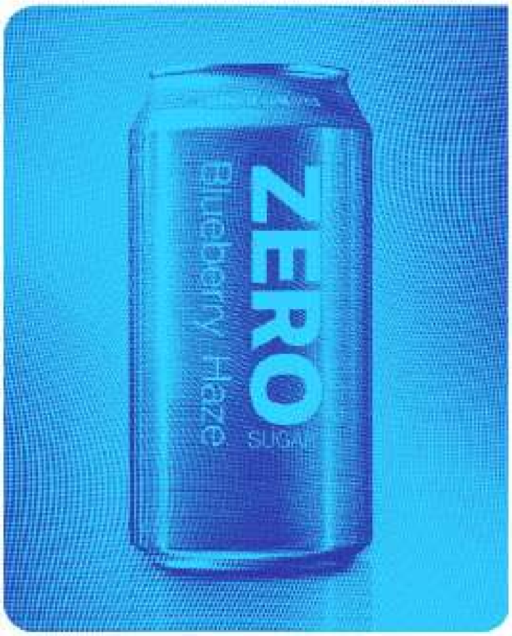
GLOBAL REPORT

THE X FACTOR

How Generation X is quietly driving trillions in consumer spending



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Thank you for the opportunity to share *The X Factor: How Generation X is quietly driving trillions in consumer spending* with you. This report provides a global analysis of Gen X consumer behavior and spending trends, based on proprietary NIQ and World Data Lab (WDL) data, including WDL's consumer spending forecasts. It follows our groundbreaking generational report, *Spend Z*, and continues our mission to decode and predict generational spending patterns worldwide, arming both manufacturers and retailers with the data they need to maximize growth.

While Gen X won't hit its peak spend until the 2030s, **retailers and manufacturers in the consumer packaged goods (CPG) and Tech & Durables (T&D) industries only have a few years to maximize Gen X spend before this cohort's share of total spending starts to decline.** *The X Factor* forecasts key areas of growth and underscores the differences in Gen X behavior by region and country so brands can better understand what motivates this generation today—and into the next decade.

Our team is passionate about seeing brands win with Gen X over the next five to 10 years. We're certain that manufacturers and retailers will see measurable growth if they properly invest in Gen X. If you have questions about our research or how to engage with Gen X during this strategic window of time, we welcome the conversation. Together, we can help your business maximize the "Gen X decade."

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Chief Communications Officer &
Head of Global Marketing COE, NIQ

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Co-founder & CEO,
World Data Lab

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Introduction

For years, Gen X has been dubbed “the forgotten generation” in media, policy, and even marketing campaigns. Skipped over or bundled in with Boomers or Millennials, this small but mighty generation has quietly become the engine of global consumer spending. **This report will show why the next decade represents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for manufacturers and retailers to capture Gen X loyalty and lifetime value.**

> ***Gen X will be the spending leader globally through 2033, surpassing $20 trillion (USD). If you aren’t planning with them in mind, you’re missing your most profitable current customer.***

Why you can’t afford to overlook Gen X

- Gen X will lead *global consumer spending* from 2021 through 2033. In high-income markets, Gen X will take the lead later but hold it longer—from 2026 through 2036.
- While Boomers still dominate in net worth, Gen X is second—and gaining.
- Gen Xers are currently in their *peak expenditure years* (ages 45–60).
- Gen Xers have emerged as “caretaker consumers”—simultaneously caring for children, aging parents, *and* their households.
- Gen X will spend $15.2 trillion in 2025. If you treated them as their own “country,” they would form the world’s second-largest consumer market—second only to the US and roughly 2x the size of China’s current spending. And that number will only keep climbing: By 2035, global Gen X spending will reach $23 trillion.

> ***The time to capture Gen X spend is now.***

Taking action

Our goal is to make this report actionable, with insights specific to manufacturers and retailers. Unlike with other generations we'll analyze, **Gen X's spend is peaking *now*, *meaning immediate action is necessary*.** At the end of each section, you'll find a summary of takeaways and actions to help you capture Gen X spend.

If you're unsure which actions will provide the most incrementality, our team at NIQ is available to assist. We can help make sense of the data for your prioritized categories and identify new opportunities within your product portfolio.

What actions matter now?

Retailer actions

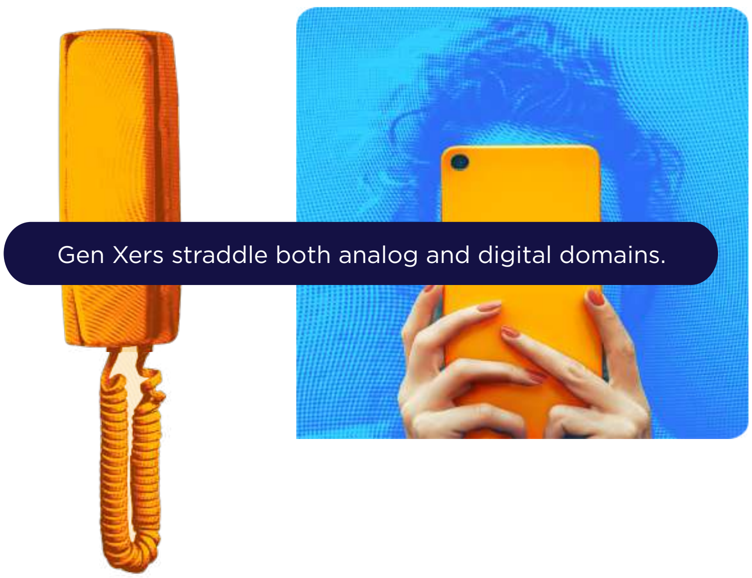
Focus innovation and premium product development on Gen X today. Unlike other generations, Gen X can *and will* spend on quality and convenience now—but only if you can clearly convey value.

Manufacturer actions

Strategically develop product portfolios that cater to Gen X's binary role as provider and consumer. Focus on functional innovation, premiumization, and clear value communication.

Who is Gen X?

The 1.4 billion members of Gen X alive today were born between 1965 and 1980 (currently ages 45–60). The time of their birth means Gen Xers straddle the analog and digital domains. They were born primarily to Boomer parents, and their children are either Millennials or Gen Zers. Gen Xers pride themselves on their independent spirit, which can be attributed to many growing up as "latchkey kids" with both parents working.
In their youth, they witnessed the rise of MTV, grunge culture, and personal computing. Most incomprehensibly for members of Gen Z and younger generations, most Gen Xers didn't have a cell phone until college—or later. Instead, their early social lives depended on a landline phone attached to a wall.



Today, Gen Xers are far from the teens described above. These middle-aged adults now sit at the center of both their family and economic lives. They are well-educated global leaders at the peak of their careers, helping to usher in a new kind of technology revolution with the proliferation of new digital touchpoints like omnichannel shopping and AI-driven personalization. At the same time, they're in their "double-dependent stage," caring for their children *and* their aging parents.

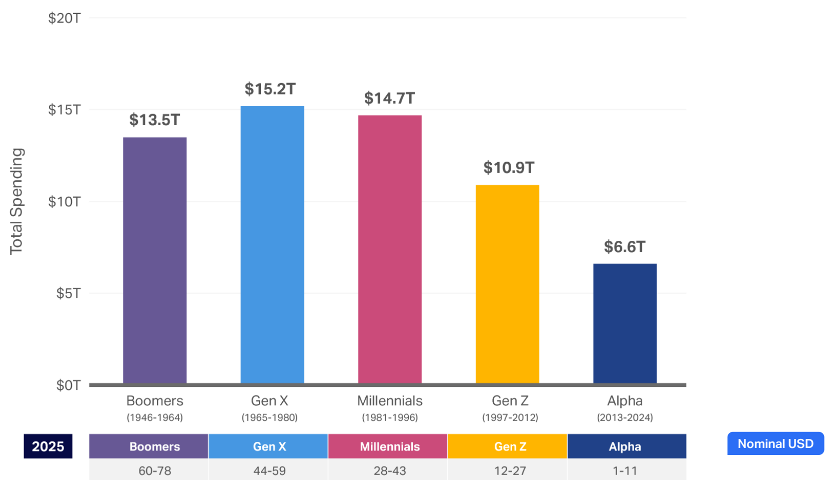
Noteworthy consumer behaviors

- **Digital adopters:** Trust reviews, engage in omnichannel shopping, consider themselves "digital pioneers"
- **Tech influencers:** Often set household tech agenda
- **Pragmatic buyers:** Want quality and clarity over "flash"

The Gen X decade

Finally hitting its stride, Gen X is poised to exert dominance with its wallet. In 2025 alone, Gen X will spend an estimated $15.2 trillion. Over the next decade, this cohort will remain the highest-spending generation in the world.

Today, Gen X is the highest-spending generation in the world, at $15.2T



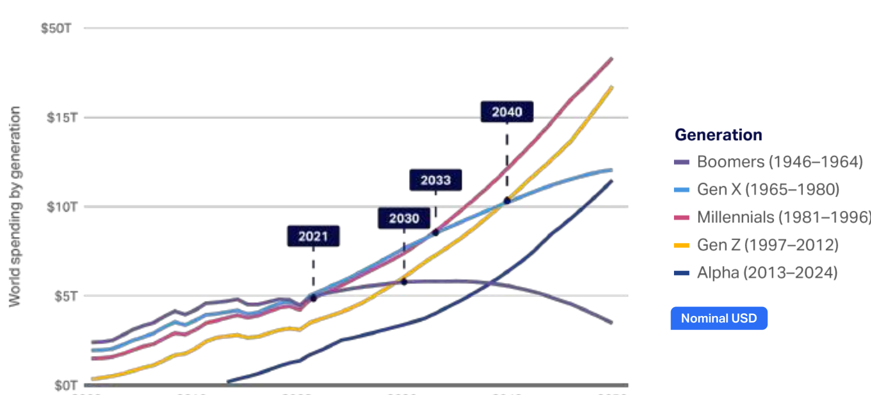
Source: World Data Lab

trillion (USD) in global spend in 2025 alone

This spending power is happening today because **members of Gen X are now in their peak earning years**. Gen Xers are also having to spend on their children (ages 17–32, world average) *and* their aging parents.

For retailers and manufacturers, this spending (on both themselves and their dependents) translates to big dollars, as **Gen X represents the richest and most spend-ready generation in developed markets globally.**

We are now in the Gen X decade, where Gen Xers will be the largest spending generation



Source: World Data Lab

By 2033, however, Gen X shifts into a new reality—and becomes the new Boomers in terms of spending impact. The top end of the generation moves into retirement, and Millennials will surpass them in spend. Gen X will still spend on their children, but it will be to help them financially with large purchases—like a house—rather than cost-of-living stipends. Many Gen Xers will also see their Boomer parents pass away during this time, eliminating the need to spend on elder care.

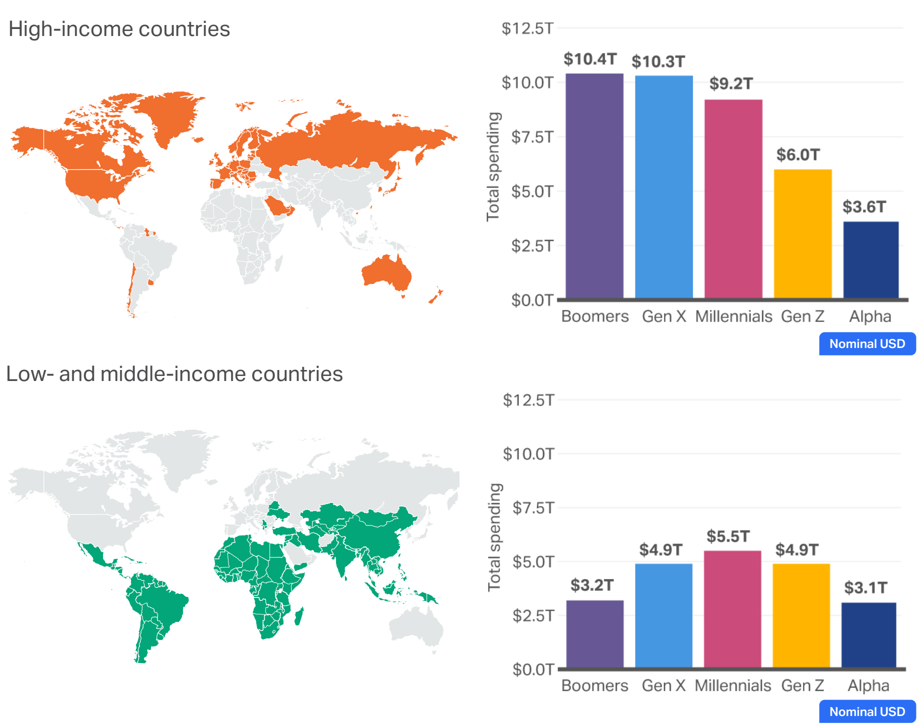
During the next eight to 10 years, while Gen X households still have children at home, Gen X women are incredibly important consumers. Women in general are increasing their dominance relative to economic decisions for their households and now influence 70–80% of all consumer spending. As it relates to direct spend, women now control 50% (a staggering $31.8 trillion) of worldwide spend. It should come as no surprise then that, **in many countries, Gen X women are the most active CPG buyers and most influential family decision-makers**.

Women control ***50%*** **of worldwide consumer spend—a staggering** ***$31.8 trillion***

Low-income vs. high-income countries

There's one caveat that manufacturers and retailers can't afford to overlook when considering Gen X: While Gen X dominates in high-income countries, it's already on the decline in some low- and middle-income countries due to relatively low average life expectancy in those regions. In these countries, Gen X spend isn't as meaningful as it is in high-income markets, where life expectancy is longer, incomes are higher, and families are smaller.

Generational spending: A tale of two worlds (2025)



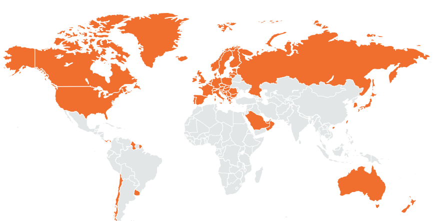
Source: World Data Lab

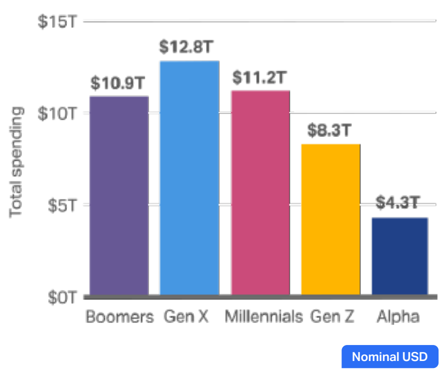
This trend of high-income country spend dominance continues to play out through 2030 and beyond, until Gen X hits its peak spending globally around 2033. In low- and middle-income countries, Millennials and Gen Z already spend more than Gen X.

Gen X hits its peak spending globally around **2033**

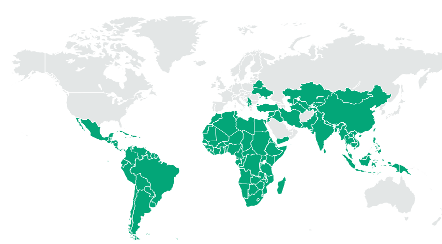
In 2030, Gen X will be the highest spender in high-income countries

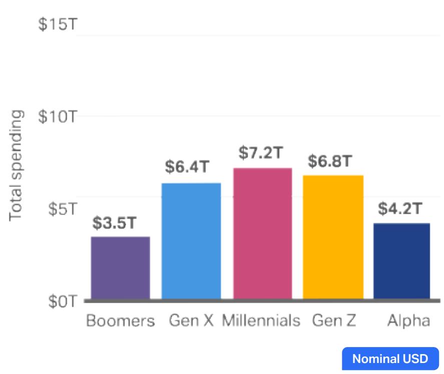
High-income countries





Low-and middle-income countries



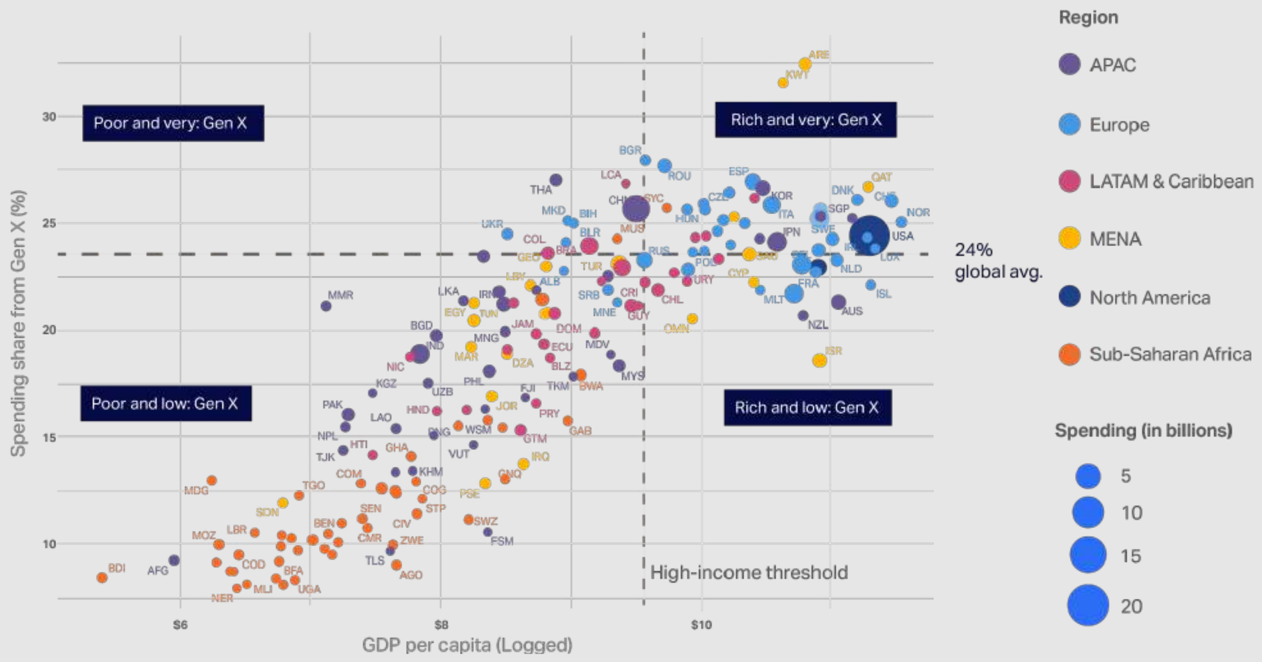


Source: World Data Lab

When we look across regions and countries, we can easily see the low- vs. high-income reality bear out. Wealthier regions, including Europe and North America, help account for two-thirds of Gen X spend worldwide, while low-income regions, such as Sub-Saharan Africa, skew much younger relative to spend.

In the chart below, the horizontal line shows Gen X's average share of total spending at 24%. Only a handful of countries meet or exceed that level. Those above the line—China, the US, and most EU nations—are also the world's highest-spending markets, indicating that Gen X's influence is strongest where overall consumer outlays are largest. The opposite holds true in Sub-Saharan Africa, large parts of Asia Pacific, Middle East & North Africa, and Latin America, where Gen Xers won't have as much impact on overall consumer spending.

Countries above global average for Gen X spending account for two-thirds of total world spending



Source: World Data Lab

With Gen Xers dominating in wealthy countries, they naturally reign supreme relative to the higher-spending groups of rich and upper middle class consumers. Here, we'll define "rich" as anyone who spends at least $120 per day (per person, in 2017 dollars to control for cost-of-living differences) and "middle class" as anyone spending at least $12 but less than $120 per day (per person). For clarity, Gen X is **currently not the wealthiest** generation **but will spend the most** during this next decade. For the near term, younger generations will continue to dominate the lower-spending groups. (In other words: More than one in every four people who are rich are Gen Xers.)

1 in 4

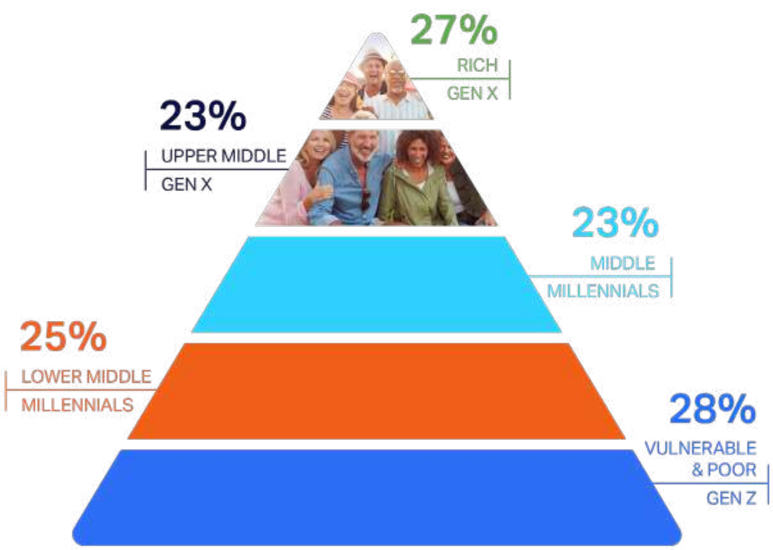
people who are rich are Gen Xers

Source: World Data Lab

This distinction is paramount: While Gen X may not be the wealthiest generation (in terms of total assets)—a title that still largely belongs to Boomers—**they dominate in daily discretionary spending, and they represent the greatest consumer ROI in large-basket, multi-category purchases** (especially across the Grocery, Household, and Wellness categories). For companies looking to maximize incrementality, Gen X is comprised of the most dependable, active spenders across the most profitable consumer segments.

Gen X dominates in the higher-spending groups

Most dominant generation by spending group headcount (2025)



Source: World Data Lab

Manufacturer and retailer actions

In higher-income regions and countries: Fuel premium purchases across key categories by focusing on attributes we know are most valued by higher-income Gen X consumers.

Key attributes for higher-income Gen Xers: Reliability, functionality, product value (not simply price), health and wellness, efficiency and convenience, and authenticity

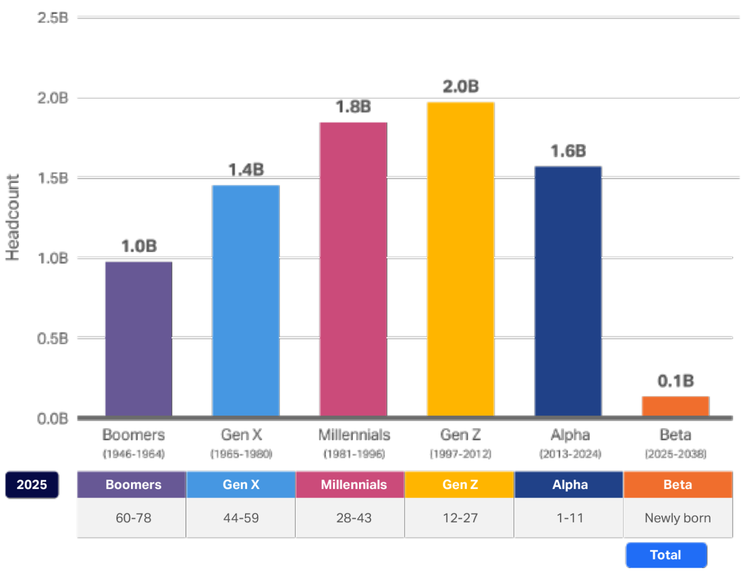
In lower-income regions and countries: Secure customer lifetime value (CLV) by earning Gen X trust via long-lasting, multi-use products and promotions that reflect the household finances of said country/region.

Key attributes for lower-income Gen Xers: Affordability and accessibility, durability and multi-use utility, availability (wide-scale distribution), and functional wellness at affordable prices

Small but mighty

Gen X is smaller in population than Generation Alpha, Millennials, and Gen Z, but it currently has more consolidated wealth, especially in developed markets like Canada, Germany, Japan, the UK, and the US. This generation also has incredible influence over technology, media, the workplace, and the political landscape because its members hold leadership positions in these areas.

Population by generation (2025)



Source: World Data Lab

Though Gen X currently makes up just 17% of the global population, in developed nations like the US, it's currently leading almost one-third of all households. This gives Gen X an outsized influence when it comes to CPG and T&D purchases. Gen X spending power is even more impressive because its wage growth over the past few years has been slower, when compared with younger generations.

Key insights

- Gen X consumers are **open to new brands** if the brands they've historically purchased fail to meet expectations or stop delivering clear value—especially in today's inflationary climate.
- Gen X members **reward brands** that consistently deliver and save them time, money, or mental energy.
- Gen X's **loyalty is earned** through positive brand experiences and reliability/consistency—not hype or social proof (e.g., influencers).

C-suite takeaways

- Fewer people, more value (if captured)
- Gen X conversion = higher ROI per shopper

The sandwich generation

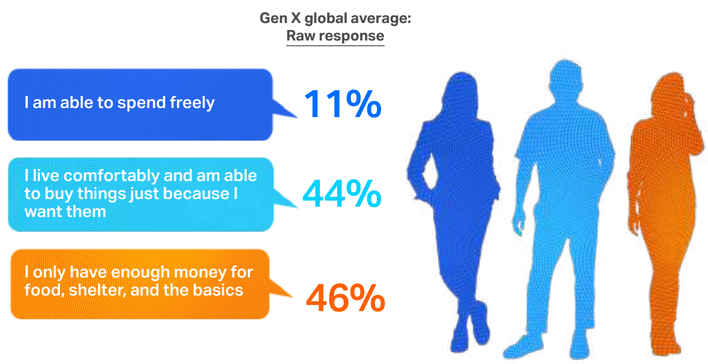
In addition to being dubbed "the forgotten generation" (a misnomer we'll continue to explore), Gen X is referred to as "the sandwich generation" because many of its members are financially supporting children while caring for aging parents. In low- and middle-income countries, Gen X may represent the first generation to achieve middle-class stability. In high-income countries, their status as "CFOs" of three generations means much of their wealth is being spent on others.

Gen X feels more able to spend freely than Boomers, but less able than Millennials

This may be due, in part, to Gen X simultaneously supporting children *and* parents.

Gen X indexed to ...

Total	Boomers	Gen X	Millennials	Gen Z
80	131	100	62	65
96	100	100	95	87
111	94	100	123	136



Source: NIQ 2025 Private Label & Branded Products report global survey

We've mentioned that Gen X's children are on average ages 17–30 globally, but they do skew slightly younger in a few key regions.

Average age of children by region

Gen X	North America	Europe	World average	LATAM	Middle East & North Africa	Asia Pacific	Sub-Saharan Africa
Age* of chidren: 2025	15-30	15-30	17-32	17-32	15-30	17-32	15-30

*Based on United Nations data, mean child-bearing age data
Source: World Data Lab

Being sandwiched between aging parents and their children has led to both notable stress for Gen X and an effective decrease in discretionary spending. A recent study in the US found that finances are a big reason for Gen Xers' stress, with 51% feeling stress in this area fairly or very often. Of the Gen X respondents, only 35% feel prepared to financially support their parents, and just 55% feel prepared to financially support their children over the next few years.

The weight of Gen X responsibilities shows in their spending. Elder & Dependent Care and Education are among the fastest-growing categories for this cohort—and will be for the next five years, leaving Gen Xers with less discretionary spending for themselves.

Fastest-growing categories for Gen X: 2025-2030

	Size of Gen X market in 2025	Gen X CAGR: 2025-2030
Elder & Dependent Care	$82B	8.2%
Bicycles	$23B	7.4%
Outdoor Recreation Durables*	$60B	6.8%
Education	$352B	6.2%
Household Tools**	$30B	6.2%
Total	**$15.2T**	**4.7%**

Nominal USD

*Includes planes, boats, kayaks, canoes, hot air balloons, horses, windsurfing, golf carts, scuba equipment, etc.
**Includes hand tools, gardening tools, ladders, door fittings, small electric accessories
Source: World Data Lab

Gen Xers are feeling the crunch in their day-to-day choices too. For example, they are much more likely than Boomers, but less likely than Millennials, to stress significantly about choosing or preparing what to eat every day.[1] They are also much less likely than Millennials and Gen Z to splurge or treat themselves with more expensive purchases. This conservative purchase pattern holds true across low-, medium-, and high-income Gen Xers.

Key insights

- Gen X often **sets the standard** for what modern-day consumption looks like: homeownership, education, brand aspirations, employment goals.
- Gen X consumers **tend to be brand-trusting and loyal** to purchases that help them actualize their goals relative to status.
- Gen X members are **gatekeepers for their children's mobility**—heavily influencing what Gen Zers and Millennials consume.
- Gen X consumers **look for value and convenience** to help them juggle enormous responsibilities and financial priorities.

Retailer actions

Position products/services as time savers and enablers of care. Dependent Care, Outdoor Recreation, and Household Tools are key categories of growth. Deliver omnichannel experiences that build trust first, then highlight convenience.

Manufacturer actions

Consider new formats and claims geared toward caregiving, longevity, and convenience in products across CPG and T&D portfolios.

[1]NIQ 2025 Private Label & Branded Products report global survey

Gen X spending priorities

Near term (0–2 years)

Gen X will continue to dominate spending in wealthier nations for the near term. Though the wealth transfer from their Boomer parents is already underway, it will still be a few more years before Gen Xers, by and large, receive any planned inheritances. In low- to middle- income countries, we also see Gen X losing headcount, with 300 million members globally having already passed away.

During the next two years, Gen Xers will continue their place in the workforce and managing family finances. Their children will fill college campuses, and their parents will occupy senior living and nursing facilities.

Considering these dynamics, what can brands focus on to win Gen X?

First, let's look at what's working well today—and into the near future—across key categories, broken down by region. Again, you can see that Elder & Dependent Care and Education rank highly for fastest-growing categories, but there are also opportunities around Recreation Durables (both Indoor and Outdoor) and Travel (All-Inclusive Holidays, Hotels, and Air Travel specifically).

Fastest-growing categories for Gen X, by region: 2025-2030

Overall	North America	Europe	LATAM	Middle East & North Africa	Asia Pacific	Sub-Saharan Africa
Elder & Dependent Care (8.2%)	Elder & Dependent Care (10.2%)	All-Inclusive Holidays (7.5%)	Outdoor Recreation Durables (9.1%)	Elder & Dependent Care (16.5%)	Bicycles & E-Bikes (12.9%)	Household Maintenance Services (15.5%)
Bicycles (7.4%)	Indoor Recreation Durables (9.8%)	Elder & Dependent Care (6.8%)	Life Insurance (7.7%)	Hotels (9.8%)	Motorcycles (9.6%)	Plants & Fertilizers (12.5%)
Outdoor Recreation Durables (6.8%)	Outdoor Recreation Durables (8.6%)	Musical Instruments & Indoor Recreation Durables* (6.2%)	Wine (7.3%)	Household Maintenance Services (8.6%)	Education (8.8%)	Indoor Recreation Durables (10.0%)
Education (6.2%)	Optical & Health Accessories (7.7%)	Financial Service Fees (5.4%)	Financial Services (7.0%)	Personal Care Services (8.6%)	Household Tools (7.9%)	Gas (7.6%)
Household Tools (6.2%)	Postal & Delivery (7.6%)	Air Travel (5.4%)	Hotels (6.8%)	Life Insurance (8.4%)	Coffee & Tea (6.8%)	Computers (7.4%)

Source: World Data Lab

Now, let's look at where growth is slowing for Gen X. Discretionary spending is down in some markets, which suggests that their dual-dependent status may be limiting the "fun toys"—like motorcycles or the latest phones—that Gen Xers buy for themselves. Gen Xers are also more settled than younger Millennials and have likely already invested in household furnishings.

Slowest-growing categories for Gen X, by region: 2025-2030

Overall	North America	Europe	LATAM	Middle East & North Africa	Asia Pacific	Sub-Saharan Africa
Motorcycles (1.5%)	Motorcycles (-3.3%)	Passenger Travel by Road (1.8%)	Musical Instruments & Indoor Recreation Durables* (2.5%)	Household Cleaning & Maintenance Products (-1.8%)	Tableware (1.6%)	Phone Equipment (0.4%)
Furniture (3.0%)	Carpets & Other Floor Coverings (-3.2%)	Sporting Equipment (1.9%)	Passenger Transport by Road (2.9%)	Air Travel (2.6%)	Carpets & Other Floor Coverings (2.7%)	Financial Services (0.4%)
Phone Equipment (3.2%)	Spirits (-1.1%)	Phone Equipment (2.5%)	Coffee & Tea (3.2%)	Dishes (3.2%)	Musical Instruments & Indoor Recreation Durables* (2.7%)	Beer (1.5%)
Indoor Recreation Durables* (3.2%)	Electricity (-0.7%)	Life Insurance (2.7%)	Household Cleaning & Maintenance Products (3.2%)	Food (3.7%)	Vehicle Maintenance (3.4%)	Wine (1.7%)
TVs, Radios, & Stereo Systems (3.3%)	Furniture (1.1%)	TVs, Radios, & Stereo Systems (3.0%)	Postal & Delivery (3.7%)	Soft Drinks (3.8%)	Dishes (3.6%)	Dairy (2.9%)

Source: World Data Lab

Gen X's weak discretionary spending (when compared with younger generations) may partly be attributed to a focus on retirement savings. Indeed, one US study found that Gen X's investments are 40% more significant than the overall population.

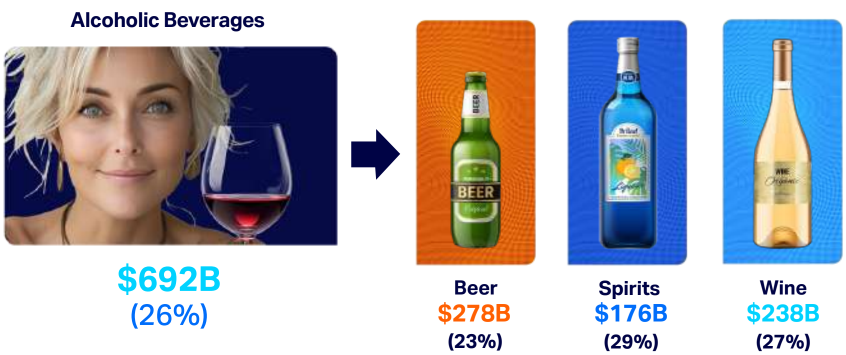
Gen X CPG spend

To get a clearer picture of Gen X's influence on category-level purchases, we're going to examine Gen X's influence on three major CPG categories globally: Alcohol, Beauty, and Food & Non-alcoholic Beverages (Food & NAB). We'll unpack what Gen X is spending on across these categories and the generation's portion of total spend.

Alcohol

There's no question that Gen X still loves a good drink. Their global share of alcoholic beverage spending is 26%. That total share breaks down further into 23% for beer, 29% for spirits, and 27% for wine.

The global "Alcohol tree" in 2024 (Gen X's share)

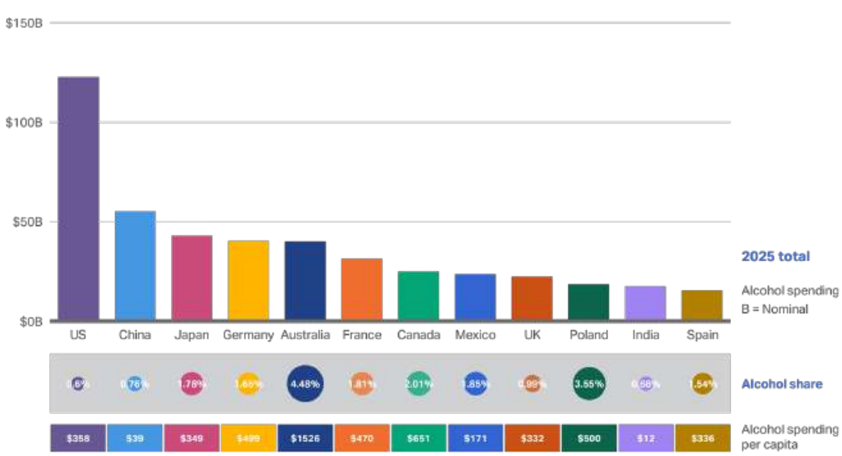


Source: World Data Lab

Nominal USD

In 2025, consumers around the world are directing 1.8% of their total spending to alcoholic beverages. There are some variances, of course, with Australians spending the most (at 4.48%) and US consumers at just over 0.5%.

Alcohol generally accounts for 1.8% of total spending—slightly higher in Australia and Poland; lower in India, US, and China



Source: World Data Lab

Nominal USD

Key US-specific NIQ insights surface relative to Gen X. Indeed, Gen X continues to play a powerful role in the Beverage Alcohol (BevAl) market, accounting for roughly one-third of all category spend—nearly equal to that of Millennials' spend and far outpacing Gen Z.

While traditionally more loyal to legacy brands, Gen X is increasingly open to exploring new products—such as ready-to-drink cocktails or niche spirits like mezcal and Japanese whisky. Beverage Alcohol brands that appropriately segment their strategies to meet the unique preferences of these generational groups—whether through targeted marketing, tailored flavor profiles, or sustainability commitments—can maximize their appeal and relevance in the near term.

This generation's preferences are underscored in the resilience of $15 to $20 wines, a psychological consumer "sweet spot" that signals a search for quality without extravagance. This middle-tier appeal highlights a broader generational theme: **Gen X is willing to pay—but only when the value proposition is clear.**

As health and wellness continue to reshape consumer behavior, Gen X is also embracing moderation and better-for-you attributes, with growing interest in low-calorie, non-GMO, and no-added-sugar options. And while not digital natives, Gen X consumers' comfort with convenience is fueling momentum in click-and-collect and hybrid alcohol purchasing, making them an essential audience for retailers that can balance quality, functionality, and ease.

For more guidance on how to win this category, contact NIQ's BevAl experts.

Beauty

Gen Xers are also big spenders on Beauty, making up one-quarter of total spend for the category. They spend on both Beauty Products and Beauty Services—and maintain around one-quarter of spend across key product segments such as Skin Care, Makeup, Hair Products, and Fragrances.

The Beauty industry is a global success story, with explosive growth in some regions:

+7.3%

Beauty industry YOY global value growth

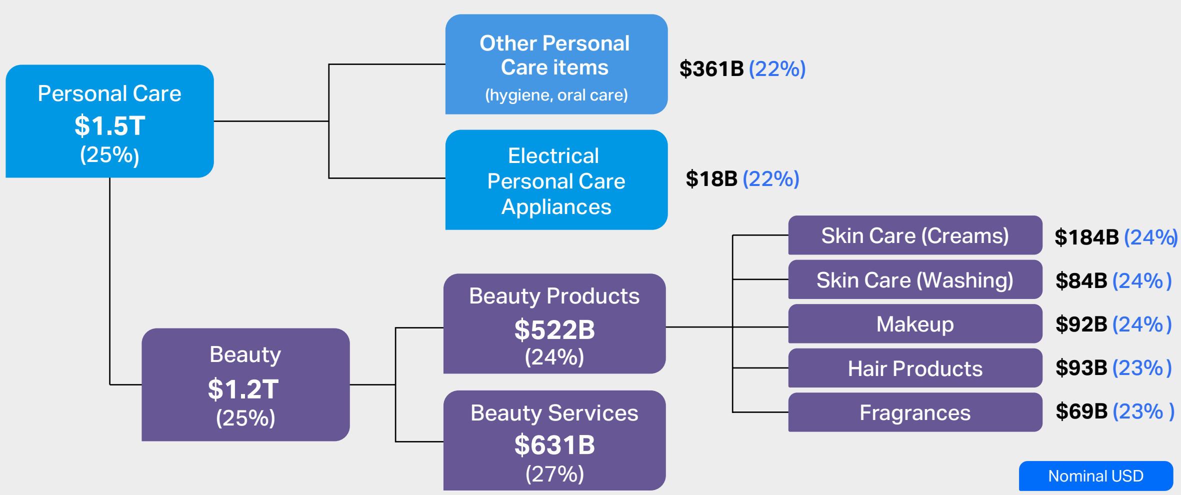
+19.1%

Latin America YOY value growth

+27.1%

Middle East & Africa YOY value growth

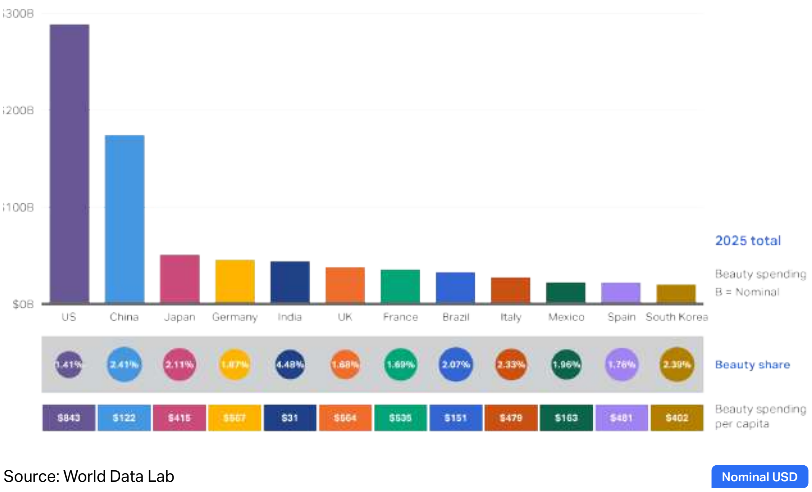
The global "Beauty tree" in 2025 (Gen X's shares)



Source: World Data Lab

Globally, Beauty consumers dedicate roughly 2% of their total spend to products in the Beauty category. The US and China are by far the largest markets.

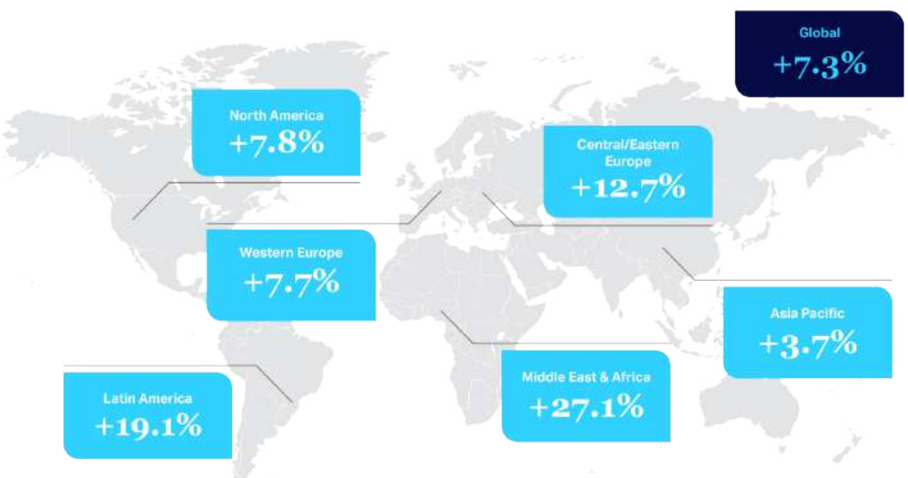
Beauty generally accounts for 2% of total spending—slightly higher in China and South Korea; lower in India, US, and Mexico



Source: World Data Lab

When we layer WDL data with NIQ growth data, we see an even fuller picture of how the Beauty category is trending in 2025.

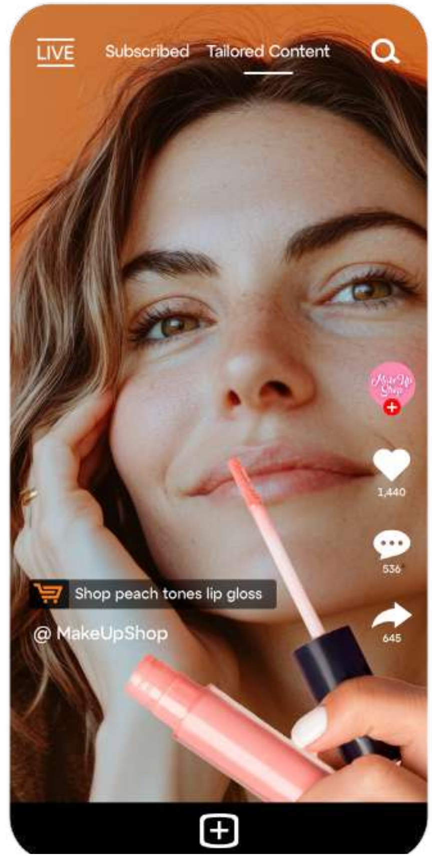
Regional Beauty value growth %



Source: NielsenIQ QBN RMS Beauty MAT Q3 2024, 69 countries
*Fact Value % growth vs YA (unweighted)
Beauty = Hair, Skin, Fragrance, Cosmetic & Nail

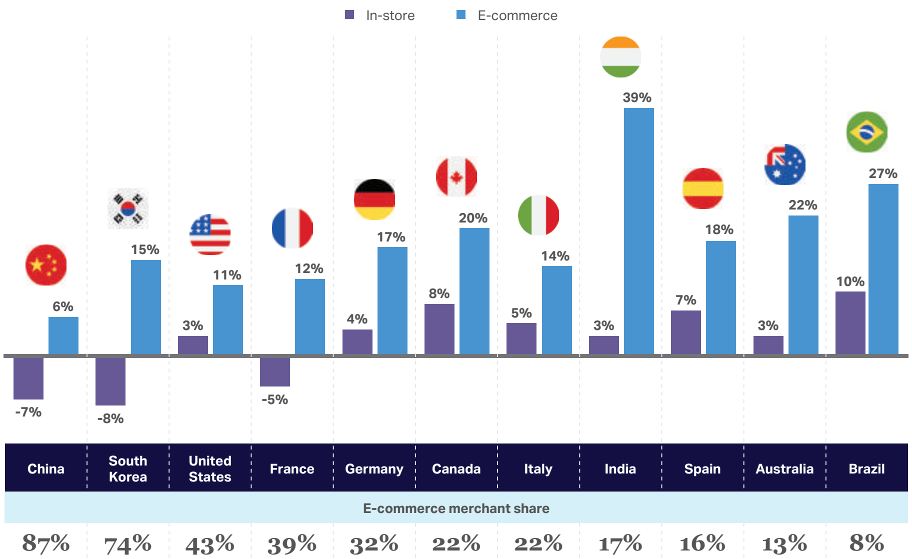
In the near term, the Beauty industry shines as a global success story, experiencing a value growth of +7.3% year over year. While regions like Latin America (+19.1%) and the Middle East & Africa (+27.1%) are experiencing explosive growth, mature markets such as North America and Western Europe still show strong performances at +7.8% and +7.7%, respectively. This robust global expansion is heavily driven by inflation, but there are also leading optimistic indicators with rising incomes and new consumers entering the market.

When examining this growth from a retailer perspective, e-commerce continues to dominate the Beauty space, with a consistent growth trajectory across global markets. Platforms like Amazon, TikTok Shop, and Shein have redefined shopping experiences, blending convenience with discovery. Notably, TikTok Shop ranked as the top e-commerce merchant for cosmetics during Black Friday 2024, reflecting the platform's role in fueling impulse purchases and brand discovery.



The convenience consumer mindset fueling global e-commerce growth, relative to Beauty, positions retailers perfectly for near-term growth with Gen X, as convenience remains a prevailing motivator for this cohort. When examining percentage change (vs. year ago) and percentage of e-commerce share by region, we get the following breakdown:

Value % change vs. year ago



Source: World Data Lab

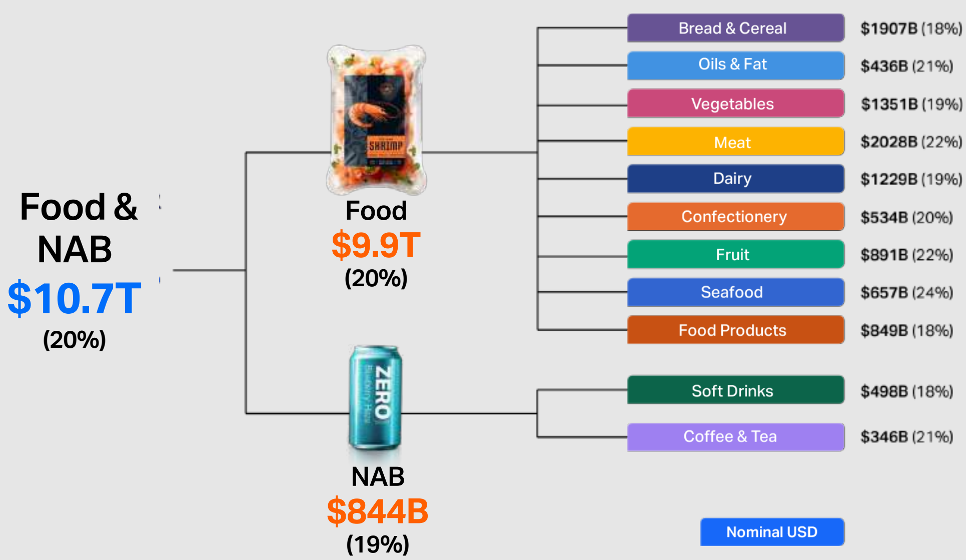
Gen X consumers aren't just in their peak earning years; they're in their *recalibration* years. They're redefining what value means in the Beauty category, seeking products that balance benefits with simplicity, legacy with innovation, and luxury with accessibility. In other words: They're gravitating toward Beauty services and products that feel both elevated and grounded. Winning with Gen X in Beauty means aligning with the deeper values they identify with—trust, quality, and authenticity—while respecting their desire for products that fit effortlessly into their demanding lives.

For more guidance on how to win this category, contact NIQ's Beauty experts.

Food & Non-alcoholic Beverages (NAB)

Globally, Gen X's share of Food & NAB spend is 20%—slightly lower than the other categories we've explored. Several products where Gen X spend jumps up over 20% include Seafood, Fruit, Soft Drinks, and Coffee & Tea.

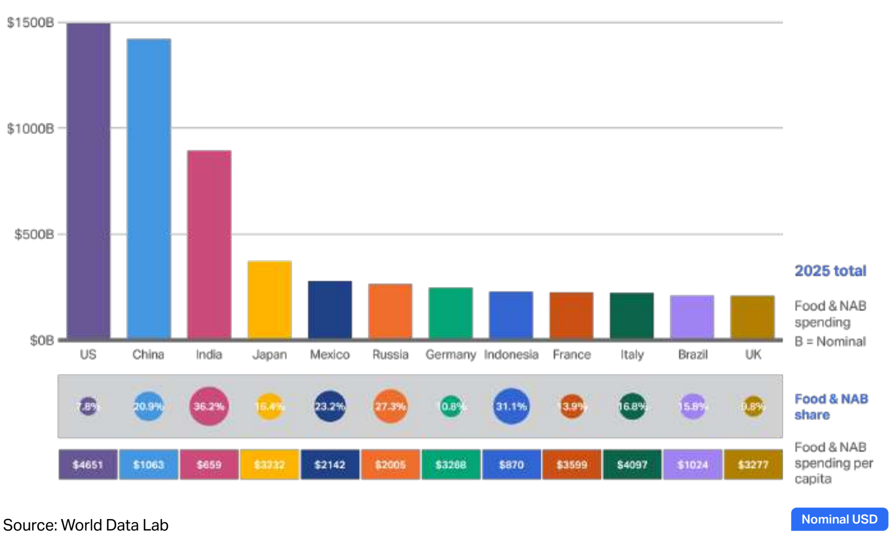
The global "Food & NAB tree" in 2025 (Gen X's share)



Source: World Data Lab

On average, global consumers spend roughly 19% of their CPG budget on Food & NAB purchases. This number jumps significantly in India, Indonesia, and Russia, whereas consumers in the UK and US spend less than 10% of their budget on the category.

Food & NAB generally accounts for 19% of total spending—slightly higher in India and Indonesia; lower in UK, US, and Germany



Source: World Data Lab

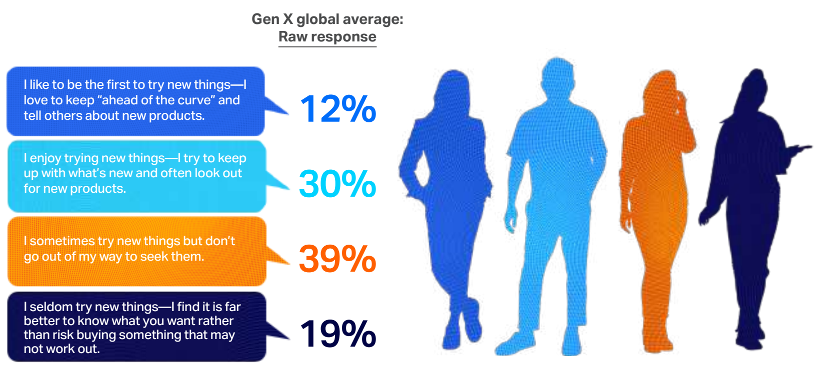
Purchasing behaviors

Gen X spend is shaped by distinct purchasing behaviors. For instance, Gen Xers are more likely to try new products than Boomers, but much less likely than Millennials. Gen Xers are also more likely than Boomers, but much less likely than Millennials, to pay a premium to get a product when it first hits the market or to receive the product sooner.[2]

These key insights signal that innovations should be positioned to Gen X as practical and reliable, skewing away from that which is perceived as "trendy." Gen X will respond well to products that offer clear functional benefits, like time savings or improved performance—particularly if they clearly demonstrate value for this cohort's busy, dynamic lifestyle.

Gen X is much more likely to try new products than Boomers, but much less likely than Millennials

	Gen X indexed to ...				
	Total	Boomers	Gen X	Millennials	Gen Z
Adventurous	79	186	100	58	59
	100	159	100	83	92
	110	86	100	133	132
Cautious	98	65	100	136	109



Source: NIQ 2025 Private Label & Branded Products report global survey

When it comes to the Health & Wellness category specifically, **31% of Gen Xers said they would use anti-obesity medications (AOMs) like Ozempic to support weight loss**.[3] That's much higher than Boomers, but lower than Millennials.

CPG manufacturers that are attempting to win with products that complement Gen X's adoption of AOMs are increasingly innovating toward nutrient-dense, high-protein, and/or fiber-rich foods that build or maintain muscle mass and help to support digestion. Examples of these innovations include US manufacturers like Conagra introducing "GLP-1 Friendly" labels on their Healthy Choice frozen meals and Nestlé's Vital Pursuit product line offering portion-controlled, higher-protein options tailored for consumers taking AOMs.

Gen Xers also continue to look to vitamins and supplements, with 65% saying they would start or increase their intake of vitamins and supplements to support their health (more than Boomers, less than Millennials).[4] As Gen Xers age, they will undoubtedly prioritize products that help them feel healthier.

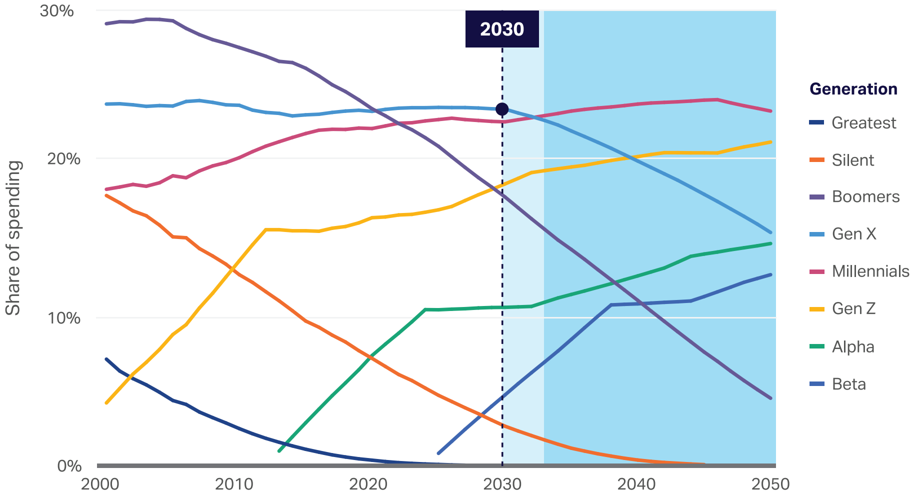
[2,3,4]NIQ 2025 Private Label & Branded Products report global survey

Midterm (2–10 years)

The midterm will see Gen X spend continue to dominate in categories like Travel, Education Services, Elder & Dependent Care, and Healthcare. However, peak Gen X spend will wind down by the early 2030s, and Millennials will assume the position Gen X had previously held as the highest-spending generational cohort.

Five years from today, Gen X will start losing its share of world spending considerably

In eight years, it will officially lose its first-place position to Millennials.



Source: World Data Lab

This weakening is driven by several factors:

- The number of Gen Xers globally is declining.
- The older portion of the generation is entering retirement.
- Gen Xers' dependent spend will dissipate as children leave home and Boomers pass away.

In just **8** years, Gen X will lose its lead position for share of global spending to Millennials.

When we look at the numbers, Gen X will lose another 100 million members by 2035, but 300 million additional Boomers will also have passed away.[5] Over time, these Boomer losses will continue to shift Gen X's spending prioritization away from Elder Care.

The global decline of the Boomer generation

Every region's Boomer headcount, by year

Boomers	North America	Europe	LATAM	Middle East & North Africa	Asia Pacific	Sub-Saharan Africa
2025	74M	154M	77M	47M	562M	53M
2030	68M	138M	68M	40M	475M	41M
2035	59M	117M	57M	32M	375M	29M

Source: World Data Lab

Nominal USD

Though we will see a decline in spending by the end of this period, Gen X still has eight to 10 years of peak spend. In just five years, members of Gen X are set to spend as much per capita as Boomers do today. That's not something brands can afford to ignore.

If you previously thought of Gen X as "the forgotten generation," think again. Over the next five to 10 years, their peak earning power, financial influence, and evolving lifestyle priorities will make them one of the most quietly dominant consumer forces in the global economy.

In five years, Gen X will spend as much as Boomers spend per capita today

Per-capita spending, by generation

Generation	Boomers	Gen X	Millennials	Gen Z	Gen Alpha
2025	$13,999 (69% / 31%)	$10,484 (65% / 35%)	$7,997 (57% / 43%)	$5,527 (48% / 52%)	$4,231 (39% / 61%)
2030	$17,368 (75% / 25%)	$13,683 (71% / 29%)	$10,178 (65% / 35%)	$7,754 (56% / 44%)	$5,460 (47% / 53%)
2035	$21,742 (82% / 18%)	$16,957 (76% / 24%)	$13,364 (71% / 29%)	$10,385 (63% / 37%)	$7,434 (56% / 44%)

Percentage of consumer class
Percentage of Poor & Vulnerable class

Nominal USD

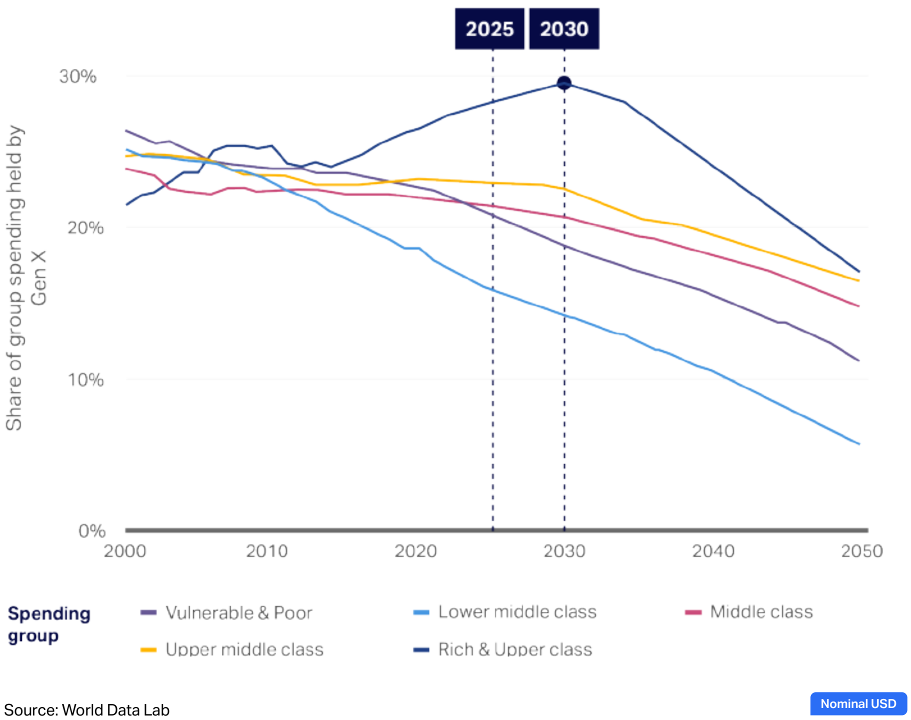
Source: World Data Lab

With Gen Xers in low-income countries having shorter life spans than those in high-income areas, the upper class and rich will increasingly account for a bigger share of Gen X spending.[6] Regions such as North America and Europe will become even more important markets for brands and retailers looking to capitalize on Gen X through 2030.

[5,6]World Data Lab

Gen X will start losing share of Rich & Upper class spending by 2030

It will be the last spending group from which Gen X will lose its share.



Source: World Data Lab

To maximize incrementality from Gen X spending, the time to act is *now*. While Gen X will remain a dominant spending force beyond 2030, the most valuable years to capture the economic power of this consumer cohort are 2025–2030.

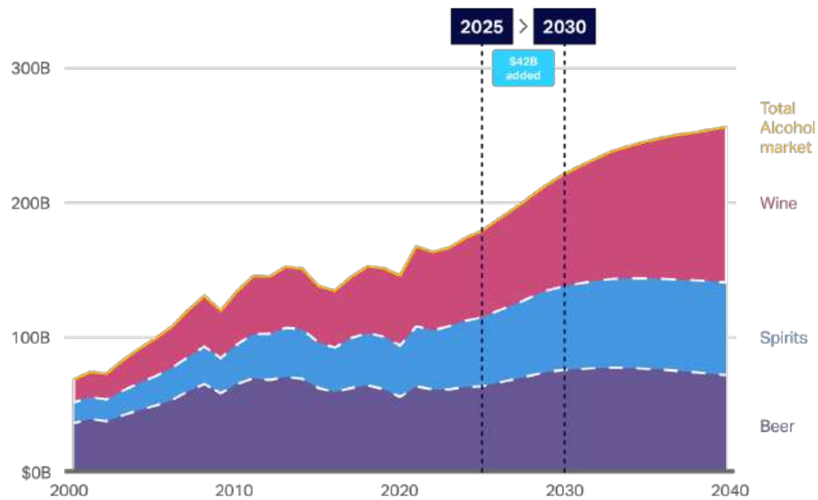
Gen X CPG spend

Once again, we'll evaluate what the midterm global Gen X spend is projected to look like across the key categories of Alcohol, Beauty, and Food & NAB.

Alcohol

The next five years represent an opportunity for alcohol brands to capture an additional $42 billion in Gen X spend. Growth will be seen across wine, spirits, and beer, ***with wine seeing significant growth into 2040***. Just two regions will account for more than half of that growth.

The Gen X Alcohol market will grow to 1.2x its current size in the next five years



Source: World Data Lab

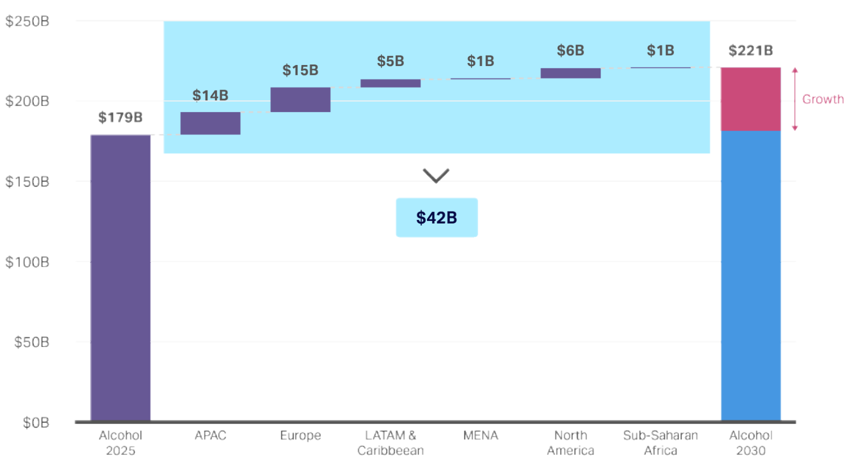
Nominal USD

The opportunity:

$42B

in additional Gen X spend in the next five years

APAC and Europe will generate over half the Alcohol growth for Gen Xers in the next five years



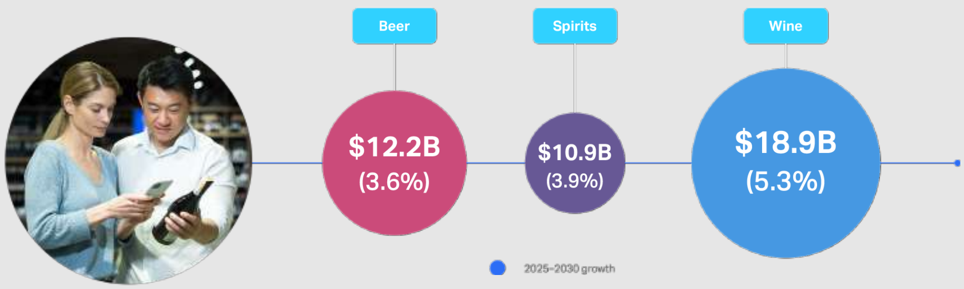
Source: World Data Lab

Nominal USD

The Alcohol industry has placed a lot of emphasis on winning over younger generations of drinkers, but World Data Lab projections show Gen X wine spending will continue to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 5.3% over the next 10 years.

Gen X Alcohol categories spending growth, global

Categories growth and CAGR: 2025-2035

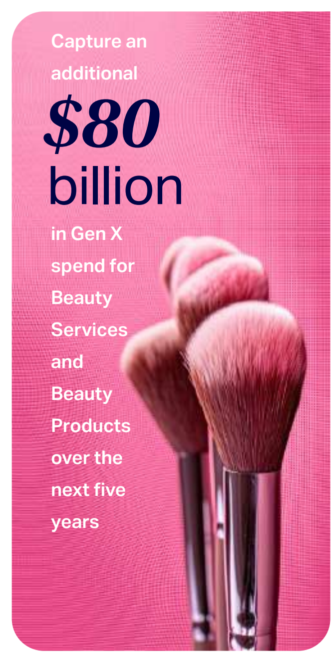


Source: World Data Lab

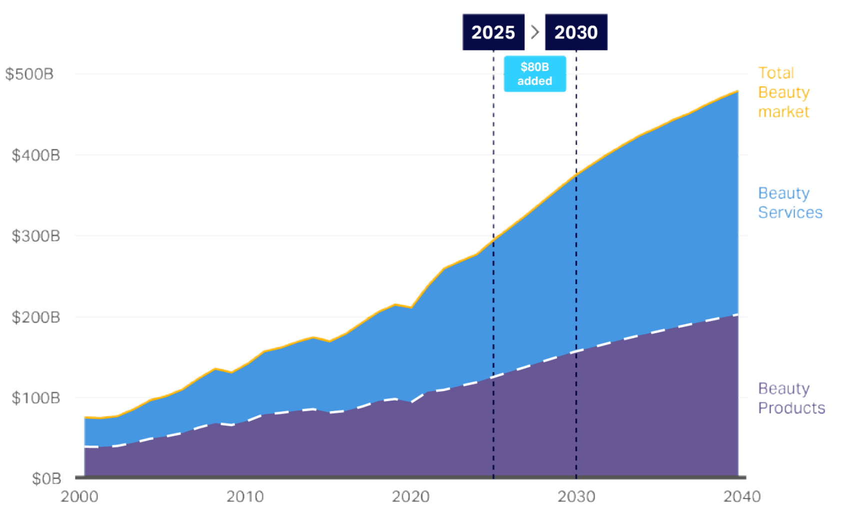
Nominal USD

Beauty

Beauty will also see Gen X's spend grow over the next decade. Manufacturers and retailers can capture an additional $80 billion in Beauty Services and Beauty Products in the next five years alone. APAC and North America will account for nearly two-thirds of this growth.



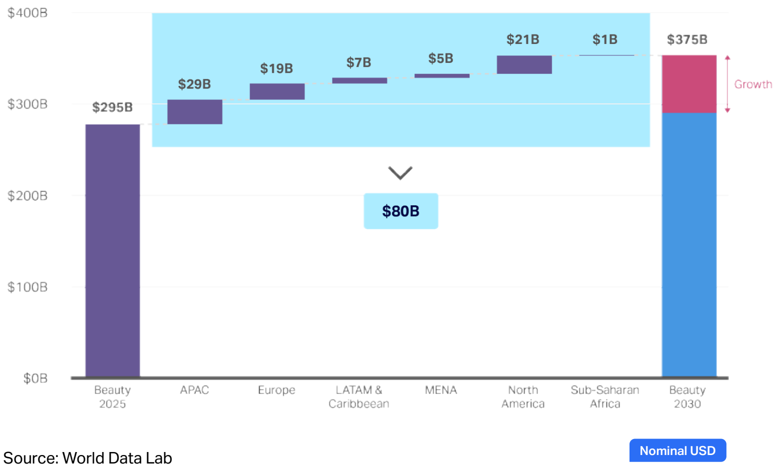
The Gen X Beauty market will grow to 1.3x its current size in the next five years



Source: World Data Lab

Nominal USD

APAC and North America will generate nearly two-thirds of the Beauty growth for Gen Xers in the next five years

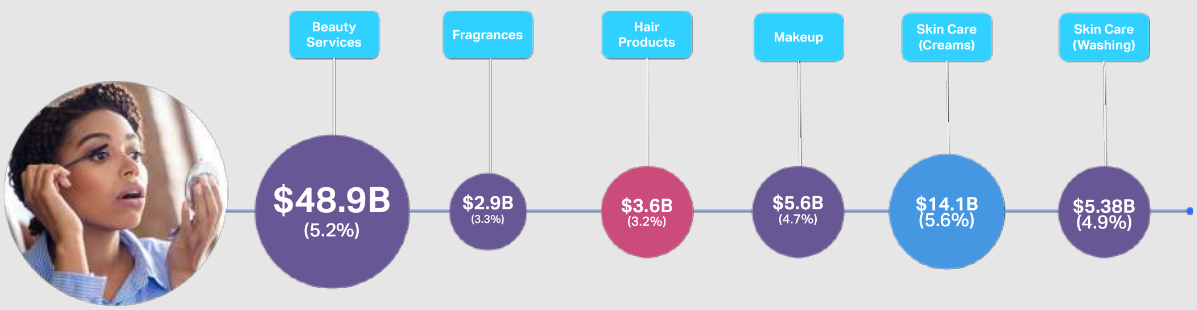


Source: World Data Lab

Beauty Services is by far the largest category within Beauty, based on Gen X total spend. It will continue to grow at a CAGR of 5.2%, but Skin Care (Creams) will see an even greater rate of growth—with a 5.6% CAGR.

Gen X Beauty categories spending growth, global

Categories growth and CAGR: 2025-2035



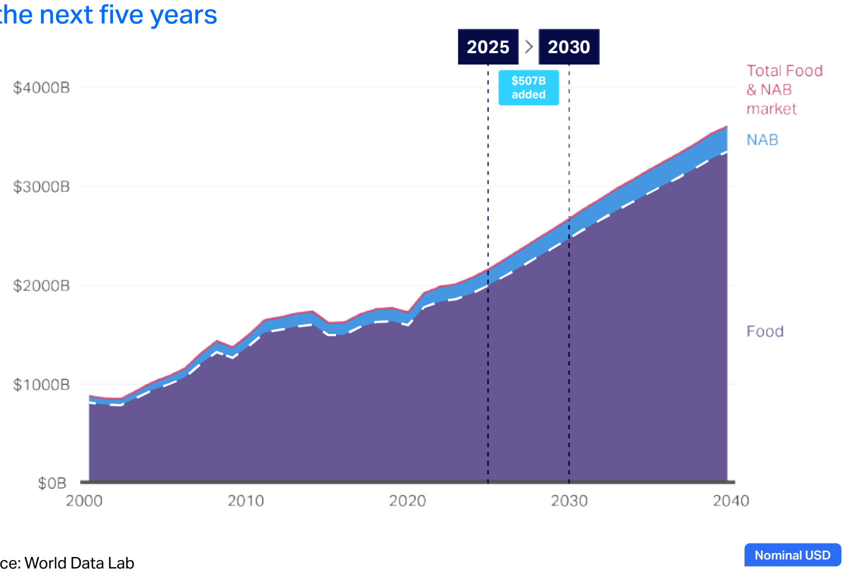
Source: World Data Lab

Food & NAB

The Food & NAB market will add $507 billion in Gen X spend over the next five years. This time, APAC alone accounts for over half this growth.

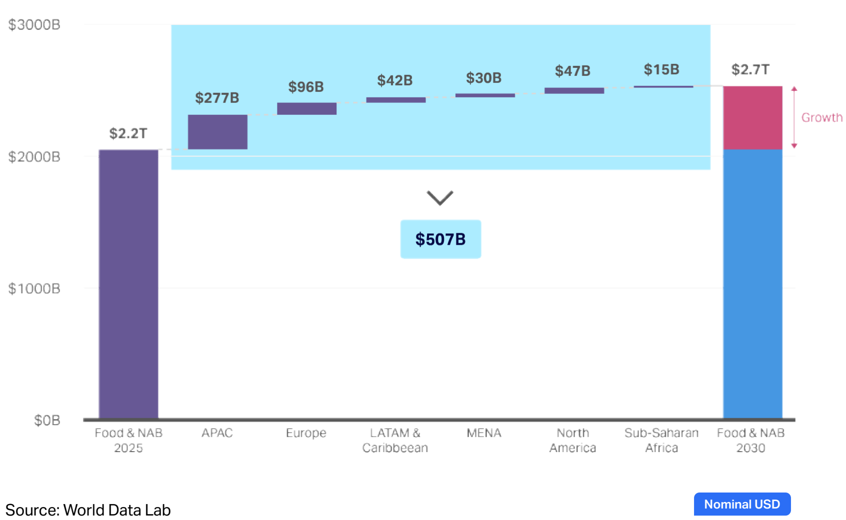
$507 billion in additional Gen X spend over the next five years

The Gen X Food & NAB market will grow to 1.2x its current size in the next five years



Source: World Data Lab

APAC alone will generate over half the Food & NAB growth for Gen Xers in the next five years

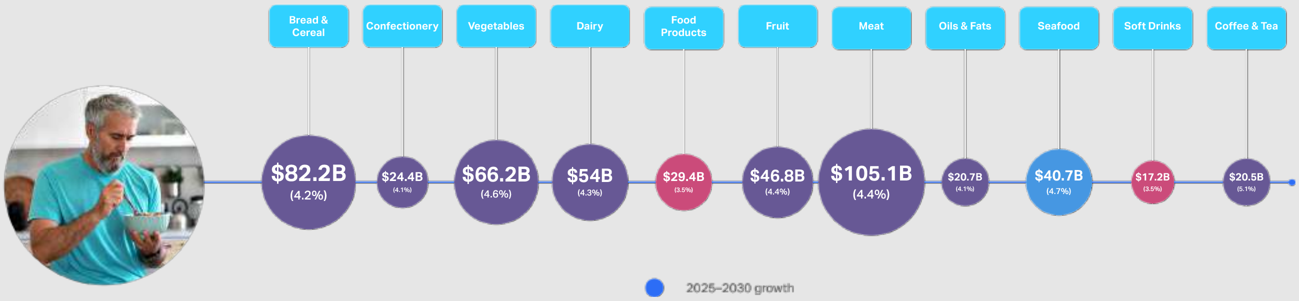


Source: World Data Lab

For Gen X, Coffee & Tea and Seafood will be the fastest-growing categories over the next five years, but Meat and Bread & Cereal will be the most valuable categories relative to spend. Even though Food Products and Soft Drinks account for the slowest-growing categories, they will still see a 3.5% CAGR.

Gen X Food & NAB categories spending growth, global

Categories growth and CAGR: 2025-2030



Source: World Data Lab

Nominal USD

Long term (10+ years)

We've already seen that as Gen X grows older, its spending power will be overtaken—first by Millennials in 2033 and then by Gen Z by 2040.[7] At 10-plus years into the future, Gen X members will be transitioning into their retirement years, which will bring new demand for Healthcare and Financial Services products.

However, retirement will likely look different for Gen X. Some experts believe Millennials will see the biggest benefit from the estimated $90 trillion in assets (in the US alone) that will be passed down from the Silent Generation and Boomers. This wealth transfer will help to cement Millennials as the richest generation in history. The idea that Gen X may be left out aligns with recent data in the US showing only 12% of Gen Xers will rely on an inheritance as part of their retirement income. This is acutely problematic, as 18% (12 million) of Gen Xers in the US have nothing saved for retirement, and 47% of all working Gen Xers expect to retire later than anticipated.

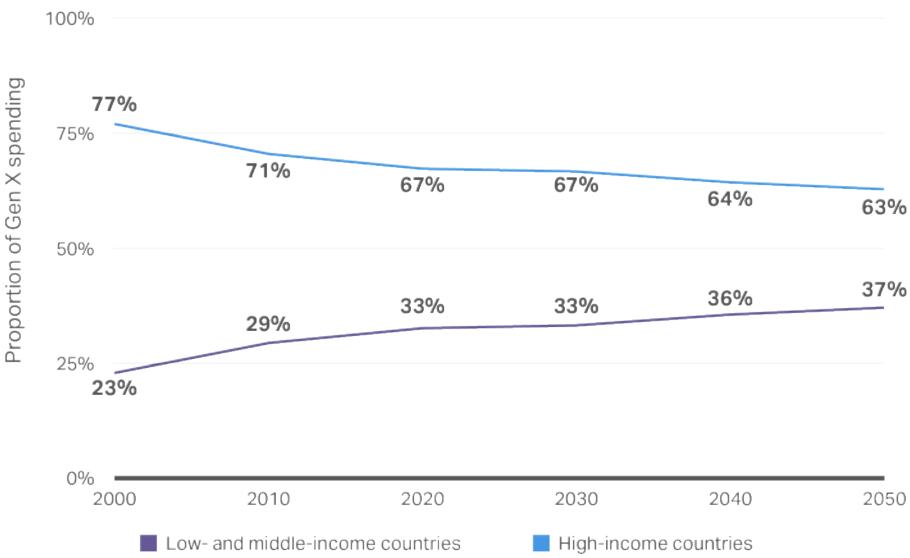
Predictive data for long-term Gen X CPG spend is limited. However, as Gen Xers simplify their lives in retirement or semi-retirement, we anticipate their spend will more closely resemble Boomers at the same life stages.

47%

of all working Gen Xers expect to retire later than anticipated

[7] World Data Lab

For Gen Xers, low- and middle-income countries used to make up 20% of the market. Today, it stands at over 30%, and by 2050, it will be almost 40%.



Source: World Data Lab

C-suite takeaways

- Dual-dependent care will dominate Gen X spend in the short term.
- Standout categories like Alcohol, Beauty, and Food & NAB will see exponential growth in Gen X spend over the long term, but these are far from the only categories that will benefit.
- Gen X will try new products—especially ones that meet their needs relative to their life stage.
- Invest in premium and practical now, and anticipate a pivot to wellness, security, and ease-of-use for the long term.
- **You have five years *from today* to capture the highest possible share of the Gen X wallet. *The time to act is now.***

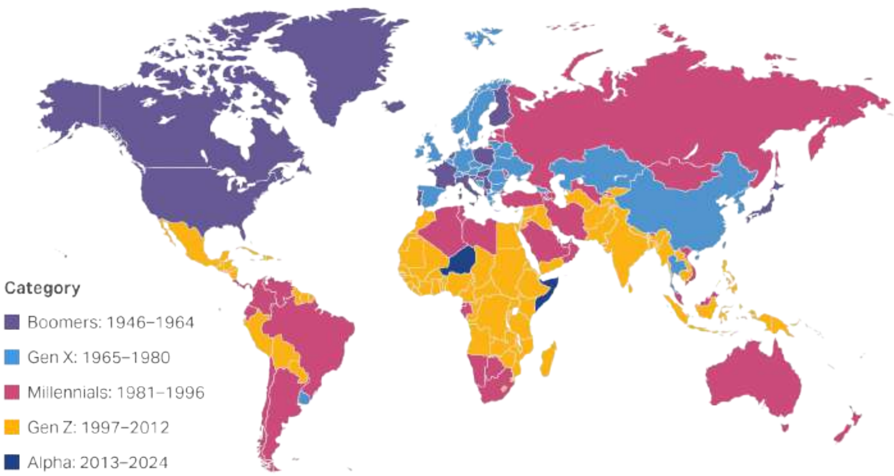
Gen X by region and country

To help organizations optimize their innovation, marketing, and assortment plans (by region or country), World Data Lab has forecast Gen X's "peaks" of dominance across the globe. Regional outlooks, as well as country-specific forecasts, serve to help you better understand when Gen X's peak spend will hit—and how long it's going to last—so you can build a strategy to maximize incrementality.

Where does Gen X dominate today—and where will it dominate in 2030?

Most dominant generation per country (2025)

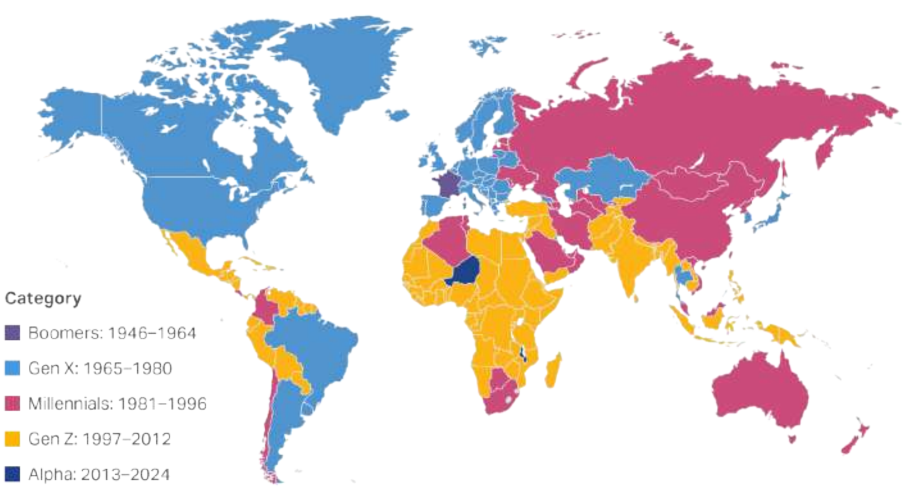
In terms of absolute consumer spending



Source: World Data Lab

Most dominant generation per country (2030)

In terms of absolute consumer spending



Source: World Data Lab

Due to shorter lifespans in developing countries, Gen X peak spending has already passed.

Although there will be a global decline in Gen X population, North America and Europe will actually see an increase in Gen X's contribution to spend over the next five years.[8] In these regions, Gen X is the core spend engine of the next decade, but Asia Pacific has the fastest-growing spend of any region globally.

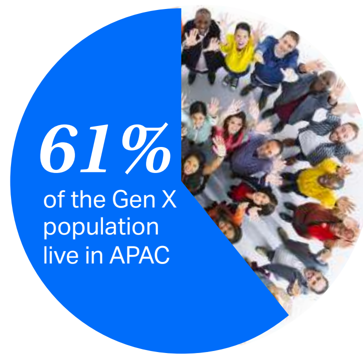
APAC, which represents 61% of the Gen X population, will be the fastest-growing region with Gen X

Gen X per-capita spending by region

Gen X	North America	Europe	LATAM	Middle East & North Africa	Asia Pacific	Sub-Saharan Africa	World average
2025	$73,377	$22,604	$8,443	$7,129	$5,002	$1,575	$10,484
2030	$93,746	$28,489	$11,079	$9,440	$6,674	$2,103	$13,683
2035	$110,956	$34,330	$13,556	$11,903	$8,573	$2,574	$16,957
CAGR (2025-2035)	4.2%	4.3%	4.8%	5.3%	5.5%	5.0%	4.7%

Source: World Data Lab

Nominal USD



To provide even more granularity relative to insights, we're highlighting Gen X spend across countries from four key regions: North America, Western Europe, Asia Pacific, and Latin America.

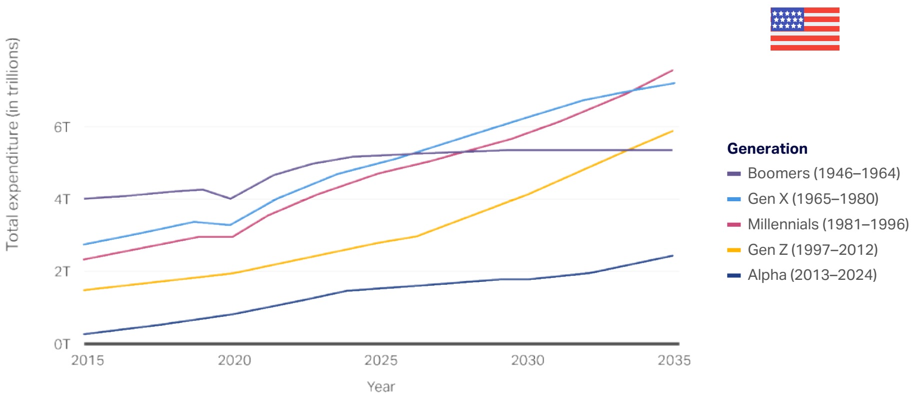
North America

United States

The US is on the cusp of becoming a Gen X economy. Organizations should be looking at what matters to Gen X now and developing plans that cater to their needs via relevant products and messaging.

[8]World Data Lab

The US is still a Boomer economy in 2025. Next year, it will transition into the Gen X decade.



Source: World Data Lab

Currently, in the US, Gen X households (in total) spend less across almost all CPG categories than Boomer or Millennial households because there are comparatively fewer of them.[9] However, they are big spenders when you look at dollars spent on a per-household basis. At the category level, Gen X households in the US spend more than Boomer households on all categories—except Floral—and more than Millennial households on Pet Care, Floral, and Household Care.

Gen X is also revealing its life stage when we look at value share relative to Boomers and Millennials. It has the lowest value share for Baby Care (except for Boomers) and the highest for Pet Care, with 4.8% of its CPG budget going to Gen Xers' furry friends.[10]

Looking beyond CPG, we continue to see growth in Gen X spend on Elder & Dependent Care, as well as on Recreation and Health & Wellness.

Fastest-growing categories for Gen X, US: 2025-2030

	Gen X CAGR: 2025-2030
Elder & Dependent Care	10.4%
Musical Instruments & Indoor Recreation Durables*	10.1%
Outdoor Recreation Durables	8.8%
Valet, Parking & Tolls	8.0%
Optical & Health Accessories	7.7%
Total	**4.6%**

*Includes musical instruments, billiard tables, ping pong tables, and gaming machines

Source: World Data Lab

Nominal USD

[9,10] Source: NIQ US Omnishopper Panel, CPG Purchasing Total Outlets (In-store & E-commerce), 52 weeks ending Feb. 22, 2025

Looking only at national-level data in the US is ill-advised, however. As seen in the chart below, wealthier Gen Xers tend to concentrate in select city centers. (In Seattle and Boston, for example, 70–79% of Gen Xers are rich.)

The US is a hub for wealthy Gen Xers: Cities with the highest concentration of Gen X individuals in the Rich* segment

City	Gen X: Rich population	Gen X: Total population	Gen X: Rich percentage
Seattle	909,693	1,149,545	79.1%
Kennewick, WA	38,390	52,970	72.5%
Bellingham, WA	23,339	32,236	72.4%
Olympia, WA	34,381	47,523	72.3%
Spokane, WA	82,529	114,252	72.2%
Yakima, WA	22,810	31,676	72.0%
Lawrence, MA	35,556	50,725	70.1%
Brockton, MA	29,438	42,007	70.1%
Lowell, MA	31,419	44,868	70.0%
Boston	559,081	798,446	70.0%
Framingham, MA	21,403	30,575	70.0%
Minneapolis/Saint Paul	476,224	707,659	67.3%
St Cloud, MN	22,498	33,562	67.0%
Rochester, MN	21,906	32,722	66.9%
Eagan, MN	71,793	108,530	66.2%

*We define "rich" as anyone who spends at least $120 per day (per person, in 2017 dollars to control for cost-of-living differences) and "middle class" as anyone spending at least $12 but less than $120 per day (per person).

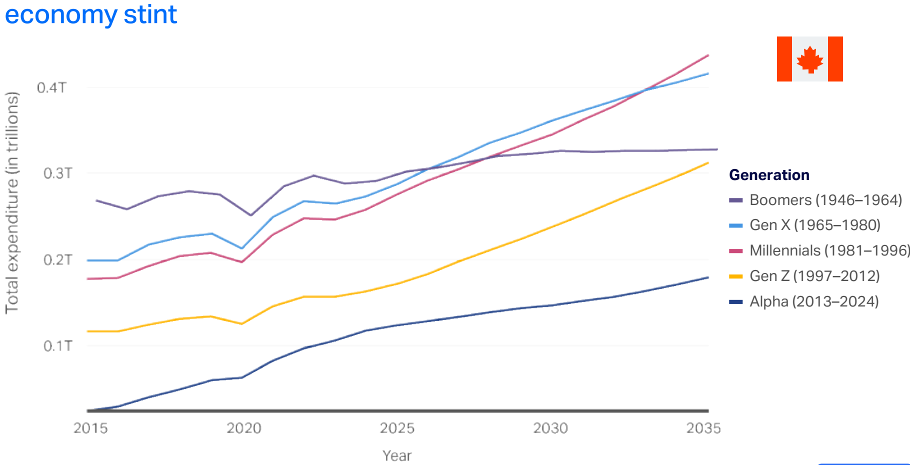
Source: World Data Lab

What this tells us is that manufacturers and retailers must consider regional, urban, rural, and other nuances when selling to Gen X consumers. By leveraging NIQ's hyper-local, omnichannel data, brands and retailers can move beyond broad strokes to activate with precision—by geography, mission, and mindset.

Canada

Like the US, Canada is presently a Boomer economy. Its transition to a Gen X economy will lag slightly behind the US, starting in 2027 and lasting until 2033.

Canada is still a Boomer economy and will only have a brief Gen X economy stint



Source: World Data Lab

Nominal USD

As one might expect, Canada's Gen Xers will spend more in several of the same categories as in the US, including Elder & Dependent Care and Optical & Health Accessories. However, Canadians will be much more focused on Household Services and Travel than their neighbors to the south.

Fastest-growing categories for Gen X, Canada: 2025-2030

	Gen X CAGR: 2025-2030
Household Services	8.4%
Personal Care Services	8.1%
Elder & Dependent Care	7.8%
Optical & Health Accessories	7.3%
All-Inclusive Holidays	7.2%
Total	**4.6%**

Source: World Data Lab

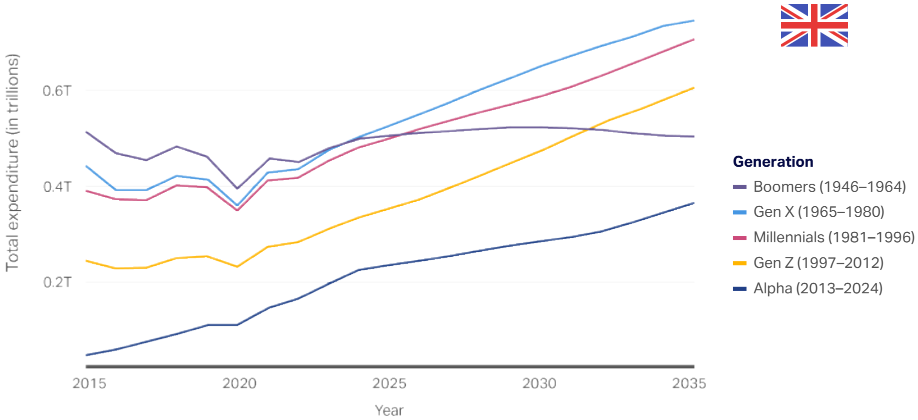
Nominal USD

Western Europe

United Kingdom

Gen X in the UK will reign supreme over the economy for 14 years—much longer than in other nations. In fact, their dominance has already begun.

The UK has already been a Gen X economy for one year—and will continue to be until 2038

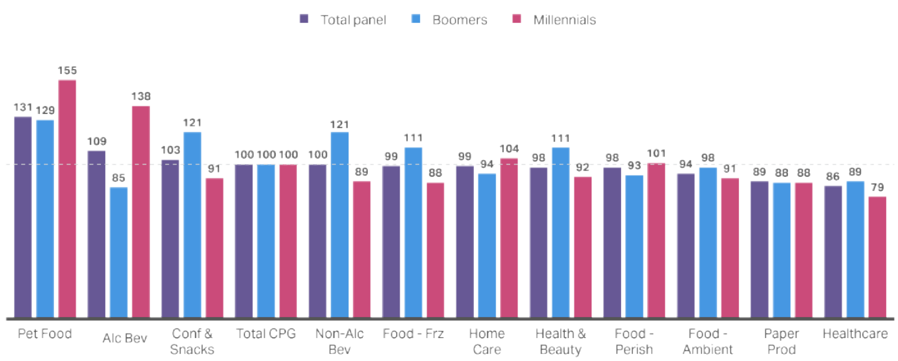


Source: World Data Lab

Nominal USD

In Great Britain, we see CPG spending for Gen X households skew toward the Pet Food category and away from Paper Products and Healthcare products. When compared with Boomer households, Gen X households purchase more Confectionery & Snacks, Non-alcoholic Beverages, Health & Beauty, and Frozen Food.

For Great Britain: Gen X value share indexed to other generations



Gen X value share indexed to value share for specified group
Source: NIQ CPG Purchasing Panel, Total Outlets, Great Britain, 52 weeks ending Feb. 22, 2025

Looking at the fastest-growing categories for Gen X across the UK, we see a much heavier focus on services than we did in the US.

Fastest-growing categories for Gen X, UK: 2025-2030

	Gen X CAGR: 2025-2030
Household Services	10.9%
Elder & Dependent Care	10.2%
Outdoor Recreation Durables	10.0%
Maintenance Services	9.2%
Personal Care Services	8.8%
Total	**4.3%**

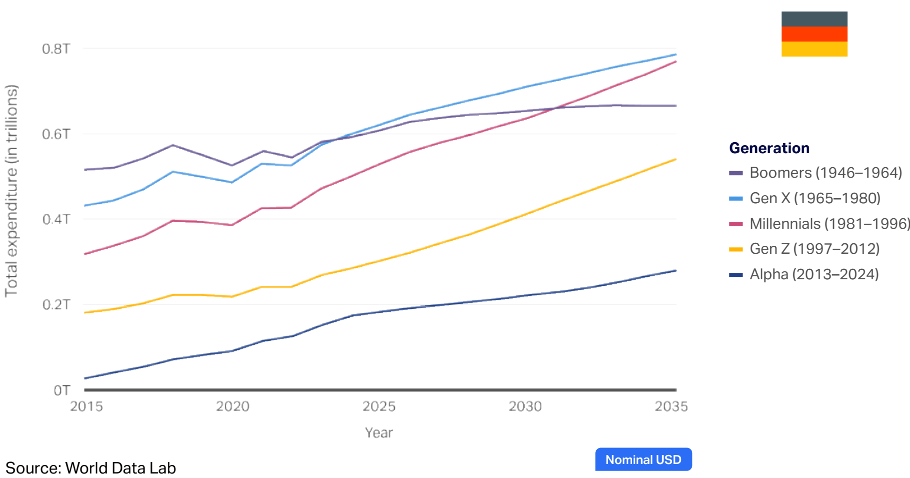
Nominal USD

Source: World Data Lab

Germany

Like in the UK, Gen X dominance has already begun in Germany, but Germany will shift to a Millennial economy one year earlier. Because Germany had a thriving economy as Gen X was coming of age, these consumers are wealthier today than Gen Xers in some other EU countries.

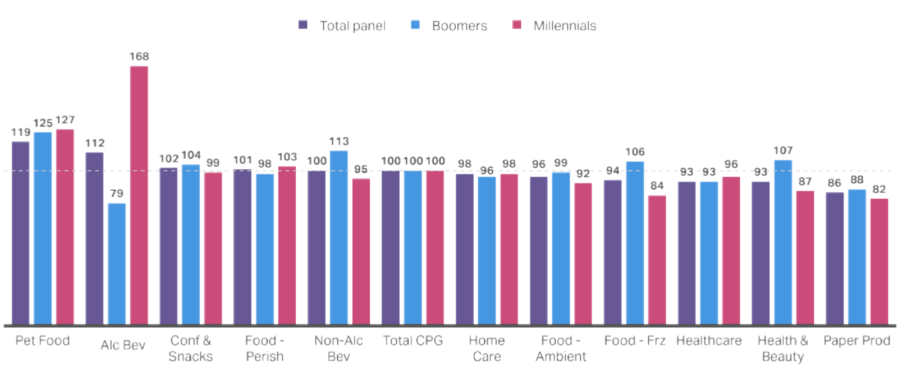
Germany has also been a Gen X economy for one year, but will be a Millennial economy in 2037



Source: World Data Lab

In CPG categories, German Gen X households look a lot like their counterparts in Great Britain, skewing toward the Pet Food category and away from Paper Products. They also spend more on Non-alcoholic Beverages, Health & Beauty, and Frozen Food than the Boomer cohort.

Gen X value share indexed to other generations



Gen X value share indexed to value share for specified group
Source: NIQ CPG Purchasing Panel, Total Outlets, Germany, 52 weeks ending Feb. 22, 2025

Gen X in Germany is also spending more on Holidays, Jewelry, and Medical Products & Services when we examine the fastest-growing categories over the next five years.

Fastest-growing categories for Gen X, Germany: 2025-2030

	Gen X CAGR: 2025- 2030
All-Inclusive Holidays	8.5%
Financial Services Fees	7.3%
Paramedical	5.1%
Private Hospital Services	5.0%
Jewelry	4.8%
Total	**2.7%**

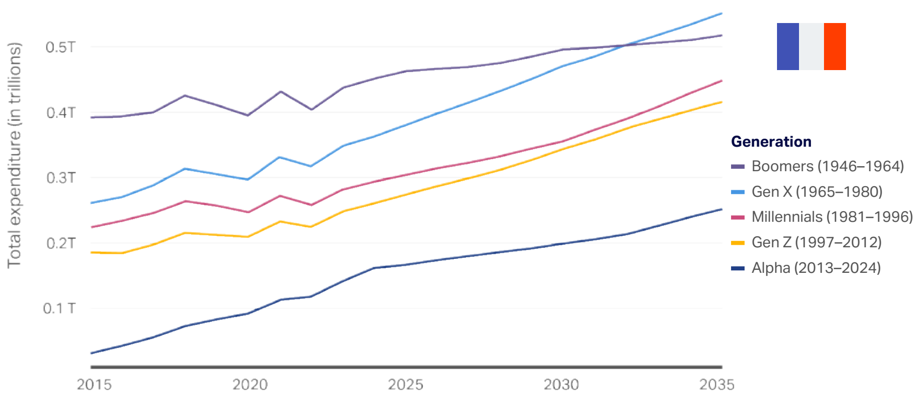
Source: World Data Lab

Nominal USD

France

The economy in France tells a different story. Boomers still dominate spend in France—and will until 2032. This is due to a relatively weak economy during Gen Xers' youth, which has resulted in them having decreased spending power compared with Boomers when Boomers were at the same life stage.

France is still a Boomer economy and will not be a Gen X economy until 2032

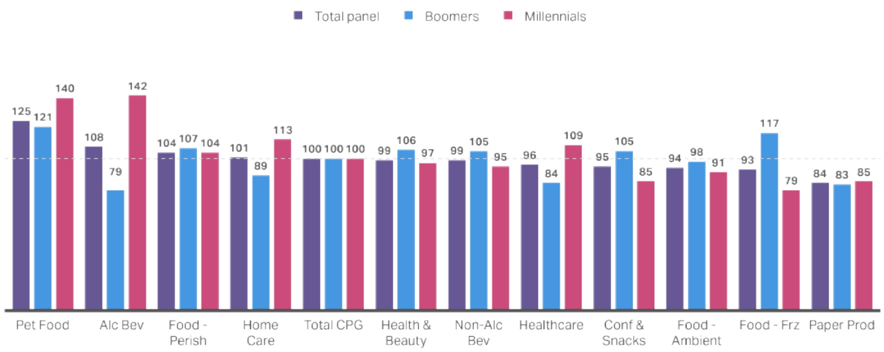


Source: World Data Lab

Nominal USD

That said, it's beneficial to look at French Gen Xers' CPG spend, relative to Boomers and Millennials. Here, Pet Food surfaces as a top category yet again. Gen X is also spending more on Frozen Food (relative to Boomers) and on Home Care and Healthcare (relative to Millennials).

Gen X value share indexed to other generations



Gen X value share indexed to value share for specified group
Source: NIQ CPG Purchasing Panel, Total Outlets, France, 52 weeks ending Feb. 22, 2025

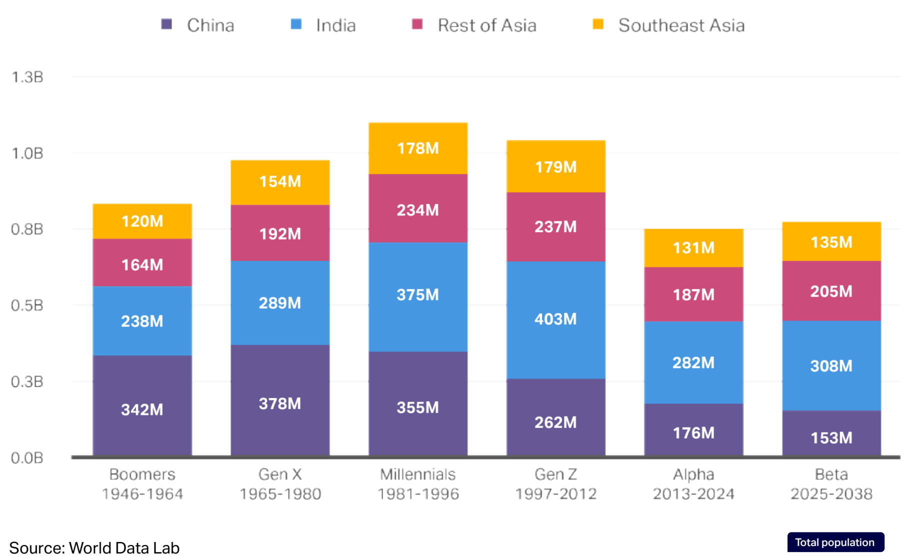
Asia Pacific

China

Gen X is comprised of the most Asian members of any generation ever—with 61% of its population born in APAC.[11] A staggering 37% of this cohort was born in China.

In Asia, Gen X growth was driven by China

37% of APAC's Gen X consumers are Chinese



Source: World Data Lab

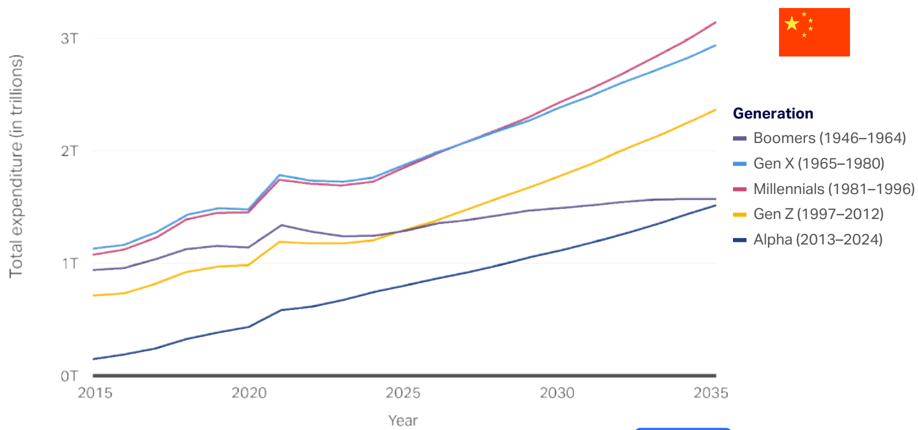
61%
of the Gen X population was born in APAC

37%
born in China

Unlike any other country we've examined thus far, Gen X and Millennials have been neck-and-neck in the race for dominance in China since 2015. In just two years, however, Millennial spend will finally overtake Gen X for good.

[11]World Data Lab

China has had Millennials and Gen Xers move in tandem since 2015, with Millennials overtaking Gen Xers in 2027



Source: World Data Lab

Nominal USD

Unsurprisingly, Elder & Dependent Care is a priority for Gen X in China, but we'll also see notable growth in the Soft Drinks category.

Fastest-growing categories for Gen X, China: 2025-2030

	Gen X CAGR: 2025-2030
Bicycles & E-bikes	10.6%
Financial Services Fees	10.2%
Soft Drinks	8.9%
Elder & Dependent Care	8.7%
Air Travel	8.6%
Total	**5.1%**

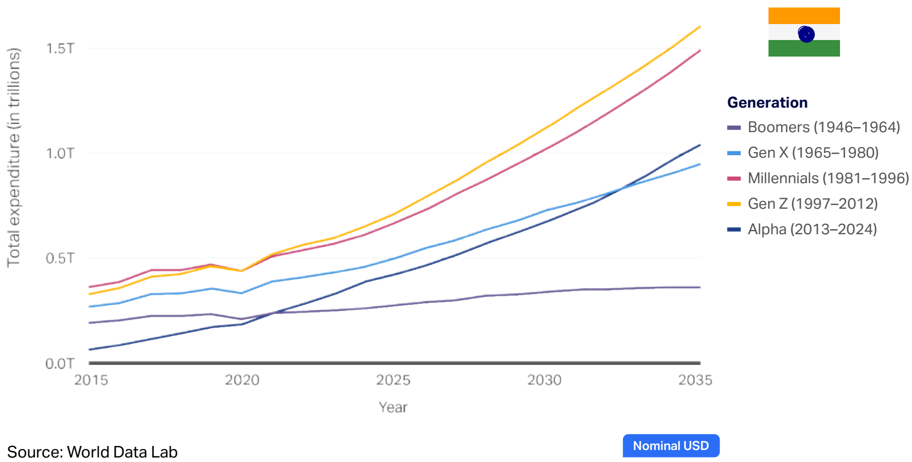
Source: World Data Lab

Nominal USD

India

Gen X hasn't dominated India's economy within the past 10 years, nor will it in the future. Rather, its younger counterparts have taken the reins, with Gen Z already surpassing Millennials in total spending power.

India is a Gen Z economy



Source: World Data Lab

Even though Gen X isn't the dominant spending cohort in India, it's still markedly spending. Wine and Air Travel are two of the fastest-growing categories that brands should continue to monitor for incrementality.

Fastest-growing categories for Gen X, India: 2025-2030

	Gen X CAGR: 2025-2030
Wine	11%
Air Travel	10.6%
Vehicles	9.9%
Financial Services Fees	9.7%
Personal Care Durables*	8.5%
Total	**7.8%**

Nominal USD

*Includes electric razors, hair trimmers, hair dryers, curling tongs and styling combs, vibrators, and electric toothbrushes

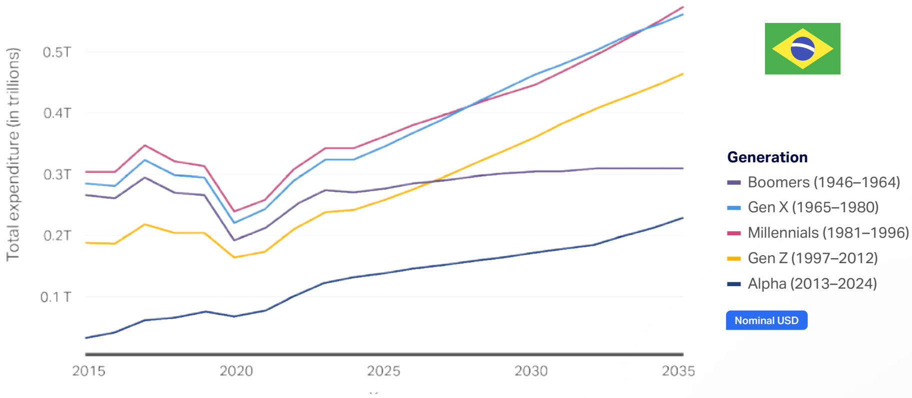
Source: World Data Lab

Latin America

Brazil

Gen X spend is far from finished in Brazil, even though it's currently a Millennial-dominated economy. Increased mid-life spending will propel Gen X to dominance by 2028, and it will remain the highest-spending generation for five or six years.

While Brazil is currently a Millennial economy, the rapid per-capita spending increase for Gen X in their 40s and 50s is making Brazil a Gen X economy by 2028

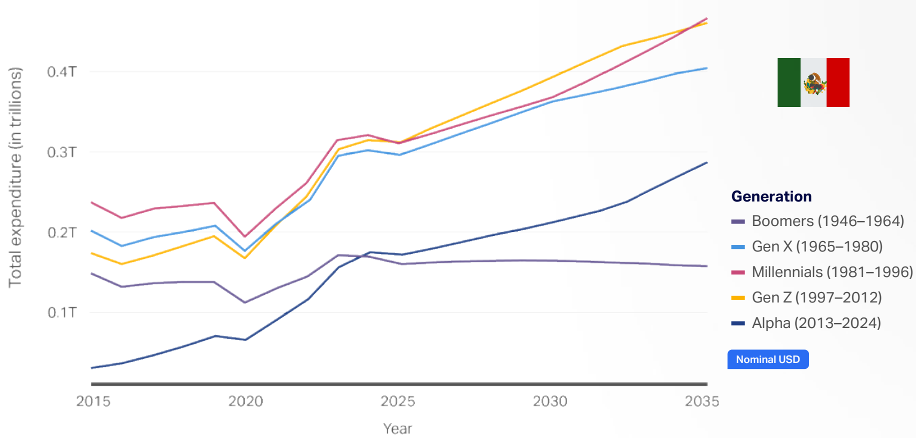


Source: World Data Lab

Mexico

As we saw in India, Gen X spend in Mexico has already been surpassed by both Millennial and Gen Z spend. Gen Z will own the next decade here until Mexico becomes a Millennial-driven economy again in 2035.

Mexico became a Gen Z economy this year. However, Millennials will catch up by 2035.



Source: World Data Lab

Global implications

The key takeaway: In line with the aforementioned values and spending priorities, Gen X emerges as "the caretaker consumer" generation. The relatively high degree of spend on categories relating to the home signals Gen X's role in maintaining multiple households, caring for both family and pets, and ensuring functionality across the homes they manage.

Manufacturer actions

Gen X spend reveals white space for premium, yet practical, product innovations—particularly at the intersection of cleanliness and comfort. Manufacturers should leverage category and shopper data to identify where Gen X is electing for premium selections and/or over-indexing (i.e., pet health, functional cleaners, household products), and they should build innovation pipelines that speak directly to "value plus" product positioning. Think: smarter, functional upgrades; "cleaner" formulations; and multi-use packs and formats. It's critical that solutions add clear benefit and simplify—without sacrificing quality.

- Leverage data to strategically optimize product lines regionally.
- In higher-income countries, offer premium (or specialized) SKUs. In others, focus on more flexible formats and affordability.

Retailer actions

Gen X shoppers are disproportionately valuable in categories linked to home care management, but they're often under-represented in planning. To capture this spend, retailers should leverage consumer insights and data to tailor assortment, cross-merchandize, and target promotions to Gen Xers' specific priorities: maintaining homes, supporting familial well-being, and safeguarding their valuable time.

Segment Gen X spend strategies regionally.

- In more developed markets, elevate the shopper experience.
- In other markets, maintain options but shift larger-scale investments toward Millennials and Gen Z.

Strategic considerations

Private label and small brands

In recent years, private label products have become increasingly popular with consumers—not just in the US or Europe, but globally. While younger generations are much more willing to spend on private label, Gen X is spending big—and notably spending more than Boomers. **However, Gen X tends to lean more toward branded products when purchasing large and/or well-known, established brands.**

When purchasing well-known large brands, Gen X is the generation with the greatest preference for name (rather than private label) brands

Gen X indexed to ...

Total	Boomers	Gen X	Millennials	Gen Z	Gen X global average: Raw response
106	108	100	105	112	When I buy well-known large brands, they are usually ""name brands"" made by a big national or international manufacturer. 72%
88	84	100	90	78	When I buy well-known large brands, theyare usually brands made for a specific retailer (e.g., store-branded private label products). 28%

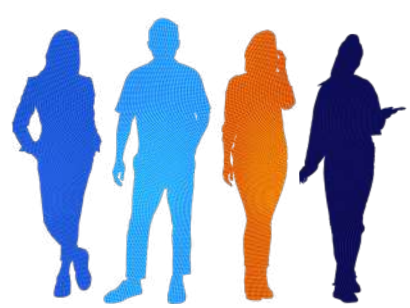
Source: NIQ 2025 Private Label & Branded Products report global survey

Gen X won't necessarily go out of its way to purchase from small brands. Yet, when presented with products viewed as substitutable, Gen X does show a preference for smaller brands over large manufacturer and/or retail brands. A recent NIQ survey also found that 33% of Gen Xers try to consume products made locally or that support their local area.[12]

When shopping for everyday food and household items, Gen X is more open to small brands than Boomers are

Gen X indexed to ...

Total	Boomers	Gen X	Millennials	Gen Z	Gen X global average: Raw response
101	89	100	111	106	I just purchase what I need, without thinking deeply about the brand it comes from. 34%
111	115	100	120	112	I don't go out of my way to buy specific brands, but all things being equal, I'd prefer to buy small brands. 22%
92	110	100	86	79	I prefer to buy small brands over purchasing from large manufacturers or retail brands. 13%
95	101	100	86	97	I prefer to buy well-known large brands whenever I can (e.g., well-known brands from large companies or store-branded private label products) . 31%



Source: NIQ 2025 Private Label & Branded Products report global survey

[12]NIQ proprietary data

Tech & Durables

Gen X was the first generation to use the Internet, own cell phones, and purchase laptops. Members of this generation spent their youth in music stores at the mall, carrying their portable Walkman, Discman, and then iPod. The amount of technology changes Gen X has both *first experienced and then subsequently adopted* is astounding.

Today, Gen Xers are purchasing smart appliances, wearable health tech, and hybrid work setups, and they're influencing the technology purchases of both their parents and their children. As might be expected, Gen X is much more likely to adopt new "smart" devices than Boomers, yet less likely than its younger counterparts.[13]

Global statistics about Gen Xers' current use of technology

- 35% allow "smart" devices (e.g., fridge sensor) to automatically order new products when required[14]
- 38% regularly use a wearable device that autonomously tracks and learns their behaviors[15]
- 39% accept product recommendations from their own AI assistant (e.g., Siri on iPhone, Amazon Alexa, etc.)[16]
- 40% leverage AI to automate and speed up everyday shopping decisions[17]

Retailer actions

Lean into education, credibility, and customer service. Gen X still values in-store interactions for higher-priced products but typically scans reviews before making purchase decisions. Feature side-by-side comparisons and strategically curate seamless omnichannel experiences to fuel purchases.

Wearables and health and wellness apps will likely see even greater growth as Gen X ages. Globally, over half of Gen Xers already leverage technology or apps to manage health needs.[18] As Gen X spending power hits its peak, there's a huge opportunity for T&D manufacturers to capture Gen X spend.

Manufacturer actions

Design products that simplify complexity. (Gen X doesn't seek gratuitously "smart" products.) Key product attributes include durability, reliability, and simple onboarding (i.e., easy setup and/or support). Make the cross-generational appeal primary—this generation often shares tech recommendations with both their aging parents and their adult children.

[13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18] NIQ 2025 Private Label & Branded Products report global survey

Technology in retail

Like other generations, Gen Xers tend to distrust AI technologies and worry about the safety of their personal information. When asked if they avoid sharing details in virtual interactions because they don't trust AI data privacy, 58% of Gen X respondents said "Yes."[19] Almost as many (53%) said they would wait longer for support from a human to avoid interacting with an AI-generated influencer or customer service representative.[20] These responses show that it's important for retailers and brands to build trust around AI tools with Gen X consumers and continue to provide human alternatives when it comes to customer service options.

Despite their concerns about AI, Gen X consumers are far from technology averse. According to an NIQ global survey, more than one-third of Gen Xers say they are likely to purchase a product or service they have experienced solely through an augmented reality (AR) or virtual reality (VR) platform.

When it comes to digital payments, Gen X demonstrates a strong preference for convenience and security. The annual McKinsey Digital Payments Survey reveals that digital wallet usage has become commonplace, with in-store adoption in the US increasing from 19% in 2019 to 28% in 2024.

These trends illustrate that **Gen X is not only comfortable with technology but also a significant driver relative to digital adoption**. This cohort's engagement with AR/VR and digital payment solutions highlights its adaptability and influence in shaping the digital consumer landscape—particularly given its outsized global purchasing power.

[19, 20] NIQ 2025 Private Label & Branded Products report global survey

Sustainability

Consumers are facing economic pressure and making tradeoffs when it comes to cost vs. values. Recent trends show that Gen X, like younger generations, is beginning to deprioritize environmental, social, and governance (ESG) claims in their purchasing decisions across many major markets. However, specific claims like recyclable packaging, clean ingredients, and energy efficiency continue to resonate with Gen X.

Indeed, products with recyclable packaging claims have seen an 8.4% annual sales increase, making it a trend that offers significant upside. According to a 2023 brand-sponsored study by Boxed Water and Researchscape International, 59% of Gen Xers reported that they "often" or "always" recycle, surpassing both Millennials (50%) and Gen Z (44%)—data highlighting Gen X's strong engagement in consistent, lifestyle-driven sustainability behaviors.

Gen Xers, like Boomers, place slightly higher priority on energy efficiency and the cost to run appliances than younger generations.[21] As heads of households who are caring for children and aging parents, this focus on cost savings makes sense.

While Gen Xers are 10% less likely than Millennials and Gen Zers to switch retailers or providers to purchase more sustainable options, they are 17% more likely to do so than Boomers.[22]

The key takeaway

Brand loyalty is earned through clear value, simplicity, and consistency. Gen X isn't typically won over by hype—but they'll reward honesty and utility.

[21,22] NIQ 2025 Private Label & Branded Products report global survey

The big takeaways for manufacturers and retailers

Gen X isn't a transitional generation—it's your present-day profit center. This cohort is in its prime earning and spending years, wielding outsized influence despite its smaller population size. Sandwiched between two larger generations, **Gen X is punching above its weight—leading households, shaping workplace dynamics, and *guiding purchasing decisions for themselves and for the Boomers and younger generations they support.***

Gen X isn't a transitional generation—it's your present-day profit center.

What to remember about Gen X

- Gen X is "the forgotten generation." Retailers and manufacturers are underestimating their spending power. The Gen X decade began four years ago (in 2021), and **the time to leverage their pole position is *now***.
- Gen Xers are "caretaker consumers." They support their parents and children, leaving them with less discretionary spending but influencing purchasing decisions for Gen Z, Millennials, and Boomers. **They are the CFOs of their households.**
- Gen X spending differs across countries and regions. Retailers need to **apply a generational country and city lens** to their outreach efforts. Gen X only dominates in developed markets and in China. Gen X will gain further traction in the US, parts of Europe, and Latin America.

Over the next five to 10 years, Gen X will hit its peak consumption era, especially in mature markets critical to global brand and retailer growth. Its habits are stable, measured, and relatively high-value—making Gen Xers an ideal audience for CPG and T&D brands, as well as the retailers that carry their products. Members of this generation don't chase trends; they invest in what works for them and those they support. **If you fail to prioritize them now, you're not just missing a moment—you're risking a decade of loyalty and lifetime value**.

We'd welcome the opportunity to partner with your team to ensure your innovation pipeline, marketing, merchandising and assortment strategy, pricing and promotion plans, and more are built to resonate authentically with Gen X—and move them to action.

Let's make sure you're not overlooking your most quietly powerful consumer.

NIQ's Global Thought Leadership & Content team values your feedback. Complete this brief survey to let us know what you think of this report.

World Data Lab also welcomes your feedback or questions. Email insights@worlddatalab.com or visit https://worlddatalab.com/ for more information.

Generation

Forgotten no more.

About NIQ

NielsenIQ (NIQ) is a leading consumer intelligence company, delivering the most complete understanding of consumer buying behavior and revealing new pathways to growth. NIQ combined with GfK in 2023, bringing together two industry leaders with unparalleled global reach. Our global reach spans over 90 countries covering approximately 85% of the world's population and more than $7.2 trillion in global consumer spend. With a holistic retail read and the most comprehensive consumer insights—delivered with advanced analytics through state-of-the-art platforms—NIQ delivers the Full View™.

For more information, visit **NIQ.com**

About World Data Lab (WDL)

WDL creates forward-looking proprietary data to quantify and forecast consumer trends, consumer spending, demographic shifts, and progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals up to 2034. WDL's advanced data science approach, which has been peer-reviewed and published in Nature, delivers unrivaled accuracy, freshness, and consistency across all demographic groups in 180 countries and more than 6,000 cities.

For more information or questions, please visit **https://worlddatalab.com/** or contact insights@worlddatalab.com.