



YOUNG PEOPLE TODAY 2022

Young people's livelihoods
and financial living conditions

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Preface

The objective of youth policy is for all young people to have good living conditions, power to shape their lives and influence on societal development. The Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society has been tasked by the Government to follow up the youth policy objective. This is done, among other things, through an annual report based on indicators for young people's living conditions, which the Agency monitors.

An important prerequisite for achieving the youth policy objective is that young people have good financial living conditions. The ability to earn a living, and to have a secure income and sufficient financial resources affect many other aspects of life. In this year's follow-up, the Agency has therefore chosen to focus on the indicators relating to young people's livelihoods and financial living conditions. The COVID-19 pandemic has clearly affected young people's opportunities to work, and the proportion of employed young people has decreased. The unemployment rate rose sharply, but has since fallen again. However, young people who are further removed from the labour market are at risk of staying out of work for long periods. The report's findings show that opportunities for contacts in the labour market are important for young people to get into work.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the financial situation of young people is more difficult to describe today. For example, the results of the Agency's National Youth Survey conducted in spring 2021 show no clear signs of a deterioration in the financial living conditions of young people in general compared to the 2018 survey. The proportion reporting dissatisfaction with their finances is unchanged and the proportion reporting difficulties in meeting current expenses has decreased. However, it will be important to continue monitoring young people's financial living conditions and their employment opportunities in the coming years to see how different groups of young people are affected. It is clear that financial living conditions are not the same for all young people. For example, foreign-born young people are more likely to be unemployed and the proportion living with low financial standards or on financial assistance is higher. The results also indicate that young people with disabilities have poorer financial living conditions. For example, the proportion who are dissatisfied with their finances is higher, as is the proportion who have had difficulty meeting current expenses. Another area where we see a worrying development in young people's living conditions is the number of young people who are in debt to the Enforcement Authority and have applied for debt restructuring, and the number of young people who are threatened with eviction and are evicted.

The work on the report has been carried out by the Investigation Department through the efforts of Emma Törnström (head of project) and Eric Hellsing.

Lena Nyberg

Director-General

Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society

Summary

This report is part of the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society's (MUCF) follow-up of the youth policy objective. It is based on the indicators on young people's living conditions monitored by the Agency. These are published on the website ungidag.se and are supplemented each year by a report. In this year's report, the Agency has chosen to highlight and report on the development of indicators relating to young people's livelihoods, young people's financial living conditions and young people with financial difficulties. The main findings from each chapter are presented below.

The chapter on young people's employment and livelihoods shows the following:

- 39.4 percent of young people aged 15–24 were employed in 2020, a decrease compared to 2019. The proportion of those employed in a temporary position is significantly higher among young people than in other age groups. It is also common for young people to work part-time, and the proportion of this is higher among girls compared to boys.
- It is common for young people to get their current job through their own contacts. There has been an increase in the proportion of young people who have found a job by applying for an advertised position. This is about as common as young people getting their job by contacting the workplace themselves, but the proportion getting their job this way has decreased. The proportion of young people who say they got their job through the municipality or Arbetsförmedlingen (the Public Employment Service) is lower.
- 74.4 percent of young people aged 16–25 have experience of a summer job, either from this past summer or earlier summers. Young people born in Sweden are more likely to have had a summer job compared to young people born abroad. A significantly higher proportion of foreign-born respondents say they have applied for but never found a summer job. A lower proportion of young people with disabilities have had a summer job, and it is more common for young people with disabilities never to have applied for a summer job.
- The proportion of young people running businesses is low, at 1.6 percent in 2020. This proportion has been stable for a long time.
- The proportion of unemployed young people increased in 2020 as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the proportion decreased again slightly in 2021, from 11.4 percent to 9.7 percent. The proportion of young people unemployed for more than 90 days has decreased marginally, from 6.3 percent to 6.1 percent. The median duration of unemployment among young people aged 16–24 has increased sharply, from 110 days in 2020 to 245 days in 2021.

- The proportion of young people aged 16–24 who are neither working nor studying (Uvas) was 6.2 percent in 2019. There is a higher proportion of young people born abroad who are neither working nor studying than is the case among those born in Sweden. However, since 2009, the proportion in the Uvas group has decreased more among the foreign-born than among the native-born, which means that the difference between the groups has narrowed over time.
- In 2020, the number of young people aged 16–24 who had activity benefit, sickness compensation or sickness benefit at some point during the year was 48 per 1,000 insured. The number has been slightly higher among girls compared to boys throughout the period from 2012.

The chapter on young people’s financial living conditions shows the following:

- In 2021, 22.4 percent of young people aged 16–25 reported dissatisfaction with their finances, a proportion unchanged from 2018. In 2021, the proportion was slightly higher among girls than among boys. The proportion dissatisfied with their finances is higher among young people aged 20–25, young people born abroad and young people with disabilities.
- In 2021, almost half of young people aged 16–25 say they have received financial help from parents or relatives in the past year, although this proportion has decreased over time. The proportion is higher among young people born abroad and among young people with disabilities. 6 percent of young people aged 16–25 say that they are unable to get financial help from parents or relatives. The proportion is higher among young people born abroad and among young people aged 20–25.
- In 2021, 17.1 percent of young people aged 16–25 reported that they have had difficulty meeting their current expenses for food, rent, bills, etc. on one or more occasions in the past year. This proportion has decreased compared to 2018 and is now at the lowest level recorded since 2006. The proportion is significantly higher in the 20–25 age group, among young people born abroad and among young people with disabilities. In all these groups, a higher proportion have experienced difficulties several times in the past year.
- 26 percent of young people aged 20–24 lived with low financial standards in 2019. There are large differences among young people depending on their country of birth; the proportion with low financial standards was 40 percent among young people born abroad compared to 22 percent among those born in Sweden.
- In 2020, the proportion of young people aged 18–24 on financial assistance was just under 7 percent. Among foreign-born young people, the proportion receiving financial assistance is significantly higher than among native-born young people, at 20 percent and 3 percent, respectively, in 2020.

- In 2020, 53,098 young people aged 18–24 were defendants in one or more applications for payment orders. The number decreased between 2012 and 2016, but has been higher again since then. The number has been slightly higher among boys compared to girls throughout the period. In the same year, 20,774 young people aged 18–24 had debts to be collected by the Enforcement Authority. The number of young people with debts for recovery decreased between 2012 and 2019, but has since increased again. Boys are more likely to have debts for recovery than girls.
- In 2020, 164 young people were evicted from their homes, of whom 122 were boys and 42 girls. In the same year, 487 young people were threatened with eviction, of whom 341 were boys and 146 girls. Both the number of young people threatened with eviction and the number of young people evicted decreased in the past, but have increased again.

In summary, a number of findings are highlighted as particularly important

- The risk of long-term disadvantage for young people who are further removed from the labour market as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic of recent years.
- The importance of personal contacts for young people's chances of finding a job.
- The relatively high proportion of young people in temporary employment and short part-time jobs. For those young people who need to support themselves, such employment can put them in a precarious financial situation.
- Differences in financial living conditions between different groups of young people, with young people born abroad and young people with disabilities being two groups in a more difficult situation.
- The trend in the number of young people in debt from an early age and the high number of young people applying for debt restructuring.

Overall assessment of challenges

The Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society monitors a series of indicators related to the youth policy objective for **all young people to have good living conditions, power to shape their lives and influence on societal development**. In this report, we follow up on the indicators related to young people's livelihoods and financial living conditions. These are complemented by results from the Authority's National Youth Survey on young people's perceptions of their finances.

Several indicators monitored by the Agency have shown positive developments over time, for young people in general or for groups of young people. Examples include the decrease in unemployment among young people for many years before the COVID-19 pandemic and the higher proportion of young people leaving activity grant programmes to go to work or study in recent years. From a longer-term perspective, the proportion of foreign-born young people neither working nor studying has gradually decreased. In the Agency's National Youth Survey, the proportion of young people reporting difficulties in paying living expenses has decreased.

However, there are also a number of challenges that are important for the achievement of the youth policy objective, one of which is the persistent differences in the labour market opportunities of young people born abroad compared to young people born in Sweden. In addition, there is a risk of long-term disadvantage for young people who are further removed from the labour market as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic of recent years. There are also still clear differences in financial living conditions between different groups of young people, with young people born abroad and young people with disabilities being two groups in a more difficult situation. Another challenge is the relatively high proportion of young people in temporary employment and short part-time jobs. For those young people who need to support themselves, such employment can put them in a precarious financial situation. Finally, the trend in the number of young people in debt from an early age and the high number of young people applying for debt restructuring is worrying.

Addressing the challenges of young people's living conditions and working to reduce disparities in financial conditions is important because young people's financial standards affect many other aspects of their lives. Living with low financial standards has a negative impact on young people's living conditions, with the risk of poorer physical and mental health, homelessness, poorer educational outcomes and increased risk of unemployment (Forte 2018, UNICEF 2016).

Important to monitor the longer-term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on young people's livelihoods and finances

The COVID-19 pandemic of recent years has clearly impacted young people's opportunities to work. The proportion employed decreased, and the proportion unemployed increased significantly in 2020. However, it is more difficult to see clear impacts on the economic living conditions of young people in general at this stage through the indicators monitored by the Agency. At the same time, it is very clear that there are differences in financial living conditions between different groups of young people.

When young people themselves describe their financial situation in the Agency's National Youth Survey 2021, the responses show no clear signs of worsening finances compared to 2018. On the contrary, for example, the proportion of young people who had difficulty covering living expenses or who received financial help from their parents decreased in the latest survey in 2021. At present, it is difficult to say how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the financial living conditions of young people. The Agency's National Youth Survey was conducted in the spring of 2021, when many young people were still affected by the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. For many young people, the COVID-19 pandemic has meant reduced opportunities to travel or participate in leisure activities, for example. This means that young people's spending is also likely to have been affected, and reduced spending among young people during the COVID-19 pandemic could explain the results to some extent.

However, for many young people, the COVID-19 pandemic has meant unemployment and changes in their future plans. Experience shows that young people are generally better equipped to cope with such challenges compared to older age groups. However, for those young people who were already further removed from the labour market in the past, there is a risk that they will remain removed from the labour market for a prolonged period of time. The increase in the median duration of unemployment among young people shows a shift among unemployed young people, with those who have been unemployed for longer periods now facing even longer spells of unemployment. This could potentially create an increasingly divided labour market among young people. It is therefore important to continue monitoring the impact on young people's financial living conditions in the longer term as well.

Contacts and networks are important for getting young people into work

The path to work can look very different for young people. In the Agency's National Youth Survey, young people who are currently working indicated how they got their current job. The results show that the path to work has changed over time for young people in general, and that it differs to some extent between different groups of young people.

Networks and personal contacts play a very important role in helping young people to find a job. Four out of ten young people got their current job through people they know. It is therefore important that young people are given good opportunities to create networks and contacts that can lead to employment. But not all young people have access to equal networks of contacts. Having contacts that can lead to a job is more common among young people of younger ages and among boys. Thus, for many young people, contacts with the world of work within the framework of their education may be important, or the possibility of various forms of workplace-based activities within the framework of e.g. Arbetsförmedlingen programmes. During the COVID-19 pandemic of recent years, such activities have been more difficult to implement and it is important to continue efforts to enable young people to connect with the world of work. Summer jobs can also provide valuable contacts for young people for future employment, and it is important that young people are given good opportunities to work in the summer. The results of the Agency's National Youth Survey show that many young people have experience of summer jobs, but that groups of young people may need support in accessing employment opportunities and the important experiences and contacts that summer jobs bring. For example, young people born in Sweden are more likely to have had a summer job compared to young people born abroad. A significantly higher proportion of foreign-born respondents indicate they had looked for a summer job, but had never found one. There is also a lower proportion of young people with disabilities who have had a summer job. Among these young people, it is more common never to have looked for a summer job.

The results of the National Youth Survey also show that actors such as municipalities and also Arbetsförmedlingen have an important role to play in supporting young people who face major challenges in finding a job. The proportion of young people who say they got their job through either the municipality or Arbetsförmedlingen has increased between 2018 and 2021, with one in ten young people responding that they got their job through the municipality. Young people of a younger age and young people born abroad are significantly more likely to say that they got a job through the municipality. A lower proportion of young people, 3 percent, say they got a job through Arbetsförmedlingen. However, the proportion of young people who found a job through Arbetsförmedlingen is higher among foreign-born young people and among young people with disabilities.

Young people need secure employment conditions

Temporary employment is common among young people, and the proportion is significantly higher compared to other age groups. In 2020, more than half of employed young people aged 15–24 were in a temporary position. The proportion is higher among girls than boys. Temporary employment is more common at younger ages, with seven out of ten 15–19 year olds in temporary employment in 2020. But the proportion is also high among young people aged 20–24, where a higher proportion can be assumed to be working to earn a living and not alongside studies, for example. Almost one in two young people

in the older age group had a temporary position. The proportion is higher among girls than boys, although the differences have narrowed over time.

One in two employed people aged 15–24 worked part-time in 2020, and had an agreed working time of less than 35 hours per week. Of young people working part-time, the vast majority, just over 70 percent, work short part-time, meaning they have an agreed working time of 1–19 hours per week. The proportion of part-time workers is higher among girls. Six out of ten girls work part-time, compared to four out of ten boys. The proportion is particularly high among employed young people aged 15–19, with eight out of ten girls and six out of ten boys working part-time. In the 20–24 age group, one in two girls and three in ten boys worked part-time. The higher proportion of girls than boys working part-time is partly due to the fact that girls are more likely to work alongside their studies.

It is not surprising that the proportion of young people who are employed for a limited time period or who work part-time is higher than in other age groups. The vast majority of young people have studies as their main focus and work as a complement to their studies in order to have an income or gain work experience. But for young people who work to earn a living, who are older and have higher living expenses, precarious labour market conditions can be an obstacle to a secure and predictable financial situation. The MUCF study on young people's attitudes and values shows that young people themselves prioritise predictability and security in their employment (MUCF, 2019b). Almost eight out of ten young people think that permanent employment is important for them to be interested in a job. We see no differences in how boys and girls prioritise this. The Agency's Attitudes and Values Study found that young people in the older age group 20–24 are more likely to prioritise predictability and job security than young people aged 16–19. Almost all young people think it is important for a job to have a good working environment and working conditions. This is one of the most important aspects for young people to be interested in a job.

Young people born abroad continue to have poorer financial living conditions

The financial situation of young people is largely linked to their ability to support themselves through work. Young people born abroad find it more difficult to establish themselves in the labour market, and they also tend to have poorer financial living conditions. This is evident, for example, in the higher proportion of foreign-born young people who have low financial standards as well as in the large differences in the proportion of young people with financial assistance between those born abroad and those born in Sweden.

The results of the National Youth Survey also show that a higher proportion of foreign-born young people have had problems covering living expenses, such as food, rent and bills. In 2021, 9 percent had had such problems at some point, and 16 percent had had problems several times in the past year. The proportion of foreign-born young people who have received financial help from parents or relatives is also higher, with more than half having received it in 2021. Three in ten foreign-born young people say they have received financial

help several times. Moreover, a higher proportion of young people born abroad say that they are not able to get financial help from parents or relatives. This means that the group's dependence on relatives for financial support is greater, while at the same time a higher proportion do not have access to relatives for financial support.

Although the differences compared to young people born in Sweden remain large, the trend in several indicators shows a slightly improved situation among young people born abroad. The proportion of foreign-born young people with low financial standards has decreased slightly over time. The trend has also been slightly positive in recent years for young people born abroad who receive financial assistance. MUCF's National Youth Survey shows that the proportion of foreign-born young people who have had difficulty covering living expenses has decreased compared to the survey conducted in 2018, and the proportion who say they cannot get financial help from parents has also decreased. Despite this, large differences in financial living conditions remain, which makes it important to continue to monitor, for example, this group of young people's opportunities to establish themselves in the labour market.

Clear signs of a more difficult situation for young people with disabilities

Young people with disabilities is a group that is not monitored within the framework of the indicators reported on ungidag.se. However, MUCF's National Youth Survey gives indications that this group also has poorer financial living conditions compared to other young people. The proportion of young people with disabilities responding to the agency's National Youth Survey who say they are mainly engaged in studies is lower compared to young people without disabilities. The proportion was 57 percent, compared to 69 percent, in 2021. 20 percent of young people with disabilities say they are engaged in activities other than studies or work, compared to 6 percent of young people without disabilities. Among these, both the proportion unemployed and those on sick leave are higher among young people with disabilities compared to other young people.

It can also be seen that more than one in three young people with a disability are dissatisfied with their finances in 2021, a significantly higher proportion compared to young people without a disability. Every second young person with a disability has had difficulty covering living expenses in the past year, and every third has received financial help from parents or relatives several times in the past year. The results of the Agency's National Youth Survey cannot be generalised to the whole group of young people with disabilities, but they should be seen as a clear signal that this group of young people is facing challenges related to their financial living conditions.

Worrying trend of young people with debts and payment problems

In 2020, 53,098 young people aged 18–24 were defendants in applications for payment orders and 20,774 young people of the same age had debts to be recovered by the Enforcement Authority. The number of young people with payment orders has varied since 2012, but there is no clear downward trend. The number of young people with debts for recovery decreased in the past, but the number has remained stable since 2017. At the same time, statistics from Svensk Inkasso show a worrying increase in the number of cases among young people under the age of 25, even though the vast majority of debt collection cases do not go to the Enforcement Authority (Svensk Inkasso 2021). The fact that young people have payment problems and debts early in life is serious because it can be an obstacle to future opportunities. Payment orders can also have negative consequences in young people's lives and should therefore be taken very seriously. The issue of a payment order can lead to a payment default, which in turn can make it difficult to get a loan, rent a home or take out a telephone subscription for a period of time in the future, which could negatively impact young people's opportunities, for example, to secure their own housing.¹ Between 2019 and 2020, the number of young people applying for debt restructuring increased significantly. The increase coincided in time with a change in the way applications are made, and the actual number of young people granted debt restructuring has not increased correspondingly. The number of young people with such serious debts that they qualify for debt restructuring remains low. However, the sharp increase nevertheless signals a perceived need among young people for help in managing their debts, and possibly a lack of knowledge about where such support is available. It signals that there is a need for young people to know how to deal with payment problems and where to get support in doing so.

¹ Payment defaults can remain in the register of credit report companies for different lengths of time, usually three years for a private individual.

The Agency's assessments and suggestions

In this report, the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society has chosen to focus on indicators related to young people's livelihoods and financial living conditions. The ability to earn a living, and to have a secure income and sufficient financial resources affect many other aspects of life, making this area an important prerequisite for achieving the youth policy objective.

Young people are at a time of life when financial circumstances and incomes are changing relatively rapidly. Livelihoods are changing, as are expenses and financial responsibilities. This makes it complex to build up a picture of the financial living conditions of young people in general. The statistics presented in the report must always be seen in the light of the fact that young people as a group is not homogeneous, but includes a variety of young people with different financial living conditions. In the coming year, MUCF intends to work further on developing knowledge about young people's financial living conditions. In particular, it is important to raise young people's own voices about their financial situation.

This chapter presents MUCF's assessments and suggestions in relation to the indicators it follows.

The importance of continuing to monitor the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on young people's financial living conditions

The Agency finds that

it is important that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on young people's opportunities to enter the labour market and their financial living conditions should be monitored continuously in the coming years, by both MUCF and other authorities. Particular focus should be placed on young people who are further removed from the labour market.

The COVID-19 pandemic of recent years has had a number of consequences on young people's lives that may affect their livelihoods and financial conditions in the long term. Unemployment among young people aged 16–24 increased in 2020 to 11.4 percent, but slightly decreased again in 2021 to 9.7 percent. Arbetsförmedlingen estimates that unemployment has been held back by the increased opportunities for young people to study and that unemployment will continue to fall in the coming years. This development is also reflected in the responses to MUCF's National Youth Survey, where the proportion of young people stating that they mainly work is lower in 2021 compared to 2018, while

the proportion responding that they study or have something else as their main focus has increased.²

Young people are generally flexible and better off in the long term compared to older people who lose their jobs. For example, they are more likely to retrain or pursue higher education. But for groups of young people, the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic are likely to be more difficult to manage. Arbetsförmedlingen estimates that people who are further removed from the labour market will find it more difficult to find jobs even when the labour market recovers (Arbetsförmedlingen 2021b). The proportion of young people aged 16–24 unemployed for more than 90 days increased in 2020 to 6.3 percent, and in 2021 it was 6.1 percent. It is worrying that within the group of young people there has been a shift towards longer spells of unemployment for those who are far removed from the labour market.

The median duration of unemployment among young people aged 16–24 has increased sharply between 2020 and 2021. In 2021, the median duration of unemployment among young people was 245 days, compared to 110 days in 2020. As the number of young people with short spells of unemployment has clearly decreased in 2021, there has been an upward shift in the median duration. In its latest forecast, Arbetsförmedlingen points to the worrying trend of long-term unemployment remaining at high levels despite the fact that unemployment has generally returned to lower levels. Labour market segmentation has increased and those who were unemployed before the COVID-19 pandemic now have longer spells of unemployment (Arbetsförmedlingen 2021b).

MUCF has previously noted that there is a risk that young people who are neither working nor studying end up with long periods out of work and study as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic (MUCF, 2020b). During the recession of 2008–2010, the establishment process was clearly affected for young people aged 16–19 years who were neither working nor studying. Many ended up in a prolonged period of labour market exclusion despite having been in employment before the recession. IFAU and the Riksbank have also highlighted the risk of long-term effects on the labour market for young people even after the economy has turned around (IFAU 2021, Riksbank 2021). Research shows that both young people with shorter and longer education who enter the labour market during economic crises may be affected by this even in the longer term.

At present, it is difficult to see how young people's financial living conditions will be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and the challenges it has brought with it. Livelihood opportunities have changed and become worse for groups of young people. Future educational plans may have changed and there is a risk that the knowledge level of young people who studied during the COVID-19 pandemic may have been affected. However, such changes and their impact on young people's financial living conditions are difficult to monitor other than in the longer term. However, it is clear that financial living conditions already differ between groups of young people. Among the groups monitored by the

²The group of young people who had something else as their main focus includes those who are unemployed, participants in labour market programmes, on sick leave and on parental leave.

Agency, young people born abroad and young people with disabilities are two groups that have poorer financial living conditions than other young people. It is important to continue monitoring the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, both for young people in general and for groups of young people who are more vulnerable, so that the differences in financial living conditions among young people do not increase.

The assessment is important for the youth policy objective for all young people to have good living conditions, power to shape their lives and influence on societal development. It is also important in the context of Goal 8 of the 2030 Agenda – Decent Work and Economic Growth – and in particular Target 8.5 – full employment and decent work with equal pay for work of equal value for all – and Target 8.6 – reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training. It also relates to Goal 10 – Reduced Inequalities – and in particular Target 10.1 – reduce income disparities.

Give young people who are further removed from the labour market more opportunities to make contacts through summer jobs

The Agency finds that

it is important to continue to focus on summer jobs for young people. Such initiatives should give particular priority to young people who are neither working nor studying, as well as young people in areas with socioeconomic challenges. The Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society believes that future summer job initiatives could be based on criteria similar to those used in previous initiatives during the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to the National Youth Survey conducted in the spring of 2021, 74 percent of young people aged 16–24 had experience with summer jobs, either from the past summer or earlier summers. Among young people aged 16–19, the proportion was 56.8 percent. But for young people who are further removed from the labour market, it is more difficult to find summer jobs. There is fierce competition for jobs and young people who, for example, have incomplete grades and lack private networks often have fewer opportunities to get the jobs on offer. The results of MUCF's National Youth Survey show, for example, that the proportion of foreign-born young people who have had a summer job is lower than that of native-born young people. A significantly higher proportion of foreign-born respondents said they had applied for but never found a summer job (16.9 percent) compared to native-born respondents (8.6 percent). The proportion of young people with experience of summer jobs is also lower among young people with disabilities, 67 percent compared to 76 percent among young people without disabilities. One in four (23.5 percent) young people with disabilities also say they have never applied for a summer job,

compared to 15 percent of young people without disabilities. Having a summer job is an important first step for many young people in making contact with the world of work. In MUCF's 2021 National Youth Survey, four in ten (39.2 percent) of young people aged 16–25 said they got their current job through people they know. In all youth surveys conducted, this has been the main way for young people to find a job.

Statistics Sweden has reported that many summer jobs disappeared in the summer of 2020, with 16 percent fewer 16–19 year olds working in the summer in August 2020 compared to 2019 (Statistics Sweden 2021). The Riksbank (2021) has highlighted the risk that a lack of extra and summer jobs could lead to lower employment even in the long term for some young people. Research shows that one-third of those who have completed vocational upper-secondary education find their first permanent jobs with employers where they had summer or extra jobs during their upper-secondary education.

The Agency has previously highlighted the risk of young people who are neither working nor studying ending up in long periods of exclusion as a consequence of a more difficult labour market situation (MUCF 2021b). One in ten young people is at some point in their youth outside of both work and studies, and some of these end up in long periods of exclusion. All young people who become unemployed need support, but experience from previous recessions shows that young people who are neither working nor studying are at particular risk of long periods of exclusion. This makes initiatives that support their entry into the labour market particularly important.

In 2020, a summer job initiative of SEK 180 million was implemented, as well as the “Jobb för unga” (Jobs for Young People) initiative of SEK 100 million in the autumn of 2020. “Jobb för unga” targeted young people who had completed their upper-secondary education in the current year and young people who fell under the municipalities' activity responsibility (Government 2020b). The Government allocated a further SEK 180 million to summer jobs in 2021, and in March 2021 the Government also instructed Arbetsförmedlingen to allocate up to SEK 200 million to the municipalities to strengthen their opportunities to create jobs for young people, with special priority for young people living in households with low socioeconomic status³ (Government 2021b, Government 2021c). The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions followed up on the summer jobs and “Jobb för unga” with a survey, and the results are good in view of the COVID-19 pandemic (SKR 2020, SKR 2021).

These measures have been important one-offs, but the Agency also believes that further long-term efforts may be needed to help create more summer jobs over time for young people who are neither working nor studying. The Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society believes that an approach similar to the initiative with a specific focus on young people in households with socioeconomic challenges is needed in the future, but with the addition of specifically reaching young people who are neither working nor studying within that group. However, the possibilities for targeting funds specifically at young people who are neither working nor studying need to be further explored. It is important

³The results are to be reported by Arbetsförmedlingen on 17 May 2022.

to clearly emphasise the target group's need to gain work experience in order to increase their chances of entering the labour market. For example, according to the study **Utbildning – nyckeln till arbete** (Education – the key to work) by the Swedish Association of Local and Regional Authorities, completion of upper-secondary education is a decisive factor in establishing oneself in the labour market, as is early work experience (SKR 2016). An initiative to create more summer jobs for the target group is therefore important and can be carried out in cooperation between municipalities, non-profit actors and the business community. The initiatives taken must also be monitored and evaluated to see whether they are having the desired effect.⁴

The assessment is important for the youth policy objective for all young people to have good living conditions, power to shape their lives and influence on societal development. It is also important in the context of Goal 8 of the 2030 Agenda – Decent Work and Economic Growth – and in particular Target 8.5 – full employment and decent work with equal pay for work of equal value for all – and Target 8.6 – reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training. It also relates to Goal 10 – Reduced Inequalities – and in particular Target 10.1 – reduce income disparities.

22 The results are to be reported by Arbetsförmedlingen on 17 May 2022.

23 Directing future financial resources to summer jobs for the target group of young people who are neither working nor studying may mean fewer opportunities for other target groups to have a workplace connection during the holidays. An analysis therefore needs to be carried out over the current criteria so that they can be adjusted to be more accurate and so that displacement effects are avoided as far as possible. For those groups of young people who are neither working nor studying and who have high thresholds for entering the labour market, the possibility of gaining work experience and the opportunity to make professional contacts are of great importance.

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