

(DIS)CONNECTED WITH THE REALITY

It is undoubtedly true, the history of the generation gap and misunderstandings this gap has created is no younger than the humankind exists. So, it was no surprise elders brought up one of the oldest rhetorical questions in the world: What is it with youngsters? It is true, we're experiencing turbulence and instability, just as any generation had experienced. Besides, the fourth industrial revolution, globalization, the omnipotent power of the Internet, forced our evolution in a way almost no one could imagine just a decade ago. Nowadays thus the question about what the world is coming to and the young generation with it got a new sound, there's one more remark that pop-ups to youngsters about them living in some bubble instead of the real world. Also, it is noticeable the difference between generations is increasing disproportionally towards the age gap. Probably it would be worth trying to explore whether the meaning of reality is changing and if we in a hurry to grow on those metamorphoses.

Let's start with small steps, details if I may, isn't it where the devil is. Our taste preferences digressed from existed ones; the market provided us with new goods in response and created campaigns to recruit new adepts. IQOS instead of cigarette's honesty, MANA or smoothie instead of one good meal, music as real thing versus Spotify, fruits grow more sugared, so we've turned into sugar-free. We use less cash but more cards or apps instead, even phoning someone is a bit rude as new etiquette invites us to chat in messengers, SMSs at top.

Our grandmas learned the art of small talks and negotiations within the shopping. Innovations crowded it out or even replaced by online shopping, where all you need is to drop chosen items in a bag. In case of any questions, you're asked not to hesitate, and contact support represented by chat-box or a call center employee — less human contacts. Today, you can even work from the "comfort of your home", minimizing communication with your colleagues, team, boss. Maintaining rapport with your peers, establishing a trust or even sharpen office politics skills? All got online.

Even a sense of real nature is changing. Whereas someone from Siberia kindly invites any of us, the city dweller, to go fishing or on a mushroom hunt, or any camping, keep it in mind- it's half recreation, half surviving. So, gather picnic hampers with IQOS, gluten-free, lactose-free, sugar-free, or what its name free food and hint to uber escape towards city jungles is no more an option there.

We filter photos we're sharing with our friends and society (like no one will see us IRL), filter events we could be probably interested in attending, restaurants, and the food we might like, places we'd like to visit on vacations. We're putting all the statements had been made, videos been uploaded, basically every sentence, under a magnifying glass to polish incoming info from any shade of body-shaming, look-ism, age-ism, and so on. Outside of the sterile Google environment, those filters do not exist. This micro reality is not viable without a bubble.

Our bandwidth got narrow. We are Ok with binge-eating delivered pizza while binge-watching another TV show, it's ubiquitous ads almost stalked us wherever we're linking. But we start to ask publishers to issue comic books instead of traditional ones to read effortlessly.

We got swamped with data stream, so we've established our range of interests to cluster this flow, companies got us microtargeted in response. They've created Russian dolls, so our friends and we got

shown something designed explicitly for a specific micro group. So, we're diversifying even more. Our friends could bring for lunch something not alike, rumors about new Xbox instead of PlayStation, a new update for Apple vs. Android.

As successfully marketers figured out their path through our filters maze, news got the same way towards our attention. After sifting by countries, regions, age, gender, frequently visited pages on the Internet, previous interests, news are finally handled to us. They're not necessarily remained the same for everyone, which is odd, because reality is the same. Sometimes we find ourselves put in a spot when you should participate in a discussion, started by the question: "Have you heard what's happened in X?" We start our response with a polite and emotionally neutral smile, which can easily slip into some sad expression just in case.

Does it mean we've been relocated to some new micro reality and got disconnected from each other for good? Will those changes lead to even deeper misunderstandings? Well, the market and we are guilty of transforming reality into something customized and easier-to-process. On the flip side, most of the recent innovations look to mature enough for ensuring some sort of sustainability to us. Switchovers are slowing down. We're maintaining new ways to reassemble. Lagged figured out their tricks to adjust and almost are neck and neck.

We can use this little break wisely to introspect whether the elders are right about our mixed blessing-getting tagged with the new reading of real life.