

## Serving young people

As a generation hit by two major global crises in less than 15 years, today's youth are finding it increasingly difficult to transition to an autonomous life. Young people have less income at their disposal than previous young generations and they are 2.5 times more likely to be unemployed than those aged 25-64 (OECD, 2020a). The COVID-19 crisis has further exacerbated inequalities among young people and between different age cohorts, raising questions about intergenerational justice. For instance, youth were hit hardest by rises in unemployment over the past year with significant effects on their mental health and access to housing (OECD, 2021; OECD, 2020b). At the same time, they have played an important role in building societal resilience by supporting their peers and the elderly during the pandemic (OECD, 2020a).

Access to and the responsiveness and quality of public services are important determinants of young people's transition to an autonomous life. In 2020, youth-led organisations surveyed by the OECD showed the greatest satisfaction in the area of sports, culture and leisure (3.2 on average, on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 was "very dissatisfied" and 5 "very satisfied") but were much less satisfied with public services in housing (2.1 on average) and employment (2.5) (Figure 14.30).

In recent years, an increasing number of OECD countries have adopted national youth strategies (NYS) to unite governmental and non-governmental stakeholders behind a joint vision for young people (Figure 14.31). In 2020, 25 out of 33 OECD countries (76%), as well as Costa Rica and Romania had a NYS in place. A majority of these strategies aim to improve the access to and responsiveness of public services for young people (80%) and integrate the diverse concerns of young people into all service areas (84%) (OECD, 2020b).

A large number of OECD countries pursue a cross-sectoral approach and their NYS cover commitments for young people in a wide array of service areas including education (24 out of 25, 96%), health (23 out of 25, 92%) and sports (21 out of 25, 84%) (Figure 14.32). These are also areas of focus for Brazil, Costa Rica and Romania. Fewer OECD countries focus on justice (7 out of 25, 28%), transport (13 out of 25, 52%) and housing (15 out of 25, 60%), which are policy areas where youth organisations express lower levels of satisfaction. The average satisfaction score was 2.1 out of 5 for housing services, 2.5 for justice, and 2.6 for transport, presumably because these services are less responsive to young people's expectations and needs than those where governments have been paying more attention to their needs. For instance, the average satisfaction with both education and health services was 2.7 (Figure 14.30).

Policy makers need adequate resources and skills and effective co-ordination mechanisms to avoid fragmented delivery of policies and services. The main obstacles government entities in charge of youth affairs identify in this area are the lack of institutional mechanisms (45%) and insufficient capacities in line ministries (42%) and within their own entity (39%) (OECD, 2020b).

### Methodology and definitions

"Youth" is defined as a period towards adulthood, which is characterised by various transitions in people's lives. The UN classification indicates that individuals aged between 15 and 24 fall into this category.

Data from government entities were collected through the OECD Youth Governance Surveys, to which 33 OECD countries responded, as well as Brazil, Costa Rica and Romania. Respondents were senior officials from the youth, education or health ministry, or any other ministry responsible for the co-ordination of national youth strategies.

Data on youth organisations were collected via an online survey conducted between May 2019 and January 2020, to which 65 organisations responded. The survey used a (non-representative) convenience sampling method, so the results are not representative at the country level and cannot be extrapolated to the population of youth organisations. Respondents were recruited on social media, through the OECD's official accounts; only respondents who could prove the existence of their organisation (with a valid URL/website presenting the work of the organisation) were included in the final analysis.

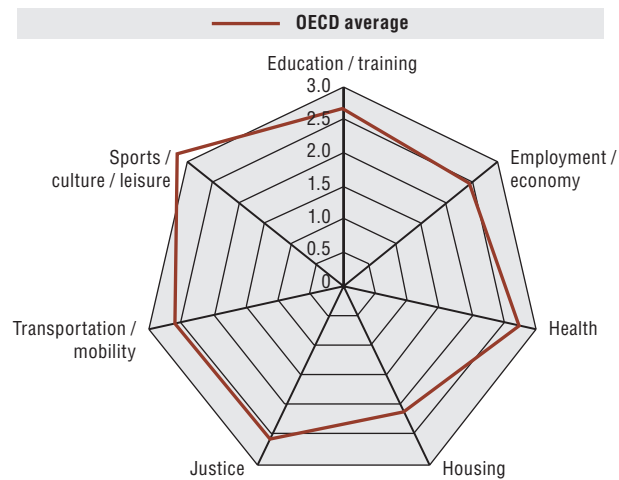
### Further reading

- OECD (2021), Unemployment Rates, OECD website, [www.oecd.org/sdd/labour-stats/unemployment-rates-oecd-update-february-2021.htm](http://www.oecd.org/sdd/labour-stats/unemployment-rates-oecd-update-february-2021.htm).
- OECD (2020a), "Youth and COVID-19: Response, recovery and resilience", *OECD Policy Responses to Coronavirus (COVID-19)*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/c40e61c6-en>.
- OECD (2020b), *Governance for Youth, Trust and Intergenerational Justice: Fit for All Generations?*, OECD Public Governance Reviews, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/c3e5cb8a-en>.

### Figure notes

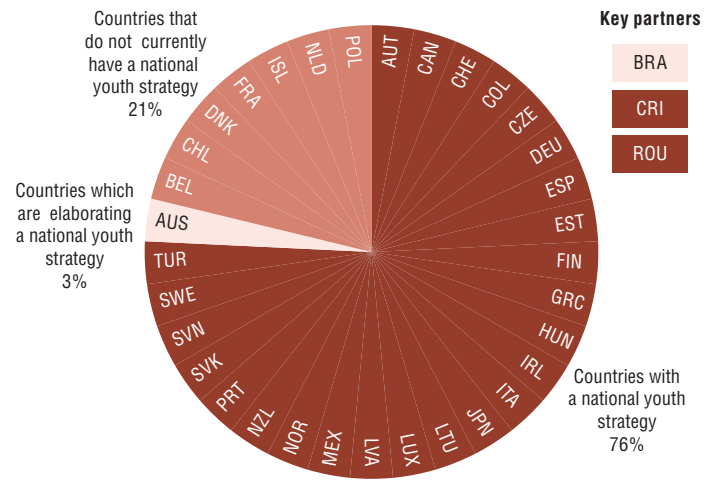
- 14.30. Data based on 49 to 52 (depending on the answer option) youth organisations in OECD countries for which answers to this question are available. Youth organisations were asked to rate their satisfaction on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 was "very dissatisfied" and 5 was "very satisfied".
- 14.31. The graph shows the 33 OECD countries and 3 non-member countries (Brazil, Costa Rica and Romania) responding to the OECD Youth Governance Surveys.
- 14.32. Data refer to 28 countries, 25 OECD countries and 3 non-member countries (Brazil, Costa Rica and Romania), that have or are elaborating a NYS.

14.30. Youth organisations' satisfaction with public services, 2020



Source: OECD (2020) Survey of Youth Organisations. StatLink <https://doi.org/10.1787/888934259959>

14.31. Availability of a youth strategy at the national/federal level, 2020



Source: OECD (2020) Youth Governance Surveys. StatLink <https://doi.org/10.1787/888934259978>

14.32. Thematic focus of national youth strategies, 2020

Country	Education/ training	Employment/ economy	Health	Housing	Justice	Transportation/ mobility	Sports/ culture/ leisure
Australia	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Austria	●	●	●	○	●	●	●
Canada	●	●	●	○	○	○	○
Switzerland	●	○	●	○	○	○	●
Colombia	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Czech Republic	●	●	●	○	○	●	●
Germany	●	●	●	●	○	●	●
Spain	●	●	○	○	○	○	○
Estonia	●	●	●	○	○	●	●
Finland	●	●	●	●	○	○	●
Greece	●	●	●	○	●	○	●
Hungary	●	●	●	●	○	●	○
Ireland	●	●	●	○	○	○	●
Japan	●	●	●	●	○	●	●
Lithuania	●	●	●	●	○	○	●
Luxembourg	○	●	○	●	○	○	○
Latvia	●	●	●	○	○	●	●
Mexico	●	●	●	●	○	●	●
Norway	●	●	●	●	●	○	●
New Zealand	●	●	●	●	○	○	●
Portugal	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Slovak Republic	●	●	●	○	○	○	●
Slovenia	●	●	●	●	○	●	●
Sweden	●	●	●	●	○	○	●
Turkey	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
<b>OECD Total</b>							
● Yes	24	24	23	15	7	13	21
○ No	1	1	2	10	18	12	4
Brazil	●	●	●	○	●	●	●
Costa Rica	●	●	●	●	○	○	●
Romania	●	○	●	○	○	○	●

Source: OECD (2020) Youth Governance Surveys.

StatLink <https://doi.org/10.1787/888934259997>



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