

# YOUTH IN PANDEMIC

COVID-19 SENTIMENT, ATTITUDES &  
BEHAVIOURS IN EMEA

information  
desk

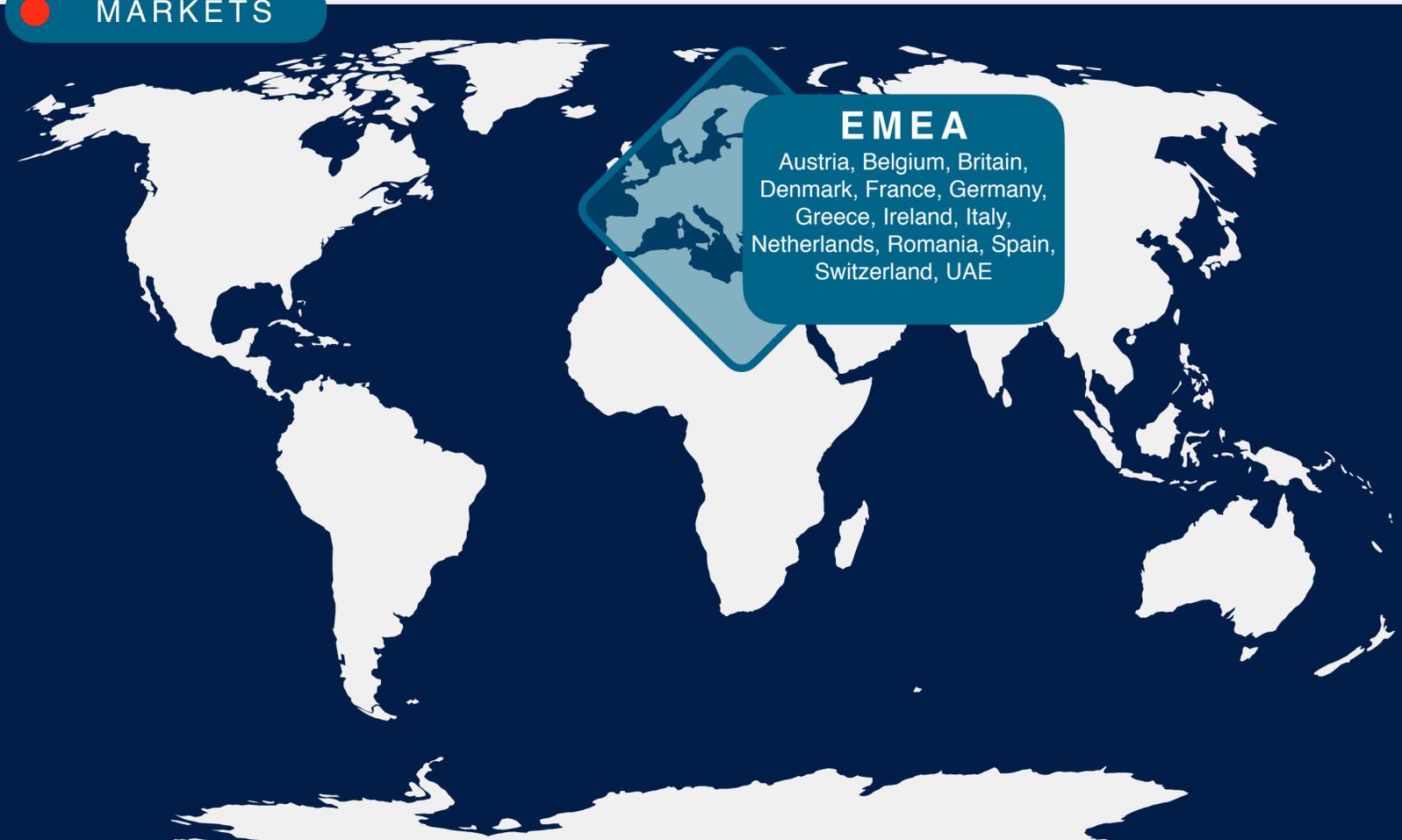
insights from  
**VICE** media  
group

# Understand how young people across the EMEA region are truly feeling and behaving during the COVID-19 pandemic

APPROACH

An online quantitative study fielded from March 20-29 via VICE, Refinery29, and i-D websites and social channels. Additional qualitative questions fielded to VICE Media Group’s proprietary insights communities, VICE Voices and Mad Chatter.

MARKETS



**EMEA**  
 Austria, Belgium, Britain,  
 Denmark, France, Germany,  
 Greece, Ireland, Italy,  
 Netherlands, Romania, Spain,  
 Switzerland, UAE

SAMPLE SIZE

**N=1,840**

GENDER

**48%**  
MALE

**48%**  
FEMALE

**4%**  
NON-BINARY/  
N/A

GENERATION

**35%**  
GEN Z

**50%**  
MILLENNIAL

**15%**  
GEN X

LOCATION

**18%**  
RURAL

**18%**  
SUBURBAN

**37%**  
URBAN

**27%**  
MAJOR CITY  
(1MM+ PEOPLE)

# Youth in EMEA takes the COVID-19 crisis seriously, but still not as seriously as the rest of the world

• **81%**  
**VS. 87% Global**

say they take this pandemic very seriously



They are doing their part, but they don't feel everyone else does

89%

feel they do everything they can to limit the spread of Coronavirus.

32%

VS. 20% NA / VS. 22% LATAM

feel others do everything they can to limit the spread of Coronavirus.

ONLY 15%

of *youth in Britain* feel that others do everything they can to limit the spread of Coronavirus



“

I think many people have changed...[they] are more supportive, while others have shown their most horrible human side and how selfish and individualistic they are

”

– Millennial, Woman, Spain



Q: I am doing everything I can do to limit the spread of Coronavirus.

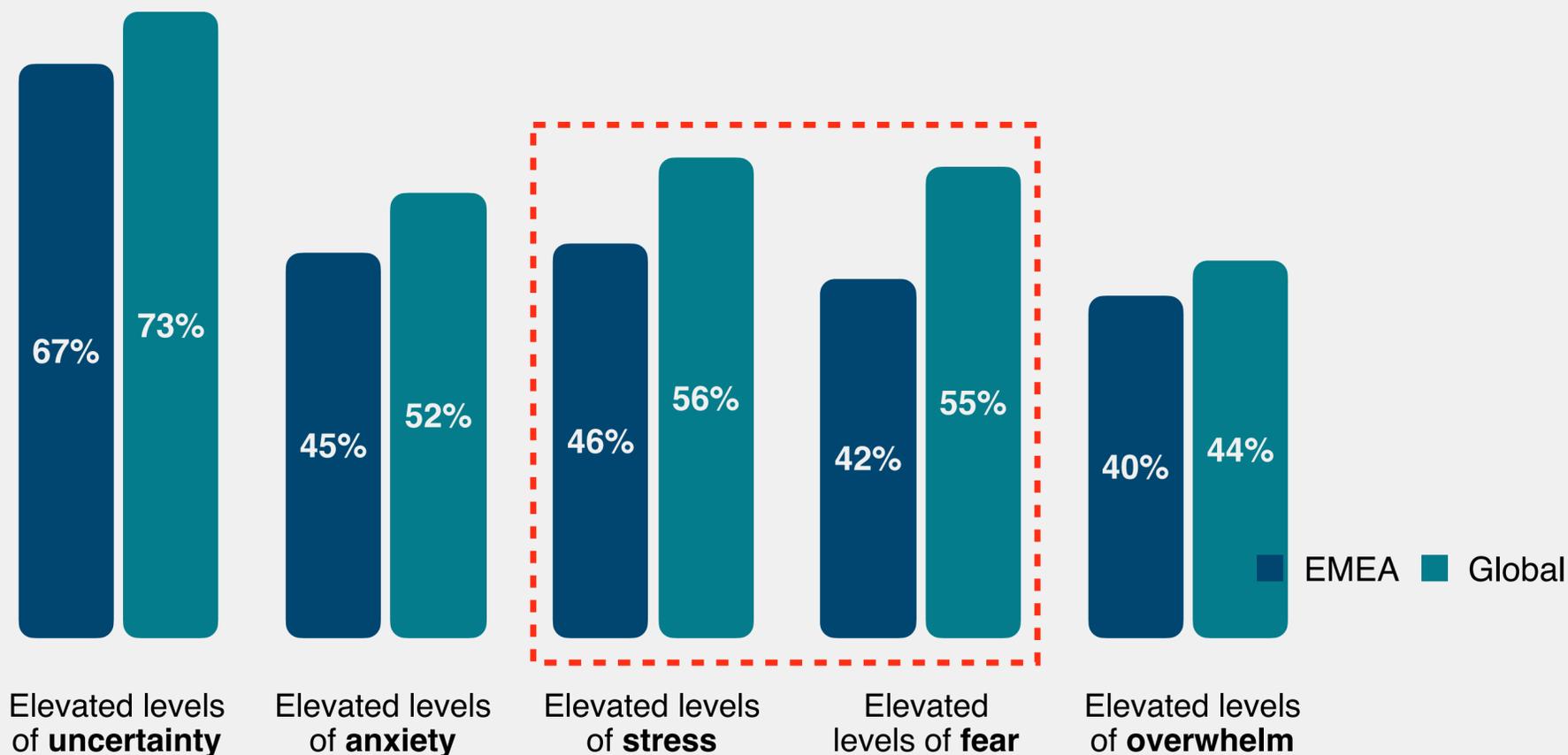
Q: I feel others are doing everything they can do to limit the spread of Coronavirus.

# Emotions are running high for the EMEA youth

ITALY

Youth in Italy is in this for the long run, experiencing the situation more intensely compared to the rest of the region

HOW THEY ARE FEELING COMPARED TO BEFORE COVID-19



88%  
VS. 67% EMEA

Experience higher levels of *uncertainty* compared to before COVID-19

81%  
VS. 46% EMEA

Experience higher levels of *stress* compared to before COVID-19

Q: How would you describe your emotions today compared to an average day before the Coronavirus?

They are worried for loved ones, while the potential of a new recession is more worrisome than getting sick themselves

62%

are mostly worried about *loved ones* getting the Coronavirus

ONLY

25%

say they worry about getting the Coronavirus *themselves*

VS. 43% Global



46%

say they are worried about the **economic impact**

31%

say they are worried about their **personal finances**

“  
I worry that soon I will no longer have a roof over my head because the promised government aid packages are not really being planned and will probably be too late  
”

– Gen Z, Transgender, Austria

# There's still positivity and thoughts of a better tomorrow...

# 57%

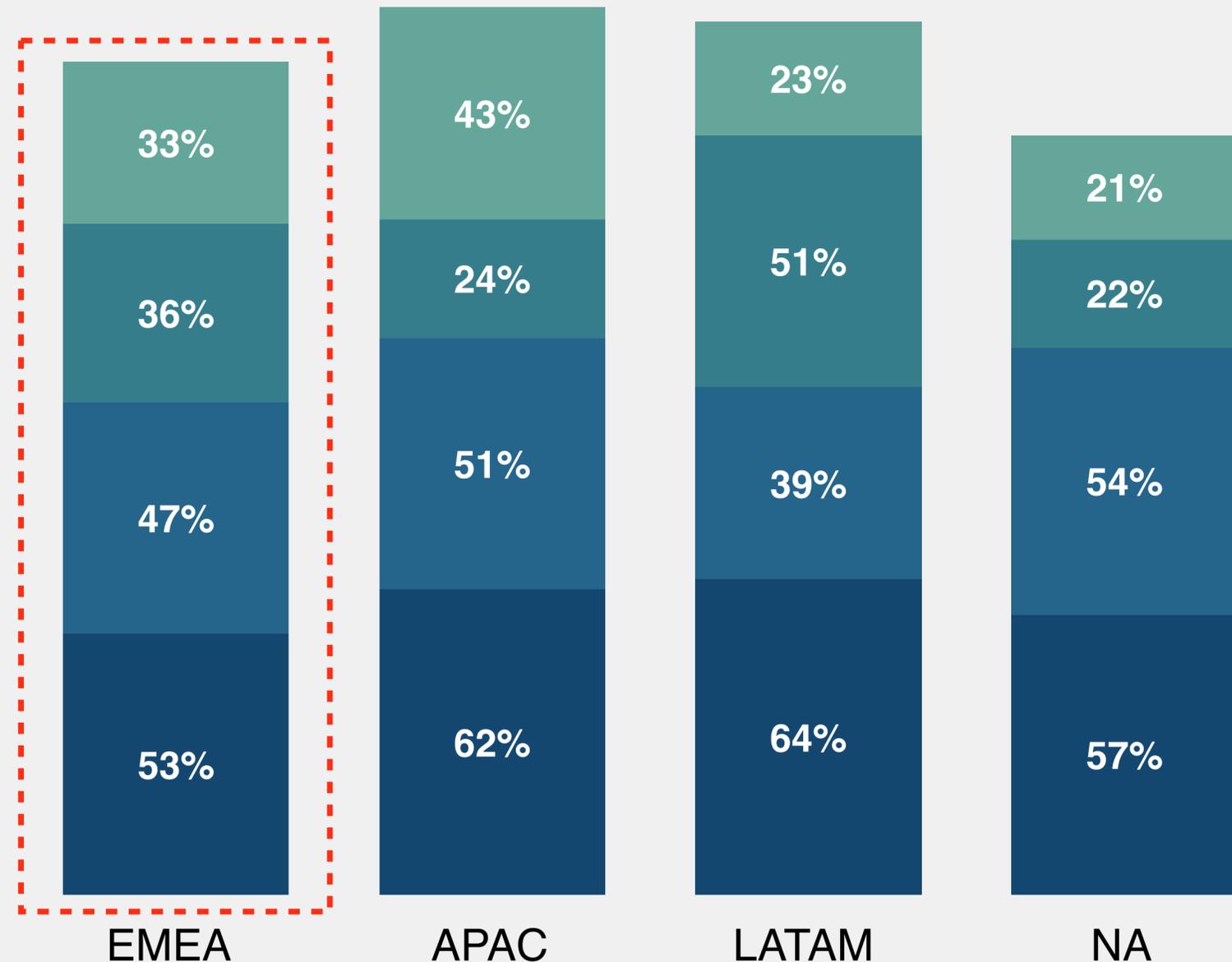
VS. 45% NA / VS. 49% APAC

feel Coronavirus will have a positive long-term impact on society and culture

*Q: Do you feel Coronavirus will have a positive or negative long-term impact on society and culture?*

## HIGHER LEVELS OF POSITIVE EMOTIONS COMPARED TO PRE COVID-19

Empathy Gratitude Connectedness Hopefulness



*Q: How would you describe your emotions today compared to an average day before the Coronavirus?*

# Southern European countries don't share the optimism of most EMEA countries

ONLY **28%**  
-29% VS. EMEA

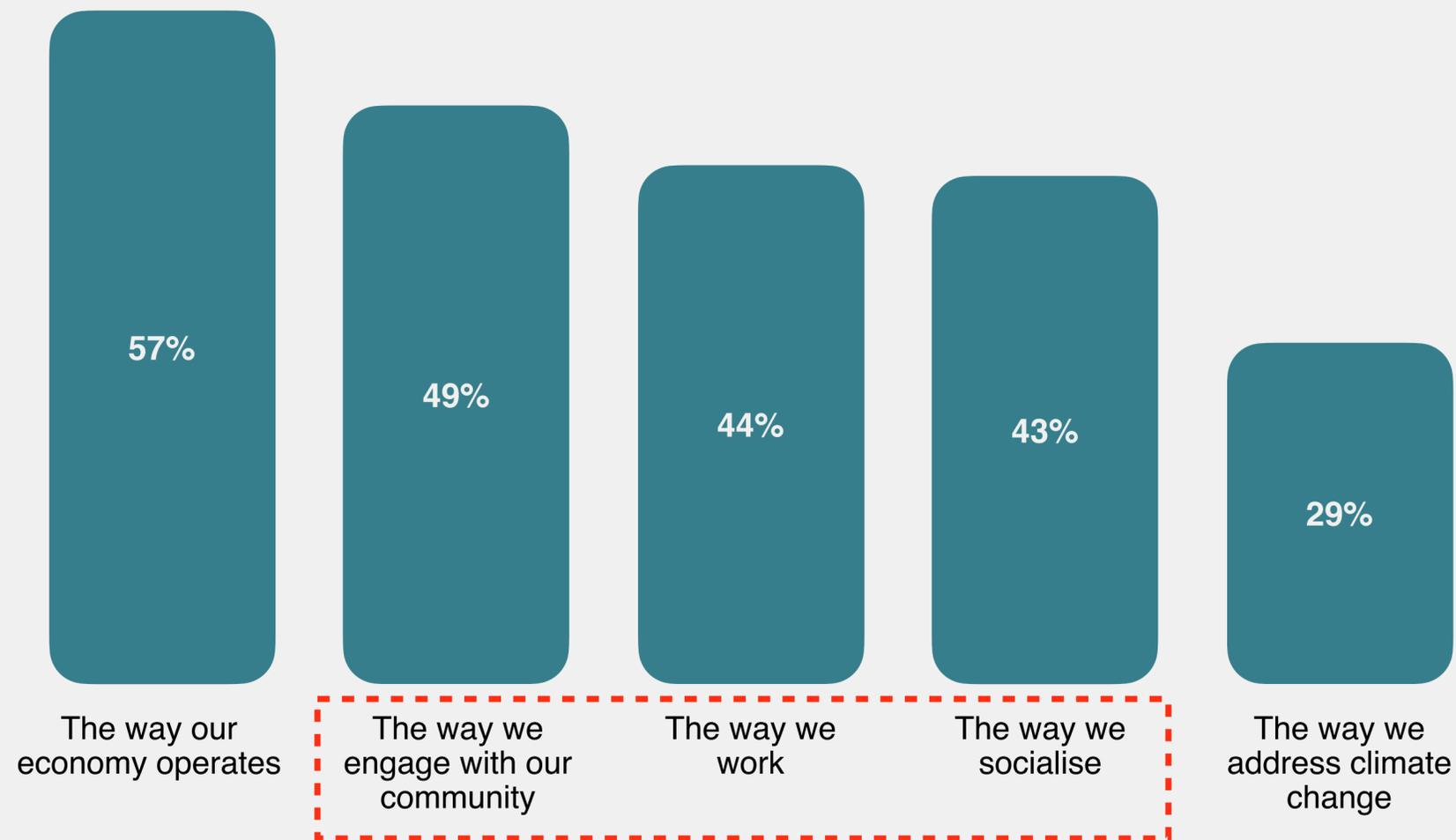
of youth in *Italy* feels  
Coronavirus will have a  
positive long-term impact

ONLY **42%**  
-15% VS. EMEA

of youth in *Spain* feels  
Coronavirus will have a  
positive long-term impact



# Youth in EMEA know the world will never be the same and predict long lasting changes in our economy and society



Q: What do you imagine will be the most lasting societal change after this pandemic?

## NETHERLANDS

Youth in the Netherlands are convinced that their social life will never be the same again

**84%**  
VS. 49% EMEA

Say there will be a long lasting change in the **way we engage with our community**

**71%**  
VS. 44% EMEA

Say there will be a long lasting change in the **way we work**

# Purpose has an impact on getting them through this

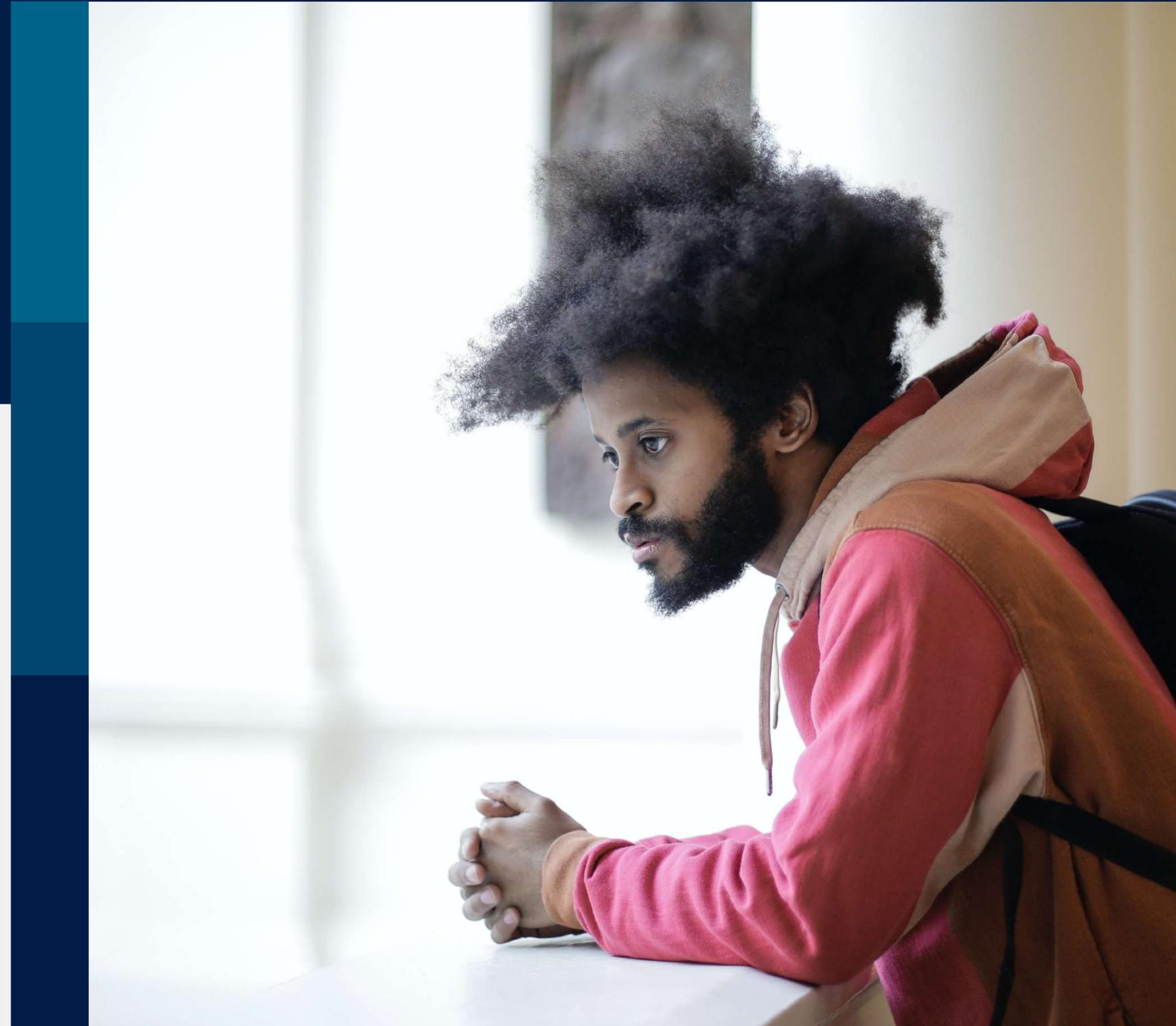
• **40%**

experience **lower levels of purposefulness** now compared to before Coronavirus

• **41%**

say that feeling a **sense of purpose today** and into the future makes them feel emotionally grounded.

**VS. 35% Global**



# Many are grateful for the gift of time that has been given to them.

"I can now look for an hour outside the window into the nature, **zoning out and consciously doing nothing** without any feelings of guilt."

– Gen Z, Woman, Germany

"**Having new ideas** and being able to work on projects that excite me"

– Gen Z, Man, Belgium

"Time to take a break and reflect. This situation is a possibility for all of us to **reboot.**"

– Millennial, Man, Spain



“  
Slowing down, having time to exercise, cook and spend time with my husband and kids  
”

– Millennial, Woman, Britain

**1** IN **2** say they feel more grateful today than they did before the Coronavirus

Q: How would you describe your emotions today compared to an average day before the Coronavirus?

Q: What are you unexpectedly grateful for during this time?

# Staying sane in an insane situation

They have found the way to see the positive in a negative situation and stay emotionally grounded.

# 1 IN 2

stay emotionally grounded through **entertainment**, finding **comic relief** to be a good distraction for them.



# 67%

say that **connecting** with loved ones keeps them emotionally grounded.

I notice a general movement together - friends I hadn't heard from for a long time, lunch breaks via Skype...I am now often less lonely in quarantine than I previously felt

– Millennial, Man, Germany

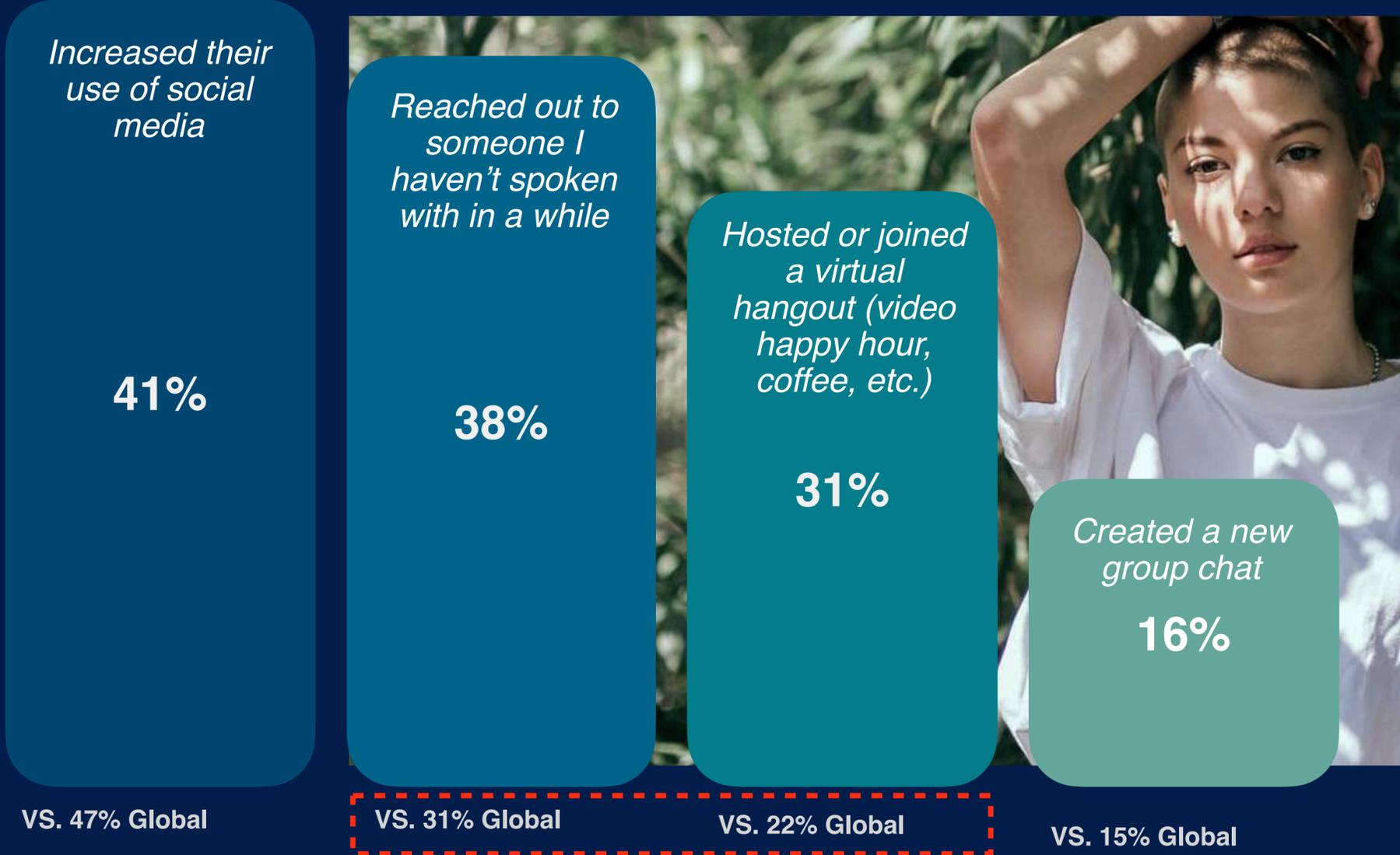
# They are looking for new ways to stay connected or reconnect

• **72%**

took actions to make sure they stay connected during the COVID-19 crisis

## BEING ALONE DOESN'T MEAN FEELING ALONE

Compared to the rest of the world, youth in EMEA more actively seeks for social contact by reaching out to those who they've lost touch with or virtually enjoying time with friends instead of just scrolling through social media.



Q: Have you taken any of the following actions in order to stay connected, maintain relationships, or manage your mental health?

# 28%

say they've taken up or gotten back to a hobby

**+13% learned a new skill**

# 1 IN 4

say they've experimented with a new recipe

## Many are focusing on self-development during this time

# 49%

have turned to their creativity with their newly earned time

**VS. 62% NA/ VS. 56% APAC**



“ I take care of my animals, listening to loud music and dancing, reading a lot of books and next week I am starting the renovation of my terrace

”

– Millennial, Woman, Germany

# Some are focusing on their mental health and self care

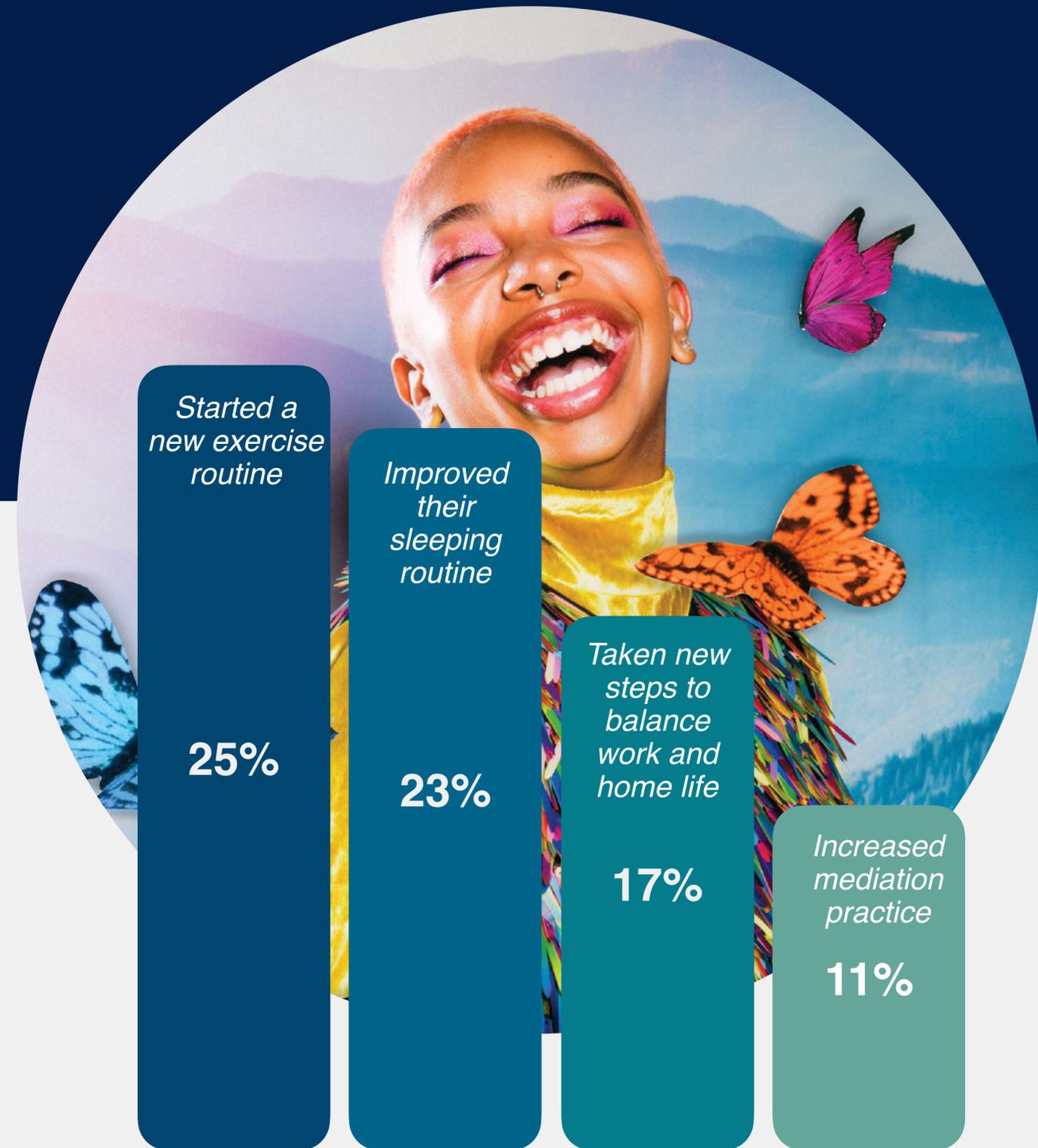
“  
I am scared that my mental health will be affected from the self isolation and the lack of human contact  
”

34%

say they feel **worried** about their emotional and **mental health**

54%

say they've implemented a **new routine** to get them through the situation



Q: Have you taken any of the following actions in order to stay connected, maintain relationships, or manage your mental health?



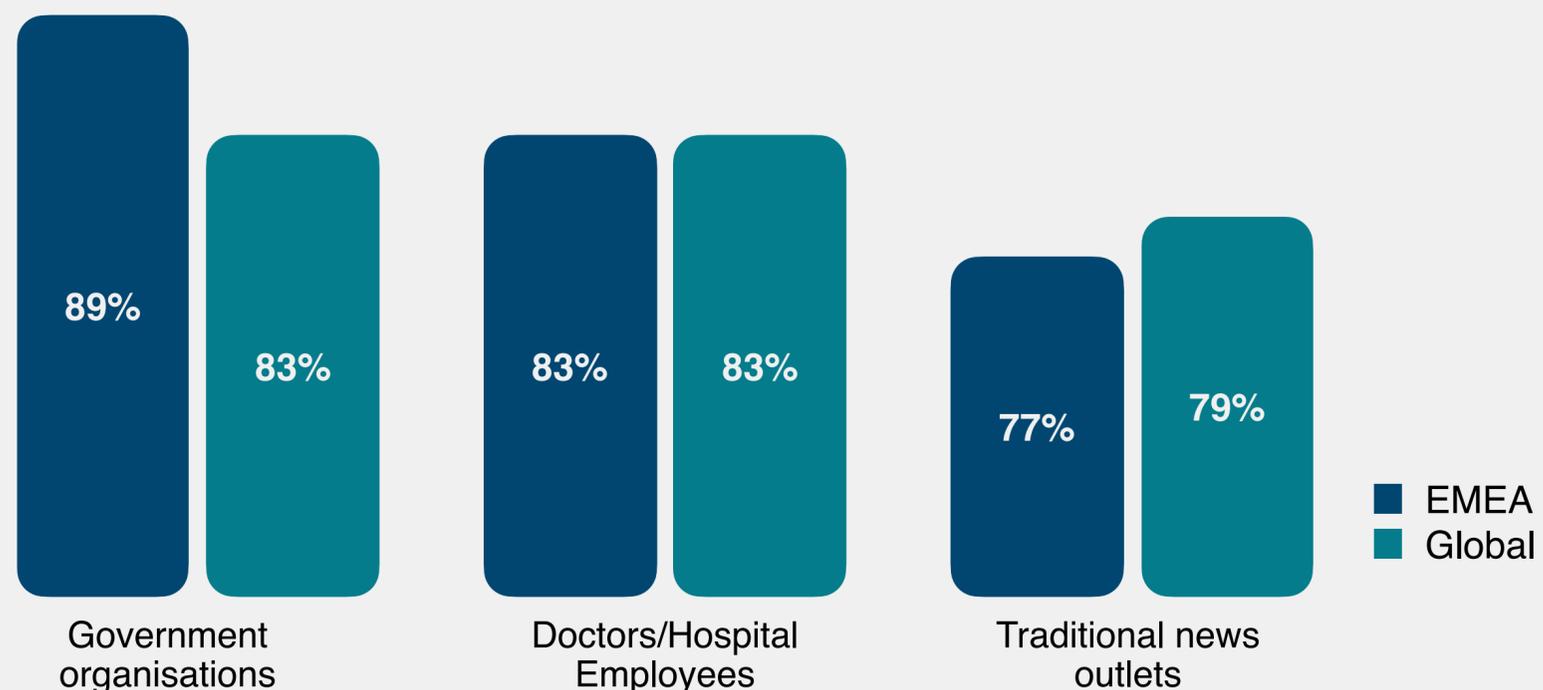
COVID-19 AND CONTENT CONSUMPTION

# COVID-19, EMEA YOUTH AND THE ROLE OF MEDIA

# Youth in EMEA haven't lost faith in their leaders

**72%** rely on their *national leaders* for COVID-19 information  
**VS. 58% Global**

## OTHER INFORMATION SOURCES THEY RELY ON



Q: How much do you rely on information from the following sources about and surrounding Coronavirus?

## BRITAIN AND FRANCE

However, young people in certain EMEA markets do not share the same levels of trust towards their local leaders

**ONLY 30%**  
**VS. 61% EMEA**

Of youth in *Britain* relies on their local leaders for COVID-19 information

**ONLY 41%**  
**VS. 61% EMEA**

Of youth in *France* relies on their local leaders for COVID-19 information

# At the same time Coronavirus content fatigue has already started to settle in...

• **60%**

VS. 46% Global

actively seeking non-Coronavirus content to consume online



**ONLY 41%**

VS. 50% Global

Feel that following the news is what can make them get through this pandemic

“  
I would like to see lots of non-coronavirus content. Everything in the media is about the virus we can't escape it.”

– Millennial, Woman, Ireland

# Young people are seeking inspiration and advice

OVER 1 IN 2

relies on alternative news outlets for information on and around COVID-19

Q: What types of stories would you like to hear from us?

Q: How much do you rely on information from the following sources about and surrounding Coronavirus?

## TYPES OF CONTENT THEY ARE LOOKING FOR



*“Healthy cooking recipes for all people who might not be healthy financially, as well as tips for single parents who may reach their limits right now.”*

— Millennial, Woman, Germany

*“Tips on maintaining your mental health, eating disorders, depression, anxiety disorders are all at a new high right now!”*

— Gen Z, Woman, Austria

# Key Takeaways

## Time for a change

Today's youth knows that not everything is going to be okay and they anticipate there will be consequences, but they also know something good can come out of it. Gen Z and millennials have been asking for a change for a long time and now it's the time to get it. Brands need to listen to them more than ever and lead the change together with youth in the direction they desire. Show them what you can do for them to help them get through the crisis and aim for a better tomorrow together.

## Finding a cause

Brands need to show to young people that they are there for them. Don't just inform them everything will be okay

and that you have a solution to keep servicing them during the crisis. They need ways to escape the Coronavirus and figure out what they can do to make the best out of a bad situation. Drive their attention to a cause to help them find meaning.

## Resuming everyday life

Young people are getting tired of hearing and reading about Coronavirus, while feeling that their lives have been paused. We are in this for the long run and there's an urgency to adjust and resume our lives. Brands need to show young people that they are not just observing and waiting for things to go back to normal, but they are here to define what the new normal is and guide youth throughout the crisis and beyond, moving forward to our new reality.



# THANK YOU

information  
desk

insights from  
**VICE** media  
group

To dive deeper into our insights, please contact Christina Poimenidou, Director Insights EMEA | [christina.poimenidou@vice.com](mailto:christina.poimenidou@vice.com)

