



Global healthcare

# Young adults in a changing world

A global view  
on mind health



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# How to read this report

## Mind health and mental health

Mind health includes our emotional, psychological and social wellbeing. It shapes how we think, feel and act, handle stress and relate to others. In our annual studies, we use the term ‘mind health’ rather than mental health, to move away from the common misconception that mental health refers only to illness.

Just like our physical health, our mind health changes over time – and not all changes mean something’s wrong. At AXA, we believe language can play a powerful role in normalising these changes, which is why we use the term ‘mind health’ to recognize the full spectrum of mental wellbeing. By doing so, we hope to make it easier for people to open up and reach out for support when they need it.

### Natives and non-natives

We often refer to two demographics throughout this study: natives and non-natives.

Non-natives are people who live in a different country from the one they were born in.

Natives are people who live in the same country they were born in.

### Millennials and Gen Z

This study will look at how young non-native adults are experiencing mind health, focusing on two key age groups: 18-to-24-year-olds and 25-to-34-year-olds. We refer to these broadly as Gen Z and Millennials (or Gen Y).

Because generational definitions and age groups don’t align perfectly, there is some overlap. For example, 25-to-28-year-olds are Gen Z by birth year but fall within our 25 to 34 age group.

### Millennials: 1981 to 1996

As the first generation of digital natives, Millennials came of age during the rise of the internet and social media. They saw the shift from dial-up to smartphones, from landlines to livestreams, and also lived through major world events.

This study focuses on Millennials aged 25-34. However, this age band also includes the oldest Gen Zs (25-28s), meaning some of the findings we share reflect the experiences of both generations.

### Gen Z: 1997 to 2012

Unlike Millennials, Gen Z has grown up using the internet, modern technology, and social media.

They’ve never known a world without constant connectivity.

But much like their generational predecessors, they’ve also grown up in times of global crises such as climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic.

# Foreword

Xavier Lestrade, CEO, AXA Health International

For five years, AXA Global Healthcare has been studying the mental wellbeing of people who choose to live and work overseas. Through our research, we have gained valuable insights into their mind health needs and the unique challenges they face as a non-native demographic.

Our research this year reveals that global mental health is at a pivotal moment. Almost a third (32%) of the world's population are now living with a mind health condition – a figure that's seen no change since 2023.

Non-native individuals continue to face greater mental health challenges than their native counterparts. This is evident once again in the workplace, where our findings show that 83% of non-natives are experiencing mental health symptoms linked to their working environment – a figure 4% higher than both last year and their native peers.

This year, however, our results show these differences are not limited to the workplace.

Beyond this, the global landscape is fuelling a generational divide, as mounting geopolitical uncertainty, financial insecurity, tech overwhelm, and social isolation, among many other factors, take a greater toll on young non-native adults. Those aged 18 to 34 are now struggling more than older generations, with the number experiencing depression, anxiety or stress rising by 11% in just a year.

However, for the first time, our research shows they're not just struggling more, they're struggling differently. Despite their closeness in age, non-native Millennial mind health is in sharper decline compared to Gen Z, as the impacts of loneliness, work-related issues and technological change weigh more heavily on them.

Yet for both Gen Z and Millennials, our findings this year make it clear that we cannot turn the tide on these issues in isolation. As employees, policymakers, communities and individuals, we all have a role to play in driving change. This means listening to young adults more closely, acting more decisively and building systems of care that reflect the reality of their world. Above all, we must recognise the importance of their digital lives, which are transforming how they connect, cope and communicate.

By working with purpose, we not only safeguard the next generation, but also create a brighter and psychologically safer future for all.



In 2025, **1** in **3** people worldwide are suffering from a mind health condition. A statistic which can only signal declining mental health as one of the major global health crises of our time.

Based on a survey of 1,459 18-to-75-year-olds living across 16 countries,<sup>1</sup> this edition of AXA's Mind Health study shows that young adults – those aged 18-34 – are at the centre of this crisis, and the situation isn't improving. In the last year alone, the number experiencing depression, anxiety or stress, even moderately, has increased by 11%. They're now also two times more likely to experience these conditions than 55-to-75-year-olds.

Yet even within this group, the picture isn't uniform. There's a generation gap emerging between how 18-24s (Gen Z) and 25-34s (Millennials) are experiencing mind health, and the challenges that are shaping it. And it's a divide that's becoming even more pronounced among non-native individuals who, as this study has monitored over the past five years, remain especially vulnerable in comparison.

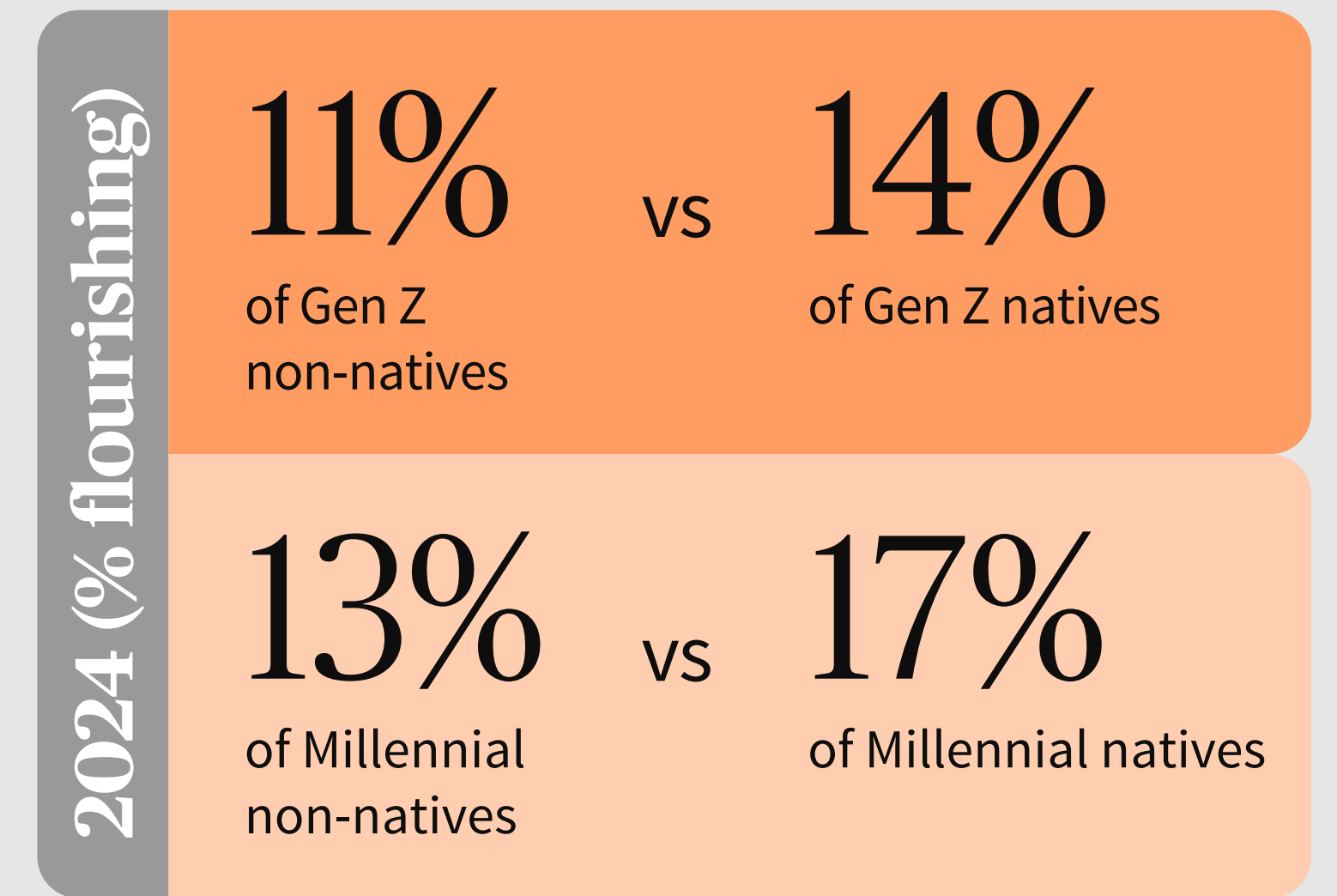
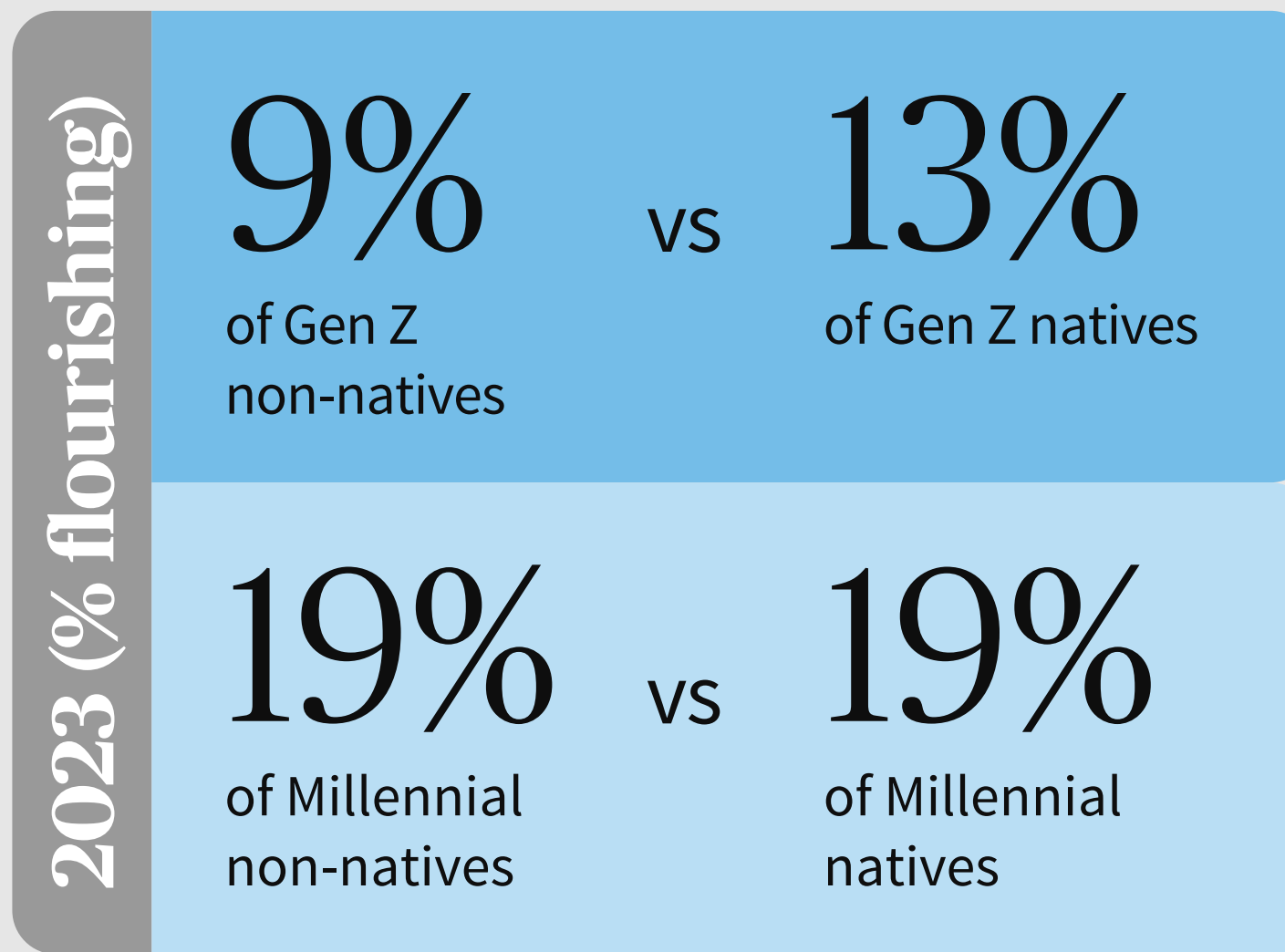


# A growing generational divide



Native or non-native, our findings show that young adults are in a difficult place with their mind health. Unsurprisingly, they face similar challenges: digital burnout; overexposure to unregulated platforms and 24/7 media feeds; career insecurity; and political uncertainty. But they experience life very differently.

Non-natives, for example, have the added challenges of fewer support networks, language barriers, and cultural displacement, putting them at a disadvantage when it comes to achieving good mind health. This year's results indicate that this is especially true for Gen Z and Millennial non-natives, who aren't faring as well as their native peers.

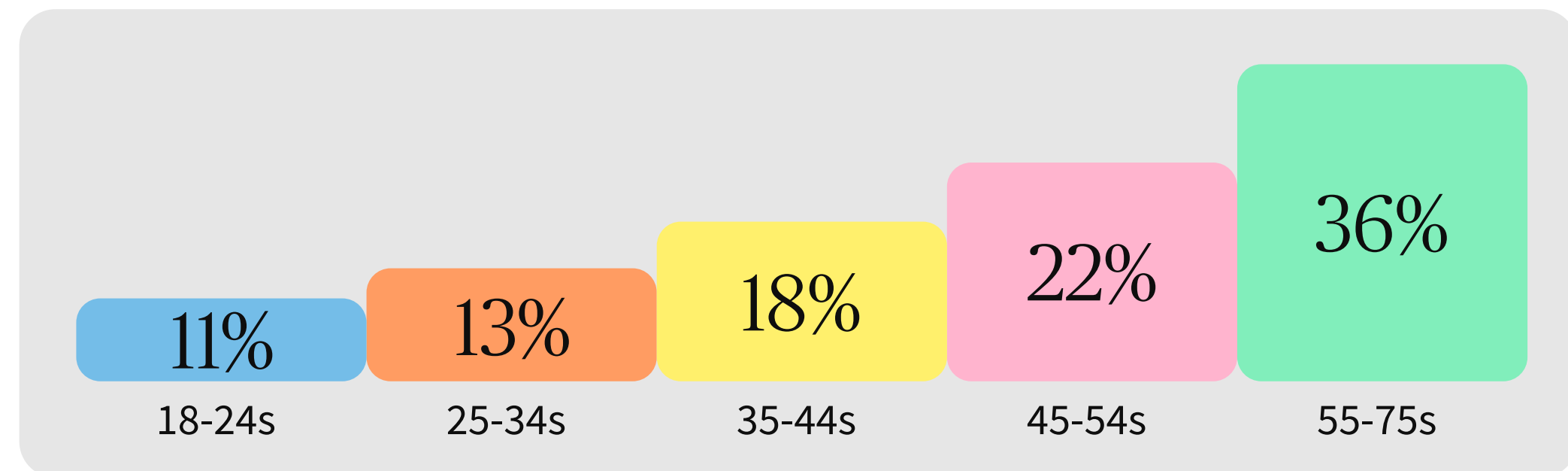


Looking closer, there's even been a notable mind health shift since last year within the young non-native demographic. Despite being close in age, the gap between Gen Z and Millennial mental wellbeing is widening; Gen Z is doing better while Millennials are struggling more than ever.

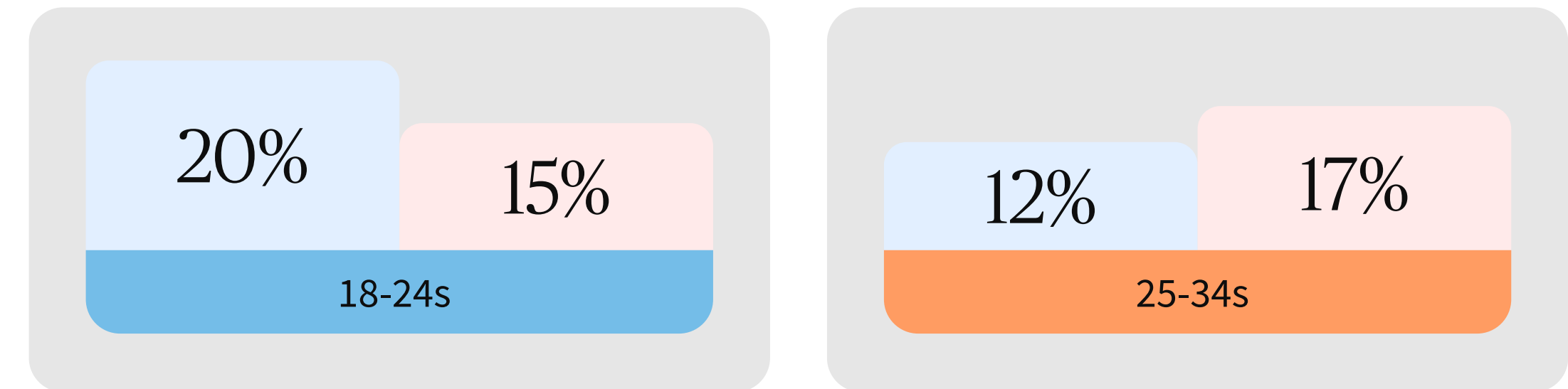
The proportion of non-native Gen Z flourishing has increased by 22% since last year, and the number struggling has decreased by a quarter (25%). By comparison, we've seen a 32% decrease in the number of non-native Millennials flourishing, and a 42% increase in the number struggling.

For context, non-native 45-to-55-year-olds are over two thirds (69%) more likely to be flourishing than Millennials, and 55-to-75-year-olds are three times more likely. It seems then that non-native mind health is improving with age.

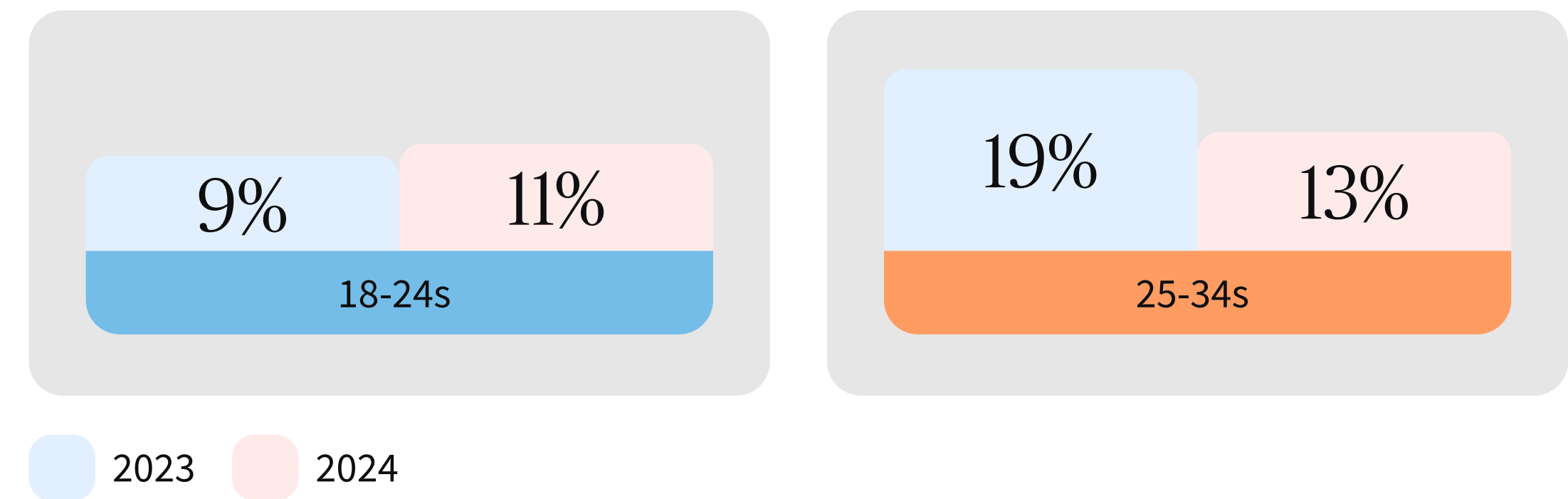
**Non-native age groups (% flourishing)**



**Non-natives (% struggling)**



**Non-natives (% flourishing)**

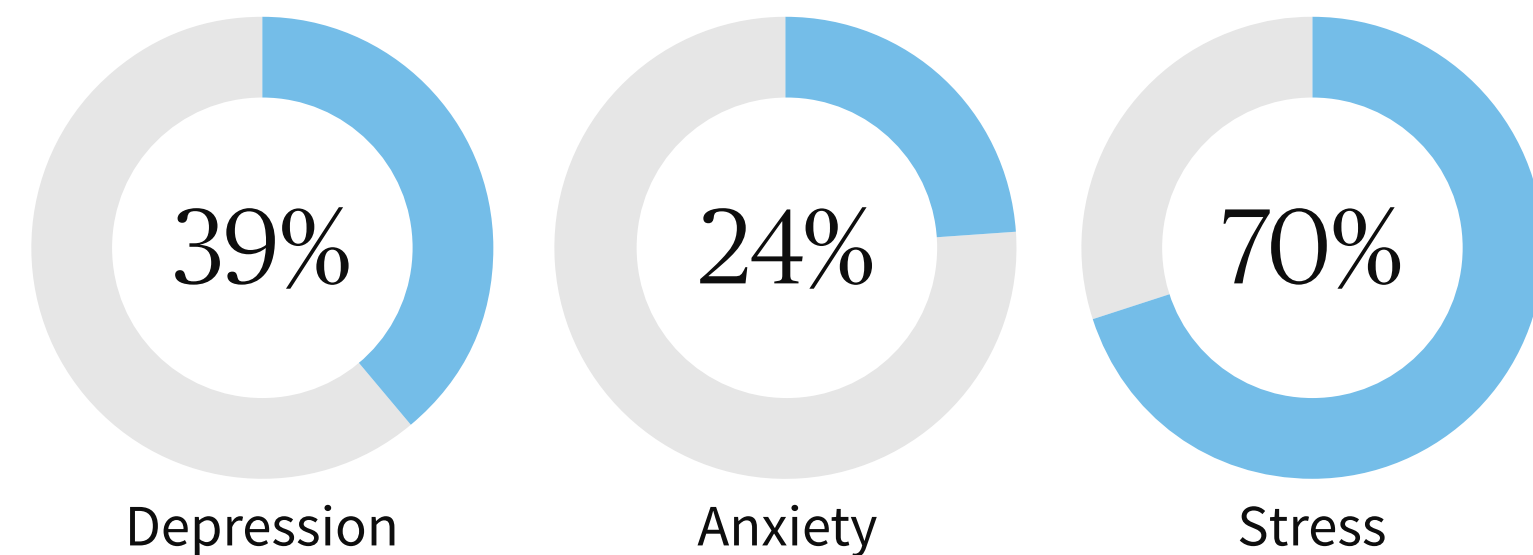


2023 2024

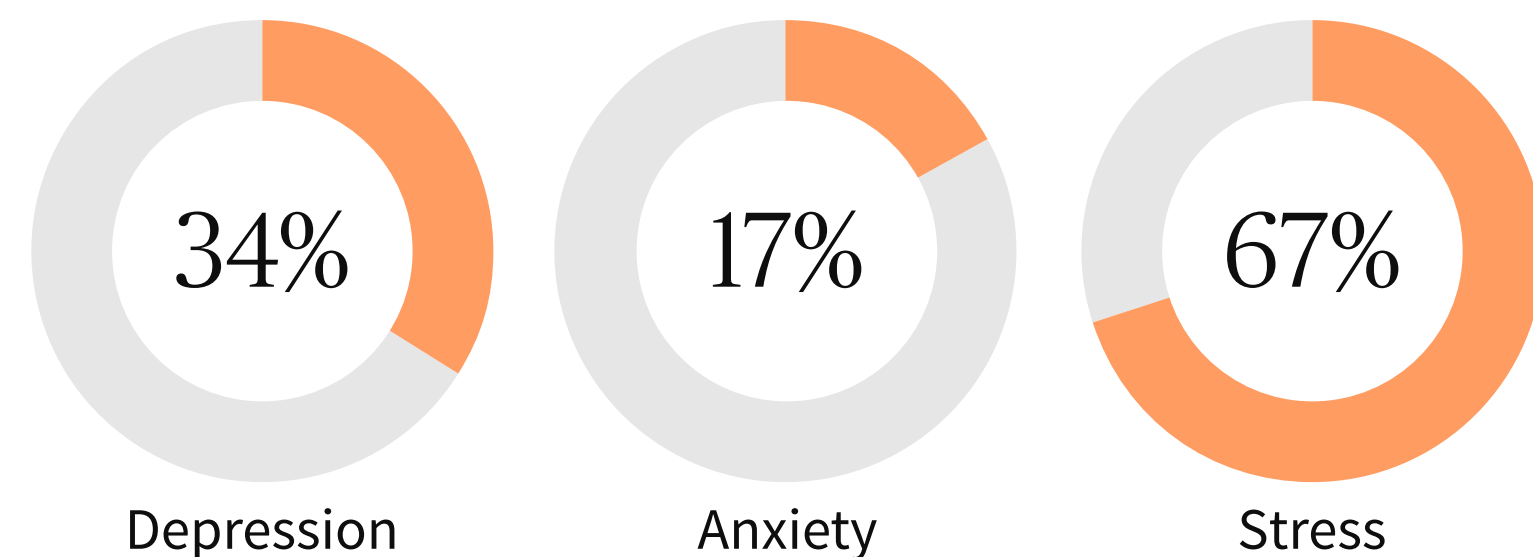
# Rising reports

According to the Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS), young non-native adults are also showing significant increases in psychological distress compared to 2023. The proportion experiencing at least moderate depression has increased by 11% among Gen Z and by 26% among Millennials.

## Gen Z

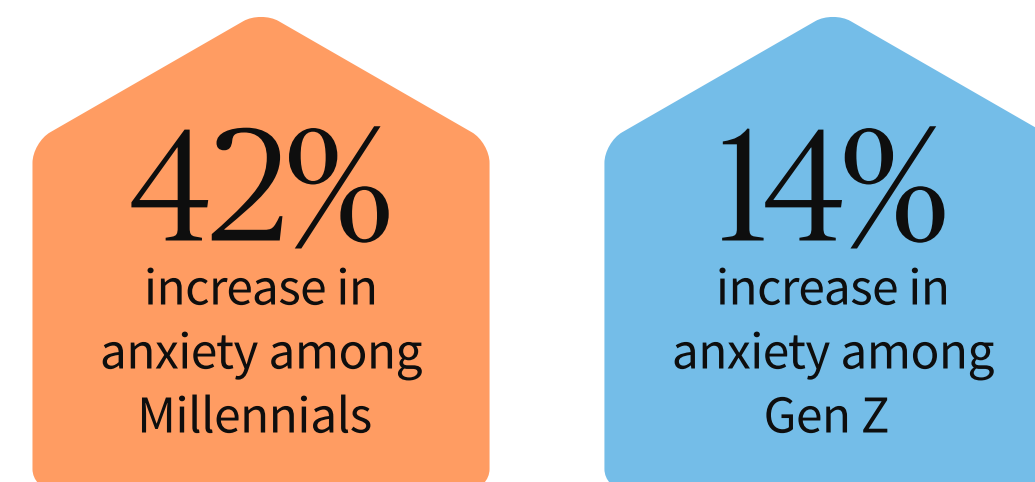


## Millennials



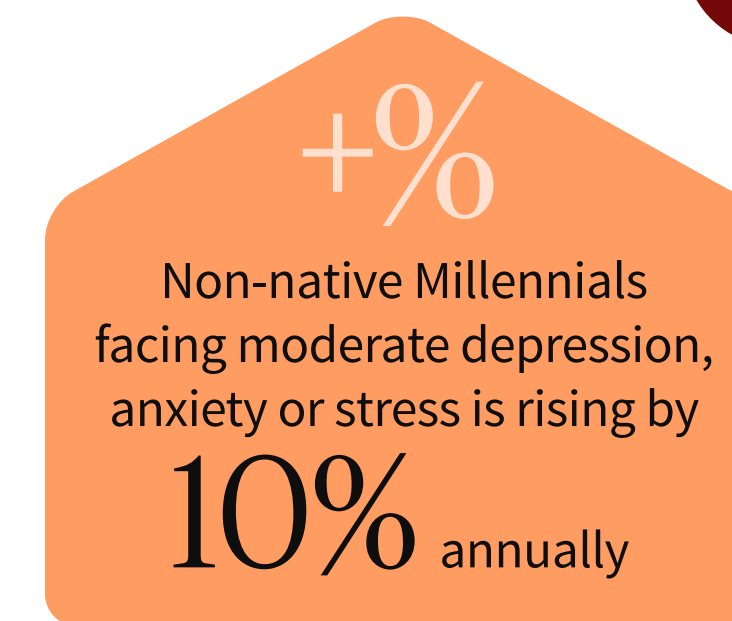
Interestingly, Gen Z are currently scoring higher across the DASS compared to their generational predecessors, but our year-on-year findings show that Millennial mind health is arguably worse as it's deteriorating far more rapidly.

If we take anxiety as an example, they're 29% less likely to be suffering than Gen Z yet, since 2023, 42% more are reporting symptoms. The increase for Gen Z is comparatively lower at 14%.



Stress is another notable area of concern for both age groups, increasing by 11% year-on-year and remaining the area of highest psychological strain across the DASS. Non-native Millennials, however, have seen a 20% increase this year, while Gen Z experienced no change.

Still, if we compare these DASS scores with those of young native adults, there's an even greater generational divide. Gen Z natives are 21% less likely to experience at least moderate anxiety, and 13% less likely to experience moderate depression than their non-native peers. And native Millennials are 12% less likely to experience both.



**What is DASS?**  
The DASS is a self-report tool used to measure three common areas of psychological distress: depression, anxiety, and stress. Rather than providing a clinical diagnosis, it identifies how severe a person's symptoms are, with scores ranging from mild to extremely severe.

# A gap in perception

Still, despite these wellbeing differences, there's still one commonality between young non-native adults: **they claim to be doing better than they actually are.**

Based on self-evaluation, almost a third (31%) of non-native 18-to-24-year-olds say their mind health is poor\*. This is in stark contrast to their DASS scores, which show that nearly three-quarters (74%) of them could be suffering from moderate to extremely severe anxiety, stress or depression.

The picture is similar for Millennial non-natives, 37% of whom self-evaluate as having poor mental health. But, according to the DASS, over two thirds (67%) are suffering from moderate to extremely severe anxiety, stress or depression.

## 18-24s

Self-evaluation

31%

DASS score

74%

## 25-34s

Self-evaluation

37%

DASS score

67%

Their self-evaluation also conflicts with the levels of stress they've reported over the last 12 months. Since 2023, there's been a 19% increase in the percentage of 18-24s saying that their mental health is good or very good, yet 86% are still reporting moderate or severe stress. While this figure has mildly improved since last year (89%), Millennials are once again experiencing harsher declines and little to no year-on-year improvement in their wellbeing.

Although almost two thirds (63%) class their mental health as good or very good on self-evaluation, levels of self-reported moderate or severe stress are, once again, rising and now extreme for the vast majority. Since 2023, there's been an 8% increase rising to 89%.



\*Respondents were asked to evaluate their mental health as good, very good, or average, bad or very bad. When we use the term 'poor mental health' we are referring to those who self-evaluated their mind health as being 'average, bad or very bad'

Expert voice

# Mind the gap: when coping isn't the same as thriving

Colin Preece, Chartered Psychologist and Clinical Head of Mental Health, Teladoc Health UK

Many of us think we know how we're doing when it comes to our mental wellbeing. But there can be a big difference between how people feel they're coping and what's really going on beneath the surface.

The 2025 AXA Mind Health Report highlights this gap: young people seem to be living with moderate to severe stress, anxiety or depression and are accepting of this, thinking they are doing fine.

But, why the disconnect? For many young people, stress has become so normal that 'coping' just means making it through the day. But coping shouldn't be about survival – it should mean having the energy, focus, and resilience to thrive.

So how can you tell when coping might not be enough? Some warning signs include:

Feeling low or irritable for more than two weeks

Trouble sleeping or sleeping too much

Losing interest in hobbies or activities you once enjoyed

Big changes in appetite or energy

Struggling to focus or make decisions

Pulling away from friends or family

Feelings of hopelessness or worthlessness

If these symptoms start interfering with daily life, it may be time to seek support.

And asking for help is not a weakness, it's a strength. The findings show that more young adults are reaching out to professionals and making use of digital tools to get support, which is encouraging progress, but there's more to do.

Reaching out early can make a real difference. It opens the door to professional guidance that not only helps people get back on track but also supports personal growth and long-term development. Whether it's through therapy, coaching, or digital resources, early professional intervention can help individuals move from just coping to truly thriving.

For all of us – whether we're employees, family, colleagues or friends – recognising this 'mind health gap' is important. It helps us better understand ourselves, support each other, and build healthier workplaces and communities. Because real coping isn't about just getting by, it's about building a life where we all can thrive.



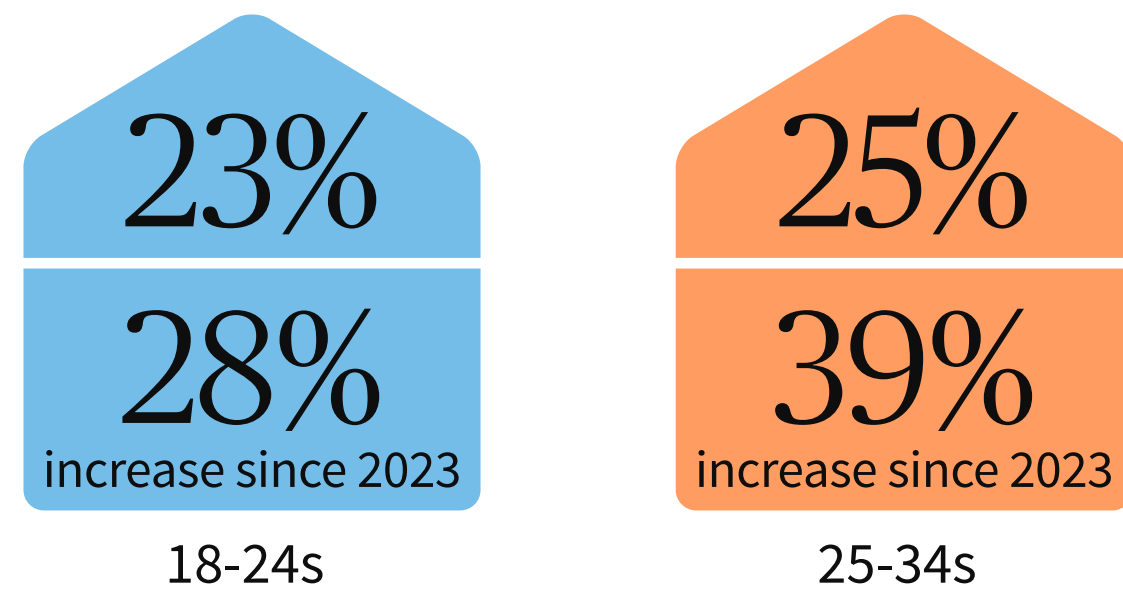
Teladoc<sup>®</sup>  
HEALTH

# Reaching out

But it's not all bad news. More Gen Z and Millennial non-natives are now getting support from a mental health professional, rather than a GP.

In the last 12 months, there's been a 12% decrease in the number of Millennials seeking more general care, and a 39% increase in visits to a psychiatrist or mental health specialist. The same can be seen for Gen Z who are now 14% less likely to see a GP, and 28% more likely to see a mental health expert.

## Visits to a psychiatrist or other mental health specialist in the last 12 months:



Due to their poorer mind health, it's perhaps unsurprising to see that more non-native Millennials are getting this specialist support compared to Gen Z, but it could also reflect the perception gap among Gen Z, who might not be seeking as much help with their mind health because they believe it to be better than it actually is.



# Shifting sources

Social media, the web, AI platforms – mind health information is now more accessible than ever. As our digital world tries to keep pace with our emotional demands, the variety of sources, forums, therapy and even wellness influencers grow. It’s a time of great change in the mind health support and treatment space; one that’s seen support evolve from face-to-face therapy to instant messaging counselling.

Our findings this year show that digital natives could be influencing this change, simply by how they’re accessing mind health information. For 43% of non-native Gen Z, for example, social media is the most popular source of information, closely followed by online channels such as blogs and websites (37%). Alarmingly, they’re leant on even more than healthcare professionals, who were cited as the third most popular place for information (34%).

This is illustrated by the fact that, aside from the increase in visits to a psychiatrist or mental health specialist (p11), Gen Z visits to other professionals for mental health support have decreased over the last 12 months.

Visits are down by:

↓ 14% to a GP

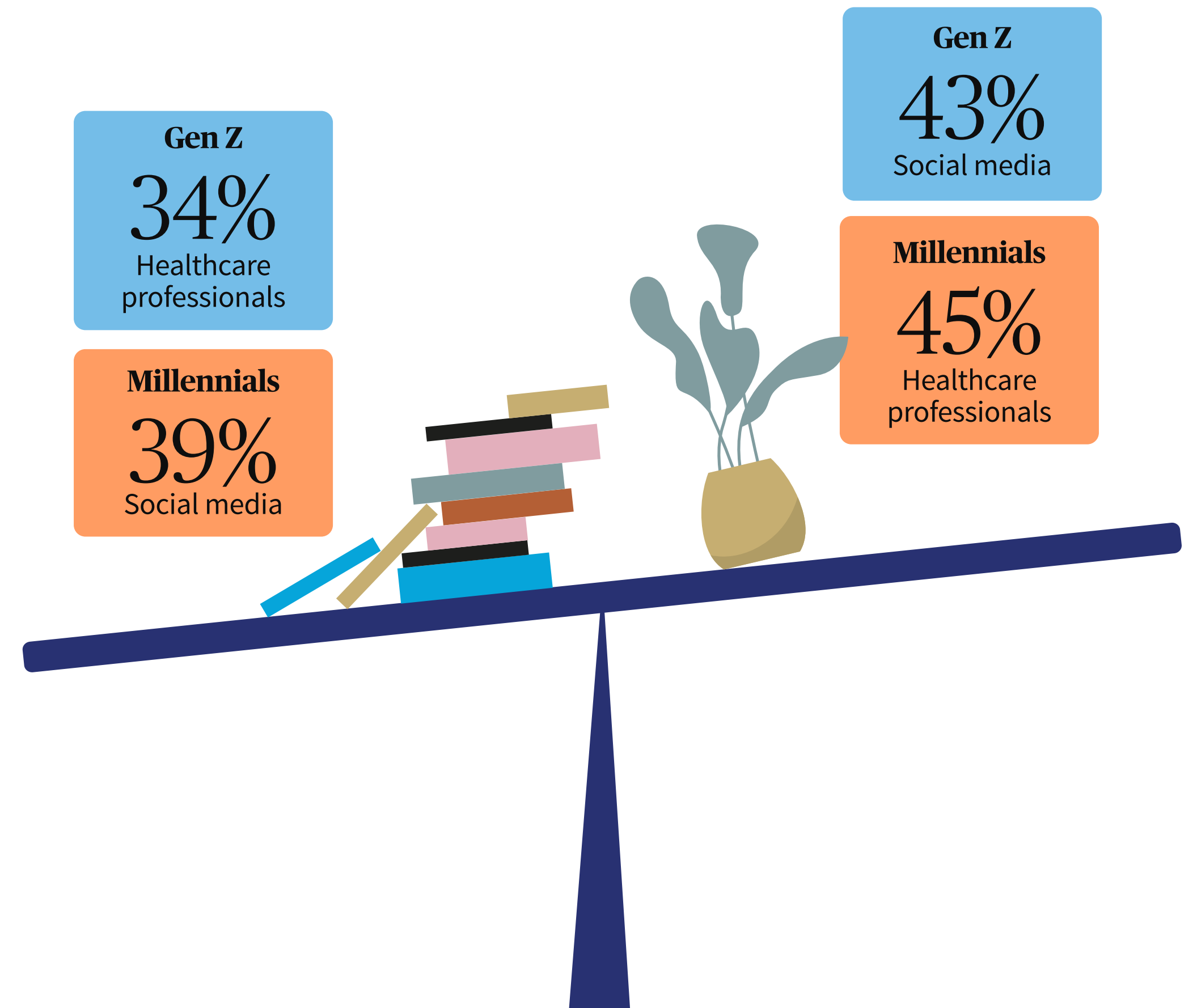
↓ 20% to a psychologist

↓ 32% to an occupational physician

A sign that social media and online sources are taking the place of more specialized and personalized support.

For Millennial non-natives, however, the dial shifts slightly. They’re just as likely to go to a healthcare professional as they are to online sources as their first port of call for mental health information (45%). This could be a generation preference appearing, or simply evidence that we become more discerning as we get older and prefer to reach for professional support. Still, they really aren’t far behind Gen Z (39%) when it comes to using social media as a source – it’s still their second choice.

While these findings could reflect a shift towards peer-driven and easily accessible mental health content, they also raise concerns about the reliability and safety of what young adult non-natives are consuming and the unregulated platforms they’re turning to.



# Let's talk TikTok

TikTok is a good example of one of these platforms. In 2025, it's now the fifth most popular social media platform in the world and of its 2.5 billion users, almost three quarters (71%) are the same age as our respondents – between 18 and 34 years old.<sup>2</sup>

Since its explosion on the social media scene in 2018, and its burst in popularity during the pandemic, TikTok has been increasingly scrutinised for its content moderation. More specifically its exposure to harmful content and the spread of misinformation, which can spread quickly through personal stories or viral trends. Videos such as: “Five signs you have trauma”, “What your anxiety really means” and “How I cured my depression”.

## Content moderation

Given the lack of professional oversight on social media platforms like TikTok – anyone can post mental health information, regardless of experience – young adults are at an increased risk of absorbing this misleading or even damaging content without critical evaluation.

In a recent study by The Guardian<sup>3</sup>, more than half of all the top trending videos offering mental health advice on TikTok were found to contain misinformation. The study took the top 100 videos posted under the #mentalhealthtips hashtag and shared them with psychologists, psychiatrists and academic experts, who established that 52 videos offering advice on dealing with trauma, neurodivergence, anxiety, depression and severe mental illness contained some misinformation, and that many others were vague or unhelpful.

In a bid to correct this issue and accept some social responsibility, TikTok has recently partnered with the World Health Organisation (WHO) to support Fides<sup>4</sup> – a global network of healthcare professionals and content creators who are focused on sharing evidence-based, authoritative mental health information. Certainly a step in the right direction for their online community.



## Engagement over accuracy

Like many social media models, TikTok has a powerful personalization algorithm, entirely driven by a user's likes, follows, watches, and reshares. By design, its only purpose is to maximize engagement, not accuracy, so content is algorithmically curated and served up based on user behaviour rather than medical credibility or factual reliability.

For our non-native 18-to-24-year-olds, we can see how relying on social media as a primary

source of mental health information could result in an echo chamber of inaccurate or even conflicting content. So, while still pivotal for self-expression, connection and entertainment, it's likely not the safest or most regulated place to find their mind health facts.

Perhaps this is something that the healthcare professionals and content creators working for Fides will help with, or could they find their advice swallowed up by the algorithm? Time will tell.

## Unseen pressures, everyday struggles

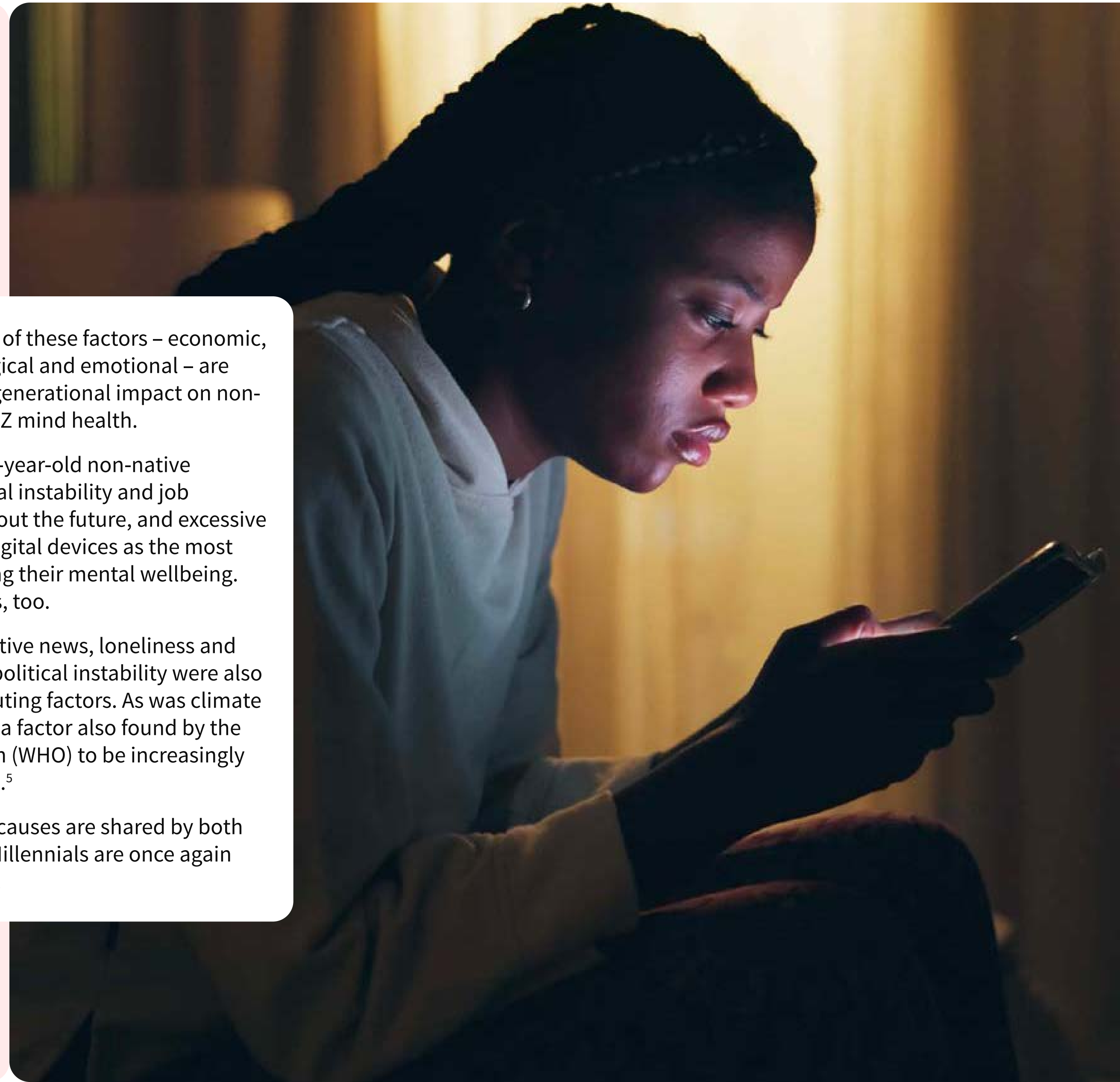
Young adults globally are coming of age in an era of uncertainty. They're witnessing climate catastrophes and geopolitical conflict, experiencing financial fragility and employment insecurity, managing technological overwhelm due to their always-on culture and navigating how the uncharted and so far, unregulated territories of AI will change their future.

Our findings show that all of these factors – economic, environmental, technological and emotional – are having a profound cross-generational impact on non-native Millennial and Gen Z mind health.

In particular, our 18-to-34-year-old non-native respondents cited financial instability and job insecurity, uncertainty about the future, and excessive use of social media and digital devices as the most prominent factors affecting their mental wellbeing. But there are many others, too.

Constant exposure to negative news, loneliness and isolation, and social and political instability were also high on the list of contributing factors. As was climate change and eco-anxiety – a factor also found by the World Health Organization (WHO) to be increasingly reported by young people.<sup>5</sup>

However, although these causes are shared by both non-native generations, Millennials are once again struggling more intensely.



## Loneliness and isolation

As previously mentioned, non-natives face a unique set of lifestyle challenges in comparison to natives, and loneliness and social isolation are two of the greatest. Living away from their native country, often with limited social networks, can make everyday connections harder to build and, for some, homesickness and longing for familiarity can intensify these feelings.

This is certainly the case for Millennial non-natives, the age group most affected by loneliness and isolation in our study. Over half (56%) said these contribute to their poor mind health, putting them at greater risk than others:

- 10% more likely than native Millennials
- 30% more likely than Gen Z non-natives
- 87% more likely than 55-75-year-old non-natives

As for reasons, there may be a couple of factors at play. As we age, it's natural to become less socially connected than we are in our teens and 20s. But for Millennial non-natives, this disconnection can happen sooner and feel more acute. Living away from their native country can mean long-standing relationships are geographically out of reach, making it harder to maintain a strong support network over time.

Between the ages of 25 and 34, it's also more likely that Millennials are navigating major life events such as marriage, pregnancy or parenthood, which may mean their desire for social connection is greater.<sup>5</sup> While these milestones can be fulfilling, they can also limit the time available for nurturing friendships and social connections due to increased responsibility and less social flexibility. So, for non-natives who may not have nearby family or long-term friends to lean on, these life changes can significantly contribute to feelings of isolation and loneliness.

## Work-life balance, and stress:

Another source of mental strain for non-native Millennials was their work – the stress it's causing, its imbalance with the rest of their life, and now, the added pressure to keep up with technological advancements such as AI.

But this isn't necessarily new. As we saw in our 2024 Mind Health report, non-native individuals are generally more prone to work-related wellbeing issues. The findings showed that:

### 2024 report

**Non-native individuals**

- 80% were experiencing mind health concerns, such as stress and anxiety, due to their work environment.
- 49% were battling burnout.

Our most recent results could indicate that non-native Millennials may have been contributing quite heavily to those numbers, given that among our 25-to-34-year-old respondents this year:

**Non-native millennials**

- 40% say work-related stress is currently affecting their mind health.
- 38% say they're having difficulty achieving a work-life balance.

## Work-related differences

Surprisingly, just a quarter (25%) of Gen Z respondents report that these work-related issues are affecting their mind health,\* a proportion more comparable with older non-native age groups – such as those in their 50s, 60s, and 70s – where 22% are reporting work-related stress.

It could be that career pressures are sharpening these differences. Millennials are often in a career-building stage of life, competing for promotions, managing heavier workloads and trying to prove themselves in mid-level roles, which can all contribute to increased stress and work-life imbalance. Gen Z, on the other hand, are more likely to be in entry-level or early career positions, with less responsibility and less pressure.

But being in this stage of their careers during an age of accelerating tech development may also be having an impact. Our research shows that 44% are feeling the pressure to keep pace with rapid technological change, including AI advancements, while 64% report financial instability and job insecurity as another factor. This economic and digital pressure – connected or not – may be heightening their sense of career vulnerability and in turn, impacting their mind health.

It may also be that the differences are reflecting generational attitudes to work; a form of ‘work culture inheritance’. Millennials started their careers in an era that often valued long hours, constant availability and commitment at the expense of work-life balance. While Gen Z have entered the workforce at a time when conversations around mental health, hybrid and remote work models, and boundary setting are more established. For these reasons, Millennials may still feel bound by older workplace values which put more strain and stress on their mind health.

Ultimately, these pressures are compounded for non-native professionals by the challenges of living and working outside their home country. As many relocate for better opportunities, their career progress is often closely tied to the success of their move and can lead to a stronger sense of pressure to perform. The need to adapt to these new working environments can also contribute and intensify the issues with work-related stress and work-life balance that we’re seeing in our results.

**Millennial non-natives are 60% more likely to be impacted by work-related stress than their Gen Z peers**

\*60% of 18-24-year-old survey respondents are in work



Visits to an occupational physician are down 12% year-on-year for millennial non-natives.

## Exposure to negative news

It's one of the benefits of our modern world – the ability to connect with what's going on beyond our front door in a matter of seconds. But, we've all been there. Opened our phones or browsers; turned on our TVs or radios and suddenly we're absorbing the next breaking news story.

Our findings this year show that 42% of Gen Z and half (50%) of Millennial non-natives are struggling with this overexposure. While this is not unique to their generations – 55-to-75-year-olds are also somewhat affected (36%) – the 'always-on' culture of Gen Z and Millennials means they're more likely to spend time on digital platforms where this type of news is more readily accessible.

In their Digital News Report<sup>7</sup>, the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism (RISJ) found that phones are used as the primary device for accessing news for the vast majority of under 35s (69%). On a typical day, almost half (45%) of Gen Z and over a third (39%) of Millennials first come into contact with the news on their phones.

In another survey they released earlier this year<sup>8</sup>, the RISJ also found that younger demographics are now placing the highest dependence on social media and video network for accessing the news, with 44% of 18-to-24-year-olds (Gen Z) and 38% of 25-to-34-year-olds (Millennials) saying they are their main sources.

Indicative of this overlap between social media, device habits and news consumption, our study results found that around half (51%) of our Gen Z and Millennial non-native respondents said that excessive use of social media and digital devices is negatively affecting their mental health.

Understandably so if we consider that their main route to the news – and exposure of negative news content – is through the device they're already overusing.

The result, as we've discussed earlier in this report (p13), could easily be a constant stream of distressing information. All amplified by real-time alerts, news aggregators and algorithmically fueled content, which push stories into view as soon as they develop.

For always-on digital natives, this may make the media seem magnified, inescapable and could even start to shape how they perceive the world around them. Other factors identified in our research suggest there may be further consequences of overexposure and overuse of news and tech on young adult non-native mind health. For example:

### 18-34s

56%

feel uncertain about the future in a rapidly changing world

46%

are affected by social and political unrest

37%

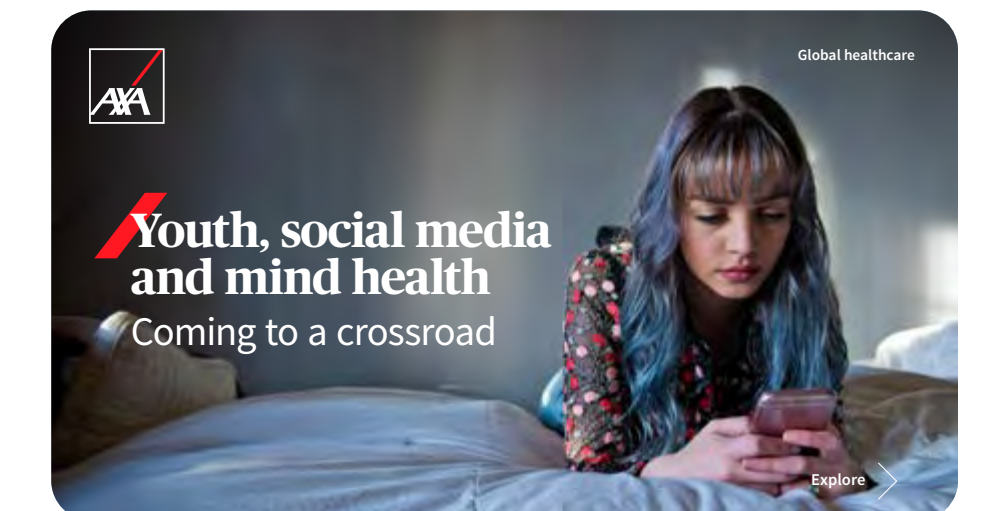
are impacted by geopolitical instability

42%

are affected by climate change and eco-anxiety

# 47% of 18-to-34-year-old non-natives are struggling with constant exposure to negative news in the media.

You can find out more about the relationship between social media and young people's mind health, including tips and guidance, in our [full report](#).



Expert voice

# Digital dependency: how young adults can reclaim control

Louisa Rose, CEO of youth mental health charity, Beyond, and former social media professional.

Social media is a contributing factor in how each young adult experiences mind health and it can be part of the problem, as much as the solution. These platforms allow users to share experiences and destigmatise challenges. But they can also foster unhealthy habits, thanks to poor moderation and the pervasive risk of subtle digital addiction.

Nowhere is this tension more visible than in the lives of young people, for whom screens are no longer optional but a firm fixture in daily routines.

By the age of 12, 97% of UK children (91% in the US) have a smartphone, three in four are using them in ways that mirror behavioural addiction and Gen Zers are online more than any other demographic.

Modelling behaviour that helps to reclaim agency over this dependency is crucial to turning the tide.

As CEO of Beyond – and a former social media professional – I sit in the middle of a fascinating and often frustrating conversation between regulators, educators, caregivers, and young people. Each group has a strong idea about what the solution should be. But too often, those ideas exist in silos.

Many assume that the key to unlocking change is to simply remove or delay access to devices.

However, if we're serious about lasting change, we need more nuanced and inclusive solutions that acknowledge the voices of young people. The Beyond Youth Board – spanning Gen Alpha (~2010-2024) to Millennials, from a wide range of backgrounds – is clear: We know we're addicted. We don't want you to take the technology away. We want you to make it safer.

So, while organisations globally are working with stakeholders to make that happen, they hope to help Gen Alpha avoid repeating their mistakes. Organisations such as #HalfTheStory in the US and Flippgen in the UK show what's possible when Gen Zers lead on rebalancing digital dependency, especially through education.

Algorithmic literacy plays an essential role here. Critical thinking skills don't fully mature until around age 25, so supporting digital natives to understand how and why particular content is shown is key. Netflix auto-plays the next episode, for example, but do we explain to a seven-year-old why?

While systemic change evolves, non-native young adults can reclaim agency now:

**Digital diet:** how 'nutritious' is the content you see? Unfollow what drains you.

**Learn the algorithms:** understanding why you see content helps resist its pull.

**Set offline anchors:** nurture friendships, hobbies and routines away from screens.

**Model intentional use:** habits of peers, mentors, employees and parents shape younger generations.

Even small behavioural swaps can help. For instance, wearing an analogue watch reduces the need to check the time on your phone, which in turn can lower the chances of drifting into unintentional scrolling.

The challenge is complex and won't be solved overnight. But with shared responsibility and coordinated action, I truly believe it's possible to shift the trajectory.

**Beyond**

Beyond is a youth mental health charity tackling the growing mental health crisis affecting young people in the UK. To find out more, visit: [wearebeyond.org.uk](https://wearebeyond.org.uk)



# Managing mind health

Given all that we now know about young adult non-natives and their mental health, it's reassuring to see that both age groups are increasingly seeing a mental health therapist.

Together, they're now 12% less likely to seek more general care for their mental health, but a third (33%) more likely to see a psychiatrist or mental health specialist, than they were in 2023.

Millennials, despite suffering with poorer mind health across all areas of our study are, reassuringly, seeking more help than Gen Z. Of those with a mind health condition, 21% are receiving professional help with the support of medication – a 29% difference to Gen Z – and only 13% say their condition isn't managed at all.

Gen Z, however, are 16% less likely to be self-managing, and 19% more likely to say their condition isn't managed at all.

Signs that they might be falling into a grey area in terms of looking after their mind health, even though they appear to be doing better than Millennials on the whole.

## Work-ready solutions

Even though work-related factors are having a big impact on mental health, particularly for non-native Millennials, there's been a 21% decrease since 2023 in the number of 18-34s managing their mind health with the support of an occupational physician. Instead, both Gen Z and Millennial non-natives are seeking help outside the workplace – leaning on psychiatrists, psychologists, and GPs.

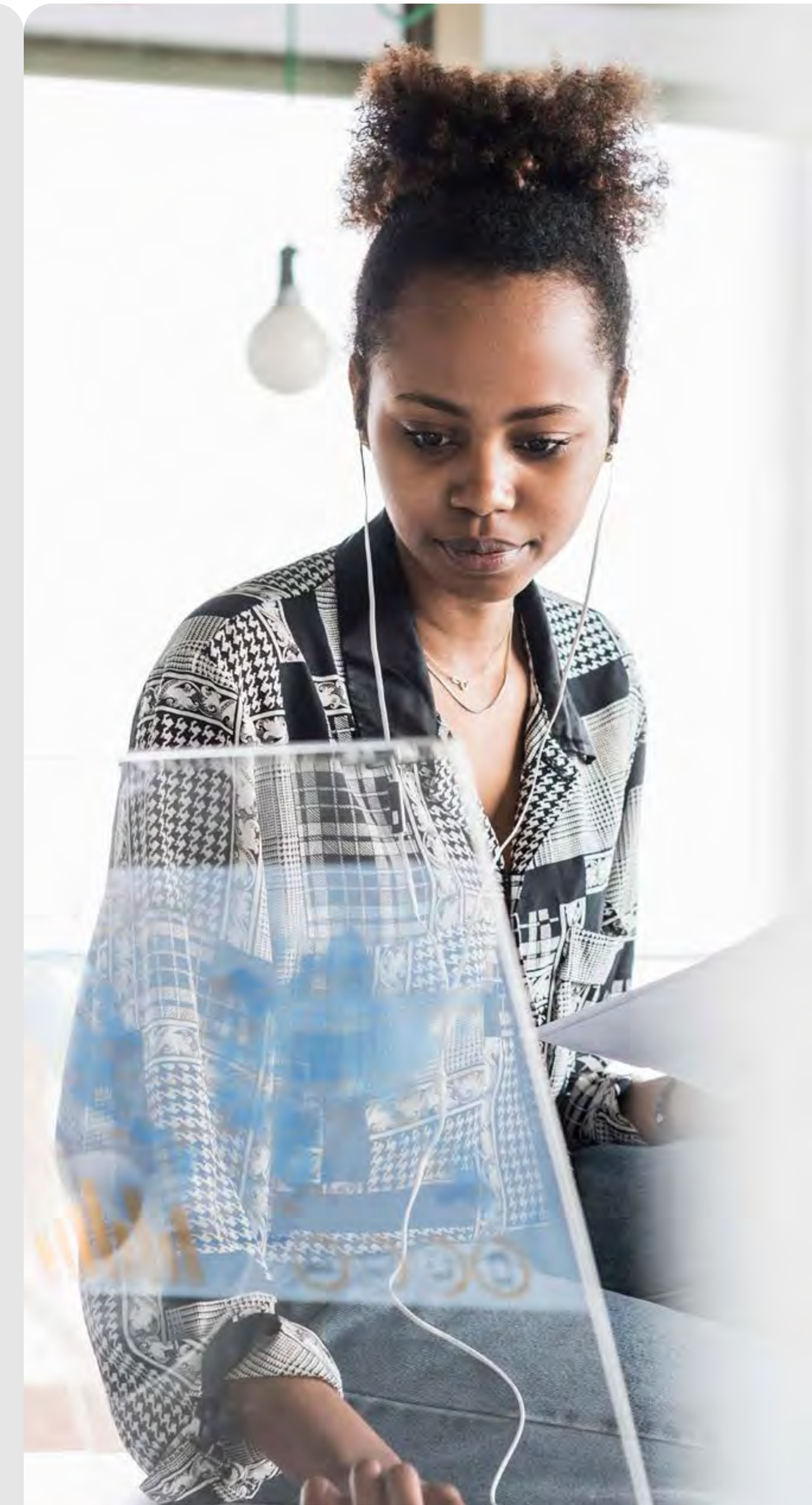
Given what we now know about other causes of poor mind health among these age groups, it may simply be that they're looking for support that isn't confined to workplace wellbeing and aims to address the wider influences on their mental health instead, such as loneliness and isolation (p15) or excessive tech use (p17).

That said, it could also be that mounting work-related issues, such as stress and poor work-life balance, mean that occupational physicians aren't the most trusted, suitable or preferred pathway for mental health support. For non-natives who may be on international assignment, and who haven't yet built a rapport with their employer, it may feel even harder reaching out for help in these instances.

Since 2023, non-native 18-34s are:

**33%**  
less likely to see  
a psychiatrist  
or mental health  
specialist.

**21%**  
less likely to see  
an occupational  
physician.



# A new era of mental healthcare is here

In the short time AI has been in our lives, it's already broken through the boundaries of its purpose as a productivity tool. What was, at first, 'extra help', is now quietly running in the background of our lives and becoming increasingly integrated into our everyday.

Inevitably, this 'co-piloted' reality has already reached the mental healthcare space, with more and more people turning to AI chatbots for support. In the UK alone, over 10 million adults are now using ChatGPT or Google Gemini for personal help with their mind health.<sup>9</sup>

For our non-native Millennial and Gen Z respondents, the picture is similar. A significant proportion say they're interested in adopting AI tools to help them with their mind health, and some already have.

The biggest uptake is among Gen Z non-natives: 25% of whom are already using digital journaling apps to provide reframing techniques and identify negative thought patterns; AI sleep tracking to analyze patterns; and AI goal-setting and habit formation apps to support and maintain healthy routines. A quarter (25%) are using AI-powered chatbot therapists for support, guidance and coping strategies too.

Millennial non-natives follow a couple of percentage points behind Gen Z across all this usage.

Above all though, our results are signaling the future of AI adoption among young adult non-natives. Of the 18-to-34-year-olds who have never used it, but say they would:

**43%** are interested in an AI-powered virtual therapist

**47%** are interested in an AI social support app that connects them with individuals who have similar mind health concerns

**46%** would use an AI platform that matches them with licensed therapists for virtual sessions

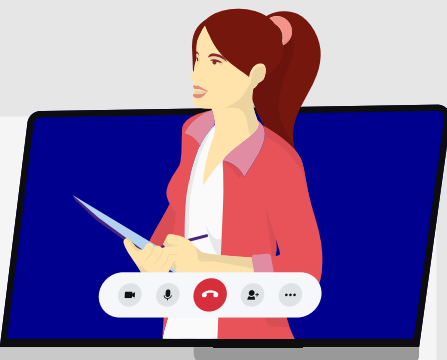
**51%** would use an AI goal-setting and habit formation app

## A word of warning

As digital natives, it's not this predicted use of AI which is surprising, but perhaps the number intending to use it for mental health support. Once again, we have to consider how misinformation could emerge in these circumstances, especially if we consider how information is fed to us by AI.

For example, popular AI tools like ChatGPT and Google's AI Mode gather information by breaking down what users ask into simple keywords and then searching for the most recent, trending or highly discussed content online. They often rely on sources that are popular or frequently mentioned, including user-generated content from platforms such as Reddit – particularly if there's a partnership involved. As a result, chatbot responses may not offer expert, balanced or clinically accurate answers.

The 'memory' of these tools must also be taken into account, as it can affect how objective the responses are. For instance, an individual who has previously asked an AI chatbot for mental health advice about burnout at work might later ask for advice



**66%** of Gen Z and Millennial non-natives would use, or have used, AI virtual therapists for mind health support.

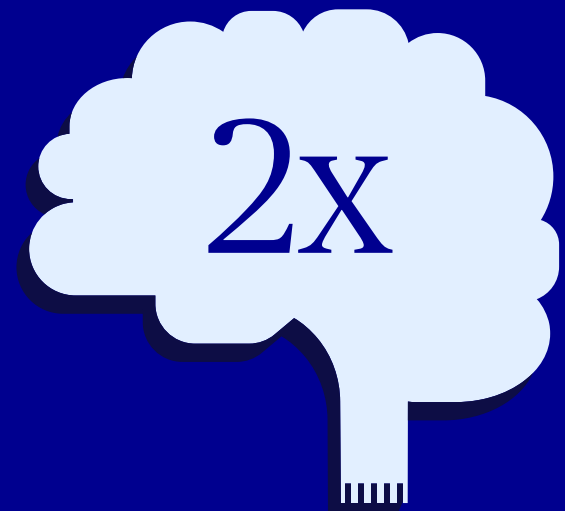
on improving their sleep quality. The chatbot may then interpret their insomnia solely through a stress-at-work lens, overlooking other possible factors such as their lifestyle or physical health.

So, even now – especially now – we must pay close attention to how AI is increasingly being used for mind health support and continue advising people of all ages to use it with care. Leveraging its capabilities to supplement, but not substitute, traditional human-led support.

# Five key takeaways

1. Gen Z and Millennials are now reporting the highest rates of mind health issues.

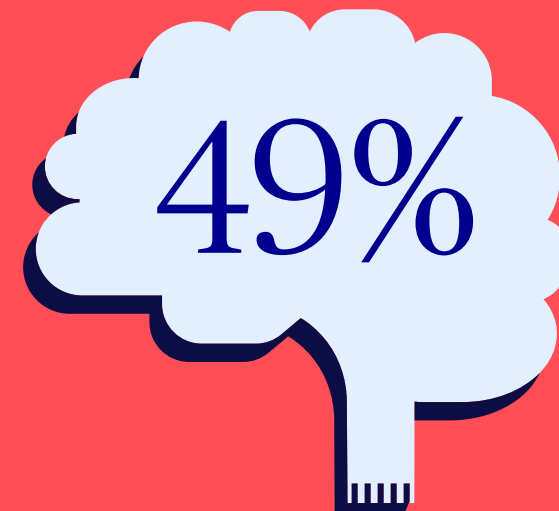
18-34-year-olds are now



more likely to experience depression, anxiety or stress compared to over 55s. But non-native individuals continue to struggle more than natives. This year, non-native 18-34s are 13% more likely to experience moderate depression.

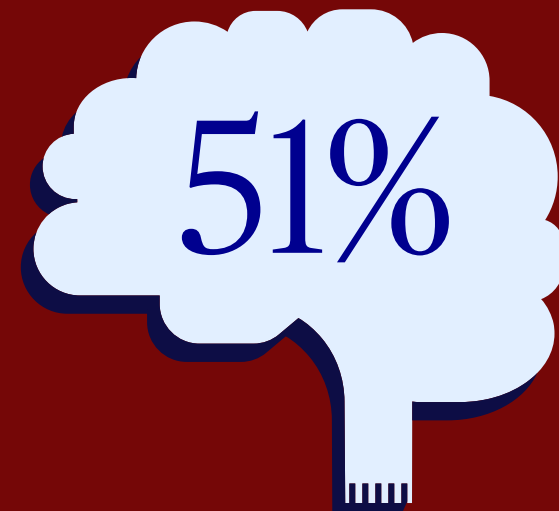
2. Millennial non-natives are experiencing poorer mind health than their non-native Gen Z successors.

There's been a



rise in the number of Millennials struggling, compared with a 25% rise among Gen Z.

3. Excessive use of social media and digital devices is having a significant impact on non-native 18-34s.



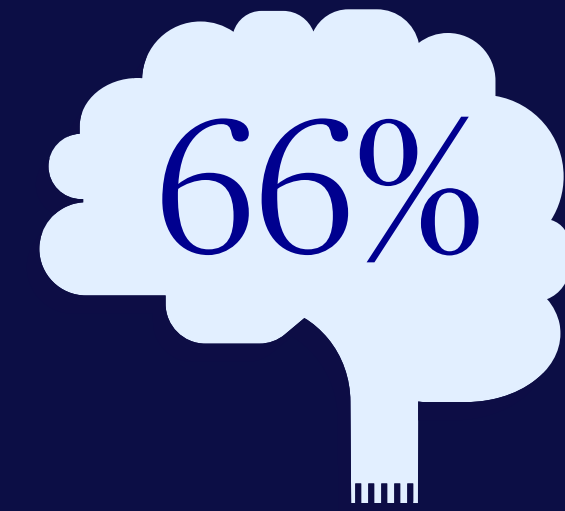
of Gen Z and Millennials say that social media and digital devices are key factors affecting their mental health.

4. More Gen Z and Millennial non-natives are now getting support from a mental health professional.



more non-native 18-34s are now seeing a psychiatrist or mental health specialist than they were in 2023.

5. AI-powered mind health support is growing in popularity and usage among young adult non-natives.



of Gen Z and Millennial non-natives would use, or have already used, AI virtual therapists for mind health support.

# Take ten and check in with your mind health

How is your mind health at the moment? Maybe it's not something you think about regularly but you'd like to pay a bit more attention to.

At AXA, we recently launched the [AXA Mind Health Self-Check](#) to help individuals learn more about their mental wellbeing and what they can do to improve it.

In just ten minutes, the self-check will take you through a short series of questions about your state of mind, skills and beliefs, and lifestyle to gather insights and provide you with a personal report into your emotional wellbeing. It's:

- free
- anonymous
- confidential
- available in ten languages
- based on research from 200 scientific studies.

So, if you're ready to be more mindful with your mind health, this is the place to [start](#).

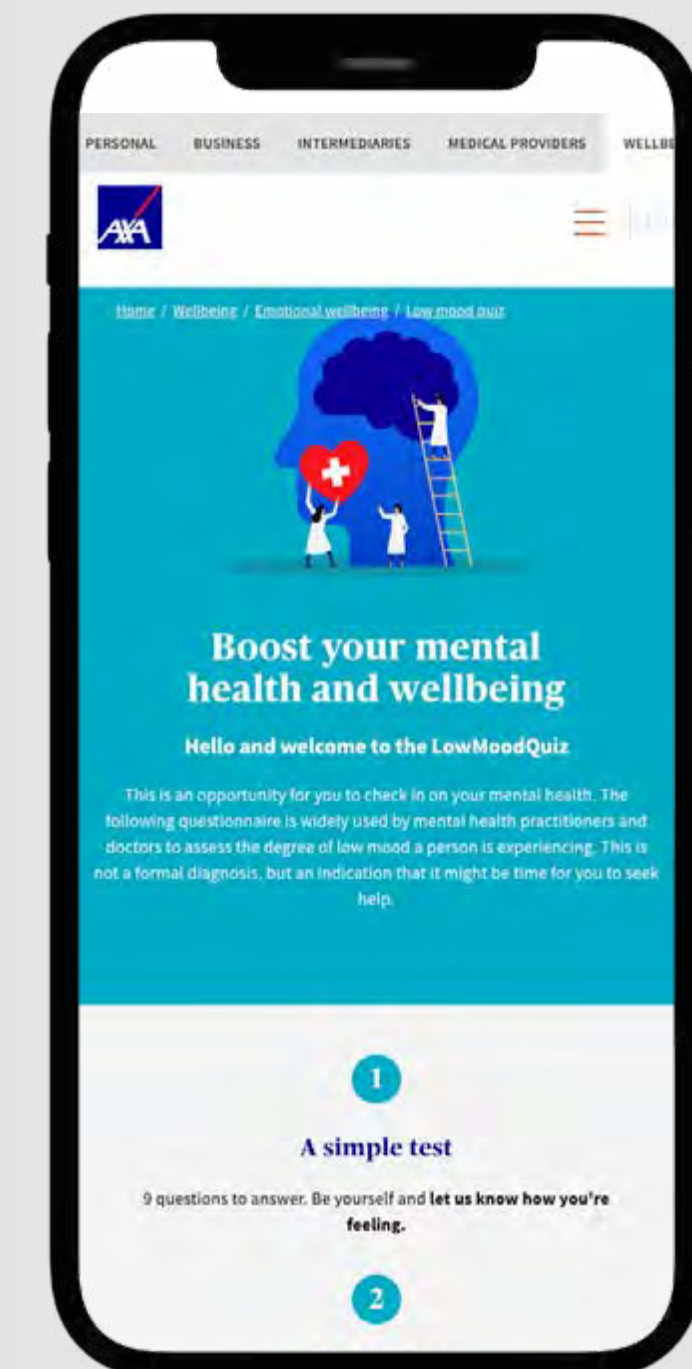
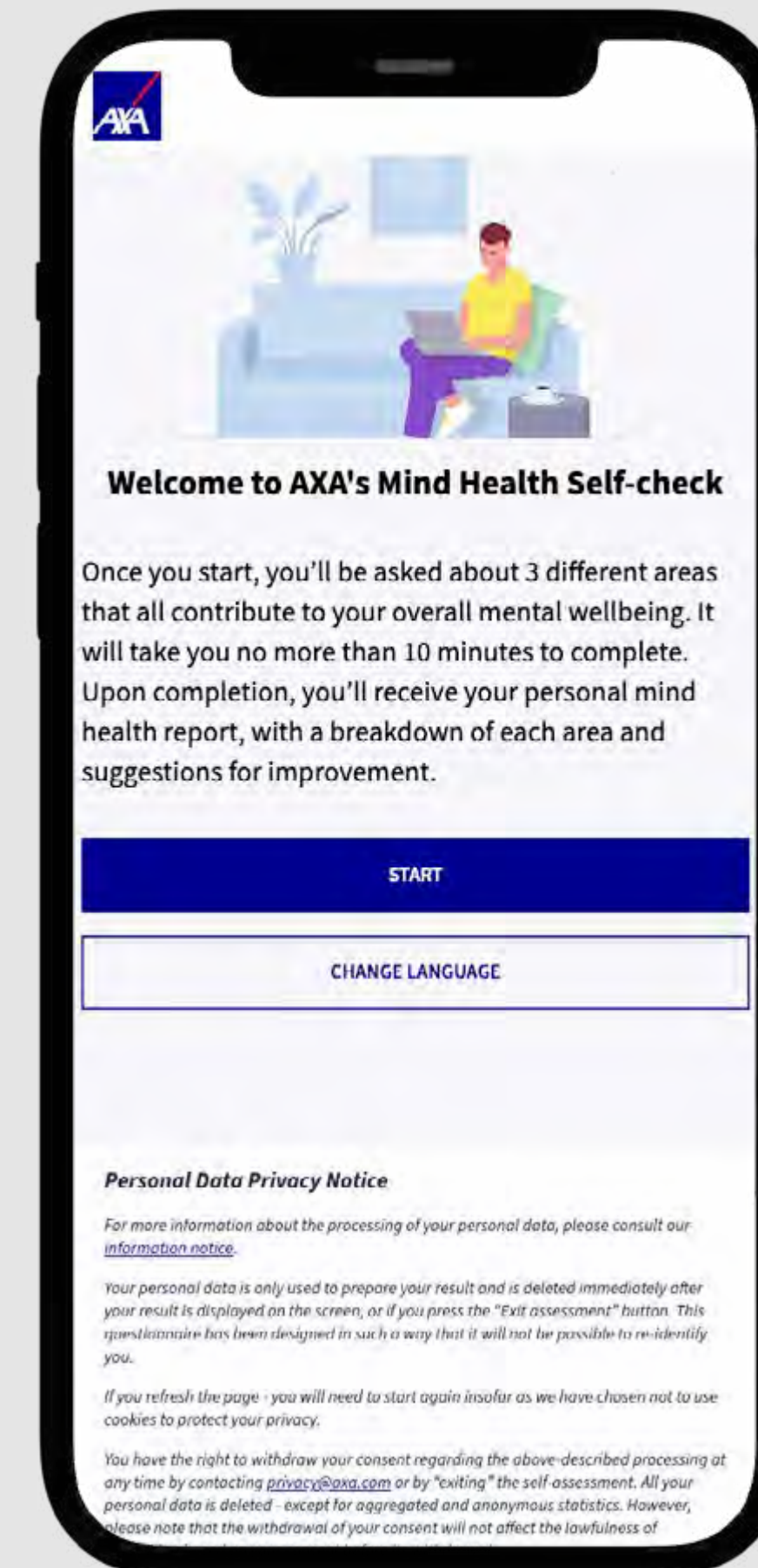
## Anxiety and Low Mood quizzes

You can also take our Anxiety and Low Mood quizzes if you'd like to assess where you're currently sitting on both of these scales.

While neither of these questionnaires will provide you with a formal diagnosis, they're still widely used by mental health practitioners and doctors to assess the degree of low mood and anxiety a person is experiencing, and will guide you to some helpful resources and services to help you stay on top and in control, even if things feel at their worst.

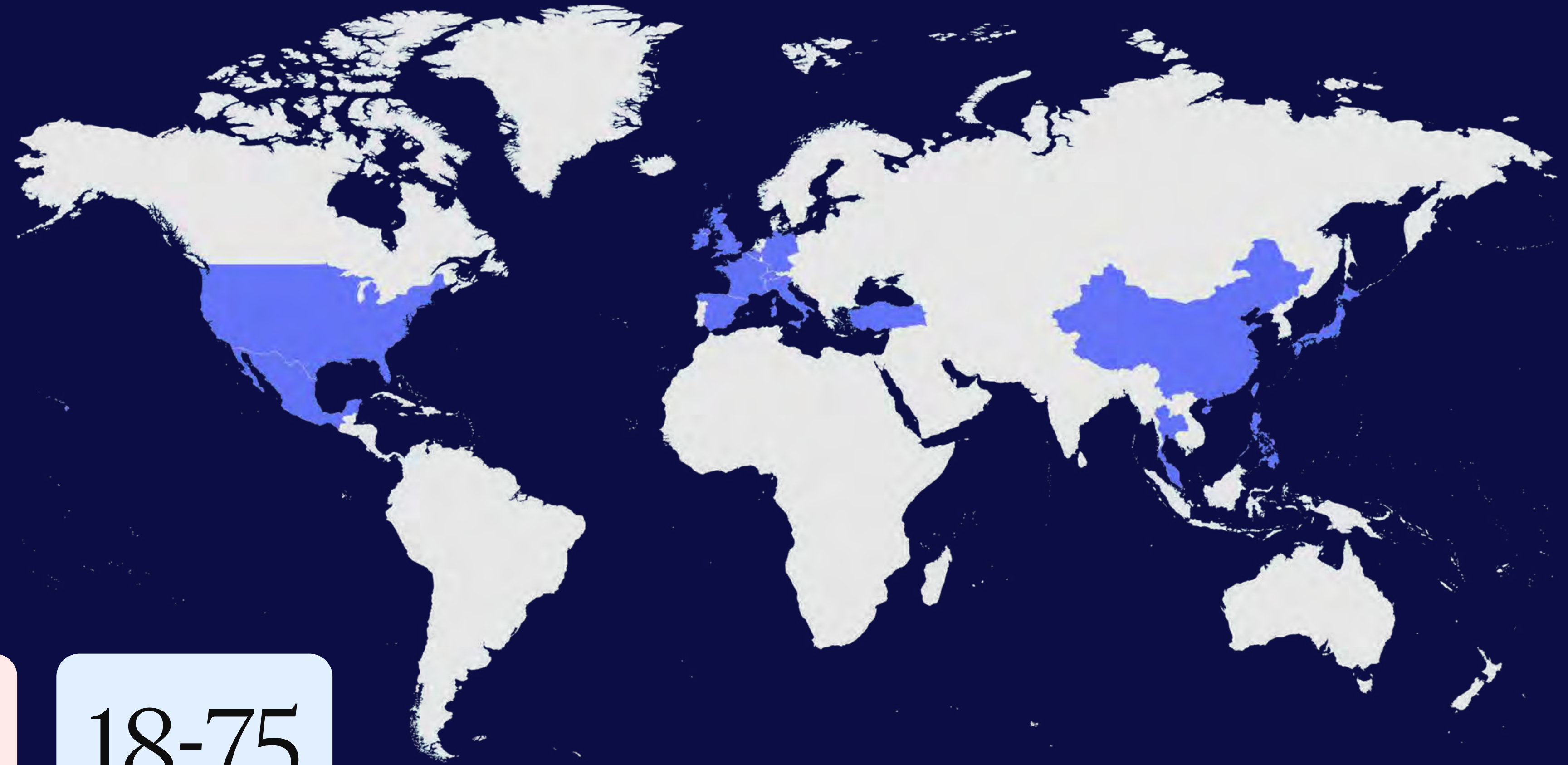
[ANXIETY QUIZ](#)

[LOW MOOD QUIZ](#)



# Methodology

The AXA Mind Health survey was carried out jointly with Ipsos France. Online interviews were conducted between 8 October and 11 November 2024 in 16 countries: UK, Ireland, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Switzerland, China, Hong Kong, Japan, Mexico, Philippines, Thailand, Turkey and the USA. A quota method was applied to gender, age, occupation and region. The data is weighted so that each country's sample composition best reflects the demographic profile of the adult population (18 to 75-year-olds), according to the most recent census data.



16  
countries

17,000  
respondents

18-75  
years old



[axaglobalhealthcare.com](https://axaglobalhealthcare.com)

<sup>1</sup> The AXA Mind Health survey was carried out jointly with Ipsos France. Online interviews were conducted between 8 October and 11 November 2024 in 16 countries.

<sup>2</sup> <https://growthdevil.com/tiktok-age-demographics>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2025/may/31/more-than-half-of-top-100-mental-health-tiktoks-contain-misinformation-study-finds>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.who.int/teams/digital-health-and-innovation/digital-channels/fides>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240049338>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/978240112360>

<sup>7</sup> <https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/our-research/how-young-people-consume-news-and-implications-mainstream-media>

<sup>8</sup> <https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/digital-news-report/2025>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.nationalworld.com/health/millions-of-brits-turning-to-ai-chatbots-for-mental-health-support-amid-nhs-challenges-5231025>

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