

# TROUBLED BY WATER

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31% of Generation Z believes their generation will definitely or probably not have enough clean water in the future.

72%

worry about pollution of lakes, rivers and oceans

39% worry a great deal and 33% worry some

66%

worry about the health of fish and oceans

33% worry a great deal and 33% worry some

58%

worry about the food supply in the U.S.

26% worry a great deal and 32% worry some

**Worry is widespread across parties:** Among voting age Gen Zers, majorities of each major political party express worry about the health of fish and oceans.

59% of Republicans

70% of Independents

80% of Democrats

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Generation Z is unified in holding politicians and governments responsible.

ALMOST  
NINE IN 10

(88%) say both national and local politicians and governments should be responsible for improving the quality of water resources.

Among voting-age Gen Zers:

82%  
of Republicans

&

96%  
of Democrats

say **national** politicians and governments are very or somewhat responsible.

82%  
of Republicans

&

93%  
of Democrats

say **local** politicians and governments are very or somewhat responsible.

93% of Gen Zers say it is very (74%) or somewhat (19%) important to protect oceans, lakes and rivers from pollution.

73% think the U.S. is definitely or probably not doing enough to protect water.



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25 million young people — over one-third of Generation Z — worry they'll need to move due to climate change.

- 12% of Gen Zers say they worry "a great deal" while 24% worry "somewhat."
- The worry is similar among Gen Zers who generally wish to continue living in their current community: 33% worry they'll have to move from their current town or city, despite wanting to stay.

When thinking about the future of their town or city, about three-quarters (73%) of Gen Zers worry about at least one type of water problem:

59% Too much pollution in water

45% Risk of floods

40% Not enough access to clean drinking water

38% Risk of drought or not having enough water



# METHODOLOGY

Results are based on a Gallup Panel™ web survey conducted August 6-14, 2024, with a sample of 2,832 12- to 27-year-olds from across the U.S. The Gallup Panel is a probability-based panel of U.S. adults who are randomly selected using address-based sampling methodology. Gallup also recruits using random digit-dial phone interviews that cover landline and cellphones. Weighting was conducted to match national demographics of gender, age, race, Hispanic ethnicity, education and census region. Demographic weighting targets were based on the most recent American Community Survey estimates for 12- to 27-year-olds.

Overall, 1,255 12- to 18-year-old children were reached through adult members of the Gallup Panel who indicated they had at least one child 18 or younger living in their household; the additional 1,577 18- to 26-year-old respondents are members of the Gallup Panel.

For the total sample of 2,832 Gen Z respondents, the margin of sampling error is ±2.9 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. Margins of error for subgroups are higher.

## FULL WORDING OF REPORTED ITEMS

- **Looking ahead, do you think your generation will have enough clean water in the future to live?**

*Yes, definitely; Yes, probably; No, probably not; No, definitely not*

- **The next section is about issues related to climate change. How much do you worry about each of the following?**

*Not at all, not very much, somewhat, a great deal*

- Drought, or not having enough water
- Flooding
- Hurricanes
- Extreme heat or cold
- Wildfires
- Tornadoes or strong winds
- Warming oceans
- Rising sea levels
- Pollution of lakes, rivers and oceans
- The availability of clean drinking water
- The food supply in the U.S.
- The health of fish and oceans

- **How responsible do you think each of the following groups should be for improving the quality of our water resources?**

*Not at all responsible, not very responsible, somewhat responsible, very responsible*

- Average Americans
- People who are part of your generation (Gen Z or younger)
- Previous generations, such as your parents or grandparents (such as Boomers and Gen X)
- Local politicians and governments (such as your city or state government)
- National politicians and governments (such as the U.S. government)
- Farmers or ranchers
- Large corporations (such as Apple or Amazon)
- Small businesses
- Oil and gas companies

- **How important or not important is it to protect oceans, lakes and rivers from pollution?**

*Not important at all, a little important, somewhat important, very important*

- **Do you think the U.S. is doing enough to protect water?**

*Definitely no, Probably no, Probably yes, Definitely yes*

- **In the future, do you want to continue to live in your current town/city, or would you prefer to move?**

*Continue to live in current town/city, Prefer to move*

- **Thinking about the future, how much do you worry, if at all, that you may need to move from your current town/city because of climate change?**

*Not at all, not very much, somewhat, a great deal*

- **How much, if at all, do you worry about the following when you think about the future of your current town/city?**

*Not at all, not very much, somewhat, a great deal*

- Risk of drought or not having enough water
- Risk of floods
- Risk of hurricanes
- Risk of extreme heat or cold
- Risk of wildfires
- Risk of other forms of severe weather
- Too much pollution water such as lakes, rivers and oceans
- Too much air pollution
- Not enough access to clean drinking water

Items are shown in the order they are reported. The full survey contains additional items.