

# SWEDISH GEN Z'S 2024 TRENDS

// A TREND FORECAST BASED ON 15,000 YOUNG VOICES



ungdoms  
barometern





"0.5 cameras on your phone!  
Everyone loves to take pictures in  
0.5 and I think that's the big trend.  
The pictures turn out cool and  
you can fit so much more into the  
frame! Because of that I think a lot  
of people will get a new phone"

Girl, 20 y.o.

# SWEDEN'S YOUTH PREDICT THE TRENDS OF 2024

As a part of Sweden's largest youth study, the Youth Barometer (Ungdomsbarometern), lets thousands of young people, aged 15-24, predict next year's major trend every fall. With over 15,000 respondents in the survey overall, we have received 7,254 unique trend forecasts. The major themes such as sustainability and social media recur among young people's trendspotting from year to year, which is why we dig a little deeper to find new trends and tendencies among young people's predictions for the future. It is clear this year that AI has made a strong entrance and established itself as more than just a trend among Sweden's young population. Just as the Barbie movie in many ways became the leading trend in 2023, several different premieres and events are predicted to be trendsetting in 2024.

Defining this year's trend forecasts is an increased focus on economy, health, and aesthetics, where we see a number of trends in each area that are almost contradict each other. It seems as though inflation and tumultuous events around the world have given rise to a number of coping mechanisms, where some prioritize their well-being and

slowing down, while others are about going on the offensive with a more high-tempo approach. The apparent overrepresentation of boys and girls on opposite sides of the spectrum only adds to the intrigue of this year's trend insights.

Just like last year, we have of course used artificial intelligence to identify the big themes (and smaller trends). The insights in this report have then been analyzed and compiled by analysts who work daily in direct contact with the youth of Sweden. In this way, we can deliver a trend report that captures both the breadth of 15,000 young voices and the depth of qualitative analysis, enriched with the experiences, insights, and observations of our analysts.

Let's get into it!

## UB:S TREND TEAM:

Project manager: Johanna Göransson  
Analysts: Cecilia Wahlgren  
and Henrik Jodén  
Graphics and illustration: Sofie Jonsson



# AI – AN OBVIOUS PART OF THE FUTURE

We begin with artificial intelligence (AI), a dominating theme among this year's trend forecasts and evidently something that the young generation associates with the future. 2023 was the year that AI hit the masses and became a part of everyday life, especially among the young who are usually quick to implement new technology into their lives. Looking at how young people reflect on how they have come to integrate and relate to AI, we find it especially interesting to delve deeper into what kind of relationships they form with this technology. Is AI becoming something that is viewed as a personal assistant, a newfound friend, or even a potential partner?

## 1. AI AS A PERSONAL ASSISTANT

For many young people, AI has introduced the opportunity of having their own personal assistant to help with otherwise time-consuming or boring tasks. It has also provided an easier way of acquiring knowledge or learning about new topics. Having someone to help with chores like making shopping lists or setting up a workout schedule frees up more time that can be spent on fun activities like hanging out with friends, spending time on your hobbies, or learning something new.

**"New "Siri". A personal assistant available in your phone that can help you find recipes, budget, plan and help with research for school."**

**Girl, 21 y.o.**

**"AI friends. New AI language models that are designed for socialization and being the "perfect friend"**

**Guy, 23 y.o.**

## 2. AI AS A FRIEND

At the same time, there are young people who interact with AI as a form of entertainment and not for any concrete purpose. They view AI as someone to hang out with, talk to and discuss with. In these circumstances, AI is not very different from a friend who might share your interests or listen to your thoughts. The number of services that allow users to create their own AI-friend adjusted to their interests or preferred characteristics is growing exponentially. The social media giants (with Snapchat leading the charge) are eager to implement these features into their platforms.

**"For guys to get an AI girlfriend that they treat like a real person, either because they are curious and view it as a fun experiment or because they don't have a partner or friends they can talk to."**

**Guy, 17 y.o.**

## 3. AI AS A PARTNER

If it's possible to view AI as a friend, the step toward seeing it as a romantic partner may not be far off. Many current AI services already allow you to adjust the appearance and level of flirtatiousness to your preference. Being the first generation that primarily meets their romantic partners on dating apps, Gen Z are no strangers to forming digital attachments. How different is it to talk to an AI compared to chatting with an unknown stranger on Tinder?







"In connection with the new Willy Wonka movie starring Timothée Chalamet, I feel that there will be a trend around the small characters, the Oompa Lompas. The movie is set to be released in December 2023, so the trend will reach young audiences in early 2024."

Guy, 23 y.o.

# HYPED UP HAPPENINGS

There is a whole heap of things that young people are already looking forward to and believe have big hype potential during the upcoming year. The surrounding hype of something is a crucial factor in establishing trends and what becomes popular amongst Gen Z.

The Barbie movie is a clear example from this year of a hyped phenomenon that influenced everything from trending aesthetics to music and cultural discourse.

"Being a Swiftie (Taylor Swift fan). Her tour is coming to Sweden for the first time this spring. Based on the impact that her tour has had in the U.S., I think it's safe to say we can expect something similar here in Sweden."

Girl, 19 y.o.

"Deadpool, the 3rd movie is coming out in 2024, and given how iconic Deadpool (and Wolverine, who is also featured) is, whatever happens in the movie is intended to become a trend, at least on social media."

Guy, 21 y.o.

Some examples of events and upcoming releases that are already gathering hype are Taylor Swift coming to Sweden and the release of Grand Theft Auto 6.

Hype can be translated to exaggerated excitement, and it might be that the longing for fun and exciting events is even bigger during of these otherwise dark times.

"I think that GTA6 is going to be the biggest trend because it's an open game that you can get endless hours of content from."

Guy, 16 y.o.





# TRENDS AND COUNTER-TRENDS

In last year's trend report, we talked about trends and counter-trends among young people in general, a phenomenon that becomes even more evident when we look at this year's trend forecasts. Among these, three clear themes recur this year; economy, health, and aesthetics, to be viewed as macro trends. How young people relate to these, on the other hand, looks very different depending on who we ask. However, this year's trendspotting reveals two overarching approaches to these macro trends: slowing down and focusing inwards or the opposite, increasing the tempo and focusing outwards. These opposite

approaches, in turn, drive what microtrends young people mention in their trend forecasts, which we will elaborate on in this trend report.

An insight that we take with us from this year's trend forecast is that differences in approach to each macro trend largely correspond to gender, where we see that more girls appear to be in favor of slowing down in various ways, while boys tend to increase the pace. Of course, this doesn't mean that all girls will be living #slowlife or that all boys will go into #monkmode.





## ECONOMY

# SPEND LESS

Over the past year, it has not escaped many that we are living in tougher economic times with high inflation and a weak Swedish currency. Some of the young people in Sweden believe that they will consume less but smarter in 2024, which we hear especially among young girls. Recession core, dupe culture, and no spend week are three microtrends that embody this approach to personal finance.

”Interest in luxury watches seems to become more mainstream, and they cost more than most people want or can spend on an accessory. Additionally, websites like Pandabuy are becoming more popular because people want to appear wealthy even if they don’t have the money for it.”

Guy, 19 y.o.

### I. DUPE-CULTURE

As an addition to the conversation about the importance of brands, several young people highlight the impact of dupe-culture, which has been widely spread not least through TikTok. The trend is to find and recommend cheap copies (duplicates) of various exclusive products. In this context, buying a “dupe” is seen as a way to consume consciously and to get more for your money, rather than buying something fake. Temu, Shein, and Amazon are three examples of websites that young people turn to for this purpose.



”To get as much stuff as you can for as little money as possible. That’s why I think a lot of people are going to be buying from fast fashion brands such as Shein.”

Girl, 20 y.o.

### 2. NO SPEND CHALLENGE

The fact that young people get financial tips and tricks on social media is not a new phenomenon. A challenge that has lived for a long time, but which is now reaching out to more and more young people, is the “No spend challenge”. It’s a way to gamify and make something fun out of saving money, by periodically cutting all expenses beyond the bare necessities. A TikTok challenge that perhaps rhymes well with the poorest month of the year, January?



# 40%

FOUR OUT OF TEN  
YOUNG PEOPLE  
BELIEVE THAT THE  
MOST IMPORTANT  
THING RIGHT NOW  
IS TO BE TOGETHER  
WITH THEIR FAMILY

### 3. RECESSION CORE

One tendency we hear among young people is to embrace the recession and a more restrained way of life. To address only the necessary needs and reduce excess consumption. We also hear that some people associate the recession core trend with having more traditional or conservative values, for example in the form of focusing more and more on the family and home.

”We live in a time characterized by economic uncertainty. It creates ripple effects in all aspects of life. [...] We seek security in an insecure time, leading to increased conservatism and nationalism. I believe the major trend will be things that were popular in the early 2000s, as that is perceived as security by today’s youth.”

Girl, 19 y.o.





## ECONOMY

# EARN MORE

For those who can't imagine cutting back on their expenses when times get tougher economically, there's only one alternative solution; Earn more! A counter-trend that coexists with the tendency to cut back on one's consumption is therefore (of course) to increase one's income, something that is especially mentioned among boys. We can see that the entrepreneurial spirit is still trending both in young people's trend forecasts and elsewhere, for example when we ask what young people are interested in doing after they graduate high school.

"Next year's big trend will be to become mentally stronger and unstoppable! I see a lot of people talking about self-improvement and how you become more productive, stronger, and gain more confidence."

Guy, 16 y.o.

## 4. PRODUCTIVITY SYSTEMS

To increase your income, the first step is often to become more productive, and there are many systems and procedures to choose from. Whether it's trying out the latest morning routine, working according to the Pomodoro method, or learning time blocking, it's clear that different systems and methods to be more productive are a central part of increasing your income.

@samfilyyy (2023-07-25) Try this if you need an energy boost or study session [Video]. TikTok. <https://vm.tiktok.com/ZGe85dsu2/>  
@theworklife (2023-10-11) How to have a productive day [Video]. TikTok. <https://vm.tiktok.com/ZGe8PoNWs/>



"Entrepreneurship and earning money because it will be tough with the economy."

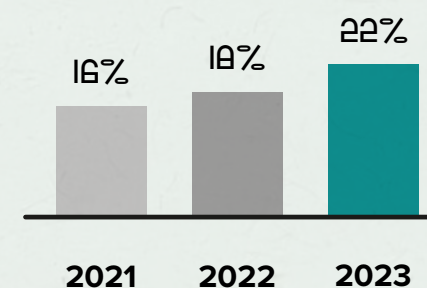
Guy, 21 y.o.



"Market flipping, i.e. buying items cheaply on websites and then selling them for their actual value, I believe will become significant because many young people struggle with money and will want to earn some extra income."

Guy, 16 y.o.

Percentage of guys wanting to "start their own business" after high school:



@bready.jake (2023-10-03) Testing side hustles part 1 [Video]. TikTok. <https://vm.tiktok.com/ZGe8PoL7x/>

## 5. SIDE HUSTLE

No matter how productive you become, there are only 24 hours in a day, and many young people would like to grow the amount in their bank account while studying, for example. Therefore, several mention some kind of side hustle as next year's major trend. Trends mentioned on this theme include acquiring additional income sources by learning to code or making money on social media. Others talk about investing in expensive products that don't lose value or "market flipping" by buying second-hand things cheaply and then selling them for profit.



## 6. ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Both TikTok and Instagram are described by young people as filled with tips on which career choices are most profitable, how to start your own business, and how to develop an "executive presence" to be perceived as more professional and quickly make a career. Perhaps this entrepreneurial trend is primarily about how many young people (especially boys) want to be perceived, but we also see in other data that the interest in "starting your own business" is growing.

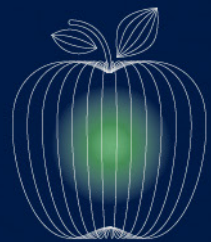


## 10 RULES TO HAVE A PRODUCTIVE DAY

LET'S GET STARTED

10

do the hardest  
task first



9. Feed your brain

8.  
FIRE UP YOUR  
ENDORPHINS

7. work with  
your phone in  
another room



6. Focus on one task at a time.  
6. **Focus** on one task at a time.  
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6. Focus on one **task** at a time.  
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6. Focus on one task at **a** time.  
6. Focus on one task at a **time**.

5. TAKE  
UNPLUGGED  
BREAKS

4. HAVE A  
CLUTTER FREE  
SPACE

3. USE THE  
POMODORO  
TECHNIQUE

2.  
TIMEBLOCK

1. SLEEP GOOD  
REAL GOOD

"Flatbread roll! As studies show,  
the "cool" hamburger joints  
are disappearing. I believe  
the classic flatbread roll with  
sausage and mashed potatoes  
will be the big replacement!"

Girl, 23 y.o.





## HEALTH

# BALANCE

Living a healthy life is something young people prioritize and are increasingly thinking about, so it's not surprising that health trends are mentioned when young people look to 2024. Here, too, we see two opposing tracks that relate to well-being and health. Many girls focus on achieving well-being from the inside out by relieving some of the pressure they put on themselves, while boys instead tend to raise the bar and focus even more on maximizing their performance.

### I. HOLISTIC HEALTH

Some young people are turning to a holistic approach that, in addition to physical and mental health, also includes emotional, social, and spiritual components to promote well-being from the inside out. Mindful meditation and affirmations are two tools used to look inward and deal with negative thoughts and stress. TikTok trends such as cozy cardio (doing cardio in a relaxed and cozy way) or hotgirlwalk (taking a walk while thinking about positive aspects/people in your life) are further signs of exercising to feel good, rather than performing.

"Mindfulness and mental health. To care for yourself through yoga, meditation, a proper diet, etc. will be a big thing in 2024."

Girl, 21 y.o.



# 11%

ONE OUT OF TEN  
GIRLS PRACTICES  
MINDFULNESS  
REGULARLY



"To distance yourself from dopamine traps (TikTok, Instagram Reels, etc.) and instead start doing "real" hobbies such as baking or crocheting."

Guy, 23 y.o.

### 3. REDUCED SCREEN TIME FOR INCREASED BALANCE

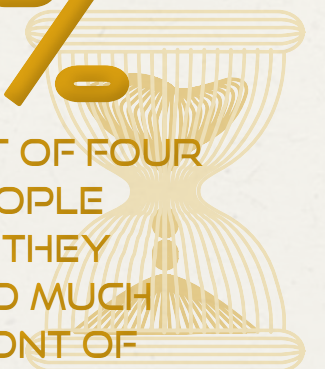
It is also perhaps not surprising that young people associate a more balanced and healthy life with reduced screen time. Partly because it frees up more time for creative and social activities, but also because many young feel that social media negatively affects their mental health. It's hard to stop scrolling. Scaling down the use of social media is thus another component in creating a more balanced everyday life.

### 2. SLOW LIFE AND CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

In order to unwind and reduce stress, it is also important to find meaningful activities in everyday life. In young people's trend forecasts, several people mention that they want to spend more time on, for example, crocheting, knitting, reading, or pottery. You want to spend more time on activities that are creative, methodical, relaxing, screen-free and that can be done with a friend – simply because it makes you feel good. Perhaps we will see a new upsurge of creative hobbies among young people in 2024, similar to what we saw during the pandemic years?

# 73%

THREE OUT OF FOUR  
YOUNG PEOPLE  
FEEL THAT THEY  
SPEND TOO MUCH  
TIME IN FRONT OF  
SCREENS





# OPTIMIZE

On the other hand, we see an approach to health that is based on optimizing and maximizing. Several of the trends that young people talk about on this theme are about making mental health more efficient, and when it comes to physical health, the focus is on appearance.

## 4. LOOKSMAXXING

Looksmaxxing is mentioned by several young guys as a trend that will become more mainstream in the coming year. The concept of looksmaxxing has its roots in the world of gaming and is about “maxxing” your appearance in the same way that you can maximize the stats of your game character. Keeping a strict lifestyle with a lot of exercise and skin care, such as that of Patrick Bateman in the movie “American Psycho,” are examples of the guiding principles of this trend.



## 5. MONKMODE

In order to perform, it is also important to optimize your mental health. Examples of trends mentioned on this topic include “monk mode”, which is all about maximizing one’s performance through isolation, introspection, and focusing on a specific number of goals. The concept is borrowed from the moderate lifestyle of a monk and is used to develop more quickly in certain areas by doing less of others.

## 6. DIGITAL DETOX FOR OPTIMAL FOCUS

Even for those young people who want to optimize their health, a more restrained approach to social media is often included. Terms mentioned on this topic are “digital detox” or “dopamine detox”. By abstaining from social media and restoring dopamine levels, many people hope to have both better concentration and better mental health.

@imangadzhimoments (2023-05-27) Is Monk Mode for you? [Video]. TikTok. <https://vm.tiktok.com/ZGeRQJv5Y/>  
@\_fcmotivate (2023-04-27) Erling Haaland secret to recovery and sleep [Video]. TikTok. <https://vm.tiktok.com/ZGeRQMkrd/>

### The Definitive Guide to Looksmaxxing for Men

Skincare 101

Nutrition Matters

Sleep Well

Physical Fitness

Oral Hygiene

Level 1: Robe Overhaul

Over Quantity

Level 4: Advanced Aesthetics

Facial Glow

Line Enhancement

Lip Care

Style, Tailor Your Life

"Right now, a new trend is beginning to emerge where it's all about improving yourself as much as possible – "looksmaxxing". I think this will become mainstream in 2024"

Kille, 18 år





## AESTHETIC

# BACK TO BASICS

When creating your identity at a young age, aesthetics are central to expressing to others who you are (or want to be). Wearing certain clothes or doing certain things because it feels like they belong to the aesthetic you want to be associated with has become a mantra for many young people - "do it for the aesthetic". Looking ahead, young people believe that aesthetics based on the safe space of the home will prevail in 2024.

### 1. OUT WITH #GIRLBOSS, IN WITH #SOFT GIRLS

Power women and girl bosses feel quite out of fashion if we ask young people. Instead, clean girls and soft girls are two aesthetics that take their place in the feed as an anti-trend against maintaining a high-performing and successful image. Instead of performance, Soft Girls focuses on a simpler and slower life with a focus on well-being. They'd rather stay at home than party, and don't stay in the office longer than necessary.

"Over the past year, the "Clean girl aesthetic" has been trending on social media, featuring videos of young, primarily girls, taking care of themselves both mentally and physically. This may include applying a face mask, reading, or going for a cozy walk instead of, for example, partying."

Girl, 20 y.o.

### 2. DOPAMIN DECOR

On the same theme, we hear that the home is an important and safe place to relax and do things that make you feel good. As a part of this, many young people believe that we will see a romanticization of household chores and putting a personal touch on their home. Maybe by embracing the interior design trend dopamine decor, which is about decorating with details and colors that make you happy! Young people still want dopamine per se, but they would rather have dopamine from their surroundings than from social media.





## AESTHETIC

# FAKE IT 'TIL YOU MAKE IT

While we see that many girls lean towards softer aesthetics with a focus on balance and well-being, we also see that there is a segment of young guys who favor more exclusive and dressed-up styles. Fake it 'til you make it is the keyword for these trends as the goal with these aesthetics is to look like someone who has a lot of money and lives an exclusive lifestyle.

### 3. GRISCH

In true “Fake it ‘til you make it” spirit, we sense a new emerging aesthetic in the form of Grisch. It is described as a lifestyle and aesthetic centered around city life, luxury, and opulence. A manifestation of a lifestyle many young people long for, which is characterized by designer clothes, fine watches, champagne, and expensive restaurant meals. Is it the “brats” making a comeback in the Gen Z style?

””Grisch,” which involves dressing as “rich” as possible. It’s not always about wearing expensive clothes but simply looking wealthy and flashy. The trend suits everyone because it can involve affordable clothing and shoes.”

Guy, 16 y.o.

# 33%

ONE OUT OF THREE  
YOUNG PEOPLE  
WANTS TO BE  
PERCEIVED AS  
SUCCESSFUL.

### 4. CEO-AESTHETIC

In the same vein as Grisch, we also see that the CEO aesthetic is becoming more common among guys. Manager has for a long time been the most attractive profession among young people in general but for boys in particular. Among these young people, it is not only important to become a manager, but even more so to look like the CEO of a successful company. Suits, shirts, high-end watches, and everything associated with an expensive lifestyle are rewarded in this aesthetic.

## BUSINESS STUDIES





## KEY TAKEAWAYS

# REFLECTING ON THE STATE OF GEN Z GOING INTO 2024

### AI IS A NATURAL PART OF THE FUTURE

In many cases, AI is the first thing that comes to young people's minds when they think about the future and tomorrow's trends. In many ways, AI is seen as something more comprehensive than just a trend, rather something that will have a major impact on all areas of life. The role AI may play in young people's lives is thus likely to affect what new trends we will see in the future.

**"As a reaction to increased surveillance and AI, analog things will make a comeback."**

**Guy, 21 y.o.**

### DON'T UNDERESTIMATE THE HYPE FACTOR

Listening to young people, it's clear that highly hyped events or things are anticipated to make the most significant impact. In the report's introduction, we highlighted examples of upcoming launches that young people eagerly anticipate and foresee as potential big hits!

### DIFFERENT MOTIVATIONS AND PRIORITIES

Throughout these trend forecasts, we see that young girls and boys differ in terms of driving forces and priorities. The general tendency is for girls to talk about trends that focus on unwinding, taking care of themselves, and exploring cozy hobbies rather than pursuing a career.

At the same time, guys are talking about accelerating and increasing their productivity in the coming years, by maximizing both their appearance and their income. Potentially, these gender differences also basically constitute a counter-trend to what society looks like right now, where girls generally have higher grades than boys and continue their studies to a greater extent

### COPING MECHANISMS IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

It can be difficult to understand why certain trends occur and what they tell us about the youth generation, especially when so

many trends seem to be at odds with each other. It's only when we take a step back and look at things from a larger perspective that we see how these trends are different expressions of deeper attitudes and values.

The last three years have been messy for Sweden's young population, to say the least. A pandemic, war in Ukraine, and worry about the financial situation. The world seems to keep shaking and shifting the terms for today's youth. In addition to this, we also need to take into consideration that this year's survey was conducted during the time when the fighting in Israel and Palestine escalated, and news of violence and death was all over social media.

No matter if it's deciding to start a side hustle, decorating with dopamine-inducing colors, or going into monk mode, perhaps the trends we describe in this report represent different ways to manage and navigate a time that feels more and more uncertain.

**"I believe that more young people will turn to religions or other spiritual practices to find some form of security or hope, considering the uncertainties in Sweden and the world."**

**Girl, 19 y.o.**





# MORE CURIOUS ABOUT GEN Z?

Inspired, surprised, or confused by this year's trends? This report is largely based on a single question out of hundreds asked in our largest annual study. Based on the same study, we also produce tailor-made workshops, lectures, and reports with to help companies, authorities, and other organizations better understand and relate to young people. The 2024 edition covers ten different thematic areas.

## IDENTITY, LIFESTYLE & HEALTH

What interests, values, and identities are important among today's youth? How is their well-being in general and mental health in particular?

## SOCIETY & POLITICS

How do young people's views on important societal issues and politics evolve? How does their view of the future, trust in institutions, and willingness to engage change over time?

## HIGH SCHOOL

How do young people view the choice of high school? What is most important when selecting a program and school, and how do they gather information for their choices?

## HIGHER EDUCATION

How interested are young people in higher education? Those who want to study – why, what, how, and where do they want to study and what information do they want before choosing an education?

## WORK & CAREER

What do young people think about the future of work? Which factors are most important when choosing what industry to work in, and which industries are the most attractive to young people today?

## UNIONS

What are young people's views on and attitudes towards unions? Why do people want to join a union and what information are they looking for?

## FINANCES & CONSUMPTION

What defines Gen Z as consumers and what do they spend their money on? What do young people's financial knowledge and behavior look like?

## FOOD & MEALS

What does young people's food consumption look like and how would they describe their diet? How do these attitudes and behaviors manifest themselves in the grocery store?

## GEN Z CRASH COURSE!

Do you or your organization need a proper introduction to today's young generation and how to reach them? With a lecture with one of our youth experts and the report **Brands, advertising & social media**, you will come a long way. Now we have packaged these into a favorable offering in the form of a Gen Z Crash Course – get in touch for more information and booking!

## SUSTAINABILITY

What do young people mean by the concept of sustainability today and how committed are they to the sustainability issue? What obstacles do they experience with living sustainably?

## BRANDS, ADVERTISING & SOCIAL MEDIA

How do you reach Gen Z today? And what is required need interest and engage the young audience?

[Click here to read more](#)

## HOW CAN WE HELP YOU?

Based on the data in our reports, we also conduct in-depth analyses on specific areas of expertise or target groups. The insights are presented and delivered based on the formats that best suit your business. For instance:

- Inspiring and informative lectures
- Knowledge-based workshops
- Thematic reports or customized insight materials
- Target audience analyses
- Tailored studies with proprietary data collection
- Consultation and advisory services



