

Youth:

a pending
subject

Studies on
Youth in
Latin America and
the Caribbean



SUMMARY OF REGIONAL AND NATIONAL FINDINGS

14 COUNTRIES

NOVEMBER, 2025

FRIEDRICH
EBERT
STIFTUNG

DEMOCRACY AND
HUMAN RIGHTS

14 COUNTRIES

SUMMARY OF REGIONAL AND NATIONAL FINDINGS

FRIEDRICH
EBERT 
STIFTUNG

CONTENT



PRESENTATION	
About Youth: A pending subject	6
INTRODUCTION	
	8
METHODOLOGY	
	10
SUMMARY OF THE REGIONAL REPORT	
	13
SUMMARY OF THE REGIONAL REPORT	
"Participation and Representation in Dispute: Youth and Democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean"	14
SUMMARY OF THE COUNTRIES	
	19
ARGENTINA	
"Youth in Argentina: Between disillusionment and hope". How Argentine youth think and act politically	20
BOLIVIA	
"Exploring contrasts: democracy through the eyes of Bolivian youth". Discontent and demands of young people toward Bolivia's Political System	23
BRAZIL	
Brazilian youth and the Democratic challenge. Findings from the study: "Youth: a pending subject"	27
CHILE	
"Youth, politics, and democracy in Chile: a conversation for change." Youth tensions and challenges in the democratic system	31
COLOMBIA	
"Because tomorrow will be beautiful": a portrait of a critical and hopeful youth in Colombia	35
COSTA RICA	
"Youth in Costa Rica between democracy and authoritarianism": tensions and democratic challenges of Costa Rican youth	39

ECUADOR	
Political participation of Youth in Ecuador: between fear, precarity, and inequality	43
HONDURAS	
Honduran youth: between dissatisfaction with the present and hope for the future	48
MEXICO	
Mexican youth question politics and call for more inclusive forms of participation	52
PANAMA	
Neither indifferent nor conformist: Panamanian youth facing the democratic challenge	55
PERU	
Youth in Peru: distant from traditional politics but driven by the need for transformation	59
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	
Neither indifferent nor naïve: Dominican youth and the democratic challenge	62
URUGUAY	
Between the democratic ideal and political exclusion: what Uruguayan youth think	66
VENEZUELA	
Venezuelan youth: between precariousness and democratic hope	70
REFERENCES	74

PRESENTATION

ABOUT YOUTH: A PENDING SUBJECT

Geopolitical shifts and multiple crises are complicating governance and putting pressure on democracies around the world—and Latin America is no exception. The region faces growing uncertainty, deep structural socioeconomic inequalities, security challenges linked to organized crime, increasing dissatisfaction with state institutions, and the rise of political projects with authoritarian tendencies. Young people have been disproportionately affected by these changes. Historically, they have played a fundamental role in the continent’s political history, standing at the center of democratic transformations, the defense of environmental and territorial rights, and the feminist, labor, and social struggles that have shaped the region.

Despite their protagonism in major movements and mobilizations, youth representation in decision-making spaces remains limited. Political institutions have been unable to channel their demands or establish effective intergenerational dialogue and public policies that respond to their needs. Traditional arenas of political representation, such as political parties and trade unions, struggle today to attract young people and therefore to represent their interests or include their ideas in programmatic agendas. This situation widens the gap between decision-making spaces and youth mobilizations and fuels frustration with state institutions and the functioning of democracy. Strengthening an intergenerational perspective within our understanding of democracy is, therefore, both an urgent and strategic task.

The regional research project *Youth: A pending subject* seeks to contribute to this mission. Developed by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) across fourteen Latin American countries, it brings together the voices of more than twenty thousand young peo-

ple and offers a systematic perspective on the relationship between youth, participation, and political thinking. Its distinctive value lies in integrating dimensions that are often treated separately —values, political practices, and perceptions of the state— through a participatory methodology developed in collaboration with subject-matter specialists, youth actors, and various FES offices in the region. The regional approach provides rigorous empirical knowledge and makes it possible to identify both shared patterns and national specificities.

However, data are not an end in themselves but a starting point for political dialogue. The comparative findings among countries make it possible to identify representation gaps, understand new forms of youth participation, and design political strategies capable of reconnecting with the concerns, aspirations, and experiences of this generation. Thus, this study serves as a political tool that strengthens intergenerational debate within political movements, promotes processes of democratic renewal, and inspires the development of public policies that harness the knowledge and creativity of this vital segment of our societies.

In this sense, *Youth: A pending subject* is part of FES’s long-standing commitment to social justice, equality, and democratic renewal. Understanding what young people think, how they live, what they fight for, and what they expect from politics and the state allows us to detect social change trends and identify alternative paths to address the complex challenges of today’s societies. In a context marked by disillusionment with democratic institutions, listening, gathering data, and engaging in joint reflection with young people represent ways to rebuild bridges between institutions and citizens, and between politics and everyday life. The study’s

results invite political parties, trade unions, social movements, academia, and governments to consider the new forms of political participation emerging among youth and to chart new paths toward policies grounded in social justice, gender equality, and human dignity.

With this document summarizing the most significant findings of the research project, we hope to

contribute to a broader dialogue —within the region and beyond— on youth political participation and the ongoing renewal of our democratic institutions, ensuring that democratic instruments rise to meet the challenges we face. May young people become central interlocutors in building a fairer and more democratic tomorrow.



Tina Hennecken Andrade
Representative, FES Ecuador

INTRODUCTION

Latin America and the Caribbean is one of the youngest and most unequal regions in the world. Within it live young people between the ages of 15 and 35, navigating a decisive period of personal, educational, professional, and political exploration, often within contexts marked by structural inequalities, democratic transitions, and multiple crises. Over the past decades, these generations have taken a leading role in the region’s major political, social, and cultural activism—from student and feminist movements to environmental, territorial, and digital protests.

The project “*Youth: A pending subject*,” implemented by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES), seeks to understand these transformations and provide empirical evidence on the political attitudes, values, and forms of participation of contemporary youth. Between January and February 2024, a survey was conducted with nearly 22,000 young people across fourteen countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, using web panels managed by YouGov. The study offers nationally representative data and a regional comparative analysis across four main dimensions: living conditions, perceptions of democracy, values and ideological orientations, and forms of political participation and collective action.

Based on the collected data, the project has launched a broad process of analysis, dialogue, and dissemination aimed at strengthening public debate and evidence-based policy-making. The regional report compares results across the fourteen participating countries, while the national reports explore in depth the specific findings of each local context, accompanied by briefs, presentations, and media materials. The website www.juventudesfes.org, available in Spanish, Portuguese, and English, compiles all reports and offers interactive data visualizations to support comparative reading.

The regional findings reveal a generation that values democracy but distrusts its institutions. Between 58% and 73% believe democracy is the best system of government, yet fewer than half are satisfied with how it functions. Labor precariousness, educational gaps, and a lack of opportunities fuel the desire to emigrate—surpassing 50% in several countries— and deepen a sense of social discontent that, nonetheless, does not translate into apathy. On the contrary, young people are engaging in new forms of participation, both digitally and within their communities, and align themselves with causes related to social justice, gender equality, and environmental protection.

The national reports presented in this document broaden and localize these trends, offering a diverse and complex picture. In Argentina, youth combine institutional disillusionment with a strong expectation for change. In Bolivia and Honduras, dissatisfaction with democracy coexists with a belief that voting remains a valid tool for national transformation. In Brazil, Chile, and Peru, the study reveals critical and heterogeneous generations oscillating between progressive values and conservative leanings. In Ecuador, fear and insecurity reshape public life, while in Colombia, Panama, and the Dominican Republic, youth maintain democratic hopes in the context of institutional disappointment. In Uruguay, confidence in the welfare state remains strong, and in Venezuela, the aspiration for democratic reconstruction persists in the face of precarious conditions. These national summaries highlight both the region’s common denominators—inequality, institutional distrust, labor precarity, and migration aspirations— and the local nuances that shape distinct generational experiences.

This document therefore presents a synthesis of the findings from the regional and national reports,

prepared in coordination with FES offices in each country and with the participation of researchers specializing in youth, democracy, and public policy. Its goal is to offer a comparative and up-to-date perspective on youth in Latin America and the Caribbean, contributing to public debate and inspiring strategies that expand political representation and social justice.

Latin American youth is not a disengaged generation, but a key political actor in contention. Their critical perspective, new forms of organization, and steadfast commitment to democracy represent an opportunity to rethink the region's future and renew its institutions with a focus on equality, dignity, and participation.

Anabel Bilbao García
Project Coordinator



METHODOLOGY

The study “Youth: A pending subject” analyzes patterns and trends in the political attitudes and values of young people across the region through a mixed-methods approach based on surveys and statistical data analysis. The primary data collection tool was a survey on political participation and youth, conducted between January and February 2024 (following a brief pilot in early December 2023 to ensure proper programming and infrastructure) across 14 countries.

The questionnaire was developed in collaboration with FES offices in Latin America and the Caribbean, a group of experts from various surveyed countries, and young people linked to political and social organizations in the region. It was subsequently validated with the survey firm responsible for administering the instrument. The questionnaire consists of a core set of 65 questions common to all countries, along with 2 to 5 country-specific questions addressing national issues.



The survey instrument includes questions aimed at exploring various dimensions of youth experiences:

- a) living conditions of young people;
- b) perspectives on politics and major national issues;
- c) views on democracy and positions on key political causes;
- d) forms and motivations for political participation;
- e) time use, technology use, and access to information.

The survey was administered online through web panels. YouGov, an international online research and public opinion analysis company, was in charge of implementation. With a global presence, YouGov is one of the world’s largest research networks and has gained recognition as a pioneer in digital studies and a trusted source of information and data. Over the past two decades, YouGov has built a carefully selected global panel of survey participants, including respondents from various Latin American countries. These panels are characterized by high participation rates and detailed demographic information, enabling more precise and methodologically robust research.

In countries without proprietary panels, YouGov partnered with established sample providers, applying rigorous quality control measures equivalent to those used in its own panels. Surveys were conducted exclusively in digital format using an active sampling approach, which prioritizes sample quality over volume. This method restricted participation to individuals who met predefined eligibility criteria, thereby helping ensure sample representativeness.

Combined with statistical weighting techniques, this approach strengthened the inferential validity of the findings.

All respondents provided informed consent. For participants aged 15 to 17, parental consent was obtained before starting the survey. It is important to note that questions related to education and employment for this age group were answered by their legal guardians due to sampling requirements. The survey was administered in Spanish throughout the region, except in Brazil, where it was conducted in Portuguese.

The sampling framework includes variables such as gender, age groups, geographic region of residence, type of area (urban, suburban, or rural), education, employment status, and attention to news consumption. Additionally, social class analysis was constructed based on the ESOMAR socioeconomic classification model, which considers the educational and occupational background of household heads and purely economic variables such as income and asset ownership.

The sample was built using stratified sampling in each country, based on the LAPOP AmericasBarometer (2021). Selection within each stratum was carried out using weighted sampling with replacement. The weights vary by country (see Table No. 1). The margin of error (with a 95% confidence interval) for a sample proportion p based on the subset sample is calculated using the following formula:

$$\hat{p} + 100 \times \sqrt{\frac{1 + CV^2}{n}}$$

Where:

CV refers to the coefficient of variation of the sample weights.

n is the sample size used to calculate the proportion.

This is a measure of sampling error (the average of all estimates obtained using the same sample selection and weighting procedures repeatedly). The sample estimate is expected to deviate from its expected value by less than the margin of error in 95 percent of all samples. It does not reflect non-sampling errors, including possible selection bias in panel participation or in response to a specific survey.

One of the main goals of this study was to generate nationally representative data for each participating country so that it could be used in policy design, research, and advocacy efforts. The survey does not aim to provide aggregated regional representativeness; rather, it is constructed based on independent national samples. The results allow for cross-country comparisons and offer a comparative view of youth in Latin America and the Caribbean.

At the regional level, a total of 21,847 surveys were conducted, ranging from 1,100 to 2,024 per country. Table No. 1 presents the number of surveys conducted in each country and the corresponding margin of error.



TABLE N.º 1. SURVEYS CONDUCTED BY COUNTRY AND CORRESPONDING MARGIN OF ERROR

Argentina (n = 2 007, moe: ± 2.5)	Costa Rica (n = 1 149, moe: ± 4.4)	Peru (n = 2 001, moe: ± 3.2)
Bolivia (n = 1 103, moe: ± 4.4)	Ecuador (n = 2 004, moe: ± 3.2)	Dominican Republic (n = 1 132, moe: ± 4.7)
Brazil (n = 2 024, moe: ± 2.5)	Honduras (n = 1 100, moe: ± 4.7)	Uruguay (n = 1 108, moe: ±3.8)
Chile (n = 2 002, moe: ±2.7)	Mexico (n = 2 001, moe: ±3.0)	Venezuela (n = 1 103, moe: ± 3.8)
Colombia (n = 2 004, moe: ± 2.8)	Panama (n = 1 109, moe: ±3.9)	

The analysis presented in this comparative report offers both a descriptive and analytical interpretation of the survey results. Throughout the sections of this document, variables are disaggregated by population groups defined according to gender, age, and social class, with the aim of identifying patterns, contrasts, and significant inequalities among different segments of the youth population.

Gender is considered in binary terms (male and female), since the only recorded non-conforming identity —non-binary— was selected by a very small number of respondents, insufficient to form a distinct analytical category. The survey covers young people aged 15 to 35. However, recognizing that within this broad age range there are diverse experiences, trajectories, and conditions, the sample was segmented into three age groups: 15 to 17 years, 18 to 26 years, and 27 to 35 years. This

division allows for a better understanding of the different life stages, particularly regarding schooling, labor market entry, and political participation.

Regarding socioeconomic classification, as previously mentioned, the ESOMAR socioeconomic level model was used. For the purposes of this report, the five levels defined by this methodology (A, B, C, D, and E) were grouped into three broad categories: upper class (AB), middle class (C), and lower class (DE). This grouping responds to the need to simplify the analysis and facilitate cross-country comparisons, given that broad categories allow general trends to be identified without losing explanatory power. Furthermore, the use of this methodology, which is widely adopted in public opinion studies in Latin America, helps to harmonize the data and support a regional reading of social inequalities.



SUMMARY OF THE REGIONAL REPORT

ANABEL BILBAO G. (COORD.), MELINA VÁZQUEZ, FRANKLIN RAMÍREZ,
ELISA GUARANÁ DE CASTRO, ÓSCAR AGUILERA, MARIANA LICEA
Y CAMILA RODRÍGUEZ.

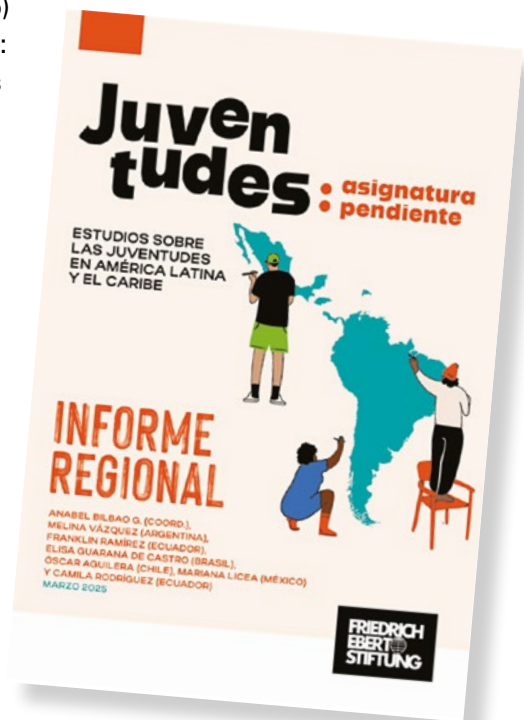
SUMMARY OF THE REGIONAL REPORT

“PARTICIPATION AND REPRESENTATION IN DISPUTE: YOUTH AND DEMOCRACY IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN”

The first section of the report, authored by Mariana Licea (Mexico) and Camila Rodríguez (Ecuador), begins with a key question: *How are young people living today?* While this generation has greater access to secondary education, university enrollment remains heavily conditioned by social class: only between 2% and 10% of young people aged 18 to 35 from working-class sectors manage to complete higher education.

In the labor sphere, in nine of the fourteen surveyed countries, fewer than 50% of young people aged 18 to 35 have access to jobs that include all legal benefits. Inequalities are more pronounced for women, rural youth, and low-income groups, who also face a significant burden of unpaid domestic work.

This translates into an alarming trend: between 35% and 62% of young people in the region express a desire to migrate. The main reasons are the pursuit of new experiences (over 50% in 9 out of 14 countries) and the economic crisis (over 50% in 6 out of the 14 countries).



Key data

- In the region, between 14% and 42% of young people aged 18 to 35 have stable employment.
- Between 29% and 57% of young people aged 18 to 35 are unemployed.
- The trend indicates that more than 50% of youth in the surveyed countries are satisfied with their personal lives; however, in five countries (Argentina, Ecuador, Honduras, Venezuela, and Peru), more than 60% are dissatisfied with the general situation of their country.

DEMOCRACY, POLITICS AND MAIN NATIONAL PROBLEMS. DEMOCRATIC PERCEPTIONS AND INSTITUTIONAL TENSIONS

The second section of the report, prepared by Óscar Aguilera (Chile), focuses on young people's perceptions of democracy, its institutions, and the functioning of the political system in the region. The results reveal a significant tension: although between 58% and 73% of young people claim that democracy is preferable to any other form of government, fewer than half (40%) express satisfaction with its current functioning—except in Uruguay, where the figure reaches 52%. This data reflects widespread dissatisfaction with democratic systems that fail to effectively respond to social demands or ensure genuine spaces for participation.

Distrust toward political parties exceeds 50% in the majority of surveyed countries (10 out of 14), paving the way for the appeal of strong leadership figures as an apparent solution to crisis. This inclination toward authoritarian alternatives does not necessarily represent a rejection of democratic values, but should instead be read as a sign of frustration with institutions that fail to channel youth expectations appropriately. In contrast, universities remain among the most legitimate and trusted institutions among young people.



Key data

- The surveyed youth identified poverty, drugs, insecurity, and corruption as the most serious problems in their countries, each with concern levels ranging between 30% and 50%.
- Their top public policy demands are employment, social welfare, and security; these are considered the most urgent priorities for the design and implementation of public policies, with priority levels also ranging between 30% and 50%.

VALUES, CAUSES, AND DEMOCRACY FROM A YOUTH PERSPECTIVE. PERCEPTIONS OF SOCIETY, VALUES, AND POLITICAL AGENDAS THAT MOBILIZE YOUTH IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

The third section of the report, developed by Elisa Guaraná de Castro (Brazil), focuses on the ideological positions and political values of youth in Latin America and the Caribbean. Far from being a uniform group, young people in the region express a marked heterogeneity shaped by tensions between progressive and conservative discourses; support for expanded rights and the persistence of traditional values coexist within this group.

The majority of surveyed youth strongly support public education and healthcare, as well as an active role of the State in guaranteeing rights. However, conservative positions emerge on issues such as abortion, same-sex marriage, and family models, with notable differences based on gender, social class, and country.

Young women, in general, show greater alignment with progressive values and agendas related to gender rights and diversity, while men tend to hold

more traditional views. These variations demonstrate that classic left-right frameworks are insufficient to explain the ideological map of today's youth. Instead, a new political landscape emerges—one shaped by cultural disputes, demands for social justice, and growing criticism of current systems of political representation.

Disaffection with democracy does not necessarily imply its rejection. Although the majority believe democracy is the best form of government, between 13% (Uruguay) and 72% (Venezuela) report dissatisfaction with how it functions. This paradox is explained by a combination of factors: weakened political parties, disillusionment with traditional politics, precarious living conditions, and the rise of discourses promoting authoritarian solutions in response to crisis.

At the same time, topics such as territorial autonomy for Indigenous peoples and environmental protection enjoy high levels of approval. This reflects a critical political consciousness and a strong connection to social justice agendas developed over the last decade by youth movements, collectives, and organizations.

Key data

- There is strong support for public policies that guarantee healthcare, education, freedom of sexual orientation, gender identity, and a life free from violence.
- More than 65% support the right of Indigenous peoples and ethnic communities to exercise autonomy over their territories.
- Between 41% and 60% believe that women are more suited than men for professions related to caregiving, especially in countries such as Brazil, Panama, Ecuador, and Bolivia. In Uruguay and Argentina, this statement received less support (41%), but in all countries, caregiving continues to be strongly perceived as a feminized role—even in professional settings.

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION: BETWEEN DISENCHANTMENT AND COLLECTIVE ACTION

Participation and its practices

The fourth and final section of the report, prepared by Melina Vázquez (Argentina) and Franklin Ramírez Gallegos (Ecuador), analyzes how young people engage politically, both within and outside institutional channels. In a context marked by distrust toward political parties, institutions, and traditional organizations, young people deploy a wide range of political actions that include voting, digital activism, protests, cultural interventions, and activity on social media.

Although formal affiliation with political parties and connection to social organizations does not exceed 20% in any of the countries surveyed, young people express a willingness to get involved in an organization if they had more information on how to do so. This finding suggests that low participation rates are not necessarily a sign of apathy, but rather the result of barriers related to access, representation, time, or the lack of appropriate channels.

Despite institutional skepticism, voting remains highly valued: between 51% and 74% of young people believe it continues to be a valid tool to transform reality. This is reflected in the high levels of electoral participation observed in countries like Ecuador, Chile, Argentina, Peru, and Brazil, where over 80% of young people aged 18 to 35 reported having voted in the most recent elections.

Beyond conventional mechanisms, youth activism takes multiple forms: marches, protests, artistic interventions, digital campaigns, and neighborhood organizing are all spaces where political action is expressed by those who do not feel represented by institutions. These non-traditional forms not only hold legitimacy among youth, but also pose a direct challenge to classical models of participation.

Finally, political interest appears linked to social class: middle and upper-middle-class sectors show relatively higher levels of interest than lower-income groups, as they are more likely to regularly follow political events. However, even in contexts of democratic disaffection, between 9% and 23% of youth report discussing politics occasionally or frequently.

Key data

- Between 34% and 50% express a desire to participate in political organizations, even if they are not currently involved.
- Youth aged 18 to 35 in Ecuador, Chile, Argentina, Peru, and Brazil lead in electoral participation, with turnout rates exceeding 80%; the lowest rates are recorded in Venezuela (46%) and Panama (50%).
- Between 8% and 33% of youth have participated in marches or protests over the past year; Panamá and Chile stand out for this form of engagement.
- Although trust in labor unions is low (only 5% to 17% report high trust), between 25% and 36% of young people feel the need for more information about unionism and labor rights, and would be willing to join if better informed.
- Distrust extends not only to political parties, the legislative branch, the presidency, and social media influencers, but also to institutions such as the police and the church. Only universities continue to maintain a high level of public trust.

Taken as whole, these data constitute a strategic tool for rethinking the present and future of democracies in Latin America from a generational perspective. Beyond merely being heard, youth must be recognized as fundamental actors in the

construction of transformative political agendas—capable of renewing institutions, expanding the boundaries of participation, and strengthening processes of social justice across the region.

To download the
FULL REPORT in Spanish,
scan the QR code.



[HTTPS://JUVENTUDESASIGNATURAPENDIENTE.COM/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2025/06/INFORME_REGIONAL-1.PDF](https://juventudesasignaturapendiente.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/informe_regional-1.pdf)



SUMMARY OF THE COUNTRIES

ARGENTINA - BOLIVIA - BRAZIL - CHILE - COLOMBIA - COSTA RICA
ECUADOR - HONDURAS - MEXICO - PANAMA - PERU
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC - URUGUAY - VENEZUELA

ARGENTINA



YOUTH IN ARGENTINA: BETWEEN DISILLUSIONMENT AND HOPE”. HOW ARGENTINE YOUTH THINK AND ACT POLITICALLY

**Melina Vázquez,
Diego Beretta**

This study analyzes perceptions, forms of participation, and political stances of young people in a context marked by deep social and institutional transformations. Far from the stereotype of apathy, the data reveal diverse and unequal modes of engagement, ranging from collective action to everyday gestures with political significance.

At total of 2,007 young people participated in the study in Argentina

PROFILE OF ARGENTINE YOUTH

This is not a homogeneous group: age, gender, class, and geographic location shape very different life experiences. Most live in urban areas (63%), identify as middle class (56%), and recognize themselves as heterosexual (78%), with the presence of diverse orientations and identities. Most are single and live with their families.



Among those aged 18 to 35, access to secondary education is extremely high (96%), but inequality becomes stark at the university level: 43% of upper-class youth graduate, compared to just 4% of those from lower-income backgrounds. These disparities are reflected in the labor market, with 37% reporting being unemployed and actively seeking work—rates that are higher among lower-income groups and those aged 18 to 26. Women face greater job insecurity and spend more hours on unpaid caregiving, deepening gender inequalities.

Nevertheless, optimism about life prevails: 78% believe their lives will improve in the next five years. Most view their educational trajectory positively—especially in public institutions—and report satisfaction with their emotional and social relationships. However, a clear tension persists: 52% express a desire to emigrate, mainly due to the economic crisis.

THE VALUE OF DEMOCRACY

Young people continue to choose democracy, although they question its performance. Only 33% report being satisfied with the system; 41% express ambivalence; and 26% are dissatisfied. Despite their criticisms, 70% consider democracy preferable to any other form of government, with variations based on age and political ideology.

Voting retains strong value: 74% see it as a tool for change—and this figure rises to 79% among those who identify with right-wing ideologies. Nearly 60% favor the idea of a “strong leader” over institutional mechanisms (especially among center-right youth, at 66%), in a context shaped by the rise to power of Javier Milei. Additionally, 43% believe that democracy could function without political parties—reflecting a growing detachment from traditional political actors.

At the institutional level, political parties, churches, and labor unions generate the highest levels of distrust. Universities are the exception, with 45% expressing trust in them. The judiciary is widely

questioned: 58% believe it “never or almost never” guarantees justice.

AGENDAS, VALUES, AND POLITICAL STANCES

The main concerns among youth are poverty, unemployment, and access to rights (64%), followed by insecurity (54%), drug use (36%), and corruption (35%). While issues such as climate change, police violence, or democracy do not top the list, they emerge more clearly when considering the role of the State: 80% believe the State must guarantee free, quality education and healthcare, and 82% consider it responsible for environmental protection.

Policy demands are clear: employment and economic production are top priorities (six out of ten), followed by social policies (45%), security policies (33%) and housing policies (31%). Class or ideological differences have minimal impact on these priorities. Among public policies specifically targeting youth, the most positively rated include Comprehensive Sex Education (66%), the Progresar scholarship program (66%), the Universal Child Allowance (63%), the Emergency Family Income (62%), and youth voting rights (58%).



To summarize, young people combine a rights-based agenda, the pursuit of autonomy, and high expectations for the State as a guarantor, all shaped by tensions that vary across gender, age, and ideology.

A SNAPSHOT OF YOUTH PARTICIPATION

Far from being “depoliticized,” young people express a clear desire to engage—what’s missing are spaces that are more horizontal, inclusive, and genuinely participatory. While 30% report having “some” interest in politics and only 12% express “a lot,” the majority frequently discuss political matters with family (66%) and friends (54%). Only 13% say they never talk about politics, citing disinterest, boredom, or stress.

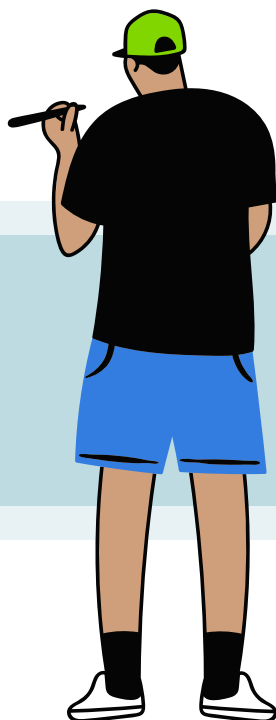
Voting remains a key entry point: 83% of respondents participated in the 2023 presidential elections. Disappointment with political parties is evident—one in three youth do not feel represented by any political force. As of February 2024, La Libertad Avanza held 33% of support, followed by *Unión por la Patria* (10%) and *Juntos por el Cambio* (5%). While only 10% reported having actively participated in a political party, 24% said they would consider doing so in the future —especially during election periods— indicating a form of engagement that is more episodic than sustained.

In terms of organized participation, 62% did not take part in any group or space in the past year. Among those who did, recreational, cultural, and volunteer activities were the most common. Protests continue to be a legitimate outlet for some youth: 12% participated in a demonstration in 2023, driven by injustice, crises, or personal causes.

How can we encourage greater youth participation in politics to save and strengthen democracy? The challenge is not only to understand what young people think or how they vote, but to accompany them in the creation of meaningful spaces for representation, listening, and leadership.

In the face of political disaffection, precarious conditions, and the rise of strong leaderships that channel discontent, democracy faces a historic opportunity: to rebuild its connection with new generations and to open pathways that transform their hope into a driver of collective change.

To download the FULL REPORT in Spanish, scan the QR code.



[HTTPS://JUVENTUDESASIGNATURAPENDIENTE.COM/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2025/10/22388.PDF](https://juventudesasignaturapendiente.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/22388.pdf)

BOLIVIA



“EXPLORING CONTRASTS: DEMOCRACY THROUGH THE EYES OF BOLIVIAN YOUTH”. DISCONTENT AND DEMANDS OF YOUNG PEOPLE TOWARD BOLIVIA’S POLITICAL SYSTEM

Josue Cortez

Despite widespread disappointment with democracy and the direction of the country, Bolivian youth still view voting as a means to transform their reality. Detached from traditional ideological labels, they prioritize causes such as social justice, environmental protection, and gender rights. This report also explores how young people engage with —or distance themselves from— organized spaces of political participation, offering a window into the complex landscape of their aspirations, demands, and frustrations.

1,103 YOUNG PEOPLE
PARTICIPATED IN THE STUDY IN
BOLIVIA.



A YOUTH MARKED BY INSTABILITY AND DEMOCRATIC EROSION

The political transformations of the past two decades have shaped a generation that has grown up in the context of polarization and uncertainty. From the rise of the Movement for Socialism in 2006, the nationalization of gas, and the declaration of Bolivia as a Plurinational State, to institutional crises and internal tensions within the ruling party, young people have witnessed a model that continues to fall short of their expectations. Nonetheless, many still place trust in voting as a tool for change.

URGENT DEMANDS IN THE FACE OF PERSISTENT INEQUALITY

The country's most pressing issues are closely linked to living conditions: poverty, unemployment, and limited access to healthcare and education. These were identified by 61% of surveyed participants. The data aligns with official statistics: 1.4 million young people live in conditions of moderate monetary poverty.

In terms of healthcare, while 62% of respondents have some form of insurance —mostly public— 31% still lack coverage. According to the 2022 Household Survey, access to primary and secondary education is broadly covered. As a result, the central demand has shifted from access to improving the quality of education.

Additionally, 46% view corruption as a critical issue in a country ranked among the most corrupt in Latin America, according to the World Justice Project. Concerns about insecurity, drug trafficking, and the absence of justice are also significant.

In this context, youth priorities are clear: decent employment (54%), collective well-being (43%), and enhanced security (28%). Environmental protection, access to science and technology, and the right to a dignified life also emerge as key aspirations. These demands reflect a strong call to build a more just, inclusive, and future-oriented system.

BETWEEN DEMOCRATIC DISAPPOINTMENT AND THE RISK OF AUTHORITARIANISM

Although 52% of young people express dissatisfaction with democracy, 51% still believe that voting can help solve the country's problems. This apparent contradiction reflects an ambivalent relationship with politics: only 17% report a high level of interest in it. Nonetheless, politics is not a distant topic—85% say they discuss it with family and friends.

Perceptions of political representation are low: just 27% feel their concerns are “mostly or fully” reflected in the political system, while 26% say their concerns are not reflected at all.

This disappointment is also visible in a worrisome openness to authoritarian alternatives. A striking 69% believe a strong leader would solve the country's problems more effectively than political parties or democratic institutions, and nearly half (44%)



say it makes no difference to them whether they live under a democratic regime or not. Despite these figures, a majority (68%) still state that democracy is the best form of government—an encouraging base from which to rebuild young people’s trust in the democratic system.

INSTITUTIONAL DISTRUST: A BARRIER TO DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION

Distrust among Bolivian youth toward institutions is both deep and widespread. Fewer than 10% express high confidence in the branches of government—Executive, Legislative, Judicial, and Electoral—while over 40% report low or no trust in all of them.

Political parties and the police rank as the least trusted institutions: 54% of youth trust them very little or not at all. Even traditionally respected entities, such as universities (25%) and the Church (19%), show low trust levels. The presidency and its cabinet also face skepticism, with half of the surveyed youth expressing distrust.

YOUTH PARTICIPATION: BETWEEN PARTY DISAPPOINTMENT AND NEW FORMS OF ACTIVISM

Between 53% and 59% of young people have neither participated in nor shown interest in engaging in political party activities; only 11% have ever joined a political party. However, one third expresses a willingness to get involved, which represents a valuable opportunity to renew political structures and overcome *caudillismo* (strongman politics/authoritarian leadership).

Young people express interest in engaging in alternative forms of participation, such as volunteering (49%), digital activism (41%), and responsible consumption (36%). In contrast, more confrontational actions like strikes or symbolic occupations are broadly rejected—71% and 69%, respectively, report having neither participated in nor wished to participate in them.

Furthermore, 51% have not been involved in any social organization in the past year. The primary motivations for joining such spaces include learning, socializing, and making constructive use of free time. On the other hand, the main barriers to participation are the perceived lack of tangible benefits, low alignment with personal interests, and limited time availability.



Despite disappointment and distrust, Bolivian youth have not given up on transforming their country. They believe in voting and seek new forms of participation that are more horizontal and aligned with their values.

The challenge for Bolivia is to strengthen genuine channels of participation, rebuild institutional trust, and create spaces where young people can take the lead.

To download the
FULL REPORT in Spanish,
scan the QR code.



[HTTPS://JUVENTUDESASIGNATURAPENDIENTE.COM/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2025/04/21899.PDF](https://juventudesasignaturapendiente.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/21899.pdf)

BRAZIL



DEMOCRACY, PARTICIPATION, AND POLITICAL ATTITUDES AMONG BRAZILIAN YOUTH

**Elisa Guaraná, Severine Macedo,
Olivia Perez, Willian Habermann**

Brazil is a young country: there are 48.5 million people between the ages of 15 and 29 —that is, one-fourth of its population (IBGE, 2022). However, the construction of rights for youth has been marked by advances and setbacks; it has gone through major political transformations— from the cycle of Workers’ Party governments and the creation of the Youth Statute, to the cutbacks during the administrations of Michel Temer and Jair Bolsonaro, including the massive protests of 2013, the impeachment of Dilma Rousseff, and the attempted coup in 2023.

The report explores the contradictions, fears, and hopes of a generation that is redefining the rules of the democratic game.

**2,024 YOUNG PEOPLE IN BRAZIL
PARTICIPATED IN THE STUDY.**



BETWEEN PRIVATE SATISFACTION AND PUBLIC PRECARIETY

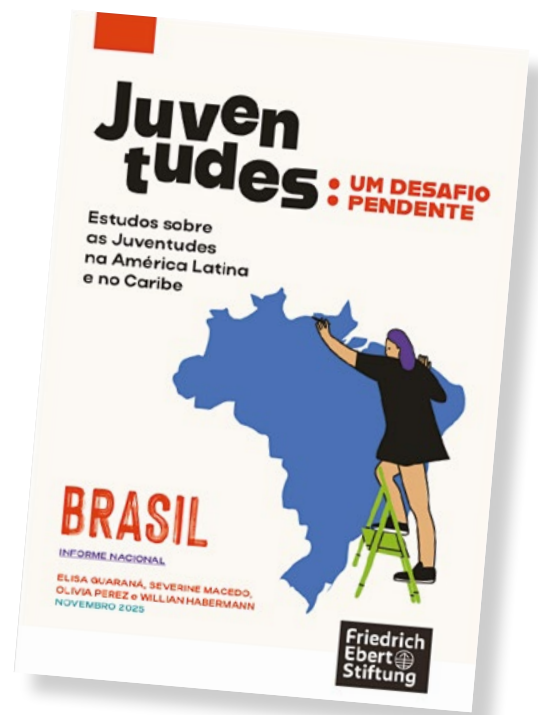
The research reveals a paradox: Brazilian youth report high levels of personal satisfaction but clear disappointment with public life. 67% say they are satisfied with their life overall, 70% with their family, 50% with their friendships, 57% with their health, and 59% with education. However, when speaking about the country, the outlook shifts: 45% express dissatisfaction with their economic situation, and 55% with the national situation. These perceptions reflect the effects of historical inequalities and the reforms that, after 2016, weakened labor protections and cut social rights.

Education is one of the most positively rated areas: 67% evaluate the education they received favorably, and for the first time, more than half of the population over age 25 has completed basic education (IBGE, 2023). In contrast, employment remains a major shortcoming: only 36% of young people aged 18 to 35 have stable jobs. This figure is shaped by inequality: 45% of white youth have access to formal employment, compared to just 29% of black youth. Despite this, 88% believe their future will be better in five years—a sign of optimism that persists even in the face of adversity.

THE STATE IN THE SPOTLIGHT: POVERTY, INSECURITY, AND YOUTH DEMAND

For most Brazilian youth, the country’s main problems have a social face: 61% mention poverty, unemployment, and lack of access to basic rights as their top concerns. These are followed by drug use, corruption, gender-based violence and organized crime.

Gender analysis reveals significant gaps: 65% of young women prioritize poverty, unemployment, and access to healthcare and education, compared to 57% of men. Insecurity particularly affects ado-



lescents aged 15 to 17 (39%) and is compounded in a country where, between 2012 and 2021, 298,602 young people were murdered —76% of them black— according to the “Black Youth Alive” Plan.

Perceptions around security and the State are complex: 69% support harsher penalties and 70% agree with lowering the age of criminal responsibility. However, half acknowledge that more guns lead to more violence, and 64% value police professional training as a preventive strategy.

Regarding public policy priorities, employment tops the list (55%), followed by social policies (46%), security, housing, and the environment. However, only 16% say they are aware of any youth-oriented public policy —well below the 44% reported in 2013— which reflects the institutional dismantling in recent years.

Even so, most young people continue to view the State as a key factor in addressing inequalities and building a fairer future, although they do so with increasing criticism and distrust.

IDEOLOGY, POLITICS, AND DEMOCRACY: YOUTH AMBIVALENCE

Brazilian youth do not fit neatly into traditional “left” or “right” political categories. About 44% identify with the center, 38% with the right, and 18% with the left. This reflects the strength of conservative positions but also ideological diversity. Gender reveals differences: 20% of young women place themselves on the left, compared to 17% of men—a sign of the influence of feminist movements on women’s political awareness.

Regarding democracy, 66% believe it is still the best form of government, although 58% are sympathetic to the idea of strong leaders and 49% support a democracy without political parties. Most reject authoritarian or military alternatives.

Young people support an active State, with strong approval for public education and healthcare, environmental protection, wealth redistribution, and Indigenous autonomy. They also express progressive views on sexual and reproductive rights —such as same-sex marriage and healthcare access for trans people— though abortion remains a divisive issue, with only a third in favor.

This is a plural and contradictory generation, blending progressive demands with conservative leanings. It reflects a political landscape in constant dispute.

TRUST AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AMONG YOUTH

Trust in traditional political institutions is low: 57% distrust political parties, 45% distrust the presidency, and 42% the legislative branch. In contrast, universities, churches, and the media receive more positive evaluations.

Race also plays a role: black youth express greater distrust toward the police and the judicial sys-

tem, reflecting their historical exposure to violence and criminalization. Nevertheless, most maintain a moderate level of trust, suggesting a critical stance rather than outright rejection.

Interest in politics is moderate: only 25% say they are very or quite interested, mostly among youth from upper social classes. Among those who actively participate in some form of organization, engagement is primarily driven by causes such as the defense of the family (26%), environmental protection (22%), youth rights (15%), and anti-racist movements (13%).

Around 19% report that they are not currently involved in activism but would like to be, indicating a latent potential for mobilization. The most common forms of action are digital activism (23%), political consumption (19%), and signing or collecting signatures for a petition (16%), while more radical actions, such as strikes or symbolic occupations, have low levels of support.

These figures show a youth population that is critical of institutions but open to new forms of participation and willing to act when causes resonate with their daily lives.

DIGITAL YOUTH: BETWEEN INFORMATION AND MOBILIZATION

Social media plays a central role in the lives of Brazilian youth, serving both as a source of information and a space for expression. About 93% consume news daily or several times a week; social media is their primary source of political information (57%), followed by television (45%) and platforms such as YouTube or WhatsApp.

However, the use of these platforms is mostly passive, focused on entertainment or social interaction, which limits their mobilizing potential. The most common forms of digital participation are reacting to, sharing, or commenting on posts, while the creation of political content —such as cam-

paings, blogs, or memes— is much less frequent. Even so, 39% report having engaged in activism through social media, and 20% express interest in doing so, revealing fertile ground for future action.

Brazilian youth live in a tension between deep institutional distrust and a strong hope for a more just future. Although their traditional political participation remains low, there is growing potential for mobilization, especially around causes such as environmental protection, feminism, anti-racism, and human rights.

Recognizing youth as full political actors and strengthening inclusive, intersectional public policies will be key to turning their demands into driving forces for a more just and participatory democracy.

To download the FULL REPORT in portuguese, scan the QR code.



[HTTPS://JUVENTUDESASIGNATURAPENDENTE.COM/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2025/11/22422.PDF](https://juventudesasignaturapendente.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/22422.pdf)

CHILE



“YOUTH, POLITICS, AND DEMOCRACY IN CHILE: A CONVERSATION FOR CHANGE.” YOUTH TENSIONS AND CHALLENGES IN THE DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM

Óscar Aguilera, Francisco Álvarez Langenbach

The data show that seven out of ten young Chileans consider democracy the best form of government and value voting as a genuine mechanism for social transformation—an important shift compared to previous decades of electoral disengagement. However, warning signs have emerged: fewer than 30% declare themselves satisfied with democracy, and nearly half believe that a military government could be an acceptable alternative in times of crisis. This combination of normative support for democracy and attraction to strong leadership reflects a scenario of contradictions that challenges institutions and the broader public debate on the country’s political future.

The findings not only reveal how young people relate to politics but also invite reflection on how to build citizenship in a country where youth have played a leading role in the major social transformations of the past two decades.

IN CHILE, 2,002 YOUNG PEOPLE PARTICIPATED IN THE STUDY.



BETWEEN PRECARIETY AND DEMOCRATIC CHALLENGE

Chilean youth live amid sharp contrasts. Although most come from households headed by someone with a secondary or technical level of education (40%), followed by completed (23%) and incomplete university education (15%), these educational advances do not guarantee job stability: 47% of young people aged 18 to 35 report being unemployed. In terms of healthcare, 36% are covered by public insurance and 14% by private plans, yet one in four has no coverage at all—an indicator of the fragility of the social protection system.

On a personal level, young people feel satisfied with their family life (72%) and personal life (58%), but this satisfaction decreases when assessing their economic situation (34% are little or not at all satisfied) and, above all, the state of the country (44%). This duality reveals a generation that is resilient in its private life but critical of Chile's collective direction.

When asked about the most pressing issues, their concerns are concrete: drug use (55%), poverty and unemployment (49%), organized crime (46%), and insecurity (42%) top the list. Lower down are gender-based violence, justice, and lack of democracy.

Their priorities for the State are clear: social welfare policies (47%), employment (47%), security (37%), and housing (31%). Issues such as sexual and reproductive rights (12%) and culture (7%) appear in the background.

Regarding access to information, 67% of young people get their news mainly from social media, followed by television (45%). YouTube, WhatsApp, and online newspapers range between 26% and 20%. Time use also reflects their priorities: they spend around nine hours per week working, six hours on leisure or social media, and just one hour on activism or volunteering. Institutional politics, therefore, competes with daily life, which is marked by survival and social connections.

Finally, their relationship with democracy is characterized by mistrust: only 26% are satisfied with its



functioning, although seven out of ten still consider it the best form of government. This disenchantment does not imply total rejection but rather criticism of how the system currently operates. Even so, authoritarian tendencies are concerning: 33% say it makes no difference whether they live in a democracy or not, 48% believe a military government could be a solution in times of crisis, and 41% prefer an authoritarian government in some cases. The challenge is clear: to reconnect youth with democracy not only as an ideal but as a practice that responds to their real demands.

WHAT EXPLAINS HOW YOUNG PEOPLE THINK POLITICALLY?

Beyond opinions, the study aimed to understand which factors determine how young people position themselves within the political spectrum. The results show that these differences are not primarily shaped by age, gender, or social class, but rather by their attitudes and values toward politics, the economy, and culture.

In the political dimension, two profiles emerge: *authoritarianism* —which groups those who justify military interventions or non-democratic regimes —and *liberalism*— which values democracy but distrusts political parties and weak leadership. The more authoritarian individuals tend to identify with the right, while illiberal attitudes can be found on both the left and the right, suggesting new ways of understanding political thinking.

In economic terms, those who reject redistributive policies and prefer that the private sector manage public services tend to align more with the right. In the cultural dimension, young people with more conservative views and less affinity for feminist demands also lean toward the right. The key finding

is that ideological differences cannot be explained solely by social status but by how individuals position themselves on concrete issues such as gender equality, the role of the State, and democracy itself.

CONCLUSIONS: YOUTH, DEMOCRACY, AND THE CHALLENGE OF TRUSTING THE FUTURE

The results reveal a persistent tension between support for democracy and dissatisfaction with how it functions. While Chilean youth recognize democracy as the best system of government, they express deep distrust toward its institutions and question the capacity of politics to deliver effective responses to their demands.

The study identifies two distinct attitudes toward the system: authoritarianism, more closely linked to the right and critical of democracy itself; and liberalism, which defends democracy but in a narrow sense—focused on strong leadership and the absence of political parties. This distinction is crucial because it shows that not all youth discontent translates into a desire for dictatorship, but it may lead to a more limited vision of democratic participation.

Although many young people identify with the center or lean toward the right, their values tend to be more liberal in cultural matters and redistributive in economic ones. However, mistrust of the State persists, explaining why some prefer that the private sector manage public services.

The major challenge lies in participation. Young people from working-class backgrounds are the least likely to engage in social or political organizations, which can exclude them from public debate. When combined with institutional distrust, this trend reinforces a cycle of exclusion.

The message is clear: without policies that strengthen trust and promote youth participation, Chilean democracy will continue to face a deficit of legitimacy and representation.

To download the
FULL REPORT in Spanish,
scan the QR code.



[HTTPS://JUVENTUDASIGNATURAPENDIENTE.COM/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2025/10/22387.PDF](https://juventudesasignaturapendiente.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/22387.pdf)

COLOMBIA



“BECAUSE TOMORROW WILL BE BEAUTIFUL”: A PORTRAIT OF A CRITICAL AND HOPEFUL YOUTH IN COLOMBIA

Juliana Hernández de la Torre,
Miyerlandy Cabanzo Valencia

The voices of young Colombians reveal a generation that questions the present—aware of the country’s structural challenges, yet still holding on to the hope of social transformation. This study offers an in-depth analysis of youth in a context marked by inequality, economic precariousness, and institutional distrust, but also by a strong expectation of change.

IN COLOMBIA, 2,004 YOUNG
PEOPLE PARTICIPATED IN THE
STUDY.

A COUNTRY IN MOTION: YOUTH AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

Between 2011 and 2021, Colombia experienced a sustained cycle of youth-led mobilization—from student protests over education to the 2021 social uprising—that paved the way for the country’s first left-wing government in recent history, led by Gustavo Petro and Francia Márquez.

Even so, discontent persists. Insecurity, unfulfilled government promises, and the absence of structural responses have eroded trust in institutions.



The youth unemployment rate reached 19.2% in 2024, and 37% of those who work earn less than USD 300 per month (DANE, 2024). Moreover, access to higher education remains unequal: more than 700 municipalities report enrollment rates below 50% (SNIES, 2024).

Despite these challenges, Colombian youth maintain a hopeful outlook toward the future and a firm belief in their capacity to drive change.

BEYOND THE VOTE

58% of young people believe that voting can transform reality, although their political participation is expressed mainly through nontraditional channels: boycotting products for political or environmental reasons (24%), engaging in digital activism (20%), or participating in protests or petition drives (19%). Among those who are not currently active, 45% say they would be willing to participate, primarily through volunteering or social media (36%).

In 2021, elections for the Municipal Youth Councils were held for the first time. Although participation was limited, this process marked an important institutional milestone for youth political representation and laid the groundwork for its continuity and strengthening in subsequent elections, which showed a slight increase in participation and greater political competition over these spaces.

CRITICAL OF THE PRESENT, HOPEFUL FOR THE FUTURE

The main concerns among Colombian youth are poverty (65%), drug use (49%), insecurity (45%), and corruption (42%), alongside persistent challenges such as gender-based violence, police brutality, and forced migration.

In terms of public policy priorities, their preferences are clear:



- Employment and youth economy (63% of women, 57% of men).
- Education, health, and social security (51% of women, 48% of men).

Amid precarious conditions, 86% believe their lives will improve in the next five years. This optimism coexists with a critical view of the State and the perception that institutions fail to adequately address their needs.

AN AMBIVALENT RELATIONSHIP WITH INSTITUTIONS

69% of young people prefer democracy over any other system, but only 8% report being “very satisfied” with its functioning. The warning signs are clear:

- 61% do not trust political parties.
- Only 37% trust universities (the most highly rated institution).
- Congress (51%) and political parties (61%) generate low levels of confidence.

In addition, a generational and gender gap also emerges: while young women tend to hold progressive views, young men show higher levels of conservatism. Fifty-two percent of men believe that feminist movements “seek to dominate men,” and 30% show a tendency to support authoritarian leaders and governments.

BETWEEN THE POLITICAL CENTER AND THE SEARCH FOR OPPORTUNITY

Although the country is currently governed by the left, the majority of young people identify them-

selves with the political center (58%) or the right (26%). The most common reasons for not participating in social organizations include lack of time (34%), the absence of organizations that represent their interests (40%), and a preference for individual rather than collective action (30%).

Among those who reported belonging to an organization, participation is driven primarily by the desire to gain experience (41%), help others (33%), or socialize (29%), rather than by traditional political motivations.

Overall, six out of ten young people express a desire to emigrate, reflecting a strong aspiration to seek opportunities abroad. Migration emerges as a life option: among those who would like to migrate, 52% cite the search for new experiences or the economic crisis as their main reasons, while 43% point to the lack of employment.

SOCIAL MEDIA: NEW ARENAS FOR POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

Social media platforms are the main source of political information for Colombian youth: 63% use them, surpassing television and print media. The most common forms of digital participation include liking political content (34%), searching for information (28%), and sharing memes (27%). Only a small proportion create original content to promote campaigns (4%) or write blogs (5%). The main causes they support online are environmental protection (22%), youth rights (14%), and feminism or gender-related issues (10%). However, the digital environment also presents risks such as misinformation, hate speech, radicalization, algorithmic manipulation, and impacts on mental health.

Although young people distrust traditional political channels, they have not abandoned democracy or collective action. This represents an opportunity to reconnect with politics through more inclusive, educational, and creative initiatives that speak their language and reflect their realities.

Political parties, the State, and civil society share a common challenge: to provide real and representative responses to a generation that no longer waits to be invited to participate but seeks to redefine politics through the digital, the everyday, and the emotional.

To download the
FULL REPORT in Spanish,
scan the QR code.



[HTTPS://JUVENTUDESASIGNATURAPENDIENTE.COM/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2025/04/21595.PDF](https://juventudesasignaturapendiente.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/21595.pdf)

COSTA RICA



“YOUTH IN COSTA RICA BETWEEN DEMOCRACY AND AUTHORITARIANISM”: TENSIONS AND DEMOCRATIC CHALLENGES OF COSTA RICAN YOUTH

Ilka Treminio Sánchez, Cathalina García Santamaria

This is an in-depth analysis of Costa Rican youth, set within a context marked by inequality, low institutional trust, concern over employment, and a growing political dissatisfaction.

Even so, the study reveals transformative potential—provided that real spaces for youth participation and representation are created.

IN COSTA RICA, 1,149 YOUNG PEOPLE PARTICIPATED IN THE STUDY.

ELECTORAL FRAGMENTATION AND INSTITUTIONAL DISAFFECTION

Costa Rica is experiencing a political landscape marked by party fragmentation, the weakening of traditional democratic channels, and a growing institutional disaffection. The 2022 elections recorded historically low turnout (56.7% in the second round) and the highest number of registered par-





BETWEEN THE DEMOCRATIC IDEAL AND THE AUTHORITARIAN TEMPTATION

58% of young Costa Ricans prefer democracy as their system of government, and 68% believe that voting can transform reality. However, four out of ten would accept an authoritarian government if it “solved the country’s problems.” In fact, satisfaction with democracy is low: 37% describe themselves as satisfied, 47% as somewhat satisfied, and 16% as dissatisfied. Among adolescents aged 15 to 17, 56% defend democracy, a figure that rises to 65% among those aged 27 to 35. Yet, among young people aged 18 to 26, 42% admit that under certain circumstances, they could prefer an authoritarian regime.

This panorama reveals a generation that values democracy as an ideal but distrusts its practical effectiveness. It underscores the urgent need to strengthen civic education, foster meaningful participation, and promote inclusive public policies that reconnect youth with democratic life.

WHAT CONCERNS AND MOBILIZES COSTA RICAN YOUTH

The main concerns among Costa Rican youth are drug use (64%); poverty, unemployment, and lack of access to basic rights (55%); and organized crime and drug trafficking (50%). In terms of public policy priorities, employment (60%) ranks first, followed by social welfare (43%) —which includes education, health, and security— and public safety (38%).

Women place greater emphasis than men on employment and social welfare policies, while social security is particularly relevant among young people aged 27 to 35 and among those who identify as Catholic.

ties since 1953, reflecting a dispersed and distrustful citizenry. From this context emerged the Social Democratic Progress Party, which brought Rodrigo Chaves to power (TSE, 2022).

Chaves’s confrontational style marked a break with the country’s institutional tradition. Although he governs with a legislative minority (10 out of 57 seats) and broke with his own party before mid-term, he maintains high approval levels (54% as of April 2025, according to CIEP-UCR).

Economically, overall unemployment fell to 7.82%, but among youth aged 15 to 24 it reached 21.06%. Relative poverty dropped to 21.8% and extreme poverty to 6.3%, although social investment fell to its lowest level in a decade (from 12% to 9.7% of GDP) (INEC, 2024), affecting education and youth policies in particular.

This situation has generated distrust and disappointment among young people, who face higher unemployment, exclusion, and limited political representation.

DISTANCE FROM POLITICAL PARTIES, BUT NOT FROM PUBLIC LIFE

46% of young people report having little or no interest in politics, and only 17% show a high level of interest. However, this distance does not imply apathy: many young people engage in social and community causes through nonpartisan spaces. Political participation remains concentrated in traditional activities such as supporting campaigns, persuading others to vote, or sharing party messages on social media.

Although digitalization has opened new channels for expression, it has not yet led to a significant shift toward alternative forms of activism. Interestingly, the highest levels of participation are found among young people who are critical of the democratic system—suggesting that oppositional discourse on social media is attracting the attention of disillusioned sectors.

Among nonpartisan forms of participation, religious organizations and sports clubs stand out, each with participation rates exceeding 15%.

SOCIAL MEDIA: THE MAIN SOURCE OF INFORMATION, BUT PASSIVE ENGAGEMENT

Social media platforms are the primary source of information for 68% of Costa Rican youth, followed by television (41%), WhatsApp (28%), and YouTube (20%). Women use social media more frequently (73% vs. 63% men), while men prefer television (45% vs 38 women).

However, most young people engage passively in the digital sphere: actions such as liking or sharing memes prevail over more active initiatives like writing blogs or creating campaigns. Only a minority produce original political content. Women are more involved in issues related to feminism, sexual rights, and anti-racism.

This low level of active engagement exposes young people to algorithmic bubbles that reinforce polarizing messages and normalize violent or misleading discourse. Such dynamics pose a risk to democratic culture, especially in the context of weakening civic education and limited critical training.

Costa Rican youth face a fragmented political landscape, marked by persistent inequalities and low institutional trust, yet they are far from apathetic. They are active in their communities, on social media, and through new forms of everyday activism that blend social and political engagement in more horizontal, diverse, and disruptive ways.

The study reveals a clear willingness to get involved, particularly in nonpartisan spaces that connect with their real interests. Young people are not mere spectators—they are protagonists in the construction of democracy.

To download the
FULL REPORT in Spanish,
scan the QR code.



[HTTPS://JUVENTUDESASIGNATURAPENDIENTE.COM/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2025/04/21992.PDF](https://juventudesasignaturapendiente.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/21992.pdf)

ECUADOR



POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF YOUTH IN ECUADOR: BETWEEN FEAR, PRECARITY, AND INEQUALITY

Franklin Ramírez Gallegos

More than six million Ecuadorian youth between the ages of 15 and 35 —one-third of the country's population— face conditions of precarity, insecurity, and exclusion that limit their political participation. The report reveals a complex reality: six out of ten unemployed people are young, and one in four neither studies nor works.

It also highlights a central paradox: although young people maintain strong support for democracy and show affinity with progressive causes, there is a growing acceptance of authoritarian alternatives in response to fear and violence. Far removed from traditional political parties, new generations are reinventing their political engagement through digital activism and more horizontal forms of association. Nonetheless, class, gender, and educational inequalities continue to define who can participate and who remains excluded from public life.

IN ECUADOR, 2,004 YOUNG PEOPLE PARTICIPATED IN THE STUDY.



MULTIPLE CRISIS, DISCONTENT, AND FEAR

Ecuador is undergoing a structural crisis—political, economic, and social. In less than a decade, three successive governments —Lenín Moreno, Guillermo Lasso, and Daniel Noboa— have progressively reduced the role of the State, while violence has reached unprecedented levels. Between 2021 and 2025, more than 25,000 homicides were recorded, and in 2023 the country became the most violent in the region, with a rate of 47.2 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants. In January 2024, President Noboa declared an “internal armed conflict,” consolidating a militarized security policy and nearly permanent states of emergency.

The crisis is also evident in employment and education. According to the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INEC), informality reached 55.2%, adequate employment fell to 34.1%, and underemployment to 23.2%. Income poverty rose to 28%, and extreme poverty to 12.7%. School enrollment dropped to 4.1 million students —the lowest figure since 2019— leaving about 450,000 young people out of the education system, particularly in provinces such as Esmeraldas.

When asked about the country’s main problems, young people cited poverty, unemployment, and lack of access to basic rights (56%), followed by organized crime and drug trafficking (53%), insecurity (49%), drug use (44%), and corruption (31%). More than half (57%) express a desire to migrate; among them, 60% would do so for economic reasons, 51% due to unemployment, and 35% out of fear of violence.

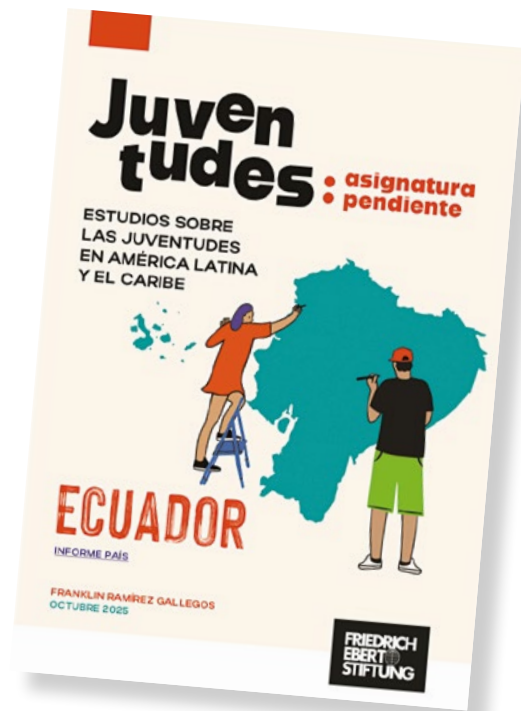
Discontent is widespread: 66% are dissatisfied with the country’s situation and 52% with their economic situation. Fear has also reshaped public life: four out of ten young people have stopped attending parties or cultural events, five out of ten have reduced their use of public transport, and 23% have stopped participating in protests. Yet, an enduring

hope persists—86% believe their lives will improve in the next five years.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION: BETWEEN PRECARIETY AND INEQUALITY

In 2024, only 31.8% of young people aged 18 to 35 had access to adequate employment. Youth unemployment (9.2%) is nearly double the national average. Since the pandemic, labor precarity has deepened, and gender gaps have widened: while adequate employment among men increased to 35.5%, among women it reached only 26.2%. Moreover, female unemployment rose from 10.9% to 12.8% between 2023 and 2024 (ENEMDU, 2024).

According to the survey, only 15% of young people aged 18 to 35 have stable employment, and among those who are working, just 38% receive all legally mandated benefits. Employment conditions are largely precarious: among those who work, part-time jobs predominate (19%), followed by hourly



work (10%), occasional or online jobs (4%), and work mediated through digital platforms (1%).

Educational inequalities are also pronounced. Only 24% of youth aged 15 to 35 have access to higher education, and social origin largely determines opportunity: just 5% of youth from low-income backgrounds complete university, compared to 17% from middle-class and 32% from upper-class backgrounds. Secondary education serves as the highest level achieved for two-thirds of lower- and middle-income sectors, and 11% of the most disadvantaged youth do not complete this level. With low educational attainment, unemployment rises to 62%, while among those with university education, it drops to 44%, with 28% securing stable employment. Education opens doors, but without policies that connect education to production, a degree alone is not enough to break the cycle of precarity.

DEMOCRACY AND AUTHORITARIANISM: BETWEEN VIOLENCE AND THE TEMPTATION OF ORDER

The wave of violence and the pervasive sense of insecurity have fueled a growing demand for order, which translates into greater tolerance for authoritarian alternatives. 62% of young people would support a military government in times of crisis, and nearly half would accept an authoritarian regime under certain circumstances, while only 36% reject such options. Three out of four believe that a strong leader would solve the country's problems more effectively than political parties or institutions.

Despite this, democratic foundations remain: 66% prefer democracy over any other form of government, and 65% trust the vote as a tool for change. Satisfaction with the system is moderate (48%), and 46% state that it makes no difference to them whether they live in a democracy or not. This am-

bivalence reveals a generation that values the democratic ideal but remains skeptical of its ability to protect them.

INSTITUTIONAL DISTRUST AND SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING

Young people's trust in institutions remains low across nearly all sectors, except for the Armed Forces, which hold a 54% approval rating within the current context of "internal war." Credibility levels are minimal throughout the rest of the system: only 13% trust social movements, 8% trust labor unions, and 10% trust political parties. Within the State, 24% express confidence in the central government, 12% in local governments, 14% in the judiciary, and 11% in the National Assembly. Universities stand out as one of the few institutions viewed positively, with a 32% approval rate.

On a personal level, family remains the main source of emotional support: 66% report satisfaction with their family life and 44% with their friendships. This personal sense of well-being, however, is not enough to offset the widespread erosion of collective trust.

POLITICAL INTEREST AND PARTICIPATION: A GENERATION THAT TALKS BUT FEARS MOBILIZATION

Political interest among Ecuadorian youth is divided: 45% show little or no interest, while 20% report being highly interested. Political conversations mainly take place in private and trusted settings—56% discuss politics with family and 45% with friends— while public spaces for debate are increasingly empty.

Although 86% of youth aged 15 to 35, voted in the 2023 elections, only 9% are affiliated with a political party. Protest activity remains subdued due to fear: just 8% participated in demonstrations over the past year. Among those who did not, the main reasons cited were fear of repression, lack of time, or the perception that “it makes no difference.”

In contrast, the digital sphere has gained ground as a platform for political expression. Two out of ten young people supported campaigns through social media, and 16% expressed opinions on public issues. Facebook is the main source of political information (23%). While half of young people have not yet spoken out publicly, many express the intention to do so in the future.

ASSOCIATIVE PARTICIPATION AND MOBILIZING CAUSES

Organized participation among Ecuadorian youth remains low but not absent. 12% take part in social organizations, while sports clubs (18%) and religious spaces (12%) register the highest levels of involvement. Neighborhood, student, and cultural associations each attract less than 5% participation.

The most mobilizing causes in social media include the defense of the environment and territories (20%), youth rights (15%), and family- and life-related conservative agendas (14%), followed by feminist movements (10%) and Afro-descendant rights and anti-racist movements (8%).

IDEOLOGY AND VALUES: LIMITED PROGRESSIVE ASPIRATIONS CONSTRAINED BY INEQUALITY

Within the ideological landscape of Ecuadorian youth, center-left orientations prevail (47%), compared to 30% who identify with the center-right. Overall, 56% place themselves on the left of the political spectrum and 44% on the right. Women and lower-income groups tend to adopt more progressive positions.

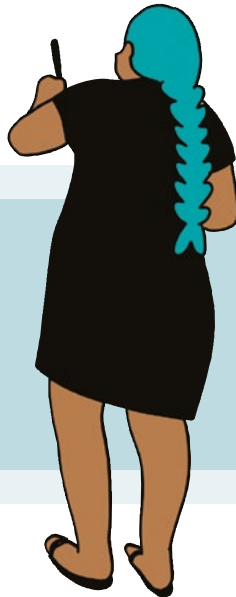
A large majority support public welfare policies: 85% endorse free access to education and health-care, and 72% favor higher taxes for the wealthy. Environmental protection ranks as a top priority for 85%. Gender parity in democracy receives 68% approval; indigenous autonomy, 77%; and equal rights for migrants, 56%. Regarding LGBTIQ+ rights, 74% defend freedom of sexual orientation and gender identity, 65% support access to trans healthcare, and 60% approve of same-sex marriage.

However, conservative attitudes persist. Fifty-four percent believe women are better suited for caregiving roles, 41% consider catcalling acceptable, and 39% think motherhood provides greater fulfillment than other life choices. These contradictions reveal a form of progressive thinking that continues to coexist with traditional gender stereotypes and cultural conservatism.

This is not an apathetic generation, but one that seeks new ways to make an impact—more horizontal, digital, and community-based. The challenge lies in creating safe and meaningful spaces for participation and ensuring that public policies adopt generational, participatory, and territorial approaches.

Ecuadorian youth are not mere spectators. Listening to their voices and responding to their demands will be decisive for the country's democratic future.

To download the
FULL REPORT in Spanish,
scan the QR code.



[HTTPS://JUVENTUDESASIGNATURAPENDIENTE.COM/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2025/10/22413.PDF](https://juventudesasignaturapendiente.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/22413.pdf)

HONDURAS



HONDURAN YOUTH: BETWEEN DISSATISFACTION WITH THE PRESENT AND HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

Elías Villalta

The study “Status of Youth Participation and Political Opinion in Honduras” provides an in-depth look into how young people perceive politics in the country. Despite widespread disappointment with democracy and the nation’s direction, Honduran youth still view voting as a means to transform their reality and hold firm to the belief that the future can be better. Moving away from traditional ideological labels, they prioritize causes such as social justice and environmental protection. The report also examines how they engage —or disengage— with formal political participation spaces, offering insight into the complex landscape of their aspirations, demands, and frustrations.

A TOTAL OF 1,100 YOUNG PEOPLE PARTICIPATED IN THE STUDY IN HONDURAS.

LIVING CONDITIONS OF HONDURAN YOUTHS

Although 52% of young people express satisfaction with their personal lives, the reality in their country hits them hard: 68% are dissatisfied with the national situation and 62% with their own economic



conditions. Job insecurity is one of the main reasons. Only 20% of youth aged 18 to 35 have stable employment, while 21% hold temporary jobs; half of the young population is unemployed but actively seeking work.

The lack of opportunities explains another key finding: 51% of Honduran youth wish to migrate, driven mainly by the economic crisis (72%) and the lack of employment (49%). Even so, optimism persists—40% believe their future will be much better, and another 41% think it will be somewhat better.

In education, more than half (54%) are satisfied with the training they have received. However, only 12% of youth between 18 and 35 have access to higher education, limiting their prospects for employment and professional growth.

YOUTH PERSPECTIVES ON DEMOCRACY, INSTITUTIONAL TRUST, AND POLITICAL INTEREST

Democracy continues to be regarded as the best form of government, though satisfaction remains low. Only 2% of respondents report being very satisfied with how it functions, while 26% express complete dissatisfaction. A striking 74% of young people prefer strong leaders to political parties and institutions when it comes to solving national problems, and half believe that democracy could function without political parties altogether.

Institutional distrust is also pervasive. Political parties (58%) and the Presidency along with its cabinet (50%) receive the highest levels of rejection, whereas universities (39%) and the Church (40%) are the most trusted

institutions among youth. This may explain why political discussions are rare: 41% say they rarely talk about politics, and 19% never do, mainly because they find it uninteresting, difficult to understand, or a source of conflict.

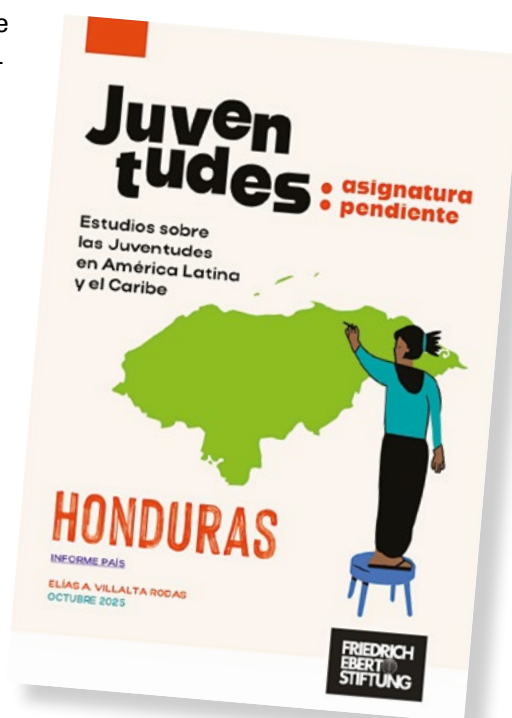
Among those who do discuss political matters, conversations occur primarily within private circles—53% with family and 43% with friends—and less frequently at work (21%) or with partners (11%). Since most young people are not part of organized groups, parties, unions, or collective movements account for only 6% as spaces for political exchange, while social networks and online forums reach just 4%.

These findings reveal that, although conversation spaces exist, political discussion among youth mainly occurs in closed and homogeneous environments, where dialogue happens among like-minded individuals and confrontation or debate is avoided. In this sense, politics tends to be treated as a private matter, confined to circles of trust rather than opened to public debate.

YOUTH POSITIONS ON POLITICAL AGENDAS

When it comes to public policies, Honduran youth express strong opinions. A majority (53%) strongly agree and 34% agree that the State must guarantee free, high-quality education and healthcare. Likewise, 45% strongly agree and 39% agree that environmental protection should be a top governmental priority.

However, an important contradiction emerges: young people believe that public services and strategic sectors such as oil, telecommunications, and electricity



are of better quality when managed by the private sector. This perception cuts across ideological lines, with similar agreement among those who identify with the center (58%), the right (64%), and even the left (53%).

This suggests that ideological positions do not clearly define opinions on economic or public management issues and that there is a general tendency toward ambiguity regarding the role of the State and the market.

Although divisions persist around topics such as abortion, privatization of public services, or LGBTIQ+ rights, broad support for the expansion of rights overall still remains. Regarding trade unionism and labor rights, 33% of young people acknowledge needing more information. Among the main challenges for unions are the lack of spaces for youth participation (23%) and limited awareness about how to join (23%).

PARTICIPATION IN ORGANIZATIONS AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Half of Honduran youth (46%) have not engaged with any organization in the past year. Among those

who did participate, most were involved in religious institutions (28%), sports clubs (13%), or volunteer groups (7%). The main deterrents to participation include not receiving any tangible benefits (38%) or not finding spaces aligned with their interests (32%).

Regarding social mobilization, 85% have not taken part in marches or protests over the last year. Among the 10% who did, their motivations were clear: to change the country's reality (48%) and to help address existing problems (35%).

USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND DIGITAL ACTIVISM

Social media platforms have consolidated their position as the main source of information for Honduran youth (62%), followed by television (45%). Nearly half (44%) have expressed opinions or taken a stance on digital platforms over the past six months, mainly around topics such as family, youth rights, and environmental issues.

The data reveal that, despite facing precarious conditions, exclusion, and deep institutional distrust, Honduran youth continue to look toward the future with optimism. They call for decent employment, equitable access to quality education and healthcare, and advocate for public policies that prioritize collective well-being and environmental protection.

Their message is clear: they need real and tangible opportunities to build the future they envision.

To download the
FULL REPORT in Spanish,
scan the QR code.



[HTTPS://JUVENTUDESASIGNATURAPENDIENTE.COM/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2025/12/INFORME-FINAL-HN_JOVENES-EN-HONDURAS-ENTRE-LA-DEMOCRACIA-Y-EL-AUTORITARISMO-04-12.PDF](https://juventudesasignaturapendiente.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/informe-final-hn_jovenes-en-honduras-entre-la-democracia-y-el-autoritarismo-04-12.pdf)

MEXICO



YOUTH AND POLITICS IN MEXICO: ORBITING BETWEEN INFORMATION AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Mariana Licea, Luis Sosa

In a Mexico marked by political, economic, and social tensions, the portrays young people as a generation that values democracy but doubts those who represent it; one that finds personal satisfaction yet collective frustration; and that, although less engaged in voting, has found in digital and everyday spaces new ways of engaging politically.

A TOTAL OF 2,001 YOUNG PEOPLE IN MEXICO PARTICIPATED IN THE STUDY

DIVERSITY, INEQUALITY, AND RESILIENCE IN A GENERATION SEEKING ITS PLACE

Mexican youth represent 32% of the population (INEGI, 2020) and reflect the country's diversity: some grew up during the "lost decade" of economic adjustment, while others were born in the context of the "war on drugs." Despite different life trajectories, they share common challenges—precarious employment, violence, and structural inequality.

Socially, family remains the core of daily life: 33% live with their parents and 29% with a



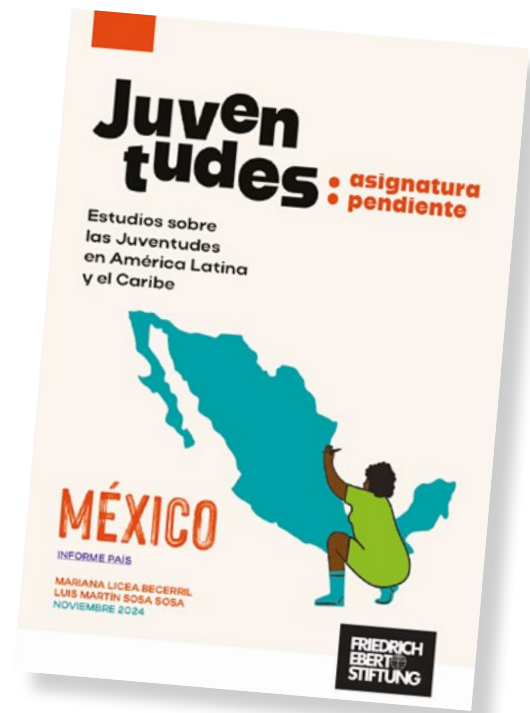
partner. Political discussions, when they occur, take place more often at home than on social media. However, social networks are their main source of information: 62% report learning about political and current affairs through them. For many, politics appears incidentally, mixed with memes, entertainment, and digital consumption.

At a personal level, six out of ten young people report being satisfied with their lives, especially those with stable employment, higher education, or higher income. Only two out of ten are satisfied with the country's situation. Among young people aged 18 to 35, sharp educational and labor gaps persist: only 12% of the lower-class access university education, compared with 49% of the upper class. Employment inequality also weighs heavily: one-third are unemployed, and 15% of those employed lack benefits.

The main concerns are insecurity, organized crime, and drug trafficking, followed by poverty, unemployment, drug use, corruption, and gender-based violence. Women highlight insecurity and poverty as top priorities, while men assign greater importance to corruption, positioning it as one of the country's main problems. Nearly half have considered migrating within the country, and four out of ten would do so abroad: the more privileged seek "new experiences," while the less advantaged aim to escape the crisis and unemployment.

MEXICAN YOUTH OSCILLATE BETWEEN DISSATISFACTION AND THE SEARCH FOR EFFECTIVE SOLUTIONS

Young people in Mexico maintain an ambivalent relationship with politics. Although 70% state that democracy is preferable to any other form of government, many question its mechanisms and outcomes. Nearly one-third do not believe that voting can transform the country, reflecting a crisis of confidence in institutions.



The sense of representation is key: among those who feel their problems are adequately reflected in national politics (21%), the interest in participation increases by nearly 30 points compared to those who do not feel represented. In contrast, disconnection fuels authoritarian tendencies: 68% believe that a "strong leader" would better solve the country's problems, and 45% would be willing to accept a military government in times of crisis. Nevertheless, voting remains the strongest link between youth and democracy—an instrument to demand change and define the nation's direction.

Ideologically, the center dominates (53%), followed by the right (32%) and the left (15%). While there is broad support for progressive causes such as gender equality, environmental protection, and labor rights, resistance persists regarding abortion and traditional caregiving roles. Overall, the survey depicts a critical and pragmatic generation that demands results over rhetoric.

POLITICS IS DISCUSSED ONLINE, BUT LIVED LITTLE IN THE STREETSS

Mexican youth primarily access information through screens: 62% obtain news from social networks, and 21% through WhatsApp, where group chats and message chains are common. Traditional media have lost influence—43% watch television, 17% read digital newspapers, 10% listen to the radio, and only 4% consult printed newspapers.

Although the digital environment provides variety and immediacy, half of young people distrust influencers and YouTubers due to misinformation and the spread of fake news. This hyper connec-

tion does not necessarily translate into political action: fewer than one-third show interest in traditional politics, only 12% participated in protests during the past year, and 55% do not belong to any organization. Political conversations occur mainly at home (60%), while only 8% engage in them on social media.

Nevertheless, the digital space has become a new political arena. 40% use likes to express support, 30% seek information to reinforce their views, and 32% share memes. These memes, beyond humor, serve as vehicles for political and cultural expression, though only 11% of young people create them.

Mexican youth have not turned away from politics—they question it, reimagine it, and seek to transform it. They demand forms of participation that are more horizontal, inclusive, and closer to their everyday realities, where their voices carry real weight in decision-making. Although they uphold democracy as an ideal, they perceive it as distant and unresponsive to their needs.

The challenge lies in bringing politics closer to their lived experiences, strengthening civic education, and opening spaces where they can participate without fear and with a genuine sense of purpose. Mexican youth are not an indifferent generation; they are one that thinks, debates, and acts—a generation that seeks a legitimate place in shaping the democratic future of the country.

To download the FULL REPORT in Spanish, scan the QR code.



[HTTPS://JUVENTUDASIGNATURAPENDIENTE.COM/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2025/10/JAP_MEXICO.PDF](https://juventudesasignaturapendiente.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/JAP_MEXICO.PDF)

PANAMA



NEITHER INDIFFERENT NOR CONFORMIST: PANAMANIAN YOUTH FACING THE DEMOCRATIC CHALLENGE

Mónica Patricia Romero Zapata

What do Panamanian youth think, and how do they engage in politics? This is the central question explored in the study “Political Participation of Panamanian Youth in the Current Context.” The report examines young people’s perceptions, experiences, and challenges regarding democracy, institutions, education, employment, and new forms of participation—both in person and online.

The study combines data and analysis through the lens of class, gender, and age, offering key insights to strengthen youth representation within political parties, unions, and public decision-making spaces.

IN PANAMA, 1,109 YOUNG
PEOPLE PARTICIPATED IN THE
STUDY.

DIVERSE YOUTH BETWEEN INDEPENDENCE AND PRECARIETY

Panamanian youth live heterogeneous realities that shape their aspirations and their ways of engaging with society. According to the study, 45% live with people other than their parents or partners, revealing broader networks of care and support beyond the traditional family structure. This independence increases with age: while 70% of



those aged 15 to 17 still live with their parents, only 14% of those aged 27 to 35 do so.

However, autonomy does not guarantee stability: only 32% of young people aged 18 to 35 are employed, and of those, just 54.7% have jobs that include full legal benefits. Informality, temporary work, and limited opportunities remain structural barriers in their transition to adulthood.

In education, the data are more encouraging. A total of 70.5% report being satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of education received, though gender and access gaps to higher education persist. Young women aged 18 to 35 show higher levels of schooling than men, and more than 70% studied in public institutions, underscoring the importance of the state education system.

Despite these difficulties, an optimistic outlook prevails: 84% believe their lives will be better or much better in the next five years. Still, immediate concerns are clear: poverty, unemployment, and limited access to basic rights (66%) top the list, followed by corruption (55%) and drug use (35.8%). Only 32.4% believe these issues are reflected in the national youth agenda. Among the most urgent policy priorities, young people demand decent employment, social welfare, and citizen security.

A VALUED DEMOCRACY, INSTITUTIONS IN CRISIS

Although most Panamanian youth value democracy, their trust in institutions is deeply eroded. A total of 64% consider democracy preferable to any other form of government, yet disillusionment with those who represent it is evident.

Political parties receive the lowest evaluations (61% distrust), followed by the Executive branch (59.3%), the Legislative (52%), and the Judiciary (35.7%). Local governments (50.1%) and labor unions (43.5%) also fail to reverse this perception. In contrast, in-

stitutions such as universities (37.5%) and religious organizations (32%) inspire slightly higher —though still limited— levels of trust.

This disengagement does not indicate apathy; rather, it reflects deep frustration with corruption, institutional opacity, and lack of responsiveness—factors that, according to young people, undermine the legitimacy of the democratic system.

PARTICIPATING, BUT THROUGH DIFFERENT CODES

Despite the critical outlook, Panamanian youth are not disconnected from politics; rather, they engage through different logics. Only 15.6% report being very or fairly interested in politics, while 24.4% say they have no interest at all.

However, this distance should not be interpreted as indifference. Political conversations occur in everyday life, mainly within the family (56%), among friends (45%), and with partners (15%).

At the institutional level, the figures raise democratic concerns. A total of 69.6% consider the idea of a



“strong leader” viable, and 54.3% would support a democracy without political parties. Furthermore, 34.2% justify an authoritarian government under certain circumstances, while 35% express indifference toward the type of political regime. Only 13% report being very satisfied with the current functioning of democracy. Therefore, democracy is valued—but not in its present form of practice.

IDEOLOGY, CAUSES, AND MOBILIZATION

Most young people identify with the political center (56.5%), though generational and gender differences are evident: those aged 15 to 17 tend to lean toward the right (30.3%), while the 18-to-26 group shows greater affinity with the left (20.4%). Among women, the left predominates (21.5%), while among men, the right prevails (32.3%).

Regarding causes and values, progressive positions stand out: environmental protection (81.1%), free healthcare and education (81%), technological regulation (74.9%), and comprehensive sex education (70.9%). However, conservative stances persist—50.5% oppose same-sex marriage, and 53.4% disagree with abortion legalization. Concerning gender-based violence, 77.5% reject it, but 15.4% still justify it in certain cases, reflecting the per-

sistence of stereotypes and the need for rights-based education.

Participation does not follow traditional paths, but it exists and is being redefined. Although 50.2% did not participate in any organization in the past year, many engage through religious groups (18.3%), sports clubs (14%), or hobby-related spaces (9.2%). The main motivations are gaining experience (47.7%) and helping others (30.6%). Only 5% have been active in political parties, but interest is growing.

Activism also takes new forms: 32.6% joined protests in the past year, 23.8% expressed opinions on social media, and 23.4% adjusted their consumption habits for ethical or political reasons. Union affiliation remains minimal (1.8%), though 34.4% call for more education on unionism and labor rights. The main barriers remain the lack of accessible spaces (25%) and limited knowledge about how to get involved (19%).

Additionally, 28% of young people are not currently involved in organizations, causes, or activist spaces, yet report a desire to participate. This suggests that the main obstacle is not apathy, but the persistence of barriers to access and a lack of open spaces for participation.

The findings show that Panamanian youth are not apathetic but rather critical and demanding. Their institutional distrust does not imply a rejection of democracy; it reflects a call for renewal—a desire for politics that is more participatory, transparent, and accessible.

A new generation is emerging—one that seeks information, expresses itself, and organizes through new languages, with a strong digital presence and a clear drive for change. Strengthening democracy in Panama requires rethinking channels for youth participation, updating representation spaces, and rebuilding institutional trust through dialogue, active listening, and shared responsibility.

To download the
FULL REPORT in Spanish,
scan the QR code.



[HTTPS://JUVENTUDASIGNATURAPENDIENTE.COM/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2025/07/22233.PDF](https://juventudesasignaturapendiente.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/22233.pdf)

PERU



YOUTH IN PERU: DISTANT FROM TRADITIONAL POLITICS BUT DRIVEN BY THE NEED FOR TRANSFORMATION

Alejandra Sabina,
Yolanda Dinegro Martinez

Peruvian youth are not apathetic; rather, they are deeply critical of the current political system and seek new meanings for collective action. The study “Youth in Peru: Crisis, Expectations, and Realities” provides a detailed portrait of their perceptions, demands, and forms of participation, showing how a generation disenchanted with institutions continues to bet on social and political transformation.

IN PERU, 2,001 YOUNG PEOPLE PARTICIPATED IN THE STUDY.

POLITICAL CRISIS AND THE RIFT BETWEEN YOUTH AND INSTITUTIONS

Peru is undergoing one of the most unstable periods in its recent history: six presidents in seven years, corruption scandals, economic recession (-0.6%), and mass protests met with violent repression. In this context, young people feel disconnected from institutions—though not indifferent to public affairs.

A total of 73% believe democracy is the best system of government, yet only 11% are satisfied with its performance. Furthermore, 47% support the cre-



ation of a new Constitution, reflecting a desire for structural change that currently lacks clear institutional channels for expression.

REJECTION OF PARTISANSHIP, SEARCH FOR NEW SPACES

Disillusionment with politics has translated into rejection of traditional channels of participation. A total of 91% express medium, low, or very low trust in political parties, and 50% do not participate in any type of organization. However, the other half does engage, primarily through environmental collectives (24%), youth rights initiatives (16%), and pro-life or family movements (14%).

Although institutional trust is minimal, voting retains symbolic importance. Fifty-three percent believe that voting can still generate change—evidence that, despite their disillusionment, young people have not abandoned the hope of influencing the political direction of the country.

DEMOCRACY VALUED BUT WITH LOW SATISFACTION

Support for the democratic ideal does not translate into complacency. Although nearly three-quarters of Peruvian youth (73%) consider democracy preferable to any other regime, only 11% report being very satisfied with its current functioning.

Interest in politics is also limited: only 26% say they are interested, and 36% report “some interest.” Political discussion occurs sporadically, mainly within the family (57%) or among friends (46%). These figures portray a youth that is not detached from politics but engages in it intermittently and with distrust.

Thus, young people value the democratic system, but their support is accompanied by strong criticism of its effectiveness, transparency, and repre-

sentativeness. They believe in democracy—yet they feel it does not belong to them.

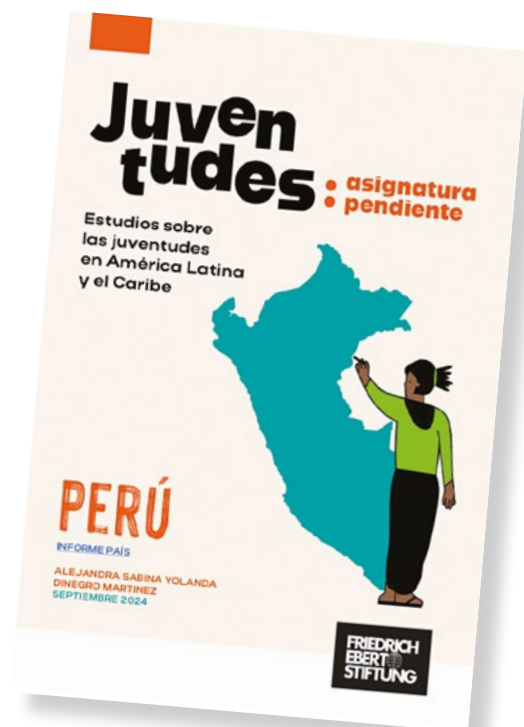
INEQUALITY, EMPLOYMENT AND RIGHTS: THE URGENT PRIORITIES OF YOUTH

The main concerns of Peruvian youth center on poverty, unemployment, and the lack of access to basic rights (61%), followed by insecurity (46%) and corruption (46%).

These priorities are reflected in the public policies they consider most urgent:

- 48% call for policies focused on youth employment, production, and the economy.
- 3% prioritize health, education, and social protection.
- 37% identify public safety as a key issue.

Only 12% feel that youth issues are fully represented in the public agenda, while 28% believe they are



barely represented—or not at all. The gap between youth demands and their institutional recognition deepens the sense of political exclusion.

HIGH CONNECTIVITY, LOW DIGITAL ACTIVISM

Peruvian youth are highly connected, yet their digital political engagement remains limited. Social media is their main source of political information (63%), followed by television (45%) and WhatsApp (26%).

However, connectivity does not necessarily lead to activism. Only 25% have used social networks to express opinions on environmental issues, and just 21% use social media to express their views on specific issues. Most maintain a more passive attitude, limited to likes or reactions.

Nevertheless, 87% agree with the need for technological regulation and recognize the potential of digital platforms for development, although they have not yet managed to turn connectivity into civic action. The challenge lies in channeling this digital energy into more critical, creative, and transformative participation.

The challenge lies in re-engaging this generation with democracy, ensuring their rights, and creating genuine channels for participation and dialogue. Without such openings, disillusionment risks turning into resignation—or greater openness to authoritarian leadership.

Ultimately, the study reveals a generation with a strong critical awareness, demanding recognition not merely as observers of the present but as essential actors in Peru's democratic transformation.

To download the FULL REPORT in Spanish, scan the QR code.



[HTTPS://JUVENTUDESASIGNATURAPENDIENTE.COM/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2025/04/21916.PDF](https://juventudesasignaturapendiente.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/21916.pdf)

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC



NEITHER INDIFFERENT NOR NAÏVE: DOMINICAN YOUTH AND THE DEMOCRATIC CHALLENGE

Aris Marcenellys Balbuena García

In a country where political discourse often feels detached from young people's everyday lives, the report "Dominican Youth and Democracy: The Challenge of Valuing the Collective, Conflict, and the Right to Material Well-Being" reveals a generation that values democracy yet distrusts those who represent it. Confronted with precarity, corruption, and barriers to basic rights, they refuse resignation and instead seek alternative forms of participation.

IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC,
1,132 YOUNG PEOPLE
PARTICIPATED IN THE STUDY

DISAFFECTION WITH DEEP ROOTS AMID ECONOMIC GROWTH AND INEQUALITY

Youth disconnection from democracy stems from unfulfilled promises, clientelism, and the perception that public institutions serve only a few. In this vacuum, anti-rights and authoritarian narratives promising "order" in exchange for freedom



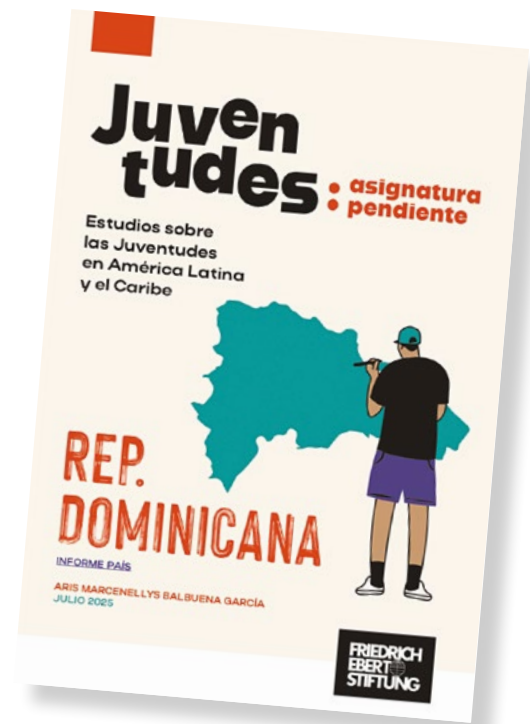
gain traction, while traditional parties lose ideological strength and mobilizing capacity.

Young people have played key roles in major social movements —such as the campaign for 4% of GDP for education and environmental defense in 2011–2012— yet distrust in institutional politics persists. The paradox is stark: a dynamic economy coexists with low wages, informality, teenage pregnancy, and gender inequality. According to ECLAC (2023), 26.9% of young people (ages 15–24) have no personal income, and 17.6% neither study nor work. Added to this are rising abstention rates (45.6% in 2024) and declining support for democracy (from 64.7% in 2004 to 48.1% in 2023, according to Latinobarómetro [2023]). Still, a recent Constitutional Court ruling allowing independent candidacies opens a window for new voices and agendas.

VITAL OPTIMISM WITH CONCERNS ABOUT THE ECONOMY AND RIGHTS

Far from despair, most young Dominicans report satisfaction with their health, education, and relationships, and they view the future with optimism. However, 65.7% identify the main national problems as the economy, unemployment, and limited access to health and education. These are followed by corruption (40.3%), drug use (38.4%), and insecurity (33.8%)—in a context where informality and low wages particularly affect women and precarious social classes. Nevertheless, 90.3% believe their situation will improve within five years.

This optimism coexists with a strong desire to emigrate: 62% want to leave due to the economic crisis, lack of employment, or in search of opportunities. Their public policy priorities are clear—employment, production, and social well-being. Women emphasize income generation and access to services, while men highlight technology, sports, and leisure. Lower and lower-middle classes call for housing, nutrition, and gender equality. They do not merely seek to “improve their lives”: they un-



derstand precisely which structural transformations are needed to live with dignity.

DEMOCRATIC PREFERENCE WITH WORRYING SIGNS OF AUTHORITARIANISM

Although 66% of young Dominicans prefer democracy, only 22.6% express high satisfaction with its performance. The belief that a “strong leader” (68.6%) could govern more effectively than parties or institutions is gaining traction, and 44% would view an authoritarian government “under certain circumstances” favorably. The tension is clear: democracy as an ideal is valued, but institutional reality is perceived as ineffective and unprotective.

Institutional distrust runs deep. The police (49%), political parties (43%), and influencers (42.1%) rank among the least trusted actors. Higher, though still moderate, confidence is placed in universities (47.6%) and churches (43.7%), followed by the media and the armed forces. The executive, legislative, and judicial branches, as well as unions and local governments, all face distrust from more than a

third of respondents. Nonetheless, 73.7% acknowledge the role of unions in defending labor rights, and trust in social organizations and movements exceeds that in several political institutions—indicating that within collective action, the hope for a renewed form of politics still endures.

MODERATE ACTIVISM AND THE SEARCH FOR SAFE SPACES

Over 70% of young Dominicans express some degree of interest in politics, yet only 18.2% describe themselves as “very” or “quite” interested. Political discussions mostly occur in private settings—among friends, family, or coworkers—and rarely online. Among those who never talk about politics (20.7%), the main reasons are lack of interest, the conflictive nature of the topic, or insufficient understanding or information—a gap that affects women more, linked to underrepresentation and gender bias.

Organizational membership remains limited: 41.3% did not participate in any collective space over the past year, and those who did favored religious or sports groups. Only 3.5% joined social movements or rights-based collectives. Common barriers include lack of time, the perception that “nothing is gained,” and the feeling that “no one represents their interests.” Still, party affiliation shows potential: 31.3% have been members, and 28% express willingness to join—indicating interest exists but inclusive spaces are lacking.

The most common forms of participation are the least disruptive—volunteering, signing petitions,

and sharing content. Protests or occupations are less frequent, though 14.8% reported demonstrating, motivated by a desire to transform the country. Voting remains valued as a mechanism for change (59.7%), but abstention is high: voter turnout was 56.6% in 2020, and although 69.6% intended to vote in 2024, three in ten did not plan to do so.

Online, political engagement is limited and mostly passive: 66% use social media for information, but few express critical positions. The topics that generate the most engagement in digital spaces are the environment, youth rights, and family. In sum, young Dominicans are present and attentive—but they demand participation formats aligned with their values, rhythms, and need to be heard.

DOMINANT CENTER WITH NUANCES: STRONG SOCIAL STATE, MARKET AS TENSION

The political center prevails (51.8%), with a slight right-leaning tendency among men and higher social classes. Nevertheless, there is broad support for the State’s role in guaranteeing health, education, and environmental protection (86.8%), for the free provision of public services (88.2%), and for technological regulation (81.2%), along with redistributive fiscal policies. This confidence in the public sphere coexists with the belief that the private sector could manage certain services more efficiently, revealing an underlying tension between rights and market logics. In terms of rights, progress coexists with gray areas: a political culture that has yet to fully embrace gender equality and rights-based approaches.

Dominican youth are not apathetic—they are critical, demanding, and aware. Between democratic values and exclusionary practices lie real tensions, but also an opportunity: this generation knows what hurts, what must change, and what it is willing to defend. The task is to open the way through safe, horizontal, and inclusive spaces for participation, supported by institutions that listen and are accountable. Only then will the democratic ideal regain meaning and a sense of belonging for new generations.

To download the
FULL REPORT in Spanish,
 scan the QR code.



[HTTPS://JUVENTUDESASIGNATURAPENDIENTE.COM/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2025/09/22282.PDF](https://juventudesasignaturapendiente.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/22282.pdf)

URUGUAY



BETWEEN THE DEMOCRATIC IDEAL AND POLITICAL EXCLUSION: WHAT URUGUAYAN YOUTH THINK

Ana Paula García Erramuspe

The study “Make Them Realize We’re Close” analyzes the relationship of Uruguayan youth with politics, the State, and democratic life. The report explores their perceptions, concerns, and positions regarding employment, rights, participation, security, and the role of institutions. The overall picture combines subjective well-being with economic and labor disenchantment, attachment to democracy with low political participation, and a predominantly progressive outlook nuanced by conservative views on certain issues.

IN URUGUAY, 1,108 YOUNG PEOPLE PARTICIPATED IN THE STUDY.

BETWEEN PERSONAL SATISFACTION AND STRUCTURAL INEQUALITIES

Young Uruguayans generally describe themselves as satisfied with their lives and optimistic about the future, yet the economy and employment remain their main sources of concern. At the regional level, Uruguay leads in terms of access to employment,



with 58% of the population engaged in work; of this group, 59% hold full-time jobs with all legally mandated benefits. Nevertheless, youth unemployment remains considerably high (ILO, 2023; INE, 2024), and the labor market continues to pose barriers, particularly for those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds.

In terms of health, 80% have some form of coverage, placing the country among those with the highest access in the region. However, 35% of young people are considering emigration: 68% to gain new experiences, 38% due to unemployment, and 27% because of the economic crisis.

Their main concerns and priorities include drug use (62%), insecurity (43%), and organized crime (23%), alongside unemployment, poverty, and lack of access to basic rights, which concern 46%. Accordingly, the most urgent policy demands are employment (53%), social welfare (36%), housing (30%), and public safety (32%). Issues such as gender equality, climate change, and youth participation rank lower, reflecting an immediate focus on economic and security-related matters.

LOW POLITICAL INTEREST AND DEBATES CONFINED TO PRIVATE SPACES

Uruguay ranks as the fifth country in the region with the lowest levels of political interest: nearly half of respondents report little or no interest in politics. While the reasons for this disinterest vary, surveyed women show lower engagement than men, and the same pattern appears among young



people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds compared to higher ones.

Almost half express little (25%) or no interest (24%) in political issues, and only one in five reports being quite (12%) or very interested (8%). This disinterest is also reflected in the frequency of political conversations, which are mostly limited to family or close friends.

Only 13% discuss politics frequently or very frequently, and few do so in public or collective spaces. Among those with no interest at all (24%), reasons include boredom, lack of information, or aversion to the conflict that political discussions often provoke.

DIVIDED INSTITUTIONAL TRUSTY AND LIMITED YOUTH REPRESENTATION

Universities are the institutions that inspire the greatest trust, while churches and influencers concentrate the highest levels of distrust. Although a majority acknowledges the importance of trade unions, there is also a significant lack of understanding about their role, as reflected in the 30% who either do not know or do not respond when asked about their relevance. Regarding political debate, 36% positively assess the performance of Parliament, while 35% have no clear opinion.

Although more than half consider youth participation in the political agenda to be important, they do not identify organizations that represent or defend their interests. This may be linked to a broader issue: existing spaces fail to adequately channel the concerns and demands of young people.

DOMINANT IDEOLOGICAL CENTER WITH MARKED PROGRESSIVE TENDENCIES

Most young Uruguayans identify with the political center (51%), although the country leads the region in support for the left or far left (25%). Women (29%), along with the middle (26%) and lower classes (25%), tend to lean left, while men (29%) and young people from higher socioeconomic backgrounds (38%) show a stronger inclination toward the right.

Beyond the ideological spectrum, there is clear support for fundamental rights: 86% endorse free access to health and education, and 81% support same-sex marriage and freedom of gender and sexual identity.

Uruguayan youth hold a largely progressive outlook, with strong backing for the State's role in social welfare, gender equality, and environmental protection. However, opinions are more divided regarding income redistribution, migration policies, and abortion legalization. According to the data, 64% support gender parity laws and 72% back comprehensive sex education, while one-third oppose abortion legalization.

LOW ORGANIZATIONAL PARTICIPATION AND PREVAILING DISINTEREST

The majority have not participated in any political or social organization in the past year. Among

those who have, only one in five reports doing so for political, ethical, social, or religious convictions; fewer than 10% belong to student, neighborhood, cooperative, social movement, union, or political organizations.

Those who do not participate cite two main reasons. On one hand, individual motivations such as lack of time, preference for personal activities, or the perception that participation offers no tangible benefits. On the other, they claim that existing organizations fail to represent their interests.

In party politics, engagement is similarly low: only 9% have been affiliated with a party and 6% have been candidates, while nearly half do not identify with any party. Electoral support—whether in person or online—remains the most common form of political involvement, yet 60% say they have not done it and would not do so.

Less formal actions—such as signing petitions, using social media for advocacy, or attending protests—also show limited participation: none exceed 25%, and around 40% say they neither engage nor intend to. Among the active minority (17%), participation is motivated by indignation or a desire for change. Those who abstain cite disinterest, lack of time, and skepticism. This defines a youth civic culture that is more critical than apathetic, marked by disenchantment and distance from traditional channels of political engagement.

Far from being depoliticized, Uruguayan youth face structural barriers that constrain their participation: unemployment, lack of representation, institutional distrust, and generational exclusion.

Their priorities are clear—employment, welfare, housing, and security—and their values show broad social consensus around rights and the welfare state. The challenge lies in creating real and safe channels for participation, renewing political mediation with a generational and gender-balanced approach, and safeguarding democratic convictions against the temptation of authoritarian shortcuts. Only then will the democratic ideal feel attainable, and young people will be able to take an active role in shaping the country’s future.

To download the
FULL REPORT in Spanish,
scan the QR code.



[HTTPS://JUVENTUDESASIGNATURAPENDIENTE.COM/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2025/09/22307.PDF](https://juventudesasignaturapendiente.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/22307.pdf)

VENEZUELA



VENEZUELAN YOUTH: BETWEEN PRECARIOUSNESS AND DEMOCRATIC HOPE

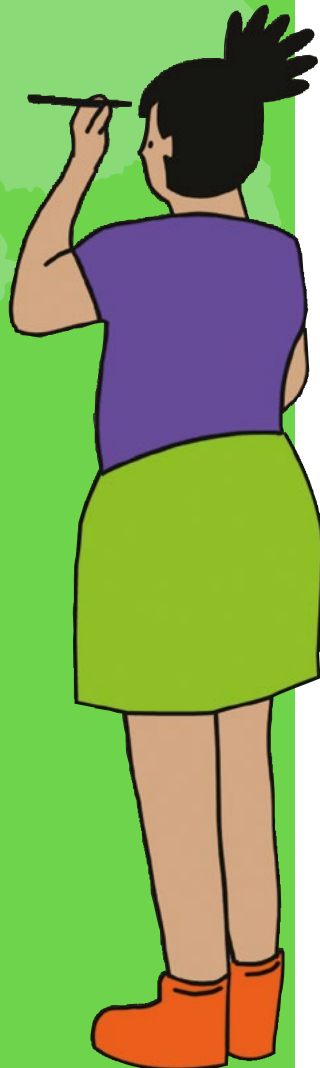
**Lisette González,
Anaís López**

The report “What do young people in Venezuela think and how do they participate? Attitudes toward politics and collective action” gathers the expectations, motivations, and concerns of young people regarding politics, democracy, and collective action, in a context marked by the presidential election of July 28, 2024.

The data portray a generation with expectations of democratic change, rejection of authoritarian alternatives, and a strong demand for educational and employment opportunities. At the same time, there is a clear detachment from political parties and trade unions, as well as a low inclination toward collective action, except in sports and religious spaces.

The objective of the report is to contribute to public debate from a progressive, democratic, and social justice perspective, highlighting the demands and future prospects of a generation that reached adulthood surrounded by great challenges.

**IN VENEZUELA, 1,103 YOUNG
PEOPLE PARTICIPATED IN THE
STUDY.**



LIVING CONDITIONS: EDUCATION, LABOR INSECURITY, AND EXPECTATIONS

Most young people aged 18 to 35 have completed secondary education (56% of men and 47% of women), and a significant proportion have accessed higher education (33% of men and 41% of women).

The employment situation is critical: the most common category is job seekers (55% of women and 40% of men). Only 27% of men and 16% of women report having stable employment; the rest depend on temporary jobs or work without labor rights.

This coexists with an ambivalent assessment: 66% of young people are somewhat or very dissatisfied with their economic situation, and 77% with that of the country, yet 50% report being satisfied or very satisfied with their personal lives. Still, 89% believe their future will be better or much better in five years; this optimism is linked to the intention to migrate (45%), seen as a way out of unemployment and crisis.

YOUTH BETWEEN POLITICAL DISENCHANTMENT AND THE DEFENSE OF DEMOCRACY

Far from the image of the once-prominent student movement, today a low or null interest in politics predominates: five out of ten young people admit this, a higher figure than in the UCAB Youth Survey (2021). A gender gap persists: 22% of men report considerable or high interest, compared to 11% of women.

Despite this detachment, support for democracy remains strong: 62% consider it the best form of government; 51% reject the idea that “it makes no difference” to live in a democracy or not; and 62% oppose military governments in times of crisis. However, a tension persists: 65% agree that a strong leader is more capable of solving the coun-

try’s problems, revealing a desire for effectiveness that borders on personalism. Democratic support varies by ideology—79% among those identifying with the right and 47% on the left.

On public policy, progressive positions prevail: 82% support free health and education, and large majorities back environmental measures, Indigenous autonomy, and migrants’ rights. 63% percent favor gender parity laws; 74% endorse comprehensive sex education; and 44% support same-sex marriage. Conservative stances remain: 59% reject the legalization of abortion, and 54% believe women are better suited for caregiving roles.

Institutional trust is minimal: 64% express very high distrust toward the Executive, 61% toward the police, and 60% toward local governments and political parties. Venezuela ranks as the Latin American country where young people express the highest level of distrust toward the state and its institutions.



YOUTH PARTICIPATION: BETWEEN VOTING, DIGITAL ACTIVISM, AND ORGANIZATIONAL APATHY

Voting is the most widespread form of participation. Sixty-three percent report being registered in the Electoral Registry, although only 46% of adults over 18 voted in the 2021 regional elections. Ahead of the presidential elections on July 28, 2024, willingness to vote rises to 68%—higher among those identifying with the right and lower among centrists. Party membership is scarce: 14% have joined a political party, and 15% have tried to persuade others to vote.

Alternative forms of engagement favor low-risk, low-commitment actions: 20% use social media to express opinions, 19% have protested, and 19% have signed or collected petitions. More ex-

posed actions remain marginal (6% hunger strikes; 5% occupations). Digital activism is central: 63% get informed through social media and 40% via WhatsApp; television follows at 38%. Online participation is mostly passive —35% share memes and 38% give likes— while creating original content is rare.

Beyond politics, organizational involvement is even lower: 55% did not participate in any organization in the past year. Among those who did, most engaged with religious groups (18%) and sports clubs (13%); only 6% participated in volunteer or recreational activities. Involvement in unions, student councils, or neighborhood associations is minimal. The report highlights youth engagement in human-rights causes, feminist and LGBTQ+ collectives, spaces that have fostered new leaderships.

Venezuelan youth live in the context of economic precarity, high institutional distrust, and a strong intention to migrate. Although nearly seven out of ten express willingness to vote, involvement in political parties, unions, or social organizations remains minimal, and digital activism is limited to low-cost actions. A conservative undercurrent also persists regarding sexual and reproductive rights, underscoring the urgency of comprehensive sex education and gender equality.

The challenge lies in promoting progressive agendas that strengthen democracy, foster youth leadership, and connect existing causes with social justice and human rights, demonstrating that another way of doing politics is possible in Venezuela.

To download the
FULL REPORT in Spanish,
scan the QR code.



[HTTPS://JUVENTUDESASIGNATURAPENDIENTE.COM/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2025/09/22321-20250925.PDF](https://juventudesasignaturapendiente.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/22321-20250925.pdf)

REFERENCES

- Aguilera, A. y Álvarez, F. (2025). "Youth, Politics, and Democracy in Chile: A Conversation for Change". En Bilbao, A. (Coord.), *Youth: A pending subject. Survey on Political Participation and Attitudes of Youth in Latin America and the Caribbean*. Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES).
- Balbuena, A. (2025). "Dominican Youth and Democracy: The Challenge of Valuing the Collective, Conflict, and the Right to Material Well-Being". En Bilbao, A. (Coord.), *Juventudes: asignatura pendiente. Encuesta sobre participación y actitudes políticas de las juventudes en América Latina y el Caribe*. Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES).
- Bilbao, A. G. (Coord.), Vázquez, M., Ramírez, F., Guaraná de Castro, E., Aguilera, Ó., Licea, M., y Rodríguez, C. (2025). *Youth: A pending subject. Survey on Political Participation and Attitudes of Youth in Latin America and the Caribbean*. Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES).
- Guaraná de Castro, E.; Macedo, S., Perez, O. C.; Habermann, W. (2025). "Youth: A Pending Challenge – An Analysis of Democracy, Participation, and Political Positioning of Youth in Brazil". En Bilbao, A. (Coord.), *Youth: A pending subject. Survey on Political Participation and Attitudes of Youth in Latin America and the Caribbean*. Sao Paulo: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES).
- Cortez, J. (2024). "Exploring Contrasts: Democracy Through the Eyes of Bolivian Youth". En Bilbao, A. (Coord.), *Youth: A pending subject. Survey on Political Participation and Attitudes of Youth in Latin America and the Caribbean*. La Paz: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES).
- Dinegro, A. (2024). "Youth in Peru: Crisis, Expectations, and Realities". En Bilbao, A. (Coord.), *Youth: A pending subject. Survey on Political Participation and Attitudes of Youth in Latin America and the Caribbean*. Lima: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES).
- García Erramuspe, A. P. (2025). "Let Them Realize That We Are Close': Youth and Politics in Uruguay". En Bilbao, A. (Coord.), *Youth: A pending subject. Survey on Political Participation and Attitudes of Youth in Latin America and the Caribbean*. Montevideo: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES).
- Gonzalez, L. y López, A. (2024). "What Do Young People in Venezuela Think and How Do They Participate? Attitudes Toward Politics and Collective Action". En Bilbao, A. (Coord.), *Youth: A pending subject. Survey on Political Participation and Attitudes of Youth in Latin America and the Caribbean*. Caracas: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES).
- Hernández de La Torre, J. y Cabanzo, M. (2024). "Country Report: Because Tomorrow Will Be Beautiful. Youth in Colombia Between Present Disenchantment and Hope for a Better Future". En Bilbao, A. (Coord.), *Youth: A pending subject. Survey on Political Participation and Attitudes of Youth in Latin America and the Caribbean*. Bogotá: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES).
- Licea, M. y Sosa, L. (2024). "National Report: Mexico". En Bilbao, A. (Coord.), *Youth: A pending subject. Survey on Political Participation and Attitudes of Youth in Latin America and the Caribbean*. Ciudad de México: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES).
- Ramírez, F. (2025). "Political Participation of Ecuadorian Youth: Between Fear, Precarity, and Inequality". En Bilbao, A. (Coord.), *Youth: A pending subject. Survey on Political Participation and Attitudes of Youth in Latin America and the Caribbean*. Quito: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES).
- Romero, M. (2024). "Political Participation of Panamanian Youth in the Current Context". En Bilbao, A. (Coord.), *Youth: A pending subject. Survey on Political Participation and Attitudes of Youth in Latin America and the Caribbean*. Ciudad de Panamá: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES).

- Sánchez, I. y García, C. (2024). "Youth in Costa Rica Between Democracy and Authoritarianism" En Bilbao, A. (Coord.), *Youth: A pending subject. Survey on Political Participation and Attitudes of Youth in Latin America and the Caribbean*. San José: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES).
- Vázquez, M. y Beretta, D. (2025). "Youth in Argentina: Between Anger and Hope" En Bilbao, A. (Coord.), *Youth: A pending subject. Survey on Political Participation and Attitudes of Youth in Latin America and the Caribbean*. Buenos Aires: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES).
- Villalta, E. (2024). "Situation of Youth Political Participation and Opinion in Honduras" En Bilbao, A. (Coord.), *Youth: A pending subject. Survey on Political Participation and Attitudes of Youth in Latin America and the Caribbean*. Santiago de Chile: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES).

Acknowledgements:

Regional and Ecuador Coordination:

Tina Hennecken-Andrade

Representative, FES Ecuador (current)

Constantin Groll

Representative, FES Ecuador (hasta junio 2025)

Anabel Bilbao García

Project Coordinator

Camila Rodríguez

Project Officer

National Project coordination teams:

Sergio Balardini y Mariela Ventos (FES Argentina)

José Luis Exeni (FES Bolivia)

Willian Habermann (FES Brazil)

Christian Sánchez (FES Chile)

Saruy Tolosa (FES Colombia)

Argerie Sánchez (FES Costa Rica)

Anabel Bilbao G. (FES Ecuador)

Mónica Torres (FES Honduras)

Elisa Sánchez (FES Mexico)

Argerie Sánchez (FES Panama)

Raúl Tecco y María del Pilar Sáenz (FES Peru)

María Fernanda López (FES Dominican Republic)

Aníbal Peluffo (FES Uruguay)

Anais López (FES Venezuela)

Compilation and Layout

Nataly Tufiño Villacís: Media Consultant. Specialist in political communication, human rights, and environmental communication.

Suggested Citation:

Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (2025). Youth: a pending subject. Summary of findings from the regional and national studies. Friedrich Ebert Foundation: Quito

Imprint

Av. República E7-123 and pasaje Martín Carrión.
Edificio Pucará, 4th floor
Quito, Ecuador

For publications requests:

info.ecuador@fes.de

The opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the official positions of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung.

The commercial use of materials edited and published by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) is prohibited without prior written authorization from FES.

The survey results are nationally representative. Together with data from other countries in the region, they provide a comparative perspective on youth.

ISBN: 978-9978-94-285-7

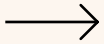




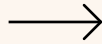
Youth:

a pending subject

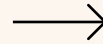
RESUMEN DE HALLAZGOS



One of the main priorities of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES) is its work with politically engaged youth at the national, regional, and global levels. Youth: An Unfinished Agenda is a regional FES initiative in Latin America and the Caribbean. The project aims to collect, analyze, and bring into public debate robust, evidence-based data on political participation and the attitudes of young people across the region.



Between January and February 2024, a survey was conducted with approximately 22,000 young people across fourteen countries in the region, using a web-based panel methodology. The participating countries were Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Peru, the Dominican Republic, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

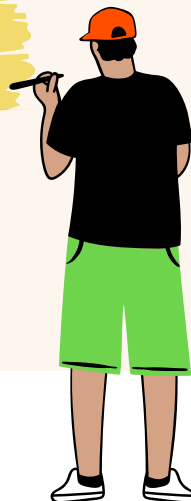


The study examines the forms, types, and motivations of youth political participation, their political orientations on key contemporary issues, their perceptions of the State and democracy, as well as their modes of political expression and use of social media.

This document summarizes the main findings and proposes pathways to strengthen youth political participation and renew democratic institutions.

THE REGIONAL DATA ANALYSIS REPORT, DATA VISUALIZATIONS, AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROJECT ARE AVAILABLE AT:

WWW.JUVENTUDESFES.ORG



To download the **FULL REPORT** in Spanish, scan the QR code.



**FRIEDRICH
EBERT
STIFTUNG**