

Youth Barometer: Work is the biggest cause of pressure and stress among young people

The 2025 Youth Barometer, which examines the pressures and expectations of young people, indicates that finding a job is the number one concern among young people. Of the respondents, 70 per cent said they experienced pressures to get a job and of the nine different causes for pressures respondents selected it most often. In addition, 50% said they felt uncertain and insecure about getting a job.

“The Youth Barometer was initiated back in the 1990s as a reaction to the ongoing recession and a concern about whether young people want to work anymore. The latest Youth Barometer repeats the message from previous barometers that employment is an important way for young people to engage in society,” says **Konsta Happonen**, Statistical Researcher at the Finnish Youth Research Society.

Under pressure. The Youth Barometer 2025 (eds. Sofia Laine & Konsta Happonen) was now implemented for the first time as only an online survey instead whereas it was previously carried out as telephone interviews or a combination of these two. As data for the Youth Barometer was collected only online, this made the collection of a new type of data possible: free-form responses written by young people themselves. The most common theme repeated in the free-form responses submitted by young people was that the pressures experienced by young people seem to be underestimated. The second most common theme was employment. In their responses, young people highlighted the difficulties in finding their first job and how a degree no longer guarantees a job.

“As it is increasingly difficult to find a first job, uncertainty accumulates and is widely reflected in the well-being of young people. This uncertainty makes it difficult to make plans for the future, such as purchasing one’s own home or starting a family, and weakens the belief that one’s own life will find an equilibrium and take flight,” says **Ida Leino**, chairperson of the State Youth Council.

More young people would like to go to a higher education institutions than there are available places

In addition to finding a job, studies were one of the most significant causes of pressures experienced by young people. More than half of the young people were under pressure to get an education. Young people typically wanted an education to at least achieve a good societal position, but more than one third of young people felt that avoiding shame was also an important motivation factor for studying. The young people’s free-form responses repeatedly highlighted how stressful external expectations of a quick completion of studies and other transitions in life can feel.

“Many young people feel that they have failed if they are still looking for their place in the world and do not know what they are going to do ‘when they grow up’. Youth is a time of self-exploration, but many young people felt that there was not enough leeway for this exploration,” states **Sofia Laine**, Research Professor at the Finnish Youth Research Society.

Despite the perceived pressures, young people's belief in education has remained strong. The pursuit of a good social position through education seems to be a practice that is broadly internalised by young people: as many as 81% of young people had set the completion of a higher education degree as a goal for themselves. More young people would like to complete a higher education degree than the education system currently has study places. In addition to the results of the Youth Barometer, this can be seen, for example, as tens of thousands of applicants being rejected admissions by higher education institutions during the joint applications process.

Young people's faith in the future of the world at a historically low level

According to the Youth Barometer, pessimism felt by young people regarding to the future of the world has increased. Of the respondents, 50% were pessimistic or very pessimistic about the future of the world, whereas the corresponding figure was just 28% in 2021. The results of the 2024 Youth Barometer, which was published a year ago that caused the greatest amount of social discourse was a decline in young people's faith in their own future. The now published barometer shows the same has happened to faith in the future of the world.

“The result is not surprising, as from the perspective of both Finnish society and the global political situation we are currently living in an exceptional era of varying crises, which, in addition to economic uncertainty, has included a pandemic, the climate emergency, and a war in Europe,” summarises Laine.

In addition to optimism related to the future of the world, the Youth Barometer included questions about phenomena that cause uncertainty and insecurity among young people. There were questions on 11 different phenomena. Of these, young people felt the greatest amount of uncertainty and insecurity about the global political situation: 60% responded that they felt very much or quite a lot of insecurity. When this was last asked about in 2018, 42 per cent responded in this manner.

“Young people's experiences of uncertainty and insecurity have increased. The well-being of young people cannot be an afterthought in decision-making. Instead, it must be a priority in decision-making in all administrative branches, and the impacts of decisions on young people must be assessed systematically. Adults and decision-makers are responsible for the of future prospects we offer young people,” emphasises Ida Leino, Chairman of the State Youth Council.

Details on the publication

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The publication is only available in Finnish.

All published Youth Barometers are [openly available online](#). The printed book can be purchased at the publication event or from [Bookstore Tiedekirja](#) and other well-stocked bookshops.

The Youth Barometer is published jointly by the [Finnish Youth Research Society](#), the [State Youth Council](#) and the [Ministry of Education and Culture](#).

Infographics

Also view the infographics for the Youth Barometer 2025, which summarise the results.

Publication event

The [Youth Barometer publication event](#) will be held at Tiedekulma (Yliopistonkatu 4, Helsinki) on Wednesday 11 March from 9:00 to 11:00. The event can also be followed online on the [Tiedekulma website](#).

Enquiries

Sofia Laine, Research Professor
Finnish Youth Research Society
tel. +358 44 416 5374
sofia.laine@nuorisotutkimus.fi

Konsta Happonen, Statistical Researcher
Finnish Youth Research Society
tel. +358 44 416 5377
konsta.happonen@nuorisotutkimus.fi

Ida Leino, Chair
State Youth Council
tel. +358 50 323 5693
ida.leino@hotmail.com

More information about the Youth Barometers

The Youth Barometer is a survey of the values and attitudes of young people aged 15 to 29 living in Finland that has been conducted annually since 1994. The theme of the 2025 Youth Barometer was the pressures and expectations experienced by young people. In addition to the annually changing theme, some of the themes examined are permanent. In addition to the permanent core themes of employment and education, other long-standing monitoring themes have included social participation, housing, the future, social life, as well as satisfaction with life and its various aspects.

The data collection for the barometer was now conducted for the first time only in the form of online data collection, which made it possible to expand the selection of languages in the barometer. In 2025, it was possible to respond to the survey not only in Finnish and Swedish but also in English, meant that it was easier to reach young people who are native speakers of languages other than Finnish or Swedish. A total of 2,312 young people aged 15-29 who lived permanently in mainland Finland responded to the survey conducted in early 2025. Taloustutkimus Oy was responsible for the data collection.