



Co-funded by
the European Union

Youth4Values

Democratic Participation and Civic Engagement
for young people in the Balkans through

ERASMUS-YOUTH-2024-CB

Youth Participation and Democracy Survey Results and Expert Analysis

[MOJO DE CAÑA - Spain](#)

1. Introduction

Mojo de Caña Association has conducted an anonymous questionnaire aimed at young people aged 15 to 30 from across the country as a preliminary activity of the YOUTH4VALUES Project, funded by the European Union. This project aims to improve democratic governance and active citizenship among young people in Greece, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Spain through civic education workshops and local activities.

The project focuses on strengthening the connection between democracy and human rights, promoting the inclusion and political participation of young people, and facilitating the creation of platforms for young people to interact, debate, and engage with decision-makers.

This questionnaire aimed to understand young people by focusing on how they actively participate in citizenship, politics, and democratic values. We wanted to know what motivates them, what opportunities they have, and what obstacles they face. The idea is that this analysis will serve to initiate conversations and deepen research and dialogue on youth digital activism and civic engagement.

You can see the results of the questionnaire below.

If you want to know more about this project, visit our IG @Youth4Values or our website www.mojodecaña.org/youth4values

2. Online Survey Results

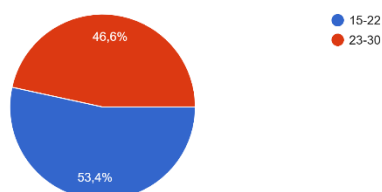
TOTAL ANSWERS: 249

Age Group

23-30 years: 46.6%

15-22 years: 53.4%

1. Grupo de edad
249 respuestas



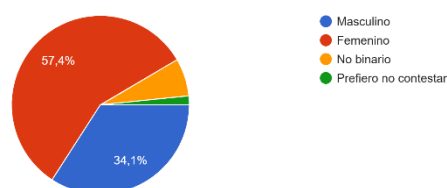
Gender

Female: 57.4%

Male: 35%

Non-binary: 6.8%

2. Género
249 respuestas



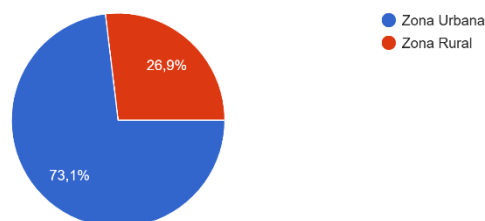
3. Vivo en

249 respuestas

Residence

Urban Area: 73%

Rural Area: 27%



4. Nivel Educativo:

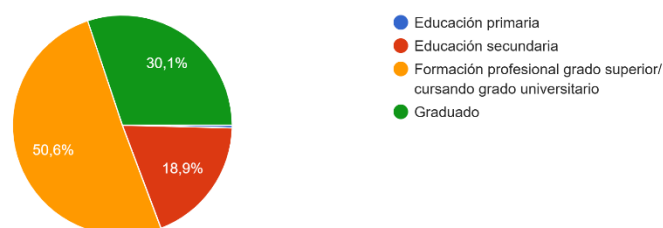
249 respuestas

Educational Level

Graduate: 30%

Higher vocational training/attending university: 50%

Secondary education: 18%



Main Occupation

Studying: 55%

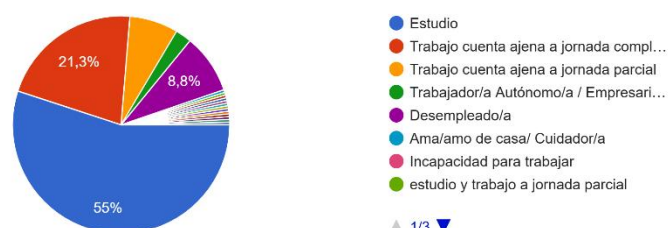
Full-time employment: 21%

Unemployed: 8%

Part-time employment: 10%

5. Principal ocupación (Actualmente yo)

249 respuestas



Interest in Political and Social Developments

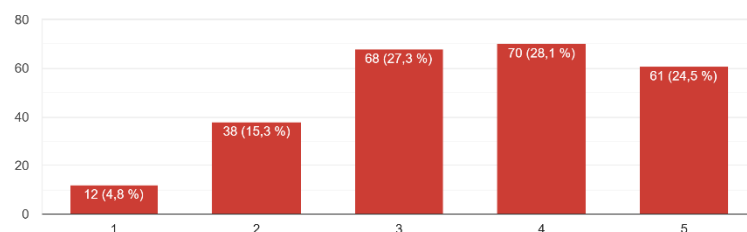
High: 52.6%

Moderate: 27.3%

Low: 20.1%

6. ¿Cómo calificarías tu interés en los desarrollos políticos y sociales de tu país?

249 respuestas



Participation in Civic Initiatives

Yes: 72%

No: 28%

8. ¿Qué tan a menudo votas en las elecciones (locales o nacionales)?

249 respuestas

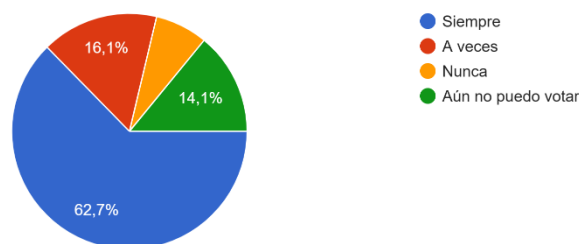
Voting Frequency

Always: 62.7%

Sometimes: 16.1%

Never: 7.1%

Cannot vote yet: 14.1%



9. ¿Cuánto crees que las personas jóvenes influyen en la toma de decisiones en tu comunidad?

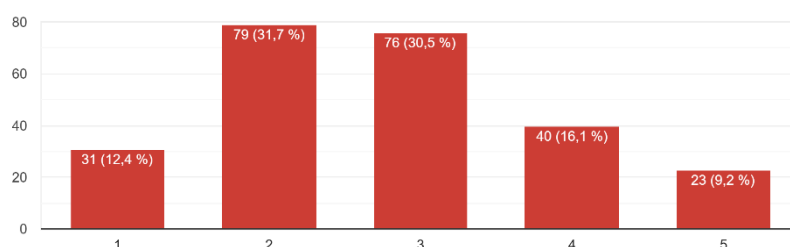
249 respuestas

Influence of Young People in Decision-Making

High: 25.3%

Moderate: 30.5%

Low: 44.1%



Opinion on Democracy

Yes, democracy is the best form of government: 78%

No, democracy is not the best form of government: 20%

Don't know: 2%

Challenges for Youth Political Participation

Distrust in politicians and political institutions: 65%

Lack of representation of young people in decision-making bodies: 50%

Apathy or lack of interest in politics: 40%

Overwhelming focus on economic survival: 30%

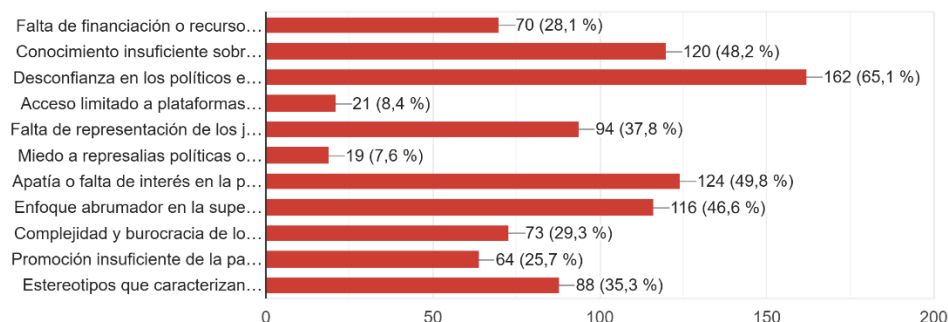
Complexity and bureaucracy of political systems: 20%

Insufficient promotion of youth participation: 20%

Stereotypes characterizing young people as incapable of participating or making serious decisions: 10%

11. ¿Cuáles son los mayores desafíos que enfrentan los jóvenes en tu país en términos de participación política? (elige hasta 3)

249 respuestas



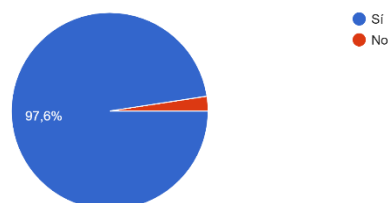
Education on Civic Rights and Responsibilities

Yes: 97.6%

No: 2.4%

12. ¿Crees que la educación sobre derechos y responsabilidades cívicas debería formar parte de la educación formal?

249 respuestas



Familiarity with European Union Values

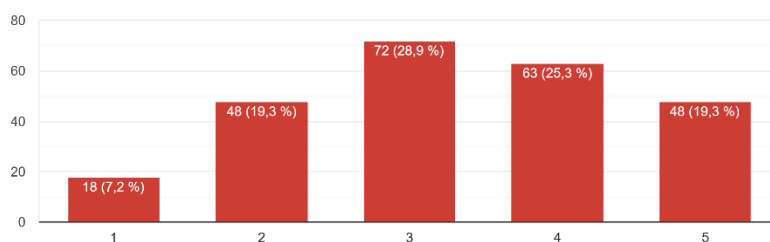
Very familiar: 44.6%

Moderately familiar: 28.9%

Little familiar: 26.5%

13. ¿Qué tan familiarizado estás con los valores de la Unión Europea, como el estado de derecho, los derechos humanos y las libertades?

249 respuestas



Evaluation of Institutional Transparency

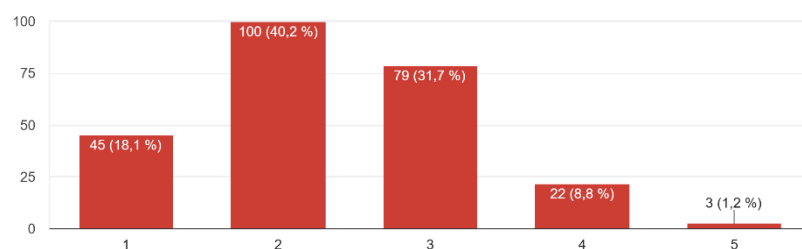
High: 9.6%

Moderate: 31.7%

Low: 58.3%

14. ¿Cómo evaluarías la transparencia de las instituciones en tu país?

249 respuestas



Motivations for Greater Democratic Participation

Offer economic incentives or scholarships for civic engagement: 50%

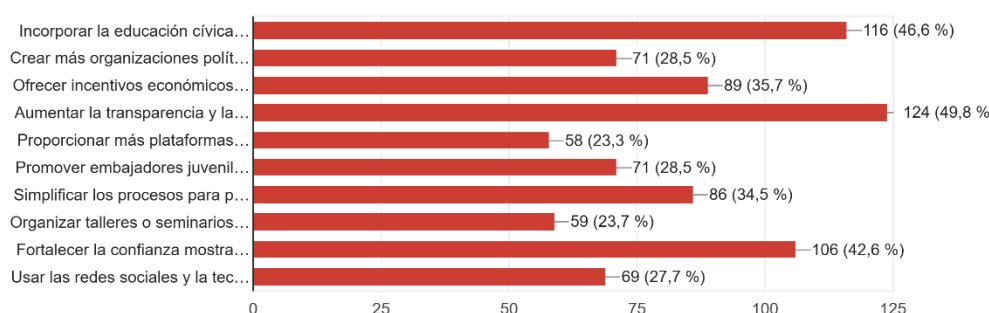
Increase transparency and accountability in governance: 40%

Promote youth ambassadors or representatives in political institutions: 30%

Organize workshops or seminars on political rights and responsibilities: 20%

15. ¿Qué te motivaría a involucrarte más en los procesos democráticos? (elige hasta 3)

249 respuestas



Trends in Open Responses

The open responses show a general trend of *distrust in politicians and political institutions*, as well as a *perception of a lack of representation of young people in decision-making bodies*. Many respondents mention the *need to increase transparency and accountability in governance*, as well as the importance of *incorporating civic education into school curricula*. There is also a highlighted need to offer economic incentives and create more youth-focused political organizations to foster greater democratic participation.

The analysis of the "Youth4Values ES" questionnaire reveals that most respondents are young people aged 23 to 30, predominantly female and residing in urban areas. Most have a graduate level of education or are pursuing vocational training, and their main occupations are studying or being unemployed. A high percentage show interest in the political and social developments of their country, and many have participated in civic initiatives, especially in demonstrations related to equality and rights. However, the general perception is that young people have low influence in decision-making in their communities.

Regarding democracy, most respondents believe it is the best form of government, although they criticize its current implementation. The main challenges for youth political participation include distrust in politicians, lack of representation, and apathy. To increase democratic participation, respondents suggest offering economic incentives, increasing transparency, and promoting youth ambassadors. Additionally, most agree that education on civic rights and responsibilities should be part of formal education, although they perceive low transparency in their country's institutions.

3. Results of Expert Interviews

As part of the same survey, and to obtain a broader view of the results, various experts in the field of youth and civic participation from our organization, as well as from national entities and institutions, were invited.

Through a semi-structured interview, we sought to obtain their views on the results and/or opinions of the young people who completed the survey.

Among the interviewed experts, we find:

- Domingo Airam Perez Santana. Mojo de Caña Association. Facilitator, European Projects Manager, and SALTO Trainer in Youth Participation.
- Jana Pajic. Mojo de Caña Association. Trainer of international projects for the Spanish and French National Youth Agencies.
- Mikel Albandoz. Mojo de Caña Association. Social Educator and Mediator of Participatory and Community Processes.
- Carmen Padilla. Directorate General of Youth of the Government of the Canary Islands. Youth Information Technician, Participation, and Delegate of the Spanish National Agency for European Youth Programs in the Canary Islands.
- Aurora Parrilla. Las Palmas de Gran Canaria City Council. Youth Technician.
- Javier Cosío. Gran Canaria Island Council. Youth Worker, Youth Information, and European Projects.
- Miguel Angel Hernandez. La Palma Island Council. Sociocultural Animator, Youth Area.
- Andrés Pris. Autonomous Agent Madrid. Facilitator of Community Programs.
- María Posadas. SocialCoop Cooperative. Basque Country. Technician of Participatory Programs.

The most common or notable responses obtained were:

- **What do the survey results suggest to you in general?**
 - Perceives more interest and participation than expected, although highlights that the perception of young people in their environment is of disinterest in politics and a tendency towards the far-right.
 - Young people demand more information about political participation processes.
 - Believes the survey has primarily reached youth who already have certain values, but that work on these values, especially democratic values, must continue.
 - Highlights that participation is balanced in terms of age and gender, with high interest in political and social developments, and a perception that democracy is the best form of government.

- **Is there any data in the survey that caught your attention? Which one? Why?**
 - The interest shown in politics, voting percentages, perceived capacity to influence the community, and familiarity with EU values.
 - Concern that more than half of the respondents distrust politicians.
 - Highlights the coherence in responses about the lack of transparency and political disengagement of youth.
 - Young people distrust politicians, which poses an obstacle to political participation.
- **What do you think as a youth work professional about the participation of young people in democratic processes in your local/national reality?**
 - It is essential to promote youth participation to combat political disengagement and individualism.
 - There is a great distance between politicians and young people, which has generated distrust in democracy.
 - It is urgent to work on democratic values and human rights with youth.
 - Youth participation in democratic processes is necessary to bring new perspectives and solutions to social challenges.
- **How do you think youth participation in democratic processes could be improved?**
 - Promote real participation and critical thinking.
 - Work on values such as tolerance and environmental care.
 - Review the democratic representation system.
 - Educate all generations in democratic participation.
 - Talk more about history.
 - Promote dialogue spaces between young people and political leaders.
 - Improve curricular content related to human rights and civic responsibilities.

The open responses from the semi-structured interview "Youth4Values ES Consulta expertos" reveal several significant trends in the perception and participation of young people in democratic processes. A prominent trend is the widespread distrust in politicians and political institutions. The interviewees point out that this distrust is a significant obstacle to youth participation, as many young people do not trust the people who represent them and make decisions on their behalf. This distrust also extends to the perception of democracy, with some young people questioning its effectiveness due to the lack of transparency and representation.

Another important trend is the perception of a lack of representation of young people in democratic processes. The interviewees mention that young people often feel excluded from decision-making

processes, which contributes to their political disengagement. This lack of representation is exacerbated by the perception that young people do not have significant influence in their community, further demotivating their participation.

Regarding the proposed solutions to improve youth participation, the interviewees suggest several strategies. One of the most mentioned is the need to foster real participation and critical thinking among young people. This includes promoting values such as tolerance, environmental care, and care for others, which are seen as essential to counteract the individualism and extreme liberalism currently prevalent among youth.

Additionally, the importance of improving civic education is highlighted. The interviewees propose introducing and enhancing curricular content related to human rights and civic responsibilities in formal education. They also suggest leveraging the testimonies of generations who lived through dictatorship and repression to raise awareness among young people about the importance of democracy and human rights.

Another proposed solution is the creation of more spaces for dialogue and participation for young people. This includes promoting meeting spaces between young people and political leaders, as well as enhancing platforms and channels for participation on the Internet and social networks. The interviewees also suggest reviewing the democratic representation system and exploring direct decision-making systems in areas where possible.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the analysis of the results from the semi-structured interview "Youth4Values ES Consulta expertos" shows that, although there is significant interest in political and social developments among young people, there are several obstacles that hinder their active participation in democratic processes. Distrust in politicians and the lack of representation are the main challenges identified. To overcome these obstacles, it is essential to foster real and critical youth participation, improve civic education, and create more spaces for dialogue and participation. By addressing these challenges, greater youth involvement in democracy can be promoted, ensuring that their voices are heard and valued in political decision-making.