

A woman with dark curly hair, wearing a red sweater and purple pants, is sitting cross-legged on a grey mat on the floor. She has her eyes closed and her hands resting on her chest in a meditative pose. The background shows a modern living room with a white sofa, patterned cushions, and a coffee table with a white mug. A large abstract painting is on the wall, and sunlight streams in from a window on the right.

SIEMENS

Re-imagining progress in a changing world

International survey and report 2022

Siemens Home Appliances



Siemens Home Appliances Progress Report 2022

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A high-angle photograph of a man and a young child sitting on a large, shaggy rug in a living room. They are playing chess on a dark wooden coffee table. The man, with dark curly hair and wearing a dark blue sweater, is leaning over the table, moving a piece. The child, wearing a light blue hoodie and dark pants, is looking at the board. The room features a beige sofa, a patterned rug, and a leather ottoman. A smartphone is on the table next to the chessboard.

Foreword

For most of us, the last two years have brought considerable changes to our lives, at work and our home. The pandemic was a catalyst for many of the themes we have discussed for a number of years – especially in the field of digitalisation, collaboration and workplace flexibility.

It has reduced emissions, as we replaced extensive travel with countless video conferences. For many, it has taken a toll on both physical and mental health. This time of crisis has made us re-think our priorities and attitudes towards life and living together. It has raised an important question, one that matters to us greatly at Siemens Home Appliances.

How does progress look like, for all of us and each of us?

This report is intended to be an inspiration to re-imagine progress, to take into account the learnings, and to think about our ambitions, in our lives and at our homes.

Progress has always been in our DNA as a brand. We aim to constantly improve and embrace the power of innovation to increase people's quality of life at home. We believe that technology is the solution to the world's biggest challenges. And the solution to many of the small everyday challenges, in our homes, our kitchens and beyond.

As a leading manufacturer of home appliances, we draw inspiration from our customers, those ambitious go-getters who are curious by nature. With every innovation, we aim to empower them to create the life they envision. From the way they live together and manage their households to how they spend time with family and friends, prepare food, and express themselves in how they style their homes. We believe it's time to re-think and refine the understanding of progress: from higher, further and faster to a more balanced, human approach. To create this report, we carefully listened to those who use appliances day in and day out and have put together our findings.

We commissioned a representative survey in some of our key markets: Germany, China, the Netherlands, Spain, Turkey, the UK and the US, with the goal of finding out how current issues, like the pandemic, climate change, a faster living pace, and individual ambitions have changed the way people think about progress – and act accordingly.

In the following report, we will share our findings. In addition to the survey, we also interviewed people who have already taken action in their fields and who are experts in creating progress for many of us. We hope their stories will inspire you as much as they have inspired us.

Please join us in the conversation about progress re-imagined. I am looking forward to hearing your views, too.



André Corell
Global Head of Communication
Siemens Home Appliances



The turning point: Re-imagining progress in a changing world

History is full of inflection points where people changed their views of the world along with their place in it. The Industrial Revolution, for example, led to significant changes in social relationships, people's attitudes towards work, and their consumption patterns.

Likewise, the aftermath of World War II led to sweeping social and economic mobilisation within countries around the world, and greater hope among women as they had the opportunity to enter

the workforce for the first time. The Bubonic Plague that shook Medieval Europe, the Renaissance, and the introduction of the internet are all examples of events, among many, that altered the course of human history and inspired dramatic social, cultural, and economic shifts.

Recent world events and their consequences suggest that we are currently living through such a transformative moment, full of conflict and tension. An increasingly flexible lifestyle is widely celebrated as an

opportunity, while it has also shown detrimental effects on people’s well-being and health. The rise of individual freedom as the new ideal has also led to a lack of belonging and loneliness for many. The growth of cities with their plentiful economic opportunities has reduced physical space and displaced nature. Now, the acceleration of climate change, the pandemic and the rise of geopolitical conflicts and war, seem to have merged into a perfect storm. They form the backdrop for a re-imagined future.

As history has shown, crises and other periods of profound change, even when those changes are positive, are often turning points



that cause people to re-examine their priorities. Today, equipped with new technologies and more knowledge about the impact of our lifestyles on the planet than any generation in human history, people everywhere are reflecting on the meaning – and limits – of progress, as well as their responsibilities themselves and each other.

New research from Siemens Home Appliances, which included 7300 respondents from China, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, Turkey, the UK, and the US, has identified what progress means to people everywhere against the backdrop of recent global events.

The study paints a picture of a changing world and illuminates the ways in which current issues – such as the pandemic, the changing climate, and societal division – have inspired people to think about progress and their role in creating positive change for themselves and society.



“Me” versus “we”: How do people measure progress today?

What is progress? Cambridge Dictionary defines it as “movement to an improved or more developed state”. Few would argue that progress is not a positive thing, but what is more important: individual or collective progress?

According to the study, nearly half of people surveyed say that progress is important in life, not only through personal success, but also through a healthier lifestyle, good human relationships, and a more sustainable future. In other words, nearly half of the respondents take a balanced perspective of progress, one that considers the traditional, individual-

istic understanding of progress along with a better life for all. Interestingly, respondents’ income and educational background do not play a role in their definition. Every fourth person sees progress mostly through the lens of society as a whole – they see the need to be more conscious of our planet and societal well-being, to slow down, and to consume less.

At the other extreme, 1 of 4 people defines progress as something that is, first and foremost, beneficial for the individual: striving to perform, improve and increase their own success.

The meaning of progress

“When you think about your life and what you want to achieve, what does ‘progress’ mean to you personally?” (agree in %)

43 %

Progress is important in life, not only through personal success, but also in the form of a healthier lifestyle, good human relationships and a more sustainable future.

25 %

Personal progress is very important to me. I’m striving to perform, improve myself and increase my success.

25 %

We all need to progress as a society, we should be more conscious of our planet and society, and we have to slow down and consume less.

4 %

I don’t believe in the idea of progress, it is better to accept things as they are.

4 %

I don’t know / No answer.



Naturally, as people grow older, they are less interested in individual progress, more supportive of collective progress, and ready to make compromises. Almost half of the Baby Boomer generation and Gen X believe progress should be balanced between personal success on the one hand and a healthier lifestyle, good human relationships, and a more sustainable future on the other. In contrast, only 1 out of 10 members of the Gen Z (under 25) take this holistic view. 4 in 10 Gen Z respondents say that progress is about performance, improvement, and individual success. This is understandable considering the tough economic challenges this demographic faces, such as pandemic-related employment

insecurity and the rising cost of living. The parallels with what Millennials experienced during the Great Recession are clear.ⁱⁱⁱ In addition to age, geography and culture also play a role in shaping people's views towards progress. While close to one-third of respondents in Spain, Germany, the Netherlands and the UK focus on the concept of slowing down and consuming less. This is less of an appealing idea for respondents in China and the US (15% and 20% respectively). These findings are reflected in numerous studies that show that sustainability and environmental concerns are top-of-mind for Europeans^{iv}, while China's growing middle-class^v and a persistent culture of consumerism in the US drive high consumption in those countries.

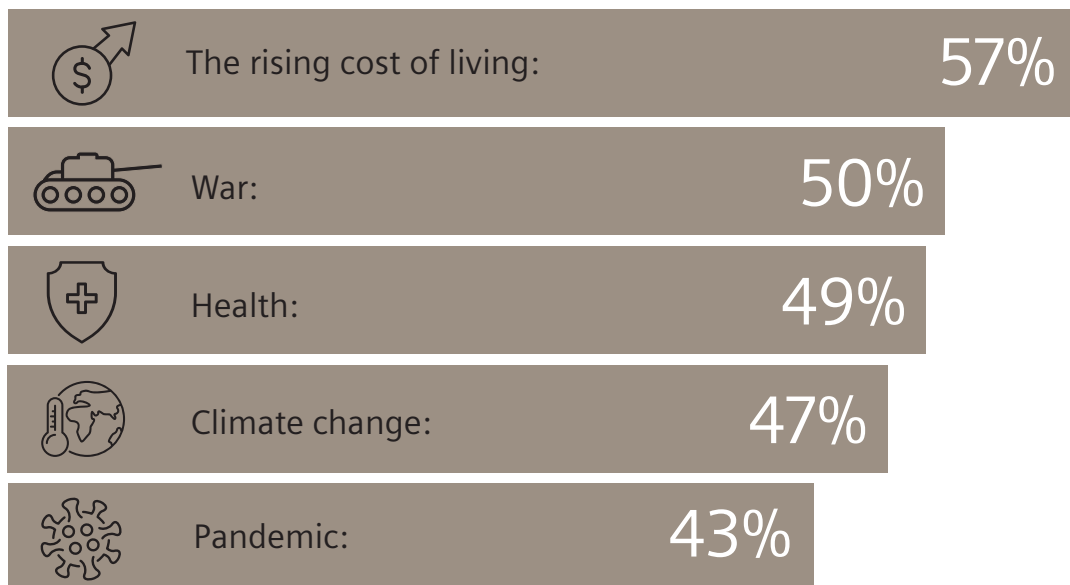
Re-defining progress: Current events shaping new views

The rising cost of living, the war, and inflation are the top three worries of respondents in 2022 – a sharp rise from last year on all three issues. About half of the people surveyed expressed their worries in these areas. On the other hand, the

pandemic dropped from 1st place to 7th place on the ranking of 19 different issues, with 43% indicating they are still worried about it. In China, however, 60% understandably still have concerns about the pandemic.

Global issues of concern 2022

“What issues are you worried about right now? What scares you?” (multiple answers possible)

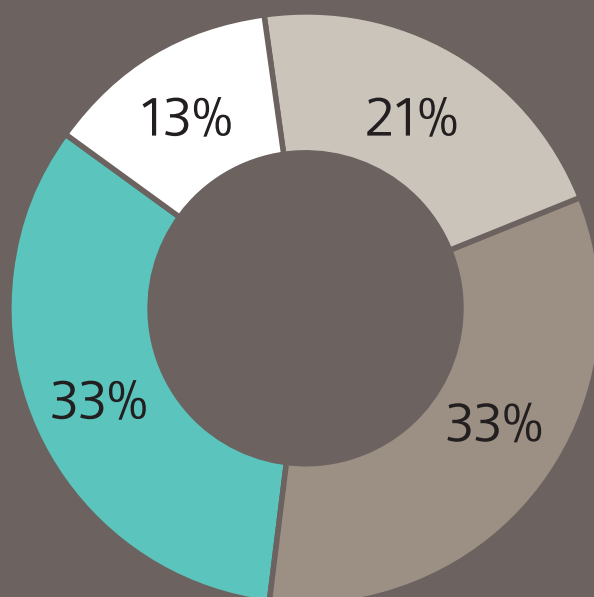


This shifting mix of concerns has led to a watershed moment for attitudes and perspectives on progress. Nearly 9 in 10 people (87%) say they have changed their views on what progress means to them. The issues of our time have led 1 in 3 people to rethink their priorities, not wanting

to put individual progress ahead of the planet and other people. Another third of people hope there is a way “to have it all”, with continued individual progress on one hand, while at the same time progress for well-being, relationships, and the planet on the other.

Global issues change views on progress

“Think about the pandemic, climate change and the growing division in our society. How has that changed your view on what progress means?” (agree in %)



- These issues haven't changed my personal view on progress.
- Big issues make me realise that I cannot change the world as a single person. Therefore, I focus on myself and strive for personal development.
- The big issues in our world have made me rethink my priorities. Individual progress should not happen at the expense of the planet and its people.
- There must be a way to achieve everything: individual progress, and progress for health, relationships and the planet.

Only 13% of people say that their personal views on progress have not been influenced by the issues our world faces today. Again, we can see geographic differences. In China, only 2% take this fiercely independent view, indicating that people in China have been significantly affected by recent world events, while in the US more than 1 in 5 say they have not been influenced, suggesting that Americans feel more insulated from these issues.

Age is also a factor influencing whether people are ready to change their perspective on progress. While younger generations are more likely to say their views on progress have evolved, more than 1 in 5

of those over the age of 58 seem unaffected by the big challenges of our time when it comes to their definition of progress. This could be because older adults, having lived longer and experienced more of life's ups and downs, tend to be more pro-social and community-minded to begin with.^{vi} The role of age is again reflected in people's attitudes towards the impact of their individual efforts. 1 in 5 people has realised that they alone cannot change the world.

Therefore, they choose to focus on themselves and strive for personal development – particularly Gen Z and Gen Y (25% agree), in contrast to Gen X (15% agree) and Baby Boomers (12% agree).

Progress in motion: Who should be in the driver's seat?

When it comes to tackling the big issues of our time, people see a shared responsibility between government, companies and individuals. Especially when it comes to lowering our carbon footprint and addressing climate change, around half of people say governments, companies and individuals are equally responsible.

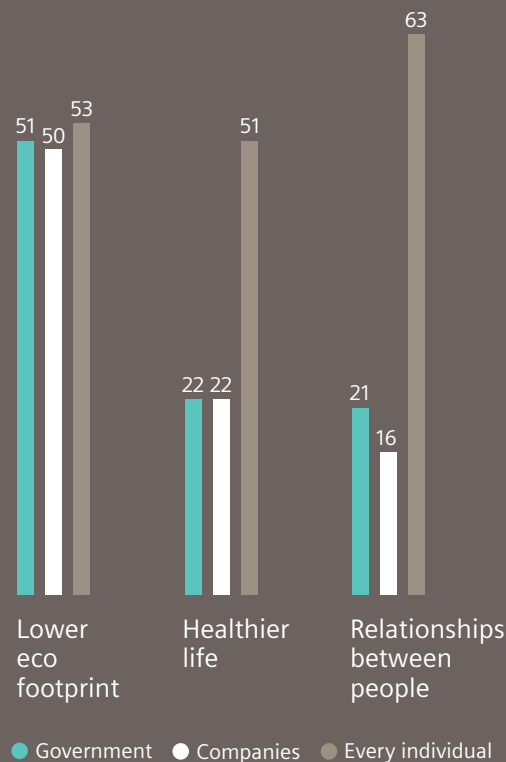
However, people see differences in responsibility based on the nature of the challenge. Almost half of people (48%) say that governments should take the lead on improving the financial situation. By contrast, people see individuals as being primarily responsible for creating a healthier life (51%), improved relationships (63%), and more respect and understanding in society (67%) – while governments and companies play supporting roles.

Approval rates for responsibility vary considerably between countries. In China especially, people support the idea of individual responsibility for climate-related matters – almost 60% - on par with those who see the government as responsible.

Nearly half feel personally responsible, in contrast to the US, where fewer than 1 in 5 people feel personally responsible.

Shared responsibility for progress is the ideal

“There are many areas where progress might happen. Who do you think is responsible for this in the following areas?” (agree in %, multiple answers possible)



Overall, people's attitudes point to a sense of shared responsibility for addressing the issues we face as a society. Given the scale and nature of today's challenges, particularly

the existential threat of climate change, people understand that while personal responsibility is important, no single individual or entity can solve these systemic issues alone. Individuals, governments, and businesses must work together to drive progress.

The time is now: Steps people are taking to create a better world

Around the world, people aren't waiting to be told what to do. An overwhelming majority – more than 4 out of 5 – have already started to reduce overconsumption and save energy and water in their homes, while almost the same number have started to strive for a healthier life.

Two-thirds have started to deepen relationships, as well as improve their wealth and success. Around half have initiated activities for the common

good to make the world a better place. 71% of people under 25 say that they work hard for their wealth and success, which is in contrast to the popular perception that this generation lacks ambition.

Furthermore, this individual ambition does not appear to compromise their willingness to drive progress for the common good and a better world (53% agree, the highest approval rate among all generations). These findings align with a 2021 Deloitte survey that found that Millennials and Gen Zs around the world are determined to hold themselves and others accountable for society's most pressing issues.^{vii}

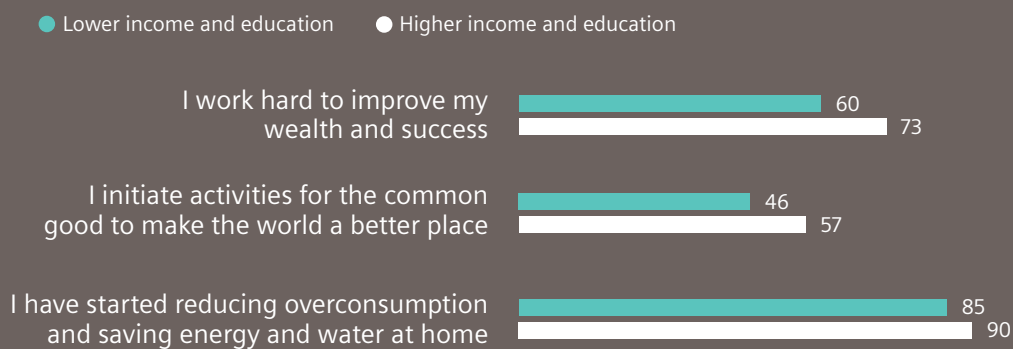


While the general statement holds true that a majority are initiating action, the study also reveals country differences: 86% across all countries have started to address overconsumption, water and energy usage. This global average includes extremes on both ends: the US (76%)

and China (93%). China leads on all fronts in terms of individual action: reducing overconsumption, a healthier life, deeper relationships, and improving wealth. This is a reflection on the country's strong culture of personal contribution for the benefit of the nation.

Higher income and education group lead on driving progress

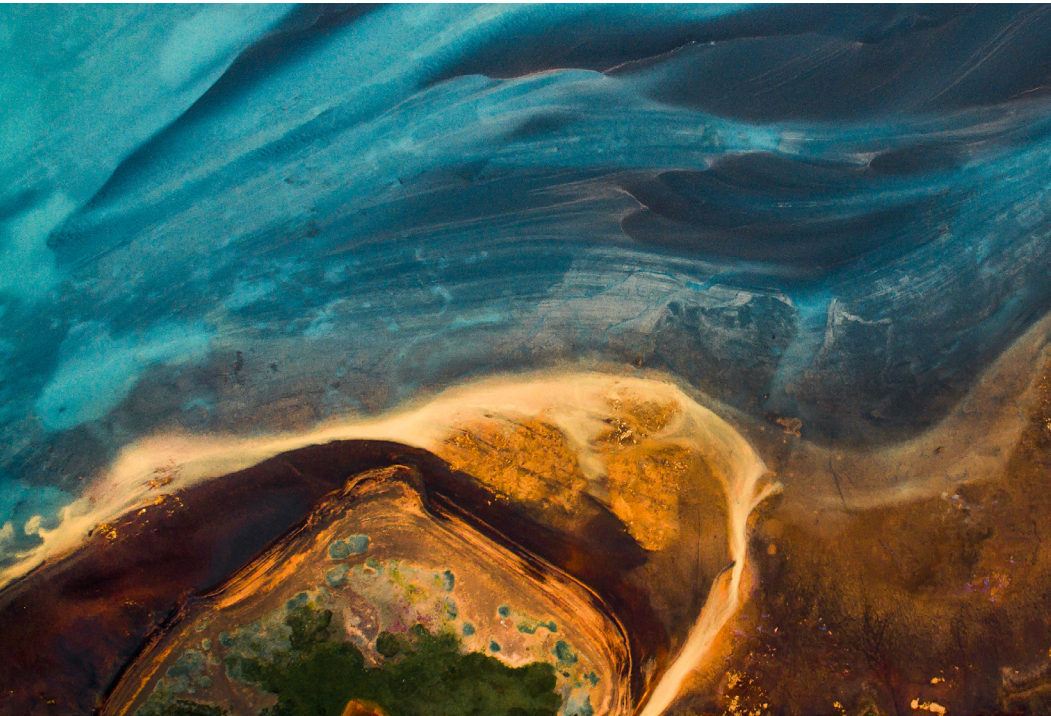
"Have you already taken steps to drive progress in these areas?" (agree in %, multiple answers possible)



Education level and income are also factors in people's ability and willingness to take action. Those with more education and higher incomes are between 5-13% more likely to have already taken steps to initiate progress in various areas, compared

to those with less education and lower incomes. This is likely more a function of practicality than attitudes; naturally, access to more resources makes it easier for people to make deliberate, eco-friendly choices.^{viii}





Tackling climate change: An opportunity for businesses and brands

When it comes to climate change, personal responsibility is key. Nearly 3 out of 4 people (71%) say that all of us should live and consume more consciously, avoiding overconsumption and waste. However, results also show an important opportunity for businesses and brands to lead on this issue.

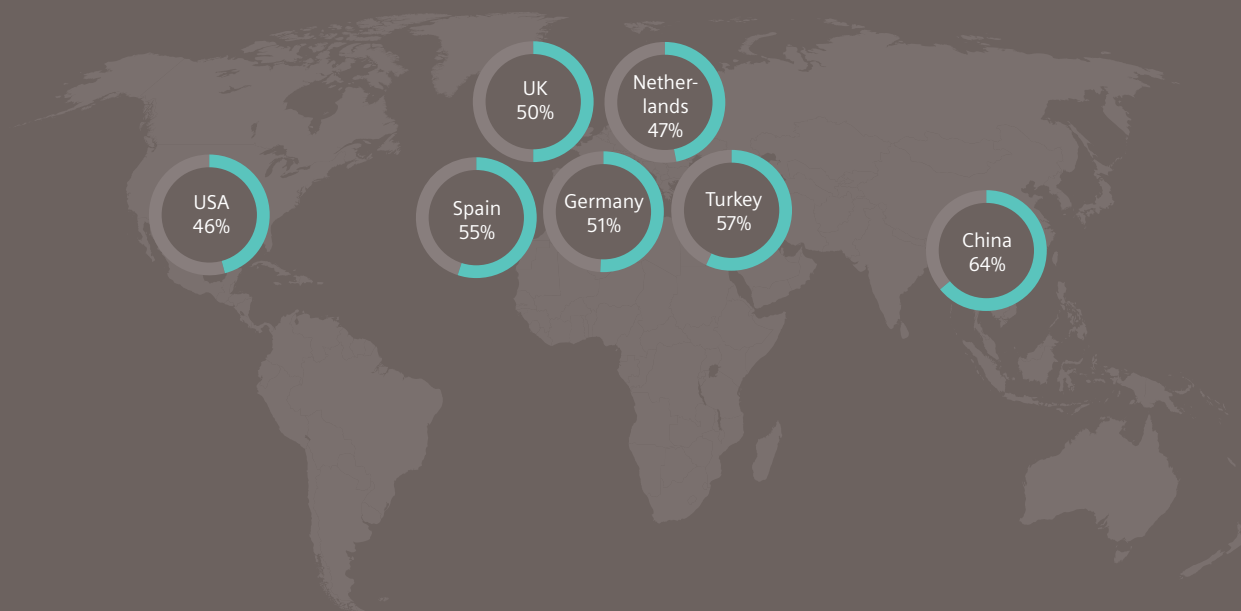
According to the study, people view companies as playing a critical role in addressing climate change. More than half of the respondents see

solutions in more sustainable options for use and consumption – especially in China (65%), while to a lesser, but still significant, extent in the US (44%) and the Netherlands (42%).

This is echoed in other studies that show that people’s expectations of businesses are higher than ever when it comes to leading on urgent societal problems, especially considering that public trust in government continues to plummet.^{ix}

Innovative technologies should enable progress in harmony with a better life for all

"How should 'climate crisis' be tackled?" (agree in %)



Technology is viewed as a promising solution. More than half of people across all age groups (53%) would^x like to see new and innovative technology, designed to enable progress in harmony with a better life for all. This sentiment is similarly illustrated in a recent survey published by BSH Home Appliances in which people internationally expressed a clear demand for companies to support their sustainability journey.

Fortunately, technologies exist today that make products more sustainable and also contribute to the "circular

economy", which the European Commission defines as one in which "the value of products, material and resources is maintained in the economy for as long as possible and the generation of waste minimised."^{xi} Examples of such technologies include connectivity, Artificial Intelligence, and the Internet of Things (IoT), among others. As companies continue to incorporate these digital technologies into their operations, people will have more options for products and services that help them live sustainably.

Beyond the turning point

Recent global events, such as the pandemic, have taught us many lessons – but perhaps the most enduring will be how critical it is to work together on the collective challenges we face. The issues are too big to be tackled by one institution and too complex to trust one facet to deal with them. People across the globe are reconsidering their views on progress through the lens of this complexity, as well as their unique life situation and the way they've been socialised and they are taking action.

One thing is clear: given the nature and scale of the issues facing our society today, it will take all of us – individuals, governments and businesses – to address the challenges of our time. The study results point to a promising turning point in our understanding of these challenges and what it will take to solve them and create progress for all.

Methodology

The Siemens Home Appliances research was conducted by isi GmbH as an online survey of 5500 people (representative of total population (20-65 years*) in China, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, Turkey, the UK and the US). For comparison between respondents of high income/education** vs. lower income another 1800 people were surveyed (boost). The survey took place in April 2022.

* Generation Z (20-25 years), Generation Y (26-41 years), Generation X (42-57 years), Baby Boomers (58 years +)

** High income threshold: 1st Quartil (Upper 25% of population) annual net household income per country, high education: at least a university degree.

ⁱ <https://webpages.cs.luc.edu/~dennis/106/106-Bkgr/20-Industrial-Rev.pdf>

ⁱⁱ <http://ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/alliances-and-wars/war-as-an-agent-of-transfer/a-w-purdue-the-transformative-impact-of-world-war-ii>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/young-millennials-and-gen-zers-face-employment-insecurity-and-hardship-during-pandemic>

^{iv} <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0921800921002135>

^v <https://www.mckinsey.com/cn/our-insights/our-insights/five-consumer-trends-shaping-the-next-decade-of-growth-in-china>

^{vi} <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-helpful-brain/202201/are-older-people-more-helpful>

^{vii} <https://www2.deloitte.com/global/en/pages/about-deloitte/articles/millennialsurvey.html>

^{viii} <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2019/jul/29/eco-friendly-going-green-poor-cost-diary>

^{ix} <https://www.edelman.com/trust/2022-trust-barometer>

^x BSH Home Appliances, 2022, Driving Change Together

^{xi} <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/circular-economy>



Re-alignment of humans with nature

Sebastian Copeland is a polar explorer, climate advocate and photographer: Three different passions, united in their power to address the planet's most imminent challenges.

As a lifelong climber and mountaineer, Sebastian was named one of the world's most adventurous men of the last 25 years, according to Men's Journal, and has his work featured in National Geographic, Vanity Fair, The New York Times and other media around the world.

He has crossed Antarctica in 84 days, crossed the Simpson Desert in Australia and led expeditions to Greenland and the North and South Poles. His SEDNA Foundation is dedicated to reporting from the front lines of climate change.

The American/English/French national lives in Munich with his German wife and two daughters.

We spoke to Sebastian about his ambition to slow down climate change, his exploration of the least explored continent on the planet, and his view on the evolution of progress in his own life.

You are part of a small community of people who have set foot on earth's southernmost continent, Antarctica. You have reached the North Pole and crossed the length of Greenland. You just recently returned from Greenland again. Ambitious undertakings. What triggered you to visit the least explored continent on this planet?

Sebastian: Indeed, this beautiful continent has thankfully remained relatively untouched by humans. Explorers had dreamt of reaching the poles from the time we understood the planet's geodesy. And having read exploration accounts in books from childhood, it made a dreamer out of me from an early age, wanting to follow in the footsteps of the heroic age of exploration.

And with that came the North Pole, which I was privileged enough to reach in 2009 and attempted again but failed in 2017. The reality is that I believe at the rate the traditional way of travelling from land to the North Pole is behind us, given the rapid melting of its ice cap, my daughters' generation will sadly no longer be able to go there.



You have just come back from a Greenland expedition. You have measured the ice with the help of your photography. What does the ice tell us about our planet and the climate?

Sebastian: The loss of ice is the earliest indicator of systemic transformations taking place in our planet's climate. And there is nothing more visceral than witnessing this. Take glaciers, for instance. 95% of the world's glaciers are in retreat. What this tells us couldn't be clearer. Sea ice loss is measured both in extent and thickness and sea ice volume at both poles is receding. The winter freeze is shortened, and the spring melt has extended.

Travelling on the Arctic Sea ice has become precarious given the transformations in climate. But the drama is not limited to cold places. Ultimately the world is nothing if

not a complex and interconnected ecological system, each community of living and non-living things affecting other communities.

When we lose hydrology in certain areas, it affects our farming cycles



which have been in place for the last 12,000 years, anchoring our development and prosperity. Hydrology's impacts on the ecological balance of those environments, by definition, defines our ability to sustain ourselves. Since the end of the last ice age, 11,700 years ago, there have been few fluctuations in our climate, but the changes that we are seeing now, in less than 30 years, are unprecedented in the human experience.

You are describing your work as advocacy on behalf of the climate, to slow down this dramatic development, and you describe your photography as a weapon. Can you explain that to us?



pillar is exploration. I do field work, together with different groups that contribute to research. All of this together empowers me with a deeper connection not just with the ice, but also with the climate, our planet and human life in general.

Sebastian: My work is divided by three pillars that all synergistically align behind one singular purpose: to fight for the realignment of humans with nature. In that sense, my camera is my weapon. I'm not just motivated by taking beautiful pictures. My only professional photo subject is the ice because it aligns with another passion of mine, which is climate science.

Photography enables me to communicate principles that may be too esoteric, too boring or too complex for people's busy and challenging lives. It brings an emotional dimension to the discussion. Along with photography and science, my third



What exactly are you doing on your expeditions? Take us along to understand your days out there.

Sebastian: In January, I'll go to Antarctica to measure the coldest place on Earth, together with the NSIDC, the National Snow and Ice Data Center, and my friend and scientist Ted Scambos from the IPCC.

This has important implications, as we have a good understanding of where we can find the hottest place in the world, either the Dasht-e Lut desert in Iran or Death Valley in California. But we don't actually know where the coldest spot on Earth is, other than that it



is located in Antarctica. We aim to change that, so we can locate that spot and observe how it is being affected by global warming. I also spent two years on a scientific research icebreaker in the Antarctic Peninsula some years ago. Or during a full crossing of Antarctica, I took wind measurements to

help understand the transport of air currents over the interior plateau, which had never been visited before and certainly never measured except remotely.

This informed a peer-reviewed paper produced by the NSIDC. Sometimes my expeditions have been purely athletic: I humbly hold a couple of records, notably the farthest distance kite-skied in one 24-hour period, in Greenland (595km).

Honestly, these trips often start with a big, lofty goal, and they end up being just about putting one foot in front of the other and hoping that you make it to the end. The polar regions are tough environments. But in the end, they always lead to one place: transformation, and hopefully a deeper understanding of the areas that I speak of. Theoretically, you can talk about the ice loss and the Arctic Sea ice until you're blue in the face. But only when you get yourself into some predicaments because of changing climate conditions can you actually feel what it's like. That experience, I believe, enables me to speak about it from a different point of view, away from just statistics and what anybody can download from the NASA website.

Siemens Home Appliances has done this international research about the perception of progress today. You are very ambitious and continuously push for progress. What is your individual perspective on it? How would you define it?

Sebastian: In pure vernacular, the word “progress” is about development and improvement

If you asked what progress was 100 years ago, the answer would have been different to what it should



in society. But that needs to be defined. Is it quality of life? Speed of travel? Exotic fruits transported across the globe to service wealthy nations? Is it about better heating in the world’s cold regions? Then, what is the impact of that progress? Can progress today be about anything that does not improve a healthy cohabitation of humans with nature? The two are not incompatible.

be today. We understand that the paradigm of quality of life, lifespan and luxuries on one hand depends on other factors influencing it: food security, basic healthcare and geopolitical stability. This is more and more dependent on the planet’s regenerative capacity, so that it can continue to provide for us. In short, progress needs to harmonise our quest for quality of life with the health of the planet.

Has your perspective on progress changed throughout the years?

Sebastian: Yes. Just like everyone, I am the product of the science and the information of my generation. I was born in the sixties. The first couple of decades of my existence were certainly not entrenched in any type of consideration for the planet, simply because culturally, we were not there. Moving from black and white TV to colour TV was one measure of progress for me then. With a deeper understanding of the natural sciences certain events started to resonate with me and made me aware of the imprint that we collectively had on the planet, and the implications of that.

Today, progress is e-mobility. You know, I drive an Audi e-tron. Zero emission is progress. Progress is energy-saving appliances in your home. It is the understanding that we can have the same function and quality of life, while addressing the other paradigm that we've just discussed: the planet's health.



Was there anything like an epiphany in your life where you really, all of a sudden, had this understanding that our attitude towards progress needs to change?

Sebastian: My epiphany was tiered. First were the increased disturbances in natural cycles and instances of violent natural events: hurricanes, distressed hydrology (droughts and floods) and wildfires. That was especially evident in America. The signs were there in the seventies, but we generally thought that disasters were isolated events. Of course, nature is non-linear. We had famines in Ethiopia and other places. But my real epiphany came when I realised that, while nonlinear, these events were systemic. They were part of a trend.

My mom went to Lake Chad when I was a kid and we looked at a map of Lake Chad. Well, go and look at Lake Chad now on Google Maps and compare that with maps from forty years ago.

The difference is staggering. Many lakes around the world are drying up. The next epiphany was about the movement of people. Climate refugees will redefine – as is already the case – the nature of socio-politics. And the implications are immense.

What do you dream of now? And what is keeping you awake at night?

Sebastian: For me, the dream is to align two fundamentally antagonistic systems. One is the human system, and the other is the ecosystem. We can do it. Rather than being on a collision course with one another, we must draw from the strength of the one and vice versa. We must emulate the best of nature, and simultaneously defend it, and acknowledge that nature also has rights.

If you ask what my personal contribution is: I aspire to give nature a voice. The visuals that I bring back have one purpose, and that is to generate an emotion, by creating an attachment to exotic areas that would otherwise feel foreign and distant. Beauty in a photograph is a universal language, one that can translate a message from the heart to the mind and hopefully into a programme of action. The poles are beautiful. And they're changing at a precipitous rate. Now, would you understand that just by looking at them? No. The point of a picture is to stop for one second and pay attention. That is step one.

You were saying about climate change, that we cannot solve this alone. You are also an ambassador for brands, and you work with a couple of businesses and think tanks. What do you see as the benefit of collective progress here? And what can businesses and brands, in particular, do to contribute more effectively?

Sebastian: In society, there are three drivers of change: politicians, business leaders and the public represented by the media. Imagine that they are all shackled at the ankle. They can all move but only as fast as the slowest one. Business leaders are in a unique position to drive change and loosen the shackle by delivering solutions that move the other two groups forward. These should improve quality of life at a reasonable price. But their products must also reflect a societal need.

Business is in the driving seat to change that. I would add that in the mid-to-long term, a business will become obsolete if it does not align with a market transformation towards a sustainable future.



What role should technology play when it comes to relevant progress for human life and the planet?

Sebastian: The solutions of technology are, of course, quintessential to this discussion because we can't expect people not to travel anymore, or we can't expect them not to power their houses.



But we can expect them to do so using less energy, to drive vehicles that generate no pollution. And that pertains to home appliances, too.

To make that happen, we need superior technologies that deliver the best quality products and infrastructure while also considering the entire supply chain. We live in a technology-driven world, and this is fuelling progress. If you look at just what solar and wind are doing as key technologies that are ready and scaling up because the cost is being driven down, that's a

clear indicator. Less exciting, but just as important are energy efficiencies in technologies like insulation and heat pumps, appliances, and of course, transportation. It's not as exciting to be replacing light bulbs throughout the city with energy-efficient lighting, but it is part of the solution. More and more people are using refrigeration.

If we can reduce the footprint of refrigeration by 10%, we remove at the very least 6 to 10 billion tonnes of CO₂ per year from the atmosphere. I am seeing the winds of change. When faced with more natural disasters, wildfires, deforestation, loss of biodiversity and climate refugees, businesses, politicians and people will push for change. I am certain. We just need to ramp it up.



How do you start the process of progress in your own home, as a citizen and a human being?

Sebastian: My wife and I renovated the inside of our place two years ago, just before the pandemic. We were fortunate enough to be able to get the latest technology in 2020, which included Gaggenau and Siemens. This gave us the most up-to-date energy-efficient features available at the time. We live in an apartment so there are limits to what we could do. But with a nice garden and lots of windows, there was room to use natural light. We have to rely on the energy that's being supplied to the building. Luckily for us, it's not oil or coal, but it's still gas. I wish I had photovoltaic instead. But I drive electric. My kids who are five and seven are well aware of what is good for the "little animals", because that's how we frame it for that age group. This sort of collective education and conditioning is also paramount to the next 20 years. Education is critical and a quintessential part of this discussion. We can talk about technology until hell freezes over, but at the end of the day, it's both what you're going to buy and who are you going to vote for when you're 20 that can redefine human

behaviour. That work starts today. I'm hoping that in five years' time, my kids will educate me because, of course, I'm a dinosaur.

Let's face it: we've based our development on the "take make waste" model for too long. Certainly, my generation has. For the first time, we're starting to understand the need to rethink that. What if we just rented clothes instead of buying them? If the pandemic has taught us one thing, it is that we can change our ways. It should not be limited to not eating out or doing Zoom meetings. Let's re-invent everything. That is a different kind of real progress.

You are talking about a healthier lifestyle?

Sebastian: Yes, absolutely. With more free time, it should also be spent outdoors. And then there are eating habits. My wife and I spent less time in restaurants. We've been very focused on organic and biodynamic agriculture. We have improved our cooking skills. We control the ingredients, we have spent more time in the kitchen, we think about packaging waste, all of that together as a family. We know that progress has to start with one's own life and home. So, we're just trying to do our part.

Collective happiness



Rossella Ferorelli, Ph.D., is an architect and urban designer. After living in various places around Italy, she has been based in Bari since 2011. It is here on the sunny, southern Italian coast that she cofounded SMALL, an architecture office and research platform devoted to urban culture with both a curatorial and design focus. At the same time, she has worked as a consultant for the city of Milan on European programmes about tactical urbanism and sustainable mobility since 2019. She also teaches and lectures regularly.

We spoke to Rossella about collective happiness and progress for urban spaces, the transformation of private homes post-pandemic, and the almost religious pursuit of the perfect kitchen in Italy.

You have been advising the city of Milan on urban planning for a couple of years – and create public spaces that are designed to improve people’s lives. What is your personal ambition, the vision you want to bring to life?

Rossella: The term itself might appear a little abstract. For me, it comes down to the small everyday experiences. Observing smiling faces, spending time with my loved ones, enjoying the sunrise after a beautiful party with my friends, the perfect atmosphere and climate. This idea of happiness can be translated into urban design practice, into an urban reality

With my plan, I create situations where people stay together and live their lives to the fullest. It has to do with the five senses. I want people to regain access to their city, and feel its visual beauty, but also its tactile quality; they should be able to experience spaces by smelling, seeing, listening and touching. The experience of nature plays a big role in this for me.



Can you measure the happiness or satisfaction of people with their urban spaces? Do you have indicators that tell you whether you've achieved impact?

Rossella: During my work as a consultant to the city of Milan, I had the opportunity to see a lot of small urban transformation projects happen in a very short period of time. Usually, urban design takes a long time to be implemented. You start designing in 2020 and see the results in 2025. But recently, our time span from planning to realisation was much shorter, which is great, because you can enjoy results relatively quickly and adjust things if needed. You work like a sociologist. You observe what happens at different moments of the day, during the week and during the year. When we are successful with our planning, we simply observe that people stay, spend more time, use the functionality and interact with each other.

Can you give us examples?

Rossella: Let's say you transform a street with a lot of traffic into a pedestrian zone. The amount of time that people like to spend in these newly created spaces is much higher than expected. These spaces bring people together; they

serve as connectors. I recall at least 20 spaces in Milan where the city installed picnic tables. Not a single time during the day have I seen those spaces and tables empty. Through the example of this small-scale project, you can already understand the desire of people to live outside in the city, to regain ownership of urban spaces and use them for their relationships, health, and well-being.

People behave as if they were in their homes; they use public spaces like they use very intimate, personal spaces. They share them with people who they wouldn't get a chance to know when at home, regardless of age, income, education, religion, or ability. The city design helps to overcome division. That is one of the most basic indicators of happiness or success. I would call this progress.

Because this approach to urban spaces has changed the understanding of a city as a place of flow and transition, where everybody has to move around fast, into a place of togetherness, contemplation, well-being, and quality of life.

Our principles in the past were not designed to exclude anyone, but today our philosophy is to explicitly design something that is good for everyone.

Then, how do you reconcile the different needs of people in society?

Rossella: It's true that as soon as two people come together, you face potential conflict. The newly created public spaces that provide an attraction for young people can



lead to complaints by residents about the noise.

The classic dilemma. Each time you expand the rights of one group of people, there is a risk that you are reducing the rights of other groups in the same space. While it is impossible to make everybody happy, you can increase collective happiness. Peaceful negotiation is needed, handling conflicts in a way that is productive and generates understanding and new shared values.

Can you share some trends in urban planning with us?

Rossella: The keywords around urban transformations are now changing very quickly, and that is very much to do with climate change, sustainability, and life during the pandemic. You might have heard about the 15-minute city concept that was born in Paris in 2015.

It is based on the vision that every citizen should be able to access every basic need in a radius of 15 minutes of walking or cycling from their home. Everything like schools, administration, shops, healthcare. Now this concept is evolving into something more complex and more interesting in my view. Inside this very dense urban environment, access to green, beautiful spaces, where you can share social lives, art, and culture have to be included. Many urban designers and planners are working towards this very holistic and human idea of urban proximity.

Like every other field, the pandemic has also accelerated urban planning. A manifesto on this specific aspect of a more holistic human urban concept was created in Milan during the pandemic.

And tactical urbanism is another trend. Implementing changes in a temporary way. If changes are not welcome, we change them again. If they are accepted, you turn them into strategic concepts or permanent changes. This way of working is derived from the grassroots movement. Cities are learning from citizens. They no longer mandate and cascade decisions, but listen, observe, use public intelligence, and derive actions from it.

And finally, there is the end to land consumption. The end to the banal expansion and the use of land in European cities. What started after the Second World War in Europe is now going in the reverse direction. The populations of European countries are contracting on average. And natural, untouched ground is a precious resource. We must create a new balance.



You are also an architect of people's individual homes. Let's talk about progress in this field. Have people's needs and desires changed because of the considerable changes around us?

Rossella: There is a very visible transformation happening. All of us have experienced that our homes have become semi-public spaces and semi-private spaces. We are no longer sure where our private life ends and public life begins. In the past, our front door was that physical barrier that protected us from the outside. Once it was closed, you were a private person. Now, it's not so precisely divided.

Both time and space inside face intrusion from the outside, especially from our work. Both areas of our lives are blurring. Even while we are sleeping, we might be working, because we think about work, because our environment reminds us of work.

This coexistence of two dimensions is very positive for some people, for example freelancers, or those who travel a lot. But they also have a strong impact on families with kids who juggle many different tasks in the same space, or people who live in very small homes shared with several people.

This coexistence of several spheres in our life is changing home builders' desires dramatically. Clients are now asking for small spaces that can be transformed into a hyper-private space, where I can have my call without being heard or hearing others. Now people are evaluating space and privacy as a priority much more than before.

Terraces, balconies, and small gardens are now a must for anyone who can afford them. Even the smallest spot with plants, flowers, and more sunlight counts. There is also a slowly growing desire for sustainable, recycled materials, although for many this is still perceived as a luxury. In retail environments, sustainability is already happening on a higher level.

Our last question is about the kitchen. The Italian kitchen. Is this very traditional place undergoing changes, too?

Rossella: I like to refer to the kitchen in Italy as a temple. For every Italian person, the kitchen is connected to a lot of memories, as it typically played a role in the relationship between mother and grandmother. I like to believe that this area of the house is where we created feminism and gender equality, where we shaped the interaction between men and women. Even in the very patriarchal

structure of our families, our grandmothers demonstrated their strong technical abilities, the field where they demonstrated competence and decision-making power in a specific field. While hopefully today we do not need the kitchen to display equality – and many men have “re-conquered” this space for themselves – still the kitchen has remained a place for representation of a growing competence.

A new sense of creativeness is shared inside the family, inside the group of friends. Celebration of creativity in cooking is something that is growing a lot as a collective ritual, in addition to eating as our traditional collective ritual. The whole process of selecting ingredients, creation and consumption of food – I think at Siemens you call this the culinary journey – is a blurred collective experience that sometimes becomes the very centre of our homes. There are two different philosophies emerging here: On one side of the spectrum, people try to keep the competence of cooking for themselves, their kitchen becoming a highly technological and specific laboratory of creation, full of appliances that

help them express their artistry and talent. This kitchen lives like a separate temple with limited access for others.

The other end of the spectrum is about integrating the kitchen into all the public spaces of the house. Imagine a theatre, a stage of performance. These kitchen owners love the permeability between the public parts of their house and the kitchen space. They want to blend the kitchen into the furniture and even make it invisible when not in use. For me as an architect, these different philosophies and preferences are the spice of my work. It's all about understanding the human being, their place on the spectrum of kitchen and cooking preferences.

While there is immense progress in the way we build and use our kitchens, there still is this ancestral discovery of who you are based on how you prepare food and how you share this journey with others.

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Image on page 31 – Regeneration of the public spaces network in Libertà neighborhood, Bari (design: 2017-2022, expected realization: 2023-24)

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All information in this publication has been collected and processed with the utmost care. Nevertheless, errors cannot be completely ruled out. All forward-looking statements were made on the basis of assumptions and estimates existing at the time of publication.