

2025 CourtFutures Top Trends to Watch: By Age Cohort



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The Surveys

This report synthesizes the insights of more than 1,800 court professionals, each reviewing subsets of 247 distinct scenarios depicting potential futures for the courts. This summary highlights recent assessments segmented by age cohort.

Traditional Generation Born Before 1945	Baby Boomers Born Between 1945 & 1964	Generation X Born Between 1965 & 1979
Millennials Born Between 1980 & 1994		Generation Z Born After 1994

Over the past twelve years, we have garnered stakeholder input by disseminating thirteen surveys to explore a fundamental question: *What is the most probable future for courts?* By evaluating the likelihood of various scenarios unfolding over the next decade and averaging those assessments, we have developed a forecast of potential developments in the judicial system.

Respondents rated the probability of each scenario on a scale of 1 (Highly Likely) to 5 (Improbable). Scenario scores were then averaged and categorized as follows: Assessments averaging from 1.0 to 1.9 are labeled *Highly Likely*; 2.0 to 2.4: *Likely*; 2.5 to 2.9: *Maybe (50-50 Chance)*; 3.0 to 3.4: *Unlikely*; 3.5 and higher: *Improbable*.

We invite you to go to <https://www.Courtleader.net>. Janet Cornell hosts the site where we have posted several “thought pieces” on the *CourtFutures* webpage. You can request a full set of survey results by emailing us at CourtFutures@gmail.com. The endnote lists the number of respondents in each age cohort.

No. 10: Courts Employ Significantly More Knowledge Workers

This is the first of several scenarios that appeared in the 2024 *Top Trends* report, but their implications are too important to overlook. As court management becomes more complex, courts will hire staff with strong interpersonal skills to ensure efficient case management, improve accessibility, and foster a positive experience for all parties.ⁱ With the rise of artificial intelligence and evolving regulations, courts will require professionals who can analyze, manage, and interpret vast amounts of legal information efficiently.ⁱⁱ This scenario was first assessed as Likely with a 2.4 probability in the Spring of 2013; it was again assessed as Likely in the Winter of 2016 with a 2.2 average probability.

Theme	Overall Group
<i>Courts Employ Significantly More Knowledge Workers</i>	<i>Likely</i>

All age cohorts assessed the scenario as *Likely* with a 2.1 likelihood. Baby Boomers assessed it with a 2.2 probability; Millennials assessed it as 2.3; and Generation X assessed it as 2.1.

No. 9: Employee Conflict Resolution Becomes a Key Skill for Hiring Supervisors & Managers

With up to four generations working together and a mix of in-office and remote employees, workplaces are becoming ever more diverse. Organizations will be looking for supervisors and managers who excel at mediating conflicts and managing diverse expectations. These skills are essential for fostering collaboration, ensuring workplace harmony, and addressing the unique challenges of modern teams.ⁱⁱⁱ

Theme	Overall Group
<i>Conflict Resolution Becomes a Key Skill for Supervisors & Managers</i>	<i>Likely</i>

All age cohorts assessed this scenario as *Likely* with a 2.2 likelihood. Baby Boomers assessed it as a 2.3 probability; Millennials assessed it as 2.1; Generation X assessed it as 2.2.

No. 8: Artificial Intelligence Increasingly Automates Litigant Assistance

This scenario was also in the 2024 Top Trends report. Courts are beginning to embrace automated systems not just to assist, but to guide litigants through the maze of court procedures. These digital assistants go far beyond simple form instructions. They offer tailored advice, often with an accuracy and depth that rivals, or even exceeds, that of live court professionals. When this scenario was last assessed in the Winter of 2021, it earned a *Likely* rating, with a probability of 2.2.

Theme	Overall Group
<i>Artificial Intelligence Increasingly Automates Litigant Assistance</i>	<i>Likely</i>

All age cohorts assessed the scenario as *Likely* with a 2.1 probability. Baby Boomers & Generation X with a 2.0 likelihood; Millennials with a 2.2.

No. 7: Artificial Intelligence Creates Entirely New Categories of Job Roles

AI is rewriting the rules of work, and new roles are quietly emerging. Jobs like AI trainers, explainers, and prompters now bridge man and machine. These aren't science fiction; they are already in demand. The future workforce won't just use AI, it will *shape* it.^{iv}

Theme	Overall Group
<i>Artificial Intelligence Generates New Categories of Job Roles</i>	<i>Likely</i>

The overall group assessed the scenario as *Likely* with a 2.1 probability. Baby Boomers & Generation X with a 2.1 likelihood; Millennials with a 2.2.

No. 6: Courts Train Staff in Trauma-Informed Customer Service Skills to Deal with Litigants & Families In Crisis

As courts increasingly serve litigants and families experiencing emotional crises, it is essential that staff are equipped with trauma-informed customer service skills. New employees are now expected to identify signs of trauma in real time, remain calm under pressure, de-escalate emotionally charged situations, and practice self-care to support their own mental health.^v

Theme	Overall Group
<i>Courts Train Staff with Trauma-Informed Customer Service Skills</i>	<i>Likely</i>

The overall group assessed the scenario as *Likely* with a 2.3 probability. Baby Boomers assessed it as having a *50-50 Chance* with a 2.5 likelihood; Generation X assessed it as 2.2; Millennials assessed it as 2.1.

No. 5: Cybersecurity Continues to Be a Major Issue for Courts

Courts manage vast amounts of sensitive legal data, making them attractive targets for cybercriminals. Recent incidents, such as ransomware attacks on the U.S. court system, have disrupted operations and compromised critical records. Additionally, vulnerabilities in court networks expose them to risks that could undermine public trust and delay legal proceedings.^{vi} This scenario was first assessed as Highly Likely in the Winter of 2021 with a 1.4 average probability. Most recently, it was run in the 2024 survey.

Theme	Overall Group
<i>Cybersecurity Continues to Be a Major Issue for Courts</i>	<i>Highly Likely</i>

The overall group assessed the scenario as *Highly Likely* with a 1.6 probability. Baby Boomers assessed it as a 1.4 likelihood; Generation X assessed it as 1.6; Millennials assessed it as 1.9.

No. 4: Courts Increasingly Depend on Outsourced Cybersecurity Vendors

As scenario number 5 shows, cybersecurity is still top of mind for many courts that face challenges in attracting and retaining skilled cybersecurity professionals due to budget constraints and competitive private-sector salaries. Outsourcing management to security service providers offers a viable solution, granting access to advanced technologies and 24/7 monitoring without the overhead of building in-house teams.^{vii}

Theme	Overall Group
Courts Increasingly Depend on Outsourced Cybersecurity Vendors	Likely

The overall group assessed the scenario as **Likely** with a 2.0 probability. Baby Boomers assessed it as **Highly Likely** a 1.8 likelihood; Generation X and Millennials assessed it as **Likely** with a 2.0 and 2.3 respectively.

No. 3: Legislatures and Interest Groups Attempt to Assert More Control over Judicial Decisions

Over the next decade, it is anticipated that legislatures and interest groups will intensify efforts to influence judicial decisions. Legislatures and interest groups employ various strategies to increase their influence. These include imposing legislative restrictions on judicial authority, initiating recalls, promoting voter initiatives and referendums, conducting budget audits, and advocating for more partisan approaches to judicial selection, elections, and retention. This trend is further propelled by substantial financial investments in judicial elections, particularly at the state level, where special interest spending has surged, raising concerns about the impartiality of the judiciary.^{viii}

Theme	Overall Group
Legislatures & Interest Groups Attempt to Assert More Control over Judicial Decisions	Highly Likely

The overall group assessed the scenario as **Highly Likely** with a 1.9 probability. Baby Boomers assessed it as a 1.8; Generation X assessed it as **Likely** with a 2.0; and Millennials assessed it as **Highly Likely** with a 1.9.

No. 2: Electronic Transcripts are Produced Faster and at Higher Quality

Advancements in software have significantly improved voice-to-text conversion, minimizing the need for human intervention. Modern voice recognition technology can accurately distinguish between different speakers, while improved sound systems reduce the occurrences of "inaudibles." Electronic transcription will continue to improve over traditional court reporting methods in the next decade due to advancements in artificial intelligence and digital recording technologies. AI-powered transcription tools are becoming more accurate, reducing errors and increasing efficiency in legal documentation.^{ix}

Theme	Overall Group
Electronic Transcripts are Produced Faster and at Higher Quality	Highly Likely

All age cohorts assessed the scenario as **Highly Likely** with a 1.6 overall probability. Baby Boomers and Generation X assessed it as 1.6; Millennials assessed it as 1.8.

No. 1: The Public Becomes Increasingly Skeptical of Technology

Amid the ongoing flood of news highlighting the potential risks of AI, public skepticism is rising. Many people are increasingly hesitant about the use of AI, particularly in the courts, due to concerns over its reliability, fairness, and potential for misuse. The 2024 Edelman Trust Barometer Supplemental Report: Insights for the Tech Sector noted that as AI innovation accelerates, trust in AI companies has declined, reflecting deepening public anxieties about the societal impact of rapid technological change.^x

Theme	Overall Group
The Public Becomes Increasingly Skeptical of Technology	Likely

All age cohorts assessed the scenario as **Likely** with a 2.4 overall probability. Baby Boomers and Generation X assessed it as 2.4; Millennials assessed it as 2.2.

We are gearing up for our 2026 survey and want to hear what you think we should ask. Also, let us know of anyone who might be interested in participating in the next survey. Email your suggestions to court futures@gmail.com.

Respondents By Age Cohort

Survey Date	Respondents	Traditionals (Born Before 1945)	Baby Boomers (1945 to 1964)	Generation X (1965 to 1979)	Millennials (1980 to 1994)	Generation Z (Born After 1994)
Spring 2013	232	3	133	60	31	
Summer 2013	212	5	119	56	31	
2014	510	11	293	144	58	
2015	493	13	283	145	49	
2016	369	8	203	112	42	1
2017	391	14	206	130	38	
2018	352	12	164	127	47	
2019	396	13	201	146	36	
2020	412	10	176	170	44	8
2021	358	9	161	138	42	3
2022	321	8	125	139	39	5
2023	288	6	115	117	41	6
2024	205		69	98	31	
2025	214	1	71	87	43	2

ⁱ <https://nacmnet.org/portfolio-item/the-future-of-hiring-is-there-a-balance-between-ai-diversity-and-court-expertise/>

ⁱⁱ <https://abovethelaw.com/2025/02/empirical-evidence-on-the-impact-of-ai-in-law-insights-from-professor-daniel-schwarcz/>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://smartree.com/en/articol/top-5-priorities-for-hr-leaders-in-2023/>

^{iv} https://sloanreview.mit.edu/article/will-ai-create-as-many-jobs-as-it-eliminates/?utm_source=chatgpt.com

^v https://www.traumaaware.org/promoting-access-to-justice-through-trauma-informed-courts?utm_source=chatgpt.com

^{vi} https://www.ncsc.org/_data/assets/pdf_file/0030/86835/NCSC-Final-Cyber-Report-Dec-2022.pdf

^{vii} https://natlawreview.com/article/organizations-increasingly-meet-cybersecurity-needs-through-outsourcing?utm_source=chatgpt.com#google_vignette

^{viii} <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/analysis-opinion/outside-spending-special-interests-floods-judicial-elections-record>

^{ix} <https://www.transperfectlegal.com/blog/future-court-reporting-how-ai-revolutionizing-legal-transcription>

^x https://www.edleman.com//trust/2024/trust-barometer/special-report-tech-sector?utm_source=chatgpt.com