

# Nordic youth voices

The pandemic and the right to be heard



# Table of content

Foreword	3
Introduction	4
<b>Denmark</b>	6
Ester	7
Max	8
<b>Faroe Islands</b>	9
Gylta	10
<b>Finland</b>	11
Helmi	12
<b>Greenland</b>	13
Majli	14
<b>Iceland</b>	15
Eiður	16
Tomas	17
<b>Norway</b>	18
Nameh	19
Hannan	20
Sunniva	21
<b>Sweden</b>	22
Mira	23
Olle	24
Julia	25
<b>Lithuania</b>	26
Gabija	27
Povilas	28
Reference list	29
About the publication	30

# Foreword

## "They could've found better solutions if they'd only asked us first." Max

In the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, it has become evident that most of the measures to prevent the spread of the virus were implemented by decision-makers without consulting or listening to children and youth. This is a violation of children's rights, and consequently some of the measures seriously impacted children and youth.

This report gives voice to Nordic youth. You can listen to a series of filmed interviews in which youth share their reflections on the pandemic and their right to be heard in accordance with the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 12](#).

The aim of the [Nordic Welfare Centre](#) is to contribute to increased co-operation and knowledge on the wellbeing of children and youth in the Nordic region. From 2021–2024, the Nordic Welfare Centre is giving priority to a project that explores the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic and children and young people's right to be heard in matters that concern them. The project has been commissioned by the Nordic Council of Ministers, and sorts under the [Action Plan for 2021–2024](#), and the [Nordic Council of Ministers' cross-sectoral strategy for children and youth 2016–2024](#). The goal is for the Nordic region to become the world's most socially sustainable and integrated region. To achieve this goal, a critical strategic measure is to ensure equal opportunities and participation for all children and youth in the Nordic region.

The Nordic Welfare Centre invites you to listen to what youth have to say, in the interviews in this book. Their stories illustrate why decision-makers should prioritise children and youth in the decision-making process during times of crises. In the aftermath of the pandemic, it is important to recognise that even quite minor modifications could have made a huge difference for the wellbeing of many of our children and youth.

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# Introduction

**Being heard and involved in all matters that concern them is important for children and youth. In this collection of filmed interviews, youth in the Nordic region give insights into how the pandemic affected them. They offer feedback about how things could have been managed differently, and in a way that would have caused them less stress. Two Lithuanian youth also offer their insights into how the subsequent war in Ukraine affected them.**

The interviewees share their experience of making a transition from one level of education to another during the pandemic. This means that new relationships with fellow students, teachers and friends had to be established and new educational subjects mastered. For many youths, this was a socially and educationally challenging shift – and potentially more so during the pandemic.

The introduction to the interviews provides a brief description of the main restrictions youth faced in the different Nordic regions. The restrictions that were implemented during the pandemic differed throughout the region, and our focus has been on those restrictions that had consequences for participation in school and leisure activities.

## Being heard makes a difference

A range of restrictions were implemented by the authorities throughout the Nordic region, to protect all citizens from the Covid-19 pandemic. As a result, many children and youth experienced challenges. Arenas, activities and help services important for their wellbeing and development became less accessible. Arenas such as schools and cultural and recreational activities were either entirely or partially closed and services related to health care, welfare, and social assistance were limited.

Restrictions on leisure and recreational activities may have significantly impacted the ability of children and young people to maintain social relationships, as well as their mental and physical wellbeing (Helfer, Aapola-Kari, & Trane, Children and Young People's Participation During the Corona Pandemic – Nordic Initiatives, 2023). Most children and youth were also forbidden from gatherings in public places, and sometimes the pandemic measures in place, prevented young people from seeing their loved ones and prohibited them from maintaining friendships (Helfer, Aapola-Kari, & Trane, Children and Young People's Participation During the Corona Pandemic – Nordic Initiatives, 2023).

Throughout the Nordic region, youth's voices were often ignored in decision-making processes during the Covid-19 pandemic. To some extent, institutions in the Nordic countries working for and with children and youth were unprepared for the crisis

(Helfer, Aapola-Kari, & Trane, Children and Young People's Participation During the Corona Pandemic Nordic Initiatives, 2023). If children and youth were consulted on Covid-19 restrictions that affected them, they were involved too late in the process because decisions had often already been made.

## New research

The lessons that can be learned from the interviews are also reflected in new Nordic research. Children and youth suffered more than necessary because decision-makers seldom heard or involved them in the decisions that concerned them.

We recommend reading the following three reports commissioned by the Nordic Welfare Centre on behalf of the Nordic Council of Ministers.

In [Children and Young People's Participation During the Corona Pandemic – Nordic Initiatives](#) you can read about whether and how children and youth were involved throughout the Nordic region. You will also learn about promising practises and strategies that provide important lessons on how the right to be heard could have been better implemented and utilised.

The follow-up report [Restricted childhood, interrupted youth](#) will give you a broad overview of Nordic research on education, leisure and participation during the pandemic and the many consequences of the restrictions on Nordic children and youth.

In the report, [Child and youth participation during crisis: Recommendations for decision makers in the Nordic region](#), young experts and national experts from all the Nordic countries, as well as Greenland, the Faroe Islands and Åland, give their recommendations for decision-makers on how they can be better prepared for listening to and involving youth during potential future crisis.

Being heard and involved in all matters that concern them significantly affects children and youth and impacts their well-being, especially during times of crises. We hope that their stories will provide you with insight into the significance of listening to and involving children and youth in all matters that concern them.

# Denmark

## Status of school closures in Denmark during the pandemic

- Early childhood education: Closed from March–May 2020.
- Primary/elementary school<sup>[1]</sup>: Closed from March–April 2020 and December 2020–February 2021.
- Secondary school<sup>[2]</sup>: Closed from March–May 2020 and December 2020–February 21. Adjusted operations from April–May 2021. Closed from December 2021.
- Higher education (university/university college): Closed from March–July 2020 and December 2020–February 2021. Adjusted operations from April–June 2021.
- By 31 January 2022, all restrictions in Denmark were lifted (Norlén, Gassen, & Randall, 2022).

Denmark and Norway implemented school closures at all levels. In Denmark, school closures or adjusted operations primarily affected older students. Denmark was one of the first countries in Europe to enforce a nationwide lockdown. The lockdown was accompanied by restrictive measures to prevent the spread of the virus. From March 2020, all schools and universities, libraries, leisure activities and day-care facilities were closed. The government also implemented the closure of all restaurants and shopping centres, a closing of the borders closure as well as a ban of gatherings of more than ten people (Norlén, Gassen, & Randall, 2022).

The second nationwide lockdown was enforced in December 2020. Once again, schools were closed, and home schooling returned. The restrictions started to be phased out in March 2021. Firstly, shops and outdoor cultural and sports activities reopened. Some weeks later pupils were allowed to return to school for one day a week. Early in May 2021, all pupils in primary school, vocational education and graduating students in secondary school and adult education were allowed to return to school on a full-time basis.

At the same time, all sport activities for children and youth were reinstated. By late May 2021, the remaining students in secondary school and students in higher education were allowed to return to school (Helfer, Trane Ibsen, Särkiluoto, & Aapola-Kari, 2022).

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1. Primary/elementary school is for children six or seven years old (depending on when they start) until the age of thirteen.

2. Secondary school usually consists of two to four years. Most pupils' complete secondary education in the year they turn 16.



## Ester

### **"The agenda setters could have done more for the wellbeing of young people."**

Ester, who is from Denmark, attended her ninth year of primary school when Denmark enforced the first school lockdowns. The second time Esther experienced a period of lockdown she had begun her first year in upper secondary school. She felt isolated and lonely during the pandemic shutdowns. She believes that socialising with peers is crucial in the formative years of youth. According to Ester, isolation makes you forget how to be around others and interact and she believes that the decision-makers should have done more to safeguard the welfare of youth.

Life as a young person was very atypical during the pandemic years. The school council was suspended and all activities except online education were halted. Ester and her peers did not really feel that they were part of school. The teachers were instructed to talk with the students about their wellbeing every other week, but they had no way of influencing or making any difference for the students.

[Watch a short version of the interview with Ester here](#)



## Max

### **"They could've found better solutions if they'd only asked us first."**

Max, who is from Denmark, was in college when the first lockdown was enforced. During the pandemic, he did not feel he was being listened to or consulted by adults – they did what they thought was best, without asking. He believes the decision-makers thought they knew what youth needed but is convinced that youth would have come up with better solutions if they had been asked. Max thinks that the schools should at least have provided solutions for communication between students.

If another pandemic were to break out in the future, Max emphasises that the priority should be to provide a concrete platform on which youth can communicate, make suggestions, assess and provide data for others to act upon – and, if possible, keep the schools open.

[Watch a short version of the interview with Max here](#)



# Faroe Islands

**In the Faroes, the spring semester of 2020 was particularly affected by a lockdown lasting four to five weeks whereby schools and leisure activities were completely closed. During this period, most schools turned to distance learning, either online or in other ways. The total lockdown during the spring was followed by a short period of reopening before the summer holidays.**

When public schools reopened for the autumn semester 2020, special health safety guidelines were introduced. Primary school pupils returned to school and these schools had to follow key guidelines. For instance, teachers and classes were separated in different facilities. Apart from the major lockdown in spring 2020, sports and other leisure activities also reopened quickly (Norlén, Gassen, & Randall, 2022) (Helfer, Aapola-Kari, & Trane, 2023).



## Gylta

### **"It was difficult to know what I was allowed to do."**

Gylta attended year seven of secondary school in the Faroe Islands when the Covid-19 pandemic hit. She lost contact with most of her friends, as well as the players in her handball team who she had played with for nine years. Not being able to meet them really affected her, both mentally and physically, and it also affected her school performance.

Gylta believes that the schools should organise and divide pupils into small social groups with peers, if strict lockdowns should ever be necessary in the future. The peer groups then should be allowed to cooperate on homework and to socialise. Gylta says that sitting in front of a screen without meeting people for long periods of time made her feel lonely.

[Watch a short version of the interview with Gylta here](#)

# Finland

## Status of school closures in Finland during the pandemic

- Early childhood education: Open.
- Primary school: Open.
- Secondary school: Closed from March–August 2020. Adjusted operations from September 2020–July 2021.
- Higher education: Closed from March–August 2020. Adjusted operations from September 2020–July 2021 (Norlén, Gassen, & Randall, 2022).

During the pandemic years, universities were periodically closed, and students were mainly taught online. Most student events were cancelled or postponed, affecting the motivation and wellbeing of many students. Online education was also widely used in secondary school and higher education during the second and third wave of the pandemic. In spring 2020, even primary school in Finland switched to online education for almost two months.

At the same time most public facilities – such as youth centres, shopping centres, libraries, restaurants, and other meeting places favoured by youth were closed. Leisure activities were transferred online if possible. The government prohibited gatherings of more than ten people. From March to April 2020, the region of Uusimaa in Southern Finland, which includes the capital, was isolated from the rest of Finland and travel to and from the region was severely restricted (Helfer, Aapola-Kari, & Trane, 2023).



## Helmi

**"We can prepare for crises in a much better way in the future."**

Helmi is 19 years old and lives in Finland. She completed secondary school during the pandemic. Helmi felt that not being able to talk to anyone or even being able to meet her friends was particularly troublesome.

Helmi found distance learning challenging, both mentally and physically, and that there was a high threshold for asking questions online. Her school supervisor organised a helpful course, where the pupils could talk about how to manage emotions such as loneliness and depression.

She is optimistic and believes that we are now better prepared for a crisis as we have learned some important lessons.

[Watch a short version of the interview with Helmi here](#)

# Greenland

**Since Greenland has no physical borders with any neighbouring country it could be completely isolated. By suspending travel by air and water and controlling the movement of people between cities, Greenland was, to a greater extent than other countries, able to keep its society open. Greenland had no nationwide lockdowns – only a few localised ones.**

Schools were only closed at the beginning of the pandemic, when all schools were closed for a few weeks. When the Covid-19 virus was identified in a school, a day care centre or other institution, the government temporarily put a restriction on the specific school or institution – either by closing parts of it or closing it entirely (Helfer, Aapola-Kari, & Trane, 2023). Most day-care centres, schools and leisure activities for children and youth remained open during the pandemic.



## Majli

### **"Decision-makers should be better at listening to children."**

Majli is from Greenland, and she was 15 years old and in year eight when the pandemic started. The suggestions by Majli and her classmates to improve the pandemic situation were not acknowledged, meaning they had to catch up with a lot of work when schools reopened after the lockdown periods.

During the pandemic Majli became interested in politics. In her opinion, decision-makers need to listen more to the worries and concerns that youth face.

[Watch a short version of the interview with Majli here](#)

# Iceland

## Status of school closures in Iceland during the pandemic

- Early childhood education: Open.
- Primary school: Closed from March 2021–April 2021.
- Secondary school: Closed from March–May 2020 and March– April 2021.
- Higher education: Closed from March–May 2020 and March–April 2021 (Norlén, Gassen, & Randall, 2022).

During the spring of 2020, ordinary education at schools was interrupted. The government-imposed restrictions on the number of pupils allowed to be in the same classroom. Pupils were no longer allowed to mix with other students in other classes and were prohibited from using cafeterias. Extensive restrictions on people's right to meet were introduced from March 2020. Most schools partially switched to online teaching. The restrictions lasted until May 2021 when pupils were again allowed to return to school (Helfer, Aapola-Kari, & Trane, 2023), (Norlén, Gassen, & Randall, 2022).



## Eiður

### **"They should have kept the schools open."**

Eiður was 18 years old at the time of the interview and lives in Reykjavik. He graduated from lower secondary school and made the transition to upper secondary school during the pandemic years. His school made it compulsory for pupils to register online every morning at 08.00 but did nothing to improve or facilitate pupil interaction. This was a challenge and had a negative impact on his experience of upper secondary school. He feels he has missed out on getting to know his school peers. He believes that if he had been able to get to know them better, it would have been easier for him to learn.

Eiður is politically active and believes that the schools should not have been closed. However, he considers online learning a positive option that should continue to be offered in the future. It should be available for students who need it, or who do not thrive in school, as well as an option for assignments that require group work.

[Watch a short version of the interview with Eiður here](#)





## Tomas

### **"The schools should have encouraged students to exercise more."**

Thomas is 18 years old and lives in Reykjavik. At the time of the interview, had just finished his second year of upper secondary school. He was in year ten when the pandemic hit the Nordic region.

During most of his first school year and the second semester of his second year, he was mainly taught online. He found it difficult to concentrate during periods of home schooling and believes that it made the teacher-pupil relationship more challenging. Nevertheless, he sees online lessons as a potential option in the future, especially as an alternative to having substitute teachers when his teachers are on sick leave. He missed seeing his friends and would have preferred it if the schools had encouraged more physical exercise.

[Watch a short version of the interview with Tomas here](#)

# Norway

## Status of school closures in Norway during the pandemic

- Early childhood education: Closed from March–April 2020.
- Primary school: Closed from March–April 2020. Adjusted operations from July–October 2021.
- Secondary school: Closed from March–June 2020. Adjusted operations from January–February 2021.
- Higher education: Closed from March–June 2020. Adjusted operations from November–December 2020. Closed from January–February 2021. Adjusted operations from March–September 2021 (Norlén, Gassen, & Randall, 2022).

School closures primarily affected older students in the Nordic region, but Norway and Denmark were the only countries to implement school closures on all levels, including kindergarten.

During the periods of adjusted operations, the schools in regions with low infection rates were allowed to remain open. A traffic light system with red, green, and orange lights was used to identify when infection rates increased. A red light meant that schools would close for a brief period until the infection rates fell – and a green light meant that schools could reopen (Helfer, Aapola-Kari, & Trane, 2023).



## Nameh

### **“I learned almost nothing. I couldn’t speak neither English nor Norwegian.”**

Nameh is 16 and lived in Oslo, Norway at the time of the interview. During the pandemic, Nameh and her peers were immigrants studying for a certificate of lower secondary school<sup>[3]</sup>. The certificate is mandatory for admittance to upper secondary school. Nameh had just started the course to secondary school in autumn 2020.

Nameh found the transition to online education almost impossible. It was both imprudent and unreasonable to be assigned to online education, as she lacked the necessary language skills. She believes she should have spoken up about it but found it challenging and was unable to find the courage to say anything.

According to Nameh, everything became easier when schools that provided intensive courses for newly arrived immigrants were allowed to reopen in the autumn of 2021. Even though it was just a few days a week, Nameh felt that being at school and meeting her friends made the learning process easier. She believes many of her peers felt very lonely during the lockdown and the periods of home schooling. She thinks it would have helped if she and her peers had been given an opportunity to attend some leisure time activities during the lockdown.

[Watch a short version of the interview with Nameh here](#)

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3. The first seven years (years 1–7) are called the primary level, and the three subsequent years (years 8–10) are called the lower secondary level.



## Hannan

**“It is important to listen to young people and understand how they feel.”**

Hannan is 16 and lives in Oslo, Norway. During the pandemic, she had just started an intensive course providing a certificate of lower Secondary school<sup>[4]</sup>. The certificate is mandatory for admittance to upper Secondary school.

Hannan wanted to be at school as she needed more help from the teachers. She found online education too difficult. It was hard to understand what the teachers were saying and how to complete the various assignments. The online platform Teams kept malfunctioning all the time. She felt it was very unreasonable that she had to take exams after only completing an online education.

When the classes for newly arrived immigrants were allowed to reopen in autumn 2021, Hannan and her friends decided to attend as many lessons as possible. Face-to-face teaching made a huge difference to Hannan. She found it easier to be more open, it made her more focused, and she made new friends. She believes youth should have been listened to and asked about how they felt during the lockdown.

[Watch a short version of the interview with Hannan here](#)

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4. The first seven years (Years 1-7) are called the primary level, and the three subsequent years (Years 8-10) are called the lower secondary level.



## Sunniva

**"It could've been so much easier if we'd received some help to set up study groups."**

Sunniva was 19 in the autumn of 2020 when she moved from Norway to Sweden to study at the University of Uppsala. Early the same autumn, all universities in Sweden were closed as a containment measure. All education transitioned to online teaching, which lasted throughout the spring semester of 2021.

Sunniva thinks that youth's mental health should have been prioritised more. She suggests a youth survey could have been conducted aimed at checking the students' wellbeing at the university. Also, it should have been possible to give the students a certain degree of social life and allow them to be at the university for short periods in small groups. She believes it could have been so much easier if the students had at least received some help to set up some study groups.

As a new student studying abroad, Sunniva also felt isolated from home. In March 2020, Norway, Denmark, the Faroe Islands, Finland, and Greenland closed their borders. Iceland and Sweden continued to allow visitors to enter the country. This meant that many Nordic students for a period of one to one and a half years encountered many obstacles if they wanted to travel home to meet their family and friends.

[Watch a short version of the interview with Sunniva here](#)

# Sweden

## Status of school closures in Sweden during the pandemic

- Early childhood education: Open.
- Primary school: Open.
- Secondary school: Closed from March–June 2020. Adjusted operations from during November 2020 and closed from December 2020–May 2021.
- Higher education: Closed from March 2020–June 2021 (Norlén, Gassen, & Randall, 2022).

In March 2020, several measures were implemented with the aim of restricting the spread of the virus in Sweden. Universities transitioned to online teaching, a measure that lasted until the end of the spring semester of 2021. Public events and meetings were restricted to 500 people, and this was later reduced to 50 and then eight people. Sports and recreational activities were suspended or had to be performed outdoors alone or in smaller groups, and competitions were limited or cancelled until December 2020, with some interim adjustments (Norlén, Gassen, & Randall, 2022).

In contrast to younger children, there were two periods of full online teaching for students at upper secondary schools, with the exception of students in vulnerable life situations. The first period was from March until June 2020 and the second period was for two weeks in December 2020. At that time, online teaching was also extended to years 7–9. An exception was made for students who benefited from one-on-one learning, for example, pupils who faced social challenges at home or who did not have a place to study.

Sports activities were affected by both the recommendations that limited free time and leisure, as well as general guidelines regarding events and social gatherings. During the first wave in spring 2020, sport activities had to be held outdoors, and events such as competitions or cups were restricted or prohibited. This particularly impacted indoor and team sports. In May 2020, competitions could be organised with no spectators if there were less than 50 people.

Public services such as libraries, swimming pools and gyms were not affected by the crowd restrictions, but safety measures were implemented (Helfer, Aapola-Kari, & Trane, 2023), (Norlén, Gassen, & Randall, 2022).



## Mira

### **"The university could've told us more."**

Mira was 23 years old and had just started her studies at university when the Covid-19 pandemic hit.

Mira was on the student council, and, at a relatively early stage, the council raised the question of whether student seminars and lectures would be held online. In her opinion, the university could have been much clearer about this. The delay and period of uncertainty negatively impacted Mira and many of her peers. Mira as many others had hired a one-room apartment to be close to the university. As she had already rented out her own flat in Stockholm when all her education courses were transferred online, she ended up staying in her partner's flat.

Mira believes that some of the challenges the students encountered could have been addressed with better and clearer information, for instance, regarding student health services. She believes this would also have been an important measure to secure the wellbeing of the students during the long periods of lockdown.

[Watch a short version of the interview with Mira here](#)



## Olle

### **"Basketball was heavily affected."**

Olle is 14 years old and lives in a suburb outside Stockholm. He started lower secondary school during the pandemic. The schools in Sweden were open for students from 13 to 16 years, with some basic regulations.

Basketball practice is important to Olle. It represents a large part of his social life, and one day he hopes to become a professional basketball player. His biggest concern during the pandemic was the cancelling of matches and tournaments, and he worried a lot about practice being completely suspended for an extended period.

Regarding school, he found that it was more difficult to receive help with school assignments and that some of the containment measures did not make any sense. However, he found that the pandemic gave him some breathing space, taking away some of the pressure.

[Watch a short version of the interview with Olle here](#)





## Julia

**"You must provide youth with a platform, if they are to have a say."**

Julia is 17 and lives in Stockholm, Sweden. She started her first year at upper secondary education during the first year of the pandemic. At first, she was able to physically attend school for a brief period. However, the schools closed in December 2020 and all teaching was moved online until spring 2021.

During one part of the pandemic, Julia felt like she was living the same day over and over again. She reacted badly to the isolation and found it necessary to organise her days in strict routines to stay sane. In Julia's opinion, the students' voices and opinions were not heard and youth should at least have been provided with some platform on which to meet and talk to others, as well as decision-makers.

[Watch a short version of the interview with Julia here](#)

# Lithuania

## Status of school closures in Lithuania

At the start of the pandemic, Lithuania, like the rest of the world, imposed a nationwide lockdown to stop the spread of the virus. This significantly impacted students of all ages. In March 2020, all childcare and education services were shut down, forcing schools, universities to move all education online. The Lithuanian education system was challenged, as some students did not have access to devices that were crucial for learning. All the classes were held online for the rest of the academic year. At the end of summer, some schools tried to implement a hybrid way of teaching – by combining online education and classroom teaching. However, this only applied to younger students, since students from years eight to twelve were still taught online.

In December 2020, the lockdown was extended, and all schools had to resume online learning. As the vaccines became more available, teachers and education workers were one first groups to be vaccinated to allow schools to start running again. From March 2021, the restrictions were partially lifted: sports and other extracurricular activities were resumed. Decisions regarding how to provide education were left to local municipalities and schools. Many schools returned to contact learning. However, both students and teachers had to be either vaccinated or take tests on a frequent basis. As the new academic year started in September 2021, all students returned to school, although some precautions were taken to ensure the safety of students and teachers. University students were only allowed to return to university if they had been vaccinated. In February 2022, all restrictions were lifted ([Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania](#)).

## The subsequent war in Ukraine

Russia's war in Ukraine has significantly impacted the youth of Lithuania. This war so close to home, makes Lithuanians concerned about stability and security. The war has also reminded Lithuania of its own history, raised concerns about Russia's intentions, and what it's like to have your freedom taken away.

For many youths it was a wake-up call. Stability, freedom, and democratic values that were taken for granted, now seemed fragile and at risk of disappearing. Lithuanians empathised with Ukrainians and felt a shared sense of solidarity in their pursuit of freedom and self-determination. Since the war began, Lithuanians have opened their arms and welcomed over 74.000 Ukrainian refugees. This is the largest number of refugees to ever enter the country. Several youths have joined NGO's and taken on roles as volunteers, offering their help to Ukrainian refugees or for those people who are still in the war-affected areas.



## Gabija

### **"The voice of youth can make a change."**

Gabija, 18, lives in Vilnius, Lithuania. When the Covid-19 pandemic hit, she had just started upper secondary school, and the sudden shift to remote learning left her longing for the company of her classmates and teachers. She found it hard to stay motivated. And just when things were starting to get better, the outbreak of the Ukraine war brought a new wave of worry and uncertainty to Lithuanian society.

Gabija believes that the voice of youth can change a lot, so she hopes that their voice can be taken more seriously in the future.

[Watch the interview with Gabija here.](#)



## Povilas

**“The mere act of expressing one's perspective can alleviate the burden of tension.”**

Povilas lives in Lithuania. He started his first year at the university just as the first lockdown measures were being enforced. Recalling those days, he describes a period of isolating himself at home, confined within the same four walls for extended periods of time. As the Covid-19 crisis neared its conclusion, Povilas found himself emotionally drained and burdened by anxiety, without fully understanding its origin.

Povilas believe it holds significant importance for the younger generation to have a platform to voice their opinions. Among the primary benefits of this approach is stress reduction; the mere act of expressing one's perspective can alleviate the burden of tension. In Povilas opinion, sharing your thoughts not only brings about a sense of relief but also imparts the assurance that your concerns are acknowledged, and actions are underway.

The war in Ukraine added to his concerns for the future. Even though the war is far away it could spread, and he dreads the possibility of it reaching Lithuania. He feels that helping Ukrainians through donations and so forth eases some of his concerns.

[Watch the interview with Povilas here.](#)

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# About the publication

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