



1. OVERVIEW OF THE SESSION

Primary Goal:

- Engage young people (18-25) in open and informal discussions about political and electoral systems.
- Gather insights from diverse perspectives on politics and governance.
- Foster a safe and inclusive space for dialogue.
- Understand youth challenges, aspirations, and role in shaping democracy.

Structure of the Session: Warm-Up:

- Icebreaking activity: Dixit.
- Participants chose a Dixit card representing the word "politics" and explained their choice.

Thought-Provoking Questions:

- Encouraged critical thinking about political engagement and voting.
- Activity: Participants positioned themselves in corners labeled "Yes, I agree" or "No, I disagree" in response to the question, "Do you think politics takes care of young people?"
- Each participant explained their reasoning.

Exploratory Questions:

- Participants shared experiences, concerns, and expectations about politics.
- Activity: Participants wrote their thoughts on sticky notes in response to the question, "What are your expectations regarding electoral and political systems?", placed them on a poster, and explained their reasoning.

Brainstorming Questions:

- Group brainstorming on how to improve political awareness and participation among young people.
- Activity: Participants, divided into two groups, created a poster titled "Politics According to Us", freely expressing their ideas through writing, drawing, or other creative means.

Closing Activity:

- Reflective discussion summarizing key takeaways.
- Participants suggested future actions based on their insights.

Outcome:

- The structured approach facilitated meaningful conversations and provided valuable insights into young people's perspectives on political and electoral matters

2. KEY INSIGHTS AND OBSERVATIONS

Warm-Up: Initial Impressions of Politics

Responses to "Describe politics in one word or phrase" and reasoning:

- Common words/phrases: corruption, power, change, future, hope, money.
- Many associated politics with corruption and power, showing distrust.
- Others saw politics as a tool for change and a hopeful future.
- Some highlighted money, believing financial interests dominate politics.
- Emotional tone: mix of frustration and cautious optimism.

Recollections of first exposure to politics:

- First exposure mainly through school (learning political structures, history, government).
- Social media played a significant role in shaping political awareness.
- Social media provided access to various viewpoints but also misinformation.
- Emotional tone: curiosity mixed with caution.

Personal Connections

Issues in the community participants believe politics can address:

- Key issues: unemployment, education, environmental protection, security, democracy.
- Emotional tone: concern and optimism for a more just and equitable society.

Politicians or political leaders participants recognized and what they knew:

- Most mentioned figures: Giorgia Meloni, Giuliano Amato, Vladimir Putin, Donald Trump, Benjamin Netanyahu.
- Predominantly negative opinions about these leaders.
- Criticism of Giuliano Amato for being too old (90 years) to lead an AI commission.
- No leader inspired admiration, reflecting general disillusionment.
- Despite this, participants remained hopeful for better leadership in the future

3. THOUGHT-PROVOKING QUESTIONS

Exploring Systems and Structures

Characteristics of good vs. bad governments according to participants:

A good government:

- Supports young people.
- Prioritizes social issues.
- Avoids war.
- Invests in the environment rather than military arms.
- Values democracy.

A bad government:

- Neglects youth.
- Engages in war.
- Focuses on military spending.
- Undermines democratic principles.

Emotional tone: passionate discussion, hopeful for a better future with the right leadership.

Participant speculations on the absence of government:

- Belief that something would eventually reorganize the state and institutions.
- Acknowledgment that reorganization would be difficult due to the lack of strong political leaders.
- Emotional tone: cautious optimism, recognizing challenges but believing in possible change.

Power and Responsibility

Whether participants feel leaders care about young people and why:

- General belief that leaders do not care about young people.
- Feeling of not being represented or considered.
- Desire for greater support, including policies like universal basic income for young people.
- Emotional tone: frustration mixed with determination to push for recognition and support.

Ideas shared about what they would do if in charge of the country for a day:

- Give more voice to younger generations and reduce the power of older leaders.
- Make large environmental investments, such as planting trees in Palermo and throughout Italy.
- Focus on supporting the LGBTQI community and migrants, emphasizing that it is unacceptable for people to continue living in the sea.
- Emotional tone: enthusiasm and a deep desire for a more inclusive and sustainable future

4. EXPLORATORY QUESTIONS

Political Systems and Leaders

Perceptions of decision-making processes in the country:

- Many participants found political decision-making confusing, opaque, and inaccessible.
- Belief that decisions are made by a small group of powerful individuals rather than through an inclusive process.
- Desire for greater transparency and connection between decision-making and everyday citizens, especially youth.
- Emotional tone: frustration with the current system but hope for a more democratic and responsive political process.
- Importance of understanding government systems:
- Lack of political knowledge leaves young people vulnerable to manipulation and disillusionment.
- Better education about government systems is crucial for informed decision-making and political participation.
- Strong determination among participants to educate themselves and others to create a more engaged and informed society.
- Emotional tone: urgency and commitment to bridging the gap between politics and the younger generation.

Sources of political news participants use and trust levels:

- Most frequently used platforms: Instagram, TikTok, Twitter.
- Social media is the most immediate and accessible source but trust levels are low.
- Concerns over biased reporting, sensationalism, and misinformation.
- Traditional media (newspapers, TV) seen as more trustworthy but still met with skepticism.
- Emotional tone: uncertainty and frustration about news reliability but hope for better media literacy.

Experiences with fake or misleading political news:

- Participants recalled encountering viral fake news and manipulated headlines.
- Frustration with how quickly misinformation spreads and how it plays on fear and anger.
- Some felt empowered when identifying fake news through fact-checking and cross-referencing sources.
- Emotional tone: anger at false information but also pride in uncovering the truth.

Electoral Systems

Knowledge of elections and areas of confusion:

- Participants understood the basic structure of elections.
- Areas of confusion: proportional representation, differences between national and local elections, role of political parties.
- Frustration that electoral systems aren't adequately explained through education or media.
- Emotional tone: mix of curiosity and frustration, with a desire for more clarity and transparency.

Opinions on the impact of voting:

- Participants were divided in their views on voting's impact.
- Many felt voting doesn't always lead to tangible change, especially when leaders seem disconnected from youth concerns.
- Others saw voting as a powerful tool for change, particularly when young people unite for a cause.
- Emotional tone: cautious optimism and frustration, with a shared desire for greater political engagement



5. BRAINSTORMING QUESTIONS

Creative Solutions

Ideas for a new political system and its rules:

- More transparent decision-making and stronger youth representation.
- Proposal for a youth council with direct influence on policies.
- Support for direct democracy, allowing citizens to vote on specific policies.
- Emotional tone: Idealism and optimism, with a vision for a more inclusive and transparent political system.

First promises participants would make if running for office:

- Environmental investments, such as increasing green spaces and tree planting.
- Protecting LGBTQI rights and improving conditions for migrants.
- Universal basic income for young people to tackle unemployment.
- Emotional tone: urgency and excitement, focusing on social justice, sustainability, and youth empowerment.

Engaging Young People

Suggestions for making politics more interesting or accessible for youth:

- Interactive apps and social media campaigns with quizzes, polls, and discussions.
- Informal debates and discussions in schools and universities.
- Community events or festivals combining fun activities with political education.
- Emotional tone: excitement and innovation, with a strong push for more engaging and relatable political content.

Tools or resources participants felt would be helpful:

- Educational websites, fact-checking platforms, and interactive learning resources.
- Mentorship programs connecting youth with experienced political figures.
- Local youth councils and political workshops for advocacy training.
- Emotional tone: optimism and empowerment, with a desire to take control of their political education.

Addressing Issues

Political issues participants want more attention on and why:

- Youth unemployment, education, environmental sustainability, democracy, and social equality.
- Frustration with lack of policies addressing youth unemployment.
- Call for better education policies to prepare youth for the job market.
- Environmental concerns, including investment in green initiatives.

Questions participants would ask their country's leader:

- "What are you doing to tackle youth unemployment?"
- "How will you ensure young people have a greater voice in decision-making?"
- "What is your plan to address the climate crisis?"
- "Why aren't migrants and the LGBTQI community given the rights they deserve?"
- Emotional tone: directness and accountability, demanding real action from leaders

6. CLOSING ACTIVITY

At the end of the session, several major themes emerged from the participants' reflections:

- Desire for greater political engagement among young people.
- Frustration with feeling disconnected from political processes.
- Passion for having their voices heard.
- Need for more accessible information and tools to understand political systems.
- Strong desire for systemic change, particularly in areas like youth unemployment, education, and environmental sustainability.
- Reflection on the importance of democracy and representation.
- Emphasis on the central role of young people in shaping the future.
- Mixed emotional tone of hope and determination.
 - Hope for a brighter, more inclusive future.
 - Determination to actively work toward that future through greater participation in political life.

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