

# HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT VS GENERATION Z'S JOB

Jeanina-Biliana Ciurea, Venera-Cristina Manciu \*, Andreea-Mihaela Zgardan

Babeş-Bolyai University, Faculty of Economics and Business Administration,  
1-4, Traian Vuia Square, Reşita, Romania

\* Corresponding author. E-mail: [venera.manciu@ubbcluj.ro](mailto:venera.manciu@ubbcluj.ro)

**Abstract:** A notable challenge faced by today's organisations concerns generational diversity. The paper aims to highlight the distinctive traits of Generation Z, as well as their values, preferences, and work-related expectations. It also focuses on what these younger generations look for when entering a new job, the factors that influence their decision to stay, and the work patterns they prefer.

**Keywords:** human resource management, job, Generation Z.

## 1. Introduction

Globalisation, demographic shifts, the rapid evolution of technology and the diverse preferences of employees have introduced significant challenges to the field of human resource management. These factors have reshaped the objectives of HRM processes.

The main goal of human resource management, as highlighted by Graham (1978), is the strategic coordination of the workforce in order to leverage its skills to achieve maximum organisational benefit, while ensuring that employees are rewarded both materially and through satisfaction and recognition of their efforts [5].

Each generation brings a different set of qualities, values and traits to the workplace. Every generation has something unique to offer: younger generations generally contribute innovative and fresh ideas, while older generations bring knowledge and expertise [4].

Generation Z includes young people who grew up with IT devices, tablets and smartphones connected to high-speed internet, making them technologically adept and commonly referred to as digital natives [11].

Education and access to information are essential, especially since the sources of documentation are numerous. They prefer visual and interactive learning methods based on tutorials. Even though it is often difficult, many of them choose a part-time job that allows them to pursue higher education as well, which is why they expect a high degree of flexibility from employers [10].

Traditional human resource practices, which often prioritize a hierarchical structure, rigid working hours, and uniform policies, are increasingly being challenged by the expectations of this generation [9].

However, not all employers are prepared to work with Generation Z, and the clash of mindsets is often difficult for each side to accept. Labels such as "young people do not want to work" or "they have financial

demands" may be regarded both as myth and as reality [13].

Companies that fail to adapt to these shifts may struggle with attracting and retaining young talent, as Gen Z's loyalty to employers is often linked to values alignment and workplace culture [8].

The workplace of Generation Z is a topic of interest for several subjects, such as sociology, economics and human resource management. The rapid transformations occurring in the professional environment are driven by factors such as digitalisation, globalization, and shifts in employees' values and aspirations.

Susan Taylor Martin, Chief Executive of the British Standards Institution (BSI), stated that "AI represents a tremendous opportunity for companies worldwide, but as they pursue greater productivity and efficiency, we must not lose sight of the fact that, ultimately, it is people who drive progress." [14].

The effectiveness of an organisation depends on its human resource management practices, which include recruitment, selection, evaluation, and motivation. It is essential to understand that the success or failure of an organisation largely depends on its human resources, which makes them central to these processes [4].

Organisations, regardless of their profile, must identify and implement measures that enable them to adapt to the requirements of today's workforce in order to attract, motivate, and effectively harness the potential of Generation Z.

## 2. Theoretical Considerations

Analyst Richard Florida states that "*the creative economy of the 21st century emphasizes innovation, collaboration, and personal development,*" aspects that are essential in the new paradigm of the labour market [3].

Human resource management faces the difficult task of addressing, on the one hand, the effects of

technological progress and automation, which are transforming the traditional structure of work and requiring new professional competencies, and, on the other hand, the need for employers to create a balance between efficiency and employee satisfaction [2].

Mannheim (1952) was the first to conceptualise generations as sociological phenomena, arguing that they are shaped by the shared experiences of individuals, which have a substantial impact on their perspectives and the way they interpret the world. Generalisations and definitive claims about generational characteristics are frequently criticized for failing to account for individual uniqueness [7].

Generation Z, young people born between 1997 and 2012, is emerging not only as the largest but also as the future most financially powerful generation. According to a report by NielsenIQ and the World Data Lab, Gen Z already accounts for more than 17% of global spending and is rapidly approaching the status of the wealthiest generation worldwide [19].

This generation is eager for professional mentoring and is aware that success requires lifelong learning. Although they are labelled as digital natives, they still need to build meaningful connections with their colleagues.

Despite being highly success-oriented, Generation Z has been stereotyped as being less engaged in the workplace. This discrepancy may be explained through the theory of generations and generational units, which argues that subgroups exist within each generation.

Further research by Leslie et al. (2021) revealed three unique subgroups within Generation Z: Advanced Investors, Chill Worker Investors, and Social Investors. Work-life balance is important for Social Investors, Chill Worker Investors seek a comfortable work atmosphere, while Advanced Investors are more concerned with developing their careers. These subgroups possess diverse values and professional objectives, indicating that Generation Z is not a homogeneous generation [6].

Generation Z holds distinct professional values due to its digital upbringing and increased awareness of global issues. These values play a fundamental role in shaping the way its members engage in work. According to research, traits such as pragmatism, self-confidence, and strong ambition characterize Generation Z [1].

Therefore, companies that want to succeed in managing the workforce of this generation must innovate in HR management practices, including the application of technology in the work system and providing more space for employee creativity [10].

### 3. Research methodology

The labour market in Romania has undergone significant changes, though not with positive effects. According to data provided by Eurostat, Romania ranks last in the EU in terms of professional life duration, with an average of approximately 32.7 years in 2024,

compared to 36 years in 2000 — the year in which our country entered the ranking of the nations that worked the most [15].

It is remarked that young people from Generation Z have difficulty securing stable employment, especially after completing their university studies, or they spend several years in unemployment after graduation. As a result, many of them begin accessing their first job only around the age of 30 [15].

The jobs held by young people from Generation Z have become much more complex, being influenced by a wide range of factors such as: work flexibility (they prefer flexible schedules as well as a combination of remote and hybrid work), the impact of artificial intelligence, technology, and automation in the professional environment, shifts in value systems and in attitudes toward organisational culture, personal development, and leadership, etc. These are just a few of the characteristics found in today's workplaces.

A relevant case study in this regard can be carried out through direct qualitative research based on a survey, using a questionnaire administered to a representative sample of Generation Z young people from Reșița

In this research, the questionnaire posted on Google Forms during March 2025 (March 1-31) was completed by 85 responses.

The sample consisted of respondents aged 18–34, of whom 69.2% were women and 30.8% were men. Their education levels were as follows: secondary education (high school) – 26.9%, higher education (Bachelor's degree – 38.5%, Master's and PhD – 34.6%). As for the employment status, 65.4% had permanent employment contracts, 19.2% had fixed-term contracts, 11.5% were freelancers, and 3.9% were students without an employment contract. Participants worked in the following fields: technical and IT – 17.2%, healthcare – 11.5%, industrial production – 19.2%, trade and services – 15.4%, marketing and sales – 26.9%, and public administration – 9.8%.

The questionnaire included 36 questions and was structured into three sections, each containing 10 questions, along with 6 identification items: changes in human resource management and their effects on Generation Z jobs; the job profile of Generation Z; employers versus Generation Z.

Respondents were free to select multiple answer options for each question. The direct qualitative research applied to the sample of 85 respondents aimed to address the following aspects:

**Purpose of the research:** Analysis of the job profile of Generation Z

**Main Objective:** Identifying Generation Z young people's perceptions of employers and the impact on human resource management

**Secondary Objectives:**

1. identifying the attitudes of Generation Z young people toward their job

2. assessing the level of responsibility shown by Generation Z young people toward their job
3. methods used by Generation Z young people to access jobs
4. criteria for evaluating and rewarding Generation Z young people in relation to their job
5. the importance of education for Generation Z in accessing a job
6. evaluating the level of preparedness of Generation Z young people for entering the job market
7. the expectations of Generation Z young people regarding the jobs offered by employers
8. the adaptability of Generation Z young people to employers' requirements

workplace, and 16.9% mentioned aspects of discrimination or harassment in their current job.  
 b) impact on Generation Z jobs

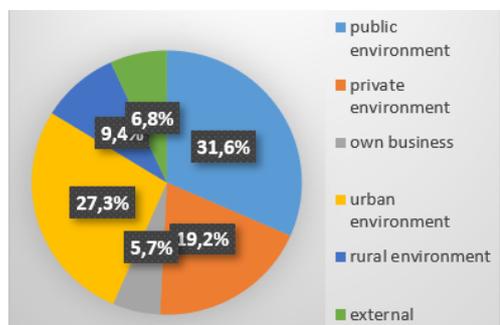


Fig. 2. Job fields of Generation Z

Generation Z respondents who participated in the direct research reported that 31.6% work in the public sector, 19.2% in the private sector, and 5.7% stated that they run their own business (or a family business). Naturally, jobs in urban areas are held by more than 27.3% of them, while 9.4% work in rural areas, and 6.8% mentioned that they have a job abroad.

**The hypothesis proposed** to be tested through the qualitative research was: *The changes that have occurred in human resource management have generated the emergence of jobs whose profile is sought by Generation Z young people.*

**4. Research results**

The results obtained from administering the questionnaire to the qualitative research sample of 85 respondents led to the following conclusions:

**I.** The changes in human resource management and their effects on the jobs sought by Generation Z were assessed by the 85 respondents who participated in the survey, based on the criteria presented in the graph below:  
 a) impact on human resource management

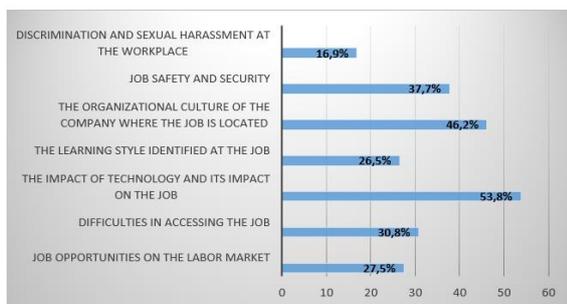


Fig. 1. Impact on human resources management

Generation Z respondents evaluated the human resource management characteristics that influence their choice of a job as follows: the impact of technology and artificial intelligence is the main influencing factor for 53.8% of them; the organisational culture of the company where they already work is the second factor for 46.2% of them; and job security and safety are considered influential by 37.7% of respondents. More than 30.8% of respondents reported having encountered difficulties in accessing a job, while 27.5% indicated that there are few job opportunities on the labour market. Additionally, 26.5% of them noted the leadership style present at their

**2.** The job profile of Generation Z, based on the analysis of the data obtained through the direct research, shows that, in general, they seek a workplace that they enjoy and where they can benefit from a salary package that satisfies them, aiming for a balance between financial stability and the desire to do what they like. They also want jobs that offer flexibility as well as opportunities for career advancement, while professional development and education remain important to them. The graph below is illustrative in this regard:

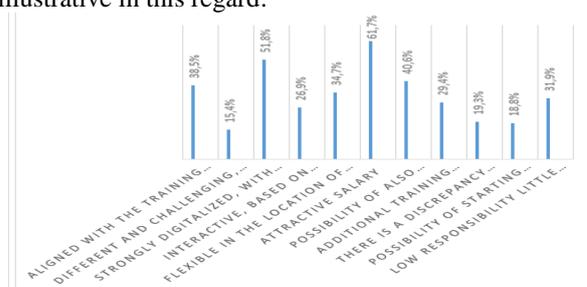
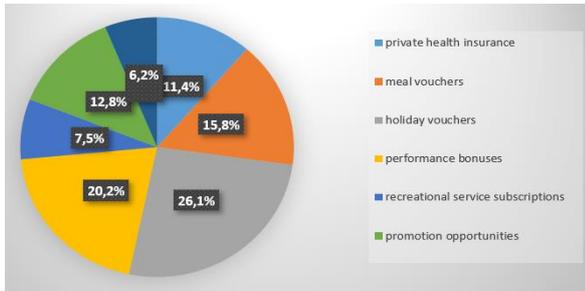


Fig. 3. Job profile of Generation Z

A total of 61.7% of Generation Z respondents indicated that they want a job that offers an attractive salary and benefits package; 51.8% prefer a job with a digital component and modern technological features; 40.6% want a job that allows them to pursue university studies at the same time; 38.5% prefer positions aligned with their training and acquired competencies; and 34.7% would like a flexible work schedule. Only a small proportion of respondents—15.4%—believe that their job should be different from their initial training and more challenging. Furthermore, 19.3% reported that their

current jobs reveal a discrepancy between school education and labour market demands, while 18.8% expressed interest in starting their own business.

Since more than half of the respondents (61.7%) stated that they are highly interested in having a job that offers an attractive salary and benefits package, it is important to identify what these elements include from their perspective.



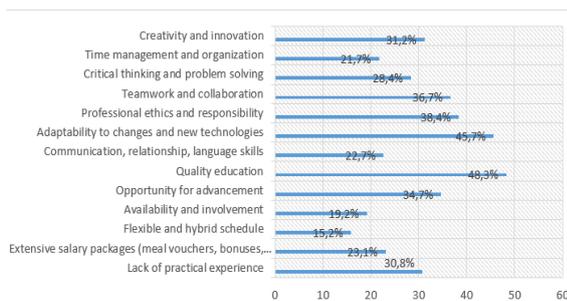
**Fig. 4.** Components of the attractive salary package requested by Generation Z

Generation Z young people would like an attractive benefits package to include, for 26.1% of them, the granting of vacation vouchers; 20.2% would like performance bonuses; 15.8% prefer food stamps; 12.8% want opportunities for career advancement; 7.5% would appreciate subscriptions to recreational services; and 6.2% would like access to professional development programs. These results reflect the period of uncertainty that Romanian society as a whole is currently experiencing, and young people are extremely sensitive to the inflationary phenomenon, which is generally difficult to manage.

### 3. Employers vs. Generation Z

Studies show that youth unemployment in Romania has exceeded 23.9%, placing it well above the European average, while employers tend to prefer mature employees because they are more consistent and do not change jobs as frequently [16]. The plotting of the research data indicates that the relationship between employers and Generation Z young people is characterized by the following aspects:

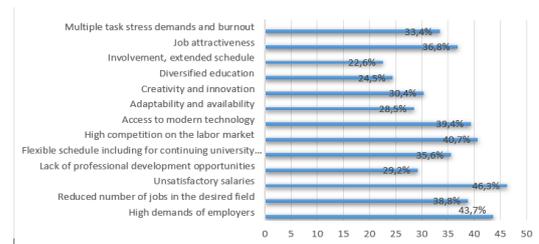
#### a) Employers



**Fig. 5.** Employers' requirements for Generation Z

For employers, high-quality education is the primary requirement for Generation Z young people when applying for a job—48.3% indicated this. Adaptability to existing changes and to new technology is the second most important requirement, cited by 45.7%. Only 15.2% of employers consider it important to offer Generation Z flexible or hybrid work schedules that would allow them to pursue university studies or other forms of training alongside their job, supporting their future professional development.

#### b) Generation Z



**Fig. 6.** Generation Z's requirements for employers

The data presented in the graph show that 46.3% of Generation Z young people who participated in the research are dissatisfied with the salaries offered by employers for their current jobs. Additionally, 43.7% believe that employers have very high expectations of them, while 40.7% consider the competition on the labour market to be very strong.

Generation Z young people consider themselves prepared and skilled to access jobs involving modern technologies, including artificial intelligence, in a proportion of 39.4%. For 36.8% of them, their jobs are attractive, while 33.4% believe that the jobs they currently hold involve multiple tasks and place significant demands on them.

The analysis and presentation of the data obtained from the qualitative research indicate that the tested hypothesis should be accepted.

We can conclude that digitalisation in human resource management, such as the use of artificial intelligence and online collaboration platforms, has proven to facilitate Generation Z's adaptation to a dynamic and continuously evolving work environment. Moreover, organisations that provide room for a balance between professional and personal life, as well as diversity in the workplace, are better able to enhance the engagement and satisfaction of employees from this generation.

## 5. Conclusions

Human resource management has evolved and made it possible to generate new jobs that incorporate the requirements sought by Generation Z young people.

To meet the needs of Generation Z, companies must adjust their human resource strategies in order to remain competitive in the digital era.

Generation Z young people face significant dilemmas that must be overcome in order to obtain the desired job. On the one hand, they are told that they do not have sufficient experience to be hired, yet on the other hand, how are they supposed to gain this experience if no one is willing to employ them.

On the other hand, Generation Z young people enter a labour market that is often outdated and rigid, where they are poorly paid, while they themselves seek flexibility, recognition, and attractiveness. They perceive work differently and hold values distinct from those of previous generations. They do not seek only a salary; they value flexibility, work-life balance, and a safe work environment in which they feel comfortable and respected [17].

Loyalty to a job or company is ensured by salary transparency as well as by the prospects for professional development offered to them.

Employment prospects for Generation Z are quite controversial, as they are often considered *job hoppers* (those who frequently change jobs in order to advance rapidly both hierarchically and financially), *snowflake* (individuals who are easily offended and who are not satisfied with simple appreciation but wish to develop in their own way), or *entry-level* (those at the beginning of their career who must accept a compromise between financial satisfaction and professional development).

Generation Z young people remain willing to leave the country in search of better-paid and more attractive jobs abroad, while others are beginning to start their own businesses by accessing various programs that provide non-refundable funding or by relying on financial support offered by their families.

Labour market reforms in Romania must continue in order to attract and retain talented young human capital, as this is a means of ensuring, on the one hand, increased economic competitiveness for the country and, on the other hand, a solution for reducing the gap between the national economy and global developments [18].

## 6. References

- [1] Benítez-Márquez M.D., Sánchez-Teba E.M., Bermúdez-González, G., Núñez-Rydman E.S.: "Generation Z Within the Workforce and in the Workplace: A Bibliometric Analysis". *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, 2022. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.736820>
- [2] Brockbank W.: "HR from the Outside In: Six Competencies for the Future of Human Resources," Jan. 2012, [https://www.academia.edu/111083968/HR\\_from\\_the\\_Outside\\_In\\_Six\\_Competencies\\_for\\_the\\_Future\\_of\\_Human\\_Resources](https://www.academia.edu/111083968/HR_from_the_Outside_In_Six_Competencies_for_the_Future_of_Human_Resources)
- [3] Florida R.: "The Rise of the Creative Class: And How It's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life," ResearchGate, Oct. 2024, doi: [10.2307/3552294](https://doi.org/10.2307/3552294), 2024
- [4] Mishra G., Pandey A.C., Tiwari A.: "Rethinking HRM for generation z: Matching procedures with new expectations", *International Journal of Research in Management* 2025; 7(1): 157-164, 2025
- [5] Graham H.T.: "Human resources management", Plymouth: Macdonald, Evans, 1978
- [6] Leslie B., Anderson C., Bickham C., Horman J., Overly A., Gentry C., Callahan C. & King J.: "Generation Z Perceptions of a Positive Workplace Environment. Employee Responsibilities and Rights" *Journal*, 33(3), 171-187. <https://doi.org/10.1007/S10672-021-09366-2>, 2021
- [7] Mannheim K.: "The problem of generations". In P. Kecskemeti (Ed.), *Essays on the sociology of knowledge* (pp. 276-320). Routledge and Kegan Paul. <https://www.scirp.org/reference/ReferencesPapers?ReferenceID=1584004>
- [8] McCrindle M.: "The ABC of XYZ: Understanding the global generations" (3rd ed.). McCrindle Research, 2022
- [9] Meister J. C. & Mulcahy K.: "The future workplace experience: 10 rules for mastering disruption in recruiting and engaging employees", McGraw-Hill Education, 2016
- [10] Sikandar H., Kohar, U. H. A., Sanda G., Salman A., Cilan T., Shabbir M. S. & Ramos-Meza C. S.: "Eco-innovation in small and medium enterprises (SMEs): A systematic literature review", *Journal of the Knowledge Economy*, 15(2), 5841-5863, 2024
- [11] <https://cariera.ejobs.ro/sunt-multumiti-angajatorii-de-generatia-z/>
- [12] <https://www.deloitte.com/global/en/issues/work/genz-millennial-survey.html>
- [13] <https://panorama.ro/gen-z-inflatie-independenta-financiara/>
- [14] <https://www.antena3.ro/high-tech/generatia-z-se-confrunta-cu-o-apocalipsa-a-locurilor-de-munca-companiile-aleg-inteligenta-artificiala-pentru-munca-entry-level-762708.html>
- [15] <https://hotnews.ro/romania-ultimul-loc-in-europa-dupa-durata-vietii-profesionale-acum-20-de-ani-eram-in-plutonul-celor-care-munceau-cel-mai-mult-alaturi-de-nordici-2038367>
- [16] <https://adevarul.ro/economie/companiile-prefera-angajatii-maturi-cu-rate-si-2472202.html>
- [17] Report Study PulseZ-VSFA, Gen Z portrait, study of behaviours and attitudes (in original in Romanian), elaborated by Market Opportunity Research, 2023
- [18] <https://agerpres.ro/economic/2025/09/10/romania-pe-locul-51-in-clasamentul-mondial-al-competitivitatii-talentelor--1482957>
- [19] <https://evz.ro/generatia-z-noua-forta-economica-romania-in-topul-tarilor-cu-cele-mai-multe-campanii-dedicate-tinerilor.html>.