OECD Public Governance Reviews

Governance for Youth, Trust and Intergenerational Justice

FIT FOR ALL GENERATIONS?

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Preface

The COVID-19 pandemic has deeply disrupted our societies and economies. This disruption has also been strongly felt by our young people. Young people may be less at-risk in terms of developing severe physical health symptoms linked to COVID-19, but the medium- and long-term consequences of the crisis hit our young generation particularly hard. Having to navigate the economic and social fallout from the crisis, reduced employment and career prospects, and the risk of exclusion and poverty right at the outset of one's life, is not easy.

While future prospects remain uncertain, young people have displayed great resilience. They have shown true commitment to solidarity, and have not only withstood the challenges of this crisis, but helped in many ways. The myriad projects supported under European programmes such as Erasmus+ or the European Solidarity Corps are living proof of this commitment, as are all the young people that are active in national volunteer services or youth organisations. Our younger generations have shown that they are deeply engaged in bringing relief to those that need it most. Yet, illustrative examples are not enough to craft the policies we need. For that, we need hard evidence and systematic analysis.

The OECD report on *Governance for Youth, Trust and Intergenerational Justice: Fit for all Generations?* provides valuable insight into the experience of young people today – the challenges they face as well as what they need to thrive. Its broad evidence-base allows us to identify many good practices, but it also reveals that much remains to be done to empower our young. These practices teach us that we need to double down on our investment in social cohesion and solidarity. The evidence that backs them demonstrates that public governance is crucial in supporting young people's transition towards independent life. We need young people to be engaged and represented if public institutions are to retain their legitimacy and have a significant impact.

It calls for integrated governance to support our youth's transition to an autonomous life, acknowledging that gains in educational attainment, technological advancements and health outcomes have not always translated into more opportunities for young people. Crucially, the report raises the issue of young citizens' trust in government, their participation and representation. It illustrates how young people get involved both in institutionalised and non-institutionalised channels of political participation, prompting questions about legal frameworks, governance tools and capacities.

The report also raises questions related to resources and inter-generational solidarity. Given that OECD nations enjoy increasingly good life conditions and their inhabitants tend to live longer, the relative weight of older generations will increase, and so will their demand for resources. There is a need, therefore, to explore the magnitude of existing inequalities across generations, and to look for solutions.

This knowledge should reinforce our commitment to address the considerable challenges faced by many young people as part of our recovery plans. By joining forces in the analysis of the current problems, the Member States, the European Union, and the OECD reinforce our collective capacity to provide appropriate policy responses. The report clearly highlights the added value that a coherent, cross-sectoral and participatory youth strategy can provide in order to fulfil this task. It also shows, how new governance

tools such as impact assessments can help to integrate the concerns of young people more systematically in policy-making and intergenerational dialogue.

Investing in younger generations remains at the core of our action. We must work towards creating new opportunities – not just *for* them, but *with* them. As European Commissioner and Minister, we also deem it important to focus equally on the three core areas of the EU Youth Strategy Engage – Connect – Empower and to contribute continuously to each of them. Therefore, we are working to reinforce European Union programmes such as Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps, so that they will be more widely accessible and inclusive. Through thousands of projects every year, these programmes enable young people to shape their own channels for civic participation and community-building.

We need to actively listen to our young people because there can be no justice without everyone's voice being heard.

Genuine dialogue between young people and decision makers and the achievement of the EU Youth Goals are our main objectives in taking the young people in Europe seriously. The OECD's work on youth empowerment and intergenerational justice will help us support and sustain this endeavour. We must consider the well-being of both living and future generations, integrating intergenerational considerations more systematically in strategy design and programming, building up strategic foresight capacity to integrate a longer-term perspective in policy making, encouraging dialogue, and increasing transparency and accountability about our policy choices.

Best regards,

Dr. Franziska Giffey,
Federal Minister,
Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ)

Commissioner Mariya Gabriel,
Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth

Foreword

In the context of global challenges and the adverse impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on today's young and future generations, this report provides the first comparative assessment of the policies, laws, institutional capacities and governance tools put in place by 34 OECD countries, the European Union and eight non-member countries to promote youth empowerment and intergenerational justice. It draws on the responses collected from the OECD Youth Governance Surveys by government entities in charge of youth affairs, ministries of education and selected line ministries as well as 81 OECD-based youth organisations between May 2019 and February 2020. Where relevant, it integrates insights from the OECD Policy Response (2020) *Youth and COVID-19: Response, Recovery and Resilience*".

This report helps policy makers deliver policies and services that leave no generation behind. It does so by providing comparative evidence, benchmarks, good practices and lessons learned in three core areas:

- Supporting youth's transition to an autonomous life
- Enhancing youth participation and representation in public life as well as trust in government, and
- Delivering fair policy outcomes for all generations

This report is part of the work of the OECD Public Governance Committee (PGC) to promote citizen-centred policy design to ensure inclusive growth. This work is directed by the PGC and benefits from the discussions by the Friends of Youth PLUS group, which brings together PGC delegates, youth policy makers and representatives from youth and elderly organisations.

The report draws on the evidence gathered by the Public Governance Committee, the Regulatory Policy Committee, and PGC sub-bodies. It complements work across the OECD on young people's social and economic inclusion (Directorate for Employment Labour and Social Affairs Directorate), skills development (Directorate for Education and Skills), financial inclusion and literacy (Directorate for Financial and Enterprise Affairs), and well-being and inclusion (Centre for Well-Being, Inclusion, Sustainability and Equal Opportunities). It also contributes to OECD-wide initiatives such as the OECD Action Plan for Youth and the OECD Initiative on Inclusive Growth.

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The report was prepared by the OECD Public Governance Directorate (GOV), headed by Elsa Pilichowski. It was developed under the strategic direction of Martin Forst, Head of the Governance Reviews and Partnerships Division in GOV, and of Miriam Allam, Deputy Head of Division. The report and the work on youth empowerment and intergenerational justice is co-ordinated by Moritz Ader.

Giorgia Ponti (Chapter 1), Gamze Igrioglu (Chapter 2), Pietro Gagliardi (Chapter 3) and Moritz Ader (Chapter 4) co-authored the report and were responsible for the data collection and analysis. Gamze Igrioglu co-ordinated the data validation process with valuable contributions by Sebastian Franzkowiak, Metri Arrum, Aichetou Taffa, Tala Khanji and Stephanie Attil. Guillaume Biganzoli and Mai Hosny provided support in the selection of good practice examples. Ciara Muller and Raquel Paramo with support by Lukasz Lech and Roxana Glavanov prepared the manuscript for publication and controlled the quality.

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Editorial

We are living in uncertain times. The COVID-19 pandemic is threatening our economies, our jobs, our businesses, but most importantly the health and well-being of millions. It is disrupting nearly all aspects of our everyday lives. However, people of different ages are experiencing its impacts in different ways.

When the pandemic hit, young people had yet to recover from the consequences of the 2007-2008 global financial crisis. Indeed, youth shouldered much of the long-term economic and social consequences of that crisis: the share of youth not in employment, education or training (NEET) in OECD countries rose to 18% and the number of unemployed young people increased by 20% between 2007 and 2014, leaving one in eight 18-25 year-olds in poverty.[1]

Today, young people across OECD countries enjoy unprecedented access to information, education and technology, which offers new opportunities to work, learn and interact across borders. Yet, more than a decade after the global financial crisis, young women and men experience high levels of economic uncertainty. On average across OECD countries, today's youth have less income at their disposal than the previous young generation and they are 2.5 times more likely to be unemployed than the middle-aged.[2] Economic uncertainties and societal challenges are motivating young people to raise their voices, as demonstrated by the youth-led demonstrations on climate change. The COVID-19 pandemic, with its uncertain prospects for those entering the job market, has increased anxiety among young people about their aspirations and outlook. Consequently, less than half of young people (45%) across OECD countries have expressed trust in their government.[3]

We must not allow the COVID-19 crisis to result in a "Generation Lockdown." Public governance – our laws, policies, public institutions, and the way we make decisions and allocate public resources – will be crucial to these efforts.

The OECD report on ''*Governance for Youth, Trust and Intergenerational Justice: Fit for all Generations?*'' could not have come at a more timely moment. It shows what governments can do to reinforce young people's trust, unlock their potential to better contribute to their societies and economies, and ensure the well-being of current and future generations.

Furthermore, it demonstrates why acting now is essential. When youth succeed in becoming independent, societies and economies can harness their productive potential. On the other hand, when they struggle to become autonomous, society bears the costs of compounding inequalities over their lifetime. Countries with an inclusive, well resourced, and accountable youth policy tend to see higher interest among young people in politics. When young people are systematically engaged in policymaking, they are more likely to express satisfaction with policy outcomes. Moreover, in countries with lower levels of inequality among different age cohorts, life satisfaction tends to be higher.

The report also provides comparative evidence from 42 countries and the European Union on "how to get it right'' for all generations across the core functions of government: from rulemaking, to public budgeting and decision-making. Its recommendations provide a solid foundation for developing a forward-looking OECD agenda on youth empowerment and intergenerational justice.

To reach its conclusions, the report draws on OECD's extensive research and experience through its Public Governance and Regulatory Policy Committees. It complements and delivers on the OECD flagship initiatives on Inclusive Growth, Future of Work, Going Digital as well as the OECD Action Plan for Youth. It also holds valuable insights to inform the 2020 G20 agenda on youth empowerment and the 2020 OECD Ministerial Council Meeting, both of which recognise the importance of empowering youth and promoting intergenerational justice for a strong, resilient, green and inclusive recovery from COVID-19.

As highlighted by Minister Giffey and Commissioner Gabriel in the preface, we need to benefit from the valuable evidence, benchmarks and good practices provided in the report to chart a course for action. Investing in younger generations must remain at the core of our efforts and we must join forces for tangible impact on the ground.

The pandemic is a call to renew our commitment to strengthen social cohesion and resilience for today's young and future generations. The OECD stands ready to advance the global debate on youth empowerment and intergenerational justice, and to fully support countries in taking this crucial agenda forward.

Ángel Gurría,
Secretary-General of the OECD

[1] Data is compared between 2007 and 2014. OECD calculations based on OECD Short-Term Labour Market Statistics (database). OECD calculations based on OECD Income Distribution (database). NEET rates refer to those aged 15-24 while poverty rates refer to those aged 18-25. OECD (2020), "Youth-and-COVID-19-Response-Recovery-and-Resilience", OECD Publishing, Paris, https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/view/?ref=134_134356-ud5kox3g26&title=Youth-and-COVID-19-Response-Recovery-and-Resilience.

[2] OECD calculations based on OECD *Labor Force Statistics* (database), for 2018.

[3] OECD calculations based on Gallup World Poll Database (2019 or latest year available).

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Acronyms and abbreviations

CBAx	Cost-Benefit Analysis tool (in New Zealand)
COP	(United Nations) Climate Change Conference
ESS	European Social Survey
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EqIA	Equality Impact Assessment
EU	European Union
EUR	Euro
GBA+	Gender-Based Analysis Plus
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GHG	Green House Gas Emissions
GSG	(OECD) Global Strategy Group
G20	Group of Twenty
HCFEA	Haut Conseil de la famille et de l'enfance et de l'age (High Council for the Family and Childhood and Age, in France)
IJ	Intergenerational Justice
IPU	International Parliamentary Union
LSF	Living Standards Framework (in New Zealand)
MC	Member of cabinet
MP	Member of parliament
NEET	Not in Employment, Education or Training

NYS	National Youth Strategy
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OPSI	(OECD) Observatory of Public Sector Innovation
PISA	(OECD) Programme for International Student Assessment
RIA	Regulatory Impact Assessment
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SIA	Sustainability Impact Assessment
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
USD	United States Dollar
WHO	World Health Organization

Codes for OECD countries			
AUS Australia	EST Estonia	KOR Korea	SVK Slovak Republic
AUT Austria	FIN Finland	LTU Lithuania	SVN Slovenia
BEL Belgium	FRA France	LUX Luxembourg	SWE Sweden
CAN Canada	GBR United Kingdom	LVA Latvia	TUR Turkey
CHE Switzerland	GRC Greece	MEX Mexico	USA United States
CHL Chile	HUN Hungary	NLD Netherlands	
CZE Czech Republic	IRL Ireland	NOR Norway	
COL Colombia	ISL Iceland	NZL New Zealand	
DEU Germany	ISR Israel	OECD average	
DNK Denmark	ITA Italy	POL Poland	
ESP Spain	JPN Japan	PRT Portugal	
Codes for non-OECD countries			
ARG Argentina	BRA Brazil	KAZ Kazakhstan	ROU Romania
BGR Bulgaria	CRI Costa Rica	PER Peru	UKR Ukraine

Executive Summary

Youth today enjoy unprecedented access to information, education and technology. However, the repercussions of the global financial crisis in the late 2000s, the COVID-19 pandemic and global transformations such as population ageing, digitalisation, and rising inequalities have created uncertainties about the future young people and unborn generations face.

Public governance must be at the heart of the debate about the role of the state in creating an enabling environment for youth, trust and intergenerational justice. The report provides information on whether the existing legal, policy and institutional and decision-making arrangements deliver on the implicit promise that each generation will do better than the last.

This report is prepared based on the findings of a survey of 34 OECD member countries and the European Commission and eight selected non-member countries, as well as 81 youth organisations based in the participating countries. It provides a comparative analysis for:

- adopting a holistic governance approach to support youth in their transition to an autonomous life;
- increasing youth participation and representation in public life and their relationship with government; and
- integrating considerations of intergenerational fairness and justice in policy-making.

The analysis builds on the findings of the OECD Youth Stocktaking report (2018) to explore which governance tools work and which do not, and why. It sets benchmarks for cross-country comparisons in each area and provides innovative and practical insights for policy makers, civil society and young people to build a present and future that leaves no one behind.

The transition of youth to an autonomous life has become more challenging

Despite the gains in educational attainment and health outcomes over recent decades, the transition to an autonomous life has become more difficult. Young people are 2.5 times more likely to be unemployed than people aged 25-64, have less disposable income than previous young generations, find it more challenging to afford housing and are more likely to work in insecure jobs.

When youth are not active in social life and the labour market, the costs for societies and economies are high. Their absence undermines social cohesion, productivity and the potential for inclusive growth. OECD data show that, on average across OECD, 1 in 10 youth aged 15-24 years was not in education, employment or training (NEET) in 2019, which represents an economic cost equivalent to between 0.9% and 1.5% of OECD GDP.

To support youth in their transition to an autonomous life, governments should consider:

- Formulating and investing in the quality of integrated youth strategies, at the appropriate level(s) of government, to ensure they are evidence-based, participatory and cross-sectoral, supported by political commitment, adequate resources, and effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.
- Equipping policy makers with adequate resources and skills and establishing effective co-ordination mechanisms to ensure a coherent delivery of youth policy and services across different ministries and levels of government.
- Reviewing age-based criteria to access public services and opportunities to participate in public life to create a legal environment that is conducive to youth engagement and empowerment.
- Facilitating young people's access to information and counselling in areas such as education, employment and health by providing public services online.
- Providing targeted policies and services for young women and men, especially the most vulnerable youth populations (e.g. NEET youth, young migrants; homeless youth and youth with disabilities).
- Systematically gathering age-disaggregated data, and applying regulatory and budgetary impact assessments to address inequalities within and across different age cohorts.

Youth's trust, perception of having a say and representation have stalled

Since the global financial crisis in the late 2000s, youth's trust in public institutions and their perception of having political influence and representation in decision-making have stalled. At the same time, young people demonstrate strong motivation for addressing global challenges such as climate change, rising inequality, shrinking space for civil society and threats to democratic institutions.

To strengthen youth's relationship with public institutions, governments should consider:

- Reforming registration rules and lowering minimum age requirements to address barriers to youth participation in political life and promote age diversity in state institutions.
- Providing programmes to help young people join and thrive in the public sector workforce as well as programmes for inter-generational learning between older and younger employees.
- Engaging youth stakeholders in a meaningful way in policy design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation to ensure age-diversity in public consultations and more responsive and inclusive policy outcomes, through in-person as well as digital means.
- Strengthening volunteering and youth work through national laws, strategies and programmes that include a common vision and clear responsibilities, co-ordinated action, and adequate resources for building youth's skills and competencies as well as social cohesion and societal resilience.
- Exploring the co-creation of innovative mechanisms to engage with non-institutionalised youth activism and recognise its important contribution to the political discourse.

Ageing and COVID-19 raise questions about intergenerational justice

Population ageing across OECD countries is decreasing the share of young voters, scaling up pension obligations, and raising the demand for health care and other social care services. Concerns about fairness between generations increasingly permeate social, fiscal and environmental public policy debates and are likely to gain further traction in the context of addressing COVID-19.

In response, OECD countries have created new institutions, laws, policies and public management tools to integrate the concerns of today's youth and future generations more systematically in policy-making and encourage intergenerational dialogue and solidarity.

To foster intergenerational justice the context of ageing societies, governments should consider:

- Demonstrating strong political commitment to act upon inequalities both within and between different age cohorts and address intergenerational challenges.
- Integrating intergenerational justice considerations in laws, policies strategies and programmes and promote co-ordination across government to ensure policy coherence.
- Creating or strengthening oversight institutions/mechanisms to monitor intergenerational justice commitments by ensuring resources and their legal, financial and political independence.
- Ensuring policy makers are aware and have the right skills and public management tools to promote intergenerational justice in policy-making, public spending and decision-making.
- Promoting age diversity in public life and decision-making.

1. One Step Forward, Two Steps Backwards? Youth Are Facing an Uncertain Future

Young people across OECD countries enjoy unprecedented access to information, education and technology. However, the repercussions of the 2007-08 global financial crisis and global transformations such as climate change, ageing, digitalisation, and rising inequalities have created significant uncertainties about the future young people and unborn generations can expect. The COVID-19 pandemic has further accelerated these concerns. This chapter will discuss the impact of these crises along with broader global transformations and their impact on youth, and point out why public governance must be at the heart of delivering policies that are fit for all generations, including youth.

The COVID-19 crisis has had an unprecedented impact on societies and economies. From the eldest to the youngest citizens, the implications of the pandemic are affecting all age-cohorts. Although young people[1] are less-at-risk than others in terms of direct health impacts, they are hit hard by the social and economic consequences as recognised by the OECD Economic Outlook 2020 (OECD, 2020[1]). Already prior to the pandemic, average youth unemployment (aged 15-24) across the OECD was 11.7% compared to an average of total unemployment of 5.4%[1] in 2019. Since the onset of the crisis in February, youth unemployment rate (people aged 15 to 24) has increased 4.9 percentage points, which is more than twice as large as for the over 25-year-olds (OECD, 2020[2]).

In the effort to contain the spread of the virus, OECD countries have implemented nation-wide lockdowns and social distancing measures that have disrupted all aspects of daily life. From school and university closings, to the termination of part-time and student jobs, the pandemic has exposed young people's vulnerability in the labour market and resulted in a loss of jobs and income, which risks to negatively impact young people's future career trajectories. As youth often fill positions in non-standard forms of employment, they also have fewer financial reserves to fall back on, which increases their risk to fall into poverty and rely on governmental welfare programmes for extended periods. Findings from the OECD Policy Paper "Youth and COVID-19: Response, Recovery and Resilience" further demonstrate that young people are most concerned about the impact of the pandemic on mental health, education and employment (OECD, 2020[3]).

The pandemic hits OECD countries at a moment when many younger people have barely recovered from the repercussions of the 2007-08 global financial crisis. Across the OECD, the 2007-2008 crisis left 15 million young people unemployed, and 1 in 10 jobs held by people aged under 30 were lost (OECD, 2020[4]). In the four years following the onset of the crisis, young people (aged 18 to 25) suffered the most significant loss of income compared to any other age cohort (OECD, 2014[5]). Only in 2017, almost a decade later, the youth unemployment rate retracted to pre-crisis levels (OECD, 2020[4]). Following the slow recovery, youth continue to face significant challenges. For instance, as of 2018, young people are 2.5 times more likely to be unemployed than people aged 25 to 64 (OECD, 2018[6]). Moreover, 10.9% of youth are not in employment, education or training (NEET) – a slight recovery from 13.2% in 2010 (OECD, 2017[7]).

Both the global financial crisis and the COVID-19 crisis hit youth to vastly different extents. Young people are a heterogeneous group such that other identity factors than age co-determine their specific needs and vulnerability, including their sex, socio-economic background, health, ethnicity, and whether they live in an urban or rural context. Existing inequalities within the same age cohort can be as large or exceed inequalities between different age cohorts indeed. However, as diverse as young people and their concerns are, they are sharing the experience of re-occurring crises and new uncertainties due to a number of global transformations, which will be discussed in detail in the next section. Despite high-level international commitments[2] that put young people at the centre of political attention such as the World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth 2019 in Portugal, G20 Antalya Declaration and the focus on "youth empowerment" in the 2020 G20 agenda, as well as the "Youth Employment Support" adopted by the European Commission, structural challenges to young people's empowerment and intergenerational justice persist.

The *2018 OECD Youth Stocktaking Report* demonstrates that public governance matters to build social cohesion and resilience across all age cohorts. Indeed, laws, policies, the capacities of public institutions and the way governments and public administrations make decisions and allocate public resources have significant consequences for the opportunities available to youth and future generations. Most notably, governance matters to support young people in their transition to an autonomous life and in their relationship with government. It also shapes the relationship between different age cohorts and the perception of whether policy-making is considered "fair" from a generational perspective.

This chapter will discuss some of the most significant global trends and context in which governments attempt to empower youth and promote intergenerational justice. It will apply the OECD Governance Framework for Youth Empowerment and Intergenerational Justice (see Figure 1.1). At the outside of the triangle, the figure displays the main policy objectives (i.e. transition, trust, intergenerational justice). At the inside, it sets out the governance arrangements put in place by governments to achieve these objectives. For the purpose of this report, the analysis focuses on the legal frameworks, institutional capacities and co-ordination, the existence of a whole-of-government policy, mainstreaming tools and mechanisms to encourage youth engagement in public life and their representation in state institutions.

Figure 1.1. Public governance framework for youth empowerment and intergenerational justice

Source: OECD

Shaping youth's future: global trends and their impact

The context in which young people today are coming of age is significantly different from the circumstances in which todays middle-aged and elderly grew up. Some indicators point to significant improvements achieved over the past decades. For instance, in 2019, the share of young adults (25-34) obtaining a Bachelor's degree across OECD countries hit a record high of 24% (OECD, 2019[8]) and digital technologies have enabled youth to build new partnerships and friendships across borders. In 2019, young people across OECD countries expressed a positive outlook into their own future. When asked to rank their view of their own future on a scale from 1 to 10, youth (15-29) chose a 7.8 rating on average[3]. However, a survey conducted by Eurofound among countries in Europe in April 2020, on the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, demonstrates that notable differences persist: while employed youth were most optimistic (50%), unemployed and self-employed were significantly less optimistic (26% and 43%, respectively) (Eurofound, 2020[9]).

At the place of following the traditional pathways of transitioning to an autonomous life, the life trajectories of contemporary adolescents and young adults today are more diverse. Most notably, today, young people are marrying later and less, and invest more time in education (Vespa, 2017[10]). Some of these changing attitudes are voluntary and based on altering societal norms and values. Others, however, are rooted in the social and economic hardship young people have experienced over recent years, which make it more difficult for young people to achieve some of the classical milestones of adulthood, such as financial independence, a decent job, house ownership, and parenthood (Côté and Bynner, 2008[11]). For instance, in 2013, following the global financial crisis, 73% of young people in the EU aged 18-24 still lived in the same households as their parents (Őzdemir, Ward and Zolyomi, 2014[12]). Findings from OECD Youth

Governance Surveys show that responding youth organisations based in OECD countries are the least satisfied with governments' response to housing compared to any other policy area (see Chapter 2).

As the next sections will demonstrate, the implicit promise that each new generation will fare better than the previous one appears to stand on shaky grounds. The notion of intergenerational justice underlies many of today's most heated political debates, such as the sustainability of national deficits, the depletion of natural resources or the extinction of endangered species and pollution as well as climate change (see Chapter 4). It is also characteristic of debates in the field of social policy, especially due to an ageing population across all OECD countries, and frames discussions about inclusive participation in decision-making.

Demographic change and ageing societies

As recognised by the OECD Global Strategy Group in 2019, population ageing is a megatrend trend that concerns all OECD countries due to a rise in life expectancy and low fertility rates. Demographic change is gradually changing the age composition of societies. In 2018, the share of young people aged 15 to 24 made up 13% of the OECD's total population[4] compared to 16% in 1990[5]. Whereas people aged 65 and older represented around 17% of the OECD's population in 2018, their share is expected to increase to 21% by 2030[6].

While all OECD countries are ageing, the magnitude of demographic change varies significantly across borders. For instance, while the share of people aged 65 and over in Israel and Turkey is expected to increase to 13.6% and 12.6% respectively, by 2030, their share in Italy, Korea and Japan is expected to surge to 24.5%, 27.2% and 31.2%, respectively[7]. Demographic change raises important questions about intergenerational solidarity and the sustainability of public service delivery models as employment, labour market and social service systems were built for a younger median age population. Population ageing also reshapes the composition of the electorate and political weight of different age cohorts, which raises questions about the fair participation and representation of all age cohorts in democratic decision-making.

However, demographics are not a fate – policies and institutions matter (see Chapter 4). Indeed, a growing number of OECD countries has created dedicated institutions, laws, and public administration tools to design policies that are fit for all generations.

A glance at inequalities

Inequality risks stifling economic growth and societal cohesion (OECD, 2015[13]). Inequalities persist both across individuals and households (vertical inequality) and across groups defined by their age, ethnicity, sex, race as well as other identity factors (horizontal inequality) (OECD, 2017[14]). Moreover, whereas some inequalities can be associated with age itself, other developments point to cohort effects and a deterioration of the living conditions of youth more generally over time.

Young people typically have limited financial assets, which puts those living in economically vulnerable households at an increased risk of falling below the poverty line within three months, should their income suddenly stop or decline (OECD, 2020[3]). Youth and the elderly (14%) as well as children (13%) in OECD countries face a higher risk of living in income poverty when compared to the middle-aged (10%) (OECD, 2019[15]) (OECD, 2015[13]). Youth also face a higher risk of financial exclusion, which may have broader economic consequences and limit educational or employment opportunities further. Young people also have lower financial literacy levels than older individuals: across the 13 OECD countries that participated in the PISA 2018 assessment, only 54% of students held a bank account (OECD, 2020[16]).

While differences in income and wealth are associated with age itself, OECD evidence also points to important cohort effects. Most notably, today's generation of young people has less disposable income than older generations when they were young (OECD, 2020[17]). Income inequality in households can translate into unequal opportunities for young people and children to access quality education and health

care. Contrary to their peers from wealthy backgrounds, children from lower socio-economic backgrounds tend to enter the labour market sooner and fill low-skilled positions. In the context of globalisation and automation, these workers are less likely to receive training opportunities to learn new skills, which can cause them to fall behind their peers (OECD, 2019[18]). OECD evidence demonstrates that only 20% of low-skilled workers participate in job-related training, compared to 37% and 58% of medium and high-skilled workers, respectively (OECD, 2019[18]).

Moreover, OECD evidence points to a "broken social elevator" as young people today face less favourable occupational upward mobility prospects than their parents' generations (OECD, 2018[19]). On average, it takes over 4 generations – or more than 100 years – for someone born in low-income families to approach the mean income across OECD countries. Significant differences exist between the top performing Nordic countries Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden and countries with significantly less upward mobility (OECD, 2018[19]).

The future of work

The transition of young people from education to employment is characterised by new challenges. OECD evidence illustrates that higher educational attainment increases the chances for employment: on average, the employment rate for young people aged 25 to 34 with tertiary education is 85%, compared to 61% for the same age cohort without an upper secondary education (OECD, 2020[20]). Nevertheless, despite an increase in the access to higher education, young graduates are struggling to find stable, decent and well-paid jobs, which delays their accumulation of savings and home ownership (Whitehead and Williams, 2017[21]). Higher costs for post-secondary education and increasing competition in the job market for non-temporary contracts are some of the challenges young people are facing. For instance, in about half of OECD countries for which data is available, tuition fees for Bachelor's programmes increased by 20% between 2008 and 2018 (OECD, 2019[8]). Evidence also shows that the level of debt youth must shoulder at the time of their graduation has increased significantly in some countries.

Young people are growing up in a rapidly changing labour market. While globalisation and digitalisation present new opportunities, they also present new challenges for graduates and jobseekers. These changes require young people to acquire vastly different skills and competences than their parents. For instance, routine jobs and middle-skilled jobs, defined as occupations in the middle of the occupation-wage distribution, are expected to face the highest of being replaced by automated services whereas occupations that require high-level skills held by senior managers, technicians and professionals are likely to remain in demand (OECD, 2020[1]). The International Labour Organisation (ILO) warns that, in the future labour market, young graduates may be exposed to low and unstable earnings; lower social protection when hired as "independent" contractors, and lack of bargaining power (ILO, 2020[22]). Already today, around 35% of young people work in short-term contracts, or part-time employment that do not provide the same access to unemployment insurance and social protection as full-time contracts (OECD, 2019[23]). In certain countries, non-standard workers[8] are 40% to 50% less likely to receive income support when they are out-of-work compared to workers in standard employment, despite being at a higher risk (OECD, 2019[23]). The lack of financial stability prompts young people to delay their entry into the labour force by postponing the end of their post-secondary education and by combining work and studies (OECD, 2015[24]). For instance, across the member states of the European Union, 11.1% of young people aged 15 to 19 (and 18.7% of 20-24 year old) on average combined evening classes with part-time jobs in 2019 (Eurostat, 2019[25]).

Youth's relationship with public institutions and new forms of participation

The broader social and economic transformations outlined above coincide with the emergence of innovative and digital forms of democratic participation, but also new threats to civic space[9]. As a

consequence, the relationship between young people and governments is subject to fast and presumably lasting change.

In more than half of OECD countries (20 out of 37), youth's trust in government, compared to the total population, has decreased since 2006. While some countries have seen a slow recovery over the last decade, significant differences exist between countries and age cohorts.[10] Economic and social uncertainty, which have recently been magnified by COVID-19, can further erode youth's trust in public institutions. Prolonged periods of lack of trust in government as well as other democratic institutions can lead to disenchantment with the political system, potentially eroding the legitimacy of liberal democratic institutions. Moreover, the lack of trust in the political class and in the democratic system and the rise of populism can mutually reinforce each other (Heiss and Matthes, 2017[26]).

Youth's participation and representation in public life also remains limited. Young people tend to join political parties and participate in elections less than older people: 68% of young people went to the polls compared to 85% of people aged 54 or more across OECD countries for which data is available (OECD, 2020, p. 188[27]). Over the last decade, limited progress has been achieved to increase the representation of young people in state institutions and decision-making. Only 22% of members of lower houses of parliament are below the age of 40 in OECD countries, whereas the share of 20-39 year olds in the population amounts to 34%.[11]

Young people increasingly divert to non-institutionalised forms of political engagement, some of which extend beyond national borders, such as social movements and online activism (Marien, Hooghe and Quintelier, 2010[28]), partly due to their disenchantment from traditional politics (Crowley and Moxon, 2017[29]). Social movements such as Fridays for Future and online activism co-ordinated by young people to express concerns about the EU Directive on Copyright in the Digital Single Market, point to a surge of youth-led online activism. Social media platforms have been pivotal in facilitating these new forms of participation. The widespread use of social media and other online channels has facilitated the access to different sources of information. However, it has also expedited the spread of misinformation and disinformation, which pose a threat to the trust of citizens in media and democratic institutions. A Reuters Institute study illustrates that social media is the source of 88% of the misinformation in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic (Reuters Institute, 2020[30]). Digital tools are increasingly impacting young people lives' and the way they interact with public life.

Outline of the report

Supporting youth to succeed: a call for action

Within less than 15 years, youth have been hit by two major global crises in a context of rapid social and economic transformations. What can governments do to support young people in their transition to an autonomous life?

Chapter 2 assesses the policy and institutional capacities provided by governments to support youth in their transition to an autonomous life. It will analyse how governments set their priorities and strategically plan their interventions through national youth strategies (NYS) and compare country practices against the OECD benchmarks for a NYS that follows the principles of good governance. Moreover, it will discuss how "youth affairs" are being organised across public administrations and the different approaches set in place by governments to co-ordinate, implement, monitor and evaluate youth policy. It will also address the questions of how legal frameworks and governance tools can be designed and applied to deliver policies and services that are responsive to young people's needs.

Youth and public institutions: stronger together

The effectiveness, resilience and legitimacy of public institutions depends on strong ties between today's and tomorrow's citizens. Yet, young people's perception of having political influence and representation in decision-making have stalled. What can governments do to promote youth's trust in government, and their participation and representation in public life and decision-making?

Chapter 3 presents data and research on trust in public institutions among young people, as well as youth's participation and representation in institutionalised and non-institutionalised channels of political participation (e.g. voting in elections, working in the public administration, engagement in the policy cycle, volunteering, youth activism). Chapter 3 analyses the role of legal frameworks, governance tools and capacities in fostering a strong relationship between young people and public institutions. Through empirical evidence, it provides an assessment of governments' efforts to engage youth and their efficacy to foster a more inclusive, prosperous and active relationship between young people and public institutions.

Integrating intergenerational justice in policy-making and governance

The fair distribution of public resources is crucial for social cohesion and equal opportunities across all age cohorts. However, the implicit promise that each generation will fare better than the previous ones stands on shaky grounds. What can governments do to ensure a fair distribution of costs and entitlements across current and future generations?

Chapter 4 will discuss how governments can foster intergenerational justice (IJ) in the context of ageing societies. Concerns about a fair allocation of the costs and benefits between generations have been permeating debates on social, fiscal and environmental public policy, and increasingly do so since the global financial crisis 2007-08. In reaction, OECD countries have created new institutions, laws, policies and governance tools to integrate the concerns of today's youth and future generations more systematically in policy-making and public service delivery. This Chapter will explore the magnitude of existing inequalities across generations and map innovation in governance to deliver policies and services that are fit for all generations.

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Notes

[1] Mindful of the de-standardisation of life trajectories, and the constant evolution and re-interpretation of particular stages of life, the report defines “youth” as a period towards adulthood which is characterised by various transitions in one person’s life (e.g. from education to higher education and employment; from the parental home to renting an own apartment, etc.). Where possible, for statistical consistency, the report employs the United Nations' classification of "youth" as individuals aged 15-24.

[2] In 2019, the Lisboa+21 Declaration and the EU Youth Strategy 2019-27 were adopted. Moreover, the Council of Europe's Youth Work Strategy put forth an action plan. The Consenso de Montevideo was adopted in 2013 by 38 participating countries from CEPAL (United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean).

[3] Gallup World Poll (database)

[4] OECD Demography and Population (database)

[5] Calculations based on OECD historical population data (database)

[6] Calculations based on OECD Populations Projections (database)

[7] Calculations based on OECD Populations Projections (database)

[8] Defined by the ILO as “an umbrella term for different employment arrangements that deviate from standard employment. They include temporary employment; part-time and on-call work; temporary agency work and other multiparty employment relationships; as well as disguised employment and dependent self-employment.”: www.ilo.org/global/topics/non-standard-employment/lang--en/index.htm

[9] Civic Space is defined as “the set of political, institutional and legal conditions necessary for citizens and civil society to access information, speak, associate, organise and participate in public life.” For more information, see the OECD Observatory of Civic Space.

[10] OECD calculation based on Gallup World Poll (Database).

[11] Inter-Parliamentary Union, *Parline database on national parliaments* (https://data.ipu.org).

2. Empowering Youth to Succeed: A Call for Action

A generation hit by two major global crises in the last decade, today's youth face particular challenges to start an autonomous life and shape their life course. If unaddressed, these challenges will deprive countries of an important resource of human capital and risk diminishing the potential for inclusive growth. What can governments do to support young people in their transition to an autonomous life?

This chapter assesses policies, institutional capacities, legal frameworks and governance tools set in place by governments to support youth in their transition to an autonomous life. It analyses how governments set their priorities and strategically plan their interventions in youth policy, in particular through national youth strategies. Moreover, it provides a comparative analysis of the different approaches established by governments to co-ordinate, implement, monitor and evaluate policies and services for young people.

Young people are facing new challenges while starting an autonomous life

The transition from adolescence to an autonomous life marks an important stage in the life course. As young people reach the age of majority, they gradually leave family home, enter the workforce, and obtain new rights and responsibilities (Greeson J.K.P., 2013[1]). In this period, adolescents and young adults require access to targeted policies and services to realise their potential and contribute to society and economy.

As inequalities at a young age compound over the life course, governments must seek to create an environment in which youth from different socio-economic backgrounds enjoy access to youth rights, quality education, employment opportunities, health services and youth work, among others. Youth dropping out from school or stuck in unemployment will start their adult life with less income and less financial security, which can delay their achievement of classical milestones of adulthood (see Chapter 1) (OECD, 2013[2])). For example, being unemployed at a young age can have "scarring effect" in terms of long-term career paths and future earnings. Young people with a history of unemployment are likely to have lower wage levels, poorer prospects for better jobs, and ultimately lower pensions (OECD, 2016[3]). Moreover, disruptions in the transition of youth to an autonomous life can create significant long-term costs for societies and economies, undermining social cohesion and productivity levels as well as the potential for inclusive growth. One in ten youth aged 15-24 years on average across OECD was not in education, employment or training in 2019, which represents an economic cost equivalent to between 0.9% and 1.5% of GDP across OECD (OECD, 2020[4]).

Chapter 1 illustrates that despite the gains in educational attainment and health outcomes over the past decades, the transition to an autonomous life has become more difficult for young people (OECD, 2019[5]). Various OECD indicators such as housing affordability, NEET youth and disposable income confirm this trend (see Chapter 1). Governments must also seek to address the specific challenges faced by young men and women from diverse backgrounds. For instance, girls and young women now outpace boys and young men in educational attainment, on average, in OECD countries (OECD, 2017[6]). Yet, gender gaps in employment, entrepreneurship and public life persist with rather slow improvements for young women (OECD, 2019[7]). Other intersecting identity factors, such as sexual orientation, geography, culture, migrant status, ethnicity, disability and income may exacerbate existing inequalities within and across age groups. Uncovering structural and multi-dimensional inequalities among youth therefore requires a thorough analysis of how age intersects with other identity factors.

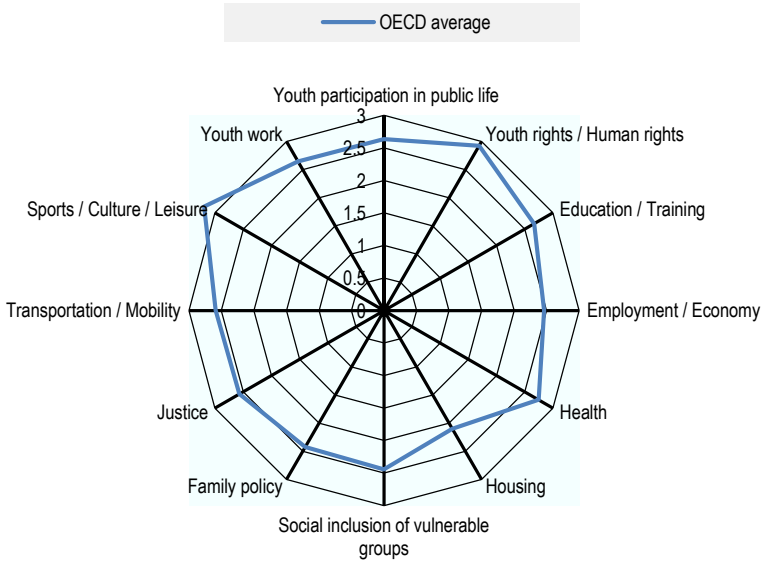
The COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbates these challenges, most notably in the fields of education, employment, mental health and disposable income. For instance, youth (15-24) were the group that was most affected by the rise in unemployment between February and August 2020 (OECD, 2020[8]). In turn, disruptions in their access to education and employment opportunities can create new challenges, such as difficulties in paying back school loans (OECD, 2020[9]). To avoid exacerbating inequalities and involve young people in building societal resilience, governments need to anticipate the impact of mitigation and recovery measures across different age groups and strengthen the governance arrangements in place to deliver services and policies, which are more responsive to youth's needs.

Addressing fragmentation: an integrated governance approach to support youth in their transition to an autonomous life

Young people have specific needs and interests across all policy and service areas including in employment, education, health, justice, housing, transportation, sports, gender equality and environment, among others. Findings from the OECD Youth Governance Surveys show that youth organisations in OECD countries are most satisfied with the work of their government in the area of sports, culture and leisure. However, they express significantly lower levels of satisfaction in the field of housing, followed by

employment and economy, which could in turn also affect their trust in national governments (Figure 2.1). A co-ordinated approach across these policy areas is needed to avoid the fragmented delivery of policies and services that can exacerbate the "transition challenge".

Figure 2.1. Youth organisations express lower levels of satisfaction with public services, especially in the field of housing and employment



Note: Based on 49 to 52 (depending on answer option) youth organisations in OECD countries for which data to this question is available. Youth organisations were asked to rate their satisfaction on a scale from 1 to 5, hence lower value represents lower satisfaction.
Source: OECD calculations based on OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

The capacity of governments to plan, co-ordinate, steer, monitor and evaluate youth policy is crucial to create synergies and overcome institutional silos by involving all relevant stakeholders in government and civil society. This is particularly important in times of crises as exemplified by the COVID-19 pandemic (OECD, 2020[9]). However, the findings of the OECD Youth Governance Surveys confirm that significant governance challenges continue to persist. For instance, a majority of respondents identifies the lack of institutional mechanisms and incentives for co-ordination and limited capacities as barriers to better co-ordinate with other ministries and subnational authorities (Figure 2.10).

Findings from the 2018 Youth Stocktaking Report demonstrate that adopting an integrated approach to public governance is critical to overcome these challenges (OECD, 2018[10]). Effective, inclusive and transparent governance is a driver of trust of young people in governments and contributes to the legitimacy of government action (OECD, 2020[9]).

This chapter will present the results of the OECD Youth Governance Surveys and benchmark country practices against the OECD Assessment Framework for National Youth Strategies. The framework draws on four pillars, which together form an integrated public governance approach to support youth in their transition.[1] The results for each pillar are presented in separate sub-sections:

1. Strategic planning through national youth strategies (NYS) to unite governmental and non-governmental stakeholders behind a joint vision and identify strategic goals and objectives;
2. Institutional arrangements to allocate clear roles, responsibilities and adequate capacities across all stakeholders to achieve strategic objectives;
3. Legal frameworks that encourage young people's access to public life and services, and that do not discriminate based on age; and

4. Governance tools in rule-making, public budgeting and procurement to ensure youth-responsive policy outcomes.

Each sub-section assesses key trends across OECD member and selected non-member countries and discusses solutions for addressing existing gaps based on good practices collected through the survey. The chapter concludes with policy recommendations to support countries chart a course for adopting an integrated governance approach to achieving youth-responsive policy outcomes as well as for developing a forward-looking OECD agenda on youth empowerment.

National youth strategies: a vehicle for better strategic planning

Strategic planning is a key management tool to ensure that political commitments translate into actionable plans and strategies and guide the work of the government over time (OECD, 2019[11]). Strategic planning needs to be linked with the budgeting process to ensure that the allocation of public resources serves the achievement of strategic priorities, as recognised by the OECD Policy Recommendation on Budgetary Governance (OECD, 2015[12]).

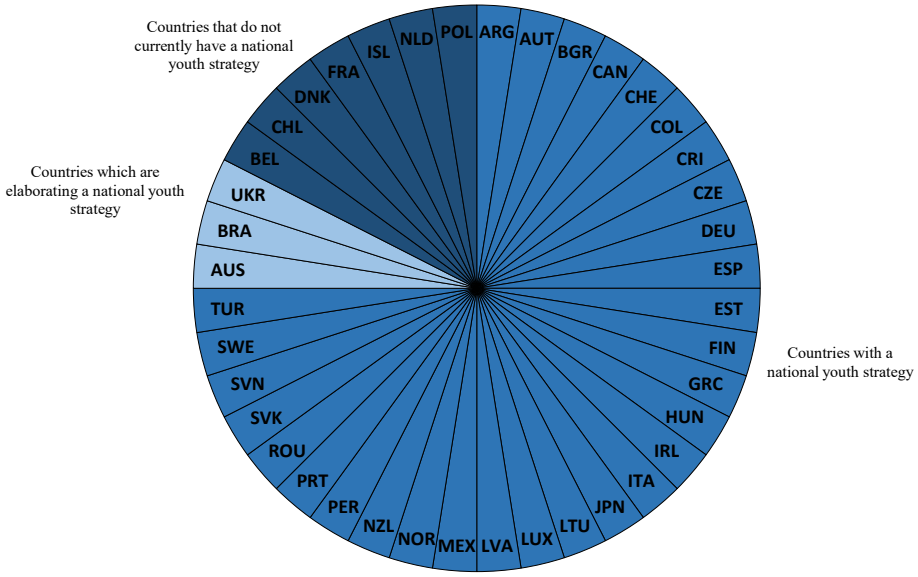
As youth policy cuts across various ministerial portfolios, a clear and comprehensive strategy can help to structure priorities and guide the implementation of programmes and delivery of services. It can also help set and communicate the rationale, objectives, expected outcomes and targets, and hence facilitate policy planning across the whole of government. It also encourages governments to integrate youth-specific considerations into sectoral policies and enhance policy coherence.

National youth strategies are trending but not always participatory, budgeted, monitored or evaluated

Across OECD member and selected non-member countries, national youth strategies (NYS) are a common tool for government-wide strategic planning and priority setting in youth policy. NYS can also serve as guiding frameworks to engage relevant non-governmental stakeholders in shaping programmes and services for young people. Therefore, they play an important role to enable a co-ordinated and holistic approach to youth policy. A large majority of respondents from OECD member and non-member countries (80%) reports adopting and implementing a NYS as a top priority to deliver policies and services that are responsive to youth's needs.

However, NYS are one way to set and co-ordinate policies for young people. Some countries pursue a different approach. For example, Denmark adopts a transversal approach to youth policy in which several policy documents cover different aspects of young people's lives while there is no single strategy providing a policy umbrella (European Commission, 2019[13]).

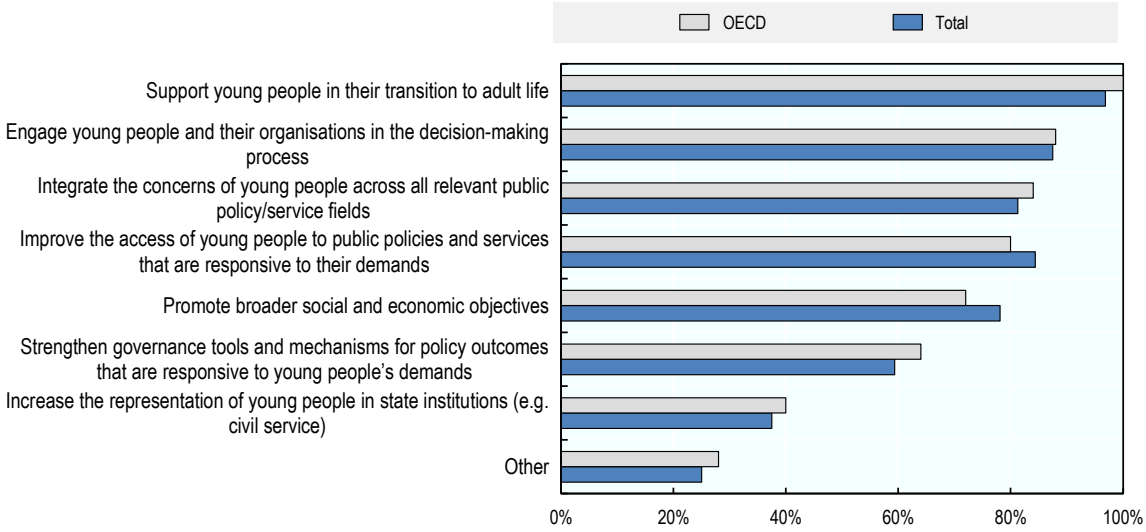
Figure 2.2. Three in four countries have an operational national youth strategy, 2020



Note: The graph shows 33 OECD countries and 7 selected non-member countries, namely Argentina, Bulgaria, Brazil, Costa Rica, Peru, Ukraine and Romania.
Source: OECD calculations based on OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

As of April 2020, 76% (25 out of 33) of OECD countries have an operational national or federal multi-year youth strategy in place (Figure 2.2). Australia is in the process of elaborating a strategy. Among the non-member countries responding to OECD Youth Governance Surveys[2], Argentina, Bulgaria, Costa Rica, Peru, and Romania have an operational national youth strategy, and Brazil and Ukraine are currently formulating one.

Figure 2.3. Strategic objectives of national youth strategies



Note: Total refers to 32 countries, which consist of 25 OECD member and 7 non-member countries that have or are elaborating a NYS. OECD refers to 25 countries.
Source: OECD calculations based on OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

National youth strategies provide a framework to advance youth-specific and broader society-wide goals. Indeed, all countries with a strategy in place or elaborating one confirm that they intend to support young people in their transition to adult life (Figure 2.3). A large majority of responding countries also aims at improving youth's access to youth-responsive public policies and services (80%) and integrating youth concerns across all relevant public policy/service fields (84%). On the other hand, there is a notable discrepancy between the emphasis placed on desired outcomes and the means to achieve them, as less than two in three responding entities underline the importance of strengthening governance tools and mechanisms to implement the strategy.

Adopting a national youth strategy alone is not sufficient. When young people are not engaged or when there is a lack of adequate human and financial resources dedicated to its implementation, a strategy is unlikely to deliver on its goals. These challenges can further be exacerbated in the absence of a single public body which co-ordinates cross-sectoral implementation, monitoring and evaluation of a strategy. Based on the OECD Assessment Framework for National Youth Strategies and the information provided through the OECD Youth Governance Surveys, the next section will benchmark country practices against eight principles to identify to what extent NYS in place are aligned with the principles of good governance, reveal potential gaps and present policy solutions based on examples of what works across OECD countries.

Getting it right: quality standards for national youth strategies

While a number of international frameworks exists to guide policy makers in preparing national youth strategies,[3] there is no single unified framework, which sets measurable standards, indicators and international benchmarks. This report proposes eight principles of good governance to address this gap. Together, they constitute the OECD Assessment Framework for National Youth Strategies as illustrated in Table 2.1.

The framework points out that NYS should be evidence-based; participatory; resourced; transparent and accessible; monitored, evaluated and accountable; cross-sectoral; gender-responsive and supported by high-level political commitment. These principles mirror various OECD instruments that codify OECD practice and standards in public governance, in particular the OECD Recommendations on Open Government (OECD, 2017[14]), Gender Equality in Public Life (OECD, 2015[15]), Budgetary Governance (OECD, 2015[12]), Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (OECD, 2019[16]) as well as the OECD Policy Framework on Sound Public Governance (OECD, 2019[11]).

The framework provides an integrated approach to guide policy makers throughout the youth strategy cycle. All principles are intertwined with each other and they are mutually reinforcing. In fact, evidence from a correlation analysis run based on the results of OECD Youth Governance Surveys confirms that positive outcomes in one quality standard are associated with positive outcomes in others. For instance, when a strategy is transparent about the sources of information and the responsibilities of different stakeholders, it tends to perform better in the "accountability" dimension, too. Therefore, policy makers should seek to deliver on these principles in tandem.

Results from the analysis in the next chapters suggest that investments into the quality of national youth strategies can yield positive results. For instance, youth in countries that rank higher in the OECD Assessment Framework for National Youth Strategies tend to express greater interest in politics (see Chapter 3) (Figure 2.4).

Table 2.1. OECD framework of quality standards of national youth strategies

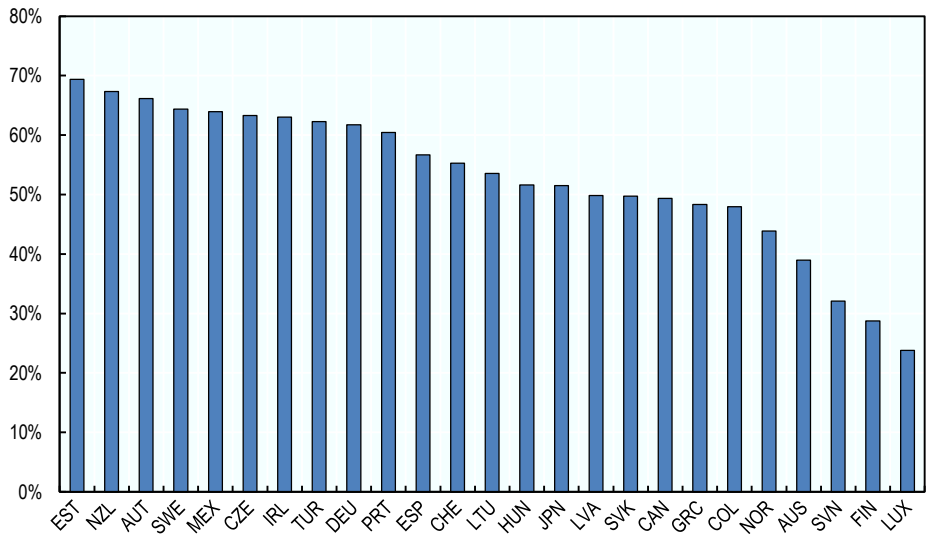
Principle	Definitions and Explanations
Supported by political commitment	**Definition**: The country's leadership has committed to tackle youth's needs. **Explanation**: (i) High-level statements outlining youth as government priority; and (ii) "youth" covered in strategic government documents (e.g. national development strategy).
Evidence-based	**Definition**: all stages of youth policy development and implementation are based on reliable, relevant, independent and up-to-date data and research, in order for youth policy to reflect the needs and realities of young people. **Explanation**: (i) regularly-conducted research on youth; (ii) age-disaggregated data is collected by the ministry/ministries in charge of youth affairs, line ministries and independent statistics authority; and (iii) system to facilitate data/information exchange between entity in charge of the youth portfolio and all other stakeholders involved.
Participatory	**Definition**: A participatory national youth strategy engages all relevant stakeholders, at all stages of the policy cycle, from the elaboration and implementation to monitoring and evaluation. Stakeholders are youth organisations, young people, and all other organisations as well as individuals who are influencing and/or are being influenced by the policy. Particular attention is to be paid to the participation of vulnerable and marginalised groups. **Explanation**: (i) meaningful participation of youth organisations, youth workers and non-organised youth throughout the policy cycle; (ii) variety of tools and channels to ensure meaningful participation, such as face-to-face meetings, surveys, seminars and conferences, online consultations, and virtual meetings (webinars); and (iii) focused activities to engage vulnerable and marginalised groups.
Resourced / budgeted	**Definition**: Sufficient resources, both in terms of funding and human resources are available for youth organisations, structures for youth work as well as public authorities to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate the national youth strategy. Supportive measures, from training schemes to funding programmes, are made available to ensure the capacity building of various actors and structures involved in youth policy. **Explanation**: (i) the ministry/ministries co-ordinating the youth portfolio has/have a dedicated budget; (ii) the ministry/ministries co-ordinating the youth portfolio has/have sufficient human resources; (iii) a dedicated budget and dedicated staff is assigned to the national youth strategy; and (iv) grants and other support structures are made available by the government to youth organisations and structures for youth work.
Transparent and accessible	**Definition**: The national youth strategy should clearly state which government authority/authorities has/have the overall co-ordinating responsibility for its implementation. It should also be clear which ministries are responsible for the different areas that are addressed in the policy. A transparent policy should be laid out in publicly accessible documents. **Explanation**: (i) national youth strategy available online in an easily accessible format; (ii) the national youth strategy clearly defines responsibilities for implementation, monitoring and evaluation; (iii) clear description of roles and responsibilities within the entity/entities co-ordinating the strategy are available and easily accessible to other stakeholders (e.g. organisational chart and contact details); and (iv) results of surveys, consultations and reports are publicly available.
Monitored and evaluated / accountable	**Definition**: Data is collected in a continual and systematic way. The strategy is systematically and objectively assessed looking at its design, implementation and results with the aim of determining the relevance and fulfilment of objectives, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. An evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful, enabling policy makers to incorporate lessons learned into the decision–making process. Finally, the various stakeholders in the policy-making process take responsibility for their actions and can be held accountable for them. **Explanation**: (i) measurable objectives and targets are set; (ii) key performance indicators linked to the objectives and targets are defined; (iii) a data-collection system for key performance indicators is established; (iv) specific mechanisms exist to ensure the quality of the data collected; (v) progress reports are prepared on a regular basis; (vi) evidence produced in monitoring is used to inform decision-making; and (vii) evaluations are prepared regularly and made available publicly.
Cross-sectoral / transversal	**Definition**: Cross-sectoral youth strategy implies that all relevant policy areas are covered and that a co-ordination mechanism exists among different ministries, levels of government and public bodies responsible for and working on issues affecting young people. **Explanation**: (i) all relevant policy areas are addressed and put in relation with one another in the national youth strategy; (ii) line ministries are involved throughout the policy cycle; (iii) intra-ministerial co-ordination mechanisms are established; and (iv) mechanisms to involve local and potentially other subnational levels of government throughout the policy cycle of the strategy exist.
Gender responsive	**Definition**: The national youth strategy should be assessed against the specific needs of women and men from diverse backgrounds to ensure inclusive policy outcomes. **Explanation**:(i) explicit reference to gender equality in the strategy; (ii) availability of gender-disaggregated data; and (iii) availability of gender-specific objectives within the strategy.

Source: OECD

Findings from the OECD Youth Governance Surveys demonstrate that the degree to which national youth strategies deliver on these principles varies significantly across countries. Across the OECD, only 20% of national youth strategies (5 out of 25) are fully participatory, budgeted and monitored and evaluated. In other words, a large majority of NYS risks being formulated without meaningful engagement of youth stakeholders, adequate resources and effective mechanisms to measure whether they deliver on their objectives or not. This reveals the need to investing into their quality.

The findings presented in Figure 2.4 reflect the extent to which NYS meet eight principles outlined in Table 2.1. The analysis shows that NYS formulated by Estonia, New Zealand and Austria align most closely with OECD Framework in terms of transparency, accountability and inclusiveness (Box 2.1). The methodology used to benchmark national youth strategies is further explained in Annex B.

Figure 2.4. The extent to which national youth strategies meet the principles of the OECD Assessment Framework varies significantly across countries (%)



Note: Methodology is explained in Annex B.
Source: OECD calculations based on OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

Box 2.1. Examples of holistic national youth strategies

Estonia

The *Youth Field Development Plan (2014-2020)* targets young people between 7 and 26 years old and contributes to the objectives of the "Estonia 2020" Competitiveness Strategy and the Government's Action programme in relation to youth policy and youth work. The Ministry of Education and Research led and oversaw the development of the strategy. It adopted a participatory approach and organised an online consultation, working groups as well as different events to receive feedback from young people and other key stakeholders, including youth-led organisations. For example, the Estonian National Youth Council submitted written comments and suggestions which were integrated within the strategy.

The strategy has a dedicated budget for its implementation, which is linked to respective goals and timeframes. Evidence-based monitoring or assessment of the implementation of the strategy is being conducted annually through the indicators set in the Development Plan. Reporting takes place via

annual implementation reports, which are submitted to the Government of the Republic for approval. The results of the monitoring and evaluation of the strategy are published online.

New Zealand

The Government of New Zealand released its *Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy* in August 2019 to improve the wellbeing of all young people under the age of 25. The development of the strategy was jointly led by the Minister for Child Poverty Reduction (a portfolio held by the Prime Minister) and the Minister for Children, demonstrating strong political support. The strategy includes six outcome indicators which are reported on annually as part of an update report to Parliament. For each outcome, data will be disaggregated when possible by household income or socio-economic status and ethnicity. The Child Wellbeing Unit within the Department of the Prime Minister and acts as the lead institution to monitor implementation. Twenty other government agencies have also partial responsibility for its implementation. Overall, the chief executives of these agencies, and by extension their respective line Ministers, are accountable for more than 110 individual actions.

Austria

In Austria, each federal ministry is required to develop at least one national "youth objective" related to its own sphere of competence to support the implementation of the *Austrian Youth Strategy*, encouraging a cross-sectoral approach. Each objective should contribute to improving the conditions of young people. An external agency assisted each federal ministry in defining and formulating their objectives and a cross-sectoral working group was created to foster dialogue and exchanges. Focus groups with young people called "Reality Check" were organised to receive young people's feedback and integrate their views.

Source: OECD Youth Governance Surveys; (Republic of Estonia, 2020[17]).

Political commitment is the starting point

High-level political support for the adoption of a national youth strategy is critical to ensure the necessary buy-in across the government and public and to mobilise resources. For example, in Canada, each minister receives a mandate letter – including the youth portfolio - with objectives to be met, which are available to the public. (Government of Canada, 2019[18]). In Austria, Canada, Colombia, Japan and Italy, youth affairs are co-ordinated by the Centre of Government (CoG)[4]. In Germany, the national youth strategy was launched jointly by the Minister in charge of youth affairs and the Head of Government by an inter-ministerial working group with the participation of all ministries.

The CoG (through the offices of Prime Ministers and Presidents) can play an important role in generating political will and leadership to pursue a cross-sectorial approach, both horizontally, across different ministries, and vertically, across different levels of government (OECD, 2014[19]). The findings from the OECD Youth Governance Surveys demonstrate that none of the countries in which the CoG assumes responsibility for the youth portfolio identified the lack of political will/leadership as a challenge for co-ordination.

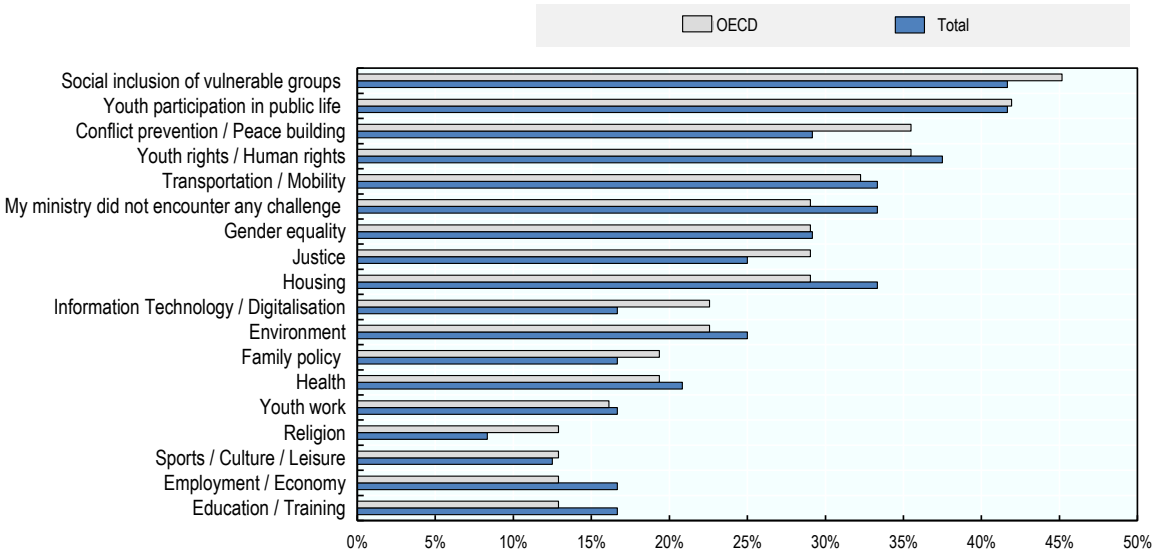
Age-disaggregated evidence is essential to identify and address gaps

The approach through which governments collect, apply and integrate evidence into policy and decision-making is an important determinant of successful policy design and delivery (OECD, 2019[11]). Throughout the youth strategy cycle, the evidence used by policy makers should be reliable, relevant, independent and up-to-date. Essentially, evidence must be disaggregated by age and take into account other intersecting

identity factors to address inequalities based on gender, socio-economic background, ethnicity and disability, among others.

Youth strategies need to be grounded in national and local realities by reflecting the specific and heterogeneous challenges faced by young men and women in different circumstances. Sound evidence should also underpin monitoring, evaluation and feedback systems to inform future planning and, where needed, facilitate potential adjustments to the set course.

Figure 2.5. Challenges to the collection of age-disaggregated data



Note: Total refers to 31 countries, which consist of 24 OECD member and 7 non-member countries that have or are elaborating a NYS. OECD refers to 24 countries.
Source: OECD calculations based on OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

The systematic collection and use of age-disaggregated data remains uneven across policy areas. While almost all ministries in charge of youth affairs across OECD (88%) report to collect evidence to inform the design of their NYS, only half of them gathers age-disaggregated data and information. Among this group, more than two-thirds faced challenges during the collection of age-disaggregated data in various policy areas that are essential to support youth's transition to autonomous life (Figure 2.5). Evidence gaps are most salient in the area of the social inclusion of vulnerable groups (45%), youth participation in public life (42%), conflict prevention (36%) and youth rights (36%). The absence of information from a youth perspective presents a considerable risk, which may undermine the achievement of progress in these areas.

Similarly, although a large majority of ministries in charge of youth affairs across OECD (88%) relies on evidence made available by line ministries, only every second responding line ministry actually collects age-disaggregated data. As a result, the specific interests and needs of young people in policy areas such as transportation, gender equality, housing, justice and environment may be neither assessed nor fully understood and used to inform policy design and the allocation of public budgets.

There is hence a need to use age-disaggregated evidence more systematically in the development of laws, strategies and government plans (Box 2.2). Policy makers also need to acquire the skills and capacities to ensure the availability and accessibility of age-disaggregated data in collaboration with statistics agencies, line ministries and non-governmental stakeholders. The elaboration of NYS provides a momentum to raise

awareness for existing evidence gaps and secure a government-wide commitment to invest into the systematic collection and use of such data.

Box 2.2. Age-disaggregated evidence in Sweden

The Swedish Parliament adopted its current youth policy bill *With youth in focus: a policy for good living conditions, power and influence* in 2014. The Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society (MUCF) is responsible for ensuring that the objectives of the youth policy are achieved. As part of its ongoing effort to monitor and evaluate the youth policy, it continuously compiles and publishes available age-disaggregated data, which is linked to the indicators of the youth policy, on the *Ung Idag* website (http://www.ungidag.se/) to ensure transparency. It covers six key sectors of interest for youth: work and housing; economic and social vulnerability; physical and mental health; influence and representation; culture and leisure; and training.

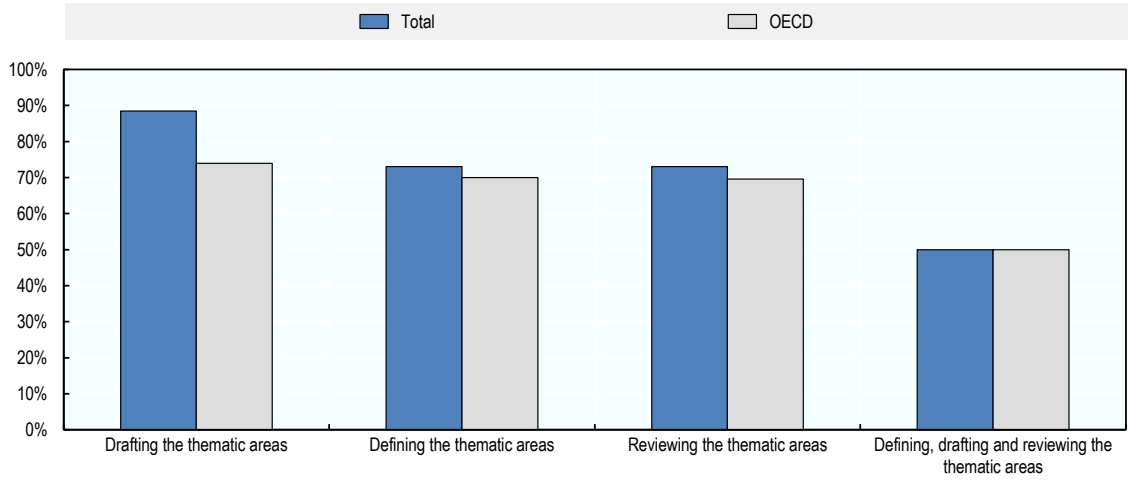
Source: OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

Youth are often involved in the elaboration of the strategy but not throughout the full cycle

The active engagement of stakeholders helps policymakers identify their needs and deliver responsive policies and services. The OECD Recommendation on Open Government underlines that stakeholder participation increases government inclusiveness and accountability, and calls on governments to "grant all stakeholders equal and fair opportunities to be informed and consulted and actively engage them in all phases of the policy-cycle and service design and delivery" (OECD, 2017[14])

A participatory national youth strategy involves all relevant youth stakeholders at all stages of the policy cycle, from its elaboration and implementation to monitoring and evaluation. A large majority of OECD countries surveyed (88%) reports that organised youth groups and organisations have been consulted in the formulation of their strategies through varying mechanisms. Face-to-face public meetings (82%), advisory/expert groups (64%) and surveys (50%) were the most frequent.

Figure 2.6. Participation of youth stakeholders in the elaboration of national youth strategies

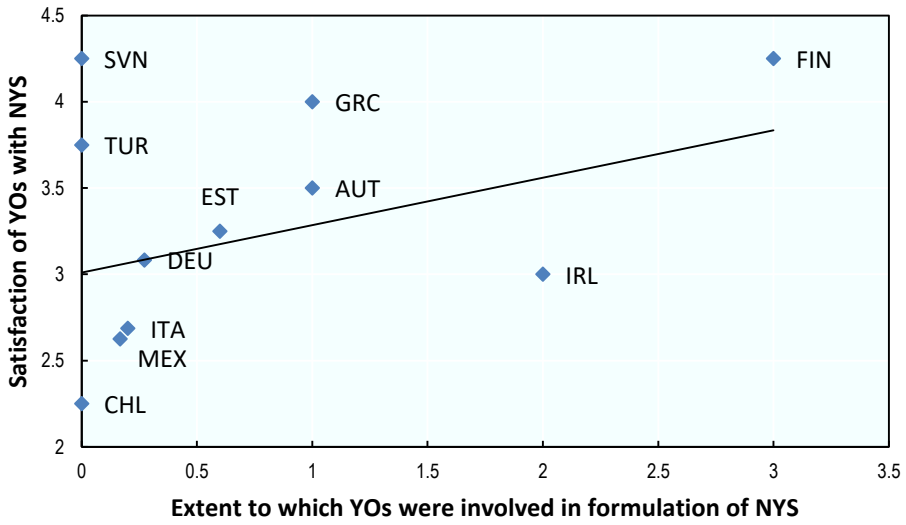


Note: Total refers to 26 countries, which consist of 20 OECD member and 6 non-member countries that have or are elaborating a NYS. OECD refers to 20 countries.
Source: OECD calculations based on OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

Despite the widespread participation of youth stakeholders in the design phase, the survey results demonstrate that their engagement is often limited to specific stages, rather than happening throughout the full cycle. Only in half of OECD countries (10 out of 20), youth are involved in the definition, drafting and review phase (Figure 2.6). Most frequently, youth stakeholders are consulted or engaged during the drafting phase. This may undermine the ability of youth stakeholders to understand how their feedback was used to inform the final text (OECD, 2016[20]). For example, Canada and New Zealand published the feedback received by youth stakeholders during consultations in summary reports, which were made public, to demonstrate how their input was addressed (Canada, 2018[21]; New Zealand, 2019[22]).

In fact, the survey findings demonstrate the positive impact of youth stakeholders' participation throughout all stages. When youth were involved in defining, drafting and reviewing the thematic areas, they tend to be more satisfied about the coverage, objectives and potential impact of NYS (Figure 2.7).

Figure 2.7. Consultations of young people throughout the youth strategy cycle tend to increase their satisfaction with the final text



Note: Correlation coefficient: 0.33; p-value: 0.29. The independent variable is the share of youth organisations in each country that indicated to have been consulted to define, draft and review the thematic areas of the national youth strategy. The dependent variable is the mean of means of satisfaction expressed by youth organisations with the areas and objectives of the national youth strategy.
Source: OECD calculations based on OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

Youth stakeholders from diverse backgrounds need to have equal opportunities to participate and be heard in this process (Box 2.3). A thorough mapping of relevant stakeholders should inform stakeholder participation to ensure fair and inclusive representation while creating legitimacy and buy-in (OECD, 2016[20]). Not all young people are organised in specific groups and it is crucial to give equal participation opportunities to non-organised young people. The survey findings indicate that ministries of youth continue to struggle in promoting a fully inclusive approach as around 4 in 10 did not involve non-organised youth in the consultation process.

While an overwhelming majority of NYS across OECD countries (84%) covers social inclusion of vulnerable groups as a thematic area, only one-third conducted separate consultations with potentially vulnerable and marginalised groups (e.g. NEET youth; youth with disabilities). Other countries involved these groups in the general consultation exercises. A systematic approach to involving youth at risk of social or economic exclusion is lacking among countries. It is also exacerbated by the lack of age-

disaggregated evidence on the specific challenges they face, potentially undermining the delivery of support programmes to those in need.

Box 2.3. Examples of stakeholder consultations on youth policy

Japan

The Japanese Cabinet Office appoints students as "Special Youth Rapporteurs" to inform government planning, legislation and regulations related to childhood and youth. The Special Youth Rapporteurs are asked to give their opinion on government thematic priorities, which are selected by the Cabinet Office. Their inputs are then shared across relevant ministries and government agencies and are published online on the website of the Cabinet Office.

New Zealand

The *Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy* in New Zealand benefited from the contributions of 10,000 New Zealanders, including 6,000 children and young people. The Government used a wide range of mechanisms, including face-to-face interviews, focus groups, workshops, academic forums, surveys and a "send a post card to the Prime Minister" initiative. The inclusion of children and young people from vulnerable groups, especially young Māori and other pacific young people as well as disabled youth, young women, refugees or children in care of the state, was a priority. The government also consulted a reference group, made up of child and youth representatives, including non-governmental organisations and academics, and published reports online to report back on the feedback received.

Peru

In Peru, the government used documentary reviews, focus groups and participatory workshops to reach out to 2,000 youth leaders from 25 regions in the design of the NYS. Young people contributed to the delineation and enunciation of challenges related to youth as well as the determination of solutions.

Source: OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

Resources underpin effective implementation

Adequate human and financial resources are needed to enable all ministries and stakeholders involved in the delivery of policies and services for youth to achieve the strategic objectives of NYS. Without a dedicated budget, a strategy is likely to miss its targets with potentially negative consequences for the relationship between youth and their government. Dedicated financial resources are needed to finance programmes and activities and to mobilise the necessary human resources within and across the public administration.

Given the crosscutting nature of youth policy, well-resourced strategies also facilitate inter-institutional co-ordination. For example, national youth strategies with dedicated resources allow institutions in charge of youth policy to use financial incentives to encourage other ministries to deliver on their part of transversal tasks (OECD, 2014[23]). Survey findings confirm that in countries where NYS are resourced, respondents tend to report less frequently that the lack of capacities (e.g. human and financial resources) is a challenge for cross-governmental co-ordination.

Across the OECD, however, only around two-thirds of countries (17 out of 25) with a NYS in place are budgeting it. Out of five responding non-member countries with a NYS, three reported that it is accompanied with a dedicated budget. Among the strategies with a dedicated budget, the allocations vary significantly. However, given the institutional differences in organising youth affairs, financial resources

allocated to NYS cannot be compared easily across countries. Moreover, a majority of OECD respondents (11 out of 17) indicated that budget information is not available.

Reinforcing transparency and accessibility of national youth strategies

Strategies need to be transparent and accessible for citizens in order to contribute to building citizens' trust and achieving policy outcomes more effectively (OECD, 2019[24]).

All OECD countries that have a national youth strategy publish it online. Information related to its implementation, including evidence from monitoring reports and evaluations, should also be made public to optimise its value for money, accountability and transparency. This underpins the accountability of national youth strategies and provides legitimacy for the use of public funds and resources.

Survey findings show that in 88% of responding OECD countries the results of monitoring and evaluation exercises are accessible publicly. Among them, 60% of countries publish the performance evaluation on the ministry/government website and 32% present it as part of an annual report that is available to the public. On the other hand, only around 6% use the social media account of the ministry/government to disseminate such information. Among non-member countries with NYS, 2 out of 5 publish the performance evaluation on the ministry/government website and as an annual report which is available to the public.

Country practices differ largely as to whether evaluation results are made available systematically or ad hoc. Findings of the OECD Report "Improving Governance with Policy Evaluation" show that the publication of evaluation results also depends on the commissioning institution and points to an uneven level of dissemination and publication across countries and institutions (OECD, 2020[25]).

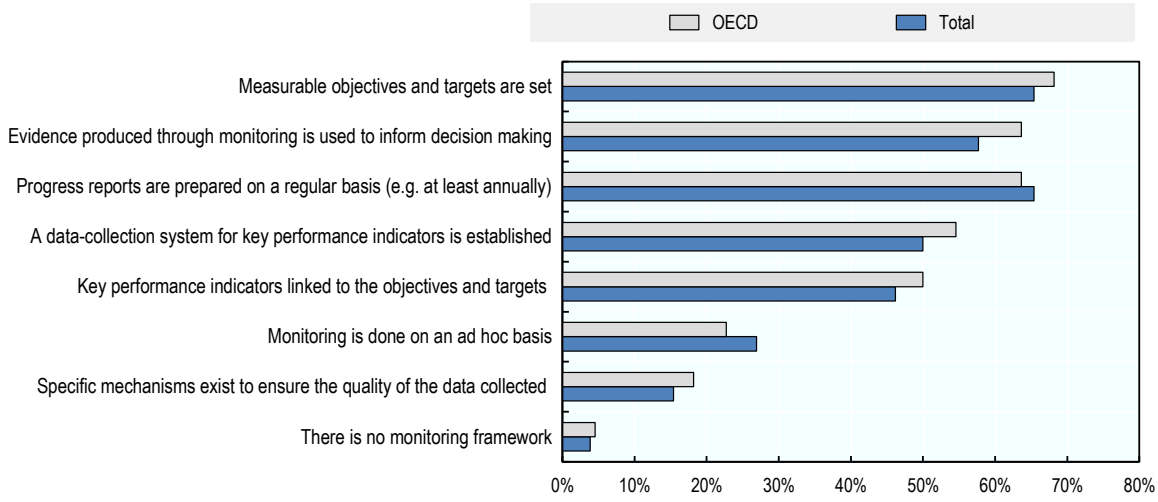
These findings demonstrate that there is untapped potential for governments to use social media and other online channels to share the results and impact of their work in ways that youth and other stakeholders may find more relevant and easily accessible. Sharing such information in a "youth-friendly" way can ultimately improve the transparency, accountability and legitimacy of youth strategies.

Sound monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for accountability

Sound monitoring, evaluation and feedback systems provide policy makers with a better understanding of what works and what does not and support that policy choices are rooted in evidence-informed decisions. National youth strategies need to be monitored and evaluated on a regular basis to ensure that decisions and budget allocations contribute to achieving their strategic objectives and to enable governments to alter course if needed.

Survey findings demonstrate that 95% of responding OECD countries set up specific mechanisms to monitor and evaluate their national youth strategies, albeit through varying approaches (Figure 2.8). While two-thirds of national youth strategies across the OECD set measurable objectives and targets, and prepare progress reports on a regular basis (e.g. at least annually), one in every four strategies is monitored and evaluated on an ad hoc basis, leaving it at the discretion of the entities in charge of youth affairs and their leadership. Around one in two strategies identifies key performance indicators (KPIs) linked to the youth policy objectives and targets, and establishes a data-collection system to track progress. Mechanisms to ensure the quality of the data collected are much less frequent and only used by around 8% of countries (e.g. quality control/assurance mechanism, competence development). Among responding non-members, while all countries with a NYS report having a framework to monitor and evaluate their national youth strategies, 2 out of 5 note that it is done on an ad-hoc basis.

Figure 2.8. Monitoring and evaluation of national youth strategies



Note: Total refers to 26 countries, which consist of 22 OECD member and 4 non-member countries that have a NYS. OECD refers to 22 countries.
Source: OECD calculations based on OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

A majority of OECD countries (64%) reports that evidence produced through monitoring and evaluation is used to inform policy-making, which suggests that at least two in three countries have put in place feedback loops. The OECD Report on Improving Governance with Policy Evaluation underlines that policy evaluation is a continuous exercise, which needs to be conducted ex-post and ex-ante (OECD, 2020[25]). However, the survey findings show that less than one in four countries with a NYS in place applies specific mechanisms for both ex-post and ex-ante evaluation.

Allocating well-defined mandates and specific resources to oversee and carry out policy evaluation is also crucial to ensure the generation of high quality evidence. Across the OECD countries, more than 90% of responding countries assigned an entity with the legal responsibility to monitor the implementation of the strategy. Primarily, this is done by the ministries co-ordinating the youth portfolio themselves (82%), whereas line ministries (27%) and the Centre of Government (14%) are less frequently in charge.

These findings resonate with the allocation of responsibilities for the evaluation of national youth strategies. Across the responding OECD countries, around two-thirds of NYS are evaluated by the ministries co-ordinating youth portfolio (65%), followed by line ministries (17%) and the Centre of Government (17%). In Hungary, the parliament is responsible for evaluating the NYS. The findings of the OECD Report on Improving Governance with Policy Evaluation show that the policy evaluation by independent oversight institutions (e.g. independent commissions, supreme audit institutions, Ombud's offices) and the legislatures helps strengthen the accountability of governments and foster integrity (OECD, 2020[25]). For example, in Finland, the National Audit Office examined the results and effectiveness of youth workshops in 2013–2016, and the allocation of the resources and cost efficiency of youth work in 2014–2017 (Finland, 2020[26]).

Enabling youth stakeholders to monitor and evaluate NYS increases the transparency and accountability of NYS (Box 2.4). It can also be an important driver of youth's satisfaction in different service and policy areas. Quantitative analysis of data from the OECD Youth Governance Surveys (Figure 3.15) shows that where youth organisations have been involved in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, they report a higher satisfaction with government's performance across public service areas (such as transportation, health, housing, and employment among others) (see Chapter 3).

In Slovenia, the implementation of the National Youth Programme (2013 – 2022) is evaluated by the youth sector with a report which is prepared every three years. In Costa Rica, the results of the evaluation exercise are presented to the National Youth Assembly, which is tasked with approving the National Youth Strategy. The Assembly is composed of representatives of different civil society organisations, universities, political parties and ethnic groups and meets on a regular basis.

Box 2.4. Monitoring and evaluation of the national youth strategy in the Slovak Republic

The Government of the Slovak Republic adopted its Strategy for Youth (2014-2020) in 2014. Its implementation is monitored and evaluated by two experts groups: an inter-ministerial working group for state policy in the field of youth, co-ordinated by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport, and the Committee for Children and Youth, co-ordinated by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family. Progress reports are elaborated yearly and submitted to the relevant Minister.

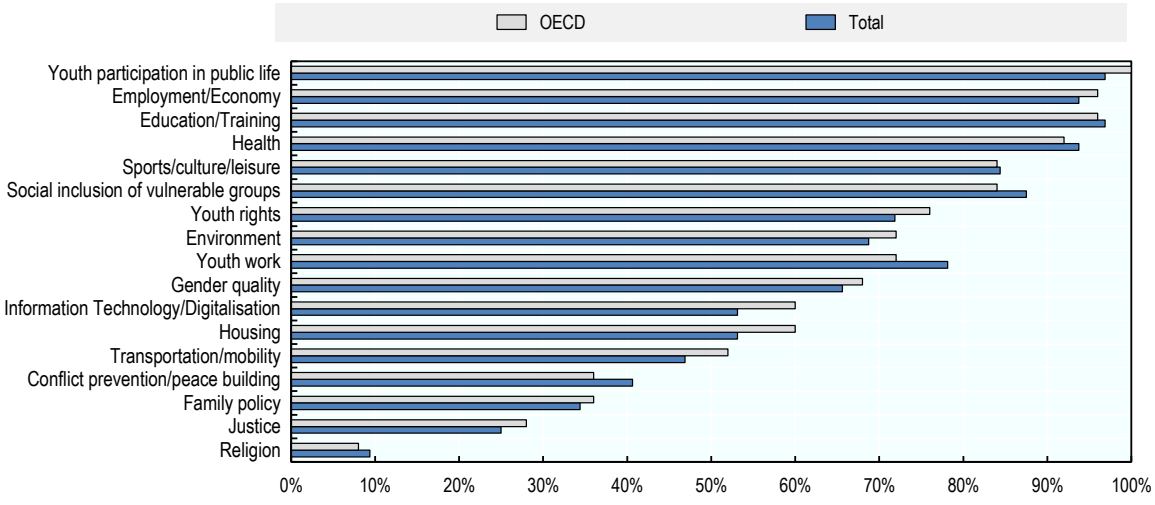
Continuous monitoring of the strategy is also conducted through public consultations at the national and regional level with the participation of young people as well as government representatives and non-governmental organisations. A mid-term evaluation "Youth Report" was completed in 2018 and a final report to evaluate the progress and impact of the strategy will be submitted in 2021.

Source: OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

Cross-sectoral strategies demand vertical and horizontal co-ordination

Youth as a policy area cuts across numerous policy domains. For example, the access to and quality of education has a direct impact on whether or not young people will find decent jobs, which, in turn, can ultimately have implications for young people's health status. Similarly, increasing young people's opportunities to participate in sports and enjoy quality free time can be significant for their physical as well as mental health. A cross-sectoral youth strategy should seek to address all relevant policy areas through a youth lens and create synergies with one another.

Figure 2.9. Thematic focus of national youth strategies



Note: Total refers to 32 countries, which consist of 25 OECD member and 7 non-member countries that have or are elaborating a NYS. OECD refers to 25 countries.
Source: OECD calculations based on OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

The transversal nature of youth as a policy area is generally recognised in the design of NYS. Although the thematic focus areas covered vary from country to country, an overwhelming majority across the OECD covers commitments to youth participation in public life (100%); employment and economy (96%); education and training (96%); health (92%); and sports (84%) (Figure 2.9).

On the other hand, topics such as justice (28%), transportation (52%), housing (60%) and digitalisation (60%) are addressed to a more limited extent, despite their significance for the transition of youth to an autonomous life. In fact, surveyed youth organisations based in OECD countries express lower levels of satisfaction with government's response to their needs in these sectors which are less covered in NYS. On a scale from 1-5, where 5 represents the highest level of satisfaction, they rate housing (2.1), justice (2.5) and transportation (2.6) as service and policy areas which meet their wishes, expectations and needs to a lesser extent compared to others (Figure 2.1).

While these areas might be covered more extensively in sectoral strategies and programmes, findings call for a need to better understand and deliver on the needs of young people in these policy areas. It is also important to make sure that efforts in different sectors are complementary to each other. In this context, NYS could be further used as a policy umbrella to enable a holistic approach and joint-up efforts in the collection of age-disaggregated evidence and the delivery of services for young people by different ministries.

Gender-responsiveness help ensure inclusiveness of national youth strategies

The 2015 OECD Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life (OECD, 2015[15]) highlights that all government action should be assessed against the specific needs of women and men from diverse backgrounds to ensure inclusive policy outcomes. Gender mainstreaming in national youth strategies can contribute to reducing the gender gap amongst young people through systematic use of sex-disaggregated data, inclusion of gender expertise in the design of youth policy and definition of gender-specific objectives and indicators (OECD, 2019[7]).

In more than two-thirds of OECD countries (17 out of 25), national youth strategies focus on gender equality as a thematic area (3 out of 5 in non-member countries). However, around 30% of the responding entities across the OECD point to challenges in the collection of age-disaggregated data on gender equality, suggesting that the specific challenges faced by young women and men may not be fully captured in the NYS. This reveals an untapped potential to leverage NYS to advance gender equality commitments based on gender-specific objectives and sex-disaggregated data.

Institutional arrangements to translate commitments into results

Implementation: institutions, oversight and accountability

The previous section benchmarked the practices of OECD countries and selected non-member countries against eight quality standards of a national youth strategy. The analysis presented mixed results: a majority of countries are pursuing a cross-cutting approach to the design and delivery of youth-related objectives. At the same time, the availability of age-disaggregated evidence, a fully participative approach and the mobilisation of adequate resources and monitoring and evaluation capacities continue to present challenges across many countries.

A robust institutional framework is crucial to ensure the effective implementation and co-ordination of youth policy objectives. It requires a clear allocation of mandates and responsibilities across ministerial portfolios and different levels of government. It also calls for a holistic approach, which may involve the Centre of Government, institutions in charge of youth policy, line ministries, data-collecting and producing bodies, as well as independent oversight institutions, along with various non-governmental stakeholders.

Institutions in charge of co-ordinating youth policy

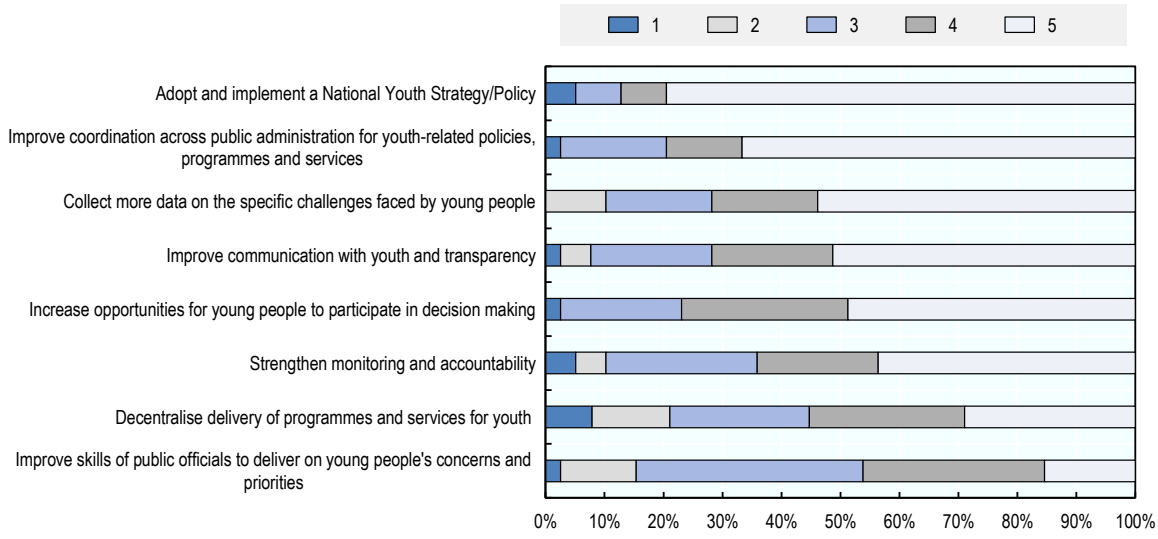
Practices to assign formal authority for youth affairs vary significantly across OECD member and non-member countries participating in the Youth Governance Surveys. In one-fourth of the OECD countries, the youth portfolio is located within the Ministry of Education (8 out of 32). In five of these countries, a department dedicated to youth affairs exists. The second most common arrangement is a Ministry for Youth with combined portfolios (i.e. education, sports, family affairs, senior citizens, women, and children) (22%, 7 out of 32). Around 18% of OECD countries established a department dedicated to youth affairs within a ministry responsible for health, labour, social security and social policy (6 out of 32). In Austria, Canada, Colombia, Japan and Italy, youth affairs are organised at the CoG (i.e. Prime Minister's Office or its equivalent).

In Chile, Mexico, Portugal, Slovenia and Spain, a National Youth Institute operates under an assigned line ministry to co-ordinate and implement national youth policy. In the case of Spain, decision-making power is shared between the National Youth Institute (Instituto de la Juventud, INJUVE) and the Youth Inter-Ministerial Commission, presided by the Minister of Health, Social Services and Equality. Bulgaria, Costa Rica, Ukraine and Romania organise youth affairs through a Ministry of Youth with a combined portfolio. In Brazil, the youth portfolio is hosted by the Ministry of Women Family and Human Rights. Argentina's National Institute of Youth operates as part of the Ministry of Social Development.

Despite the differences in institutional set-up, these government entities assume similar responsibilities. Findings from the OECD Youth Governance Surveys illustrate that nearly all entities in OECD countries (91%) draft and implement youth policy, and a large majority (81%) provide funding to non-governmental youth stakeholders. Around one in four central youth institutions do not engage in the design and delivery of programmes and services nor do they advise line ministries on youth policy. Among non-member countries, the institutions in charge of youth policy are also primarily tasked with drafting and implementing youth policy (100%). However, they appear to assume greater responsibilities for the design and delivery programmes and services dedicated to youth (100%) compared to those in the OECD countries (75%).

Only around half of these entities across the OECD countries (53%) reports collecting age-disaggregated data and information. At the same time, the survey findings show that 88% of OECD countries rely on evidence collected by the institution in charge of youth policy in the design of their national youth strategy. This observation raises questions about the administrative capacities in place to gather and use relevant data to inform strategy design and monitoring. For 73% of ministries in charge of youth affairs, strengthening age-disaggregated data collection is a priority, suggesting that policy makers are aware of the need to address this challenge (Figure 2.10). The two main priorities ministries in charge of youth affairs seek to address include the adoption and implementation of a national youth strategy (87%) and to improve co-ordination across ministerial portfolios and departments (79%)[5].

Figure 2.10. Priorities of central youth institutions



Note: Data refers to 39 countries composed of OECD member and non-members (1=not at all prioritised, 2=marginally prioritised, 3=somewhat prioritised, 4=moderately prioritised, 5=fully prioritised).
Source: OECD calculations based on OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

The survey results demonstrate that the location of the youth portfolio within government can be an important indication of the political importance given to this agenda. It can also have an impact on its specific functions (e.g. monitoring and co-ordination roles), resources (e.g. budgets and human resources) and scope of influence (e.g. convening power). For example, a ministry dedicated to youth affairs will be part of the Cabinet where it can advocate for youth concerns at the highest political level. Survey findings also suggest that ministries of youth secure more human and financial resources compared to departments or units inside ministries of education or combined portfolios (see the next section). Across the respondents from OECD countries, they are also least likely to identify the lack of capacities as a challenge when co-ordinating youth policies across the government.

Similarly, the survey findings suggest that countries in which the youth portfolio is located at the CoG find it less challenging to secure political commitment to co-ordinate and implement youth policy, programmes and services. The CoG can also play out its convening power. Indeed, none of the respective youth units at the CoG reports that line ministries and subnational authorities do not show sufficient interest in the co-ordination of youth affairs. In contrast, 20% of the entities that are organised as ministries or departments perceive this as a challenge.

Human and financial resources allocated for youth affairs

Comparative evidence on the available resources to implement youth policy, programmes and services is scarce. This derives from the fact that youth is a cross-cutting policy area and that young people may be beneficiaries of social services and other government programmes, which do not necessarily target them exclusively. However, limited comparative evidence exists also in terms of the resources dedicated to the entity in charge of co-ordinating the youth portfolio. Around 75% of responding OECD countries indicate that such information is not available. Similarly, around 60% of respondents in OECD countries report that no information is available on the number of employees who are primarily working on youth affairs.

Based on the results from a small sample of countries that provided evidence, it appears that dedicated youth ministries secure more funding than departments or units of youth within ministries of education or ministries with combined portfolios. And yet, the share that is specifically dedicated to youth affairs in these

entities was less than 0.1% of the central government budget per annum for the fiscal years 2015-2019[6]. In other words, approximately, out of EUR 1000 central government budget, less than EUR 1 goes to the youth entity in the form of a ministry and even less for other forms of organisation (e.g. unit, department). In line with the findings presented in the previous section, budget and staff information also confirms that ministries of youth are best equipped with human and financial resources compared to other institutional arrangements to host youth portfolio.

Moving forward, increasing the availability of information on budget and staff dedicated to youth affairs would facilitate comparisons across OECD countries and help bolster accountability.

Co-ordination: getting stakeholders on board

The cross-cutting nature of policies and services for young people means that they cannot be implemented in isolation from each other. Strong co-ordination mechanisms across governmental and non-governmental stakeholders are required to avoid a fragmented delivery across policy areas (inter-ministerial or horizontal) and with regard to the involvement of subnational levels of government (vertical).

Horizontal co-ordination

Several OECD countries have put in place an institutionalised mechanism for the inter-ministerial co-ordination of youth affairs (OECD, 2018[10]). These mechanisms often take the form of inter-ministerial or inter-departmental co-ordination bodies, working groups or focal points (Box 2.5).

Box 2.5. Examples of horizontal co-ordination mechanisms for youth policy

Inter-ministerial or inter-departmental co-ordination bodies are composed of ministries with a responsibility to implement specific commitments of the national youth policy. The ministry with formal responsibility to co-ordinate youth affairs is always part of these structures and usually co-ordinates and prepares its meetings. For instance, in Luxembourg, an inter-department committee is in charge. It is composed of representatives of the Ministers of Children and Youth, Children, Children's Rights, Foreign Affairs, Local Affairs, Culture, Cooperation and Development, Education, Equal Opportunities, Family, Justice, Housing, Police, Employment, Health and Sports.

Working groups are oftentimes established on an ad hoc basis and assume responsibility for specific topics. In principle, only ministries with corresponding portfolios are involved in the respective thematic working group. Inter-ministerial co-ordination bodies may be complemented by working groups in which line ministries may take the lead in co-ordinating its activities. In the United States, an Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs supports co-ordinated federal activities in the field of youth.

Focal points may be appointed to oversee the work on youth affairs within line ministries and co-ordinate youth-related programming with the entity in charge of youth affairs. In Slovenia, each Ministry has a dedicated youth focal point to facilitate co-ordination with the Council of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for Youth (URSM) and other ministries. In Flanders, Belgium, there is a contact point for youth in all agencies and departments.

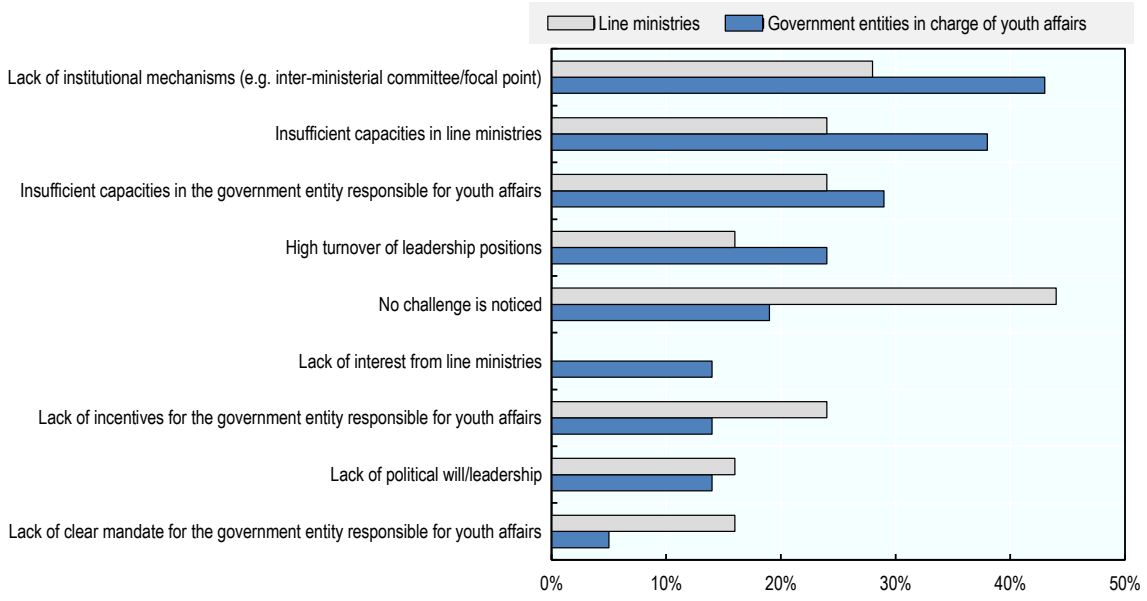
Source: OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

Despite these arrangements, survey findings show that significant challenges persist to unite all relevant stakeholders behind a whole-of-government approach to youth policy. Indeed, the lack of institutional mechanisms (e.g. inter-ministerial committee/focal point) is highlighted as the most important barrier for inter-ministerial co-ordination (45%) by the central youth entities. Insufficient capacities in line ministries

(42%) and within their own entity (39%) are also frequently mentioned. Around one-fifth identifies the lack of interest from line ministries as the main challenge.

Responding line ministries from OECD countries have a somewhat different perception (Figure 2.11). They largely point to the lack of incentives within the government entity responsible for youth affairs as the main challenge. In turn, they tend to agree with the central youth entities that the absence of institutional mechanisms and insufficient capacities in central youth institutions and line ministries further exacerbate this challenge.

Figure 2.11. Entities in charge of youth affairs and line ministries express diverging views about co-ordination challenges



Note: Data refers to 21 OECD countries in which both the ministry in charge of youth affairs and one or two line ministries answered the OECD Youth Governance Surveys. The results refer to 21 entities in charge of youth policy and 25 line ministries in OECD countries.
Source: OECD calculations based on OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

These findings reveal that, across many OECD countries, there is a need to strengthen the institutional arrangements to facilitate inter-ministerial co-ordination by formalising these mechanisms and ensuring their effective use. In addition, governments should consider equipping their entities in charge of youth affairs and line ministries with adequate human and financial resources to create the administrative capacities for the collection of age-disaggregated evidence, inter-ministerial co-ordination and mainstreaming. Reported challenges in terms of limited incentives and interest to promote cooperation across institutions suggest that political buy-in is a precondition for a cross-sectoral approach. The OECD Survey on the Organisation and Functions of the Centre of Government (2013) shows that 86% of OECD countries use financial incentives or individual/collective performance targets to promote horizontal cooperation for transversal tasks (OECD, 2013[27]). These incentive mechanisms could also be used in the field of youth policy.

Vertical co-ordination

The most frequent interactions between young people and public administration take place at municipal or district level. Many government services that are critical for young people (e.g. healthcare, education,

social services, etc.) are generally provided at the local level, especially in countries with federal or decentralised administrations. Effective vertical co-ordination is therefore indispensable to translate youth policy commitments into programmes and tailored services in collaboration with local public authorities and non-governmental stakeholders.

Findings from the OECD Youth Governance Surveys show that 74% of responding ministries in charge of youth affairs in OECD countries deliver policies, programmes or services at the subnational level (Box 2.6). More than half of the respondents underline (55%) that a further decentralised approach to the delivery of programmes and services for youth is a top priority.

However, the survey results indicate significant barriers to vertical co-ordination. More than half (52%) of responding youth entities, which deliver services at the local level, point to insufficient capacities among subnational level of government. Limited capacities in central youth institutions (26%), lack of institutional mechanisms (22%), lack of interest from subnational level of government (22%) as well as high turnover of leadership positions (22%) play a less significant role for most countries.

These challenges point to the need to equip subnational authorities with sufficient capacities, mandates and responsibilities to enable a joint-up delivery of programmes and services for youth. This also involves enhancing the administrative, policy and data-gathering capacity of subnational authorities, and ensuring that regional and local priorities are reflected in youth policy, including in national youth strategies. Institutionalised co-ordination mechanisms across the different levels of government involved are therefore crucial to avoid fragmented coverage and access to services for youth across geographical boundaries.

The mechanisms used to co-ordinate the relationship between the central and subnational levels are highly dependent on the country context. In particular, the extent to which public services in the field of education and others are delivered by subnational authorities is determined by the general organisation and distribution of competencies for public affairs (e.g. federal vs. unitary) and population size, among others. Despite the diversity of approaches, engaging municipalities and local governments as well as youth workers and youth councils at subnational level can provide context-specific evidence to inform youth policy-making at central level (see Chapter 3).

Box 2.6. Vertical co-ordination on childhood and youth policy in Switzerland

Switzerland is a federal state made up of 26 cantons. While cantons, cities and municipalities have the lead competence over all matters related to childhood and youth, in addition to social policy, education, culture and health, the federal government (or Confederation) oversees certain aspects of children and youth protection services as well as promotion of youth.

The Conference for childhood and youth policy (Conférence pour la politique de l'enfance et de la jeunesse, CPEJ) is made up of the cantonal contact services for childhood and youth policy and is responsible for co-ordinating childhood and youth policy at the inter-cantonal level. The CPEJ is a technical conference for the Conference of cantonal directors for social affairs (Conférence des directrices et directeurs cantonaux des affaires sociales, CDAS) and manages the implementation of children rights as well as the development of childhood and youth policy in Switzerland. The CPEJ advises and informs all organs of the CDAS on matters related to childhood and youth. This local government structure co-ordinates actively with the federal government. Indeed, the federal law on the promotion of childhood and youth mandates for the increasing collaboration and exchange of information between the Confederation and the cantons on these issues.

Source: (Federal Social Insurance Office, 2019[28])

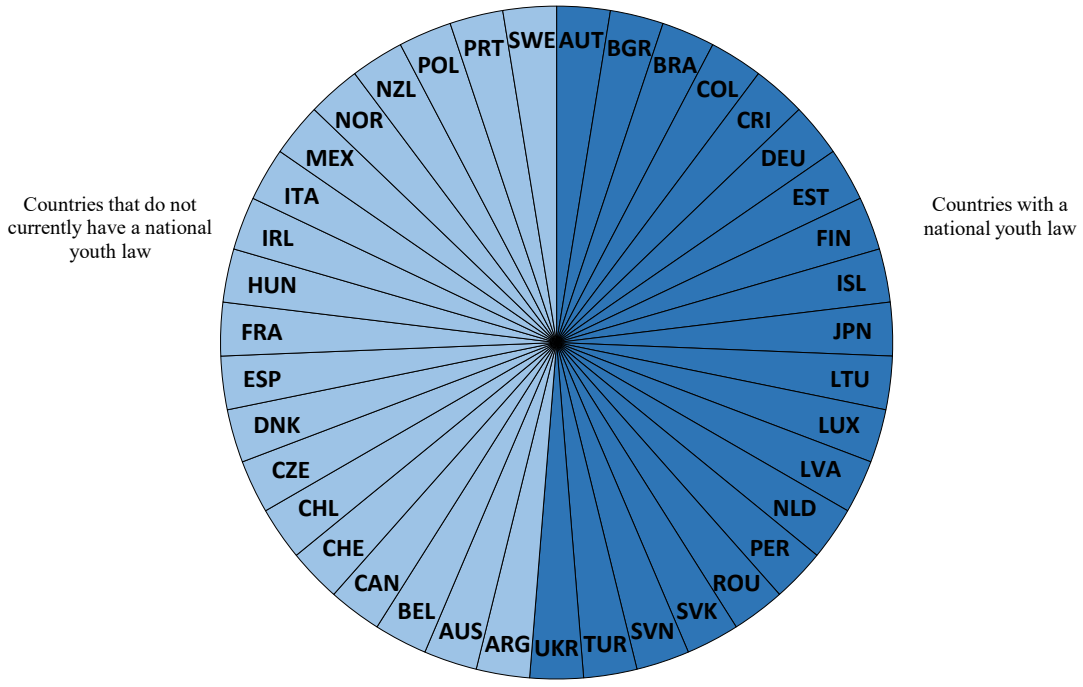
Enabling legal frameworks to level the playing field

Legal frameworks are important determinants of youth's access to public services for their personal development and transition to an autonomous life. They also shape youth's access to engagement opportunities in public life and the relationship with the state as minimum age requirements determine the age to vote or run as a candidate in elections, among others.

National youth laws as catalysts of effective implementation

A youth law or youth act is the most general and comprehensive legislative framework that identifies main stakeholders and fields of action both for state institutions and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working with and for young people (OECD, 2018[10]). It defines youth and youth institutions, youth age limits, actions to be taken by the state, in particular the executive branch, and to whom they are targeted, as well as financial and budgetary considerations (OECD, 2018[10]).

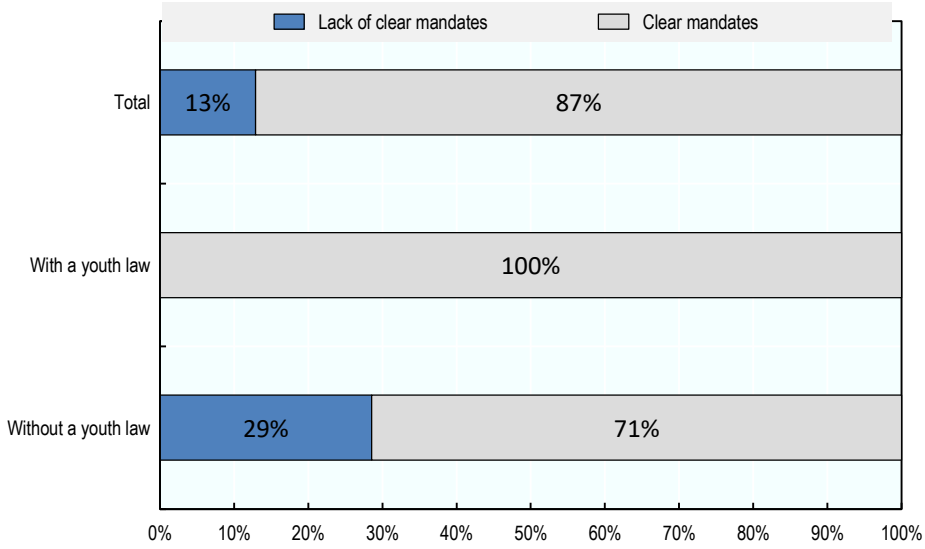
Figure 2.12. Countries with a national youth law, 2020



Note: The graph shows 32 OECD countries and 7 selected non-member countries, namely Argentina, Bulgaria, Brazil, Costa Rica, Peru, Ukraine and Romania.
Source: OECD calculations based on OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

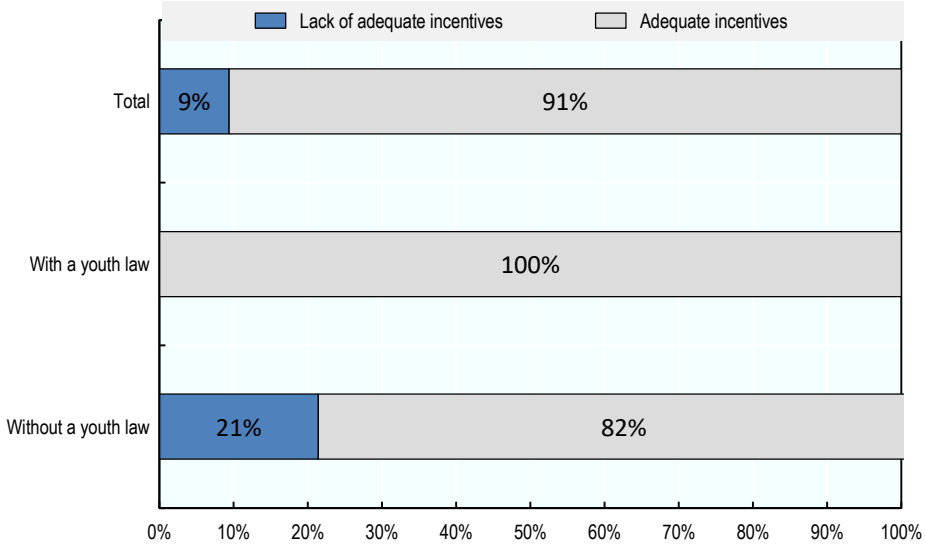
Across the OECD, 14 countries have a youth law in place (Figure 2.12). Among the survey respondents from non-member countries, Bulgaria, Brazil, Costa Rica, Peru, Romania and Ukraine adopted youth laws (Box 2.7). In some OECD countries without a general youth law, youth policy is laid out through various sectoral legislation and youth-specific commitments. For example, in Norway, the rights of youth are largely maintained through laws related to children and social care.

Figure 2.13. National youth laws and mandates



Note: Pearson's chi-square test p-value: 0.05; Fisher's exact test p-value: 0.11. The chart reflects the replies of 31 ministries in charge of youth affairs, of which 14 with a youth law in place and 17 without a youth law in place.
Source: OECD calculations based on OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

Figure 2.14. National youth laws and incentives



Note: Pearson's chi-square test p-value: 0.10; Fisher's exact test p-value: 0.23. The chart reflects the replies of 31 ministries in charge of youth affairs, of which 14 with a youth law in place and 17 without a youth law in place.
Source: OECD calculations based on OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

The analysis reveals that countries with a youth law are less likely to report that the lack of clear mandates or the lack of adequate incentives among governmental stakeholders in the youth field is a challenge (Figure 2.13 and 2.14). Indeed, among the OECD countries with a youth law, none of the respondents reports that the lack of clear mandates and incentives presents barriers for inter-ministerial co-ordination, whereas 29% and 21% of countries without a youth law do, respectively.

Some of the youth laws in the OECD member and selected non-member countries also include clarifications on the existing support structures to encourage young people's representation and participation in policy-making. For instance, the youth laws in Estonia, Finland and Iceland guarantee stable sources of funding to national youth organisations that fit a set of criteria. In some OECD countries, such as Finland, Luxembourg and Slovenia youth laws also feature provisions on the status and functions of the National Youth Council, including membership conditions, responsibilities, among others. The role of national youth laws in promoting the representation and participation of young people in public life are further examined in Chapter 3.

Box 2.7. Examples of national youth laws

Finland

Finland renewed its 1972 Youth Act in 2016. The legislation targets all persons below the age of 29 and covers all aspects of youth work and activities as well as youth policy across all levels of government. It identifies the Ministry of Education and Culture as the primary state authority responsible for the administration, co-ordination and development of the national youth policy, in cooperation with other ministries and central government agencies as well as defined local authorities, youth associations and other relevant organisations. The Youth Act also specifies the key roles and responsibilities of each relevant stakeholders. It notably lays out the role and conditions of the Government in transferring state subsidies to national youth work organisations.

Colombia

Colombia adopted a Statutory Law on Youth Citizenship (*Ley Estatutaria de Ciudadanía Juvenil*) in 2013 to establish the institutional framework of youth policy and work and define young people's rights. It creates a National Youth System (*Sistema Nacional de la Juventudes*) and allows for young people's active participation in the design, implementation and evaluation of youth policy. The Law stipulates that the Presidential Council for Youth (*Consejeria Presidencial para la Juventud*) is in charge of managing the System and of promoting the implementation of the National Youth Policy. It also lays out the roles and missions of local governments and territorial bodies in the implementation of public youth policies. The Presidential Council is responsible for ensuring the effective co-ordination between them and the central government and provides technical assistance in the formulation and implementation of youth policy at their level.

Source: OECD Youth Governance Surveys; (European Commission, 2017[29]).

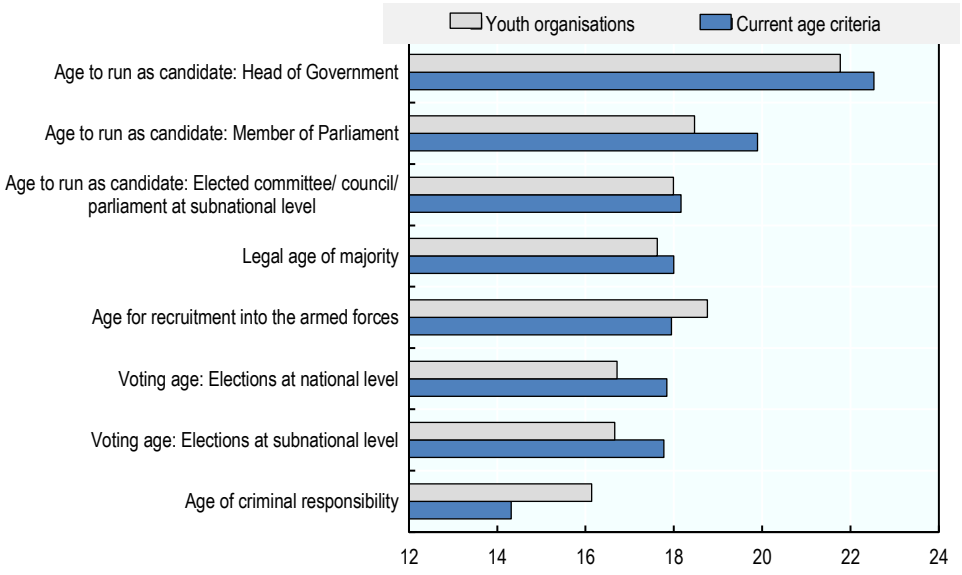
Addressing age-based barriers and discrimination

Minimum-age requirements are common in various policy fields. They apply for the period of compulsory education, access to employment, marriageable age, voting age or age to run as candidate, criminal responsibility, access to specific justice or health services, and recruitment into the armed forces, among others (OECD, 2018[10]).

All OECD member and selected non-member countries covered in this report maintain the age of majority at 18 years, except Japan and New Zealand where the legal age of majority is 20 years. However, in the definition of the minimum age required to vote, run as candidate in elections and access certain public services, significant differences can be observed across the countries. These differences in turn directly affect the opportunities of adolescents and young adults to make decisions, access services and rely on protection provided by government.

Across the OECD countries responding to the OECD Youth Governance Surveys, the average age of criminal responsibility is 14.5 years. The age of beginning of compulsory education varies between age 3 (e.g. France and Mexico) and 7 (e.g. Estonia, Finland, Latvia and Poland). Apart from Greece (17) and Austria (16), for all OECD countries voting age for national elections is 18 years. This also resonates with non-members except for Argentina (16) and Brazil (16). Across the OECD, average age to run as a candidate to be a member of the parliament is 19.8 years. Across six OECD countries, young people can be recruited into the armed forces without being eligible to vote due to their age. In more than one-third of responding countries (15 out of 40), age requirements also determine young people's access to medical advice and counselling for reproductive health services, which ranges from age 12 to 18. Minimum age requirements to access specific health services may have distinct effects on young girls, which can be exacerbated by discriminatory family codes (e.g. legal minimum age of marriage) (UNICEF, 2016[30]).

Figure 2.15. There is a discrepancy between what youth organisations report as appropriate minimum age requirements and current requirements



Note: Based on 17 to 19 (depending on answer option) OECD government entities in charge of youth affairs, and on 25 to 38 (depending on answer option) youth organisations in OECD countries for which data to this question is available.
Source: OECD calculations based on OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

When asked about the appropriate minimum ages, the surveyed youth organisations suggest that age to run as a candidate and vote for national and sub-national elections should be lowered (Figure 2.15). Minimum voting and candidacy age requirements have a direct impact on the political participation and representation of young people and their ability to inform policies and decisions that affect them (see Chapter 3). At the same time, for the age of criminal responsibility and recruitment into armed forces, they maintain that the threshold should be slightly higher.

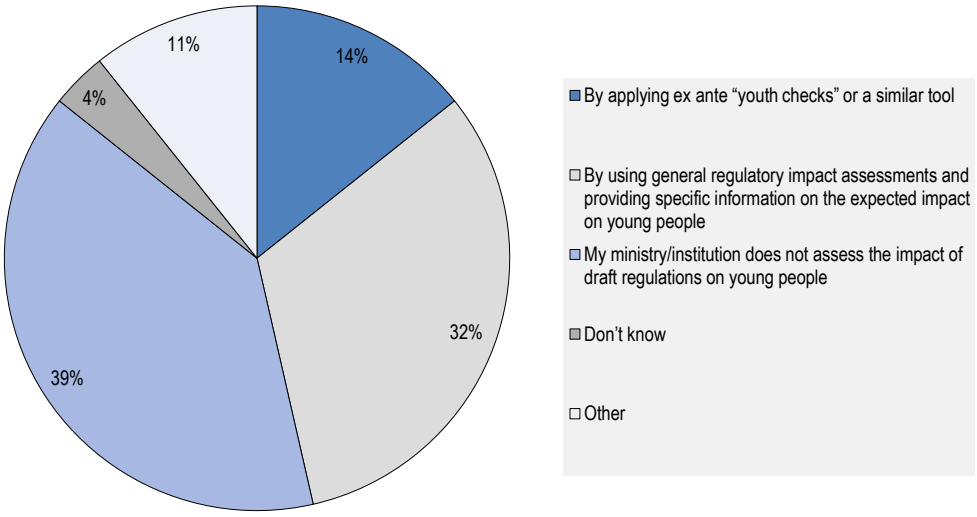
These findings illustrate that in setting these requirements, there is a fine line to balance the need to protect and the aim to empower young people, without creating unwanted legal barriers and age-based discrimination. Governments should therefore seek to review existing minimum age requirements, laws and regulations where they potentially discriminate and exacerbate existing inequalities based on age, gender and other intersecting identity factors.

Governance tools to generate youth-responsive policy outcomes

Budgets, regulations and procurement are critical instruments government can leverage to generate youth-responsive policy outcomes. The OECD Recommendation on Regulatory Policy and Governance (OECD, 2012[31]) recognises regulatory impact assessments (RIAs) as an important tool for an evidence-based policy-making. In the context of youth policy, RIAs can help identify potential differentiated impacts of policy and rule-making on young people.

Over the last years, a number of countries are experimenting with innovative governance tools to ensure their policies and services are more closely aligned with the needs of young people. Survey findings show that the use of RIAs for youth policy goals however remains largely limited across OECD member and non-member countries. While a third of OECD countries use general regulatory impact assessments and provide specific information on the expected impact on young people, only 4 out 28 responding OECD countries apply ex ante "youth checks" to incorporate youth consideration more systematically in policy-making and legislation in Austria, France, Germany and New Zealand (Figure 2.16) (Box 2.8). In Iceland, the Ministry of Education Science and Culture in charge of youth portfolio reported developing a youth check in cooperation with the Office of the Ombudsman for Children.

Figure 2.16. Use of regulatory impact assessments for youth policy objectives



Note: Data refers to 28 OECD member countries.
Source: OECD calculations based on OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

Budgeting is another key lever at the disposal of governments to pursue broader societal objectives. The OECD Recommendation on Budgetary Governance (OECD, 2015[12]) recognises the budget as the central policy document, which helps governments translate their plans and aspirations into reality. Over the past years, many OECD countries have turned to budgeting to achieve different cross-cutting high level priorities with the introduction of ''gender budgeting'' "green budgeting", "wellbeing budgeting" and "SDG budgeting", among others (Downes and Nicol, 2019[32]).

In the context of youth policy, budgeting can be a powerful tool to align the broader economic and social objectives of government with the interests and expectations of young people and future generations (see Chapter 4). By systematically taking the needs and interests of young people into account in tax and spending decisions, governments can anticipate the potential impacts of budgeting choices across different age groups and shape their revenue and spending decisions accordingly.

The OECD Youth Stocktaking Report (2018) describes youth-sensitive budgeting as a way to ''integrate a clear youth perspective within the overall context of the budget process, through the use of special processes and analytical tools, with a view to promoting youth-responsive policies'' (OECD, 2018[10]). While there is limited evidence of youth-sensitive budgeting practices in the national budget cycle of any OECD country until now, Canada considers youth-specific objectives in the framework of gender budgeting (Box 2.8). Moving forward, countries could consider tapping into the unused potential of youth-sensitive budgeting to generate more inclusive outcomes (OECD, 2018[10])

Box 2.8. Examples on the use of regulatory and budgetary tools for youth policy objectives

France

The youth impact clause (*clause d'impact sur la jeunesse*) is part of the general process of prior evaluation of draft laws and regulations. With some exceptions, article 8 of Organic Law No. 2009-403 of 15 April 2009 provides that all bills must be accompanied by an impact study. The production of an impact statement is also required for any draft regulatory text (ordinance, decree and order) that includes new measures applicable to local authorities, civil society actors (enterprises, citizens and organisations) or deconcentrated state services.

If the Government fails to comply with this requirement, the National Assembly can refuse to place the bill on its agenda. In the event of disagreement between this assembly and the Prime Minister on the satisfactory nature of the impact study, the matter may be referred to the Constitutional Council for a decision within 8 days.

The purpose of these impact studies is to :

1. provide a tool for political decision-making;
2. improve the quality of legislative texts;
3. enlighten Parliament on the nature and timeliness of the planned reforms;
4. improve public information.

Canada

The Government of Canada has put in place a "Gender-based analysis plus" (GBA+) to ensure that "the differential impacts of people of all genders are considered when policies, programs and legislation are developed."

It is an analytical process that seeks, to advance gender equality but it goes beyond considerations of sex and gender differences to also look at other factors such as race, ethnicity, religion, age, and mental or physical disability. Since 2018 and based on the results of the GBA+, Canada includes a Gender Results Framework in its federal budget as a whole-of-government tool to help guide future policy decisions and track developments in gender equality and diversity across selected policy priorities. One such priority is dedicated to providing equal opportunities and diversified paths in education and skills development and includes a youth-specific objective which is to reduce gender gaps in reading and numeracy skills among youth, including indigenous youth. Selected indicators and goals are measured over time to benchmark progress.

The GBA+ measures in the 2019 Budget include an increased focus on youth with a dedicated CAD 6 billion on a wide range of issues including student loans, youth volunteer programmes, indigenous youth reconciliation initiatives, employment or prevention of cyberbullying and abuse.

Source: (France, 2018[33]), OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

Accounting for 12% of GDP in OECD countries, public procurement is an important tool to support wider cultural, social, economic and environmental outcomes that go beyond the immediate purchase of goods and services (OECD, 2020[34]). The OECD Recommendation on Public Procurement also underlines the importance of pursuing complementary secondary policy objectives through public procurement in a balanced manner against the primary procurement objective (OECD, 2015[35]).

In the context of youth policy, public procurement could be leveraged to support the participation of young entrepreneurs and youth-owned businesses in procurement processes and to assess the differentiated impacts of procurement projects on different age groups and generations (see Chapter 4). This needs to build on a solid assessment to understand if procurement is the right lever to achieve these secondary policy objectives.

For example, the Ministry of Children of New Zealand has designed an innovative procurement process to create opportunities for young Māori providers to deliver a more effective community-based youth remand service (New Zealand, 2020[36]). The initiative has built on the recognition that traditional methods of procuring such services have generally disadvantaged smaller, community providers. This project has primarily targeted minorities, and within them young people. (See also new Oranga Tamariki Legislation Act 2019 as an example of how the procurement process can be designed to support social outcomes) (New Zealand, 2020[36]).

Policy recommendations

This chapter has provided an analysis of trends, bottlenecks and good practice examples in delivering on the needs of young people and addressing the challenges they face in transitioning to an autonomous life. It assessed how governments can design, co-ordinate, implement, monitor and evaluate policies and services that are responsive to young people's needs.

A number of OECD countries have designed national youth strategies, created co-ordination mechanisms, established monitoring and evaluation frameworks and adopted regulatory, budgetary and procurement tools to facilitate youth's transition to an autonomous life. However, inadequate financial and human capacities, limited and ad-hoc use of co-ordination, monitoring, evaluation and data collection mechanisms and governance tools undermine the achievement of youth policy objectives.

To support youth in their transition to an autonomous life, governments should consider:

1. Formulating and investing into the quality of integrated youth policies, for instance through national youth strategies, at the appropriate level(s) of government, to ensure they are evidence-based, participatory and cross-sectoral, supported by political commitment, adequate resources, and effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.
2. Equipping policy makers with adequate resources and skills and setting in place effective co-ordination mechanisms to deliver youth policy and services across different ministries and levels of government in a coherent manner.
3. Addressing age-related barriers and discrimination to facilitate youth's access to public resources and participate in public life.
4. Providing people-centric and user-friendly public services for youth, including through digital means, to facilitate their access to information and counselling in areas such as education, employment, health, and others.
5. Providing targeted policies and services for young women and men from diverse backgrounds, especially the most vulnerable youth populations (e.g. NEET youth, young migrants, minorities and indigenous communities; homeless youth and youth with disabilities).

6. Systematically gathering age-disaggregated data, and applying governance tools such as regulatory and budgetary impact assessments and public procurement to address inequalities within and across different age cohorts.

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Notes

[1] The OECD survey was responded by Privy Council Office in October 2019. In November 2019, Canada created a new Ministry of Diversity, Inclusion and Youth. The report considers institutional arrangement in force at the time.

[2] Respondents from non-member countries refer to the entities in charge of youth in Argentina, Bulgaria, Brazil, Costa Rica, Peru, Ukraine and Romania.

[3] The 1998 Lisbon Declaration, the 2014 Baku Commitment to Youth Policies, the 2019 Lisboa+21 Declaration on Youth Policies and Programmes, and guidelines as well as practical tools developed by the Council of Europe, the European Youth Forum.

[4] The CoG is "the body of group of bodies that provide direct support and advice to Heads of Government and the Council of Minister, or Cabinet". The CoG is mandated "to ensure the consistency and prudency of government decisions and to promote evidence-based, strategic and consistent policies" (OECD, 2013).

[5] Respondents were asked to rate their priorities to deliver policies and services that are responsive to youth's needs on a scale of 1 to 5 (i.e. 1=not at all prioritised, 2=marginally prioritised, 3=somewhat prioritised, 4=moderately prioritised, 5=fully prioritised). Prioritisation levels are calculated based on respondents indicating a score of 4 or 5.

[6] The findings refer to the share of central government budget that is specifically dedicated to youth affairs (i.e. as opposed to other policy areas) in four ministries of in charge youth portfolio across the OECD countries for the fiscal years 2015-2019.

3. Youth and Public Institutions: Stronger Together

This chapter focuses on the role of governance in fostering the relationship between youth and public institutions. After a general deterioration in the aftermath of the 2007-2008 financial crisis, trust in public institutions, representation in decision-making and political efficacy remain low among young people. At the same time, youth are vocal in the public debate through non-institutionalised channels of participation. Re-building their trust and enhancing their participation in decision-making remain crucial in order to ensure the resilience, effectiveness and long-term legitimacy of public institutions and to achieve more sustainable policies in response to global transformations and shocks.

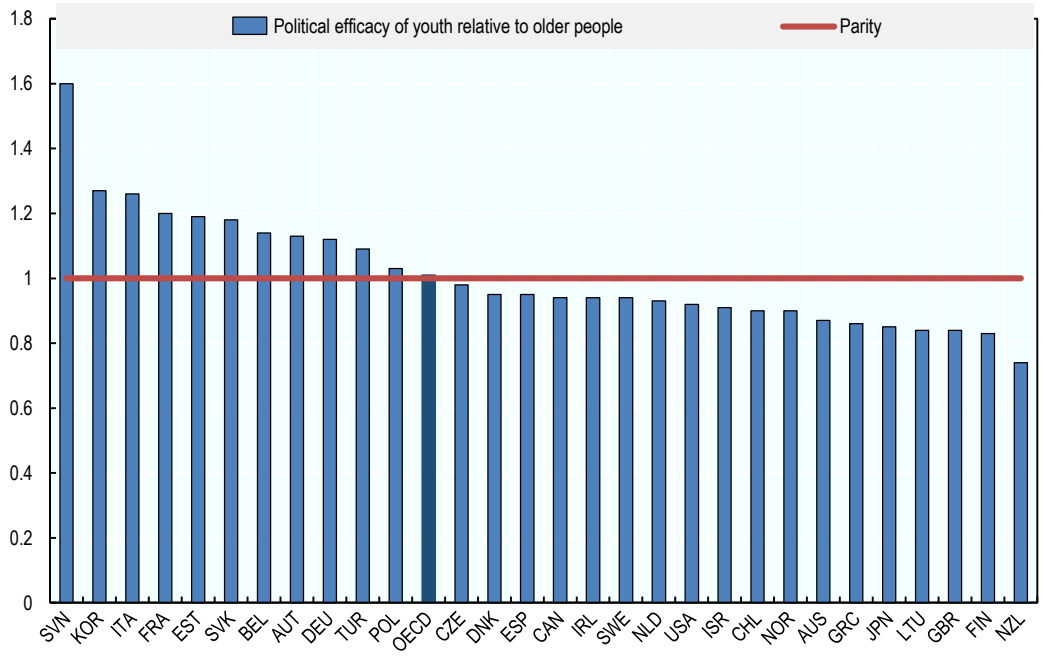
Building a strong relationship to ensure resilience and effectiveness

Less than half of young people expressed confidence in their national government in OECD countries in 2019 (45.6% on average).[1] Youth also tend to join political parties and participate in elections less than their older peers: 68% of young people go to the polls compared to 85% of people over 54 on average in OECD countries (OECD, 2020, p. 188[1]). The representation of youth in state institutions also remains limited with an average representation gap of 12 percentage points between the share of members of lower houses of parliament under the age of 40 (22%) and the share of people aged 20-39 in the population over 20 years of age (34%).[2] Among the surveyed OECD ministries in charge of youth affairs, only 26% of the staff is under the age of 34 on average.[3] At the same time, young people demonstrate agency in the public sphere. From online campaigns raising awareness about violence against women to social movements fighting inequality, racial discrimination and climate change, young people actively participate in the public debate through non-institutionalised channels.

In more than half of OECD countries for which data is available, young people are less likely than older people to feel to have a say on what the government does (Figure 3.1). Limited political efficacy may feed into support for "populist movements." In fact, research on European countries finds that populist parties draw their support disproportionately from younger voters (Foa and Mounk, 2019[2]): disinformation through social media and instant messaging apps might further exacerbate youth's vulnerability to populism. To the extent that they amplify grievances toward institutions, the appeal of populist parties among youth could contribute to the deterioration of liberal democratic institutions in the long-run.

Figure 3.1. In 18 OECD countries, youth expressed less political efficacy than older people did

Political efficacy is captured by people reporting that they feel to have a say on what the government does. The red line marks the point in which younger and older citizens feel empowered to the same extent within a country. Above the line, young people feel empowered to a greater extent than older fellow citizens do, and vice versa.



Notes: "Youth" here refers to people aged 16-24; "Older people" here refers to people aged 25-44.
Sources: OECD (2020), *How's Life? 2020: Measuring Well-being*, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/9870c393-en.

The effectiveness of government policies widely rests on compliance. For instance, in responding to the COVID-19 crisis, governments have taken measures that have drastically altered the everyday behaviour and life of citizens in order to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on people's lives. When citizens trust state's institutions they tend to comply voluntarily with rules to a greater extent (Murphy, 2004[3]). Promoting trust and strengthening the relationship between young people and public institutions is hence crucial to ensure the readiness and resilience of societies to future shocks.

A strong relationship between youth and public institutions is also necessary to mobilise support for structural reforms and sustain short-term sacrifices in exchange of long-term, less tangible benefits (OECD, 2013[4]). This is especially crucial as youth are likely to bear most of the long-term implications of today's decisions. For instance, where policy timeframes are longer, governments can align more easily measures to recover from the socio-economic consequences of COVID-19 with tangible investments into young and future generations (see Chapter 4).

The COVID-19 crisis has presented governments with great challenges: at the same time, it provides a window of opportunity to recalibrate the relationship between youth and public institutions. This Chapter:

1. analyses trends in youth's trust in government, use of non-institutionalised and institutionalised channels of political participation, and representation in public administrations and state institutions;
2. discusses governance challenges and barriers that hinder youth's relationship with public institutions and how governments can address them; and
3. highlights the role of youth work and youth volunteering in promoting resilient societies and how governments can strengthen these fields through programmes and resources.

In institutions we trust (less)

A glance at a decade-long erosion

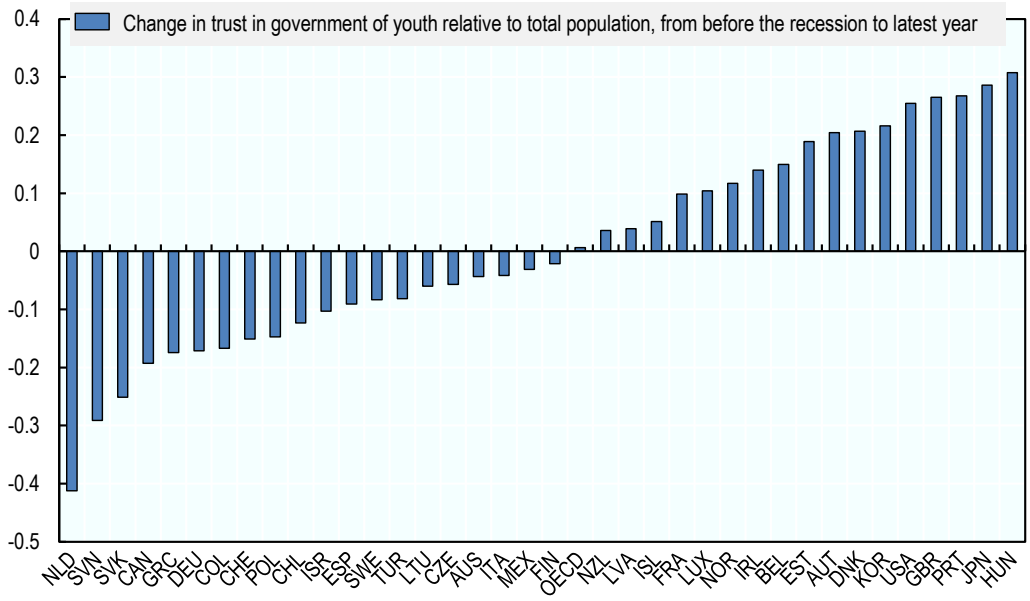
The erosion of trust in public institutions has come to the forefront of the policy debate since the 2007-2008 financial crisis and the recession that followed it. Inequalities in income and opportunities, unemployment and job insecurity, lack of economic growth, perceived corruption and global challenges have undermined citizens' confidence in institutions (OECD, 2017[5]). Young people were disproportionately affected by the adverse impact of the 2007-2008 financial crisis (see Chapter 1) and particularly lost confidence. For instance, trust in government decreased by 5 percentage points (p.p.) between 2007 and 2012 among the total population in OECD countries (OECD, 2013, p. 26[4]). During the same period, in countries most affected by the crisis, youth's trust in national governments declined by 25 p.p. in Greece (2007-2012), by 19 p.p. in Spain (2006-2012) and by 15 p.p. in Portugal (2006-2012).[4]

In 2019, only 45% of the population on average expressed trust in their national government in 2019, barely recovering from its low of 40% recorded in the aftermath of the financial crisis in 2010-12 (OECD, 2020[1]). Similarly, in 2018-2019 only 46% of people aged 15-29 expressed trust in national government across the OECD.[5] Furthermore, in more than half of OECD countries (20 out of 37), the trust expressed by young people in national governments, compared to the total population, has decreased since 2006 (Figure 3.2).

OECD analysis shows that among individual characteristics, economic and social uncertainty is a strong predictor of low trust (OECD, 2017[5]). Such uncertainty is more likely to be experienced by young people during their transition to an autonomous life (see Chapter 2): the 2007-2008 crisis magnified the uncertainty faced by youth, especially in the labour market (France, 2016[6]). Learning from past experiences, governments must seek to mitigate the youth-specific impacts and uncertainties brought by the COVID-19 crisis, as well as avoid a further erosion of their trust (OECD, 2020[7]).

Figure 3.2. In more than half OECD countries, youth trust government less than before the 2007-2008 financial crisis (relative to the total population)

Change in trust in government of youth relative to total population, from 2006-2007 to latest year available.

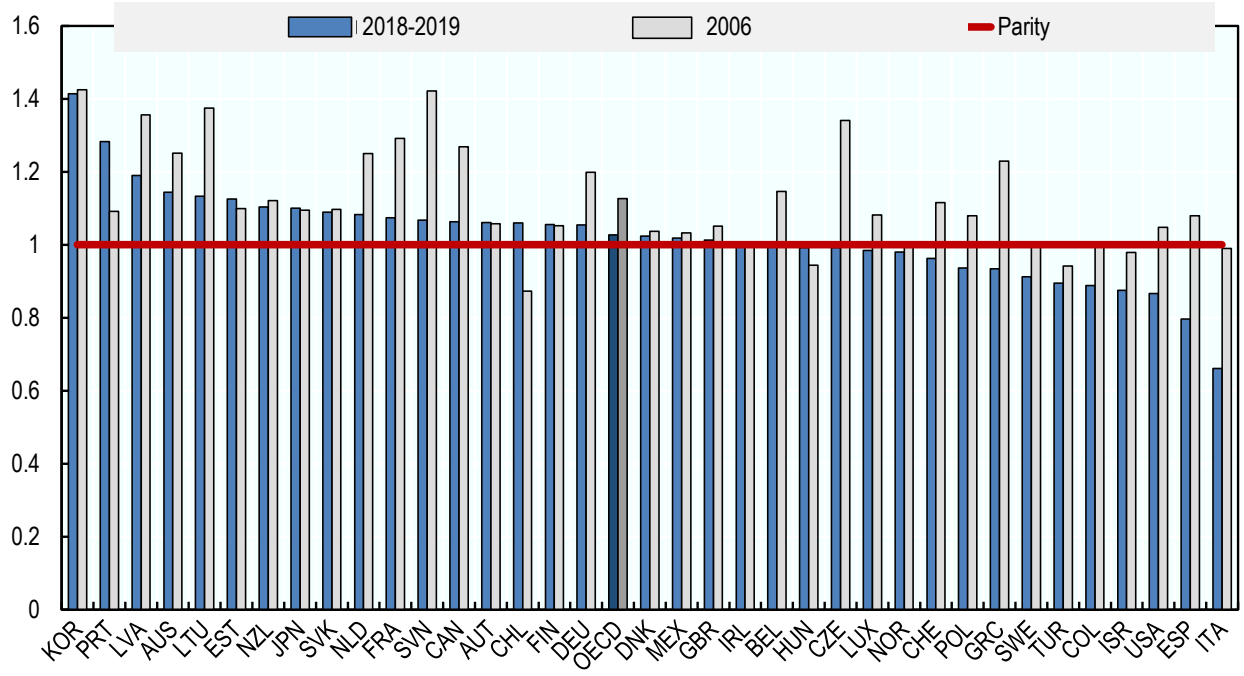


Notes: "Youth" here refers to people aged 15-29.
Source: OECD calculations based on Gallup World Poll (Database).

Beyond the national government, young people have been losing trust in public institutions widely, which raises concerns about the legitimacy of fundamental democratic institutions. For instance, less than half of the total population (44%) expressed trust in their country's parliament in 2018, across 16 OECD countries.[6] Furthermore, in 2018-2019, 56% of youth expressed trust in the judicial system on average across 36 OECD countries (similarly to 55% of the total population).[7] However, before the 2007-2008 financial crisis, young people trusted the judicial system more than the total population in 30 OECD countries. The latest data (2018-2019) shows that this is now the case in only 21 OECD countries and that overall the relative level of trust that young people express in the judicial system has declined in 29 OECD countries (Figure 3.3). Despite the negative trends, youth's confidence in and access to the judicial system remains an area that is often overlooked: only 25% of the countries that responded to the OECD Youth Governance Surveys included objectives, targets and actions on justice in their national youth strategies (see Chapter 2).

Figure 3.3. Youth trust the judicial system more than the total population in 21 OECD countries, but their trust (relative to the total population) has decreased in 29 OECD countries since 2007

The charts shows the share of youth that express confidence in the judicial system relative to the share of the total population that does, in 2018-2019 (blue bars) and in 2006-2007 (grey bars). The red line marks the point in which youth and the overall population trust the judicial system to the same extent within a country. Above the line, young people express trust in the judicial system to a greater extent than the total population does, and vice versa.



Notes: "Youth" here refers to people aged 15-29. Age-disaggregated data across years is not available for Iceland. Data for Luxembourg refers to 2010.
Source: OECD calculations based on Gallup World Poll (Database).

Re-building youth's trust in government

Trust in public institutions is a multifaceted concept driven by a variety of factors. A functioning democratic system (macro-level), outcomes of policy-making (meso-level) and the government's ability to deliver everyday services to citizens (micro-level) matter for trust (Bouckaert, 2012[8]). The perceived level of corruption in the political system also has a significant, negative impact on citizen's trust in public institutions (Rothstein, 2011[9]). OECD analysis (OECD, 2017[5]) suggests that governments can promote public trust by delivering services and policies that are high in quality, responsive to citizens' demands, reliable and guided by principles of integrity, openness and fairness (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1. OECD Trust Framework: Deconstructing citizens' trust in public institutions

Trust Component	Government Mandate	Concern affecting trust	Policy dimension
Competence: governments' ability to deliver to citizens the services they need, at the quality level they expect	Provide public services	Access to public services, regardless of social/economic condition; Quality and timeliness of public services; Respect in public service provision, including response to citizen feedback	Responsiveness
	Anticipate change, protect citizens	Anticipation and adequate assessment of evolving citizen needs and challenges; Consistent and predictable behaviour; Effective management of social, economic and political uncertainty	Reliability
Values: drivers and principles that inform and guide government action	Use power and public resources ethically	High standards of behaviour; Commitment against corruption; Accountability	Integrity
	Inform, consult, and listen to citizens	Ability to know and understand what government is up to; Engagement opportunities that lead to tangible results	Openness
	Improve socioeconomic conditions for all	Pursuit of socio-economic progress for society at large; Consistent treatment of citizens and businesses (vs. fear of capture)	Fairness

Source: OECD (2017), *Trust and Public Policy: How Better Governance can Help Rebuild Public Trust*, OECD Publishing, Paris, http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264268920-en

At the macro-level, across 16 OECD countries, 14% of people under the age of 29 held a disenchanted view about democracy in 2010-2014 (i.e. considering democracy "a bad way of governing"). This compares to only 9% of the people aged more than 50 that shared the same opinion.[8] At the meso-level, young people are voicing concerns about the short-termism of policy outcomes that fail to address long-term challenges such as climate change and social inequalities (see Chapter 4). At the micro-level, some of the everyday services do not seem to address the challenges young people face in their transition from education to employment, in finding affordable housing and other areas. Indeed, data from the OECD Youth Governance Surveys highlights general dissatisfaction of surveyed youth organisations with governments' performance across service areas and in particular for housing, employment, family policy and justice (see Chapter 2). Further research would be needed to collect and analyse data on public trust and its drivers among different population groups: the OECD is exploring this aspect in its work on measuring trust in government.[9]

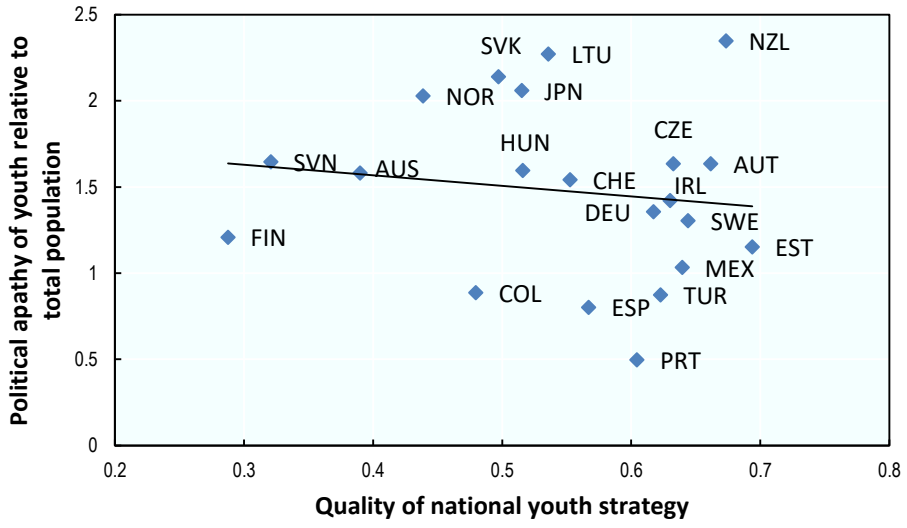
Chapter 2 has explored the role that national youth strategies (NYS) play in easing youth's transition to an autonomous life. Across most OECD countries, national youth strategies also guide policy makers in reinforcing the relationship between youth and public institutions. For instance, 88% of NYS aim at engaging young people in the decision-making process (88% for OECD; 6 out of 7 for non-OECD).[10] The Czech Republic's national youth strategy (2014-2020), for instance, includes strategic goals to promote the active involvement of children and young people in decision-making processes and in influencing the social and democratic life of the country.[11] A large majority (81%) intend to integrate the concerns of young people across all relevant public policy/service fields (84% for OECD; 5 out of 7 for non-OECD).[12] However, only four in ten NYS cover commitments to increase the representation of young people in state institutions (40% for OECD; 2 out of 7 for non-OECD).[13] Among others, the national youth strategy of Slovenia (2013-2022) includes objectives and measurable indicators on youth's participation in elections as voters and candidates as well as their representation in institutions both at the local and national level.

Figure 3.4 shows that there seems to be a tendency between the quality of a national youth strategy[14] and greater interest of young cohorts in politics. In other words, in countries that have adopted national youth strategies based on the principles of good governance (see Chapter 2), young people tend to report to be

interested in politics more often than the total population. Although the relationship is statistically imprecise, it highlights why decisive action is needed. Furthermore, in all countries except Colombia, Portugal, Spain and Turkey young people report more political apathy than the total population.

Figure 3.4. Where national youth strategies are based on principles of good governance, political apathy among young people tends to be lower

The horizontal axis plots the quality of the national youth strategy, a measure based on data from the OECD Youth Governance Surveys. The vertical axis plots the share of young people that report "not to be interested at all" in politics relative to the share of the total population that does (2018 or latest year available): value "1" is where political apathy is the same among young people and among the total population.



Notes: Correlation coefficient: -0.14; p-value: 0.54; "youth" here refers to people aged 15-29.
Sources: OECD calculations based on OECD Youth Governance Surveys; OECD calculations based on OECD (2019), *Society at a Glance 2019: OECD Social Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/soc_glance-2019-en.

Building from the ground up: ensuring an enabling environment

Protecting the civic space in which young people find themselves is the very first step in ensuring a strong relationship between youth and public institutions. The civic space is shaped by the institutions, laws, regulations and rules that influence youth's basic civil and political rights and liberties, including their access to information, freedom of speech and expression, right of association and assembly, right to privacy, non-discrimination, the freedom of the press, as well as open internet and data protection among others. OECD analysis shows that significant variations still exist among OECD countries when it comes to political rights and civil liberties (OECD, 2018[10]).

Beyond basic rights, other legal and policy frameworks can facilitate the inclusion of young people in the public sphere, in particular policies governing hate speech and incitement to violence as well as policies ensuring youth's access to justice. Laws, policies and funding mechanisms can also be designed to protect and promote the space for civil society organisations, including youth organisations, to thrive.

Effective implementation, monitoring and sanctioning of violations are essential elements for legal frameworks to be effective and all state institutions have a role to play. As outlined in the OECD Recommendation of the Council on Open Government (OECD, 2017[11]), governments should "explore the potential of moving from the concept of open government toward that of open state." Building an open

state requires the executive, legislature, judiciary, independent public institutions and all levels of government "to collaborate to promote transparency, integrity, accountability, and stakeholder participation, in support of democracy and inclusive growth" (OECD, 2017[11]).

In the context of an Open State, Ombudspersons for children and youth rights fulfil an important function as independent oversight institutions to protect and promote the rights of children and young people. OECD evidence shows that 19 OECD countries have created a specific ombudsperson for youth at regional or national/federal level and 11 have created a dedicated office within the national ombudsperson office, or included youth affairs as part of its mandate (OECD, 2018[10]). Their competencies vary widely across countries: from anonymous helplines to policy advice, from mediation to full-fledged independent investigations. Furthermore, their competency on overseeing government's youth policies remains untapped, as no OECD government collaborates with these institutions in monitoring and evaluating national youth strategies (see Chapter 2).

Youth activism: a display of agency and a call for governments to act

Young people show political agency, but they are increasingly turning to non-institutionalised channels of political participation, including online activism, issue-based mobilisation, demonstrations, political consumerism and signing petitions (Marien, Hooghe and Quintelier, 2010[12]). In 2018, 23% of people aged 15-29 surveyed across 22 OECD countries in the European Social Survey reported that they had shared or posted online about politics in the previous 12 months, compared to 15% of respondents aged 30+.[15] Young people have catalysed social media and other online channels to raise their voices on issues around inequality and discrimination (e.g. gender or race/ethnicity-based), climate change, the freedom of speech on the internet, and ethnic violence, with significant ripple effects on public debates as well as national and international policy agendas.

Available data suggests that young people are more likely to take part in public demonstrations than older fellow citizens: in 2018, 10% of respondents aged 15-29 reported that they had taken part in demonstrations in the previous 12 months, compared to 7% of respondents aged 30+, across 22 OECD countries.[16] Youth's participation in public demonstrations was as high as 26% of 15-29 respondents in Spain, 18% in Norway and 16% in France.[17] In the past, young people have especially mobilised at times of crises. Sloam (2014[13]) illustrates how young people became "activated" in the aftermath of the 2007-2008 financial recession, taking "digitally networked action" based on digital technology platforms.

According to survey data from ORB Media, young people are between 9 and 17 percent more likely to prefer informal political activity than those older than 40: in the early 2000s, young people were only 3% more likely to protest than older people.[18] Furthermore, in the past, young people that were interested in politics and involved in protests were also more likely to vote: 15% of the young respondents to ORB Media's surveys both voted and participated in protests in the 2000s. This is no longer the case: only 7% of the young population surveyed in 2017 both voted and participated in protests.[19]

The reasons behind young people's preference for non-institutionalised channels are in fact manifold. Findings from the OECD Youth Governance Surveys highlight that 79% of surveyed youth organisations in OECD countries believe that young people's participation in elections is hampered by a lack of confidence that their vote will lead to positive change, while 75% of them point to the lack of a youth-focus in political party programmes. Ehsan (2018[14]) finds that identifying with a "minor party"[20] is strongly related with the non-institutional political participation of British youth. Non-institutionalised political participation might hence be preferred by young people as a high-impact alternative to institutionalised channels: digital technologies might also contribute by ensuring access to such participation with limited transaction costs.

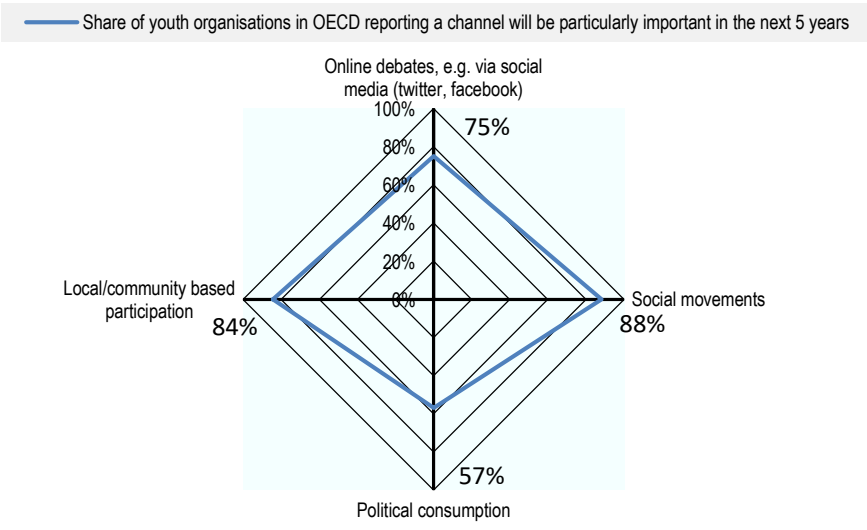
A prominent example is the global mobilisation of pupils and students in demonstrations calling for governments' action on climate change. The 13 million-people[21] social movement under the banners of

"Fridays For Future" has been a critical element in re-introducing climate change at the top of the political agenda and in national reform plans. For instance, the Danish government has supported the creation of a Youth Climate Council, which advises the Ministry of Environment in the areas of climate change, environmental protection, farming and food production. At the international level, in December 2019, the European Commission presented the European Green Deal, a strategy aimed at zeroing net emissions of greenhouse gases by 2050 and at decoupling economic growth from the use of resources (European Commission, 2019[15]).

Non-institutionalised channels such as online debates, petitions and social movements are already significant today, but they are likely to become even more important in the future, as also believed by a large majority of youth organisations (Figure 3.5). These dynamics underline a significant change in the paradigm of youth's manifestation of civic duty and involvement in public life at the global, national, local and community levels, calling for governments to adapt existing participatory channels and adopt innovative ones.

Figure 3.5. Youth organisations expect non-institutionalised channels to become more important

The chart shows four non-institutionalised channels of political participation and, for each, the share of youth organisations based in OECD countries that believe this channel will be of particular importance in the next 5 years.



Notes: Based on 51 youth organisations in OECD countries. Youth organisations reporting that these channels will be of "particular importance" refers to the share of youth organisations reporting that the channels will be "extremely important" (score of 5 out of 5) or "moderately important" (score of 4 out 5) in the next 5 years.
Source: OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

While non-institutionalised channels mobilise young people around specific societal and political topics, they also show limitations. Concerns mainly revolve around issues of transparency, accountability and unequal access across society. For instance, Marien, Hooghe, and Quintelier (2010[12]) find that access to non-institutionalised channels is more biased than access to institutionalised forms due to inequalities in education (although less biased when it comes to gender and age). Signing a petition or joining an internet forum might require more financial and technological resources, replicating entrenched socio-economic inequalities (Norris, 2001[16]). Furthermore, avoiding the exploitation of personal data, resisting the "tribalisation" boosted by digital technologies, and limiting the influence of "fake news" require extensive digital and cognitive skills. Donating money or buying "fair trade" goods and services also require financial resources (Stolle, Hooghe and Micheletti, 2005[17]).

For policy makers, the shifting pattern of political participation among young people represents a call for action to understand the underlying reasons of youth's limited participation in institutionalised channels and to re-think and address the barriers to such channels. At the same time, policy makers should acknowledge the contribution of non-institutionalised youth activism to the political discourse and work to address the inequalities in youth's access to such channels (including digital skills, access to the internet, formal and civic education).

In order to bridge the divide between public institutions and youth activism, public authorities from all levels of government can adopt innovative forms of deliberative democracy to take into account the voices of youth activists. In the last decade, governments at all levels have been increasingly adopting innovative deliberative processes, such as Citizens' Assemblies, Juries and Panels that bring together groups of randomly selected participants and facilitate deliberation to complement the decision-making process of public institutions (OECD, 2020[18]).

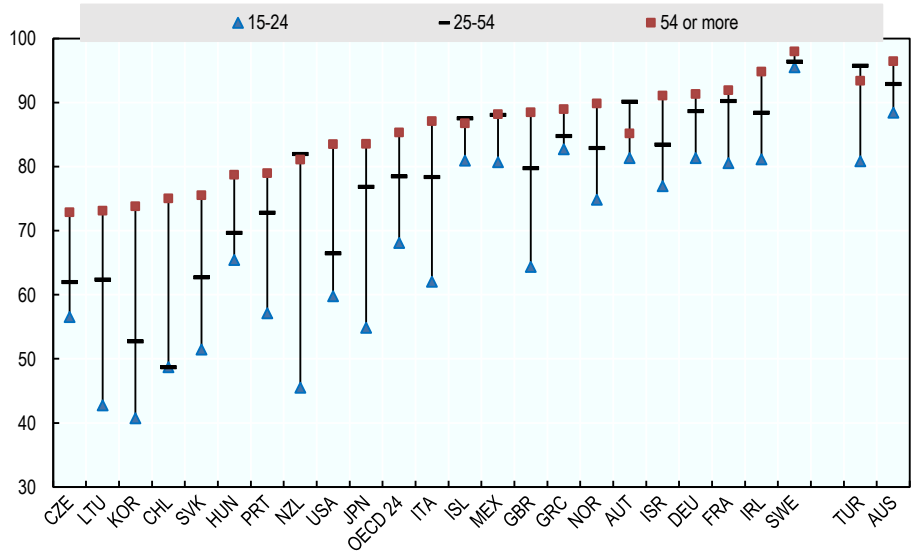
Youth and the ballot box

Young people tend to vote less

Across OECD countries, young people tend to turnout for elections less than any other group in society (Figure 3.6): 68% of young people aged 15-24 go to the polls on average compared to 85% of people aged 54 or more (OECD, 2020[1]). Furthermore, the turnout gap between young and older voters is larger than 20 percentage points in 10 of the OECD countries included in Figure 3.6. In Lithuania, New Zealand and Korea the gap is larger than 30 percentage points. Young people, however, are not a uniform group and differences in turnout within younger age cohorts must be considered in relation to their level of education, gender, parental education and income, and ethnicity. Plutzer (2002[19]) finds parental socio-economic and political resources to be positively related to young people's turnout. As for ethnicity, studies have found that enfranchised young people from minority groups tend to participate less in elections (Togeby, 2008[20]).

Figure 3.6 Young people tend to vote less than their older peers do

Self-reported voter turnout by age, percent, 2012-18

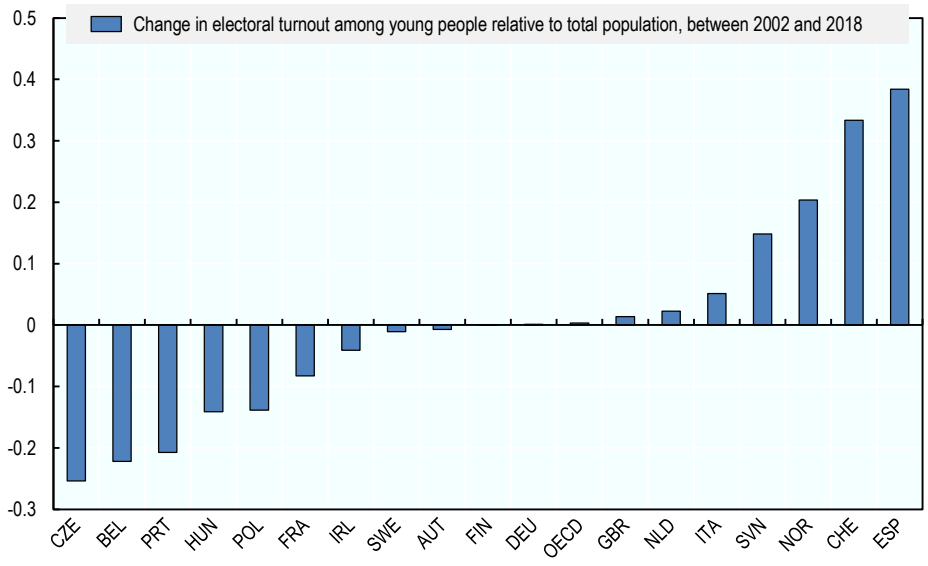


Note: Australia and Turkey enforce compulsory voting.
Source: OECD, (2020[1]), *How's Life? 2020: Measuring Well-being*, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/9870c393-en.

Research points to life-cycle effects to explain why young people participate in elections less than older people, arguing that turnout increases within a given generation as the members of that generation grow older (Blais, Gidengil and Nevitte, 2004[21]; Wass, 2007[22]). Research from Denmark highlights that first-time voters tend to vote more than slightly older youth (Bhatti, Hansen and Wass, 2012[23]): in other words, turnout rates decline with age in the years right after an individual becomes eligible to vote, while they are higher for older citizens. Such life-cycle effects might be linked to "adult roles" and the idea that young adults might be focused on finding employment or building a family, and only partake in other adult roles such as participating in elections later in life (Highton and Wolfinger, 2001[24]; Goerres, 2007[25]). People might also become accustomed with participating in elections over the course of their lives (Goerres, 2007[25]). However, the gap in electoral participation between younger and older people has widened over time in almost half OECD countries for which data is available (Figure 3.7). In other words, today's youth tend to vote less than the youth of the past in numerous countries. Lowering the bar for young people to vote could help tackle such historical trends. The next section explores potential strategies such as lowering the voting age.

Figure 3.7. In 9 out of 19 available OECD countries, youth go to the polls less than in 2002 (relative to the total population)

Change in electoral turnout among young people relative to total population, from 2002 to 2018.



Notes: "OECD" here refers to the average of the available OECD countries. "Youth" here refers to people aged 18-24.
Sources: OECD calculations based on European Social Survey ESS1-2002 and ESS9-2018.

The gap between younger and older people's electoral participation overtime might also be partly explained by cohort effects, such as shared historical experiences and socio-economic characteristics experienced by a specific generation (Goerres, 2007[25]). For instance, today's young people might perceive electoral participation as a "right" more than a duty, compared to cohorts of the past (Blais, Gidengil and Nevitte, 2004[21]). Furthermore, people that come of "political age" in years of rapid economic expansion might form different electoral behaviours than people that come of "political age" in years of economic recession: these behaviours might then stick throughout a person's life.

Strengthening participation in elections

Available data from the OECD Youth Governance Surveys point to a considerable discrepancy between the challenges that entities in charge of youth affairs seek to address to encourage young people to vote and the challenges considered most significant by youth organisations.

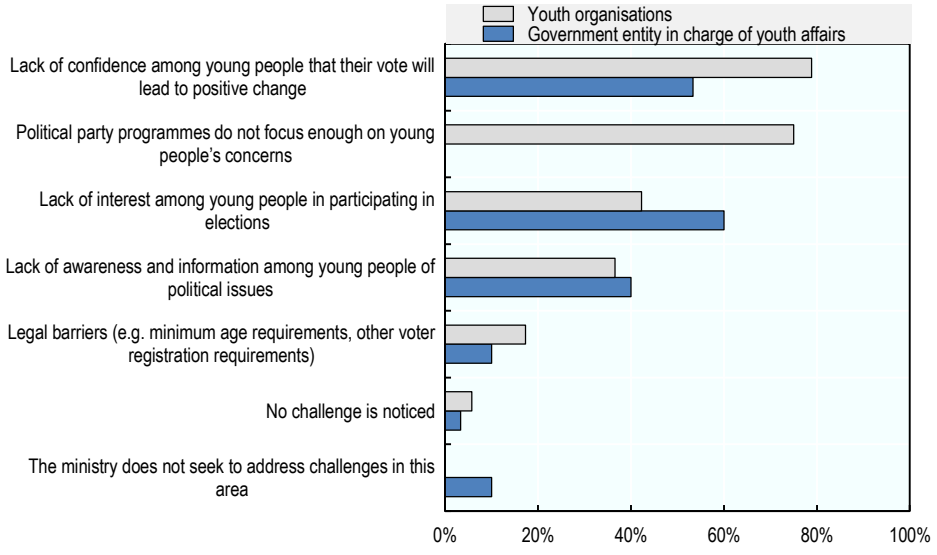
As shown in Figure 3.8, 60% of OECD ministries in charge of youth affairs seek to address the lack of interest among young people. Denmark places a particular focus on first-time voters, while the efforts undertaken by France and Sweden target young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. Denmark, for instance, has included specific commitments on promoting the electoral participation of first-time voters in Open Government Action Plans in the past.[22] Furthermore, 10% of surveyed OECD entities in charge of youth affairs stress that they do not seek to address challenges in this area.

In contrast, youth organisations overwhelmingly point to a lack of confidence in institutional channels (79% of youth organisations in OECD countries) and the absence of youth's priorities in the programmes of political parties (75%).

Understanding the challenges faced by young people in participating in elections constitutes the first step in addressing the root causes. For instance, the Canadian institution responsible for conducting elections, "Elections Canada", analyses the obstacles that first-time voters face, including youth's lack of knowledge of electoral processes and difficulty in finding accessible information, and issues of mobility and registration requirements, among others.[23]

Figure 3.8. Challenges and priorities to encourage youth's participation in elections do not match

The grey bars show the share of youth organisations in OECD countries that mention a specific challenge for youth's participation in elections; the blue bars show the share of OECD ministries in charge of youth affairs that mention a specific challenge they seek to address.



Notes: Based on 30 OECD government entities in charge of youth affairs and 52 youth organisations in OECD countries. Ministries in charge of youth affairs were not asked about parties' programmes as a priority area for youth's participation in elections.
Source: OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

From a governance perspective, voter registration rules, compulsory voting, voting age requirements and civic education are some of the elements that can influence the likeliness of young people to vote. Although

outside of the scope of this report, electoral systems can also create incentives (or disincentives) for voter turnout.

Do I need to register to vote?

In Australia, Mexico, the US and the UK, citizens are responsible to register themselves in electoral lists as a prerequisite for voting. This type of provision introduces an additional step between not voting and voting, regardless of whether registration is voluntary or mandatory. In Chile, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Norway, South Korea, Spain and Sweden, voter registration is automatic, although often based on national or local registers. For instance, voter registration in Germany is automatic, but based on residency registries: in turn, it is the responsibility of the individual to update their place of residence with the local government.

Voter registration requirements can represent a considerable challenge especially for first-time voters who are more likely to be changing residency at a time of transition. Governments can take various steps in order to facilitate youth's registration. In the US, for instance, in face of the challenges posed by registration requirements, some states have started to allow individuals younger than 18 years of age to register to vote, so that they will be registered and eligible to cast a ballot once they reach 18. Holbein and Hillygues (2016[26]) find that states in the US that have preregistration rules in place also report higher youth's voter turnout, with equal effectiveness across socio-economic and political subgroups. Governments should ensure that young citizens have accessible information at hand on how to register and vote, for instance through information and registration campaigns in schools, universities and other places where young people socialise. Social media can also be leveraged, for example by prominently displaying reliable information and links to governmental websites to all users of voting age.[24]

Compulsory voting is currently in place and enforced in Australia, Belgium, Luxembourg and Turkey. Compulsory voting remains an appealing and effective mechanism to assure higher turnout rates among youth as well as the total population: Australia and Turkey are among the OECD countries with highest turnout rates for all population groups as shown in Figure 3.6. At the same time, compulsory voting is often at the centre of controversial discussions due to theoretical (e.g. voting as a right and a civic duty) and practical considerations (e.g. "free riding," and potential infringements of individual liberties).

Some countries, including Switzerland, the UK and the US have also held trials of electronic voting as a means to promote turnout by ensuring an easier access to voting. More systematically, Estonia has held several rounds of local, national and European elections in which people could cast votes over the internet (i-voting, or e-voting), since 2005. E-voting has become more popular through the years in Estonia: in the 2019 parliamentary elections 43.8% of all votes were cast online, compared to 3.4% in the 2007 parliamentary elections.[25] However, only 29.2% of e-voters were aged 18-34 in 2019, compared to 44% in 2007.[26] A number of studies also show that electronic voting has not had a positive impact on new voters and on youth turnout in Estonia. Instead, the new channel mainly reached existing voters and replicated socio-economic inequalities in access to the internet (Bochsler, 2010[27]; Vassil and Weber, 2011[28]; Wigartz, 2017[29]). Measures aimed at ensuring equal access to the internet and online tools in the first place are hence crucial to ensure the effectiveness of the digitalisation of public services and public life (see Chapter 2).

Am I old enough to vote?

Voting age requirements can be a barrier to the political socialisation of young people. According to IPU data, the minimum voting age for elections at the national level (for the lower house of parliament, where applicable) is 18 in all OECD countries except Austria and Greece where it is respectively 16 and 17 (it is 16 also in Argentina and Brazil). In Argentina, Austria, Brazil, Estonia, Greece and Israel, the minimum age to vote is also below 18 in subnational elections (17 for Greece and Israel; 16 for all the others). It is also below 18 for subnational elections in Germany for the elections in four federal states and for local-

level elections in eleven federal states. According to the youth organisations based in OECD countries surveyed in the OECD Youth Governance Surveys, the threshold should be lowered to 16.7 years (on average), which resonates with advocacy initiatives led by the European Youth Forum to lower the minimum age to 16 for parliamentary elections at the national level.[27] The idea of lowering minimum voting age requirements has recently gained further traction in countries such as France, Germany and Italy. Moreover, recently, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe supported lowering the voting age in 2011; Scotland enfranchised 16- and 17-year olds for the independence referendum in 2014; and Malta lowered the general voting age to 16 in 2018. Recent debates have also explored the provocative idea of lowering the voting age to zero with varying proposals on the exercise of children's voting right by their guardians, also known as demeny or family voting (Sanderson and Scherbov, 2007[30]; Aoki and Vaithianathan, 2009[31]; Vanhuysse, 2013[32]).

One argument in favour of lowering voting age requirements revolves around political socialisation. When aged 18 or 19 most young people have completed secondary education and many have already left their parents' home, and they are hence harder to reach as a group. In contrast, when aged 16-17, youth are more likely to be living with their families and to be in education. In turn, considering that close relatives and partners play a strong role in people's voting behaviour (Stoker and Jennings, 1995[33]), political socialisation by family members and school-based voter education programmes are most impactful for youth aged 16-17 years old. After a series of reductions of voting age requirements at the national level (in 1992 from 19 to 18 years) and at the sub-national level (from 18 to 16 in five out of nine federal states by 2005), Austria became the first OECD country to adopt a general voting age of 16 years in 2007. Initial research shows that turnout of 16- and 17-year old Austrians tends to be higher than that of older first-time voters with no significant differences in their political maturity in terms of interest and knowledge (Aichholzer and Kritzinger, 2020[34]; Zeglovits, 2020[35]). Furthermore, these effects can also generate long-run benefits as people that vote when young are also more likely to continue voting when growing older (Goerres, 2007[25]).

Why should I vote?

The positive impact of lowering age requirements on youth's turnout is however largely dependent on young people's interest, awareness and confidence in the value of participating, as highlighted in Figure 3.8. Civic and citizenship education in schools and through extra-curricular activities can be instrumental in this regard. For instance, in the Austrian experience, the 2007 electoral law reform was accompanied by a number of measures to raise awareness among young voters, enhance civic and citizenship education in schools, and engage schools in preparing 16- and 17-year olds for the 2008 federal elections (Schwarzer and Zeglovits, 2013[36]). More generally, while the evidence for a direct link between civic education and youth's electoral turnout remains non-conclusive, a review of existing evidence shows that civic education can enhance young people's awareness of civic and political issues, information about democratic processes and institutions, and political expression (Manning and Edwards, 2014[37]). Civic curricula should also focus on strengthening youth's ability to understand and exercise their rights and duties, embrace democratic values and acquire the necessary skills for active citizenship.

As recognised by the OECD Recommendation of the Council on Public Integrity (2017[38]), civic education in schools can also help promoting a culture of integrity in society. Box 3.1 points to some interesting practices on civic and citizenship curricula in schools. However, there are wide differences in the organisation of the curricula (for instance as separate subjects or integrated with other subjects), in the number of years and hours for which they are taught (from 8.8 hours in Lithuania to 72 hours in France throughout primary and secondary education in 2017), in students' involvement in shaping the curricula, and in the levels of training of teachers on this subject (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2017[39]). Youth organisations and the youth work sector can also provide a substantial contribution in educating young people to democratic values and promoting their awareness and interest for civic issues. For instance, the Finnish National Youth Council Allianssi conducts mock elections simultaneously with

national and EU elections in order to introduce to voting those who are too young to take part in the elections. In parallel to the 2019 parliamentary elections, more than 600 schools and 60,000 students took part in such mock elections.[28]

Box 3.1. Civic and citizenship education

Belgium (German-speaking Community): Politics

The current strategic youth plan (Jugendstrategieplan) of the German-speaking Community of Belgium aims at fostering a strong political culture among young people, not only in time of elections, but throughout their education. In particular, the Community supports young people's understanding of the political sphere by addressing questions such as: are politics currently concerned with topics that matter to my age cohort? Who was elected and what does it mean? The curricula are prepared in a participatory way together with the different stakeholders.

Norway: Democracy and Human Rights

Within their national youth strategy, the Ministry of Education in Norway has implemented commitments on educating young people to democracy and human rights, as part of the new school curricula of primary and secondary schools. This approach aims to build a sense of awareness of global issues already at a young age, for youth to develop during their secondary and post-secondary education and experiences. The inclusion of this type of education within the national youth strategy can also help with its effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Sources : Jugendstrategieplan 2016-2020;
http://www.ostbelgienlive.be/PortalData/2/Resources/downloads/jugend/DG-Jugendstrategieplan%20f
OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

No relation without representation

A fair representation of young people in public institutions is critical to ensure that public decisions take into account different realities and perspectives; that policy solutions benefit from a range of experiences, skills and views; and ultimately that policy outcomes are more sustainable and responsive to all citizens. Furthermore, the active involvement of young people in institutions can serve as a model to inspire others of the same age cohort and restore their trust in public institutions. Such positive impacts of a fair representation have already been explored through gender lenses (Wolbrecht and Campbell, 2007[40]; OECD, 2019[41]). Equal access to decision-making and political leadership can also have a positive impact on economic and social outcomes: OECD analysis shows that countries with a higher share of women in legislatures tend to face lower levels of inequality and higher levels of trust in government (OECD, 2014[42]). This section looks into youth's representation in state institutions (such as public administration, parliaments and cabinets) and its role in promoting better policy outcomes, as well as youth's trust in governments and political interest.

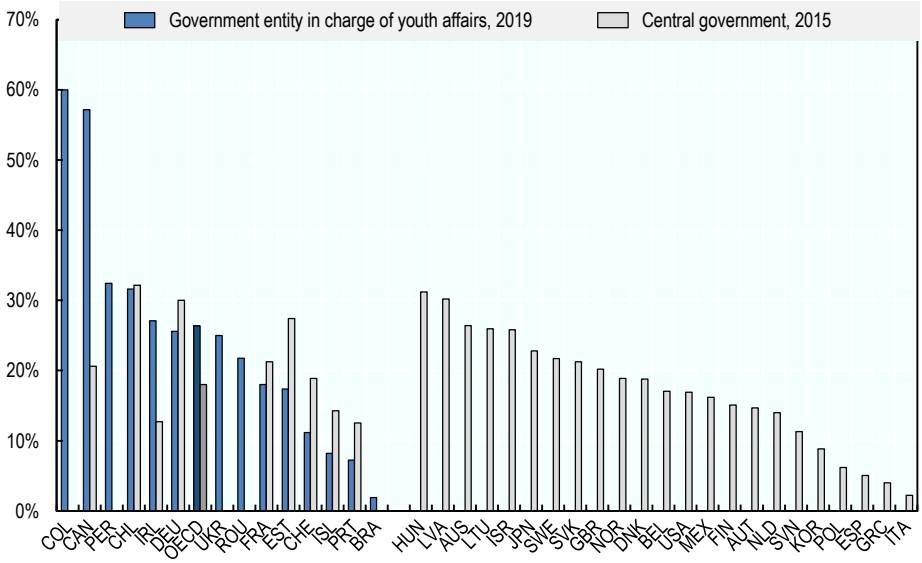
Work ahead on age-diversity in the public administration

Despite improvements, youth's representation in the public administration remains limited (Figure 3.9). Up from 15% in 2015 and 20% in 2017, officials aged 18-34 represented 26% of the total staff of entities in charge of youth affairs in 2019, on average across OECD countries for which data is available (20% for non-OECD).[29] Significant differences are evident, from higher shares in Colombia and Canada (respectively 60% and 57%) to much more limited ones in Portugal and Iceland (respectively 7% and 8%).

Young officers were fewer in central public administrations, where on average only 18% of civil servants were aged 18-34 in 2015.[30] With 25% of civil servants in central public administrations over the age of 50 across the OECD,[31] governments are presented with the need and opportunity to transform public administrations to attract new generations of civil servants in the face of an ageing workforce.

Figure 3.9. Public administrations are still not inclusive enough when it comes to young people

Share of official staff aged 18-34 in entities in charge of youth affairs in 2019, compared to the share of official staff aged 18-34 in central/federal governments in 2015.



Sources: OECD calculations based on 2019 OECD Youth Governance Surveys; OECD (2016) Survey on the Composition of the workforce in Central/federal Governments.

Countries with a lower than average representation of young people in the public administration are not necessarily less successful in delivering programmes and services that respond to their needs (OECD, 2018[10]). Nevertheless, as highlighted in the OECD Recommendation of the Council on Public Service Leadership and Capability (2019[43]), governments should build an inclusive and safe public service that reflects the diversity of society, which also includes age-diversity. Countries can proactively seek to attract under-represented groups such as young people and their skill-sets to ensure public service capability. A fair representation of young people in the civil service can also conduct to better policy outcomes as far as diversity in decision-making can help generate innovative ideas. Through its 2020 Youth Policy, for instance, the Canadian government committed to having 75% of crown corporations include a young person on their board.[32] Yet, only 38% of countries with or elaborating a national youth strategy include objectives on increasing the representation of young people in state institutions such as the civil service (40% for OECD; 2 out of 7 for non-OECD).[33]

Limited shares of young employees may result from low attractiveness of the public sector as an employer compared to the private sector. However, while salary considerations are important to young people, research from Gallup highlights other elements that millennials[34] look for in a job: purpose, development, coaching, ongoing conversations, a focus on strengths, and healthy work-life balance (Gallup, 2016[44]). Governments can improve the attractiveness of their public sector in these areas, including through employer branding activities aimed at making the public sector an employer of choice for young people. Public administrations can strengthen their brand as an employer meeting integrity and ethical standards, delivering value for money, and giving employees the opportunity to contribute to public value. OECD

evidence from the 2016 Survey on Strategic Human Resource Management shows that most governments emphasise the opportunity to contribute to public value, learning opportunities, and work-life balance on governments' recruiting websites and communication material. However, OECD data also points to the lack of governments' joint plans and strategies to effectively guide and brand such efforts.

Beyond enhancing the attractiveness of the public sector, governments can re-imagine recruitment strategies and selection tools. Recruitment processes are often challenged by high volumes of applications, lengthy procedures, numerous assessment steps and tight regulations. OECD data indicates that it can take up to three months to recruit professionals in 19 OECD countries and in eight it can be as long as six months.[35] More flexible contractual modalities and dedicated programmes to attract young talent such as graduate programmes can help recruit youth into the public sector. Yet, even among entities in charge of youth affairs, such programmes are still limited. Only 61% of surveyed entities in charge of youth affairs have internship programmes in place (62% for OECD; 4 out of 7 for non-OECD).[36]

The Turkish Presidential Human Resources Office through the "Internship Mobilization Programme" offers senior undergraduate students the chance to intern in one of the various ministries and public sector agencies. Similarly, Bulgaria's "Career Start" Programme gives graduates the chance to work in the civil service for nine months to gain professional experience to advance their career in the public sector.[37] The Flemish community of Belgium offers an internship scheme dedicated to young people under 26 years of age from disadvantaged groups.[38] Internship schemes can be helpful in offering young people the chance to gain skills and exposure to public institutions. However, governments can also proactively develop their workforce through longer-term, structured graduate programmes aimed at attracting, developing and retaining highly-qualified young talent through training, mentoring, job rotation and accelerated promotion tracks. While some countries have put in place structured programmes for graduates to join the public sector (Box 3.2), they are less common: only 42% of youth ministries have such programmes (42% for OECD; 3 out of 7 for non-OECD). Among ministries of education not in charge of youth affairs as well as other surveyed line ministries, programmes to attract graduates are even less frequent (respectively 24% and 25% of surveyed ministries).[39]

Box 3.2. Graduate programmes: attracting and developing young talent in the public administration

Ireland: Irish Government Economic and Evaluation Service

The Irish Government Economic and Evaluation Service (IGEES) supports an integrated approach to policy formulation and implementation in the civil service based on economic and analytical skills. As a cross-government service, it has provided needed skills and competences to the public administration while attracting and developing the skills of young economics graduates. The recruitment process involves on average 20 graduates per year, with an increase in intake in recent years for a total number of 160 IGEES staff working across the departments as of 2020.

Australia: APS Graduate Programs

The APS Graduate Programs allow new graduates in Australia an entry-level pathway into the public sector. The graduate programs generally take 10 to 18 months to complete, with two to three rotations through different work areas, to give participants a range of skills, knowledge and experience at the start of their career. Participants normally follow face-to-face workshops, trainings and simulation activities. Successful completion of the programs can give participants further opportunities of career development within the public sector as well as study assistance for further training.

Sources: https://igees.gov.ie/ ; https://www.finance.gov.au/publications/information-sheet/graduate-program; https://www.apsjobs.gov.au/s/graduate-programs.

An ageing workforce and a small share of young employees is a risk factor for public administrations, in terms of limited capacity for renewal and diversity (OECD, 2017[45]). The lack of evidence on the share of youth in ministries' staff in many countries suggests that age balance in public institutions is not systematically monitored. Governments can consider "conducting measurement and benchmarking at regular intervals to monitor progress, detect and remove barriers, and design interventions" (OECD, 2019[43]). At the same time, ageing workforces can provide young entrants with opportunities to learn from older, more experienced civil servants. For the large share of officials that will retire, effective knowledge management and transfer strategies are needed to avoid a loss of institutional knowledge and experience (OECD, 2015[46]). Countries should create and develop structured, regular and extensive opportunities for inter-generational learning between older and younger employees. These programmes can help bridging the generational gaps between leadership and entry-level positions and flatten the hierarchical organisation of public administrations.

More widely, ensuring age-diversity in the civil service cannot be limited to the selection phase: public administrations also need to develop the leadership capabilities of current and potential senior-level public servants (OECD, 2019[43]). Induction and on-boarding programmes, internal secondments, job rotations and networking opportunities can be helpful in exposing young civil servants to other work areas and identify potential future managers. Career development programmes for young officials (such as leadership programmes) as well as mentorship programmes can also be instrumental in developing young talent, their skills and capabilities to achieve a modern and effective public administration. However, only 39% of surveyed entities in charge of youth affairs run career development programmes (35% for OECD; 4 out of 7 for non-OECD), and only 30% of them have established mentorship programmes (32% for OECD; 1 out of 7 for non-OECD).

While public administrations with limited shares of young employees do not necessarily fare worse than others in delivering on youth's needs, governments can use branding, recruiting and development activities to promote age-diversity to promote innovation, organisational performance and trust in public institutions.

Youth are under-represented in parliament and cabinet

With a representation gap of 12 percentage points in parliaments and an average Cabinet age of 53 years across OECD countries, young people remain severely under-represented in public institutions. Ensuring that young people take part in decision-making through representation in parliaments and cabinets is critical in ensuring greater diversity, mainstreaming a youth's perspective in policy-making, as well as ensuring more responsive policy outcomes. In turn, better policy outcomes and better services' provision are instrumental in regaining citizens' trust (OECD, 2017[5]).

In 2018, people aged 20-39 represented 34% of the total population aged 20 or above on average across OECD countries.[40] Yet, in 2020, only 22% of members of parliaments (MPs) in OECD lower houses of parliament are 40 years of age or below: this points to a representation gap of 12 percentage points on average.[41] A similar representation gap of 13 percentage points emerges when comparing MPs under the age of 30 and the share of 20-29 year-olds in the over-20 population. The gap is even larger for upper houses of parliament, where only 9% of MPs are under the age of 40 across 14 OECD countries, partly due to higher minimum age requirements.[42] Wide differences exist among OECD countries (Figure 3.10): in Italy, Finland and Norway the share of MPs below 40 is actually higher than the share of people aged 20-39 (by 6 percentage points in Italy, 4 p.p. in Finland and 1 p.p. in Norway). In all other OECD countries, the share of "young MPs" is lower than the corresponding share of people aged 20-39 in the over-20 population. The largest representation gaps emerge in Luxembourg (26 p.p.), the United States (25 p.p.) and Australia (24 p.p.).

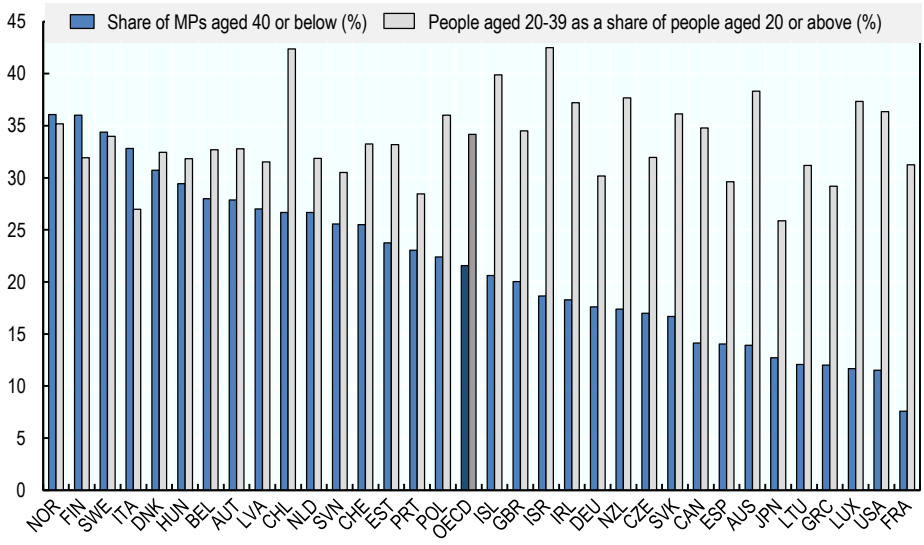
Beyond looking at the share of young MPs, it is also crucial to monitor and analyse youth's share of parliamentary leadership positions in order to ensure their fair representation in parliamentary decision-making. Future analysis should examine such question, for instance, in reference to speakers and deputy

speakers of the house, leaders of political groups, minority leaders, majority leaders and chairs of parliamentary committees.

Representative democracy does not necessarily require its institutions to mirror the composition of its population and demographics alone do not determine the access of younger candidates to decision-making bodies. However, large representation gaps are a warning sign about norms, rules and regulations that hamper youth's access to these bodies and that may fuel disenchantment and disinterest for politics among young people.

Figure 3.10. Youth representation gaps in parliaments in OECD countries remain wide

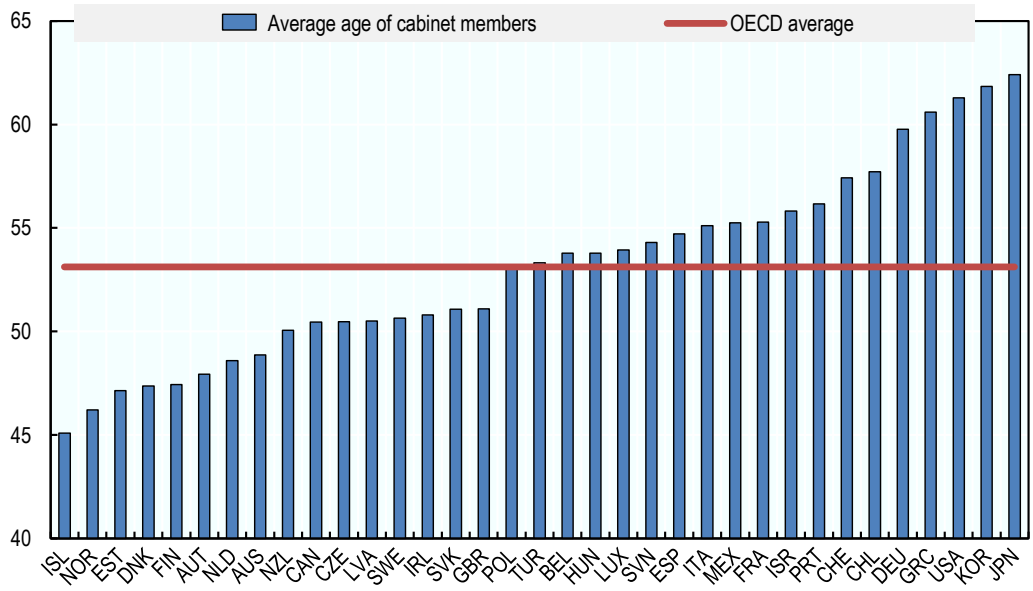
Percentage of Members of Parliament (lower chamber in bicameral systems) that are 40 years of age or under in 2020, compared to the percentage of population aged 20-39 as a share of the population aged 20 or above in 2018.



Sources: OECD calculations based on *OECD Demography and Population* (database); Inter-Parliamentary Union, *Parline database on national parliaments* (https://data.ipu.org).

This type of representation gap is even more pronounced when it comes to the country's political leadership. As illustrated in Figure 3.11, the average age of cabinet members varied between 45 years and 62.4 years in 2018. Four of the five youngest cabinets across the OECD countries were located in Nordic countries. Furthermore, in eight of the 16 countries that have an average age of cabinet members below the OECD average of 53 the share of elderly in the population is actually above the OECD median. That is the case for Austria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Latvia, the Netherlands and Sweden. These patterns show that demography is not destiny, and that social norms as well as legal and institutional barriers to youth's political careers matter. As of February 2018, only 51 of the then-incumbent cabinet members were younger than 40 years (8%) and only 20 were 35 years or younger (3%). In 13 OECD countries, there was no minister or Head of State or Government below 40 years in 2018 (OECD, 2018[10]). The age composition of the Cabinet may have implications for government priorities and spending patterns: Chapter 4 explores these correlations in detail.

Figure 3.11. Youth are under-represented in national cabinets



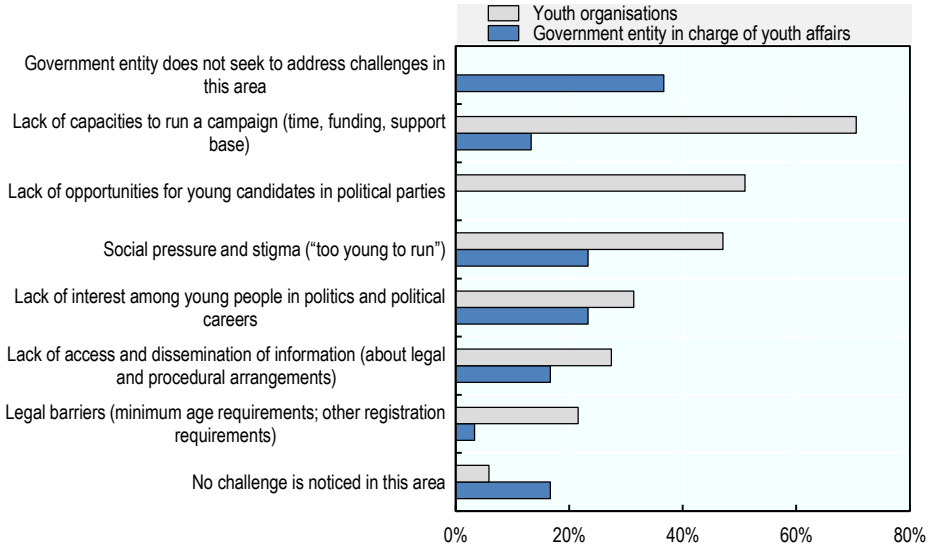
Notes: Data for one cabinet member in Canada and three members of cabinet in Mexico could not be found. Representatives were selected based on the Members of Cabinet listed on the official government websites.
Source: OECD Stocktaking Report (2018).

Promoting a fair representation for young people

When it comes to explaining the limited representation of young people in parliaments, academic and policy research is particularly scarce and mostly focuses on the role of electoral systems (Sundström and Stockemer, 2018[47]). Instead, OECD data shows that young people face numerous financial, legal and other obstacles in their path to becoming a member of parliament or cabinet. Running a campaign requires time and funding: 71% of the youth organisations in OECD countries surveyed in the OECD Youth Governance Surveys indicate this as the main challenge. As shown in Figure 3.12 (grey bars), limited opportunities for young people within political parties and traditional stereotypes portraying youth as lacking the necessary experience are also perceived as major barriers. The minimum age required to run for office is pointed to as another challenge, especially in the upper houses of parliament. These barriers can hinder the chances for young people running for office, as well as limit their aspirations to political office in the first place. Yet, as shown in Figure 3.12 (blue bars), OECD government entities in charge of youth affairs largely underestimate these challenges. 53% of them do not notice challenges or do not seek to address them, which might partly be explained by a lack of mandate in this field.

Figure 3.12. Youth's barriers to candidacy to political office are often underestimated

The grey bars show the share of youth organisations in OECD countries that mention a specific challenge that prevents youth from presenting themselves as candidates in elections; the blue bars show the share of OECD government entities in charge of youth affairs that mention a specific challenge they seek to address.



Notes: Based on 30 OECD government entities in charge of youth affairs and 51 youth organisations in OECD countries. Ministries in charge of youth affairs were not asked about the lack of opportunities for young people in political parties.
Source: OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

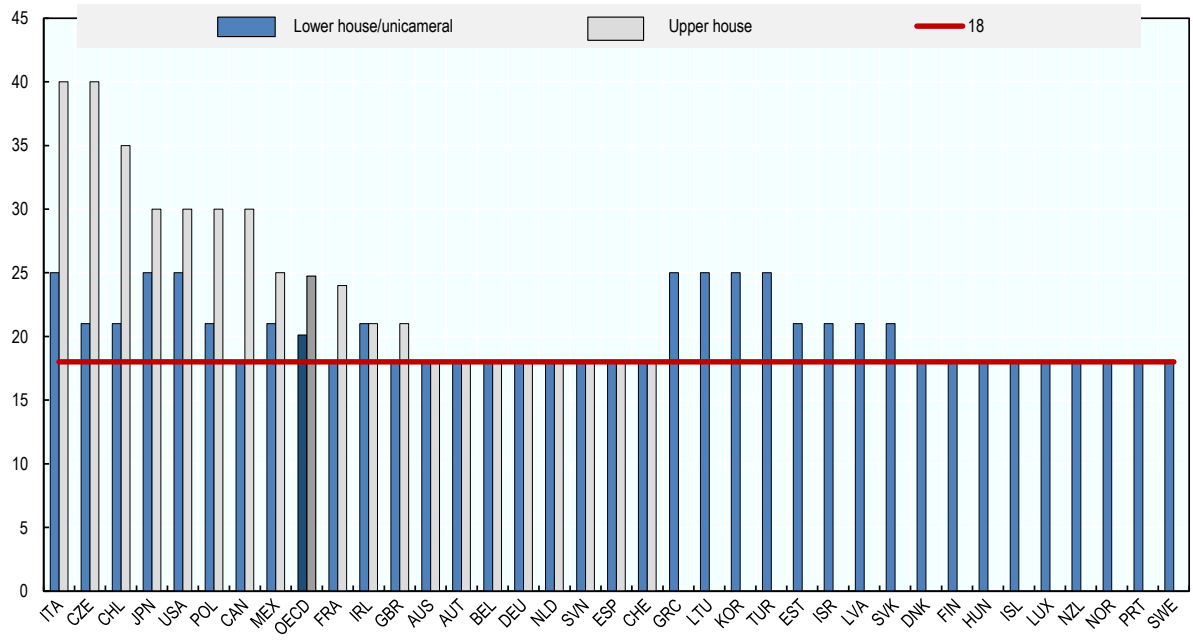
Political parties, and especially their youth wings, can offer an important avenue for young people to participate in shaping parties' programmes, access decision-making procedures and start their career in politics. However, evidence collected in the OECD Youth Governance Surveys suggests that the appeal of political parties among young people remains limited. For instance, in Portugal, only 1% of people aged 15-24 are members of a party, compared to 2% of the total population. Similarly, in Germany, 1.5% of people aged 15-35 were members of a party in 2018, compared to 5% of the total population in 2014. Norway and Sweden follow similar patterns, respectively with 6% and 5% of young people[43] holding membership of a party (compared to respectively 7% and 5.5% among the total population).[44] 78% of surveyed youth organisations in OECD point to a lack of openness of political parties to new ideas and innovations and 42% to a lack of interest among young people in politics as significant barriers.[45]

To address these challenges, governments must seek to ensure that minimum age requirements and other registration requirements do not discriminate against young people as candidates in elections. Evidence also suggests that proportional representation electoral systems are more conducive to youth's representation in parliament (Stockemer and Sundström, 2018[48]). However, a detailed discussion of the impact of electoral systems remains outside the scope of this Report.

Stockemer and Sundström (2018[48]) find that for every year candidate age requirements are lowered, the share of young deputies aged 40 and lower increases by more than 1 percentage point. While voting age requirements are most commonly fixed at 18 in most OECD countries, age requirements to run for office at the national level tend to be higher and more diverse across countries (Figure 3.13). For instance, 7 OECD countries set the minimum age to run as a candidate for the lower house at 25. Italy and the Czech Republic set the threshold at 40 years when it comes to the upper house of parliament. Imbalances between minimum voting age and minimum candidacy age requirements can send mixed messages to young people. For instance, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU, 2010, p. 14[49]) has previously recommended for parliaments to "align the minimum voting age with the minimum age of eligibility to run

for office in order to ensure greater participation by youth in parliaments." Similarly, while the current age requirement for running as a member of parliament across OECD countries is 20.1 for lower houses of parliament and unicameral systems (24.7 for upper houses of parliament),[46] OECD-based youth organisations surveyed in the OECD Youth Governance Surveys believe candidacy age requirements should be lowered to 19.4 years on average (see Chapter 2).[47]

Figure 3.13. Minimum age to run as a member of parliament



Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union, *Parline database on national parliaments* (https://data.ipu.org).

A large body of literature shows that legislative gender quotas in parliament or in electoral lists can boost the representation of female representatives. According to the IPU, 130 countries around the world have introduced constitutional, electoral or political party quotas for women. The OECD Recommendation of the Council on Gender Equality in Public Life (2015[50]) refers to "quotas" as a possible measure that adherents are recommended to consider in order "to achieve gender balanced representation in decision-making positions in public life." Similarly, with due attention to the electoral system and contextual factors, governments could consider to adopt quotas for youth in parliaments to increase youth's representation. Youth quotas have previously been endorsed by the Inter-Parliamentary Union Assembly (IPU, 2010[49]) and a few countries have already adopted such measure (Table 3.2). For instance, Sweden has adopted a 25% quota for candidates under the age of 35 within party lists (IPU, 2018[51]). Voluntary quotas for candidates on some political party lists have been established in Mexico (30% and 20% under 30 in two political parties), Sweden (25% under 35), Lithuania (under 35), Hungary (20%, age: n.a.) and Turkey (10%, age: n.a.) (IPU, 2018[51]).

Table 3.2. Youth quotas and youth representation in parliament around the world

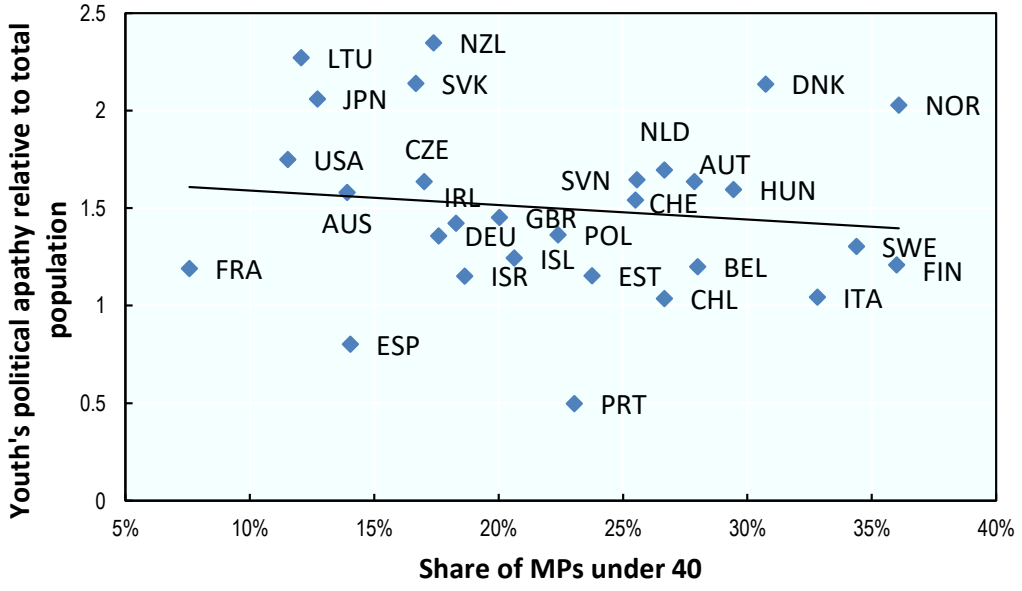
Country	Quota type	Age group	Quota %	Gender	% under age 30	% under age 40
Rwanda	Reserved	Under 35	7.7	Embedded	1.3	22.5
Morocco	Reserved	Under 40	7.6	Embedded	1.6	14.7
			Kenya:			
Lower H	Reserved	Under 35	3.4	Embedded	No data	No data
Upper H	Reserved	Under 35	2.9	Embedded	3.0	26.9
Uganda	Reserved	Under 30	1.3	Embedded	1.1	22.9
Philippines	Legislated	Unknown	50*	Mixed	1.7	15.8
Tunisia	Legislated	Under 35	25**	Separate	6.5	22.6
Gabon	Legislated	Under 40	20	No	0.0	8.6
Kyrgyzstan	Legislated	Under 36	15	Separate	4.2	35.0
Egypt	Legislated	Under 35	Varied****	Separate	1.0	11.8
Nicaragua	Party	Unknown	40,*** 15	Mixed	1.1	14.1
Romania	Party	Unknown	30	Separate	6.4	35.3
Mexico	Party	Under 30	30, 20	Separate	7.6	35.7
Montenegro	Party	Under 30	30, 20	Separate	9.9	30.9
Vietnam	Party	Under 40	26.5	Separate	1.8	12.3
El Salvador	Party	Under 31	25	Separate	2.4	14.3
Sweden	Party	Under 35	25	Separate	12.3	34.1
Mozambique	Party	Under 35	20	Separate	0.0	17.2
Cyprus	Party	Under 45, 35	20	Separate	1.8	12.5
Lithuania	Party	Under 35	Unknown	Separate	2.8	19.2
Hungary	Party	Unknown	20	Separate	2.0	29.4
Senegal	Party	Unknown	20	Separate	0.0	11.0
Angola	Party	Unknown	15	Separate	0.6	11.1
Turkey	Party	Unknown	10	Separate	0.2	8.8
Croatia	Party	Unknown	Unknown	Separate	2.7	21.9
Ukraine	Party	Unknown	Unknown	Separate	5.0	41.2

Notes: Policies apply to single and lower chambers of parliament (except in Kenya, as noted). *50% of PR lists must come from different sectors, including youth. **In districts with four or more seats, one young candidate should be placed in one of the top four list positions. ***Women and youth together. ****Minimum of 16 young candidates must be nominated across 4 electoral districts.
Source: Readapted from IPU (2018), *Youth participation in national parliaments: 2018*, Inter-Parliamentary Union, https://www.ipu.org/resources/publications/reports/2018-12/youth-participation-in-national-parliaments-2018.

Quantitative analysis (Figure 3.14) shows that there is a mild tendency between having a higher share of parliamentarians under the age of 40 and young people expressing more interest in politics (as well as feeling more politically empowered), although the relationship is statistically imprecise. On the other hand, a higher share of young parliamentarians is not related to higher political trust among young people, which suggests that a more complex combination of drivers is at play. These findings highlight the imminent relevance for governments to tackle the under-representation of young people in state institutions.

Figure 3.14. Where there are younger MPs, youth tends to express less political apathy

The horizontal axis plots the share of MPs aged 40 or below (in unicameral systems or in lower houses). The vertical axis plots the share of young people that report not to be interested at all in politics relative to the share of the total population that reports the same (2018 or latest year available): value "1" is where political apathy is the same among young people and among the total population.



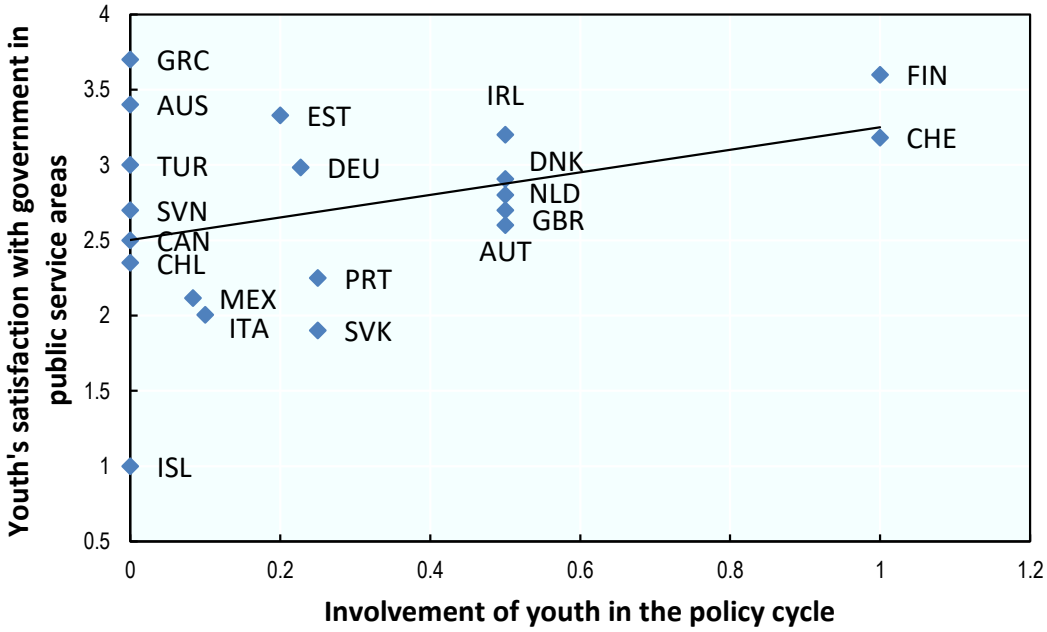
Notes: Correlation coefficient: -0.13; p-value: 0.50; "youth" here refers to people aged 15-29.
Sources: OECD calculations based on Inter-Parliamentary Union, *Parline database on national parliaments* (https://data.ipu.org); OECD calculations based on OECD (2019), *Society at a Glance 2019: OECD Social Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/soc_glance-2019-en.

Walking the inclusive path in the policy cycle

According to the OECD Youth Governance Surveys, only 26% of youth organisations reported to be satisfied with governments' performance on youth participation in public life.[48] As recognised in the OECD Recommendation of the Council on Open Government (2017[11]), stakeholder[49] participation in the policy cycle increases government's accountability, broadens citizen's empowerment and influence on decisions, builds civic capacity and improves the evidence for policy-making, among others. When it comes to young people, quantitative analysis of data from the OECD Youth Governance Surveys (Figure 3.15) shows that where youth organisations have been involved in the policy cycle to a greater extent, they report a higher satisfaction with government's performance across public service areas (such as transportation, health, housing and employment among others).

Figure 3.15. A participatory policy cycle can sustain youth's satisfaction with government

The horizontal axis plots the extent to which youth organisations in a country reported to have been involved in the policy cycle (informed, consulted and/or engaged). The vertical axis plots the average satisfaction reported by youth organisations in a given country across a number of public service areas.



Notes: Correlation coefficient: 0.35; p-value: 0.12. The dependent variable is a mean of means of 10 satisfaction scores (1-5) reported by youth organisations in a given OECD country with government's responses in education, employment, health, housing, inclusion, family policy, justice, mobility, leisure, and youth work. When a country had missing information, the mean of the others was imputed. The independent variable is the mean of the shares of youth organisations in a given OECD country that reported they were consulted or engaged in the policy cycle.
Source: OECD calculations based on OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

Transparency and communication are the first steps toward effective participation

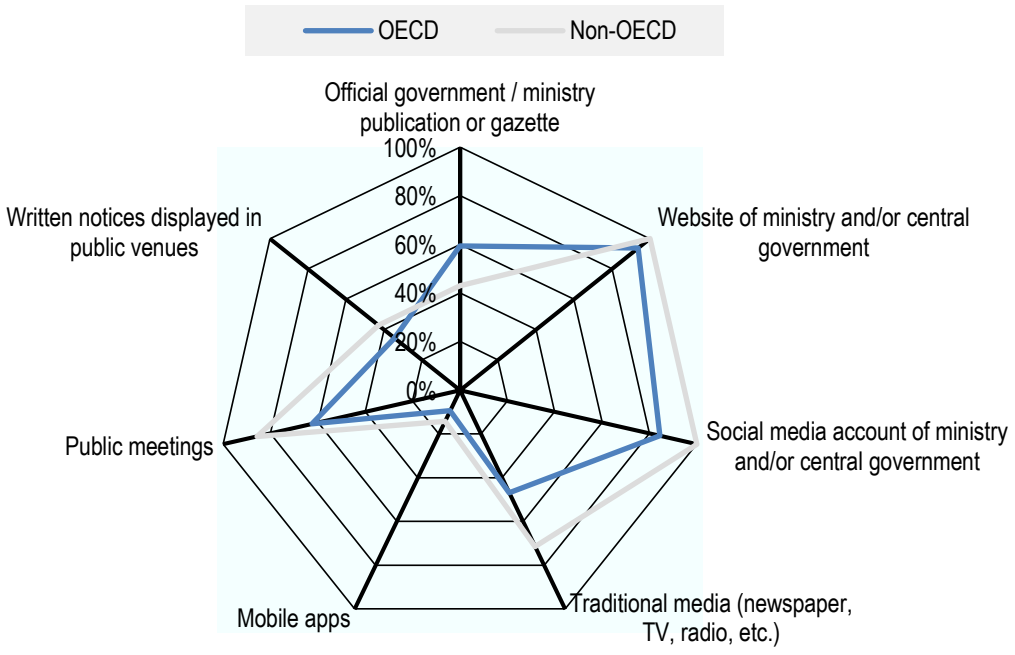
Government transparency and good communication with youth is the first step to establish meaningful participation in the policy cycle: indeed, 72% of entities in charge of youth affairs indicated that they prioritise improving their communication with youth stakeholders and strengthening transparency.[50] Ministries' websites remain the most common platform to provide information about their work and access to public programmes and services, as indicated by 95% of them (94% for OECD; 7 out of 7 for non-OECD). However, as Figure 3.16 shows, governments have largely started to innovate their communication strategies to reach out to young people via social media. In Colombia, France, Turkey and Brazil, government entities in charge of youth affairs also communicate with young people through mobile phone apps. As recognised in the OECD Recommendation of the Council on Open Government (OECD, 2017[11]), governments should promote innovative ways to promote stakeholder participation by leveraging digital government tools.

Communication and transparency can also be strengthened by establishing mechanisms for young people and youth organisations to provide feedback to ministries on the quality of policies, programmes and services. In Japan, for instance, junior high school students are recruited as "Special Youth Reporters" for the Cabinet Office: their role is to report their opinions on a variety of policy topics, which are then shared by the Cabinet Office with the relevant ministries and agencies.[51] In a number of OECD countries, consultation portals are established: in Iceland, a one-stop Consultation Portal allows everyone to submit comments and suggestions to all public consultations published by ministries.[52] However, when it comes

to communicating with young people, policy makers should tailor their messages and delivery modes to the intended audience. This requires governments to conduct research into the young audience they intend to approach to gain a deeper understanding of their motivations, fears or barriers. The OECD Communication Guide on Engaging Young People in Open Government (OECD, 2018[52]) also highlights the importance of communicating as early as possible, presenting clear and detailed reasons, scope of interaction and expected outcomes. Furthermore, governments should ensure that communication unfolds as a two-way road, rather than a one-way dissemination of information. A range of traditional and digital forms of communication such as online platforms and social media can be leveraged depending on the particular communications objective.

Figure 3.16. Ministries of youth are modernising their communication practices

The chart shows the share of OECD and non-OECD government entities in charge of youth affairs that reported using a given channel to provide information about youth-related policies, programmes and services.



Note: Based on 32 OECD and 7 non-OECD government entities in charge of youth affairs.
Source: OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

Inform, consult, engage

Transparency and effective communication create the adequate environment for young people to participate to the policy and service cycle. However, meaningful participation requires further steps (Box 3.3). The OECD Recommendation of the Council on Open Government (OECD, 2017[11]) stipulates that countries shall "grant all stakeholders equal and fair opportunities to be informed and consulted and actively engage them in all phases of the policy-cycle and service design and delivery."

Box 3.3. A model to assess stakeholder participation

The OECD Recommendation of the Council on Open Government (2017[11]) defines "stakeholder participation" as "all the ways in which stakeholders can be involved in the policy cycle and in service design and delivery, including

1. **Information**: an initial level of participation characterised by a one-way relationship in which the government produces and delivers information to stakeholders. It covers both on-demand provision of information and "proactive" measures by the government to disseminate information.
2. **Consultation**: a more advanced level of participation that entails a two-way relationship in which stakeholders provide feedback to the government and vice-versa. It is based on the prior definition of the issue for which views are being sought and requires the provision of relevant information, in addition to feedback on the outcomes of the process.
3. **Engagement**: when stakeholders are given the opportunity and the necessary resources (e.g. information, data and digital tools) to collaborate during all phases of the policy-cycle and in the service design and delivery."

Source: OECD Recommendation of the Council on Open Government (2017[11]).

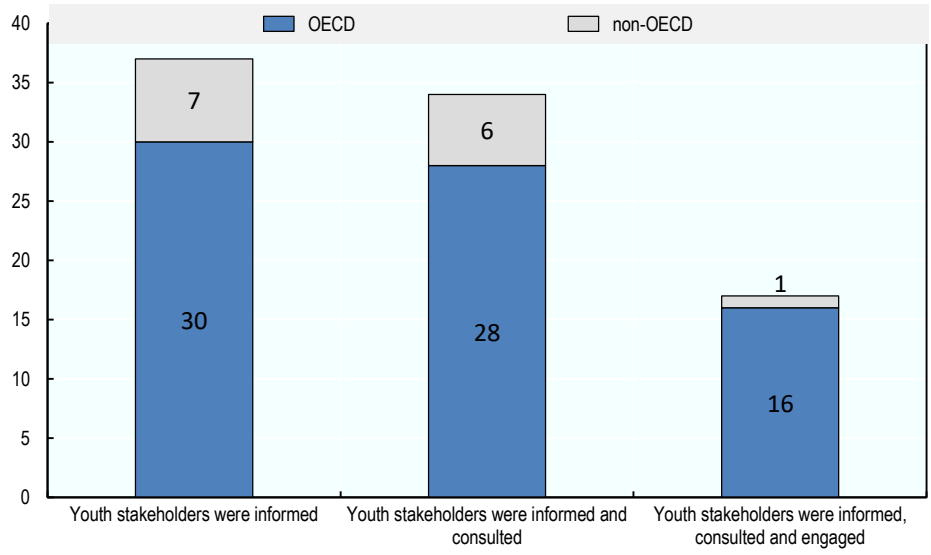
Chapter 2 highlighted that systematic, timely and inclusive consultation with a wide range of youth stakeholders throughout formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation is crucial to ensure that national youth strategies can deliver their intended impact. OECD data shows that even among the government entities in charge of youth affairs, there is still room to enhance youth stakeholders' participation in the policy cycle (Figure 3.17). Indeed, while 92% of ministries of youth informed and consulted young people in the past year (93% for OECD; 6 out of 7 for non-OECD), only 43% engaged them (50% for OECD; 1 out of 7 for non-OECD).[53]

Youth's participation should not be limited to the policies and services discussed in the entity in charge of youth affairs, considering the relevance of a wide array of policy areas to the lives of young people. For instance, in Norway, the Ministry of Culture consulted children and young people between the age of 3 and 19 in the formulation of a white paper on art, culture, and digital artistic and cultural expression in 2019.[54] Norwegian children and youth organisations were also consulted in the formulation of the government's strategy for "Children Leaving in Poverty (2015-2017)" and the action plan to combat violence against children.[55] In 2018, New Zealand's Ministry of Education extensively consulted and engaged young people in shaping the future of education in their country through an Online Youth Forum,[56] two Education Summits bringing together youth from a wide array of backgrounds with special attention to marginalised groups, as well as online surveys.[57]

However, line ministries generally provide fewer participation or engagement opportunities for youth. Only 14% of survey respondents from ministries of education (not in charge of youth affairs) informed, consulted and engaged young people in their policy cycle over the last 12 months (18% for OECD; 1 out of 3 for non-OECD). Among the participating line ministries, only 12% did (14% for OECD; 0 out of 3 for non-OECD).[58] At the same time, increasing opportunities for young people to participate in decision-making is recognised as a priority area by 77% of entities in charge of youth affairs and 72% of ministries of education, but only by 53% of other line ministries surveyed.[59]

Figure 3.17. Youth's engagement in the policy cycle of OECD entities in charge of youth affairs remains limited

Number of OECD and non-OECD entities in charge of youth affairs that informed, consulted and/or engaged youth stakeholders in the policy cycle in the past 12 months.



Note: Based on 30 OECD government entities in charge of youth affairs.
Source: OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

Engaging young people in the policy cycle requires adequate financial and human resources, open information, good co-ordination and appropriate incentives for public officials to close the feedback loop. Concrete support to encourage participation, particularly among marginalised youth, includes reimbursing expenses, providing childcare and holding consultations in different geographical areas. Where widely accessible, digital tools can also be leveraged to reduce the transaction costs. For instance, the Latvian Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development co-organised hackathons with high school and university students to explore applications of open data to current issues.[60] Box 3.4 provides some examples of consultation and engagement practices undertaken across OECD countries.

Box 3.4. Consulting and engaging: amplifying young people's voices

Luxembourg: the Youth Parliament

The Parliament for Youth is an assembly composed by youth and working for youth. Every person aged 14-24 living in Luxembourg can be a member. A parliamentary session lasts from October to the following October. The Parliament for Youth is composed of commissions and an executive board. Since its creation, it has published resolutions on a variety of policy areas including waste management, European affairs and the quality of life. It also holds regular meetings with government officials. The Youth Parliament's main partners are the National Youth Council of Luxembourg (CGJL), the Ministry of National Education, Children and Youth as well as the Chamber of Deputies.

Latvia: Coffee with Politicians

"Coffee with Politicians" is a method of participation created in Sweden and adapted to the context in Latvia. The aim is to provide an opportunity to both youth and politicians to meet and discuss issues

that are important to them. For young people, it is often the first opportunity to address high-level decision makers directly and immediately, and engage in a debate with them about issues that concern them. In turn, it is an opportunity for politicians to hear about the issues that young people care about from the "primary source" – young people themselves.

European Union (EU): Youth dialogue

One of the main instruments of the EU Youth Strategy 2019- 2027 for youth participation is the EU Youth Dialogue. Drawing on the former Structured Dialogue, this programme consists of a dialogue with young people and youth organisations involving policy and decision makers, as well as experts, researchers and other relevant civil society actors. The EU Youth Dialogue is steered by a group composed of young people and youth organisation at the European, national and local levels. The programme has resulted in the strengthening of National Youth Councils as representative bodies that allow youth to voice their opinions through decision-making, and developing young people's skills for active citizenship.

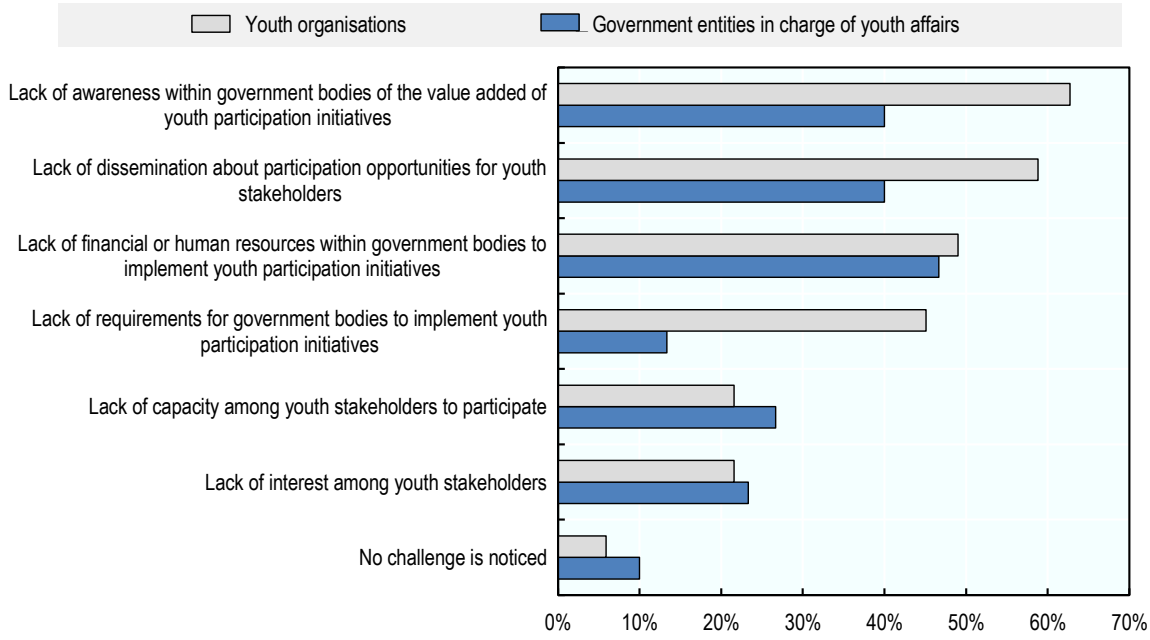
Sources: https://www.jugendparlament.lu/; OECD Youth Governance Surveys; https://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/implementation/dialogue_en.

Addressing challenges requires commitment

Youth-led organisations identify three main challenges to a more frequent and meaningful participation of young people in the policy cycle. First, government bodies lack awareness of the value added of youth participation initiatives; second, such opportunities are not well disseminated; and third, government bodies lack the necessary financial and human resources to implement them. This diagnosis matches the priority areas identified by government entities in charge of youth affairs, although to a more limited extent. For instance, only 40% of the entities in charge of youth affairs indicated that they seek to address the lack of awareness within government bodies for this purpose, compared to 63% of youth organisations that consider it a main challenge (Figure 3.18).

Figure 3.18. Governments and youth identify similar priorities on youth's participation in the policy cycle but to different extents

The chart shows the percentage of youth organisations in OECD countries indicating a given challenge as one of the three main challenges preventing youth from participating in the policy cycle. The chart also shows the percentage of OECD government entities in charge of youth affairs reporting a given challenge as one of the three main challenges they seek to address.

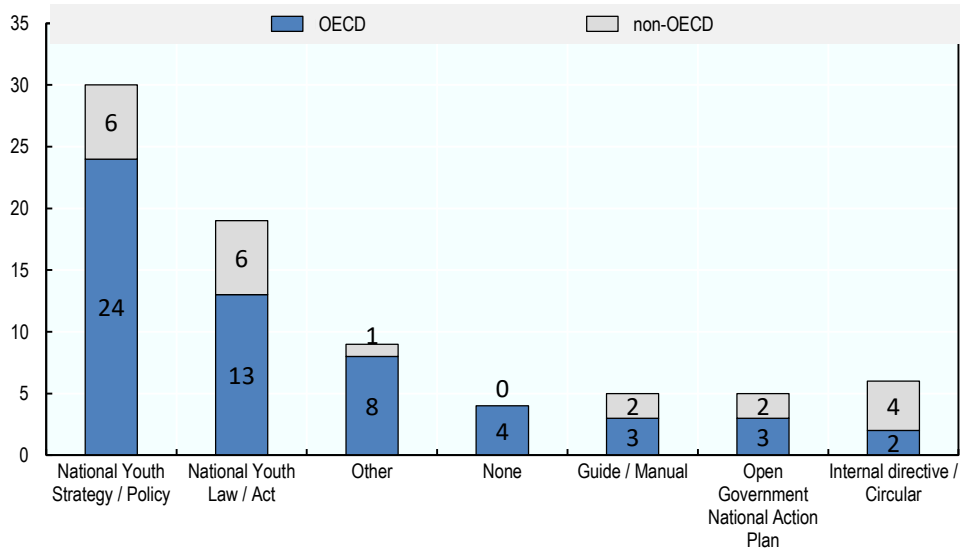


Note: Based on 30 OECD government entities in charge of youth affairs and 51 youth organisations in OECD countries.
Source: OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

Through commitments in youth policy and national strategies, governments can create a stronger mandate across ministerial portfolios to address such challenges (Figure 3.19). National youth strategies are the most common type to feature such objectives: 77% of countries with a NYS in place cover a commitment to promote youth's participation in the policy cycle (75% for OECD; 6 out of 7 for non-OECD) (see Chapter 2).[61] Less than half of countries (49%) have commitments enshrined in national youth laws (41% for OECD; 6 out of 7 for non-OECD).[62] At the same time, as highlighted in the OECD Recommendation of the Council on Open Government (2017[11]), supporting documents such as guidelines and manuals for policy makers can encourage youth's participation in the policy cycle. However, practical manuals and guidelines are still uncommon: only 13% of the surveyed entities in charge of youth affairs have elaborated manuals for decision makers on how to engage youth systematically in the decisions that affect their lives (9% for OECD; 2 out of 7 for non-OECD).[63] For instance, Germany is currently refining general quality standards and recommendations to ensure an effective participation of children and youth in day care centres, schools, municipalities and youth work centres in co-operation with the Federal Youth Council.[64]

Figure 3.19. Practical guidance to promote youth participation in the policy cycle remains scarce among OECD countries

The chart shows the number of OECD countries that have documents featuring commitments to encourage youth participation in the policy/service cycle.



Note: Based on 32 OECD and 7 non-OECD government entities in charge of youth affairs.
Source: OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

As Figure 3.19 illustrates, Argentina, Bulgaria, Luxembourg, the Slovak Republic and Spain have elaborated Open Government National Action Plans that feature youth-specific commitments on open government as part of their membership to the Open Government Partnership.[65] Including youth-specific commitments in these action plans can be an effective way of promoting youth's involvement in the policy cycle not only within the government entity in charge of youth affairs, but also across ministries and government entities, given their cross-sectorial scope. For instance, Spain's 2017-2019 Open Government Action Plan includes a commitment for the Spanish Youth Institute INJUVE to promote the effective participation of young people in democratic life and in the creation of youth policies through the national implementation of the EU Structured Dialogue. The nature, ambition, implementation and tracking of youth-specific commitments however vary greatly across countries.

Engaging young people in deciding how public resources are allocated can ensure that their interests are addressed in public expenditure and increase their interest and ownership in an exercise otherwise perceived as technical, while also increasing the process' transparency and accountability. Participatory budgeting programmes allow citizens or specific sub-groups to provide preferences on how budgets are allocated across specific projects or priority areas. Such programmes can be particularly useful when young people are involved in the whole process of designing, selecting and implementing the budgeted projects. For instance, in each of the 82 cantons of Costa Rica, a youth committee receives yearly funding from the national Young Person Council to develop and implement activities and projects formulated by each committee on the basis of the priorities and objectives individuated by its young members.[66] In Portugal, a participatory budgeting initiative was first undertaken at the national level in 2017: people aged 14-30 had the chance to elaborate proposals in fields such as sport, social innovation, science education and environmental sustainability for a total amount of EUR 300 000. At the sub-national level, the Portuguese Municipality of Gaia is currently implementing a three-year participatory budgeting initiative dedicated to people aged 13-30 with a total budget of EUR 240 000.[67]

A seat at the table: youth bodies and co-ordination with government

Youth-led organisations and representative bodies play a crucial role in representing the voice of young people vis-à-vis state institutions. Present in 77% of the countries surveyed (78% for OECD; 5 out of 7 for non-OECD),[68] national youth councils can prove a valuable partner for governments to gather information, ensure wide consultations and run joint activities and programmes.

According to evidence from the OECD Youth Governance Surveys, youth councils at the subnational level (regional as well as local) are even more common: they exist in 85% of the countries surveyed (88% for OECD; 5 out of 7 for non-OECD). Local youth councils can empower young people by allowing them to participate in local decision-making, as well as by promoting a sense of belonging and responsibility within their community. In some countries, youth participation is further institutionalised. For instance, in countries such as Finland and Norway, the establishment of local youth councils is mandatory at the municipal level. Similarly, in the Flemish Community of Belgium, public institutions are compelled by decree to consult young people in policy-making both at the community and city-level.[69]

A second mechanism through which governments and ministries seek the inputs of young people is through advisory youth councils. These bodies are normally affiliated to governments or specific ministries, such as in Denmark where the Ministry of Environment and Food has established a Youth Climate Council. While such bodies exist in 59% of the countries surveyed in the OECD Youth Governance Surveys (53% for OECD; 6 out of 7 for non-OECD), they widely differ in terms of functions, composition, terms of appointment, financial and human resources, and involvement in the policy cycle (Box 3.5). For instance, the Swiss Federal Commission for Children and Youth (CFEJ), with one third of members under 30 years of age, advises the Federal Council on matters of children and youth policy, monitors the situation of youth and children and proposes necessary measures. It also evaluates ex-ante the potential impact of new policies and regulations on youth policy and child policy in Switzerland.[70]

Box 3.5. Youth advisory councils

France: Council of Orientation of Youth Policy (Conseil d'orientation des politiques de Jeunesse; CoJ)

Since 2016, the Conseil d'orientation des politiques de Jeunesse (CoJ), acts as an advisory body to the Prime Minister. The CoJ contributes to the co-ordination and evaluation of youth-related policies, and is composed of commissions dealing with education and participation within policy-making. Its 79 members, including Ministers, youth representatives and youth organisations, can also be consulted on legislative or regulatory drafts on issues relating to youth and may examine any general drafts law relating to youth policies.

New Zealand: Youth Advisory Group

The Ministry of Education in New Zealand has created an advisory group composed of 12 members aged 14 to 18, which are expected to inform the Ministry on the impact of activities and measures adopted within the education field. The group allows young people to voice their opinions and share insights about education policies, and suggest how to improve them. The members are expected to draft a feedback report targeting the Ministry, which is also released to the public.

Chile: Youth Cabinet (Gabinete Juven)

Since 2018, the National Institute of Youth in Chile (INJUV) implements the initiative "Gabinete Juvenil" bringing together 155 young people aged 15-29 elected at the local level to regional youth cabinets. The initiative provides an opportunity for dialogue, debate and integration of new and innovative ideas in the policy cycle of the institute through national commissions on a variety of issues and topics.

Source: https://www.jeunes.gouv.fr/coj; OECD Youth Governance Surveys; https://programassociales.ministeriodesarrollosocial.gob.cl/programas_otrasinic/62713/2019/4.

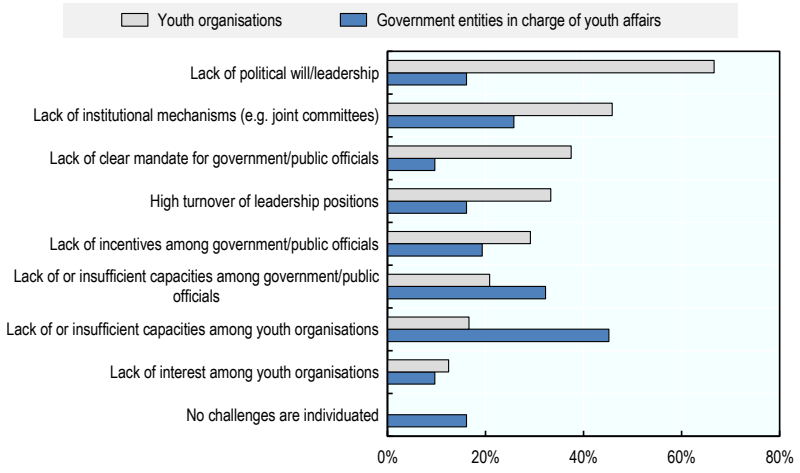
National and school student unions are important spaces for youth to engage in democratic decision-making and can be vehicles of youth's demands to governments. National student unions are present in 82% of the countries surveyed (81% for OECD; 6 out of 7 for non-OECD) and high school student unions in 77% of them (78% for OECD; 5 out of 7 for non-OECD). Cross-national student unions, such as the European Students Union, play an important advocacy role in matters exceeding national boundaries. In the education field, school and student councils that represent students' interests vis-à-vis the administrations of schools and universities fulfil important functions in ensuring that students' voices are heard and included when taking decisions, as well as in promoting active citizenship and civic education.

All youth-representative bodies and organisations, from the school-level to the sub-national up to the national levels, should be equipped with appropriate resources, clear mandates, independence and an inclusive composition. For instance, challenges for an effective co-ordination between government entities and youth organisations are widespread. Some of the entities in charge of youth affairs surveyed in the OECD Youth Governance Surveys expressed concerns that young people from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, marginalised youth, and young people from minority groups might be less likely to take part in youth organisations and representative bodies in the first place. This challenge calls for governments to equip youth organisations with the necessary tools and resources to broaden their membership, as well as consider establishing innovative mechanisms to engage marginalised young people directly.

Data from the OECD Youth Governance Surveys (Figure 3.20) shows that the perceptions of governments and youth organisations on the main obstacles for an effective co-ordination with one another greatly diverge. OECD entities in charge of youth affairs point to insufficient financial and human resources among youth organisations (45%) and among their own ministries (32%), as well as to the lack of institutional mechanisms (26%) as the main challenges to better co-ordinate with youth organisations. The lack of institutional mechanisms such as joint committees and advisory councils is also highlighted by 46% of the responding youth organisations as a key barrier. However, they most commonly point to the lack of political will and leadership among government officials (67%).

Figure 3.20. Governments and youth organisations highlight different obstacles to effective co-ordination

The chart plots the share of youth organisations in OECD countries and the share of OECD government entities in charge of youth affairs reporting a specific challenge as one of the top three challenges when coordinating youth-related policies, programs or services with one another.



Note: Based on 31 OECD government entities in charge of youth affairs and 24 youth organisations in OECD countries.
Source: OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

Identified as a key challenge by government entities in charge of youth affairs, the lack of financial and human capacities among youth organisations requires action from governments. Available data from the OECD Youth Governance Surveys shows that 79% provide funding to youth organisations (81% for OECD; 5 out of 7 for non-OECD). In some cases, financial support is provided by entities in charge of youth affairs directly, while in other cases youth organisations are funded through local authorities or national youth councils. For instance, in Denmark, the Danish Youth Council (DUF) receives a share of the Danish lottery funds and then distributes funding to its member children and youth organisations.[71] Similarly, in Norway, the Ministry of Culture provides financial support to youth organisations via the "Frifond" grants that are distributed by the Norwegian Children and Youth Council (LNU) and the Norwegian Music Council.[72] In Finland, the Ministry of Education and Culture (also responsible for youth affairs) awarded EUR 18.6 million of funding to youth organisations in 2020, to be disbursed through the ministry itself as well as the regional state administrative agencies.[73] 55% of entities in charge of youth affairs also provide educational and technical assistance to build up the administrative capacities of youth organisations (48% for OECD; 6 out of 7 for non-OECD).[74] 61% of the ministries of education provide organisational and technical support to school and student councils (58% for OECD; 4 out of 6 for non-OECD). In Lithuania, for instance, the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports provides the Lithuanian School Student Union (LMS) with training support on a yearly basis with a particular focus on upskilling trainings for coordinators of school student unions.

In partnership with governments, well-funded youth representative bodies with clear mandates, independence, access to decision-making, adequate capacities and an inclusive membership can be an effective way of bringing innovative and youth-responsive solutions into the decision-making process. They also fulfil an important function in fostering an active and democratic life among young people.

Youth workers and young volunteers: the potential for resilient societies

The COVID-19 crisis has shown that young volunteers and youth workers are an important resource for societies in ensuring societal resilience in the face of shocks and disasters. Youth volunteers and youth workers have helped mitigate the impact of the crisis on the everyday lives of the most vulnerable people, from elderly people with limited access to public services to children with limited out-of-school activities.

In need of a compass: youth work and government strategies

Youth work includes a wide range of social, cultural, educational, sports-related, leisure and political activities designed for young people and managed by professional and voluntary youth workers through organisations, informal groups, public youth services and individually. Youth workers can also engage in "open youth work" prioritising the participation of young people themselves in ideating, planning, organising and evaluating activities.[75] Youth work activities such as Scouting provide young people with out-of-school and informal opportunities to learn, grow, socialise and actively participate in their communities. Youth workers also play a crucial role in providing targeted support to vulnerable and marginalised youth (such as youth in need of health counselling, access to justice, support to prevent the misuse of drugs, etc.), especially when they would not turn to public services for help. Youth workers can also provide trainings and support to youth organisations and their leaders, ensuring they have the right skills and capacities to successfully conduct their own activities. The COVID-19 crisis has also highlighted the crucial role that digital youth work can play.

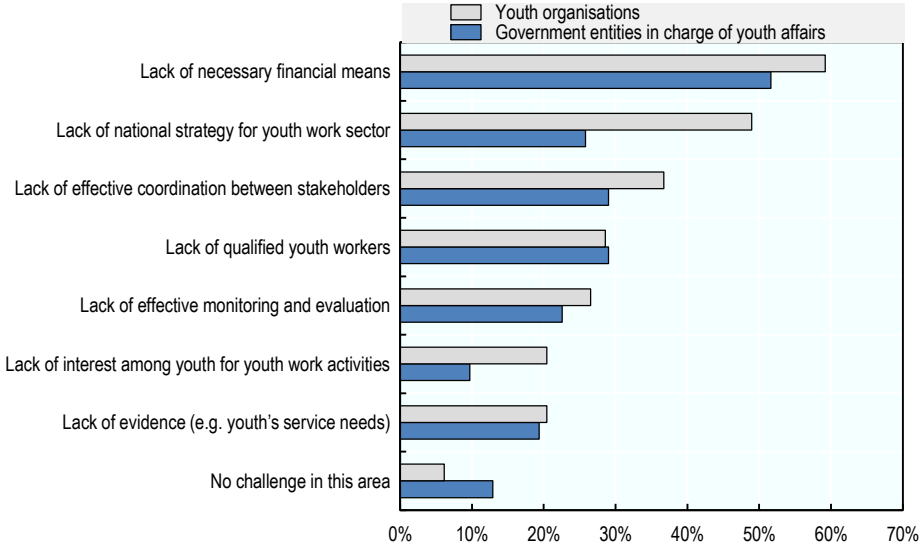
Data from the OECD Youth Governance Surveys shows that both governments and youth organisations highlight a lack of financial resources as a key challenge for this sector (52% for OECD government entities in charge of youth affairs; 59% for youth organisations in OECD countries). Youth work has often suffered deep cuts in financial resources from public authorities since the 2007-2008 financial crisis. In England and Wales, for instance, local authorities' expenditure on the sector has been cut by 70% in real terms in

less than a decade, resulting in the loss of 760 youth centres and more than 4,500 youth workers since 2010-2011 (YMCA England and Wales, 2020[53]). Similarly, government spending on youth work services in Ireland decreased by 32% between 2008 and 2014: while partly recovered, its projected level for 2020 is still almost 15% below its 2008 level (NYCI, 2019[54]). Evidence from the OECD Youth Governance Surveys shows that, across six OECD countries, the share of the budget of the government entity in charge of youth affairs dedicated to the youth work sector has shrunk from 7% in 2015 to 4% in 2019.[76] The limited availability of comparable evidence also suggests that governments still do not adequately monitor youth work spending.

The lack of a national youth work sector strategy and a lack of effective co-ordination also emerge as areas where further improvement is warranted, in particular considering the shared competencies national and sub-national authorities have in promoting and financing the youth work sector (Figure 3.21). The findings also point to a general underestimation by governments of the challenges in the sector compared to the perceptions of surveyed youth organisations.

Figure 3.21. Financial support and integrated strategies are needed for a thriving youth work sector

The chart plots the share of youth organisations in OECD countries and the share of OECD government entities in charge of youth affairs reporting a specific challenge as one of the top three challenges for the youth work sector.

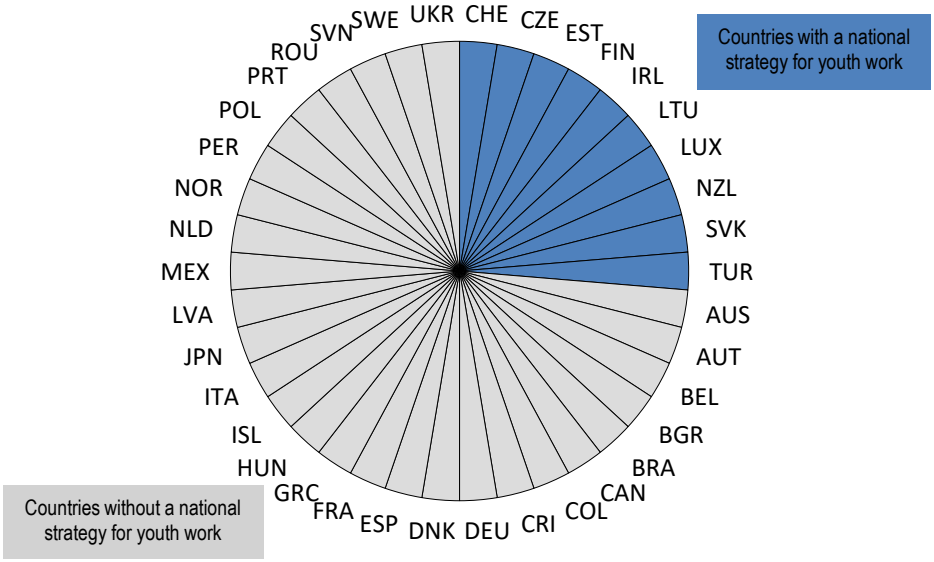


Note: Based on 31 government entities in charge of youth affairs and 49 youth organisations in OECD countries.
Source: OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

Public authorities can support youth work services by investing into the skills and qualifications of youth workers, the financial capacities of their organisations as well as supporting the digitalisation of the sector. Good co-ordination between government entities, sub-national levels of government and youth workers as well as proper monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are also required for a successful youth work sector. As highlighted in the Recommendation on Youth Work (2017[55]) adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, "special attention should be paid to the need for strategies, frameworks, legislation, sustainable structures and resources, effective co-ordination […] that promote equal access to youth work for all young people." As Figure 3.22 shows, 26% of the countries surveyed have a dedicated strategy for the youth work sector in place (30% for OECD; 0 out of 7 for non-OECD). Furthermore, 78% feature commitments for the youth work sector in their national youth strategies (72% for OECD; 7 out of 7 for non-OECD). In Estonia, the Youth Work Act (2010)[77] defines the scope of youth work activities, clarifies the

responsibilities across levels of government and includes provisions on supervision and funding mechanisms. Building on that and previous acts, the Estonian Youth Field Development Plan (2014-2020)[78] presents actionable objectives, targets and actions to enhance quality youth work. Similarly, as part of the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027, the European Union is currently developing a European Youth Work Agenda to ensure quality, innovation and recognition to youth work across member states (Council of the European Union, 2018[56]).

Figure 3.22. Dedicated strategies for the youth work sector remain uncommon



Source: OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

Leveraging youth volunteering for resilient societies

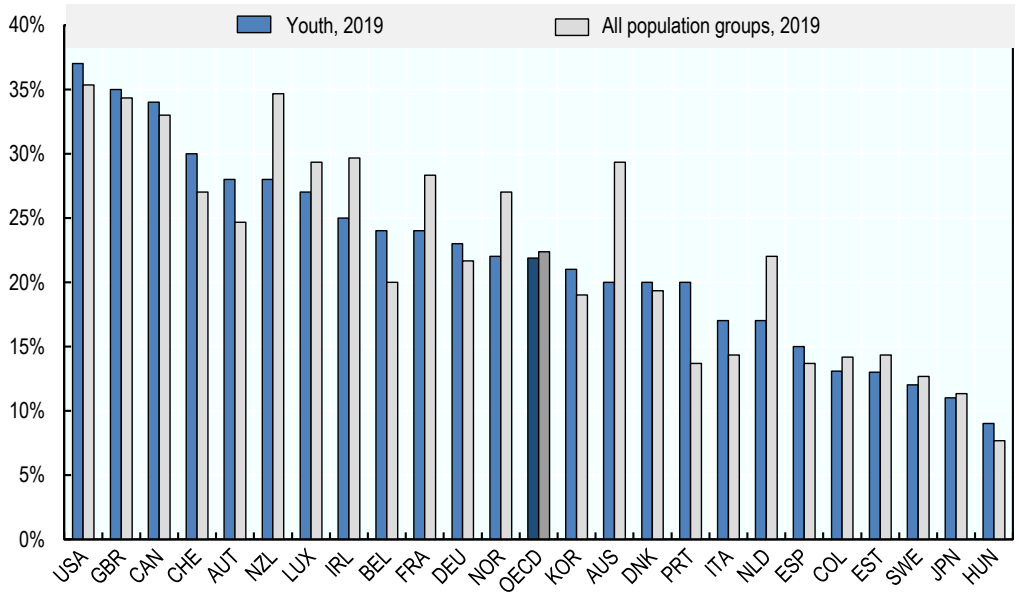
Volunteering is a tool for combatting social exclusion, as it allows people to participate in their community as valued and valuable citizens, make new friends, expand their network and boost their social skills (OECD, 2015[57]). Young people can develop valuable "hard skills" as well as "soft skills" when volunteering, which could in turn help them in their career paths (OECD, 2015[57]). In addition, volunteering creates social capital, building and consolidating bonds of trust and co-operation, while cultivating norms of altruism, solidarity, civic mindfulness and respect for diversity (Putnam, 2000[58]). However, it is also important to note that volunteering programmes should not replace government programmes dedicated to bring youth not in employment, education or training closer to the labour market. During the COVID-19 crisis, young volunteers have stepped up to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on the most vulnerable groups in society, also showing intergenerational solidarity. Governments have also promoted youth volunteering in that critical context through dedicated programmes, such as the French "Je veux aider" and the Canadian "I Want to Voluneer" platforms (OECD, 2020[7]).

22% of young people in OECD countries reported of having volunteered in the previous month in 2019, across 24 OECD countries (Figure 3.23). In more than half OECD countries for which data is available, young people volunteered more than all population groups on average. Particularly, high shares of young volunteers are reported in the United States (37%), the United Kingdom (35%) and Canada (34%). On the other hand, less than 15% of surveyed youth reported having volunteered in Hungary (9%), Japan (11%), Sweden (12%), Estonia (13%) and Colombia (13%). Figure 3.23 also shows that youth volunteered more than the total population especially in Portugal (1.5 times) and Belgium (1.2 times), while the opposite is true in Australia and the Netherlands among others (0.7 times in Australia and 0.8 times in the

Netherlands). With almost half of people aged 14 to 25 engaged in voluntary activities (49.2%), young people were identified as the most voluntarily active age group in Germany in 2014.[79]

Figure 3.23. In 13 of 24 available OECD countries, young people volunteer more than the total population

The chart shows the share of young people (15-29) who reported having volunteered in the previous month in 2019 (blue bars) and the average among the share of young, middle-aged and elderly people who reported the same in 2019 (grey bars).

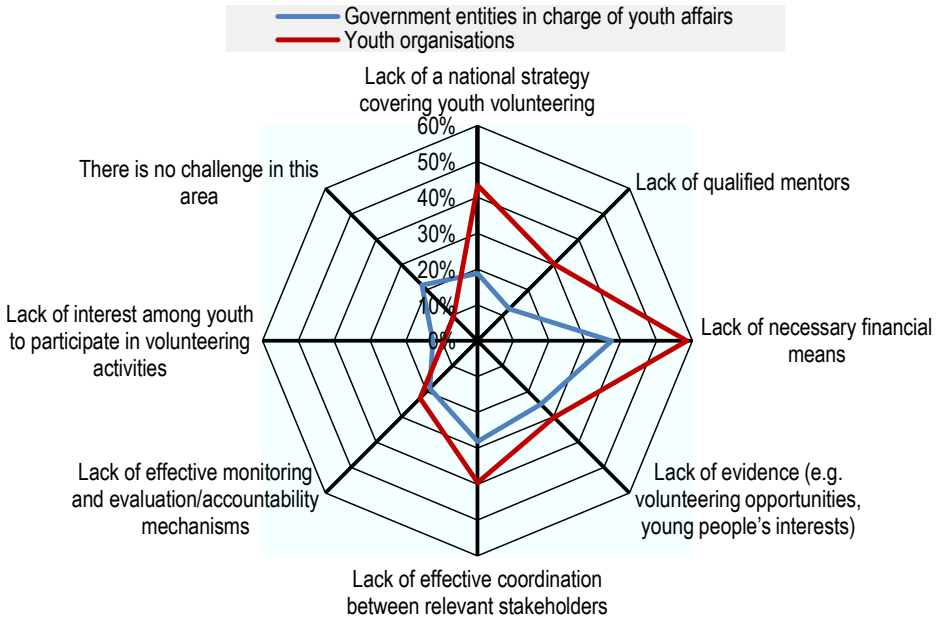


Source: OECD calculations based on Gallup World Poll (Database).

Available evidence indicates that youth volunteering is hampered by lack of opportunities, resources and awareness. Difficulties related to logistics or personal costs can curtail volunteering of young people from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds. Facilitating the access to volunteering for all young people regardless of their socio-economic background remains a key challenge to be addressed. Data from the OECD Youth Governance Surveys highlights that OECD entities in charge of youth affairs and youth organisations in OECD countries identify similar challenges in this area, although to different extents (Figure 3.24). The most common challenges reported by policy makers are the lack of financial means (38%) and the lack of effective co-ordination between relevant stakeholders (28%). The lack of a national strategy covering youth volunteering is individuated by 19% as a main challenge. Youth organisations report the same main challenges in this area, although to a much larger extent: the lack of financial means is mentioned by 58% of respondents, the lack of a national strategy by 43% of them, and the lack of effective co-ordination by 40%. Finally, only 9% of youth organisations report no challenge, compared to 22% of the OECD entities in charge of youth affairs.

Figure 3.24. Youth organisations are more concerned than governments about the barriers to youth volunteering

The chart shows the share of OECD government entities in charge of youth affairs (blue line) and the share of youth organisations in OECD countries (red line) that reported a given challenge when asked about the top three challenges for youth volunteering.



Note: Based on 32 OECD government entities in charge of youth affairs and 53 youth organisations in OECD countries.
Source: OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

With the objective of increasing the share of young volunteers, countries such as the Czech Republic, Germany, Lithuania, Slovakia and Spain include strategic objectives on youth volunteering within their national youth strategy. Strategic planning for the volunteering sector (through dedicated strategies or integrated ones) can be useful in clarifying responsibilities, promoting effective co-ordination, creating monitoring and accountability mechanisms, and ensuring dedicated financial resources.

64% of OECD countries for which data is available[80] deliver or finance specific national programmes to promote youth volunteering. While funding for the volunteering sector has increased or remained stable since 2015 in all 4 OECD countries for which comparable data is available, the share of resources of entities in charge of youth affairs dedicated to volunteering remains limited in Germany (3.2%), Portugal (2%), Norway and Hungary (all three below 1%). At the European level, youth volunteering is supported by the European Solidarity Corps,[81] which was sustained with a EUR 375.6 million budget in 2018-2020.[82] While ensuring adequate, larger resources for youth volunteering remains crucial, there is a risk that this might come at the expenses of other programmes or priorities within the entities in charge of youth affairs. Box 3.6 presents innovative cases of national programmes to promote youth volunteering.

Box 3.6. National volunteering programmes: bringing them in

Canada: National Service Corps Programme

The national Service Corps in Canada gives young Canadians the opportunity to be involved in meaningful volunteering projects that have a positive impact on their communities. The programme offers "micro-financing" ranging from CAD 250 to 1,500 for youth to lead their own volunteering projects. Since its creation, more than 2,000 young Canadians have benefited from the available grants. Funding also targets vulnerable youth populations, such as young people who have been granted refugee status.

France : Civic Service (Service Civique)

With the law of 10 March 2010, the French government created the "Service Civique" programme, designed to encourage civic commitment by young people aged 16 to 25, as well as by people with disabilities aged 16 to 30, without any qualification conditions. Volunteering projects typically last between 6 to 12 months with at least 24 hours per week, working with NGOs in areas of education, environment, science, sports, family, civil security, or French language promotion. Volunteers receive an allowance of around EUR 473 net per month provided by the State.

Belgium: Bel'J

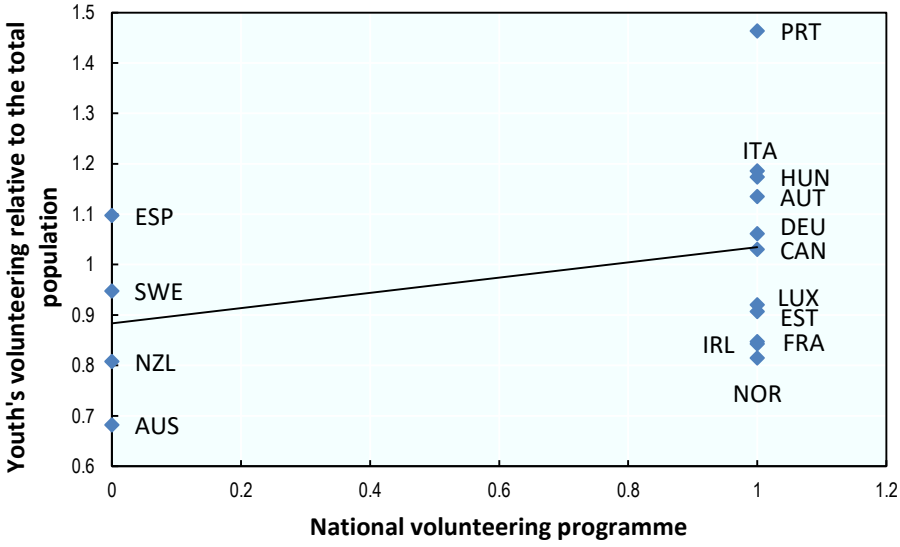
Established in 2009, the "Bel'J" is a youth volunteering programme that gives young people aged 12-30 the opportunity to volunteer in a community different from their own. The programme aims at fostering the cultural immersion of youth in different communities; helping young people identify similarities and understand differences across communities; and improving language skills. Each community has appointed an agency to implement the programme: Flemish Community - JINT vzw; French Community - Bureau International Jeunesse (AT); German-speaking Community - Jugendbüro der Deutschsprachigen Gemeinschaft VoG.

Source: https://www.canada.ca/en/services/youth/canada-service-corps/about.html; http://www.bel-j.be/bel-j/index.php/nl/; https://www.service-civique.gouv.fr/uploads/content/files/a1f4929fa0322ef849461854a6b7840d94f45d6f.pdf

National programmes and strategies covering youth volunteering, when equipped with the right financial and human resources, can help promote youth volunteering. As Figure 3.25 shows, there is a positive and precise relationship between having a national programme for youth volunteering and the extent to which young people volunteer compared to the total population. In countries in which there is no such programme, young people volunteer less than the total population on average (0.88). Instead, in countries with youth volunteering programmes, youth volunteer more than the total population on average (1.04).

Figure 3.25. National programmes and strategies can be effective in promoting youth volunteering

The horizontal axis plots countries with such programmes at value 1, and countries without such programmes at value 0. The vertical axis plots the share of young people reporting that they have volunteered time to an organisation in the past month relative to the share of the total population that did, in 2019.



Notes: The Wilcoxon rank sum test yields a p-value of 0.14; "youth" here refers to people aged 15-29.
Sources: OECD calculations based on Youth Governance Surveys and Gallup World Poll (Database).

Policy recommendations

This chapter has provided an evaluation of the current state of the relationship between youth and public institutions across a variety of dimensions as well as an analysis of the impact of legal frameworks, governance tools, strategies, policies, practices and capacities. Young people demonstrate interest and awareness of global challenges and take action through non-institutionalised channels. At the same time, youth's trust in institutions has halted and their participation in elections remains lower than for other age groups. Across OECD countries, significant representation gaps emerge when looking at youth's representation in the public administration, cabinets and parliaments.

Governments have put in place practices to consult and engage young people and their representative bodies in the policy cycle: however, they still need to address considerable challenges that lie ahead. Finally, despite their contribution to ensuring resilient societies, the youth work and youth volunteering sectors need to be strengthened especially through adequate financing, strategic guidance and effective co-ordination.

To re-build youth's trust in governments and strengthen their relationship with public institutions, governments should consider:

1. Reforming registration rules and lowering minimum age requirements to address barriers to youth participation in political life and promote age diversity in state institutions.
2. Providing programmes to help young people join and thrive in the public sector workforce as well as programmes for inter-generational learning between older and younger employees.
3. Engaging youth stakeholders in a meaningful way throughout the policy cycle to ensure age-diversity in public consultations and more responsive and inclusive policy outcomes, through in person as well as digital means.

4. Strengthening volunteering and youth work through national laws, strategies and programmes that include a common vision and clear responsibilities, co-ordinated action, and adequate resources for building youth's skills and competences as well as social cohesion and societal resilience.
5. Exploring the co-creation of innovative mechanisms to engage with non-institutionalised youth activism and recognise its important contribution to the political discourse.

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Notes

[1] OECD calculation based on Gallup World Poll (Database).

[2] OECD calculations based on Inter-Parliamentary Union, Parline database on national parliaments (https://data.ipu.org) and OECD Demography and Population (Database).

[3] OECD Youth Governance Surveys. Data available for 10 OECD entities in charge of youth affairs.

[4] OECD calculations based on Gallup World Poll (Database).

[5] OECD calculation based on Gallup World Poll (Database).

[6] OECD calculations based on European Social Survey ESS9-2018, considering respondents that reported a level of confidence in their country's parliament between 6 and 10 (on a scale 0-10). Data available for Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Germany, Estonia, Finland, France, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Slovenia, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

[7] Age-disaggregated data not available for Iceland.

[8] World Values Survey Wave 6: 2010-2014. Data available for Australia, Chile, Colombia, Estonia, Germany, Japan, South Korea, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand and Poland.

[9] http://www.oecd.org/gov/webinar-measuring-public-trust-after-a-pandemic-and-economic-crises.htm

[10] OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

[11] https://www.msmt.cz/file/35221/.

[12] OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

[13] OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

[14] Definition and measurement discussed in Chapter 2 and Annex 2.

[15] OECD calculations based on European Social Survey ESS9-2018. Data available for Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

[16] OECD calculations based on European Social Survey ESS9-2018. Data available for Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

[17] OECD calculations based on European Social Survey ESS9-2018. Data available for Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

[18] ORB Media's data from surveys with 979,000 respondents from 128 countries overtime; at the time of writing, the 2018 data included 3,754 respondents from 52 countries; https://orbmedia.org/stories/generation-activist/data.

[19] ORB Media's data from surveys with 979,000 respondents from 128 countries overtime; at the time of writing, the 2018 data included 3,754 respondents from 52 countries; https://orbmedia.org/stories/generation-activist/data.

[20] The study refers to the Liberal Democrats, the UK Independence Party and the Green Party in this category. The study's finding also holds for then opposition Labour Party.

[21] FridaysForFuture – Statistics, https://www.fridaysforfuture.org/statistics/graph, accessed on 4 April 2020.

[22] For instance, in Denmark's Open Government National Action Plan 2013-2014, https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Denmark_Open-Government-Action-Plan-2013-2014_ENG_1-sided_print.pdf

[23] https://www.elections.ca.

[24] Facebook, for instance, has announced such a campaign in the US in the run-up to the 2020 Presidential elections, https://about.fb.com/news/2020/07/facebook-does-not-benefit-from-hate/

[25] Estonian National Electoral Committee, https://www.valimised.ee/et.

[26] Estonian National Electoral Committee, https://www.valimised.ee/et

[27] https://www.youthforum.org/vote-16

[28] You can find more information at http://www.nuorisovaalit.fi/

[29] OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

[30] OECD (2016) Survey on the Composition of the workforce in Central/federal Governments.

[31] OECD (2016) Survey on the Composition of the workforce in Central/federal Governments.

[32] canada.ca/content/dam/y-j/documents/YP-ENG.pdf

[33] OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

[34] The Gallup Report defines millennials as those born between 1980 and 1996.

[35]2016 OECD survey on Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM).

[36] 2019 OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

[37] https://www.az.government.bg/pages/programa-start-na-karierata/

[38] https://overheid.vlaanderen.be/personeel/diversiteit-en-gelijke-kansen/stages-en-startbanen.

[39] OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

[40] OECD calculations based on OECD Demography and Population (Database).

[41] OECD calculations based on Inter-Parliamentary Union, Parline database on national parliaments (https://data.ipu.org).

[42] OECD calculations based on Inter-Parliamentary Union, Parline database on national parliaments (https://data.ipu.org). Data available for Australia, Austria, Chile, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Ireland, Japan, Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States.

[43] "Young people" refers to people aged 16-24 for Norway, and to people aged 18-24 for Sweden.

[44] OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

[45] OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

[46] Inter-Parliamentary Union, Parline database on national parliaments (https://data.ipu.org).

[47] OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

[48] Respondents were asked to rate government's response in this area on a scale 1-5. Satisfaction here is defined as respondents indicating a score of 4 or 5.

[49] The Recommendation defines "stakeholders" as "any interested and/or affected party, including: individuals, regardless of their age, gender, sexual orientation, religious and political affiliations; and institutions and organisations, whether governmental or non-governmental, from civil society, academia, the media or the private sector."

[50] OECD Youth Governance Surveys. Respondents were asked to rank priority areas on a 1-5 scale. The percentages reflect the respondents that indicated a priority score of 4 or 5.

[51] OECD Youth Governance Surveys; https://www8.cao.go.jp/youth/youth-opinion/index.html.

[52] OECD Youth Governance Surveys; https://samradsgatt.island.is/um-samradsgatt.

[53] OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

[54] OECD Youth Governance Surveys; https://www.kulturtanken.no/busk

[55] https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/ff601d1ab03d4f2dad1e86e706dc4fd3/children-living-in-poverty_q-1230-e.pdf

[56] OECD Youth Governance Surveys; https://educationcentral.co.nz/tag/online-youth-forum/

[57] https://conversation.education.govt.nz/conversations/education-conversation/whatyou-told-us/

[58] OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

[59] OECD Youth Governance Surveys. Respondents were asked to rank priority areas on a 1-5 scale. The percentages reflect the respondents that indicated a priority score of 4 or 5.

[60] OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

[61] OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

[62] OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

[63] OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

[64]https://www.bmfsfj.de/blob/94118/c49d4097174e67464b56a5365bc8602f/kindergerechtes-deutschland-broschuere-qualitaetsstandards-data.pdf

[65] The Open Government Partnership is a multilateral initiative launched in 2011 that aims to secure concrete commitments from governments to promote transparency, empower citizens, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to strengthen governance. Member countries commit to deliver a country action plan developed with public consultation, and commit to independent reporting on their progress. Currently, the Partnership holds 78 country and 20 local members working alongside thousands of civil society organisations. For more information: http://www.opengovpartnership.org.

[66] OECD Youth Governance Surveys; GOP+Jovem 2020, Vila Nova de Gaia, Câmara Municipal, https://www.cm-gaia.pt/pt/cidade/juventude/gop-jovem-2020/.

[67] OECD Youth Governance Surveys; The initiative falls under the framework of the *Gaia Orçamento Participativo* (Gaia Participatory Budgeting or GOP) + *Jovem 2020* project which focuses on three main areas: i) creativity, culture and sport; ii) environment and sustainability; iii) intergeneration and youth volunteering.

[68] OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

[69] Flemish Parliament Act of 20 January 2012 on a revised youth and children's rights policy

[70] https://www.ekkj.admin.ch/fr/

[71] https://en.duf.dk/

[72] https://www.frifond.no

[73] OECD Youth Governance Surveys; https://nuorisotilastot.fi/#!/en/avustukset//perus/choice-1/prosentit/whiteblue//Koko%20maa/table/suhde//null/kunta/donut/%5B%5D/kohteet/%5B%5D/sortToimija/2016-2018/not final/Miten%20edustuksellinen%20demokratia%20nuorten%20osalta%20toteutuu%20kunnassanne%20ja%20mit%C3%A4%20edustuksellisen%20demokratian%20mahdollisuuksia%20nuorille%20on%20tarjolla%3F/undefined/////e30=.

[74] OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

[75] https://www.ecyc.org/about-us/open-youth-work#:~:text=Open%20youth%20work%20is%20a%20partnership%20between%20youth%20workers%20and,as%20partners%20in%20the%20process.&text=Open%20youth%20work%20enables%20communities%20to%20contribute%20to%20meeting%20their%20own%20needs .

[76] Data available for Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland and the Slovak Republic. Data from Latvia is available only for 2017-2019.

[77] https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/530102013106/consolide.

[78] https://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/nak_eng.pdf.

[79] Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, https://www.bmfsfj.de/blob/113702/53d7fdc57ed97e4124fffec0ef5562a1/vierter-freiwilligensurvey-monitor-data.pdf.

[80] OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

[81] https://europa.eu/youth/solidarity_en

[82] OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

4. Delivering Fair Policy Outcomes For All Generations

This chapter will discuss how governments can foster intergenerational justice in policy-making and public governance. The notion of intergenerational justice underlies many of today's most heated debates, such as the sustainability of national deficits, the depletion of natural resources or the extinction of endangered species and pollution. It is also characteristic of debates in the field of social policy, especially due to an ageing population across all OECD countries, and frames discussions about inclusive participation in decision-making. However, demographics are not a fate – policies and institutions matter. Indeed, a growing number of OECD countries has created dedicated institutions, laws, and public administration tools to design policies and deliver services that fit all generations.

The COVID-19 pandemic has placed concerns about intergenerational solidarity and justice prominently in the policy arena (OECD, 2020[1]). In the wake of the crisis, media reports about young people shopping groceries for the elderly in isolated care facilities created a new sense of intergenerational support. With the adoption of large-scale economic stimulus packages by governments, the focus has shifted to the question how governments can "build back better" for all generations.

Intergenerational justice had been a hot topic long before COVID-19[1] due to population ageing, the legacy of the global financial crisis (see Chapter 1) and, more recently, the debate about climate justice. In particular, demographic change is raising new questions about the sustainability of public service delivery models which were built to meet the demands of younger societies. As societies across OECD countries are ageing, the old-age dependency ratio, which compares the economically inactive population (65 and over) to the working age population (16-64), will change significantly. Whereas in 1990, an average of 21 individuals aged 65 and over faced 100 persons of working age (20-64) across OECD countries, this share increased to 31 in 2020 and is projected to rise to 53 by 2050.[2] The increase in the numerical weight of older age cohorts has important implications for the allocation of public resources. For instance, in 2015, governments across OECD spent 2.2 times more on public pensions than on public education, up from a factor of 1.6 in 2000.[3] Differences between countries with similar demographics confirm that public spending patterns are driven by policy choices and longstanding governance cultures rather than being determined by demographics alone (Vanhuysse, 2013[2]; Lynch, 2006[3]).

Population ageing also reshapes the composition of the electorate and political weight of different age cohorts with important implications for democratic decision-making. While age alone cannot predict policy preferences, and each age cohort is in itself heterogeneous due to differences in socio-economic background, gender, geography, ethnicity and other identity factors, ageing societies must seek to ensure a fair participation and representation of all age cohorts in public life and policy-making.

This chapter will explore the magnitude of inequalities across generations and map innovation in governance to integrate intergenerational justice in policy-making and governance. The chapter:

1. analyses recent and future demographic trends, pointing out that the magnitude of "ageing" affects OECD countries differently;
2. discusses intergenerational justice as a policy objective; and
3. maps political leadership, government policies and strategies, accountability and oversight institutions, anticipatory and adaptive tools and efforts to promote age diversity in public life and decision-making to promote intergenerational justice.

OECD countries are ageing but at different magnitudes

The OECD Global Strategy Group (GSG) recognised population ageing as a megatrend with impacts on the core functions of government in 2019.[4] The fact that people are living longer and healthier lives due to improvements in the access and coverage of health care, medical progress and healthier lifestyles is a success story. However, population ageing also creates a need for reform. To avoid inequalities to compound over the life cycle, policies need to integrate a life-course perspective with concerted efforts to address existing gaps among the younger generation.

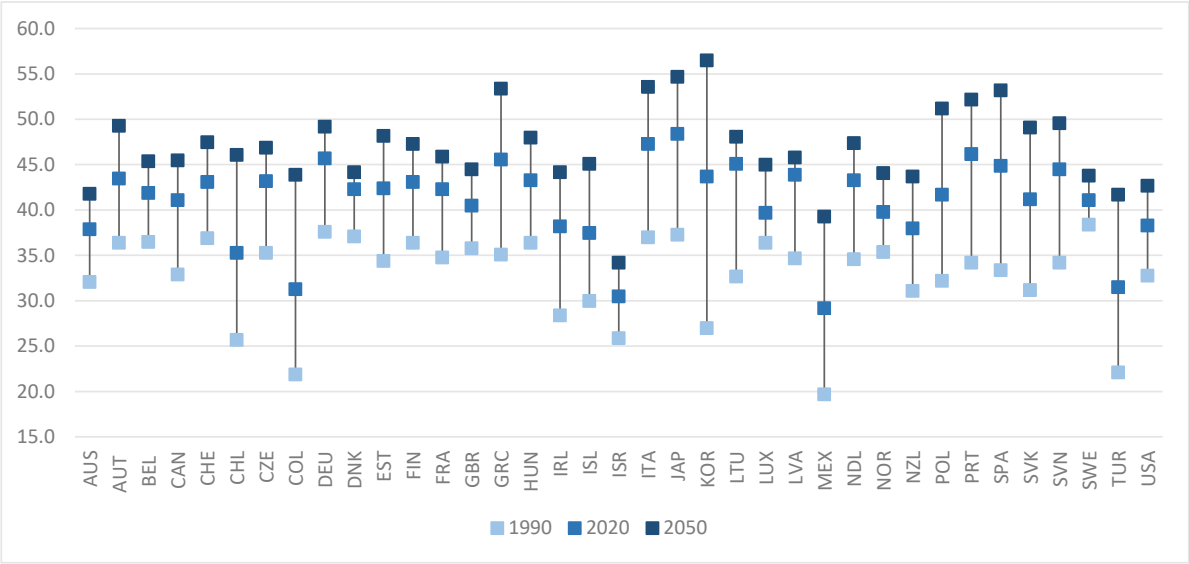
All OECD countries are ageing but the magnitude of demographic change differs significantly. Over the last 30 years, the median age increased by 8.2 years on average from 32.8 years in 1990 to 41 years in 2020. Over the next 30 years, United Nations projections forecast that all OECD countries will age to an average median age of 46.8 years by 2050.[5] This development is driven by an increase in life expectancy and low fertility rates. Life expectancy at birth increased by six years from 74.5 years in 1990 to 80.9 years in 2018.[6] Between 1990 and 2017, life expectancy at 65 increased from 17.9 years to 21.4 years for women and from 14.3 years to 18.1 years for men.[7] In turn, the average fertility rates decreased from 1.95 to 1.66[8]

due to changing family norms, changing patterns of residential mobility and partially because female labour force participation increased (Vanhuysse and Goerres, 2012[4]). As a consequence, since 1990, the share of people aged less than 15 declined from 22.5% to 17.7% whereas the share of people aged 65 and over increased from 11.6% to 17.2% in 2018 respectively.[9]

Figure 4.1 illustrates the evolution of the median age for all OECD counties between 1990, 2020 and 2050 (projections). This figure can be read in two ways. First, the length of each straight line indicates the magnitude of demographic change between 1990 and 2050: a longer line indicates a more significant change in the age composition. Second, it illustrates that some countries are expected to age much faster over the coming decades than others. For instance, whereas Lithuania and Latvia experienced a rapid ageing of their population over the past 30 years, this process is expected to slow down over the next decades. On the other hand, Colombia Luxembourg and Chile are projected to age faster. In absolute terms, Korea and the relatively young societies of Chile, Turkey and Mexico are projected to age faster than any other OECD country.

Figure 4.1. OECD countries are ageing at different magnitudes

Median age across OECD countries for 1990, 2020 and projections in 2050



Source: Based on United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2019). World Population Prospects 2019, custom data acquired via website.

Promoting a fair distribution of costs and entitlements across different generations and spurring social and economic inclusion concerns the core functions of government – from rule-making to public budgeting to public decision-making (Vanhuysse and Goerres, 2012[4]). The following sections will discuss intergenerational justice as a policy objective and analyse the political leadership demonstrated by countries to integrate an intergenerational justice lens in policy-making and governance. It will also map the policies and strategies, accountability and oversight institutions, and anticipatory and adaptive tools government have put in place and their efforts to promote age diversity in public life and decision-making.

Applying a generational perspective in policy-making

Fairness between generations is the idea that "the pursuit of welfare by the current generation should not diminish the opportunities for a good and decent life for succeeding generations" (United Nations, 2013[5]). Whereas "intergenerational equity" is concerned with the fair inter-temporal distribution of endowments,

often within an environmental context,[10] "intergenerational justice (IJ)" can be understood as a broader concept which involves, apart from distributive, also procedural, restorative, and retributive dimensions (United Nations, 2013[5]).

As a concept, intergenerational justice describes relations among contemporary generations, such as between children and their parents or between younger and older generations. In the context of sustainable development, intergenerational justice claims that contemporary generations have obligations towards past and future generations, for instance by omitting to leave yet unborn generations with unwanted debt, capital and legislation (Meyer, 2015[6]; Thompson, 2010[7]; Gosseries and Meyer, 2009[8]). This chapter will cover both dimensions – fairness between contemporary generations and between past and future generations.

Intergenerational justice gained global prominence beyond academic circles with the Brundtland report in 1987 ("Our Common Future"), which identifies as sustainable "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987[9]).[11] Translating intergenerational justice into practice in policy-making, however, entails methodological and practical challenges, especially in relation to future generations. How far into the future do the responsibilities of contemporary generations extend (e.g. to immediate successors or more distant generations)? How should governments weight the interests of contemporary generations against future generations? While these considerations cannot be discussed in detail here,[12] it is important to note that they have important implications for policy and measurement.

Inequality between generations in ageing societies

Inequalities between generations (*horizontal inequalities*) can affect any age cohort. It is important to recognise this fact in order to avoid a biased selection or interpretation of indicators. Moreover, addressing gaps in intergenerational justice should not be pursued at the expense of investing less efforts into addressing inequalities within the same age cohort (*vertical inequalities*).

At the same time, young people are at a crucial life stage in which their access to education and training, decent employment, housing and other dimensions has a significant influence on future trajectories (see Chapter 1 and 2). Children, adolescents and young adults will also bear the consequences of the decisions taken by policy makers today for the longest time, also in policy arenas in which quick turnarounds are difficult to achieve (e.g. climate change). Results from studies measuring intergenerational justice in the United Kingdom (UK) and Italy found that the prospects for young people and generational fairness have deteriorated over recent years. Key drivers include increasing pension liabilities per worker and healthcare costs, high levels of relative youth unemployment, increasing government debt per person and rising housing costs in the UK (Leach and Hanton, 2015[10]), and negative trends for youth in income and wealth, access to housing and increasing pension liabilities in Italy (Monti, 2017[11]).

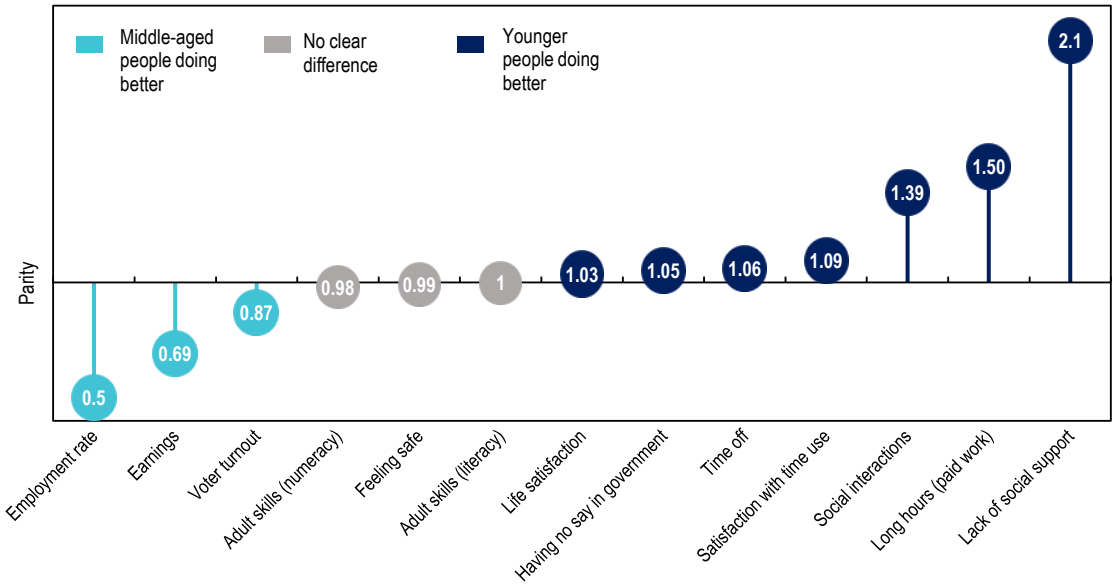
Intergenerational justice is a complex concept and there is no universally accepted approach to measuring what is fair from a generational perspective. The OECD Framework for Measuring Well-Being and Progress fulfils two important criteria to shed light on this question. It provides a framework to analyse existing inequalities across age cohorts by acknowledging the multi-dimensional nature of well-being (beyond GDP and other economic indicators); moreover, it takes into account the intertemporal dimension of well-being by analysing the evolution of the economic, natural, human and social capital in a country.[13]

Figure 4.2 demonstrates that young people (aged below 26) fare worse than the middle-aged (26-50) and older people (51 and above) in work-related outcomes, most notably in terms of their access to employment and earnings, which risks to delay their path to financial independence (see Chapter 1). Young people are also significantly less likely to vote than older age cohorts (see Chapter 3). On the other hand, young people generally enjoy more social support and interactions than the middle-aged and elderly. They are less likely to work long hours, and express higher life satisfaction overall. Interestingly, youth are also

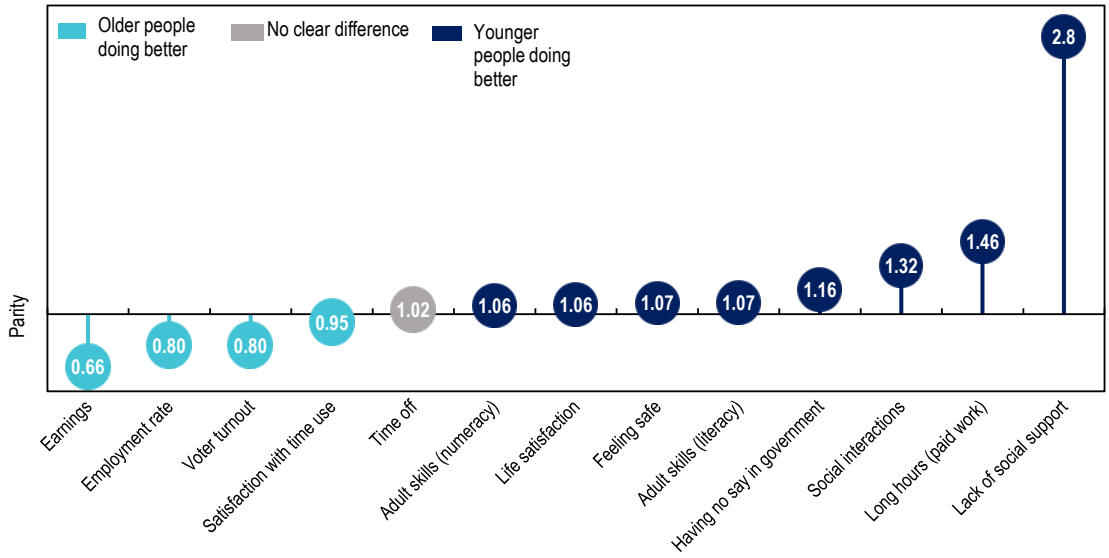
slightly less likely to feel that they do not have a say in government (OECD, 2020[12]). This snapshot demonstrates that policy makers must give careful consideration to analysing existing divides across generations.

Figure 4.2. Younger people in OECD countries fare worse than older and middle-aged people in work-related outcomes, but have more social connections and time off

A. OECD average age ratios (distance from parity) for younger people relative to their middle-aged peers



B. OECD average age ratios (distance from parity) for younger people relative to their older peers



Source: (OECD, 2020[12]).

Despite the central role of public governance to deliver policies and services in a fair manner across different age cohorts, there is no international framework to guide policy makers in this effort. This is despite the well-acknowledged fact that *short-termism* in policy-making – the dominance of short-term

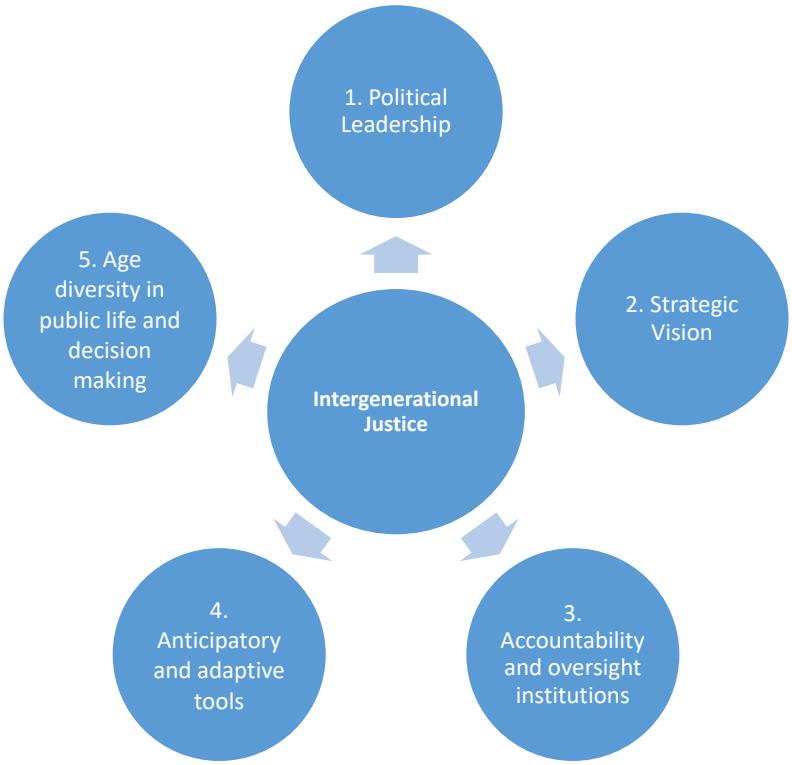
considerations at the expensive of long-term interests – underlies many of the questions about a fair distribution of endowments and costs across current and future generations. This chapter will attempt to address this gap and introduce a framework to explore how governments can pro-actively foster intergenerational justice from a public governance perspective.

A governance approach to promoting intergenerational justice

The lack of structures to encourage long-term thinking is a systemic risk to intergenerational justice. Therefore, governments seeking to foster intergenerational justice must acknowledge that any decision taken in the present profoundly affects the ability of youth and future generation to enjoy the same opportunities as their parents and ancestors.

The analytical framework presented in Figure 4.3 draws on a review of OECD's work on achieving more inclusive and future-oriented policy outcomes, in particular as identified by the OECD Youth Governance Framework (OECD, 2018[13]), the OECD Recommendation on Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (OECD, 2019[14]), the OECD Recommendation on Open Government (OECD, 2017[15]) and the OECD Recommendation on Gender Equality (OECD, 2015[16]).

Figure 4.3. A governance approach to promoting intergenerational justice



Source: OECD.

The following sections will focus on innovative country practices for embedding considerations of intergenerational fairness into policy design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation, public spending and public decision-making. Where feasible, they will assess the impact of these mechanisms and draw conclusions to build governance capacity for intergenerational justice.

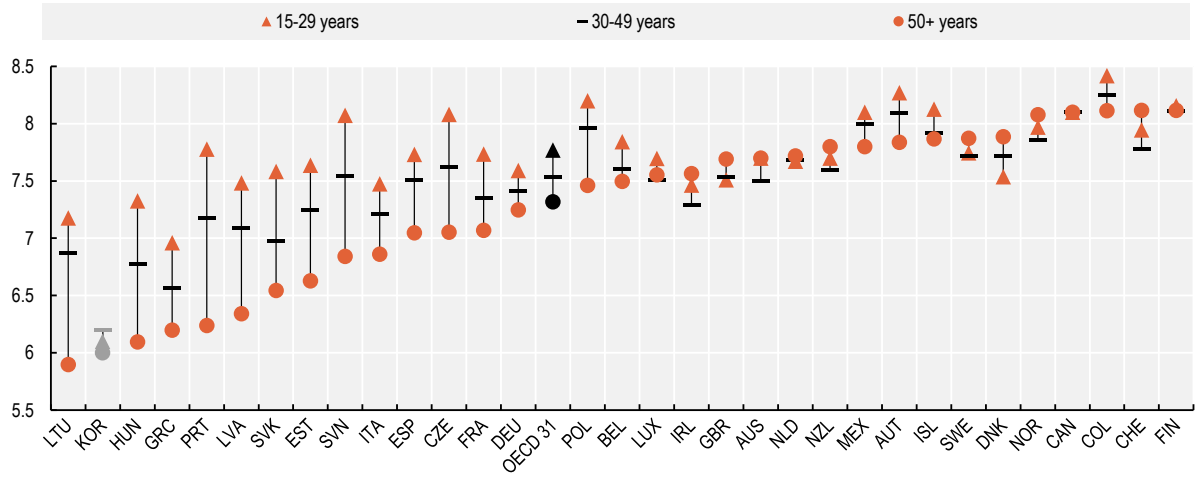
Demonstrating political leadership

Intergenerational justice cuts across various ministerial departments and portfolios. Political buy-in is therefore critical to unite the whole of government and public administration behind the objective of ensuring a fair distribution of entitlements across generations. Such commitments must be anchored within government structures to ensure a long-term perspective.

Figure 4.4 demonstrates a strong business case for promoting intergenerational justice at the highest level of government. It illustrates that countries in which age-related inequalities are lower, citizens tend to express higher levels of life satisfaction. Where the gaps in life satisfaction between the age cohorts is significant, overall life satisfaction is lower. The figure also shows that, despite the challenges outlined in Chapter 1 of the report, young people (15-29) express broadly similar levels of life satisfaction (7.7 out of 10) when compared to the age group 30-49 (7.5) and those aged 50 and over (7.2). Young people are less likely to report negative affect balance, which captures the share of the population reporting more negative than positive feelings on the previous day (i.e. 9% of youth compared to 14% of middle-aged and 15% of older generations for data collected between 2010 and 2018) (OECD, 2020[12]).

Figure 4.4. Countries with lower age-related inequalities have higher levels of life satisfaction overall

Mean values of life satisfaction on a 0-10 scale, by age, 2018 or latest available year



Source: (OECD, 2020[12]).

Despite prominent calls for a fair distribution of entitlements across generations, the concept is integrated in a fragmented manner into the legal, policy and institutional structures across OECD countries.

In contrast, through its Living Standard Framework (LSF), New Zealand has established a more holistic approach. The LSF is a tool for analysing policy and providing advice, and a measurement framework to analyse policy impacts across different dimensions of well-being, as well as the distributional implications across age groups, sexes, and population groups from different socio-economic backgrounds. While it is not exclusively concerned with age-related inequalities, it has been a driver of important policy, budgetary and institutional initiatives, in particular to address child poverty and improve child and youth well-being (Box 4.1).

Box 4.1. New Zealand's well-being framework

The LSF identifies 12 domains of current well-being (e.g. subjective well-being, income, health, trust and social relations, institutions, etc.) as well as four dimensions of future well-being (i.e. human, social, produced and natural capital). Through the lenses of "risk" and "resilience", the framework takes into account the governments' capacity to respond to opportunities and adverse effects in the future.

In 2019, budget bids submitted by government agencies were assessed by using the LSF. This exercise resulted in the first "well-being budget" and five well-being priorities, covering commitments to support mental well-being of under 24-year-olds, reducing child poverty and improving child well-being, and accelerating the transition to a sustainable and low-emissions economy, among others. As a result, the Cabinet adopted the Child Poverty Reduction Act in 2018 and a Child and Youth Well-being Strategy in 2019. Institutionally, Child Poverty and Child Well-being Units were created to form the Child Well-being and Poverty Reduction Group, which is located within the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. The Prime Minister also acts as the Minister for Child Poverty Reduction.

From an intergenerational justice perspective, the most interesting feature of the LSF is its capacity to make visible inequalities across age cohorts and their negative implications for broader economic and social performance. Tools such as the Cost-Benefit Analysis (CBAx) support this perspective by including an intergenerational well-being domain.

Source: (The Treasury, New Zealand, 2020[127]).

Political leadership is more difficult to generate for the somewhat unknown interests and needs of future (yet unborn and hence unable to vote) generations. For instance, despite the ratification of the Paris Agreement by 189 Parties, progress to reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG) from domestic production across OECD countries has been slow and is unlikely to deliver on the emission reduction targets (OECD, 2020[12]). At global scale, total atmospheric carbon concentrations are still rising rapidly and CO2 emissions from energy use were at no point higher than in 2018 (OECD, 2020[12]). A 2019 report by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services finds that around one million animal and plant species are threatened with extinction, many within decades (United Nations, 2019[17]).

Beyond the stock of natural capital, governments must seek to maintain and build up the stock of economic, social and human capital. For instance, in terms of economic capital, government financial liabilities across OECD countries exceeded financial assets by 27 percentage points in 2018 (OECD, 2020[12]). High levels of debt interest payments reduce the capacity of governments to supply public services and to grow and refinance themselves and increase the burden on younger and future generations to finance repayment through lower consumption or productivity increases (Vanhuysse, 2013[2]). Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the average government debt per person under 20 years in an OECD country exceeded 165,000 USD in 2017 compared to 50,500 USD in 1995.[14] OECD estimates suggest that ageing pressures could increase public debt to an average of 180% of GDP in G20 economies by 2050 in a no-reform scenario, compared to projected debt levels of 94.5% of GDP without ageing pressure (Rouzet et al., 2019[18]). This raises important questions about the distribution of responsibility between current and future generations and the political will to promote fairness across both contemporary generations and between current and future ones (European Central Bank, 2013[19]).

Another public administration which has shown strong political commitment to integrate intergenerational justice considerations in policy-making and governance is Wales in the United Kingdom. With the adoption of the Well-Being of Future Generations Act in 2015, Wales enshrined in law the pursuit of economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being as the central organising principle of the public service. The

Act requires all 44 public bodies to set and publish well-being objectives in line with the country's seven well-being goals. It also commits every public agency to set its own targets for each of the seven objectives, and to publish an annual progress report. Agencies and ministries are required to set progress milestones in relation to 46 national indicators, their criteria for achievement and the timeframe (Box 4.2).

Box 4.2. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Well-being goals cover several intergenerational dimensions, such as the efficient and proportionate use of resources and the transformation to a low carbon society. To operationalise the "sustainable development" principle, public bodies are required to think "long term", "prevent", "integrate", "collaborate" and "involve" (see visual).

The Act established a number of important safeguards. Welsh Ministers identify national indicators and set milestones, and public bodies are required to issue public statements when they set their objectives and present annual progress reports. The Future Generations Commissioner (see below) acts as a public oversight body, supported by the Auditor General Wales, which has the mandate to assess the extent to which a public body acts in accordance with the sustainable development principle. At the local level, public service boards set up local well-being plans and are responsible for achieving the well-being goals in their area. Following each election cycle, the incoming government prepares a "Future Trends Report" to anticipate future developments.

Source: (Future Generations Commissioner for Wales, 2020[20]).

While a recent Court case illustrates the difficulties of enforcing intergenerational justice in practice, the Act has raised public attention and awareness for matters that may be considered "unfair" to future generations in Wales.[15]

Setting a strategic vision

As of 2020, none of the OECD countries has adopted a stand-alone national strategy dedicated to advancing intergenerational justice. The following sections demonstrate that commitments to foster intergenerational solidarity and address intergenerational imbalances are scattered across various policies and strategies, which are focused on sustainable development, specific age cohorts (i.e. youth, elderly/ageing) as well as social, fiscal, and environmental policy. Governments must therefore implement strong co-ordination and oversight mechanisms across all stakeholders involved at the central and subnational level to avoid fragmentation in the implementation of such commitments.

Constitutional provisions

At least eight countries have enshrined the rights of future generations in their Constitution, through clauses related to general, ecological or financial matters (Tremmel, 2006[21]). Based on a review of the Constitute Project database, Table 4.1 lists the direct references to constitutional entitlements for future generations across OECD countries. It illustrates that most commonly, such entitlements are linked to the protection of natural resources, which shall be maintained and safeguarded through sustainable development and the application of long-term considerations.

Table 4.1. Provisions in national constitutions pertaining to future generations in OECD countries

	Provisions in the Constitution
BEL	*In the exercise of their respective competences, the Federal State, the Communities and the Regions pursue the objectives of sustainable development in its social, economic and environmental aspects, taking into account the solidarity between the generations (Art. 7bis)*
DEU	*Mindful also of its responsibility toward future generations, the state shall protect the natural foundations of life and animals by legislation and, in accordance with law and justice, by executive and judicial action, all within the framework of the constitutional order (Art. 20a)*
HUN	*The management and protection of national assets shall aim at serving public interest, meeting common needs and preserving natural resources, as well as at taking into account the needs of future generations (Art. 38)*
LUX	*The State guarantees the protection of the human and cultural environment, and works for the establishment of a durable equilibrium between the conservation of nature, in particular its capacity for renewal, and the satisfaction of the needs of present and future generations (Art. 11bis)*
NOR	*Natural resources should be made use of on the basis of comprehensive long-term considerations whereby this right will be safeguarded for future generations as well (Art. 112)*
POL	*Public authorities shall pursue policies ensuring the ecological security of current and future generations (Art. 74)*
POR	*(...) the state shall be charged with: Promoting the rational use of natural resources, while safeguarding their ability to renew themselves and maintain ecological stability, with respect for the principle of intergenerational solidarity (Art. 66.2b)*
SWE	*The public institutions shall promote sustainable development leading to a good environment for present and future generations (Art. 2)*

Source: Compiled based on (Constitute Project, 2020[22]).

Direct references to future generations exist further in the constitutional preambles of Estonia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and the Federal Constitution of Switzerland (Tremmel, 2006[21]).

At the multilateral level, the Declaration on the Responsibilities of the Present Generations toward Future Generations (1997), adopted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), is the most explicit in stressing that "the present generations have the responsibility of ensuring that the needs and interests of present and future generations are fully safeguarded."[16] In relation to the impact of ageing on intergenerational solidarity, the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (2002) provides that "solidarity between generations at all levels – in families, communities and nations – is fundamental for the achievement of a society for all ages. Solidarity is also a major prerequisite for social cohesion and a foundation of formal public welfare and informal care systems." The Plan acknowledges that governments must seek to adjust pension, social security, health and long-term care systems in a context of demographic change and alternating social and economic circumstances to sustain economic growth and development (UNESCO, 1997[23]).

So far, no binding international instrument exists to grant future generations enforceable rights. Nevertheless, alleged violations of the principle of intergenerational justice/equity have been brought to court in Australia, Netherlands, Norway, United Kingdom and United States and in several non-OECD countries. In the Netherlands, in December 2019, the Supreme Court upheld a judgement of 2015 that greenhouse gas emissions must be reduced by a minimum of 25% before 2020 compared to 1990 levels because of their serious impact on the rights to life and well-being (Harvard Law Review, 2019[24]). In February 2020, a court ruled plans for a third runway at Heathrow airport in London illegal on the basis of the climate targets set out in the 2016 Paris Climate Agreement (Carrington, 27 February 2020[25]).

Sustainable development strategies

The adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provided a new momentum for countries to apply a generational perspective to strategic planning and policy-making (see Table 4.2). Through its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets, the agenda acknowledges that current generations must act for the benefit of future generations, emphasising the role youth are playing in passing "the torch to future generations" (United Nations, 2015[26]).

The thematic range and depth of national commitments to intergenerational justice present themselves as diverse as the concept, covering sustainable environment, public finances, social security systems and culture/heritage. Furthermore, Estonia and Latvia point to divides between the generations in skills and cultures, whereas Luxembourg, Czech Republic and Latvia underline the benefits of intergenerational exchanges and intergenerational learning.

Table 4.2. Intergenerational commitments in sustainable development strategies in OECD countries

	Strategy	Selected Commitments to Intergenerational Justice
BEL	Federal Vision for Sustainable Development	We are committed to working for a fair and inclusive economy, which (…) respects planetary boundaries and which, at the same time, brings well-being and prosperity to all members, including the most vulnerable, both present and future generations.
CZE	Czech Republic 2030	It is necessary that the state is able to use the potential of the elderly to share their experience with younger workers, for example, via forms of intergenerational tandems.
DEN	A Sustainable Denmark – Development in Balance (2014)	A society, where our children, grandchildren and later generations have the opportunity to enjoy at least as good living conditions like us We must ensure a clean environment and a rich nature - also for future generations
EST	Sustainable Estonia 21 (2005-30)	[Address the] danger of widening of the digital and cultural gap between different groups of population [between] youth culture [...] and "the culture of the elderly"
FIN	The Finland We Want by 2050 - Society's Commitment to Sustainable Development	"Cross-generational thinking" is one of five principles: The consequences of our actions must be assessed far into the future. Instead of promoting short-term interests, we should weigh the effects that our decisions will have on future generations. A cross-generational perspective requires us to grasp large-scale issues, understand the interwoven consequences of our solutions and take responsibility for our actions.
DEU	German Sustainable Development Strategy (2016)	Public authorities are obliged to take into account intergenerational equity. This requires compliance with the constitutional debt restrictions on the part of the Federal Government, Länder and local authorities. In a further step, the debt ratio should be continually reduced to a fair level from an intergenerational perspective. One major task is to make social security poverty-proof for future generations (…) a green economy requires changes to production and consumption habits in order to ensure prosperity and high quality of life for future generations around the world
HUN	National Framework Strategy on Sustainable Development	A fundamental principle of the Framework Strategy is that the creation of goods (…) essential for enhancing the material, mental and spiritual well-being of every generation, requires four basic, indispensable resources: human, social, natural and economic.
LAT	Sustainable Development Strategy (2010-30)	Reduce the digital divide between the youngest and other generations Mobilise pensioners for mentor programmes in school to reduce social isolation and strengthen the link between generations Increasing need for public and private sector to develop care services for the elderly due to the expected decline in multigenerational housing
LTU	National Strategy for Sustainable Development (2011)	To meet the needs of the current generation, while not undermining the opportunities of the future generations to satisfy their needs within the EU and elsewhere Enable the revival of valuable cultural heritage and its preservation for future generations
LUX	Luxembourg 2030 (2019)	The main objectives are the maintenance in good health of the people concerned, their social participation, opening of service offers to people non-Luxembourgers and promoting intergenerational exchanges Focus on constructing rental housing and intergenerational housing Intergenerational sovereign wealth fund (*Zukunftsfonds*) designed to generate savings reserves for future generations
POL	Long-term National Development Strategy 2030 (2017)	Development with an eye towards future generations: Competitiveness of economy, the preservation of the natural balance and quality of life, while maintaining the sustainability of public finances
SLO	Slovenian Development Strategy 2030	Honour "all intergenerational commitments" based on mutual trust and trust in transparent and responsible public institutions
SWE	Policy for Global Development	Fewer economically active people have to support increasing numbers of pensioners and children. Thus a key question, and a priority issue in the context of international sustainability efforts, is how to support the present and future younger generations. (…). Vigorous efforts should be made to

		strengthen [young people].

Source: Belgium: (Conférence interministérielle pour le Développement durable, 2017[27]); Czech Republic: (Office of the Government of the Czech Republic, 2017[28]); Denmark: (Government of Denmark, 2014[29]) Estonia: (Estonian Ministry of the Environment, 2005[30]); Finland: (Ministry of Environment, 2013[31]); Germany: (The Federal Government of Germany, 2016[32]); Hungary: (Resolution 18/2013. (28th March) of the Parliament, 2013[33]); Latvia: (Saeima of the Republic of Latvia, 2010[34]); Lithuania: (Government of the Republic of Lithuania, 2011[35]); Luxembourg: (Le Gouvernement du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg, 2019[36]); Poland: (Government of Poland, 2017[37]); Slovenia: (Government of Slovenia, 2018[38]); Sweden: (Swedish Ministry of the Environment, 2003[39]).

OECD countries not covered in this table have integrated key principles of the 2030 Agenda into existing government and national development plans, or designed subnational strategies and plans. For instance, the Community of Flanders in Belgium adopted Vision 2050 in 2016, which points to the implications of a growing population of elderly citizens in terms of both opportunities (i.e. active role in associations and volunteers) and challenges (i.e. pressure on informal care) (Flanders, Department of Public Governance and the Chancellery, 2019[40]).

In part representing a "proxy" for the interests of future generations, young people have been involved in shaping the sustainable development strategies in some countries. In Estonia, the National Youth Council participated in the elaboration of the country's long-term development strategy, Estonia 2035. The Government of Finland established the Agenda 2030 Youth Group to engage young people in political planning and help ensure a long-term perspective in decision-making in 2017. The group, which is composed of 20 people aged 15 to 28, serves as an advocate for the SDGs in their region, organisations, school and workplaces and participates in the national planning and implementation process by attending stakeholder meetings in the ministries. In Sweden, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs launched the campaign #FirstGeneration in 2016 to raise awareness about the Global Goals of the 2030 agenda and the importance of engaging youth in sustainable development. Similar youth-led groups were created in Denmark, Ireland, Luxembourg, and Slovenia, among others.

National youth strategies

Whereas constitutional provisions and sustainable development strategies primarily focus on the "future well-being" dimension, national youth strategies (NYS) provide a vehicle to advance intergenerational justice objectives for current and future generations. Table 4.3 illustrates that at least 12 of 26 OECD countries with an operational NYS in place use it strategically to pursue such objectives.

First and most common are commitments to intergenerational dialogue (e.g. with references to population ageing in the case of Germany and Switzerland). The youth strategy of Greece includes an indicator to monitor the progress achieved by cities in adopting or supporting intergenerational co-operation programmes. Second, and less frequent are interlinkages between youth policy and the preservation of the environment. Czech Republic and Hungary further point to the transmission of cultural and societal norms and traditions. Commitments to ensure young people's access to the labour market, housing and social inclusion make up a third group of objectives, which focus on the social dimension of well-being. Finally, the national youth strategy of Ireland commits to breaking the intergenerational cycle of disadvantage, and similar pledges can be found in the strategies of New Zealand and Canada with regard to their native population.

Table 4.3. Intergenerational commitments in national youth strategies in OECD countries

	Strategy	Selected Commitments to Intergenerational Justice
CAN	Canada's Youth Policy	*Youth want to see further immediate action to protect the environment so that they, and future generations of Canadians, can inherit a healthy world.*
CZE	National Youth Strategy 2014-20	*Strategy 2020 uses the principle of intergenerational dialogue and emphasises the role of empathy and the ability to listen to one another in intergenerational relations, especially in areas of employment, and the mutual sharing of cultural and societal norms.*
DEU	In Shared Responsibility: Politics for, with and by Youth	*Our ageing society is faced with the challenge of effectively involving the younger generation in discourses and decisions, as well as ensuring a fair balance and needs-based offers for young people.*
GRE	Strategic Framework for the Empowerment of Youth	*Developing youth as human capital is a top-priority towards the country's future and its recovery but also towards social justice and equality both between and within generations.*
HUN	National Youth Strategy 2009-2024	*Living with the identity of being Hungarian and European – To develop the relationship between Hungarian youths living in Hungary and beyond the borders, transmit their cultural traditions to future generations.*
IRE	National Youth Strategy 2015-2020	*In addition to school, a positive community context can enable civic and democratic engagement, and play a part in breaking the intergenerational cycle of disadvantage by acting as a protective factor against substance misuse, criminality, social exclusion and deprivation.*
JPN	General Rules for Supporting the Development of Children and Youth	*Providing opportunities for hands-on activities and diverse activities such as intergenerational and interregional exchanges.*
NZL	Child and Youth Well-being Strategy	*In order to achieve greater equity, the Government has prioritised policies and initiatives to improve the well-being of children and young people who are living in poverty and disadvantaged circumstances, those of interest to Oranga Tamariki, and those with mental health or additional learning needs.*
SVN	National Youth Program 2013-2022	*Follow the principles of intergenerational co-operation or ensure greater intergenerational solidarity (one of the strategies' key orientations)*
SVK	Strategy of the Slovak Republic for Youth (2014-20)	*Displaying social solidarity by means of volunteering is important for young people from the viewpoint of their personal development, educational mobility, competition, social coherence and citizenship. The youth volunteering strongly contributes to intergenerational solidarity.*
ESP	Youth Strategy 2020	*Reach a "Generational Pact" of the whole society to provide young people with a minimum of security in their socio-labour insertion, which is vital for all.*
CHE	Swiss Policy on Children and Youth	*Population ageing will change the distribution of age groups within the population, which will be accompanied - in terms of social protection - by an increasing transfer of financial burdens to the benefit of the elderly. (...). In the future, it will be necessary to be more attentive to relationships between generations, in both private and public spaces, and to encourage dialogue between them in order to resolve any tensions and avoid open conflicts.*

Source: Based on a review of national strategies submitted through the OECD Youth Governance Surveys.

According to the OECD Youth Governance Surveys, 72% of OECD countries with a National Youth Strategy in place or under elaboration pursue broader social and economic objectives. Box 4.3 presents the cases of Germany and Portugal, which explicitly link youth policy to climate protection and environmental literacy.

Box 4.3. Leveraging national youth strategies to preserve the environment

The OECD 2020 "How is Life" report finds that the material footprint[17] has increased since 2010 across OECD countries. This is supported by a study undertaken by (Vanhuysse, 2013[2]), which finds that only seven out of 29 OECD countries produced a "net ecological surplus" in 2008, which represents a country's bio capacity less its ecological footprint[18] to determine the capacity of the natural environment to sustain ecological pressure.

Germany: Innovation Fund "Climate protection as a youth policy"

The National Youth Strategy (*In gemeinsamer Verantwortung: Politik für, mit und von Jugend*) features the Innovation Fund "Climate protection as a youth policy". The fund is managed by the Ministry of Environment and intends to provide easy access to micro finance for initiatives in the field of extra-curricular education on climate protection and the engagement of adolescents and young adults in climate protection activities. Through its Climate Protection Action Alliance, the ministry engages youth associations in an inter-professional and intergenerational dialogue to take into account young people's perspectives in the elaboration of the 2030 Climate Protection Programme.

Portugal: Investing in environmental literacy

The national youth strategy in Portugal (*Plano Nacional da Juventude 2018-21*) includes commitments to invest in the environmental literacy of young people. It covers initiatives such as social support for young people up until age 23 to use public transportation; the promotion of youth volunteering in the context of preserving nature, forests and ecosystems; and support for social and environmental-based entrepreneurship among students.

Source: Germany: (Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, 2019[41]); Portugal: (Portuguese Institute of Sport and Youth, 2018[42]).

Additional research would be needed to better determine the impact of national youth strategies in addressing inequalities within and across different age cohorts, and the creation of economic, natural, social and human capital.

The results of a correlation analysis demonstrate a statistically significant negative relationship between the quality of the NYS and the ecological footprint: in OECD countries with a higher quality NYS, the ecological footprint tends to be lower also when controlling for the proportion of older people (65+)[19]. This finding may indicate that countries that invest into a quality youth strategy also tend to pay greater attention to ecological sustainability and environmental protection and vice versa. Both efforts may be underpinned by the commitment to improve the living conditions of younger and future generations.

National elderly and ageing strategies

Some OECD countries integrate commitments to intergenerational justice in their national elderly or ageing strategies. Table 4.4 presents selected country examples. For instance, Czech Republic's National Action Plan Supporting Positive Ageing (2013-17) covered a stand-alone chapter on "Volunteering and intergenerational co-operation", which calls for strengthening stable intergenerational relations, addressing negative stereotyping of seniors in media and fostering volunteering among the elderly to address social exclusion and encourage intergenerational exchanges. Ireland's National Positive Ageing Strategy (2013) stresses that solidarity between generations should be enhanced and that intergenerational initiatives should be adopted across the different levels of government.

Table 4.4 Intergenerational commitments in national elderly/ageing strategies in selected OECD countries

	Strategy	Selected Commitments to Intergenerational Justice
AUS	National Strategy for an Ageing Australia	*The sheer magnitude of the demographic change requires a pro-active approach in order to ensure quality of life for older people, harmony between the generations and positive outcomes for the whole population.*
CZE	National Action Plan Supporting Positive Ageing for 2013-17	*To effectively use the potential of the growing number of seniors, it is necessary to focus on two basic areas - health and lifelong learning. [The measures set out in the document] are based on [seniors'] participation in the labour market, [their] active participation in the development of civil society (in the form of volunteering or within the family) and support for intergenerational dialogue.*
HUN	National Strategy Concerning the Elderly	*Reducing the gaps between ageing and older people and young people, strengthening and developing intergenerational relations and co-operation, and making more efficient use of the resources in co-operation.*
IRE	National Positive Ageing Strategy (2013)	*While the nature of the contributions and needs may change over the life-course, the giving and receiving of resources between generations are crucial to promoting economic and social stability. Therefore, it is important that any policies and programmes that are developed in support of the Goals and Objectives of the Strategy should meet the needs of all generations and should be used to connect generations rather than to separate them.*
LAT	Active Ageing Strategy for a Longer and Better Working Life in Latvia	*Intergenerational co-operation and the reduction of stereotypes against older people.*
NOR	More Years – More Opportunities	*Family patterns are changing with more divorces and formation of new relations with step-families. Collaboration between generations will remain important.*
SVN	Active Ageing Strategy	*Underpinning the Active Ageing Strategy is the concept of active ageing, which emphasises activity and creativity in all periods of life, concern for health, and intergenerational co-operation and solidarity.*

Source: Australia: (Department of Health and Ageing, 2001[43]); Czech Republic: (Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, 2013[44]); Hungary: (Government of the Republic of Hungary, 2009[45]); Ireland: (Department of Health of Ireland, 2013[46]); Latvia: (Order of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 507, 2016[47]); Norway: (Ministry of Health and Care Services, 2016[48]); Slovenia: (Institute of Macroeconomic Analysis and Development of the Republic of Slovenia and Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, 2018[49]).

Drivers of intergenerational justice commitments

International commitments, in particular the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals and the declaration of 2012 as the "European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations", have spurred the proliferation of commitments to fairness across generations in government plans (European Commission, 2014[50]). Furthermore, non-governmental stakeholders and foundations are increasingly vocal about generational divides and the adverse effects of business as usual in light of demographic change and slow progress in the fight against climate change and other areas of intergenerational concern. This is reflected in media coverage, which has displayed concerns about the foundations of future well-being, on the one hand, and a tendency to portray societal discussions about ageing, changing norms and entitlements as a conflict between specific generations (e.g. the "Baby Boomers" and "Millennials").[20] While the increase in public attention has spurred innovation in governance as presented in this chapter, stirring up "generational conflicts" presents a serious risk to dilute the attention of policy makers from addressing the structural inequalities that exist both within and between different age cohorts.

Effective oversight and co-ordination mechanisms fulfil an important function to promote transparency and accountability in the field of intergenerational justice. The next section will explore the prerogatives of specialised oversight institutions in selected OECD countries.

Accountability and oversight institutions

At least nine OECD countries and Malta have established public institutions to monitor the implementation of government commitments to future generations (Network of Institutions for Future Generations,

2020[51]). Since their creation, however, three entities were abolished or transformed into new public bodies.

The location of oversight institutions for intergenerational justice within the broader governance structure, their level of independence from political considerations, thematic focus, and specific functions and enforcement mechanisms vary greatly across OECD countries. These choices have important implications for their legitimacy and effectiveness.

Table 4.5. Selected lead entities in monitoring intergenerational justice across OECD countries

	Institution
New Zealand	Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment (1986-now)
Finland	Committee for the Future (1993-now)
France	Council for the Rights of Future Generations in France (1993-2013)
Canada	Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development (1995-now)
Israel	Parliamentary Commissioner for Future Generations (2001-06)
Germany	Parliamentary Advisory Council for Sustainable Development (2004-now); councils on global change and sustainable development (both 2017-now)
Hungary	Parliamentary Commissioner for Future Generations (2008-12); Deputy Ombudsperson for Future Generation (2012-now)
Australia	Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment (since 1993)
Wales (UK)	Future Generations Commissioner (2015-now)
Malta	Guardian of Future Generations (2012-16, 2017-now)

Source: (Network of Institutions for Future Generations, 2020[51]).

Indeed, legal, financial and political independence are important requirements for these oversight bodies to operate effectively. Yet, in some countries, changes in political priorities resulted in the dismantling of entities created to promote a longer-term perspective in policy-making. Other countries established safeguards against the dominance of political considerations by enshrining their functions in law and decoupling membership from political appointments.

Location in the governance system and focus

The allocation of clear mandates and responsibilities are critical to determine the scope of intervention. The most common institutional mechanism is in the form of a Parliamentary Commissioner (New Zealand, Israel 2001-06, and Hungary 2008-12), a parliamentary committee with multi-party participation (Finland, Germany) and Ombudsperson (Hungary 2012-now, Malta). In Canada, the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development is placed within the Office of the Auditor General. Notably, the Committee for the Future in Finland is situated at the Centre of Government within the remit of the Prime Minister.

The most explicit commitment to intergenerational justice can be found in Wales in the United Kingdom. The Guardian for Future Generations encourages public bodies to integrate a long-term perspective in policy-making and to monitor the implementation of the Future Generations Bill (The Future Generations Commissioner for Wales, 2020[52]). In Germany, the Parliamentary Advisory Council for Sustainable Development used to assess progress against the principle of Intergenerational Equity (without being supported by specific indicators), however, this focus was replaced by the larger SDGs framework in 2016 (German Bundestag, 2020[53]). The scope of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Future Generations in Hungary (2008-12) and the Parliamentary Commissioner for Future Generations in Israel used to be broad, to include “areas affecting the quality of life of future generations” in the case of Hungary (United Nations, 2013[5]). Direct references to Intergenerational Justice are less frequent in public bodies, which can count on a longer history. Its core principles are pursued in the context of promoting sustainability (Canada)

(Office of the Auditor General of Canada, 2020[54]), environmental protection (New Zealand) (Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment, 2020[55]) and the anticipation of future developments that exceed election cycles (Finland) (Parliament of Finland, 2020[56]).

Key prerogatives and functions

The Parliamentary Commissioner for Future Generations in Hungary (2008-12) was endowed with far-reaching authority to monitor and evaluate the enforcement of sustainability commitments through law. It was able to pro-actively launch investigations, initiate constitutional and legislative proposals and deal with complaints. As of 2012, its successor, the Deputy Ombudsperson for Future Generations has a narrower mandate and lost its investigative powers (Office of the Commissioner for Fundamental Rights, 2020[57]). In Israel, during its six-year existence, the Commissioner essentially had a veto function on laws with an impact on future generations as the latter could only be passed upon the presentation of his report.

Most of the analysed oversight bodies exert less authority over government and do not hold legislative power or a mechanism to enforce compliance. Instead, they provide expert advice and recommendations and monitor the implementation of commitments by public bodies. They also keep an eye on the integration of intergenerational justice objectives into sector priorities and policies and encourage co-ordination across the whole of government. For instance, in Finland, the main task of the Committee for the Future is to prepare the response of Parliament to the Government's Future Report. Most entities communicate their findings to the public.

The Finnish Committee for the Future and the Future Generations Commissioner in Wales also consult the public in setting the agenda for future priorities and work programmes. The Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development in Canada is endowed with the function to oversee the petition process. The Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment in New Zealand deals with public complaints, leads investigations and reports to the parliament.

Box 4.4. Guardians, ombudsperson and commissioners for future generations

Finland: Parliamentary Committee for the Future

In 1993, Finland established the Parliamentary Committee for the Future as a standing committee to serve as a think tank for futures, science and technology policy. The Committee for the Future is composed of 17 members from different political parties. Located within the remit of the Prime Minister, its main function is to prepare the response of Parliament (Parliament's Future Report) to the Government's Future Report and to work on long-term issues, which exceed election cycles. The Committee can issue reports, initiate public consultations and set the agenda on future priorities. While it does not hold legislative powers, it can have an influence on government decisions about the budget and work programme at the request of Parliament (Tiihonen, 2015[58]).

In 2016, the Committee held the international seminar "For the next generations" to discuss intergenerational relations and the fair transfer of resources between generations.

Wales: Future Generations Commissioner

The position of the Future Generations Commissioner in Wales is enshrined in the 2015 Well-being of Future Generations Act (see above). Contrary to the Parliamentary Committee for the Future in Finland, the Welsh Government appoints the Future Generations Commissioner for a seven-year term. The Commissioner provides advice to public bodies and public service boards to meet their well-being objectives and may conduct a review into how public bodies are taking account of the long-term impact of their decisions, and make recommendations based on the findings.

In 2019-20, the Commissioner conducted a review into the public procurement practices across all 44 ministries and public agencies to assess the outcomes for current and future generations against four pillars of well-being (social, economic, environmental and cultural).

Source: Finland: (The Committee for the Future, 2016[59]); Wales: (The Future Generations Commissioner for Wales, 2020[52])

The Network of Institutions for Future Generations brings together most of the entities introduced above to share knowledge and disseminate best practices to promote responsible, long-term governance (Network of Institutions for Future Generations, 2020[51]). It also gathers Norway's Ombudsman for Children, which advocates for the rights of children and young people and ensures that Norwegian authorities comply with the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Ministry of Children and Families, 2020[60]). Indeed, Ombudsperson can also play a crucial role in encouraging a more long-term perspective in policy-making (see Chapter 3).

This section demonstrates that independent oversight institutions with a strong mandate and resources can play a critical role in raising public attention to concerns about intergenerational justice. They can act as watchdogs of government action and raise critical questions when a more long-term perspective risks being superseded by short-term considerations. Some, such as the Finish Parliamentary Committee for the Future, also act as agenda setters to anticipate the impact of broader transformations in society and economy across current and future generations.

Future research would be needed to map and assess the impact of the broader institutional environment in which intergenerational justice objectives are promoted, such as to cover the work of the Austrian Court of Auditors in 2016 on “The effective use of public funds with regard to sustainability and intergenerational fairness” (Rechnungshof, 2018[61]). Other relevant stakeholders to include would be independent institutions, parliamentary commissions on children and adolescents’ rights, children and youth

parliaments, youth work sector, among others. Moreover, research at national level should also take into account the institutional arrangements established at subnational level of government.

Anticipatory and adaptive governance tools

Integrating an intergenerational lens in policy-making requires adequate awareness ("Intergenerational Justice literacy"), skills, and tools in the hands of policy makers. Capacities must be established within the public administration to consider the intergenerational dimension in programme design and policy-making and to align sector objectives with strategic government objectives. At the organisational level, clear responsibilities should be assigned across public bodies to generate age-disaggregated evidence, scan the horizon for future developments, anticipate the distributional impacts of rule-making and public budgeting, and monitor and evaluate performance.

This section explores the use of anticipatory and adaptive governance tools by OECD countries to promote intergenerational justice. In recent years, countries have started to establish administrative capacity to anticipate, assess and address the generational impact of policies and public budgeting. While none of these tools will replace a political decision, they can provide useful evidence to inform decision-making in the context of uncertainty and policy trade-offs.

Systematic collection of age-disaggregated evidence

The findings from the OECD Youth Governance Surveys that are presented in Chapter 2 illustrate that ministries in charge of youth affairs face significant challenges in the collection of age-disaggregated evidence, in particular when the public service needs of vulnerable groups, and the opportunities for young people to engage in public life are concerned. Box 4.5 presents snapshot data from the OECD report "How is Life 2020" in selected well-being areas for the young, the middle-aged and older people.

Box 4.5. Inequality across age cohorts in OECD countries, 2020

Income and wealth

Youth (aged below 26) and older people (aged 51 and above) are more likely to live in households with lower income and wealth, and hence face a greater risk of poverty. Disposable income in households with children and young people, and households with older people is 10% and 4% lower respectively than in the average household for middle-aged people (26-50). Youth and older people also face a higher risk to live in an income-poor household (35% and 20% higher respectively when compared to middle-aged people).

Financial security and poverty

Households with heads aged 35 or younger hold less financial and non-financial assets than households headed by older people, making this group more vulnerable to face financial insecurity, in particular when coupled with lower educational attainment. To some extent, the differences in income can be attributed to the fact that most young people will be in education, training or at the beginning of their professional career. However, OECD evidence demonstrates that when poverty at a young age persists, it compounds with disadvantages in health, education, employment and earnings and can result in higher welfare dependency (OECD, 2017[62]).

Work and job quality

Youth (15-24) and older adults (55-64) are 50% and 20% less likely to be employed than the middle-aged respectively. Youth (20% higher) and older adults (30% higher) also face a higher likelihood of being stuck in long-term unemployment than the middle-aged. In employment, older adults earn 4

percent more every hour than middle-aged adults do. In turn, young people's hourly earnings are 30% lower when compared to middle-aged adults. Young employees also experience higher job strain than other age cohorts, despite working less long hours than older age cohorts.

Health

Health and its determinants can be transmitted between generations and hence present an important policy area for intergenerational justice (WHO, 2015[63]). As of 2018, 89% of young people (15-24) perceived their health as "good" or "very good" relative to 64% of 45-64 year-old and 44% of those 65 and over.[21] Young people face a higher risk to be involved in road traffic accidents and mental health disorders because of alcohol abuse. Suicide rates are generally higher among middle-aged and older people. In light of rapid population ageing the demand for labour-intensive long-term care (health and social care) is expected to increase further. In 2017, an average of 10.8% of people aged 65 and over received long-term care, which presents a 5 percent increase compared with 2007 (OECD, 2019[64]).

Housing

As housing affordability is measured at household data, inequalities across age cohorts are more difficult to determine. Findings from a study for the United Kingdom suggests that young people are finding it harder than previous generations to become homeowners due to the rapid increase in house prices, moreover, most property is held by older people. The study also points to a decline in the number of houses built as a proportion of the number of households over time as a factor to consider (Kingman, 2018[65]).

Note: The report also provides evidence on gaps between different age cohorts in terms of work-life balance, social connections and safety.
Source: (OECD, 2020[12]).

As highlighted in previous chapters, it is important to recognise that within the same age cohort or generation, interests and needs vary significantly. The public service needs of a 15-year old in a rural area will differ from a 24-year old living in a university city, and the concerns of a pensioner in his or her mid-60s are likely to be different from someone aged 80 or above. Blurred age definitions present a major challenge to measure progress in the implementation of intergenerational justice. For the SDGs, for instance, it is common practice to consider persons aged 60 and older to belong to the same age group. The Titchfield City Group on Ageing-related Statistics and Age-disaggregated Data, set up by the Office for National Statistics of the United Kingdom in 2018, is tasked to improve and harmonise statistical measurement of information on population ageing with a focus on improving the measurement of older people (Crofts, 2018[66]).

Governments must seek to ensure that adequate capacities exist within the public administration or can be procured in collaboration with research institutes to collect, manage, and use granular evidence to inform priority setting and monitor progress.

Horizon scanning and future needs

Ageing societies are putting traditional public service delivery models to a test. In a context of growing complexity and uncertainty, demographic change and other megatrends (see Chapter 1) require policy makers to scan the horizon for multiple alternative scenarios and their implications for intergenerational justice. To assess policies or draft regulation from an intergenerational perspective, a methodology must seek to evaluate the long-term impact of public policies and to systematically assess the distributional impacts of public policies across current and future generations.

Strategic Foresight and Anticipatory Governance can provide useful frameworks to generate knowledge about possible different futures and pathways for governments to steer towards more fair and equitable ones. Strategic Foresight can help to integrate a longer-term perspective in policy-making, which is a

precondition to define policy challenges as intertemporal and intergenerational. The evidence it generates can spur new thinking about the best policies to adopt today to ensure future well-being as recognised by the OECD Recommendation on Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (OECD, 2019[14]).

With the support of the OECD Observatory of Public Sector Innovation (OPSI), the city of Oulu in Finland has engaged in an exercise to anticipate the future for youth-at-risk and support them in the transformation towards life in a digital society and automation of work. This initiative aims at building local administrative capacity to work in an anticipatory manner and design public service delivery models that can adapt fast to new challenges. In the city of Vantaa, the initiative has focused on different scenarios for the integration of migrant youth to set up effective governance responses (OECD Observatory of Public Sector Innovation, 2020[67]). Strategic Foresight as applied in Oulu and Vantaa can help to identify, prevent and mitigate actual and potential adverse impacts of events. In light of current and future disruptions, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, strategic foresight should inform strategic planning and programme design to avoid age-related imbalances.

In turn, engaging young audiences in developing future scenarios is critical to empower youth and give voice and agency to those who will live with the consequences of decisions longer than senior decision makers. By bringing children, adolescents and young adults into conversations about their future with other age cohorts, strategic foresight methodologies can foster intergenerational dialogue about ways to address intertemporal challenges and design a more promising future.

Impact assessment tools

As described in Chapter 2, impact assessments are an important element in the toolbox of governments to anticipate the welfare and distributional impacts of policies and programmes as acknowledged by the OECD Recommendation on Regulatory Policy and Governance (OECD, 2012[68]). Regulatory Impact Assessments (RIA) provide a systemic approach to assessing the positive and negative effects of proposed and existing regulations and non-regulatory alternatives. As part of their national RIA systems, some countries have put in place more tailored assessments to generate evidence on the expected impact of draft legislation and regulation on specific population groups, such as through “youth checks”, which broaden the default “adult” perspective in policy-making. Through the Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+), Canada anticipates the impact of regulatory and budgetary proposals on younger and older people (see Chapter 2).

Despite the rhetoric to promote fairness between the generations, there is no applicable standard or approach to assess whether a public policy is fair from an intergenerational perspective. However, the Government of the Netherlands is currently elaborating a “Generation Test” to address this gap (Box 4.6).

Box 4.6. Elaboration of a "Generation Test" in the Netherlands

Upon the recommendation of the Social and Economic Council of the Netherlands (SER), the Cabinet of the Netherlands is currently elaborating a "Generation Test" for the legislative process and the preparation of political and social agreements. The introduction of the Generation Test responds to the ambition to better understand the effects of policies on young people and to consider their interests more systematically in policy design.

The Generation Test intends to generate evidence on the expected impact of policy and regulatory proposals across generations and to involve young people in the process. In the elaboration process, the Cabinet collaborates with different youth groups, such as the SER Youth Platform (*Jongerenplatform*) and the Dutch National Youth Council, as well as planning agencies, the Council of State and the SER.

Source: (Minister of Social Affairs and Employment, 2020[69]).

Switzerland's Sustainability Impact Assessments (SIA) framework presents another innovative example. It draws on a three dimensions (e.g. economic, social and environmental) to promote solidarity both with future generations (*intergenerational solidarity*) and within the current generation (*intragenerational solidarity*). The framework is operationalised through 15 sustainability criteria of which three define sustainability through the lens of intergenerational fairness. It holds that, for instance, public money should be managed such that it does not adversely affect future generations. Moreover, it sets out that the impact of environmental disasters should be reduced and the risks of accidents accepted only when no lasting damage will be created for future generations in the event of a worst-case scenario (OECD, 2012[70]).

Sustainability Impact Assessments can inform decision-making and strategic planning by considering cross-cutting, intangible as well as short-term and long-term effects. SIAs can also encourage multi-stakeholder engagement in identifying future challenges and impact, and integrate intergenerational fairness considerations into sector policies, programmes and strategies (OECD, 2020[71]). In the United Kingdom, equality impact assessments (EqIA) take into account the effects of policies on people in respect of disability, gender, racial equality and wider equality areas, including age (Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2009[72]).

Sovereign wealth funds, budget cycle, fiscal policy and public procurement

The allocation of public resources provides another powerful tool for governments to invest in intergenerational justice. Sovereign wealth funds (and pension and "climate justice" funds), the budget cycle, fiscal policy and public procurement practices play a critical role in this regard. For instance, Finland's Sovereign Wealth Fund and New Zealand's Superannuation Fund make savings for future needs and generations. The Norwegian Government Pension Fund Global manages the revenues from the country's oil and gas resources for the benefit of current and future generations.

The integration of an intergenerational justice lens into the budget cycle can shape national development plans, sector strategies, policies and programmes. For instance, the "well-being budget" in New Zealand (see 3.1), which was introduced in 2019, sheds light on horizontal inequalities, the distributional effects of budget allocations across different age cohorts and actual trade-offs faced by policy makers (Government of New Zealand, 2019[73]). The Slovak Council for Budget Responsibility considers intergenerational fairness in connection with the long-term sustainability of public finances (OECD, 2020[74]). The Council quantifies the net contribution to and receipt from public finances of individual age cohorts. In 2019, the European Commission published a Discussion Paper, which is attempts to integrate intergenerational justice considerations in fiscal sustainability analysis, among others by measuring the amount of

intertemporal public liabilities that are unfunded claims on future governments' budgets (Arévalo et al., 2019[75]). In Australia, the intergenerational budgetary forecast is undertaken in the context of publishing fiscal projections of spending and costs (Australian Government, 2015[76]).

As highlighted in Chapter 3, public procurement represents 12% of GDP in OECD countries and is yet another important field that governments can use strategically to respond to citizens' needs, including youth (OECD, 2020[77]). The strategic use of public procurement to achieve social and environmental outcomes is increasingly recognised and applied ("sustainable public procurement", "green public procurement"), with more or less explicit linkages to the promotion of intergenerational fairness (Stoffel et al., 2019[78]). Large-scale infrastructure projects deserve a particular notion as mismanagement and corruption can create undue burden on young and future taxpayers. With an expected global investment need of USD 71tn or 3.5% of the annual GDP from 2007 to 2030, infrastructure investments in high-impact sectors such as buildings, vehicles and energy-using products also provide a unique opportunity to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and create a more healthy and sustainable world (OECD, 2020[79]).

As part of the global response to climate change, Ireland launched the Youth Climate Justice Fund in March 2020. In 2020, the Fund will make available EUR 500 000 to support youth-led action and innovation on Climate Justice at community, regional and national level. Projects are eligible when they raise climate justice awareness among young people and empower youth to influence change at different levels of government (Department of Children and Youth Affairs in Ireland, 2020[80]).

Monitoring and performance frameworks

The systematic measurement of progress in addressing intergenerational divides is critical to avoid that societies and economies will bear the long-term economic, social and environmental costs of inaction. Performance measurement systems need to be underpinned by indicators that capture generational gaps and their consequences to well-being today and in the future.

At the request of the Dutch Cabinet, Statistics Netherlands publishes its Sustainability Monitor once a year on "Accountability Day". The Sustainability Monitor assesses well-being "here and now" (i.e. quality of life in the present), well-being "later" (i.e. resources available for the next generation) and "elsewhere" (i.e. to place the well-being results for the Netherlands in the context of broader global developments). The House of Representatives discusses its findings during the annual Accountability Debate and the Dutch Cabinet officially reacts to its main conclusions (Box 4.7).

Box 4.7. Monitor of well-being and sustainable development goals in the Netherlands

The monitor was published for the second time in 2019 to cover the SDGs. It distinguishes between well-being in the present along 29 indicators, divided into eight themes (GDP, well-being, material welfare, health, labour and leisure time, housing, society, safety and environment) and well-being for future generations. To measure the potential for future well-being, it identifies 20 well-being trends based on developments in the economic, social, human and environmental capital stocks, similar to the OECD well-being framework (see visual).

The Monitor compares the results for the Netherlands against the average performance of EU countries. Moreover, based on 12 indicators in the areas "trade and aid", "environment and resources" and GDP, it displays the impact of the level of well-being in the Netherlands on the rest of the world.

Source: (Statistics Netherlands, 2019[81]).

Age diversity in public life and decision-making

As societies age, the share of young people in society is projected to shrink in the future, hence further reducing young people's political weight in the electorate, in public institutions and policy-making. If not managed, these developments could in turn result in further disenchantment among young people towards their countries' public institutions.

Chapter 3 discussed the legal, institutional and other barriers young people face to participate in public and political life. Population ageing may exacerbate some of these challenges. When societies age and turnout rates remain stable, the median voter's age will increase. For instance, the median voter's age in the United Kingdom is expected to increase from 49 in 2010 to 54 by 2051 (Berry, 2014[82]). An older demographic of eligible voters and higher-than-average voting turnout rates among older relative to younger people has nurtured concerns about the dominance of the interests of older people in political party programmes and the political discourse (Vanhuysse and Goerres, 2012[4]). Moreover, the risk of a pro-elderly spending bias by governments and an increasing marginalisation of young people in the democratic process have been evoked (OECD, 2018[13]; Vanhuysse, 2013[2]). This assumes that a higher numeric share of older people at the ballot box will incentivise politicians to act in their favour, potentially at the expense of the interests of younger generations.

Younger and older voters do not necessarily hold diverging views and interests about the future. Different generations are linked to each other through family bonds, joint experiences and often share similar norms, values and interests. For instance, while adolescents and young adults initiated the Fridays For Future movement, "Seniors for Future", mobilises senior citizens who expressed the same concerns about preserving the environment for future generations. Existing research suggests that both life stage and generational identity influence political behaviour and that a simple comparison of younger versus older voters is missing the point (Berry, 2014[82]; Hollanders and Koster, 2010[83]; Goerres and Tepe, 2010[84]). While these findings alleviate concerns that the interests of younger electorates will be superseded by those of older electorates, low turnout among youth presents a risk in itself as it may undermine the legitimacy of representative democracy and its institutions over time.

Children, adolescents and young adults are sometimes considered "proxies" for the interests of future generations. To overcome the inherent challenge that current decision-making systems tend to be inclined towards the preferences of present generations, Yahaba Town municipality in Japan has undertaken an experiment. In the discussion about the municipality's vision for 2060, imaginary "future generation" groups were created as stakeholders to negotiate with present-generation groups in a series of workshops about the municipalities' policy policies on the road to 2060. The experiment concluded with the adoption of more than half of the measures that the imaginary "future generation" groups had proposed originally, indicating that decision-making preferences had at least somewhat shifted to future generations (Hara et al., 2019[85]).

Chapter 3 also pointed out that the "representation gap" of young people in state institutions and decision-making positions continues to persist. If age matters in priority-setting and political decision-making, one may expect younger decision makers to allocate a higher share of public resources into areas directly or indirectly benefiting young people, such as in education. It is important to keep in mind that this assumption is somewhat simplified as isolating the "age" factor is difficult and older decision makers may be driven by similar motivations as younger ones in order to leave behind a world in which their children and grandchildren will enjoy the same or better opportunities. Keeping these caveats in mind, the next sections will present the results from a correlation analysis run to identify a potential relationship between the age composition in national parliaments and cabinets and government spending across OECD countries.

Cabinet age and spending

The hypothesis that younger decision makers tend to allocate a higher share of the public budget in youth-related policy areas and accumulate less debt was tested along two dimensions and the following indicators:

1. the relative spending of pensions to education: the expected relationship is negative ("the higher the share of young decision makers, the lower spending of pensions relative to education")
2. the per-head public debt of under 20-year olds: the expected relationship is negative ("the higher the share of young decision makers, the lower the per-head public debt of under 20-year olds")

For each dimension, the hypothesis was tested in relation to the share of members of parliament below 40 (MPs) and the mean cabinet age (MCs) while controlling for the proportion of 65+ year-olds.[22] Both the independent (share of young MPs, mean cabinet age) and dependent variables (i.e. relative pension/education spending, public debt) present "snapshot" data and therefore do not include intertemporal dynamics.[23]

The statistical analysis does not find any significant relationship between the proportion of young MPs and relative government spending the field of pensions/education[24]. There is an imprecise relationship in that countries with a higher representation of MPs below 40 tend to have lower per-head public debt of under 20s.[25] Neither of these findings is statistically significant. On the other hand, the analysis uncovers thought-provoking patterns of co-variation between the mean Cabinet age and public spending across OECD countries.

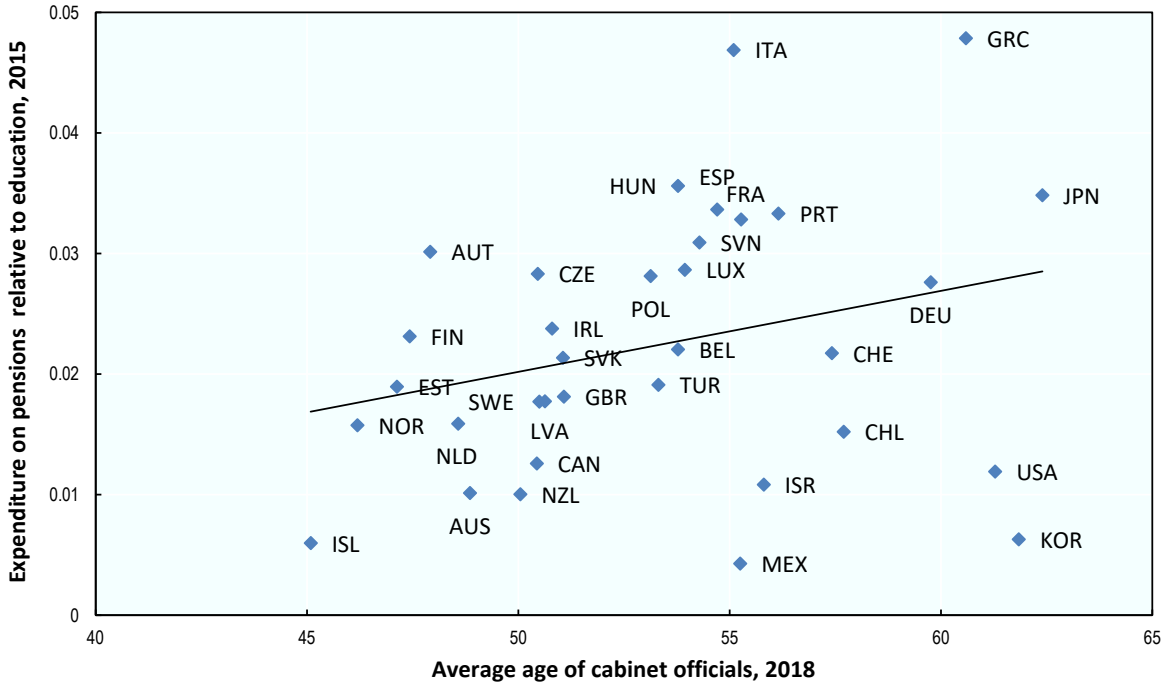
Cabinet age and the allocation of public resources

In line with the hypothesis, Figure 4.5 illustrates that countries in which the mean Cabinet age is higher tend to spend more on pensions relative to education. This relationship remains positive when the proportion of older people (65+) is introduced as a second independent variable. The results also show that older societies tend to spend more on pensions relative to investments into education than younger societies. In other words, both a higher mean Cabinet age and older demographics in a society tend to be associated with the allocation of a higher share of public resources to pensions relative to education.

The findings suggest that different drivers are at play at country level. For instance, Mexico, Chile and Israel have rather young societies but older Cabinets than the OECD average and still demonstrate a more balanced allocation of public spending between the generations than most other countries. Italy and Greece have older demographics and older Cabinets and spend significantly more on pensions than on education. Finland, in turn, has one of the oldest societies, but its cabinet members are among the youngest across the OECD and spending between pensions and education is rather balanced.

Figure 4.5. Cabinet age and relative spending on pensions/education, 2015/18

The horizontal axis plots the average age of cabinet officials across OECD countries (April 2018). The vertical axis plots the share of government expenditures on pensions relative to education (2015): value "0" is where the spending on pension and education is equal.



Note: Bivariate correlation coefficient: 0.28; p-value: 0.10. When controlling for the share of elderly in the population in a trivariate regression, the coefficient for average age of cabinet officials is 0.0006; p-value: 0.11.
Source: OECD calculations based on OECD (2018), Youth Stocktaking Report, OECD Publishing: Paris; OECD Pensions at a Glance (database); OECD (2020), Public spending on education (indicator). doi: 10.1787/f99b45d0-en; OECD Demography and Population (database).

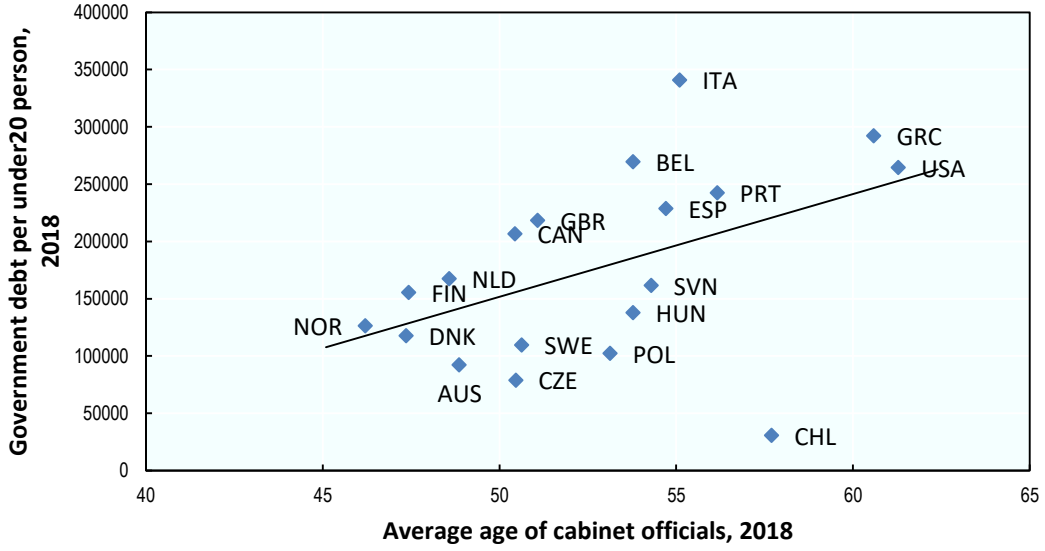
These results suggest that, while both the demographic composition in society and the mean Cabinet age may have an impact on public spending priorities, they are not the only factors at play. Policy choices play an important role and underpin the importance of political commitment to address age-based imbalances.

Cabinet age and fiscal burden

As discussed above, there may be good reasons for a government to take on public debt. For instance, fiscal stimulus packages can support countries weather an economic downturn, such as the COVID-19 crisis, and spur investments into assets with high rates of return and social benefit, such as improved access to education and healthcare or the establishment of strategic infrastructure.

Figure 4.6. Cabinet age and government debt per under 20, 2018

The horizontal axis plots the average age of cabinet officials across OECD countries (April 2018). The vertical axis plots the government debt per under 20 person (2015).



Note: Bivariate correlation coefficient: 0.47; p-value: 0.04. When controlling for the share of elderly in the population in a trivariate regression, the coefficient for average age of cabinet officials is 9672.749; p-value: 0.03.
Source: OECD calculations based on OECD (2018), Youth Stocktaking Report, OECD Publishing: Paris; OECD National Accounts at a Glance (database); OECD Historical Population (database); OECD Demography and Population (database).

The results from the correlation exercise suggest that countries in which the mean Cabinet age is higher tend to have a higher total government debt per under 20 person. This relationship is even stronger when controlling for the proportion of older people (65+) in a trivariate regression. This relationship is consistent across countries with largely varying demographics, such Slovenia, on the younger end, and Portugal and Greece, on the older end. Every mean age year of the cabinet is associated with a rise in predicted public debt for the young by about 10,000 USD. One notable exception is Chile in which total government debt per person under 20 is low in relation to the mean Cabinet age.

The statistical significance of the findings in this section suggests that governments should consider promoting age diversity and inclusiveness in different forms of participation and representation in state institutions, including in senior leadership positions of the government and public administration. Despite significant gaps in practice, there is widespread acknowledgment that gender balance and diversity in public leadership positions are critical to integrate diverse perspectives in policy-making (OECD, 2019[86]).

In contrast, the perception of both young and elderly people (*ageism*) in leadership positions continues to be dominated by stereotypes rather than an appreciation of the diverse views and experiences different age cohorts can bring on board. Addressing challenges to intergenerational justice hence remains an important task for policy makers across all ages in the years to come.

Policy recommendations

This chapter has presented evidence demonstrating that the implicit promise that each new generation will fare better than the previous one increasingly stands on shaky grounds. Nothing that the notion of the intergenerational justice underlies many of today's most heated political debates, and that demographics

are not a fate, the chapter has provided a mapping of the efforts undertaken by OECD countries to integrate intergenerational justice considerations in policy-making and governance. It finds that, despite notable innovative practices in building institutional capacities and applying new governance tools to anticipate the distributional impact of public policies and budgeting across different age cohorts, systemic risks persist.

Most notably, governments need to address the lack of structures and incentives to encourage long-term thinking and planning in public institutions and their processes. This involves a fair assessment of all relevant benefits and costs of today's decisions across current and with regard to unborn generations. It also requires decision makers to bring together the different initiatives, institutions and tools applied under a coherent strategy to address imbalances between generations. A more systematic collection age-disaggregated evidence, the use of strategic foresight and the creation of well-resourced oversight institutions along with the promotion of age diversity in decision-making are some of the pathways to follow for a more robust approach across the whole of government.

To foster intergenerational justice in the context of ageing societies, governments should consider:

1. Demonstrating strong political commitment to act upon inequalities both within and between different age cohorts and address intergenerational challenges.
2. Integrating intergenerational justice considerations in laws, policies, strategies and programmes and promote co-ordination across government to ensure policy coherence.
3. Creating or strengthening oversight institutions/mechanisms to monitor intergenerational justice commitments by ensuring resources and their legal, financial and political independence.
4. Ensure policy makers are aware and have the right skills and public management tools to promote intergenerational justice in policy-making, public spending and decision-making.
5. Promoting age diversity in public life and decision-making.

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Notes

[1] In 2019, the phrase "OK boomer" went viral on social media and served as a proxy to describe an increasingly tense relationship between the young and the old (BBC News, 7 November 2019[87]).

[2] OECD (2020), Working age population (indicator). doi: 10.1787/d339918b-en (Accessed on 22 July 2020).

[3] OECD (2020), Pension spending (indicator). doi: 10.1787/a041f4ef-en (Accessed on 22 July 2020); OECD (2020), Public spending on education (indicator). doi: 10.1787/f99b45d0-en (Accessed on 22 July 2020).

[4] The GSG brings together Ministers, G7/G20 Sherpas and Senior Officials to discuss global megatrends and how the OECD can support countries in dealing with future challenges and opportunities.

[5] United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2019). World Population Prospects 2019, custom data acquired via website.

[6] Calculated based on (OECD, 2020[94]). Data includes all OECD countries except for Latvia (no data available for 1990). Calculated based on 2018 data except for Japan (2017).

[7] Life expectancy at age 65 years old is the average number of years that a person at that age can be expected to live, assuming that age-specific mortality levels remain constant. Calculated based on (OECD, 2020[95]). Data includes all OECD countries except for Latvia (no data available for 1990) and Colombia (no data available). Calculated based on 2017 data except for Chile (2016).

[8] Assuming no net migration and unchanged mortality, a total fertility rate of 2.1 children per woman ensures a broadly stable population. Calculated based on (OECD, 2020[96]) with data for 1990 and 2017.

[9] OECD (2020), Young population (indicator). doi: 10.1787/3d774f19-en (Accessed on 24 July 2020).

[10] The OECD Glossary of Statistical Terms defines intergenerational equity as “the issue of sustainable development referring, within the environmental context, to fairness in the intertemporal distribution of the endowment with natural assets or of the rights to their exploitation.” (OECD Glossary of Statistical Terms, n.d.[97]). For a discussion about climate change as an intergenerational problem and its implications for equity among communities in the present and the future, see (Weiss, 2008[98])

[11] The UN Declaration on Environment and Development, adopted at the “Earth Summit” in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, reaffirmed that “the right to development must be fulfilled as to equitably meet developmental and environmental needs of present and future generations” (UN General Assembly, 12 August 1992[90]). A 2013 report by the UN Secretary General marked another milestone arguing that social cohesion between generations is a cornerstone for achieving sustainable development (United Nations, 2013[5]).

[12] For an introduction into important concepts in the IJ debate see (Thompson, 2010[7]) on discounting, things of value and global justice; (Vanhuysse, 2013[2]) on how to account for the interests of future generations, future technological progress and for unexpected future exogenous shocks; and (Gosseries and Meyer, 2009[8]) and (Meyer, 2015[6]) on the philosophical principles underlying the concept.

[13] The Intergenerational Fairness Index, established by the Intergenerational Foundation (UK-based charity), measures the extent to which young people today are at a disadvantage compared to the rest of society and the degree to which future generations will be impacted by the ways in which we live today or by government action. In contrast, the Generational Divide Index (GDI is concerned with the “generational divide“, which assesses the extent of delay that young people face in obtaining full autonomy to pursue life’s pursuit compared to the older generations (i.e. buying a house, borrowing money, pursuing higher education, suitable employment) (Monti, 2017[11]).

[14] OECD calculations based on *OECD National Accounts at a Glance* (database) and *OECD Demography and Population* (database).

[15] In 2019, parents in the county borough of Neath Port Talbot in Wales challenged the closure of a school on the ground that it was not compliant with the well-being goal of creating "attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities" (*R (B) v Neath Port Talbot CBC*). However, the High Court dismissed the case, arguing that the Act could not trigger a judicial review as it prescribed a “high-level target duty which is deliberately vague, general and aspirational and which applies to a class rather than individuals” (Martin, 15 May 2019[99])

[16] The responsibilities of the present towards future generations are also acknowledged in other UN instruments, such as the Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972), the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity (1992), the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (1992), the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (1993), and the UN General Assembly resolutions relating to the protection of the global climate for present and future generations adopted since 1990.

[17] The material footprint measures the extraction of raw material to meet economic demands per capita (in tonnes).

[18] The ecological footprint describes the surface of land and water required by an economy to produce all goods consumed in that economy, and to absorb all wastes generated by their production. It presents an intuitive indicator to assess the pressure put by societies on their natural environment (Vanhuysse, 2013[2]).

[19] Bivariate correlation coefficient: 0.44 (p-value: 0.03). When controlling for share of older people, an increase of 0.1 points in the quality of the NYS is associated with a decline in the ecological footprint of 0.8 (p-value: 0.02).

[20] For two largely opposing perspectives on this topic, see (Bristow, 2019[92]) and (Sternberg, 2019[93]), among others.

[21] OECD calculations based on the *OECD Health Status* (database).

[22] In line with the definition of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, “young” members of parliament (MPs) are considered to be 40 years or younger. As for members of cabinet, the assessment relies on the average age of ministers across OECD countries as of February 2018 (OECD, 2018[13]).

[23] “Snapshot” data measures policy outcomes and efforts/situation today. Further research could complement the findings presented in this Chapter by integrating past and future points in time. Future research could also explore the relationship in other areas such as the budget allocated to the government entity in charge of youth affairs, government-financed expenditures on research and development as percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), etc.

[24] The correlation coefficient is -.03 (p=.85).

[25] The analysis yields a modest negative bivariate relationship between higher parliamentary representation of the young and per-head public debt of under 20s. r=-.21 (p=.38). In a trivariate regression with proportion of older people as a second independent variable, the relationship remains negative, but the p-value is at .29, evidence of an imprecise relationship.

Annex A. The 2019 OECD Youth Governance Surveys

Delivering on the guidance and the Programme of Work of the OECD Public Governance Committee (PGC), the OECD Secretariat conducted the 2019 OECD Youth Governance Surveys between May 2019 and February 2020. Survey 1 targeted government entities in charge of youth affairs (Table A.1), while Survey 2 targeted ministries of education that are not in charge of youth affairs and line ministry indicated by the PGC delegate of each country (Table A.2). The Surveys collected responses of government entities from 34 OECD member countries and the European Commission and eight non-member countries. The questionnaires gathered information on governments' youth policies, the role of public institutions in delivering them, and tools to integrate the perspective of young people in policymaking. The questionnaires also looked at laws and regulations on the access of young people to public services, as well as governments' practices to inform, consult and engage young people. They also gathered information about the opportunities for youth to shape policy outcomes, engage as volunteers and in youth work and work in state institutions. They also collected evidence on civic education systems in place. The OECD Secretariat, in co-operation with the respondent government entities, undertook a process of data cleaning and validation between September 2019 and April 2020 to ensure the completeness, consistency and coherency of the responses received in Survey 1 and Survey 2.

As part of the 2019 OECD Youth Governance Surveys, the OECD Secretariat also ran an online survey targeting youth organisations and stakeholders worldwide between May 2019 and January 2020. The 81 respondents were asked to provide information that served to characterise their organisation and the country their responses referred to (if not internationally-based organisations). They were also asked to provide a link to the website of their organisation. Only the responses that included a valid URL/website presenting the work of a youth organisation were included in the final analysis (65 respondents). The online survey was disseminated via OECD social media, networks of youth-led organisations, youth policymakers, and delegates to the Public Governance Committee of the OECD. While the survey does not represent jurisdictions or stakeholder groups, its goal was to include the perspective of a diverse group of youth-led organisations operating at the international, national and local level (Table A.3).

Table A.1. Government entities in charge of youth affairs that participated to the 2019 OECD Youth Governance Surveys, Survey 1

Country	Government entity
Australia	Department of Health
Austria	Federal Chancellery Federal Minister for Women Families and Youth within the Federal Chancellery
Belgium	Flemish Community, French Community and German-speaking Community
Canada	Privy Council Office
Chile	Instituto Nacional de la Juventud
Colombia	Consejeria Presidencial para la juventud
Czech Republic	Ministry of Education Youth and Sports
Denmark	The Ministry of Education
Estonia	Ministry of Education and Research

Country	Government entity
Finland	Ministry of Education and Culture
France	Ministry of national education and youth
Germany	Bundesministerium Familie Senioren Frauen und Jugend
Greece	MINISTRY OF EDUCATION RESEARCH AND RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS
Hungary	Ministry of Human Capacities
Iceland	Ministry of Education Science and Culture
Ireland	Children and Youth Affairs
Italy	Department for Youth Policies and the Universal Civic Service
Japan	Cabinet Office, Office of the Director for Policy of Youth Affairs
Latvia	Ministry of Education and Science
Lithuania	Ministry of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania
Luxembourg	MENJE
Mexico	Instituto Mexicano de la Juventud
Netherlands	Ministry of Health Welfare and Sport
New Zealand	Ministry of Social Development
Norway	Norwegian Ministry of Children and Family
Poland	Ministry of National Education
Portugal	Portuguese Institute of Youth and Sports
Slovak Republic	Ministry of Education Science Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic
Slovenia	Office for Youth
Spain	INJUVE
Sweden	Ministry of Culture
Switzerland	Federal Social Insurance Office
Turkey	Ministry of Youth and Sports
Argentina	National Institute of Youth
Brazil	Ministry of Women Family and Human Rights
Bulgaria	Ministry of youth and sports
Costa Rica	Ministry of Culture and Youth
Peru	Ministerio de Educacion
Romania	The ministry of Youth and Sport
Ukraine	Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine
European Commission	Directorate General for Education and Culture (*ad-hoc contribution*)

Table A.2. Government entities that participated to the 2019 OECD Youth Governance Surveys, Survey 2

Country	Government entity
Chile	Ministerio de Educacion
Colombia	Department for Social Prosperity
Colombia	Colombian Ministry of Education
Czech Republic	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
Denmark	Ministry of Higher Education and Science
Estonia	Ministry of Social Affairs
France	Ministry of public action and accounts
Germany	Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community
Hungary	Prime Minister's Office
Iceland	Ministry of Social affairs

Country	Government entity
Ireland	Ministry of Education and Skills
Ireland	Department of Rural and Community Development
Italy	Ministry of Labour and Social Policies
Italy	MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
Japan	Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology
Korea	Ministry of Education
Korea	Ministry of Gender equality and family
Latvia	The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development
Lithuania	Ministry of Education, Science and Sport
Luxembourg	Ministry of Culture
New Zealand	Ministry of Education
Norway	Ministry of Education and Research
Norway	Ministry of Culture
Poland	Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy
Portugal	Ministério do Trabalho, Solidariedade e Segurança Social
Slovenia	Ministry of Public Administration
Spain	MINISTERIO DE EDUCACION Y FORMACION PROFESIONAL
Sweden	Ministry of Education and Research
Sweden	Ministry of Employment
Turkey	Ministry of Education
Argentina	Ministerio de Educacion Cultura Ciencia y Tecnología
Argentina	Secretary of Environment and Sustainable Development
Brazil	MEC
Bulgaria	Ministry of Education
Bulgaria	Council of Ministers' Administration
Costa Rica	Ministerio de Educación Publica
Costa Rica	Ministry of National Planning and Economic Policy
Kazakhstan	Agency of Civil service
Romania	Ministry of Labour and Social Justice
Romania	Ministry of Education and Research
Ukraine	MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE OF UKRAINE

Table A.3. Youth stakeholders that participated to the online survey part of the 2019 OECD Youth Governance Surveys

Type of youth stakeholder	Share of respondents
Youth-led organisation (e.g. majority of members are below 30 years)	37%
Non-governmental organisation focusing on youth issues (e.g. youth rights, youth participation, youth work)	25%
Youth wing of a political party	3%
Youth umbrella organisation (e.g. regional, national or subnational youth council, association of youth organisations)	20%
Other youth structure (e.g. student councils, advisory youth board of governmental institutions or other organisations)	1%
Other youth stakeholder	14%

Annex B. Assessing the quality of national youth strategies

The OECD Secretariat has conducted an assessment of the quality of national youth strategies on the basis of the extent to which they meet the principles of good governance included in the OECD framework of quality standards of national youth strategies (Chapter 2). The assessment is based on the data collected from government entities in charge of youth affairs in the 2019 OECD Youth Governance Surveys (Survey 1).

The final score (0-1) is an average of scores across seven different dimensions with equal weights for each dimension. In turn, each dimension's score (0-1) is also an equally weighted average across selected survey questions/options. The information from the selected survey questions/options were coded in a way that higher values signify a higher quality of policy design. A preliminary analysis demonstrated that six out of the seven dimensions have an empirical structure of one dominant underlying variable that finds its partial realisation in all six dimensions. The seven dimensions, their meaning and the corresponding selected survey questions/options on which their measurement is based are detailed in Table B.1.

Table B.1. Dimensions and measures to assess the quality of national youth strategies

Dimension	Meaning	Score	Survey questions and options
Evidence-based	All stages of youth policy development and implementation are based on reliable, relevant, independent and up-to-date data and research, in order for youth policy to reflect the needs and realities of young people.	0-1	6 survey options
Participatory	A participatory national youth strategy engages all relevant stakeholders, at all stages of the policy cycle, from the elaboration and implementation to monitoring and evaluation. Stakeholders are youth organisations, young people, and all other organisations as well as individuals who are influencing and/or are being influenced by the policy. Particular attention is to be paid to the participation of vulnerable and marginalised groups.	0-1	9 survey options
Resourced / budgeted	Sufficient resources, both in terms of funding and human resources are available for youth organisations, structures for youth work as well as public authorities to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate the national youth strategy. Supportive measures, from training schemes to funding programmes, are made available to ensure the capacity building of various actors and structures involved in youth policy.	0-1	1 survey option
Transparent and accessible	The national youth strategy should clearly state which government authority/authorities has/have the overall co-ordinating responsibility for its implementation. It should also be clear which ministries are responsible for the different areas that are addressed in the policy. A transparent policy should be laid out in publicly accessible documents.	0-1	5 survey options
Monitored and evaluated / accountable	Data is collected in a continual and systematic way. The strategy is systematically and objectively assessed looking at its design, implementation and results with the aim of determining the relevance and fulfilment of objectives, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. An evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful, enabling policy makers to incorporate lessons learned into the decision–making process. Finally, the various stakeholders in the policy making process take responsibility for their actions and can be held accountable for them.	0-1	12 survey options
Cross-sectoral / transversal	Cross-sectoral youth strategy implies that all relevant policy areas are covered and that a co-ordination mechanism exists among different ministries, levels of government and public bodies responsible for and working on issues affecting young people.	0-1	32 survey options
Gender-responsive	The national youth strategy should be assessed against the specific needs of women and men from diverse backgrounds to ensure inclusive policy outcomes.	0-1	1 survey option

Annex C. Quantitative analysis

The quantitative analysis presented in this Report was conducted in collaboration with Senior Expert Professor Achim Goerres (University of Duisburg-Essen). Following internal and collaborative discussions on the overarching objective of the analysis, research questions, hypotheses and measurement, the OECD Secretariat provided the Senior Expert with all the original and additional data files. The data files were then cleaned individually, restructured to follow a pattern of one row per country, and finally merged into one major data file. The data file used for the final quantitative analysis was updated in a second step to account for changes from the data cleaning and validation process conducted by the OECD Secretariat in co-operation with the respondent government entities as well as to account for changes in OECD membership (i.e. addition of data for Colombia).

The methods used for the analysis are bivariate and multivariate analyses including:

1. Pearson's for continuous variables that range from -1 (perfect negative relationship), through 0 (no relationship) to +1 (perfect positive relationship);
2. Pearson's Chi²-test for tables of categorical variables with a p-value that gives the likelihood of that pattern to occur by chance alone;
3. Fisher's Exact test for tables in which one cell has a count of zero with a p-value that gives the likelihood of that pattern to occur by chance alone;
4. Wilcoxon test for a context where one continuous variable is tested for its distribution across two groups with a p-value that indicates the likelihood of the two sub-distributions deriving from the same underlying distribution;
5. Kruskal-Wallis test for analyses in which one continuous variables is tested for distribution across more than two groups with a p-value that indicates the likelihood of the n sub-distributions deriving from the same underlying distribution; and
6. Exploratory OLS regression analyses with two predicting variables and one continuous dependent variable.

The sample of countries is not a random sample from a defined population, but a census of OECD countries for which there were data available. Inferential statistics such as p-values of correlation coefficients should hence be interpreted as a measure of precision of observed patterns of co-variation.

When looking at the impact of involving youth organisations in the policy cycle on their satisfaction with government's performance across a range of public services, country-level observations were calculated as a mean of means of individual youth organisations' responses on the basis of their country of operation. Whenever a country-level observation had missing information, the mean of the other country-observations was imputed.

OECD Public Governance Reviews

Governance for Youth, Trust and Intergenerational Justice

FIT FOR ALL GENERATIONS?

Global transformations – from population ageing to digitalisation, rising inequalities and climate change – have created profound uncertainties for young people and future generations, despite unprecedented access to information, education and technology. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated pre-existing challenges in youth's mental well-being and employment, while raising concerns about the sustainability of public finances.

This report provides the first comparative assessment of the policies, laws, institutional capacities and governance tools put in place by 42 national governments and the European Union to promote youth empowerment and intergenerational justice. It sets benchmarks for cross-country comparisons in three main areas: 1) Supporting youth's transition to an autonomous life, 2) Enhancing youth's participation and representation in public life as well as trust in government, and 3) Delivering fair policy outcomes for all generations. Finally, it provides practical insights for policy makers, civil society and young people seeking to build a present and future that leaves no generation behind.

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