

WHAT YOUTH WANT FOR THE POLITICAL SYSTEM

Recommendations from the **ActEU Youth Democracy Labs**





MORE CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT

At European level, young people feel that there are too few opportunities for them to make their voices heard.

More specifically, they are calling for more public consultations in general and, for example, referrals to EU-wide referendums on major European issues.

SOME INSTITUTIONAL REFORMS

Several reforms are also deemed necessary in the main institutions:

- To give the European Parliament the right to initiate legislation;
- To create transnational lists for EU elections;
- To use qualified majority voting more often in the Council;
- To hold public hearings for Commissioners;
- To directly elect the President of the European Commission.

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ENHANCED TRANSPARENCY

Above all, the Youth Labs expressed high expectations towards institutions, politicians and political practices. In this regard, transparency is seen as a priority, and its current level is not considered satisfactory.

Specifically, requests for clearer political platforms and greater transparency with regards to decision-making and business relations were highlighted.

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BETTER REPRESENTATION

Even though the situation is improving, there is still strong demand for better representation and greater diversity in politics, particularly with regard to women, youth, minorities, and low-income groups. However, the possibility of using quota is still under debate.

IMPROVED COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION

If young people are not engaged enough with politics, it may be because politics does not target them directly enough. In any case, communication and information aimed at young people is a recurring demand. While this communication may require an increased presence on social media, these campaigns must remain serious and focused on specific issues.

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And whether through clearer explanations or by providing information in different languages (including Braille) or on different media, efforts must be made to offer political information that is understandable to everyone.



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THOROUGH CIVIC EDUCATION

All of this could be combined with more civic and political education, starting as early as primary or middle school. Whether it is about the European Union or politics in general, the aim is to increase political interest and prepare students to engage in democracy.

A FAIRER BEHAVIOUR

Finally, politicians and political parties will have to work hard on themselves if they wish to regain young people's trust.

FROM POLITICIANS

They are expected to take more **grounded, honest positions** that are connected to the lives of citizens.



AND POLITICAL PARTIES

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Politicians, who should be knowledgeable about the issues they deal with, must also develop their positions with the help of experts and with a long-term perspective.

U-turns or defections to other political parties are therefore severely judged. In order to combat polarisation, political parties are expected to cooperate more and behave more fairly during campaigns.



TAKEAWAYS FROM THE ACTEU YOUTH LABS

Young people want to participate in politics, but they are **dissatisfied with the current political system.**

They are calling for **clear opportunities for involvement**, some of which can be implemented immediately, while others require institutional reforms. But they also expect more from institutions – greater transparency – and especially from politicians and political parties.

They expect better communication and information aimed at them, more civic and political education but above all **more serious, knowledgeable and fair behaviour** from elected officials and representatives.

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