

The Great Gen Z Exodus: Record Numbers of Young Britons Trading the UK for Opportunities Abroad

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A fundamental shift is reshaping the UK's demographic landscape as Gen Z leads a record-breaking wave of emigration. According to *The Great Gen Z Exodus* report by [The TEFL Academy](#), young professionals are no longer waiting until their 30s to move abroad, they are departing in their 20s at unprecedented rates.

The Post-Pandemic Acceleration

Official ONS data reveals a stark generational pivot. In the year to June 2025, departures among those aged 20–29 reached an estimated 130,000–140,000, a significant surge from the pre-pandemic average of 92,000. Conversely, emigration among those in their early 30s has declined, signalling that the decision to leave is happening earlier in life than ever before.

Today, young adults under 35 account for 76% of all British emigrants, with hundreds of professionals leaving daily during their most economically productive years.

Driven by Economic Pressure

The exodus is fueled by a growing confidence gap in the UK's long-term prospects. The TEFL Academy's survey of 4,000 Gen Z and young Millennials highlighted deep-seated financial anxieties:

- Wage Stagnation: 86% agree UK wages do not reflect the rising cost of living.
- Economic Pessimism: Respondents rated their optimism for a future in the UK at just 2.44 out of 5.

- Housing Hurdles: 65% of young people expect housing affordability to worsen, viewing international mobility as a strategic necessity rather than a choice.

Seeking Quality of Life and Career Strategy

For many, leaving is a calculated move to secure a better standard of living. Those already abroad cited overall quality of life (4.45/5) and work-life balance (4.03/5) as their primary motivators. Furthermore, 54% of respondents believe staying in the UK could actively hold back their long-term career potential.

Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) has emerged as a key pathway, offering graduates an accessible route to gain global experience while earning an income.

Top Destinations for Young Professionals

Young Britons are targeting regions that offer a mix of lower living costs and high demand for skills:

- Asia (47%): The top choice, led by demand in Thailand, Vietnam, and South Korea.
- Europe (26%): Spain and Portugal remain popular for lifestyle and proximity.
- Australia/NZ (17%): Attracting those seeking higher wages and working holidays.

A Generational Turning Point

“Young Britons aren’t running away from the UK; they’re running toward opportunity,” says Rhyan O’Sullivan, Managing Director at The TEFL Academy.

As international mobility becomes a core component of career planning, the report suggests a permanent shift in how success is defined. For Gen Z, the future is no longer tied to a single country, but to wherever stability and opportunity can realistically be found.

Click [here](#) for the full report.