

1. OVERVIEW OF THE SESSION

Purpose:

Engage young people in discussions on political systems, voting importance, and youth participation in decision-making.

Structure:

- Introduction and project presentation.
- Discussions on governance, media influence, and misinformation.
- Brainstorming session to encourage creative political solutions.
- Identification of key political and social issues.
- Conclusion with key insights and reflections.

2. KEY INSIGHTS AND OBSERVATIONS

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

- Politics was described as "complex," emphasizing its evolving and challenging nature.
- Paradoxical—confusing yet dynamic, offering many learning opportunities.

Recollections of first exposure to politics:

- School debates
- Media
- Accompanying parents to vote

Personal Connections

Issues in the community participants believe politics can address

- Social inequalities
- Gender representation
- Public transportation

Politicians or political leaders participants recognized and what they knew

Historical leaders:

- Winston Churchill, prime-minister and Iron Curtain expression
- Maria de Lurdes Pintassilgo, Portugal's first female Prime Minister

Present leaders:

- Ukraine-Russia War: Vladimir Putin, Donald Trump, Volodymyr Zelensky
- EU politics: Viktor Orbán
- Brazil: Jair Bolsonaro and Lula da Silva



3. THOUGHT-PROVOKING QUESTIONS

Exploring Systems and Structures

Characteristics of good vs. bad governments according to participants

- Good governments focus on citizens' welfare and solving real problems
- Bad governments are marked by corruption, self-interest, and power struggles
- Effective governance should include diverse representation, especially from working-class individuals

Participant speculations on the absence of government

- Chaos, with power struggles
- Anarchy, similar to a classroom without supervision

Power and Responsibility

Whether participants feel leaders care about young people and why

- Leaders' concern for young people is superficial
- Efforts driven by political motives and lacking long-term

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

- Equal pay
- Extending paternity leave
- Tackling the housing crisis - affordable housing projects
- Free higher education
- Healthcare reform

4. EXPLORATORY QUESTIONS

Political Systems and Leaders

Perceptions of decision-making processes in the country:

- Unclear
- Separation of powers understood
- President's veto role understood

Importance of understanding government systems:

- Essential for meaningful participation
- Avoid populism and extremism

Media and Information

Sources of political news participants use and trust levels:

- Social media platforms (X, Instagram, and TikTok)
- Concerns about bias and misinformation are widespread

Experiences with fake or misleading political news:

- Fake news, especially on social media
- Highlighting the need for critical thinking and selective media consumption

Electoral Systems

Knowledge of elections and areas of confusion:

- General process of elections is understood
- Confusion around how legislative seats and its leaders

Opinions on the impact of voting:

- A crucial civic duty
- Concerns about low youth participation - limited political engagement beyond voting

5. BRAINSTORMING QUESTIONS

Creative Solutions

Ideas for a new political system and its rules

- Democracy
- Based on Welfare state (health, education, and housing, social justice, rights protection, and political literacy)

First promises if running for office

- Housing crisis
- Education reform
- Gender equality
- Fostering political engagement - transparency

Engaging Young People

Making politics more interesting or accessible for youth

- Education and combating misinformation
- Simplify politics and made more engaging - social media

Tools or resources that would be helpful

- Educational resources explaining politics
- Political literacy in schools

Addressing Issues

Political issues that need more attention and why

- Housing crisis
- Healthcare
- Rise of far-right ideologies - a threat to democratic values and social rights

Questions to ask the country's leader

- Contradictions in politics - social democracy and public welfare
- Protection of women's rights

6. CLOSING ACTIVITY

Key Takeaways:

- Concerns included political extremism, the influence of social media, and the importance of historical awareness.
- Issues like gender inequality, threats to women's rights, and socio-economic challenges such as education, housing, and healthcare were also highlighted.

Feedback:

- The session was engaging
- Active participation
- Enthusiasm for future activities

