

YOUTH.sg:

The State of Youth in Singapore 2024



Youth & Their Strides Towards Flourishing



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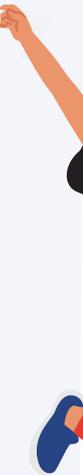
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NATIONAL
YOUTH
COUNCIL
SINGAPORE

WE HEAR **Y**OUTH
HERE FOR **Y**OUTH

At NYC, we believe in a world where young people are respected and heard and have the ability to influence and make a difference in 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**



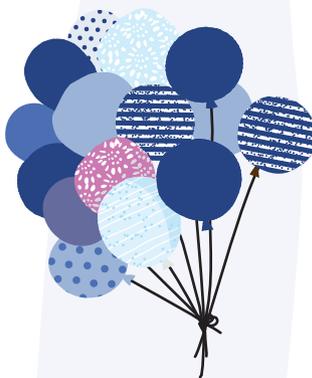
Our Mission

Create **opportunities for all Singaporean youth** to be **heard**, to be **empowered** and **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.

Visit www.nyc.gov.sg for more information.

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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, 2019, and 2022. 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 five separate issues covering topics concerning the state of youth today:



Youth & Their Diverse Priorities

shed light on the aspirations, values & attitudes driving youths



Youth & the Future of Work

focuses on youths' education & employment related attitudes and future readiness



Youth & Their Enduring Bonds

provides insights into the strength and quality of youths' social support



Youth & the Power of Communities

delves into youths' sense of social cohesion and civic engagement



Youth & Their Strides Towards Flourishing

highlights multiple aspects of youths' wellbeing and ability to thrive

Each issue features youth statistics and insights from the NYS. Together, the five issues of YOUTH.sg intend 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.

Wellbeing

An individual's wellbeing can be said to be shaped by where they live, what they have and who they know. As a multifaceted concept, there are three broad contributors toward wellbeing; a person's quality of life, their economic circumstances, and their connections to the groups around them (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2020). These broad categories can be further sub-divided into 11 dimensions. Quality of life indicators include subjective wellbeing and health. Material conditions comprise income and wealth, work and job quality, and housing. Lastly, dimensions of connections include one's social ties and work-life balance.



Wellbeing

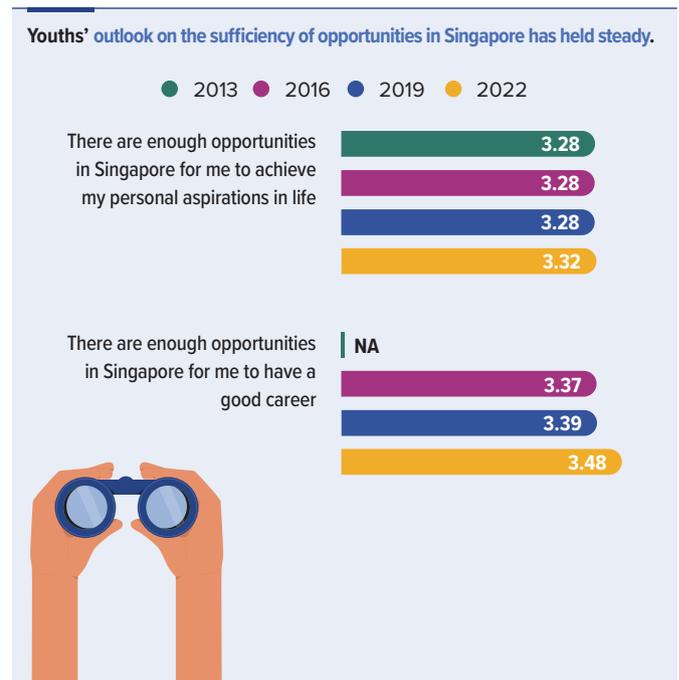
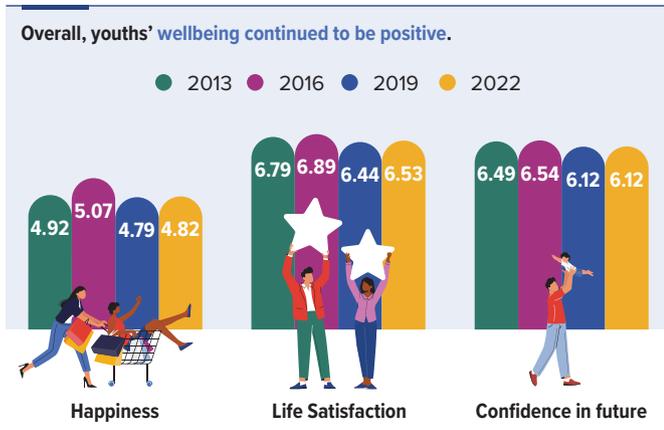
In a world of change, our youths are constantly navigating opportunities and upheavals in their journey. The COVID-19 pandemic in particular had led to various economic, social, psychological challenges, thereby affecting the wellbeing of youths (Graupensperger et al., 2022). As they plough through these challenges and make strides towards a future where they flourish and grow, qualities such as self-determination and resilience are critical in helping youths rise above disruptions beyond their control (Renati et al., 2023).

Global events such as economic downturns, pandemics, and technological disruptions have a far-reaching impact on individuals who are at the cusp of making major life decisions and planning for their futures. Such events can create new possibilities or cause the loss of opportunities, thereby making pathways and achievements precarious (Schoon & Mortimer, 2017; Settersten et al., 2020). These disruptions and

disappointments may threaten youths' immediate welfare in the short-term and make it difficult for them to visualise their futures in the long run.

Against the backdrop of rising unpredictability (Bloom et al., 2022), youth stressors such as future uncertainty has reached its peak in the past decade. It is pertinent to note, however, that future uncertainty is not always negative; it may be motivating and act as an impetus for action (Smith et al., 2014). Concurrently, youths' subjective wellbeing and longer-term outlook such as their life satisfaction, future confidence, happiness, and sense of opportunities in Singapore to achieve personal aspirations and a good career remained stable. This suggests that they are resilient and were able to take the pandemic in their stride.

Taken together, it is important for various stakeholders such as parents, educators, and mentors to help youths navigate their future and achieve success in life. These stakeholders can work hand-in-hand to help youths form strong social networks (Tambyah et al., 2024) and replenish their personal resilience resources such as optimism and sense of purpose in life (Fullerton et al., 2021; Smith et al., 2013) to allow them to adapt and thrive in the future.



PART A: SUBJECTIVE WELLBEING

Section A1:

HAPPINESS, LIFE SATISFACTION & CONFIDENCE IN FUTURE

The COVID-19 pandemic does not appear to have had a lasting impact on youths' subjective wellbeing. Measures of happiness, life satisfaction, and future confidence held steady between 2019 to 2022 (Table A1). Older youths held more positive evaluations of their lives and future as compared to younger youths (Table A2).



Taking all things together, how happy would you say you are?
(Based on a 7-pt scale, where 7="very happy" & 1="very unhappy".)

Having considered all things in life, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days?
(Based on a 10-pt scale, where 10="satisfied" & 1="dissatisfied".)

How confident do you feel about your future as a whole?
(Based on a 10-pt scale, where 10="very confident" & 1="not confident at all".)

Table A1:

MEAN RATINGS OF YOUTHS' HAPPINESS, LIFE SATISFACTION & CONFIDENCE OVER TIME (WITH STANDARD DEVIATIONS IN PARENTHESES)

	2013	2016	2019	2022
	(n=2,843)	(n=3,531)	(n=3,392)	(n=3,565)
Happiness (7-pt scale)	4.92 (1.18)	5.07 (1.17)	4.79 (1.24)	4.82 (1.23)
Life satisfaction (10-pt scale)	6.79 (1.87)	6.89 (1.86)	6.44 (1.93)	6.53 (1.91)
Confidence in future (10-pt scale)	6.49 (1.99)	6.54 (2.00)	6.12 (1.97)	6.12 (1.95)

Table A2:

MEAN RATINGS OF YOUTHS' HAPPINESS, LIFE SATISFACTION & CONFIDENCE BY AGE (WITH STANDARD DEVIATIONS IN PARENTHESES)

	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	Overall
	(n=711)	(n=802)	(n=963)	(n=1,090)	(n=3,565)
Happiness (7-pt scale)	4.70 (1.25)	4.78 (1.30)	4.84 (1.22)	4.92 (1.14)	4.82 (1.23)
Life satisfaction (10-pt scale)	6.31 (1.92)	6.38 (2.06)	6.53 (1.92)	6.80 (1.73)	6.53 (1.91)
Confidence in future (10-pt scale)	5.74 (1.97)	5.95 (2.03)	6.16 (2.00)	6.47 (1.79)	6.12 (1.95)

Section A2:

SELF-ESTEEM & SELF-EFFICACY

Self-esteem is understood as the evaluation of one's self-worth (Baumeister et al., 2003; Orth & Robins, 2014), while self-efficacy is defined as the beliefs about one's ability to control and independently manage life events (Bandura, 1990, 2006). Together, self-esteem and self-efficacy shape a person's agentic behaviour (e.g. goal setting and attainment, taking initiative) and influence their approach towards life's challenges and opportunities.

Older youths were observed to have a higher sense of self-esteem compared to younger youths, while levels of self-efficacy are comparable across all age groups (Tables A4 and A6).



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 A3:

MEAN RATINGS OF YOUTHS' SELF-ESTEEM OVER TIME (WITH STANDARD DEVIATIONS IN PARENTHESES)

	2013	2016	2019	2022
	(n=2,843)	(n=3,531)	(n=3,392)	(n=3,565)
Self-Esteem (Aggregate)	3.64 (0.67)	3.63 (0.66)	3.59 (0.70)	3.60 (0.70)
On the whole, I am satisfied with myself	3.86 (0.86)	3.85 (0.85)	3.74 (0.90)	3.78 (0.90)
I feel that I have a number of good qualities	4.01 (0.75)	4.00 (0.71)	3.95 (0.75)	4.01 (0.77)
I feel I do not have much to be proud of ^a	2.95 (1.07)	2.96 (1.05)	2.93 (1.08)	2.99 (1.10)

Note

a. This item was reverse coded in the aggregate score.



Table A4:
MEAN RATINGS OF YOUTHS' SELF-ESTEEM BY AGE (WITH STANDARD DEVIATIONS IN PARENTHESES)

	15-19 (n=711)	20-24 (n=802)	25-29 (n=963)	30-34 (n=1,090)	Overall (n=3,565)
Self-Esteem (Aggregate)	3.44 (0.72)	3.57 (0.74)	3.61 (0.71)	3.72 (0.63)	3.60 (0.70)
On the whole, I am satisfied with myself	3.58 (0.98)	3.77 (0.97)	3.78 (0.88)	3.92 (0.78)	3.78 (0.90)
I feel that I have a number of good qualities	3.90 (0.84)	4.01 (0.82)	4.00 (0.74)	4.08 (0.69)	4.01 (0.77)
I feel I do not have much to be proud of ^a	3.17 (1.11)	3.07 (1.12)	2.95 (1.09)	2.85 (1.08)	2.99 (1.10)

Note

a. This item was reverse coded in the aggregate score.

Table A5:
MEAN RATINGS OF YOUTHS' SELF-EFFICACY OVER TIME (WITH STANDARD DEVIATIONS IN PARENTHESES)

	2013 (n=2,843)	2016 (n=3,531)	2019 (n=3,392)	2022 (n=3,565)
Self-Efficacy (Aggregate)	4.41 (0.53)	4.42 (0.52)	4.30 (0.54)	4.30 (0.54)
It is important to think before you act	4.50 (0.61)	4.48 (0.59)	4.41 (0.63)	4.45 (0.62)
If I work harder, I will achieve better results	4.28 (0.78)	4.34 (0.74)	4.19 (0.78)	4.12 (0.82)
I am responsible for what happens to me	4.45 (0.62)	4.44 (0.61)	4.28 (0.64)	4.33 (0.65)

Table A6:
MEAN RATINGS OF YOUTHS' SELF-EFFICACY BY AGE (WITH STANDARD DEVIATIONS IN PARENTHESES)

	15-19 (n=711)	20-24 (n=802)	25-29 (n=963)	30-34 (n=1,090)	Overall (n=3,565)
Self-Efficacy (Aggregate)	4.34 (0.55)	4.35 (0.57)	4.27 (0.54)	4.27 (0.53)	4.30 (0.54)
It is important to think before you act	4.47 (0.65)	4.48 (0.64)	4.43 (0.61)	4.41 (0.60)	4.45 (0.62)
If I work harder, I will achieve better results	4.25 (0.79)	4.20 (0.83)	4.04 (0.84)	4.06 (0.82)	4.12 (0.82)
I am responsible for what happens to me	4.29 (0.66)	4.36 (0.67)	4.32 (0.63)	4.33 (0.63)	4.33 (0.65)

Section A3:

LIFE STRESSORS

Concerns over the future, emerging responsibilities of adulthood and one's finances have intensified (Table A7). They remain key stressors for young people across all age groups over the years. Notably, youths aged 20 to 24 were particularly affected as they navigate the transition from education into the workforce (Table A8).



To what extent do you find the following areas of your life to be stressful?

(Based on a 5-pt scale, where 5="extremely stressful", 3="moderately stressful", & 1="not at all stressful".)

Table A7:

MEAN RATINGS OF YOUTHS' LIFE STRESSORS OVER TIME (WITH STANDARD DEVIATIONS IN PARENTHESES)

	2013 (n=2,791)	2016 (n=3,493)	2019 (n=3,354)	2022 (n=3,540)
Future uncertainty	3.46 (1.15)	3.46 (1.17)	3.33 (1.15)	3.52 (1.12)
Emerging adult responsibility	3.22 (1.12)	3.30 (1.15)	3.25 (1.12)	3.48 (1.08)
Finances	3.23 (1.27)	3.07 (1.20)	3.21 (1.18)	3.35 (1.15)
Work	3.10 (1.09)	2.99 (1.06)	3.00 (1.05)	3.12 (1.08)
Studies	3.49 (1.16)	3.36 (1.22)	3.16 (1.22)	3.11 (1.27)
Health of family member	3.04 (1.18)	3.13 (1.21)	3.00 (1.18)	3.04 (1.17)
Personal health	2.68 (1.18)	2.74 (1.22)	2.62 (1.13)	2.81 (1.13)
Family relationships	2.45 (1.26)	2.26 (1.10)	2.40 (1.15)	2.55 (1.17)
Friendships (including peer pressure, romantic relationships)	2.40 (1.16)	2.20 (1.03)	2.38 (1.11)	2.51 (1.13)

Note

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



Table A8:
MEAN RATINGS OF YOUTHS' LIFE STRESSORS BY AGE (WITH STANDARD DEVIATIONS IN PARENTHESES)

	15-19 (n=705)	20-24 (n=798)	25-29 (n=956)	30-34 (n=1,083)	Overall (n=3,540)
Future uncertainty	3.59 (1.11)	3.66 (1.12)	3.54 (1.10)	3.35 (1.11)	3.52 (1.12)
Emerging adult responsibility	3.38 (1.08)	3.69 (1.04)	3.58 (1.09)	3.30 (1.07)	3.48 (1.08)
Finances	3.10 (1.13)	3.48 (1.13)	3.45 (1.17)	3.33 (1.14)	3.35 (1.15)
Work	2.75 (1.15)	3.08 (1.09)	3.26 (1.01)	3.22 (1.04)	3.12 (1.08)
Studies	3.76 (1.04)	3.45 (1.18)	2.75 (1.25)	2.61 (1.23)	3.11 (1.27)
Health of family member	2.89 (1.17)	3.03 (1.21)	3.08 (1.15)	3.12 (1.15)	3.04 (1.17)
Personal health	2.66 (1.16)	2.82 (1.16)	2.84 (1.11)	2.88 (1.10)	2.81 (1.13)
Family relationships	2.49 (1.17)	2.61 (1.21)	2.57 (1.17)	2.53 (1.16)	2.55 (1.17)
Friendships (including peer pressure, romantic relationships)	2.71 (1.15)	2.64 (1.13)	2.46 (1.15)	2.33 (1.07)	2.51 (1.13)

Note

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



Section A4:

RESILIENCE

The ability to bounce back or recover from stress or adversity (Smith et al., 2008) is critical for individuals to thrive in the face of challenges brought forth by an increasingly tumultuous environment. Youths perceived themselves to be moderately resilient (Table A9).



To what extent do you agree with these statements?

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

Table A9:**MEAN RATINGS OF YOUTHS' RESILIENCE OVER TIME** (WITH STANDARD DEVIATIONS IN PARENTHESES)

	2016	2019	2022
	(n=3,531)	(n=3,392)	(n=3,565)
Resilience (Aggregate)	3.29 (0.60)	3.22 (0.63)	3.17 (0.64)
I tend to bounce back quickly after hard times	3.73 (0.82)	3.46 (0.84)	3.40 (0.86)
I have a hard time making it through stressful events ^a	3.10 (0.96)	2.96 (0.94)	3.01 (0.93)
It does not take me long to recover from a stressful event	3.56 (0.86)	3.39 (0.88)	3.31 (0.91)
It is hard for me to snap back when something bad happens ^a	2.92 (0.95)	2.93 (0.93)	2.94 (0.92)
I usually come through difficult times with little trouble	3.35 (0.85)	3.28 (0.86)	3.23 (0.88)
I tend to take a long time to get over setbacks in my life ^a	2.89 (0.95)	2.92 (0.96)	2.99 (0.95)

Note

a. These items were reverse coded in the aggregate score.

Table A10:
MEAN RATINGS OF YOUTHS' RESILIENCE BY AGE (WITH STANDARD DEVIATIONS IN PARENTHESES)

	15-19 (n=711)	20-24 (n=802)	25-29 (n=963)	30-34 (n=1,090)	Overall (n=3,565)
Resilience (Aggregate)	3.10 (0.64)	3.13 (0.63)	3.18 (0.66)	3.23 (0.62)	3.17 (0.64)
I tend to bounce back quickly after hard times	3.40 (0.89)	3.37 (0.86)	3.38 (0.86)	3.44 (0.83)	3.40 (0.86)
I have a hard time making it through stressful events ^a	3.16 (0.94)	3.07 (0.93)	2.98 (0.93)	2.90 (0.89)	3.01 (0.93)
It does not take me long to recover from a stressful event	3.30 (0.96)	3.31 (0.91)	3.29 (0.91)	3.33 (0.87)	3.31 (0.91)
It is hard for me to snap back when something bad happens ^a	3.03 (0.95)	2.97 (0.95)	2.90 (0.90)	2.88 (0.89)	2.94 (0.92)
I usually come through difficult times with little trouble	3.18 (0.92)	3.18 (0.91)	3.22 (0.87)	3.30 (0.84)	3.23 (0.88)
I tend to take a long time to get over setbacks in my life ^a	3.08 (0.97)	3.04 (0.95)	2.95 (0.95)	2.91 (0.92)	2.99 (0.95)

Note

a. These items were reverse coded in the aggregate score.



PART B: PHYSICAL WELLBEING

Section B1:

PERCEIVED PHYSICAL & MENTAL HEALTH

Transitions during emerging adulthood can have a significant impact on an individual's physical and mental welfare (Arnett et al., 2014; Barlett et al., 2020). This is especially true during the COVID-19 pandemic (Ministry of Health, 2023) and more attention should be paid to how youths are faring both physically and mentally post-COVID.

Overall, physical and mental health were reported to be fair in 2022 (Table B1). Younger youths perceived themselves to have better physical than mental health. Older youths reported higher levels of mental health (Table B2), which suggests that they may have been less impacted by the pandemic than younger youths.



All in all, how would you describe your state of physical health these days?
(Based on a 5-pt scale, where 5="very good", 3="fair", & 1="very poor".)

All in all, how would you describe your state of mental health these days?
(Based on a 5-pt scale, where 5="very good", 3="fair", & 1="very poor".)

Table B1:

MEAN RATINGS OF YOUTHS' PERCEIVED PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH OVER TIME (WITH STANDARD DEVIATIONS IN PARENTHESES)

	2019	2022
	(n=3,392)	(n=3,565)
Perceived physical health	3.52 (0.83)	3.39 (0.84)
Perceived mental health	3.48 (0.92)	3.26 (0.94)

Note

This is a new question introduced in NYS 2019, replacing the question on perceived general health in earlier iterations of the NYS.

Table B2:

MEAN RATINGS OF YOUTHS' PERCEIVED PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH BY AGE (WITH STANDARD DEVIATIONS IN PARENTHESES)

	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	Overall
	(n=711)	(n=802)	(n=963)	(n=1,090)	(n=3,565)
Perceived physical health	3.46 (0.85)	3.35 (0.87)	3.39 (0.84)	3.38 (0.81)	3.39 (0.84)
Perceived mental health	3.20 (1.00)	3.19 (0.98)	3.27 (0.91)	3.35 (0.87)	3.26 (0.94)

PART C: ECONOMIC WELLBEING

Section C1:

PERCEIVED OPPORTUNITIES

Despite uncertainty over the future, youths' outlook has held steady over time. Youths held moderate evaluations of the opportunities available to them in Singapore to achieve their life goals, while remaining slightly more optimistic about the chance to have a good career (Table C1).



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 C1:

MEAN RATINGS OF YOUTHS' PERCEIVED OPPORTUNITIES OVER TIME (WITH STANDARD DEVIATIONS IN PARENTHESES)

	2013	2016	2019	2022
	(n=2,843)	(n=3,531)	(n=3,392)	(n=3,565)
There are enough opportunities in Singapore for me to achieve my personal aspirations in life	3.29 (1.01)	3.28 (1.03)	3.28 (0.93)	3.32 (0.89)
There are enough opportunities in Singapore for me to have a good career ^a	NA	3.37 (0.99)	3.39 (0.91)	3.48 (0.86)

Note

a. Item is new to NYS 2016.

Table C2:

MEAN RATINGS OF YOUTHS' PERCEIVED OPPORTUNITIES BY AGE (WITH STANDARD DEVIATIONS IN PARENTHESES)

	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	Overall
	(n=711)	(n=802)	(n=963)	(n=1,090)	(n=3,565)
There are enough opportunities in Singapore for me to achieve my personal aspirations in life	3.32 (0.90)	3.33 (0.94)	3.28 (0.88)	3.35 (0.86)	3.32 (0.89)
There are enough opportunities in Singapore for me to have a good career	3.52 (0.86)	3.50 (0.88)	3.44 (0.86)	3.47 (0.83)	3.48 (0.86)

Section C2:

INCOME & REWARDS

Over the years, youths' attitudes towards income equality have been relatively balanced. Tolerance for income differences has grown (Table C3), with older youths believing more strongly that larger income differences are needed to incentivise efforts (Table C4).



To what extent do you agree with the following statement regarding incomes and rewards?

(Based on a 10-pt scale, where 10="we need larger income differences as incentives for individual effort" & 1="incomes should be made more equal".)

Table C3:

MEAN RATINGS OF YOUTHS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS INCOME & REWARDS OVER TIME (WITH STANDARD DEVIATIONS IN PARENTHESES)

	2013	2016	2019	2022
	(n=2,843)	(n=3,531)	(n=3,392)	(n=3,565)
Incomes & rewards	5.54 (2.50)	5.09 (2.44)	5.57 (2.31)	5.70 (2.26)

Table C4:

MEAN RATINGS OF YOUTHS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS INCOME & REWARDS BY AGE (WITH STANDARD DEVIATIONS IN PARENTHESES)

	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	Overall
	(n=711)	(n=802)	(n=963)	(n=1,090)	(n=3,565)
Incomes & rewards	5.52 (2.10)	5.58 (2.31)	5.59 (2.34)	5.99 (2.21)	5.70 (2.26)



Section C3:

HARD WORK & CONNECTIONS

Besides hard work, connections are increasingly seen as an important factor for achieving success (Table C5). Older youths had a greater tendency to perceive luck and connections as crucial conditions for succeeding in life compared to younger youths (Table C6).



To what extent do you agree with the following statement regarding work and connections?

(Based on a 10-pt scale, where 10=“hard work doesn't generally bring success - it's more a matter of luck and connections” & 1=“in the long run, hard work usually brings a better life”.)

Table C5:

MEAN RATINGS OF YOUTHS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS HARD WORK & CONNECTIONS OVER TIME

(WITH STANDARD DEVIATIONS IN PARENTHESES)

	2013	2016	2019	2022
	(n=2,843)	(n=3,531)	(n=3,392)	(n=3,565)
Hard work & connections	5.12 (2.60)	4.99 (2.47)	5.72 (2.44)	6.07 (2.34)

Table C6:

MEAN RATINGS OF YOUTHS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS HARD WORK & CONNECTIONS BY AGE

(WITH STANDARD DEVIATIONS IN PARENTHESES)

	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	Overall
	(n=711)	(n=802)	(n=963)	(n=1,090)	(n=3,565)
Hard work & connections	5.49 (2.30)	5.98 (2.35)	6.33 (2.33)	6.27 (2.32)	6.07 (2.34)



Section C4:

ALLOWANCE & PARENTAL INCOME

Most schooling youths received financial support from their parents, with over 6 in 10 receiving at least \$100 or more in monthly allowances (Table C7).



What is the average monthly spending money you receive from your family or guardian?
(This does not include school or tuition fees or your own salary.)

Table C7:

SCHOOLING YOUTHS' MONTHLY ALLOWANCES OVER TIME

	2013	2016	2019	2022
	(n=1,057)	(n=1,206)	(n=1,116)	(n=1,109)
Above S\$300	17%	18%	20%	21%
S\$201 - S\$300	18%	19%	18%	16%
S\$100 - S\$200	32%	31%	32%	28%
Below S\$100	22%	22%	16%	20%
I do not receive money	10%	10%	13%	15%



What is your parents' combined monthly income (from all sources)?

Table C8:

PARENTS' COMBINED INCOME OVER TIME

	2013 ^a	2016	2019	2022
	(n=2,025)	(n=3,341)	(n=3,140)	(n=3,240)
\$5,000 and above	25%	31%	38%	44%
\$3,000 - \$4,999	18%	19%	19%	18%
\$2,000 - \$2,999	15%	16%	16%	13%
\$1,500 - \$1,999	12%	10%	8%	7%
\$1,000 - \$1,499	11%	10%	6%	6%
\$500 - \$999	9%	5%	4%	3%
Below \$500	10%	9%	10%	9%

Notes

Respondents who declined giving a response were excluded from the reported figures.

a. NYS 2013 response brackets were captured differently and may not be strictly comparable.

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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, 2020; 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"> • Social support • Social participation • Values & attitudes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Employment • Wellbeing
Focus	The power of relationships	The human potential of young people

NYS 2022 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 November 2022 to February 2023. A total of 3,565 youths were successfully surveyed, of which 150 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 2013, 2016, 2019, and 2022. Figures referenced in all tables in the publication were weighted according to interlocking matrices of age, gender, and race of the respective youth populations.

**TABLE II :
PROFILE OF NYS RESPONDENTS**

		NYS 2013 (n=2,843)	NYS 2016 (n=3,531)	NYS 2019 (n=3,392)	NYS 2022 (n= 3,565)	Latest Youth Population ^a
Age	15-19	24%	23%	21%	20%	20%
	20-24	25%	25%	24%	22%	22%
	25-29	24%	25%	27%	27%	27%
	30-34	28%	27%	28%	31%	31%
Gender	Male	49%	49%	50%	50%	50%
	Female	51%	51%	50%	50%	50%
Race	Chinese	72%	72%	72%	71%	71%
	Malay	16%	16%	17%	17%	17%
	Indian	10%	9%	9%	9%	9%
	Others	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%
Nationality	Singaporean	90%	94%	93%	93%	86%
	Permanent Resident	10%	6%	7%	7%	14%
Marital Status	Single	74%	73%	74%	74%	75%
	Married	25%	26%	25%	25%	25%
	Divorced/Separated/Widowed	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Religion	Buddhism	25%	24%	22%	21%	26%
	Islam	19%	20%	21%	20%	20%
	Christianity	19%	19%	20%	20%	18%
	Hinduism	6%	5%	5%	5%	5%
	Taoism/Traditional Chinese Beliefs	7%	6%	5%	4%	6%
	Other Religions	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%
	No Religion	23%	25%	27%	29%	25%
Dwelling	HDB 1-2 rooms	3%	5%	4%	6%	4%
	HDB 3 rooms	14%	14%	14%	13%	11%
	HDB 4 rooms	37%	38%	35%	30%	34%
	HDB 5 rooms, executive, & above	32%	29%	30%	33%	29%
	Private flat & condominium	9%	9%	12%	13%	15%
	Private house & bungalow	6%	4%	4%	4%	6%
	Others	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%

Note

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, nationality and dwelling (DOS, 2022a, 2022b and 2022c) as well as marital status, and religion (DOS, 2020a and 2020b).

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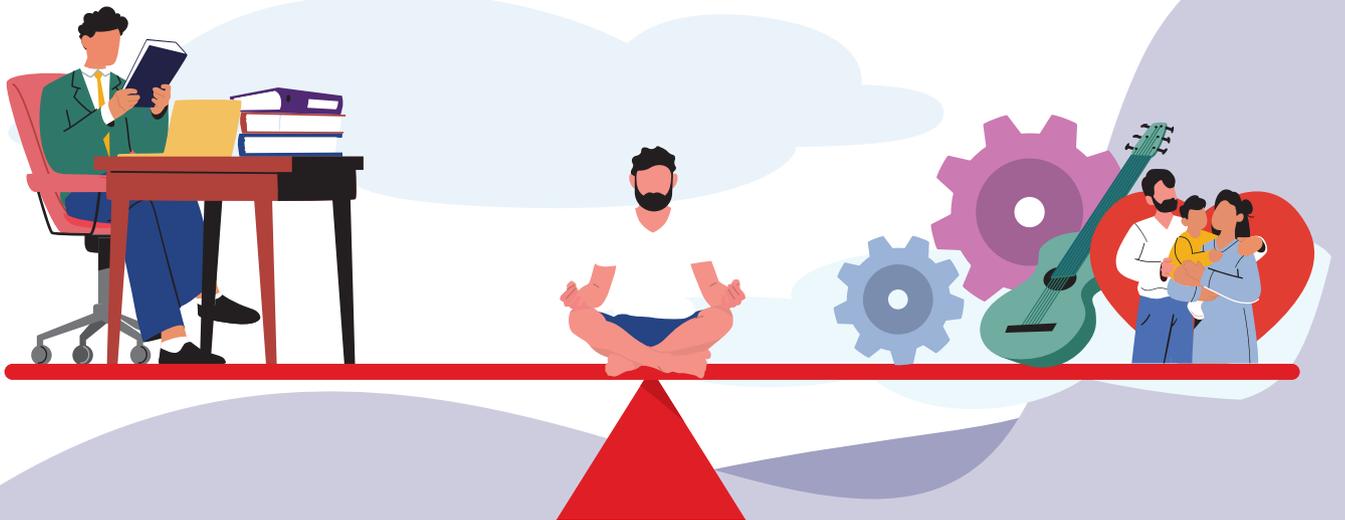
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YOUTH IN SINGAPORE: A BRIEF DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

Takeaways

Young people form a cornerstone of Singapore's social and economic landscape, representing a sizeable segment of the population. In 2023, Singapore's resident youth population (aged 15 to 34 years old) accounted for one-quarter of the resident population. The gender ratio has held steady with an even split. The ethnic background of our resident youth population remains diverse, and there is a sizeable proportion of youths who are holding Permanent Residency.



The demographic trends of our youths not only reflect the progress of our nation, but also the amalgamation of decisions they have made at each point of transition. Over the past 40 years, young people have been pursuing higher educational attainment and delaying marriage. In 2023, 58% of youths aged 25 to 29 years old in the workforce had attained at least a university degree and 87% of youths aged 20 to 29 years old were single.



Beyond a diverse demographic composition, the changes in attainment of milestones reflect the shifting landscape of Singapore's youth. In the YOUTH.sg publication, the National Youth Council explores time trends across both administrative data and perception data from the National Youth Survey to offer a holistic understanding of young people. These deeper insights serve to provide a comprehensive overview to inform youth development, policy, and practice.



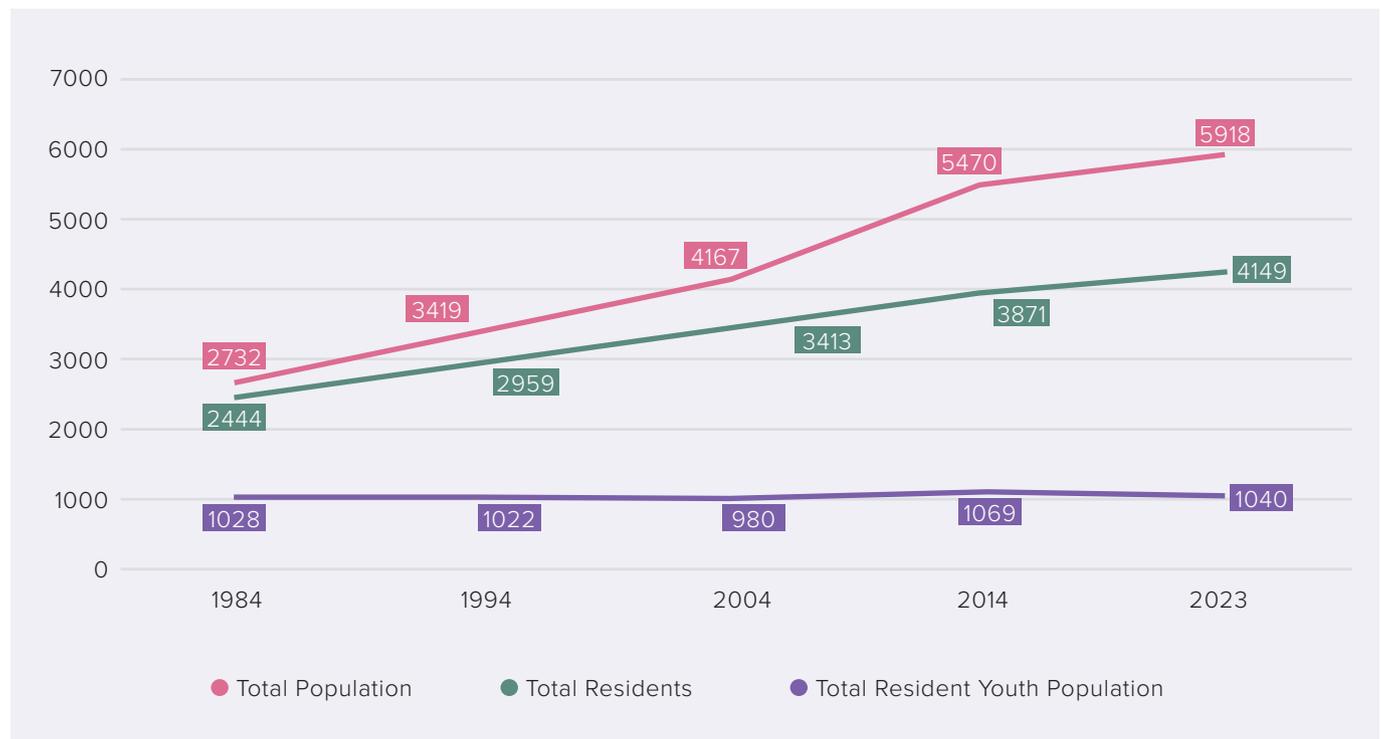
Youth Population

As of 2023, Singapore's total population stood at 5.9 million, with a resident population of 4.1 million (Department of Statistics (DOS), 2023a). Within this, the resident youth population (aged 15 to 34 years old) comprised a sizeable proportion at approximately 1 million people (see Chart I). However, this youth demographic is shrinking relative to the overall population, as evidenced by

the rise in the median age of residents from 27 years in 1984 to 42 years in 2023. This demographic shift signalled significant societal changes, with the dwindling youth population and growing elderly cohort suggesting increased pressures on younger generations, as more face greater responsibilities in supporting an ageing society in the years to come.

Chart I.

OVERALL POPULATION AND YOUTH POPULATION IN SINGAPORE IN '000 (1984–2023)



Source: Department of Statistics (2023a & 2023b)

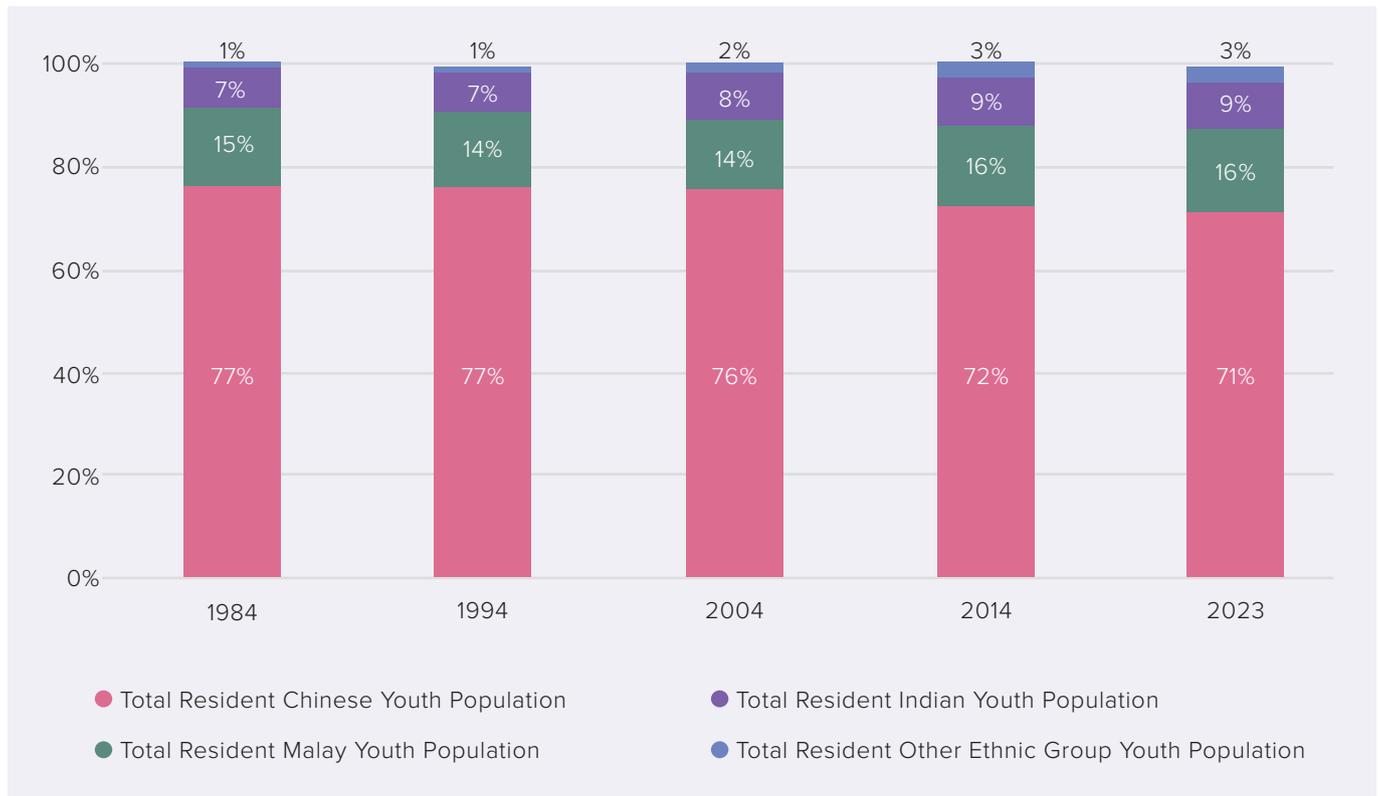
Gender Profile

The gender ratio of the resident youth population remained relatively even across the past 40 years, mirroring the overall trends of Singapore’s resident population. In 2023, there was an even proportion of 50% males and 50% females (DOS, 2023b).

Ethnicity and Permanent Residency Profile

Our resident youth population steadily became more diverse over the years. While Chinese remained as the majority ethnic group of youths in Singapore, there was an increase in the proportion of youths from other ethnic groups, from 23% in 1984 to 29% in 2023 (see Chart II). Contributing to our social diversity were our Permanent Resident youths, who formed a sizeable proportion (14% in 2023; DOS, 2023b & 2023c) of the youth population.

Chart II.
ETHNICITY BREAKDOWN OF THE RESIDENT YOUTH POPULATION IN SINGAPORE (1984–2023)



Source: DOS (2023b)

Educational Profile

On the whole, Singapore youths had become more educated, with a majority now pursuing higher education beyond secondary-level schooling. The gross proportion of students enrolled in post-secondary (non-tertiary) institutions and above had steadily risen from 21% in 1990 to 92% in 2023 (DOS, 2023d). The majority of those aged 25 to 29 years old in the workforce now have at least a university degree, compared to 30 years ago where having a secondary or below educational attainment was more common (see Chart III).

Marital Profile

The pursuit of diverse life goals, including attaining higher educational qualifications, alongside youths' evolving attitudes and concept of marriage may have contributed to the decision to delay or reconsider marriage plans. Over the last 40 years, the median age of first marriages has risen from 26.9 to 30.8 for grooms, and from 24.1 to 29.2 for brides (DOS, 2023f). Correspondingly, the prevalence of singlehood amongst youths aged 20-29 remained high, having risen from 69% in 1984 to 87% in 2023 (see Chart IV). The proportion of single youths aged 30-39 progressively increased from 17% in 1984 to 30% in 2023 (see Chart V).

Chart III.

HIGHEST QUALIFICATION ATTAINED OF YOUTHS AGED 25-29 IN THE LABOUR FORCE (1990–2023)

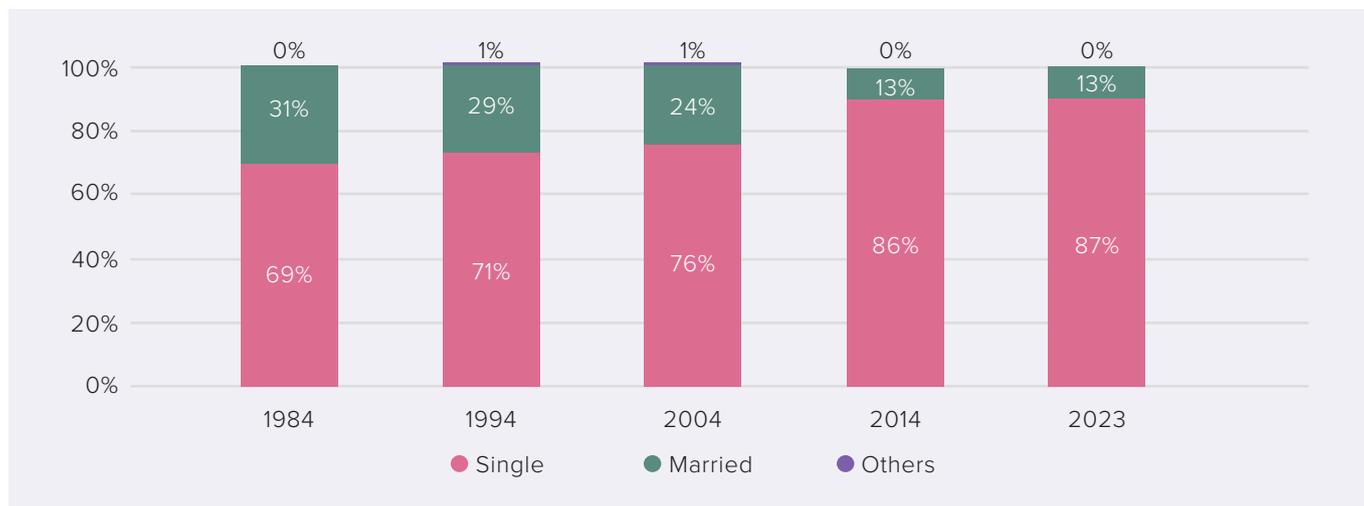


Note

a. 1984 data is not available
Source: DOS (2023d)

Chart IV.

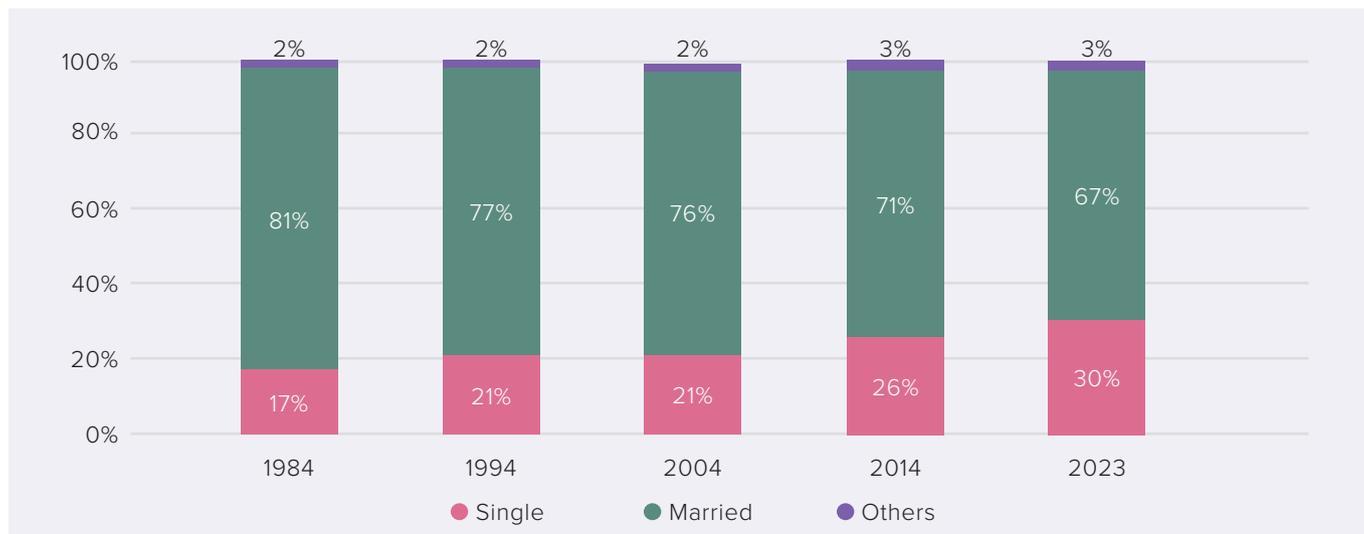
RESIDENT YOUTH AGED 20-29 YEARS OLD IN SINGAPORE BY MARITAL STATUS (1984-2023)



Source: DOS (2023e)

Chart V.

RESIDENT YOUTH AGED 30-39 YEARS OLD IN SINGAPORE BY MARITAL STATUS (1984-2023)



Source: DOS (2023e)

Conclusion

Accounting for one-quarter of Singapore's resident population, our youth are an integral part of our nation. Amidst the backdrop of an increasingly aged and diverse population, youths themselves are driving broader societal trends shaping our demographic composition. In particular, the choices youths make in pursuing higher education and reconsidering marriage have shifted the landscape of Singapore's youth over time. These trends have bearing on our nation's happiness, prosperity and progress.

Efforts to understand and provide appropriate developmental opportunities for youths will require greater understanding of the context in which they live and work. Youths are navigating a world around them which is unprecedentedly complex, uncertain and rapidly evolving. For them to be able to seize opportunities, stay resilient

and adaptable in the face of unanticipated change and make informed decisions to guide their transitions into adulthood and beyond, the stakeholders around them should develop informed, timely and appropriate support.

The National Youth Council (NYC) seeks to provide a holistic and comprehensive understanding of young people, by bringing together administrative and perception data from the National Youth Survey (NYS). The NYS offers deeper insights into social and human capital indicators, which can inform youth development, policy, and practice. With this goal in mind, the YOUTH.sg publications will take on a topical approach to address youth trends and concerns in the areas of Values and Attitudes, Education and Employment, Social Support, Social Cohesion and Participation, and Wellbeing.

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