



1. OVERVIEW OF THE SESSION

Civic and Political Participation: Understanding Politics in Spain and Our Contribution as Rural Youth

The session was held in the meeting room of Purchena Public Library, gathering 12 young people aged 14 to 25 for an informal, interactive dialogue about politics in Spain. Designed to bridge the gap between high civic participation and limited understanding of regional and national politics, the session blended storytelling, group reflection, and creative exercises inspired by the Get Political approach.

Participants engaged in open discussions about what politics means to them, how they perceive power, and how they relate (or don't) to institutions beyond the municipal level. The relaxed, inclusive environment encouraged honest sharing across generations and backgrounds.

Key Discussion Themes

- What Does Politics Mean to You?
- Understanding Government & Representation
- "I Vote, But I Don't Understand It"
- Trust, Transparency & Information
- Politics & Daily Life
- Young People & Politics

2. KEY INSIGHTS AND OBSERVATIONS

High civic commitment, low electoral literacy

Most participants vote locally and feel invested in their community, but lack clarity on how the Spanish political system functions at other levels.

Politics feels far away

Many don't know who represents them in regional or national government (other than the president or well-known figures), or how decisions made outside the municipality affect their daily lives.

Information is unclear or inaccessible

Participants expressed difficulty understanding political language, party platforms, and legislative processes. Fake news and misinformation were commonly cited concerns.

Youth want to learn and lead

Younger participants felt particularly underserved by political education but showed strong motivation to engage and share ideas.



3. THOUGHT-PROVOKING QUESTIONS

"What does politics mean to you?"

Who do you believe holds power in Spain?

Do you feel represented by regional or national leaders?

Can politics be a force for positive change in our community?"

4. EXPLORATORY QUESTIONS

"These helped participants explore unfamiliar aspects of the political system:

How are laws made in Spain, and at what levels?

What is the role of the Congreso de los Diputados vs. the Senate?

How does voting work in regional elections?

What influence do political parties have after elections are over?

These revealed that many participants were unaware of key features of Spain's political structure, such as proportional representation or the legislative autonomy of autonomous communities.

Takeaways

- Some participants misunderstood the role of political parties in forming governments.
- Several participants admitted they didn't know how to register to vote when living away from home, or whether their vote would "count" if submitted from abroad.
- Participants were unanimous in requesting simplified, trustworthy resources, ideally distributed locally and explained in plain language.



5. BRAINSTORMING QUESTIONS

"Used during the creative phase to generate ideas:

If you were in charge for a day, what would you change?

What would a more inclusive political system look like?

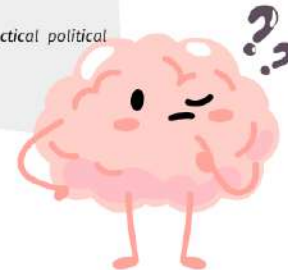
How can political information be made more understandable?

What would make young people feel included in politics?

Participants imagined new systems with more transparency, rotating leadership, digital participation tools, and local forums that connect everyday life with decision-making.

Takeaways

- They emphasized that politics is present in daily concerns, even if it often feels remote or bureaucratic.
- Several suggested schools should focus more on practical political education, including mock elections or debates."



6. CLOSING ACTIVITY

"To wrap up, participants were invited to share one thing they had learned or would like to do next. Responses included:

"I want to understand how voting actually works—who gets in and how."

"We should do this more often, especially before elections."

"Now I'm thinking differently about how national decisions affect us here."

Several expressed interest in organizing youth-led sessions or distributing local guides to political systems."