

Youth in Government Policy and Practice

India today enjoys a demographic dividend compared to Western Europe, China, Japan and other developed countries. Nearly 65 per cent of the country's population is under 35 years of age. The proportion of youth population in India is projected to grow until 2021. Indian policy makers' hope today lies in the high demographic dividend that has been associated with accelerated growth in South Asian countries. However, it must be remembered that the second half of the century will see an increasingly aged population. Therefore, unless this demographic advantage is harnessed in an economically productive manner, this population profile combined with poor social security net in the country may turn into a demographic disaster.

ENGAGING YOUTH IN GOVERNMENT POLICY AND PRACTICE

Along with the Union Government in India, various states like Maharashtra, Odisha, Karnataka, Kerala, Jharkhand and Haryana have initiated formulation of youth policies. The Union Government promulgated its most recent National Youth Policy in 2014 "to empower the youth of the country to achieve their full potential, and through them enable India to find its rightful place in the community of nations." To achieve this vision, the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has allocated a budget of Rs.1,934 Crores in the financial year 2017-18. The government and various other stakeholders need to work on five objectives

with 11 identified priority areas (table below) to ensure that policy and programs are implemented successfully by different agencies. The Ministries of Panchayati Raj, Home Affairs, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, as well as the Indian Army are also implementing various schemes for achieving the objectives of the National Youth Policy.



NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY – OBJECTIVES, PRIORITY AREAS AND SCHEMES

OBJECTIVES	PRIORITY AREAS	SCHEMES
1. Create a productive workforce that can make a sustainable contribution to India's economic development	1. Education 2. Employment and skill development 3. Entrepreneurship	1. Sankalp 2. Life skills training for adolescents 3. Skill upgradation training program 4. Rashtriya Yuva Sashaktikaran Karyakram
2. Develop a strong and healthy generation equipped to take on future challenges	4. Health and healthy lifestyle 5. Sports	5. National Scheme for Youth and Adolescent Development 6. Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram 7. Khelo India – National Program for Development of Sports
3. Instill social values and promote community service to build national ownership	6. Promotion of social values 7. Community engagement	8. Nehru Yuva Kendra 9. National Services Scheme 10. Prime Minister's Rural Development Fellowship
4. Facilitate participation and civic engagement at levels of governance	8. Participation in politics and governance 9. Youth engagement	11. Mahatma Gandhi Yuva Swachhta Abhiyan and Shramdaan Karyakram
5. Support youth at risk and create equitable opportunity for all disadvantaged and marginalized youth	10. Inclusion 11. Social justice	12. Udaan 13. Sadbhavna 14. Himayat 15. Tribal Youth Exchange Program 16. North Eastern Youth Exchange Program

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