

THE YOUTH DECLARATION 2020

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FOREWORD

The decisions we make today shape the world we live in tomorrow.

Over three weeks in the middle of a historic lockdown, nearly two hundred high school students met online to research, debate and look to solve the challenges facing Aotearoa New Zealand. These participants joined and shared their experiences in all walks of life, from communities in West Auckland to rural towns in Southland, and talked about their perspective.

The views of all these young people are condensed and refined into this document, the 2020 Youth Declaration. This sets out the biggest priorities that rangatahi would like to see addressed in this country, from inequality in education to our place in global affairs. Supported by all of our participants and the communities they represent, this document acts as the standard by which young people can work towards their common goals, and the platform through which these aspirations can be heard.

To all the Members of Parliament, CEOs, councilors and decision-makers reading this: we challenge you to think about the changes our young people would like to see in the world. People are working in communities all around this country to try and make these ideas into reality, and we would ask you to think about how you, in your role, could play your part.

Use this document to inform your decisions, but also take steps towards including young people at your decision-making table. There is no substitute for the presence of a meaningful youth voice in deciding the future direction of Aotearoa.

E korero ana mātou. E whakarongo ana koutou?
We're speaking. Are you listening?

Henry Seaton

Aotearoa Youth Declaration 2020 Coordinator

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Aotearoa Youth Declaration 2020 Organising Committee



AOTEAROA YOUTH DECLARATION 2020

This year, due to COVID-19, AYD took place online. This was a chance for us as a committee to innovate and develop a new event structure. The new format included chat rooms and video meetings for participant communication, digital workshops and social events, a plethora of guest speakers, and final town hall presentations held online.

All participants were placed into rōpū chat rooms for discussion with each other and with volunteers, along with open channels for general discussion. We used Google Drive to host briefing papers and statements, as well as supporting participants to collaboratively draft their statements.

Via Zoom, facilitators engaged in regular discussion with participants. These discussions helped to capture some of the face-to-face interaction which would normally be present at a physical conference. Regular calls allowed participants to socialise and engage in comprehensive discussion of their given issue. In the first call the participants engaged in our Tikanga Workshop, which encouraged participants to think about their identity and how this connected to the values of Tikanga Māori. This set the tone for the participants to engage with each other respectfully and openly.

Throughout the conference, in the place of AYD's normal external outreach events, we had a range of guest speakers attend and present digitally. Participants were able to attend any speakers they were interested in hearing from, ask questions directly or discuss their own ideas, to broaden their knowledge of New Zealand and inform their drafted statements.

Alongside these sessions, we also ran social events and workshops to engage participants and help them to make the most out of the experience. Running throughout the conference, our Civics Interactive Problem Solving Workshop assigned rōpū to represent actors in an escalating domestic crisis, challenging them to strategise and work together to achieve their common goals.

The final major part of the conference were town-halls. These took place at the end of the conference and provided an opportunity for individual rōpū to present their statements to the conference as a whole. Each town-hall took the form of an open Zoom call that other participants could join. In each town-hall one rōpū would present its statements, and respond to comments from participants outside their rōpū. These formed a valuable part of the deliberative process, allowing participants to gather feedback and alter their statements before voting.

Following town-halls agreeability voting opened, allowing participants to have their final say by voting on other Rōpū's statements. These statistics are included in the final declaration, indicating how much support each particular statement has from the youth involved. All statements were supported by the vast majority of participants, indicating strong agreement among youth about their future.



HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

Each rōpū has developed three solution statements. It is no easy task narrowing down tens of ideas to just the three most important and consequently, we ask you to bear in mind that other issues of great significance to our rangatahi may exist beyond the statements alone. **Each statement identifies a problem and offers a tangible course of action.**

The percentage number next to each statement gives its agreeability ranking. This system has allowed every single participant across all rōpū groups to individually rate how much they agree or disagree with each statement on a scale of 1 to 10, with higher values equating to higher proportions of rangatahi standing behind each particular statement. The percentage given is based on the number of those that agreed (ranked 7 to 10). Above 75% is a strong agreeability, 50-75% shows a reasonable agreeability, and under 50% is not well agreed with. Reasons for low agreeability rankings may be a lack of understanding of the topic or general disagreement.

Each statement identifies an important concern voiced by our young people for you to acknowledge, consider, and reflect on how you can work towards achieving it in your home, community or business. If we want Aotearoa to continue on its path towards a truly inclusive society, the needs and views of our youth must be given significant weight.

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT US

Aotearoa Youth Declaration is entirely run off the commitment and dedication of voluntary young people over a 10 month period. It is no easy task coordinating so many facets of the conference and the Youth Declaration.

Each year, our core focus is to ensure the conference is accessible and representative of young people. We have to charge participants and volunteers conference fees to cover conference costs. We rely on funding from grants, but often fall short in having enough financial security to achieve our goals.

You can support us financially by sponsoring the conference in a number of ways. You can offer scholarships for youth participation, cover individual registration fees, or regional delegation fees (accommodation) and travel costs. You can also support us in developing our educational materials, as printing is one of our main costs.

We collaborate with a range of awesome leaders and organisations, and rely on their generosity to provide our life-changing educational programme to as many young people as possible. Our expert speaker programme and outreach programme is always looking for new partnerships to facilitate an interactive and quality educational session for each of our rōpū.

You can contact ayd@unyouth.org.nz to express your interest in supporting our mahi.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

IMPROVING PRODUCTIVITY

77.6%

Productivity is a key determinant of economic growth, however, New Zealand's productivity is currently 30% less efficient than similarly developed nations in the OECD. This means that with the same resources, our country is producing less output compared to other OECD nations, significantly hindering our GDP growth. By introducing these three policies, we believe that New Zealand will be able to improve its productivity performance and consequently, improve its GDP growth. This is essential to building the foundation of a resilient and growing economy.

1. Introduce a 150% tax rebate on R&D spending in the private sector in New Zealand to incentivise businesses to spend more on research and development. This increases productivity by increasing the range of capital goods available to producers, which will increase efficiencies in the production process.
2. Support and provide improved and increased training programs with a focus on STEM fields to improve the skills of workers. Further support high skilled trades to cater for New Zealand's growing demand for such skills.
3. Invest in urban farming technology to reduce the requirement for farmland and other resources in crop production and the distance produced has to travel to reach the end consumer. This will improve efficiencies in the production process and free up land for more productive activities such as dairy farming.

CREATING A MORE EQUITABLE ECONOMY

74.8%

The government holds a crucial role in helping ensure a sustainable and equitable economy. With 29% of Kiwis employed by small businesses (firms with fewer than 20 employees), ensuring the prosperity of these firms is crucial. Additionally, we see a growing inequality, with NZ having a Gini coefficient of 33. As inequality grows, we must grapple with the role governments must play - be it in changes to our social safety net, or changes in regulation.


1. Increase the minimum wage to a living wage (\$22.10, with the intention to keep in-sync with future rises) for all those above 18, and to \$16.50 for those either below 18, in starting-out positions or training roles. Subsidies may be offered to small New Zealand firms for the medium term to allow a painless transition.
2. Introduce means of testing for all unemployment support. Use these savings to allow more effective targeting of those eligible for support, who are not getting it.
3. Introduce a capital gains tax on assets valued at above \$10,000 excluding the primary residence. Index the valuations for inflation, and ensure the rate is equal to the rate of income tax paid by the individual selling the asset.

STOPPING THE BRAIN DRAIN

88.8%

Currently, New Zealand is losing many of its educated, skilled people to other countries, such as Australia. NZ's best minds leave as they seek greater opportunities and success elsewhere. This is called the brain drain. Migration data from Statistics New Zealand shows that annual migrant departures from NZ rose from 82,703 to 97,498 between 2016 and 2018. It is crucial that we create policies to prevent this number from further increasing; if we can stop the brain drain, we will have more quality, educated workers contributing to our economy, helping it to flourish.

1. Incentivising large global corporations to set up branch offices and subsidiaries in New Zealand. This provides more job opportunities domestically, encouraging qualified people to stay.
2. Introducing government scholarship programs for jobs in New Zealand to minimise the immigration of highly trained students to other countries after tertiary graduation.
3. Subsidising businesses to provide internships and apprenticeships to domestic and international students. This provides an incentive for students to stay, and industries that are most impacted by brain drain are less financially affected.



EDUCATION

ADDRESSING THE INEQUITY OF OUR EDUCATION SYSTEM

86.9%

Aotearoa's education system is one of the most unequal in the world. UNICEF's 2018 Innocenti Report Card ranked Aotearoa 33rd of 38 OECD countries for educational inequality across pre-school, primary school and secondary school levels. The decile-based funding system has failed to account for larger voluntary donations at high decile schools. Thus, quality teaching staff, opportunities and resources are less accessible at low decile schools. Other factors exacerbating the gap are stigma, poverty and racism. Particularly, significant gaps exist between Māori and the total population. In 2016, 66.5% of Māori school leavers achieved NCEA level 2 or higher compared to 80.3% of total school leavers.

1. Implement an anonymised risk-based funding system calculated by an equity index which accounts for factors such as socio-economic disadvantage, parents' average income and ethnicity (as explored here by the Ministry of Education);
2. Implement additional funding to help students facing disadvantage; and
3. Retain quality teaching staff at higher risk schools through targeted financial incentives.

ATTRACTING KIWIS TO THE TEACHING PROFESSION

91.6%

Teachers are the backbone of our education system. However, a stigma surrounds the teaching profession that the profession is underpaid, overworked and not of high-status. This deters many Kiwis from viewing teaching as a viable career. Consequently, Aotearoa is facing a teacher shortage so teachers work overtime, compromising teaching quality. Additionally, there is a lack of diversity amongst teachers. 75% of teachers identify as female and 70% of teachers identify as European/Pakeha. Diversity amongst teachers is important to ensure rangatahi can see themselves reflected in this profession and to ensure accurate representation of our communities.

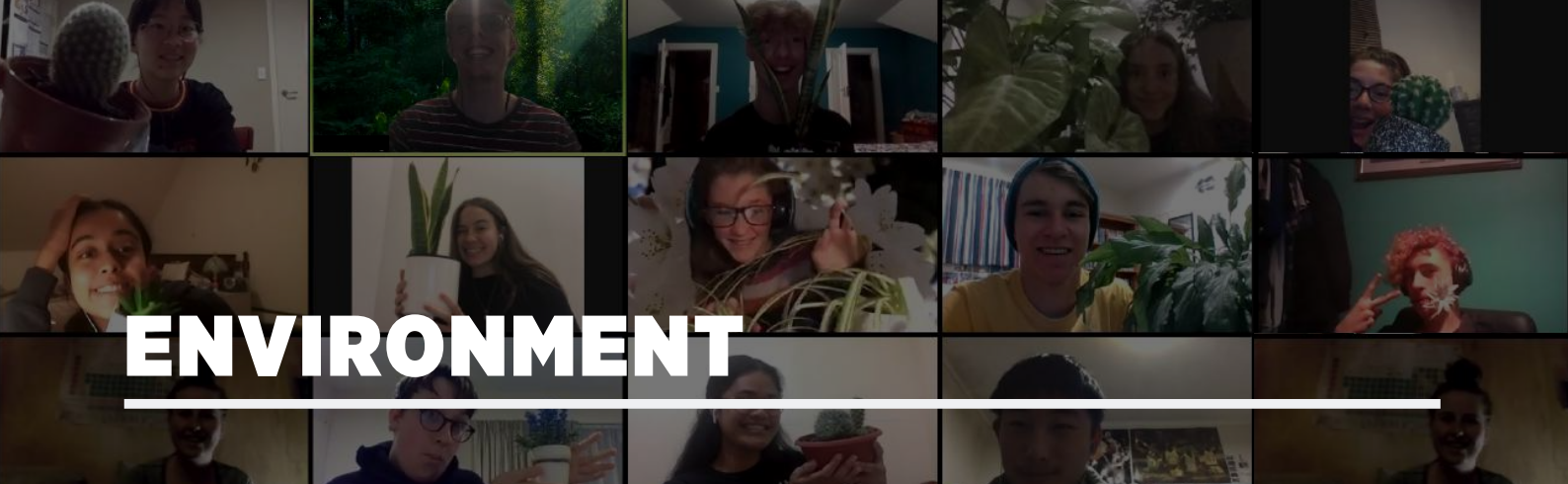
1. Increase teacher pay, particularly for teachers employed at higher risk schools, taking into consideration the recent increase in Teaching Council fees;
2. Increase exposure around the realities of teaching, including the impact on students and the wider community, to de-stigmatise the profession (such as through shadowing programs); and
3. Provide support for teachers to ensure there is consistency in the quality of teaching across Aotearoa (such as through workshops).

DEVELOPING A MODERN CURRICULUM

83.2%

The NCEA is Aotearoa's key school-leaving qualification. The NCEA's rigid standards-based assessment system inhibits meaningful learning. Instead, courses encourage memorisation, rote-learning and fact recall which prevent cohesive lifelong learning. Additionally, the NCEA does not prepare all school leavers for their future. Firstly, this is due to the differing availability of standards at different schools, school timetable constraints and restrictive subject choices. Secondly, the nature of standards has negatively impacted students' ability to learn independently. Therefore, technological, problem-solving and real-world skills should be incorporated into the curriculum. This is to ensure rangatahi are prepared to move on to further study or work in our rapidly changing world.

1. Teach lifelong learning attitudes through student-directed projects that encourage creativity;
2. Implement more flexibility in assessment by having a range of assessment methods for students to choose from; and
3. Prepare students for the future by connecting learning content to real-world contexts.



ENVIRONMENT

CLIMATE CHANGE

86.9%

Climate change is the biggest threat to Aotearoa New Zealand's future. Rising sea levels threaten 75% of our population, who live within 10km of the coast. Furthermore, our warming climate will create more prolonged droughts and more unpredictable storms, jeopardising farming and water security across Aotearoa. Our country, as a collective, needs to recognise the threat climate change poses to our nation and take immediate action to mitigate the impacts climate change will have on New Zealand. We believe that to stop climate change successfully; we must eliminate the sources of greenhouse gases which have created our warming atmosphere.

- 1.Calls for a necessary readdress of the Zero Carbon Act to establish explicit liability within the national and local governments and to cut emissions in half by 2030.
- 2.Strongly demands the nationwide government declare an immediate state of climate emergency to facilitate changes to carbon neutrality.
- 3.Urges for nationwide subsidies to: make public transport free for all by 2025, develop and expand public transport in regions with a lack of transport infrastructure (such as nationwide high-speed passenger rail) and further lower carbon emissions of current public transport initiatives.

SUSTAINABILITY

93.5%

Striving towards a circular economy is an essential aspiration for Aotearoa to have when aiming to co-exist with our natural environment successfully. We believe that New Zealand's economy and society can be a force for improving sustainability. This ensures resource security for future generations. By investing in green technologies and actively attempting to divest away from environment-harming products such as petrol cars and plastics, we can safeguard the livelihoods of future New Zealanders for the years to come.

- 1.Calls for investment in green solutions and innovation in the name of sustainability, including, but not limited to: electric transport and charging stations, renewable energy and vertical urban forests.
- 2.Encourages the development of a future proof, national-level waste management program, including expansion to recycling infrastructure and the redevelopment of all waste processing facilities.
- 3.Demands for a nationwide electric vehicle subsidy on commercial vehicles to be implemented immediately. And furthermore, to institute a progressively increasing nationwide subsidy on private electric vehicles.

LAND

82.2%

Our terrestrial environments are consistently infringed on by human modernisation. Whether this is through urban sprawl, forestry or invasive species, our presence is felt in nearly every ecosystem across Aotearoa New Zealand. More than 4000 of our native plants and animals are at risk of extinction. Human impact on vulnerable and endemic ecosystems must be kept in check. Land-use changes, introduced predators and pests continue to threaten our most precious ecosystems, native plants and wildlife. We believe Aotearoa must take urgent steps to prevent the destruction of our precious native ecosystems.

- 1.Calls for an ambitious urban planning scheme to include green architecture, green belts and sustainable urban design in Aotearoa's expanding cities.
- 2.Demands for Sustainable Farming initiatives to reduce environmentally damaging byproducts including, but not limited to: methane gas, nitrogen fertilisers and unsustainable logging and irrigation.
- 3.Strongly advises the expansion and development of regional and national parks towards the goal of Predator Free with specific targets by 2035.

WATER

88.8%

The freshwater and marine ecosystems of Aotearoa New Zealand are overlooked when we put environmental protections in place. Our rōpū recognises the importance of our Awa and Moana to all facets of life. Too often, our water environments are thought to be beyond human influence. We believe that New Zealand should protect our marine and freshwater environments as we do in our national parks and invest in the rehabilitation of ecosystems already damaged by us. Furthermore, we believe that a Te Ao Maori outlook should be taken when creating decisions about Aotearoa's water resources.

- 1.Reaffirms the need for the 2020 'All Rivers Swimmable' goal and strongly condemns the 'greenwashing' of these targets; and furthermore, recognises the significance of freshwater ecosystems to Te Ao Maori.
- 2.Demands the addition and expansion of all marine reserves to protect our fragile marine ecosystems to cover 25% of Aotearoa New Zealand's sovereign waters.
- 3.Calls for the criminalisation of deep-sea trawling in Aotearoa New Zealand's territorial waters in order to protect fragile deep-sea coral reef ecosystems. Furthermore, we encourage the introduction of harsher punishments and better methods of monitoring for bycatch and overfishing, such as increased fines and license suspension.



GOVERNANCE & JUSTICE

PROMOTING AN EQUITABLE CORRECTIONS APPROACH

88.8%

The corrections system plays a crucial role in our justice system. Yet it appears that the current system is ineffective in safely and fairly dealing with those being incarcerated and promoting an equitable outcome for all, especially youth. While the argument can be made that the youth corrections system has a more rehabilitation orientated correction response, the adult correction system still relies heavily on a punitive approach. Indicative of the punitive approach for adults is New Zealand's three-strike law.

High recidivism rates, prolonged incarceration periods and a lack of rehabilitation make it difficult for offenders to be reintroduced into society. The impact of high recidivism is not only a prolonged burden on the taxpayer, but more importantly the lasting negative impact it has on communities. The issue of high recidivism is of particularly notable impact when it comes to youth in the corrections system, requiring a reevaluation of dealing with youth offenders.

It is highly concerning to see Maori and Pasifika disproportionately represented in New Zealand's prison population. This disproportionate representation showcases the underlying bias against these communities in the justice system. The current corrections methodology is also ineffective at dealing with prevailing gang structures and is unable to prevent these from operating or supporting those affected by them.

1. We strongly advise the use of restorative justice as an outcome/tool for judges. Broaden the scope of offences able to be addressed using restorative justice and continue to encourage restorative justice be used in the youth justice system.
2. We call for acknowledgement that reintegration into society begins while incarcerated. Furthermore, we suggest a kiwi saver type system for prisoners, which they can use to support their reintegration. Prisoners are able to work within the prison system to earn money, while financial literacy and independence outside of the prison should be taught. Once released, they are required to work with a social worker to manage the use of the money. We suggest stipulations to being eligible to taking part in this program (i.e. first-time offender, good conduct, etc.). Furthermore, the money earned in this programme is still subject to taxes, as well as being used to cover some costs of living in prison.

REINSTATING PRISONER VOTING RIGHTS

70.1%

The status quo is one where no prisoner is extended the civil liberty to vote. In conjunction with committing a crime, prisoners inadvertently forfeit their right to vote. A report commissioned by the Justice Committee in 2010 came to the conclusion that the removal of prisoners voting rights is a breach of New Zealand's Bill of Rights. The topic of prisoner voting can put into perspective our current system of incarceration - should it be a punitive one where we remove peoples rights or a rehabilitative one where people are afforded the opportunities outside of prison? Disallowing prisoners from voting highlights the fact that the opinions of those that society has failed are not heard in our democracy. Particularly concerning is the overrepresentation of Maori and Pasifika in the corrections system, disproportionately impacting those communities and their ability to vote.

1. We call for compulsory civics education for prisoners to support reintegration into society.
2. We request a crown inquiry into the voting rights of prisoner voting rights, as the High court has set the precedent that removing their rights may violate the bill of rights
3. We suggest that prisoners with three years or less remaining of their sentence get to vote, as well as all prisoners being able to vote on referendums directly impacting them (we support the current bill). However, by supporting this change, we also acknowledge the need to review the requirements to stand for election.

DRUG POLICY REFORM

84.1%

Drug law is a contentious topic in today's society. Currently, 11.4% of New Zealand's prison population is incarcerated due to drug offences. Thus, drug law impacts a significant proportion of the prison population and has a significant impact on society.

An issue identified with the current drug laws is the criminalisation of drugs, resulting in drugs being seen as a criminal (not health) issue. This removes the ability for individuals to seek medical support, due to the fear of conviction.

It is undeniable that the recreational use of cannabis is widely spread across New Zealand, raising the question of whether criminalising this drug is the correct response to ensuring public safety, and whether it is an issue that deserves the level of attention it gets in the justice system. The current system rules out the ability to safely control production and sales, which would not only reduce procurement crime but also see benefits from tax income and sellers/producers being able to make a legal living.

Another primary issue of the current drug law is that it disproportionately impacts minorities, such as Maori and Pasifika, resulting in those communities being significantly impacted and disparities within New Zealand further perpetuated. We acknowledge that drug laws are a contentious topic with multiple different standpoints, however, it cannot be denied that the current system fails to protect those most vulnerable and unfairly impacts minorities.

1. We request that more emphasis is put on the upcoming Cannabis referendum, ensuring that voters are informed and are able to have a factual debate. This includes encouraging discussion about the referendum in educational institutions, such as high schools and universities.
2. Beyond the scope of the referendum, we suggest a growing emphasis on drug education at schools and educational institutes.
3. We urge that drug use becomes primarily a health issue in the the eye of the law, with a lesser focus on punitive measures.

ENSURING FAIR REPRESENTATION IN PARLIAMENT

63.6%

MMP is the current electoral system of New Zealand - which replaced First Past the Post from the 1996 election onwards. The system of MMP gives citizens of New Zealand two votes, one for their local MP and one for the party they wish to be in government. The two votes Kiwis get means that New Zealand's parliament is sometimes made up of a collection of MPs who have been tactically elected. MMP, however, is a very contentious topic in New Zealand as there are arguments on its threshold, the role of the Māori seats within the system, overhang seats and the system itself.

1. We request that a possible implementation of an alternative vote system is investigated and reviewed against the existing system. Alternative voting will help increase representation of smaller and more independent candidates in communities. As well as ensuring that the elected individual represents the majority of the voters views.
2. The Maori seats in parliament should be entrenched to require a 75% majority in parliament. This contrasts to the current simple majority of 50%.
3. We recommend reducing the threshold to gaining seats in parliament is reduced to ensure smaller, newer parties can be represented. We support the current legislation being proposed to reduce the threshold to 4%, however we aim to reduce this down to 2.5%, which would represent 3 seats in parliament, ensuring we prevent fragmentation of parliament. We acknowledge that with a reduction of this threshold the existing coat tailing system should be removed.





HEALTHCARE & HAUORA

MENTAL HEALTH

92.5%

New Zealand's suicide rate is higher than the global average, and we have one of the highest rates of youth suicide in the developed world. We acknowledge that taha hinengaro (mental and emotional wellbeing) interrelates with, and impacts, the other dimensions of our Hauora. Young people especially bear the brunt of mental health issues: many of us face stress, anxiety, depression, eating disorders and bullying. Issues of mental health and resiliency face stigma, and are often minimised or perpetuated by pressure from our family members and communities. We believe that bringing down the barriers of mental health stigma and improving mental health services will help us combat this issue.

1. Subsidise and increase the availability of training opportunities for specialists in youth and teen counselling, including a focus on expanding the workforce of such specialists in rural communities. This will help improve mental health services for youth by reducing wait times and making them geographically closer to many young people.
2. Increase the capacity of, and information about, phone, text and online mental health services, such as 1737 and Youthline. This will reduce wait times, and increase knowledge about these excellent services for people who may not feel comfortable discussing their mental health with people around them or counsellors.
3. Develop and implement more student-led mental health education initiatives in schools, such as talks or poster campaigns on the signs, prevalence, and strategies to help ourselves and others deal with poor mental health. This will help destigmatize mental health and equip young people with vital knowledge and skills.

ACCESSIBILITY OF HEALTHCARE SERVICES

88.8%

Ensuring all New Zealanders have access to healthcare is important because people who face barriers when accessing healthcare are ultimately less likely to receive the care they need. Young people face unique barriers, including a lack of knowledge about symptoms, the clarity of healthcare services available to us, time limitations, and travel required to access these services. We believe that developing and delivering more initiatives to make healthcare more accessible to young people is crucial because access to healthcare is a fundamental right, and limiting access to it negatively impacts health outcomes, whilst early diagnosis can lead to dramatically better outcomes.

1. Provide more and better online health resources aimed at young people addressing issues including sexual health and mental health symptoms. These resources must be easy to find and understand, without being condescending. This will increase young people's access to easy to digest health information.
2. Encourage health professionals to increase their presence in the community, such as through school visits. This will help break down barriers between patients and healthcare professionals through increasing young people's awareness of the services available and being able to see how warm and friendly health professionals are.
3. Provide better healthcare services in schools, including through increasing the number of nurses in schools and increasing the availability of training opportunities for school staff to develop their physical and mental first aid skills. This will improve the immediate care students experiencing poor health have access to in our schools.

HEALTH EDUCATION

89.7%

Health education in schools is important because school is the only time that young people can gain standardised knowledge and skills to inform our decision making regarding our health. However, we recognise that the differences in the quality and quantity of health education students across New Zealand currently receive are significant. We believe that health education should be improved so all students receive consistent, quality health education to empower us to make positive, healthy decisions.

1. Make health education for year 7 to 10 students compulsory. This would require an iterative and in-depth health education curriculum. We believe the curriculum should include how to access healthcare, mental health and nutrition. This will ensure all students receive consistent, quality health education with minimal repetition of content between years.
2. Subsidise and increase the availability of professional development opportunities for teachers to specialise in health education. This will further improve the consistency and quality of health education all students receive.
3. Promote targeted interventions through health education. We acknowledge that health education currently often benefits more privileged populations more. We also recognise that targeted interventions to support disadvantaged populations are integral to an effective health strategy and believe that health education should inform about, and encourage the uptake of, these interventions.



IDENTITY & REPRESENTATION

MEDIA AND REPRESENTATION

86%

Generation Z is the generation of the internet. Growing up on the internet and the propagandic nature of social media has a huge effect on rangatahi's opinions. Hence we see the need for greater awareness of the dangers of the internet and propaganda -- as this has led to extremist groups thriving online.

1. The development of an educational campaign to teach digital information literacy to rangatahi from a young age. Youth voice is essential at every stage of the campaign's formation as it aims to equip rangatahi with the critical thinking skills needed to evaluate biases and validity in media content. We also ask for consistent bi-annual reviews.
2. We are highly concerned about the opportunity for one-sided perspectives to perpetuate due to biases within the media and social media, reinforced by algorithms that create echo chambers.
3. We think there should be channels through which students can learn about consent, how sex workers operate and why they shouldn't be shamed. We are also aware of the fact that the majority of pornography exploits how its workers operate and does not present a realistic viewpoint on sex and consent.

EQUITY

82.2%

With greater depth to ensure inclusivity and understanding of diversity we can ensure that our society is equitable to all. Currently we have low awareness around consent and sexual culture in New Zealand. Many people still disregard or choose to ignore the harms of rape/sexual assault when it takes place. Our laws are often built in a way which denies non conforming genders to get the financial support they need to start a family. We don't have resources available to those in our communities who need extra assistance to overcome language barriers when accessing services to which they have. We believe that parental leave shouldn't be defined by gender.

1. We would like to see the concept of consent and awareness around creating positive sexual environments for those involved introduced in schools from y7 through to y10, along with education regarding the effects and facts behind pornography.
2. We'd like to see all genders and non-binary people recognised within parental leave, and single-income households and single parents considered.
3. We want as many people to understand the services to which they are entitled. We need more language diversity in official information and services. If this isn't achievable, we must ensure that adequate interpretation services are available to those who need it.

LGBTQIA+ INCLUSIVITY

80.4%

There is a deep intolerance of the LGBTQIA+ community within our schools and society as whole. And while the education system may not enforce homophobic and transphobic views, these can be engendered by inaction and underrepresentation of positive LGBTQIA+ narratives. A culture of misinformation and resentment towards gender and sexual minorities is enabled to grow if we don't look at our current system with a critical eye. We believe that Aotearoa needs to actively work towards teaching students to be more accepting of diversity.

1. Normalising LGBTQIA+ relationships at a young age. This means having LGBTQIA+ representation and positive role models within narratives and influences etc. that children are exposed to within schools.
2. Sex education in Aotearoa is highly hetero-normative. We'd like to see LGBTQIA+-inclusive sex education in schools, especially in regards to LGBTQIA+ specific contraception and STIs.
3. We need to recognise that religion and LGBTQIA+ issues often can come into conflict. We want institutions and educational facilities to take into account cultural and orientation conflicts and work with both communities to ensure that all environments create a safe space for diversity of viewpoints and allow for constructive discourse on intersectional issues.
4. We would like to see a total ban on LGBTQIA+ conversion therapy of all kinds in New Zealand. This archaic practice psychologically damages young people in the rainbow community for life and violates their UN rights. It has been outlawed in most western countries for good reason, and it is time that NZ does the same.



INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

RETHINKING INTERNATIONAL TRADE

78.5%

Covid-19 was a wake up call for New Zealand that it cannot rely on a single or small group of trading partners. The system of global trade will undoubtedly look different in the coming years as countries recover from the COVID-19 economic and health crisis. In the new international dynamic, New Zealand must reprioritize its existing and future obligations. In these policies, we attempt to diversify New Zealand's trading partners and turn our attention to an underrepresented possibility for trade partners in the Pacific Islands.

1. New Zealand should review its current free trade agreements, focusing on the international state of human rights to ensure its trade partners align with New Zealand's values and interests. New Zealand should prioritize improving existing agreements over ending them and focus on balancing its economic and social interests.
2. New Zealand should strongly consider investing in Pacific Island states as new trade partners and look to align itself with existing agreements. This might include the Pacific Islands Countries Trade Agreement (PICTA) and joining the Pacific Islands Countries Trade Agreement and co-operating further with PACER Plus.
3. When trading with the Pacific, New Zealand should prioritize agreements that are mutually beneficial to both New Zealand and its Pacific Island neighbours.

THINKING PROACTIVELY ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT MITIGATION 84.1%

Although climate change is a global problem, it is well known that some states are disproportionately impacted by its effects. Given the inevitable impact of climate change in the Pacific Island with rising sea levels and soil erosion, New Zealand must be proactive about its approach to climate change mitigation. Beyond our domestic obligations to combat climate change, we have generated international obligations to mitigate some of the greater injustices that climate change will entail, especially on our Pacific neighbours. We see remedies in the fields of climate refugees, "green" foreign aid, and the incorporation of core climate values into our international negotiations.

1. New Zealand must rework its existing policies on refugees to allow for the incorporation and acceptance of climate refugees as a legitimate category of refugee.
2. New Zealand should encourage other countries to acknowledge climate refugees as a legitimate category of refugee to bring the issue of climate change to the forefront of the international discussion again.
3. New Zealand should provide proactive green aid to countries in the Pacific islands to help mitigate the immediate impacts of climate change.

PROMOTING NEW ZEALAND

83.2%

Whilst New Zealand is a relatively minor player on the international stage, it is imperative that we capitalise on any opportunity to boost our reputation and significance. Recently, we have achieved a number of international "wins" through our domestic actions. Acting on this would have a wide variety of benefits such as greater cultural competency for our citizens, a more diverse domestic economy, and being able to showcase New Zealand and its citizens to the wider world. New Zealand can do this both through interactions with other states and through the promotion and development of our individual citizens.

1. Strive to host more culturally-based international events and host more internationally focused conferences.
2. Expand the Prime Minister's scholarship scheme in terms of regions offered and amount of scholarships available.
3. Create and facilitate work exchange programmes for inbound and outbound residents, focussing especially on the Pacific region

RIGHTS & FREEDOMS

ACCESS AND DISTRIBUTION OF PERSONAL DATA

86%

The right to privacy is an essential topic to consider given the development of new technologies, social media and the internet. We believe an issue is that companies are using the data and information that we provide to online platforms for their benefit and breaching our privacy. They use this data to improve their services, tailor online experiences to the users liking, target advertising and profit from selling customers information to third parties. However, these companies can also store customers information indefinitely, hack devices and listen and watch them. Users who sign up for websites, social media and online platforms are often oblivious to what they are saying yes. We believe it is essential to make policy changes to keep everyone safe and private online.

1. Expanding on current law meaning that privacy and data regulations must be clearly laid out at the top of the terms and conditions. These regulations must specify how the service is using consumers data and exactly what data is being used/taken by the service.
2. Introducing new legislation meaning companies can only collect data that is relevant to their service, while their service/app is open and if a data-breach occurs, all affected users must be notified of the breached data.
3. Establishing an independent task force to monitor companies data collection and storage. This task force would ensure that all government collected data can only be used by other government agencies. Breaching these laws would be punished with a fine of up to \$10,000 per person whose data was breached.

BROADENING AND AUGMENTING CURRENT HATE SPEECH LEGISLATION 76.6%

It is difficult to strike a balance between guaranteeing the right to freedom of speech against excessive government control while minimising the dangers of harmful speech due to the inherently nuanced and subjective nature of speech itself. Currently, the definition of hate speech lacks clarity and equality and the current hate speech punishment can involve jail time which gives the government egregious power to control speech and take offenders out of society. We suggest three policy changes to address these gaps in our current hate speech law:

1. Expanding the current law to criminalise speech that incites violence/resentment against all the groups mentioned in the prohibited grounds of discrimination (article 21, section 7 of the Human Rights Amendment Act 2001) instead of just on a colour/ethnic basis.
2. Tightening the definition of hate speech to specifically target speech that incites physical violence, not including conspiracy to genuinely carry out violence and speech that worsens discrimination, such as encouraging resent or judgement against a specific societal group.
3. Removing prison terms for any crime that is solely hate speech. We would only punish hate speech through fines and would increase the fine size to accommodate more serious hate speech crime instances.

PROTECTING NEW ZEALANDERS WITH EFFECTIVE FIREARMS CONTROL 84.1%

Firearms are an important part of New Zealand's culture. However, the privilege of owning a firearm should never come above New Zealanders safety. The issue of firearms legislation needs to be more closely considered, as firearms are dangerous items that can be very harmful in the wrong hands and the current restrictions on firearms attainment are not sufficient to keep New Zealanders safe. The low age-barrier to own a firearm, currently 16 in New Zealand we believe is troublesome and the lack of any centralised firearm registration makes it very difficult for Police to safely respond to incidents of firearms violence. We call on the government to improve Firearms Control Legislation by:

1. Establishing a central firearm registration that registers firearms to their owners and records public and private firearm sales.
2. Introducing a "learner" firearm license for people between the age of 16-18 which does not allow the ownership or purchase of firearms and only allows the use of firearms under the supervision of a full firearm license owner.
3. Introducing compulsory mental and physical health exams as a requirement to attain a firearm license, focusing on preventing individuals who may be harmful to others or themselves from accessing firearms. Individuals may have their licence restricted, such as only accessing specific firearms or munitions types.



SCIENCE & ENGINEERING

ADAPTING TO RAPID TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGES

86.9%

Technology is evolving rapidly, providing us with both new opportunities and new challenges every day. If we fall behind the rest of the world adapting to this technology, New Zealand becomes disadvantaged compared to other countries. Technology contributes massively to our economy and quality of life, and so when we fall behind the times these areas also take a hit relative to the rest of the world. It is also easy for certain groups to take advantage of new technology to the detriment of wider society, and the government must be prepared to regulate these new areas of technology.

1. Enforcing stricter regulations around how companies collect and manage personal data.
2. New Zealand should invest in startups and enterprises in the STEM field, to create more opportunities for bettering and diversifying the economy to encourage private science and engineering enterprises and businesses to be based in NZ and employ NZers.
3. More funding should be provided towards STEM research and the provision of labs and other facilities to support such research.

ENCOURAGING ACCESSIBILITY AND REPRESENTATION IN STEM

82.2%

In New Zealand, our population is diverse and many areas of our lives demonstrate this. However, in STEM, we often see a lack of representation and this is often due to a lack of accessibility. We, as the Science and Engineering rōpū, believe that in order to create a sector that represents the views and perspectives of all of New Zealand, we must focus on developing the accessibility of STEM for all. This is particularly important for women, Māori and Pasifika and people from low socio-economic backgrounds. Currently, only around 16% of the engineering workforce consists of females. Although the female's enrolment rate in relative programmes and industries is increasing, it is still extremely under-represented. In order to increase accessibility we must develop programmes and education resources. Especially focusing on cultivating interest in primary and intermediate and developing funding for those in education who are disadvantaged. In low decile schools, about 20% of students do not have internet access from their homes. This limits their full immersion into digital learning technology thus discouraging them from entering science and engineering programs in the future. We strongly believe the significance of this field in contributing to the development of New Zealand, therefore we call for more recognition and resources being put into improving the accessibility and representation in STEM.

1. New Zealand needs to set a baseline funding figure in schools to cultivate interest in STEM subjects.
2. We need to encourage an increase in high quality STEM programmes, clubs and extracurriculars for minority groups and women.
3. We need to increase female and minority representation in science media to mitigate stereotypes in the field.

AI AND AUTOMATION IN THE WORKFORCE

72%

As the world develops more advanced technologies and they are implemented into the common workplace, peoples jobs and livelihoods are put at stake of being removed. The problem that this issue faces is that the wellbeing of both families and the individual is at stake, especially towards those who may not have as advanced education, as their jobs are inherently more at risk of automation, as they tend to be simpler. Having the jobs of those without the ability or capacity to obtain higher education removed is not only detrimental on a social scale, as we would see more families that walk the fine line of poverty fall, but also from an economic perspective New Zealand as a nation would suffer, because fewer people with sustainable income means that, firstly, more people on benefits, so more of the taxpayer money is aimed towards this group, so the infrastructure of New Zealand suffers, and secondly, since less of the population of New Zealand would be able to afford to buy non-essential products, as we see more families within New Zealand being in lower socioeconomic positions, the internal economy of New Zealand would suffer.

1. Encouraging the spread and implementation of automation and AI throughout New Zealand, in traditionally unsafe industries and workplaces, using a quota of automated businesses and organisations in separate regions.
2. Funding the upskilling of lower income workers so that they have the ability to attain other jobs if they are replaced by automation.
3. Placing a tax on companies utilising automation - this money can then be used to fund things like upskilling, welfare for those losing jobs, and also de-incentivises switching to automation.



SOCIAL & YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

PROMOTING INCLUSIVITY IN ALL ENVIRONMENTS, IN ORDER TO FURTHER WELLBEING AND EQUITABLE ACCESSIBILITY MEASURES 81.3%

Inclusivity is important because New Zealand prides itself on our diversity, but at the same time there is a difference in opportunity and there are disadvantages affecting accessibility to opportunities (e.g. lower income areas vs high income areas). This difference in accessibility makes it more difficult to achieve these same opportunities. Accessibility allows more people to be involved and opens up opportunity. Often rangatahi don't feel like they have someone to trust and support their wellbeing, they don't have easy access to therapists or proper help to support their mental wellbeing. Mental wellbeing is a topic with a lot of stigma, and this often prevents rangatahi from receiving the help that they need. Without this support we are raising a generation who feel like they cannot open up.

1. Recognises the need to make the disparity gap smaller. We recommend implementing a state-funded scholarship system that allows for people to be linked up with those who can provide opportunities for them (e.g. sporting, cultural, and academic). We believe this would be an important step towards free and equitable access to opportunity.
2. Invites the establishment of a youth task force charged with providing the Ministry of Health input on mental health and wellbeing decision-making. Ensuring that this engages with people outside of the system and creating a mechanism which allows for policy to be drafted by those it will ultimately affect the most is key.
3. Further invites the adoption of a consistent approach between schools and other youth institutions when it comes to mental wellbeing. We recommend promoting confidentiality between the administration and the students, as well as creating a strong set-up which covers a range of access points - internet or in person. (e.g. having trained therapists or professionals, or introducing a mandated semi-regular check-up for all students).

INSTILLING CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY BY PROVIDING MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENGAGEMENT 85%

Rangatahi are the present and future of Aotearoa, so everything that we do at this age reflects how we might act in the future. It is important that rangatahi are engaged in politics as current politics will continue to affect our lives and families, so the more youth are engaged now, the better it is for our futures as we can create these decisions. A strong educational curriculum allows us to be able to make these decisions, without influence or bias. Increased youth engagement provides more opportunities for rangatahi to be taken seriously.

1. Recommends the enforcement of an increased civics focus within the curriculum, starting from primary school and gradually becoming more comprehensive. We see the success of programmes such as Life Education, and recommend that this one be similar. We support the involvement of rangatahi in its creation and recommend a system be created where they can report to the government about the programmes.
2. Urges implementing civics programmes for rangatahi (beginning at the primary level) before considering lowering the voting age, so that rangatahi have a better education surrounding voting and politics by the time they are able to enrol.
3. Calls for more transparent local governments. We recommend doing this through increased relationships with rangatahi that support their ability to be involved in decision-making. This may be done through the mechanism of utilising government funding for the establishment of local body affiliated youth councils and other rangatahi voice groups.

SOCIAL SUPPORT THROUGH AN INCREASED FOCUS ON EMPLOYMENT 84.1%

Employment is important as it keeps the economy going - supporting supply and trade in order to provide people with the resources they need for the basic necessities in life. With poverty and homelessness rendering a vast number of people unable to get employment, extra support is required beyond what is currently available. However, this rōpū is of the opinion that monetary supplements alone are not sufficient, and a better use of funding would be to focus on the development of an employment pipeline and get people into the workforce.

1. Encourages the provision of access to qualifications to get into the workforce (e.g. trade certifications, polytech diplomas, university degrees). We recommend diverting some of the government funding from benefits to scholarships for accessing these qualifications.
2. Advocates for the rights of part time workers in relation to support services being seen as equal to those of full time workers. We see the promotion of services such as mental health and pastoral care being integral to equality within the workplace and supporting those who may not be able to take a full time job.
3. Calls for further support in communities with lower employment rates. This support could be through services such as workshops on necessary employment skills of varying degrees (skill based).



UN YOUTH NZ - ABOUT US

UN Youth New Zealand is a non-profit organisation that provides civics education outside the traditional classroom context. Through fun workshops, conferences, Model UN, and outreach events, we engage high school and tertiary students in the most pressing affairs of their country and the international community. Through providing opportunities for all young people across Aotearoa, our goal is to inspire young New Zealanders to be global citizens in today's rapidly globalising world.

Throughout Aotearoa, our work equips young people to become informed, engaged, and critical New Zealanders who understand their global context and the connections between the local and the global. Our organisation provides young people with the necessary educational and social skills to excel. Annually, over 3000 young New Zealanders from Northland to Southland attend a UN Youth event.

UN Youth hosts three conferences nationally each year drawing together hundreds of students from across the country. One of the conferences looks at solving problems in the community and government policy, the second considers international affairs and diplomacy, and the last aims to engage young New Zealanders in politics and democracy. An online Diplomacy Competition is also available for all high school students across New Zealand to help them further develop their understanding of these issues.

We also lead three annual international trips for high school students — a study tour through Europe and the United States, a cultural exchange trip to Australia and the Pacific, and a small delegation to the Evatt Competition run by UN Youth Australia. For tertiary students, we run a trip to the Harvard National Model UN in the United States, and a trip around South East Asia focused on globalisation.

UN Youth is powered by a body of 150 volunteers across the country who dedicate many hours of their week to engaging young people and growing the organisation.

Further information about the organisation, our events, people and opportunities can be found on our website www.unyouth.org.nz/

THANK YOU

ORGANISING COMMITTEE

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Daniel Payne | Assistant Coordinator, Volunteers Officer
Caitlin Hancy | Logistics Officer
Christopher McCardle | Educations Officer
Daniel Ji | Registrations Officer
Henry Frear | Educations Officer
Ishie Sharma | Head of Welfare, Social Officer
Kauri Tearaura | Equity Officer
Tallulah Farrar | Promotions Officer
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OUTREACH SPEAKERS

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Arrun Soma
(Previously) TVNZ, BBC UK

David Vega
Amnesty NZ

Eva Maffey
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Arianna Bacic, Ella-Rose Steven, Grant Hewison
Equal Justice Project

Brianna Fruer, Mary Moeono-Kolio
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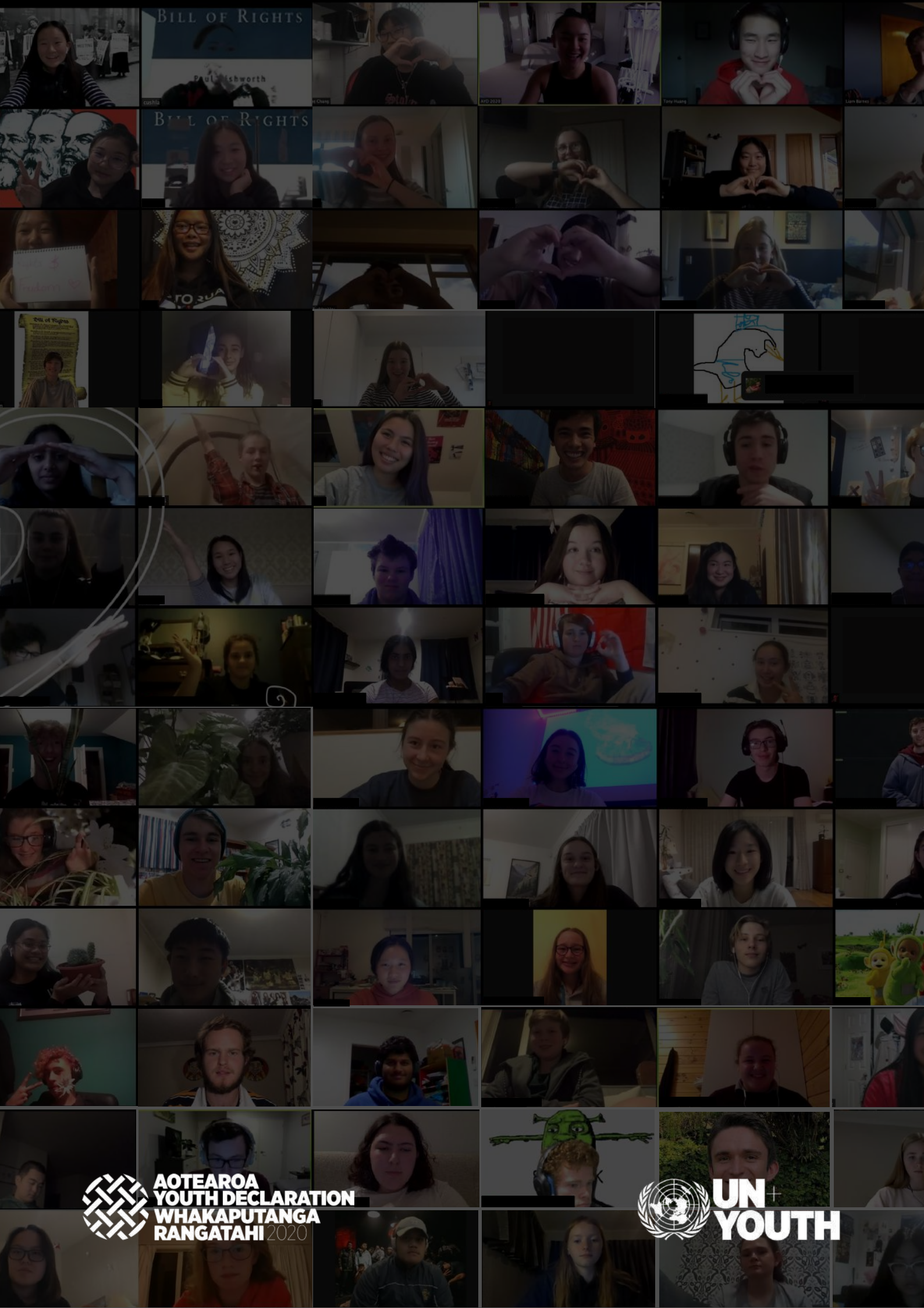
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