

Topic Global Youth Participation Index

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Key Takeaways Background

Youth participation is essential for inclusive democracy, yet young people continue to face systemic barriers in civic, political, and economic life. The Global Youth Participation Index (GYPI) is the first global attempt to systematically measure youth participation across 141 countries. This session introduced the GYPI, its methodology, key findings, and how it can serve as an advocacy tool for civil society and young leaders.

Understanding the GYPI and Its Dimensions

Definition: The GYPI is a composite index that measures youth participation in four key dimensions:

- *Socio-Economic*: Access to education, employment opportunities, and economic participation.
- *Civic Space*: Ability of young people to engage socially and politically, both online and offline.
- *Political Affairs*: Youth participation in legislatures, political parties, and state institutions.
- *Elections*: Opportunities and barriers to youth voting and standing for office.

Impact: The GYPI challenges myths about youth apathy, revealing instead structural exclusion. Its data provide evidence for advocacy, highlight disparities across regions, and push for reforms that expand meaningful youth participation.

→ Key Insight: Youth disengagement is not a personal failure but the result of systemic barriers that must be dismantled.

Real-World Findings:

- Average global GYPI score: 61/100, showing widespread barriers despite pockets of progress.
- Lowest-scoring dimension: Political Affairs (51/100), reflecting restrictive age limits, weak youth representation, and limited party engagement with youth.
- Case comparison: Colombia vs. South Africa (both scored 64 overall) – but Colombia lags in Political Affairs due to age restrictions for candidates and weaker youth party structures, while South Africa performs better with more open access.

Tools for change

- GYPI Data: A resource for CSOs, governments, academics and youth advocates to design evidence-based reforms.
- Policy Levers Identified:
 - Lowering age barriers for candidacy
 - Automatic voter registration
 - Ensuring affordable internet access
 - Strengthening youth quotas and representation in parties
 - Expanding access for marginalized groups (women, ethnic minorities, LGBTQ+, youth with disabilities)

Other resources

Additional Reading

- GYPI website: <https://gypi.epd.eu>
- [GYPI report](#)