

Peer Learning Round Tables



Cluster 2: Prosperity

Building back innovative, inclusive and sustainable economies and providing decent and productive jobs for all

Session 2-2

Young people and COVID-19: Impact and Solutions

Friday, 12 March 2021, 10:00-12:00 (CET)

Guiding questions for round table

Question 1

During the COVID-19 crisis, young people have missed out on learning, job opportunities, social interactions, and many other aspects in this important developmental period of their lives. What are and how do we mitigate some of the immediate, medium- and long-term impacts of the COVID-19 crisis on the young women and men?

Question 2

COVID-19 has exacerbated important inequities and disparities along various socio- economic dimensions such as gender, ethnicity, geography, income, disability, sexual orientation and identity, migration, and others. What are some effective initiatives to address inequities and maintain social cohesion?

Question 3

The rapid move towards digitalisation has posed challenges, but also created opportunities. How can we harness this momentum to build resilient economies and communities, close the 'digital divide', and ensure all young people equally benefit from digitalization?

Question 4

It has been widely recognised that youth participation is a right and an effective mechanism for better policy design and implementation. However, some youth organisations have been facing fewer opportunities for engagement. What are some good examples of policy responses to the COVID-19 crisis and some effective participation mechanisms that have been created and implemented with young people as partners?

Background

COVID-19 disproportionately impacted young people. School closures, disruptions to formal and informal work, labour immobility, fractured social networks, and diminished access to services continue to impact young people, long after restrictions are removed, and the pandemic is brought under control. Today's youth, especially those facing multiple and intersecting forms of marginalisation, will experience the generational costs of COVID-19. Young women and girls face intersectional vulnerabilities and discrimination. This has immeasurable consequences for social cohesion, stability, and economic prosperity.

Governments worked hard to meet the challenges facing young people, such as quick innovations in digitalisation, while managing the immediate health and economic crisis. Young people also worked hard to meet these challenges. Youth and youth-led organisations are at the forefront of responding, such as through volunteering, online skill building, mutual aid initiatives, combating disinformation and awareness-raising, and supporting peers and younger children in learning.

A meaningful participation of young people in efforts to Build Back Better brings visionary and innovative solutions for inclusive and sustainable development. This roundtable will highlight the youth's experiences, best practice and challenges faced by young people due to COVID-19, and government and youth organisations responses to the crisis. The roundtable will showcase innovative government responses to address the challenges facing young people due to COVID-19 and will provide a space for youth to share their views for youth-oriented building back to inspire policy solutions.

Organizers

Lead organizer

UN Issue-based Coalition on Adolescent and Youth, led by UNICEF and UNFPA

Contributors

European Youth Forum
Major Group on Children and Youth
Group of European Youth for Change