



YOUTH

2016: A year of political change



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VARIATION:

In 2016 **our youth community** talked a lot about the **dynamic political changes** that took place. This report will cover how the Tribes felt about the **political transformations**.

GENERATION STABILITY

Research found that those born in 1998 or later **prioritise jobs and financial security**. Effecting their political decisions too¹.

75% of 16-18 year old's crave stability (more than other generations)¹.

Similarly, Channel 4's study with **Starcom**, outlined that the **number one** need for 16-24 year olds was **security** ².

"The only alternative would be to **give everyone money for university** - though that will just extend the problem of **degrees becoming too common - ergo less valuable**".

18, Female, Leading Edge.



"I think to get **more confidence to be active** I would have to feel like young people and their views are taken seriously and can actually have an **impact/change** the way things are".

17, Female, Aspirant.



"I was aware of this - yes. **I'm not happy** with this decision as I think that it will be a **huge deterrent for young people** as it just means they will be in **more debt for longer**."

17, Female, Aspirant.



Wish...not GRANTed:

BEGINNING – MATIENCE GRANTS:

And so the political polarisation begun...In January 2016 it was announced that there would no longer be **maintenance grants** for those from **low income families** but instead loans. University plays a **fundamental lifestyle change** for this generation and can be seen as a **coming of age** too, it's no surprise that **50% of young people** felt it was harder to get a job than it was just a year ago ³.

INVESTMENT:

Young people are creating our future and see there selves as the ones who have to live with the changes made in 2016. That is why most of The Tribes feel that education should be made **cheaper or even free** as they are the **next generation who will lead this society**.

SEGREGATION:

Many young people feel **united and dislike the idea of feeling separated**. This was highlighted when some of The Tribes discussed how they felt that the maintenance grants would **create class division**. As a result, almost a **third** believe

that these changes **favour students from rich backgrounds**⁴. Some Tribes, mentioned they wouldn't have been able to complete university if they hadn't had the maintenance grants. However, others felt this **wouldn't create segregation** as those who required a grant were able to **get a loan** instead and could therefore sympathise with the decision made by the Government.

LIGHTS, CAMERA...NO ACTION:

Despite **1 in 4 young people** saying that they felt they were **let down by the government**⁴, The Tribes outlined how they were **reluctant to protest against changes**. Almost all of the Tribes said they would not be taking any action against the Maintenance Grants, even though many of them appeared to be strongly opposed to the Government's decision. This is surprising, as **63% of young people plan on going to university**⁵, meaning this decision will affect many of them directly.

GENERATION NATION TRAITS:

Dr Maria Grasso, has found that young voters growing up in the **1980s and 1990s** were less engaged politically than older generations.

As a result, they were **less likely to vote** and therefore less likely to **participate politically**.

Concluding, that **political contribution among future generations will continue to fall...**⁶

"I was not keen on Jeremy Corbyn initially - although **I have grown to like him more**. I think he's **too idealistic** and his defence policies aren't great".

22, Female, Mainstream.



"He is **different to others** as he has strong opinions to **help women through discrimination in the work place**".

16, Female.

"Still think his chances of winning the next election are slim because he is a bit **radical** - and **I am not sure that he will be able to rally the support**. Even if he does get in - I think a lot of MPs will vote against everything he proposes".

22, Male, Alternative.



THE RISE AND FALL OF JEREMY CORBYN:

LEADER, HERE, THERE AND EVERYWHERE:

2016 is where **the divide** over the labour elect Jeremy Corbyn began, after he was elected as Labour leader in 2015. Some of his views spoke directly to the youth generation with talk of policies such as '**abolition of tuition fees**' and '**affordable housing**' amongst others.

REALITY CHECK:

A few of the Tribes exclaimed how they liked what Corbyn stood for in terms of **discrimination against women** and other policies. Despite this, many of the Tribes exclaimed how they felt he wouldn't be elected. Reasons such as having policies that are too idealistic as well as feeling unsure that Corbyn

had a strong enough presence to become prime minister.

POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT:

UK Labour has now become popular among younger age groups, with an **average age twenty years younger than a year ago**⁷ (July 2016).

The rise in youth participation could be the start of a more **politically engaged generation**.



Should I Stay Or Should I Go?

A snapshot of what young people were thinking in the lead up to the election...

AWARENESS:

Some of the Tribes weren't fully aware of the **consequences** for leaving or remaining in the EU in the lead up to the referendum.

I DON'T WANT TO LEAVE EU:

Most of the Tribes intended to vote remain or expressed they wanted to remain in the EU, with only a small minority saying they wanted to leave the EU. Which is no surprise, as **75% of 18-24 year olds voted to remain in the EU⁸**.

MONEY FOCUSED:

When discussing whether they wanted to remain or leave the EU, the Tribes mentioned the **positives** and **negatives** economically for both sides. It's no surprise that **79%** of the finance focused **16-24 year olds don't like the idea of being in debt⁹**.

UNCERTAINTY:

A noticeable subject across all of the main political themes is that many young people were **reluctant to change**. The idea that why change something if nothing disastrous has yet occurred appeared regularly. It would seem that this generation prefer the **status quo**.

FUTURE PLANS:

Many of The Tribes, mentioned how they were now **worried for their future**. The **forward thinking** generation, outlined how they feared that leaving the EU would even ruin their future plans. For example, some mentioned how **plans to go travelling in Europe** had been **ceased** as a result of leaving the EU, this concern is mirrored by the fact that 16-24 year olds are **31% more likely** than the average adult to be **passionate about travelling⁹**.

KEEPING EU UPDATED:

"I probably haven't been keeping up with the EU Referendum as much as I should have been (its exam season - so priorities). I have - however - listened to the occasional speech either on TV or in person."

18, Female, Urban.



Are EU Serious?

The outcome and opinions after the election results...

INITIAL REACTIONS:

The Tribes exclaimed how they were shocked or surprised at the outcome of the results and that they weren't expecting to leave the EU. Others, said they felt, **disappointed, upset or even angry.**

BLAME AND DIVIDE:

Some young people, **held a grudge** against the older generation, as they feel that **they had to live with the consequences of the decision made.** Some Tribes insisted that those who were **16 or 17** should have been eligible to vote, as **it concerns their future the most.** However, **only 64% of 18-24 year olds who were eligible to vote, voted¹¹.** Compared to **90% of over 65's who voted¹².**

VOTING:

With some blaming the older generation and others stating that people younger should have been able to vote as it affects their future too, the results came down to **not enough young people voting in the referendum.** This could have been down to what some of The Tribes mentioned about **not knowing or understanding much about the positives or negatives of remaining or leaving.** However, as a result of the election, **53% of the Tribes** said they were **more interested** in the subject of Politics.

Trump vs. Clinton = TRUMPED:

EVERYWHERE & ANYWHERE:

It's no surprise that in a **media consumed society** the Tribes highlighted how the news was '**everywhere**' in the lead up to the election – making it hard for them not to get gist of what was going on.

THE LESSER OF TWO EVILS:

Some of the Tribes described **Hillary as the 'lesser of two evils'** however, the Tribes were worried for either outcome of the election. They did express how **Hillary had the edge** because she had **experience in politics which they felt was important**.

THE LIKEABILITY FACTOR:

For some of the Tribes, they would like to see someone become president who is a **likeable character** rather than just based on what their policies are. For example, **Michelle Obama and Bernie Saunders** were **praised and discussed**. With celebrities posing as '**relatable**' and '**aspirational**' for young people and playing a

bigger role than ever before, it's no surprise that **54% of 16 year olds say they aspire to become a celebrity**¹³.

TWO WRONGS DON'T MAKE A WHITE-HOUSE:

Some of the Tribes mentioned how they did not like Clinton and Trump's tactics. They didn't like how the remarks made by the candidates became **personal about one another and felt that this was unprofessional**.

EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED:

The Tribes described having feelings of concern about the changes to come with Trump now becoming President. In the most, The Tribes were **shocked about the results**, leading them to **verify the results on other sources**. However, social media tended to act as a way for them to **rant about the situation** or see celebrities reactions.



USA ELECTION SHOCK:

*"I did not look to social media straight away - but after going on Facebook a few moments ago - I read **celebrities tweets on a video** - that were upset and crying. I saw **numerous friends post on Facebook about the disappointment** and how it is another example of a Brexit. I am annoyed at the fact Trump was elected president. But I think what led to it was the amount of people **striving to see change in their country**".*

19, Female, Leading Edge

*"I was in shock. I didn't believe it. **I was outraged... the polls were wrong...again!** How did they get it that wrong? For example The Huffington Post said **Clinton had a 98% chance of winning**".*

18, Male, Leading Edge.

*"Just because **we don't all agree doesn't mean we should all fall out about it.** I went on Facebook as I usually do in the morning but I quickly went off as every other post consisted of people having a rant but I don't find particularly interesting to read".*

19, Female, Mainstream.

Conclusion: To Change or Not to Change?

STOP IN THE NAME OF...NOTHING:

A generation who appear to have a strong opinion on politics, leaning towards a **liberal set of beliefs and values, with policies that appear to directly effect them**. However, a lack of votes in the recent elections suggest a disengaged youth.

CELEBRITY CULTURE VULTURE:

The likeability factor is important to young people when it comes to being able to **align themselves with a leader**. However, research has shown a **correlation between those who are interested in celebrities and least engaged when it comes to politics**¹⁴.

UNCERTAINTY & CHANGE:

2016 has made some of The Tribes anxious for their **future job opportunities, travelling and the potential economical situation**. The Tribes like a lifestyle that has **structure and stability**, show by preferred options such as wanting to remain in the EU and picking Clinton over Trump which resemble a sense of stability.

IS 2017 THE YEAR OF CHANGE?

2016 showed the **disengagement** and consequences of young people not voting. Despite the results affecting their future.

Will their **diverse attitude** completely change the **political circumstances in the future**?





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