

A young woman with short hair, wearing a bright blue t-shirt and a black jacket, is smiling slightly. She is wearing black gloves and is operating a blue pallet jack. The background is a blurred industrial or warehouse setting with shelves and equipment. The overall tone is professional and focused on the subject of Generation Z in manufacturing.

more than just a job.

spotlight on generation z
in the manufacturing
industry

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the changing culture of manufacturing's future workforce.

As recruitment shortages in the manufacturing sector continue to hit the headlines, Randstad surveyed over 670 people who work in manufacturing, production and warehousing to uncover how they choose who to work for.

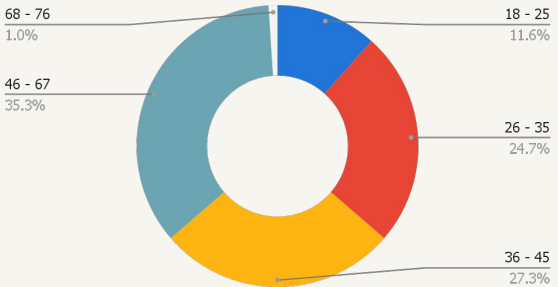
In this report, we draw on key observations that reflect younger workers' perspectives of the workplace. Generation Z* will play a pivotal role in shaping the future of the manufacturing industries, and workplaces must listen to them if they hope to stay competitive in a challenging recruitment market. We have curated key insights that demonstrate what motivates people aged 25 and under, who work in the manufacturing industries, to apply for jobs or stay in their current roles.



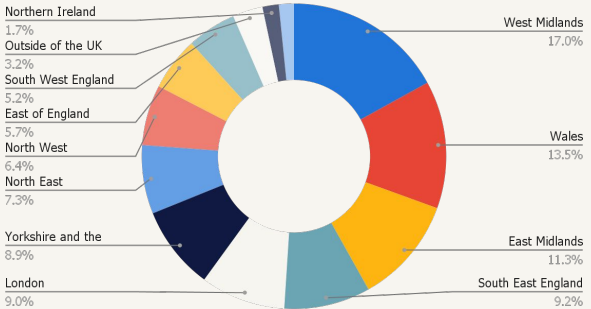
Our survey spanned 6,000 workers from across the UK. Of these, 670 respondents worked in either manufacturing, warehousing or production roles. The breakdown of these 670 participants can be seen below:

*Generation Z were born between 1997 and 2015.

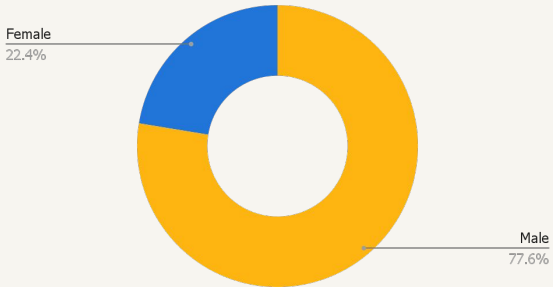
Age Breakdown



Location Breakdown



Gender Breakdown

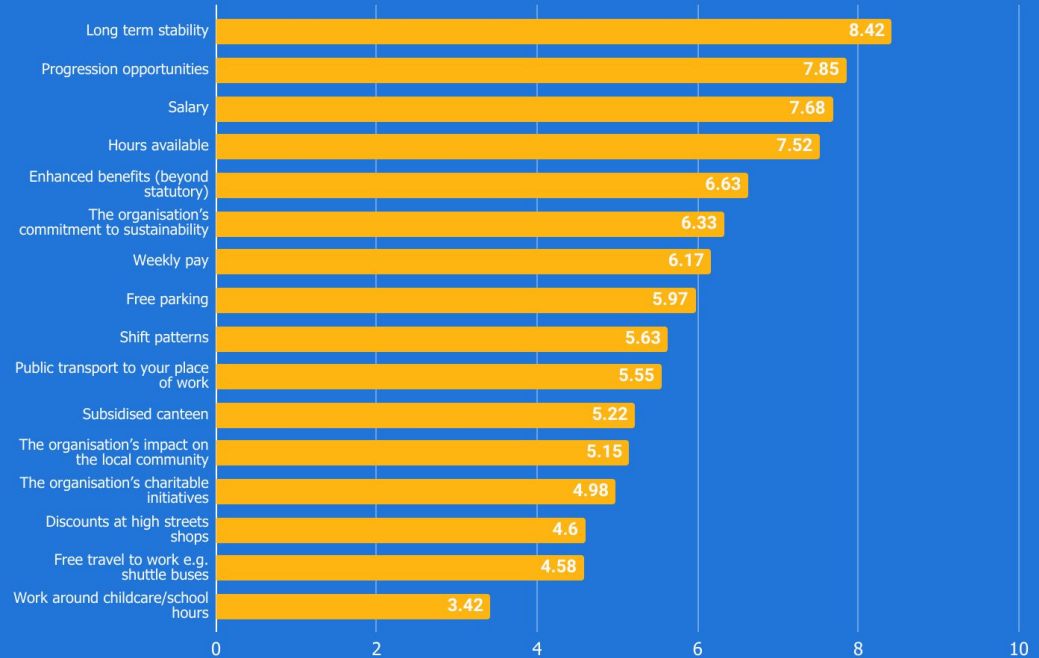


long term stability and progression opportunities top the charts.

One of our survey's most thought-provoking findings was that younger workers favour career progression to a greater extent than their older colleagues. In fact, progression opportunities and long term stability were more likely to motivate a younger worker to apply for a job than the salary advertised. This was reversed for older workers, who value salary more than progression opportunities.

This is mirrored in the results of the question that asked "how important are the following factors in keeping you at your current job?" which found younger workers were almost 20% more likely to select progression opportunities than the rest of the workforce.

If you were looking for a new job, how important are the following factors in influencing your decision to apply?



what does this mean for employers?

As workplaces look to onboard a greater number of younger workers who have grown up experiencing rapid increases in the cost of living, alleviating concerns around career advancement and long term stability in the manufacturing sector is critical.

Even if the current recruitment focus is primarily temporary and contingent roles, it is important to ensure that careers pages and job descriptions inform candidates of opportunities to learn new skills that will help them in the future.



progression and training are set to become must haves.

key motivations for gen z.

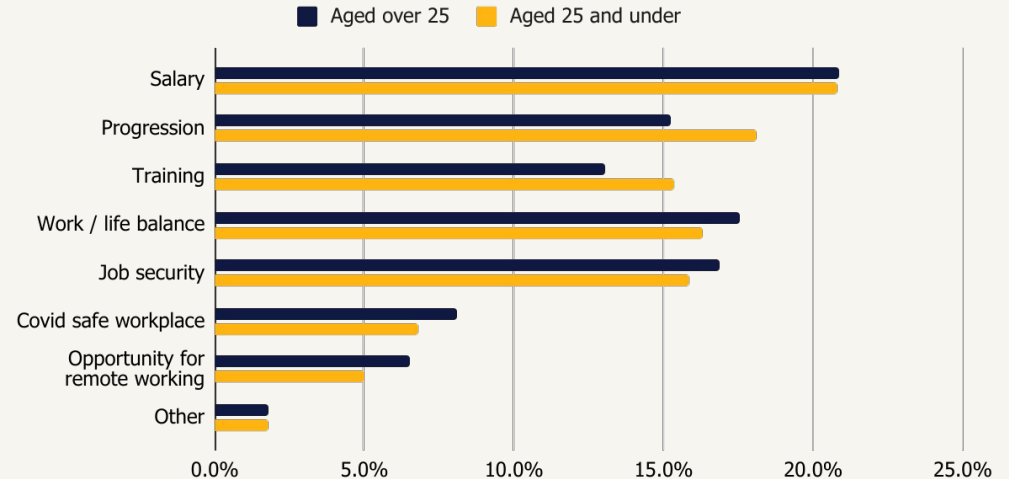
Progression and training are the only factors that younger employees value more than their older colleagues.



The results on the previous pages demonstrate similarities and differences when compared to [Randstad's Employer Brand Research \(REBR\)](#) report. In general, [work life balance was the most desirable factor for those looking to change jobs](#). However, in manufacturing, salary, progression and training outrank it, highlighting the importance of ensuring these are part of your offering to attract new skilled labour.

The REBR report did note that a majority of employees from across the globe and all working sectors desired more career progression than their current employer provided. Only 6% of young workers feel they have the chance to learn new skills in their current workplace.

Which of the following factors are most important for keeping you at your current job?



By providing more in-depth training and focusing on progression opportunities, employers should be able to retain their top talent whilst motivating the rest of the workforce as they see their teammates progressing.

staying put or making a move.

Almost 30% of manufacturing, production and warehousing workers want to move into a different industry within the next five years, with earning more money being the top reason, followed by learning something new and then more career opportunities. This jumps by nearly a third, to almost 40% of those aged 25 and under, propelling retention challenges into the spotlight.

what do you most enjoy about your current job?

When asked what they enjoyed most about their current jobs, those aged 25 and under cited enjoying the work and having good colleagues. This contrasts with older workers who are half as likely to appreciate their teammates and 50% more likely to stay in their job due to being good at it. This is useful information for employers and could prompt some easy to implement initiatives such as hosting employee social events where workers can get to know each other, increasing variety or reducing monotony in the work, and ensuring workers have regular feedback and recognition.

what is most likely to persuade you to move jobs?

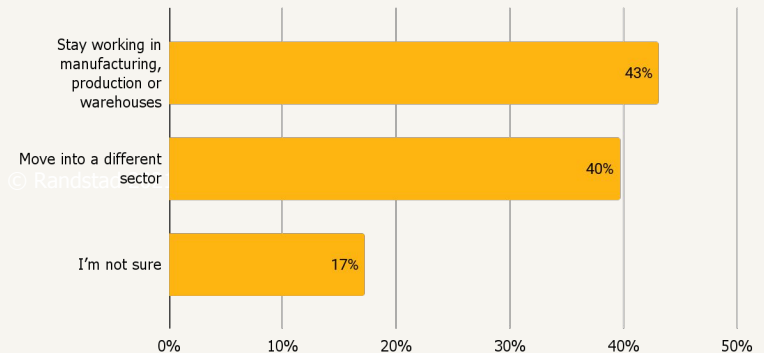
Once again, all manufacturing, production and warehouse workers cited progression opportunities as the factor that would be most likely to persuade them to move jobs, with the younger generation valuing this slightly more than their older colleagues.



job moving confidence.

Our research found that workers aged 25 and under feel less confident about moving jobs than their older colleagues.

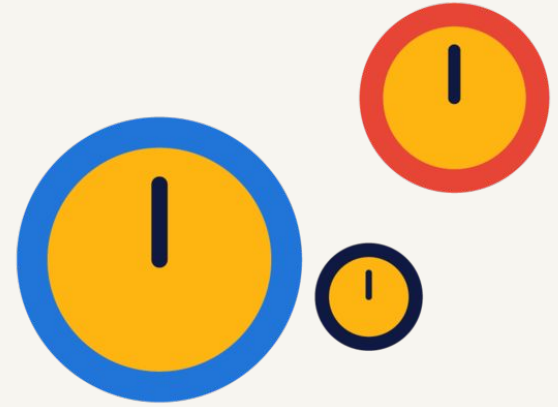
Looking ahead at the next 0 - 5 years, do you want to stay in your sector or move to a different sector?



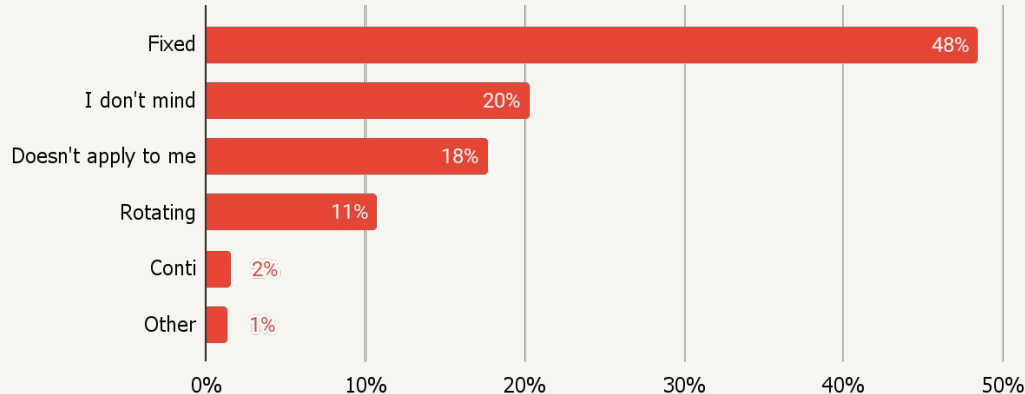
flexibility and work life balance.

Across all manufacturing, production and warehousing workers, half wanted more flexibility in their shifts. This number didn't change depending on age group.

When asked which of the following shift patterns they would prefer, again almost 50% chose fixed shifts, with conti patterns particularly unpopular at less than 2%. Changing established shift patterns can be difficult, however employers who are struggling to recruit must ask themselves hard questions about why, and explore what they could offer employees in terms of flexibility and shift patterns.



Which of the following shift patterns do you prefer? (all ages)



Of the under 25s, only one in ten would be dissuaded from working weekends, compared to a quarter of older workers.

If employers require weekend working, the younger workforce are ready and waiting to fill the shifts. Ensuring the rest of their employee proposition suits Gen Z's needs will help employers attract these workers and keep their weekend shifts covered.

in conclusion.

Randstad's research has highlighted that Generation Z workers in the manufacturing sector have heightened progression focused motivations compared to their older colleagues and employers must pay attention if they hope to attract and retain these workers.

Investing in training and support that helps employees recognise where they are developing and progressing is going to become increasingly important as more of Generation Z enters the workforce. Employers must stay mindful of the fact that younger workers are measurably more likely to see work as much more than just money, with progression opportunities topping salary across multiple questions.

Employers must also be mindful that almost 40% of Generation Z are considering leaving the manufacturing sector in the next five years, in search of higher salaries, improved career opportunities and long term stability. Threatening retention challenges emphasise the need for a change in culture and preventive recruitment strategies.

takeaway actions.

- ❑ Highlight progression opportunities in job descriptions.
- ❑ Feature success stories and development examples on careers pages and websites.
- ❑ Emphasise employee testimonials which demonstrate the ability to progress within your organisation.
- ❑ Provide relevant training to all employees and support them with further training if they want it.
- ❑ Host social and team building events so your colleagues get to know each other.
- ❑ Give regular, positive feedback and recognition.
- ❑ Ensure current employees are first in line for learning new skills when it is needed.

working with randstad.

In this fast moving and rapidly changing environment, organisations will need a flexible workforce that can scale up fast. For this they need to consider how attractive they are to a generation that will continue to shape the UK workforce for years to come. This further emphasises the need for HR managers to collect, manage and analyse data on their workforce, the labour market and new HR tech. These are subjects that Randstad will be exploring more on our Workforce Insights blog in the coming months.



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human forward

Randstad is the global leader in the HR services industry. We support people and organisations in realising their true potential by combining the power of today's technology with our passion for people. We call it Human Forward. In 2020, we helped nearly two million candidates find a meaningful job with more than 236,000 clients.

Randstad is active in 38 markets around the world and has a top-three position in almost half of these. Randstad was founded in 1960 and is headquartered in Diemen, the Netherlands. Randstad N.V. is listed on the NYSE Euronext.

