



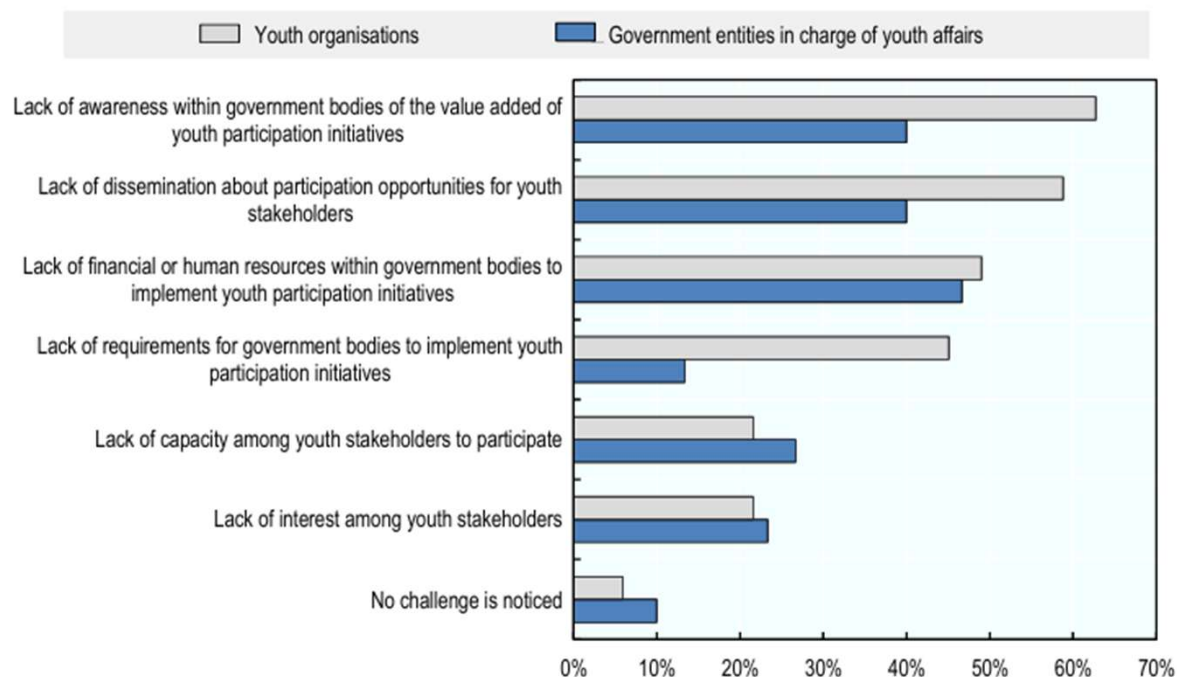
25th CONFERENCE
INTERNATIONAL
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IN SEARCH OF INTERGENERATIONAL FAIRNESS: *A 'YOUTH CHECK'* FOR ITALY

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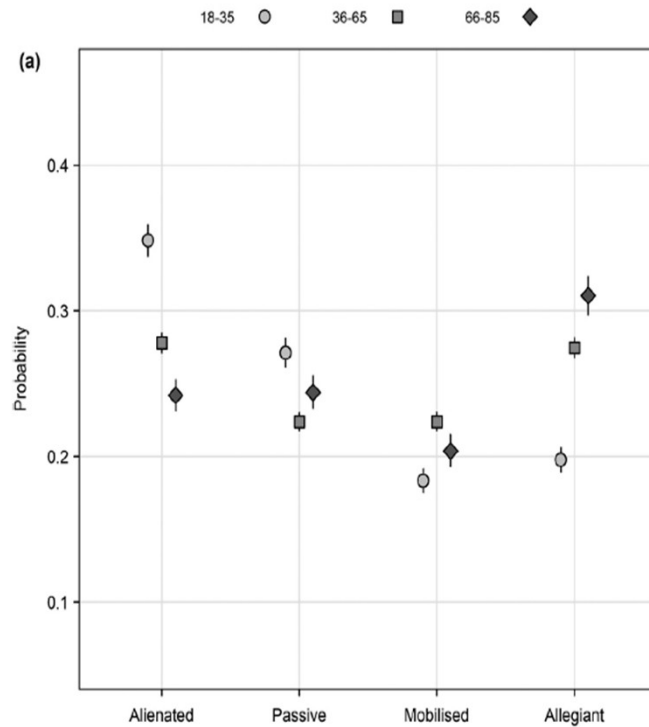
PARTICIPATION IN THE POLICY CYCLE: SIMILAR PRIORITIES BUT DIFFERENT EXTENTS?



Note: Based on 30 OECD government entities in charge of youth affairs and 51 youth organisations in OECD countries.
Source: OECD Youth Governance Surveys.



SOUTHERN EUROPE



(Source: OECD, 2020)

Comparative analyses about youth civism show in Southern Europe low levels of engagement, growing dissatisfaction towards public sphere and distrust in future. Across the 4 countries (ES, GR, IT, PT) being young is associated with a *higher probability of being alienated*, i.e. having low satisfaction and trust and low political engagement, and of being *passive*, i.e. having high political trust but low political engagement.

Young citizens are more likely to be both dissatisfied with and mistrustful of the political realm and disengaged, indicating an important problem about how preferences and needs are transmitted to the political system.



YOUNG PEOPLE IN ITALY

Italian scenario seems even more complicated by structural factors like '**demographic winter**', that breeds imbalances related to declining fertility rates, familism by default, slowdowns in transition to adulthood --> *posponement of goals*

Italy is the European nation with the lowest number of young adults (people between 20 and 34 years). Moreover, in the 1960s the 15–25 age group made up 15.7% of the Italian population; today, it accounts for only 10.8% (two million fewer people). The 15–19 age group stood at 7.3% but is now only 4.8% (one million fewer people); according to Istat projections, this share could fall to 3.5% by 2050.

This is the striking outcome of the process—dating back to the late 1970s—that defines Italy's demographic crisis. There is an objective quantitative dimension (often overlooked by the younger cohorts themselves) underlying the difficulty of making their voices heard. Attributing this problem to their own inherent weakness erodes confidence in their collective action.



CITIZENSHIP ORIENTATIONS

In a longitudinal study regarding 8 european countries (Enchikova et al., 2021), data of Italian sample show that half of young respondents feels **indifferent** towards participation.

Results from Tzankova-Prati-Cicognani 2022 (survey incl 1732 late adolescents and young adults):

- Largest cluster: *Unengaged trustful* (32,2%), low interest/participation but high political trust
- *Unengaged distrustful* group (23,9%): low level of participation + very low political trust and interest in social issues
- *Standby distrustful* cluster (19,8%): sociopolitical interest above the mean, very low level of participation and political trust
- *Standby trustful* group (17,8%): high interest and political trust but lower levels of participation
- *Active trustful* youth (only 6,3%): positive values in all domains.



COMMUNITY DISTRUST

In deprived context of Southern Italy Carbone *et al.* (2021) found perception of stagnant local reality + family of origin mostly focused on keeping younger people inside to defend themselves against the instability of the outside world. No active involvement even in presence of virtual commitment and hope for social change: *a generation left alone with his goals.*

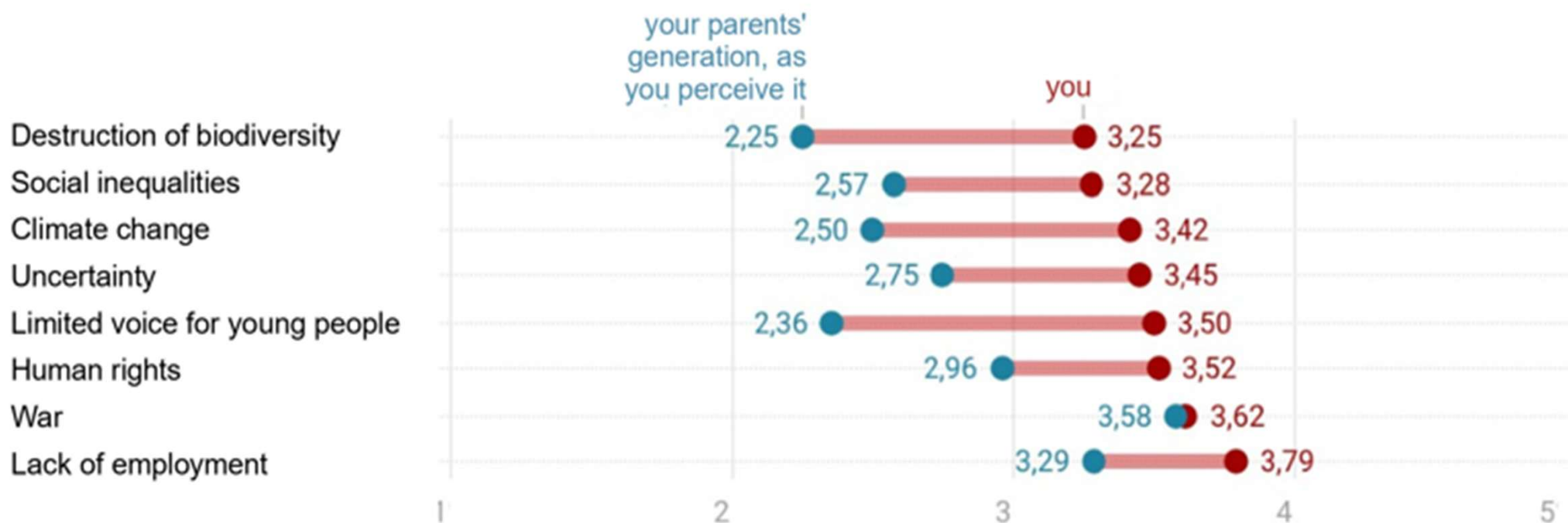
Public agenda has often forgotten to save room for their empowerment. Young people's anti-politics attitude is indeed political as it stems from a prolonged experience of peripheralization. Challenges associated with the uncomfortable condition of 'denizens': formally included and substantially excluded, morally blamed for lacking the commitment to find their place in the society (Pitti 2022). It is therefore no surprise that young people, effectively shut out from influencing institutional decisions, have shown little inclination towards participation and collective action.

But civic engagement of new generations, without addressing the political sphere directly only to a limited degree, tends to be more topic- and cause based, and lacks long-term investment in communities or political organizations.



WHAT WORRIES THE MOST

Total



(Source: Barca-Manicardi-Perrini 2026)



REGULATION MATTERS

In recent times there has been a mix of reforms which tries to change direction. Main leverage comes from pressure exerted by Eu Institutions in terms of agenda-setting, referring to Council of Europe's *Youth Perspective* and *Youth Action Plan*.

Inside the framework of *NRRP-National Reprise and Resilience Plan* Italian Government decided to strenghten resources devoted to civil service programs (a school of active citizenship for young people) and to expand the mandate and scope of action of the Italian Youth Agency (law n. 15/2023). Furthermore, a big investment has been made in opening of Youth Centres all over Italy (*Progetto Desteenazione*) using ESF.





GENERATIONAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

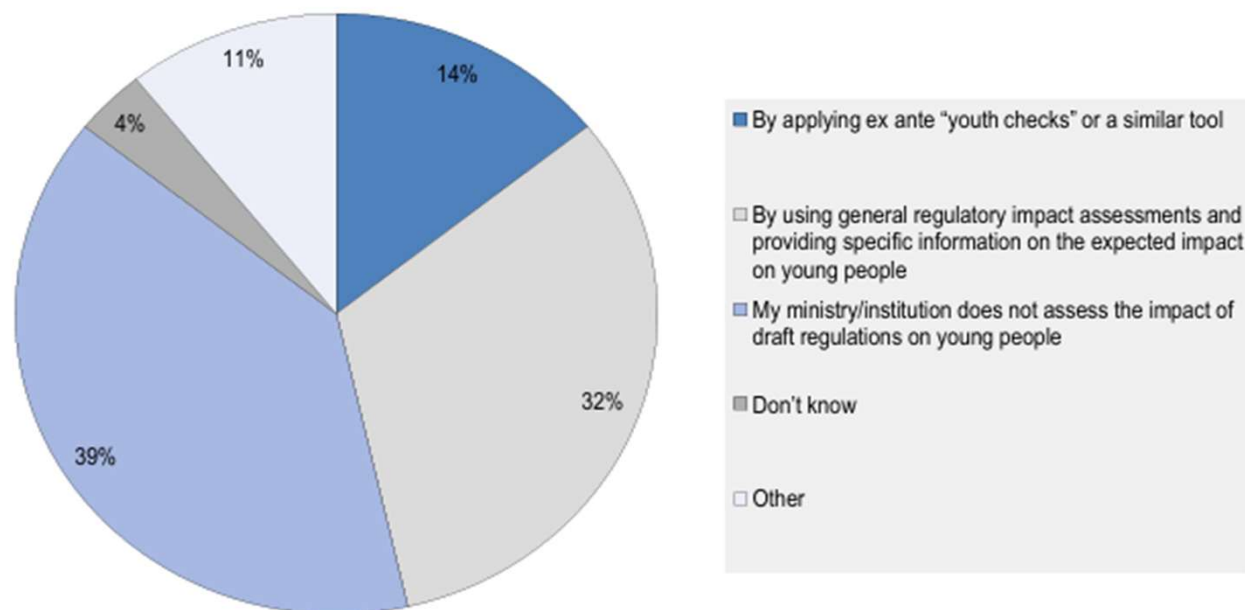
The most significant innovation regards the adoption of a **Generational Impact Assessment** rule (*VIG-Valutazione di Impatto Generazionale* in law n. 167/2025) applied to territorial development planning instrument peculiar to local authorities responsibilities.

For what regards promising practices of VIG implementation some interesting evidences are already available (Monti *et al.*, 2026), for example:

- use of labelling administrative decisions from generational point of view in the case of Parma European Youth Capital;
- Bologna Municipality, which has institutionalized the mandate of Additional Councillor expression of students of local university;
- ANCI (association of Italian Municipalities) has promoted the adoption of guidelines for youth-friendly strategic planning, suggesting methods to measure generational divides, approaches for young people consultations, training schemes for public servants.



USE OF REGULATORY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS FOR YOUTH POLICY OBJECTIVES



Note: Data refers to 28 OECD member countries.

Source: OECD calculations based on OECD Youth Governance Surveys.



TO FOSTER INTERGENERATIONAL JUSTICE

Governments should consider:

1. *Collecting age-disaggregated evidence and using strategic foresight.*
2. *Demonstrating strong political commitment to act upon inequalities both within and between different age cohorts and address intergenerational challenges.*
3. *Integrating intergenerational justice considerations in laws and programmes, and promote co-ordination across government to ensure policy coherence.*
4. *Ensuring availability of right skills and public management tools to promote intergenerational justice in decision-making, public spending and policy-making.*
5. *Creating/strengthening oversight institutions/mechanisms to monitor intergenerational justice commitments by ensuring resources and their legal, financial and political independence.*

To neglect the interests of younger generations leads to detriment of a future-oriented and sustainable public policy and fuels distrust in democracy.



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Thank you for your attention!
Merci de votre attention !
¡Gracias por su atención!
Dziękujemy za uwagę!