

Teens for Democracy 2025 Impact Report

Executive Summary

The Teens for Democracy Workshop, held as part of the Athens Democracy Forum 2025, brought together 42 young people aged 13 to 17 from across Greece and abroad to explore the question: “How can young people resist extremism and defend democratic values?”

Over three days, participants shared personal experiences, analyzed social and political influences, and worked collaboratively to develop actionable recommendations for policymakers, educators, and communities. The workshop emphasized empathy, dialogue, and critical thinking as essential tools for countering extremism and strengthening democratic culture. Its findings were presented at the Athens Democracy Forum plenary session, as part of our continuous commitment to integrating youth voices into the global conversation on democracy.



The workshop was facilitated by experts in psychology, education, and civic engagement: Myrto Xanthopoulou, Philanthropy and Civil Society Expert; and Professor Manos Tsakiris, Director of the Centre for the Politics of Feelings, University of London. The initiative was supported by the [ORBIS project](#), Libra Philanthropies and the Captain Vasilis and Carmen Constantakopoulos Foundation.

Prior to the in person meeting during the Forum, the teens met two more times (hybrid sessions: July 2025 and September 2025) in order to prepare for the longer deliberation. After the July meeting, teens voted for their preferred topic through the [PolisOrbis](#) tool.

External Evaluation

For the first time, the workshop’s impact was evaluated by a study conducted by the [University of London Center for the Politics of Feelings](#). The aim was to understand if and how teenagers’ participation changed their views for democracy, extremism, their political efficacy and their knowledge about political issues. This study on Teens For Democracy, conducted during the 2025 Athens Democracy Forum, revealed meaningful and encouraging outcomes in how young participants perceive democracy, their political influence, and their civic knowledge. Specifically, the study highlighted that the *Teens for Democracy* session produced clear and meaningful outcomes. Participants showed a notable increase in political efficacy, particularly external efficacy—the belief that political systems respond to citizen voices. Teens left the Forum feeling

that their collective actions can meaningfully influence change. They also demonstrated strong knowledge gains across all assessed areas, especially in understanding extremism, democratic rights, and civic institutions. Open-ended reflections revealed a distinct shift in mindset: from “We should be heard” to “We should act,” indicating that youth increasingly saw themselves as active and capable contributors to democratic life.

Overall, the session appears to have increased feelings of political efficacy, strengthened commitment to active participation, deepened understanding of how deliberation works, and shifted youth identity from observers to contributors. In conclusion, the Teens For Democracy experience empowered young people to view themselves as informed and capable democratic actors, leaving them with greater confidence, deeper knowledge, and a renewed commitment to active civic involvement.

Workshop Overview and Methodology

The Teens for Democracy workshop took place on October 1, 2025, at the Athens Conservatoire, as part of the Athens Democracy Forum under the theme “Resisting Extremism: Young People and Democratic Values.” The workshop was designed to provide a safe and inclusive environment for dialogue, critical reflection, and creative collaboration. Its goal was to empower teenagers to analyze extremist narratives, explore the roots of polarization, and articulate constructive recommendations on how young people can strengthen democracy in their schools, families, and communities.

The day-long program combined storytelling, case studies, and role-playing with structured group discussions and simulations. Participants examined the causes of extremism, experimented with strategies for dialogue and de-escalation, and reflected on their role as young citizens. Observers documented the discussions, capturing the depth of emotion, curiosity, and maturity expressed by participants. The insights from these observations, together with the final recommendations developed by the participants, form the basis of this Impact Report. A follow up session using the ORBIS toolkit (Bcause platform) is anticipated implicating a much larger number of Teens for Democracy program starting 2022 in order to give the opportunity to more young people to voice their opinion, ideas and policy recommendations.

Athens Democracy Forum

73 Haines House, 10 Charles Clowes Walk
London SW11 7AH

Registered in England & Wales — Company No: 11850248

E: info@athensdemocracy.com

W: athensdemocracyforum.com

© 2025 The Democracy & Culture Foundation

Key Themes and Insights

Throughout the workshop, participants engaged in open discussions about extremism as a phenomenon that affects everyday life — at school, online, and within families. They agreed that extremism is not only about violence but also about intolerance, manipulation, and exclusion. The sessions revealed how social media, misinformation, and emotional vulnerability can amplify division, while also highlighting young people's desire to build understanding and community.



The teens also noted how corruption and gaslighting by political actors, exposure to harmful news which leads to desensitization, and the ease of organizing violent groups online, can push people away from trust in democracy.

Participants identified several drivers of extremism: peer pressure, online echo chambers, lack of critical thinking, family tensions, frustration with institutions, and economic insecurity. As one participant noted,

“It’s hard to tell the difference between a strong opinion and non-violent extremism.” Another added, “We want to speak, but we don’t always learn how to listen.” Discussions emphasized that young people’s search for meaning and belonging can make them susceptible to manipulation, especially when trust in institutions is low. Through role-playing exercises, participants practiced countering extremist rhetoric in realistic scenarios. Appealing to logic or emotion alone proved less effective; instead, participants discovered that “offering something that benefits the other side directly” or “thinking from the other person’s point of view” often led to more constructive conversations. Teens found that the most effective strategies for countering extremist views involved engaging the person rather than confrontation — staying calm, asking questions, and seeking common ground. What worked best was highlighting issues in ways that showed benefits for them or for the collective, listening attentively and showing understanding, staying calm and respectful, searching for common ground, and using the Socratic method of asking questions to uncover the reasoning behind their statements. On the other hand, relying on logic, science, or facts and figures often proved less effective, as did pointing out contradictions, becoming overwhelmed with emotions, or trying to appeal to empathy alone. These approaches tended to create defensiveness rather than dialogue. But overall, the role-play exercise showed that extremist minds are hard to change; and that the best way forward is to think of how one can use precautionary measures and focus on prevention against extremism from influencing people’s hearts and minds in the first place.

Recommendations

The teens worked in small groups to design concrete recommendations about how we can best prepare young people to prevent and resist extremism. They wanted them to be clear, easy to

Athens Democracy Forum

73 Haines House, 10 Charles Clowes Walk
London SW11 7AH

Registered in England & Wales — Company No: 11850248

E: info@athensdemocracy.com

W: athensdemocracyforum.com

© 2025 The Democracy & Culture Foundation

understand, and above all, actionable. They followed the same method for each one: say who should take action, what they should do, and why it matters for young people and democracy.

In their own words, these are their proposals and recommendations; they are addressed to policymakers, educators, NGOs, communities, families - and anyone affecting and affected by the appeal of extremism in younger generations.

Education and Schools

We believe the Ministry of Education should establish a dedicated period in schools where teachers and students can openly discuss current political and social issues. This would give us a space to practice dialogue and learn to respect different views. Schools should also provide civic education and training in critical thinking, so that we can better navigate misinformation and resist manipulation, especially from social media. Teachers themselves should receive professional training to be equipped for this task. We want schools to organize debates and workshops with external experts, because practicing free speech and hearing diverse perspectives help us grow into active citizens. We advocate against political party biases in schools, universities and in classrooms. Finally, we believe schools - through active Youth Councils - should collaborate more closely with schools' leadership as well as local governments and communities, take a more active role on school and other policy areas and work together on real neighborhood issues so that our education connects to the world we live in.

Online and Social Media

We know how deeply social media affects us, and we see both its dangers and its potential. Parents and guardians - but not governments - should help set healthy limits on our use of social media so that it does not negatively influence our lives with harmful content. NGOs, and not governments, should partner with online platforms to make algorithms more transparent and to reduce their hidden biases. We call on corporations to redesign algorithms to make diverse content more visible, so that echo chambers do not isolate us. At the same time, we believe governments and tech CEOs must not secretly collaborate in ways that reduce accountability or manipulate what we see. Platforms should also limit the disproportionate influence of powerful individuals, so that no one person can dominate public debate online.

Families, Community and Inclusion

We believe municipalities should organize events and forums that bring people together in an inclusive environment, creating a stronger sense of belonging. Parents and guardians should talk more openly with their children about politics, and social workers could help families learn how to have these conversations. Communities and online platforms should provide spaces where parents and children can share their own stories, because telling our stories builds empathy and breaks down isolation. Parents also need guidance and seminars about the risks of radicalization so they can support us better. Families should encourage emotional awareness and openness and support our mental health, with the help of psychologists where needed, so that we feel safe expressing ourselves and trusted at home, at schools, in our communities. Above all, parents

should understand the importance of validation and acceptance of their children and the significant impact their relationships have on us and our future.



Youth Participation in Politics

We want municipalities to fund youth-led newspapers and projects so that our voices and concerns can be heard. Schools should dedicate at least one-third of field trips to politics, governance, and history, giving us real-world exposure to how democracy works. We also want opportunities to engage with NGOs and governments through workshops and digital platforms, making civic participation

encouraged and accessible to everyone. There should be new, separate platforms where young people can discuss politics and get reliable information, outside the toxic atmosphere of mainstream social media. Municipalities should also establish Youth Councils that bring students from different schools together to provide transparency and constructive criticism to local leaders, including mayors. Finally, we believe that Article 55 of the Greek Constitution should be changed to lower the age of political participation from 25 so that young people can begin shaping democracy much earlier.

Support Systems and Mental Health

We know that extremism feeds on isolation, anxiety, and a lack of support. That is why we call on the Ministries of Health, Social Welfare and Culture, as well as welfare organizations to raise awareness about the challenges faced by vulnerable people in society. The Ministry of Education should introduce a weekly hour of social service in schools so that we can learn empathy by addressing real social issues. Both the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health should ensure that psychologists are present in schools to support us, not requiring parental prior knowledge or consent; and they should also provide free sessions for young people at risk of exclusion. Social workers should be properly funded and incentivized, because their work is essential in helping families and communities. Finally, governments should allocate more resources to research and expand mental health services, so that no young person feels left behind.

Conclusion

The Teens for Democracy 2025 workshop demonstrated that when young people are trusted and given the tools to think critically and collaborate, they can generate thoughtful and practical solutions to some of society's most pressing challenges. Their recommendations are clear, actionable, grounded in lived experience and based on a sincere belief in democracy's potential to

Athens Democracy Forum

73 Haines House, 10 Charles Clowes Walk
London SW11 7AH

Registered in England & Wales — Company No: 11850248

E: info@athensdemocracy.com

W: athensdemocracyforum.com

© 2025 The Democracy & Culture Foundation

include, protect, and empower. The Athens Democracy Forum provided these young participants not only a platform to speak, but also an opportunity to be heard — a vital investment in the democratic future.

Resisting extremism begins with listening, learning, and building stronger communities — in schools, online, within families, and across politics. It begins with engaging directly and empathetically, and with adults who trust young people enough to act on their ideas. The Teens for Democracy initiative will continue to grow as a bridge between generations, fostering the next wave of active, informed, and compassionate citizens.

Athens Democracy Forum

73 Haines House, 10 Charles Clowes Walk
London SW11 7AH

Registered in England & Wales — Company No: 11850248

E: info@athensdemocracy.com

W: athensdemocracyforum.com

© 2025 The Democracy & Culture Foundation

Appendix 1 – Evaluation Report by the University of London

Youth, Democracy, and Empowerment: Teens for Democracy at the 2025 Athens Democracy Forum

Prof Manos Tsakiris, Centre for the Politics of Feelings, University of London

Teens for Democracy 2025

Impact Report.....	1
Executive Summary.....	1
External Evaluation	1
Workshop Overview and Methodology	2
Key Themes and Insights.....	2
Recommendations	3
Conclusion.....	5
Appendix – Evaluation Report by the University of London	6
Highlights	7
Executive Summary	8
Introduction.....	9
Methodology	9
Results of closed questions	10
Analysis of the Open Ended Questions	12
Q1: The Role of Young People in Democracies	12
2. Q2: Are Democratic Systems at Risk? Why?	13
3. Q3: Did the Forum Change Perceptions of Citizens’ Assemblies & Deliberation? (Post-only)	14
Overall Summary of Open Ended Questions	14
Appendix I of Full Responses to the Open ended Questions.....	15
Appendix II Separate Bar charts for each variable.....	18

Highlights

Key Findings

- **Political Efficacy:** Notable increase, especially in **External Efficacy** — the belief that political systems respond to citizen voices. Teens left the Forum feeling that their collective actions can truly influence change.
- **Knowledge Gains:** Strong positive growth across all knowledge-related areas — particularly in understanding **extremism, democratic rights, and institutions**.
- **Open-ended Reflections:** Clear tone shift from “*We should be heard*” to “*We should act.*” Youth saw themselves as active, capable participants in democratic life.

Key Impact

The Teens for Democracy session appears to have:

- **Increased feelings of political efficacy**
- **Strengthened commitment to active participation**
- **Deepened understanding of how deliberation works**
- **Shifted youth identity from observers → contributors**

Conclusion: The Teens for Democracy session empowered young people to see themselves as informed and capable democratic actors. They emerged with stronger confidence, deeper knowledge, and a renewed commitment to active participation

Executive Summary

This study on **#TeensForDemocracy**, conducted during the 2025 Athens Democracy Forum, reveals meaningful and encouraging outcomes in how young participants perceive democracy, their political influence, and their civic knowledge.

Key Findings:

- **Significant improvements in political efficacy**, particularly in **external efficacy** — that is, the belief that political institutions and leaders are responsive to citizens' voices. After taking part in the Forum, participants felt more confident that democratic systems can be influenced through collective action and youth participation. This reflects a shift from passive observation to a belief in real-world impact.
- **Strong positive gains in knowledge-related variables.** Participants reported large increases in their understanding of **extremism, democratic rights, institutions, and social and political issues**. This suggests that exposure to expert discussions and deliberative exercises at the Forum substantially deepened their grasp of key democratic concepts.
- **Shifts in tone and perspective in open-ended responses.** Before the session, participants emphasized the importance of being heard; afterwards, they stressed the importance of **acting**. Their narratives moved from "we should be included" to "we can contribute." They also displayed:
 - Greater appreciation of **deliberation** as a process for resolving differences.
 - A clearer sense of **agency** and responsibility in defending democratic systems.
 - Enhanced confidence in their ability to contribute meaningfully to democratic dialogue.

Overall, the findings suggest that the Teens for Democracy session not only improved participants' **knowledge and understanding of democracy**, but also **empowered them to see themselves as active, capable, and influential democratic actors**.

Introduction

This study aimed to assess young people's experiences participating in a citizens' assembly and how it affects their attitudes towards democracy and political participation. Participants aged 13-18 took part in a two-day assembly at the Athens Democracy Forum (ADF) focused on "Resisting Extremism: Young People and Democratic Values," where they developed recommendations to be presented first at the ADF and then to policymakers and experts.

Methodology

We designed a survey to be given to the teenagers who participated at the Teens for Democracy session during the 2025 Athens Democracy Forum (ADF). Our aim was to understand if and how their participation changes their views for democracy, extremism, their political efficacy and their knowledge about political issues. Our plan was to collect data from before and after their participation but due to logistical reasons this was not possible. As a result, thirteen teenagers completed the survey *before* the Athens Democracy Forum and their participation in the Teens for Democracy session, and 12 teenagers completed the survey *after* their participation at the Teens for Democracy session.

Important Disclaimer: As no participants completed the survey both before and after the ADF, we can at least see if there are group differences between those who took the survey before and those who did it afterwards. These differences could reflect the impact that their participation had, assuming that the two groups are roughly comparable in terms of socio-demographics.

In the survey, participants answered questions about themselves and about their:

political efficacy¹ (capturing both **Internal efficacy**, that is the feeling of personal competence to understand and engage with the political process, and **external efficacy**, that is the belief that the political system is responsive to citizen demands)

their civic engagement willingness (e.g. sign petitions, volunteer for political parties or action groups, etc)

their support for democracy (e.g. multiple parties, free media, respect of electoral results)

their open-minded thinking style (e.g. update your thinking with evidence)

¹ **Political Efficacy Questions** : **Internal efficacy** is the feeling of personal competence to understand and engage with the political process, while **external efficacy** is the belief that the political system is responsive to citizen demands.

Internal Efficacy Questions 1-3

1 Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a young person like me can't really understand

2 I am confident that I can construct arguments about political issues (in writing or speech) that are logical and well-reasoned.

3 I often don't feel sure of myself when talking with other people about politics and government.

External efficacy questions 4-6

4 There are many legal ways for young people like me to successfully influence what the government does.

5 Public officials don't care about what people like me think

6 I can do something to influence who wins a state election.

their exposure to extremist content and

their perceived knowledge about certain issues

At the end of the survey, they answered three open questions:

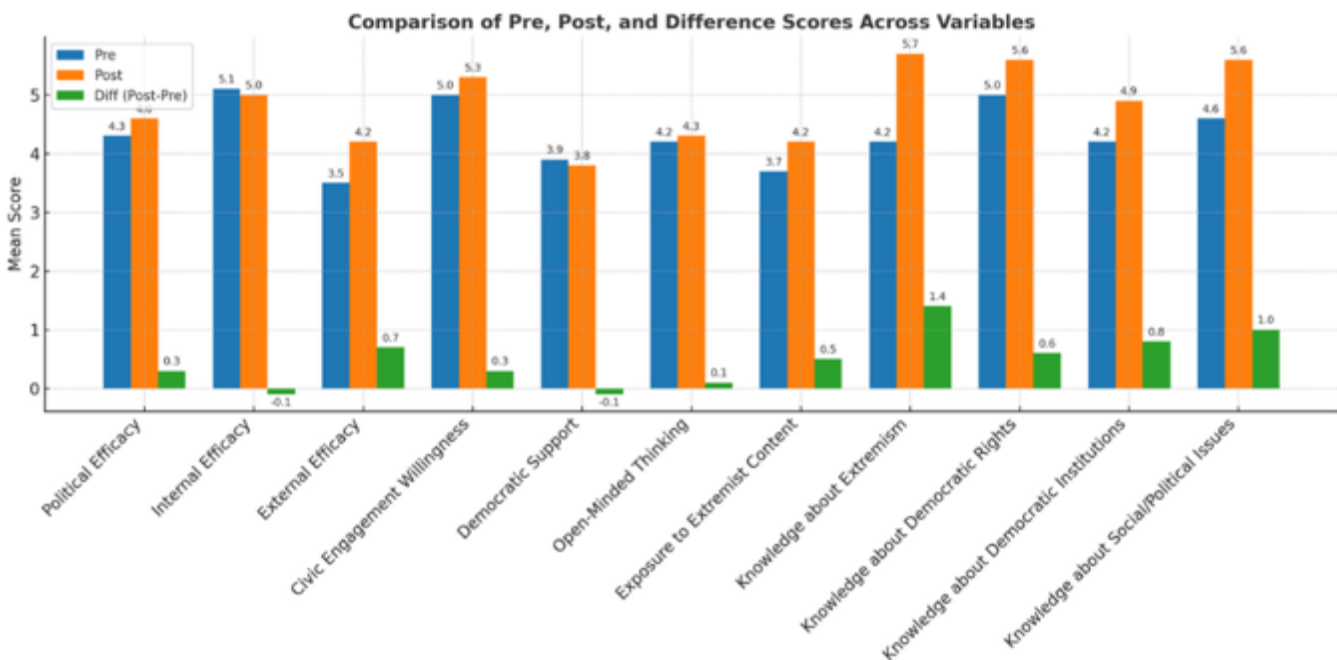
1.What do you think should be the role of young people in democracies? (*given both before and after their participation*)

2. Do you think democratic systems are at risk, and if so, why? (*given both before and after their participation*)

3. Do you feel like this experience has changed your perceptions on citizens' assemblies or deliberation? How? (*given only after their participation*)

Results of closed questions

These are the mean values for the closed questions for those who completed the survey only before , those who completed the survey only after their participation, and we also estimate the differences between the two groups.



	Pre		Post		Post minus pre	
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev	Diff. in Means	Std. Error
Political Efficacy score on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree)	4.3	0.9	4.6	0.9	0.3	0.4
Internal Efficacy score on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree)	5.1	1.0	5.0	1.5	-0.1	0.5
External Efficacy score on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree)	3.5	1.2	4.2	0.9	0.7	0.4
Civic Engagement Willingness score on a scale from 1 (not at all willing) to 7 (very much willing)	5.0	1.7	5.3	1.1	0.3	0.6
Democratic Support score on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)	3.9	0.6	3.8	0.7	-0.1	0.3
Open-Minded Thinking score on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree)	4.2	1.1	4.3	1.0	0.1	0.4
Exposure to Extremist Content score (1 = Never, 2 = Very rarely, only once or twice, 3 = Occasionally, from time to time, 4 = Many times)	3.7	1.1	4.2	0.6	0.5	0.4
Knowledge about Extremism score on a scale from 1 (Not knowledgeable at all) to 7 (Very knowledgeable)	4.2	1.6	5.7	0.8	1.4	0.5
Knowledge about Democratic Rights score on a scale from 1 (Not knowledgeable at all) to 7 (Very knowledgeable)	5.0	1.6	5.6	1.0	0.6	0.5

	Pre		Post		Post minus pre	
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev	Diff. in Means	Std. Error
Knowledge about Democratic Institutions score on a scale from 1 (Not knowledgeable at all) to 7 (Very knowledgeable)	4.2	1.6	4.9	1.4	0.8	0.6
Knowledge about Social and Political Issues score on a scale from 1 (Not knowledgeable at all) to 7 (Very knowledgeable)	4.6	1.6	5.6	1.2	1.0	0.6

Analysis of the Open Ended Questions

Q1: The Role of Young People in Democracies

Shared Themes Across Both Groups

Both pre and post participants agree that:

- **Young people should have a voice** in society.
- Their perspectives are **unique, fresh, and important**.
- **Education** in civic/political understanding is necessary for meaningful participation.
- There is recognition that **young people represent the future** of democracy.

These themes appear consistently before and after the session.

What Changes After the Session?

Before the Session (pre)

Strong emphasis on **being heard** and **having opinions taken seriously**.

Some hesitation on whether young people **should make decisions** (e.g., “adults should still decide”).

After the Session (post)

Greater emphasis on **taking active roles**, e.g., *proposing solutions, participating in councils, advocating rights*.

More responses stress that young people are **not only the future, but the present**, with a claim to **real involvement now**.

Before the Session (pre)	After the Session (post)
Youth participation framed mostly as consultative .	Youth participation framed as active and co-creative (joining, debating, influencing, representing, assembling).

Tone Shift

- **Pre:** “We should be heard.”
- **Post:** “We should *act*.”

This suggests that the **#teensfordemocracy session increased perceived agency and confidence**.

2. Q2: Are Democratic Systems at Risk? Why?

Shared Concerns Across Groups

Both groups mention:

- **Rise of extremism**
- **Polarization**
- **Fake news / misinformation**
- **Threats to free speech and rights**
- **Corruption or unresponsive leadership**

So the core *awareness of risk* existed **before** the session.

What Changes After the Session?

Before	After
Explanations feature societal trends , such as social media, propaganda, populism, and historical reasoning.	Explanations focus more on current political dynamics and systemic critique (e.g., parties alienating groups, politics as industry, misuse of constitutional power).
Tone often analytical and reflective.	Tone more direct, urgent , and experience-based .
Some belief that institutions will “hold” against risks.	Fewer expressions of institutional trust; more emphasis on collective responsibility for protecting democracy.

Interpretation

After the session, teens appear:

- **More critical of institutional behavior**, not just social trends.
- More aware that **active engagement is necessary** to defend democracy.
- Less likely to assume democracy is self-sustaining.

3. Q3: Did the Forum Change Perceptions of Citizens’ Assemblies & Deliberation? (Post-only)

All responses indicate a positive shift.

Key impacts mentioned:

- Greater appreciation of **structured dialogue** as a tool for solving disagreements.
- Recognition that **respectful discussion across differences is possible**.
- Increased **confidence in their own voice** and capacity to contribute.
- Understanding that **change requires collective, informed support**.
- A sense of **belonging to a democratic process**.

Several participants explicitly say they now feel **more capable, more informed, and more empowered**.

Overall Summary of Open Ended Questions

Dimension	Before Session	After Session
Identity as political actors	“We deserve to be heard.”	“We can shape change.”
Perception of democracy’s risks	Concern rooted in social and ideological trends.	Concern linked to structural and political realities; less trust in institutions alone.
Sense of agency	Moderate, often conditional on age or competence.	Stronger confidence, belief in youth representation, and direct action.
Understanding of deliberation	Abstract or theoretical.	Concrete, experiential, tied to personal empowerment.

Appendix I of Full Responses to the Open ended Questions

Q1 : What do you think should be the role of young people in democracies?

Group of Participants who completed the survey <i>before</i> their participation	Group of Participants who completed the survey <i>after</i> their participation
Every child after 5th grade should be heard and taken seriously by elders and government members . Every mature child has a right to participate in decision making more so ever if it involves something about their school life. Young people should be able to express their opinion meanwhile being heard by older people Their voices should definitely be heard and taken seriously by politicians. There should also be conferences like this, where young people can present their views and suggest solutions or different aspects of a social ,economical or even political matter. young people should be heard, as their opinion can sometimes be even more important than an adults opinion It is given knowledge that the young are the future. Therefore, as young people, we must maintain a level of engagement that would provide us with a better outlook when we are able to engage with democracy. Since, as young people, we may not have many opportunities to participate in what we believe and the democratic system. As we are still young, it is best to keep ourselves educated and knowledgeable on the current state of socioeconomics. To provide their opinion on certain matters, offer their side of what's right and wrong, but in no terms are they to decide for themselves on a matter. Their age makes them inappropriate to take such decisions. However their opinion should be highly valued as they represent a different age group than adults, and therefore have different opinion. In my opinion young people should be able to contribute to the political decisions because they can give a more fresh and modern solution that citizens may like. In a democracy as long as the legal age of voting remains the same (who knows maybe in 20 years time the voting age will be 16), all young people play an extremely honest role. As the youth hasn't lived in the same past as most adults today their beliefs are more based and influenced by modern and possibly more effective beliefs which can help solve today's societys' problems rather than being bound in the chains of the past's so called greatness or popular yet older and less effective values. The most important thing is for teens to educate themselves, and hear all aspects of an event or topic. This helps them form an opinion that isn't purely based off what they've been told by parents or friends. Young people should have active roles in democracies all around the world. Thus, adults need to pay attention and give more opportunities to teens to speak their mind and contribute to society. Young people should be given the opportunity to participate more actively in democratic procedures. In order for this to be	To learn and give recommendations Educate themselves in order to be adequately knowledgeable on politics by the time they are old enough to vote and to be able to understand current pressing politic related issues Every young person should be given the opportunity to voice their opinions, concerns and suggestions for the improvement of current society and be heard by those in charge Young people who truly know about democracy, laws and political stuff and that they do have critical thinking can have the opportunity to say their opinions but the adults are the ones who should decide because they have more experience in the world and they also are able to survive on their own, so they know how it is to be a adult. Young people can express what they believe but any changes must be made by experts and people that are in the industry. Especially when this kind of decisions affects the whole country. The exact same as the older ones, sometimes even more important when older ones surpass a certain age and start having critical thinking problems (i dont mean to take their right to vote, but to take young people that are more open minded and fresh into consideration more) The role should be them fighting for their rights.. as an example in the USA, refugees are getting deported so my opinion is that young people should fight for their rights They should actively take part and propose solutions. They should be able to present their resolutions and opinion at the government. I do believe that having an active engaging part in democracy is quite difficult as a young person. However, it is possible that we keep ourselves educated and involved as much as possible. So when we do have the ability to participate, we can be engaged citizens who are critical and knowledgeable. Young people should be taken more into account because we are not only the future but the present.... There should be some councils that represent our voices to the government and talk our minds to the public

successful, there should be education on those procedures provided by the stage from young age. Young people can play a big part in a democracy since when they are active they have been historically drivers of change. Ignoring the power they can have is causing issues and the lack of knowledge they have provided is becoming one of the main reasons that extremes appeal to them.	Active citizens not passive listeners Young people should be involved in politics and express their opinions as they are members of the community too with beliefs and opinions that might improve democracy .
---	---

Q2 : Do you think democratic systems are at risk, and if so, why?

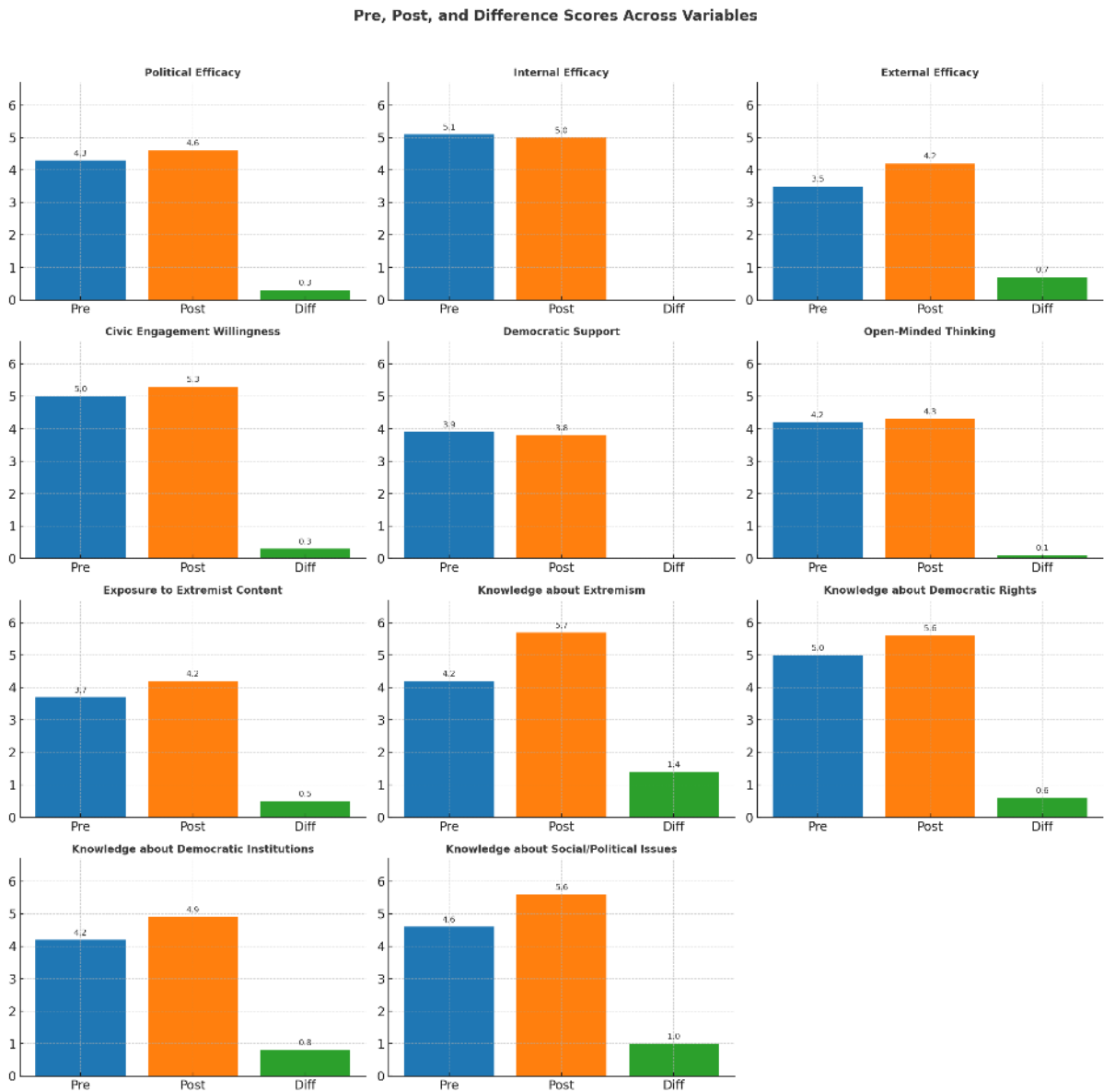
Group of Participants who completed the survey <i>before</i> their participation	Group of Participants who completed the survey <i>after</i> their participation
So and so .From one hand democratic systems might seem that they’re under risk but I believe that if people work more united the systems will be back to normal and we will have the chance to live in a more democratic society They definitely are considering many parties are becoming more well known from time to time Definitely so, because with the rise of social-media, and extremism as well, people tend to value their beliefs more than the ones of others, and therefore not respecting them. This leads to violent outcomes and possibly the coercion of a person. Also, social media often show us only one sided arguments, which do not help us shape clear opinions, and maybe this also puts democracy at risk, since people act in an unknowledgeable and ignorant towards topics, way. I would prefer not to answer In recent politics there has been a rise of using anger and hatred to drive political views and parties, from my observation. Which does pose a threat to democratic systems at risk. Because, a goal of a nation should be to accommodate for majority, if you exclude a group with hatred that will only brew hatred on the opposite side. However, I am aware that it is difficult to please everyone. But regardless, working towards the common goal of improving everyone’s situations is more beneficial than worrying about how to exclude one group because it I align with your personal views. No, even though extremism is on the rise it is, in my’opinion, not going to take over the democratic system. There will continue to be representatives of our democracy systems that will stay strong to their values. Extremism is in most cases wrong and in our world most of the times the right way of things perseveres. I believe that democracy is at risk because people’s opinion doesn’t have any value anymore except for the politicians that can express their opinions and be heard but their opinions are not the opinions of the people that they voted them. I strongly believe that if no effective action is taken against populist extremism as many politicians who lean towards left or right wing populism tend to violate democratic institutions like Orban, Erdogan, Putin, Chavez and many more who have only been able to rule for so long by ignoring democratic values and institutions.	Yes. The severe conflict between the political parties has destroyed unity Yes, as the current rise of the extremism is currently meddling with what was once considered the political middle, which is now getting increasingly difficult to define I do think they’re at risk, largely due to polarization observed in current day society, especially in young age people I think that in no country there is democracy, although we try to have democratic systems. I don't think that this kind of systems work all the time. They are at risk of disappearing, because politics are an industry that is based on politicians making a profit, as they pull strings from instructions that essentially come from higher-ups. Governments sometimes are incompetent to follow the laws and support the constitution either if they're left or right wing by doing the opposite of what are they proposing, by placing non eligible people on strong postitions and not following the constitutional laws because they might go against their political party's agenda. Well nowadays a lot of kids are exposed to extremism without them noticing so as a conclusion democracy is at risk due to the present. So I think democratic systems are at a huge risk due to this exposure Maybe, because with th rise of extremism democratic values are being destroyed. Well yes I believe that democratic systems are at risk from time to time but I do believe that now that people have become more united and care more about democracy these systems have gone back to normal. The current common theme that political parties are adopting is that they try to frame a certain group of people as the reason why negative

The title of democracy in a country is not imminently threatened. Still, with the limitation of free speech on the rise, and the slow act of our rights being taken away without us realising how much we need them, democracy has already started to lean towards autocracy, even if it hasn't been named that yet. Yes, I believe that current democracies are at risk due to the massive spread of fake news, propaganda, ongoing wars, and corruption. Nowadays, the world is positioned in a very fragile point. There are conflicts in almost every continent and global issues are more severe than ever. The far right is rising everywhere and rights people fought for years to get are getting evoked. Minorities are being targeted all over the world and people are put again to the position to fight for the basic rights. All those factors, make me believe that democratic systems are in fact at risk, however they are in a position where there still can be a shift towards stability.	things are happening. Therefore completely alienating that group of people. Which is really harmful because, what we should be trying to achieve is the common good. But we abandon the idea of the common good when we alienate a mass majority. Yes because there is a rise of the extremism and the far right now that we are going through an economical and political crisis thus the younger generations are more easily influenced by the politicians Yes fit to corruption and wars I believe that Democratic systems are at risk because politicians don't listen and respect the opinions of their voters . In this way democracy loses her original form because the voices of the citizens are not being heard.
--	---

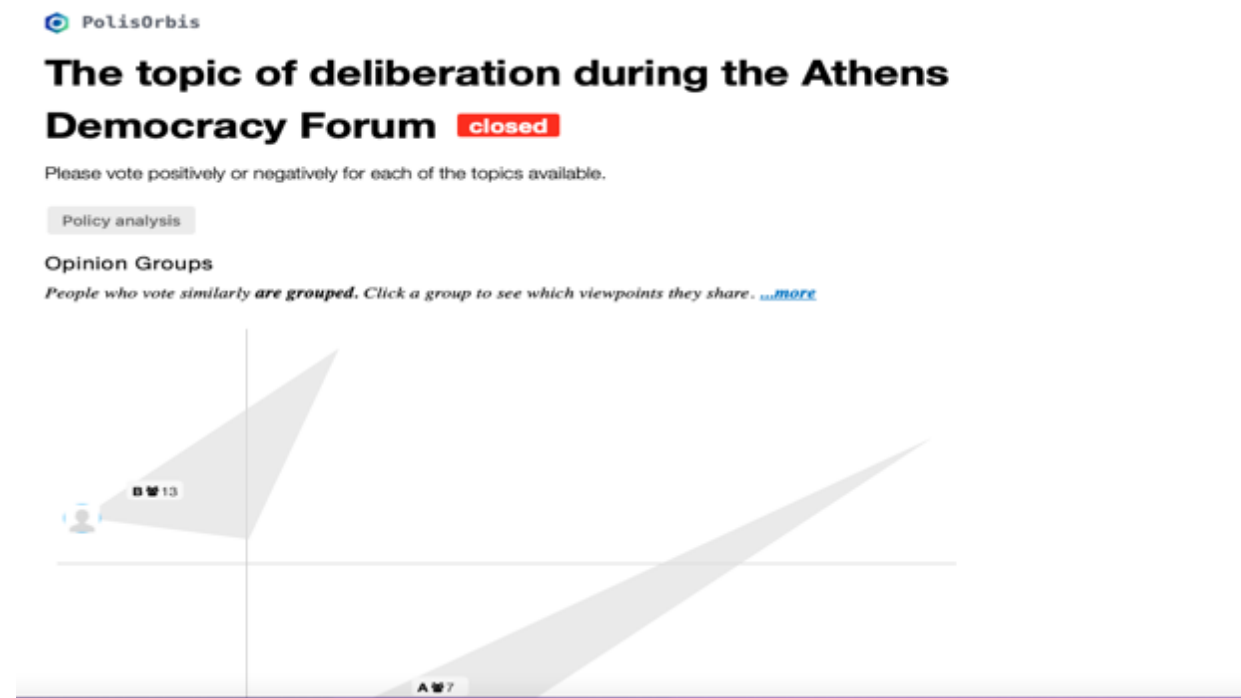
Q3: Do you feel like your experience at the Athens Democracy Forum has changed your perceptions on citizens’ assemblies or deliberation? How?

Group of Participants who completed the survey <i>after</i> their participation
It obviously had, by being exposed to many important and educated people and also having to work with many smart and educated individuals sharing different opinions. Finding common ground and making deliberation the key point to solve problems effectively and find common sense, ground and a middle solution. Well hearing other people stories and experiences I have to say that is has changed with what a person has experienced Yes I strongly believe that my experience at the Athens Democracy Forum has changed my perceptions on citizens assemblies and deliberations because through groups talk,presentations and workshops I have finally understood the values of democracy Yes, to me it was made abundantly clear that those who are able to bring true change are aware of what needs to be done. However, the process of it is difficult. Therefore, the only thing they are able to do is talk and bring awareness to such situations. As there needs to be massive support before something is able to develop. It surely did ,even though I am used to debating with people with different political beliefs I had the feeling that even if we disagreed on something we were respectful to each other. Also it showed me how structured dialogue can genuinely influence policy. Lastly I left the Forum with a stronger belief that creating spaces for informed citizen input can rebuild trust in democratic institutions. Yes and I am very grateful for that. I believe that now I am more confident in myself, my beliefs and the impact we can make as teens This experience has definitely changed my mind about how can we contribute in society and politics as teenagers and citizens in general through deliberation as we can discuss and find new ideas and solutions all together.

Appendix II Separate Bar charts for each variable



Appendix 2 – ORBIS deliberation outcomes



 BCAUSE
MAKING FOR CHANGING

Discussions Events Groups

[Sign Up](#) [Sign In](#)

[← Back](#) [Go to the discussion](#) The Open University
BCAUSE is a not-for-profit service delivered by The Open University

Explore

Discussions

Events

Bcause

About Us

Contact Us

Policy

Privacy

Cookies

Athens Democracy Forum

73 Haines House, 10 Charles Clowes Walk
London SW11 7AH

Registered in England & Wales — Company No: 11850248

E: info@athensdemocracy.com

W: athensdemocracyforum.com

© 2025 The Democracy & Culture Foundation