



NEWGEN FOR CITIZENSHIP BAROMETER

From the engaged student to the
responsible entrepreneur

December 2025

NEWGEN
TALENT
CENTRE

SUPPORTED BY

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« Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has. » Margaret Mead



While the question of young employees' engagement is a pressing issue for companies, young people's civic engagement appears to be strengthening.

New generations of graduates are exerting considerable influence through their individual and collective involvement. This emerging power is driving major societal changes, not only in the public sphere but also within companies.

Our hypothesis is that if employers value and support young people's civic engagement in the workplace, it will foster greater engagement at work through shared values. These engaged young people will also contribute to transforming business practices.

This first edition of the **barometer on the civic engagement of new generations**, inspired by the NewGen Talent Centre's expertise on young people's aspirations and professional skills, reflects EDHEC's conviction in the positive contribution of young people to today's global challenges.

In addition to surveying students about their engagement, this barometer also measures the responsible practices of young entrepreneurs, which are early expressions of corporate citizenship.

A STRONG COMMITMENT FROM YOUNG PEOPLE IN SERVICE OF SOCIETY

82%

of young people devote time, on their own initiative, to activities related to civic engagement



79%



86%



Civic engagement refers to voluntary, regular, and unpaid participation in support of the common good. It can take various forms, such as missions of general interest within organizations (associations, collectives, etc.), advocacy actions for societal causes, or solidarity initiatives whose impact extends beyond the family circle.

Definition developed based on the studies "Voluntary Commitment, Social Cohesion and Citizenship" (CESE, 2022) and "Citizenship: Being a Citizen Today" (Council of State, 2018).

THEY ENGAGE IN CHARITABLE CAUSES OR IN ACTIVITIES THAT SUPPORT KNOWLEDGE SHARING

TYPES OF ENGAGEMENT

For the form of engagement considered the most important

Global

45% Voluntary, regular, and unpaid involvement in charitable / solidarity / humanitarian associations

35% Voluntary, regular, and unpaid involvement in activities supporting knowledge transmission (scouting / sports or arts associations / academic support / tutoring)

8% Voluntary, regular, and unpaid involvement in associations dedicated to environmental preservation

7% Voluntary, regular, and unpaid involvement in local political life and union activities (representing a group, taking part in activities...)

5% Voluntary, regular, and unpaid involvement in public service missions (volunteer firefighter, military reserve, general-interest missions, etc.)

0% Other voluntary, regular, and unpaid involvement

■ Women ■ Men

50%
42%

34%
36%

7%
9%

6%
7%

3%
6%

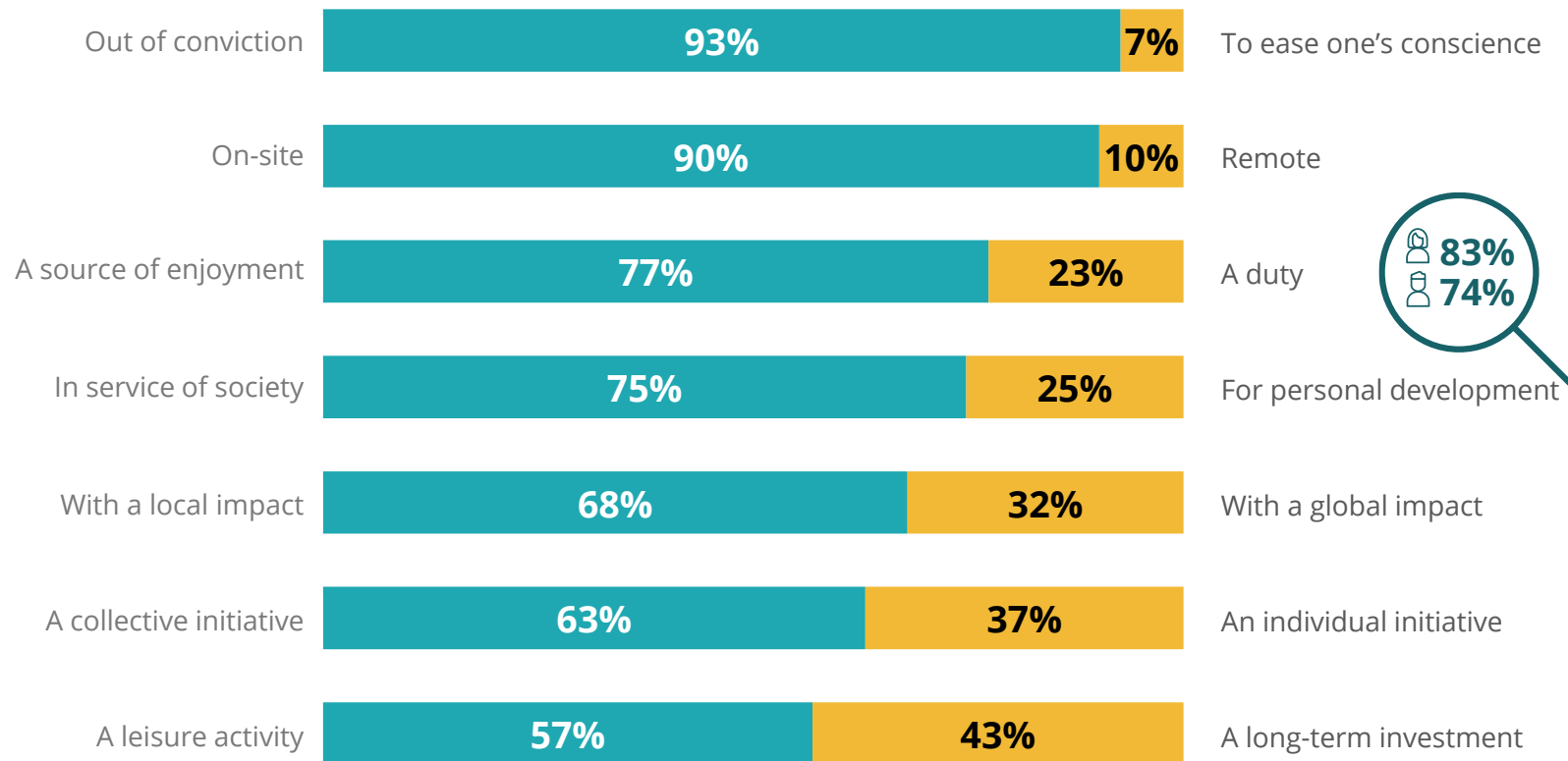
0%
0%



93% OF YOUNG PEOPLE ENGAGE OUT OF CONVICTION



Q. : “Are your engagements rather : ”



“

My civic engagement brings me a sense of well-being, the feeling that I am standing up for my convictions, and the impression of actively contributing to creating a better world.

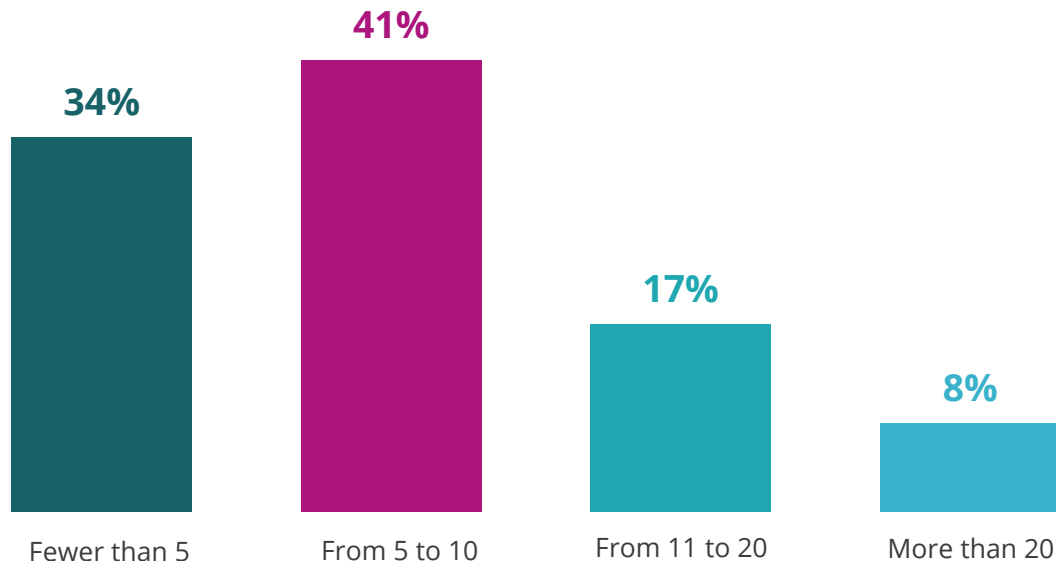
”

YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ENGAGE ALL YEAR ROUND

6 hours

is the median monthly time devoted to their main civic engagement

% of respondents by number of hours per month devoted to this main engagement



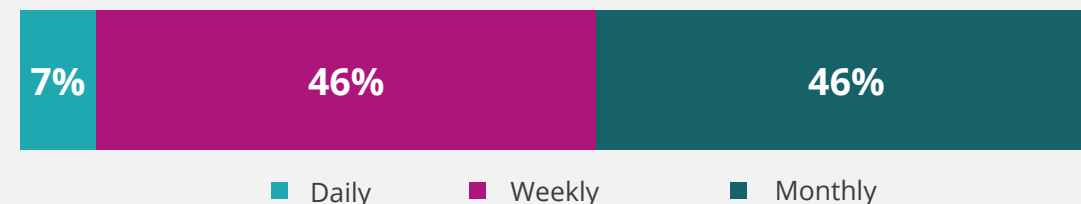
FOR THOSE WHO ENGAGE :

77% have an engagement **during the school period**

80% have an engagement **outside the school period**

61% have an engagement **during both periods**

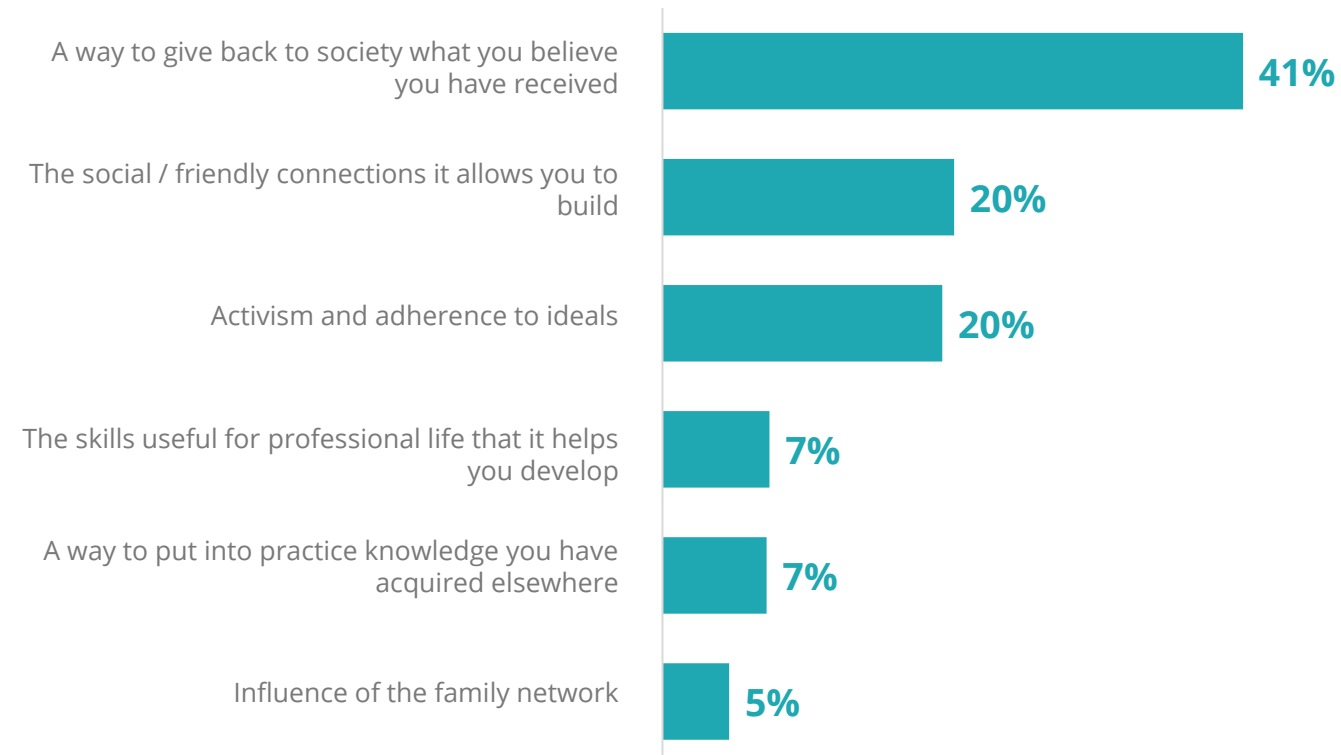
FOR THOSE WHO ENGAGE DURING THE SCHOOL PERIOD, THIS IS AN ENGAGEMENT :



THE MOTIVATIONS BEHIND THEIR CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

? Q. : “ What are the main motivations for your civic engagements ? ”

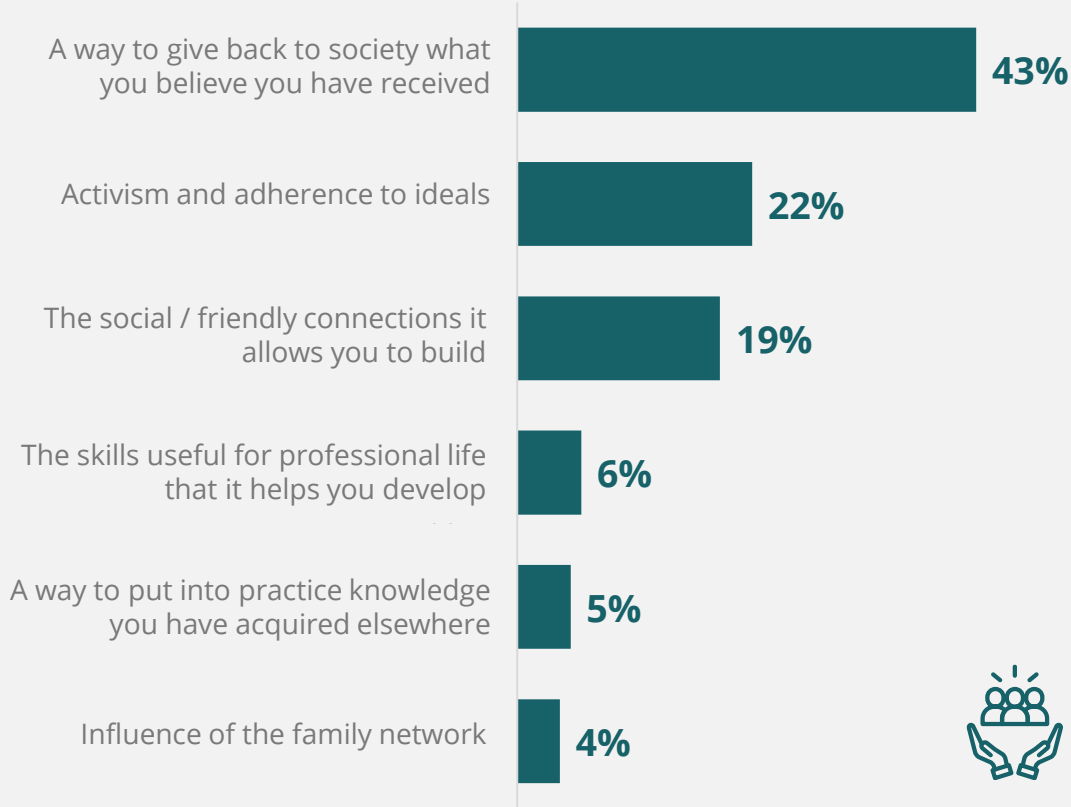
% of respondents who ranked the item in first place



MAIN MOTIVATIONS BY TYPE OF ENGAGEMENT

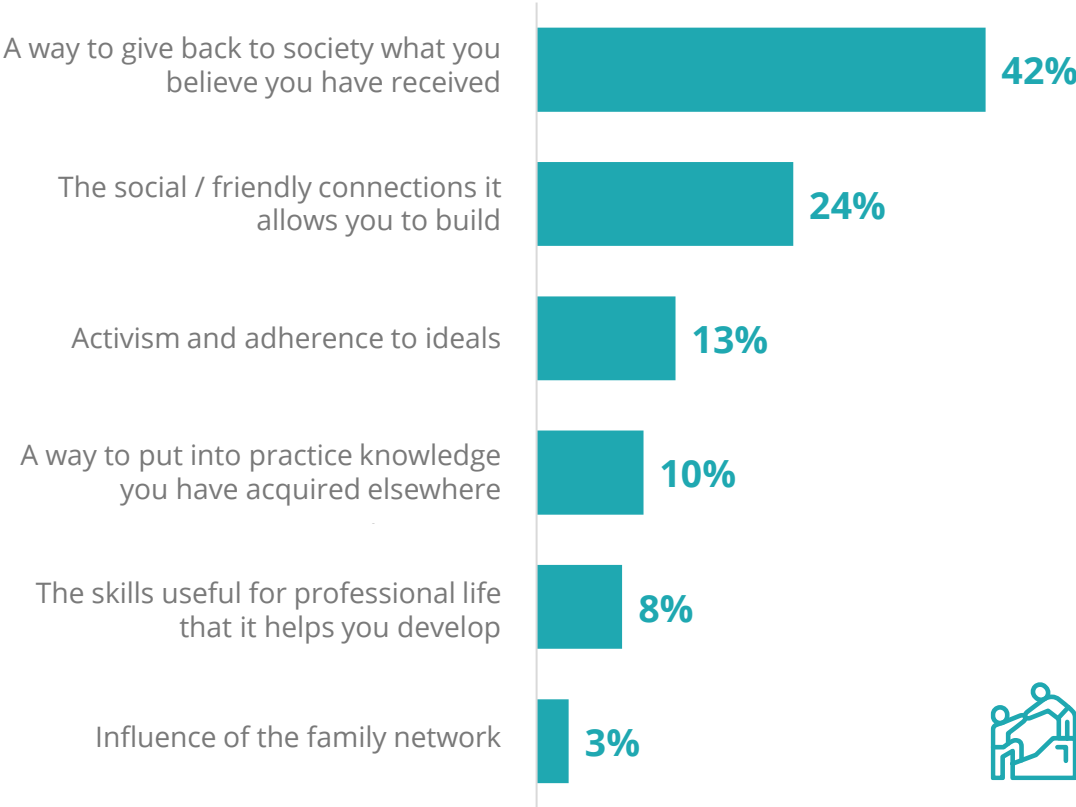
CHARITABLE AND HUMANITARIAN ENGAGEMENTS

Median time of 6 hours per month
% of respondents who ranked the item in first place



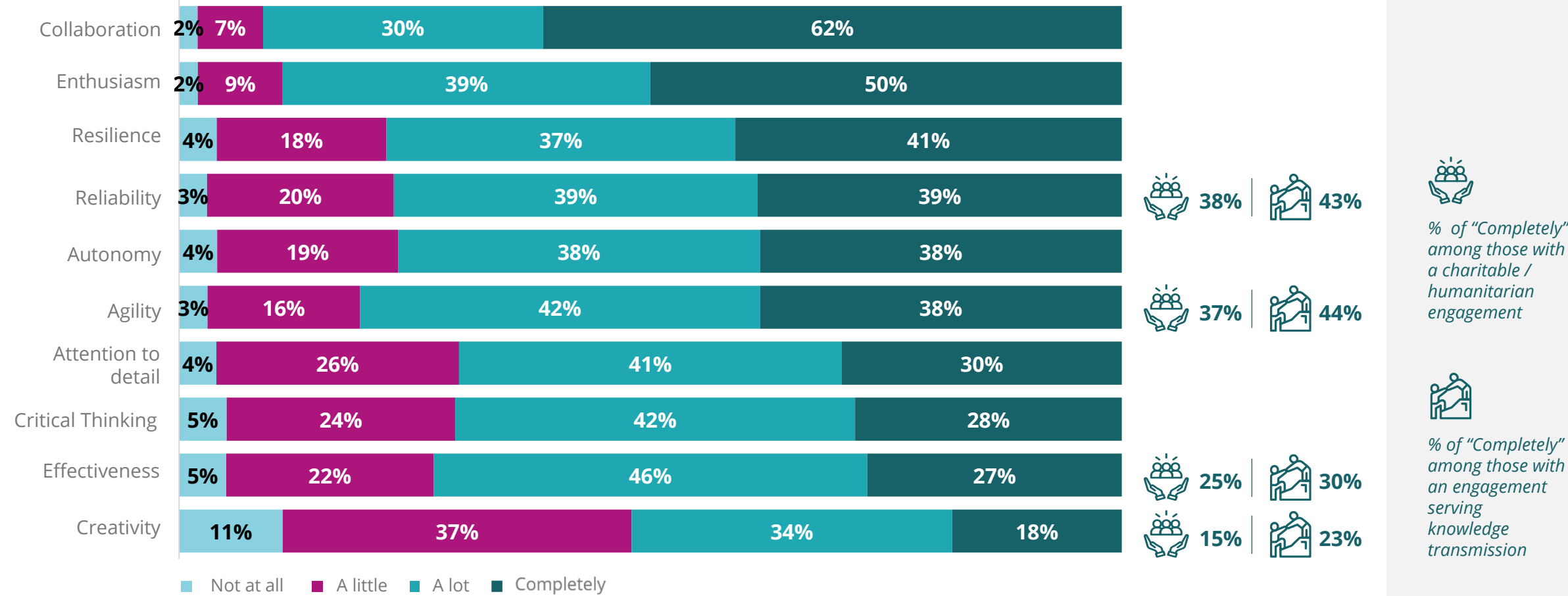
ENGAGEMENTS SERVING KNOWLEDGE TRANSMISSION

Median time of 10 hours per month
% of respondents who ranked the item in first place



COLLABORATION IS THE 1st SKILL DEVELOPED, REGARDLESS OF THE TYPE OF ENGAGEMENT

Q. : “ Have these engagements enabled you to develop the following skills ? ”



THE PERCEIVED BENEFITS OF CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

VERBATIM #1

Awareness and understanding of societal issues

- “ • **Becoming aware of major issues** that are nevertheless ignored or set aside (underdevelopment, access to education...).
- My engagement helps me gain a more **cross-cutting perspective** on major changes happening in the world.
- This engagement has made me **aware of the importance of the environment and solidarity**, and therefore of the values I would like to develop in the future.
- **A stance and an attitude in favor of defending the climate**, both on a personal and professional level. ”

Empathy and understanding of others

- “ • **It made me much more empathetic, attentive, oriented toward others**, with a strong ability to question myself and put things into perspective.
- My engagement has given me a better understanding of individuals: their desires, their motivations, their limits. This allows me to **approach management with an external perspective** and to put myself in the place of my team members.
- It has genuinely allowed me to **learn more about myself and about others**, and therefore to develop better understanding, attentiveness, and communication with people in general.
- This engagement has taught me **to be supportive** and empathetic toward others, which will help me when I need to work within a team and collaborate with others. ”

Teamwork, sharing, appreciation of the collective

- “ • My involvement in an association has allowed me to learn how **to collaborate, to be autonomous, and to be responsive** to expectations and deadlines.
- The ability to work as part of a team, with deadlines, **to be pedagogical**, to understand needs and respond to them.
- It has enabled me to build strong bonds, **experience moments of sharing**, and above all learn how to work with others and collaborate.
- My engagement has taught me **the value of collective work**. These cooperation skills will likely be very useful to me. ”

THE PERCEIVED BENEFITS OF CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

VERBATIM #2

Open-mindedness, a new perspective on the world

- “ • This engagement has given me **a different perspective on how I view society**.
- It is an opening onto the world and **an understanding of all the stakeholders** who may be affected by decisions.
- My civic engagement allows me to **discover new fields, new people, and different ways of thinking and cultures** from around the world, all within a caring environment that has meaning. ”

Fulfilment, satisfaction, pride

- “ • A personal achievement, **a way to realize oneself**, also learning from others — especially younger people — and the ability to support someone and listen to them.
- Benefits on a personal level, as **these experiences make me grow**, allow me to meet a wide range of people with unique experiences, and **make me proud**.
- **I find fulfilment mostly through my engagement** by feeling useful. It allows me to orient my future vocation toward serving others. ”

Sense of duty, commitment, and responsibility

- “ • This engagement has made me a committed and willing person, with a sense of responsibility and consideration for others — **a valuable asset for a managerial position**.
- It has developed a real interest in engagement and a lasting desire **to always pass on what has been passed on to me**.
- My engagement has taught me to be more dedicated, and **it inspires me for my future profession**. ”

THE PERCEIVED BENEFITS OF CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

VERBATIM #3

Critical thinking

- “ • This engagement allows me to maintain a critical mindset regarding each of my decisions, and **to make choices that are best suited** to the current situation.
- A certain perspective on global issues, a degree of open-mindedness, and **more structured reflection**. ”

Conviction, values, ethics

- “ • My engagement brings me a form of humility — a quality I aspire to — and **convictions that will guide my future decisions**.
- My engagement allows me to be involved and **to act on my convictions rather than remain passive**.
- **An awareness of essential ethical issues** and of the meaning of responsibility.
- From a personal standpoint, it allows me to understand what impact I want to have and **to define the things that matter to me**. ”

Valuing and helping others

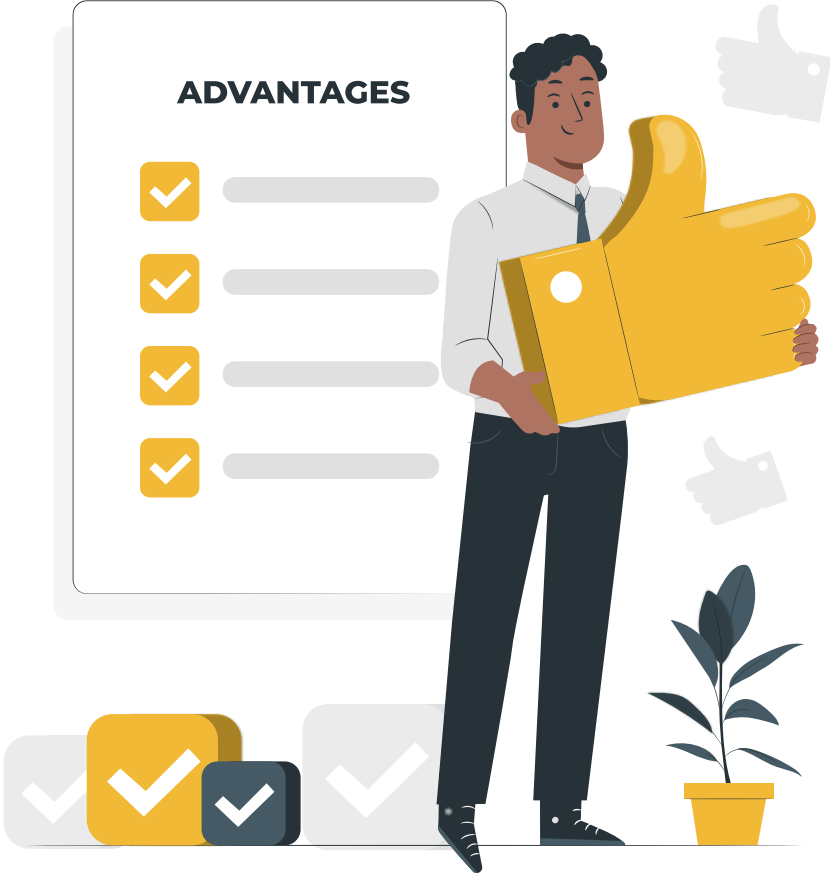
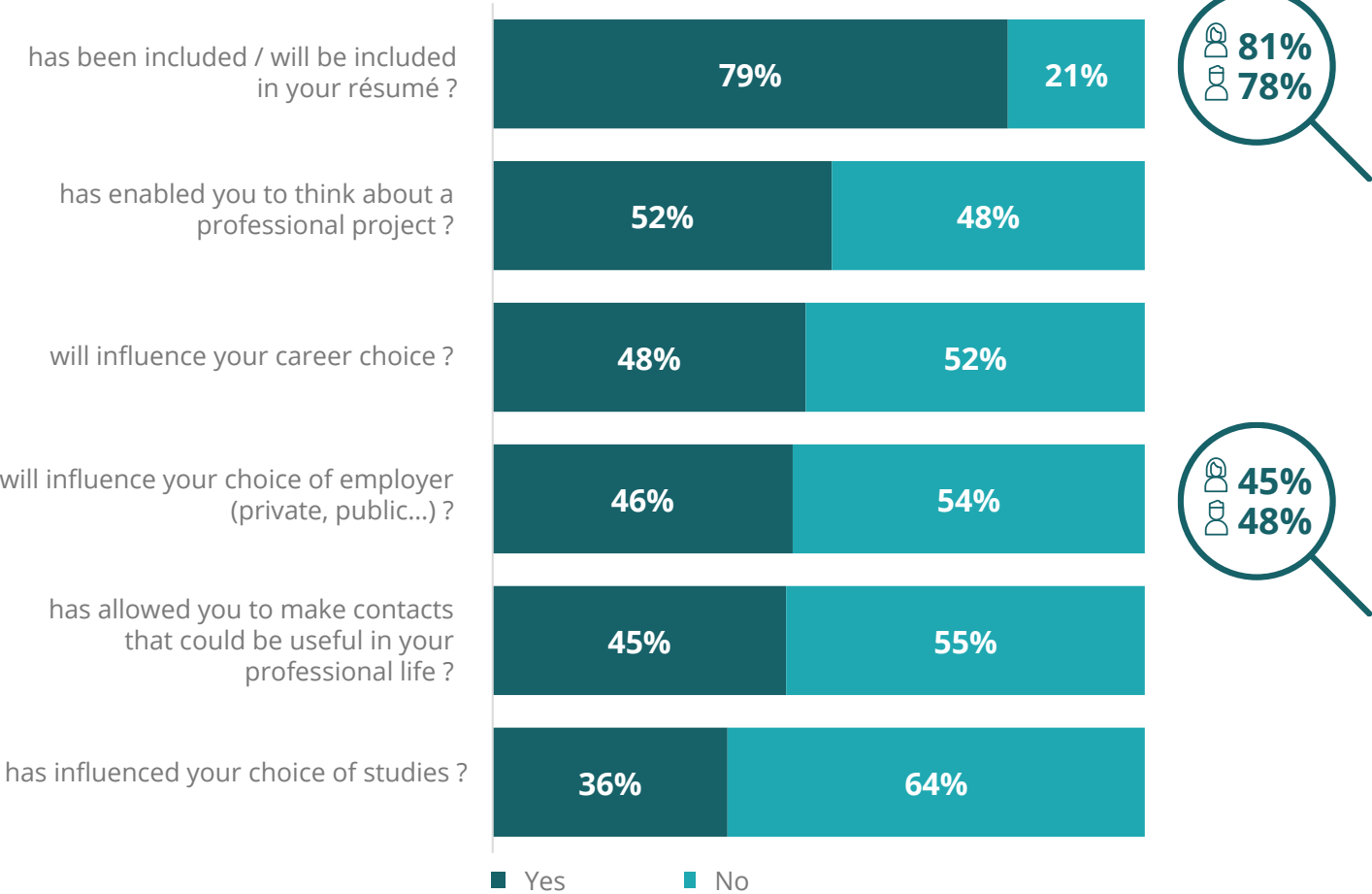
- “ • A human connection through meeting people from all walks of life, and the satisfaction of having been able **to help people who needed it**.
- This engagement has allowed me **to put myself at the service of others**, and I intend to keep this quality. ”

Contributing to the common good

- “ • My civic engagement has led me to pay **particular attention to the common good**, considering it as an issue in its own right.
- Being able to pass on **a sustainable future** to the next generations.
- Meeting a need to engage, **to act for progress and collective well-being**. ”

ENGAGEMENTS THAT SHAPE PROFESSIONAL PATHS

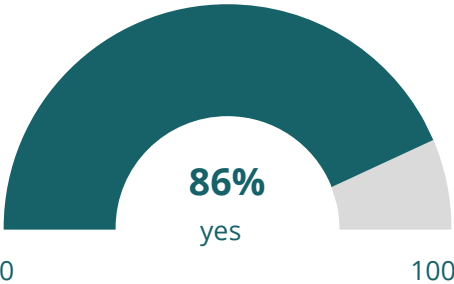
Q. : “ *This engagement...*”



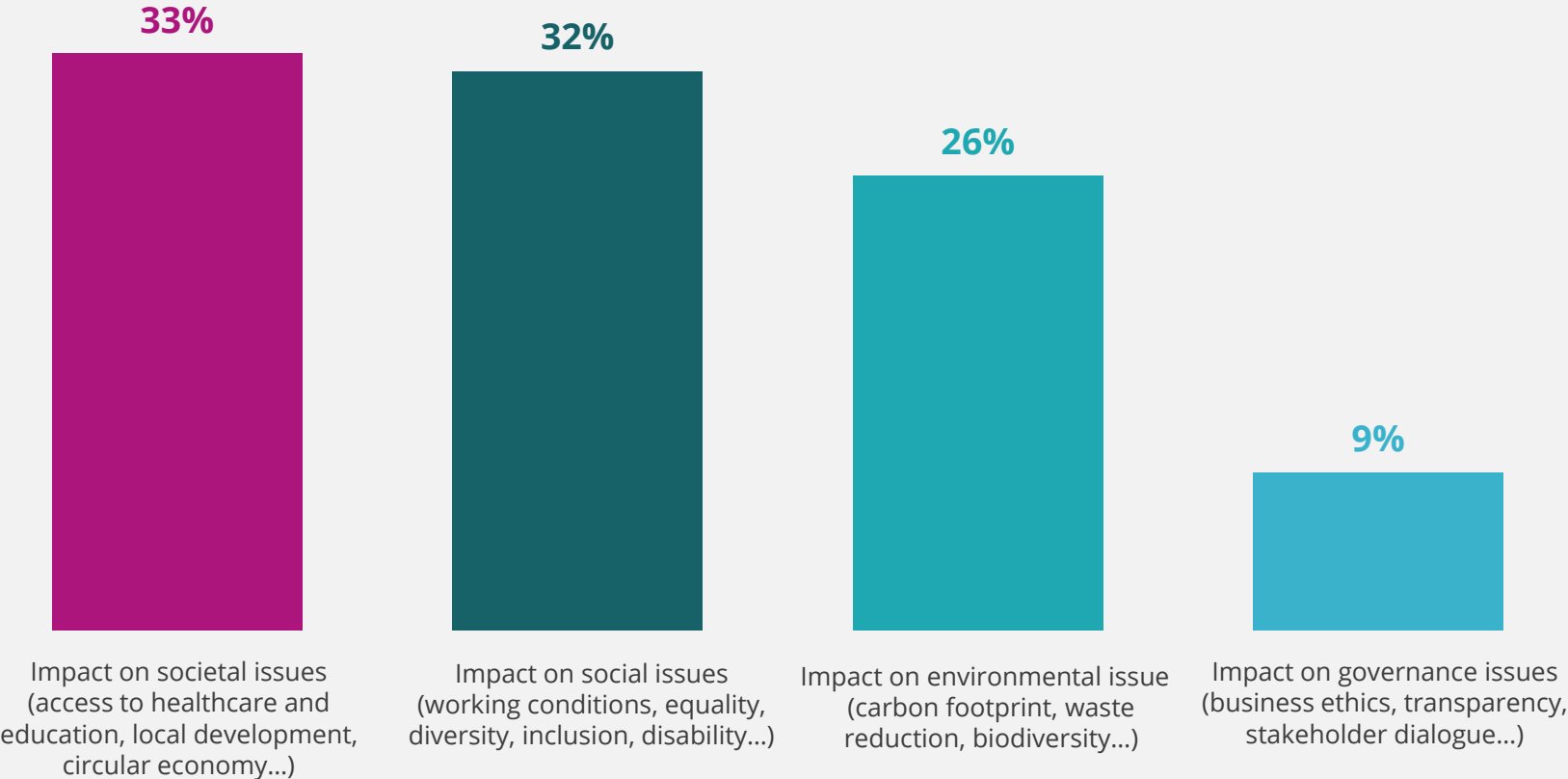
INFLUENCE OF ENGAGEMENT ON THE IMPACT THEY WOULD LIKE TO HAVE IN THEIR FUTURE CAREER



Q. : “ Will your engagement influence the type of impact (social, societal, environmental...) that you would like to have in your professional life ? ”



WHICH TYPE OF IMPACT AS A PRIORITY:





FROM ENGAGED STUDENT TO RESPONSIBLE ENTREPRENEUR

Results of the [INNOVA barometer](#) for France measuring responsible business practices among young entrepreneurs.

MORE THAN 9 OUT OF 10 YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS HAVE IMPLEMENTED RESPONSIBLE PRACTICES

- ▶ **49%** actively and strategically integrate responsible practices into their operations;
- ▶ **32%** are aware of the importance of these practices and apply them whenever possible;
- ▶ **13%** act only when it is necessary or when opportunities arise.

88%

aim to have a net positive transformative impact, half of whom seek to achieve this across all levels (environmental, social, governance, and civic)



Having a net positive transformative impact:

The startup's core purpose is to directly address major current environmental, social, or societal challenges. The startup's main activity and/or its day-to-day operations therefore aim to generate positive transformation, going beyond merely reducing negative impacts.

THE MOST COMMON RESPONSIBLE PRACTICES #1



Environmental practices

(for startups implementing at least one responsible business practice)

- ▶ **57%** of startups have implemented or are in the process of implementing **initiatives to reduce their carbon footprint**
- ▶ **54%** of startups have implemented or are in the process of implementing **sustainable design practices for products and services**
- ▶ **52%** of startups have implemented or are in the process of implementing **circular economy practices**



The environmental dimension of responsible practices: it concerns the management within the company of emissions, resource consumption, energy use, and, more broadly, interactions with natural ecosystems.

THE MOST COMMON RESPONSIBLE PRACTICES #2



Social practices

(for startups implementing at least one responsible business practice)

- ▶ **66%** of startups have implemented or are in the process of implementing **responsible marketing and fair customer relations**
- ▶ **61%** of startups have implemented or are in the process of implementing **initiatives to support employee well-being**
- ▶ **49%** of startups have implemented or are in the process of implementing **diversity and inclusion programs**



The social dimension of responsible practices: it encompasses the attention paid by the company to inclusion, equity, and the well-being of individuals within the organization, as well as to the relationships it maintains with surrounding communities.

THE MOST COMMON RESPONSIBLE PRACTICES #3



Governance practices

(for startups implementing at least one responsible business practice)

- ▶ **66%** of startups have implemented or are in the process of implementing **transparent and ethical governance**
- ▶ **65%** of startups have implemented or are in the process of implementing **data protection and cybersecurity measures**



The governance dimension of responsible practices: it refers to process transparency, ethical decision-making, and the clarity and accountability of the company's management structures.

THE MOST COMMON RESPONSIBLE PRACTICES #3



Civic practices

(for startups implementing at least one responsible business practice)

- ▶ **40%** of startups have implemented or are in the process of implementing **community engagement projects**
- ▶ **33%** of startups have implemented or are in the process of implementing **collaborations aimed at achieving systemic impact**



The civic dimension of responsible practices: it relates to the company's active contribution to collective issues, the strengthening of democratic values, and the pursuit of lasting societal resilience.

MONITORING OF RESPONSIBLE PRACTICES INDICATORS

26%

of startups with responsible practices measure the impact of their actions using performance indicators (KPIs)

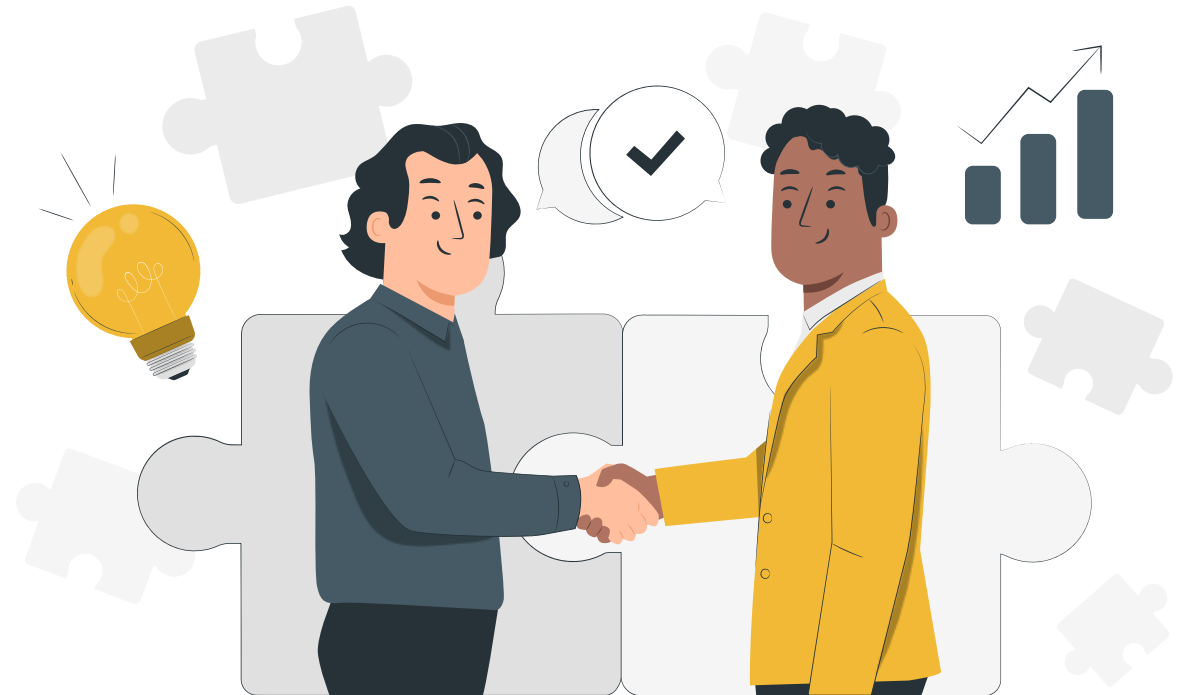


When they are measured,

- ▶ **70%** of startups have implemented **environmental indicators**
(carbon emissions, energy efficiency, waste reduction and recycling rates, impact on biodiversity)
- ▶ **56%** of startups have implemented **social indicators**
(employee well-being and satisfaction, diversity and inclusion indicators, number of training and development hours per employee, health and safety performance)
- ▶ **44%** of startups have implemented **civic indicators**
(community investment, number of volunteer hours, impact on local economies, number of local suppliers or jobs created, accessibility and equity in the provision of products/services)
- ▶ **40%** of startups have implemented **governance indicators**
(transparency indicators, number of publicly accessible reports, stakeholder feedback sessions, diversity on the board of directors, GDPR compliance rate, number of data breaches)

THE IMPORTANCE OF RESPONSIBLE ENGAGEMENT IN THE SELECTION OF STRATEGIC PARTNERS

- ▶ **68%** of startups consider responsible commitments important or very important when choosing **future collaborators**
- ▶ **58%** of startups consider responsible commitments important or very important when choosing **support structures (incubators, etc.)**
- ▶ **54%** of startups consider responsible commitments important or very important when choosing **investors**
- ▶ **53%** of startups consider responsible commitments important or very important when choosing **business partners**



THE VALUATION OF CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN THE RECRUITMENT OF A COLLABORATOR



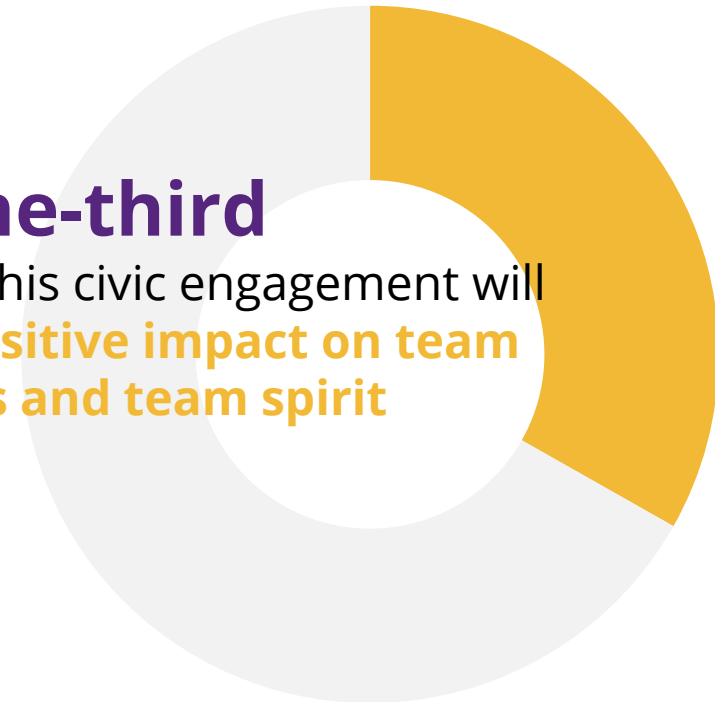
For half

of responsible young entrepreneurs, a candidate's civic engagement is **a guarantee of alignment with the company's culture and values**



For one-third

of them, this civic engagement will have **a positive impact on team dynamics and team spirit**



IMPORTANCE OF A FUTURE COLLABORATOR'S RESPONSIBLE ENGAGEMENT #1

A candidate with civic convictions is more high-performing and more innovative

- When a candidate holds strong convictions about what can improve society and acts accordingly by putting their skills to use, the outcomes of their efforts are all the better. **Conviction is a highly effective driver of work and a source of great innovation.**
- **A candidate must deeply resonate with the company's commitment;** otherwise, they will not apply it with the same enthusiasm and will not understand the company's mission or direction.
- A candidate's engagement reflects their values. Engagement brings **genuine motivation through alignment with the project's values**, creating coherence and added value for the company.
- Choosing to work in a startup means prioritizing the future (impact of scaling and value creation) over the present (less competitive salary compared to a large corporation). **External engagement demonstrates the ability to commit to the future.**
- An engaged candidate shows **dedication and a sense of responsibility.**

A candidate with civic convictions strengthens team cohesion

- Every candidate must have a coherent and committed vision so as not to create friction in their work. **Their engagement will be a real asset for the company.**
- A candidate's engagement is valuable for the company because it reflects strong values such as altruism, responsibility, and initiative. An engaged candidate often demonstrates transferable skills like **teamwork, leadership, time management, and adaptability**. This engagement also shows intrinsic motivation and a desire to contribute to meaningful projects—qualities that are essential in a dynamic and collaborative professional environment. Finally, it fosters a more inclusive, ethical company culture focused on positive impact.
- They become a member of the team, **sharing the same values and the same vision.**

IMPORTANCE OF A FUTURE COLLABORATOR'S RESPONSIBLE ENGAGEMENT #2

A candidate with civic convictions helps make the company more civic-minded

- It is the small extra element that reflects an **awareness of living in the world** and not merely following a personal trajectory.
- Employees embody the company's image externally. Their strong commitments help **reinforce the organization's values and reputation**.
- Value alignment, **coherence between the candidate's profile and the company's ambition**, and the need to be innovative while keeping ESG issues in mind.
- A candidate's engagement reflects their sense of responsibility, their ability to collaborate, and their desire to have a positive impact—**qualities that are valuable** for a company attentive to its social impact and internal culture.
- Someone who is "**a good person**" in their private life will likely be one in the company as well.
- The candidate must be the first to embody engagement, because **it is the sum of individual commitments that makes a company truly committed**.
- A candidate's engagement is valuable because it embodies **a shared vision, stimulates responsible innovation**, and ensures continuity in the effort required to bring forward an industrial solution with strong social and environmental impact.
- We seek and value candidates who share our mindset, our vision, and our priorities, both in terms of professional practices and environmental impact objectives. A candidate's engagement does not consist only in adhering to our approach and activities, but also in showing initiative and **actively contributing to advancing our ambitions**. ”

KEY POINTS



STUDENTS

- ▶ 82% of young people devote time to activities related to civic engagement, particularly **charitable missions and knowledge transmission**
- ▶ Their engagements are driven by **conviction, carried out on-site, and oriented toward serving society**
- ▶ Their main motivations are **giving back to society** what they have received, as well as **creating social connections**
- ▶ **Collaboration, enthusiasm, resilience, and reliability** are the four most important skills they develop through their engagement
- ▶ These engagements are included in young people's résumés and **inspire their professional projects**
- ▶ Their engagements will influence the **type of impact** that 86% of young people would like to have in their professional lives.



YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS

- ▶ 49% of young entrepreneurs actively and strategically integrate **responsible practices** into their operations
- ▶ 88% of young entrepreneurs aim to have a **net positive transformative impact**
- ▶ 66% of startups have implemented or are in the process of implementing **transparent and ethical governance**
- ▶ 40% of startups have implemented or are in the process of implementing **community engagement projects**
- ▶ 68% of startups consider responsible commitments important or very important when choosing **future collaborators**
- ▶ **For half** of responsible young entrepreneurs, a candidate's civic engagement is a guarantee of **alignment with the company's culture and values.**



One can only find fulfilment by serving a cause whose meaning goes beyond the individual.

Edgar Morin



► **1st study:**

2025 EDHEC NewGen Talent Centre survey conducted among 2,529 students from preparatory and university programmes, from L3 to master's level, including 40% women and 60% men.

► **2nd study:**

INNOVA Europe Barometer – 2025 Edition. Survey conducted among 230 early-stage French startups, 96% of which have fewer than 20 employees, operating in services (44%), software (31%), products (16%), and other activities (9%)



ABOUT EDHEC

With 120 years of history, EDHEC Business School has established itself as a leading institution in France, ranking as the 7th Business School in Europe according to the Financial Times since 2022. Its 2024–2028 strategic plan, entitled “Generations 2050,” is entirely dedicated to accelerating the world’s major transformations through impactful research and teaching.

The commitment of the entire EDHEC community, comprising more than 55,000 alumni and students, will make it possible to meet this challenge successfully. EDHEC has developed a unique model based on research that serves society, businesses, and students. EDHEC is today a place of excellence, innovation, experience, and diversity, capable of shaping future generations in a world undergoing profound change. Having a positive impact on the world is our purpose.



ABOUT THE NEWGEN TALENT CENTRE

Created in May 2013 under the direction of Manuelle Malot, the NewGen Talent Centre is EDHEC centre of expertise on the aspirations, behaviours, and skills of new generations of graduates. What motivated EDHEC to create the centre was the conviction of the positive impact that younger generations can have on the world's transformations.

The NewGen Talent Centre draws on its experience and network of partners to address companies' challenges related to attraction, retention, and engagement.

THE TEAM OF THE EDHEC NEWGEN TALENT CENTRE

**MANUELLE
MALOT**

Director of Careers and
NewGen Talent Centre

**GENEVIÈVE
HOURIET SEGARD, PhD**

Deputy and Scientific
Director

**NADIA
MEDJDOUB**

Data and Insight
Manager

**LAURANNE
LIGNEREUX**

Research
Officer



TO LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR STUDIES OR TO CONTACT US:
[Visit the EDHEC NewGen Talent Centre website](#)



ABOUT THE CENTRE FOR RESPONSIBLE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The EDHEC Centre for Responsible Entrepreneurship brings together all of the school's initiatives related to entrepreneurship and aims to train and raise awareness among talents capable of transforming business by contributing positively to society's balance.

In 2022, EDHEC Business School co-founded the INNOVA Europe coalition alongside ESMT and POLIMI Graduate School of Management. It has since expanded to become a dynamic network of ten European universities (Aalto University, ETH Zurich, IE University, Kyiv School of Economics, London Business School, Rotterdam School of Management, and University College Dublin). Our shared mission is to promote a distinctly European form of entrepreneurship: more sustainable, more human, and aligned with contemporary challenges.

THE TEAM OF EDHEC CENTRE FOR RESPONSIBLE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

LUDOVIC CAILLUET
Associate Dean

YASMINE MACHWATE
Head of Incubators

JULIETTE MAGNIENT
Program Manager Impact
Barometer Project Manager

VALENTINE CLEMENT
Head of Communications &
Events

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR ACTIVITIES:
[Visit the EDHEC page dedicated to INNOVA Europe](#)



LILLE

24 avenue Gustave Delory -
CS 50411
59057 Roubaix Cedex 1 -
France
Tel: + 33 (0)3 20 15 45 00
Fax: + 33 (0)3 20 15 45 01

LONDRES

10 Fleet Place, Ludgate
London EC4M 7RB - United
Kingdom
Tel: + 44 (0)207 871 67 40
Fax: + 44 (0)207 248 22 09

PARIS

16-18 rue du 4 septembre
75002 Paris - France
Tel: + 33 (0)1 53 32 76 30
Fax: + 33 (0)1 53 32 76 31

NICE

393 promenade des Anglais -
BP 3116
06202 Nice Cedex 3 - France
Tel: + 33 (0)4 93 18 99 66
Fax: + 33 (0)4 93 83 08 10

SINGAPOUR

1 George Street
#07-02 Singapore 049145
Tel: + 65 (0)6438 0030
Fax: + 65 (0)6438 9891



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