

YOUTH.sg:

# The State of Youth in Singapore

*Youth and the Future of Work*



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WE HEAR **YOUTH**  
HERE FOR **YOUTH**

At NYC, we believe in a world where young people are respected and heard, and have the ability to influence and make a difference to the world. Together with our partners, we develop future-ready youth who are committed to Singapore by instilling in them a heart for service, resilience and an enterprising spirit.

## Our Vision

Thriving youth who are **Future-Ready** and **Committed to Singapore**

## Our Mission

Create **Opportunities for All Youths in Singapore**

To be **heard**, to be **empowered** and to be **the change**

## Our Background

NYC was set up by the Singapore Government on 1 November 1989 as the national co-ordinating body for youth affairs in Singapore and the focal point of international youth affairs.

On 1 January 2015, NYC began its operations as an autonomous agency under the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY) and housed two key institutions: Outward Bound Singapore (OBS) and Youth Corps Singapore (YCS). Together, the agency drives youth development and broadens outreach to young Singaporeans and youth sector organisations.

Mr Edwin Tong, Minister for Culture, Community and Youth and Second Minister for Law is the Chairperson of the 16th Council. The Council comprises members from diverse backgrounds such as the youth, media, arts, sports, corporate and government sectors.



## Preface

The National Youth Survey (NYS) studies the major concerns and issues of schooling and working youths in Singapore. It is a time-series survey that tracks and provides updated analyses of national youth statistics and outcomes to inform policy and practice. To date, NYS has been conducted in 2002, 2005, 2010, 2013, 2016, and 2019. Findings and analyses from each cycle of NYS are subsequently published as YOUTH.sg: The State of Youth in Singapore (YOUTH.sg).

**This edition of YOUTH.sg consists of six separate issues covering the topics of**



**Values &  
Attitudes**



**Education &  
Employment**



**Social  
Support**



**Social  
Cohesion**



**Wellbeing**



**COVID-19  
(Special Edition)**

Each issue features youth statistics and insights from the NYS. Complementing the NYS insights are relevant studies and in-depth analyses by practitioners in youth research and development to provide readers with an overview of the state of youth in Singapore.

Contributors comprise NYS' academic collaborators (A/Ps Ho Kong Chong, Ho Kong Weng, and Irene Ng), NYC, Youth STEPS' academic collaborators (Dr Chew Han Ei, A/P Vincent Chua, and Dr Alex Tan) and other contributors (Ministry of Manpower, National Arts Council, National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre, and Sport Singapore). Together, the YOUTH.sg intends to shed light on and explore specific emergent trends and issues of youths.

**This publication has been put together by the Research team at the  
National Youth Council.**

### Notation

NA Not Available

### Notes

Percentages may not total up to 100% due to rounding.

Survey figures may vary slightly due to sample weighting.

# Education & Employment

Education comprises learning within formal institutions as well as non-institutional learning. Continual acquisition of knowledge and skills is key to helping youths build competencies and stay relevant in today's evolving workforce. Understanding youths' attained competencies, perceptions of future preparedness, and educational aspirations provides additional insight to understanding the interdependent role of human capital accumulation and youth development (World Bank, 2018).

Employment reflects the process by which individuals apply their skills, competencies, and other attributes to create economic value. Looking at youths' perceived employability, job seeking stressors, and job expectations could go a long way towards balancing youths' occupational aspirations and readiness with the demands of the economy.



# Education & Employment

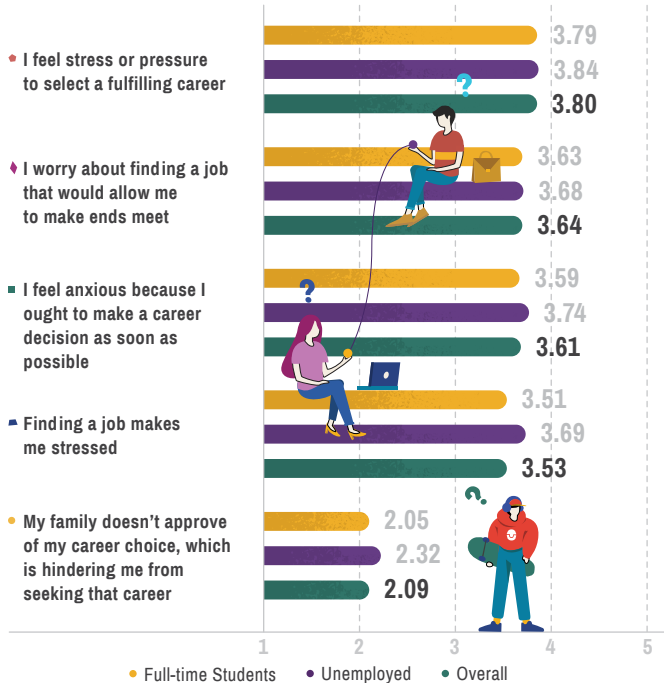
Pathways toward achieving one's educational and career aspirations have never looked as diverse and complex for today's youths.

Various industries within Singapore's economy are undergoing rapid changes due to technological advancements and the push to go digital. Compared to past cohorts, job security and lifetime employment are less guaranteed (Blossfeld et al., 2005; Kalleberg, 2009) as the ever-changing labour landscape introduces uncertainties to both school-to-work transitions and early career development (Heinz, 2009). In addition, COVID-19 was observed globally to be a major disruption to youths' pathways in achieving their educational and career aspirations (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and

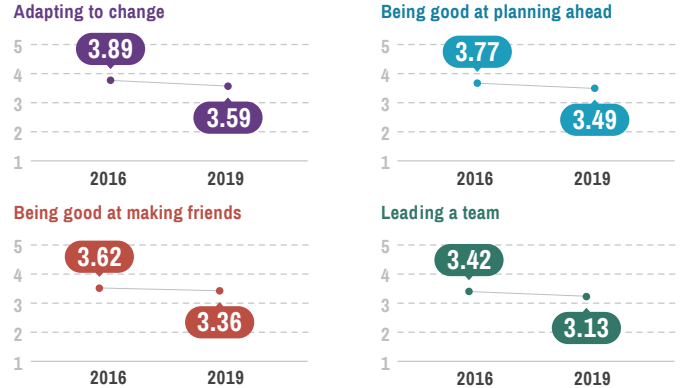
Development, 2020). This further complicates existing job seeking pressures among youths in Singapore.

Thus, in today's globalised economy, it is ever more pressing for youths to continuously assess and develop their skillsets and work experiences in order to better transition into the workplace and build a fulfilling career. Beyond building hard competencies, youths must not forget to develop their soft skills, such as creativity and social intelligence (Deloitte, 2017). In view of the trends, youths in Singapore are observed to sustain confidence in achieving their educational goals, while maintaining a conservative outlook of their trajectory in the future economy.

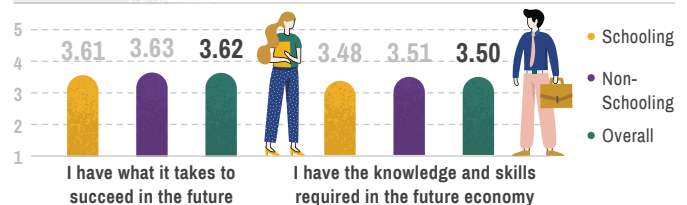
Prior to the pandemic, youths **faced pressures to find their preferred employment.**



Competencies related to **thriving in a diverse and dynamic environment** saw the greatest dips.



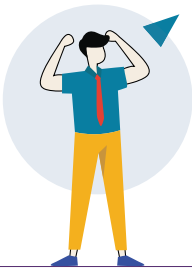
Youths are **moderately confident** in their level of preparedness for the future.



# Part A: Future Preparedness & Competencies

Regardless of age and schooling status, youths' self-reported preparedness for the future is moderate (**Tables A1 and A2**). In line with their modest assessment of having the requisite knowledge and skills for the future economy, 2019 saw a decline in reported levels of work, social and cultural competencies (**Table A3**).

Younger youths are more likely to perceive that they possess leadership, multicultural, and empathetic competencies, while older youths are more likely to perceive that they are good at planning ahead. Public speaking is observed to be the weakest competency reported across all age groups (**Table A4**).



**Question: To what extent do you agree with the following statements?**  
(Based on a 5-pt scale, where 5="strongly agree", 3="neither agree nor disagree", & 1="strongly disagree".)

▲ **TABLE A1: MEAN RATINGS OF YOUTHS' PERCEIVED PREPAREDNESS BY AGE**  
(with standard deviations in parentheses)

	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	Overall
	(n=716)	(n=804)	(n=926)	(n=946)	(n=3,392)
I have what it takes to succeed in the future	3.61 (0.82)	3.60 (0.87)	3.64 (0.80)	3.63 (0.81)	3.62 (0.83)
I have the knowledge and skills required in the future economy	3.45 (0.84)	3.49 (0.86)	3.50 (0.83)	3.54 (0.86)	3.50 (0.85)

▲ **TABLE A2: MEAN RATINGS OF YOUTHS' PERCEIVED PREPAREDNESS BY SCHOOLING STATUS**  
(with standard deviations in parentheses)

	Schooling	Non-Schooling	Overall
	(n=1,116)	(n=2,276)	(n=3,392)
I have what it takes to succeed in the future	3.61 (0.83)	3.63 (0.82)	3.62 (0.83)
I have the knowledge and skills required in the future economy	3.48 (0.84)	3.51 (0.86)	3.50 (0.85)

**Note**  
This is a new question introduced in NYS 2019.

**Question: To what extent do these qualities reflect who you are?**  
 (Based on a 5-pt scale, where 5="very much like me", 3="somewhat like me", & 1="not like me at all".)

**▲ TABLE A3: MEAN RATINGS OF YOUTHS' COMPETENCIES OVER TIME**

(with standard deviations in parentheses)

		2010	2013	2016	2019
		(n=1,268)	(n=2,843)	(n=3,531)	(n=3,392)
<b>Work Competencies</b>	Working well with other people	3.91 (0.70)	3.95 (0.86)	3.94 (0.84)	3.78 (0.87)
	Learning and applying new knowledge/skills <sup>a</sup>	NA	NA	NA	3.65 (0.93)
	Analysing and evaluating issues objectively <sup>a</sup>	NA	NA	NA	3.63 (0.97)
	Being good at planning ahead	3.68 (0.83)	3.70 (1.01)	3.77 (0.98)	3.49 (1.05)
	Taking initiative <sup>a</sup>	NA	NA	NA	3.42 (1.01)
	Leading a team of people	3.44 (0.97)	3.41 (1.13)	3.42 (1.11)	3.13 (1.16)
	Being innovative <sup>a</sup>	NA	NA	NA	3.11 (1.07)
<b>Social Emotional Competencies</b>	Caring about other people's feelings	4.01 (0.73)	4.19 (0.84)	4.15 (0.85)	3.92 (0.96)
	Staying away from people who might get me in trouble	3.65 (1.02)	3.74 (1.06)	3.77 (1.03)	3.67 (1.08)
	Adapting to change	3.85 (0.78)	3.86 (0.91)	3.89 (0.91)	3.59 (0.97)
	Being able to manage my thoughts and feelings <sup>a</sup>	NA	NA	NA	3.51 (0.98)
	Being good at making friends	3.96 (0.73)	3.68 (1.05)	3.62 (1.06)	3.36 (1.08)
	Speaking publicly	3.12 (1.01)	2.75 (1.25)	2.88 (1.23)	2.67 (1.23)
<b>Global &amp; Cultural Competencies</b>	Respecting the values and beliefs of people who are of different race or culture than I am	3.91 (0.74)	4.23 (0.81)	4.20 (0.77)	4.02 (0.92)
	Understanding the impact of global forces on local issues <sup>a</sup>	NA	NA	NA	3.27 (1.12)
	Knowing a lot about people of other races and cultures	3.41 (0.95)	3.36 (1.08)	3.39 (1.05)	3.24 (1.07)

**Note**

a. Items are new to NYS 2019.



▲ **TABLE A4: MEAN RATINGS OF YOUTHS' COMPETENCIES BY AGE**

(with standard deviations in parentheses)

		15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	Overall
		(n=716)	(n=804)	(n=926)	(n=946)	(n=3,392)
<b>Work Competencies</b>	Working well with other people	3.78 (0.91)	3.81 (0.86)	3.77 (0.86)	3.78 (0.87)	3.78 (0.87)
	Learning and applying new knowledge/skills <sup>a</sup>	3.69 (0.92)	3.66 (0.90)	3.67 (0.92)	3.60 (0.95)	3.65 (0.93)
	Analysing and evaluating issues objectively <sup>a</sup>	3.57 (1.01)	3.69 (0.95)	3.64 (0.95)	3.60 (0.95)	3.63 (0.97)
	Being good at planning ahead	3.38 (1.13)	3.48 (1.06)	3.52 (1.05)	3.54 (0.98)	3.49 (1.05)
	Taking initiative <sup>a</sup>	3.37 (1.05)	3.43 (1.01)	3.41 (1.00)	3.47 (0.99)	3.42 (1.01)
	Leading a team of people	3.22 (1.20)	3.17 (1.15)	3.08 (1.14)	3.09 (1.15)	3.13 (1.16)
	Being innovative <sup>a</sup>	3.19 (1.10)	3.10 (1.06)	3.06 (1.04)	3.10 (1.08)	3.11 (1.07)
<b>Social Emotional Competencies</b>	Caring about other people's feelings	4.07 (0.92)	4.00 (0.96)	3.86 (0.97)	3.82 (0.95)	3.92 (0.96)
	Staying away from people who might get me in trouble	3.67 (1.08)	3.71 (1.10)	3.67 (1.06)	3.63 (1.07)	3.67 (1.08)
	Adapting to change	3.59 (0.99)	3.61 (1.00)	3.58 (0.93)	3.57 (0.96)	3.59 (0.97)
	Being able to manage my thoughts and feelings <sup>a</sup>	3.47 (1.05)	3.50 (1.03)	3.50 (0.96)	3.55 (0.90)	3.51 (0.98)
	Being good at making friends	3.44 (1.12)	3.39 (1.10)	3.33 (1.04)	3.31 (1.09)	3.36 (1.08)
	Speaking publicly	2.76 (1.29)	2.71 (1.24)	2.64 (1.21)	2.60 (1.21)	2.67 (1.23)
<b>Global &amp; Cultural Competencies</b>	Respecting the values and beliefs of people who are of different race or culture than I am	4.14 (0.92)	4.12 (0.87)	3.97 (0.91)	3.90 (0.96)	4.02 (0.92)
	Understanding the impact of global forces on local issues <sup>a</sup>	3.36 (1.13)	3.30 (1.15)	3.22 (1.06)	3.21 (1.12)	3.27 (1.12)
	Knowing a lot about people of other races and cultures	3.33 (1.06)	3.26 (1.07)	3.17 (1.05)	3.23 (1.09)	3.24 (1.07)

**Note**

a. Items are new to NYS 2019.



# Part B: Expectations & Aspirations

**Section B1:**  
**Perceived Highest Level**  
**Of Education Achievable**

Youths remain confident in their ability to attain a bachelor's degree or higher (**Table B1**). While the majority of schooling youths believe that they can obtain at least a bachelor's degree, non-schooling youths are more likely to think that they can achieve a postgraduate degree (**Table B2**).

Question: What is the highest level of education you think you can achieve?

▲ **TABLE B1: YOUTHS' PERCEIVED HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION ACHIEVABLE OVER TIME**

	2013	2016	2019
	(n=2,843)	(n=3,531)	(n=3,392)
Postgraduate degree	38%	34%	39%
Bachelor's degree	38%	39%	37%
Diploma	12%	13%	10%
Professional certification	7%	6%	6%
ITE or equivalent	3%	4%	2%
'A' level/Int'l Baccalaureate	1%	1%	1%
'O' or 'N' level	2%	3%	2%
PSLE & below	0%	1%	2%



▲ **TABLE B2: YOUTHS' PERCEIVED HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION ACHIEVABLE BY SCHOOLING STATUS**

	Schooling	Non-schooling	Overall
	(n=1,116)	(n=2,276)	(n=3,392)
Postgraduate degree	33%	43%	39%
Bachelor's degree	48%	32%	37%
Diploma	12%	10%	10%
Professional certification	3%	7%	6%
ITE or equivalent	1%	3%	2%
'A' level/Int'l Baccalaureate	1%	1%	1%
'O' or 'N' level	2%	3%	2%
PSLE & below	1%	2%	2%



## Section B2: Perceived Education To Get A Decent Job

Corresponding to the belief that they can attain a bachelor's degree, youths also continue to perceive that a degree is the minimum qualification level needed to get a decent job. This belief is held by at least half of youths in Singapore across all schooling status (**Tables B3 and B4**).

**Question: In your opinion, what level of education/training does a person need to get an average/decent job these days?**

▲ **TABLE B3: YOUTHS' PERCEIVED LEVEL OF EDUCATION NEEDED TO GET A DECENT JOB OVER TIME**

	2013	2016	2019
	(n=2,843)	(n=3,531)	(n=3,392)
Postgraduate degree	6%	5%	6%
Bachelor's degree	52%	50%	53%
Diploma	30%	30%	28%
ITE or equivalent	6%	8%	6%
'A' level/Int'l Baccalaureate	1%	1%	1%
'O' or 'N' level	4%	4%	4%
PSLE	1%	0%	1%
Others	1%	2%	2%

▲ **TABLE B4: YOUTHS' PERCEIVED LEVEL OF EDUCATION NEEDED TO GET A DECENT JOB BY SCHOOLING STATUS**

	Schooling	Non-schooling	Overall
	(n=1,116)	(n=2,276)	(n=3,392)
Postgraduate degree	7%	6%	6%
Bachelor's degree	53%	54%	53%
Diploma	30%	27%	28%
ITE or equivalent	5%	6%	6%
'A' level/Int'l Baccalaureate	1%	1%	1%
'O' or 'N' level	4%	3%	4%
PSLE	0%	1%	1%
Others	1%	2%	2%

### Section B3: Expected Income

Most youths have a minimum income level in mind when seeking a job (**Table B5**). Across all age groups, close to 90% of youths expect to earn more than \$2,000 (**Table B7**), which is a realistic expectation considering that the median gross monthly salary among fresh graduates in permanent full-time jobs in 2020 was \$3,700 (Ang, 2021).

**Question: Is there a minimum level of income per month below which you would not accept a job as your main occupation?**

▲ **TABLE B5: YOUTHS WITH EXPECTED LEVEL OF INCOME OVER TIME**

	2013	2016	2019
	(n=2,843)	(n=3,531)	(n=3,392)
Yes	72%	83%	85%

▲ **TABLE B6: YOUTHS WITH EXPECTED LEVEL OF INCOME BY AGE**

	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	Overall
	(n=716)	(n=804)	(n=926)	(n=946)	(n=3,392)
Yes	77%	84%	88%	88%	85%

**Question: What is the minimum amount of monthly income at which you would accept a job as your main occupation?**

▲ **TABLE B7: YOUTHS' EXPECTED LEVEL OF INCOME BY AGE**

	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	Overall
	(n=555)	(n=679)	(n=817)	(n=837)	(n=2,888)
\$10,000 and above	5%	1%	1%	3%	2%
\$7,000 - \$9,999	7%	1%	1%	5%	3%
\$5,000 - \$6,999	15%	3%	8%	20%	12%
\$3,000 - \$4,999	33%	42%	49%	42%	42%
\$2,000 - \$2,999	29%	43%	33%	24%	32%
\$1,500 - \$1,999	6%	7%	6%	4%	6%
\$1,000 - \$1,499	4%	3%	1%	1%	2%
\$500 - \$999	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Less than \$500	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%

## Part C: Employment Concerns



### Section C1: Perceived Employability

While recognising that there are opportunities available in the labour market, schooling and unemployed youths are only moderately confident in their employability. In particular, they may be less assured of having the right skillsets to get a job (**Table C1**). Working youths are more confident in their employability, particularly if they perceive themselves as having the relevant skills and experience (**Table C2**).

**Question:** We would like to know about your opinions on your prospects regarding work. Below are some statements that you may agree or disagree with.

(Based on a 5-pt scale, where 5="strongly agree", 3="neither agree nor disagree", & 1="strongly disagree".)

▲ **TABLE C1: MEAN RATINGS OF YOUTHS' PERCEIVED EMPLOYABILITY BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS**

(with standard deviations in parentheses)

	Full-time Students	Unemployed	Overall
	(n=1,328)	(n=199)	(n=1,527)
I am confident there is a market for the job that I am intending to pursue	3.53 (0.87)	3.58 (0.88)	3.54 (0.87)
I know what I need to do to get the job that I want	3.53 (0.88)	3.45 (0.92)	3.52 (0.89)
I am confident that my educational qualifications can secure me a job in my chosen field	3.39 (0.95)	3.38 (1.01)	3.39 (0.96)
People in the career I am aiming for are in high demand in the labour market	3.36 (0.88)	3.51 (0.92)	3.38 (0.89)
The skills and abilities that I possess allow me to be employed in any organisation	3.30 (0.92)	3.25 (0.96)	3.29 (0.92)
There are plenty of job vacancies where I am looking	2.86 (0.85)	2.94 (0.94)	2.87 (0.86)

#### Note

Full-time Students comprise – (1) Full-time Students and not working and (2) Full-time Students and working part-time.

Source: Youth STEPS (National Youth Council & IPS Social Lab, 2019). 🐦

Question: We would like to know about the nature of your job. Below are some statements that you may agree or disagree with. (Based on a 5-pt scale, where 5="strongly agree", 3="neither agree nor disagree", and 1="strongly disagree".)

▲ **TABLE C2: MEAN RATINGS OF WORKING YOUTHS' PERCEIVED EMPLOYABILITY**  
(with standard deviations in parentheses)

	Employed
	(n=1,201)
I could get any job, anywhere, so long as my skills and experience were reasonably relevant	3.69 (0.79)
I am aware of the opportunities arising in this organisation even if they are different to what I do now	3.62 (0.80)
If I needed to, I could easily get another job like mine in a similar organisation	3.52 (0.89)
Even if there was downsizing in my current organisation, I am confident that I could remain employed	3.50 (0.95)
My personal networks in this organisation help me in my career	3.46 (0.90)
Anyone with my level of skills and knowledge, will be highly sought after by employers	3.39 (0.80)
I could easily get a similar job to mine in almost any organisation	3.29 (0.93)

**Note**  
Employed comprises – (1) Working full-time and not studying, (2) Working full-time and studying part-time, (3) Working part-time and not studying and (4) Working part-time and studying part-time.

**Section C2: Job Seeking Stress** Both schooling and unemployed youths feel the pressure to select a job which is fulfilling and would allow them to make ends meet. Unemployed youths feel more anxious about making a career decision and experience greater stress in their job search. Family approval (or lack thereof) does not seem to affect youths' career plans (**Table C3**).

**Question:** We would like to know about your opinions on your prospects regarding work. Below are some statements that you may agree or disagree with.  
(Based on a 5-pt scale, where 5="strongly agree", 3="neither agree nor disagree", & 1="strongly disagree".)

▲ **TABLE C3: MEAN RATINGS OF YOUTHS' JOB SEEKING STRESS BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS**  
(with standard deviations in parentheses)

	Full-time Students	Unemployed	Overall
	(n=1,328)	(n=199)	(n=1,527)
I feel stress or pressure to select a fulfilling career	3.79 (0.97)	3.84 (0.96)	3.80 (0.97)
I worry about finding a job that would allow me to make ends meet	3.63 (1.01)	3.68 (1.07)	3.64 (1.02)
I feel anxious because I ought to make a career decision as soon as possible	3.59 (1.00)	3.74 (0.97)	3.61 (1.00)
Finding a job makes me stressed	3.51 (0.93)	3.69 (1.02)	3.53 (0.95)
My family doesn't approve of my career choice, which is hindering me from seeking that career	2.05 (0.93)	2.32 (1.13)	2.09 (0.96)

**Note**  
Full-time Students comprise – (1) Full-time Students and not working and (2) Full-time Students and working part-time.



## Part D: Overseas Exposure

Overseas exposure helps build one's sense of self-confidence and the ability to cope with uncertainty (Gmelch, 1997). Older youths report lower levels of overseas programme participation than younger youths (**Table D1**). More than half of schooling youths across all educational levels participate in at least one overseas programme, with study trips, student exchanges, and cultural immersions being the top programmes (**Table D3**).

**Question: Have you participated in the following overseas programmes?**

▲ **TABLE D1: OVERSEAS PROGRAMME PARTICIPATION BY AGE**

	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	Overall
	(n=716)	(n=804)	(n=926)	(n=946)	(n=3,392)
<b>Overall participation<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>54%</b>
Study trip	41%	44%	33%	21%	34%
Student exchange	17%	24%	29%	18%	22%
Community expedition	18%	25%	21%	14%	19%
Cultural immersion programme <sup>b</sup>	24%	21%	16%	11%	17%
Internship	10%	11%	16%	14%	13%
Competition	7%	9%	10%	6%	8%
Religious expedition	5%	5%	7%	7%	6%
Other learning programme	0%	1%	2%	1%	1%

### Notes

Question is refined in NYS 2019.

This is a multiple response item, hence figures will not sum to 100%.

The upper-bound survey population figures are reflected in this table.

a. Overall participation is based on participation in at least one overseas programme.

b. Item is new to NYS 2019.

▲ **TABLE D2: SCHOOLING YOUTHS' SCHOOL-BASED OVERSEAS PROGRAMME PARTICIPATION OVER TIME**

	2013 (n=1,057)	2016 (n=1,206)	2019 (n=1,116)
<b>Overall participation<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>62%</b>
Study trip	28%	37%	43%
Student exchange	28%	37%	21%
Community expedition	20%	23%	21%
Cultural immersion programme <sup>b</sup>	NA	NA	24%
Internship	4%	6%	10%
Competition	7%	10%	6%
Religious expedition	1%	4%	2%
Other learning programme	7%	4%	0%

**Notes**

a. Overall participation is based on participation in at least one overseas programme over the course of their schooling life.

b. Item is new to NYS 2019.



▲ **TABLE D3: SCHOOLING YOUTHS' SCHOOL-BASED OVERSEAS PROGRAMME PARTICIPATION BY ENROLLED INSTITUTIONS**

	Secondary	JC/IB	ITE	Polytechnic	Local University	Others <sup>a</sup>	Overall
	(n=250)	(n=116)	(n=59)	(n=274)	(n=303)	(n=114)	(n=1,116)
<b>Overall participation<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>62%</b>
Study trip	38%	51%	31%	38%	52%	43%	43%
Student exchange	18%	24%	19%	14%	33%	11%	21%
Community expedition	12%	22%	22%	19%	30%	16%	21%
Cultural immersion programme <sup>c</sup>	24%	32%	14%	24%	26%	18%	24%
Internship	8%	7%	24%	8%	12%	6%	10%
Competition	5%	7%	5%	4%	9%	10%	6%
Religious expedition	2%	0%	2%	2%	3%	1%	2%
Other learning programme	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

**Notes**

This is a multiple response item, hence figures will not sum to 100%.

The upper-bound survey population figures are reflected in this table.

a. Youths enrolled in private or foreign institutions.

b. Overall participation is based on participation in at least one overseas programme over the course of their schooling life.

c. Item is new to NYS 2019.



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# About the National Youth Survey

The NYS represents a milestone in Singapore’s youth research with its resource-based approach that focuses on the support youths require for societal engagement (social capital) and individual development (human capital).

The National Youth Indicators Framework (NYIF) (Ho & Yip, 2003) was formulated to provide a comprehensive, systematic, and theoretically-grounded assessment of youths in Singapore. The NYIF draws from the existing research literature, policy-relevant indicators, and youth development models. It spans six domains of social and human capital. **Table I** summarises the framework.

▲ **TABLE I: NATIONAL YOUTH INDICATORS FRAMEWORK**

	Social Capital (Grootaert & van Bastelaer, 2002; Putnam, 2000)	Human Capital (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2001; World Economic Forum, 2017)
Definition	Social capital refers to the relationships within and between groups, and the shared norms and trust that govern these interactions.	Human capital refers to the skills, competencies, and attitudes of individuals, which in turn create personal, social, and economic wellbeing.
Domains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Social support</li><li>• Social participation</li><li>• Values &amp; attitudes</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Education</li><li>• Employment</li><li>• Wellbeing</li></ul>
Focus	The power of relationships	The human potential of young people

NYS 2019 adopted a random (i.e., probability-based) sampling method to ensure responses are representative of the resident youth population aged 15 to 34 years old.

The fieldwork period spanned September to November 2019. A total of 3,392 youths were successfully surveyed, of which 227 were surveyed at their households. Demographic proportions of NYS respondents adhered closely to the youth population.

**Table II** presents the profile of respondents from NYS 2002, 2005, 2010, 2013, 2016, and 2019. Figures referenced in all tables in the publication (with the exception of figures from NYS 2002<sup>a</sup>) were weighted according to interlocking matrices of age, gender, and race of the respective youth populations.

**Note**  
a. Figures from NYS 2002 were not weighted due to the non-standard age bands used.



▲ **TABLE II: PROFILE OF NYS RESPONDENTS**

		NYS 2002 (n=1,504)	NYS 2005 (n=1,504)	NYS 2010 (n=1,268)	NYS 2013 (n=2,843)	NYS 2016 (n=3,531)	NYS 2019 (n=3,392)	Latest Youth Population <sup>a</sup>
Age	15-19	NYS 2002 utilised non-standard age bands	33%	24%	24%	23%	21%	21%
	20-24		31%	23%	25%	25%	24%	24%
	25-29		36%	25%	24%	25%	27%	27%
	30-34 <sup>b</sup>	NA	NA	28%	28%	27%	28%	28%
Gender	Male	50%	50%	49%	49%	49%	50%	50%
	Female	50%	50%	51%	51%	51%	50%	50%
Race	Chinese	77%	75%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%
	Malay	15%	15%	15%	16%	16%	17%	17%
	Indian	7%	9%	10%	10%	9%	9%	9%
	Others	1%	1%	4%	3%	3%	3%	3%
Nationality	Singaporean	93%	90%	86%	91%	94%	93%	86%
	Permanent Resident	7%	10%	14%	10%	6%	7%	14%
Marital Status	Single	83%	85%	74%	74%	74%	74%	74%
	Married	17%	14%	25%	25%	26%	25%	25%
	Divorced/Separated/Widowed	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Religion	Buddhism	35%	32%	36%	25%	24%	22%	28%
	Islam	16%	17%	18%	19%	20%	21%	18%
	Christianity	16%	16%	15%	19%	19%	20%	18%
	Hinduism	5%	6%	6%	6%	5%	5%	5%
	Taoism/Traditional Chinese Beliefs	6%	6%	7%	7%	6%	5%	7%
	Other Religions	2%	1%	3%	1%	0%	1%	0%
	No Religion	21%	21%	15%	23%	25%	27%	23%
Dwelling	HDB 1-2 rooms	5%	3%	5%	3%	5%	4%	3%
	HDB 3 rooms	26%	24%	24%	14%	14%	14%	12%
	HDB 4 rooms	33%	43%	34%	37%	38%	35%	35%
	HDB 5 rooms, executive, & above	24%	19%	26%	31%	29%	30%	29%
	Private flat & condominium	12%	11%	3%	10%	9%	12%	13%
	Private house & bungalow			9%	6%	4%	4%	6%
	Others	0%	NA	NA	0%	0%	1%	0%

**Notes**

a. Latest youth population refers to the most recent available data from the Department of Statistics (DOS) at the time of fieldwork – age, gender, race, and dwelling (DOS, 2019a) as well as nationality (DOS, 2019b), marital status, and religion (DOS, 2016).

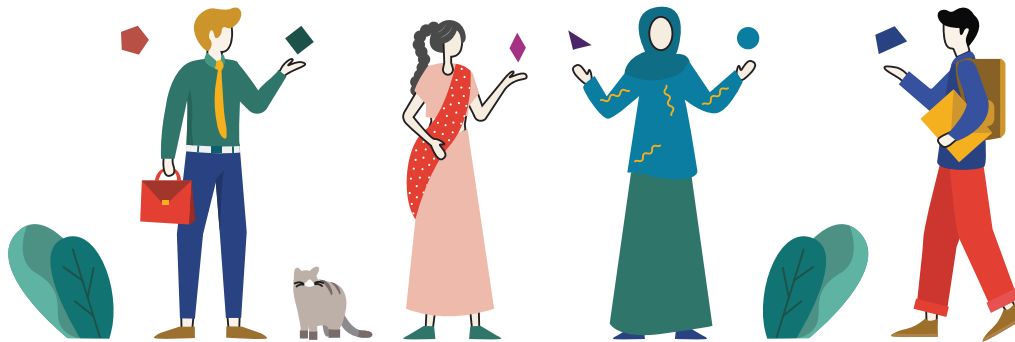
b. The 30-34 age band was included from NYS 2010.

# Youth Studies

## Youth Study on Transitions and Evolving Pathways in Singapore (Youth STEPS)

NYC and the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) Social Lab have partnered to embark on the first national-level longitudinal study of youths in Singapore to better understand young people's experiences as they live, study, work, and play in Singapore. Between 2017 and 2022, the Youth STEPS will explore youths' evolving life aspirations, values and attitudes, and achievements and mobility as they transition from adolescence to adulthood.

A nationally-representative youth panel of 17- to 24-year-old youths were recruited in 2017. Annual survey fieldwork and data analysis are undertaken by IPS Social Lab. To date, three waves of the study have been completed. In the third wave, a total of 3,178 youths aged 19 to 26 were surveyed in 2019.



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