BACKGROUND
Youth are participating in mental health policymaking in several countries [1-3], yet there has been limited attention to it in the grey and academic literature. A scoping review on youth participation in mental health policymaking was conducted to map this literature around the globe and to identify gaps for future research and action. During the last stage of the review [4], the primary findings were validated with stakeholders. This poster analyzes the consultation data by focusing on the characteristics of youth participants and the factors that facilitate youth participation. We use an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusiveness (EDI) lens anchored on everyone’s right to access and contribute to mental health policy making [4].

METHODS
Online focus group discussions or individual interviews were conducted in May-July 2021 with 45 participants from 16 countries, divided into 3 categories:
- young people (from 14-24 years),
- adult allies of youth participation
- policymakers

The primary findings of the literature review (Figure 1), condensed into a 3-page document, were shared in advance. Participants were asked to give their opinions on whether the primary findings aligned/not with their experience and to identify primary audiences and methods to disseminate findings from the review. Meetings took place in English on Zoom and phone and were recorded, transcribed verbatim, and coded thematically using NVivo11. The main themes from the review were enriched with themes emerging from the consultation.

I’d like to see a lot more diversity. [...] we need to have a mix of youth participants in research that reflects the young people that we see in society...”
—Consultation Youth Participant

CONCLUSION
Stakeholders collectively agreed that:
1. youth participation in mental health policymaking is not diverse enough: skewness in gender, lack of diversity in: sexual orientation representatives, people with lived experience, and people with disability.
2. demographic traits of research participants are often poorly reported.

Two complementary approaches are needed:
1. Bring more diversity in youth participation in mental health programs and policy making.
2. Pay more attention to the demographic background of participants in research. This will bring more context to participants’ contributions.

REFERENCES

KEYFINDINGS
On the characteristics of participants in published studies, the gender ratio, including sexual minorities, the proportion of participants with lived experience, and the non-specified socio-demographic data caught stakeholders’ attention. Discussions suggest gaps in research protocols, instruments, and recruitment strategies.

Stakeholders’ Comments...

Josie Tuong 1, Sakiko Yamaguchi, PhD 2, & Mónica Ruiz-Casares, PhD 3, 4
1 Department of Anatomy & Cell Biology, McGill University
2 Research Institute of the McGill University Health Centre, McGill University
3 Sherpa University Institute, CIUSSS West Central Montreal

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
Thank you to all youth and adults who participated in the consultation and to other research team members who assisted with recruitment & interview guidelines. Dr. Yamaguchi’s involvement and the literature review were funded by the Ford Foundation (Grant to Dr. Alayne Adams). The consultation was funded by the Sherpa IU (Funds to Dr. Ruiz-Casares).