



2021 REPORT

# The Shift Work Economy

United States of America



# The Shift Work Economy

David Zinman | Global President, Deputy

80% of the global workforce (2.7B people) are employed with irregular or rotating hours ([Emergence 2020 Report](#)). That's nearly a third of the world's population.

At Deputy, we sit at the heart of the labor market, enabling us to observe and report on the global workforce effectively. In the last year, we've developed the concept of the "Shift Work Economy," defined as workplaces with paid-by-the-hour employees and scheduled shifts on either an agreed, rotating, or irregular basis.

**In the United States, our organization works with over 83,661 businesses across a variety of industry sub-sectors, enabling us to observe over 1,302,499 shift workers who fall into this category. Businesses that operate with hourly workforce flexibility expand and contract hours of their employees as consumer demand rises and falls. This positions these businesses as leading indicators of how the economy responds to various trends and events. In essence, by powering the scheduling for over 1 million shift workers, Deputy can see labor demand before it materializes.**

Our scheduling software collects information on the hours people are scheduled and work. Deputy's shifts/hours scheduled and shifts/hours worked data provides a key index for how industries with a significant shift worker employee base have performed in the past and will perform in the future. We also collect and analyze granular insights on gender, generations, compliance behaviors, shift worker wellbeing, shift fairness, stability, and more.

At a time like today, where the world is healing from the destruction of COVID-19, this data can help understand the labor market better and identify areas of economic recovery. We can provide valuable, localized insights on how communities are recovering and how they contribute to national economic performance. Together, these components provide a powerful and unprecedented outlook on the health of the Shift Work Economy.



**David Zinman**

Global President, Deputy



# Methodology

The 2021 Shiftwork Economy Report was produced by leading scheduling software platform, Deputy, using Deputy customer data. The report features an industry-focused data analysis of US shift workers across the hospitality, healthcare, retail, and services industries. The data represents information collected from January 2019–May 2021. The analysis includes data from 1,302,499 US-based shift workers, 93,703,714 scheduled shifts, and 83,498,666 worked shifts.

## Industry Sample Set:

### Hospitality

109,453 shift workers, 6,339,132 scheduled shifts, and 5,725,689 worked shifts.

### Healthcare

128,585 shift workers, 5,791,401 scheduled shifts, and 3,327,284 worked shifts.

### Retail

119,584 shift workers, 8,200,451 scheduled shifts, and 7,625,719 worked shifts.

### Services

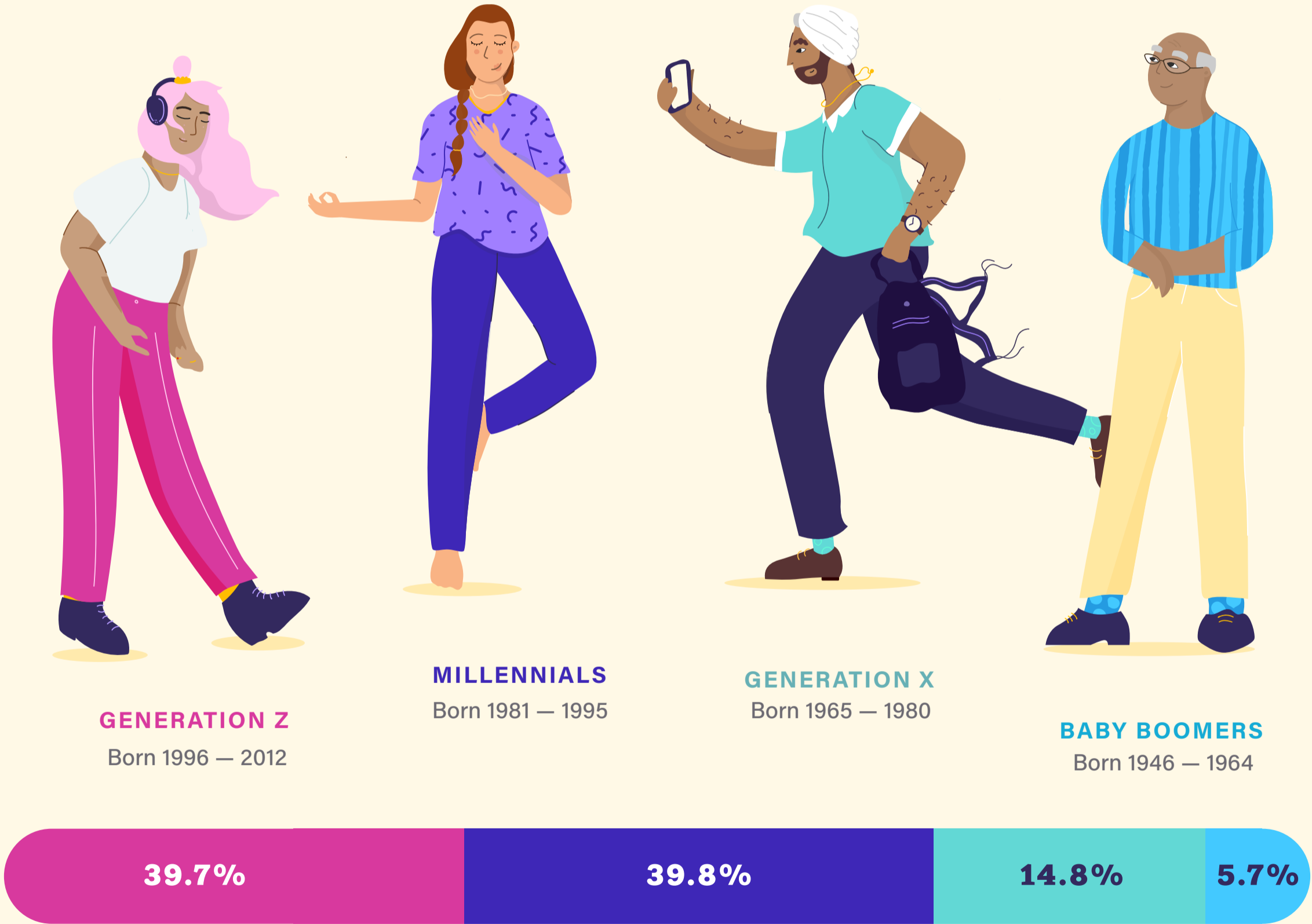
199,268 shift workers, 7,770,110 scheduled shifts, and 6,901,280 worked shifts.

\* Industry sample sets will not add up to the overall number of shift workers, this is due to data being analyzed from other industries not called out in the report, churn and other events that have occurred between 2019–2021. This data has been normalized to account for seasonality and demand of workforce fluctuations throughout the week (e.g. weekday vs. weekends).



# Shift workers by generation

Generation Z & Millennials make up majority of US shift workers



- The number of Generation Z shift workers are likely to surpass their Millennial counterparts in the workplace within the next six months.



# American shift workers by generation

Baby Boomers work more hours and shifts each month on average



## GENERATION Z

**21**

Average age

**6h**

Average shift length

**128**

Average hrs/month

**21**

Average shifts/month



## MILLENNIALS

**31**

Average age

**6.8h**

Average shift length

**173**

Average hrs/month

**26**

Average shifts/month



## GENERATION X

**46**

Average age

**7.1h**

Average shift length

**186**

Average hrs/month

**26**

Average shifts/month



## BABY BOOMERS

**61**

Average age

**7.3h**

Average shift length

**225**

Average hrs/month

**30**

Average shifts/month

- On average, Baby Boomers worked more hours than any other generation. In the last year, we've seen Baby Boomers average 30 shifts per month, resulting in extended hours and limited days off.
- Most of the growth in hours worked by Baby Boomers came from the healthcare sector.



# Scheduled vs worked hours by generation

American shift workers lack stability and job security

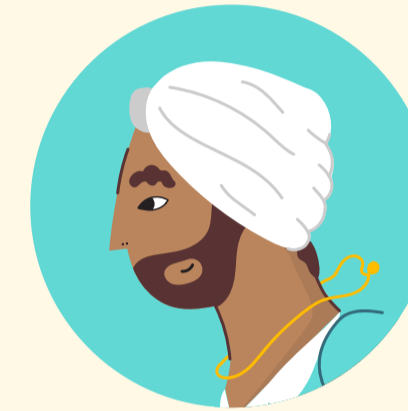
- Shift workers are working more hours per month than ever before on average when you look at our insights purely from a generational perspective. However the average hours displayed here are significantly influenced by the significant increase in work in the healthcare and services sectors during the pandemic.
- A standout issue impacting all generations however regardless of the industry worked in, is the lack of job security that exists with every generation on average being scheduled well below the full time equivalent of 164 hours per month.



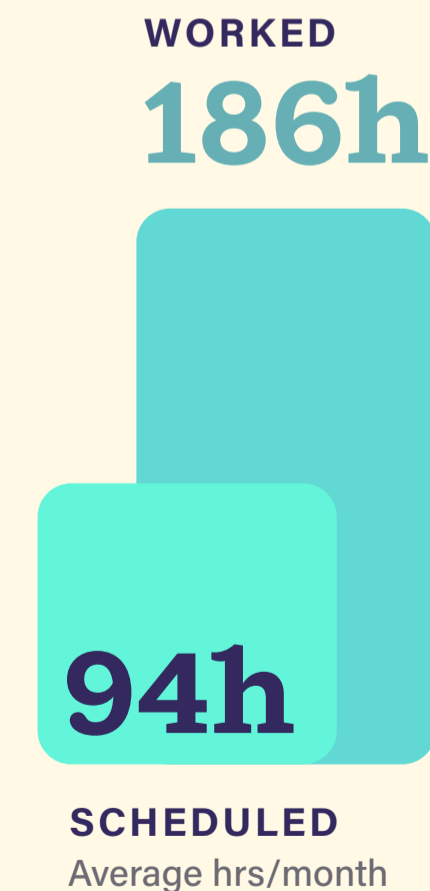
GENERATION Z



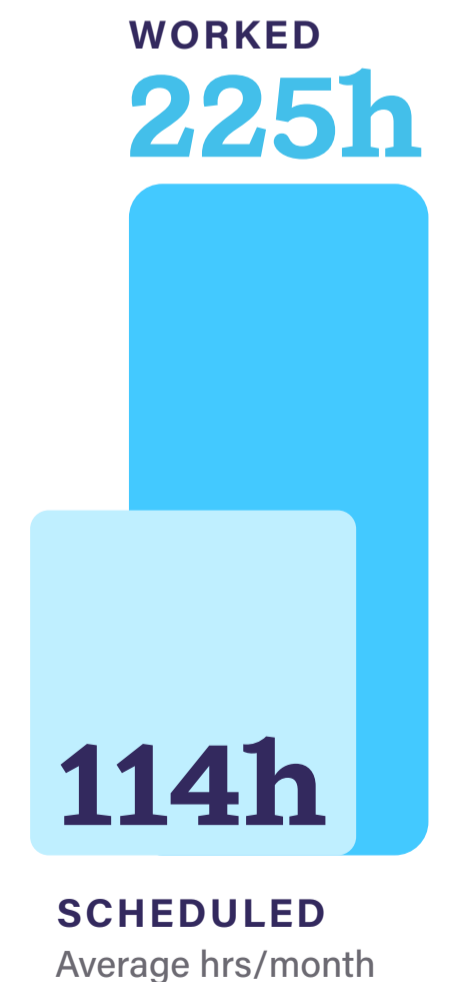
MILLENNIALS



GENERATION X



BABY BOOMERS



# Female vs male shift workers

Female shift workers face more shift instability



FEMALE



MALE

- Women are working longer shifts than men and represent the majority of shift workers. But are given less scheduled hours, extra hours and overtime than men. Making their work schedules less predictable and secure.

**40**  
Average age

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**8.1h**  
Average shift length

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**62%**  
of all shiftworkers

**WORKED**  
**174h**

**99h**

**SCHEDULED**  
Average hrs/month

A bar chart for female shift workers. The top bar is yellow and labeled 'WORKED 174h'. The bottom bar is also yellow and labeled '99h'. Below the bars is the text 'SCHEDULED Average hrs/month'.

**WORKED**  
**196h**

**103h**

**SCHEDULED**  
Average hrs/month

A bar chart for male shift workers. The top bar is purple and labeled 'WORKED 196h'. The bottom bar is also purple and labeled '103h'. Below the bars is the text 'SCHEDULED Average hrs/month'.

**40**  
Average age

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**7.9h**  
Average shift length

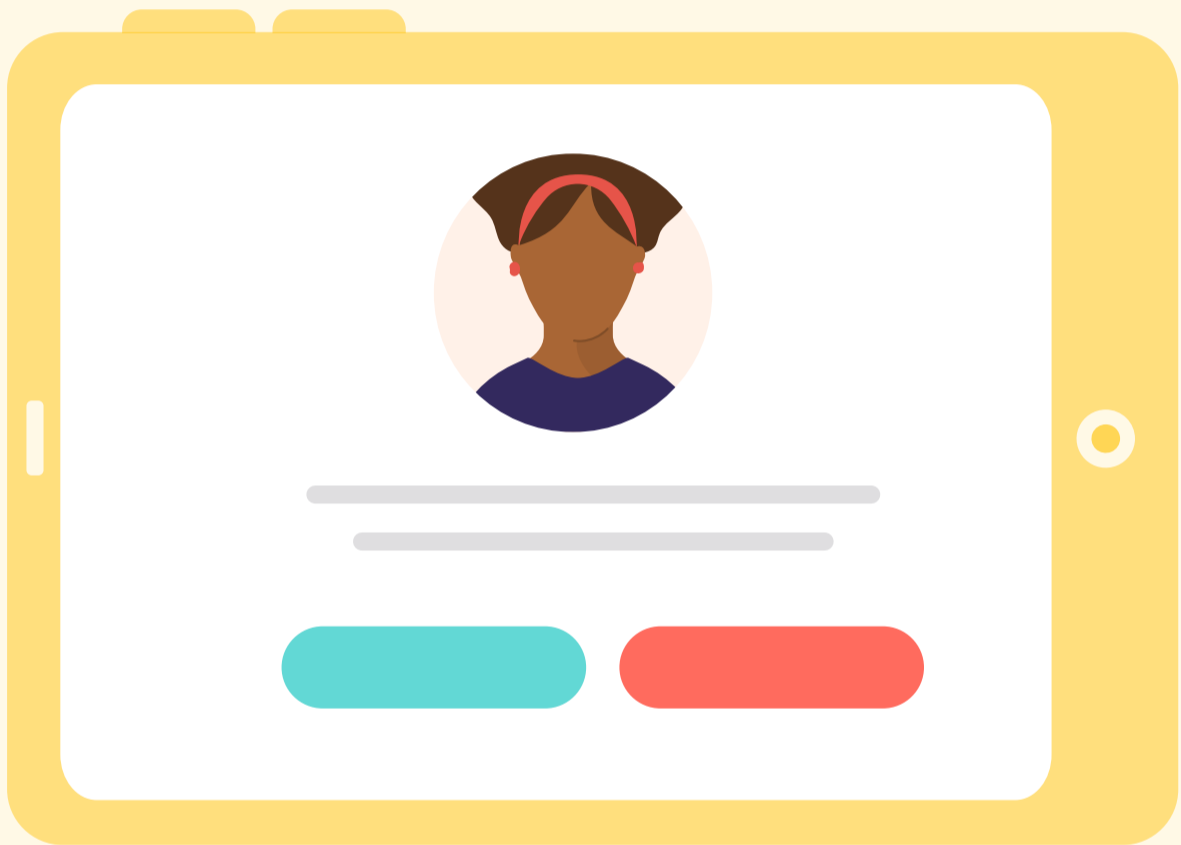
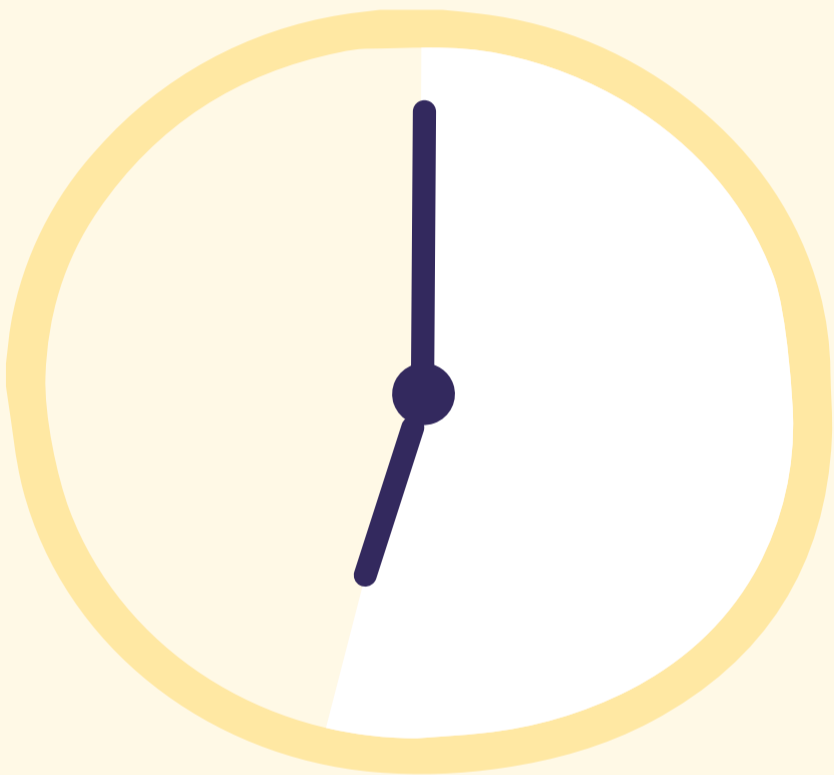
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**38%**  
of all shiftworkers



# The average shift in America

Majority work morning and afternoon shifts



AVERAGE SHIFT LENGTH

**6.7 hrs.**

AVERAGE CLOCK ON

**7:24 am**

AVERAGE CLOCK OFF

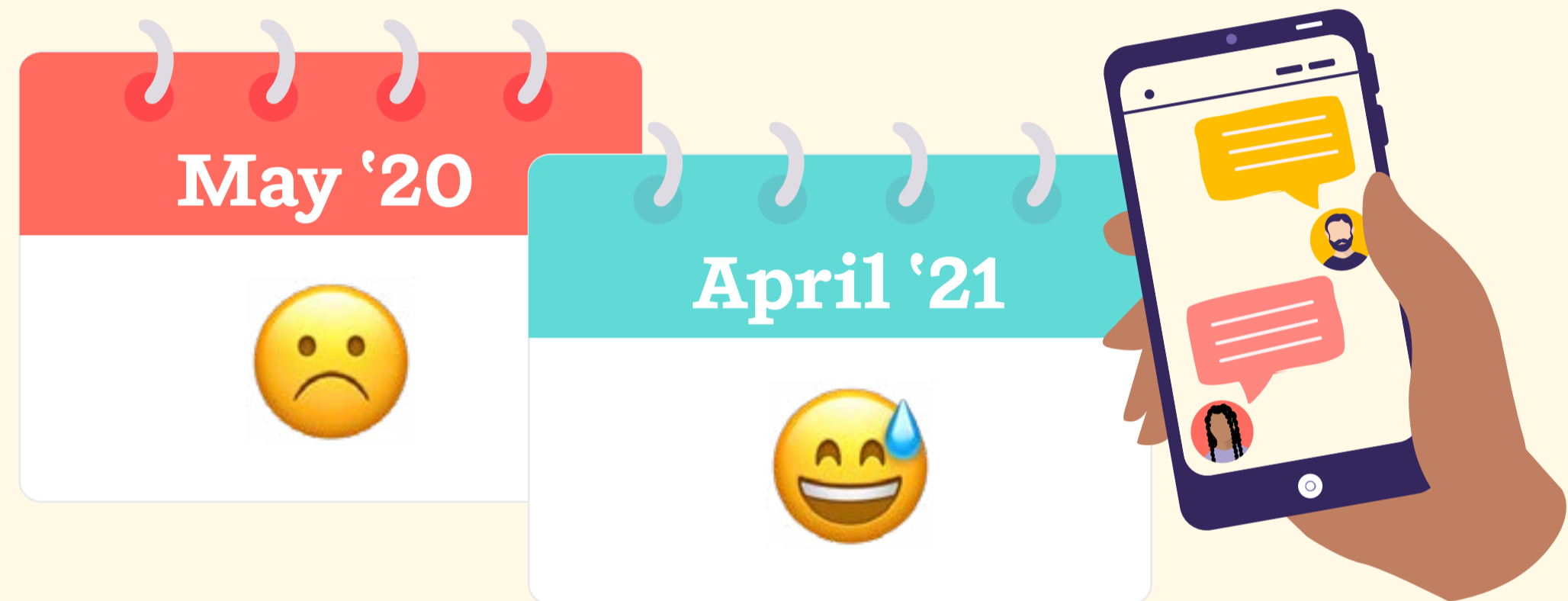
**5:24 pm**



# The pandemic 2020/2021

How COVID-19 has impacted shift workers in the US

- Shifts and hours worked, declined sharply from March to April 2020 during the initial national lock down.
- Over 1.9 million conversations have taken place on the Deputy News feed about COVID-19 since December 2019.
- The sharp decline in shifts and hours worked in April, led to an even tougher May for shift workers and what would end up being the month during the pandemic where the least shifts and hours were worked.
- Hospitality experienced the sharpest reduction of hours followed by retail, with services experiencing the strongest recovery post April 2020. This is due to the lockdown restrictions on dining and non-essential retail, with the recovery fueled by increasing demand from consumers.
- Services and retail had the greatest disparity (4-6%). This trend rang true across all industries however, hospitality and healthcare had the least disparity between the impact of COVID-19 on women (1-2%).



WORST MONTH

**May '20**

BEST MONTH

**April '21**

PANDEMIC-RELATED MESSAGES

**1,934,992**

sent via Newsfeed



Female shift workers were 4% more adversely impacted by COVID-19 in terms of average shifts worked and average hours worked (20% decline for males versus 24% decline for females), however have experienced a stronger recovery (19% males versus 27% females).



# Pandemic impact vs recovery

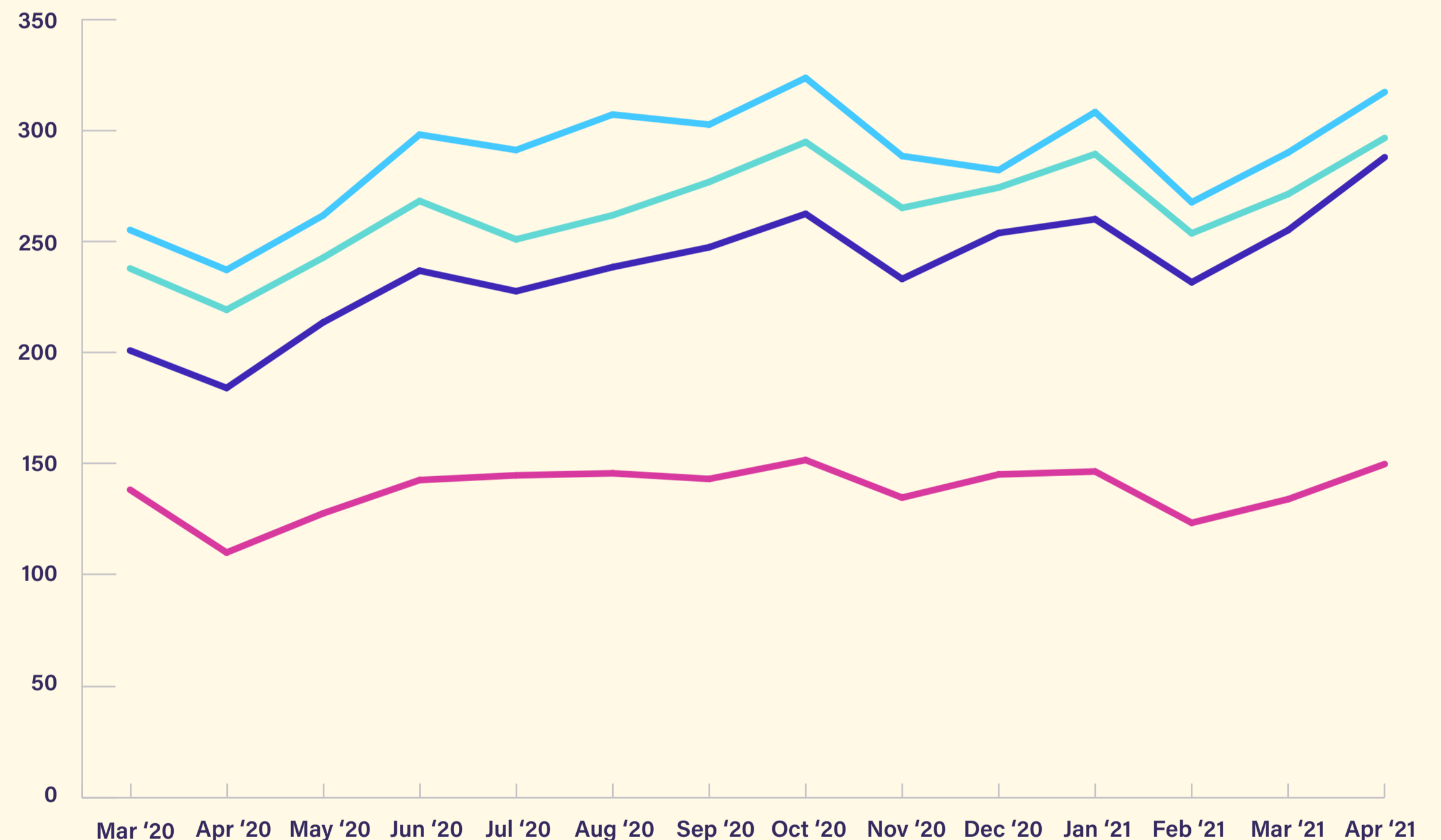
How COVID-19 has impacted the working patterns of healthcare workers

AVERAGE MONTHLY HOURS WORKED

## Healthcare

- **Baby Boomers**  
22% reduction from pre-COVID shifts and hours
- **Generation X**  
17% reduction from pre-COVID shifts and hours
- **Generation Z**  
37% reduction from pre-COVID shifts and hours
- **Millennials**  
20% reduction from pre-COVID shifts and hours

The hardest hit subsectors in the Healthcare industry were In-home Care and Dentists. After a slight reduction hours worked are now back to pre-COVID levels.



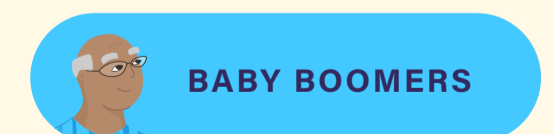
GENERATION Z



MILLENNIALS



GENERATION X



BABY BOOMERS



# Pandemic impact vs recovery

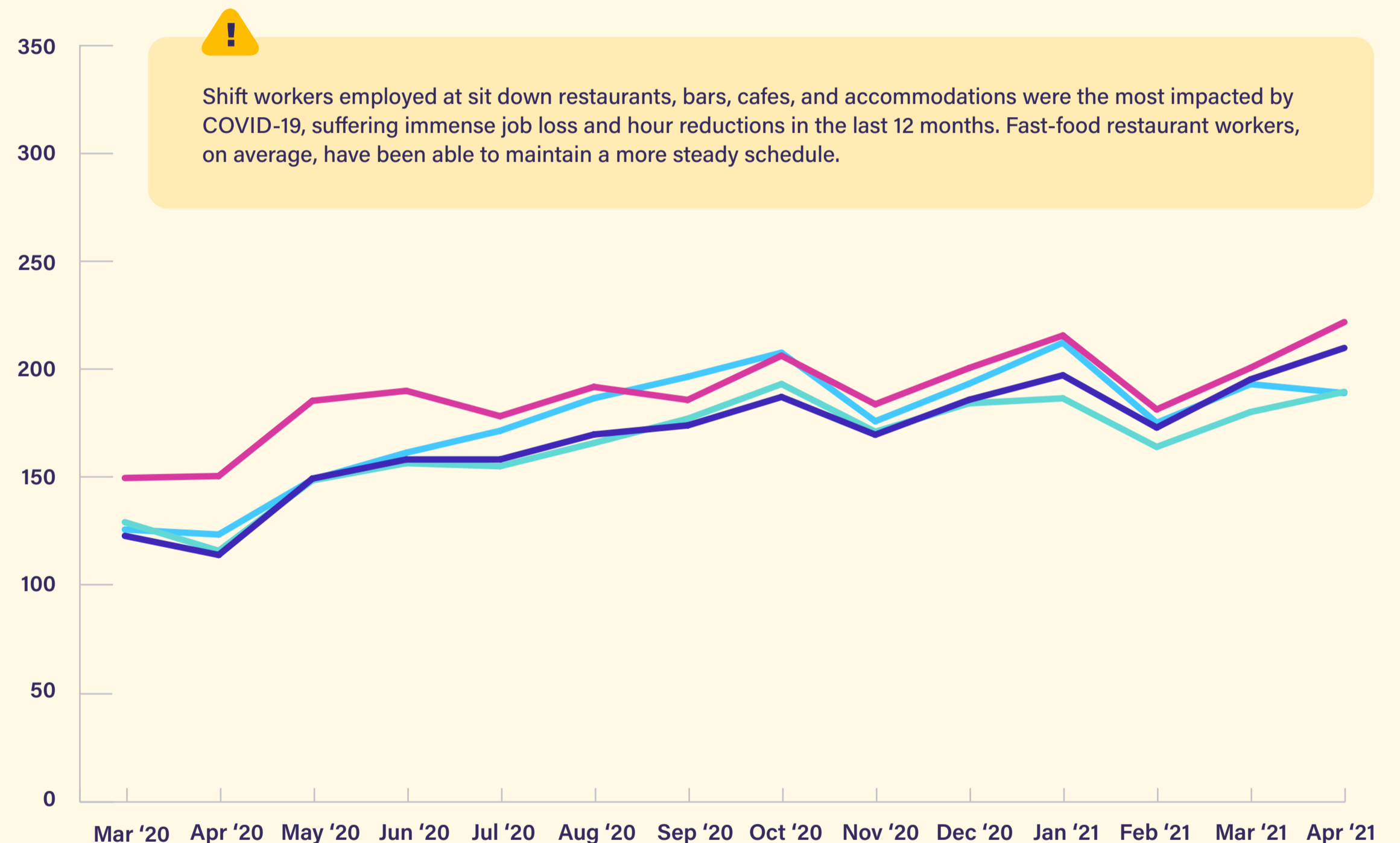
How COVID-19 has impacted generations by industry

## AVERAGE MONTHLY HOURS WORKED

### Hospitality

- **Baby Boomers**  
43% reduction from pre-COVID shifts and hours
- **Generation X**  
30% reduction from pre-COVID shifts and hours
- **Generation Z**  
43% reduction from pre-COVID shifts and hours
- **Millennials**  
43% reduction from pre-COVID shifts and hours

The Hospitality industry was the hardest hit by the pandemic, with shift workers in this space experiencing the impact of unpredictable work schedules, most frequently.



GENERATION Z



MILLENNIALS



GENERATION X



BABY BOOMERS



# Pandemic impact vs recovery

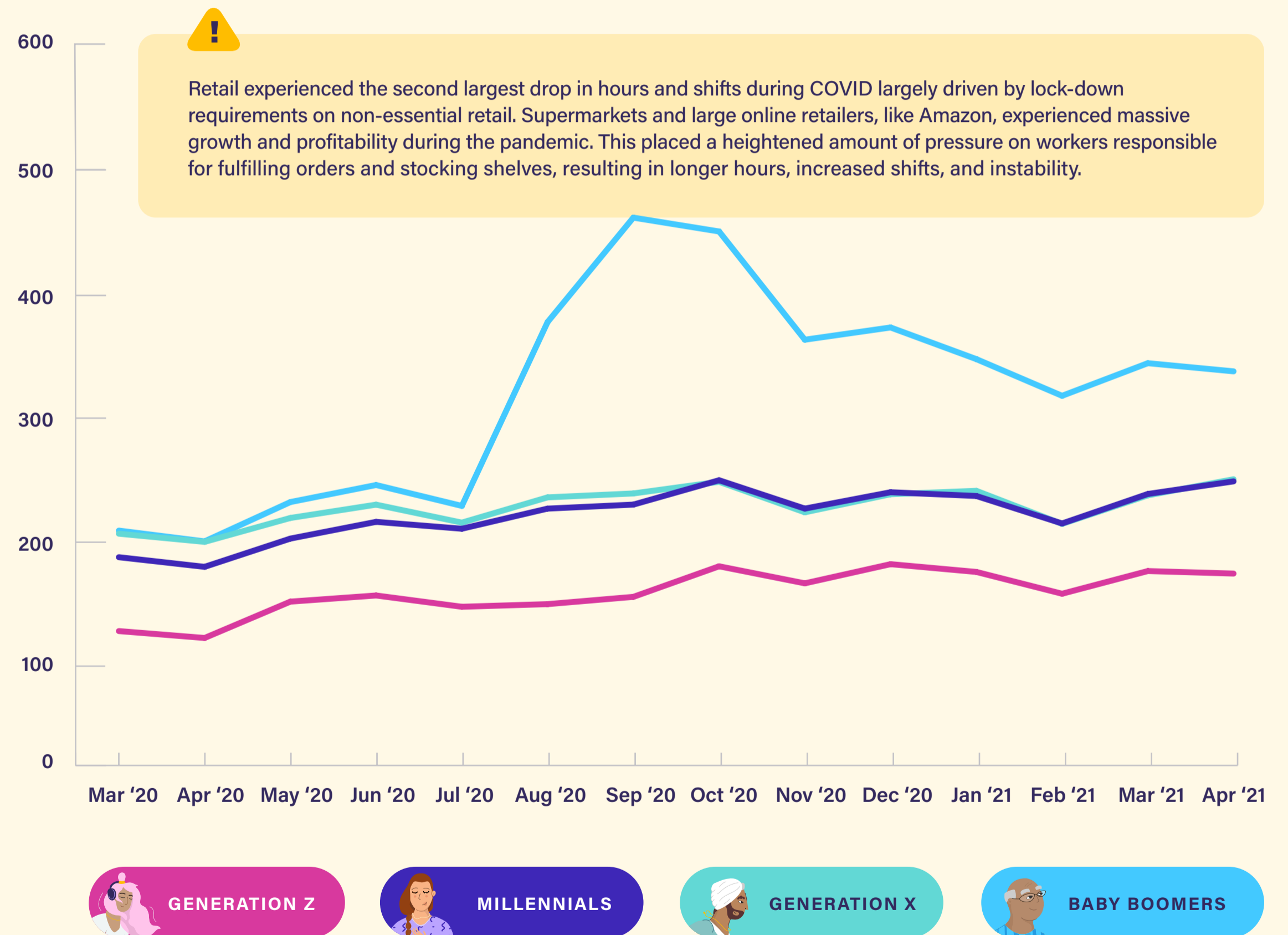
How COVID-19 has impacted generations by industry

## AVERAGE MONTHLY HOURS WORKED

### Retail

- **Baby Boomers**  
43% reduction from pre-COVID shifts and hours
- **Generation X**  
30% reduction from pre-COVID shifts and hours
- **Generation Z**  
44% reduction from pre-COVID shifts and hours (experienced the slowest recovery)
- **Millennials**  
44% reduction from pre-COVID shifts and hours

Hours and shifts fell 30% during the height of the pandemic in April 20 however have since recovered to pre-pandemic levels.



# Pandemic impact vs recovery

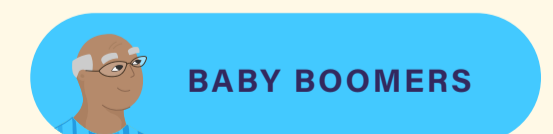
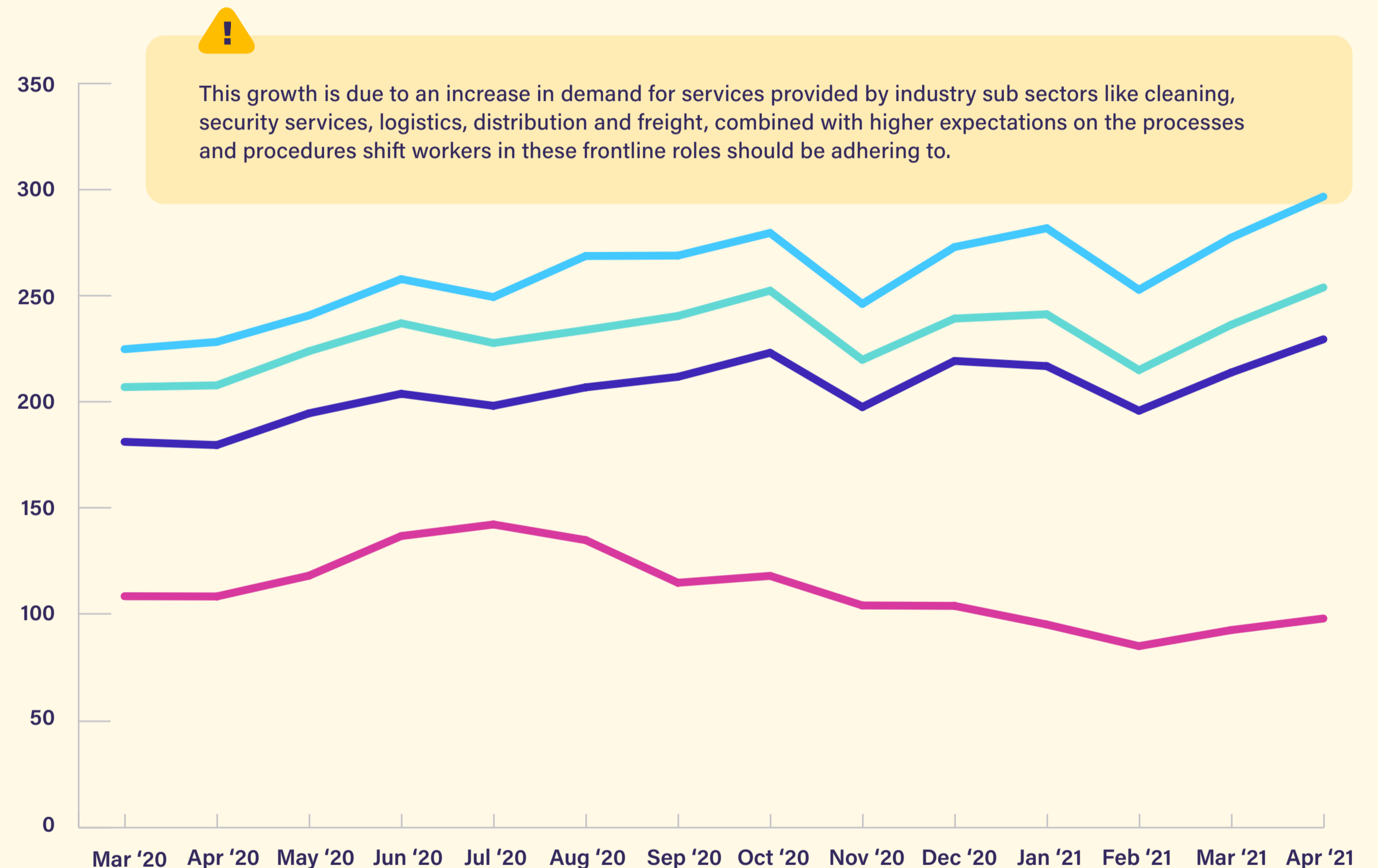
How COVID-19 has impacted generations by industry

## AVERAGE MONTHLY HOURS WORKED

### Services

- **Baby Boomers**  
15% reduction from pre-COVID shifts and hours
- **Generation X**  
9% reduction from pre-COVID shifts and hours
- **Generation Z**  
18% reduction from pre-COVID shifts and hours (experienced a very slow recovery)
- **Millennials**  
12% reduction from pre-COVID shifts and hours

The services industry experienced a strong recovery, with hours and shifts growing 10% above pre-pandemic levels.



**#ShiftWorkEconomy**

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