THE GLOBAL YOUTH PARTICIPATION INDEX REPORT 2025

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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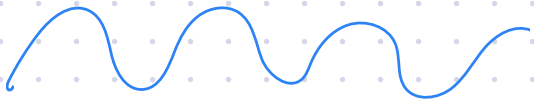
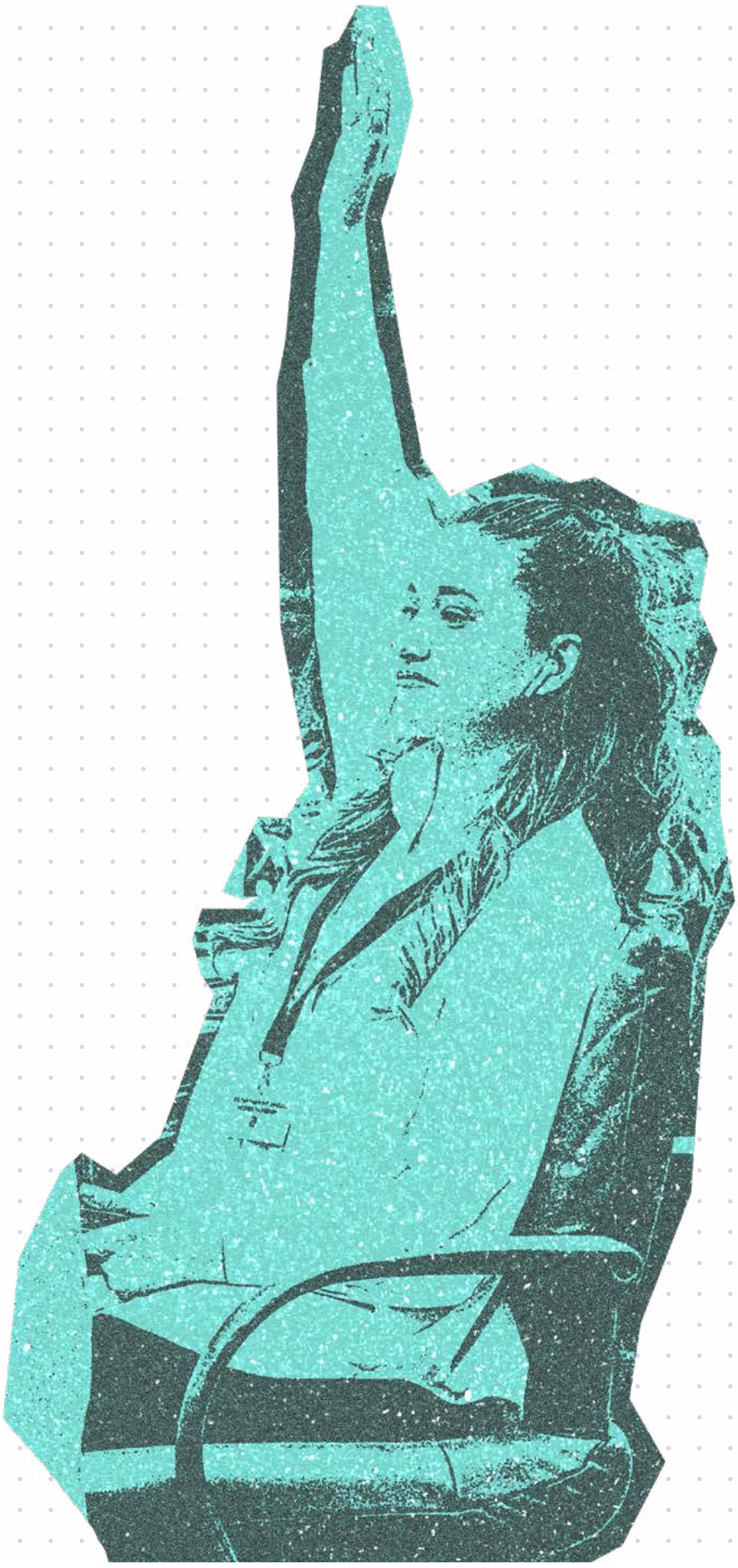




1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The **Global Youth Participation Index (GYPI)** represents the first ever attempt to systematically collect data on the participation of young people in economic, civic and political life. More specifically, the GYPI scores 141 countries on the extent to which they respect young people's political rights, civil liberties and economic needs, and so enable them to fully participate in political, civic and economic life. In doing so, the GYPI provides young people and their allies with the data needed to advocate for the removal of barriers to youth participation.

The GYPI is composed of 41 variables divided into four key dimensions of youth participation, providing a nuanced picture of the opportunities and barriers to participation in areas that are of great importance to young people:

- **Socio-Economic dimension,** which covers the opportunities and barriers to young people securing an education and participating in the economy.
- **Civic Space dimension,** which assesses the extent to which young people can play an active role in social and political developments, both online and in person.
- **Political Affairs dimension,** which documents the extent of youth participation in legislatures, political parties and other political spaces.
- **Elections dimension,** which captures the opportunities and barriers to young people participating in elections and casting ballots.

These dimensions were identified through conversations with young people and experts on youth participation. Variables were drawn from pre-existing datasets and, when necessary, collected by **66 data contributors**, including many under 30. The findings were then discussed with the GYPI Youth Panel, a group of nine young leaders from around the world with valuable insights on youth participation. A **deep engagement with young people** was therefore critical to the development of the GYPI from the start.

The scores for these dimensions and variables demonstrate that there is a long way to go when it comes to youth participation. **The average overall GYPI score is just 61 out of 100.** While the average scores for the Socio-Economic dimension tend to be higher at 76 out of 100, the figures for the Civic Space (62), Political Affairs (51) and Elections (54) dimensions are lower.

Crucially, low scores indicate significant barriers to youth participation, rather than apathy or disinterest, and highlight the **limited opportunities to participate** across a wide range of sectors and institutions.

There are significant variations in GYPI scores **both between and within regions**. European, North American and Australasian countries tend to perform better overall, in part due to higher levels of democracy. Many – but by no means all – sub-Saharan African states and those from the Middle East and North Africa region score less well. Asia features some of the greatest internal differences of any region, in part due to its size and the range of political systems it includes, from South Korea (76) through to Myanmar (41) and Afghanistan (14). There is also considerable variation within Latin America, though to a lesser extent.

Beneath these broader patterns, there are also some important similarities across regions. In almost all countries, **young people struggle to be recognised as political representatives and leaders** and are often excluded from the most powerful decision-making bodies. In the majority of countries, for example, young people remain significantly under-represented in the legislature. In 28 countries, there is **no youth representation at all**.

While authoritarian states tend to perform poorly on the GYPI, highlighting **the challenges that the global spread of autocracy poses for youth participation**, young people are also under-represented in decision-making bodies in several established democracies, such as Japan and the United States.

At the same time, some countries that are not usually counted among the world's strongest democracies perform much better than might be predicted with regard to specific dimensions of the GYPI. **Ecuador and Timor-Leste,** for example, rank in the middle of the GYPI overall but are some of the best performers when it comes to youth participation in elections. This, in turn, points to changes that other countries can also make to improve their performance on the GYPI. The strong scores of **Ecuador and Timor-Leste on the Elections dimension** are the product of policies that enhance electoral accessibility such as automatic voter registration and voter education, and so demonstrate the potential for policy reforms to bring about significant change even in challenging contexts.

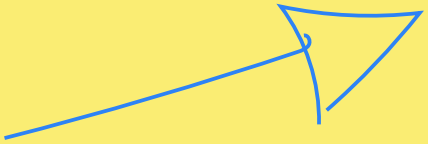
Conversely, high scores on the **Socio-Economic dimension** are not a guarantee of high scores on the overall GYPI. Czechia and Singapore, for example, both perform well on this dimension, but end up in the middle of the GYPI ranking due to the significant barriers to youth participation that exist regarding Elections and Civic Space (Singapore) and Political Affairs (Czechia).

A key takeaway from the GYPI is therefore that **youth rights are not yet fully respected**. There is room for improvement in nearly every dimension, even in the highest-ranking countries. By identifying these barriers to youth participation, the GYPI also highlights some of the **reforms** that can address them. There are a number of GYPI variables, for example, for which a wide range of countries perform poorly, including the Representation of Young People in the Legislature; the presence of overly restrictive Age Requirements for Candidates; the absence in many countries of formal mechanisms to promote youth participation through the presence of Youth Party Associations (i.e. wings or sections) and Youth Quotas for decision-making bodies; the limited supply of Free and Fair Elections; poor Educational Quality; patchy Access to Online Governance and low levels of Accessibility of the Voting Process.

No single measure works in isolation, however. For example, automatic voter registration will only facilitate meaningful youth participation if elections are credible, while youth quotas can backfire if seen as insincere and tokenistic. **A holistic, youth-led approach is essential**. Crucially, the GYPI stresses the need for action across all four dimensions of participation. Meaningful change requires more than policy reform — it depends on shifting attitudes through investment in skills, intergenerational dialogue in politics, and civic spaces that foster mutual respect.

The GYPI also reveals that youth participation **must be viewed intersectionally**: young women, LGBTQI+ youth, young people living with disabilities and those from ethnic minorities face significant barriers, even in higher-ranked countries. In Armenia, for example, as in so many countries in our sample, few young people say there is acceptance of gays and lesbians. Most electoral democracies also fall short in terms of representing disadvantaged groups in the legislature and in women's access to state jobs, with Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire and the Solomon Islands scoring under 40 out of 100. Unless prejudices like misogyny, racism, homophobia and transphobia are challenged, gains in youth participation will exclude those already marginalised.

Finally, the GYPI highlights the **power of data**: by quantifying participation and ranking countries, it reveals diverse obstacles worldwide. Youth and their allies can now pinpoint where their countries lag behind regional and global benchmarks, using GYPI data to advocate for reform in the areas that matter the most to them. Expanding the index to better capture young people's involvement in social movements, online political debate and community organisations will deepen insights into the extent of youth participation around the world, and the barriers that still need to be overcome.



2. INTRODUCTION: YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

Young people have been widely recognised as a **force for positive change**, and the importance of their equal participation in society has been the focus of significant global agendas over the past two decades. In the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, the United Nations states that youth participation and empowerment is a crucial goal, and has taken steps to promote the inclusion of young people across the organisation. This has been most notable through the UN 2030 Youth Strategy, "An ambitious system-wide strategy to guide the United Nations and its partners to work meaningfully with and for young people around the world".[1]

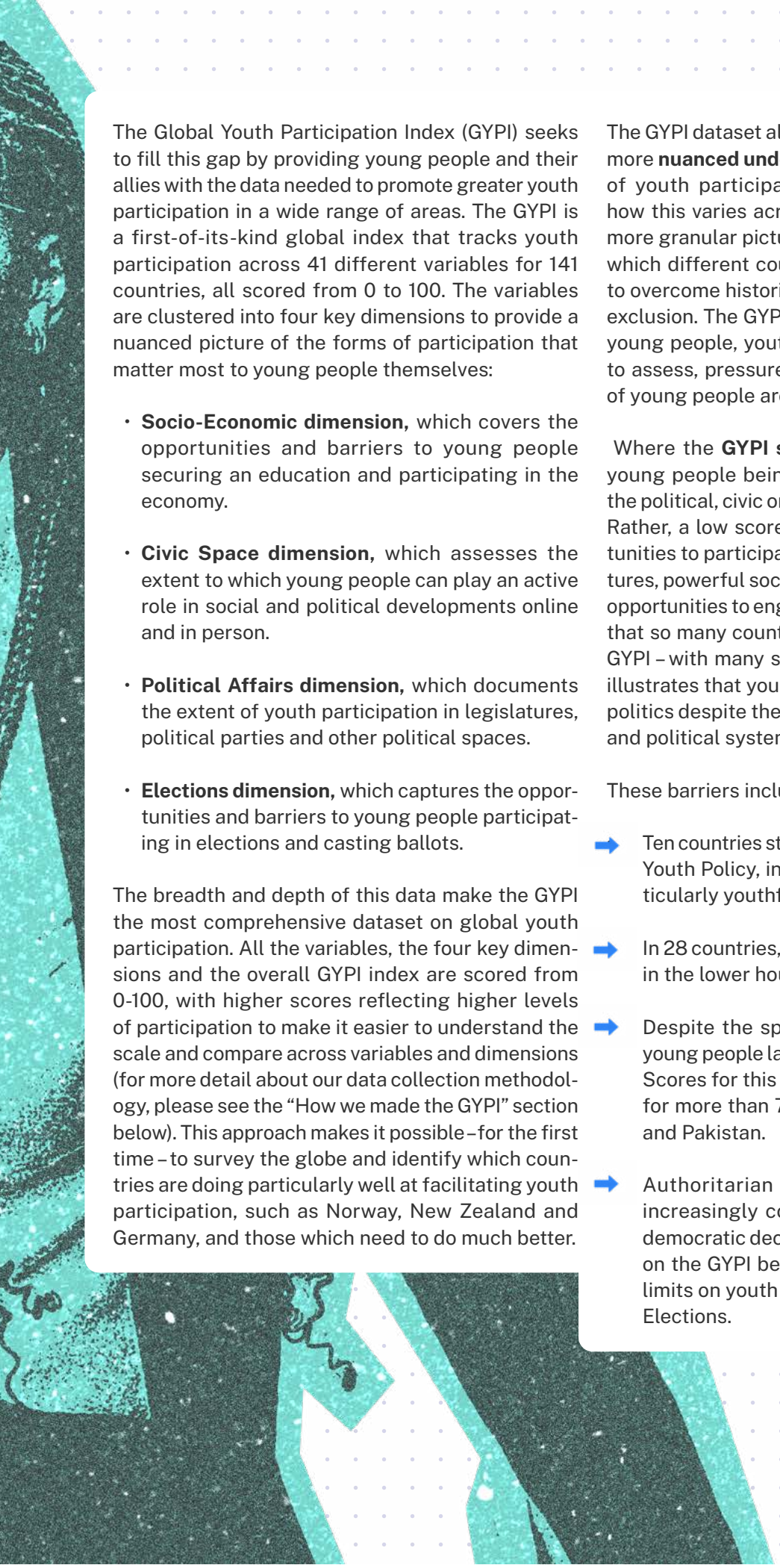
Beyond the overarching work of the United Nations, other regional organisations have also taken an interest in promoting the participation of young people in decision-making processes and in society. The European Union, for example, has made the **inclusion of youth in policy a priority**, and has sought to enhance youth participation and inclusion in democratic processes through the EU Youth Strategy (2019-2027). The strategy focuses on three areas of action: engagement, connection and empowerment, with the ultimate goal being to "foster youth participation in democratic life," to "support social and civic engagement," and to "ensure that all young people have the necessary resources to take part in society".[2]

Similarly, the African Union has worked to develop policies and programmes under the AU Agenda 2063, which fall within the African Youth Charter, the Youth Decade Plan of Action, and the Malabo Decision on Youth Empowerment. These efforts seek to "protect young people from discrimination" and ensure "freedom of movement, speech, association, religion, ownership of property and other human rights, while committing to **promoting youth participation throughout African society**".[3] The Youth Decade Plan focuses on several key areas, including education and skills development, youth employment and entrepreneurship, as well as governance, peace and security.

As these efforts demonstrate, regional, continental and supranational organisations all recognise the value of youth participation and inclusion. However, despite the increased attention given to the importance of youth participation and inclusion, there remains a gap in understanding the extent to which young people can participate in political, civic and economic life. Often it is young people themselves, rather than exclusionary institutions, that are blamed for a lack of participation, representation and inclusion. On the contrary, research on youth participation in decision-making processes, and the words and actions of young people around the world, show that they are not disengaged or disinterested, but often face insurmountable barriers when trying to fully participate.[4] Put another way, young people tend to be locked out of political processes rather than supported to engage in them, which can lead to their alienation and disappointment in government and state institutions – while being blamed for not doing more to engage in the democratic process.[5]

From **Bangladesh to Zimbabwe, and Paraguay to Serbia**, young people have recently been on the frontline of demonstrations and movements for democratic, just and non-corrupt governments. Yet, they are often excluded from the legislature by overly restrictive age limits, overlooked by political party elites, and denied access to critical opportunities and resources, including employment, training and internet access. Worse still, young demonstrators face extreme brutality. During and in the aftermath of the youth-led protests in Kenya against the 2024 Finance Bill and government corruption, for example, young people were arrested, tortured, and in some cases killed.[6]

One of the factors fuelling the misrepresentation of young people's political participation is the lack of a comprehensive and global view of youth participation. While numerous datasets gather some information about young people, few focus exclusively on young people and their socio-political inclusion. As a result, practitioners and youth organisers lack the data they need to make lasting and impactful change, through evidence-based arguments and pressure.



The Global Youth Participation Index (GYPI) seeks to fill this gap by providing young people and their allies with the data needed to promote greater youth participation in a wide range of areas. The GYPI is a first-of-its-kind global index that tracks youth participation across 41 different variables for 141 countries, all scored from 0 to 100. The variables are clustered into four key dimensions to provide a nuanced picture of the forms of participation that matter most to young people themselves:

- **Socio-Economic dimension,** which covers the opportunities and barriers to young people securing an education and participating in the economy.
- **Civic Space dimension,** which assesses the extent to which young people can play an active role in social and political developments online and in person.
- **Political Affairs dimension,** which documents the extent of youth participation in legislatures, political parties and other political spaces.
- **Elections dimension,** which captures the opportunities and barriers to young people participating in elections and casting ballots.

The breadth and depth of this data make the GYPI the most comprehensive dataset on global youth participation. All the variables, the four key dimensions and the overall GYPI index are scored from 0-100, with higher scores reflecting higher levels of participation to make it easier to understand the scale and compare across variables and dimensions (for more detail about our data collection methodology, please see the "How we made the GYPI" section below). This approach makes it possible – for the first time – to survey the globe and identify which countries are doing particularly well at facilitating youth participation, such as Norway, New Zealand and Germany, and those which need to do much better.

The GYPI dataset also enables us to develop a much more **nuanced understanding** of which dimensions of youth participation are particularly low, and how this varies across countries and regions. This more granular picture helps to identify the areas in which different countries need to make progress, to overcome histories of youth marginalisation and exclusion. The GYPI is therefore a valuable tool for young people, youth advocates and policy makers to assess, pressure and promote the full inclusion of young people around the world.

Where the **GYPI score is low**, it is rarely due to young people being apathetic or disinterested in the political, civic or economic life of their countries. Rather, a low score usually reflects limited opportunities to participate, due to closed political structures, powerful socio-economic barriers and limited opportunities to engage on their own terms. The fact that so many countries perform very poorly on the GYPI – with many scoring less than 50 out of 100 – illustrates that young people are often engaging in politics despite the barriers posed by the economic and political systems they operate within.

These barriers include the fact that:

- Ten countries still lack a comprehensive National Youth Policy, including several states with particularly youthful populations.
- In 28 countries, there is no youth representation in the lower house of the legislature at all.
- Despite the spread of new technology, many young people lack Access to Online Governance. Scores for this variable fall below 60 out of 100 for more than 75 countries, including Morocco and Pakistan.
- Authoritarian states, which are becoming increasingly common due to two decades of democratic decline, perform particularly poorly on the GYPI because they typically place tight limits on youth participation in Civic Space and Elections.

*"**The GYPI proves that youth exclusion is a global design flaw, not a personal failure. It gives us a framework to hold governments and institutions accountable** … Data like this should empower us to not just advocate but also demand structural change. As a young Zambian woman, this report is a call to action."*

Melissa Sarah H., Zambia,
GYPI Youth Panel

By highlighting the main barriers to youth participation, the GYPI also **reveals the reforms and changes** that have the potential to reduce these barriers. The variables of the GYPI on which countries tend to score particularly poorly include the Representation of Young People in the Legislature; the use of formal mechanisms to promote youth participation through the presence of Youth Quotas and Youth Party Associations (i.e. wings or sections); the Extent of Free and Fair Elections; Access to State Jobs – including for young women and youth of different economic classes; the Accessibility of the Voting Process; Educational Quality; Access to Online Governance, and the Acceptance of Gay and Lesbian Youth.

In turn, this suggests that there is a **particular need to**:

- Increase investment to widen access to education and training and improve its quality, providing young people with the skills needed to participate in political, civic and economic life.
- Target the additional barriers faced by young women, such as restrictive gender norms and early marriage, as well as other intersectional identities.
- Move towards affordable internet access for all young people in order to facilitate digital participation, for example in Civic Space, and increase online access to government data and services.
- Ensure that appropriate state jobs are accessible to young people, including young women, LGBTQI+ youth, young people living with disabilities and those from ethnic minorities who face significant barriers, even in higher-ranked countries.
- Strengthen the representation of young people in the local and national executives of political parties while adopting new measures to improve the ease of electoral participation, including automatic voter registration.
- Increase the representation of young people in the legislature by removing prohibitive age barriers to elected positions, for example.
- Enhance respect for political rights and civil liberties, so that young people can speak their minds and fully participate in civil society.
- Hold credible elections to enable young people to express their political preferences at the ballot box.

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- Hold credible elections to enable young people to express their political preferences at the ballot box.

It is important to recognise that each of these changes would only have a **limited effect in isolation**. Adopting automatic voter registration – and so ending the global pattern of lower registration rates for younger citizens who have had less time to secure the necessary documentation – will only have a meaningful impact on youth participation if it goes hand-in-hand with efforts to ensure that elections are credible.

The GYPI is particularly valuable in this regard because it highlights the **need for action across all four key dimensions of youth participation**. It is only when this happens that institutional and policy reform is likely to be translated into attitudinal and behavioural change. As a wide range of research has now documented, combating ageism in order to improve young people's access to decision-making institutions requires investment in skills and education, creating lasting opportunities for intergenerational exchange in formal politics,[7] and connecting generations in Civic Space to foster respect and understanding.[8]

3. HOW WE BUILT THE GYPI

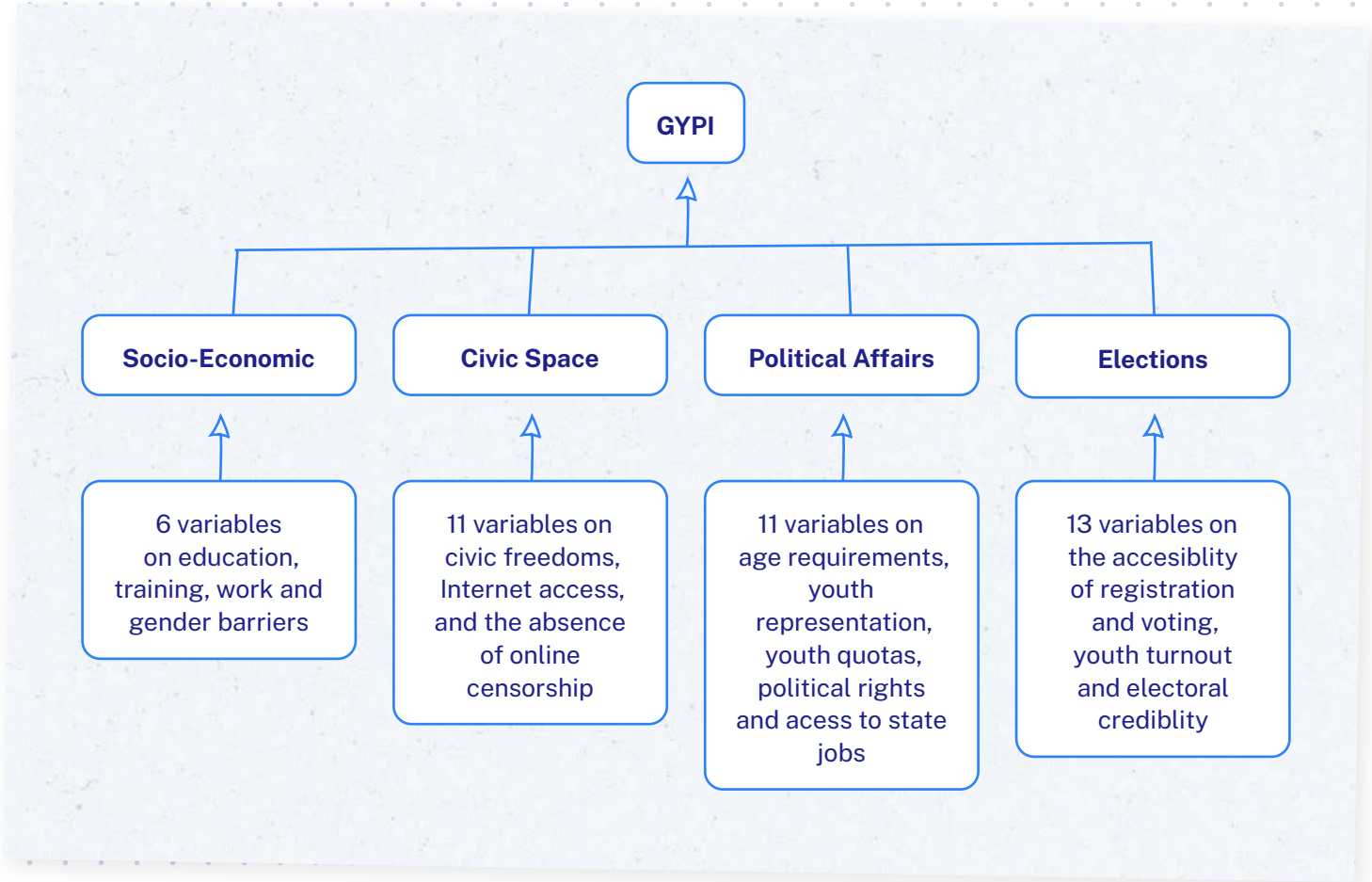
The GPYI is an Index that scores 141 countries on the extent to which they respect young people's political rights, civil liberties, and economic needs, enabling youth to fully participate in political, civic and economic life. All the variables, dimensions, and the overall GYPI are scored 0 to 100. Higher scores, i.e. those closer to 100, mean that young people are better able to enjoy a politically active and engaged life. It is therefore in those countries and dimensions that have lower scores that the need for reform is most pressing. Creating the GYPI involved five key steps across three phases:

Phase 1: Scoping study	**Step 1:** Holding conversations with youth researchers and activists, and consulting the literature, to map out four main dimensions of youth participation, each of which speaks to a different aspect of young people's ability to fully participate in economic, civic and political life. **Step 2:** Identifying factors for which reliable data collection would be feasible across many countries for each dimension.
Phase 2: Pilot study	**Step 3:** Collecting available data from pre-existing datasets and then working with experts on youth politics and (where possible) young activists, hired as consultants, to identify as much of the missing data as possible for 15 countries. This was done to verify that it was possible to construct such an Index for different kinds of states, and outline the challenges that would be involved in compiling the complete GYPI.
Phase 3: Full GYPI study	**Step 4:** Collecting data for all 141 countries, converting each variable to a 0 to 100 scale for ease of interpretation, and then calculating the score for each dimension by averaging the score for each of the variables that it includes. **Step 5:** Calculating the overall GYPI score for each country by averaging the score for the four dimensions for that country, discussing the outcomes with the GYPI Youth Panel, and sharing the data through the GYPI website.

3.1. **The Four Dimensions of the GYPI**

The four different dimensions of the GYPI are important because each one speaks to a different aspect of the lived reality experienced by young people. Every dimension includes variables that provide insights into the context for youth participation and the extent to which all young people can participate **(Figure 1)**. This means that we take into account, where possible, the additional barriers that young people may face due to their gender, sexuality, faith and ethnicity.

Figure 1. The four dimensions of the GYPI



The **Socio-Economic dimension**. Participation in education and meaningful work are areas of life most highly valued by young people. The Socio-Economic dimension is also particularly significant because it has implications for the extent to which young people can fully participate in other areas. Young people who are denied the right to participate in education and the workforce, for example, may find it harder to meaningfully participate in political life due to limited resources and experience. The dimension is composed of 6 variables:

- Primary School Completion Rate
- Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) Rate for Youth
- Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) Rate for Female Youth
- Proportion of Youth Seeking Work Who Are Employed
- Educational Equality
- Absence of Early Marriage

The **Civic Space dimension**. Engaging in civic activities is important to many young people who care about their country and want to be active in their communities. This is not always possible, however, due to barriers including limited access to civic spaces, such as online platforms and debates, and tight restrictions on public demonstrations and meetings. The Civic Space dimension is especially notable because for many young people, 'engaged' forms of citizenship, such as activities concerned with social welfare, are as important – or even more important – than duty-based forms of participation such as voting (Dalton 2016: 6). The dimension is composed of 11 variables:

- Percent of Youth who Signed a Petition
- Core Civil Society Index (strength of civil society)
- Level of Civil Society Repression
- Level of Government Efforts to Censor the Internet
- Internet Access
- Internet Access in Secondary Schools
- Freedom of Peaceful Assembly
- Freedom of Religion
- Use of Social Media by Political Elites
- Access to Online Governance
- Acceptance of Gays and Lesbians

The **Political Affairs dimension**. Young people have been at the forefront of recent campaigns to defend political rights and civil liberties around the world, and are actively engaged in political parties through youth wings (associations/sections). Yet, in many countries, youth are also prevented from playing a full leadership political role, for example, by age limits on who can stand for public office that prevent younger citizens from taking up a seat in the legislature, or because the government does not respect political rights and civil liberties. The dimension is composed of 11 variables:

- Age Requirements for Candidates to the Legislature
- Presence of a National Youth Policy
- Presence of a Youth Quota
- Presence of a Youth Party Association (often called 'sections' or 'wings')
- Representation of Young People in the Legislature
- Representation of Disadvantaged Social Groups in the Legislature
- Access to State Jobs by Class
- Access to State Jobs by Gender
- Trust in Political Parties
- Quality of Freedom of Expression
- Quality of Political Rights

The **Elections dimension**. Participating in elections is critical if young people are to shape the composition of the government and the kinds of politics that it implements. Despite high levels of youth interest in politics, the electoral turnout of young people is often low. Commentators often put this down to apathy, but in reality, it is often due to structural and logistical obstacles because young people have had less time to register to vote, are less well placed to overcome barriers such as onerous registration requirements, and may not believe that their vote will count, for example, due to electoral manipulation. The dimension is composed of 13 main variables:

- Voting Age
- Youth Turnout in National Elections
- Extent of Free and Fair Elections
- Accessibility of the Voting Process (composed of ten further variables)[9]

It is important to be clear that there are several important types of youth participation for which data does not exist, and which proved to be too difficult or expensive to collect. This includes data on the number of young people taking part in social movements and demonstrations, and the proportion of young people engaging in discussion of political and social issues online. For this reason, it is crucial not to read the GYPI as a measure of the level of interest and motivation of young people to participate in national life, and not to interpret lower scores as meaning that young people are apathetic or disengaged. For a full breakdown of the data and methodology, including the source and full definition of each of the variables, refer to the GYPI website here: **https://gypi.epd.eu/**

Box 1: **Who is A Youth?**

There is no one unique definition of 'youth', or even globally-agreed-upon upper and lower age limits for the category[10] nor for 'young people' more widely.[11] Rather, definitions of youth and young people are often dependent on those doing the defining, local norms, and the wider context. Large supranational organisations such as the United Nations (UN) and the World Bank often categorise youth as those aged 15-24, whereas the European Union (EU) defines youth as ages 15-29 and the African Union as those aged 15-35. In this report, we define youth as young people belonging to the 15-30 age group, in order to have a consistent definition we can apply across all our cases, while recognising that this will fit some countries better than others.

Box 2: **The GYPI Youth Panel**

The GYPI Youth Panel is made up of nine young people with valuable insights on youth participation from around the world, including Africa, Asia and Latin America. The Panel met several times to discuss the design and findings of the GYPI, what they mean for young people and the changes that are needed to empower them to fully participate in political, economic and civic life. Quotes and insights from the GYPI Youth Panel are featured throughout the report, while the profiles of the Youth Panel members can be found on the GYPI website.

Box 3: **Definition of GYPI categories**

The overall GYPI score is a number between 0 and 100, with 100 being the best score possible, and 0 the worst. To make it easier to see how a country performs on the GYPI, we categorised the countries into quartiles based on very high, high, medium and low scores. These categorisations therefore reflect the position of any given country within the spectrum of performance captured by the GYPI.

Youth participation level category	Overall GYPI score range
Very High ●	72–84
High ●	62–71
Medium ●	53–61
Low ○	14–52

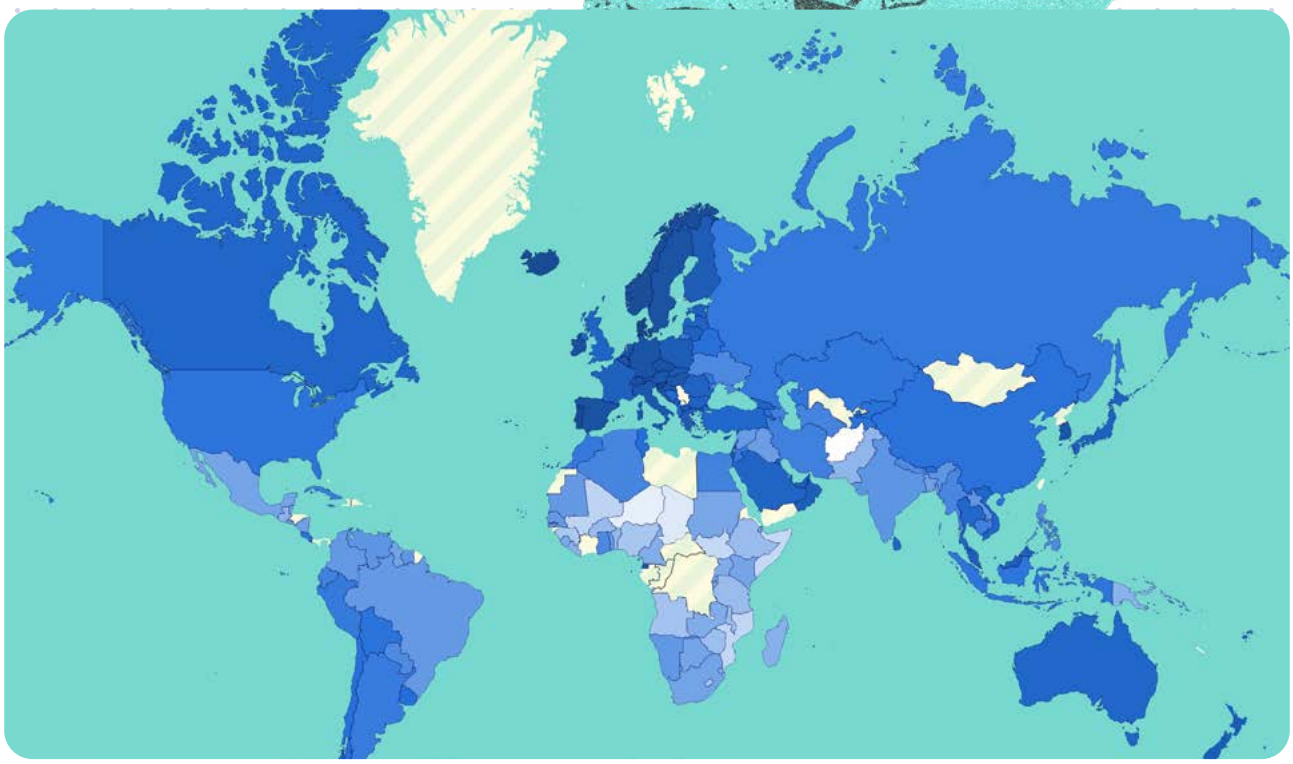
4. KEY FINDINGS OF THE GYPI

4.1. Youth Participation Around the World

The GYPI tells a story of varied youth participation: young people are striving to participate in all aspects of life, but they face significant challenges that often prevent them from doing so. In no country are young people's rights to political, civic and economic participation fully realised. Rather, the average GYPI score across all countries is just 61. The maximum GYPI score is 84 (Norway), and the lowest is 14 (Afghanistan). While there are large variations among countries, these overarching findings demonstrate that there is significant room – and need – for improvement.

Figure 2 shows the worldwide results of the 2025 GYPI. The countries in dark blue – mostly in Europe, Australasia, and North America – are those with the highest average score across all dimensions, relative to the rest of the world. Countries in the lightest blue – largely in sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and North Africa, and parts of Eastern Europe and Asia – have the lowest overall scores, and therefore the greatest room for improvement. **Box 3** explains the criteria for grouping countries into low, medium, high and very high overall GYPI scores

Map of world countries by Global Youth Participation Index score, 2025



The highest-performing 20 countries are highlighted in **Table 1** (for full country rankings, see Annex A). The highest scoring countries are all classified as democracies (for example, by the V-Dem Institute)[12] and the majority in Europe with a few exceptions such as Australia, Canada and South Korea. These countries feature high levels of Socio-Economic participation among young people, as well as fairly high scores when it comes to the Civic Space and Elections dimensions.

As in several other global rankings, all the Nordic countries (**Denmark**, **Norway**, **Sweden**, **Finland** and **Iceland**) are ranked in the top 10 of the GYPI. This ranking reflects these countries' longstanding commitments to advancing the political and social rights of young people, including their representation in legislative institutions.[13] Larger social patterns around inclusivity and equality also promote safer spaces for LGBTQI+ communities and ethnic and religious minorities to feel included.

Table 1. Top 20 Ranking Countries, Overall GYPI

Rank	Country	Score
1	Norway	84
2	New Zealand	84
3	Germany	81
4	Denmark	80
5	Sweden	80
6	Netherlands	80
7	Finland	80
8	Canada	79
9	Australia	79
10	Switzerland	78
11	United Kingdom	78
12	Iceland	78
13	Malta	77
14	Austria	77
15	Luxembourg	76
16	Spain	76
17	South Korea	76
18	Ireland	75
19	Estonia	75
20	Slovenia	75

In **Iceland** (ranked 12 out of 141/GYPI score 78), for example, young people strongly believe that their communities are welcoming and accepting of LGBTQI+ people. This is reflected in various government policies, including those that prohibit discrimination, as well as in the establishment of supportive environments like LGBTQI+ youth centres that provide young people with a 'home away from home' and the chance to connect with peers.[14]

There are also many examples of good practice outside of the top 20. In **Timor-Leste** (ranked 44), for example, civil society is vibrant and young people can participate in promoting their values and policy agendas with little fear of government intervention. The country also performs well in terms of promoting skills training for young women and providing leadership training skills, in addition to efforts to make structural improvements to enhance the ability of youth to enjoy their rights.[15]

The lowest scoring 20 countries are shown in **Table 2**. Unlike the majority of European countries at the top, those ranked at the bottom span several continents, demonstrating that youth exclusion is not associated with a singular region, but is a much larger, global phenomenon.

All of the countries ranked at the bottom of the GYPI are authoritarian states, highlighting the challenges that the global spread of autocracy poses for youth participation. In these contexts, room for participation is extremely limited and young people face significant repercussions for participation in Elections, Civic Spaces and Political Affairs, including physical violence. Countries such as Myanmar (133), Tajikistan (137) and Nicaragua (136) all suffer from oppressive governments where freedom of expression is extremely limited. In other places, such as Cuba (123), Venezuela (125) and Somalia (140), political rights such as the ability to participate in free and fair elections, or to engage in civic mobilisation without suffering fear and intimidation are denied.

Table 2. Bottom 20 Ranking Countries, Overall GYPI

Rank	Country	Score
122	Ethiopia	47
123	Cuba	46
124	Cambodia	46
125	Venezuela	45
126	Mozambique	45
127	Mali	45
128	Iran	44
129	Guinea	44
130	Egypt	44
131	Mauritania	42
132	Burundi	41
133	Myanmar	41
134	Sudan	40
135	Cameroon	39
136	Nicaragua	39
137	Tajikistan	38
138	Chad	35
139	South Sudan	35
140	Somalia	32
141	Afghanistan	14

All of the countries ranked at the bottom of the GYPI are authoritarian states, highlighting the challenges that the global spread of autocracy poses for youth participation. In these contexts, room for participation is extremely limited and young people face significant repercussions for participation in Elections, Civic Spaces and Political Affairs, including physical violence. Countries such as **Myanmar** (133), **Tajikistan** (137) and **Nicaragua** (136) all suffer from oppressive governments where freedom of expression is extremely limited. In other places, such as **Cuba** (123), **Venezuela** (125) and **Somalia** (140), political rights such as the ability to participate in free and fair elections, or to engage in civic mobilisation without suffering fear and intimidation are denied.

The challenges posed by government repression are not only felt in countries towards the bottom of the GYPI. They also appear in several middle-ranking countries, including those in and around Europe. In **Belarus** (106/141), for example, young people are not only challenged by limited political rights, but the country's historically strong civil society organisations have been severely repressed in recent years. Similar challenges are also faced by young people in **Hungary** (51/141), where the Civic Space dimension score is low as voices critical of the government have been systematically targeted and civil liberties constrained.

Despite these challenges, young people across these countries still strive to fully participate and promote more democratic inclusion. Venezuelan youth exemplify this point. In this country, young people work together to promote electoral participation, raise awareness about government oppression and human rights violations, and combat digital autocracy – including government-led internet censorship – by creating alternative information channels.[16] These young people demonstrate that while countries may rank low in the GYPI, young people are actively working to change their realities, refusing to be silenced.

"We live in a world where decisions that shape our present and future are often made without our voices. Yet young people are not apathetic: ***they participate, organise, mobilise, and create new ways of engaging with politics, often outside traditional channels****… Bringing youth into decision-making processes strengthens democracy, improves public policy, and expands what is possible."*

María Virginia Paglia, Argentina, GYPI Youth Panel

The overall GYPI scores therefore reveal a concerning pattern. While some countries perform well when it comes to youth participation, most feature several significant barriers to the full realisation of young people's political, civic and economic rights. From low representation in political institutions to repressive regimes that stifle alternative avenues for engagement, youth participation in Political Affairs, Civic Space and Elections is unduly constrained.

Despite these challenges, **young people around the world remain steadfast in their fight for their rights**. In Bangladesh, Serbia and Turkey, youth are leading the way in demanding more effective, accountable and clean government, often risking their own personal safety to attend and lead the mass demonstrations that have been identified as a critical element of democratic resistance in an era of autocratisation[17]. Efforts to enhance young people's participation should therefore be careful not to fall into the trap of blaming young people for their own exclusion, or imagining that they are apathetic and disengaged. The reality is very different –young people must overcome remarkably high hurdles to engage in the political, civic and economic life of their countries, and the most effective way to increase participation is to remove these barriers. Rather than solely focusing on youth as the future, oung people's contributions, empowerment, and demands for their rights need to be heard *today*.

> *"We are often told that the youth are the leaders of our future. **We believe otherwise.** We are here, right now. The youth can lead today, and for some of us with the platforms to do so, the youth are leading today."*
>
> **Dexter Yang, Philippines, GYPI Youth Panel**

Table 3. Highest and Lowest GYPI scores for each dimension

Dimension	Highest	Lowest	Average
Political Affairs	76	2	51
Elections	84	16	54
Civic Space	94	17	62
Socio-Economic	98	21	77
Overall	84	14	61

4.2. A Review of the Dimensions

The overall GYPI score for each country is the average of the four dimensions of the GYPI. Going beyond this headline figure to take a deeper look at each of the individual dimensions – Socio-Economic, Political Affairs, Civic Space, and Elections reveals further nuances – not least because countries that perform well on one dimension do not always score highly on the others. **Table 3** lists the highest, lowest, and average scores across the four dimensions. Here we see that young people face significant challenges across all dimensions. While scores for the Socio-Economic dimension tend to be higher at 76 out of 100, the figures for the Political Affairs (51), Civic Space (62), and Elections (54) dimensions are considerably lower.

The **Political Affairs dimension**, which focuses on formal avenues of political inclusion such as young people's presence in political parties and legislatures and the presence of a comprehensive National Youth Policy, scores the lowest of all dimensions. This is indicative of the global underrepresentation of young people in political institutions which results from exclusionary structures that limit when and in which positions young people can be formally represented. **Table 4** provides an overview of the top and bottom 10 countries in terms of Political Affairs, along with their score and the category they occupy in terms of their overall GYPI score.

Table 4. Higher and Lowest scores for Political Affairs

Rank	Country	Score	Category
1	Norway	76	Very High
2	Germany	71	Very High
3	Malta	70	Very High
4	New Zealand	70	Very High
5	Luxembourg	69	Very High
6	Sweden	69	Very High
7	Belgium	68	Very High
8	Finland	68	Very High
9	Latvia	67	Very High
10	Slovenia	67	Very High
132	Lebanon	31	Medium
133	Chad	31	Low
134	Cameroon	30	Low
135	Cambodia	29	Low
136	Somalia	29	Low
137	Tajikistan	29	Low
138	South Sudan	28	Low
139	Iraq	20	Low
140	Nicaragua	20	Low
141	Afghanistan	2	Low

We measure youth representation in the national legislature by calculating the share of young people in parliament as a proportion of the young adults of voting age. A score of 100 would mean that there is the same proportion of young people in the legislature as in the population. The average score for this indicator across the entire GYPI sample is just 12. The highest score, achieved by Norway, is just 65. As indicated above, even among countries that rank in the top ten for the overall GYPI, the access of young people to formal leadership positions remains limited. For example, **Luxembourg** (15), **Belgium** (17), and **New Zealand** (18) all record low scores, despite being in the top ten countries overall. Among the bottom 10 countries, six of ten score 0, and four have extremely limited representation (South Sudan (4), **Chad** (5), **Lebanon** (7), and **Somalia** (8)). This reflects the added barriers young people can face in securing political representation in gerontocratic societies.[18]

There are numerous factors that contribute to the under-representation of young people in Political Affairs. Institutionally, young people are often impeded by high candidate age requirements; the considerable financial costs involved in being selected by a political party and then running a campaign; and electoral systems that rarely make it easy to register.[19] Culturally, youth are often viewed as "leaders in the making," which leads to ageist discriminatory practices that disregard their knowledge and experience, and often to being told they need to "wait their turn". Yet, youth's time is today – they are already citizens and members of society: their inclusion in the highest decision-making bodies is imperative to advancing youth participation in all other dimensions.

"Young politicians, leaders & decision-makers should not be seen as a novelty, an exception, or a surprise; ***octogenarian Heads of States should.***"

Daniel Ekomo-Soignet. Central African Republic, GYPI Youth Panel

Movements like the #NotTooYoungToRun campaign in **Nigeria** (102/141) show how powerful popular mobilisation by young people can open up new opportunities for youth representation.[20] An intergenerational movement that spanned urban and rural areas, #NotTooYoungToRun lobbied legislators, built coalitions within civil society, ran a highly effective online campaign, and drafted a formal amendment bill to lower the minimum age threshold for elected office. The ultimate victory of the campaign, against great odds, reduced the age threshold for election to the country's House of Representatives from 30 to 25 years old.[21]

Other campaigns have been less successful. In **Italy** (85/141), youth demands to lower candidate age requirements have been less successful, with young people feeling that those with the power to change the law are not willing to listen to their concerns.[22] Cross-national learning from successful campaigns such as #NotTooYoungToRun, while building a global network to bring an end to age discrimination, can further strengthen youth voices in countries where they continue to be ignored by those in power. Achieving change now is particularly important given the especially **low levels of trust in political parties**, which is very low even in some established democracies such as the United Kingdom (15/100) and Spain (11/100).

Table 5. Top and Bottom 10 Ranking Countries, Elections Dimension

Rank	Country	Score	Category
1	Ecuador	84	High
2	New Zealand	83	Very High
3	Denmark	82	Very High
4	Australia	79	Very High
5	Netherlands	78	Very High
6	Iceland	77	Very High
7	Timor-Leste	75	High
8	Norway	75	Very High
9	Germany	74	Very High
10	Canada	74	Very High
132	Russia	33	Low
133	Cambodia	33	Low
134	Burundi	31	Low
135	Singapore	29	Medium
136	Cuba	29	Low
137	Vietnam	27	Medium
138	China	26	Low
139	Somalia	21	Low
140	Afghanistan	18	Low
141	Cameroon	16	Low

*"To me, the most critical aspect of youth participation is the **power to influence decision-making processes—not just being heard, but being taken seriously.** Beyond tokenistic inclusion, it's about giving young people access to resources, spaces, and information that allow them to co-create solutions. This is especially vital in contexts like the Sahel, where youth face compounded challenges but remain key drivers of innovation and resilience."*

René Edouard Mendis, Senegal, GYPI Youth Panel

A closely related dimension to Political Affairs is **Elections**, which captures how easy it is for young people to register and vote, how likely they are to participate, and the extent to which a credible electoral process means that voters can choose who governs them. **Table 5** illustrates the top and bottom ten countries on the Elections dimension. The average score for this dimension is 54, only slightly higher than Political Affairs (51), reflecting a broader picture of youth disempowerment in formal political arenas.

The countries that rank most highly on the Elections dimension are more diverse in terms of geographical location and other characteristics than for the other three dimensions. While countries that fall in the Very High GYPI category are highly represented, **Ecuador** (ranked 1 on this dimension) and **Timor-Leste** (7) demonstrate high levels of youth participation in elections. Similarly, **Singapore** (135) and **Vietnam** (137) are ranked Medium in the overall GYPI categories, but score much lower here, both falling in the bottom ten countries. These different patterns highlight the value of breaking the overall GYPI score down into dimensions, and of recognising the distinctive participation landscapes faced by young people around the world.

Youth participation in elections remains a significant challenge across many countries. The average score on this indicator, which is based on the proportion of young people who say they regularly vote in elections,[23] is just 40 across the full GYPI sample. While the highest score of 84 Youth participation in elections remains a significant challenge across many countries. The average score on this indicator, which is based on the proportion of young people who say they regularly vote in elections,[24] is just 40 across the full GYPI sample. While the highest score of 84 in **Ecuador** is impressive, many countries score much lower, including **Burundi** (10), **Chile** (18), **Ethiopia** (19) and **Lithuania** (11). While there are many factors that contribute to young people's participation in elections – accessibility, ease of voting procedures, and a sense that casting a ballot can make a difference are particularly important considerations. In **Ecuador**, the typically low levels of electoral registration among young people (because they have had less time to meet the often cumbersome requirements, in terms of the documentation required, and where they must be presented) are overcome through a system of automatic registration. Because all Ecuadorian citizens are automatically registered to vote when they turn 16, based on information from the civil registry, eligible voters do not need to apply or register separately to vote.[25] Young people have access to national civic education campaigns, as well as frequent voter education programmes. Similar initiatives and provisions also exist in countries such as New Zealand, Timor-Leste, and Sweden, but remain comparatively rare elsewhere.

*"Youth participation remains untapped and every effort must be put in place to target, **engage and harness the youth's potential to change the world.**"*

Daisi Omokungbe, Nigeria, GYPI Youth Panel

The **Civic Space** dimension captures the ability of young people to engage with others, participate in civic life, and engage in debates and demonstrations outside of more 'formal' or 'traditional' political spaces. **Table 6** shows the highest and lowest ranking countries for the Civic Space dimension. The average score of 62 masks considerable variation, with a high score of 94 (**New Zealand**) and a low score of just 16 (**Afghanistan**).

Table 6. Top and Bottom 10 Ranking Countries, Civic Space Dimension

Rank	Country	Score	Category
1	New Zealand	94	Very High
2	Malta	92	Very High
3	Norway	91	Very High
4	Netherlands	90	Very High
5	Finland	89	Very High
6	Spain	88	Very High
7	Canada	88	Very High
8	United Kingdom	88	Very High
9	Sweden	87	Very High
10	United States	87	Very High
132	Uganda	32	Low
133	Iran	32	Low
134	Cuba	31	Low
135	Nicaragua	28	Low
136	South Sudan	27	Low
137	Burundi	27	Low
138	Chad	25	Low
139	Myanmar	22	Low
140	Tajikistan	19	Low
141	Afghanistan	17	Low

While the list of the top 10 countries in Table 6 features many countries that perform well across the GYPI, there are also some countries that do better when it comes to Civic Space than on some other dimensions. In **Uruguay** (21), for example, youth increasingly take on leadership roles, particularly in civic spaces around climate change, community development, and democratic dialogue.[26] This helps to explain the country's high score when it comes to Civic Space, boosted by high scores for internet freedom, right to assembly, and access to online governance.

There are also countries that perform less well on this dimension than their overall GYPI score would suggest. In **Japan** (ranked 24 on this dimension), for example, young people have access to strong civil society organisations, enjoy the right to assemble, and generally face little government censorship. Despite this, young people face barriers to their full participation, including a lack of engagement on social media from political elites, and limited acceptance of young people from sexual minorities.[26]

Even more challenging are contexts where civil society groups and internet freedoms are constrained by authoritarian governments, as is the case in several of the lowest ranking countries. In **Burundi** (137), young people have limited access to the internet, tight constraints are imposed on civil society groups, and both media and social media suffer from censorship and the threat of internet shutdowns. This, in turn, creates the conditions under which disinformation can thrive, creating further challenges to youth civic engagement.

Despite this, young people in Burundi – as in many of the other areas outlined in this report – continue to demand the recognition of their rights. Through a range of innovative media formats, youth-led organisations have addressed issues like governance, human rights, and social cohesion – in some cases leading to important policy changes. Yaga Burundi, for example, is the country's largest blogging community "working on active citizenship, freedom of the press and democracy" and in the process creating an "alternative civic space in a challenging media environment".[27]

Table 7. Top and Bottom 10 Ranking Countries, Socio-Economic Dimension

Rank	Country	Score	Category
1	Japan	98	Very High
2	Norway	95	Very High
3	Singapore	95	Medium
4	Switzerland	95	Very High
5	Slovenia	95	Very High
6	Czechia	94	High
7	Germany	94	Very High
8	Malta	94	Very High
9	Iceland	94	Very High
10	Denmark	94	Very High
132	Guinea	56	Low
133	Iraq	56	Low
134	Burkina Faso	56	Low
135	Sudan	51	Low
136	Chad	50	Low
137	Mozambique	48	Low
138	Mauritania	46	Low
139	Somalia	44	Low
140	South Sudan	44	Low
141	Afghanistan	21	Low

*"**Youth participation is the backbone of civic engagement**, open democracy, and sustainable future, specifically for Pakistan where around 60% of the youth is under 30, and they can play their constructive role in peace."*

Fizza Mehak Batool, Pakistan, GYPI Youth Panel

The highest-scoring dimension in the GYPI is Socio-Economic participation. Here, countries have an average score of 77, with a high score of 98 (**Japan**) and a low score of 21 (**Afghanistan**). **Table 7** highlights the top and bottom ranking countries on the Socio-Economic dimension. Although scores on this dimension are generally higher, there are some interesting variations. **Singapore**, for example, is placed in the Medium category in terms of its overall GYPI score, but ranks third on Socio-Economic participation. The **Czechia** also scores far better on this dimension, ranking sixth, than it does overall. The performance of these countries is driven by similar factors to others in the top ten, namely low levels of youth unemployment and access to quality education.

Access to effective education and training declines rapidly, however, as we move down the rankings. In other contexts, for example, high unemployment and low-quality education generate few opportunities for young people to gain skills or become economically independent. For women, these challenges may be exacerbated by patriarchal social norms and early marriage. Of the countries ranked towards the bottom of the Socio-Economic dimension, all feature high rates of unemployment for women, and early marriage is a significant concern in **Afghanistan**, **Burkina Faso**, **Chad**, **Mauritania**, **Mozambique**, **Somalia**, **South Sudan**, and **Sudan**. Despite laws that set the marriage age to 18, for example, Mozambique has the highest rates of child marriage globally.[28]

The additional barriers to young women's participation in these contexts highlight the intersectional challenges that young people around the world face in obtaining their political, civic and economic rights. While many countries score highly in the Socio-Economic dimension, too many young people around the world continue to struggle to obtain employment and to see a viable future for themselves and their families. Much more therefore needs to be done – by those in power and by civil society groups, working collectively with young people and their organisations – in order to strengthen the voices of young people and enable them to co-create the solutions to their own exclusion.

"What struck me most in the GYPI findings is the disparity between political rhetoric and actual youth inclusion. Some countries score relatively high in civic engagement but remain low in political participation – highlighting a clear gap between mobilising youth and integrating them into decision-making spaces. It also surprised me to see how even modest investments in education and digital access seem to correlate with higher scores across several dimensions. ***This reinforces the need for holistic, multisectoral approaches to youth participation."***

René Edouard Mendis, Senegal,
GYPI Youth Panel

Room for improvement

In summary, this report has identified several areas in **need of improvement** across all four dimensions. The variables for which countries most often receive low scores on the GYPI include: Access to Online Governance, Educational Quality, and the Accessibility of the Voting Process — core foundations that shape how easily young people can engage with institutions. Similarly, limited Access to State Jobs, particularly for young women and youth from lower economic backgrounds, continues to restrict opportunities for inclusion in economic, and hence public, life. Scores are also low in many countries for the Acceptance of Gay and Lesbian Youth, reflecting broader patterns of exclusion based on identity. In the political sphere, shortcomings in the Representation of Young People in the Legislature, the Extent of Free and Fair Elections, and the adoption of formal mechanisms such as Youth Quotas and Youth Party Associations (i.e. wings or sections), indicate a widespread failure to incorporate youth perspectives in decision-making processes. There are also very low levels of **trust in political parties**, with an average score of just 23, which speaks to just how alienated many young people feel from formal political processes. Clearly, it is time for action.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS: TOWARDS GREATER YOUTH PARTICIPATION

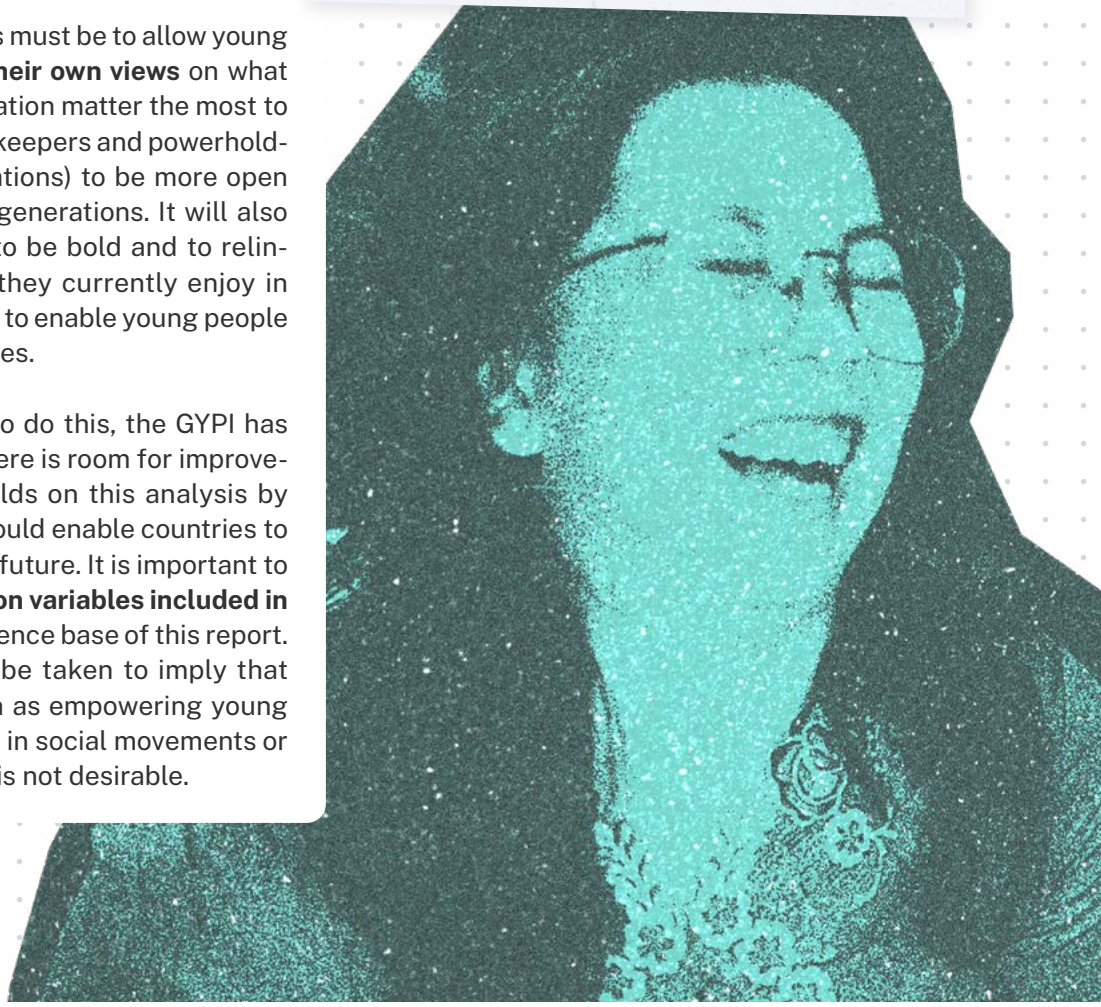
Young people are often said to be the future of the political, social and economic life of their countries, but they are also the present. They are also an increasing proportion of the world's population, making up the majority of citizens in over 50 countries, and two-thirds of society in many states in sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, the Middle East and parts of Latin America. Despite this, young people continue to be excluded across all four dimensions of participation captured by the GYPI around the world. No country has any room for complacency where youth participation is concerned: significant **obstacles exist to fully realising youth participation in every state included in this study**. By highlighting the many barriers to youth participation, the findings of the GYPI represent a powerful call for action. Much more needs to be done, and urgently, to remove the challenges facing young people so they can fully enjoy their rights and participate in the creation of their own future.

The first step in this process must be to allow young people to **freely express their own views** on what areas and forms of participation matter the most to them. This will require gatekeepers and powerholders (mostly in older generations) to be more open to engaging with younger generations. It will also need older powerholders to be bold and to relinquish some of the power they currently enjoy in decision-making processes to enable young people to identify their own priorities.

To support young people to do this, the GYPI has identified areas in which there is room for improvement, and this section builds on this analysis by identifying changes that would enable countries to score higher on the GYPI in future. It is important to note that the **focus here is on variables included in the GYPI**, as that is the evidence base of this report. This emphasis should not be taken to imply that reform in other areas, such as empowering young people to better participate in social movements or within civil society groups, is not desirable.

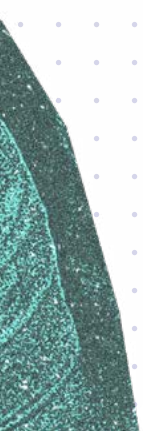
*"The GYPI report, if brought to the attention of government authorities and key decision-makers through advocacy, would propel fresh efforts to create more opportunities for young people - **through education, capacity building, improved funding for youth projects, and policies to engender youth leadership** - which will lead to the empowerment and improvement of young people's economic, political, and technological capacity for national development"*

Daisi Omokungbe, Nigeria,
The GYPI Youth Panel



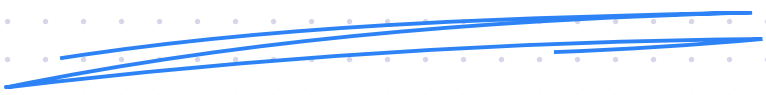
→ **Socio-Economic barriers.** On average, the Socio-Economic dimension scores the highest (77 out of 100) of the four, but there is still considerable scope for improvement. Primary school completion rates remain low in countries such as Benin and Burkina Faso. Moreover, some countries score well on enrolment and completion but deliver poor-quality education, including Azerbaijan, Brazil and India, which is why Educational Quality scores just 54 out of 100 across the whole sample. It is therefore critically important that more resources are invested to widen access to education and training, thereby boosting their quality and reducing the NEET rate. Improving GYPI Socio-Economic scores will also require addressing non-financial challenges, such as poor-quality teaching, outdated curricula, and the additional challenges that early marriage and restrictive gender norms can represent for girls and young women. Reducing socio-economic barriers could also be achieved via intergenerational co-creation (for example, in civic education programmes) to foster civic agency and participation among young people, while building a shared understanding of civic engagement.[29] Securing improvements on this dimension is especially important as young people regularly identify a lack of access to education and training as one of the **greatest barriers** they face due to the spillover effect this can have on their ability to participate in the Civic Space, Political Affairs and Elections.

→ **Civic Space barriers.** The low and moderate scores of countries on the Civic Space dimension highlight the significant challenges that young people face in participating in national conversations and making their voices heard both offline and online. The average GYPI score of 62 out of 100 masks several countries, such as Belarus, Chad and Myanmar, in which civil society repression and constraints on online participation – including both limited access to the internet and internet censorship or surveillance – severely constrain the space for youth activism and engagement. GYPI scores will not improve in these countries until basic civil liberties are respected, notably freedom of expression. The greatest gains will be achieved if there are simultaneous improvements both off- and online, and research shows that this can be self-reinforcing. On the one hand, participation in local communities (offline) can lead to participation online and a wider commitment to engagement locally, nationally and globally.[30] Conversely, participation in digital civic activities, especially via online tools for engagement, can drive greater offline engagement (for example, boosting trust in political parties, encouraging young people to run for office).[31] Therefore, young people's online participation should not be dismissed as superficial or irrelevant, and it is important not to see offline and online activity as being inherently in competition. Important lessons about how to foster more inclusive online spaces can be learned from countries such as Armenia, the Netherlands and New Zealand, which see high levels of internet access, low levels of censorship, and regular efforts by political leaders to engage with youth digitally. This is especially significant for young people, many of whom enjoy participating online and have come to see unfettered internet access as a **basic human right**.



→ **Political Affairs barriers.** As the lowest scoring dimension within the GYPI (51 out of 100), the disappointing levels of participation in Political Affairs are perhaps the strongest evidence of the extent to which outmoded political institutions are limiting youth engagement in mainstream politics. Ten countries still lack a comprehensive National Youth Policy, including several states with particularly youthful populations. Beyond this, many countries lack a quota to ensure youth representation in decision-making bodies, have limited inclusion of young people within political parties, and impose minimum age requirements for parliamentarians that effectively lock out young representatives from being elected. There is also considerable variation in the accessibility of government information and services online. All this contributes to the levels of trust in political parties, including in comparatively democratic countries, such as Argentina, Canada, Greece and South Korea. There are several practical steps that can be taken to address this, including removing overly restrictive age limits to elected positions and ensuring the representation of young party members on the local and national executives of political parties. Introducing youth quotas for decision-making bodies can also help, but only if young people's views are genuinely taken into account so this does not appear tokenistic. Establishing "youth-proofing" procedures to ensure that policies do not discriminate on the basis of age can help to make sure that new regulations and legislation do not add to the problem, while introducing and committing to Open Government Initiatives to increase transparency, accountability, and citizen participation in government more broadly.

→ **Electoral participation barriers.** Levels of youth participation in elections are disappointingly low, with an average score of just 54/100, even in some countries where young people are highly engaged in Political Affairs and Civic Space. This often reflects a combination of limited investment in and commitment to mechanisms that would make it easier for young people to get on the electoral register and to vote, as well as poor-quality electoral processes, which together discourage or prevent young people from casting ballots. In Russia, for example, early, proxy and postal voting is not possible and elections are routinely manipulated, which partly explains why only a minority of young people have participated in elections. Improving GYPI scores on this dimension will require adopting measures such as introducing automatic voter registration, investing in more effective voter education campaigns, reducing limits on the voting age,[32] while empowering electoral commissions to deliver credible polls. Countries such as Ecuador and Timor-Leste have already implemented some of these measures and there is no reason that other countries, especially more democratic and wealthy ones, cannot do the same. Making these improvements is especially valuable as they will have positive effects both now and in the future. Research shows that voting is habit forming, and when someone starts to vote when they are young, they are much more likely to continue to do so as they get older.[33] This in turn, can result in more electorally-engaged citizens, higher electoral turnout, more legitimate governments and more democracy. Creating more inclusive, user-friendly and trustworthy electoral procedures and fostering higher turnout rates among young people would also make it clear that youth are not to blame for the 'crisis of democracy.'



In this way, the four dimensions of the GYPI highlight the importance of taking a coherent and joined-up approach to enhancing youth participation. Recent research has shown, for example, that the adoption of youth quotas alone is not sufficient to boost youth political participation, or improve relations between young people and the government.[34] If young people perceive that the introduction of a youth quota in the legislature is designed to deflect demands for more far-reaching transformation, for example, it may increase rather than reduce their sense of alienation.[35] Similarly, a growing body of research demonstrates that overcoming ageism to expand young people's access to decision-making spaces requires sustained investment in skills and education, the development of enduring opportunities for **intergenerational interaction** within formal politics, and the strengthening of generational ties in civic spaces to promote greater mutual understanding and respect.[36] It is therefore critical that young people and their allies adopt a **holistic approach** rather than only focusing on one area or one dimension.

The GYPI also demonstrates the importance of looking at youth participation through an intersectional lens. Even in some of the countries that perform well overall, women and members of the LGBTQI+ community face considerable and unacceptable barriers, as do young people from ethnic and religious minorities and those living with disabilities.[37] In Armenia, for example, as well as in a number of countries such as Cuba, Indonesia and Malawi, a very low proportion of young people say that where they live is a good place to be gay or lesbian. Meanwhile, most countries – including those that are electoral democracies – perform poorly when it comes to the representation of disadvantaged groups within the legislature. Many countries also perform badly when it comes to the ability of women to access state jobs, with states such as Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, and the Solomon Islands scoring below 40 out of 100 on this measure. More, therefore, needs to be done to challenge discriminatory and exclusionary social norms such as misogyny, racism, homophobia and transphobia and to **protect the human rights of all youth**. A good place to start would be for all countries to fully ratify and domesticate international human rights treaties, agreements and conventions, such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), as well as other regionally based standards such as the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.[38] Increasing youth participation will be a hollow victory if it leaves behind those young people who have historically been most excluded from their societies and political systems.

Finally, the GYPI highlights the **power and importance of data**. Quantifying participation and ranking countries shines a powerful spotlight on the barriers facing young people, and the different forms that these can take across the world. Now that the GYPI exists, young people and organisations that represent them can use it to identify the ways in which their countries are lagging behind regional and global standards, and hence strengthen their campaigns for reform. It will therefore be important to extend the GYPI, investing in collecting new data that does not currently exist. This includes the extent of young people's everyday engagement in social movements, the proportion of young people engaging in political debate and discussions online, and the number of young people engaged with community groups and organisations.

It also means expanding the GYPI to include places where low-levels of economic development, conflict, and/or repression mean that insufficient data was available for the current round. This is particularly important, because in its contexts such as Djibouti, Haiti, and Palestine – all missing from GYPI 2025 – that young people face the most extreme forms of exclusion. With further investment, and more comprehensive data, the next iteration of the GYPI can provide even more insights into the extent of youth participation around the world, and the barriers that still need to be overcome.

ANNEX A: **OVERALL GYPI SCORES AND RANKINGS FOR 141 COUNTRIES**

Rank	Country	Score	Category
1	Norway	84	Very High
2	New Zealand	84	Very High
3	Germany	81	Very High
4	Denmark	80	Very High
5	Sweden	80	Very High
6	Netherlands	80	Very High
7	Finland	80	Very High
8	Canada	79	Very High
9	Australia	79	Very High
10	Switzerland	78	Very High
11	United Kingdom	78	Very High
12	Iceland	78	Very High
13	Malta	77	Very High
14	Austria	77	Very High
15	Luxembourg	76	Very High
16	Spain	76	Very High
17	South Korea	76	Very High
18	Ireland	75	Very High
19	Estonia	75	Very High
20	Slovenia	75	Very High
21	Latvia	75	Very High
22	Portugal	75	Very High
23	France	75	Very High
24	Belgium	74	Very High
25	Uruguay	74	Very High
26	Japan	74	Very High

27	Israel	73	Very High
28	United States	72	Very High
29	Italy	72	Very High
30	Costa Rica	72	Very High
31	Croatia	72	Very High
32	Cyprus	72	Very High
33	Greece	71	Very High
34	Lithuania	71	High
35	Czechia (Czechia)	71	High
36	Seychelles	71	High
37	Poland	71	High
38	Ecuador	71	High
39	Argentina	70	High
40	Brazil	69	High
41	Trinidad and Tobago	69	High
42	Slovakia	69	High
43	Bulgaria	69	High
44	Timor-Leste	68	High
45	Chile	68	High
46	Montenegro	68	High
47	Moldova	67	High
48	Jamaica	67	High
49	Mauritius	67	High
50	Ghana	66	High
51	Hungary	66	High
52	Indonesia	66	High
53	Romania	65	High
54	Armenia	65	High
55	Philippines	65	High
56	Albania	65	High
57	North Macedonia	64	High
58	Bolivia	64	High

59	Georgia	64	High
60	Fiji	64	High
61	South Africa	64	High
62	Colombia	64	High
63	Bhutan	63	High
64	Namibia	63	High
65	Serbia	63	High
66	Cabo Verde	63	High
67	Malaysia	63	High
68	Bosnia and Herzegovina	63	High
69	Peru	63	High
70	Sri Lanka	62	High
71	Ukraine	62	High
72	Mexico	61	High
73	Sao Tome and Principe	61	Medium
74	Botswana	60	Medium
75	Singapore	60	Medium
76	Thailand	60	Medium
77	Zambia	60	Medium
78	Sierra Leone	60	Medium
79	Solomon Islands	59	Medium
80	Kenya	59	Medium
81	India	59	Medium
82	Nepal	59	Medium
83	Paraguay	59	Medium
84	Maldives	58	Medium
85	The Gambia	58	Medium
86	Senegal	57	Medium
87	Lesotho	56	Medium
88	Benin	56	Medium
89	Tanzania	56	Medium
90	Togo	56	Medium

91	El Salvador	56	Medium
92	Jordan	55	Medium
93	Kazakhstan	55	Medium
94	Guatemala	55	Medium
95	Turkiye	55	Medium
96	Malawi	55	Medium
97	Kyrgyzstan	54	Medium
98	Algeria	54	Medium
99	Vietnam	53	Medium
100	Zimbabwe	53	Medium
101	Morocco	53	Medium
102	Tunisia	53	Medium
103	Papua New Guinea	53	Medium
104	Lebanon	52	Medium
105	Liberia	52	Low
106	Belarus	52	Low
107	Russia	52	Low
108	Niger	51	Low
109	Bangladesh	51	Low
110	Rwanda	51	Low
111	Nigeria	51	Low
112	Angola	50	Low
113	Cote d'Ivoire	50	Low
114	Burkina Faso	50	Low
115	China	49	Low
116	Democratic Republic of Congo	49	Low
117	Uganda	49	Low
118	Pakistan	48	Low
119	Iraq	48	Low
120	Madagascar	48	Low
121	Azerbaijan	48	Low
122	Ethiopia	47	Low

123	Cuba	46	Low
124	Cambodia	46	Low
125	Venezuela	45	Low
126	Mozambique	45	Low
127	Mali	45	Low
128	Iran	44	Low
129	Guinea	44	Low
130	Egypt	44	Low
131	Mauritania	42	Low
132	Burundi	41	Low
133	Myanmar	41	Low
134	Sudan	40	Low
135	Cameroon	39	Low
136	Nicaragua	39	Low
137	Tajikistan	38	Low
138	Chad	35	Low
139	South Sudan	35	Low
140	Somalia	32	Low
141	Afghanistan	14	Low

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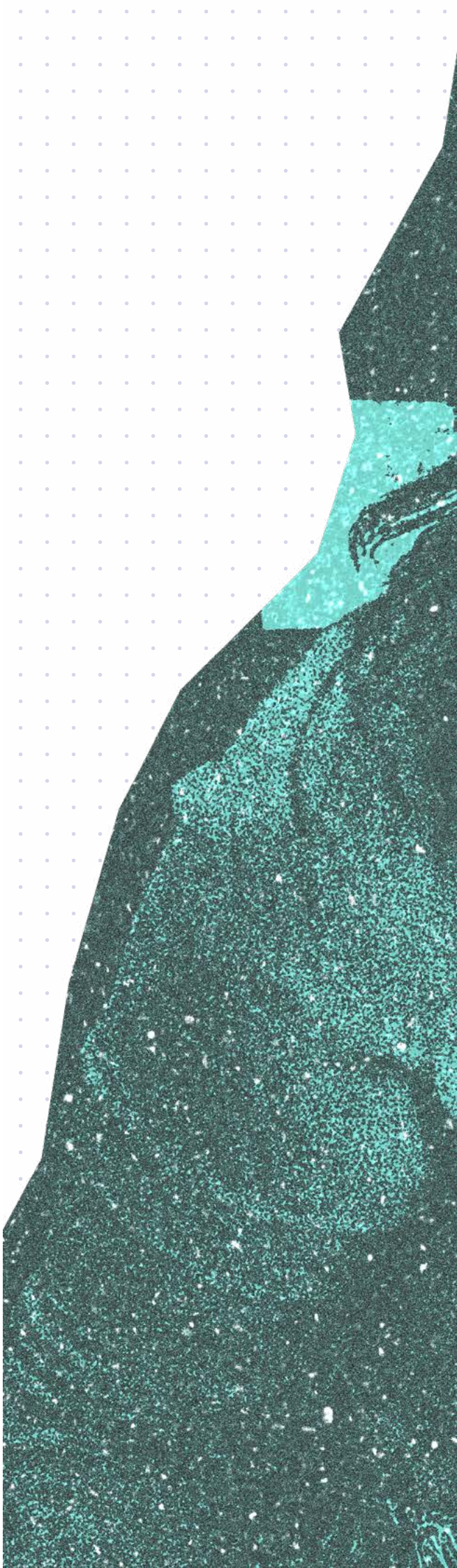

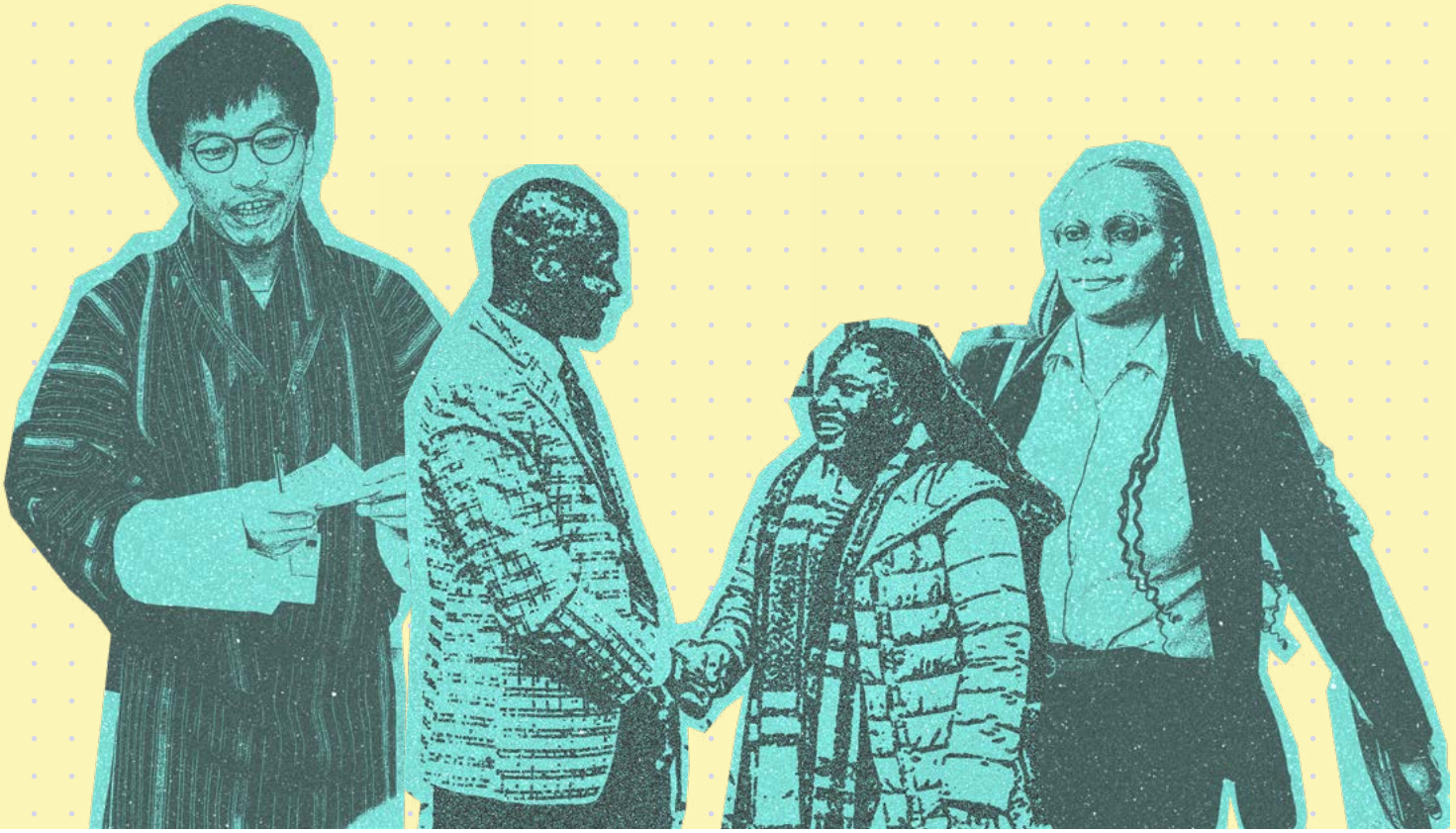

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