

# I'm fed up of hearing Gen-Z are 'victims' – they are the luckiest in human history

[Zoe Strimpel](#)– There has never been a better time or place in history to moan than 21st century Britain, where those best at claiming victim status often have the most dubious of causes for doing so. We have [record numbers of people](#) on sickness benefits, not working because of a range of hazy “illnesses”, including stress, which a generation ago most people wouldn't have even bothered to mention, let alone used as a stay-home-for pay card.

Perhaps the dodgiest British sob story of all, however, is the generational one. We are bombarded with policy discussions and general cultural jib-jab about how to make life “fairer” for young people. Young people are being made to suffer cruelly because of the callous hedonism, greed, fecklessness and historical luck of Boomers and Gen-X (those in their 40s and 50s). Young people will never be able to get on let alone mount the housing ladder, goes the catechism. They can barely scrape rent in the city of their choice (especially if this is London), are forced to hold down jobs that will never, in and of themselves, hoist them up to middle class security; face an affordability crisis in basics from education to groceries, and eke out an existence in the space between crumbling public services. Oh, and they are doomed to live in a perilously heating world, picking up the tab – morally, psychologically and economically– for the profligate energy usage of their forebears.

Some of this is true, but the picture it paints in general of a beleaguered generation is false. In fact, people in their late teens and 20s, namely Gen-Z and young millennials, are the luckiest, best-off generation of all time. They're also

unprecedentedly powerful politically, culturally and every other way. I looked with amazement as the Icon of the Seas, [the world's largest cruise ship](#), five times the size of the Titanic, set sail from Miami earlier this year. It was motored at least in part by trending hashtags on TikTok, according to business insiders.

Despite their woes with urban housing markets in comparison to past generations, they're still vastly rich compared to the 20-somethings of their grandparents and great-grandparents' generation, with greatly improved health, spending power and influence, all wrapped up in astonishing consumer nouse gained though life online carefully picking their way through targeted marketing of goods and services. Indeed, if Gen-Z are already famous as the most savvy generation yet, then their average salaries at 25 outdo those of previous generations: the average salary of a 25-year old in 2024 is £35,000 per year, according to investment advisory Moneyfarm. In 1984, according to the ONS, the average weekly salary of a man in full-time, non-manual employment between the ages of 25 and 29 was £163; for women it was £126 for the same age-range and type. Over the course of a year this came to £6,552 for women and £8,476 for men – or, £26,393 for women in today's money, and £34,143 for men. Women's average earnings have rocketed, and men's have risen. This is not the poorest generation ever.

And then there's the question of what they can buy with their money. True, property has become far more expensive in relation to salary. As the historian Eliza Filby [explores in her on-the-nose new book](#), *Inheritocracy: We Need to Talk About the Bank of Mum and Dad*, inter-generational wealth plays a much bigger role in home ownership for young people, or, where London is concerned, the ability to live at all while studying or getting a foot in.

But what they lose in property purchasing power they gain elsewhere. Brands fall over themselves to please them. So does the working world, which has had to adjust to their woke

diktats and assertiveness about health and work-life balance in order to entice them into the workforce. According to a study by the technology company Personio, published last week, half of [Gen-Z](#) would quit over having to come into the office three days a week, and employers are forced to listen. The work itself that they do tends to be safer, with better conditions, more perks, more opportunities, and closer to personal interests, than the toiling and drudgery known to previous generations of young people.

In the UK, there are [more under-30s earning £1m a year than ever](#), according to a report earlier this year. This is thanks in part to rising salaries in music and sport, but it's also courtesy of a new social media ecology that returns impressive sums to influencers and successful YouTubers alike. Never has being a young woman in a tracksuit filming oneself baking a cake been so lucrative. At the seedier end of the money-making tree is Onlyfans, a hugely popular subscription service for those who want to sell "content" of an intimate nature.

Gen-Z are extraordinarily time-rich. They can, and do, spend more time engaged in "me time" than any before them. This includes all the time young people used to have to spend cooking rather than summoning a meal kit to their doors; going to libraries or buying newspapers to find things out rather than googling, travelling to see friends rather than instant messaging; going to the cinema instead of watching Netflix; soldiering through illness and pain that is now solvable through modern medicine, a surfeit of information online and pharmacies that deliver.

Gen-Z may be the most anxious generation of all time, the most prone to moan and berate, but that doesn't mean they're not also the luckiest.

Reports: [Zoe Strimpel](#) – [The Telegraph](#)