>



31%

#### SALES WORKERS

Including sales assistants (general), checkout operators and office cashiers, and pharmacy sales assistants.



28%

#### LABOURERS

Including fast food cooks, kitchenhands, shelf fillers, farm workers and cleaners.



25%

#### COMMUNITY & PERSONAL SERVICE WORKERS

Including waiters, sports coaches, instructors, officials, cafe workers, bar attendants, baristas and child carers.

### GIG WORK

'Gig work' is a type of job where workers don't have set hours, and they get paid per task or assignment rather than receiving an hourly or weekly wage.

**8%**

of 17-year-olds had gig work while at school

### THE TOP GIGS WERE:



Performing online tasks



Babysitting



Cleaning



Gardening/landscaping



Being a musician



Umpiring/coaching

## LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

### LIVING WITH PARENTS

**96%**

were living with their parents, family members or a guardian

For those that had left their family home, accommodation types included living in a share house or flat, renting, living in a hostel or boarding house, living in a private house as a boarder, or living on campus.



### HOMELESSNESS AND UNSTABLE HOUSING

**3%**

had experienced not having a permanent place to live by the age of 17

This included staying with relatives or at a friend's house, staying in a caravan, a boarding house or a hostel, or sleeping rough i.e. in a car, tent, or on the street.

Note: 'Living with parents' is determined by asking respondents about their household and whether they usually live with their parents, family or a guardian. 'Homelessness and unstable housing' is determined by asking respondents about their housing situation and whether they have ever experienced not having a permanent place to live.

## PERCEPTIONS OF SOFT SKILLS



### TEAMWORK

**83%** agree they stay focused on their task when working in teams



### CREATIVITY

**81%** agree they are good at coming up with new ideas



### PROBLEM SOLVING

**74%** agree they see problems as challenges to overcome



### ORAL COMMUNICATION

**67%** agree they are good at presenting a talk to a group of acquaintances

### WHAT ARE SOFT SKILLS?

Soft skills are personal traits, communication abilities and social skills. They are important for success in the workplace and are not specific to any one job or career.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF SOFT SKILLS FOR THE FUTURE

While some technical skills are becoming obsolete in a changing job market impacted by automation and innovation, soft skills are increasingly required of employees<sup>(2)</sup>. In the last 25 years, Australia has seen a decline in jobs requiring manual or repetitive tasks but an increase in jobs that are people-focused or require problem solving and creative thinking<sup>(3)</sup>. A teenager today will likely have 17 different employers and five different careers in their lifetime<sup>(4)</sup> and will require a set of transferable skills that can be used across a range of jobs<sup>(5)</sup>.



## PAVING FUTURE PATHWAYS

The LSAY program provides a wealth of information on Australian youth, helping us to understand the key events in the lives of young Australians. Information shared by LSAY participants provides valuable insights into how young people transition from school to the world of work that now demands new skills and experience in the face of globalisation and technological change.

The LSAY data continues to inform future youth initiatives and policies and is freely available to researchers, policymakers and analysts. Visit [www.lsay.edu.au](http://www.lsay.edu.au) to explore the LSAY data and find out how young people are experiencing and navigating the new millennium.



**60,000+** YOUNG PEOPLE SURVEYED SINCE LSAY COMMENCED IN 1995



**700+ SCHOOLS** TOOK PART IN THE LATEST LSAY COHORT



**6 COHORTS** HAVE BEEN TRACKED SO FAR

#### Notes:

Survey responses are weighted to population benchmarks to account for the survey being undertaken as a sample rather than the entire target population.

\*School subjects taken in years 11 & 12 excludes International Baccalaureate (IB) students.

#### References:

1. Anlezark, A & Lin, P 2011, *Does combining school and work affect school and post-school outcomes?*, NCVET, Adelaide, <https://www.ncver.edu.au/research-and-statistics/publications/all-publications/does-combining-school-and-work-affect-school-and-post-school-outcomes>
2. Seet, P-S, Jones, J, Spoehr, J & Hordacre, A-L 2018, *The Fourth Industrial Revolution: the implications of technological disruption for Australian VET*, NCVET, Adelaide, <https://www.ncver.edu.au/research-and-statistics/publications/all-publications/the-fourth-industrial-revolution-the-implications-of-technological-disruption-for-australian-vet>
3. Foundation for Young Australians 2017, *The New Work Smarts: thriving in the new work order*, Foundation for Young Australians, Melbourne, <https://www.fya.org.au/report/the-new-work-smarts/>
4. Ibid.
5. Seet, P-S, Jones, J, Spoehr, J & Hordacre, A-L 2018, op. cit.

#### Source:

National Centre for Vocational Education Research 2019, Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth, 2015 cohort (version 2.0).

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