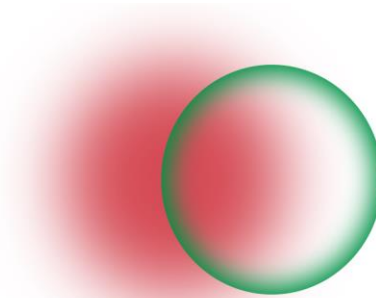


# THE FUTURE WE WANT: Better Policies for the Next Generation and a Sustainable Transition



OECD  
MINISTERIAL  
COUNCIL MEETING  
2022

*Speeches delivered by members of Youthwise, the OECD's Youth advisory board at the OECD Ministerial Council Meeting on 10 June 2022.*

## **Ilaria Foroni**

Dear Ministers, Ambassadors and Secretary-General,

This is a historical moment.

For the first time, two young people---from Italy and Canada--are talking at the OECD Ministerial Council Meeting.

My name is Ilaria Foroni, and I am not here because I am a talented research fellow or brilliant student in economics but because the Italian chair decided to include young people in this session, which is about building the future. Young people might be a third of population but we are 100% of the future.

Today, the OECD, one of the most important public policy institutions, is taking a step forward. The day before yesterday, at the invitation of Minister Dadone, it provided the space, the means, and staff support, to transform the vision of 70 youth delegates, into tangible future policies.

Being young provides us with both the energy and capacity to dream about improving policies and our lives on this planet. With other youth representatives, we exchanged ideas latent in our minds and our hearts, but sharing these with you is what makes them powerful.

We are here to find all together the force to be visionaries, in a world which can seem like it's falling apart.

Sometimes we have ideas, but a young voice is needed to energize adults to act.

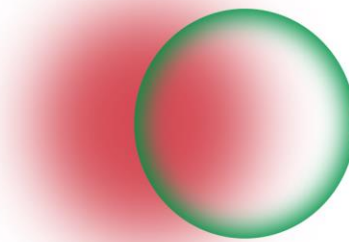
Through our discussions, we identified three priorities for the future we want:

- 1) We believe that youth participation in government can only be meaningful, if it is diverse, consistent, and embedded in formal decision- making processes – with young people as key stakeholders.
- 2) We would like the power to be shared across society; with more collaboration between generations. This is vital at a time when young people have to deal with the climate crisis and global economic instability.
- 3) We need you to invest in civic education, to help young people to become active global citizens. This education should allow us to rethink the workforce of tomorrow, with jobs that reflect our values and empower us to be agents of change. Paid leave for mental health and civic participation would be key features of this new workplace.

Thank you. Over to Jack.

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## Jack Peplinski

I am Jack Peplinski, a 21 year old from Alberta, Canada.

My family's ancestors immigrated from France, Germany, Ireland, Poland, the UK, and South Africa. From potato famines to two world wars and many events in between, I am a product of their struggle to make better decisions to build better lives for themselves and their families.

That is why today I am excited to share some recommendations from Youthwise at the OECD, which similarly strives to make, "better policies for better lives".

I want to preface by saying that there is no single solution, no silver bullet, to any of these problems, but as a group of young people we propose the following ideas:

We encourage the OECD to develop guidelines about how to promote meaningful youth participation, and to continue to involve Youthwise in OECD events and provide permanent funding.

We would welcome the adoption of a "future generations test" on every new national policy, which would evaluate the impact it has on young people and future generations (especially, women, indigenous people and minorities).

Finally, we would ask you to further invest in youth—the future—through requiring internships to be paid, and ensuring fair wages and functioning social protection systems for young people as they enter the labour market. This is important because, with inflation rising, more of us are struggling to cover our basic needs and even more to invest in the future.

I've heard how difficult it can be to pass and implement policies; however, one final action that each of you can do is this:

Over the next month, take 30 minutes to talk to one young person about the future *they* want. Youthwise members would be happy to talk to you.

The phrase, "youth are the future" is both a cliché and a truth. But youth are also critical to the present because democracies work best when all people are empowered.

Today we have outlined the future youth want; but this is also the future we *all* want.

Thank you for listening to us today.