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Global



Key Findings:

Global Youth Index 2022

Preparing youth for
the post-COVID-19 future

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Global Youth Index 2022:

Background, objectives, methodology



Opportunities in young adulthood shape future professional success and life satisfaction. Globally, major progress has been made over the past decades in terms of increasing access to education and educational attainment at all levels. Many countries have also made progress in engaging youth in decision making and in promoting youth entrepreneurship and integration into the world of work. Youth also became a force to be reckoned with to achieve the SDGs through a variety of engagement channels.

However, much needs to be done to further empower youth to become more equal and more engaged. Delivering on multifaceted programs for youth development is complex, and for most countries, providing their youth with opportunities for personal and professional growth is still a work in progress. COVID-19 has exacerbated the challenges that youth face by disrupting education, aggravating mental health challenges as well as limiting opportunities for work and peer-to-peer social contacts.

Most countries face important challenges when putting in place the right frameworks and policies for youth development. While many of them have youth policies, there are differing levels of enforcement, monitoring, reporting and evaluating what matters to youth development. Countries often have limited tools to identify their strengths and weaknesses relative to their peers, to evaluate specific factors within their own programs or to find policy models that work.

1 in 3

1 in 3 youths say that COVID-19 has negatively affected their work or education performance.

The Global Youth Index set out to fill this information gap in its first edition in 2018. This second, improved edition assesses the state of youth development in 30 countries across different geographies and levels of development. It compiles metrics on the factors, policies and institutions that drive youth development.

It provides a practical tool for policy makers and youth to identify priorities for change and to track progress over time. The objective of the Index is to support policy makers in creating opportunities for youth to take the decisions that will shape their future.

Four key takeaways

- 1 Most countries need to improve their digital strategies to ensure that students are getting the skills they need to be successful in the workplace.
- 2 Only seven of the 30 countries successfully link industry to vocational teaching, and only six monitor their vocational programs well.
- 3 Most countries could further improve how they support young people to be healthy, notably through early detection of mental illness.
- 4 Youth perceive that social inequality is affecting their future pathways, with unemployment, poverty and nepotism among their top concerns.



19 ⁱⁿ / 30

Only 19 out of 30 countries have national strategies with specific targets for youth digital literacy.

Global Youth Index: Summary Methodology

The full methodology note, including a description of the research process, detailed index structure and technical notes are available at: <https://gyi.misk.org.sa/>.

The Global Youth Index measures factors, policies and institutions that enable youth development in 30 countries around the world. Youth development is understood as the process that prepares young people to meet the challenges of an increasingly complex future and fulfill their potential. For the purpose of this research, youth is defined as persons between the ages of 18 to 35 years.

The Index was developed using the Horizon Group index building methodology, which follows the OECD Handbook for Composite Indicators.* The index framework was developed with the support of an expert panel representing a range of institutions from the public and private sectors, non-for profits, and academia that work on youth development globally. It includes 125 indicators: 34 are from a survey of 31,500 youth aged 18-30 in 30 countries; 64 are from recognized international organizations in the relevant areas such as World Bank, IMF, UNESCO and ITU; and 27 are derived from Horizon Group policy assessments. They form two sub-indices:

- 1

Foundations for the future

factors directly related to youth development policies.

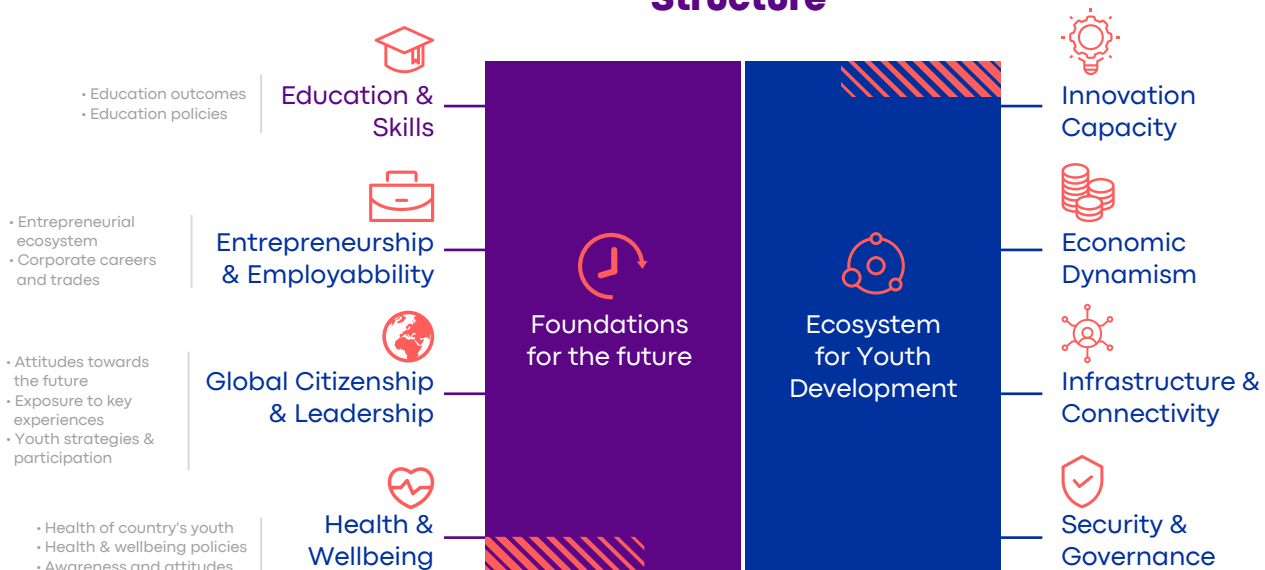
- 2

Ecosystem for youth development

wider factors that shape the development path of the country and create a favorable environment for youth development.

Each of these sub-indices, in turn, consist of pillars and indicators as follows:

Global Youth Index 2022 Structure



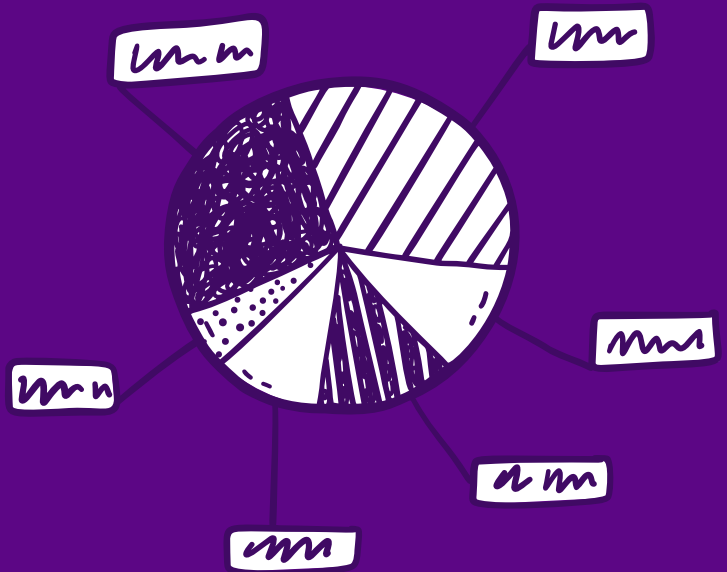
*<https://www.oecd.org/els/soc/handbookonconstructingcompositeindicatorsmethodologyanduserguide.htm>

Table 1: Global Youth Index 2022

RANK	COUNTRY	SCORE (0-100)
1.	 Denmark	67.70
2.	 Sweden	67.58
3.	 Australia	67.40
4.	 Germany	67.21
5.	 Canada	66.28
6.	 United Kingdom	66.01
7.	 South Korea	65.86
8.	 China	64.27
9.	 France	63.40
10.	 United States	63.27
11.	 Japan	63.07
12.	 Spain	54.81
13.	 Turkey	53.96
14.	 Italy	53.13
15.	 Indonesia	52.98
16.	 Russia	52.70
17.	 Saudi Arabia	52.65
18.	 Mexico	52.07
19.	 Philippines	51.16
20.	 Ukraine	49.54
21.	 Brazil	48.80
22.	 Jordan	48.17
23.	 Argentina	47.94
24.	 India	47.23
25.	 Kenya	45.65
26.	 Egypt	45.62
27.	 South Africa	45.19
28.	 Morocco	43.94
29.	 Pakistan	41.74
30.	 Nigeria	36.82

Global Youth Index 2022:

key results



The Index ranking (Table 1) shows that youth development is highly correlated with income levels. Data shows that with the exception of China, the top 10 are all high-income economies. The results also show, however, that countries at all stages of income and development have room for improvement – even the top-ranked country, Denmark, scores only 67.7 out of a possible 100.

The double dividend

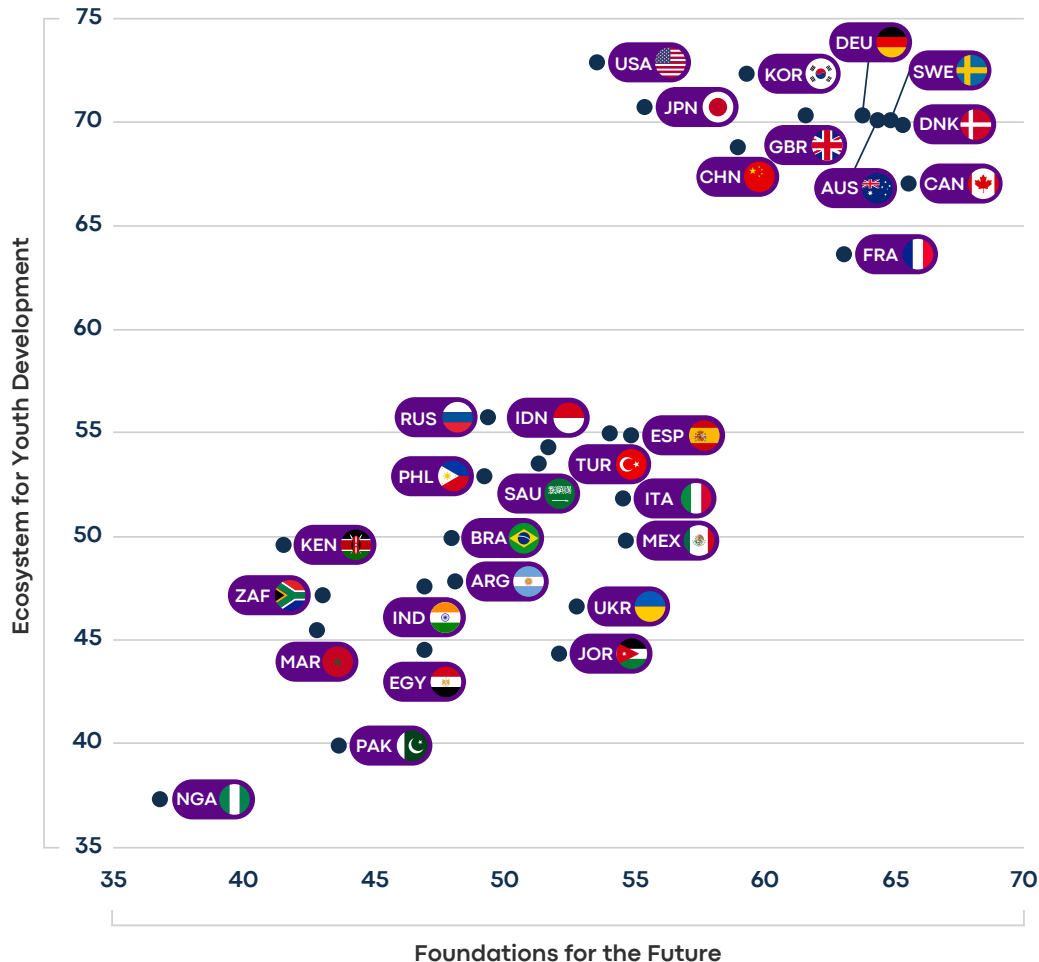
Successful youth development depends on a wide range of policies specifically targeted at youth. We capture these under the heading “Foundations for the future”. This encompasses areas such as education, skills, global citizenship, leadership, and entrepreneurship. Equally important is the broader context of a country’s overall development path. We capture these factors under “Ecosystem for youth development”;

they includes a country’s economic dynamism, level of innovation, infrastructure development, and safety and security.

Successful youth development depends on a wide range of policies specifically targeted at youth.



Each area reinforces the other, and getting both right leads to a “double dividend” for youth. That is, successful youth-targeted policies (for example, to equip youth with relevant skills) will have a limited effect if the ecosystem is lacking (for example, the labor market is rigid). Data shows that as a result of governments working in partnerships with the private sector and other actors, countries are able to achieve efficient youth policies and an ecosystem that is conducive to youth development.

Figure 1: Foundation for the future vs. Ecosystem for youth development

Source: Global Youth Index 2022

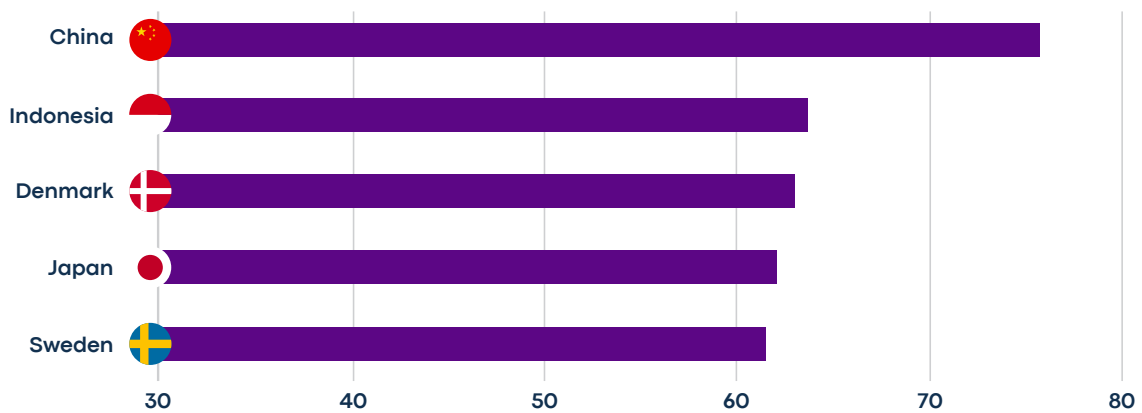
Notes: Scores on a scale of 0-100

Getting youth ready for the future of work

On entrepreneurship and employability, China takes the lead (see Figure 2). Developed countries such as Canada, the United States, Australia and the United Kingdom are outperformed by more dynamic emerging economies, such as Indonesia, Ukraine and Mexico.

7 in 30

Only seven of the Index's 30 countries include industry practitioners in the vocational education teaching workforce.

Figure 2: Top 5: Entrepreneurship and employability

Source: Global Youth Index 2022
Notes: Scores on a scale of 0-100



Youth in Japan need the least amount of time to find a job after graduating.

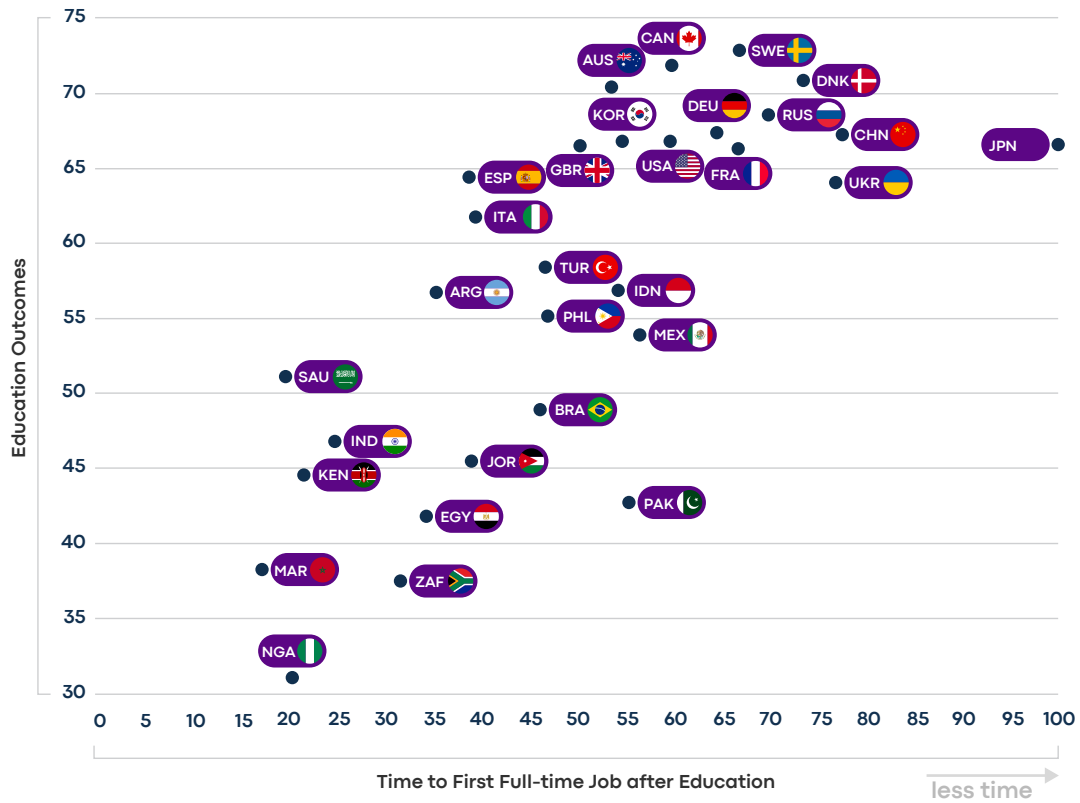
Examples of good practices include employers carrying out vocational training and public employment service centers placing graduates with employers.

Source: <https://www.oecd.org/employment/japan-should-do-more-to-help-young-people-take-part-in-the-labour-market.htm>



Index data shows that in countries with the best education outcomes, graduates need the least amount of time to find a job (see Figure 3). Years of schooling are strongly correlated with income, while periods of youth unemployment can have long-lasting effects on income and health.

Figure 3: Getting Ready for the Future of Work



Source: Global Youth Index 2022

Note: Scores on a scale of 0-100. Education outcomes is a domain in the education and skills sub-index. The scores are based on 26,691 responses to the survey question: “How many months after completing your education did you start a full-time job?”. The responses were transformed to a 0-100 scale, where 100 means least time.



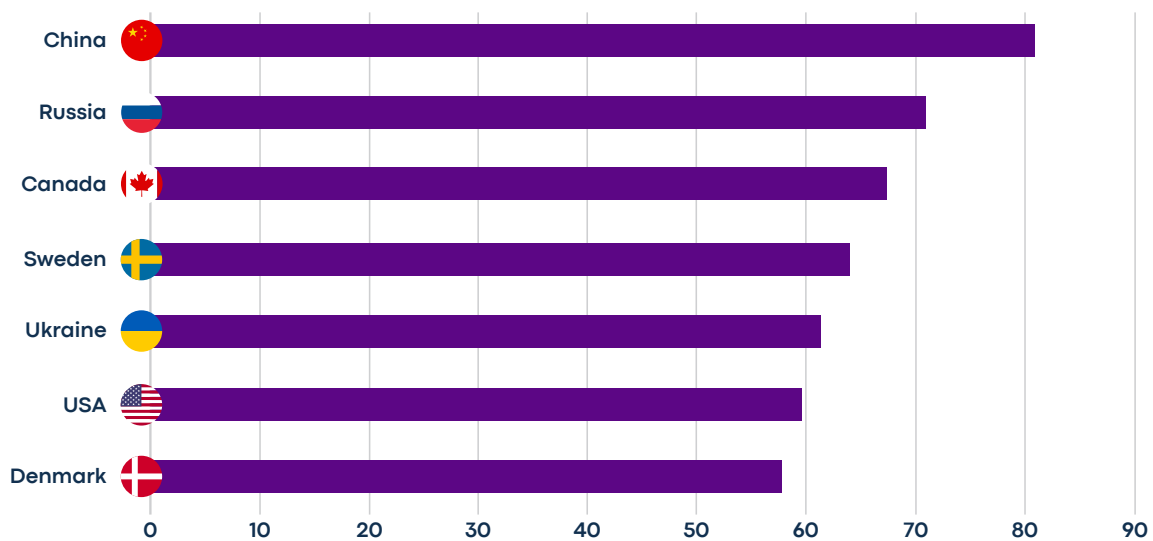
Over the next 10 years, an estimated 50% of jobs will be transformed by automation¹ – and as digital skills become more key to future job prospects, the way we deliver training and education will need to evolve. The GYI assesses skills ranging from applied digital marketing to programming complex software. Many developing countries focus more than high income countries on providing digital skills through education systems: China and Russia, for example, are ahead of many more advanced economies, as shown in Figure 4. Argentina, Saudi Arabia and Morocco are at the bottom of this ranking, with the most room to improve ICT skills.

¹<https://www.mckinsey.com/mgi/overview>

50%

Over the next 10 years, an estimated 50% of jobs will be transformed by automation.

Figure 4: ICT Skills: Selected Countries



Source: Global Youth Index 2022

Note: Scores on a scale of 0-100. ICT skills comprises four sub-indicators: Business software proficiency (GYI21 survey); Programming skills (GYI21 survey); Advanced online communications (GYI21 survey); Digital skills of adult population (Executive Opinion Survey, WEF). The GYI21 survey sample size for ICT-related questions was 31,590. Countries were selected to represent different levels of development.






















Widening options in education

The education and skills component of the GYI measures factors that affect not only youths' employability, but also global citizenship and leadership. It is led by Australia, Germany and Sweden, while the United States and Japan rank relatively low— 13th and 16th, respectively – where educational outcomes could be further developed through more advanced educational policies.

Germany and Sweden perform well on both educational outcomes and policies, while countries such as Saudi Arabia, Argentina, and Turkey perform well on education policies but have room for improvement on educational outcomes, as shown by Figure 4. These differences in performance demonstrate the complexity of implementing educational reforms, which tend to require substantial systemic changes that take time to achieve.

Figure 5: Top 10 in education outcomes and education policies

Top 10 in Education Outcomes			Top 10 in Education Policies		
1	 Sweden	72.84	1	 Australia	75.00
2	 Canada	71.67	2	 Germany	70.60
3	 Denmark	70.74	3	 Saudi Arabia	68.71
4	 Australia	70.46	4	 United Kingdom	65.29
5	 Russia	68.42	5	 Canada	64.49
6	 Germany	67.24	6	 Sweden	64.35
7	 China	67.13	7	 South Korea	60.85
8	 United States	66.86	8	 Argentina	59.71
9	 South Korea	66.83	9	 Denmark	58.90
10	 Japan	66.64	10	 Turkey	57.65

Source: Global Youth Index 2022

Note: Scores on a scale of 0-100. The education outcomes sub-pillar comprises element such as K12 enrollment ratio, post secondary enrolment ratio, Quality of education and ICT Skills. Education policies sub-pillar measures aspects such as digital literacy policies, e-inclusion of women, vocational trainings and social partnerships. (see Methodology Note for details).

Figure 6: Policies for Vocational Programs

Countries that Include Industry Practitioners in Vocational Education Teaching	Countries that have Strong Data on Vocational Programs
 Australia	 Australia
 Canada	 China
 Germany	 Germany
 Mexico	 India
 Philippines	 Indonesia
 Sweden	 Japan

Source: Global Youth Index 2022

Note: The figure shows countries that received full marks on the respective policy assessment. See methodology note for details.

Educational options have never been more diverse, or the choice of educational path more critical. In particular, vocational education is an increasingly important alternative to traditional academic degrees. Work-based learning is found in 16 out of the 30 countries, but teaching is often disconnected from industry practice. As shown in Figure 6, only six countries successfully include industry practitioners in the vocational teaching workforce. Monitoring of vocational programs is important given how skills requirements will change in the coming years, but only six countries have strong data on vocational training programs.

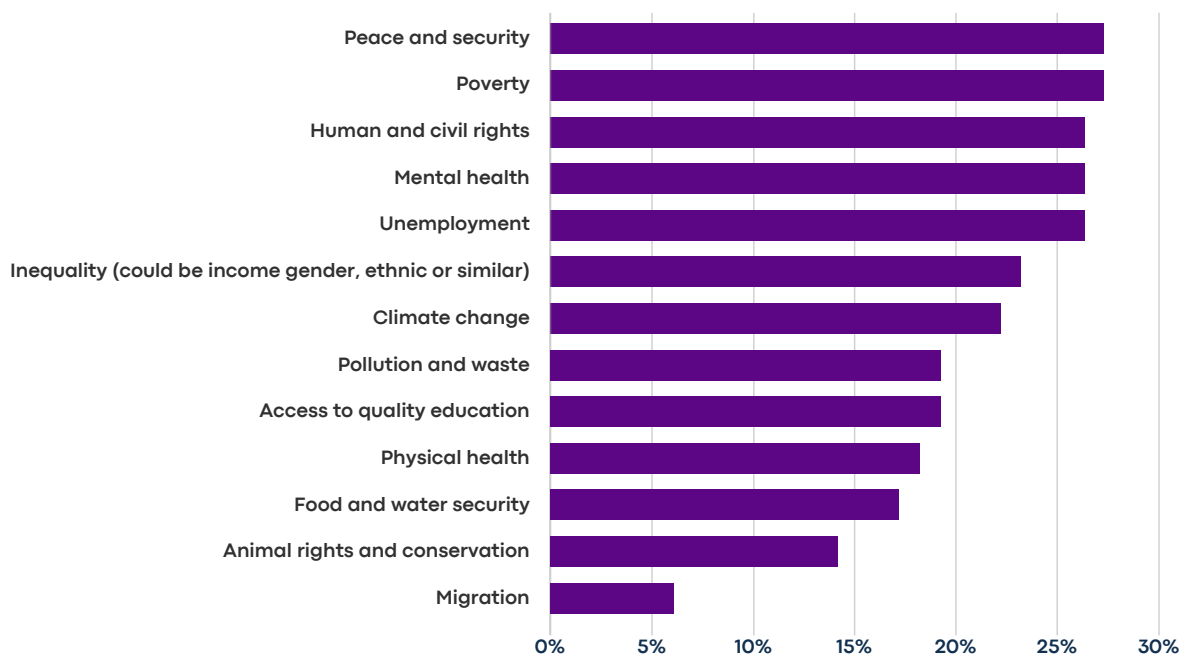
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Key challenges for youth

The global citizenship and leadership domain of the index is led by Canada, Denmark and the United Kingdom. For Japan, at 29th, this is the weakest area of youth development, with youth having the lowest exposure to key experiences among the 30 countries.

At the core of global citizenship education is awareness of global and local issues, and motivation and initiative to act on them. When asked about what they perceive to be the key challenges globally, the top three issues mentioned by youth were peace and security, poverty, and human and civil rights issues (see Figure 7). In general, they saw security-related issues as even more important than environmental issues and mental health was rated as more important than physical health.

Figure 7: Most Important Global Issues for Youth



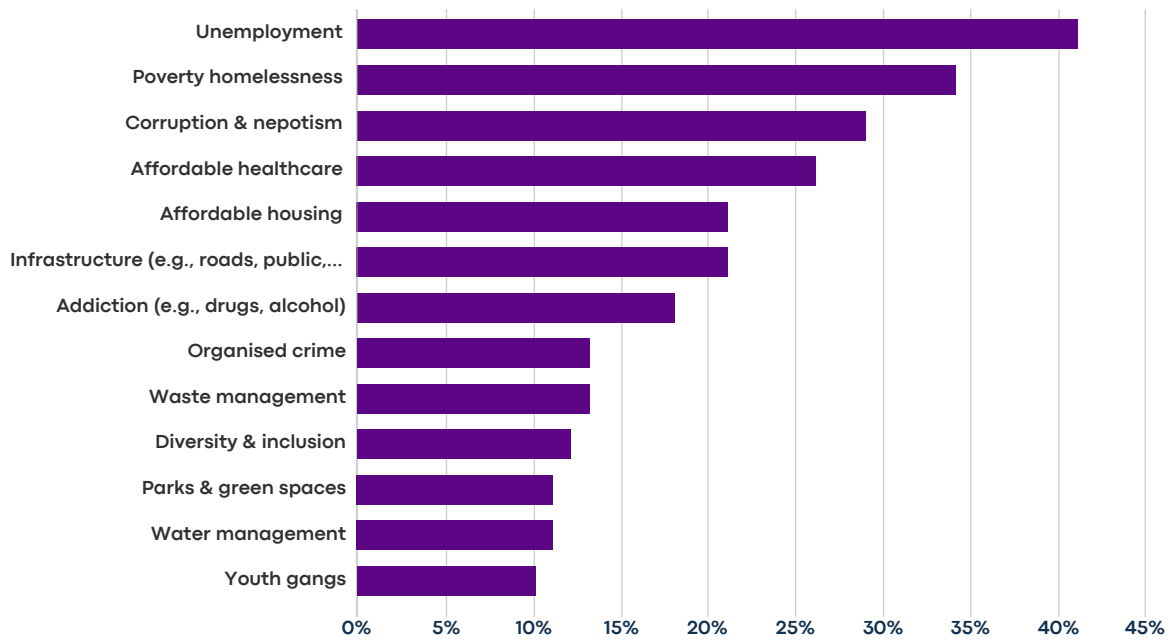
Source: Global Youth Index 2022

Note: Share of answers to the survey question: Which of the following global issues is/are most important to you?

Sample size: 31590

A similar pattern emerged when youth were asked to name the most important local issues. Unemployment, poverty and homelessness, and corruption and nepotism were the top three (see Figure 8). Environmental challenges were seen as relatively less important.

Figure 8: Most Important Local Issues for Youth

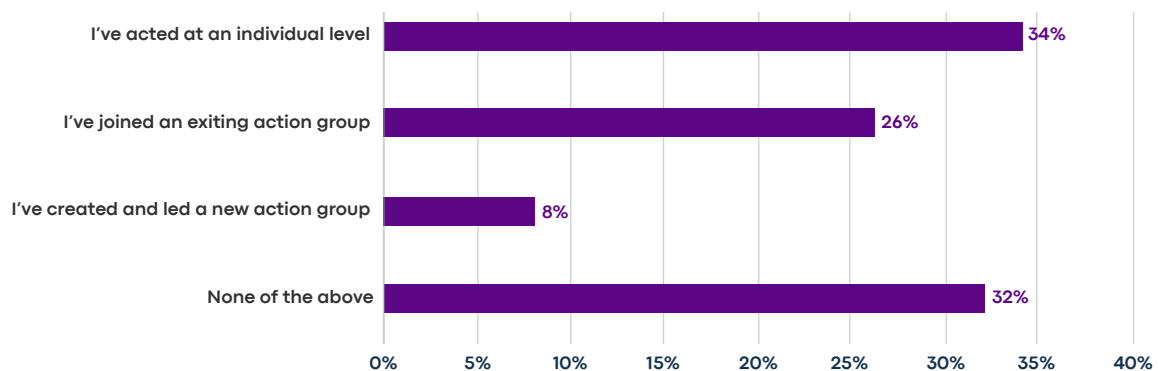


Source: Global Youth Index 2022

Note: Share of answers to the survey question: Which of the following local issues is/are most important to you?
Sample size: 31590.

The data on youth action on challenges is encouraging. When asked if they had taken action on the issues they care about, there was a roughly equal split: 34% said they had acted individually and another 34% in a group (26% joined a group and 8% started or lead one), while 32% did not act at all, as shown in Figure 9.

Figure 9: Action to Address Issues Youth Care About



Source: Global Youth Index 2022

Note: Survey question: "What have you done to address the issue you care about the most in the last year?" Sample size: 31,590.

Health is wealth

Most countries have taken action in response to evidence demonstrating the need to support physical education, healthy diets and mental health counselling for youth. Support is provided especially as part of school programs.

Developed economies such as France, Italy, Sweden and Canada have the best results on health (see Table 2). Their healthcare services score highly on three aspects that are key to youth wellbeing: high quality, easy access and broad-based insurance. They also have strong policies on physical health (including prevention, sport and nutrition) and mental health (including awareness, societal acceptance and counselling).

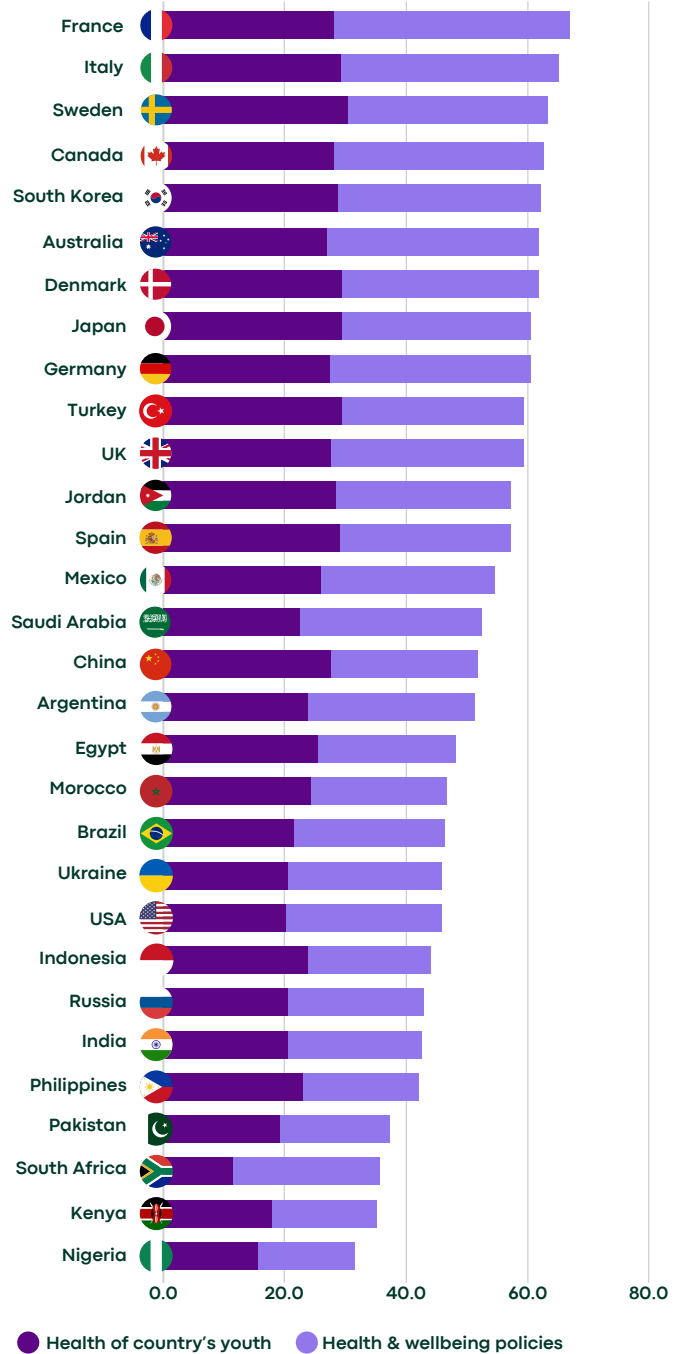
In China and the United States, which otherwise perform well, there is room for improvement in youth health and wellbeing.



In China and the United States, which otherwise perform well, there is room for improvement in youth health and wellbeing. Low scores on physical and mental fitness and the prevalence of substance abuse cause the United States to rank 22nd on this pillar. China's rank of 16th was affected primarily by insufficient healthcare policies, especially in promoting mental wellbeing.



Figure 10: Health and Wellbeing Pillar

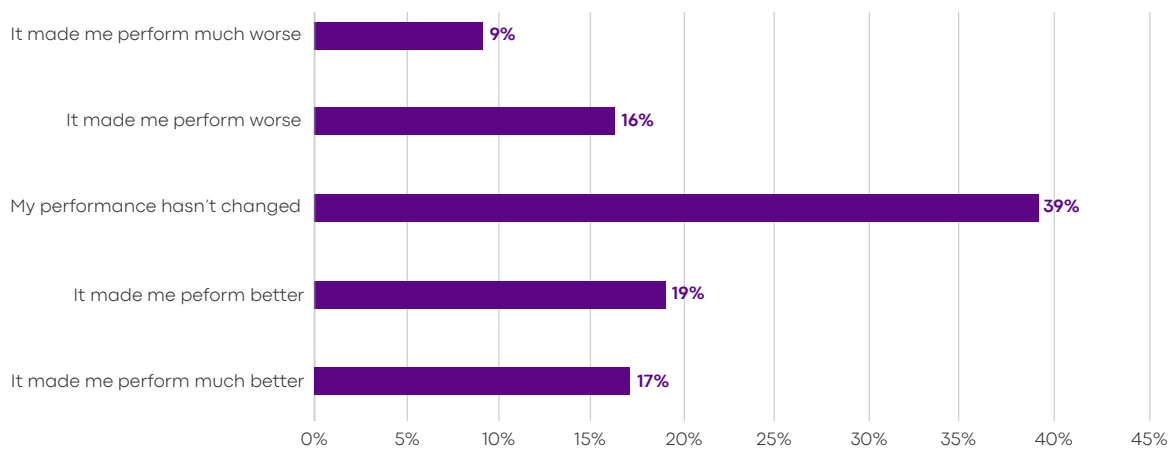


Source: Global Youth Index 2022

Notes: Scores on a scale of 0-100

Most countries have scope for improvement in two areas. The first is early detection of mental illness, which is especially relevant in the context of COVID-19. Even before the pandemic, depression was one of the leading causes of illness and disability among youth globally. In the first year of the pandemic, in particular, social isolation, anxiety and fears about the future led to deteriorating mental health for many (see Figure 11). The second is increasing youth access to supportive environments: digital health services offer opportunities here, especially for putting more emphasis on preventive healthcare.

Figure 11: COVID-19 and Mental Health



Source: Global Youth Index 2022

Notes: Survey question: "Thinking about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, how did it affect your ability to perform successfully at work or in education?" Sample size: 31,590.



In the first year of the pandemic, in particular, social isolation, anxiety and fears about the future led to deteriorating mental health for many youths



Next steps

How to use the Global Youth Index



The Global Youth Index was developed as a tool to support the efforts of policymakers, businesses and youth to improve the environment for youth development in their countries. In particular, it can help to:

- benchmark country results across key areas of youth development and identify good practices from other countries;
- design suitable solutions and policies for challenges facing youth as well as public private initiatives;
- heighten awareness on how supporting youth benefits all of society; and
- inspire young people to take action to design their future.

By providing data on concepts that have not previously been measured, the Index equips stakeholders with the knowledge they need to establish partnerships at country level to improve the prospects for youth. We hope the Index will be used widely to contribute to increasing youth wellbeing in the countries assessed.

We hope the Index will be used widely to contribute to increasing youth wellbeing





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



This paper builds on the research undertaken for the Global Youth Index

<https://gyi.misk.org.sa/>.

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Country profiles, the full methodology
and dataset can be accessed at
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