

# Citizenship and Participation

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- The definition of citizenship from Wikipedia:

Citizenship denotes the link between a person and a state (e.g. Norway) or association of states (e.g. EU). Possession of citizenship is normally associated with the **right** to work and live in a country and to participate in political life.

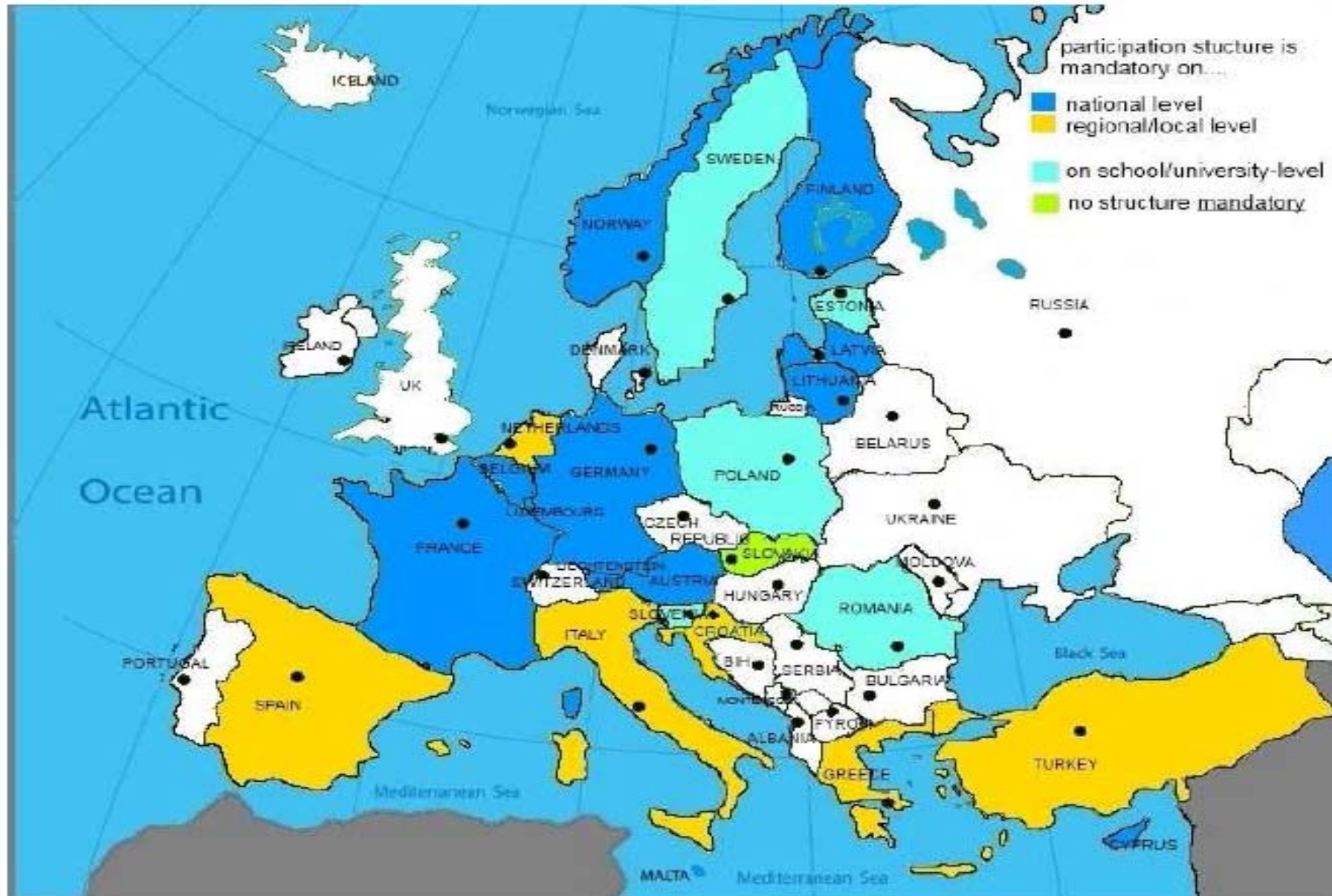
- The right to participation (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948):

Article 20,1. Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.

Article 21, 1. Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.

Article 23, 4. Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

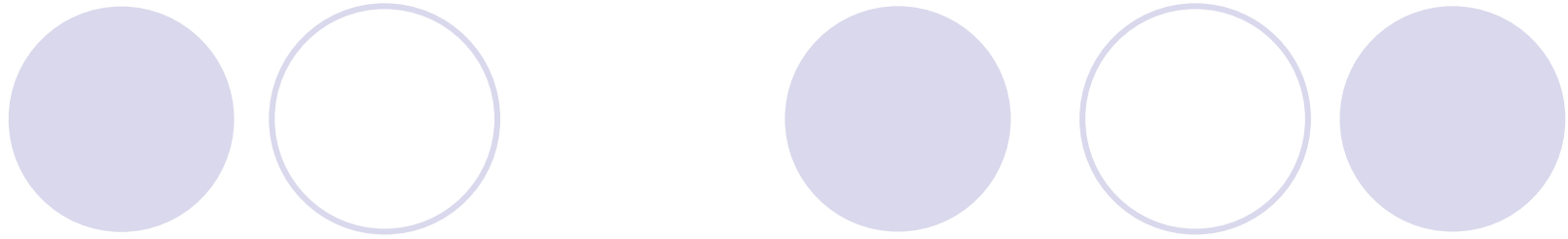
In all countries where a law exists, young people's rights to participation in decision making process is mandatory. In Europe (Zentner, M. 2011)





## Participation for active citizenship

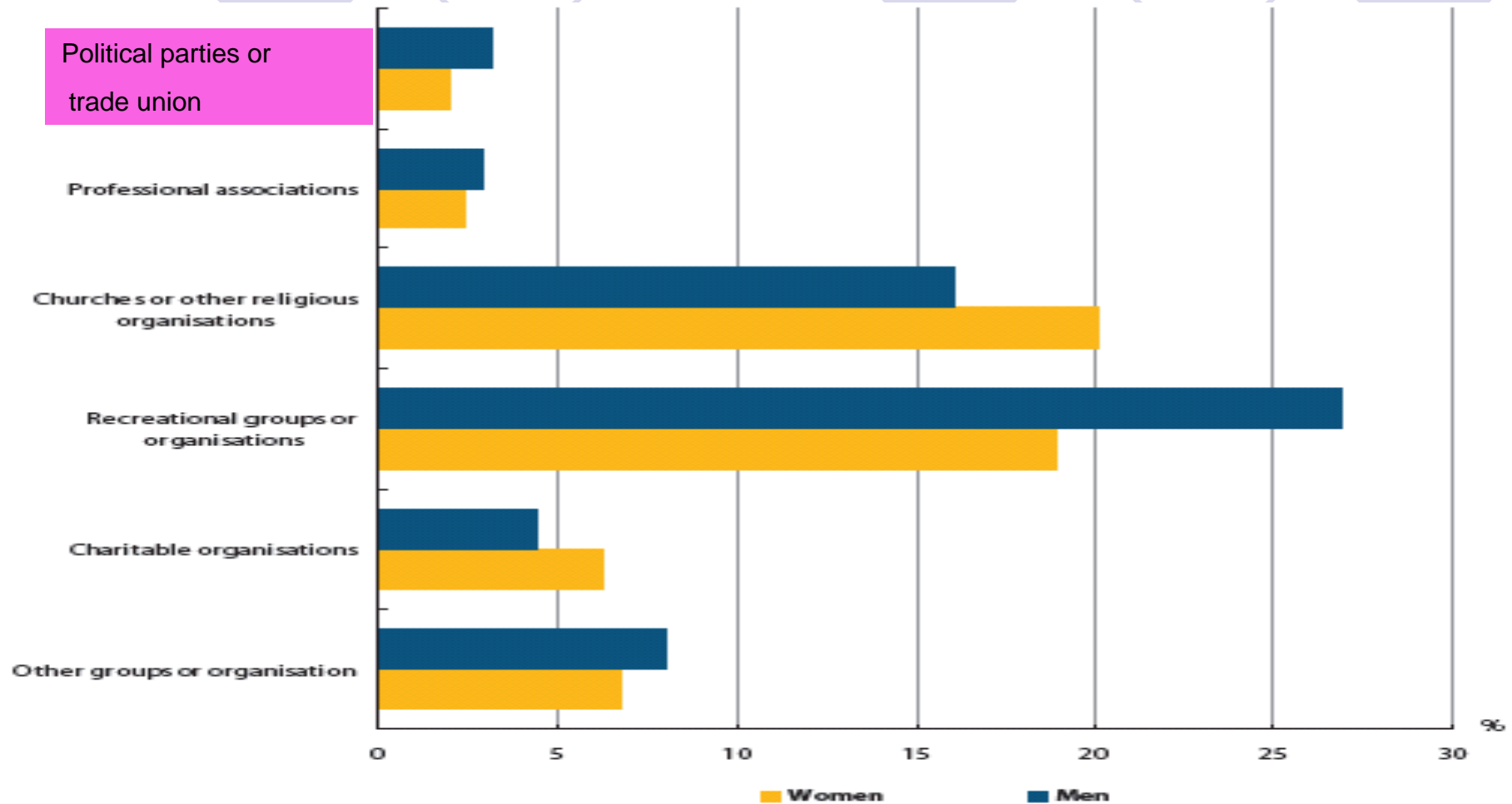
- Participation is essential for individuals using their right as a citizenship.
- Participation of citizens is about engaging in forming opinions and taking actions to bring about positive changes in society.
- Active citizenship in a democratic society has two forms:
  - \* Representation in governance
  - \* Participation in civic and political affaires



Youth representation in governance:

they are not at the positions where power resides

# Youth representations are in many social and recreational groups but not political organisations



Source: Eurostat, EU-SILC ad hoc module on social participation, 2006  
Note: EU-27: estimates

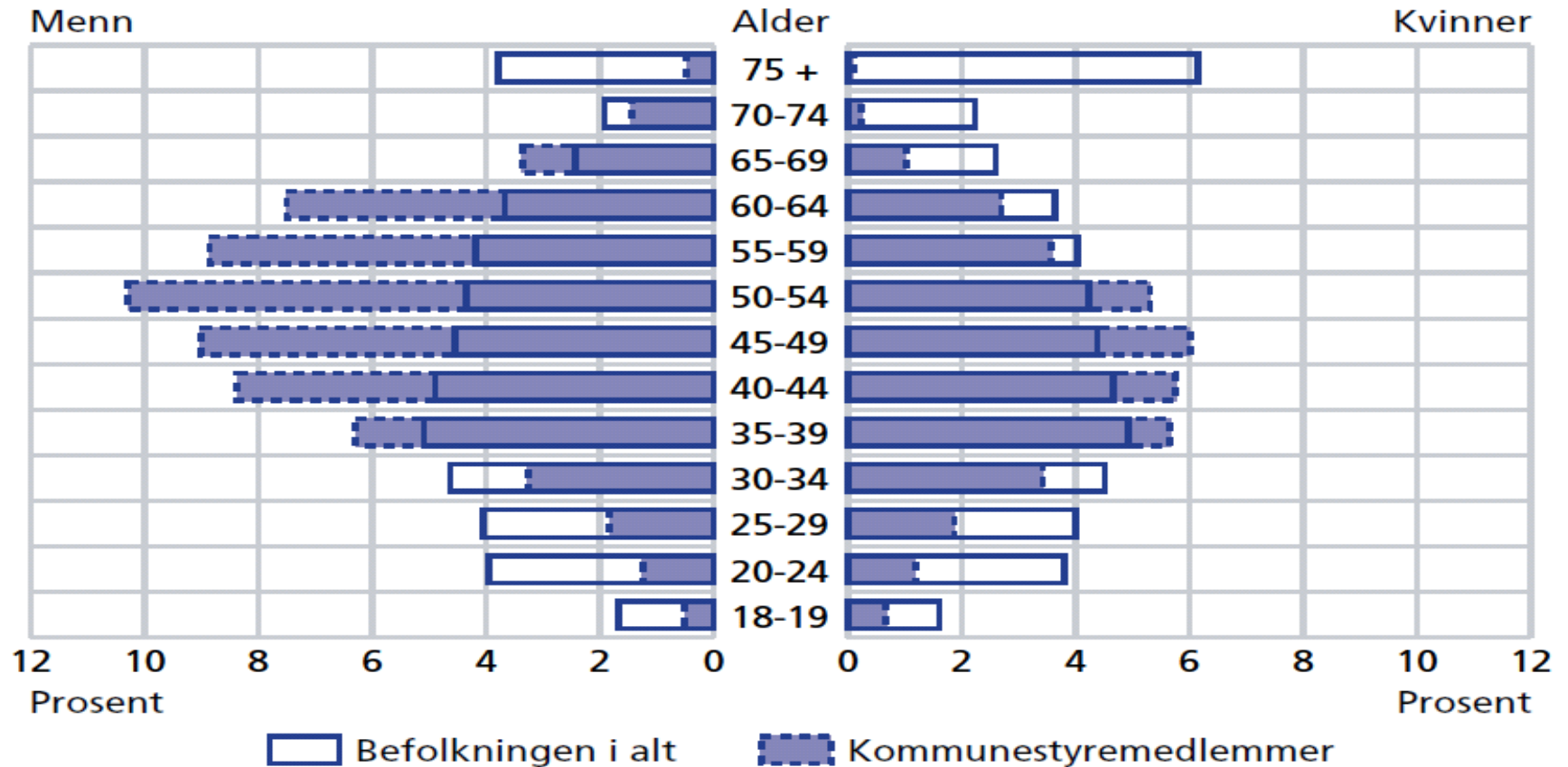
Which of the following political actions do young people think is the MOST important to ensure that their voice is heard by the policymakers?

	% To participate in debates with policy-makers	% To join a political party	% To take part in a demonstration	% To sign a petition	% To be member or support NGO	% To join a trade union	% DK/NA
<b>EU 15</b>	11	17	15	12	10	<b>28</b>	5
<b>NMS12</b>	12	13	8	8	15	<b>33</b>	9

Source: Flash Eurobarometer No 202 – Youth Survey data, 2007

# Young people are underrepresented in local community councils as well (LNU, 2011)

Kommunestyremedlemmer, etter alder og kjønn. 2007. Prosent



In addition, youth representatives often have to drop out from the local councils due to moving for studies and working opportunities elsewhere



Young people are underrepresented in national and local parliaments in Sweden as well, after national and local elections in 2010 (LNU 2011)

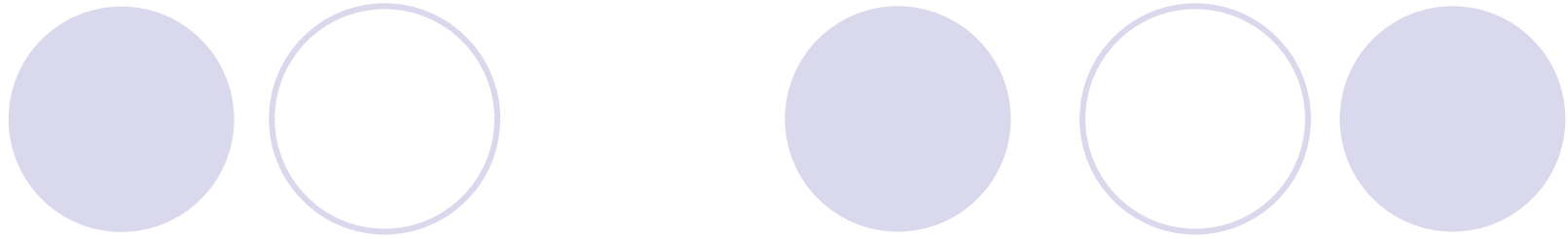
Etter at Sverige gjennomførte valg på alle de tre folkevalgte nivåene i 2010, så ungdomsrepresentasjonen slik ut for aldersgruppen 18-29 år:

	<b>Andel/total</b>	<b>Prosent</b>
Riksdagen <sup>42</sup>	17/349	5%
Landsting	93/1.662	6%
Kommunestyrelse	892/12.969	7%

The same underrepresentation of young people in Denmark after national election in 2007 and regional election in 2009 (LNU 2011)

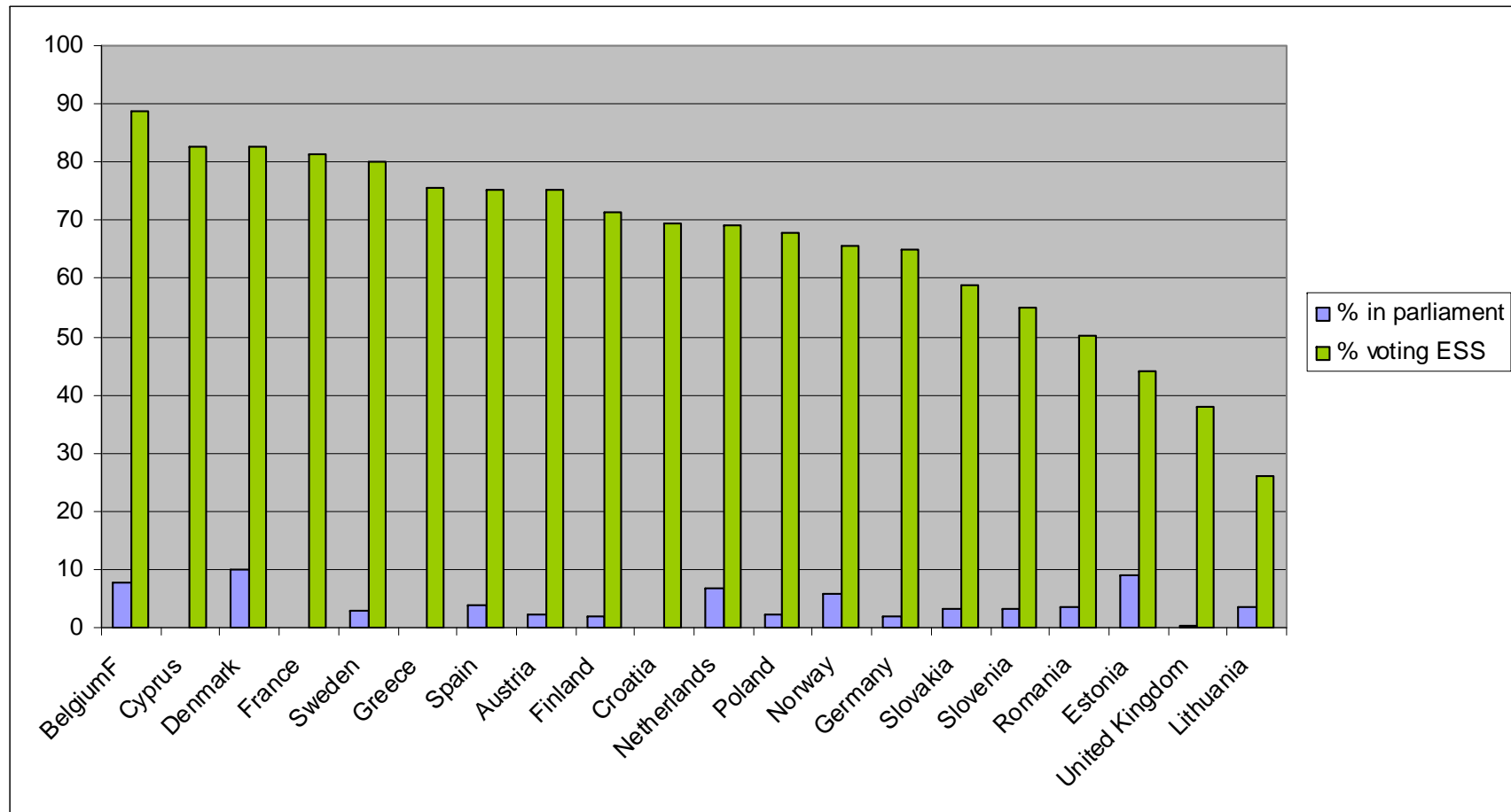
Etter folketingsvalget i 2007 og valget til kommunalbestyrelsene og regionsrådene i 2009, så ungdomsrepresentasjonen slik ut:

	<b>Andel/total</b>	<b>Prosent</b>
Folketinget <sup>50</sup>	17/179	10%
Regionråd <sup>51</sup>	11/205	5%
Kommunalbestyrelse <sup>52</sup>	138/2468	6%




**Challenge:**  
Without representation, young people  
are reluctant to participate

# Youth representation in national parliament vs % youths who have voted in European countries

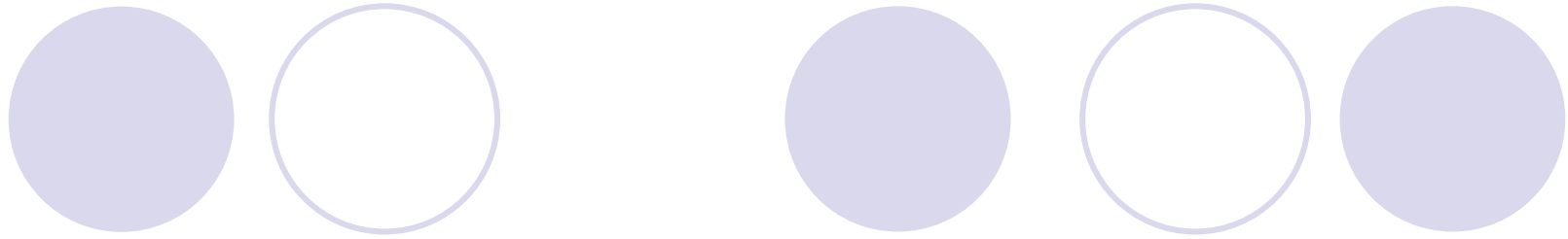


Data source: EKCYP (2011), ESS (2006-2008)

# Why don't young people vote in the first election when they are eligible to?

Main reasons why young people did not go to vote	>18
No candidate/party wanted to win	44 
Something important to do	26
Not interested in seeing what it was like	25
Forgot	16
No candidate/party wanted to lose	15
No duty to vote	13
Did not think it would be interesting/fun	13
Family was not going to vote	6
No friends went to vote	4
Family did not encourage to vote	4
Friends were not going to vote	3
Other	29

Source: EACEA/EC 'Youth Participation in Democratic Life', survey in 7 countries, 2011-2012 (AT, FI, FR, HU, ES, PL, UK)

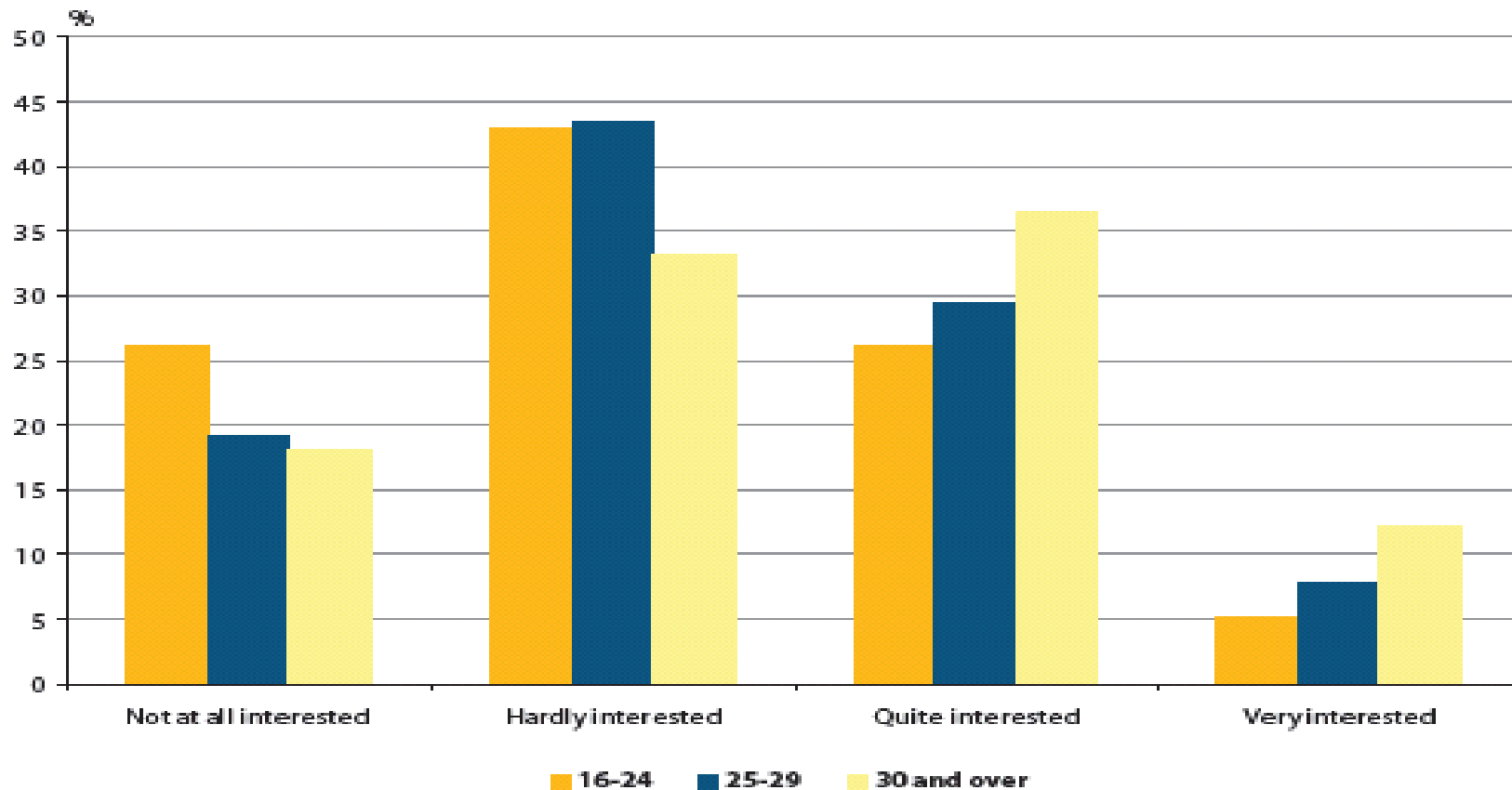


Youth participation in Europe:

they are interested and they do want to participate

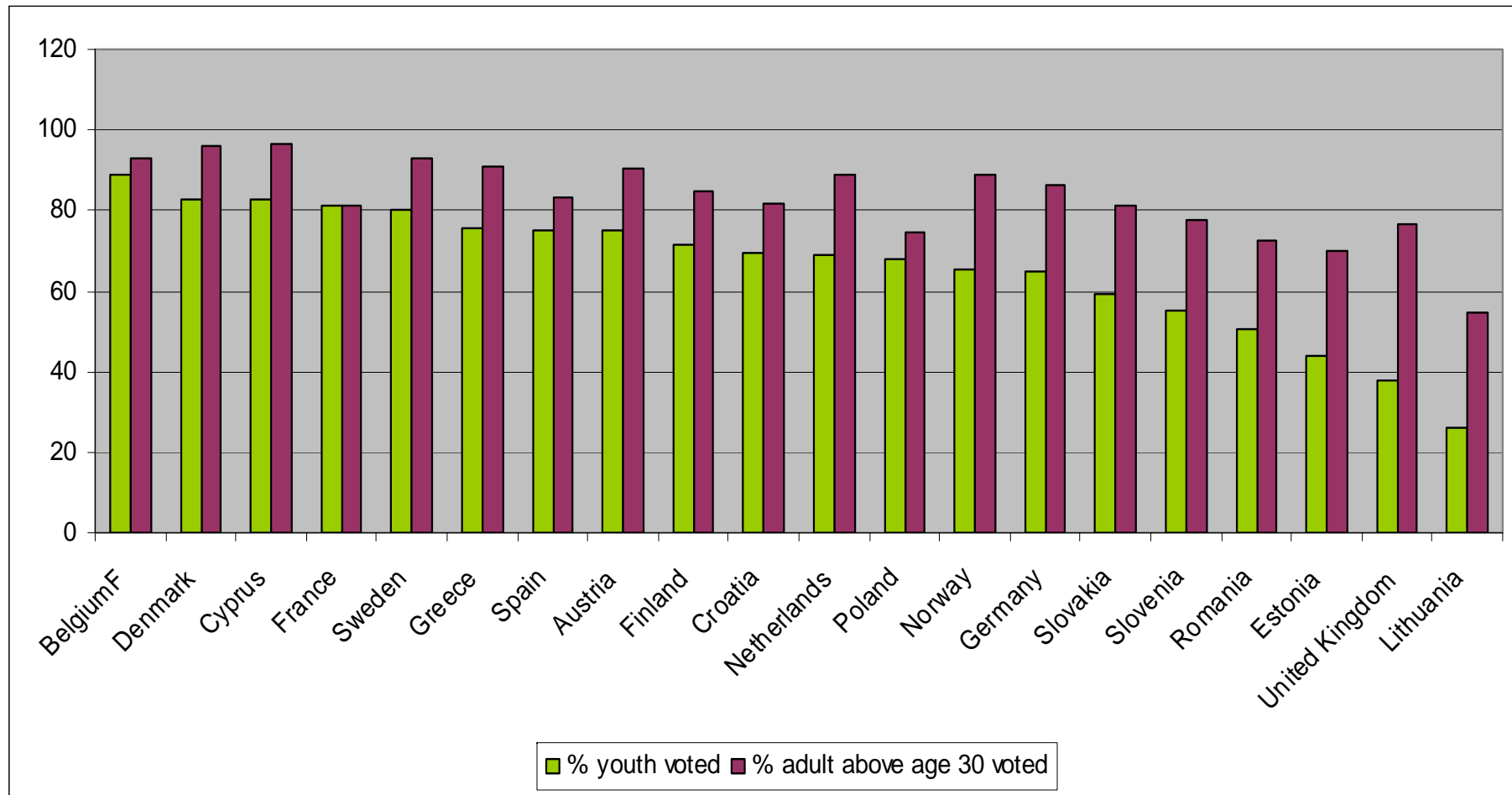
# Young people appear to be only slightly less interested in politics than the older generation

Figure 7.12: Interest in politics, by age group, EU-27, 2006 (%)\*



Source: European Social Survey<sup>(18)</sup>

# Young people appear to be only slightly less engaged in national elections than the older generation



Data source: EKCYP (2011), ESS (2006-2008)





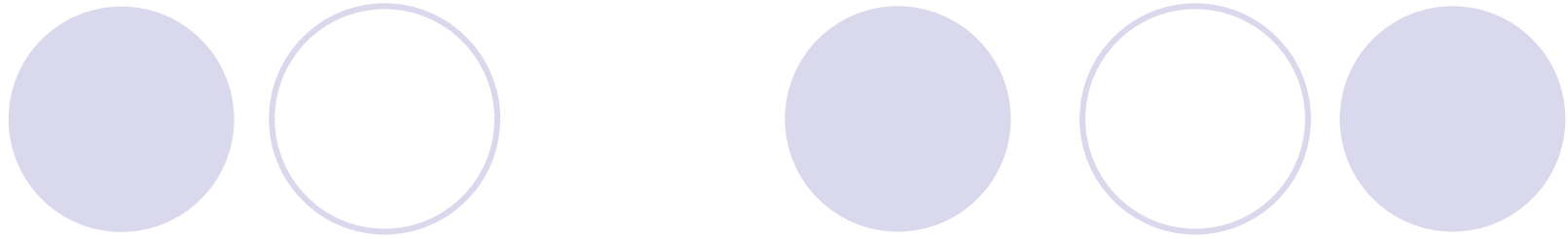
## Something happened from adolescent aspiration to actual participation in democracy

- In Norway, 84% 14 years olds in 2009 saying that their will definitely or probably vote in local and national elections when they become adults, while the actual turnout for local election trial in 2011 for 16 years olds is 60%.
- In 23 EU member countries on average, 78% 14 years olds adolescents saying they would vote in national election while 71% is the actual average turnout.
- The biggest gap is found in Lithuania from 88% aspired adolescents to 49% voting turnout.

# International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) 2009

Table 6.10: National percentages of students' expected electoral participation in European, local, and national elections

Country	Percentages of Students Reporting That They Probably Will or Certainly Will:			Electoral Turnout	
	Vote in local elections	Vote in national elections	Vote in European elections	In last national election (%)	In last European election (%)
Austria	83 (0.8) △	82 (0.9) △	77 (0.9) ▲	82	46
Belgium (Flemish) †	75 (1.1) ▽	72 (1.3) ▽	52 (1.1) ▽	93 <sup>a</sup>	90 <sup>b</sup>
Bulgaria	78 (1.0)	69 (1.0) ▽	55 (1.3)	56	39
Cyprus	76 (0.8) ▽	75 (0.8) ▽	59 (1.1)	89	59
Czech Republic †	67 (0.9) ▼	50 (1.1) ▼	38 (1.2) ▼	65	28
Denmark †	80 (0.7)	89 (0.6) ▲	54 (1.0) ▽	87	60
England ‡	75 (1.1) ▽	72 (1.1) ▽	43 (1.1) ▼	61 <sup>c</sup>	35 <sup>c</sup>
Estonia	78 (1.2)	73 (1.3) ▽	30 (1.0) ▼	62	44
Finland	85 (0.7) △	85 (0.7) △	53 (1.0) ▽	65	40
Greece	83 (0.9) △	77 (1.1)	68 (1.3) △	74	53
Ireland	89 (0.7) △	87 (0.7) △	73 (1.0) ▲	67	59
Italy	91 (0.6) ▲	88 (0.6) ▲	78 (0.9) ▲	81	65
Latvia	81 (1.1)	77 (1.2)	62 (1.1) △	61	54
Liechtenstein	80 (2.2)	81 (2.0)	n/a	85	n/a
Lithuania	88 (0.8) △	88 (0.8) △	58 (1.1)	49	21
Luxembourg	69 (0.7) ▼	73 (0.7) ▽	64 (0.8) △	92	91
Malta	81 (1.3)	86 (1.2) △	60 (1.3)	93	79
Poland	82 (1.0) △	77 (1.0)	50 (1.0) ▽	54	5
Slovak Republic <sup>1</sup>	74 (1.2) ▽	75 (1.2) ▽	64 (1.5) △	55	20
Slovenia	79 (0.8)	81 (0.8) △	43 (1.0) ▼	63	28
Spain	87 (0.8) △	85 (0.8) △	68 (0.9) ▲	75	45
Sweden	81 (1.1)	85 (0.9) △	63 (1.3) △	82	46
Switzerland †	70 (1.2) ▽	70 (1.4) ▽	n/a	48	n/a
European ICCS average	80 (0.2)	78 (0.2)	58 (0.2)	71	49



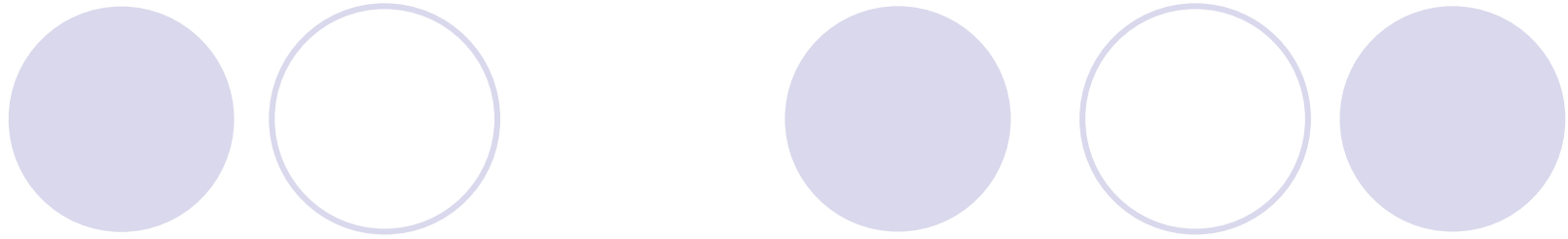
Most young people are engaged:

their participation on multiple platforms

**Table 4.1:** Modes of participation experienced at least once by young citizens

	<18	>18
Discuss politics	46	60
Sign existing petition	32	55
Donate to cause or charity	31	45
Vote in national or European election	7	59
Vote in local election	7	57
Overpay for a product to support a cause	27	40
Vote in sectorial election	17	33
Participate in a demonstration	21	26
Volunteer time to cause or charity	23	24
Boycott a product for political reasons	14	25
Vote in a Facebook or social media survey	19	23
Political comment on Facebook/social media	17	23
Stand for non-political election	18	17
Follow charity or party on social media	14	18
Join union or pressure group	6	16
Subscribe to charity or party newsletter	9	14
Send letter to politician or organisation	8	13
Join a political party or young party organisation	3	6
Initiate a petition	4	4
Stand for election	3	4
None of the above	19	7

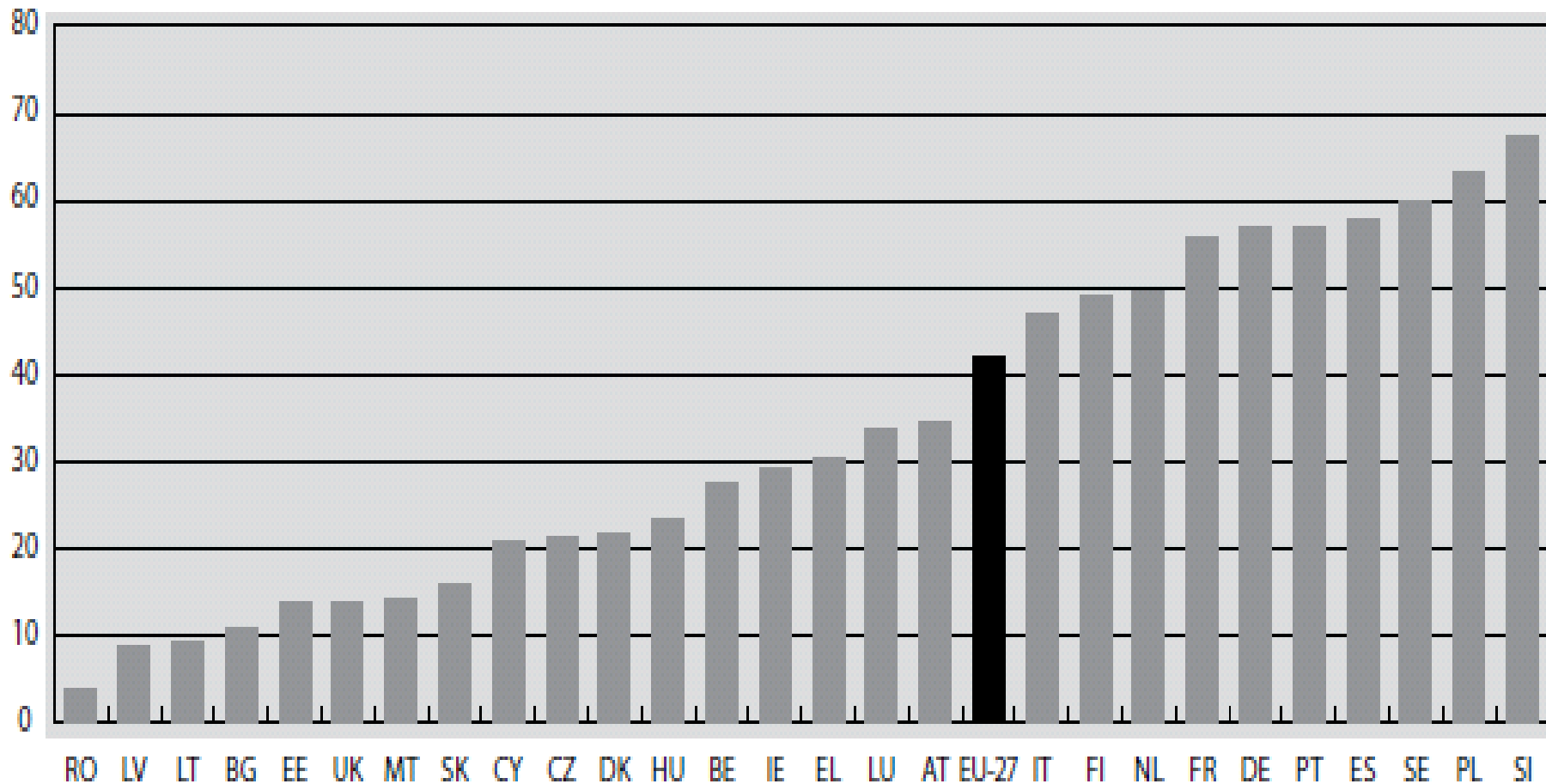
**Source:** EACEA/EC Youth Participation in Democratic Life survey, 2011-2012.



**Challenge: barriers to participation**

1. Young people at work usually have higher rates of temporary and part-time employment, which prevents their membership in a trade union

Figure 4: Share of young employees (15–24 age group) with a temporary contract, second quarter of 2010



Source: Eurostat.

2. Young people has always been one of the groups hardest hit by the economic downturn and they are often amongst the first to lose their jobs as a result of a crisis.

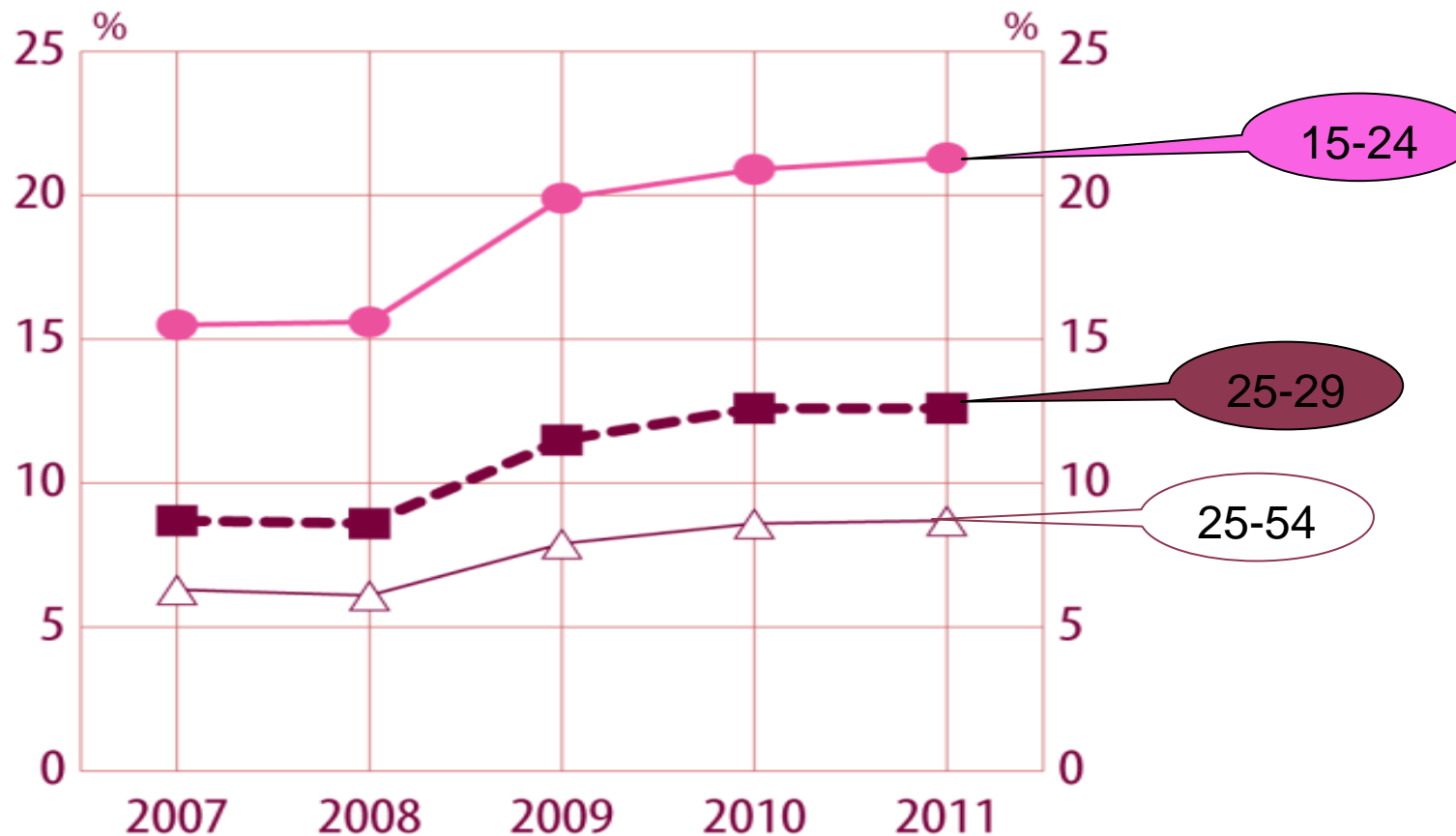
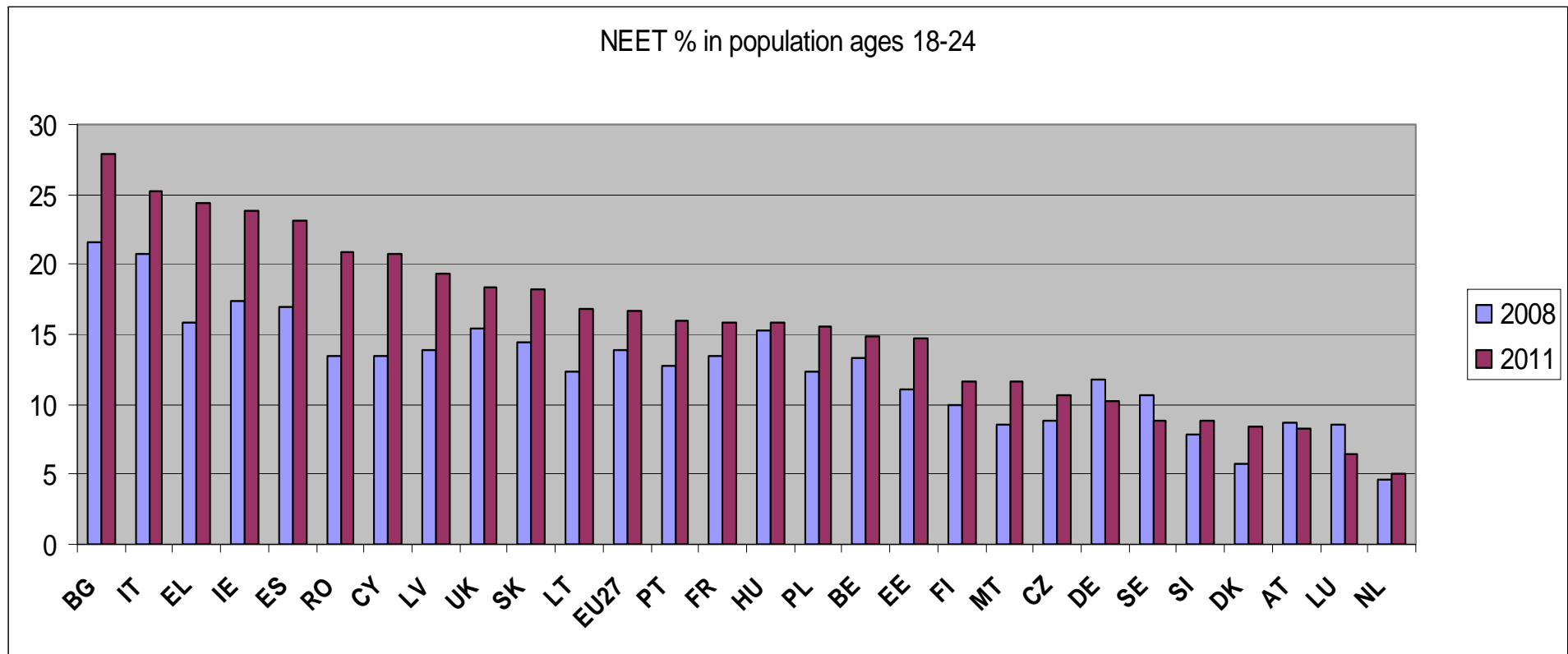


Figure 3-E: Increase of unemployment rates of young people, EU-27 average, by age, 2007-2011

### 3. The NEET youth are in danger to become passive citizens

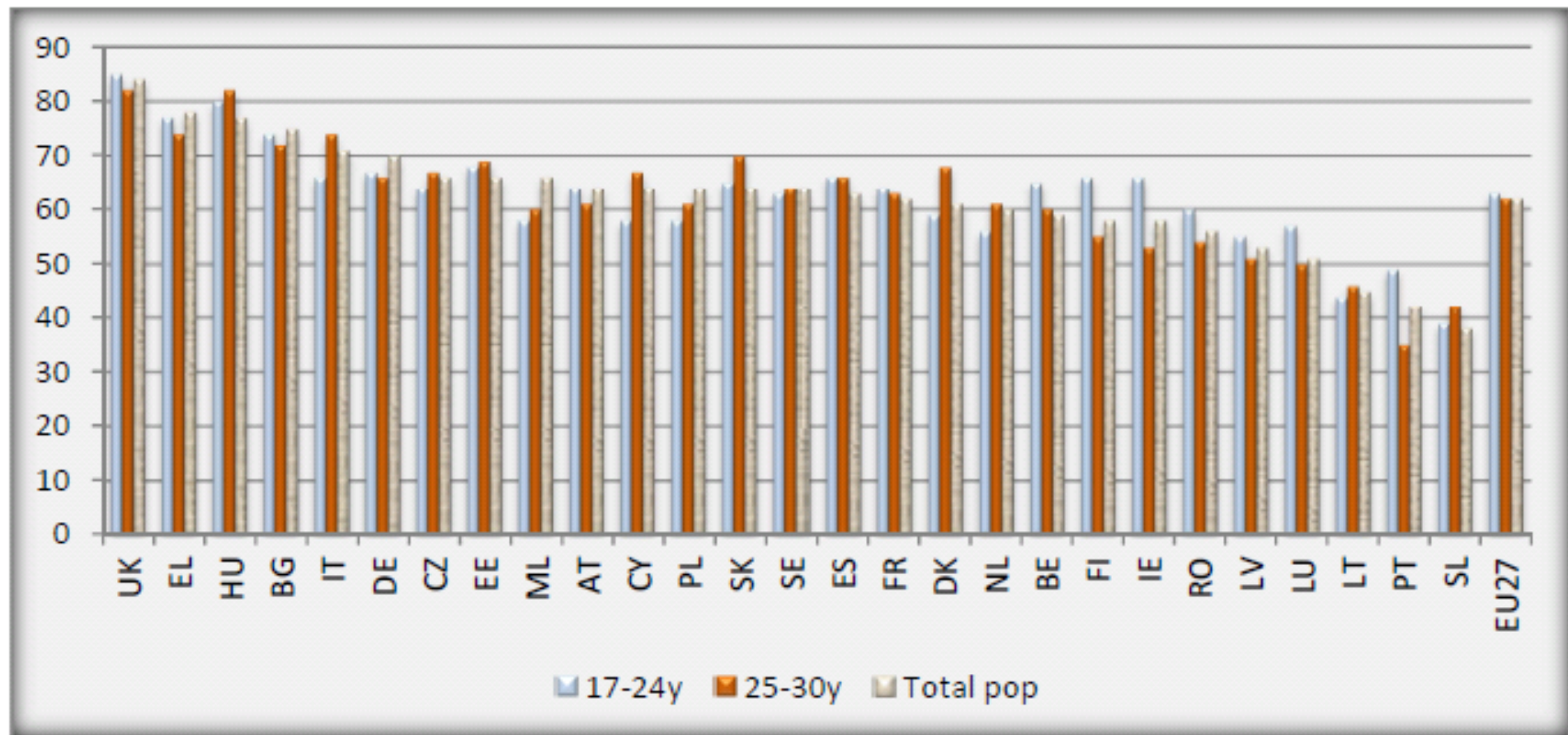


Source: EACEA/EC 'Youth Participation in Democratic Life', Eurostat data 2012.



## 4. The young people who distrust the traditional source of information

**Figure 5.3:** Degree of distrust of the press



**Source:** EACEA/EC 'Youth Participation in Democratic Life', based on re-analysis of European Social Survey – 2008 wave

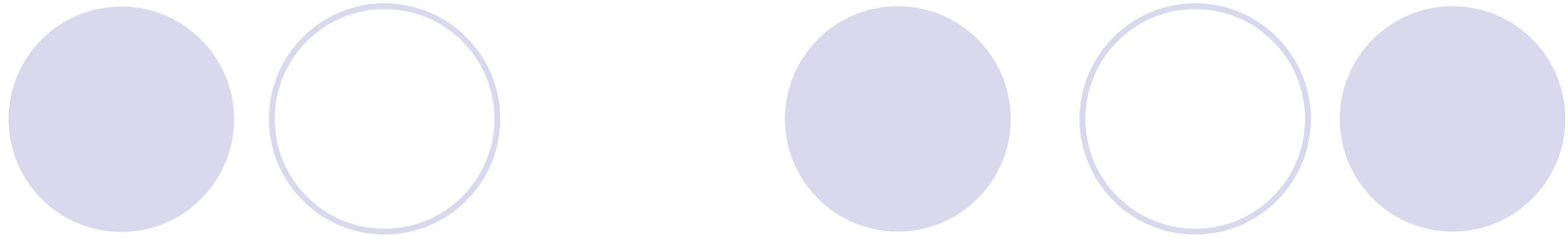
## 5. Those young people with a criminal record are often in danger being completely excluded

- In China, in 2010, young people between ages 16-25 represent 28% of first entrants to the criminal justice system while only 15% of the population are at this age group (Law Yearbook of China 2012, [www.cnki.net](http://www.cnki.net)).
- In the US, approximately a quarter of million children (ages 10-17) are prosecuted, sentenced or incarcerated as adults each year, of which 70% serving for nonviolent offenses. In 2009 alone, the US police made 1.6 million juvenile arrests (Children's Defence Fund 2011).
- In England and Wales, in 2010, young people under the age of 21 represent approximately 26% of the first entrants to the criminal justice system in the UK while only 13% of the total population in the UK are between ages 15-24 (UK Ministry of Justice 2010/2011).



## Conclusion

- In European countries where young people's right to participate is made mandatory, young people do participate in democratic processes
- But, their participation in democratic process is very much limited by their limited representation in political organisations or governing institutions where power resides and decisions regarding their life chances are made.
- Instead, we tend to find them in unstable and poor paid jobs or out of a job completely, in the streets causing unrest or even in prison.



**Some tried initiatives**

# Effective methods to boost youth participation in national elections

**Table 3.6:** Evaluation of possible youth participation boosters – Under 18<sup>9</sup>

	Positiveness	Expected effectiveness
<b>Elect special young people representatives (national)</b>	<b>2.9 (1.1)</b>	<b>2.7 (1.2)</b>
School and university students' unions	2.8 (1.2)	2.6 (1.2)
<b>Voting advice applications</b>	<b>2.8 (1.2)</b>	<b>2.7 (1.2)</b>
<b>Elect special young people representatives (European)</b>	<b>2.8 (1.1)</b>	<b>2.5 (1.2)</b>
<b>Elect youth councils (local level)</b>	<b>2.8 (1.1)</b>	<b>2.6 (1.2)</b>
<b>Facebook interaction with candidates</b>	<b>2.7 (1.2)</b>	<b>2.6 (1.2)</b>
<b>School debates with party people at election time</b>	<b>2.7 (1.2)</b>	<b>2.6 (1.2)</b>
Mass demonstrations on youth specific issues	2.6 (1.2)	2.4 (1.3)
Sit downs on big issues	2.5 (1.2)	2.3 (1.3)
<b>Allow internet voting</b>	<b>2.5 (1.4)</b>	<b>2.5 (1.3)</b>
Mass demonstrations on major issues	2.4 (1.2)	2.2 (1.3)
<b>Lower voting age to 16</b>	<b>2.3 (1.4)</b>	<b>2.3 (1.4)</b>



## Lower voting age to 16

- In Austria, the eligible voting age is 16. 82% 14-year olds will vote in national election while the actual turnout is 82%.
- In Norway, local election trial for age 16 in 20 communities, over 90% young people surveyed said they would vote while only 60% actually voted.

**Table 3.7:** Evaluation of possible youth participation boosters – 18-30

	Positiveness	Expected effectiveness
<b>Voting advice applications</b>	<b>2.8 (1.2)</b>	<b>2.7 (1.2)</b>
School and university students unions	2.7 (1.2)	2.5 (1.2)
<b>Elect special young people representatives (national)</b>	<b>2.6 (1.2)</b>	<b>2.4 (1.2)</b>
<b>Elect special young people representatives (European)</b>	<b>2.6 (1.1)</b>	<b>2.3 (1.2)</b>
<b>Facebook interaction with candidates</b>	<b>2.6 (1.2)</b>	<b>2.6 (1.2)</b>
<b>School debates with party people at election time</b>	<b>2.5 (1.2)</b>	<b>2.4 (1.2)</b>
<b>Elect youth councils (local level)</b>	<b>2.5 (1.1)</b>	<b>2.3 (1.2)</b>
Mass demonstrations on youth-specific issues	2.4 (1.3)	2.2 (1.3)
Sit downs on big issues	2.4 (1.3)	2.1 (1.3)
<b>Allow internet voting</b>	<b>2.4 (1.4)</b>	<b>2.5 (1.4)</b>
Mass demonstrations on major issues	2.30 (1.3)	2.0 (1.3)
<b>Lower voting age to 16</b>	<b>1.5 (1.3)</b>	<b>1.7 (1.3)</b>

**Source:** EACEA/EC 'Youth Participation in Democratic Life' Survey, 2011-2012

## Recommendations from a follow-up project of local election trail of the age 16 in Norway, “My Vote”:

- National authorities must:
  - \* finance more research on life course of young elected politicians and on what it takes to make it in politics.
  - \* develop a national strategy for disseminating information to increase awareness of election and the political system among young people. An important part of information dissemination must be creating meeting places for young people and politicians.
  - \* working with local authorities to put a greater focus on young politicians in elective program.
  - \* ensure that youth organisations get access to school, so they can contribute to more social engagement among young people.



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