

Teens for Democracy - Policy recommendations

2023 Athens Democracy Forum

Climate crisis

Climate change is one of the biggest issues that affects us now as well as future generations. What is the best way to educate and empower teenagers about the climate crisis in order to promote real change? What would be your message about climate justice to world leaders for the upcoming COP28 Climate Summit?

Teens' Recommendations:

- Introduce compulsory and comprehensive environmental education curricula from an early age that will extend to human rights challenges and the effects of climate crisis on our development. These courses should be interactive, and involve children in discussions, peer to peer education (including children with the experience of climate refugees) include outdoors activities (outdoor learning)
- Set up digital platforms in all languages made by teens in collaboration with international organisations (such as UNICEF) to encourage states to adopt contemporary information for these curricula and involve policy makers in non formal education activities for this purpose.
- Introduce ongoing teachers' training and involve experts with a holistic socio-economic approach. And also inform them of local and civil society platforms in which children can express their views and participate. It's important that they encourage and empower children to this effect.
- In schools instead of imposing other measures to pupils (expulsion) apply measures for environmental volunteer work.

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- Schools must go green. Introduce standards for the operation of schools so environmentally friendly practices can be adopted and learned.
- Impose sanctions and fines to companies that violate environmental laws and burn a lot of fossil fuels. Provide more incentives in order to convince companies to comply.

Citizens' Participation

Many people think their government is disconnected from their daily lives, and that they feel powerless to impact its decisions. One way for people to become more engaged is for lawmakers to ask the view of the citizens when they consider a law and before they vote on it. We would like your ideas on the following: What would be the best ways to resolve a disagreement between lawmakers and the citizens who are advising them?

Teens' recommendations:

- Establish youth councils at a local and national level. Ensure representation of all areas and diversity of vulnerable populations.
- Teens should vote and actively participate in decision making. Redefine the concept of citizenship through education and legislation.
- Introduce Child Rights Impact Assessment procedures in all decision making and include children in the process.
- Empower children and pupils' councils in participation interactively.
- Assess the performance and rank stakeholders and decision makers regarding their effective engagement with children in decision making.
- Introduce procedures that formally involve children in the parliamentary decision making so they can express their views.
- Set up digital platforms to ensure the communication, and participation of children.
- Enhance legislation to protect children human rights defenders from attacks.
- Ensure transparency and accountability in decision making in order to monitor the implementation of our recommendations.