



## Briefing note

### What is Youthwise?

Youthwise is a Youth Advisory Board composed of **23 people aged 18-30** covering 24 OECD countries, which will act as a sounding board for the Organisation's proposals. Members of Youthwise will brainstorm with OECD experts and put forward suggestions for consideration by the OECD in its work on youth. The first Youthwise pilot programme will cover the period April- December 2021.

Youthwise is an informal group that will meet approximately once a month to participate in webinars and consultations, allowing members to engage with OECD experts and gain a better understanding of how the OECD functions and the work it does, as well as giving them the opportunity to input into a range of work areas. They will also attend high-level events and join interactive workshops with the Y20, meeting youth leaders from around the world.

### Why is Youthwise being formed?

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted living, learning, and working. It has profoundly affected physical and mental health, and people's social lives on an individual level, and globally, it has shaken whole economies. These impacts have been especially hard on young people, as we have seen in the OECD's work on employment, education and mental health<sup>1</sup>. And with global vaccinations underway, now is the time for all segments of society – including this most affected group – to imagine a future beyond the crisis.

In the Communications Council meeting in January 2021, member countries including Belgium, France, and Greece stressed the need for OECD analysis and recommendations to target young people in particular. In March 2021, the OECD's Economic Outlook included a strong message on the need to provide urgent help to young people to prevent long-term scarring of a generation. The kinds of help and the most effective methods of its delivery should be determined with young people themselves.

---

<sup>1</sup> OECD (2020), *Youth and COVID-19: Response, recovery and resilience*, <https://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/youth-and-covid-19-response-recovery-and-resilience-c40e61c6>

OECD (2021), *Economic Outlook, Interim Report March 2021*, [https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/economics/oecd-economic-outlook/volume-2020/issue-2\\_34bfd999-en](https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/economics/oecd-economic-outlook/volume-2020/issue-2_34bfd999-en)

Not only are the stakes high for them, but their lived experiences, their resilience and their creativity, can help policy makers reinvent learning, working and living after COVID-19.

A number of OECD directorates alongside PAC – notably the Directorate for Education and Skills and the Public Governance Directorate – have long engaged with youth in different areas of their work. However, the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on young people, together with the political momentum originating from October 2020's MCM (through the call to review the Youth Action Plan), has made youth engagement a strong priority that requires an organisation-wide response, to bring together all new and existing youth initiatives.

Youthwise is, in part, a response to that call from Members, and a vehicle for the Organisation's call to action for youth. It is a way to listen to young people and **create a space for them to contribute to the OECD's work**. And with the significant input of many directorates into the creation, selection, and implementation of Youthwise, it is a useful point of federation for youth engagement across the OECD.

With the call for applications initiated in February 2021, under the umbrella of the *I am the Future of Work* campaign, the Youthwise programme's initial focus will be on learning and employment. Members of Youthwise will provide input into the new **Youth Action Plan** requested by OECD member countries in the October 2020 MCM statement. More recently, the Dutch Ambassador to the OECD also suggested that Youthwise could be a useful sounding board in the process of defining a new vision statement for the organisation.

Following this pilot programme, this and future Youthwise cohorts could work on other thematics, with OECD Members, directorates and young people taking part.

### **How was Youthwise formed?**

The OECD Secretary General launched a call for applications to Youthwise on 5 February 2021 at the Warwick Economic Summit, the largest student-run economics forum in Europe. Online applications were open for one month until 5 March. PAC and its regional Centres, in partnership with external youth partners, the Public Governance Directorate, OECD institutional stakeholders such as TUAC and BIAC, and more, promoted and disseminated the call for applications to a broad audience of diverse ages, backgrounds and geographies. PAC also shared a social media kit with communications contacts in OECD delegations, to promote the call for applications and an online youth [survey](#) on learning and work.

Participants had to fulfil specific criteria such as being an OECD member country national, aged between 18 and 30 years as of 1 January 2021, fluent in English, interested in national and international debates on education and job policies, and finally, they had to be committed to participating in a number of group activities in 2021. We specified from the beginning that Youthwise members would be selected on an individual basis and would not be representing their country(ies) or an external organisation. A group of around 20 members is the optimal size for efficient collaboration and engagement online.

While acknowledging the fact that the OECD has two official languages (French and English), given the need to carry out Youthwise working sessions and meetings online and with limited resources, communications will be conducted in English. Reports on the group's work will be made available in both official languages of the Organisation.

Interest in the initiative was significant, reflecting an appetite among youth communities for a voice in matters that concern them. The call garnered well over 600 applications, the vast majority coming from

OECD Member countries—32 out of 37, or 86% of OECD membership. Applications from non-OECD countries or persons outside the specified age range were not considered.)

Applicants were asked to answer the following question through either a short essay, a video or an image: “What do you think is the most important action that political leaders should take to help young people thrive in their professional lives?”

Following an initial screening of responses by a 19-person task force in PAC, a cross-generational jury from PAC and the Public Governance Directorate reviewed 60 leading applications. The final nominations were made among the strongest candidates with an effort to balance gender, age, geographical origins, social background, occupation, life and career experience and other considerations.

Given the current context, members of Youthwise will work remotely and will have an online working space to communicate with each other and the OECD. The first informal “meet and greet” was on 16 April, during which members were introduced to the OECD and the Youthwise coordination team, and had the chance to connect with each other. An official kick-off meeting on 4 May will set out the rationale for the project and the issue areas that will be covered.

### Numbers and figures

We received 600+ applications, of which 517 were found to be valid after thorough review.

#### Split of the applications received by country<sup>2</sup>

Italy	61	Denmark	8
Mexico	53	Costa Rica	7
Japan	37	Greece	7
United States	37	Poland	7
United Kingdom	36	Austria	5
France	33	Israel	5
Colombia	32	Sweden	5
Canada	30	Czech Republic	4
Germany	25	Ireland	4
Spain	20	Slovak Republic	4
Netherlands	18	Chile	3
Belgium	15	Finland	3
Australia	13	Hungary	3
Turkey	12	Luxembourg	3
Korea	10	Estonia	1
Lithuania	10	Latvia	1
Portugal	9	Switzerland	1

### Who is part of Youthwise?

---

<sup>2</sup> The country numbers include some dual nationalities so the total adds up to just over 517.

# YOUTHWISE



**Pedro Rueda**  
Colombian  
19 years old  
Student of Law



**Carine Akpoto**  
French  
25 years old  
Recent graduate in  
International  
Cooperation



**Manpreet Deol**  
Canadian  
24 years old  
Student of the  
Social Science of  
the Internet



**Markus Kuttvonen**  
Finnish  
21 years old  
Student of  
Emergency care



**Eugénie Niyibamaso**  
Swedish  
27 years old  
Care worker and  
Student of Social Work



**Idalia Ziehl**  
Mexican  
27 years old  
Founder and CEO  
of equestrian  
equipment startup



**Joe Grochmal**  
American  
23 years old  
Economic  
Development fellow



**Jim Frindert**  
German  
22 years old  
Student of  
Economics



**Miyu Sasaki**  
Japanese  
20 years old  
Student of the Arts



**Brian O'Shea**  
Irish  
25 years old  
Student of Urban  
Studies



**Alexandre Cornet**  
French  
25 years old  
Reserve Naval  
Cadet and Ocean  
Policy Officer



**Angela Gales**  
Italian &  
Luxembourgish  
19 years old  
Student of Economics  
and Politics



**Lorna MacLean**  
British  
24 years old  
Recent History  
graduate and  
Research volunteer



**Jack Garton**  
Australian  
26 years old  
Juris Doctor  
candidate



**Anna Jeppesen**  
Danish  
20 years old  
Volunteer in  
Pedagogical Assistance



**Andrea Bittnerová**  
Czech  
29 years old  
Project Manager



**João Cardoso**  
Portuguese  
25 years old  
Student of Science  
and Technology



**Hubert Put**  
Polish  
26 years old  
Energy Markets  
Analyst



**Zilfi Sert**  
Dutch & Turkish  
25 years old  
Health  
Researcher



**Konstantinos Papachristou**  
Greek  
19 years old  
Student of Politics  
and International  
studies



**Ingrid Annilo**  
Estonian  
25 years old  
Project and  
Partnerships  
Officer



**Deok Yi**  
Korean  
26 years old  
Student of Media  
Design Engineering



**Yam Atir**  
Israeli  
28 years old  
Director of Government  
Relations and Policy

## Final board composition

## Applicant breakdown

### Genders

- M: 11
- F: 12

### Status'

- Employed: 11
- Student: 9
- Looking for work: 3

### Ages:

- 19 - 3
- 20 - 1
- 21 - 1
- 22 - 2
- 23 - 1
- 24 - 2
- 25 - 6
- 26 - 3
- 27 - 2
- 28 - 1
- 29 - 1

### Countries:

1. Australia
2. Canada
3. Colombia
4. Czech Republic
5. Denmark
6. Estonia
7. Finland
8. France
9. Germany
10. Greece
11. Ireland
12. Israel
13. Italy\*
14. Japan
15. Korea
16. Luxembourg\*
17. Mexico
18. Netherlands\*\*
19. Poland
20. Portugal
21. Sweden
22. Turkey\*\*
23. United Kingdom
24. United States

# Applicant breakdown

## Genders

- M: 11
- F: 12

## Status'

- Employed: 11
- Student: 9
- Looking for work: 3

## Ages:

- 19 - 3
- 20 - 1
- 21 - 1
- 22 - 2
- 23 - 1
- 24 - 2
- 25 - 6
- 26 - 3
- 27 - 2
- 28 - 1
- 29 - 1

## Countries:

1. Australia
2. Canada
3. Colombia
4. Czech Republic
5. Denmark
6. Estonia
7. Finland
8. France
9. Germany
10. Greece
11. Ireland
12. Israel
13. Italy\*
14. Japan
15. Korea
16. Luxembourg\*
17. Mexico
18. Netherlands\*\*
19. Poland
20. Portugal
21. Sweden
22. Turkey\*\*
23. United Kingdom
24. United States