

## Future Scientist in the BILD-interview

Why the young generations think and vote differently,  
the mistakes Germany makes +++ What politicians and CEOs need to change

By Mark Oliver Rühle published at the  
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Germanys future is protesting

The major parties lose more and more votes from the young generations, pupils organize climate-protests, Youtube-influencer mix up the political establishment and studies prove, that employers missed their chances on tying young talents to their businesses – all of this in times of pressing skill shortage.

There is a gap between the generations. Are the younger ones antagonising the older ones?

→ **BILD** spoke to the futurepsychologist and demographic-scientist Prof. Dr. Thomas Druyen (61) from the Sigmund Freud private University in Vienna about the steadily growing gaps between the generations and the force of the youth.

**BILD:** Young influencer, such as Youtube-Star Rezo are suddenly interfering stridently, and they have an audience of millions of people – are you surprised by this echo?

**Prof. Dr. Thomas Druyen:** "I'm surprised, that this echo is surprising. Finally those questions are asked and people peer behind the hypocrisy of those in charge, who are full of themselves. The digital offstage is becoming the vermin exterminator of the ones pampered by success, who have not recognized, that their ship has sailed. The shouts of the young audience are surely not yet scientific or journalistic game-changers, but they will raise the dust, that was used to blur out sight for the past years. Keep it going!"

**BILD:** How do you as an expert evaluate the results of the "Future Talents"-study, which proved, that employers missed their chanced on tying young talents to their businesses?

**Druyen:** "The study is twisting the knife in the wound of our society. Many companies – also the majority of the politicians – have not yet understood how future employees can be addressed properly and how they act. The "Future Talents"-study is of a vast significance for our country. Those, who grew up with digitalisation play an exponentially growing role in terms of shaping the future. Those in charge apparently still don't get this. The offers that are supposed to attract our youth are way too conventional and discouraged."

**BILD:** This means that the employers are not prepared for the youngest generation of employees?

**Druyen:** "For me, the ignorance of employers has to do first and foremost with psychological factors. Psychologically our society seems to be extremely overwhelmed. The current diversity of unfamiliar and

new developments promotes stress, lack of time and fear of the future. The fact that we also need a new way of thinking is completely repressed. The young people, who are concerned with digitalization, have already subconsciously created (what the elders will hardly be able to develop) a world that is constantly changing and is hardly predictable. Flexibility is the core competence of the hour. The youth are actually the scouts that should receive the biggest attention.

## The European election has introduces a time rebound

**Can we learn from the youth? What are companies specifically suggesting? – How are we supposed to approach this youth?**

**Druyen:** “The fact is: The gap between the young and the old is getting bigger and bigger. The European elections have clearly marked the dawn of a new era. The youth thinks, votes and acts differently. Thank god there is no way of stopping it. And since we in Germany have a demographic gap, i.e. too few young people, companies must apply. What has been right for decades, can now suddenly become the opposite due to digitalization and globalization.”

**For example?**

**Druyen:** “For example, perfection. When we work on something today until it is impeccable, one can be sure that it will already be out-dated by the time of the optimization. So today I urgently advise the implementation of young advisory boards in companies. We need the input of those, who grew up with smart technologies.”

**What is Germany doing wrong?**

**Druyen:** “We totally missed the demographic changes, that are known for decades. A qualified immigration, for instance, would have been able to compensate the shortage of skilled workers in good time. Everyone who does not think preventively will be punished. 90 percent of our politicians see the future through the rearview-mirror. This is similarly true for many companies. We are world champions in problem solving, but in the assessment of future developments we are dilettantes. This is what our studies show. The future of democracy is an experiment that seeks all of our strength and imagination. Anything must be challenged, since there are hardly any safe concepts. We now need to dare being more youthful in our entrepreneurship.”

**What does it mean for the economic location: Germany, that we “totally missed” the demographic changes?**

**Druyen:** “Pension reductions for citizens, an obsolete lifecycle and approximately 20 years or more of years in an old age without financial plan and tasks. Our life has extended in the past 30 decades.

The core of our pension system has remained unchanged. How is that supposed to work? Retiring at the age of 65 or how some parties irresponsibly demand, at 63, and then by the 85th, or even 95th debt externally financed. That doesn't work."

**Germany is aging  
(Chart)**

**"We need new visions"**

**What do we need to reinvent?**

**Druyen:** "We need a new vision of our future society. The answers from the government so far?! Totally no answer at all! We must reinvent our lifework for at least another ten years. Making it attractive, promoting our meaning of life, communal living and so on. When I am abroad I only hear admiration and recognition for our country, at least as far as our living conditions are concerned. We live in an oasis. But with our annoyance, our inexplicable frustration and our fear regarding the future, we ignore our chance on self-determining the changes every day."

**You have a son of your own, who will be attending the labour market in about 10 years. What are his prospects? And will his generation be the most affected by demographic change?**

**Druyen:** "My son is lucky. He was born in one of the best countries in the world with absolutely great living standards. In the school everyone is desperately endeavoured, the teachers, the parents and the pupils. The books are outdated, teachers overburdened, digitalisation underrepresented, the concept of education is antiquated. Nevertheless, we all try to make the most of it.

Knowing how many people are so much worse. The initiative, however, must come from one's self, the state is neither our godfather nor our client. And its leadership competence has massively shed feathers. We have to help ourselves now."