

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Structural injustices faced by young people in the city of São Paulo

Financing



Realization



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**Participants aged 29 and under.*

Partner Organizations

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About the study

The Structural Injustices study among young people in the city of São Paulo was designed **to deepen our knowledge of the so-called structural injustices** that affect the productive inclusion of young people in São Paulo, **particularly the demographic exclusion created by the systemic barrier of territorial distancing.**

Methodology

The methodological concept was based on participatory construction of the research, featuring open co-creation workshops, Question/Action (*PerguntAção*) workshops with young researchers from social organizations that partner with Opportunity Youth (*Juventudes Potentes*) / GOYN, quantitative sample research, and interviews with actors in the youth field.

Achievements

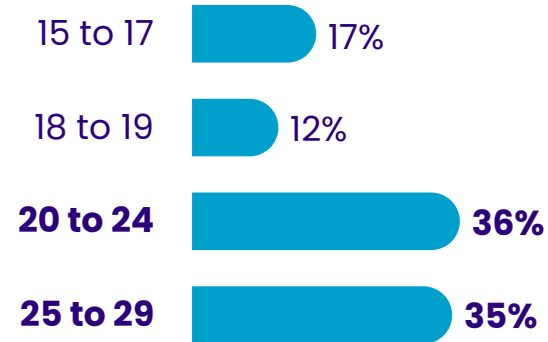
Workshops and interviews: December 2022 to April 2023

Quantitative sample research: February to March 2023
Sample: 600 young people living in the south and east regions of the city of São Paulo, aged 15 to 29, were interviewed.

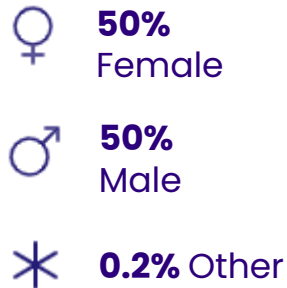


Profile of respondents

Age



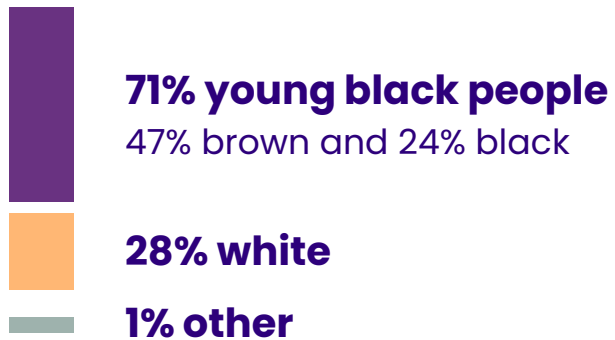
Gender and Identity



Territory



Race/colour

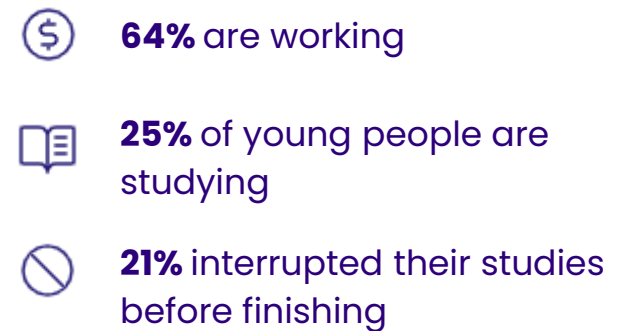


Children



Age when they had their first child:
37% before reaching 17
49% between 18 and 24
14% after 25

Occupation



What does **structural injustices** mean?

“Structural Injustices” is not an immediately recognized term, but the various interpretations given by the respondents follow a common thread.



9 out of 10 young people

believe that “there is a process of historical social inequalities that affects particular people and groups and keeps them in less favourable conditions than others”*

“

It’s an injustice that has a root that cannot be removed.”

“

The idea is that a poor person remains poor.”

– *Young people in a Question/Action (PerguntAção) workshop*

It is **intersectional**, which means there is an overlapping of variables that act to promote and reproduce structural injustices:

- **Race / colour**
- **Sexuality and gender identity**
- **Age**
- **Household income**
- **Place of residence**
- **Maternity**

*Findings presented collectively in a Question/Action workshop with young people

Perceptions and experiences of the same city

84% live in regions with urban infrastructure, but flooding and a lack of water and electricity are still commonly encountered, especially by young black people.

“ I feel safe because I know what will happen if something happens to me.”

“ The only time I didn't feel safe was when the police invaded Favela 14”

— Young people in a Question/Action workshop



7 out of 10 feel safe in the neighbourhood where they live



2 out of 10 feel unsafe on public transport

The issue of moving from their homes to places that have more and better opportunities for work and study stands out among the processes of exclusion.



68% have already run **out of money** to take public transport



42% take **more than 1 hour** to reach the city centre



60% have felt **harmed by spending too much time** on public transport

Social indicators influence the relationship of young people with the city:

- men circulate and feel more part of the city than women
- 5 out of 10 women don't feel safe getting home late
- 3 out of 10 LGBTQIAPN+ young people do not feel safe in the neighbourhoods where they live

Quality of life

Having public services in the neighbourhood doesn't mean they are always available.

Mental health care is one of the **greatest demands** among young people, but **there is little understanding about these services in the neighbourhoods where they live.**

65% use hospitals or public health centres

Present in 93% of the neighbourhoods

28% participate in sports activities

Present in 66% of the neighbourhoods

25% attend cultural events

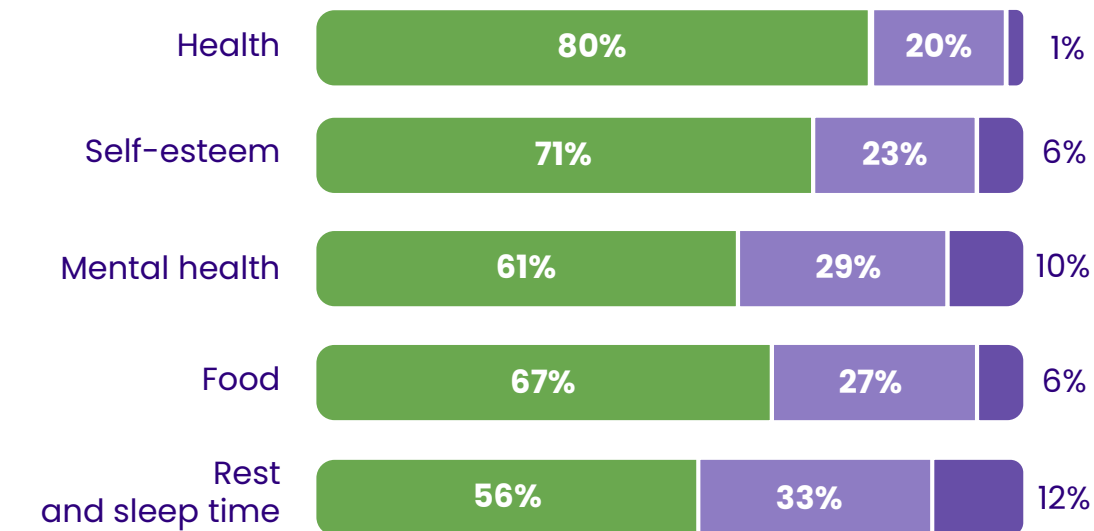
Present in 53% of the neighbourhoods

13% use social assistance services

Present in 73% of the neighbourhoods

Not having access to opportunities and feeling excluded in various aspects of life and society impacts on the use of available services and on self-esteem, and leads to discouragement and a lack of confidence to dream about and seek better outcomes.

Key: ■ Good ■ Fair ■ Poor



Difficulties with self-trust and self-worth have a direct influence on the relationships young people have at home, on the support they receive from family members, and on a healthy living environment.



5 out of 10 young people have felt discredited by their family



6 out of 10 young LGBTQIAPN+ assess their mental health as "poor" or "fair"



33% say that their physical and mental health condition hinders their job search

Challenges to education



44% have considered dropping out of school



21% interrupted their studies

34% for being unable to balance school with work
18% due to pregnancy

Feeling discouraged to continue studying

42% think that school did not prepare them for professional life

39% have been discriminated against due to where they studied

Despite the challenges, 78% intend to continue or resume their studies

Young researchers reported that compared to private schools, public schools have insufficient support to help them confront their personal issues and desires to develop life projects.

Among school age respondents...



42% started working before age 16



37% of young people with children had their first child before the age of 18.

72% have worked and studied at the same time

Difficulties in balancing studies and work:

- 38% are unable to get trained or study due to lack of time.
- Due to pressure to work and earn income, they end up being unable to continue in the area they would like to study.
- The ability to continue their studies is heavily reliant on financial stability.
- For those who do not go to college but intend to become professionally trained, their best means to continue their studies are free courses in the field in which they work.

Injustices in the hiring process, and on the job

The formal job openings most sought after by young people when they enter the job market have low pay, limited opportunities for learning and professional development, and few benefits.

Main impediments to seeking and securing better jobs

- **60% lack of access to information**
- **54% few openings available close to where they live**
- **50% low professional qualification or unfair competition**
- **46% prejudice and discrimination from companies**

29% have been denied full payment of a transport voucher; **26%** have had to lie about where they live; **21%** feel disadvantaged because of the distance from where they live.

Respondents feel disrespected in the selection process, as they are not evaluated for their ability and potential, but rather for their stigmatized personal and social characteristics.

Despite these difficulties, 8 out of 10 feel qualified for the jobs they apply for, even if they are not hired or called for an interview.

For young people, a good job vacancy is:

- Employment card and benefits (transport and meal vouchers)
- Opportunity for learning and career planning
- Work close to home
- Salary compatible with the position and no accumulation of duties
- Decent working conditions
- Valuing of employees
- Healthy work environment
- Social interaction

For these young people, their greatest desires in life are:

- 34% have their own home
- 31% work with what they believe in
- 20% go to college
- 19% have a job and salary to pay the bills
- 18% work for themselves
- 17% build a family

If they could, 72% would have their own business

To escape uncertainty in work cycles, self-employment emerges for many as a popular potential choice in their neighbourhoods.

Understanding and confronting structural injustices

Despite the barriers they face, young people of all profiles have the desire to chart their own paths and reverse the cycles of injustices and inequalities in order to have more meaningful opportunities in their lives.

That's why it's important that different **actors in society become aware of the injustices these young people face in their daily lives, and develop action plans with more transparent, effective, and coordinated goals.** We underline the importance of creating policies which are both intersectoral and which link different actors in the working world ecosystem. Together, they can build mechanisms to overcome social inequalities and promote quality of life for these young people, with the right to plan their future and choices with dignity.

Within the scope of productive inclusion, there is a perception that companies and organizations have not addressed structural injustices among young people **because they don't know how to confront the issue, and get little support from public policies.**

Collective proposals for confronting structural injustices:

Education

- Offer school tutoring to reduce educational inequalities
- Promote a closer connection between the school and the demands of young people from the urban periphery, including employment, living conditions, current vs. required skills, life projects, and mental health
- Promote more skills training for the job market
- Promote better Internet skills training

Work

- Create the means to ensure inclusion and permanence of young people in the workplace, and consider working students and/or mothers
- Promote public policies to encourage and monitor workers' rights and productive inclusion
- Incentivize companies located in the urban peripheries
- Training coordinated between the government, CSOs and companies, targeting the wishes of young people, trends, future professions, and opportunities for development in the territory itself
- Change the internal hiring culture of companies so that they welcome young workers, starting with the selection process, and ensure favourable conditions for their development
- New work dynamics for young people from the urban periphery